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PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

SENATE—Tuesday, February 25, 2014

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Father Patrick J. Conroy, who is the Chaplain of the U.S. House of Representatives.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day. On this day, help us to discover the power of resting in You and receiving assurance and encouragement in Your amazing grace.

Send Your Spirit down upon the Members of this Senate, who have been entrusted by their fellow Americans with the awesome privilege and responsibility of sustaining the great experiment of democratic self-government.

May they be reminded always of who they are. May they be open to Your inspiration, that they might overcome the temptation to work through the issues of this day on their own strength and cleverness. Grant them wisdom, insight, and vision, that the work they do will be for the betterment of our Nation during a time of struggle for so many millions of Americans. May they earn the trust and respect of those they represent, whether or not they had earned their vote, and make history that expands the great legacy of so many who have served in this Chamber before now—a legacy of noble service, sometimes political risk, but always great leadership.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 301.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 301 (S. 1982) a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11:05 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

At 11:05 a.m. the Senate will resume executive session to consider the nomination of James Moody to be a U.S. district judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

At 11:15 a.m. there will be five roll-call votes in order to confirm a number of district court nominations.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent that there be 2 minutes of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees between the votes in this series.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would also note, these are 10-minute votes after the first one, and we are going to cut them off when the time is up. So if people are late, they are at their peril. We have a lot to do today, and we are going to move along. It is not fair to Members to keep them waiting around while someone else is finishing a phone call.

Following the disposition of the nomination of Beth Freeman to be a U.S.

district judge for the Northern District of California, the Senate will recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate reconvenes at 2:15 p.m., there be an hour of debate equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees prior to a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to S. 1982, the veterans' benefits bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VETERANS HEALTH CARE AND JOB TRAINING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today the Senate will vote to advance bipartisan legislation that expands and improves the health care and job training available to our Nation's veterans.

I thank the Senator from Vermont, BERNARD SANDERS, for his leadership on this issue and for his dedication to America's service men and women.

The 19th century British statesman George Canning said: "When our perils are past, shall our gratitude sleep?"

"When our perils are past, shall our gratitude sleep?"

Although it is clear the world is still a very perilous place, the United States is finally winding down more than a decade of war in Afghanistan, and we are out of Iraq.

Mr. President, our gratitude shall not sleep. It is time to demonstrate the depth and breadth of our appreciation to the men and women who have kept this country safe in spite of the risk to their lives and the sacrifices required of their families.

I think of a young man from Hawthorne, NV, who enlisted right out of high school, who was 18 years old. He was in Afghanistan for a matter of

days, and one of those explosive devices blew off his legs at the hips. I think of him and his parents. What a struggle. That is what this legislation is all about.

This bill would not only improve veterans' access to health care, it would extend job training programs for servicemembers reentering the civilian workforce. It would bolster benefits for surviving spouses and children. And it would make the Veterans' Administration more transparent and more efficient.

Senator SANDERS' legislation would allow the Veterans' Administration to open 27 new clinics and medical facilities in 18 States and Puerto Rico. These clinics will improve the quality of care and reduce travel time for our retired heroes, particularly for veterans who live in rural areas—as the young man I just talked about is from a very rural part of Nevada in Hawthorne.

This legislation would help the VA work to end the backlog of claims for benefits. Legislation contained in this package will also improve care and benefits for veterans who experienced sexual trauma while serving their country.

This measure also expands educational opportunities for recently separated veterans by securing in-State tuition rates for post-9/11 veterans at all public colleges and universities. And this measure renews the VOW to Hire Heroes Act, which has helped spur hiring of out-of-work servicemembers and has given more than 70,000 veterans access to job training.

Unfortunately, though, unemployment is still far too high among veterans transitioning back to the civilian workforce. Last year more than 700,000 men and women who served in the U.S. military were unemployed. This is simply unacceptable. No one who has fought for their country overseas should have to fight for a job here at home.

Instead, we should be helping veterans—especially those who have endured more than a decade of war—to continue to serve their country as productive citizens. That is why this legislation extends for 2 years a program that helps former servicemembers get the skills they need to compete in a civilian workforce.

This legislation has the support of virtually every veterans organization in this country—25 of them—including the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

The bill is fully paid for with the savings from winding down the two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that so strained our military and our financial resources for more than a decade. The Pentagon projects that war spending will go down as we continue to reduce the number of American troops in Afghanistan.

This legislation will lock in those savings, establishing caps on overseas war spending for the very first time. It is only fair that we use a small portion of those savings to invest in our returning veterans, who have given so much over the past 13 years to ensure our safety.

Even with the perils of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan past for so many of our servicemembers, our gratitude shall not sleep. We owe it to our veterans to make the transition to peace a very productive time.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

MEDICARE ADVANTAGE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, late last week the Obama administration proposed yet another round of drastic cuts to a popular Medicare program used by millions—millions—of American seniors. Not surprisingly, they did it quietly, in the hopes that these latest cuts to Medicare Advantage would somehow get lost in what folks around here call the “Friday news dump.” But the American people are not easily fooled.

The far left has always hated Medicare Advantage. It is a program that offends them ideologically because it offers more market-based choices to seniors than traditional Medicare. But the left's prodding is not the only reason the Obama administration has already cut this successful program so deeply, and why now it plans to cut it even deeper.

The hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of cuts that Washington Democrats want to impose on Medicare Advantage—cuts that will cause millions of seniors to lose access to doctors and face higher premiums—are basically all to fund ObamaCare.

Some folks might describe this as “robbing Peter to pay Paul.” But I have a better analogy: It is like ripping parts off a Cadillac to patch up a Pinto. America's seniors actually understand this.

Our constituents like—they like—the choices Medicare Advantage offers. And they do not like ObamaCare. That is why seniors from all across Kentucky have written to protest this misguided policy.

Jack and Alda Rice from Fairdale wrote that Medicare Advantage has been there for them when they needed it, and that it is “tough for seniors to have to find new doctors, especially for those who live in rural areas. It means traveling greater distances and spending more on gas.”

“It is a sad thing,” they wrote, “when good doctors leave a plan because of funding cuts.”

Ronald and Linda Baynum from Edgewood wrote that they “[found] it appalling” that money that was put away for senior citizens is now being used for things like ObamaCare. “It

seems like most politicians are only working for themselves instead of the people,” they wrote.

Well, look, they have every right to be frustrated. I mean, why on Earth would we want to ruin one program that is helping people in order to fund another that is causing them so much pain? The question answers itself.

That is why I, along with Senators CORNYN, THUNE, BARRASSO, MORAN, and BLUNT sent a letter to the administration today—to express our deep concerns with these proposed cuts to Medicare Advantage and other proposals that would increase premiums, reduce choices, and cause America's seniors to lose access to the health plans they were promised they could keep. Our letter asks the administration to act within the bounds of the law to limit the negative impact these misguided policies would have on seniors.

It is notable that even some of our friends on the other side of the aisle seem to understand the pain all of this is causing. That is why 19—19—Senate Democrats recently signed a bipartisan letter with 21 Republicans that called on the administration to mitigate the impact of these cuts to Medicare Advantage. We appreciate Democratic support on any issue. It is good when they acknowledge the senselessness of cutting one successful program to fund a failed one, of cuts that will make it even harder for America's seniors to keep the benefits, plans, and doctors of their choice. But, frankly, it is hard to believe they are really being serious on this one. That is because nearly every one of these Senators voted for ObamaCare, the very law that imposed the same cuts they are now railing against. Nearly every single one of them voted later to keep these cuts in place.

Senator HATCH proposed an amendment that would have reversed ObamaCare's cuts to Medicare Advantage. It only failed because nearly every Democratic Senator voted against it. So Washington Democrats had their chance for a mulligan. They took a pass. They actually cannot have it both ways. Signing on to some letter will not absolve them of responsibility now. It will not erase the fact that even when they were given a second chance to help American's seniors, many voted a second time to take a whack at Medicare.

Let's not forget that these folks and their allies are basically the same ones—the very same ones—who promised up and down that Americans could keep their health care plans that they had and they liked, under ObamaCare—a promise that was voted the “Lie of the Year” in 2013. So Americans are not about to be taken in on the latest ObamaCare spin.

Let's be honest. The only realistic solution is to undo the damage altogether by starting over with real reform. That means replacing

ObamaCare and its more than \$700 billion in Medicare cuts—cuts imposed solely to fund ObamaCare—and replacing that with bipartisan reforms that can actually help struggling middle-class Americans.

I urge the Democrats to follow the lead of one prominent Senate Democrat who said just the other day he would vote tomorrow—vote tomorrow—to repeal ObamaCare. If he is serious about what he said, that means he is finally listening to the American people instead of the party bosses in Washington. If more of his colleagues on the other side of the aisle would only do the same, we could finally move forward with real patient-centered health reform; we could finally do away with the practice of raiding Medicare to fund ObamaCare; we could finally be done with the hurt this law is imposing on men and women all across our country—college graduates, moms, dads, small business women, constituents who struggle every day just to get by, and, of course, millions, literally millions of seniors. Republicans are on their side. We agree with them that ObamaCare is a law that just does not work, and we agree with them that now is not the time to impose higher costs and reduce choices for senior citizens, as the partisan ObamaCare law proposes.

I know the authors of this law may have had good intentions, but now is the time for them to admit past mistakes and to work with Republicans in a bipartisan fashion to remedy these errors before even more people get hurt by ObamaCare.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11:05 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

MOODY NOMINATION

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I wish to speak about a friend of mine and a Presidential nominee to be on the Federal bench in Arkansas. I will take 3 to 5 minutes. I know there are others who want to speak.

Today I rise to support the nomination of Judge James Moody—whom in

Arkansas we call Jay Moody—to be a Federal judge in the Eastern District of Arkansas. Jay has been a phenomenal judge and lawyer for a long time in Arkansas.

One of the things this nomination illustrates to me and I think also brings home to people around the country is that this body should not play games with the third branch of government. We have our own issues. This body can be dysfunctional and highly partisan. Let's not export that to the judiciary. We have a fine man who has offered his services to be a Federal judge.

If you look at what I like to look at, Is he well qualified? Yes, absolutely. Everyone agrees on that. Can he be fair and impartial? That is what you want in a judge. The answer is yes, he can be very fair and impartial. He has demonstrated that as a member of the Arkansas bench for a long time now.

Also, especially in a district court position, does he have the right judicial temperament? I think every person who has ever dealt with Judge Jay Moody will say that he not only has the right temperament, but he meets and exceeds all of these criteria across the board. He is exactly the kind of judge we should all want.

In fact, there is no reason why Judge Moody was not confirmed back in December. He should have been. But for the wrangling here in the Senate, but for the problems we have had in the Senate in the last several months, he would be a Federal judge today, and he should be a Federal judge today. In fact, 2 weeks ago I came to the floor and asked for consent that we go ahead and just confirm him by unanimous consent, but that was not granted.

Since 2003 Jay Moody has served as a circuit judge—that is a trial court judge in Arkansas—for the Sixth Judicial District, which is the Little Rock area. He previously worked at the Wright, Lindsey & Jennings law firm, which is one of the most prestigious firms in the State. It is a very well-known law firm. It is highly professional, has a great reputation. He became a partner there in 1994, just a few years after he joined the firm. He also spent time as an adjunct professor at the University of Arkansas Bowen School of Law, where he earned his J.D. He is also a member of a number of different lawyer groups and associations—at least he was before he entered the bench.

I could spend 20 minutes talking about his qualifications, talking about what a fine nominee and fine selection Jay Moody is to be a district court judge in the Eastern District of Arkansas, but, honestly, this turns out to be a no-brainer, so I am not going to belabor his qualifications and why we should do this other than to say that I know I am tired—and I think people all over the country are also tired—of the gridlock here in Washington. They

look at a State such as Arkansas where we have eight Federal district court judges and we have two vacancies. These vacancies should have been filled back in December. There is no reason why they should not. But they have been working under 75 percent horsepower now for months. We could have fixed that back in December, but because of the wrangling here in the Senate and in Washington, that was not done.

Today is the day we can rectify that. Today is the day we can confirm Judge Moody to be on the Federal bench.

I think we can all be very proud of this nomination. Again, he is exactly what we would all want in a Federal judge. That is confirmed by talking to lawyers in Arkansas. It does not matter if you are a criminal or civil lawyer; it does not matter if you are a plaintiff's lawyer or a defense lawyer; everybody agrees he will be a great Federal judge.

One of his old law partners, the managing partner of Wright, Lindsey & Jennings, Ed Lowther, told me one time—I said: How is Jay Moody on the bench? Of course, we all knew him as a lawyer. How is he on the bench? He paid one of the best compliments a lawyer can pay to a judge. He said, "He gets his work done." Can we really ask for any more than that? He gets his work done. He takes care of it.

In fact, it is almost uncanny when you look at the very difficult, high-profile, complicated cases that come to the trial court level in Pulaski County Circuit Court. Again, that is our trial court there in Little Rock. Almost always, he is the one who ends up with the case. Not only do the lawyers love him and appreciate him, but also his colleagues obviously have a lot of respect, and they often hand off the more difficult cases to Judge Moody.

In fact, I heard a conversation here on the floor just 2 or 3 weeks ago. My colleague, Senator BOOZMAN of Arkansas, is supportive of this nominee and has been helping push this nominee through the process. He went to the Judiciary Committee—by the way, this nomination has come through the Judiciary Committee not once but twice. Senator BOOZMAN helped push him through the Judiciary Committee, helped get him to the floor, and has talked to his Republican colleagues. I overheard a conversation the other day where Senator BOOZMAN was talking to Leader MCCONNELL. JOHN BOOZMAN turned to Senator MCCONNELL and said, "MITCH, this guy is great." He said, "You could not have picked someone better had you picked him yourself." That is really Jay Moody in a nutshell.

With that, I would like to ask my colleagues to vote for this nomination today. I believe we will vote in about 30 to 45 minutes. I am not sure exactly what time we start. But I ask my colleagues to support this nomination.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JOHANNIS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, last Friday we heard that the health care law is scheduled to deliver yet another blow to Americans. The administration released a proposal that would significantly cut Medicare Advantage.

Medicare Advantage is a very well-received program. It offers private plan options for seniors on Medicare. Nearly 30 percent of Medicare beneficiaries voluntarily choose to enroll in Medicare Advantage because it offers extra benefits, it offers lower costs, more flexibility, and better care coordination than the traditional Medicare program.

This program, Medicare Advantage, has been very well received in the State of Nebraska. About 35,000 Nebraskans are enrolled in Medicare Advantage.

An analysis notes that further cuts to Medicare Advantage would “disproportionately affect beneficiaries with low incomes, including the 41 percent of enrollees with incomes below \$20,000.”

This announcement is absolutely no surprise; the health care law has siphoned over \$700 billion from Medicare—not to strengthen the program but to pay for ObamaCare; \$308 billion of those cuts come from Medicare Advantage, again disproportionately affecting beneficiaries with low incomes, including 41 percent who are trying to live on incomes below \$20,000.

The reality is these cuts will likely mean fewer benefits and higher out-of-pocket costs for seniors who can't afford that. Plans could drop out of the market all together or seniors could find out that their trusted doctor will no longer be covered by their plan. We have already started to see the consequences.

Since the passage of ObamaCare, the number of Medicare Advantage plans available to seniors has not been strengthened. In fact, they have been reduced from 48 in 2009 to now 20.

In rural areas, seniors have fewer choices. The plans available have dropped from 36 to 13, according to a Kaiser analysis.

Another study estimates about 526,000 of current 2013 Medicare Advantage enrollees will have to make some changes because their plan is not available in 2014.

How do these consequences match up with the President's promises? Well,

they don't. The President spoke about Medicare, and he said: “Don't worry; I am not going to touch it”—or his promise: If you like your plan, you can keep it, which an independent fact checker has called the lie of the year.

The Medicare Advantage issues unraveling today are symbolic of the broader problems with the law. The math doesn't add up, and the promises aren't kept. Nearly every week it seems the authors and supporters of this law are trying to bury their past. They are trying to create hollow promises. They are trying to get around misleading statements and hide behind a new position, at least until the November elections are over.

It is remarkable that they are perfectly willing to evade the key pillars of this law. The law's employer mandate has been ignored and delayed. Mandated plan benefits aren't required for another year, and deadlines are conveniently rescheduled—to when? Until after the election.

This time around 19 Democratic Senators have joined a number of Republicans in writing the Medicare administrator saying the administration's Medicare Advantage cuts “create disruption and confusion” and “inhibit plans from driving the innovation that has resulted in better care and improved outcomes for Medicare beneficiaries.”

What is so contradictory is that these same individuals voted against amendments offered by Senator HATCH, twice, during the health care law debate that would have struck ObamaCare's Medicare Advantage cuts. They twice voted against that.

Understanding the consequences of these Medicare Advantage cuts before the law was passed would seem like the responsible course of action. But rejecting these amendments, voting for a bill that cuts over \$300 billion for Medicare Advantage, then backpedaling when the politics get tough, and when the cuts become real to everyday folks, apparently, they were for the cuts before they were against the cuts.

It is even more frustrating when you consider that recent efforts to dodge these cuts are only part of the story. For the past few years, the Obama administration has been pumping money back into Medicare Advantage under the guise of a so-called demonstration program that the Government Accountability Office says they probably don't even have the authority to run. GAO asserted that HHS should terminate the demonstration program, but the administration flat-out ignored that.

The real purpose of the \$8 billion program was to effectively mask the health care law's significant cuts to Medicare Advantage until when? After the November election. It is just another example of the administration's hiding their poor decisions and then re-

writing the law as they see fit. But as this new Medicare notice clearly shows, this phony demonstration project is about to run out and our senior citizens are truly caught.

Our taxpayers deserve a government that is held accountable for its actions. Americans are tired of temporary fixes and lip service. They are rightfully demanding the truth. It is time for my friends across the aisle to own up to the devastating consequences of this law and acknowledge it is time to repeal it.

During the debate, Republicans also supported an amendment to ensure Medicare savings were invested back into Medicare, not used to back ObamaCare. Remarkably, nearly everyone on the Democratic side of the aisle rejected that idea. Republicans are still committed to that principle, and we stand ready to work on ensuring the Medicare Program is accessible, that it is flexible, and that it is cost-efficient for seniors today and for our grandchildren in the decades to come.

Taking money out of Medicare to finance ObamaCare was wrong and it needs to stop. That is a promise worth delivering on.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss the pain ObamaCare continues to inflict on Americans. It seems like every week brings more ObamaCare bad news for somebody—families, businesses, middle-income Americans, lower income Americans. This past week the bad news was for seniors.

On Friday the Obama administration announced its planned 2015 cuts to Medicare Advantage—cuts that were dictated by ObamaCare and will result in higher prices and fewer choices for millions of American seniors. More than 15 million seniors—close to 30 percent of all Medicare recipients—are enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans. The Wall Street Journal reports that approximately one out of every two new Medicare enrollees chooses Medicare Advantage.

Medicare Advantage offers seniors a chance to pick a plan that is right for them instead of a one-size-fits-all approach. Advantage plans also frequently offer important health supplements, such as dental, vision, hearing, and wellness benefits, as well as smaller copays or deductibles. Studies also show that Medicare Advantage Program enrollees receive better care and

experience better health outcomes than seniors enrolled in traditional fee-for-service Medicare.

Despite the benefits these plans offer to seniors, Democrats and the President supported Medicare Advantage cuts in the President's health care law. In 2010, the President and Democrats paid—or I should say tried to pay—for ObamaCare by, among other things, cutting more than \$700 billion from Medicare—already, I might add, on its way to bankruptcy—to pay for yet a new entitlement for nonseniors. More than \$300 billion of those cuts were targeted specifically at the Medicare Advantage Program.

Those cuts are kicking in this year, hitting Medicare Advantage beneficiaries with cost increases and benefit cuts of up to \$70 per month—no small amount for a senior on a fixed income. Friday's announcement of further steep cuts for 2015 could mean up to an additional \$75 per month in increased cost next year.

But that is not all. Cost hikes are bad enough, but this year's cuts and the 2015 cuts announced Friday will result in a host of other problems for seniors who participate in Medicare Advantage. First and foremost, some seniors will lose their plans entirely as a result of ObamaCare's cuts, breaking the President's promise that if you like your plan you can keep it.

The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that more than one-half million seniors will lose their current plans in 2014. If the 2015 cuts go into effect, even more seniors will lose their plans next year. Seniors will also have fewer plan choices as a result of ObamaCare's raiding Medicare Advantage to pay for a new health care entitlement program. If next year's cuts go into effect, we can expect to see even more reductions.

These higher costs and reductions in available Medicare Advantage plans will disproportionately impact low-income seniors in rural areas, areas such as those I represent in South Dakota. Forty-one percent of those seniors in Medicare Advantage plans have annual incomes of less than \$20,000 and are least able to bear the higher costs forced on them by ObamaCare. Yet it is precisely those seniors who are bearing the greatest burden when it comes to paying for ObamaCare.

On top of that, reports indicate that plans are responding to the cuts by reducing their footprint in rural markets, giving these seniors fewer options when it comes to choosing a health care plan.

Finally, similar to so many other Americans suffering under ObamaCare, seniors on a Medicare Advantage plan may no longer be able to keep the doctors they have and like thanks to these cuts. Between Medicare cuts and the new ObamaCare tax insurance companies are facing this year, companies are

scrambling for ways to be able to afford to continue their plans. Frequently their only option is to narrow their networks of doctors and hospitals or raise their copayments and deductibles, thus reducing seniors' choices and increasing their health care costs.

Republicans have long touted the quality care and patient choice offered by Medicare Advantage plans. When the health care bill was being considered in 2010, we warned at the time that Medicare cuts being proposed in the bill would hurt seniors, damage Medicare Advantage, and weaken a program already hastening toward bankruptcy. Despite this, Democrats not only supported the health care bill, they also voted twice against measures to repeal the law's cuts to Medicare Advantage.

Now it seems many Democrats have changed their minds. Earlier this month, 19 Democratic Senators, most of whom voted for ObamaCare in 2010, joined a number of Republicans in sending a letter to Marilyn Tavenner, Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, urging her not to cut Medicare Advantage. Let's hope it is not too little too late.

Democrats' support for the Medicare Advantage letter to the CMS Administrator reflects their increasing unease with their support for ObamaCare. Once they planned to tout ObamaCare to voters as a legislative triumph, but Democrats up for reelection now can't run away from the law fast enough.

In fact, the President has repeatedly delayed parts of the health care law to give Democrats political cover. Each delay is a tacit admission that, yes, this law will hurt jobs and the economy because, after all, if this law is not going to hurt jobs and the economy, why do we have to continually delay it? The latest number is somewhere in the twenties. I have heard 24, 27, and 28 different delays of the harmful effects and impacts of ObamaCare.

If the health care law is the panacea the American people were promised, Democrats and the President would be working to implement the law faster, not slow it down.

The only possible reason to delay the law is because its implementation is going to hurt. It is a little awkward when your signature legislation has to be repeatedly delayed to give the folks who voted for it a better chance of keeping their jobs.

Unfortunately, the President doesn't seem to have learned his lesson. Not content with the damage his health care law is doing to an already struggling economy—a recent CBO report warned that the health care law may result in up to 2.5 million fewer full-time workers—he continues to push policies that will further weaken an already sluggish economy, such as a minimum wage bill that CBO reports would result in up to 1 million fewer jobs.

At a time when our labor force participation rate is at Jimmy Carter-era lows, a law that would further reduce the number of full-time workers is one of the worst possible things we could do for our economy. People working produces economic growth. The fewer people working, the less likely we are to produce the kind of growth we need to pull our economy out of the slump it has been in throughout the President's administration. What we need right now are policies that will create jobs and encourage businesses to expand and invest in our economy and in our workers.

If the President were really serious about reversing the economic stagnation of the past 5 years, he wouldn't be pushing his health care bill or a minimum wage hike. Instead, he would be calling the Senate majority leader and urging him to take up and pass trade promotion authority, which will create thousands of jobs for American workers. He would sign off on the Keystone Pipeline and the 42,000-plus jobs it would support. He would join bipartisan majorities in both Houses of Congress to support a repeal of the job-destroying medical device tax in his health care law, a tax that has already cost more than 33,000 jobs.

American families and workers are hurting. They have been hit hard by ObamaCare and the Obama economy. It is time for the President to give them some help.

I would argue there are bipartisan issues out there. The trade promotion authority, repealing the medical device tax, and the Keystone Pipeline have broad bipartisan majorities here in the Senate. We had a vote a year ago on the budget on repealing the medical device tax, and 79 Senators, including 30 Democrats, voted for that. The last time we had a vote here on the Keystone Pipeline, 62 voted in support of it, again representing broad bipartisan support for that initiative. We know the trade promotion authority is something that enjoys support from both Republicans and Democrats. All of these initiatives enjoy broad bipartisan support and are known job creators. Those are the types of things we ought to be focused on, not things that, according to the Congressional Budget Office, are going to cost more jobs.

Implementation of ObamaCare, according to the CBO report a couple weeks ago, will reduce the number of workers in this country by 2.5 million over the next decade. It also said it would reduce overall wages by about 1 percent. So that is fewer jobs and lower take-home pay.

Last week we had the report come out from the Congressional Budget Office that raising the minimum wage could cost up to 1 million jobs at the same time it is raising prices. So the very people we are trying to help are going to have fewer jobs and higher

costs. How does that solve the problems our economy faces? How does that get people in this country back to work? How does that grow and expand our economy in a way that creates greater opportunity for middle-class families?

There are things we can do on which there is broad bipartisan support that are known job creators, that are known to expand and grow our economy. I would add to that list as well reforming our Tax Code. We have lost so much in terms of economic growth in the past few years since the recession and coming out of that recession because we have had subpar growth. We haven't seen the type of growth rates we normally see and experience coming out of a recession during a recovery. As a consequence, we have much larger deficits because when the economy is growing at a sluggish, anemic, slow rate, it means there are fewer people working, fewer people investing, fewer people making money, and therefore fewer people paying taxes. We need the opposite. We need a growing, expanding, vibrant, dynamic economy fueled by policies in Washington, DC, that make it less expensive and less difficult to create jobs rather than more expensive and more difficult, which is what we see coming out of the Obama administration and the Democratic majority here in the Senate.

We can do better. We must do better for the American people, for middle-class families who have been hit hard by the effects and the impacts of this economy with fewer jobs, lower take-home pay, higher premiums, higher deductibles, and fewer choices of doctors and hospitals under ObamaCare. These policies are hurting the American people. We need to put policies in place that will help the American people by growing our economy and creating more jobs for middle-class Americans.

I yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JAMES MAXWELL MOODY, JR., TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of James Maxwell Moody, Jr., of Arkansas, to be United

States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11:15 a.m. will be equally divided and controlled in the usual form.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

JUDGE WILLIAM K. SESSIONS III

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, for almost two decades Judge William Sessions has served as a Federal judge for the District of Vermont. Last month Judge Sessions announced he would take senior status later this year. I have worked with Senator SANDERS, Representative WELCH, and the Vermont Bar Association to convene a merit commission to find highly qualified candidates to serve on the Vermont District Court so I can then recommend them to the President.

I know I speak on behalf of all Vermonters, no matter what their background, when I thank Judge Sessions for his years of distinguished public service and applaud him for agreeing to continue his judicial service even after he takes senior status this summer. Because of his continued dedication, Vermont will have one of the most highly respected and extraordinarily capable jurists on the Federal bench. I am proud to call Judge Sessions my friend, and I am honored to have cast my vote to confirm his nomination 18 years ago.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD at the completion of my remarks a Rutland Herald article written by Brent Curtis that recounts his many accomplishments.

There are only two authorized district judgeships in Vermont. We are the second smallest State in the Union. So, when President Clinton asked for my recommendation to fill a vacancy in my native State, I did not take this task lightly. I knew the people of Vermont deserved a judge with integrity, intelligence, and fairness, somebody whom anybody could go before—plaintiff or defendant, rich or poor, no matter their political background—and know they would have a fair hearing.

During my time in private practice as a litigant and then as State's attorney in Vermont, I experienced firsthand the tradition of legal excellence we have in Vermont. I know many Vermont lawyers who are among the best this country has to offer, and Bill Sessions earned a reputation as one of the finest trial lawyers in the State. He was widely respected by prosecutors and defense lawyers, and by the plain-

tiff and defense bars alike. He was praised by those who had been his co-counsel, by State and Federal judges and prosecutors, and even by those who had been his opposing counsel in court. It was a privilege to submit his name to the White House for nomination to the U.S. District Court. At the time, I told President Clinton this would be one nomination he would never have to question his judgment in making because he would have somebody who would always serve the country so well. The Senate confirmed him unanimously on August 11, 1995.

Judge Sessions received his B.A. from Middlebury College in 1969. Upon his graduation with honors from the George Washington University Law School in 1972, Judge Sessions served his country in the U.S. Army from 1972 to 1977 and in active service from 1972 to 1973. He also served as a law clerk to another friend of mine, Judge Hilton Dier of the Addison County District Court. Before his service on the Federal bench, Judge Sessions contributed to his community as an adjunct professor at Vermont Law School; in private practice; as the executive director of the Addison County Youth Services Bureau; and as a public defender in Addison County, VT.

During his years of service on the Federal bench, Judge Sessions has worked tirelessly to ensure that all those who come before him are treated fairly and with dignity. He is a judge who has taken seriously his commitment to both justice and the American people. He served for many years as a member of the Judicial Conference, composed of the leaders of the Federal judiciary.

Judge Sessions also served for a decade on the U.S. Sentencing Commission, eventually serving as its Chairman. Three Presidents, both Democratic and Republican, nominated him to this Commission, and the Senate confirmed him unanimously each time. As a commissioner, Judge Sessions made deeply significant contributions to American sentencing policy. He played an important role in the reduction of the sentencing disparity for crack and powder cocaine offenses. He has done vital work to improve the Federal Sentencing Guidelines. This was especially important following a number of Supreme Court cases that gave judges more discretion in the sentences they impose. Even after his time on the Sentencing Commission, Judge Sessions continued to work for better sentencing policy, publishing an article in a journal of the University of Virginia School of Law that explained how the three branches of government could work together to improve sentencing in America.

Judge Sessions has not forgotten what it is to be a Vermonter. He still finds time on weekends to be at farmers markets around Vermont. He is a

familiar face at the booth for Blue Ledge Farm, a small Vermont dairy started by his daughter, Hannah, and son-in-law, Greg. I think of a picture of him holding a grandchild in one hand and making change for one of the customers with the other.

He is one of our country's most respected jurists. He is a lawyer's lawyer and a judge's judge. Marcelle and I think of him and Abi, his wife, as dear personal friends.

Our justice system has benefited a great deal from Judge Sessions' years of service. I thank Judge Sessions for all he has done as a Federal judge. I thank him for continuing to serve as a model jurist.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Rutland Herald, Feb. 16, 2014]

SESSIONS REFLECTS ON YEARS ON AND OFF
THE BENCH

(By Brent Curtis)

U.S. District Judge William K. Sessions III will shift to senior status.

Long before he was making decisions in a courtroom, federal Judge William Sessions III was working to keep people out of them.

With only months remaining before he shifts to senior status in June, Sessions, who turned 67 this month, can look back over two decades of rulings that carried both constitutional and criminal ramifications.

But before he was tapped by President Bill Clinton to serve as a federal judge in Vermont in 1995, and before he began a career as a trial lawyer and civil rights practitioner in the 1970s, Sessions was a teacher and an advocate to troubled youth and prison inmates.

After earning a bachelor's degree from Middlebury College in 1969, Sessions went to Washington, D.C., to attend the George Washington University Law School.

Before his legal studies began, he volunteered to be a reading and math teacher to inmates in the Washington, D.C., prison system.

"It was a profound experience for me," Sessions said in an interview. "I was nervous and scared but I learned how to relate with these guys and I learned and loved their stories, and decided at that point I wanted to work with kids and young people."

He added, "I had this unbelievably moving experience and then the question was 'How do I get involved in helping young people so they don't end up in places like prison?'"

His initial work toward that goal was to open a youth center for delinquent and troubled kids in Middlebury. But when a job as a public defender opened up in the mid 1970s, Sessions said he seized the opportunity and spent the next two decades blending his humanitarian and legal passions.

FOCUSED ON LAW

With that kind of background, the role of a judge—whose job it is to remain impartial during often emotionally and politically charged proceedings—might seem too restrictive.

But Sessions said that, like all judges, he has strived to suppress his biases and focus on the law and the legal questions that have come before him.

The one area where he said his humanitarianism shows in the courtroom is in the courtesy he strives to show to everyone who stands before him.

"I love treating people with respect," he said. "In this courtroom, I take a great deal of pride in seeing that a little bit of Vermont takes place in the courtroom. . . . Each defendant is treated respectfully. I think that's how people treat each other in Vermont."

He has also tried to look beyond a person's crime to consider variables about their risk to commit future offenses, their rehabilitative needs including mental health and substance abuse and the message that a potential sentence might send to the broader public.

"I would say that I look closely at the nature of the crime and whether they're taking responsibility for it," he said. "In all the studies I've read, if someone is accountable for their crime, they're much less likely to re-offend."

"On the other hand, I feel really strongly that human characteristics, the need for rehabilitation and the need to protect society by addressing those issues that a particular defendant has are also important," the judge added.

Over the years, Sessions has heard countless criminal cases, including the first death penalty case in the state in more than half a century. In that case, involving convicted murderer Donald Fell, Sessions ruled in 2002 that the Federal Death Penalty Act of 1994 was unconstitutional. The 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals later reversed that ruling and an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court wasn't taken up by the justices. Because Fell's case remains under appeal, Sessions said he is unable to discuss it.

Sessions also served for 11 years on the U.S. Sentencing Commission which was established to address disparities in criminal sentencing.

Politics surrounds the group, with congressmen split over whether they wanted to create it in 1999 and insistence among legislators that the commissions members be made up equally of judges nominated by conservatives and liberals.

JUDGES UNITED

But the agendas of the politicians who created the commission didn't enter into the work of the judges who Sessions said were routinely united in their opinions on changes designed to make sentencing guidelines and outcomes more uniform from state to state.

And in no arena were the judges more in agreement, he said, than in their work on addressing the disparities in sentencing for those guilty of possessing crack cocaine.

Prior to the commission's work on crack cocaine sentences, a 100-to-1 disparity existed between sentencing for crack and powder cocaine.

A defendant guilty of possessing 5 grams of crack cocaine faced a five-year minimum sentence while a person would have to possess 500 grams of powder cocaine to receive the same punishment.

"It stemmed from a fear in the 1980s that crack cocaine was a devastating drug that was much more serious than powder cocaine," Sessions said. "So the penalties were extraordinarily high. Five grams of cocaine is an extraordinarily small amount."

After it became clear that there wasn't much difference between crack and powder in terms of ill effects, and after it became clear that those being sentenced for crack cocaine possession were disproportionately black people, Sessions said it became obvious to all the judges on the commission that their first task needed to be a change to the crack sentencing guidelines.

"We went around the room and we were each asked what we wanted to change first

and the judges unanimously spoke of changing the crack versus powder cocaine disparity," he said. "The reason really stems not only out of the criminal justice system but on the impact on minority communities in the country."

In 2004, the commission changed the sentencing guidelines for crack cocaine possession and in 2010 Congress passed changes to the required amount someone must possess to receive a minimum five or 10-year jail sentence.

The changes were made retroactively and had the effect, on average, of reducing jail sentences for crack cocaine possession by three years.

"That meant that 20,000 people in prison were resentenced for crack cocaine and many were released immediately," Sessions said, calculating that about 25 cases in Vermont were affected by the sentencing change.

NATIONAL IMPACT

Beyond the criminal cases, Sessions has decided a number of cases with weighty constitutional import.

Thanks to being in a small state with just two federal judges, Sessions said he has received a disproportionate amount of cases with potential national ramifications over the years.

One of the most far reaching cases he's decided was a 2007 case in which he ruled in favor of Vermont, New York and a number of environmental groups in a case involving several automobile manufacturers.

The case was based on regulations passed in California and then adopted in Vermont and New York that sought to reduce automobile emissions by establishing higher mileage requirements for new cars.

"(The auto manufacturers) sued in each of the circuits and our case came up first," Sessions said. "It was a question of whether it was a requirement that was justified constitutionally."

Car manufacturers argued that the changes would have a severe impact on the industry and they argued that global warming hadn't been established.

Over the course of a six-week trial, Sessions heard from dozens of witnesses before issuing a 350-page decision that upheld the state's regulations.

"I've been told it's in textbooks on environmental law," he said.

The shift to senior status will likely reduce Sessions' workload, as a new federal judge will be appointed to the district. But while he said he's looking forward to time with his four grandchildren and hiking and biking with his wife, the judge said he isn't thinking yet about slowing his work on the bench.

"I'm not planning on slowing down at all," he said. "At this point, I'm a pretty young guy. I'm going to be 67 this month, but I feel like 50."

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is currently considering the Moody nomination.

Mr. LEAHY. Is there a time agreement on the nomination?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has now expired.

Mr. LEAHY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of James Maxwell Moody, Jr., of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas?

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 95, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 39 Ex.]

YEAS—95

Alexander	Franken	Mikulski
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Moran
Baldwin	Graham	Murkowski
Barrasso	Grassley	Murphy
Begich	Hagan	Murray
Bennet	Harkin	Paul
Blumenthal	Hatch	Portman
Blunt	Heinrich	Pryor
Booker	Heitkamp	Reed
Boozman	Heller	Reid
Boxer	Hirono	Rockefeller
Brown	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Inhofe	Sanders
Cantwell	Isakson	Schatz
Cardin	Johanns	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Scott
Casey	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Chambliss	Kaine	Shaheen
Coats	King	Stabenow
Coburn	Kirk	Tester
Cochran	Klobuchar	Thune
Collins	Landrieu	Toomey
Coons	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Corker	Lee	Udall (NM)
Cornyn	Levin	Vitter
Cruz	Manchin	Walsh
Donnelly	Markey	Warner
Durbin	McCain	Warren
Enzi	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Feinstein	McConnell	Wicker
Fischer	Menendez	Wyden
Flake	Merkeley	

NAYS—4

Crapo	Roberts
Risch	Shelby

NOT VOTING—1

Nelson

The nomination was confirmed.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I am very pleased to express my strong support for two highly qualified nominees to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California:

Superior Court Judge Beth Freeman, and James Donato.

I recommended these candidates to President Obama after my bipartisan screening committee gave them both strong recommendations.

I am very pleased they will soon fill two longstanding vacancies in the Northern District of California.

Judge Freeman earned her law degree from Harvard Law School in 1979, and she served in the County Counsel's Office in San Mateo for 18 years.

She has spent the last 12 years on the San Mateo Superior Court, including as presiding judge and assistant presiding judge. She has presided over more than a thousand trials, and she has experience in both civil and criminal cases.

I have received letters of support for Judge Freeman from Don Horsley, president of the San Mateo Board of Supervisors and former chair of the County's Domestic Violence Council, and from Stephen Wagstaffe, San Mateo District Attorney.

These letters are strong endorsements for Judge Freeman, and I will simply quote what Mr. Wagstaffe said: "In 36 years as a prosecutor in San Mateo County, I have not seen a better judge in all respects than Judge Freeman."

That is very high praise, and I am pleased Judge Freeman soon will be confirmed and begin her service as a Federal judge in San Jose.

Let me now describe Jim Donato, who once confirmed will serve in San Francisco.

Mr. Donato earned his law degree from Stanford Law School where he was a Senior Editor of the Stanford Law Review. He clerked for Judge Procter Hug on the Ninth Circuit.

He served for 3 years in the City Attorney's Office in San Francisco. He has built a distinguished record over two decades as a private practitioner handling complex civil cases such as antitrust cases, at Cooley LLP and Shearman & Sterling LLP.

Complex civil experience is especially important in Northern California because the Northern District's docket is 84 percent civil, according to the most recent statistics.

Mr. Donato also is a leader in the San Francisco legal community where he has devoted much of his time to the Bar Association of San Francisco, including as its President in 2008.

I have great confidence Mr. Donato will be an outstanding federal district judge.

Let me close by noting that each of these nominees will fill a judicial vacancy that has been designated as a "judicial emergency" by the Judicial Conference of the United States.

The Northern District's weighted caseload per judgeship is over 13 percent above the national average. Filings per active judge are up 17 percent since 2008. In fact, it now takes 27 percent longer for a civil case to get to trial than it did in 2010.

The vacancy Judge Freeman would fill has existed for over 800 days. The vacancy Mr. Donato would fill has existed for over 500 days.

It is long past time for these seats to be filled. Indeed, each of these nominees should have been confirmed in 2013—but, unfortunately, each had to be renominated in this session and voted out of the Judiciary Committee for a second time. This wasted several months during which each could have been serving as a Federal Judge.

Nevertheless, I am very pleased that, today, Judge Freeman and Jim Donato will be confirmed and will be able to assume their duties shortly.

I urge my colleagues to support both of these fine nominees.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees prior to a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Donato nomination.

Who seeks recognition?

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the next nominee, James Donato of California, was originally nominated in June of 2013. He was voted out of the Judiciary Committee unanimously.

I have heard from my friends on the Republican side that we should be concerned about emergency vacancies. This is an emergency vacancy. He was reported out unanimously for the first time last October. He had to be reported out a second time this year—again, unanimously. He has the strong support of the two Senators from California. So holding up and having a filibuster and going through all of that on this nomination is the kind of game playing that hurts the Federal judiciary. It is almost like the efforts made by our friends on the other side in closing down the government last year, and this is just a slow way to close down the Federal judiciary.

I urge immediate consideration and confirmation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, may I direct a question through the Chair to the distinguished chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

Does the chairman of the committee think we should have a recorded vote on this?

Mr. LEAHY. I would be happy to have a voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time in opposition?

Mr. REID. No one is standing. I yield back the time.

Mr. HATCH. I yield back the time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the time is yielded back.

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of James Donato, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Robert Menendez, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard

Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of James Donato, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. HATCH (when his name was called). Present.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 40 Ex.]

YEAS—55

Baldwin	Harkin	Pryor
Begich	Heinrich	Reed
Bennet	Heitkamp	Reid
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rockefeller
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Sanders
Boxer	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Landrieu	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Collins	Markey	Udall (NM)
Coons	McCaskey	Walsh
Donnelly	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Feinstein	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Franken	Murkowski	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murphy	
Hagan	Murray	

NAYS—42

Alexander	Enzi	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Heller	Roberts
Chambliss	Hoeven	Rubio
Coats	Inhofe	Scott
Coburn	Isakson	Sessions
Cochran	Johanns	Shelby
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Cornyn	Kirk	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Cruz	McCain	Wicker

ANSWERED "PRESENT" —1

Hatch

NOT VOTING—2

Levin Nelson

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 55, the nays are 42, 1 Senator voting "present." The motion is agreed to.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, Chairman LEAHY has told me that he has no need for a rollcall vote. I would hope others would also agree.

NOMINATION OF JAMES DONATO TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of James Donato, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time is yielded back. There will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, for the benefit of the people of this country who have been listening to the complaints in the Senate from Senators about not approving judges, let me remind everybody that at this point we have approved over 220 judges appointed by this President. Only two have been disapproved. That is more than 99 percent.

As far as the second term of this administration is concerned, I want to say that after the Senate confirms the three district court judges we will approve today, we will have confirmed 50 of President Obama's judicial nominees during his second term. Up to this point in President Bush's second term, the Senate had confirmed only 21. So that is 50 to 21 as far as the production of this Congress for approving judges.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I have deep respect for my friend the senior Senator from Iowa. But he has been listening to himself talk too much and he is starting to believe it. Everyone knows we are in this situation because the Republicans are slow-walking every nomination—every nomination. There is no reason, no reason whatsoever, that we are having votes on cloture on these judges, as Senator LEAHY pointed out earlier, reported out unanimously.

It is a waste of the taxpayers' time to go through the process we have been going through. We are going to continue working to move the backlog. We have scores of judges, district court judges, and we have a number of circuit court judges. We are going to, in the near future, file cloture on all of them. If that is what the Republicans want us to do, then that is what we will do. The American people will see the colossal waste of time we have been going through, not only on district court judges but circuit court judges and all nominations.

I would suggest to my friend the senior Senator from Iowa he not believe his own words because they are simply not true.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of James Donato, of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of California?

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. REID. I announce that the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHN-SON), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER) would have voted "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 90, nays 5, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 41 Ex.]

YEAS—90

Alexander	Gillibrand	Mikulski
Ayotte	Graham	Moran
Baldwin	Grassley	Murkowski
Barrasso	Hagan	Murphy
Begich	Harkin	Murray
Bennet	Hatch	Paul
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Portman
Booker	Heitkamp	Pryor
Boozman	Heller	Reed
Boxer	Hirono	Reid
Brown	Hoeven	Rockefeller
Burr	Inhofe	Rubio
Cantwell	Isakson	Sanders
Cardin	Johanns	Schatz
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Schumer
Casey	Kaine	Scott
Chambliss	King	Sessions
Coats	Kirk	Shaheen
Coburn	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cochran	Landrieu	Tester
Collins	Leahy	Thune
Coons	Lee	Toomey
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (CO)
Cruz	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	Markey	Vitter
Enzi	McCain	Walsh
Feinstein	McCaskey	Warren
Fischer	McConnell	Whitehouse
Flake	Menendez	Wicker
Franken	Merkley	Wyden

NAYS—5

Blunt	Risch	Shelby
Crapo	Roberts	

NOT VOTING—5

Corker	Johnson (SD)	Warner
Durbin	Nelson	

The nomination was confirmed.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees prior to a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Freeman nomination.

Who yields time?

If no one yields time, time will be charged equally.

Mr. COATS. I yield back the remaining time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Beth Labson Freeman, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Robert Menendez, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Beth Labson Freeman, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. HATCH (when his name was called). Present.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 56, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 42 Ex.]

YEAS—56

Baldwin	Harkin	Murray
Begich	Heinrich	Pryor
Bennet	Heitkamp	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reid
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Boxer	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Landrieu	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Levin	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Markey	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	McCaskill	Walsh
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Feinstein	Merkley	Warren
Franken	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden
Hagan	Murphy	

NAYS—42

Alexander	Coats	Enzi
Ayotte	Coburn	Fischer
Barrasso	Cochran	Flake
Blunt	Corker	Graham
Boozman	Cornyn	Grassley
Burr	Crapo	Heller
Chambliss	Cruz	Hoeben

Inhofe	McConnell	Scott
Isakson	Moran	Sessions
Johanns	Paul	Shelby
Johnson (WI)	Portman	Thune
Kirk	Risch	Toomey
Lee	Roberts	Vitter
McCain	Rubio	Wicker

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Hatch

NOT VOTING—1

Nelson

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 56, the nays are 42, 1 Senator responded "present."

The motion is agreed to.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote on the motion to invoke cloture and the motion to proceed to S. 1982 now occur at 3:30 p.m. this afternoon and the time from 2:15 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Madam President, I have also spoken to the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, and he does not desire a rollcall vote on this next nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF BETH LABSON FREEMAN TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Beth Labson Freeman, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time is yielded back. There will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield back my time.

Mr. REID. As do we.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The yeas and nays are requested.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Beth Labson Freeman, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California?

The yeas and nays are ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) and

the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 91, nays 7, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 43 Ex.]

YEAS—91

Alexander	Franken	Moran
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baldwin	Graham	Murphy
Barrasso	Grassley	Murray
Begich	Hagan	Paul
Bennet	Harkin	Portman
Blumenthal	Hatch	Pryor
Blunt	Heinrich	Reed
Booker	Heitkamp	Reid
Boozman	Heller	Rubio
Boxer	Hirono	Sanders
Brown	Hoeben	Schatz
Burr	Isakson	Schumer
Cantwell	Johanns	Scott
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Sessions
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Shaheen
Casey	Kaine	Stabenow
Chambliss	King	Tester
Coburn	Klobuchar	Thune
Cochran	Landrieu	Toomey
Collins	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Coons	Lee	Udall (NM)
Corker	Levin	Vitter
Cornyn	Manchin	Walsh
Cruz	Markey	Warner
Donnelly	McCain	Warren
Durbin	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Feinstein	Menendez	Wyden
Fischer	Merkley	
Flake	Mikulski	

NAYS—7

Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Crapo	Risch	
Inhofe	Roberts	

NOT VOTING—2

Nelson	Rockefeller
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to thank the majority leader and the Democratic floor staff for taking the necessary steps to confirm the four judicial nominees we have just confirmed between last night and today. I am sure the people in Connecticut, Arkansas, and California are thankful that their districts now have judges to help alleviate the heavy caseload in those districts and that they will now be able to have their cases decided in a more expeditious manner.

There are 28 more judicial nominees still currently pending on the Executive Calendar in States such as Tennessee, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Washington, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, and Wisconsin.

I hope Senate Republicans will not continue to politicize the filling of judicial vacancies. Americans in those States want a functioning Federal judiciary at full capacity so they can seek and obtain justice in an expeditious manner.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I was regrettably unable to be present for vote number 41, the confirmation of James Donato to be a United States District Judge for the Northern District of California. I was happy to see that he was confirmed, and if I had been present, I would have voted yea on the nomination.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:59 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 3:30 p.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

If no one yields time, the time will be equally divided between both sides.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, every Veterans Day and every Memorial Day many of us, regardless of our political views, go out into our communities and we speak about our respect and admiration for the veterans of this country. As chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs for the last year, I have learned that regardless of political ideology, virtually all Members of the Congress in fact mean what they say and do understand and do appreciate the enormous sacrifices veterans and their families—and their families—have made for our Nation.

Sadly, everybody in this country knows we are living at a time when the Congress is virtually dysfunctional and partisanship runs rampant. But I have found on my committee and in the Congress as a whole that Members do understand the sacrifices made by the men and women who put their lives on the line and do, although we have differences of opinion, want to do the right thing to defend those who have defended us.

The good news is that President Obama and the Congress, in a bipartisan way, have made significant progress in addressing a number of the problems facing veterans in this country. The President's budgets have been generous and I think Congress has acted in a responsible way.

That is the good news. But the bad news is that we still have a very long way to go if we are to keep faith with those who have put their lives on the line to defend us. We have made progress, but we still have a long way to go. I hope very much that we will go down that road together and we will tell the American people that in the midst of all of the partisanship, all of the politics, at least on this one issue we can stand together and protect the interests of those people who have sacrificed so much for our country.

Congress cannot bring back to their families those who died in battle. As the Presiding Officer knows, just in the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, we have lost over 6,700 troops. Congress cannot restore the legs and the arms and the eyesight that roadside explosions have taken away from brave men and women. Congress cannot simply snap its fingers and magically cure the hundreds of thousands who returned from Iraq and Afghanistan with post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury or those who suffer from the pain and humiliation of sexual assault. As a nation, however, while we cannot magically solve those problems, we can in fact—and it is our responsibility, in fact—do everything we can to help ease and ameliorate the problems facing our veterans and their families. We can't solve it all—we know that—but we can go further in ameliorating some of the problems facing veterans and their families.

I will give my colleagues a few examples. Congress can help the 2,300 men and women who were looking forward to having families but who suffered reproductive injuries in Iraq and Afghanistan. I believe Senator MURRAY will come to the floor. She has long been a champion of this issue, as have been others. Let me give my colleagues one case out of 2,300: Army veteran Matt Keil of Colorado was wounded by sniper fire in Iraq in 2007. The sniper's round struck Matt's neck, causing severe damage to a vital artery and his spinal cord. Through sheer determination and with the love and resolve of his wife Tracy, Matt's condition improved. He and Tracy began to consider having children. Doctors assured them that having children could be possible with the help of in vitro fertilization. The Keil family paid more than \$30,000 for reproductive treatments. Congress can help the Keil family and others to ease that financial burden. That is a cost of war. We should be there for that family and for the other families who want the opportunity to have children.

Congress can help the tens of thousands of family members who every single day provide loving care for those who were severely injured in World War II, in Korea, in Vietnam, and in other wars. Let me give my colleagues another example.

In March of 1969, Miles Epling was on patrol in Vietnam when a booby trap

detonated, killing some of his fellow marines and leaving him without legs. He returned home to West Virginia in a wheelchair. From that point on, he has required around-the-clock help from those around him. His family provided that help without receiving any training, any assistance or any financial support.

Here is the very good news—and we should be very proud of this, in a bipartisan way, as a Congress: In 2010, 4 years ago, Congress passed a very strong and excellent caregivers program for post-9/11 veterans. It is a program that is working well in providing significant help to caregivers of those post-9/11 veterans. I want everybody to put themselves in the place of a wife or sister or mother or brother who around the clock—around the clock, 24/7, 365 days a year—is providing care to folks who have suffered serious injuries in one war or another. We provided support for those caregivers post-9/11, for Iraq and Afghanistan, but we did not do that for the other wars. Now is the time for us to expand the caregivers program for the families of all disabled veterans who are in the same position that Miles is in. That is the fair thing to do, that is the right thing to do, and that is included in this comprehensive piece of legislation.

Because we have the moral obligation to do the very best we can for veterans, the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee has brought forth comprehensive legislation that is strongly supported by virtually every veteran and military organization in the country. Today I thank the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Military Officers Association of America, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, the Gold Star Wives of America, and the dozens of other veterans organizations that are strongly supporting this comprehensive piece of legislation.

In their statement of support, the DAV writes:

This massive omnibus bill—

That is the bill that is going to be on the floor in a short period of time. The DAV writes:

This massive omnibus bill, unprecedented in our modern experience, would create, expand, advance, and extend a number of VA benefits, services and programs that are important to DAV and to our members. For example, responding to a call from DAV as a leading veterans organization, it would create a comprehensive family caregiver support program for all generations of severely wounded, injured and ill veterans. Also, the bill would authorize advance appropriations for VA's mandatory funding accounts to ensure that in any government shutdown environment in the future, veterans benefits payments would not be delayed or put in jeopardy. This measure also would provide additional financial support to survivors of servicemembers who die in the line of duty, as

well as expanded access for them to GI Bill educational benefits. A two-plus year stalemate in VA's authority to lease facilities for health care treatment and other purposes would be solved by this bill. These are but a few—

“A few”—

of the myriad provisions of this bill that would improve the lives, health, and prospects of veterans—especially the wounded, injured and ill—and their loved ones.

That is from the Disabled American Veterans. I thank them very much for their support. The truth is that we have letters of support that are similar in nature from dozens of other veterans organizations, and we thank them again for their support.

Madam President, may I ask the time situation—how much time each side has and how much time is remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority has 24 minutes remaining of the 35 minutes originally granted, and the minority has 35 minutes.

Mr. SANDERS. Very good.

What I would like to do now is yield to the former chairperson of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, somebody who has done an outstanding job for veterans. She has focused on one issue that I feel very strongly about; that is, the need to help those veterans who would like to have children but as a result of war wounds are unable to do so.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, would the Senator yield for a unanimous consent request?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized following the remarks of the Senator from Washington.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. I thank you, Madam President. And I thank the chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee for putting together this very good piece of legislation we are about to consider.

It is no secret that in our Nation's Capital we are sharply divided on any number of economic and political issues that are facing average Americans right now. But I have come to the floor today to talk about one issue on which we are rarely divided; that is, our duty to keep the promise we have made to provide not only care but opportunity to all those who have honorably served in our Nation's Armed Forces. It unites even the most unlikely partners because we realize we have all made a promise to those who have signed up to serve, and we all need to keep it because there is so much on the line.

When our brave men and women volunteered to protect our Nation, we promised them we would take care of them and their families when they returned home. We need to ask ourselves, are we doing enough for our Nation's

veterans? So this comprehensive legislation before us today really is the test for a lot of Members of Congress. Can we put politics aside now for the good of our Nation's veterans? Can we show these heroes, despite our differences, that we will work as diligently toward getting them the benefits and care they have earned as they have worked for our Nation. I hope we can. And I say that because the investments in this bill are a lot more than numbers on a page. They are life-changing programs for veterans who are looking to take the skills they have learned from the battlefield to the boardroom. It is support for the countless victims of military sexual assault, who are desperate to come out of the shadows. It is providing the dream of having a family to those who are suffering from some of the most devastating wounds of war. It is timely investment in the very biggest priorities of our Nation's heroes. So I would like to use the remainder of my time to highlight just a few of the investments that are included in this bill and how they translate to the lives of our veterans and their families.

For those who have worn our Nation's uniform, particularly for those young veterans who have spent the last decade being shuttled back and forth to war zones half a world away, the road home is not always smooth, the red-tape is often long, and the transition from the battlefield to the workplace is never easy. This should not be the case. We should not let the skills and training our Nation's veterans have already attained go to waste. We cannot afford to have our Nation's heroes unable to find a job to support their families, without an income that provides stability, or without work that provides the pride and sense of purpose that is so critical to the transition home.

That is why I am proud that in this legislation we are considering today we reauthorize and build on many of the provisions that were part of my VOW to Hire Heroes Act, which was signed into law by President Obama in 2011. Double-digit unemployment rates for veterans used to be the norm, but since VOW became law the unemployment rate for post-9/11 veterans is now on par with nonveterans. And while recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics proves that these programs work, we still have more work to be done, and that is addressed in this legislation.

I also believe the great strength of our military is in the character and dedication of our men and women who wear the uniform. It is the courage of these Americans to volunteer to serve that is the Pentagon's greatest asset. Our servicemembers volunteer to face danger, to put their lives on the line, to protect our country and our people.

It is no longer a secret that sexual assault continues to plague the ranks of our military services, which is an-

other issue this comprehensive legislation addresses. I think we all agree it is absolutely unconscionable that a fellow servicemember—the person whom you rely on to have your back and be there for you—would commit such a terrible crime. Even worse is the prevalence of these crimes. It is appalling that they commit such a personal violation of their brother or sister in uniform.

The National Defense Authorization Act that we passed last year took some historic action to help servicemembers access the resources they need to seek justice without fear, including a provision I authored to create a new category of legal advocates called special victims' counsels who would be responsible for advocating on behalf of the interests of the victim. But we still have a long road ahead of us before we put an end to these shameful acts and meanwhile provide all the necessary resources to those who have, unfortunately, been impacted. Thankfully, the chairman's legislation aims to do just that with provisions to improve the delivery of care and benefits to veterans who experienced sexual trauma while serving in the military.

When our best and brightest put on a uniform and join the U.S. Armed Forces, they do so with the understanding they will sacrifice much in the name of defending our country and its people. But that sacrifice should not have to come in the form of unwanted sexual contact from within the ranks.

Finally, I wish to talk today about a provision that has been one of my top priorities in the Senate for a while now. It is a provision that builds upon our effort to improve VA services for women veterans and veterans with families.

As we all know, with the changing nature of our conflicts overseas, we have been seeing the brutal impact of improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, which means we are now seeing more and more servicemembers—both male and female—increasingly susceptible to reproductive, spinal, and traumatic brain injuries due to the weapons of war.

Thanks to modern medicine, many of these servicemembers are being kept alive, and they are returning home. Like so many of our veterans, these men and women come home looking to return to their lives, to find employment, and often to start a family. Yet what they find when they go to the VA today is that the fertility services that are available do not meet their very complex needs. In fact, veterans suffering from these injuries find the VA is today specifically barred from providing more advanced assisted reproduction techniques, such as IVF. They are told that despite the fact that they have made such an extreme sacrifice

for our country, we cannot today provide them with the medical services they need to start a family.

These are veterans such as SSG Matt Keil and his wife Tracy. Staff Sergeant Keil was shot in the neck while on patrol in Iraq in 2007—6 weeks after he married the love of his life, Tracy. The bullet went through the right side of his neck, it hit a major artery, it went through his spinal cord, and it exited through his shoulder blade. Staff Sergeant Keil instantly became a quadriplegic. Doctors told Tracy, his wife, that her husband would be on a ventilator for the rest of his life and would never move his arms or his legs. Well, Staff Sergeant Keil eventually defied the odds and found himself off that ventilator and beginning the long journey of physical rehabilitation.

In fact, Tracy and her husband started talking and exploring the possibilities of having a family together. Having children was all they could talk about once they started to adjust to their new normal. With Staff Sergeant Keil's injuries preventing him from having children naturally, Tracy turned to the VA and began to explore her options for fertility treatments, but because of that VA ban she was turned down. So Tracy and Staff Sergeant Keil decided instead to pursue IVF through the private sector. Out of options, they decided this was important enough to them that they were willing to pay out of pocket to the tune of almost \$32,000 per round of treatment.

Well, thankfully, on November 9, 2010, just after their first round of IVF, Staff Sergeant Keil and Tracy welcomed their twins, Matthew and Faith, into the world. Tracy told me—and I want to quote her:

The day we had our children something changed in both of us. This is exactly what we had always wanted, our dreams had arrived.

The VA, Congress and the American People have said countless times [to us] that they want to do everything they can to support my husband [and] make him feel whole again and this is your chance.

Having a family is exactly what we needed to feel whole again. Please help us make these changes [to the law] so that other families can share in this experience.

Well, Tracy and Matt are not alone. There are many men and women out there who share this common thread of a desperate desire to fulfill their dream of starting a family, only to find that catastrophic wounds they sustained while defending our country are now preventing them from seeing that dream through.

As we all know, it should not be that way. Our Nation's heroes should not have to spend tens of thousands of dollars in the private sector to get the advanced reproductive treatments they need to start a family. They should not have to watch their marriages dissolve because of the stress of infertility in

combination with the stresses of readjusting to a new life after severe injury, driving relationships to a breaking point. Any servicemember who sustains this type of serious injury deserves a lot more.

We came very close to making this bill a reality last Congress. In fact, with Tracy Keil sitting up in the gallery—like so many of our heroes who have joined us today—with Tracy watching, the Senate unanimously passed this legislation. Unfortunately, what happened was that some Republicans in the House of Representatives refused to take up this bill and pass it. So time ran out last year and we were not able to get it to the President's desk.

But this effort is not over. This provision was the very first piece of legislation I introduced in this Congress, and there is excellent momentum to get it done. This is about giving our veterans, who sacrificed everything, every option we have to help them fulfill the simple dream of having a family. It says we are not turning our backs on the catastrophic reproductive wounds that have become a signature of these wars.

It says to all those brave men and women who did not ask questions when they were put in harm's way that we will not let politics get in the way of our commitment to you. This provision in the bill will reverse this troubling barrier to care and will bring the VA in line, finally, with the military which does provide these services under TRICARE.

Our women veterans deserve this. Our male veterans deserve this. Our military families deserve this. I am here today to urge my colleagues to support this bill, the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014. Our veterans do not ask for a lot. They should not have to. They have done everything that has been asked of them. They have been separated from their families through repeated deployments. They have sacrificed life and limb in combat. They have done all of this selflessly and with honor to our country.

We cannot allow our commitment to them to lapse or to get caught up in any kind of unrelated amendments or political grandstanding. So I thank the Senator from Vermont and his staff for their tireless work to bring this legislation to the floor. I hope we do the right thing now and get this legislation passed and get this legislation to the desk of the President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). The Republican whip.

OBAMACARE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I see the Senator from North Carolina is here on the floor. I know he is likely here to respond to the Senator from

Vermont and the Senator from Washington on the veterans bill that is on the floor, and what I believe is a much better alternative for us in dealing with the needs of our veterans in a way that is fiscally responsible.

But what I would like to do is to turn to another story that continues to unfold worse and worse news over time, that unfortunately we tend to get distracted from because there are so many other things that are happening. But when the President's signature health care bill, the Affordable Care Act, was signed into law 4 years ago, we knew that it did not just create a brand new health care entitlement. It actually weakened existing programs like Medicare and Medicaid.

For people who do not deal with these programs on a day-in and day-out basis, of course, Medicare is for seniors, for health care for seniors; Medicaid is a separate program which is shared by the States and the Federal Government to provide the safety net health care program for low-income Texans in my State.

But because of the massive new burdens that ObamaCare is placing on the health care safety net, which is already failing the neediest members of society, the share of physicians accepting new Medicaid patients in Texas has fallen from 67 percent in 2000 to only 32 percent in 2012. So in 2000, 67 percent of physicians would accept a new Medicaid patient. Today it is roughly one-third, one out of every three.

Of course, the reason for that is the Federal Government continues to pay less and less. Now I think it is roughly 50 cents on the dollar compared to private insurance to a physician who treats a Medicaid patient. So we know that many Texas physicians, including a majority of established primary care physicians, are not accepting new Medicaid patients at all because they are being asked essentially to work for 50 cents on the dollar, something they cannot afford to do.

Yet the architects of ObamaCare thought that it was a good idea to add millions more people to a broken program, one that already was not providing access to quality health care. This, of course, will further reduce the quality of Medicaid, which is one reason why many State Governors refused the Federal Government's request to actually expand the coverage of Medicaid absent reforms to fix it and make sure that it would work more fairly and better and more cost effectively. Of course, the consequence of that is it will make it even harder on the poorest and most vulnerable Americans to gain access to quality health care.

As for the Medicare program, of course that is for seniors, ObamaCare created a new panel of unelected bureaucrats known as the Independent Payment Advisory Board. What an innocuous bureaucratic-sounding name.

Some people call it the IPAB. These are unelected bureaucrats who will decide whether your health care is worth a cost-benefit analysis.

What they will end up doing is slashing Medicare payments to doctors so that many physicians can no longer afford to see new Medicare patients and provide the treatment that those patients and their doctors believe they need and that they want. So it has become abundantly clear that the goal of ObamaCare is to make Medicare more like Medicaid. We know what that means. We know it is not hard to predict, that fewer and fewer doctors will treat Medicare patients and some will leave the program all together.

Why do we know that? Well, we have seen the experience with these new major cuts to Medicare Advantage. Not to confuse things too much, but Medicare Advantage is actually a private insurance alternative to traditional Medicare which pays doctors based on the services they provide. Medicare Advantage is a remarkably successful program that covers roughly 30 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries, close to 16 million people.

The funds to those programs, to those 30 million, to that program that benefits 30 million beneficiaries, are being slashed by approximately \$308 billion as a result of ObamaCare. This is another one of these hidden problems with ObamaCare that is now just coming to light, even though we talked about it a lot back in 2009 and 2010. Now it is coming to fruition.

The truth is, these cuts in Medicare Advantage will force many seniors to pay higher premiums and further undermine their existing health care arrangements. You remember the President said: If you like what you have, you can keep it. If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor.

We are now learning that is absolutely not true in many cases. Just to give you a sense, though, of Medicare Advantage's popularity, according to the Wall Street Journal, about one of two people newly eligible for Medicare chose Medicare Advantage and enrollment is growing at a rate of roughly 10 percent per year.

Why is Medicare Advantage so popular compared to traditional Medicare fee for service? Well, for all the reasons you might expect. The program offers a lot more flexibility and much more patient choice than traditional Medicare based on a number of different performance measures that also deliver better results than traditional Medicare. It has become the primary driver of innovation within the Medicare system.

Yet we know, and we have known now for 4 years, and we are now seeing that the reality is the administration is trying to undermine Medicare Advantage to help pay for ObamaCare. Neither one is working the way the beneficiaries of those programs ex-

pected and were promised they would work.

Earlier this month I joined with 39 of my colleagues here in the Senate to send a letter to CMS Administrator Marilyn Tavenner urging her to "maintain payment levels that will allow Medicare Advantage beneficiaries to be protected from disruptive changes in 2015." Our letter described Medicare Advantage as "a great success," noting that one study published in the American Journal of Managed Care found that "the hospital readmission rates for [Medicare Advantage] enrollees are 13-20 percent lower than for Medicare [fee-for-service] enrollees."

In other words, it is more effective delivering quality care, keeping seniors healthy and reducing dramatically the need to have them readmitted to hospitals once they are discharged.

The Members who signed this letter were not just folks who work on this side of the aisle. They included several prominent Democrats, such as my two colleagues from New York, the senior Senator from Minnesota, the junior Senator from Massachusetts, the junior Senator from Oregon, and from Washington State, and from Colorado, who also happens to be the Chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

They signed this letter—39 Senators—saying: Please do not cut Medicare Advantage in a way that disadvantages current seniors. It is bad enough that ObamaCare is effectively taking money out of a successful program, Medicare Advantage, to fund a new entitlement. It is bad enough that seniors are being forced to pay higher premiums and deal with enormous uncertainty in order to facilitate a government takeover of the health care system.

What makes it even worse is that ObamaCare continues to be an unmitigated disaster. Every day you pick up the newspaper, every day you watch television: Millions of Americans have lost their preferred health insurance, and millions more are paying higher premiums for coverage. Many families have discovered that their new ObamaCare-mandated coverage does not give their children access to their preferred doctors and hospitals.

As one physician from Washington State recently told CBS News:

We're seeing denials of care, disruptions in care; we're seeing a great deal of confusion and, at times, anger and frustration on the part of these families who bought insurance thinking that their children were going to be covered. And they've in fact found that it's a false promise.

A false promise—that is ObamaCare in a nutshell, if you think about it. A program that was sold as a way to help the uninsured and the economy has instead hurt the economy and forced millions of Americans to lose their existing coverage—a false promise.

The Congressional Budget Office—the latest bit of bad news—now estimates that ObamaCare will reduce the size of the American labor force by 2.5 million full-time workers over the next decade. Here is the latest news. In addition, CMS has projected the law could lead to higher insurance premiums for about 11 million employees at small businesses.

As for the promise of "universal coverage"—do you remember, this was the whole basis for government-mandated health care: Everybody is going to be covered. Well, when all is said and done, ObamaCare will, according to the Congressional Budget Office, leave upwards of 30 million people without health care coverage in 2023.

After witnessing a tidal wave of disruptions and hardships caused by his signature legislative accomplishments, what is President Obama's response? His response is to either minimize the political damage, to kick the news past the November election, to delay the employer mandates, to refuse to enforce other provisions of the law, and to waive the law which has no clear means for waiver. So basically, it is to refuse to enforce the law, to get it past the election. Let's cut the bleeding, politically speaking.

Earlier this month, for the second time since July, the administration announced they would unilaterally delay enforcement of the employer mandate. Of course, the President—like so much of what he does these days—has no clear legal authority to do that, but our colleagues across the aisle do not seem to care as long as they kick it past the election because they are worried about the accountability that comes with this false promise made to sell ObamaCare.

Americans want the same type of health care reforms that they wanted back in 2009. There are plenty of alternatives, sensible patient-centered reforms that will actually bring down the cost. You know, if you want people to buy more of something, you reduce the cost. You do not raise the cost. That creates just the opposite problem. We also know there are alternatives to expand quality insurance coverage and improve access to quality care.

I might just add—since I know the Senator from North Carolina has been patiently sitting there to speak on a different topic—that he and Senator HATCH and Senator COBURN have offered what has widely been heralded as a very sensible alternative approach to ObamaCare that avoids the problems and reduces the costs, and it does not interfere with patient choice.

We know ObamaCare promised these results, but it failed to deliver. In response, we have many different alternative ideas that increase patient choice, increase transparency, and increase provider competition, all of

which is designed to produce for consumers lower cost, wider coverage, and better quality care.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, may I inquire how much time exists on both the majority and minority sides?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 21 minutes remaining on the Republican side, 9½ minutes remaining on the Democratic side.

Mr. BURR. I thank the Chair, and I thank my colleague for his comments on the Affordable Care Act.

I am actually excited to be here having a debate about veterans and about the promises we have made to those who are reliant on not only the VA but on this institution to actually look at the programs and the services provided, and when we, as a body, see deficiencies, reforming them, fixing them, so our customer—who is that person who made that ultimate sacrifice, who put on that uniform and, in many cases, now has a lifetime disability because of it—can count on that health care system to be there.

I would have expected we would be on the floor debating in a bipartisan way those fixes that were needed to make sure that veterans with disability claims didn't have to wait hundreds of days to determine whether they were going to have a disability that was signed off on and, if so, what the percentage was and that percentage then provided them income.

I thought we would focus on the challenges the Senate has to reform how the appeals process works. Because when a veteran is denied a disability claim or he gets less than he thinks he should have been awarded, then he has the opportunity to appeal that to the court of appeals. The time now for the appeals decision has grown to years. It shouldn't be like this. It is absurd that the Congress of the United States, much less the Veterans' Administration, is content with the deficiencies we have in this broken system.

Instead of being here to look at fixes provided under the Sanders bill, we are here looking at how to expand the population of coverage. We are here on programs that have had little to no hearings. We are here without understanding the intended or the unintended consequences.

Let me share the knowledge I have of North Carolina where we have the largest growing veterans population in America. I don't have the facilities today to handle that veterans population in the timeframe Americans are used to being delivered health care. I could go out and start construction tomorrow, if my good friend the Presiding Officer would allocate me the money, since he sits on the Appropriations Committee, and build facilities, and I still couldn't meet the facilities

requirement needed to provide that level of care. As a matter of fact, we have about \$14 billion worth of construction currently underway in the country, and on an annual basis, this body—the Congress of the United States—allocates about \$1 billion in facilities construction and maintenance money.

We have 14 years of backlog right now and we are not even anticipating what the effects are going to be of our current warriors who have come out of Iraq, who will leave Afghanistan, who might enter Syria or who might be in a conflict down the road. No, we are here debating in the Sanders bill a massive expansion in who is provided benefits in the VA.

So who is that? It is veterans who have no service-connected disability. It is veterans who are above the means-testing threshold. Let me put that in layman's terms. These are not people who are low income and these are not people who have a service-connected disability.

We are going to have days to debate this bill, and I will introduce an alternative. I will openly confess, upfront, that I don't get into fixes, because to do fixes there has to be bipartisanship. To reform programs in the Federal agencies, Republicans and Democrats have to come together.

We are here today because there was no outreach to attempt to put together a compromise bill. If the conversation we had about a day before we left a week ago, where my colleague said, this is what I am going to do, why don't you sign on, but he wasn't willing to talk about changes—if that was compromise, then he did that. But I don't consider that to be compromise. I don't consider it to be good-faith negotiation.

But that is behind us. We now have this bill to consider, and it is a massive expansion. And what does it do? It basically says to those warriors who have service-connected disabilities, those individuals who are low income—and this is where they get their service, their health care—you are going to have to wait in a bigger line. You are going to have to get behind more people. So what veterans expect, which is that the most needy will receive the services they need, is not what this bill does. It is not at all what it does.

As a matter of fact, section 301 of the Sanders bill would expand eligibility of the VA health care system. It would qualify to enroll in the VA health care as priority 8 veterans if they do not have access to health insurance except through a health exchange and do not qualify for higher priority.

Before getting into my concerns about this affected section and what impact it would have on VA, I wish to comment on how this section has been drafted. The section says:

If a veteran qualifies as a priority 8 veteran and has no other option but the health

exchange under the Affordable Care Act, they could enroll in the VA.

Let me read that again:

If a veteran qualifies as a priority 8 veteran and has no other option but the health exchange under the Affordable Care Act, they can enroll in the VA.

We have just mandated that everybody in this country—except when the President delays the mandate—has to be under the Affordable Care Act and they are part of the health exchange. Here we are saying to priority 8 veterans, if your only option is the health exchange, we will let you opt into the VA. Well, if the health exchange is that good, why would we dare risk all other veterans who have service-connected disabilities or low incomes having to wait behind people who were provided health care out of the health exchange?

Some priority 8 veterans may even qualify for a subsidy under the exchange, something they would not receive if they were to enroll in VA health care. I don't know, are they concerned these veterans will be unable to find a plan that meets their needs? Everybody else in America was shoved into it. Why should we be concerned about them?

My intention today isn't to open a health care debate. I do have serious concerns about this expansion. Expanding eligibility could stress an already overburdened system. There is a reason why the priority 8 veterans program was halted. The VA found they could not provide timely access to services while sustaining a high level of care. And judging by the well over 30 health care inspectors reports issued by the Office of Inspector General in this Congress alone, the VA is having trouble with the limited group they currently serve.

Here are some examples of the IG's health care inspections report released since January 2013: 1. Three deaths in Atlanta because of delays in mental health care; 2. Two reports regarding delays in GI consults and issues with facilities operating services in Columbia, SC; 3. Emergency department patient death at the Memphis VA center; 4. Two reports on the inappropriate use of insulin pens at both the VA Western New York Healthcare System and the Salisbury VA Medical Center; and 5. Two reports on Legionnaires' disease at VA Pittsburgh and a review of Legionnaires' disease prevention at VHA facilities.

If we expand enrollment, if we expand the coverage, it would surely require an increase in funding at the VA. When we increase the number of patients entering the system, we certainly need to hire additional staff and to provide more space to treat the new veterans. I have already talked about the 14-year backlog we have on facilities now. Without followthrough on secondary cost, we only frustrate veterans when their expectations aren't met, not satisfy them.

I truly believe if we expand government programs we need to do it responsibly. We need to understand the intended consequences and plan for the unintended consequences. We should explore whether the VA can manage the implementation of this expansion. We should explore what impact this will have on the VA's ability to treat combat veterans and veterans with limited incomes and find out what new needs, both in staffing and space, would be created by this expansion.

Unfortunately, we don't know the answers to these questions, because in preparation for this section the majority didn't hold an oversight hearing looking specifically at the consequences—intended or unintended—to expand enrollment of priority 8 veterans. In fact, the only hearing on this subject was a hearing on legislation pending before the committee on October 30, 2013. At that hearing we heard testimony on three dozen bills—clearly, not enough time to examine the details of any of the 30 bills.

From their testimony at the hearing, the VA obviously agrees with me. Dr. Robert Jessie, Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health, indicated that expanding enrollment of priority 8 veterans “presents many potential complications and uncertain effects on VA's enrollment system.” That comes from a guy pretty high up within the Veterans' Administration. They are not necessarily for this.

Finally, I want to address a comment my colleague from Vermont made at a press conference a few weeks ago. He said:

We're not going to bring one new person in without making absolutely certain that the VA has the resources to accommodate those people.

As I read the bill, there is nothing in this provision or in the bill itself that would restrict implementation in that way. However, I would gladly support an amendment which would delay this provision until GAO reports that the VA could manage this additional population of veterans.

Mr. President, you might be thinking, as others who are listening might, what does all this cost? How is it paid for? Is the funding recurring or is it one-time funding? Is it permanent expansion?

Let me try to answer some of that for you. The way the Sanders bill is paid for is with money out of the overseas contingency operations. That is more money we were going to spend that we haven't spent, that we never had because we were borrowing it, and now we are going to use it to expand this. It is one-time funding for a permanent program. Let me say that again. It is one-time funding for a permanent program.

It is not as though we are going to fund this expansion of priority 8s, and all of a sudden, when OCO money is

gone, we say: Oops, we didn't mean it; we are going to pull it back. No, these are going to be in the system regardless of the impact, regardless of the consequences.

So who is adversely affected? Today's warriors. The same warriors who are waiting in line to get health care services are now going to compete for a limited number of slots to be seen by people who might have had private insurance, by people who might have been in the health care exchange, by individuals who are not low income and who have no service-connected disability. Who else? Those veterans with disability claims who are waiting for a determination. I mean these veterans are going to be impacted by this because we will have such an influx of people within the system. Veterans are waiting for disposition of their disability claims, their appeals. Those who have gone back and have waited, they have finally gone through hundreds of days for a claim to be determined only to find out they have to appeal it. Now they are going to go through hundreds of days of appeal, and we are saying we are going to have to start using some of these people to administer new services which far exceed and are outside of priority 8 which I focused on. But we will talk about the entirety of this bill as the next several days go on.

The last one, and I will stop for this afternoon: Who is adversely affected? Our kids, our grandchildren, the ones who sit at home today hoping the decisions we make about future obligations take into account that they are paying the tab. They are the ones who will be here years from now keeping the promises we make, and they are hoping we only make the ones we can keep.

Mr. President, how much time is remaining on our side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Five minutes.

Mr. BURR. I will tell a personal story about a trip to one of our military cemeteries abroad.

We were in the country of Belgium. I was there for a Memorial Day service. Much to my amazement, there were probably 4,000 to 5,000 individuals.

We got through with the formalities of a very well-constructed Memorial Day celebration. As I wandered through the graves, I found a Belgian couple with their two young children at the headstone of an American soldier from World War II. I asked them one simple question: Why are you here?

The Belgian father, younger than I, looked at me and he said: Sir, I inherited this grave from my father. My father took the responsibility for this grave to always make sure it was just like it was the day he got it. I have now inherited that from my father, and my children will inherit that responsibility from me.

I know there are a lot of veterans organizations who hope Senator SAND-

ERS' bill becomes law, but I think there are a lot of veterans who are hoping it doesn't: the veterans who need the VA system and count on it for their mental health treatment, for their substance abuse treatment, for their primary care. They count on it for diabetes maintenance, they count on it to stay alive, and we promised it to them.

I am sure future generations will look at the decisions we make this week and will belly up to the bar for whatever it costs, but I think it is important for us to remember our obligations stretch long past our service here. Although it seems somewhat easy to spend somebody else's money, our kids want us to reform this, our veterans want us to reform this, the VA wants us to reform this.

Once we reform it, we can talk about expansion. Until then, it is irresponsible for the Congress of the United States—for the Senate of the United States—to talk about dumping more people into a broken system, to ask those who have already waited so long to wait longer because of our actions.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. I thank my colleague from North Carolina, the ranking member of the Veterans' Committee, for his remarks. I look forward to debating some of the issues the Senator raised because I think it is important for not just the veterans of this country but the tens of millions of people who support our veterans to understand what we are trying to do to improve lives for those people who have put their lives on the line to defend this country.

I did find it interesting that the ranking member from North Carolina suggested in so many words, yes, this bill does have the support of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Military Officers Association of America, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Gold Star Wives of America, and dozens of other veterans organizations, but the implication was they may be supporting this bill but veterans back home do not. I doubt that very much. In fact, I happen to believe these organizations do a very good job in representing the interests of their veterans and that they listen to the veterans.

As the ranking member understands, this bill was put together not from my head, not from his head or any Member of the Senate's head. We listened to the veterans community which came forward before the Congress. In fact, today there was a joint session—which I had to miss because I was here—with the DAV, and then we are going to hear from the American Legion, from the VFW—we are going to hear from all the veterans organizations.

This bill represents what those veterans organizations said the veterans community needs. I strongly disagree with the Senator from North Carolina in suggesting the veterans organizations do not do an effective job in representing their membership.

The other point I will make is that I look forward to this debate. Every now and then it is a good idea to have a debate on real issues on the floor of the Senate, so I look forward to this debate. But in terms of the suggestion that this is not a bipartisan bill—I do understand absolutely not every word in here nor every source of funding is supported by our Republican colleagues, but as chairman of the Veterans' Committee, I have worked as hard as I could—and I believe the ranking member knows this—to develop as best I could a bipartisan piece of legislation. I remind all the Members of the Senate and the American people this legislation contains a significant number of provisions authored and supported by Republican members of the Veterans' Committee, including my friend from North Carolina. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, there are some 26 separate provisions which Republican Members have authored or cosponsored. That is not an insignificant number.

Further, perhaps two of the most prominent provisions are the omnibus bills. That is when we collect the number of different bills and we put them into one pot. We did that on two occasions. As the ranking member knows, the vote on each of those omnibus bills was unanimous. Every Democrat, every Republican, and the Independent chairman of the committee voted for them. In truth, other important provisions were passed—not unanimously, of course, but they did pass in many cases with bipartisan support.

Furthermore, this bill contains two key bipartisan provisions passed overwhelmingly by the Republican-controlled House of Representatives.

So let me acknowledge that not every provision in this bill was brought before the committee. That is true. But the two major provisions which were not brought before this committee are bipartisan and in fact have been passed overwhelmingly by the Republican-controlled House.

With almost unanimous votes, the House passed the same provision included in the Senate bill which would solve a longstanding problem to authorize the VA to enter into 27 major medical facility leases in 18 States and Puerto Rico.

My friend talks about the fact that we need more infrastructure for our veterans. He is right. This bill provides 27 major medical facility leases in 18 States and Puerto Rico, and in an absolutely overwhelmingly bipartisan vote that language was passed in the House.

The second bill—not included in our discussions in the Senate committee—

also passed with very broad support in the House—deals with ensuring that veterans can take full advantage of the post-9/11 GI bill and get instate tuition in the State in which they currently live. If I am not mistaken, I believe my friend supports that provision.

It is fair to say not every provision was debated in the committee. He is right. But the two major provisions that were not, were passed with overwhelming support in the House and I believe will pass with overwhelming support in this body and are included in this legislation.

I believe virtually every Member of the Senate, regardless of his or her ideology, cares about veterans—and I know the Senator from North Carolina does—and all of us want to do the very best we can. That is why I have worked so hard with Members of my committee, with Republicans and Democrats, to make this bill as bipartisan as it possibly could be. I am not here to say it is 100 percent bipartisan. It is not. But we worked hard, and there are significant and major provisions in this bill which come from my Republican colleagues because they were good ideas. As chairman of the committee, my view is we don't reject an idea because somebody has an "R" next to their name. If they have a good idea, it is in the bill.

May I ask the President how much time remains.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 2½ minutes.

Mr. SANDERS. I will very briefly touch on some of the other provisions in the bill.

We restore full COLA for military retirees. As we all know, the House and the Senate passed and the President signed the bill to undo the provision in the Budget Act, but they did not include those members of the military who signed up after January 2014. They are still suffering from a cut in the COLA. We address that.

This bill does expand VA health care and among other ways it provides dental care. I don't know about other States, but in my State—and I suspect all over this country—in talking to veterans, they think dental care is part of health care. Right now, except for service-connected situations, dental care is not provided. We have a major pilot project to say to veterans: Yes, dental care is part of VA health care and you can get that.

As to advanced appropriations for the VA, not everybody knows this, but we were 7 to 10 days away from disabled veterans not getting their checks when the government was shut down. This legislation ensures veterans receive consistent access to the benefits they have earned by establishing advanced appropriations for the mandatory accounts at VA.

We move forward in a bipartisan way to end the benefits backlog. My col-

league from North Carolina pointed out it is a serious issue. Everybody agrees it is a serious issue. I think the VA is making some progress. This legislation has significant language to help the VA move forward in that area.

This legislation would extend from 5 years to 10 years unfettered access to VA health care for recently separated veterans to address their health care needs early.

This legislation renews our vow to hire veterans, making sure veterans get the employment opportunities many are now lacking when they come back from Iraq and Afghanistan.

This legislation deals in a significant way with the horrendous issue of sexual assault, making sure victims of sexual assault—women and men—get the care they need at the VA.

I will conclude by saying this is a serious bill which deals with a very serious issue. My hope is every Member treats the needs of veterans with the respect they deserve. I look forward to the debate which I am confident we will have.

Clearly, this is not a perfect bill, and I know there are Members who have ideas as to how they can improve it. This is what the legislative process is about. My sincere hope, however, is amendments which are brought forth deal with veterans issues and not amendments which are not relevant and not germane to this discussion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SANDERS. I ask unanimous consent for an additional 30 seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SANDERS. The ranking member and I have disagreements, and that is what the legislative process is about. Let's debate the issues on the floor.

I hope we show our respect to the veterans by not getting into issues that have nothing to do with veterans' needs. I hope we are not off debating Iran or ObamaCare or gay marriage or whatever it may be. I guess those are good political issues for some people. I hope people understand how significant and important the issue itself is—the needs of our veterans—and we stay focused on that issue as we bring forth amendments.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I thank my colleague, the chairman of the committee. He is right when he said we have a lot of agreements. As a matter of fact, about 80 percent of the policies in his bill are in my alternative bill, but I have a big problem with the other 20 percent. I have a problem with the cost. I have a problem with the unintended consequences. I wish we could figure out the intended consequences, but we cannot because there has not been much time to do it.

I look forward to the next several days. I believe the chairman made a plea that the amendments be limited to VA issues. That might be possible if the minority had the opportunity to amend legislation in this institution. I think we have had four votes on Republican amendments since July. To suggest that Iran is not important is, in fact, turning a blind eye on the world.

In my bill I have a piece of legislation that is cosponsored by 59 Senators, and it is bipartisan. My legislation is the Iran sanctions bill. Why? Because it is the only way we can get this to the floor. We have been denied the opportunity to deal with this issue in any other way. This is important to the American people, and it is important to our friends and allies around the world. I am sure it will dominate part of the debate.

Make no mistake about it, the one matter the chairman didn't point to was what we are fixing. We are adding a lot of stuff, but we are not fixing anything. Ask any veteran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask for an additional 30 seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BURR. If you ask any veteran about the areas that need reform, I believe they would tell Chairman SANDERS, just like they would tell me: Yes, there are a lot of places that need reform. To suggest that should not be part of this debate is ludicrous.

I look forward to the next several days, and I urge my colleagues to support getting on this bill and to vote yea when they come to the floor for this next vote.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will read.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 301, S. 1982, the Comprehensive Veterans Health Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act.

Harry Reid, Bernard Sanders, Tom Harkin, Brian Schatz, Mary L. Landrieu, Jack Reed, Jeanne Shaheen, Tim Kaine, Christopher A. Coons, Patrick J. Leahy, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Joe Donnelly, Jon Tester, Barbara Boxer, Richard Blumenthal, Sherrod Brown, Barbara Mikulski.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived. The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 99, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 44 Leg.]

YEAS—99

Alexander	Franken	Moran
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baldwin	Graham	Murphy
Barrasso	Grassley	Murray
Begich	Hagan	Paul
Bennet	Harkin	Portman
Blumenthal	Hatch	Pryor
Blunt	Heinrich	Reed
Booker	Heitkamp	Reid
Boozman	Heller	Risch
Boxer	Hirono	Roberts
Brown	Hoeven	Rockefeller
Burr	Inhofe	Rubio
Cantwell	Isakson	Sanders
Cardin	Johanns	Schatz
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Casey	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Chambliss	Kaine	Sessions
Coats	King	Shaheen
Coburn	Kirk	Shelby
Cochran	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Landrieu	Tester
Coons	Leahy	Thune
Corker	Lee	Toomey
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (CO)
Crapo	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Cruz	Markey	Vitter
Donnelly	McCain	Walsh
Durbin	McCaskill	Warner
Enzi	McConnell	Warren
Feinstein	Menendez	Whitehouse
Fischer	Merkley	Wicker
Flake	Mikulski	Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

Nelson

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 99, the nays are 0. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I would like to spend a little bit of time offering a viewpoint different from the viewpoint of the chairman of the committee on this bill.

First of all, I want to say by context that my father and his two brothers all served in World War II. My two brothers served during the Vietnam era. There is no question we have an obligation to meet our commitments to those who have put their lives and futures on the line for this country.

But it pains me that, although we have increased spending 58 percent in the VA programs since 2009, which was fiscal year 2010, what we have seen is a complete lack of oversight of what is happening. Let me give an example. The VA Committee in the Senate last year held 30 hearings, 4 of which were oversight. If you read the transcripts of those hearings, you cannot call them oversight hearings even though they were billed as oversight hearings.

Why is that important? It is important because there are a multitude of

significant, serious problems in the Veterans' Administration. Just 2 days ago it was discovered that in an L.A. VA clinic, the staff of the clinic destroyed the medical records of thousands of people so that when they do the metric on how far behind they are, we cannot measure it; or the fact that 82 veterans last year died of carcinomas through delayed diagnosis because they could not get a diagnostic procedure, such as a colonoscopy; or the fact that we have all these veterans who cannot access mental health care, and we see the suicide rate—unacceptable, to say the least.

So we have a bill on the floor that massively—and that is a small word for what this bill does—massively expands the authority and the ability of the VA to offer care to another 14 million veterans—from 6 million to 20 million.

On a system today that cannot keep up, we have 600,000 people waiting for a disability determination. We are not having oversight hearings on that. We are not having oversight hearings on a South Carolina VA hospital where people are dying from malpractice like crazy. We are not having the oversight hearings to hold the VA accountable. What we are doing is putting a bill to expand their responsibilities instead of holding them accountable for the responsibilities they have today. That is what we should be doing. Instead, we are going to add \$60 billion. And that is a conservative number. That is my number.

But all you have to do is look at what the cost and the efficiency and the outcomes are through the VA system to see that we are going to diminish the veterans caregiver program by expanding it to everybody. We are going to create all sorts of new programs and no resources to actually provide them. And we are going to create more advanced funding, advanced appropriations, which will limit our ability to hold them capable and culpable in the future.

There are a lot of things we ought to be doing for our veterans right now that are already in law that we are not doing, and we come to the floor with a massive expansion at a time when we cannot even care for what we are doing. As a physician who trained in VA hospitals, I know the difference in the level of care. I can assure you it has not gotten any better. From my colleagues I speak to in the medical profession and from the veterans whom I talk to who contact me, it has gotten far worse. It does not have to be that way, but it will always be that way if, in fact, we continue to not hold those in leadership positions accountable for not stepping to the bar for performance, quality, and outcome.

From Congress to the Pentagon, we must reassess what laws, regulations, and rules can be changed to ensure that benefits and other decisions the

Veterans' Administration makes are beyond reproach and based on the best facts available. Let's ensure that the Department's limited resources are focused on its core mission rather than disbursed in an effort to remedy every possible problem for every veteran. Remember, when everyone is first priority, no one is. That is what this bill is. We diminish the priority of the commitments we have made to the veterans who are out there today.

Our veterans are looking to us for help. We are about to enact legislation that is going to further strain the ability of the VA to do its most basic charge: help with the health care, mental health, and capability of those who have put it all on the line for this country.

It is shameful that Congress now is trying to claim credit for providing new benefits while our old promises are forgotten. Our heroes—our heroes—are literally dying at the hands of malpractice, incompetency, and delay.

If we really wanted to care for our veterans—those with service-connected disabilities—what we would say is, go wherever you want to go to get whatever you need because you served this country. And it actually would cost less. But because we pile them into a broken system now—and that is not all VA organizations. Let me clarify that. There are some excellent VA hospitals that do great work. Their specialists are far ahead of the private sector. But on general grounds, to put a veteran at a place with less than the best possible care dishonors their service to this country—dishonors their service to our country.

Veterans are our heroes. They are the symbol of our country of sacrifice, of giving for others. Yet we have four oversight hearings in a year? With the multitude of problems that are going on in the VA hospitals and the Veterans' Administration in terms of disability determination, we have four? The House had 34 oversight hearings, and they were rigorous. When you ask members of the committee: Have you read the House oversight hearings? No. They had 26 regular hearings and 34 oversight hearings trying to hold the VA accountable.

We are not going to hold the VA accountable with this bill. We are going to make them less accountable. And that is a disservice to the very people who have honored us by serving in the military of this country.

As of February 15, 2014, the VA has 677,000 claims pending for disability compensation. Why should it take a year for somebody who put their butt on the line for this country and received an injury and is disabled? Why should it take a year for us to determine that we owe them an extra bit of compensation and availability?

What is being done to fix that? We have a VA regional center in my home

town, with good employees, hard-working employees. They are not destroying files so they can say they met a metric. Veterans seeking mental health treatment still experience weeks-long delays scheduling appointments. The epidemic of overprescription of opiates—let me say that again—there is an epidemic of overprescription of opiates for those people who served our country, making them dependent addicts because we give them the wrong treatments.

There are avoidable veterans deaths at the VA. In a recent story by CNN on misdiagnosis and improper care for gastrointestinal conditions, there were 2-year consultation delays—2 years to get in to see a specialist at the VA when you are losing blood. How do we explain that? Who is accountable? We are, because we are not holding them accountable.

There were 82 deaths last year alone—I am sure that is a far understatement—because of delayed diagnosis for just investigative endoscopies. That is just what is documented. How do we accept that? Had they been in the private sector, they would not have had a delay. They would not be dead.

So here is the proposal that I would put out. Do our veterans deserve the best of care in this country? I think they do. Should they be able to get that care where they know the quality, they know the outcomes and the transparency as to what their future might be or must they be forced into a system that is going to give them something less? That is where we are today.

The chairman in his bill increases VA medical care for everybody who served without a disability. What will that do to the VA system? We cannot handle what we have in front of us now in terms of those who have a percentage medical disability that allows them access to the VA health care system.

So when you triple that or more than triple it, where are the resources? If we really mean what we say in this bill, you are talking hundreds of billions of dollars over 10 years. You are not talking the \$30 billion that the chairman says is what the cost is. You are talking hundreds of billions. But the point I would make is we have an infrastructure out there that can care for our veterans. It is the hospitals all around the country. It is the doctors all around the country. Does a veteran not have the right to get the best care? Should we not give him a card and say: You served this country. Here is your service connection. Here is your disability. You can get care at a VA hospital, if you want, or you can get care wherever you want.

But I will guarantee you what will happen is, if we give what was promised to the veterans—not what we are giving today—real care, real opportunity with real transparency as the

outcome, what you will see is marked improvement in care, marked improvement in outcomes, no change in additional cost—no change in additional cost—and access that is promised but not denied and delayed.

In one South Carolina VA facility alone, 20 veterans are either dead or dying of cancer because of delayed diagnoses. They had the symptoms and presented them to the hospital, but because of delay and incompetency—just that one hospital.

The other thing we know is veterans' malpractice claims are markedly increasing—markedly. All you have to do is look at the OIG report on the claims of deficiencies at the VA in New Haven, CT. Contamination, cross-contamination, inadequate procedures for infection precautions, absence of employees that are supposed to be on duty when they are not, failure to clean operating rooms properly, failure to have the proper ventilation system in an operating room for a contaminated case. That is just one hospital.

What does that mean in real life? What that means in real life is the risk for iatrogenic or facility or physician-caused infection goes through the roof—not the fault of the physician but the fault of the VA for not managing the system properly.

Former VA epidemiologist, Dr. Steven Coughlin, testified before the House Veterans' Affairs Committee that the VA failed to follow up on over 2,000 veterans who indicated in VA surveys that they were experiencing suicidal thoughts. When the HVAC followed up on Dr. Coughlin's claims, they found that they were validated. Unfortunately, too many of those who had suggested their problems committed suicide. It is a little late.

Because Dr. Coughlin brought this up, he was admonished, bullied, and intimidated for speaking about the ethical lapses at the VA. Where is the oversight hearing? You see, if we are not going to hold the VA accountable, the quality of care is not going to rise to the level that our veterans deserve.

Another area is this. The VA wasted \$3 billion over the past 10 years because they failed to secure competitive market prices for surgical implants. That is \$3 billion. That is documented. That is a GAO study. GAO did that. We did not do it. We did not find it. Oh, by the way, at the end of the year when they had some money to spend, about \$600,000 worth of artwork was purchased, instead of putting it into additional doctors, cleaning operating rooms, additional people to secure clearances on disability.

By expanding VA care and the potential of 22 million more veterans, you can guarantee that the veterans who are getting care now are going to get poorer quality and less access to care. You can guarantee that. That is what this bill is really about. This bill is

really about a decrease in the requirements for care for our veterans. It is not about an increase. It is about a decrease because when you flood that system with people who do not have a service-connected disability, what will happen is this. Easy goes first and hard goes last. I have seen that in the VA my whole life.

There is also an expansion in the caregivers program. I am not sure I disagree with it. But certainly, for those after 9/11 a commitment ought to not be diminished if we expand this program. The minimum cost for that is \$9.5 billion. The VA has not yet met its full obligation under the VA caregivers law that we have today. Yet we are not holding them accountable.

There is another area in this bill that I think is tragic. It is well intended, but it mandates that the University of West Virginia or the University of Oklahoma must give in-State tuition to anybody from anywhere that has ever served or they lose their benefits under the GI bill. That totally ignores the Constitution in this country.

Now, 20 States have already said they are doing that. Ten others have bills in the process. Eight others have a partial. So we are at 38 of the 50 States right now. But in our vision, we are going to mandate that the Tenth Amendment does not mean anything, that the 80 percent of funding on higher education in Oklahoma that comes from people in the State of Oklahoma, that we can co-opt that and coerce them and tell them what they are going to do.

It is well intended. But it is certainly not constitutional. It certainly does not respect the Tenth Amendment of the United States. Does Oklahoma or West Virginia have the right to make a decision on who they give in-State tuition to? Why not just pass a law that says: Every State will give in-State tuition to everybody.

The reason it was connected with States is because of State funding. We totally trample that. Again, the advanced appropriations will limit our ability to hold those people accountable for the very things that I have described to you. But we are going to do it anyway.

A proposal to expand VA advanced appropriations needs to be considered by the administration as a part of an across-the-government review of the advantages and disadvantages of such progress, not only for the VA but potentially other programs and agencies. Only in the context of such a broad review could the administration offer an opinion on making such a change for the VA. Therefore, we cannot offer a position.

That is from the VA. The real answer is: Give us advanced appropriations, and then it is only after the fact that you can hold us accountable, not during the fact.

Here is another GAO study that we should be highly concerned about. The VA—this is the GAO—has no idea how

long most patients wait to receive care. They do not even know their own metrics.

It is unclear how long veterans are waiting to receive care in VA's medical facilities because the reported data are unreliable, because VA hospitals have tried to cover up wait times, fudge numbers, and backdate delayed appointments in an effort to make things better than they are.

That is directly from a GAO report. Where is the oversight hearing on that; or the L.A. facility that just destroyed medical records so nobody could know how long people had been waiting for appointments?

Based on GAO recommendations to improve reliability of reported wait times for new medical appointments in 2013, the VA changed the way it tracks and calculates its performances. Using the new tracking method in 2013, the VA reported only 41 percent of veterans were scheduled for a new primary care appointment and only 40 percent of veterans were scheduled for a new specialty appointment within the 14-day standard.

So 40 percent of the time, with the 6 million veterans we have now, they are getting adequate timely care, and 60 percent are not. Yet we are going to expand that to 22 million, and we don't have the resource base or the facility base or the employee base or the professional base or the caregiver base to do that?

In contrast, in 2012 the VA reported that 90 percent of new primary appointments and 95 percent of specialty appointments had met the 14-day standard.

The VA exam requests backlog purge. VA employees destroyed veterans' medical records to cancel backlog exam requests.

That is from Patrick Howley, again.

Oliver Mitchell, a marine veteran and former patient services assistant at the Los Angeles VA system, told the Daily Caller: We just didn't have the resources to conduct all those exams. Basically we would get 3,000 requests a month for medical exams, but in a 30-day period we only had the resources to do about 800. That is 25 a day. That rolls over to the next month and creates a backlog. It is a numbers thing. The waiting list counts against the hospital's efficiency. The longer a veteran waits for an exam, it counts against the hospital as far as productivity is concerned. Some patients were waiting 6 to 9 months for an exam, and the VA didn't know how to address the issue.

Is the answer to open this to another 16 million veterans or is the answer to improve the efficiency, transparency, quality, and outcomes of the present VA system before we go about expanding this system to people who are otherwise covered?

Mr. Mitchell, when he tried to sound the alarm on the VA's deliberate at-

tempt to fraudulently reduce the backlog, was transferred out of his department and eventually terminated from his job. After he contacted Congress in 2011—2 months later when the VA found out about it—he was fired.

So do we really want transparency in what we are doing? Do we really want to know what is going on? Do we really want to fix the system? Do we really want to offer health care to veterans and make it equal to what they can get in the private sector or do we want to say we want to offer all these new benefits at the same time we are not meeting our commitment on the benefits we have already promised? That is the game that is being played.

Earlier I said the VA said the Committee on Veterans Affairs held 30 hearings. They only held 16—16 hearings; 1 every 3 weeks.

The annual budget of the Department of Veterans Affairs exceeded \$134 billion a year. Delay in vet care is not for the lack of money. The delay in vet care is not for the lack of money, it is for the lack of accountability in management. Case in point: More than 20 veterans have died or are dying due to late diagnosis and treatment of cancer at the William Jennings Bryan Dorn Veterans Medical Center in Columbia, SC. Documents show only one-third of that \$1 million appropriated by Congress to fix the problem was used for its intended purpose at that VA facility. Only one-third of the money we appropriated to fix this problem was actually used to pay for care for veterans on waiting lists. At the same time, the documents show the waiting list at Dorn kept growing to 3,800 patients in December of 2011.

I will be back to speak on the floor and offer amendments. I have pages and pages of examples of veterans who served this country honorably, proudly, and sacrificed to a great extent, who are getting substandard care in the system we are offering them today. Before we expand that system, what is needed is a rigorous oversight and debate about how we are doing what we are doing now.

The promise of access to care for our veterans, as shown by VA centers and clinics all across this country, hospitals all across this country, diagnostic procedures all across this country, reflects that when access is delayed, that care is denied. And that is what is happening right now far too often to the people who have served this country. We ought to be about fixing that and holding accountable those in the responsible positions, and holding ourselves accountable to do what is necessary to give at least the standard of care they could get anywhere else in the country. That is the direction in which we should go.

I thank the Presiding Officer for the time, and I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I look forward to discussing in the next several days the issues Senator COBURN raised, but I did want to make one clarification, and I hope the Senator is listening. He repeatedly indicated this legislation opens the door to every one of the 22 million veterans in America, and then proceeded to say that once you open the door, you are going to have inadequate care because we don't have the resources to take care of 22 million veterans. That simply is inaccurate and that is not in the legislation.

There is nothing in the legislation that says we open the door to every veteran in America regardless of income. So when people talk about the VA suddenly being flooded by veterans and care being diminished because of the huge increase into the system, that is just not true.

What is true? What is true right now is we have an absurd and complicated income eligibility system throughout this country. What happens in the State of Vermont or the State of California—one's eligibility for the VA, if you are a priority 8—is different and dependent upon the county in which you live. So in Vermont, you can be living in a county where if your income level is \$45,000 a year you are eligible for VA health care, but in a county where the line is drawn just across the street, you may not be eligible. In States such as California or Georgia, which have many, many, many counties, you have the absurd situation where a person living on one side of the street is eligible for VA health care, but the person living on the other side of the street is not eligible for VA health care.

This is totally absurd, and we end up having hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of different income eligibility standards. So what this legislation does is not open the door—and I hope my Republican colleagues will not continue to say it because it is not true—but it does say that in a State where you have different income eligibility standards based on counties, what we will do is have one income eligibility standard per State, that being the highest level. So we will have 50 different standards—50 different standards for 50 different States—not have hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of different standards. In every State there will be an income eligibility level, but it will not open the door for health care to 22 million veterans.

Second of all, we were very careful in this legislation to say, if a veteran who, under this bill, would be eligible for VA health care, a veteran who can newly access VA health care, we absolutely have to have the medical infrastructure available so that all veterans will get the quality care they need; so that new veterans coming in will not diminish service for other veterans. In

this bill we make clear—and we made this clear in our long discussion with the Disabled American Veterans—the priority for the VA remains those veterans who are injured in action, those veterans who need that care. That is the highest priority that we establish.

So when people say we are opening the door to all veterans, care is going to be diminished, that simply is not true. That is not what the bill says.

Thirdly, let me reiterate some of the provisions in this bill, because before we vote on final passage—and, by the way, I want to take this opportunity to thank every Member of the Senate for voting to proceed. I think it is time we had some very serious debate about VA health care, and now is the time to do it. But let me reiterate a point I made earlier. Senator COBURN raised important issues, Senator BURR before him raised important issues, and we should debate those issues. But in all due respect for the veterans of this country, who have sacrificed so much, let us not politicize this debate on veterans issues by bringing in sanctions against Iran or let us not bring in ObamaCare, let us not bring in the dozens of other issues that are out there. Let us debate this issue on its merits. Let us bring forth amendments which deal with veterans issues.

Senator COBURN and Senator BURR have amendments which deal with veterans issues. I welcome those amendments. Let us have those debates. Nobody ever suggested this bill is perfect. There are a lot of Senators out there, Democrats and Republicans, who have ideas about how we can improve the services and the programs we provide to veterans. I welcome those ideas. But do not destroy this legislation by politicizing it, by doing what we have done month after month, year after year, which is why the American people have so much contempt for what goes on in Congress. Let us focus on veterans issues.

We have differences of opinion. Let us debate those issues. Let us not bring in extraneous matters, poison pills, which will give people a reason to vote against this bill. Let us debate veterans issues.

Let me talk about some of the issues in this bill that my Republican colleagues did not talk about. No. 1, I am proud—I hope we are all proud—that recently we made sure the promises made to military retirees were kept, that we rescinded the 1-percent COLA decrease that was in the bipartisan budget agreement. But we did not go far enough. Men and women who are joining the military after January 2014 are still subject to that decrease in COLA.

Are we in favor of keeping promises to all veterans, including the new members of the Armed Forces or are we not? Let us debate that issue. I believe that we keep our promises to all

veterans. That is in the bill. If people want to oppose that, they have the right to oppose that.

We have heard in several instances that the VA does not have the medical infrastructure to take care of the needs of veterans, and that is true. That is why in this bill we authorize the VA to enter into 27 major medical facility leases in 18 States and in Puerto Rico—18 States and Puerto Rico.

So don't come forward and say "gee, VA does not have the infrastructure to take care of veterans needs" but then vote against a provision that significantly expands VA health care capabilities. I talked a moment ago about what we mean by expanding VA health care. We do away with the absurdly complicated bureaucratic situation that now exists in which there are hundreds of different income eligibility standards in the 50 States of the country. We reduce it to 50. In California or Vermont, you will know whether you are eligible for health care as a Priority 8 veteran.

Does it open the opportunity for more veterans to come into VA health care? It does. The reason is because VA provides good-quality health care to our veterans, which is why the veterans throughout this country whom I have talked to and in patient satisfaction surveys approve and are supportive of VA health care. More want to come into the system.

We heard just how terrible and awful VA health care is, and then we heard: We don't want to open the doors because it is going to be flooded with new people coming into VA health care. You can't have it both ways. If VA health care is so terrible, why are you afraid of new people coming into VA health care? The answer is that if you go out to the veterans community, they will tell you: Yeah, there are problems in VA. But there are problems in every health care institution in this country. Over 30,000 Americans die every single year because they don't get to the doctor when they should because they don't have health care. I don't want any veterans to be part of that number.

Hospitals all over this country are struggling with an epidemic of infections. The VA has done better than many other medical institutions in addressing that.

In terms of telehealth—which is so important to veterans in my rural State and in rural States all over the country—guess which medical institution is leading the country in terms of telehealth. It is the Veterans' Administration. That means a veteran can walk into a VA community-based outreach clinic in rural West Virginia and have a teleconference with a specialist in any other part of the country. VA has been cutting-edge in terms of telehealth.

We talk about medical technology and medical health care records. Guess

which health care institution in America has led the effort in terms of medical and health care technology. It has been the VA.

So I find it interesting that on one hand some of my colleagues tell us how terrible VA health care is, and on the other hand they are nervous that hundreds of thousands of veterans may want to access VA health care because, in fact, it is one of the best health care institutions in the country.

Does VA have problems? Of course it has problems. I am not aware of any health care institution in America that does not have its share of problems. The difference between the VA and many private or nonprofit hospitals is—and it should be this way—by law, every problem at the VA makes it to the front pages. My guess is that if a hospital in West Virginia or Vermont screws up, they don't necessarily make it to the front pages. Because VA is public and by law they have to be transparent, they are on the front pages.

In terms of advanced appropriations for VA, my friends on the other side have a bit of a problem with that. I don't. I find it interesting that when our Republican colleagues in the House shut down the U.S. Government because they don't like and wanted to defund ObamaCare, we were 7 days to 10 days away from preventing disabled veterans from getting the checks they need in order to survive. So I believe advanced funding for the VA to make sure that they are never put in that position again, that there is money in the bank to pay the benefits we owe to our veterans in the event of another government shutdown, is good public policy.

As I mentioned earlier, when we talk about health care, in my view, we have to talk about dental care as well. If people do not have adequate dental care, it impacts their employability, say if they are missing front teeth. People get sick from infections if they don't have adequate dental care. I think we owe it to our veterans to make sure they do.

This legislation provides a pilot project for 30,000 veterans to begin to access dental care within the VA. We will see how that pilot goes. I suspect we are going to see a huge need out there. And if some of my colleagues think veterans are not entitled to dental care, then we have a difference of opinion. That is fine. Let's debate it. But I think dental care is an intrinsic part of health care in general. I think we have a dental care crisis in the United States of America and within the dental community. Right now dental care is available to those veterans who have suffered service-connected dental problems but not available to veterans in general. I want to change that.

I have heard the discussion about the backlog. Every Member of the Senate

is concerned about the backlog. We have had hearings in the Senate about the backlog. I am really glad that today people are concerned about the backlog. I just wonder where they were 5 years ago when—before Obama became President—the VA was probably the largest institution in this Nation, if not the world, that still did all of its benefits processing work on paper, not digitally.

When Secretary Shinseki became Secretary of the VA, he said: We are going to bring the VA into the 21st century. We are going to go from paper to digital, to an electronic system.

That is what they have been doing, and what we have seen is real progress. Is it fast enough for me? No, it is not. But Secretary Shinseki has told me personally and our committee that they are on track, so by the end of 2014 all VA claims will be processed within 120 days with 98 percent accuracy. That is pretty good. Just think for a moment what a huge task that is. Individual veteran files wider than this, with years and years of records, have to be put into a digital system. That is what they are doing, and they are making progress. In this legislation, we have brought forth Republican and Democrat ideas to make sure that they are, in fact, on target and that they reach the very ambitious goals Secretary Shinseki brought forth.

So if you are interested in the claims backlog, vote for this legislation because we have bipartisan language in it to make sure veterans do not have to wait years to get their claims processed.

My friend from Oklahoma said he is not sympathetic to the idea that veterans should pay instate tuition, which is essentially what we meant when we passed the post-9/11 GI educational bill. Every time we bring forth legislation, we hear all of the reasons why we should not go forward in providing services and benefits to our veterans.

I would argue—and many economists would agree with me—that one of the most significant pieces of legislation passed in the modern history of the United States of America was the GI bill of World War II. That bill said to the millions of people who fought in World War II, in that terrible war: When you come home, no matter what your income is, you will be eligible to get a higher education. As a result of that legislation, millions of soldiers who returned were able to go to college. They became businessmen, they became doctors, they became lawyers. And one of the reasons the economy of the United States of America expanded significantly for the middle class was a direct result of that very important GI bill.

What we said several years ago was that we should take that premise and apply it to the men and women who served post-9/11 in Iraq and Afghani-

stan. It was quite a political debate here. Some of my Republican friends had their doubts. We passed it, and today over 1 million veterans and their family members are now getting a college education. In my view, that was exactly the right thing to do.

One of the problems is that veterans move about. So if they go from the State where they have lived their whole life—for example, they lived in Vermont and go to California—and the GI bill promises them instate tuition, it turns out the tuition in the State they are in now may be a lot higher than in their home State and sometimes makes it impossible for them to go to college.

We agree with virtually all the veterans organizations that the intent of the post-9/11 GI education bill was to make sure they get instate tuition. So if somebody from California comes to Vermont, they get our instate tuition. If somebody from Vermont goes to California, they get their instate tuition. Not doing so denies many people a higher education.

Previously, this Congress passed language which says that if you served in Iraq and Afghanistan, you are going to get 5 years of free health care, which was the right thing to do. It turns out not everybody learned about the benefit. Four or five years have come and gone. What we say to those veterans is, we are going to give you another 5 years to take advantage of that provision.

Senator MURRAY from Washington—the former chair of the Veterans' Affairs Committee who preceded me—and Senator REID earlier today talked about the employment situation for veterans. I think we all know we are in a tough economy. Real unemployment is close to 13 percent. Youth unemployment is higher. So when somebody who gets out of the service and comes home to look for a job—it is hard to do.

I believe we have to do what we can to make sure that when people leave the service they can find a job. That is what this legislation does. We also want to make sure the skills acquired by the men and women of our Armed Forces while on Active Duty or in the National Guard become applicable to civilian life as well, and we have language in this bill that does that.

There is another issue which I didn't hear my Republican colleagues talking about but which is a very important part of the bill. We have a situation where some 2,300 veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan have come back with a variety of wounds that make it impossible for them to have children. I will give one example.

Army veteran Matt Keil of Colorado was wounded by sniper fire in Iraq in 2007. The sniper's round struck Matt's neck, causing severe damage to a vital artery and his spinal cord. Through sheer determination and with the love

and resolve of his wife Tracy, Matt's condition improved. He and Tracy began to consider having children. Doctors assured them that having children could be possible with the help of in vitro fertilization. The Keil family paid more than \$30,000 for reproductive treatments.

In the legislation on the floor now, we say that is wrong. If a servicemember who was injured in war wants to have a family and is unable to have a family, we should make it possible for them to do so. If some of my colleagues on the other side disagree, that is fine. Let's have that debate. I think we owe it to the 2,300 men and women who were wounded in battle. They should have the opportunity to raise a family.

We all know that one of the uglier aspects of military service in recent years has been the epidemic of sexual assault. When we send people into the military, we do not want to see men and women being sexually assaulted. I know the Department of Defense is working hard to address this issue, but the fact is that many veterans who came home from war were sexually assaulted. This legislation contains important provisions that would improve the delivery of care and benefits to veterans who experienced sexual trauma while serving in the military.

This provision was inspired by Ruth Moore. She struggled for 23 years to receive VA disability compensation. This is a woman who was sexually assaulted and had a very difficult time proving that and getting the care she needed. We address that issue in this legislation.

In 2010, the Congress took a very significant step forward in saying to family members who were caring for disabled vets that we understood how terribly difficult it is for them. There are wives, sisters, brothers, and other family members who, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, are on call for veterans who have suffered serious injuries, and that is tough. That is very tough and stressful. There are wives and sisters and brothers out there who don't get any time off. They are on call 7 days a week.

We passed a caregivers act that provides a modest stipend. It provides training and time off for people who are caring for veterans 7 days a week. It says, you can have a day off. We will send in a nurse. We did that for post-9/11 veterans. The truth is there are tens of thousands of families who are experiencing and going through the same issues and have been doing so for decades. I believe it is appropriate that we expand the caregivers act to every generation of veterans and make sure that those families get the help they need.

I have heard some of my Republican colleagues say this legislation simply opens the door to every veteran in America to come in, and that when

they come in, the quality of care is going to be diminished. That is simply an inaccurate statement, and I hope my colleagues read the legislation before they repeat that. It is not true. What we do is end the absurd and complicated situation of having hundreds and hundreds of different income eligibility standards. Instead of many hundreds of standards, there will be one in each State, and it will be the highest standard, which will mean that more veterans are able to come into VA health care. It does not open the door. We have been clear in saying we will not bring more veterans in until we make sure we have the infrastructure to deal with those veterans.

Some people have said: Well, why do you want to bring more veterans into the VA? The answer is pretty simple. I talked to many veterans in Vermont who would like to get into VA health care because of the respect and the knowledge about the needs of veterans and the high quality of care they get, and the fact that there is a strong network of primary health care facilities all over the country which they can access.

I will conclude for the moment by saying I very much appreciate the fact that every single Member of the Senate—I believe there were 99 votes—voted to proceed on this debate. I look forward to this debate. It is an important debate. I look forward to serious amendments which address the needs of veterans. I think it would be very disrespectful to the veterans community if we started injecting into this debate totally extraneous and highly political and partisan issues.

The issue of sanctions in Iran is a very important issue. People have honest differences of opinion. That is not an issue regarding VA health care. It is not an issue regarding the caregivers program. It is not an issue regarding dental care for our veterans.

Let's respect veterans and have this debate on veterans issues and not on extraneous political issues which will divide us. Let's try to come together and not be divided.

With that, I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. RISCH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING MAYOR MARSHA OGILVIE

Mr. RISCH. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to a distinguished Idahoan, Marcia H. Ogilvie, a loyal and steadfast mayor of Sandpoint, ID.

On January 8 of this year Mayor Ogilvie lost a valiant battle with cancer, and my State lost a good friend, a champion for women and children, and a tireless public servant.

Mayor Ogilvie was born at March Air Force Base in southern California and moved to the great State of Idaho in 1994. In the 20 years she made Idaho her home, she distinguished herself in service to others. As she once said—and many in Sandpoint now say—she won the hearts and minds of the people in Sandpoint.

Elected mayor just 2 years ago, and having served the previous 2 years on the city council, Mayor Ogilvie leaves a giant hole in those hearts and in the broader community. The business and professional experience Mayor Ogilvie brought was wide and varied and earned her the respect of many.

Early in her career, she served in restaurant and retail management. When she and her husband Francis arrived in Sandpoint, they opened a couple of small businesses—the Candy Cottage and All Smiles, a gift shop. But Marsha Ogilvie was not just about business. She cared deeply about the health, welfare, and success of women and children.

Soon after moving to Idaho, and well before entering public service, she established Kinderhaven, a nonprofit community organization which is dedicated to supporting children in crisis. Founded in 1996, and under the vision and compassionate care of Marsha Ogilvie, more than 1,300 children have found the all-important help they needed in times of their great distress. So important to the Sandpoint community, Kinderhaven was named the grand prize winner in the 2002 Governor's Brightest Stars Awards.

In addition, Mrs. Ogilvie, who crossed paths with many women serving as volunteers in the Sandpoint community, started Women Honoring Women. It was designed to be a one-time event, but it has evolved since 1999 into an annual event to recognize and honor women in Bonner County, ID. It recognizes women 65 or older who are working to make a difference in the lives of others, who love to learn, and who exhibit qualities of leadership.

Marsha Ogilvie recognized these qualities in others because she too possessed them—well, all but one. She was only 64 when she passed away.

If these achievements were not enough, Marsha Ogilvie joined with three friends to co-author a children's book which was just recently published. "Gigi's Enchanted Forest" was a way to honor the life of a mutual friend of theirs who shared their hope for and love of children and a dedication to community service.

Mayor Marsha H. Ogilvie personified a life of giving and caring. Her unparalleled legacy of hard work, reaching out to her community, and recognizing those who help others in volunteer service is indelibly etched on the hearts and minds of those she served in Sandpoint, ID, and far beyond the city limits.

May God bless her husband, her family, and the hundreds of Idahoans who will miss her passion, exuberance, and spirit of joy.

I thank the Presiding Officer and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, late in the day on Friday—after reporters had gone home for the weekend—the Obama administration quietly released its new Medicare Advantage payment rates. The cuts the President wants to make to this program are potentially devastating to millions of Americans.

The next morning the New York Times' headline read: "U.S. Proposes Cuts to Rates in Payments for Medicare."

Politico wrote about it too. They said:

The Obama Administration is proposing a major cut in 2015 payments to Medicare Advantage.

Fifteen million Americans depend on these health insurance plans the President wants to cut.

Instead of listening to seniors and investing in a program that works well, the Obama administration is doing everything conceivable to make sure Medicare Advantage fails.

Back in December the press gave President Obama the Lie of the Year Award for his statement that if you like your health care plan, you can keep it. Millions of people across America have now gotten letters saying their insurance plans are being canceled because of the Democrats' health care law. By cutting Medicare Advantage, I tell my colleagues, the Obama administration is now ensuring that even more Americans can't keep the health care plan they like.

Twenty-nine percent of all Medicare patients have chosen to enroll in Medicare Advantage. There is a reason for that. The Medicare Advantage Program lives up to its name by delivering clear advantages. The plans give extra benefits such as dental coverage, vision coverage, hearing benefits, wellness programs, and other benefits that are important to our seniors. Sometimes they offer smaller copayments, lower deductibles, and less out-of-pocket costs than the traditional Medicare Program does. Sometimes seniors even pay a higher monthly premium for

these extra benefits, but often the benefits are financed through plan savings due to the programs and the way they work.

For many seniors Medicare Advantage is a good option. It is the right option for them. These are people who don't have a lot of money but who still want the peace of mind that comes with good health insurance. Those seniors are now facing much higher costs or lower benefits because of the Obama administration's decisions rolled out last Friday night. Because of this proposal and the administration's way to try to sneak it out on Friday, seniors are concerned and anxious about what the administration is also hiding.

Ever since the President and Democrats in Congress passed their health care law, they have been going after seniors who rely on Medicare. They raided a total of over \$700 billion from Medicare—and we discussed that during the debate over the health care law. The money was taken from seniors on Medicare not to strengthen Medicare, not to secure the future of Medicare but to start a whole new government program for other people. There is a whole new bureaucracy, and it has been created by Washington Democrats in the health care law.

ObamaCare specifically targeted the Medicare Advantage Program, significant amounts of direct and indirect payment cuts totaling over \$300 billion. That is 43 percent of the total Medicare cuts, just for this one program. So 29 percent of America's seniors rely on Medicare Advantage. Because about 29 percent of seniors on Medicare are in Medicare Advantage, they are responsible for 43 percent of the cuts.

Because of these cuts and other changes in the law, fewer private health care plans are going to be able to participate in Medicare Advantage in the future. That means a number of things. It means some people who rely on these plans are going to find out their plan is being canceled entirely. Some people in Iowa—thousands of people in Iowa—have already gotten letters canceling their Medicare Advantage plan.

The Kaiser Family Foundation looked at what the President's health care law does to seniors and they said that about a one-half million patients will lose their existing coverage—seniors on Medicare Advantage. These seniors are going to have fewer options to get the care they need from the doctor they choose at a lower cost. More of these people are going to be forced into a one-size-fits-all government plan. They are going to lose the insurance they had, insurance they liked and that worked for them.

Some people may find their new insurance network doesn't include the doctors they had before. We have seen this happening all across the country. As the major provider of Medicare Ad-

vantage had to try to make it all work, they had to eliminate many doctors from their plans, so that those doctors are not going to be able to keep their patients and those patients are not going to be able to keep their doctors, in spite of what the President told the American people when he looked into the camera and said: If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor.

A lot of these people are going to see their costs increase. The Kaiser Family Foundation says the average out-of-pocket limit for Medicare Advantage plans is going to increase by \$464 this year. The President and Washington Democrats said their health care plan was going to save people money. That is what the President told the country. That is why he said he did this whole health care law. He said it was going to save people money. That is what people wanted. The President told people what they wanted to hear, but he failed to give them what he promised. That is why his credibility ratings are down. That is why people believe he misled them intentionally, and that is why this administration is viewed to be incompetent by a majority of Americans. It turns out costs continue to go up because of the law.

This new round of cuts to Medicare Advantage is just another example of how the health care law is wrecking our health care system, not fixing it. America's health care system wasn't working before, but the President and the law Democrats voted for has made it worse.

Medicare is headed toward bankruptcy, but the Obama administration has rejected bipartisan solutions to reform and to strengthen the program. Through cuts such as the ones announced last Friday, the President's health care law takes money from Medicare and uses it to pay for something else.

There was actually a double data dump that occurred on Friday: the Medicare Advantage cuts that were announced late in the day, and then later than that the CMS—the Medicare/Medicaid services for the country—came out with their report and it reported that two-thirds of small businesses that provide health insurance for their employees would see their prices go up because of the health care law—two-thirds of small businesses. These are ones that by law don't have to provide health insurance—with employees of less than 50, they don't have to, by law, supply it, but they often do supply it. They do supply that insurance. I think about 17 million people get insurance that way, through work—businesses that are not mandated to supply the insurance, but they do it to get good workers. As a result, what they are seeing is that their rates are going up.

So that was part of the double data dump that occurred on Friday.

It was interesting to see a note that came out of the Democrats' lunch

meeting today. It was just reported in Roll Call magazine. It said: "A group of Senate Democrats is expected to launch a counteroffensive in favor of ObamaCare on Wednesday, a response to persistent attacks on the law from their Republican counterparts."

First, I will point out the attacks on the law are coming from American citizens all around the country. It is what we hear at townhall meetings and it is what we hear as we travel around the country, people whose families are noting that they are paying more and getting less, losing their doctors and losing their insurance. But the report in Roll Call says:

Democrats discussed the new endeavor touting benefits of the Affordable Care Act during Tuesday's weekly caucus lunch to a warm reception, according to Connecticut's Christopher S. Murphy, who is one of the senators leading the effort. A Senate Democrat aide said the formal rollout will come Wednesday.

I welcome the opportunity to hear what the Democrats have to say because the damage being done by this health care law to people all across the country is significant.

It is interesting because all we need to do is turn to Friday's New York Times, Robert Pear, an excellent writer for the Times, who had, I thought, a fascinating story. He took two pages of the paper: "Public Sector Capping Part-Time Hours . . ." Public sector capping part-time hours. Why? Right here in the headline: "to Skirt Health Care Law."

Let me start: "Cities, counties, public schools and community colleges around the country"—we are not talking about businesses or fast food chains; we are talking about cities, counties, public schools and community colleges around the country—"have limited or reduced the work hours of part-time employees . . ." Why? "to avoid having to provide them with health insurance under the Affordable Care Act, state and local officials say. The cuts to public sector employment, which has failed to rebound since the recession"—it says right here—"could serve as a powerful political weapon for Republican critics of the health care law, who claim it is creating a drain on the economy."

It is creating a drain on the economy. We have two folks in the picture in Medina, OH, working on a trash truck. One of the gentlemen talks about his hours being limited to 29 hours. He called it "a hit to his wallet."

The President is fighting to talk about raising the minimum wage, when people are actually losing take-home pay. It is impacting their wages, the health care law is. It is impacting how much money they take home at the end of the week.

The next page talks about somebody who works as a clerk in the parks department saw her hours drop from 38 a

week to 35 and then to 29. Why? Because of the health care law and the 30-hour limit.

It is interesting to go through the list of the different jobs of people who are losing hours, who want to work. These are hard-working Americans who are having their hours cut—public sector workers, people who work for cities, counties, public schools, community colleges. The list goes on: police dispatchers, prison guards, substitute teachers, bus drivers, athletic coaches, school custodians, cafeteria workers, and part-time professors; office clerks, sanitation workers, park inspectors—all in all, people who are being hurt because of the President's health care law and the mandates and the way it is put together by this President and the Democrats who voted for it.

It is interesting to see the Senator from Connecticut mentioned here as leading the effort, and I would recommend to him this article by Robert Pear in Friday's New York Times, who goes specifically to the core of what is happening in Connecticut, in that Senator's home State. It says:

Mark Benigni, the superintendent of schools in Meriden, CT—a public school, public sector—and a board member of the American Association of School Administrators said in an interview that the new health care law is having "unintended consequences for school systems across the Nation."

This health care law is full of unintended consequences. Now we have someone who is a board member for the American Association of School Administrators saying that the health care law is having unintended consequences for school systems across the Nation. He specifically says, in Connecticut, as in many States—this is the article now:

In Connecticut, as in many States, significant numbers of part-time school employees work more than 30 hours a week and do not receive health benefits.

Quoting the superintendent in schools in Meriden, CT:

Are we supposed to lay off full-time teachers? Are we supposed to lay off full-time teachers so that we can provide insurance coverage to part-time employees?

The superintendent goes on to say:

If I had to cut five reading teachers to pay for health benefits for substitute teachers, I am not sure that would be best for our students.

So I would ask the President of the United States: What do you want? These are the choices that because of your health care law, crammed down the throats of the American people, you are asking the public sector of our country to make. Get rid of five reading teachers in Meriden, CT, to pay for expensive health insurance policies for substitute teachers. That superintendent is trying to say, I am not sure that what the law requires would be best for our students.

I think this law was not well-thought-out, was not well planned. So I

will be interested tomorrow to see Senate Democrats come to the floor with their ObamaCare PR counteroffensive and explain to the American people why they are being faced with a disastrous Web site rollout 4 days after the President told the American people it will be easier to use than Amazon and cheaper than your cell phone bill and you can keep your doctor if you like your doctor. Let them explain why 5 million people then got letters from insurance companies saying their insurance policies have been canceled; why the Web site failure is just the tip of the iceberg that the American people are seeing right now in terms of premiums going up, canceled policies, can't keep their doctor, higher out-of-pocket costs, higher copays, higher deductibles, all in spite of the President's glowing promises which, in my opinion, were made to deceive the American people in an effort to pass a health care law which many people see as bad for patients, bad for providers, and bad for the taxpayers.

I will continue to come to the floor and talk about what I hear as I go home to Wyoming each week in terms of a health care law which is not providing the patients what they asked for, what they need, and what they were promised.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I wish to thank my colleague Senator BARRASSO for coming to the floor, and now I would like to give a second opinion to what he has just said.

He said he wants to wait until tomorrow to hear some success stories about the Affordable Care Act. I am going to give him a preview tonight.

Ray Romanowski—62 years old, city of Chicago, musician, part-time employee, barrel-chested Polish guy who belongs in the city of Chicago—sat next to me at a clinic, patted his wallet and said: Guess what, Senator. I have health insurance for the first time in my life, and it feels good.

Judy takes care of hotel rooms down in southern Illinois, a place that I stay. She is over there in the hospitality room. Same story: 62 years old, worked every day she could and never had health insurance one day in her life. She was diagnosed with diabetes and, thank God, she now has, because of the Affordable Care Act, health insurance.

Those are just a couple of stories.

What the Senator from Wyoming did not tell you is that there are aspects of this Affordable Care Act which American families value. Do you have a child in your family who is sick with maybe asthma, diabetes? Is your wife a cancer survivor? In the old days before the Affordable Care Act, that meant it would be hard to get health insurance and, if you could, it would be very expensive.

So we changed it. We said: You cannot discriminate against families because somebody happens to be sick. Those of us who have raised families know that happens pretty regularly. So that protection is in the law, and it is a protection which some of the absolutists want to repeal. Get rid of it. Let's get back to the good old days when a sick child would basically disqualify a family from health insurance.

It used to be that insurance companies had odd ways of basically rating people when it came to premiums. One of the disabilities they identified was if the person seeking health insurance was a woman. They would discriminate against women seeking health insurance because it is possible they would become pregnant and more expensive. We did away with that discrimination as well.

Then there were lifetime limits. Madam President, \$100,000 in health insurance coverage may sound great, but if you go into the hospital or see the doctor the next day and you are told you have cancer and have to face radiation, chemotherapy, and more, \$100,000 will not last very long, and pretty soon you are into life savings and pretty soon after that you are into bankruptcy, something the Presiding Officer knows very well.

So we eliminated the lifetime limits on health insurance policies as part of the Affordable Care Act. I do not hear the Senator from Wyoming and others suggesting they want to go back to those days. Do they?

The bottom line is this: The Affordable Care Act is a good law. We wrote it and passed it without the help of any Republicans. Not a single one of them would step up and join us in this effort. Now they have done nothing for the last 4 years but criticize it.

I will say this. It is not perfect. It can be improved. I will invite the Senator from Wyoming, who is a medical doctor and a man I respect, to join us in improving it. Let's find a way to make it better. Let's fix it. There are things that can be fixed into law. That is what people sent us here to do. We can give speeches about how good or bad it is, but most Americans want it to work. They want health insurance that is affordable and available and accessible, and they want to make sure they are going to be treated fairly once they buy it.

I think the marketplaces we will tell you about are working for a lot of families, and we are going to come to the floor to tell those stories. I know the other side spent a long time talking about what they consider to be shortcomings, and there are some obvious shortcomings with the Affordable Care Act. The rollout was a disaster. Anybody who says otherwise was not paying attention. For 60 days we worked to get our Web sites up and running, and some of them still leave room to be desired, leave room for improvement.

But I talked to a businessman in Chicago last week, and he said: It is a good thing my business failures are not on the front page of the paper every day because I have made a lot of mistakes, but I keep going until I get it right. That is what we ought to do, keep going until we get it absolutely right.

We have a good start, trying to bring 60 million uninsured Americans under protection of health insurance, to allow people to shop for the best policy for their family. That is realistic.

I also want to add one thing. The critics of the Affordable Care Act assume that before we passed it, health insurance premiums did not increase. We know better. Particularly for those who had small businesses and individuals, their policies were canceled on average once every 24 months, and their health insurance premiums went up 12 to 20 percent.

A friend of mine has a small trucking company. He tried to cover his employees who worked for him and their families until one of the employees had a sick baby, and then the health insurance premiums went through the roof and they all were out on their own. With the help from the employer—what he used to pay each month—they had a helping hand looking for health insurance.

He went to buy health insurance for himself—himself, the owner of the company—and his wife. It turned out that if you turned in a claim this year for a problem you had with your foot, next year that company health insurance plan—the one he bought—would not cover anything related to your feet. So you slowly exclude all the possible claims that can be made for profitability. Then, in the end, you have a worthless health insurance policy.

Those were the old days. I would say to the Senator from Wyoming and his friends, we are not going back to the old days. We can improve this law. Let's work together to do it. But we are not going back to the days of discrimination based on preexisting conditions, lifetime limits on policies, discrimination against women, excluding children from the health insurance of their families—the things that really were wrong with the system.

Help us make it better, but do not just come here and complain. I think people expect us to be more positive and constructive.

Madam President, I rise in strong support of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits Act of 2014. Chairman BERNIE SANDERS of Vermont has put together a comprehensive improvement, which I support. He is new as chairman, but he is off to a flying start.

The bill reminds us of our obligations to veterans. I especially appreciate that he worked with me on a few priorities. It authorizes a new \$10 million initiative in prosthetics and orthotics.

Limb loss is one of the signature wounds of Iraq and Afghanistan. There are not enough medical professionals with the expertise needed to fit veterans with the best orthotic or prosthetic for their injuries.

Now the Department of Veterans Affairs can partner with universities to expand the number of master's degree programs so our wounded warriors continue to receive the best care.

This veterans package also addresses a problem I have been working to fix that allows veterans to consolidate student loans or participate in student loan forgiveness without penalty.

Congress capped the interest rate for servicemembers at 6 percent several years ago, but a loophole has prevented servicemembers from keeping that protection if they consolidate their student debt or enroll in the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. This bill closes that loophole.

The bill makes sure veterans using their GI bill education benefits will pay instate tuition rates. Senator SANDERS has a good bill when it comes to student loans.

There is one provision in it of special interest and importance to me. Several years ago one of our colleagues, a Senator from New York by the name of Hillary Clinton, came up with a great idea. Senator Clinton said: We ought to help the caregivers for disabled vets. I liked the idea a lot and was kind of envious that she came up with it first. Then she moved on to be Secretary of State. So I called her at the State Department and asked: Hillary, is it OK if I take up your bill on caregivers? She said: Be my guest. And I did. I introduced the Hillary Clinton caregivers bill, and ultimately, with the help of Senator Akaka and others, we passed it.

Here is what it says. If you had someone who was injured after 9/11 and disabled and you were prepared to give them care, we are going to help you. For that wife who stands by her husband, a husband who stands by his wife, a mother or father helping the disabled vet, here is what we will offer to you: first, the very best in skilled nursing training so you know how to take care of your veteran and do it the right way; secondly, a respite. Two weeks out of the year you get a vacation. We are going to send in some skilled nurses so you can go off and relax. You deserve it after spending 50 weeks caring for this veteran. Third, if you are in a bind economically, financially, we want to make sure you are going to have enough money to survive. So we offered a monthly stipend to those caregivers who are helping.

Let me tell you some stories that I think illustrate this so well, why it is important and why it is working.

In 2005, Eric Edmundson was a 26-year-old Army sergeant when he survived a roadside blast in Iraq. He went

into cardiac arrest while waiting for a transport to a military hospital. His brain was deprived of oxygen for almost 30 minutes. He became a quadriplegic as a result of the injuries.

The VA basically told Eric's parents Ed and Beth that there was no hope and no place to turn. The doctors said Eric would spend the rest of his life in a vegetative state and he should be sent to a nursing home. His dad said not only no, but hell no, this is my 26-year-old son, and I am not giving up on him.

So Eric was transferred to the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, which is where I first met him. His recovery was incredible. His mom and dad stayed by their son's side until the day when we proudly watched Eric, with a helping hand, literally walk out of the hospital in his dress uniform—a sign of dramatic progress in just a few months.

Today, he is living in North Carolina with his wife and two children—beautiful kids. His parents are his full-time caregivers, and they share their home with Eric and his wife.

But even these family caregivers like Ed and Beth need a helping hand. They told me about Hillary Clinton's bill, and they got me started. I am glad they did. Because now that it has become the law, 12,000 families just like theirs across America are getting the helping hand of the caregiver program. It helps the veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan, with their families, be where they want to be: at home with their families. If you want to get down to the bottom line, it saves the government money. It costs a lot more money to put people in VA facilities than to help these families keep the veterans at home where they want to be.

Let me show you one other one, which I think is a great story. This is the story of Yuriy Zmysly, who was a marine serving in Afghanistan and Iraq. He returned to the United States for what was going to be a routine surgery at a military hospital, but because of complications from the surgery, from an appendix procedure, he was left with a severe brain injury.

Aimee—who is shown right here in this picture—was his fiancée at the time. When Yuriy reached the point where he came out in a state where he was in a wheelchair and struggling, Aimee said: I promised you I loved you and I was going to marry you and we are going through with it. And she did. She married Yuriy and stood by his side. They have a beautiful daughter Adelina, whom I met just a couple weeks ago in Chicago. She is 4 months old. It is for caregivers such as Aimee, who dropped everything and even dropped out of school to help care for this disabled vet Yuriy that this program is designed.

I am proud of this program. I think the 256—I think that is the right num-

ber—caregiver families in Illinois have a special helping hand as they help our disabled vets. We need to expand it. BERNIE SANDERS does just that. He expands this program beyond those veterans who were afflicted after 9/11 to those who were afflicted before, from previous conflicts, from previous service to our country.

This caregivers program is the right thing to do. These men and women who care for our disabled vets are truly saints and angels, and we ought to stand by them. Giving them a helping hand through this expansion of the caregivers program is right for America, it is right for our vets, and it is right for us to do for the men and women who risked their lives for our country.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. BURR addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator withhold?

Mr. DURBIN. I withhold.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I thank my colleague from Illinois, and I should have told him I was going to come out to be recognized. Let me thank him because he has raised a very important issue on caregivers.

I also want to thank him for the interest he took in Eric Edmundson, who is from North Carolina. I might add to the story, for my colleagues, there was not a caregiver program when Eric Edmundson's dad took over his care. He did what I think parents have a tendency to do. He said: It can be better for my son if I take control of it—and he ended up in Illinois at his dad's request. Although he has not made a full recovery, he has made a spectacular recovery from the prognosis. I know my good friend from Illinois has to go, but I appreciate him highlighting that.

Let me just say that I think all Members of the Senate would like to expand the caregivers program. I wrote the caregivers program. Senator Akaka, who was then the chairman, came to the floor and it was passed. As written, section 303 would expand the caregivers program to veterans of all eras. Let me say that again: Veterans of all eras we would extend the caregivers program to if the Sanders bill was passed.

I have the alternative bill, which is in the process of being filed. It does not expand the caregivers program—a program I am passionate about. I wrote it. It does not do it for a reason, and I want to turn to Senator Akaka's comments on the Senate floor when we passed this bill, where Senator Akaka, the chair of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, said this:

[O]ne, the needs and circumstances of the newest veterans in terms of the injuries are different—different—from those of veterans from earlier eras; two, the family situation

of the younger veterans is different from that of older veterans; and three, by targeting this initiative on a specific group of veterans, the likelihood of a successful undertaking is enhanced.

To me, the most important of these reasons mentioned by Senator Akaka was the belief that the VA would not be able to implement a program of that magnitude. That is why caregivers was crafted to be a program that we ramped up over time. It was targeted at a very specific population, and we envisioned that as the VA got more proficient at actual training and implementation of this program, it would be ramped up.

The VA has proven us right. They have had trouble in implementing this program in what is a very limited program. Their rollout and management of the program has been flawed in several areas and has been a disservice to those veterans in need of these critical services. Since the start of the program 2½ years ago, several problems have been brought to my attention. These problems include decisions regarding eligibility for the program which are inconsistent across the country—no quality assurance program to monitor the quality, consistency and timeliness of those decisions, and no formal process to appeal the decisions of eligibility for caregiver assistance.

Let me highlight the issues with this program. I want to share some stories of veterans' experiences. A veteran applied to the program at the VA in Colorado. His application was denied. Yet, after moving from Colorado to Florida, he applied again using the exact same information he had previously submitted in Colorado. The VA in Florida granted his application. How can this happen? It is because we have an agency that has yet to draw on the consistency needed to apply equally to our veterans.

Another veteran in Florida suffered from multiple gunshot wounds resulting in paraplegia. VA denied him entry into the program because he did not require assistance with at least one activity of daily living or ADL. He was being compensated through an aid and assistance or A & A program. I find it interesting that this veteran did not qualify for caregivers. He was actually compensated under the aid and assistance program because what he needs is ADL services, not just the one required under the caregiver program.

In addition, I have also heard many veterans and their caregivers were treated rudely by the VA staff when applying to these programs for a PTSD diagnosis. VA staff have told them that PTSD—get this—that PTSD is not a disability that requires assistance with ADLs or activities of daily living.

Assistance with the activities of daily living is only one of the four criteria needed as having a serious injury. Under the law, a veteran needs to meet

one of the four. Even the appeals process does not seem to be well thought through. You see, we can write the laws, but it is the agency's regulations that they write that dictate how these programs are run.

VA says that they have an appeals process. However, it is vastly different from the appeals process at VBA, the Veterans Benefit Administration. It leaves Veterans Service Officers or VSOs at a disadvantage to help veterans and their caregivers. VSOs have been told that VA considers it a medical decision and they cannot question the denial. The only recourse veterans and their caregivers have is to appeal to the medical center director. The problem with this is that it was the medical center director who denied the appeal in the first place.

I am going to go on as the days go on, describing the things in this program that we would all like to embrace, things that I think every Member of the Senate says: Yes, we ought to do this for veterans. Here is the problem. If we have a broken system, jamming more people into it is actually the worst thing we can do.

As I said earlier, there is nothing in the Sanders bill to fix the things that are broken at VA. There is nothing in the alternative bill to fix things in the VA. But the one thing that I do not do in the alternative bill is I do not jam millions more veterans into the system. Caregivers should be expanded as VA perfects how to implement it, to educate the caregivers, to be able to address the concerns, and, more importantly, the intent of why we wrote the program.

Enrollment or access to VA should only open if we have the health care professionals or the facilities to handle them, but not to crowd out those current veterans who leave the battlefield today and need the services that only the VA can provide. So, even though in everybody's wish list we would like to expand to every veteran, in the caregiver program we would like to expand to everybody who wants to care for a loved one, the truth is, we do the ones who are in the system an injustice if we are not prepared to be able to implement it, to handle it. That is the difference between the Sanders bill and my alternative. We simply look at the things that have bipartisan support, but do not necessarily grow the problem worse than it is today.

I said earlier, my regret—and I see my colleague from South Carolina is here. My regret in this debate is that we are not on the Senate floor debating reforms to the Veterans' Administration. I think the presiding officer would agree that there are areas—these are areas that do not have a partisan leaning. When we look at our Nation's veterans, we do not see one side of the aisle or the other. We see a promise we made to them and a commitment we have got to fulfill.

To ignore the things that need reform really is a mistake. To talk about expanding the population without reforming these areas, quite frankly, is disingenuous to the veterans to whom we owe so much.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, one, I would like to compliment Senator BURR for trying to find a way to improve veterans health care. I think the comment he made is pretty accurate. Before you expand a system that is clearly broken, it looks to me like you would want to fix it.

There is a bipartisan view that it is broken. A lot of solutions have bipartisan support. But we are where we are. I know Senator SANDERS is very genuine about wanting to expand veterans' benefits. I certainly understand where Senator BURR is coming from. We want to, one, pay for whatever we do, because we are \$17 trillion in debt. But, two, we have to look at the broken system. If you include another 14 million veterans, people who are not service connected and make them overnight eligible for VA health care that is in short supply, you will frustrate the ones who need it the most and take a weak system and completely break it. It seems to me that is not helping veterans at all.

But part of the package that Senator BURR has authored also deals with another problem of great and immediate concern: imposing sanctions on the Iranian nuclear program if the negotiations fail to deliver the desired result.

This is an unfortunate moment for me. Senators MENENDEZ and KIRK have been a team for a long time working to impose sanctions on the Iranian government as they march toward a nuclear weapon. We have imposed 16 rounds of sanctions since 1987; 9 U.N. Security Council resolutions since 2006, demanding the full and sustained suspension of all uranium enrichment related and reprocessing activities and its full cooperation with the IAEA.

This body has been bipartisan when it comes to the Iranian nuclear program and our support for Israel. Senator MENENDEZ has been one of the leading voices in the entire Congress. He deserves lots of credit. He is my friend. We have a new round of sanctions that are bipartisan. We have 17 Democratic cosponsors. We have all but two Republicans. So we have 59 cosponsors that would allow sanctions to be available and in place if we do not reach a final deal in this round of negotiations in the P5+1.

Why is it important that the Congress reimpose sanctions through new

legislation if there is failure? No. 1, the sanctions are designed to get the end game right. I believe that the only successful outcome through negotiations would be to dismantle the plutonium-producing reactor. The Iranians do not need a plutonium-producing reactor for a civilian nuclear power program to comply with the U.N. resolution that requires the removal of all highly enriched uranium. A lot of highly enriched uranium is now in the hands of the Iranian government. The U.N., of all bodies, has asked for it to be removed and turned over to the international community.

I worry that if you leave this highly enriched uranium in place in Iran, we will live to regret it. A dirty bomb becomes a real possibility. The other aspect of a final deal that has to be accomplished, in my view, is that the Iranian regime should be out of the enrichment business.

There are 15 nations that have nuclear power programs that do not enrich uranium. Mexico and Canada are two of those nations. We are objecting to the South Koreans who want to go into the enrichment business. I do not mind South Korea having a nuclear power program, but we really have to watch the spread of nuclear proliferation through the enrichment of uranium.

It is imminently possible to have a nuclear power program and have the fuel cycle controlled. You do not need to enrich to have commercial nuclear power. If you were going to make a list of countries that are unreliable and dangerous, and you would not want to give the right to enrich, I think Iran would be at the top. Just look at how this regime has behaved over the last 30 years. I do not have to time to go into all of the "list of horrors," but our resolutions regarding the Iranian nuclear program list them very well.

So we are at an impasse now. The Republican position is that we should have a new sanctions vote on the bipartisan sanctions bill now while the negotiations are going on to reinforce to the international community that we are very serious about pressure being applied to the Iranians until we get the deal that we all can live with. I think it is fair to say that the Iranians would not be in negotiations without crippling sanctions.

I want to give credit to the Obama administration for implementing a sanctions regime that really did cripple the Iranian economy, and it has gotten them to the table. Unfortunately, the interim deal has absolutely undercut all of our gains. I will give you some details as to why all we have accomplished has been undercut and the sanctions regime that got the Iranians to the table is crumbling before our eyes.

Here is what our allies in Israel say. The prime minister of Israel said: "Iran

got the deal of the century, the international community got a bad deal." I think he is absolutely right. Under the interim deal, not 1 ounce of highly enriched uranium is required to be taken out of Iran. Some of it would be chemically altered, and you can reverse that chemical process so that it could be processed for weapons use later down the road.

Not one centrifuge has been destroyed. Of the 16,000 to 18,000 centrifuges, not one has been destroyed. The plutonium-producing reactor is not being dismantled. It has been mothballed, for lack of a better word. I am not so sure it is even in a mothball status.

So the prime minister of Israel says: "Iran got the deal of the century, the international community got a bad deal." Again, I would agree. Nothing has been accomplished in the interim deal. The interim deal is so far away from a final deal, I do not see how you get there.

We have to dismantle the plutonium reactor completely, not just stop its construction or delay its construction. We should remove all of the highly enriched uranium out of the hands of the ayatollahs because it is too dangerous to leave it there. The U.N. agrees with that. That is the end position. They should not be allowed to enrich. If the Iranians want a peaceful nuclear power program, I will be the first to say: That is fine. Build a reactor in Iran. Build a couple of reactors if you like. Have the Russians help the Iranians construct their reactor, as long as the international community can control the fuel cycle.

There is no need to enrich in Iran for a peaceful nuclear power program. We would be crazy as a nation and a world to give this regime the right to enrich uranium and have a breakout, to go from low-level enrichment to 90 percent, to make a nuclear weapon. I think that is what they are trying to do. I would like every Senator to be able to answer a question from their constituents about this issue. Do you believe the Iranians have been trying to build a nuclear bomb rather than a nuclear power program?

It is clear to me they have been trying to build a nuclear bomb for a very long time. They get right up to the edge. They have one of the most sophisticated enrichment programs in the world. I do not think it is designed to produce peaceful nuclear power.

Here is what the head of Iran's nuclear agency said last night:

The iceberg of sanctions is melting while our centrifuges are also still working. This is our greatest achievement.

He is right. I mean, what more can I say? The head of the Iranian nuclear agency, said on Iranian state television:

The iceberg of sanctions is melting while our centrifuges are also still working. This is our greatest achievement.

This is what the foreign minister said:

The White House tries to portray it as basically a dismantling of Iranian's nuclear program.

The interim deal—

We are not dismantling any centrifuges, we're not dismantling any equipment, we're simply not producing, not enriching over 5 percent.

They are telling us and the world, with this interim deal, they are not dismantling a damn thing.

President Rouhani, the new moderate—if you believe that, I have some property I want to sell you—said on CNN: "So there will be no destruction of centrifuges—of existing centrifuges?" President Rouhani said: "No. No, not at all."

Well, if you believe, as I do, they should be out of the enrichment business, then all the centrifuges should be dismantled and destroyed. Because to allow this regime to continue to enrich is dangerous and, quite frankly, will lead to a military conflict between Israel and Iran and maybe others.

President Rouhani tweeted:

Our relationship with the world is based on Iranian nation's interest. In Geneva agreement, world powers surrendered to Iran's national will.

Well, maybe that is bluster. When you look at the evidence, it's not so much bluster. The Deputy Foreign Minister said of the interconnections between networks of centrifuges that have been used to enrich uranium to 20 percent, so that they can enrich only to 5 percent:

These interconnections can be removed in a day and connected again in a day.

So he is basically saying all we have done is basically pull the plug and we will just put it back in if we need to.

Here is what has happened since the interim deal with the sanctions regime. President Rouhani declared:

We have struck the first blow to the illegal sanctions, in the fields of insurance, shipping, the banking system, foodstuffs and medicine and exports of petrochemical materials.

He tweeted:

You are witness to how foreign firms are visiting our country; 117 political delegations have come here.

France, Turkey, Georgia, Ireland, Tunisia, Kazakhstan, China, Italy, India, Austria, and Sweden. The French chamber of commerce led a delegation to Iran not long ago with the head of Michelin Tire Company. I have been talking to the Michelin Company. They are not going to violate the sanctions, but they do believe that after this interim deal the smart money is that the sanctions are behind us.

The International Monetary Fund predicted Iran's economy could turn around due to the interim agreement. Listen to this:

The economy in Iran that was crippled because of the sanctions could turn around

based on the interim agreement that doesn't dismantle or remove anything. Prospects for 2014 and 2015 have improved with an interim P5+1 agreement. Real GDP growing by 1 to 2 percent in 2014-2015. Inflation would potentially climb 15 to 20 percent. India's oil imports from Iran more than doubled in January from a month earlier. China has emerged as Iran's top trading partner, with nonoil trade hitting \$13 billion over the last 10 months. U.S. aerospace companies are seeking permission to sell airline parts to Iran for the first time in three decades. Iran has signed a deal to sell Iraq arms and ammunition worth \$195 million, according to documents seen by Reuters. At least 13 major international companies have said in recent weeks they aim to reenter the Iranian marketplace over the next several months.

These sanctions, my friends on the other side, are crumbling. If we do not reset what is going on, the leverage we have gained is being lost. We are marching toward a disaster. Having a new round of sanctions passed by Congress would tell the international community from our point of view this is not behind us, we are not going to take the pressure off until we get a result that makes our country and our allies in the region safe, particularly Israel. If we do not act now, it will be too late.

To our friends at the White House: When you threaten to veto legislation and you accuse people who want to impose sanctions if the deal fails as wanting to go to war, I am afraid you completely misunderstand the situation as it really exists. I am willing to give you credit for imposing the sanctions in a forceful way, but you are naive and dangerous in your thought process if you think we can now negotiate with the sanctions crumbling and get the right answer.

The Iranian monetary unit, the rial, has appreciated by over 25 percent. The Iranian economy is rebounding after the interim deal. They are back in business. Inflation is down, the value of their currency is up, people are lining up to do business in Iran, the sanctions are crumbling, and the U.S. Senate sits quiet.

All I can say is that we have a chance to turn this around before it is too late. I believe the best thing we could do as a body is for Republicans and Democrats to pass a new round of sanctions that would only take place at the end of the 6-month period if a final deal is not achieved that results in the things I have outlined.

The bipartisan sanction bill reinforces the end game of basically dismantling the ability of the Iranians to develop a nuclear weapon. We have specific language in the sanctions bill that would get us to a good outcome. I am afraid by the time the 6 months is up, the economy in Iran will have rebounded and the will of the international community to go through this process again will have been lost.

Right now the smart money is that Iran is a place you can soon do business, the sanctions are history, and our

European allies, I am afraid, will accept a deal with the Iranians that is not in our national interest and will certainly not be good for our allies.

I am very worried the P5+1 has already conceded in their own mind some enrichment capability in the hands of the Iranian regime for the purpose of face saving, supposedly. We should not worry about allowing the Iranians to save face, given what they have done to our soldiers in Iraq, the amount of terrorism they have spread throughout the world, and the way they have behaved. I am not in the face-saving business when it comes to Iran. I am in protecting America's national security interest business.

I do not mind the Iranians having a nuclear power program for peaceful purposes, as long as you control the fuel cycle. But if they want more than that, that tells you all you need to know about what their ambitions are.

I say to my colleagues on the other side: If you allow any enrichment capability left in the hands of the Shia Persians in Iran, the Sunni Arabs are going to insist on a like capability. And I am here to tell you if you want to turn the Mideast into the ultimate powder keg, allow the Iranians to have an enrichment program. Because every Sunni Arab nation that can afford one will want a like program. If you think you can allow the Iranians to enrich uranium and the Sunni Arabs will sit on the sidelines and do nothing, you don't understand the Mideast. If you want to set the world on the road to Armageddon, that will be the end of nonproliferation in the Mideast. The interim deal is a bad deal for the world, according to the Prime Minister, and a great deal for Iran. The Prime Minister of Israel is right.

If this administration is contemplating a final agreement that does not remove all the highly enriched uranium in Iran, consistent with the U.N. resolution, it is making a mistake for the ages. If this administration is going to sign on to a deal that allows enrichment to continue in Iran, where they now have a class of centrifuges that can take less than 5 percent uranium and spin it up to 90 percent, that will be a mistake for the ages.

This is North Korea in the making. But unlike North Korea, where they eventually went nuclear after the international community, through inspections and sanctions, tried to stop their program, Japan and South Korea have yet to feel the need to obtain a nuclear weapon to counter the North Koreans. I can assure you the Sunni Arab nations in the Mideast will not put themselves in that position. All you have to do is ask them.

I challenge every Member of this body to get on the phone and call the major Sunni Arab states and ask them a simple question: If the Iranians are allowed to enrich, will you insist on the same right? See what they tell you.

We have a chance here, if we are smart, to reset the table before these sanctions completely crumble, and they are. If you think you can wait 6 months, have them completely crumble and reimpose sanctions, you are kidding yourself, because the world is not going to go down that road.

What will happen if this negotiation with Iran fails to deliver what I think is the right outcome—a peaceful nuclear power program without any capability to make a nuclear weapon—I think the people throughout the region are going to respond forcefully and in kind and our friends in Israel and the world are hurt.

Can Israel tolerate the ayatollahs in Iran having the ability to develop a nuclear weapon and the only thing between the State of Israel's security is a bunch of U.N. inspectors? Now think about that. Would you put America's national security at risk, and the only thing between a hostile nation having a nuclear weapon and threatening to wipe us off the map and success is a bunch of U.N. inspectors? How well did that work in North Korea? That is not a viable outcome.

We have to stop this program completely. It must be dismantled, not mothballed. It has to be dismantled. If the Iranians want a nuclear powerplant for peaceful purposes, they can have one as long as somebody responsible controls the fuel cycle.

We are headed toward a disaster if we don't act pretty quickly. I don't mean to be so dire, but look at the Mideast. Look at the Syrian effort to contain the Syrian chemical weapons program. These thuggish regimes are not going to turn over the advantages they have until the regime itself is threatened. I believe the Iranians, after Syria, do not believe anymore that our country has the will to use military force as a last resort to stop their nuclear program. No matter what President Obama says, his actions speak far louder than his words. We could change things if the Congress would impose new sanctions, bipartisan in nature. It would actually allow the administration some leverage they do not have today.

The reason for the bipartisan bill, as in the Burr alternative to the Sanders bill, is that many of us believe now that time is not on our side. And to my friends on the other side, I hate the fact we have now split on what to do about Iran and how to impose sanctions. I have enjoyed, as much as anything in my entire time in the Senate, working with my Democratic and Republican colleagues to craft policies designed to get the right answer when it comes to the Iranian nuclear threat. But we are now in a different spot.

As much as I hate it, I feel compelled, from my point of view, to use every opportunity this body presents to bring up the issue. If you do not believe the sanctions are crumbling, I

would love to hear your explanation as to why they are still working, given the information that is overwhelming.

So I hope in the coming days we can regain that bipartisanship. The majority leader, several months ago, promised a vote on Iran sanctions if we could find a bipartisan bill. He made that promise, and I will quote that later in the week. What has happened between then and now is the President has weighed in. He has tried to lock his party down and he has threatened to veto this sanctions bill.

Now is not the time to turn the Senate over to the Obama administration, which does not have a very good track record when it comes to policing the Mideast. Actually, we are helping them, whether they believe it or not. The last thing I want is a conflict anywhere in the world that can be avoided, but here are our choices: If the negotiations fail, Israel will not stand for a nuclear-capable Iran. If you attack Iran, you open Pandora's box and many bad things can happen.

I can tell you this, if there is a war between us and Iran, they lose, we win. This is not much of a debate militarily. But it is always a terrible thing to go to war unless you absolutely have to. So if the Iranians believe we are serious about sanctions and we are serious about using military force as a last resort, we may actually still get the right answer.

If they don't believe that, we are putting Israel and our allies in a terrible spot. If the Iranian program survives these negotiations and they march toward a nuclear weapon as the North Koreans did, if the U.N. inspections fail and they achieve their goal of a nuclear weapon, then we have emptied Pandora's box, because every Sunni Arab state will follow in kind. Then only God knows what happens next. We have a chance to avoid that.

But Israel will never stand for the proposition that the only thing between the ayatollahs having a nuclear weapon and the State of Israel's survival is a bunch of U.N. inspectors trying to control a program with a live capability; and Sunni Arab states will not allow the Iranians to enrich without them claiming an equal right. All this can be avoided if we act decisively. But if we continue to wait and allow the sanctions to crumble, God help us all.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO ED KOREN

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, late this week, Vermont will recognize the noteworthy legacy of Ed Koren, who was recently named Vermont's second Cartoonist Laureate. A resident of Brookfield, VT, Mr. Koren is best known nationally for his distinctive creature cartoons that appear in the New Yorker. His work has also been featured in many other publications.

Mr. Koren grew up in Mount Vernon, NY, and attended Columbia University, where he first began sketching cartoons for the university's magazine. Encouraged by a favorable review of one of his earliest works, Mr. Koren then dedicated himself to drawing investigative and satirical cartoons. His hard work, quick wit, and unique social commentary are evidenced in his work. In true Vermont tradition, he has also found the time to volunteer as a firefighter in his small community for the past 26 years.

I am proud to recognize Ed Koren's achievement as Vermont's Cartoonist Laureate. The Vermont Digger recently published a profile of this accomplished man who has adopted Vermont as his home that captures all that is so unique about his character and creativity. I ask that the article, "Cartoonist Ed Koren earns a Vermont laurel, but don't expect him to rest on it," be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Vermont Digger, Feb. 16, 2014]

THIS STATE: CARTOONIST ED KOREN EARNS A VERMONT LAUREL, BUT DON'T EXPECT HIM TO REST ON IT

(By Andrew Nemethy)

From his rambling 1840s farmhouse in Brookfield in central Vermont, Ed Koren looks out on Sunset Lake and a quintessential Vermont village whose famed floating bridge is an icon of the state. But as a cartoonist, Koren's off-beat, pinballing mind is focused on a different view, as he scans the strange landscape of human foibles, fads, social mores and culture. It's a scene that has sustained him for more than five decades.

"There's something always new, or quirky or nutty or outrageous," he says, describing the lode of material that keeps inspiring his cartoons. "To me, it never ends, and it's great for that."

By a cranial alchemy that even he is hard-pressed to explain, what he sees out in the world gets distilled into cartoons populated by fuzzy big-beaked creatures and captions that capture the essence of whatever tickled his perceptive fancy. What emerges in his cartoons is at once universal but also artisanal and localvore because of the set-

tings, which reflect the terroir of his adopted state. Take a recent New Yorker cartoon whose locale was instantly recognizable to any patron of the Three Penny Taproom in Montpelier, from the layout to the bartender to the list of beers, which included "Curtis India Pale Ale" (his wife's name is Curtis) "Onion River Saison" and "Camel's Hump Imperial Stout."

"I kind of bring it home," he says simply. "It's like a tribute to friends. It's capturing what I like about living here."

It's entirely fitting, then, that on Feb. 27, Koren will be recognized as Vermont's Cartoonist Laureate at the Statehouse, and will give a talk at the Center for Cartoon Studies in White River Junction, which nominated him for the award. (Burlington's James Kolcharka was the first.)

Koren is honored and, typically, quick to riff humorously about the nomination, quipping that he may have to wear a neck brace. "It's a weighty thing," he says of the honor and a potential swelled head. He then dredges up a quote from his literary mind, attributed to politician and UN ambassador Adlai Stevenson: "Flattery is all right so long as you don't inhale."

Truth is, there's little danger of flattery going to his head. Koren lives a well-grounded rural life in Brookfield: For 26 years he has served in the volunteer fire department, a job he loves, though he admits at 78, hauling hoses and pouring water on house fires, the "real grunt work," is beyond his capacity today.

"I'm getting to be too old," he says.

When it comes to cartoons, few artists have a style as distinctive and easily recognizable as Koren's squiggly creatures, which have appeared all over Vermont, his donation to nonprofits and other organizations he deems worthy. Koren himself is small-beaked and not very large, with a bushy gray mustache, a frequent twinkle in his eye and a sprightly gait that reflects his exercise pursuits, which range seasonally from cross-country skiing to biking and paddling. He's famed for exercising daily, which he says refreshes his mind and his sense of the beauty in the world.

Imagine a lean, fit fatherly elf with a curmudgeonly tinge, and you're not far off (though it's more grandfatherly these days, thanks to grandkids from his first marriage). He now lives with his wife Curtis and an elderly Siamese feline named Catmandu.

Koren, who was raised in Mount Vernon, N.Y., was doing a teaching gig in graphic arts at Brown University when Vermont beckoned and he moved here permanently.

"I fell into this house in Brookfield from a year-old copy of Country Journal," he explains. He saw an ad for the house in the magazine, checked it out, fell in love with its village location, and, while living in New York City, bought the place in 1978 as a second home.

His ties to the Green Mountains go much further back, however, to his teens when he attended a summer theater camp in Waitsfield. The lush landscape and way of life was beguiling. "Like a lot of kids, it stays with you," he says.

While Vermont offers fodder and settings for his cartoons, he admits to living a yin and yang existence. "I've always been a New Yorker because I've spent so much of my life there. I'm at a heart a city guy, but I'm at heart a country guy," he says. And like many a Vermont country guy, he's now, in mid-February, admitting to being weary of winter as he lugs in firewood from the shed to keep his Vermont Castings stove going and his house warm.

Koren was drawn to the arts early. As a kid, he was inspired to draw by Al Capp's Li'l Abner, especially the simple lovable cartoon characters known as "Shmoos." He began drawing cartoons in the mid-1950s at Columbia University for the college humor magazine, "Jester," and then went on to study graphic arts in Paris and to receive an MFA from Pratt Institute. He was feeling tugged in several career directions—city planning, architecture, and graphic arts—when a "kindly response" from The New Yorker about looking at his cartoons put his future on course.

Koren landed in the magazine's pages in its literary heyday when the legendary William Shawn was editor. His illustrations and cartoons began appearing in The New York Times, Time and Newsweek magazines, as well as in ads for financial publications and Fortune 500 companies, and in a wide range of books. Always a freelance artist, for a number of years in the late 1990s he fell out of favor at the New Yorker (it was "an unreliable family member") but now seems to be back in the magazine's cartoon graces.

Koren is vague in describing how he came up with the creatures in his cartoons, which he roughs out and then refines in a lengthy process using pen and ink on large pieces of art paper measuring about two feet on each side. Those squiggly lined creatures of his just sort of happened, he says, explaining his style had a "lax way of evolving" and that he "wasn't trying to do any of what I achieved."

Koren draws in a spacious and cluttered studio at one end of his house, with two tables, stacks of books and walls pinned with illustrations, hand-written quotes and mementoes. Underneath one table is a bank of 40 drawers that hold decades of his life in pen and ink.

"I save everything. I'm a pack rat. I hate to throw things away," he admits.

As for his captions, which often nail smug and self-important people and modern life in general, he says he keeps his ears open "like two giant antennas," especially when he is visiting New York City. At home he reads a lot and listens to radio (WDEV, VPR and NHPR.)

Does he ever think of retiring? "Never!" he says, recoiling at the idea. Besides, humanity is constantly providing inflated egos to puncture and trends to lampoon.

"It's part of my life. If I didn't do that, what would I do?" he asks.

TRIBUTE TO DAVID RUBENSTEIN

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, in recent years, as difficult budget questions have beset the debate in Washington about how best to rein in spending while meeting our shared responsibilities to Americans, our communities, and the world, our Nation's treasures—from the monuments that dot the National Mall to the historic relics that line the halls of the Smithsonian museums—have had to shore up spending and face the reality that the government simply can't foot the bill the way it used to.

Tough decisions in Washington have led many with the means to increase their charitable giving, but none compare to the generosity of David Rubenstein, businessman, family man, philanthropist. He is also a friend to

many. But most importantly, he is a friend to many of America's national treasures. I cherish his friendship.

You need not walk far in Washington to find Mr. Rubenstein's mark. I hear often from Vermonters who have come to Washington, for work or a family vacation, who visit such iconic places as the National Zoo, the Kennedy Center, the Library of Congress, and, of course, the Smithsonians. All bear some sign of Mr. Rubenstein's generosity.

The New York Times recently featured a profile of this man and what he calls "patriotic giving." I ask unanimous consent that a copy of that profile be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, Feb. 21, 2014]
A BILLIONAIRE PHILANTHROPIST IN WASHINGTON WHO'S BIG ON "PATRIOTIC GIVING"

(By Jennifer Steinhauer)

WASHINGTON.—The expansive reach of David M. Rubenstein into the public life of the nation's capital can be seen during a brief excursion from his downtown office at the Carlyle Group, the private equity firm that he co-founded and that made him a billionaire.

Begin across the street at the National Archives, the site of the new gallery, named after him, where Magna Carta, which he bought in 2007 for \$23 million, is on permanent loan. Then head to the Library of Congress, and see the first map of the United States, also his, in the Great Hall.

Make your way to the earthquake-damaged Washington Monument, which will reopen this spring after a \$15 million repair, half paid for by Mr. Rubenstein, then zip to the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, where his \$75 million has bought, among other things, a new pipe organ. End up at the National Zoo, where baby Bao Bao frolics in the panda habitat Mr. Rubenstein endowed, part of a \$7 million Smithsonian gift.

Over the years, Mr. Rubenstein, who has a fortune estimated at \$3 billion, has made gifts to the usual array of universities, hospitals and cultural organizations beloved by wealthy donors. But he stands nearly alone in shoring up institutions generally under the purview of the federal government. About \$200 million of the \$300 million he has given away has been what he calls "patriotic giving."

"The United States cannot afford to do the things it used to do," Mr. Rubenstein said, "and I think it would be a good thing if more people would say: 'My national zoo needs money, the archives need money. I think we're going to have to do more for them.'"

And there is plenty more to do in a city that has not only suffered from cutbacks in federal spending but which historically has lacked both the wealth and the philanthropic traditions of places like New York. While there were wealthy and civic-minded men like Duncan Phillips and Eugene Meyer who left their mark on Washington in the last century, it was the federal government that built and maintained the parks and museums that in other cities donors endowed, according to Steven Pearlstein, a professor of public and international affairs at George Mason University and a columnist for The Washington Post. "The federal government was the sugar daddy," he said.

For the most part, according to Mr. Pearlstein, Washington has been a place where the currency has been power more than money. In the past two decades, that has begun to change as government contracting, banking and the law have created a new wealthy class in the city and its suburbs, but no one has given his money away quite like Mr. Rubenstein.

"This kind of giving is starting to happen more often because governments are really suffering," said Stacy Palmer, the editor of The Chronicle of Philanthropy. "But the extent of Rubenstein's giving sets him apart."

Such giving, she said, is a subject of feverish debate in the philanthropy world, where many believe that private money should not permit government to abdicate responsibilities and in turn drain cash from food banks, hospitals and other services in need. There are "concerns about whether it is a good idea for philanthropy to step in for government," Ms. Palmer said.

Mr. Rubenstein, 64, who first came to Washington to work in government, offers a simple explanation for what he has done: "I felt I owed my country a lot. I also felt I owed the city a lot. I built my company here; I met my wife here."

He grew up in modest means in Baltimore; his father sorted mail for the Postal Service and his mother was a homemaker. After college and law school, he worked in a New York law firm before getting a job on Capitol Hill for the Senate Judiciary Committee. In 1977, he joined the Carter administration, where he spent his days toiling over domestic policy as a White House aide, and met his wife, Alice Rogoff, who worked at the Office of Management and Budget. Newsweek once called him "the White House workaholic."

After his stint ended, Mr. Rubenstein took another corporate law job but reassessed and concluded that he was "a mediocre lawyer." With some partners, he set out to found Carlyle, named after the hotel in New York City, quickly accruing a fortune in the world of leveraged buyouts.

Ten years ago, Mr. Rubenstein said, he began to consider his legacy, and after learning from some actuarial tables that white Jewish males were likely to live to 81, decided to start plowing a lot of his money—and his time—into philanthropic causes. "There are other wonderful donors in Washington," said Michael M. Kaiser, president of the Kennedy Center, "but it's the range of his giving and his collection of interests that is staggering."

In choosing his beneficiaries, Mr. Rubenstein relies on his interests and his gut. He has a passion for American history and can lecture extemporaneously and at length about presidents, historic documents, the civil rights movement and beyond—and has no staff or foundation to vet requests.

He spends little time agonizing over a donation. "To some extent when you've made the money, you feel you can give it away more rapidly," he said.

In January 2013, Curt Viebranz, the president of George Washington's Mount Vernon, took Mr. Rubenstein around the museum to show him how it had displayed some of his documents.

Over lunch, Mr. Viebranz recalled: "I felt emboldened to ask him for a large gift, and much to my surprise and happiness, he made that \$10 million gift in February. It was a remarkably efficient process." He added, "It can take years of cultivating a donor to get a gift of that size."

If you don't call Mr. Rubenstein, he might call you. If you do "make the ask," expect to

get an answer in weeks. While Mr. Rubenstein likes to see results—and despite his unassuming manner, is not averse to seeing his name on the doors of his beneficiaries—he does not use the complex success metrics of philanthropists like Eli Broad in Los Angeles. He tends not to check in, but if beneficiaries send an update, they hear back from him, no matter his time zone (he travels roughly 250 days a year).

The donations can be transformative. Mr. Rubenstein will endow the expansion of the Kennedy Center, which otherwise would have had to go to Congress for an appropriation. At Monticello, his \$10 million gift allowed Leslie Greene Bowman, president of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation, as she puts it, "to return the mountaintop of Monticello to something Jefferson would have recognized in just a few years what I would venture to say would have taken at least a decade to accomplish."

Mr. Rubenstein says he likes to apply the "mother standard" to giving. "When I built Carlyle, my mother didn't call to say, 'I'm so proud,' he said. 'When I give a gift to some place of importance, she calls and says, 'I'm proud.'"

REMEMBERING STRATTON "STRATTY" LINES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today I remember a dear friend to Marcelle and me. Stratton "Stratty" Lines was for more than 40 years the proprietor of the Oasis Diner in Burlington, VT. Throughout its history, the diner was the center of many a political discussion over a hearty breakfast or tasty lunch and lots of laughs too. At the center of all the activity was Stratty, a first-generation American who, with his family, built a successful business in downtown Burlington. One of Stratty's sons, David, describes his father as the "quintessential Vermonter." Stratty was that and so much more. He was a good family man and a hard worker who cared about working people.

I have many fond memories of the Oasis Diner, perhaps chief among them, eating breakfast there, celebrating with Stratty, and thanking voters the morning after I was first elected to the Senate in 1974. The diner was a popular stop among visitors to Vermont, including President Bill Clinton and Vice President Walter Mondale. During their visits and during my many trips to the diner, Stratty imparted the wisdom and common sense for which he was so well known and will be long remembered.

In memory of Stratty Lines, I ask that the article by Mike Donoghue of the Burlington Free Press, "Oasis Diner proprietor Stratton 'Stratty' Lines remembered as quintessential Vermonter," be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Burlington Free Press, Feb. 17, 2014]

OASIS DINER PROPRIETOR STRATTY LINES REMEMBERED AS "QUINTESSENTIAL VERMONTER"

STRATTY LINES, LONGTIME OWNER OF BURLINGTON'S OASIS DINER, REMEMBERED FOR FOOD AND CONVERSATION

(By Mike Donoghue)

When Stratton "Stratty" Lines helped opened the Oasis Diner more than 40 years ago, coffee was a dime, and hamburgers cost 25 cents. Over the years, Lines served up food to the rich and the poor, the famous and the infamous.

His customers included local politicians and the president of the United States. The food was always good, and so was the conversation.

"I could learn more in 20 minutes with Stratty than I could with any polls," said U.S. Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt. "Stratty heard everything. He knew what was gossip and what made sense."

Lines often was spotted in a white short-order-cook hat trimmed in red, a white shirt and an apron over his pants. He also was a well-known Democratic supporter.

His health had been failing in recent months, one of his sons, David, said, and he was found dead of natural causes Friday at his Williston home. He was 84.

"He was the quintessential Vermonter, a first-generation American who established a small business that became an institution in this community," David Lines said.

The Oasis Diner was a popular breakfast and lunch spot just east of Church Street for the movers and shakers of greater Burlington, but also for common folks. The draw was more than just the food—and more than just politics. Stratty Lines would follow sports, community events and all the other headlines of the day.

Leahy said a visit to Burlington was incomplete without a stop at the Oasis to learn the latest. When he offered condolences to David Lines, "I said I loved going in there," Leahy recounted. "I could learn more going in there by having breakfast."

The Oasis remained a local institution until 2007, when the business was sold to become a New York-style delicatessen. The building now is home to El Cortijo.

Even in death, Lines sought to ensure people were properly fed. The Chittenden County Meals on Wheels, along with the Department of Veterans Affairs, are two organizations the family has suggested people make donations in Lines' memory instead of sending flowers.

Lines was born in Greece, graduated from Burlington High in 1947 and served as a military policeman in the U.S. armed forces in Germany from 1951–53.

Leahy, Vermont's senior senator and a former Chittenden County prosecutor, said lots of political debates were held in the 17-by-40-foot diner. He said Lines enjoyed hearing the hot-button topics of the day.

Lines was a gracious host, Leahy said, and always asked about his wife, Marcelle, and their children before anything else. Leahy said he believes he began frequenting the Oasis as a student at St. Michael's College, where he graduated in 1961, but he became more of a regular following law school and returning to Vermont in the mid '60s.

When he served as Chittenden County state's attorney, Leahy said, he would sometimes run names of potential jurors past Lines.

"He'd say, 'You might want to avoid that one,' or 'That would be a good one,'" Leahy said.

Lines was as popular with house-painters as he was with politicians. Alden Cadwell, 56, of Burlington said he always enjoyed his stops at the diner.

"Stratty was a big-hearted man with the biggest welcoming smile in Burlington," Cadwell said. "He ran a diner that a regular patron came for the theater as much as the food."

Cadwell said patrons got to hear cooks, waiters and other customers exchanging orders and quips.

"You did not leave the Oasis hungry or unentertained," Cadwell said.

Former federal Judge Albert W. Coffrin often could be seen sitting on a revolving stool at the counter. Coffrin once confided to a Burlington Free Press reporter that the Oasis was among his favorite stops.

Lawyers, bankers, merchants, the clergy and others also frequented the Burlington landmark.

Leahy said he brought President Bill Clinton into the diner during a visit to Burlington on July 31, 1995, to speak at the National Governors Association convention in South Burlington.

After a picture-taking event that included Clinton, Leahy, Lines and then-Gov. Howard Dean outside the diner, the nation's commander-in-chief stepped inside to enjoy lunch. The Oasis served up a hand-carved, overstuffed sandwich of fresh turkey on seeded rye, a Diet Coke and a slice of apple pie.

"Thanks for a great lunch," Clinton said when he departed.

"This was the highlight of my life, after the birth of my children," Lines would say later—especially significant, he added, for the son of Greek immigrants who arrived in the country without a dime.

His parents opened the diner in 1954, and Lines, who worked briefly at General Electric, soon joined the family business.

Lines would later say proudly he picked up the tab for President Clinton's meal.

"I don't think he ever got over that," Dean said Monday as he recalled the presidential visit.

"Stratty was an important guy. The ordinary person listened to him. He would rarely endorse somebody. He would say, 'So and so was a good guy,'" the former Vermont governor said.

"He would be more blatant once he got to know you better. He was the best of the old guard. He was socially conservative and business conservative," Dean said. "He was very much for the working class. It was a family business, and his kids were working in there. It was kind of cool."

Clinton wasn't the only brush with greatness for Lines.

A picture of him shaking hands with President Jimmy Carter also was displayed at the diner.

Vice President Walter Mondale stopped for pancakes shortly before the March 1980 primary. Tipper Gore, wife of Vice President Al Gore, enjoyed a slice of apple pie and ice cream in July 1999. A few other celebrity customers included Susan Sarandon, Tim Robbins, Lyle Lovett and Elliot Gould.

Lines was a longtime New York Yankees fan, but he said in 1977 that he converted to the Toronto Blue Jays after his veteran sportscasting friend Tom Cheek left WVMT-AM in Colchester and became the voice of the Blue Jays. Lines would visit Cheek during spring training and during the regular season.

Leahy said after he was elected to Congress, he would receive phone calls from the White House or from ambassadors and others

while he was having breakfast at the Oasis. The ambassador from Russia called once.

A few days later, a political friend called the diner and, speaking with a put-on Russian accent, claimed to be a phone operator in Moscow. He confirmed with Lines that Leahy had taken the ambassador's call. The prankster told Lines the politician's call was made collect, and he owed \$437.84, and then he hung up.

"Stratty loved to tell the story to everyone about the calls," Leahy said.

A celebration of Lines' life is planned for 4–7 p.m. Thursday at the Corbin and Palmer Funeral Home in Essex Junction. A brief service is planned at the funeral home at 10 a.m. Friday followed by a private interment.

Survivors include three sons, Jon, Gary and David, all in the Burlington area, and daughter Maria in California.

HOLZER BOOK BINDERY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, in this age of digital readers and electronic books, the fine craft of bookbinding may seem to some archaic. On the contrary: the fine skills, patience, and dedication required to mend the pages of some of our greatest treasures have become all the more critical to preserving printed books—for classics printed decades or centuries ago, to cookbooks or children's books that have been in our families for generations.

At Holzer Book Bindery in Hinesburg, VT, Marianna Holzer, a third-generation bookbinder, is doing just that. Her shop is lined with leather-bound books, many restored by her own hand, and hand-operated cast-iron presses that help her with her handcraft. Her clients range from towns and municipalities, to personal collectors, and extend far beyond the mountains of Vermont.

In 1960, her father, 30 years her mother's senior, closed down his own bindery business in Boston to settle in Putney. Marianna was in high school when, years after her father passed away, her mother set up their own bindery in the basement. Here, Marianna learned the basics of bindery from her mother, using the storied tools of her father. After studying plant and soil science at the University of Vermont, Marianna found herself working at Four Seasons Garden Center in Williston before longing for something new. She ultimately returned to her bookbinding roots, joining a small bindery in Jericho before opening her own shop in 2008.

Marianna now works alongside her husband and folk musician, Rik Palieri, who assists her. Today, her challenges are even greater, as she battles multiple sclerosis. People send their books and heirlooms from around the country, seeking her dexterity and her expertise. For Marianna, it is her true love of preserving the past and the sentiment it brings others that makes her excel at her craft. She honors her family legacy by using her grandfather's logo as her own.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD an article about this exceptional Vermonter who has dedicated her life to bringing joy to others by repairing those precious keepsakes we chose to pass on to our loved ones: "At Holzer Book Bindery, Repairing Old Volumes Is a Labor of Love." [Seven Days, February 19, 2014]

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From Seven Days, Feb. 19, 2014]

AT HOLZER BOOK BINDERY, REPAIRING OLD
VOLUMES IS A LABOR OF LOVE
(By Ethan De Seife)

Any author who gets a publishing deal these days knows the importance of e-books: Many readers now opt for pixels over ink. At Holzer Book Bindery in Hinesburg, though, the book's the thing. Owner Marianna Holzer, a third-generation bookbinder, appreciates books as objects. Her love for beautiful volumes and the increasingly rare craft of making them by hand is evident in her shop, located on the ground floor of her home. The place is filled with drawers of old metal typesetting letters, rolls of buckram and leather, and hand-operated, cast-iron book presses. Many of the hand tools that Holzer, 58, uses were inherited from her father, Albert, and grandfather, Ulrich, both of whom ran bookbinding shops in Boston. Both men were known not only for the high quality of their work, but for their personal investment in the books they repaired. Said Holzer, "My mom used to say that people would bring their books to have them bound at the Holzer Bindery, but they'd have to wait until everybody in the family had read the book before they got it back."

As a child, hanging around her father's shop, Holzer picked up many of the finer points of this specialized art. A career shift in the early 1980s brought her to Brown's River Bindery, an operation that started in Jericho, then moved to Essex. Holzer worked her way up to various supervisory positions within the company.

When Brown's was reorganized and folded into a larger bindery called Kofile, Holzer decided the time was right to set up her own business. As it happened, her mother had recently moved out of the downstairs apartment in Holzer's home. That freed up the cozy space that, in 2008, Holzer turned into her own bindery. To honor her family's craft legacy, she still uses the logo from her grandfather's shop.

Though Holzer can and does create entire bound volumes from scratch, most of her projects are repairs, often on the beloved literary heirlooms of private clients. She can fix torn pages or create new ones for old books, trimming new folios, stitching them into signatures and assembling them into custom bindings.

During Seven Days' visit to the bindery, Holzer was performing surgery on some old, careworn, hardback copies of two of L. Frank Baum's Oz novels. The client who'd brought them wanted to resuscitate the books for sentimental reasons, and they needed a great deal of attention. Nearly all of both books' pages were brittle, tattered and detached from their bindings, from which the glue had long since cracked and flaked off. Still, Holzer estimated the job would take her just a couple of days of mending, and only an hour or two to sew the pages back together.

Holzer has multiple sclerosis, which can make such detailed work difficult, so she's

glad, she said, to have assistance from her husband, folk musician Rik Pallieri. In between his concert tours, Pallieri helps out on the larger binding orders, including the municipal records of a number of Vermont towns. (Holzer is reluctant to say which ones.)

Pallieri professed admiration for the kind of beautiful, hand-bound books that Holzer Bindery produces. The couple has preserved and bound their own cherished keepsakes, such as an original program from one of Buffalo Bill's Wild West shows. Pallieri's own daily journal is a huge, green, handcrafted volume that would look right at home on the shelves of a city planning office.

Repair jobs come into the bindery in what Holzer described as a "steady but not overwhelming supply." Every one is different, and, she said, without first inspecting the book, it's difficult to estimate the cost of the repairs. Prices per piece range from about \$100 to more than \$1,000.

"It will depend on what needs to be done, what the customer wants, if we are trying to save all the original material or make a new cover, and then that will depend on whether it is in leather or imitation leather," Holzer explained.

Demonstrating her craft to a visitor, Holzer smiled and laughed frequently. She took particular delight in the gold stamper, with which she embosses books' spines and covers with shiny letters and designs. With this device, Holzer can also turn strips of scrap leather into personalized bookmarks, mementos that she gives visitors to the bindery.

Holzer's shop—along with the handful of other small bookbinders scattered around the state—embodies the spirit of quality artisanship associated with Vermont. Case in point: Holzer mentioned a client from Houston, Texas, for whom she bound a memorial Bible. Its owner had found Holzer Bindery online and chosen the company specifically because of its Vermont location, she said; to him, this guaranteed careful craft.

Over cups of tea served beneath the cuckoo clock in her kitchen, Holzer talked with Seven Days about the fine art of fine books.

SEVEN DAYS: How did you get started in the bookbinding business?

MARIANNA HOLZER: My father was 70 when I was born—30 years older than my mother. I was pretty young when [his bindery] was still going in Boston. He closed the business in 1960, when he was 80, and moved to southern Vermont, to Putney. He passed away when I was 11, and my mom set up a little bindery later, when I was in high school, in the basement of our house. She taught me a few basic things.

I went to UVM, [where I] studied plant and soil science. I got a job at Four Seasons Garden Center [in Williston]. I kind of got sick of that, and found out that there was this small bindery [Brown's River Bindery] in Jericho, and went to see them. That's how it began.

SD: What are all these tools used for?

MH: The board shears are basically a huge paper cutter; the guillotine, which needs to be super-sharp, is for trimming the edges of a book's pages. I use a lot of mending tissue, which is a Japanese tissue used to fix rips and tears. The rounding or backing hammer—one of my father's tools—I use for rounding a book's spine. One of my favorite things to do is the gold stamping, which presses down on a thin piece of Mylar covered with 22-carat gold. That's how you decorate a binding, letter by letter.

SD: What services do you offer?

MH: One thing I do here is deacidify paper. Anything before the mid-1800s was printed on rag paper, which holds up quite well. Newer paper is made with wood pulp, and we didn't know until more recently how acidic it was. It gets really brittle and cracks when you turn the pages. So we can deacidify the paper, and it'll stop the progression of [the decay]—though it won't bring it back [to its original condition].

SD: Bookbinding is such a niche field. What challenges does your business face?

MH: It seems to me, in some ways, books are becoming more precious as people realize they have certain books that they want to preserve and pass on. Bibles are one thing. It's cheaper to buy a new one, but [the owner has] written all over it. Children's books—people have grown up with a book. And cookbooks! People have written in them, or they have their mother's cookbook. The newer versions they don't like as much.

These days, newer bindings are single sheets that are just glued in. When you open them up, they sometimes crack and fall apart. And those are kind of hard to fix, because they don't have enough of the margin that's necessary to drill the holes for stitching. Older books tend to be in better shape.

SD: How does having MS affect your work as a binder?

MH: I just get really tired sometimes. It's almost like I'm walking through mud or something. It's a big effort to do things. It's also dexterity, fine motor control.

SD: Are you concerned about the new all-in-one machines that can print a book from a digital file and then bind it?

MH: Not particularly. You see a book, and you never think what goes into making it. They [bind books] by machine nowadays. But if you want to repair a book, you can't do it by machine.

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND LEONARD ROBINSON

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I wish to speak about one of Wyoming's greatest World War II heroes, the Rev. Leonard Robinson. Leonard is a special man whose sacrifice speaks louder than his words.

In 1942, less than 1 year after shipping out from Fort Bliss, TX, Robinson found himself among 75,000 American and Filipino soldiers and civilians surrendered to the Imperial Japanese Army. He was one of the fortunate to survive the barbaric 65 mile, 5-day Bataan Death March. Those who were unable to keep up with the march were either beaten or shot by Japanese soldiers.

Robinson was held as a prisoner of war for almost 3½ years. He survived the Bataan Death March, disease, malnutrition, slave labor and torture through his faith in God. Both spiritually and physically, Reverend Robinson credits the Bible with saving his life during his time as a prisoner of war. It is through his faith that he persevered through one of the greatest atrocities committed against our soldiers.

As a prisoner of war, Leonard would often recite Psalm 23 to get him through his struggle. Rev. Leonard Robinson's life has been a journey of

war, suffering, hope and peace. Leonard embraced faith in his darkest hours, showed a commitment to duty when all else was lost, and held dear to the memory of his brothers in arms who did not return. In his battered billfold, Leonard kept a roster of his unit and the names of the fallen soldiers. He is a living testament to the often overlooked sacrifices that make our men and women in uniform America's greatest treasure.

Today, Reverend Robinson is being honored at the Casper Area Chamber of Commerce "Hiring a Hero" luncheon. The event's goal is to promote veteran employment through recognizing our service men and women who have triumphed over adversity with a proven ability to overcome challenges and obstacles through strength and determination. I do not know of a better example than my friend and my surgical patient Rev. Leonard Robinson. He epitomizes the service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform.

STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I have spoken on the floor of this body on a number of occasions about the impending retirement crisis facing this country. I know from my constituents that the dream of a secure retirement is growing fainter and fainter. In fact, the retirement income deficit—meaning, difference between what people have saved for retirement and what they should have at this point—is a staggering \$6.6 trillion and growing. Today, half of Americans have less than \$10,000 in savings, and only 14 percent are "very confident" they will have enough money for a comfortable retirement.

I am deeply concerned by these statistics. That is why, in 2013, I introduced legislation to tackle this challenge head on. My legislation, S. 567 the Strengthening Social Security Act of 2013, would improve the most efficient, most effective retirement program we have—Social Security—in three ways. First, it would increase benefits by about \$65 per month for all beneficiaries. Second, it would ensure that annual cost of living adjustments more accurately reflect the cost of living experienced by seniors by adopting the CPI-E. And, finally, it would remove the wage cap so that the payroll tax applies fairly to every dollar of wages. According to the Social Security actuaries, my proposal would increase benefits for current and future beneficiaries while also extending the life of the Social Security Trust Fund through 2049.

Recently, an organization that I have worked closely with for many years, the National Committee to Preserve Social Security & Medicare, launched a campaign in support of a proposal that would boost Social Security benefits,

including my legislation. I deeply appreciate the support of the national committee, and commend them for their work to strengthen and expand Social Security. I look forward to continuing to work with them, and other supportive organizations, to confront our Nation's retirement crisis. Strengthening and expanding Social Security is the crucial first step.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN CHINA

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, today I would like to draw attention to a disturbing trend impacting the work of journalists in China.

On January 30, 2014, New York Times reporter Austin Ramzy was forced to leave China due to processing delays for his press credentials. Unfortunately, this is not an isolated event. In 2013, Reporters Without Borders ranked China 173rd out of 179 countries in terms of press freedoms. Over the past year, we have seen China increase efforts to curb the work of foreign news organizations, including extended delays in processing journalist visas, restrictions on access to "sensitive" locations and individuals, pressure on local staff, blocked Web sites, and reports of cyber hacking of media organizations.

To call attention to this suppression, I, as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, along with subcommittee ranking member MARCO RUBIO, Senate Foreign Relations chairman BOB MENENDEZ, and ranking member BOB CORKER, introduced S. Res. 361. This resolution urges the People's Republic of China to take meaningful steps to improve freedom of expression in China as fitting of a responsible international stakeholder.

The ongoing crackdown on journalists and members of the press reporting in China is of grave concern to me. A country that engages in routine censorship and online blocking; harassment, reprisals, and detention of journalists; and visa delays or denials for journalists not only fails its own people but also fails the international community. A vibrant and free press instills trust in one's government, creates a more transparent environment for business investments, develops an engaged community, and builds legitimacy as a secure, global leader. We expect our partners to strive for these standards.

As we look to rebalance our policy toward the Asia-Pacific region, the United States has a responsibility to promote respect for universal human rights. We urge President Obama to use all appropriate tools to improve and promote freedom of the press in China.

I would like to thank my colleagues for joining me in support of press freedom in China.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DR. MOHAMMAD YOUSAF

• Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I wish to recognize one of West Virginia's finest cardiologists, Dr. Mohammad Yousaf, on receiving the 2013 Heart of Gold Award, which was presented by the West Virginia American Heart Association on February 23, 2013. There is truly no one more qualified, more compassionate or more devoted than Dr. Yousaf, who has been practicing in West Virginia for more than 20 years.

A native of Pakistan, Dr. Yousaf made his way to West Virginia to complete his residency at Marshall University. During his fellowship, he was assigned rotations in our beautiful State's capital, Charleston. Thankfully, he never left and his unwavering commitment to the cardiology field at South Charleston Cardiology, where he continues to practice today, has consistently saved West Virginian lives across our State.

With the help of Dr. Yousaf's momentous contributions and medical expertise, the quality of West Virginia's medical community has strengthened throughout the years and the health and well-being of the people of West Virginia continue to improve.

There are a myriad of doctors across this Nation that diagnose and treat patients every day. However, what distinguishes a good doctor from a great doctor starts and stops with patient care. Dr. Yousaf always puts his patients first and takes the time to build the trust and confidence necessary that leads to positive and long-lasting doctor-patient relationships. Long days and sleepless nights never obstruct from the compassion and dedication Dr. Yousaf devotes to each one of his patients.

Dr. Yousaf is also no stranger to prestigious awards, including the Distinguished West Virginian award, which was created to honor those who have contributed significantly to West Virginia and those who have brought positive attention to our great State. After more than two decades practicing as a cardiologist in the Mountain State, it is unquestionable that his integrity and work ethic know no bounds. And today, I am proud to commemorate the success of such a wonderful person and such a talented physician.

It is fitting that Dr. Yousaf was presented with the Heart of Gold Award last year, for he once described "the personal satisfaction you get" as a physician who has the means and opportunities to save lives every day. So today, I congratulate a remarkably intelligent and gifted cardiologist on receiving such an esteemed honor. I know he will continue to save lives in

the great state of West Virginia for years to come.●

REMEMBERING MICHAEL A. STEPOVICH

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I wish to give tribute to Alaska's last Territorial Governor, Michael A. Stepovich, who unfortunately died early on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, at the age of 94.

Mr. Stepovich was a war veteran, a legislator, a local government leader, the first Governor of the Territory born in Alaska and the last prior to statehood in 1957 and 1958, a lawyer, a civic leader, businessman and a true statesman. He also was a good man, and great friend to my entire family. When my family moved to Fairbanks, AK in the early 1970s, Mike and his wife Mathilda and their children were our earliest and closest friends. The Stepovichs raised a large and loving family, and while most Alaskans will remember Mike as an Alaskan statesman, I will always think of him first as a true family man.

Michael was born in Fairbanks on March 12, 1919, the son of Michael A. and Olga S. Stepovich. He graduated in 1940 from Gonzaga University—which in 1966 honored him with the DeSmet medal for being an “outstanding graduate and layman.” He earned a law degree from Notre Dame in 1943, and after service in the Navy, he completed post-graduate work at Santa Clara College in 1946.

Stepovich opened a private law practice in Fairbanks in 1948, serving as the city attorney of Fairbanks from 1950 to 1952, as a delegate to the Territorial House of Representatives from 1951–1953 and in the Territorial Senate from 1953–1957. While in the Senate he served as minority leader and was a strong supporter of statehood. He worked tirelessly on the 1956 referendum for statehood. President Dwight Eisenhower appointed Stepovich to be Territorial Governor after Alaskans went to the ballot box in support of joining the Union. He was to be Alaska's last Territorial Governor—within a year Congress would approve Alaska as the 49th State.

After statehood, Governor Stepovich turned his attention to representing Alaska in the U.S. Senate. He lost his bid in 1958 to be one of Alaska's first Senators to Ernest Gruening, who had served in Washington as one of Alaska's first two “shadow” Senators since 1956. Stepovich later ran and lost races to be Governor, first against William A. Egan and later against Walter Hickel. But his defeats did not diminish his interest in or dedication to Alaska. And he remained especially committed to Fairbanks and the rest of the Interior region.

From chairing the Fairbanks Planning and Zoning Committee in 1952 and

1953, through the 1980s, Mike Stepovich was always ready to serve to better Alaska. He was active in the Pioneers of Alaska, the Elks, Eagles, American Legion and the Tanana Valley Bar Association. And that was not always easy given that he was a devoted family man to his wife Matilda and 13 children: Antonia, Maria Theresa, Michael, Peter, Christopher, Dominic, Theodore John, Nicholas Vincent, James, Laura, Nada, Andrea and Melissa. All 13 of the Stepovich children were able to be together with Mike before he passed.

While I could tell many stories about Mike, let me just say to my fellow Senators that Mike Stepovich was a man who would have given the shirt off his back to help a neighbor in need. He was one of the most honorable, decent, and wise men I have had the distinct honor to know in my life. I can only offer my sincere condolences to his family upon his death, just a month shy of his 95th birthday.

Alaska is a much better place because of Mike Stepovich. Those of us who were lucky enough to know him understand how great a loss this is for Alaska. We will always remember his efforts that helped make Alaska, and his hometown of Fairbanks, what it is today.●

REMEMBERING ELIZABETH AND ROY PERATROVICH

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I wish to honor Elizabeth Peratrovich, her husband Roy Peratrovich, and their relentless pursuit of equal civil rights in the territory of Alaska. Elizabeth and Roy lived and worked long before Alaska became a State and still longer before the United States passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. February 16, 2014 marked the 25th year Alaskans celebrated Elizabeth and the passage of the Alaska Anti-Discrimination Act of 1945. I would like to take a moment today, to once again, share the Peratroviches' story and reflect on the legacy of their work.

Elizabeth, a member of the Lukaaxádi clan, in the Raven moiety of the Tlingit tribe, was born on Independence Day in Petersburg, AK in 1911. One year later, Alaska gained a territorial legislature in Juneau made up of 8 senators and 16 representatives, none of whom were Alaska Native. In the same year a group of Alaska Natives from Southeast formed the Alaska Native Brotherhood to advocate for a right to U.S. citizenship for Alaska Natives. In 1915, Alaska Native women came together and established the Alaska Native Sisterhood to work alongside the brotherhood. Although Elizabeth was very young for the creation of these bodies, each came to play a great role in her fight for equal rights.

Many Americans are familiar with the history of discrimination and pres-

ence of Jim Crow laws at this time in the South. Probably fewer Americans are familiar with the existence of similar discrimination towards Alaska Natives. In Juneau, Alaskan Natives were restricted to purchasing homes in only certain parts of town and their children restricted to segregated Indian schools. Local business displayed signs in their store fronts reading, “No Natives Allowed,” “We cater to white trade only,” or “No Dogs, No Natives” and restaurant signs read, “Meals at all hours—All white help.” The U.S. Congress granted citizenship to Native Americans in 1924, yet signs like these and the discrimination they perpetrated endured.

Elizabeth grew up and attended school in Petersburg, Sitka and Ketchikan. After graduating she continued her education at the Western College of Education in Bellingham, WA. In 1931, Elizabeth married Roy Peratrovich, a fellow Western College student and Tlingit from Klawock, AK. In 1940, Roy was elected to be the Alaska Native Brotherhood's camp president and the following year Elizabeth was elected grand president of the Alaska Native Sisterhood.

Together, with their young family, the Peratroviches moved to Juneau, only to experience discrimination against Alaska Natives first-hand. Elizabeth and Roy picked out a home together and tried to purchase it, but once the owners realized that the Peratroviches were Alaska Native, they would not sell. Their children felt unwelcome at school. Their close family friend, Henrietta Newton, who was not Alaska Native herself but married an Alaska Native man, was told by a local beauty parlor, “I'm sorry we don't cater to Indian trade.” When an Alaska Native child had an altercation with the law, their local newspaper published it as front page news. Discrimination towards Alaska Natives remained prevalent. On December 30, 1941, in their capacities as president and grand president of the Alaska Native Brother and Sisterhoods, Roy and Elizabeth wrote a letter to Ernest Gruening, then Governor of the Territory of Alaska. The letter drew attention to the discrepancy between Alaska Natives paying taxes for a public school system from which their children were excluded and also between Alaska Native men fighting in World War II, who upon return were denied rights that other locals enjoyed. Thus began their public pursuit of equal rights for all people in Alaska.

Elizabeth began to call upon her friends and family to involve themselves in the anti-discrimination movement. She recruited women to meet with a Senator from Nome in order to express to him what it felt like to be discriminated against, left out of the United Service Organization, and forced to read signs in local businesses

barring them from entry. Elizabeth and Roy met with Governor Gruening to strategize their movement, and then traveled around Native communities bringing with them sample anti-discrimination legislation from the lower 48. In 1943, State Senator Norman Walker introduced an act that would provide full and equal accommodations to all people within the Territory of Alaska. The vote was defeated, but the Peratroviches were not.

In 1945, the antidiscrimination bill was reintroduced. It passed the house and moved to the senate. The gallery was full, the doors were open and spectators filled the halls outside. Once on the senate floor, the debate began. As senators stood to speak, Elizabeth, along with many other community members listened. They listened as one Senator rose to say:

Far from being brought closer together, which will result from this bill, the races should be kept further apart. Who are these people, barely out of savagery, who want to associate with us whites with 5,000 years of recorded civilization behind us?

Elizabeth looked on as another senator claimed, "Mixed breeds are the source of trouble, it is they only who wish to associate with the whites," and as a church leader declared that it would take at least 30 years before Alaska Natives were equal to white men, Roy rose to speak on behalf of the bill noting that Governor Gruening recognized discrimination in Alaska. He addressed the legislature with these words, "Either you are for discrimination or you are against it accordingly as you vote on this bill."

Once debate on the bill concluded, the public was given a chance to express their views in front of the legislature and a crowd gathered that day. Given this chance, Elizabeth took it. Once on the senate floor, Elizabeth sat next to the president of the senate, where she addressed the predominantly white and all-male body of legislators. "I would not have expected that I, who am barely out of savagery, would have to remind gentlemen with five thousand years of recorded civilization behind them of our Bill of Rights."

When asked if she thought the bill would eliminate discrimination, Elizabeth replied:

Do your laws against larceny and even murder prevent those crimes? No law will eliminate crimes but at least you as legislators can assert to the world that you recognize the evil of the present situation and speak your intent to help us overcome discrimination.

As Elizabeth finished speaking, the gallery broke out in applause. The senate voted and passed the anti-discrimination bill by a vote of 11 to 5. On February 16, 1945, Elizabeth earned her spot as our fighter with velvet gloves, and as she's respectfully remembered in our State, Alaska's Martin Luther King.●

REMEMBERING AMY S. PERKINS

● Ms. AYOTTE. Madam President, I wish to celebrate the life and legacy of a great New Hampshire public servant—State representative Amy S. Perkins of Seabrook.

I was deeply saddened to learn of Amy's passing earlier this week. At age 43, she was taken from us far too soon. My heart is broken for her family and friends, as well as her constituents in Seabrook.

Amy represented the very best of New Hampshire's "citizen legislature." She and her husband Koko, also a State representative, represented Seabrook together at the State House while also giving back to their beloved community in so many other ways.

Amy was active in her church in Seabrook and was a member of the Raymond E. Walton American Legion Post 70 Women's Auxiliary. Koko, who continues to serve in the legislature, is the deputy chief at the Seabrook Fire Department. As a husband and wife team, they committed themselves to giving back to others—embodying New Hampshire's distinctive spirit of community.

In addition to her public duties, Amy was also a devoted mother who leaves behind two children—her son Daumanic Fucile and her daughter Katelyn Perkins. She was also a daughter and a sister—and I extend my deepest sympathy to the family members who are mourning her loss.

Amy was a leader who refused to sit on the sidelines. She is someone who cared deeply about her town and her State, and she selflessly stepped up to serve. Amy leaves behind a legacy of service that I know her husband Koko will carry on—and her children will always be able to look to the example she set as a model of how to give back to others.

Amy Perkins will be deeply missed by those whose lives she touched. Her family and many friends will remain in my thoughts and prayers.●

RECOGNIZING CAMILLE BECKMAN

● Mr. RISCH. Madam President, countless American businesses find their start in the living rooms, backyards, and garages of aspiring entrepreneurs. Harnessing individual creativity and work ethic, a hobby can grow into a lasting enterprise. Today I wish to recognize and commend the Camille Beckman Corporation, a company from my home State of Idaho whose hard work and dedication to quality has seen growth and prosperity in a unique and thriving market.

Susan Beckman Roghani learned the value of homemade goods from her mother, who sold soaps, creams, and original art at local events. In 1986, Susan built on the work of her mother and founded the Camille Beckman cosmetics brand in Boise, ID, which uses

wholesome ingredients and natural herbs to produce high-quality creams and lotions. From production and ingredients to design and marketing, every aspect of the Camille Beckman brand is produced from American-made materials and the company consistently exceeds the Federal Trade Commission's Made in the USA standard.

After relocating in 2001 to a larger facility in Eagle, ID, Camille Beckman continued to grow and expand. Today, Camille Beckman's handcrafted luxury body products are sold in over 10,000 locations across the country, along with many retailers globally. Their factory headquarters prides itself on being an energy-efficient, state-of-the-art, architecturally beautiful 105,000 square foot facility that, through their "reduce and recycle" production policies, consumes only around 30 percent of energy used by similarly sized facilities.

The company's positive and energetic culture has contributed tremendously to Camille Beckman's continued success. Thanks to an ongoing commitment to its workers, Camille Beckman has many employees that have been with the company since its formative years. In 1995, the Camille Beckman Foundation was formed as a way to help charities at the local, national, and international levels. From food banks to orphanages to medical care, the foundation gives money to dozens of charities in Idaho and across the world.

I congratulate Camille Beckman on their success, continued growth, and exemplary reputation for quality. Camille Beckman represents the best aspects of American craftsmanship and is a credit to both Idaho and the Nation.●

REPORT ON THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO CUBA AND OF THE EMERGENCY AUTHORITY RELATING TO THE REGULATION OF THE ANCHORAGE AND MOVEMENT OF VESSELS—PM 30

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the

national emergency declared on March 1, 1996, with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, as amended and expanded on February 26, 2004, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2014.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *February 25, 2014.*

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4706. A communication from the Secretary of the Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Commission Reporting Requirements Under Section 7A of the Clayton Act, 15 U.S.C. Section 18a" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 10, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4707. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Tanner Crab Area Closure in the Gulf of Alaska and Gear Modification Requirements for the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea Groundfish Fisheries" (RIN0648-BB76) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4708. A communication from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pacific Island Fisheries; 2014 Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures" (RIN0648-XC954) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 7, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4709. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to accomplishments made under the Airport Improvement Program for fiscal year 2010; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4710. A communication from the Secretary of the Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Commission Reporting Requirements Under Section 8 of the Clayton Act, 15 U.S.C. Section 19(a)(5)" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 10, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4711. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4712. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pur-

suant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries Off West Coast States; Coastal Pelagic Species Fisheries; Annual Specifications" (RIN0648-XC772) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4713. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Television Broadcasting Services; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma" (MB Docket No. 13-302, DA 14-130) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4714. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Television Broadcasting Services; Birmingham, Alabama" (MB Docket No. 13-261, DA 14-131) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4715. A communication from the Secretary of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to all complaints received by air carriers alleging discrimination on the basis of disability; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4716. A communication from the Deputy Secretary of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Treatment of Certain Collateralized Debt Obligations Backed Primarily by Trust Preferred Securities With Regard to Prohibitions and Restrictions on Certain Interests in, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds" (RIN3038-AE13) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4717. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Suspension of Community Eligibility" ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2013-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4718. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Flood Elevation Determinations" ((44 CFR Part 67) (Docket No. FEMA-2013-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4719. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Flood Elevation Determinations" ((44 CFR Part 67) (Docket No. FEMA-2013-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4720. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Flood Elevation Deter-

minations" ((44 CFR Part 67) (Docket No. FEMA-2013-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4721. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Flood Elevation Determinations" ((44 CFR Part 67) (Docket No. FEMA-2013-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4722. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to transactions involving U.S. exports to Angola; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4723. A communication from the Chairman and President of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to transactions involving U.S. exports to Mexico; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4724. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran as declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4725. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Final Flood Elevation Determinations" ((44 CFR Part 67) (Docket No. FEMA-2013-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4726. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the continuation of the national emergency with respect to Libya declared in Executive Order 13566; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4727. A communication from the Director, Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Anti-Money Laundering Program and Suspicious Activity Report Filing Requirements for Housing Government Sponsored Enterprises" (RIN1506-AB14) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4728. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Irish Potatoes Grown in Modoc and Siskiyou Counties, California, and in All Counties in Oregon, Except Malheur County; Termination of Marketing Order No. 947" (Docket No. AMS-FV-13-0036; FV13-947-1 FR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4729. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Tomatoes Grown in Florida; Increased Assessment Rate" (Docket No. AMS-

FV-13-0076; FV13-966-1 FR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4730. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Irish Potatoes Grown in Colorado; Decreased Assessment Rate for Area No. 2" (Docket No. AMS-FV-13-0072; FV13-948-2 FIR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4731. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Paper and Paper-Based Packaging Promotion, Research and Information Order" (Docket No. AMS-FV-11-0069 FR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4732. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Irish Potatoes Grown in Washington and Imported Potatoes; Modification of the Handling Regulations, Reporting Requirements, and Import Regulations for Red Types of Potatoes" (Docket No. AMS-FV-13-0068; FV13-946-3 IR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4733. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Irish Potatoes Grown in Colorado; Decreased Assessment Rate for Area No. 2" (Docket No. AMS-FV-13-0072; FV13-13-948-2 IR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4734. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Softwood Lumber Research, Promotion, Consumer Education and Industry Information Order; Changes to the Membership of the Softwood Lumber Board" (Docket No. AMS-FV-13-0038) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4735. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Cotton and Tobacco Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Cotton Futures Classification: Optional Classification Procedure" (Docket No. AMS-FV-13-0043) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4736. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Oranges, Grapefruit, Tangerines,

and Tangelos Grown in Florida; Increased Assessment Rate" (Docket No. AMS-FV-13-0074; FV13-905-3 FR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4737. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "GS-omega/kappa-Hxtx-Hv1a; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9904-92) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4738. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "N-(n-octyl)-2-pyrrolidone; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9906-17) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4739. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Alkyl Alcohol Alkoxyolate Phosphate and Sulfate Derivatives; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9906-24) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4740. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Saflufenacil; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9905-87) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4741. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Metal Halide Lamp Fixtures" (RIN1904-AC00) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 12, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. HARKIN, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1086. A bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 113-138).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. THUNE:

S. 2038. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for

other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 2039. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require that ITIN applicants submit their application in person at taxpayer assistance centers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. RISCCH):

S. 2040. A bill to exchange trust and fee land to resolve land disputes created by the realignment of the Blackfoot River along the boundary of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. RISCCH):

S. 2041. A bill to repeal the Act of May 31, 1918, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. RUBIO):

S. Con. Res. 32. A concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the need for investigation and prosecution of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, whether committed by officials of the Government of Syria, or members of other groups involved in civil war in Syria, and calling on the President to direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice and vote of the United States to immediately promote the establishment of a Syrian war crimes tribunal, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 149

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 149, a bill to provide effective criminal prosecutions for certain identity thefts, and for other purposes.

S. 161

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 161, a bill to extend the Federal recognition to the Little Shell Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Montana, and for other purposes.

S. 375

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 375, a bill to require Senate candidates to file designations, statements, and reports in electronic form.

S. 1011

At the request of Mr. JOHANNES, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1011, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of Boys Town, and for other purposes.

S. 1174

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1174, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers.

S. 1187

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1187, a bill to prevent homeowners from being forced to pay taxes on forgiven mortgage loan debt.

S. 1395

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1395, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend and expand the charitable deduction for contributions of food inventory.

S. 1397

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1397, a bill to improve the efficiency, management, and interagency coordination of the Federal permitting process through reforms overseen by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and for other purposes.

S. 1404

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1404, a bill to prohibit the consideration of any bill by Congress unless the authority provided by the Constitution of the United States for the legislation can be determined and is clearly specified.

S. 1406

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1406, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1458

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1458, a bill to establish the Daniel Webster Congressional Clerkship Program.

S. 1459

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts

(Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1459, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to prohibit the transportation of horses in interstate transportation in a motor vehicle containing 2 or more levels stacked on top of one another.

S. 1468

At the request of Mr. COONS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1468, a bill to require the Secretary of Commerce to establish the Network for Manufacturing Innovation and for other purposes.

S. 1500

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1500, a bill to declare the November 5, 2009, attack at Fort Hood, Texas, a terrorist attack, and to ensure that the victims of the attack and their families receive the same honors and benefits as those Americans who have been killed or wounded in a combat zone overseas and their families.

S. 1591

At the request of Mrs. HAGAN, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1591, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the work opportunity credit to small businesses which hire individuals who are members of the Ready Reserve or National Guard, and for other purposes.

S. 1659

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1659, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 regarding proprietary institutions of higher education in order to protect students and taxpayers.

S. 1691

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1691, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to improve the security of the United States border and to provide for reforms and rates of pay for border patrol agents.

S. 1738

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1738, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

S. 1828

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1828, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 1908

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from

Utah (Mr. HATCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1908, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 1999

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1999, a bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to require the consent of parties to contracts for the use of arbitration to resolve controversies arising under the contracts and subject to provisions of such Act and to preserve the rights of servicemembers to bring class actions under such Act, and for other purposes.

S. 2021

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2021, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the incentives for the production of biodiesel.

S. 2036

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was withdrawn as a cosponsor of S. 2036, a bill to protect all school children against harmful and life-threatening seclusion and restraint practices.

S. CON. RES. 7

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 7, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding conditions for the United States becoming a signatory to the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty, or to any similar agreement on the arms trade.

S. RES. 348

At the request of Mr. BURR, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 348, a resolution expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace.

S. RES. 355

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the names of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 355, a resolution calling on the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to cease the extra-judicial release of Afghan detainees, carry out its commitments pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding governing the transfer of Afghan detainees from the United States custody to Afghan control and to uphold the Afghan Rule of Law with respect to the referral and disposition of detainees.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CORNYN:

S. 2039. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require that ITIN applicants submit their application in person at taxpayer assistance centers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2039

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "ITIN Reform Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ISSUANCE OF ITINS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6109 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(i) SPECIAL RULES RELATING TO THE ISSUANCE OF ITINS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may issue an individual taxpayer identification number to an individual only if the requirements of paragraphs (2) and (3) are met.

"(2) IN-PERSON APPLICATION.—The requirements of this paragraph are met if, with respect to an application for an individual taxpayer identification number—

"(A) the applicant submits an application in person, using Form W-7 (or any successor thereof) and including the required documentation, at a taxpayer assistance center of the Internal Revenue Service, or

"(B) in the case of an applicant who resides outside of the United States, the applicant submits the application in person to an employee of the Internal Revenue Service or a designee of the Secretary at a United States diplomatic mission or consular post, together with the required documentation.

"(3) INITIAL ON-SITE VERIFICATION OF DOCUMENTATION.—The requirements of this paragraph are met if, with respect to each application, an employee of the Internal Revenue Service at the taxpayer assistance center, or the employee or designee described in paragraph (2)(B), as the case may be, conducts an initial verification of the documentation supporting the application submitted under paragraph (2).

"(4) REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION.—For purposes of this subsection—

"(A) required documentation includes such documentation as the Secretary may require that proves the individual's identity and foreign status, and

"(B) the Secretary may only accept original documents.

"(5) EXCEPTIONS.—

"(A) MILITARY SPOUSES.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to the spouse, or the dependents, without a social security number of a taxpayer who is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States.

"(B) TREATY BENEFITS.—Paragraph (1) shall not apply to a nonresident alien applying for an individual taxpayer identification number for the purpose of claiming tax treaty benefits.

"(6) TERM.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—An individual taxpayer identification number issued after the date of the enactment of this subsection shall be valid only for the 5-year period which includes the taxable year of the individual for which such number is issued and the 4 succeeding taxable years.

"(B) RENEWAL OF ITIN.—Such number shall be valid for an additional 5-year period only if it is renewed through an application which satisfies the requirements under paragraphs (2) and (3).

"(C) SPECIAL RULE FOR EXISTING ITINS.—In the case of an individual with an individual taxpayer identification number issued on or before the date of the enactment of this subsection, such number shall not be valid after the earlier of—

"(i) the end of the 3-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this subsection, or

"(ii) the first taxable year beginning after—

"(I) the date of the enactment of this subsection, and

"(II) any taxable year for which the individual (or, if a dependent, on which the individual is included) did not make a return."

(b) INTEREST.—Section 6611 of such Code is amended by redesignating subsection (h) as subsection (i) and by inserting after subsection (g) the following new subsection:

"(h) SPECIAL RULE RELATING TO ITINS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, no interest shall be allowed or paid to or on behalf of an individual with respect to any overpayment until 45 days after an individual taxpayer identification number is issued to the individual."

(c) AUDIT BY TIGTA.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every two years thereafter, the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration shall conduct an audit of the program of the Internal Revenue Service for the issuance of individual taxpayer identification numbers pursuant to section 6109(i) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. The report required by this subsection shall be submitted to the Congress.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) SUBSECTION (a).—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to requests for individual taxpayer identification numbers made after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) SUBSECTION (b).—The amendment made by subsection (b) shall apply to returns due, claims filed, and refunds paid after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 32—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING THE NEED FOR INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF WAR CRIMES, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY, AND GENOCIDE, WHETHER COMMITTED BY OFFICIALS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA, OR MEMBERS OF OTHER GROUPS INVOLVED IN CIVIL WAR IN SYRIA, AND CALLING ON THE PRESIDENT TO DIRECT THE UNITED STATES PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS TO USE THE VOICE AND VOTE OF THE UNITED STATES TO IMMEDIATELY PROMOTE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SYRIAN WAR CRIMES TRIBUNAL, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 32

Whereas the Government of Syria is reported to have engaged in widespread torture, rape, and massacre of civilians, including by means of chemical weapons, most recently on or about August 21, 2013;

Whereas other groups involved in civil war in Syria, including the al-Nusra Front, are reported to have engaged in torture, rape, summary execution of government soldiers, kidnapping for ransom, and violence against civilians, including Christians and others who are not Sunni Muslims;

Whereas these and other actions perpetrated by the Government of Syria and other groups involved in civil war in Syria may constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide;

Whereas Syria is not a state-party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, done at Rome July 17, 1998, and is not a member of the International Criminal Court;

Whereas the international community has previously established ad hoc tribunals through the United Nations to bring justice in specific countries where there have been war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide;

Whereas ad hoc tribunals, including the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, have successfully investigated and prosecuted war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, and there are many positive lessons to be learned from these three ad hoc tribunals; and

Whereas any lasting, peaceful solution to civil war in Syria must be based upon justice for all, including members of all factions, political parties, ethnicities, and religions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This concurrent resolution may be cited as the "Immediate Establishment of Syrian War Crimes Tribunal Resolution".

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the United States Government should urge the Government of Syria and other groups involved in civil war in Syria to implement an immediate cease fire and engage in negotiations to end the bloodshed;

(2) the United States Government should publicly declare that it is a requirement of basic justice that war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, whether committed by officials of the Government of Syria, or members of other groups involved in civil war in Syria, should be investigated and prosecuted;

(3) the President should direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice and vote of the United States to immediately promote the establishment of a Syrian war crimes tribunal, an ad hoc court to prosecute the perpetrators of such serious crimes committed during the civil war in Syria;

(4) in working with other countries to establish a Syrian war crimes tribunal, the United States Government should promote judicial procedures that enable the prosecution of the most culpable persons guilty of directing such serious crimes;

(5) the United States Government should make an immediate priority the collection of information that can be supplied to a Syrian war crimes tribunal for use as evidence to support the indictment and trial of any person involved in civil war in Syria and responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide in Syria; and

(6) the United States Government should urge other interested states to apprehend and deliver into the custody of a Syrian war crimes tribunal persons indicted for war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide in Syria and urge such states to provide information pertaining to such crimes to the tribunal.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2744. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2745. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2746. Mrs. HAGAN (for herself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2747. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2748. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2749. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2750. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2751. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2752. Mr. BURR (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an

amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2753. Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2744. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 76, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

SEC. 330. CANADIAN FORCES BASE GAGETOWN REGISTRY.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish and maintain a registry to be known as the “Canadian Forces Base Gagetown Health Registry” (in this section referred to as the “Registry”).

(b) CONTENTS.—Except as provided in subsection (c), the Registry shall include the following information:

(1) A list containing the name of each individual who—

(A) while serving as a member of the Armed Forces, was stationed at or underwent training at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown, New Brunswick, Canada, at any time during the period beginning on January 1, 1956, and ending on December 31, 2006; and

(B)(i) applies for care or services from the Department of Veterans Affairs under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code;

(ii) files a claim for compensation under chapter 11 of such title on the basis of any disability that may be associated with such service;

(iii) dies and is survived by a spouse, child, or parent who files a claim for dependency and indemnity compensation under chapter 13 of such title on the basis of such service;

(iv) requests from the Secretary a health examination under subsection (d)(1); or

(v)(I) receives from the Secretary a health examination similar to the health examination under subsection (d)(1); and

(II) submits to the Secretary a request to be included in the Registry.

(2) Relevant medical data relating to the health status of, and other information that the Secretary considers relevant and appropriate with respect to, each individual described in paragraph (1) who—

(A) grants to the Secretary permission to include such information in the Registry; or

(B) at the time the name of the individual is added to the Registry, is deceased.

(c) INDIVIDUALS SUBMITTING CLAIMS OR MAKING REQUESTS BEFORE DATE OF ENACTMENT.—If an application, claim, or request referred to in paragraph (1) of subsection (b) was submitted, filed, or made with respect to an individual described in that paragraph before the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall, to the extent feasible, include in the Registry the information described in that subsection relating to that individual.

(d) EXAMINATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon the request of an individual described in subsection (b)(1)(A), the Secretary shall provide the individual with—

(A) a health examination (including any appropriate diagnostic tests); and

(B) consultation and counseling with respect to the results of the examination and tests.

(2) CONSULTATION AND COUNSELING TO FAMILY MEMBERS.—In the case of an individual described in subsection (b)(1)(A) who is deceased, upon the request of a spouse, child, or parent of that individual, the Secretary shall provide that spouse, child, or parent with consultation and counseling with respect to the results of the examination and tests under paragraph (1)(A) or the results of an examination similar to that examination with respect to that individual.

(e) OUTREACH.—

(1) ONGOING OUTREACH TO INDIVIDUALS LISTED IN THE REGISTRY.—The Secretary shall, from time to time, notify individuals listed in the Registry of significant developments in research on the health consequences of potential exposure to a toxic substance or environmental hazard related to service at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown.

(2) EXAMINATION OUTREACH.—The Secretary shall carry out appropriate outreach activities with respect to the provision of any health examinations (including any diagnostic tests) and consultation and counseling services under subsection (d).

(f) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INFORMATION.—The Secretary of Defense shall furnish to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs such information maintained by the Secretary of Defense as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs considers necessary to establish and maintain the Registry.

(g) INDEPENDENT STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall provide for a study on the potential exposure of individuals to toxic substances or environmental hazards related to service at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown at any time during the period beginning on January 1, 1956, and ending on December 31, 2006.

(2) INDEPENDENT ENTITY.—The study required by paragraph (1) shall be carried out by an entity that—

(A) has experience conducting studies with respect to the exposure of individuals to toxic substances or environmental hazards; and

(B) is not affiliated with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(3) DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION.—The study required by paragraph (1) shall be completed not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(h) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, and each year thereafter, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the Registry.

(2) ELEMENTS.—Each report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of veterans included in the Registry.

(B) Any trend in claims for compensation under chapter 11 or 13 of title 38, United States Code, with respect to veterans included in the Registry.

(C) A description of the outreach efforts made by the Secretary under subsection (e) during the one-year period ending on the date of such report.

(D) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate.

SA 2745. Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. KING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 61, between lines 5 and 6, insert the following:

SEC. 314. PROGRAM OF ENHANCED CONTRACT CARE AUTHORITY FOR HEALTH CARE NEEDS OF VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 17 is amended by inserting after section 1703 the following new section:

“§ 1703A. Program of enhanced contract care authority for health care needs of veterans

“(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—(1) The Secretary shall conduct a program under which the Secretary provides covered health services to covered veterans through qualifying non-Department health care providers.

“(2) The Secretary shall commence the conduct of the program on October 1, 2014.

“(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of the program under this section, a covered veteran is any veteran who—

“(1) is—

“(A) enrolled in the system of patient enrollment established and operated under section 1705(a) of this title as of the date of the commencement of the program under subsection (a)(2); or

“(B) eligible for health care under section 1710(e)(3) of such title; and

“(2) resides in a location that is—

“(A) more than 60 minutes driving distance from the nearest Department health care facility providing primary care services, if the veteran is seeking such services;

“(B) more than 120 minutes driving distance from the nearest Department health care facility providing acute hospital care, if the veteran is seeking such care; or

“(C) more than 240 minutes driving distance from the nearest Department health care facility providing tertiary care, if the veteran is seeking such care.

“(c) COVERED HEALTH SERVICES.—For purposes of the program under this section, a covered health service with respect to a covered veteran is any hospital care, medical service, rehabilitative service, or preventative health service that is authorized to be provided by the Secretary to the veteran under this chapter or any other provision of law.

“(d) QUALIFYING NON-DEPARTMENT HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS.—For purposes of the program under this section, an entity or individual is a qualifying non-Department health care provider of a covered health service if the Secretary determines that the entity or individual is qualified to furnish such service to a covered veteran under the program.

“(e) LOCATIONS.—The program shall be carried out within—

“(1) of the areas at which the Secretary was carrying out the pilot program established under section 403 of the Veterans' Mental Health and Other Care Improvements Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-387; 38 U.S.C. 1703 note) on the day before the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014, those areas at which the Secretary has determined that such pilot program was carried out successfully; and

“(2) any additional area that the Secretary may select for purposes of the program.

“(f) ELECTION.—A covered veteran seeking a covered health service from a qualifying

non-Department health care provider under the program under this section shall submit to the Secretary an application therefor in such form, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary shall specify for purposes of the program.

“(g) PROVISION OF SERVICES THROUGH CONTRACT.—The Secretary shall provide covered health services to veterans under the program under this section through contracts with qualifying non-Department health care providers for the provision of such services.

“(h) EXCHANGE OF MEDICAL INFORMATION.—In conducting the program under this section, the Secretary shall develop and utilize a functional capability to provide for the exchange of appropriate medical information between the Department and qualifying non-Department health care providers providing health services under the program.

“(i) REPORTS.—Not later than the 30 days after the end of each year in which the program under this section is conducted, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee of Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that includes—

“(1) the assessment of the Secretary of the program during the preceding year, including its cost, volume, quality, patient satisfaction, benefit to veterans, and such other findings and conclusions with respect to the program as the Secretary considers appropriate; and

“(2) such recommendations as the Secretary considers appropriate regarding—

“(A) the continuation of the program; and

“(B) extension of the program to other or all Veterans Integrated Service Networks of the Department.

“(j) SOURCE OF FUNDS.—In carrying out the program under this section, such sums as may be necessary to carry out the program shall be derived from amounts appropriated or otherwise made available to the Office of Rural Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs after the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1703 the following new item:

“1703A. Program of enhanced contract care authority for health care needs of veterans.”.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 403 of the Veterans' Mental Health and Other Care Improvements Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-387; 38 U.S.C. 1703 note) is repealed.

SA 2746. Mrs. HAGAN (for herself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 207, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

Subtitle F—Work Opportunity Tax Credit

SEC. 451. WORK OPPORTUNITY CREDIT TO SMALL BUSINESSES FOR HIRING MEMBERS OF READY RESERVE OR NATIONAL GUARD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 51 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3) of subsection (b), by inserting “or any individual described in subparagraph (J) of subsection (d)(1) who has been certified as having aggregate periods of

unemployment described in clause (ii)(III) of such subparagraph” after “subsection (d)(3)(A)(iv)”, and

(2) in paragraph (1) of subsection (d), by striking “or” at the end of subparagraph (H), by striking the period at the end of subparagraph (I) and inserting “, or”, and by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(J) in the case of an eligible employer (as defined in section 408(p)(2)(C)(i)), an individual who—

“(i) is a member of—

“(I) the Ready Reserve (as described in section 10142 of title 10, United States Code), or

“(II) the National Guard (as defined in section 101(c)(1) of such title 10), and

“(ii) is certified by the designated local agency as—

“(I) being a member of a family described in clause (i) of paragraph (3)(A),

“(II) having aggregate periods of unemployment during the 1-year period ending on the hiring date which equal or exceed 4 weeks (but less than 6 months), or

“(III) having aggregate periods of unemployment during the 1-year period ending on the hiring date which equal or exceed 6 months.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to wages paid or incurred by the employer during the taxable year to individuals who begin work for the employer after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 452. PERMANENT EXTENSION OF WORK OPPORTUNITY CREDIT FOR EMPLOYERS HIRING QUALIFIED VETERANS AND MEMBERS OF READY RESERVE AND NATIONAL GUARD.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 51(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting “(other than any individual described in subparagraph (B) or (J) of subsection (d)(1))” after “individual”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to individuals who begin work for the employer after December 31, 2013.

SA 2747. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the first word and insert the following:

1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. References to title 38, United States Code.

Sec. 3. Budgetary effects.

TITLE I—SURVIVOR AND DEPENDENT MATTERS

Sec. 101. Extension of initial period for increased dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses with children.

Sec. 102. Eligibility for dependency and indemnity compensation, educational assistance, and housing loans for surviving spouses who remarry after age 55.

Sec. 103. Extension of marriage delimiting date for surviving spouses of Persian Gulf War veterans to qualify for death pension.

- Sec. 104. Making effective date provision consistent with provision for benefits eligibility of a veteran's child based upon termination of remarriage by annulment.
- Sec. 105. Expansion of Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship.
- Sec. 106. Expansion of Yellow Ribbon G.I. Education Enhancement Program.
- Sec. 107. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina bifida.
- Sec. 108. Program on assisted living for children of Vietnam veterans and certain Korea service veterans born with spina bifida.
- Sec. 109. Program on grief counseling in retreat settings for surviving spouses of members of the Armed Forces who die while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces.
- Sec. 110. Program evaluation on survivors' and dependents' educational assistance authorities.

TITLE II—EDUCATION MATTERS

- Sec. 201. Approval of courses of education provided by public institutions of higher learning for purposes of All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance conditional on in-State tuition rate for veterans.
- Sec. 202. Extension and expansion of authority for certain qualifying work-study activities for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 203. Prohibitions relating to references to GI Bill and Post-9/11 GI Bill.
- Sec. 204. Review of utilization of educational assistance to pursue programs of training on the job and participating employers.
- Sec. 205. Report on debt management and collection.
- Sec. 206. Restoration of prior reporting fee multipliers.

TITLE III—HEALTH CARE MATTERS

Subtitle A—Expansion and Improvements of Benefits Generally

- Sec. 301. Requirement for enrollment in patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs of certain veterans eligible for enrollment by law but not currently permitted to enroll.
- Sec. 302. Further extension of period of eligibility for health care for veterans of combat service during certain periods of hostilities and war.
- Sec. 303. Extension to all veterans with a serious service-connected disability of eligibility for participation in family caregiver program.
- Sec. 304. Improved access to appropriate immunizations for veterans.
- Sec. 305. Expansion of provision of chiropractic care and services to veterans.
- Sec. 306. Modification of commencement date of period of service at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for eligibility for hospital care and medical services in connection with exposure to contaminated water.

- Sec. 307. Expansion of emergency treatment reimbursement for certain veterans.
- Sec. 308. Modification of determination of eligibility of veterans for treatment as a low-income family for purposes of enrollment in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 309. Extension of sunset date regarding transportation of individuals to and from facilities of Department of Veterans Affairs and requirement of report.
- Sec. 310. Coverage of costs of care for veterans at medical foster homes.
- Sec. 311. Extension and modification of pilot program on assisted living services for veterans with traumatic brain injury.
- Sec. 312. Program on health promotion for overweight and obese veterans through support of fitness center memberships.
- Sec. 313. Program on health promotion for veterans through establishment of Department of Veterans Affairs fitness facilities.

Subtitle B—Health Care Administration

- Sec. 321. Extension of Department of Veterans Affairs Health Professional Scholarship Program.
- Sec. 322. Expansion of availability of prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.
- Sec. 323. Contracting for health care.
- Sec. 324. Limitation on expansion of dialysis pilot program.
- Sec. 325. Requirement for Department of Veterans Affairs policy on reporting cases of infectious diseases at facilities of the Department.
- Sec. 326. Independent assessment of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks and medical centers of Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 327. Requirements in connection with next update of current strategic plan for Office of Rural Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 328. Report on provision of telemedicine services.
- Sec. 329. Designation of Corporal Michael J. Crescenzo Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Subtitle C—Complementary and Alternative Medicine

- Sec. 331. Expansion of research and education on and delivery of complementary and alternative medicine to veterans.
- Sec. 332. Program on integration of complementary and alternative medicine within Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers.
- Sec. 333. Studies of barriers encountered by veterans in receiving, and administrators and clinicians in providing, complementary and alternative medicine services furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 334. Program on use of wellness programs as complementary approach to mental health care for veterans and family members of veterans.

Subtitle D—Mental Health Care

- Sec. 341. Inclusion of mental health professionals in the education and training program for health personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 342. Education program and peer support program for family members and caregivers of veterans with mental health disorders.
- Sec. 343. Report on provision of mental health services for families of certain veterans at facilities of the Department.
- Sec. 344. Annual report on community mental health partnership pilot program.

Subtitle E—Dental Care Eligibility Expansion and Enhancement

- Sec. 351. Restorative dental services for veterans.
- Sec. 352. Pilot program on expansion of furnishing of dental care to all enrolled veterans.
- Sec. 353. Program on education to promote dental health in veterans.
- Sec. 354. Information on dental services for inclusion in electronic medical records under dental insurance pilot program.
- Sec. 355. Authorization of appropriations.

Subtitle F—Health Care Related to Sexual Trauma

- Sec. 361. Expansion of eligibility for sexual trauma counseling and treatment to veterans on inactive duty training.
- Sec. 362. Provision of counseling and treatment for sexual trauma by the Department of Veterans Affairs to members of the Armed Forces.
- Sec. 363. Department of Veterans Affairs screening mechanism to detect incidents of domestic abuse.
- Sec. 364. Reports on military sexual trauma and domestic abuse.

Subtitle G—Reproductive Treatment and Services

- Sec. 371. Clarification that fertility counseling and treatment are medical services which the Secretary may furnish to veterans like other medical services.
- Sec. 372. Reproductive treatment and care for spouses and surrogates of veterans.
- Sec. 373. Adoption assistance for severely wounded veterans.
- Sec. 374. Regulations on furnishing of fertility counseling and treatment and adoption assistance by Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 375. Coordination between Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense on furnishing of fertility counseling and treatment.
- Sec. 376. Facilitation of reproduction and infertility research.
- Sec. 377. Annual report on provision of fertility counseling and treatment furnished by Department of Veterans Affairs.
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TITLE IV—EMPLOYMENT AND RELATED MATTERS

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Sec. 401. Reauthorization of veterans retraining assistance program.

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Sec. 601. Medical examination and opinion for disability compensation claims based on military sexual trauma.

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Subtitle B—Claims for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

Sec. 611. Program on treatment of certain applications for dependency and indemnity compensation as fully developed claims.

Sec. 612. Report by Secretary of Veterans Affairs on improving timeliness and accuracy of administration of claims for dependency and indemnity compensation and pension for surviving spouses and children.

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Sec. 621. Working group to improve employee work credit and work management systems of Veterans Benefits Administration in an electronic environment.

Sec. 622. Task force on retention and training of Department of Veterans Affairs claims processors and adjudicators.

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Sec. 624. Recognition of representatives of Indian tribes in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

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Sec. 626. Department of Veterans Affairs notice of average times for processing compensation claims.

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Sec. 628. Reports on use of existing authorities to expedite benefits decisions.

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Subtitle D—Board of Veterans' Appeals and Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

Sec. 631. Treatment of certain misfiled documents as a notice of appeal to the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

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TITLE VII—OUTREACH MATTERS

Sec. 701. Program to increase coordination of outreach efforts between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Federal, State, and local agencies and nonprofit organizations.

Sec. 702. Cooperative agreements between Secretary of Veterans Affairs and States on outreach activities.

Sec. 703. Advisory committee on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 704. Advisory boards on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs relating to health care.

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TITLE VIII—ENHANCEMENT OF RIGHTS UNDER SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT

Sec. 801. Modification of period determining which actions are covered under stay of proceedings and adjustment of obligation protections concerning mortgages and trust deeds of members of uniformed services.

Sec. 802. Protections for members of uniformed services regarding professional licenses.

Sec. 803. Prohibition on denial of credit because of eligibility for protection.

- Sec. 804. Interest rate limitation on debt entered into during military service to consolidate or refinance student loans incurred before military service.
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- TITLE IX—OTHER MATTERS**
- Sec. 901. Repeal of certain reductions made by Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.
- Sec. 902. Consideration by Secretary of Veterans Affairs of resources disposed of for less than fair market value by individuals applying for pension.
- Sec. 903. Extension of reduced pension for certain veterans covered by medicaid plans for services furnished by nursing facilities.
- Sec. 904. Conditions on award of per diem payments by Secretary of Veterans Affairs for provision of housing or services to homeless veterans.
- Sec. 905. Exception to certain recapture requirements and treatment of contracts and grants with State homes with respect to care for homeless veterans.
- Sec. 906. Extended period for scheduling of medical exams for veterans receiving temporary disability ratings for severe mental disorders.
- Sec. 907. Authority to issue Veterans ID Cards.
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- Sec. 909. Extension of authority for Secretary of Veterans Affairs to obtain information from Secretary of Treasury and Commissioner of Social Security for income verification purposes.
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- Sec. 911. Review of determination of certain service in Philippines during World War II.
- Sec. 912. Review of determination of certain service of merchant mariners during World War II.
- Sec. 913. Report on Laotian military support of Armed Forces of the United States during Vietnam War.
- Sec. 914. Report on practices of the Department of Veterans Affairs to adequately provide services to veterans with hearing loss.

Sec. 915. Report on joint programs of Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense with respect to hearing loss of members of the Armed Forces and veterans.

Sec. 916. Limitation on aggregate amount of bonuses payable to personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs during fiscal year 2014.

Sec. 917. Amendment to OCO adjustments.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 3. BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

(a) **PAYGO SCORECARD.**—The budgetary effects of this Act shall not be entered on either PAYGO scorecard maintained pursuant to section 4(d) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 933(d)).

(b) **SENATE PAYGO SCORECARD.**—The budgetary effects of this Act shall not be entered on any PAYGO scorecard maintained for purposes of section 201 of S. Con. Res. 21 (110th Congress).

TITLE I—SURVIVOR AND DEPENDENT MATTERS

SEC. 101. EXTENSION OF INITIAL PERIOD FOR INCREASED DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES WITH CHILDREN.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1311(f)(2) is amended by striking “two-year” and inserting “three-year”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect as of September 30, 2014, and shall apply to any surviving spouse who was eligible for or in receipt of benefits under section 1311(f) of title 38, United States Code, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 102. ELIGIBILITY FOR DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION, EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE, AND HOUSING LOANS FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES WHO REMARRY AFTER AGE 55.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Paragraph (2)(B) of section 103(d) is amended to read as follows:

“(B) The remarriage after age 55 of the surviving spouse of a veteran shall not bar the furnishing of benefits specified in paragraph (5) to such person as the surviving spouse of the veteran.”.

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Paragraph (5) of such section is amended by striking “Paragraphs (2)(A)” and inserting “Paragraphs (2)”.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 103. EXTENSION OF MARRIAGE DELIMITING DATE FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES OF PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS TO QUALIFY FOR DEATH PENSION.

Section 1541(f)(1)(E) is amended by striking “January 1, 2001” and inserting “the date that is 10 years and one day after the date on which the Persian Gulf War was terminated, as prescribed by Presidential proclamation or by law”.

SEC. 104. MAKING EFFECTIVE DATE PROVISION CONSISTENT WITH PROVISION FOR BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY OF A VETERAN'S CHILD BASED UPON TERMINATION OF REMARRIAGE BY ANNULMENT.

Section 5110(1) is amended by striking “, or of an award or increase of benefits based on

recognition of a child upon termination of the child's marriage by death or divorce.”.

SEC. 105. EXPANSION OF MARINE GUNNERY SERGEANT JOHN DAVID FRY SCHOLARSHIP.

(a) **EXPANSION OF ENTITLEMENT.**—Subsection (b)(9) of section 3311 is amended by inserting “or spouse” after “child”.

(b) **LIMITATION AND ELECTION ON CERTAIN BENEFITS.**—Subsection (f) of such section is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (4); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraphs:

“(2) **LIMITATION.**—The entitlement of an individual to assistance under subsection (a) pursuant to paragraph (9) of subsection (b) because the individual was a spouse of a person described in such paragraph shall expire on the earlier of—

“(A) the date that is 15 years after the date on which the person died; and

“(B) the date on which the individual remarries.

“(3) **ELECTION ON RECEIPT OF CERTAIN BENEFITS.**—A surviving spouse entitled to assistance under subsection (a) pursuant to paragraph (9) of subsection (b) who is also entitled to educational assistance under chapter 35 of this title may not receive assistance under both this section and such chapter, but shall make an irrevocable election (in such form and manner as the Secretary may prescribe) under which section or chapter to receive educational assistance.”.

(c) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 3321(b)(4) is amended—

(1) by striking “an individual” and inserting “a child”; and

(2) by striking “such individual's” each time it appears and inserting “such child's”.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is two years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 106. EXPANSION OF YELLOW RIBBON G.I. EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 3317(a) is amended by striking “in paragraphs (1) and (2)” and inserting “in paragraphs (1), (2), and (9)”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to academic terms beginning after July 1, 2015.

SEC. 107. BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN OF CERTAIN THAILAND SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA BIFIDA.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter III of chapter 18 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1822. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina bifida

“(a) **BENEFITS AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary may provide to any child of a veteran of covered service in Thailand who is suffering from spina bifida the health care, vocational training and rehabilitation, and monetary allowance required to be paid to a child of a Vietnam veteran who is suffering from spina bifida under subchapter I of this chapter as if such child of a veteran of covered service in Thailand were a child of a Vietnam veteran who is suffering from spina bifida under such subchapter.

“(b) **SPINA BIFIDA CONDITIONS COVERED.**—This section applies with respect to all forms and manifestations of spina bifida, except spina bifida occulta.

“(c) VETERAN OF COVERED SERVICE IN THAILAND.—For purposes of this section, a veteran of covered service in Thailand is any individual, without regard to the characterization of that individual's service, who—

“(1) served in the active military, naval, or air service in Thailand, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975; and

“(2) is determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, to have been exposed to a herbicide agent during such service in Thailand.

“(d) HERBICIDE AGENT.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘herbicide agent’ means a chemical in a herbicide used in support of United States and allied military operations in Thailand, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF “CHILD”.—Section 1831(1) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) by striking “subchapter III of this chapter” and inserting “section 1821 of this title”; and

(B) in clause (i), by striking “section 1821 of this title” and inserting “that section”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) For purposes of section 1822 of this title, an individual, regardless of age or marital status, who—

“(i) is the natural child of a veteran of covered service in Thailand (as determined for purposes of that section); and

“(ii) was conceived after the date on which that veteran first entered service described in subsection (c) of that section.”.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SUBCHAPTER HEADING.—The heading for subchapter III of chapter 18 is amended by inserting “AND THAILAND” after “KOREA”.

(2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 18 is amended—

(A) by striking the item relating to subchapter III and inserting the following new item:

“SUBCHAPTER III—CHILDREN OF CERTAIN KOREA AND THAILAND SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA BIFIDA”;

and

(B) by inserting after the item relating to section 1821 the following new item:

“1822. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina bifida.”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 108. PROGRAM ON ASSISTED LIVING FOR CHILDREN OF VIETNAM VETERANS AND CERTAIN KOREA SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA BIFIDA.

(a) PROGRAM.—Commencing not later than 180 days after the date on which this section takes effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing assisted living, group home care, or similar services in lieu of nursing home care to covered individuals.

(b) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—For purposes of this section, a covered individual is any individual who is entitled to health care under subchapter I or III of chapter 18 of title 38, United States Code.

(c) DURATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the program shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(2) CONTINUATION.—Subject to paragraph (3), the Secretary may continue the program for an additional two-year period as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(3) TERMINATION.—The program may not operate after the date that is five years after the date of the commencement of the program.

(d) SCOPE OF SERVICES AND PROGRAM.—Under the program, the Secretary shall provide covered individuals with integrated, comprehensive services, including the following:

(1) Assisted living, group home care, or such other similar services as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) Transportation services.

(3) Such other services as the Secretary considers appropriate for the care of covered individuals under the program.

(e) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall—

(1) inform all covered individuals of the services available under the program;

(2) enter into agreements with appropriate providers of assisted living, group home care, or other similar services for provision of services under the program; and

(3) determine the appropriate number of covered individuals to be enrolled in the program and criteria for such enrollment.

(f) REPORTS.—

(1) PRELIMINARY REPORTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the commencement of the program and, if the program is continued under subsection (c)(2), not later than three years after the date of the commencement of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program.

(B) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) A description of the implementation and operation of the program.

(ii) The number of covered individuals receiving benefits under the program.

(iii) An analysis that compares the costs of furnishing assisted living, group home care, or similar services with the costs of furnishing nursing home care.

(iv) An analysis of the costs and benefits under the program.

(v) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(vi) Such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary may have.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program.

(B) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(ii) Such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary may have.

(g) FUNDING.—Amounts to carry out the program shall be derived from amounts ap-

propriated or otherwise made available for the furnishing of nursing home care under chapter 18 of title 38, United States Code.

(h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 109. PROGRAM ON GRIEF COUNSELING IN RETREAT SETTINGS FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO DIE WHILE SERVING ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Commencing not later than 180 days after the date on which this section takes effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out, through the Readjustment Counseling Service of the Veterans Health Administration, a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing grief counseling services described in subsection (b) in group retreat settings to surviving spouses of members of the Armed Forces who die while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces who would, as determined by the Readjustment Counseling Service, benefit from the services provided under the program.

(2) PARTICIPATION AT ELECTION OF SURVIVING SPOUSE.—The participation of a surviving spouse in the program under this section shall be at the election of the surviving spouse.

(b) COVERED SERVICES.—The services provided to a surviving spouse under the program shall include the following:

(1) Information and counseling on coping with grief.

(2) Information about benefits and services available to surviving spouses under laws administered by the Secretary.

(3) Such other information and counseling as the Secretary considers appropriate to assist a surviving spouse under the program with adjusting to the death of a spouse.

(c) EVENTS.—The Secretary shall carry out the program at not fewer than six events as follows:

(1) Three events at which surviving spouses with dependent children are encouraged to bring their children.

(2) Three events at which surviving spouses with dependent children are not encouraged to bring their children.

(d) DURATION.—The program shall be carried out during the two-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(e) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the first year of the program and not later than 180 days after the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the program.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall contain the findings and conclusions of the Secretary as a result of the program, and shall include such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms “active duty”, “Armed Forces”, and “surviving spouse” have the meanings given such terms in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 110. PROGRAM EVALUATION ON SURVIVORS' AND DEPENDENTS' EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE AUTHORITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall enter into a contract with

an appropriate private sector entity to conduct a program evaluation of the authorities for survivors' and dependents' educational assistance under chapter 35 of title 38, United States Code.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than six months after the entry into the contract required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth the results of the program evaluation conducted pursuant to the contract, together with such comments on the results of the program evaluation as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE II—EDUCATION MATTERS

SEC. 201. APPROVAL OF COURSES OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING FOR PURPOSES OF ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE CONDITIONAL ON IN-STATE TUITION RATE FOR VETERANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 3679 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter and subject to paragraphs (3) through (6), the Secretary shall disapprove a course of education provided by a public institution of higher learning to a covered individual pursuing a course of education with educational assistance under chapter 30 or 33 of this title while living in the State in which the public institution of higher learning is located if the institution charges tuition and fees for that course for the covered individual at a rate that is higher than the rate the institution charges for tuition and fees for that course for residents of the State in which the institution is located, regardless of the covered individual's State of residence.

“(2) For purposes of this subsection, a covered individual is any individual as follows:

“(A) A veteran who was discharged or released from a period of not fewer than 90 days of service in the active military, naval, or air service less than three years before the date of enrollment in the course concerned.

“(B) An individual who is entitled to assistance under section 3311(b)(9) or 3319 of this title by virtue of such individual's relationship to a veteran described in subparagraph (A).

“(3) If after enrollment in a course of education that is subject to disapproval under paragraph (1) by reason of paragraph (2)(A) or (2)(B) a covered individual pursues one or more courses of education at the same public institution of higher learning while remaining continuously enrolled (other than during regularly scheduled breaks between courses, semesters or terms) at that institution of higher learning, any course so pursued by the covered individual at that institution of higher learning while so continuously enrolled shall also be subject to disapproval under paragraph (1).

“(4) It shall not be grounds to disapprove a course of education under paragraph (1) if a public institution of higher learning requires a covered individual pursuing a course of education at the institution to demonstrate an intent, by means other than satisfying a physical presence requirement, to establish residency in the State in which the institution is located, or to satisfy other requirements not relating to the establishment of

residency, in order to be charged tuition and fees for that course at a rate that is equal to or less than the rate the institution charges for tuition and fees for that course for residents of the State.

“(5) The Secretary may waive such requirements of paragraph (1) as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(6) Disapproval under paragraph (1) shall apply only with respect to educational assistance under chapters 30 and 33 of this title.”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Subsection (c) of section 3679 of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a) of this section), shall apply with respect to educational assistance provided for pursuit of programs of education during academic terms that begin after July 1, 2015, through courses of education that commence on or after that date.

SEC. 202. EXTENSION AND EXPANSION OF AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN QUALIFYING WORK-STUDY ACTIVITIES FOR PURPOSES OF THE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **EXTENSION OF EXPIRING CURRENT AUTHORITY.**—Section 3485(a)(4) is amended by striking “June 30, 2013” each place it appears and inserting “June 30, 2015”.

(b) **EXPANSION TO OUTREACH SERVICES PROVIDED THROUGH CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES.**—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(K) During the period beginning on June 30, 2013, and ending on June 30, 2015, the following activities carried out at the offices of Members of Congress for such Members:

“(i) The distribution of information to members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their dependents about the benefits and services under laws administered by the Secretary and other appropriate governmental and nongovernmental programs.

“(ii) The preparation and processing of papers and other documents, including documents to assist in the preparation and presentation of claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.”.

(c) **ANNUAL REPORTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than June 30 of 2014 and 2015, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the work-study allowances paid under paragraph (1) of section 3485(a) of title 38, United States Code, during the most recent one-year period for qualifying work-study activities described in paragraph (4) of such section, as amended by subsections (a) and (b) of this section.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include, for the year covered by such report, the following:

(A) A description of the recipients of such work-study allowances.

(B) A list of the locations where qualifying work-study activities were carried out.

(C) A description of the outreach conducted by the Secretary to increase awareness of the eligibility of such work-study activities for such work-study allowances.

SEC. 203. PROHIBITIONS RELATING TO REFERENCES TO GI BILL AND POST-9/11 GI BILL.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter II of chapter 36 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 3697B. Prohibition relating to references to GI Bill and Post-9/11 GI Bill

“(a) **PROHIBITION.**—(1) No person may, except with the written permission of the Secretary, use the words and phrases covered by this subsection in connection with any promotion, goods, services, or commercial ac-

tivity in a manner that reasonably and falsely suggests that such use is approved, endorsed, or authorized by the Department or any component thereof.

“(2) For purposes of this subsection, the words and phrases covered by this subsection are as follows:

“(A) ‘GI Bill’.

“(B) ‘Post-9/11 GI Bill’.

“(3) A determination that a use of one or more words and phrases covered by this subsection in connection with a promotion, goods, services, or commercial activity is not a violation of this subsection may not be made solely on the ground that such promotion, goods, services, or commercial activity includes a disclaimer of affiliation with the Department or any component thereof.

“(b) **ENFORCEMENT BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.**—(1) When any person is engaged or is about to engage in an act or practice which constitutes or will constitute conduct prohibited by subsection (a), the Attorney General may initiate a civil proceeding in a district court of the United States to enjoin such act or practice.

“(2) Such court may, at any time before final determination, enter such restraining orders or prohibitions, or take such other action as is warranted, to prevent injury to the United States or to any person or class of persons for whose protection the action is brought.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 36 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3697A the following new item:

“3697B. Prohibition relating to references to GI Bill and Post-9/11 GI Bill.”.

SEC. 204. REVIEW OF UTILIZATION OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO PURSUE PROGRAMS OF TRAINING ON THE JOB AND PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall commence a review of—

(1) the utilization of educational assistance under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pursue programs of training on the job (other than programs of apprenticeship); and

(2) the availability of such programs to individuals seeking to pursue such programs with such educational assistance.

(b) **REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than two years after the date on which the Secretary commences the review required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on such review.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The extent of utilization as described in paragraph (1) of subsection (a).

(B) An assessment of the availability of programs as described in paragraph (2) of such subsection.

(C) A description of any barriers the Secretary has identified to greater utilization of educational assistance for pursuit of a program of training on the job or availability of such programs.

(D) Such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary may have to increase or decrease such utilization or availability.

(E) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate.

SEC. 205. REPORT ON DEBT MANAGEMENT AND COLLECTION.

(a) **REPORT.**—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c),

the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on processes used by the Department of Veterans Affairs to identify and resolve cases of incorrect payments associated with educational assistance under chapters 30 and 33 of title 38, United States Code.

(b) **ISSUES ADDRESSED.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall, to the extent possible, address the following:

(1) The effectiveness of the processes referred to in subsection (a) in identifying and resolving incorrect payments associated with educational assistance under chapters 30 and 33 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) The accuracy of overpayment information provided to veterans by the Education Service and Debt Management Center of the Department.

(3) How well the Debt Management Center of the Department communicates and works with veterans to resolve disputed debt amounts.

(4) How the payment and debt collection processes of the Department compare to comparable programs in other Federal agencies.

(5) Any recommendations to improve the payment and debt collection processes of the Department that the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 206. RESTORATION OF PRIOR REPORTING FEE MULTIPLIERS.

Section 3684(c) is amended—

(1) by striking “\$12” and inserting “\$7”; and

(2) by striking “\$15” and inserting “\$11”.

TITLE III—HEALTH CARE MATTERS

SUBTITLE A—EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENTS OF BENEFITS GENERALLY

SEC. 301. REQUIREMENT FOR ENROLLMENT IN PATIENT ENROLLMENT SYSTEM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF CERTAIN VETERANS ELIGIBLE FOR ENROLLMENT BY LAW BUT NOT CURRENTLY PERMITTED TO ENROLL.

(a) **REQUIREMENT FOR ENROLLMENT.**—Section 1705 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d)(1) The Secretary shall provide for the enrollment in the patient enrollment system of veterans specified in paragraph (2) by not later than December 31, 2014.

“(2) Veterans specified in this paragraph are as follows:

“(A) Veterans with noncompensable service-connected disabilities rated as zero percent disabling who—

“(i) are not otherwise permitted to enroll in the system as of the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014; and

“(ii) as of the date of enrollment under this section, do not have access to health insurance except through a health exchange established pursuant to section 1311 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (42 U.S.C. 18031).

“(B) Veterans without service-connected disability who—

“(i) are not otherwise permitted to enroll in the system as of the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014; and

“(ii) as of the date of enrollment under this section, do not have access to health insur-

ance except through a health exchange established pursuant to section 1311 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

“(3) A veteran who, after enrolling in the patient enrollment system pursuant to this subsection, obtains access to health insurance other than through a health exchange shall remain enrolled in the patient enrollment system notwithstanding obtaining access to such health insurance.

“(4) A veteran enrolled in the patient enrollment system pursuant to this subsection shall maintain the priority for care of the veteran at the time of enrollment unless and until a change in circumstances of the veteran results in a higher priority for care of the veteran under subsection (a).”.

(b) VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR ENROLLMENT.

(1) **USE OF INFORMATION ON HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 53 is amended by inserting after section 5318 the following new section:

“§ 5319. Review of reporting of health insurance coverage

“The Secretary shall notify each veteran who enrolls under subsection (d) of section 1705 of this title in the patient enrollment system of veterans under such section that information on the veteran's access to health insurance that is furnished to the Secretary for purposes of such enrollment may be compared with information obtained by the Secretary of the Treasury under section 6103(j)(23) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.”.

(B) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 53 is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“5319. Review of reporting of health insurance coverage.”.

(2) **DISCLOSURE OF RETURN INFORMATION BY INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE.**—Section 6103(j) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(23) **DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN RETURN INFORMATION FOR VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF VETERANS FOR ENROLLMENT IN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS PATIENT ENROLLMENT SYSTEM.**—

“(A) **RETURN INFORMATION FROM INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE.**—The Secretary shall, upon written request, disclose current return information from returns under section 6055 with respect to minimum essential coverage of individuals to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the purposes of verifying the eligibility of veterans for enrollment in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs under section 1705(d) of title 38.

“(B) **RESTRICTION ON DISCLOSURE.**—The Secretary shall disclose return information under subparagraph (A) only for purposes of, and to the extent necessary in, verifying the eligibility of veterans to enroll in the patient enrollment system described in that subparagraph.

“(C) **RESTRICTION ON USE OF DISCLOSED INFORMATION.**—Return information disclosed under subparagraph (A) may be used by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs only for the purposes of, and to the extent necessary in, verifying the eligibility of veterans to enroll in the patient enrollment system described in that subparagraph.”.

(c) **PUBLIC NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT OF ENROLLMENT.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register, and shall make available to the public on an Internet website of the Department of Vet-

erans Affairs, a notice regarding the date on which veterans covered by subsection (d) of section 1705 of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a) of this section), may commence enrollment in the patient enrollment system required by that section.

SEC. 302. FURTHER EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF ELIGIBILITY FOR HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS OF COMBAT SERVICE DURING CERTAIN PERIODS OF HOSTILITIES AND WAR.

Section 1710(e)(3) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “the date that is five years before the date of the enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, after a period of five years” and inserting “January 27, 2003, after a period of 10 years”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “more than five years” and all that follows and inserting “before January 28, 2003, and who did not enroll in the patient enrollment system under section 1705 of this title before January 28, 2008, after January 27, 2018.”.

SEC. 303. EXTENSION TO ALL VETERANS WITH A SERIOUS SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY OF ELIGIBILITY FOR PARTICIPATION IN FAMILY CAREGIVER PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1720G(a)(2)(B) is amended by striking “on or after September 11, 2001”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on September 30, 2014.

SEC. 304. IMPROVED ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE IMMUNIZATIONS FOR VETERANS.

(a) **INCLUSION OF RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATIONS AS MEDICAL SERVICES.**—

(1) **COVERED BENEFIT.**—Subparagraph (F) of section 1701(9) is amended to read as follows: “(F) immunizations against infectious diseases, including each immunization on the recommended adult immunization schedule at the time such immunization is indicated on that schedule;”.

(2) **RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE DEFINED.**—Section 1701 is amended by adding after paragraph (9) the following new paragraph:

“(10) The term ‘recommended adult immunization schedule’ means the schedule established (and periodically reviewed and, as appropriate, revised) by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices established by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and delegated to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.”.

(b) **INCLUSION OF RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATIONS IN ANNUAL REPORT.**—Section 1704(1)(A) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in clause (ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by inserting after clause (ii) the following new clause:

“(iii) to provide veterans each immunization on the recommended adult immunization schedule at the time such immunization is indicated on that schedule.”.

(c) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the development and implementation by the Department of Veterans Affairs of quality measures and metrics, including targets for compliance, to ensure that veterans receiving medical services under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, receive each immunization on the recommended

adult immunization schedule at the time such immunization is indicated on that schedule.

(2) **RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE DEFINED.**—In this subsection, the term “recommended adult immunization schedule” has the meaning given that term in section 1701(10) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(2).

(3) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This subsection shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 305. EXPANSION OF PROVISION OF CHIROPRACTIC CARE AND SERVICES TO VETERANS.

(a) **PROGRAM FOR PROVISION OF CHIROPRACTIC CARE AND SERVICES TO VETERANS.**—Section 204(c) of the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Programs Enhancement Act of 2001 (Public Law 107–135; 115 Stat. 2459; 38 U.S.C. 1710 note) is amended—

(1) by inserting “(1)” before “The program”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2) The program shall be carried out at not fewer than two medical centers or clinics in each Veterans Integrated Service Network by not later than one year after the effective date specified in section 305(c) of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014, and at not fewer than 50 percent of all medical centers in each Veterans Integrated Service Network by not later than two years after such effective date.”.

(b) **EXPANDED CHIROPRACTOR SERVICES AVAILABLE TO VETERANS.**—

(1) **MEDICAL SERVICES.**—Paragraph (6) of section 1701 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(H) Chiropractic services.”.

(2) **REHABILITATIVE SERVICES.**—Paragraph (8) of such section is amended by inserting “chiropractic,” after “counseling.”.

(3) **PREVENTIVE HEALTH SERVICES.**—Paragraph (9) of such section is amended—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (F) through (K) as subparagraphs (G) through (L), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the following new subparagraph (F):

“(F) periodic and preventive chiropractic examinations and services;”.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section and the amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 306. MODIFICATION OF COMMENCEMENT DATE OF PERIOD OF SERVICE AT CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA, FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR HOSPITAL CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES IN CONNECTION WITH EXPOSURE TO CONTAMINATED WATER.

(a) **MODIFICATION.**—Section 1710(e)(1)(F) is amended by striking “January 1, 1957,” and inserting “August 1, 1953 (or such earlier date for the commencement of exposure to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune as the Secretary, in consultation with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, shall specify).”.

(b) **PUBLICATION.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register a notice of any earlier date for the commencement of exposure to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for purposes of section 1710(e)(1)(F) of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a).

SEC. 307. EXPANSION OF EMERGENCY TREATMENT REIMBURSEMENT FOR CERTAIN VETERANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1725(b)(2)(B) is amended—

(1) by inserting “(i)” after “(B)”;

(2) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) the veteran was unable to receive care under this chapter within such 24-month period because of a waiting period imposed by the Department with respect to a new patient examination of such veteran.”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 308. MODIFICATION OF DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF VETERANS FOR TREATMENT AS A LOW-INCOME FAMILY FOR PURPOSES OF ENROLLMENT IN THE PATIENT ENROLLMENT SYSTEM OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **AREAS OF RESIDENCE.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall modify the areas in which veterans reside as specified for purposes of determining whether veterans qualify for treatment as low-income families for enrollment in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs under section 1705(a)(7) of title 38, United States Code, to meet the requirements as follows:

(1) Any area so specified shall be within only one State.

(2) Any area so specified shall be co-extensive with one or more counties (or similar political subdivisions) in the State concerned.

(b) **VARIABLE INCOME THRESHOLDS.**—The Secretary shall modify the thresholds for income as specified for purposes of determining whether veterans qualify for treatment as low-income families for enrollment in the patient enrollment system referred to in subsection (a) to meet the requirements as follows:

(1) There shall be one income threshold for each State, equal to the highest income threshold among the counties within such State.

(2) The calculation of the highest income threshold of a county shall be consistent with the calculation used for purposes of section 3(b) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b)).

(3) The timing and methodology for implementing any modifications in geographic income thresholds pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be determined by the Secretary in such a manner as to permit the Department to build capacity for enrolling such additional veterans in the patient enrollment system of the Department as become eligible for enrollment as a result of such modifications, except that all required modifications shall be completed not later than five years after date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 309. EXTENSION OF SUNSET DATE REGARDING TRANSPORTATION OF INDIVIDUALS TO AND FROM FACILITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REQUIREMENT OF REPORT.

(a) **EXTENSION OF SUNSET DATE.**—Subsection (a)(2) of section 111A is amended by striking “December 31, 2014” and inserting “September 30, 2015”.

(b) **FUNDING AVAILABLE.**—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) **FUNDING.**—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2014 and 2015 for the Department, \$4,000,000 to carry out this section.”.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Com-

mittee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on—

(1) the efforts of the Secretary to carry out the transportation services required by section 111A(a) of title 38, United States Code;

(2) the utilization of those services by covered veterans; and

(3) the feasibility and advisability of the continuation of the provision of such services after September 30, 2015.

SEC. 310. COVERAGE OF COSTS OF CARE FOR VETERANS AT MEDICAL FOSTER HOMES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In conducting the medical foster home program pursuant to section 17.73 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may cover the costs associated with the care of veterans at medical foster homes.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 311. EXTENSION AND MODIFICATION OF PILOT PROGRAM ON ASSISTED LIVING SERVICES FOR VETERANS WITH TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY.

(a) **EXTENSION OF PROGRAM.**—Subsection (a) of section 1705 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110–181; 38 U.S.C. 1710C note) is amended by striking “a five-year” and inserting “an eight-year”.

(b) **MODIFICATION OF LOCATIONS.**—Subsection (b) of such section is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(2) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following new paragraphs:

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The pilot program shall be carried out at locations selected by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program.

“(2) **LOCATED IN SAME REGION AS POLYTRAUMA CENTERS.**—Of the locations selected under paragraph (1), at least one location shall be in each health care region of the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs that contains a polytrauma center of the Department of Veterans Affairs.”.

(c) **MODIFICATION OF REPORT REQUIREMENTS.**—Subsection (e) of such section is amended to read as follows:

“(e) **REPORTS.**—

“(1) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014, and not later than September 30 each year thereafter until 2018, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the pilot program.

“(B) **ELEMENTS.**—Each report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

“(i) The number of individuals that participated in the pilot program during the year preceding the submission of the report.

“(ii) The number of individuals that successfully completed the pilot program during the year preceding the submission of the report.

“(iii) The degree to which pilot program participants and family members of pilot program participants were satisfied with the pilot program.

“(iv) The interim findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the success of the pilot program and recommendations for improvement.

“(2) **FINAL REPORT.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 60 days after the completion of the pilot program,

the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a final report on the pilot program.

“(B) ELEMENTS.—The final report required by subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

“(i) A description of the pilot program.

“(ii) An assessment of the utility of the activities under the pilot program in enhancing the rehabilitation, quality of life, and community reintegration of veterans with traumatic brain injury, including complex mild traumatic brain injury.

“(iii) Such recommendations as the Secretary considers appropriate regarding improving the pilot program.”.

(d) MODIFICATION OF DEFINITIONS.—

(1) COMMUNITY-BASED BRAIN INJURY RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATIVE CARE SERVICES.—Such section is further amended—

(A) in the section heading, by striking “ASSISTED LIVING” and inserting “COMMUNITY-BASED BRAIN INJURY RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATIVE CARE”;

(B) in subsection (c), in the subsection heading, by striking “ASSISTED LIVING” and inserting “COMMUNITY-BASED BRAIN INJURY RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATIVE CARE”;

(C) by striking “assisted living” each place it appears, and inserting “community-based brain injury rehabilitative care”; and

(D) in subsection (f)(1), by striking “and personal care” and inserting “rehabilitation, and personal care”.

(2) ELIGIBLE VETERAN.—Subsection (f)(3) of such section is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) has a traumatic brain injury that is classified as complex-mild to severe.”.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2015 \$46,000,000 to carry out the pilot program under section 1705 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181; 38 U.S.C. 1710C note), as amended by this section. The amount so authorized to be appropriated shall be available for obligation for the three-year period beginning on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on October 1, 2014.

SEC. 312. PROGRAM ON HEALTH PROMOTION FOR OVERWEIGHT AND OBESE VETERANS THROUGH SUPPORT OF FITNESS CENTER MEMBERSHIPS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Commencing not later than 180 days after the date on which this section takes effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, through the National Center for Preventive Health, carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of promoting health in covered veterans, including achieving a healthy weight and reducing risks of chronic disease, through support for fitness center membership.

(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of this section, a covered veteran is any veteran who—

(1) is enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment established and operated by the Secretary under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code;

(2) is determined by a clinician of the Department of Veterans Affairs to be over-

weight or obese as of the date of the commencement of the program; and

(3) resides in a location that is more than 15 minutes driving distance from a fitness center at a facility of the Department that would otherwise be available to the veteran for at least eight hours per day during five or more days per week.

(c) DURATION OF PROGRAM.—The program shall be carried out during the two-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(d) LOCATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall select—

(A) not less than five medical centers of the Department at which the Secretary shall cover the full reasonable cost of a fitness center membership for covered veterans within the catchment area of such centers; and

(B) not less than five medical centers of the Department at which the Secretary shall cover half the reasonable cost of a fitness center membership for covered veterans within the catchment area of such centers.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting locations for the program, the Secretary shall consider the feasibility and advisability of selecting locations in the following areas:

(A) Rural areas.

(B) Areas that are not in close proximity to an active duty military installation.

(C) Areas in different geographic locations.

(e) PARTICIPATION.—

(1) MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.—The number of covered veterans who may participate in the program at each location selected under subsection (d) may not exceed 100.

(2) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation of a covered veteran in the program shall be at the election of the covered veteran in consultation with a clinician of the Department.

(f) MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), in carrying out the program, the Secretary shall pay the following:

(A) The full reasonable cost of a fitness center membership for covered veterans within the catchment area of centers selected under subsection (d)(1)(A) who are participating in the program.

(B) Half the reasonable cost of a fitness center membership for covered veterans within the catchment area of centers selected under subsection (d)(1)(B) who are participating in the program.

(2) LIMITATION.—Payment for a fitness center membership of a covered veteran may not exceed \$50 per month of membership.

(g) REPORTS.—

(1) PERIODIC REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the commencement of the program and not less frequently than once every 90 days thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on activities carried out to implement the program, including outreach activities to veterans and community organizations.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program detailing—

(A) the findings and conclusions of the Secretary as a result of the program; and

(B) recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program.

(h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 313. PROGRAM ON HEALTH PROMOTION FOR VETERANS THROUGH ESTABLISHMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FITNESS FACILITIES.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Commencing not later than 180 days after the date on which this section takes effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of promoting health in covered veterans, including achieving a healthy weight, through establishment of Department of Veterans Affairs fitness facilities.

(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of this section, a covered veteran is any veteran who is enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment established and operated by the Secretary under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code.

(c) DURATION OF PROGRAM.—The program shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(d) LOCATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out the program by establishing fitness facilities in Department facilities as follows:

(A) In not fewer than five Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers selected by the Secretary for purposes of the program.

(B) In not fewer than five outpatient clinics of the Department selected by the Secretary for purposes of the program.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting locations for the program, the Secretary shall consider the feasibility and advisability of selecting locations in the following areas:

(A) Rural areas.

(B) Areas that are not in close proximity to an active duty military installation.

(C) Areas in different geographic locations.

(e) LIMITATION ON EXPENSES.—In establishing and supporting a fitness facility in a facility of the Department under the program, the Secretary may expend amounts as follows:

(1) For establishment and support of a fitness facility in a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center, not more than \$60,000.

(2) For establishment and support of a fitness facility in an outpatient clinic of the Department, not more than \$40,000.

(f) REPURPOSING OF PHYSICAL SPACE AND PURCHASES OF EQUIPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (e), the Secretary may, in carrying out the program, repurpose existing physical space of the Department and purchase such fitness equipment and supplies as the Secretary considers appropriate for purposes of the program.

(2) REPURPOSING EXCEPTION.—Existing physical space used for the direct delivery of health care to patients may not be repurposed under paragraph (1).

(g) PROHIBITION ON ASSESSMENT OF USER FEES.—The Secretary may not assess a fee upon a covered veteran for use of a fitness facility established under the program.

(h) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation of a covered veteran in the program shall be at the election of the covered veteran.

(i) REPORTS.—

(1) PERIODIC REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the commencement of the program and not less frequently than once every 90 days thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on

Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on activities carried out to implement the program, including outreach activities to veterans and community organizations.

(2) **FINAL REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program detailing—

(A) the findings and conclusions of the Secretary as a result of the program; and

(B) recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program.

(j) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle B—Health Care Administration

SEC. 321. EXTENSION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

Section 7619 is amended by striking “December 31, 2014” and inserting “December 31, 2019”.

SEC. 322. EXPANSION OF AVAILABILITY OF PROSTHETIC AND ORTHOTIC CARE FOR VETERANS.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OR EXPANSION OF ADVANCED DEGREE PROGRAMS TO EXPAND AVAILABILITY OF PROVISION OF CARE.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall work with institutions of higher education to develop partnerships for the establishment or expansion of programs of advanced degrees in prosthetics and orthotics in order to improve and enhance the availability of high quality prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth a plan for carrying out subsection (a). The Secretary shall develop the plan in consultation with veterans service organizations, institutions of higher education with accredited degree programs in prosthetics and orthotics, and representatives of the prosthetics and orthotics field.

(c) **FUNDING.**—

(1) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, \$10,000,000 to carry out this section.

(2) **AVAILABILITY.**—The amount authorized to be appropriated by paragraph (1) shall remain available for expenditure until September 30, 2017.

SEC. 323. CONTRACTING FOR HEALTH CARE.

(a) **USE OF CAPITATION-BASED RESOURCE ALLOCATION IN ENTRY INTO CONTRACTS.**—In entering into contracts for the furnishing of health care services under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (including under this title and the amendments made by this title), the Secretary shall use the capitation-based resource allocation model of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) **PRIORITY FOR CONTRACTS WITH CERTAIN ENTITIES.**—In entering into contracts for the furnishing of health care services under the laws administered by the Secretary, the Secretary shall afford a priority for entry into contracts for Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Community Health Centers (CHCs), whenever appropriate.

(c) **BEST PRACTICES.**—The Secretary shall modify the guidance of the Department of

Veterans Affairs on contracts for health care services in order to provide for the incorporation into such contracts of standardized requirements for such best practices under such contracts, including the following:

(1) Requirements that contracts provide the Department on a regular basis information on scheduling and appearance for appointments for health care on per-patient basis.

(2) Such other best practices requirements as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(d) **FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER DEFINED.**—In this section the term “Federally Qualified Health Center” means a Federally-qualified health center as defined in section 1905(l)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(1)(2)(B)).

SEC. 324. LIMITATION ON EXPANSION OF DIALYSIS PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) **LIMITATION.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall not expand the dialysis pilot program to, or expand the capacity to provide additional dialysis care at, any facility owned or leased by the Department that is not an initial facility until after the date that—

(1) the Secretary has implemented the dialysis pilot program at each initial facility for a period of not less than two years;

(2) an independent analysis of the dialysis pilot program has been conducted at each initial facility, including a consideration and comparison of factors including—

(A) the ability of veterans to access care under the dialysis pilot program;

(B) the quality of care provided under the dialysis pilot program; and

(C) the satisfaction of veterans who have received treatment under the dialysis pilot program; and

(3) the report required by subsection (b) has been submitted.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of the completion of the independent analysis required by subsection (a)(2), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that—

(1) includes the results of that independent analysis; and

(2) addresses any recommendations with respect to the dialysis pilot program provided in a report prepared by the Government Accountability Office.

(c) **UTILIZATION OF EXISTING DIALYSIS RESOURCES.**—In order to increase the access of veterans to dialysis care and decrease the travel time of such veterans to receive such care, the Secretary shall fully utilize existing dialysis resources of the Department, including any community dialysis provider with which the Department has entered into a contract or agreement for the provision of such care.

(d) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **DIALYSIS PILOT PROGRAM.**—The term “dialysis pilot program” means the pilot demonstration program established by the Secretary in 2009 to provide dialysis care to patients at certain outpatient facilities operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) **INITIAL FACILITY.**—The term “initial facility” means one of the four outpatient facilities identified by the Secretary to participate in the dialysis pilot program prior to the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 325. REQUIREMENT FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY ON REPORTING CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES AT FACILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter II of chapter 73 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 7330B. Reporting of infectious diseases

“(a) **REPORTING.**—The Secretary shall ensure that the Department has in effect an up-to-date policy on reporting a notifiable infectious disease diagnosed at a facility under the jurisdiction of the Secretary in accordance with the provisions of State and local law in effect where such facility is located.

“(b) **NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASE.**—For purposes of this section, a notifiable infectious disease is any infectious disease that is—

“(1) on the list of nationally notifiable diseases published by the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; or

“(2) covered by a provision of law of a State that requires the reporting of infectious diseases.

“(c) **PERFORMANCE MEASURES.**—The Secretary shall develop performance measures to assess whether and to what degree the directors of Veterans Integrated Service Networks and Department medical centers are complying with the policy required by subsection (a).”

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 73 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7330A the following new item:

“7330B. Reporting of infectious diseases.”

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 326. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS AND MEDICAL CENTERS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **CONTRACT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall seek to enter into a contract with an independent third-party to perform the services covered by this section.

(2) **TIMING.**—The Secretary shall seek to enter into the contract described in paragraph (1) not later than 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) **INDEPENDENT STUDY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Under a contract between the Secretary and an independent third-party under this section, the third party shall carry out a study—

(A) to assess the organizational structures of medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(B) to improve succession planning among key leadership roles at Veterans Integrated Service Networks and medical centers of the Department.

(2) **MATTERS STUDIED AND PROPOSED.**—In carrying out the study, the third party shall—

(A) assess whether the organizational structure of the medical centers of the Department is effective for the furnishing of medical services, addressing issues that arise regarding the furnishing of medical services, and addressing standard business operations;

(B) propose one organizational chart for Department medical centers with a common set of base position descriptions;

(C) propose a base set of medical positions that should be filled to ensure that the

health care provided to veterans by the Department is of good quality; and

(D) identify which key leadership positions at Veterans Integrated Service Networks and Department medical centers should have succession plans and propose how to implement such plans.

(3) **TIMING.**—The third party shall complete the study under this section not later than 270 days after entering into the contract described in subsection (a).

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the third party completes the study under this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the results of such study.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 327. REQUIREMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH NEXT UPDATE OF CURRENT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **REQUIREMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The first update of the Strategic Plan Refresh for Fiscal Years 2012 through 2014 of the Office of Rural Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs after the date of the enactment of this Act, whether an update or refresh of such Strategic Plan Refresh or a strategic plan to supersede such Strategic Plan Refresh, shall be prepared in accordance with this section.

(2) **CONSULTATION.**—The Director of the Office of Rural Health shall prepare the update in consultation with the following:

(A) The Director of the Health Care Retention and Recruitment Office of the Department.

(B) The Director of the Office of Quality and Performance of the Department.

(C) The Director of the Office of Care Coordination Services of the Department.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The update described in subsection (a) shall include, for the period covered by the update, the following:

(1) Goals and objectives for the recruitment and retention by the Veterans Health Administration of health care personnel in rural areas.

(2) Goals and objectives for ensuring timeliness and improving quality in the delivery of health care services by the Veterans Health Administration in rural areas through contract and fee-basis providers.

(3) Goals and objectives for the implementation, expansion, and enhanced use of telemedicine services by the Veterans Health Administration in rural areas, including through coordination with other appropriate offices of the Department.

(4) Goals and objectives for ensuring the full and effective use of mobile outpatient clinics by the Veterans Health Administration for the provision of health care services in rural areas, including goals and objectives for the use of such clinics on a fully mobile basis and for encouraging health care providers who provide services through such clinics to do so in rural areas.

(5) Procedures for soliciting from each Veterans Health Administration facility that serves a rural area the following:

(A) A statement of the clinical capacity of such facility.

(B) The procedures of such facility in the event of a medical, surgical, or mental health emergency outside the scope of the clinical capacity of such facility.

(C) The procedures and mechanisms of such facility for the provision and coordination of health care for women veterans, including

procedures and mechanisms for coordination with local hospitals and health care facilities, oversight of primary care and fee-basis care, and management of specialty care.

(6) Goals and objectives for the modification of the funding allocation mechanisms of the Office of Rural Health in order to ensure that the Office distributes funds to components of the Department to best achieve the goals and objectives of the Office and in a timely manner.

(7) Goals and objectives for the coordination of, and sharing of resources with respect to, the provision of health care services to veterans in rural areas between the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, the Indian Health Service of the Department of Health and Human Services, and other Federal agencies, as appropriate and prudent.

(8) Specific milestones for the achievement of the goals and objectives developed for the update.

(9) Procedures for ensuring the effective implementation of the update.

(c) **TRANSMITTAL TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the issuance of the update described in subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall transmit the update to Congress, together with such comments and recommendations in connection with the update as the Secretary considers appropriate.

SEC. 328. REPORT ON PROVISION OF TELEMEDICINE SERVICES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the following:

(1) Issues that may be impeding the provision by the Department of Veterans Affairs of telemedicine services for veterans, including the following:

(A) Statutory or regulatory restrictions.

(B) Licensure or credentialing issues for any provider practicing telemedicine with veterans who live in a different State than the provider.

(C) Limited broadband access in rural areas.

(D) Limited information technology resources or capabilities.

(E) Long distances veterans must travel to access a facility or clinic with telemedicine capabilities.

(F) Insufficient liability protection for providers.

(G) Reimbursement issues faced by providers.

(H) Travel limitations for providers that are unaffiliated with the Department and are participating or seeking to participate in a telemedicine program of the Department.

(2) Actions taken to address the issues identified in paragraph (1).

(3) An update on efforts by the Department to carry out the initiative of teleconsultation for the provision of remote mental health and traumatic brain injury assessments required by section 1709A of title 38, United States Code.

(4) An update on efforts by the Department to offer training opportunities in telemedicine to medical residents, as required by section 108(b) of the Janey Ensinger Act (Public Law 112-154; 38 U.S.C. 7406 note).

(5) An update on efforts by the Department to, in partnership with primary care providers, install video cameras and instruments to monitor weight, blood pressure, and other vital statistics in the homes of patients.

(b) **TELEMEDICINE DEFINED.**—In this section, the term "telemedicine" means the use by a health care provider of telecommunications to assist in the diagnosis or treatment of a patient's medical condition.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 329. DESIGNATION OF CORPORAL MICHAEL J. CRESCENZ DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER.

(a) **DESIGNATION.**—The medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs located at 3900 Woodland Avenue in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center".

(b) **REFERENCES.**—Any reference in any law, regulation, map, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the medical center referred to in subsection (a) shall be considered to be a reference to the Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Subtitle C—Complementary and Alternative Medicine

SEC. 331. EXPANSION OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ON AND DELIVERY OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE TO VETERANS.

(a) **DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN TO EXPAND RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND DELIVERY.**—Not later than six months after the effective date specified in subsection (f), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall develop a plan to expand materially and substantially the scope of research and education on, and delivery and integration of, complementary and alternative medicine services into the health care services provided to veterans.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The plan required by subsection (a) shall provide for the following:

(1) Research on the following:

(A) The comparative effectiveness of various complementary and alternative medicine therapies.

(B) Approaches to integrating complementary and alternative medicine services into other health care services provided by the Department.

(2) Education and training for health care professionals of the Department on the following:

(A) Complementary and alternative medicine services selected by the Secretary for purposes of the plan.

(B) Appropriate uses of such services.

(C) Integration of such services into the delivery of health care to veterans.

(3) Research, education, and clinical activities on complementary and alternative medicine at centers of innovation at Department medical centers.

(4) Identification or development of metrics and outcome measures to evaluate the provision and integration of complementary and alternative medicine services into the delivery of health care to veterans.

(5) Integration and delivery of complementary and alternative medicine services with other health care services provided by the Department.

(c) **CONSULTATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with the following:

(A) The Director of the National Center on Complementary and Alternative Medicine of the National Institutes of Health.

(B) The Commissioner of Food and Drugs.

(C) Institutions of higher education, private research institutes, and individual researchers with extensive experience in complementary and alternative medicine and the

integration of complementary and alternative medicine practices into the delivery of health care.

(D) Nationally recognized providers of complementary and alternative medicine.

(E) Such other officials, entities, and individuals with expertise on complementary and alternative medicine as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) SCOPE OF CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall undertake consultation under paragraph (1) in carrying out subsection (a) with respect to the following:

(A) To develop the plan.

(B) To identify specific complementary and alternative medicine practices that, on the basis of research findings or promising clinical interventions, are appropriate to include as services to veterans.

(C) To identify barriers to the effective provision and integration of complementary and alternative medicine services into the delivery of health care to veterans, and to identify mechanisms for overcoming such barriers.

(d) FUNDING.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

(e) COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “complementary and alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that term in regulations the Secretary shall prescribe for purposes of this section, which shall, to the degree practicable, be consistent with the meaning given such term by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 332. PROGRAM ON INTEGRATION OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE WITHIN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTERS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

(1) carry out, through the Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation of the Department of Veterans Affairs, a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of integrating the delivery of complementary and alternative medicine services selected by the Secretary with other health care services provided by the Department for veterans with mental health conditions, chronic pain conditions, other chronic conditions, and such other conditions as the Secretary determines appropriate; and

(2) in developing the program, identify and resolve barriers to the provision of complementary and alternative medicine services selected by the Secretary and the integration of those services with other health care services provided by the Department.

(b) DURATION OF PROGRAM.—The program shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning on the effective date specified in subsection (j).

(c) LOCATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out the program at not fewer than 15 separate Department medical centers.

(2) POLYTRAUMA CENTERS.—Not less than two of the medical centers designated under paragraph (1) shall be located at polytrauma rehabilitation centers of the Department.

(3) SELECTION OF LOCATIONS.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall select locations that include the following areas:

(A) Rural areas.

(B) Areas that are not in close proximity to an active duty military installation.

(C) Areas representing different geographic locations, such as census tracts established by the Bureau of the Census.

(d) PROVISION OF SERVICES.—Under the program, the Secretary shall provide covered services to covered veterans by integrating complementary and alternative medicine services with other services provided by the Department at the medical centers designated under subsection (c)(1).

(e) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of the program, a covered veteran is any veteran who—

(1) has a mental health condition diagnosed by a clinician of the Department;

(2) experiences chronic pain; or

(3) has a chronic condition being treated by a clinician of the Department.

(f) COVERED SERVICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of the program, covered services are services consisting of complementary and alternative medicine as selected by the Secretary.

(2) ADMINISTRATION OF SERVICES.—Covered services shall be administered under the program as follows:

(A) Covered services shall be administered by clinicians employed by the Secretary for purposes of this section who, to the extent practicable, shall provide services consisting of complementary and alternative medicine, including those clinicians who solely provide such services.

(B) Covered services shall be included as part of the Patient Aligned Care Teams initiative of the Office of Patient Care Services, Primary Care Program Office, in coordination with the Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation.

(C) Covered services shall be made available to both—

(i) covered veterans with mental health conditions, pain conditions, or chronic conditions described in subsection (e) who have received conventional treatments from the Department for such conditions; and

(ii) covered veterans with mental health conditions, pain conditions, or chronic conditions described in subsection (e) who have not received conventional treatments from the Department for such conditions.

(g) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation of a veteran in the program shall be at the election of the veteran and in consultation with a clinician of the Department.

(h) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

(1) QUARTERLY REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the commencement of the program and not less frequently than once every 90 days thereafter for the duration of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the efforts of the Secretary to carry out the program, including a description of the outreach conducted by the Secretary to veterans and community organizations to inform such organizations about the program.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program.

(B) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program, including with respect to—

(I) the utilization and efficacy of the complementary and alternative medicine services established under the program;

(II) an assessment of the benefit of the program to covered veterans in mental health

diagnoses, pain management, and treatment of chronic illness; and

(iii) the comparative effectiveness of various complementary and alternative medicine therapies.

(ii) Barriers identified under subsection (a)(2) that were not resolved.

(iii) Such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(i) COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “complementary and alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that term in section 331(e) of this Act.

(j) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 333. STUDIES OF BARRIERS ENCOUNTERED BY VETERANS IN RECEIVING, AND ADMINISTRATORS AND CLINICIANS IN PROVIDING, COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE SERVICES FURNISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) STUDIES REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct comprehensive studies of the barriers encountered by veterans in receiving, and administrators and clinicians in providing, complementary and alternative medicine services furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) STUDIES CONDUCTED.—

(A) VETERANS.—In conducting the study of veterans, the Secretary shall—

(i) survey veterans who seek or receive hospital care or medical services furnished by the Department, as well as veterans who do not seek or receive such care or services;

(ii) administer the survey to a representative sample of veterans from each Veterans Integrated Service Network; and

(iii) ensure that the sample of veterans surveyed is of sufficient size for the study results to be statistically significant.

(B) ADMINISTRATORS AND CLINICIANS.—In conducting the study of clinicians and administrators, the Secretary shall—

(i) survey administrators of the Department who are involved in the provision of health care services;

(ii) survey clinicians that have provided complementary and alternative medicine services through the program established under section 332 of this Act, after those clinicians have provided those services through such program for at least 90 days; and

(iii) administer the survey to administrators under clause (i)—

(I) before the introduction of complementary and alternative medicine services through such program; and

(II) not earlier than 90 days after the introduction of complementary and alternative medicine services through such program.

(b) ELEMENTS OF STUDIES.—

(1) VETERANS.—In conducting the study of veterans required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall study the following:

(A) The perceived barriers associated with obtaining complementary and alternative medicine services from the Department.

(B) The satisfaction of veterans with complementary and alternative medicine services in primary care.

(C) The degree to which veterans are aware of eligibility requirements for, and the scope of services available under, complementary and alternative medicine services furnished by the Department.

(D) The effectiveness of outreach to veterans on the availability of complementary and alternative medicine for veterans.

(E) Such other barriers as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) ADMINISTRATORS AND CLINICIANS.—In conducting the study of administrators and clinicians required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall study the following:

(A) The extent of the integration of complementary and alternative medicine services within the services provided by the Department.

(B) The perception by administrators and clinicians of the structural and attitudinal barriers to the delivery of high quality complementary and alternative medicine services by the Department.

(C) Strategies that have been used to reduce or eliminate such barriers and the results of such strategies.

(D) The satisfaction of administrators and clinicians regarding the integration of complementary and alternative medicine services within the services provided by the Department.

(E) The perception by administrators and clinicians of the value of specific complementary and alternative medicine services for inpatient and outpatient veteran populations.

(c) DISCHARGE BY CONTRACT.—The Secretary shall enter into a contract with a qualified independent entity or organization to carry out the studies required by this section.

(d) MANDATORY REVIEW OF DATA BY THE NATIONAL RESEARCH ADVISORY COUNCIL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ensure that the head of the National Research Advisory Council reviews the results of the studies conducted under this section.

(2) SUBMITTAL OF FINDINGS.—The head of the National Research Advisory Council shall submit findings with respect to the studies to the Under Secretary for Health and to other pertinent program offices within the Department with responsibilities relating to health care services for veterans.

(e) REPORTS.—

(1) REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the status of the implementation of this section.

(2) REPORT ON STUDY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 45 days after the date of the completion of the study, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the study required by subsection (a).

(B) CONTENTS.—The report required by subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) Recommendations for such administrative and legislative proposals and actions as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(ii) The findings of the head of the National Research Advisory Council and of the Under Secretary for Health.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, \$2,000,000 to carry out this section.

(g) COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “complementary and alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that term in section 331(e) of this Act.

SEC. 334. PROGRAM ON USE OF WELLNESS PROGRAMS AS COMPLEMENTARY APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS AND FAMILY MEMBERS OF VETERANS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program through the award of grants to public or private nonprofit entities to assess the feasibility and advisability of using wellness programs to complement the provision of mental health

care to veterans and family members eligible for counseling under section 1712A(a)(1)(C) of title 38, United States Code.

(2) MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED.—The program shall be carried out so as to assess the following:

(A) Means of improving coordination between Federal, State, local, and community providers of health care in the provision of mental health care to veterans and family members described in paragraph (1).

(B) Means of enhancing outreach, and coordination of outreach, by and among providers of health care referred to in subparagraph (A) on the mental health care services available to veterans and family members described in paragraph (1).

(C) Means of using wellness programs of providers of health care referred to in subparagraph (A) as complements to the provision by the Department of Veterans Affairs of mental health care to veterans and family members described in paragraph (1).

(D) Whether wellness programs described in subparagraph (C) are effective in enhancing the quality of life and well-being of veterans and family members described in paragraph (1).

(E) Whether wellness programs described in subparagraph (C) are effective in increasing the adherence of veterans described in paragraph (1) to the primary mental health services provided such veterans by the Department.

(F) Whether wellness programs described in subparagraph (C) have an impact on the sense of wellbeing of veterans described in paragraph (1) who receive primary mental health services from the Department.

(G) Whether wellness programs described in subparagraph (C) are effective in encouraging veterans receiving health care from the Department to adopt a more healthy lifestyle.

(b) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the program for a period of three years beginning on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the program at facilities of the Department providing mental health care services to veterans and family members described in subsection (a)(1).

(d) GRANT PROPOSALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A public or private nonprofit entity seeking the award of a grant under this section shall submit an application therefor to the Secretary in such form and in such manner as the Secretary may require.

(2) APPLICATION CONTENTS.—Each application submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A plan to coordinate activities under the program, to the extent possible, with the Federal, State, and local providers of services for veterans to enhance the following:

(i) Awareness by veterans of benefits and health care services provided by the Department.

(ii) Outreach efforts to increase the use by veterans of services provided by the Department.

(iii) Educational efforts to inform veterans of the benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle.

(B) A statement of understanding from the entity submitting the application that, if selected, such entity will be required to report to the Secretary periodically on standardized data and other performance data necessary to evaluate individual outcomes and to facilitate evaluations among entities participating in the program.

(C) Other requirements that the Secretary may prescribe.

(e) GRANT USES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A public or private nonprofit entity awarded a grant under this section shall use the award for purposes prescribed by the Secretary.

(2) ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND FAMILY.—In carrying out the purposes prescribed by the Secretary in paragraph (1), a public or private nonprofit entity awarded a grant under this section shall use the award to furnish services only to individuals specified in section 1712A(a)(1)(C) of title 38, United States Code.

(f) REPORTS.—

(1) PERIODIC REPORTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the commencement of the program, and every 180 days thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the program.

(B) REPORT ELEMENTS.—Each report required by subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program during the 180-day period preceding the report.

(ii) An assessment of the benefits of the program to veterans and their family members during the 180-day period preceding the report.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the end of the program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report detailing the recommendations of the Secretary as to the advisability of continuing or expanding the program.

(g) WELLNESS DEFINED.—In this section, the term “wellness” has the meaning given that term in regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

Subtitle D—Mental Health Care

SEC. 341. INCLUSION OF MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM FOR HEALTH PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the education and training program required under section 7302(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall include education and training of marriage and family therapists and licensed professional mental health counselors.

(b) FUNDING.—The Secretary shall apportion funding for the education and training program equally among the professions included in the program.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 342. EDUCATION PROGRAM AND PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR FAMILY MEMBERS AND CAREGIVERS OF VETERANS WITH MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS.

(a) PROGRAMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish an education program (in this section referred to as the “education program”) and a peer support program (in this section referred to as the “peer support program”) for the education and training of family members and caregivers of eligible veterans with mental health disorders.

(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(A) FAMILY MEMBER; CAREGIVER.—The terms “family member” and “caregiver” have the meaning given those terms in section 1720G(d) of title 38, United States Code.

(B) ELIGIBLE VETERAN.—The term “eligible veteran” means a veteran who is enrolled in the health care system established under

section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code.

(b) EDUCATION PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Under the education program, the Secretary shall provide a course of education to family members and caregivers of eligible veterans on matters relating to coping with mental health disorders in veterans.

(2) DURATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The education program shall be carried out during the four-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the education program.

(B) AUTHORITY FOR EXTENSION.—The Secretary may extend the duration of the education program for an additional four years.

(3) LOCATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as required by subparagraph (D), the Secretary shall carry out the education program at the following facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs:

(i) Not less than 10 medical centers of the Department.

(ii) Not less than 10 clinics of the Department.

(iii) Not less than 10 Vet Centers (as defined in section 1712A(h) of title 38, United States Code).

(B) SOLICITATION OF APPLICATIONS.—In selecting locations for the education program, the Secretary shall solicit applications from eligible facilities of the Department that are interested in carrying out the education program.

(C) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting locations for the education program, the Secretary shall consider the feasibility and advisability of selecting locations in the following areas:

(i) Rural areas.

(ii) Areas that are not in close proximity to an active duty installation.

(iii) Areas in different geographic locations.

(D) EXPANSION OF LOCATIONS.—Not later than two years after the date of the commencement of the education program, the Secretary shall expand the number of facilities at which the Secretary is carrying out the education program to include the following:

(i) Not less than 10 additional medical centers of the Department.

(ii) Not less than 10 additional clinics of the Department.

(iii) Not less than 10 additional Vet Centers.

(4) CONTRACTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the education program, the Secretary shall enter into contracts with qualified entities described in subparagraph (B) to offer the course of education described in paragraph (5) to family members and caregivers of eligible veterans and covered veterans.

(B) QUALIFIED ENTITY DESCRIBED.—A qualified entity described in this subparagraph is a non-profit entity with experience in mental health education and outreach, including work with children, teens, and young adults, that—

(i) uses high quality, relevant, and age-appropriate information in educational programming, materials, and coursework, including such programming, materials, and coursework for children, teens, and young adults; and

(ii) works with agencies, departments, non-profit mental health organizations, early childhood educators, and mental health providers to develop educational programming, materials, and coursework.

(C) PRIORITY.—In entering into contracts under this paragraph, the Secretary shall give priority to qualified entities that, to the maximum extent practicable, use Internet technology for the delivery of course content in an effort to expand the availability of support services, especially in rural areas.

(5) ELEMENTS.—The course of education described in this paragraph shall consist of not less than 10 weeks of education and shall include the following:

(A) General education on different mental health disorders, including information to improve understanding of the experiences of individuals suffering from those disorders.

(B) Techniques for handling crisis situations and administering mental health first aid to individuals suffering from mental health disorders.

(C) Techniques for coping with the stress of living with someone with a mental health disorder.

(D) Information on additional services available for family members and caregivers through the Department or community organizations and providers related to mental health disorders.

(E) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(6) INSTRUCTORS.—

(A) TRAINING.—Each instructor of the course of education described in paragraph (5) shall maintain a level of proficiency in the course of education as determined by the Secretary, and shall submit proof of that level of proficiency to the Secretary at such time and in such manner as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(B) INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THE COURSE AS INSTRUCTORS.—Commencing as of the date that is two years after the date of the commencement of the education program, any individual who has successfully completed the course of education described in paragraph (5) and has successfully completed such additional training as is required for instructors pursuant to subparagraph (A) may act as an instructor in the course of education.

(c) PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Under the peer support program, the Secretary shall provide peer support to family members and caregivers of eligible veterans on matters relating to coping with mental health disorders in veterans.

(2) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall provide peer support under the peer support program at each location at which the Secretary provides education under the education program.

(3) ELEMENTS.—Peer support under the peer support program shall consist of meetings in group settings between a peer support coordinator under paragraph (4) and family members and caregivers of eligible veterans on matters relating to coping with mental health disorders in veterans. At each location, those meetings shall be conducted not less often than twice each calendar quarter.

(4) PEER SUPPORT COORDINATOR.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the director of each participating facility, may select an individual who has successfully completed the course of education described in subsection (b)(5) to serve as a peer support coordinator for each such facility to carry out the peer support program.

(B) PROFICIENCY OF INSTRUCTORS.—Each peer support coordinator shall maintain a level of proficiency in peer support as determined by the Secretary, and shall submit proof of that level of proficiency to the Secretary at such time and in such manner as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(d) SURVEYS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct a comprehensive and statistically significant survey of the satisfaction of individuals that have participated in the course of education described in subsection (b)(5) and individuals that have participated in the peer support program that includes the following:

(A) The general satisfaction of those individuals with the education and assistance provided in the education program and the peer support program.

(B) The perceived effectiveness of the education program and the peer support program in providing education and assistance that is useful for those individuals.

(C) The applicability of the education program and the peer support program to the issues faced by those individuals.

(D) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(E) A representative sample of the information required by subparagraphs (A) through (D) from each Veterans Integrated Service Network that is participating in the education program and the peer support program.

(2) COMPILATION OF INFORMATION.—The information compiled as a result of the surveys required by paragraph (1) shall be included in the annual report required by subsection (e)(1).

(e) REPORTS.—

(1) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the commencement of the education program and not later than September 30 each year thereafter until 2017, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the education program and the peer support program.

(B) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) The number of individuals that participated in the course of education described in subsection (b)(5) during the year preceding the submission of the report.

(ii) The number of individuals that participated in the peer support program during the year preceding the submission of the report.

(iii) A detailed analysis of the surveys conducted under subsection (d) with respect to the individuals described in clause (i) and (ii).

(iv) The degree to which veterans and family members and caregivers of veterans are aware of the eligibility requirements for enrollment in the education program and the peer support program.

(v) Any plans for expansion of the education program and the peer support program.

(vi) The interim findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the success of the education program and the peer support program.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the completion of the education program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the feasibility and advisability of continuing the education program and the peer support program.

(B) ELEMENTS.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) A detailed analysis of the surveys conducted under subsection (d).

(ii) The feasibility and advisability of continuing the education program without entering into contracts for the course of education described in subsection (b)(5) and instead using peer support coordinators selected under subsection (c)(4) as instructors of the course of education.

(iii) The feasibility and advisability of expanding the education program and the peer support program.

SEC. 343. REPORT ON PROVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR FAMILIES OF CERTAIN VETERANS AT FACILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the feasibility and advisability of providing services under the program established by section 304(a) of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-163; 38 U.S.C. 1712A note) at medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

SEC. 344. ANNUAL REPORT ON COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and not later than September 30 each year thereafter until the completion of the pilot program described in subsection (b), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on that pilot program.

(b) PILOT PROGRAM DESCRIBED.—The pilot program described in this subsection is the pilot program conducted by the Veterans Health Administration to connect medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs with community-based mental health care providers and substance abuse treatment providers for the purpose of assisting in the treatment of veterans with mental health disorders, commonly known as the "Community Mental Health Partnership Pilot".

(c) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) The number of sites participating in the pilot program.

(2) The number of individuals participating in the pilot program at each site.

(3) A detailed assessment of the effectiveness of the participation of veterans in, and the satisfaction of veterans with the pilot program.

(4) An analysis of barriers to the effectiveness of the participation of veterans in, and the satisfaction of veterans with the pilot program.

(5) A description of the plans of the Secretary to conduct outreach and provide information to veterans and community mental health providers with respect to the pilot program.

(6) A description of any plans to expand the pilot program, including plans that focus on the unique needs of veterans located in rural areas.

(7) An explanation of how the care provided under the pilot program is consistent with the minimum clinical mental health guidelines promulgated by the Veterans Health Administration, including clinical guidelines contained in the Uniform Mental Health Services Handbook of such Administration.

Subtitle E—Dental Care Eligibility Expansion and Enhancement

SEC. 351. RESTORATIVE DENTAL SERVICES FOR VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1710(c) is amended—

(1) in the second sentence—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively; and

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively;

(2) by inserting "(1)" after "(c)";

(3) by striking "The Secretary" and inserting the following:

"(2) The Secretary"; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(3) In addition to the dental services, treatment, and appliances authorized to be furnished by paragraph (2), the Secretary may furnish dental services and treatment, and dental appliances, needed to restore functioning in a veteran that is lost as a result of any services or treatment furnished under this subsection."

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 352. PILOT PROGRAM ON EXPANSION OF FURNISHING OF DENTAL CARE TO ALL ENROLLED VETERANS.

(a) PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Commencing not later than 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of furnishing dental care to veterans enrolled in the system of patient enrollment under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, who are not eligible for dental services and treatment, and related dental appliances, under current authorities.

(b) DURATION OF PILOT PROGRAM.—The pilot program shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the pilot program.

(c) LOCATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program at not fewer than 16 locations as follows:

(A) Four Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers with an established dental clinic.

(B) Four Department medical centers with a current contract for the furnishing of dental care.

(C) Four Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) with space available for the furnishing of services and treatment under the pilot program.

(D) Four facilities selected from among Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Indian Health Service facilities with established dental clinics, of which—

(i) at least one facility shall be such an Indian Health Service facility; and

(ii) any Indian Health Service facility so selected shall be selected in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting locations for the pilot program, the Secretary shall consider the feasibility and advisability of selecting locations in each of the following:

(A) Rural areas.

(B) Areas that are not in close proximity to an active duty military installation.

(C) Areas representing different geographic locations, such as census tracts established by the Bureau of Census.

(d) LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING VETERANS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The total number of eligible veterans who may participate in the pilot program may not exceed 30,000.

(2) DISTRIBUTION OF LIMITATION.—In applying the limitation in paragraph (1) to the pilot program, the Secretary shall distribute the limitation across and among locations selected for the pilot program in a manner that takes appropriate account of the size and need of veterans for dental services at each such location.

(e) SCOPE OF SERVICES.—The dental services and treatment furnished to veterans under the pilot program shall be consistent with the dental services and treatment furnished by the Secretary to veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 100 percent disabling under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(f) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation of a veteran in the pilot program shall be at the election of the veteran.

(g) LIMITATION ON AMOUNT OF SERVICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The total amount the Secretary may expend furnishing dental services and treatment to a veteran participating in the pilot program during any one-year period may not exceed such amount as the Secretary determines appropriate. The amount so determined may not be less than \$1,000.

(2) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall make the determination under paragraph (1)—

(A) in consultation with the Director of the Indian Health Service; and

(B) in consultation with the Director of the Health Resources and Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services if one or more Federally Qualified Health Center is selected as a location for the pilot program under subsection (c)(1)(D).

(h) COPAYMENTS.—The Secretary may collect copayments for dental services and treatment furnished under the pilot program in accordance with authorities on the collection of copayments for medical care of veterans under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code.

(i) PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) NOTICE TO ELIGIBLE VETERANS ON PILOT PROGRAM.—In carrying out the pilot program, the Secretary shall inform all veterans eligible to participate in the pilot program of the services and treatment available under the pilot program.

(2) CONTRACTS.—In carrying out the pilot program, the Secretary may enter into contracts with appropriate entities for the provision of dental services and treatment under the pilot program. Each such contract shall specify performance standards and metrics and processes for ensuring compliance of the contractor concerned with such performance standards.

(j) REPORTS.—

(1) PRELIMINARY REPORTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than each of 540 days and three years after the date of the commencement of the pilot program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the pilot program.

(B) CONTENTS.—Each report under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) A description of the implementation and operation of the pilot program.

(ii) The number of veterans receiving services and treatment under the pilot program, and a description of the dental services and treatment furnished to such veterans.

(iii) An analysis of the costs and benefits of the pilot program, including a comparison of costs and benefits by location type.

(iv) An assessment of the impact of the pilot program on medical care, wellness, employability, and perceived quality of life of veterans.

(v) The current findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the pilot program.

(vi) Such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the pilot program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the pilot program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the pilot program.

(B) CONTENTS.—The report under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the pilot program.

(ii) Such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the pilot program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(k) **FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER DEFINED.**—In this section the term “Federally Qualified Health Center” means a Federally-qualified health center as defined in section 1905(1)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(1)(2)(B)).

(l) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 353. PROGRAM ON EDUCATION TO PROMOTE DENTAL HEALTH IN VETERANS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program of education to promote dental health for veterans who are enrolled in the system of patient enrollment of the Department of Veterans Affairs under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) **CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in the program shall be deemed to alter or revise the eligibility of any veteran for dental care under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The program required by subsection (a) shall provide education for veterans on the following:

(1) The association between dental health and overall health and well-being.

(2) Proper techniques for dental care.

(3) Signs and symptoms of commonly occurring dental conditions.

(4) Treatment options for commonly occurring dental issues.

(5) Options for obtaining access to dental care, including information on eligibility for dental care through the Department and on purchasing private dental insurance.

(6) Available and accessible options for obtaining low or no-cost dental care, including through dental schools and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs).

(7) Such other matters relating to dental health as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) DELIVERY OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide educational materials to veterans under the program required by subsection (a) through a variety of mechanisms, including the following:

(A) The availability and distribution of print materials at Department facilities (including at medical centers, clinics, Vet Centers, and readjustment counseling centers) and to providers (including members of Patient Aligned Care Teams).

(B) The availability and distribution of materials over the Internet, including through webinars and My Health eVet.

(C) Presentations of information, including both small group and large group presentations.

(2) **SELECTION OF MECHANISMS.**—In selecting mechanisms for purposes of this subsection, the Secretary shall select mechanisms designed to maximize the number of veterans who receive education under the program.

(d) **FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER DEFINED.**—In this section the term “Federally Qualified Health Center” means a Federally-qualified health center as defined in section 1905(1)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(1)(2)(B)).

(e) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 354. INFORMATION ON DENTAL SERVICES FOR INCLUSION IN ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS UNDER DENTAL INSURANCE PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Commencing not later than 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall expand the dental insurance pilot program established by section 17.169 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, to establish a mechanism by which private sector dental care providers shall forward to the Department of Veterans Affairs information on dental care furnished to individuals under the pilot program for inclusion in the electronic medical records of the Department with respect to such individuals.

(b) CONSTRUCTION WITH CURRENT PILOT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to revise eligibility for participation in, or the locations of, the pilot program referred to in subsection (a).

(2) **DURATION.**—The Secretary may continue the pilot program for two years in addition to the duration otherwise provided for the pilot program in section 17.169 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, if the Secretary determines that the continuation is needed to assess the mechanism required by subsection (a).

(3) **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION IN MECHANISM.**—The participation in the mechanism required by subsection (a) of an individual otherwise participating in the pilot program shall be at the election of the individual.

(c) **INCLUSION OF INFORMATION ON MECHANISM IN REPORTS.**—Each report to Congress on the pilot program after the date of the commencement of the mechanism required by subsection (a) shall include information on the mechanism, including a current assessment of the feasibility and advisability of using the mechanism to include information on dental care furnished individuals in the electronic medical records of the Department with respect to such individuals.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 355. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2015 \$305,000,000 to carry out this subtitle and the amendments made by this subtitle. The amount so authorized to be appropriated shall be available for obligation for the five-year period beginning on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle F—Health Care Related to Sexual Trauma

SEC. 361. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SEXUAL TRAUMA COUNSELING AND TREATMENT TO VETERANS ON INACTIVE DUTY TRAINING.

Section 1720D(a)(1) is amended by striking “or active duty for training” and inserting

“, active duty for training, or inactive duty training”.

SEC. 362. PROVISION OF COUNSELING AND TREATMENT FOR SEXUAL TRAUMA BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) **EXPANSION OF COVERAGE TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.**—Subsection (a) of section 1720D is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3);

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph (2):

“(2)(A) In operating the program required by paragraph (1), the Secretary may, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, provide counseling and care and services to members of the Armed Forces (including members of the National Guard and Reserves) on active duty to overcome psychological trauma described in that paragraph.

“(B) A member described in subparagraph (A) shall not be required to obtain a referral before receiving counseling and care and services under this paragraph.”; and

(3) in paragraph (3), as redesignated by paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “a veteran” and inserting “an individual”; and

(B) by striking “that veteran” each place it appears and inserting “that individual”.

(b) **INFORMATION TO MEMBERS ON AVAILABILITY OF COUNSELING AND SERVICES.**—Subsection (c) of such section is amended—

(1) by striking “to veterans” each place it appears; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by inserting “members of the Armed Forces and” before “individuals”.

(c) **INCLUSION OF MEMBERS IN REPORTS ON COUNSELING AND SERVICES.**—Subsection (e) of such section is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “to veterans”;

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking “women veterans” and inserting “individuals”; and

(B) by striking “training under subsection (d).” and inserting “training under subsection (d), disaggregated by—

“(A) veterans;

“(B) members of the Armed Forces (including members of the National Guard and Reserves) on active duty; and

“(C) for each of subparagraphs (A) and (B)—

“(i) men; and

“(ii) women.”;

(3) in paragraph (4), by striking “veterans” and inserting “individuals”; and

(4) in paragraph (5)—

(A) by striking “women veterans” and inserting “individuals”; and

(B) by inserting “, including specific recommendations for individuals specified in subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of paragraph (2)” before the period at the end.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 363. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SCREENING MECHANISM TO DETECT INCIDENTS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall develop and implement a screening mechanism to be used when a veteran seeks healthcare services from the Department of Veterans Affairs to detect if the veteran has been a victim of domestic abuse for purposes of improving the treatment of the veteran and assessing the prevalence of domestic abuse in the veteran population.

(b) **READILY AVAILABLE SCREENING TOOLS.**—In developing and implementing a screening mechanism under subsection (a), the Secretary may incorporate into the screening mechanism such readily available screening tools as the Secretary considers appropriate for the screening mechanism.

(c) **DOMESTIC ABUSE DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “domestic abuse” means behavior with respect to an individual that—

(1) constitutes—

(A) a pattern of behavior resulting in physical or emotional abuse, economic control, or interference with the personal liberty of that individual;

(B) a violation of Federal or State law involving the use, attempted use, or threatened use of force or violence against that individual; or

(C) a violation of a lawful order issued for the protection of that individual; and

(2) is committed by a person who—

(A) is a current or former spouse or domestic partner of that individual;

(B) shares a child in common with that individual;

(C) is a current or former intimate partner of that individual that shares or has shared a common domicile with that individual;

(D) is a caregiver or family caregiver of that individual (as such terms are defined in section 1720G(d) of title 38, United States Code); or

(E) is in any other type of relationship with that individual that the Secretary may specify for purposes of this section.

SEC. 364. REPORTS ON MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA AND DOMESTIC ABUSE.

(a) **REPORT ON SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**—Not later than 630 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the treatment and services available from the Department of Veterans Affairs for male veterans who experience military sexual trauma compared to such treatment and services available to female veterans who experience military sexual trauma.

(b) **REPORT ON DOMESTIC ABUSE AMONG VETERANS.**—Not later than two years after the implementation of the screening mechanism required by section 363(a) of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shall jointly submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on domestic abuse among veterans that includes the following:

(1) A summary of the types, outcomes, and circumstances of incidents of domestic abuse that have been reported by veterans during the two-year period preceding the submission of the report.

(2) A summary of the treatments available from the Department of Veterans Affairs for veterans who experience domestic abuse and an assessment of the effectiveness of those treatments.

(3) Data and analysis on any correlation between an incident of military sexual trauma or sexual trauma experienced after the age of 18 and domestic abuse.

(4) Any other issues that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs or the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention determines appropriate.

(c) **REPORTS ON TRANSITION OF MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA AND DOMESTIC ABUSE TREATMENT FROM DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**—Not later than 630 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for five years, the Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee established by section 320(a) of title 38, United States Code, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on military sexual trauma and domestic abuse that includes the following:

(1) The processes and procedures utilized by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense to facilitate transition of treatment of individuals who have experienced military sexual trauma or domestic abuse from treatment provided by the Department of Defense to treatment provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) A description and assessment of the collaboration between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense in assisting veterans in filing claims for disabilities related to military sexual trauma or domestic abuse, including permitting veterans access to information and evidence necessary to develop or support such claims.

(d) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.**—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

(2) **DOMESTIC ABUSE.**—The term “domestic abuse” has the meaning given that term in section 363(c) of this Act.

(3) **MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.**—The term “military sexual trauma” means psychological trauma, which in the judgment of a mental health professional employed by the Department, resulted from a physical assault of a sexual nature, battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment which occurred while the veteran was serving on active duty or active duty for training.

(4) **SEXUAL HARASSMENT.**—The term “sexual harassment” means repeated, unsolicited verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature which is threatening in character.

(5) **SEXUAL TRAUMA.**—The term “sexual trauma” shall have the meaning given that term by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for purposes of this section.

(e) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle G—Reproductive Treatment and Services

SEC. 371. CLARIFICATION THAT FERTILITY COUNSELING AND TREATMENT ARE MEDICAL SERVICES WHICH THE SECRETARY MAY FURNISH TO VETERANS LIKE OTHER MEDICAL SERVICES.

Section 1701(6), as amended by section 305(b)(1) of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(I) Fertility counseling and treatment, including treatment using assisted reproductive technology.”

SEC. 372. REPRODUCTIVE TREATMENT AND CARE FOR SPOUSES AND SURROGATES OF VETERANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter VIII of chapter 17 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1788. Reproductive treatment and care for spouses and surrogates of veterans

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall furnish fertility counseling and treatment, including through the use of assisted reproductive technology, to a spouse or surrogate of a severely wounded, ill, or injured veteran who has an infertility condition incurred or aggravated in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service and who is enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment established under section 1705(a) of this title if the spouse or surrogate and the veteran apply jointly for such counseling and treatment through a process prescribed by the Secretary.

“(b) **COORDINATION OF CARE FOR OTHER SPOUSES AND SURROGATES.**—In the case of a spouse or surrogate of a veteran not described in subsection (a) who is seeking fertility counseling and treatment, the Secretary may coordinate fertility counseling and treatment for such spouse or surrogate.

“(c) **CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the Secretary—

“(1) to find or certify a surrogate for a veteran or to connect a surrogate with a veteran; or

“(2) to furnish maternity care to a spouse or surrogate of a veteran.

“(d) **ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY DEFINED.**—In this section, the term ‘assisted reproductive technology’ includes in vitro fertilization and other fertility treatments in which both eggs and sperm are handled when clinically appropriate.”

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1787 the following new item:

“1788. Reproductive treatment and care for spouses and surrogates of veterans.”

SEC. 373. ADOPTION ASSISTANCE FOR SEVERELY WOUNDED VETERANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter VIII of chapter 17, as amended by section 372(a) of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1789. Adoption assistance

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may pay an amount, not to exceed the limitation amount, to assist a covered veteran in the adoption of one or more children.

“(b) **COVERED VETERAN.**—For purposes of this section, a covered veteran is any severely wounded, ill, or injured veteran who—

“(1) has an infertility condition incurred or aggravated in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service; and

“(2) is enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment established under section 1705(a) of this title.

“(c) **LIMITATION AMOUNT.**—For purposes of this section, the limitation amount is the amount equal to the lesser of—

“(1) the cost the Department would incur if the Secretary were to provide a covered veteran with one cycle of fertility treatment through the use of assisted reproductive technology under section 1788 of this title, as determined by the Secretary; or

“(2) the cost the Department would incur by paying the expenses of three adoptions by covered veterans, as determined by the Secretary.

“(d) **ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY DEFINED.**—In this section, the term ‘assisted reproductive technology’ has the meaning given that term in section 1788 of this title.”

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17, as

amended by section 372(b) of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1788 the following new item: "1789. Adoption assistance."

SEC. 374. REGULATIONS ON FURNISHING OF FERTILITY COUNSELING AND TREATMENT AND ADOPTION ASSISTANCE BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall prescribe regulations—

(1) on the furnishing of fertility treatment to veterans using assisted reproductive technology;

(2) to carry out section 1788 of title 38, United States Code, as added by section 372 of this Act; and

(3) to carry out section 1789 of such title, as added by section 373 of this Act.

(b) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, during the period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act and ending on the date on which the Secretary prescribes regulations under subsection (a), the Secretary may not furnish—

(1) to a veteran any fertility treatment that uses an assisted reproductive technology that the Secretary has not used in the provision of a fertility treatment to a veteran before the date of the enactment of this Act;

(2) any fertility counseling or treatment under section 1788 of such title, as added by section 372 of this Act; or

(3) any assistance under section 1789 of such title, as added by section 373 of this Act.

(c) ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY DEFINED.—In this section, the term "assisted reproductive technology" has the meaning given the term in section 1788 of such title, as added by section 372 of this Act.

SEC. 375. COORDINATION BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ON FURNISHING OF FERTILITY COUNSELING AND TREATMENT.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense shall share best practices and facilitate referrals, as they consider appropriate, on the furnishing of fertility counseling and treatment.

SEC. 376. FACILITATION OF REPRODUCTION AND INFERTILITY RESEARCH.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 73, as amended by section 325(a) of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 7330C. Facilitation of reproduction and infertility research"

"(a) FACILITATION OF RESEARCH REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall facilitate research conducted collaboratively by the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to improve the ability of the Department of Veterans Affairs to meet the long-term reproductive health care needs of veterans who have a genitourinary service-connected disability or a condition that was incurred or aggravated in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service, such as a spinal cord injury, that affects the veterans' ability to reproduce.

"(b) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that information produced by the research facilitated under this section that may be useful for other activities of the Veterans Health Administration is disseminated throughout the Veterans Health Administration."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 73, as

amended by section 325(b) of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7330B the following new item:

"7330C. Facilitation of reproduction and infertility research."

(c) REPORT.—Not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the research activities conducted by the Secretary under section 7330C of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

SEC. 377. ANNUAL REPORT ON PROVISION OF FERTILITY COUNSELING AND TREATMENT FURNISHED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently than annually thereafter, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the fertility counseling and treatment furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs during the year preceding the submittal of the report.

(b) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under subsection (a) shall include, for the period covered by the report, the following:

(1) The number of veterans who received fertility counseling or treatment furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs, disaggregated by era of military service of such veterans.

(2) The number of spouses and surrogates of veterans who received fertility counseling or treatment furnished by the Department.

(3) The cost to the Department of furnishing fertility counseling and treatment, disaggregated by cost of services and administration.

(4) The average cost to the Department per recipient of such counseling and treatment.

(5) In cases in which the Department furnished fertility treatment through the use of assisted reproductive technology, the average number of cycles per person furnished.

(6) A description of how fertility counseling and treatment services of the Department are coordinated with similar services of the Department of Defense.

SEC. 378. PROGRAM ON ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS.

(a) ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS RECEIVING HEALTH CARE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 17 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 1709B. Assistance for child care for certain veterans receiving health care"

"(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to provide, subject to subsection (b), assistance to qualified veterans described in subsection (c) to obtain child care so that such veterans can receive health care services described in subsection (c).

"(b) LIMITATION ON PERIOD OF PAYMENTS.—Assistance may only be provided to a qualified veteran under this section for receipt of child care during the period that the qualified veteran—

"(1) receives health care services described in subsection (c) at a facility of the Department; and

"(2) requires travel to and from such facility for the receipt of such health care services.

"(c) QUALIFIED VETERANS.—For purposes of this section, a qualified veteran is a veteran who is—

"(1) the primary caretaker of a child or children; and

"(2)(A) receiving from the Department—

"(i) regular mental health care services;

"(ii) intensive mental health care services; or

"(iii) such other intensive health care services that the Secretary determines that provision of assistance to the veteran to obtain child care would improve access to such health care services by the veteran; or

"(B) in need of regular or intensive mental health care services from the Department, and but for lack of child care services, would receive such health care services from the Department.

"(d) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the program in no fewer than three Veterans Integrated Service Networks selected by the Secretary for purposes of the program.

"(e) FORMS OF CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE.—(1) Child care assistance under this section may include the following:

"(A) Stipends for the payment of child care offered by licensed child care centers (either directly or through a voucher program) which shall be, to the extent practicable, modeled after the Department of Veterans Affairs Child Care Subsidy Program established pursuant to section 630 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2002 (Public Law 107-67; 115 Stat. 552).

"(B) Direct provision of child care at an on-site facility of the Department.

"(C) Payments to private child care agencies.

"(D) Collaboration with facilities or programs of other Federal departments or agencies.

"(E) Such other forms of assistance as the Secretary considers appropriate.

"(2) In the case that child care assistance under this section is provided as a stipend under paragraph (1)(A), such stipend shall cover the full cost of such child care."

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1709A the following new item:

"1709B. Assistance for child care for certain veterans receiving health care."

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 205(e) of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-163; 38 U.S.C. 1710 note) is amended by inserting "but not after the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014" before the period at the end.

(b) ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING READJUSTMENT COUNSELING AND RELATED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 17, as amended by subsection (a)(1) of this section, is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 1709C. Assistance for child care for individuals receiving readjustment counseling and related mental health services"

"(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to provide, subject to subsection (b), assistance to qualified individuals described in subsection (c) to obtain child care so that such individuals can receive readjustment counseling and related mental health services.

"(b) LIMITATION ON PERIOD OF PAYMENTS.—Assistance may only be provided to a qualified individual under this section for receipt of child care during the period that the qualified individual receives readjustment counseling and related health care services at a Vet Center.

“(c) **QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS.**—For purposes of this section, a qualified individual is an individual who is—

“(1) the primary caretaker of a child or children; and

“(2)(A) receiving from the Department regular readjustment counseling and related mental health services; or

“(B) in need of readjustment counseling and related mental health services from the Department, and but for lack of child care services, would receive such counseling and services from the Department.

“(d) **LOCATIONS.**—The Secretary shall carry out the program under this section in no fewer than three Readjustment Counseling Service Regions selected by the Secretary for purposes of the program.

“(e) **FORMS OF CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE.**—(1) Child care assistance under this section may include the following:

“(A) Stipends for the payment of child care offered by licensed child care centers (either directly or through a voucher program) which shall be, to the extent practicable, modeled after the Department of Veterans Affairs Child Care Subsidy Program established pursuant to section 630 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2002 (Public Law 107-67; 115 Stat. 552).

“(B) Payments to private child care agencies.

“(C) Collaboration with facilities or programs of other Federal departments or agencies.

“(D) Such other forms of assistance as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(2) In the case that child care assistance under this subsection is provided as a stipend under paragraph (1)(A), such stipend shall cover the full cost of such child care.

“(f) **VET CENTER DEFINED.**—In this section, the term ‘Vet Center’ means a center for readjustment counseling and related mental health services for individuals under section 1712A of this title.”

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17, as amended by subsection (a)(2) of this section, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1709B the following new item:

“1709C. Assistance for child care for individuals receiving readjustment counseling and related mental health services.”

SEC. 379. COUNSELING IN RETREAT SETTINGS FOR WOMEN VETERANS NEWLY SEPARATED FROM SERVICE IN THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) **COUNSELING IN RETREAT SETTINGS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter II of chapter 17 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1720H. Counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated from service in the Armed Forces

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall provide, through the Readjustment Counseling Service of the Veterans Health Administration, reintegration and readjustment services described in subsection (c) in group retreat settings to women veterans who are recently separated from service in the Armed Forces after a prolonged deployment.

“(b) **ELECTION OF VETERAN.**—The receipt of services under this section by a woman veteran shall be at the election of the veteran.

“(c) **COVERED SERVICES.**—The services provided to a woman veteran under this section shall include the following:

“(1) Information on reintegration into the veteran’s family, employment, and community.

“(2) Financial counseling.

“(3) Occupational counseling.

“(4) Information and counseling on stress reduction.

“(5) Information and counseling on conflict resolution.

“(6) Such other information and counseling as the Secretary considers appropriate to assist the veteran in reintegration into the veteran’s family, employment, and community.”

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1720G the following new item:

“1720H. Counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated from service in the Armed Forces.”

(b) **REPEAL OF SUPERSEDED PILOT PROGRAM AUTHORITY.**—Section 203 of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-163; 38 U.S.C. 1712A note) is hereby repealed.

Subtitle H—Major Medical Facility Leases

SEC. 381. AUTHORIZATION OF MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY LEASES.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out the following major medical facility leases at the locations specified, and in an amount for each lease not to exceed the amount shown for such location (not including any estimated cancellation costs):

(1) For a clinical research and pharmacy coordinating center, Albuquerque, New Mexico, an amount not to exceed \$9,560,000.

(2) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Brick, New Jersey, an amount not to exceed \$7,280,000.

(3) For a new primary care and dental clinic annex, Charleston, South Carolina, an amount not to exceed \$7,070,250.

(4) For the Cobb County community-based Outpatient Clinic, Cobb County, Georgia, an amount not to exceed \$6,409,000.

(5) For the Leeward Outpatient Healthcare Access Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, including a co-located clinic with the Department of Defense and the co-location of the Honolulu Regional Office of the Veterans Benefits Administration and the Kapolei Vet Center of the Department of Veterans Affairs, an amount not to exceed \$15,887,370.

(6) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Johnson County, Kansas, an amount not to exceed \$2,263,000.

(7) For a replacement community-based outpatient clinic, Lafayette, Louisiana, an amount not to exceed \$2,996,000.

(8) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Lake Charles, Louisiana, an amount not to exceed \$2,626,000.

(9) For outpatient clinic consolidation, New Port Richey, Florida, an amount not to exceed \$11,927,000.

(10) For an outpatient clinic, Ponce, Puerto Rico, an amount not to exceed \$11,535,000.

(11) For lease consolidation, San Antonio, Texas, an amount not to exceed \$19,426,000.

(12) For a community-based outpatient clinic, San Diego, California, an amount not to exceed \$11,946,100.

(13) For an outpatient clinic, Tyler, Texas, an amount not to exceed \$4,327,000.

(14) For the Errera Community Care Center, West Haven, Connecticut, an amount not to exceed \$4,883,000.

(15) For the Worcester community-based Outpatient Clinic, Worcester, Massachusetts, an amount not to exceed \$4,855,000.

(16) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, an amount not to exceed \$4,232,060.

(17) For a multispecialty clinic, Chattanooga, Tennessee, an amount not to exceed \$7,069,000.

(18) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Chico, California, an amount not to exceed \$4,534,000.

(19) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Chula Vista, California, an amount not to exceed \$3,714,000.

(20) For a new research lease, Hines, Illinois, an amount not to exceed \$22,032,000.

(21) For a replacement research lease, Houston, Texas, an amount not to exceed \$6,142,000.

(22) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Lincoln, Nebraska, an amount not to exceed \$7,178,400.

(23) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Lubbock, Texas, an amount not to exceed \$8,554,000.

(24) For a community-based outpatient clinic consolidation, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, an amount not to exceed \$8,022,000.

(25) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Phoenix, Arizona, an amount not to exceed \$20,757,000.

(26) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Redding, California, an amount not to exceed \$8,154,000.

(27) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Tulsa, Oklahoma, an amount not to exceed \$13,269,200.

SEC. 382. BUDGETARY TREATMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITIES LEASES.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds the following:

(1) Title 31, United States Code, requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to record the full cost of its contractual obligation against funds available at the time a contract is executed.

(2) Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11 provides guidance to agencies in meeting the statutory requirements under title 31, United States Code, with respect to leases.

(3) For operating leases, Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11 requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to record upfront budget authority in an “amount equal to total payments under the full term of the lease or [an] amount sufficient to cover first year lease payments plus cancellation costs”.

(b) **REQUIREMENT FOR OBLIGATION OF FULL COST.**—Subject to the availability of appropriations provided in advance, in exercising the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into leases provided in this Act, the Secretary shall record, pursuant to section 1501 of title 31, United States Code, as the full cost of the contractual obligation at the time a contract is executed either—

(1) an amount equal to total payments under the full term of the lease; or

(2) if the lease specifies payments to be made in the event the lease is terminated before its full term, an amount sufficient to cover the first year lease payments plus the specified cancellation costs.

(c) **TRANSPARENCY.**—

(1) **COMPLIANCE.**—Subsection (b) of section 8104 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(7) In the case of a prospectus proposing funding for a major medical facility lease, a detailed analysis of how the lease is expected to comply with Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11 and section 1341 of title 31 (commonly referred to as the ‘Anti-Deficiency Act’). Any such analysis shall include—

“(A) an analysis of the classification of the lease as a ‘lease-purchase’, ‘capital lease’, or ‘operating lease’ as those terms are defined in Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11;

“(B) an analysis of the obligation of budgetary resources associated with the lease; and

“(C) an analysis of the methodology used in determining the asset cost, fair market value, and cancellation costs of the lease.”.

(2) SUBMITTAL TO CONGRESS.—Such section 8104 is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h)(1) Not less than 30 days before entering into a major medical facility lease, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives—

“(A) notice of the Secretary’s intention to enter into the lease;

“(B) a copy of the proposed lease;

“(C) a description and analysis of any differences between the prospectus submitted pursuant to subsection (b) and the proposed lease; and

“(D) a scoring analysis demonstrating that the proposed lease fully complies with Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11.

“(2) Each committee described in paragraph (1) shall ensure that any information submitted to the committee under such paragraph is treated by the committee with the same level of confidentiality as is required by law of the Secretary and subject to the same statutory penalties for unauthorized disclosure or use as the Secretary.

“(3) Not more than 30 days after entering into a major medical facility lease, the Secretary shall submit to each committee described in paragraph (1) a report on any material differences between the lease that was entered into and the proposed lease described under such paragraph, including how the lease that was entered into changes the previously submitted scoring analysis described in subparagraph (D) of such paragraph.”.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section, or the amendments made by this section, shall be construed to in any way relieve the Department of Veterans Affairs from any statutory or regulatory obligations or requirements existing prior to the enactment of this section and such amendments.

TITLE IV—EMPLOYMENT AND RELATED MATTERS

SUBTITLE A—TRAINING AND OTHER SERVICES FOR VETERANS SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

SEC. 401. REAUTHORIZATION OF VETERANS RETRAINING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) EXTENSION.—Subsection (k) of section 211 of the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-56; 38 U.S.C. 4100 note) is amended by striking “March 31, 2014” and inserting “June 30, 2016”.

(b) NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE VETERANS.—Subsection (a)(2) of such section is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

“(C) 50,000 during the period beginning April 1, 2014, and ending June 30, 2015; and

“(D) 50,000 during the period beginning July 1, 2015, and ending June 30, 2016.”.

(c) CLARIFICATION OF LIMITATION ON AGGREGATE AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended by striking “up to 12 months of retraining assistance provided by the Secretary of Veterans Af-

fairs” and inserting “an aggregate of not more than 12 months of retraining assistance provided by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under this section”.

(d) PROVIDERS OF RETRAINING ASSISTANCE.—Subsection (b) of such section is further amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) as paragraphs (4), (5), and (6), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph (3):

“(3) is offered by a four-year educational institution and, as determined by the Secretary, is not reasonably available at a community college or technical school;”.

(e) EXTENSION OF APPLICATION DATE.—Subsection (e)(1)(G) of such section is amended by striking “October 1, 2013” and inserting “October 1, 2015”.

(f) REPORTS.—Subsection (i) of such section is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking “REPORT” and inserting “REPORTS”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following new paragraph (1):

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress reports on training assistance provided under this section as follows:

“(A) By not later than October 1, 2015, for participants provided assistance through March 31, 2014.

“(B) By not later than October 1, 2017, for participants provided assistance during the period beginning on April 1, 2014, and ending on June 2016.”; and

(3) in paragraph (2), by striking “The report required by paragraph (1) shall include” and inserting “Each report required by paragraph (1) shall include, for the period covered by such report.”.

SEC. 402. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO PROVIDE REHABILITATION AND VOCATIONAL BENEFITS TO MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES WITH SEVERE INJURIES OR ILLNESSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1631(b)(2) of the Wounded Warrior Act (title XVI of Public Law 110-181; 10 U.S.C. 1071 note) is amended by striking “December 31, 2014” and inserting “December 31, 2016”.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the benefits provided by the Secretary under section 1631(b) of such Act.

(2) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—In this subsection, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 403. EXTENSION OF ADDITIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAMS FOR PERSONS WHO HAVE EXHAUSTED RIGHTS TO UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS UNDER STATE LAW.

Section 3102(b)(4) is amended by striking “March 31, 2014” and inserting “March 31, 2016”.

SEC. 404. UNIFIED EMPLOYMENT PORTAL FOR VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4105 is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c)(1) The Secretary shall develop a single, unified Federal web-based employment portal, for use by veterans, containing infor-

mation regarding all Federal programs and activities concerning employment, unemployment, and training to the extent the programs and activities affect veterans.

“(2) The Secretary shall work with representatives from the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Small Business Administration, and other Federal agencies and organizations concerned with veterans’ issues, to determine an appropriate platform and implementing agency for the portal. The Secretary shall enter into an agreement with the other Federal agencies for the implementation of the portal.”.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—The Secretary of Labor shall implement the portal required by subsection (c) of section 4105 of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a) of this section), by not later than January 1, 2015.

SEC. 405. REPORT ON UNIFIED GOVERNMENT INTERNET PORTAL FOR VETERANS ON JOBS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

(a) IDENTIFICATION OF INTERNET WEBSITES AND APPLICATIONS THAT CAN ASSIST VETERANS SEEKING EMPLOYMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Defense, and other appropriate public and private entities, take appropriate actions to identify Internet websites and applications that can assist veterans in seeking employment.

(2) PRIORITY IN IDENTIFICATION OF CERTAIN WEBSITES AND APPLICATIONS.—In identifying websites and applications pursuant to paragraph (1), the Secretary shall place a particular priority on identifying websites and applications that do the following:

(A) Match veterans seeking employment with available jobs based on the skills the veterans acquired as members of the Armed Forces.

(B) Permit employers to post information about available jobs.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of Labor shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the actions of the Secretary under subsection (a). The report shall include an assessment of the feasibility and advisability of creating a single, unified Internet-based employment portal for the Federal Government for use by veterans regarding employment through the Federal Government, including the cost of creating the portal, the collaboration with other Federal agencies required to create the portal, and the anticipated use of the portal.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 406. INFORMATION ON DISABILITY-RELATED EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION PROTECTIONS IN TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1144(b) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(9) Provide information about disability-related employment and education protections.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle B—Employment of Veterans and Recognition of Veteran Status With Respect to Employment Related Matters

SEC. 411. EMPLOYMENT OF VETERANS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4214 is amended—
(1) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the following:

“(4)(A) The requirement under this paragraph is in addition to the appointment of qualified covered veterans under the authority under paragraph (1) by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.

“(B) The head of each agency, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall develop a plan for exercising the authority specified in subparagraph (C) during the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014.

“(C) The authority specified in this subparagraph is the authority as follows:

“(i) The authority under paragraph (1).

“(ii) The authority available to the agency concerned under the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-339) and the amendments made by that Act.

“(D) The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall ensure that under the plans developed under subparagraph (B) agencies shall appoint to existing vacancies not fewer than 15,000 qualified covered veterans during the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014. For purposes of complying with this subparagraph, an appointment pursuant to the authority referred to in subparagraph (C)(ii) shall not count toward the number required by this subparagraph unless the appointment is to a vacancy in a full-time, permanent position.”;

(2) in subsection (d), in the third sentence, by inserting “(including, during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014, the development and implementation by each agency of the plan required under subsection (b)(4), which shall include information regarding the grade or pay level of appointments by the agency under the plan and whether the appointments are, or are converted to, career or career-conditional appointments)” after “subsection (b) of this section”; and

(3) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter before subparagraph (A), by striking “to the Congress” and inserting “to the appropriate committees of Congress”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “(including, during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014, the development and implementation by the agency of the plan required under subsection (b)(4), which shall include information regarding the grade or pay level of appointments by the agency under the plan and whether the appointments are, or are converted to, permanent appointments)” before the period; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) In this subsection, the term ‘appropriate committees of Congress’ means—

“(A) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and
“(B) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives.”.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress (as defined under section 4214(e)(3) of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a)) regarding the development of a plan to carry out the amendments made by subsection (a).

SEC. 412. STATE RECOGNITION OF MILITARY EXPERIENCE OF VETERANS IN ISSUING LICENSES AND CREDENTIALS TO VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4102A(c) is amended by striking paragraph (9) and inserting the following new paragraph (9):

“(9)(A) As a condition of a grant or contract under which funds are made available to a State under subsection (b)(5) in order to carry out section 4103A or 4104 of this title, the State shall—

“(i) establish a program under which the State administers an examination to each veteran seeking a license or credential issued by the State and issues such license or credential to such veteran without requiring such veteran to undergo any training or apprenticeship if the veteran—

“(I) receives a satisfactory score on completion of such examination, as determined by the State;

“(II) has been awarded a military occupational specialty that is substantially equivalent to or exceeds the requirements of the State for the issuance of such license or credential;

“(III) has engaged in the active practice of the occupation for which the veteran is seeking such license or credential for at least two of the five years preceding the date of application; and

“(IV) pays any customary or usual fees required by the State for such license or credential; and

“(ii) submit each year to the Secretary a report on the exams administered under clause (i) during the most recently completed 12-month period that includes, for the period covered by the report the number of veterans who completed an exam administered by the State under clause (i) and a description of the results of such exams, disaggregated by occupational field.

“(B) The Secretary may waive the requirement under subparagraph (A) that a State establish a program described in that subparagraph as a condition of a grant or contract if the State certifies to the Secretary that the State—

“(i) takes into account previous military training for the purposes of issuing licenses or credentials;

“(ii) permits veterans to completely satisfy through examination any training or testing requirements for a license or credential with respect to which a veteran has previously completed military training; and

“(iii) for any credential or license for which a veteran is unable to completely satisfy such requirements through examination, the State substantially reduces training time required to satisfy such requirement based on the military training received by the veteran.

“(C) Not less frequently than once each year, the Secretary shall submit to Congress and the Secretary of Defense a report summarizing the information received by the Secretary under subparagraph (A)(ii).”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) EXAMS.—Subparagraph (A) of section 4102A(c)(9) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to grants and contracts described in such subparagraph awarded after such date.

(2) REPORTS.—Subparagraph (B) of such section 4102A(c)(9), as so added, shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and the Secretary of Labor shall submit the first report under such subparagraph not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 413. GRANTS TO HIRE VETERANS AS FIRST RESPONDERS.

(a) GRANTS FOR FIREFIGHTERS.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall award grants under section 34 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2229a) to hire veterans as firefighters.

(b) GRANTS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS.—The Attorney General shall award grants under part Q of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3796dd et seq.) to hire veterans as law enforcement officers.

(c) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this section to hire veterans, the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Attorney General shall give priority to the hiring of veterans who served on active duty in the Armed Forces on or after September 11, 2001.

(d) FUNDING.—

(1) DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.—There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Homeland Security, \$125,000,000 to carry out subsection (a).

(2) DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.—There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Justice, \$125,000,000 to carry out subsection (b).

(3) AVAILABILITY.—The amounts authorized to be appropriated by this subsection shall be available for expenditure through September 30, 2018.

SEC. 414. EMPLOYMENT OF VETERANS AS EVALUATION FACTOR IN THE AWARDED OF FEDERAL CONTRACTS.

(a) CIVILIAN CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 33 of title 41, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§3313. Employment of veterans as evaluation factor

“The head of each executive agency shall consider favorably as an evaluation factor in solicitations for contracts and task or delivery order valued at or above \$25,000,000 the employment by a prospective contractor of veterans constituting at least 5 percent of the contractor’s workforce.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 33 of such title is amended by adding after the item relating to section 3312 the following new item:

“3313. Employment of veterans as evaluation factor.”.

(b) DEFENSE CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§2338. Employment of veterans as evaluation factor

“The head of each agency shall consider favorably as an evaluation factor in solicitations for contracts and task or delivery order valued at or above \$25,000,000 the employment by a prospective contractor of veterans

constituting at least 5 percent of the contractor's workforce."

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 137 of such title is amended by adding after the item relating to section 2337 the following new item:

"2338. Employment of veterans as evaluation factor."

(c) **REGULATIONS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council shall amend the Federal Acquisition Regulation to carry out the provisions of section 3313 of title 41, United States Code, and section 2338 of title 10, United States Code, as added by subsections (a) and (b), respectively.

SEC. 415. REPORT ON DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MEMBERS OF RESERVE COMPONENTS OF ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS IN CIVILIAN LABOR MARKET.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 570 days after the date of the enactment of this act, the Secretary of Labor, in coordination with the heads of such agencies as the Secretary considers appropriate, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on barriers and potential discrimination facing veterans in the labor market.

(b) **CONTENTS.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An evaluation of the following:

(A) The extent to which members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces and veterans face barriers to entry into the civilian labor market, including whether such members and veterans face obstacles in obtaining employment, maintaining employment, or receiving promotions while employed.

(B) The extent to which a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces or a veteran faces discrimination in the civilian labor market based on the member's or veteran's status as a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces or as a veteran, as the case may be.

(C) The adequacy and effectiveness of Federal laws in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act in preventing or ameliorating acts of discrimination against members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces and veterans seeking or retaining employment in the civilian labor market.

(D) The adequacy and effectiveness of programs of the Department of Labor in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act in educating private sector employers on matters relevant to hiring and employing veterans and the military experience of veterans.

(2) Such recommendations as the Secretary may have for legislative or administrative action—

(A) to address barriers or discrimination that members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces and veterans may face in the civilian labor market;

(B) to improve education and outreach for employers in the civilian labor market on issues regarding hiring and employing such members and veterans; and

(C) to assist employers in the civilian labor market in matching the military experience of such members and veterans with the needs of such employers.

(3) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) **APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.**—In this section, the term "appropriate committees of Congress" means—

(1) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle C—Program on Career Transition

SEC. 421. PROGRAM ON PROVISION OF CAREER TRANSITION SERVICES TO YOUNG VETERANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Commencing not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in collaboration with the Secretary of Labor, carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of establishing a program to provide career transition services to eligible individuals—

(1) to provide eligible individuals with work experience in the civilian sector;

(2) to increase the marketable skills of eligible individuals;

(3) to assist eligible individuals in obtaining long-term employment; and

(4) to assist in integrating eligible individuals into their local communities.

(b) **ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.**—For purposes of the program, an eligible individual is an individual who—

(1) is—

(A) a veteran of the Armed Forces who was discharged or released from service therein under conditions other than dishonorable; or

(B) a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces (including the National Guard) who—

(i) served on active duty in the Armed Forces (other than active duty for training) for more than 180 consecutive days during the three-year period ending on the date of application for participation in the program; and

(ii) is not serving on active duty on the date of commencement of participation in the program;

(2) if discharged or released from the Armed Forces on the date of commencement of participation in the program, was so discharged or released not later than three years before application for participation in the program;

(3) is unemployed or underemployed, as determined by the Secretary; and

(4) is, at the time at which the individual applies for participation in the program, 18 years of age or older, but not more than 30 years of age.

(c) **ELIGIBLE EMPLOYERS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For purposes of the program, an eligible employer is an employer determined by the Secretary to meet such criteria for participation in the program as the Secretary shall establish for purposes of the program.

(2) **PAST PERFORMANCE ON CERTAIN MATTERS.**—The criteria established by the Secretary under paragraph (1) may include past performance of an employer with respect to the following:

(A) Job training, basic skills training, and related activities.

(B) Financial accountability.

(C) Demonstrated high potential for growth and long-term job creation.

(3) **FOR-PROFIT AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT EMPLOYERS.**—The employers determined by the Secretary to be eligible employers under paragraph (1) may include both for-profit and not-for-profit employers.

(4) **SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS.**—In determining employers to be eligible employers

under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall ensure that small business concerns are afforded opportunities to participate in the program.

(5) **EXCLUSIONS.**—The following employers may not be determined to be an eligible employer under paragraph (1):

(A) An agency of the Federal Government or a State or local government.

(B) An employer that has previously participated in the program and, as determined by the Secretary, failed to abide by any requirement of the program.

(C) An employer that cannot give an assurance to the Secretary at the time of application for participation in the program under subsection (1), and in such manner as the Secretary shall specify pursuant to that subsection, on each matter as follows:

(i) That the employer has not been investigated or subject to a case or action by the Federal Trade Commission during the 180-day period ending on the date the employer would otherwise commence participation in the program.

(ii) That the employer has been in good standing with a State business bureau during the period described in clause (i).

(iii) That the employer is not delinquent with respect to payment of any taxes or employer contributions described under section 3301 and 3302 (a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 3301 and 3302(a)(1)).

(iv) That the employer would not request the placement of an additional eligible individual under the program, if after such additional placement, the number of eligible individuals placed in internships at such employer under the program would constitute more than 10 percent of the eligible employer's workforce. For purposes of the previous sentence, being an intern under the program placed at an employer shall be considered part of the employer's workforce.

(v) That the employer has the intention of retaining eligible participants after such participants have completed participation in the program.

(d) **DURATION.**—The Secretary shall carry out the program during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(e) **CAREER TRANSITION SERVICES.**—For purposes of the program, career transition services are the following:

(1) Internships under subsection (f).

(2) Mentorship and job-shadowing under subsection (g).

(3) Volunteer opportunities under subsection (h).

(4) Professional skill workshops under subsection (i).

(5) Skills assessment under subsection (j).

(6) Additional services under subsection (k).

(f) **INTERNSHIPS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For each eligible individual whom the Secretary approves for participation in the program, the Secretary shall attempt to place such eligible individual in an internship on a full-time basis with an eligible employer whom the Secretary has approved for participation in the program.

(2) **DURATION.**—Each internship under the program shall be for a period of one year.

(3) **WAGES.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall furnish pay and benefits to each eligible individual participating in an internship under the program for the duration of such participation in an aggregate amount not to exceed \$25,000.

(4) **EMPLOYMENT STATUS.**—For purposes of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care

Act (Public Law 111-148), an eligible individual placed in an internship with an eligible employer under the program shall be considered an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs and not the eligible employer during the period of such internship under the program.

(5) **RELATION TO OTHER FEDERAL ASSISTANCE.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, pay received by an individual under this subsection may not be used in any calculation to determine the eligibility of such individual for any Federal program for the purpose of obtaining child care assistance.

(g) **MENTORSHIP AND JOB-SHADOWING.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—As a condition of an eligible employer's participation in the program and the placement of an eligible individual in an internship at the eligible employer, the eligible employer shall provide each eligible individual placed in an internship at the eligible employer under the program with at least one mentor who is an employee of the eligible employer.

(2) **JOB-SHADOWING AND CAREER COUNSELING.**—To the extent practicable, a mentor assigned to an eligible individual participating in the program shall provide such eligible individual with job shadowing and career counseling.

(h) **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—As a condition on participation in the program, each eligible individual who participates in the program shall, not less frequently than once each month in which the eligible individual participates in the program, engage in a qualifying volunteer activity in accordance with guidelines the Secretary shall establish.

(2) **QUALIFYING VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES.**—For purposes of this subsection, a qualifying volunteer activity is any activity the Secretary considers related to providing assistance to, or for the benefit of, a veteran. Such activities may include the following:

(A) Outreach.

(B) Assisting an organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code, on a volunteer basis.

(C) Service benefitting a veteran in a State home or a Department of Veterans Affairs medical facility.

(D) Service benefitting a veteran at an institution of higher education.

(i) **PROFESSIONAL SKILLS WORKSHOPS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall provide eligible individuals participating in the program with workshops for the development and improvement of the professional skills of such eligible individuals.

(2) **TAILORED.**—The workshops provided by the Secretary shall be tailored to meet the particular needs of eligible individuals participating in the program as determined under subsection (j).

(3) **TOPICS.**—The workshops provided to eligible individuals participating in the program may include workshops for the development of such professional skills as the Secretary considers appropriate, which may include the following:

(A) Written and oral communication skills.

(B) Basic word processing and other computer skills.

(C) Interpersonal skills.

(4) **MANNER OF PRESENTATION.**—Workshops on particular topics shall be provided through such means as may be appropriate, effective, and approved of by the Secretary for purposes of the program. Such means may include use of electronic communication.

(5) **ASSESSMENTS.**—The Secretary shall conduct an assessment of a participant in a

workshop conducted under this subsection to assess the participant's knowledge acquired as a result of participating in the workshop.

(j) **SKILLS ASSESSMENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Under the program, the Secretary shall develop and implement an objective assessment of eligible individuals participating in the program to assist in the placement of such individuals in internships under subsection (f) and to assist in the tailoring of workshops under subsection (i).

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The assessment may include an assessment of the skill levels and service needs of each participant, which may include a review of basic professional entry-level skills, prior work experience, employability, and the individual's interests.

(k) **ADDITIONAL SERVICES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Secretary shall, under the program, furnish the following services to an eligible individual participating in the program when assessment under subsection (j) indicates such services are appropriate:

(A) Counseling, such as job counseling and career counseling.

(B) Job search assistance.

(C) Follow-up services with participants that are offered unsubsidized employment by the employer with whom they were assigned.

(D) Transportation, as described in paragraph (3).

(2) **REFERRALS.**—In lieu of furnishing a service to an eligible individual under paragraph (1), the Secretary may refer such eligible individual to another Federal, State, or local government program that provides such service.

(3) **TRANSPORTATION.**—In accordance with criteria established by the Secretary for purposes of the program, the Secretary may pay an allowance based upon mileage, of any eligible individual placed in an internship under the program not in excess of 75 miles to or from a facility of the eligible employer or other place in connection with such internship.

(l) **PARTICIPATION.**—

(1) **APPLICATION.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—An eligible employer or eligible individual seeking to participate in the program shall submit to the Secretary an application therefor at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary shall specify.

(B) **REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBLE EMPLOYERS.**—An application submitted by an eligible employer under subparagraph (A) shall include a certification or other information, in such form and manner as the Secretary shall specify, on each of the assurances required by subsection (c)(5)(C), including the assurance that the employer has the intention of retaining eligible participants after they have completed participation in the program as provided in clause (v) of that subsection.

(2) **TIME OF APPLICATION FOR CERTAIN ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.**—A member of the Armed Forces on active duty who expects to be an eligible individual described in subsection (b)(1)(A) upon discharge or release from the Armed Forces may submit an application to participate in the program not earlier than 180 days before the date on which the member expects to be discharged or released from the Armed Forces. A member who submits such an application shall be treated as unemployed or underemployed for purposes of subsection (b)(2) if the member has not accepted an offer of employment after discharge or release as of the time of the submittal of the application.

(3) **DELIMITING DATE FOR COMMENCEMENT OF PARTICIPATION BY INDIVIDUALS.**—An eligible

individual may not commence participation in the program after the date that is two years after the date of the commencement of the program.

(4) **SELECTION.**—The Secretary shall review each application submitted by an applicant under paragraph (1) and approve or disapprove the applicant for participation in the program.

(m) **GRANTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may award grants to eligible entities to assist the Secretary in carrying out the program.

(2) **ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.**—For purposes of the program, an eligible entity is a nonprofit organization.

(3) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—In awarding grants under this subsection, the Secretary may consider whether an eligible entity—

(A) has an understanding of the unemployment problems of eligible individuals and members of the Armed Forces transitioning from service in the Armed Forces to civilian life; and

(B) has the capability to assist the Secretary in administering effectively the program and providing career transition services to eligible individuals.

(4) **USE OF FUNDS.**—Amounts received by a recipient of a grant under this subsection may be used as the Secretary considers appropriate for purposes of the program, including as follows:

(A) To assist the Secretary in carrying out the program.

(B) To recruit eligible employers and eligible individuals to participate in the program.

(C) To match eligible individuals participating in the program with internship opportunities at eligible employers participating in the program.

(D) To coordinate and carry out job placement and other employer outreach activities.

(n) **OUTREACH.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Labor shall jointly carry out a program of outreach to inform eligible employers and eligible individuals about the program and the benefits of participating in the program.

(2) **INCLUDED LOCATIONS AND GROUPS.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Labor shall ensure that any outreach program and activities conducted under paragraph (1) include, to the extent practicable, rural communities, tribal lands of the United States, Native Americans, and tribal organizations (as defined in section 3765 of title 38, United States Code).

(o) **AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO PROGRAM.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Each year of the program, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may recognize one or more eligible employers or one or more eligible individuals participating in the program for demonstrating outstanding achievement in carrying out or in contributing to the success of the program.

(2) **CRITERIA.**—The Secretary shall establish such selection procedures and criteria as the Secretary considers appropriate for the award of recognition under this subsection.

(p) **MINIMIZATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN ON PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS.**—The Secretary shall take such measures as may be necessary to minimize administrative burdens incurred by eligible employers due to participation in the program.

(q) **REPORTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 45 days after the completion of the first year of the program and not later than 180 days after the

completion of the second and third years of the program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the program.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An evaluation of the program.

(B) The number and characteristics of participants in the program.

(C) The number and types of internships in which eligible individuals were placed under the program.

(D) The number of individuals who obtained long-term full-time unsubsidized employment positions after participation in the program, the hourly wage and nature of such employment, and if available, whether such individuals were still employed in such positions three months after obtaining such positions.

(E) An assessment of the feasibility and advisability of providing career transition services to eligible individuals.

(F) An assessment of the effect of the program on earnings of eligible individuals and the employment of eligible individuals.

(G) Such recommendations for legislative and administrative action as the Secretary may have to improve the program, to expand the program, or to improve the employment of eligible individuals.

(r) **FUNDING LIMITATIONS.**—

(1) **WAGES FOR INTERNSHIPS.**—Not less than 95 percent of amounts authorized to be appropriated for the program by subsection (t) shall be used to provide pay under subsection (f)(3).

(2) **ADMINISTRATION.**—Not more than 5 percent of amounts authorized to be appropriated for the program by subsection (t) may be used to administer the program.

(s) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **ACTIVE DUTY, ARMED FORCES, RESERVE COMPONENT, AND VETERAN.**—The terms “active duty”, “Armed Forces”, “reserve component”, and “veteran” have the meanings given such terms in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) **FULL-TIME BASIS.**—The term “full-time basis”, with respect to an internship, means participation in the internship of not fewer than 30 hours per week and not more than 40 hours per week.

(3) **SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN.**—The term “small business concern” has the meaning given that term under section 3(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(a)).

(4) **UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION.**—The term “unemployment compensation” means regular compensation (as defined in section 205 of the Federal-State Extended Unemployment Compensation Act of 1970), compensation under the Federal-State Extended Compensation Act of 1970, and compensation under the emergency unemployment compensation program under title IV of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008.

(t) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, \$600,000,000 to carry out this section. The amount so authorized to be appropriated shall remain available until expended.

Subtitle D—Improving Employment and Reemployment Rights of Members of the Uniformed Services

SEC. 431. ENFORCEMENT OF RIGHTS OF MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES WITH RESPECT TO STATES AND PRIVATE EMPLOYERS.

(a) **ACTION FOR RELIEF.**—Subsection (a) of section 4323 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “appear on behalf of, and act as attorney for, the person on whose behalf the complaint is submitted and”;

(B) by striking “for such person”;

(C) by striking the fourth sentence; and

(D) by adding at the end the following: “The person on whose behalf the complaint is referred may, upon timely application, intervene in such action, and may obtain such appropriate relief as is provided in subsections (d) and (e).”;

(2) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following new paragraph (2):

“(2)(A) Not later than 60 days after the date the Attorney General receives a referral under paragraph (1), the Attorney General shall transmit, in writing, to the person on whose behalf the complaint is submitted—

“(i) if the Attorney General has made a decision to commence an action for relief under paragraph (1) relating to the complaint of the person, notice of the decision; and

“(ii) if the Attorney General has not made such a decision, notice of when the Attorney General expects to make such a decision.

“(B) If the Attorney General notifies a person that the Attorney General expects to make a decision under subparagraph (A)(i), the Attorney General shall, not later than 30 days after the date on which the Attorney General makes such decision, notify, in writing, the person of such decision.”;

(3) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4);

(4) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph (3):

“(3) Whenever the Attorney General has reasonable cause to believe that a State (as an employer) or a private employer is engaged in a pattern or practice of resistance to the full enjoyment of any of the rights and benefits provided for under this chapter, and that the pattern or practice is of such a nature and is intended to deny the full exercise of such rights and benefits, the Attorney General may commence an action for relief under this chapter.”; and

(5) in paragraph (4), as redesignated by paragraph (3), by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following new subparagraph (C):

“(C) has been notified by the Attorney General that the Attorney General does not intend to commence an action for relief under paragraph (1) with respect to the complaint under such paragraph.”.

(b) **STANDING.**—Subsection (f) of such section is amended to read as follows:

“(f) **STANDING.**—An action under this chapter may be initiated only by the Attorney General or by a person claiming rights or benefits under this chapter under subsection (a).”.

(c) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Subsection (h)(2) of such section is amended by striking “under subsection (a)(2)” and inserting “under paragraph (1) or (4) of subsection (a)”.

SEC. 432. SUSPENSION, TERMINATION, OR DEBARMENT OF CONTRACTORS FOR REPEATED VIOLATIONS OF EMPLOYMENT OR REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS OF MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter III of chapter 43 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 4328. Suspension, termination, or debarment of contractors

“(a) **GROUND FOR SUSPENSION, TERMINATION, OR DEBARMENT.**—Payment under a contract awarded by a Federal executive agency may be suspended and the contract

may be terminated, and the contractor who made the contract with the agency may be suspended or debarred in accordance with the requirements of this section, if the head of the agency determines that the contractor as an employer has repeatedly been convicted of failing or refusing to comply with one or more provisions of this chapter.

“(b) **EFFECT OF DEBARMENT.**—A contractor debarred by a final decision under this section is ineligible for award of a contract by a Federal executive agency, and for participation in a future procurement by a Federal executive agency, for a period specified in the decision, not to exceed 5 years.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 43 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 4327 the following new item:

“4328. Suspension, termination, or debarment of contractor.”.

(c) **REGULATIONS.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council shall amend the Federal Acquisition Regulation to carry out section 4328 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Section 4328 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall apply with respect to failures and refusals to comply with provisions of chapter 43 of title 38, United States Code, occurring on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—Section 4332(a) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (10) as paragraph (11); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following new paragraph (10):

“(10) The number of suspensions, terminations, and debarments under section 4328 of this title, disaggregated by the agency or department imposing the suspension or debarment.”.

SEC. 433. SUBPOENA POWER FOR SPECIAL COUNSEL IN ENFORCEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS OF MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES WITH RESPECT TO FEDERAL EXECUTIVE AGENCIES.

Section 4324 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e)(1) In order to carry out the Special Counsel’s responsibilities under this section, the Special Counsel may require by subpoena the attendance and testimony of Federal employees and the production of documents from Federal employees and Federal executive agencies.

“(2) In the case of contumacy or failure to obey a subpoena issued under paragraph (1), upon application by the Special Counsel, the Merit Systems Protection Board may issue an order requiring a Federal employee or Federal executive agency to comply with a subpoena of the Special Counsel.

“(3) An order issued under paragraph (2) may be enforced by the Merit Systems Protection Board in the same manner as any order issued under section 1204 of title 5.”.

SEC. 434. ISSUANCE AND SERVICE OF CIVIL INVESTIGATIVE DEMANDS BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 4323 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsection (i) as subsection (j); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (h) the following new subsection (i):

“(i) **ISSUANCE AND SERVICE OF CIVIL INVESTIGATIVE DEMANDS.**—(1) Whenever the Attorney General has reason to believe that any person may be in possession, custody, or control of any documentary material relevant

to an investigation under this subchapter, the Attorney General may, before commencing a civil action under subsection (a), issue in writing and serve upon such person, a civil investigative demand requiring—

“(A) the production of such documentary material for inspection and copying;

“(B) that the custodian of such documentary material answer in writing written questions with respect to such documentary material; or

“(C) the production of any combination of such documentary material or answers.

“(2) The provisions of section 3733 of title 31 governing the authority to issue, use, and enforce civil investigative demands shall apply with respect to the authority to issue, use, and enforce civil investigative demands under this section, except that, for purposes of applying such section 3733—

“(A) references to false claims law investigations or investigations shall be considered references to investigators or investigations under this subchapter;

“(B) references to interrogatories shall be considered references to written questions, and answers to such need not be under oath;

“(C) the definitions relating to ‘false claims law’ shall not apply; and

“(D) provisions relating to *qui tam* relations shall not apply.”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Subsection (i) of section 4323 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(2), shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to violations of chapter 43 of title 38, United States Code, alleged to have occurred on or after such date.

(c) **ANNUAL REPORTS.**—Section 4332(b)(2) is amended—

(1) by striking “Not later than” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(B) ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT ON CIVIL INVESTIGATIVE DEMANDS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall include with each report submitted under subparagraph (A) for the last quarter of each fiscal year a report on the issuance of civil investigative demands under section 4323(i) of this title during the most recently completed fiscal year.

“(ii) **ELEMENTS.**—Each report submitted under clause (i) shall include the following for the fiscal year covered by the report:

“(I) The number of times that a civil investigative demand was issued under section 4323(i) of this title.

“(II) For each civil investigative demand issued under such section with respect to an investigation, whether such investigation resulted in a settlement, order, or judgment.”.

Subtitle E—Small Business Matters

SEC. 441. EXPANSION OF CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO INCLUDE CONDITIONALLY OWNED SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS 100 PERCENT OWNED BY VETERANS.

Section 8127(1) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by inserting “unconditionally” before “owned by” each place it appears; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) The term ‘unconditionally owned’ includes, with respect to ownership of a small business concern, conditional ownership of such small business concern if such business concern is 100 percent owned by one or more veterans.”.

SEC. 442. MODIFICATION OF TREATMENT UNDER CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES OWNED BY VETERANS OF SMALL BUSINESSES AFTER DEATH OF DISABLED VETERAN OWNERS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 8127(h) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “rated as” and all that follows through “disability.” and inserting a period; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by amending subparagraph (C) to read as follows:

“(C) The date that—

“(i) in the case of a surviving spouse of a veteran with a service-connected disability rated as 100 percent disabling or who dies as a result of a service-connected disability, is 10 years after the date of the veteran’s death; or

“(ii) in the case of a surviving spouse of a veteran with a service-connected disability rated as less than 100 percent disabling who does not die as a result of a service-connected disability, is three years after the date of the veteran’s death.”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to applications received pursuant to section 8127(f)(2) of title 38, United States Code, that are verified on or after such date.

SEC. 443. TREATMENT OF BUSINESSES AFTER DEATHS OF SERVICEMEMBER-OWNERS FOR PURPOSES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 8127 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (i) through (j) as subsections (j) through (m), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (h) the following new subsection (i):

“(i) **TREATMENT OF BUSINESSES AFTER DEATH OF SERVICEMEMBER-OWNER.**—(1) If a member of the Armed Forces owns at least 51 percent of a small business concern and such member is killed in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service, the surviving spouse or dependent child of such member who acquires such ownership rights in such small business concern shall, for the period described in paragraph (2), be treated as if the surviving spouse or dependent child were a veteran with a service-connected disability for purposes of determining the status of the small business concern as a small business concern owned and controlled by veterans for purposes of contracting goals and preferences under this section.

“(2) The period referred to in paragraph (1) is the period beginning on the date on which the member of the Armed Forces dies and ending on the date as follows:

“(A) In the case of a surviving spouse, the earliest of the following dates:

“(i) The date on which the surviving spouse remarries.

“(ii) The date on which the surviving spouse relinquishes an ownership interest in the small business concern and no longer owns at least 51 percent of such small business concern.

“(iii) The date that is ten years after the date of the member’s death.

“(B) In the case of a dependent child, the earliest of the following dates:

“(i) The date on which the surviving dependent child relinquishes an ownership interest in the small business concern and no longer owns at least 51 percent of such small business concern.

“(ii) The date that is ten years after the date of the member’s death.”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Subsection (i) of section 8127 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to the deaths of members of the Armed Forces occurring on or after such date.

SEC. 444. SPECIAL RULE FOR TREATMENT UNDER CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS LICENSED IN COMMUNITY PROPERTY STATES.

Section 8127, as amended by section 443 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(n) **SPECIAL RULE FOR COMMUNITY PROPERTY STATES.**—Whenever the Secretary assesses, for purposes of this section, the degree of ownership by an individual of a small business concern licensed in a community property State, the Secretary shall also assess what that degree of ownership would be if such small business concern had been licensed in a State other than a community property State. If the Secretary determines that such individual would have had a greater degree of ownership of the small business concern had such small business concern been licensed in a State other than a community property State, the Secretary shall treat, for purposes of this section, such small business concern as if it had been licensed in a State other than a community property State.”.

SEC. 445. REPORT ON ASSISTANCE FOR VETERANS IN OBTAINING TRAINING ON PURCHASING AND OPERATING A FRANCHISE.

(a) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of Labor shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, and other appropriate entities, submit to Congress a report on the assistance available to veterans to obtain training necessary to purchase and operate a franchise.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of the assistance available for veterans through the Department of Labor, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Small Business Administration, or any other agency of the Federal Government in order to obtain training necessary to purchase or operate a franchise.

(2) Information on the number of veterans who have sought and obtained the training described in paragraph (1) during the five calendar years preceding the report.

(3) A description of any barriers encountered by veterans in obtaining the training described in paragraph (1).

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE V—ACCOUNTABILITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENTS

SEC. 501. ADMINISTRATION OF VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.

(a) **VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter I of chapter 73 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 7310. Veterans Integrated Service Networks

“(a) **ORGANIZATION.**—(1) The Secretary shall organize the Veterans Health Administration in geographically defined Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

“(2) Each Veterans Integrated Service Network shall be organized in consideration of the following:

“(A) The size of the veteran population of the region of the network.

“(B) The complexity of the medical needs of the veterans in such region.

“(C) Patient referral patterns.

“(D) The availability of a full continuum of health care services.

“(E) The ability of the Department to furnish health care efficiently.

“(F) Partnerships with non-Department health care entities.

“(b) STAFFING MODEL.—(1) The Secretary shall establish a staffing model for each Veterans Integrated Service Network that—

“(A) is appropriate for the mission and responsibilities of the Veterans Integrated Service Network; and

“(B) accounts for the specific health care needs of differing populations in the Veterans Integrated Service Network.

“(2) The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service Network complies with the staffing model established by the Secretary under paragraph (1) for such Veterans Integrated Service Network.

“(c) INTEGRATED HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.—The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service Network maintains a regional integrated healthcare system by—

“(1) implementing alliances with such other governmental, public, and private health care organizations and practitioners as the Secretary considers appropriate to meet the needs of veterans in the Network;

“(2) providing oversight and management of, and taking responsibility for, a regional budget for the activities of the Veterans Health Administration in the geographic area of the Network that is—

“(A) aligned with the budget guidelines of the Department and the Veterans Health Administration;

“(B) balanced at the end of each fiscal year; and

“(C) sufficient to provide high-quality health care to veterans within the region and to meet any unique needs of the veterans of the region;

“(3) using national metrics to develop systems to provide effective, efficient, and safe delivery of health care; and

“(4) ensuring high-quality clinical programs and services are rendered in and through—

“(A) the medical centers and outpatient clinics of the Department that are located in the Network; and

“(B) other non-Department clinical or health care delivery settings located in the Network.

“(d) REDUCTION IN DUPLICATE FUNCTIONS.—The Secretary shall ensure that the Veterans Integrated Service Networks identify and reduce, whenever practicable, the duplication of functions in clinical, administrative, and operational processes and practices of the Veterans Health Administration.

“(e) COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service Network—

“(1) works to achieve maximum effectiveness in patient care and safety, graduate medical education, and research; and

“(2) assesses the consolidation or realignment of institutional functions, including capital asset, safety, and operational support functions, in collaboration and cooperation with other Veterans Integrated Service Networks and the following offices or entities within the geographical area of the Network:

“(A) The offices of the Veterans Benefits Administration and the National Cemetery Administration.

“(B) The offices, installations, and facilities of the Department of Defense, including

the offices, installations, and facilities of each branch of the Armed Forces and the reserve components of the Armed Forces.

“(C) The offices, installations, and facilities of the Coast Guard.

“(D) Offices of State and local agencies that have a mission to provide assistance to veterans.

“(E) Medical schools and other affiliates.

“(F) Offices of Congress, offices of State and local elected officials, and other government offices.

“(G) Federal, State, and local emergency preparedness organizations.

“(H) Community and nonprofit organizations.

“(I) Such other entities of the Federal Government as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(f) HEADQUARTERS.—(1) The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service Network has only one headquarters office.

“(2) The location of a headquarters office for a Veterans Integrated Service Network shall be determined by the Secretary and co-located with a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center.

“(3)(A) The Secretary may employ or contract for the services of such full time equivalent employees and contractors at the headquarters of each Veterans Integrated Service Network as the Secretary considers appropriate in accordance with the staffing models established under subsection (b).

“(B) Not later than December 31 each year, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on employment at the headquarters of Veterans Integrated Service Networks during the most recently completed fiscal year.

“(C) Each report submitted under subparagraph (B) shall include the following for the year covered by the report:

“(i) The number of individuals employed at each headquarters of a Veterans Integrated Service Network.

“(ii) The number of individuals employed by the Veterans Health Administration in each Veterans Integrated Service Network who are not employed at the same location as the headquarters of the Network.

“(iii) The title for each position of employment at a headquarters of a Veterans Integrated Service Network.

“(iv) The title for each position of employment with the Veterans Health Administration in each Veterans Integrated Service Network that is not at the same location as the headquarters of the Network.

“(v) An assessment of the impact on the budget of the Department by the employment of individuals at the headquarters of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

“(g) TRIENNIAL STRUCTURE REVIEW, REASSESSMENT, AND REPORT.—(1) Beginning three years after the date of the enactment of this section and not less frequently than once every three years thereafter, the Secretary shall conduct a review and assessment of the structure and operations of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks in order to identify recommendations—

“(A) for streamlining and reducing costs associated with the operation of each headquarters of a Veterans Integrated Service Network; and

“(B) for reducing costs of health care within the Veterans Health Administration.

“(2) Not later than 180 days after conducting a review and assessment under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the

Committee of Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on such review and assessment, which shall include such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate to improve the Veterans Integrated Service Networks.”

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 73 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7309 the following new item:

“7310. Veterans Integrated Service Networks.”

(b) RELOCATION OF HEADQUARTERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a headquarters office of a Veterans Integrated Service Network that on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act was in a location that was not co-located with a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center and the Secretary is engaged in a lease for such location, the Secretary may—

(A) relocate such headquarters upon the expiration of such lease so that such headquarters is co-located as required by section 7310(f)(2) of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)(1)); or

(B) notwithstanding such section 7310(f)(2) (as so added), renew such lease or enter into a new lease to keep such headquarters in such location.

(2) REPORT.—If the Secretary renews a lease or engages in a new lease under paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives, before renewing such lease or engaging in such lease, a report describing the reasons for such renewal or engagement. Such report shall include the following:

(A) A list of Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers in the Veterans Integrated Service Network of the headquarters with underutilized buildings, the number of such buildings, and the total underutilized square footage for each such medical center.

(B) The cost of the current lease (the annual amount of rent, the total cost over the life of the lease, and the total cost per square foot) and the current square footage being leased.

(C) The cost of the new lease (the annual amount of rent, the total cost over the life of the lease, and the total cost per square foot) and the square footage to be leased.

(c) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any change in the location or type of medical care or service provided by a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center, a Department community based outpatient clinic, a center for readjustment counseling and related mental health services for veterans under section 1712A of title 38, United States Code (known as a “vet center”), or other facility that provides direct care or services under a law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section, and the amendments made by this section, shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 502. REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTERS FOR VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 73, as amended by section 501(a)(1) of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 7310A. Regional support centers for Veterans Integrated Service Networks

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish not more than four regional support centers within the Veterans Health Administration to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks. The head of each regional support center shall report to the Under Secretary of Health.

“(b) FUNCTIONS.—The functions of the regional support centers established under subsection (a) are as follows:

“(1) To assess the quality of work performed within finance operations and other compliance related activities of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

“(2) To assess how effectively and efficiently each Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts outreach to veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, or any other contingency operation (as that term is defined in section 101 of title 10).

“(3) To assess how effectively and efficiently each Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts programs for the benefit of women veterans.

“(4) To assess how effectively and efficiently each Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts programs that address homelessness among veterans.

“(5) To assess how effectively and efficiently each Veterans Integrated Service Network consumes energy.

“(6) To assess such other matters concerning the operations and activities of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(c) STAFF.—The Secretary may hire such employees and contractors as the Secretary considers appropriate to carry out the functions of the regional support centers.

“(d) LOCATION OF REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTERS.—(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the location of each regional support center established under subsection (a) shall be determined by the Secretary and co-located with a medical center of the Department.

“(2) The Secretary may choose a location for a regional support center established under subsection (a) that is not co-located with a medical center of the Department if the Secretary submits to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives, before entering into a contract for a location that is not co-located with a medical center, a report describing the reasons for choosing a location for the regional support center that is not co-located with a medical center of the Department. Such report shall include the following:

“(A) A list of medical centers of the Department in the Veterans Integrated Service Network of the regional support center with underutilized buildings, the number of all Veterans Health Administration buildings in such Network, and the total underutilized square footage for each medical center of the Department in such Network.

“(B) The estimated cost of such lease (the annual amount of rent, the total cost over the life of the lease, and the total cost per square foot) and the square footage to be leased.”

(b) INITIAL STAFFING.—In providing for the initial staff of each regional support center established under section 7310A(a) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, to the degree practicable, transfer employees from headquarters of Veterans Integrated

Service Networks to regional support centers who were employed in positions at such headquarters that covered functions similar to those described in section 7310A(b) of such title, as so added.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 73, as amended by section 501(a)(2) of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7310 the following new item:

“7310A. Regional support centers for Veterans Integrated Service Networks.”

(d) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any change in the location or type of medical care or service provided by a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center, a Department community based outpatient clinic, a center for readjustment counseling and related mental health services for veterans under section 1712A of title 38, United States Code (known as a “vet center”), or other facility that provides direct care or services under a law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section, and the amendments made by this section, shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 503. COMMISSION ON CAPITAL PLANNING FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL FACILITIES.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the Commission on Capital Planning for Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facilities (in this section referred to as the “Commission”).

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) VOTING MEMBERS.—The Commission shall, subject to subparagraph (B), be composed of 10 voting members as follows:

(i) 1 shall be appointed by the President.

(ii) 1 shall be appointed by the Administrator of General Services.

(iii) 3 shall be appointed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, of whom—

(I) 1 shall be an employee of the Veterans Health Administration;

(II) 1 shall be an employee of the Office of Asset Enterprise Management of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(III) 1 shall be an employee of the Office of Construction and Facilities Management of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(iv) 1 shall be appointed by the Secretary of Defense from among employees of the Army Corps of Engineers.

(v) 1 shall be appointed by the majority leader of the Senate.

(vi) 1 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate.

(vii) 1 shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(viii) 1 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives.

(B) REQUIREMENT RELATING TO CERTAIN APPOINTMENTS OF VOTING MEMBERS.—Of the members appointed pursuant to clause (i), (ii), and (iv) through (viii) of subparagraph (A), all shall have expertise in capital leasing, construction, or health facility management planning.

(C) NON-VOTING MEMBERS.—The Commission shall be assisted by 10 non-voting members, appointed by the vote of a majority of members of the Commission under subparagraph (A), of whom—

(i) 6 shall be representatives of veterans service organizations recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; and

(ii) 4 shall be individuals from outside the Department of Veterans Affairs with experi-

ence and expertise in matters relating to management, construction, and leasing of capital assets.

(D) DATE OF APPOINTMENT OF VOTING MEMBERS.—The appointments of the members of the Commission under subparagraph (A) shall be made not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(3) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT; VACANCIES.—Members shall be appointed for the life of the Commission. Any vacancy in the Commission shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(4) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 15 days after the date on which 7 members of the Commission have been appointed, the Commission shall hold its first meeting.

(5) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the call of the Chair.

(6) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number of members may hold hearings.

(7) CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR.—The Commission shall select a Chair and Vice Chair from among its members.

(b) DUTIES OF COMMISSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall undertake a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of various options for capital planning for Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities, including an evaluation and assessment of the mechanisms by which the Department currently selects means for the delivery of health care, whether by major construction, major medical facility leases, sharing agreements with the Department of Defense, the Indian Health Service, and Federally Qualified Health Clinics under section 330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b), contract care, multisite care, telemedicine, extended hours for care, or other means.

(2) CONTEXT OF EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT.—In undertaking the evaluation and assessment, the Commission shall consider—

(A) the importance of access to health care through the Department, including associated guidelines of the Department on access to, and drive time for, health care;

(B) limitations and requirements applicable to the construction and leasing of medical facilities for the Department, including applicable laws, regulations, and costs as determined by both the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Management and Budget;

(C) the nature of capital planning for Department medical facilities in an era of fiscal uncertainty;

(D) projected future fluctuations in the population of veterans; and

(E) the extent to which the Department was able to meet the mandates of the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services Commission.

(3) PARTICULAR CONSIDERATIONS.—In undertaking the evaluation and assessment, the Commission shall address, in particular, the following:

(A) The Major Medical Facility Lease Program of the Department, including an identification of potential improvements to the lease authorization processes under that Program.

(B) The management processes of the Department for its Major Medical Facility Construction Program, including processes relating to contract award and management, project management, and processing of change orders.

(C) The overall capital planning program of the Department for medical facilities, including an evaluation and assessment of—

(i) the manner in which the Department determines whether to use capital or non-capital means to expand access to health care;

(ii) the manner in which the Department determines the disposition of under-utilized and un-utilized buildings on campuses of Department medical centers, and any barriers to disposition;

(iii) the effectiveness of the facility master planning initiative of the Department; and

(iv) the extent to which sustainable attributes are planned for to decrease operating costs for Department medical facilities.

(D) The current backlog of construction projects for Department medical facilities, including an identification of the most effective means to quickly secure the most critical repairs required, including repairs relating to facility condition deficiencies, structural safety, and compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990.

(4) **REPORTS.**—Subject to paragraph (5), the Commission shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and to the Committee Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives, reports as follows:

(A) Not later than six months after its initial meeting under subsection (a)(4), a report on the Major Medical Facility Lease Program and the Congressional lease authorization process.

(B) Not later than one year after its initial meeting, a report—

(i) on the management processes of the Department for the construction of Department medical facilities; and

(ii) setting forth an update of any matters covered in the report under subparagraph (A).

(C) Not later than 18 months after its initial meeting, a report—

(i) on the overall capital planning program of the Department for medical facilities; and

(ii) setting forth an update of any matters covered in earlier reports under this paragraph.

(D) Not later than two years after its initial meeting, a report—

(i) on the current backlog of construction projects for Department medical facilities;

(ii) setting forth an update of any matters covered in earlier reports under this paragraph; and

(iii) including such other matters relating to the duties of the Commission that the Commission considers appropriate.

(E) Not later than 27 months after its initial meeting, a report on the implementation by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs pursuant to subsection (g) of the recommendations included pursuant to paragraph (5) in the reports under this paragraph.

(5) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Each report under paragraph (4) shall include, for the aspect of the capital asset planning process of the Department covered by such report, such recommendations as the Commission considers appropriate for the improvement and enhancement of such aspect of the capital asset planning process.

(c) **POWERS OF COMMISSION.**—

(1) **HEARINGS.**—The Commission may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission considers advisable to carry out this section.

(2) **INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.**—The Commission may secure directly from any Federal department or agency such information as the Commission considers necessary to carry out this section. Upon re-

quest of the Chair of the Commission, the head of such department or agency shall furnish such information to the Commission.

(d) **COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.**—

(1) **COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.**—Each member of the Commission who is not an officer or employee of the Federal Government shall be compensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which such member is engaged in the performance of the duties of the Commission. All members of the Commission who are officers or employees of the United States shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for their services as officers or employees of the United States.

(2) **TRAVEL EXPENSES.**—The members of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Commission.

(3) **STAFF.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Chair of the Commission may, without regard to the civil service laws and regulations, appoint and terminate an executive director and such other additional personnel as may be necessary to enable the Commission to perform its duties. The employment of an executive director shall be subject to confirmation by the Commission.

(B) **COMPENSATION.**—The Chair of the Commission may fix the compensation of the executive director and other personnel without regard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the executive director and other personnel may not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(4) **DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.**—Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the Commission without reimbursement, and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

(5) **PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT SERVICES.**—The Chair of the Commission may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(e) **TERMINATION OF COMMISSION.**—The Commission shall terminate 60 days after the date on which the Commission submits its report under subsection (b)(4)(E).

(f) **FUNDING.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make available to the Commission such amounts as the Secretary and the Chair of the Commission jointly consider appropriate for the Commission to perform its duties under this section.

(g) **ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall implement each recommendation included in a report under subsection (b)(4) that the Secretary considers feasible and advisable and can be implemented without further legislative action.

(2) **REPORTS.**—Not later than 120 days after receipt of a report under subparagraphs (A) through (D) of subsection (b)(4), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee Vet-

erans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth the following:

(A) An assessment of the feasibility and advisability of each recommendation contained in such report.

(B) For each recommendation assessed as feasible and advisable—

(i) if such recommendation does not require further legislative action for implementation, a description of the actions taken, and to be taken, by the Secretary to implement such recommendation; and

(ii) if such recommendation requires further legislative action for implementation, recommendations for such legislative action.

SEC. 504. ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CERTAIN ACCOUNTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 117 is amended—

(1) by striking “medical care accounts of the Department” each place it appears and inserting “covered accounts of the Department”;

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking “medical care accounts of the Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs account” and inserting “accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs account”;

(B) in paragraph (1), by inserting “Veterans Health Administration,” after “(1)”;

(C) in paragraph (2), by inserting “Veterans Health Administration,” after “(2)”;

(D) in paragraph (3), by inserting “Veterans Health Administration,” after “(3)”;

(E) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (3) as paragraphs (7) through (9), respectively;

(F) by inserting before paragraph (7), as redesignated by subparagraph (E), the following new paragraphs:

“(1) Veterans Benefits Administration, Compensation and Pensions.

“(2) Veterans Benefits Administration, Readjustment Benefits.

“(3) Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Insurance and Indemnities.

“(4) Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Housing Benefit Program Fund.

“(5) Veterans Benefits Administration, Vocational Rehabilitation Loans Program Account.

“(6) Veterans Benefits Administration, Native American Veteran Housing Loan Program Account.”; and

(G) in the subsection heading, by striking “MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS” and inserting “COVERED ACCOUNTS”; and

(3) in the section heading, by striking “CERTAIN MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS” and inserting “CERTAIN ACCOUNTS”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to fiscal year 2016 and each subsequent fiscal year.

(c) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking the first paragraph (37) and inserting the following:

“(37) information on estimates of appropriations for the fiscal year following the fiscal year for which the budget is submitted for the following accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs:

“(A) Veterans Benefits Administration, Compensation and Pensions.

“(B) Veterans Benefits Administration, Readjustment Benefits.

“(C) Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Insurance and Indemnities.

“(D) Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Housing Benefit Program Fund.

“(E) Veterans Benefits Administration, Vocational Rehabilitation Loans Program Account.

“(F) Veterans Benefits Administration, Native American Veteran Housing Loan Program Account.

“(G) Veterans Health Administration, Medical Services.

“(H) Veterans Health Administration, Medical Support and Compliance.

“(I) Veterans Health Administration, Medical Facilities.”.

(d) **TECHNICAL CORRECTION.**—Such section is further amended by redesignating the second paragraph (37), as added by section 11(a)(2) of the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-352; 124 Stat. 3881), as paragraph (39).

SEC. 505. PUBLIC ACCESS TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RESEARCH AND DATA SHARING BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNET WEBSITE.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make available on an Internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs available to the public the following:

(1) Data files that contain information on research of the Department.

(2) A data dictionary on each data file.

(3) Instructions for how to obtain access to each data file for use in research.

(b) **PUBLIC ACCESS TO MANUSCRIPTS ON DEPARTMENT FUNDED RESEARCH.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Beginning not later than 540 days after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Secretary shall require, as a condition on the use of any data gathered or formulated from research funded by the Department, that any final, peer-reviewed manuscript prepared for publication that uses such data be submitted to the Secretary for deposit in the digital archive under paragraph (2) and publication under paragraph (3).

(2) **DIGITAL ARCHIVE.**—Not later than 540 days after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Secretary shall—

(A) establish a digital archive consisting of manuscripts described in paragraph (1); or

(B) partner with another executive agency to compile such manuscripts in a digital archive.

(3) **PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.**—

(A) **AVAILABILITY OF ARCHIVE.**—The Secretary shall ensure that the digital archive under paragraph (2) and the contents of such archive are available to the public via a publicly accessible Internet website at no cost to the public.

(B) **AVAILABILITY OF MANUSCRIPTS.**—The Secretary shall ensure that each manuscript submitted to the Secretary under paragraph (1) is available to the public under subparagraph (A) not later than one year after the official date on which the manuscript is otherwise published.

(4) **CONSISTENT WITH COPYRIGHT LAW.**—The Secretary shall carry out this subsection in a manner consistent with applicable copyright law.

(5) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the date the Secretary begins making manuscripts available to the public under this subsection and not less frequently than once each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the implementation of this subsection during the most recent one-year period.

(B) **CONTENTS.**—Each report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include for the period of the report:

(i) The number of manuscripts submitted under paragraph (1).

(ii) The titles of such manuscripts.

(iii) The authors of such manuscripts.

(iv) For each such manuscript, the name and issue number or volume number, as the case may be, of the journal or other publication in which such manuscript was published.

(c) **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DATA SHARING BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.**—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee established by section 320(a) of title 38, United States Code, shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense options and recommendations for the establishment of a program for long-term cooperation and data sharing between and within the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense to facilitate research on outcomes of military service, readjustment after combat deployment, and other topics of importance to the following:

(1) Veterans.

(2) Members of the Armed Forces.

(3) Family members of veterans.

(4) Family members of members of the Armed Forces.

(5) Members of communities that have a significant population of veterans or members of the Armed Forces.

(d) **EXECUTIVE AGENCY DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “executive agency” has the meaning given that term in section 133 of title 41, United States Code.

(e) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 506. ASSESSMENT BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES OF INFORMATION MADE AVAILABLE BY VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION.

(a) **ASSESSMENT OF INFORMATION CURRENTLY AVAILABLE.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) conduct an assessment of the process by which the Veterans Benefits Administration informs veterans, veterans service organizations, and such other persons as the Comptroller General considers appropriate regarding the furnishing of benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to determine the extent to which the process results in disseminated information that—

(A) adequately supports and improves the timeliness and accuracy of decisions made by the Administration with respect to claims for disability compensation and such other benefits furnished under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs as the Comptroller General considers appropriate; and

(B) encourages the filing of fully developed claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary; and

(2) assess how the Veterans Benefits Administration notifies each claimant during, and as part of, any electronic filing process established by the Secretary for the filing of applications for disability compensation and such other benefits under laws administered by the Secretary as the Comptroller General considers appropriate that services may be available to the claimant from a veterans service organization.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the findings of the Comptroller General under subsection (a). Such report shall include such recommendations as the Comptroller General may have for legislative or administrative action to improve the availability of information made available to the public by the Veterans Benefits Administration regarding the furnishing of benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(c) **VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “veterans service organization” means an organization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 507. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT ON ADVISORY COMMITTEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the advisory committees of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) **CONTENTS.**—The report required by subsection (a)—

(1) shall include—

(A) recommendations or proposals for continuing, modifying, or terminating certain advisory committees, including noting areas of overlap and duplication among the advisory committees; and

(B) such other information as the Comptroller General considers appropriate; and

(2) may include—

(A) a description of each advisory committee, including with respect to each committee—

(i) the purpose of the committee;

(ii) the commencement date of the committee; and

(iii) the anticipated termination date of the committee;

(B) a summary of the anticipated expenses and the actual expenses incurred for each advisory committee during the most recent three fiscal years ending before the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(C) with respect to meetings held by each advisory committee—

(i) the frequency with which each committee has met during the shorter of—

(I) the most recent three fiscal years ending before the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(II) the life of the committee;

(ii) the date of the most recent meeting held by the committee before such date of enactment; and

(iii) the date of the most recent report or other written product developed by the committee before such date of enactment.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

**TITLE VI—IMPROVEMENT OF PROCES-
SING OF CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION**
**Subtitle A—Claims Based on Military Sexual
Trauma**

**SEC. 601. MEDICAL EXAMINATION AND OPINION
FOR DISABILITY COMPENSATION
CLAIMS BASED ON MILITARY SEX-
UAL TRAUMA.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5103A(d) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3)(A) In the case of a claim for disability compensation based on a mental health condition related to military sexual trauma, the Secretary shall treat an examination or opinion as being necessary to make a decision on a claim for purposes of paragraph (1) if the evidence of record before the Secretary, taking into consideration all information and lay or medical evidence (including statements of the claimant)—

“(i)(I) contains competent evidence that the claimant has a current disability, or persistent or recurrent symptoms of disability; and

“(II) indicates that the disability or symptoms may be associated with the claimant’s active military, naval, or air service; but

“(ii) does not contain a diagnosis or opinion by a mental health professional that may assist in corroborating the occurrence of a military sexual trauma stressor related to a diagnosable mental health condition.

“(B) In this paragraph, the term ‘military sexual trauma’ shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this paragraph, and shall include ‘sexual harassment’ (as so specified).”

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the number of examinations and opinions conducted by the Secretary pursuant to paragraph (3) of section 5103A(d) of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)), including the following:

(1) The number of examinations conducted using a standardized disability assessment.

(2) The number of examinations conducted using a non-standardized clinical interview.

**SEC. 602. CASE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICERS FOR
MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA SUP-
PORT.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall assign to each individual seeking compensation under the laws administered by the Secretary based on military sexual trauma a case representative officer who shall provide advice and general information to such individual on the claims process for such compensation. Each case representative officer so assigned shall be assigned from among current personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) LIAISON.—A case representative officer assigned to an individual under subsection (a) shall be responsible for serving as a liaison between the individual, an authorized agent or attorney of the individual under section 5904 of title 38, United States Code, or an otherwise accredited representative of the individual, and the Department of Veterans Affairs on matters relating to the claim of the individual for compensation under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(c) CASE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICER REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) COMPETENCE AND KNOWLEDGE.—Each case representative officer assigned under subsection (a) shall be competent and knowledgeable about the following:

(A) The claims adjudication process and applicable laws, regulations, and other authority applicable to the adjudication of disability claims based on military sexual trauma.

(B) Such other services to victims of sexual trauma as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO WHICH ASSIGNED.—A case representative officer may not be assigned to more individuals described in subsection (a) than, as determined by the Secretary, is appropriate for the provision of individual case management assistance by such officer.

(d) INFORMATION ON BENEFITS AND PROGRAMS RELATING TO MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make available to the public information on the availability of case representative officers under subsection (a) to assist in the application for benefits based on military sexual trauma. The Secretary shall revise and update the information so made available in order to ensure that the information is as current as possible.

(2) INDIVIDUALS SEPARATING FROM MILITARY SERVICE.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, ensure that individuals who are being separated from the active military, naval, or air service are provided appropriate information about programs, requirements, and procedures for applying for benefits based on military sexual trauma and the availability of case representative officers under subsection (a).

(e) INFORMATION ON TRAINING FOR AGENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF INDIVIDUALS ASSIGNED CASE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICER.—The Secretary shall make available to the authorized agent or attorney of an individual assigned a case representative under subsection (a), or to the otherwise accredited representative of the individual, any relevant materials used to train such case representative officer for the duties of such position.

(f) ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN VETERANS CONSIDERATION OF MECHANISMS TO ENHANCE COORDINATION BETWEEN VBA AND VHA ON BENEFITS FOR MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The Advisory Committee on Women Veterans established under section 542 of title 38, United States Code, shall undertake actions to identify mechanisms to enhance coordination between the Veterans Benefits Administration and the Veterans Health Administration in the provision of benefits based on military sexual trauma, including the identification of barriers to the appropriate provision of benefits for military sexual trauma by such Administrations and of means of eliminating or reducing such barriers.

(g) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not less frequently than annually, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth the following:

(1) A certification whether or not the case representative officers assigned under subsection (a) during the preceding year met the requirements specified in subsection (c).

(2) A description of the current training the Secretary provides to employees of the Veterans Benefits Administration on claims for benefits based on military sexual trauma, including the frequency, length, and content of such training.

(3) A description of current policies and procedures on the training the Secretary

provides to case representative officers, including the current position descriptions for case representative officers.

(4) A description of current efforts to coordinate activities and assistance provided to individuals who seek care or benefits for military sexual trauma between the Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration, including the efforts of the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans under subsection (f).

(h) SUNSET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No case representative officer may be assigned under subsection (a) after December 31, 2018.

(2) CONTINUATION OF DUTIES AFTER SUNSET DATE.—Paragraph (1) shall not be construed to prohibit any case representative officer assigned to an individual before the date specified in that paragraph from performing duties pursuant to this section after that date with respect to a claim for which that case representative officer was assigned to such individual before that date.

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERVICE.—The term “active military, naval, or air service” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term “military sexual trauma” shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section, and shall include “sexual harassment” (as so specified).

**SEC. 603. REPORT ON STANDARD OF PROOF FOR
SERVICE-CONNECTION OF MENTAL
HEALTH CONDITIONS RELATED TO
MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the current standard of proof for service-connection under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code, for covered mental health conditions based on military sexual trauma.

(b) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Secretary shall include in the report under subsection (a) any recommendations the Secretary considers appropriate to improve the adjudication of claims for compensation based on military sexual trauma, including—

(1) recommendations for an appropriate standard of proof for such claims if the Secretary considers such recommendations advisable; and

(2) recommendations for legislative action, if necessary, to carry out such improvement.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERVICE.—The term “active military, naval, or air service” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) COVERED MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION.—The term “covered mental health condition” means post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, or other mental health diagnosis that the Secretary determines to be related to military sexual trauma.

(3) MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term “military sexual trauma” shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section, and shall include “sexual harassment” (as so specified).

**SEC. 604. REPORTS ON CLAIMS FOR DISABILITIES
INCURRED OR AGGRAVATED BY
MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.**

(a) REPORTS.—Not later than December 1, 2014, and each year thereafter through 2018, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the covered claims submitted to the Secretary during the previous fiscal year.

(b) ELEMENTS.—Each report under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) The number of covered claims submitted to or considered by the Secretary during the fiscal year covered by the report.

(2) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1), the number and percentage of such claims—

(A) submitted by each gender;

(B) that were approved, including the number and percentage of such approved claims submitted by each gender; and

(C) that were denied, including the number and percentage of such denied claims submitted by each gender.

(3) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were approved, the number and percentage, listed by each gender, of claims assigned to each rating percentage of disability.

(4) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were denied—

(A) the three most common reasons given by the Secretary under section 5104(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code, for such denials; and

(B) the number of denials that were based on the failure of a veteran to report for a medical examination.

(5) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were resubmitted to the Secretary after denial in a previous adjudication—

(A) the number of such claims submitted to or considered by the Secretary during the fiscal year covered by the report;

(B) the number and percentage of such claims—

(i) submitted by each gender;

(ii) that were approved, including the number and percentage of such approved claims submitted by each gender; and

(iii) that were denied, including the number and percentage of such denied claims submitted by each gender;

(C) the number and percentage, listed by each gender, of claims assigned to each rating percentage of disability; and

(D) of such claims that were again denied—

(i) the three most common reasons given by the Secretary under section 5104(b)(1) of such title for such denials; and

(ii) the number of denials that were based on the failure of a veteran to report for a medical examination.

(6) The number of covered claims that, as of the end of the fiscal year covered by the report, are pending and, separately, the number of such claims on appeal.

(7) For the fiscal year covered by the report, the average number of days that covered claims take to complete beginning on the date on which the claim is submitted.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERVICE.—The term “active military, naval, or air service” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) COVERED CLAIMS.—The term “covered claims” means claims for disability compensation submitted to the Secretary based on post traumatic stress disorder alleged to have been incurred or aggravated by military sexual trauma.

(3) MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term “military sexual trauma” shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section, and shall include “sexual harassment” (as so specified).

Subtitle B—Claims for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

SEC. 611. PROGRAM ON TREATMENT OF CERTAIN APPLICATIONS FOR DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION AS FULLY DEVELOPED CLAIMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of expediting the treatment of a covered dependency and indemnity compensation claim.

(b) COVERED DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION CLAIMS.—For purposes of this section, a covered dependency and indemnity compensation claim is a claim submitted to the Secretary for compensation under chapter 13 of title 38, United States Code, for which the claimant—

(1) applies for such compensation within one-year of the death of the veteran upon whose service the claim is based;

(2) was the dependent on the claim of a veteran who was receiving benefits for one or more service-connected conditions as of the date of death;

(3) submits a death certificate or other evidence with the claim indicating that the veteran's death was due to a service-connected or compensable disability; and

(4) in the case that the claimant is the spouse of the deceased veteran, certifies that he or she has not remarried since the date of the veteran's death.

(c) DURATION.—The program shall be carried out during the one-year period beginning on the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) LOCATIONS.—The program shall be carried out at the Pension Management Center of the Department of Veterans Affairs or such centers selected by the Secretary for purposes of the program.

(e) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 270 days after the date on which the program is completed, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of covered dependency and indemnity compensation claims that were adjudicated under the program, disaggregated by the following:

(i) Claims in which the claimant claimed entitlement to compensation on the basis of the claimant's status as the spouse of a deceased veteran.

(ii) Claims in which the claimant claimed entitlement to compensation on the basis of the claimant's status as the child of a deceased veteran.

(iii) Claims in which the claimant claimed entitlement to compensation on the basis of the claimant's status as the parent of a deceased veteran.

(B) The number of covered dependency and indemnity compensation claims that were adjudicated under the program and for which compensation was not awarded, disaggregated by clauses (i) through (iii) of subparagraph (A).

(C) A comparison of the accuracy and timeliness of claims adjudicated under the program with claims submitted to the Secretary for compensation under chapter 13 of title 38, United States Code, that were not provided expeditious treatment under the program.

(D) The findings of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(E) Such recommendations as the Secretary may have for legislative or adminis-

trative action to improve the adjudication of claims submitted to the Secretary for compensation under chapter 13 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 612. REPORT BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ON IMPROVING TIMELINESS AND ACCURACY OF ADMINISTRATION OF CLAIMS FOR DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION AND PENSION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES AND CHILDREN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 455 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report with recommendations for legislative or administrative actions to improve the timeliness and accuracy with which the Secretary processes and adjudicates claims for compensation under chapter 13 of title 38, United States Code, and pension under sections 1541 and 1542 of such title.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle C—Agency of Original Jurisdiction

SEC. 621. WORKING GROUP TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE WORK CREDIT AND WORK MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS OF VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION IN AN ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a working group to assess and develop recommendations for the improvement of the employee work credit and work management systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration in an electronic environment.

(b) COMPOSITION.—The working group shall be composed of the following:

(1) The Secretary or the Secretary's designee.

(2) Individuals selected by the Secretary from among employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs who handle claims for compensation and pension benefits and are recommended to the Secretary by a labor organization for purposes of this section, including at least one of each of the following individuals:

(A) A veterans service representative.

(B) A rating veterans service representative.

(C) A decision review officer.

(3) Not fewer than three individuals selected by the Secretary to represent different organizations recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(4) Individuals selected by the Secretary—

(A) that are not employees of the Department; and

(B) that are experts in work credit and work management systems.

(c) DUTIES.—The duties of the working group are to assess and develop recommendations for the following:

(1) The improvement of the employee work credit and work management systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration in an electronic environment.

(2) A scientific, data based methodology to be used in revising the employee work credit system of the Department to improve the quality and quantity of work produced by employees of the Department.

(3) The improvement of the resource allocation model of the Veterans Benefits Administration, with a focus on the processing of claims in an electronic environment.

(4) A schedule by which the revisions referred to in paragraph (2) will be implemented by the Department.

(d) **REVIEW AND INCORPORATION OF FINDINGS FROM PRIOR STUDY.**—In carrying out its duties under subsection (c), the working group shall review the findings and conclusions of previous studies of the employee work credit and work management systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

(e) **ROLE OF THE SECRETARY.**—The Secretary shall consider the recommendations of the working group and implement such recommendations as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(f) **REPORTS.**—

(1) **INTERIM REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the establishment of the working group, the working group shall submit to Congress a report on the progress of the working group.

(2) **FINAL REPORT.**—Not later than one year after the date of the establishment of the working group, the Secretary shall submit to Congress the methodology described in subsection (c)(2) and the schedule described in subsection (c)(4) that the Secretary has decided to implement pursuant to subsection (e).

(g) **IMPLEMENTATION OF METHODOLOGY AND SCHEDULE.**—After submitting the report under subsection (f), the Secretary shall take such actions as may be necessary to apply the methodology described in subsection (c)(2) and the schedule described in subsection (c)(4) that the Secretary has decided to implement pursuant to subsection (e).

SEC. 622. TASK FORCE ON RETENTION AND TRAINING OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CLAIMS PROCESSORS AND ADJUDICATORS.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a task force to assess retention and training of claims processors and adjudicators that are employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs and other departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

(b) **COMPOSITION.**—The task force shall be composed of the following:

(1) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs or designee.

(2) The Director of the Office of Personnel Management or designee.

(3) The Commissioner of Social Security or designee.

(4) An individual selected by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs who represents an organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(5) Such other individuals selected by the Secretary who represent such other organizations and institutions as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) **DURATION.**—The task force established under subsection (a) shall terminate not later than two years after the date on which the task force is established under such subsection.

(d) **DUTIES.**—The duties of the task force are as follows:

(1) To identify key skills required by claims processors and adjudicators to perform the duties of claims processors and adjudicators in the various claims processing and adjudication positions throughout the Federal Government.

(2) To identify reasons for employee attrition from claims processing positions.

(3) To coordinate with educational institutions to develop training and programs of education for members of the Armed Forces to prepare such members for employment in claims processing and adjudication positions in the Federal Government.

(4) To identify and coordinate offices of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs located throughout the United States to provide information about, and promotion of, available claims processing positions to members of the Armed Forces transitioning to civilian life and to veterans with disabilities.

(5) To establish performance measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the task force.

(6) Not later than one year after the date of the establishment of the task force, to develop a Government-wide strategic and operational plan for promoting employment of veterans in claims processing positions in the Federal Government.

(7) To establish performance measures to assess the plan developed under paragraph (6), to assess the implementation of such plan, and to revise such plan as the task force considers appropriate.

(e) **REPORTS.**—

(1) **SUBMITTAL OF PLAN.**—Not later than one year after the date of the establishment of the task force, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the plan developed by the task force under subsection (d)(6).

(2) **ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION.**—Not later than 120 days after the termination of the task force, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that assesses the implementation of the plan developed by the task force under subsection (d)(6).

SEC. 623. REPORTS ON REQUESTS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR RECORDS OF OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.

(a) **REPORTS REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter through the date that is 910 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the attempts of the Department of Veterans Affairs to obtain records necessary to adjudicate claims for benefits from another department or agency of the Federal Government during the 180-day period ending on the date of such report.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Each report shall set forth the following:

(A) For the period covered by such report, the following:

(i) The total number of requests made by the Department.

(ii) The types of records requested.

(iii) The number of requests made before the receipt of each record.

(iv) The amount of time between the initial request for each record and the receipt of each record.

(v) The number of occurrences of the receipt of a record after the adjudication of the claim for which the record was sought.

(vi) A description of the efforts of the Secretary to expedite the delivery of records to the Department from other departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

(B) Such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate in light of such report.

(2) **PRESENTATION.**—The information in a report under clause (i) through (v) of paragraph (1)(A) shall be set forth separately for each department and agency of the Federal Government covered by such report.

SEC. 624. RECOGNITION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF INDIAN TRIBES IN THE PREPARATION, PRESENTATION, AND PROSECUTION OF CLAIMS UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 5902(a)(1) is amended by inserting “, including Indian tribes (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b))” after “as the Secretary may approve”.

SEC. 625. PROGRAM ON PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS IN IMPROVING QUALITY OF CLAIMS FOR DISABILITY COMPENSATION SUBMITTED TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **PROGRAM REQUIRED.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of entering into memoranda of understanding with local governments and tribal organizations—

(1) to improve the quality of claims submitted to the Secretary for compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code, and pension under chapter 15 of such title; and

(2) to provide assistance to veterans who may be eligible for such compensation or pension in submitting such claims.

(b) **MINIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.**—In carrying out the program required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall enter into, or maintain existing, memoranda of understanding with at least—

(1) two tribal organizations; and

(2) 10 State or local governments.

(c) **DURATION.**—The program shall be carried out during the two-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(d) **REPORT.**—

(1) **INITIAL REPORT.**—Not later than one year after the date of the commencement of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that includes the following:

(A) A description of the implementation and operation of the program, including a description of outreach conducted by the Secretary to tribal organizations and State and local governments.

(B) An evaluation of the program, including the total number of memoranda of understanding entered into or maintained by the Secretary.

(2) **FINAL REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the termination of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that includes the following:

(A) A description of the implementation and operation of the program, including a description of outreach conducted by the Secretary to tribal organizations and State and local governments.

(B) An evaluation of the program, including the total number of memoranda of understanding entered into or maintained by the Secretary.

(C) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(D) Such recommendations for continuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(e) **TRIBAL ORGANIZATION DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “tribal organization” has the meaning given that term in section 3765 of title 38, United States Code.

**SEC. 626. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
NOTICE OF AVERAGE TIMES FOR
PROCESSING COMPENSATION
CLAIMS.**

(a) **PUBLIC NOTICE.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, to the extent practicable, post the information described in subsection (b)—

(1) in physical locations, such as Regional Offices or other claims in-take facilities, that the Secretary considers appropriate;

(2) on the Internet website of the Department; and

(3) through other mediums or using such other methods, including collaboration with veterans service organizations, as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(b) **INFORMATION DESCRIBED.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The information described in this subsection is the average processing time of the claims described in paragraph (2).

(2) **CLAIMS DESCRIBED.**—The claims described in this paragraph are each of the following types of claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs:

(A) A fully developed claim.

(B) A claim that is not fully developed.

(3) **UPDATE OF INFORMATION.**—The information described in this subsection shall be updated not less frequently than once each fiscal quarter.

(c) **EXPIRATION OF REQUIREMENTS.**—The requirements of subsection (a) shall expire on December 31, 2015.

(d) **VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “veterans service organization” means an organization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

**SEC. 627. QUARTERLY REPORTS ON PROGRESS
OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
IN ELIMINATING BACKLOG OF
CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION THAT
HAVE NOT BEEN ADJUDICATED.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently than quarterly thereafter through calendar year 2015, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the backlog of claims filed with the Department of Veterans Affairs for compensation that have not been adjudicated by the Department.

(b) **CONTENTS.**—Each report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) For each month through calendar year 2015, a projection of the following:

(A) The number of claims completed.

(B) The number of claims received.

(C) The number of claims on backlog at the end of the month.

(D) The number of claims pending at the end of the month.

(E) The number of appeals pending at the end of the month.

(F) A description of the status of the implementation of initiatives carried out by the Secretary to address the backlog, including the expected impact of those initiatives on accuracy and timeliness of adjudication of claims.

(2) For each quarter through calendar year 2015, a projection of the average accuracy of disability determinations for compensation claims that require a disability rating (or disability decision).

(3) For each month during the most recently completed quarter, the following:

(A) The number of claims completed.

(B) The number of claims received.

(C) The number of claims on backlog at the end of the month.

(D) The number of claims pending at the end of the month.

(E) The number of appeals pending at the end of the month.

(F) A description of the status of the implementation of initiatives carried out by the Secretary to address the backlog, including the impact of those initiatives on accuracy and timeliness of adjudication of claims.

(G) An assessment of the accuracy of disability determinations for compensation claims that require a disability rating (or disability decision).

(4) For the most recently completed quarter—

(A) the number of cases physically received at the Board of Veterans' Appeals and docketed;

(B) the number of cases pending at the Board of Veterans' Appeals at the end of the quarter;

(C) the number of cases physically at the Board of Veterans' Appeals at the end of the quarter;

(D) the number of notices of disagreement and appeals filed to the agency of original jurisdiction referred to in section 7105(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code; and

(E) the number of decisions made by the Board of Veterans' Appeals and the percentage of such decisions that were allowed, remanded, denied, or otherwise disposed of.

(c) **AVAILABILITY TO PUBLIC.**—The Secretary shall make each report submitted under subsection (a) available to the public.

(d) **ON BACKLOG AND PENDING DEFINED.**—In this section, the terms “on backlog” and “pending”, with respect to a claim for compensation received by the Secretary, shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section.

**SEC. 628. REPORTS ON USE OF EXISTING
AUTHORITIES TO EXPEDITE BENEFITS
DECISIONS.**

(a) **REPORT ON CURRENT USE OF TEMPORARY, INTERMEDIATE, AND PROVISIONAL RATING DECISIONS.**—

(1) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the use of temporary, intermediate, and provisional rating decisions to expedite the benefits decisions of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) **REPORT ELEMENTS.**—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) With respect to temporary and intermediate rating decisions, the following:

(i) The number of temporary and intermediate rating decisions issued by the Department during each of fiscal years 2011, 2012, and 2013.

(ii) A description of any reasons or obstacles that prevent use of existing authorities to issue temporary or intermediate rating decisions.

(iii) A description of the Quick Pay Disability initiative, including the rationale for not expanding the initiative beyond pilot program status.

(B) With respect to provisional rating decisions, the following:

(i) The number of provisional rating decisions issued by the Department during the oldest claims first initiative.

(ii) Of the provisional rating decisions issued during the oldest claims first initiative—

(I) the number of such decisions that involved a claim granted;

(II) the number of such decisions that involved a claim denied; and

(III) the number of such decisions that involved a claim granted in part or a claim denied in part.

(iii) A statement of the most common reasons claims were not granted earlier under the oldest claims first initiative when there was sufficient evidence to render an award of benefits in the provisional rating decision.

(iv) The average number of days to issue a provisional rating decision under the oldest claims first initiative.

(v) Of the total number of decisions that were completed under the oldest claims first initiative—

(I) the number that were Category 1 claims and received a final rating decision; and

(II) the number that were Category 2 claims and received a provisional rating decision.

(vi) The number of rating decisions issued during the oldest claims first initiative that involved a brokered claim, set forth by number of such claims by Regional Office of the Department, including—

(I) the number of brokered claims received by each Regional Office; and

(II) the number of brokered claims issued by each Regional Office.

(vii) The number of provisional rating decisions issued during the oldest claims first initiative with respect to which the veteran requested that the provisional decision become final in order to appeal.

(viii) The number of provisional rating decisions issued during the oldest claims first initiative with respect to which the veteran requested an appeal after the expiration of the 1-year period beginning on the date of notification of the provisional rating decision.

(ix) An assessment of the accuracy of provisional rating decisions issued during the oldest claims first initiative, set forth by Category 1 claims and Category 2 claims.

(C) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate for purposes of the report.

(3) **SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION.**—If the Secretary continues to obtain information on rating decisions under clauses (vii) and (viii) of paragraph (2)(B) after the date of the submittal of the report required by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the committees of Congress referred to in paragraph (1) a report on such information that supplements the information on such clauses in the report under paragraph (1) when the Secretary completes accumulation of such information.

(b) **PLAN FOR INCREASE IN USE OF TEMPORARY OR INTERMEDIATE RATING DECISIONS.**—

(1) **REPORT ON PLAN REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth a plan to increase the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions to expedite benefit decisions of the Department when the record contains sufficient evidence to grant any claim at issue, including service connection.

(2) **PLAN ELEMENTS.**—The plan required under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Mechanisms to overcome obstacles to the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions, including mechanisms (such as upgrades) to assure the ability of the Veterans

Benefits Management System to facilitate the issuance of temporary or intermediate rating decisions.

(B) Mechanisms to ensure that appropriate claimant populations, such as claimants who file complex or multi-issue disability compensation claims, benefit from the availability of temporary or intermediate rating decisions.

(C) Mechanisms to provide for the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions, including mechanisms to resolve whether a request by a claimant or claimant representative should trigger use of a temporary or intermediate rating decision depending on the circumstances of the claimant.

(D) Mechanisms to prevent the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions in lieu of a final rating decision when a final rating decision could be made with little or no additional claim development.

(E) Such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate to increase the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions to expedite benefit decisions of the Department.

SEC. 629. REPORTS ON DEPARTMENT DISABILITY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AND PREVENTION OF UNNECESSARY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.

(a) REPORT ON DISABILITY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS FURNISHED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the furnishing of general medical and specialty medical examinations by the Department of Veterans Affairs for purposes of adjudicating claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of general medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

(B) The number of general medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating a claim in which a comprehensive joint examination was conducted, but for which no disability relating to a joint, bone, or muscle had been asserted as an issue in the claim.

(C) The number of specialty medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating a claim.

(D) The number of specialty medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating a claim in which one or more joint examinations were conducted.

(E) A summary with citations to any medical and scientific studies that provide a basis for determining that three repetitions is adequate to determine the effect of repetitive use on functional impairments.

(F) The names of all examination reports, including general medical examinations and Disability Benefits Questionnaires, used for evaluation of compensation and pension disability claims which require measurement of repeated ranges of motion testing and the number of examinations requiring such measurements which were conducted in fiscal year 2012.

(G) The average amount of time taken by an individual conducting a medical examination to perform the three repetitions of movement of each joint.

(H) A discussion of whether there are more efficient and effective scientifically reliable methods of testing for functional loss on repetitive use of an extremity other than the three time repetition currently used by the Department.

(I) Recommendations as to the continuation of the practice of measuring functional impairment by using three repetitions of movement of each joint during the examination as a criteria for evaluating the effect of repetitive motion on functional impairment with supporting rationale.

(b) REPORT AND PLAN TO PREVENT THE ORDERING OF UNNECESSARY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the efforts of the Secretary in reducing the necessity for in-person disability examinations and other efforts to comply with the provisions of section 5125 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Criteria used by the Secretary to determine if a claim is eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative.

(B) The number of claims determined to be eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative during the period beginning on the date of the initiation of the initiative and ending on the date of the enactment of this Act, disaggregated—

(i) by fiscal year; and

(ii) by claims determined eligible based in whole or in part on medical evidence provided by a private health care provider.

(C) The total number of claims determined to be eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative that required an employee of the Department to supplement the evidence with information obtained during a telephone interview with a claimant or health care provider.

(D) Information on any other initiatives or efforts, including disability benefits questionnaires, of the Department to further encourage the use of medical evidence provided by a private health care provider and reliance upon reports of a medical examination administered by a private physician if the report is sufficiently complete to be adequate for the purposes of adjudicating a claim.

(E) A plan—

(i) to measure, track, and prevent the ordering of unnecessary medical examinations when the provision by a claimant of a medical examination administered by a private physician in support of a claim for benefits under chapter 11 or 15 of title 38, United States Code, is adequate for the purpose of making a decision on that claim; and

(ii) that includes the actions the Secretary will take to eliminate any request by the Department for a medical examination in the case of a claim for benefits under chapter 11 or 15 of such title in support of which a claimant submits medical evidence or a medical opinion provided by a private health care provider that is competent, credible, probative, and otherwise adequate for purposes of making a decision on that claim.

Subtitle D—Board of Veterans' Appeals and Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

SEC. 631. TREATMENT OF CERTAIN MISFILED DOCUMENTS AS A NOTICE OF APPEAL TO THE COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS.

Section 7266 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e)(1) If a person adversely affected by a final decision of the Board, who has not filed a notice of appeal with the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims under subsection (a), misfiles a document with the Board or the agency of original jurisdiction referred to in section 7105(b)(1) of this title that expresses disagreement with such decision and a clear intent to seek review of such decision by the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, not later than 120 days after the date of such decision, such document shall be treated as timely filed under subsection (a).

“(2) The treatment of misfiled documents under paragraph (1) does not limit equitable relief that may be otherwise available to a person described in that paragraph.”.

SEC. 632. DETERMINATION OF MANNER OF APPEARANCE FOR HEARINGS BEFORE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7107 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by striking “in subsection (f)” and inserting “in subsection (g)”;

(2) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g); and

(3) by striking subsections (d) and (e) and inserting the following new subsections:

“(d)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), a hearing before the Board shall be conducted through picture and voice transmission, by electronic or other means, in such a manner that the appellant is not present in the same location as the members of the Board during the hearing.

“(2)(A) A hearing before the Board shall be conducted in person upon the request of an appellant.

“(B) In the absence of a request under subparagraph (A), a hearing before the Board may also be conducted in person as the Board considers appropriate.

“(e)(1) In a case in which a hearing before the Board is to be held as described in subsection (d)(1), the Secretary shall provide suitable facilities and equipment to the Board or other components of the Department to enable an appellant located at an appropriate facility within the area served by a regional office to participate as so described.

“(2) Any hearing conducted as described in subsection (d)(1) shall be conducted in the same manner as, and shall be considered the equivalent of, a personal hearing.

“(f)(1) In a case in which a hearing before the Board is to be held as described in subsection (d)(2), the appellant may request that the hearing be held at the principal location of the Board or at a facility of the Department located within the area served by a regional office of the Department.

“(2) A hearing to be held within an area served by a regional office of the Department shall (except as provided in paragraph (3)) be scheduled to be held in accordance with the place of the case on the docket under subsection (a) relative to other cases on the docket for which hearings are scheduled to be held within that area.

“(3) A hearing to be held within an area served by a regional office of the Department may, for cause shown, be advanced on motion for an earlier hearing. Any such motion shall set forth succinctly the grounds upon

which the motion is based. Such a motion may be granted only—

“(A) if the case involves interpretation of law of general application affecting other claims;

“(B) if the appellant is seriously ill or is under severe financial hardship; or

“(C) for other sufficient cause shown.”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to cases received by the Board of Veterans' Appeals pursuant to notices of disagreement submitted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE VII—OUTREACH MATTERS

SEC. 701. PROGRAM TO INCREASE COORDINATION OF OUTREACH EFFORTS BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) **PROGRAM REQUIRED.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of using State and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations—

(1) to increase awareness of veterans regarding benefits and services for veterans; and

(2) to improve coordination of outreach activities regarding such benefits and services between the Secretary and Federal, State, and local government and nonprofit providers of health care and benefit services for veterans.

(b) **DURATION.**—The Secretary shall carry out the program for a two-year period.

(c) GRANTS.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall carry out the program through the competitive award of grants to State and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations—

(A) to increase the awareness of veterans regarding benefits and services for veterans; and

(B) to improve coordination of outreach activities regarding such benefits and services between the Secretary and Federal, State, and local government and nonprofit providers of health care and benefit services for veterans.

(2) APPLICATION.—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—A State or local government agency or nonprofit organization seeking a grant under the program shall submit to the Secretary an application therefor in such form and in such manner as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(B) **ELEMENTS.**—Each application submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) A description of the consultations, if any, with the Department of Veterans Affairs in the development of any proposal under the application.

(ii) A description of the project for which the applicant is seeking a grant under the program, including a plan to coordinate under the program, to the greatest extent possible, the outreach activities of Federal, State, and local government agencies that provide health care, benefits, and services for veterans and nonprofit organizations that provide such care, benefits, and services to enhance the awareness and availability of such care, benefits, and services.

(iii) An agreement to report to the Secretary standardized data and other performance measures necessary for the Secretary to evaluate the program and to facilitate evaluation of projects for which grants are awarded under the program.

(iv) Such other information as the Secretary may require.

(3) CONSIDERATIONS.—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In awarding grants under the program to carry out projects, the Secretary shall consider—

(i) where the projects will be carried out and which populations are targeted; and

(ii) the likelihood that each potential grantee will successfully carry out the grant proposal.

(B) **CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING LOCATION AND TARGET POPULATION.**—In taking the matters specified in subparagraph (A)(ii) into consideration, the Secretary shall consider in particular the advisability of awarding grants for projects—

(i) carried out in areas with populations that have a high proportion of veteran representation;

(ii) carried out in a variety of geographic areas, including urban, rural, and highly rural areas; and

(iii) that target a variety of veteran populations, including racial and ethnic minorities, low-income populations, and older populations.

(4) **USE OF FUNDS.**—The Secretary shall establish appropriate uses of grant amounts received under the program.

(5) **OVERSIGHT OF USE OF FUNDS.**—The Secretary shall establish appropriate mechanisms for oversight of the use of grant amounts received under the program, including the evidence grantees must submit to demonstrate use of grant amounts and procedures for the recovery of grant amounts that were improperly used.

(6) **LIMITATION.**—In a fiscal year, not more than 20 percent of all grant amounts awarded in that fiscal year may be awarded to a single State entity.

(d) **STATE MATCHING REQUIREMENT.**—The Secretary may not make a grant to a State under subsection (c) unless that State agrees that, with respect to the costs to be incurred by the State in carrying out the program or projects for which the grant was awarded, the State will make available (directly or through donations from public or private entities) non-Federal contributions in an amount equal to 50 percent of Federal funds provided under the grant.

(e) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section the following:

(1) \$2,500,000 for fiscal year 2015.

(2) \$2,500,000 for fiscal year 2016.

(f) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 120 days after the completion of the first calendar year beginning after the date of the commencement of the program, and not less frequently than once every year thereafter for the duration of the program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report evaluating the program and the projects supported by grants awarded under the program.

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(B) An assessment of the benefit to veterans of the program.

(C) The performance measures used by the Secretary for purposes of the program and data showing the performance of grantees under the program under such measures.

(D) The recommendations of the Secretary as to the feasibility and advisability of continuing or expanding or modifying the program.

(g) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 702. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND STATES ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 63 is amended by inserting after section 6306 the following new section:

“§ 6306A. Cooperative agreements with States

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements and arrangements with various State agencies and State departments to carry out this chapter and to otherwise carry out, coordinate, improve, or enhance outreach activities of the Department and the States.

“(b) **REPORT.**—The Secretary shall include in each report submitted under section 6308 of this title a description of the agreements and arrangements entered into by the Secretary under subsection (a).”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 6306 the following new item:

“6306A. Cooperative agreements with States.”.

SEC. 703. ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish an advisory committee on outreach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) **MEMBERSHIP.**—The advisory committee shall be composed of individuals selected by the Secretary from among the following:

(1) To the maximum extent practicable, individuals who are eminent in their respective fields of public relations.

(2) Representatives of organizations with offices that focus on communications and distribute messages through major media news outlets and social media.

(3) To the maximum extent practicable, individuals with experience communicating financial results and business strategy for purposes of shaping a confident brand image.

(4) To the maximum extent practicable, individuals with experience with consumer and lifestyle imaging and creating publicity for a particular product or service.

(5) To the maximum extent practicable, veterans who have experience in press and public relations.

(c) **DUTIES.**—The advisory committee shall advise the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs—

(1) to ensure that the Department of Veterans Affairs is strategically and effectively—

(A) engaging the public and Department stakeholders to increase awareness nationally regarding all benefits and services furnished by the Department;

(B) explaining new or changing policies of the Department;

(C) improving the image and reputation of the Department; and

(D) coordinating and collaborating with national community-based organizations, nonprofits, and State and local government agencies;

(2) to assist the Secretary in conducting such other press or public relations activities relating to outreach activities of the Department as the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs consider appropriate; and

(3) to ensure coordination and collaboration on efforts within the Department for the development, implementation, and review of local outreach with respect to benefits that include the following:

(A) Compensation and pension benefits.
 (B) Insurance benefits.
 (C) Burial and memorial benefits.
 (D) Education benefits.
 (E) Vocational rehabilitation and employment benefits.
 (F) Readjustment counseling benefits.
 (G) Loan guarantee benefits.
 (H) Such other benefits as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(d) LOCATION OF MEETINGS.—Each meeting of the advisory committee shall take place at a location that is property of the Department and shall, to the maximum extent practicable, use teleconference technology.

(e) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall consult with and seek the advice of the advisory committee not less frequently than quarterly on matters relating to the duties of the advisory committee under subsection (c).

(f) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once every 90 days for the first year and semiannually thereafter, the advisory committee shall submit to Congress and to the Secretary a report on outreach activities of the Department.

(2) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include such recommendations for legislative and administrative action as the advisory committee considers appropriate to improve the press and public relations of the Department relating to outreach.

(g) TERMINATION.—The advisory committee shall terminate on October 1, 2015, and the requirements and authorities under this section shall terminate on such date.

(h) OUTREACH DEFINED.—In this section, the term “outreach” has the meaning given the term in section 6301 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 704. ADVISORY BOARDS ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For each entity described in paragraph (2), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, acting through the director of that entity, establish not later than 180 days after the effective date specified in subsection (h) an advisory board at that entity on matters relating to outreach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs at that entity.

(2) ENTITY DESCRIBED.—An entity described in this paragraph is—

(A) a healthcare system of the Department; or

(B) a Veterans Integrated System Network, if such Veterans Integrated System Network does not contain a healthcare system.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each advisory board established under subsection (a)(1) shall be, to the maximum extent practicable, composed of individuals selected by the Secretary from among the following:

(A) Individuals who are eminent in their respective fields of public relations.

(B) Representatives of organizations with offices that focus on communications and distribute messages through major media news outlets and social media.

(C) Individuals with experience communicating financial results and business strategy for purposes of shaping a confident brand image.

(D) Individuals with experience with consumer and lifestyle imaging and creating publicity for a particular product or service.

(E) Employees of the Department who are involved in press and public relations strat-

egy for an entity described in subsection (a)(2).

(F) To the maximum extent practicable, veterans who have experience in press and public relations.

(2) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation of an individual selected under paragraph (1) shall be at the election of the individual.

(c) DUTIES.—Each advisory board established under subsection (a)(1) at an entity described in subsection (a)(2) shall advise the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs—

(1) to ensure that the Department of Veterans Affairs is strategically and effectively—

(A) engaging the public and Department stakeholders to increase awareness nationally regarding benefits and services furnished by the Department;

(B) explaining new or changing policies of the Department;

(C) improving the image and reputation of the Department;

(D) coordinating and collaborating with national community-based organizations, nonprofits, and State and local government agencies; and

(E) coordinating and collaborating on efforts within the Department for the development, implementation, and review of local outreach with respect to benefits that include—

(i) compensation and pension benefits;

(ii) insurance benefits;

(iii) burial and memorial benefits;

(iv) education benefits;

(v) vocational rehabilitation and employment benefits;

(vi) readjustment counseling benefits;

(vii) loan guarantee benefits; and

(viii) such other benefits as the Secretary considers appropriate; and

(2) to assist the director of that entity in conducting such other press or public relations activities relating to outreach activities of the Department as that advisory board considers appropriate.

(d) MEETING LOCATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If teleconference technology is not used, meetings of each advisory board established under subsection (a)(1) shall be held at a location that is property of the Department.

(2) TELECONFERENCE TECHNOLOGY.—Each advisory board shall use, to the maximum extent practicable, teleconference technology.

(e) CONSULTATION.—Each director of an entity described in subsection (a)(2) shall consult with and seek the advice of the advisory board established at such entity not less frequently than once every two months on matters relating to the duties of the advisory board under subsection (c).

(f) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not less frequently than each year, each advisory board established under subsection (a)(1) shall submit to the Secretary a report with such information as may be beneficial to the Secretary in preparing the reports required by section 6308 of title 38, United States Code.

(g) TERMINATION.—Each advisory board established under subsection (a)(1) and the authorities and requirements of this section shall terminate three years after the effective date specified in subsection (h).

(h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 705. MODIFICATION OF REQUIREMENT FOR PERIODIC REPORTS TO CONGRESS ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6308 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “even-numbered”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “biennial”;

(B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “for legislative and administrative action” after “Recommendations”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) Recommendations that such administrative actions as may be taken—

“(A) to maximize resources for outreach activities of the Department; and

“(B) to focus outreach efforts on activities that are proven to be more effective.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SECTION HEADING.—The heading for section 6308 is amended by striking “**Biennial**” and inserting “**Annual**”.

(2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by striking the item relating to section 6308 and inserting the following new item:

“6308. Annual report to Congress.”.

SEC. 706. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY FOR OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 63 is amended by inserting after section 6308 the following new section:

“§ 6309. Budget transparency

“(a) BUDGET REQUIREMENTS.—In the budget justification materials submitted to Congress in support of the Department budget for a fiscal year (as submitted with the budget of the President under section 1105(a) of title 31), the Secretary shall include a separate statement of the amount requested for such fiscal year for activities of the Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs as follows:

“(1) For outreach activities of the Department in aggregate.

“(2) For outreach activities of each element of the Department specified in subsection (b)(1).

“(b) PROCEDURES FOR EFFECTIVE COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION.—(1) Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014, the Secretary shall establish and maintain procedures for the Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs to ensure the effective coordination and collaboration of outreach activities of the Department between and among the following:

“(A) Office of the Secretary.

“(B) Veterans Health Administration.

“(C) Veterans Benefits Administration.

“(D) National Cemetery Administration.

“(2) The Secretary shall—

“(A) beginning after the date on which the Secretary establishes procedures under paragraph (1), not less frequently than once every two years conduct a review of the procedures established and maintained under paragraph (1) to ensure that such procedures meet the requirements of such paragraph;

“(B) make such modifications to such procedures as the Secretary considers appropriate based upon reviews conducted under subparagraph (A) in order to better meet such requirements; and

“(C) not later than 45 days after completing a review under subparagraph (A), submit to Congress a report on the findings of such review.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 6308 the following new item:

“6309. Budget transparency.”.

TITLE VIII—ENHANCEMENT OF RIGHTS UNDER SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT

SEC. 801. MODIFICATION OF PERIOD DETERMINING WHICH ACTIONS ARE COVERED UNDER STAY OF PROCEEDINGS AND ADJUSTMENT OF OBLIGATION PROTECTIONS CONCERNING MORTGAGES AND TRUST DEEDS OF MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 303(b) of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 533(b)) is amended by striking “filed” and inserting “pending”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 710(d) of the Honoring America’s Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-154; 126 Stat. 1208) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following new paragraph (1):

“(1) SUNSET AND REVIVAL.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subsections (b) and (c) of section 303 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 533), as amended by subsections (a) and (b) of this section, are amended by striking ‘within one year’ each place it appears and inserting ‘within 90 days’.

“(B) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subparagraph (A) shall take effect on January 1, 2015.”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (3).

SEC. 802. PROTECTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES REGARDING PROFESSIONAL LICENSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title VII of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 701 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“SEC. 707. PROFESSIONAL LICENSES.

“(a) EXPIRATION DURING PERIOD IN WHICH SERVICEMEMBERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR HOSTILE FIRE OR IMMINENT DANGER SPECIAL PAY.—If a license issued by a State or local licensing authority to a servicemember would otherwise expire during a period in which such servicemember is eligible for hostile fire or imminent danger special pay under section 310 of title 37, United States Code, such State or local licensing authority shall delay the expiration of such license until not earlier than the date that is 180 days after the date on which such period of eligibility ends.

“(b) CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS DURING PERIOD IN WHICH SERVICEMEMBERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR HOSTILE FIRE OR IMMINENT DANGER SPECIAL PAY.—If a State or local licensing authority otherwise requires a servicemember to meet any continuing education requirements to maintain a license for a trade or profession during a period in which such servicemember is eligible for hostile fire or imminent danger special pay under section 310 of title 37, United States Code, such State or local licensing authority shall delay such continuing education requirement until not earlier than the date that is 180 days after the date on which such period of eligibility ends.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of such Act (50 U.S.C. App. 501(b)) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 706 the following new item:

“Sec. 707. Professional licenses and certifications.”.

SEC. 803. PROHIBITION ON DENIAL OF CREDIT BECAUSE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR PROTECTION.

Section 108 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 518) is amended—

(1) by striking “Application by” and inserting the following:

“(a) APPLICATION OR RECEIPT.—Application by”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(b) ELIGIBILITY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the protections under subsection (a), an individual who is entitled to any right or protection provided under this Act may not be denied or refused credit or be subject to any other action described under paragraphs (1) through (6) of subsection (a) solely by reason of such entitlement.

“(2) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prohibit a lender from considering all relevant factors, other than the entitlement of an individual to a right or protection provided under this Act, in making a determination as to whether it is appropriate to extend credit.”.

SEC. 804. INTEREST RATE LIMITATION ON DEBT ENTERED INTO DURING MILITARY SERVICE TO CONSOLIDATE OR REFINANCE STUDENT LOANS INCURRED BEFORE MILITARY SERVICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 207 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 527) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “ON DEBT INCURRED BEFORE SERVICE” after “LIMITATION TO 6 PERCENT”;

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph (2):

“(2) LIMITATION TO 6 PERCENT ON DEBT INCURRED DURING SERVICE TO CONSOLIDATE OR REFINANCE STUDENT LOANS INCURRED BEFORE SERVICE.—An obligation or liability bearing interest at a rate in excess of 6 percent per year that is incurred by a servicemember, or the servicemember and the servicemember’s spouse jointly, during military service to consolidate or refinance one or more student loans incurred by the servicemember before such military service shall not bear an interest at a rate in excess of 6 percent during the period of military service.”;

(4) in paragraph (3), as redesignated by paragraph (2) of this subsection, by inserting “or (2)” after “paragraph (1)”; and

(5) in paragraph (4), as so redesignated, by striking “paragraph (2)” and inserting “paragraph (3)”.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF LIMITATION.—Subsection (b) of such section is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “the interest rate limitation in subsection (a)” and inserting “an interest rate limitation in paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection (a)”; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the paragraph heading, by striking “AS OF DATE OF ORDER TO ACTIVE DUTY”; and

(B) by inserting before the period at the end the following: “in the case of an obligation or liability covered by subsection (a)(1), or as of the date the servicemember (or servicemember and spouse jointly) incurs the obligation or liability concerned under subsection (a)(2)”.

(c) STUDENT LOAN DEFINED.—Subsection (d) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) STUDENT LOAN.—The term ‘student loan’ means the following:

“(A) A Federal student loan made, insured, or guaranteed under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.).

“(B) A private student loan as that term is defined in section 140(a) of the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1650(a)).”.

SEC. 805. TERMINATION OF RESIDENTIAL LEASES AFTER ASSIGNMENT OR RELOCATION TO QUARTERS OF UNITED STATES OR HOUSING FACILITY UNDER JURISDICTION OF UNIFORMED SERVICE.

(a) TERMINATION OF RESIDENTIAL LEASES.—(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 305 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 535) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking “or” at the end;

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) in the case of a lease described in subsection (b)(1) and subparagraph (C) of such subsection, the date the lessee is assigned to or otherwise relocates to quarters or a housing facility as described in such subparagraph.”; and

(B) in subsection (b)(1)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking “or” at the end;

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) the lease is executed by or on behalf of a person who thereafter and during the term of the lease is assigned to or otherwise relocates to quarters of the United States or a housing facility under the jurisdiction of a uniformed service (as defined in section 101 of title 37, United States Code), including housing provided under the Military Housing Privatization Initiative.”.

(2) MANNER OF TERMINATION.—Subsection (c)(1) of such section is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (A)—

(i) by inserting “in the case of a lease described in subsection (b)(1) and subparagraph (A) or (B) of such subsection,” before “by delivery”; and

(ii) by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C); and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraph (B):

“(B) in the case of a lease described in subsection (b)(1) and subparagraph (C) of such subsection, by delivery by the lessee of written notice of such termination, and a letter from the servicemember’s commanding officer indicating that the servicemember has been assigned to or is otherwise relocating to quarters of the United States or a housing facility under the jurisdiction of a uniformed service (as defined in section 101 of title 37, United States Code), to the lessor (or the lessor’s grantee), or to the lessor’s agent (or the agent’s grantee); and”.

(b) DEFINITION OF MILITARY ORDERS AND CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES FOR PURPOSES OF ACT.—

(1) TRANSFER OF DEFINITIONS.—Such Act is further amended by transferring paragraphs (1) and (2) of section 305(i) (50 U.S.C. App. 535(i)) to the end of section 101 (50 U.S.C. App. 511) and redesignating such paragraphs, as so transferred, as paragraphs (10) and (11).

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Such Act is further amended—

(A) in section 305 (50 U.S.C. App. 535), as amended by paragraph (1), by striking subsection (i); and

(B) in section 705 (50 U.S.C. App. 595), by striking “or naval” both places it appears.

SEC. 806. PROTECTION OF SURVIVING SPOUSE WITH RESPECT TO MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C.

App. 531 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 303 (50 U.S.C. App. 533) the following new section:

“SEC. 303A. PROTECTION OF SURVIVING SPOUSE WITH RESPECT TO MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), with respect to a servicemember who dies while in military service and who has a surviving spouse who is the servicemember's successor in interest to property covered under section 303(a), section 303 shall apply to the surviving spouse with respect to that property during the one-year period beginning on the date of such death in the same manner as if the servicemember had not died.

“(b) NOTICE REQUIRED.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—To be covered under this section with respect to property, a surviving spouse shall submit written notice that such surviving spouse is so covered to the mortgagee, trustee, or other creditor of the mortgage, trust deed, or other security in the nature of a mortgage with which the property is secured.

“(2) TIME.—Notice provided under paragraph (1) shall be provided with respect to a surviving spouse anytime during the one-year period beginning on the date of death of the servicemember with respect to whom the surviving spouse is to receive coverage under this section.

“(3) ADDRESS.—Notice provided under paragraph (1) with respect to property shall be provided via e-mail, facsimile, standard post, or express mail to facsimile numbers and addresses, as the case may be, designated by the servicer of the mortgage, trust deed, or other security in the nature of a mortgage with which the property is secured.

“(4) MANNER.—Notice provided under paragraph (1) shall be provided in writing by using a form designed under paragraph (5) or submitting a copy of a Department of Defense or Department of Veterans Affairs document evidencing the military service-related death of a spouse while in military service.

“(5) OFFICIAL FORMS.—The Secretary of Defense shall design and distribute an official Department of Defense form that can be used by an individual to give notice under paragraph (1).”

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 303A of such Act, as added by subsection (a), shall apply with respect to deaths that occur on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of such Act (50 U.S.C. App. 501) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 303 the following new item:

“Sec. 303A. Protection of surviving spouse with respect to mortgage foreclosure.”

SEC. 807. IMPROVED PROTECTION OF MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES AGAINST DEFAULT JUDGMENTS.

(a) MODIFICATION OF PLAINTIFF AFFIDAVIT FILING REQUIREMENT.—Paragraph (1) of section 201(b) of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 521(b)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and indenting such clauses two ems to the right;

(2) in the matter before clause (i), as redesignated by paragraph (1), by striking “In any” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In any”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph (B):

“(B) DUE DILIGENCE.—Before filing the affidavit, the plaintiff shall conduct a diligent

and reasonable investigation to determine whether or not the defendant is in military service, including a search of available records of the Department of Defense and any other information reasonably available to the plaintiff. The affidavit shall set forth all steps taken to determine the defendant's military status and shall have attached copies of the records on which the plaintiff relied in drafting the affidavit.”

(b) APPOINTMENT OF ATTORNEY TO REPRESENT DEFENDANT IN MILITARY SERVICE.—Paragraph (2) of such section (50 U.S.C. App. 521(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking “If in an action” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—If in an action”;

(2) in subparagraph (A), as designated by paragraph (1), by striking “If an attorney” and inserting the following:

“(C) LIMITATIONS ON APPOINTED ATTORNEY.—If an attorney”;

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (A), as designated by paragraph (1), the following new subparagraph:

“(B) DUE DILIGENCE.—If the court appoints an attorney to represent the defendant—

“(i) the attorney shall conduct a diligent and reasonable investigation to determine whether or not the defendant is in military service, including a search of available records of the Department of Defense and any other information reasonably available to the attorney; and

“(ii) the plaintiff shall submit to the attorney such information as the plaintiff may have concerning the whereabouts or identity of the defendant.”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) TREATMENT OF ATTORNEYS FEES.—The reasonable fees of an attorney appointed to represent a servicemember shall be treated as costs of court for court cost purposes, unless the creditor seeks relief from such charges from the court.”

SEC. 808. CLARIFICATION REGARDING APPLICATION OF ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY OF ATTORNEY GENERAL AND PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION UNDER SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT.

Sections 801 and 802 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 597 and 597a) shall apply as if such sections were included in the enactment of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940 (54 Stat. 1178, chapter 888) and included in the restatement of such Act in Public Law 108-189.

SEC. 809. CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The heading for section 305 of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 535) is amended by striking “RESIDENTIAL OR MOTOR VEHICLE LEASES” and inserting “LEASES OF PREMISES OCCUPIED AND MOTOR VEHICLES USED”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of such Act (50 U.S.C. App. 501(b)) is amended by striking the item relating to section 305 and inserting the following new item:

“Sec. 305. Termination of leases of premises occupied and motor vehicles used.”

TITLE IX—OTHER MATTERS

SEC. 901. REPEAL OF CERTAIN REDUCTIONS MADE BY BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013.

(a) ADJUSTMENT OF RETIREMENT PAY.—Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-76) is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) APPLICABILITY TO DISABILITY AND SURVIVOR BENEFITS.—Title X of the Department

of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 (division C of Public Law 113-76) is repealed.

(2) APPLICABILITY TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO JOINED AFTER JANUARY 1, 2014.—Section 2 of Public Law 113-82 is repealed.

SEC. 902. CONSIDERATION BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF RESOURCES DISPOSED OF FOR LESS THAN FAIR MARKET VALUE BY INDIVIDUALS APPLYING FOR PENSION.

(a) VETERANS.—Section 1522 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Secretary”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2)(A) If a veteran otherwise eligible for payment of pension under section 1513 or 1521 of this title or the spouse of such veteran disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue the payment of pension to such veteran under section 1513 or 1521 of this title, as the case may be, for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the veteran or, if the veteran has a spouse, the corpus of the estates of the veteran and of the veteran's spouse, that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the veteran or spouse had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the veteran's maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate of the veteran or, if the veteran has a spouse, the corpus of the estates of the veteran and of the veteran's spouse, that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the veteran's maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the veteran applies for pension under section 1513 or 1521 of this title or, if later, the date on which the veteran (or the spouse of the veteran) disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the first day of the first month in or after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this subparagraph shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of covered resources so disposed of by the veteran (or the spouse of the veteran) on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reasonably have been consumed for the veteran's maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension that is payable to a veteran under

section 1513 or 1521 of this title, including the maximum amount of increased pension payable under such sections on account of family members, but not including any amount of pension payable under such sections because a veteran is in need of regular aid and attendance or is permanently housebound, rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Secretary”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2)(A) If a veteran otherwise eligible for payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child, the spouse of the veteran, or the child disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue payment of such increased pension for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the child that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the veteran, the spouse of the veteran, or the child had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate of the child that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the veteran applies for payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child or, if later, the date on which the veteran, the spouse of the veteran, or the child disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the first day of the first month in or after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this subparagraph shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of by the veteran, the spouse of the veteran, or the child on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reasonably have been consumed for the child’s maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of increased monthly pension that is payable to a veteran under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child, rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c)(1)(A) The Secretary shall not deny or discontinue payment of pension under section 1513 or 1521 of this title or payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child by reason of the application of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2) of this section to the disposal of resources by an individual—

“(i) if—

“(I) a satisfactory showing is made to the Secretary (in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary) that all resources disposed of for less than fair market value have been returned to the individual who disposed of the resources; or

“(II) the Secretary determines, under procedures established by the Secretary in accordance with subparagraph (B), that the denial or discontinuance of payment would work an undue hardship; or

“(ii) to the extent that any portion of the resources disposed of for less than fair market value have been returned to the individual who disposed of the resources.

“(B) Undue hardship would be worked by the denial or discontinuance of payment for purposes of subparagraph (A)(i)(II) if the denial or discontinuance of payment would deprive the individual during the period of denial or discontinuance—

“(i) of medical care such that the individual’s life or health would be endangered;

“(ii) of necessary food or clothing, or other necessities of life; or

“(iii) on such other basis as the Secretary shall specify in the procedures required by subparagraph (A)(i)(II).

“(C) If payment of pension or increased pension that would otherwise be denied or discontinued by reason of the application of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2) is denied or discontinued only in part by reason of the return of resources as described in subparagraph (A)(ii), the period of the denial or discontinuance as determined pursuant to subparagraph (E) of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2), as applicable, shall be recalculated to take into account such return of resources.

“(2) At the time a veteran applies for pension under section 1513 or 1521 of this title or increased pension under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child, and at such other times as the Secretary considers appropriate, the Secretary shall—

“(A) inform such veteran of the provisions of subsections (a)(2) and (b)(2) providing for a period of ineligibility for payment of pension under such sections for individuals who make certain dispositions of resources for less than fair market value, including the exception for hardship from such period of ineligibility;

“(B) obtain from such veteran information which may be used in determining whether or not a period of ineligibility for such payments would be required by reason of such subsections; and

“(C) provide such veteran a timely process for determining whether or not the exception for hardship shall apply to such veteran.”.

(b) SURVIVING SPOUSES AND CHILDREN.—Section 1543 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3);

(B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph (2):

“(2)(A) If a surviving spouse otherwise eligible for payment of pension under section 1541 of this title disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or

after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue the payment of pension to such surviving spouse under section 1541 of this title for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the surviving spouse that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the surviving spouse had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the surviving spouse’s maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate of the surviving spouse that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the surviving spouse’s maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the surviving spouse applies for pension under section 1541 of this title or, if later, the date on which the surviving spouse disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the first day of the first month in or after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this subparagraph shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of by the surviving spouse on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reasonably have been consumed for the surviving spouse’s maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension that is payable to a surviving spouse under section 1541 of this title, including the maximum amount of increased pension payable under such section on account of a child, but not including any amount of pension payable under such section because a surviving spouse is in need of regular aid and attendance or is permanently housebound, rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4)(A) If a surviving spouse otherwise eligible for payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child or the child disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue payment of such increased pension for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a

part of the corpus of the estate of the child that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the surviving spouse or the child had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the child's maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate of the child that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the child's maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the surviving spouse applies for payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child or, if later, the date on which the surviving spouse (or the child) disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the first day of the first month in or after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this clause shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of by the surviving spouse (or the child) on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reasonably have been consumed for the child's maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of increased monthly pension that is payable to a surviving spouse under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child, rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Secretary”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2)(A) If a child otherwise eligible for payment of pension under section 1542 of this title or any person with whom such child is residing who is legally responsible for such child's support disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue the payment of pension to such child under section 1542 of this title for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the child or the corpus of the estate of any person with whom such child is residing who is legally responsible for such child's support that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the child or person had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the child's maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate described in clause (i) that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the child's maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the child applies for pension under section 1542 of this title or, if later, the date on which the child (or person described in subparagraph (B)) disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this clause is the first day of the first month in or after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this clause shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of by the child (or person described in subparagraph (B)) on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reasonably have been consumed for the child's maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension that is payable to a child under section 1542 of this title, rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c)(1)(A) The Secretary shall not deny or discontinue payment of pension under section 1541 or 1542 of this title or payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child by reason of the application of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or (b)(2) of this section to the disposal of resources by an individual—

“(i) if—

“(I) a satisfactory showing is made to the Secretary (in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary) that all resources disposed of for less than fair market value have been returned to the individual who disposed of the resources; or

“(II) the Secretary determines, under procedures established by the Secretary in accordance with subparagraph (B), that the denial or discontinuance of payment would work an undue hardship; or

“(ii) to the extent that any portion of the resources disposed of for less than fair market value have been returned to the individual who disposed of the resources.

“(B) Undue hardship would be worked by the denial or discontinuance of payment for purposes of subparagraph (A)(i)(II) if the denial or discontinuance of payment would deprive the individual during the period of denial or discontinuance—

“(i) of medical care such that the individual's life or health would be endangered;

“(ii) of necessary food or clothing, or other necessities of life; or

“(iii) on such other basis as the Secretary shall specify in the procedures required by subparagraph (A)(i)(II).

“(C) If payment of pension or increased pension that would otherwise be denied or discontinued by reason of the application of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or (b)(2) is denied or discontinued only in part by reason of the return of resources as described in subparagraph (A)(ii), the period of the denial or discontinuance as determined pursuant to subparagraph (E) of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or (b)(2), as applicable, shall be recalculated to take into account such return of resources.

“(2) At the time a surviving spouse or child applies for pension under section 1541 or 1542 of this title or increased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child, and at such other times as the Secretary considers appropriate, the Secretary shall—

“(A) inform such surviving spouse or child of the provisions of subsections (a)(2), (a)(4), and (b)(2), as applicable, providing for a period of ineligibility for payment of pension or increased pension under such sections for individuals who make certain dispositions of resources for less than fair market value, including the exception for hardship from such period of ineligibility;

“(B) obtain from such surviving spouse or child information which may be used in determining whether or not a period of ineligibility for such payments would be required by reason of such subsections; and

“(C) provide such surviving spouse or child a timely process for determining whether or not the exception for hardship shall apply to such surviving spouse or child.”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsections (a)(2), (b)(2), and (c) of section 1522 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), and subsections (a)(2), (a)(4), (b)(2), and (c) of section 1543 of such title, as added by subsection (b), shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to payments of pension and increased pension applied for after such date and to payments of pension and increased pension for which eligibility is redetermined after such date, except that no reduction in pension shall be made under such subsections because of any disposal of covered resources made before such date.

(d) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 months after the date of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently than once each year thereafter through 2018, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the administration of subsections (a)(2), (b)(2), and (c) of section 1522 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), and subsections (a)(2), (a)(4), (b)(2), and (c) of section 1543 of such title, as added by subsection (b), during the most recent 12-month period.

(2) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following, for the period covered by the report:

(A) The number of individuals who applied for pension under chapter 15 of such title.

(B) The number of individuals who received pension under such chapter.

(C) The number of individuals with respect to whom the Secretary denied or discontinued payment of pension under the subsections referred to in paragraph (1).

(D) A description of any trends identified by the Secretary regarding pension payments that have occurred as a result of the amendments made by this section.

(E) Such other information as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the Select Committee on Aging of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 903. EXTENSION OF REDUCED PENSION FOR CERTAIN VETERANS COVERED BY MEDICAID PLANS FOR SERVICES FURNISHED BY NURSING FACILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (d)(7) of section 5503 is amended by striking “November 30, 2016” and inserting “September 30, 2023”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SECTION HEADING.—The section heading of such section is amended to read as follows: “Reduced pension for certain hospitalized veterans and certain veterans receiving domiciliary, nursing home, or nursing facility care”.

(2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 55 is amended by striking the item relating to section 5503 and inserting the following new item:

“5503. Reduced pension for certain hospitalized veterans and certain veterans receiving domiciliary, nursing home, or nursing facility care.”.

SEC. 904. CONDITIONS ON AWARD OF PER DIEM PAYMENTS BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR PROVISION OF HOUSING OR SERVICES TO HOMELESS VETERANS.

(a) CONDITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2012(c)(1) is amended by striking “unless the facilities” and all that follows through “may specify.” and inserting the following: “unless the Secretary certifies the following:

“(A) That the building where the grant recipient or eligible entity provides housing or services for which the grant recipient or eligible entity would receive such payment is in compliance with the codes relevant to the operations and level of care provided, including applicable provisions of the most recently published version of the Life Safety Code of the National Fire Protection Association or such other comparable fire and safety requirements as the Secretary may specify.

“(B) That such building and such housing or services are in compliance with licensing requirements, fire and safety requirements, and any other requirements in the jurisdiction in which the building is located regarding the condition of the building and the provision of such housing or services.”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply with respect to an application for a per diem payment under section 2012 of title 38, United States Code, submitted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) ANNUAL INSPECTIONS REQUIRED.—Section 2012 is amended by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following new subsection (b):

“(b)(1) Not less frequently than once each fiscal year, the Secretary shall inspect each facility of each grant recipient or entity eligible for payments under subsection (a) at which the recipients and entities provide services under section 2011 of this title or this section.

“(2) Except as provided in paragraph (1), inspections made under such paragraph shall be made at such times as the Secretary considers necessary.

“(3) An inspection of a facility of a recipient or entity described in paragraph (1) made

under such paragraph may be made with or without prior notice to the recipient or entity, as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(4) No per diem payment may be provided to a grant recipient or eligible entity under this section unless the facilities of the grant recipient or eligible entity meet such standards as the Secretary shall prescribe.”.

(c) REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION AUTHORIZED.—Subsection (c) of such section is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively;

(2) in paragraph (1), as amended by subsection (a)(1), by striking “in paragraph (2)” and inserting “in paragraph (4)”;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph (2):

“(2) The Secretary may revoke any certification made under paragraph (1) if the Secretary determines that such certification is no longer accurate.”.

(d) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION OF TERMINATION OF PER DIEM REQUIRED.—Such subsection is further amended by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph (3):

“(3) Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Secretary terminates provision of per diem payment under this section to a grant recipient or an eligible entity, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives notice of such termination if such termination were made because a facility of the grant recipient or eligible entity did not comply with—

“(A) an applicable provision of the most recently published version of the Life Safety Code of the National Fire Protection Association or such other comparable fire and safety requirement as the Secretary has specified; or

“(B) a licensing requirement, fire or safety requirement, or another requirement in the jurisdiction in which the facility is located regarding the condition of the facility.”.

(e) TREATMENT OF CURRENT RECIPIENTS OF PER DIEM PAYMENTS.—

(1) ASSESSMENT.—In the case of the recipient of a per diem payment under section 2012 of title 38, United States Code, that receives such a payment during the year in which this Act is enacted for the provision of housing or services, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall assess whether the building where such housing or services are provided is and whether the housing and services are in compliance as required by section 2012(c)(1) of such title, as amended by subsection (a)(1).

(2) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—In the case described in paragraph (1), if the Secretary does not certify the compliance of the building and the housing or services under such section before the date that is two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary may not make any additional per diem payments to the recipient for the provision of such housing or services under section 2012 of such title until the Secretary certifies that such building is and such housing or services are in compliance.

(f) CONFORMING CONDITION ON AWARD OF GRANTS BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE PROGRAMS.—Section 2011(b)(5)(A) is amended by inserting “, including housing and building codes,”.

SEC. 905. EXCEPTION TO CERTAIN RECAPTURE REQUIREMENTS AND TREATMENT OF CONTRACTS AND GRANTS WITH STATE HOMES WITH RESPECT TO CARE FOR HOMELESS VETERANS.

(a) EXCEPTION TO CERTAIN RECAPTURE REQUIREMENTS.—Section 8136(b) is amended by

inserting “, or the provision of services or conduct of a program pursuant to a contract or grant issued or awarded by the Secretary under subchapter II of chapter 20 or section 2031(a)(2) of this title,” after “outpatient clinic”.

(b) CONSTRUCTION.—The amendment made by subsection (a) may not be construed to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into a contract with a State home or award a grant to a State home for the furnishing of residential care for a veteran without—

(1) identifying a substantial need for such care; and

(2) determining that the State home is the most appropriate provider of such care.

SEC. 906. EXTENDED PERIOD FOR SCHEDULING OF MEDICAL EXAMS FOR VETERANS RECEIVING TEMPORARY DISABILITY RATINGS FOR SEVERE MENTAL DISORDERS.

Section 1156(a)(3) is amended by striking “six months” and inserting “18 months”.

SEC. 907. AUTHORITY TO ISSUE VETERANS ID CARDS.

(a) AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may issue a card to a veteran that identifies the veteran as a veteran and includes a photo of the veteran and the name of the veteran.

(2) NO REQUIREMENT FOR ENROLLMENT OR RECEIPT OF BENEFITS.—The Secretary may issue a card under paragraph (1) to a veteran, whether or not such veteran is—

(A) enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment established under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code; or

(B) in receipt of educational assistance, compensation, or pension under laws administered by the Secretary.

(3) DESIGNATION.—A card issued under paragraph (1) may be known as a “Veterans ID Card”.

(b) RECOGNITION OF VETERANS ID CARDS FOR REDUCED PRICING OF PHARMACEUTICALS, CONSUMER PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES.—The Secretary may work with national retail chains that offer reduced prices on pharmaceuticals, consumer products, and services to veterans to ensure that such retail chains recognize cards issued under subsection (a)(1) for purposes of offering reduced prices on pharmaceuticals, consumer products, and services.

(c) VETERAN DEFINED.—In this section, the term “veteran” has the meaning given the term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 908. HONORING AS VETERANS CERTAIN PERSONS WHO PERFORMED SERVICE IN THE RESERVE COMPONENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

Any person who is entitled under chapter 1223 of title 10, United States Code, to retired pay for nonregular service or, but for age, would be entitled under such chapter to retired pay for nonregular service shall be honored as a veteran but shall not be entitled to any benefit by reason of this honor.

SEC. 909. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO OBTAIN INFORMATION FROM SECRETARY OF TREASURY AND COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SECURITY FOR INCOME VERIFICATION PURPOSES.

Section 5317(g) is amended by striking “September 30, 2016” and inserting “September 30, 2018”.

SEC. 910. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO ISSUE AND GUARANTEE CERTAIN LOANS.

Section 3729(b)(2) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) in clause (iii), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”; and

(B) in clause (iv), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”;

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”; and

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”;

(3) in subparagraph (C)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”; and

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”;

(4) in subparagraph (D)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”; and

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”.

SEC. 911. REVIEW OF DETERMINATION OF CERTAIN SERVICE IN PHILIPPINES DURING WORLD WAR II.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and such military historians as the Secretary of Defense recommends, shall review the process used to determine whether a covered individual served in support of the Armed Forces of the United States during World War II in accordance with section 1002(d) of title X of Division A of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5; 38 U.S.C. 107 note) for purposes of determining whether such covered individual is eligible for payments described in such section.

(b) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—In this section, a covered individual is any individual who timely submitted a claim for benefits under subsection (c) of section 1002 of title X of Division A of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5; 38 U.S.C. 107 note) based on service as described in subsection (d) of that section.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report detailing any findings, actions taken, or recommendations for legislative action with respect to the review conducted under subsection (a).

(d) PROHIBITION ON BENEFITS FOR DISQUALIFYING CONDUCT UNDER NEW PROCESS PURSUANT TO REVIEW.—If pursuant to the review conducted under subsection (a) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines to establish a new process for the making of payments as described in that subsection, the process shall include mechanisms to ensure that individuals are not treated as covered individuals for purposes of such payments if such individuals engaged in any disqualifying conduct during service described in that subsection, including collaboration with the enemy or criminal conduct.

SEC. 912. REVIEW OF DETERMINATION OF CERTAIN SERVICE OF MERCHANT MARINERS DURING WORLD WAR II.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Homeland Security and such military historians as the Secretary of Defense recommends, shall review the process used to determine whether an individual performed service under honorable conditions that satisfies the require-

ments of a coastwise merchant seaman who is recognized pursuant to section 401 of the GI Bill Improvement Act of 1977 (Public Law 95-202; 38 U.S.C. 106 note) as having performed active duty service.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report detailing any findings, actions taken, or recommendations for legislative action with respect to the review conducted under subsection (a).

SEC. 913. REPORT ON LAOTIAN MILITARY SUPPORT OF ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES DURING VIETNAM WAR.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and such agencies and individuals as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs considers appropriate, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on—

(1) the extent to which Laotian military forces provided combat support to the Armed Forces of the United States between February 28, 1961, and May 15, 1975;

(2) whether the current classification by the Civilian/Military Service Review Board of the Department of Defense of service by individuals of Hmong ethnicity is appropriate; and

(3) any recommendations for legislative action.

(b) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—In this section, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 914. REPORT ON PRACTICES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO ADEQUATELY PROVIDE SERVICES TO VETERANS WITH HEARING LOSS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the actions taken by the Secretary to implement the findings and recommendations included in the 2006 report by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies entitled “Noise and Military Service: Implications for Hearing Loss and Tinnitus” that was prepared pursuant to section 104 of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-330; 116 Stat. 2822).

(b) EFFECT OF DUTY MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY NOISE EXPOSURE LISTING ON RECEIPT OF BENEFITS BY VETERANS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall include in the report required by subsection (a) an evaluation of the extent to which veterans who had a military occupational specialty during service as a member of the Armed Forces that is not included on the Duty Military Occupational Specialty Noise Exposure Listing (in this subsection referred to as the “MOS List”) are precluded from receiving benefits related to hearing loss from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) DATA.—The Secretary shall include in the evaluation required by paragraph (1) the following:

(A) With respect to veterans who had a military occupational specialty included on the MOS List—

(i) the number of claims for benefits related to hearing loss from the Department of Veterans Affairs that were granted; and

(ii) the number of claims for benefits related to hearing loss from the Department that were denied.

(B) With respect to veterans who had a military occupational specialty not included on the MOS List—

(i) the number of claims for benefits related to hearing loss from the Department that were granted;

(ii) the number of claims for benefits related to hearing loss from the Department that were denied;

(iii) of the number of denied claims under clause (ii), the number of those claims that were appealed; and

(iv) of the number of appealed claims under clause (iii), the number of those appealed claims that were successfully appealed.

(c) ADDITIONAL MATTERS.—The Secretary shall include in the report required by subsection (a) the following:

(1) In the case of a veteran with unilateral hearing loss, an explanation of the scientific basis for the practice of the Department of determining a disability rating level with respect to hearing based on an examination of that veteran's healthy ear instead of the injured ear.

(2) An analysis of the reduction in earning capacity for veterans as a result of unilateral hearing loss, with a focus on the ability of those veterans—

(A) to detect the direction of sound; and

(B) to understand speech.

(3) An explanation of the rationale for the practice of the Department of not issuing a compensable rating for hearing loss at certain levels that are severe enough to require the use of hearing aids.

(4) A survey of the audiologists that conduct compensation and pension examinations for the Department to assess the implementation of the most recent edition of the best practices manual for hearing loss and tinnitus examinations that includes the following:

(A) A description of the training received by those audiologists compared to the methods described in the most recent edition of the best practices manual for hearing loss and tinnitus examinations.

(B) An assessment of how those audiologists have complied with that training.

(C) Whether those audiologists are using a range of tones up to 8000 hertz to test the hearing of veterans.

(d) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize or require the Secretary to defer, delay, or replace the ongoing efforts of the Secretary to update the schedule of ratings required by section 1155 of title 38, United States Code.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 915. REPORT ON JOINT PROGRAMS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE WITH RESPECT TO HEARING LOSS OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, submit to Congress a report that identifies the following:

(1) Goals for the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense for the prevention, early detection, and treatment of hearing loss by the National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory Research of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Hearing Center of Excellence of the Department of Defense.

(2) Resources of the Department of Veterans Affairs that could be made available to assist the Department of Defense in conducting audiometric tests and tinnitus screenings for members of the Armed Forces.

(3) Barriers to information being added to the Hearing Loss and Auditory System Injury Registry required under section 721(c)(1) of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (Public Law 110-417; 122 Stat. 4506).

(4) Recommendations for any legislative or administrative actions necessary with respect to the Hearing Loss and Auditory System Injury Registry—

(A) to assist in achieving the goals specified in paragraph (1);

(B) to improve the adjudication of claims for benefits with respect to hearing loss; and

(C) to further the research objectives of the National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory Research of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Hearing Center of Excellence of the Department of Defense.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 916. LIMITATION ON AGGREGATE AMOUNT OF BONUSES PAYABLE TO PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DURING FISCAL YEAR 2014.

The aggregate amount of bonuses and awards payable to personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs under chapter 45 or 53 of title 5, United States Code, or any other provision of such title, during fiscal year 2014 may not exceed \$368,000,000.

SEC. 917. AMENDMENT TO OCO ADJUSTMENTS.

Section 251 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) **ELIMINATING A BREACH.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Each non-exempt account within a category shall be reduced by a dollar amount calculated by multiplying the enacted level of sequestrable budgetary resources in that account at that time by the uniform percentage necessary to eliminate a breach within that category.

“(B) **OVERSEAS CONTINGENCIES.**—Any amount of budget authority designated as for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism for any of fiscal years 2018 through 2021 in excess of the levels set in subsection (b)(2)(E) shall be counted in determining whether a breach has occurred in the revised security category during the fiscal year.”; and

(2) in subsection (b)(2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A)(ii), by inserting “for fiscal years 2012 through 2017,” before “the Congress”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(E) **OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS/GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM.**—If, for fiscal years 2018 through 2021, appropriations for discretionary accounts are enacted that Congress designates for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism in statute on an account by account basis and the President subsequently so designates, the adjustment for the fiscal year shall be the total of such appropriations for the fiscal year in

discretionary accounts designated as being for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism, but not to exceed—

“(i) for fiscal year 2018, \$94,740,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

“(ii) for fiscal year 2019, \$96,807,000,000 in additional new budget authority;

“(iii) for fiscal year 2020, \$98,983,000,000 in additional new budget authority; and

“(iv) for fiscal year 2021, \$101,167,000,000 in additional new budget authority.”.

SA 2748. Mr. RUBIO submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 367, after line 14, add the following:

SEC. 918. REMOVAL OF SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR PERFORMANCE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 7 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 713. Senior Executive Service: removal based on performance

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—(1) Notwithstanding subchapter V of chapter 35 of title 5, subchapter V of chapter 75 of title 5, or any other provision of law, the Secretary may remove any individual who is an employee of the Department from a Senior Executive Service position (as defined in section 3132(a) of title 5) if the Secretary determines the performance of the individual warrants such removal.

“(2) If the Secretary so removes such an individual, the Secretary may—

“(A) remove the individual from the civil service (as defined in section 2101 of title 5); or

“(B) appoint the individual to a General Schedule position at any grade of the General Schedule the Secretary determines appropriate.

“(b) **NOTICE TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 30 days after removing an individual from the Senior Executive Service under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives notice in writing of such removal and the reason for such removal.

“(c) **MANNER OF REMOVAL.**—A removal under this section shall be done in the same manner as the removal of a professional staff member employed by a Member of Congress.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“713. Senior Executive Service: removal based on performance.”.

SA 2749. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 367, after line 14, add the following:

SEC. 918. CLARIFICATION OF PRESUMPTIONS OF EXPOSURE FOR VETERANS WHO SERVED IN VICINITY OF REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.

(a) **COMPENSATION.**—Subsections (a)(1) and (f) of section 1116 are amended by inserting

“(including the territorial seas of such Republic)” after “served in the Republic of Vietnam” each place it appears.

(b) **HEALTH CARE.**—Section 1710(e)(4) is amended by inserting “(including the territorial seas of such Republic)” after “served on active duty in the Republic of Vietnam”.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) shall take effect as of September 25, 1985.

SA 2750. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IX, add the following:

SEC. 918. REVIEW OF OPERATION OF CERTAIN SHIPS DURING THE VIETNAM ERA.

(a) **REVIEW REQUIRED.**—By not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall review the logs of each ship under the authority of the Secretary of the Navy that is known to have operated in the waters near Vietnam during the Vietnam Era (as that term is defined in section 101(29) of title 38, United States Code) to determine—

(1) whether each such ship operated in the territorial waters of the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975; and

(2) for each such ship that so operated—

(A) the date or dates when the ship so operated; and

(B) the distance from the shore of the location where the ship operated that was the closest proximity to shore.

(b) **PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**—Upon a determination that any such ship so operated, the Secretary of Defense shall provide such determination, together with the information described in subsection (a)(2) about the ship, to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(c) **PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make publicly available all unclassified information provided to the Secretary under subsection (b).

SA 2751. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE X—MILITARY JUSTICE MATTERS

SEC. 1001. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Military Justice Improvement Act of 2014”.

SEC. 1002. MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITY TO DETERMINE TO PROCEED TO TRIAL BY COURT-MARTIAL ON CHARGES ON CERTAIN OFFENSES WITH AUTHORIZED MAXIMUM SENTENCE OF CONFINEMENT OF MORE THAN ONE YEAR.

(a) **MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—

(A) **MILITARY DEPARTMENTS.**—With respect to charges under chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (the Uniform Code of Military Justice), that allege an offense specified in paragraph (2) and not excluded under paragraph (3), the Secretary of Defense shall require the Secretaries of the military departments to provide for the determination under section 830(b) of such chapter (article 30(b) of the Uniform Code of Military

Justice) on whether to try such charges by court-martial as provided in paragraph (4).

(B) **HOMELAND SECURITY.**—With respect to charges under chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (the Uniform Code of Military Justice), that allege an offense specified in paragraph (2) and not excluded under paragraph (3) against a member of the Coast Guard (when it is not operating as a service in the Navy), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide for the determination under section 830(b) of such chapter (article 30(b) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice) on whether to try such charges by court-martial as provided in paragraph (4).

(2) **COVERED OFFENSES.**—An offense specified in this paragraph is an offense as follows:

(A) An offense under chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (the Uniform Code of Military Justice), that is triable by court-martial under that chapter for which the maximum punishment authorized under that chapter includes confinement for more than one year.

(B) A conspiracy to commit an offense specified in subparagraph (A) as punishable under section 881 of title 10, United States Code (article 81 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(C) A solicitation to commit an offense specified in subparagraph (A) as punishable under section 882 of title 10, United States Code (article 82 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(D) An attempt to commit an offense specified in subparagraphs (A) through (C) as punishable under section 880 of title 10, United States Code (article 80 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(3) **EXCLUDED OFFENSES.**—Paragraph (1) does not apply to an offense as follows:

(A) An offense under sections 883 through 917 of title 10, United States Code (articles 83 through 117 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(B) An offense under section 933 or 934 of title 10, United States Code (articles 133 and 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(C) A conspiracy to commit an offense specified in subparagraph (A) or (B) as punishable under section 881 of title 10, United States Code (article 81 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(D) A solicitation to commit an offense specified in subparagraph (A) or (B) as punishable under section 882 of title 10, United States Code (article 82 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(E) An attempt to commit an offense specified in subparagraph (A) through (D) as punishable under section 880 of title 10, United States Code (article 80 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(4) **REQUIREMENTS AND LIMITATIONS.**—The disposition of charges pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be subject to the following:

(A) The determination whether to try such charges by court-martial shall be made by a commissioned officer of the Armed Forces designated in accordance with regulations prescribed for purposes of this subsection from among commissioned officers of the Armed Forces in grade O-6 or higher who—

(i) are available for detail as trial counsel under section 827 of title 10, United States Code (article 27 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice);

(ii) have significant experience in trials by general or special court-martial; and

(iii) are outside the chain of command of the member subject to such charges.

(B) Upon a determination under subparagraph (A) to try such charges by court-mar-

tial, the officer making that determination shall determine whether to try such charges by a general court-martial convened under section 822 of title 10, United States Code (article 22 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), or a special court-martial convened under section 823 of title 10, United States Code (article 23 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(C) A determination under subparagraph (A) to try charges by court-martial shall include a determination to try all known offenses, including lesser included offenses.

(D) The determination to try such charges by court-martial under subparagraph (A), and by type of court-martial under subparagraph (B), shall be binding on any applicable convening authority for a trial by court-martial on such charges.

(E) The actions of an officer described in subparagraph (A) in determining under that subparagraph whether or not to try charges by court-martial shall be free of unlawful or unauthorized influence or coercion.

(F) The determination under subparagraph (A) not to proceed to trial of such charges by general or special court-martial shall not operate to terminate or otherwise alter the authority of commanding officers to refer such charges for trial by summary court-martial convened under section 824 of title 10, United States Code (article 24 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), or to impose non-judicial punishment in connection with the conduct covered by such charges as authorized by section 815 of title 10, United States Code (article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice).

(5) **CONSTRUCTION WITH CHARGES ON OTHER OFFENSES.**—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to alter or affect the disposition of charges under chapter 47 of title 10, United States Code (the Uniform Code of Military Justice), that allege an offense triable by court-martial under that chapter for which the maximum punishment authorized under that chapter includes confinement for one year or less.

(6) **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretaries of the military departments and the Secretary of Homeland Security (with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy) shall revise policies and procedures as necessary to comply with this subsection.

(B) **UNIFORMITY.**—The General Counsel of the Department of Defense and the General Counsel of the Department of Homeland Security shall jointly review the policies and procedures revised under this paragraph in order to ensure that any lack of uniformity in policies and procedures, as so revised, among the military departments and the Department of Homeland Security does not render unconstitutional any policy or procedure, as so revised.

(7) **MANUAL FOR COURTS-MARTIAL.**—The Secretary of Defense shall recommend such changes to the Manual for Courts-Martial as are necessary to ensure compliance with this subsection.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE AND APPLICABILITY.**—Subsection (a), and the revisions required by that subsection, shall take effect on the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and shall apply with respect to charges preferred under section 830 of title 10, United States Code (article 30 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), on or after such effective date.

SEC. 1003. MODIFICATION OF OFFICERS AUTHORIZED TO CONVENE GENERAL AND SPECIAL COURTS-MARTIAL.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subsection (a) of section 822 of title 10, United States Code (article 22 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (8) and (9) as paragraphs (9) and (10), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following new paragraph (8):

“(8) the officers in the offices established pursuant to section 1003(c) of the Military Justice Improvement Act of 2014 or officers in the grade of O-6 or higher who are assigned such responsibility by the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, or the Commandant of the Coast Guard, but only with respect to offenses to which section 1002(a)(1) of the Military Justice Improvement Act of 2014 applies;”.

(b) **NO EXERCISE BY OFFICERS IN CHAIN OF COMMAND OF ACCUSED OR VICTIM.**—Such section (article) is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) An officer specified in subsection (a)(8) may not convene a court-martial under this section if the officer is in the chain of command of the accused or the victim.”.

(c) **OFFICES OF CHIEFS OF STAFF ON COURTS-MARTIAL.**—

(1) **OFFICES REQUIRED.**—Each Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces or Commandant specified in paragraph (8) of section 822(a) of title 10, United States Code (article 22(a) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), as amended by subsection (a), shall establish an office to do the following:

(A) To convene general and special courts-martial under sections 822 and 823 of title 10, United States Code (articles 22 and 23 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), pursuant to paragraph (8) of section 822(a) of title 10, United States Code (article 22(a) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), as so amended, with respect to offenses to which section 1002(a)(1) applies.

(B) To detail under section 825 of title 10, United States Code (article 25 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice), members of courts-martial convened as described in subparagraph (A).

(2) **PERSONNEL.**—The personnel of each office established under paragraph (1) shall consist of such members of the Armed Forces and civilian personnel of the Department of Defense, or such members of the Coast Guard or civilian personnel of the Department of Homeland Security, as may be detailed or assigned to the office by the Chief of Staff or Commandant concerned. The members and personnel so detailed or assigned, as the case may be, shall be detailed or assigned from personnel billets in existence on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 1004. DISCHARGE USING OTHERWISE AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL AND RESOURCES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretaries of the military departments and the Secretary of Homeland Security (with respect to the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy) shall carry out sections 1002 and 1003 (and the amendments made by section 1003) using personnel, funds, and resources otherwise authorized by law.

(b) **NO AUTHORIZATION OF ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL OR RESOURCES.**—Sections 1002 and 1003 (and the amendments made by section 1003) shall not be construed as authorizations for personnel, personnel billets, or funds for the discharge of the requirements in such sections.

SEC. 1005. MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITIES ON COURTS-MARTIAL BY INDEPENDENT PANEL ON REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF PROCEEDINGS UNDER THE UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE.

Section 576(d)(2) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (Public Law 112-239; 126 Stat. 1762) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subparagraph (J) as subparagraph (K); and

(2) by inserting after subparagraph (I) the following new subparagraph (J):

“(J) Monitor and assess the implementation and efficacy of sections 1002 through 1004 of the Military Justice Improvement Act of 2014, and the amendments made by such sections.”.

SA 2752. Mr. BURR (for himself, Mr. McCONNELL, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014”.

(b) **TABLE OF CONTENTS.**—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
Sec. 2. References to title 38, United States Code.

TITLE I—SURVIVOR AND DEPENDENT MATTERS

- Sec. 101. Extension of initial period for increased dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses with children.
- Sec. 102. Eligibility for dependency and indemnity compensation, educational assistance, and housing loans for surviving spouses who remarry after age 55.
- Sec. 103. Extension of marriage delimiting date for surviving spouses of Persian Gulf War veterans to qualify for death pension.
- Sec. 104. Making effective date provision consistent with provision for benefits eligibility of a veteran's child based upon termination of remarriage by annulment.
- Sec. 105. Expansion of Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship.
- Sec. 106. Expansion of Yellow Ribbon G.I. Education Enhancement Program.
- Sec. 107. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina bifida.
- Sec. 108. Program on assisted living for children of Vietnam veterans and certain Korea service veterans born with spina bifida.
- Sec. 109. Program on grief counseling in retreat settings for surviving spouses of members of the Armed Forces who die while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces.
- Sec. 110. Program evaluation on survivors' and dependents' educational assistance authorities.

TITLE II—EDUCATION MATTERS

- Sec. 201. Approval of courses of education provided by public institutions of higher learning for purposes of All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance conditional on in-State tuition rate for veterans.
- Sec. 202. Extension and expansion of authority for certain qualifying work-study activities for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 203. Prohibitions relating to references to GI Bill and Post-9/11 GI Bill.
- Sec. 204. Review of utilization of educational assistance to pursue programs of training on the job and participating employers.
- Sec. 205. Report on debt management and collection.
- Sec. 206. Restoration of prior reporting fee multipliers.

TITLE III—HEALTH CARE MATTERS

Subtitle A—Expansion and Improvements of Benefits Generally

- Sec. 301. Improved access to appropriate immunizations for veterans.
- Sec. 302. Expansion of provision of chiropractic care and services to veterans.
- Sec. 303. Modification of commencement date of period of service at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for eligibility for hospital care and medical services in connection with exposure to contaminated water.
- Sec. 304. Expansion of emergency treatment reimbursement for certain veterans.
- Sec. 305. Extension of sunset date regarding transportation of individuals to and from facilities of Department of Veterans Affairs and requirement of report.
- Sec. 306. Extension and modification of pilot program on assisted living services for veterans with traumatic brain injury.
- Sec. 307. Program on health promotion for overweight and obese veterans through support of fitness center memberships.
- Sec. 308. Program on health promotion for veterans through establishment of Department of Veterans Affairs fitness facilities.

Subtitle B—Health Care Administration

- Sec. 311. Extension of Department of Veterans Affairs Health Professional Scholarship Program.
- Sec. 312. Expansion of availability of prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.
- Sec. 313. Limitation on expansion of dialysis pilot program.
- Sec. 314. Requirement for Department of Veterans Affairs policy on reporting cases of infectious diseases at facilities of the Department.
- Sec. 315. Independent assessment of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks and medical centers of Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Sec. 316. Requirements in connection with next update of current strategic plan for Office of Rural Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 317. Report on provision of telemedicine services.

Sec. 318. Report on expansion of patient enrollment.

Sec. 319. Report on expansion of program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers.

Sec. 320. Designation of Corporal Michael J. Crescenzo Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Subtitle C—Complementary and Alternative Medicine

Sec. 321. Expansion of research and education on and delivery of complementary and alternative medicine to veterans.

Sec. 322. Program on integration of complementary and alternative medicine within Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers.

Sec. 323. Studies of barriers encountered by veterans in receiving, and administrators and clinicians in providing, complementary and alternative medicine services furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 324. Program on use of wellness programs as complementary approach to mental health care for veterans and family members of veterans.

Subtitle D—Mental Health Care

Sec. 331. Inclusion of mental health professionals in the education and training program for health personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 332. Report on provision of mental health services for families of certain veterans at facilities of the Department.

Sec. 333. Annual report on community mental health partnership pilot program.

Subtitle E—Dental Care Eligibility Expansion and Enhancement

Sec. 341. Restorative dental services for veterans.

Sec. 342. Pilot program on expansion of furnishing of dental care to all enrolled veterans.

Sec. 343. Program on education to promote dental health in veterans.

Sec. 344. Information on dental services for inclusion in electronic medical records under dental insurance pilot program.

Sec. 345. Authorization of appropriations.

Subtitle F—Health Care Related to Sexual Trauma

Sec. 351. Expansion of eligibility for sexual trauma counseling and treatment to veterans on inactive duty training.

Sec. 352. Provision of counseling and treatment for sexual trauma by the Department of Veterans Affairs to members of the Armed Forces.

Sec. 353. Department of Veterans Affairs screening mechanism to detect incidents of domestic abuse.

Sec. 354. Reports on military sexual trauma and domestic abuse.

Subtitle G—Adoption Assistance, Child Care Assistance, and Counseling

Sec. 361. Adoption assistance for severely wounded veterans.

Sec. 362. Coordination between Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense on furnishing of fertility counseling and treatment.

Sec. 363. Program on assistance for child care for certain veterans.

Sec. 364. Counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated from service in the Armed Forces.

Subtitle H—Major Medical Facility Leases

Sec. 371. Authorization of major medical facility leases.

Sec. 372. Budgetary treatment of Department of Veterans Affairs major medical facilities leases.

TITLE IV—EMPLOYMENT AND RELATED MATTERS

Subtitle A—Training and Other Services for Veterans Seeking Employment

Sec. 401. Extension of authority of Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide rehabilitation and vocational benefits to members of Armed Forces with severe injuries or illnesses.

Sec. 402. Consolidated and coordinated Federal Government Internet portal to connect current and former members of the Armed Forces with employers seeking employees with skills and experience developed through military service.

Subtitle B—Employment of Veterans and Recognition of Veteran Status With Respect to Employment Related Matters

Sec. 411. Employment of veterans with the Federal Government.

Sec. 412. State recognition of military experience of veterans in issuing licenses and credentials to veterans.

Sec. 413. Employment of veterans as evaluation factor in the awarding of Federal contracts.

Sec. 414. Report on discrimination against members of reserve components of Armed Forces and veterans in civilian labor market.

Subtitle C—Improving Employment and Reemployment Rights of Members of the Uniformed Services

Sec. 421. Suspension, termination, or debarment of contractors for repeated violations of employment or reemployment rights of members of uniformed services.

Subtitle D—Small Business Matters

Sec. 431. Expansion of contracting goals and preferences of Department of Veterans Affairs to include conditionally owned small business concerns 100 percent owned by veterans.

Sec. 432. Modification of treatment under contracting goals and preferences of Department of Veterans Affairs for small businesses owned by veterans of small businesses after death of disabled veteran owners.

Sec. 433. Treatment of businesses after deaths of servicemember-owners for purposes of Department of Veterans Affairs contracting goals and preferences.

Sec. 434. Special rule for treatment under contracting goals and preferences of Department of Veterans Affairs of small business concerns licensed in community property States.

Sec. 435. Report on assistance for veterans in obtaining training on purchasing and operating a franchise.

TITLE V—ACCOUNTABILITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENTS

Sec. 501. Administration of Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

Sec. 502. Regional support centers for Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

Sec. 503. Commission on Capital Planning for Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facilities.

Sec. 504. Advance appropriations for certain accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 505. Public access to Department of Veterans Affairs research and data sharing between Departments.

Sec. 506. Assessment by Comptroller General of the United States of information made available by Veterans Benefits Administration.

Sec. 507. Comptroller general report on advisory committees of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

TITLE VI—IMPROVEMENT OF PROCESSING OF CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION

Subtitle A—Claims Based on Military Sexual Trauma

Sec. 601. Medical examination and opinion for disability compensation claims based on military sexual trauma.

Sec. 602. Case representative officers for military sexual trauma support.

Sec. 603. Report on standard of proof for service-connection of mental health conditions related to military sexual trauma.

Sec. 604. Reports on claims for disabilities incurred or aggravated by military sexual trauma.

Subtitle B—Claims for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

Sec. 611. Program on treatment of certain applications for dependency and indemnity compensation as fully developed claims.

Sec. 612. Report by Secretary of Veterans Affairs on improving timeliness and accuracy of administration of claims for dependency and indemnity compensation and pension for surviving spouses and children.

Subtitle C—Agency of Original Jurisdiction

Sec. 621. Working group to improve employee work credit and work management systems of Veterans Benefits Administration in an electronic environment.

Sec. 622. Task force on retention and training of Department of Veterans Affairs claims processors and adjudicators.

Sec. 623. Reports on requests by the Department of Veterans Affairs for records of other Federal agencies.

Sec. 624. Recognition of representatives of Indian tribes in the preparation, presentation, and prosecution of claims under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 625. Program on participation of local and tribal governments in improving quality of claims for disability compensation submitted to Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 626. Department of Veterans Affairs notice of average times for processing compensation claims.

Sec. 627. Quarterly reports on progress of Department of Veterans Affairs in eliminating backlog of claims for compensation that have not been adjudicated.

Sec. 628. Reports on use of existing authorities to expedite benefits decisions.

Sec. 629. Reports on Department disability medical examinations and prevention of unnecessary medical examinations.

Subtitle D—Board of Veterans' Appeals and Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

Sec. 631. Treatment of certain misfiled documents as a notice of appeal to the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

Sec. 632. Determination of manner of appearance for hearings before Board of Veterans' Appeals.

TITLE VII—OUTREACH MATTERS

Sec. 701. Program to increase coordination of outreach efforts between the Department of Veterans Affairs and Federal, State, and local agencies and nonprofit organizations.

Sec. 702. Cooperative agreements between Secretary of Veterans Affairs and States on outreach activities.

Sec. 703. Advisory committee on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 704. Advisory boards on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs relating to health care.

Sec. 705. Modification of requirement for periodic reports to Congress on outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sec. 706. Budget transparency for outreach activities of Department of Veterans Affairs.

TITLE VIII—OTHER VETERANS MATTERS

Sec. 801. Repeal of certain reductions made by Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.

Sec. 802. Consideration by Secretary of Veterans Affairs of resources disposed of for less than fair market value by individuals applying for pension.

Sec. 803. Extension of reduced pension for certain veterans covered by medicaid plans for services furnished by nursing facilities.

Sec. 804. Conditions on award of per diem payments by Secretary of Veterans Affairs for provision of housing or services to homeless veterans.

Sec. 805. Exception to certain recapture requirements and treatment of contracts and grants with State homes with respect to care for homeless veterans.

- Sec. 806. Extended period for scheduling of medical exams for veterans receiving temporary disability ratings for severe mental disorders.
- Sec. 807. Authority to issue Veterans ID Cards.
- Sec. 808. Honoring as veterans certain persons who performed service in the reserve components of the Armed Forces.
- Sec. 809. Extension of authority for Secretary of Veterans Affairs to obtain information from Secretary of Treasury and Commissioner of Social Security for income verification purposes.
- Sec. 810. Extension of authority for Secretary of Veterans Affairs to issue and guarantee certain loans.
- Sec. 811. Review of determination of certain service in Philippines during World War II.
- Sec. 812. Review of determination of certain service of merchant mariners during World War II.
- Sec. 813. Report on Laotian military support of Armed Forces of the United States during Vietnam War.
- Sec. 814. Report on practices of the Department of Veterans Affairs to adequately provide services to veterans with hearing loss.
- Sec. 815. Report on joint programs of Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense with respect to hearing loss of members of the Armed Forces and veterans.
- Sec. 816. Limitation on aggregate amount of bonuses payable to personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs during fiscal year 2014.
- Sec. 817. Designation of American World War II Cities.

TITLE IX—IRAN SANCTIONS

- Sec. 901. Short title.
- Sec. 902. Sense of Congress on nuclear weapon capabilities of Iran.

Subtitle A—Expansion and Imposition of Sanctions

- Sec. 911. Applicability of sanctions with respect to petroleum transactions.
- Sec. 912. Ineligibility for exception to certain sanctions for countries that do not reduce purchases of petroleum from Iran or of Iranian origin to a de minimis level.
- Sec. 913. Imposition of sanctions with respect to ports, special economic zones, and strategic sectors of Iran.
- Sec. 914. Identification of, and imposition of sanctions with respect to, certain Iranian individuals.
- Sec. 915. Imposition of sanctions with respect to transactions in foreign currencies with or for certain sanctioned persons.
- Sec. 916. Sense of Congress on prospective sanctions.

Subtitle B—Enforcement of Sanctions

- Sec. 921. Sense of Congress on the provision of specialized financial messaging services to the Central Bank of Iran and other sanctioned Iranian financial institutions.

- Sec. 922. Inclusion of transfers of goods, services, and technologies to strategic sectors of Iran for purposes of identifying Destinations of Diversion Concern.

- Sec. 923. Authorization of additional measures with respect to Destinations of Diversion Concern.

- Sec. 924. Sense of Congress on increased staffing for agencies involved in the implementation and enforcement of sanctions against Iran.

Subtitle C—Implementation of Sanctions

- Sec. 931. Suspension of sanctions to facilitate a diplomatic solution.

Subtitle D—General Provisions

- Sec. 941. Exception for Afghanistan reconstruction.
- Sec. 942. Exception for import restrictions.
- Sec. 943. Applicability to certain intelligence activities.
- Sec. 944. Applicability to certain natural gas projects.
- Sec. 945. Rule of construction with respect to the use of force against Iran.

SEC. 2. REFERENCES TO TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE.

Except as otherwise expressly provided, whenever in this Act an amendment or repeal is expressed in terms of an amendment to, or repeal of, a section or other provision, the reference shall be considered to be made to a section or other provision of title 38, United States Code.

TITLE I—SURVIVOR AND DEPENDENT MATTERS

SEC. 101. EXTENSION OF INITIAL PERIOD FOR INCREASED DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES WITH CHILDREN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1311(f)(2) is amended by striking “two-year” and inserting “three-year”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect as of September 30, 2014, and shall apply to any surviving spouse who was eligible for or in receipt of benefits under section 1311(f) of title 38, United States Code, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 102. ELIGIBILITY FOR DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION, EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE, AND HOUSING LOANS FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES WHO REMARRY AFTER AGE 55.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (2)(B) of section 103(d) is amended to read as follows:

“(B) The remarriage after age 55 of the surviving spouse of a veteran shall not bar the furnishing of benefits specified in paragraph (5) to such person as the surviving spouse of the veteran.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Paragraph (5) of such section is amended by striking “Paragraphs (2)(A)” and inserting “Paragraphs (2)”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 103. EXTENSION OF MARRIAGE DELIMITING DATE FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES OF PERSIAN GULF WAR VETERANS TO QUALIFY FOR DEATH PENSION.

Section 1541(f)(1)(E) is amended by striking “January 1, 2001” and inserting “the date that is 10 years and one day after the date on which the Persian Gulf War was terminated, as prescribed by Presidential proclamation or by law”.

SEC. 104. MAKING EFFECTIVE DATE PROVISION CONSISTENT WITH PROVISION FOR BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY OF A VETERAN'S CHILD BASED UPON TERMINATION OF REMARRIAGE BY ANNULMENT.

Section 5110(1) is amended by striking “, or of an award or increase of benefits based on recognition of a child upon termination of the child's marriage by death or divorce,”.

SEC. 105. EXPANSION OF MARINE GUNNERY SERGEANT JOHN DAVID FRY SCHOLARSHIP.

(a) EXPANSION OF ENTITLEMENT.—Subsection (b)(9) of section 3311 is amended by inserting “or spouse” after “child”.

(b) LIMITATION AND ELECTION ON CERTAIN BENEFITS.—Subsection (f) of such section is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (4); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraphs:

“(2) LIMITATION.—The entitlement of an individual to assistance under subsection (a) pursuant to paragraph (9) of subsection (b) because the individual was a spouse of a person described in such paragraph shall expire on the earlier of—

“(A) the date that is 15 years after the date on which the person died; and

“(B) the date on which the individual remarries.

“(3) ELECTION ON RECEIPT OF CERTAIN BENEFITS.—A surviving spouse entitled to assistance under subsection (a) pursuant to paragraph (9) of subsection (b) who is also entitled to educational assistance under chapter 35 of this title may not receive assistance under both this section and such chapter, but shall make an irrevocable election (in such form and manner as the Secretary may prescribe) under which section or chapter to receive educational assistance.”.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3321(b)(4) is amended—

(1) by striking “an individual” and inserting “a child”; and

(2) by striking “such individual's” each time it appears and inserting “such child's”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is two years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 106. EXPANSION OF YELLOW RIBBON G.I. EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3317(a) is amended by striking “in paragraphs (1) and (2)” and inserting “in paragraphs (1), (2), and (9)”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to academic terms beginning after July 1, 2015.

SEC. 107. BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN OF CERTAIN THAILAND SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA BIFIDA.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 18 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1822. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina bifida

“(a) BENEFITS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary may provide to any child of a veteran of covered service in Thailand who is suffering from spina bifida the health care, vocational training and rehabilitation, and monetary allowance required to be paid to a child of a Vietnam veteran who is suffering from spina bifida under subchapter I of this chapter as if such child of a veteran of covered service in Thailand were a child of a Vietnam veteran who is suffering from spina bifida under such subchapter.

“(b) SPINA BIFIDA CONDITIONS COVERED.—This section applies with respect to all forms and manifestations of spina bifida, except spina bifida occulta.

“(c) VETERAN OF COVERED SERVICE IN THAILAND.—For purposes of this section, a veteran of covered service in Thailand is any individual, without regard to the characterization of that individual's service, who—

“(1) served in the active military, naval, or air service in Thailand, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975; and

“(2) is determined by the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, to have been exposed to a herbicide agent during such service in Thailand.

“(d) HERBICIDE AGENT.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘herbicide agent’ means a chemical in a herbicide used in support of United States and allied military operations in Thailand, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF “CHILD”.—Section 1831(1) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) by striking “subchapter III of this chapter” and inserting “section 1821 of this title”; and

(B) in clause (i), by striking “section 1821 of this title” and inserting “that section”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) For purposes of section 1822 of this title, an individual, regardless of age or marital status, who—

“(i) is the natural child of a veteran of covered service in Thailand (as determined for purposes of that section); and

“(ii) was conceived after the date on which that veteran first entered service described in subsection (c) of that section.”.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SUBCHAPTER HEADING.—The heading for subchapter III of chapter 18 is amended by inserting “AND THAILAND” after “KOREA”.

(2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 18 is amended—

(A) by striking the item relating to subchapter III and inserting the following new item:

“SUBCHAPTER III—CHILDREN OF CERTAIN KOREA AND THAILAND SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA BIFIDA”;

and

(B) by inserting after the item relating to section 1821 the following new item:

“1822. Benefits for children of certain Thailand service veterans born with spina bifida.”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 108. PROGRAM ON ASSISTED LIVING FOR CHILDREN OF VIETNAM VETERANS AND CERTAIN KOREA SERVICE VETERANS BORN WITH SPINA BIFIDA.

(a) PROGRAM.—Commencing not later than 180 days after the date on which this section takes effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing assisted living, group home care, or similar services in lieu of nursing home care to covered individuals.

(b) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—For purposes of this section, a covered individual is any indi-

vidual who is entitled to health care under subchapter I or III of chapter 18 of title 38, United States Code.

(c) DURATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the program shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(2) CONTINUATION.—Subject to paragraph (3), the Secretary may continue the program for an additional two-year period as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(3) TERMINATION.—The program may not operate after the date that is five years after the date of the commencement of the program.

(d) SCOPE OF SERVICES AND PROGRAM.—Under the program, the Secretary shall provide covered individuals with integrated, comprehensive services, including the following:

(1) Assisted living, group home care, or such other similar services as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) Transportation services.

(3) Such other services as the Secretary considers appropriate for the care of covered individuals under the program.

(e) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall—

(1) inform all covered individuals of the services available under the program;

(2) enter into agreements with appropriate providers of assisted living, group home care, or other similar services for provision of services under the program; and

(3) determine the appropriate number of covered individuals to be enrolled in the program and criteria for such enrollment.

(f) REPORTS.—

(1) PRELIMINARY REPORTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the commencement of the program and, if the program is continued under subsection (c)(2), not later than three years after the date of the commencement of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program.

(B) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) A description of the implementation and operation of the program.

(ii) The number of covered individuals receiving benefits under the program.

(iii) An analysis that compares the costs of furnishing assisted living, group home care, or similar services with the costs of furnishing nursing home care.

(iv) An analysis of the costs and benefits under the program.

(v) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(vi) Such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary may have.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program.

(B) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(ii) Such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary may have.

(g) FUNDING.—Amounts to carry out the program shall be derived from amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for the furnishing of nursing home care under chapter 18 of title 38, United States Code.

(h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 109. PROGRAM ON GRIEF COUNSELING IN RETREAT SETTINGS FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO DIE WHILE SERVING ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Commencing not later than 180 days after the date on which this section takes effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out, through the Readjustment Counseling Service of the Veterans Health Administration, a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing grief counseling services described in subsection (b) in group retreat settings to surviving spouses of members of the Armed Forces who die while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces who would, as determined by the Readjustment Counseling Service, benefit from the services provided under the program.

(2) PARTICIPATION AT ELECTION OF SURVIVING SPOUSE.—The participation of a surviving spouse in the program under this section shall be at the election of the surviving spouse.

(b) COVERED SERVICES.—The services provided to a surviving spouse under the program shall include the following:

(1) Information and counseling on coping with grief.

(2) Information about benefits and services available to surviving spouses under laws administered by the Secretary.

(3) Such other information and counseling as the Secretary considers appropriate to assist a surviving spouse under the program with adjusting to the death of a spouse.

(c) EVENTS.—The Secretary shall carry out the program at not fewer than six events as follows:

(1) Three events at which surviving spouses with dependent children are encouraged to bring their children.

(2) Three events at which surviving spouses with dependent children are not encouraged to bring their children.

(d) DURATION.—The program shall be carried out during the two-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(e) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the first year of the program and not later than 180 days after the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the program.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall contain the findings and conclusions of the Secretary as a result of the program, and shall include such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms “active duty”, “Armed Forces”, and “surviving spouse” have the meanings given such terms in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 110. PROGRAM EVALUATION ON SURVIVORS' AND DEPENDENTS' EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE AUTHORITIES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall enter into a contract with an appropriate private sector entity to conduct a program evaluation of the authorities for survivors' and dependents' educational assistance under chapter 35 of title 38, United States Code.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than six months after the entry into the contract required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth the results of the program evaluation conducted pursuant to the contract, together with such comments on the results of the program evaluation as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE II—EDUCATION MATTERS

SEC. 201. APPROVAL OF COURSES OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING FOR PURPOSES OF ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE CONDITIONAL ON IN-STATE TUITION RATE FOR VETERANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 3679 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c)(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter and subject to paragraphs (3) through (6), the Secretary shall disapprove a course of education provided by a public institution of higher learning to a covered individual pursuing a course of education with educational assistance under chapter 30 or 33 of this title while living in the State in which the public institution of higher learning is located if the institution charges tuition and fees for that course for the covered individual at a rate that is higher than the rate the institution charges for tuition and fees for that course for residents of the State in which the institution is located, regardless of the covered individual's State of residence.

“(2) For purposes of this subsection, a covered individual is any individual as follows:

“(A) A veteran who was discharged or released from a period of not fewer than 90 days of service in the active military, naval, or air service less than three years before the date of enrollment in the course concerned.

“(B) An individual who is entitled to assistance under section 3311(b)(9) or 3319 of this title by virtue of such individual's relationship to a veteran described in subparagraph (A).

“(3) If after enrollment in a course of education that is subject to disapproval under paragraph (1) by reason of paragraph (2)(A) or (2)(B) a covered individual pursues one or more courses of education at the same public institution of higher learning while remaining continuously enrolled (other than during regularly scheduled breaks between courses, semesters or terms) at that institution of higher learning, any course so pursued by the covered individual at that institution of higher learning while so continuously enrolled shall also be subject to disapproval under paragraph (1).

“(4) It shall not be grounds to disapprove a course of education under paragraph (1) if a public institution of higher learning requires a covered individual pursuing a course of education at the institution to demonstrate

an intent, by means other than satisfying a physical presence requirement, to establish residency in the State in which the institution is located, or to satisfy other requirements not relating to the establishment of residency, in order to be charged tuition and fees for that course at a rate that is equal to or less than the rate the institution charges for tuition and fees for that course for residents of the State.

“(5) The Secretary may waive such requirements of paragraph (1) as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(6) Disapproval under paragraph (1) shall apply only with respect to educational assistance under chapters 30 and 33 of this title.”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Subsection (c) of section 3679 of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a) of this section), shall apply with respect to educational assistance provided for pursuit of programs of education during academic terms that begin after July 1, 2015, through courses of education that commence on or after that date.

SEC. 202. EXTENSION AND EXPANSION OF AUTHORITY FOR CERTAIN QUALIFYING WORK-STUDY ACTIVITIES FOR PURPOSES OF THE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **EXTENSION OF EXPIRING CURRENT AUTHORITY.**—Section 3485(a)(4) is amended by striking “June 30, 2013” each place it appears and inserting “June 30, 2015”.

(b) **EXPANSION TO OUTREACH SERVICES PROVIDED THROUGH CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES.**—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(K) During the period beginning on June 30, 2013, and ending on June 30, 2015, the following activities carried out at the offices of Members of Congress for such Members:

“(i) The distribution of information to members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their dependents about the benefits and services under laws administered by the Secretary and other appropriate governmental and nongovernmental programs.

“(ii) The preparation and processing of papers and other documents, including documents to assist in the preparation and presentation of claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.”.

(c) **ANNUAL REPORTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than June 30 of 2014 and 2015, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the work-study allowances paid under paragraph (1) of section 3485(a) of title 38, United States Code, during the most recent one-year period for qualifying work-study activities described in paragraph (4) of such section, as amended by subsections (a) and (b) of this section.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include, for the year covered by such report, the following:

(A) A description of the recipients of such work-study allowances.

(B) A list of the locations where qualifying work-study activities were carried out.

(C) A description of the outreach conducted by the Secretary to increase awareness of the eligibility of such work-study activities for such work-study allowances.

SEC. 203. PROHIBITIONS RELATING TO REFERENCES TO GI BILL AND POST-9/11 GI BILL.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter II of chapter 36 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 3697B. Prohibition relating to references to GI Bill and Post-9/11 GI Bill

“(a) **PROHIBITION.**—(1) No person may, except with the written permission of the Sec-

retary, use the words and phrases covered by this subsection in connection with any promotion, goods, services, or commercial activity in a manner that reasonably and falsely suggests that such use is approved, endorsed, or authorized by the Department or any component thereof.

“(2) For purposes of this subsection, the words and phrases covered by this subsection are as follows:

“(A) ‘GI Bill’.

“(B) ‘Post-9/11 GI Bill’.

“(3) A determination that a use of one or more words and phrases covered by this subsection in connection with a promotion, goods, services, or commercial activity is not a violation of this subsection may not be made solely on the ground that such promotion, goods, services, or commercial activity includes a disclaimer of affiliation with the Department or any component thereof.

(b) **ENFORCEMENT BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.**—(1) When any person is engaged or is about to engage in an act or practice which constitutes or will constitute conduct prohibited by subsection (a), the Attorney General may initiate a civil proceeding in a district court of the United States to enjoin such act or practice.

“(2) Such court may, at any time before final determination, enter such restraining orders or prohibitions, or take such other action as is warranted, to prevent injury to the United States or to any person or class of persons for whose protection the action is brought.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 36 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3697A the following new item:

“3697B. Prohibition relating to references to GI Bill and Post-9/11 GI Bill.”.

SEC. 204. REVIEW OF UTILIZATION OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO PURSUE PROGRAMS OF TRAINING ON THE JOB AND PARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall commence a review of—

(1) the utilization of educational assistance under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to pursue programs of training on the job (other than programs of apprenticeship); and

(2) the availability of such programs to individuals seeking to pursue such programs with such educational assistance.

(b) **REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than two years after the date on which the Secretary commences the review required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on such review.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The extent of utilization as described in paragraph (1) of subsection (a).

(B) An assessment of the availability of programs as described in paragraph (2) of such subsection.

(C) A description of any barriers the Secretary has identified to greater utilization of educational assistance for pursuit of a program of training on the job or availability of such programs.

(D) Such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary may have to increase or decrease such utilization or availability.

(E) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate.

SEC. 205. REPORT ON DEBT MANAGEMENT AND COLLECTION.

(a) **REPORT.**—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on processes used by the Department of Veterans Affairs to identify and resolve cases of incorrect payments associated with educational assistance under chapters 30 and 33 of title 38, United States Code.

(b) **ISSUES ADDRESSED.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall, to the extent possible, address the following:

(1) The effectiveness of the processes referred to in subsection (a) in identifying and resolving incorrect payments associated with educational assistance under chapters 30 and 33 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) The accuracy of overpayment information provided to veterans by the Education Service and Debt Management Center of the Department.

(3) How well the Debt Management Center of the Department communicates and works with veterans to resolve disputed debt amounts.

(4) How the payment and debt collection processes of the Department compare to comparable programs in other Federal agencies.

(5) Any recommendations to improve the payment and debt collection processes of the Department that the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 206. RESTORATION OF PRIOR REPORTING FEE MULTIPLIERS.

Section 3684(c) is amended—

(1) by striking “\$12” and inserting “\$7”; and

(2) by striking “\$15” and inserting “\$11”.

TITLE III—HEALTH CARE MATTERS**Subtitle A—Expansion and Improvements of Benefits Generally****SEC. 301. IMPROVED ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE IMMUNIZATIONS FOR VETERANS.**

(a) **INCLUSION OF RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATIONS AS MEDICAL SERVICES.**—

(1) **COVERED BENEFIT.**—Subparagraph (F) of section 1701(9) is amended to read as follows: “(F) immunizations against infectious diseases, including each immunization on the recommended adult immunization schedule at the time such immunization is indicated on that schedule.”

(2) **RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE DEFINED.**—Section 1701 is amended by adding after paragraph (9) the following new paragraph:

“(10) The term ‘recommended adult immunization schedule’ means the schedule established (and periodically reviewed and, as appropriate, revised) by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices established by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and delegated to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.”

(b) **INCLUSION OF RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATIONS IN ANNUAL REPORT.**—Section 1704(1)(A) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in clause (ii), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by inserting after clause (ii) the following new clause:

“(iii) to provide veterans each immunization on the recommended adult immunization schedule at the time such immunization is indicated on that schedule.”

(c) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the development and implementation by the Department of Veterans Affairs of quality measures and metrics, including targets for compliance, to ensure that veterans receiving medical services under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, receive each immunization on the recommended adult immunization schedule at the time such immunization is indicated on that schedule.

(2) **RECOMMENDED ADULT IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE DEFINED.**—In this subsection, the term “recommended adult immunization schedule” has the meaning given that term in section 1701(10) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a)(2).

(3) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This subsection shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 302. EXPANSION OF PROVISION OF CHIROPRACTIC CARE AND SERVICES TO VETERANS.

(a) **PROGRAM FOR PROVISION OF CHIROPRACTIC CARE AND SERVICES TO VETERANS.**—Section 204(c) of the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care Programs Enhancement Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-135; 115 Stat. 2459; 38 U.S.C. 1710 note) is amended—

(1) by inserting “(1)” before “The program”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2) The program shall be carried out at not fewer than two medical centers or clinics in each Veterans Integrated Service Network by not later than one year after the effective date specified in section 302(c) of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014, and at not fewer than 50 percent of all medical centers in each Veterans Integrated Service Network by not later than two years after such effective date.”

(b) **EXPANDED CHIROPRACTOR SERVICES AVAILABLE TO VETERANS.**—

(1) **MEDICAL SERVICES.**—Paragraph (6) of section 1701 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(H) Chiropractic services.”

(2) **REHABILITATIVE SERVICES.**—Paragraph (8) of such section is amended by inserting “chiropractic,” after “counseling.”

(3) **PREVENTIVE HEALTH SERVICES.**—Paragraph (9) of such section is amended—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (F) through (K) as subparagraphs (G) through (L), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (E) the following new subparagraph (F):

“(F) periodic and preventive chiropractic examinations and services.”

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section and the amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 303. MODIFICATION OF COMMENCEMENT DATE OF PERIOD OF SERVICE AT CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA, FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR HOSPITAL CARE AND MEDICAL SERVICES IN CONNECTION WITH EXPOSURE TO CONTAMINATED WATER.

(a) **MODIFICATION.**—Section 1710(e)(1)(F) is amended by striking “January 1, 1957,” and inserting “August 1, 1953 (or such earlier date for the commencement of exposure to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune as the Secretary, in consultation with the Agency

for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, shall specify).”

(b) **PUBLICATION.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish in the Federal Register a notice of any earlier date for the commencement of exposure to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for purposes of section 1710(e)(1)(F) of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a).

SEC. 304. EXPANSION OF EMERGENCY TREATMENT REIMBURSEMENT FOR CERTAIN VETERANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1725(b)(2)(B) is amended—

(1) by inserting “(i)” after “(B)”; and

(2) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) the veteran was unable to receive care under this chapter within such 24-month period because of a waiting period imposed by the Department with respect to a new patient examination of such veteran.”

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 305. EXTENSION OF SUNSET DATE REGARDING TRANSPORTATION OF INDIVIDUALS TO AND FROM FACILITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND REQUIREMENT OF REPORT.

(a) **EXTENSION OF SUNSET DATE.**—Subsection (a)(2) of section 111A is amended by striking “December 31, 2014” and inserting “September 30, 2015”.

(b) **FUNDING AVAILABLE.**—Such section is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) **FUNDING.**—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2014 and 2015 for the Department, \$4,000,000 to carry out this section.”

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on—

(1) the efforts of the Secretary to carry out the transportation services required by section 111A(a) of title 38, United States Code;

(2) the utilization of those services by covered veterans; and

(3) the feasibility and advisability of the continuation of the provision of such services after September 30, 2015.

SEC. 306. EXTENSION AND MODIFICATION OF PILOT PROGRAM ON ASSISTED LIVING SERVICES FOR VETERANS WITH TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY.

(a) **EXTENSION OF PROGRAM.**—Subsection (a) of section 1705 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181; 38 U.S.C. 1710C note) is amended by striking “a five-year” and inserting “an eight-year”.

(b) **MODIFICATION OF LOCATIONS.**—Subsection (b) of such section is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(2) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following new paragraphs:

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The pilot program shall be carried out at locations selected by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program.

“(2) **LOCATED IN SAME REGION AS POLYTRAUMA CENTERS.**—Of the locations selected under paragraph (1), at least one location shall be in each health care region of the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs that contains a polytrauma center of the Department of Veterans Affairs.”

(c) MODIFICATION OF REPORT REQUIREMENTS.—Subsection (e) of such section is amended to read as follows:

“(e) REPORTS.—

“(1) ANNUAL REPORT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014, and not later than September 30 each year thereafter until 2018, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the pilot program.

“(B) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

“(i) The number of individuals that participated in the pilot program during the year preceding the submission of the report.

“(ii) The number of individuals that successfully completed the pilot program during the year preceding the submission of the report.

“(iii) The degree to which pilot program participants and family members of pilot program participants were satisfied with the pilot program.

“(iv) The interim findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the success of the pilot program and recommendations for improvement.

“(2) FINAL REPORT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the completion of the pilot program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a final report on the pilot program.

“(B) ELEMENTS.—The final report required by subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

“(i) A description of the pilot program.

“(ii) An assessment of the utility of the activities under the pilot program in enhancing the rehabilitation, quality of life, and community reintegration of veterans with traumatic brain injury, including complex mild traumatic brain injury.

“(iii) Such recommendations as the Secretary considers appropriate regarding improving the pilot program.”

(d) MODIFICATION OF DEFINITIONS.—

(1) COMMUNITY-BASED BRAIN INJURY RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATIVE CARE SERVICES.—Such section is further amended—

(A) in the section heading, by striking “ASSISTED LIVING” and inserting “COMMUNITY-BASED BRAIN INJURY RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATIVE CARE”;

(B) in subsection (c), in the subsection heading, by striking “ASSISTED LIVING” and inserting “COMMUNITY-BASED BRAIN INJURY RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATIVE CARE”;

(C) by striking “assisted living” each place it appears, and inserting “community-based brain injury rehabilitative care”; and

(D) in subsection (f)(1), by striking “and personal care” and inserting “rehabilitation, and personal care”.

(2) ELIGIBLE VETERAN.—Subsection (f)(3) of such section is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (C), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) has a traumatic brain injury that is classified as complex-mild to severe.”

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for

the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2015 \$46,000,000 to carry out the pilot program under section 1705 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181; 38 U.S.C. 1710C note), as amended by this section. The amount so authorized to be appropriated shall be available for obligation for the three-year period beginning on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(f) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on October 1, 2014.

SEC. 307. PROGRAM ON HEALTH PROMOTION FOR OVERWEIGHT AND OBESE VETERANS THROUGH SUPPORT OF FITNESS CENTER MEMBERSHIPS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Commencing not later than 180 days after the date on which this section takes effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, through the National Center for Preventive Health, carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of promoting health in covered veterans, including achieving a healthy weight and reducing risks of chronic disease, through support for fitness center membership.

(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of this section, a covered veteran is any veteran who—

(1) is enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment established and operated by the Secretary under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code;

(2) is determined by a clinician of the Department of Veterans Affairs to be overweight or obese as of the date of the commencement of the program; and

(3) resides in a location that is more than 15 minutes driving distance from a fitness center at a facility of the Department that would otherwise be available to the veteran for at least eight hours per day during five or more days per week.

(c) DURATION OF PROGRAM.—The program shall be carried out during the two-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(d) LOCATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall select—

(A) not less than five medical centers of the Department at which the Secretary shall cover the full reasonable cost of a fitness center membership for covered veterans within the catchment area of such centers; and

(B) not less than five medical centers of the Department at which the Secretary shall cover half the reasonable cost of a fitness center membership for covered veterans within the catchment area of such centers.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting locations for the program, the Secretary shall consider the feasibility and advisability of selecting locations in the following areas:

(A) Rural areas.

(B) Areas that are not in close proximity to an active duty military installation.

(C) Areas in different geographic locations.

(e) PARTICIPATION.—

(1) MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS.—The number of covered veterans who may participate in the program at each location selected under subsection (d) may not exceed 100.

(2) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation of a covered veteran in the program shall be at the election of the covered veteran in consultation with a clinician of the Department.

(f) MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), in carrying out the program, the Secretary shall pay the following:

(A) The full reasonable cost of a fitness center membership for covered veterans within the catchment area of centers selected under subsection (d)(1)(A) who are participating in the program.

(B) Half the reasonable cost of a fitness center membership for covered veterans within the catchment area of centers selected under subsection (d)(1)(B) who are participating in the program.

(2) LIMITATION.—Payment for a fitness center membership of a covered veteran may not exceed \$50 per month of membership.

(g) REPORTS.—

(1) PERIODIC REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the commencement of the program and not less frequently than once every 90 days thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on activities carried out to implement the program, including outreach activities to veterans and community organizations.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program detailing—

(A) the findings and conclusions of the Secretary as a result of the program; and

(B) recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program.

(h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 308. PROGRAM ON HEALTH PROMOTION FOR VETERANS THROUGH ESTABLISHMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FITNESS FACILITIES.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Commencing not later than 180 days after the date on which this section takes effect, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of promoting health in covered veterans, including achieving a healthy weight, through establishment of Department of Veterans Affairs fitness facilities.

(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of this section, a covered veteran is any veteran who is enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment established and operated by the Secretary under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code.

(c) DURATION OF PROGRAM.—The program shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(d) LOCATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out the program by establishing fitness facilities in Department facilities as follows:

(A) In not fewer than five Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers selected by the Secretary for purposes of the program.

(B) In not fewer than five outpatient clinics of the Department selected by the Secretary for purposes of the program.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting locations for the program, the Secretary shall consider the feasibility and advisability of selecting locations in the following areas:

(A) Rural areas.

(B) Areas that are not in close proximity to an active duty military installation.

(C) Areas in different geographic locations.

(e) LIMITATION ON EXPENSES.—In establishing and supporting a fitness facility in a

facility of the Department under the program, the Secretary may expend amounts as follows:

(1) For establishment and support of a fitness facility in a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center, not more than \$60,000.

(2) For establishment and support of a fitness facility in an outpatient clinic of the Department, not more than \$40,000.

(f) REPURPOSING OF PHYSICAL SPACE AND PURCHASES OF EQUIPMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (e), the Secretary may, in carrying out the program, repurpose existing physical space of the Department and purchase such fitness equipment and supplies as the Secretary considers appropriate for purposes of the program.

(2) REPURPOSING EXCEPTION.—Existing physical space used for the direct delivery of health care to patients may not be repurposed under paragraph (1).

(g) PROHIBITION ON ASSESSMENT OF USER FEES.—The Secretary may not assess a fee upon a covered veteran for use of a fitness facility established under the program.

(h) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation of a covered veteran in the program shall be at the election of the covered veteran.

(i) REPORTS.—

(1) PERIODIC REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the commencement of the program and not less frequently than once every 90 days thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on activities carried out to implement the program, including outreach activities to veterans and community organizations.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program detailing—

(A) the findings and conclusions of the Secretary as a result of the program; and

(B) recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program.

(j) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle B—Health Care Administration

SEC. 311. EXTENSION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.

Section 7619 is amended by striking “December 31, 2014” and inserting “December 31, 2019”.

SEC. 312. EXPANSION OF AVAILABILITY OF PROSTHETIC AND ORTHOTIC CARE FOR VETERANS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OR EXPANSION OF ADVANCED DEGREE PROGRAMS TO EXPAND AVAILABILITY OF PROVISION OF CARE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall work with institutions of higher education to develop partnerships for the establishment or expansion of programs of advanced degrees in prosthetics and orthotics in order to improve and enhance the availability of high quality prosthetic and orthotic care for veterans.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth a plan for carrying out subsection (a). The Sec-

retary shall develop the plan in consultation with veterans service organizations, institutions of higher education with accredited degree programs in prosthetics and orthotics, and representatives of the prosthetics and orthotics field.

(c) FUNDING.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, \$10,000,000 to carry out this section.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by paragraph (1) shall remain available for expenditure until September 30, 2017.

SEC. 313. LIMITATION ON EXPANSION OF DIALYSIS PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) LIMITATION.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall not expand the dialysis pilot program to, or expand the capacity to provide additional dialysis care at, any facility owned or leased by the Department that is not an initial facility until after the date that—

(1) the Secretary has implemented the dialysis pilot program at each initial facility for a period of not less than two years;

(2) an independent analysis of the dialysis pilot program has been conducted at each initial facility, including a consideration and comparison of factors including—

(A) the ability of veterans to access care under the dialysis pilot program;

(B) the quality of care provided under the dialysis pilot program; and

(C) the satisfaction of veterans who have received treatment under the dialysis pilot program; and

(3) the report required by subsection (b) has been submitted.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the completion of the independent analysis required by subsection (a)(2), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that—

(1) includes the results of that independent analysis; and

(2) addresses any recommendations with respect to the dialysis pilot program provided in a report prepared by the Government Accountability Office.

(c) UTILIZATION OF EXISTING DIALYSIS RESOURCES.—In order to increase the access of veterans to dialysis care and decrease the travel time of such veterans to receive such care, the Secretary shall fully utilize existing dialysis resources of the Department, including any community dialysis provider with which the Department has entered into a contract or agreement for the provision of such care.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) DIALYSIS PILOT PROGRAM.—The term “dialysis pilot program” means the pilot demonstration program established by the Secretary in 2009 to provide dialysis care to patients at certain outpatient facilities operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) INITIAL FACILITY.—The term “initial facility” means one of the four outpatient facilities identified by the Secretary to participate in the dialysis pilot program prior to the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 314. REQUIREMENT FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS POLICY ON REPORTING CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES AT FACILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 73 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 7330B. Reporting of infectious diseases

“(a) REPORTING.—The Secretary shall ensure that the Department has in effect an up-to-date policy on reporting a notifiable infectious disease diagnosed at a facility under the jurisdiction of the Secretary in accordance with the provisions of State and local law in effect where such facility is located.

“(b) NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASE.—For purposes of this section, a notifiable infectious disease is any infectious disease that is—

“(1) on the list of nationally notifiable diseases published by the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; or

“(2) covered by a provision of law of a State that requires the reporting of infectious diseases.

“(c) PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—The Secretary shall develop performance measures to assess whether and to what degree the directors of Veterans Integrated Service Networks and Department medical centers are complying with the policy required by subsection (a).”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 73 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7330A the following new item:

“7330B. Reporting of infectious diseases.”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 315. INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT OF THE VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS AND MEDICAL CENTERS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) CONTRACT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall seek to enter into a contract with an independent third-party to perform the services covered by this section.

(2) TIMING.—The Secretary shall seek to enter into the contract described in paragraph (1) not later than 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) INDEPENDENT STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Under a contract between the Secretary and an independent third-party under this section, the third party shall carry out a study—

(A) to assess the organizational structures of medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(B) to improve succession planning among key leadership roles at Veterans Integrated Service Networks and medical centers of the Department.

(2) MATTERS STUDIED AND PROPOSED.—In carrying out the study, the third party shall—

(A) assess whether the organizational structure of the medical centers of the Department is effective for the furnishing of medical services, addressing issues that arise regarding the furnishing of medical services, and addressing standard business operations;

(B) propose one organizational chart for Department medical centers with a common set of base position descriptions;

(C) propose a base set of medical positions that should be filled to ensure that the health care provided to veterans by the Department is of good quality; and

(D) identify which key leadership positions at Veterans Integrated Service Networks and Department medical centers should have succession plans and propose how to implement such plans.

(3) TIMING.—The third party shall complete the study under this section not later than

270 days after entering into the contract described in subsection (a).

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the third party completes the study under this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the results of such study.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 316. REQUIREMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH NEXT UPDATE OF CURRENT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **REQUIREMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The first update of the Strategic Plan Refresh for Fiscal Years 2012 through 2014 of the Office of Rural Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs after the date of the enactment of this Act, whether an update or refresh of such Strategic Plan Refresh or a strategic plan to supersede such Strategic Plan Refresh, shall be prepared in accordance with this section.

(2) **CONSULTATION.**—The Director of the Office of Rural Health shall prepare the update in consultation with the following:

(A) The Director of the Health Care Retention and Recruitment Office of the Department.

(B) The Director of the Office of Quality and Performance of the Department.

(C) The Director of the Office of Care Coordination Services of the Department.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The update described in subsection (a) shall include, for the period covered by the update, the following:

(1) Goals and objectives for the recruitment and retention by the Veterans Health Administration of health care personnel in rural areas.

(2) Goals and objectives for ensuring timeliness and improving quality in the delivery of health care services by the Veterans Health Administration in rural areas through contract and fee-basis providers.

(3) Goals and objectives for the implementation, expansion, and enhanced use of telemedicine services by the Veterans Health Administration in rural areas, including through coordination with other appropriate offices of the Department.

(4) Goals and objectives for ensuring the full and effective use of mobile outpatient clinics by the Veterans Health Administration for the provision of health care services in rural areas, including goals and objectives for the use of such clinics on a fully mobile basis and for encouraging health care providers who provide services through such clinics to do so in rural areas.

(5) Procedures for soliciting from each Veterans Health Administration facility that serves a rural area the following:

(A) A statement of the clinical capacity of such facility.

(B) The procedures of such facility in the event of a medical, surgical, or mental health emergency outside the scope of the clinical capacity of such facility.

(C) The procedures and mechanisms of such facility for the provision and coordination of health care for women veterans, including procedures and mechanisms for coordination with local hospitals and health care facilities, oversight of primary care and fee-basis care, and management of specialty care.

(6) Goals and objectives for the modification of the funding allocation mechanisms of the Office of Rural Health in order to ensure that the Office distributes funds to components of the Department to best achieve the

goals and objectives of the Office and in a timely manner.

(7) Goals and objectives for the coordination of, and sharing of resources with respect to, the provision of health care services to veterans in rural areas between the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, the Indian Health Service of the Department of Health and Human Services, and other Federal agencies, as appropriate and prudent.

(8) Specific milestones for the achievement of the goals and objectives developed for the update.

(9) Procedures for ensuring the effective implementation of the update.

(c) **TRANSMITTAL TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the issuance of the update described in subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall transmit the update to Congress, together with such comments and recommendations in connection with the update as the Secretary considers appropriate.

SEC. 317. REPORT ON PROVISION OF TELEMEDICINE SERVICES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the following:

(1) Issues that may be impeding the provision by the Department of Veterans Affairs of telemedicine services for veterans, including the following:

(A) Statutory or regulatory restrictions.

(B) Licensure or credentialing issues for any provider practicing telemedicine with veterans who live in a different State than the provider.

(C) Limited broadband access in rural areas.

(D) Limited information technology resources or capabilities.

(E) Long distances veterans must travel to access a facility or clinic with telemedicine capabilities.

(F) Insufficient liability protection for providers.

(G) Reimbursement issues faced by providers.

(H) Travel limitations for providers that are unaffiliated with the Department and are participating or seeking to participate in a telemedicine program of the Department.

(2) Actions taken to address the issues identified in paragraph (1).

(3) An update on efforts by the Department to carry out the initiative of teleconsultation for the provision of remote mental health and traumatic brain injury assessments required by section 1709A of title 38, United States Code.

(4) An update on efforts by the Department to offer training opportunities in telemedicine to medical residents, as required by section 108(b) of the Janey Ensinger Act (Public Law 112-154; 38 U.S.C. 7406 note).

(5) An update on efforts by the Department to, in partnership with primary care providers, install video cameras and instruments to monitor weight, blood pressure, and other vital statistics in the homes of patients.

(b) **TELEMEDICINE DEFINED.**—In this section, the term "telemedicine" means the use by a health care provider of telecommunications to assist in the diagnosis or treatment of a patient's medical condition.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 318. REPORT ON EXPANSION OF PATIENT ENROLLMENT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the feasibility and advisability of the Department of Veterans Affairs expanding enrollment in the system of patient enrollment established and operated under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, of veterans described in subsection (a)(8) of that section.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall include an analysis of the following:

(1) The ability of the Department to manage an expansion of enrollment in the system of patient enrollment under that section to veterans described in subsection (a)(8) of that section.

(2) The impact of such expansion on the budget of the Department.

(3) The impact of such expansion on the ability of medical centers of the Department to provide health care to veterans.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 319. REPORT ON EXPANSION OF PROGRAM OF COMPREHENSIVE ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the feasibility and advisability of the Department of Veterans Affairs expanding the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers under section 1720G of title 38, United States Code.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall include an analysis of the following:

(1) The ability of the Department to manage an expansion of the program of comprehensive assistance for family caregivers under that section.

(2) The impact of such expansion on the budget of the Department.

(3) The impact of such expansion on the ability of medical centers of the Department to provide health care to veterans.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 320. DESIGNATION OF CORPORAL MICHAEL J. CRESCENZ DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER.

(a) **DESIGNATION.**—The medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs located at 3900 Woodland Avenue in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center".

(b) **REFERENCES.**—Any reference in any law, regulation, map, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the medical center referred to in subsection (a) shall be considered to be a reference to the Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

Subtitle C—Complementary and Alternative Medicine

SEC. 321. EXPANSION OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ON AND DELIVERY OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE TO VETERANS.

(a) **DEVELOPMENT OF PLAN TO EXPAND RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND DELIVERY.**—Not later than six months after the effective date specified in subsection (f), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall develop a plan to expand materially and substantially the scope

of research and education on, and delivery and integration of, complementary and alternative medicine services into the health care services provided to veterans.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—The plan required by subsection (a) shall provide for the following:

(1) Research on the following:

(A) The comparative effectiveness of various complementary and alternative medicine therapies.

(B) Approaches to integrating complementary and alternative medicine services into other health care services provided by the Department.

(2) Education and training for health care professionals of the Department on the following:

(A) Complementary and alternative medicine services selected by the Secretary for purposes of the plan.

(B) Appropriate uses of such services.

(C) Integration of such services into the delivery of health care to veterans.

(3) Research, education, and clinical activities on complementary and alternative medicine at centers of innovation at Department medical centers.

(4) Identification or development of metrics and outcome measures to evaluate the provision and integration of complementary and alternative medicine services into the delivery of health care to veterans.

(5) Integration and delivery of complementary and alternative medicine services with other health care services provided by the Department.

(c) **CONSULTATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with the following:

(A) The Director of the National Center on Complementary and Alternative Medicine of the National Institutes of Health.

(B) The Commissioner of Food and Drugs.

(C) Institutions of higher education, private research institutes, and individual researchers with extensive experience in complementary and alternative medicine and the integration of complementary and alternative medicine practices into the delivery of health care.

(D) Nationally recognized providers of complementary and alternative medicine.

(E) Such other officials, entities, and individuals with expertise on complementary and alternative medicine as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) **SCOPE OF CONSULTATION.**—The Secretary shall undertake consultation under paragraph (1) in carrying out subsection (a) with respect to the following:

(A) To develop the plan.

(B) To identify specific complementary and alternative medicine practices that, on the basis of research findings or promising clinical interventions, are appropriate to include as services to veterans.

(C) To identify barriers to the effective provision and integration of complementary and alternative medicine services into the delivery of health care to veterans, and to identify mechanisms for overcoming such barriers.

(d) **FUNDING.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

(e) **COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “complementary and alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that term in regulations the Secretary shall prescribe for purposes of this section, which shall, to the degree practicable, be consistent with the meaning given such term by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(f) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 322. PROGRAM ON INTEGRATION OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE WITHIN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTERS.

(a) **PROGRAM REQUIRED.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall—

(1) carry out, through the Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation of the Department of Veterans Affairs, a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of integrating the delivery of complementary and alternative medicine services selected by the Secretary with other health care services provided by the Department for veterans with mental health conditions, chronic pain conditions, other chronic conditions, and such other conditions as the Secretary determines appropriate; and

(2) in developing the program, identify and resolve barriers to the provision of complementary and alternative medicine services selected by the Secretary and the integration of those services with other health care services provided by the Department.

(b) **DURATION OF PROGRAM.**—The program shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning on the effective date specified in subsection (j).

(c) **LOCATIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall carry out the program at not fewer than 15 separate Department medical centers.

(2) **POLYTRAUMA CENTERS.**—Not less than two of the medical centers designated under paragraph (1) shall be located at polytrauma rehabilitation centers of the Department.

(3) **SELECTION OF LOCATIONS.**—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall select locations that include the following areas:

(A) Rural areas.

(B) Areas that are not in close proximity to an active duty military installation.

(C) Areas representing different geographic locations, such as census tracts established by the Bureau of the Census.

(d) **PROVISION OF SERVICES.**—Under the program, the Secretary shall provide covered services to covered veterans by integrating complementary and alternative medicine services with other services provided by the Department at the medical centers designated under subsection (c)(1).

(e) **COVERED VETERANS.**—For purposes of the program, a covered veteran is any veteran who—

(1) has a mental health condition diagnosed by a clinician of the Department;

(2) experiences chronic pain; or

(3) has a chronic condition being treated by a clinician of the Department.

(f) **COVERED SERVICES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For purposes of the program, covered services are services consisting of complementary and alternative medicine as selected by the Secretary.

(2) **ADMINISTRATION OF SERVICES.**—Covered services shall be administered under the program as follows:

(A) Covered services shall be administered by clinicians employed by the Secretary for purposes of this section who, to the extent practicable, shall provide services consisting of complementary and alternative medicine, including those clinicians who solely provide such services.

(B) Covered services shall be included as part of the Patient Aligned Care Teams initiative of the Office of Patient Care Services, Primary Care Program Office, in coordination with the Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation.

(C) Covered services shall be made available to both—

(i) covered veterans with mental health conditions, pain conditions, or chronic conditions described in subsection (e) who have received conventional treatments from the Department for such conditions; and

(ii) covered veterans with mental health conditions, pain conditions, or chronic conditions described in subsection (e) who have not received conventional treatments from the Department for such conditions.

(g) **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.**—The participation of a veteran in the program shall be at the election of the veteran and in consultation with a clinician of the Department.

(h) **REPORTS TO CONGRESS.**—

(1) **QUARTERLY REPORTS.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the commencement of the program and not less frequently than once every 90 days thereafter for the duration of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the efforts of the Secretary to carry out the program, including a description of the outreach conducted by the Secretary to veterans and community organizations to inform such organizations about the program.

(2) **FINAL REPORT.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program.

(B) **CONTENTS.**—The report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program, including with respect to—

(I) the utilization and efficacy of the complementary and alternative medicine services established under the program;

(II) an assessment of the benefit of the program to covered veterans in mental health diagnoses, pain management, and treatment of chronic illness; and

(III) the comparative effectiveness of various complementary and alternative medicine therapies.

(ii) Barriers identified under subsection (a)(2) that were not resolved.

(iii) Such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(i) **COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “complementary and alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that term in section 321(e) of this Act.

(j) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 323. STUDIES OF BARRIERS ENCOUNTERED BY VETERANS IN RECEIVING, AND ADMINISTRATORS AND CLINICIANS IN PROVIDING, COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE SERVICES FURNISHED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **STUDIES REQUIRED.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct comprehensive studies of the barriers encountered by veterans in receiving, and administrators and clinicians in providing, complementary and alternative medicine services furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) **STUDIES CONDUCTED.**—

(A) **VETERANS.**—In conducting the study of veterans, the Secretary shall—

(i) survey veterans who seek or receive hospital care or medical services furnished

by the Department, as well as veterans who do not seek or receive such care or services;

(ii) administer the survey to a representative sample of veterans from each Veterans Integrated Service Network; and

(iii) ensure that the sample of veterans surveyed is of sufficient size for the study results to be statistically significant.

(B) ADMINISTRATORS AND CLINICIANS.—In conducting the study of clinicians and administrators, the Secretary shall—

(i) survey administrators of the Department who are involved in the provision of health care services;

(ii) survey clinicians that have provided complementary and alternative medicine services through the program established under section 322 of this Act, after those clinicians have provided those services through such program for at least 90 days; and

(iii) administer the survey to administrators under clause (i)—

(I) before the introduction of complementary and alternative medicine services through such program; and

(II) not earlier than 90 days after the introduction of complementary and alternative medicine services through such program.

(b) ELEMENTS OF STUDIES.—

(1) VETERANS.—In conducting the study of veterans required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall study the following:

(A) The perceived barriers associated with obtaining complementary and alternative medicine services from the Department.

(B) The satisfaction of veterans with complementary and alternative medicine services in primary care.

(C) The degree to which veterans are aware of eligibility requirements for, and the scope of services available under, complementary and alternative medicine services furnished by the Department.

(D) The effectiveness of outreach to veterans on the availability of complementary and alternative medicine for veterans.

(E) Such other barriers as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) ADMINISTRATORS AND CLINICIANS.—In conducting the study of administrators and clinicians required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall study the following:

(A) The extent of the integration of complementary and alternative medicine services within the services provided by the Department.

(B) The perception by administrators and clinicians of the structural and attitudinal barriers to the delivery of high quality complementary and alternative medicine services by the Department.

(C) Strategies that have been used to reduce or eliminate such barriers and the results of such strategies.

(D) The satisfaction of administrators and clinicians regarding the integration of complementary and alternative medicine services within the services provided by the Department.

(E) The perception by administrators and clinicians of the value of specific complementary and alternative medicine services for inpatient and outpatient veteran populations.

(c) DISCHARGE BY CONTRACT.—The Secretary shall enter into a contract with a qualified independent entity or organization to carry out the studies required by this section.

(d) MANDATORY REVIEW OF DATA BY THE NATIONAL RESEARCH ADVISORY COUNCIL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall ensure that the head of the National Research Advisory Council reviews the results of the studies conducted under this section.

(2) SUBMITTAL OF FINDINGS.—The head of the National Research Advisory Council shall submit findings with respect to the studies to the Under Secretary for Health and to other pertinent program offices within the Department with responsibilities relating to health care services for veterans.

(e) REPORTS.—

(1) REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the status of the implementation of this section.

(2) REPORT ON STUDY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 45 days after the date of the completion of the study, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the study required by subsection (a).

(B) CONTENTS.—The report required by subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) Recommendations for such administrative and legislative proposals and actions as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(ii) The findings of the head of the National Research Advisory Council and of the Under Secretary for Health.

(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, \$2,000,000 to carry out this section.

(g) COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “complementary and alternative medicine” shall have the meaning given that term in section 321(e) of this Act.

SEC. 324. PROGRAM ON USE OF WELLNESS PROGRAMS AS COMPLEMENTARY APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS AND FAMILY MEMBERS OF VETERANS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program through the award of grants to public or private nonprofit entities to assess the feasibility and advisability of using wellness programs to complement the provision of mental health care to veterans and family members eligible for counseling under section 1712A(a)(1)(C) of title 38, United States Code.

(2) MATTERS TO BE ADDRESSED.—The program shall be carried out so as to assess the following:

(A) Means of improving coordination between Federal, State, local, and community providers of health care in the provision of mental health care to veterans and family members described in paragraph (1).

(B) Means of enhancing outreach, and coordination of outreach, by and among providers of health care referred to in subparagraph (A) on the mental health care services available to veterans and family members described in paragraph (1).

(C) Means of using wellness programs of providers of health care referred to in subparagraph (A) as complements to the provision by the Department of Veterans Affairs of mental health care to veterans and family members described in paragraph (1).

(D) Whether wellness programs described in subparagraph (C) are effective in enhancing the quality of life and well-being of veterans and family members described in paragraph (1).

(E) Whether wellness programs described in subparagraph (C) are effective in increasing the adherence of veterans described in paragraph (1) to the primary mental health services provided such veterans by the Department.

(F) Whether wellness programs described in subparagraph (C) have an impact on the sense of wellbeing of veterans described in

paragraph (1) who receive primary mental health services from the Department.

(G) Whether wellness programs described in subparagraph (C) are effective in encouraging veterans receiving health care from the Department to adopt a more healthy lifestyle.

(b) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the program for a period of three years beginning on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the program at facilities of the Department providing mental health care services to veterans and family members described in subsection (a)(1).

(d) GRANT PROPOSALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A public or private nonprofit entity seeking the award of a grant under this section shall submit an application therefor to the Secretary in such form and in such manner as the Secretary may require.

(2) APPLICATION CONTENTS.—Each application submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A plan to coordinate activities under the program, to the extent possible, with the Federal, State, and local providers of services for veterans to enhance the following:

(i) Awareness by veterans of benefits and health care services provided by the Department.

(ii) Outreach efforts to increase the use by veterans of services provided by the Department.

(iii) Educational efforts to inform veterans of the benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle.

(B) A statement of understanding from the entity submitting the application that, if selected, such entity will be required to report to the Secretary periodically on standardized data and other performance data necessary to evaluate individual outcomes and to facilitate evaluations among entities participating in the program.

(C) Other requirements that the Secretary may prescribe.

(e) GRANT USES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A public or private nonprofit entity awarded a grant under this section shall use the award for purposes prescribed by the Secretary.

(2) ELIGIBLE VETERANS AND FAMILY.—In carrying out the purposes prescribed by the Secretary in paragraph (1), a public or private nonprofit entity awarded a grant under this section shall use the award to furnish services only to individuals specified in section 1712A(a)(1)(C) of title 38, United States Code.

(f) REPORTS.—

(1) PERIODIC REPORTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the commencement of the program, and every 180 days thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the program.

(B) REPORT ELEMENTS.—Each report required by subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program during the 180-day period preceding the report.

(ii) An assessment of the benefits of the program to veterans and their family members during the 180-day period preceding the report.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the end of the program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report detailing the recommendations of the Secretary as to the advisability of continuing or expanding the program.

(g) **WELLNESS DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “wellness” has the meaning given that term in regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

Subtitle D—Mental Health Care

SEC. 331. INCLUSION OF MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM FOR HEALTH PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out the education and training program required under section 7302(a)(1) of title 38, United States Code, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall include education and training of marriage and family therapists and licensed professional mental health counselors.

(b) **FUNDING.**—The Secretary shall apportion funding for the education and training program equally among the professions included in the program.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 332. REPORT ON PROVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR FAMILIES OF CERTAIN VETERANS AT FACILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the feasibility and advisability of providing services under the program established by section 304(a) of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–163; 38 U.S.C. 1712A note) at medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

SEC. 333. ANNUAL REPORT ON COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and not later than September 30 each year thereafter until the completion of the pilot program described in subsection (b), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on that pilot program.

(b) **PILOT PROGRAM DESCRIBED.**—The pilot program described in this subsection is the pilot program conducted by the Veterans Health Administration to connect medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs with community-based mental health care providers and substance abuse treatment providers for the purpose of assisting in the treatment of veterans with mental health disorders, commonly known as the “Community Mental Health Partnership Pilot”.

(c) **ELEMENTS.**—Each report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) The number of sites participating in the pilot program.

(2) The number of individuals participating in the pilot program at each site.

(3) A detailed assessment of the effectiveness of, the participation of veterans in, and the satisfaction of veterans with the pilot program.

(4) An analysis of barriers to the effectiveness of, the participation of veterans in, and the satisfaction of veterans with the pilot program.

(5) A description of the plans of the Secretary to conduct outreach and provide information to veterans and community men-

tal health providers with respect to the pilot program.

(6) A description of any plans to expand the pilot program, including plans that focus on the unique needs of veterans located in rural areas.

(7) An explanation of how the care provided under the pilot program is consistent with the minimum clinical mental health guidelines promulgated by the Veterans Health Administration, including clinical guidelines contained in the Uniform Mental Health Services Handbook of such Administration.

Subtitle E—Dental Care Eligibility Expansion and Enhancement

SEC. 341. RESTORATIVE DENTAL SERVICES FOR VETERANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1710(c) is amended—

(1) in the second sentence—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively; and

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively;

(2) by inserting “(1)” after “(c)”;

(3) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(2) The Secretary”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) In addition to the dental services, treatment, and appliances authorized to be furnished by paragraph (2), the Secretary may furnish dental services and treatment, and dental appliances, needed to restore functioning in a veteran that is lost as a result of any services or treatment furnished under this subsection.”

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 342. PILOT PROGRAM ON EXPANSION OF FURNISHING OF DENTAL CARE TO ALL ENROLLED VETERANS.

(a) **PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.**—Commencing not later than 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of furnishing dental care to veterans enrolled in the system of patient enrollment under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code, who are not eligible for dental services and treatment, and related dental appliances, under current authorities.

(b) **DURATION OF PILOT PROGRAM.**—The pilot program shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the pilot program.

(c) **LOCATIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program at not fewer than 16 locations as follows:

(A) Four Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers with an established dental clinic.

(B) Four Department medical centers with a current contract for the furnishing of dental care.

(C) Four Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs) with space available for the furnishing of services and treatment under the pilot program.

(D) Four facilities selected from among Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Indian Health Service facilities with established dental clinics, of which—

(i) at least one facility shall be such an Indian Health Service facility; and

(ii) any Indian Health Service facility so selected shall be selected in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(2) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—In selecting locations for the pilot program, the Secretary shall consider the feasibility and advisability of selecting locations in each of the following:

(A) Rural areas.

(B) Areas that are not in close proximity to an active duty military installation.

(C) Areas representing different geographic locations, such as census tracts established by the Bureau of Census.

(d) **LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING VETERANS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The total number of eligible veterans who may participate in the pilot program may not exceed 30,000.

(2) **DISTRIBUTION OF LIMITATION.**—In applying the limitation in paragraph (1) to the pilot program, the Secretary shall distribute the limitation across and among locations selected for the pilot program in a manner that takes appropriate account of the size and need of veterans for dental services at each such location.

(e) **SCOPE OF SERVICES.**—The dental services and treatment furnished to veterans under the pilot program shall be consistent with the dental services and treatment furnished by the Secretary to veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 100 percent disabling under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(f) **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.**—The participation of a veteran in the pilot program shall be at the election of the veteran.

(g) **LIMITATION ON AMOUNT OF SERVICES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The total amount the Secretary may expend furnishing dental services and treatment to a veteran participating in the pilot program during any one-year period may not exceed such amount as the Secretary determines appropriate. The amount so determined may not be less than \$1,000.

(2) **CONSULTATION.**—The Secretary shall make the determination under paragraph (1)—

(A) in consultation with the Director of the Indian Health Service; and

(B) in consultation with the Director of the Health Resources and Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services if one or more Federally Qualified Health Center is selected as a location for the pilot program under subsection (c)(1)(D).

(h) **COPAYMENTS.**—The Secretary may collect copayments for dental services and treatment furnished under the pilot program in accordance with authorities on the collection of copayments for medical care of veterans under chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code.

(i) **PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION.**—

(1) **NOTICE TO ELIGIBLE VETERANS ON PILOT PROGRAM.**—In carrying out the pilot program, the Secretary shall inform all veterans eligible to participate in the pilot program of the services and treatment available under the pilot program.

(2) **CONTRACTS.**—In carrying out the pilot program, the Secretary may enter into contracts with appropriate entities for the provision of dental services and treatment under the pilot program. Each such contract shall specify performance standards and metrics and processes for ensuring compliance of the contractor concerned with such performance standards.

(j) **REPORTS.**—

(1) **PRELIMINARY REPORTS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than each of 540 days and three years after the date of the commencement of the pilot program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of

Representatives a report on the pilot program.

(B) CONTENTS.—Each report under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) A description of the implementation and operation of the pilot program.

(ii) The number of veterans receiving services and treatment under the pilot program, and a description of the dental services and treatment furnished to such veterans.

(iii) An analysis of the costs and benefits of the pilot program, including a comparison of costs and benefits by location type.

(iv) An assessment of the impact of the pilot program on medical care, wellness, employability, and perceived quality of life of veterans.

(v) The current findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the pilot program.

(vi) Such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the pilot program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the completion of the pilot program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the pilot program.

(B) CONTENTS.—The report under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the pilot program.

(ii) Such recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the pilot program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(k) FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER DEFINED.—In this section the term “Federally Qualified Health Center” means a Federally-qualified health center as defined in section 1905(1)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(1)(2)(B)).

(l) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 343. PROGRAM ON EDUCATION TO PROMOTE DENTAL HEALTH IN VETERANS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program of education to promote dental health for veterans who are enrolled in the system of patient enrollment of the Department of Veterans Affairs under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in the program shall be deemed to alter or revise the eligibility of any veteran for dental care under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The program required by subsection (a) shall provide education for veterans on the following:

(1) The association between dental health and overall health and well-being.

(2) Proper techniques for dental care.

(3) Signs and symptoms of commonly occurring dental conditions.

(4) Treatment options for commonly occurring dental issues.

(5) Options for obtaining access to dental care, including information on eligibility for dental care through the Department and on purchasing private dental insurance.

(6) Available and accessible options for obtaining low or no-cost dental care, including through dental schools and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs).

(7) Such other matters relating to dental health as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) DELIVERY OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide educational materials to veterans under the program required by subsection (a) through a variety of mechanisms, including the following:

(A) The availability and distribution of print materials at Department facilities (including at medical centers, clinics, Vet Centers, and readjustment counseling centers) and to providers (including members of Patient Aligned Care Teams).

(B) The availability and distribution of materials over the Internet, including through webinars and My Health eVet.

(C) Presentations of information, including both small group and large group presentations.

(2) SELECTION OF MECHANISMS.—In selecting mechanisms for purposes of this subsection, the Secretary shall select mechanisms designed to maximize the number of veterans who receive education under the program.

(d) FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTER DEFINED.—In this section the term “Federally Qualified Health Center” means a Federally-qualified health center as defined in section 1905(1)(2)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d(1)(2)(B)).

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 344. INFORMATION ON DENTAL SERVICES FOR INCLUSION IN ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORDS UNDER DENTAL INSURANCE PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Commencing not later than 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall expand the dental insurance pilot program established by section 17.169 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, to establish a mechanism by which private sector dental care providers shall forward to the Department of Veterans Affairs information on dental care furnished to individuals under the pilot program for inclusion in the electronic medical records of the Department with respect to such individuals.

(b) CONSTRUCTION WITH CURRENT PILOT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to revise eligibility for participation in, or the locations of, the pilot program referred to in subsection (a).

(2) DURATION.—The Secretary may continue the pilot program for two years in addition to the duration otherwise provided for the pilot program in section 17.169 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, if the Secretary determines that the continuation is needed to assess the mechanism required by subsection (a).

(3) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION IN MECHANISM.—The participation in the mechanism required by subsection (a) of an individual otherwise participating in the pilot program shall be at the election of the individual.

(c) INCLUSION OF INFORMATION ON MECHANISM IN REPORTS.—Each report to Congress on the pilot program after the date of the commencement of the mechanism required by subsection (a) shall include information on the mechanism, including a current assessment of the feasibility and advisability of using the mechanism to include information on dental care furnished individuals in the electronic medical records of the Department with respect to such individuals.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 345. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There is authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Veterans Affairs for fiscal

year 2015 \$305,000,000 to carry out this subtitle and the amendments made by this subtitle. The amount so authorized to be appropriated shall be available for obligation for the five-year period beginning on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle F—Health Care Related to Sexual Trauma

SEC. 351. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SEXUAL TRAUMA COUNSELING AND TREATMENT TO VETERANS ON INACTIVE DUTY TRAINING.

Section 1720D(a)(1) is amended by striking “or active duty for training” and inserting “, active duty for training, or inactive duty training”.

SEC. 352. PROVISION OF COUNSELING AND TREATMENT FOR SEXUAL TRAUMA BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) EXPANSION OF COVERAGE TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.—Subsection (a) of section 1720D is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3);

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph (2):

“(2)(A) In operating the program required by paragraph (1), the Secretary may, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, provide counseling and care and services to members of the Armed Forces (including members of the National Guard and Reserves) on active duty to overcome psychological trauma described in that paragraph.

“(B) A member described in subparagraph (A) shall not be required to obtain a referral before receiving counseling and care and services under this paragraph.”; and

(3) in paragraph (3), as redesignated by paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking “a veteran” and inserting “an individual”; and

(B) by striking “that veteran” each place it appears and inserting “that individual”.

(b) INFORMATION TO MEMBERS ON AVAILABILITY OF COUNSELING AND SERVICES.—Subsection (c) of such section is amended—

(1) by striking “to veterans” each place it appears; and

(2) in paragraph (3), by inserting “members of the Armed Forces and” before “individuals”.

(c) INCLUSION OF MEMBERS IN REPORTS ON COUNSELING AND SERVICES.—Subsection (e) of such section is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “to veterans”;

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking “women veterans” and inserting “individuals”; and

(B) by striking “training under subsection (d).” and inserting “training under subsection (d), disaggregated by—

“(A) veterans;

“(B) members of the Armed Forces (including members of the National Guard and Reserves) on active duty; and

“(C) for each of subparagraphs (A) and (B)—

“(i) men; and

“(ii) women.”;

(3) in paragraph (4), by striking “veterans” and inserting “individuals”; and

(4) in paragraph (5)—

(A) by striking “women veterans” and inserting “individuals”; and

(B) by inserting “, including specific recommendations for individuals specified in subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of paragraph (2)” before the period at the end.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the

date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 353. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SCREENING MECHANISM TO DETECT INCIDENTS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall develop and implement a screening mechanism to be used when a veteran seeks healthcare services from the Department of Veterans Affairs to detect if the veteran has been a victim of domestic abuse for purposes of improving the treatment of the veteran and assessing the prevalence of domestic abuse in the veteran population.

(b) READILY AVAILABLE SCREENING TOOLS.—In developing and implementing a screening mechanism under subsection (a), the Secretary may incorporate into the screening mechanism such readily available screening tools as the Secretary considers appropriate for the screening mechanism.

(c) DOMESTIC ABUSE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “domestic abuse” means behavior with respect to an individual that—

(1) constitutes—

(A) a pattern of behavior resulting in physical or emotional abuse, economic control, or interference with the personal liberty of that individual;

(B) a violation of Federal or State law involving the use, attempted use, or threatened use of force or violence against that individual; or

(C) a violation of a lawful order issued for the protection of that individual; and

(2) is committed by a person who—

(A) is a current or former spouse or domestic partner of that individual;

(B) shares a child in common with that individual;

(C) is a current or former intimate partner of that individual that shares or has shared a common domicile with that individual;

(D) is a caregiver or family caregiver of that individual (as such terms are defined in section 1720G(d) of title 38, United States Code); or

(E) is in any other type of relationship with that individual that the Secretary may specify for purposes of this section.

SEC. 354. REPORTS ON MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA AND DOMESTIC ABUSE.

(a) REPORT ON SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA IN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—Not later than 630 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the treatment and services available from the Department of Veterans Affairs for male veterans who experience military sexual trauma compared to such treatment and services available to female veterans who experience military sexual trauma.

(b) REPORT ON DOMESTIC ABUSE AMONG VETERANS.—Not later than two years after the implementation of the screening mechanism required by section 353(a) of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shall jointly submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on domestic abuse among veterans that includes the following:

(1) A summary of the types, outcomes, and circumstances of incidents of domestic abuse

that have been reported by veterans during the two-year period preceding the submission of the report.

(2) A summary of the treatments available from the Department of Veterans Affairs for veterans who experience domestic abuse and an assessment of the effectiveness of those treatments.

(3) Data and analysis on any correlation between an incident of military sexual trauma or sexual trauma experienced after the age of 18 and domestic abuse.

(4) Any other issues that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs or the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention determines appropriate.

(c) REPORTS ON TRANSITION OF MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA AND DOMESTIC ABUSE TREATMENT FROM DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.—Not later than 630 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for five years, the Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee established by section 320(a) of title 38, United States Code, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on military sexual trauma and domestic abuse that includes the following:

(1) The processes and procedures utilized by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense to facilitate transition of treatment of individuals who have experienced military sexual trauma or domestic abuse from treatment provided by the Department of Defense to treatment provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) A description and assessment of the collaboration between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense in assisting veterans in filing claims for disabilities related to military sexual trauma or domestic abuse, including permitting veterans access to information and evidence necessary to develop or support such claims.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

(2) DOMESTIC ABUSE.—The term “domestic abuse” has the meaning given that term in section 353(c) of this Act.

(3) MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term “military sexual trauma” means psychological trauma, which in the judgment of a mental health professional employed by the Department, resulted from a physical assault of a sexual nature, battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment which occurred while the veteran was serving on active duty or active duty for training.

(4) SEXUAL HARASSMENT.—The term “sexual harassment” means repeated, unsolicited verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature which is threatening in character.

(5) SEXUAL TRAUMA.—The term “sexual trauma” shall have the meaning given that term by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for purposes of this section.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle G—Adoption Assistance, Child Care Assistance, and Counseling

SEC. 361. ADOPTION ASSISTANCE FOR SEVERELY WOUNDED VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter VIII of chapter 17 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1788. Adoption assistance

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may pay an amount, not to exceed the limitation amount, to assist a covered veteran in the adoption of one or more children.

“(b) COVERED VETERAN.—For purposes of this section, a covered veteran is any severely wounded, ill, or injured veteran who—

“(1) has an infertility condition incurred or aggravated in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service; and

“(2) is enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment established under section 1705(a) of this title.

“(c) LIMITATION AMOUNT.—For purposes of this section, the limitation amount is equal to the cost the Department would incur by paying the expenses of three adoptions by covered veterans, as determined by the Secretary.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1787 the following new item:

“1788. Adoption assistance.”.

SEC. 362. COORDINATION BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ON FURNISHING OF FERTILITY COUNSELING AND TREATMENT.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense shall share best practices and facilitate referrals, as they consider appropriate, on the furnishing of fertility counseling and treatment.

SEC. 363. PROGRAM ON ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS.

(a) ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR CERTAIN VETERANS RECEIVING HEALTH CARE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 17 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1709B. Assistance for child care for certain veterans receiving health care

“(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to provide, subject to subsection (b), assistance to qualified veterans described in subsection (c) to obtain child care so that such veterans can receive health care services described in subsection (c).

“(b) LIMITATION ON PERIOD OF PAYMENTS.—Assistance may only be provided to a qualified veteran under this section for receipt of child care during the period that the qualified veteran—

“(1) receives health care services described in subsection (c) at a facility of the Department; and

“(2) requires travel to and from such facility for the receipt of such health care services.

“(c) QUALIFIED VETERANS.—For purposes of this section, a qualified veteran is a veteran who is—

“(1) the primary caretaker of a child or children; and

“(2)(A) receiving from the Department—

“(i) regular mental health care services;

“(ii) intensive mental health care services;

or

“(iii) such other intensive health care services that the Secretary determines that provision of assistance to the veteran to obtain child care would improve access to such health care services by the veteran; or

“(B) in need of regular or intensive mental health care services from the Department, and but for lack of child care services, would receive such health care services from the Department.

“(d) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the program in no fewer than three Veterans Integrated Service Networks selected

by the Secretary for purposes of the program.

“(e) FORMS OF CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE.—(1) Child care assistance under this section may include the following:

“(A) Stipends for the payment of child care offered by licensed child care centers (either directly or through a voucher program) which shall be, to the extent practicable, modeled after the Department of Veterans Affairs Child Care Subsidy Program established pursuant to section 630 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2002 (Public Law 107-67; 115 Stat. 552).

“(B) Direct provision of child care at an on-site facility of the Department.

“(C) Payments to private child care agencies.

“(D) Collaboration with facilities or programs of other Federal departments or agencies.

“(E) Such other forms of assistance as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(2) In the case that child care assistance under this section is provided as a stipend under paragraph (1)(A), such stipend shall cover the full cost of such child care.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1709A the following new item:

“1709B. Assistance for child care for certain veterans receiving health care.”.

(3) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 205(e) of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-163; 38 U.S.C. 1710 note) is amended by inserting “but not after the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014” before the period at the end.

(b) ASSISTANCE FOR CHILD CARE FOR INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING READJUSTMENT COUNSELING AND RELATED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 17, as amended by subsection (a)(1) of this section, is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1709C. Assistance for child care for individuals receiving readjustment counseling and related mental health services

“(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall carry out a program to provide, subject to subsection (b), assistance to qualified individuals described in subsection (c) to obtain child care so that such individuals can receive readjustment counseling and related mental health services.

“(b) LIMITATION ON PERIOD OF PAYMENTS.—Assistance may only be provided to a qualified individual under this section for receipt of child care during the period that the qualified individual receives readjustment counseling and related health care services at a Vet Center.

“(c) QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS.—For purposes of this section, a qualified individual is an individual who is—

“(1) the primary caretaker of a child or children; and

“(2)(A) receiving from the Department regular readjustment counseling and related mental health services; or

“(B) in need of readjustment counseling and related mental health services from the Department, and but for lack of child care services, would receive such counseling and services from the Department.

“(d) LOCATIONS.—The Secretary shall carry out the program under this section in no

fewer than three Readjustment Counseling Service Regions selected by the Secretary for purposes of the program.

“(e) FORMS OF CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE.—(1) Child care assistance under this section may include the following:

“(A) Stipends for the payment of child care offered by licensed child care centers (either directly or through a voucher program) which shall be, to the extent practicable, modeled after the Department of Veterans Affairs Child Care Subsidy Program established pursuant to section 630 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 2002 (Public Law 107-67; 115 Stat. 552).

“(B) Payments to private child care agencies.

“(C) Collaboration with facilities or programs of other Federal departments or agencies.

“(D) Such other forms of assistance as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(2) In the case that child care assistance under this subsection is provided as a stipend under paragraph (1)(A), such stipend shall cover the full cost of such child care.

“(f) VET CENTER DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘Vet Center’ means a center for readjustment counseling and related mental health services for individuals under section 1712A of this title.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17, as amended by subsection (a)(2) of this section, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1709B the following new item:

“1709C. Assistance for child care for individuals receiving readjustment counseling and related mental health services.”.

SEC. 364. COUNSELING IN RETREAT SETTINGS FOR WOMEN VETERANS NEWLY SEPARATED FROM SERVICE IN THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) COUNSELING IN RETREAT SETTINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter II of chapter 17 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 1720H. Counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated from service in the Armed Forces

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide, through the Readjustment Counseling Service of the Veterans Health Administration, reintegration and readjustment services described in subsection (c) in group retreat settings to women veterans who are recently separated from service in the Armed Forces after a prolonged deployment.

“(b) ELECTION OF VETERAN.—The receipt of services under this section by a woman veteran shall be at the election of the veteran.

“(c) COVERED SERVICES.—The services provided to a woman veteran under this section shall include the following:

“(1) Information on reintegration into the veteran's family, employment, and community.

“(2) Financial counseling.

“(3) Occupational counseling.

“(4) Information and counseling on stress reduction.

“(5) Information and counseling on conflict resolution.

“(6) Such other information and counseling as the Secretary considers appropriate to assist the veteran in reintegration into the veteran's family, employment, and community.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1720G the following new item:

“1720H. Counseling in retreat settings for women veterans newly separated from service in the Armed Forces.”.

(b) REPEAL OF SUPERSEDED PILOT PROGRAM AUTHORITY.—Section 203 of the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-163; 38 U.S.C. 1712A note) is hereby repealed.

Subtitle H—Major Medical Facility Leases

SEC. 371. AUTHORIZATION OF MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY LEASES.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out the following major medical facility leases at the locations specified, and in an amount for each lease not to exceed the amount shown for such location (not including any estimated cancellation costs):

(1) For a clinical research and pharmacy coordinating center, Albuquerque, New Mexico, an amount not to exceed \$9,560,000.

(2) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Brick, New Jersey, an amount not to exceed \$7,280,000.

(3) For a new primary care and dental clinic annex, Charleston, South Carolina, an amount not to exceed \$7,070,250.

(4) For the Cobb County community-based Outpatient Clinic, Cobb County, Georgia, an amount not to exceed \$6,409,000.

(5) For the Leeward Outpatient Healthcare Access Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, including a co-located clinic with the Department of Defense and the co-location of the Honolulu Regional Office of the Veterans Benefits Administration and the Kapolei Vet Center of the Department of Veterans Affairs, an amount not to exceed \$15,887,370.

(6) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Johnson County, Kansas, an amount not to exceed \$2,263,000.

(7) For a replacement community-based outpatient clinic, Lafayette, Louisiana, an amount not to exceed \$2,996,000.

(8) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Lake Charles, Louisiana, an amount not to exceed \$2,626,000.

(9) For outpatient clinic consolidation, New Port Richey, Florida, an amount not to exceed \$11,927,000.

(10) For an outpatient clinic, Ponce, Puerto Rico, an amount not to exceed \$11,535,000.

(11) For lease consolidation, San Antonio, Texas, an amount not to exceed \$19,426,000.

(12) For a community-based outpatient clinic, San Diego, California, an amount not to exceed \$11,946,100.

(13) For an outpatient clinic, Tyler, Texas, an amount not to exceed \$4,327,000.

(14) For the Errera Community Care Center, West Haven, Connecticut, an amount not to exceed \$4,883,000.

(15) For the Worcester community-based Outpatient Clinic, Worcester, Massachusetts, an amount not to exceed \$4,855,000.

(16) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, an amount not to exceed \$4,232,060.

(17) For a multispecialty clinic, Chattanooga, Tennessee, an amount not to exceed \$7,069,000.

(18) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Chico, California, an amount not to exceed \$4,534,000.

(19) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Chula Vista, California, an amount not to exceed \$3,714,000.

(20) For a new research lease, Hines, Illinois, an amount not to exceed \$22,032,000.

(21) For a replacement research lease, Houston, Texas, an amount not to exceed \$6,142,000.

(22) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Lincoln, Nebraska, an amount not to exceed \$7,178,400.

(23) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Lubbock, Texas, an amount not to exceed \$8,554,000.

(24) For a community-based outpatient clinic consolidation, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, an amount not to exceed \$8,022,000.

(25) For a community-based outpatient clinic, Phoenix, Arizona, an amount not to exceed \$20,757,000.

(26) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Redding, California, an amount not to exceed \$8,154,000.

(27) For the expansion of a community-based outpatient clinic, Tulsa, Oklahoma, an amount not to exceed \$13,269,200.

SEC. 372. BUDGETARY TREATMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITIES LEASES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) Title 31, United States Code, requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to record the full cost of its contractual obligation against funds available at the time a contract is executed.

(2) Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11 provides guidance to agencies in meeting the statutory requirements under title 31, United States Code, with respect to leases.

(3) For operating leases, Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11 requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to record upfront budget authority in an “amount equal to total payments under the full term of the lease or [an] amount sufficient to cover first year lease payments plus cancellation costs”.

(b) REQUIREMENT FOR OBLIGATION OF FULL COST.—Subject to the availability of appropriations provided in advance, in exercising the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into leases provided in this Act, the Secretary shall record, pursuant to section 1501 of title 31, United States Code, as the full cost of the contractual obligation at the time a contract is executed either—

(1) an amount equal to total payments under the full term of the lease; or

(2) if the lease specifies payments to be made in the event the lease is terminated before its full term, an amount sufficient to cover the first year lease payments plus the specified cancellation costs.

(c) TRANSPARENCY.—

(1) COMPLIANCE.—Subsection (b) of section 8104 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(7) In the case of a prospectus proposing funding for a major medical facility lease, a detailed analysis of how the lease is expected to comply with Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11 and section 1341 of title 31 (commonly referred to as the ‘Anti-Deficiency Act’). Any such analysis shall include—

“(A) an analysis of the classification of the lease as a ‘lease-purchase’, ‘capital lease’, or ‘operating lease’ as those terms are defined in Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11;

“(B) an analysis of the obligation of budgetary resources associated with the lease; and

“(C) an analysis of the methodology used in determining the asset cost, fair market value, and cancellation costs of the lease.”.

(2) SUBMITTAL TO CONGRESS.—Such section 8104 is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(h)(1) Not less than 30 days before entering into a major medical facility lease, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the House of Representatives—

“(A) notice of the Secretary’s intention to enter into the lease;

“(B) a copy of the proposed lease;

“(C) a description and analysis of any differences between the prospectus submitted pursuant to subsection (b) and the proposed lease; and

“(D) a scoring analysis demonstrating that the proposed lease fully complies with Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11.

“(2) Each committee described in paragraph (1) shall ensure that any information submitted to the committee under such paragraph is treated by the committee with the same level of confidentiality as is required by law of the Secretary and subject to the same statutory penalties for unauthorized disclosure or use as the Secretary.

“(3) Not more than 30 days after entering into a major medical facility lease, the Secretary shall submit to each committee described in paragraph (1) a report on any material differences between the lease that was entered into and the proposed lease described under such paragraph, including how the lease that was entered into changes the previously submitted scoring analysis described in subparagraph (D) of such paragraph.”.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section, or the amendments made by this section, shall be construed to in any way relieve the Department of Veterans Affairs from any statutory or regulatory obligations or requirements existing prior to the enactment of this section and such amendments.

TITLE IV—EMPLOYMENT AND RELATED MATTERS

Subtitle A—Training and Other Services for Veterans Seeking Employment

SEC. 401. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO PROVIDE REHABILITATION AND VOCATIONAL BENEFITS TO MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES WITH SEVERE INJURIES OR ILLNESSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1631(b)(2) of the Wounded Warrior Act (title XVI of Public Law 110-181; 10 U.S.C. 1071 note) is amended by striking “December 31, 2014” and inserting “December 31, 2016”.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the benefits provided by the Secretary under section 1631(b) of such Act.

(2) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—In this subsection, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 402. CONSOLIDATED AND COORDINATED FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INTERNET PORTAL TO CONNECT CURRENT AND FORMER MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WITH EMPLOYERS SEEKING EMPLOYEES WITH SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE DEVELOPED THROUGH MILITARY SERVICE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Although significant progress has been made, unemployment among veterans remains stubbornly high.

(2) The unemployment rate among younger veterans, ages 18 to 24, remains well above the national average.

(3) This problem impacts the Department of Defense budget. Over the past 10 years, the Federal Government has expended more than \$9,600,000,000 on unemployment compensation benefits for former members of the Armed Forces.

(4) The Department makes significant investments in members of the Armed Forces including specialized technical training in skills that are easily transferrable to civilian career fields.

(5) Beyond specific technical training, veterans gain unique leadership, organizational, and other skills that make them valued employees in the private sector.

(6) Government agencies, private sector entities, and nonprofit organizations are responding to the issue of unemployment among veterans.

(7) There are now so many programs to assist veterans in finding employment, many within the Government, that veterans may not know where to seek assistance in finding employment. While these programs are well intentioned, many are duplicative in nature and compete for scarce resources.

(8) The Department of Labor, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, and the Office of Personnel Management are currently working to consolidate the veterans employment initiatives of the Government into a single, consolidated Internet portal with the goal of connecting veterans who are seeking employment with employers who want to employ them.

(9) The consolidated portal will prevent Federal Government agencies from competing with each other to accomplish the same goal, and will save the Federal Government money while providing a comprehensive, coordinated tool for employers and veterans seeking employment.

(10) The Federal Government can accomplish this by leveraging the best practices of current programs.

(11) While progress has been made, there is no statutory requirement to streamline these Government programs and coordinate the resources that are all intended to achieve the same goal.

(b) CONSOLIDATED INTERNET PORTAL REQUIRED.—Commencing not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (h), the Secretary of Labor shall, in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and organizations concerned with veterans resources, consolidate Internet portals of the Federal Government on employment for current and former members of the Armed Forces into a comprehensive, consolidated Internet portal within a single existing platform or system for the purposes of connecting current and former members of the Armed Forces who are seeking employment with employers who want to employ them.

(c) ELEMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The consolidated Internet portal under subsection (b) should include the following:

(A) A means through which current and former members of the Armed Forces may connect for employment purposes with employers seeking the experience and skills developed during service in the Armed Forces, including a means of presenting a profile of each member or former member to employers that includes, at a minimum—

(i) the skills obtained by such member or former member during service in the Armed Forces and additional skills such member or former member is interested in pursuing; and

(ii) the current or intended residence of such member or former member (including an option for members or former members who are willing to reside in various locations).

(B) A means of permitting qualified prospective employers to post employment openings and seek contact with members or former members based on their profile for the purposes of requesting the initiation of arrangements or negotiations concerning potential employment.

(C) A means of presenting other employment resources, including resume preparation, to members or former members seeking employment.

(2) **MATTERS CONSIDERED.**—In developing the consolidated Internet portal, the Secretaries referred to in subsection (b) should consider, at a minimum, the following:

(A) Public and private sector resources on matters relating to the portal.

(B) Opportunities to incorporate local employment networks into the portal.

(C) Methodologies to determine the most effective employment resources and programs to be incorporated into the portal.

(D) Means for streamlining processes through the portal for employers to find and employ former members of the Armed Forces.

(d) **MEMBER PARTICIPATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Participation in the consolidated Internet portal under subsection (b) shall be limited to members of the National Guard and Reserves, members of the Armed Forces on active duty who are transitioning from military service to civilian life, former members of the Armed Forces, and veterans.

(2) **VOLUNTARY.**—Participation by a member or former member of the Armed Forces described in paragraph (1) in the consolidated Internet portal shall be voluntary. A member or former member participating in the portal may cease participation in the portal at any time.

(e) **REPORTS BY IMPLEMENTING SECRETARIES.**—

(1) **PRELIMINARY REPORT.**—Not later than six months after the effective date specified in subsection (h), the Secretaries shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the consolidated Internet portal under subsection (b). The report shall include the following:

(A) A list of the Internet portals of the Federal Government that are redundant to, or duplicative of, the consolidated Internet portal.

(B) An estimate of the cost-savings to be achieved by the Federal Government through the consolidated Internet portal, including through the elimination or consolidation into the consolidated Internet portal of the Internet portals listed under subparagraph (A).

(2) **REPORT FOLLOWING IMPLEMENTATION OF PORTAL.**—Not later than one year after the date of the implementation of the consolidated Internet portal under subsection (b), the Secretaries shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the portal.

(3) **ELEMENTS.**—Each report under this subsection shall include a description of the consolidated Internet portal and such other information on the portal as the Secretaries consider appropriate.

(f) **COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 540 days after the effective date specified in subsection (h), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appro-

priate committees of Congress a report on the elimination by Federal agencies of Internet portals that are redundant to, or duplicative of, the consolidated Internet portal under subsection (b).

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The report shall include the following:

(A) The list of the Internet portals of the Federal Government at the time of the implementation of the consolidated Internet portal that are determined by the Comptroller General to have been redundant to, or duplicative of, the consolidated Internet portal.

(B) An assessment whether the list of Internet portals under subsection (e)(1)(A) encompassed all the Internet portals of the Federal Government that were redundant to, or duplicative of, the consolidated Internet portal.

(C) An assessment of the actions taken by Federal agencies to eliminate Internet portals that were redundant to, or duplicative of, the consolidated Internet portal.

(D) A list of Internet portals of the Federal Government determined to be redundant to, or duplicative of, the consolidated Internet portal that have yet to be eliminated by Federal agencies as of the date of the report.

(g) **APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on Education and the Workforce, the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(h) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle B—Employment of Veterans and Recognition of Veteran Status With Respect to Employment Related Matters

SEC. 411. EMPLOYMENT OF VETERANS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 4214 is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the following:

“(4)(A) The requirement under this paragraph is in addition to the appointment of qualified covered veterans under the authority specified in subparagraph (C) by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.

“(B) The head of each agency, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall develop a plan for exercising the authority specified in subparagraph (C) during the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014.

“(C) The authority specified in this subparagraph is the authority as follows:

“(i) The authority under paragraph (1).

“(ii) The authority available to the agency concerned under the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-339) and the amendments made by that Act.

“(D) The Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall ensure that under the plans developed under subparagraph (B) agencies shall appoint to existing vacancies not fewer than 15,000 qualified covered veterans during the five-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of

2014. For purposes of complying with this subparagraph, an appointment pursuant to the authority referred to in subparagraph (C)(ii) shall not count toward the number required by this subparagraph unless the appointment is to a vacancy in a full-time, permanent position.”;

(2) in subsection (d), in the third sentence, by inserting “(including, during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014, the development and implementation by each agency of the plan required under subsection (b)(4), which shall include information regarding the grade or pay level of appointments by the agency under the plan and whether the appointments are, or are converted to, career or career-conditional appointments)” after “subsection (b) of this section”; and

(3) in subsection (e)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter before subparagraph (A), by striking “to the Congress” and inserting “to the appropriate committees of Congress”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “(including, during the 5-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014, the development and implementation by the agency of the plan required under subsection (b)(4), which shall include information regarding the grade or pay level of appointments by the agency under the plan and whether the appointments are, or are converted to, permanent appointments)” before the period; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) In this subsection, the term ‘appropriate committees of Congress’ means—

“(A) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate; and

“(B) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives.”;

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress (as defined under section 4214(e)(3) of title 38, United States Code, as amended by subsection (a)) regarding the development of a plan to carry out the amendments made by subsection (a).

SEC. 412. STATE RECOGNITION OF MILITARY EXPERIENCE OF VETERANS IN ISSUING LICENSES AND CREDENTIALS TO VETERANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 4102A(c) is amended by striking paragraph (9) and inserting the following new paragraph (9):

“(9)(A) As a condition of a grant or contract under which funds are made available to a State under subsection (b)(5) in order to carry out section 4103A or 4104 of this title, the State shall—

“(i) establish a program under which the State administers an examination to each veteran seeking a license or credential issued by the State and issues such license or credential to such veteran without requiring such veteran to undergo any training or apprenticeship if the veteran—

“(I) receives a satisfactory score on completion of such examination, as determined by the State;

“(II) has been awarded a military occupational specialty that is substantially equivalent to or exceeds the requirements of the

State for the issuance of such license or credential;

“(III) has engaged in the active practice of the occupation for which the veteran is seeking such license or credential for at least two of the five years preceding the date of application; and

“(IV) pays any customary or usual fees required by the State for such license or credential; and

“(ii) submit each year to the Secretary a report on the exams administered under clause (i) during the most recently completed 12-month period that includes, for the period covered by the report the number of veterans who completed an exam administered by the State under clause (i) and a description of the results of such exams, disaggregated by occupational field.

“(B) The Secretary may waive the requirement under subparagraph (A) that a State establish a program described in that subparagraph as a condition of a grant or contract if the State certifies to the Secretary that the State—

“(i) takes into account previous military training for the purposes of issuing licenses or credentials;

“(ii) permits veterans to completely satisfy through examination any training or testing requirements for a license or credential with respect to which a veteran has previously completed military training; and

“(iii) for any credential or license for which a veteran is unable to completely satisfy such requirements through examination, the State substantially reduces training time required to satisfy such requirement based on the military training received by the veteran.

“(C) Not less frequently than once each year, the Secretary shall submit to Congress and the Secretary of Defense a report summarizing the information received by the Secretary under subparagraph (A)(ii).”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

(1) EXAMS.—Subparagraph (A) of section 4102A(c)(9) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to grants and contracts described in such subparagraph awarded after such date.

(2) REPORTS.—Subparagraph (B) of such section 4102A(c)(9), as so added, shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and the Secretary of Labor shall submit the first report under such subparagraph not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 413. EMPLOYMENT OF VETERANS AS EVALUATION FACTOR IN THE AWARDED OF FEDERAL CONTRACTS.

(a) CIVILIAN CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 33 of title 41, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§3313. Employment of veterans as evaluation factor

“The head of each executive agency shall consider favorably as an evaluation factor in solicitations for contracts and task or delivery orders valued at or above \$25,000,000 the employment by a prospective contractor of veterans constituting at least 5 percent of the contractor's workforce.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 33 of such title is amended by adding after the item relating to section 3312 the following new item:

“3313. Employment of veterans as evaluation factor.”.

(b) DEFENSE CONTRACTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§2338. Employment of veterans as evaluation factor

“The head of each agency shall consider favorably as an evaluation factor in solicitations for contracts and task or delivery orders valued at or above \$25,000,000 the employment by a prospective contractor of veterans constituting at least 5 percent of the contractor's workforce.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 137 of such title is amended by adding after the item relating to section 2337 the following new item:

“2338. Employment of veterans as evaluation factor.”.

(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council shall amend the Federal Acquisition Regulation to carry out the provisions of section 3313 of title 41, United States Code, and section 2338 of title 10, United States Code, as added by subsections (a) and (b), respectively.

SEC. 414. REPORT ON DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS IN CIVILIAN LABOR MARKET.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 570 days after the date of the enactment of this act, the Secretary of Labor, in coordination with the heads of such agencies as the Secretary considers appropriate, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on barriers and potential discrimination facing veterans in the labor market.

(b) CONTENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An evaluation of the following:

(A) The extent to which members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces and veterans face barriers to entry into the civilian labor market, including whether such members and veterans face obstacles in obtaining employment, maintaining employment, or receiving promotions while employed.

(B) The extent to which a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces or a veteran faces discrimination in the civilian labor market based on the member's or veteran's status as a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces or as a veteran, as the case may be.

(C) The adequacy and effectiveness of Federal laws in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act in preventing or ameliorating acts of discrimination against members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces and veterans seeking or retaining employment in the civilian labor market.

(D) The adequacy and effectiveness of programs of the Department of Labor in effect on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act in educating private sector employers on matters relevant to hiring and employing veterans and the military experience of veterans.

(2) Such recommendations as the Secretary may have for legislative or administrative action—

(A) to address barriers or discrimination that members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces and veterans may face in the civilian labor market;

(B) to improve education and outreach for employers in the civilian labor market on issues regarding hiring and employing such members and veterans; and

(C) to assist employers in the civilian labor market in matching the military experience of such members and veterans with the needs of such employers.

(3) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—In this section, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(1) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle C—Improving Employment and Reemployment Rights of Members of the Uniformed Services

SEC. 421. SUSPENSION, TERMINATION, OR DEBARMENT OF CONTRACTORS FOR REPEATED VIOLATIONS OF EMPLOYMENT OR REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS OF MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter III of chapter 43 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§4328. Suspension, termination, or debarment of contractors

“(a) GROUNDS FOR SUSPENSION, TERMINATION, OR DEBARMENT.—Payment under a contract awarded by a Federal executive agency may be suspended and the contract may be terminated, and the contractor who made the contract with the agency may be suspended or debarred in accordance with the requirements of this section, if the head of the agency determines that the contractor as an employer has repeatedly been convicted of failing or refusing to comply with one or more provisions of this chapter.

“(b) EFFECT OF DEBARMENT.—A contractor debarred by a final decision under this section is ineligible for award of a contract by a Federal executive agency, and for participation in a future procurement by a Federal executive agency, for a period specified in the decision, not to exceed 5 years.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 43 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 4327 the following new item:

“4328. Suspension, termination, or debarment of contractor.”.

(c) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council shall amend the Federal Acquisition Regulation to carry out section 4328 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 4328 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall apply with respect to failures and refusals to comply with provisions of chapter 43 of title 38, United States Code, occurring on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(e) ANNUAL REPORT.—Section 4332(a) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (10) as paragraph (11); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following new paragraph (10):

“(10) The number of suspensions, terminations, and debarments under section 4328 of this title, disaggregated by the agency or department imposing the suspension or debarment.”.

Subtitle D—Small Business Matters**SEC. 431. EXPANSION OF CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO INCLUDE CONDITIONALLY OWNED SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS 100 PERCENT OWNED BY VETERANS.**

Section 8127(l) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by inserting “unconditionally” before “owned by” each place it appears; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) The term ‘unconditionally owned’ includes, with respect to ownership of a small business concern, conditional ownership of such small business concern if such business concern is 100 percent owned by one or more veterans.”.

SEC. 432. MODIFICATION OF TREATMENT UNDER CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES OWNED BY VETERANS OF SMALL BUSINESSES AFTER DEATH OF DISABLED VETERAN OWNERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8127(h) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “rated as” and all that follows through “disability.” and inserting a period; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by amending subparagraph (C) to read as follows:

“(C) The date that—

“(i) in the case of a surviving spouse of a veteran with a service-connected disability rated as 100 percent disabling or who dies as a result of a service-connected disability, is 10 years after the date of the veteran’s death; or

“(ii) in the case of a surviving spouse of a veteran with a service-connected disability rated as less than 100 percent disabling who does not die as a result of a service-connected disability, is three years after the date of the veteran’s death.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to applications received pursuant to section 8127(f)(2) of title 38, United States Code, that are verified on or after such date.

SEC. 433. TREATMENT OF BUSINESSES AFTER DEATHS OF SERVICEMEMBER-OWNERS FOR PURPOSES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 8127 is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (i) through (j) as subsections (j) through (m), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (h) the following new subsection (i):

“(i) TREATMENT OF BUSINESSES AFTER DEATH OF SERVICEMEMBER-OWNER.—(1) If a member of the Armed Forces owns at least 51 percent of a small business concern and such member is killed in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service, the surviving spouse or dependent child of such member who acquires such ownership rights in such small business concern shall, for the period described in paragraph (2), be treated as if the surviving spouse or dependent child were a veteran with a service-connected disability for purposes of determining the status of the small business concern as a small business concern owned and controlled by veterans for purposes of contracting goals and preferences under this section.

“(2) The period referred to in paragraph (1) is the period beginning on the date on which the member of the Armed Forces dies and ending on the date as follows:

“(A) In the case of a surviving spouse, the earliest of the following dates:

“(i) The date on which the surviving spouse remarries.

“(ii) The date on which the surviving spouse relinquishes an ownership interest in the small business concern and no longer owns at least 51 percent of such small business concern.

“(iii) The date that is ten years after the date of the member’s death.

“(B) In the case of a dependent child, the earliest of the following dates:

“(i) The date on which the surviving dependent child relinquishes an ownership interest in the small business concern and no longer owns at least 51 percent of such small business concern.

“(ii) The date that is ten years after the date of the member’s death.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (i) of section 8127 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to the deaths of members of the Armed Forces occurring on or after such date.

SEC. 434. SPECIAL RULE FOR TREATMENT UNDER CONTRACTING GOALS AND PREFERENCES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS LICENSED IN COMMUNITY PROPERTY STATES.

Section 8127, as amended by section 433 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(n) SPECIAL RULE FOR COMMUNITY PROPERTY STATES.—Whenever the Secretary assesses, for purposes of this section, the degree of ownership by an individual of a small business concern licensed in a community property State, the Secretary shall also assess what that degree of ownership would be if such small business concern had been licensed in a State other than a community property State. If the Secretary determines that such individual would have had a greater degree of ownership of the small business concern had such small business concern been licensed in a State other than a community property State, the Secretary shall treat, for purposes of this section, such small business concern as if it had been licensed in a State other than a community property State.”.

SEC. 435. REPORT ON ASSISTANCE FOR VETERANS IN OBTAINING TRAINING ON PURCHASING AND OPERATING A FRANCHISE.

(a) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of Labor shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, and other appropriate entities, submit to Congress a report on the assistance available to veterans to obtain training necessary to purchase and operate a franchise.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of the assistance available for veterans through the Department of Labor, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Small Business Administration, or any other agency of the Federal Government in order to obtain training necessary to purchase or operate a franchise.

(2) Information on the number of veterans who have sought and obtained the training described in paragraph (1) during the five calendar years preceding the report.

(3) A description of any barriers encountered by veterans in obtaining the training described in paragraph (1).

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE V—ACCOUNTABILITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE IMPROVEMENTS**SEC. 501. ADMINISTRATION OF VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.**

(a) VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 73 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 7310. Veterans Integrated Service Networks

“(a) ORGANIZATION.—(1) The Secretary shall organize the Veterans Health Administration in geographically defined Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

“(2) Each Veterans Integrated Service Network shall be organized in consideration of the following:

“(A) The size of the veteran population of the region of the network.

“(B) The complexity of the medical needs of the veterans in such region.

“(C) Patient referral patterns.

“(D) The availability of a full continuum of health care services.

“(E) The ability of the Department to furnish health care efficiently.

“(F) Partnerships with non-Department health care entities.

“(b) STAFFING MODEL.—(1) The Secretary shall establish a staffing model for each Veterans Integrated Service Network that—

“(A) is appropriate for the mission and responsibilities of the Veterans Integrated Service Network; and

“(B) accounts for the specific health care needs of differing populations in the Veterans Integrated Service Network.

“(2) The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service Network complies with the staffing model established by the Secretary under paragraph (1) for such Veterans Integrated Service Network.

“(c) INTEGRATED HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.—The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service Network maintains a regional integrated healthcare system by—

“(1) implementing alliances with such other governmental, public, and private health care organizations and practitioners as the Secretary considers appropriate to meet the needs of veterans in the Network;

“(2) providing oversight and management of, and taking responsibility for, a regional budget for the activities of the Veterans Health Administration in the geographic area of the Network that is—

“(A) aligned with the budget guidelines of the Department and the Veterans Health Administration;

“(B) balanced at the end of each fiscal year; and

“(C) sufficient to provide high-quality health care to veterans within the region and to meet any unique needs of the veterans of the region;

“(3) using national metrics to develop systems to provide effective, efficient, and safe delivery of health care; and

“(4) ensuring high-quality clinical programs and services are rendered in and through—

“(A) the medical centers and outpatient clinics of the Department that are located in the Network; and

“(B) other non-Department clinical or health care delivery settings located in the Network.

“(d) REDUCTION IN DUPLICATE FUNCTIONS.—The Secretary shall ensure that the Veterans

Integrated Service Networks identify and reduce, whenever practicable, the duplication of functions in clinical, administrative, and operational processes and practices of the Veterans Health Administration.

“(e) **COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION.**—The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service Network—

“(1) works to achieve maximum effectiveness in patient care and safety, graduate medical education, and research; and

“(2) assesses the consolidation or realignment of institutional functions, including capital asset, safety, and operational support functions, in collaboration and cooperation with other Veterans Integrated Service Networks and the following offices or entities within the geographical area of the Network:

“(A) The offices of the Veterans Benefits Administration and the National Cemetery Administration.

“(B) The offices, installations, and facilities of the Department of Defense, including the offices, installations, and facilities of each branch of the Armed Forces and the reserve components of the Armed Forces.

“(C) The offices, installations, and facilities of the Coast Guard.

“(D) Offices of State and local agencies that have a mission to provide assistance to veterans.

“(E) Medical schools and other affiliates.

“(F) Offices of Congress, offices of State and local elected officials, and other government offices.

“(G) Federal, State, and local emergency preparedness organizations.

“(H) Community and nonprofit organizations.

“(I) Such other entities of the Federal Government as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(f) **HEADQUARTERS.**—(1) The Secretary shall ensure that each Veterans Integrated Service Network has only one headquarters office.

“(2) The location of a headquarters office for a Veterans Integrated Service Network shall be determined by the Secretary and co-located with a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center.

“(3)(A) The Secretary may employ or contract for the services of such full time equivalent employees and contractors at the headquarters of each Veterans Integrated Service Network as the Secretary considers appropriate in accordance with the staffing models established under subsection (b).

“(B) Not later than December 31 each year, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on employment at the headquarters of Veterans Integrated Service Networks during the most recently completed fiscal year.

“(C) Each report submitted under subparagraph (B) shall include the following for the year covered by the report:

“(i) The number of individuals employed at each headquarters of a Veterans Integrated Service Network.

“(ii) The number of individuals employed by the Veterans Health Administration in each Veterans Integrated Service Network who are not employed at the same location as the headquarters of the Network.

“(iii) The title for each position of employment at a headquarters of a Veterans Integrated Service Network.

“(iv) The title for each position of employment with the Veterans Health Administration in each Veterans Integrated Service Network that is not at the same location as the headquarters of the Network.

“(v) An assessment of the impact on the budget of the Department by the employment of individuals at the headquarters of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

“(g) **TRIENNIAL STRUCTURE REVIEW, REASSESSMENT, AND REPORT.**—(1) Beginning three years after the date of the enactment of this section and not less frequently than once every three years thereafter, the Secretary shall conduct a review and assessment of the structure and operations of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks in order to identify recommendations—

“(A) for streamlining and reducing costs associated with the operation of each headquarters of a Veterans Integrated Service Network; and

“(B) for reducing costs of health care within the Veterans Health Administration.

“(2) Not later than 180 days after conducting a review and assessment under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee of Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on such review and assessment, which shall include such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate to improve the Veterans Integrated Service Networks.”.

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 73 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7309 the following new item:

“7310. Veterans Integrated Service Networks.”.

(b) **RELOCATION OF HEADQUARTERS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In the case of a headquarters office of a Veterans Integrated Service Network that on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act was in a location that was not co-located with a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center and the Secretary is engaged in a lease for such location, the Secretary may—

(A) relocate such headquarters upon the expiration of such lease so that such headquarters is co-located as required by section 7310(f)(2) of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)(1)); or

(B) notwithstanding such section 7310(f)(2) (as so added), renew such lease or enter into a new lease to keep such headquarters in such location.

(2) **REPORT.**—If the Secretary renews a lease or engages in a new lease under paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives, before renewing such lease or engaging in such lease, a report describing the reasons for such renewal or engagement. Such report shall include the following:

(A) A list of Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers in the Veterans Integrated Service Network of the headquarters with underutilized buildings, the number of such buildings, and the total underutilized square footage for each such medical center.

(B) The cost of the current lease (the annual amount of rent, the total cost over the life of the lease, and the total cost per square foot) and the current square footage being leased.

(C) The cost of the new lease (the annual amount of rent, the total cost over the life of the lease, and the total cost per square foot) and the square footage to be leased.

(c) **CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any change in the location or type of medical care or service provided by a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center, a Department commu-

nity based outpatient clinic, a center for readjustment counseling and related mental health services for veterans under section 1712A of title 38, United States Code (known as a “vet center”), or other facility that provides direct care or services under a law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section, and the amendments made by this section, shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 502. REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTERS FOR VETERANS INTEGRATED SERVICE NETWORKS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subchapter I of chapter 73, as amended by section 501(a)(1) of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§ 7310A. Regional support centers for Veterans Integrated Service Networks

“(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary shall establish not more than four regional support centers within the Veterans Health Administration to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks. The head of each regional support center shall report to the Under Secretary of Health.

“(b) **FUNCTIONS.**—The functions of the regional support centers established under subsection (a) are as follows:

“(1) To assess the quality of work performed within finance operations and other compliance related activities of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

“(2) To assess how effectively and efficiently each Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts outreach to veterans who served in Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, or any other contingency operation (as that term is defined in section 101 of title 10).

“(3) To assess how effectively and efficiently each Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts programs for the benefit of women veterans.

“(4) To assess how effectively and efficiently each Veterans Integrated Service Network conducts programs that address homelessness among veterans.

“(5) To assess how effectively and efficiently each Veterans Integrated Service Network consumes energy.

“(6) To assess such other matters concerning the operations and activities of the Veterans Integrated Service Networks as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(c) **STAFF.**—The Secretary may hire such employees and contractors as the Secretary considers appropriate to carry out the functions of the regional support centers.

“(d) **LOCATION OF REGIONAL SUPPORT CENTERS.**—(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), the location of each regional support center established under subsection (a) shall be determined by the Secretary and co-located with a medical center of the Department.

“(2) The Secretary may choose a location for a regional support center established under subsection (a) that is not co-located with a medical center of the Department if the Secretary submits to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives, before entering into a contract for a location that is not co-located with a medical center, a report describing the reasons for choosing a location for the regional support center that is not co-located with a medical center of the Department. Such report shall include the following:

“(A) A list of medical centers of the Department in the Veterans Integrated Service

Network of the regional support center with underutilized buildings, the number of all Veterans Health Administration buildings in such Network, and the total underutilized square footage for each medical center of the Department in such Network.

“(B) The estimated cost of such lease (the annual amount of rent, the total cost over the life of the lease, and the total cost per square foot) and the square footage to be leased.”

(b) INITIAL STAFFING.—In providing for the initial staff of each regional support center established under section 7310A(a) of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, to the degree practicable, transfer employees from headquarters of Veterans Integrated Service Networks to regional support centers who were employed in positions at such headquarters that covered functions similar to those described in section 7310A(b) of such title, as so added.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 73, as amended by section 501(a)(2) of this Act, is further amended by inserting after the item relating to section 7310 the following new item:

“7310A. Regional support centers for Veterans Integrated Service Networks.”

(d) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any change in the location or type of medical care or service provided by a Department of Veterans Affairs medical center, a Department community based outpatient clinic, a center for readjustment counseling and related mental health services for veterans under section 1712A of title 38, United States Code (known as a “vet center”), or other facility that provides direct care or services under a law administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section, and the amendments made by this section, shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 503. COMMISSION ON CAPITAL PLANNING FOR DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL FACILITIES.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the Commission on Capital Planning for Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Facilities (in this section referred to as the “Commission”).

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) VOTING MEMBERS.—The Commission shall, subject to subparagraph (B), be composed of 10 voting members as follows:

(i) 1 shall be appointed by the President.

(ii) 1 shall be appointed by the Administrator of General Services.

(iii) 3 shall be appointed by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, of whom—

(I) 1 shall be an employee of the Veterans Health Administration;

(II) 1 shall be an employee of the Office of Asset Enterprise Management of the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(III) 1 shall be an employee of the Office of Construction and Facilities Management of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(iv) 1 shall be appointed by the Secretary of Defense from among employees of the Army Corps of Engineers.

(v) 1 shall be appointed by the majority leader of the Senate.

(vi) 1 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate.

(vii) 1 shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(viii) 1 shall be appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives.

(B) REQUIREMENT RELATING TO CERTAIN APPOINTMENTS OF VOTING MEMBERS.—Of the members appointed pursuant to clause (i), (ii), and (iv) through (viii) of subparagraph (A), all shall have expertise in capital leasing, construction, or health facility management planning.

(C) NON-VOTING MEMBERS.—The Commission shall be assisted by 10 non-voting members, appointed by the vote of a majority of members of the Commission under subparagraph (A), of whom—

(i) 6 shall be representatives of veterans service organizations recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; and

(ii) 4 shall be individuals from outside the Department of Veterans Affairs with experience and expertise in matters relating to management, construction, and leasing of capital assets.

(D) DATE OF APPOINTMENT OF VOTING MEMBERS.—The appointments of the members of the Commission under subparagraph (A) shall be made not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(3) PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT; VACANCIES.—Members shall be appointed for the life of the Commission. Any vacancy in the Commission shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(4) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 15 days after the date on which 7 members of the Commission have been appointed, the Commission shall hold its first meeting.

(5) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the call of the Chair.

(6) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number of members may hold hearings.

(7) CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR.—The Commission shall select a Chair and Vice Chair from among its members.

(b) DUTIES OF COMMISSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall undertake a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of various options for capital planning for Department of Veterans Affairs medical facilities, including an evaluation and assessment of the mechanisms by which the Department currently selects means for the delivery of health care, whether by major construction, major medical facility leases, sharing agreements with the Department of Defense, the Indian Health Service, and Federally Qualified Health Clinics under section 330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b), contract care, multisite care, telemedicine, extended hours for care, or other means.

(2) CONTEXT OF EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT.—In undertaking the evaluation and assessment, the Commission shall consider—

(A) the importance of access to health care through the Department, including associated guidelines of the Department on access to, and drive time for, health care;

(B) limitations and requirements applicable to the construction and leasing of medical facilities for the Department, including applicable laws, regulations, and costs as determined by both the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Management and Budget;

(C) the nature of capital planning for Department medical facilities in an era of fiscal uncertainty;

(D) projected future fluctuations in the population of veterans; and

(E) the extent to which the Department was able to meet the mandates of the Capital

Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services Commission.

(3) PARTICULAR CONSIDERATIONS.—In undertaking the evaluation and assessment, the Commission shall address, in particular, the following:

(A) The Major Medical Facility Lease Program of the Department, including an identification of potential improvements to the lease authorization processes under that Program.

(B) The management processes of the Department for its Major Medical Facility Construction Program, including processes relating to contract award and management, project management, and processing of change orders.

(C) The overall capital planning program of the Department for medical facilities, including an evaluation and assessment of—

(i) the manner in which the Department determines whether to use capital or non-capital means to expand access to health care;

(ii) the manner in which the Department determines the disposition of under-utilized and un-utilized buildings on campuses of Department medical centers, and any barriers to disposition;

(iii) the effectiveness of the facility master planning initiative of the Department; and

(iv) the extent to which sustainable attributes are planned for to decrease operating costs for Department medical facilities.

(D) The current backlog of construction projects for Department medical facilities, including an identification of the most effective means to quickly secure the most critical repairs required, including repairs relating to facility condition deficiencies, structural safety, and compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990.

(4) REPORTS.—Subject to paragraph (5), the Commission shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and to the Committee Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives, reports as follows:

(A) Not later than six months after its initial meeting under subsection (a)(4), a report on the Major Medical Facility Lease Program and the Congressional lease authorization process.

(B) Not later than one year after its initial meeting, a report—

(i) on the management processes of the Department for the construction of Department medical facilities; and

(ii) setting forth an update of any matters covered in the report under subparagraph (A).

(C) Not later than 18 months after its initial meeting, a report—

(i) on the overall capital planning program of the Department for medical facilities; and

(ii) setting forth an update of any matters covered in earlier reports under this paragraph.

(D) Not later than two years after its initial meeting, a report—

(i) on the current backlog of construction projects for Department medical facilities;

(ii) setting forth an update of any matters covered in earlier reports under this paragraph; and

(iii) including such other matters relating to the duties of the Commission that the Commission considers appropriate.

(E) Not later than 27 months after its initial meeting, a report on the implementation by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs pursuant to subsection (g) of the recommendations included pursuant to paragraph (5) in the reports under this paragraph.

(5) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Each report under paragraph (4) shall include, for the aspect of the capital asset planning process of the Department covered by such report, such recommendations as the Commission considers appropriate for the improvement and enhancement of such aspect of the capital asset planning process.

(c) **POWERS OF COMMISSION.**—

(1) **HEARINGS.**—The Commission may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Commission considers advisable to carry out this section.

(2) **INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.**—The Commission may secure directly from any Federal department or agency such information as the Commission considers necessary to carry out this section. Upon request of the Chair of the Commission, the head of such department or agency shall furnish such information to the Commission.

(d) **COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.**—

(1) **COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.**—Each member of the Commission who is not an officer or employee of the Federal Government shall be compensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which such member is engaged in the performance of the duties of the Commission. All members of the Commission who are officers or employees of the United States shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for their services as officers or employees of the United States.

(2) **TRAVEL EXPENSES.**—The members of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Commission.

(3) **STAFF.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Chair of the Commission may, without regard to the civil service laws and regulations, appoint and terminate an executive director and such other additional personnel as may be necessary to enable the Commission to perform its duties. The employment of an executive director shall be subject to confirmation by the Commission.

(B) **COMPENSATION.**—The Chair of the Commission may fix the compensation of the executive director and other personnel without regard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the executive director and other personnel may not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(4) **DETAIL OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.**—Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the Commission without reimbursement, and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

(5) **PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT SERVICES.**—The Chair of the Commission may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(e) **TERMINATION OF COMMISSION.**—The Commission shall terminate 60 days after the

date on which the Commission submits its report under subsection (b)(4)(E).

(f) **FUNDING.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make available to the Commission such amounts as the Secretary and the Chair of the Commission jointly consider appropriate for the Commission to perform its duties under this section.

(g) **ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall implement each recommendation included in a report under subsection (b)(4) that the Secretary considers feasible and advisable and can be implemented without further legislative action.

(2) **REPORTS.**—Not later than 120 days after receipt of a report under subparagraphs (A) through (D) of subsection (b)(4), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth the following:

(A) An assessment of the feasibility and advisability of each recommendation contained in such report.

(B) For each recommendation assessed as feasible and advisable—

(i) if such recommendation does not require further legislative action for implementation, a description of the actions taken, and to be taken, by the Secretary to implement such recommendation; and

(ii) if such recommendation requires further legislative action for implementation, recommendations for such legislative action.

SEC. 504. ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CERTAIN ACCOUNTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 117 is amended—
(1) by striking “medical care accounts of the Department” each place it appears and inserting “covered accounts of the Department”;

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking “medical care accounts of the Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs account” and inserting “accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs account”;

(B) in paragraph (1), by inserting “Veterans Health Administration,” after “(1)”;

(C) in paragraph (2), by inserting “Veterans Health Administration,” after “(2)”;

(D) in paragraph (3), by inserting “Veterans Health Administration,” after “(3)”;

(E) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (3) as paragraphs (7) through (9), respectively;

(F) by inserting before paragraph (7), as redesignated by subparagraph (E), the following new paragraphs:

“(1) Veterans Benefits Administration, Compensation and Pensions.

“(2) Veterans Benefits Administration, Readjustment Benefits.

“(3) Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Insurance and Indemnities.

“(4) Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Housing Benefit Program Fund.

“(5) Veterans Benefits Administration, Vocational Rehabilitation Loans Program Account.

“(6) Veterans Benefits Administration, Native American Veteran Housing Loan Program Account.”; and

(G) in the subsection heading, by striking “MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS” and inserting “COVERED ACCOUNTS”; and

(3) in the section heading, by striking “certain medical care accounts” and inserting “certain accounts”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with re-

spect to fiscal year 2016 and each subsequent fiscal year.

(c) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking the first paragraph (37) and inserting the following:

“(37) information on estimates of appropriations for the fiscal year following the fiscal year for which the budget is submitted for the following accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs:

“(A) Veterans Benefits Administration, Compensation and Pensions.

“(B) Veterans Benefits Administration, Readjustment Benefits.

“(C) Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Insurance and Indemnities.

“(D) Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Housing Benefit Program Fund.

“(E) Veterans Benefits Administration, Vocational Rehabilitation Loans Program Account.

“(F) Veterans Benefits Administration, Native American Veteran Housing Loan Program Account.

“(G) Veterans Health Administration, Medical Services.

“(H) Veterans Health Administration, Medical Support and Compliance.

“(I) Veterans Health Administration, Medical Facilities.”.

(d) **TECHNICAL CORRECTION.**—Such section is further amended by redesignating the second paragraph (37), as added by section 11(a)(2) of the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-352; 124 Stat. 3881), as paragraph (39).

SEC. 505. PUBLIC ACCESS TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RESEARCH AND DATA SHARING BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERNET WEBSITE.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make available on an Internet website of the Department of Veterans Affairs available to the public the following:

(1) Data files that contain information on research of the Department.

(2) A data dictionary on each data file.

(3) Instructions for how to obtain access to each data file for use in research.

(b) **PUBLIC ACCESS TO MANUSCRIPTS ON DEPARTMENT FUNDED RESEARCH.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Beginning not later than 540 days after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Secretary shall require, as a condition on the use of any data gathered or formulated from research funded by the Department, that any final, peer-reviewed manuscript prepared for publication that uses such data be submitted to the Secretary for deposit in the digital archive under paragraph (2) and publication under paragraph (3).

(2) **DIGITAL ARCHIVE.**—Not later than 540 days after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Secretary shall—

(A) establish a digital archive consisting of manuscripts described in paragraph (1); or

(B) partner with another executive agency to compile such manuscripts in a digital archive.

(3) **PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.**—

(A) **AVAILABILITY OF ARCHIVE.**—The Secretary shall ensure that the digital archive under paragraph (2) and the contents of such archive are available to the public via a publicly accessible Internet website at no cost to the public.

(B) **AVAILABILITY OF MANUSCRIPTS.**—The Secretary shall ensure that each manuscript submitted to the Secretary under paragraph (1) is available to the public under subparagraph (A) not later than one year after the

official date on which the manuscript is otherwise published.

(4) **CONSISTENT WITH COPYRIGHT LAW.**—The Secretary shall carry out this subsection in a manner consistent with applicable copyright law.

(5) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the date the Secretary begins making manuscripts available to the public under this subsection and not less frequently than once each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the implementation of this subsection during the most recent one-year period.

(B) **CONTENTS.**—Each report submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include for the period of the report:

(i) The number of manuscripts submitted under paragraph (1).

(ii) The titles of such manuscripts.

(iii) The authors of such manuscripts.

(iv) For each such manuscript, the name and issue number or volume number, as the case may be, of the journal or other publication in which such manuscript was published.

(C) **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DATA SHARING BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.**—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (e), the Department of Veterans Affairs-Department of Defense Joint Executive Committee established by section 320(a) of title 38, United States Code, shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense options and recommendations for the establishment of a program for long-term cooperation and data sharing between and within the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense to facilitate research on outcomes of military service, readjustment after combat deployment, and other topics of importance to the following:

(1) Veterans.

(2) Members of the Armed Forces.

(3) Family members of veterans.

(4) Family members of members of the Armed Forces.

(5) Members of communities that have a significant population of veterans or members of the Armed Forces.

(d) **EXECUTIVE AGENCY DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “executive agency” has the meaning given that term in section 133 of title 41, United States Code.

(e) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 506. ASSESSMENT BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES OF INFORMATION MADE AVAILABLE BY VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION.

(a) **ASSESSMENT OF INFORMATION CURRENTLY AVAILABLE.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) conduct an assessment of the process by which the Veterans Benefits Administration informs veterans, veterans service organizations, and such other persons as the Comptroller General considers appropriate regarding the furnishing of benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to determine the extent to which the process results in disseminated information that—

(A) adequately supports and improves the timeliness and accuracy of decisions made

by the Administration with respect to claims for disability compensation and such other benefits furnished under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs as the Comptroller General considers appropriate; and

(B) encourages the filing of fully developed claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary; and

(2) assess how the Veterans Benefits Administration notifies each claimant during, and as part of, any electronic filing process established by the Secretary for the filing of applications for disability compensation and such other benefits under laws administered by the Secretary as the Comptroller General considers appropriate that services may be available to the claimant from a veterans service organization.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the findings of the Comptroller General under subsection (a). Such report shall include such recommendations as the Comptroller General may have for legislative or administrative action to improve the availability of information made available to the public by the Veterans Benefits Administration regarding the furnishing of benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(c) **VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “veterans service organization” means an organization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 507. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT ON ADVISORY COMMITTEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the advisory committees of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) **CONTENTS.**—The report required by subsection (a)—

(1) shall include—

(A) recommendations or proposals for continuing, modifying, or terminating certain advisory committees, including noting areas of overlap and duplication among the advisory committees; and

(B) such other information as the Comptroller General considers appropriate; and

(2) may include—

(A) a description of each advisory committee, including with respect to each committee—

(i) the purpose of the committee;

(ii) the commencement date of the committee; and

(iii) the anticipated termination date of the committee;

(B) a summary of the anticipated expenses and the actual expenses incurred for each advisory committee during the most recent three fiscal years ending before the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(C) with respect to meetings held by each advisory committee—

(i) the frequency with which each committee has met during the shorter of—

(I) the most recent three fiscal years ending before the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(II) the life of the committee;

(ii) the date of the most recent meeting held by the committee before such date of enactment; and

(iii) the date of the most recent report or other written product developed by the committee before such date of enactment.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE VI—IMPROVEMENT OF PROCESSING OF CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION

Subtitle A—Claims Based on Military Sexual Trauma

SEC. 601. MEDICAL EXAMINATION AND OPINION FOR DISABILITY COMPENSATION CLAIMS BASED ON MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 5103A(d) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3)(A) In the case of a claim for disability compensation based on a mental health condition related to military sexual trauma, the Secretary shall treat an examination or opinion as being necessary to make a decision on a claim for purposes of paragraph (1) if the evidence of record before the Secretary, taking into consideration all information and lay or medical evidence (including statements of the claimant)—

“(i)(I) contains competent evidence that the claimant has a current disability, or persistent or recurrent symptoms of disability; and

“(II) indicates that the disability or symptoms may be associated with the claimant's active military, naval, or air service; but

“(ii) does not contain a diagnosis or opinion by a mental health professional that may assist in corroborating the occurrence of a military sexual trauma stressor related to a diagnosable mental health condition.

“(B) In this paragraph, the term ‘military sexual trauma’ shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this paragraph, and shall include ‘sexual harassment’ (as so specified).”.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the number of examinations and opinions conducted by the Secretary pursuant to paragraph (3) of section 5103A(d) of title 38, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)), including the following:

(1) The number of examinations conducted using a standardized disability assessment.

(2) The number of examinations conducted using a non-standardized clinical interview.

SEC. 602. CASE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICERS FOR MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA SUPPORT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall assign to each individual seeking compensation under the laws administered by the Secretary based on military sexual trauma a case representative officer who shall provide advice and general information to such individual on the claims process for such compensation. Each case representative officer so assigned shall be assigned from among current personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) **LIAISON.**—A case representative officer assigned to an individual under subsection (a) shall be responsible for serving as a liaison between the individual, an authorized

agent or attorney of the individual under section 5904 of title 38, United States Code, or an otherwise accredited representative of the individual, and the Department of Veterans Affairs on matters relating to the claim of the individual for compensation under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(c) CASE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICER REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) **COMPETENCE AND KNOWLEDGE.**—Each case representative officer assigned under subsection (a) shall be competent and knowledgeable about the following:

(A) The claims adjudication process and applicable laws, regulations, and other authority applicable to the adjudication of disability claims based on military sexual trauma.

(B) Such other services to victims of sexual trauma as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(2) **LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO WHICH ASSIGNED.**—A case representative officer may not be assigned to more individuals described in subsection (a) than, as determined by the Secretary, is appropriate for the provision of individual case management assistance by such officer.

(d) INFORMATION ON BENEFITS AND PROGRAMS RELATING TO MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall make available to the public information on the availability of case representative officers under subsection (a) to assist in the application for benefits based on military sexual trauma. The Secretary shall revise and update the information so made available in order to ensure that the information is as current as possible.

(2) **INDIVIDUALS SEPARATING FROM MILITARY SERVICE.**—The Secretary shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, ensure that individuals who are being separated from the active military, naval, or air service are provided appropriate information about programs, requirements, and procedures for applying for benefits based on military sexual trauma and the availability of case representative officers under subsection (a).

(e) **INFORMATION ON TRAINING FOR AGENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF INDIVIDUALS ASSIGNED CASE REPRESENTATIVE OFFICER.**—The Secretary shall make available to the authorized agent or attorney of an individual assigned a case representative under subsection (a), or to the otherwise accredited representative of the individual, any relevant materials used to train such case representative officer for the duties of such position.

(f) **ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN VETERANS CONSIDERATION OF MECHANISMS TO ENHANCE COORDINATION BETWEEN VBA AND VHA ON BENEFITS FOR MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.**—The Advisory Committee on Women Veterans established under section 542 of title 38, United States Code, shall undertake actions to identify mechanisms to enhance coordination between the Veterans Benefits Administration and the Veterans Health Administration in the provision of benefits based on military sexual trauma, including the identification of barriers to the appropriate provision of benefits for military sexual trauma by such Administrations and of means of eliminating or reducing such barriers.

(g) **ANNUAL REPORTS.**—Not less frequently than annually, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Com-

mittee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth the following:

(1) A certification whether or not the case representative officers assigned under subsection (a) during the preceding year met the requirements specified in subsection (c).

(2) A description of the current training the Secretary provides to employees of the Veterans Benefits Administration on claims for benefits based on military sexual trauma, including the frequency, length, and content of such training.

(3) A description of current policies and procedures on the training the Secretary provides to case representative officers, including the current position descriptions for case representative officers.

(4) A description of current efforts to coordinate activities and assistance provided to individuals who seek care or benefits for military sexual trauma between the Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration, including the efforts of the Advisory Committee on Women Veterans under subsection (f).

(h) SUNSET.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—No case representative officer may be assigned under subsection (a) after December 31, 2018.

(2) **CONTINUATION OF DUTIES AFTER SUNSET DATE.**—Paragraph (1) shall not be construed to prohibit any case representative officer assigned to an individual before the date specified in that paragraph from performing duties pursuant to this section after that date with respect to a claim for which that case representative officer was assigned to such individual before that date.

(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) **ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERVICE.**—The term “active military, naval, or air service” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) **MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.**—The term “military sexual trauma” shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section, and shall include “sexual harassment” (as so specified).

SEC. 603. REPORT ON STANDARD OF PROOF FOR SERVICE-CONNECTION OF MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS RELATED TO MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the current standard of proof for service-connection under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code, for covered mental health conditions based on military sexual trauma.

(b) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**—The Secretary shall include in the report under subsection (a) any recommendations the Secretary considers appropriate to improve the adjudication of claims for compensation based on military sexual trauma, including—

(1) recommendations for an appropriate standard of proof for such claims if the Secretary considers such recommendations advisable; and

(2) recommendations for legislative action, if necessary, to carry out such improvement.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) **ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERVICE.**—The term “active military, naval, or air service” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) **COVERED MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION.**—The term “covered mental health condition” means post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, or other mental health di-

agnosis that the Secretary determines to be related to military sexual trauma.

(3) **MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.**—The term “military sexual trauma” shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section, and shall include “sexual harassment” (as so specified).

SEC. 604. REPORTS ON CLAIMS FOR DISABILITIES INCURRED OR AGGRAVATED BY MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.

(a) **REPORTS.**—Not later than December 1, 2014, and each year thereafter through 2018, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the covered claims submitted to the Secretary during the previous fiscal year.

(b) **ELEMENTS.**—Each report under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) The number of covered claims submitted to or considered by the Secretary during the fiscal year covered by the report.

(2) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1), the number and percentage of such claims—

(A) submitted by each gender;

(B) that were approved, including the number and percentage of such approved claims submitted by each gender; and

(C) that were denied, including the number and percentage of such denied claims submitted by each gender.

(3) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were approved, the number and percentage, listed by each gender, of claims assigned to each rating percentage of disability.

(4) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were denied—

(A) the three most common reasons given by the Secretary under section 5104(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code, for such denials; and

(B) the number of denials that were based on the failure of a veteran to report for a medical examination.

(5) Of the covered claims under paragraph (1) that were resubmitted to the Secretary after denial in a previous adjudication—

(A) the number of such claims submitted to or considered by the Secretary during the fiscal year covered by the report;

(B) the number and percentage of such claims—

(i) submitted by each gender;

(ii) that were approved, including the number and percentage of such approved claims submitted by each gender; and

(iii) that were denied, including the number and percentage of such denied claims submitted by each gender;

(C) the number and percentage, listed by each gender, of claims assigned to each rating percentage of disability; and

(D) of such claims that were again denied—

(i) the three most common reasons given by the Secretary under section 5104(b)(1) of such title for such denials; and

(ii) the number of denials that were based on the failure of a veteran to report for a medical examination.

(6) The number of covered claims that, as of the end of the fiscal year covered by the report, are pending and, separately, the number of such claims on appeal.

(7) For the fiscal year covered by the report, the average number of days that covered claims take to complete beginning on the date on which the claim is submitted.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) **ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERVICE.**—The term “active military, naval, or air service” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) **COVERED CLAIMS.**—The term “covered claims” means claims for disability compensation submitted to the Secretary based on post traumatic stress disorder alleged to have been incurred or aggravated by military sexual trauma.

(3) **MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.**—The term “military sexual trauma” shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section, and shall include “sexual harassment” (as so specified).

Subtitle B—Claims for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation

SEC. 611. PROGRAM ON TREATMENT OF CERTAIN APPLICATIONS FOR DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION AS FULLY DEVELOPED CLAIMS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of expediting the treatment of a covered dependency and indemnity compensation claim.

(b) **COVERED DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION CLAIMS.**—For purposes of this section, a covered dependency and indemnity compensation claim is a claim submitted to the Secretary for compensation under chapter 13 of title 38, United States Code, for which the claimant—

(1) applies for such compensation within one-year of the death of the veteran upon whose service the claim is based;

(2) was the dependent on the claim of a veteran who was receiving benefits for one or more service-connected conditions as of the date of death;

(3) submits a death certificate or other evidence with the claim indicating that the veteran's death was due to a service-connected or compensable disability; and

(4) in the case that the claimant is the spouse of the deceased veteran, certifies that he or she has not remarried since the date of the veteran's death.

(c) **DURATION.**—The program shall be carried out during the one-year period beginning on the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) **LOCATIONS.**—The program shall be carried out at the Pension Management Center of the Department of Veterans Affairs or such centers selected by the Secretary for purposes of the program.

(e) REPORT.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 270 days after the date on which the program is completed, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of covered dependency and indemnity compensation claims that were adjudicated under the program, disaggregated by the following:

(i) Claims in which the claimant claimed entitlement to compensation on the basis of the claimant's status as the spouse of a deceased veteran.

(ii) Claims in which the claimant claimed entitlement to compensation on the basis of the claimant's status as the child of a deceased veteran.

(iii) Claims in which the claimant claimed entitlement to compensation on the basis of the claimant's status as the parent of a deceased veteran.

(B) The number of covered dependency and indemnity compensation claims that were adjudicated under the program and for which compensation was not awarded, disaggregated by clauses (i) through (iii) of subparagraph (A).

(C) A comparison of the accuracy and timeliness of claims adjudicated under the program with claims submitted to the Secretary for compensation under chapter 13 of title 38, United States Code, that were not provided expeditious treatment under the program.

(D) The findings of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(E) Such recommendations as the Secretary may have for legislative or administrative action to improve the adjudication of claims submitted to the Secretary for compensation under chapter 13 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 612. REPORT BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ON IMPROVING TIMELINESS AND ACCURACY OF ADMINISTRATION OF CLAIMS FOR DEPENDENCY AND INDEMNITY COMPENSATION AND PENSION FOR SURVIVING SPOUSES AND CHILDREN.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 455 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report with recommendations for legislative or administrative actions to improve the timeliness and accuracy with which the Secretary processes and adjudicates claims for compensation under chapter 13 of title 38, United States Code, and pension under sections 1541 and 1542 of such title.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Subtitle C—Agency of Original Jurisdiction

SEC. 621. WORKING GROUP TO IMPROVE EMPLOYEE WORK CREDIT AND WORK MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS OF VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION IN AN ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENT.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a working group to assess and develop recommendations for the improvement of the employee work credit and work management systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration in an electronic environment.

(b) **COMPOSITION.**—The working group shall be composed of the following:

(1) The Secretary or the Secretary's designee.

(2) Individuals selected by the Secretary from among employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs who handle claims for compensation and pension benefits and are recommended to the Secretary by a labor organization for purposes of this section, including at least one of each of the following individuals:

(A) A veterans service representative.

(B) A rating veterans service representative.

(C) A decision review officer.

(3) Not fewer than three individuals selected by the Secretary to represent different organizations recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(4) Individuals selected by the Secretary—

(A) that are not employees of the Department; and

(B) that are experts in work credit and work management systems.

(c) **DUTIES.**—The duties of the working group are to assess and develop recommendations for the following:

(1) The improvement of the employee work credit and work management systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration in an electronic environment.

(2) A scientific, data based methodology to be used in revising the employee work credit system of the Department to improve the quality and quantity of work produced by employees of the Department.

(3) The improvement of the resource allocation model of the Veterans Benefits Administration, with a focus on the processing of claims in an electronic environment.

(4) A schedule by which the revisions referred to in paragraph (2) will be implemented by the Department.

(d) **REVIEW AND INCORPORATION OF FINDINGS FROM PRIOR STUDY.**—In carrying out its duties under subsection (c), the working group shall review the findings and conclusions of previous studies of the employee work credit and work management systems of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

(e) **ROLE OF THE SECRETARY.**—The Secretary shall consider the recommendations of the working group and implement such recommendations as the Secretary determines appropriate.

(f) REPORTS.—

(1) **INTERIM REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the establishment of the working group, the working group shall submit to Congress a report on the progress of the working group.

(2) **FINAL REPORT.**—Not later than one year after the date of the establishment of the working group, the Secretary shall submit to Congress the methodology described in subsection (c)(2) and the schedule described in subsection (c)(4) that the Secretary has decided to implement pursuant to subsection (e).

(g) **IMPLEMENTATION OF METHODOLOGY AND SCHEDULE.**—After submitting the report under subsection (f), the Secretary shall take such actions as may be necessary to apply the methodology described in subsection (c)(2) and the schedule described in subsection (c)(4) that the Secretary has decided to implement pursuant to subsection (e).

SEC. 622. TASK FORCE ON RETENTION AND TRAINING OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CLAIMS PROCESSORS AND ADJUDICATORS.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a task force to assess retention and training of claims processors and adjudicators that are employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs and other departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

(b) **COMPOSITION.**—The task force shall be composed of the following:

(1) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs or designee.

(2) The Director of the Office of Personnel Management or designee.

(3) The Commissioner of Social Security or designee.

(4) An individual selected by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs who represents an organization recognized by the Secretary for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(5) Such other individuals selected by the Secretary who represent such other organizations and institutions as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) **DURATION.**—The task force established under subsection (a) shall terminate not later than two years after the date on which the task force is established under such subsection.

(d) **DUTIES.**—The duties of the task force are as follows:

(1) To identify key skills required by claims processors and adjudicators to perform the duties of claims processors and adjudicators in the various claims processing

and adjudication positions throughout the Federal Government.

(2) To identify reasons for employee attrition from claims processing positions.

(3) To coordinate with educational institutions to develop training and programs of education for members of the Armed Forces to prepare such members for employment in claims processing and adjudication positions in the Federal Government.

(4) To identify and coordinate offices of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs located throughout the United States to provide information about, and promotion of, available claims processing positions to members of the Armed Forces transitioning to civilian life and to veterans with disabilities.

(5) To establish performance measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the task force.

(6) Not later than one year after the date of the establishment of the task force, to develop a Government-wide strategic and operational plan for promoting employment of veterans in claims processing positions in the Federal Government.

(7) To establish performance measures to assess the plan developed under paragraph (6), to assess the implementation of such plan, and to revise such plan as the task force considers appropriate.

(e) REPORTS.—

(1) SUBMITTAL OF PLAN.—Not later than one year after the date of the establishment of the task force, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the plan developed by the task force under subsection (d)(6).

(2) ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 120 days after the termination of the task force, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that assesses the implementation of the plan developed by the task force under subsection (d)(6).

SEC. 623. REPORTS ON REQUESTS BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR RECORDS OF OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES.

(a) REPORTS REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter through the date that is 910 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the attempts of the Department of Veterans Affairs to obtain records necessary to adjudicate claims for benefits from another department or agency of the Federal Government during the 180-day period ending on the date of such report.

(b) ELEMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each report shall set forth the following:

(A) For the period covered by such report, the following:

(i) The total number of requests made by the Department.

(ii) The types of records requested.

(iii) The number of requests made before the receipt of each record.

(iv) The amount of time between the initial request for each record and the receipt of each record.

(v) The number of occurrences of the receipt of a record after the adjudication of the claim for which the record was sought.

(vi) A description of the efforts of the Secretary to expedite the delivery of records to the Department from other departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

(B) Such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate in light of such report.

(2) PRESENTATION.—The information in a report under clause (i) through (v) of paragraph (1)(A) shall be set forth separately for each department and agency of the Federal Government covered by such report.

SEC. 624. RECOGNITION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF INDIAN TRIBES IN THE PREPARATION, PRESENTATION, AND PROSECUTION OF CLAIMS UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Section 5902(a)(1) is amended by inserting “, including Indian tribes (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b))” after “as the Secretary may approve”.

SEC. 625. PROGRAM ON PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS IN IMPROVING QUALITY OF CLAIMS FOR DISABILITY COMPENSATION SUBMITTED TO DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of entering into memoranda of understanding with local governments and tribal organizations—

(1) to improve the quality of claims submitted to the Secretary for compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code, and pension under chapter 15 of such title; and

(2) to provide assistance to veterans who may be eligible for such compensation or pension in submitting such claims.

(b) MINIMUM NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—In carrying out the program required by subsection (a), the Secretary shall enter into, or maintain existing, memoranda of understanding with at least—

(1) two tribal organizations; and

(2) 10 State or local governments.

(c) DURATION.—The program shall be carried out during the two-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the program.

(d) REPORT.—

(1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the commencement of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that includes the following:

(A) A description of the implementation and operation of the program, including a description of outreach conducted by the Secretary to tribal organizations and State and local governments.

(B) An evaluation of the program, including the total number of memoranda of understanding entered into or maintained by the Secretary.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the termination of the program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that includes the following:

(A) A description of the implementation and operation of the program, including a description of outreach conducted by the Secretary to tribal organizations and State and local governments.

(B) An evaluation of the program, including the total number of memoranda of understanding entered into or maintained by the Secretary.

(C) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(D) Such recommendations for continuation or expansion of the program as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(e) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—In this section, the term “tribal organization” has the meaning given that term in section 3765 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 626. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS NOTICE OF AVERAGE TIMES FOR PROCESSING COMPENSATION CLAIMS.

(a) PUBLIC NOTICE.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, to the extent practicable, post the information described in subsection (b)—

(1) in physical locations, such as Regional Offices or other claims intake facilities, that the Secretary considers appropriate;

(2) on the Internet website of the Department; and

(3) through other mediums or using such other methods, including collaboration with veterans service organizations, as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(b) INFORMATION DESCRIBED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The information described in this subsection is the average processing time of the claims described in paragraph (2).

(2) CLAIMS DESCRIBED.—The claims described in this paragraph are each of the following types of claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs:

(A) A fully developed claim.

(B) A claim that is not fully developed.

(3) UPDATE OF INFORMATION.—The information described in this subsection shall be updated not less frequently than once each fiscal quarter.

(c) EXPIRATION OF REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of subsection (a) shall expire on December 31, 2015.

(d) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—In this section, the term “veterans service organization” means an organization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 627. QUARTERLY REPORTS ON PROGRESS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS IN ELIMINATING BACKLOG OF CLAIMS FOR COMPENSATION THAT HAVE NOT BEEN ADJUDICATED.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently than quarterly thereafter through calendar year 2015, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the backlog of claims filed with the Department of Veterans Affairs for compensation that have not been adjudicated by the Department.

(b) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) For each month through calendar year 2015, a projection of the following:

(A) The number of claims completed.

(B) The number of claims received.

(C) The number of claims on backlog at the end of the month.

(D) The number of claims pending at the end of the month.

(E) The number of appeals pending at the end of the month.

(F) A description of the status of the implementation of initiatives carried out by the Secretary to address the backlog, including the expected impact of those initiatives on accuracy and timeliness of adjudication of claims.

(2) For each quarter through calendar year 2015, a projection of the average accuracy of

disability determinations for compensation claims that require a disability rating (or disability decision).

(3) For each month during the most recently completed quarter, the following:

(A) The number of claims completed.

(B) The number of claims received.

(C) The number of claims on backlog at the end of the month.

(D) The number of claims pending at the end of the month.

(E) The number of appeals pending at the end of the month.

(F) A description of the status of the implementation of initiatives carried out by the Secretary to address the backlog, including the impact of those initiatives on accuracy and timeliness of adjudication of claims.

(G) An assessment of the accuracy of disability determinations for compensation claims that require a disability rating (or disability decision).

(4) For the most recently completed quarter—

(A) the number of cases physically received at the Board of Veterans' Appeals and docketed;

(B) the number of cases pending at the Board of Veterans' Appeals at the end of the quarter;

(C) the number of cases physically at the Board of Veterans' Appeals at the end of the quarter;

(D) the number of notices of disagreement and appeals filed to the agency of original jurisdiction referred to in section 7105(b)(1) of title 38, United States Code; and

(E) the number of decisions made by the Board of Veterans' Appeals and the percentage of such decisions that were allowed, remanded, denied, or otherwise disposed of.

(c) **AVAILABILITY TO PUBLIC.**—The Secretary shall make each report submitted under subsection (a) available to the public.

(d) **ON BACKLOG AND PENDING DEFINED.**—In this section, the terms “on backlog” and “pending”, with respect to a claim for compensation received by the Secretary, shall have the meaning specified by the Secretary for purposes of this section.

SEC. 628. REPORTS ON USE OF EXISTING AUTHORITIES TO EXPEDITE BENEFITS DECISIONS.

(a) **REPORT ON CURRENT USE OF TEMPORARY, INTERMEDIATE, AND PROVISIONAL RATING DECISIONS.**—

(1) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the use of temporary, intermediate, and provisional rating decisions to expedite the benefits decisions of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) **REPORT ELEMENTS.**—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) With respect to temporary and intermediate rating decisions, the following:

(i) The number of temporary and intermediate rating decisions issued by the Department during each of fiscal years 2011, 2012, and 2013.

(ii) A description of any reasons or obstacles that prevent use of existing authorities to issue temporary or intermediate rating decisions.

(iii) A description of the Quick Pay Disability initiative, including the rationale for not expanding the initiative beyond pilot program status.

(B) With respect to provisional rating decisions, the following:

(i) The number of provisional rating decisions issued by the Department during the oldest claims first initiative.

(ii) Of the provisional rating decisions issued during the oldest claims first initiative—

(I) the number of such decisions that involved a claim granted;

(II) the number of such decisions that involved a claim denied; and

(III) the number of such decisions that involved a claim granted in part or a claim denied in part.

(iii) A statement of the most common reasons claims were not granted earlier under the oldest claims first initiative when there was sufficient evidence to render an award of benefits in the provisional rating decision.

(iv) The average number of days to issue a provisional rating decision under the oldest claims first initiative.

(v) Of the total number of decisions that were completed under the oldest claims first initiative—

(I) the number that were Category 1 claims and received a final rating decision; and

(II) the number that were Category 2 claims and received a provisional rating decision.

(vi) The number of rating decisions issued during the oldest claims first initiative that involved a brokered claim, set forth by number of such claims by Regional Office of the Department, including—

(I) the number of brokered claims received by each Regional Office; and

(II) the number of brokered claims issued by each Regional Office.

(vii) The number of provisional rating decisions issued during the oldest claims first initiative with respect to which the veteran requested that the provisional decision become final in order to appeal.

(viii) The number of provisional rating decisions issued during the oldest claims first initiative with respect to which the veteran requested an appeal after the expiration of the 1-year period beginning on the date of notification of the provisional rating decision.

(ix) An assessment of the accuracy of provisional rating decisions issued during the oldest claims first initiative, set forth by Category 1 claims and Category 2 claims.

(C) Such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate for purposes of the report.

(3) **SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION.**—If the Secretary continues to obtain information on rating decisions under clauses (vii) and (viii) of paragraph (2)(B) after the date of the submittal of the report required by paragraph (1), the Secretary shall submit to the committees of Congress referred to in paragraph (1) a report on such information that supplements the information on such clauses in the report under paragraph (1) when the Secretary completes accumulation of such information.

(b) **PLAN FOR INCREASE IN USE OF TEMPORARY OR INTERMEDIATE RATING DECISIONS.**—

(1) **REPORT ON PLAN REQUIRED.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report setting forth a plan to increase the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions to expedite benefit decisions of the Department when the record contains sufficient evidence to grant any claim at issue, including service connection.

(2) **PLAN ELEMENTS.**—The plan required under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Mechanisms to overcome obstacles to the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions, including mechanisms (such as upgrades) to assure the ability of the Veterans Benefits Management System to facilitate the issuance of temporary or intermediate rating decisions.

(B) Mechanisms to ensure that appropriate claimant populations, such as claimants who file complex or multi-issue disability compensation claims, benefit from the availability of temporary or intermediate rating decisions.

(C) Mechanisms to provide for the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions, including mechanisms to resolve whether a request by a claimant or claimant representative should trigger use of a temporary or intermediate rating decision depending on the circumstances of the claimant.

(D) Mechanisms to prevent the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions in lieu of a final rating decision when a final rating decision could be made with little or no additional claim development.

(E) Such recommendations for legislative or administrative action as the Secretary considers appropriate to increase the use of temporary or intermediate rating decisions to expedite benefit decisions of the Department.

SEC. 629. REPORTS ON DEPARTMENT DISABILITY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AND PREVENTION OF UNNECESSARY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.

(a) **REPORT ON DISABILITY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS FURNISHED BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the furnishing of general medical and specialty medical examinations by the Department of Veterans Affairs for purposes of adjudicating claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The number of general medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

(B) The number of general medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating a claim in which a comprehensive joint examination was conducted, but for which no disability relating to a joint, bone, or muscle had been asserted as an issue in the claim.

(C) The number of specialty medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating a claim.

(D) The number of specialty medical examinations furnished by the Department during the period of fiscal years 2009 through 2012 for purposes of adjudicating a claim in which one or more joint examinations were conducted.

(E) A summary with citations to any medical and scientific studies that provide a basis for determining that three repetitions is adequate to determine the effect of repetitive use on functional impairments.

(F) The names of all examination reports, including general medical examinations and

Disability Benefits Questionnaires, used for evaluation of compensation and pension disability claims which require measurement of repeated ranges of motion testing and the number of examinations requiring such measurements which were conducted in fiscal year 2012.

(G) The average amount of time taken by an individual conducting a medical examination to perform the three repetitions of movement of each joint.

(H) A discussion of whether there are more efficient and effective scientifically reliable methods of testing for functional loss on repetitive use of an extremity other than the three time repetition currently used by the Department.

(I) Recommendations as to the continuation of the practice of measuring functional impairment by using three repetitions of movement of each joint during the examination as a criteria for evaluating the effect of repetitive motion on functional impairment with supporting rationale.

(b) REPORT AND PLAN TO PREVENT THE ORDERING OF UNNECESSARY MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the efforts of the Secretary in reducing the necessity for in-person disability examinations and other efforts to comply with the provisions of section 5125 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) Criteria used by the Secretary to determine if a claim is eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative.

(B) The number of claims determined to be eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative during the period beginning on the date of the initiation of the initiative and ending on the date of the enactment of this Act, disaggregated—

(i) by fiscal year; and

(ii) by claims determined eligible based in whole or in part on medical evidence provided by a private health care provider.

(C) The total number of claims determined to be eligible for the Acceptable Clinical Evidence initiative that required an employee of the Department to supplement the evidence with information obtained during a telephone interview with a claimant or health care provider.

(D) Information on any other initiatives or efforts, including disability benefits questionnaires, of the Department to further encourage the use of medical evidence provided by a private health care provider and reliance upon reports of a medical examination administered by a private physician if the report is sufficiently complete to be adequate for the purposes of adjudicating a claim.

(E) A plan—

(i) to measure, track, and prevent the ordering of unnecessary medical examinations when the provision by a claimant of a medical examination administered by a private physician in support of a claim for benefits under chapter 11 or 15 of title 38, United States Code, is adequate for the purpose of making a decision on that claim; and

(ii) that includes the actions the Secretary will take to eliminate any request by the Department for a medical examination in the case of a claim for benefits under chapter 11 or 15 of such title in support of which a claimant submits medical evidence or a medical opinion provided by a private health

care provider that is competent, credible, probative, and otherwise adequate for purposes of making a decision on that claim.

Subtitle D—Board of Veterans' Appeals and Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

SEC. 631. TREATMENT OF CERTAIN MISFILED DOCUMENTS AS A NOTICE OF APPEAL TO THE COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS.

Section 7266 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e)(1) If a person adversely affected by a final decision of the Board, who has not filed a notice of appeal with the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims under subsection (a), misfiles a document with the Board or the agency of original jurisdiction referred to in section 7105(b)(1) of this title that expresses disagreement with such decision and a clear intent to seek review of such decision by the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, not later than 120 days after the date of such decision, such document shall be treated as timely filed under subsection (a).

“(2) The treatment of misfiled documents under paragraph (1) does not limit equitable relief that may be otherwise available to a person described in that paragraph.”.

SEC. 632. DETERMINATION OF MANNER OF APPEARANCE FOR HEARINGS BEFORE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7107 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1), by striking “in subsection (f)” and inserting “in subsection (g)”;

(2) by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g); and

(3) by striking subsections (d) and (e) and inserting the following new subsections:

“(d)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), a hearing before the Board shall be conducted through picture and voice transmission, by electronic or other means, in such a manner that the appellant is not present in the same location as the members of the Board during the hearing.

“(2)(A) A hearing before the Board shall be conducted in person upon the request of an appellant.

“(B) In the absence of a request under subparagraph (A), a hearing before the Board may also be conducted in person as the Board considers appropriate.

“(e)(1) In a case in which a hearing before the Board is to be held as described in subsection (d)(1), the Secretary shall provide suitable facilities and equipment to the Board or other components of the Department to enable an appellant located at an appropriate facility within the area served by a regional office to participate as so described.

“(2) Any hearing conducted as described in subsection (d)(1) shall be conducted in the same manner as, and shall be considered the equivalent of, a personal hearing.

“(f)(1) In a case in which a hearing before the Board is to be held as described in subsection (d)(2), the appellant may request that the hearing be held at the principal location of the Board or at a facility of the Department located within the area served by a regional office of the Department.

“(2) A hearing to be held within an area served by a regional office of the Department shall (except as provided in paragraph (3)) be scheduled to be held in accordance with the place of the case on the docket under subsection (a) relative to other cases on the docket for which hearings are scheduled to be held within that area.

“(3) A hearing to be held within an area served by a regional office of the Department

may, for cause shown, be advanced on motion for an earlier hearing. Any such motion shall set forth succinctly the grounds upon which the motion is based. Such a motion may be granted only—

“(A) if the case involves interpretation of law of general application affecting other claims;

“(B) if the appellant is seriously ill or is under severe financial hardship; or

“(C) for other sufficient cause shown.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to cases received by the Board of Veterans' Appeals pursuant to notices of disagreement submitted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE VII—OUTREACH MATTERS

SEC. 701. PROGRAM TO INCREASE COORDINATION OF OUTREACH EFFORTS BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out a program to assess the feasibility and advisability of using State and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations—

(1) to increase awareness of veterans regarding benefits and services for veterans; and

(2) to improve coordination of outreach activities regarding such benefits and services between the Secretary and Federal, State, and local government and nonprofit providers of health care and benefit services for veterans.

(b) DURATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the program for a two-year period.

(c) GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out the program through the competitive award of grants to State and local government agencies and nonprofit organizations—

(A) to increase the awareness of veterans regarding benefits and services for veterans; and

(B) to improve coordination of outreach activities regarding such benefits and services between the Secretary and Federal, State, and local government and nonprofit providers of health care and benefit services for veterans.

(2) APPLICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A State or local government agency or nonprofit organization seeking a grant under the program shall submit to the Secretary an application therefor in such form and in such manner as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(B) ELEMENTS.—Each application submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

(i) A description of the consultations, if any, with the Department of Veterans Affairs in the development of any proposal under the application.

(ii) A description of the project for which the applicant is seeking a grant under the program, including a plan to coordinate under the program, to the greatest extent possible, the outreach activities of Federal, State, and local government agencies that provide health care, benefits, and services for veterans and nonprofit organizations that provide such care, benefits, and services to enhance the awareness and availability of such care, benefits, and services.

(iii) An agreement to report to the Secretary standardized data and other performance measures necessary for the Secretary to evaluate the program and to facilitate evaluation of projects for which grants are awarded under the program.

(iv) Such other information as the Secretary may require.

(3) CONSIDERATIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In awarding grants under the program to carry out projects, the Secretary shall consider—

(i) where the projects will be carried out and which populations are targeted; and

(ii) the likelihood that each potential grantee will successfully carry out the grant proposal.

(B) CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING LOCATION AND TARGET POPULATION.—In taking the matters specified in subparagraph (A)(ii) into consideration, the Secretary shall consider in particular the advisability of awarding grants for projects—

(i) carried out in areas with populations that have a high proportion of veteran representation;

(ii) carried out in a variety of geographic areas, including urban, rural, and highly rural areas; and

(iii) that target a variety of veteran populations, including racial and ethnic minorities, low-income populations, and older populations.

(4) USE OF FUNDS.—The Secretary shall establish appropriate uses of grant amounts received under the program.

(5) OVERSIGHT OF USE OF FUNDS.—The Secretary shall establish appropriate mechanisms for oversight of the use of grant amounts received under the program, including the evidence grantees must submit to demonstrate use of grant amounts and procedures for the recovery of grant amounts that were improperly used.

(6) LIMITATION.—In a fiscal year, not more than 20 percent of all grant amounts awarded in that fiscal year may be awarded to a single State entity.

(d) STATE MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary may not make a grant to a State under subsection (c) unless that State agrees that, with respect to the costs to be incurred by the State in carrying out the program or projects for which the grant was awarded, the State will make available (directly or through donations from public or private entities) non-Federal contributions in an amount equal to 50 percent of Federal funds provided under the grant.

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is hereby authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section the following:

(1) \$2,500,000 for fiscal year 2015.

(2) \$2,500,000 for fiscal year 2016.

(f) ANNUAL REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the completion of the first calendar year beginning after the date of the commencement of the program, and not less frequently than once every year thereafter for the duration of the program, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report evaluating the program and the projects supported by grants awarded under the program.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) The findings and conclusions of the Secretary with respect to the program.

(B) An assessment of the benefit to veterans of the program.

(C) The performance measures used by the Secretary for purposes of the program and data showing the performance of grantees under the program under such measures.

(D) The recommendations of the Secretary as to the feasibility and advisability of continuing or expanding or modifying the program.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 702. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND STATES ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 63 is amended by inserting after section 6306 the following new section:

“§ 6306A. Cooperative agreements with States

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements and arrangements with various State agencies and State departments to carry out this chapter and to otherwise carry out, coordinate, improve, or enhance outreach activities of the Department and the States.

“(b) REPORT.—The Secretary shall include in each report submitted under section 6308 of this title a description of the agreements and arrangements entered into by the Secretary under subsection (a).”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 6306 the following new item:

“6306A. Cooperative agreements with States.”

SEC. 703. ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish an advisory committee on outreach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—The advisory committee shall be composed of individuals selected by the Secretary from among the following:

(1) To the maximum extent practicable, individuals who are eminent in their respective fields of public relations.

(2) Representatives of organizations with offices that focus on communications and distribute messages through major media news outlets and social media.

(3) To the maximum extent practicable, individuals with experience communicating financial results and business strategy for purposes of shaping a confident brand image.

(4) To the maximum extent practicable, individuals with experience with consumer and lifestyle imaging and creating publicity for a particular product or service.

(5) To the maximum extent practicable, veterans who have experience in press and public relations.

(c) DUTIES.—The advisory committee shall advise the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs—

(1) to ensure that the Department of Veterans Affairs is strategically and effectively—

(A) engaging the public and Department stakeholders to increase awareness nationally regarding all benefits and services furnished by the Department;

(B) explaining new or changing policies of the Department;

(C) improving the image and reputation of the Department; and

(D) coordinating and collaborating with national community-based organizations, nonprofits, and State and local government agencies;

(2) to assist the Secretary in conducting such other press or public relations activities relating to outreach activities of the Department as the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs consider appropriate; and

(3) to ensure coordination and collaboration on efforts within the Department for

the development, implementation, and review of local outreach with respect to benefits that include the following:

(A) Compensation and pension benefits.

(B) Insurance benefits.

(C) Burial and memorial benefits.

(D) Education benefits.

(E) Vocational rehabilitation and employment benefits.

(F) Readjustment counseling benefits.

(G) Loan guarantee benefits.

(H) Such other benefits as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(d) LOCATION OF MEETINGS.—Each meeting of the advisory committee shall take place at a location that is property of the Department and shall, to the maximum extent practicable, use teleconference technology.

(e) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall consult with and seek the advice of the advisory committee not less frequently than quarterly on matters relating to the duties of the advisory committee under subsection (c).

(f) REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once every 90 days for the first year and semiannually thereafter, the advisory committee shall submit to Congress and to the Secretary a report on outreach activities of the Department.

(2) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include such recommendations for legislative and administrative action as the advisory committee considers appropriate to improve the press and public relations of the Department relating to outreach.

(g) TERMINATION.—The advisory committee shall terminate on October 1, 2015, and the requirements and authorities under this section shall terminate on such date.

(h) OUTREACH DEFINED.—In this section, the term “outreach” has the meaning given the term in section 6301 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 704. ADVISORY BOARDS ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS RELATING TO HEALTH CARE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For each entity described in paragraph (2), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, acting through the director of that entity, establish not later than 180 days after the effective date specified in subsection (h) an advisory board at that entity on matters relating to outreach activities of the Department of Veterans Affairs at that entity.

(2) ENTITY DESCRIBED.—An entity described in this paragraph is—

(A) a healthcare system of the Department; or

(B) a Veterans Integrated System Network, if such Veterans Integrated System Network does not contain a healthcare system.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each advisory board established under subsection (a)(1) shall be, to the maximum extent practicable, composed of individuals selected by the Secretary from among the following:

(A) Individuals who are eminent in their respective fields of public relations.

(B) Representatives of organizations with offices that focus on communications and distribute messages through major media news outlets and social media.

(C) Individuals with experience communicating financial results and business strategy for purposes of shaping a confident brand image.

(D) Individuals with experience with consumer and lifestyle imaging and creating publicity for a particular product or service.

(E) Employees of the Department who are involved in press and public relations strategy for an entity described in subsection (a)(2).

(F) To the maximum extent practicable, veterans who have experience in press and public relations.

(2) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation of an individual selected under paragraph (1) shall be at the election of the individual.

(c) DUTIES.—Each advisory board established under subsection (a)(1) at an entity described in subsection (a)(2) shall advise the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs—

(1) to ensure that the Department of Veterans Affairs is strategically and effectively—

(A) engaging the public and Department stakeholders to increase awareness nationally regarding benefits and services furnished by the Department;

(B) explaining new or changing policies of the Department;

(C) improving the image and reputation of the Department;

(D) coordinating and collaborating with national community-based organizations, nonprofits, and State and local government agencies; and

(E) coordinating and collaborating on efforts within the Department for the development, implementation, and review of local outreach with respect to benefits that include—

- (i) compensation and pension benefits;
- (ii) insurance benefits;
- (iii) burial and memorial benefits;
- (iv) education benefits;
- (v) vocational rehabilitation and employment benefits;
- (vi) readjustment counseling benefits;
- (vii) loan guarantee benefits; and
- (viii) such other benefits as the Secretary considers appropriate; and

(2) to assist the director of that entity in conducting such other press or public relations activities relating to outreach activities of the Department as that advisory board considers appropriate.

(d) MEETING LOCATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If teleconference technology is not used, meetings of each advisory board established under subsection (a)(1) shall be held at a location that is property of the Department.

(2) TELECONFERENCE TECHNOLOGY.—Each advisory board shall use, to the maximum extent practicable, teleconference technology.

(e) CONSULTATION.—Each director of an entity described in subsection (a)(2) shall consult with and seek the advice of the advisory board established at such entity not less frequently than once every two months on matters relating to the duties of the advisory board under subsection (c).

(f) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not less frequently than each year, each advisory board established under subsection (a)(1) shall submit to the Secretary a report with such information as may be beneficial to the Secretary in preparing the reports required by section 6308 of title 38, United States Code.

(g) TERMINATION.—Each advisory board established under subsection (a)(1) and the authorities and requirements of this section shall terminate three years after the effective date specified in subsection (h).

(h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 705. MODIFICATION OF REQUIREMENT FOR PERIODIC REPORTS TO CONGRESS ON OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 6308 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by striking “even-numbered”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “biennial”;

(B) in paragraph (2), by inserting “for legislative and administrative action” after “Recommendations”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) Recommendations that such administrative actions as may be taken—

“(A) to maximize resources for outreach activities of the Department; and

“(B) to focus outreach efforts on activities that are proven to be more effective.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SECTION HEADING.—The heading for section 6308 is amended by striking “Biennial” and inserting “Annual”.

(2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by striking the item relating to section 6308 and inserting the following new item:

“6308. Annual report to Congress.”.

SEC. 706. BUDGET TRANSPARENCY FOR OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 63 is amended by inserting after section 6308 the following new section:

“§ 6309. Budget transparency

“(a) BUDGET REQUIREMENTS.—In the budget justification materials submitted to Congress in support of the Department budget for a fiscal year (as submitted with the budget of the President under section 1105(a) of title 31), the Secretary shall include a separate statement of the amount requested for such fiscal year for activities of the Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs as follows:

“(1) For outreach activities of the Department in aggregate.

“(2) For outreach activities of each element of the Department specified in subsection (b)(1).

“(b) PROCEDURES FOR EFFECTIVE COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION.—(1) Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014, the Secretary shall establish and maintain procedures for the Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs to ensure the effective coordination and collaboration of outreach activities of the Department between and among the following:

“(A) Office of the Secretary.

“(B) Veterans Health Administration.

“(C) Veterans Benefits Administration.

“(D) National Cemetery Administration.

“(2) The Secretary shall—

“(A) beginning after the date on which the Secretary establishes procedures under paragraph (1), not less frequently than once every two years conduct a review of the procedures established and maintained under paragraph (1) to ensure that such procedures meet the requirements of such paragraph;

“(B) make such modifications to such procedures as the Secretary considers appropriate based upon reviews conducted under subparagraph (A) in order to better meet such requirements; and

“(C) not later than 45 days after completing a review under subparagraph (A), submit to Congress a report on the findings of such review.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 63 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 6308 the following new item:

“6309. Budget transparency.”.

TITLE VIII—OTHER VETERANS MATTERS

SEC. 801. REPEAL OF CERTAIN REDUCTIONS MADE BY BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013.

(a) ADJUSTMENT OF RETIREMENT PAY.—Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (Public Law 113–67) is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) APPLICABILITY TO DISABILITY AND SURVIVOR BENEFITS.—Title X of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 (division C of Public Law 113–76) is repealed.

(2) APPLICABILITY TO MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO JOINED AFTER JANUARY 1, 2014.—Section 2 of Public Law 113–82 is repealed.

SEC. 802. CONSIDERATION BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OF RESOURCES DISPOSED OF FOR LESS THAN FAIR MARKET VALUE BY INDIVIDUALS APPLYING FOR PENSION.

(a) VETERANS.—Section 1522 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Secretary”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2)(A) If a veteran otherwise eligible for payment of pension under section 1513 or 1521 of this title or the spouse of such veteran disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue the payment of pension to such veteran under section 1513 or 1521 of this title, as the case may be, for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the veteran or, if the veteran has a spouse, the corpus of the estates of the veteran and of the veteran's spouse, that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the veteran or spouse had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the veteran's maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate of the veteran or, if the veteran has a spouse, the corpus of the estates of the veteran and of the veteran's spouse, that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the veteran's maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the veteran applies for pension under section 1513 or 1521 of this title or, if later, the date on which the veteran (or the spouse of the veteran) disposes

of covered resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the first day of the first month in or after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this subparagraph shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of covered resources so disposed of by the veteran (or the spouse of the veteran) on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reasonably have been consumed for the veteran’s maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension that is payable to a veteran under section 1513 or 1521 of this title, including the maximum amount of increased pension payable under such sections on account of family members, but not including any amount of pension payable under such sections because a veteran is in need of regular aid and attendance or is permanently housebound,

rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Secretary”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2)(A) If a veteran otherwise eligible for payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child, the spouse of the veteran, or the child disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue payment of such increased pension for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the child that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the veteran, the spouse of the veteran, or the child had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate of the child that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the veteran applies for payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child or, if later, the date on which the veteran, the spouse of the veteran, or the child disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the first day of the first month in or

after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this subparagraph shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of by the veteran, the spouse of the veteran, or the child on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reasonably have been consumed for the child’s maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of increased monthly pension that is payable to a veteran under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child,

rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c)(1)(A) The Secretary shall not deny or discontinue payment of pension under section 1513 or 1521 of this title or payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child by reason of the application of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2) of this section to the disposal of resources by an individual—

“(i) if—

“(I) a satisfactory showing is made to the Secretary (in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary) that all resources disposed of for less than fair market value have been returned to the individual who disposed of the resources; or

“(II) the Secretary determines, under procedures established by the Secretary in accordance with subparagraph (B), that the denial or discontinuance of payment would work an undue hardship; or

“(ii) to the extent that any portion of the resources disposed of for less than fair market value have been returned to the individual who disposed of the resources.

“(B) Undue hardship would be worked by the denial or discontinuance of payment for purposes of subparagraph (A)(i)(II) if the denial or discontinuance of payment would deprive the individual during the period of denial or discontinuance—

“(i) of medical care such that the individual’s life or health would be endangered;

“(ii) of necessary food or clothing, or other necessities of life; or

“(iii) on such other basis as the Secretary shall specify in the procedures required by subparagraph (A)(i)(II).

“(C) If payment of pension or increased pension that would otherwise be denied or discontinued by reason of the application of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2) is denied or discontinued only in part by reason of the return of resources as described in subparagraph (A)(ii), the period of the denial or discontinuance as determined pursuant to subparagraph (E) of subsection (a)(2) or (b)(2), as applicable, shall be recalculated to take into account such return of resources.

“(2) At the time a veteran applies for pension under section 1513 or 1521 of this title or increased pension under subsection (c), (d), (e), or (f) of section 1521 of this title on account of a child, and at such other times as the Secretary considers appropriate, the Secretary shall—

“(A) inform such veteran of the provisions of subsections (a)(2) and (b)(2) providing for a period of ineligibility for payment of pension under such sections for individuals who make certain dispositions of resources for less than fair market value, including the ex-

ception for hardship from such period of ineligibility;

“(B) obtain from such veteran information which may be used in determining whether or not a period of ineligibility for such payments would be required by reason of such subsections; and

“(C) provide such veteran a timely process for determining whether or not the exception for hardship shall apply to such veteran.”.

(b) SURVIVING SPOUSES AND CHILDREN.—Section 1543 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3);

(B) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph (2):

“(2)(A) If a surviving spouse otherwise eligible for payment of pension under section 1541 of this title disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue the payment of pension to such surviving spouse under section 1541 of this title for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the surviving spouse that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the surviving spouse had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the surviving spouse’s maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate of the surviving spouse that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the surviving spouse’s maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the surviving spouse applies for pension under section 1541 of this title or, if later, the date on which the surviving spouse disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the first day of the first month in or after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this subparagraph shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of by the surviving spouse on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reasonably have been consumed for the surviving spouse’s maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension that is payable to a surviving spouse under section 1541 of this title, including the maximum amount of increased pension payable under such section on account of a child, but not including any amount of pension payable under such section because a

surviving spouse is in need of regular aid and attendance or is permanently housebound, rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4)(A) If a surviving spouse otherwise eligible for payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child or the child disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue payment of such increased pension for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the child that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the surviving spouse or the child had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate of the child that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the surviving spouse applies for payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child or, if later, the date on which the surviving spouse (or the child) disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this subparagraph is the first day of the first month in or after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this clause shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of by the surviving spouse (or the child) on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reasonably have been consumed for the child’s maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of increased monthly pension that is payable to a surviving spouse under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child,

rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by inserting “(1)” before “The Secretary”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(2)(A) If a child otherwise eligible for payment of pension under section 1542 of this title or any person with whom such child is

residing who is legally responsible for such child’s support disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i), the Secretary shall deny or discontinue the payment of pension to such child under section 1542 of this title for months during the period beginning on the date described in subparagraph (D) and equal to the number of months calculated as provided in subparagraph (E).

“(B)(i) For purposes of this paragraph, a covered resource is any resource that was a part of the corpus of the estate of the child or the corpus of the estate of any person with whom such child is residing who is legally responsible for such child’s support that the Secretary considers that under all the circumstances, if the child or person had not disposed of such resource, it would be reasonable that the resource (or some portion of the resource) be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(ii) For purposes of this paragraph, the Secretary may consider, in accordance with regulations the Secretary shall prescribe, a transfer of an asset (including a transfer of an asset to an annuity, trust, or other financial instrument or investment) a disposal of a covered resource for less than fair market value if such transfer reduces the amount in the corpus of the estate described in clause (i) that the Secretary considers, under all the circumstances, would be reasonable to be consumed for the child’s maintenance.

“(C)(i) The look-back date described in this clause is a date that is 36 months before the date described in clause (ii).

“(ii) The date described in this clause is the date on which the child applies for pension under section 1542 of this title or, if later, the date on which the child (or person described in subparagraph (B)) disposes of covered resources for less than fair market value.

“(D) The date described in this clause is the first day of the first month in or after which covered resources were disposed of for less than fair market value and which does not occur in any other period of ineligibility under this paragraph.

“(E) The number of months calculated under this clause shall be equal to—

“(i) the total, cumulative uncompensated value of the portion of the covered resources so disposed of by the child (or person described in subparagraph (B)) on or after the look-back date described in subparagraph (C)(i) that the Secretary determines would reasonably have been consumed for the child’s maintenance; divided by

“(ii) the maximum amount of monthly pension that is payable to a child under section 1542 of this title,

rounded down, in the case of any fraction, to the nearest whole number, but shall not in any case exceed 36 months.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c)(1)(A) The Secretary shall not deny or discontinue payment of pension under section 1541 or 1542 of this title or payment of increased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child by reason of the application of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or (b)(2) of this section to the disposal of resources by an individual—

“(i) if—

“(I) a satisfactory showing is made to the Secretary (in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary) that all resources disposed of for less than fair market value have been returned to the individual who disposed of the resources; or

“(II) the Secretary determines, under procedures established by the Secretary in accordance with subparagraph (B), that the denial or discontinuance of payment would work an undue hardship; or

“(ii) to the extent that any portion of the resources disposed of for less than fair market value have been returned to the individual who disposed of the resources.

“(B) Undue hardship would be worked by the denial or discontinuance of payment for purposes of subparagraph (A)(i)(II) if the denial or discontinuance of payment would deprive the individual during the period of denial or discontinuance—

“(i) of medical care such that the individual’s life or health would be endangered;

“(ii) of necessary food or clothing, or other necessities of life; or

“(iii) on such other basis as the Secretary shall specify in the procedures required by subparagraph (A)(i)(II).

“(C) If payment of pension or increased pension that would otherwise be denied or discontinued by reason of the application of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or (b)(2) is denied or discontinued only in part by reason of the return of resources as described in subparagraph (A)(ii), the period of the denial or discontinuance as determined pursuant to subparagraph (E) of subsection (a)(2), (a)(4), or (b)(2), as applicable, shall be recalculated to take into account such return of resources.

“(2) At the time a surviving spouse or child applies for pension under section 1541 or 1542 of this title or increased pension under subsection (c), (d), or (e) of section 1541 of this title on account of a child, and at such other times as the Secretary considers appropriate, the Secretary shall—

“(A) inform such surviving spouse or child of the provisions of subsections (a)(2), (a)(4), and (b)(2), as applicable, providing for a period of ineligibility for payment of pension or increased pension under such sections for individuals who make certain dispositions of resources for less than fair market value, including the exception for hardship from such period of ineligibility;

“(B) obtain from such surviving spouse or child information which may be used in determining whether or not a period of ineligibility for such payments would be required by reason of such subsections; and

“(C) provide such surviving spouse or child a timely process for determining whether or not the exception for hardship shall apply to such surviving spouse or child.”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsections (a)(2), (b)(2), and (c) of section 1522 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), and subsections (a)(2), (a)(4), (b)(2), and (c) of section 1543 of such title, as added by subsection (b), shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply with respect to payments of pension and increased pension applied for after such date and to payments of pension and increased pension for which eligibility is redetermined after such date, except that no reduction in pension shall be made under such subsections because of any disposal of covered resources made before such date.

(d) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 months after the date of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently than once each year thereafter through 2018, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on the administration of subsections (a)(2), (b)(2), and (c) of section 1522 of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection

(a), and subsections (a)(2), (a)(4), (b)(2), and (c) of section 1543 of such title, as added by subsection (b), during the most recent 12-month period.

(2) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following, for the period covered by the report:

(A) The number of individuals who applied for pension under chapter 15 of such title.

(B) The number of individuals who received pension under such chapter.

(C) The number of individuals with respect to whom the Secretary denied or discontinued payment of pension under the subsections referred to in paragraph (1).

(D) A description of any trends identified by the Secretary regarding pension payments that have occurred as a result of the amendments made by this section.

(E) Such other information as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(3) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and the Select Committee on Aging of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives.

SEC. 803. EXTENSION OF REDUCED PENSION FOR CERTAIN VETERANS COVERED BY MEDICAID PLANS FOR SERVICES FURNISHED BY NURSING FACILITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (d)(7) of section 5503 is amended by striking “November 30, 2016” and inserting “September 30, 2023”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) SECTION HEADING.—The section heading of such section is amended to read as follows: **“Reduced pension for certain hospitalized veterans and certain veterans receiving domiciliary, nursing home, or nursing facility care”**.

(2) TABLE OF SECTIONS.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 55 is amended by striking the item relating to section 5503 and inserting the following new item:

“5503. Reduced pension for certain hospitalized veterans and certain veterans receiving domiciliary, nursing home, or nursing facility care.”.

SEC. 804. CONDITIONS ON AWARD OF PER DIEM PAYMENTS BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR PROVISION OF HOUSING OR SERVICES TO HOMELESS VETERANS.

(a) CONDITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 2012(c)(1) is amended by striking “unless the facilities” and all that follows through “may specify.” and inserting the following: “unless the Secretary certifies the following:

“(A) That the building where the grant recipient or eligible entity provides housing or services for which the grant recipient or eligible entity would receive such payment is in compliance with the codes relevant to the operations and level of care provided, including applicable provisions of the most recently published version of the Life Safety Code of the National Fire Protection Association or such other comparable fire and safety requirements as the Secretary may specify.

“(B) That such building and such housing or services are in compliance with licensing requirements, fire and safety requirements, and any other requirements in the jurisdiction in which the building is located regarding the condition of the building and the provision of such housing or services.”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall apply with respect to an application for a per diem payment under section 2012 of title 38, United States Code, submitted on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) ANNUAL INSPECTIONS REQUIRED.—Section 2012 is amended by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following new subsection (b):

“(b)(1) Not less frequently than once each fiscal year, the Secretary shall inspect each facility of each grant recipient or entity eligible for payments under subsection (a) at which the recipients and entities provide services under section 2011 of this title or this section.

“(2) Except as provided in paragraph (1), inspections made under such paragraph shall be made at such times as the Secretary considers necessary.

“(3) An inspection of a facility of a recipient or entity described in paragraph (1) made under such paragraph may be made with or without prior notice to the recipient or entity, as the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(4) No per diem payment may be provided to a grant recipient or eligible entity under this section unless the facilities of the grant recipient or eligible entity meet such standards as the Secretary shall prescribe.”.

(c) REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION AUTHORIZED.—Subsection (c) of such section is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (4) and (5), respectively;

(2) in paragraph (1), as amended by subsection (a)(1), by striking “in paragraph (2)” and inserting “in paragraph (4)”;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph (2):

“(2) The Secretary may revoke any certification made under paragraph (1) if the Secretary determines that such certification is no longer accurate.”.

(d) CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION OF TERMINATION OF PER DIEM REQUIRED.—Such subsection is further amended by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph (3):

“(3) Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Secretary terminates provision of per diem payment under this section to a grant recipient or an eligible entity, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives notice of such termination if such termination were made because a facility of the grant recipient or eligible entity did not comply with—

“(A) an applicable provision of the most recently published version of the Life Safety Code of the National Fire Protection Association or such other comparable fire and safety requirement as the Secretary has specified; or

“(B) a licensing requirement, fire or safety requirement, or another requirement in the jurisdiction in which the facility is located regarding the condition of the facility.”.

(e) TREATMENT OF CURRENT RECIPIENTS OF PER DIEM PAYMENTS.—

(1) ASSESSMENT.—In the case of the recipient of a per diem payment under section 2012 of title 38, United States Code, that receives such a payment during the year in which this Act is enacted for the provision of housing or services, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall assess whether the building where such housing or services are provided is and whether the housing and services are in compliance as required by section 2012(c)(1) of such title, as amended by subsection (a)(1).

(2) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—In the case described in paragraph (1), if the Secretary does not certify the compliance of the building and the housing or services under such section before the date that is two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary may not make any additional per diem payments to the recipient for the provision of such housing or services under section 2012 of such title until the Secretary certifies that such building is and such housing or services are in compliance.

(f) CONFORMING CONDITION ON AWARD OF GRANTS BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE PROGRAMS.—Section 2011(b)(5)(A) is amended by inserting “, including housing and building codes,”.

SEC. 805. EXCEPTION TO CERTAIN RECAPTURE REQUIREMENTS AND TREATMENT OF CONTRACTS AND GRANTS WITH STATE HOMES WITH RESPECT TO CARE FOR HOMELESS VETERANS.

(a) EXCEPTION TO CERTAIN RECAPTURE REQUIREMENTS.—Section 8136(b) is amended by inserting “, or the provision of services or conduct of a program pursuant to a contract or grant issued or awarded by the Secretary under subchapter II of chapter 20 or section 2031(a)(2) of this title,” after “outpatient clinic”.

(b) CONSTRUCTION.—The amendment made by subsection (a) may not be construed to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into a contract with a State home or award a grant to a State home for the furnishing of residential care for a veteran without—

(1) identifying a substantial need for such care; and

(2) determining that the State home is the most appropriate provider of such care.

SEC. 806. EXTENDED PERIOD FOR SCHEDULING OF MEDICAL EXAMS FOR VETERANS RECEIVING TEMPORARY DISABILITY RATINGS FOR SEVERE MENTAL DISORDERS.

Section 1156(a)(3) is amended by striking “six months” and inserting “18 months”.

SEC. 807. AUTHORITY TO ISSUE VETERANS ID CARDS.

(a) AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may issue a card to a veteran that identifies the veteran as a veteran and includes a photo of the veteran and the name of the veteran.

(2) NO REQUIREMENT FOR ENROLLMENT OR RECEIPT OF BENEFITS.—The Secretary may issue a card under paragraph (1) to a veteran, whether or not such veteran is—

(A) enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment established under section 1705(a) of title 38, United States Code; or

(B) in receipt of educational assistance, compensation, or pension under laws administered by the Secretary.

(3) DESIGNATION.—A card issued under paragraph (1) may be known as a “Veterans ID Card”.

(b) RECOGNITION OF VETERANS ID CARDS FOR REDUCED PRICING OF PHARMACEUTICALS, CONSUMER PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES.—The Secretary may work with national retail chains that offer reduced prices on pharmaceuticals, consumer products, and services to veterans to ensure that such retail chains recognize cards issued under subsection (a)(1) for purposes of offering reduced prices on pharmaceuticals, consumer products, and services.

(c) VETERAN DEFINED.—In this section, the term “veteran” has the meaning given the term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 808. HONORING AS VETERANS CERTAIN PERSONS WHO PERFORMED SERVICE IN THE RESERVE COMPONENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

Any person who is entitled under chapter 1223 of title 10, United States Code, to retired pay for nonregular service or, but for age, would be entitled under such chapter to retired pay for nonregular service shall be honored as a veteran but shall not be entitled to any benefit by reason of this honor.

SEC. 809. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO OBTAIN INFORMATION FROM SECRETARY OF TREASURY AND COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SECURITY FOR INCOME VERIFICATION PURPOSES.

Section 5317(g) is amended by striking “September 30, 2016” and inserting “September 30, 2018”.

SEC. 810. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY FOR SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO ISSUE AND GUARANTEE CERTAIN LOANS.

Section 3729(b)(2) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) in clause (iii), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”; and

(B) in clause (iv), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”;

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”; and

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”;

(3) in subparagraph (C)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”; and

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”;

(4) in subparagraph (D)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”; and

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “October 1, 2017” and inserting “September 30, 2023”.

SEC. 811. REVIEW OF DETERMINATION OF CERTAIN SERVICE IN PHILIPPINES DURING WORLD WAR II.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and such military historians as the Secretary of Defense recommends, shall review the process used to determine whether a covered individual served in support of the Armed Forces of the United States during World War II in accordance with section 1002(d) of title X of Division A of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5; 38 U.S.C. 107 note) for purposes of determining whether such covered individual is eligible for payments described in such section.

(b) **COVERED INDIVIDUALS.**—In this section, a covered individual is any individual who timely submitted a claim for benefits under subsection (c) of section 1002 of title X of Division A of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5; 38 U.S.C. 107 note) based on service as described in subsection (d) of that section.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report detailing any findings, actions taken, or recommendations for legislative action with respect to the review conducted under subsection (a).

(d) **PROHIBITION ON BENEFITS FOR DISQUALIFYING CONDUCT UNDER NEW PROCESS PURSU-**

ANT TO REVIEW.—If pursuant to the review conducted under subsection (a) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines to establish a new process for the making of payments as described in that subsection, the process shall include mechanisms to ensure that individuals are not treated as covered individuals for purposes of such payments if such individuals engaged in any disqualifying conduct during service described in that subsection, including collaboration with the enemy or criminal conduct.

SEC. 812. REVIEW OF DETERMINATION OF CERTAIN SERVICE OF MERCHANT MARINERS DURING WORLD WAR II.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Homeland Security and such military historians as the Secretary of Defense recommends, shall review the process used to determine whether an individual performed service under honorable conditions that satisfies the requirements of a coastwise merchant seaman who is recognized pursuant to section 401 of the GI Bill Improvement Act of 1977 (Public Law 95-202; 38 U.S.C. 106 note) as having performed active duty service.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report detailing any findings, actions taken, or recommendations for legislative action with respect to the review conducted under subsection (a).

SEC. 813. REPORT ON LAOTIAN MILITARY SUPPORT OF ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES DURING VIETNAM WAR.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the effective date specified in subsection (c), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense and such agencies and individuals as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs considers appropriate, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report on—

(1) the extent to which Laotian military forces provided combat support to the Armed Forces of the United States between February 28, 1961, and May 15, 1975;

(2) whether the current classification by the Civilian/Military Service Review Board of the Department of Defense of service by individuals of Hmong ethnicity is appropriate; and

(3) any recommendations for legislative action.

(b) **APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.**—In this section, the term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(1) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 814. REPORT ON PRACTICES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO ADEQUATELY PROVIDE SERVICES TO VETERANS WITH HEARING LOSS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the actions taken by the Secretary

to implement the findings and recommendations included in the 2006 report by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies entitled “Noise and Military Service: Implications for Hearing Loss and Tinnitus” that was prepared pursuant to section 104 of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-330; 116 Stat. 2822).

(b) **EFFECT OF DUTY MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTY NOISE EXPOSURE LISTING ON RECEIPT OF BENEFITS BY VETERANS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall include in the report required by subsection (a) an evaluation of the extent to which veterans who had a military occupational specialty during service as a member of the Armed Forces that is not included on the Duty Military Occupational Specialty Noise Exposure Listing (in this subsection referred to as the “MOS List”) are precluded from receiving benefits related to hearing loss from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) **DATA.**—The Secretary shall include in the evaluation required by paragraph (1) the following:

(A) With respect to veterans who had a military occupational specialty included on the MOS List—

(i) the number of claims for benefits related to hearing loss from the Department of Veterans Affairs that were granted; and

(ii) the number of claims for benefits related to hearing loss from the Department that were denied.

(B) With respect to veterans who had a military occupational specialty not included on the MOS List—

(i) the number of claims for benefits related to hearing loss from the Department that were granted;

(ii) the number of claims for benefits related to hearing loss from the Department that were denied;

(iii) of the number of denied claims under clause (ii), the number of those claims that were appealed; and

(iv) of the number of appealed claims under clause (iii), the number of those appealed claims that were successfully appealed.

(c) **ADDITIONAL MATTERS.**—The Secretary shall include in the report required by subsection (a) the following:

(1) In the case of a veteran with unilateral hearing loss, an explanation of the scientific basis for the practice of the Department of determining a disability rating level with respect to hearing based on an examination of that veteran's healthy ear instead of the injured ear.

(2) An analysis of the reduction in earning capacity for veterans as a result of unilateral hearing loss, with a focus on the ability of those veterans—

(A) to detect the direction of sound; and

(B) to understand speech.

(3) An explanation of the rationale for the practice of the Department of not issuing a compensable rating for hearing loss at certain levels that are severe enough to require the use of hearing aids.

(4) A survey of the audiologists that conduct compensation and pension examinations for the Department to assess the implementation of the most recent edition of the best practices manual for hearing loss and tinnitus examinations that includes the following:

(A) A description of the training received by those audiologists compared to the methods described in the most recent edition of the best practices manual for hearing loss and tinnitus examinations.

(B) An assessment of how those audiologists have complied with that training.

(C) Whether those audiologists are using a range of tones up to 8000 hertz to test the hearing of veterans.

(d) **CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize or require the Secretary to defer, delay, or replace the ongoing efforts of the Secretary to update the schedule of ratings required by section 1155 of title 38, United States Code.

(e) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 815. REPORT ON JOINT PROGRAMS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE WITH RESPECT TO HEARING LOSS OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, submit to Congress a report that identifies the following:

(1) Goals for the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense for the prevention, early detection, and treatment of hearing loss by the National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory Research of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Hearing Center of Excellence of the Department of Defense.

(2) Resources of the Department of Veterans Affairs that could be made available to assist the Department of Defense in conducting audiometric tests and tinnitus screenings for members of the Armed Forces.

(3) Barriers to information being added to the Hearing Loss and Auditory System Injury Registry required under section 721(c)(1) of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (Public Law 110-417; 122 Stat. 4506).

(4) Recommendations for any legislative or administrative actions necessary with respect to the Hearing Loss and Auditory System Injury Registry—

(A) to assist in achieving the goals specified in paragraph (1);

(B) to improve the adjudication of claims for benefits with respect to hearing loss; and

(C) to further the research objectives of the National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory Research of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Hearing Center of Excellence of the Department of Defense.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 816. LIMITATION ON AGGREGATE AMOUNT OF BONUSES PAYABLE TO PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DURING FISCAL YEAR 2014.

The aggregate amount of bonuses and awards payable to personnel of the Department of Veterans Affairs under chapter 45 or 53 of title 5, United States Code, or any other provision of such title, during fiscal year 2014 may not exceed \$368,000,000.

SEC. 817. DESIGNATION OF AMERICAN WORLD WAR II CITIES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall designate at least one city in the United States each year as an “American World War II City”.

(b) **CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION.**—After the designation made under subsection (c), the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall make each designation under subsection (a) based on the following criteria:

(1) Contributions by a city to the war effort during World War II, including those related to defense manufacturing, bond drives,

service in the Armed Forces, and the presence of military facilities within the city.

(2) Efforts by a city to preserve the history of the city's contributions during World War II, including through the establishment of preservation organizations or museums, restoration of World War II facilities, and recognition of World War II veterans.

(c) **FIRST AMERICAN WORLD WAR II CITY.**—The city of Wilmington, North Carolina, is designated as an “American World War II City”.

(d) **EXPIRATION OF AUTHORITY.**—The requirements of subsections (a) and (b) shall terminate on the date that is five years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE IX—IRAN SANCTIONS

SEC. 901. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014”.

SEC. 902. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON NUCLEAR WEAPON CAPABILITIES OF IRAN.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Government of Iran continues to expand the nuclear and missile programs of Iran in violation of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions.

(2) The Government of Iran has a decades-long track record of violating commitments regarding the nuclear program of Iran and has used diplomatic negotiations as a subterfuge to advance its nuclear weapons program.

(3) Iran remains the world's foremost state sponsor of terrorism, having directed, supported, and financed acts of terrorism against the United States and its allies that have resulted in the thousands of deaths, including the deaths of United States citizens and members of the Armed Forces of the United States.

(4) The Government of Iran and its terrorist proxies, particularly Lebanese Hezbollah, continue to provide military and financial support to the regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria, aiding that regime in the mass killing of the people of Syria.

(5) The Government of Iran continues to sow instability in the Middle East and threaten its neighbors, including allies of the United States, such as Israel.

(6) The Government of Iran denies its people fundamental freedoms, including freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, and freedom of conscience.

(7) Strict sanctions on Iran, imposed by the United States and the international community, are responsible for bringing Iran to the negotiating table.

(8) President Hassan Rouhani of Iran has in the past admitted to using diplomatic negotiations to buy time for Iran to make nuclear advances.

(9) Based on Iran's current stockpile of uranium enriched to 3.5 percent and 20 percent and its current centrifuge capacity, Iran could produce a sufficient quantity of weapons-grade uranium for a bomb in one to 2 months' time.

(10) If the Government of Iran commences the operation of its heavy water reactor in Arak, it could establish an alternate pathway to a nuclear weapon through the production of plutonium.

(11) As of the date of the enactment of this Act, 19 countries access nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without conducting any enrichment or reprocessing activities within those countries.

(12) The Government of Iran could likewise access nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without conducting any enrichment or reprocessing activities within Iran.

(b) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Government of Iran must not be allowed to develop or maintain nuclear weapon capabilities;

(2) all instruments of power and influence of the United States should remain on the table to prevent the Government of Iran from developing nuclear weapon capabilities;

(3) the Government of Iran does not have an absolute or inherent right to enrichment and reprocessing capabilities and technologies under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, done at Washington, London, and Moscow July 1, 1968, and entered into force March 5, 1970 (commonly known as the “Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty”);

(4) the imposition of sanctions under this title, including sanctions on exports of petroleum from Iran, is triggered by violations by Iran of any interim or final agreement regarding its nuclear program, failure to reach a final agreement in a discernible time frame, or the breach of other conditions described in section 931;

(5) if the Government of Israel is compelled to take military action in legitimate self-defense against Iran's nuclear weapon program, the United States Government should stand with Israel and provide, in accordance with the law of the United States and the constitutional responsibility of Congress to authorize the use of military force, diplomatic, military, and economic support to the Government of Israel in its defense of its territory, people, and existence;

(6) the United States should continue to impose sanctions on the Government of Iran and its terrorist proxies for their continuing sponsorship of terrorism; and

(7) the United States should continue to impose sanctions on the Government of Iran for—

(A) its ongoing abuses of human rights; and

(B) its actions in support of Bashar al-Assad in Syria.

Subtitle A—Expansion and Imposition of Sanctions

SEC. 911. APPLICABILITY OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO PETROLEUM TRANSACTIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1245(d)(4)(D)(i) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8513a(d)(4)(D)(i)) is amended—

(1) in subclause (I), by striking “reduced reduced its volume of crude oil purchases from Iran” and inserting “reduced the volume of its purchases of petroleum from Iran or of Iranian origin”; and

(2) in subclause (II), by striking “crude oil purchases from Iran” and inserting “purchases of petroleum from Iran or of Iranian origin”.

(b) **DEFINITIONS.**—Section 1245(h) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8513a(h)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (5) and (6), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) **IRANIAN ORIGIN.**—The term ‘Iranian origin’, with respect to petroleum, means extracted, produced, or refined in Iran.

“(4) **PETROLEUM.**—The term ‘petroleum’ includes crude oil, lease condensates, fuel oils, and other unfinished oils.”

(c) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 102(b) of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8712(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)—

(A) by striking “crude oil purchases from Iran” and inserting “purchases of petroleum from Iran or of Iranian origin”; and

(B) by striking “as amended by section 504,”; and

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking “crude oil purchases” and inserting “purchases of petroleum from Iran or of Iranian origin”.

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall apply with respect to determinations under section 1245(d)(4)(D)(i) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8513a(d)(4)(D)(i)) on or after the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 912. INELIGIBILITY FOR EXCEPTION TO CERTAIN SANCTIONS FOR COUNTRIES THAT DO NOT REDUCE PURCHASES OF PETROLEUM FROM IRAN OR OF IRANIAN ORIGIN TO A DE MINIMIS LEVEL.

(a) **STATEMENT OF POLICY.**—It is the policy of the United States to seek to ensure that all countries reduce their purchases of crude oil, lease condensates, fuel oils, and other unfinished oils from Iran or of Iranian origin to a de minimis level by the end of the 1-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) **INELIGIBILITY FOR EXCEPTIONS TO SANCTIONS.**—Section 1245(d)(4)(D) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8513a(d)(4)(D)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(iii) **INELIGIBILITY FOR EXCEPTION.**—

“(I) **IN GENERAL.**—A country that purchased petroleum from Iran or of Iranian origin during the one-year period preceding the date of the enactment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014 may continue to receive an exception under clause (i) on or after the date that is one year after such date of enactment only—

“(aa) if the country reduces its purchases of petroleum from Iran or of Iranian origin to a de minimis level by the end of the one-year period beginning on such date of enactment; or

“(bb) as provided in subclause (II) or (III).

“(II) **COUNTRIES THAT DRAMATICALLY REDUCE PURCHASES.**—

“(aa) **IN GENERAL.**—A country that would otherwise be ineligible pursuant to subclause (I)(aa) to receive an exception under clause (i) may continue to receive such an exception during the one-year period beginning on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014 if the country—

“(AA) dramatically reduces by at least 30 percent its purchases of petroleum from Iran or of Iranian origin during the one-year period beginning on such date of enactment; and

“(BB) is expected to reduce its purchases of petroleum from Iran or of Iranian origin to a de minimis level within a defined period of time that is not longer than 2 years after such date of enactment.

“(bb) **TERMINATION OF EXCEPTION.**—If a country that continues to receive an exception under clause (i) pursuant to item (aa) does not reduce its purchases of petroleum from Iran or of Iranian origin to a de minimis level by the date that is 2 years after the date of the enactment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014, that country shall not be eligible for such an exception on or after the date that is 2 years after such date of enactment.

“(III) **REINSTATEMENT OF ELIGIBILITY FOR EXCEPTION.**—A country that becomes ineligible for an exception under clause (i) pursuant to subclause (I) or (II) shall be eligible

for such an exception in accordance with the provisions of clause (i) on and after the date on which the President determines the country has reduced its purchases of petroleum from Iran or of Iranian origin to a de minimis level.”.

(c) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 1245(d)(4)(D)(i) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8513a(d)(4)(D)(i)) is amended in the matter preceding subclause (I) by striking “Sanctions imposed” and inserting “Except as provided in clause (iii), sanctions imposed”.

SEC. 913. IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO PORTS, SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES, AND STRATEGIC SECTORS OF IRAN.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Section 1244(a)(1) of the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8803(a)(1)) is amended by striking “and shipbuilding” and inserting “shipbuilding, construction, engineering, and mining”.

(b) **EXPANSION OF DESIGNATION OF ENTITIES OF PROLIFERATION CONCERN.**—Section 1244(b) of the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8803(b)) is amended by striking “in Iran and entities in the energy, shipping, and shipbuilding sectors” and inserting “, special economic zones, or free economic zones in Iran, and entities in strategic sectors”.

(c) **EXPANSION OF ENTITIES SUBJECT TO ASSET FREEZE.**—Section 1244(c) of the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8803(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014”; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014”; and

(B) by striking “the energy, shipping, or shipbuilding sectors” each place it appears and inserting “a strategic sector”; and

(C) by inserting “, special economic zone, or free economic zone” after “port” each place it appears; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) **STRATEGIC SECTOR DEFINED.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In this section, the term “strategic sector” means—

“(i) the energy, shipping, shipbuilding, and mining sectors of Iran;

“(ii) except as provided in subparagraph (B), the construction and engineering sectors of Iran; and

“(iii) any other sector the President designates as of strategic importance to Iran.

“(B) **EXCEPTION FOR CONSTRUCTION AND ENGINEERING OF SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS, AND SIMILAR FACILITIES.**—For purposes of this section, a person engaged in the construction or engineering of schools, hospitals, or similar facilities (as determined by the President) shall not be considered part of a strategic sector of Iran.

“(C) **NOTIFICATION OF STRATEGIC SECTOR DESIGNATION.**—The President shall submit to Congress a notification of the designation of a sector as a strategic sector of Iran for purposes of subparagraph (A)(iii) not later than 5 days after the date on which the President makes the designation.”.

(d) **ADDITIONAL SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO STRATEGIC SECTORS.**—Section 1244(d) of the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8803(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014”; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking “the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014”; and

(3) in paragraph (3), by striking “the energy, shipping, or shipbuilding sectors” and inserting “a strategic sector”.

(e) **SALE, SUPPLY, OR TRANSFER OF CERTAIN MATERIALS TO OR FROM IRAN.**—Section 1245 of the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8804) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014”; and

(B) in subparagraph (C)(i)(I), by striking “the energy, shipping, or shipbuilding sectors” and inserting “a strategic sector (as defined in section 1244(c)(4))”; and

(2) in subsection (c), by striking “the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014”.

(f) **PROVISION OF INSURANCE TO SANCTIONED PERSONS.**—Section 1246(a)(1) of the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8805(a)(1)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)(i), by striking “the energy, shipping, or shipbuilding sectors” and inserting “a strategic sector (as defined in section 1244(c)(4))”.

(g) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 1244 of the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8803), as amended by subsections (a), (b), (c), and (d), is further amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking “**THE ENERGY, SHIPPING, AND SHIPBUILDING**” and inserting “**CERTAIN PORTS, ECONOMIC ZONES, AND**”;

(2) in subsection (b), in the subsection heading, by striking “**PORTS AND ENTITIES IN THE ENERGY, SHIPPING, AND SHIPBUILDING SECTORS OF IRAN**” and inserting “**CERTAIN ENTITIES**”;

(3) in subsection (c), in the subsection heading, by striking “**ENTITIES IN ENERGY, SHIPPING, AND SHIPBUILDING SECTORS**” and inserting “**CERTAIN ENTITIES**”; and

(4) in subsection (d), in the subsection heading, by striking “**THE ENERGY, SHIPPING, AND SHIPBUILDING**” and inserting “**STRATEGIC**”.

SEC. 914. IDENTIFICATION OF, AND IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO, CERTAIN IRANIAN INDIVIDUALS.

(a) **EXPANSION OF INDIVIDUALS IDENTIFIED.**—Section 221(a) of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8727(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(C), by striking “; or” and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) an individual who engages in activities for or on behalf of the Government of Iran that enables Iran to evade sanctions imposed by the United States with respect to Iran;

“(4) an individual acting on behalf of the Government of Iran who is involved in corrupt activities of that Government or the diversion of humanitarian goods, including agricultural commodities, food, medicine, and medical devices, intended for the people of Iran; or

“(5) a senior official—

“(A) of an entity designated for the imposition of sanctions pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) in connection with—

“(i) Iran’s proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction; or

“(ii) Iran’s support for acts of international terrorism; and

“(B) who was involved in the activity for which the entity was designated for the imposition of sanctions.”

(b) **EXPANSION OF SENIOR OFFICIALS DESCRIBED.**—Section 221(b) of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8727(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (5), by striking “; or” and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (6), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) a senior official of—

“(A) the Office of the Supreme Leader of Iran;

“(B) the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran;

“(C) the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran;

“(D) the Council of Ministers of Iran;

“(E) the Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics of Iran;

“(F) the Ministry of Justice of Iran;

“(G) the Ministry of Interior of Iran;

“(H) the prison system of Iran; or

“(I) the judicial system of Iran.”

(c) **BLOCKING OF PROPERTY.**—Section 221 of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8727) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

“(d) **BLOCKING OF PROPERTY.**—

“(1) **OFFICIALS AND OTHER ACTORS.**—In the case of an individual described in paragraph (1), (3), (4), or (5) of subsection (a) who is on the list required by that subsection, the President shall block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of that individual if such property or interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

“(2) **FAMILY MEMBERS.**—In the case of an individual described in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) who is on the list required by that subsection, the President shall block and prohibit a transaction in property or an interest in property of that individual if the property or interest in property—

“(A) was transferred to that individual from an individual described in paragraph (1) of subsection (a) who is on the list required by that subsection; and

“(B) is in the United States, comes within the United States, or is or comes within the possession or control of a United States person.”

(d) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 221 of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria

Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8727), as amended by subsections (a), (b), and (c), is further amended—

(1) by striking the section heading and inserting “**IDENTIFICATION OF, AND IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO, CERTAIN IRANIAN INDIVIDUALS**”;

(2) in subsection (a), by striking “the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “the date of the enactment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014”; and

(3) in subsection (c), by striking “subsection (d)” and inserting “subsection (e)”.

(e) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of contents for the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8701 et seq.) is amended by striking the item relating to section 221 and inserting the following:

“Sec. 221. Identification of, and imposition of sanctions with respect to, certain Iranian individuals.”

SEC. 915. IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO TRANSACTIONS IN FOREIGN CURRENCIES WITH OR FOR CERTAIN SANCTIONED PERSONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Title II of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8721 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by inserting after section 221 the following:

“**Subtitle C—Other Matters**”;

(2) by redesignating sections 222, 223, and 224 as sections 231, 232, and 233, respectively; and

(3) by inserting after section 221 the following:

“**SEC. 222. IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO TRANSACTIONS IN FOREIGN CURRENCIES WITH CERTAIN SANCTIONED PERSONS.**

“(a) **IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS.**—The President—

“(1) shall prohibit the opening, and prohibit or impose strict conditions on the maintaining, in the United States of a correspondent account or a payable-through account by a foreign financial institution that knowingly conducts or facilitates a transaction described in subsection (b)(1); and

“(2) may impose sanctions pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) with respect to any other person that knowingly conducts or facilitates such a transaction.

“(b) **TRANSACTIONS DESCRIBED.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—A transaction described in this subsection is a significant transaction conducted or facilitated by a person related to the currency of a country other than the country with primary jurisdiction over the person with, for, or on behalf of—

“(A) the Central Bank of Iran or an Iranian financial institution designated by the Secretary of the Treasury for the imposition of sanctions pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act; or

“(B) a person described in section 1244(c)(2) of the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8803(c)(2)) (other than a person described in subparagraph (C)(iii) of that subsection).

“(2) **PRIMARY JURISDICTION.**—For purposes of paragraph (1), a country in which a person operates shall be deemed to have primary jurisdiction over the person only with respect to the operations of the person in that country.

“(c) **APPLICABILITY.**—Subsection (a) shall apply with respect to a transaction described in subsection (b)(1) conducted or facilitated—

“(1) on or after the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Nu-

clear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014 pursuant to a contract entered into on or after such date of enactment; and

“(2) on or after the date that is 180 days after such date of enactment pursuant to a contract entered into before such date of enactment.

“(d) **INAPPLICABILITY TO HUMANITARIAN TRANSACTIONS.**—The President may not impose sanctions under subsection (a) with respect to any person for conducting or facilitating a transaction for the sale of agricultural commodities, food, medicine, or medical devices to Iran or for the provision of humanitarian assistance to the people of Iran.

“(e) **WAIVER.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The President may waive the application of subsection (a) with respect to a person for a period of not more than 180 days, and may renew that waiver for additional periods of not more than 180 days, if the President—

“(A) determines that the waiver is important to the national interest of the United States; and

“(B) not less than 15 days after the waiver or the renewal of the waiver, as the case may be, takes effect, submits a report to the appropriate congressional committees on the waiver and the reason for the waiver.

“(2) **FORM OF REPORT.**—Each report submitted under paragraph (1)(B) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

“(f) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

“(1) **FINANCIAL INSTITUTION; IRANIAN FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.**—The terms ‘financial institution’ and ‘Iranian financial institution’ have the meanings given those terms in section 104A(d) of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8513b(d)).

“(2) **TRANSACTION.**—The term ‘transaction’ includes a foreign exchange swap, a foreign exchange forward, and any other type of currency exchange or conversion or derivative instrument.”

(b) **ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS.**—Section 2 of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act (22 U.S.C. 8701) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) as paragraphs (5), (6), and (9), respectively;

(2) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) **ACCOUNT; CORRESPONDENT ACCOUNT; PAYABLE-THROUGH ACCOUNT.**—The terms ‘account’, ‘correspondent account’, and ‘payable-through account’ have the meanings given those terms in section 5318A of title 31, United States Code.

“(2) **AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY.**—The term ‘agricultural commodity’ has the meaning given that term in section 102 of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 (7 U.S.C. 5602).

“(3) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term ‘appropriate congressional committees’ has the meaning given that term in section 14 of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note).

“(4) **DOMESTIC FINANCIAL INSTITUTION; FOREIGN FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.**—The terms ‘domestic financial institution’ and ‘foreign financial institution’ have the meanings determined by the Secretary of the Treasury pursuant to section 104(i) of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8513(i)).”; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (6), as redesignated by paragraph (1), the following:

“(7) MEDICAL DEVICE.—The term ‘medical device’ has the meaning given the term ‘device’ in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).”

“(8) MEDICINE.—The term ‘medicine’ has the meaning given the term ‘drug’ in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321).”

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents for the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 is amended by striking the items relating to sections 222, 223, and 224 and inserting the following:

“Sec. 222. Imposition of sanctions with respect to transactions in foreign currencies with certain sanctioned persons.

“Subtitle C—Other Matters

“Sec. 231. Sense of Congress and rule of construction relating to certain authorities of State and local governments.

“Sec. 232. Government Accountability Office report on foreign entities that invest in the energy sector of Iran or export refined petroleum products to Iran.

“Sec. 233. Reporting on the importation to and exportation from Iran of crude oil and refined petroleum products.”

SEC. 916. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON PROSPECTIVE SANCTIONS.

It is the sense of Congress that, if additional sanctions are imposed pursuant to this title and the Government of Iran continues to pursue an illicit nuclear weapons program, Congress should pursue additional stringent sanctions on Iran, such as sanctions on entities providing the Government of Iran access to assets of the Government of Iran held outside Iran, sanctions on Iran's energy sector, including its natural gas sector, and sanctions on entities providing certain underwriting, insurance, or reinsurance to the Government of Iran.

Subtitle B—Enforcement of Sanctions

SEC. 921. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE PROVISION OF SPECIALIZED FINANCIAL MESSAGING SERVICES TO THE CENTRAL BANK OF IRAN AND OTHER SANCTIONED IRANIAN FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the President has been engaged in intensive diplomatic efforts to ensure that sanctions against Iran are imposed and maintained multilaterally to sharply restrict the access of the Government of Iran to the global financial system;

(2) the European Union is to be commended for strengthening the multilateral sanctions regime against Iran by prohibiting all persons subject to the jurisdiction of the European Union from providing specialized financial messaging services to the Central Bank of Iran and other sanctioned Iranian financial institutions;

(3) in order to continue to sharply restrict access by Iran to the global financial system, the President and the European Union must continue to expeditiously address any judicial, administrative, or other decisions in their respective jurisdictions that might weaken the current multilateral sanctions regime, including decisions regarding the designation of financial institutions and global specialized financial messaging service providers for sanctions; and

(4) existing restrictions on the access of Iran to global specialized financial messaging services should be maintained.

SEC. 922. INCLUSION OF TRANSFERS OF GOODS, SERVICES, AND TECHNOLOGIES TO STRATEGIC SECTORS OF IRAN FOR PURPOSES OF IDENTIFYING DESTINATIONS OF DIVERSION CONCERN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 302(b) of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8542(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) in clause (ii), by striking “; or” and inserting a semicolon;

(ii) in clause (iii), by striking “; and” and inserting “; or”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(iv) strategic sectors; and”; and

(B) in subparagraph (C)(ii), by striking “; or” and inserting a semicolon;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) that will be sold, transferred, or otherwise made available to a strategic sector of Iran.”

(b) STRATEGIC SECTOR DEFINED.—Section 301 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8541) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (14) as paragraph (15); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (13) the following:

“(14) STRATEGIC SECTOR.—The term ‘strategic sector’ has the meaning given that term in section 1244(c)(4) of the Iran Freedom and Counter-Proliferation Act of 2012.”

(c) SUBMISSION OF REPORT.—Section 302(a) of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8542(a)) is amended by striking “180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act” and inserting “90 days after the date of the enactment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014”.

SEC. 923. AUTHORIZATION OF ADDITIONAL MEASURES WITH RESPECT TO DESTINATIONS OF DIVERSION CONCERN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 303(c) of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8543(c)) is amended—

(1) by striking “Not later than” and inserting the following:

“(1) LICENSING REQUIREMENT.—Not later than”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) ADDITIONAL MEASURES.—The President may—

“(A) impose restrictions on United States foreign assistance or measures authorized under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) with respect to a country designated as a Destination of Diversion Concern under subsection (a) if the President determines that those restrictions or measures would prevent the diversion of goods, services, and technologies described in section 302(b) to Iranian end-users or Iranian intermediaries; or

“(B) prohibit the issuance of a license under section 38 of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2778) for the export to such a country of a defense article or defense service for which a notification to Congress would be required under section 36(b) of that Act (22 U.S.C. 2776(b)).

“(3) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014, and every 90 days thereafter, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report—

“(A) identifying countries that have allowed the diversion through the country of

goods, services, or technologies described in section 302(b) to Iranian end-users or Iranian intermediaries during the 180-day period preceding the submission of the report;

“(B) identifying the persons that engaged in such diversion during that period; and

“(C) describing the activities relating to diversion in which those countries and persons engaged.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 303 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8543) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c), in the subsection heading, by striking “LICENSING REQUIREMENT” and inserting “LICENSING AND OTHER MEASURES”; and

(2) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “subsection (c)” and inserting “subsection (c)(1)”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “subsection (c)” and inserting “subsection (c)(1)”; and

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking “is it” and inserting “it is”.

SEC. 924. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON INCREASED STAFFING FOR AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAN.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) when the President submits the President's budget for fiscal year 2015 to Congress under section 1105(a) of title 31, United States Code, the President should, in that budget, prioritize—

(A) resources for the Office of Foreign Assets Control for the Department of Treasury dedicated to the implementation and enforcement of sanctions with respect to Iran; and

(B) resources for the Department of State dedicated to the implementation and enforcement of sanctions with respect to Iran; and

(2) the appropriate committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives should prioritize the resources described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (1) during consideration of authorization and appropriations legislation in future fiscal years.

Subtitle C—Implementation of Sanctions

SEC. 931. SUSPENSION OF SANCTIONS TO FACILITATE A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION.

(a) SUSPENSION OF NEW SANCTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may suspend the application of sanctions imposed under this title or amendments made by this title for a 180-day period beginning on the earlier of the date of the enactment of this Act or the date on which the President submits a notification described in paragraph (5) to the appropriate congressional committees, if the President makes the certification described in paragraph (2) to the appropriate congressional committees every 30 days during that period.

(2) CERTIFICATION DESCRIBED.—A certification described in this paragraph is a certification that—

(A) Iran is complying with the provisions of the Joint Plan of Action and any agreement to implement the Joint Plan of Action;

(B) Iran has agreed to specific and verifiable measures to implement the Joint Plan of Action;

(C) Iran is transparently, verifiably, and fully implementing the Joint Plan of Action and any agreement to implement the Joint Plan of Action;

(D) Iran has not breached the terms of or any commitment made pursuant to the Joint Plan of Action or any agreement to implement the Joint Plan of Action;

(E) Iran is proactively and in good faith engaged in negotiations toward a final agreement or arrangement to terminate its illicit nuclear activities, related weaponization activities, and any other nuclear activity not required for a civilian nuclear program;

(F) the United States is working toward a final agreement or arrangement that will dismantle Iran's illicit nuclear infrastructure to prevent Iran from achieving a nuclear weapons capability and permit daily verification, monitoring, and inspections of suspect facilities in Iran so that an effort by Iran to produce a nuclear weapon would be quickly detected;

(G) any suspension of or relief from sanctions provided to Iran pursuant to the Joint Plan of Action is temporary, reversible, and proportionate to the specific and verifiable measures taken by Iran with respect to terminating its illicit nuclear program and related weaponization activities;

(H) Iran has not directly, or through a proxy, supported, financed, planned, or otherwise carried out an act of terrorism against the United States or United States persons or property anywhere in the world;

(I) Iran has not conducted any tests for ballistic missiles with a range exceeding 500 kilometers; and

(J) the suspension of sanctions is vital to the national security interests of the United States.

(3) RENEWAL OF SUSPENSION.—Following the 180-day period described in paragraph (1), the President may renew a suspension of sanctions under that paragraph for 2 additional periods of not more than 30 days if, for each such renewal, the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees—

(A) a certification described in paragraph (2) that covers the 30 days preceding the certification; and

(B) a certification that a final agreement or arrangement with Iran to fully and verifiably terminate its illicit nuclear program and related weaponization activities is imminent and that Iran will, pursuant to that agreement or arrangement, dismantle its illicit nuclear infrastructure to preclude a nuclear breakout capability and other capabilities critical to the production of nuclear weapons.

(4) TERMINATION OF SUSPENSION OF EXISTING SANCTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Any sanctions deferred, waived, or otherwise suspended by the President pursuant to the Joint Plan of Action or any agreement to implement the Joint Plan of Action, including sanctions suspended under this section and sanctions relating to precious metals, petrochemicals, Iran's automotive sector, and sanctions pursuant to section 1245 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8513a), shall be reinstated immediately if—

(i) during the 180-day period described in paragraph (1), the President does not submit a certification every 30 days pursuant to that paragraph; or

(ii) the President does not renew the suspension of sanctions pursuant to paragraph (3);

(iii) Iran breaches its commitments under either the Joint Plan of Action or a final agreement or arrangement described in subsection (b)(1); or

(iv) no final arrangement or agreement is reached with Iran by the earlier of the date that is 240 days after—

(I) the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(II) the date on which the President submits a notification described in paragraph (5)

to the appropriate congressional committees.

(B) WAIVER.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The President may waive the reinstatement of any sanction under subparagraph (A)(iii) for periods of not more than 30 days during the period specified in clause (ii) if, for each such waiver, the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees—

(I) a notification of the waiver;

(II) a certification described in paragraph (2) that covers the 30 days preceding the certification;

(III) a certification that the waiver is vital to the national security interests of the United States with respect to the dismantlement of Iran's illicit nuclear weapons program; and

(IV) a detailed report on the status of the negotiations with the Government of Iran on a final agreement or arrangement to terminate its illicit nuclear program and related weaponization activities, including an assessment of prospects for and the expected timeline to reach such an agreement or arrangement.

(ii) PERIOD SPECIFIED.—The period specified in this clause is the period that begins on the date of the enactment of this Act and ends on the earlier of the date that is one year after—

(I) such date of enactment; or

(II) the date on which the President submits a notification described in paragraph (5) to the appropriate congressional committees.

(5) NOTIFICATION RELATING TO AGREEMENT TO IMPLEMENT JOINT PLAN OF ACTION.—Not later than 3 days after Iran has agreed to specific and verifiable measures to implement the Joint Plan of Action, the President shall notify the appropriate congressional committees of that agreement.

(b) SUSPENSION FOR A FINAL AGREEMENT OR ARRANGEMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Unless a joint resolution of disapproval is enacted pursuant to subsection (c), the President may suspend the application of sanctions imposed under this title or amendments made by this title for a one-year period if the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the United States and its allies have reached a final and verifiable agreement or arrangement with Iran that will—

(A) dismantle Iran's illicit nuclear infrastructure, including enrichment and reprocessing capabilities and facilities, the heavy water reactor and production plant at Arak, and any nuclear weapon components and technology, so that Iran is precluded from a nuclear breakout capability and prevented from pursuing both uranium and plutonium pathways to a nuclear weapon;

(B) bring Iran into compliance with all United Nations Security Council resolutions related to Iran's nuclear program, including Resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007), 1803 (2008), 1835 (2008), and 1929 (2010), with a view toward bringing to a satisfactory conclusion the Security Council's consideration of matters relating to Iran's nuclear program;

(C) resolve all issues of past and present concern with the International Atomic Energy Agency, including possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program;

(D) permit continuous, around the clock, on-site inspection, verification, and monitoring of all suspect facilities in Iran, including installation and use of any compliance verification equipment requested by the International Atomic Energy Agency, so

that any effort by Iran to produce a nuclear weapon would be quickly detected; and

(E) require Iran's full implementation of and compliance with the Agreement between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards in Connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, done at Vienna June 19, 1973, including modified Code 3.1 of the Subsidiary Arrangements to that Agreement and ratification and implementation of the Protocol Additional to that Agreement, done at Vienna December 18, 2003; and

(F) requires Iran's implementation of measures in addition to the Protocol Additional that include verification by the International Atomic Energy Agency of Iran's centrifuge manufacturing facilities, including raw materials and components, and Iran's uranium mines and mills.

(2) RENEWAL OF SUSPENSION.—The President may renew the suspension of sanctions pursuant to paragraph (1) for additional one-year periods if, for each such renewal, the President—

(A) certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that Iran is complying with the terms of the final arrangement or agreement, including by—

(i) dismantling Iran's illicit nuclear infrastructure, including enrichment and reprocessing capabilities and facilities, and the heavy water reactor and production plant at Arak, so that Iran is prevented from pursuing both uranium and plutonium pathways to a nuclear weapon;

(ii) permitting continuous, around the clock, on-site inspection, verification, and monitoring of all suspect facilities in Iran, including installation and use of any compliance verification equipment requested by the International Atomic Energy Agency, so that any effort by Iran to produce a nuclear weapon would be quickly detected;

(iii) resolving all issues of past and present concern with the International Atomic Energy Agency, including possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program;

(iv) remaining in full compliance with all United Nations Security Council resolutions related to Iran's nuclear program, including Resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007), 1803 (2008), 1835 (2008), and 1929 (2010);

(v) fully implementing and complying with the Agreement between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards in Connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, done at Vienna June 19, 1973, including modified Code 3.1 of the Subsidiary Arrangements to that Agreement and ratification and implementation of the Protocol Additional to that Agreement, done at Vienna December 18, 2003; and

(vi) implementing measures, in addition to the Protocol Additional, that include verification by the International Atomic Energy Agency of Iran's centrifuge manufacturing facilities, including raw materials and components, and Iran's uranium mines and mills; and

(B) submits to the appropriate congressional committees with the certification under subparagraph (A) a detailed report describing the actions taken by Iran to comply with the terms of the final arrangement or agreement.

(c) JOINT RESOLUTION OF DISAPPROVAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In this subsection, the term "joint resolution of disapproval" means only a joint resolution of the 2 Houses of Congress, the sole matter after the resolving clause of which is as follows: "That Congress

disapproves of the suspension of sanctions imposed with respect to Iran under section 931(b)(1) of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act of 2014 pursuant to the certification of the President submitted to Congress under that section on _____, with the blank space being filled with the appropriate date.

(2) PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERING RESOLUTIONS.—

(A) INTRODUCTION.—A joint resolution of disapproval—

(i) may be introduced in the House of Representatives or the Senate during the 15-day period beginning on the date on which the President submits a certification under subsection (b)(1) to the appropriate congressional committees;

(ii) in the House of Representatives, may be introduced by the Speaker or the minority leader or a Member of the House designated by the Speaker or minority leader;

(iii) in the Senate, may be introduced by the majority leader or minority leader of the Senate or a Member of the Senate designated by the majority leader or minority leader; and

(iv) may not be amended.

(B) REFERRAL TO COMMITTEES.—A joint resolution of disapproval introduced in the Senate shall be referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and a joint resolution of disapproval in the House of Representatives shall be referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

(C) COMMITTEE DISCHARGE AND FLOOR CONSIDERATION.—The provisions of subsections (c) through (f) of section 152 of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2192) (relating to committee discharge and floor consideration of certain resolutions in the House of Representatives and the Senate) apply to a joint resolution of disapproval under this subsection to the same extent that such subsections apply to joint resolutions under such section 152, except that—

(i) subsection (c)(1) shall be applied and administered by substituting “10 days” for “30 days”; and

(ii) subsection (f)(1)(A)(i) shall be applied and administered by substituting “Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs” for “Committee on Finance”.

(3) RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE.—This subsection is enacted by Congress—

(A) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate and the House of Representatives, respectively, and as such is deemed a part of the rules of each House, respectively, but applicable only with respect to the procedure to be followed in that House in the case of a joint resolution, and it supersedes other rules only to the extent that it is inconsistent with such rules; and

(B) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either House to change the rules (so far as relating to the procedure of that House) at any time, in the same manner and to the same extent as in the case of any other rule of that House.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “appropriate congressional committees” has the meaning given that term in section 14 of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note).

(2) JOINT PLAN OF ACTION.—The term “Joint Plan of Action” means the Joint Plan of Action, signed at Geneva November 24, 2013, by Iran and by France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the People’s Republic of China, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

(3) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term “United States person” has the meaning

given that term in section 101 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8511).

Subtitle D—General Provisions

SEC. 941. EXCEPTION FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION.

The President may provide for an exception from the imposition of sanctions under the provisions of or amendments made by this title for reconstruction assistance or economic development for Afghanistan—

(1) to the extent that the President determines that such an exception is in the national interest of the United States; and

(2) if, not later than 15 days before issuing the exception, the President submits a notification of and justification for the exception to the appropriate congressional committees (as defined in section 14 of the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note)).

SEC. 942. EXCEPTION FOR IMPORT RESTRICTIONS.

No provision of or amendment made by this title authorizes or requires the President to impose sanctions relating to the importation of goods.

SEC. 943. APPLICABILITY TO CERTAIN INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES.

Nothing in this title or the amendments made by this title shall apply to the authorized intelligence activities of the United States.

SEC. 944. APPLICABILITY TO CERTAIN NATURAL GAS PROJECTS.

Nothing in this title or any amendment made by this title shall be construed to apply with respect to any activity relating to a project described in subsection (a) of section 603 of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8783) to which the exception under that section applies at the time of the activity.

SEC. 945. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION WITH RESPECT TO THE USE OF FORCE AGAINST IRAN.

Nothing in this title or the amendments made by this title shall be construed as a declaration of war or an authorization of the use of force against Iran.

SA 2753. Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 367, after line 14, add the following:

SEC. 918. PROTECTION OF INDIVIDUALS ELIGIBLE FOR INCREASED PENSION UNDER LAWS ADMINISTERED BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ON BASIS OF NEED FOR REGULAR AID AND ATTENDANCE.

(a) DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STANDARDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall work with the heads of Federal agencies, States, and such experts as the Secretary considers appropriate to develop and implement Federal and State standards that protect individuals from dishonest, predatory, or otherwise unlawful practices relating to increased pension available to such individuals under chapter 15 of title 38, United States Code, on the basis of need for regular aid and attendance.

(2) SUBMITTAL TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the

Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives the standards developed under paragraph (1).

(b) CONDITIONAL RECOMMENDATION BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—If the Secretary does not, on or before the date that is 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives standards that are developed under subsection (a)(1), the Comptroller General of the United States shall, not later than the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, submit to such committees a report containing standards that the Comptroller General determines are standards that would be effective in protecting individuals as described in such subsection.

(c) STUDY BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—Not later than 540 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall complete a study on standards implemented under this section to protect individuals as described in subsection (a)(1) and submit to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of the House of Representatives a report containing the findings of the Comptroller General with respect to such study.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2014, at 9 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2014, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Reauthorizing Tria: The State of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Market, Part II.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on February 25, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room 430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled “Examining Mental Health: Treatment Options and Trends.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office

Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Nominations."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2014, at 2 p.m., to conduct a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs for the legislative presentation of the Disabled American Veterans

The Committee will meet in room 345 of the Cannon House Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION, CIVIL RIGHTS, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Human Rights, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2014, at 2:30 p.m., in room SH-216 of the Hart Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Reassessing Solitary Confinement II: The Human Rights, Fiscal, and Public Safety Consequences."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2014, at 3:30 p.m., to hold a Near Eastern and South and Central Asian Affairs subcommittee

hearing entitled, "Lebanon at the Crossroads."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Oversight of the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 25, 2014, at 2 p.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing, entitled, "Natural Resource Adaptation: Protecting ecosystems and economies."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE NATIONAL INTEGRATED DROUGHT INFORMATION SYSTEM

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 307, H.R. 2431.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2431) to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I further ask that the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 2431) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2014

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it

adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 26, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business for 2 hours, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half; and that following morning business, the Senate resume the motion to proceed to S. 982, the veterans' benefits bill, postcloture; further, that all time during adjournment and morning business count postcloture on the motion to proceed to S. 982.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:34 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, February 26, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate February 25, 2014:

THE JUDICIARY

JAMES DONATO, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA.

BETH LABSON FREEMAN, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA.

JAMES MAXWELL MOODY, JR., OF ARKANSAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, February 25, 2014

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 25, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ANDY HARRIS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

UMITA AND UMRA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about H.R. 899, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act, which will be considered by the House later this week. I realize, Mr. Speaker, that this name doesn't come trippingly off the tongue, but it is an important piece of legislation.

Every year, Federal agencies impose thousands of regulatory mandates on local governments and small businesses. Those mandates are often costly, stretching city and State budgets and making it harder for businesses in North Carolina and around the country to grow and add jobs.

UMITA will force Washington to think much more carefully about regulatory costs before passing them on to

small businesses and local governments. This bill will ensure that regulations are enacted only when the benefits to be gleaned by a rule outweigh the costs imposed by the rule.

Ultimately, this bill is about transparency and accountability, something Democrats and Republicans can support with equal fervor.

Mr. Speaker, I began the process of writing this legislation in 2007. Knowing that it takes a lot of creativity and hard work to pass legislation, I sat down with my staff to think about legislative ideas that could gain sufficient bipartisan support to be enacted.

We started looking at the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995, which cleared a Republican Congress before being signed by President Clinton. UMRA was a model for bipartisan legislating, so we looked to it for ideas.

The guiding principle of UMRA was that the American people would be better served by a government that regulates only on the basis of good information, including a cost-benefit analysis. UMRA was a good bill, but over time, shortcomings have become apparent. Multiple administrations over the past 19 years have attempted to fix loopholes in UMRA via executive actions.

Additionally, independent regulatory agencies have become far more prevalent in the intervening years, so it is very important to make sure they are bound by the same transparency requirements as other regulatory bodies.

To address these issues, we drafted the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act. UMITA will codify these executive fixes and fix some currently unaddressed loopholes to make sure that Federal agencies are in compliance with the spirit of UMRA.

Mr. Speaker, like UMRA, UMITA is bipartisan legislation. Three out of four cosponsors are Democrats. This bill has gained bipartisan support because it is purely about good government, fostering openness and honesty about the cost of regulations. Specifically, UMITA will require government's independent regulatory agencies to analyze the cost of their proposed mandates before they are imposed on the public; treat "changes to conditions of grant aid" as mandates, guarantee the public always has the opportunity to weigh in on regulations; and equip Congress and the American people with better tools to determine the true cost of regulations.

Finally, H.R. 899 will ensure government is held accountable for following these rules. If the requirements set for

by UMRA and UMITA are not met, a judicial stay may be placed upon regulations.

UMITA is a bipartisan solution to a bipartisan problem: unaccountable Federal agencies damaging our economy with poorly considered regulations.

I look forward to broad support from my colleagues from both sides of the aisle when it is considered on Friday.

REMINGTON TO ALABAMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, last week the Tennessee Valley of north Alabama enjoyed a great economic victory when Remington Outdoor Company announced 2,000 new jobs and a new firearms manufacturing plant in the valley.

Last month, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo declared that hardworking Americans who believe in the Second Amendment's right to bear arms "have no place in the State of New York because that's not who New Yorkers are."

No question, Alabama and the Tennessee Valley owe a debt of gratitude to New York and its Governor Cuomo for helping to inspire Remington to expand in Alabama, but to be fair, New York's hostility to the Second Amendment is only one factor supporting Remington's Alabama expansion. The most important factor is that Alabama is simply a better place to do business.

New York's income tax rates are roughly 60 percent higher than Alabama's, which means Alabama's hardworking citizens keep more of the money they earn.

New York's per capita property tax rates are roughly four times higher than those in Alabama, which means Huntsville metro citizens are twice as likely to own a home as New Yorkers.

New York's business tax burden is the 50th worst in America, while Alabama's is a respectable 21st.

New York residents are 25 percent more likely to live in poverty than Huntsville metro citizens. Out of 50 States, Alabama's long-term solvency is 5th best in America, and its overall fiscal condition is 10th best. New York's financial condition is near the bottom, ranking 45th in each category.

Alabama's financial future is bright. New York increasingly risks being unable to pay for basic services.

New York workers average commuting 78 minutes a day to and from

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

work versus 36 minutes a day for Huntsville metro citizens. Tennessee Valley citizens have more time to spend with their families and the enjoyment of life.

In Alabama, the cost of living is 11 percent below the national average. In New York, the cost of living is 25 percent above the national average. A paycheck in Alabama buys 40 percent more than the same paycheck in New York.

Alabama's right-to-work law means that Alabamians cannot be forced to join a union against their will. Whether it be our right-to-work law or the Second Amendment right to bear arms, Alabama's motto says it all: "We dare defend our rights."

Beating out New York was only half the battle for Remington's plant. Alabama faced stiff competition from 24 other States; yet, in the judgment of Remington, the Tennessee Valley was the best place to live, work, and grow their business.

Why? The Tennessee Valley is highly educated. For example, Huntsville metro has the highest per capita concentration of engineers in America. Huntsville and Madison County are ranked number seven in America by CNN Money as "a great place to live and find a job," number four in America by the Progressive Policy Institute on the list of America's high-tech hot spots, in the top 10 in America by USA Today as a great place to be inspired by innovation, number three in America by business facilities for aerospace and defense manufacturing, and in the top 10 in America by Family Circle magazine for being a great place to raise a family.

The Tennessee Valley is blessed with a clean environment and four major lakes with world-renowned fishing and water sports, lakes that stretch the entire length of the Tennessee Valley.

Unlike New York and other blue States, in Alabama, envy, greed, and class warfare are not political weapons that justify attacking, taxing, and destroying success. To the contrary, in Alabama, we applaud those who, through hard work, find prosperity and the American Dream.

In Alabama, we are blessed with a great Governor in Robert Bentley. We are blessed with political leaders in Jackson, Marshall, Madison, Limestone, Morgan, Lawrence, Colbert, and Lauderdale Counties who support free enterprise and are cooperative and willing to help each other achieve success, attributes that were critical to Remington's concluding that the Tennessee Valley was the best place in America for Remington to grow and prosper.

Thanks to Remington, Americans will soon be able to exercise their Second Amendment rights by buying and owning firearms made in the great State of Alabama.

Thank you, Remington.

As for all you other businesses in blue States who are tired of being attacked and regulated and taxed into submission and financial loss, come on down. There is a reason why Remington chose Alabama and a reason why we are called "Alabama, the Beautiful."

Try Alabama. I promise you will like it and wonder why you didn't come sooner.

ROBERT NEWTON LOWRY, A TRUE AMERICAN HERO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. DENHAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the life of a true American hero, Robert Newton Lowry, on his 95th birthday. Bob was born on this day, February 25, 1919, 95 years ago, here in Washington, D.C. He considers Modesto, California, his home.

For high school, Mr. Lowry attended Manlius School, a military school in upstate New York. He graduated at the top of his class and was named an ROTC honor grad. Bob also received a commission to the United States Army, but, unfortunately, he was too young to accept it at the time.

He then was admitted to Princeton University. During his time there, he received the prestigious New York Herald Book Award. He graduated in 1942 with highest honors, summa cum laude and ROTC. These honors earned him another commission, this time to the United States Marine Corps as a second lieutenant. In July 1942, following Officer Candidate School at Quantico, he began artillery training.

In February of 1943, Bob sailed out of San Diego Harbor with the 2nd Battalion, 12th Regiment of the Third Marine Division. He joined the fighting in the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific, first in Guadalcanal, then the original invasions of Bougainville, Guam, and Iwo Jima.

During his time in Auckland, New Zealand, Bob met his wife, Lieutenant Commander Mary Dudley. They married in May of 1946. Mary died in April 2005, just 2 weeks before their 60th anniversary. Mary always maintained that, as lieutenant commander, she outranked him both in the military service and in their marriage. They are survived by two children, Robert Dudley Lowry and Ann Lowry-Perez, as well as four grandchildren: Sam and Joe Lowry, and Michael and Lowry Champion.

After the battle of Iwo Jima, Bob returned stateside to Norfolk, Virginia, where he commanded a Marine guard company at the naval station. He was soon appointed commanding officer of the Europa, a 100-man Marine detachment sent to Europe to provide secu-

rity for a seized German luxury liner. Bob was one of the few Marine Corps officers to manage the commissioning of this kind of Navy vessel.

Bob was released from Active Duty in January 1946 and retired from the Marines in 1959 with the rank of major. Following his time in the Marines, he enrolled in law school at the University of Virginia in a postwar accelerated program, graduating in 1948.

Bob then began a lifetime of specialty law practice, primarily in public utility and transportation. His career started first with the Southern Railway and then progressed to his work at a law firm in Washington, D.C.

In 1953, Bob accepted a position with Brobeck, Phleger & Harrison, a renowned law firm in San Francisco, from which he retired in 1989. He has greatly enjoyed the company of the Marine Corps League, the Modesto Detachment, whose members regularly go out of their way to include him, to celebrate his service, as well as they are doing his 95th birthday celebration.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Robert Newton Lowry on his unwavering dedication and contributions to this great Nation.

□ 1215

THE DIVINE NINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as we observe the final week of Black History Month, I would like to recognize the Divine Nine historically Black fraternities and sororities of the National Pan-Hellenic Council.

For over 100 years, brothers and sisters of the Divine Nine have played an instrumental role in altering the course of American history, and the Divine Nine have served as training grounds for some of our Nation's best and brightest leaders.

The Divine Nine Organizations are:

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, founded in 1866 at Cornell University. Their brotherhood includes the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; Congressmen EMANUEL CLEAVER, DANNY DAVIS, CHAKA FATTAH, AL GREEN, GREGORY MEEKS, CHARLES RANGEL, DAVID SCOTT, and BOBBY SCOTT; Ambassador Andrew Jackson Young; the National Urban League president, Marc Morial; legal pioneers Charles Hamilton Houston and Thurgood Marshall; and their honorable grand president, Mark S. Tillman.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, founded in 1908 at Howard University. Their sisterhood proudly boasts Congresswomen SHEILA JACKSON LEE, EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, TERRI SEWELL, and FREDERICA WILSON; actress Phylicia Rashad of "The Cosby Show"; author Maya Angelou; civil rights leaders Rosa

Parks and Coretta Scott King; and their honorable president attorney, Carolyn House Stuart.

Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, founded in 1911 at Indiana University. Among their notable achievers are Microsoft chairman and CEO, John W. Thompson; civil rights leader the Reverend Ralph Abernathy; founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus, the Reverend Delegate Walter Fauntroy; Congressmen SANFORD BISHOP, WILLIAM LACY CLAY, JOHN CONYERS, ALCEE HASTINGS, BENNIE THOMPSON, and HAKEEM JEFFRIES; and Grand Polemarch William "Randy" Bates.

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, founded in 1911 at Howard University. They include in their ranks Assistant House Democratic Leader JAMES CLYBURN of South Carolina; Congressman HANK JOHNSON of Georgia; NASA Administrator Charles Bolden; comedian Bill Cosby; Dr. Charles Drew, whose medical research in the field of blood transfusions led to the founding of the blood bank; and their honorable grand basileus, Dr. Andrew Ray.

Delta Sigma Theta, founded in 1913 at Howard University. Delta counts as sisters my esteemed colleague and chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, the Honorable MARCIA L. FUDGE; also Congresswomen YVETTE CLARKE and JOYCE BEATTY; Shirley Chisolm, the first African American woman elected to Congress; former Secretary of Labor Alexis Herman; and their honorable president, Paulette C. Walker.

Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, founded in 1914 at Howard University. Not only are the Sigmas the fraternity of my husband, Dr. Nathaniel Horn, they also include former President of the United States William Jefferson Clinton; Congressman JOHN LEWIS; A. Phillip Randolph, civil rights pioneer and leader of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters; Dr. George Washington Carver; and their Honorable President, Jonathan Mason.

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, founded in 1920 at Howard University. Notable sisters include author Zora Neale Hurston; jazz great Sarah Vaughan; the late Congresswoman Julia Carson; and their honorable president, Mary Breaux Wright.

Sigma Gamma Rho, my sorority, founded in 1922 at Butler University. The sisters of Sigma Gamma Rho include Congresswoman CORRINE BROWN of Florida and the late Congresswoman Lindy Boggs; the first African American winner of an Academy Award, Hattie McDaniel; and our esteemed grand basileus, Bonita Herring.

Finally, Iota Phi Theta, founded in 1963 at Morgan State University. Their notables include Congressman BOBBY RUSH; Billy Ocasio, former alderman to Chicago's 26th Ward and current adviser to Governor Pat Quinn; and their honorable grand polaris, Robert Clark.

Whether it has been standing up for women's suffrage, advancing civil rights by dismantling Jim Crow, advancing the science of medicine, or leading in business innovation, the Divine Nine has been there the entire time leading from the front.

The Divine Nine's scope of service is felt far beyond their organizational borders. The work of these fraternities and sororities has helped to make this Nation a better place for all Americans. For this, and many other reasons, I thank the entire Divine Nine for a job well done.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 19 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As we meditate on all the blessings of life, we especially pray for the blessing of peace in our lives and in our world. Our fervent prayer, O God, is that people will learn to live together in reconciliation and respect, so that the terrors of war and of dictatorial abuse will be no more.

In a special way, we ask Your blessing upon the people of Ukraine. May peace and civility descend upon that nation as it finds itself in political turmoil.

May Your special blessings be upon the Members of this assembly as they return from a week in their home districts. Give them wisdom and charity, that they might work together for the common good.

May all that is done this day in the people's House be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr.

BUTTERFIELD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

THE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH RATE FORMULA

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, in just a little bit over a month's time, the Nation's physicians will face a 25 percent reduction in payment in the Medicare system. This severely affects access for Medicare patients and is something that could be resolved.

Two weeks ago, for the first time, introduced in the House, H.R. 4015 was a compromise agreement between Republicans and Democrats, House and Senate, on a way forward for repealing the sustainable growth rate formula.

It does represent a compromise and is not going to please everyone, but it is a significant achievement and was marked by an editorial piece in *The Wall Street Journal* on February 19 titled "Fixing the 'Doc Fix.'"

In the *Journal's* editorial, they note that the Senate Finance, House Ways and Means, and Energy and Commerce Committees don't agree on much, but they are doing a service by agreeing to end this charade known as the SGR.

They go on to note that "doctors hate the uncertainty of the SGR." That is an understatement. Every Member of this House has heard from their physicians back home about how much they hate this formula.

They go on to say, "Absent reform, one way or another the money is going to be spent, and Congress can either continue to do so in incremental doc-fix slices or admit in advance that it was always going to do it."

In fact, the time has come. It is within our power. We should repeal the SGR and pass H.R. 4015.

APPLAUDING THE MORAL MONDAY PROTESTS

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, on February 8, more than 80,000 North Carolinians rallied outside the State capitol building in Raleigh to protest the extreme policies of North California Republican Governor Pat McCrory and the Republican-led legislature.

North Carolina Republicans have cut education funding to the bone, denied a half-million people access to health care by refusing to expand Medicaid,

and are trying to silence North Carolina citizens by making it harder to vote.

Mr. Speaker, these policies are making life difficult, and North Carolinians have had enough. North Carolina Republican leaders must not continue to sacrifice the common good of millions to benefit an elite few.

We need to increase funding for education and job training, expand health care access, and guarantee the right to vote.

I applaud the Moral Monday protests and all those who support a better way to govern.

HONORING DR. NEHEMIAH DAVIS' 50TH ANNIVERSARY AS PASTOR OF MOUNT PISGAH MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Reverend Nehemiah Davis on his 50th anniversary as pastor of the historic Mount Pisgah Baptist Church. The church is in my hometown of Fort Worth, Texas, located on Evans Avenue, on the historical South Side.

While this year marks Dr. Davis' 50th year as pastor of Mount Pisgah, I would also like to congratulate him on his installation as president of the National Missionary Baptist Convention of America.

Pastor Davis' dedication to the church and to his community is exceeded only by his devotion to his wife, Dorothy Nell Cole Davis, and his two daughters, Carol Michelle Davis Jackson and Nina Caron Davis, who have given Dr. Davis two grandkids.

Mr. Speaker, Pastor Davis has lived his entire life giving service to the community and preaching the faith, and he wanted everyone here to know today that out of all the things that he has accomplished over his lifetime, that he is also very proud of his domino-playing skills.

I ask my distinguished colleagues of the 113th Congress to join me in honoring Pastor Davis on his 50th anniversary as pastor of Mount Pisgah Missionary Baptist Church, as well as an exemplary life of service.

CONDITIONS IN SOUTH SUDAN

(Mr. WOLF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, this picture depicts South Sudanese women in a food distribution line. Another desperate woman at the fore is hunched over barbed wire.

Violence, displacement, and starvation plague the world's newest nation, but that doesn't have to be so.

Months ago, I wrote the Obama administration urging that they invite former President George W. Bush and the Bush Institute to engage in the crisis, given that President Bush had forged lasting relationships with South Sudanese leaders during the negotiation of peace in 2005.

The Obama administration, perhaps constrained by pride, has failed to act, and the very nation the U.S. helped birth is perishing in its infancy.

TROOP REDUCTION THREATENS NATIONAL SECURITY

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel outlined a proposal yesterday calling for a troop reduction that will shrink our Army to its smallest size since World War II began in 1939.

This decision is sad proof that the President's priorities will threaten the strength of our military at a time of worldwide instability as al Qaeda and its affiliates develop safe havens across North Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia with an intent to destroy America.

This past week, I participated in a delegation led by Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman ED ROYCE to Asia. In Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines, we met national leaders who are building their militaries to face the rising threats and promoting peace through strength.

Efficiencies must be made to maintain our end strength. The President has misplaced priorities and chosen to place our brave men and women in uniform on the chopping block in order to spend more money promoting Big Government dependency. National defense is the first duty of the national government, as promoted by the Military Officers Association of America.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

LET'S MAKE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LEANER, MORE EFFICIENT, AND MORE ACCOUNTABLE

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, during our most recent constituent listening tour, I had the opportunity to speak with over 1,000 Kansans, many who continue to voice their frustration with a Federal Government that seems to create more problems than it fixes and builds too many barriers to success for those working to realize the American Dream.

Mr. Speaker, the House must continue to pass legislation that helps reg-

ular, average, working American people. Despite the entrenched Washington interests, we must remove the Big Government barriers that are slowing the drive and ingenuity of our great Nation.

We must pursue a robust, all-of-the-above energy policy that increases domestic energy production, making us less dependent on foreign sources of energy, keeping energy prices down for American families, and putting tens of thousands of Americans back to work.

We must reform the Tax Code that is riddled with exemptions and loopholes and is unfair to the average American worker. We must put forward patient-centered reforms to our health care system that spur competition, quality of care innovation, and cost reduction.

Mr. Speaker, we must make our Federal Government leaner, more efficient, and more accountable to the American people.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO CUBA AND OF THE EMERGENCY AUTHORITY RELATING TO THE REGULATION OF THE ANCHORAGE AND MOVEMENT OF VESSELS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113-92)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM) laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the national emergency declared on March 1, 1996, with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, as amended and expanded on February 26, 2004, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2014.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 25, 2014.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1502

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee) at 3 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

FOIA OVERSIGHT AND
IMPLEMENTATION ACT OF 2014

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1211) to amend section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Freedom of Information Act), to provide for greater public access to information, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1211

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "FOIA Oversight and Implementation Act of 2014" or the "FOIA Act".

SEC. 2. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT AMENDMENTS.

(a) ELECTRONIC ACCESSIBILITY.—Section 552 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking "for public inspection and copying" and inserting "in an electronic, publicly accessible format" each place it appears;

(ii) by striking ";; and" and inserting a semicolon;

(iii) by striking subparagraph (E) and inserting the following new subparagraphs:

"(E) copies of all releasable records, regardless of form or format, that have been requested three or more times under paragraph (3); and

"(F) a general index of the records referred to under subparagraphs (D) and (E);"; and

(iv) in the matter following subparagraph (F) (as added by clause (ii) of this subparagraph)—

(I) by striking "subparagraph (D)" and inserting "subparagraphs (D) and (E)"; and

(II) by striking "subparagraph (E)" and inserting "subparagraph (F)"; and

(B) in paragraph (7)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking "that will take longer than ten days to process"; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by inserting "automated" after "provides";

(2) in subsection (g), by striking "make publicly available upon request" and inserting "make available in an electronic, publicly accessible format"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(m) FOIA WEB SITE REQUIRED.—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this subsection, the Office of Management and Budget shall ensure the existence and operation of a single website, accessible by the public at no cost to access, that allows the public to—

"(1) submit requests for records under subsection (a)(3);

"(2) receive automated information about the status of a request under subsection (a)(7); and

"(3) file appeals.".

(b) PRESUMPTION OF OPENNESS.—Section 552(b) of title 5, United States Code, is amended in the matter following paragraph (9), by inserting before "Any reasonably segregable portion" the following: "An agency may not withhold information under this subsection unless such agency reasonably foresees that disclosure would cause specific identifiable harm to an interest protected by an exemption, or if disclosure is prohibited by law.".

(c) THE OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES.—Section 552 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(4)(A)(i), by striking "the Director of the Office of Management and Budget" and inserting "the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Government Information Services,"; and

(2) by amending subsection (h) to read as follows:

"(h) THE OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES.—

"(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the Office of Government Information Services within the National Archives and Records Administration. The head of the Office is the Director of the Office of Government Information Services.

"(2) REVIEW OF FOIA POLICY, PROCEDURE, AND COMPLIANCE.—The Office of Government Information Services shall—

"(A) review policies and procedures of agencies under this section;

"(B) review compliance with this section by agencies;

"(C) identify methods that improve compliance under this section that may include—

"(i) the timely processing of requests submitted to agencies under this section;

"(ii) the system for assessing fees and fee waivers under this section; and

"(iii) the use of any exemption under subsection (b); and

"(D) review and provide guidance to agencies on the use of fees and fee waivers.

"(3) MEDIATION SERVICES.—The Office of Government Information Services shall offer mediation services to resolve disputes between persons making requests under this section and agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation and, at the discretion of the Office, may issue advisory opinions if mediation has not resolved the dispute.

"(4) SUBMISSION OF REPORT.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Office of Government Information Services shall not less than annually submit to the committees described in subparagraph (C) and the President a report on the findings from the information reviewed and identified under paragraph (2), a summary of the Office's activities under paragraph (3) (including any advisory opinions issued), and legislative and regulatory recommendations to improve the administration of this section.

"(B) ELECTRONIC AVAILABILITY OF REPORTS.—The Office shall make available any

report submitted under paragraph (A) in a publicly accessible format.

"(C) CONGRESSIONAL SUBMISSION OF REPORT.—The committees described in this subparagraph are the following:

"(i) The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives.

"(ii) The Committees on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Judiciary of the Senate.

"(D) DIRECT SUBMISSION OF REPORTS AND TESTIMONY.—Any report submitted under paragraph (A), any testimony, or any other communication to Congress shall be submitted directly to the committees and the President, without any requirement that any officer or employee outside of the Office of Government Information Services, including the Archivist of the United States and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, review such report, testimony, or other communication.

"(5) SUBMISSION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—The Director of the Office of Government Information Services may submit additional information to Congress and the President that the Director determines to be appropriate.

"(6) ANNUAL MEETING REQUIRED.—Not less than once a year, the Office of Government Information Services shall hold a meeting that is open to the public on the review and reports by the Office and permit interested persons to appear and present oral or written statements at such meeting.".

(d) PUBLIC RESOURCES.—Section 552(a)(6)(A) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking "of such determination and the reasons therefor, and of the right of such person to appeal to the head of the agency any adverse determination; and" and inserting the following: "of—

"(I) such determination and the reasons therefor;

"(II) the right of such person to seek assistance from the agency FOIA Public Liaison; and

"(III) the right of such person to appeal to the head of the agency any adverse determination, within a period determined by the agency that is not less than 90 days after the receipt of such adverse determination; and"; and

(2) in clause (ii), by striking the period and inserting the following: "and the right of such person to seek dispute resolution services from the agency FOIA Public Liaison or the Office of Government Information Services.".

(e) ADDITIONAL DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS.—Section 552(a) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

"(8) DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION FOR INCREASED PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE GOVERNMENT.—Each agency shall—

"(A) review the records of such agency to determine whether the release of the records would be in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the Government;

"(B) for records determined to be in the public interest under subparagraph (A), reasonably segregate and redact any information exempted from disclosure under subsection (b); and

"(C) make available in an electronic, publicly accessible format, any records identified in subparagraph (A), as modified pursuant to subparagraph (B).

"(9) INCREASED DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.—Each agency shall—

“(A) make information public to the greatest extent possible through modern technology to—

“(i) inform the public of the operations and activities of the Government; and

“(ii) ensure timely disclosure of information; and

“(B) establish procedures for identifying categories of records that may be disclosed regularly and additional records of interest to the public that are appropriate for public disclosure, and for posting such records in an electronic, publicly accessible format.”.

(f) **REPORT ON CATEGORIES OF INFORMATION FOR DISCLOSURE.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every two years thereafter, the Director of the Office of Information Policy of the Department of Justice, after consultation with agencies selected by the Director, shall submit to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Judiciary of the Senate a report that identifies categories of records that would be appropriate for proactive disclosure, and shall make such report available in an electronic, publicly accessible format.

(g) **AGENCY FOIA REPORT.**—Section 552(e) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by inserting “and to the Director of the Office of Government Information Services” after “the Attorney General of the United States”;

(B) in subparagraph (N), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(C) in subparagraph (O), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon; and

(D) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

“(P) the number of times the agency invoked a law enforcement exclusion under subsection (c);

“(Q) the number of times the agency engaged in dispute resolution with the assistance of the Office of Government Information Services or the FOIA Public Liaison;

“(R) the number of records that were made available in an electronic, publicly accessible format under subsection (a)(2); and

“(S) the number of times the agency assessed a search or duplication fee under subsection (a)(4)(A) and did not comply with a time limit under subsection (a)(6).”;

(2) by amending paragraph (3) to read as follows:

“(3) **ELECTRONIC ACCESSIBILITY OF REPORTS.**—Each agency shall make each such report available in an electronic, publicly accessible format. In addition, each agency shall make the raw statistical data used in its reports available in a timely manner in an electronic, publicly accessible format. Such data shall be—

“(A) made available without charge, license, or registration requirement;

“(B) capable of being searched and aggregated; and

“(C) permitted to be downloaded and downloaded in bulk.”;

(3) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking “Committee on Government Reform and Oversight” and inserting “Committee on Oversight and Government Reform”;

(B) by striking “Governmental Affairs” and inserting “Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs”; and

(C) by striking “April 1” and inserting “March 1”;

(4) in paragraph (5)—

(A) by inserting “and the Director of the Office of Government Information Services”

after “the Director of the Office of Management and Budget”; and

(B) by striking “by October 1, 1997”; and

(5) by amending paragraph (6) to read as follows:

“(6) **ATTORNEY GENERAL FOIA REPORT.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Attorney General of the United States shall submit to Congress and the President an annual report on or before March 1 of each calendar year which shall include for the prior calendar year—

“(i) a listing of the number of cases arising under this section;

“(ii) each subsection under this section, each paragraph of the subsection, and any exemption, if applicable, involved in each case, the disposition of such case, and the cost, fees, and penalties assessed under subparagraphs (E), (F), and (G) of subsection (a)(4); and

“(iii) a description of the efforts undertaken by the Department of Justice to encourage agency compliance with this section.

“(B) **ELECTRONIC AVAILABILITY.**—The Attorney General of the United States—

“(i) shall make each report described under subparagraph (A) available in an electronic, publicly accessible format; and

“(ii) shall make the raw statistical data used in each report available in an electronic, publicly accessible format, which shall be—

“(I) made available without charge, license, or registration requirement;

“(II) capable of being searched and aggregated; and

“(III) permitted to be downloaded, including downloaded in bulk.”.

(h) **SEARCH OR DUPLICATION FEES.**—Section 552(a)(4)(A)(viii) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: “Any agency that does assess search or duplication fees after failing to comply with a time limit under paragraph (6) shall provide written notice to the requester of the circumstance that justifies the fees. If an agency fails to provide such notice, the agency may not assess search or duplication fees.”.

(i) **GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE.**—Subsection (i) of section 552 of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(i) **GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE.**—The Government Accountability Office shall—

“(1) conduct audits of administrative agencies on compliance with and implementation of the requirements of this section and issue reports detailing the results of such audits;

“(2) catalog the number of exemptions under subsection (b)(3) and agency use of such exemptions; and

“(3) review and prepare a report on the processing of requests by agencies for information pertaining to an entity that has received assistance under title I of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 (12 U.S.C. 5211 et seq.) during any period in which the Government owns or owned more than 50 percent of the stock of such entity.”.

(j) **CHIEF FOIA OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES; COUNCIL; REVIEW.**—Section 552 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking subsections (j) and (k); and

(2) by inserting after subsection (i), the following new subsections:

“(j) **CHIEF FOIA OFFICER.**—

“(1) **DESIGNATION.**—Each agency shall designate a Chief FOIA Officer who shall be a senior official of such agency (at the Assistant Secretary or equivalent level).

“(2) **DUTIES.**—The Chief FOIA Officer of each agency shall, subject to the authority of the head of the agency—

“(A) have agency-wide responsibility for efficient and appropriate compliance with this section;

“(B) monitor implementation of this section throughout the agency and keep the head of the agency, the chief legal officer of the agency, and the Attorney General appropriately informed of the agency’s performance in implementing this section;

“(C) recommend to the head of the agency such adjustments to agency practices, policies, personnel, and funding as may be necessary to improve its implementation of this section;

“(D) review and report to the Attorney General, through the head of the agency, at such times and in such formats as the Attorney General may direct, on the agency’s performance in implementing this section;

“(E) facilitate public understanding of the purposes of the statutory exemptions of this section by including concise descriptions of the exemptions in both the agency’s handbook issued under subsection (g), and the agency’s annual report on this section, and by providing an overview, where appropriate, of certain general categories of agency records to which those exemptions apply;

“(F) serve as the primary agency liaison with the Office of Government Information Services and the Office of Information Policy; and

“(G) designate one or more FOIA Public Liaisons.

“(3) **COMPLIANCE REVIEW REQUIRED.**—The Chief FOIA Officer of each agency shall—

“(A) review, not less than annually, all aspects of the agency’s administration of this section to ensure compliance with the requirements of this section, including—

“(i) agency regulations;

“(ii) disclosure of records required under paragraphs (2), (8), and (9) of subsection (a);

“(iii) assessment of fees and determination of eligibility for fee waivers;

“(iv) the timely processing of requests for information under this section;

“(v) the use of exemptions under subsection (b); and

“(vi) dispute resolution services with the assistance of the Office of Government Information Services or the FOIA Public Liaison; and

“(B) make recommendations as necessary to improve agency practices and compliance with this section.

“(k) **CHIEF FOIA OFFICERS COUNCIL.**—

“(1) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established in the executive branch the Chief FOIA Officers Council (in this subsection, referred to as the ‘Council’).

“(2) **MEMBERS.**—The Council shall consist of the following members:

“(A) The Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget.

“(B) The Director of the Office of Information Policy at the Department of Justice.

“(C) The Director of the Office of Government Information Services at the National Archives and Records Administration.

“(D) The Chief FOIA Officer of each agency.

“(E) Any other officer or employee of the United States as designated by the Co-Chairs.

“(3) **CO-CHAIRS.**—The Director of the Office of Information Policy at the Department of Justice and the Director of the Office of Government Information Services at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be the Co-Chairs of the Council.

“(4) **SUPPORT SERVICES.**—The Administrator of General Services shall provide administrative and other support for the Council.

“(5) CONSULTATION.—In performing its duties, the Council shall consult regularly with members of the public who make requests under this section.

“(6) DUTIES.—The duties of the Council include the following:

“(A) Develop recommendations for increasing compliance and efficiency under this section.

“(B) Disseminate information about agency experiences, ideas, best practices, and innovative approaches related to this section.

“(C) Identify, develop, and coordinate initiatives to increase transparency and compliance with this section.

“(D) Promote the development and use of common performance measures for agency compliance with this section.

“(7) MEETINGS.—

“(A) REGULAR MEETINGS.—The Council shall meet regularly and such meetings shall be open to the public unless the Council determines to close the meeting for reasons of national security or to discuss information exempt under subsection (b).

“(B) ANNUAL MEETINGS.—Not less than once a year, the Council shall hold a meeting that shall be open to the public and permit interested persons to appear and present oral and written statements to the Council.

“(C) NOTICE.—Not later than 10 business days before a meeting of the Council, notice of such meeting shall be published in the Federal Register.

“(D) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF COUNCIL RECORDS.—Except as provided in subsection (b), the records, reports, transcripts, minutes, appendixes, working papers, drafts, studies, agenda, or other documents that were made available to or prepared for or by the Council shall be made publicly available.

“(E) MINUTES.—Detailed minutes of each meeting of the Council shall be kept and shall contain a record of the persons present, a complete and accurate description of matters discussed and conclusions reached, and copies of all reports received, issued, or approved by the Council.”

(k) REGULATIONS.—

(1) REVISION OF REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the head of each agency shall review the regulations of such agency and shall issue regulations on procedures for the disclosure of records under section 552 of title 5, United States Code, in accordance with the amendments made by this section. The regulations of each agency shall include—

(A) procedures for engaging in dispute resolution; and

(B) procedures for engaging with the Office of Government Information Services.

(2) OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Office of Government Information Services shall submit to Congress a report on agency compliance with the requirements of this subsection.

(3) REPORT ON NONCOMPLIANCE.—The head of any agency that does not meet the requirements of paragraph (1) shall submit to Congress a report on the reason for non-compliance not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(4) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW FOR NON-COMPLIANCE.—Any agency that fails to comply with the requirements of this subsection shall be reviewed by the Office of Inspector General of such agency for compliance with section 552 of title 5, United States Code.

(5) AGENCY DEFINED.—In this section, the term “agency” has the meaning given such

term in section 552(f) of title 5, United States Code.

SEC. 3. PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall establish a pilot program for 3 years to review the benefits of a centralized portal to process requests and release information under section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Freedom of Information Act).

(b) PLAN REQUIRED.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall establish a plan to evaluate the functionality and benefits of a centralized portal to receive and track requests made under section 552 of title 5, United States Code, by selecting no less than 3 agencies that have not previously participated in a centralized portal, including at least one of the following:

(1) An agency that receives more than 30,000 requests annually for information under section 552 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) An agency that receives between 15,000 and 30,000 requests annually for information under such section.

(3) An agency that receives 15,000 or fewer requests annually for information under such section.

(c) AGENCY USE OF WEB SITE.—Each agency selected under subsection (b) shall use the centralized portal to—

(1) receive requests under section 552 of title 5, United States Code;

(2) consult with and refer requests to participating agencies;

(3) if practicable, process requests received under such section;

(4) track the status of requests submitted under such section; and

(5) make records released available publicly through the centralized portal.

(d) REVIEW REQUIRED.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall, in consultation with the Attorney General, the Office of Government Information Services, and the head of each agency participating in the pilot program, review the benefits of a centralized portal, including—

(1) any cost saving, resource saving, or efficiency gained;

(2) any change in the amount of requests received under section 552 of title 5, United States Code;

(3) any increase in transparency and accessibility to Government information; and

(4) any changes in the ability to access and compile information needed for agency annual reports required under section 552 of title 5, United States Code.

(e) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 3 months after the completion of the pilot program, the head of each agency participating in the program—

(1) shall submit to Congress a report on the impact of the pilot program on agency processes under section 552 of title 5, United States Code, whether the agency will continue to participate in the centralized portal, and any recommendations the head of the agency considers appropriate; and

(2) shall make such report available in an electronic, publicly accessible format.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AGENCY.—The term “agency” has the meaning given such term in section 552(f) of title 5, United States Code.

(2) CENTRALIZED PORTAL.—The term “centralized portal” means an electronic online portal that allows a requester to submit a request under section 552 of title 5, United

States Code, to any participating agency, to track the status of a request, and to obtain a response to a request made through the portal.

SEC. 4. INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW; ADVERSE ACTIONS.

(a) INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Inspector General of each agency shall—

(A) periodically review compliance with the requirements of section 552 of title 5, United States Code, including the timely processing of requests, assessment of fees and fee waivers, and the use of exemptions under subsection (b) of such section; and

(B) make recommendations the Inspector General determines to be necessary to the head of the agency, including recommendations for disciplinary action.

(2) AGENCY DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “agency” has the meaning given that term under section 552(f) of title 5, United States Code.

(b) ADVERSE ACTIONS.—The withholding of information in a manner inconsistent with the requirements of section 552 of title 5, United States Code (including any rules, regulations, or other implementing guidelines), as determined by the appropriate supervisor, shall be a basis for disciplinary action in accordance with subchapter I, II, or V of chapter 75 of such title, as the case may be.

SEC. 5. OPEN GOVERNMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Archivist of the United States shall establish an Open Government Advisory Committee (in this section, referred to as the “Committee”), an independent advisory committee to make recommendations for improving Government transparency.

(b) MEMBERSHIP; CHAIR; MEETINGS; QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERS.—The Committee shall be composed of at least nine members appointed by the Archivist, one of whom shall be designated the Chair by the members, and shall meet at such times and places as may be designated by the Chair. Each member of the Committee shall be qualified by education, training, or experience to make recommendations on improving Government transparency. The membership of the Committee shall include—

(1) representatives of the Department of Justice and the Office of Government Information Services;

(2) at least two members with experience requesting information under section 552 of title 5, United States Code (including one member of the news media); and

(3) at least one member with expertise in information technology.

(c) COMPENSATION.—While serving on the business of the Committee, and while so serving away from home and the member's regular place of business, a member may be allowed travel expenses, as authorized by the Archivist.

(d) CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE.—The members of the Committee shall be considered to be special Government employees (as such term is defined in section 202 of title 18, United States Code).

(e) STAFF.—The Archivist may appoint and fix the compensation of such personnel as may be necessary to enable the Committee to carry out its functions. Any personnel of the Committee who are employees shall be employees under section 2105 of title 5, United States Code. Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the Committee without reimbursement from the Committee, and such detailee shall retain the rights, status, and privileges of regular

employment of such employee without interruption.

(f) **APPLICABILITY OF THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.**—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall apply to the Committee and any subcommittee or subgroup thereof.

(g) **DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.**—The Archivist shall make publicly available the following information:

(1) The charter of the Committee.

(2) A description of the process used to establish and appoint the members of the Committee, including the following:

(A) The process for identifying prospective members.

(B) The process of selecting members for balance of viewpoints or expertise.

(C) The reason each member was appointed to the Committee.

(3) A list of all current members, including, for each member, the name of any person or entity that nominated the member.

(4) A summary of the process used by the Committee for making decisions.

(5) A transcript or audio or visual recording of each meeting of the Committee.

(6) Any written determination by the President or the Archivist, pursuant to section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), to close a meeting or any portion of a meeting and the reasons for such determination.

(7) Notices of future meetings of the Committee.

(h) **MANNER OF DISCLOSURE.**—

(1) **WEBSITE PUBLICATION.**—Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Archivist shall make the information required to be disclosed under this section available electronically on the official public website of the National Archives and Records Administration at least 15 calendar days before each meeting of the Committee. If the Archivist determines that such timing is not practicable for any required information, the Archivist shall make the information available as soon as practicable but no later than 48 hours before the next meeting of the Committee.

(2) **AVAILABILITY OF COMMITTEE MEETING.**—The Archivist shall make available electronically, on the official public website of the National Archives and Records Administration, a transcript or audio or video recording of each Committee meeting not later than 30 calendar days after such meeting.

SEC. 6. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act and the amendments made by this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized or appropriated.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 1211, the FOIA Oversight and Implementation Act, or FOIA Act, is a bipartisan bill approved unanimously by the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee last March. I cosponsored the legislation, which Ranking Member ELIJAH CUMMINGS authored.

The bill is a product of the joint effort by our staffs. The legislation has been endorsed by 29 nonpartisan transparency groups, including the Project On Government Oversight, known as POGO, Government in the Sunshine, the Sunlight Foundation, and the American Society of News Editors.

Mr. Speaker, it is critical at this time that the American people believe and actually receive the information that lets them understand what their government is doing.

A key provision of this bill is to codify requirements in a FOIA memorandum issued by President Obama and Attorney General Holder. This includes making the presumption of openness standard the law of the land. That means that an agency can only withhold information if the disclosure of such records would cause foreseeable harm. This shifts the burden of proof from the public requester seeking information about a government agency, with which he must now demonstrate that he has the need to the government being open and transparent, unless it has a good reason to withhold.

The FOIA Act of 2014 also requires an unprecedented level of proactive disclosure. That means that more information will be made available to the public without each individual interested in the information needing to file separate FOIA requests to get it.

Mr. Speaker, in plain English, if one person and then another person or one entity and another entity seem to want to have the same information, rather than the agencies possibly posting it publicly, they will be required to post it publicly, so that which a few agencies want to know or a few private organizations want to know, the entire public would have easy access. Another way of putting it is, if you are going to tell one person that it is reasonable to have public access, then all the public should have easy access to that information.

These proactive disclosure requirements are intended to make the information-sharing a routine part of government. Like the DATA Act passed earlier this year, which the House approved, the FOIA Act requires all information be posted in an electronic, publicly accessible format.

Raw data will be available as the original format so that it can be machine-searched and give the widest ability for the public to have not just access to the letters, but access to the meaning and the cross-meaning of this information.

Under this bill, more agencies will be using technology to increase trans-

parency by processing FOIA requests through a centralized Web portal. Users will submit requests in one location, where agencies can automatically post their response. This kind of one-point access is something the public has long waited for from the Federal Government.

The legislation before the House today modestly amends the committee-reported bill by establishing an Open Government Advisory Committee, housed within the National Archives' Office of Government Information Services. The Open Government Advisory Committee will ensure that reform efforts continue after this bill is enacted.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment to the FOIA law is one of the most important additional accesses to the American people; and I might note with thanks that this is an initiative begun by this administration, by President Obama, that we believe should be there for all times.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman ISSA for sponsoring this bill with me. This bill, if enacted, would be a landmark reform of our most important open government law, the Freedom of Information Act.

This legislation would make significant improvements to the current law, which has not been consistently implemented.

During the Clinton administration, Attorney General Janet Reno adopted a policy under which the Department of Justice would defend an agency's use of a FOIA exemption only when the agency could reasonably foresee that disclosure would harm an interest protected by that exemption.

In the Bush administration, Attorney General John Ashcroft reversed this standard and directed the Justice Department to defend agency decisions to withhold records, as long as they had a legal basis for doing so.

President Obama, to his credit, on his first day in office, directed agencies to implement FOIA with a presumption of openness. Attorney General Holder overturned the Ashcroft standard and reinstated the foreseeable harm standard.

The legislation before us today would codify, in law, this presumption in favor of disclosure, no matter who is President.

Under this bill, an agency would not be allowed to withhold information in response to a FOIA request, unless disclosure is prohibited by law or would cause specific identifiable harm to an interest protected by one of FOIA's exemptions.

This bill also would create an advisory committee to make recommendations to improve government transparency. The President recently endorsed this idea in the Open Government National Action Plan issued by the administration in December of 2013.

This legislation also would create a pilot project to encourage participation in a centralized FOIA portal. A centralized portal, such as FOIAonline, that is run by EPA, allows requesters to use one Webcast to file requests to multiple agencies.

The bill also would strengthen the Office of Government Information Services by enhancing its role in providing guidance to agencies and ensuring that agencies notify requesters of their right to use its mediation services.

The bill would strengthen the independence of this office by allowing it to send testimony and reports directly to Congress without approval from the Office of Management and Budget.

I urge every Member of this body to support this open government legislation by voting for it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We don't often find in this body the kind of consensus behind something that, as the ranking member said, has gone both ways under different Presidents.

I am a proud Republican, but I believe that the order given by President Obama was the right order. The order given by President Bush, perhaps in light of 9/11, perhaps in light of other considerations, might have seemed right at the time.

But let me make something clear today: on our committee, there is unanimity. The American people must have access to all the information, unless there is a specific reason to withhold it.

This requirement under FOIA today will drive the DATA Act and other reforms that will cause information to be likely stored in formats that are easier for agencies to determine that which they must withhold. We think it is important.

Today, legions of people often spend countless hours redacting nothing more than one name or one Social Security number that cannot be found, except by a set of eyes scanning over it.

So, in addition to the American people getting what they are entitled to under this act, we believe that it will drive the kind of innovation automation that actually will save the American people money and cause more information to be available.

Just as census data is critical to our economy, so is access to what your government is doing, planning to do, or thought about, talked about, or did in

the process of making laws, regulations, and rules.

So I join with my colleague in believing that this is a time in which we say this President acted properly in how he ordered something, we believe codifying it, so that no follow-on President could modify it or fail to deliver what this legislation envisions.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I am about to close.

Again, I want to thank Chairman ISSA for his hard work on this. This is so very, very important.

I often tell my constituents, Mr. Speaker, that this is our watch. We are the guardians of the democracy today, and it is important to us to pass on a stronger and a better democracy than the one we found when we came upon this Earth.

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A significant part of any democracy is openness, where people can know what the government is doing. When you have a representative government, people come to the town hall meetings trying to find out what is going on, and now they can go to computers and find out what is going on. We must have as much openness as possible and as is reasonable, and I think that this is a big step in the right direction of preserving that part of the democracy that calls for transparency.

So I agree with the chairman. This is so much bigger than us. This is not just about this moment. This is about generations yet unborn. This is about people trying simply to be a part of their democracy, who are trying to understand it, who are trying to use information so that they can be participants in it. If they do not know what is going on, it is kind of hard to participate. If they do not know what is going on, it is kind of hard to go to their representatives to urge them to make appropriate changes.

So, with that, I urge all of the Members of this body to vote in favor of this legislation.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, as I close, I want to thank my partner in this legislation, Mr. CUMMINGS.

In order to get this kind of legislation, you do need to make sure that you have dotted the i's, and I believe we have done so. The minor modification that was made between the time it left the committee and the floor is one that was done on a bipartisan basis. Were this to go back to our committee, of course it would pass unanimously. Therefore, I urge all Members to vote "yes" on H.R. 1211—to support the bill, to support freedom, to support the opportunity for the American people to know.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1211, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

FEDERAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION REFORM ACT

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1232) to amend titles 40, 41, and 44, United States Code, to eliminate duplication and waste in information technology acquisition and management, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1232

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act".

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title.
- Sec. 2. Table of contents.
- Sec. 3. Definitions.

TITLE I—MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WITHIN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- Sec. 101. Increased authority of agency Chief Information Officers over information technology.
- Sec. 102. Lead coordination role of Chief Information Officers Council.
- Sec. 103. Reports by Government Accountability Office.

TITLE II—DATA CENTER OPTIMIZATION

- Sec. 201. Purpose.
- Sec. 202. Definitions.
- Sec. 203. Federal data center optimization initiative.
- Sec. 204. Performance requirements related to data center consolidation.
- Sec. 205. Cost savings related to data center optimization.
- Sec. 206. Reporting requirements to Congress and the Federal Chief Information Officer.

TITLE III—ELIMINATION OF DUPLICATION AND WASTE IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION

- Sec. 301. Inventory of information technology software assets.
- Sec. 302. Website consolidation and transparency.
- Sec. 303. Transition to the cloud.

Sec. 304. Elimination of unnecessary duplication of contracts by requiring business case analysis.

TITLE IV—STRENGTHENING AND STREAMLINING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Subtitle A—Strengthening and Streamlining IT Program Management Practices

Sec. 401. Pilot program on interagency collaboration.

Sec. 402. Designation of assisted acquisition centers of excellence.

Subtitle B—Strengthening IT Acquisition Workforce

Sec. 411. Expansion of training and use of information technology acquisition cadres.

Sec. 412. Plan on strengthening program and project management performance.

Sec. 413. Personnel awards for excellence in the acquisition of information systems and information technology.

TITLE V—ADDITIONAL REFORMS

Sec. 501. Maximizing the benefit of the Federal strategic sourcing initiative.

Sec. 502. Governmentwide software purchasing program.

Sec. 503. Promoting transparency of blanket purchase agreements.

Sec. 504. Additional source selection technique in solicitations.

Sec. 505. Enhanced transparency in information technology investments.

Sec. 506. Enhanced communication between government and industry.

Sec. 507. Clarification of current law with respect to technology neutrality in acquisition of software.

Sec. 508. No additional funds authorized.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **CHIEF ACQUISITION OFFICERS COUNCIL.**—The term “Chief Acquisition Officers Council” means the Chief Acquisition Officers Council established by section 1311(a) of title 41, United States Code.

(2) **CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER.**—The term “Chief Information Officer” means a Chief Information Officer (as designated under section 3506(a)(2) of title 44, United States Code) of an agency listed in section 901(b) of title 31, United States Code.

(3) **CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICERS COUNCIL.**—The term “Chief Information Officers Council” or “CIO Council” means the Chief Information Officers Council established by section 3603(a) of title 44, United States Code.

(4) **DIRECTOR.**—The term “Director” means the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

(5) **FEDERAL AGENCY.**—The term “Federal agency” means each agency listed in section 901(b) of title 31, United States Code.

(6) **FEDERAL CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER.**—The term “Federal Chief Information Officer” means the Administrator of the Office of Electronic Government established under section 3602 of title 44, United States Code.

(7) **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY OR IT.**—The term “information technology” or “IT” has the meaning provided in section 11101(6) of title 40, United States Code.

(8) **RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term “relevant congressional committees” means each of the following:

(A) The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Committee on

Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

(B) The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate.

TITLE I—MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WITHIN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

SEC. 101. INCREASED AUTHORITY OF AGENCY CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICERS OVER INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.

(a) **PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENT OF CIOs OF CERTAIN AGENCIES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 11315 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by redesignating subsection (a) as subsection (e) and moving such subsection to the end of the section; and

(B) by inserting before subsection (b) the following new subsection (a):

“(a) **PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENT OR DESIGNATION OF CERTAIN CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICERS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—There shall be within each agency listed in section 901(b)(1) of title 31 an agency Chief Information Officer. Each agency Chief Information Officer shall—

“(A)(i) be appointed by the President; or

“(ii) be designated by the President, in consultation with the head of the agency; and

“(B) be appointed or designated, as applicable, from among individuals who possess demonstrated ability in general management of, and knowledge of and extensive practical experience in, information technology management practices in large governmental or business entities.

“(2) **RESPONSIBILITIES.**—An agency Chief Information Officer appointed or designated under this section shall report directly to the head of the agency and carry out, on a full-time basis, responsibilities as set forth in this section and in section 3506(a) of title 44 for Chief Information Officers designated under paragraph (2) of such section.”.

(2) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 3506(a)(2) of title 44, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by striking “(A) Except as provided under subparagraph (B), the head of each agency” and inserting “The head of each agency, other than an agency with a Presidentially appointed or designated Chief Information Officer as provided in section 11315(a)(1) of title 40,”; and

(B) by striking subparagraph (B).

(b) **AUTHORITY RELATING TO BUDGET AND PERSONNEL.**—Section 11315 of title 40, United States Code, is further amended by inserting after subsection (c) the following new subsection:

“(d) **ADDITIONAL AUTHORITIES FOR CERTAIN CIOs.**—

“(1) **BUDGET-RELATED AUTHORITY.**—

“(A) **PLANNING.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the head of each agency listed in section 901(b)(1) or 901(b)(2) of title 31 and in section 102 of title 5 shall ensure that the Chief Information Officer of the agency has the authority to participate in decisions regarding the budget planning process related to information technology or programs that include significant information technology components.

“(B) **ALLOCATION.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, amounts appropriated for any agency listed in section 901(b)(1) or 901(b)(2) of title 31 and in section 102 of title 5 for any fiscal year that are available for information technology shall be allocated within the agency, consistent with the provisions of appropriations Acts and budget guidelines and recommendations from the

Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in such manner as specified by, or approved by, the Chief Information Officer of the agency in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer of the agency and budget officials.

“(2) **PERSONNEL-RELATED AUTHORITY.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the head of each agency listed in section 901(b)(1) or 901(b)(2) of title 31 shall ensure that the Chief Information Officer of the agency has the authority necessary to approve the hiring of personnel who will have information technology responsibilities within the agency and to require that such personnel have the obligation to report to the Chief Information Officer in a manner considered sufficient by the Chief Information Officer.”.

(c) **SINGLE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER IN EACH AGENCY.**—

(1) **REQUIREMENT.**—Section 3506(a)(3) of title 44, United States Code, is amended—

(A) by inserting “(A)” after “(3)”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(B) Each agency shall have only one individual with the title and designation of ‘Chief Information Officer’. Any bureau, office, or subordinate organization within the agency may designate one individual with the title ‘Deputy Chief Information Officer’, ‘Associate Chief Information Officer’, or ‘Assistant Chief Information Officer’.”.

(2) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—Section 3506(a)(3)(B) of title 44, United States Code, as added by paragraph (1), shall take effect as of October 1, 2014. Any individual serving in a position affected by such section before such date may continue in that position if the requirements of such section are fulfilled with respect to that individual.

SEC. 102. LEAD COORDINATION ROLE OF CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICERS COUNCIL.

(a) **LEAD COORDINATION ROLE.**—Subsection (d) of section 3603 of title 44, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(d) **LEAD INTERAGENCY FORUM.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Council is designated the lead interagency forum for improving agency coordination of practices related to the design, development, modernization, use, operation, sharing, performance, and review of Federal Government information resources investment. As the lead interagency forum, the Council shall develop cross-agency portfolio management practices to allow and encourage the development of cross-agency shared services and shared platforms. The Council shall also issue guidelines and practices for infrastructure and common information technology applications, including expansion of the Federal Enterprise Architecture process if appropriate. The guidelines and practices may address broader transparency, common inputs, common outputs, and outcomes achieved. The guidelines and practices shall be used as a basis for comparing performance across diverse missions and operations in various agencies.

“(2) **REPORT.**—Not later than December 1 in each of the 6 years following the date of the enactment of this paragraph, the Council shall submit to the relevant congressional committees a report (to be known as the ‘CIO Council Report’) summarizing the Council’s activities in the preceding fiscal year and containing such recommendations for further congressional action to fulfill its mission as the Council considers appropriate.

“(3) **RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—For purposes of the report required by paragraph (2), the relevant congressional committees are each of the following:

“(A) The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

“(B) The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate.”.

(b) **ADDITIONAL FUNCTION.**—Subsection (f) of section 3603 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(8) Assist the Administrator in developing and providing guidance for effective operations of the Federal Infrastructure and Common Application Collaboration Center authorized under section 11501 of title 40.”.

(c) **REFERENCES TO ADMINISTRATOR OF E-GOVERNMENT AS FEDERAL CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER.**—

(1) **REFERENCES.**—Section 3602(b) of title 44, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following: “The Administrator may also be referred to as the Federal Chief Information Officer.”.

(2) **DEFINITION.**—Section 3601(1) of such title is amended by inserting “or Federal Chief Information Officer” before “means”.

SEC. 103. REPORTS BY GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE.

(a) **REQUIREMENT TO EXAMINE EFFECTIVENESS.**—The Comptroller General of the United States shall examine the effectiveness of the Chief Information Officers Council in meeting its responsibilities under section 3603(d) of title 44, United States Code, as added by section 102, with particular focus on—

(1) whether agencies are actively participating in the Council and heeding the Council’s advice and guidance; and

(2) whether the Council is actively using and developing the capabilities of the Federal Infrastructure and Common Application Collaboration Center authorized under section 11501 of title 40, United States Code, as added by section 401.

(b) **REPORTS.**—Not later than 1 year, 3 years, and 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the relevant congressional committees a report containing the findings and recommendations of the Comptroller General from the examination required by subsection (a).

TITLE II—DATA CENTER OPTIMIZATION

SEC. 201. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this title is to optimize Federal data center usage and efficiency.

SEC. 202. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) **FEDERAL DATA CENTER OPTIMIZATION INITIATIVE.**—The term “Federal Data Center Optimization Initiative” or the “Initiative” means the initiative developed and implemented by the Director, through the Federal Chief Information Officer, as required under section 203.

(2) **COVERED AGENCY.**—The term “covered agency” means any agency included in the Federal Data Center Optimization Initiative.

(3) **DATA CENTER.**—The term “data center” means a closet, room, floor, or building for the storage, management, and dissemination of data and information, as defined by the Federal Chief Information Officer under guidance issued pursuant to this section.

(4) **FEDERAL DATA CENTER.**—The term “Federal data center” means any data center of a covered agency used or operated by a covered agency, by a contractor of a covered agency, or by another organization on behalf of a covered agency.

(5) **SERVER UTILIZATION.**—The term “server utilization” refers to the activity level of a

server relative to its maximum activity level, expressed as a percentage.

(6) **POWER USAGE EFFECTIVENESS.**—The term “power usage effectiveness” means the ratio obtained by dividing the total amount of electricity and other power consumed in running a data center by the power consumed by the information and communications technology in the data center.

SEC. 203. FEDERAL DATA CENTER OPTIMIZATION INITIATIVE.

(a) **REQUIREMENT FOR INITIATIVE.**—The Federal Chief Information Officer, in consultation with the chief information officers of covered agencies, shall develop and implement an initiative, to be known as the Federal Data Center Optimization Initiative, to optimize the usage and efficiency of Federal data centers by meeting the requirements of this Act and taking additional measures, as appropriate.

(b) **REQUIREMENT FOR PLAN.**—Within 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Chief Information Officer, in consultation with the chief information officers of covered agencies, shall develop and submit to Congress a plan for implementation of the Initiative required by subsection (a) by each covered agency. In developing the plan, the Federal Chief Information Officer shall take into account the findings and recommendations of the Comptroller General review required by section 205(e).

(c) **MATTERS COVERED.**—The plan shall include—

(1) descriptions of how covered agencies will use reductions in floor space, energy use, infrastructure, equipment, applications, personnel, increases in multiorganizational use, server virtualization, cloud computing, and other appropriate methods to meet the requirements of the initiative; and

(2) appropriate consideration of shifting Federally owned data center workload to commercially owned data centers.

SEC. 204. PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO DATA CENTER CONSOLIDATION.

(a) **SERVER UTILIZATION.**—Each covered agency may use the following methods to achieve the maximum server utilization possible as determined by the Federal Chief Information Officer:

(1) The closing of existing data centers that lack adequate server utilization, as determined by the Federal Chief Information Officer. If the agency fails to close such data centers, the agency shall provide a detailed explanation as to why this data center should remain in use as part of the submitted plan. The Federal Chief Information Officer shall include an assessment of the agency explanation in the annual report to Congress.

(2) The consolidation of services within existing data centers to increase server utilization rates.

(3) Any other method that the Federal Chief Information Officer, in consultation with the chief information officers of covered agencies, determines necessary to optimize server utilization.

(b) **POWER USAGE EFFECTIVENESS.**—Each covered agency may use the following methods to achieve the maximum energy efficiency possible as determined by the Federal Chief Information Officer:

(1) The use of the measurement of power usage effectiveness to calculate data center energy efficiency.

(2) The use of power meters in facilities dedicated to data center operations to frequently measure power consumption over time.

(3) The establishment of power usage effectiveness goals for each data center.

(4) The adoption of best practices for managing—

(A) temperature and airflow in facilities dedicated to data center operations; and

(B) power supply efficiency.

(5) The implementation of any other method that the Federal Chief Information Officer, in consultation with the Chief Information Officers of covered agencies, determines necessary to optimize data center energy efficiency.

SEC. 205. COST SAVINGS RELATED TO DATA CENTER OPTIMIZATION.

(a) **REQUIREMENT TO TRACK COSTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Each covered agency shall track costs resulting from implementation of the Federal Data Center Optimization Initiative within the agency and submit a report on those costs annually to the Federal Chief Information Officer. Covered agencies shall determine the net costs from data consolidation on an annual basis.

(2) **FACTORS.**—In calculating net costs each year under paragraph (1), a covered agency shall use the following factors:

(A) Energy costs.

(B) Personnel costs.

(C) Real estate costs.

(D) Capital expense costs.

(E) Maintenance and support costs such as operating subsystem, database, hardware, and software license expense costs.

(F) Other appropriate costs, as determined by the agency in consultation with the Federal Chief Information Officer.

(b) **REQUIREMENT TO TRACK SAVINGS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Each covered agency shall track realized and projected savings resulting from implementation of the Federal Data Center Optimization Initiative within the agency and submit a report on those savings annually to the Federal Chief Information Officer. Covered agencies shall determine the net savings from data consolidation on an annual basis.

(2) **FACTORS.**—In calculating net savings each year under paragraph (1), a covered agency shall use the following factors:

(A) Energy savings.

(B) Personnel savings.

(C) Real estate savings.

(D) Capital expense savings.

(E) Maintenance and support savings such as operating subsystem, database, hardware, and software license expense savings.

(F) Other appropriate savings, as determined by the agency in consultation with the Federal Chief Information Officer.

(3) **PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.**—The Federal Chief Information Officer shall make publicly available a summary of realized and projected savings for each covered agency. The Federal Chief Information Officer shall identify any covered agency that failed to provide the annual report required under paragraph (1).

(c) **REQUIREMENT TO USE COST-EFFECTIVE MEASURES.**—Covered agencies shall use the most cost-effective measures to implement the Federal Data Center Optimization Initiative, such as using estimation to measure or track costs and savings using a methodology approved by the Federal Chief Information Officer.

(d) **GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REVIEW.**—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall examine methods for calculating savings from the Initiative and using them for the purposes identified in subsection (d), including establishment and use of a special revolving

fund that supports data centers and server optimization, and shall submit to the Federal Chief Information Officer and Congress a report on the Comptroller General's findings and recommendations.

SEC. 206. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS TO CONGRESS AND THE FEDERAL CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER.

(a) AGENCY REQUIREMENT TO REPORT TO CIO.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), each covered agency each year shall submit to the Federal Chief Information Officer a report on the implementation of the Federal Data Center Optimization Initiative, including savings resulting from such implementation. The report shall include an update of the agency's plan for implementing the Initiative.

(2) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—The Secretary of Defense shall comply with paragraph (1) each year by submitting to the Federal Chief Information Officer a report with relevant information collected under section 2867 of Public Law 112-81 (10 U.S.C. 2223a note) or a copy of the report required under section 2867(d) of such law.

(b) FEDERAL CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER REQUIREMENT TO REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Each year, the Federal Chief Information Officer shall submit to the relevant congressional committees a report that assesses agency progress in carrying out the Federal Data Center Optimization Initiative and updates the plan under section 203. The report may be included as part of the annual report required under section 3606 of title 44, United States Code.

TITLE III—ELIMINATION OF DUPLICATION AND WASTE IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION

SEC. 301. INVENTORY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SOFTWARE ASSETS.

(a) PLAN.—The Director shall develop a plan for conducting a Governmentwide inventory of information technology software assets.

(b) MATTERS COVERED.—The plan required by subsection (a) shall cover the following:

(1) The manner in which Federal agencies can achieve the greatest possible economies of scale and cost savings in the procurement of information technology software assets, through measures such as reducing the procurement of new software licenses until such time as agency needs exceed the number of existing and unused licenses.

(2) The capability to conduct ongoing Governmentwide inventories of all existing software licenses on an application-by-application basis, including duplicative, unused, overused, and underused licenses, and to assess the need of agencies for software licenses.

(3) A Governmentwide spending analysis to provide knowledge about how much is being spent for software products or services to support decisions for strategic sourcing under the Federal strategic sourcing program managed by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy.

(c) AVAILABILITY.—The inventory of information technology software assets shall be available to Chief Information Officers and such other Federal officials as the Chief Information Officers may, in consultation with the Chief Information Officers Council, designate.

(d) DEADLINE AND SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director shall complete and submit to Congress the plan required by subsection (a).

(e) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this

Act, the Director shall complete implementation of the plan required by subsection (a).

(f) REVIEW BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—Not later than two years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall review the plan required by subsection (a) and submit to the relevant congressional committees a report on the review.

SEC. 302. WEBSITE CONSOLIDATION AND TRANSPARENCY.

(a) WEBSITE CONSOLIDATION.—The Director shall—

(1) in consultation with Federal agencies, and after reviewing the directory of public Federal Government websites of each agency (as required to be established and updated under section 207(f)(3) of the E-Government Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-347; 44 U.S.C. 3501 note)), assess all the publicly available websites of Federal agencies to determine whether there are duplicative or overlapping websites; and

(2) require Federal agencies to eliminate or consolidate those websites that are duplicative or overlapping.

(b) WEBSITE TRANSPARENCY.—The Director shall issue guidance to Federal agencies to ensure that the data on publicly available websites of the agencies are open and accessible to the public.

(c) MATTERS COVERED.—In preparing the guidance required by subsection (b), the Director shall—

(1) develop guidelines, standards, and best practices for interoperability and transparency;

(2) identify interfaces that provide for shared, open solutions on the publicly available websites of the agencies; and

(3) ensure that Federal agency Internet home pages, web-based forms, and web-based applications are accessible to individuals with disabilities in conformance with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794d).

(d) DEADLINE FOR GUIDANCE.—The guidance required by subsection (b) shall be issued not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 303. TRANSITION TO THE CLOUD.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that transition to cloud computing offers significant potential benefits for the implementation of Federal information technology projects in terms of flexibility, cost, and operational benefits.

(b) GOVERNMENTWIDE APPLICATION.—In assessing cloud computing opportunities, the Chief Information Officers Council shall define policies and guidelines for the adoption of Governmentwide programs providing for a standardized approach to security assessment and operational authorization for cloud products and services.

(c) ADDITIONAL BUDGET AUTHORITIES FOR TRANSITION.—In transitioning to the cloud, a Chief Information Officer of an agency listed in section 901(b) of title 31, United States Code, may establish such cloud service Working Capital Funds, in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer of the agency, as may be necessary to transition to cloud-based solutions. Any establishment of a new Working Capital Fund under this subsection shall be reported to the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Senate and relevant Congressional committees.

SEC. 304. ELIMINATION OF UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION OF CONTRACTS BY REQUIRING BUSINESS CASE ANALYSIS.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to leverage the Government's buying

power and achieve administrative efficiencies and cost savings by eliminating unnecessary duplication of contracts.

(b) REQUIREMENT FOR BUSINESS CASE APPROVAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 33 of title 41, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“§3312. Requirement for business case approval for new Governmentwide contracts.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—An executive agency may not issue a solicitation for a covered Governmentwide contract unless the agency performs a business case analysis for the contract and obtains an approval of the business case analysis from the Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy.

“(b) REVIEW OF BUSINESS CASE ANALYSIS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—With respect to any covered Governmentwide contract, the Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy shall review the business case analysis submitted for the contract and provide an approval or disapproval within 60 days after the date of submission. Any business case analysis not disapproved within such 60-day period is deemed to be approved.

“(2) BASIS FOR APPROVAL OF BUSINESS CASE.—The Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy shall approve or disapprove a business case analysis based on the adequacy of the analysis submitted. The Administrator shall give primary consideration to whether an agency has demonstrated a compelling need that cannot be satisfied by existing Governmentwide contract in a timely and cost-effective manner.

“(c) CONTENT OF BUSINESS CASE ANALYSIS.—The Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy shall issue guidance specifying the content for a business case analysis submitted pursuant to this section. At a minimum, the business case analysis shall include details on the administrative resources needed for such contract, including an analysis of all direct and indirect costs to the Federal Government of awarding and administering such contract and the impact such contract will have on the ability of the Federal Government to leverage its purchasing power.

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) COVERED GOVERNMENTWIDE CONTRACT.—The term ‘covered Governmentwide contract’ means any contract, blanket purchase agreement, or other contractual instrument for acquisition of information technology or other goods or services that allows for an indefinite number of orders to be placed under the contract, agreement, or instrument, and that is established by one executive agency for use by multiple executive agencies to obtain goods or services. The term does not include—

“(A) a multiple award schedule contract awarded by the General Services Administration;

“(B) a Governmentwide acquisition contract for information technology awarded pursuant to sections 11302(e) and 11314(a)(2) of title 40;

“(C) orders under Governmentwide contracts in existence before the effective date of this section; or

“(D) any contract in an amount less than \$10,000,000, determined on an average annual basis.

“(2) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term ‘executive agency’ has the meaning provided that term by section 105 of title 5.”

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 33 of title 41, United States Code, is amended by adding after the item relating to section 3311 the following new item:

“3312. Requirement for business case approval for new Governmentwide contracts.”.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than June 1 in each of the next 6 years following the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy shall submit to the relevant congressional committees a report on the implementation of section 3312 of title 41, United States Code, as added by subsection (b), including a summary of the submissions, reviews, approvals, and disapprovals of business case analyses pursuant to such section.

(d) GUIDANCE.—The Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy shall issue guidance for implementing section 3312 of such title.

(e) REVISION OF FAR.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Acquisition Regulation shall be amended to implement section 3312 of such title.

(g) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Section 3312 of such title is effective on and after 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE IV—STRENGTHENING AND STREAMLINING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Subtitle A—Strengthening and Streamlining IT Program Management Practices

SEC. 401. PILOT PROGRAM ON INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION.

(a) PILOT PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 115 of title 40, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“CHAPTER 115—INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

“Sec.

“11501. Pilot program on interagency collaboration.

“§ 11501. Pilot program on interagency collaboration

“(a) REQUIREMENT TO CONDUCT PILOT PROGRAM.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall conduct a three-year pilot program in accordance with the requirements of this section to test alternative approaches for the management of commonly used information technology by executive agencies.

“(b) ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSES.—For purposes of the pilot program, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall establish a Federal Infrastructure and Common Application Collaboration Center (hereafter in this section referred to as the ‘Collaboration Center’) within the Office of Electronic Government established under section 3602 of title 44. The purpose of the Collaboration Center is to serve as a resource for Federal agencies, available on an optional-use basis, to assist and promote coordinated program management practices and to develop and maintain requirements for the acquisition of IT infrastructure and common applications commonly used by various Federal agencies.

“(c) ORGANIZATION OF CENTER.—

“(1) MEMBERSHIP.—The Center shall consist of the following members:

“(A) An appropriate number, as determined by the CIO Council, but not less than 12, full-time program managers or cost specialists, all of whom have appropriate experience in the private or Government sector in managing or overseeing acquisitions of IT infrastructure and common applications.

“(B) At least 1 full-time detailee from each of the Federal agencies listed in section 901(b) of title 31, nominated by the respective agency chief information officer for a detail period of not less than 1 year.

“(2) WORKING GROUPS.—The Collaboration Center shall have working groups that specialize in IT infrastructure and common applications identified by the CIO Council. Each working group shall be headed by a separate dedicated program manager appointed by the Federal Chief Information Officer.

“(d) CAPABILITIES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE COLLABORATION CENTER.—For each of the IT infrastructure and common application areas identified by the CIO Council, the Collaboration Center shall perform the following roles, and any other functions as directed by the Federal Chief Information Officer:

“(1) Develop, maintain, and disseminate requirements suitable to establish contracts that will meet the common and general needs of various Federal agencies as determined by the Center. In doing so, the Center shall give maximum consideration to the adoption of commercial standards and industry acquisition best practices, including opportunities for shared services, consideration of total cost of ownership, preference for industry-neutral functional specifications leveraging open industry standards and competition, and use of long-term contracts, as appropriate.

“(2) Develop, maintain, and disseminate reliable cost estimates.

“(3) Lead the review of significant or troubled IT investments or acquisitions as identified by the CIO Council.

“(4) Provide expert aid to troubled IT investments or acquisitions.

“(e) GUIDANCE.—The Director, in consultation with the Chief Information Officers Council, shall issue guidance addressing the scope and operation of the Collaboration Center. The guidance shall require that the collaboration Center report to the Federal Chief Information Officer.

“(f) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall annually submit to the relevant congressional committees a report detailing the organization, staff, and activities of the Collaboration Center, including—

“(A) a list of IT infrastructure and common applications the Center assisted;

“(B) an assessment of the Center’s achievement in promoting efficiency, shared services, and elimination of unnecessary Government requirements that are contrary to commercial best practices; and

“(C) the use and expenditure of amounts in the Fund established under subsection (i).

“(2) INCLUSION IN OTHER REPORT.—The report may be included as part of the annual E-Government status report required under section 3606 of title 44.

“(g) GUIDELINES FOR ACQUISITION OF IT INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMON APPLICATIONS.—

“(1) GUIDELINES.—The Collaboration Center shall establish guidelines that, to the maximum extent possible, eliminate inconsistent practices among executive agencies and ensure uniformity and consistency in acquisition processes for IT infrastructure and common applications across the Federal Government.

“(2) CENTRAL WEBSITE.—In preparing the guidelines, the Collaboration Center, in consultation with the Chief Acquisition Officers Council, shall offer executive agencies the option of accessing a central website for best practices, templates, and other relevant information.

“(h) PRICING TRANSPARENCY.—The Collaboration Center, in collaboration with the Office of Federal Procurement Policy, the Chief Acquisition Officers Council, the General Services Administration, and the As-

sisted Acquisition Centers of Excellence, shall compile a price list and catalogue containing current pricing information by vendor for each of its IT infrastructure and common applications categories. The price catalogue shall contain any price provided by a vendor in a contract awarded for the same or similar good or service to any executive agency. The catalogue shall be developed in a fashion ensuring that it may be used for pricing comparisons and pricing analysis using standard data formats. The price catalogue shall not be made public, but shall be accessible to executive agencies.

“(i) AUTHORIZATION TO USE FUND.—In any fiscal year, notwithstanding section 321(c) of title 40, up to five percent of the fees collected during the prior fiscal year under the multiple award schedule contracts entered into by the Administrator of General Services and credited to the Acquisition Services Fund under section 321 of title 40, may be used to fund the activities of the Collaboration Center. Each fiscal year, the Director, in consultation with the Federal Chief Information Officer, shall determine an appropriate amount needed to operate the Collaboration Center and the Administrator of General Services shall transfer amounts only to the extent and in such amounts as are provided in advance in appropriation acts from the Fund to the Director for the Center.

“(j) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term ‘executive agency’ has the meaning provided that term by section 105 of title 5.

“(2) FEDERAL CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER.—The term ‘Federal Chief Information Officer’ means the Administrator of the Office of Electronic Government established under section 3602 of title 44.

“(3) RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ‘relevant congressional committees’ means each of the following:

“(A) The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

“(B) The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate.”.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The item relating to chapter 115 in the table of chapters at the beginning of subtitle III of title 40, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“115. Information Technology Acquisition Management Practices 11501”.

(b) DEADLINES.—

(1) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director shall issue guidance under section 11501(e) of title 40, United States Code, as added by subsection (a).

(2) CENTER.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director shall establish the Federal Infrastructure and Common Application Collaboration Center, in accordance with section 11501(b) of such title, as so added.

(3) GUIDELINES.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Infrastructure and Common Application Collaboration Center shall establish guidelines in accordance with section 11501(g) of such title, as so added.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3602(c) of title 44, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (2);

(2) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following new paragraph (3):

“(3) all of the functions of the Federal Infrastructure and Common Application Collaboration Center, as required under section 11501 of title 40; and”.

SEC. 402. DESIGNATION OF ASSISTED ACQUISITION CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—Chapter 115 of title 40, United States Code, as amended by section 401, is further amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“SEC. 11502. ASSISTED ACQUISITION CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE.

“(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to develop specialized assisted acquisition centers of excellence within the Federal Government to serve as a resource for Federal agencies, available on an optional-use basis, to assist and promote—

“(1) the effective use of best acquisition practices;

“(2) the development of specialized expertise in the acquisition of information technology; and

“(3) Governmentwide sharing of acquisition capability to augment any shortage in the information technology acquisition workforce.

“(b) DESIGNATION OF AACES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this section, and every 3 years thereafter, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Chief Acquisition Officers Council and the Chief Information Officers Council, shall designate, redesignate, or withdraw the designation of acquisition centers of excellence within various executive agencies to carry out the functions set forth in subsection (d) in an area of specialized acquisition expertise as determined by the Director. Each such center of excellence shall be known as an ‘Assisted Acquisition Center of Excellence’ or an ‘AACE’.

“(c) USE OF EXISTING AUTHORITY.—This section provides no new authority to establish a franchise fund or revolving fund.

“(d) FUNCTIONS.—The functions of each AACE are as follows:

“(1) BEST PRACTICES.—To promote, develop, and implement the use of best acquisition practices in the area of specialized acquisition expertise that the AACE is designated to carry out by the Director under subsection (b).

“(2) ASSISTED ACQUISITIONS.—To assist all Government agencies in the expedient, strategic, and cost-effective acquisition of the information technology goods or services covered by such area of specialized acquisition expertise by engaging in repeated and frequent acquisition of similar information technology requirements.

“(3) DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING OF IT ACQUISITION WORKFORCE.—To assist in recruiting and training IT acquisition cadres (referred to in section 1704(j) of title 41).

“(e) CRITERIA.—In designating, redesignating, or withdrawing the designation of an AACE, the Director shall consider, at a minimum, the following matters:

“(1) The subject matter expertise of the host agency in a specific area of information technology acquisition.

“(2) For acquisitions of IT infrastructure and common applications covered by the Federal Infrastructure and Common Application Collaboration Center authorized under section 11501 of this title, the ability and willingness to collaborate with the Collaboration Center and adhere to the requirements standards established by the Collaboration Center.

“(3) The ability of an AACE to develop customized requirements documents that meet the needs of executive agencies as well as the current industry standards and commercial best practices.

“(4) The ability of an AACE to consistently award and manage various contracts, task or delivery orders, and other acquisition arrangements in a timely, cost-effective, and compliant manner.

“(5) The ability of an AACE to aggregate demands from multiple executive agencies for similar information technology goods or services and fulfill those demands in one acquisition.

“(6) The ability of an AACE to acquire innovative or emerging commercial and non-commercial technologies using various contracting methods, including ways to lower the entry barriers for small businesses with limited Government contracting experiences.

“(7) The ability of an AACE to maximize commercial item acquisition, effectively manage high-risk contract types, increase competition, promote small business participation, and maximize use of available Governmentwide contracts.

“(8) The existence of an in-house cost estimating group with expertise to consistently develop reliable cost estimates that are accurate, comprehensive, well-documented, and credible.

“(9) The ability of an AACE to employ best practices and educate requesting agencies, to the maximum extent practicable, regarding critical factors underlying successful major IT acquisitions, including the following factors:

“(A) Active engagement by program officials with stakeholders.

“(B) Possession by program staff of the necessary knowledge and skills.

“(C) Support of the programs by senior department and agency executives.

“(D) Involvement by end users and stakeholders in the development of requirements.

“(E) Participation by end users in testing of system functionality prior to formal end user acceptance testing.

“(F) Stability and consistency of Government and contractor staff.

“(G) Prioritization of requirements by program staff.

“(H) Maintenance of regular communication with the prime contractor by program officials.

“(I) Receipt of sufficient funding by programs.

“(10) The ability of an AACE to run an effective acquisition intern program in collaboration with the Federal Acquisition Institute or the Defense Acquisition University.

“(11) The ability of an AACE to effectively and properly manage fees received for assisted acquisitions pursuant to this section.

“(f) FUNDS RECEIVED BY AACES.—

“(1) AVAILABILITY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law or regulation, funds obligated and transferred from an executive agency in a fiscal year to an AACE for the acquisition of goods or services covered by an area of specialized acquisition expertise of an AACE, regardless of whether the requirements are severable or non-severable, shall remain available for awards of contracts by the AACE for the same general requirements for the next 5 fiscal years following the fiscal year in which the funds were transferred.

“(2) TRANSITION TO NEW AACE.—If the AACE to which the funds are provided under paragraph (1) becomes unable to fulfill the

requirements of the executive agency from which the funds were provided, the funds may be provided to a different AACE to fulfill such requirements. The funds so provided shall be used for the same purpose and remain available for the same period of time as applied when provided to the original AACE.

“(3) RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING AUTHORITIES.—This subsection does not limit any existing authorities an AACE may have under its revolving or working capital funds authorities.

“(g) GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REVIEW OF AACE.—

“(1) REVIEW.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall review and assess—

“(A) the use and management of fees received by the AACES pursuant to this section to ensure that an appropriate fee structure is established and enforced to cover activities addressed in this section and that no excess fees are charged or retained; and

“(B) the effectiveness of the AACES in achieving the purpose described in subsection (a), including review of contracts.

“(2) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the designation or redesignation of AACES under subsection (b), the Comptroller General shall submit to the relevant congressional committees a report containing the findings and assessment under paragraph (1).

“(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) ASSISTED ACQUISITION.—The term ‘assisted acquisition’ means a type of inter-agency acquisition in which the parties enter into an interagency agreement pursuant to which—

“(A) the servicing agency performs acquisition activities on the requesting agency’s behalf, such as awarding, administering, or closing out a contract, task order, delivery order, or blanket purchase agreement; and

“(B) funding is provided through a franchise fund, the Acquisition Services Fund in section 321 of this title, sections 1535 and 1536 of title 31, or other available methods.

“(2) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term ‘executive agency’ has the meaning provided that term by section 133 of title 41.

“(3) RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term ‘relevant congressional committees’ has the meaning provided that term by section 11501 of this title.

“(i) REVISION OF FAR.—The Federal Acquisition Regulation shall be amended to implement this section.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 115 of title 40, United States Code, as amended by section 401, is further amended by adding at the end the following new item:

“11502. Assisted Acquisition Centers of Excellence.”.

Subtitle B—Strengthening IT Acquisition Workforce

SEC. 411. EXPANSION OF TRAINING AND USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION CADRES.

(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to ensure timely progress by Federal agencies toward developing, strengthening, and deploying personnel with highly specialized skills in information technology acquisition, including program and project managers, to be known as information technology acquisition cadres.

(b) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Section 1704 of title 41, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(j) STRATEGIC PLAN ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION CADRES.—

“(1) FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN TO CONGRESS.—Not later than June 1 following the

date of the enactment of this subsection, the Director shall submit to the relevant congressional committees a 5-year strategic plan (to be known as the 'IT Acquisition Cadres Strategic Plan') to develop, strengthen, and solidify information technology acquisition cadres. The plan shall include a timeline for implementation of the plan and identification of individuals responsible for specific elements of the plan during the 5-year period covered by the plan.

“(2) MATTERS COVERED.—The plan shall address, at a minimum, the following matters:

“(A) Current information technology acquisition staffing challenges in Federal agencies, by previous year's information technology acquisition value, and by the Federal Government as a whole.

“(B) The variety and complexity of information technology acquisitions conducted by each Federal agency covered by the plan, and the specialized information technology acquisition workforce needed to effectively carry out such acquisitions.

“(C) The development of a sustainable funding model to support efforts to hire, retain, and train an information technology acquisition cadre of appropriate size and skill to effectively carry out the acquisition programs of the Federal agencies covered by the plan, including an examination of inter-agency funding methods and a discussion of how the model of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund could be applied to civilian agencies.

“(D) Any strategic human capital planning necessary to hire, retain, and train an information acquisition cadre of appropriate size and skill at each Federal agency covered by the plan.

“(E) Governmentwide training standards and certification requirements necessary to enhance the mobility and career opportunities of the Federal information technology acquisition cadre within the Federal agencies covered by the plan.

“(F) New and innovative approaches to workforce development and training, including cross-functional training, rotational development, and assignments both within and outside the Government.

“(G) Appropriate consideration and alignment with the needs and priorities of the Infrastructure and Common Application Collaboration Center, Assisted Acquisition Centers of Excellence, and acquisition intern programs.

“(H) Assessment of the current workforce competency and usage trends in evaluation technique to obtain best value, including proper handling of tradeoffs between price and nonprice factors.

“(I) Assessment of the current workforce competency in designing and aligning performance goals, life cycle costs, and contract incentives.

“(J) Assessment of the current workforce competency in avoiding brand-name preference and using industry-neutral functional specifications to leverage open industry standards and competition.

“(K) Use of integrated program teams, including fully dedicated program managers, for each complex information technology investment.

“(L) Proper assignment of recognition or accountability to the members of an integrated program team for both individual functional goals and overall program success or failure.

“(M) The development of a technology fellows program that includes provisions for recruiting, for rotation of assignments, and for partnering directly with universities with

well-recognized information technology programs.

“(N) The capability to properly manage other transaction authority (where such authority is granted), including ensuring that the use of the authority is warranted due to unique technical challenges, rapid adoption of innovative or emerging commercial or noncommercial technologies, or other circumstances that cannot readily be satisfied using a contract, grant, or cooperative agreement in accordance with applicable law and the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

“(O) The use of student internship and scholarship programs as a talent pool for permanent hires and the use and impact of special hiring authorities and flexibilities to recruit diverse candidates.

“(P) The assessment of hiring manager satisfaction with the hiring process and hiring outcomes, including satisfaction with the quality of applicants interviewed and hires made.

“(Q) The assessment of applicant satisfaction with the hiring process, including the clarity of the hiring announcement, the user-friendliness of the application process, communication from the hiring manager or agency regarding application status, and timeliness of the hiring decision.

“(R) The assessment of new hire satisfaction with the onboarding process, including the orientation process, and investment in training and development for employees during their first year of employment.

“(S) Any other matters the Director considers appropriate.

“(3) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than June 1 in each of the 5 years following the year of submission of the plan required by paragraph (1), the Director shall submit to the relevant congressional committees an annual report outlining the progress made pursuant to the plan.

“(4) GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REVIEW OF THE PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORT.—

“(A) Not later than 1 year after the submission of the plan required by paragraph (1), the Comptroller General of the United States shall review the plan and submit to the relevant congressional committees a report on the review.

“(B) Not later than 6 months after the submission of the first, third, and fifth annual report required under paragraph (3), the Comptroller General shall independently assess the findings of the annual report and brief the relevant congressional committees on the Comptroller General's findings and recommendations to ensure the objectives of the plan are accomplished.

“(5) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) The term ‘Federal agency’ means each agency listed in section 901(b) of title 31.

“(B) The term ‘relevant congressional committees’ means each of the following:

“(i) The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

“(ii) The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate.”.

SEC. 412. PLAN ON STRENGTHENING PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE.

(a) PLAN ON STRENGTHENING PROGRAM AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE.—Not later than June 1 following the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall submit to the relevant congressional committees a plan for improving management of IT programs and projects.

(b) MATTERS COVERED.—The plan required by subsection (a) shall include, at a minimum, the following:

(1) Creation of a specialized career path for program management.

(2) The development of a competency model for program management consistent with the IT project manager model.

(3) A career advancement model that requires appropriate expertise and experience for advancement.

(4) A career advancement model that is more competitive with the private sector and that recognizes both Government and private sector experience.

(5) Appropriate consideration and alignment with the needs and priorities of the Infrastructure and Common Application Collaboration Center, the Assisted Acquisition Centers of Excellence, and acquisition intern programs.

(c) COMBINATION WITH OTHER CADRES PLAN.—The Director may combine the plan required by subsection (a) with the IT Acquisition Cadres Strategic Plan required under section 1704(j) of title 41, United States Code, as added by section 411.

SEC. 413. PERSONNEL AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE ACQUISITION OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall develop policy and guidance for agencies to develop a program to recognize excellent performance by Federal Government employees and teams of such employees in the acquisition of information systems and information technology for the agency.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The program referred to in subsection (a) shall, to the extent practicable—

(1) obtain objective outcome measures; and

(2) include procedures for—

(A) the nomination of Federal Government employees and teams of such employees for eligibility for recognition under the program; and

(B) the evaluation of nominations for recognition under the program by 1 or more agency panels of individuals from Government, academia, and the private sector who have such expertise, and are appointed in such a manner, as the Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall establish for purposes of the program.

(c) AWARD OF CASH BONUSES AND OTHER INCENTIVES.—In carrying out the program referred to in subsection (a), the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall establish policies and guidance for agencies to reward any Federal Government employee or teams of such employees recognized pursuant to the program—

(1) with a cash bonus, to the extent that the performance of such individual or team warrants the award of such bonus and is authorized by any provision of law;

(2) through promotions and other non-monetary awards;

(3) by publicizing—

(A) acquisition accomplishments by individual employees; and

(B) the tangible end benefits that resulted from such accomplishments, as appropriate; and

(4) through other awards, incentives, or bonuses that the head of the agency considers appropriate.

TITLE V—ADDITIONAL REFORMS**SEC. 501. MAXIMIZING THE BENEFIT OF THE FEDERAL STRATEGIC SOURCING INITIATIVE.**

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy shall prescribe regulations providing that when the Federal Government makes a purchase of services and supplies offered under the Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiative (managed by the Office of Federal Procurement Policy) but such Initiative is not used, the contract file for the purchase shall include a brief analysis of the comparative value, including price and nonprice factors, between the services and supplies offered under such Initiative and services and supplies offered under the source or sources used for the purchase.

SEC. 502. GOVERNMENTWIDE SOFTWARE PURCHASING PROGRAM.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator of General Services, in collaboration with the Department of Defense, shall identify and develop a strategic sourcing initiative to enhance Governmentwide acquisition, shared use, and dissemination of software, as well as compliance with end user license agreements.

(b) **EXAMINATION OF METHODS.**—In developing the initiative under subsection (a), the Administrator shall examine the use of realistic and effective demand aggregation models supported by actual agency commitment to use the models, and supplier relationship management practices, to more effectively govern the Government's acquisition of information technology.

(c) **GOVERNMENTWIDE USER LICENSE AGREEMENT.**—The Administrator, in developing the initiative under subsection (a), shall allow for the purchase of a license agreement that is available for use by all executive agencies as one user to the maximum extent practicable and as appropriate.

SEC. 503. PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY OF BLANKET PURCHASE AGREEMENTS.

(a) **PRICE INFORMATION TO BE TREATED AS PUBLIC INFORMATION.**—The final negotiated price offered by an awardee of a blanket purchase agreement shall be treated as public information.

(b) **PUBLICATION OF BLANKET PURCHASE AGREEMENT INFORMATION.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of General Services shall make available to the public a list of all blanket purchase agreements entered into by Federal agencies under its Federal Supply Schedules contracts and the prices associated with those blanket purchase agreements. The list and price information shall be updated at least once every 6 months.

SEC. 504. ADDITIONAL SOURCE SELECTION TECHNIQUE IN SOLICITATIONS.

Section 3306(d) of title 41, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “or” at the end of paragraph (1);

(2) by striking the period and inserting “; or” at the end of paragraph (2); and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) stating in the solicitation that the award will be made using a fixed price technical competition, under which all offerors compete solely on nonprice factors and the fixed award price is pre-announced in the solicitation.”.

SEC. 505. ENHANCED TRANSPARENCY IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENTS.

(a) **PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION ABOUT IT INVESTMENTS.**—Section 11302(c) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (3); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following new paragraph:

“(2) **PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Director shall make available to the public the cost, schedule, and performance data for all of the IT investments listed in subparagraph (B), notwithstanding whether the investments are for new IT acquisitions or for operations and maintenance of existing IT.

“(B) **INVESTMENTS LISTED.**—The investments listed in this subparagraph are the following:

“(i) At least 80 percent (by dollar value) of all information technology investments Governmentwide.

“(ii) At least 60 percent (by dollar value) of all information technology investments in each Federal agency listed in section 901(b) of title 31.

“(iii) Every major information technology investment (as defined by the Office of Management and Budget) in each Federal agency listed in section 901(b) of title 31.

“(C) **QUARTERLY REVIEW AND CERTIFICATION.**—For each investment listed in subparagraph (B), the agency Chief Information Officer and the program manager of the investment within the agency shall certify, at least once every quarter, that the information is current, accurate, and reflects the risks associated with each listed investment. The Director shall conduct quarterly reviews and publicly identify agencies with an incomplete certification or with significant data quality issues.

“(D) **CONTINUOUS AVAILABILITY.**—The information required under subparagraph (A), in its most updated form, shall be publicly available at all times.

“(E) **WAIVER OR LIMITATION AUTHORITY.**—The applicability of subparagraph (A) may be waived or the extent of the information may be limited—

“(i) by the Director, with respect to IT investments Governmentwide; and

“(ii) by the Chief Information Officer of a Federal agency, with respect to IT investments in that agency;

if the Director or the Chief Information Officer, as the case may be, determines that such a waiver or limitation is in the national security interests of the United States.”.

(b) **ADDITIONAL REPORT REQUIREMENTS.**—Paragraph (3) of section 11302(c) of such title, as redesignated by subsection (a), is amended by adding at the end the following: “The report shall include an analysis of agency trends reflected in the performance risk information required in paragraph (2).”.

SEC. 506. ENHANCED COMMUNICATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council shall prescribe a regulation making clear that agency acquisition personnel are permitted and encouraged to engage in responsible and constructive exchanges with industry, so long as those exchanges are consistent with existing law and regulation and do not promote an unfair competitive advantage to particular firms.

SEC. 507. CLARIFICATION OF CURRENT LAW WITH RESPECT TO TECHNOLOGY NEUTRALITY IN ACQUISITION OF SOFTWARE.

(a) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of this section is to establish guidance and processes to clarify that software acquisitions by the Federal Government are to be made using merit-based requirements development and

evaluation processes that promote procurement choices—

(1) based on performance and value, including the long-term value proposition to the Federal Government;

(2) free of preconceived preferences based on how technology is developed, licensed, or distributed; and

(3) generally including the consideration of proprietary, open source, and mixed source software technologies.

(b) **TECHNOLOGY NEUTRALITY.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to modify the Federal Government's long-standing policy of following technology-neutral principles and practices when selecting and acquiring information technology that best fits the needs of the Federal Government.

(c) **GUIDANCE.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director, in consultation with the Chief Information Officers Council, shall issue guidance concerning the technology-neutral procurement and use of software within the Federal Government.

(d) **MATTERS COVERED.**—In issuing guidance under subsection (c), the Director shall include, at a minimum, the following:

(1) Guidance to clarify that the preference for commercial items in section 3307 of title 41, United States Code, includes proprietary, open source, and mixed source software that meets the definition of the term “commercial item” in section 103 of title 41, United States Code, including all such software that is used for non-Government purposes and is licensed to the public.

(2) Guidance regarding the conduct of market research to ensure the inclusion of proprietary, open source, and mixed source software options.

(3) Guidance to define Governmentwide standards for security, redistribution, indemnity, and copyright in the acquisition, use, release, and collaborative development of proprietary, open source, and mixed source software.

(4) Guidance for the adoption of available commercial practices to acquire proprietary, open source, and mixed source software for widespread Government use, including issues such as security and redistribution rights.

(5) Guidance to establish standard service level agreements for maintenance and support for proprietary, open source, and mixed source software products widely adopted by the Government, as well as the development of Governmentwide agreements that contain standard and widely applicable contract provisions for ongoing maintenance and development of software.

(6) Guidance on the role and use of the Federal Infrastructure and Common Application Collaboration Center, authorized under section 11501 of title 40, United States Code (as added by section 401), for acquisition of proprietary, open source, and mixed source software.

(e) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 2 years after the issuance of the guidance required by subsection (b), the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the relevant congressional committees a report containing—

(1) an assessment of the effectiveness of the guidance;

(2) an identification of barriers to widespread use by the Federal Government of specific software technologies; and

(3) such legislative recommendations as the Comptroller General considers appropriate to further the purposes of this section.

SEC. 508. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

Except as provided in section 11501(i) of title 40, United States Code, as added by section 401, no additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act and the amendments made by this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized or appropriated.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill, the Federal IT Acquisition Reform Act, or FITARA, is a slightly modified version of the one that left committee. It was changed only with my cosponsor's concurrence in order to make it more likely to easily pass both bodies. This is, in fact, substantially the same bill, as amended, as the full House voted last year to incorporate in the House version of the defense authorization bill.

H.R. 1232 reforms governmentwide the process by which the government annually acquires and employs, roughly, \$81 billion of Federal information technology. To quote President Obama on November 14, 2013: "One of the things the Federal Government does not do well is information technology procurement."

Now, that was profound because, in the fifth year of his Presidency, it is very clear that the President has realized that this is a monumental task, one inherited by him, not one created by him.

There are systematic problems in the way that we procure IT, including the nature of the history of individuals at all levels thinking they can buy something, and often they can, but too often our committee sees and reviews billion-dollar writeoffs of IT programs in which you cannot find out who was in charge, in which you cannot find out how they went on so long, and the hardest thing to find out is why they don't work at the end of \$1 billion worth of "in and out" of House production. Indeed, industry experts estimate that as much as 25 percent of the over \$80 billion annual expenditure is mismanaged or is attributable to duplicative investments or simply doesn't come to be used.

We need to enhance the best value to the taxpayer. More importantly, good

software saves billions of dollars and countless lives and countless hours if it works. Bad or poorly done software can frustrate the American public and can often deprive them of the very product or service that they expect to receive.

When this bill was originally envisioned, written, and passed out of our committee, no one had heard of the healthcare.gov Web site. Our committee, in fact, had looked at countless other failures within the IT procurement community, including ones at the Department of Defense and others, including ones that occurred under previous Presidents. We had determined, along with Mr. CONNOLLY, that there were a number of areas in which we needed to make fundamental change. So, although the American people can certainly see the launch of healthcare.gov as a poster child for not done on time, not, perhaps, done on a budget that we would be proud of and certainly something for which you could not find the responsible parties, even when you called them before your committee, let us make this clear: this bill is not about one failure. It is about a governmentwide, longstanding failure that predates this administration.

Among the things that FITARA will do is to create a clear line of responsibility, authority, and accountability over IT investment and management decisions by empowering agency CIOs; creating an operational framework to dramatically enhance the government's ability to procure commonly used IT faster, cheaper, and smarter; and strengthening the IT acquisition workforce. I want to reiterate this, that this is the Federal IT acquisition force. There can be no better investment than to make sure the people whom you trust the most for procuring IT, both from a standpoint of functionality and security, be a well-trained workforce, which is part of what we want to make sure we have.

FITARA accelerates and consolidates and optimizes the organization of government's proliferating data centers, something that my colleague from Virginia has worked on tirelessly. It increases the transparency of IT investment scorecards by requiring 80 percent of governmentwide IT spending to be covered by public Web sites called "IT dashboards," and it ensures procurement decisions give due consideration to all technologies, including open source. I might note that for the \$677 million that initially was spent on healthcare.gov, some of the areas in which the code worked was proven open source technology that was made available.

The discussion draft of this bill was first posted by our committee on its Web site 18 months ago. We held two full committee hearings on the bill, and the language that has evolved through the course of several rewrites and extensive feedback by the con-

tracting and technology communities and experts inside and outside of the government has given us the legislation you see before you today. This is a significant and timely reform that enhances both defense and nondefense procurement, and I urge all Members to support the bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act, FITARA, would make a number of improvements to the management and the acquisition of IT systems in the Federal Government. I think if we were to summarize what this bill does we would have to use the words "effective" and "efficient." We would have to use them over and over again, and we would also say that we are going to do better.

It would enhance the authority of the Federal Chief Information Officers, require agencies to optimize the functioning of Federal data centers, eliminate duplicative IT acquisition practices, and strengthen the Federal IT acquisition workforce. These reforms are needed to ensure that the Federal Government makes effective and efficient investments in information technology.

I want to commend Representative ISSA, the chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, for the bipartisan approach to this legislation. We had two full committee hearings on the concepts of this bill. The draft of the bill was made available for comment prior to the committee's considering it, and we really do appreciate that.

I also want to recognize Representative GERALD CONNOLLY, the ranking member of the Government Operations Subcommittee, for his critical work on drafting this legislation on technology issues generally. He has made himself an expert in this area, and we are the beneficiaries of that expertise. A significant portion of the legislation before us is based on Ranking Member CONNOLLY's own bill to consolidate Federal data centers.

Last year, the GAO issued its most recent high-risk report, which lists several IT projects as being among the Federal Government's highest-risk investments. For instance, a contract to streamline the Army's inventory of weapons systems is more than 12 years behind schedule and is almost \$4 billion over budget. Effective oversight is one of the best weapons against this kind of wasteful spending. Congress has a duty to conduct oversight as well as the obligation to give agencies the tools they need to conduct their own oversight and improve their processes.

Agencies need more well-trained acquisition management professionals to effectively oversee complex systems acquisitions and to ensure that the government is a smart and diligent

consumer. If you do not have the people who have the expertise who are doing the acquisitions, you often run into major problems. As has often been said, there is nothing like not knowing what you don't know. The Federal IT Acquisition Reform Act addresses this need by requiring OMB to submit a 5-year plan to develop, strengthen, and solidify IT acquisition cadres.

I understand that the administration has some concerns with this legislation we are considering today, so it is my hope that we can address those concerns as the bill moves forward in the legislative process.

Again, I want to thank Chairman ISSA for all of his hard work and Mr. CONNOLLY for all of his. I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ), a man who has worked diligently on the subcommittee to ensure that national security includes Internet security.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I thank the chairman for his good work on this. Without Chairman ISSA's leadership on this issue, we would not have this bill here today. I appreciate his work and dedication and passion on this issue. I appreciate Mr. CUMMINGS. I also appreciate Mr. CONNOLLY and the good work he does on this topic.

Mr. Speaker, I hope what people see here is a bipartisan approach to something that is a very large problem. There is a great imperative that we deal with this and deal with it right away. The Federal Government spent more than \$600 billion over the past decade on information technology, and we spend, roughly, \$80 billion a year just on IT. It is a critical component to making sure that we do have an effective and responsive government.

Now, of the \$80 billion or so that is spent each year, about one-third is spent on new procurement projects, and about two-thirds is spent on the operation and maintenance of existing or obsolete systems. It takes so much more energy and personnel to go through obsolete systems than it does to quickly replace with software and hardware and personnel new information technology systems that will make our government more responsive and more effective. There is nothing more frustrating than trying to work with an operating system that is no longer supported by the company that even makes the operating system. We have heard horror stories of people working on DOS operating systems. They are still looking at green screens, for goodness sakes. This is an imperative, and we have to make sure it is prioritized.

□ 1530

Some industry experts have estimated that as much as 70 percent of

new IT acquisitions fail or require re-baselining. The Technology CEO Council, made up of top industry experts, estimates that \$20 billion of the \$80 billion we spend is wasted every year on mismanaged and duplicative IT programs.

The GAO has estimated that the Departments of Treasury, Agriculture, Energy, and State spend well over 80 percent of their IT budgets on operations and maintenance of potentially obsolete systems.

We can do better on this. We are united in a bipartisan way. I encourage my colleagues to pass this bill.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate Chairman ISSA and his leadership on this issue, and I urge a "yes" vote on this bill.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), a man who has worked very hard on this legislation with Chairman ISSA.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank my good friend and our distinguished ranking member of the committee, Mr. CUMMINGS, for his graciousness and generosity. He has been a great leader and a great mentor in our committee. I also thank the distinguished chairman, Mr. ISSA, for his leadership on this legislation. I have been proud to cosponsor and coauthor this bill with him.

In the 21st century, Mr. Speaker, effective governance is inextricably linked with how well government leverages technology to serve its citizens. Yet our current Federal laws governing IT management and procurement are antiquated and out of step with technological change and growth and yield poor results.

Far too often, cumbersome bureaucracy stifles innovation and prevents government from efficiently buying and deploying cutting-edge technology. Program failure and cost overruns plague the vast majority of major Federal IT investments.

As the distinguished chairman indicated, if only the rollout of the health care Web site were a unique incident. Unfortunately, it actually characterizes most major Federal IT procurement rollouts.

Some Federal managers report as much as 47 percent of their budgets are spent on maintaining inadequate or antiquated IT platforms. That is 47 percent.

In recent decades, taxpayers have been forced to foot the bill for massive IT program failures that ring up staggeringly high costs but exhibit astonishingly poor performance. For example, the Air Force invested 6 years in a modernization effort that cost more than \$1 billion but failed to deliver a usable product, prompting the Assistant Secretary to state:

I am personally appalled at the limited capabilities that program has produced relative to that amount of investment.

This status quo is neither acceptable nor sustainable.

Again, I want to thank Chairman ISSA for working with me in a productive manner to develop the bipartisan Issa-Connolly Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act, or FITARA. This bipartisan legislation seeks to comprehensively streamline and strengthen the Federal IT acquisition process and promote the adoption of the best practices from the technology community.

The reform measure before us recognizes that effective Federal IT procurement reform must start with leadership and accountability. It is absolutely essential that a department's top leadership understands how critical effective IT investments are to an agency's operations and ability to carry out its future mission.

We must elevate and enhance the prestige and, more importantly, the authorities of CIOs across the Federal Government to hold them accountable and to give them the flexibility to effectively manage an agency's IT portfolio. Agency heads need talented leaders to serve as their primary advisers on IT management; to recruit and retain talented IT staff, as the distinguished chairman has indicated; and to oversee critical IT investments across the organization. Title I of our legislation would accomplish this while also avoiding one-size-fits-all solutions by allowing agencies significant discretion in implementing the various aspects of this new law.

Our bill would also accelerate data center optimization, as the distinguished ranking member indicated, and provide agencies with flexibility to leverage efficient cloud services and strengthen the accountability and transparency of Federal IT programs.

If enacted, 80 percent of the approximately \$80 billion spent annually on Federal IT investment would be required to be posted on the public IT Dashboard, compared to the 50 percent or less that characterizes that activity today.

Strengthening the transparency requirements is an urgent and much-needed reform in light of the most recent January 2014 GAO report that revealed the IT Dashboard has not been updated for 15 of the last 24 months. This finding is as astonishing as it is unacceptable.

Fortunately, a bipartisan consensus is forming around the urgent need to further streamline and strengthen how the Federal Government acquires and deploys information technology. President Obama has embraced Federal IT procurement reform, and a number of agencies are already taking a lead in the area.

Now is the time, Mr. Speaker, to ensure reforms are adopted government-wide and carry the force of reform law. I urge all of my colleagues to join us in

this bipartisan effort in supporting this important and urgently needed reform.

In the 21st century, effective governance is inextricably linked with how well government leverages technology to serve its citizens.

Yet, our current Federal laws governing Federal IT management remain out of step with technological change and growth, with bureaucracy stifling innovation and preventing government from efficiently buying and deploying cutting edge technology.

Simply put, today Federal IT acquisition is often a cumbersome, bureaucratic, and wasteful exercise—characterized by a Federal Government that has no idea what technology it needs, struggles to manage what it has, and consequently wastes billions of taxpayer dollars on failed IT investments.

In recent decades, taxpayers have been forced to foot the bill for massive IT program failures that ring up staggeringly high costs, but exhibit astonishingly poor performance.

Program failure and cost overruns still plague the vast majority of major Federal IT investments, while Federal managers' report that 47 percent of their budget is spent on maintaining antiquated and inadequate IT platforms.

The annual price tag of this wasteful spending on Federal IT programs is estimated to add up to approximately \$20 billion.

The Air Force invested six years in a modernization effort that cost more than \$1 billion, but failed to deliver a usable product, prompting its Assistant Secretary to state, quote "I am personally appalled at the limited capabilities that program has produced relative to that amount of investment."

Of course, failing mission-critical IT investments do not only waste taxpayer dollars, but they jeopardize our Nation's safety, security, and economy.

From malfunctioning Census handheld computers that threatened to undermine a critical constitutional responsibility . . . to a promised electronic border fence that never materialized . . . time and time again, agency missions have been sabotaged by failed IT acquisitions and gross mismanagement.

This status quo is unacceptable and unsustainable.

The question facing us today is how can we modernize an IT procurement process designed for the 20th century to meet the growing technology demands of the 21st?

There are no quick fixes or legislative silver bullets. However, I strongly believe that if Congress can limit partisan posturing, we may finally have an opportunity to address the core problem at the heart of the HealthCare.gov challenge—our Nation's broken Federal IT procurement system.

I want to thank Chairman ISSA for working with me in a productive manner to develop the bipartisan Issa-Connolly Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act, also known as FITARA.

Our bipartisan legislation seeks to comprehensively streamline and strengthen the Federal IT acquisition process and promote the adoption of best practices from the technology community.

We have solicited extensive input from all stakeholders to refine and improve our bill in an open and transparent manner.

The resulting Issa-Connolly reform measure recognizes that effective Federal IT procurement reform must start with leadership and accountability.

It is absolutely vital that a Department's top leadership understands how critical effective IT investments are to an agency's operations and ability to carry out its mission.

After reviewing the findings of extensive oversight reviews, and feedback from those in the trenches, I believe we must elevate and enhance the prestige, and more importantly, the authorities, of CIOs across the Federal Government to hold them accountable for effectively managing an agency's IT portfolio.

Agency heads must have talented leaders to serve as primary advisors on IT management . . . recruit and retain talented IT staff . . . and oversee critical IT investments.

Title I of FITARA would accomplish this, while also avoiding "one-size-fits-all" solutions by allowing agencies significant discretion in implementing the law.

In many respects, FITARA simply provides the force of law behind the August 2011 memorandum authored by then-OMB Director Jacob Lew, which announced that the Administration was committed to, quote:

"changing the role of Agency Chief Information Officers away from just policy-making and infrastructure maintenance, to encompass true portfolio management for all IT."

This will enable CIOs to focus on delivering IT solutions that support the mission and business effectiveness of their agencies and overcome bureaucratic impediments to deliver enterprise-wide solutions."

More than two years has passed since that policy memorandum was distributed to agencies, and it has become clear that efforts to reform IT through Administrative actions alone will not suffice.

In fact, if one takes the time to analyze FITARA vis-à-vis existing Administration IT initiatives, one will find that our bipartisan bill is consistent with, and seeks to build on, the nascent Federal IT initiatives that have emerged over the past five years, including those in the 25 Point Plan.

For example, the Issa-Connolly FITARA would enhance the CIO Council's role, tasking it with leading enterprise-wide portfolio management, and coordinating shared services and shared platforms across government.

This bipartisan bill would also empower agencies to eliminate duplicative and wasteful IT contracts that have proliferated for commonly-used, IT Commodity-like investments, such as e-mail.

In this era of austerity, agencies cannot afford to spend precious dollars and time creating duplicative, wasteful contracts for products and licenses they already own. In addition to improving how the government procures IT, this amendment would also enhance how the government deploys these tools.

Our bill would accelerate data center optimization, provide agencies with flexibility to leverage efficient cloud services, and strengthen the accountability and transparency of Federal IT programs.

If enacted, 80 percent of the approximately \$80 billion annual Federal IT investment would be required to be posted on the public IT Dashboard, compared to the 50 percent coverage that exists today.

Strengthening the transparency requirements of the IT Dashboard is an urgent and much needed reform in light of the recent January 2014 GAO report that revealed the IT Dashboard has not been updated for 15 of the past 24 months! This finding was as astonishing as it was unacceptable.

The IT Dashboard was launched in 2009 with great fanfare, and to this day, OMB continues to claim that, quote "The IT Dashboard gives the public access to the same tools and analysis that the government uses to oversee the performance of the Federal IT investments."

Clearly providing the public with accurate and updated Federal IT investment performance data for only 9 months out of a 2-year period fails to give average citizens access to the same analysis used by agencies.

It certainly undermines OMB's claim that the IT Dashboard was launched to, quote shine "light onto the performance and spending of IT investments," by ensuring that the public has access to data indicating not only whether a project is over budget or behind schedule, but providing specific dollars figures and dates.

Consistent with the principle that public contracts are public documents, our amendment also strengthens transparency in regard to the final negotiated price a company charges a Federal agency for a good or service.

Today, far too many agencies negotiate blanket purchase agreements in silos, without any knowledge that another agency has already negotiated a BPA with the same exact vendor, for the same exact product, but at a different price.

Nearly two decades has passed since the Information Technology Management Reform Act and the Federal Acquisition Reform Act were enacted through the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1996—reforms that are better known today as the foundational "Clinger-Cohen Act."

Fortunately, a bipartisan consensus is finally forming around the urgent need to further streamline and strengthen how the Federal Government acquires and deploys IT. President Obama has embraced Federal IT procurement reform and several agencies are already taking the lead in this area.

Now is the time to ensure reforms are adopted government-wide and carry the force of law.

The bipartisan Issa-Connolly Federal IT Acquisition Reform Act will enhance the statutory framework established by Clinger-Cohen to create an efficient and effective Federal IT procurement system that best serves agencies, industry, and most importantly, the American taxpayer.

I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting this important and urgently needed bipartisan reform measure.

IT ALLIANCE FOR PUBLIC SECTOR,
Washington, DC, February 25, 2014.

Re H.R. 1232, the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA)

HON. DARRELL ISSA,
Chairman, House Oversight & Government Reform, Washington, DC.

HON. GERRY CONNOLLY,
House Oversight & Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ISSA AND REPRESENTATIVE CONNOLLY: On behalf of the Information

Technology Alliance for Public Sector (IT Alliance), I would like to thank you for your continued engagement with industry regarding the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA). We believe that these discussions have led to many improvements to the legislation over the past year. We look forward to continuing this dialogue as the bill advances to the Senate.

The IT Alliance recognizes the importance of revisiting and revising federal information technology management and related acquisition processes, and we appreciate the outreach efforts of the bill's cosponsors and their staffs. We greatly appreciate the additional changes recently made to the bill that include the clarification of applicability to the Department of Defense regarding CIO authorities, the added "optional-use" text around the Acquisition Centers of Excellence, and the removal of the term "low-cost" from the bill. While we still hold some reservations regarding the Federal Infrastructure and Common Application Collaboration Center, we believe making the program into a pilot allows agencies more flexibility. Additionally, we continue to support many of the provisions and authorities in the bill.

Enhanced Authorities for the Civilian Chief Information Officers (CIOs)—The IT Alliance supports enhanced authority for CIOs, including consolidation of the position to improve management of IT investment decisions, reduce redundancy, and drive efficiency across the entire department. ARWG further supports provisions establishing direct executive agency personnel engagement in the IT investment strategy for the agency.

Multi-Year Revolving Funds for IT Investment—The IT Alliance strongly supports the funding availability for agencies wishing to transition to the cloud. We see this as a significant improvement that will allow the government acquisition of technology to keep pace with innovation, and to provide more flexibility in budget models than currently exists. We further believe this flexibility should be extended to all IT investments.

Transition to the Cloud—The IT Alliance supports the provisions that promote the government's transition to a cloud services environment. Industry has emphasized the need for government to utilize the most innovative advancements in information technology to increase efficiency and reduce costs, and transitioning to the cloud will provide the government with more reliable, more affordable and more flexible access to IT infrastructure than currently exists.

Data Center Optimization—The IT Alliance supports provisions that seek to create effective data center optimization plans. These plans would establish metrics for optimizing data center usage and drive efficiencies in their utilization, while also encouraging the wider use of commercial data centers and commercial cloud services. The bill seeks to eliminate non-optimized data centers, and, subject to appropriations, use the savings achieved to promote other IT capabilities and services throughout the agency involved.

Strengthening the IT Acquisition Workforce—The IT Alliance is also very supportive of provisions that enhance the IT acquisition workforce's capabilities. These provisions, particularly regarding the development of a career path for IT program management, represent a first step to meaningful improvements in the management of IT investments.

Enhanced Communication with Industry—ARWG supports the provisions that encourage a more robust dialogue between industry and government. This promotes federal acquisition personnel having responsible and constructive dialogues with industry and we could not encourage this point more.

Thank you again for your dedication to improving the way the federal government procures information technologies, and for recognizing the need for management, workforce, and technical solutions. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues as it advances to the Senate to further improve this important bill. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Erica McCann of the ITAPS staff if we can be of further assistance.

Respectfully submitted,

A.R. "TREY" HODGKINS III,

Senior Vice President, Public Sector.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, can I inquire as to how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 12 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Maryland has 11½ minutes remaining.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

My partners in this are sitting on the other side of the aisle. But this committee has come together to look at a problem as simple as chief information officer doesn't mean "chief." It is simply a hollow title.

This bill, more than anything else to the American people, means that for every piece of major IT procurement, there will be a chief information officer; and that CIO will have budget authority and be held accountable, but also be given the ability to make those decisions, including pulling the "stop" button on a bad piece of legislation.

So the title of CIO and CTO and some of the other titles need to mean something. Our committee unanimously believes that if you are to be a chief, you have to be able to tell the Indians what to do. You can't be a chief in name only, and when something doesn't work, find yourself without the ability to call "halt," to go directly to the agency head or do the other things we would expect the title "chief" to mean.

So, for that reason, I believe it has united a committee behind something that must pass today, go to the Senate and be taken up and become law, if we are going to begin regaining the American people's confidence in our ability to procure large information systems.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with Chairman ISSA. If we are going to have a chief information officer, they need to be what we say they are. They need to have the power to effect change when change is appropriate. They have to have the power to make sure decisions are made to carry out the issues that come up with IT in an effective and efficient manner. I think this legislation is a giant step in the right direction.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would hope and ask all Members of Congress to vote in favor of this legislation. As I often say, we can always do better. I think that this is one of those times when, through a bipartisan effort, we are making a major statement that we are going to do better.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, first, I urge all Members to vote on this important legislation to send a strong message that this is a do-something Congress when it comes to problems that have been around for a very long time.

Secondly, I would like to take a moment, in a bit of personal privilege, to say to the American workforce that work for the Federal Government that, in every investigation by our committee, we have found in every failed project there were legions of good Federal employees who recognized the problem, sent letters, and who tried to have a program that was not going right to go right or go better.

It is not for lack of many, many in the Federal workforce who are doing their job as best they can. It is for lack of a consolidated and predictable chain of command. It is for lack of the ability to have somebody know they are in charge, bear the full weight, and be qualified.

I have no doubt that, upon enactment of this law, the Federal workforce will begin to breathe a breath of fresh air to know that they are being empowered to do the work they so desperately want to do, and that the tools are going to be added for them and the titles will become a title earned and then used wisely.

Seldom do we spend a lot of time on the House floor talking about how great the Federal workforce is. We are talking about monumental failures. Let's understand that it is not for lack of good programmers, it is not for lack of good contractors, and it is not for lack of well-meaning and dedicated Federal workers that we come today. It is for the need to organize them in a way in which we believe they can be successful. And that is the other part of our committee. We are the Committee on Government and Oversight Reform, and today is a structural reform in how we purchase information technology.

For that, I want to thank my partners on the other side of the aisle because we have been right next to each other on this all the way. I particularly thank Mr. CONNOLLY, who has put his staff and his own personal time into every aspect of this, and who also added his earlier legislation that allows us to bring about the necessary consolidation of duplicative centers spread around the country. They are simply a waste of energy and a waste of software power.

So I see this as a win-win, one in which Republicans and Democrats have come together in a Congress that does not have a great reputation but, on occasion, does great things.

I urge support for this, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1232 because it begins to fix a broken procurement system that has been on the GAO's "high-risk" list since the early 1990's.

Federal IT procurement has been a black hole of taxpayer dollars long before the deeply flawed rollout of Healthcare.gov. During my service on the House Intelligence Committee from 2003 to 2011, there were billions of dollars spent on IT projects that failed, without a shred of work product recoverable for the taxpayer.

H.R. 1232 will go a long way toward addressing these problems by empowering agency CIOs and developing new IT acquisition guidelines and best practices. This bill is a strong start but I think there's more that can be done.

Congressman CONNOLLY and I have worked together to draft complementary legislation to FITARA, called the Reforming Federal Procurement of Information Technology Act. Our bill would create a new, high-level office of IT experts in the White House charged with reviewing major federal IT projects before they get off track.

Our bill would also make it easier for small, innovative businesses to compete for federal projects by simplifying the contracting process. The Federal Acquisition Regulation is 1,900 pages long, and some agencies have a supplement that's an additional 1,000 pages. This rewards incumbent companies familiar with the rules and prevents open competition and innovation among vendors.

I applaud Congressmen ISSA and CONNOLLY for working together on this important legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1232, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TAXPAYERS RIGHT-TO-KNOW ACT

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1423) to provide taxpayers with an annual report disclosing the cost and performance of Government programs and areas of duplication among them, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1423

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Taxpayers Right-To-Know Act".

SEC. 2. COST AND PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Section 1122(a) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(3) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Information for each program described under paragraph (1) shall include the following to be updated not less than annually:

“(i) The total administrative cost of the program for the previous fiscal year.

“(ii) The expenditures for services for the program for the previous fiscal year.

“(iii) An estimate of the number of clients served by the program and beneficiaries who received assistance under the program (if applicable) for the previous fiscal year.

“(iv) An estimate of, for the previous fiscal year—

“(I) the number of full-time Federal employees who administer the program; and

“(II) the number of full-time employees whose salary is paid in part or full by the Federal Government through a grant or contract, a subaward of a grant or contract, a cooperative agreement, or another form of financial award or assistance who administer or assist in administering the program.

“(v) An identification of the specific statute that authorizes the program, including whether such authorization is expired.

“(vi) Any finding of duplication or overlap identified by internal review, an Inspector General, the Government Accountability Office, or other report to the agency about the program.

“(vii) Any program performance reviews (including program performance reports required under section 1116).

“(B) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

“(1) ADMINISTRATIVE COST.—The term ‘administrative cost’ has the meaning as determined by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget under section 504(b)(2) of Public Law 111–85 (31 U.S.C. 1105 note), except the term shall also include, for purposes of that section and this paragraph, with respect to an agency—

“(I) costs incurred by the agency as well as costs incurred by grantees, subgrantees, and other recipients of funds from a grant program or other program administered by the agency; and

“(II) expenses related to personnel salaries and benefits, property management, travel, program management, promotion, reviews and audits, case management, and communication about, promotion of, and outreach for programs and program activities administered by the agency.

“(ii) SERVICES.—The term ‘services’ has the meaning provided by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and shall be limited to only activities, assistance, and aid that provide a direct benefit to a recipient, such as the provision of medical care, assistance for housing or tuition, or financial support (including grants and loans).”.

(b) EXPIRED GRANT FUNDING.—Not later than February 1 of each fiscal year, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall publish on the public website of the Office of Management and Budget the total amount of undisbursed grant funding remaining in grant accounts for which the period of availability to the grantee has expired.

SEC. 3. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO IDENTIFICATION, CONSOLIDATION, AND ELIMINATION OF DUPLICATIVE GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS.

Section 21 of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (31 U.S.C. 712 note) is amended by

inserting “(a)” before the first sentence and by adding at the end the following:

“(b) The Comptroller General shall maintain and provide regular updates, on not less than an annual basis to a publicly available website that tracks the status of responses by Departments and the Congress to suggested actions that the Comptroller General has previously identified in annual reports under subsection (a). The status of these suggested actions shall be tracked for an appropriate period to be determined by the Comptroller General. The requirements of this subsection shall apply during the effective period of subsection (a).”.

SEC. 4. CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.

Nothing in this Act shall, or the amendments made by this Act, be construed to require the disclosure of classified information.

SEC. 5. REGULATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION.

(a) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall prescribe regulations to implement this Act, and the amendments made by this Act.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION.—This Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall be implemented not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.—No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act, or the amendments made by this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I believe that the American people should know what their government spends and what their government does. It is a reasonable request to be able to make of a government that is designed to serve the people. The people should be able to look back and be able to evaluate. Is this government serving the people, and are they doing it in such a way that is actually efficient and making a difference?

Every company in America can tell you what their staff is spending their time on and what the cost of their activities are, how many customers they have, and whether they are successful at reaching their basic goals. But we do not have that within the Federal Government.

H.R. 1423 asks just a few specific things of our government to be able to delineate, again, what every business in America does. It is just six specific things, such as the name of the program, the basic description of that program, the administrative costs of that program, the number of staff for that program, the number of beneficiaries of that program, the statutory authority for that program, and, very importantly, how that program is actually evaluated and what are the metrics to determine if this program is getting the job done that it needs to get done.

We have started in the right direction. OMB is working to comply with the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 by publicly listing all of the programs that the government administers and their performance goals, but that information is incomplete.

H.R. 1423 fills the gaps in the information provided to the public by requiring OMB to include such vital information as the administrative costs and expenditures of each Federal program, the number of people the program serves, the number of employees working on the program, and where in the statute the program is authorized.

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This bill offers a simple list that Congress can use to evaluate Federal programs and to make informed decisions about how to make government work smarter and better. Agencies could cut billions of dollars in costs, without compromising services. In many cases, they could improve their services while we are still saving money to the taxpayer.

If we just cut duplicative administrative costs and eliminate the programs that do not work, we can protect taxpayer dollars. We have an enormous Federal deficit. We should do everything we can to be able to evaluate what we are doing as a government and be able to determine where we are wasting taxpayer dollars. There are not taxpayer dollars left to waste.

Under the bill, any person anywhere in the country can, at any time, access information about the cost, scope, and performance of every Federal program.

H.R. 1423 requires OMB to report publicly any finding of duplication by GAO, an inspector general or any other report. It also requires GAO to maintain a database that tracks how quickly and how well Congress and the administration respond to these findings of duplication.

It may come as a surprise: Congress occasionally finds duplication and does nothing about it. This would provide the opportunity for the American people to be able to look back and to be able to track, are we doing something about inefficiencies that have already been isolated in government?

The Vice President was asked during the State of the Union, in this very Chamber, by the President of the United States, to begin a study of job training programs. We know there are more than 57 job training programs that already exist across the Federal Government in multiple agencies. The Vice President was asked to be able to locate those programs, evaluate those programs, and to help determine what is the right process forward for those programs.

Now, that is something that we in the House did earlier last year, the SKILLS Act, but it is something that

we would welcome participation from the administration on.

I ask the question: Why can't we already do that in every area, not just duplicative job training programs?

We have multiple programs in multiple agencies that are duplicative. Why do we just do it in job training programs?

Let's do it in all of them. This is the beginning of a process to get after that duplication and that waste. No one here, on either side of the aisle, wants to see a program that is unnecessary or ineffective.

Waste in government is not a Democrat or Republican issue; it is a Big Government issue. With a government the size that we have, we have duplication and we have waste. Let's identify it.

The Taxpayers Right-to-Know Act will ensure we do that. I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I remind my colleagues that multiple groups have already leaned into this bill to say, please pass this, including the Citizens Against Government Waste, the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council, and the National Taxpayers Union.

America is watching us. Let's deal with our inefficiency.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I wanted to thank Chairman ISSA and the sponsor of this bill, Chairman LANKFORD, for working with me to improve this legislation.

I respect the sponsor's goal with his bill, which is to provide taxpayers more information about how their money is being spent by the Federal Government. I think most people don't mind paying taxes, but they want to know that they are spending them and that they are being used in an effective and efficient manner and for the purpose intended.

However, the Congressional Research Service identified multiple areas of potential overlap and duplication between the bill as it was introduced and the current statutory requirements.

For example, the bill, as introduced, would have required each agency to report information on improper payments, but the Improper Payments Information Act already requires agencies to report information on improper payments.

The current bill, as amended, eliminates much of that duplication. This is a much better bill, and I applaud the majority for their work on it.

There is one provision in the Taxpayers Right-to-Know Act that I want to note because I think it will be a real improvement with regard to transparency. The bill would require agencies to report the number of full-time positions that are paid, in full or in part, through a grant or a contract.

We do not currently know how many employees are working for the Federal Government through contracts. This bill would require agencies to disclose this information on an annual basis.

This bill also includes an amendment that was offered by Representative SPEIER during our committee markup to require agencies to report for their programs any findings of duplication or overlap identified by internal review, an inspector general, the Government Accountability Office, or other report to the agency.

This requirement will help agencies keep track of areas of duplication. It also will increase accountability by making this information easier to find for government watchdogs, including Congress.

I appreciate the improvements that have been made to the bill. I appreciate the bipartisan spirit by which we were able to come to the floor today. I intend to support the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, let me make one quick comment, then I would like to yield a minute to my colleague.

This does allow us to be able to gather that information. It is a good thing to have the information.

Over the past several years there has been a push to provide greater transparency in the Federal Government, but the difficulty of bits of information scattered in different parts in different reports has forced the need for this; to say, let's put all that data together.

Not only the number of staff and the number of programs and duplication reports, but let's gather that into one readable report so that every American doesn't have to know where to chase down to get bits of information. They can actually go to one spot and be able to look at it, whether it is a watchdog group, Members of Congress, or any citizen at any computer in America, they can be able to do that kind of research.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA).

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I will be brief.

When our committee works together in the way they have, particularly under the leadership of Chairman LANKFORD, we can do some amazing reforms. This is, in fact, more amazing than people might at first gather.

For example, this requires something as simple as to have the Office of Management and Budget report what is

called the all-in cost of Federal programs. For too long, the American people have heard about what a program costs, only to find out that if you go through all the various budgets that a particular action is spread about, it might cost five or six times as much.

That kind of single point accountability is just one of the many reasons that this well-thought-out, bipartisan legislation, led by Mr. LANKFORD, really needs to be passed today as part of this package of reforms to get a government accountability to the American people.

I thank the chairman. I thank the ranking member.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as I close, I urge all Members to vote in favor of the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the conversation and the debate today. This is something that Republicans and Democrats can agree on. We should have transparency. Again, this is not a Republican issue or a Democrat issue. This is a size and scope of our government issue.

We have grown extremely large in the Federal Government. We have duplication that none of us can even find, large budget categories with no specific items underneath them to be able to identify how much things cost, what their effectiveness includes.

This is a moment for us to begin to get the details of all these programs that Congress has authorized back to the Congress for us to be able to evaluate their effectiveness.

This is the right move to be able to make in the days ahead, for us to be able to get our arms around an extremely large, extremely complicated budget with a tremendous amount of duplication and waste that we can't find until we shine some light on it through this bill. I urge all Members to be able to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the "Taxpayer Right-to-Know-Act."

The Taxpayer Right-to-Know Act would require all federal agencies to describe, in detail, all programs under their agency, their costs, the number of employees running each program, and possible duplication. Reports would be due each year.

Agencies would also have to publish performance reviews and improper payment rates. OMB would then analyze the reports for overlapping programs and provide concrete recommendations on how to reduce duplication and waste.

This bill would ensure greater transparency, enhance scrutiny of taxpayer dollars, and help deliver better value to the American people.

The Taxpayer Right-to-Know Act is about transparency, fiscal responsibility, and finding

solutions to right-size the government for the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1423, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

UNLOCKING CONSUMER CHOICE AND WIRELESS COMPETITION ACT

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1123) to promote consumer choice and wireless competition by permitting consumers to unlock mobile wireless devices, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1123

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Unlocking Consumer Choice and Wireless Competition Act".

SEC. 2. REPEAL OF EXISTING RULE AND ADDITIONAL RULEMAKING BY LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS.

(a) REPEAL AND REPLACE.—As of the date of the enactment of this Act, paragraph (3) of section 201.40(b) of title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, as amended and revised by the Librarian of Congress on October 28, 2012, pursuant to the Librarian's authority under section 1201(a) of title 17, United States Code, shall have no force and effect, and such paragraph shall read, and shall be in effect, as such paragraph was in effect on July 27, 2010.

(b) RULEMAKING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Librarian of Congress, upon the recommendation of the Register of Copyrights, who shall consult with the Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information of the Department of Commerce and report and comment on his or her views in making such recommendation, shall determine, consistent with the requirements set forth under section 1201(a)(1) of title 17, United States Code, whether to extend the exemption for the class of works described in section 201.40(b)(3) of title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, as amended by subsection (a), to include any other category of wireless devices in addition to wireless telephone handsets.

(2) TIMING OF RULEMAKING.—(A) If this Act is enacted before June 1, 2014, the determination under paragraph (1) shall be made by not later than the end of the 9-month period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(B) If this Act is enacted on or after June 1, 2014, the determination under paragraph (1) shall be made in the first rulemaking under section 1201(a)(1)(C) of title 17, United States Code, that begins on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) UNLOCKING AT DIRECTION OF OWNER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Circumvention of a technological measure that restricts wireless

telephone handsets or other wireless devices from connecting to a wireless telecommunications network—

(A)(i) as authorized by paragraph (3) of section 201.40(b) of title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, as made effective by subsection (a), and

(ii) as may be extended to other wireless devices pursuant to a determination in the rulemaking conducted under subsection (b), or

(B) as authorized by an exemption adopted by the Librarian of Congress pursuant to a determination made on or after the date of enactment of this Act under section 1201(a)(1)(C) of title 17, United States Code, may be initiated by the owner of any such handset or other device, by another person at the direction of the owner, or by a provider of a commercial mobile radio service or a commercial mobile data service at the direction of such owner or other person, solely in order to enable such owner or a family member of such owner to connect to a wireless telecommunications network, when such connection is authorized by the operator of such network.

(2) NO BULK UNLOCKING.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to permit the unlocking of wireless handsets or other wireless devices, for the purpose of bulk resale, or to authorize the Librarian of Congress to authorize circumvention for such purpose under this Act, title 17, United States Code, or any other provision of law.

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Except as provided in subsection (c), nothing in this Act alters, or shall be construed to alter, the authority of the Librarian of Congress under section 1201(a)(1) of title 17, United States Code.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) COMMERCIAL MOBILE DATA SERVICE; COMMERCIAL MOBILE RADIO SERVICE.—The terms "commercial mobile data service" and "commercial mobile radio service" have the respective meanings given those terms in section 20.3 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK.—The term "wireless telecommunications network" means a network used to provide a commercial mobile radio service or a commercial mobile data service.

(3) WIRELESS TELEPHONE HANDSETS; WIRELESS DEVICES.—The terms "wireless telephone handset" and "wireless device" mean a handset or other device that operates on a wireless telecommunications network.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. POLIS. I don't believe there is a rule for this bill. Is there a rule for this bill?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair is referring to a standing rule of the House.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I claim the time in opposition.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman from Virginia in favor of the motion?

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I am in favor of the motion. I am not opposed to the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. On that basis, pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) will control the 20 minutes in opposition.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) is recognized.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 1123, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Last winter, due to an expired exemption to existing law, consumers lost the legal right to unlock their cell phones so that they could use them on a different wireless carrier. Outraged consumers flooded Congress and the White House with complaints over this change in policy that resulted in reduced marketplace competition.

In response to this impact on consumers, a bipartisan group of House Judiciary Committee members introduced H.R. 1123, the Unlocking Consumer Choice and Wireless Competition Act. The legislation reinstates the prior exemption to civil and criminal law for unlocking cell phones for personal use. It also creates an expedited process to determine whether this exemption should be extended to other wireless devices such as tablets.

When this legislation is enacted, consumers will be able to go to a kiosk in the mall, get help from a neighbor, or see a wireless carrier to help unlock their cell phone without any risk of legal penalties. This is not the case today, which is why this legislation is necessary.

H.R. 1123 is supported by such diverse groups in the cellular industry, from the large carriers of CTIA to the small carriers of the Competitive Carriers Association.

Although these two groups announced a private sector agreement in December on unlocking based upon this same legislation, that agreement cannot eliminate the potential of civil and criminal sanctions for consumers who unlock their cell phones. So the need for the legislation remains. Even Consumers Union supports this critical legislation.

□ 1600

The committee has been aware of law enforcement concerns regarding the explosive growth in smartphone thefts. Efforts by criminals to undertake bulk unlocking and transfers of stolen phones are a growing concern in Amer-

ica. Smartphones seem to have become crime magnets in many cities across America.

Because the policy issue has always focused on the ability of consumers to unlock their phones, the legislation is similarly focused on individual consumer unlocking without raising law enforcement concerns. Why would it make sense for Congress to enable criminal gangs to more easily make money off stolen phones instead of simply solving the main issue of consumers being able to unlock their own phones?

Some would like this legislation to go even further. However, I hope all can agree that this is a good start and a solid piece of legislation that will empower consumer choice.

I urge my colleagues to support this important proconsumer legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in opposition to the Unlocking Consumer Choice and Wireless Competition Act.

I support the sentiment behind this bill, and I support the version that was reported out of the Judiciary Committee. However, unfortunately, an important change that I will discuss to the detriment of this bill was added last week, just prior to this bill being brought to the floor.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) gave some background with regard to why a bill is necessary. Ever since the Library of Congress ruled last year that unlocking your cell phone violates copyright law, there have been a number of us on both sides of the aisle who have worked to ensure that consumers have the right to unlock their wireless devices and use their property as they see fit.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of Congresswoman LOFGREN's bill, the Unlocking Technology Act of 2013, which gives consumers the right to unlock their devices on a permanent basis.

Before I came to Congress, I was an entrepreneur who started a number of businesses, and I understand firsthand the importance of allowing a free market to thrive and to create a positive environment for businesses and consumers alike.

Allowing consumers to unlock their cell phones, which are their own personal property, can spur competition, allowing new start-up carriers to succeed, lowering prices, and increasing service options for all cell phone users.

To be clear, this is a separate issue from being contractually bound to use a certain provider for a certain period of time. Many Americans choose to enter into a long-term contract in exchange for discounts or free cell phones.

That is not the issue being discussed today, and I don't think there is a

problem from either side of the aisle about those consensual contracts.

Rather, we are talking about unlocking cell phones that are not contractually bound to a certain service provider. This has been an issue within our trade agreements.

I have recently drafted bipartisan letters to the United States Trade Representative, with Representative MASSIE, expressing concern that the leaked text of the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement would potentially make any permanent fix to unlocking cell phones illegal.

Now, this bill is not a permanent fix. This bill would make clear congressional intent consistent with the optional agreement between the companies that they have reached. However, the last-minute change that was made in this bill, different from the bill that was passed out of committee, puts a real poison pill in this bill for consumer advocates, such as myself.

The bill adds the language that nothing in this subsection shall be construed to permit the unlocking of wireless handsets or other wireless devices for the purpose of bulk resale or to authorize the Librarian of Congress to authorize circumvention for such purpose or any other provision of law.

Now, while this gives, again, at least a patina of deniability that the bill is making a statement in one way or the other, the statement certainly implies that Congress believes that bulk unlocking is, in fact, illegal.

Now, why is bulk unlocking important? When it comes to the actual technical skills necessary, many consumers are not going to be unlocking their phones themselves. There needs to be a market in unlocked phones for consumers to have the full ability and to be empowered to choose the provider of their choice.

This bill does weigh in, with congressional intent, against the creation of a dynamic marketplace that increases consumer choice and options.

I think, without this clause, this was a bill that made it clear that we can't use the Digital Millennium Copyrights Act to interfere with an issue that is unrelated to copyright, but with this clause, it suggests that perhaps the DMCA's clauses can be used for non-copyright issues if, perhaps, somebody doesn't like the motive behind the unlocker.

So, as a result of this change, a number of organizations have withdrawn their support: iFixit, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, Public Knowledge, Generation Opportunity, and FreedomWorks.

I hope to be able to continue to work with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to improve this bill, but with the current language, I do not believe, at this point, that this bill is a step forward for consumers.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, at this time, it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), the chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

Mr. ISSA. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, when I was alerted as to this change, like Mr. POLIS, I asked, What will be the impact? And, at first glance, I was concerned that it could be a poison pill, that it could limit the ability, for example, for somebody to take trade-ins of thousands of phones and unlock them, but I found no such case because they are buying from an individual.

At that moment, they choose to unlock it as part of the arrangement, and you now have an unlocked phone. There is no prohibition on buying 500 unlocked phones and selling 500 unlocked phones.

As a matter of fact, when I went through the language of bulk sales, I could find essentially no possible business plan that would require the unlocking of bulk phones, except as to buying from a wholesaler who did not intend them to be unlocked, intended them to be sold individually, unlocking them, and then selling them off to another party.

Any transaction in which the product gets to an individual or in which unlocking occurs at the time of the individual is fully covered by this bill.

So although I did share the concern of the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) that there was a scenario in which somebody would not be able to unlock a phone, I discovered that there was nothing that the consumer would be affected by that could possibly affect this.

For example, let me say that, hypothetically, I am that individual, that company, and Mr. POLIS and I have something in common, which is we both ran companies. If I am an individual and I want to buy 1,000 locked phones, there is going to be an easy unlock capability. Third parties are going to be able to provide the unlock capability.

I can buy 1,000 locked phones or 100,000 locked phones. I can sell them to somebody else, who sells them to somebody else. Anytime that company or individual is down to the end user who wants to unlock a phone, that capability is there.

Mr. POLIS is one of the most intelligent and knowledgeable and trained people in this area of anyone in Congress, but if we go through each of the workarounds that we, in business, would do, I can find no scenario whatsoever in which this would stop the consumer from receiving an unlocked phone, if they chose to, even if, in the interim basis, there were many transactions of 10 or 100,000 phones of bulk sale.

It does not prevent the sale of unlocked bulk phones being sold and re-

sold. It does not prevent the bulk sale of locked phones. So you only have to ensure, as I understand the law—and I have checked it against the language—that the unlocking occurs in support of the consumer.

So though I share the opposition's concern, I believe—I have looked through, vetted it, and like Mr. POLIS, as a businessman, I have found that it stops no business plan and hurts no consumer.

I thank the chairman for bringing this legislation. I urge its support.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Will the gentleman yield?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from California.

Mr. ISSA. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOODLATTE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, on the very point that the gentleman from California just raised, I will submit a letter for the RECORD from the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council, representing many small businesses and entrepreneurs around America and endorsing this legislation.

I would also like to note that the Consumers Union of America and the Competitive Carriers Association, which are the small telecommunications companies that have to compete with the big behemoths, would both be concerned about their ability to compete in this very area; but they both support this legislation as well, the Consumers Union representing consumers and small businesses, and the SBE representing small businesses and entrepreneurs.

SBE COUNCIL,

Vienna, VA, February 24, 2014.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council (SBE Council) is pleased to support H.R. 1123, the Unlocking Consumer Choice and Wireless Competition Act of 2013. Entrepreneurs require flexibility to successfully run their businesses, and they certainly support the freedom and choice provided by H.R. 1123.

H.R. 1123 repeals a Library of Congress (LOC) rulemaking determination regarding the circumvention of measures controlling access to copyrighted software on wireless telephone handsets for the purposes of connecting to other, different wireless handsets. This means entrepreneurs and small businesses can easily switch to another carrier once their contracts expire on their cell phones or tablets.

H.R. 1123 is a common sense measure that aligns government policies with the flexibility the 100,000 members of SBE Council need. We look forward to working with you to advance H.R. 1123.

Sincerely,

KAREN KERRIGAN,
President and Chief Executive Officer.

NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE,

Washington, DC, February 24, 2014.

Hon. ROBERT W. GOODLATTE,
Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN, I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to advise you of our support for H.R. 1123, the "Unlocking Consumer Choice and Wireless Competition Act," which has been favorably reported by your committee and is scheduled to be considered by the House later this week.

Law enforcement agencies across the country, and especially in large urban areas, have been experiencing an increase in the number of crimes that involve stolen wireless devices. Often, smartphones are stolen from consumers and then sold to the criminal equivalent of an aggregator who unlocks them in bulk and attempts to sell them domestically or abroad. The ability to unlock these devices is a critical part of criminals' ability to resell them at a profit.

For this reason, as Congress contemplates legislation to facilitate lawful unlocking by individuals, either for themselves or for devices on a family plan, we urge you to retain the prohibition on bulk unlocking consistent with both the 2010 and 2012 decisions from the Copyright Office. We believe that maintaining this prohibition will reduce smartphone thefts because the criminal sale of these devices will no longer be as profitable.

Thank you as always for considering the views of the more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police. If I can provide any more information on this issue, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco in my Washington office.

Sincerely,

CHUCK CANTERBURY,
National President.

Mr. POLIS. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the inability to unlock cell phones means that the original wireless carrier has an unfair and unnecessary competitive advantage. In many instances, the sole purpose of locking a cell phone is to keep consumers bound to their existing networks.

Consumers often buy a new cell phone as part of their initial purchase of service from a carrier's wireless network. Because the phone is locked into that carrier's network, at the end of the first term of service, the consumer is forced to stay with that provider, sometimes at a higher rate, or being stuck with a useless locked phone.

Allowing a phone to be unlocked will allow a consumer to keep his phone and switch carriers to a more appropriate, affordable, or suitable plan and have that opportunity, without having to purchase a new phone. So I support H.R. 1123, as amended, as it will restore a consumer's ability to unlock their cell phones.

Now, obviously, allowing millions of consumers who wish to unlock their cell phones and switch to another provider, obviously, that has widespread support. The White House, the Federal

Communications Commission, and others that the chairman of the committee have mentioned have all urged Congress to allow cell phone unlocking.

The bill, as amended, makes improvements to the bill as reported by the Judiciary Committee. The new language in the bill makes it clear that the sole purpose of the bill is to allow unlocking in order to switch carriers.

This bipartisan legislation enhances consumer choice in the cell phone market, and accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, at this time, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CHAFFETZ), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. CHAFFETZ. I thank the gentleman from Virginia, Chairman GOODLATTE, for his leadership on this issue.

We woke up one day, Mr. Speaker, and the Library of Congress—the Library of Congress—decided that, if you unlocked your cell phone, that that would be a felony—a felony.

You go and buy a mobile phone. It is your phone. You own it. The current law on the books today, if you go to unlock that phone, you have committed a felony in the United States of America.

You have got to be kidding me. It is a felony to unlock your cell phone?

This bill today is short, sweet, and is simple. It is not a big, broad review of the DMCA. We are just trying to do something simple. We have an opportunity to make sure that that good person at home who wants to unlock their phone doesn't commit a felony. It is that short. It is that sweet. It is that simple.

I stand with Representatives LOFGREN, POLIS, and others who want to look at this bigger, broader reform. But for today, could we please just make sure that it is not a felony to unlock your own phone? My goodness. We can do that. We can do that.

I urge a "yes" vote on this bill. I appreciate the chairman's leadership. Let's get this done. Vote "yes."

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In listening to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), there was a discussion of to what degree does this language interfere with potential and existing business models, and I agree with them. There are many workarounds. I think the danger here is invoking the language of copyright in an unrelated area.

To quote from Public Knowledge: this new language, even if Congress believes that bulk unlocking is a problem, it is clear that it is not a copyright problem. Just as individual unlocking is not a copyright problem, a bill designed to scale back overreaching copyright laws should not also endorse an overreach of copyright law.

I have a full statement from Public Knowledge that I will submit for the RECORD, Mr. Speaker. And as put by the Electronic Frontier Foundation, by expressly excluding bulk unlocking, this new legislation sends two dangerous signals: one, that Congress is okay with using copyright as an excuse to inhibit certain business models, even if the business isn't actually infringing on any of its copyrights; and, two, that Congress still doesn't understand the collateral damage section 1201 is causing.

For example, bulk unlocking not only benefits consumers, but it is also good for the environment. Unlocking allows reuse, and that means less electronic waste. I will be submitting the Electronic Frontier Foundation statement into the RECORD.

Again, the bill, as it passed committee, didn't weigh in on these matters of bulk unlocking and was satisfactory to consumer advocacy groups, including those that have now come out in opposition to this underlying bill.

Many of the arguments that the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) made about the potential use of phones for criminal purposes may, in fact, be valid arguments and may, in fact, deserve policy responses, but not within the realm of copyright law.

They deserve appropriate attention within the realm of criminal law and perhaps might prevail upon the expertise of both of my colleagues from Virginia, who know far more about these matters than I.

But if there needs to be harsher penalties or more enforcement within criminal law with regard to the illegal use of cell phones, whether locked or unlocked, or illicit transactions, that would be an appropriate venue.

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But invoking copyright law is a very dangerous precedent for an unrelated area. We did reach a bipartisan consensus on this bill in July, but at the last minute after the bill was marked up and reported out, this new language was added to the bill that would have negative effects on consumers' ability to unlock their phones.

The new language specifically states that the bill does not apply to bulk unlocking. Now, that signals that Congress believes that it is illegal for companies, including many small businesses and start-ups, to unlock cell phones in bulk, again, as Mr. ISSA pointed out, not binding language, not something that immediately would be used to prosecute a small business, but it would create greater uncertainty—not less uncertainty—around unlocking of cell phones in bulk, which could make it more difficult for consumers to buy an already unlocked, used cell phone. Again, since many consumers lack the technical expertise

themselves to unlock cell phones, we want to ensure that they have availability to purchase unlocked cell phones and use them with the carrier of their choice.

Again, this is an inappropriate use of copyright law to bar small businesses and large businesses from unlocking devices when it has nothing to do with making illegal copies of protected works, the purpose of copyright law. Again, if there is a criminal problem, we should address that within the realm of criminal law and enforcement, not within the realm of copyright.

My colleague, Congresswoman LOFGREN, offered compromise language to Chairman GOODLATTE, but she reports back that this language was rejected because it was provided too late in the process. Again, I wish that Congresswoman LOFGREN and others were brought in earlier in the process. I think there was the general assumption among the advocates on my side of the bill and that encourage more consumer choice that the bill, as reported from committee, would be the bill that was considered on the floor, as is traditionally done.

Unfortunately, we are not voting on that bill that had that bipartisan consensus in committee. The bill has changed, and the bill now can be perceived as picking sides with regard to congressional intent of application of copyright law for bulk unlocking, something that many of us see as a negative precedent with regard to consumer choice and overreach of using copyright law to protect incumbent advantages.

But, Mr. Speaker, it is never too late to reach a compromise. There is no rush to bring this bill to the floor today. There is a temporary agreement in place which offers consumers the same protections that are considered under this bill, and I hope that the chair and ranking member consider working to improve this bill so that it can pass this body unanimously. It doesn't need to be a controversial bill.

I fear that the bill currently before us, while, again, it enshrines some of the current protections that protect consumers that Mr. CHAFFETZ talked so passionately about, also, unfortunately, weighs in in applying copyright law in an unrelated area that can have the effect of restricting consumer choice.

I reserve the balance of my time.

REP. GOODLATTE SLIPS SECRET CHANGE INTO PHONE UNLOCKING BILL THAT OPENS THE DMCA UP FOR WIDER ABUSE

(By Mike Masnick)

As you may recall, there's been a ridiculous (on many levels) fight concerning the legality of "unlocking" mobile phones. Let's go through the history first. Because of section 1201 of the DMCA, the "anti-circumvention" provision, companies have been abusing copyright law to block all sorts of actions that are totally unrelated to copyright.

That's because 1201 makes it illegal to circumvent basically any "technological protection measures." The intent of the copyright maximalists was to use this section to stop people from breaking DRM. However, other companies soon distorted the language to argue that it could be used to block certain actions totally unrelated to copyright law—such as unlocking garage doors, ink jet cartridges, gaming accessories . . . and phones. There have been court cases about a number of these issues, with (thankfully) many courts ruling against this kind of abuse, though it still happens.

Separately, every three years, the Librarian of Congress gets to announce "exemptions" to section 1201 where it feels that things are being locked up that shouldn't be. Back in 2006, one of these exemptions involved mobile phone unlocking. Every three years this exemption was modified a bit, but in 2012, for unexplained reasons, the Librarian of Congress dropped that exemption entirely, meaning that starting in late January of 2013, it was possible to interpret the DMCA to mean that phone unlocking was illegal. In response to this there was a major White House petition—which got over 100,000 signatures, leading the White House to announce (just weeks later) that it thought unlocking should be legal—though, oddly, it seemed to place the issue with the FCC to fix, rather than recognizing the problem was with current copyright law.

Following this, a slew of new bills were introduced in Congress, many of which attempted to narrowly deal with the specific issue, while leaving the larger issues untouched. Many of these bills were incredibly problematic, though eventually the consensus seemed to get behind one bill before . . . nothing. Fast forward a year and nothing has changed, though the main bill, supported by Rep. Goodlatte, called the Unlocking Consumer Choice Act, is scheduled to go to a vote on Tuesday. It had gone through the basic markup process and some adjustments had been made to make it a good first step towards fixing problems.

As of last week, a bunch of folks, who were concerned about the issues with unlocking and how Section 1201 was a problem, were supportive of this bill and were expecting to publicly speak out in favor of getting the bill passed. Except . . . late last week, with no explanation whatsoever, and no consultation with others even though the markup and Judiciary Committee process had already concluded, Rep. Goodlatte slipped into the bill a little poison pill/favor to big phone companies, adding a seemingly innocuous statement as section (c)(2):

No Bulk Unlocking—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to permit the unlocking of wireless handsets or other wireless devices, for the purpose of bulk resale, or to authorize the Librarian of Congress to authorize circumvention for such purpose under this Act, title 17, United States Code, or any other provision of law.

While this gives Goodlatte and other maximalists some sort of plausible deniability that this bill is making no statement one way or the other on bulk unlocking, it certainly very strongly implies that Congress believes bulk unlocking is, in fact, still illegal. And that's massively problematic on any number of levels, in part suggesting that the unlocker's motives in unlocking has an impact on the determination under Section 1201 as to whether or not it's legal. And that's an entirely subjective distinction when a bill seems to assume motives, which makes an already problematic

Section 1201 much more problematic. Without that clause, this seemed like a bill that was making it clear that you can't use the DMCA to interfere with an issue that is clearly unrelated to copyright, such as phone unlocking. But with this clause, it suggests that perhaps the DMCA's anti-circumvention clause can be used for entirely non-copyright issues if someone doesn't like the "motive" behind the unlocker.

Given that, both Public Knowledge and EFF have pulled their support for the bill. As Public Knowledge noted:

"The new language specifically excluding bulk unlocking could indicate that the drafters believe that phone unlocking has something to do with copyright law. This is not a position we support. Even if Congress believes that bulk unlocking is a problem, it's clear that it's not a copyright problem, just as individual unlocking is not a copyright problem. A bill designed to scale back overreaching copyright laws should not also endorse an overreach of copyright law."

EFF made a similar statement:

By expressly excluding [bulk unlocking], this new legislation sends two dangerous signals: (1) that Congress is OK with using copyright as an excuse to inhibit certain business models, even if the business isn't actually infringing anyone's copyright; and (2) that Congress still doesn't understand the collateral damage Section 1201 is causing. For example, bulk unlocking not only benefits consumers, it's good for the environment—unlocking allows re-use, and that means less electronic waste.

Two members of Congress who have been closely associated with these issues, Reps. Zoe Lofgren and Anna Eshoo, also pulled their support of the bill late Monday as well, expressing their clear outrage at how this change was slipped in after the fact, in a letter sent to their colleagues in the House:

After this bill was marked up and reported out of committee, a new section was added to the bill without notice to or consultation with us. . . .

They furthermore point out that it's ridiculous that Congress is not fixing the broken anti-circumvention parts of the DMCA, and could possibly be strengthening them with this sneaky change of language:

In his concurring opinion in *Lexmark v. Static Control Components*, Judge Merritt wrote: "We should make clear that in the future companies like Lexmark cannot use the DMCA in conjunction with copyright law to create monopolies of manufactured goods for themselves . . ." The court's holding prevented Lexmark from using dubious copyright claims and an overboard reading of 17 USC 1201—the same section the Unlocking Consumer Choice Act alters—to prevent third parties from creating competing printer ink cartridges. The issue is similar here.

UNLOCKING TO GET A VOTE IN CONGRESS, BUT THE BILL IS FLAWED

(By Troy Wolverton)

Congress on Tuesday is expected to take up the issue of cell phone unlocking. But what started out as an effort to restore consumer rights may end up being a setback to consumers.

While consumers may soon be able to legally unlock their cell phones again, the bill that would temporarily restore that right would essentially prohibit companies from making a business doing the same thing. In other words, while you could legally unlock your own cell phone—if you can figure out how to do it—you might have a difficult time buying an already unlocked used cell

phone—because few of them would be on the market.

That wasn't how the bill, H.R. 1123, was originally written or what it stated when it was voted out of committee. Instead, the bill simply would have set aside for the next year or so a regulatory ruling from last year and allowed anyone—consumer or business—to unlock cell phones individually or in bulk.

But late last week, new language barring bulk unlocking was added surreptitiously to the bill. Although the new language wasn't subject to any hearings or public debate, it's included in the bill that will be voted on by Congress. What's worse is that the bill will apparently be voted on using a special procedure that would essentially bar both debate on the floor of the House and amendments to the bill.

The change to the bill was so substantial that Derek Khanna, a former Republican congressional staffer who started the campaign to reverse the regulatory ruling on unlocking and has worked for the past year to keep the issue alive, has become lukewarm on the bill, calling the new language "troublesome." While he's still backing the bill, Khanna expressed hope that the Senate, when considering the issue, would work on a bill without the bulk unlocking ban.

Other former backers have now dropped their support for the unlocking bill. Among them: the Electronic Frontier Foundation, consumer advocacy group Public Knowledge and local Democratic representatives Anna Eshoo and Zoe Lofgren.

"We're all for phone freedom and we wish we could support the bill. Unfortunately, however, the costs for users outweigh the benefits," the EFF said in statement.

Cell phone manufacturers and carriers frequently use software to bind or lock devices to particular networks. The locks are meant to make it difficult for consumers to take their devices with them to another carrier. Manufacturers and carriers say the locks are important to their businesses, allowing them to develop exclusive devices that can attract or retain consumers. Consumer advocates, meanwhile, basically view them as tools that thwart competition in the marketplace and prevent consumers from being able to fully control the devices they own.

The locks are protected by an obscure portion of U.S. copyright law that forbids consumers and businesses from tampering with protections put in place by intellectual property owners to protect their works—even when what they want to do with those works is completely legal or covered by fair use.

The Librarian of Congress is charged with reviewing, every three years, potential exemptions to that copyright provision. Starting in 2006, the Librarian recognized an exception for cell phone unlocking.

But in late 2012, the Librarian, citing the growing number of unlocked devices on the market, announced that the exemption would be revoked. Early last year, unlocking cell phones again became illegal.

Ever since, consumers and their advocates have pressed policy makers to overturn the Librarian's ruling. A petition to President Obama last year, for example, received more than 114,000 signatures in a little more than a month.

At its base, the dispute over unlocking is about whether copyright law can be twisted to forbid otherwise legal activities. The copyright provision that prohibits the breaking of software locks was written as the age of digital information was just starting to take off. One of the features of digital information is that computers can be used to

make perfect copies of originals. There was a real fear on the part of copyright holders that the market for their goods would be undermined by a flood of perfect digital copies of their works. Why buy a song from Apple if you can simply download the same one for free from Napster? The provision was written to allow copyright holders to protect their works from this kind of illicit mass copying.

But since then, the provision has been used to thwart all kinds of otherwise legitimate activities. Not only has the unlocking of cell phones been impeded by the provision, but so too have things like the “jailbreaking” of iPads so that they can run programs not approved by Apple, the making of printer cartridges by companies other than the printer manufacturer, and reporting on security vulnerabilities.

Advocates for a renewed right of unlocking generally oppose this kind of restrictive view of copyright. They’d like Congress or regulators to recognize that, in general, breaking software locks is OK if the intention is to do something legal, something that might be covered under fair use or other consumer rights.

What those advocates find objectionable about the bulk unlocking bar in the new bill is that it represents something of a Congressional imprimatur for the more restrictive view of copyright, one in which copyright law can be used to ban business practices that have nothing to do with making illicit copies of protected works.

As Eshoo and Lofgren put it in a joint statement today: “Congress should work to roll back abusive practices that use copyright law to prevent owners from having control over the devices they lawfully own. What it means to ‘own’ a device that has been purchased is what’s at stake here. The new addition to the bill puts the effort to stand up for the property rights of the owners of technology devices at risk.”

Eshoo, Lofgren and other backers of unlocking have put their hope in a broader bill co-authored by the two that would grant a permanent right for consumers and businesses to unlock phones, but to circumvent software locks if the intent is to do something non-infringing.

As I wrote in my column today, I think that bill is a long shot, given the current dysfunction of Congress. Instead, I argued that the Federal Communications Commission should simply step in now and bar the locking of cell phones to particular carriers.

[From washingtonpost.com, Feb. 21, 2014]

HERE’S WHAT REFORMERS SAY IS MISSING
FROM CONGRESS CELLPHONE UNLOCKING BILL
(By Timothy B. Lee)

Almost everyone agrees that unlocking your cellphone should be legal. But crafting legislation to give consumers the freedom everyone agrees they should have is surprisingly difficult.

The debate over cellphone unlocking started about a year ago, when a ruling by the Library of Congress suggested that unlocking your cellphone to take it to another wireless carrier could run afoul of copyright law. That triggered a grassroots backlash, prompting members of Congress and even the White House to support overruling the Librarian’s ruling.

But crafting legislation to permit cellphone unlocking has been surprisingly complicated. Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.), the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, has introduced legislation permitting consumers to unlock their cellphones. But that legislation has gotten lukewarm support

from public interest groups who say it doesn’t go far enough in recognizing consumer rights.

On Friday, the advocacy group Public Knowledge announced it was withdrawing support from Goodlatte’s bill after the chairman introduced a new version. The new version includes language permitting individuals to unlock their cellphones. But the legislation states that “nothing in this subsection shall be construed to permit the unlocking of wireless handsets or other wireless devices, for the purpose of bulk resale.”

The problem, according to Public Knowledge’s Sherwin Siy, is that the DMCA shouldn’t apply to phone unlocking—“bulk” or otherwise—in the first place. The DMCA was supposed to be about preventing piracy, not limiting what consumers do with their gadgets. The new Goodlatte bill “doesn’t prevent bulk unlocking but it certainly seems to suggest Congress thinks it’s already prohibited,” Siy says. That could be a step backwards.

The issue has significance well beyond cellphones. More and more of the products in our daily lives have computers embedded in them. If it’s illegal to unlock your cellphone, it might be illegal to modify or repair a wide variety of other products. For example, all modern cars have computers embedded in them, and repairing a car increasingly requires accessing its onboard software. Could car manufacturers invoke the DMCA to prevent unauthorized repair work?

An aide to the judiciary committee insists that critics like Siy are over-reading the legislation. The bill is intended to allow cellphone unlocking, the aide says, without affecting broader questions about the scope of the DMCA. Those broader issues will be tackled later, as part of a broader review of U.S. copyright law.

But the current furor over cellphone unlocking represents a rare opportunity to craft DMCA reform that could actually pass Congress. If Congress passes narrow legislation fixing only the most obvious abuse of the DMCA, there might not be enough political capital left for a broader reform later on.

The Electronic Frontier Foundation, another public interest group that favors overhauling the DMCA, shares Siy’s concern. “We are deeply concerned that the bill has new language excluding bulk unlocking,” EFF’s Corynne McSherry says. “Unlocking, whether individually or in bulk, makes reuse and repair possible, and is a public benefit. It should be clearly lawful.”

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to say to the gentleman from Colorado, I understand that you would like to see copyright law changed. But the fact of the matter is this is copyright law, and so the fact of the matter is right now consumers cannot legally unlock their phones, and we need to fix that problem. We have been working to do it.

I have worked very closely with the ranking member of the full committee and the ranking member of the subcommittee on the Judiciary Committee so that this change that was made is bipartisan. It should come as a surprise to no one because we, in fact, discussed this during the markup of the bill in the committee. When we did discuss that, we said we would continue to work with Members moving forward, and we came up with language that is bipartisan.

It is also supported, by the way, by Senator LEAHY and Senator GRASSLEY in the United States Senate. This is a bipartisan and bicameral compromise to move this legislation forward to address the concerns of organizations like the American Consumers Union supporting this legislation, the Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council, the Competitive Carriers Association, the CTIA, and also, importantly—

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. GOODLATTE. I yield myself an additional 30 seconds. I will read very briefly from the letter from the National Fraternal Order of Police.

It says: “As Congress contemplates legislation to facilitate lawful unlocking by individuals, either for themselves or for devices on a family plan, we urge you to retain the prohibition on bulk unlocking consistent with both the 2010 and 2012 decisions from the Copyright Office. We believe that maintaining this prohibition will reduce smartphone thefts because the criminal sale of these devices will no longer be as profitable.”

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) for purposes of a colloquy.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to engage the chairman in a colloquy.

Mr. Chairman, am I correct that this legislation is meant to preserve the Registrar of Copyrights’ findings on bulk resale of new phones in both the 2010 and 2012 rulemakings and is not intended to apply to used phones?

Mr. GOODLATTE. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOODLATTE. That is correct. This legislation is not intended to impair unlocking related to family plans consisting of a small number of handsets or of used phones by legitimate recyclers or resellers. The objective of this savings clause is to make it clear that the legislation does not cover those engaged in subsidy arbitrage or in attempting to use the unlocking process to further traffic in stolen devices.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Also, I think you have indicated that the Fraternal Order of Police is supportive of this provision as well?

Mr. GOODLATTE. That is correct.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, again, as we come here to talk about this, I join and associate myself with the gentleman from Utah and also the other comments that have

been made here. We are looking to protect consumers. I enjoy the opportunity to go forward and look at an issue which we are supportive of: consumer choice.

As a member of the Judiciary Committee's IP Subcommittee, I believe if a consumer has met their contractual obligations with a service provider, then they should have the right to unlock and use the device with another carrier.

Our Nation's intellectual property law should prioritize three things: innovation, creation, and competition. Frankly, holding consumers hostage to their carrier fails to pass the smell test in this category.

We live in an age where consumers want choice, access, and freedom. Although carriers may have to evolve and develop to address the changes that this legislation may have on their business models, I am confident that any changes made will only better serve the consumer and promote competition.

It is with that in mind that I understand the gentleman from Colorado, and I understand the thought, because I actually had passed and do support the larger measure that came out of the Judiciary Committee. But also, in taking into account, there is a process here in which I believe that immediate help to consumers is the bigger issue and would be willing and will work, as I have stated before, for the larger measures that have been talked about here before. However, to hold this bill as it is and say this is not something to move forward on I can't accept and would urge all Members to accept this bill. It is a process of moving forward.

I do not believe that there is picking sides here. In fact, what I believe is happening here is we are protecting consumers and moving the discussion down the line. That is what we are sent here to do, and I believe this is a good balance between the two.

I respect the gentleman from Colorado and, Mr. Speaker, believe that we can work further on this, but this is a bill that needs to be passed today so we can move on and protect our consumers.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your work and the work of the committee in doing so. This is a matter of consumers, this is a matter of choice, and we need to make sure that this body stands for that.

Mr. POLIS. I would like to inquire, Mr. Speaker, as to how much time remains on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Colorado has 7½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Virginia has 8 minutes remaining.

Mr. POLIS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again, there seems to be some strong, bipartisan consensus here that there remains more work to be done.

As Representative CHAFFETZ said, we do need a long-term solution. We need to ensure that any solution we enter is not compromised by our Nation's trade agreements to ensure that consumers are protected in control of their own devices in choosing the plan that they desire.

The language in question that was added after the bipartisan consensus was reached in committee is not operative language. It is not language that criminalizes something that wasn't criminal before or proactively bans the bulk sale of phones. What it does explicitly do is establish some degree of congressional intent.

Perhaps this colloquy between the two gentlemen from Virginia helped roll back a part of what could be read in the congressional intent of this language, and I am appreciative of that effort. However, congressional intent could, nevertheless, be construed that there is an imprint, there is a congressional desire to use a more restrictive view of copyright, one in which copyright laws can be used to ban business practices that have nothing to do with making illicit copies of protected works.

Copyrights are a very important area of law. It is meant to protect the creator of a work from having their work ripped off and sold and others profit at their expense. However, it is difficult to see, and this is why so many of us were critical of the Librarian of Congress' initial decision. It is very difficult to see what the nexus is between unlocking cell phones and copyright.

By adding this language in, it adds some degree of congressional perception that copyright law can be what many of us feel to be abused in this manner that reduces consumer choice and does not protect any legitimate creator of a work. Again, to the extent there are concerns from police and law enforcement officials with regard to how unlocked or locked cell phones are being used for transactions that are otherwise illegal, that is a question of criminal law and enforcement and something that I would hope to be certainly supportive of efforts within Judiciary or Homeland Security or other committees to ensure that we reduce crime across all of those. But let's not give the court's ruling on these actions a reason to think that perhaps Congress condones them.

Again, having my colleagues on both sides of the aisle on the RECORD talking about how this bill is simply a first step and how we need to go further and, of course, not backing away from the initial committee markup of the bill, it is certainly also helpful in establishing congressional intent. And that is really what we are talking about here. We are not talking about binding language where before this bill passes somebody doesn't go to jail, after this bill passes they do. We are talking about potential

use and precedent going forward with regard to how copyright law can, from my perception, be misapplied to reduce consumer choice in areas that are unrelated to the purpose of copyright protection.

That is why I continue to stand in opposition to this bill, certainly appreciating the step forward of enshrining in law potentially that it is no criminal penalty for an individual unlocking their own cell phone. But, again, we want to make sure it doesn't happen at the expense of moving the entire discussion in the wrong direction.

An opinion in yesterday's L.A. Times was headlined, "The House's cell phone unlocking bill: Thanks but no thanks." I would like to submit the L.A. Times op-ed into the RECORD, Mr. Speaker.

I reserve the balance of my time.

[From the Los Angeles Times, Feb. 25, 2014]

THE HOUSE'S CELLPHONE UNLOCKING BILL:
THANKS BUT NO THANKS

(By Jon Healey)

How hard can it be for Congress to make it legal for consumers to switch mobile networks without having to buy a new phone?

Too hard, evidently.

The House is scheduled to vote Tuesday on a bill that was supposed to clear the way for consumers to unlock the phones they buy from wireless companies after they've fulfilled their contracts. But the measure, which was modest to begin with, has been rendered irrelevant by voluntary agreements on unlocking that the Federal Communications Commission obtained from the wireless companies. The bill was also changed at the last minute in a way that arguably weakens consumers' ownership rights, prompting some consumer advocates and Democrats to withdraw their support.

The current version is so bad, consumers would be better off if Congress did nothing at all.

At issue is a dubious interpretation of copyright law that deters people from moving their phones from one network to another. Each mobile carrier typically sells phones with electronic locks that prevent them from being reprogrammed to work on rival carriers' networks. The U.S. Copyright Office, acting through the Librarian of Congress, ruled in 2012 that removing the locks violated the 1998 Digital Millennium Copyright Act, which forbids the circumvention of technologies that protect copyrighted works.

The ruling was bizarre, considering that the locks inside phones don't protect against software piracy; their only real purpose is to protect the mobile carriers' business model. And the carriers have (and use) better tools to recover the subsidies they put into the phones they sell, most notably contracts that impose hefty early termination penalties.

The 1998 law requires the Librarian of Congress to revisit the anti-circumvention rules every three years, which means the Electronic Frontier Foundation and other consumer advocates can try to set things right in 2015. Sadly, however, the default interpretation of the cellphone locks is that they are covered by the anti-circumvention ban.

The Copyright Office's decision, which took effect early last year, led more than 100,000 people to petition the White House for help. Tech-friendly lawmakers lined up to offer bills, including an elegantly simple one

by Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Wis.) that would require mobile companies to let customers unlock the wireless devices they buy, and a more sweeping proposal by Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) to exempt wireless device unlocking from the anti-circumvention ban.

The best of the bunch was a bill by Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-San Jose) and a bipartisan group of co-sponsors to limit the 1998 law's anti-circumvention rules to locks that protect against piracy. That bill also would have declared that it was not copyright infringement for the owner of a mobile device to unlock it for the purpose of switching to another network.

The House, however, is scheduled to take up a different measure Tuesday afternoon, H.R. 1123 by Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) and co-sponsors from both parties. As introduced, it would simply have replaced the Copyright Office's 2012 ruling with its decision in 2010 that cellphone owners could unlock their phones without running afoul of copyrights. It also would have called on the Librarian of Congress to decide within a year whether to extend the exemption to all other locked wireless devices, such as tablets.

The relief offered by the bill would have remained in effect only until the Librarian of Congress reviewed the anti-circumvention rules again in 2015, so it hardly seemed worth the effort. The version that the House is slated to vote on Tuesday also includes a new provision effectively barring devices from being unlocked in bulk for the purpose of reselling them.

The latter change disturbed Lofgren (a member of Goodlatte's committee) and fellow Silicon Valley Democrat Anna Eshoo, who accused Republicans of adding the provision in secret after the Judiciary Committee approved the bill. The proposed ban on unlocking for the sake of resale, they argued in a letter to colleagues Monday, is an inappropriate use of copyright law to stop people from disposing of the devices they buy as they please.

"Congress should work to roll back abusive practices that use copyright law to prevent owners from having control over the devices they lawfully own," Lofgren and Eshoo wrote. "What it means to 'own' a device that has been purchased is what's at stake here. The new addition to the bill puts the effort to stand up for the property rights of the owners of technology devices at risk."

Public Knowledge, a technology advocacy group, agreed. "Even if Congress believes that bulk unlocking is a problem, it's clear that it's not a copyright problem, just as individual unlocking is not a copyright problem," said Sherwin Siy, the group's vice president of legal affairs. "A bill designed to scale back overreaching copyright laws should not also endorse an overreach of copyright law."

Both Public Knowledge and the Electronic Frontier Foundation withdrew their support for the measure after the new provision was disclosed last week.

The House plans to bring up H.R. 1123 under an expedited procedure that forbids amendments but requires a two-thirds vote to pass. With some luck, Lofgren and Eshoo can rally all the supposedly tech-friendly members in the chamber to knock the bill off track.

As you may recall, there's been a ridiculous (on many levels) fight concerning the legality of "unlocking" mobile phones. Let's go through the history first. Because of section 1201 of the DMCA, the "anti-circumvention" provision, companies have been abus-

ing copyright law to block all sorts of activities that are totally unrelated to copyright. That's because 1201 makes it illegal to circumvent basically any "technological protection measures." The intent of the copyright maximalists was to use this section to stop people from breaking DRM. However, other companies soon distorted the language to argue that it could be used to block certain actions totally unrelated to copyright law—such as unlocking garage doors, ink jet cartridges, gaming accessories . . . and phones. There have been court cases about a number of these issues, with (thankfully) many courts ruling against this kind of abuse, though it still happens.

Separately, every three years, the Librarian of Congress gets to announce "exemptions" to section 1201 where it feels that things are being locked up that shouldn't be. Back in 2006, one of these exemptions involved mobile phone unlocking. Every three years this exemption was modified a bit, but in 2012, for unexplained reasons, the Librarian of Congress dropped that exemption entirely, meaning that starting in late January of 2013, it was possible to interpret the DMCA to mean that phone unlocking was illegal. In response to this there was a major White House petition—which got over 100,000 signatures, leading the White House to announce (just weeks later) that it thought unlocking should be legal—though, oddly, it seemed to place the issue with the FCC to fix, rather than recognizing the problem was with current copyright law.

Following this, a slew of new bills were introduced in Congress, many of which attempted to narrowly deal with the specific issue, while leaving the larger issues untouched. Many of these bills were incredibly problematic, though eventually the consensus seemed to get behind one bill before . . . nothing. Fast forward a year and nothing has changed, though the main bill, supported by Rep. Goodlatte, called the Unlocking Consumer Choice Act, is scheduled to go to a vote on Tuesday. It had gone through the basic markup process and some adjustments had been made to make it a good first step towards fixing problems.

As of last week, a bunch of folks, who were concerned about the issues with unlocking and how Section 1201 was a problem, were supportive of this bill and were expecting to publicly speak out in favor of getting the bill passed. Except . . . late last week, with no explanation whatsoever, and no consultation with others even though the markup and Judiciary Committee process had already concluded, Rep. Goodlatte slipped into the bill a little poison pill/favor to big phone companies, adding a seemingly innocuous statement as section (c)(2):

No Bulk Unlocking—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to permit the unlocking of wireless handsets or other wireless devices, for the purpose of bulk resale, or to authorize the Librarian of Congress to authorize circumvention for such purpose under this Act, title 17, United States Code, or any other provision of law.

While this gives Goodlatte and other maximalists some sort of plausible deniability that this bill is making no statement one way or the other on bulk unlocking, it certainly very strongly implies that Congress believes bulk unlocking is, in fact, still illegal. And that's massively problematic on any number of levels, in part suggesting that the unlocker's motives in unlocking has an impact on the determination under Section 1201 as to whether or not it's legal. And that's an entirely subjective

distinction when a bill seems to assume motives, which makes an already problematic Section 1201 much more problematic. Without that clause, this seemed like a bill that was making it clear that you can't use the DMCA to interfere with an issue that is clearly unrelated to copyright, such as phone unlocking. But with this clause, it suggests that perhaps the DMCA's anti-circumvention clause can be used for entirely non-copyright issues if someone doesn't like the "motive" behind the unlocker.

Given that, both Public Knowledge and EFF have pulled their support for the bill. As Public Knowledge noted:

"The new language specifically excluding bulk unlocking could indicate that the drafters believe that phone unlocking has something to do with copyright law. This is not a position we support. Even if Congress believes that bulk unlocking is a problem, it's clear that it's not a copyright problem, just as individual unlocking is not a copyright problem. A bill designed to scale back overreaching copyright laws should not also endorse an overreach of copyright law."

EFF made a similar statement:

By expressly excluding [bulk unlocking], this new legislation sends two dangerous signals: (1) that Congress is OK with using copyright as an excuse to inhibit certain business models, even if the business isn't actually infringing anyone's copyright; and (2) that Congress still doesn't understand the collateral damage Section 1201 is causing. For example, bulk unlocking not only benefits consumers, it's good for the environment—unlocking allows re-use, and that means less electronic waste

Two members of Congress who have been closely associated with these issues, Reps. Zoe Lofgren and Anna Eshoo, also pulled their support of the bill late Monday as well, expressing their clear outrage at how this change was slipped in after the fact, in a letter sent to their colleagues in the House:

After this bill was marked up and reported out of committee, a new section was added to the bill without notice to or consultation with us. . . .

They furthermore point out that it's ridiculous that Congress is not fixing the broken anti-circumvention parts of the DMCA, and could possibly be strengthening them with this sneaky change of language:

In his concurring opinion in *Lexmark v. Static Control Components*, Judge Merritt wrote: "We should make clear that in the future companies like Lexmark cannot use the DMCA in conjunction with copyright law to create monopolies of manufactured goods for themselves. . . ." The court's holding prevented Lexmark from using dubious copyright claims and an overboard reading of 17 USC 1201—the same section the Unlocking Consumer Choice Act alters—to prevent third parties from creating competing printer ink cartridges. The issue is similar here.

Congress should work to roll back abusive practices that use copyright law to prevent owners from having control over the devices they lawfully own. What it means to "own" a device that has been purchased is what's at stake here. The new addition to the bill puts the effort to stand up for the property rights of the owners of technology devices at risk.

It is sad that the bipartisan consensus reached during mark-up in the Judiciary committee to improve the law has been destroyed by a secret decision of the majority after the bill was reported out.

Unfortunately, the bill was deemed so uncontroversial that it's been listed on the suspension calendar of the House, which is

where non-controversial bills are put to ensure quick passage. That means that, not only did Goodlatte slip in a significant change to this bill that impacts the entire meaning and intent of the bill long after it went through the committee process (and without informing anyone about it), but he also got it put on the list of non-controversial bills to try to have it slip through without anyone even noticing.

Either way, it seems that even if the bill does pass, it won't do anything to fix a very broken part of the DMCA and, in fact, could make it somewhat worse. Politics as usual when it comes to anything having to do with copyright.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I am the last speaker remaining on our side. I believe I have the right to close, so if the gentleman has anything else he would like to say.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I yield myself the balance of my time.

I am heartened by the discussion on both sides of the aisle with regard to the path forward. I wish we could be at a better place today. I think we had a bill that was reported out of committee that would not have engendered, I don't believe, any degree of controversy here on the floor of the House.

We have now moved to a place where the bill does invoke some degree of appropriate controversy and some degree of appropriate opposition. I would advance that it is never too late to reach a compromise, either before this bill is voted upon—perhaps my colleague, Mr. GOODLATTE, will be willing to consider Ms. LOFGREN's language change—or after this bill passes. I think that we would all agree that this issue is not one in any way, shape, or form that is being put to bed here today.

I would hope that, as a guiding principle, Members on both sides of the aisle look to consumer choice and the power of markets to achieve the best outcome and ensure that incumbents don't seek to co-opt copyright law to the detriment of our economy and the detriment of consumer choice.

□ 1630

Again, this bill has language that can be construed as applying copyright law in another area and having a congressional blessing to do so, which is why I encourage my colleagues to join Electronic Frontier Foundation, Public Knowledge, Generation Opportunity, FreedomWorks, and iFixit, and some of those very organizations that were in the forefront of proposing that we pass a bill that allows unlocking that have since withdrawn their support from this bill because of the last-minute changes, which I saw for the first time yesterday and that I wish this House had a bigger opportunity to vet, perhaps bringing this bill forward under a rule if the suspension motion fails.

If a third of the Members of the House oppose, we would have an opportunity to remedy this bill under a rule that was hopefully structured to allow

for compromise language that would then allow the bill to proceed with near unanimity. I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle see that as an opportunity, certainly not as a rebuke to the chair and ranking member on the committee. We appreciate the direction and the intent behind this bill, their desire to make sure that Americans know that they are not under duress or a criminal threat if they are unlocking their own cell phone. That is a sentiment that both the chair and the ranking member have echoed passionately, but I think we can do better with regard to ensuring that this bill is also not a precedent for the use of overreaching copyright law and a congressional blessing to do so in a way that hampers the trade, the bulk trade of unlocked cell phones which offer great potential benefits to the marketplace and to consumers.

So I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this suspension bill, to consider working with both sides to get to "yes," and to move in a direction that we look at as a guiding principle, ensuring that consumers and the marketplace are allowed to fully operate without the co-option of copyright law to protect incumbents.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I would just say to the gentleman from Colorado, I understand his larger aspirations with regard to changes in copyright law. The committee recognizes that our copyright laws have not been amended in 40 years, and that we are conducting a comprehensive review. We have held many hearings on copyright issues already. We have many more planned, and we are going to continue that work, but this small bill to protect the rights of consumers on cell phone unlocking does not meet his aspirations to try to use it as a vehicle for greater things being done here because it is intended to be a narrow fix to a problem that was created when the Register of Copyrights did not take the necessary steps to allow the continued unlocking of cell phones.

So it has taken a great deal of bipartisan work on the part of the ranking member and myself; the ranking member of the subcommittee, who had objections to the bill as reported out of the committee, has since left Congress, and the new ranking member has signed off on the change that was made here to bring organizations like the Fraternal Order of Police into acceptance of this, and we still have the support of important consumer organizations, like Consumers Union, as well as the cell phone industry organizations. As a result, this legislation needs to move forward as it is today.

The savings clause that the gentleman objects to is meant to make it clear that this is focused on consumers and not on the larger issues. If enact-

ing in one area as we are in this very narrow, targeted bill, we sent a signal in another area, and a signal is what the gentleman identifies, we would never enact anything. So it is important that we address what is in this bill, the language that was worked out in the committee, that was discussed in the committee, that was then worked out further as the bill was reported to the floor, and pass this legislation today, and we can work on these broader issues in the future, but in the meantime, we need to protect the rights of our consumers to unlock the phones that they own when they purchase a used cell phone.

Ms. LOFGREN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOODLATTE. I am happy to yield briefly to the gentlewoman.

Ms. LOFGREN. I appreciate the gentleman yielding. I was delayed at the airport. I just wanted to indicate my opposition to the bill since it has been changed, noting that Public Knowledge in the Los Angeles Times said today that we would be better off doing nothing than the bill as changed. I have talked to the chairman about this, but I wanted to make my position clear. If we do not pass this bill because of the Obama administration's deal with the telecoms, consumers will still be able to unlock their phones. This is a step backwards.

I very much appreciate the gentleman's courtesy in yielding.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Reclaiming my time, what the gentlewoman says is, indeed, true; that there is a private agreement, but that private agreement cannot and does not mitigate the fact that the act of unlocking a cell phone carries with it a felony penalty under the law, and that is absolutely ridiculous. So this legislation needs to be passed, and we can then move on to have the larger debate about the importance of cell phone unlocking—or rather, section 1201 of the DMCA, and other issues as we move forward on various copyright issues in the committee, but now is not the place, now is not the time to have that debate.

This simple, bipartisan legislation should be passed by the House. I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1123, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS PROTECTION ACT OF 2013

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1944) to protect private property rights.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1944

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Private Property Rights Protection Act of 2013”.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON EMINENT DOMAIN ABUSE BY STATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—No State or political subdivision of a State shall exercise its power of eminent domain, or allow the exercise of such power by any person or entity to which such power has been delegated, over property to be used for economic development or over property that is used for economic development within 7 years after that exercise, if that State or political subdivision receives Federal economic development funds during any fiscal year in which the property is so used or intended to be used.

(b) INELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL FUNDS.—A violation of subsection (a) by a State or political subdivision shall render such State or political subdivision ineligible for any Federal economic development funds for a period of 2 fiscal years following a final judgment on the merits by a court of competent jurisdiction that such subsection has been violated, and any Federal agency charged with distributing those funds shall withhold them for such 2-year period, and any such funds distributed to such State or political subdivision shall be returned or reimbursed by such State or political subdivision to the appropriate Federal agency or authority of the Federal Government, or component thereof.

(c) OPPORTUNITY TO CURE VIOLATION.—A State or political subdivision shall not be ineligible for any Federal economic development funds under subsection (b) if such State or political subdivision returns all real property the taking of which was found by a court of competent jurisdiction to have constituted a violation of subsection (a) and replaces any other property destroyed and repairs any other property damaged as a result of such violation. In addition, the State or political subdivision must pay any applicable penalties and interest to reattain eligibility.

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON EMINENT DOMAIN ABUSE BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

The Federal Government or any authority of the Federal Government shall not exercise its power of eminent domain to be used for economic development.

SEC. 4. PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.

(a) CAUSE OF ACTION.—Any (1) owner of private property whose property is subject to eminent domain who suffers injury as a result of a violation of any provision of this Act with respect to that property, or (2) any tenant of property that is subject to eminent domain who suffers injury as a result of a violation of any provision of this Act with respect to that property, may bring an action to enforce any provision of this Act in the appropriate Federal or State court. A State shall not be immune under the 11th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States from any such action in a Fed-

eral or State court of competent jurisdiction. In such action, the defendant has the burden to show by clear and convincing evidence that the taking is not for economic development. Any such property owner or tenant may also seek an appropriate relief through a preliminary injunction or a temporary restraining order.

(b) LIMITATION ON BRINGING ACTION.—An action brought by a property owner or tenant under this Act may be brought if the property is used for economic development following the conclusion of any condemnation proceedings condemning the property of such property owner or tenant, but shall not be brought later than seven years following the conclusion of any such proceedings.

(c) ATTORNEYS’ FEE AND OTHER COSTS.—In any action or proceeding under this Act, the court shall allow a prevailing plaintiff a reasonable attorneys’ fee as part of the costs, and include expert fees as part of the attorneys’ fee.

SEC. 5. REPORTING OF VIOLATIONS TO ATTORNEY GENERAL.

(a) SUBMISSION OF REPORT TO ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Any (1) owner of private property whose property is subject to eminent domain who suffers injury as a result of a violation of any provision of this Act with respect to that property, or (2) any tenant of property that is subject to eminent domain who suffers injury as a result of a violation of any provision of this Act with respect to that property, may report a violation by the Federal Government, any authority of the Federal Government, State, or political subdivision of a State to the Attorney General.

(b) INVESTIGATION BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Upon receiving a report of an alleged violation, the Attorney General shall conduct an investigation to determine whether a violation exists.

(c) NOTIFICATION OF VIOLATION.—If the Attorney General concludes that a violation does exist, then the Attorney General shall notify the Federal Government, authority of the Federal Government, State, or political subdivision of a State that the Attorney General has determined that it is in violation of the Act. The notification shall further provide that the Federal Government, State, or political subdivision of a State has 90 days from the date of the notification to demonstrate to the Attorney General either that (1) it is not in violation of the Act or (2) that it has cured its violation by returning all real property the taking of which the Attorney General finds to have constituted a violation of the Act and replacing any other property destroyed and repairing any other property damaged as a result of such violation.

(d) ATTORNEY GENERAL’S BRINGING OF ACTION TO ENFORCE ACT.—If, at the end of the 90-day period described in subsection (c), the Attorney General determines that the Federal Government, authority of the Federal Government, State, or political subdivision of a State is still violating the Act or has not cured its violation as described in subsection (c), then the Attorney General will bring an action to enforce the Act unless the property owner or tenant who reported the violation has already brought an action to enforce the Act. In such a case, the Attorney General shall intervene if it determines that intervention is necessary in order to enforce the Act. The Attorney General may file its lawsuit to enforce the Act in the appropriate Federal or State court. A State shall not be immune under the 11th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States from any such action in a Federal or State court of

competent jurisdiction. In such action, the defendant has the burden to show by clear and convincing evidence that the taking is not for economic development. The Attorney General may seek any appropriate relief through a preliminary injunction or a temporary restraining order.

(e) LIMITATION ON BRINGING ACTION.—An action brought by the Attorney General under this Act may be brought if the property is used for economic development following the conclusion of any condemnation proceedings condemning the property of an owner or tenant who reports a violation of the Act to the Attorney General, but shall not be brought later than seven years following the conclusion of any such proceedings.

(f) ATTORNEYS’ FEE AND OTHER COSTS.—In any action or proceeding under this Act brought by the Attorney General, the court shall, if the Attorney General is a prevailing plaintiff, award the Attorney General a reasonable attorneys’ fee as part of the costs, and include expert fees as part of the attorneys’ fee.

SEC. 6. NOTIFICATION BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.

(a) NOTIFICATION TO STATES AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.—

(1) Not later than 30 days after the enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall provide to the chief executive officer of each State the text of this Act and a description of the rights of property owners and tenants under this Act.

(2) Not later than 120 days after the enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall compile a list of the Federal laws under which Federal economic development funds are distributed. The Attorney General shall compile annual revisions of such list as necessary. Such list and any successive revisions of such list shall be communicated by the Attorney General to the chief executive officer of each State and also made available on the Internet website maintained by the United States Department of Justice for use by the public and by the authorities in each State and political subdivisions of each State empowered to take private property and convert it to public use subject to just compensation for the taking.

(b) NOTIFICATION TO PROPERTY OWNERS AND TENANTS.—Not later than 30 days after the enactment of this Act, the Attorney General shall publish in the Federal Register and make available on the Internet website maintained by the United States Department of Justice a notice containing the text of this Act and a description of the rights of property owners and tenants under this Act.

SEC. 7. REPORTS.

(a) BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and every subsequent year thereafter, the Attorney General shall transmit a report identifying States or political subdivisions that have used eminent domain in violation of this Act to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate. The report shall—

(1) identify all private rights of action brought as a result of a State’s or political subdivision’s violation of this Act;

(2) identify all violations reported by property owners and tenants under section 5(c) of this Act;

(3) identify the percentage of minority residents compared to the surrounding non-minority residents and the median incomes of those impacted by a violation of this Act;

(4) identify all lawsuits brought by the Attorney General under section 5(d) of this Act;

(5) identify all States or political subdivisions that have lost Federal economic development funds as a result of a violation of this Act, as well as describe the type and amount of Federal economic development funds lost in each State or political subdivision and the Agency that is responsible for withholding such funds; and

(6) discuss all instances in which a State or political subdivision has cured a violation as described in section 2(c) of this Act.

(b) **DUTY OF STATES.**—Each State and local authority that is subject to a private right of action under this Act shall have the duty to report to the Attorney General such information with respect to such State and local authorities as the Attorney General needs to make the report required under subsection (a).

SEC. 8. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING RURAL AMERICA.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—The Congress finds the following:

(1) The founders realized the fundamental importance of property rights when they codified the Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution, which requires that private property shall not be taken “for public use, without just compensation”.

(2) Rural lands are unique in that they are not traditionally considered high tax revenue-generating properties for State and local governments. In addition, farmland and forest land owners need to have long-term certainty regarding their property rights in order to make the investment decisions to commit land to these uses.

(3) Ownership rights in rural land are fundamental building blocks for our Nation’s agriculture industry, which continues to be one of the most important economic sectors of our economy.

(4) In the wake of the Supreme Court’s decision in *Kelo v. City of New London*, abuse of eminent domain is a threat to the property rights of all private property owners, including rural land owners.

(b) **SENSE OF CONGRESS.**—It is the sense of Congress that the use of eminent domain for the purpose of economic development is a threat to agricultural and other property in rural America and that the Congress should protect the property rights of Americans, including those who reside in rural areas. Property rights are central to liberty in this country and to our economy. The use of eminent domain to take farmland and other rural property for economic development threatens liberty, rural economies, and the economy of the United States. The taking of farmland and rural property will have a direct impact on existing irrigation and reclamation projects. Furthermore, the use of eminent domain to take rural private property for private commercial uses will force increasing numbers of activities from private property onto this Nation’s public lands, including its National forests, National parks and wildlife refuges. This increase can overburden the infrastructure of these lands, reducing the enjoyment of such lands for all citizens. Americans should not have to fear the government’s taking their homes, farms, or businesses to give to other persons. Governments should not abuse the power of eminent domain to force rural property owners from their land in order to develop rural land into industrial and commercial property. Congress has a duty to protect the property rights of rural Americans in the face of eminent domain abuse.

SEC. 9. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the policy of the United States to encourage, support, and promote the private ownership of property and to ensure that the constitutional and other legal rights of private property owners are protected by the Federal Government.

SEC. 10. RELIGIOUS AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

(a) **PROHIBITION ON STATES.**—No State or political subdivision of a State shall exercise its power of eminent domain, or allow the exercise of such power by any person or entity to which such power has been delegated, over property of a religious or other nonprofit organization by reason of the nonprofit or tax-exempt status of such organization, or any quality related thereto if that State or political subdivision receives Federal economic development funds during any fiscal year in which it does so.

(b) **INELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL FUNDS.**—A violation of subsection (a) by a State or political subdivision shall render such State or political subdivision ineligible for any Federal economic development funds for a period of 2 fiscal years following a final judgment on the merits by a court of competent jurisdiction that such subsection has been violated, and any Federal agency charged with distributing those funds shall withhold them for such 2-year period, and any such funds distributed to such State or political subdivision shall be returned or reimbursed by such State or political subdivision to the appropriate Federal agency or authority of the Federal Government, or component thereof.

(c) **PROHIBITION ON FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.**—The Federal Government or any authority of the Federal Government shall not exercise its power of eminent domain over property of a religious or other nonprofit organization by reason of the nonprofit or tax-exempt status of such organization, or any quality related thereto.

SEC. 11. REPORT BY FEDERAL AGENCIES ON REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES RELATING TO EMINENT DOMAIN.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the head of each Executive department and agency shall review all rules, regulations, and procedures and report to the Attorney General on the activities of that department or agency to bring its rules, regulations and procedures into compliance with this Act.

SEC. 12. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that any and all precautions shall be taken by the government to avoid the unfair or unreasonable taking of property away from survivors of Hurricane Katrina who own, were bequeathed, or assigned such property, for economic development purposes or for the private use of others.

SEC. 13. DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT.

If the court determines that a violation of this Act has occurred, and that the violation has a disproportionately high impact on the poor or minorities, the Attorney General shall use reasonable efforts to locate former owners and tenants and inform them of the violation and any remedies they may have.

SEC. 14. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act the following definitions apply:

(1) **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.**—The term “economic development” means taking private property, without the consent of the owner, and conveying or leasing such property from one private person or entity to another private person or entity for commercial enterprise carried on for profit, or to increase tax revenue, tax base, employment, or

general economic health, except that such term shall not include—

(A) conveying private property—

(i) to public ownership, such as for a road, hospital, airport, or military base;

(ii) to an entity, such as a common carrier, that makes the property available to the general public as of right, such as a railroad or public facility;

(iii) for use as a road or other right of way or means, open to the public for transportation, whether free or by toll; and

(iv) for use as an aqueduct, flood control facility, pipeline, or similar use;

(B) removing harmful uses of land provided such uses constitute an immediate threat to public health and safety;

(C) leasing property to a private person or entity that occupies an incidental part of public property or a public facility, such as a retail establishment on the ground floor of a public building;

(D) acquiring abandoned property;

(E) clearing defective chains of title;

(F) taking private property for use by a utility providing electric, natural gas, telecommunication, water, wastewater, or other utility services either directly to the public or indirectly through provision of such services at the wholesale level for resale to the public; and

(G) redeveloping of a brownfield site as defined in the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act (42 U.S.C. 9601(39)).

(2) **FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDS.**—The term “Federal economic development funds” means any Federal funds distributed to or through States or political subdivisions of States under Federal laws designed to improve or increase the size of the economies of States or political subdivisions of States.

(3) **STATE.**—The term “State” means each of the several States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or any other territory or possession of the United States.

SEC. 15. LIMITATION ON STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act may be construed to supersede, limit, or otherwise affect any provision of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4601 et seq.).

SEC. 16. BROAD CONSTRUCTION.

This Act shall be construed in favor of a broad protection of private property rights, to the maximum extent permitted by the terms of this Act and the Constitution.

SEC. 17. SEVERABILITY AND EFFECTIVE DATE.

(a) **SEVERABILITY.**—The provisions of this Act are severable. If any provision of this Act, or any application thereof, is found unconstitutional, that finding shall not affect any provision or application of the Act not so adjudicated.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This Act shall take effect upon the first day of the first fiscal year that begins after the date of the enactment of this Act, but shall not apply to any project for which condemnation proceedings have been initiated prior to the date of enactment.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1944, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In 1997, Susette Kelo was trying to rebuild her life when she purchased a small, Victorian house perched on the waterfront in the Fort Trumbull neighborhood of New London, Connecticut. It was Susette's dream to own a home that looked out over the water. The little pink house she purchased was in need of repair, but with lots of hard work, she was able to restore it and start a new life for herself on the banks of the Thames River. Susette was finally living her dream.

Tragically, however, the city of New London turned that dream into a nightmare.

In 1998, pharmaceutical giant Pfizer announced its intent to build a plant in Fort Trumbull, and the city of New London began planning a massive redevelopment of the area surrounding the Pfizer plant. The city handed its power of eminent domain to a private corporation to take the entire neighborhood for economic development purposes.

Susette and several of her neighbors, some of whose families had lived in their homes for generations, challenged the city's use of eminent domain all of the way to the U.S. Supreme Court in a desperate attempt to save their homes and their mostly blue collar neighborhood.

However, the Supreme Court, in one of the most controversial rulings in its history, held that private economic development constitutes a "public use" under the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution. Under the Court's reasoning, the government can now use the eminent domain power to take the property of any individual for nearly any reason. As the dissenting justices observed, by defining public use so expansively, the result of the decision is:

Effectively to delete the words "for public use" from the takings clause of the Fifth Amendment. The specter of condemnation hangs over all property. Nothing is to prevent the State from replacing any Motel 6 with a Ritz-Carlton, any home with a shopping mall, or any farm with a factory. The government now has license to transfer property from those with few resources to those with more. The Founders cannot have intended this perverse result.

The Court's 5-4 decision against Susette and her neighbors sparked a nationwide backlash against eminent

domain abuse. Susette's fight helped remind Americans that private ownership of property is vital to our freedom and our prosperity, and is one of the most fundamental principles embedded in the Constitution. Poll after poll that came out in the wake of the Court's ruling consistently showed that Americans from across every demographic cross-section overwhelmingly opposed the decision and supported efforts to strengthen property rights protections.

Although Susette's story is probably the most infamous case of eminent domain abuse, it is by no means an isolated case. Every day across this country, Americans are forced to sit back and watch powerlessly as their homes, small businesses, family farms, and churches are bulldozed to make way for high-end condos, shopping malls, and other upscale developments.

Oftentimes, after Americans go through the trauma of losing their private property to eminent domain abuse, the planned private economic development doesn't even occur. In New London, for instance, the Fort Trumbull redevelopment project never got off the ground. After spending close to \$80 million in taxpayer money, there has been no new construction, and the neighborhood where Susette Kelo's little pink house was located is now a barren field, overrun by weeds.

It is time for Congress finally to step in and do its part to rein in eminent domain abuse by passing the Private Property Rights Protection Act. I want to thank Mr. SENSENBRENNER for reintroducing this legislation. He and I have worked together on this issue for many years, and I am pleased that this legislation incorporates many provisions from legislation I helped introduce in the 109th Congress, the STOPP Act.

Specifically, the Private Property Rights Protection Act prohibits State and local governments that receive Federal economic development funds from using economic development as a justification for taking property from one person and giving it to another private entity. Any State or local government that violates this prohibition will be ineligible to receive Federal economic development funds for a period of 2 years.

Moreover, this legislation grants adversely affected landowners the right to use appropriate legal remedies to enforce the provisions of the bill. In addition, it allows State and local governments to cure violations by giving the property back to the original owner. No one should have to live in fear of the government snatching up their home, farm, church, or small business. As the Institute for Justice has observed:

Using eminent domain so another richer, better-connected person may live or work on the land you used to own tells Americans that their hopes, dreams, and hard work do

not matter as much as money and political influence. The use of eminent domain for private development has no place in a country built on traditions of independence, hard work, and protection of property rights.

This bill creates incentives for State and local governments to help ensure that eminent domain abuse does not occur in the future. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 1944, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in the wake of the Supreme Court's decision in *Kelo v. City of New London*, I have been concerned that States and municipalities could use this decision to expand their power of eminent domain, whether for the benefit of private parties or for public projects, to the detriment of those who are least powerful in the community.

While I believe the power of eminent domain has been abused, particularly against those lacking economic or political power, in the 9 years since the *Kelo* decision, States have properly addressed the issue on their own, and we should respect their judgment rather than impose this awkward, one-size-fits-all Federal legislative response.

I have reached this conclusion for several reasons. The first and foremost is that it is important to note that in *Kelo*, the Supreme Court acknowledged that State courts may interpret their own eminent domain powers in a manner that is actually more protective of property rights. I am, therefore, encouraged that no fewer than 43 States have followed that advice and taken steps to restrict their own powers of eminent domain to guard against abuse.

□ 1645

Given the fact that our system of federalism appears to be working and that the States have already enacted legal protections that are needed to prevent abuse of eminent domain power, I do not believe that Federal intervention is necessary or appropriate at this time.

Second, the bill's enforcement provisions are very troubling. A jurisdiction found in violation of this legislation would be stripped of all Federal economic development funds for 2 years, which could have a devastating impact on its financial health.

The Supreme Court has long held that, "when Congress attaches conditions to a State's acceptance of Federal funds, the conditions must be set out 'unambiguously.'" But the term "Federal economic development funds" is, in fact, ambiguous and could conceivably include transportation, housing, and all kinds of significant Federal funding.

Those who could bear the heaviest burden of cuts and programs like the Community Development Block Grants could be precisely the same communities that have suffered the most

under the abuse of eminent domain power in the past, that is, the powerless in our communities.

Furthermore, the impact of this legislation could be severe, even if a city or State never exercised the power of eminent domain. That is because no lender could ignore the risk of a future administration violating this legislation by using them in a domain for a prohibited purpose and, consequently, facing the devastating penalties during the life of the bond, thereby affecting the city's ability to make the payments on the bond.

This bill gives no discretion and no flexibility with respect to the penalty. It fails to take into account the severity or magnitude of the violation, so even a small violation would have to result in a complete loss of all economic development funds for 2 years.

No matter how clean a city's record may be, the danger that some future violation would have such a devastating effect could negatively impact its bond rating.

Finally, against this backdrop, we need to remember that eminent domain has a long and shameful history of disproportionately impacting foreign minority communities.

Inner-city neighborhoods that lacked institutional and political power were often designated as blighted areas slated for redevelopment through urban renewal programs. Properties were condemned, and land was turned over to private developers.

That abuse was not confined to the use of eminent domain for economic development purposes. Many of those abuses would still be allowed under this bill. You can trace the cost of any major highway in America to see where poor and minority communities were located. You can map political power, where it is and where it isn't, by the proposed route of the Keystone pipeline today.

This bill does nothing to protect property owners like the witness who testified before the House Judiciary Committee about how her property was taken to benefit the foreign corporation building that pipeline.

The bill does not even give property owners the right to sue to stop an illegal taking in the first place. Suits can only be brought after the property is taken, after it is too late. Despite the draconian penalties in the bill, the actual property owner would get nothing.

This underscores why it is important that we continue to monitor the facts on the ground to determine whether Federal action is warranted. If so, what effective action should be taken?

If the States fail to protect our citizens, Congress should remain ready, willing, and able to do so. However, as the States have already acted to curb reviews, we in Congress should allow them to maintain their authority to act.

Even if you believe the bill achieves the correct balance between State authority and Federal intervention and prohibits the inappropriate use of eminent domain, the irrational penalties it imposes and the fact that individual property owners are not even protected still require that the bill be defeated.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the legislation and reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, at this time, it is my pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER), the chairman of the Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations Subcommittee, and the chief sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the House of Representatives today is considering H.R. 1944, the Private Property Rights Protection Act, as part of Stop Government Abuse Week. My bill aims to restore the property rights of all Americans the Supreme Court took away 9 years ago.

The Founders of our country recognized the importance of an individual's right to personal property when they drafted the Constitution. The Fifth Amendment states, "nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation."

In *Kelo v. the City of New London*, in a 5-4 decision, the Supreme Court decided that economic development can be a public use under the Fifth Amendment's Takings Clause. The Court held that the government could take private property from an owner to help a corporation or a private developer.

The now infamous *Kelo* decision was met with swift and strong opposition. As former Justice O'Connor stated, "Government now has license to transfer property from those with fewer resources to those with more. The Founders cannot have intended this perverse result."

In the nearly 9 years since *Kelo*, polls show that Americans overwhelmingly oppose property being taken and transferred to another private owner, even if it is for a public economic good.

Groups including the AARP and NAACP oppose *Kelo*, noting that, "the takings that result [from the Court's decision] will disproportionately affect and harm the economically disadvantaged and, in particular, racial and ethnic minorities and the elderly."

Representatives of religious organizations have stated that, "Houses of worship and other religious institutions are, by their very nature, non-profit and almost universally tax-exempt. These fundamental characteristics of religious institutions render their property singularly vulnerable to being taken under the rationale approved by the Supreme Court."

Should the government be able to close churches if it prefers malls?

The Private Property Rights Protection Act is needed to restore to all Americans the property rights the Supreme Court took away. Although several States have independently passed legislation to limit their power of eminent domain, the supreme courts of Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio have barred the practice under State constitutions. These laws exist on a varying degree.

H.R. 1944 would prohibit State and local governments that receive Federal economic development funds from using economic development as a justification for taking property from one person and giving it to another private entity.

Any State or local government that violates this prohibition will be ineligible to receive Federal economic development funds for 2 years.

The protection of property rights is one of the most important tenets of our government.

I am mindful of the long history of eminent domain abuses, particularly in low-income and often predominantly minority neighborhoods, and the need to stop it.

I am also mindful of the reasons we should allow the government to take land when the way in which the land is being used constitutes an immediate threat to public health and safety. I believe this bill accomplishes both goals.

I urge my colleagues to join me in protecting property rights for all Americans and limiting the dangerous effects of the *Kelo* decision on the most vulnerable in society.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I have in my hand bits of the few remaining bricks from the foundation of Susette Kelo's home in New London, Connecticut. They were picked up at the site just over a year ago.

They once supported the lovingly arranged sanctuary of a woman who raised five sons and put herself through nursing school by working as an emergency medical technician. They gave her a place to rest after a long day's work surrounded by the things that meant the most to her. They were the foundations of her castle until the government's bulldozers arrived.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Kelo's home, known as the "little pink house," was reduced to rubble—this rubble—by the government's abuse of eminent domain and has remained just that—rubble.

These bits of bricks serve as a stark reminder of the government's inability to plan people's lives better than they can plan them themselves. They are the dramatic result of a type of government abuse that should never be rewarded with Federal taxpayer dollars. The homes that hardworking Americans have earned should be protected

from government abuse, and we here in the people's House have a duty to do just that.

I had the opportunity to meet Susette Kelo. To me, she is a genuine American hero, fighting all the way to the United States Supreme Court to protect her little pink house and to protect all of our Fifth Amendment rights under the United States Constitution.

To me, the failure of the Court to correctly rule on that eminent domain case cries out for the Congress to correctly rule on this abuse by passing Mr. SENSENBRENNER's bill, by passing the Private Property Rights Protection Act.

As has been noted, 43 States have acted to protect eminent domain rights. Isn't it time for the United States Congress to do the same?

I urge my colleagues to support the Private Property Rights Protection Act, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1944, the Private Property Rights Protection Act of 2013.

This legislation addresses the eminent domain practice of seizing private property for the "public benefit" of economic development, which was deemed constitutional by the United States Supreme Court in its decision in *Kelo v. City of New London*. This bill prohibits a state or local government from seizing private property for economic development if that state or local government receives federal economic development funds, and prohibits the federal government from exercising eminent domain powers for economic development purposes.

While it has not received much attention or debate in the full House of Representatives, my colleagues on the Committee on Financial Services and I have become increasingly concerned about a new proposed use of eminent domain which would be incredibly destructive to our housing markets and to Main Street investors alike.

Dozens of communities across the country are considering a vulture fund-developed investment scheme by which the municipality's eminent domain power is used to acquire underwater—but otherwise performing—mortgage loans held by private-label mortgage-backed securities and then refinance those loans through programs administered by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA).

Our housing finance system depends on private capital to take risk, make loans, purchase mortgage-backed securities, and help millions of Americans fulfill the dream of homeownership. What this eminent domain scheme considers would be incredibly destructive to the finance of homeownership and would do little more than help a few homeowners who can already afford their mortgage and line the pockets of the investors who developed this proposal. Who would invest in a mortgage knowing that their investment could be stolen just a few months or years later? Ironically, this new risk to the housing finance system would freeze the return of private capital to our markets at a time when many in Congress

are looking for ways to increase the role of the private sector and decrease the federal government's footprint.

Using eminent domain in this manner will hurt Main Street investors the most. Those investors and pensioners may be invested in mortgages sitting in communities considering this plan—like Richmond, California—and not even know it. They are the ones who will suffer the most from this particular form of eminent domain.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER's legislation shines a spotlight on the abusive uses of eminent domain, including this investment scheme, and I am proud to support the bill. I believe this legislation may have the effect of defeating such a scheme. In addition, I support Chairman HENSARLING's efforts to directly target and defeat this use of eminent domain, and I look forward to future opportunities to ensure the protection of private property and the security of our housing finance system.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1944, the Private Property Rights Protection Act of 2013. Unfortunately, I was delayed in returning to Washington and, regrettably, but want to take this opportunity to note its importance.

When we hear the words "eminent domain," we often visualize the government taking a home, an office building, or a piece of land, often for a highway or some other public infrastructure. But my colleague Mr. SENSENBRENNER articulated well in his remarks that the powers of eminent domain are sometimes used for very different purposes.

One abuse of eminent domain that I have long been publicly against is the use of eminent domain to seize mortgage notes from investors, using the courts to unilaterally restructure the terms of those loans before selling them to other investors. In this scheme, some private investors have their investments seized and incur losses while other private investors benefit. Many of the investors who will incur losses are the savers and retirees who own them through their 401(k), IRA, or pension accounts. But ultimately, this is a blatant abrogation of private property rights and undermines longstanding contract law. As a response, I have introduced H.R. 2733, which prohibits Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the Federal Housing Administration from making, purchasing, or guaranteeing loans in areas where eminent domain is being used to seize mortgage notes. This legislation is also included in the Protecting American Taxpayers and Homeowners (PATH) Act.

I believe that property rights, whether real property or the financial instruments that finance them, should be protected. Doing so will give certainty to the housing finance system, which is necessary to transition from a system dominated by government-guaranteed mortgages to one based on private capital.

The Private Property Rights Protection Act of 2013 is not the only legislation to address the issue of abusive eminent domain practices. Section 407 of the Consolidated Appropriation Act of 2014, Pub. L. No. 113–76, prohibits the expenditure of federal funds to support activities that utilize eminent domain powers, unless it's exclusively for a public purpose. The schemes being considered call for the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to

guarantee the seized and restructured mortgage loans. Given that some private investors and their paid intermediaries stand to benefit, it is apparent that FHA is unable to participate in these restructuring programs, so long as eminent domain powers are used. With this provision signed into law just last month, Congress and the President have already begun to define the limits of acceptable usage of eminent domain.

I thank Mr. SENSENBRENNER for his important work on this issue.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, in 2005 I supported a similar version of this bill that was truly bipartisan and aimed at reversing a Supreme Court decision, *Kelo v. City of New London*. In that decision, the Court upheld the right of New London to take private property and transfer it to another private individual for the purpose of increasing the tax revenue of the city. The House passed that bill (H.R. 4128) by a vote of 376–38, but the Senate never took up H.R. 4128.

Unfortunately, the version before us today goes much farther than the more narrowly tailored 2005 bill. H.R. 1944 would bar any form of eminent domain related to generating economic activity. Such a sweeping approach is contrary to the Constitution and to our history.

The rights of property owners were so important to our nation's founders that they enshrined property rights in our Constitution. However, the Founders knew that towns and municipalities would need to look after the greater public good and occasionally acquire property with just compensation to the owners in order to use that property for public good. The power of eminent domain has enabled us to make many advances over the years. It was used to create the national railroad system, the interstate highway system, and make telephone, electric, sewer, and water lines available to all our communities. Eminent domain, when used properly, is a critical power of government that has benefited people in New Jersey and across America. This bill would eviscerate this power, and for that reason I cannot support this bill in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1944.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

TAXPAYER TRANSPARENCY AND EFFICIENT AUDIT ACT

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2530) to improve transparency and efficiency with respect to audits and communications between taxpayers and the Internal Revenue Service, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2530

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Taxpayer Transparency and Efficient Audit Act”.

SEC. 2. DEADLINE FOR RESPONSES TO TAXPAYER CORRESPONDENCE.

Not later than 30 days after receiving any written correspondence from a taxpayer, the Internal Revenue Service shall provide a substantive written response. For purposes of the preceding sentence, an acknowledgment letter shall not be treated as a substantive response.

SEC. 3. TAXPAYER NOTIFICATION OF DISCLOSURES BY IRS OF TAXPAYER INFORMATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after disclosing any taxpayer information to any agency or instrumentality of Federal, State, or local government, the Internal Revenue Service shall provide a written notification to the taxpayer describing—

- (1) the information disclosed,
- (2) to whom it was disclosed, and
- (3) the date of disclosure.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Subsection (a) shall not apply if the Secretary of the Treasury, or the Secretary’s designee, determines that such notification would be detrimental to an ongoing criminal investigation or pose a risk to national security.

SEC. 4. DEADLINE FOR CONCLUSION OF AUDITS OF INDIVIDUAL TAXPAYERS.

If any audit of a tax return of an individual by the Internal Revenue Service is not concluded before the end of the 1-year period beginning on the date of the initiation of such audit, the Internal Revenue Service shall provide the taxpayer a written letter explaining why such audit has taken more than 1 year to complete.

SEC. 5. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements of this Act. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized or appropriated.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BENTIVOLIO). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 2530, the Taxpayer Transparency and Efficient Audit Act, is a direct response to testimony and inquiries and news reports that the Ways and Means Committee and other interested Members of Congress have heard about as it relates to the IRS scandal.

Part of the difficulty that American taxpayers have, Mr. Speaker, is that they feel that they are basically on their heels, that the Internal Revenue Service has all the power and has all the inertia and has all the momentum; and if you are a taxpayer and the IRS is coming after you, you feel as if, look, this is a one-way street, and they are able to target, and they are able to focus, and they are able to keep all this momentum and have us on our heels.

This is an effort to correct this problem. Every time the IRS shares a taxpayer’s information, the IRS, under this bill, must send a disclosure letter to the taxpayer within 30 days of the disclosure, except in cases where it would be detrimental to an ongoing criminal investigation or to national security.

□ 1700

Whenever the IRS receives correspondence from a taxpayer, the IRS must substantively respond within 30 days, and the response can’t simply be a pat on the head and an acknowledgment letter but a substantive reply. Finally, the bill creates the goal that audits should be completed within 1 year. If not, the IRS must send an explanation to the taxpayer as to why it took too long.

In a nutshell, Mr. Speaker, what we are trying to do is to put the IRS on notice that they have got an obligation to operate within certain timeframes, which is a 30-day substantive response; to finish an audit in a year and, if you can’t finish it in a year, have a good explanation as to why; and then also to make sure that, if information is being disclosed to someone outside the IRS—again, outside the context of a criminal investigation or of a national security incident—the IRS has to disclose that to the taxpayer.

Now, you might be thinking, Wow, what in the world? That is against the law already, and this information shouldn’t be shared outside the Internal Revenue Service. You would be right in thinking that.

The problem is we heard testimony—and it was very compelling testimony, Mr. Speaker—from a witness down in Texas, who described this experience. Her name was Catherine Engelbrecht, and she was the founder of an organization called True the Vote. This is somebody who decided to participate in public life, who decided to get organized and have a group. Lo and behold, over a period of time, once she decided that she was going to petition the Federal Government for status for her group True the Vote to be involved in election issues and ballot integrity issues, all of a sudden, she finds herself the subject of a great deal of interest from other elements of the Federal Government that have nothing to do with the tax inquiry. According to my information, she had 15 different visits from four different Federal agencies.

We may never get to the bottom of where it came from—where the leak took place—what was the theory behind it and how all of that came to pass, but we know this: we know that we can do something about it. We know that we can put limitations on the Internal Revenue Service that create a duty and an obligation and a legal sanction around which the IRS has to operate that says you cannot disclose this information and that, if this information is disclosed, you have a duty to let the taxpayer know.

Clearly, what we are trying to do with this legislation is to limit the Internal Revenue Service, not from collecting taxes, not from enforcing the law, not from doing the things that they are tasked and created by this body to do, but, instead, to do it in a limited fashion, to be wise, not to be abusive, not to be lording power over taxpayers. When it all comes down to it, let’s not forget this: we have a system of taxation that is based on—what? It is based on voluntary compliance. The Federal Government does not have the ability to go about and do all of this enforcement. So a voluntary tax compliance system is presumed.

What does that mean?

That means that the taxpayer has to have confidence that the tax-paying institution, itself, has integrity. As we know, that integrity is seriously in question, so I urge the favorable consideration of H.R. 2530.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased to join my colleague from Illinois in the discussion and debate of H.R. 2530, the Taxpayer Transparency and Efficient Audit Act.

Since 2010, the Internal Revenue Service’s total budget has declined by 8 percent. This may not sound like much except that the number of individual tax returns has gone up by 11 percent, and the number of business tax returns has gone up by 23 percent. What happens when you combine a larger workload with fewer employees? You get more unanswered mail, more unreturned phone calls, and the closing of taxpayer assistance centers around the country.

I recently had the pleasure of welcoming the new Internal Revenue Service Commissioner, John Koskinen, to the Ways and Means Committee. He painted a very bleak picture of the challenges the agency is facing.

Over the same 4-year period that the Internal Revenue Service’s budget has been slashed, the number of phone calls the agency receives has gone up by 40 percent. Over 100 million calls were placed by taxpayers to the Internal Revenue Service last year, and nearly 20 million of those calls went unanswered because the IRS did not have enough employees to answer them.

The Internal Revenue Service's ability to process taxpayer correspondence has taken a similar hit. The IRS tries to respond to taxpayer correspondence within 45 days. During the final week of fiscal year 2013, the IRS was unable to process 53 percent of its letters within the 45-day timeframe, and the open inventory of unanswered letters stood at 1.1 million.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us requires the Internal Revenue Service to provide written responses to taxpayers within 30 days. That is simply an impossibility given the current funding levels. The Republicans can't have it both ways.

You can't both complain about the IRS' not answering its mail within 30 days and then demand that its budget be cut at the same time.

Of course, the Internal Revenue Service would have more resources to spend on taxpayers if they were not wasting time and money responding to the Republicans' infinite document request. According to the latest letter from the Internal Revenue Service, dated February 7, 2014, over 150 IRS personnel have worked for a total of more than 79,000 hours to respond to ongoing congressional investigations. They have produced more than a half a million pages of documents, have had more than 60 transcribed interviews taken of IRS employees, and have answered questions at 14 congressional hearings.

Enough is enough. It is time for the Internal Revenue Service to get back to its primary mission of administering taxpayer services.

Mr. Speaker, I am also concerned about the provision in the bill that calls for audits to be completed within 1 year. This will create an incentive for criminals to try and delay any audit or investigation by the Internal Revenue Service to try and "run out the clock" so that they can avoid their taxes. We would not say that if you can avoid a criminal investigation for 1 year that your crime will be forgiven. So why would we say that for cheating on your taxes? Our constituents expect us to provide a level playing field when it comes to the Tax Code, and the Republicans should not tilt that playing field towards tax cheats in the pursuit of their November preelection strategy.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that all of this legislation designed to hurt the Internal Revenue Service instead places the burden most directly on the elderly, the poor, and the disabled. They are the ones who are most likely to need the services from the Internal Revenue Service that they can no longer find. This is not just a problem for the Internal Revenue Service or for taxpayers but also for this Congress. When our constituents cannot get the help they need and deserve from a Federal agency, they turn to us. It is not just the Commissioner who has called for more resources but also

the IRS Oversight Board, the Taxpayer Advocate, and the Treasury inspector general.

I am hopeful that this Congress will listen. These are our constituents who need us.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSKAM. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we are accused now of wanting to have it both ways. I suppose we are guilty as charged. We have an expectation that the Internal Revenue Service is going to work well with the resources that they have been appropriated and be able to be responsive to inquiries, but it is an important distinction because we are saying that the IRS has to respond at the same level at which they demand responses from the taxpayer.

So, when you get a letter at home from the Internal Revenue Service, there is nobody who is cavalier about that. What happens? You look at that. My constituents look at that. The business owners in my district—the small businesses in my district—look at something from the Internal Revenue Service, and they say, Stop the presses. Wow, we have got to stop everything. The IRS is coming in, and we have got to deal with this. Get on top of it.

Yet we are told that the Internal Revenue Service cannot be held to that same standard, to that same level of responsiveness that the IRS demands from American citizens—demands with the ability to fine, demands with the ability to imprison if necessary, demands with the ability to take your property away through the force of liens.

I think the IRS can handle it. I think the IRS is now recognizing, hey, there is something that is going on, and the American public is recognizing that what has actually happened is that they have delegated a great deal of authority to the Internal Revenue Service. With the way our Founders created our system, Mr. Speaker, now these citizens are saying, We want to reclaim the authority. Why? Because the authority has been abused.

You are going to be limited, Internal Revenue Service, based on this legislation and other legislation because you abused this.

This is not about the poor. This is not about the elderly. This is not about the disabled. Those arguments are not very persuasive. This is about the limitation of the long arm of the Federal Government being able to hold you to account and my constituents to account to a standard that they are unwilling to live by themselves. That is just wrong.

So do we want it both ways? Yes, we do. We want the Internal Revenue Service to be wise with the money that has been allocated to them, and we want them to be forthcoming and help-

ful when it comes to responding in the same way to which they have been responded.

Now, my distinguished colleague from Illinois has mentioned the consternation and hand-wringing that has come upon the Internal Revenue Service. Here is a fairly simple remedy, Mr. Speaker:

The Internal Revenue Service can be forthcoming. They can say, Here is the information, to the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, that you have requested. The chairman of the Ways and Means Committee has requested documentation, particularly about Lois Lerner, who is at the heart of this investigation.

Has the Internal Revenue Service been forthcoming to give Lois Lerner's emails? The answer is "no." It is difficult. It is one excuse after another. "We are looking." "We are searching." It is all of these sorts of "the dog ate my homework" responses.

Here is the simple remedy:

If it has taken too much time, if it is that big of a problem, if it is taking all of this energy that they want to devote to helping taxpayers that, instead, they are spending devoting to defending themselves in an investigation, save a lot of time—print out the emails, and send them to Chairman DAVE CAMP. That is how they can save time, and that is how they can save money.

By golly, we have got to get to a point where this agency is under control and is doing the right thing by those who have entrusted them with a great deal of authority.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time and am prepared to close. I will end with just two things.

I certainly appreciate the instructions as well as the passion from my colleague from Illinois, and I want every agency of our government to be as efficient as it possibly can and should be.

One of the things that we have learned is that you can't get blood out of a turnip.

□ 1715

You can squeeze it; you can tease it; you can do everything to it that you want to, but it will still end up being blood.

The other thing that I will end with is this month we celebrate African American History Month. I am reminded of something that Frederick Douglass said:

In this world, we may not get everything that we pay for, but we most certainly must pay for everything that we get.

I maintain that we must have the adequate resources that are needed for employees to do their jobs in a timely and efficient manner. And so I appreciate the comments of my colleague. I appreciate his passion.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) for his willingness to come and debate this issue. I appreciate his admonition about Frederick Douglass and that whole notion that we need to pay for what we get, and I think that that is a good word on which to end.

In other words, the American public has an expectation that they are going to get something, and they are paying for it. They are paying for it in taxes that, in some cases, are confiscatory—a very, very high tax burden—and they are voluntarily complying with the Tax Code. And toward that end, they have the expectation that they are going to be treated courteously, that they are going to be treated with respect, and that they are not going to be subsequently targeted by some other Federal agency completely unrelated to their inquiring.

So I urge the passage of H.R. 2530, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2530, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROTECTING TAXPAYERS FROM INTRUSIVE IRS REQUESTS ACT

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2531) to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from asking taxpayers questions regarding religious, political, or social beliefs.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2531

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Protecting Taxpayers from Intrusive IRS Requests Act”.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON QUESTIONS REGARDING RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL, OR SOCIAL BELIEFS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Internal Revenue Service shall not ask any taxpayer any question regarding religious, political, or social beliefs.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING EXCEPTIONS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) any exceptions to subsection (a) which are provided by later enacted provisions of law should identify the specific questions which are authorized, the class of taxpayers to which such questions are authorized to be asked, and the circumstances under which such questions are authorized to be asked, and

(2) if the Commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service determines that asking any class of taxpayers a question prohibited under subsection (a) would aid in the efficient administration of the tax laws, such Commissioner should submit a report to Congress which—

(A) includes such question in the verbatim form in which it is to be asked,

(B) describes the class of taxpayers to whom the question is to be asked, and

(C) describes the circumstances that would be required to exist before the question would be asked.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I draw your attention to H.R. 2531, the Protecting Taxpayers from Intrusive IRS Requests Act. Let me give you a quick summary, Mr. Speaker, of what the bill does. Let me give you an example that we heard in the Ways and Means Committee that prompted this. And I look forward to hearing from my colleague, Mr. DAVIS.

The legislation establishes a new procedure for the IRS to follow when asking questions regarding three areas: religious, political, and social beliefs. And the following is the new procedure: the IRS can't ask those questions. They can't ask about religious, political, or social beliefs. And there are two exceptions. One is a question or set of questions that is approved by Congress by an enacted law; or, if the IRS Commissioner deems questions are important to aid in tax administration and submits a report to Congress, which must include the following and be approved by a joint resolution of Congress:

State the specific questions that were authorized;

Describe the class of taxpayers who will be asked the questions;

Describe the circumstances surrounding the taxpayers being asked those questions.

So where is this coming from? What is this all about?

We heard testimony from six witnesses, Mr. Speaker, who came before the Ways and Means Committee as the IRS scandal was breaking. These six witnesses in particular I found to be compelling. I found them to be compelling for two reasons:

Number one, they didn't give up on their country. When they were being targeted by the Federal Government, these witnesses kept faith and kept hope with the America that they knew existed, and they were not willing to feel overwhelmed even though the events were actually fairly overwhelming, being targeted by your Federal Government to say you can and cannot participate in the public square. That is one reason I admire them.

The second reason, Mr. Speaker, was this. They came to Washington to do something about it. They engaged Congress. They engaged in the full committee. They gave compelling testimony. The testimony moved us. It moved me to introduce this bill.

Here was the single, without question, most compelling witness who spoke that day, in my view. She represented a right-to-life group in Iowa. She told the story of being asked by the Internal Revenue Service in written interrogatories—in other words, pieces of paper with questions written down that come from the Internal Revenue Service to their little group—and the inquiry was, Tell us about your prayers. Tell us about your prayer meetings. What goes on at those?

Mr. Speaker, you know as well as I do that our freedom to worship is our first freedom, and our freedom to worship is central to who we are.

The long, powerful arm of the Federal Government is coming in and grabbing a little right-to-life group by the neck and shaking them around, saying, Write down what happens in your prayer meetings and write it down and sign your name, under penalty of perjury. That is exactly what those questions did.

I was sobered by that. That was chastening testimony to hear that this agency, this agency of delegated authority from the people's House, has now used that and, I would argue, misused that. Why in the world does the Internal Revenue Service need to know about the prayer meetings of a pro-life group in Iowa? That is a shameful abuse and a shameful scandal that they even asked those questions.

But what does it tell you?

It tells you that there was a way of thinking, a culture, I would argue, at the Internal Revenue Service that said, We are empowered to do these things.

Well, if that is what they think, let's correct that, shall we, Mr. Speaker? Let's say that they can't ask those questions. The questions about religion, your political beliefs, and about what your social beliefs are have nothing to do with what the Internal Revenue Service should be doing as it relates to tax administration.

So these are very clear limitations. There are a couple of exceptions. But it is meant clearly to put the IRS back where they belong on the tax administration side and not deciding who gets

to participate in the public square of debate and who doesn't.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Coming from the same and neighboring communities and State as my colleague, we agree on many things. We all agree that the Internal Revenue Service should not ask about your religious, political, or social beliefs in determining your taxpayer status. That is different, however, from asking you about your political activities, which was at the root of the Internal Revenue Service's mismanagement of the 501(c)(4) applications.

The IRS did the right thing in trying to group together applications by activity, but they were wrong in using party names and labels from both Democrats and Republicans in their organizational process.

The division that was the subject of the May 2013 TIGTA report was grossly mismanaged in that it allowed these applications to be selected by name and then allowed them to sit for an inordinate length of time. Swift corrective action was taken to remove the ineffective management, and the subsequent IRS leadership has put the agency on the right path to restoring the public trust.

There has never been any evidence of political motivation or influence from anyone either inside or outside the IRS. Treasury's inspector general repeatedly testified that he found no evidence of political motivation in the selection of processing of tax exemption applications that were the subject of his report. Indeed, an extensive review of 5,500 employee emails by the TIGTA Office of Investigations concluded that there was no political motivation in trying to group these applications.

At the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, what we saw was a small division of a very large agency that struggled to determine how to handle tax-exempt applications from politically motivated groups. Consequently, they allowed those applications to sit for an inordinate amount of time while it tried to determine what criteria to use to judge who determined tax-exempt status.

We also had a flawed TIGTA report that deliberately removed any reference to Progressive and Democratic groups from the criteria the IRS actually used to group applications together and consequently presented a one-sided and partisan conclusion about this issue to Congress.

What we do not have is any evidence of political motivation in the processing of tax exemption applications or any evidence of outside influence in the selection or processing of tax exemption applications.

Mr. Speaker, I think enough is enough. It is time for us to move on to processing issues like extending long-

term unemployment insurance benefits, raising the minimum wage, and fixing our immigration laws. Let us give the American people some confidence that their Congress can debate and pass bills on these important issues.

Yes, there was activity that took place which is unacceptable. The individuals have been removed from those positions. Let us take the Internal Revenue Service and move it on to higher heights, giving the American people that each and every citizen is treated fairly, with respect, and with the dignity that all of us deserve as citizens of this great Nation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My colleague said enough is enough. I guess enough is enough if you are one of the ones that wasn't impacted. But if you were impacted by the IRS targeting, it had a jarring effect on you. And if we are going to move forward, if we are going to have the Internal Revenue Service have the respect that we need it to have, which it doesn't have right now, there is an overwhelming level of concern and consternation about how the IRS handled these things in the past and how they conducted themselves.

The fact that the Internal Revenue Service has not been forthcoming pursuant to Chairman CAMP's request for information is not in dispute. There is nobody here that is arguing the IRS has been completely forthcoming and given the chairman all the information he needs or that he has requested. No. They haven't been forthcoming, and that continues to be a real problem.

I think it is important for us to recognize that the TIGTA report was an audit. It was not an investigation. An investigation is ongoing. So this notion that there is no knowledge or there is no indication of any sort of political influence, I think that there is a great deal of knowledge of political influence that was peddled and used here, and I think the facts bear it out.

□ 1730

The scope of the audit that the gentleman was referring to was to focus on conservative targeting. The IG struck within the parameters of the audit. Far more conservative groups faced IRS scrutiny, they faced more questions, and were approved at a lower rate than progressive groups were.

Numbers are very straightforward: 104 conservative groups experienced an average of 15 additional questions, only 46 percent of conservative applicants were approved, and 56 percent of groups are either waiting for a determination or have withdrawn in frustration.

Now, that is messed up. If you are withdrawing because you can't get a straight answer, you are just feeling overwhelmed, who wins then?

The Internal Revenue Service wins, and the taxpayer that wants to participate in the public debate loses.

Compare that to seven progressive groups that were asked an average of just five additional questions.

You know what, Mr. Speaker?

Every one of those progressive groups was approved—100 percent of them were approved.

We know now that the IRS targeted not only right-leaning applicants, but also right-leaning groups that are already operating as 501(c)(4)s, and at Washington, D.C.'s direction, not Cincinnati's initiative, at Washington, D.C.'s direction, dozens of groups operating as 501(c)(4)s were flagged for IRS surveillance, monitoring of the groups' activities, Web sites, and any other publicly available information.

Of these groups, 83 percent were right-leaning, and of the groups that the IRS selected for audit, 100 percent of those were conservative-leaning. So, this idea that this was, well, everybody is treated the same way, the facts don't bear that out, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to draw attention to one particular group, a constituency that I represent, the West Suburban Patriots of DuPage County. They submitted their application for 501(c)(4) status in May of 2011. They received a letter from the IRS acknowledging their application. Nearly 4 months later they were told their application was "in the pile."

Over a year later, June of 2012, the West Suburban Patriots received a letter indicating that they had to answer a series of questions in an incredibly short timeframe. The questions were political, and demonstrated that the IRS scoured their Web site by demanding information that would be on their Members Only web page.

Isn't that interesting?

In July of 2012 they received a letter granting their 501(c)(4) status.

Now, the West Suburban Patriots name and tax ID number were found on a list of "political advocacy cases" that the Exempt Organizations Office in D.C. made to track Tea Party cases, and USA Today received the confidential political advocacy list and made it public.

Here is the point: this is not what the Internal Revenue Service should be doing. The Internal Revenue Service should be making proper inquiries, not asking about prayer meetings, not being passive aggressive, choosing winners and losers in the public square.

This is an important piece of legislation. It reclaims authority that was once delegated and has been abused, and now needs to be reclaimed.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

You know, I think with the IRS, we are, like, approaching a fork in the

middle of the road and we have choices that we can make.

We now have new leadership. The agency has been sanitized. The individuals with culpability are no longer there. They no longer play in any leadership roles at all.

The new Commissioner has given us every assurance, and he comes to the IRS with an impeccable record from both public and private activity, and has given every assurance that can be given that he is going to take that road that leads to the highest level of integrity, that we can bank on the Internal Revenue Service being as fair as fair can be.

I like to believe that he means what he says, and that he says what he means. So I am confident that we have a new IRS, and we will see it function with a new light, a new spirit, and a new direction.

So I thank my colleague. I have no further requests for time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank Mr. DAVIS for engaging in this debate and this discussion, and I think he is right. We are at a fork in the road. I would describe the fork in the road as the responsibility that we have in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge us to take this challenge, and that is to do everything that we can, in light of this information that has come to our attention, to make sure that the Internal Revenue Service is being limited, is not allowed to ask questions regarding religion or social questions or political questions, and that we can enjoy a day in the future when they enjoy our respect. With that, I urge passage the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support the "Protecting Taxpayers from Intrusive IRS Requests Act".

Many of my constituents in the 24th District of Texas—some of whom were unfairly targeted by the IRS—have lost confidence in the impartiality of the agency.

Due to the political targeting scandal, my constituents are deeply skeptical about the IRS and angry at how they have been treated.

I fully agree with their concerns: the IRS has been blatantly too intrusive on my constituents' personal lives and of many other Americans around the country.

Americans should always be protected from unnecessary and intrusive questions about their political, religious, and social beliefs.

On behalf of my constituents, I respectfully urge members to help protect American taxpayers and vote for this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2531.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 36 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. TERRY) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 1211, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 1123, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

FOIA OVERSIGHT AND IMPLEMENTATION ACT OF 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1211) to amend section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Freedom of Information Act), to provide for greater public access to information, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 410, nays 0, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 63]

YEAS—410

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Bass

Beatty
Becerra
Benishak
Bentivoglio
Bera (CA)
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn

Blumenauer
Bonamici
Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Brown (FL)

Brownlee (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Cantor
Capito
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cartwright
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman
Cohen
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Cotton
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Daines
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Edwards
Ellison
Ellmers
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxo
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Frelinghuysen
Gabbard
Gallego

Garamendi
Garcia
Gardner
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grijalva
Grimm
Guthrie
Hahn
Hall
Hanabusa
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
Latta
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebach
Lofgren
Long
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer

Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lummis
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
Matsui
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Meng
Messer
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Neugebauer
Noem
Nolan
Nunes
Nunnelee
O'Rourke
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascarella
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pittenger
Pitts
Pocan
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita

Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Runyan
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schock
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter

Sherman
Shinkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Speier
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tierney
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Turner
Upton

Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Welch
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)

NOT VOTING—20

Campbell
Capps
Fincher
Gerlach
Gingrey (GA)
Gosar
Graves (MO)

Gutiérrez
Hanna
McCarthy (NY)
Miller, Gary
Nugent
Pastor (AZ)
Richmond

Ruppersberger
Rush
Schwartz
Tiberi
Wilson (FL)
Young (IN)

□ 1900

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER and Mr. ELLISON changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

UNLOCKING CONSUMER CHOICE AND WIRELESS COMPETITION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1123) to promote consumer choice and wireless competition by permitting consumers to unlock mobile wireless devices, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 295, nays 114, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 64]

YEAS—295

Aderholt
Amodei
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr

Barrow (GA)
Barton
Beatty
Becerra
Benishak
Bera (CA)

Bilirakis
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany

Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Butterfield
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Cantor
Capito
Cárdenas
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cartwright
Cassidy
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Chu
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Coble
Coffman
Cohen
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Connolly
Conyers
Cook
Cooper
Costa
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Daines
Davis (CA)
Davis, Rodney
DeLauro
DeBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Dingell
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Engel
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fox
Frankel (FL)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gallego
Garcia
Gardner
Garrett
Gibbs
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanabusa
Harper
Harris
Hartzler

Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Hinojosa
Holding
Horsford
Hoyer
Hudson
Huffman
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Kelly (PA)
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
Latta
Levin
Lewis
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Lummis
Maffei
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Meeks
Messer
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Mullin
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Nadler
Neugebauer
Noem
Nolan
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Fallone
Pascarell
Paulsen
Pearce

Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Rahall
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Edwards
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruiz
Runyan
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schock
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott (VA)
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shinkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Vargas
Vela
Velázquez
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Wasserman
Schultz
Waxman
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Young (AK)

NAYS—114

Amash
Bachmann
Bass
Bentivolio
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Bridenstine
Broun (GA)
Capuano
Carney
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clyburn
Cole
Courtney
Cummings
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
Doggett
Doyle
Duncan (SC)
Edwards
Ellison
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Gabbard
Garamendi
Gibson
Grayson
Green, Al

Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hahn
Himes
Holt
Honda
Huelskamp
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kuster
Langevin
Lee (CA)
Lipinski
Loebsock
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn
Massie
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meng
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Mulvaney
Napolitano
Neal

Negrete McLeod
O'Rourke
Payne
Pelosi
Perry
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rohrabacher
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Slaughter
Speier
Stockman
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Veasey
Visclosky
Walz
Waters
Welch
Yarmuth
Yoho

NOT VOTING—21

Campbell
Capps
Fincher
Gerlach
Gingrey (GA)
Gosar
Graves (MO)

Gutiérrez
Hanna
McCarthy (NY)
Miller, Gary
Nugent
Pastor (AZ)
Richmond

Ruppersberger
Rush
Schwartz
Smith (WA)
Tiberi
Wilson (FL)
Young (IN)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1909

Ms. CLARKE of New York changed her vote from “nay” to “yea.”

Mr. SANFORD changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for votes on Tuesday, February 25, 2014.

I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on rollcall vote 63, and “nay” on rollcall vote 64.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3865, STOP TARGETING OF POLITICAL BELIEFS BY THE IRS ACT OF 2014; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2804, ALL ECONOMIC REGULATIONS ARE TRANSPARENT ACT OF 2014; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. WOODALL, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113-361) on the resolution (H. Res. 487) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3865) to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2804) to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE EXPECT ACCOUNTABILITY

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, this week the House will consider several measures to stop government abuse, especially when it threatens freedom and limits opportunity.

The American people expect accountability, and every day the House is focused on carrying out responsible oversight.

As an example, late on Friday, the Obama administration released a report that we demanded detailing the impact of the health care law and what it will do to employer-sponsored health plans.

You may not have seen the report. It was released rather quietly on Friday afternoon, so I am going to enter it into the RECORD today. I urge every Member to read it and share it with your constituents.

As you do, keep in mind that the White House promised that this law would bring down health insurance premiums by some \$2,000 per family. Instead, according to the administration's own bookkeepers, premiums will go up for two out of three small businesses in our country.

This amounts to about 11 million employees who are going to see more money coming out of their paycheck for their health insurance every month, and remember, these premiums will be felt not just by workers, but the small business owners themselves, making it even harder to create jobs.

Another sucker punch to our economy. Another broken promise to hard-working Americans—and the only reason we even know about it is that the House demanded this transparency from the administration.

That is why the House continues to focus on stopping government abuse and promoting better solutions for middle class families and small businesses.

[From Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, Feb. 21, 2014]

REPORT TO CONGRESS ON THE IMPACT ON PREMIUMS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES WITH EMPLOYER-SPONSORED HEALTH INSURANCE FROM THE GUARANTEED ISSUE, GUARANTEED RENEWAL, AND FAIR HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS PROVISIONS OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

INTRODUCTION

The "Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011" required this report to Congress on the impact of sections 2701 through 2703 of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act, as amended by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) on the premiums paid by individuals and families with employer-sponsored health insurance. Specifically, the Chief Actuary of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is to provide an estimate of the number of individuals and families who will experience a premium increase and the number who will see a decrease as a result of these three provisions.

Section 2701 of PHS Act is titled "Fair Health Insurance Premiums" and requires adjusted community rating for plan years beginning on or after January 1, 2014. Specifically, premium rates in the individual and small group market charged for non-grandfathered health insurance coverage may only be varied on the basis of the following four characteristics:

Individual or family enrollment.

Geographic area—premium rates can vary by the area of the country.

Age—premium rates can be higher for an older applicant than that for a younger applicant, but the ratio of premiums cannot exceed 3:1 for adults.

Tobacco use—premium rates can be higher for smokers, but the ratio cannot exceed 1.5:1.

Section 2702 of the PHS Act requires the guaranteed issuance of health insurance coverage in the individual and group market subject to specified exceptions. This means that insurers that offer coverage in the individual or group market generally must accept all applicants for that coverage in that market. Under section 2703 of the PHS Act, group and individual health insurance coverage must be guaranteed renewable at the option of the plan sponsor or individual, subject to specified exceptions. These three sections do not apply to grandfathered health insurance coverage.

BACKGROUND

Prior to the passage of the ACA, the insurance products in the small group market were already required to be guaranteed issue and renewable under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). In addition, large group policies are not subject to section 2701 of the PHS Act. Self-funded plans are also not subject to the provisions analyzed in this report. As a result, large group and self-funded plans will be unaffected by the new rating require-

ments. Since these three specific ACA provisions will not have any significant effect on the premium rates paid by individuals working for large sized employers, the remainder of this report will focus on health insurance policies in the small group market.

To help individuals with pre-existing conditions gain affordable insurance coverage, Sections 2702 and 2703 of PHS Act generally require guaranteed issuance and renewability of policies to any employer that applies for coverage offered in the applicable market within enrollment periods, regardless of the health histories of its employees or other prohibited factors. These requirements apply to all small group health insurance plans other than grandfathered plans (as defined by federal regulations at 45 CFR 147) beginning on or after January 1, 2014. Some analysts expect that these grandfathered plans will experience reduced enrollment as individuals leave for new plans that are not only cheaper due to lower administrative costs, but also offer more generous coverage, or leave for individual market coverage for which individuals may qualify for premium tax credits. Under HIPAA, all states currently have adopted guaranteed issue and renewal requirements for small group policies.

The Chief Actuary was required to estimate the impact of these three specific ACA provisions—fair health insurance premiums, guaranteed issue and renewability—on the premiums for individuals and families with employer sponsored health insurance. Since fully insured small group policies are already guaranteed issue and renewal in all states, we expect there is no material net impact of these two ACA provisions on premium rates. As a result, the premium rate impact in the small group market is expected to result from only the new adjusted community rating provision in section 2701 of the PHS Act.

ADJUSTED COMMUNITY RATING FOR SMALL EMPLOYERS

This new adjusted community rating criteria is a change from the current small group market industry practice that existed prior to when these criteria take effect. Previously, issuers in most states could vary premiums by factors such as: health status of the group, group size, and industry code or classification. Smaller firms, and those performing high-risk work, or firms with sick employees, received significantly higher premiums than those with a lower risk group. In addition, they could be subject to large premium increases based on a new diagnosis for a single employee.

The ACA created a new health insurance Exchange for small businesses called the SHOP (Small Business Health Options Program), to offer plans tailored for small employers with 100 or fewer employees. All health plans (other than those offered through the SHOP) will be subject to the premium rating requirements of section 2701 of the PHS Act. Beginning 2014, most individuals must obtain a form of minimum essential coverage or face a penalty. Individuals with income between 100 and 400 percent of federal poverty level (FPL) may be eligible for premium tax credits and cost sharing reductions on a sliding scale to help reduce the cost if the coverage is obtained through the Exchanges.

There is considerable uncertainty as to whether small employers will decide to terminate their existing offer of health insurance coverage and send their employees to individual market Exchanges. Many factors may be relevant to their decisions. For example, the decision could depend heavily on

the extent to which employees are eligible for a premium tax credit on the individual market Exchanges. Some expect that it would be cheaper for employees with income below 250 percent of FPL to buy coverage from the individual market Exchanges given the premium tax credits and cost-sharing reductions available at these income levels. Small employers with predominantly low-wage, part-time and seasonal employees may find it to their financial advantage to terminate existing coverage. Small businesses with 50 or fewer workers may find terminating existing coverage particularly attractive since they are not required by the ACA to offer affordable minimum essential health insurance coverage, and their workers have access to health insurance in the new Exchanges. Alternatively, it may be financially attractive for small employers with relatively healthy employees to continue to provide coverage but convert to a self-insured arrangement with stop-loss coverage. If such coverage becomes widely available, some analysts expect a substantial increase in self-insured small employers. However, small group employers will also have to consider employee resistance and administrative complexity to substitute alternative types of compensation for employer's health benefits contributions, which may encourage small employers to continue to offer insurance coverage on a tax-favored basis.

Prior to 2014, insurers could set lower premiums for small employers with younger and healthier employees due to their low expected health care needs, and significantly higher rates for small employers with older and sicker employees with greater expected health care needs. The ratio of premiums charged between old and young ages was typically 5:1 or more, and could translate into much higher premiums for firms with older employees. In addition, gender could also be used as a rating factor. Before 2014, employers with more women of childbearing age were commonly charged higher premiums.

The adjusted community rating under ACA prohibits the use of gender, health status and claims history as rating factors, and restricts the premium rating ratio for adults to between young and old ages. These changes are expected to further relieve the financial burdens for older and sicker individuals as coverage could become more affordable for them. However, for younger and healthier individuals, premiums could increase since health status is no longer permitted as a rating factor and the new age rating band is limited to 3:1 for adults, less than what insurers typically have used.

Some analysts are concerned with the possibility of adverse selection, which prompts small employers with younger and healthier individuals to drop coverage or switch to other forms of coverage such as self-insurance, leaving the remaining risk pool with only the sickest individuals thereby raising premiums significantly. The propensity for adverse selection is mitigated by other ACA provisions that encourage small employers to offer coverage and premium stabilization programs in the fully insured market such as risk adjustment. For example, small employers with 25 or fewer employees whose average annual salary is less than \$50,000 may be eligible for small business tax credit on a sliding scale if they contribute at least 50 percent of the total premium. Many analysts believe that these and other factors will help attract a broad and stable group of employers to reduce the negative impact on premiums and avoid the adverse selection problem.

ESTIMATES BY INDEPENDENT MODELERS

A number of independent modelers developed estimates of post-ACA premium rates and enrollment of small group coverage for a number of states and the country as a whole. For example, some of their findings are summarized below.

Wisconsin—A study by Gorman Actuarial and Dr. Jonathan Gruber predicted that the small group market is expected to see relatively small premium rate increase—1.3 percent. Fifty-three percent of small group plans, or 63 percent of the small group employees, will experience a premium rate increase of 15 percent, while 47 percent of small groups or 37 percent of the employees will experience a 16 percent decrease. Most of the impact is due to elimination of health status as a rating factor.

Maine—A study by Gorman Actuarial and Dr. Jonathan Gruber estimated that a large majority (89 percent) of small employers are expected to experience a premium rate increase of 12 percent on average, while the remaining 11 percent will experience an average premium rate decline of 17 percent. The impact is largely due to the elimination of group size as a rating factor.

Ohio—A study from Milliman estimates that, before the application of tax subsidies, the small group premium rates are going to increase by 5 to 15 percent.

National—Actuaries at Oliver Wyman examined the national impact on premium rates of adjusted community rating, guaranteed issue and renewal using a database of actual claims covering over 6 million people. They predict that the small group premium rates will increase by 20 percent.

OACT ESTIMATES

This analysis focuses on the number of people with health insurance coverage through their employer whose premium rates are expected to increase or decrease as a result of the guaranteed issue, guaranteed renewability, and premium rating provisions of the ACA only. Other factors affecting rates such as changes in product design, provider networks, or competition are not considered. In addition, other provisions of the ACA, including the coverage expansions, the extension of dependent coverage to age 26, the individual mandate, and the employer mandate will impact the availability of coverage, the take-up of that coverage, and the premium rates charged to those who currently have employer-sponsored insurance, but those impacts are not included in this estimate. We prepared a more complete report on the financial effects of the ACA in 2010. As mentioned previously, the effect on large employers is expected to be negligible, therefore our evaluation examines the impact on employees of fully-insured small firms.

In 2012, about 18 million people were enrolled in the small group health insurance market through employers with 50 fewer employees. About 8 percent of small firms offered a self-insured health plan, therefore about 17 million people received coverage in the fully-insured small group health market. These 17 million people will be affected by the new premium rating requirements contained in the ACA. Before the premium rating provision of the ACA took effect, firms with employees who had better than average health risks would typically pay lower premiums, and therefore, they were more likely to be the firms that offer health insurance. As a result, most of people with coverage in the small group market have premium rates that are below average. Based on our review of the available research and discussions with several actuarial experts, we have esti-

mated that roughly 65 percent of small employers offering health insurance coverage have premium rates that are below average.

Once the new premium rating requirements go into effect, it is anticipated that the small employers that offer health insurance coverage to their employees and their families would have average premium rates. Therefore, we are estimating that 65 percent of the small firms are expected to experience increases in their premium rates while the remaining 35 percent are anticipated to have rate reductions. The individuals and families that receive health insurance coverage from their small employer generally contribute a portion of the premium. For this analysis, if the employer premium increases, it is assumed that the employee contribution will rise as well. Similarly, if the employer premium is reduced, the employee contribution is assumed to decrease. This results in roughly 11 million individuals whose premiums are estimated to be higher as a result of the ACA and about 6 million individuals who are estimated to have lower premiums.

There is a rather large degree of uncertainty associated with this estimate. The impact could vary significantly depending on the mix of firms that decide to offer health insurance coverage. In reality, the employer's decisions to offer coverage will be based on far more factors than the three that are focused on in this report so understanding the effects of just these provisions will always be challenging. Using their Compare model, RAND analyzed the impact of the entire ACA on small group premiums and determined that the effect would be minimal. Further, note that the number of affected individuals will be smaller in 2014 because (i) a number of small group plans were renewed early, and (ii) about half of the states have allowed extensions to their pre-ACA rating rules under the transitional policy announced by CMS on November 14, 2013.

SUMMARY

The Affordable Care Act requires all non-grandfathered health insurance coverage in the individual and group markets to be guaranteed issue and guaranteed renewable. In addition, all non-grandfathered insurance plans and policies in the individual and group markets can vary premium rates based only on age, family status, geography, and tobacco use, and the variation in the age and tobacco use factors is limited. This new premium rating requirement will impact the premiums paid by individuals and families working for small employers who offer health insurance. Specifically, we have estimated that the premium rates for roughly 11 million people will increase and about 6 million people are expected to experience a premium rate reduction due to sections 2701 through 2703 of the PHS Act.

SUPPORT FOR VENEZUELAN

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Venezuelans who seek to return liberty, the rule of law, and peace to their beleaguered nation. Over a period of years, the corrupt Cuban-backed Maduro-Chavez government has systematically looted and oppressed the people it purports to serve.

I received an email from a friend today who has spent significant time in Venezuela. He writes:

Students, tired of the corruption, the crime, the killings, an economy spiraling out of control, a lack of free press, are peacefully demonstrating, per their constitutional right, against the government. The government, instead of protecting the students and others demonstrating, is attacking, arresting, and often killing them.

Mr. Speaker, the death toll is growing; the list of political prisoners is growing. The repressive tactics of the Venezuelan Government cannot be ignored. I call on the administration to act and support Venezuelans who seek simply to secure the blessings of liberty for themselves and their countrymen.

□ 1915

THE CRISIS IN VENEZUELA

(Mr. GARCIA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, as they have for weeks, thousands of Venezuelans continue to risk their lives, taking to the streets in protest of their failed government. The people of Venezuela have seen their economy collapse, family members kidnapped, friends murdered.

While they plead for a better future for their country, the government brutally attacks its own citizens and clamps down on basic freedoms. This is not a democracy, and no conscientious nation should remain silent.

It is our responsibility to make sure the world knows full well what is happening in Venezuela, and that the Venezuelan government is accountable for these blatant violations of universal democratic principles.

As the protesters' latest motto goes, "El que se cansa pierde"—he who tires, loses. The fight for freedom, justice, and human rights will never, never die.

THE CASE OF LEOPOLDO LOPEZ

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it is right and fitting for the United States House of Representatives to pay attention to the case of Venezuelan opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez, who has been unjustly imprisoned by the puppet regime of Nicolas Maduro.

Leopoldo is a grassroots leader and founder of the political party Voluntad Popular. He has been wrongfully accused of criminal incitement, conspiracy, arson, and intent to damage property.

Leopoldo is being held in a military prison, and his proceedings have been kept secret from the public. We cannot stand idly by while democracy and due process are trampled on in our own hemisphere, Mr. Speaker. Being silent is not an option.

Venezuelan students have been peacefully demonstrating against this regime that has no qualms repressing the protest with live ammunition and shock groups whose tactics are extremely violent.

Those of us who advocate for freedom have a moral responsibility to support the students in Caracas, Merida, San Cristobal, Valencia, and throughout Venezuela who, through peaceful means, seek the way to create a more perfect union with democracy and freedom as their guide.

THE OLYMPIC STRUGGLE IN UKRAINE

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, this weekend the world watched the close of the Olympic Games in Sochi, Russia. Our Nation distinguished itself.

Right next door, in the nation of Ukraine, another Olympic struggle was going on as tens of thousands of young people, the future of that country of Ukraine, rose in peaceful assembly and achieved their goal of removing corrupt leadership and of offering the hope that life in Ukraine could be better for all.

May I encourage the leaders of Ukraine's Parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, to rise to this occasion, to embrace all of that great country, to keep the peace, to move toward democratic reform, so that the full potential of that remarkable place on this Earth can be reached for the first time in modern history.

May Ukraine extend west and south and east and north. Her power is yet to be fully realized, and we congratulate those who are moving toward peaceful progress in that nation.

May God go with you.

RECOGNIZING RARE DISEASE DAY

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, this week, on February 28, we recognize Rare Disease Day, which gives us a chance to raise awareness of the rare diseases affecting our communities.

In the United States, there are 7,000 rare diseases affecting nearly 30 million Americans. One disease I would like to raise awareness about today is pulmonary fibrosis, which affects individuals' lungs and their ability to breathe.

Pulmonary fibrosis kills 40,000 Americans each and every year, the same number of annual deaths as from breast cancer. There is still no known cure, no known cause, and no FDA-approved treatment.

Earlier this year, Mr. Speaker, Senator COONS and I led a bipartisan let-

ter, with 41 other Members of Congress, asking the National Institutes of Health to review their funding levels for rare diseases like pulmonary fibrosis. This letter shows that Members on both sides of the aisle want to see more progress in fighting back against these rare diseases.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues and constituents to remember our fellow Americans suffering from rare diseases, including pulmonary fibrosis.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF WILLIAM T. MAGEE

(Mr. WENSTRUP asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, on February 28, another member of America's Greatest Generation will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery. William T. Magee—"Tom," as he is known—was an American and Cincinnati we can all be proud of.

Tom was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, two Bronze Stars, and two Presidential Unit Citations during his service in World War II.

Serving aboard a B-24 Liberator, Tom's plane was shot down over enemy territory, and he survived 10 days in enemy territory before returning to the fight.

Later, with a different crew, Tom safely landed a bomber after the pilot and copilot were killed by enemy fire.

Tom came home to Cincinnati, where he lived the rest of his life, devoted to his family, work, and community. Tom's legacy of serving his Nation inspired three children and two grandchildren to serve our nation in conflicts ranging from Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Thank you, Lieutenant Magee. A grateful nation salutes you. Rest in peace. Rest in peace.

THE FAIR ACT

(Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about fairness, to talk about individuals, many from my district, who are being treated unfairly because of the President's health care law.

Marjorie, from Carmel, recently wrote to tell me that coverage on the exchanges for her family will cost at least \$1,500 a month. Her husband recently lost his job in the health care industry, and she has two kids in college. Her only option may be to go without health care and pay the penalty to the IRS. For Marjorie, ObamaCare is not fair.

Mr. Speaker, too many Hoosiers, too many Americans have similar stories.

The President has delayed the employer mandate for businesses twice, but he has offered no such relief for individuals who are struggling.

That is why Republican Study Committee Chairman STEVE SCALISE and I have introduced the FAIR Act. This simple bill ensures that whenever the ObamaCare employer mandate is delayed, the individual mandate will be delayed as well.

House Republicans understand that fairness means not treating people differently. It means government cannot pick and choose which laws apply to which Americans.

Mr. Speaker, let's pass this common-sense piece of legislation. It is the fair thing to do.

NATIONAL CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise as cochairman of the bipartisan Career and Technical Education Caucus to recognize National Career and Technical Education Month, celebrated each February.

National CTE Month recognizes the contributions that career and technical education programs make to the American economy, along with the important work being done by CTE professionals and teachers.

In today's competitive job market, high-paying, high-demand jobs require technical skills and training. CTE programs have been historically underutilized, yet, in an era of record high unemployment, these programs are the key to bridging the skills gap.

CTE Month is also a time for policymakers to ask, are we doing enough to ensure individuals have the skills that will lead to a family-sustaining job?

Now, I know my fellow colleagues in the Career and Technical Education Caucus share these concerns. I was pleased to learn that Senators ROB PORTMAN of Ohio and TIM Kaine of Virginia have followed suit and organized the Senate CTE Caucus, and I look forward to working with them and my House cochairman, Mr. LANGEVIN of Rhode Island, as we continue to promote America's competitiveness through CTE programs.

MAKING IT IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEWART). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be back on the floor once again. I won't take a whole hour here,

but I wanted just to talk about something that is so very important to America and, really, to the future of this country.

I like to start these discussions with what are we all about? What should we really be thinking about?

I find myself often going back to Franklin Delano Roosevelt during a very difficult time in America's history, the Great Depression. He put forth a principle, if you would, a values statement of what he was about and really what this country could and should be about.

He said the test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.

It is a values statement. It is a statement of what I like to believe I am here for, to deal with this profound, important issue in this, another period of stress for the American family.

We often find ourselves here on the floor, and I do this almost all the time, talking about this subject, the subject of Making It in America. This is a manufacturing strategy for America, and in this strategy there are many elements that we spend time on the floor talking about and legislation that we push here dealing with how to revive the manufacturing sector, and in doing so, give the American family, the American middle class, an opportunity that it once had: to find a good-paying job, to be able to make it in America with their family, to provide for a home, for food, for clothing, for education, vacations, sort of the American Dream, to be able to do those things. They knew that if they would work hard they would be able to make it.

Well, one way of achieving that is with this strategy of rebuilding the American manufacturing sector to make it in America, whether that is manufacturing food, as occurs in my district—it is a big agricultural district—or some of the new technologies of biotechnologies of one sort or another.

The high-tech industry, the automotive industry is coming back, and indeed, for a variety of reasons, some of it had to do with on our legislative agenda. We are seeing the revival of the American manufacturing sector. Good, wonderful. That is where the middle class jobs will largely come from.

There are various pieces of this. There is the trade policy, and there is much debate here on the floor now and in the months ahead about the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a new trade deal. Is it going to be fair trade or free trade?

We don't need free trade. What we need is fair trade.

The tax policies—certainly we see this in the kind of tax breaks that are out there. Does the oil industry need additional tax breaks?

Their incomes, which are the largest profits in the world, do they need to be supplemented with American taxpayer money?

Right now they are, the Big Five: \$6 billion a year of American taxpayer money going to them.

We talk about tax policy, talk energy policy, but I want to really focus this evening on these two issues, labor and education.

□ 1930

We will leave aside the research issues—which are fundamental to future economic growth because you have to be out ahead, and that is where research comes in—and the infrastructure, which I will weave into this.

But I really want to focus on labor and education. And I want to focus on a very important part of this equation, this very important part about the middle class and those who want to be in the middle class.

Specifically, I want to talk about women, and I want to talk about a women's economic agenda, about why this is critically important not just to women and their children and the families, but also to America and to America's future.

We know that the American family has changed. We know that, over the years, more and more families are raised by a single parent, and in most cases, that is a single mother. And so a women's economic agenda is critical for those children.

It is also critical for the American economy because, when women succeed, America succeeds. This is a theme we are going to spend a lot of time talking about. We are going to talk about women in the American economy and their success.

And here are three of the principles that we need to talk about. America's success is dependent upon the success of women because women are a major part of our workforce today, and they are a major part of the poverty issue in America.

One in three women in America are living in poverty or are teetering on the brink of poverty. That is 42 million women, plus the 28 million children who depend upon them.

And the American family has changed. Today, only one in five families has a homemaker, a mom that is a stay-at-home mom, and a working dad. Two out of three families depend on the wages of the working mom. Two out of three families depend upon the wages of the working mom who is struggling to balance caregiving as well as breadwinning.

The average woman continues to be paid just 77 cents for every dollar that a man working in the same job, the same skill sets, and the same amount of time at that job earns, so the living wage and equal pay for equal work is critical.

The average African American woman earns 64 cents compared to a man doing that same work, and an average Latina earns 55 cents. This is a huge problem for those individuals. It is also a huge problem for the American economy because a large portion of the American workforce is held back by simple discrimination, obviously discrimination based on race.

An African American woman, a Latina woman, 55 percent of the wage that a man would earn in that same job, or 64 percent for an African American woman. It is discrimination, for which there ought to be no place in America.

Closing the wage gap between men and women would cut the poverty rate in half. Closing the wage gap for an African American woman, for a Latina woman, for a European woman would reduce the poverty rate in America by 50 percent.

Is this on the agenda for America? Is poverty on the agenda? You would think so, listening to the debate on the floor of the House of Representatives. How do you close the gap? End wage discrimination. That is how you do it.

This is not a new issue. This is an issue that has been with us at least for the last 60 years. President Kennedy talked about this in the early part of his all-too-short Presidency.

Women make up nearly two-thirds of the minimum wage workers in America, and a vast majority of these workers receive no paid sick days, not one, not one paid sick day; yet these are the mothers, these are the mothers that have the children, and these are the children that get sick.

So what is that mother to do? She might very well lose her job. Even though she is earning less than a man, she might very well lose her job when she does what every mother wants to do, and that is to care for their sick child.

More than half of the babies born to women under the age of 30 are born to unmarried mothers; and most of those mothers are White, a single-parent family and a woman, a White woman earning 77 cents doing a job that a man is paid a full dollar.

There is something wrong with this, and this is something that the House of Representatives and the Senate must deal with, and I am sure the President would sign that bill.

Nearly two-thirds of Americans and 85 percent of the millennials believe that the government should adapt to the reality of single-parent families and use its resources to help children and mothers succeed, regardless of their familial status.

An overwhelming 96 percent of single mothers say paid leave in the workplace policy would be the most help to them, and 80 percent of all Americans say that the government should expand access to high-quality, affordable child care.

A living wage, equal pay for equal work, paid family and medical leave, and affordable child care, this is an agenda. This is the Democratic agenda; this ought to be the Republican agenda; and it surely ought to be the American agenda, because when women succeed, America succeeds.

Three things that have been on the agenda for America for a long time and that are obviously not yet done. A living wage, this is the minimum wage issue. This is swirling around the congressional debate. Should there be a living wage, a minimum wage, a minimum wage of \$10.10 for every American? What would it mean to women? It would mean that half of the women in poverty would no longer be there.

When you couple it with equal pay for equal work, suddenly, you have an American agenda where we can go after poverty, where the great debate about the equality of opportunity in America is addressed, where the equality and the wage disparity is addressed, where we can make some real progress in dealing not only with poverty, but also dealing with the well-being of our children.

We are in America, where one out of four American children go to bed hungry. You want to deal with that issue? Then you deal with a living wage and the minimum wage issue, \$10.10, which is actually just about equal to what the minimum wage was when Ronald Reagan was Governor of California, long before he became President, and then you pay equal for equal work. This is an agenda that ought to be the American agenda.

Here is a little bit more on it. The challenge, the gender pay gap, where an African American woman earns 64 percent, or 64 cents, of what a male would be paid for in that same job, where a Latina earns 55 cents for what a man would earn doing that same job, and where, on average, across this Nation, it is 77 cents, the gender pay gap.

The Paycheck Fairness Act, H.R. 377, raise the minimum wage, H.R. 1010—which, by the way, ought to be \$10.10—these bills have been introduced. These bills have strong Democratic support. These bills are not heard in those committees that our Republican colleagues control.

It is time for these bills to be taken up. It is time for America to end the gender pay gap with H.R. 377. It is time for the minimum wage to become, once again, equal to what it was in purchasing power when Ronald Reagan was Governor of the State of California in the 1960s, H.R. 1010, \$10.10 an hour for every worker in America, wherever they are, whether they are a woman or a man.

Working family, how is a parent to care for their children? If you care about family values, this is important. This is important if you care about family values. What is a working moth-

er to do? Remember, roughly half of the American families are now headed by a single woman.

If that child gets sick, in many places across America, that mother is faced with a terrible quandary. Are they going to go to work and leave the child at home sick? Or are they not going to go to work, lose a day of pay or, quite possibly, lose the job, which is not uncommon in America?

So we put forth H.R. 1286, the paid sick leave act, something that is common, in fact, in every European country, advanced economies around the world understand family values, like ours should, too. They understand that parents, man and woman, husband and wife, single father or single mother want to take care of their children.

We have six children. We have raised those children. We have 11 grandchildren. And we understand that those kids are little petri dishes that collect germs and get sick. We understand what it takes to care for a child. It takes the attention, the full attention, of the husband or the mother or the single mother or the single father.

H.R. 1286 is languishing in the committees controlled by our Republican colleagues. We talk a lot about family values around here. If you really care about them, then you would let that parent have a paid sick leave so they can care for their child.

Children, oh, we spend a lot of time talking about children, our future, the destiny of America, children. What can we do now to help every child in America? What can we do now to help every family in America?

Well, I would suggest that we take a look at H.R. 769, the Permanent Child Tax Credit Act. We have a child tax credit. It bounces up and down, depending upon the whims of Congress and the Senate and the President.

This would permanently increase the child tax credit so that every working family, from the top down to the bottom, those people that are on the edge of poverty, those people are not now earning \$10.10 an hour, that are at just above the now minimum wage at the Federal level, say \$7 an hour, so that those people would be able to at least have a little more income with the permanent child care tax credit.

How long have we known that, if you could give a child early education, pre-K, prekindergarten education, that that child, in the formative years of their brain development, would advance faster and longer in the development of their mind and their capabilities to address the challenges that they will have out ahead?

We have known this for decades. We know that, if you can get your child into pre-K, into early childhood education, that that child can be advancing faster, be better able to handle first grade, second grade, and on, all the way through college.

This is not just an American issue. Around the world, countries that want to advance their economy, countries that want to have social justice, countries that want their families to have economic opportunity, they want early childhood education.

□ 1945

So we put forth H.R. 3461, the universal pre-K education act. Universal pre-K, can we afford it? Of course, we can. When you consider the benefit to this Nation and when you consider the benefit to that individual child, you would say of course we can afford it, and, alternatively, we cannot afford not to do it. We cannot allow a large percentage of our children to not succeed in school, to not be able to keep up, to go into a classroom ill-prepared, whether it is kindergarten or first grade, to begin behind on the first day of school. It is not uncommon—I don't know, the percentage is probably somewhere less than 25 percent of the children in America are able to get pre-K education.

But I will tell you who is able to get it: those families that have the upper income, those families that are not worried about the gender pay gap, and those families that are not worried about the minimum wage. Those families are able to send their kids to early childhood education courses of all kinds. And so when those children enter kindergarten, when those children begin the first grade, they are the ones ahead. They are the ones that are likely to stay ahead. And for those children that don't have this opportunity, they are the ones that are behind. They are the ones that are going to fail. They are the ones that will drop out and likely to become the troublemakers of the future.

So why not give every child in America an equal opportunity to succeed? Can we afford it? You bet. We cannot afford to not do this. This is critical. This is our agenda. When women succeed, America succeeds. This is a family value agenda. This is an agenda where, if you care about the American family, if you care about its success, if you care about its health, then these are the issues that we ought to be pushing: the gender pay gap, equal pay for equal work, the Paycheck Fairness Act, H.R. 377; raise the minimum wage, H.R. 1010.

I would ask our Republican colleagues who care deeply about family values—and I know they do—to consider these two pieces of legislation. And if you don't want a Democratic author, find a Republican author and we will support it. We don't care who carries the bill. We just want paycheck fairness, equal pay for equal work. We just want the minimum wage to provide enough for a family to at least survive and thrive.

If you care about family values, then you will want to talk about paid sick

leave so that a mother or father doesn't have to make a choice between their job and their child's health.

H.R. 1286, let's give every family a chance. Let's give this a hearing. Let's give this bill a hearing in committee.

And, finally, all of us will stand here on the floor and we will talk for hours about our children, but are we willing to actually do something? Are we really actually willing to fund early childhood education? And are we willing to make permanent a tax break, a child tax credit? Or are we just willing to yap and talk?

Here is something positive. Here is something real. Take up H.R. 769, the Permanent Child Tax Credit Act. Take up universal pre-K education, H.R. 3461. If you are not willing to take these bills up, if you are not willing to introduce something similar to address these issues, then it is all talk. It is just a lot of hot air, for which there is justifiable belief that that is most of what is done around here.

Give the American family a chance. Give American women the opportunity to succeed. Let's do it. And we can. So this is our agenda. This is part of the Make It In America agenda when we talk about labor, when we talk about education, we talk about women in the workforce, and we talk about their opportunity. We can Make It In America. We can make things. We can make locomotives, we can make solar cells, and we can make windmills. But if we want the American people to make it, if we want them to be able to take care of their families, if we want children to thrive, and if we really want the American family to make it, then we had better be thinking about women, and we had better remember that when women succeed, then this country will succeed.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

JUDEO-CHRISTIAN VALUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to be recognized and to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives. Of all the things that are on my mind that I would like to express to you, I know that there are also a good number of things on the mind of the gentlelady from Florida, and so I would be so happy to yield to the very classy gentlelady from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

STAND IN SUPPORT OF DEMOCRACY IN VENEZUELA

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I thank the gentleman from Iowa for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge this legislative body to stand in solidarity

with the freedom seekers and the pro-democracy advocates of Venezuela. They have taken to the streets, as you can see in these posters, to demand an end to the rule of Nicolas Maduro's antidemocratic measures and his failed economic policies that have caused a shortage of basic necessities like bread, electricity, and more, despite the vast oil wealth that the nation has.

But the harshest shortage is democracy. These unarmed freedom seekers have predictably been met by the heavy hand of Maduro's state thugs. As the Venezuelan forces have responded with violence, Maduro remains intransigent. He vows to continue to unleash the National Guard on these unarmed protesters under the false pretense of protecting the people of Venezuela.

Montesquieu said that there is no crueller tyranny than that which is perpetrated under the shield of law and in the name of justice, and that is what we see with Maduro in Venezuela. There have been over a dozen deaths so far, Mr. Speaker, a high number of arrests, including one of the most vocal critics of Maduro, Leopoldo Lopez, who turned himself in even though he is facing serious, trumped-up charges. His case caused Amnesty International to condemn Maduro, saying the charges against Leopoldo Lopez were politically motivated and an attempt to silence dissent in Venezuela. I agree.

I ask my colleagues to be as vocal and as engaged on the crisis of democracy in Venezuela as they have been on the problems in Ukraine. It is vitally important to highlight the democratic struggles of the people of Venezuela, where over a dozen pro-democracy advocates have been killed in the past weeks as Maduro unleashed the thugs in an effort to silence the masses.

The people of Venezuela deserve better than Maduro's abuse of power, his corruption and his antidemocratic measures, and they are pleading for help and looking to the world, turning to the United States, to speak out against these injustices and to help—help them as they fight for their fundamental rights.

The United States must stand with them in this struggle. That is why, Mr. Speaker, I have introduced a bill tonight, H. Res. 488, a resolution that says to the people of Venezuela, to Maduro, and to the world that the United States stands on the side of those who seek liberty and who seek democracy in Venezuela, and that we will not remain silent while those abuses persist.

This resolution also deplores the inexcusable use of violence against opposition leaders and the protesters—many of whom are just students—and the use of intimidation to try to silence dissent. H. Res. 488 also urges responsible nations to not sit quietly by on the sidelines but to instead stand with them in solidarity with the people

of Venezuela to actively encourage a process of dialogue to end the violence.

Mr. Speaker, this body must not remain silent on Venezuela. I urge my colleagues to stand in support of freedom, in support of peace, in support of nonviolence, in support of democracy, and in support of those seeking a peaceful, democratic process in Venezuela, and to cosponsor my resolution, H. Res. 488.

I thank the Speaker for the time, and I thank the gentleman from Iowa for yielding me his time.

Thank you, sir.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentlelady from Florida. And reclaiming my time, I will move to the microphone.

Again, Mr. Speaker, through you I am thanking the gentlelady from Florida for raising this issue and giving me the number of the bill that I expect to sign on in business tomorrow, H. Res. 488. I am of the opinion that here in the House of Representatives we have too few people that demonstrate the leadership that the gentlelady from Florida is demonstrating tonight and taking a stand on foreign policy issues. I am very happy to see the focus that has been brought on Venezuela from some of the leadership that emerges from Florida.

It has caught my attention, Mr. Speaker, when I listen to the circumstances taking place in Venezuela, I can't help but think about essentially the sister state of Cuba and how they have led the Marxist socialist regime in the Western Hemisphere since about 1959. I think of this Western Hemisphere, all of it, as the domain of, as Churchill described it from this hemisphere, Western Christendom; the foundation of Western civilization, Judeo-Christianity; the values that come from the Old and New Testament; the values that Christopher Columbus brought here across the ocean, and that great footprint of the moral values and the ethics that have emerged as part of our Old Testament values and our New Testament values; the idea of the Protestant work ethic, turning the other cheek and building a civilization, a society to provide the best opportunity for salvation to glorify God and our country and to understand, as our Founding Fathers understood, that our rights do come from God, and to promote that. The full-throated Americanism as the leaders of the free world, of Western Christendom, has not been asserted strongly enough in this hemisphere, and certainly not strongly enough in other hemispheres, Mr. Speaker. But it comes home when you see the violence in a place like Venezuela where at least a dozen dissidents have been killed as political enemies to the Maduro regime, and one a beauty queen who was abducted on a motorcycle, shot in the head, and died last week.

The tragedy that is taking place down there, I can't help but reflect back upon my travels in that part of the world and recognizing a trip through some of the places such as Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Panama, some of the stops I made along the way. I have not been to Venezuela. I have been to Cuba, Mr. Speaker. But one thing that I recognized is that in South America they just don't know America very well. They don't know Americans very well. They look to the United States as the leader in the free world, the economic leader, the military leader, and the cultural leader, but we watched as the beginnings and the growth of the leftist regimes have taken hold in South America for a number of reasons.

□ 2000

Some is because nature and power abhors a vacuum, and we have allowed a vacuum to take place in places like Venezuela.

In Cuba, we have sat back and watched for all these years waiting for the biological solution to take place with the Castro brothers—and that is the vernacular that I picked up on a trip to Cuba some time ago.

If the United States doesn't take leadership in this hemisphere, we are going to see some philosophy, some ideology take that leadership, and we have seen it take place in Venezuela. Hugo Chavez seemed to be enamored with Cuba, and we have seen Fidel Castro led the Marxist regime in Cuba, and influenced Venezuela. It is hard to think of a Venezuela that has been such a Marxist thorn in the side, a belligerent Hugo Chavez, one who called our President "the devil" from New York City from the United Nations, from the podium, and went on with, I will say, a smelly description, Mr. Speaker, that was offensive to anyone on the planet, let alone Americans.

Hugo Chavez drove that Marxist agenda in Venezuela, and then he handed this thing over to Maduro, according to Maduro, and now we have a second regime there, a second Marxist regime that is oppressing its people and killing freedom demonstrators and dissidents and people that stand up for freedom, and we have sat here without a strong voice coming from our President of the United States. Not a condemning voice of the violence in Venezuela, not a strong leadership that says to them there is a reason why you are running into shortages. One thing that the gentlelady from Florida didn't miss: a shortage of toilet paper, of all things. Now, how can an oil-rich country that is rich enough to promise that they are going to give free energy and fuel to Americans—that was just a couple years ago by Hugo Chavez—and yet they can't operate an economy that can provide the simplest necessities of life, like some food products, or toilet

paper, for example. Those things are produced automatically and spontaneously by a demand economy that comes from free enterprise.

If there is no product on the shelf, and say it is milk or bread—in Cuba it is the ration of sugar and beans and rice—but if there is nothing on the shelf in America, somebody will look around and think, Why is that shelf bare? Why can't I buy something I want, and they will start to produce it. If you bake a loaf of bread and put it on the shelf, and it is of moderate quality for a moderate price, someone else will come along and bake a better loaf of bread for a lower price, or maybe a cheaper price of equal quality, and that competition of one loaf of bread sitting next to the other decides. When the consumer pulls that loaf off the shelf and puts it in their grocery cart, that is a vote for one product over another. It happens over and over again in this country, and because of that, we walk into a grocery store in America—and I remember the stories when the Russians first were able to come over here and see what a supermarket looked like. It was amazing for them to see that you could grab anything you wanted.

Then I think of my trips to places like Russia and Cuba, and it looks to me like their societies and their civilizations are trained to stand in line. When we went to the Duma in Moscow a few years ago on a trip, we stood outside even though we were expected by their parliamentarians. We waited a long time to get in line and then a long time to get into the line where you hang your coat up. Everybody wears a heavy coat over there. Then to get into the line again to go into the hallway, and then get into line to go into the room, then to go into the waiting room, and I looked around at people that were standing in line, and it looked to me like maybe they didn't all know why they were in line, but it was what they were trained to do, stand in line. I presume when they got to the front of line, some of them found out why they were there. Maybe all of them knew. I didn't know the language of the culture there. When they finished that, they would go get in another line.

It is a full-time job to go line up and wait for those things that come to us as Americans, offered to us, some of them delivered to us, but free people stand in fewer lines than oppressed people do. You will see lines in communist countries far more often than you see lines in free countries like the United States of America.

You don't want to stand in line to buy something. You don't want to stand in line to receive something. You will stand in line for something free from government. That happens in this country, too. You surely don't want to stand in line to pay for something that

you already have. So you will find there is somebody working the cash registers to move you through to get their hand on your credit card and ring that up. That is what happens in a free country.

Lines in Russia; lines in Cuba. I recall seeing a couple of lines in Cuba that I didn't expect to see. One of them was a line for ice cream. As we went down the street, I looked over and here is this long line that went for a couple of blocks. I asked our guide, What is going on there? They have a shipment, a delivery of ice cream, and so the Cubans are lining up to get an ice cream cone. Now two blocks to wait for an ice cream cone? We wouldn't do that. We would walk another block to get an ice cream cone at the competing store, or the one next to that, or the one next to that. That is one of the differences that are taking place.

You know, I reviewed some of the speech that was delivered by Ms. ROSELEHTINEN's Senate counterpart, Senator RUBIO, and as he spoke on the Senate floor about doctors and about how the junior Senator from Iowa, and that is my word "junior," who traveled to Cuba and was very happy and proud of what he had seen there and the accomplishments of the Castros and talked about the medical system that they have in Cuba. I think that flows from Michael Moore's movie rather than anything that has to do with fact, Mr. Speaker, but it was stated by the gentleman from Florida that yes, they have good doctors, doctors that are Cuban, and many of them are the ones that defected to the United States. I agree with that statement.

He also mentioned doctors and cab-drivers. I have experienced that. I have hailed a cab in Havana, a legal trip to Havana. I might say, which might have been different than the ones we are discussing, and what do you meet behind the steering wheel? A doctor driving a taxi cab. What was the most logical taxi cab when I was there? A 1954 Chevy with a Russian diesel engine under the hood. It looks like it is a rolling repair shop up and down the streets, which are better than I thought they would be. There are cars that have pulled off that break down, and they just come along and jack them up and crawl underneath and fix them with the parts that they can scavenge. When the car is repaired, they drive it on again. It is part of traveling to stop and repair the vehicle you are in. These vehicles are put together from parts from different places.

One of the things also that I noticed was that there were Russian tractors sitting all over the place. They are broken down, and they had been robbed for parts. There would be a circle maybe of grass growing up around the tires where they had been there for a long time.

Then I began to notice that there were these Brahmin oxen around the island in a lot of places, and they are staked down with a rope. There is a stake driven down and then a rope, so they have what I call a pivot-grazing system for these Brahmin cattle that they are using as beasts of burden, and I imagine raising them for the meat they get as well, scattered all over the island. I was able to plow with a team of Brahmin oxen. I had my NRA cap on, and I have a picture of that that I won't forget.

But what happened in Cuba was, back in the 1990s when the Soviet Union was going with a stronger economy than the Russians are today, Mr. Speaker, they saw the Soviet Union meltdown going into the 1990s, and when that happened, the subsidy for Cuba stopped. They weren't able to continue that subsidy. What had been taking place was Cuba raised sugar. The world market for sugar then was 6 cents a pound. The Russians would send them oil for sugar. The Cubans would ship the sugar to the Russians, and the proceeds from the oil would come into Cuba, and they were getting 51 cents worth of oil for every 6 cents of sugar they sent. That was how they propped up the government in Cuba. It was subsidized by the Soviet Union. That was the most important equation of it all.

When the Soviet Union imploded and shrunk back, states declared their independence and the Russian Federation was formed a little bit over time, the Cubans had to stand on their own. When that happened, the subsidies stopped, so did the parts and the support for the Russian tractors that were being used. They got parked as they broke down, and then they were robbed for parts. It is the only economy that I know of that has gone from an industrialized, mechanical tractor production for agriculture back to using animals again and animal husbandry. That is digression, and I would make that point to my junior Senator from Iowa.

Cuba digressed. It wasn't progress, it was digression. They digressed to using animals as beasts of burden again, where once they had tractors, albeit Russian tractors. They digressed from doctors in the clinic and hospital to doctors behind the steering wheel of a 1954 Chevy with a Russian diesel under the hood. They digressed from a country that had a measure of freedom, however harsh the dictatorship was under Batista, to a nation now that has been oppressed and under a communist dictatorship since 1959.

The Senator from Florida also mentioned that they don't have the freedoms there, that even though there was discussion about access to the Internet—I can tell you personally, the Senator from Florida is right, Cubans don't have access to the Internet. I was on a trip up to a college up in the

mountains in Cuba. We rode up there in the back of a Russian deuce-and-a-half, and it took, oh, about an hour and 45 minutes or maybe 2 hours to wind our way up there into this little campus in what I would call hills, but they said mountains. As we were interviewing some of the professors there and some of the students there, I was standing next to a gentleman who was from Florida. His parents had escaped from Cuba and still held deeds for land that they owned, real estate that they owned in Cuba that they had never been compensated for. He was perhaps the best interpreter that I had ever experienced. His name is Ed Sabatini, and I hope that Ed Sabatini is out there somewhere.

As they were talking, he was telling me what they were saying, and he was reading their body language, their voice inflection, and what they said and putting this together for me in real time. He was one of those people who could talk and listen and interpret simultaneously. He was very skilled. He said to me in the middle of this, as I was asking questions of the Castro minders, he said, you realize that they are not asking the questions that you are asking, because I would ask a question to one of Castro's minders and interpreters. He would turn to a couple of instructors at the school. He would ask a question in Spanish and return it back to me in English. Ed said to me, You know the minder, the Castro minder, is not asking the questions of them that you are asking, and he is not giving you the answers that they are returning. He is telling you something different than you would be learning if you could understand what they were saying. No, I didn't know that. So we broke away from that conversation.

I had asked, Do you have Internet here at this school, at this university? It was a specific question. Their answer came back specifically, Yes, we have Internet.

You have full access to Internet?

Yes, we do. We are in the modern world. We have full access to the Internet.

When I learned they were not answering my questions, we moved away and went down to talk to the some students sitting on the curb, and began more of a rapid-fire conversation that I was catching up with a little bit after the fact. I wanted to know what this Internet looked like, tell me some more facts about the Internet. They didn't seem to know how to answer the question on having Internet access. We drilled in to get the answer, and it was this: yes, they had access to Internet, and if they had a question that they needed a response to that they would get from the Internet, then they would formally make that request. They would write that request out in a letter form, and put the letter in an envelope, and when the Russian deuce-and-a-half

went down the mountainside to Santa Clara, a small city near there, they would deliver the request in letter form, and then whoever was the minder of the Internet would decide if they would get them the answer off the Internet. They would apparently access the Internet, print out the answer that they thought that the student or the instructor should have, put that on a different Russian deuce-and-a-half after a few days or a week, and it would wind its way back up the mountain again. It was 70 kilometers away at least, to send a Russian deuce-and-a-half down with a letter in it to ask somebody who had clearance from Castro to go on the Internet and get an answer back, to send a Russian deuce-and-a-half up the mountain to a student.

That is Internet access as I saw it and heard it from the lips of students there on that mountain school that is like an extension school, an ag college. Some will know what the name of that school is.

When I found that out, I said I want to see out what you have. So we went into a classroom. As we walked into the class courtroom, there were 12 or 14 computers in there. So yes, they had computers. They were old 386s. There were two or three students sitting at every screen, and the instructor was teaching a course on how bad capitalism is.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I wish I had had an iPhone so I could have taken a picture of that screen and captured it. It was in Spanish, but it was interpreted to me this way, and this is what I can recall. There were five points on why capitalism is so bad. They were instructing these kids, these students, they were college-aged students, and they were all young men, on how bad capitalism is, and one of the lessons of these five points was a capitalist keeps all of the money and all of the profit and takes enough just to feed the worker so the worker can just barely survive while the capitalist gets rich.

□ 2015

That was one of the five points, and it was those kind of Marxist points on down the line. As we walked in, they were in the middle of indoctrinating their students in favor of Marxism and against capitalism.

I don't know who has seen a lesson like that take place in a communist country. I have. It impressed me that how does a young person in a controlled environment with controlled communication ever get the idea that there is a whole great wonderful world out here in America?

But they have a sense of what America is like because then it turned into a question-and-answer period. There were students that were asking questions directly of me. Most of them had to do with agriculture. I was answering

them through Ed, the interpreter. Then at a certain point, it became too rapid fire, and he took it over and just did the conversation.

But here is what happened. I remember one big-faced young man sitting in the back of the room, and he asked some of the most prescient questions. But these questions were: Who sets the markets for your agriculture products? And what would be the price of beans and rice and corn, for example, and oats and wheat?

I answered him that the market sets the prices. Well, how does the market set the prices? Well, there is a buyer that makes an offer and a seller that decides whether or not to take it. If the seller says no, then the buyer might decide to raise his price until they get to a place where they agree. That was an amazing concept, and it looked like they had never heard that before.

Then it is, well, no one sets the prices; how can that be, that no one sets the prices? And the second thing will be, well, how often does the price change? That can change hundreds of times a day. It changes every transaction because the buyer and the seller can reach at a different point down to the tenth of a penny, a hard concept for them to understand.

Another question, who sets the price of farmland in the United States? Well, I know about that. The market sets the price of farmland.

Another new concept was, well, no one steps in and assigns a price? No, the buyer and the seller have to agree. That sets the price. You can see that soaking into their minds as they were asking the questions.

And then a question was, Why does anyone ever sell land? I had to explain that sometimes you reach that point in life when you don't want to work the land anymore; maybe you want to retire; maybe you want to take your capital out and roll it into another business; maybe you want to put it into savings; maybe you want to sell it to a neighbor who can utilize it better and the price is high enough; maybe you are overleveraged with a lending institution and you have to sell off a piece of land to get liquid again; maybe the economy went bad and you went broke and you had to sell it all before the bank foreclosed; or maybe the bank foreclosed and then sold it all out from underneath you, as we would say.

All of these were new concepts for these young men in this classroom in Cuba that I had been told by Castro's minders that, yes, they had full access to the Internet, they had computers, and they were connected to the modern and real world.

Well, what I found out was they only had old 386's. They were sharing them two or three at a station. They were learning on the screens of these computers in the old font style that you would see, with that kind of green

screen with white lettering on it. They were learning the perils of capitalism and the merits of Marxism.

So that is the kind of minds that are influenced by the Castro regime. We have had an embargo on trading with Cuba for a long time, and we have got a lot of years invested in it. We need to keep it in place. We have to have the kind of leadership in this country that can inspire people to step up and take their island back.

We need the kind of leadership in this country that can inspire the people in Venezuela to step up and take their country back. We need the kind of leadership in this country that will send the message and go down and stop and visit and inspire, in country after country in this hemisphere—even if we are only speaking about this hemisphere—to inspire the people of Central and South America to embrace the kind of life that we enjoy here.

The difference between the United States of America and countries in points south isn't because we are blessed with an extraordinary amount of natural resources that sets us apart. They have a lot of natural resources down in Central and South America, too.

It isn't because our climate is so much preferred to theirs. They have a favorable climate in most of their continent as well, and a lot of people go down there because their climate is favorable to ours.

I have a cousin who spent 8 years in the Peace Corps at Tegucigalpa. He sat in the mountains. He had the only refrigerator for miles around. That is because he is a diabetic, and he needed to keep his insulin in a propane-powered refrigerator.

I talked with him those years ago, and I said, what is the yield potential for corn? Now, we will raise now over 200 bushel an acre in our neighborhood. Down there, a decent crop back then was a little over 100 bushel. He said it has got the potential to raise 100 bushel.

What does it need? It needs fertilizer. It needs seed corn. I said, can't you get fertilizer and seed corn down there?

After I pressed him very hard in those idealistic years when we were still young and haven't experienced a lot of the world—and he more than I have—and his answer was, you have to understand the mindset when you are in subsistence agriculture as opposed to agriculture for profit.

He grew up on a farm. He said the difficult thing you have is to try to not get so hungry that you have to eat your seed corn. That is a different mindset.

We do capital investment here. We wouldn't think of starting a house and building a house very often, at least, unless we had the capital lined up to go in and build that thing and frame it up and close it in and get it wired and get

the utilities all set up, put the roofing and the siding on, and pave the driveway. We might even sod the lawn and have that all penciled into our deal, and then we start.

Down there, it is a different attitude. If they get a little bit of money together, they will go buy a few bricks and put that in the wall of the house. If they get a little more money, they do a little more. They might be building on that house for years and years and years.

Maybe they don't ever get to live in it, but their children do. Maybe their grandchildren move into that because they don't have access to capital like we have because—guess what, Mr. Speaker—because they are not capitalists. They are Marxists. They live with the oppression of Marxism, and it has to be mind control and thought control.

If you fear that your neighbors are going to report you to the regime, if you even fear that your family members that sit around the supper table with you, that one of them might be currying favor with the regime and report what you said at the supper table at night, after a while, it disciplines your thought to not think those things anymore because what you think eventually you might say and what you say might get you in trouble with the regime and might get you imprisoned, incarcerated. And then you can be the subject of the regime and have to suffer through the incarcerations that we know of, of the dissidents that are there in places like Cuba and Venezuela.

I am amazed that one could be impressed with what Cuba has built. I don't know that anybody is particularly impressed with what Venezuela has. They do have oil. They are blessed with natural resources. They have got the wrong forum and the wrong system of government, Mr. Speaker.

What gives people an opportunity, that gives them prosperity, that let's them plan not only for their future and put in capital investment, build a home, get it paid for, put some money in the bank, have an investment for a 401(k) so that you can live comfortably in your retirement, those things come from capitalism, from free enterprise—a free enterprise economy. They don't come from a Marxist state that has a central command that controls it all.

I am very troubled that the inspiration that the United States is isn't being utilized to the extent that it needs to be. So as I look at the void in our foreign policy and I look at a President who has made it his foreign policy to lead from behind, and then I look around the world and I see where is the leadership vacuum—and power abhors a vacuum, so it rushes into that vacuum. Right now, there is a bit of a power vacuum in Venezuela.

But I don't know that we have any kind of a plan or a strategy to even

voice that strong support for the freedom-loving people that live in places like Venezuela and Cuba. Let our light shine, send the message to them, get this operation going so that one day we can see the Western Hemisphere not only just be the foundation of Western civilization in the modern world, but it can grow and prosper, and we can live in peace and harmony by free enterprise and free trade and open access to everybody's market on an equal basis, not on a preferential basis.

When we passed the free trade agreement, the CAFTA-DR Free Trade Agreement, which is many of the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic, that opened up markets for us. We had already given them access to our markets. It opened up our markets.

We need to go down there now and say thank you and meet people and build the kind of relationships necessary. An American presence—and I mean a United States of America presence in Central and South America—should be grown and should be expanded, and it should be part of our strategy to strengthen our leaderships in this hemisphere.

If we do a far better job than we have done in the past, then we also have the moral authority to strengthen our relationships outside of this hemisphere in the Eastern as well as the Western Hemisphere.

Mr. Speaker, I am very troubled also by that strategy of leading from behind in country after country. I am troubled that President Obama, as he came into office, and he was elected in early November of 2008, and on the 17th of November of 2008, then-Ambassador to Iraq, Ryan Crocker, who is a stellar public servant and an impressive individual as far as an Ambassador is concerned, and someone who, if you listen to him talk, you know that he has got a deep knowledge base on that part of the world. But Ambassador Ryan Crocker signed the agreement, the status of forces agreement, in Iraq. In it, it just simply cleared out all U.S. influence and all U.S. troop presence in Iraq, with the exception of a few marines inside the Green Zone at the new U.S. Embassy.

I looked at the bases that we had established there, the airstrips that we had established there, the billions of dollars invested in military and logistical infrastructure. Essentially, our pledge was to sack up our bats and go home.

I was troubled when I read that agreement. It was already signed on November 17 when I read it. I contacted the White House and said, You are pulling everything out of Iraq, with the exception of a few marines in the Green Zone near the U.S. Embassy, giving away air bases.

And the answer was, We wanted to clear the field so that the incoming

President will have free rein, and we hope and expect that he will renegotiate a U.S. presence on these bases in Iraq.

Now, I don't know the depth of the agreement that took us to that point on November 17, 2008; I just know what that agreement said. Of course, Obama was already elected President. Later on, he was inaugurated January 20, the following year, 2009. He continued with this strategy of the pullout in Iraq.

The negotiations that I think should have and had a real opportunity to be successful failed, so that agreement of November 17, 2008, essentially stood, and all of our military and our munitions, the foundation for security that we had established in the entire country of Iraq, gone, gone down to just an embassy security personnel presence was it. All the blood, all the treasure handed over to the Iraqis who were led by a Shi'a and Maliki.

We were advised by some of our top foreign policy people that we shouldn't worry because Iran won't be exerting its influence in Iraq. There is a natural tension there. We should remember that they fought a war back in the eighties, and so they are not going to team up in a way; they are not going to line up against American interests; they are not going to be a thorn in our side or troublesome.

Look what happened in Iraq instead. Yes, a strong influence on the part of the Iranians, the Iranians pushing military supplies through Iraq, reported in the news just a couple of days ago, and also, the al Qaeda flag flying in places like Fallujah and Ramadi, places I have been to, places that were all shot to pieces, places where their mayors and their local leadership said, We are going to rebuild this city, and we are going to live in peace and prosperity.

We all know, Mr. Speaker, you can't live in peace and prosperity if you are living underneath that black al Qaeda flag. That is a result of leading from behind. That is a result of stepping out of Iraq and handing that country over. That is a result of not focusing on the negotiations necessary to establish a status of forces agreement in Iraq that could have provided the security and the stability and the training necessary for the Iraqis to protect themselves from the outside influence that now has a powerful influence in those places that were paid for, some of them more than once, and that includes Fallujah, in American blood, Mr. Speaker. That is Iraq.

Afghanistan, the President found himself pushed into a situation where he had to order a surge, even though he rejected the surge that was ordered by President Bush in Iraq—and it was, by all objective accounts, a successful surge in Iraq. President Obama, Mr. Speaker, ordered the surge of a minimum number of troops in Afghanistan.

I recall General McChrystal laying out those numbers. I don't have them

exactly committed to memory, but something to the extent of 75,000 troops will get the job done. With 50,000 troops, it will take a while. There will be a greater risk, and maybe we can get the job done. We kind of think so. And if you get down to 35,000 troops, you hope that you can get the job done.

The President opted for the lesser option and went in, in a minimalist attitude, and leaked out there and in a slow way reinforced our troops in Afghanistan. As soon as he ordered the surge, at the same time, he announced when the United States would pull out.

I don't know how any military strategist would announce when they were going to pull out. That says directly to the enemy, You have to hold on past this date; you will no longer have anybody to fight when they are gone.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that leading from behind has created a vacuum in Iraq that is being filled by al Qaeda and by the Iranians and the conflicting Iraqis again, and leading from behind in Afghanistan, that is creating a vacuum that is being filled by the Taliban.

When we look at where this is going, I am asking, what is our objective there any longer? What are we trying to preserve? I haven't heard this President tell us his goal or his objective.

But I do know this: in listening to the chairman of the Armed Services Committee in the news press conference just yesterday, how it boiled down, is what I heard from the esteemed chairman, Mr. MCKEON, and that is this: If you are going to order our troops into battle, Mr. President, Commander in Chief, then you owe them, you owe them your support for them, but also for their mission. You can't say you support the troops without also supporting their mission.

That needs to be, in a full-throated way, articulated by our Commander in Chief. If you support the troops, you can't do so, unless you also support their mission. If you are the Commander in Chief, you have to articulate that mission and let them know that the sacrifice is worth it and why the sacrifice is worth it. If you don't think so, you have to give a different order.

□ 2030

Those are those parts of the world.

Now I take us to Egypt, and these are the foreign policy discussions, Mr. Speaker, the ones that we don't have very often in this Congress. We can go a whole year and not have a debate on foreign policy. Throughout the Middle East—Egypt and Libya and Lebanon and Israel—these are countries that I visited with a small delegation of Members right before Christmas, so it is fairly fresh. Egypt was a very interesting stop. The things that I learned there and the view that I have on Egypt don't match up with our State Department's view, which, I think, is mirrored in an effort to reflect the

President's view. Mr. Speaker, in September, which is when we went in and met with the interim President, Mansour, and also with General el-Sisi, the commander of the military, it was only just June 30 through the 3rd of July that the Egyptians had come to the streets.

I think I have to back up on the history a little bit more in that, yes, Mubarak was a heavyhanded dictator. He was there for a lot of years as a heavyhanded dictator. Yet he was someone we had done business with. If you look back through the history of our relationship with Egypt, it warmed up considerably when Dwight Eisenhower told the British the Suez Canal is not yours. You need to move out of there, and the Egyptians will control the Suez Canal. In '54, that built a bond between the United States and Egypt. It was the right call on the part of Dwight Eisenhower. The British did pull back from their operations going on in the Suez, and it brought about a greater degree of stability in that part of the world.

Then take us to 1979—'79 is the year, as I recall, that we began doing joint operations with some Egyptian troops and other interests—but with American troops—and some of them were National Guard personnel from my neighborhood. It was joint operations in the Sinai. We have conducted those operations since 1979, up until this year, so we have a strong relationship with Egypt. Since 1979, their military equipment has been, by and large—and I don't know that I can say it has been exclusively the U.S., but it has been vastly, predominantly the U.S. The Russian influence in Egypt has been minimal, so that is how I want to keep it. If we are going to have peace in the Middle East, Mr. Speaker, Egypt is an anchor that is necessary for peace in the Middle East.

When our President went to Cairo and gave his speech in Cairo on June 9 of 2009, he seated the Muslim Brotherhood in the front row. Now, that is something that would have been missed by me at the time because I don't recognize the faces of the Muslim Brotherhood, but Egyptians do. They knew that the Muslim Brotherhood, which was formed in Egypt, was pushing to do a takeover of Mubarak, and they didn't understand why the message that was sent by President Obama was at least implied or implicit support for the voices of those folks sitting in the front row. Shortly after that speech—sometime after that speech—our then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made the statement that Mubarak needs to be gone yesterday. The Egyptian people didn't understand why it appeared to them that the new administration at the time was supporting the Muslim Brotherhood and opposing Mubarak and implying that the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood should come to power, which is what happened.

As they demonstrated in the streets, the unrest brought it about that Mubarak was pushed out, and into power and into elected office was the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood. This was incompetence in the government. Plus, each move that was made was assuring the Egyptians they would never see another election again, that their individual and their human rights that they had were going to be diminished as Morsi strengthened his power grip on the control of Egypt. There were 83 million Egyptians, of which only 5.6 million voted for Morsi as President. He did an incompetent job in Egypt. As the economy went into shambles and they saw their freedom go, they thought, What could be worse? We were better off under Mubarak. It wasn't so great, but we were better off under Mubarak.

On June 30 of last summer, the Egyptian people emerged into the streets. Of the 80 to 83 million Egyptians, 30 to 33 million went to the streets to protest peacefully to remove Morsi and put in a government of the people of Egypt.

What happened from that, after that June 30 to July 1, 2 and 3, is that they pleaded with the military to step in and take over. At that point, General el-Sisi and others stepped in to take over the Government of Egypt, and they provided that stability. Yes, it was bloody in the streets of Cairo and in other places in Egypt, but throughout that, you saw radical Islamists who were going in, raiding Christian weddings and slaughtering the wedding parties and others there at churches. While we were there in September, they burned down 70. Then I learned it was as many as 100 Christian churches in Egypt.

How is it that the Christians were caught in a conflict in a mostly Sunni country and were being attacked in that fashion?

The reason was the Muslim Brotherhood wanted the Christians to enter into it to create more of a civil war and more chaos because they believed that they could take power in the chaos. Instead, the Christians said—and there are less than 9 percent who are Christians and over 90 percent Sunni Muslims in Egypt—we are going to pray for these people who are destroying our churches and killing us. We are going to forgive them, and we are going to pray for peace. That was a component that brought about the demonstrations in the streets last summer that I mentioned from June 30 until at least July 3.

Out of that came the stability from the turmoil, however bloody, with interim President Mansour and with General el-Sisi in command of the military, who told us in September of last year, as did President Mansour, We are writing a constitution, and we are going to offer it to the people when we get it polished up and ask them to go

to the polls and ratify the constitution in Egypt. That was September when they made that promise.

When I returned in December, shortly before Christmas, I sat down with the chairman of the constitution committee, and I remarked as they had written the constitution, which had been published a couple of weeks before we got there, You promised us that you were going to produce a constitution and have it delivered to the people of Egypt in November, and I noticed that it didn't show up until December.

He looked at me, and he said, We were only 72 hours late, 72 hours into December. I think that is pretty good for government, don't you?

I smiled and laughed, and said, If you were in my country and asked me a similar question, I would hope that I would be astute enough to give a similar answer that you gave to me.

Seventy-two hours into December they produced a constitution. They put it on the ballot after we left, which was January 14 and 15. It passed overwhelmingly by a vote of the people of Egypt. It sets up elections in Egypt in a couple of months and then elections for a new President down the line, less than 3 months after that. We are seeing the pieces being put in place.

Even though the news media reports every outburst of unrest that is there, I see stability being anchored in Egypt, but it is not being anchored by the leadership of our administration, and it is not being anchored by the leadership out of our State Department. It is being anchored by the voice of the people of Egypt and by the good judgment of those whom they have empowered and, I think, whom they will continue to empower in the upcoming elections.

We are told we don't have to worry about the Russians doing business in Egypt because they don't give anything away, because they don't give any military equipment away. They have to sell everything. If the Egyptians don't have any money, it would seem that there wouldn't be a calculation done for the loans that were offered out of the Saudis and out of the United Arab Emirates, but now we have the Russians, who have negotiated a military equipment deal with the Egyptians for the first time that I know of since 1979 or, I will say, pre-1979. We didn't need the Russians in Egypt. They filled a vacuum—a vacuum due to a lack of leadership, a vacuum created by the implication that the President and our administration is supporting the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Egyptian people ask us: Why do the Americans support the Muslim Brotherhood? We are trying to get them out of here. My answer to them in a press conference in Cairo twice was this: the American people do not support the Muslim Brotherhood. In fact, the American people oppose the Muslim Brotherhood.

I believe this administration is on the wrong side of the issue in Egypt, and I think they will have to turn that giant ship of state around slowly because the administration will have to save face. I can't expect that the President is going to go out into the Rose Garden and step behind the podium with the Great Seal of the United States of America and say, "I came to confess that I was wrong in Egypt." No, there will have to be some smoke and some mirrors. If things go as well as they can over a period of time, we can ratchet our policy around to get behind the voice of the people in Egypt and strengthen our relationships there—the economic relationships, the trade partnership relationship and the military relationships—so at least they have the equipment that we had promised them so they can fight off al Qaeda in the Sinai.

So we say al Qaeda is growing in the Sinai, and we say to the Egyptians, You are going to have to go short of some of the equipment you expected from us because we don't like the idea that there was a duly elected Muslim Brotherhood president that was so bad that 30 to 33 million Egyptians poured into the streets.

Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, if that percentage of the population—say, roughly, 40 percent of the population—of the United States were all in the streets on the same day? Can you imagine what that would be like? If 125 million Americans came to the streets and stayed there from June 20 until July 3, do you think it would bring about a change in the policy and in the government of the United States with that kind of unrest? That is the magnitude. I have only seen this magnitude a few times.

I can think of a time when we had the magnitude of that kind of response in the nation of Georgia, when the Russians went in and invaded South Ossetia and the other client state. They went in and invaded and occupied. It was shortly afterwards—a week or so after that—that they had hands across Georgia, where they said a million of the, roughly, 4 million Georgians were in the streets. I saw thousands of them with their flags wrapped around their shoulders and their babies wrapped up in their flags, standing together in unity. When people come out of their homes to the tune of 25 or 40 percent of their population, you know something is wrong, Mr. Speaker.

That didn't get the attention of this administration enough for them to start to ratchet our policy around and get behind the voice of the people. Still they insist that there was a duly elected Morsi, and despite whatever happened after that, we are going to stick with the guy because the people of the Muslim Brotherhood were sitting in the front row, and our President gave a speech in Cairo. It sent a message, and

it was a factor in the change in power in Egypt. It was helpful to bring Morsi to power. When Morsi came to power, the Muslim Brotherhood was in power. They did consolidate their power, and they did begin to shut down the rights of the people of Egypt, and the Egyptians rose up.

□ 2045

It is because of a vacuum, and it was because of leading from behind, and it is from having sympathy for people who carry within them the values that are contrary to that of the United States. That is the Muslim Brotherhood. That is just Egypt.

Now, if I go on and I look at the things that have happened in the more than 2½ years of the Arab Spring, and in each of those things, when the Arab Spring erupted within country after country, across North Africa and across and around the Mediterranean, each change that was brought about went against the interests of the United States.

But somehow, the myopic belief that I think was in the mind of Jimmy Carter when he saw the Ayatollah Khomeini return to Iran from London, if I remember where he was based back in 1979, another watershed year, because there was a religious leader we ought to be supportive of him instead of the Shah of Iran.

Look what that got us, the beginning of the radical Islamic uprising, and we have been fighting that ever since, but not with the knowledge, the full knowledge base of what is going on.

In Libya, you have got a civil war that really hasn't ended, it just is suspended, and you have terrorists and radical Islamists that are controlling Benghazi.

You hear people that go to Libya, and you get the idea that somehow they went to Benghazi and walked around the ashes and the ruins where Ambassador Chris Stevens and our three other heroic Americans died. But they are not going there. They can't go there. We don't have the security personnel to go there. Neither do the government officials from Tripoli.

The country is divided at this point, and the terrorists are in control of most of Benghazi, and they go into Tripoli once in a while, and they have surrounded the Parliament and other government buildings and exerted their control there, Mr. Speaker.

There is still a void and a vacuum. We didn't get it resolved in Libya, in spite of all of the treasure and some of the blood that was spilled, thankfully, not American blood.

In Lebanon, it is an even bigger mess with a less decisive future, and you have Hezbollah controlling a significant component of that country and standing out on the streets in their uniforms under their yellow flags with

their weapons, defiant. They are a terrorist organization, and they are occupying parts of Lebanon, parts of the Beirut.

The results in Israel: constantly, the pressure is on Netanyahu and the Israelis. Don't you have a little more land that you can sacrifice in the belief that somehow you can trade land for peace?

There is no model in history that I can find that you can successfully trade land for peace, but still, our administration pushes, negotiate to give up something. A two-state solution. Let's move the Jews out of the West Bank because, after all, doesn't everybody know that they have no business living in a place like Judea, where they have lived since antiquity?

It is their ancestral homeland. What justice is there in pushing people out?

If 20 percent of the population of Israel proper is Arab, and they can live in peace and harmony there—remember, the fence is to keep people out, but the 20 percent of Arabs that are inside are peaceful. They are happy enough to live there. They vote. They serve in the Knesset. They serve in the Supreme Court. They have a voice that many will say is equal to that of Jews that live there. There is some question about it.

But if they can live in relative harmony in Israel proper, why is it that the Jews don't have a right to live in places like Gaza or the West Bank?

Then the problem is Netanyahu; the problem is the Israelis.

I don't think so, Mr. Speaker. I think we need to be in full-throated support with every kind of commitment necessary to bring about the kind of solutions that promote God-given liberty and things that we know here as American ideals.

We need to elect the next President, a very astute foreign policy president who believes in free enterprise, who believes in the pillars of American exceptionalism, and believes in exporting them to the rest of the world, because we are far better off with an American policy and a promotion of our beliefs and our ideals in other places in the world, where they want to embrace our way of living, than we are pulling back and allowing that vacuum to be filled by the power-hungry despots of people like a Castro, a Chavez, a Maduro, a Putin.

That is the mission for America. It is one of the missions for America. When the Presidential candidates come to Iowa, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask them, speak on foreign policy, become a student of foreign policy. Go travel, draw your own conclusions.

But, in the end, we are a world player. We have been a world player for a long time. We need to stay a world player.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. NUGENT (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of plane troubles.

Mr. PASTOR of Arizona (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of family health issues.

Mr. RUSH (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of attending to family acute medical care and hospitalization.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, February 26, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the fourth quarter of 2013 pursuant to Public Law 95–384 are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN OCT. 1 AND DEC. 31, 2013

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Steve King	12/14	12/16	Egypt		531.62						531.62
	12/16	12/17	Lebanon		210.00						210.00
	12/17	12/17	Libya								
	12/18	12/19	Israel		843.28						843.28
	12/19	12/20	Austria		417.00						417.00
	12/20	12/21	Norway		655.25						655.25
	12/13	12/21	ALL				12,825.27				12,825.27
Total											15,482.42
Hon. Louie Gohmert	12/14	12/16	Egypt		531.62						531.62
	12/16	12/17	Lebanon		210.00						210.00
	12/17	12/17	Libya								
	12/18	12/19	Israel		843.28						843.28
	12/19	12/20	Austria		417.00						417.00
	12/13	12/20	ALL				19,608.17				19,608.17
											21,610.07
Total											184.00
Samuel Ramer	12/14	12/16	Egypt		184.00						184.00
	12/16	12/17	Lebanon		75.00						75.00
	12/17	12/17	Libya								
	12/18	12/19	Israel		128.00						128.00
	12/19	12/20	Austria		417.00						417.00
	12/20	12/21	Norway		181.00						181.00
			ALL				7,898.80				7,898.80
Total											8,883.80
Committee total					5,644.05		40,332.24				45,976.29

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
* Per diem reimbursement.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4797. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Importation of Live Birds and Poultry, Poultry Meat, and Poultry Products From a Region in the European Union; Technical Amendment [Docket No. APHIS-2009-0094] (RIN: 0579-AD45) received February 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4798. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of General William M. Fraser III, United States Air Force, and his advancement on the retired list in the grade of general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4799. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of General Robert W. Cone, United States Army, and his advancement on the retired list in the grade of general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4800. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter authorizing Colonel Terry V. Williams, United States Marine Corps, to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4801. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's Alternative Fuel Vehicle program report for FY 2013; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4802. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report pursuant to Section 804 of the PLO Commitments Compliance Act of 1989 (title VIII, Foreign Relations Authorization Act, FY 1990 and 1991 (Pub. L. 101-246)), and Sections 603-604 (Middle East Peace Commitments Act of 2002) and 699 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, FY 2003 (Pub. L. 107-228), the functions of which have been delegated to the Department of State; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4803. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-179, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4804. A letter from the Chairman, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting the Commission's Performance and Accountability Report for Fiscal Year 2013; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4805. A letter from the Chief Operating Officer and Acting Executive Director, Election Assistance Commission, transmitting Fiscal Year 2013 Activities Report; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4806. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Election Commission, transmitting eight legislative recommendations from the Commission; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4807. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Establishment and Modification of Area Navigation (RNAV) Routes; Atlanta, GA [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0860; Airspace Docket No. 12-ASO-36] (RIN: 2120-AA66) received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to

the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4808. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 30937; Admt. No. 3572] received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4809. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 30936; Admt. No. 3571] received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4810. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — IFR Altitudes; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No.: 30940; Admt. No. 511] received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4811. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's report entitled, "27th Annual Report of Accomplishments Under the Airport Improvement Program for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010"; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. ISSA: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. Supplemental report on H.R. 2804. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-354 Pt. 2).

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 1123. A bill to promote consumer choice and wireless competition by permitting consumers to unlock mobile wireless devices, and for other purposes, with an amendment (Rept. 113-356). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 1944. A bill to protect private property rights (Rept. 113-357). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ISSA: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 3308. A bill to require a Federal agency to include language in certain educational and advertising materials indicating that such materials are produced and disseminated at taxpayer expense, with an amendment (Rept. 113-358). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. ISSA: Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. H.R. 1232. A bill to amend titles 40, 41, and 44, United States Code, to eliminate duplication and waste in information technology acquisition and management (Rept. 113-359). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. CAMP: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 3979. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, with an amendment (Rept. 113-360). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. WOODALL: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 487. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3865) to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2804) to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules (Rept. 113-361). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. BARBER:

H.R. 4075. A bill to provide funding to the National Institute of Mental Health to support suicide prevention and brain research, including funding for the Brain Research Through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SHUSTER (for himself, Mr.

RYAN of Ohio, Mr. PETRI, Mr. WALZ, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. KIND, Mr. LATTI, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. DENT, and Mr. DUFFY):

H.R. 4076. A bill to address shortages and interruptions in the availability of propane and other home heating fuels in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. CONYERS (for himself and Mr. BENISHEK):

H.R. 4077. A bill to ensure and foster continued patient safety and quality of care by clarifying the application of the antitrust laws to negotiations between groups of health care professionals and health plans and health care insurance issuers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 4078. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require that ITIN applicants submit their application in person at taxpayer assistance centers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COLLINS OF GEORGIA (for himself and Mrs. BLACKBURN):

H.R. 4079. A bill to amend title 17, United States Code, to ensure fairness in the establishment of certain rates and fees under sections 114 and 115 of such title, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BURGESS (for himself and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas):

H.R. 4080. A bill to amend title XII of the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain trauma care programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. COLLINS of New York (for himself, Mr. REED, and Mr. GIBSON):

H.R. 4081. A bill to prohibit funds made available to the Department of Education or the Department of Justice from being used to provide postsecondary courses in prisons; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee:

H.R. 4082. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the work opportunity tax credit and to provide such credit for hiring long-term unemployed individuals; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GIBSON:

H.R. 4083. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce the rate of tax regarding the taxation of distilled spirits; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (for himself, Ms. DELAULO, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. CONNOLLY):

H.R. 4084. A bill to amend the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 to establish a Community Gardens Pilot Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. HIMES (for himself, Ms. DELAULO, and Ms. ESTY):

H.R. 4085. A bill to amend title 4 of the United States Code to limit the extent to which States may tax the compensation earned by nonresident telecommuters and other multi-State workers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KILDEE (for himself and Ms. DELAULO):

H.R. 4086. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to improve 21st Century Community Learning Centers; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. KILDEE:

H.R. 4087. A bill to amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to provide grants to States for summer employment programs for youth; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. KILDEE:

H.R. 4088. A bill to provide funding for Violent Crime Reduction Partnerships in the most violent communities in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROHRABACHER (for himself, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. JONES):

H.R. 4089. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income compensation received by employees consisting of qualified distributions of employer stock; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia (for himself, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. LUCAS, and Mr. PETERSON):

H. Con. Res. 86. Concurrent resolution celebrating the 100th anniversary of the enactment of the Smith-Lever Act, which established the nationwide Cooperative Extension System; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. BENISHEK:

H. Con. Res. 87. Concurrent resolution recognizing the occasion of the 200th Anniver-

sary of the Star Spangled Banner and its importance to the people of the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. HOYER (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. WOLF, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Ms. NORTON):

H. Con. Res. 88. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. SALMON, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. SIREN, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. YOHIO, Mr. STOCKMAN, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois):

H. Res. 488. A resolution supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic change and calling to end the violence; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Ms. WATERS, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. FATTAH, and Mr. MEADOWS):

H. Res. 489. A resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the need to facilitate and promote a robust response to the looming global crisis of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SCHNEIDER:

H. Res. 490. A resolution providing for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3546) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Rules.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. BARBER:

H.R. 4075.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. SHUSTER:

H.R. 4076.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 1 (related to general Welfare of the United States), and Clause 3 (related to regulation of Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with Indian tribes).

By Mr. CONYERS:

H.R. 4077.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 4078.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. COLLINS of Georgia:

H.R. 4079.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 8 of Section 8 of Article I of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. BURGESS:

H.R. 4080.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article One, Section Eight, Clause One

"The Congress shall have the power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States."

Article One, Section Eight, Clause Three

"To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

By Mr. COLLINS of New York:

H.R. 4081.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 6, Clauses 1 and 18 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee:

H.R. 4082.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. GIBSON:

H.R. 4083.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of Article 1 of the Constitution—The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. HASTINGS of Florida:

H.R. 4084.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8: The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

By Mr. HIMES:

H.R. 4085.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, the Taxing and Spending Clause: "The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States . . ."

By Mr. KILDEE:

H.R. 4086.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 8

By Mr. KILDEE:

H.R. 4087.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 8

By Mr. KILDEE:

H.R. 4088.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 8

By Mr. ROHRABACHER:

H.R. 4089.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution. The authority to enact this legislation is also derived from Amendment XVI of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 15: Mr. RICHMOND.
H.R. 20: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. OWENS, and Mr. HECK of Washington.
H.R. 25: Mr. STEWART.
H.R. 60: Mr. MORAN, Ms. KUSTER, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. MOORE, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 137: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 138: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 139: Mr. CLAY and Mr. SIREs.
H.R. 140: Mr. DESJARLAIS.
H.R. 148: Mr. HECK of Washington.
H.R. 335: Mr. SCHNEIDER.
H.R. 400: Mr. CONNOLLY.
H.R. 411: Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 421: Mr. HANNA.
H.R. 425: Mr. PERRY.
H.R. 437: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 460: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 482: Mr. RUIZ.
H.R. 543: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas and Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
H.R. 565: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 594: Mr. MEEHAN.
H.R. 647: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, and Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 669: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 688: Mr. REED.
H.R. 713: Mr. MCKINLEY.
H.R. 715: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. CHU, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. KUSTER, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mr. McDERMOTT.
H.R. 737: Mr. GARCIA.
H.R. 792: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. PETRI, and Mrs. LUMMIS.
H.R. 795: Mr. FORBES.
H.R. 798: Mr. HECK of Washington and Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 831: Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. DAINES, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Ms. EDWARDS, and Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.
H.R. 846: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN and Mr. COTTON.
H.R. 920: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico and Mr. KIND.
H.R. 946: Mr. STUTZMAN.
H.R. 951: Ms. LEE of California.
H.R. 975: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 1010: Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. SCHNEIDER.
H.R. 1014: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 1074: Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. LATTA, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, and Mr. NUGENT.
H.R. 1084: Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. VISCLOSKY.
H.R. 1091: Mr. SESSIONS.
H.R. 1148: Mr. McALLISTER.
H.R. 1240: Ms. SINEMA and Mrs. BUSTOS.
H.R. 1249: Mr. WENSTRUP.
H.R. 1250: Ms. MOORE and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 1252: Ms. McCOLLUM.

H.R. 1263: Mr. NEAL.
H.R. 1330: Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 1354: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN and Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
H.R. 1386: Mr. LANKFORD and Mrs. BACHMANN.
H.R. 1427: Mr. NUNES.
H.R. 1500: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H.R. 1508: Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 1528: Ms. NORTON and Mr. VARGAS.
H.R. 1563: Mr. HINOJOSA.
H.R. 1565: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 1573: Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 1599: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. BARBER, and Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 1652: Mr. GRIMM.
H.R. 1692: Mr. NEAL, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 1695: Mr. CÁRDENAS.
H.R. 1701: Mr. FITZPATRICK and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
H.R. 1726: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts and Mr. BARBER.
H.R. 1732: Mr. DeFAZIO.
H.R. 1744: Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 1761: Mr. STIVERS, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. WALBERG.
H.R. 1779: Mr. PRICE of Georgia and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.
H.R. 1795: Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. LoBIONDO, Mr. GUTHRIE, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 1796: Mr. BISHOP of New York.
H.R. 1801: Ms. MATSUI and Mrs. NEGRETE McLEOD.
H.R. 1814: Mr. MULVANEY.
H.R. 1830: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 1845: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 1852: Mr. McCAUL, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. LATHAM, and Ms. EDWARDS.
H.R. 1857: Mr. OWENS.
H.R. 1940: Mr. LOWENTHAL.
H.R. 1944: Mr. SIMPSON.
H.R. 1953: Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 1962: Ms. ESTY.
H.R. 1984: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 1998: Mr. BISHOP of New York and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 2012: Mr. FARR.
H.R. 2068: Mr. ROHRABACHER.
H.R. 2135: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. GUTHRIE.
H.R. 2149: Mr. McDERMOTT, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. VARGAS.
H.R. 2156: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 2172: Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 2222: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
H.R. 2278: Mr. PERRY.
H.R. 2302: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 2394: Mrs. BACHMANN.
H.R. 2415: Mr. ROE of Tennessee and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 2417: Mr. DeSANTIS.
H.R. 2468: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
H.R. 2482: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 2530: Ms. JENKINS, Mr. MARCHANT, Mrs. BLACK, and Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 2531: Mr. CARTER, Ms. JENKINS, Mr. MARCHANT, Mrs. BLACK, and Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 2536: Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 2540: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. VARGAS, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 2548: Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. GUTHRIE, and Mr. DEUTCH.
H.R. 2553: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. NOLAN, and Mr. VISCLOSKY.
H.R. 2577: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.
H.R. 2638: Mr. SIREs.
H.R. 2663: Mr. TIBERI and Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.
H.R. 2689: Mr. SCHNEIDER.
H.R. 2702: Ms. SPEIER.
H.R. 2707: Mrs. NEGRETE McLEOD.
H.R. 2780: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 2788: Mr. ELLISON, Ms. GABBARD, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 2827: Mr. ELLISON and Mr. DeFAZIO.
H.R. 2841: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. NORTON and Mr. NUNNELEE.
H.R. 2847: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. ENYART, and Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.
H.R. 2897: Mr. TONKO and Ms. CHU.
H.R. 2901: Mr. McGOVERN.
H.R. 2920: Ms. LOFGREN.
H.R. 2939: Mr. RUNYAN.
H.R. 2955: Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 2975: Mr. TONKO.
H.R. 2989: Mr. CAPUANO.
H.R. 2994: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, and Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 2996: Mr. JOYCE, Mr. COLE, Mr. VELA, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. TSONGAS, and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.
H.R. 3040: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
H.R. 3043: Mr. COOK.
H.R. 3086: Mr. ENGEL, Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SALMON, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. BRADY of Texas, and Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 3116: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 3121: Mr. COBLE and Mr. SCHOCK.
H.R. 3136: Mr. BUCSHON.
H.R. 3150: Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 3155: Ms. FOXX.
H.R. 3179: Mr. BUCSHON.
H.R. 3186: Mr. PALLONE.
H.R. 3313: Mr. COOK, Mr. VARGAS, Mrs. NEGRETE McLEOD, and Mr. COLE.
H.R. 3344: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. LEE of California, and Mr. MEADOWS.
H.R. 3361: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 3370: Mr. RUIZ, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 3382: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 3383: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. DeFAZIO.
H.R. 3384: Mr. JONES, Mr. WALZ, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. ENYART, and Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 3413: Mr. JORDAN.
H.R. 3453: Ms. FUDGE.
H.R. 3461: Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. DOYLE, and Mr. HECK of Washington.
H.R. 3474: Mr. WESTMORELAND.
H.R. 3486: Mr. JORDAN.
H.R. 3489: Mr. VALADAO.
H.R. 3494: Mrs. CAPPS.
H.R. 3505: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 3546: Mr. DOYLE.
H.R. 3591: Mr. BUTTERFIELD and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 3593: Mr. TIPTON.
H.R. 3607: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.
H.R. 3629: Mr. COTTON and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 3648: Mr. VARGAS.
H.R. 3656: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.
H.R. 3657: Mr. COLE and Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 3658: Mr. CARTER and Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 3673: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
H.R. 3698: Mr. BOUSTANY, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, and Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 3708: Mr. TIBERI and Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.
H.R. 3711: Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 3723: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan and Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 3732: Mr. BUCSHON and Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 3747: Mr. ISRAEL and Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 3804: Mr. McNERNEY.

H.R. 3824: Mr. McNERNEY.

H.R. 3833: Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 3855: Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 3864: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 3877: Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 3899: Ms. DELBENE and Mr. REICHERT.

H.R. 3905: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 3912: Mr. KILMER and Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 3921: Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. MOORE, and Mr. HECK of Washington.

H.R. 3930: Mr. NOLAN, Mr. HUDSON, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. SCHOCK, and Mr. ROKITA.

H.R. 3954: Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 3991: Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. POCAN, Mr. GOSAR, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. FORTENBERRY, and Mr. COTTON.

H.R. 3996: Mr. RUNYAN.

H.R. 4001: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan.

H.R. 4006: Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 4012: Mr. WESTMORELAND and Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 4016: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. LAN-GEVIN.

H.R. 4026: Ms. BASS, Mr. ENYART, and Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 4031: Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. HUNTER, and Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 4040: Mr. ENYART and Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 4041: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. ENYART, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. McNERNEY, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SIREs, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. DEGETTE, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 4051: Mr. ENYART, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. WALZ, and Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 4064: Mr. TERRY, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 4071: Mr. GIBSON.

H.J. Res. 108: Mr. BYRNE.

H. Con. Res. 28: Ms. LOFGREN.

H. Res. 54: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H. Res. 109: Ms. BONAMICI and Mr. KEATING.

H. Res. 190: Ms. HANABUSA.

H. Res. 345: Mr. RUSH and Mr. MEEKS.

H. Res. 359: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.

H. Res. 411: Mr. HUELSKAMP and Mr. GIBBS.

H. Res. 418: Mr. MARINO.

H. Res. 422: Ms. MENG.

H. Res. 432: Mr. FOSTER.

H. Res. 442: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. RIGELL, Mr. STIVERS, and Mr. MCCAUL.

H. Res. 456: Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. HOLT, Mr. REICHERT, and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H. Res. 476: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. NUNNELEE.

H. Res. 479: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

H. Res. 480: Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H. Res. 483: Mr. McNERNEY and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CELEBRATING POINT REYES
FARMSTEAD CHEESE COMPANY

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company on the occasion of the company's recognition by Sand County Foundation, the California Farm Bureau Federation and Sustainable Conservation as the recipient of the prestigious 2013 California Leopold Conservation Award. Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the Leopold Conservation Award recognizes extraordinary landowner achievement in voluntary stewardship and management of natural resources.

Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company and its owners, the Giacomini Family, have prioritized healthy landscapes, clean waterways and a clean-energy future. Rotational grazing of their cows keeps soils healthy and helps prevent harmful erosion, and their methane digester produces renewable energy to power their dairy and cheese facility.

Please join me in congratulating the Giacomini and Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Company on this important recognition and for the lasting impact their conservation policies will have on California's ranching community and its environment.

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY
MONTH

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect and sincere admiration that I rise today to celebrate Black History Month and its 2014 theme—Civil Rights in America, focusing on the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This year's theme reflects on the many courageous individuals who fought for an end to discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Through the passage of the Civil Rights Act, discrimination was outlawed in public facilities including restaurants and hotels, ending the era of legal segregation in such establishments.

Leading up to the passage of the Civil Rights Act, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led the Civil Rights March on Washington fighting for, amongst other ideals, meaningful civil rights legislation, including better employment opportunities and an end to segregation. This historic event led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which paved the way for future anti-discrimination legislation, including

the Voting Rights Act of 1965. While there is more work to be done, we must follow in the footsteps of the great leaders of the Civil Rights Movement in order to ensure that every American is afforded equal opportunity and justice.

This month and always, it is important that we honor and celebrate America's greatest advocates for equal rights and civil liberties, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. DuBois, and Thurgood Marshall, and to remember the extraordinary contributions of organizations including the NAACP, the National Urban League, and the Congress for Racial Equality, as well as many others which have played such a critical role in changing the landscape of American society for the better. As we pay tribute to these heroes of African American history, let us remember their profound perseverance, sacrifice, and struggle in the fight for freedom and equality which has shaped our great nation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues join me in celebrating Black History Month and honoring those who fought, and those who continue to fight, for civil rights and justice. Through the efforts of these honorable individuals, we are reminded how far we have come as a nation, while realizing there is still progress to be made.

HONORING HARRISON RAMSDEN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Harrison Ramsden. Harrison is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Harrison has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Harrison has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Harrison has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Harrison Ramsden for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE
FLOYD ADAMS

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of the late Honorable Floyd Adams, Jr. of Savannah, Georgia. Mr. Adams was a long time leader in our community, and I was fortunate to work closely with him for many years. Floyd was the first African-American mayor of Savannah, holding office from 1996 until 2003.

Floyd began his career running the Savannah Herald, a weekly newspaper covering the African-American community in Savannah that his father started in 1945. He found his calling in public service and ran for the Savannah City Council in 1982. He represented the First District on the City Council until 1995, when he decided to run for mayor of Savannah. He won the election, becoming the 63rd mayor of Georgia's oldest city and taking command during an important time in Savannah's history. He ran again in 1999, facing no opposition and serving the city and its great people until 2003, when term limits prevented him from running again.

Floyd came into office in January of 1996 as the city prepared to do its part in the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. Though the games were hosted in Atlanta, Savannah was the location of all sailing competitions. He witnessed an incredible expansion of Savannah's tourism industry, thanks in part to the success of John Berendt's bestseller "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil." He also led Savannah through the troubles of 1999's Hurricane Floyd, which caused mass evacuations throughout the Southeast. His leadership through times both good and bad should not be forgotten.

After his time as mayor, Floyd remained involved in Savannah politics. In 2008, he ran for the District 2 seat on the Savannah-Chatam County School Board and won. Floyd's continued support of Savannah and his unfailing determination to make the city a better place inspired many in our community. We all can learn from his example.

The Honorable Floyd Adams, Jr. died February 1, 2014. He was, and still is, an inspiration to the people of Savannah. He will be remembered as a fair and courageous leader. I am truly honored to be able to recognize the Honorable Floyd Adams, Jr. today, and I consider myself lucky to have called him a friend. He will be deeply missed by his community, friends, and family.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

JOHN B. "JACK" NEWKIRK

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud John B. "Jack" Newkirk for his induction into the Jefferson County Business Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame recognizes outstanding area businesses, individuals, organizations and civic leaders from the past and present that have significantly impacted and contributed to the Jefferson County community.

One of Jack's greatest contributions to our community is his medical device inventions. He and his wife, Carol, started companies that distributed life-saving medical devices. These medical devices have improved the quality of life for thousands of people around the world.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jack for his outstanding contributions to the world of medicine and well-deserved recognition from the Jefferson County Business Community.

IN HONOR OF THE BULLHEAD
CITY BEE**HON. PAUL A. GOSAR**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Bullhead City Bee's 24th anniversary. The Bee was established on December 27, 1989 and serves the cities of Bullhead City, Arizona and Laughlin, Nevada. The co-founders of the newspaper include Hilda Gay Zimmer, Jim Dir, and Thom McGraham, the current publisher. Many Bullhead City-area residents turn to the Bee for their local news, making this an important community newspaper.

Congratulations to the Bullhead City Bee on 24 years of success. May they find continued success for years to come.

IN MEMORIAM OF SARALEE
McCLELLAND KUNDE**HON. JARED HUFFMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, we rise today in memory of Saralee McClelland Kunde, who passed away on January 26, 2014 after a long battle with cancer. In 1938, her parents, Robert and Lillian "Sweet Lil" McClelland purchased a milk route in Marin County and subsequently entered the dairy business, hand-milking 18 brown Swiss cows. Born in Marin Saralee hurled herself into the dairy operation and into 4-H, raising Holsteins and showing them at local fairs.

Revered as a superstar by others who work to promote the county's grapes, wines, milk and other bounty, and to preserve its ranch

and farmlands, Kunde championed the Sonoma County Harvest Fair since its inception and was a key player in the Select Sonoma County marketing campaign and the Russian River Valley Winegrowers.

A generous philanthropist, Saralee rallied others to contribute to myriad Sonoma County causes, including the 4-H Center in Rohnert Park. Tireless and innovative, Kunde constantly enacted strategies to promote the Harvest Fair and the Sonoma County Fair, challenge and inspire youth involved in 4-H and Future Farmers of America, fortify cooperation among grape growers and other producers, and introduce the general public to the farm experience.

The depth of Saralee's commitment to agriculture in Sonoma County fueled many efforts to unite ranchers and farmers and to propel their products into national markets. She was a formidable force in uniting the diverse and often conflicting members of the agricultural community.

Mr. Speaker, Saralee Kunde's vibrant life is proof positive that one woman can make a difference. The legacy she leaves will not soon be forgotten as much of her legacy lives on all around us in Sonoma County and beyond. It is therefore appropriate that we pay tribute to her today and honor her memory.

HONORING SCOTT PATTON

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Scott Patton. Scott is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Scott has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Scott has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Scott has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Scott Patton for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONGRATULATING KENDALL
COYNE ON WINNING THE SILVER
MEDAL AS A MEMBER OF THE
U.S. WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAM AT
THE XXII WINTER OLYMPICS IN
SOCHI, RUSSIA

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Kendall Coyne for competing

and winning a silver medal as a member of the U.S. Women's Hockey Team at the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics. I am very proud of Coyne's performance at the Olympic Games and honored to have her as a resident of Palos Heights, IL.

Born in Palos Heights, Illinois, Kendall Coyne from an early age dedicated her heart and soul to the sport she loves, hockey. When she was three years old, her mother tried to get her involved in figure skating, but Kendall would not have any part of it. Inspired by her older brother Kevin, Kendall laced up her hockey skates and played on boys' hockey teams until she joined the U-18 national team at the age of 15.

While other children her age would be playing with their friends or sleeping in on the weekends, Kendall would wake her parents up at six in the morning so that they could take her to the rink for practice. Not only is she a dedicated athlete, she is a full-time student. After graduating from Carl Sandburg High School, in Orland Park, Illinois, she attended the Berkshire School in Sheffield, Massachusetts for their post-graduate program. After graduating from Berkshire, Kendall was awarded a scholarship to play women's hockey at Northeastern University. At Northeastern, Kendall is studying communications and hopes to one day become a sports analyst.

At just 21 years of age, Kendall Coyne has been a three-time world championship medalist, a participant in four Nations Cups, a three-time U18 world championship medalist, a two-time Hockey East First-Team All-Star selection, and a Hockey East Rookie of the Year among many other distinctions. During the XXII Olympics, she scored two goals and recorded four assists while helping her team reach the gold medal game.

At 5'2", Kendall Coyne is the shortest member of the U.S. women's national team. But what she might lack in height she makes up in dedication, perseverance, strength, agility, and drive. I am certain the tradition of success Kendall has established will continue for a long time to come.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the tremendous accomplishments of Kendall Coyne and to congratulate her and the entire U.S. Women's Hockey Team for winning the silver medal at the XXII Winter Olympics in Sochi.

HONORING MARY SIMON

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of myself and Representatives HONDA, ESHOO, and SPEIER to recognize the service of Ms. Mary Simon to San Jose and the Bay Area community.

Ms. Simon, the founder and executive director of Resource Area for Teaching (RAFT), will retire in the spring of 2014 after 20 years at its helm. She will greatly be missed.

After 12 years of teaching math and science to second and third graders, Ms. Simon founded RAFT in 1994 with a mission to help teachers transform children's learning experience

through hands-on education. RAFT is a non-profit organization that provides educators with prepared teaching kits and idea sheets for activities in mathematics, science, and art. Additionally, RAFT helps teachers access education specialists who can assist with planning lessons and projects as well as locate affordable teaching supplies.

Ms. Simon's remarkable vision had been to create a place that celebrates and supports great teaching. Through her hard work, Ms. Simon was able to bring together countless volunteers, donors, and companies to collaborate in this effort. Under her leadership, thousands of teachers joined RAFT to improve the quality of education in the Bay Area.

Under Ms. Simon's guidance, RAFT became an important resource for educators and continues to foster community involvement. With Ms. Simon's effort and unwavering commitment, RAFT grew into a 10,000-member organization and continues to enrich the education experience of hundreds of thousands of students. RAFT's products, services, and teaching supplies improve the educational experience of over 825,000 kids per year.

We wish to congratulate Ms. Mary Simon on her impressive and impactful career and commend her years of service to the San Jose and the Bay Area community generally. Continued efforts and innovation in education of generations to come must be one of our top priorities as a nation, and Ms. Simon's efforts in this area are invaluable.

Ms. Simon worked to create a place where teachers could come together for the support and respect for the important, essential work that they do for our children. Because of Ms. Simon's vision, creativity, and dedication, RAFT will continue to make a positive impact on our educators and students. Ms. Simon's service has made our community a better place, and she will be dearly missed.

GARY WINK

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Gary Wink for his induction into the Jefferson County Business Hall of Fame and for his outstanding career in the Golden business community.

Gary served for 22 years as an executive and President and CEO of the Golden Chamber of Commerce. During that time, the membership of the Chamber more than doubled. Gary expanded the Golden Fine Arts Festival into an event ranking in the top 50 festivals in the nation, and he developed the Golden Farmers Market, one of the finest in Colorado.

Gary's leadership at the Golden Chamber of Commerce was instrumental in securing a thriving business climate that Golden continues to enjoy.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Gary on his contributions to the Golden business community and his well-deserved honor from the Jefferson County Business Community.

IN HONOR OF REPRESENTATIVE
PAUL CLYMER

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, State Representative Paul Clymer is a principled leader, a man of character, veteran, and strong advocate for the citizens of the 145th legislative district of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. We honor his service to our country, state and community, as we also recognize his leadership in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, where he chairs the Education Committee and is a member of the Gaming Oversight Committee. Representative Clymer plans to retire at the end of the year, having served in state office for 34 years. An avid historian, he was responsible for developing funding strategies for the restoration and preservation of 85 of 147 Civil War monuments on the historic Gettysburg, Pennsylvania battlefield. Additionally, he is chairman of the committee working to preserve the historic integrity of the state Capitol building, its architecture, furniture, paintings and artifacts. On these and other issues important to the people he represents, namely, open space, farmland preservation, public transportation, gaming, veterans affairs, business and jobs, Representative Paul Clymer rises above the crowd, and in so doing, has set an outstanding example for others to follow.

HONORING GRANT BESS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Grant Bess. Grant is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Grant has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Grant has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Grant has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Grant Bess for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CONGRATULATING THE LEMONT
HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY
CHEERLEADING SQUAD ON WIN-
NING THE 2014 MEDIUM DIVISION
ISHA CHEERLEADING STATE
CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Lemont High School Varsity Cheerleading Squad. On February 8th, the squad competed in the 2014 IHSA Medium Division Cheerleading State Championship at the U.S. Cellular Coliseum in Bloomington, IL and placed 1st in their division. I appreciate all of the incredible hard work and dedication this squad has put into their performance and would like to congratulate them on this tremendous team achievement.

The Lemont High School Varsity Squad comprises 19 members which includes Seniors: Madison Detres, Emily Durham, Gianna Letizia, Miranda Neumann, Rebecca Peraino, Kelsey Tate, Gianna Turek, and D.J. Wohead, Juniors: Easton Kral, Reann Kwasneski, Elly Lambert, Nicole Markley, Stephanie Markley, Kayly Norris, Samantha Palumbo, Jenna Polk, and Samantha Walus, Sophomores: Erin Cliff and Katelyn Papierski, and Freshman: Caitlyn Henry.

This squad under the guidance of head coach Dave Erlenbaugh, has had a very successful competition season leading up to the ISHA Cheerleading State Championships. Notable wins include their 1st place finish at both Sectionals and the Winter Meltdown Competition.

Lemont's varsity squad has made 9 consecutive final appearances at the IHSA State Championships and won the title in 2009, 2010, and 2011. This most recent win only adds to their excellent competition record.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this impressive accomplishment made by the Lemont High School Varsity Cheerleading Squad and to congratulate them on their state championship win.

RECOGNIZING CAMDEN COUNTY,
GEORGIA

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Camden County, GA in light of their recent designation as a Coast Guard Community. Camden is the first county in the nation to be given this distinguished distinction, as it normally only is given to cities. Camden, however, is such a great supporter of the Coast Guard, its personnel, its families, and its mission that the award was given to the county as a whole.

Camden County is incredibly rich in history. Founded on February 5, 1777, it is one of the oldest counties in Georgia. It was named for Charles Pratt, Earl of Camden, who was an

Englishman in favor of the American Independence. Modern day Camden County includes the cities of St. Mary's, Woodbine, and Kingsland and is home to Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay. Kings Bay is the Atlantic Fleet's home port for U.S. Navy's ballistic missile nuclear submarines, the Ohio-class. It also is home to Cumberland Island National Seashore, a National Wilderness Area.

With this honor, Camden County and its cities join 15 other cities to earn this designation, but Camden is the only to be labeled a Community. The designation was supported by the Congressional committees that oversee the Coast Guard and by the Coast Guard headquarters in Washington, D.C. The Coast Guard plays a major role in insuring the safety and security of Camden County and the Georgia Coast. Two teams are stationed in Camden County: the Maritime Force Protection Unit, which protects Navy assets at Kings Bay, and the Maritime Safety and Security Team 91108, which was established following the 9/11 attacks.

This honor would not have been possible without the strong support of many groups in Camden County. The Camden Partnership, which was created to support both Navy and Coast Guard members in Camden, made visits to 210 congressional offices to support restoring the Coast Guard budget when the group faced budget cuts. The Coast Guard Community of Camden organizes events and programs in support of Coast Guard members and families. The local Navy League awards its Coast Guard Sailor of the Year, and the Chamber of Commerce supports a military member of the month.

Camden County is a proud community and a model for the nation. I consider myself fortunate to represent such an incredible group of people, and I am thankful for the hard work and tireless dedication they display for the men and women who protect us.

DR. CYNTHIA STEVENSON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Dr. Cynthia Stevenson for her outstanding contribution to the Jefferson County School District and her induction into the Jefferson County Business Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame recognizes area businesses, individuals, organizations and civic leaders from past and present that significantly impacted and contributed to the Jefferson County community.

Cindy has been a part of Jefferson County schools most of her life as a student, a teacher, principal and superintendent.

As a result of her leadership, Jefferson County Schools thrived. Her dedication and commitment to providing the highest quality education to our kids will benefit our community for years to come. I am proud to call Cindy my friend and thankful for her public service.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Dr. Stevenson on her contributions and I am

deeply grateful for the legacy of excellence she has given to our community.

RECOGNIZING THE EVENTS OF
FEBRUARY 26, 1992

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues and people all over the world in recognizing the tragedy which occurred on February 26, 1992 in the small Azerbaijani town of Khojaly. The attack resulted in the deaths of 613 Azerbaijani civilians and is one of the most devastating acts of violence in the South Caucasus in recent history. According to some accounts, the fate of 150 Khojaly inhabitants is still unknown, even after twenty-one years.

The numerous casualties in the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan underscore the need for a political-rather than a military-solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. A fair and comprehensive settlement is the most effective tool to encourage stability, prosperity, and a lasting peace in the region. As co-chair of the Minsk Group, the United States remains committed to working with both sides to that end. With that goal in mind, we remember and mourn the 613 victims of Khojaly and work together to safeguard the human rights of all.

HONORING JORDAN BENNETT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jordan Bennett. Jordan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 444, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jordan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jordan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jordan has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jordan built a planter and a bench in the vegetable garden at Harvesters Community Food Network, a local food bank in Kansas City, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jordan Bennett for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

ADDRESSING AFROPHOBIA IN
EUROPE

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the European Parliament's February 20, 2014 public hearing on Afrophobia, as well as the critical importance of continuing to work with the European Union (EU) to address racism and discrimination against Black Europeans. It has been organized by the Green Party in collaboration with the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) and the European Coalition of Cities Against Racism (ECCAR).

An estimated seven to ten million individuals of African descent currently live in Europe, particularly in France, the United Kingdom, and The Netherlands. These populations form an influential part of the African Diaspora. From labor and scholarship to politics and civil rights, they have contributed greatly to European history and culture over the past several centuries. However, the story of Black Europeans remains widely untold, rendering many of their past and present contributions to the political and social life of Europe invisible or forgotten. Furthermore, similar to the experiences of many African Americans, they have increasingly become the targets of discrimination, pernicious racial profiling, and violent hate crimes impacting equal access to housing, employment, education, and justice.

I commend Members of the European Parliament Jean-Jacob Bicep, Jean Lambert, and Philippe Lamberts of the Greens/European Free Alliance (EFA) for building upon previous efforts and hosting a public hearing on Afrophobia in the EU. As the Ranking Democratic Member of the Helsinki Commission, I have long worked with European policymakers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community leaders to help address inequality and discrimination facing persons of African descent.

In November 2013, the U.S. Helsinki Commission hosted an Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) delegation of Black European Rights Leaders representing 10 countries.

During a Commission briefing, entitled "Europeans of African Descent 'Black Europeans': Race, Rights, and Politics," members of the delegation shed light on the challenges encountered by many Black Europeans due to ongoing racism and discrimination, including barriers to greater political representation and leadership opportunities. Furthermore, they drew attention to the need for increased cooperation between Europe and the United States to combat racial discrimination and continuing racial disparities.

In conjunction with the Delegation's visit, I introduced H. Res. 421 "Recognizing People of African Descent and Black Europeans", which outlines concrete steps that the United States can take to help address racism and discrimination in Europe. It calls for the adoption of a Joint U.S.-European Union Action

Plan to develop transatlantic solutions to combat racial discrimination and promote racial equality in Europe.

In addition, I sent a letter to President Obama on December 20, 2013 urging him to sign a Presidential Memorandum on "International Initiatives to Advance Human Rights, Social Inclusion, Equality, and Empowerment of Peoples of African Descent."

Mr. Speaker, Europe is currently grappling with complex questions at the intersection of national identity, decreasing birth rates, increasing immigration, security concerns, and a rise in extremist political parties. Cooperation between the United States and the EU is key to addressing the global challenges of racism and discrimination, and we should recognize the efforts made by the EU to address them.

HONORING CAPTAIN ERNEST T.
NORDMAN

HON. JASON T. SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Captain Ernest T. Nordman of Cape Girardeau, Missouri for his outstanding achievements and exemplary years of service to our Nation.

Captain Nordman is being awarded the prestigious Manion Award for Officer Logistician of the Year. The award is named after 1st Lieutenant Travis Manion, a Marine logistician who was killed by enemy sniper fire in Iraq in 2007. This award honors outstanding leadership skills, exemplary actions and overall conduct. I would like to congratulate Captain Nordman for this distinguished achievement and his honorable service. I am tremendously grateful for the dedicated men and women who have dutifully served our country, and among them leaders such as Captain Nordman who have risen as admirable leaders. It is my pleasure to recognize his achievements before the House of Representatives.

RECOGNIZING TALENTED SCIENTISTS AT FORT SETTLEMENT MIDDLE SCHOOL

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the talented young scientists at Fort Settlement Middle School in Sugar Land, Texas. Students Anish Mago, Siddanth Arora, Nithin Parsan, Dillion Ding and their science teacher, Karen Staley, were named first place winners in the 2014 Mars Rover Celebration.

The Mars Rover Celebration is an annual competition that invites students interested in science and engineering to participate in the design and construction of a Mars Rover model that would carry out a specific mission. The Fort Settlement students' mission was to colonize Mars. The team's working model "Amazement" earned them first place in the

solar-powered Rover division. Having grown up in Clear Lake, near the Johnson Space Center, I too was interested in space exploration as a young student. At a time when America needs more talent in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields, it's great to see this enthusiasm for space exploration in our future scientists and leaders.

On behalf of everyone from the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, I'm proud to recognize these young scientists. Congratulations to the Fort Settlement Middle School team on earning this impressive accomplishment. I hope one day to see you all on your own mission to Mars. In this case, the sky is not the limit.

HONORING ZACHARY BISCHLER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Zachary Bischler. Zachary is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Zachary has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Zachary has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Zachary has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Zachary Bischler for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE DELAWARE RIVER
YACHTSMEN'S LEAGUE

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the upcoming 100th Year Anniversary of the founding of the Delaware River Yachtsmen's League (DRYL). Founded in 1914, the DRYL is committed to promoting true Yachtsmanship on the Delaware River, its tributaries and surrounding territory.

The DRYL started with a mere five founding clubs, and now contains 35 clubs along with six boating organizations. Over 5,000 boating members support one another in their commitments of successful club activities, working for cleaner waterways, and staying abreast of developing issues and laws.

I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in commending the Delaware River Yachtsmen's League for this distinguished milestone in its already impressive history. May we all seek to emulate the League's culture of dedication and hard work.

RECOGNIZING DEPUTY SHERIFF
CHAD R. KOWALCZYK FOR HIS
BRAVERY AND SELFLESSNESS
IN THE LINE OF DUTY

HON. SEAN P. DUFFY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Taylor County Deputy Sheriff Chad R. Kowalczyk for his bravery, selflessness, and quick thinking in the line of duty while responding to a call on September 8, 2013.

Deputy Kowalczyk responded to a call of an armed suspect who had several hostages. Upon arriving at the scene, Deputy Kowalczyk requested back-up.

When the suspect began firing shots at Deputy Kowalczyk, he retreated to a position of cover and attempted to warn the responding officers of the situation. Unable to make radio contact, Deputy Kowalczyk decided to leave his position of cover to get to his squad car, knowingly putting his life in jeopardy.

When Deputy Kowalczyk broke cover, he was struck by a round in his left abdomen.

Deputy Kowalczyk made it to his car and radioed the other officers alerting them of the situation. When they arrived at the scene, they found Deputy Kowalczyk taking up a tactical position, despite his serious injuries.

Mr. Speaker, Deputy Kowalczyk may not agree with me, but he is a hero. His quick thinking and selflessness not only saved his fellow officers, but the family held hostage in their home. Please join me in thanking Deputy Kowalczyk once again for his bravery, selflessness, and quick thinking in the line of duty.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
RESOURCE CENTER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Developmental Disabilities Resource Center (DDRC) for receiving the Non-Profit of the Year award from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

For 50 years DDRC has been providing support and opportunities to people with developmental disabilities and their families in Jefferson County. From their humble beginnings in church basements, DDRC has grown to 550 employees and more than 200 volunteers who make a difference in the lives of more than 3000 individuals each year.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Developmental Disabilities Resource Center (DDRC) for this well deserved honor from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County. Your dedication to our community enhances all of our lives.

CONGRATULATING COACH STEVE
JENKINS ON HIS 600TH WIN

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Coach Steve Jenkins on his 600th career win as head coach of Evangel University's men's basketball program.

Coach Jenkins reached this impressive feat in his 32nd season at Evangel University, a small Christian college in Springfield, Missouri. With this win, Coach Jenkins is now only the seventh active coach in the NAIA-I division to reach 600 wins.

Through his 30-plus seasons as head coach, Coach Jenkins' teams reached the NAIA national tournament 11 times, including a National Championship in 2002. His teams have captured seven Heart of America conference titles. He was honored as the NAIA National Coach of the Year in 2002, and was named Heart of America Athletic Conference Coach of the Year on six different occasions. Coach Jenkins was inducted into the Springfield Area Sports Hall of Fame in 2011 and the Missouri Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2013. On March 18, 2014, he will be inducted into the NAIA Hall of Fame.

Coach Jenkins' legacy at Evangel University extends beyond his record as a basketball coach. A 1974 Evangel graduate, Coach Jenkins lettered in baseball for 4 years and basketball for 3 years. After pursuing graduate studies, he soon returned to Evangel in 1977 as head baseball coach for 6 seasons, and assistant basketball coach for 5 seasons. He was named head basketball coach in 1982, and on December 5th of this season, coached his 1000th game at Evangel University. In 1998, Coach Jenkins added the responsibility of being the men's golf coach, and is serving in that capacity for the 16th year. He has garnered two Heart of America Coach of the Year honors for men's golf. Steve and his lovely wife Rhonda, also a graduate of Evangel, have three grown children—Sarah, Jon, and David—and six grandchildren.

Coach Jenkins' exemplary devotion to coaching is only matched by his devotion in the classroom, his love of his family, and his strength in his faith. The Springfield community is justifiably proud of Coach Jenkins and the Evangel basketball program. I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating him on his well-deserved victory.

HONORING BORIS TRAJKOVSKI

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Boris Trajkovski.

As the founder and chair of the Congressional Caucus of Macedonia and Macedonian-Americans, and having one of the largest Macedonian communities in my district, I would like to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the tragic and untimely passing of Macedonia's president Boris Trajkovski, who was a great friend to the United States and the American people.

President Trajkovski and his entourage were en route to an international investment conference when his plane crashed near Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina on February 26, 2004. President Trajkovski, aged 47, left behind a wife, Vilma, and two children, Sara and Stefan. His gravestone in Macedonia reads a Biblical verse: "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God."

As a member and pastor of the Methodist Church of Macedonia, President Trajkovski was a tireless advocate for religious tolerance, religious freedom, and conflict resolution. He was a man of great faith. His great faith drove him to be a man who led reconciliation throughout his region of the world. In 2002, he was awarded the World Methodist Peace Award by the World Methodist Council for his role in promoting peace and political stability.

At his inauguration ceremony in 1999, President Trajkovski promised: "I intend to be the president of all citizens of Macedonia, regardless of their ethnic or religious background, regardless of their political standing. I shall not allow ethnic hatred and intolerance to undermine Macedonia's stability." While deputy foreign minister, he supported U.S. and NATO-led efforts against Serbia, and allowed for NATO troops to be stationed in Macedonia, during which time Macedonia took in 400,000 Kosovar refugees.

President Trajkovski demonstrated his willingness to work with all of Macedonia's ethnic groups, which helped to prevent a civil war. He worked to foster peace and integrate Macedonia into the international community.

Under President Trajkovski's leadership, Macedonia was one of the first nations to publicly support NATO-efforts in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom and send troops to both, and under his leadership, Macedonia negotiated an agreement with the United States under Article 98 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, signed the agreement on June 30, 2003, and ratified the agreement on October 16, 2003, thereby helping to ensure United States citizens will not be subject to politically motivated prosecutions.

On March 11, 2004, the House of Representatives passed H. Res. 540 expressing the deepest sympathies and solidarity of the American people to the Macedonian people.

As a tribute to President Trajkovski, then-President Bush and then-Secretary Powell recognized Macedonia under its constitutional name Republic of Macedonia, on November 4, 2004.

President Trajkovski's legacy remains today. His wife Vilma has dedicated her life to working to continue his work in bridging youth of all ethnic groups, promoting peace and dialogue, and religious freedom among all, and she is a tireless advocate for breast cancer research. His daughter, Sara, currently works at the Macedonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The American people will forever remember President Trajkovski's friendship, and I hope that one day his dream of Macedonia joining NATO and the EU will become reality.

HONORING NORM HARTY

HON. JASON T. SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Norm Harty, who nearly 50 years ago pioneered the technique of using dynamite to clean the inside of a power plant boiler, in order to remove slag deposit. Power plants burning any type of fuel, except natural gas, eventually build ash that creates slag deposits on the tubes running through boilers. This build up can create inefficiency in the operation of a power plant, requiring more fuel to be used to reach the same output a clean boiler could produce, not to mention being a safety hazard as well. The advances Norm and his company helped create in boiler cleaning technology have made their mark.

In 1964 Norm started his own business, N. B. Harty, and hired his first employee. Now 50 years and more than 4,500 jobs later Harty is still running his company which is regarded as the number one explosive cleaning company in the world. Norm has done business in all 50 states in the United States and in Canada, Mexico and Korea.

In addition to his business achievements, Norm and his late wife Billie, have contributed much to their community of Dexter, Missouri.

For the advances Norm and his company helped create in boiler cleaning technology, and his many other contributions to the community, it is my pleasure to recognize his efforts and achievements before the House of Representatives.

CONGRATULATING WILLIAM
HOMALON

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate William Homalon, a senior at Morton Ranch High School in Katy, TX, on bringing home a gold medal from the University Interscholastic League State Wrestling Championship. William is one of the 28 talented wrestlers from Katy to qualify for the state tournament.

William is a repeat state champion, finishing his senior year with an impressive record of 51-3. He went undefeated at this year's state tournament, pinning all four of his opponents to capture the gold in the 126 lb. division.

Texas is home to many outstanding athletes, and becoming a state champion is not an easy feat. Becoming one twice is extraordinary. On behalf of all residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, I am honored to recognize William's accomplishment! Our community is proud of William Homalon.

HONORING CLAYTON SHRUGA

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Clayton Shrug. Clayton is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Clayton has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Clayton has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Clayton has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Clayton Shrug for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING CAPTAIN CHARLES R. BURROWS FOR HEROIC ACHIEVEMENT

HON. SEAN P. DUFFY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present the Navy Commendation Medal to Captain Charles R. Burrows for heroic achievement while serving as an F Division Junior Officer, Secondary Battery Officer, 5th Division Officer, and Senior Officer of the Deck Underway from December 1942 until September 1945.

During his service, Captain Burrows participated in fourteen major operations against the enemy while stationed aboard the USS *Tennessee* in the South Pacific.

As stated by Captain Burrow's commanding officer, John B. Heffernan, Captain Burrows, "by his initiative, perseverance, outstanding ability, and the foresight with which he anticipated developments, he planned, trained, directed, and maintained a secondary battery organization which met the most exacting requirements of the operations in which the USS *Tennessee* participated."

Captain Burrows demonstrated immeasurable heroism during the Saipan and Okinawa campaigns when the USS *Tennessee* was under continuous heavy attack from opposition battleships as well as kamikaze air attacks.

By his exceptional ability, personal initiative and unwavering dedication to duty, Captain Charles Burrows upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Captain Burrows and thanking him for his courage and his service to our country.

HONORING MR. JIM BRICKER ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jim Bricker, who has retired after over fifty years of service in Washington state. Throughout his career, Mr. Bricker has shown a passion for education policy, including serving on the Council for Higher Education, the Office of Financial Management, and the State Senate, where he worked as staff director of Committee Services. His interest in education reached into the classroom, where he spent 38 years teaching as an adjunct professor at the University of Puget Sound and at Pacific Lutheran University.

Serving his country as a colonel in the Marine Corps for 33 years, Mr. Bricker had the distinguished honor of being the Senior Officer in the Northwest for the past five years. His fervor for the integrity of the legislative process helped him play a critical role in major pieces of education legislation, including the founding of Evergreen State College in 1967. He later served in the executive offices of four governors, ending as Governor Gardner's Special Assistant for National Affairs.

For the past 22 years he worked as the Director of Government Affairs at PEMCO Financial Services, where he improved insurance policy. At age 50, Mr. Bricker ran his very first marathon, and continues to cultivate a passion for the outdoors and for physical exercise.

Even in retirement, Mr. Bricker remains dedicated to improving education and will continue to serve as a member of the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. A man of integrity and high principle, his humility and his impact on the state of Washington and on his country will long be remembered.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Bricker for a lifetime of dedicated service.

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION—JEFFERSON COUNTY**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Colorado State University Extension—Jefferson County for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Colorado State University Extension—Jefferson County.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Colorado State University Extension—Jefferson County for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

HONORING MR. JERRY L. SMITH

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a hardworking and self motivated man, Mr. Jerry L. Smith.

Mr. Jerry Smith was born in Hollandale, Mississippi on July 27, 1953 to Rev. C. B. and Hattie Smith. He was reared on a farm. He graduated from Anguilla High School in 1971 and in May 1975 from Mississippi Valley State University with a B. S. Degree in Industrial Technology.

Mr. Smith was enlisted in the U.S. Air Force as a Second Lieutenant from July, 1975 to August, 1978. In 1979, he started working for Asmco as a plant manager for 10 years. He started farming around 1994 and has been farming ever since. His motto is, "In order to make your life better you have to get up each day and strive for that".

Mr. Smith is married to Patsy Smith and to that union they have one child, Nicholas. He is an active member of St. Paul M. B. Church.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Jerry L. Smith.

IN RECOGNITION OF BETH
HUNKAPILLER**HON. JACKIE SPEIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Beth Hunkapiller who has been named San Carlos Citizen of the Year for her outstanding and numerous contributions to San Carlos schools and the community at large. Beth is a 20-year veteran of the San Carlos School Board, and has worked tirelessly to ensure that our children have access to a quality education and to outstanding facilities.

Beth was instrumental in creating the San Carlos Charter Learning Center, the first charter school in California. She served as a founding member and chair of the State Board of Education's Advisory Commission on Charter Schools. She also served as the Department of Education's Charter School Division Director. She currently is the chair of the board of directors of Aspire Public Schools, the largest charter school organization in California.

It was Beth's experience as a parent that got her deeply involved in education. She was a volunteer teacher in her son's co-op nursery school and a Girl Scout Daisy troop coordinator. She later served as Heather PTA president, Heather Fun Day Chair, a member of an Ad Hoc Superintendent Selection Citizen Committee, and a campaign chair for the Committee to Defeat the Voucher.

After her election to the school board in 1993, Beth continued volunteering her time and expertise to the Healthy Cities Tutoring program which strives to help children who struggle to succeed in school. Beth was routinely re-elected by wide margins since 1993.

When it comes to supporting public schools, Beth Hunkapiller is at the head of her class. The San Carlos Education Foundation has been a success in large part because of its amazing volunteer parents, but also in part to one forever parent: Beth Hunkapiller. Year after year, Beth and her husband Mike have been generous donors and have set the standard for philanthropy within any community. But Beth doesn't just write checks. She volunteers for the largest annual fundraiser, Spring Fling, and she lent her credibility as a school board member to volunteer efforts to raise funds from residents and businesses in and around San Carlos. She and her amazing husband, Mike, started "Fund-A-Need" ten years ago, an effort that is emblematic of their vision and generosity. The Hunkapillers have matched donations raised for specific needs such as science equipment, LCD projectors, smart boards, computers, iPads, PE needs, counseling and wellness programs, literacy specialists, calculators, musical instruments, art supplies and teacher development training.

I must also note, Mr. Speaker, that Mike Hunkapiller is an outstanding business leader and that his expertise contributed to modern science being able to efficiently sequence the human genome. It could be said of Beth and Mike that they are a real team. Mike figures out what makes us tick and Beth figures out how to make us tick better, through education.

No mention of Beth's record in education would be complete without mentioning her ceaseless efforts to support bond measures and parcel taxes. Beth is an advocate for fiscal responsibility, and in her role as a trustee, Beth was noted for asking important questions to ensure accountability by the administration for the funds that were raised. Beth realizes that education is the foundation of democracy, and a well-funded education is the foundation of every classroom. In public forums large and small, and literally across decades, Beth has lent tier voice and credibility to the effort to grow the capacity of the district to support new waves of children as they entered the schools.

Mr. Speaker, the schools in San Carlos are bursting at the seams, so much so that many new classrooms will soon be built. Young couples routinely mention the schools as their primary reason for moving into San Carlos. Beth is being named as the Citizen of the Year by the Chamber of Commerce, but the local realtors should name her salesperson of the century. The schools of San Carlos are beloved. Beth would be the first to note that it takes a remarkable team of parents and staff and administrators to create outstanding schools, but make no mistake, Beth deserves a fair share of the credit.

The Hunkapillers have raised their two children in San Carlos and their children graduated from Heather, Central, Menlo High School and Stanford. Their grandson now attends the Charter Learning Center. Beth is also an active member of the San Carlos Rotary.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to honor Beth

Hunkapiller for her recognition by the Chamber of Commerce as Citizen of the Year. I couldn't think of a more deserving candidate. Beth is a beacon of public service and an inspiration to all of the residents of the City of Good Living, San Carlos, California.

CELEBRATING THE GRAND RE-OPENING OF THE VALLEY RANCH LIBRARY

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the completion of the Valley Ranch Library's renovation project. The library has been serving the citizens of Irving, Texas, since 1996 with an amazing collection of books, educational programs, and meeting spaces for community groups.

The history of the Valley Ranch Library begins in 1996 when it established its operations in a rental space no larger than 10,000 square feet. Following its opening, the library quickly became one of the busiest branches in the Irving Public Library system.

In June of 2006, the City of Irving initiated the construction project of a new 26,000 square foot library at 401 Cimarron Trail. In less than two years, the Valley Ranch Library celebrated its new facility at the grand opening ceremony in October of 2007. The new library brought new features to the community such as additional study rooms, public computers, and a café. Of the entire constructed facility, 5,000 square feet was left unfinished for future expansion.

In September of 2012, the citizens of Irving voted on a bond sale to complete the Valley Ranch Library, and in October of 2013, the library renovation project began.

The library expansion included more community meeting spaces, increased shelving by 20%, defined children's areas for a more comfortable experience of all ages, and the addition of a digital media lab.

The Valley Ranch Library is the second busiest and next-largest branch in the Irving Public Library system, after the Central Library. The library's surrounding community is composed of families focused on education; consequently, the library operates to meet and exceed the community's demand for educational resources and programs. The programs are often filled to capacity and patrons are known for maximizing their 50-book limit every three weeks.

Since the establishment of the facility in 2006, the Valley Ranch Library has grown significantly as demonstrated by the following statistics. The library has grown 72% in visitation, 26% in items checked out, 44% in collection size, 40% in reference requests, and 87% in public computer usage.

I am extremely appreciative of the City of Irving and the Irving Public Library system for continuing to address the needs of the community by enhancing the quality of their infrastructure. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in con-

gratulating the City of Irving and Irving Public Library on the completion of the Valley Ranch Library's renovation project.

CHASE BANK LAKESIDE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Chase Bank Lakeside for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Chase Bank Lakeside.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Chase Bank Lakeside for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

HONORING ANTHONY V. "TONY" HERZOG

HON. TOM MARINO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Anthony Herzog, a member of my staff for the past two years who will be retiring from his position as a District Representative in my Hamlin Constituent Service Center. Tony, what most know him by, started in my office on June 2nd, 2012 and I was eager to put his knowledge and experience to use by helping me serve the people of Pennsylvania's 10th Congressional District.

Tony has an extensive public service record including having served as Wayne County Commissioner for 24 years. As commissioner, he was instrumental in numerous projects in Wayne County including, construction of the Wayne County Operations Center, the Wayne County Correctional Facility, and also the Recycling Center. Tony also served as director for the Wayne County Chamber of Commerce and worked to acquire the BL-2 No. 54 Locomotive, a showpiece in Honesdale, while also establishing the Stourbridge Line Rail Excursions.

Tony has also been active in numerous organizations and has held leadership positions in most of them, including: the Honesdale Lions Club, Boy Scouts Troop 1 100th Anniversary, the Fraternal Order of Eagles, Wayne County Family Center Board, NEPA Alliance, Wayne County Area Agency on Aging, Wayne County Drug and Alcohol Commission, Wayne County Conservation District and in 1998, Tony was appointed by the Governor to the PennDOT Transportation Advisory Committee.

He also served as President of Herzog Trucking Company in Honesdale for 33 years.

Tony's influence can also be found in area sports as he is a strong supporter of both recreational and organized sports in Wayne County. He has been a player, coach, umpire and sponsor as his company, Herzog Trucking Company, sponsored numerous teams throughout the area. He was a member of the volunteer group that built Honesdale High School's first ever football field and bleachers in the 1970's and he assisted in the improvement of the County Sports Complex in Beach Lake, Pennsylvania.

Tony currently resides in Cherry Ridge Township with his wife, Sharon. They have two children: Andrea and Steven and three grand-children: Emma and Brady Herzog and Heather O'Hara.

Words cannot express how thankful I am to have had Tony as a member of my staff and how sad I am going to be to see him go. He has left a lasting impression and he will be truly missed by me, members of my staff, and the people of Pennsylvania's 10th Congressional District.

HONORING MANUFACTURING MATTERS

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the first graduates of Manufacturing Matters, a fast track training program in Richmond, Indiana.

The collaborative program is being spearheaded by Ivy Tech Community College WorkOne, and the Economic Development Corporations and Chambers of Commerce from Wayne, Rush, and Fayette counties to provide individuals the skills to succeed in the manufacturing industry. I am proud to announce that twelve people became the first graduates of this program on January 31, 2014. The first class includes Jarrod Andrews, Mary Ann Frazier, Bob Harding, Mark Hawkins, Marc Lechuga, Dylan McLemore, Darren McEwen, Rita Robinson, Chris Stedt, Randy Tucker, Wilmi Vizcaino, and Kenny Warner.

Manufacturing Matters aims to cultivate a skillset that program participants can apply to future manufacturing jobs. The program provides hardworking individuals the opportunity to develop a comprehensive understanding of manufacturing processes, safety, quality, and leadership.

In addition to the technical skills learned, the program participants attended a job fair to connect with potential employers. Manufacturing Matters has partnered with several organizations in Indiana from leading energy groups to local governments in an effort to employ the program graduates. The job fair matched employers with applicants who were ready for on-the-job success.

This program equips individuals with the tools to work and provides competent staff to businesses in the manufacturing industry. As a Member of Congress, I strongly support programs like Manufacturing Matters that

strengthen the American manufacturing industry.

HONORING TECHNICAL SERGEANT JOSHUA COOMER

HON. JASON T. SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Technical Sergeant Joshua Coomer of Summersville, Missouri for his outstanding achievements and exemplary years of service to our Nation. Technical Sergeant Coomer first enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in May of 1999. During his career he served in two deployments, his first to Kuwait in 2000 and then to Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia in 2002.

On August 1st, 2014, Technical Sergeant will retire from the U.S. Air Force after honorably serving for 15 years. Throughout his career he has been recognized on numerous occasions for his distinguished leadership and commitment to uphold standards. He was named Military Training Leader of the Year in 2005, 2009, 2011, and 2012 in different groups for his outstanding performance in preparing future military personnel.

His superior officers speak very highly of him and I thank Mr. Joshua Coomer for his service to our Nation. It is my pleasure to recognize his achievements before the House of Representatives.

CONGRATULATING RICKY REGAS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ricky Regas, a junior at Cinco Ranch High School, on bringing home a gold medal from the University Interscholastic League State Wrestling Championship. Ricky is one of the 28 talented wrestlers from Katy, TX, to qualify for the state tournament.

Ricky captured this year's gold medal in the 182 lb. bracket after a hard-fought final match. Ricky finished the year with a record of 34-0, an undefeated season. I hope to continue to see great things from Ricky in his senior season.

Texas is home to many outstanding athletes, and becoming a state champion is not an easy feat. On behalf of all residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, I am honored to recognize Ricky's accomplishment. Our community is proud of Ricky Regas.

HONORING THE VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM IN HUNGARY AND AROUND THE WORLD

HON. ANDY HARRIS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Memorial Day for the Victims of Communism in Hungary. On this day in 1947 the Soviet authorities occupying Hungary illegally arrested Bela Kovacs, the general secretary of the Independent Smallholders' Party, who, after being deported to the USSR and spending almost a decade in prison and labor camps died at the early age of 51. The arrest of this fellow Hungarian politician marked a new era in Hungary where the elimination of political opponents soon led to one-party dictatorship, and his fate symbolizes the tragic destiny of hundreds of thousands in Hungary whose rights were denied and whose lives were crushed by the evils of Communism.

As a son of an immigrant from Hungary who fled the same brutal regime that eliminated Bela Kovacs, I know there are few among us who can give a firsthand account of the horrors of the soul-crushing Communist system. It is therefore all the more important that we officially remember the immeasurable damage caused by totalitarian regimes worldwide, and recognize that too many people of influence still subscribe to these same deadly ideas. Nostalgia toward Communism and the whitewashing of history is deplorable, and crimes committed during those times should never fade from our memory.

No leader in Europe today is a more outspoken advocate of remembering the crimes of the Communist system than Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who himself was instrumental in the underground movement that helped bring down Communism in Hungary. Hungary's leadership in facing and condemning its Communist past is exemplary. Hungary was first among the nations of Central and Eastern Europe to institute a memorial day for the Victims of Communism, and soon many nations followed.

The Hungarian Parliament has set out to remove the last vestiges of communism and open a bold new chapter defined by its own history and its own national sovereignty—which was dictated by outsiders for far too long.

Hungary's new Constitution declared that the crimes committed against the Hungarian nation under communist dictatorship has no statute of limitations, and it rejects the authority of the country's communist constitution of 1949—which made a mockery of the rights and freedoms it claimed to enumerate for its people.

Since last December, former victims of the state-party intelligence service now have the right to go public with the names of their surveillance agents and search the formerly closed archives. In a society plagued by the secrets of the Communists' crimes, truth is the only antiseptic, and it is the only source of reconciliation.

Inaugurated by the Orbán government more than decade ago, the House of Terror in Budapest, the former headquarters of the Communist State Police and a place synonymous with the brutalities of the dictatorship, today is one of the most visited museums in the world showcasing the everyday horrors of a dictatorial regime.

Overcoming the damages caused by 45 years of totalitarian Communism is not easy, but Hungarians are on the right path. In an era of political correctness which too often refuses to shame the shameful and to elevate selfless heroes, Hungary's leadership should be applauded.

COLORADO COMMUNITY MEDIA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Colorado Community Media for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Colorado Community Media.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Colorado Community Media for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

HONORING MARK ALLAN SEGAL

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mark Allan Segal, one of the founding fathers of the gay rights movement and possibly the person most responsible for bringing national attention to that group's quest for acceptance and respectability.

By the age of eighteen Mark was an activist and founded Gay Youth, the nation's first organization to deal with the issues of gay teens and endangered LGBT youth. Then, realizing the gay community needed to be brought out into the open, Mark created the Gay Raiders and took his fight national by breaking into television newscasts and nationally broadcast live programs, always espousing gay rights. These break-ins were known as "zaps" and succeeded in making people aware of a part of our society that did not have equal rights under the law. The last known "zap" was one that took place on the CBS Evening News with Walter Cronkite, and strange as it seems, Mark Segal and Walter Cronkite became and

remained friends until Mr. Cronkite's passing in July of 2009.

Mark founded the Pride of Philadelphia Election in 1989 to build a coalition of gay activists and allies. He raised over \$30,000 during the primary, waging a television ad campaign to defeat then City Councilman Francis Rafferty in order to elect allies to Philadelphia City Council, including then candidate for Mayor, Ed Rendell. Mark was also instrumental in obtaining funding from the late Congressman Thomas Foglietta in order to purchase a permanent home for the William Way LGBT Community Center, located in the heart of Philadelphia's "Gayborhood".

Mark is the founder of the Philadelphia Gay News and has become a respected journalist with his newspaper winning numerous awards. He is a tireless champion for his community making it his duty to make people understand and respond to the issues at hand, never quitting the fight. And now, his latest project of bringing affordable housing to an aging gay population has reached fruition. The John C. Anderson Apartments, named for a Philadelphia City Councilman who died of AIDS in 1983, is now open. It is the first senior citizen housing project built by and for the LGBT community in Pennsylvania and only the third of its type in the United States. This is housing where gay tenants will feel comfortable living in a community that will not discriminate against them. But also, like the senior complexes built by Christian, Jewish and Chinese groups, this housing will be open to any eligible senior in need.

I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in commending Mark Segal for being at the forefront of a fight still taking place today. He is an outstanding example of unwavering commitment to equal rights, and we should all be thankful for his tireless dedication and determination.

TRIBUTE TO TERRY GILMORE

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community are exceptional. Temecula has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent to make their communities a better place to live and work. Terry Gilmore is one of these individuals. On February 22, 2014, Terry was honored as the 2013 "Citizen of the Year" award recipient at the Temecula Chamber of Commerce Installation and Awards Gala.

Terry was born and raised in the thriving city of St. Louis, Missouri, as one of four children to parents with a blue collar background. Like them, Terry never went on to attend college, but instead gained his keen business sense from working at a bowling alley starting at a very young age. Terry developed his love for the sport of bowling while clearing out the pins at the back of the lanes and often earned free games as payment. As a youth, Terry be-

came one of the top 10 amateur bowlers in the country.

The joy Terry found in bowling was put on hold when he received a draft card for Vietnam in 1966. He served his country proudly for over a year as an infantry radio operator. Immediately after returning from the war, Terry found that he was willing to move just about anywhere to follow his dreams. With \$702 dollars in his pocket and a brand new Corvette, Terry moved from his hometown of St. Louis out west to the sunny city of Phoenix, Arizona for a new start.

Though Phoenix was still a very small town at the time of his move, Terry found his way in to a job at the local Dodge dealership, Scottsdale Dodge. Not only did he find passion in the job, but he also found love when he met a sales associate, named Cindy, who would eventually become his wife. Terry's commitment showed itself early in his career. He was the first to pick up extra shifts on weekends and holidays, all the while saving up to provide for his wife and family. He moved up within the dealership and soon decided to take a huge risk by moving out to Ventura, California in 1983 to get more experience in the automotive industry. Terry landed a job with Robert Gregory at Paradise Chevrolet, where his success eventually led him to take on the role as General Manager.

A mere eight years later, Robert Gregory was given the opportunity to open a new Chevrolet dealership in the then-small town of Temecula, California, and invited Terry to buy in as his partner. With hard work and dedication, Terry became the sole owner of Paradise Chevrolet after 20 years. Terry's attitude for success created a thriving business that earned him the "Chevrolet Dealer of the Year Award" for the entire United States in 2010.

It is hard to imagine that Terry would have any free time on his hands, yet he has always found time for his community. From Copy for Kids, serving in Chamber positions, and helping local Veterans, Terry truly has had a hand in developing organizations and groups that make our community great. He found his true calling, however, through the Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest County. For over 20 years, Terry has helped the non-profit reach their fundraising goals, and currently serves on the Board of Directors, more specifically the Emeritus Board of Distinction. When asked why he remains so involved in these organizations, Terry stated, "There is nothing more valuable than your time, so I decided to give mine."

In his spare time, Terry enjoys spending time with his wife of over 30 years, their daughter who attends San Diego State University, and his daughter from a previous marriage, who still lives in St. Louis.

Considering all that Terry has done for the city of Temecula, the Temecula Chamber of Commerce named him their 2013 "Citizen of the Year." Terry's tireless passion for service has contributed immensely to the betterment of our community. He has been the heart and soul of many organizations and events and I am proud to call him a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many individuals are grateful for his service and salute him as he receives this prestigious award.

HONORING THE EDDIE WASHINGTON CENTER FOR 20 YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE IN LAKE COUNTY

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because the Eddie Washington Center for Men in Waukegan, Illinois, the largest city in the district I represent, has been helping men rise for 20 years in Lake County.

In 1993, Township Supervisor Patricia Jones united her community to renovate an old fire station and establish the Eddie Washington Center, a transitional home for adult men struggling with homelessness.

Taking a holistic approach, the Eddie Washington Center seeks to break the persistent cycle of homelessness and offer a hand up and push forward to the men who seek help. Stressing the spirit of giving back to the community, residents of the center offer services while learning skills to promote an independent, successful life. Some of these services further contribute to our community, including snow removal and lawn care for local seniors.

In addition to offering a safe, clean and nurturing resident environment, the Eddie Washington Center offers counseling, mentoring, vocational training and much more to effect positive change.

Homelessness is a stubborn condition, one that is incredibly difficult to break. The goal of the Eddie Washington Center, through hard work and innovative methods, is to break that lifestyle and set residents on a sustainable, positive path forward.

February is Black History Month, honoring the contributions and commitments of African American leaders to communities throughout the country. So too, let us honor the work of the staff and volunteers at the Eddie Washington Center. These dedicated men and women have devoted their time and energies to their community. Their example is one we can all follow, and their success with the Eddie Washington Center is something we can all celebrate.

Congratulations and thank you to the Eddie Washington Center on 20 remarkable years.

HONORING THE AHISKA TURKS

HON. STEVE CHABOT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress from Ohio, I am proud of my state's diversity and the many cultures that make it such a great place to live.

One of the more active ethnic groups in Ohio is the Ahiska Turks, who are represented by the Ahiska Turkish American Community Center (ATACC). When the United States offered P-2 refugee status to this distinct minority group in Russia, to those who faced religious and ethnic persecution by the Russians,

roughly 12,000 Ahiska Turks came to our country, and settled in Ohio, Illinois, Georgia, Idaho, Pennsylvania, New York, Oregon, Missouri, Kentucky, Florida, Texas, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Virginia.

Those who created new lives in Ohio learned English, established small businesses, educated their children, and revitalized neighborhoods. They invested over \$30 million just in north Dayton alone, where dilapidated houses were transformed into an oasis of middle class dwellings. For example, the Dayton Community Center was a dying building which they bought and renovated. It now not only houses Ahiska Turkish American Community Center events, but it is also a flourishing neighborhood preschool.

Ahiska Turks are living the American dream not only in my state, but also around the country. In their efforts to open shops, and establish businesses in transportation and construction, for example, they have successfully accomplished what we often talk about here in Congress—they have created jobs.

But while these fortunate Ahiska Turks now live better and more prosperous lives here in the U.S., the lives of the Ahiska Turks in Russia are very different. Their children are segregated in schools and told they can never "catch up" or integrate with their Russian counterparts. They continue to face widespread persecution and live under discriminatory laws. However, if these same people thrive once they come to the United States, and their children excel in school, then there is little doubt that the environment of hostility and discrimination in which they live in Russia is what is keeping them from meeting their real potential in that country.

As a result, I call on the State Department to restart the P-2 program so that those Ahiska Turks who continue to face persecution in Russia can come to the United States and rejoin their families. Ohio has benefited from their hard work, dedication, and family values. This program was a blessing for these wonderful people, and it was a good deal for the United States.

CHARLES CHURCH MCKAY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Charles Church McKay for his induction into the Jefferson County Business Hall of Fame.

Charlie is an outstanding member of the Jefferson County Business Community where he manages the development of residential and commercial real estate projects. His major ventures include the Rockwell International Training Center, the Church Ranch Corporate Center, the Smart Reservoir Expansion Project and the Candelas project in Arvada.

Additionally, Charlie serves on many community boards, offering his expertise to such organizations as the Jefferson County Economic Council board, the Northwest Metro Chamber of Commerce and Transportation Management Organization. He is the Chair-

man of Denver Boulder Corridor Marketing Coalition, the Historical Mandalay Community Center, Inc., the Broomfield Economic Development Council and the Founder and Chairman of Jefferson Center Metropolitan District.

Charlie and his family celebrate a rich Colorado legacy dating back to 1857, and I am pleased to see him continue a tradition of excellence. I extend my deepest congratulations to Mr. McKay for his well-deserved recognition from the Jefferson County Business Community.

RECOGNIZING THE 22ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY MASSACRE

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 22nd anniversary of the Khojaly massacre in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. Khojaly, once the home to 7,000 people, was the site of the largest killing of ethnic Azerbaijani civilians in the course of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. On February 25, 1992, Armenian armed forces descended on Khojaly killing 613 people, of which 106 were women and 83 were children. Fifty-six people were reported to have been killed with extreme cruelty and torture. In addition, 1,275 people were taken hostage, 150 went missing and 487 people became disabled. Also according to records that have been maintained, 76 of the victims were teenagers, 8 families were wiped out and 25 children lost both of their parents while 130 lost one of their parents.

The extent of the cruelty of this massacre against women, children and the elderly was unfathomable. Today, the Nagorno-Karabakh region is under Armenian occupation, and this year's anniversary serves to remind us of the need to redouble efforts to help resolve the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. As the U.S., Russia and France are co-chairs of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) Minsk Group, which is charged with finding a peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, we all must work diligently to bring about a swift end to this ongoing conflict.

The United States and Azerbaijan enjoy a strong partnership based on shared strategic interests. Our countries share many values, including a vision for greater diversity and tolerance as well as respect for minorities and gender rights. We have worked together to prevent the spread of extremism and Azerbaijan's vital contribution to the U.S.-led operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo cannot be understated. The United States, along with our European allies, also recognize Azerbaijan's leadership role in bringing stability to energy markets in the region and abroad.

Mr. Speaker, Azerbaijan is a strong ally and friend of the United States in a strategically important and complex region of the world. As Azerbaijanis around the world observe this painful chapter in their country's history and remember lost loved ones, let us remember

our support of peaceful efforts to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and reforms that promote regional stability. I ask my colleagues to join me and our Azerbaijani friends in commemorating the tragedy that befell the town of Khojaly.

HONORING COMMANDER DON
FINNEGAN

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Commander Don Finnegan from Muncie, Indiana.

Commander Finnegan is the State Director of Honor and Remember. This organization preserves the memory of those who have died to protect our freedom and presents personalized flags to families who have lost a loved one in service for our country.

In April of 2002, Commander Finnegan joined the Sons of American Veterans as a Chaplain at the Squadron level. Due to his participation in Sons of AMVETS, Mr. Finnegan became involved with an organization called Honor and Remember, and is now Indiana's first State Director.

In addition to Sons of AMVETS and Honor and Remember, Mr. Finnegan has served his community for the last 24 years in the volunteer fire services as well as the past 15 years as a member of Red Cross Disaster Services.

Commander Finnegan's character and example of service has impacted his family. Both of his sons, Shane and Ryan, have served in the Military as well as his daughter-in-law.

Men and women like Commander Finnegan deserve recognition for the service they provide to their communities and to our veterans. I am proud of the work Commander Finnegan has done for the state of Indiana.

CONGRATULATING CHRISTIAN
MARTINEZ

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Christian Martinez, a senior at Katy High School, on bringing home a gold medal from the University Interscholastic League State Wrestling Championship. Christian is one of the 28 talented wrestlers from Katy, TX to qualify for the state tournament.

Christian, who took home a silver medal in 2013, captured this year's gold medal in the 132 lb. bracket after a hard-fought final match. Christian is the 10th state champion wrestler to come from Katy High School.

Texas is home to many outstanding athletes, and becoming a state champion is not an easy feat. On behalf of all residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, I am honored to recognize Christian's accomplishment! Our community is proud of Christian Martinez.

HONORING NICOLE MICHELE HINES

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the memory of Nicole Michele Hines, a woman who lived more life in her 38 years than most will live in a lifetime, and is remembered for stating, "My PASSION is greater than your power!"

Her advocacy for women's rights, fatherhood, community uplift and the foundation of family were just a few of the areas she fought for. Her association with organizations such as Holy Redeemer Health System's Project Rainbow/Drueding Center and the Women's Community Revitalization Project landed her prestigious spots on their boards and various committees. She lived and fought for the educational rights of her own children, Naim and Aminah, and for a village of others.

Nicole was a tireless champion for her community, always willing to serve in whatever capacity was needed, devoting endless hours to politics at both the city and state levels. She was elected Committee Woman for the 49th Ward, 5th Division, and worked diligently to help further the community's improvement and redevelopment. She was a strong supporter of the Logan CDC, serving as an active member of their Neighborhood Advisory Committee, and was actively involved in many organizations, among them but not limited to, the Philadelphia Center for Art and Technology, Philadelphia Assisting Communities, the Community Women's Education Project and the Northwest Community Coalition for Youth. Her final project was advocating for the rights of fatherhood and the family as a united front, helping in the creation of the Father's Heart and Legacy Empowerment Center.

I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in remembering this extraordinary woman who has touched the lives of so many and has left behind a wealth of knowledge and a glowing legacy. She made it her duty to make people understand and respond to the issues at hand and would want all of us to continue her fight.

TRIBUTE TO GERRY AND ROSIE
WILSON

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to two individuals whose ongoing dedication and contributions to the community of Temecula, California have been exceptional. Temecula has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent to make their communities a better place to live and work. Gerry and Rosie Wilson are two of these individuals. On February 22, 2014, Gerry and Rosie were honored as the "Lifetime Achievement Award" recipients at the Temecula Chamber of Commerce In-

stallation and Awards Gala for all that they have done.

Born and raised in the heart of the Midwest, Rosie and Gerry came from humble beginnings. This foundation instilled quality values in the pair that are exemplified to this day. It was almost fate that Rosie and Gerry met one day on a train. She was on her way home to Iowa to celebrate Christmas with her family after having set up a cerebral palsy clinic in Boise, Idaho and he sat down across from her. Not too shortly after, they were walking down the wedding aisle, ready to begin their life together. In a matter of two and a half years, the pair had adopted a child and given birth to three more. Their children became their top priorities.

As their children grew older, however, the Wilson's aspirations grew bigger. At their children's suggestion, the couple began to consider opening a winery. Gerry had never been known as a big risk taker; in fact, he made his living as a financial advisor. He was careful to consider every aspect of this huge investment that may have required their entire life savings. After happening upon Temecula, California in 1996, Gerry and Rosie became convinced that this was the right move for them and their dream became a reality when they purchased a small winery named Wilson Creek Winery that same year.

In 1997, Gerry and Rosie's three children and their families picked up and moved to Temecula to begin working alongside their parents at the winery, which officially opened its tasting room doors in 2000. The family's values have contributed immensely to the success of the business. It is evident that each individual contributes a certain expertise to the day-to-day operations of the winery, creating a dynamic business model.

The Wilson's hard work and dedication have grown Wilson Creek Winery into an incredible business over the years. They have single-handedly created 20 fulltime, and 30 part time jobs. Today, the winery spans 90 acres from which they sell over 30,000 cases of wine each year. 1,000 visitors a weekend walk through the tasting room doors to experience the ambiance and wine the couple has worked so hard to create. For all of the growth and success Gerry and Rosie have contributed to Temecula, the Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce awarded the winery "Gold Business of the Year" for 2004.

Not only have Rosie and Gerry contributed tremendously to the economic growth of the city, but they have always made sure to also give back to their community. Every year, the couple hosts a variety of charity events at Wilson Creek Winery, bringing in hundreds of thousands of dollars to help local organizations and individuals in need. In 2004, The Wilsons hosted a benefit for families affected by a wildfire that came within two miles of the winery, raising \$40,000 in one night. More recently, they have hosted fundraisers for the Junior Diabetes Foundation, Special Olympics, Rotary International, Alzheimer's research, and a local animal shelter.

The Wilson's tireless passion for service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the community of Temecula, California. I am proud to call Gerry and Rosie fellow community members, Americans and friends. I know

that many individuals are grateful for their service and salute them as they receive this well-deserved Lifetime Achievement Award.

CONGRATULATING CALEB HUFF,
NAVSEA SAILOR OF THE YEAR

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Navy Diver 1st Class Caleb Huff for his service to our nation and on receiving the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) 2013 Active Duty Sailor of the Year.

Caleb is based with the Navy Experimental Dive Unit located in Panama City, Florida. The mission of his unit is to develop solutions to enhance and improve manned operations in undersea and other extreme environments through biomedical research and testing and evaluating equipment and procedures.

Caleb was one of nine contenders selected from NAVSEA enlisted sailors to compete for the 2013 Active Duty Sailor of the Year. He won this tremendous honor after being interviewed by the NAVSEA committee over a five-day competition.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say thank you to Caleb's family. His wife, Emily, and son, Mason, cheered him on as he competed for this honor and continue to provide him with support at home.

I am honored to recognize Caleb Huff for his service to our nation and on being awarded the NAVSEA 2013 Active Duty Sailor of the Year.

BANDIMERE SPEEDWAY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Bandimere Speedway for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Bandimere Speedway.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Bandimere Speedway for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

RECOGNIZING FLORIDA BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Florida Business Development Corporation for their contributions to the Central Florida business community.

Organized in 1989, Florida Business Development Corporation has grown to be the second most active Certified Development Company in the United States. The company works with private lenders to provide businesses with long-term, affordable financing that allows them to grow more quickly. Florida Business Development Corporation recently constructed a new building to accommodate its expansion, creating new employment opportunities for local residents and strengthening the economy.

Business development is essential to growing local economies and keeping hard-working Floridians employed. I commend Florida Business Development Corporation for their work to assist healthy, growing small businesses in Central Florida, and I wish them continued success.

IN RECOGNITION OF MICHAEL
CALLAGY

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Michael Callagy for his 29 years of exemplary service at the San Mateo Police Department, the last seven as Deputy Chief. He has been a tireless and effective advocate to enhance the relationship between the police and the community.

During his long career, Deputy Chief Callagy has supervised every unit in the department. He was assigned to investigations, field operations, the special operations unit, the street crimes suppression team, robbery, the homicide and sexual assault unit, vice and narcotics, persons crimes investigator, property crimes investigator, community services, support services, SWAT, hostage negotiator, field training officer, oversight of public information officer, technology-related projects, narcotics unit, traffic enforcement, neighborhood response team, reserves and K-9 programs, major criminal investigations, internal affairs, crime analysis, communications, and records. In 2012, distressed by the high rate of recidivism, Deputy Chief Callagy formed the domestic violence unit to end the cycle of violence. As you can surmise from this long list, there isn't a task or field Deputy Chief Callagy can't tackle; however, narcotics and undercover work remain his specialty.

Michael Callagy was born in San Francisco and grew up in Daly City. He graduated from Serra High School in 1980. He earned a Masters in Public Administration from Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont and a law de-

gree from Santa Clara University. In 2010, he received his Masters in Homeland Security and Defense from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey. He is a member of the California State Bar and a graduate of the FBI National Academy.

The efficiency and effectiveness of Deputy Chief Callagy's work has been widely recognized. He received awards from the San Mateo County Trial Lawyers Association, San Mateo County Gang Task Force, Governor Gray Davis' School Safety Wireless Phone Program, Avoid the 23, and San Mateo Police Activities League. The San Mateo Police Department awarded him the Gordon Joinville Special Merit Award for his leadership in developing youth services and programs. The District Attorney's Office has commended him for his outstanding skills in investigating and solving crimes.

Deputy Chief Callagy and his wife Lisa are the proud parents of four children, Brianna, Ryan, Shannon and Kevin.

Mr. Speaker, Deputy Chief Callagy's commitment to keep our communities safe has earned him the admiration and adoration of residents and his colleagues alike. While he will be deeply missed by the San Mateo Police Department, he will continue to serve and protect the residents of San Mateo County in his new role as Deputy County Manager. I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to honor an outstanding public servant and first-class police officer.

RECOGNIZING THE NORTHERN
VIRGINIA CONSERVATION TRUST

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust for receiving accreditation by the National Land Trust Accreditation Commission. The accreditation process is very rigorous and signifies the highest standards of excellence in land conservation.

When Congress first passed the tax incentives for land conservation, it placed a high degree of trust in non-profit land trusts to manage these transactions properly. Over the years, land conservation has become increasingly complex and requires careful adherence to the national Land Trust Standards and Practices. This accreditation process helps give taxpayers confidence that land trusts are a worthy public investment.

I want to thank the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust for its dedication and effectiveness in educating the public about the importance of conservation and preserving local natural areas, trails, streams, and parks. Its work helps to protect wildlife habitat, water quality and healthy communities. Since its founding 20 years ago, the Trust has protected 5,370 acres across Northern Virginia. And, by achieving national accreditation, the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust has expanded its capacity to accomplish this mission far into the future.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in commending the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust for its hard work and commitment to our community. I wish the Trust and its supporters continued success in their conservation efforts.

TASTY BAKING COMPANY

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Tasty Baking Company, better known as TASTYKAKE, as it celebrates its 100th Birthday today. Since TASTYKAKE was formed, it has been an integral ingredient to the great city of Philadelphia, as well as surrounding areas along the East Coast.

TASTYKAKE was founded in 1914 by baker Philip J. Baur and egg salesman Herbert T. Morris. The brand name was originally conceptualized by Morris' wife commenting on how she found the duo's baked goods to be "tasty." Starting in a small bakery in Philadelphia, and only using the finest and freshest of ingredients, the company quickly became a phenomenon.

TASTYKAKE, a wholly owned subsidiary of Flowers Foods, Inc., is a success story not only for Philadelphia, but for our nation as a whole. The company employs thousands, has multiple production locations in Philadelphia and Chester County, and contributes everyday to the success of America. From honey buns to chocolate bells, cupcakes to donuts, thousands of citizens are enriched by these tasty baked goods. TASTYKAKE is memorializing this special event by serving their goods to those who serve the citizens of Philadelphia, including local charities, police and fire departments, and customers. This act conceptualizes the American dream: that through hard work and dedication, everybody has a chance to make their dream succeed.

I invite you and all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Tasty Baking Company and offering our thanks to the company that has made many of our lives much sweeter.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DR. LESLIE M. COLLINS

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to the life of Dr. Leslie M. Collins, a lifelong educator, writer, and academic. Dr. Collins was a well respected professor who was always available to guide his students as they embarked on their careers. I was deeply saddened to hear of his passing this week.

For more than 50 years, Dr. Collins taught English and African-American literature at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. Even after

his retirement in 1979, he continued to teach several courses every year for nearly three decades. His dedication to education speaks for itself.

A graduate of Dillard University, Dr. Collins was awarded an M.A. from Fisk University in 1937 and a doctorate from Western Reserve University's Department of American Culture in 1945. His studies of the relationships between the peoples of the world through literature took him across the globe, to the Universities of Havana, Oslo, Florence and Madrid, as well as Africa, Europe, and the Mediterranean.

In 1945, Dr. Collins joined the English Department at Fisk University, where he taught courses ranging from Composition to Black Literature, Milton, and the Harlem Renaissance. For nearly 50 years, he reviewed books for the Nashville Tennessean, and in 1990, received an honorary doctorate of humane letters from Fisk University. The same year, his work One Hundred Years of Fisk Presidents was published, and later, his poem the Creole Girl was set to music and performed by the Black Music Repertory Ensemble of Chicago.

Mr. Speaker, we have lost a great academic and a gifted educator. Dr. Collins dedicated his life to reviving students' relationships with literature, and I feel blessed to have known him as a mentor. This week, my thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends, the Fisk University community, and the countless students whose lives he undeniably touched.

COMMENDING JIM BROWNE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Jim Browne, the Director of Parks and Recreation for my hometown of Sugar Land, Texas, on being named the East Region 2014 Director of the Year by The Texas Recreation and Park Society, TRAPS. Browne was recognized by TRAPS for his professional leadership, public service and efforts to improve quality of life in Sugar Land.

Browne has worked to enhance Sugar Land by opening numerous parks and community centers as well as expanding the city's already award winning special events. Under Browne's leadership, Sugar Land opened the Imperial Park Recreation Center, doubled program space for senior citizens at the recently renovated T.E. Harman Center and opened the first phase of the Sugar Land Memorial Park. These are just a few of the accomplishments Browne has achieved during his 35 year career in parks and recreation management.

On behalf of all residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, it's an honor to recognize Browne's commitment to the Sugar Land community. Congratulations Mr. Browne, on earning this recognition for your valued work and thank you for helping to create a community that the Sugar Land residents are proud to call home.

240 UNION

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud 240 Union for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like 240 Union.

I extend my deepest congratulations to 240 Union for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,411,178,036,656.28. We've added \$6,784,300,987,743.20 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.7 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

REGARDING THE KHOJALY TRAGEDY

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, since declaring its independence from the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan has been a reliable friend and valuable ally of the United States. For this reason, it seems appropriate for Congress to commemorate the victims of the Khojaly tragedy as the Azerbaijani people mark the anniversary of this event.

Since the early 1990s, Azerbaijan has been involved in a conflict with its neighbor to the West, Armenia. The Khojaly tragedy was the single worst day in this conflict, resulting in hundreds of lives lost, families devastated, and the town destroyed. Given our deepening ties with Azerbaijan, it is important for Americans to remember this event.

A cease-fire was negotiated in 1994, but the conflict remains unresolved. I remain confident a resolution will be found. The United States is serving as a co-chair to the Minsk Group, along with France and Russia. Together these

three nations are working to facilitate a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

The anniversary of this horrible tragedy is an appropriate time to honor the victims of these atrocities and reflect on the need for all parties to work together to bring a swift end to this conflict. I urge my colleagues to join me in standing with Azerbaijanis as they commemorate this tragedy.

CONGRATULATING PASTOR H. LEE JORDAN, JR., ON HIS FOURTH PASTORAL ANNIVERSARY AND HONORING HIM FOR OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend, Pastor H. Lee Jordan, Jr. on the occasion of his fourth Pastoral Anniversary with Greater Faith Church—Baptist (GFC) in Waukegan, Illinois, part of the district I represent.

Pastor Jordan assumed leadership of the GFC in January 2010, and since then, he has built upon the church's already outstanding legacy. Pastor Jordan's dedication and passion fill the community with joy, spreading a message of faith, integrity and community action.

In words and deeds, Pastor Jordan encourages his congregation to give back and enrich the community. Throughout his four years in Waukegan, Pastor Jordan has become a central figure in the community and an important voice of hope.

A spirited and inquisitive soul, Pastor Jordan consistently stresses the importance of never settling, of constantly seeking spiritual and personal growth. Anything is possible with the right attitude, and Pastor Jordan demonstrates to all the power of this message.

Pastor Jordan's example reaches far beyond his stirring sermons and moving songs. A husband, father, community leader and musician, he sets a daily example for his congregation and community.

In my visits to GFC, I have been moved by Pastor Jordan's passion, care and joy. His vision and discipline to follow that vision are rare and remarkably valuable to his congregation and community.

Pastor Jordan's commitment to his congregation and to Waukegan inspires everyone around him. Our communities are stronger with passionate, dedicated and visionary leaders like Pastor Jordan. I congratulate him on four years with GFC and thank him for his outstanding work.

HONORING 2013 "MR. AMIGO"
MARIANA SEOANE GARCÍA

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Charro Days Fiesta and commend

the 2013 "Mr. Amigo," recently chosen by the Mr. Amigo Association of Brownsville, TX, and Matamoros, Tamaulipas, in Mexico.

Mariana Seoane García has been selected as the 2013 "Mr. Amigo." A multi-talented Mexican actress, model, and singer, her style and charisma have won the hearts and minds of audiences across the world. In addition to her work as a performer, Ms. Seoane García has given back to her community, for example by participating in Univision's Teletón USA (USA Telethon) to raise money for children's healthcare. She is a wonderful choice to represent the spirit of friendship.

Beginning in 1964, the "Mr. Amigo" award is an annual tribute to an outstanding Mexican citizen who has made a lasting contribution during the previous year to international solidarity and goodwill. "Mr. Amigo" acts as an ambassador between the United States and Mexico and presides over the annual Charro Days Fiesta.

Charro Days dates back to 1937, when the citizens of Brownsville organized the event in the midst of the Great Depression to celebrate the cultural heritage shared between Brownsville and its sister city, Matamoros, Tamaulipas, across the border in Mexico. The first Charro Days celebration featured a parade with horse-drawn floats and participants dressed in traditional Mexican costumes reminiscent of charros, or Mexican cowboys.

From these humble beginnings, Charro Days has evolved into a multi-day event which includes dances, fiestas, a children's parade, and the Grand International Parade drawing an estimated 50,000 participants annually from Texas and Mexico.

The 77th annual Charro Days celebration commenced on February 23rd, with a grito, or celebratory yell. Later this week, the Mayor of Brownsville and the Mayor of Matamoros will meet at the Gateway International Bridge and extend their hands across the border to symbolize the friendship between the two cities.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to honor the Charro Days Fiesta and for joining me in recognizing the importance of this annual celebration which continues to strengthen the relationship between Brownsville and Matamoros, as well as the United States and Mexico.

THE WORLDWIDE PERSECUTION
OF CHRISTIANS

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, I chaired a subcommittee hearing on the persecution of Christians worldwide, a topic which has been neglected by our media and world leaders—including those in the United States.

The focus on anti-Christian persecution was not meant to minimize the suffering of other religious minorities who are imprisoned or killed for their beliefs: as the poet John Donne wrote, "Any man's death doth diminish me."

We stand for human dignity and respect for life from the womb to the tomb, and the sub-

committee has and will continue to highlight the suffering of religious minorities around the globe, be they Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan, Ba'hai in Iran, Buddhists in occupied Tibet, Yazidis in Iraq or the Muslim Rohingya people in Burma.

Christians, however, remain the most persecuted religious group the world over, and thus deserve the special attention that the hearing gave them. As one of the hearing witnesses, the distinguished journalist John Allen has written: "Christians today indisputably are the most persecuted religious body on the planet, and too often their martyrs suffer in silence."

Researchers from the Pew Center have documented incidents of harassment of religious groups worldwide—a term defined as including "physical assaults; arrests and detentions; desecration of holy sites; and discrimination against religious groups in employment, education and housing"—and has concluded that Christians are the single most harassed group today. In the year 2012, Pew reports, Christians were harassed in 110 countries around the world.

This is particularly true in the Middle East where, as one of those heard from, Archbishop Francis Chullikatt, has said, "flagrant and widespread persecution of Christians rages . . . even as we meet."

Archbishop Chullikatt was the papal nuncio to Iraq, where we have seen repeated violent assaults on Christians, such as the October 31, 2010 assault upon Our Lady of Deliverance Syrian Catholic Cathedral in Baghdad in which 58 people were killed and another 70 wounded. Attacks such as this have led the Christian population of Iraq—whose roots date back to the time of the Apostles—to dwindle from 1.4 million in 1987 prior to the first Gulf War, to as little as 150,000 today, according to some estimates. Much of this exodus has occurred during a time in which our country invested heavily in blood and treasure in seeking to help Iraqis build a democracy. As we witness the black flag of al-Qaeda again fly over cities such as Fallujah, which we had won at the cost of so much American blood, we wonder how it is that for Christians in Iraq, life appears to be worse now than it was under the vicious dictator Saddam Hussein.

If we turn to Egypt, we see a Christian population which dates back to the Apostle St. Mark also being oppressed. At a hearing we had last December 10—Human Rights Day—we heard how churches have been subjected to mob attacks and burned. For example, in April of 2012, St. Mark's Cathedral, seat of the Coptic Pope, was attacked by 30–40 Muslim youths. While dozens of Copts were sheltering inside, security forces joined the mob. Rather than dispersing the crowd, they participated in the all-night attack or stood idly by as rocks, gasoline bombs, and gas canisters were lobbed into the iconic cathedral.

Likewise, last year the subcommittee held a hearing on persecution of religious minorities in Syria. Syria had been a place of relative tolerance for religious minorities in the Middle East, including groups like the Mandaeans, who trace their roots to the time of John the Baptist and whom they still revere.

It is this connection with the past which has helped bring radical Islamists to Syria, where

not only do they seek to overthrow a violent dictator—Bashar al-Assad, but also seek to eradicate Christianity from the land.

Last September, members of al-Nusra, an al-Qaeda linked group, attacked the town of Malula. Why this is significant is because Malula is a living link with the time of Christ, a Christian village in Syria where Aramaic, the language of Jesus, is still spoken. It is for this reason that Malula was targeted—in the words of one of those attacking this small village whose way of life had remained largely unchanged over the centuries, the Mujahadeen are seeking to “conquer the capital of the Crusaders.” Such is the perspective of one whose vision has been distorted by hatred.

But it is not just in the Middle East where we see the persecution of Christians.

I would like to recall one story of one man I met, first in Jos, Nigeria, and then in Washington when we held a hearing on the terror group, Boko Haram last October. It was in the face of this one man that I was able to witness the face of the persecuted Church, which indeed is also the face of Christ.

Habila Adamu is a businessman from Yobe State in northern Nigeria. On the night of November 28, 2012, masked gunmen armed with AK-47s entered his home. They told his wife to leave, as they were here to “do the work of Allah.”

The questioning began.

“Are you a policeman?”

“No.”

“Are you a Nigerian soldier?”

“No.”

“Are you a Christian?”

“Yes.”

They then asked him why he has not accepted Islam, when he has heard the message of Muhammad.

He replied that “I am a Christian. We are also preaching the gospel of the true God to you and to other people who do not yet know God.”

They then asked, “Habila, Are you ready to die as a Christian?”

“I am ready to die as a Christian.”

They asked him again, “Are you ready to die as a Christian?”

He replied, “I am ready. . .” And before he had closed his mouth, a bullet ripped through him.

You can see the exit point of the wound in the photo before you. . .

How many of us, who profess Christ, would have been able to stare martyrdom in the face and refuse to renounce Christ?

Habila Adamu, by the grace of God, survived. The term “hero” is one thrown around loosely these days, but he is a hero of his faith.

And there are many more like him. We heard stories from around the world, where Christians are under attack simply for the beliefs they profess. We heard witnesses discuss persecution in places such as Burma, Vietnam, Eritrea, even in this hemisphere.

According to some estimates, China is on track to become the largest Christian nation in the world, though numbers are hard to pin down, because most of these Christians remain underground and cannot worship freely.

As U.S. Commission on International Freedom Commissioner Elliott Abrams points out,

independent Protestants and Catholics continue to face persecution for refusing to affiliate with government-approved religious groups. Protestant “house church” groups that refuse to join the state-approved Protestant religious organization are deemed illegal and experience harassment, fines, detentions, and imprisonment. Approximately 900 Protestants were detained in the past year for conducting public worship activities. Seven Protestant leaders also were imprisoned for terms exceeding one year. The Chinese Government issued a directive to “eradicate” unregistered Protestant churches over the next ten years, including through force. Police have embraced the plan, raiding meetings, seeking to break up large churches that previously operated openly, and detaining religious leaders.

The Chinese Government continues to appoint Bishops without Vatican approval and place them in leadership positions, setting back Vatican-Beijing relations. Dozens of Catholic clergy, including three Bishops, remain in detention, in home confinement, under surveillance, or disappeared. Bishop Thaddeus Ma Daqin, the Auxiliary Bishop of Shanghai, has been missing since he publicly announced his resignation from the state-approved Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association in June 2012. Bishop James Su Zhimin, arrested in 1996 while participating in a religious procession and convicted of QUOTE “unregistered religious activity”—in other words for remaining loyal to the Catholic Church, and not the State-authorized Church. Bishop Su has not been heard of since his arrest, and the Chinese government has repeatedly rebuffed inquiries as to his condition.

In Vietnam, to name one of these countries, churches are forced to register, and worship outside of State-authorized churches is forbidden. Christian ethnic minorities, such as the Hmong and Montagnard, are allowed to exist in uneasy tension with the governing authorities, knowing that the heavy hand of the state could stop their worship at any time. Vietnam’s Catholics, both clergy and laity, fill Vietnam’s jails as prisoners of conscience, for calling the government to account to a higher law than that of arbitrary dictates. The attack on a Catholic funeral procession in the village of Con Dau in 2010 resulted in more than 100 villagers injured, 62 arrested, five tortured, and at least three deaths; this should remind one of the brutality that Christians in Vietnam face.

And I mention Vietnam because now, in secrecy, negotiations are being held over the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Vietnam seeks entry, and if we focus on the utility and profits of increased trade without holding Vietnam to account for its human rights record, we miss an opportunity to better the lives of those who are beaten, imprisoned and even killed for their faith.

HONORING BROWNSVILLE LEADERS BOB AND RACHEL TORRES

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend two outstanding individ-

uals who have dedicated more than 50 years to the communities of Brownsville, Texas and Matamoros, Tamaulipas, in Mexico through their work with the Mr. Amigo Association.

Since the founding of the Mr. Amigo Association in 1963, Bob and Rachel Torres have both pledged time and effort to strengthen the relationship and promote the rich culture between these bordering cities.

Mr. Torres began his work in Mr. Amigo Association in 1964 as a member of the Board of Directors and went on to serve as the vice-president, and president of the entire organization in addition to chairing the Mr. Amigo Selection Committee. He stayed involved, serving as a master of ceremonies, consultant, and liaison between the association and its activities in Mexico for the last 40 years. Apart from his work with Mr. Amigo, Mr. Torres has been a chairman and member of the International Committee of the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce for over 20 years and helped establish the Junior Chamber of Commerce chapters in Mexico in Matamoros and Valle Hermoso.

Mrs. Torres, in addition to her accomplishments through the Mr. Amigo Association, created the event that now kicks off every Charro Days celebration since 1987. This event known as “Hands Across the Border,” includes the exchange of national flags by schoolchildren from both Brownsville and Matamoros and the international greetings by their respective mayors. Her involvement in the community goes beyond the Mr. Amigo Association, as she played crucial roles in the establishment of magnet schools in Brownsville, the Gladys Porter Zoo, Brownsville Crime Stoppers, and the Palo Alto Visitors Center. She is also a supporter of the arts and an advocate for healthcare access, and her faith continues to drive her work for her community and its people.

As a couple, Bob and Rachel Torres have worked with the American Consul in Matamoros and the Mexican Consul in Brownsville. Additionally, their work translating countless contracts for labor unions, articles of incorporation, and official meeting minutes has been essential to the success of maquiladoras in Brownsville and Matamoros. All of their accomplishments mentioned here today do not come close to fully describing their unwavering commitment to the welfare of these two vibrant communities.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to honor these outstanding citizens who have not only fostered a strong relationship between Brownsville and Matamoros, but between the United States and Mexico as well.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF THOMAS JEFFERSON JOHNSON AND HONORING THE SERVICE OF MR. KEVIN JOHNSON

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of CPL. Thomas Jefferson Johnson and also honor the service of his

son, Kevin Johnson. In 1944, Cpl. Johnson was killed in action during the invasion of Guam. Two years after his passing, Cpl. Johnson was buried by his loved ones, but it was without all the honors he deserved. On January 20, 2014, Kevin Johnson along with the Am Vets in Tulare, California gave Cpl. Johnson the funeral ceremony he rightly deserves. Cpl. Johnson was a source of pride for our Nation, and his service to our country must be honored.

Kevin Johnson was born in Oklahoma, but when the family farm was wiped out in a flood, the entire Johnson family moved to Chowchilla, California, where his father bought a small farm. The last time Mr. Johnson saw his father was in Oklahoma while they were visiting family before he left to the Pacific Theater. Without a father, Mr. Johnson was raised by his mother and grandparents.

After graduating from Tulare Union High, Mr. Johnson joined the military as his father did decades before. He was assigned to an Army Special Forces unit sent into the Vietnam jungle.

Mr. Johnson is a proud member of Am Vets in Tulare. They have been performing the military ceremony at veterans' funerals since 1963. The volunteer honor guard includes 13 men, and they perform 120 graveside services a year. Mr. Johnson and the men he serves with have the privilege to honor hundreds of brave men and women who fought for our country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the life of CPL Thomas Jefferson Johnson as he is remembered and honored during the funeral ceremony that is long overdue. We also must recognize the bravery and service of his son, Mr. Kevin Johnson.

IN RECOGNITION OF DAVID LACHMANN AND HIS CAREER IN SERVICE

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I, along with House Judiciary Committee Ranking Member JOHN CONYERS, Jr., would like to take this opportunity to thank David Lachmann for his service to Congress and congratulate him on his retirement. David has worked in the House of Representatives for the past twenty-five years, many of those with the House Committee on the Judiciary.

David began serving as Legislative Director for Congressman NADLER's office in January 1993. He joined the staff of the House Committee on the Judiciary in 1998 as minority staff for the Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law. In 2001, David moved with Representative NADLER to the Constitution Subcommittee and became its Chief of Staff in 2006.

David has spent nearly thirty years in public service. Prior to joining Representative NADLER when he became a Congressman in 1993, David served as Legislative Assistant to Representative Stephen J. Solarz from 1989–

1992. From 1985 to 1989, David was the Chief of Staff to Eileen C. Dugan, a member of the New York State Assembly, representing part of Brooklyn. A native of New York City, David is a graduate of Boston University and holds a B.A. in Philosophy and Political Science.

David's ability to work well with his colleagues, especially across the aisle and across the Capitol, made him a valuable staff asset to passing many key pieces of legislation. He had the lead staff responsibility in the House for several significant bills that were enacted into law including the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (Public Law 103–141), the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (Public Law 106–274). He was the lead Democratic staffer during the debate over the Bankruptcy Abuse and Consumer Protection Act of 2005, and has been a key resource to Members, various Administrations, and colleagues on and off the Hill during the Subcommittee's consideration of critical constitutional, civil rights, and civil liberties issues.

We are deeply appreciative of the service and contributions that David has provided the Judiciary Committee and the Congress for the past twenty-five years. Over this time, many people on and off Capitol Hill have been fortunate to call him a colleague and friend. He will be missed. We wish him the best of fortunes and fulfillment in his future endeavors.

HONORING THE SERVICE ACADEMY NOMINEES OF THE 4TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

HON. SCOTT PERRY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor thirty-three exceptional young men and women from the 4th Congressional District of Pennsylvania who have been nominated to attend a United States Service Academy. I submit with great pride the following nominations:

Nominated to the United States Military Academy—Matthew Benjamin, Jacob Jenkins, Chance King, Sabrina Mortell, Josh Mueller, Graeme Nelson, Zachary Schaeffer, and Tom Snell;

Nominated to the United States Naval Academy—Reed Alioth, Dom Antonelli, Bonaire Berry, Tyler Dolmetsch, Joe Fletcher, Matthew Gregoire, Liam Handley, Jacob Jenkins, Ian Johnson, Noah Krechel, Madi Luckenbaugh, Evan Miller, Logan Morris, Josh Mueller, Hayley Murdough, Seth Murphy-Sweet, Graeme Nelson, Briannah Rohrbach, Sarah Sheerin, and Billy Stolkovich;

Nominated to the United States Air Force Academy—Hank Anderson, Donny Crabill, Matt Dieffenbach, Steven Foster, Noah Krechel, Marlaina McConville, Darren Miller, Evan Miller, and Natalie Seitz; and

Nominated to the United States Merchant Marine Academy—Jon Tarbox.

These individuals have distinguished themselves among their peers as leaders who are committed to serving their country in uniform. As these highly motivated and talented young

men and women progress through the academy selection process, let us remember and be grateful for the sacrifice they are preparing to make in the name of our country and our citizens. I commend each, and wish them Godspeed in their future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER OF RITA BORNSTEIN, PH.D.

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize the accomplishments of Dr. Rita Bornstein. Dr. Bornstein served as the 13th president of Rollins College from 1990 to 2004. In 2001, she was named the George D. and Harriet W. Cornell Chair of Distinguished Presidential Leadership when Rollins received \$10 million for the first endowment of a college presidency in the nation. At the conclusion of her 14-year presidency, she was appointed the George D. and Harriet W. Cornell Chair of Philanthropy and Leadership Development at Rollins.

A recognized leader in higher education, Dr. Bornstein serves as a speaker and consultant on issues of leadership, governance, and fundraising in the nonprofit sector. She is also the author of over 40 articles, 14 book chapters, and five books, including *Legitimacy in the Academic Presidency: From Entrance to Exit*, published in November 2003 by ACE/Praeger. She has been featured or quoted in over 200 publications, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Under Dr. Bornstein's leadership, Rollins conducted the largest fundraising campaign in its history, raising \$160.2 million on a \$100 million goal. Before coming to Rollins, she was vice president for development at the University of Miami, where she led what was then one of the largest and most successful campaigns in the history of American higher education.

She has received numerous awards including the John Young History Maker Award, E. Burr Gibson Lifetime Achievement Award from CASE, Orlando Magazine's "50 Most Powerful People," Central Florida Woman of the Year, Junior Achievement Hall of Fame Laureate, Laureate for Lifetime Achievement in Fundraising from the Institute for Charitable Giving, the Henry A. Rosso Award for Lifetime Achievement in Ethical Fund Raising from The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, Citizen of the Decade from the Winter Park Chamber of Commerce, and three honorary doctorates.

Dr. Bornstein has served on numerous commissions, committees, non-profit and corporate boards including: Tupperware Corporation, Barnett Bank, NationsBank, Council for Advancement and Support of Education (Chair), American Council on Education, and the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. Currently, she is active on the boards of the Association of Governing

Boards, Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts, and the Winter Park Health Foundation.

Dr. Bornstein earned her B.A. and M.A. degrees in English literature from Florida Atlantic University and was awarded a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of Miami.

I am happy to honor Dr. Rita Bornstein, during Women's History Month, for her accomplishments and commitment to education and public service.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF LISA LOPEZ

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Lisa Lopez, a leader and advocate for workers' rights. Lisa was born in The Bronx, New York. She was raised by a very caring single mother of five, including Lisa's twin sister Elizabeth. She attended Grace Vocational High School and worked in retail stores while living in New York City.

In 1990, Lisa moved to Florida in an attempt to improve her quality of life. She worked tirelessly in the fast food and supermarket industries; working two jobs a day for many years. Lisa has a strong work ethic and is often recognized as a team leader. She believes in equality and fair pay for all.

As such, she joined Our Walmart, an organization that envisions a future in which Walmart treats its Associates with respect and dignity. After two years of employment at a Central Florida Walmart, Lisa took the courageous step of going on strike after Walmart retaliated against her for speaking out about working conditions.

I met Lisa when I visited the Walmart where she worked on Black Friday 2012. I delivered bagged lunches to employees along with flyers on their right to organize. Lisa was exceptionally brave and committed to her rights as an employee. She was the only employee to walk out on strike with me that night.

Lisa has become a spokesperson for Our Walmart, traveling throughout the country and meeting with workers and government officials. In her spare time, she volunteers at her church and spends time with her three sons, Giovanni, Christopher, and Justin. She is also a grandmother to Giovanni Jr.

I am happy to honor Lisa Lopez, during Women's History Month, for her dedication to workers' rights.

RECOGNIZING THE LEADERSHIP OF DEIRDRE MACNAB

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Deirdre Macnab, a leader in the Central Florida community. Macnab is in her third term as President of the League of Women Voters of Florida. During her presidency, the Florida League played a leadership role in the passage of Amendments 5 and 6 to the Florida Constitution. The Amendments lent a decisive blow to decades of partisan gerrymandering that plagued Florida's redistricting process. In addition, the League is a leading organization in voter education.

Macnab's background includes an M.B.A. from Columbia University in marketing and finance, and a B.A. from New York University in history and political science. She has worked for Dun & Bradstreet Corporation, Manville Corporation and Bankers Trust, and was president of her own direct marketing consulting firm in Nashville, TN.

Macnab has served on several boards including the Board of Correction, a watchdog agency working in New York City prisons. She was also elected to the Board of Education in Nashville, TN and appointed by Mayor Shirley Franklin of Atlanta to serve as her designate on the Fulton County Library Board. In addition, Macnab is a former member of the Board of MyRegion.org, a seven-county visioning coalition in Central Florida and a former member of WMFE's Citizens Advisory Board.

Macnab has received La Prensa newspaper's Mujeres Destacadas Award for being a "Community Champion," the Florida Commission on the Status of Women Florida Achievement Award for 2012, and been named the Orlando Sentinel Most Influential Central Floridian of the Year for 2012. Senator BILL NELSON and Senator MARCO RUBIO appointed Macnab to sit on the Federal Judicial Nominating Commission for the state of Florida. The Commission submits candidates for Federal judgeships to the President.

I am happy to honor Deirdre Macnab, during Women's History Month, for her leadership and dedication to civic engagement and service.

RECOGNIZING THE LEADERSHIP AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF FORMER CONGRESSWOMAN PATRICIA "PAT" SCHROEDER

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize the outstanding contributions of former Congresswoman Pat Schroeder, who now lives in Central Florida. Born in Portland, Oregon in 1940, Patricia "Pat" Schroeder graduated magna cum laude in 1961 from the University of Minnesota while working as an insurance claims adjuster to support herself through college. Mrs. Schroeder went on to Harvard Law School, where she was one of only 15 women in a class of more than 500 men. She earned her J.D. in 1964 and moved to Denver, Colorado with her husband, James.

In 1972, Schroeder won election for Congress in Colorado's first district, based in Denver, over freshman Republican incumbent James McKeivitt. At age 31, Schroeder was the second-youngest woman ever elected to the United States Congress. A mother of two young children at the time of her election to the House, Mrs. Schroeder went on to serve 12 terms.

While in Congress, she became the first woman to serve on the House Armed Services Committee. She was also a member of the original U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, established in 1983.

Schroeder, who was known in her early tenure for balancing her congressional work with motherhood, even bringing diapers to the floor of Congress, also became known for her advocacy on work-family issues. She was the main force behind the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and the 1985 Military Family Act.

Schroeder was also involved in the reform of Congress itself, working to weaken the longstanding control of committees by their chairs, sparring with Speaker Carl Albert over congressional "hideaways," and questioning why Members who lived in their offices should not be taxed for the benefit. Mrs. Schroeder left Congress undefeated in 1996 after rep-

resenting Colorado's First Congressional District in the House of Representatives for 24 years.

Following her retirement from Congress, Schroeder was a Professor at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. Currently, she is very active in all aspects of the Central Florida community. In addition to heading the Association of American Publishers (AAP), she also serves on the Marguerite Casey Foundation Board of Directors, the American Bar Association's Center for Human Rights Executive Committee, and is the Chair of the Council for a Livable World's PeacePAC.

Mrs. Schroeder is the author of two books: "Champion of the Great American Family" and "24 Years of House Work . . . and the Place Is Still a Mess." She lives with her husband, James in Celebration, Florida.

I am honored to recognize former Congresswoman Pat Schroeder, during Women's History Month, for her many contributions.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOE LEVY

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Joe Levy who passed away on February 10, 2014, at the age of 82. Joe was a pillar in the community, and his support, dedication, and commitment to the success of the City of Fresno will be greatly missed.

Joe was born and raised in Fresno, California. After graduating from Fresno High School, he attended the University of Southern California. He then went on to work in Des Moines, Iowa, for Younker's department store. In 1956, Joe's journey with Gottschalks began. When he joined the company in 1956, Gottschalks had one store in Downtown Fresno. Under Joe's leadership as CEO and Chairman, the company grew to 80 stores.

Joe was a savvy businessman, but his success was attributed to more than just knowing how to run a business. His understanding and compassion for others were significant traits that contributed to Joe's accomplishments. He truly cared for his employees, and during a time when it was a contentious issue, Joe was a strong advocate for women's advancement in the workplace.

Joe helped shape the Valley's business community, but his influence spread to all sectors of the region. His advocacy led to building California's Highway 41, and he was a tireless supporter of Measure C, which helped pay for segments of Highways 41, 168, and 180. Joe was also devoted to the revitalization of Downtown Fresno. He was an active member in the Downtown Association, and he understood the importance of a prospering downtown hub in order to have a thriving economy in the City of Fresno. In addition, Joe served as President of the Fresno Chamber of Commerce.

In 1954, Joe married the love of his life, Sharon. They would have been married 60 years this week. Joe and Sharon shared a love for their community. They raised three children: Felicia, Jody, and Bret. Joe's children, nine grandchildren, relatives, and friends

will always have a special place in their heart for Joe. Every day he demonstrated the importance of treating others with kindness and respect.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to honor the life of Joe Levy. His presence will be greatly missed, but his legacy will surely live on in the City of Fresno.

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE
KHOJALY TRAGEDY

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues the tragedy that took place in Khojaly, Azerbaijan 22 years ago today, February 25, 1992. That evening, scores of lives of innocent Azerbaijanis living in Khojaly were lost and many others were wounded or taken hostage when their city was brutally attacked.

With a population of 7,000, Khojaly was one of the three largest urban settlements of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh is recognized by the United States and the United Nations as Azerbaijani territory occupied by Armenia.

At the time, the Khojaly tragedy was widely covered by the international media, including the Boston Globe, Washington Post, New York Times, Financial Times, and many other European and Russian news agencies.

Over two decades later, there is still too little attention or interest paid to the plight of Khojaly outside of Azerbaijan.

According to Human Rights Watch and other international observers the massacre was committed by Armenian troops, reportedly with the help of the former Soviet 366th Motor Rifle Regiment. Human Rights Watch described the Khojaly Massacre as "the largest massacre to date in the conflict" over Nagorno-Karabakh. In a 1993 report, they stated "there are no exact figures for the number of Azeri civilians killed because Karabakh Armenian forces gained control of the area after the massacre" and "while it is widely accepted that 200 Azeris were murdered, as many as 500–1,000 may have died."

Soon after the attack, Time Magazine published the following report on the Khojaly Massacre: "While the details are disputed, this much is plain: something grim and unconscionable happened in the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly two weeks ago. So far, some 200 dead Azerbaijanis, many of them mutilated, have been transported out of the town tucked inside the Armenian-dominated enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh for burial in neighboring Azerbaijan. The total number of dead—the Azerbaijanis claim 1,324 civilians were slaughtered, most of them women and children—is unknown."

Azerbaijan has been a strong strategic partner and friend of the United States. The tragedy of Khojaly was a crime against humanity and I urge my colleagues to join me in standing with the people of Azerbaijan as they commemorate this tragedy and urge world leaders to help bring a peaceful solution to the occupation of these lands.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 62.

I had to depart DC early in order to arrive in GA in time to attend prior obligations there that would have been missed had I stayed in DC, due to the quickly deteriorating weather conditions in Washington and Georgia that eventually forced the closure of all the local airports in DC and Atlanta.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

HONORING THE LIFE OF HUBERT
WALSH

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 25, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Hubert Walsh, known to

many as "Hub," who passed away on February 10, 2014, at the age of 89. Hub's service to our nation and his contributions to the community of Merced are countless and deeply appreciated.

Born January 16, 1925, in Blue Ridge, Texas, Hub was the youngest of eight children. Hub worked hard to help make ends meet for his single mother and his siblings by working on farms and picking cotton. In 1943, he graduated from Anna High School and enlisted in the United States Army, where he served his country in World War II. After three years of service in France, the Ardennes, the Rhineland and Central Europe, Mr. Walsh was honorably discharged in January 1946. Not long after his discharge, Hub enlisted in the United States Air Force where he served in historic operations, including the Berlin Air Lift, the Korean War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the Vietnam War.

In 1946, Hub met his future wife, Mary Elizabeth Worthen, while stationed in Rockwell, New Mexico. They met over the Thanksgiving holiday while traveling on the same bus to visit their respective families, and soon they began dating. One day after Christmas in 1947, they married and spent the next 63 years together. Hub and Mary had three children together and lived in 20 homes in six states, finally settling in the Central Valley.

After retiring from the U.S. Air Force in 1969, Mr. Walsh attended Merced College and Stanislaus State University. Hub was a dedicated servant of the local community of Merced, where he worked as a substitute teacher for Merced City Schools and Merced High School. In addition, he was a devout Christian and served as a deacon in the Southern Baptist Church.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Mr. Hubert Walsh. He was a pillar of our community who will be greatly missed.

SENATE—Wednesday, February 26, 2014

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God our shield, we rejoice in the beauty of Your salvation. Let the people of the Earth look to You with reverential awe. Lord, look with favor upon our Senators today, delivering them from fear and guiding them around the obstacles that hinder their progress. Unite them for the common good of this great land. Manifest Your purposes to them, making clear Your plans and guiding them with Your love. Give them the wisdom to have confidence in Your power, as You inspire them to use their talents as instruments of liberation and healing. Enable them to go from strength to strength, as they fulfill Your purpose for their lives.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 26, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. MARKEY thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 2 hours. The Republicans will control the first half, the majority the final half.

Following that morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 982, the veterans benefits bill postcloture.

I hope we can reach an agreement to begin consideration of amendments on the bill today. I will have more to say about that in just a minute.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, over the last many months millions of Americans have signed up for affordable health insurance, many for the first time ever, many for the first time in many years.

Millions of young people have stayed on their parents' insurance plans while they pursue higher education to start their first jobs.

Millions of senior citizens have saved money on prescriptions—these prescription bills, they average about \$1,200 they have saved, each senior—and tens of millions of women have access to free preventive care.

Across the country, Americans who were once denied insurance because they suffered from something like cancer or something as simple as acne were able to buy affordable, quality health insurance they could afford and they could trust.

Despite all that good news, there are plenty of horror stories being told. All of them are untrue, but they are being told all over America.

The leukemia patient whose insurance policy was canceled and would die without her medication—Mr. President, that is an ad being paid for by two billionaire brothers that is absolutely false; or the woman whose insurance policy went up \$700 a month—ads paid for around America by the multi-billionaire Koch brothers, and the ad is false.

We heard about the evils of ObamaCare, about the lives it is ruining in the Republican stump speeches and in ads paid for by oil magnets, the Koch brothers.

But those tales turned out to be just that—tales, stories made up from whole cloth, lies, distorted by the Republicans to grab headlines or make political advertisements.

Mr. President, these two brothers are trying to buy America. They not only funnel money through their Americans

for Prosperity, they funnel money into all kinds of organizations to do the same thing that they are doing. They are trying to buy America. I do not believe America is for sale. But we will see. But do not take my word for all this. How about taking the word of a Noble Prize-winning economist who wrote last week in the New York Times:

What the right wants are struggling average Americans, preferably women, facing financial devastation from health reform. So those are the tales they're telling, even though they haven't been able to come up with any real examples.

Paul Krugman writes, Republicans are "just making [this] stuff up." It is easy to do if you have billions of dollars to spend and you are trying to buy America.

But, Mr. President, we have our own stories to tell—true stories—true stories of average Americans whose lives have changed for the better because of the Affordable Care Act, true stories of families that can rest easier knowing insurance companies can never again put profits first and people second.

Take the story of a couple from Henderson, NV. I went to high school there. Their names are Jane and Brett Thomas. These are real stories. This story is true.

Jane wrote to me recently to say she is "ecstatic"—that is her word—to be saving \$1,200 every month on a top-of-the-line family insurance plan thanks to ObamaCare.

For years Jane was locked into her job as a school teacher because she, Brett, and their two teenage children needed guaranteed health insurance, and it cost a lot.

But Jane was able to quit her teaching job to spend more time with her children and help her husband at the family small business. Jane says the Affordable Care Act has literally changed her life and the lives of her loved ones. This is what she wrote:

Everyone on the news keeps talking of all the people the law has hurt.

An editorial comment from me: Koch brothers' lies.

I will go back and start over:

Everyone on the news keeps talking of all the people the law has hurt, but I thought I should share our joy. The best part is our insurance covers so much more and pays better on every front. . . . I can't thank you and your colleagues enough for fighting for people like me and my family.

Republicans may need tall tales and outright lies to convince people that ObamaCare is bad for them, but Democrats do not have to make things up. We have the support of lots of people, including a Nobel Prize-winning economist, not "OilCare" magnets who are

trying to benefit their businesses by spreading lies about things that do not matter to them.

Millions of real Americans, like Jane and Brett Thomas, are benefiting from ObamaCare every day. Their premiums are lower. Their prescriptions are cheaper. They cannot be denied a policy or discriminated against. Their benefits cannot be cut off because they get sick or reach some arbitrary cap that some insurance executive dreamed up. They are no longer locked into jobs they do not love or do not need because they cannot get insurance anywhere else.

The Koch brothers are spending hundreds of millions of dollars telling Americans that ObamaCare is bad for them. It is easy to do if you have no conscience and are willing to lie, like they are, through the ads they are promoting. But the Koches should stick to what they know—the oil business—the oil business—where they have made their multibillions of dollars. The truth is simply more powerful than any myth, any legend or any false political ad.

GROUNDHOG YEAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I said I would talk about what we are doing here today. You talk about “Groundhog Day.” This is groundhog year. The Republicans in the Senate refuse to allow anything to take place.

Prior to our noon break yesterday—every Tuesday Republicans meet and Democrats meet—one of the senior Republicans came to me and said: Harry, are you going to have amendments? I said: Of course we are going to have amendments. We have talked about amendments on the veterans bill. I have had Republicans come to me and say: Let's try relevant amendments. So I said: Fine. Come up with some. They said: How many? I said: I don't care.

The first amendment is what they have been doing all along. They offer an amendment that has nothing to do with this bill, the veterans bill. It is partisanship at its best. It is obstruction at its best.

We got cloture on this bill. Virtually everybody voted to allow us to start debate on this bill. But that is only a subterfuge. The Republicans obviously have no intent of doing anything for the veterans as outlined in this bill.

The chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee has worked for months coming up with a bill that is good—a bipartisan proposal. Republican proposals are in this bill.

One of the Republican Senators here came and talked for some length yesterday about ways he would like to improve the bill. Offer amendments. He is not going to be allowed to do that.

The bill advanced yesterday should be bipartisan—a measure that would help the veterans who have given so

much to defend our country. As I indicated to my friend, the Republican Senator, before their lunch: Sure, let's look at relevant amendments. Why not? It is the right thing to do. But the first amendment the Republicans demand is an unrelated issue on Iran.

Everyone knows that there are negotiations taking place between the United States, the European Union, and others to prevent Iran from having a nuclear capacity. I have said many times—I will repeat it here today—we will not let Iran have nuclear capabilities. The sanctions that we have put in place have brought them to the bargaining table.

You would think that if there was any validity to what the Republicans are trying to do, the organization that is more supportive of Israel than any organization I know—AIPAC—said publicly they do not want a vote on this now—publicly. They do not always put stuff out in the press, but that is what they said.

The audacity of what they are doing is an effort to stall, obstruct, as they have done. This is, I repeat, not “Groundhog Day,” not groundhog month—groundhog year. The Republicans have been doing this on every issue. It does not matter if it is an issue that 90 percent of the American people support.

Republicans say they want to help veterans—a strange way of showing it. We introduced a bill that would do just that. Republicans immediately inject partisan politics into the mix, insisting on amendments that have nothing to do with helping veterans.

So I am terribly disappointed again—not surprised. What are we doing here today? Nothing, nothing.

Under the rules, they have 30 hours postcloture and they can sit around and do nothing. That is what they do all the time. We have spent months and months sitting around doing nothing because of procedural roadblocks put up by the Republicans.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

IRAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, there is a broad bipartisan majority in the Senate that would like to vote on Iran sanctions. The dilemma we have here is that the majority leader does not want this vote to occur. So I would like to start this morning with a few words about an issue that should be of grave concern to all of us; that is, the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran.

It is no exaggeration to say that this is one of the significant foreign policy challenges of our time and one we sim-

ply have to get right. That is why a strong bipartisan majority has sought to pass legislation in the Senate that puts teeth into the negotiations that have followed November's interim agreement. The challenge we have had is the majority leader does not want us to vote on it. It could be that he is afraid it will actually pass. Republican Senators—and hopefully some Democratic Senators as well—are going to continue to press the majority leader to allow a vote on this legislation before these negotiations end.

The Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act is a perfectly reasonable bill. This is a Menendez-Kirk bill. It does not disrupt ongoing negotiations. It simply provides an incentive for Iran to keep its commitment under the interim agreement. It says that if Iran does not keep its word, then it will face even tougher sanctions at the end of this 6-month period. In other words, it does not disrupt the negotiations at all, even though the big—sort of the high leader, the Supreme Leader in Iran says he is not paying any attention to these talks. Nevertheless, it does not disrupt these talks, which seem to be going nowhere.

But it does say at the end of the 6-month period: You are going to get tougher sanctions if nothing comes of the discussions. It puts teeth into the talks that are already taking place. It is a recognition of the success we have already had as a result of prior sanctions. After all, there is a good reason to believe sanctions are what brought the Iranians to the table in the first place. They were hurting. So it stands to reason that if the Iranians break the interim deal, they should get tougher sanctions. If nothing happens, we should send a message: You cannot keep talking forever. Something will happen at the end of the interim period.

That is especially true given the fact that we are actually running out of tools here short of the use of force. This bill is the best mechanism we have to keep the Iranians at the table until we get the right outcome and to ensure they are sticking to their end of the agreement. We should not fall victim to Iran's efforts at public diplomacy.

Let me repeat that a strong bipartisan majority in both Houses of Congress agrees with this approach, so there is simply no good reason for the majority leader to prevent a vote on this crucial legislation. He is gridlocking the Senate, preventing the Senate from working its will on a bill that enjoys broad bipartisan support, makes elementary good sense, and is the best hope we have to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran. There is no excuse for muzzling the Congress on an issue of this importance to our national security, to the security of Israel, our closest ally in the Middle East, and to international stability more broadly.

I know many active members of AIPAC—the majority leader mentioned AIPAC. They want to have this vote. They will be coming to Washington next week from all over the country. I will bet this is a vote they want to have.

This is a rare issue that should unite both parties in common purpose. There is no question that it would if the majority leader would simply drop his reflexive deference to a President whose foreign policy is focused on withdrawing from our overseas commitments, a foreign policy that at worst poses a serious threat to our own security and that of our allies.

So once again I call on the majority leader to allow the Congress, allow the Senate to serve its purpose and express itself in our Nation's policy toward Iran. Let our constituents speak on this all-important issue on which so many of us in both parties actually agree.

In the Joint Plan of Action, the President made clear that he opposes additional sanctions. Why don't we let Congress speak? Let Congress have a voice. Let's stand together for a forward-deployed, ready, and lethal force that makes our commitments real in the eyes of friend and foe alike. Let's hold Iran accountable—actually hold them accountable. Let's do the right thing—approve this legislation and send it to the President's desk. The clock is ticking. The time to act is now.

CHANGE IN POLICY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Earlier this year I came to the floor to pose a simple question about President Obama's final years in office: Did he want to be remembered as a hero to the left or as a champion for the middle class? That is the question. I asked the question this way because for the past several years the left has basically had its run of this White House. During that period the politically connected and the already powerful have clearly prospered. But what about the middle class? They feel as though they have been shut out altogether as household income has plummeted and families who were struggling to pay the bills have gotten left behind by a President and a party who claimed to act in their name.

So I wanted to know: Did the President plan to continue down the same ideological road he has taken us on or would he change course and embrace effective proposals that would make a real difference in the lives of middle-class Americans? Would he reach across the aisle to jump-start job creation and make the economy work for the middle class again?

Well, over the last few months we appear to have gotten our answer. Once more, the real concerns of ordinary Americans have been pushed aside in

favor of the preoccupation of the political left. Yet again we have seen the truth of the old saying that a liberal never lets the facts get in the way of a good theory. Once again we have seen how liberal policies end up hurting the very people they claim to help.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the debate over the minimum wage. As a recent CBO report made clear, the President's bill basically amounts to a terrible real-world tradeoff, helping one group of low-income Americans by undercutting another group of low-income Americans. How is that fair? Americans are crying out for jobs. Job creation is the top issue in our country. Our unemployment and underemployment rates have remained abysmally high more than half a decade after this President took office. What is the White House's solution? A bill that might sound good in theory but could cost as many as 1 million jobs, according to CBO.

The Congressional Budget Office released another report, this one on ObamaCare. There is a similar story: 2.5 million fewer Americans in jobs thanks to ObamaCare; huge disincentives to work thanks to ObamaCare. That is what CBO says.

Of course, Washington Democrats—the same folks who promised you could keep your health plan if you liked it—told Americans not to believe their own eyes, that ObamaCare would simply liberate them from jobs. ObamaCare would simply liberate them from jobs. It is just unbelievable, especially when we consider that the law's medical device tax alone is projected to kill as many as 33,000 jobs and that 60 percent of business owners and HR professionals recently surveyed said ObamaCare will negatively impact jobs. As a member of that group recently put it, "Small businesses have an incentive to stay small" under ObamaCare. That is because ObamaCare can punish businesses that choose to hire more workers.

In my home State of Kentucky, the tension between the priorities of the left and the needs of real people is on full display. That is because the Obama administration has trained its sights on some of our most vulnerable citizens. One administration adviser actually used the words "war on coal" to essentially describe what the administration is doing or, in his view, probably should be doing to hard-working miners who just want to put food on the table.

Those were his words, not mine. Here is why: Because according to liberal elites in Washington, these folks are standing in the way of their theories. A practical approach that actually takes the concerns and anxieties of those people into account would promote clean energy even as it acknowledged the real-world benefits of traditional sources of energy.

My point is this: The administration has broken faith with the middle class, and it has stirred up strong emotions, especially among those who actually want to see a better life for those struggling to make it in our States. Almost everyone feels let down. A lot of folks are very angry.

It is a real tragedy, not only because of the missed opportunities and the human cost of these policies but also because when the President ran for office, he promised a very different approach.

It is tragic because the very folks he has talked about helping are the ones who seem to suffer the most under his Presidency.

It is tragic because it appears as if he has answered the question I posed in January: that he is prepared to double down on the left and throw in the towel on the middle class. How else can you explain the obsession with all of these peripheral ideological issues at a time when Americans are demanding good, stable, high-paying jobs and a new direction, at a time when folks' wages are stagnant but their costs always seem to be rising, at a time when younger Americans seem to be resigned to a harder life than their parents had? How else can you explain why the President has refused to sign off on projects such as Keystone Pipeline that would create thousands of jobs or why he refuses to push his own party to join Republicans and support trade legislation that could create even more jobs?

This cannot be the legacy the President really wants to leave, but it is the legacy he will be ensuring for himself if he does not change. There is still time to alter the course. There is still time for the President to acknowledge that there is no reconciling the demands of his base and the concerns of the middle class. It is one or the other.

The real solution here is liberating the private sector. The real solution is to implement policies that will increase wages for everyone instead of pursuing policies that essentially seek to distribute slices of a smaller pie to some. Of course, making a turn toward authentic job creation might make the left mad, but it is the only way to get the gears of our economy working again and college graduates off their parents' couches and onto a path of earned success.

Maybe the President will show some change of heart in Minnesota today. Maybe he will recognize, for instance, that killing thousands of high-tech jobs in the medical device industry is not worth the pain it is causing. Who knows? Who knows? I sure hope so because if you have entered the sixth year of trying to fix an economy and you are still talking about emergency unemployment benefits, it is time to recognize that your policies have not worked for the middle class. It is time for a fresh start.

Before I go, I would like to highlight one more dividing line between the dreams of the left and the well-being of our constituents. It is a topic I spoke about yesterday; that is, Medicare Advantage.

As I asked then: Why would the administration want to raid a program that is working, such as Medicare Advantage, to fund a program that does not work, such as ObamaCare? Why would Senate Democrats vote time and time again to do that? They must have known that taking \$300 billion from Medicare Advantage to fund ObamaCare would have real-world impacts on seniors, such as losing choices and coverage and doctors they now enjoy. It is not fair. It is not right. Several of my colleagues will be coming to the floor to speak more about this issue this morning.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 2 hours, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nebraska.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. JOHANNIS. Yesterday I had the opportunity to come to the floor of the Senate and talk about ObamaCare's broken promises for our Nation's seniors.

The administration's most recent proposal to significantly cut Medicare Advantage is certainly not news to my colleagues on the floor today. During the health care debate, we warned over and over again that cutting \$½ trillion from Medicare to fund ObamaCare would have disastrous consequences and that it certainly would not strengthen Medicare. The law drains \$308 billion from a very well-received Medicare Advantage Program.

The stories from Nebraskans illustrate how these cuts are hurting senior citizens. I heard from a couple in Carney, NE. They wrote to me saying that the Medicare Advantage plan they had for several years was something they liked. It was a plan that worked for them, but that plan, because of ObamaCare, was cancelled. She went on to say to me that another plan was going to cost more money and higher rates were coming for them.

She said: "I have not been shy about telling people that we lost our insurance plan thanks to ObamaCare!"

I could add to that that she has lost her insurance plan—and thousands of others, tens of thousands of others across the United States—because of the votes of the majority and the President.

A Nebraskan from Hastings shared that her Medicare Advantage plan was discontinued and her new Medicare Advantage plan option was, get this, 357 percent more expensive. Is that fair treatment to that senior citizen?

When ObamaCare was passed, we tried to get amendments done that if there were any savings in Medicare, it would go back to Medicare to protect the system. That was voted down by the majority.

What we ended with is a situation where those funds were pulled out of Medicare and used to finance ObamaCare. For millions of Americans and about 35,000 Nebraskans who rely upon Medicare Advantage, this law has not delivered on its promises.

As I have said over and over since this debate began, I have been committed to ensuring that Medicare is sustainable for decades to come, not only for the current generation but for our children and our grandchildren. The health care law does not accomplish this goal, and I believe strongly it needs to be repealed.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. I come to the floor also to talk about a letter I got from Wyoming from a constituent, Traci, who lives in Rock Springs, WY. She is very concerned about the health care law. It is interesting because she writes after hearing on the news last week a clip of Secretary Sebelius. It is a clip where Secretary Sebelius claims there is no indication that the ACA is responsible for any job loss.

Traci in Rock Springs, WY, sees Secretary Sebelius on television and wants to let the country know—and I am doing that for Traci today—that the Secretary is wrong.

Traci says: "My life is a prime example. Let me explain just how the ACA has destroyed my life."

The quote she is referencing is Secretary Sebelius last week said: "There is absolutely no evidence, and every economist will tell you this, that there is any job loss related to the Affordable Care Act."

It almost seems like a deliberate deception, an effort by the Secretary to mislead the American people, saying: Who are you going to believe, Secretary Sebelius or your own two eyes when you see what is happening in your own communities?

That is why Traci wrote to me from Rock Springs, WY.

Traci said she works full time. She also maintains a number of part-time jobs. She has a master's degree.

She says: "Once the ACA was passed, I saw the writing on the wall, and so did the companies I work for."

Isn't it interesting that Traci in Rock Springs, WY, could see the writing on the wall, the companies she worked for could see the writing on the wall, and yet the Democrats in this body who voted for this law couldn't see the writing on the wall.

She said she had health insurance and that these companies wouldn't have had to provide her with anything because she had insurance—wouldn't have had to provide her with anything. But they didn't know who might and might not have insurance, and they weren't taking the chance that they would have to offer health care to a large number of people. So what these companies basically did, she said, was hire a specific number of individuals full time and thus those of us who remained part-time employees have been cut way back. This is obviously impacting her wages, her take-home pay, the things that matter to her, and it seems that Democrats, including Secretary Sebelius, couldn't care less.

It was interesting. I came to the floor yesterday with an article from the New York Times last week about all of these public jobs, people working for public schools, people working for community colleges, sanitation workers for communities, counties—all of these people having their hours cut, their take-home pay cut, their wages cut, and it is because of the health care law, specifically because of the health care law.

Traci continues:

I can't believe in a country my grandfather came to and lived the American dream is actually actively trying to prevent me from being able to do the work I want to do. The kind of work I am good at. The kind of work that others benefit from. What was the comment last week about how I am being liberated from my job to do what I truly want.

It is astonishing. What she says is: I was doing what I truly wanted.

But yet, according to the Democrats, according to NANCY PELOSI, the former Speaker of the House, she is now being liberated from the job to do what she truly wants to do—when we have somebody with a master's degree, someone who loves to teach, and not being able to do what she truly wants to do.

Continuing:

And now this government is actually preventing me from what I want to do, doing what I like to do, doing what I am meant to do.

This is a woman in Wyoming doing what she wants to do, what she likes to do, what she wants to do, and was meant to do as a teacher—because of this health care law.

It is not only in Wyoming. I read a story on the floor yesterday of a school district in Connecticut, Meriden, CT, where the superintendent, who is on a national board of school districts, said: What am I supposed to do? If I am

going to provide by law all of these part-time workers—who are working over 31 hours—health insurance, what I am going to have to do is fire five reading teachers. How can I make that decision and that tradeoff?

Instead, they cut their hours to less than 30 hours a week, but yet Kathleen Sebelius says there is absolutely no evidence relating to job loss in the Affordable Care Act.

My friend Traci writes: “So Obama care—has cost me a lot of jobs, has cost me about half of my income.”

When the President of the United States is saying we need to raise the minimum wage, why is the President of the United States ignoring Traci, her income, her wages, and her take-home pay? Why is his health care law making her life worse?

She said: “So Obama care—has cost me a lot of jobs, has cost me about half of my income.”

She continues:

And by the way I was one of those taxpayers that don't have any deductions generally to take other than my mortgage, so when you used to get a lot of taxes from me, by decreasing my income in half, your tax revenue is decreasing in half as well. So next time Sec. Sebelius claims that there are no indications of any job loss, you can tell her that I have lost multiple jobs and I am not being “liberated.”

That is what the American people are facing. That is what the President of the United States denies every day when he refuses to give voice to the suffering that his health care law is causing all across this country in all 50 States. It is time that we work together, get solutions for the health care needs of this country, and not continue under what is happening with the President's health care law—which, case after case after case, is not yet giving the American people what he promised them and is giving them a lot worse. It is hurting their lives, it is hurting their health, and it is hurting their take-home pay.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. I thank the Senator from Wyoming, who is one of the most knowledgeable, eloquent Members of our side of the aisle or in this Chamber on the subject of health care law. As a former practicing orthopedic surgeon, he knows the subject better than almost anyone I know.

But we are on the floor today to talk about the cuts to the only real choice that seniors have when it comes to their health care coverage under Medicare. There are basically two choices. One is called Medicare Advantage, which I will talk more about in a minute, and the other is Medicare, traditional Medicare, which is a fee-for-service program that many people find is less advantageous to them than Medicare Advantage.

Close to 16 million people currently receive health care benefits through

Medicare Advantage—about 1 million of them in Texas, the State I am honored to represent. Of course, they represent roughly 30 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries.

Why would somebody choose Medicare Advantage rather than traditional Medicare? Because it gives a lot more flexibility and greater patient choice. It actually delivers better results than traditional Medicare. It has been one of the main sources of innovation when it comes to health care, producing better outcomes for seniors under Medicare. Medicare Advantage is the primary driver.

Unfortunately, the President's health care law, known as the Affordable Care Act, or ObamaCare, slashed about \$300 billion from Medicare Advantage. My constituents are already going to start to see premium increases to their Medicare Advantage policies. Many of them will have to then question whether they can afford that, whether they will drop Medicare Advantage, lose the choices, the flexibility, the innovation that goes along with it, and end up basically turning to traditional Medicare fee-for-service.

In Texas, about two out of every three doctors will see a new Medicare patient because it actually reimburses physicians at a lower rate than regular health insurance does, so many doctors have found that they have to limit their practice, much as they have under Medicaid as well.

But we know that the \$300 billion that has been taken from Medicare Advantage, and these seniors—who rely on it to shore up the Affordable Care Act or ObamaCare—know that the news on ObamaCare continues to unwind and bring us bad news almost every day. Not only have millions of people lost their existing health care coverage, even though they were promised by the President of the United States that if you like it, you can keep it—I lost count of how many times the President made that statement, but I think it is somewhere in the high twenties. Of course, now we are finding out that more and more people are having to pay higher premiums as a result of ObamaCare.

Another promise the President made is he said that a family of four would see a reduction of \$2,500 in their average premiums, but they are seeing their premiums go up. Indeed, on Friday, in a late-afternoon news dump—that has become a new art form for the administration, they dump news on Friday afternoon and hope nobody notices, or it won't be covered—we learned that roughly two-thirds of the people who work for small businesses will see an increase in their premiums as a result of ObamaCare, some 11 million small business employees.

The people who are concerned about Medicare Advantage aren't only on this side of the aisle. In fact, we have had

bipartisan accolades for Medicare Advantage, called a great success by both Senators from New York, for example, and the chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee from Colorado. They recently joined me, along with a couple of dozen colleagues, to urge CMS Administrator Marilyn Tavenner to “maintain payment levels that will allow [Medicare Advantage] beneficiaries to be protected from disruptive changes in 2015.”

This bipartisan support for this important choice for seniors, known as Medicare Advantage, is in real jeopardy as they are going to see as a result a \$300 billion cut from Medicare Advantage in order to shore up this failing experiment in big government known as ObamaCare.

People's existing health care arrangements are in serious jeopardy and they are concerned and they are calling and writing us and wondering what we are going to do. Unfortunately, those calls and letters seem to fall on deaf ears, as far as the President and the people who voted for this bill are concerned. The American people have seen they are whistling past the graveyard and hoping that what will likely happen in November—which will finally be the day of electoral accountability—is that their voices will actually be heard.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise to speak on behalf of the 35,000 Nebraska senior citizens who are enrolled in Medicare Advantage. These Nebraskans are going to face fewer choices, increased premiums, and decreased benefits because of ObamaCare's latest cuts. I am especially concerned with how these cuts will impact rural Nebraskans who may be forced out of the program altogether due to the lack of available plans.

The administration has already taken over \$700 billion from Medicare to prop up ObamaCare, and \$308 billion of that is from the popular Medicare Advantage Program to fund this failed health care experiment. These cuts to health services for seniors only hasten the demise of this successful program, a program that has improved the lives of millions of seniors across this great country. Medicare Advantage works for them.

Too many promises have already been made and broken, so let's not break another promise to America's seniors.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I think nearly every Member of this body shares the goal of increasing access to affordable health insurance and helping American families receive the best

coverage to meet their specific needs. So the question before us today—and the question before us this entire Congress—is how are these goals being achieved. This has been an issue we have been debating since 2010, when ObamaCare was signed into law.

Based on the extraordinary feedback from Hoosiers, regardless of party affiliation or ideology, the overwhelming number of messages that have been sent to my office, and that I have heard while traveling across the State of Indiana, suggest that the Affordable Care Act has turned out to be a dismal failure. It is hurting more families than it is helping.

To top it all off, the administration, late last Friday afternoon once again cut one of the most popular programs available to seniors—Medicare Advantage. We have 230,000 Hoosiers enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans who could be told major cuts will be made to their plans in order to pay for ObamaCare.

What an irony. We pass a program to provide health care coverage for senior citizens. They sign up for the program. They make the choice on their own to pay higher costs for Medicare Advantage so they get better coverage, and the administration simply says: We need to rebalance things so we are going to do everything we possibly can to make it more difficult and more expensive. This was their choice, but the administration is saying: We are going to make it our choice that this program is going to be reduced and much harder to engage in.

Consider what is happening. This administration is cutting billions of dollars from Medicare Advantage—an extremely popular program not just in my State but across this country—to pay for ObamaCare, which is extremely unpopular. So the administration takes a plan that works, a plan that people support, because it is their choice and they are willing to pay for it, and the administration says: No, we are going to take that away from you so we can cover the cost for a plan that is not popular. This is the irony of ironies, particularly in terms of meeting the goal that I think all of us want to meet.

So we have yet another broken promise. The President so famously said over and over again: If you like your plan, you can keep it. If you make a choice as to how you want to be covered, what benefits you want to have, what premium you want to pay, you can keep that—but now he is saying, well, no, effectively, you can't keep it because we are going to take that away from you.

It is no wonder I receive tens of thousands of pieces of mail and phone calls from Hoosiers all across my State saying: I got duped here. I got lured into something that supposedly was going to make medical care less costly; that

I would be able to keep my doctor, I would be able to stay with my hospital, I would be able to keep the benefits in the plan I chose, and now I am being told, no, none of that is going to work.

As was just stated by Senator CORNYN of Texas, there is a bipartisan effort underway to send a message to the President. It urges the President to preserve Medicare Advantage and the incentives to join it. I know the President doesn't want to listen to Republicans and have them tell him what is happening in their States, what their suggestions are as to what to do to fix this disaster of a health care plan, but maybe he should listen to Members of his own party. There is a significant number of Democrats who have said: We don't want these cuts to be imposed on Medicare Advantage. We don't want to go home and tell our constituents they can no longer have their Medicare Advantage plan.

So if the President doesn't want to listen to us, I fully understand that. He has made that very clear. But perhaps he should listen to Members of his own party and listen to what they are saying. Let's give people the ability to make choices and keep the plan they have chosen and not have it taken away by a bureaucracy that simply makes decisions for them.

With that, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I compliment my colleagues who have been talking about Medicare Advantage today. It is amazing to me that this administration will take money from Medicare Advantage—a program people love and that works well, where they can have their own doctors and their own health care providers—and put it into ObamaCare—a program that is not working and people are not happy with—and we wind up with a lot of dissatisfied people in this country and with good reason for their dissatisfaction.

So I rise to join my colleagues in speaking out against the harm ObamaCare is already causing to seniors throughout the country who rely on Medicare Advantage. I have heard from many seniors in my home State of Utah who are worried about the impact further cuts to the Medicare Advantage Program could have on their personal health care.

For example, James and Maureen of Spanish Fork, UT, sent a letter describing how they have been personally affected by the hundreds of billions of dollars taken from Medicare Advantage to pay for ObamaCare—to take money from a program that works, that people are happy with, that they pay for, and put it into ObamaCare where it doesn't work, they are not happy with it, and it even costs the government more money.

James and Maureen were informed some time ago that their current doc-

tors and most providers in their area will no longer be covered as a part of their plan's network. In Maureen's words:

If further funding is taken from the Advantage programs, more and more providers will stop accepting these plans. Where will we go to seek medical treatment?

Maureen also said that similar to many other seniors, she and her husband "worry about what will be next."

These are common stories. Seniors throughout Utah and the Nation are seeing their health care options dwindle because President Obama and the Democrats in Congress raided Medicare Advantage to pay for their misguided ObamaCare and what they call their health care law.

We all remember when the President promised under ObamaCare if you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor. Yet because of the law's cuts to Medicare Advantage, people such as James and Maureen are being forced to find new doctors and health care providers. As each day passes, fewer and fewer options are available to them. This is just another example of broken promises that came part and parcel with ObamaCare.

On top of the problems with Medicare Advantage, a new report issued late last week from the Chief Actuary from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services had even more troubling news. Buried in the report—which was 2 years late, by the way—is the confirmation that ObamaCare will raise insurance premiums for 11 million employees of small businesses.

You heard that right. The Obama administration's own actuary found that under the President's health care law 11 million workers will see their premiums rise. As I said, this report was 2 years late, and it is no wonder why the administration sat on it for as long as they did.

This is just the latest in a long line of bad data we have seen about this misguided law. Yet the administration refuses to step away from its talking points and acknowledge the truth—that the health care law is fundamentally flawed and is not working as promised.

All of the problems we are seeing are confirming over and over that the best path forward would be to repeal ObamaCare and replace it with patient-focused, commonsense reforms that will actually lower costs and expand options for the American people. I hope eventually that is the path we take.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, in July of 2009, President Obama said: "If you like your doctor, you keep your doctor. If you like your current insurance, you keep that insurance. Period, end of story." Then later, in September of 2009, the President said: "Now these

steps [ObamaCare] will ensure that you—America's seniors—get the benefits you've been promised."

Well, Mr. President, last Friday we saw yet another group of Americans fall victim to the Democrats' broken ObamaCare promises, and this time it was America's seniors. ObamaCare cuts of over \$300 billion to Medicare Advantage are already hurting seniors who rely on that popular program for their health care needs. More than 15 million seniors, close to about 30 percent of all Medicare recipients, are enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans.

The Wall Street Journal reports that approximately one out of every two new Medicare enrollees chooses Medicare Advantage. Seniors often choose Medicare Advantage because it is a more comprehensive and cohesive way to get health care services and it offers seniors the chance to pick a plan that is right for them instead of a one-size-fits-all approach picked for them by Washington, DC.

The administration's additional cuts to Medicare Advantage announced last week will make it even harder for America's seniors to keep their benefits, plan, and preferred doctor. The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that more than one-half million seniors will lose their current plans in 2014, which is a direct violation of the President's promise.

This administration's cut to Medicare Advantage in order to try to pay for ObamaCare is having real-world impacts on people throughout the country.

A constituent of mine, Cheryl from Box Elder, SD, wrote to me this past week and said:

My husband and I both pay for a Medicare Advantage Plan. . . . We have already had our original policy cancelled because of ObamaCare. And our prescription costs have increased for the same reason. So I am practically begging you to do all you can to keep our Advantage Plan from being cut.

Every Senator who voted for this train wreck owes America's seniors such as Cheryl an explanation for these Medicare cuts, which are already resulting in canceled plans, higher costs, and reduced access to the doctors they had and liked.

When the ObamaCare legislation was being debated and these proposed cuts to Medicare were being advanced, many of us said this would be a big mistake because what they were essentially doing was cutting Medicare—particularly Medicare Advantage, which is especially helpful to a lot of seniors across this country and which is working out there—taking the savings and then using them to pay for a whole new entitlement program.

At the time we talked about this—and, of course, because of the weird conventions used in trust fund accounting here in Washington, the hundreds of billions of dollars that were

cut from Medicare were not only then used to pay for this new entitlement program, ObamaCare, but were also credited to the Medicare trust fund. Their argument was that they were preserving and extending the lifespan of Medicare, and at the same time they were using these savings from the cuts coming in Medicare Advantage to pay for a whole new entitlement program. I think for most Americans this would be spending the same money twice. It would be double-counting revenue.

Essentially what they are saying is this: We are going to put an IOU into the Medicare trust fund which at some point in the future we are going to have to redeem to pay benefits, and this is going to require us to borrow more money.

It is intergovernmental debt. We talk about publicly held debt, which is debt held by the public, but there is also intergovernmental debt, which adds to the total debt burden we place on American citizens and which is debt that we are going to have to pay back in the future.

Essentially, all they have done is put a promissory note—an IOU—into the trust fund. At some point in the future when we need to be able to pay benefits to beneficiaries, we are going to have to borrow the money to redeem that IOU.

Essentially, they were able to argue that we were somehow extending the lifespan of Medicare at the very time these cuts were being made and also at the same time paying for a whole new entitlement program under ObamaCare. It was spending the same money twice. It was double-counting revenue—something which anywhere else in the country would probably land most Americans in jail.

That being said, these Medicare Advantage cuts are now having real-world impact—something we predicted all along.

The reason Medicare Advantage is a popular program and the reason one in two new beneficiaries is signing up is that it gives you options. It gives you choices. It provides competition, which is something we need to have more of, not less of, in health care today.

If you want to put downward pressure on prices, if you want to constrain utilization in health care, then create competition out there. Give people more ownership, more skin in the game. Give them some personal investment in their own health care decisions.

As it is, with the traditional Medicare Program we have a fee-for-service Medicare Program. Many seniors are enrolled in that. But Medicare Advantage gave them another option—an option that presented choices and opportunity to cover things they want to see covered in their health care plans. And it has worked. It has been an effective program, one that I think most people point to as a success.

So we are going to cut the very program that is working perhaps the best out there in terms of meeting the health care needs of America's seniors in order to fund a whole new entitlement program, ObamaCare, and in the meantime end up with these higher premiums, canceled coverages, and all the dislocations that are coming as a result of these Medicare Advantage cuts to seniors across this country. That is the wrong way to approach this issue.

There is a much better way, one that relies more on the very things on which Medicare Advantage is based—more competition, more choice, more options—and wouldn't lead to canceled coverages, higher premiums, higher deductibles, and fewer doctors and hospitals to choose from for America's seniors. But that is exactly where we are, and American seniors are now experiencing the very thing a lot of other Americans have already experienced. People who get their insurance on the individual marketplace have seen a lot of these canceled coverages already. They have seen these huge increases in premiums.

Many of us have been here on the floor reading constituent mail and emails from families and individuals who have been adversely impacted and harmed by ObamaCare because of canceled coverage, higher premiums, higher deductibles, and loss of doctors and hospitals. We have seen this in the individual marketplace. We are starting to see this—and we will see more—in the small business, employer-provided marketplace.

But now, as of last week, the real impacts are being felt as well by seniors across this country who in big numbers have been signing up for Medicare Advantage. Close to 30 percent of all Medicare recipients—15 million seniors—as a result are going to see higher premiums and reduced access to health care because of the cuts that will occur to Medicare Advantage in order to pay for a new entitlement program, ObamaCare, which, based on the number of delays the administration has made, has already demonstrated it is not working. And I, as have many of my colleagues here, have argued for a long time that it can't work because it is built upon a faulty foundation.

There is a much better way to do this. We should do away with this approach, go back to the drawing board, and use a step-by-step approach to reforming health care in this country, realizing the status quo doesn't work but realizing as well that the best way to get lower costs, more affordable health care, and more accessible health care for more American citizens is to create downward pressure on prices. That requires giving people choices and creating competition in the marketplace. Those are the things we ought to be advocating and advancing rather than

this top-down, government-knows-best, one-size-fits-all solution coming out of Washington, DC, which is hurting more and more Americans and most recently American citizens who are now experiencing the adverse impacts of ObamaCare because of the cuts to their Medicare Advantage plans.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. AYOTTE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAN

Ms. AYOTTE. Madam President, I come to the floor today to talk about a grave threat to the United States of America, a grave threat to the world, and a grave threat to our friend and ally, the State of Israel; that is, the threat of Iran's nuclear weapons program.

As we stand here today, pending has been legislation filed by Senator RICHARD BURR which contains important sanctions which are essentially an insurance policy to make sure that Tehran does not play the United States of America and that they are, in fact, serious about stopping their nuclear weapons program. Unfortunately, there is a long history with Iran where we talk and they enrich. This is why it is so important right now that we have this insurance policy.

These sanctions pending would only go in place if Iran violates the interim agreement that has been entered into between the administration and other countries in the world and Iran and if they fail to reach a final agreement that is acceptable to the security interests of the United States of America and to our allies in the region to make the world a safer place.

We cannot accept a nuclear-capable Iran. Why is that? Iran is a country that has threatened to wipe the State of Israel off the face of the Earth. Iran has called our country "the Great Satan." Iran is the world's worst state sponsor of terrorism. They have supported terrorist groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas. They have, unfortunately, obviously worked against our strong ally Israel. They have supported the murderous Assad regime, providing Assad arms so he can murder his own people.

Unfortunately, there are so many examples of the danger of Iran having nuclear weapons capability. If Iran gets this capability, unfortunately we will also find ourselves in a position where we are in a nuclear arms race in the Middle East, a Sunni-Shia arms race, which would then also threaten the

world and make that region even more of a tinderbox.

So we now find ourselves at a critical moment. I am deeply worried that the sanctions regime this Congress has worked so hard to put in place on a strong bipartisan basis is unraveling and we need an insurance policy to make sure Iran knows they are not going to play us and unravel these sanctions. The way we can do that is by having sanctions legislation passed which is prospective.

If Iran is serious about a nuclear weapons agreement that takes away their capability of having a nuclear weapon, then they should not have a problem with prospective sanctions by this Congress. Again, those sanctions would only go in place if they violate the interim agreement. If their words mean anything, then they shouldn't have a problem with the fact that we are just saying: If you violate it, we will impose additional sanctions. We will not allow this sanctions regime to unravel.

What is the significance of this sanctions regime? The work done by this Congress on a bipartisan basis and with our partners around the world is what has brought Iran to the table. All of us want a diplomatic resolution that stops Iran from having a nuclear weapon, but we need to go into this with clear eyes, which is why having this insurance policy is so important. A final agreement with Iran will only be meaningful if it ensures they will not have the ability to enrich because their ability to enrich makes it easier for them to immediately ramp up to nuclear weapons capability.

I recently attended a security conference in Munich and met with some representatives of the Arab nations. They were asked in an open forum: If an agreement is reached and Iran is allowed to enrich, what will the rest of you want to do? Their answer was that they will want the right to enrich too.

This final agreement must stop Iran's ability to enrich. If we do not stop them, we will not only face the risk of Iran being able to quickly ramp up to a nuclear weapon and its capability to harm the world but also the risk that the Arab nations themselves will also enrich. Even if they don't have a nuclear weapon capability, they are all right at the point where they could break out to that capability, and that is just as dangerous for the world.

The amendment we have makes it clear that we are going to protect the United States of America and protect our allies and the world. It has to be clear. It should prevent Iran from that enrichment capability. This agreement should stop their capability at the Arak facility to produce plutonium. Our agreement should absolutely make sure we are given access to their military facilities so we can stop them from their programs where they are

working on weaponization of nuclear materials.

I serve on the Senate Armed Services Committee. The Director of National Intelligence and others have told us that by 2015 Iran could have ICBM capability. Can you imagine if they were to continue with this nuclear program and have ICBM capability? This is a true risk to the world.

An agreement is only meaningful if it is an agreement we can rely on, that is open, transparent, verifiable, and absolutely stops them from having a nuclear program that could be a threat to the world. We need to make sure they stop enrichment and put a stop on the Arak plutonium reactor and weaponization program. We need full and open access.

We should be addressing Iran's acts of terrorism throughout the world. One of the grave dangers I worry about is that if Iran has a nuclear weapon, they may not use it, but they may pass it on to the terrorist groups that Iran is associated with, and that is a grave danger not only to our ally Israel but also to the United States of America.

One of the reasons I believe the sanctions legislation that is pending is so important is because some of the statements that have been made recently by the regime in Tehran are very troubling and harken back to their prior behavior of we talk, they enrich. We have to question how serious they are about a verifiable, transparent, and real agreement to stop their nuclear weapons program.

For example, on February 18—in talks between Iran and the P5+1 that were held in Vienna—Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said the talks "will not lead anywhere." In advance of the talks, President Ruhani, whom Prime Minister Netanyahu has described as a wolf in sheep's clothing—and I would agree with him on that—has stated that peaceful atomic research would be pursued forever.

Iran's Foreign Minister recently clashed with a lead U.S. negotiator, Wendy Sherman, over the Arak and Fordow facilities. Sherman stated that Iran had no need for either facility. Make no mistake, if Iran is serious about giving up its nuclear weapons capability—or the pursuit of that capability—then she is absolutely right; there is no need for the Arak facility that allows them to produce plutonium. There is no need for these underground facilities such as Fordow, where they are trying to hide their program from the rest of the world.

The Foreign Minister of Iran, in reaction to her comments, described her statement as "worthless" and reinforced Iran's position that their ability to produce atomic energy at the plutonium reactor at Arak is not negotiable.

This is deeply troubling, and it is one of the reasons we need to send a clear message here and now. They came to

the table because of sanctions. The sanctions were having a deteriorating effect on their economy. Yet recently we have seen—and this has been my fear—the sanctions regime unraveling. They are actually using this negotiation with the administration to further unravel those sanctions in order to get what they want without an insurance policy to ensure that we will get what we want, and that is what this sanction legislation does.

One of the issues that came up in February, a French trade delegation—representing 116 French companies—traveled to Tehran. I recently met with one of the Arab nation's Foreign Ministers, and he told me that the hotel rooms in Tehran are filled with businessmen and women looking to line up to do business with Tehran.

This is a real issue that the sanctions regime is starting to unravel, and the legislation we have pending with 59 cosponsors is an insurance policy to say: If you are not serious about this agreement, we will impose further sanctions to make sure we do everything we can to stop you from having nuclear weapons capability.

This is a critical moment in the history of this country. This is a critical moment for the safety of the world. We want to stop Iran from using diplomatic means as a way to have nuclear weapons capability because of the risk it presents to the world.

We cannot be naive. We have to understand the prior behavior of Iran because the prior behavior of Iran will allow us to go in with our eyes wide open rather than just taking their assurances that they are serious about a nuclear weapons agreement that will stop them from having this capability.

As we stand on the floor, I ask the majority leader to allow a vote on this legislation so we can send a clear message to Iran and the rest of the world that they should not think they should do further business with Iran unless Iran is serious about giving up its nuclear weapons program through a transparent, verifiable agreement that will ensure they cannot threaten the State of Israel and the rest of the world with a nuclear weapon. I ask the majority leader to allow a vote on this important legislation.

There are so few pieces of legislation that come through the Senate which actually have 59 cosponsors. This is one of them. It certainly has strong bipartisan support.

I don't buy the argument that if we were to pass this legislation, somehow Iran would walk away from the negotiations. If Iran walks away from the negotiations because we pass prospective legislation as an insurance policy to make sure they are serious about a real, verifiable agreement that stops their nuclear weapons program, then, frankly, we know they have been playing us. Because the reality is, if they

are serious, they should not care if we put an insurance policy out there. If they are serious, they will follow through and will do what the interim agreement requires and will agree to a final agreement that stops their nuclear weapons program in a transparent, verifiable way once and for all.

On the other hand, if they are just going to walk away with a threat of prospective sanctions, how serious can they be? We will still have the sanctions in place that will continue to put pressure on them to say the United States of America and our allies will not accept a nuclear-armed Iran because of the threat it presents to us.

We cannot allow the largest state sponsor—and most serious state sponsor—of terrorism around the world to have this capability. We cannot allow a race in the Middle East—a Sunni-Shia race—to see who can have a nuclear weapon first because of the danger it presents to the world.

Finally, we cannot allow Iran to continue to threaten our friend and ally, the State of Israel. I understand and appreciate that when Iran and its leaders have made statements they want to annihilate Israel from the face of the Earth, our friends in Israel take that very seriously. They have vowed never again. We stand with them not only for their friendship but also for the safety of the world.

We have legislation pending on the floor that gives us an opportunity to make it clear what the United States of America stands for and that we will not accept a nuclear-armed Iran. They must be serious or there will be consequences in terms of economic sanctions.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, yesterday we received news that 4 million people have now signed up in private health care exchanges all across the country. In addition, it was released that about 12 million people have called the call centers in January alone, and 1.1 million people signed up to receive health care through the Affordable Care Act during that time. Young enrollment—the group of individuals for which there has always been a question as to whether they are going to sign up for these exchanges—grew by 65 percent.

It is time for this body to recognize the Affordable Care Act is working. It

is working for people who have been desperate to get insurance. It is working for people who have been getting the short end of the stick from insurance companies, and it is working for millions of seniors all across this country who have been paying far too much for prescription drug costs and for preventive health care.

We have known this from the very beginning in Connecticut. Despite the hiccups over enrollment in the fall period, States such as Connecticut that had made a commitment to making this law work, rather than undermining it, have seen the success from day one. Connecticut, at the outset, said that we were going to try to enroll between October 1 and March 31 about 80,000 people. That was our goal. We just announced in Connecticut—a State that is working to implement the law, not undermine the law—that we didn't just hit 80,000, we didn't just hit 100,000, but we have enrolled 126,000 Connecticut residents in our health care exchanges and in Medicaid. Our projection is that we are going to enroll 150,000 people by March 31. That is nearly double our initial estimate. Last week, traffic on Connecticut's Web site rose 31 percent, and the daily enrollments rose by 67 percent.

The stories just keep on coming into our office about the lives that are being changed as people, for the first time in their lives, get access to affordable health care. People such as Susie Clayton, who has been dealing with a cancer diagnosis for over a decade—a crippling, preexisting condition that for most of her adult life has kept her out of the ranks of the insured. I have known Susie for probably two decades. Almost every single conversation I have had with Susie over those 20 years has been about her daily struggle to try to deal with her illness and her preexisting condition. Every single day, every single week, she has thought about whether she is going to be able to pay for her health care if she has a recurrence of her cancer and whether during that time she is going to have a job that provides her with insurance.

Susie had been paying about \$1,700 a month at last count for an insurance plan she could afford. Her life changed on January 1. She now is paying a couple hundred dollars a month in premiums. She finally gets to wake up every day not having to worry about whether she is going to be able to afford coverage, whether she is going to be able to see a doctor to deal with her very difficult diagnosis. With 4 million people now enrolled in these exchanges across the country, that story can be replicated over and over.

A bunch of our Republican colleagues have come to the floor over the last couple of days—I was in the presiding chair yesterday listening to some speeches—regarding some new information about Medicare Advantage. Everybody knows by now that included in

the health care bill was an end to the subsidies given to Medicare Advantage plans. The private sector in health care and in other industries always tells us they can do things more cheaply than the Federal Government—and a lot of times they are right about that—but it was exactly the opposite when it came to Medicare Advantage. We were paying private insurance companies 13 percent more than it costs the Federal Government to run Medicare. This was a source of enormous profit for the insurance companies. It didn't make sense to oversubsidize insurance companies to run a program the Federal Government itself was running for 13 percent less money. So we ended those subsidies, and part of the elimination of those subsidies has gone into effect.

But the story that is being told on the floor today isn't true. The fact is that since the Affordable Care Act was passed, even as we have been implementing these cuts to these overly generous, unjustifiable subsidies to insurance companies, Medicare Advantage enrollment has gone up by 30 percent. Thirty percent more seniors are now enrolled in Medicare Advantage, even as these cuts have been imposed. Premiums are down. Medicare Advantage premiums have been reduced by 10 percent.

Over the course of the debate on the Medicare Advantage cuts, I heard Republican after Republican, when I was in the House of Representatives, come to the floor and tell us that the sky was going to fall when we ended these subsidies to insurance companies. I will be honest. A lot of them are in my State of Connecticut. Not only has the sky not fallen, it has risen, with 30 percent more seniors in Medicare Advantage with 10 percent less in premiums. To the argument I have heard on this floor that there will be less choices available to seniors because of these cuts going into effect, let's just be honest: The average Medicare beneficiary has 18 different Medicare Advantage plans to choose from—18 different plans. That is a pretty robust market.

Let me just add that Republicans have voted for these cuts themselves. The Ryan budget, which has essentially been the budget standard for Republicans in both the House and in the Senate—endorsed by hundreds of Republican legislators—the Paul Ryan budget included the cuts to Medicare Advantage subsidies because Republicans have agreed with Democrats that there is no reason to subsidize insurance companies instead of subsidizing beneficiaries.

So what happened when we decided to stop subsidizing Medicare Advantage? Enrollment went up 30 percent. Premiums went down 10 percent. The average beneficiary still had the choice of 18 different plans. But we took that money we saved in padding the pockets of health care insurance companies,

and we told seniors that when they show up to get a preventive health care visit, they are not going to have to pay anything out-of-pocket. So since the ACA has been passed, here is how much a senior has to pay for their annual checkup: Nothing. So 25 million people have gotten free preventive care since the Affordable Care Act has been passed.

What else did we do? We decided that this doughnut hole in the prescription drug bill, whereby people got coverage up front and then they had to pay for a certain amount of drugs themselves and then they got catastrophic coverage, didn't make sense. So we eliminated the prescription drug doughnut hole. It will be gone by 2020. It has been cut by more than half already. Since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, the average senior has saved \$1,200 in prescription drug costs thanks to the Affordable Care Act.

So as I listen to my Republican colleagues come to the floor and complain about the cuts to Medicare Advantage—cuts, in fact, that many of them have supported—I think we have to ask ourselves: If we had a choice to provide a 13-percent subsidy to for-profit insurance companies or pass along \$1,200 in savings to American seniors and eliminate the costs that many of these fixed-income seniors pay when they go in to get preventive care, what would we choose? This is really all about choices in this body. It is about choices in terms of where we put the money we spend on behalf of Medicare beneficiaries. To me, it is a no-brainer. To the American public, it is a no-brainer. Instead of subsidizing insurance companies, let's subsidize hard-working seniors, who have built this country, with \$1,200 in drug savings and 25 million people who have gotten free preventive health care.

For Republicans who have come down to the floor and said they want to repeal the Affordable Care Act or that they want to repeal the cuts to Medicare Advantage plans, essentially they are saying they want to return billions of dollars to the insurance companies and take away that money from seniors in this country. I do not think that is a choice the American people are going to accept.

This week a group of us in the Senate are launching the ACAworks campaign. Later today I will be joined by a number of my colleagues around the corner as we launch a new effort to make clear to the American people that now, with 4 million people enrolled, and millions of people saving money—notwithstanding the legitimate difficulties that were encountered in the first days of the Web site—the Affordable Care Act is working. It is working for millions and millions of people across this country who are finally getting care.

We will be joined today, as well, by a couple of Medicare recipients who are

glad they now have the protection when they get into the doughnut hole. They are glad they now get free preventive care. And they will take the choice any day of this Congress and this government investing in them instead of investing in big for-profit insurance companies.

None of us deny there are bumps in the road as you rework one-sixth of the American economy, which represents our health care economy. None of us will deny there is no excuse for the fact that for the first few months there were a lot of people who were not able to enroll who wanted to. But now that the enrollment site is working, now that outreach efforts are up and running, record numbers of people are signing up for health care because there is an almost insatiable demand for quality, affordable health care that is now being met as the Affordable Care Act is working.

I yield back the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I want to begin by thanking my colleague and friend from Connecticut, Senator MURPHY, for the very eloquent and powerful remarks he has just made, showing America the Connecticut experience with health care, which shows that the Affordable Care Act is working and is expanding opportunities for health care across the country. Once the myths are exploded, once the truth is told, Americans will appreciate how fortunate we are to have this reform in the way that health care is insured and delivered for the American people.

There are bumps in the road, as Senator MURPHY has just said. There will continue to be issues to be overcome in achieving success. But the enormous potential to make America healthier, to eliminate the anxiety and anguish Americans experience in seeking a quality of life that health care affords, is an opportunity and obligation we cannot shirk. I am proud to join with him in speaking this truth and clarifying for people across the country the great promise of this program.

A lot of the promise still has to be fulfilled. A lot of the realization about that promise has to be educated. But we will succeed in that effort. I thank him and my other colleagues who are joining us in seeking to make America realize the great potential and promise that we have, and already the great accomplishments that have been made.

Connecticut stands as a model for both the promise and the accomplishment in the 130,000 people who have already enrolled in the benefits for young

people now permitted to stay on their parents' policies, and, indeed, the elimination of preexisting conditions as an obstacle to insurance.

I know about many of these issues and obstacles from my time as attorney general when I fought insurance companies that denied basic opportunities and failed to fulfill their obligation and impose these kinds of obstacles. Now, hopefully, insurers will be a partner in this effort, and so will the medical community and business community across the country.

So I look forward to continuing this effort and thank him for the exposition he has given, and my other colleagues who will join us later today.

I want to focus on a group that particularly needs health care in this country, and that is our veterans. We are here to talk about the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014—a measure that seeks to address comprehensively the challenges our veterans face today.

There are more and more veterans. We are losing some of the “greatest generation.” In fact, we are losing them tragically and unfortunately every day. But the next greatest generation needs the same benefits and services we have given to the “greatest generation.” The next greatest generation is serving right now and has served recently in the wars of Iraq and Afghanistan.

We must be unwavering in our commitment to our veterans. We must determine that this big and broad bill is necessary to keep faith with them and to make sure we meet the diverse and urgent needs they present.

We all talk in this body about our commitment to veterans. But all too often, our Nation has failed to keep faith. I have learned that we all have expressed here our admiration and commitment to our Nation's veterans. I have introduced, as have many of my colleagues, veterans bills based on input from my constituents. In fact, my very first piece of legislation as a Senator was the Honoring All Veterans Act.

But the reality is this comprehensive approach is necessary. I thank Senator SANDERS as chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee for recognizing that the needs of our veterans are interlocking, multifaceted, and manifold in the kinds of problems that are raised as they leave the military and enter the civilian world.

Sometimes it is their medical records that cannot be transferred seamlessly from the Department of Defense to Veterans Affairs and Veterans' Administration facilities. Sometimes it is the failure to make their military skills transferable in credentials and licensing. And sometimes it is medical conditions, health care needs for post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain in-

jury, that make their wounds invisible, make them difficult to discern to the ordinary eye but are there deeply and enduringly unless they are treated properly. That is why health care for them is so important and why this bill expands opportunity for health care so dramatically.

The health care needs of our veterans must be met through the provisions of this bill that expand health care opportunities and services. When I first came to the Senate, I thought—and I think reasonably—that a veteran needing health care could simply go to a VA hospital to receive it. But that is really not the case. On January 17, 2003, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that it would “temporarily” suspend enrolling Priority Group 8 veterans. That temporary restriction stands today. So under existing restrictions, a veteran making as little as \$33,577 or a family of five making a household income of \$50,025 can be denied health benefits in Connecticut. There are an estimated 720,000 Priority Group 8 veterans who are not enrolled in health care. Tens of thousands of veterans apply each year for enrollment and are denied due to that means test.

Simply put, the VA should have the capacity and resources to serve every veteran. That is why section 301 of this bill would allow veterans who lack that access, who do not have a service-connected disability, and who do not have affordable health insurance, to enroll in the VA's health care system.

There are other health care provisions: section 305, which expands the provision of chiropractic care; sections 331, 332, and 333, which expand complementary and alternative medicine. Anybody who has not yet seen “Escape Fire” should view it to understand the stark ways that veterans have challenges in access to alternative treatments and why drug addiction and abuse can become such a problem. And there is section 334, expanding wellness programs. All of these programs are vital, as well as the expanded access to treatment for post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury, which, in my view, are at the core of the need for this legislation.

Section 342 would require the VA to contract with outside providers to establish a program of supportive services to family members and caregivers of veterans suffering from mental illness. All of these invisible conditions have such dramatic consequences in the employability of veterans and their ability to give back and continue to contribute to this Nation, as so many of them wish to do.

The needs of our veterans are also pressing in disability claims. The need to end the backlog is, again, one of the areas addressed directly in this bill. The backlog of disability claims at the Department of Veterans Affairs has be-

come a chronic problem. The VA is making progress. There is no question that the numbers are better today than they were. But there are still veterans such as Army veteran Jordan Massa in Connecticut, who served in Afghanistan, and Marine veteran David Alexander, who was deployed in Iraq, who had to wait too long and suffered as a result. We need to keep faith with those veterans.

I understand and I applaud Secretary Shinseki, who has committed to tackling this problem. But some 389,000 claims are still backlogged. In Connecticut, about 48 percent of the claims are backlogged, meaning that 48 percent of claims made by our veterans take more than 125 days to be resolved. Each of these veterans has an individual story, a record of service, a record of suffering. Be it in today's wars or conflicts past, a record of service and sacrifice is exemplified by every one of them. These individuals may now be looking for employment, perhaps, to support a family. We need to keep faith with them.

This legislation aims to decrease the backlog further through an accelerated appeals process and getting the VA the information it needs to decide these claims. It brings in local governments to help with the claims. And it helps veterans who have misfiled documents in the claims process to seek a better route to what they need and deserve.

The bill also would require regular reports to Congress on efforts to eliminate the backlog. Accountability is so critical—accountability on backlogs, on all of the issues that underlie the failure to process these claims as quickly as they should be. And the backlog must be eliminated.

Employment programs are also addressed in this bill. So are the traumatic effects of sexual assault. The bill is multifaceted and comprehensive, as it should be. To address the diverse and urgent needs, it must be big and broad because the needs and challenges of our veterans are big and broad.

The reality is that 1 million men and women will leave the military over the next 5 years. One million patriotic and brave men and women will be separating from our Armed Forces. Becoming veterans, they will need services and benefits that they have earned, and they will need them at the time they leave, not at some distant point in the future. We owe it to them now to keep faith.

I have submitted amendments that would address some of the other issues.

For example, the need to recognize that post-traumatic stress is not only a condition that afflicts our current military men and women and veterans but also past veterans, even though it was undiagnosed and untreated at the time. Changing their status so as to recognize post-traumatic stress for the veterans of past wars is a need that we need to address.

I will make sure those veterans of past wars, whether it is Vietnam or Korea or any of those conflicts in our history, receive a second look at their discharge. That is the purpose of the amendment. That is the purpose of legal action that has been brought by the Yale veterans clinic. I will continue to support it.

We can go further as well to enhance our veterans' health by including the Toxic Exposure Research and Military Family Support Act in this measure. I have an amendment that will do so. Many veterans were exposed to toxic chemicals such as Agent Orange and their needs are only beginning to be addressed.

In addition to the harmful effects to those individuals, there are also impacts on their children. For many years those who were exposed to Agent Orange were told there was no evidence that their symptoms resulted from that. Now that we have evidence Agent Orange is toxic, we need to include the longer term effects on their children and their families. The amendment I have offered would address those issues.

Even if none of those amendments I have proposed are adopted during this process, this measure stands on its own as a historic step forward. It is, indeed, a historic recognition of the obligation and opportunity we have at this point in our history to make sure we leave no veterans behind and keep faith with our veterans, address their needs in a big and broad bill that reflects the urgent and diverse issues and challenges they face. I am proud to support it.

I thank my colleagues on the Veterans' Affairs Committee who have approved many of the parts of this bill by unanimous vote or overwhelming bipartisan majorities. This cause should be truly bipartisan. Let's move forward and move America forward addressing the needs and challenges of its veterans as we have an obligation to do. We must keep faith with our veterans and leave no veterans behind.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1982 which the clerk will now report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to Proceed to Calendar No. 301 (S. 1982) a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me thank Senators MURRAY, DURBIN, and BLUMENTHAL for their very thoughtful and important remarks regarding the needs of veterans and why it is absolutely imperative we pass this comprehensive veterans legislation. Let me also begin by thanking all of the members of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs for their very hard work in helping to craft what is not only an enormously important piece of legislation impacting the lives of millions of our veterans but is also, to a large degree, a bipartisan piece of legislation.

It is no secret that Congress today is extraordinarily partisan and, in fact, is largely dysfunctional. On major issue after major issue the American people are crying out to us and asking that we address the serious problems facing this country. Yet we are unable to do virtually anything. I hope—and I say this from the bottom of my heart, and as chairman of the Senate veterans committee—that at least on the issue of addressing their needs—the need to protect and defend those veterans who have protected and defended us, those men and women who have put their lives on the line to protect this country—we can rise above the partisan rancor that we see down here on the floor every single day.

That is what the American people want us to do. Not only has the veterans community been clear on the need to pass this bill, but that is what the American people want us to do. They understand the sacrifices made by veterans and their families, and they want us to rise above the partisan acrimony the American people see every single day.

Let me be very clear, and let there be no misunderstanding about this. I have tried, as chairman of the committee, to do everything I can to bring forth legislation which includes provisions from Republicans and provisions from Democrats. My view is, and has been, that if there is a good idea that improves the lives of veterans—I don't care if there is an "R" attached to a Senator's name, a "D" or an "I," as in my case—let's bring forth that legislation.

The reality is, to the best of my knowledge, there are 26 separate provi-

sions that Republican Members have authored or cosponsored—that is a lot—and some of them are very significant provisions. Further, perhaps most importantly, two of the most important parts of this comprehensive legislation are omnibus bills that were passed unanimously by the committee. So what we have done is brought ideas together in two of the most important provisions in this bill, with two separate omnibus bills passed unanimously by the committee. There are other provisions in the bill that were not passed unanimously but also passed with bipartisan support.

I also want to point out the two provisions that were not discussed at the committee level but have been passed almost unanimously by the Republican-controlled House of Representatives, and I believe have strong bipartisan support in the Senate. With almost unanimous votes, the House passed a provision that would solve a long-standing problem and enable the VA to enter into 27 major medical facility leases in 18 States and Puerto Rico. We have virtually that same language in our bill, and that was passed almost unanimously in the House. So I think that is a nonpartisan, bipartisan provision.

A second provision passed by the House with very broad support deals with ensuring that veterans can take full advantage of the post 9/11 GI bill and get in-State tuition in the State in which they currently live. That language I believe is identical in our bill.

So we have major provisions passed in the Republican House with almost unanimous support that are in this bill, and there are two omnibus provisions passed with unanimous support out of our committee, and we have other provisions passed with bipartisan support.

So while I am not here to say this is 100-percent bipartisan, because it is not, we have gone a very long way to do what has not been done very often here in the Senate, and that is to bring everybody's ideas together to pass something that is terribly important for our veterans.

The point I am trying to make here is that I happen to believe that virtually every Member of the Senate, regardless of their political point of view, does care about veterans. I say this especially about the members of the committee—the Veterans' Affairs Committee—who would not be on the committee if they didn't care about veterans. I believe that virtually every Member of the Senate wants to do the best they can for veterans. That is why I have worked so hard to do my best to make sure this bill is as bipartisan as it can be.

In my view, this is, in fact, a very good bill. But like any other piece of legislation, it can be made better. We have 50 States, we have Native American tribes, and we have all kinds of

issues out there. There are 100 Senators here in this body who know their States, who know their issues. So let me be very clear in echoing what the majority leader said this morning, and that is he and I want to encourage every Member of the Senate—Democrat, Republican, and Independent—who has germane amendments dealing with veterans issues to please offer those amendments. Bring them to the floor.

My understanding is a number of amendments have already been offered by Democratic Senators and we have some amendments now that have been offered by Republican Senators. I understand Senator RUBIO and Senator COLLINS have offered amendments, as well as a number of Democrats. We look forward to more amendments coming to the floor so that we can have a serious discussion about those amendments.

I hope the one thing that will not happen is that, as we discuss this legislation, instead of having an honest debate about the needs of veterans, that this legislation becomes another forum for the same old partisan politics we have seen for years—the sort of partisan politics the American people are increasingly disgusted with. The American people understand that honest people have differences of opinion on the issues, but they do not want to see serious legislation being sabotaged because of political partisanship.

In my view, with regard to this veterans bill and the fact we have language in this bill which can improve the lives of millions of veterans and their families, I believe it would be extremely disrespectful to the men and women who have put their lives on the line to defend this country to use this piece of legislation dealing with veterans issues as nothing more than a political pawn for other issues that are totally extraneous to their needs.

I fully understand—no great secret here—that my Republican colleagues do not like the Affordable Care Act. They are entitled to their opinion. We have discussed this issue and this law over and over. I ask my Republican colleagues: Please, do not inject ObamaCare into the veterans debate. It has nothing to do with the needs of veterans.

I understand some of my Republican colleagues have strong feelings about sanctions in Iran. Clearly, this is an important issue. But it has nothing to do with the needs of veterans in this country. Please, do not inject the Iran sanctions issue into a debate on how we can improve the lives of veterans and their families.

I know there are strong feelings and disagreements about the wisdom or lack of wisdom of the Keystone Pipeline. I have my views on the issue. Other people have their views on the issue. But, frankly, the Keystone Pipe-

line has nothing to do with the needs of our veterans. And there are many other issues out there.

Let me at this point quote from a tweet that came out last night from the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America association, and this is what they say. This is the organization that represents the men and women who have fought in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is what they said last night:

The Senate should not get distracted while debating and voting on the vets bill. Iran sanctions, ObamaCare, et cetera, aren't relevant to S. 1982.

That is the issue we are debating today, and I absolutely agree with the IAVA on this issue. They also say in another tweet:

In 2013, veterans were not immune from gridlock in Washington. This year has to be different. We urge the Senate to pass this legislation.

As I mentioned yesterday, this legislation, in fact, has the support of virtually every veterans organization in the country, representing millions and millions of veterans, from the American Legion to the VFW, the DAV to the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the Vietnam Veterans of America to the Disabled American Veterans and the Paralyzed Veterans of America. We have dozens of organizations that know how important this legislation is to their members.

So my plea to my colleagues is let's debate veterans' issues. If you have an idea to improve this bill, I welcome it. Let's have that debate. I do not believe this legislation is immune to improvement. We can improve it, but please do not inject extraneous issues in here for totally political reasons. I think that is unfair to the veterans of this country.

As the Presiding Officer well knows, on Veterans Day and Memorial Day, I—and I suspect every Member of the Senate—go out and speak to veterans. We express our deep respect for them and their families and the appreciation for all they have done for our country. Today I hope we can keep faith with those promises. Let us focus on veterans' issues. Let us get the best bill we can. Let's not kill this bill because of the same old same old partisan situation we face.

I will take a few minutes to discuss why we have brought forth this legislation, which has been described as the most comprehensive piece of veterans legislation to have come before Congress in decades.

While in recent years the President and Congress have made good progress—I think the President's budgets have been good; I think Congress, in a bipartisan way, has done a good job in addressing many of the problems facing the veterans community—the truth is, and I hope everybody knows, we still have a very long way to go. Now I will discuss some of the outstanding issues this bill addresses.

I think anybody who has nursed a child or a parent who is ill or injured knows how difficult and stressful this is; how sometimes you have to stay up all night, how sometimes you have to stay with your patient 24 hours a day. I would like people to be thinking about what it means day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, to be taking care of those veterans who are severely disabled in war.

Think about, for a moment, what the stress is and how much of your own life you have given up to your loved ones, and there are tens of thousands of spouses who are now doing nursing and caring for veterans from World War II, from Korea, from Vietnam, from Iraq, from Afghanistan. That is what they are doing right now, and they are doing it because they love their husbands or their wives or their sons or daughters.

The very good news is in 2010 Congress passed legislation to develop a caregivers program for post-9/11 disabled vets. This was a huge step forward. What it said is for those men and women who came back from Iraq and Afghanistan, perhaps without legs, perhaps blind, perhaps without arms, perhaps ill in one way or another through PTSD or TBI, we were going to make sure their wives, their mothers, their sisters, their brothers, their children had the support they need to provide the kind of inhome nursing care those veterans need. This legislation has been very successful for post-9/11 veterans. I will give one example and there are obviously many.

One family who benefited from the VA's caregiver program is Ed and Karen Matayka. They live in my home State of Vermont. In 2010, Ed and Karen were deployed together as medics to Afghanistan with the Vermont Army National Guard, a National Guard of which many of us in Vermont are very proud. Just 2 days before Independence Day, the vehicle Ed was riding in was hit by an IED. The driver, Vermont's Ryan Grady, was killed. We remember that loss very well. Ed and three others were severely injured. Ed lost one leg immediately, suffered a stroke and a severe spinal cord injury. Soon thereafter his other leg was amputated above the knee and he suffered yet another stroke.

After 3 years of rehabilitation, Ed was medically retired from the Army. Because of VA's caregiver program—a program we established in 2010 for post-9/11 veterans and their families—his wife Karen was able to separate from the Army as well as become her husband's full-time caregiver. Karen spends a significant amount of time every day caring for Ed. She helps Ed with personal care, fixing his meals, and all of his transportation, including to and from medical appointments. Karen has gone through the training

program and receives a monthly stipend to help compensate for her loss of income.

I think that is the right thing to do. I am not sure there are too many Members in the Senate who don't think that is the right thing to do. Here is a guy who suffered terrible wounds. His wife is now giving up her career to care for him. Should we not help that family? I think we should. Thanks to this program Ed and Karen are able to continue their lives together in their home.

Another important point: What might the alternative be? Send Ed to a nursing home where he would be uncomfortable, not get the care of a loved one, and at great expense to the VA? So this saves us money and provides better care for our veterans. This is what we did in the post-9/11 caregiver bill. The problem is the bill only applies to post-9/11 veterans.

What I think should happen, what the veterans community thinks should happen, and what I believe the American people think should happen is we should expand that program to all veterans of all wars and their families. There are tens of thousands of family members today who are caring 24/7 for veterans wounded in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and other wars. They deserve the same benefits the post-9/11 veterans families are now receiving. That important provision is in this legislation, and I hope my colleagues support it.

There is another important provision in this legislation. This is a very important and sensitive issue. There are some 2,300 veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan who, because of a variety of injuries, are unable to start the families they have wanted to start. Some injuries are spinal cord, some may be genital injuries, some just affect the reproductive organs, and they are no longer able to have babies. Many of these young men and women want to have babies, to raise their children, and, as much as they can, to have a normal family.

Right now the VA does not offer reproductive treatments to veterans, meaning the most seriously injured among them cannot access the treatment or care needed to start a family. Senator MURRAY, former chair of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, was on the floor yesterday speaking at great length about this important issue. I believe that if we send young people off to war and they become injured and if they want to start a family, we have to assist them in being able to do so. That provision is included in this legislation.

I will talk about another issue we deal with in this bill. Unfortunately, yesterday in discussion this provision was mischaracterized by some who spoke against it. This provision deals with expanding VA health care and

making sure some, including some very vulnerable veterans who are today not eligible for VA health care, in fact become eligible.

Currently, VA uses an extremely complicated system to determine eligibility based on income for veterans without service-connected injuries, often what we call priority 8 veterans. The VA now determines income eligibility by looking at the income of an individual and his or her family county by county in each State. I don't know how many thousands of counties we have in the United States of America, but I will discuss what this means in the real world in terms of how the VA currently determines income eligibility.

My own State of Vermont is a small State—620,000 people. We are a rural State. There are just 14 counties. In Vermont, as throughout the country, each county has its own threshold for determining eligibility for priority group 8 veterans.

For a veteran living in Chittenden County, where I live, the threshold to enroll in the VA health care is less than \$48,000, but for a veteran living in Windham County, in the southern part of the State, the threshold is less than \$39,000. That is a difference of nearly \$9,000.

In the State of Georgia, there are 159 counties and nearly as many income thresholds. Imagine that. For a veteran living in Walton County, GA, the threshold is less than \$41,000. But if a veteran lives in Coffee County, the threshold is just over \$28,000. It may make sense to some people. It doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me.

In the State of Texas, there are 254 counties. For a veteran living in Brazoria County near Houston, the threshold is less than \$48,000. For a veteran living in Bee County, the threshold is less than \$31,000. That is a difference of over \$17,000. Frankly, this whole process does not make a lot of sense, and I know from personal experience it is totally confusing to veterans: Am I eligible for VA health care? It depends on which county you live in. It depends on which side of the road you live. This makes no sense at all.

This legislation simplifies the system. We establish a single income threshold for an entire State. So instead of having thousands of income thresholds, we have 50. It is true that the threshold we use would be the highest in each State, therefore, making more veterans eligible for VA health care. In my view, this is exactly what we should be doing.

There may be some in the Senate who believe a veteran in a given State who earns all of \$28,000 a year should not be eligible for VA health care because he or she is "too rich." I respectfully disagree. VA provides high-quality, cost-effective health care. There are many veterans in this country

struggling economically who want and need VA health care.

I should also add that these newly eligible veterans will pay a copayment just like all other currently eligible priority 8 veterans. Frankly, I would prefer those veterans receive high-quality care at the VA, rather than going into an emergency room at 10 times the cost when they become ill.

Let me reiterate. Unlike what some of my colleagues said yesterday, this important provision does not open VA health care to every veteran in America—and there are 22 million of them—nor does it open the floodgates, bringing in millions and millions of veterans.

I cannot give an estimate, nor can anybody else, how many will take advantage of this provision, but it will be a manageable number, largely because we make very clear—and this is an important point some of my colleagues apparently did not understand. We make it very clear in this legislation that the VA has 5 full years to fully implement this provision in a way that will not negatively impact current patient needs. So anyone who says it is going to open the floodgates for every veteran is not accurate, and that because all of these veterans are coming in we are going to diminish the quality of care for current veterans is not accurate. Let me reiterate this point, which is also in the bill. We understand that the highest priority—and we have talked to disabled American veterans about this issue—for VA health care is to take care of those veterans with service-connected problems. That is the case today and that will remain the case after this bill is passed tomorrow. Those with disabilities and those with service-connected problems will remain the highest priority.

This is a long discussion, and we could go on and on for hours about this. I am also on the health committee and I have studied this issue a little bit. There were some very harsh criticisms made yesterday about VA health care. The truth is that the Veterans' Administration runs 151 medical centers. They run some 900 community-based outreach clinics. They have hundreds of vet centers.

The VA is the largest integrated health care system in the United States of America. It employs hundreds of thousands of workers, doctors, nurses, technicians, you name it. Obviously no one has ever suggested that VA health care is perfect or that there aren't problems within the system. I have talked to veterans in Vermont, and I have talked to veterans all over the country, and by and large there is very strong support for VA health care. These veterans understand that when they walk into a VA facility, the people who are there to treat them understand their problems, and many of the workers are veterans.

I think if you talk to the veterans community, they will tell you not that the VA does not have its share of problems, it certainly does, and not that we should not focus vigorously on improving the care at VA, but they will tell you by and large the care they are getting is good care.

The point I want to make is that before we eviscerate, as was the case yesterday, the Veterans Health Administration's health care system, let us remember today about what is going on in terms of health care in America. Let us understand that the VA is not the only health care system in this country which has problems.

Today, as a nation, we are the only major country on Earth that doesn't guarantee health care to all of its people as a right. Today there are tens of millions of people—even after the Affordable Care Act—who lack any health insurance.

Let's remember that 45,000 people—according to a Harvard study—die each year because they don't get to a doctor on time because they lack health insurance. Let us not forget that in the midst of high premiums, high copayments, and lack of insurance, the United States of America spends almost twice as much per person on health care as do the people of any other nation. Many of those other nations that spend a fraction of what we spend have better health care outcomes than we did in terms of life expectancy, infant mortality, and many other important outcomes.

I will also add that before we go about attacking, in a rather vicious way, the Veterans Health Administration's health care system, we should understand that according to a recent study that appeared in the *Journal of Patient Study* that between 210,000 and 400,040 people each year who go to the hospital for care suffer some type of preventable harm that contributes to their death. According to that study, that number would make medical errors the third leading cause of death in America behind heart disease and cancer.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used the hour of postcloture debate time.

MR. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 5 additional minutes.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Vermont.

MR. SANDERS. My point in saying that is not to say that the VA health care system doesn't have its problems. It is to say that we have problems in every health institution in America. That is what we have.

When you look at the VA—and I can go on and on—they are doing some cutting-edge work. If you look at health care technology and health care

records, the VA has led the country in that direction.

There was a discussion yesterday—an absolutely correct discussion—about our concerns within the VA and outside of the VA and about overmedication of people who are dealing with pain problems. To the best of my knowledge, the VA is leading the country and doing cutting-edge work in complementary and alternative medicine with good results. They are saying that maybe we don't have to use all of this medication. Maybe we can use acupuncture, maybe we can use yoga, and maybe we can use meditation. They are doing that aggressively. By the way, this legislation expands those programs.

One of the crises in American health care today is our failure in terms of developing a strong primary health care system. Guess what. The VA has 900 primary health care facilities all over this country. The VA has women's health centers which deal with the specific needs of children.

I could go on and on about it. It is not fair to pick on the VA. They are vulnerable. Every problem they have is on the front pages of the newspapers.

I will never forget that a good friend of mine went into a hospital and died of an infection. It didn't make the front pages of the paper. That is happening all over America.

Yes, of course, we want to improve the VA health care system, but let us thank the hundreds of thousands of highly qualified and dedicated workers who are providing quality care to their patients.

Lastly, I want to say a word on something I feel very strongly about. I have always believed that dental care should be an integral part of health care as a nation and within the VA, and what this bill does for a first time, through a pilot project, is begin the process of opening dental care for nonservice-connected veterans.

There are a number of other provisions I will talk about later. Here is the bottom line: We owe more than we can ever pay back to people who sacrifice so much for this country. I think it is important that we pass this comprehensive legislation. I think it is terribly important that we have a serious debate about the serious issues facing the veterans community.

I look forward to my colleagues—Republican, Democrat, and Independent—bringing forth their ideas and amendments, but please do not disrespect those people who have sacrificed so much by killing this bill because of the same old politics we have struggled with for years. This is a veterans bill. Let's discuss veterans issues.

I yield the floor and thank my colleague for allowing me the extra 5 minutes.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

MR. BURR. Mr. President, as Paul Harvey used to say on the radio: Now

the rest of the story. We just heard a very glamorous description of bipartisanship and benefits that have been not provided equitably to veterans. What I would like to do is try and focus on reality and discuss what is actually in the bill, what is not in the bill, and what was the intent of Congress. What is the shape of the Veterans Administration?

I will start with one very important thing. My colleague pointed out that most of the veterans organizations support this bill. He is, in fact, correct. I will read from an editorial written by the CEO of Concerned Veterans of America. I won't read the whole thing and bore the President or those who listen, but he says:

But given the vast scope of this bill, we should be skeptical. In recent years, the VA, which will take on a wide range of expanded responsibilities should this bill become law, has come under fire for dysfunctional management and poor service to veterans. If the VA is already failing to meet its obligations to veterans, is it wise to extend its mission even further? Of course not. And while we need to restore the shortsighted cuts to the military pensions, there are more narrow ways to address these cuts, such as Sen. Kelly Ayotte's (R-N.H.) military pensions bill, S. 1777.

It's troubling that under this bill, VA services would be expanded far beyond veterans with combat injuries and service-connected disabilities, fundamentally changing the founding mission of VA. This will only flood the VA system with new claimants, many of whom would be better served by health coverage in the private insurance market.

Veterans seeking VA care already face wait times of months and even years; further expanding eligibility to veterans who would be better served by other healthcare options will only stretch the VA to its breaking point. There is also currently no cost estimate of this massive expansion.

Meanwhile, there is another compelling question of costs. Sanders has proposed shifting funding from the Pentagon's Overseas Contingency Operations to pay for these expanded veterans priorities. But taking funding from the men and women serving in Afghanistan and elsewhere is shortsighted and could otherwise endanger their lives. That approach will likely meet a chilly reception in the House of Representatives, and justifiably so.

This means that Sanders' \$30 billion bill would be paid for through the accumulation of additional debt. The CVA has been clear that Washington needs to "cut debt, not vets." With \$17 trillion in debt and massive annual deficits, our country faces a fiscal crisis of unparalleled scope. Now is not the time, in any federal department, to spend money we don't have.

To be sure, there's much to like in the Sanders bill. And if those components were presented as separate, smaller bills, as part of a carefully considered long-term strategy to reform the VA, hold leadership accountable and improve services to veterans, we would have no problem extending enthusiastic support.

As with so many bloated legislative projects in today's Washington, the overreaching and overpromising in this bill will only lead to disappointment and recriminations as the high costs and unanticipated consequences are revealed. That will be followed by demands for an entirely new round

of “comprehensive” reform, and the cycle will begin anew.

Congress should go back to the drawing board, assume a more modest approach and take up these proposals on an individual basis. That’s the better path to achieving enduring and effective reform of, and accountability for, the services we provide to our veterans.

I point that out because he is a CEO of a veterans organization. Not all veterans organizations agree that more is necessarily better and that to blindly add to the system is not necessarily good.

My colleague mentioned that there was a 5-year implementation. I have the legislation right here. It is title 3, subtitle A. Expansion and improvements of benefits generally, requirements for enrollment in the patient enrollment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs of certain veterans eligible for enrollment by law but not currently permitted to enroll.

It goes through all the subsections and basically says the Secretary shall provide for the enrollment in the patient enrollment system of veterans specified in paragraph 2 by no later than December 31, 2014.

Well, in section 2, veterans with noncompensable service-connected disabilities rated as zero percent disabled who are not otherwise permitted to enroll in a system as of the date of enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefit Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014—under this section they do not have access to health insurance except through a health exchange.

My colleague sat on the floor and begged me not to talk about the Affordable Care Act. The Affordable Care Act is in his bill. It is referenced in his bill.

Now, get this: The Affordable Care Act has been portrayed as the solution to the health care problem in America. Forget for a minute the fact that premiums have increased for practically everybody in America—90 percent have seen increases. The \$2,500 savings per family is a wish, a hope, and a dream.

My colleagues think so much of the Affordable Care Act that if the only choice for a veteran is the Affordable Care Act, then they can opt to go into the VA. If the Affordable Care Act and the exchange are so good, why would we want to shift them from something good into something that is questionable, based upon what the editorial said.

My colleague said the VA has the best health care system in the world. It does. The hospital system has been rated high practically every year it has been rated. I made the statement yesterday: Why would we take a system that is broken and stuff more people into it? Why wouldn’t we focus the debate on how to reform the system?

This is one year’s worth of inspector general reports on health care facili-

ties, over 40 healthcare inspections reports that have been released by the inspector general. I can tell my colleagues what is in front of the VA. They can’t even get their hands around their own inspector general’s report. These are deaths of veterans. These are individuals who used somebody else’s insulin pen. This is legionnaires disease. This is a system that drastically needs reform. This is not a Member of the Senate making an accusation, it is the inspector general of the Veterans’ Administration and all of these reports from 12 months. Yet we are talking about a massive expansion of the Veterans’ Administration, where the chairman says: Oh, they have 5 years to do it.

I am reading the legislation. There is no 5 years. There is a specified expansion of who is included in it, and it says the Secretary will do it by December 31, 2014. If the phase-in is there, then the chairman can come down and read me the language where it says 5 years. I am certainly not trying to mislead anybody, although I am trying to make sure we get the facts on the floor of what this legislation actually does.

The chairman talked about bipartisanship. He is correct. Quite a few of the bills in his package are my bills, and they passed out of committee with unanimous support. Incorporated in his bill are 143 provisions, 26 of which are Republican. I have never judged whether I liked the bill based upon how many of my proposals were in it or how many proposals from my side of the aisle were in it; I base it on what is in the bill. What are the policies? What is our intent? Do we accomplish that in the language of the legislation?

Let’s look at it for just a minute. There are no reforms—zero. Zero reforms are in the bill. It is a massive expansion of individuals in the system. As a matter of fact, under this piece of legislation, the VA doesn’t even support it. Let me read what the Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Health, Dr. Robert Jesse, said. He indicated that expanding enrollment of Priority 8 veterans “presents many potential complications and uncertain effects on VA’s enrollment system.” This is the individual in charge of health at the VA who says: I don’t think this is a good idea.

So I guess the only mistake the chairman made was—he suggested that I was opposed to it, and he was accurate, but he didn’t ever say the VA is opposed to this massive expansion.

He talked about the caregiver bill. I know something about it because I wrote it. We implemented it as a demonstration project. Why? Because Senator AKAKA and I believed the VA was not in a position to absorb this massive program and to administer and implement it in an effective way. As a matter of fact, Senator AKAKA said at the time—he was then the chair of the vet-

erans’ committee—he said there were three reasons he was reluctant to—well, let me just say that when the caregivers program came up in debate on the Senate floor, Senator AKAKA, then chair, noted that these benefits and services were not made available for all veterans for three reasons:

[O]ne, the needs and circumstances of the newest veterans in terms of injuries are different—different—from those of veterans from other eras; two, the family situation of the younger veterans is different from that of older veterans; and three, by targeting this initiative on a specific group of veterans, the likelihood of successful undertaking is enhanced.

I say to my colleagues, would the author of the caregivers program not be the first one to come to the floor and lobby for an expansion? I think the answer is yes. But would the author of the caregivers legislation want to wait until the system can handle it?

Do my colleagues realize that in two States in America, a veteran can file for caregiver status in one State and be denied and file the same application in another and be granted caregiver status? It happened in Colorado and Florida. How, in a system that is created to equally treat veterans, is that possible? Now we want to extend it to veterans of all eras. I would suggest to my colleagues that this is almost ludicrous to even think about.

I see quite a few Members here, and I am not going to take up but a couple more minutes. I want to make sure my colleagues understand that my opposition is not to veterans. My opposition is to proceeding with legislation that could hurt veterans, not help them. In this particular case, more is not necessarily better. As the CEO of Concerned Veterans of America stated, the right congressional action would be to stop, take a breath, and focus what is broken. Fix the system. Then have a debate about which veterans, if any, should be included in the VA delivery of care.

The chairman highlighted yesterday that incorporated in both his bill and my bill is a House provision that provides leases for 27 new VA outpatient facilities. He said: That is proof we have in the system enough facilities to handle the population. No, Mr. Chairman, that is not proof. Those 27 leases are for trying to make sure we have facilities to handle our current population within the VA. Those veterans who are driving over 2 hours for a primary care visit, those individuals whose transportation is their No. 1 issue—27 doesn’t even get us up to taking care of today’s population.

As I said yesterday, we have I know \$14 billion worth of construction that is currently underway in the VA; yet we appropriate \$1 billion a year. It will take us 14 years to build out the inventory we have today. But the legislation calls for an incredible increase in the size of the veterans population by December of 2014. We won’t have any of

those 27 facilities that would be legislated in this bill done by December 2014.

So I am going to urge my colleagues, as we move forward, let's not do anything to damage veterans. Let's not do anything to overwhelm the Veterans' Administration. Let's commit to work with them to reform the system. Let's listen to what they want and not put them in a situation where they are telling us: We don't want what you are proposing. Let's listen and let's apply common sense to legislation versus to just be focused on the cheers we receive from a few who are paid to represent folks in Washington.

The chairman said a number of times that this is about veterans. I can tell my colleagues it is a little bit more. It is about the American people. It is about my kids, our kids, our grandchildren. It is about what they inherit from us. They are going to inherit from us probably the most important thing: the obligation to keep our promise to veterans of all eras.

I think the decision we have to make as we debate this legislation is whether we are going to commit to a promise that is bigger than what our kids can fulfill, that costs more than our kids can afford, and that doesn't necessarily enhance the health care delivered to our veterans. If anything, today it would probably be detrimental to those who need it the most.

I thank the Presiding Officer for his patience. I thank my colleagues for their indulgence as they have patiently waited. This is way too big an issue to rush forward with. I look forward over the next several days to a real debate about the specifics in this bill and, more importantly, about what we should do as a Congress to help veterans and to help the Veterans' Administration.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I did not come to speak on this bill, although I certainly appreciate the remarks of my colleague from North Carolina. I also see the chairman is here. I say to the chairman of the committee, I am only prepared to speak on a separate subject probably for 5 to 7 minutes.

As I said, I appreciate the comments of my colleague, particularly when we are dealing with veterans, their benefits, and health care in particular. We need to be very careful in terms of what we are doing so we do it the right way because we owe them all our Nation's gratitude for the sacrifices they have made. As veteran myself, I have some appreciation of that. My daughter married into a military family. Nevertheless, we need to be very careful how we go forward in making sure the care they get through the VA system is the very best care possible. My colleague has outlined a number of

issues that need to be debated, and I dearly hope the majority leader will allow us the opportunity to not only debate but vote on the alternative which, in my opinion, addresses the issue in the very best way.

MEDICAL DEVICE TAXES

Today I come to speak about the President's visit to Minnesota. I wish it were Indiana. He is going there for the purpose, as stated, of discussing a new initiative—I think it is a transportation initiative—that he hopes will create jobs and stimulate economic growth. Clearly, that has been an ongoing challenge for this administration.

How ironic. How ironic to go to Minnesota, a State like my home State of Indiana, which has been one of the most negatively impacted by the excise taxes imposed upon one of its most dynamic job creators—the medical device industry. How ironic it is to go to Minnesota and talk about creating jobs and economic growth while at the same time promoting a provision that was incorporated in the Affordable Care Act that imposes an egregious excise tax on not the profits but on the sales receipts of medical device companies. It is simply an ObamaCare pay-for.

As I said, Indiana and Minnesota are homes to many of the country's largest medical device manufacturers. In fact, my State of Indiana exported more than \$9.7 billion in life science products in 2012, which includes medical devices. It is second in the country only to California in terms of exports of life science products. So it is very important to our State.

We have over 300 FDA-registered medical device manufacturers—some of them large, some of them small. They employ 20,000 Hoosiers directly, with an indirect support of nearly 30,000 more. So it is not a small thing for our State. It is one of the—and pardon the pun—cutting-edge industries, producing devices that improve the health of Americans and extend the life of Americans through some remarkable innovations. These companies have revolutionized the medical field with life-enhancing, as well as lifesaving, technology.

So what is the effect of this excise tax that has been imposed on these companies and this thriving industry?

Well, let me respond in a way that reflects what some Hoosiers have told me, as I travel across the State talking to these device employees and CEOs and manufacturers, learning what the impact of this tax is on their industry, which is so important to our country's economic growth.

One device manufacturer located in Warsaw, IN, develops and sells orthopedic implants for children but recently had to shelve two important projects simply because they had to get the money to pay the tax, so they could not put it into the research and development and innovation of their

next products. I quote an employee of this company, who told my office: "The medical device excise tax inhibits us from developing more products that can reduce a wheelchair-bound child's discomfort or that can allow a kid to walk for the first time."

So there are real consequences here. Companies, many of which are innovative, struggling to design that new product that can be life enhancing and life saving, have simply had to defer their product to pay the tax. They may not have made a penny in net profits. Many of these are startup companies, hoping to develop and get FDA approval for, the next new life-enhancing innovation. Yet they are not taxed on their net profits—and many are losing money initially in order to go through the tortuous and time-consuming process of getting FDA approval, which denies them getting their products out to the market for a long period of time; so most of them early on are not making any profit. But on the devices they are selling, every dollar that comes in is taxed, even though they have no net profits and, therefore, they have to take money out of research and development, out of capital equipment, out of employee compensation, in order to send the check to the government.

Cook Medical, which is located in Bloomington, IN, another Hoosier device manufacturer, was forced to table plans for a major expansion because of the device tax. In testimony before the Senate Budget Committee last year, Cook's medical chairman, Steve Ferguson, said this:

Cook has made the difficult decision that without repeal [of the medical device tax], we will move important new product lines outside of the U.S. Our previous plans to open up five new manufacturing facilities in American towns are now on hold as we use capital intended for these projects to pay the excise tax.

There are very real consequences here in terms of job creation and economic growth that are being inhibited. We are getting just the opposite. We are getting job-killing and deflated economic results as a result of this tax. And it is an egregious tax.

The Advanced Medical Technology Association recently conducted a survey of its members—they shared that with me earlier today—and found that the device tax forced manufacturers to let go of or avoid hiring 33,000 workers last year. Mr. President, that is 33,000 people who could have joined the workforce at wages which in my State are 56 percent higher than the average State wage. So these are good-paying jobs. They require good skills, but they are good-paying jobs. And it is an emerging series of products that can be exported around the world.

The survey also found that one-third of the respondents had to reduce their research and development as a result of the medical device tax.

In terms of investment dollars, three-quarters of the respondents said they

had taken one or more of the following actions in response to the tax: They have either deferred or canceled capital investments; deferred or cancelled plans to open new facilities; reduced investment in startup companies; found it more difficult to raise capital, particularly among startup companies; and reduced or deferred increases in employee compensation.

There are negative results that come from taxing anything. But when you tax sales, when you tax on an excise basis, it has a compounding effect for startup companies, and even for established companies, in terms of what they are able to do in terms of hiring, in terms of plant expansion, in terms of research and development, in terms of innovation.

This is happening across the country. Minnesota and Indiana just happen to be two States that have been particularly hard hit. We ought to be encouraging these companies to continue their research and development. We should not be punishing them with an egregious tax which is simply a byproduct and the administration says: We have to find a pay-for for ObamaCare. Here is a prospering industry, so let's take some money from them—not on their profits—but let's just take money from them from their sales—an excise tax—so that we can apply it to ObamaCare.

Essentially, what they are doing is taking money from a program that works and puts people back to work and generates taxes the right way and transferring that money to a program that is in distress, has turned out to be a job killer, according to studies and a number of agencies that have looked at this, and is very much in a state of confusion and disarray right now among the American people.

So you take some money from something that works and you give it to something that does not work. What kind of rationale is that? And how can the President go to Minnesota and say: I am here to stimulate growth and create jobs, while his very own policy has done just the opposite?

The senior Senator from Minnesota, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and I chair the Senate Medical Technology Caucus. We have been able to pull together a bipartisan effort to increase awareness of these unique issues but also to achieve a vote, which is hard to do around here. During the budget we had the so-called vote-arama. Republicans and Democrats got to offer any amendment we wanted. It is not binding law, but it sets the stage and illustrates the Senate's stance on particular topics.

On this one 79 out of 100 U.S. Senators—Republicans and Democrats; that is 45 Republicans and 34 Democrats—voted for repeal of the medical device tax. So this is not a Republican standing here challenging the President of another party or Members

across the aisle saying: We are asking you to support this Republican issue. This is a bipartisan issue. Almost as many Democrats as Republicans support this. But yet the majority leader has refused to allow this to come to an actual vote, which would put it into passage—because the House has already supported and passed this—and be sent to the President for his signature.

So I guess what I am asking here today is that the majority leader at least allow us the opportunity to go forward with a vote, where it would then, I suspect it would pass, be sent to the President. If he really wants to create jobs and stimulate the economy, we have living proof of something that will do it.

I do not know how the President today can go to a State and say: I am here to stimulate the economy and provide for new jobs and at the same time have in place a majority leader who will not allow us a vote on it. We all want to enact measures here that will get our country growing again and will get people back to work. In an area where we are providing life-enhancing and lifesaving medical technology, it is particularly important.

So my plea, as I finish here, is I urge the majority leader and I urge the President—if they are serious about encouraging economic growth, spurring job creation, and improving health care—to support the repeal of this unfair and destructive tax of medical devices.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I yield 45 minutes of my hour under cloture to Senator SANDERS, chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time is so yielded.

Mr. COONS. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SANDERS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, earlier this afternoon I spoke about the many important provisions in this veterans bill that came out of the Veterans' Affairs Committee: the fact that we worked as hard as we could to make it bipartisan, the fact that there are many provisions in this bill that came from Republican Members, and the fact that some other provisions in this bill were passed unanimously by the House of Representatives, indicating very strong bipartisan support.

But what I also said is that while I believe the American people under-

stand the full cost of war and understand the sacrifices made by veterans and their families, what they also believe is that when we have a piece of legislation—an important piece of legislation—on the floor dealing with the needs of millions and millions of veterans and their families—whether it is health care; whether it is dental care; whether it is sexual assault and how we address that issue; whether it is the fact that over 2,000 veterans have lost their ability to have kids and what we can do to make it possible for them to have children; whether it is the fact that we have tens of thousands of families in this country where loved ones are taking care of disabled vets, need some support, and we have a need to expand the caregivers act; whether it is the fact that we have some young people who are eligible to use the post-9/11 GI bill but are unable to do it because they cannot get in-State tuition; whether it is the issue of advanced appropriations and making sure we never again find ourselves in the position that we did a few months ago, where the government was shut down and where disabled veterans were 1 week or 10 days away from losing the checks they are dependent upon, I think there is widespread support in America for that bill, for the understanding that we do owe the men and women who put their lives on the line to defend us a debt of gratitude that can never be fully paid.

But we have to do our best. We have to make life as good as we can for those who were injured in war. We have to protect the hundreds of thousands who came back from Iraq and Afghanistan with PTSD or traumatic brain injury. But whatever one may think of the bill—whether you like the bill, don't like the bill, think it is too expensive or think we should have done more—the one thing most Americans understand is that it is totally absurd to be bringing forth extraneous issues into a debate on veterans needs in order to kill the bill.

I say to my colleagues exactly what the majority leader said this morning. If you have amendments dealing with veterans issues, we welcome them. We have a number of Democrats who have come forward with amendments. We have some Republicans who have come forward with amendments. We welcome amendments that are relevant and germane to the needs of veterans. What we do not welcome are extraneous amendments that are designed only—only—for partisan, political reasons, exactly the process that the American people are disgusted with today.

Interestingly enough, that is my view. I mentioned earlier today that the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America sent out a tweet yesterday, and the folks who served us in Iraq and Afghanistan said: The Senate should not get distracted while debating and

voting on the veterans bill. Iran sanctions, ObamaCare, et cetera, aren't relevant to S. 982—which is the veterans bill we are dealing with today.

The Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America said: Focus on veterans' issues, which is a very simple request and the one that should be heeded.

But today, a little while ago, we heard from the largest veterans' association in America; that is, the American Legion, which represents 2.4 million members. The American Legion is the largest veterans' organization in this country. I suspect they have chapters. I know they are strong in Vermont. I suspect they are strong in Hawaii and strong all over this country.

American Legion National Commander Daniel M. Dellinger said today:

Iran is a serious issue that Congress needs to address, but it cannot be tied to S. 982, which is extremely important as our Nation prepares to welcome millions of U.S. military service men and women home from war. This comprehensive bill aims to help veterans find good jobs, get the health care they need, and make in-State tuition rates applicable to all who use their GI bill benefits. This legislation is about supporting veterans, pure and simple. The Senate can debate various aspects of it, and that is understandable, but it cannot lose focus on the matter at hand: helping military personnel make their transition to veteran life and ensuring that those who served their Nation in uniform receive the benefits they earned and deserve. We can deal with Iran—or any other issue unrelated specifically to veterans—with separate legislation.

I think Commander Dellinger hit the nail right on the head. What he is saying is, fine, we can debate Iran at some point; we can debate ObamaCare, which has been going on day after day after day. We can do anything we want to do, but this is a bill that deals with veterans' issues.

I thank the American Legion not only for their support—they along with virtually every other veterans organization in this country supports this legislation: the VFW, DAV, Vietnam Vets, Iraq-Afghanistan Veterans of America, and dozens of organizations—but I thank the American Legion in particular for their statement in making it clear that our job is to debate a veterans bill, not kill this bill because of an extraneous issue such as Iran sanctions.

I wish to say one other word before I proceed to my main remarks. My colleague from North Carolina quoted from a group called the Concerned Veterans of America. In support of our legislation, we have the largest veterans organization in America, the second largest, third largest, fourth largest, the fifth largest, the sixth largest, and all the way down the line—many millions of Americans. Apparently supporting his position is a group called the Concerned Veterans for America. I don't mean to be personal, but this is just a simple fact that people should

understand. This organization, according to the Washington Post, is significantly supported by Charles and David Koch—the Koch brothers. We are going to be running into the Koch brothers on every piece of legislation where there is some group out there that they fund, and in this case it is the Concerned Veterans of America.

I talked earlier about the many important provisions in the bill dealing with reproductive issues, the belief the Federal Government and the VA should assist those men and women who have lost their ability to have kids. We have talked about caregivers and all that, and I want to just touch on a couple more issues at this moment.

I have believed for a very long time that dental care should be regarded as a part of health care. I think we make a mistake as a nation saying this is health care and this is dental care. Our legislation, for the first time, begins the process of providing dental care to nonservice-connected members through a significant pilot project. I have the feeling once we do this we will see veterans from all over the country who are dealing with long-term dental problems availing themselves of this service. It is the right thing to do and something I think we should be doing.

Another provision in this bill deals with the COLA issue for military retirees. I think everybody here is familiar with the fact that in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 it reduced by 1 percent annually the cost-of-living adjustments for military retirees until age 62.

The good news is the House and Senate recently passed legislation completely rescinding those cuts and the President has signed that bill. That is the good news. The bad news is those cuts continue to exist for those who join the military after January 2014, and I know the veterans organizations are concerned about that. I am concerned about that. I think that is wrong, and our legislation corrects that. So if one is talking about cuts to military retiree COLAs, we end it, pure and simple. Those COLA cuts will no longer exist if this bill is passed.

As I mentioned earlier, this legislation addresses the issue of the benefits backlog. There is great concern among all Members of the Senate that veterans are forced to wait much too long to get their claims processed. What this legislation does is support VA's ongoing efforts to end the backlog and would make needed improvements to the claims system. Again, this is the result of some bipartisan efforts.

Secretary Eric Shinseki of the VA, as he moves the claims system from paper into an electronic system, has advanced the very ambitious goal of making sure that every claim filed by a veteran will be processed in 125 days at 98 percent accuracy. That is a very ambitious goal, and the language we

have is going to hold the VA accountable and make sure we reach this very ambitious goal.

I gather there may be differences of opinion on this view, but another provision in our bill deals with the educational needs of servicemembers and making sure they get a fair shot at attaining their educational goals without incurring an additional financial burden, which is what the post-9/11 GI bill was all about. That bill has been enormously successful. There are certain problems remaining in it and we address these problems.

Given the nature of our Armed Forces, servicemembers have little to no say as to where they serve and where they reside during military service. Thus, when transitioning servicemembers consider what educational institution they want to attend, many of them choose a school in a State other than their home State or the State where they previously served. I have heard from too many veterans that many of these public educational institutions consider them out-of-State students. Given that the post-9/11 GI bill only covers in-State tuition and fees for public educational institutions, these veterans are left to cover the differences in cost between the in-State tuition rate and the out-of-State tuition rate. In some States that difference can be more than \$20,000 a year.

That is certainly not what the purpose of the 9/11 GI bill was about. As a result, many of our Nation's veterans must use loans to cover this difference and, in the process, become indebted with large school loans that will take them years to pay off.

My office has heard from a number of veterans and veterans organizations about this problem. We heard from Skye Barclay, who lived in Florida prior to joining the U.S. Marine Corps in 2006. After serving her country, Skye decided to remain with her family in North Carolina so her husband could finish serving his military obligations. Less than 1 year later, they moved to Skye's hometown in Florida to transition back to civilian life and finish their college education.

Skye and her husband changed their residency, immediately started renting a home, and ensured her car registration was up-to-date. However, the school she chose to attend could not consider either of these veterans as in-State students. As a result, they were forced to pay an additional \$2,000 out-of-pocket each semester. Due to the additional financial burden, Skye and her husband were unable to afford daycare for their daughter and instead have to juggle two demanding schedules, with one of them attending school in the morning and the other late afternoon.

The bottom line is that we passed a post-9/11 GI bill which is working incredibly well. Over 1 million veterans and their family members have used

this program. It is very important for higher education in America, and I think we should support our veterans who move to another State and make sure they get in-State tuition.

Let me conclude my remarks at this point, though I will be back later to reiterate the major point I wish to make. We can play the same old politics. My Republican colleagues can defeat this bill because of some extraneous matters in it. I think that is incredibly disrespectful to the veterans community that has sacrificed so much. That is not just my view; that is what the American Legion believes and what the American Legion says: Discuss veterans issues in a veterans bill. The Iraq-Afghanistan Veterans of America say the same.

So we may have disagreements on this bill. People may choose to vote against it for whatever reason. People may offer amendments that we would love to see—some of them may be good, some not so good—but let us respect those folks who have given so much to this country. Let us not demean the veterans community by killing this bill because of something to do with Iran sanctions. That has nothing to do with veterans' needs.

I hope we continue to have a vigorous debate on this piece of legislation. I see my friend from Florida is on the floor. People may want to vote for it. That is good. They may want to vote against it. Fine. But let us not play the same old politics which so disgusts the American people.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). The Senator from Florida.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I would like to inquire as to the pending business before the Senate. Is it the veterans bill, the motion to proceed?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It is indeed the motion to proceed to S. 1982.

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I appreciate this opportunity to address a number of matters of great concern. There might be, but I don't know of any State that has a greater presence of veterans within it than Florida, certainly per capita. We have a huge military presence in our State and a large number of veterans.

I have commented to people, by the way, that in my time in the Senate, which is now about 3 years and 2 months, a substantial percentage of the calls we get to our office are from veterans regarding veterans' issues. I have a veteran in my family—my brother—who has recently encountered some bureaucratic hurdles he is trying to overcome in terms of getting service from the VA. So these are relevant matters that are of great importance.

I am glad the Senate is on the debate. I am glad we have proceeded to have this debate. It is an important one, and I do hope I will have an opportunity to offer an amendment I have

relevant to the bill that involves and gives the opportunity for the Secretary who oversees this Department to be able to hire and fire, particularly to hold accountable mid- and higher level officials within the Veterans' Administration who are not doing their jobs and are contributing to this backlog.

I can tell you that in Central Florida we have a veterans hospital that has been well over budget and has timeliness issues and it needs to be addressed. I think that is a veterans' issue that has extraordinary bipartisan consensus. So my hope is we will be able to address it and we will have an amendment process that allows these ideas to be brought forth. From what I heard from the Senator commenting just a few moments ago, he welcomes amendments. So I hope I will have an opportunity to offer that.

I know as part of this debate the issue of Iran sanctions has been raised. I don't think it is rare to have issues that perhaps are not directly on point to a bill offered in debate, particularly when getting into a debate on an issue that has been so difficult. That is part of the problem with the Iran sanctions issue.

I understand when someone files a bill, the managers have worked hard on it, and the last thing they want is for it to be slowed down because of debate on another topic that is not directly on topic. I understand that concern. I do. But on the other hand, I hope Members will understand that part of the frustration has been the inability to even get a debate on what truly is an extraordinarily important issue.

For those here watching and those at home watching and those who may see this later, let me take a moment to briefly discuss what is at stake. I briefly discussed this a few weeks ago, but I wanted to take this opportunity to do so again.

Here is the issue: Iran, a few years ago, began developing a nuclear processing capability. What that basically means is they take uranium, for example, and they reprocess it to a certain level. You need to have a certain level of reprocessing in order to, for example, provide domestic energy for nuclear energy plants. Many countries in the world have nuclear energy, but only a handful actually process it themselves. Most decide to buy it already processed from abroad.

We have agreements and arrangements with countries all over the planet that do that. Only a handful actually retain the capacity to reprocess it or to enrich uranium or reprocess plutonium. So when we see a country announce they are going to invest money, time, and energy in developing a reprocessing or an enrichment capability, that raises red flags, and here is why. Because while you only need a certain level of enrichment to be able to provide nuclear energy for peaceful

purposes, and a little bit higher level in order to use it for medical isotopes, the exact same scientists, the exact same machines, the exact same facilities are the exact same ones that can also reprocess or enrich to an even higher level to use in a weapon.

The story of Iran has been, over the last few years, to increase their enrichment and reprocessing capabilities. That in and of itself raises red flags. Adding to that uncertainty and concern about it has been the fact they have tried to hide most of this. Consistently, Iran has been found to have secret development projects ongoing that they only admit to once they are discovered. They take a tremendous amount of effort to hide it from the world. That begins to raise red flags, because if it is truly just a peaceful program, there would be no reason to hide it or to hide their capabilities. But Iran has consistently hidden them.

There is even more reason to be concerned. In addition to increasing their capacity to enrich and reprocess, Iran is also developing long-range missile capabilities. A long-range missile—basically a missile that can fly from Iran 1,000 miles, 1,500 miles, 2,000 miles, 3,000 miles—costs a lot of money to develop. It takes a lot of time to develop.

You don't spend time or money developing those capabilities for purely conventional purposes or for defensive purposes. Usually when you undergo those efforts to develop that kind of capability, it is because you want to have the opportunity to one day put a nuclear warhead on one of those rockets.

So that is the story of Iran: massive expansion in their enrichment and reprocessing capabilities; secret enrichment programs which they try to hide from the world; and the development of long-range missile capabilities. Add to it that we are not dealing with the government of Belgium, Japan, South Korea, or any other responsible government on the planet; we are dealing with a government that actively uses terrorism all over the world as an active element of its foreign policy. They are involved in supporting various terrorist elements around the country, not just in the Middle East. Open-source reporting revealed that just a couple years ago they were involved in a plot to assassinate a foreign ambassador in Washington, DC—not in the Middle East somewhere but here. They have an active cyber capability designed to attack, disrupt, and create acts of terror online. They have been implicated, for example, in the bombing of a Jewish center in Argentina. There are few, if any, countries in the world that more actively support terrorism than the Government of Iran.

So this is with whom we are dealing. As a result, the international community, through the United Nations, imposed sanctions. Not only did they impose sanctions, they imposed the requirement that they immediately suspend and stop all enrichment and reprocessing capabilities. We can imagine why the neighbors of Iran are concerned. It is not just Israel that is concerned. Ask the Saudis, ask the Turks, ask any number of the other countries in the region.

Recently, the President and this administration have begun to undertake conversations with Iran about this program. Their hope is that we can get Iran to a place where we can lock them in; where they, in exchange for the loosening of these sanctions, agree not to do certain things.

I don't know of anyone here who would not love to wake up to the news tomorrow that the Supreme Leader in Iran has decided to abandon the reprocessing and enrichment capability and to truly show that all he is interested in is domestic energy for peaceful purposes. The problem is that is not what is happening. I believe what is happening is the United States, through the State Department and this administration, *de facto*, is already—but if not, is on the verge of—agreeing to allow Iran to keep in place its enrichment and reprocessing capabilities, and I will explain why this is a problem.

If that capability is still there, if they retain all the facilities necessary for enrichment and reprocessing, even if they agree to limit it to a certain level for now, at any point in time in the future they can ratchet it back up and can go on to develop a weapon. In fact, unfortunately, the design for a weapon is the easiest part of all this. The hardest part is reaching the technological capability to enrich uranium to a certain point to weaponize it.

If we allow them to keep all the equipment, all the technology, all their scientists, all the infrastructure in place, then at any point in the future when they decide it is time for a weapon, they can break out and do that. And I would submit that the evidence is strong that this is exactly what their strategy is.

I don't think, I know for a fact that the mandate given to those negotiators on behalf of Iran and the Supreme Leader was the following: Do whatever you can to get these sanctions lifted off our shoulders, but do not agree to anything that is irreversible.

Put yourself in their position. If you want to retain the option to one day be able to enrich and then build a weapon, you are probably willing to take one step back by agreeing to suspend enrichment only to a certain level in exchange for the lifting of these sanctions, knowing that at some point—in 2 years, 3 years, or 4 years—when the world is distracted by something else,

when something else is going on around the planet, you can then decide to come up with any excuse to build a weapon.

One of the reasons I know that is their strategy is because it is exactly what the North Koreans did. The play-book has already been written. They would engage in these ongoing negotiations, on again, off again, all designed to buy time.

Why does a government like Iran need or want a nuclear weapon? And they do. It is pretty straightforward.

No. 1, because of deep historical reasons, they desire to become the dominant power in the Middle East, to drive not just the United States but other nations out of the region and diminish everyone's influence at their expense.

The other is because they view a weapon as the ultimate insurance policy. They don't want to be the next Muammar Qadhafi; they want to be North Korea so they can now act with impunity, so they can do anything they want against us or anyone in the world because no one could possibly attack them because they have nuclear weapons.

I have heard stories about, well, we will know; we will be able to see this happening before it happens and do something about it. But look at Pakistan and India, which was a surprise to everybody, particularly India's capabilities. It is not outside the realm of the reasonable to believe that at some point one day we will wake up to the news that Iran has detonated a device and proven their capability. In fact, I have zero doubt in my mind that this is where they want to go.

What I find offensive in this whole conversation is the notion by some in the administration that anyone who feels this way or anyone who has doubts or skepticism about these negotiations is warmongering.

I actually think the failure to impose sanctions now will inevitably place a future President—perhaps even this one—with a very difficult decision to make, and that will be whether to go in and take military action to stunt or stall their weapons program because, make no mistake, a lot of damage has already been done. A lot of damage has already been done to the sanctions that were already in place. There is already growing evidence that the amount of revenue coming into Iran, the amount of business dealings coming into Iran just simply on this talk about the interim deal has truly spiked.

We also see it in their comments. The leaders of Iran—from the President, to the Supreme Leader, to the chief negotiator—are not just bragging in Iran; they are bragging all over the world that they have agreed to nothing and the West has capitulated.

What we were told by the State Department is, well, that is only for domestic consumption; they are just say-

ing that to be popular at home and to appease the radicals within Iran.

By the way, the term "radical" is an interesting term when applied to Iran. All the leaders in Iran are radical; it is just degrees of radicalism.

But to get back to the point I was making, we hear the comments they make in Iran—bragging how they have won, how they snookered the West, how they agreed to nothing, how everything they were doing before is going to move forward—and we are told: Just ignore that. They are just saying that for domestic political considerations.

That is not true. In fact, the Supreme Leader himself, the Ayatollah, has announced that these talks are going to lead to nowhere. He is not going to interfere, but they are going nowhere.

This is a transparent effort. All you have to do is open your eyes and see what they are doing. All they are doing is buying time. All they are doing is looking to relieve as many sanctions as possible without giving up anything they can do in the future or are doing now. For a deal such as this to work, you have to rely on all sorts of verification systems with a government that has made a specialty out of hiding their intentions and programs in the past.

The reason we see the push for the additional sanctions to be put in place is because at least 59 of us in the Senate—and I suspect many more who haven't lent their names to this effort yet—recognize that we cannot afford to be wrong about this because a nuclear Iran would be one of the worst developments in the world in a very long time.

In addition to being able to hold the region hostage, in addition to now being able to act with impunity—they don't have a weapon now, and they try to assassinate Ambassadors in Washington, DC. Imagine what they think they can get away with if they do have a weapon.

Beyond that, think about the risk it poses to our allies in that region, and think about this: Think about the reaction of other countries in the region to the news. The Saudis are not going to stand by and watch Iran develop a nuclear capability and not have one of their own. So I submit a nuclear Iran isn't just one more country joining the nuclear weapons club; it can be as many as two or three more countries eventually joining the nuclear weapons club in the most unstable region in the world, a place that has only had conflict, I don't know, for 5,000 years. This is what we are on the verge of here.

I appreciate the work diplomats working in the State Department do. There is a role for diplomacy in the world, and the good news is that we can negotiate agreements with most of the countries on this planet. But I think diplomacy also requires us to understand its limitations. It is very difficult to negotiate settlements and

agreements with governments and individuals who don't ever feel bound by them, who see them as one-way streets, who see them as tactics and vehicles to buy time. That is what we are dealing with.

The other part we forget is that in some parts of the world and with some governments on this planet, the language of diplomacy is viewed as a language of weakness. It becomes an invitation to become aggressive or miscalculated.

I don't know of anyone in this body who is looking to get into another war or armed conflict. That is not what Americans are all about. If we look at the story of the conflicts we have been engaged in, almost all of them involved a reluctant nation having to get involved for geopolitical purposes, because we were trying to stem the growth of communism, because we were attacked in Pearl Harbor. That is not who we are. That is not who we have ever been. Americans aren't into that. What we want to do is live happy lives and raise our families in peace. We want to be able to sell to and buy from other countries. We want a peaceful world we can partner with for business and culture.

But I also think it is important to understand that when mistakes are made in foreign policy, it is a lot harder to reverse than when they are made in domestic policies. If we pass a bad tax bill, we can always come back and pass a new one. If we make a mistake—as this body did by passing ObamaCare—we can always come back and repeal it. If we make a mistake in domestic policy, we can always come back and reverse it somehow. It is not the same in foreign policy. Once there is a nuclearized, weaponized Iran, it will be quite difficult to undo, and so are all the things it will lead to.

Let me also say that additional sanctions are no guarantee that they will never get a weapon, but it changes the cost-benefit analysis. It tests their pain threshold economically. It forces them to make a decision about whether they want to continue to be isolated from the world economically and whether weaponizing is worth it.

If you put in place an interim agreement or a final one that allows them to retain the capability to enrich in the future, they will build a weapon. That is not a matter of opinion; in my mind, that is a matter of fact. Maybe this President won't be here by the time that happens, but someone is going to have to deal with that, and it is not just the President; our country is going to have to deal with that. I at a minimum want to be on record today as making that point because if, God forbid, that day should ever come, I want it to be clearly understood that I, along with my colleagues, warned against it.

By the way, I think this opposition to additional sanctions is part of a pat-

tern of flawed foreign policy decisions on behalf of this administration, one that has largely been built on the false assumption that our problems in the world were caused by an America that was too engaged, too involved, too opinionated, was providing too much leadership and direction, when, in fact, the opposite is now true.

Many of the conflicts happening around the world today are a result of the chaos left by this administration's unclear foreign policy. Many of our allies openly question—and I can tell you from my travels that privately they strongly question—whether America's assurances remain viable and whether we can continue to be relied upon in the agreements we have made in the past to provide collective security for ourselves and our allies.

When you leave a vacuum, it is going to be filled. What it is being filled by right now are some of the most tyrannical governments on the planet. Look at what happened with Moscow over the last 5 years. Moscow viewed the whole reset strategy of the United States under this President not as an opportunity to engage us but as an opportunity to try to get an upper hand on us.

Look at what has happened in the Asia-Pacific region where the Chinese regional ambitions to drive the U.S. out have grown exponentially, as have their capabilities. Meanwhile, our partners in the region, while they welcome the rhetoric of a pivot, question whether we will have the capability to carry it out.

Certainly in the Middle East an incoherent foreign policy with regard to Syria left open an ungoverned space where foreign jihadists have poured into that country and have now basically converted entire parts of Syria as the premier operational space for global jihadists to train and operate.

Now Iran. The situation in Iran, to use a colloquial term, is freaking out all the other countries in that region who have no illusions about who Iran truly is. They know exactly who these people are, and they are baffled at how the most powerful and informed government on the planet doesn't realize what they realized a long time ago—that you are not dealing with a responsible government here with Iran. You are dealing with a nation that openly supports terrorism as a tool of statecraft, that openly has shown that they want to develop a nuclear weapons capability so they can become untouchable and the dominant power in that region.

If we don't put in place a mechanism for additional sanctions to take place, I submit that the negotiation that is going on with the Iranians will become irrelevant. By that point, even if you wanted to impose more sanctions, it would be impossible to do because so many other countries will have re-

engaged with commercial transactions with Iran. You are not going to be able to put this genie back in the bottle, and the genie is already halfway out.

I hope we will take this more seriously, but at a minimum I ask this: Why can't we vote on it? If we are wrong, debate us on it. But why can't we vote on it? Since when has the Senate become a place run by one person on a matter of this importance and magnitude? Since when has the Senate become controlled by one person's opinion?

Are you telling me that the people of Florida who I represent do not deserve the right to be represented and heard as much as the people of Nevada or any other State? Are you saying that on an issue of this importance, one individual should have the power to basically say we will have no debate when 59 Members of this body—in a place where it is tough to get 51 votes on anything—have expressed the strong opinion that they favor this?

Why can't we have this debate? Isn't that what the Senate was designed to be, a place where the great issues of our time could be debated and flushed out before the eyes of the American public and the world?

What we are consistently told is we can't have this debate and we're not going to do it. Why? Why can't we debate this? This is important. Its implications will be felt by people long after we are no longer here. I hope more attention is paid to this.

Let me just say that I understand the frustration. A piece of legislation is filed on behalf of veterans, and the Iran issue comes up. But we are running out of time. This is the only mechanism that exists to have this debate.

I would argue that it actually is relevant because it is our men and women in uniform we are going to turn to—when this thing ends up the way I know it will—and ask them to take care of this problem.

If in the end these negotiations fail, and I tragically have to say they are destined to fail, and Iran retains their enrichment capability and eventually develops a nuclear weapon, it is the men and women in uniform of these United States—our sons, our daughters, our neighbors, our friends, our mothers, our brothers, our sisters, and our fathers—whom we will ask, as we always do, to go solve the problem for us. But if we put in place sanctions that clearly articulate and lay out the price they will have to pay to continue with these ambitions, we may be able to delay that, and even prevent it; otherwise, that day will come. This piper will be paid, and I hope the price will not be so high. I fear that is where we are headed. We are on the verge of making an extraordinary geopolitical blunder that will be very difficult to undo or reverse once it is already made.

All we are asking is to have a vote on this issue. This matters enough to the American people. This matters enough to the safety and future of our children and future generations. This matters enough to the world. It deserves a full debate, and it deserves a vote.

If you are against it, you can vote against it. If you are against it, you can debate against it. We want to hear their arguments and thoughts. Why can't we vote on it? It deserves a vote. It is that important.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I rise to commend the words of my esteemed colleague, the junior Senator from Florida, who has just spoken powerfully about the threats facing our Nation. On Monday evening he spoke powerfully on the Senate floor about the brutal human rights abuses that have been endemic in communist Cuba over the past 50 years, and the sad reality that Cuba is playing a leading role in the repression of the opposition protests that are currently taking place in Venezuela.

I commend the sentiments of the Senator from Florida, and I offer a few additional thoughts of my own on this important topic.

Brave Venezuelan protesters persist in crowding the streets in Caracas, San Cristobal, Merida, and Valencia despite the detention, torture, and murder of their compatriots in recent days. They are not alone. They have been joined by darker figures, representatives of Hezbollah, Iran, and Cuba, all of whom have a vested interest in propping up the increasingly authoritarian socialist regime of Nicolas Maduro. The appearance of the Iranians, and their Hezbollah agents in Venezuela, is concerning, but it should not be surprising.

Iran has long maintained one of its largest embassies in Caracas, where it has been able to exploit the Venezuelan financial system to evade the international sanctions that—up until a few weeks ago—were placing a real burden on Iran's economy.

Now that the administration has eased the sanctions on Iran, Iran is in a significantly stronger position. Not only have they received the first \$500 million in unfrozen assets, but they have also reaped considerable collateral benefit.

Iranian President Rouhani recently tweeted: "You are witness to how foreign firms are visiting our country; 117 political delegations have come here."

The Dutch ambassador to Iran tweeted in mid-January that he participated in "speeddate sessions to meet business[es] interested in Iran."

China has emerged as Iran's top trading partner with nonoil trade hitting \$13 billion over the past 10 months, according to Iranian media.

According to documents seen by Reuters, Iran has signed a deal to sell Iraq arms and ammunition worth \$195 million—a move that would break the U.N. embargo on weapons sales by Tehran.

What could a reenriched Iran offer Venezuela, given that the joint plan of action that has enabled this economic detente has done nothing to reverse their nuclear program. The answer is chilling. The longstanding commercial ties between Iran and Venezuela, not to mention their mutual hatred for the United States, raise the specter that should Iran acquire nuclear weapons technology, it might be inclined to share it with Venezuela, which would then act as a surrogate threat to the United States in our own hemisphere.

We need to act immediately to reimpose sanctions on Iran and stand unequivocally against Iran acquiring nuclear weapons capability. I am sorry to say there is one reason—and one reason only—that we have not done so, and that is because the senior Senator from Nevada has been single-handedly blocking the Senate from voting on a bipartisan bill on Iranian sanctions. Given the broad bipartisan support in both Chambers, both the senior Senator from Nevada and the rest of the Democratic leadership need to be held accountable for this obstruction and standing in the way of defending U.S. national security interests and standing in the way of defending our friend and ally, the Nation of Israel.

As alarming as the increasing collaboration is between Iran and Venezuela, there is no country that has a greater stake in preserving the status quo in Venezuela than communist Cuba. Over the 15 years of Hugo Chavez's rule, Venezuela and Cuba have engaged in a mutually parasitic relationship in which Venezuela has exported free oil to Cuba and imported the repressive apparatus of a police state that Raul and Fidel Castro have carefully nurtured over the last 50 years.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992, many former Soviet satellites have moved towards freedom and prosperity promised by closer ties to the West—some even joining the historic NATO alliance. But Cuba, tragically, has remained mired in the communist past in no small part because Chavez provided the economic lifeline that sustained the Castro brothers' brutal oppression.

While some hoped that after Raul Castro replaced his brother in 2008, a new era of moderation might dawn, the opposite has occurred. Despite minor cosmetic reforms largely targeted toward beguiling the Western media rather than helping the Cuban people, the Castros have consolidated their

control of the island with a significant uptick in human rights abuses.

Last year I had the opportunity to visit and interview two Cuban dissidents to help provide a forum for them to tell their stories. They described the oppression as "Putinismo." That said it was following the strategy of Russia's President Putin, appearing on the outside to make cosmetic reforms while brutally repressing the people at home. That is what is happening in Cuba.

The Castro playbook includes targeting family members of the opposition, brutal attacks and even murder, as well as keeping inexorable control over communications in and out of Cuba.

An American citizen, Alan Gross, was thrown into prison in 2009 for the crime of handing out cell phones to Havana's Jewish population. Alan Gross should be released, and the United States should be calling for Alan Gross's release.

In a tip to the information age, heavy Internet censorship, among the most repressive on the planet, blankets the island to preempt the spontaneous organization facilitated by social media.

First Chavez, and now Maduro, have learned these lessons well under the tutelage of agents from the Cuban intelligence services, and their work has been on grim display during the protests that have taken place this month. The death toll is now at 13, and climbing, as police bullets have taken the lives of not only activists, but of students, innocent bystanders, and even a beauty queen.

Maduro's agents have also borrowed the tried-and-true Castro tradition of summarily detaining opposition leaders, including Leopoldo Lopez who helped organize the protests. But Mr. Lopez's real crime has been to propose an alternative to the socialist catastrophe into which Chavez and Maduro have plunged this once prosperous nation, and to suggest that real economic freedom is the only path out of the rampant inflation and chronic shortages that are making life in Venezuela intolerable.

Recent polling by Gallup reveals a dramatic shift in Venezuelans' attitude toward the economy, as the socialist policies continue to depress growth and to worsen the lives of hard-working Venezuelans. In 2012, just a couple of years ago, 22 percent of the population thought the economy was getting worse and 41 percent thought it was getting better. In 2013, those numbers reversed, with 62 percent believing it was getting worse while only 12 percent believed it was getting better. These numbers suggest there has been a sea change in how the majority of Venezuelans see their situation. These protests are different, and it is little wonder that so many have taken to the streets to demand something better.

America should stand with the protesters. America should stand on the side of freedom. America has a tradition for centuries of presenting a clarion voice for freedom because every heart yearns to be free across the globe, and the United States should unapologetically defend freedom.

Maduro appears to understand the threat of his people demanding freedom, but the unprecedented scale of his crackdown on the protesters has largely been masked from the rest of the world by a heavy veil of Internet and media censorship designed to simultaneously disable the opposition and to mask the scale of their oppression from the outside world. Some ingenious remedies have emerged, including Austin, TX's, own Zello—a direct messaging service that allows members to communicate freely either privately with individuals or over open channels that can support hundreds of thousands of users. Despite the best efforts of the Venezuelan censors to block access to Zello, the company has nimbly developed patches and work-arounds to maintain service to the some 600,000 Venezuelans who have downloaded the app since the protests began.

Zello is a shining example of how we can use our technological advantage to support those fighting for economic and political freedom across the globe, recalling our proud tradition of Radio Free Europe during the Cold War. Can my colleagues imagine apps such as Zello spreading to millions of Cubans, to millions of Iranians, to millions of Chinese, providing them the tools to directly speak out for freedom? We have other ways of supporting those advocating for a more free and prosperous Venezuela, such as supporting the sort of liberal economic reforms Mr. Lopez has proposed.

Given the remarkable natural resources Venezuela has enjoyed, it is ridiculous—it is tragic—that the economy has been so mismanaged that citizens face a chronic shortage of basic necessities. But this situation is not inevitable, and the United States is uniquely poised to help. For the United States, Canada, and now Mexico, democratic, market-oriented energy production has been the foundation of what we are beginning to call the American energy renaissance—and there is no reason that Venezuela could not reap these benefits if they reverse the socialist policies that have destroyed their economy.

In this event the United States could help Venezuela reach its full energy potential by offering a bilateral investment treaty that would cover the energy sector. Such an arrangement would protect American companies eager to invest in Venezuela and, at the same time, modernize facilities and increase production of crude—which, I might add, can be refined at the CITGO facilities in Corpus Christi, TX—result-

ing in gasoline and other refined petroleum products that can be sold on the open market for the benefit of the Venezuelan people, not given to Cuba to prop up the Castros. Which is the better deal for the Venezuelan people: having them receive the benefits of the bounty God has given that country in the open market, receive freedom, receive material blessings, or have instead their oil given to Castro to fuel the repressive policies that are inflicting misery on so many millions?

This is a dangerous and unsettling moment for Venezuela, but it is also a moment of great opportunity. Almost exactly 1 year ago, the Obama administration had a chance to push strongly for reform in Venezuela, when Chavez was on his deathbed. Instead, the Obama administration opted not to rock the boat, in the hopes that Chavez's hand-picked successor would prove more susceptible to diplomatic outreach, that he might not follow Chavez. These hopes are apparently evergreen, as just yesterday a State Department spokeswoman announced that they were open to closer engagement with the Maduro regime, saying: "We have indicated, and have indicated for months, our openness to develop a more constructive relationship with Venezuela. . . ."

Negotiating with tyrants and bullies doesn't work. The notion that our State Department could at this moment extend yet another olive branch to Caracas is exactly backward. This is the moment to point out that Maduro's abuse of his fellow citizens is intolerable to the United States; that if he wants better relations with us, he should start by listening to the demands of his own people. He should immediately and unconditionally release Leopoldo Lopez, who is being held as a hostage at the mercy of an authoritarian state. He should lift the cloud of censorship that he is using to isolate Venezuelans from each other and from the rest of the world, and the United States should do all it can to help the people of Venezuela as they choose a different path—a path of freedom and prosperity that will return this one-time enemy to their traditional role of our partner and friend. That is where the Venezuelan people want to be, and it is only their brutal leadership that is preventing it.

This is a time for American leadership to speak in defense of freedom. This is a time for the President of the United States to unequivocally stand against oppression, against totalitarianism, and for the desire of the Venezuelan people to be free and prosperous. That would benefit them, it would benefit us, and it would benefit the world.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I wish to say something about the Iran sanctions legislation that is contained in the alternative bill of which Senator BURR has been the chief architect. First I wish to speak briefly on what is happening in the Ukraine. Late last year, the country's increasingly autocratic President, Viktor Yanukovich, refused to sign a trade agreement with the European Union after coming under strong pressure from Russian leader Vladimir Putin. His refusal to sign the trade deal, coupled with the government's persistent attacks on democracy and civil liberties, as well as growing fears of Moscow's effort to turn Ukraine into a puppet state, sparked massive street protests in the capital city of Kiev. When the government responded with violence, the situation rapidly spiraled out of control until eventually President Yanukovich was expelled from office and forced to flee.

It has been almost a decade since Ukraine's Orange Revolution captured the attention and spirits of freedom lovers across the globe. Now the country is once again at a crossroads. The decisions that are made in the days and weeks that lie ahead will determine whether Ukraine is allowed to flourish as a pro-Western democracy or it is forced to languish in corruption and authoritarianism as a Russian satellite.

It is time for the President of the United States—the Commander in Chief, President Obama—to remind the world where America stands in the ongoing battle between democracy and dictatorship. It is time for him to rethink the so-called reset policy that has done nothing but embolden Vladimir Putin and discourage Russian human rights activists. It is time for the President to make absolutely clear that Russian meddling in the sovereign affairs of Ukraine is absolutely unacceptable.

As for Putin himself, it is time people everywhere see him for what he really is: a brutal thug who epitomizes corruption, repression, and dictatorship.

Turning to another important issue, which is what is happening in Iran, just a few months ago, after years of mounting sanctions and economic pressures, it appeared the West had finally gotten the Iranian dictatorship's attention and it was literally on the ropes. But then, for some reason, we chose to let them off the hook and to throw them a lifeline and to give up some of the very best leverage we had obtained over the course of years for minor concessions and hollow promises.

While the Obama administration is still trumpeting the November 2013 Iranian nuclear agreement as a diplomatic watershed, I remain deeply skeptical and concerned that we threw an economic lifeline to the world's leading state sponsor of international terrorism, even though the ayatollahs have shown no real willingness to abandon their decades-long quest for a nuclear weapon. Of course, were Iran to achieve a nuclear weapon, there would be a nuclear arms race in the Middle East, dramatically destabilizing that already very volatile region of the world.

So given that reality, along with Iran's well-documented record of duplicity, I have joined with 58 other of my Senate colleagues—Republicans and Democrats alike—in sponsoring new sanctions legislation. We have been ably led by the Senator from Illinois Mr. KIRK and other leaders. It is something called the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act that would take effect if and only if Tehran violated the Geneva agreement.

In other words, this is a backstop to the negotiations that Secretary Kerry has had and that the President has pointed to, but amazingly the Obama administration has taken the very bizarre position that the Democrats who are supporting this legislation—this backstop legislation that would do nothing to undermine the negotiations between the Secretary of State and other nations in the region—the President is now urging Democrats to stop supporting this important piece of backstop legislation, even though a commanding majority of the Senate has indicated their support for it.

In fact, the President has gone so far as to promise a veto of this legislation if it reaches his desk. Of course, it is not true, as the President argues, that this legislation would effectively sabotage the Geneva deal. In truth and in fact, what it would do is provide, as I said, a backstop but reinforce what the President and Secretary Kerry are so proud of in terms of what they have already negotiated. If Iran follows through, then this sanctions legislation would be of little force and effect.

I am not sure I understand the administration's concern. After all, if the administration thinks Iran will follow through on its Geneva commitments—something I am personally skeptical of—but if the President thinks they will follow through, then there is nothing to worry about. But if the administration believes that Iran will fail to honor those commitments, then it never should have made the deal in the first place and it should have welcomed this amendment, this piece of legislation, this backstop sanctions legislation that would buttress what they have negotiated.

I believe today what I have believed for many years—that our only hope for

a peaceful resolution of the Iranian nuclear crisis is to combine tough sanctions with the credible threat of military action. That is the only thing that will bring the ayatollahs to the table, and that is why we need to vote on new sanctions as soon as possible, preferably this week, to demonstrate that there will be serious consequences if Iran fails to uphold the Geneva deal or if it tries to delay indefinitely a final agreement.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, I would like to be recognized for 10 minutes, if I could.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, thank you. If the Presiding Officer would let me know when the 10 minutes expire, I would appreciate it.

I wish to rise in support of Senator BURR's alternative to Senator SANDERS' veterans bill. We are having a contest here about how best to help veterans. There is a lot of bipartisan agreement over the substance of the bill. The real difference is how to pay for it, but there is one key difference. In Senator BURR's alternative, we have the Iranian sanctions bill. I believe it is imperative for this body, the Senate, to speak on sanctions against Iran before it is too late. I hate the fact that we have lost our bipartisan approach to this topic.

We have been together for a very long time as Republicans and Democrats. We have had 16 rounds of sanctions since 1987, 9 U.N. Security Council resolutions since 2006 demanding the full and sustained suspension of all uranium enrichment-related and reprocessing activities and full cooperation with the IAEA.

The United Nations, the Congress, in an overwhelming bipartisan fashion, have been imposing sanctions in speaking to the threat we all face from the Iranian nuclear program. Unfortunately, the bipartisanship has come apart in terms of whether we should have another vote. The bipartisan bill that would reauthorize sanctions at the end of the 6-month negotiating period has 59 cosponsors, 17 Democrats.

We believe desperately—at least I do—that the sanctions that have been so effective in bringing the Iranians to the table are literally falling apart, and I will have some evidence to show that.

But here is what Senator REID, the majority leader, said on November 21, 2013:

I am a strong supporter of our Iran sanctions regime and believe that the current sanctions have brought Iran to the negotiating table.

I believe we must do everything possible to stop Iran from getting nuclear weapons capability, which would threaten Israel and the national security of our great country.

The Obama administration is in the midst of negotiations with the Iranians that are designed to end their nuclear weapons program. We all strongly support these negotiations and hope they will succeed, and we want them to produce the strongest possible agreement.

However, we are also aware of the possibility the Iranians could keep negotiations from succeeding. I hope that won't happen, but the Senate must be prepared to move forward with a new bipartisan Iran sanctions bill when the Senate returns after the Thanksgiving recess. I am committed to do just that.

I will support a bill that would broaden the scope of our current petroleum sanctions, place limitations on trade with strategic sectors of the Iranian economy that support its nuclear ambitions, as well as pursue those that divert goods to Iran.

While I support the administration's diplomatic efforts, I believe we need to leave our legislative options open to act on a new bipartisan sanctions bill in December, shortly after we return.

The challenge of the majority leader was to find a bipartisan bill that could speak anew to sanctions. We are able to do that. Senator MENENDEZ has been absolutely terrific, along with Senator KIRK, in making sure that sanctions have worked. The Obama administration deserves a lot of credit for keeping the sanctions regime together and getting Iranians to the table.

But the interim agreement that has been entered into between the P5+1 and the Iranians quite frankly is well short of what we need. My goal, and I think the body's goal—at least I hope—would be to dismantle the plutonium-producing reactor that the Iranians are building; not just stop its construction, but dismantle it; take the highly enriched uranium that exists in Iran today and move it out of the country so it cannot be used for a dirty bomb or any other purposes.

This is what the U.N. resolutions have called for, removing the highly enriched uranium that exists in great number from Iran to the international community so it can be controlled; and, last but most importantly is to dismantle their enrichment capability. If the Iranians truly want a peaceful nuclear power program, I am all for that. I do not care if the Russians are jointly with us, that we build a nuclear powerplant in Iran to help them with commercial nuclear power. We just need to control the fuel cycle. There are 15 countries that have nuclear power programs that do not enrich uranium, Mexico and Canada being two, South Korea being another.

The point I am trying to make here is if you leave enrichment capability intact in Iran, the only thing preventing their abuse of that capability

would be a bunch of U.N. inspectors. We tried this with North Korea. We provided foreign aid and economic aid and food assistance to control their nuclear ambitions. Well, they took the money and now they have nuclear weapons. The U.N. failed to stop the desire of the North Koreans to develop a nuclear weapon.

That type of approach is not going to work in Iran. Israel is not going to allow their fate to be determined by a bunch of U.N. inspectors. If that is the only thing between the Iranian ayatollahs and nuclear weapons is a bunch of U.N. inspectors, Israel will not stand for that, nor should we.

So when the Iranians demand the right to enrich, that tells you all you need to know about their ambitions. If they want a peaceful nuclear power program, they certainly can have it. We need to control the fuel cycle.

The interim deal has not dismantled any centrifuges. They have unplugged a few, but all of them exist, the 16,000 to 18,000 of them. Here is what the Iranian Government has been openly saying about the interim deal:

The iceberg of sanctions is melting while our centrifuges are also still working. This is our greatest achievement.

This is the head of the Iranian nuclear agency. The Foreign Minister said:

The White House tries to portray it is basically a dismantling of Iran's nuclear program. We are not dismantling any centrifuges, we're not dismantling any equipment, we're simply not producing, not enriching over 5 percent.

Pretty clear. This is the President of Iran, Mr. Rouhani, on CNN.

So there will be no destruction of centrifuges—of existing centrifuges?
No. No, not at all.

Another statement, another tweet:

Our relationship with the world is based on Iran's nation's interest. In Geneva agreement, world powers surrendered to Iran's national will.

You could say this is all bluster for domestic consumption. But just keep listening to what I have to tell you. The Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister said of the interconnections between networks of centrifuges that have been used to enrich uranium to 20 percent, so that they can enrich only to 5 percent: "These interconnections can be removed in a day and connected again in a day."

So you are not dismantling anything. You are unplugging it. They can plug it right back in. Here is what has happened, the President of Iran again:

We have struck the first blow to the illegal sanctions, in the fields of insurance, shipping, the banking system, foodstuffs and medicine and exports of petrochemical materials.

You are witness to how foreign firms are visiting our country; 117 political delegations have come here: France, Turkey, Georgia, Ireland, Tunisia, Kazakhstan, China, Italy, India, Austria, and Sweden.

The French Chamber of Commerce hosted a delegation to Iran after the interim deal. The International Monetary Fund says the Iranian economy could turn around due to the interim agreement. Prospects for 2014 and 2015 have improved with the agreement. They are getting a stronger economy. The interim deal has done nothing, in my view, to dismantle their nuclear program that is a threat to us and Israel.

India's oil imports from Iran more than doubled in January from a month earlier. China has emerged as Iran's top trading partner, with nonoil trade hitting \$13 billion over the past 10 months. U.S. aerospace companies are talking about selling them parts. Thirteen major international companies have said in recent weeks they aim to reenter the Iranian marketplace over the next several months.

The value of their currency has appreciated about 25 percent. Inflation has been reduced substantially. In other words, the interim deal is beginning to revive the Iranian economy that was crippled by sanctions. The international community is lining up to do business in Iran. The sanctions against Iran are crumbling before our eyes, and the Iranians are openly bragging about this.

The only way to turn this around is to pass another piece of legislation that says, we will give the 6-month period of negotiations time to develop, but at the end of the 6 months, if we have not achieved a satisfactory result of dismantling their nuclear program, the sanctions will continue at a greater pace.

Without that threat, without that friction, we are going to get a very bad outcome here. The administration says that new sanctions will scuttle the deal and lead to war. I could not disagree more. The lack of threat of sanctions, the dismantling of sanctions, the crumbling of sanctions is going to lead to conflict. I do believe that if this body reinforced that we were serious about sanctions until the program gets to where the world thinks it should be, then we would be reinforcing our negotiating position.

So to my Democratic colleagues and Democratic leadership, I am urging you, please, to let this bipartisan bill go forward, if not in the Burr alternative, bring it up as a separate piece of legislation. Let's act now while we still can. I am hopeful we can avoid a conflict with the Iranians. But the only way to do that—I ask unanimous consent for 5 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAHAM. The only way to do that is to make the Iranians understand that they are never going to have prosperity and peace until they comply with the will of the international community, which is give them a peaceful

nuclear power program, not a weapons capability. Rather than us bending to their will, they need to bend to ours, simply because a disaster is in the making if Iran comes out of this negotiation with their nuclear capability intact.

If you allow the Iranians to enrich uranium, that is the final deal, where they still have an enrichment capability, theoretically controlled by the U.N., every Sunni Arab state will want an enrichment program of their own, and you have destroyed nonproliferation in the Mideast.

I say again, if this final agreement allows enrichment at any level by the Iranians, Sunni Arab states are going to go down the same road. Then we are marching toward Armageddon, I fear. The last thing in the world we want to do is allow the Iranians to enrich, telling our allies they cannot. That will lead to proliferation of enrichment throughout the Mideast, and you are one step away from a weapon.

If you had to make a list of countries based on the behavior that you should not trust with enriching uranium, Iran would be at the top. For the last 30 years they have sown destruction throughout the world, a state sponsor of terrorism. They have killed our troops in Iraq; they are supplying weapons to the enemies of Israel; they have been up to just generally no good. Why in the world we would give them this capability I cannot envision.

So the sanctions are crumbling. We see it before our eyes. The threat of military force against the regime I think has been diminished after the debacle in Syria. Do you really think the Iranians believe after the Syrian debacle that we mean it when we say we would use military force as a last resort? I do not want a military engagement against the Iranians. I just want their nuclear ambitions to end and give them a nuclear powerplant that is controlled to produce power and not make a bomb.

The Israelis will not live under the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran. They will not allow this program to stay intact, unlike North Korea, where the South Koreans and the Japanese did not feel they needed a nuclear program to counter the North Koreans.

The Mideast is different. The Sunni Arabs will not be comfortable with an enrichment capability given to the Iranians. Israel will never accept this, because it is a threat to the Jewish state unlike any other. So I will urge the body, before it is too late, to take the earliest opportunity to pass the bipartisan legislation that would reimpose sanctions if the agreement does not reach a satisfactory conclusion in the next 6 months.

We have 59 cosponsors. If we had a vote, I am confident we could get an overwhelming vote. It would be the right thing to send to the Iranians. It

would tell the Western World: Slow down. The idea of giving this 6 months to continue at the pace it is going, it would be impossible to reconstruct sanctions if we do not do it now. Six months from now, if the deal falls apart, President Obama says he would impose sanctions in 24 hours. By then, the regime will have been broken. Western Europe will have been basically out of the game; they have a different view of this than we do. So the idea you can wait for 6 months and the damage not be done, I think is unrealistic. You can see where the world is headed. Sanctions as a viable control device seems to be in everybody's rear-view mirror unless the Congress acts, and acts decisively.

What I hope we can do, in a bipartisan fashion, is let our allies and the Iranians know that sanctions are going to be in place as long as the nuclear threat continues to exist. I hope the President will reinforce to the Iranians: Whatever problem I had in Syria, I do not have with you.

I hope the Congress could send a message to the Iranians that we do not want a conflict, but we see your nuclear ambitions as a threat to our way of life. While we may be confused about what to do in Syria, we are not confused about the Iranian nuclear program. We want a peaceful resolution. Sanctions have to be in place until we get the right answer. But if everything else fails, then we are ready to do what is necessary as a nation as a last resort to use military force. I say that understanding the consequences of military force. It would not be a pleasant task. But in a war between us and Iran, we win, they lose. They have a small navy, a small air force. I do not want war with anyone. But if my options are to use military force to stop the Iranians from getting a nuclear weapon, I am picking use of military force. Because if they get a nuclear weapon, then the whole Mideast goes down the wrong road. You would open Pandora's box to attack the Iranians. They could do some damage to us, but it would not last long. They lose, we win. If they get a nuclear capability, you have created a nuclear arms race in the Mideast and you will empty Pandora's box and put Israel in an impossible spot.

So, my colleagues, we have a chance here to turn history around before it is too late. But the way we are moving regarding this negotiation with Iran and the outcome, I have never been more worried about. I do not want to allow the last best chance to stop the Iranian nuclear program to be lost through inaction.

If we misread where Iran is actually going, it will be a mistake for the ages.

I am urging the majority leader, if not on this bill, as soon as possible, to allow the bipartisan Iranian sanction legislation to come to the floor for debate and a vote. I think it can change history before it is too late.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I stand here as someone who is very interested in our Nation's veterans. We owe the men and women who stood in defense of our Nation the care and services they deserve for the sacrifices they have made for our country.

My dad served in the Air Force for over 20 years, and his service and sacrifice is in no small part why I am a Member of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, and previously the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. I requested to be a member of the Veterans' Affairs Committees in both Chambers because we made a commitment to take care of those who put their lives on the line for our safety and ideals, and I believe in carrying out the promise.

During my days as a Member of the House of Representatives, my mom would routinely ask me when I would see her: What have you done for our veterans lately? I was happy to talk about the programs and services we promoted, supported, and passed—and certainly in a very bipartisan way. There is a long list of accomplishments of which we can be very proud, from modernizing the GI bill so our veterans can get the education they need to succeed in life after the military, to helping our veterans pursue their dreams of owning a business, to improving the medical services our veterans need for the wounds they have suffered while serving our country.

Unfortunately, problems exist. In my Arkansas office—and I think this is true of most congressional offices—we have a number of dedicated staffers. In fact, we have three dedicated staffers who handle veterans-related issues. They help cut through the red tape of the Department of Veterans Affairs to get the care and attention our veterans have earned. Last year, more than 40 percent of the assistance we provided to Arkansans that involved Federal agencies focused on veterans' issues.

Increasing funding doesn't necessarily mean we will have better outcomes. Take for instance the claims backlog. This is a huge problem impacting hundreds of thousands of veterans nationwide. Even some of the simplest claims are stuck in the process. Since 2009, the number of claims pending for over 1 year has grown, despite a 40 percent increase in the VA's budget. The most recent statistics for the Little Rock VA Regional Office showed 7,663 total claims are pending. Nearly 54 percent have been in the

process for more than 125 days. The regional office averages nearly 217 days to complete a claim.

Thanks to the hard work and commitment of Arkansans who work at the VA, we are making progress on the backlog at the Little Rock office, but there is still work to be done for our veterans. Take, for instance, the retired lieutenant colonel in Arkansas who is eligible for benefits he earned for his service in the military. He is not receiving the correct pay. The Defense Finance and Accounting Service approved his paperwork in August and sent it to the VA. It has been 6 months and still no decision has been made. This is an easy case, and it simply shouldn't take that long.

Retired CSM Richard Green lives in Sherwood and has already received his retirement benefits, but he filed for benefits for his wife the month after they married in October 2012. It took 16 months to process that paperwork—much longer than he was used to during active military service when this sort of paperwork was fixed within one or two paychecks. Every part of the claims process is overwhelmed and bogged down.

Paul Cupp from Fort Smith, AR, has been working on his VA appeal since 2009. He was happy to get part of it approved in 2013, after 4 years of waiting. However, months later, he is still waiting for his rating to get updated and to see the actual benefits from that decision.

And the widows of our veterans are not exempt from this backlog. One Arkansan in her seventies has been working on her claim since 2005, and is still awaiting a decision on appeal. Nine years is certainly unacceptable.

Instead of fixing the existing challenges our veterans are facing through fully implementing what we have committed ourselves to, increasing accountability and improving efficiency, some of my colleagues think the best way to tackle this is by expanding programs and increasing the responsibility of the VA. The problem is we are putting more people in a system which is clearly overwhelmed and needs improvement.

This isn't the fault of the VA, which I believe is fully committed to meeting all the demands our veterans and Congress expect from them. However, the VA can only do so much. As the number of veterans and the complicated nature of their needs increases, we must not pile on additional responsibilities which overwhelm the agency. With the announcement by Senator Hagel of a potentially significant drawdown in the military, many more individuals will come into the VA system.

While the bill before us has worthwhile programs which I support and have championed, we should not expect a massive mandate imposed on VA to change the outcomes we experience.

We need a measured approach to changes. They must be done over time and include oversight to make sure our veterans are receiving the attention they deserve in a timely manner.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, it is great to see my colleague from Arkansas. We know Senator BOOZMAN tries hard to help our veterans. I thank him for his public service and for focusing on our men and women, whether they are in uniform now or who have served this country.

In the last few weeks I have talked quite a bit about veterans. We have had the veterans retirement cost-of-living fix and a few others which have brought me to the floor to talk about this very important group of people.

In my State of Arkansas we have nearly 255,000 veterans. They have put on the uniform and served their country. They have put their lives on hold for our country. They deserve to return home to a country which is going to honor the commitments we have made to them and a country which will keep the promises we have made, which is why I have been very supportive of these individuals, especially in the context of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014, S. 1982.

Many Senators are working to make this bill better and get it into a posture where it can pass the Senate. This is a commonsense bill which covers a broad range of topics which are important to our veterans, and a lot of work is going on here behind the scenes. Sometimes when the American people visit the Senate or tune in to C-SPAN 2, they sometimes see an empty Chamber. They aren't always aware of what is going on in the back rooms, here and in the hallways, with folks trying to work through a number of important issues, which is happening with this bill.

I have an important provision in this bill which I have been working on for a while. I think it is going to have broad support on both sides of the aisle, as well as a number of military organizations around the country, called the Honor America's Guard and Reserve Retirees Act. It is kind of a long name, but it is a very simple premise.

Under current law, the military definition of a veteran applies only to servicemembers who have served on Federal active duty under title X orders. This means that many of our servicemembers—most specifically our National Guard members—who have not been deployed under proper orders are falling short of this established criteria.

To put this in perspective: I recently received a letter from an Arkansas veteran named Vincent. He served for more than 20 years in the National

Guard. He has protected our families from natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina. He served our country by protecting our borders in Operation Jump Start. He served our Nation in Operation Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Enduring Freedom, and in Iraqi Freedom. Yet he still doesn't meet the military definition of a veteran of the armed services.

Vincent isn't the only one. There are 300,000 National Guard and Reserve servicemembers across the country who fall into this same category. My bill, the Honor America's Guard and Reserve Retirees Act, would fix this. It would amend the military definition of veteran to give Guard and Reserve retirees with 20 years of service the honor of being called a veteran. And it is an honor. It would allow these servicemembers to salute when the Star-Spangled Banner is played, to march in veterans' parades, and be recognized as veterans by other veterans.

I know Members of this Chamber will ask, as they should: This is a cost-neutral bill. There is no cost with this. It is simple, it is cost neutral, and it is an overdue recognition of these individual servicemembers who served bravely for our country.

It is time we pass this bill so Vincent and hundreds and thousands of others can receive the honor they deserve.

Madam President, I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this morning when I came to the Senate floor, I talked about how it is groundhog year, not "Groundhog Day." What is going on here today is an example of what has been going on with the Republican-driven direction of this Congress for several years.

What are we doing here today? Nothing. Under the rules of the Senate, cloture was invoked 99 to 0. The purpose of that vote was to get on a bill. It is a shame we had to even file cloture on it, but we did, and that takes a couple of days. Everyone should understand that after cloture is invoked, there is 30 hours. It is a waste of time.

Why are they doing that? Why are they causing this? Because they don't want to legislate. They want to do anything they can to stop President Obama from accomplishing anything.

BERNIE SANDERS, chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, has dedicated his heart and soul to something he, his committee, and the veterans community believes in—improving the lives of veterans. We have mil-

lions of people who have come home, and are coming home, from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. They deserve a lot.

The legislation that is on this floor is terrific. It is supported by 26 different veterans organizations, including the largest, the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Here is what the commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars said earlier today:

American Legion National Commander Daniel M. Dellinger said Wednesday—

That is today—

that sanctions against Iran have no place in a U.S. Senate debate over legislation that aims to expand health care, education opportunities, employment and other benefits for veterans.

I ask unanimous consent that his complete statement be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

COMMANDER: KEEP SENATE BILL FOCUSED ON VETS

American Legion leader says no other issues need to be attached to legislation to improve health care, education, employment and benefits for those who served our nation.

WASHINGTON (Feb. 26, 2014).—American Legion National Commander Daniel M. Dellinger said Wednesday that sanctions against Iran have no place in a U.S. Senate debate over legislation that aims to expand health care, education opportunities, employment and other benefits for veterans.

"Iran is a serious issue that Congress needs to address, but it cannot be tied to S. 1982, which is extremely important as our nation prepares to welcome millions of U.S. military servicemen and women home from war. This comprehensive bill aims to help veterans find good jobs, get the health care they need and make in-state tuition rates applicable to all who are using their GI Bill benefits. This legislation is about supporting veterans, pure and simple. The Senate can debate various aspects of it, and that's understandable, but it cannot lose focus on the matter at hand: helping military personnel make the transition to veteran life and ensuring that those who served their nation in uniform receive the benefits they earned and deserve. We can deal with Iran—or any other issue unrelated specifically to veterans—with separate legislation."

A 99-0 vote in the Senate Tuesday cleared the way for a full debate on S. 1982, introduced by Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. The bill seeks to improve medical and dental care offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, open 27 new VA clinics where access to care is now difficult, renew the Vow to Hire Heroes Act that has helped some 70,000 veterans find jobs and receive employment training, improve care for those who experienced military sexual trauma and protect cost-of-living adjustments for future military retirees.

Dellinger is the leader of the nation's largest veterans service organization, the 2.4-million-member American Legion.

Mr. REID. It goes into detail as to how wrongheaded this is, that the Republicans are trying to divert attention from an issue that is so very important to the American people, and

why their continued obstruction has been so detrimental to our country.

KOCH ADVERTIZING

Mr. President, I can't say that every one of the Koch brothers' ads is a lie, but I will say this: The vast majority of them are. Now, enough editorial comment. I am going to read verbatim a column that appeared in today's *The Hill* magazine—newspaper, I should call it—here on the Hill. It is entitled "Koch brothers' ads shameful." Let me read this:

Having a right is not the same thing as being in the right.

In some instances, we have the right to behave immorally. For example, the First Amendment gives some people, in some circumstances, the right to lie.

Let's set aside for a moment whether the billionaire Koch brothers have the right to run a flurry of dishonest ads about ObamaCare and ask instead whether spending millions of dollars to mislead and even lie to the American people is the right thing to do.

There is no legitimate debate about the integrity of the ads. In Louisiana, the Kochs' political front group placed an ad that, to all appearances, features a group of Louisianans opening letters from insurance companies informing them about the problems they face as a result of the Affordable Care Act.

Except that, as ABC News has documented, the individuals in their ad are not Louisianans. They are paid actors who are not reading actual letters sent by any real insurance company.

In other words, nothing about the ad is true.

The response from the brothers' organization: "The viewing public is savvy enough to distinguish between someone giving a personal story and something that is emblematic."

A little editorial comment before I continue with this op-ed piece: How about that for a response? That is code word for "we have a lot of money, and we will run ads about anything we want to run ads about."

I continue the column:

Were this an ad for Stainmaster carpet, a Koch product, Federal Trade Commission guidelines would require the ad to "conspicuously disclose that the persons in such advertisements are not actual consumers."

That is from the FTC.

Moreover, the FTC would require them to either demonstrate that these results of ObamaCare are typical or make clear in the ad that they are not.

Needless to say, the ad meets none of these requirements, thereby conforming to the legal definition of false advertising.

Not all Koch ads feature actors. Even those with real people, though, are not necessarily factual. Witness the attack on Rep. Gary Peters (D-Mich.)—

Who, by the way, is running for the Senate—

in a Koch-funded ad featuring a Michigan leukemia patient.

Everyone sympathizes with her struggle, as well they should. But neither her bravery nor her suffering makes the words she utters true. They aren't.

In the ad, the patient claims, with ObamaCare "the out-of-pocket costs are so high, it is unaffordable." The *Detroit News*

reports the "ad makes no mention that [the patient] successfully enrolled in a new Blue Cross plan where she's been able to retain her University of Michigan oncologist and continues to receive the life-saving oral chemotherapy. . . . The ad also does not mention that [her] health care premiums were cut in half."

The Washington Post's Glenn Kessler did the math. She saved \$6,348 a year on premiums. And because ObamaCare caps out-of-pocket costs for plans at \$6,350, she will be paying, at most, \$2 more this year for her care.

It's hard to call that an unaffordable increase.

If it were just these two egregious examples, someone might suggest I'm picking on the Koch brothers. Now, I do not always agree with the fact checkers, who are sometimes wrong. But it is striking that PolitiFact reviewed 11 ads placed by the brothers' organization, and not a single one was rated "true" or even "mostly true." Nine were rated "false" or worse.

So, I return to my original question. Whatever their constitutional rights, are the Koch brothers right to degrade the Democratic process with lies? Are they right to use tactics that are, by legal definitions, deceptive and dishonest? Are voters choosing a candidate due any less respect and honesty than consumers buying carpet?

We in the consulting profession—

This column is written by a nationally known pollster by the name of Mark Mellman—

We in the consulting profession need to ask ourselves hard questions about where the line is that we won't cross. When does the pursuit of victory at any cost exact too high a price? When does dishonesty distort democracy?

Politicians, political parties or media that fail to condemn these tactics, as well as broadcasters that air these ads, and the consultants who make them, are all complicit in the Kochs' immorality.

Mr. President, this is the truth. This is the truth. What is going on with these two brothers who made billions of dollars last year and attempted to buy our democracy is dishonest, deceptive, false, and unfair. Just because you have huge amounts of money, you should not be able to run these false, misleading ads by the hundreds of millions of dollars.

They hide behind all kinds of entities. It is not just their front organization, Americans For Prosperity. They give money to all kinds of organizations—lots of money. When you make billions of dollars a year, you can be, I guess, as immoral and dishonest as your money will allow. It is too bad they are trying to buy America, and it is time the American people spoke out against this terrible dishonesty and about these two brothers who are about as un-American as anyone I can imagine.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, does the Senator yield the floor?

Mr. REID. I sure do.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I rise briefly this afternoon to join my col-

leagues in expressing deep disappointment with yet another decision by the Obama administration to undermine the health care options of millions of Americans.

As we all know, the President promised, "If you like your health care plan, you can keep it." But his law's drastic cuts to Medicare and Medicare Advantage are creating an impossible environment for Americans to keep their insurance plans or to keep their doctors. Even more troubling is that funds raided from Medicare will be spent on the President's flawed health care law.

In particular, Medicare Advantage serves more than 15 million American senior citizens, including some 56,000 Mississippians. It is a program that incentivizes market-based competition and patient choice. These are two elements that have made it both popular and successful. Nearly one-third of all Medicare patients voluntarily enroll in this type of health care plan, and 95 percent of Medicare Advantage members rate their quality of care as "very high."

Independent reports show that seniors will see their plans canceled. They will see higher premiums and fewer choices because of these severe cuts to Medicare and Medicare Advantage. I have heard from health care professionals in Mississippi who are concerned about the law's negative impact on patient care.

I came to the floor earlier this week to speak about the profound human cost of the President's health care law. It is past time for the President and his allies in Congress to recognize the devastating consequences of ObamaCare. Delaying and changing the law, which the administration has done some two dozen times—with questionable legal authority, I might add—will not fix the damage. This is a law that just doesn't work.

The solution is to repeal and replace ObamaCare with market-driven reforms that empower Americans to decide which health care options are best for them. We can do better than this law, and we owe it to the American people to do so.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I come to the floor again to talk about—it is my understanding we are not going to be allowed to offer any amendments again on a significant bill that spends billions, tens of billions of dollars—to talk about a couple of amendments I have.

My staff recently talked with some veterans from Oklahoma, and I want to give you an anecdote that just happened. This is about VA care. This is a lady, a 100-percent disabled veteran, who has had knee replacements at a VA hospital. She did not have one knee replacement, she had two knee replacements. And then she had two knee replacements on the other knee.

If you look at the statistics of a knee replacement having to be replaced, it is a very rare occurrence. But the fact that you would have two knee replacements, and both of them would have to be replaced is unheard of.

The story does not end there. The story ends with the fact that during her second knee replacement, they broke her femur. So they had to put a rod into her femur. When they put the implant in, she ended up with one leg an inch longer than the other leg.

The fact is that this all occurred at a VA hospital. And it is unheard of that somebody who has a knee replacement on one side would have to have another one done because of complications, and then have the other knee done, and have to have that knee redone because of a complication. But then on top of it, as to the skill of the surgeon in terms of doing a second replacement and having a rod, and then putting the wrong rod in, it creates a leg length discrepancy that can only be corrected now by her spending a significant amount of money on an orthotic shoe on the shorter leg which, if you know anything about medicine, changes the alignment of the spine, which causes tremendous arthritis in the spine of that patient.

So here is a patient that if you look across the world in the private sector 99.9 percent of the time would not have had to have either of them replaced, would not have had to have a rod put in her femur, and would not have a leg-length discrepancy.

I agree that is an anecdote. But those are the kinds of things that we are not holding the VA to account for.

One of the amendments I was going to offer to this bill was a very straightforward amendment requiring every 6 months that the VA publish, in both their hospitals—outpatient—and nursing homes the quality of their care, the mortality rates, the complication rates, the infection rates, the wait times in their emergency rooms, the wait times for a screening examination, the wait times for an endoscopy, the complications associated with those, so veterans could actually see and compare it to the private sector—every other hospital knows all this stuff and publishes it—so they can see and compare the quality of care. Because we have an honor-bound commitment to offer care to those who have offered to sacrifice their life and their future for our freedom.

But we are not going to be able to offer the first step in terms of account-

ability to the VA health system because we get to offer no amendments.

What if you knew—and this does not apply and I do not mean to denigrate the whole VA system because there are some great VA hospitals, but in your area, where you have to go, if you knew the quality was 20 or 25 percent less than what you could get in your own hometown, would you still go to a VA hospital? Should veterans not know whether they are getting a standard of care that equates to what they could get in the private sector? They are not going to know because that is nowhere in terms of the accountability of the VA system I talked about yesterday.

One of the other amendments I was going to offer would be to strike section 301. The chairman of the committee yesterday referenced section 302. He was actually talking about section 308 of his bill, not section 302 of his bill. But when you expand VA health care to Priority Group 8—these are people who do not meet the income, have no service-connected disability, and have no limited resources—to put them into the VA health care system, when we are not adequately treating the veterans who are eligible for service today in the VA health care system, what you are really doing is taking away our commitment to care for those to whom we have already promised care. So it is somewhat cynical that we would expand from 6 million to a potential of 22 million people in a system that is behind the curve already.

The other thing that is important for that is the care for these veterans with nonservice-connected disabilities was excluded from the VA's priority group so the VA could focus—focus—its limited resources on our veterans with service-connected disabilities. In other words, they have a health complication because they served our country.

As former Secretary Anthony Principi said: Remember, when everyone is a priority, no one is. That is exactly what this bill will do. It will take the priority away from our veterans with service-connected disabilities to where they will fall further through the cracks.

The other thing in this section is—the only thing worse than them being in the Affordable Care Act, which is what this is really specifically designed to do, is to take them out of the exchanges and put them into the VA. So what we are saying under this bill is, if you are a high-income, nondisabled veteran, and the only health care coverage you have available to you is an ObamaCare exchange, then you now qualify for VA services.

What is that about? What that is about is moving to a single-payer, government-run, totally government-run health care system. And this is about moving 16 million veterans—or the potential of up to 16 million veterans—to

that position. So the only thing worse than being covered by the VA, where veterans are waiting for weeks to see a doctor and literally dying because of medical deficiencies, is being in an Affordable Care Act exchange.

This amendment would strike the expansion from the legislation, which would ensure that the VA remains focused on the service-connected disabled and increasing the quality of care for more than 6 million veterans currently in the VA system.

I want to talk a minute about why we did that. We created the VA health care system for those who have a complication of their service—a complication of their service.

Do we have a commitment, one, to ensure that those who have a complication from their service get the care we have promised them?

I believe we do. Section 301 would markedly minimize that commitment to those who have a complication from their service. So how is it that we have come about, that we have this great big VA bill on the floor, without any oversight, aggressive oversight, on holding the VA accountable to do what it is supposed to be doing now—with a 59-percent increase in budget since October 1 of 2009, and expand it and blow it to an area where we are going to offer these same services, where we are not meeting quality outcomes, we are not meeting timeliness outcomes, we are not meeting care outcomes, and we are going to put that on the VA system?

I would say the better way to honor our veterans who have a complication associated with their service is to hold the VA accountable through transparency of their quality.

Here is the other thing that has not been studied, and we do not know the answer to this. I certainly do not know it. I cannot find it anywhere. It is this. What does it cost to do an "X" procedure in a VA hospital, totally absorbed, versus doing it in a nonVA hospital? Let's assume quality is the same. Would the American taxpayer be better off if, in fact, we delivered that service at a cost that is much less?

But nobody has asked for those numbers. The VA cannot give those numbers. The VA does not know those numbers. So we are driving blind. We do not know what it costs to do a total knee in a VA hospital. We do know what it costs in Oklahoma City from every hospital. As a matter of fact, there is a wonderful hospital in Oklahoma City that advertises every price, all their complications, everything else out there. They have people from all across the country coming because they are so much cheaper and so much better than what people in the private market can get done where they live.

Let's see how VA cost and quality and outcomes compare to that. If you really want to drive quality for our

veterans, we have to have accountability in terms of how we spend money, accountability in terms of the outcomes, accountability in terms of the quality, and accountability in terms of the service.

The other amendment that I have would allow service-connected veterans who are driving hundreds of miles—in my State—to get care with a pilot program which would allow them to go anywhere they wanted, to their home town, to the next town over if it is bigger and has higher quality, rather than drive 200 miles to get their care at a VA hospital. We would cover it under Medicare rates, since we do not know the cost ramifications of what we do at VA clinics and VA hospitals, in terms of the total absorbed cost, but we do know what the price would be if we had Medicare paying. My learned opinion is that, No. 1, veterans would have access to care closer to home, probably improved quality, and most probably a decreased cost for the Federal Government, i.e., the American taxpayers in terms of meeting this honor-bound commitment to our veterans.

If, in fact, you served this country, and one of the benefits of serving this country—and you have a service-connected disability associated with that—is a promise of quality health care, why do we say you can only get it in a VA clinic or a VA hospital? If you served our country, why can't you get it wherever you want? I mean, you served our country to preserve our freedom of choice, our freedom to do and select what is best for us and our interests. Why can't a veteran have that privilege that he or she fought for and put their rear ends on the line for? Why do we not avail them of the freedom that they sacrificed for?

Nobody will answer that question. Nobody will come down and answer that question. Those are knowable answers. They are moral questions. If you sacrifice, should you not have the benefits of the freedom for which you sacrificed?

The other problem with this bill is it has a false pay-for, money that we might have spent on a war in Afghanistan. Because we are not going to spend it, we are going to spend it here and call that a pay-for. That is not a pay-for. It does not pass muster. It does not pass the budget point of order on it. Everybody knows that.

So what we ought to be doing, instead of having this bill on the floor, we ought to have a bill on the floor that holds the VA accountable, that creates transparency in the VA so that everybody in the country, including the veterans can see outcomes, quality, and cost. Finally, we ought to give the veterans the freedom that they fought for; that if they are deserving of this benefit, they ought to be able to get the benefit anywhere they choose, because they are the ones who preserved

the rights and the abilities and the capabilities for us to experience the freedoms to make choices for ourselves.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I come to the floor as the ranking member of the Veterans' Affairs Committee as we consider S. 1982, the Sanders bill. I have been down to the floor several times, and I will not take up a lot of the Senate's valuable time right now. But I do want to cover some things that have transpired since the last time I was on the floor today, when I read from an editorial that was written by Concerned Veterans of America. The group was challenged by some of my colleagues here as to whether it was a front group, whether this was a political front group.

Let me assure my colleagues, it represents real veterans. But in an effort to try to debunk the belief that this is just about one political group, I want to read some from another editorial written by Stewart Hickey of AMVETS. Now, nobody can question whether AMVETS is a legitimate veterans service organization. They have been around for a while. I will be selective in my reading:

While we agree the bill addresses many critical issues and recommends important solutions for our veterans, we do not support this bill for several reasons. First, it would be morally irresponsible and fiscally unsound, given the historically volatile situation in Afghanistan, to hang the funding for such robust legislation on any potential "peace dividend." Throwing more money—upwards of \$30 billion, and taken from war funds no less—at a failing department will only make matters worse.

This kitchen sink-like bill also endeavors to be all things to all veterans, and is very enticing to all of us "Veterans Service Organizations" as the panacea for all of our legislative agendas. The problem is, in its current configuration, it has little to no chance of passage, it's just too "pie in the sky" and lacks the power base to hold VA accountable for providing excellent care and services to veterans currently accessing the system.

It goes on to say:

We all want what is best for the veterans community, and many of the provisions in S. 1982 are positive. However, "bigger" does not mean "better." And the Sanders bill further expands a VA system that is already overwhelmed and cannot meet the current needs of veterans. Before overcommitting the Department of Veterans Affairs and subjecting our veterans to more broken promises, Congress should rally on legislation that keeps the promises already made.

Yet another veterans service organization says: Reform the Veterans Administration.

Dr. COBURN from Oklahoma, the Senator from Oklahoma, was talking about horror stories within the veteran's facilities. So I say to my colleagues: You know, the mistake here is that we are not on the floor debating the reform of the VA and then debating any expansion.

But the fact is that we look at editorial after editorial of people who have some contact with the VA. They are saying: The last thing you should do is expand service. The last thing you should do is use gimmicks to pay for it. The last thing you should do is saddle our kids with not only the debt for it but the responsibility to uphold a promise that might be impossible.

Let me speak a little further on some of the things Dr. COBURN hit on. This is about hospital delays, veterans dying at VA facilities. I came down earlier—and I might add right now that this is the stack of the Inspector General of the VA for 1 year, 1 year's worth of investigations on VA facilities where they made specific recommendations of changes that had to be made.

This dealt with the death of veterans. It dealt with Legionnaire's Disease. It dealt with things as simple as more than one patient using a disposable insulin pen—something meant for one patient that was used for multiple patients, exposing them to potential illnesses.

If the question is, do we keep the promise of the quality of care to our veterans? And if that is not important enough, let me go to the veterans that are in the system trying for the first time to get a disability rating because of a service-connected disability.

The number of claims pending in America right now is 673,000 veterans. These are individuals who have filed a claim with the Veterans' Administration, who are waiting in line for the determination to be made about what percentage of those claims they will approve. The number of claims that are considered backlogged right now is 389,000 veteran's claims.

Once a veteran receives a disability rating, if in fact they feel that the VA has come to the wrong conclusion as to the percentage, they file an appeal. The number of appeals pending is 272,000 appeals. So one can conclude from this that the number of claims pending is 673,000 plus 272,000. So there are over 1 million veterans right now waiting for a determination by the VA specifically or by the Court of Appeals to sort out their disability status.

The number of days to complete a claim is 265 days. Let me say that again: 265 days to complete a claim. Right now, claims pending are 673,000. The number of days for an appeal that is pending is 600 days—600. So let's just say of that 1 million claims that are either pending or that have been appealed, which is 1 million veterans, the number of days to complete the claim

on average took 265 days, and the number of days for an appeal, on average, was over 600. We are now at 800 days. That is almost 3 years.

I hope my colleagues are understanding what I am saying. We have a severely dysfunctional Veterans' Administration today. We have a population of warriors who are coming out of the battlefield in Afghanistan. They are coming back from deployments. They leave the service; they file for disability; they wait, they wait, they wait, they wait. When they finally get their disability claim and they are going to the VA, now all of a sudden we are talking about dumping millions of additional veterans into the line with them.

My good friend and chairman Senator SANDERS said: We can handle this because we have 27 clinics, outpatient facilities in this bill that, under a lease agreement, we are going to build out—27 facilities. They are for the veterans we have today. We don't have enough facilities to handle the current population, and he said this could handle the millions who are going to come in.

Let me remind my colleagues once again that currently we have \$14 billion worth of veterans construction underway. We appropriate about \$1 billion a year. That is a 14-year backlog on the construction of these facilities, and none of the 27 leases that are in this bill will be ready in December 2014 when the enactment of this legislation takes place.

There is one other area of massive expansion other than to veterans with nonservice-connected disabilities, and that is to a program called our caregivers program. I am pretty passionate about this because I wrote the legislation. My good friend Senator Akaka, who is no longer here, who was chairman of the Senate veterans' committee, became a champion of it. Earlier, I read Senator Akaka's statements on the Senate floor the day it was passed. He stated as clearly as anybody ever has why we limited this to a demonstration project, why we rolled it out to a small group. Our intention was that when the VA was fixed, reformed, and was capable of implementing a plan that expanded the caregiver program, we would do that but not a day sooner.

Now, all of a sudden, we are not just talking about extending the caregiver program to every current-era veteran; Senator SANDERS' bill extends it to every era. Veterans from every era who served who are still alive would be eligible for caregivers.

On occasion, he has pointed to the wounded warrior program. I will read a letter the Wounded Warrior Project sent to the committee when this legislation was being considered.

They said:

More than 2 years after initial implementation, VA still has not answered—let alone

remedied—the problems and concerns that WWP and other advocates raised regarding the Department's implementing regulations. For example, those regulations leave “appeals rights” unaddressed (including appeals from adverse determinations of law); set unduly strict criteria for determining a need for caregiving for veterans with severe behavioral health conditions; and invite arbitrary, inconsistent decisionmaking. Simply extending the scope of current law at this point to caregivers of other veterans would inadvertently signal to VA acquiescence in its flawed implementation of that law. We recommend that the Committee insist on VA's resolving these long-outstanding concerns as a pre-condition to extending the promise of this law to caregivers of pre 9/11 veterans.

If there is one thing I have made perfectly clear yesterday and today, it is that there is nothing in this bill that reforms the VA. Look at any area of the legislation. There is no reform. Yet editorials from service organizations, letters from the Wounded Warrior Project—and they were, make no mistake, behind caregivers. Their letter to the chairman said: Don't do this until it is fixed.

Well, we are where we are. To suggest that all veterans, all veterans organizations, all organizations that deal with veterans are for this is just inconsistent with the paper trail that exists, letters and editorials.

There are two things that don't go away: one, the need to reform and, two, the promise we made to our country's warriors.

We have to ask ourselves: Are we better off fixing the VA before we enlarge the population or after we enlarge the population? I can answer that. It is tough to do now, and it is not going to happen without congressional leadership. But if we expand the population, dump it on a system that is physically not capable of handling it, administratively not capable of handling it, what do we say to those veterans who need the VA health care system and can't get in to see a primary care doctor? What do we say to a person who needs mental health treatment but can't see a psychiatrist, can't get in to be evaluated, and doesn't get the medication they need?

I plead with my colleagues, don't make this mistake. There is an alternative bill. It is taken from the Sanders bill. It is 80 percent, but it doesn't have the massive expansion. It doesn't reform, but it really moves forward on some important issues.

No matter what we do, at some point we are going to have to show the leadership how to reform the VA. Why? Because we are going to keep our promise to veterans. The promise to veterans was that we would provide them a quality of care that was unprecedented.

I am not sure there is a Member of this body who believes we can dump this population onto the Veterans' Administration and that we can look any veteran in the face and say: We kept

our promise to you. Yes, you may have access, but it may be months from now. You may have the ability to go to the VA, but we don't have any room; there is no room in the inn.

These are all part of keeping your promises.

I will go back to what the AMVETS editorial said, and I will end with that because I see my colleagues here.

Bigger is not necessarily better. When I gave these statistics on backlogs of claims and appeals, these are veterans who aren't asking for bigger, they are asking for better. They are asking us to sort out this system and make it work in a way they deserve. All we will do is exacerbate the problem if, in fact, we pass S. 982.

I urge my colleagues, support the alternative—if we are given the opportunity to offer one. If not, then don't do this to our country's veterans. Wait and let us reform the VA. That is our responsibility. That is our promise.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, are we in morning business? What is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator should be aware we are on the motion to proceed to S. 982.

Mr. WICKER. With the Senate's permission, I propose to speak, along with Senator MANCHIN, as in morning business on another matter.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

PUERTO RICO STATUS RESOLUTION ACT

Mr. WICKER. I rise today to speak about a recently introduced bill regarding the future of Puerto Rico's political status. Known as the Puerto Rico Status Resolution Act, this legislation would call for an up-or-down referendum on Puerto Rican statehood, excluding the option of Puerto Rico's current status of Commonwealth. The President and Congress would have to proceed with legislation if statehood receives a majority of votes.

I support Puerto Rico's right of self-determination. This is an issue I have closely followed and been involved in for the better part of two decades. Concern about the way we do statehood determination votes in Puerto Rico is an issue that has crossed party lines in the Congress.

I would say to my colleagues, Congress needs to make sure, at a minimum, that any process used to measure the intent of Puerto Rican voters is objective; otherwise, the outcome will be neither fair nor a meaningful test of public opinion. That is why it is so important not to exclude the option of the current Commonwealth status.

The status resolution act does not rise to the threshold of fairness or a meaningful test of public opinion. There are two reasons:

First, legislation has already been enacted that calls for a plebiscite on Puerto Rico's political status. The 2014 omnibus already includes funding for a plebiscite that would include all available options for political status. Allowing Puerto Ricans the opportunity to choose a status besides statehood is in keeping with a recommendation from the White House Task Force Report released in 2011.

Second, the referendum proposed by the status resolution act would have the same shortcomings as the plebiscite held on November 6, 2012. The results of that referendum were widely criticized, as well as the tortured ballot designed by the pro-statehood party. Of the 1.9 million Puerto Ricans who participated in the referendum, only 834,191—or about 44 percent—favored statehood. Only 44 percent favored statehood. Close to half a million voters declined to respond to the second question on the ballot, evidencing their dissatisfaction with the choices offered. We need to offer better choices. The percentage of statehood supporters has not changed significantly over the past 20 years and certainly does not serve as an impetus for Congress to entertain yet another admissions process now.

Elsewhere on the November 6 ballot that I referred to, public support was clear for the pro-Commonwealth Popular Democratic Party and the election of pro-Commonwealth and anti-statehood candidate Alejandro Garcia Padilla as Puerto Rico's new Governor. In fact, the Commonwealth's legislature, as a result of that election, is now controlled by the pro-Commonwealth party, as is the mayorship of San Juan, the capital of the Commonwealth.

Statehood advocates may attempt to manipulate ballots and election results to support their preferred outcome, but they do so at the expense of the democratic process and the right of every Puerto Rican to have a say in the island's political future.

The referendum process should be conducted in a fair and transparent manner that reflects the true will of the people. In the past, I have introduced legislation that would recognize Puerto Rico's right to convene a constitutional convention—a process that could help build consensus rather than advance the exclusive agenda of one political party over the other.

For Commonwealth supporters, Puerto Rico's current status is instrumental to preserving the island's rich heritage and maintaining the authority needed to address specific needs. The status resolution act not only has the potential to trample on people's rights, but it also distracts from the island's pressing economic and security concerns.

In conclusion, Congress and the Obama administration should continue to strengthen the partnership between

Puerto Rico and the United States in constructive ways instead of encouraging a shortsighted and flawed referendum. Puerto Rico faces economic, energy, and public safety challenges that have a direct impact on the quality of life of its residents. Joint efforts to restore economic growth, modernize energy resources, and reinforce strategies for combating drug trafficking could have a big impact. I am encouraged by proposed reforms, and I wish the best to Gov. Garcia Padilla in the early days of his term in office.

I hope the Senate will not attempt to impose a solution from Washington, DC, on Puerto Rican voters—a solution that would be contrary to the public opinion of inhabitants of the island.

I am glad my colleague from West Virginia, who serves on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee which exercises jurisdiction over matters relating to Puerto Rico, has joined me on the floor, and I would now yield for him—Senator MANCHIN—to comment on a recent study by the GAO on Puerto Rico's economy and the potential effects of statehood.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I wish to thank my colleague Senator WICKER for his longstanding concern about Puerto Rico's current status and how they can govern themselves and work independently. As you can tell, this is a bipartisan concern we have and we are working very closely together.

As Senator WICKER mentioned, the Government Accountability Office is currently working on a report that examines Puerto Rico's economy and the cost of admitting Puerto Rico as a State. I look forward to seeing the results of that report. But in light of the fact we are still awaiting the GAO report, in addition to a number of other reasons, I share Senator WICKER's concerns about the Puerto Rico Status Resolution Act.

On August 1 of last year, the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which has jurisdiction over Puerto Rican issues, held a hearing on the political status of Puerto Rico, where we had the opportunity to hear from Governor Padilla, Commissioner PIERLUISI, and the President of the Puerto Rican Independence Party Ruben Berrios. I appreciated their willingness to openly discuss the ongoing status debate in Puerto Rico and their work with the committee members on how to move forward.

Similar to Senator WICKER, I support Puerto Rico's right to self-determination. However, I have voiced my concerns that the 2012 plebiscite did not meet our democratic standards of fairness and exclusivity, and more than 470,000 Puerto Ricans who left the ballot's second question blank would seem to share my concerns as well. We need

a process with the support of all Puerto Ricans, regardless of their beliefs and political status.

Supporters of statehood argue about the constitutionality of different status options. Crafting a plebiscite, however, which excludes all options except statehood, as the Puerto Rico status resolution does, is not the solution. It is not the solution.

The 2014 omnibus includes funding for a plebiscite that would be proctored by the Department of Justice which can authoritatively decide on the constitutionality of all possible status options. Further, both those who are pro-Commonwealth and those who are pro-statehood have expressed support for this process. This is not true of the 2012 plebiscite nor the Puerto Rico status resolution.

Political status is not the only issue facing Puerto Rico. The Commonwealth has faced more than half a decade of economic recession and high unemployment, as well as exceptionally high utility costs and continued obstacles to economic development.

As a former Governor I have great respect for Governor Padilla and the challenges he is up against, which are not unlike many of our own States in our country. In meeting with Governor Padilla, I have had the opportunity to hear directly about the enormous economic difficulties he has tackled in his short time as Governor.

In my understanding the 2014 budget—his 2014 budget for Puerto Rico—would significantly reduce the Commonwealth's projected deficit. General fund expenses were down by nearly \$200 million during the second half of last year and expected revenue is up. The Governor has made these efforts with the goal of having a balanced budget by 2015, something we could all work toward and a goal I applaud. I understand and have seen that progress is being made.

The Senate should do everything we can to encourage economic development across our country, including in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. We need to work as partners in confronting its high energy costs, double-digit unemployment, and continuing recession. As we support self-determination, we should ensure our focus on political status does not prevent us from addressing the immediate economic needs of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

I thank my colleague for the time to join him in speaking on this important issue and I look forward to his support of a fair and open process and to working with him on this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, if I might, let me congratulate my colleague from West Virginia on his remarks and in closing make three observations.

Despite the economic hardships of the region, the economy of Puerto Rico is the strongest of any of the Caribbean islands, and this has occurred under Commonwealth status—the special relationship that Puerto Ricans have with the United States as U.S. citizens but with their separate identity on the island.

Secondly, I would point out that some of the most vocal pro-Commonwealth voices in this Congress are Puerto Rican Americans who happened to have been elected to the Congress from the States, and they speak also and have spoken also with authority in favor of the Commonwealth concept but also in favor of a fair and accurate election.

Finally, I wish to just drive home a point Senator MANCHIN and I have made. On election day in 2012, 1.9 million Puerto Ricans showed up to vote in that election. The pro-Commonwealth candidate for Governor was elected, the pro-Commonwealth candidate for mayor of San Juan was elected, and a majority of the legislature of the island that day turned out to be pro-Commonwealth.

As flawed as the plebiscite was, the fact remains, of the 1.9 million American citizens in Puerto Rico who voted—who showed up to vote—only 44 percent of them cast a ballot in favor of statehood. That is a figure that cannot be controverted: 1.9 million people showed up to vote—American citizens in Puerto Rico—and only 44 percent of them checked the box for statehood.

So as we go forward and as we implement the provisions of the omnibus act, let us make sure that whatever we do we have the facts, as Senator MANCHIN has pointed out, and also we have a process to accurately reflect the will of the Puerto Rican people.

I thank the Chair, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I have talked to a number of my Republican colleagues, some of whom have expressed support for many of the provisions in this comprehensive veterans bill. Many of my Republican colleagues say they would like to support the bill, but they have concerns about how it is paid for and the issue of deficit—increasing the deficit. So let me say a word about this.

Unlike many expenditures, including the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the truth is this bill will not add one penny to the deficit. Let me repeat: This bill will not add one penny to the deficit. The Congressional Budget Office—the

nonpartisan scorekeeper—has estimated that mandatory spending in this legislation will total \$2.88 billion over the next decade. All of this mandatory spending is completely offset not by the overseas contingency operations—or OCO—but through more than \$4.2 billion in actual savings from programs within the jurisdiction of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. As a result, CBO has determined that overall mandatory spending—mandatory spending in this bill—will be reduced by more than \$1.3 billion.

In addition to the mandatory spending, this bill authorizes \$18.3 billion in discretionary spending over the next 5 years to improve the lives of our Nation's veterans and their families.

As we know, there is no rule in the Senate that an authorization of funding has to be offset. In essence, the discretionary spending provisions in the legislation we are debating today are just recommendations on how much additional funding we believe is needed for our Nation's veterans. It will be up to future legislation originating in the Appropriations Committee to approve or disapprove these recommendations. In other words, the Veterans' Affairs Committee is an authorizing committee; the final decisions in terms of expenditures are made by the Appropriations Committee.

Many of my Republican colleagues have insisted even recommendations of new spending—spending which may never actually happen because it has to go through the Appropriations Committee—be offset. I have done my best to listen to their concerns and have come up with an offset which will not add to the deficit over the next decade.

Specifically, the discretionary spending authorized under this bill is paid for by using savings from winding down the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan—otherwise known as the OCO fund. CBO estimates spending for overseas contingency operations will total \$1.025 trillion over the next decade, so a little more than \$1 trillion. Spending as a result of this legislation will be a tiny fraction of that amount—less than 2 percent.

OCO funds are designed, very broadly, to be used to fund war-related activities. In my view, it is totally consistent with the goals of this funding source to provide support for the men and women who have defended us in those wars.

In recent years OCO funds have provided assistance to Syrian refugees, and have helped the people of Haiti recover from a massive earthquake. Further, since 2005, the Defense Department has used OCO funding for childcare centers, hospitals, schools, traumatic brain injury research, and orthopedic equipment.

In 2010, \$50 million in OCO funds was used for the Guam Improvement Enterprise Fund. Last year, OCO funds were

allocated to the following countries: Egypt, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Somalia, South Sudan, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Yemen. Last year, OCO funds were used to combat trafficking in persons related to labor migration in the Kyrgyz Republic, and to establish a Tunisian-American Enterprise Fund.

In 2011, \$89.36 million was used by the National Guard to support the southwest border of the United States.

This year, \$218 million in OCO funding is being used for the TRICARE health care program.

These are some of the ways in the past OCO funding has been used. I am not here to argue about the wisdom of any of those expenditures. Many of them may well be valid. What I will say is the needs of our veterans are also valid. If we can spend OCO funds for the Guam Improvement Enterprise Fund, I think we can use OCO funds to protect the interests of our veterans. Again, this expenditure is less than 2 percent of the savings from ending the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

I have heard my friends on the other side of the aisle call this a budget gimmick. I disagree. Republicans and Democrats in the House and Senate have voted several times to count war-related savings as a reduction in the deficit.

For example, virtually every Republican in the House of Representatives and Senate voted for the fiscal year 2012 budget resolution, introduced by Representative PAUL RYAN, which counted \$1 trillion in deficit reduction from “phasing down overseas contingency operations”—not what I am saying, but what the Heritage Foundation points out.

If the savings from winding down wars can be counted as deficit reduction, clearly we owe it to our Nation's veterans to use a very small percentage of this fund to make their lives a little bit better at home.

To me, placing modest caps on OCO—overseas contingency operations—funding to pay for the most comprehensive veterans legislation in a decade is a no-brainer. This money was always intended to assure the well-being and success of those brave men and women who have served our great country.

Finally, I think we should be very clear: The cost of war does not end once the last shots are fired and the last battles are fought. When members of the military lose arms, legs, eyesight, come back with PTSD or TBI from fighting in wars which Congress authorized, we have a moral obligation to make sure those veterans receive all of the benefits they have earned and deserve. When American soldiers die in combat, we have a moral obligation to make sure the spouses and children they leave behind are taken care of as best as we possibly can.

This speaks to the funding of this legislation, and I hope we will have

strong support from all of our colleagues.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee for his remarks, and for the relentlessness, enthusiasm, and passion which he has pursued putting together this extraordinarily strong bill for our veterans. I look forward to supporting it, and I commend him for his excellent work.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here because every week the Senate is in session, now for 59 weeks, I give my climate speech, hoping some day sparks will hit tinder.

I could give a whole separate speech about the evil done by the Supreme Court Citizens United decision, and I could give a separate speech about the gridlock which bedevils the Senate. But this week's climate speech will touch all three—Citizens United, gridlock, and climate change—to show how the three are connected.

We fail here in this Senate to address climate change because of the peculiar gridlock in Congress. And Congress is peculiarly gridlocked because of the evils of Citizens United. Our failure to address climate change is a symptom of things gone wrong in our democracy.

I have spoken before on the Senate floor about the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision, one of the worst and most disgraceful decisions ever made by the Supreme Court, destined to follow cases such as *Lochner v. New York* onto the ash heap of judicial infamy. But we are stuck with it now. Until the Supreme Court gets its bearings back, their Citizens United stands.

In a nutshell, the Citizens United decision says this: Corporations are people; money is speech; so there can be no limit to corporate money influencing American elections under constitutional principles of freedom of speech.

If that doesn't seem right, it is because it is not. To unleash that corporate power in our elections, the conservative Justices had to go through some pretty remarkable contortions: They had to reverse previous decisions by the Court which said the opposite; they had to make up facts which are demonstrably flat-out wrong; they had to create a make-believe world of independence and transparency in election spending; and they had to maneuver their own judicial procedures to prevent a factual record which would belie those facts they were making up. It was a dirty business, with a lot of signs of intention, and it has produced evil results.

Let's start with the contortions the conservative Justices had to go through to uncork all that corporate money. They had to first make the leap that corporations are people and

money is speech to ensure corporate money is protected by the First Amendment. They went a more circuitous route, but that is where they ended up. And it is quite a leap when you think of how suspicious the Founding Fathers were of corporations. There is no mention of corporations in the Constitution. So much for these conservative Justices' fidelity to originalism—a constitutional theory the conservatives put a lot of credence in when it suits them.

To treat corporations as people and money as speech, the conservative Justices also had to overrule previous Supreme Court decisions which had said the exact opposite, which they did, upending a century of law. So much for fidelity to precedent.

The conservative bloc then had to deal with the inconvenience that First Amendment doctrine actually allows the government to regulate elections, to protect against either political corruption or even the appearance of corruption.

So how do you take away the people's ability to restrain corporate money in elections when protecting against corruption is a legitimate reason for restraints on corporate money? What you do—and what they did—is decide, by making a finding of fact, that corporations' money would not corrupt elections or politics; indeed, that no amount of corporate money could even appear to corrupt elections or politics. So much for fidelity to the judicial rule which appellate courts, State or Federal, are not supposed to engage in fact-finding.

This fact-finding about corruption by the conservative Justices caused another little inconvenience: The assertion that corporate money can't corrupt politics is laughably false. This meant the conservatives couldn't allow a factual record in the case. A factual record, with testimony and evidence about such a ludicrous proposition, would have blown it out of the water. So they let the little, narrow Citizens United case get all the way through the judicial process, including briefing and argument before them, and then they went back and changed the question into a big one.

This clever maneuver at the very end of the case guaranteed there would be no factual record developed on the new and larger question. And that freed their hand.

I should emphasize that this was a third transgression. The first transgression was for conservatives to ignore their own constitutional theory of originalism in getting to the "corporations are people and money is speech" result. The second transgression was violating the traditional rule that appellate courts were not supposed to engage in factfinding at all, let alone ludicrous factfinding. The third transgression was this maneuver with the question presented.

As a general rule, when cases come to a supreme court, State or Federal, the court defines the "questions presented" by the case. This may not seem like a big deal, just something in the ordinary course, but it is actually an important limit on judicial power under our constitutional separation of powers. It is what prevents a supreme court from roving willy-nilly into any question it wants any time. Courts have to wait until a case comes that presents a particular question, and then they identify what the question is. So it was odd indeed when the Chief Justice went back, after the case was briefed and argued, and did his own new "question presented." But it did the job.

Now the court—with no record saying otherwise—could pretend that corporate money just plain can't corrupt American elections, can't do it, no way, no how—the conservative immaculate conception of corporate money.

Pretending that corporate money couldn't possibly corrupt or even appear to corrupt American elections allowed them to sweep away any interest of the people in keeping corporate corruption out of our politics and elections. People don't need to worry their little heads about corruption, they said. Corporate money in elections is immaculate and can't corrupt.

Bingo. That got them where they wanted. We, the people, could no longer limit corporate spending in our elections. As we have seen, the big money began to flood in.

Citizens United actually gets worse in its plain errors about how independent corporate money was going to be from candidates and how transparent it was going to be whose money was truly behind all of those negative ads. Independent? Transparent? Look at the last elections. How did that work out? Subsequent history shows the falsity of that nonsense.

Those contortionist justices completely ignored a big, important fact: what big money can do, big money can threaten to do or promise to do, and there is going to be nothing independent or transparent about those private threats and promises. The Citizens United decision opened this avenue to corruption while pretending corruption was impossible.

So on to the next step: How do the evils of this Citizens United decision lead to the evils of gridlock? Look around. Look at who is scared of whom and look at who is angry with whom around here.

Democrats and Republicans actually get along pretty well—at least Democrats and most Republicans. We are policy adversaries on many subjects, but Democrats and Republicans have been policy adversaries for decades. Democrat versus Republican is old news. It doesn't explain the new weirdness around here.

Look at what you see. The real fear and the real anger around here is between the mainstream Republicans and the tea party extremists. Look around. Ask around. Where do emotions run high? Where are the shouting matches? Where are the insults hurled? Where are Senators heckled by their colleagues? The worst of it is not between Democrat and Republican, it is between tea party and Republican.

Who is being told how they can and cannot vote and what they can and cannot say? Who is being bullied and punished when they don't follow the party line—the tea party line? Not Democrats, Republicans. No one likes being bullied.

Is it the irrefutable logic of tea party argument that scares regular Republicans? Is it the clear grasp by the tea party of modern economic, cultural, and scientific realities that scares regular Republicans? Is it the broad way the tea party represents our great and diverse democracy that scares regular Republicans? Is it the keen political acumen of the tea party, say, shutting down the U.S. Government and darned near blowing the debt limit, that scares regular Republicans?

Those questions answer themselves, don't they? No. The thing that scares regular Republicans is the big money—the big corporate money, the billionaire money—behind the tea party.

The Koch brothers, for instance, may be a living cartoon of avarice, out to pollute even more and make even more money, but when the Koch brothers' big money comes in and bombs you in a small primary election, it is pretty scary. When the paid-for rightwing attack machine turns on you in your Republican primary, that can be pretty scary.

So the gridlock comes when the Republican party will not work with Democrats—not because we don't make sense and not because most Republicans don't want to make sense but because they are scared of tea party attacks funded by Citizens United money.

That brings us to climate change. As I have described in a recent speech, tens—perhaps even hundreds—of millions of dark-money dollars are being spent. Is all that money being spent having any effect on Republicans? Just look.

In this body we have Republican colleagues who have publicly acknowledged in the past carbon-driven climate change and have called for legislative action. In this body we have a former Republican Presidential nominee who campaigned for President on addressing climate change.

In this body we have Republicans who have spoken favorably about charging a fee on carbon, including the Republican original cosponsor of a bipartisan carbon pollution fee bill. We have a Republican colleague who co-

sponsored climate change legislation when he was in the House and another who voted for the Waxman-Markey cap-and-trade bill when he was in the House.

In this body we have Senators who represent historic villages now washing into the sea and needing relocation because of climate change and sea level rise, and Senators who represent great American coastal cities that are now overwhelmed by the sea at high tides because of climate change.

We have Republican Senators whose home State forests—by the hundreds of square miles—are being killed by the marauding pine beetle, and Republican Senators whose home States' glaciers are disappearing before their very eyes in their own lifetimes. We have Republican Senators whose home States are having to raise offshore bridges and highways before the rising seas.

We have Republican voters who actually get that climate change is real. It is the tea party that has the deniers. Sixty-one percent of nontea party Republicans say there is solid evidence the Earth is warming, but only 25 percent of tea partiers agree—a 36-point swing between Republicans and tea partiers.

Republicans outside of Congress, immune from the effects of Citizens United, have actually supported a carbon pollution fee so long as it is revenue neutral and doesn't add to big government. You could actually lower other taxes with it. But Republicans in Congress will now scarcely say a word about climate change—not since Citizens United; not since that disgraceful decision uncorked all that big, dark money and allowed it to cast its shadow of intimidation over our democracy.

So that is how Citizens United connects to climate change.

While our American democracy suffers and stalls, the evidence of climate change relentlessly mounts. The damage will be done in our atmosphere and oceans. The damage has already started.

I have to warn my colleagues that the denier machinery—the beast I described earlier this month—will ultimately be shown for the evil apparatus of lies that it is. When that happens, there will be more damage to go around. There will be damage to a party that allowed itself to be taken over and silenced by that corrupt apparatus, ignoring the plain facts in front of their faces.

There will be damage to a supreme court that went through such peculiar contortions to let that dark money loose, ignoring plain facts in front of their faces. We Americans, who hold our lamp high to the rest of the world as a beacon of democracy, will have some explaining to do about how we—to the dismay of the rest of the world—let our great democracy be stifled by greedy polluters, ignoring the plain facts the world faces.

The historian David McCullough spoke at the Library of Congress 2 weeks ago about John Adams and America's founding generation. He reminded us that when those men signed the Declaration of Independence, they were signing their own death warrants. When they pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to this cause, it was not mere words. David McCullough explained: "It was a courageous time." And look at us, our great democracy mired in polluters, lies, and money.

But I still believe this can be a courageous time. As Americans have in the past, we can shed the shackles of corrupting influence and rise to our duty. It just takes courage to make this a courageous time.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAN

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise today to address the significant and persistent national security threat stemming from Iran's unchecked nuclear program. I urge my colleagues to support the amendment to S. 1982 from the senior Senator from North Carolina which includes provisions to strengthen our sanctions against Iran should they fail to comply with their obligations under the joint plan of action.

Last November the Obama administration, without sufficient consultation with Congress, committed to an interim nuclear agreement with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Under this agreement we are granting to Iran over \$7 billion in sanctions relief in exchange for their commitments to decelerate their nuclear program—commitments which will be difficult, if not impossible, to verify or enforce.

In effect, we are delivering billions of dollars in repatriated oil sales proceeds, additional foreign trade, and currency—all in exchange for hollow promises of compliance with laws and U.N. Security Council resolutions they should already be following.

The stated U.S. policy, which American Presidents have repeated for decades, is to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. However, this agreement maintains Iran's nuclear weapons capability, and it allows Iran to continue to enrich uranium.

Moreover, Iran will not be required to destroy any centrifuges and will be permitted to replace centrifuges that become inoperable. The pact does little to reverse Iran's nuclear ambitions and sets a precedent for further sanctions

relief in exchange for cosmetic concessions.

Rather than easing effective sanctions, we should be tightening existing sanctions until a better long-term deal can be reached. The United States must take a strong stance to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran. If they do not agree to roll back their nuclear program, then they should face stronger sanctions.

That is why I strongly support provisions in the amendment from Senator BURR that would incorporate key provisions of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act into the pending veterans legislation.

Mr. President, 58 of my Senate colleagues have already signed on to this important freestanding legislation. They and I agree that the Government of Iran continues to expand its nuclear and missile programs in direct violation of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions. Iran has a demonstrated record of defiance and will continue to work toward stockpiling weapons grade nuclear material, sponsoring terrorism, and disregarding basic human rights.

Given these facts, it only makes sense that we take our own national security and commitment to our allies' security seriously by passing expanded sanction authorities, should Iran fail to uphold its end of the interim agreement.

Equally important, this legislation would give Congress the opportunity to review and—if necessary—disapprove of any final agreement with Iran.

I am hopeful Iran will come to the table with real, verifiable concessions in a final agreement on their nuclear program. However, hope is a poor national security strategy.

The Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act would set the proper framework for ensuring Iran dismantles its illicit nuclear infrastructure, complies with all Security Council resolutions, cooperates with the International Atomic Energy Agency, respects human rights, and ceases to promote global terrorism.

Furthermore, the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act implements President Obama's own policy. In his recent State of the Union Address, he stated that he will "be the first to call for more sanctions" should Iran fail to uphold the interim agreement.

By passing this legislation, we are ensuring that the United States has the ability to further penalize Iran for its continued noncompliance.

Nevertheless, President Obama has threatened to veto this legislation, further indicating his willingness to blindly concede to Iranian rhetoric.

Now is not the time for this Nation to exhibit weakness. Now is our chance to demonstrate to Iran and to the world that we are serious about nuclear nonproliferation and compliance

with international laws and obligations.

For these reasons, I strongly support the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act as presented in this amendment, and I urge my colleagues to act swiftly to pass this important measure.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the remaining time postcloture be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is on the adoption of the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1982) to improve the provision of medical services and benefits for veterans, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2747

Mr. REID. On behalf of Senator SANDERS, I have an amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the Sanders amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID], for himself and Mr. SANDERS, proposes an amendment numbered 2747.

(The amendment is printed in the RECORD of Tuesday, February 25, 2014 under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays on that amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2766

Mr. REID. I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes amendment numbered 2766 to amendment numbered 2747.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 1 day after enactment.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a motion, cloture in nature, at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 1982, the Comprehensive Veterans Health Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act.

Harry Reid, Bernard Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, Patty Murray, Michael F. Bennet, Mark Begich, Debbie Stabenow, Charles E. Schumer, Edward J. Markey, Richard Blumenthal, Ron Wyden, Maria Cantwell, Heidi Heitkamp, Christopher Murphy, Christopher A. Coons, Mazie Hirono, Tammy Baldwin.

MOTION TO COMMIT WITH AMENDMENT NO. 2767

Mr. REID. I have a motion to commit S. 1982. It has instructions, and that is also at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] moves to commit the bill to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs with instructions to report back forthwith with the following amendment No. 2767.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 3 days after enactment.

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays on that motion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2768

Mr. REID. I have an amendment to instructions at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 2768 to the instructions of amendment numbered 2767.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike "3 days" and insert "4 days".

Mr. REID. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2769

Mr. REID. I have a second-degree amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nevada [Mr. REID] proposes an amendment numbered 2769 to amendment numbered 2768.

The amendment is as follows:

In the amendment, strike "4 days" and insert "5 days".

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on amendment No. 2747 to S. 1982, the Comprehensive Veterans Health Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act.

Harry Reid, Bernard Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, Patty Murray, Michael F. Bennet, Mark Begich, Debbie Stabenow, Charles E. Schumer, Edward J. Markey, Richard Blumenthal, Ron Wyden, Maria Cantwell, Heidi Heitkamp, Christopher Murphy, Christopher A. Coons, Mazie Hirono, Tammy Baldwin.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum for both cloture motions required under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 309.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion to proceed.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A motion to proceed to Calendar No. 309, S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1982

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that on Thursday, February 27, during the Senate's consideration of S. 1982, but no later than 2 p.m., Senator SESSIONS, or his designee, be recognized to raise a budget point of order against the bill; that if such a point of order is raised, it be in order for Senator MURRAY, or her designee, to move to waive; that if a motion to waive is made, the vote on the motion to waive occur at 2 p.m. tomorrow; that if the motion to waive is successful, the Senate proceed to the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on amendment No. 2747; that if cloture is invoked on the amendment, all postcloture time be yielded back, amendment No. 2766 be withdrawn, and the Senate proceed to the vote on amendment No. 2747; that upon disposition of the amendment, the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on S. 1982, as amended, if amended; that if cloture is invoked on

the bill, all postcloture time be yielded back and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill, as amended, if amended; if the motion to waive is not successful, then the cloture motions be withdrawn; finally, the filing deadline for first-degree amendments to S. 1982 be at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday and the filing deadline for second-degree amendments to amendment No. 2747 and S. 1982 be 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we proceed to a period of morning business with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM KING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize an innovative educator from my home State of Kentucky—Mr. William King—who, earlier this month, was awarded the prestigious Milken Education Award.

If you were to ask William King about his occupation, he may not respond that he is a "teacher" or "educator." Instead, he is more inclined to give himself the label of "educational entrepreneur." That's because in his 12 years in education, Mr. KING has been relentless in his search to find new and better ways to educate our Nation's schoolchildren.

In his current capacity as freshman principal at Bowling Green High School—his alma mater—William is charged with shepherding his students through the all-important transition from middle to high school. King has spearheaded initiatives such as TeachMeet Kentucky and TeachMeet Nashville—which are informal meetings where teachers gather to share ideas and best practices—and No Office Day, where school administrators spend an entire day with students in the classroom. It is his Jump Start program, however, that has earned him one of, if not the most, prestigious awards in education—the Milken Education Award.

William created Jump Start to help better prepare students to excel in their first year of high school. Now, I face a lot of challenges here in the Senate, but few are more trying than those faced by a teenager who is about to enter high school. Mr. King not only recognized just how daunting this transition can be for students, but he also had the ability and the selfless inclination to do something about it.

With his innovative program, King works with students and parents and also coordinates between eighth- and ninth-grade teachers to ensure that his

kids are prepared for the academic challenges they are about to face.

The Milken Education Award is a prestigious one; it is not given out just for good intentions. Winning an "Oscar of Teaching," as it's known by teachers across the country, requires results—and William King unquestionably delivers results. Since implementing Jump Start, ninth-grade retentions have dropped by 68 percent. For this, he was recognized with the Milken Education Award, as well as \$25,000 to spend as he chooses, at a surprise assembly at Bowling Green High School.

Lowell Milken, chairman and co-founder of the Milken Family Foundation, once said, "A sound education provides the opportunity to realize one's potential." William King has shown that he is wholeheartedly dedicated to this proposition, and that he is deserving of praise from this body. I ask that my Senate colleagues join me in recognizing this exemplary Kentucky citizen.

The Park City Daily News recently published an article highlighting William's work and his award. I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Park City Daily News, Feb. 12, 2014]

EDUCATOR RECEIVES \$25,000 AWARD

(By Chuck Mason)

A Bowling Green High School administrator who graduated as a BGHS Purple in 1996 got the surprise of his life Wednesday morning.

Freshman Principal William King received a Milken Educator Award and \$25,000 he can spend any way he wants. His Jump Start program working with freshman has reduced by 68 percent the number of BGHS freshmen who do not pass.

"I had no clue," said King after the ceremony. "I had a list of all these names (of BGHS teachers) in my head (who could be receiving the award). 'It could have been anyone on our staff.'"

King also has been instrumental in holding TeachMeet seminars, which are informal meetings for teachers to share best practices of how they use technology in their classrooms, at Western Kentucky University, in Nashville and other locations in the United States.

The Milken Educator Award, called the "Oscars of Teaching" by Teacher Magazine, was presented as the cheers of 1,200 students bounced off walls of the high school's arena. Many of the students cheering King have been under his leadership since they first entered the school halls four years ago. King was told the assembly was to honor the academic accomplishments of BGHS students, and it started that way before Kentucky Education Commissioner Terry Holliday took the microphone to make remarks and then introduced Jane Foley, senior vice president of the Milken Family Foundation. Foley made the surprise announcement that King is Kentucky's 2014 Milken Educator Award winner, after telling the students first how much the award was worth and that one educator in the arena was to receive it.

"We welcome you to our family of excellence," said Foley, who received her own Milken Educator Award in 1994.

Three south-central Kentucky educators previously received a Milken Educator Award, which was created in 1987.

King was surprised during the morning assembly. Principal Gary Fields said it was a challenge to keep the announcement secret from King. The winner said he wasn't even sure he was supposed to be in the arena that morning for the academic assembly. Fields read a lengthy list of BGHS students who excelled in academics, at one point, turning to Holliday and remarking, "commissioner, I'm only halfway through the list."

King, who monitors teacher and student success, founded the Jump Start program, in which teachers and parents ensure incoming freshmen are ready for high school. King spent a dozen years as an educator, including as an instructional assistant, social studies teacher, curriculum coordinator, literacy coach and freshman principal. He's a 1996 BGHS graduate and an Eagle Scout.

King "always comes into our social studies class and talks with us," said Savannah Hanson, a junior at BGHS. She said the Milken Family Foundation made a good choice in honoring King.

Since 1987, the foundation has awarded more than \$64 million to nearly 2,600 kindergarten through 12th-grade educators across the United States in awards. Total funding for the program, which includes resources for the winning educators, is more than \$136 million. Fifty-two Kentucky teachers have received the award since 1993.

"A sound education provides the opportunities to realize one's potential, which is why the future belongs to the educated," Lowell Milken, chairman and co-founder, said in grant program information. "Effective education equips each new generation with the knowledge and skills to make sound and independent judgments, as well as proceed to the next stage in learning and in life."

The Milken awards were conceived to attract, retain and motivate talented people in the teaching profession.

Foley said the Milken Educator Award is not one that teachers or administrators can apply for. "We don't accept nominations. You don't find us, we find you," Foley said.

"Not an accolade for lifetime achievement or the proverbial gold watch at the exit door, the Milken Educator Awards targets early- to mid-career education professionals for their already impressive achievements and, more significantly, for the promise of what they will accomplish in the future," the website noted.

Accompanying Holliday and Foley was Madeline Abramson, wife of Kentucky Lt. Governor Jerry Abramson.

After the award was announced, the students did a rousing chant with a Bowling Green Purples theme, clapping their hands in staccato fashion, then stamping their feet.

"There's no way I can top that," said Holliday, taking the microphone once again. Looking at King, the commissioner added, "What an honor for Bowling Green High School and Kentucky."

Milken award winners have exceptional educational talent as evidenced by effective instructional practices and student-learning results in the classroom and school; have exemplary educational accomplishments beyond the classroom that provide models of excellence for the profession; are individuals whose contributions to education are largely unheralded yet worthy of the spotlight; are

early- to mid-career educators who offer strong long-range potential for professional and policy leadership; and have an engaging and inspiring presence that motivates and impacts students, colleagues and the community, the website noted.

The last south-central Kentucky educator to receive a Milken Educator Award was Karen Branham in 2001. At the time, Branham was a teacher at Glasgow High School. She is now assistant superintendent for student learning for the Elizabethtown Independent School District.

The MFF is headquartered in Santa Monica, Calif.

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent from the votes during yesterday's session on Tuesday, February 25, 2014. Had I been present, I would have supported the nominations of James Donato and Beth Freeman to fill judicial emergency vacancies on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, and James Moody to fill a judicial vacancy on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Arkansas. I also would have voted in favor of the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 1982, the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014.●

TRIBUTE TO KATHLEEN RICE

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I wish to pay special tribute to Kathleen B. Rice, a key member of my staff on the Select Committee on Intelligence. Kathleen will leave us shortly to join Boveri Murphy Rice, LLP, a boutique trial and litigation firm in South Bend, IN, which represents clients nationwide, ranging from Fortune 500 companies to smaller businesses and individuals. Kathleen has had a distinguished career in her 19.5 years of service to the Senate, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, and the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida. I am honored to have the opportunity to publicly thank her and note my appreciation for her outstanding service to the Select Committee on Intelligence during the past 7.5 years.

Since becoming the vice chairman of the committee in 2011, I have routinely relied upon her impressive legal acumen and excellent advice on matters large and small. Kathleen is well known on the Hill and by the private sector as one of the leading congressional staff experts on cybersecurity legislative issues. During the 111th Congress, she distinguished herself as an authority in the field with her work on S. 3538, the National Cyber Infrastructure Protection bill, on behalf of Senators Kit Bond and ORRIN HATCH. Based upon that experience, I selected Kathleen to serve as the lead counsel for all of my cybersecurity legislative

efforts. Since then, she has worked tirelessly to develop and negotiate legislative proposals consistent with my strong desire to get an effective cybersecurity information sharing bill enacted into law. During the last Congress, Kathleen was a crucial participant in the negotiations that led the ranking members of eight Senate committees to co-sponsor S. 2151 and S. 3342, the Strengthening and Enhancing Cybersecurity by Using Research, Education, Information, and Technology Act of 2012, more commonly known as "SECURE IT." During this Congress, Senator FEINSTEIN and I have been working very hard to develop a bipartisan cybersecurity information sharing bill that we believe will be well-received by the private sector and our colleagues in the Senate and the House of Representatives. We are finally quite close to being able to mark up our cybersecurity information sharing bill and Kathleen played an integral role every step of the way.

Kathleen is a recognized legislative wizard. When negotiations have stalled, it is usually Kathleen who comes up with the textual solution that provides the basis for a practical and effective bipartisan compromise—a valuable skill that unfortunately has been in short supply on the Hill in recent memory. In addition to cyber, she has been a key staff contributor to the process of passing and enacting the committee's annual intelligence authorization bills. Her expertise on the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) was invaluable during the negotiation and enactment of the Protect America Act of 2007, the FISA Amendments Act of 2008, Public Laws 111-141 and 112-14, extension of certain expiring FISA sunsets, and the FISA Amendments Act Reauthorization Act of 2012. She routinely monitors the legislative calendar to ensure that pending legislation does not negatively impact intelligence community activities and operations. She also works closely with the Members and staff of other committees on all issues related to national security.

Kathleen's mastery of criminal and national security law, coupled with her inexhaustible work ethic and sound judgment, have made her an indispensable member of the committee staff and an invaluable resource to other congressional committees. Her quick wit and good humor make her a pleasure to work with—less so, if you unwisely choose to work against the interests of her "client." Kathleen is a team player who makes everyone around her perform better. She has been an astute mentor and guide to the senior staff responsible for assisting the vice chairman and members of the committee with formulating and implementing the committee's legislative and oversight priorities. She also has done a terrific job interfacing and collaborating with my personal staff to

ensure that my office is accurately transmitting my views on current national security issues and events.

My colleagues and I trust Kathleen's judgment implicitly. Her example of dedicated public service and exceptional day-to-day performance on the job has earned our respect and admiration, and it inspired a generation of staff who had the privilege to work alongside her. There is no doubt that Kathleen has a bright future in the private sector; however, should the right opportunity present itself, I would strongly encourage my Senate colleagues to entice her back into public service. We will miss Kathleen dearly, but her legacy will remain a part of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence for years to come.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD S. GIRVEN

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I wish to pay special tribute to Richard S. Girven, a key member of my staff on the Select Committee on Intelligence. Rich has a total of 33 years of distinguished service to the Senate and the U.S. Army. He will leave us shortly to join the Washington office of the Rand Corporation where he will serve as an associate director for the Intelligence Policy Center within the National Security Research Division. I am honored to have the opportunity to publicly thank Rich and note my appreciation for his outstanding service to the Select Committee on Intelligence during the past 5½ years.

Since becoming the vice chairman of the committee in 2011, I have often relied upon Rich's impressive analytical skills and teamwork on a wide range of intelligence issues. As the committee's director of analysis, he has routinely mentored our senior staff members in the execution of their substantive and regional portfolios. Rich is well known on the Hill and throughout the intelligence community as a leading expert on issues related to Asia and the Middle East, with special emphasis on South and Southeast Asia. He has also done superlative oversight work on issues related to analytic quality, linguists in the intelligence community, human intelligence, technology, education and training, and intelligence authorities and reform. He has conducted and participated in many committee studies involving analysis, analytic tradecraft, and analyst technologies.

Rich even has a "superpower"—he reads faster than anyone I have ever met. I have been told by reliable sources that he can read at least 1,600 words per minute. This sometimes worked to his personal disadvantage, because he was frequently tasked with reading very large bills, some in excess of 1,000 pages, to assess whether any provisions could negatively impact intelligence authorities and operations.

Rich's inexhaustible work ethic and sound judgment have made him an indispensable member of the committee staff and an invaluable resource to other congressional committees. His quick wit and good humor make him a pleasure to work with. He is the consummate team player who improves the performance of everyone around him.

My colleagues and I trust Rich's judgment implicitly. His example of dedicated public service and exceptional day-to-day performance on the job has earned our respect, admiration, and it inspired a generation of staff who had the privilege to work alongside him. There is no doubt that Rich has a bright future at the Rand Corporation; however, should the right opportunity present itself, I would hope that he will consider another stint in public service. We will miss Rich deeply, but his legacy will remain a part of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence for years to come.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REMEMBERING MAJOR GENERAL FLOYD L. EDSALL

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I wish to recognize an exceptional Nevadan and veteran, Army MG Floyd Edsall. On January 29, 2014, Nevada's humble servant was called home after 92 years of devoted community advocacy.

Born December 21, 1921, Mr. Edsall answered a call for military service at an early age through his involvement at UNR in their ROTC program. In 1944, he fought in World War II and was awarded the Silver Star and three Bronze Stars for his valiant bravery.

Upon his return from service with the Army's 63rd Infantry Division, Major General Edsall taught at Elko and Sparks High Schools as well as his alma mater UNR, where he coached football and track and field. Throughout his teaching and coaching career, he remained active in the Nevada Guard.

Major General Edsall is recognized as the Nevada National Guard's first full-time adjunct general. From 1967 to 1979, he commanded the Nevada Air and Army Guard all while maintaining a steadfast dedication to expanding the Guard's enlistments during the Vietnam war. His focus and recruitment abilities exhibited with the Guard were widely regarded, and Major General Edsall retained his role of leadership over the span of three Nevada gubernatorial administrations.

Recognizing a lifetime of commitment to service, the Nevada Army Guard dedicated a 1,697-acre training facility in his honor in 1997, and on May 10 of the same year, the Maj. Gen. Floyd Edsall Training Center opened to further the foundations of service his namesake bears.

Major General Edsall's passing is a great loss and his loyal commitment to the Silver State will never be forgotten. I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering the life of a devoted Nevadan and honoring his accomplishments.●

REMEMBERING WALTER "DOC" HURLEY

• Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, earlier this month, a Hartford icon, Walter "Doc" Hurley, passed away at the age of 91. For some, Doc was a teacher, for others a coach, and for many more he was a dedicated philanthropist and friend. No matter what role he played at any given time, Doc Hurley worked his entire life to positively impact the Hartford community, and he will be sorely missed.

Doc led an eclectic and inspiring life. After attending Weaver High School in the North End of Hartford, he served in World War II as a marine. Upon coming home from the war, he finished college, worked as a teacher in Virginia, and spent a brief stint as a professional football player in the All-American Football Conference before finally returning to Hartford in 1959.

It was when he became vice principal at Weaver High School in Hartford that he began in earnest his lifelong goal of inspiring students to pursue a college degree. The most visible piece of Hurley's lasting legacy in the community is the Doc Hurley Scholarship Foundation and the renowned Doc Hurley Scholarship Basketball Classic. Over the years, Doc's foundation was responsible for awarding more than \$570,000 in scholarships to 550 high school seniors. Many of these students who went on to successful careers owe their start to Doc Hurley and his scholarship foundation. Doc was a once-in-a-generation mentor, coach, teacher, and positive inspiration for Hartford's youth.

Last October, I held an antiviolence basketball tournament for nearly 1,000 kids with the University of Connecticut men's basketball team in the field house that bears Doc Hurley's name at Weaver High School. I was proud to have had the chance to work with him on that basketball tournament and, more importantly I will work to continue his legacy of encouraging Hartford's students to achieve their highest potential.

I join everyone in Hartford and around Connecticut in celebrating the life of Walter "Doc" Hurley and mourning the loss of this great man.●

BROWN UNIVERSITY

• Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, this March, Providence, RI, celebrates the 250th anniversary of the founding of Brown University, known as one of the world's great universities.

In 1764, the American Colonies were on a headlong course toward Revolution. Many of those who would lead the charge to independence also had a hand in establishing this great American college. Among the founding Fellows and Trustees of what was then called the College in the English Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations were future signers of the Declaration of Independence, delegates to the Continental Congress and Congress of the Confederation, and members of the prominent Brown family of Providence. One of them, John Brown, was later in the 1772 attack on the royal customs vessel *HMS Gaspee* in Narragansett Bay, an act of violence against the crown that drew the first British blood in the conflict that led to the American Revolution, more than a year before the Boston Tea Party.

Since then, prominent Brunonians have included Secretaries of State John Hay and Charles Evans Hughes, Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen, and our own Governor Lincoln Chafee and Congressman DAVID CICILLINE, to name just a few. For two and a half centuries, bright and eager young Americans have arrived in Providence's beautiful College Hill neighborhood, greeted by historic architecture and the famous Van Wickles. They brought their ambition and their talent and, inevitably, they left their mark and continue to leave their mark—on our State and our Nation.

Today, Brown University is a hub of research, innovation, and learning, and an integral partner in our capital city's culture and economy. As a magnet for talent and resources, Brown has helped fuel Providence's Knowledge District, and the university itself is the fifth-largest private employer in Rhode Island. Brown's Alpert Medical School has helped bolster our State's leadership in the health care field, with more than 1,700 physicians—43 percent of all physicians in the State—affiliated with the school. And Brown's heralded BrainGate program famously helped Cathy Hutchinson use a robotic arm to pick up a cup of coffee and take a sip 15 years after a stroke left her paralyzed and unable to speak. These and countless other contributions continue to put Rhode Island on the forefront of the innovation economy, and I am grateful for Brown's role in driving our Ocean State forward.

Brown is a wonderful place. As I travel the country and encounter Brown graduates, and attend Brown functions and meet undergraduates, I have been struck at how much they love this college. For a great many of our best and brightest high school seniors, Brown is their decided first choice among all the great universities of the world.

In its original charter, it was said that Brown, "to which the youth may freely resort for education in the vernacular and learned languages, and

in the liberal arts and sciences, would be for the general advantage and honor of the government." Two hundred fifty years later, it is clear that Brown has lived up to that expectation.

I am proud to congratulate the president of Brown University, Christina Hull Paxson, Brown's trustees and faculty, and its students and alumni on 250 remarkable years.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:09 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1123. An act to promote consumer choice and wireless competition by permitting consumers to unlock mobile wireless devices, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1211. An act to amend section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Freedom of Information Act), to provide for greater public access to information, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1232. An act to amend titles 40, 41, and 44, United States Code, to eliminate duplication and waste in information technology acquisition and management.

H.R. 1423. An act to provide taxpayers with an annual report disclosing the cost and performance of Government programs and areas of duplication among them, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2530. An act to improve transparency and efficiency with respect to audits and communications between taxpayers and the Internal Revenue Service.

H.R. 2531. An act to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from asking taxpayers questions regarding religious, political, or social beliefs.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1123. An act to promote consumer choice and wireless competition by permitting consumers to unlock mobile wireless devices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 1211. An act to amend section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly

known as the Freedom of Information Act), to provide for greater public access to information, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 1232. An act to amend titles 40, 41, and 44, United States Code, to eliminate duplication and waste in information technology acquisition and management; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4742. A communication from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Defense report on the joint strategy for readiness and training in a Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C4ISR)-denied environment (OSS No. 2014-0234); to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4743. A communication from the Chief of Staff, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "2014 Report to Congress on Sustainable Ranges"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4744. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers Project; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4745. A communication from the Acting Director of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Retrospective Analysis under Executive Order 13579" (NRC-2011-0246) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4746. A communication from the Chief of the Permits and Regulations Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Migratory Bird Hunting; Revision of Language for Approval of Nontoxic Shot for Use in Waterfowl Hunting" (RIN1018-AY59) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4747. A communication from the Acting Chief of the Branch of Listing, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Threatened Status for *Eriogonum codium* (Umtanum Desert Buckwheat) and *Physaria douglasii* subsp. *tuplashensis* (White Bluffs Bladderpod) and Designation of Critical Habitat" (RIN1018-AX72; 1018-AZ54) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4748. A communication from the Chief of the Endangered Species Listing Branch, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for *Chromolaena fruticulata* (Cape Sable Thoroughwort)" (RIN1018-AZ51) received in the Office of the

President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4749. A communication from the Acting Chief of the Branch of Listing, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; *Arctostaphylos franciscana* (Franciscan Manzanita)" (RIN1018-AY63) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 11, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4750. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; New Mexico; Transportation Conformity and General Conformity Requirements for Bernalillo County" (FRL No. 9906-65-Region 6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4751. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Oklahoma; Regional Haze and Interstate Transport Affecting Visibility; State Implementation Plan Revisions; Revised BART Determination for American Electric Power/Public Service Company of Oklahoma Northeastern Power Station Units 3 and 4" (FRL No. 9906-93-Region 6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4752. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Oklahoma; Regional Haze and Interstate Transport Affecting Visibility State Implementation Plan Revisions; Withdrawal of Federal Implementation Plan for American Electric Power/Public Service Company of Oklahoma" (FRL No. 9906-81-OAR) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4753. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; Prevention of Significant Deterioration and Nonattainment New Source Review; Fine Particulate Matter (PM 2.5)" (FRL No. 9906-67-Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4754. A communication from the Regulations Coordinator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Ninety-Day Waiting Period Limitation and Technical Amendments to Certain Health Coverage Requirements Under the Affordable Care Act" (RIN0938-AR77) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4755. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch,

Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Ninety-Day Waiting Period Limitation and Technical Amendments to Certain Health Coverage Requirements Under the Affordable Care Act" ((RIN1545-BL50) (TD 9656)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4756. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Applicable Federal Rates—March 2014" (Rev. Rul. 2014-8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4757. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amount of the Life Insurance Reserves Taken into Account Under Section 807 of the IRC for Variable Contracts" (Rev. Rul. 2014-7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4758. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safe Harbor for Disregarded Entities Under Section 108" (Rev. Proc. 2014-20) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4759. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Update of Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates" (Notice 2014-13) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4760. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for the Employment and Training Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal-State Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program; Data Exchange Standardization as Required by Section 2104 of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012" (RIN1205-AB64) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 21, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4761. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Extension of Expiration Dates for Several Body System Listings" (RIN0960-AH61) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4762. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Change of Address for Requests: Testimony by Employees and the Production of Records and Information in Legal Proceedings, Claims Against the Government Under the Federal Tort Claims Act of 1948, and Claims under the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees' Claim Act of 1964" (RIN0960-AH65) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4763. A communication from the Secretary of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the export to the People's Republic of China of items not detrimental to the U.S. space launch industry; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4764. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 14-003); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4765. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-171); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4766. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, the report of a rule entitled "Visas: Waiver by Joint Action of Visa and Passport Requirements for Members of Armed Forces and Coast Guards of Foreign Countries" (RIN1400-AD51) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 6, 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4767. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, the report of a rule entitled "Visas: Documentation of Non-immigrants Under the Immigration and Nationality Act, As Amended; TN Visas from NAFTA Countries" (RIN1400-AD29) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 5, 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4768. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4769. A communication from the Vice President, Office of External Affairs, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, transmitting, the report of final rules revising and updating the Agency's Freedom of Information Act, Privacy Act, and Touhy regulations; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4770. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Current Good Manufacturing Practices, Quality Control Procedures, Quality Factors, Notification Requirements, and Records and Reports, for Infant Formula; Correction" ((RIN0910-AF27) (Docket No. FDA-1995-N-0063)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4771. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medical Devices; Reports of Corrections and Removals; Technical Amendment" (Docket No. FDA-2014-N-0011) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 21, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4772. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Administrative Detention;

Corrections" (Docket No. FDA-1997-N-0222) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 21, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4773. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medical Device Reporting: Electronic Submission Requirements" (RIN0910-AF86) (Docket No. FDA-2008-N-0393) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 21, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4774. A communication from the Director of Regulations and Policy Management Staff, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Current Good Manufacturing Practices, Quality Control Procedures, Quality Factors, Notification Requirements, and Records and Reports, for Infant Formula; Final Rule" (RIN0910-AF27) (Docket No. FDA-1995-N-0036) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4775. A communication from the Program Manager, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "World Trade Center Health Program: Amendments to List of WTC-Related Health Conditions; Cancer; Revision" (RIN0920-AA50) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4776. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program" (RIN1840-AD13) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 24, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4777. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary, Science and Technology Directorate, Department of Homeland Security, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 21, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4778. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP) for Fiscal Year 2012"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-196. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the Legislature of the State of Iowa requesting the United States Congress to immediately enact a new federal food, farm, and jobs bill; to the Com-

mittee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 102

Whereas, the United States Congress regularly establishes agricultural and food policy in an omnibus farm bill in a bipartisan spirit of cooperation, exemplified by the federal Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, Pub. L. No. 110-246 which originally was to expire in 2012, but was extended by the 112th Congress in the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012, Pub. L. No. 112-240; and

Whereas, a new food, farm, and jobs bill is critical to maintaining a strong agricultural economy and an abundant food supply that benefits all Americans, including by providing programs relating to farm commodity support, horticulture, livestock, conservation, nutrition assistance, trade, and international food aid, agricultural research, farm credit, rural development, bioenergy, forestry, and innovative strategies to revitalize this nation's rural economy by creating jobs in small towns and rural communities; and

Whereas, in Iowa, agricultural producers have faced a multitude of disasters, including drought, flood, and blizzard conditions which have been alleviated by disaster assistance under farm bill programs; and

Whereas, during 2013, the United States Senate and House of Representatives have been engaged in prolonged negotiations to enact a new food, farm, and jobs bill that is now in conference committee which is considering differences between the Senate version, titled the Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2013 (S. 954), and the House version, titled the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management (FARRM) Act of 2013 (H.R. 2642); and

Whereas, without the passage of a new food, farm, and jobs bill the United States will be subject to previously enacted permanent law, including commodity price support statutes effective in 1949; and

Whereas, the prolonged delay in passing a new food, farm, and jobs bill has created uncertainty for agricultural producers and will negatively impact the nation's overseas trade; and

Whereas, without the immediate passage of a new food, farm, and jobs bill consumers will increasingly suffer economic consequences: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That with the reconvening of the United States Congress after its holiday recess, the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate should enact a new food, farm, and jobs bill with all possible speed but no later than January 31, 2014; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate and the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to the Honorable Debbie Stabenow, Chairwoman of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the United States Senate, and the Honorable Frank Lucas, Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture of the United States House of Representatives; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to each member of the Iowa congressional delegation; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to the Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture.

POM-197. A joint resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio urging the Congress of the United States to propose a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution and applying to the Congress, pursuant to Article V of the United States Constitution, to call a convention for proposing a balanced budget amendment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 5

Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio:

The General Assembly of the State of Ohio urges the Congress of the United States to propose a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution and hereby applies to the Congress, under the provisions of Article V of the United States Constitution, for the calling of a convention of the states limited to proposing an amendment to the United States Constitution requiring that in the absence of a national emergency the total of all federal appropriations made by the Congress for any fiscal year may not exceed the total of all estimated federal revenues for that fiscal year, together with any related and appropriate Fiscal restraints; and

It is the intention of the General Assembly that matters shall not be considered at the convention that do not pertain to an amendment requiring that, in the absence of a national emergency, the total of all federal appropriations made by the Congress for any fiscal year may not exceed the total of all estimated federal revenues for that fiscal year, together with any related and appropriate fiscal restraints; and be it further

Resolved, The Secretary of State is hereby directed to transmit copies of this application to the President and Secretary of the Senate and to the Speaker and Clerk of the House of Representatives of the Congress, and copies to the members of the Senate and House of Representatives from the State of Ohio; also to transmit copies of this application to the presiding officers of each of the legislative houses of the several states, requesting their cooperation; and be it further

Resolved, This application is to be considered as covering the balanced budget amendment language of the presently outstanding balanced budget applications from other states, including previously adopted applications from Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Texas. This application shall be aggregated with those other applications for the purpose of attaining the two-thirds of states necessary to require the calling of a convention for proposing a balanced budget amendment, but shall not be aggregated with any applications on any other subject; and be it further

Resolved, If the convention called by the Congress is not limited to considering a balanced budget amendment, then any delegates, representatives, or participants from the State of Ohio asked to participate in the convention are authorized to debate and vote only on a proposed amendment or amendments to the United States Constitution requiring that in the absence of a national emergency the total of all federal appropriations made by the Congress for any fiscal year may not exceed the total of all estimated federal revenues for that fiscal year, together with any related and appropriate fiscal restraints; and be it further

Resolved, This application constitutes a continuing application in accordance with Article V of the United States Constitution

until the legislatures of at least two-thirds of the several states have made applications on the same subject or the Congress has proposed an amendment to the United States Constitution equivalent to the amendment proposed in this resolution. This application supersedes all previous applications by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio on the same subject.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE:

S. 2042. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the National Estuary Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. JOHANNES):

S. 2043. A bill to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from asking taxpayers questions regarding religious, political, or social beliefs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Mr. INHOFE, and Mr. JOHANNES):

S. 2044. A bill to improve transparency and efficiency with respect to audits and communications between taxpayers and the Internal Revenue Service; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2045. A bill to amend title 17, United States Code, to secure the rights of visual artists to copyright, to provide for resale royalties, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BROWN:

S. 2046. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide Medicare beneficiaries coordinated care and greater choice with regard to accessing hearing health services and benefits; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2047. A bill to prohibit the marketing of electronic cigarettes to children, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. LEE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 2048. A bill to include New Zealand in the list of foreign states whose nationals are eligible for admission into the United States as E-1 and E-2 nonimmigrants if United States nationals are treated similarly by the Government of New Zealand; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL (for herself and Mr. ROCKEFELLER):

S. 2049. A bill to curb unfair and deceptive practices during assertion of patents, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. Res. 362. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of "Career and Technical Education Month"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. BEGICH, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. KAINE, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. NELSON, Mr. COBURN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. KIRK, Mr. WICKER, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. SCOTT, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. UDALL of Colorado):

S. Res. 363. A resolution celebrating Black History Month; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 315

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) were added as cosponsors of S. 315, a bill to reauthorize and extend the Paul D. Wellstone Muscular Dystrophy Community Assistance, Research, and Education Amendments of 2008.

S. 345

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 345, a bill to reform the Federal sugar program, and for other purposes.

S. 357

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 357, a bill to encourage, enhance, and integrate Blue Alert plans throughout the United States in order to disseminate information when a law enforcement officer is seriously injured or killed in the line of duty.

S. 411

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 411, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 623

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 623, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure the continued access of Medicare beneficiaries to diagnostic imaging services.

S. 810

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 810, a bill to require a pilot pro-

gram on an online computerized assessment to enhance detection of behaviors indicating a risk of suicide and other mental health conditions in members of the Armed Forces, and for other purposes.

S. 862

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 862, a bill to amend section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional religious exemption from the individual health coverage mandate.

S. 919

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 919, a bill to amend the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act to provide further self-governance by Indian tribes, and for other purposes.

S. 1280

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1280, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the deductibility of charitable contributions to agricultural research organizations, and for other purposes.

S. 1323

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1323, a bill to address the continued threat posed by dangerous synthetic drugs by amending the Controlled Substances Act relating to controlled substance analogues.

S. 1332

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1332, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure more timely access to home health services for Medicare beneficiaries under the Medicare program.

S. 1406

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1406, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1431

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1431, a bill to permanently extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

S. 1495

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1495, a bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue an order with respect to secondary cockpit barriers, and for other purposes.

S. 1587

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1587, a bill to posthumously award the Congressional Gold Medal to each of Glen Doherty and Tyrone Woods in recognition of their contributions to the Nation.

S. 1654

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1654, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to deny tax deductions for corporate regulatory violations.

S. 1756

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1756, a bill to amend section 403 of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants, similar retail food establishments, and vending machines.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. 1982

At the request of Mr. KAINE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin

(Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1982, *supra*.

S. 2000

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2000, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and for other purposes.

S. 2012

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2012, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to more effectively regulate anabolic steroids.

S. 2024

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2024, a bill to amend chapter 1 of title 1, United States Code, with regard to the definition of "marriage" and "spouse" for Federal purposes and to ensure respect for State regulation of marriage.

S. 2036

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) and the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2036, a bill to protect all school children against harmful and life-threatening seclusion and restraint practices.

S. CON. RES. 32

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 32, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the need for investigation and prosecution of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, whether committed by officials of the Government of Syria, or members of other groups involved in civil war in Syria, and calling on the President to direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice and vote of the United States to immediately promote the establishment of a Syrian war crimes tribunal, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 203

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 203, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding efforts by the United States to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a negotiated two-state solution.

AMENDMENT NO. 2752

At the request of Mr. JOHANNES, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2752 intended to be proposed to S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. LEE, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mrs. MURRAY):

S. 2048. A bill to include New Zealand in the list of foreign states whose nationals are eligible for admission into the United States as E-1 and E-2 non-immigrants if United States nationals are treated similarly by the Government of New Zealand; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, today, I introduced bipartisan legislation that would promote trade and investment in America from a critical partner of ours in the Asia-Pacific region, New Zealand. I want to thank Senators LEE, MCCAIN, RUBIO, SCHUMER and MURRAY for cosponsoring this bill and for their support for this commonsense proposal.

The Encouraging Trade and Investment from New Zealand Act would extend eligibility for E-1 and E-2 visas to New Zealand citizens. E-1 visas are available to certain foreign nationals coming to the United States to engage in substantial trade, including trade in services or technology principally between the United States and their home country. E-2 visas are for certain foreign investors coming here to develop and direct the operations of an enterprise in which they invested a substantial amount of capital.

These non-immigrant visas are distinct from EB-5 investor immigrant visas, H1-B work visas and B-1 business visitor visas. Because of the unique structure of E-1 and E-2 visas, they are scrutinized closely by the State Department so that they directly support economic activity and jobs in the United States.

Allowing New Zealanders to apply for these visas would directly promote job creation. In 2010, New Zealand-owned U.S. firms in the United States supported 10,900 American jobs. By the end of 2011, the total value of direct investment from New Zealand to the United States reached \$6 billion. While these positive trends continue, the New Zealand government and New Zealand businesses have indicated that the lack of E-1 and E-2 visas is a dominant factor impeding further investment in our country.

The Encouraging Trade and Investment from New Zealand Act would fix that. Because of the changes in our treaty practices, the E-1 and E-2 visas can only be extended to New Zealand through legislation. Historically, we extended trade and investment visas to any country possessing a treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation with the United States or through other agreements.

Today more than 50 countries have access to E-1, trade, visas, and more than 80 countries have access to E-2, investors, visas. In recent years, the

U.S. government has generally stopped pursuing treaties of friendship, commerce, and navigation.

Indeed, in 2012, Congress enacted legislation extending E-1 and E-2 visas to Israel. It is now the right time to do the same for New Zealand.

Attracting trade and investment capital from New Zealand would bolster the reach of the United States' economy in the fast growing Asia-Pacific region. President Obama has made engagement with the Asia-Pacific region a top economic and security priority, the so called "pivot to Asia," and New Zealand is a valued strategic partner.

Extending trade and investment visas would bolster the bilateral relationship, increase foreign investment, and strengthen America's ties to the Asia-Pacific region. Every state will gain from greater trade and investment from New Zealand. In 2012 over 350,000 foreign traders and investors holding E-1 or E-2 visas came to our country and managed a business in all 50 states.

Substantial benefits will accrue to Hawaii—the United States' gateway to Asia and the Pacific. Hawaii has recently seen a substantial increase in tourism from New Zealand, fostered by increased direct flights between New Zealand and Hawaii. In fact, Hawaiian Airlines is the only U.S. airline offering direct service to New Zealand.

New Zealand recently announced that it would be opening a consulate in Honolulu, Hawaii. This consulate will help further bilateral ties and benefit from its proximity to the heart Hawaii's financial district and headquarters of U.S. Pacific Command.

U.S. citizens are already eligible for a similar visa in New Zealand. I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this important initiative to allow them to do the same here to create jobs in our country.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 362—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF "CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH"

Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 362

Whereas a competitive global economy requires workers to be trained in skilled professions;

Whereas in a National Association of Manufacturers report, 80 percent of respondents indicate a moderate to severe shortage of qualified skilled production employees, including frontline workers, such as machinists, operators, craft workers, distributors, and technicians;

Whereas career and technical education (referred to in this preamble as "CTE") has proven to be an effective solution to ensure

that competitive, skilled workers are ready, willing, and capable of holding jobs in high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand career fields, such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines, nursing, allied health, construction, information technology, energy sustainability, and many other fields that are vital in keeping the United States competitive in the global economy;

Whereas approximately 14,000,000 students are enrolled in CTE programs, which exist in each State and in nearly 1,300 public high schools and 1,700 2-year colleges across the United States;

Whereas 10 of the 20 fastest growing occupations in the United States require an associate's degree, or a degree with fewer requirements;

Whereas 13 of the 20 occupations with the largest number of new jobs projected require on-the-job training and an associate's degree or certificate, and nearly all such occupations require real-world skills that individuals can master through CTE;

Whereas CTE matches employability skills with workforce demand and provides relevant academic and technical coursework, leading to industry-recognized credentials for secondary and postsecondary education and adult learners;

Whereas CTE students are significantly more likely than non-CTE students to report developing problem-solving, project-completion, research, mathematics, college application, work-related, communication, time management, and critical thinking skills during high school; and

Whereas students at schools with highly-integrated, rigorous academic and CTE programs have significantly higher achievement in reading, mathematics, and science than students at schools with less integrated programs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the month of February as "Career and Technical Education Month" to celebrate career and technical education across the United States;

(2) supports the goals and ideals of Career and Technical Education Month;

(3) recognizes the importance of career and technical education in preparing a well-educated and skilled workforce in the United States; and

(4) encourages educators, counselors, and administrators to promote career and technical education as an option for students.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, today I am submitting a resolution with Senator PORTMAN designating February as Career and Technical Education month.

The key to America's continued success lies in improving our Nation's educational system. In a National Association of Manufacturers report, 80 percent of respondents indicate a moderate to severe shortage of qualified skilled production employees, including frontline workers, like machinists, operators, craft workers, distributors, and technicians. If we are to win the race for talent, we need a long-term plan that produces the best workforce in the world.

Career and technical education is a proven solution for creating jobs, retraining workers with the skills they need to fill open positions in the job market, and ensuring students of all

ages and all walks of life are career and college ready. Career and technical education will also help close the skills gap to meet the needs of high-growth, skill intensive industries. Approximately 30 percent of jobs by 2018 will require some college or a two-year associate degree, a need which can be met by improved access to career and technical education programs.

Senator PORTMAN and I have also created the Senate Career and Technical Education Caucus, a bipartisan effort committed to strengthening access and improving career and technical education. Through these efforts, we will support students and grow our nation's workforce by ensuring our youth have access to high-quality, rigorous career and technical education that will prepare them for college and for their future careers.

SENATE RESOLUTION 363—CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. BEGICH, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. WYDEN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. KAINE, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. WARNER, Mr. NELSON, Mr. COBURN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. KIRK, Mr. WICKER, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. SCOTT, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. UDALL of Colorado) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 363

Whereas in 1776, people imagined the United States as a new country dedicated to the proposition stated in the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness . . .";

Whereas the first Africans were brought involuntarily to the shores of America as early as the 17th century;

Whereas African Americans suffered enslavement and subsequently faced the injustices of lynch mobs, segregation, and denial of the basic and fundamental rights of citizenship;

Whereas inequalities and injustices in our society still exist today;

Whereas in the face of injustices, people of the United States of good will and of all races have distinguished themselves with a commitment to the noble ideals on which the United States was founded and have courageously fought for the rights and freedom of African Americans;

Whereas African Americans, such as James Beckwourth, Bill Pickett, Lieutenant Colonel Allen Allensworth, and Clara Brown,

along with many others, worked against racism to achieve success and have made significant contributions to the economic, educational, political, artistic, literary, scientific, and technological advancements of the United States, including the westward expansion;

Whereas the contributions of African Americans from all walks of life throughout the history of the United States reflect the greatness of the United States;

Whereas Muhammad Ali, Constance Baker Motley, James Baldwin, James Beckwourth, Clara Brown, Ralph Bunche, Shirley Chisholm, Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. Du Bois, Ralph Ellison, Alex Haley, Dorothy Height, Lena Horne, Charles Hamilton Houston, Mahalia Jackson, Martin Luther King, Jr., the Tuskegee Airmen, Thurgood Marshall, Rosa Parks, Bill Pickett, Jackie Robinson, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Homer Plessy, the Greensboro Four, Simeon Booker, and Booker T. Washington each lived a life of incandescent greatness;

Whereas many African Americans lived, toiled, and died in obscurity, never achieving the recognition they deserved, and yet paved the way for future generations to succeed;

Whereas pioneers, such as Maya Angelou, Arthur Ashe, Jr., Carol Moseley Braun, Ronald Brown, Ursula Burns, Kenneth Chenault, David Dinkins, Alexis Herman, Mae Jemison, Earvin "Magic" Johnson, Sheila Johnson, James Earl Jones, David Paterson, Marian Wright Edelman, Alice Walker, Oprah Winfrey, General Colin Powell, Dr. Condoleezza Rice, and Clarence Thomas have all benefitted from their forefathers and have served as great role models and leaders for future generations;

Whereas on November 4, 2008, the people of the United States elected an African-American man, Barack Obama, as President of the United States;

Whereas African Americans continue to serve the United States at the highest levels of government and military;

Whereas on February 22, 2012, President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama, along with former First Lady Laura Bush, celebrated the groundbreaking of the National Museum of African American History and Culture on the National Mall, in Washington, DC;

Whereas the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass inspired the creation of Negro History Week, the precursor to Black History Month;

Whereas Negro History Week represented the culmination of the efforts of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the "Father of Black History", to enhance knowledge of Black history through the *Journal of Negro History*, published by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, which was founded by Dr. Woodson and Jesse E. Moorland;

Whereas Black History Month, celebrated during the month of February, dates back to 1926 when Dr. Woodson set aside a special period in February to recognize the heritage and achievement of Black people of the United States;

Whereas Dr. Woodson stated: "We have a wonderful history behind us. . . . If you are unable to demonstrate to the world that you have this record, the world will say to you, 'You are not worthy to enjoy the blessings of democracy or anything else.'";

Whereas since the founding of the United States, the country imperfectly progressed towards noble goals; and

Whereas the history of the United States is the story of people regularly affirming high

ideals, striving to reach such ideals but often failing, and then struggling to come to terms with the disappointment of such failure, before committing to trying again: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) acknowledges that all people of the United States are the recipients of the wealth of history provided by Black culture;

(2) recognizes the importance of Black History Month as an opportunity to reflect on the complex history of the United States, while remaining hopeful and confident about the path ahead;

(3) acknowledges the significance of Black History Month as an important opportunity to recognize the tremendous contributions of African Americans to the history of the United States;

(4) encourages the celebration of Black History Month to provide a continuing opportunity for all people in the United States to learn from the past and understand the experiences that have shaped the United States; and

(5) agrees that, while the United States began as a divided nation, the United States must—

(A) honor the contribution of all pioneers in the United States who have helped to ensure the legacy of the great United States; and

(B) move forward with purpose, united tirelessly as "one Nation . . . indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2754. Mr. KAINÉ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2755. Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. BEGICH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2756. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2757. Mr. HELLER (for himself, Ms. HETTKAMP, and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2758. Mr. COBURN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2759. Mr. COBURN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2760. Mr. COBURN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2761. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2762. Mr. COBURN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BURR, Mr. LEE, and Mr. FLAKE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2763. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her

to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2764. Ms. BALDWIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2765. Ms. STABENOW submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2766. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2747 proposed by Mr. SANDERS to the bill S. 1982, supra.

SA 2767. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1982, supra.

SA 2768. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2767 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 1982, supra.

SA 2769. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2768 proposed by Mr. REID to the amendment SA 2767 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 1982, supra.

SA 2770. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2771. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2772. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2773. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2774. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2775. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2776. Mr. UDALL, of New Mexico (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2777. Mr. UDALL, of New Mexico submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2778. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2779. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2754. Mr. KAINÉ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 33, after line 18, add the following:
SEC. 207. COURSES UNDER EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE AUTHORITIES ADMINISTERED BY SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3679 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) A course offered by an educational institution in a State that is a required element of the curriculum to be satisfied to obtain employment in an occupation or profession requiring the approval or licensure of a board or agency of that State may be treated as approved for purposes of this chapter by an individual seeking to obtain employment in that occupation or profession only if—

“(1) the successful completion of the curriculum fully qualifies a student to—

“(A) take any examination required for entry into the occupation or profession, including satisfying any State or professionally mandated programmatic and specialized accreditation requirements; and

“(B) be certified or licensed or meet any other academically related pre-conditions that are required for entry into the occupation or profession; and

“(2) in the case of State licensing or professionally mandated requirements for entry into the occupation or profession that require specialized accreditation, the curriculum meets the requirement for specialized accreditation through its accreditation or pre-accreditation by an accrediting agency or association recognized by the Secretary of Education or designated by that State as a reliable authority as to the quality or training offered by the institution in that program.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on August 1, 2014, and shall apply with respect to courses pursued on or after that date.

SEC. 208. REVISION OF PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall reestablish the Professional Certification and Licensure Advisory Committee of the Department of Veterans Affairs provided for under section 3689(e) of title 38, United States Code. The Committee shall be reestablished in accordance with the provisions of such section 3689(e), as amended by subsection (b), and shall carry out its duties in conformance with, and subject to the requirements of such section, as so amended.

(b) MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITIES AND REQUIREMENTS.—Section 3689(e) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by inserting “(A)” after “(2)”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(B) In addition to the duties under subparagraph (A), the Committee shall—

“(i) develop, in coordination with other appropriate agencies, guidance to be used by the Department or other entities to perform periodic audits of licensure and certification programs to ensure the highest quality education is available to veterans and members of the Armed Forces; and

“(ii) develop, in coordination with the Department of Defense, appropriate certification agencies, and other appropriate nonprofit organizations, a plan to improve outreach to veterans and members of the Armed Forces on the importance of licensing and certification, as well as educational benefits available to them.”.

(2) in paragraph (3)(B), by striking “and the Secretary of Defense” and inserting “the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Education”;

(3) in paragraph (4), by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following new subparagraph:

“(B) The Committee shall meet with such frequency as the Committee determines appropriate.”; and

(4) in paragraph (5), by striking “December 31, 2006” and inserting “December 31, 2019”.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the reestablishment of the Professional Certification and Licensure Advisory Committee of the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to this section, the Committee shall submit to Congress a report setting forth an assessment of the feasibility and advisability of permitting members of the Armed Forces to use educational assistance to which they are entitled under chapters 30 and 33 of title 38, United States Code, to obtain or pursue civilian employment certifications or licenses without the use of such assistance for that purpose being charged against the entitlement of such members to such educational assistance.

SA 2755. Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself and Mr. BEGICH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 233, strike line 20 and all that follows through page 236, line 25, and insert the following:

SEC. 504. ADVANCE APPROPRIATIONS FOR CERTAIN ACCOUNTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 117 is amended—

(1) by striking “medical care accounts of the Department” each place it appears and inserting “covered accounts of the Department”;

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking “medical care accounts of the Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs account” and inserting “accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs account”;

(B) in paragraph (1), by inserting “Veterans Health Administration,” after “(1)”;

(C) in paragraph (2), by inserting “Veterans Health Administration,” after “(2)”;

(D) in paragraph (3), by inserting “Veterans Health Administration,” after “(3)”;

(E) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (3) as paragraphs (7) through (9), respectively;

(F) by inserting before paragraph (7), as redesignated by subparagraph (E), the following new paragraphs:

“(1) Veterans Benefits Administration, Compensation and Pensions.

“(2) Veterans Benefits Administration, Re-adjustment Benefits.

“(3) Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Insurance and Indemnities.

“(4) Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Housing Benefit Program Fund.

“(5) Veterans Benefits Administration, Vocational Rehabilitation Loans Program Account.

“(6) Veterans Benefits Administration, Native American Veteran Housing Loan Program Account.”; and

(G) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(10) Veterans Health Administration, Medical and Prosthetic Research.

“(11) National Cemetery Administration.

“(12) Departmental Administration, General Administration.

“(13) Departmental Administration, General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration.

“(14) Departmental Administration, Information Technology Systems.

“(15) Departmental Administration, Office of Inspector General.

“(16) Departmental Administration, Construction, Major Projects.

“(17) Departmental Administration, Construction, Minor Projects.

“(18) Departmental Administration, Grants for Construction of State Extended Care Facilities.

“(19) Departmental Administration, Grants for Construction of Veterans Cemeteries.”;

(H) in the subsection heading, by striking “MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS” and inserting “COVERED ACCOUNTS”; and

(3) in the section heading, by striking “CERTAIN MEDICAL CARE ACCOUNTS” and inserting “CERTAIN ACCOUNTS”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply with respect to fiscal year 2016 and each subsequent fiscal year.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking the first paragraph (37) and inserting the following:

“(37) information on estimates of appropriations for the fiscal year following the fiscal year for which the budget is submitted for the following accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs:

“(A) Veterans Benefits Administration, Compensation and Pensions.

“(B) Veterans Benefits Administration, Re-adjustment Benefits.

“(C) Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Insurance and Indemnities.

“(D) Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Housing Benefit Program Fund.

“(E) Veterans Benefits Administration, Vocational Rehabilitation Loans Program Account.

“(F) Veterans Benefits Administration, Native American Veteran Housing Loan Program Account.

“(G) Veterans Health Administration, Medical Services.

“(H) Veterans Health Administration, Medical Support and Compliance.

“(I) Veterans Health Administration, Medical Facilities.

“(J) Veterans Health Administration, Medical and Prosthetic Research.

“(K) National Cemetery Administration.

“(L) Departmental Administration, General Administration.

“(M) Departmental Administration, General Operating Expenses, Veterans Benefits Administration.

“(N) Departmental Administration, Information Technology Systems.

“(O) Departmental Administration, Office of the Inspector General.

“(P) Departmental Administration, Construction, Major Projects.

“(Q) Departmental Administration, Construction, Minor Projects.

“(R) Departmental Administration, Grants for Construction of State Extended Care Facilities.

“(S) Departmental Administration, Grants for Construction of Veterans Cemeteries.”.

(d) TECHNICAL CORRECTION.—Such section is further amended by redesignating the second paragraph (37), as added by section 11(a)(2) of the GPRM Modernization Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-352; 124 Stat. 3881), as paragraph (39).

SA 2756. Mr. HELLER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 291, after line 21, add the following:

Subtitle E—Other Matters

SEC. 641. IMPROVEMENTS TO AUTHORITY FOR PERFORMANCE OF MEDICAL DISABILITIES EXAMINATIONS BY CONTRACT PHYSICIAN.

(a) EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY AUTHORITY.—Subsection (c) of section 704 of the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-183; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note) is amended by striking “December 31, 2014” and inserting “December 31, 2016”.

(b) LICENSURE OF CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.—

(1) TEMPORARY AUTHORITY.—Such section 704 is further amended—

(A) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e); and

(B) by inserting after subsection (c) the following new subsection (d):

“(d) LICENSURE OF CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any law regarding the licensure of physicians, a physician described in paragraph (2) may conduct an examination pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (b) at any location in any State, the District of Columbia, or a Commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States, so long as the examination is within the scope of the authorized duties under such contract.

“(2) PHYSICIAN DESCRIBED.—A physician described in this paragraph is a physician who—

“(A) has a current license to practice the health care profession of the physician; and

“(B) is performing authorized duties for the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (b).”.

(2) PILOT PROGRAM.—Section 504 of the Veterans’ Benefits Improvement Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-275; 38 U.S.C. 5101 note) is amended—

(A) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection (c):

“(c) LICENSURE OF CONTRACT PHYSICIANS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any law regarding the licensure of physicians, a physician described in paragraph (2) may conduct an examination pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (a) at any location in any State, the District of Columbia, or a Commonwealth, territory, or possession of the United States, so long as the examination is within the scope of the authorized duties under such contract.

“(2) PHYSICIAN DESCRIBED.—A physician described in this paragraph is a physician who—

“(A) has a current license to practice the health care profession of the physician; and

“(B) is performing authorized duties for the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to a contract entered into under subsection (a).”.

(c) EXPANSION OF PILOT PROGRAM.—Subsection (b) of such section 504 is amended to read as follows:

“(b) LOCATIONS.—

“(1) NUMBER.—The Secretary may carry out the pilot program under this section through not more than 15 regional offices of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

“(2) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall select the regional offices under paragraph (1) by analyzing appropriate data to determine the regional offices that require support. Such appropriate data shall include—

“(A) the number of backlogged claims;

“(B) the total pending case workload;

“(C) the length of time cases have been pending;

“(D) the accuracy of completed cases;

“(E) the overall timeliness of completed cases;

“(F) the availability and workload of the examination units and physicians of the medical centers in the regional office; and

“(G) any other data the Secretary determines appropriate.

“(3) ANNUAL ANALYSIS.—The Secretary shall carry out the data analysis of the regional offices under paragraph (2) during each year in which the program under this section is carried out to determine the regional offices selected under paragraph (1) for such year.”.

SA 2757. Mr. HELLER (for himself, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. MANCHIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IX, add the following:

SEC. 918. EXCLUSION FROM INCOME.

Section 3(b)(4) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b)(4)) is amended—

(1) by striking “and any amounts” and inserting “, any amounts”;

(2) by striking “or any deferred” and inserting “, any deferred”; and

(3) by inserting after “prospective monthly amounts” the following: “, and any reimbursement related to aid and attendance as detailed under section 1521 of title 38, United States Code”.

SA 2758. Mr. COBURN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 76, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

SEC. 330. PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION ON PROVISION OF HEALTH CARE BY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall publish on an Internet database of the Department of Veterans Affairs available to the public information on the provision of health care by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) ELEMENTS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Each publication required by paragraph (1) shall include, with respect to each medical facility of the Department during the 180-day period preceding such publication, the following:

(i) An assessment of the outcomes of each surgical procedure with respect to each patient, including—

(I) the quality of such procedure;

(II) any complications that occurred during such procedure; and

(III) the safety of such patient in connection with such procedure.

(ii) The average length of stay for inpatient care.

(iii) A description of any hospital-acquired condition acquired by any patient.

(iv) The rate of readmission of patients within 30 days of release.

(v) The rate of mortality of patients within 30 days of release.

(vi) The rate at which opioids are prescribed to each patient.

(vii) An assessment of the outcomes of mental health treatment with respect to each patient, including—

(I) the suicide rate; and

(II) the safety of such patient in connection with such mental health treatment.

(viii) An assessment of the outcomes of nursing home treatment, if any, with respect to each patient, including the safety of such patient in connection with such nursing home treatment.

(ix) The average wait time for emergency room treatment.

(x) A description of any scheduling backlog with respect to patient appointments.

(B) ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS.—The Secretary may include in each publication required by paragraph (1) any additional information on the safety of facilities of the Department, health outcomes at such facilities, and quality of care at such facilities as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(3) SEARCHABILITY.—The Secretary shall ensure that the Internet database required by paragraph (1) is searchable by State, city, and facility.

(4) PERSONAL INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that personal information connected to information published under paragraph (1) is protected from disclosure as required by applicable law.

(b) COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report setting forth recommendations for additional elements to be included with the information published under subsection (a) to improve the evaluation and assessment of the safety and health of individuals receiving care under the laws administered by the Secretary and the quality of care received by such individuals.

SA 2759. Mr. COBURN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 34, strike line 6 and all that follows through page 38, line 22.

SA 2760. Mr. COBURN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 76, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

SEC. 330. PROGRAM TO ALLOW INDIVIDUALS ELIGIBLE FOR HEALTH CARE FROM DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO RECEIVE SUCH CARE FROM NON-DEPARTMENT ENTITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 17 is amended by inserting after section 1703 the following new section:

“§ 1703A. Program to allow individuals eligible for health care from Department to receive such care from non-Department entities

“(a) IN GENERAL.—(1) Commencing not later than one year after the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans

Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014, the Secretary shall carry out a program to provide health care and services to eligible individuals described in subsection (b) through non-Department providers and suppliers.

“(2) For purposes of this section:

“(A) The term ‘provider’ means a provider of services, as that term is defined in subsection (u) of section 1861 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x), participating in the Medicare program under title XVIII of such Act.

“(B) The term ‘supplier’ means a supplier, as that term is defined in subsection (d) of such section, participating in the Medicare program under title XVIII of such Act.

“(b) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—An eligible individual described in this subsection is an individual who—

“(1) is a veteran, surviving spouse of a veteran, spouse of a veteran, or a child of a veteran; and

“(2) is eligible for health care and services under the laws administered by the Secretary.

“(c) RESTRICTION ON CERTAIN PROVIDERS AND SUPPLIERS.—The Secretary may restrict a provider or supplier from providing care and services under the program if the Secretary determines that veterans have received substandard care from that provider or supplier.

“(d) PAYMENTS TO PROVIDERS AND SUPPLIERS.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2), payment rates to providers and suppliers for the provision of care and services under the program shall not exceed the payment rates under the fee-for-service program under the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1355 et seq.) for a comparable item or service.

“(2) The Secretary shall ensure that the aggregate amount paid to non-Department providers and suppliers for the provision of care and services under the program does not exceed the cost of providing such care and services through the Department.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 17 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1703 the following new item:

“1703A. Program to allow individuals eligible for health care from Department to receive such care from non-Department entities.”.

SA 2761. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 76, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

SEC. 330. PILOT PROGRAM TO ALLOW INDIVIDUALS ELIGIBLE FOR HEALTH CARE FROM DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS TO RECEIVE SUCH CARE FROM NON-DEPARTMENT ENTITIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall commence a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing health care and services to eligible individuals described in subsection (b) through non-Department providers and at non-Department facilities.

(b) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—Eligible individuals described in this subsection are veterans, surviving spouses of veterans, spouses

of veterans, and children of veterans (as those terms are defined in section 101 of title 38, United States Code) who are eligible for health care and services under the laws administered by the Secretary.

(c) PROVIDERS AND FACILITIES.—In carrying out the pilot program under this section, the Secretary shall select such non-Department providers and such non-Department facilities as the Secretary considers appropriate to provide health care and services as described in subsection (a).

(d) LOCATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (3), the Secretary shall carry out the pilot program at not more than 40 locations selected by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program, which shall include at least one location within each Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN).

(2) PRIORITY.—In selecting locations under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall give priority consideration to those locations in which individuals seeking primary care appointments at the nearest medical facility of the Department of Veterans Affairs have the longest average wait time.

(3) ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS.—The Secretary may expand the pilot program to include more than 40 locations as the Secretary considers appropriate on the earlier of—

(A) the date that the Secretary determines that the pilot program—

(i) is cost effective, feasible, and advisable; and

(ii) has equal or better outcomes and satisfaction among veterans as compared to health care and services received through providers and facilities of the Department; or

(B) three years after the date of the commencement of the pilot program.

(e) PAYMENTS TO PROVIDERS AND FACILITIES.—

(1) PAYMENT RATES.—Subject to paragraph (2), in carrying out the pilot program under this section, the Secretary shall specify the rates by which non-Department providers and non-Department facilities are paid for the provision of care and services under the pilot program.

(2) LIMITATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that the aggregate amount paid to non-Department providers and non-Department facilities for the provision of care and services under the pilot program does not exceed the cost of providing such care and services through providers and facilities of the Department.

SA 2762. Mr. COBURN (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BURR, Mr. LEE, and Mr. FLAKE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 367, after line 14, insert the following:

SEC. 817. LIMITATION ON IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW PROGRAMS AND EXPANSION OF EXISTING PROGRAMS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may not implement any new program or expand any existing program pursuant to any provision of this Act until the Comptroller General of the United States certifies to Congress that the Secretary is meeting all strategic targets for every program measure established in the report of the Department

of Veterans Affairs entitled “2013 Performance and Accountability Report”.

SA 2763. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 291, after line 21, add the following:

Subtitle E—Other Claims Processing Matters
SEC. 641. INSPECTOR GENERAL INVESTIGATION INTO WHETHER EMPLOYEES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DESTROYED FILES TO MISREPRESENT BACKLOG OF CLAIMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall commence an investigation to assess whether employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs have destroyed files in order to misrepresent the backlog of claims filed with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

(b) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector General shall submit to Congress a report on the findings of the Inspector General with respect to the investigation carried out pursuant to subsection (a).

SA 2764. Ms. BALDWIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 131, after line 19, add the following:

SEC. 365. AGREEMENTS WITH ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO VETERANS WHO ARE SURVIVORS OF MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.

(a) MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may enter into a memorandum of understanding with an organization described in subsection (b) to provide services to veterans who are survivors of military sexual trauma.

(b) COVERED ORGANIZATIONS.—Organizations described in this subsection are civilian organizations, including the following:

(1) Nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations.

(2) Religious or community-based organizations.

(3) Federally qualified health centers.

(4) The Indian Health Service.

(c) PURPOSE.—The purpose of a memorandum of understanding entered into under subsection (a) shall be to facilitate working and collegial relationships between the senior leadership of the Department of Veterans Affairs and an organization described in subsection (b) in order to assist the Department in better addressing military sexual trauma in one or more veteran communities.

(d) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once each year, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on any memoranda of understanding entered into under subsection (a).

(2) IN GENERAL.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) How many memoranda have been entered into and are currently in force.

(B) The strategies in such memoranda.

(C) The outcomes of the relationships sought through such memoranda.

(D) Such recommendations as the Secretary may have for legislative or administrative action to facilitate a relationship described in subsection (c) or otherwise better address military sexual trauma in a veteran community.

SEC. 366. REPORT ON FEASIBILITY AND ADVISABILITY OF SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO VETERANS WHO ARE SURVIVORS OF MILITARY SEXUAL TRAUMA.

(a) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the feasibility and advisability of supporting partnerships between local medical facilities (as defined in section 8101 of title 38, United States Code) with organizations described in subsection (b) to provide services (including mental health services and trauma-informed services) to veterans who are survivors of military sexual trauma.

(b) **COVERED ORGANIZATIONS.**—Organizations described in this subsection are civilian organizations, including the following:

(1) Nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations.

(2) Religious or community-based organizations.

(3) Federally qualified health centers.

(4) The Indian Health Service.

(c) **CONTENTS.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the effect of the Patient-Center Community Care program of the Department of Veterans Affairs on the provision of specialty care for survivors of military sexual trauma.

(2) An assessment of the feasibility and advisability of supporting partnerships as described in subsection (a) in not fewer than three Veterans Integrated Service Networks.

(3) Recommendations as to the kinds or types of organizations to which medical facilities should partner as described in subsection (a), including recommendations on the following:

(A) Nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations, the primary purpose of which is to provide services to survivors of military sexual trauma, sexual assault, domestic violence, family violence, or stalking.

(B) Religious or community-based organizations that specialize in working with survivors described in subparagraph (A).

SA 2765. Ms. STABENOW submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 109, strike lines 18 through 22 and insert the following:

(2) The number of individuals participating in the pilot program at each site, disaggregated by—

(A) age;

(B) sex;

(C) disability rating;

(D) any illness or condition co-occurring with the mental health disorder for which the individual is receiving treatment under the pilot program and with which the individual has been previously diagnosed by the Department; and

(E) whether or not the individual is homeless.

(3) A detailed assessment of the effectiveness of the pilot program, including a survey

of each veteran participating in the pilot program, to determine the impact of the program on—

(A) the success of such veteran in obtaining and maintaining gainful employment;

(B) the success of such veteran in pursuing and completing educational opportunities;

(C) the interpersonal relationships of such veteran, including relationships with family members; and

(D) the success of such veteran in achieving stable housing.

SA 2766. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2747 proposed by Mr. SANDERS to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 1 day after enactment.

SA 2767. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

This Act shall become effective 3 days after enactment.

SA 2768. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2767 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; as follows:

In the amendment, strike “3 days” and insert “4 days”.

SA 2769. Mr. REID proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2768 proposed by Mr. REID to the amendment SA 2767 proposed by Mr. REID to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; as follows:

In the amendment, strike “4 days” and insert “5 days”.

SA 2770. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 155, strike line 8 and all that follows through page 157, line 17.

SA 2771. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 132, strike line 13 and all that follows through the matter preceding line 1 on page 134.

SA 2772. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes;

which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 39, strike lines 18 through 25.

SA 2773. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 122, after line 20, insert the following:

SEC. 356. TERMINATION OF CERTAIN PROGRAMS RELATING TO DENTAL CARE.

(a) **PILOT PROGRAM ON EXPANSION OF FURNISHING OF DENTAL CARE TO VETERANS.**—Notwithstanding subsection (b) of section 352, the pilot program required by such section shall terminate not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) **PROGRAM OF EDUCATION TO PROMOTE DENTAL HEALTH FOR VETERANS.**—The program required by section 353 shall terminate not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(c) **PILOT PROGRAM ON DENTAL INSURANCE.**—Notwithstanding section 354(b), the dental insurance pilot program established by section 17.169 of title 38, Code of Federal Regulations, shall terminate not later than three years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2774. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 53, strike line 13 and all that follows through page 61, line 5.

SA 2775. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, and Ms. BALDWIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 918. DEFINITION OF SPOUSE FOR PURPOSES OF VETERAN BENEFITS TO REFLECT NEW STATE DEFINITIONS OF SPOUSE.

(a) **SPOUSE DEFINED.**—Section 101 is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “of the opposite sex”; and

(2) by striking paragraph (31) and inserting the following new paragraph (31):

“(31)(A) An individual shall be considered a ‘spouse’ if—

“(i) the marriage of the individual is valid in the State in which the marriage was entered into; or

“(ii) in the case of a marriage entered into outside any State—

“(I) if the marriage of the individual is valid in the place in which the marriage was entered into; and

“(II)(aa) the marriage could have been entered into in a State; or

“(bb) the marriage was valid in the place in which all parties to the marriage resided at the time the marriage was entered into.

“(B) In this paragraph, the term ‘State’ has the meaning given that term in paragraph (20), except that the term also includes the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.”.

(b) **MARRIAGE DETERMINATION.**—Section 103(c) is amended by striking “according to” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “in accordance with section 101(31) of this title.”.

SA 2776. Mr. UDALL of New Mexico (for himself and Mr. HELLER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 155, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

Subtitle I—Health Care for Rural Veterans

SEC. 391. PROVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH CARE TO CERTAIN VETERANS IN RURAL AND HIGHLY RURAL AREAS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall provide mental health care to eligible veterans described in subsection (c) for which a determination has been made under subsection (d).

(b) **USE OF OTHER PROVIDERS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may provide mental health care under this section by contracting with or providing payments to mental health care providers that are not otherwise affiliated with the Department of Veterans Affairs and shall, to the extent feasible, use health care resources pursuant to existing arrangements, contracts, or agreements entered into under section 8153 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) **PAYMENTS.**—The Secretary may not provide payments described in paragraph (1) that exceed the amount that the Secretary would otherwise expend in providing similar mental health care through the Department or under such existing arrangements, contracts, or agreements.

(c) **ELIGIBLE VETERANS.**—An eligible veteran described in this subsection is a veteran that—

(1) has a mental health issue resulting from post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, or any other health condition that was incurred or aggravated in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service; and

(2) lives in a rural area or highly rural area.

(d) **DETERMINATION.**—The Secretary shall provide the care required by subsection (a) to an eligible veteran if the Secretary determines any of the following:

(1)(A) A mental health care provider affiliated with the Department is not available to provide mental health care services to the eligible veteran at the medical facility of the Department that is nearest to the residence of the eligible veteran; and

(B)(i) in-person and telehealth mental health care services from the Department are not available to the eligible veteran;

(ii) the eligible veteran requests that a mental health care provider affiliated with the Department provide mental health care services to the eligible veteran in private and the provider is unable or unwilling to do so; or

(iii) travel by the eligible veteran to a regional medical center of the Department is impractical or severely detrimental to the health of the eligible veteran.

(2) That—

(A)(i) a mental health care provider affiliated with the Department has recommended that a complementary and alternative therapy approved by the Food and Drug Administration be administered to the eligible veteran;

(ii) the eligible veteran is a member of an Indian tribe or a Native Hawaiian and requests a healing method that is a cultural tradition of the eligible veteran; or

(iii) a mental health care provider has recommended a treatment for the eligible veteran that, based on the medical knowledge of the health care provider, is safe and would assist the eligible veteran in coping with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, or another mental health issue; and

(B)(i) the eligible veteran has not received the therapy, healing method, or treatment described in subparagraph (A) because of the inaccessibility or unavailability of such treatment from a medical facility of the Department; and

(ii) the eligible veteran, as a result of the mental health condition of the eligible veteran—

(I) cannot work or maintain employment;

(II) is at increased risk of doing physical harm to the eligible veteran or others; or

(III) cannot adequately manage activities of daily life.

(e) **INDIAN TRIBE DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “Indian tribe” has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

SEC. 392. GRANTS TO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION TO COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINICS FOR VETERANS IN RURAL AND HIGHLY RURAL AREAS.

(a) **GRANTS AUTHORIZED.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may award grants to eligible entities to provide transportation to veterans in rural and highly rural areas who would otherwise be eligible for reimbursement for or payment of travel expenses by the Department of Veterans Affairs pursuant to section 111 or section 111A of title 38, United States Code.

(2) **MAXIMUM AMOUNT.**—The Secretary may not award a grant under this section in an amount that exceeds \$100,000.

(3) **NO MATCHING REQUIRED.**—The Secretary may not require that an eligible entity provide a contribution of funds as a condition of receiving the grant.

(b) **ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.**—The Secretary may award grants under this section to any of the following entities:

(1) State veterans agencies.

(2) Veterans service organizations.

(3) Tribal organizations.

(c) **USE OF GRANTS.**—Eligible entities in receipt of a grant under this section may use the grant amount as follows:

(1) To provide transportation to veterans in rural and highly rural areas to and from medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including transportation by air or sea if necessary.

(2) To otherwise assist veterans in rural and highly rural areas with transportation in connection with the provision of medical care to those veterans, including transportation by air or sea if necessary.

(d) **APPLICATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Each eligible entity seeking a grant under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

(2) **CONTENTS.**—Each application submitted pursuant to paragraph (1) shall contain a

proposal for the manner in which the eligible entity seeks to provide the transportation described in subsection (a).

(e) **PRIORITY.**—The Secretary shall give priority in the awarding of grants under this section to applications submitted under subsection (d) that contain proposals that comply with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794) and regulations issued by the Secretary of Transportation under such section 504.

(f) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.**—The term “tribal organization” has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

(2) **VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION.**—The term “veterans service organization” means an organization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 393. PILOT PROGRAM ON HOUSING ALLOWANCES FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ACCEPTING ASSIGNMENT AT RURAL AND HIGHLY RURAL COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINICS.

(a) **PILOT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing a housing allowance to health care providers of the Department of Veterans Affairs who accept assignment at rural or highly rural community-based outpatient clinics as a means of encouraging such health care providers to accept assignment to such Clinics.

(b) **ELIGIBILITY.**—An individual is eligible for participation in the pilot program if the individual—

(1) is a health care provider;

(2) is, or agrees to become, an employee of the Veterans Health Administration on a full-time basis in a health care position designated by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program; and

(3) accepts an assignment in such position for a term of not less than 36 months at a rural or highly rural community-based outpatient clinic selected by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program.

(c) **CONDITIONS ON PAYMENT OF HOUSING ALLOWANCE.**—Except as provided in subsection (d)(3), an individual may be provided a housing allowance under the pilot program only while—

(1) in good standing as a health care provider within the Veterans Health Administration; and

(2) assigned as a health care provider at a rural or highly rural community-based outpatient clinic.

(d) **AMOUNT OF HOUSING ALLOWANCE.**—

(1) **MONTHLY AMOUNT DURING INITIAL TERM.**—During the first 36 months of participation in the pilot program, the housing allowance provided a health care provider participating in the pilot program shall be provided on a monthly basis at a rate that is equivalent to the monthly rate of basic allowance for housing (BAH) payable under section 403 of title 37, United States Code, to members of the uniformed services whose grade, dependency status, and geographic location most closely equals, as determined by the Secretary, the grade of such provider under section 7404 of title 38, United States Code, and the dependency status and geographic location of such provider.

(2) **MONTHLY AMOUNT FOR CERTAIN PROVIDERS FOR ADDITIONAL TERM.**—If upon completion of the first 36 months in the pilot

program a health care provider accepts continuing participation in the pilot program at a rural or highly rural community-based outpatient clinic for a term of not less than 12 additional months, the housing allowance provided the health care provider under the pilot program shall be provided on a monthly basis for such additional months at a rate determined in accordance with paragraph (1).

(3) BONUS AMOUNT.—

(A) COMPLETION OF INITIAL TERM.—Any health care provider who successfully completes 36 months of participation in the pilot program shall be paid upon completion of participation in the pilot program an amount equal to three months of the monthly rate of housing allowance provided the health care provider under paragraph (1) during the last month before the provider's completion of participation in the pilot program.

(B) COMPLETION OF ADDITIONAL ONE-YEAR TERM.—Any health care provider who successfully completes 48 months of participation in the pilot program shall be paid upon completion of participation in the pilot program an amount equal to 12 months of the monthly rate of housing allowance provided the health care provider under paragraph (2) during the last month before the provider's completion of participation in the pilot program.

(C) COMPLETION OF ADDITIONAL TWO-YEAR TERM.—Any health care provider who successfully completes 60 months of participation in the pilot program shall be paid upon completion of participation in the pilot program an amount equal to 13 months of the monthly rate of housing allowance provided the health care provider under paragraph (2) during the last month before the provider's completion of participation in the pilot program.

(D) NO REQUIREMENT TO REMAIN ON ASSIGNMENT.—An amount payable under this paragraph shall be paid whether or not the health care provider concerned remains in an assignment at a rural or highly rural community-based outpatient clinic.

(e) NATURE OF ALLOWANCE.—

(1) SUPPLEMENTAL AMOUNT.—Any housing allowance provided under the pilot program shall be in addition to any pay (including basic pay, special pay, and retirement or other bonus pay) payable to personnel of the Veterans Health Administration personnel under chapter 74 of title 38, United States Code, or any other provision of law.

(2) EXEMPTION FROM TAXATION.—For purposes of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, any housing allowance provided under the pilot program shall not be included in gross income.

(f) ANNUAL REPORTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act and not less frequently than once each year thereafter while the pilot program is in effect, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the pilot program.

(2) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A current description of the pilot program, including the current number of participants in the pilot program and the amounts of housing allowance being provided such participants.

(B) A current assessment of the value of the housing allowance under the pilot program in encouraging health care providers in accepting assignment to rural and highly rural community-based outpatient clinics.

(g) FUNDING.—Amounts for housing allowances under the pilot program shall be derived from amounts available for the Veterans Health Administration for Medical Services.

(h) SUNSET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No individual may commence participation in the pilot program on or after the date that is five years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) CONTINUATION OF ON-GOING PROVISION OF ALLOWANCE.—Nothing in paragraph (1) shall be construed to prohibit the Secretary from providing housing allowances under the pilot program to individuals who commence participation in the pilot program before the date that is five years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(i) RURAL OR HIGHLY RURAL COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC DEFINED.—In this section, the term "rural or highly rural community-based outpatient clinic" means a community-based outpatient clinic of the Veterans Health Administration that predominantly serves veterans who live in rural and highly rural areas.

SEC. 394. PROGRAM ON TRAINING HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS FOR ASSIGNMENT AT COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINICS THAT PREDOMINANTLY SERVE VETERANS WHO LIVE IN RURAL AND HIGHLY RURAL AREAS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish a program to train health care professionals for assignment at community-based outpatient clinics that predominantly serve veterans who live in rural and highly rural areas.

(2) PARTNERSHIP WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary may enter into partnerships with educational institutions.

(B) CONSULTATION.—If the Secretary enters into a partnership with an educational institution to carry out the program, the Secretary shall consult with the head of such educational institution with respect to the training and curriculum provided under the program at such educational institution.

(b) TRAINING.—The training provided to health care professionals under the program shall include the following courses:

(1) Courses on general professional development of health care professionals.

(2) Courses on providing health care to rural populations and specifically to rural veterans.

(c) CURRICULUM.—The program shall include training with respect to health issues that commonly afflict veterans as specified by the Secretary.

(d) HIRING PREFERENCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each health care professional that completes the program and completes a three-year assignment at a community-based outpatient clinic that predominantly serves veterans who live in rural and highly rural areas shall receive a preference in selection for employment in the Veterans Health Administration at the end of such three-year assignment.

(2) DEGREE OF PREFERENCE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The preference received under paragraph (1) shall be less than the preference given a veteran.

(B) VETERANS.—A veteran that receives a preference under paragraph (1) shall receive a greater preference than an individual that receives a preference under such paragraph who is not a veteran.

SEC. 395. ENCOURAGING AND FACILITATING TRANSITION OF MILITARY MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS INTO EMPLOYMENT WITH VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION.

(a) ENCOURAGING EMPLOYMENT WITH VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense shall jointly establish a program to encourage an individual who serves in the Armed Forces with a military occupational specialty relating to the provision of health care to seek employment with the Veterans Health Administration when the individual has been discharged or released from service in the Armed Forces or is contemplating separating from such service.

(b) MATCHING OF MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALTIES.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense shall jointly identify military occupational specialties relating to the provision of health care and match such occupational specialties with occupations and positions of employment within the Veterans Health Administration for which experience in such military occupational specialty qualifies one for employment in such occupation or position of employment.

(c) FACILITATION OF TRANSITION TO EMPLOYMENT WITH VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense shall prescribe such regulations and take such actions as may be necessary to facilitate the transition of individuals with military occupational specialties identified under subsection (b) into the corresponding occupations and positions of employment with the Veterans Health Administration under such subsection.

SEC. 396. ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINICS IN RURAL AND HIGHLY RURAL AREAS.

(a) ASSESSMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct a periodic assessment of community-based outpatient clinics in rural and highly rural areas to determine whether expansion and improvement of community-based outpatient clinics in those areas is feasible or advisable.

(2) ELEMENTS.—Each periodic assessment required by subsection (a) shall include the following with respect to each community-based outpatient clinic assessed:

(A) An assessment of whether the facility—

(i) meets applicable building code requirements;

(ii) meets applicable health care requirements related to privacy;

(iii) has the capacity to handle the number of patients that seek care at the facility;

(iv) has sufficient parking for patients that seek care at the facility;

(v) has adequate access to broadband technology to allow the use or expansion of telehealth services at the facility; and

(vi) has the capacity to properly store and dispose of medical and other hazardous waste.

(B) A survey of health care providers who practice at the facility with respect to—

(i) strengths of the facility;

(ii) weaknesses of the facility; and

(iii) areas in which the facility may be improved.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not less frequently than once each year thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report on the

findings of the Secretary with respect to the most recently completed assessment conducted under subsection (a), including such recommendations as the Secretary may have for the expansion or improvement of community-based outpatient clinics in rural and highly rural areas.

SEC. 397. REPORT ON ESTABLISHMENT OF POLYTRAUMA REHABILITATION CENTERS OR POLYTRAUMA NETWORK SITES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS IN RURAL AREAS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the feasibility and advisability of establishing a Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center or Polytrauma Network Site in each area in which the nearest Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center or Polytrauma Network Site is more than 300 miles away.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The report required by this section shall include the following:

(A) An assessment of the adequacy of existing Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers and Polytrauma Network Sites in providing care to veterans that live more than 300 miles from such facilities.

(B) An assessment of the adequacy of existing Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers and Polytrauma Network Sites in providing rehabilitation services pursuant to section 1710C of title 38, United States Code.

(C) An assessment of the feasibility and advisability of establishing a Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center or Polytrauma Network Site in each State in which there is a medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(D) An assessment of whether establishing new Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers and Polytrauma Network Sites would be beneficial—

(i) to the veteran population in general;

(ii) to veterans who live—

(I) more than 300 miles from the nearest Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center or Polytrauma Network Site; or

(II) in a State in which there is not a Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center or Polytrauma Network Site; and

(iii) to veterans who served in the active military, naval, or air service on or after September 11, 2001.

(2) BUDGET FOR ADDITIONAL FACILITIES.—If the Secretary determines that establishing additional Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers and Polytrauma Network Sites is feasible and advisable, the Secretary shall include with the report required by subsection (a) a budget and plan for the establishment of those additional facilities.

SEC. 398. REPORT ON EFFECTIVENESS OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE IN TREATING VETERANS WITH CERTAIN MENTAL ILLNESSES.

Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the effectiveness of complementary and alternative medicine used by the Department of Veterans Affairs in treating veterans with mental health conditions resulting from post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, or any other health condition that was incurred or aggravated in line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service.

SEC. 399. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) ACTIVE MILITARY, NAVAL, OR AIR SERVICE.—The term “active military, naval, or air service” has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(2) HIGHLY RURAL AREA.—The term “highly rural area” means an area located in a county that has less than seven individuals residing in that county per square mile.

(3) RURAL AREA.—The term “rural area” means any area that is not an urbanized area or a highly rural area.

(4) URBANIZED AREA.—The term “urbanized area” has the meaning given that term by the Director of the Bureau of the Census.

SA 2777. Mr. UDALL of New Mexico submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 33, after line 18, add the following:

SEC. 207. EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR POST-9/11 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO INCLUDE SERVICE ON ACTIVE DUTY IN ENTRY LEVEL AND SKILL TRAINING UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.

(a) FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO SERVE BETWEEN 18 AND 24 MONTHS.—Section 3311(b)(5)(A) of title 38, United States Code, is amended by striking “excluding” and inserting “including”.

(b) FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO SERVED IN OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, OR CERTAIN OTHER CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS.—Section 3311(b) of such title is amended in paragraphs (6)(A) and (7)(A) by striking “excluding service on active duty in entry level and skill training” and inserting “including service on active duty in entry level and skill training for individuals who served on active duty in the Armed Forces in Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, or any other contingency operation (as that term is defined in section 101 of title 10) and excluding service on active duty in entry level and skill training for all other individuals”.

SA 2778. Mr. BOOKER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 110, between lines 13 and 14, insert the following:

SEC. 345. REPORTS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF PATIENT-CENTERED COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 450 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and not later than September 30 each year thereafter for two years, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the program described in subsection (b).

(b) PROGRAM DESCRIBED.—The program described in this subsection is the program carried out by the Veterans Health Administration that offers veterans access to non-Department of Veterans Affairs inpatient specialty care, outpatient specialty care, mental health care, limited emergency care, and limited newborn care, commonly known as the “Patient-Centered Community Care Program”.

(c) ELEMENTS.—Each report submitted under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of the specific factors used by the Department to determine the use of the program described in subsection (b) by facilities of the Department.

(2) An analysis of the 10 health care services most frequently provided through the program and any recommendations by the Secretary to expand access to such services at facilities of the Department.

(3) An analysis of the quality of care provided through the program, including feedback from health care providers.

(4) An analysis of whether required medical documentation from health care providers participating in the program is provided to the Department in a timely and comprehensive manner for inclusion in the electronic health records of veterans.

(5) An analysis of the timeliness of payments made by the Department to health care providers for services provided through the program.

(6) A description of the specific factors used by the Department in determining if a veteran is eligible for care through non-Department providers, including such care that is not provided through the program.

(7) A description of the impact of the program on veterans participating in the program, including—

(A) the average increase or reduction in any travel required by such veterans for care;

(B) the average increase or reduction in wait-times by such veterans for care; and

(C) an analysis of the satisfaction of such veterans with the program.

(8) In response to information compiled or analyses conducted under paragraphs (1) through (7), a description of any proposed mechanisms—

(A) to reduce travel required by veterans to receive care;

(B) to reduce wait-times for veterans receiving care; or

(C) to increase the quality of care received by veterans.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall take effect on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2779. Ms. COLLINS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 291, after line 21, add the following:

Subtitle E—Other Claims Processing Matters

SEC. 641. INSPECTOR GENERAL INVESTIGATION INTO WHETHER EMPLOYEES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DESTROYED FILES TO MISREPRESENT BACKLOG OF CLAIMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs shall commence an investigation to assess—

(1) whether employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs have destroyed files; and

(2) whether the destruction of such files was carried out in order to misrepresent the backlog of claims filed with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

(b) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act,

the Inspector General shall submit to Congress a report on the findings of the Inspector General with respect to the investigation carried out pursuant to subsection (a).

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 26, 2014, at 10:30 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled "Treaties."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 26, 2014, at 2:15 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled "Prospects for Peace in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Great Lakes Region."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 26, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room S-216 of the Capitol Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 26, 2014, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Early Childhood Development and Education in Indian Country: Building a Foundation for Academic Success."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 26, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Offshore Tax Evasion: The Effort to Collect Unpaid Taxes on Billions in Hidden Offshore Accounts."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ANTITRUST, COMPETITION POLICY, AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary, Sub-

committee on Antitrust, Competition Policy, and Consumer Rights, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on February 26, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "An Examination of Competition in the Wireless Market."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 26, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Social Security, Pensions, and Family Policy of the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 26, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Retirement Savings for Low-Income Workers."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 26, 2014, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Jason Dean, a military fellow in my office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the remainder of this Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1752 AND S. 1917

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, with the concurrence of Senator MCCONNELL, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 251, S. 1752; that if a cloture motion is filed on the bill, there be 2 hours of debate on S. 1752 and S. 1917, equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate immediately proceed to the vote on the motion to invoke cloture; that if cloture is invoked, all postcloture time be yielded back and the Senate immediately proceed to vote on passage of

the bill; that no amendments, points of order or motions be in order to the bill prior to the vote on passage; that if the motion to invoke cloture on S. 1752 is not agreed to, the bill be returned to the calendar; that upon the conclusion of the consideration of S. 1752, the Senate immediately proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 293, S. 1917; that if a cloture motion is filed on the bill, the Senate immediately proceed to a vote on the motion to invoke cloture; that if cloture is invoked, all postcloture time be yielded back and the Senate immediately proceed to vote on passage of the bill; that no amendments, points of order or motions be in order to the bill prior to the vote on passage; that if the motion to invoke cloture on S. 1917 is not agreed to, the bill be returned to the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 363.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 363) celebrating Black History Month.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 363) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 27, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half; and that following morning business, the Senate

resume consideration of S. 1982, the veterans benefits bill, with the time until 2 p.m. equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with Senator SESSIONS controlling 30 minutes of the Republican time and Senator GRAHAM or his designee recognized at 1:45 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there will be a series of rollcall votes tomorrow starting at 2 p.m. We also expect to consider the nomination of Michael Connor to be Deputy Secretary of Interior tomorrow.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:57 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, February 27, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

ROBIN L. ROSENBERG, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA, VICE ADALBERTO JOSE JORDAN, ELAVATED.

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. GREGORY A. BISCONI

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. THOMAS J. TRASK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. ANDREW J. TOTH

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be brigadier general

COLONEL MARK W. ANDERSON

COLONEL DAVID P. BACZEWSKI
COLONEL JEFFREY W. BURKETT
COLONEL CONRAD C. CALDWELL III
COLONEL JEFFREY B. CASHMAN
COLONEL CHARLES W. CHAPPUIS
COLONEL JOEL A. CLARK
COLONEL PATRICK J. COBB
COLONEL THOMAS B. CUCCHI
COLONEL JOHN B. DANIEL
COLONEL GEORGE M. DEGNON
COLONEL WILLIAM D. DEHAES
COLONEL WILLIAM D. DOCKERY, JR.
COLONEL MICHAEL E. GUILLORY
COLONEL ANDREW E. HALTER
COLONEL TIMOTHY J. HARMESON
COLONEL PAUL G. HAVEL
COLONEL JILL L. HENDRA
COLONEL ALAN K. HODGDON
COLONEL JOSEPH M. JABARA
COLONEL WENDY K. JOHNSON
COLONEL TIMOTHY M. JONES
COLONEL THOMAS J. KENNETT
COLONEL KERRY L. MUEHLENBECK
COLONEL TIMOTHY A. MULLEN
COLONEL JOHN W. OGLE III
COLONEL RYAN T. OKAHARA
COLONEL THOMAS J. OWENS II
COLONEL RUSSELL A. RUSHE
COLONEL DAVID P. SAN CLEMENTE
COLONEL DIANA M. SHOOP
COLONEL JESSE T. SIMMONS, JR.
COLONEL DAVID A. SIMON
COLONEL MARK C. SNYDER
COLONEL JOHN G. SOTOS
COLONEL RONALD C. STAMPS
COLONEL RANDOLPH J. STAUDENRAUS
COLONEL FRANK H. STOKES
COLONEL SCOTT A. STUDER
COLONEL MICHAEL R. TAHERI
COLONEL RONALD B. TURK
COLONEL STEVEN C. WARREN
COLONEL ROGER E. WILLIAMS, JR.
COLONEL RONALD W. WILSON
COLONEL BRYAN F. WITCOF
COLONEL BRETT A. WYRICK
COLONEL RICKY G. YODER

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

DARVIN E. WINTERS, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED INDIVIDUALS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADES INDICATED IN THE REGULAR AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be lieutenant colonel

BRUCE E. STERNKE

To be major

BRIAN D. LAYTON
ELIZABETH M. F. LIBAO

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 531:

To be major

JEFFREY A. UHERKA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR REGULAR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY AS A CHAPLAIN UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 3064:

To be major

STEVEN K. WHITE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADES INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY NURSE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 531 AND 3064:

To be lieutenant colonel

DANIEL B. THOMPSON

To be major

JOCHEBED B. ADEOSHIFOGUN

RENITA J. ELDERYETT
FESTINA R. HUMEDAWSON
MICHAEL W. KINSHELLA
TODD A. MORRIS

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 6222:

To be lieutenant colonel

JASON K. FETTING

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 6222:

To be major

MICHELLE A. RAKERS

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be lieutenant commander

OGWO U. OGWO

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be captain

WILLIAM RABCHENIA

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 5721:

To be lieutenant commander

MATTHEW M. ANTHONY
JOHN T. APPELBAUM
KURT C. ASTROTH
MICHAEL L. BECKMAN
CHRISTOPHER G. BOEHM
MARTY E. BURNS
MARK W. CARTWRIGHT
MARIO G. CASTELLANOS
DONALD E. COOMES
KEVIN M. DORE
HENRY P. ESHENOUR
STEVEN L. EVANS, JR.
TIMOTHY A. FOX
RYAN C. GEORGE
LEIF E. GUNDERSON
SAMUEL F. HARTLEY
PHILLIP C. HERNDL
ISAIAHENETTE E. INFANTE
AMEIAN JEREMIAH
BJORN A. JOHNSON
LAUREN M. JOHNSON
PHILLIP C. JOLLEY
JOSHUA C. KING
KENNETH M. KIRKWOOD
REED A. KITCHEN
WILLIAM E. KNIPS
KERRY M. MAJOR
MICHAEL C. MARSH
NATHAN P. MATHERLY
STEVEN G. MAY
ALEXANDER M. MCMAHON
JAMES T. MCRANDLE
MATTHEW J. MINCK
BRAD W. MUSKOPF
ROBERT C. NEMETH
PAUL G. ODANIEL
ART K. PALALAY
LEON W. PLATT, JR.
TIMOTHY L. REEDER
CHRISTOPHER V. SEIVERS
JEFFREY M. SKLADZIEN
JUSTIN B. SMITH
MATTHEW E. SMITH
ROBERT B. SUTTER
THOMAS A. WILLIAMS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, February 26, 2014

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 26, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, I am on the floor again today to talk about Afghanistan—the absolute waste of life and money.

A lot of people don't realize this, but if you go back to 2001, the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, we have spent over \$1.5 trillion, which averages out to about 11.2 million tax dollars paid every hour by the American people.

In today's national paper, the USA Today—and other headlines—the headline is this: "Obama to Karzai: Time running out for security deal."

Madam Speaker, based on recent polls, this would be good news for the American people if we would not continue this relationship with Afghanistan. It is nothing but an absolute waste of the taxpayers' money, and the American people are sick and tired of it. A recent poll last week by Gallup showed that almost 50 percent of the American people believe that the war in Afghanistan was a mistake to start with.

I can honestly say this: If it was not a mistake to start with, it is a mistake now that we continue to support and spend money on a corrupt leader named Karzai.

Madam Speaker, as I listened to the Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel yesterday talk about financial pressure on our military and the budget that he will be supporting that Mr. Obama has proposed, I wonder why we in Congress are not allowed to debate on the floor of this House—and I am not talking about the Senate now—whether we believe that we should have a 10-year agreement with Afghanistan.

Again, we are talking about spending anywhere from \$3 billion to \$4 billion a month. It is borrowed money from the Chinese and Japanese, and we continue to raise the debt ceiling because we cannot pay our own bills. It is time for the Congress to speak out on behalf of the American people and say enough is enough.

To be clear, this agreement that President Karzai has adamantly refused to sign, as The Washington Post reported earlier this week, during a December visit to Kabul, Hagel suggested that the late-February NATO meeting—meaning this week—was a cutoff point for Afghan President Karzai to sign the bilateral strategic agreement that sets the terms for a post-2014 U.S. presence.

Madam Speaker, we cannot any longer police the world. We can hardly afford to pay our own bills without going to foreign governments to borrow money.

Madam Speaker, it is time for Congress to reach out and to say that we listen to the American people. When we are talking about not even being able to take care of our veterans, and we are going to cut programs for children and senior citizens, and even our veterans are in jeopardy of getting the benefits that they have earned, it is time for the American people to put pressure on Congress to have this debate that many of us in both parties would like to have, quite frankly.

Madam Speaker, I have beside me a photograph of a young man named Eric Edmundson. Eric, in 2005, was in a Humvee that was hit by an IED that exploded. Eric has been in the national Wounded Warrior Project ads across this Nation.

Eric is like so many of the wounded. We just don't really think about them every day, but we should. Eric has a wonderful wife. His mom and dad were able to retire to New Bern, North Caro-

lina, which is in my district, and help Eric have a quality of life.

Madam Speaker, I can honestly tell you that we have got so many veterans that we are going to need to take care of who earned the right for this government to take care of them that we are going to have a tsunami that is going to hit this Congress in a few years, and we are going to wonder how in the world can we give these wounded and their families what they have earned and deserve.

Madam Speaker, it is time for this Congress to put pressure on the leadership of the Republican Party and the Democratic Party to force a discussion and a debate on the future of our financial involvement in Afghanistan.

With that, Madam Speaker, I am going to ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God to please bless the wounded, to bless the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. And I ask God to please bless the House and the Senate, that we will do what is right in the eyes of God for God's people, and to please bless the President of the United States, that he also would do what is right in the eyes of God for America.

END HUNGER NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. LUMMIS). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, there are close to 50 million people who are hungry in the United States of America. We are the richest country in the history of the world, and we have close to 50 million people who are food insecure or are hungry; 17 million of these people are kids.

We in Congress are not doing nearly enough to address this issue. In fact, this Congress has made things worse for many struggling families all across this country.

Last November there was an \$11 billion cut that went into effect with regard to the SNAP program. That is the name of the program that was formerly known as food stamps, an \$11 billion cut that impacted every single beneficiary on this program. Everybody got a cut. Food prices didn't go down, but they got a cut.

Then we just recently passed a farm bill in this Congress that made sure that those well-off special interests were protected and the rich got richer. But we paid for those subsidies by cutting SNAP by another \$8.6 billion. It is shameful.

Madam Speaker, these cuts are real, and the people they impact are real. Sometimes I wonder whether those who voted for these cuts have any appreciation of what it is like to be poor in America, whether they have ever been to a food bank or a soup kitchen or ever talked to anybody who is on SNAP. It is hard. It is difficult to be poor in America.

Despite what I believe is this indifference and, in some cases, contempt for poor people that we have seen in this Chamber, I do want to acknowledge that outside of this Congress and outside of government there are many, many people who understand that we all should care about our brothers and sisters who are struggling and who are doing amazing things.

Last week, during our break, I visited with some people who I think are doing things that I found to be inspirational. Visiting these soup kitchens and shelters gave me some new inspiration and new hope that maybe what they are doing will be contagious and that those of us in this Congress will step up to the plate and take on the issue of hunger and poverty in this country.

I visited a soup kitchen in Amherst, Massachusetts, called Not Bread Alone. I met with the supervisor, Hannah Elliott, and an incredible group of volunteers, which included a chef and people from all walks of life, who prepared nutritious meals for those who are struggling.

I talked to the people who came in to have one of these nutritious meals. These people are our neighbors. These people have worked to make this country great. Some of them are veterans. They have fallen on hard times and can't afford to eat. And thank God for a place like Not Bread Alone, where they can come in and be able to be in a warm place and get a decent meal and feel like people care about them.

At UMass Amherst, I met a student named Jacob Liverman. I met him and a group of young students who launched this effort called the Food Recovery Network. What they do is work with the kitchen at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst so that the leftovers of the food that is prepared on a given day don't get thrown away.

They take those leftovers and follow all those procedures that you have to follow to make sure that everything is within the health codes. They take this food and deliver it to an emergency shelter called Craig's Doors, which is also in Amherst. I met Kevin Noonan, the executive director there, who is a wonderful man, along with all the volunteers there.

I had the privilege of being able to serve meals to the people that came through the shelter on a cold, wintry night. It is eye-opening when you talk to these people and learn about their

backgrounds and learn about how they have fallen on hard times.

I am grateful that there are places like Craig's Doors. I am grateful that there are young students like the ones I met at the University of Massachusetts Amherst campus who have taken the initiative to step up to the plate and to help try to feed people who are hungry. I am grateful for places like Not Bread Alone that do such an incredible job in terms of providing food for people.

I went to Greenfield Community College and sat down with the president, Bob Pura, and his faculty and members of their kitchen. Because there is a need, they actually have a food bank on their campus. There are people going to school who do not have enough to eat. This school provides them the support and the help that they need. They also have a permaculture garden. They are growing food not only for that soup kitchen and for their food bank, but for their students as well, because they are putting an emphasis on nutrition.

I will close, Madam Speaker, by saying these are inspirational activities that are going on. We need to learn by them, and we need to do much better. Nobody in America should go hungry.

VENEZUELA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, today I rise for those who cannot speak freely in Venezuela. Widespread demonstrations have broken out throughout Venezuela to protest an oppressive regime that seeks to silence the people and deny their fundamental freedoms of expression and the right to assembly.

After years under Chavez and now Maduro, those brave men and women are expressing themselves in a united, clear voice that what they want is what should be rightfully theirs: respect for human rights and a true democracy in Venezuela. In response, as you can see here, Maduro and his thugs treat them like criminals.

Over the past weeks, Madam Speaker, 14 people have been killed by Maduro's forces; over 100 have been unjustly detained. But because Maduro controls the major media outlets, he has silenced many of those who attempt to draw attention to the plight of the Venezuelan people and instead cast the blame on the United States for all of the country's ills. The nerve of him.

Blaming the United States for his own domestic problems seems to be the modus operandi for Maduro, but the Venezuelan people are smarter than that. They recognize that this is just another scheme of Maduro's.

The regime tried to silence its people by blocking images on Twitter, as Venezuelans turn to social media to show the world the ugly reality that they are going through.

As the violence in Venezuela continues to escalate, responsible nations in the hemisphere and throughout the world have a moral obligation to stand with the people of Venezuela against the forces of fear and oppression. We must be the voice for those suffering under this repression. At the same time, we must condemn the violent actions of the Maduro regime against people who are yearning for liberty, justice, democracy, respect, and for human rights.

This fight for democracy and human rights isn't the struggle of Venezuelans only. It is the struggle of all who seek to advance the cause of human dignity and freedom.

How we respond matters. Madam Speaker, it is a test of our commitment to the ideals of freedom and democracy for everyone, not just for a few.

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It is also a test of our resolve. Other oppressive leaders in the region are watching us to see if we back up our lofty words with action, so we must not equivocate. We must not waver.

We must stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves, and we must be the voice for those who are being silenced by this repressive regime, because our inaction would only serve to embolden other rogue regimes that seek to fight back the tides of democracy.

Throughout the Western Hemisphere, Madam Speaker, we have seen these regimes, such as Venezuela and the one in Cuba, work together to oppress and silence civil society.

Just yesterday, in my native homeland of Cuba, Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet, a leading Cuban pro-democracy advocate and a recipient of the U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom, was unjustly arrested by agents of the Castro regime for expressing his support for Leopoldo Lopez in Venezuela, one of the leading opposition figures who remains in military jail as we speak.

We must send a unified message to these and other repressive leaders that we will not look the other way when they commit heinous acts against their own people. We must show them that the world is watching and that they will face serious consequences for their transgressions.

That is why, Madam Speaker, I have proposed House Resolution 488, that expresses solidarity with the people of Venezuela who yearn for freedom, for democracy, and dignity.

I commend the Government of Panama for calling for an urgent meeting of Latin American foreign ministers at the Organization of American States,

OAS, to address this ongoing crisis in Venezuela. Sadly, this response is an exception, as other countries in the hemisphere remain deafeningly silent.

I call on the OAS to demonstrate its commitment to the principles of its Inter-American Democratic Charter and support the Venezuelan people's right for democratic reforms to be respected in their country and respect for human rights.

I urge the United States administration to make a priority of supporting the Venezuelan people's aspirations for democracy and liberty, and I urge my colleagues in the Congress to join me in this important call for solidarity.

WIND POWER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. TONKO. Madam Speaker, we are in a global competition, a global race on clean energy and innovation. In our efforts to win this race and ensure our place as the kingpin of the global economy for decades to come, we must support a secure, all-of-the-above domestic energy supply that includes both newly abundant traditional fossil fuels as well as clean, renewable energy, energy such as wind, solar, biomass, hydro, nuclear, and more.

We simply cannot continue to rely on a single fossil fuel to power our economy. That is not wise, long-term policy.

Today, I would like to highlight one of these abundant, job-creating clean energy sources: wind energy.

One way to support this critical source of energy for our Nation is the Federal Production Tax Credit, the credit that keeps electricity rates low and encourages development of proven renewable energy projects.

This credit expired at the end of last year and must be retroactively extended to foster job growth and promote a greener and cleaner environment for the next generations.

The PTC, the Production Tax Credit, also creates jobs. In my district, the Capital Region of New York State, we are host to GE's Global Research Center and Wind Turbine Service Center. In 2012 alone, GE's wind division produced some 1,722 megawatts of power and provided a local capital investment of some \$3.2 billion.

If we are serious about helping the private sector create quality jobs that will put purchasing power back in the hands of the middle class, we must support wind power as one part of our overall energy policy and strategy.

Madam Speaker, today, I renew my support for wind power and the almost 2,000 jobs this clean energy source generates in my home State of New York, a number that is growing by the day, and a group whose work every day is helping to grow our economy, clean the

air we breathe and the water we drink, and make us truly energy independent.

PRESIDENT OBAMA IS VERY DIFFERENT THAN SENATOR OBAMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. OLSON. Madam Speaker, on the issue of increasing America's national debt, President Obama is very different than Senator Obama.

Senator Barack Obama, on the House floor, March 16, 2006:

The fact that we are here today to debate raising America's debt limit is a sign of leadership failure. It is a sign that the U.S. Government can't pay its own bills. It is a sign we now depend on ongoing financial assistance from foreign countries to finance our government's reckless fiscal policies. Over the past 5 years, our Federal debt has increased by \$3.5 trillion to \$8.6 trillion. That is trillion with a "t." That is money that we have borrowed from the Social Security trust fund, borrowed from China and Japan, borrowed from American taxpayers.

Numbers that large are sometimes hard to understand. Some people may wonder why they matter. Here is why: this year the Federal Government will spend \$220 billion on interest.

Senator Obama later explained:

That is more money to pay interest on our debt this year than we will spend on education, homeland security, transportation, and veterans benefits combined.

After talking about Hurricane Katrina, Senator Obama shifted to the debt tax:

And the cost of our debt is one of the fastest growing expenses in our Federal budget. This rising debt is a hidden domestic enemy, robbing our cities and States of critical investments in infrastructure like bridges, ports, and levees, robbing our families and our children of critical investments in education, health care reform, robbing our seniors of the retirement and health security they have counted on.

Every dollar we pay in interest is a dollar that is not going to investment in America's priorities. Instead, interest payments are a significant tax on all Americans, a debt tax that Washington doesn't want to talk about.

If Washington were serious about an honest tax relief in this country, we would see an effort to reduce our national debt by returning to responsible fiscal policies.

And Senator Obama finally brought up our debt to unfriendly nations:

Now, there is nothing wrong with borrowing from foreign countries. But we must remember that the more we depend on foreign nations to lend us money, the more our economic security is tied to the whims of foreign leaders whose interests might not be aligned with ours.

Increasing America's debt weakens us domestically and internationally. Leadership means that "the buck stops here." Instead, Washington is shifting the burden of bad choices today onto the backs of our children and grandchildren. America has a debt problem and a failure of leadership. Americans deserve better.

I therefore intend to oppose the effort to increase America's debt limit.

Today, our national debt is \$18 trillion with a "t." Clearly, President

Obama has forgotten Senator Obama's words, but the American people remember, and on their behalf, I ask President Obama to decrease our debt by working with Congress to reform our Tax Code to make it pro-growth and anti-debt.

HONORING DAVID LACHMANN ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor David Lachmann on his retirement from the House of Representatives and to thank him for his 25 years of federal service.

David came to Washington in 1989 to work for former Congressman Steve Solarz of Brooklyn, staffing him on the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, as well as on issues related to criminal justice, religious liberty, housing, and the environment.

When I was elected to Congress in 1992, David became my first legislative director. In 1997, David moved to the Judiciary Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law. For the past 13 years, he has served as the Democratic chief of staff on the Constitution and Civil Justice Subcommittee.

As an expert on the First Amendment, and particularly on issues of religious liberty and church-state relations, David was instrumental in the passage of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act.

He is also one of the foremost experts in the House on bankruptcy, a very technical and complicated area of law but one that affects millions of people. Over the last 25 years, David has worked tirelessly to advocate for the rights and well-being of people who are most in need of Congress' protection but who do not have access to high-priced lobbyists.

David performed these services every day, whether in defending against attacks on women's reproductive rights, working to protect Americans' civil liberties against PATRIOT Act provisions, or building support for legislation to overturn the Defense of Marriage Act.

David's resume is impressive, but it does not tell the full story. David is a legend in the House. He is one of those committed public servants who has become an institution within the institution.

As the chief of staff of the Constitution Subcommittee, David has been the point person on some of the most difficult and divisive issues facing Congress each year. Yet, he brings a sense of humor, wit, and perspective that is well known in the House, without ever sacrificing his commitment to advancing the cause of equality and justice,

and to defending the rights and freedoms of the most vulnerable among us.

He has provided Members of Congress, staff, and advocates with a wealth of expertise and institutional memory on a wide range of issues that would be difficult, if not impossible, to replace. It will be a long time before I stop picking up the phone and dialing his number to ask him a question about some matter before the committee, or to get his perspective on the latest Supreme Court decision, or to just reminisce about the days of 1970s and 1980s New York politics.

David has worked with me for a long time, and his biggest contribution has been as a trusted adviser and loyal friend.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking David for his service and for his dedication to working on behalf of the American people. He will be sorely missed in this institution, but we wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

□ 1030

DIVERSE LOCAL AND NATIONAL SUPPORT FOR FARM BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on February 7, 2014, President Obama signed into law the Agricultural Act of 2014, the 5-year farm bill reauthorization that passed Congress with bipartisan support and reduces annual budget deficits by \$16.6 billion over 10 years.

Industry professionals across my home State of Pennsylvania and nationally—including farmers, foresters, conservationists, researchers, and policy advocates—have praised the law as a historic improvement, the Federal agriculture policy that will improve land management, support key areas of economic activity, and bolster important investments in education and applied research.

Susan Benedict, an American Tree Farm System certified forest owner from State College, Pennsylvania, stated:

As a Pennsylvania tree farmer, I can happily say this farm bill was well worth the wait. With the promotion of new market opportunities in the Biobased Markets Program and green building markets, improved access to critical conservation programs, and increased regulatory certainty when protecting water quality of my forest's roads, this farm bill is truly the best farm bill yet for forests. I applaud conference committee members for championing strong forestry provisions, such as the Biobased Markets Program changes, for America's 22 million family forest owners.

Kenneth C. Kane, president of Generations Forestry in Kane, Pennsylvania, stated:

From the outside looking in, Congress displayed a level of bipartisanship on the farm bill that has been lacking, which is far better than the gridlock we have encountered. This is a wonderful bill and a good final product from numerous standpoints. From the standpoint of the Forest Service, this bill gives Secretary Vilsack and Forest Chief Tidwell more tools to actively manage forests, which is critically important. Now that these tools are available, the Forest Service must use them. This bill also offers our foresters and private industry more tools to actively manage, so this is also very important.

Barbara Christ, the interim dean of agricultural sciences at Penn State University in State College, Pennsylvania, stated:

Agricultural policy impacts every American by advancing food security for our Nation and beyond, including providing for critical research and education programs. We are thrilled that a new 5-year farm bill is now a reality. As a specialty crop State, of particular interest to Pennsylvania is the inclusion of the specialty crop research initiative. These programs help keep our Pennsylvania farmers competitive in an increasingly complex environment and help tackle the ongoing challenge of feeding a growing population.

Robert Maiden, executive director of Pennsylvania's Association of Conservation Districts, stated:

The new Federal farm bill has many strong conservation programs that are lifelines for Pennsylvania farmers. We needed Congress to understand these points and ensure that the importance of conservation efforts wasn't lost in the final farm bill language. The final bill addressed our fiscal challenges by understanding the necessity of reductions to Federal spending while identifying the need to improve conservation program efficiencies and improvements in program delivery. The final bill will allow for cleaner water for Pennsylvania waterways, resulting in healthier communities and stronger economies.

The president and CEO of the Nature Conservancy stated:

Despite the polarized political climate and challenging budget times, this farm bill would be one of the strongest ever for conservation and forestry. The farm bill's conservation provisions are practical, cost effective, and provide solid ways for the government to collaborate with individual landowners.

The president and CEO of the American Forest Foundation stated:

The long-awaited farm bill provides resources critical to implementing conservation practices on the ground and making good forest stewardship affordable. The improvements in the new farm bill include stronger market opportunities for forests, specifically with improvements to the Biobased Markets Program, and a strengthened commitment to expanding prospects for wood in green building markets, the fastest growing market for wood products. It also includes strong support for programs that combat forest invasive pests and pathogens and provisions to increase forest owners' regulatory certainty when protecting water quality.

Madam Speaker, it isn't every day that a broad cross-section of policy advocates and industry professionals find

themselves on the same side of a given policy issue. Then again, it isn't every day that both parties actually work together for the good of the country and produce good public policy that improves the Nation's economic health, while at the same time, reforms government, and reduces spending.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE AND MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CARSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to draw attention, once again, to an issue that some in this Congress seem to have forgotten: the millions of Americans who are unemployed or are working for wages that cannot support their families.

Imagine being told that you have to support your family for the rest of your life with just a month's paycheck. If it sounds impossible to manage, it is because far too often it is.

Low-income families have to make impossible choices between food and medicine. They often live in unsafe neighborhoods and send their kids to subpar schools because they have no other option. Getting paid the minimum wage has always been difficult, but it is getting harder year after year.

If the minimum wage had been tied to inflation in 1960, it would be \$10.10 today, or just over \$20,000 per year. Now, someone making this today wouldn't be wealthy, but working full-time might at least allow them to make ends meet. For me, this is what our country is really all about. If you work hard, you can build a life for yourself and your family.

Madam Speaker, this is why I am a very proud cosponsor of the Fair Minimum Wage Act, which finally raises the minimum wage for millions of Americans. Unfortunately, some of my colleagues oppose this very bill, claiming that raising the minimum wage should be a State-by-State decision. Now, that is fine if your State chooses to raise its minimum wage, but if not, your constituents are no better off. They are still making \$7.25 an hour.

So I have just one question: If you are a well-intentioned, patriotic Republican who wants to leave the decision up to the States, are you prepared to explain to your constituents why they are worth less to you than the people across State lines?

For my part, I do not want low-wage Hoosiers to make less than those in other States just because our general assembly decides not to act. Of course, I understand the argument that some people may work fewer hours and some may even lose their jobs. This may be true. But it is important to remember that we have raised our minimum wage in the past, and in the past, the very same argument has proven itself to be

untrue. So I am very optimistic that American employers, and particularly Hoosier employers in my congressional district, will do what they can to weather a minimum wage increase without letting folks go.

Now, unfortunately, this is not the only unnecessary struggle Congress has laid on America's low-income families this year. Today, our well-intentioned, patriotic Republican leaders continue to block an extension of emergency unemployment insurance, and because of congressional inaction, nearly 2 million Americans, Madam Speaker, were instantly cut off from their benefits in December, with 72,000 more being cut off each week.

Many of my Republican friends have painted unemployment benefits as a slush fund for certain lazy Americans. This is not only incredibly offensive, it is untrue. Americans want to work, but in many communities, there are simply no jobs available. In our economic downturn, Madam Speaker, everything from restaurants to machine shops to retail stores closed their doors and are only now starting to come back.

In Indianapolis, many Hoosiers are finding they no longer have the skills necessary for the modern workforce. Educated men and women with years of experience have to retrain before they even get rehired. Others have seen their industries simply disappear and have to prepare themselves for an entirely new career. This is far from laziness. Retraining and looking for a job is hard work with no pay. These Americans deserve our help covering expenses while they get back on their feet.

Madam Speaker, my good House Republican friends have yet to bring a real jobs bill to the floor in the 113th Congress, instead, focusing continually on deregulation and repealing the Affordable Care Act. Meanwhile, they overlook that raising the minimum wage is the right thing to do, putting our country back on track.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 39 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, through whom we see what we could be and what we can become, thank You for giving us another day.

In these days, our Nation is faced with pressing issues: constitutional, religious, and personal rights, and matters of great political importance.

We thank You that so many Americans have been challenged and have risen to the exercise of their responsibilities as citizens to participate in the great debates of these days.

Grant wisdom, knowledge, and understanding to us all, as well as an extra measure of charity.

Send Your spirit upon the Members of this people's House who walk through this valley under public scrutiny. Give them peace and Solomonic prudence in their deliberations.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LANKFORD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

SILICA

(Mr. LANKFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, comments have closed on a proposed rule from OSHA for sand in the workplace.

Prolonged breathing of silica, sand, can cause serious health issues. No one will dispute that. But this new rule is interesting in its design. In the comment request, OSHA specifically singles out one industry—oil and gas—as a key reason for the rule change. They write, in part, "A recent cooperative study identified overexposures to silica among workers conducting hydraulic fracturing operations," as their prime reason for the rule change.

It is interesting that after the rule has been in place since 1971, OSHA has made this change. Fracking is not new. It has been around for decades. Why the sudden change in this administration?

I believe the change is because this administration is looking for one more way to impede oil and gas development in the United States. If this is not just about oil and gas, will OSHA set new rules for beach lifeguards who work in sand all day? How about road crews in Arizona who work in blowing sand all day? How about gift shops and restaurants along our coasts? What about dune buggy operators in the sand dunes of Little Sahara State Park in northwest Oklahoma?

The people of my district work every day to provide our Nation energy independence and to get our Nation out of the Middle East. But they are tired of fighting mounds of new regulations, unfunded mandates, and attacks on their livelihood as they serve our Nation.

WIND PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a member of the Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition to talk about a significant issue for Massachusetts and our nation: the wind production tax credit.

In the past 2 years, clean energy jobs in Massachusetts have grown by 24 percent and are projected to grow another 11 percent in 2014. Thanks to the wind industry, the Commonwealth has seen an influx of over \$200 million in capital investment and is home to nine wind-related manufacturing facilities.

Massachusetts is also home to the Wind Technology Testing Center, which at the time of its opening was the first facility in the country capable of testing large-scale wind turbine blades up to 300 feet in length. This testing center has created high-skilled jobs and has helped spur the development of next-generation blades made here in the United States.

We must act now to make sure that these innovative American businesses can continue to create new manufacturing opportunities here in the United States.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting an extension of the wind production tax credit.

STOP TARGETING POLITICAL BELIEFS

(Ms. JENKINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, investigations by the Ways and Means and

Government Reform Committees have uncovered numerous examples of what appears to be a concerted effort by the IRS to target conservative groups and develop new regulations that could essentially silence conservative groups.

If allowed to take effect, these proposed regulations impact groups that have always been allowed to voice their positions on public policy. Notably, one group exempt from these proposed regulations—even though they do similar types of outreach—is labor.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation is founded on the freedom of speech, and any effort to hinder grassroots advocacy by the IRS must be stopped. At the very least the IRS regulations should be put on hold until investigations into the agency's prior misconduct are complete.

I urge my colleagues to support the Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act, to ensure the administration does not use the IRS as a weapon to silence groups based on political beliefs.

LET'S GIVE AMERICA A RAISE

(Ms. HAHN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, the Federal minimum wage has failed to keep up with the cost of living, leaving far too many families on the brink of poverty. For millions of Americans struggling to make ends meet on the current minimum wage, times have gotten harder and harder.

Increasing the minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour would be especially important for the thousands of working women currently trying to pull their families out of poverty. Two-thirds of minimum wage workers are women. Nearly a third of the families headed by a single female are living in poverty.

This is wrong. No mother who works hard at a full-time job to provide for her children and family should be living in poverty. Our success as a nation hinges on the success of women. When women succeed, America succeeds.

That is why I have just signed a discharge petition to bring a bill to this floor so that we can vote on raising the Federal minimum wage to \$10.10 for all hardworking Americans, including our mothers and daughters.

I think it is time. Let's give America a raise.

OAS MUST DO MORE TO SUPPORT DEMOCRACY IN VENEZUELA

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on the Organization of American States, OAS, to take im-

mediate action in support of freedom and democracy in Venezuela. The OAS must not remain silent while the people who are peaceful in Venezuela are being murdered on the streets by the Maduro regime.

I commend the government of Panama for proposing a region-wide foreign minister meeting to discuss the violations of human rights in Venezuela.

If the OAS can convene a special session over the lack of airspace access for a plane from Bolivia, then surely it must convene one on the ongoing democracy in Venezuela.

As a member of the OAS and its largest international donor, the U.S. has a moral obligation to ensure that these democratic principles are upheld, and if the OAS does not do more to address these attacks on freedom, then, Mr. Speaker, we must use our full voice, vote, and influence to compel it into action.

PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT

(Mr. LOEBSACK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of a critical jobs-creating policy for Iowa and our country that must be extended immediately, the production tax credit.

Once again, Congress has allowed the job-creating production tax credit to expire. This is unacceptable. Now is the time to not just talk about job creation but to act on a policy that is a proven job creator.

The production tax credit has helped revitalize our manufacturing base and build a homegrown industry. The wind industry supports some 80,000 jobs across the country and over 6,000 in Iowa alone. With Iowa a leader in wind power, the industry is investing in our rural communities and moving us toward a cleaner, homegrown source of energy.

The last time the PTC expired, thousands of jobs were lost, including hundreds right in my district in Iowa. We can't let these jobs disappear again. The PTC must be extended.

THE TRAIN WRECK OF OBAMACARE CONTINUES

(Mr. HARRIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, the train wreck of the President's health care plan continues. Last Friday afternoon, curious timing, the Centers for Medicare Services released a report.

Mr. Speaker, the CMS is working with the IRS to implement ObamaCare, and the report said it looked at the effect on small businesses of ObamaCare and the effect on the premiums that

were going to be paid by men and women who work in those small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, their report, from the President's own administration, said that 11 million workers will pay a higher health care premium under the Affordable Care Act. That is more than 5 million women who are going to pay a higher health care premium, when the promise the President made was that every family would save \$2,500 per year.

Mr. Speaker, they are not only not going to save \$2,500, those 11 million Americans are going to pay more for their health care next year, hard-working middle class Americans who can't afford it.

America deserves better.

PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT EXTENSION

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, while we fool around again with a lot of minor bills here today, we refuse to deal with the ones that we ought to be dealing with. We need to be involved in passing things that create jobs.

Now, the production tax credit is an absolute no-brainer. We have used it for years and years. As long as I have been in the Congress it has been here, and the wind industry is dependent on it.

It is 3,000 jobs in my State, and thousands of jobs across this country. We passed it in the nineties. We let it expire. We lost all the jobs, and we are doing it again.

Now, climate change ought to be impressing people that we have to move away from fossil fuels and look for alternative energy, and this is the way we are going to do it.

In the 20th century, we invested in aerospace and microchip industries through the production tax credit, and we made all the advances of the Internet and everything else on the basis of these Production Tax Credits.

The 21st century is going to be about alternative energy, and this House dawdles around, attacking the IRS, and trying to repeal the ACA and all of this.

Why don't you make it a suspension bill?

It would pass in a minute.

□ 1215

LOGAN REGIONAL HOSPITAL'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. BISHOP of Utah asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Logan Regional Hospital, which serves the citizens of the Cache Valley of northern Utah.

In 1914, a new hospital with 60 beds was established that boasted modern patient conveniences, such as an X-ray machine. From 1948–75, the LDS church assumed responsibility for the hospital. In 1975, Intermountain Healthcare, a not-for-profit community service, was organized, which became a model for health care excellence.

In 1980, the hospital was expanded and moved to its present location, thanks to the help of \$2 million from private donors. Today, the hospital has 148 beds and offers a full range of hospital services.

The 100 years of continued health care service has been possible thanks to the professionals who have donated so much of their lives to provide excellence in health care to their patients.

Logan Regional Hospital fulfills the dreams of its original founders. Its not-for-profit community governance from committed board members continues to excel in providing for quality health care services.

THE COST OF A COLLEGE EDUCATION

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, as the cost of a college education continues to rise, Americans have become increasingly dependent on Federal student loans for access. Families are watching tuition creep up year after year, while their incomes and their savings have not kept pace.

To make matters worse, there have been widespread reports of abusive practices in the student loan servicing industry, and that makes it harder for borrowers to repay their loans. These trends jeopardize the promise of higher education as the great equalizer, a place of opportunity for all. Parents are worried that their children won't ever get a shot at the American Dream because they are drowning in debt.

And this week, the majority will bring up legislation that would undermine the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's independence and their rulemaking authority; and this bill would weaken essential consumer protections and make it all but impossible to fight abuse in the student loan industry.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on H.R. 3193 and stand up for students and families who deserve fair treatment.

PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, my home State of Hawaii is fortunate to have some of the most abundant renewable energy resources in the world, and

yet we still spend \$4.5 billion every year to import fossil fuels to power our State.

This is not sustainable, and that is why Hawaii is aggressively working towards a goal of being 70 percent alternative energy source by the year 2030. But in order to succeed, we need strong, responsible policies that support and invest in clean energy development; and all alternative energy options are necessary.

We must renew the production tax credit for wind energy. Due to the PTC, the U.S. now leads the world in wind energy production, and the industry supports more than 80,000 domestic jobs. It is in the best interest of our environment, our economy, and future generations that we renew the PTC to ensure that our Nation continues to be a world leader in clean energy.

END THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

(Mr. NOLAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker and Members of the House, I rise in support of the President, the Republicans, and the Democrats in this institution and across this country who want an end to the war in Afghanistan. It has cost us trillions of dollars that we can ill-afford.

There has been \$100 billion spent on infrastructure, yet the inspector general cannot find where the money has gone nor where the projects have been completed. There is \$30 billion in the pipeline now. We need to end that.

We need to bring all the troops home. Bring them home now. Save that money. Put it toward deficit reduction and investing in America—our roads, our bridges, our schools, our health care system. Our priorities demand it and require it.

Afghanistan is now the most corrupt nation in the world. Afghanistan supplies more illegal drugs to the rest of the world than all of the rest of the nations combined. It is time to end our involvement and stop this shameful waste of America's taxpayer treasure and our patriots' blood.

CLIMATE CHANGE

(Mr. MORAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, if you listen to the other side, you would think that the costs of the Environmental Protection Agency's efforts to reduce global warming and to protect our environment are breaking the back of our economy, but that is hardly the case.

What is really beginning to break the back of our economy is the costs associated with extreme weather events.

From Hurricane Sandy to the droughts in the Midwest and the West, it is costing tens of billions of dollars every year, and it is getting worse.

In fact, 10 years ago, the insurance industry estimated what the costs would be, and it was way less than it is today; and they acknowledge it is because of the effects of climate change. This applies to the Hartford Financial Services Group, AIG Prudential, and the Reinsurance Association of America. They all say that this is the footprint of climate change and that extreme weather conditions are going to get worse.

So you have to ask yourself: If the insurance industry is acknowledging the presence of climate change, why can't the Congress? Will the majority of this House stay in denial that the climate is changing, that human activities are contributing to this change? Are they going to continue to play an obstructionist role, or are they going to act responsibly for the benefit of future generations? I hope it is the latter.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

TAXPAYER TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2014

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3308) to require a Federal agency to include language in certain educational and advertising materials indicating that such materials are produced and disseminated at taxpayer expense, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3308

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Taxpayer Transparency Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. REQUIREMENTS FOR PRINTED MATERIALS AND ADVERTISEMENTS BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.

(a) REQUIREMENT TO IDENTIFY FUNDING SOURCE FOR COMMUNICATION FUNDED BY FEDERAL AGENCY.—Each communication funded by a Federal agency that is an advertisement, or that provides information about any Federal Government program, benefit, or service, shall clearly state—

(1) in the case of a printed communication, including mass mailings, signs, and billboards, that the communication is printed or published at taxpayer expense; and

(2) in the case of a communication transmitted through radio, television, the Internet, or any means other than the means referred to in paragraph (1), that the communication is produced or disseminated at taxpayer expense.

(b) **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS.**—

(1) **PRINTED COMMUNICATION.**—Any printed communication described in subsection (a)(1) shall—

(A) be of sufficient type size to be clearly readable by the recipient of the communication;

(B) to the extent feasible, be contained in a printed box set apart from the other contents of the communication; and

(C) to the extent feasible, be printed with a reasonable degree of color contrast between the background and the printed statement.

(2) **RADIO, TELEVISION, AND INTERNET COMMUNICATION.**—

(A) **AUDIO COMMUNICATION.**—Any audio communication described in subsection (a)(2) shall include an audio statement that communicates the information required under that subsection in a clearly spoken manner.

(B) **VIDEO COMMUNICATION.**—Any video communication described in subsection (a)(2) shall include a statement with the information referred to under that subsection—

(i) that is conveyed in a clearly spoken manner;

(ii) that is conveyed by a voice-over or screen view of the person making the statement; and

(iii) to the extent feasible, that also appears in writing at the end of the communication in a clearly readable manner with a reasonable degree of color contrast between the background and the printed statement, for a period of at least 4 seconds.

(C) **E-MAIL COMMUNICATION.**—Any e-mail communication described in subsection (a)(2) shall include the information required under that subsection, displayed in a manner that—

(i) is of sufficient type size to be clearly readable by the recipient of the communication;

(ii) is set apart from the other contents of the communication; and

(iii) includes a reasonable degree of color contrast between the background and the printed statement.

(c) **IDENTIFICATION OF OTHER FUNDING SOURCE FOR CERTAIN COMMUNICATIONS.**—In the case of a communication funded entirely by user fees, by any other source that does not include Federal funds, or by a combination of such fees or other source, a Federal agency may apply the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) by substituting “by the United States Government” for “at taxpayer expense”.

(d) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this Act:

(1) **FEDERAL AGENCY.**—The term “Federal agency” has the meaning given the term “Executive agency” in section 133 of title 41, United States Code.

(2) **MASS MAILING.**—The term “mass mailing” means any mailing or distribution of 499 or more newsletters, pamphlets, or other printed matter with substantially identical content, whether such matter is deposited singly or in bulk, or at the same time or different times, except that such term does not include any mailing—

(A) in direct response to a communication from a person to whom the matter is mailed; or

(B) of a news release to the communications media.

(e) **SOURCE OF FUNDS.**—The funds used by a Federal agency to carry out this Act shall be

derived from amounts made available to the agency for advertising, or for providing information about any Federal Government program, benefit, or service.

(f) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section shall apply only to communications printed or otherwise produced after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. GUIDANCE FOR IMPLEMENTATION.

Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall develop and issue guidance on implementing the requirements of this Act.

SEC. 4. JUDICIAL REVIEW AND ENFORCEABILITY.

(a) **JUDICIAL REVIEW.**—There shall be no judicial review of compliance or noncompliance with any provision of this Act.

(b) **ENFORCEABILITY.**—No provision of this Act shall be construed to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by any administrative or judicial action.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am here today to speak on H.R. 3308, which requires the Federal Government to disclose that advertisements and information on government programs and services are paid for by the taxpayer.

Advertisements provide information, but in many instances, they are designed to induce people to buy or use a product or service. While we can debate whether individual Federal advertising campaigns are overly promotional, surely we can agree that the public should know that they, themselves, are sponsoring a government marketing piece.

Americans deserve to know how their tax dollars are being spent, and H.R. 3308 adds needed transparency to the business of government by requiring disclosures when taxpayer dollars are spent on advertising and educational materials.

This bill is designed to help people know what is going on. It is not intended to be a burden on local broadcasters, their advertisers, or any of the work that they do in local communities.

As a former broadcaster, I understand the important role that advertising plays, but it is also important that the people know what is an adver-

tisement being paid for with government money, what is a public service announcement, and what is being paid for by private individuals.

This bill adds a disclaimer to ads in printed material very similar to what all of us in this Chamber are familiar with. There are advertising rules for Members' campaigns, where you have to indicate, 'This was paid for by so-and-so.'

This would just require government agencies who purchase advertising or produce written material to add a disclaimer saying something to the effect of, 'Produced and aired at taxpayer expense.'

I will reserve the balance of my time at this point, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Under this legislation, Mr. Speaker, any communication an agency makes that is an advertisement or that provides information about a Federal Government program, benefit, or service would have to say that it is printed or published at taxpayer expense. Emails, radio, and television ads would have to say that they are produced and disseminated at taxpayer expense.

Some agencies already identify the agencies that print them. For example, the Army prints, 'Paid for by the United States Army' on its recruiting posters. This bill would require the Army to change its wording and say, 'Printed at taxpayer expense.' I have not heard any explanation, either at the committee or here on the floor, for why such a change is so necessary.

The gentlewoman from Illinois, Congresswoman DUCKWORTH, the former Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs, raised an important point during our committee's consideration of this bill. She pointed out that some materials printed by the Department of Veterans Affairs state that the VA produced the materials. This is important because veterans need to be able to trust the source of the information, and seeing 'Department of Veterans Affairs' engenders just that trust.

Four years ago, this body passed a law, cosponsored by Chairman ISSA, the chairman of our committee, that prohibited nongovernment parties from sending mailings marked 'census' without a clear disclaimer with the name of the party sending the mailing.

That law was passed after the Republican National Committee sent a mailing that led recipients to think it was an official census document when it was not.

□ 1230

We passed that law because we wanted to protect consumers from being misled into believing a communication from a nongovernmental source was, in fact, an official government document. We should use that same logic and caution with this bill. I think it is important that this bill is interpreted to

allow agencies to continue to say that a communication is paid for by that agency rather than being required to say that the document is printed or published at taxpayer expense.

During the committee's consideration of this legislation, Chairman ISSA and my friend, Chairman FARENTHOLD, made commitments to Representative DUCKWORTH to work with her in finding mutually agreeable language. Representative DUCKWORTH suggested language that would address the issues we raised with the military and the Veterans Administration. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that language is not—not—included in this bill, and no changes were made at all since the committee considered it, despite the assurances given to Representative DUCKWORTH.

I will not vote against the bill, but I certainly hope that, if this bill or a similar bill moves through the Senate, the majority in the House will keep the commitments made to Representative DUCKWORTH and the Democrats on our committee to find a satisfactory resolution to the legitimate concerns that were raised.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to take a moment to address the concerns raised by the gentleman from Virginia before yielding to the author of the bill, Mr. LONG.

During the markup, Representative DUCKWORTH was concerned about certain agencies like the VA and the Department of Defense; and during the markup, we did add a provision, at the minority's request, that allowed the Office of Management and Budget to implement regulations in exactly how this is going to be done. It certainly does not prohibit "paid for by the Army" or "paid for by the Veterans Administration." It would simply add, "paid for by the Army at taxpayer expense," which would clearly be compliant with this law, the idea being to determine what the taxpayers are paying for and what is being donated for time, for instance, by a broadcast facility for public service announcements or to differentiate ads that are not paid for by the government. There is no disclaimer. We know it is not paid for with taxpayer dollars.

What we are after here is to let the taxpayer know when they see something on the television, hear something on the radio, or see a printed material that their tax dollars funded it and it is something they can either be proud of or they can pick up the phone and call us up here in Washington, D.C. and say, What the heck are you doing wasting our money on these types of ads?

It empowers the public to know. We are not trying to limit Federal agencies. We are not trying to detract from

the fine work that the VA does or to detract from the recruiting efforts that our Armed Forces are in.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Will my friend yield?

Mr. FARENTHOLD. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank my friend.

Is there any doubt, do you think, in a taxpayer's mind that if the current situation that identifies something as paid for by the U.S. Army, then certainly we all understand that it is also paid for by the U.S. taxpayer?

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Reclaiming my time, we have got an alphabet soup of government agencies. As I review documents for the budget, I sometimes have to Google what some of the agencies in the Federal Government do. Obviously, almost everybody knows what the Army is, but if you are not in the financial services, do you know what the CFPB is? Or do you know what some of the smaller subagencies are? And I think that is what we are getting at.

At this point, I will, however, yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Missouri, Mr. BILLY LONG, the author of this bill, my good friend and a fellow broadcaster, I might add.

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Texas for yielding to me.

Every day, Federal agencies spend money advertising various programs without mentioning where the funding for these programs or their ads are coming from. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis famously said that sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants. The Taxpayer Transparency Act is about shining a light on how taxpayer dollars are spent by requiring executive branch agencies to disclose that these advertisements are paid for at taxpayer expense. Simply, this bill extends similar requirements already imposed on the House and the Senate to the executive branch.

It is time for government to start working for the people again. By providing more transparency in their spending, executive branch agencies will have to answer to the people. Americans have every right to know exactly how their tax dollars are being spent. As Members of Congress, we should all support an open and honest government, and this legislation does that by requiring executive branch agencies to be transparent with spending taxpayer dollars which promote Federal programs.

I urge the House to support this bill and look forward to further action by our colleagues in the Senate.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Could I inquire of the Speaker how much time remains on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia has 17½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Texas has 14½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers on this side. Does the gentleman have others on his side?

Mr. FARENTHOLD. I don't have any further speakers, and I am prepared to close.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I certainly laud the intent of the bill. I sometimes wish, however, that we applied this same rubric to ourselves here in Congress. Wouldn't it be interesting for the taxpayers to know, for example, that a dead-end kind of inquiry on the IRS being pursued by the majority in this body just in our committee alone has already cost the taxpayers of the United States \$14 million producing virtually nothing? And it would be very interesting to know how much it has cost the taxpayers of this country when we had 46 or 47 repeal of the Affordable Care Act amendments in bills in this Congress and in the previous Congress.

Having said that, I certainly am not going to vote against the bill, but I am concerned that some of the concerns raised by my colleagues, particularly Congresswoman DUCKWORTH, were not, in fact, addressed in the final bill brought before this floor. It is my hope we could continue to work together to try to resolve that with some compromise language as we work with our colleagues in the other body.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Without getting into the pros and cons of the various investigations that this body does, I will say that it is our constitutional obligation to provide oversight to the various Federal agencies. One of the ways we do that is through the investigation that our committee does bring up.

I do want to say we did visit with Representative DUCKWORTH, and we do feel as if her concerns have been addressed. We could not agree on specific language with Ms. DUCKWORTH, but we were able to come up with these provisions that the minority requested at the markup that allowed the OMB to come up with the implementing regulations. It also includes a provision suggested by the minority to make clear that communications funded entirely by user fees or by sources other than that that do not include Federal funds may indicate how it is funded through the United States Government.

But this is a bill all designed to provide transparency, let taxpayers see the fruits of the spending of taxpayer dollars on advertisements, and to make a judgment about that on their own and know what is going on and know how their money is being spent.

As my colleague from Missouri pointed out, sunshine is the best disinfectant. It is what we are about in the

Oversight and Government Reform Committee. It is what this bill does, again, designed as a regulation on government agencies, not as an attempt to go after broadcasters, print shops, or anything like that. This is just to get the government agencies to tell the taxpayers what they bought with the disclaimer on there.

It is commonsense legislation. I urge all my colleagues to stand behind it. It is something that I think will be a huge step forward towards transparency, and I look forward to this bill's passage.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, last fall we learned that the Department of Health and Human Services spent nearly \$12 million dollars of taxpayer money for airtime campaigns to promote Obamacare. While this was a gross misuse of taxpayer dollars allocated to specifically target states that have opted out of Medicaid expansion, it was not an isolated event.

For this reason, I joined my colleague from Missouri as the original cosponsor of H.R. 3308, the Taxpayer Transparency Act.

This bill does just what it says—provides transparency when spending tax dollars earned by hard working Americans.

My colleague's bill would require agencies in the executive branch to disclose any and all advertisements funded by taxpayers. This includes all mailers, brochures, tv and radio ads, emails, billboards, and posters.

Both the House and Senate are required to disclose this information in franked mailing—so why are executive branch agencies not held to the same standard of transparency? Our constituents deserve better.

To my colleagues, I urge you to pass this bill to hold the federal government accountable for waste and abuse of taxpayer money.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Chairman, I rise in opposition to this legislation.

For the last three years, House Republicans have repeatedly attacked critical public health, safety, and environmental protections.

This package of anti-regulatory bills is just another such attack on agency rulemakings—one that is falsely advertised as an effort to improve transparency.

Title one of this bill, which was reported by the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, would prevent a rule from taking effect until certain information is posted online for at least six months.

The only exception to this requirement would be for the agency to forgo a notice and comment period or for the President to issue an Executive Order.

This delay is completely unnecessary and is effectively a six-month moratorium on rules. It also could give agencies a perverse incentive to avoid a public comment period altogether if a statutory or court-ordered deadline could be missed.

Just one example of a rule that could be affected by this bill is the Food and Drug Administration's proposed rule on electronic prescribing information, which would ensure that doctors have the most current safety information on prescription drugs.

Under this bill, this drug safety rule could not be finalized until OMB posts information about the rule on its web site for six months.

FDA, like other agencies, already details the status of its rulemakings on its website, and extensive information about proposed rules is also available on the website Regulations.gov.

Yet under this bill, if OMB failed to post a required piece of information, FDA could not finalize the rule unless the President stepped in and issued an Executive Order. It should not be that hard for doctors to have the most up-to-date safety information about prescription drugs.

That is just title one of this Frankenstein bill. The other three titles of this bill are even worse. One title would add 60 additional requirements to the rulemaking process.

We should be making the regulatory process more efficient and effective. Adding 60 new requirements will do exactly the opposite and make it needlessly complex.

Madam Chairman, this is a package of bad bills that would do nothing to improve our rule-making process. I urge every Member to oppose it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FARENTHOLD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3308, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3865, STOP TARGETING OF POLITICAL BELIEFS BY THE IRS ACT OF 2014; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2804, ALL ECONOMIC REGULATIONS ARE TRANSPARENT ACT OF 2014; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 487 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 487

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3865) to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and

Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2804) to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and amendments specified in this section and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-38. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 3. It shall be in order at any time on the legislative day of February 27, 2014, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules, as though under clause 1 of rule XV, relating to the bill (H.R. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my friend from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their comments.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

□ 1245

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, you have heard me say it before, it makes me so happy to be a member of the Rules Committee because our entire resolution gets read down here. The entire Rules resolution gets read, and by golly, Mr. Speaker, if you are not proud of what you are doing in your committee, you better not sign up for a committee where every word of the work that you do gets read each and every time, but I am proud of the work we are doing in the Rules Committee.

The rule that we have on the floor today, Mr. Speaker, is going to make two bills in order. Both, I would argue, are incredibly important for providing not just transparency to what goes on here in Washington but also to ensure that the people's voice continues to be heard in Washington.

House Resolution 487, this rule, is a closed rule for consideration of H.R. 3865. That is the Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act, Mr. Speaker. That is in response to what now every American understands to be the 501(c)(4) scandal, for lack of a better word; that for the first time in my lifetime, there are allegations that the IRS is targeting folks on the basis of their political beliefs for whether or not they are able to have their organization certified as a tax-exempt organization. That is not just a concern of groups on one side of the aisle or the other, Mr. Speaker, that is a concern of folks across the spectrum, and I would argue it is a concern for all Americans who believe that having their voice heard is important.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution provides for a structured rule for the consideration of H.R. 2804, the All Economic Regulations are Transparent Act.

Mr. Speaker, in that structured rule, we made in order 11 amendments. We had two Members come by and testify on behalf of their amendments last night in the Rules Committee. We made both of those amendments in order. In addition, we made four Republican amendments and five other Democratic amendments in order; so for a total of 11 amendments, four Republican amendments and seven Democratic amendments were made in order on that underlying bill. As is customary, it provides the minority with a motion to recommit on both bills.

Mr. Speaker, I sit on the Government Reform Committee. We just had a Government Reform Committee bill pass here on the floor of the House, and we

have another one here today. It aims for transparency. There is just no question in my mind, Mr. Speaker, that we have replaced taxation in this country with regulation. Rarely does someone come down and say, "I want to tax an industry." What they will come down and say is, "I want to regulate an industry." In fact, in my great State of Georgia, Mr. Speaker, we are regulating jobs right out of existence. We don't have to tax them out of existence. We don't have to outlaw an industry. We just regulate it out of existence.

Perhaps there are some industries that need to be regulated out of existence, and we should have that full and open debate on the floor of the House, but what is absolutely certain is that the American people need to be able to understand the power of the regulatory process, and the impact that it has on jobs and economic development in their community.

Today in statute, Mr. Speaker, there is a requirement that the administration twice a year publish a notice of all of those regulations that are being considered and what their impact is anticipated to be, but we have had instances, as recently as 2012, Mr. Speaker, where the administration just ignored that statute altogether. Now understand, the requirement is that you must inform the American people twice a year, just twice a year, about the regulations that are coming through the pipeline that will impact them, their families, and their businesses, and yet, that has been ignored. There has been no ability for folks to understand the magnitude of those regulations.

So we came back in this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, and said, listen, not only should you be doing that, you should probably be doing it once a month. If you have seen the Federal Register, Mr. Speaker, it is thick. It comes out every day of the week. It captures all of the new rules and regulations that are coming out. They are coming out like water out of a spigot. They are tough to keep track of. So this bill says let's do it not twice a year, let's do it once a month. Let's make sure that the American people understand in a volume that they can see and read once a month what those new rules and regulations are, and, if an agency chooses to ignore that requirement, that proposed rule and regulation will not go into effect such that the American people will get six months of notice about what it is that is going on.

I will give a good example, Mr. Speaker. It goes to the second bill we are considering, the Stop Political Targeting bill that is on the floor here today. There is a public comment period that is on right now. I don't know if most folks in America know that. I know everybody understands the IRS targeting scandal. I don't know if they

know that the administration is involved in a rulemaking right now. The investigation is still ongoing into the IRS. The extent of the abuse is not yet understood at the IRS. The committees are continuing to work through that process, as the law requires, and yet the administration has released a rule that says we think we know how to fix this, even though the investigation is not done yet; this is what we want to do, and the public comment period ends tomorrow. The public comment period ends tomorrow.

Now, folks can go to www.regulations.gov. They can still go and file their comment if they believe that the people's voice being heard is important, but think about that, Mr. Speaker. A scandal that everyone in America understands, a scandal that I believe is offensive to absolutely everyone in America because it doesn't matter which party you are in, you shouldn't target folks who disagree with you; we should absolutely have a full and open debate and let the best ideas win. Yet the administration has proposed a solution to a problem that is not yet fully understood, and the opportunity for the American people to comment on it ends tomorrow. I don't think folks know that back home, Mr. Speaker.

This transparency bill we have on the floor today intends to address that, not just for this regulation, but for all future regulations, and the Stop Political Targeting bill that we have on the floor today says this and this alone: it says since we don't fully understand what is going on, and since we know with certainty that the IRS has breached the public's trust, not the entire IRS but just this one scandal here in the 501(c)(4) operations, since we know with certainty that the public's trust has been diminished, let's not have the administration, in the absence of a full understanding by the Congress, the absence of full comment by the American people, let's not have the administration completely re-regulate that area. Rather, let's put this off, not forever, Mr. Speaker, because we all agree that work needs to be done, but for 1 year and 1 year only so that the Congress can have a full understanding and the American people can have a full accounting of what it was that led to citizens' voices being silenced by the Internal Revenue Service in their applications for 501(c)(4) status.

Those are the two bills we have on the floor today, Mr. Speaker. Again, all of the germane amendments that were offered, and candidly, there were no germane amendments that were offered to the Stop Political Targeting Act, so that is a closed rule with just the one motion to recommit, and 11 amendments made in order for the government transparency bill on the floor today, only four Republican amendments, seven Democratic amendments,

so we can have a full and open debate. I am very proud of this rule, Mr. Speaker.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am forced to rise again in opposition to the rule and the two underlying bills that are counterproductive and aren't dealing with the issues that our constituents sent us here to address. Each of these bills was brought under a restrictive process, one of them a completely closed rule that blocked all efforts from both sides of the aisle to improve the legislation.

Let's talk about the IRS bill first.

The IRS bill has a title that I think would engender broad bipartisan support. If we want to run a bill that prevents the IRS from discriminating against organizations based on their political affiliations, whether they are progressive or tea party or anywhere in between, I think there would be a way to come together in support, hopefully near unanimous support, around such a bill.

Like many Americans, I was outraged that organizations had been singled out based on the name of their organization for additional scrutiny. That is simply not the right criteria that the IRS should be using. I hope they got the message over at the IRS loud and clear, and I hope we can move to fully implement the recommendations of the inspector general to ensure that this never happens again.

However, this bill actually undoes one of the very recommendations of the inspector general from the inspector general's own report. There is even a Republican bill in the Ways and Means Committee by PETE ROSKAM that would require the IRS Commissioner to implement all of the recommendations of the inspector general, including these very regulations that this other Republican bill is seeking to prevent the implementation of. So make up our minds here, folks.

If we want to move together to prevent the IRS from discriminating against any organization because of their political affiliation, let's do so, whether it is something binding, implementing in statute the recommendations of the inspector general, whether it is a sense of Congress, I stand ready to work with my colleague from Georgia and others to speak with a strong voice that that kind of discrimination has no role in the IRS. However, that is entirely separate from what this bill does, which guts one of the very inspector general recommendations that was designed to remedy this problem going forward.

As for the other bill, the ALERRT Act, it would slow down the regulatory

process and increase red tape for agencies. It has been estimated that this bill increases reporting requirements for agencies by six times. This is a Republican bureaucrat welfare bill. How many more government bureaucrats are you going to have to hire to deal with six times more paperwork that is going to come from this bill?

You know, when I talk to my constituents in Colorado about what do we need to do, they don't say, "You need to go to Washington and help bury government workers in more paperwork. I want more red tape."

Yet, that is the bill we have here today, a Republican bill that would bury the Federal Government under six times as much reporting requirements for agencies. That is not what the American people want. That is why I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this rule and this bill.

Look, there are some issues that we could be working on here today, Mr. Speaker. Let me talk about a few of those. These are the kinds of issues that I believe if my party had the opportunity to bring bills to the floor of this Chamber, we would be bringing those bills to the floor of this Chamber. One of those is immigration reform. Rather than spending time debating bills that are counterproductive and aren't going anywhere, let's consider legislation that would replace our broken immigration system with one that works.

The Senate, Mr. Speaker, was able to come together, 68 Members, Democratic and Republican, around a commonsense solution, securing our border, ensuring that people who are here illegally get in line behind those who are here legally, implementing mandatory workplace authentication of workers, making sure the future flow of workers is in line with the needs of our economy and America can continue to compete in the 21st century. We have a nearly identical bill in the House, H.R. 15, a bipartisan bill. I think if we brought it forward under a rule, it would pass. Let's bring that bill forward, Mr. Speaker.

Nearly a year ago, the New Democratic Coalition Immigration Task Force, which I cochair, released detailed principles on comprehensive immigration reform. I applaud the Republican principles that were issued on immigration reform. There is a lot that we have in common. I believe that we can work together to pass a bill to create American jobs, ensure that we are more competitive in the global economy, reduce the deficit by hundreds of billions of dollars, and that reflects our values as Americans and reflects our values as people of faith.

Yet, the House majority has found time to shepherd dozens of bills through the Judiciary Committee to the floor of the House, including one that we are considering today, but the

House hasn't dedicated a single moment of floor time to an immigration reform bill. We haven't even tried, Mr. Speaker. We haven't had a 3-hour debate, we haven't had a 1-hour debate, we haven't had a 1-minute debate on any immigration reform bill here on the floor of the House of Representatives. You don't get to "yes" without scheduling the time and the space for Democrats and Republicans of good faith to work together to solve a problem that the American people want and demand a solution for.

Across the country, business leaders, faith leaders, national and local editorial boards, and the law enforcement community are calling for real leadership on advancing immigration reform now. In fact, just yesterday, the Chamber of Commerce sent a letter to Speaker BOEHNER from more than 600 businesses urging Congress to pass immigration reform. The Chamber president, Tom Donohue, posted a blog post emphasizing the need to have a modernized E-Verify system, provisions that are included in H.R. 15.

Last week, a Wall Street Journal op-ed criticized the Republicans' failure to act on commonsense reform. Citing a recent study from the American Farm Bureau about the cost of failing to act, The Wall Street Journal wrote:

Republicans have killed immigration reform for now, but the Farm Bureau study shows that in the real economy it is still needed. The irony is that many Republicans who support handouts to farmers oppose reforms that wouldn't cost taxpayers a dime and would help the economy.

So instead of passing a bill that reduces the deficit, secures our borders, and makes the reforms we need, Republicans say let's bury the government in red tape, increasing the paperwork for agencies by six times, and let's give government handouts to farmers. Those are the Republican policies that we are seeing in this Congress, and it is why the American people hold this institution in great disapproval. The longer we delay in passing comprehensive immigration reform, the greater the cost of inaction becomes.

□ 1300

According to the Congressional Budget Office's nonpartisan analysis, passing immigration reform would increase our gross domestic product by 3.3 percent, raise wages by \$470 billion for American citizens, and create an average of 121,000 jobs for Americans each year over the next decade.

So, rather than create jobs for Federal bureaucrats having to deal with six times as much paperwork, let's create jobs in the private sector, Mr. Speaker. Let's pass immigration reform to ensure that American companies can compete in the increasingly complex global marketplace.

If we have the ability, Mr. Speaker, to bring a bill forward to the floor, another bill we would bring forward is increasing the minimum wage to \$10.10.

Just before coming up here today to manage this rule, Mr. Speaker, I signed a discharge petition to bring that bill to the floor, a bill that I proudly cosponsor, a bill authored by my colleague, Mr. MILLER of California.

Raising the minimum wage would help restore fairness for working men and women across the country. It would lift millions of Americans out of poverty. It would fuel demand and economic growth.

A letter from over 600 economists, including seven Nobel Prize winners, said:

At a time when persistent high unemployment is putting enormous downward pressure on wages, such a minimum wage increase will provide a much-needed boost.

It is no panacea, but if we are looking at helping Americans earn enough so that they don't have to be part of the social safety net or government welfare programs, we need to make sure that they can do that in the private sector because—you know what?—at current minimum wage levels, a family working full-time, 40 hours a week, earns about \$14,000 a year.

Mr. Speaker, you try living on \$14,000 a year. I couldn't do it. I don't think you could do it, Mr. Speaker.

Guess what? That is why we have a social safety net that helps Americans and supplements their income. Whether it is Medicaid, whether it is food stamps, Americans earning \$14,000 a year don't live a great life, but they get a little help from us, and that is the right thing to do; it reflects our values.

Do you know what? If we can help them earn a little bit more, they will require less help from other taxpayers in paying their rent, paying their bills, putting groceries on their table.

So we can be fiscally responsible in reducing the need for social safety net programs if we can help lift up more Americans out of poverty. One substantial step towards doing that will be to increase the minimum wage to \$10.10.

Another issue that we would love to bring forward, Mr. Speaker, would be renewing unemployment insurance. Again, when unemployment insurance ran out with employment at high levels, it sucked money out of the economy, money that could otherwise go to create jobs and private sector growth.

In the past and in prior recessions and in prior times when we had this level of unemployment, this has always been a bipartisan issue. There has always been responsible governing majorities of Republicans and Democrats, in this Chamber and the other Chamber, that have put together extensions for unemployment insurance.

And yet, once again, it has run out, and we seek to bring a simple bill to the floor that ensures that we don't endanger our recovery by sucking money out of the economy in our time of need.

I will go on and on, Mr. Speaker, about bills we could be considering, but

sadly, the truth is—and the American people see this—we are not considering those bills here today. We are considering a bill that adds six times as much paperwork to already overworked Federal workers, and we are considering a bill that guts one of the recommendations of the inspector general that was designed to help prevent the IRS from discriminating based on political affiliation and ensure that we have sufficient transparency, consistent with our Tax Code around entities in the political arena.

We can do better, Mr. Speaker. I encourage my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to do better. I am confident that, if they are not able to do better, Mr. Speaker, the American people will give my side of the aisle a chance to do better. Either way, Mr. Speaker, immigration reform doesn't solve itself. It takes the United States Congress to solve it.

While the President can move forward with his executive powers, as he has with the deferred action program, the only comprehensive solution can come from the United States Congress.

I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to work in good faith towards addressing the flaws in our immigration system and replacing chaos with the rule of law, increasing our competitiveness, reducing our deficits, securing our borders, making America safer, and creating jobs for Americans. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 10 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS), a freshman Member, a young Member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, in support of this legislation.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me the time.

One of the things that comes when we have these debates, and we have a lot of issues that come before the floor, we speak in terms of—and my good friend from Georgia, we talked about this before—we talk in terms of bill numbers; we talk in terms of rules, the good gentleman from across the aisle from Colorado often speaks of; and we all talk in the terms that we understand.

But many times, when you look at bills and you look at the things that are coming before the floor, it is a good idea to start painting the picture of those that are impacted by it. Mr. Speaker, when we begin to do that and when we begin to look at the bills on the floor today, I want to tell you a story.

The story involves Mr. Puckett. He owns a small business that has been creating jobs for over 100 years, a family-owned brick company. Mr. Puckett attributes the success of his business to their hard work and loyal employees.

Unfortunately, when I met Mr. Puckett, the conversation was not so optimistic. He testified before the Judiciary Committee on the first bill I introduced, H.R. 1493, which is now title IV of this legislation, because his company had just lost 50 jobs as a result of two regulations crafted behind closed doors.

In a Nation of over 300 million, 50 jobs may not seem like much, but in Mr. Puckett's town, that is the difference between 50 families having food on the table or going hungry; or for small towns, like I have in northeast Georgia, it means the difference in staying in their beloved part of the State or moving somewhere else to find a job.

Every State, every congressional district, has their Mr. Pucketts. No business has been untouched by the toll of costly and overburdensome regulations. That is why I rise today in strong support of this rule and the underlying legislative package.

Now, a lot will be said and has been said about this, in saying that we need to do other things, we need to go on to this project. I just heard from my friend from across the aisle. As I have done before from here, I will simply remind him, in that nirvana state of just a few years ago, when they had the choice to do whatever they wanted to do, they chose to leave immigration on the table while they fixed other things which we are fixing today.

But today, we are going to talk about the Mr. Pucketts of the world and the business owners, but not just the business owners, the folks who work for them, the folks that so many times are missed by what we are trying to do.

By reforming our Nation's regulatory system, we jump-start the engine of our economy. When our economy gets up and going, our families flourish.

A lot can be said about this whole package. There are other speakers who will speak later today about the different titles. I am speaking specifically to title IV, which is commonly known as "sue and settle."

I have talked to Members of both Democrats and Republicans who go home and have townhall meetings. One of the things that happens all the time is you begin to talk about regulation in bills and what does this do. I see this sense of many who are in the audience. All of a sudden, their eyes just glaze over, and they say: Here it comes, Washington speak; we don't get it.

Well, I am just a country boy from northeast Georgia, and I just want to put it in simple terms. This makes it very simple to understand the sue-and-settle legislation.

Two people have a problem. They don't get along. Something is not right. In one group, they have maybe a business or a group that have a disagreement on something going on, and they can't seem to find their solution,

so the one actually says: Whoa, I see something here. There is a regulation that I can sue on. This is a government agency that I can go sue. So we have a third party in play.

So what we do is we take two people who have an issue—and I will just use “people” as the term here—and we have their outlet as saying: I will sue a third party—being the Federal Government—and while I am suing, I will work out a deal with the bureaucrats in this agency and go to a judge and get a consent order; and then, by the way, then that consent order is binding on the other person.

I grew up in a family with a brother. I have often kidded that I thought he was adopted, but he is not. He is actually my brother. It is like any other sibling rivalry, but when we would have a disagreement, it is sort of like him going to Mom and Mom only believing him, only hearing his side of the story, and then punishing me—which, by the way, for anybody watching today, that happened quite regularly.

I have spoken many times to my mom and dad about that. But is that fair? No, it is not fair. Both sides need to be heard. You need to have the opportunity. That is what sue-and-settle legislation does.

You can hear a lot, and I am sure there will be many folks who will come to the floor today and tonight saying: No, that is not what it does; you are gumming up the works. And I will get to that in a minute.

But when we understand what these do—the abusive use of consent and decree and settlements to coerce agency action is often referred to, as I have said, to sue and settle—it is the reason Mr. Puckett was losing these jobs. He did not have the input because of one of these decrees.

Agencies are failing to uphold their statutory rulemaking discretion and are allowing lawsuits from outside the groups to determine their priorities and duties. Between 2009 and 2012, the majority of these sue-and-settle actions occurred in the environmental realm, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, and Endangered Species Act.

Again, when you come forward trying to make regulatory rules, we have, like we had testified into Rules Committee last night, that anybody threatening to say something about the regulatory action is wanting dirty water, dirty air, and baby cribs that fall apart, that is just a mischaracterization and not worthy of debate to the American people.

There is no one on this side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, that wants to breathe dirty air; there is no one on this side of the aisle that wants dirty drinking water; and there is no one on this side of the aisle that wants malfunctioning parts that hurt people. That is not worthy of this debate.

This is simply saying that we are having an issue of fairness. Our President talks fairness. He discusses transparency. We are calling on him to say: We agree with you, Mr. President, on this issue. Let's have transparency. Let's have fairness here.

But, when someone enters an out-of-sight backroom deal with unelected employees—bureaucrats—to establish when the EPA will meet its past-due responsibilities, it is effectively deciding how EPA will use its limited resources and, thus, creating policy priorities for the Agency.

If the EPA needs assistance in prioritizing its many regulatory responsibilities, I recommend they consult the States who must implement these regulations and the communities that will be impacted by them.

Unlike what some claim, H.R. 1493 does nothing to hinder the rights of citizens to bring suit against their government. Again, another “let's throw up something against the wall to see if it sticks.” This does nothing. They can still bring the suits. We are just simply asking for transparency.

Instead of buying into the mantra of special interest groups that benefit from these sweetheart deals, let's look at what it actually does. As I described before in basic terms, it allows fairness; it allows transparency; and it allows those with constitutional standing to be part of a suit so that they can have input into something that will affect them. I believe everyone can agree to that.

If you are being affected, you ought to—and especially when it comes to the United States Government—we ought to be able to tell what this bill and what these rules and regulations do to us.

This is good governance. Why should we let just a certain area and a certain group—Mr. Speaker, you know of this as well. There are areas in which they get into disagreements and only their views are put forward. Sue and settle works to eliminate that.

And then, also, the bill actually requires agencies to publish notice of a proposed decree or settlement in the Federal Register and take and respond to public comments at least 60 days prior to filing the decree or the settlement. Again, it is simply improving public participation.

This is what we are about here. This is what this bill does. This bill takes a measured and reasonable approach to the sue-and-settle problem. It ensures that settlements are conducted out in the open and impacted stakeholders can have a seat at the table.

That is good governance. That is putting transparency out there. That is doing the things that we are supposed to do here.

I also have to respond to my friend from Colorado. We have great debates down here. I enjoy listening to your

perspective and coming down, Mr. Speaker, and having this kind of conversation; but I was amazed because I believe, today, the American people—there are many times I have very frustrated people in the Ninth District of Georgia who say: Both your Houses, Republican, Democrats, you are the same. I am tired of it all.

Well, today is one of those days, in this discussion right here, that you can honestly say: Here is the difference in governing philosophy. And it came out just a minute ago.

I am here with a bill and other parts of this bill today that are actually looking for transparency, openness, and willing to get regulations that are effective in a limited form of government which our Founders thought of, so that businesses can still be businesses, employees can still have jobs, moms and dads can still have paychecks and take care of the kids at home and take care of their families.

□ 1315

What I heard just a few minutes ago was the concern about the burden on the Federal Government. We are more concerned that this may cause extra work. Frankly, from my perspective, I believe this legislation can help because we can trim the size of the Federal Government and give roles and responsibilities where they need to be with States and others, and when we do so, that gives us the proper respect.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WOODALL. I yield the gentleman an additional 2 minutes.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I think what we see here is a concern for the Federal Government. Our government employees are great folks—they do good work—but I am more concerned with the American business owner. More importantly, I am concerned with the workers who will lose their jobs, have lost their jobs, or who have had to change jobs.

This is the difference right now, Mr. Speaker. If you want to see governance philosophy that is different, I am concerned that government should do what it is supposed to do and that the burden they are putting on themselves should be removed. My concern is the business owner and the worker. My concern is Mr. Puckett. My concern even more is for the 50 folks who don't have jobs because the government, through regulatory backroom deals, has cut out their livelihoods.

Who do they see for that, Mr. Speaker? Who do they go and complain to? What government agency takes their phone calls when their government has, in essence, helped put them out of jobs?

No one on this side wants anything except an economy that is flourishing and people who are working and jobs that are secure. It is about the everyday man and woman who gets up and

goes to work, but their business owners are having to tell them “not today.” We are being inundated with rules and regulations. I will stand with the American worker every day. I will acknowledge the role of our government in its limited form, but don’t ever mistake there is a separate philosophy here, one that encourages Big Government and one that says, “I am for the workers who get up every morning and go to work to take care of their families.”

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, before further yielding, I want to address some of the comments, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again, this bill creates a backdoor increase in the Federal bureaucracy. When you are talking about increasing reporting requirements by six times and adding 60 additional procedural and analytical requirements to the rulemaking process, you know that this bill must contemplate increasing the size of the Federal bureaucracy to deal with these increased requirements.

As an entrepreneur who started a number of small businesses, I know the importance of having certainty and predictability in the regulatory process. The additional bureaucracy instituted by this ALERRT Act will simply not help businesses thrive and grow. This legislation would create headaches for businesses at a time when many small businesses are already struggling to recover from the recession.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 1010, which is legislation to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour, in order to restore fairness for men and women across our country.

To discuss our proposal, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of New York. I thank the gentleman from Colorado for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition on the motion to move the previous question so that this body may consider H.R. 1010, the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013.

This crucial piece of legislation will positively impact the lives of nearly 30 million American workers and their families by gradually raising the Federal minimum wage from its current \$7.25 an hour to \$10.10 an hour by 2016. Beyond 2016, the bill ties the Federal minimum wage to annual inflation, ensuring that hardworking men and women will never again see their wages stagnate due to congressional obstruction or inaction.

Let’s first discuss who benefits from this legislation. I am sure that many watching at home and some in this very room may have a skewed perception of the contemporary minimum

wage worker. I will try my best to clear up a few of these fallacies so that this debate can be framed by fact and not by stereotype.

The average age of the minimum wage worker is 35 years old; 54 percent of them are full-time workers, and 55 percent of them are women. The average affected worker earns half of his or her family’s total income, and more than one-fourth of the minimum wage workers have children. Of the Nation’s, roughly, 75 million children, nearly one-fifth of them have at least one parent who would receive a raise if the minimum wage were increased to \$10.10 an hour. An employee working 40 hours per week for the entire 52-week calendar—no time off—at the Federal minimum wage will earn just \$15,080 in 2014.

Now, who can live on \$15,000 a year?

I just heard the gentleman from Georgia speak passionately about his concern for the American worker. I would ask that gentleman and others who are concerned about the American worker: Are you concerned about all of the American workers, or are you just concerned with those who earn at higher brackets than \$15,080 a year? A worker who works full time and is still below the Federal poverty level will qualify for Medicaid, for CHIP, for SNAP, and for other public assistance programs that will cost taxpayers approximately \$7 billion this year alone.

Let’s raise the minimum wage, and let’s lift people out of poverty without spending a dime of additional Federal money. Let’s save on those programs that the Federal Government has put in place to help those maintain a standard of living who need a helping hand.

A recent poll conducted by Quinnipiac University found that 71 percent of American workers support raising the minimum wage. That same poll found that Democrats, Republicans and Independents are all in agreement that raising the minimum wage is the right thing to do.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. BISHOP of New York. I refer back to the words of Speaker BOEHNER in his first speech to this Chamber upon being sworn in as Speaker on January 5, 2011.

He said:

This is the people’s House. This is their Congress—it is not about us; it is about them—and what they want is a government that is honest, accountable, and responsive to their needs.

Seventy-one percent of the American people are asking us to do this. If the Speaker’s words mean more than just words on a page, I would urge him to bring this bill to the floor so that we can respond to the 71 percent of the

American people who think that raising the minimum wage is good economic policy and that it is good personnel policy.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I would ask my colleague from Colorado if he has any speakers remaining.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, we do. We have at least one speaker who is here and ready to go.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES).

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the distinguished gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. Speaker, the people whom I represent at home in Brooklyn and in Queens have been hit hard by the devastation of Superstorm Sandy, and many of these working families are still struggling to recover from this vicious storm. Homes were destroyed. Businesses were ruined. Lives have been turned upside down.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, we need to deal with the issue that has been brought before the people who have suffered from this storm and who now face significant flood insurance rate increases as a result of the Biggert-Waters law passed in 2012. The people who were victimized by Superstorm Sandy are now facing the prospect of significant flood insurance premium rate increases that are heading directly at them like an out-of-control freight train, and this House should be stepping in to stop that freight train dead in its tracks. That is why I support the reform of the Biggert-Waters law. We should suspend the flood insurance increases that are heading towards these Superstorm Sandy victims. We should allow for FEMA to conduct an affordability study. We should give Congress the opportunity to get this issue correct.

The failure of this House to act on flood insurance reform is yet another example of the delay and the dysfunction in dealing with the real issues that confront the American people, and our inability to move forward as previously planned is just yet another time when a manmade disaster from this House is being imposed on the American people.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes to say, if you care about any of these issues that have been brought up today—and these are not issues that are involved in the rule, and these are not issues that are coming to the floor today—then you care about whether or not the American people are able to make their voices heard, because I am absolutely certain, as I have learned in my 3 years of having a voting card, Mr. Speaker, that the American voters still run this show. Now, the voters have a tough time having their voices heard, but if they can have their voices heard, they can make a difference.

We are talking about issues that we wish we could change, Mr. Speaker. Today on the floor, we have an issue that we can change. The administration is proposing regulations that will silence voices on these very issues that my colleagues are raising.

Let me read from Cathy Duvall, the Sierra Club's director of public advocacy and partnerships, who says this about the proposed regulations from the Obama administration's Treasury Department:

The proposal harms efforts that have nothing to do with politics—from our ability to communicate with our members about clean air and water to our efforts to educate the public about toxic pollution.

Mr. Speaker, if you believe in this process as I do, if you believe in this Nation as I do, then you believe that it is paramount that the people's voices are able to be heard. That is the issue here today. If you believe that the priorities of this House should be changed, if you believe the priorities of this Nation should be changed, if you believe anything in this Nation should be changed, you must believe that we should preserve the power of the individual's voice.

That is why this rule moratorium is here today, Mr. Speaker. That is why the investigations must go on. That is why we must reject the administration's rush to judgment here and ensure that our priority continues to be that of the board of directors of this country—the American voters.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule because it needs an amendment. I rise today in order to ask, when the motion on the previous question to end the debate is brought up, that we vote “no” so that at that point an amendment can be introduced.

If that possibility is available, I would like to bring up the provisions of H.R. 1010, which will provide a long overdue increase in the minimum wage. The bills that we are considering today are just distractions from the issues that are most important. We need to be addressing the problems that people are having.

Mr. Speaker, today's families are struggling to pay for basic needs, such as housing, health care, groceries, transportation. Someone working full time at a minimum wage job today only earns about \$14,000 a year. At that Federal minimum wage today of \$7.25, a parent working full time, year round, doesn't earn enough to get above the poverty level. When I say a “parent,” that is because studies have been done and have shown that the average minimum wage worker is 35 years old;

Raising the minimum wage not only increases workers' income and reduces

turnover, it stimulates the economy. That is because people earning the minimum wage are spending every dime that they get, thus helping the economy. We have heard fears about possible job losses, but the effect of an increased minimum wage on jobs has been studied for decades, and these studies have proven that no job loss can be expected with a modest increase in the minimum wage.

We have a clear choice. We can choose to require a fair, living wage so that people can afford food and housing for their families, or we as taxpayers can be left picking up the tab through increased public assistance when they cannot pay their bills, and we can be left with a stagnant economy that is not as improved as it would be with an increased minimum wage.

So I urge my colleagues to vote “no” when the previous question is moved. I also encourage them to support legislation to increase the minimum wage so that we can improve the quality of life for millions of Americans and improve the economy in the process.

□ 1330

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

I say to my friend from Virginia I think he is absolutely speaking from the heart when it comes to sharing the voice of his constituents in Virginia. My constituents take a slightly different view. They look to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office that said, yes, you can raise the minimum wage. You called it a modest raise. I think they called it a more than 40 percent increase in the minimum wage. But you can raise the minimum wage, as some are proposing, and that is going to lift 900,000 families above the poverty line and that is going to destroy 500,000 jobs.

I don't fault my colleagues at all for being concerned about those 900,000 individuals that are going to be lifted above the poverty line. I think we all want folks lifted above the poverty line. I don't want folks working a lifetime for minimum wage.

I want people working their way up the ladder. It is a ladder of opportunity that we ought to be building in this House. But to dismiss those 500,000 individuals that the Congressional Budget Office said will lose their jobs altogether are not partisan fights we have, Mr. Speaker. These are heartfelt discussions that we have about how best to serve the American people to whom we have sworn an oath to the Constitution that rules this land.

These are very difficult issues, but they are made better each and every time, I am certain, Mr. Speaker, if we preserve the power of the American people to have their voice heard in this debate. That is what is so important about this rule and why we must pass this rule today—to bring to the floor

the Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act—so that Americans' voices are not just silenced on the basis of their content, but not silenced period.

It is abhorrent that we would silence voices on the basis of their content, but I would argue, Mr. Speaker, it is abhorrent if we have an opportunity to stop voices from being silenced at all.

I believe this House will take that step today, and that is why I am proud to be here representing this rule.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. I would inquire if the gentleman from Georgia has remaining speakers.

Mr. WOODALL. I do not have any remaining speakers.

Mr. POLIS. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, these underlying bills are destined, if they pass this Chamber, like so many bills, for the Senate's bill graveyard. Why? Because they are counterproductive. They are not what the American people want. They don't do what they say.

If we had a bill that fully implemented the recommendations to prevent any kind of discrimination based on political affiliation at the IRS, we could pass that bill. That would be an important step forward in ensuring that the terrible embarrassment and pie on your face that the IRS had, the loss of confidence that it engendered among the American people, will not happen again.

That is a good issue to work on, but that is not what we have. Instead, we have a bill that actually guts one of the very recommendations of the inspector general designed to prevent this from happening again—the exact opposite of the title of the bill.

We also have a bill before us that creates more red tape in the Federal Government and regulatory agencies. I don't think the American people are calling out for more red tape. I don't think small businesses want regulators, whose approval they need, to be so buried with six times as many reports and 60 times more analytical requirements that they won't even be able to give routine approval for various things that small businesses and entrepreneurs need. It is a counterproductive step.

So instead of addressing the issues that the American people want us to act on, from immigration reform to raising the minimum wage to extending unemployment insurance, we are debating counterproductive, single-Chamber bills that will die in the Senate and would be harmful to the country if passed.

My colleagues Mr. SCOTT and Mr. BISHOP gave eloquent testimony for the importance of raising the minimum wage. I certainly agree with my colleague from Georgia that it is not a panacea. Would that there were a silver

bullet to lift people out of poverty, it would have 435 votes.

I do believe that the American people agree that when you work full time, you shouldn't need a government hand-out. You should be able to support your family at a very basic level. You shouldn't have to live in poverty if you are working 40, 50, 60 hours a week at a backbreaking job. Raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 will help accomplish that.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 1010, legislation to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour, to restore fairness for working men and women across the country.

Someone working full-time, year-round at minimum wage earns just over \$14,000. That is nearly \$4,000 below the poverty line. It means that other Americans will need to subsidize that person through government support, welfare, or food stamps. Because, guess what. That \$14,000 isn't enough to provide for a family, have a shot at the American Dream, or even to put a roof over your head and food on the table.

By raising the minimum wage to \$10.10, we can help Americans become self-sufficient to support themselves and their families with pride and have a job that gives them pride to put food on their table and a roof over their head without the need for government support.

Increasing the minimum wage to \$10.10 is simply a return to the level of the minimum wage in the 1960s. It would allow millions of additional American workers to support their families.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous materials, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, as my colleague from Georgia said, this rule does not contain immigration reform and minimum wage, but I think it is important for the American people to know what it could contain, what it should contain with this Chamber under Republican leadership, what it would contain if this Chamber were under Democratic leadership.

The agriculture community, the faith-based community, the business community, the law enforcement community, and the fiscal responsibility community all speak with one voice on immigration reform. What we are doing now doesn't work.

There are over 10 million people here illegally. Companies violate the law every day. There is over close to 2 million deportations, each at cost to the taxpayers of \$10,000 to \$20,000.

It is time to replace our broken immigration system with the rule of law, reduce our deficit by hundreds of billions of dollars, create over 100,000 jobs for Americans, finally secure our borders, and ensure that nobody works illegally in this country, potentially undermining wages for American workers. That is what we can accomplish. We recognize it would be a bipartisan solution.

H.R. 15, the Senate-passed bill, doesn't have everything that Democrats want in it; it doesn't have everything that Republicans want in it; but it would be good for our country. It would be great for our country and for the American people.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and defeat the previous question. I urge a "no" vote on the rule, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, you have heard a lot of heartfelt sentiments from my friends here on the floor of the House today. Unfortunately, what you haven't heard is what we are going to do together to ensure that the heartfelt sentiments of every single citizen of these United States can be heard here in Washington.

I fear my friend from Colorado is right. I don't say that lightly. He has a lot of good ideas, and I hope to collaborate with him on even more. I fear he is right that this is a single-Chamber solution. I fear that only the United States House of Representatives is concerned with protecting the voice of the people—not just people who agree with me, Mr. Speaker, but people from all stripes.

I have read from the Sierra Club earlier. Let me read from the ACLU's comments to the administration on this rule. This is what they say: "Social welfare organizations praise or criticize candidates for public office on the issues and they should be able to do so freely, without fear of losing or being denied tax-exempt status."

That is "the heart of our representative democracy," the ACLU says.

"The proposed rule"—that is the administration's rule; that is the rule we are here today to stop—"threatens to discourage or sterilize an enormous amount of political discourse in America."

Mr. Speaker, I have a chart here today. It lists what tax-exempt organizations are able to do. A 501(c) is that section of the Tax Code that deals with tax-exempt organizations.

You have 501(c)(3)'s that are able to do get-out-the-vote work, voter registration work, and candidate forums. 501(c)(4)'s are where the administration is regulating, and that is the source of the scandal: the targeting of American citizens based on their political beliefs. And 501(c)(5)'s are the labor unions in the country.

Mr. Speaker, what folks need to understand is that, as we sit here today, all of these groups can do get-out-the-vote work. All can do voter registration work and candidate forums. Why? Because it advances our Republic. It advances the cause of freedom and discourse in America.

But this, Mr. Speaker, is what the administration is proposing. For 501(c)(5)'s, or labor unions, it is proposing they continue doing all of that material. Also, for 501(c)(3)'s to continue doing all of that. But the 501(c)(4)'s—the very same 501(c)(4)'s that were targeted by the IRS on the basis of their political beliefs—those groups, and those groups alone, would be silenced.

Mr. Speaker, America is not advantaged by that rule. Maybe in some shortsighted way someone believes their personal political agenda is advanced by that scheme, Mr. Speaker, but we do not. We as a Nation do not. It is a shortsighted gain. That is why we put this bill on the floor today to delay these new regulations, this change of how American political discourse occurs, for 1 year—and 1 year only—while the investigation completes itself.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to read from the report that the inspector general crafted at the Treasury Department. He says, What were the words, what triggered this additional investigation that went on?

This is what they were, Mr. Speaker.

If you use the word "Tea Party," you might get special scrutiny. If you use the word "patriot" in your name, you might get special scrutiny. If you were concerned, Mr. Speaker—and this is reading from the Treasury Department report—if you were concerned about government spending, government debt, or taxes, you could be subjected to special scrutiny. If you wanted, Mr. Speaker, to "make America a better place to live," you could be subjected to special scrutiny.

The administration has gone far beyond that, Mr. Speaker. They are not just going to subject some groups to special scrutiny, as is the source of the scandal. They are silencing all groups. If you had a statement in your case file, Mr. Speaker, that criticized how this country is being run, you were subject to special scrutiny.

Mr. Speaker, that is not just our right, that is our obligation. Our obligation as citizens is to criticize the way this country is being run when we don't agree. Because, after all, Mr. Speaker, the President doesn't run this country. The Congress doesn't run this country. We the people run this country.

This rule to bring this bill is about one thing and one thing only, and that is making sure that those people to whom the Constitution invests every bit of power that the country has to

offer, the American citizens have a voice with which to express their concerns and the information on which to educate that voice.

My colleague from Georgia was absolutely right, Mr. Speaker. There are so many things that happen on the floor of this House, you can't tell the difference between who is who regionally, politically, and what it is that folks believe. But this issue is one of those defining issues.

Do you believe that the board of directors of America, the United States citizen, deserves a loud voice and full information? If you do, you vote "yes" on this rule, you vote "yes" on the underlying legislation, you reject the administration's effort to silence the American people on both sides of the aisle, and you commit yourself to believing that a full and open debate is the only way in which this country will succeed.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a proud cosponsor of H.R. 3865, the Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act, offered by my friend and Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. Camp of Michigan.

In the wake of the IRS's admission last year that it improperly targeted conservative groups, troubling information continues to come to light detailing just how high the scandal went. In response, the President briefly feigned the appropriate indignation and did some cursory bureaucratic reshuffling.

Then, rather than actually addressing this stunning abuse of First Amendment rights, the Administration decided to double down by proposing a regulation that all but codifies the targeting. The proposed IRS regulation—which would change the way that tax exempt status is determined for social welfare organizations—is a move that would significantly impact the activities and First Amendment rights of those organizations. It adds a massive paperwork burden for organizations, and broadens the IRS's power over political activity.

The IRS issued the rule despite six ongoing investigations into the discriminatory targeting and the fact that the existing guidance has been in place and functioning for more than 50 years.

In order to combat this proposed overreach by the IRS, H.R. 3865 prohibits it from finalizing this unnecessary rule—and similar rules—for one year.

Despite President Obama's claims that there was "not even a smidgen of corruption" at the IRS, I believe the American people still deserve real answers and a true commitment to preserving their First Amendment rights. H.R. 3865 is critical to working to regain the trust of Americans and preventing the Administration from codifying the IRS's unacceptable and discriminatory targeting.

Mr. Speaker, Americans deserve more than opaque and hurried rule changes meant to crush political discourse. At the very least, the Administration should commit to having all the facts from completed investigations before drastically changing the rules to suit its election year strategy. For that reason, I urge my colleagues to join me in fighting the IRS's con-

tinued attempts to stifle free speech by supporting H.R. 3865.

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3865.

For years, Congress demanded action on this issue. In an independent report, the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA) told the IRS and Treasury to remove the gray and give clear guidance regarding the tax treatment of social welfare organizations.

There were dramatic hearings, and the public demanded clear, fair rules. Members of this Congress from both sides of the aisle agreed that the IRS should implement all nine of the TIGTA recommendations.

This is just what the IRS and Treasury did. They are taking their time, and trying to do the right thing—once and for all. The IRS already received 23,000 comments on the proposed rulemaking—23 thousand, Mr. Speaker.

And today, not even eight months later, this body is trying to tear down long overdue progress and restart the clock at square one. So, you can see why I oppose bringing this bill to the Floor today. It makes no sense, no sense at all.

Mr. Speaker, Members of Congress can be constructive, supportive, and effective. Instead, this bill returns to the old tradition of no, by any means necessary.

I urge each and every one of my colleagues to oppose this unnecessary bill.

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, today the House will vote on H.R. 3865 the Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act, legislation to prevent the IRS from implementing newly proposed rules to restrict the First Amendment rights of certain non-profit groups. This legislation is an important step in holding the IRS accountable for its illegal targeting of conservative organizations in the run-up to the 2012 election.

Last year it was revealed by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration that the IRS used inappropriate criteria to review organizations applying for tax-exempt status based upon their names and policy positions. Now the IRS wants to rewrite the rules to justify its inappropriate and likely criminal behavior. Congress should not let the IRS take ANY regulatory action until wrong-doers within the IRS are held accountable.

In April, top IRS official Lois Lerner revealed in a public forum that the agency had been discriminating against more than 75 groups with conservative sounding names in the run-up to November 2012. Ms. Lerner actually went so far as to plant a question in the audience about the issue in order to pre-empt the release of the Inspector General's audit.

When all this became public, Members of the Administration including the President and the Attorney General expressed their outrage and called it unacceptable. The Attorney General even went so far as to declare his intent to conduct a criminal investigation.

Furthermore, it's clear from testimony given during the various Congressional hearings over the years and correspondence with the IRS that officials there were not telling Members of Congress the truth. In March of 2012—a year before this story broke—then-IRS Commissioner Douglas Shulman assured Congress: 'there is no targeting of conserv-

ative groups.' On April 23, 2012, I joined with 62 of my House colleagues in writing the IRS Commissioner inquiring further about the possible targeting and we were assured that there was no targeting or delay in processing IRS applications submitted by conservative groups.

Ms. Lerner, a longtime federal employee and senior IRS official, has since asserted her Fifth Amendment Constitutional right by refusing to testify before Congress and tell the American people exactly what the IRS was doing and who had ordered these discriminatory actions.

To make matters worse, it was further revealed that IRS employees released confidential donor information and even private taxpayer records. Disclosing confidential taxpayer information is one of the worst things an IRS employee can do—it's a felony, punishable with a \$5,000 fine and up to 5 years in prison. In fact, the Treasury Inspector General noted at least eight instances of unauthorized access to records, with at least one willful violation.

These are serious abuses but to date, not a single IRS employee has been indicted. The FBI has refused to file criminal charges. The Washington Post has reported that the investigation into this scandal is being led by Barbara Bosserman, a partisan who 'donated a combined \$6,750 to President Obama's elections and the Democratic National Committee between 2004 and 2012.' Furthermore, she does not serve in the Public Integrity Section that typically oversees these matters, but rather the Civil Rights Division, historically the most partisan office at the Department of Justice.

This week I am joined by nearly fifty of my House colleagues in writing to the Attorney General demanding the appointment of an independent special prosecutor to investigate the IRS's illegal targeting of conservative groups. Only an independent investigator who is not aligned with either political party will have the credibility to get to the bottom of this matter and hold wrong-doers accountable—whichever they may be.

I have also introduced H.R. 3762 which would hold federal employees at the IRS personally accountable when they release private taxpayer information. Under this bill, individuals whose private information is released would have a personal right of action against the employee rather than simply hoping that the Department of Justice will take action.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the rule governing debate for H.R. 2804, the "All Economic Regulations Are Transparent Act of 2014," the so-called "ALERT Act."

H.R. 2804 makes numerous changes to the federal rule-making process, including: (1) requiring agencies to consider numerous new criteria when issuing rules, such as alternatives to rules proposals; (2) requiring agencies to review the "indirect" costs of proposed and existing rules; (3) giving the Small Business Administration expanded authority to intervene in the rule-making of other agencies; and (4) requiring federal agencies to file monthly reports on the status of their rule-making activities.

I cannot support this legislation in its present form for two reasons, one procedural and one substantive.

Procedurally, I oppose the bill because in its present form it was never considered by the Judiciary Committee. This bill was reported by the Oversight and Government Reform Committee on a party line 19–15 vote but was not acted on by Judiciary Committee.

As reported, the bill contained only provisions relating to monthly reporting requirements regarding agency rule-making.

But the bill being brought to the floor now includes three additional and very controversial Judiciary bills (H.R. 2122, Regulatory Accountability Act; H.R. 1493, Sunshine for Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act; and H.R. 2542, Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act).

This is not the way to legislate on matters that have such serious consequences for the public health and safety.

Substantively, I oppose the underlying bill this rule makes in order because it imposes unneeded and costly analytical and procedural requirements on agencies that would prevent them from performing their statutory responsibilities to protect the public health and safety.

I oppose the bill also because it creates unnecessary regulatory and legal uncertainty, increases costs for businesses and State, local and tribal governments, and impedes common-sense protections for the American public.

Mr. Speaker, the bill is unnecessary and invites frivolous litigation. When a federal agency promulgates a regulation, it already must adhere to the requirements of the statute that it is implementing.

Agencies already must adhere to the robust and well-understood procedural requirements of federal law, including the Administrative Procedure Act, the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA), the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA), the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), and the Congressional Review Act.

Regulatory agencies already are required to promulgate regulations only upon a reasoned determination that the benefits of the regulations justify the costs and to consider regulatory alternatives. Final regulations are subject to review by the federal courts which, among other things, examine whether agencies have satisfied the substantive and procedural requirements of all applicable statutes.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2804 in its current form does not include an exemption for rules promulgated by the Department of Homeland Security to protect the safety of the American people and the security of our country.

For this reason, I offered an amendment that provides this important exception and I thank the Rules Committee for making it in order.

The security of the homeland is one of the most preeminent concerns of the federal government. The increased need for national security following the attacks of September 11th makes it important that the Department of Homeland Security not be unduly impeded in the promulgation of rules that may preempt attacks against our nation.

Unnecessary delays to rules set forth by the Department of Homeland Security can waste scarce resources that keep our nation safe as well as impede the regular operations of the agency.

I urge all Members to support the Jackson Lee Amendment to H.R. 2804.

The material previously referred to by Mr. POLIS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 487 OFFERED BY
MR. POLIS OF COLORADO

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 4. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1010) to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 5. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 1010.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308–311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as “a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge.” To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that “the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition” in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: “The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition.”

The Republican majority may say “the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and]

has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever.” But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: “Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment.”

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled “Amending Special Rules” states: “a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate.” (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: “Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon.”

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. WOODALL. With that, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adopting the resolution, if ordered, and suspending the rules and passing H.R. 1944.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 224, nays 192, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 65]

YEAS—224

Aderholt	Blackburn	Capito
Amash	Boustany	Carter
Amodei	Brady (TX)	Cassidy
Bachmann	Bridenstine	Chabot
Bachus	Brooks (AL)	Chaffetz
Barletta	Broun (GA)	Coble
Barr	Buchanan	Coffman
Barton	Bucshon	Cole
Benishek	Burgess	Collins (GA)
Bentivolio	Byrne	Collins (NY)
Bilirakis	Calvert	Conaway
Bishop (UT)	Camp	Cook
Black	Campbell	Cotton

Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones

NAYS—192

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen

Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Long
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind

Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebach
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham
Royce
Runyan
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)

Blumenauer
Brooks (IN)
Cantor
Davis, Rodney
Duckworth

Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascarelli
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader

NOT VOTING—14

Ellison
Gosar
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
Miller, Gary

□ 1411

Ms. KUSTER and Messrs. CICILLINE and KENNEDY changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. RIGELL and BROOKS of Alabama changed their vote from “nay” to yea.”

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 65 I was meeting with a local official, Mayor Chris Koos, and missed the time to cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 231, noes 185, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 66]

AYES—231

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Bartlett
Barr
Barton
Benishek

Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)

Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Pastor (AZ)
Posey
Rush
Tiberi

NOES—185

Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)

Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Sessions
Massie
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters (CA)
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)

Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOES—185

Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Engel

Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda

Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebsock
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui

McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky

NOT VOTING—14

Blumenauer
Cárdenas
Cooper
Ellison
Gosar

Graves (GA)
Gutiérrez
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
Miller, Gary

Pastor (AZ)
Roe (TN)
Rush
Tiberi

□ 1421

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS
PROTECTION ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1944) to protect private property rights, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 353, nays 65, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 67]

YEAS—353

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Bass

Beatty
Benishak
Bentivolio
Bera (CA)
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Bonamici

Boustany
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Buchanan

Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cassidy
Castro (TX)
Chabot
Chaffetz
Clay
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Cotton
Courtney
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Daines
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Deutsch
Diaz-Balart
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Eilmers
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farenthold
Fattah
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Gutiérrez
Hahn

Hall
Hanabusa
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Heck (WA)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holding
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Israel
Issa
Jackson Lee
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kaptur
Kelly (IL)
Kelly (PA)
Kilmer
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kirkpatrick
Kline
Kuster
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Lankford
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
Latta
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsock
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lummis
Lynch
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCauley
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
McNerney
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Moore
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)

Napolitano
Negrete McLeod
Neugebauer
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Pallone
Pascarell
Paulsen
Payne
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Polis
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Ruiz
Runyan
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schiff
Schneider
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Scott, David
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Sires
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Southerland
Speier
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Takano
Terry
Thompson (CA)

Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tipton
Titus
Tonko
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela

Velázquez
Visclosky
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Walz
Waters
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Whitfield
Williams

Wilson (FL)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yarmuth
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NAYS—65

Becerra
Bustos
Butterfield
Capuano
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Crowley
Cummings
DeGette
Dingell
Edwards
Engel
Farr

Frankel (FL)
Grayson
Grijalva
Hastings (FL)
Holt
Huffman
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Keating
Kennedy
Kildee
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Maffei
Matsui
McDermott
McGovern
Meeks

Meng
Miller, George
Moran
Nadler
Neal
O'Rourke
Pelosi
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Slaughter
Swalwell (CA)
Tierney
Tsongas
Wasserman
Schultz
Waxman
Welch

NOT VOTING—12

Blumenauer
Ellison
Gosar
Hudson

McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
Michaud
Miller, Gary

Pastor (AZ)
Rush
Tiberi
Westmoreland

□ 1429

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, I unintentionally missed rollcall vote No. 66 and cast an incorrect vote for rollcall vote No. 67 on Wednesday, February 26, 2014. I would like to correct my error and ask that the record reflect the following: on H. Res. 487, rollcall vote No. 66, I should have voted "no;" on H.R. 1944, rollcall vote No. 67, I should have voted "aye."

□ 1430

STOP TARGETING OF POLITICAL
BELIEFS BY THE IRS ACT OF 2014

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 487, I call up the bill (H.R. 3865) to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia). Pursuant to House Resolution 487, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means, printed in the bill, is adopted. The bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 3865

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act of 2014”.

SEC. 2. APPLICABLE STANDARD FOR DETERMINATIONS OF WHETHER AN ORGANIZATION IS OPERATED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL WELFARE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The standard and definitions as in effect on January 1, 2010, which are used to determine whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall apply for purposes of determining the status of organizations under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) PROHIBITION ON MODIFICATION OF STANDARD.—The Secretary of the Treasury may not issue, revise, or finalize any regulation (including the proposed regulations published at 78 Fed. Reg. 71535 (November 29, 2013)), revenue ruling, or other guidance not limited to a particular taxpayer relating to the standard and definitions specified in subsection (a).

(c) APPLICATION TO ORGANIZATIONS.—Except as provided in subsection (d), this section shall apply with respect to any organization claiming tax exempt status under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 which was created on, before, or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) SUNSET.—This section shall not apply after the one-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act of 2014”.

SEC. 2. APPLICABLE STANDARD FOR DETERMINATIONS OF WHETHER AN ORGANIZATION IS OPERATED EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL WELFARE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The standard and definitions as in effect on January 1, 2010, which are used to determine whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 shall apply for purposes of determining the status of organizations under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) PROHIBITION ON MODIFICATION OF STANDARD.—The Secretary of the Treasury may not (nor may any delegate of such Secretary) issue, revise, or finalize any regulation (including the proposed regulations published at 78 Fed. Reg. 71535 (November 29, 2013)), revenue ruling, or other guidance not limited to a particular taxpayer relating to the standard and definitions specified in subsection (a).

(c) APPLICATION TO ORGANIZATIONS.—Except as provided in subsection (d), this section shall apply with respect to any organization claiming tax exempt status under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 which was created on, before, or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) SUNSET.—This section shall not apply after the one-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP) and

the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3865.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3865, the Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act of 2014, to stop the IRS and Treasury from restricting free speech activities of social welfare organizations that have been in place for over 50 years.

Last May, we learned that the IRS targeted conservative groups seeking tax-exempt status. For over 9 months, committee investigators have reviewed hundreds of thousands of internal IRS documents and interviewed IRS officials regarding the targeting. Our investigation is not yet over, and the Ways and Means Committee continues to wait for the IRS to turn over Lois Lerner's emails. Despite the ongoing investigations both in Congress and by the inspector general, last November Treasury rushed forward with proposed new regulations to stifle 501(c)(4) groups, upending rules that have been in place for over half a century.

Under the proposed rule, social welfare organizations would face additional, unprecedented scrutiny for engaging in the most basic nonpartisan political activity, such as organizing nonpartisan get-out-the-vote drives, registering voters, or hosting candidate forums in their neighborhood. If the Treasury Department and the IRS have their way, these sorts of activities would jeopardize the tax-exempt status of social welfare organizations.

Making matters worse, the administration is pushing the proposed rule based on a false premise. Treasury issued these rules under the premise of “considerable confusion” in the tax-exempt application process. They use the term considerable confusion to justify their actions. However, the committee's investigation has found no evidence that confusion caused the IRS to systematically target conservative groups. In fact, we found evidence to the contrary, that IRS workers in Cincinnati flagged Tea Party cases for Washington, D.C., because of “media attention.” Before Washington got involved, front-line IRS employees were already processing and approving Tea Party applications with no intrusive questionnaires or signs of confusion.

In addition to being based on a false premise, the proposed rule was drafted in secrecy and long before the adminis-

tration's proclaimed need for clarity. Our investigation has discovered that Treasury and the IRS were working on these new rules behind closed doors for years—well before the targeting came to light.

While the administration claims that the proposed rule is a response to the inspector general's audit report, IRS employees told committee staff in transcribed interviews that discussions about the rule started much earlier, in the spring of 2011. Further, a June 2012 email between Treasury officials and then-IRS director of tax exempt organizations, Lois Lerner, shows that these potential regulations were being discussed off plan—meaning that the plans for the regulations were to be discussed behind closed doors. This type of behavior raises serious questions about the integrity of the rule-making process and counsels for putting a hold on the draft rules.

The intent of the rules proposed by the Obama administration is clear: to legalize the IRS' inappropriate targeting of conservative groups. These proposed rules severely limit groups' rights to engage in public debate by labeling activities such as candidate forums, get-out-the-vote efforts, and voter registration as “political activity” for 501(c)(4) groups. However, 501(c)(3)'s—which are not allowed to engage in my political activity—and labor unions are free to continue to engage in these activities without limitation.

It is clear that the American people are also concerned that these proposed rules would squash their First Amendment rights. Treasury has received over 94,000 comments on the rule so far, which is the most they have ever received on any rule ever. Given the American public's significant interest in the proposed rules, it is imperative that Treasury put a hold on them until the investigations into the targeting are complete so that all the facts are known and the public has ample opportunity to be heard.

This legislation will ensure that Treasury does not rush this rule into effect this year, allows the ongoing investigations to issue findings on the targeting, helps us to stop the IRS' targeting of taxpayers based on their personal beliefs, and is a commonsense step to preserve these groups' ability to engage in public debate.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting “yes” to this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) control the remainder of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

On a day when the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. CAMP, is unveiling a tax measure that requires serious bipartisanship to be successful, we are here on the floor considering a totally political bill in an attempt to resurrect an alleged scandal that never existed.

Was there incompetence at the IRS in the processing of 501(c)(4) applications?

Yes—and I was among the very first who said that those in supervision should be held accountable.

Was there corruption, political interference, White House involvement, an enemies list, as the Republicans have claimed since day one?

Absolutely not; no evidence whatsoever.

Yesterday, the IRS Commissioner confirmed that \$8 million has been spent directly on those investigations as over 255 people have spent over 79,000 hours doing nothing but responding to congressional investigations. An additional \$6 million to \$8 million has been spent to add capacity to information technology systems to process securely the 500,000 pages of documents Congress has received.

What have they learned? That both progressive and conservative groups were inappropriately screened out by name and not activity, and that no one was involved in this outside of the IRS, and that there was no political motivation involved.

When the inspector general asked his chief investigator to look into the possibility of political motivation by the IRS, that investigator concluded:

There was no indication that pulling these selected applications was politically motivated. The email traffic indicated there were unclear processing directions and the group wanted to make sure they had guidance on processing the applications so they pulled them. This is a very important nuance.

Indeed, it is, and it is precisely that lack of clarity that the IRS was responding to in proposing new regulations for 501(c)(4) organizations. New regulations that are designed to bring certainty in determining whether an organization's primary activities are political.

The regulations are among several steps the IG himself recommended in his audit report that the IRS undertake, each of which the Republicans repeatedly called for action on.

In a June 3, 2013, hearing before the House Appropriations Committee, Chairman CRENSHAW told Acting IRS Commissioner Danny Werfel:

We're going to insist that the IRS implement all nine of the recommendations in the inspector general's report.

A Republican member of the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. ROSKAM, has a bill to implement all of the inspector general's recommendations, including implementing new 501(c)(4) regulations.

Why is this important? Because applications for 501(c)(4) status have nearly doubled between 2010 and 2012—to 3,357, and spending has skyrocketed.

In 2006, \$1 million was spent by (c)(4) organizations. In 2010, \$92 million was spent. In 2012, \$256 million has been spent by (c)(4) organizations.

The (c)(4) designation presently allows organizations to keep their donors secret, hidden as to which individuals contributed, and that is exactly the secrecy that the Republicans are trying to preserve.

Why? Because the three largest spenders, representing fully 51 percent of the total, are a Who's Who list of Republican political operatives.

□ 1445

It is indicated here: Crossroads GPS, Karl Rove, \$71 million; Americans for Prosperity, the Koch brothers, \$36 million; and the American Future Fund, the Koch brothers again, \$25 million. That is \$132 million of the skyrocketing \$256 million that the Federal Election Commission had reported to it, according to the Center for Responsive Politics.

If you live in a targeted State and you turn on your television, you have probably seen these groups at work distorting the Affordable Care Act.

That is why we are here today, purely and simply, not because Republicans want to stand up for the rights of social welfare organizations—and they often talk about small ones—but to preserve the secrecy around the Republicans' big campaign efforts.

These are draft regulations that the Republicans themselves called for. Over 76,000 comments—and I think now more—have been received, and the comment period does not close until Friday.

These regulations aren't likely to come out this year anyway with all these comments, so why this bill? Why this bill? It is very, very clear, and it is very simple. There is a problem with 501(c)(4)'s. The three organizations that I mentioned that are involved as political operatives, in one form or another, these are people who have donors nobody knows. This is secret money.

Why are we standing here and saying to the IRS: Don't look at 502(c)(4)'s; don't look at the possible massive abuse; don't look at what has happened in the last few years where political operatives, under the guise of 501(c)(4), have moved from \$1 million in many cases to \$256 million reported to the FEC?

Our constituents, Democrats and Republicans, are offering their comments. Some of them I agree with and they deserve to be read, but not to be shredded at the hands of a November campaign strategy by the Republican Party of this country and by the Republican Conference of this House.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) control the balance of the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to take a moment just to respond to some of the comments that my friend on the other side made.

First of all, there are three ongoing investigations that are incomplete. There is the congressional investigation being conducted by multiple committees, incomplete; there is the inspector general investigation, still incomplete and ongoing; and there is a third, a criminal investigation.

I ask, first off, the question: Why start regulating now when we don't have all the information? Let's let all this go to conclusion and then institute the proper reforms.

I want to point out that in its report on targeting, the inspector general recommended the Treasury and the IRS provide guidance on how to measure political activity—not what constitutes political activity, how to measure it.

The proposed rule has been in development since 2011. Internal IRS emails between Treasury and IRS show that they were developing the rule off plan—off plan. That means beyond the sunshine of disclosure and out in the open—off plan. What do they have to hide? Why are they doing this? And this is actually before all the allegations came out.

Then, when asked at the markup of H.R. 3865—this legislation—whether the proposed rule answers the inspector general's recommendation for the IRS and Treasury to provide guidance on measuring political activity, Tom Barthold, the chief of staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation, nonpartisan, said: The proposed rule does not address the measurement issue.

All we are seeking to do is to delay the implementation of this rule until we complete the investigation and we have all the facts, and then we can talk about what necessary reforms should be implemented.

But I think it is a bit premature to start putting forth regulations that will infringe on First Amendment rights. It is a very blunt instrument and a very dangerous path to embark upon at this point in time.

With that, I am happy to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), my friend, a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the piece of legislation we are talking about.

I think it is rather chilling that 223 years ago, our First Amendment rights

were enshrined in our Bill of Rights. We have all taken the same oath. We said, to the best of our ability, we preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. I am hearing now dollar signs or dollar numbers being there saying, well, we can't afford to spend this kind of money.

Never before in America were we ever worried about the cost of money when it comes to defending our freedoms and liberties under our Constitution and our Bill of Rights. It has no dollar attached to it. It is basically fundamentally American.

When we talk about American citizens not being able to talk that way—the First Amendment, by the way, protects us and enshrines us, 45 words in the First Amendment that protect and enshrine our rights.

This is not a political issue. This is not about an "R" or a "D." This is about a "we." This is about the entire country. If we are going to sit here and say: Oh, no, this just has to do with an election—an election—really, an election?—we cannot allow the voice of the people not to be heard in our town squares. When they need to speak out, they need to know that they can speak out without being threatened or without being worried about what is going to happen to them.

This is so basically who we are as Americans. It has nothing to do with Republicans and Democrats, Independents and Libertarians. It has to do with who we are. If we cannot see that and we turn this into a political agenda and talking points, then, my gosh, how far we have fallen from what the Founders intended at the very beginning.

We cannot have this debate in seriousness and say we are spending too much money to protect the rights of our American citizens. That is absolutely foolish.

I am very, very strong on the protection of what we are talking about. H.R. 3865 reconfirms what the American people need to know. They can speak out on anything, anytime, anywhere they want, without having to be worried about anybody interfering with it, especially a government.

This is a government that serves the people; this is not a people that serve our government. And to think that we have to have a piece of legislation in addition to our First Amendment rights on the floor is absolutely so different than what we think.

Again, the voice of the American people has got to be heard. I don't care—conservative, liberal, I don't care where you are coming from. You have the right to speak out anytime you want.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining on both sides, for housekeeping purposes?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 22 minutes

remaining. The gentleman from Louisiana has 21½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CROWLEY. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we have all heard the outrage and the innuendos from my Republican colleagues and their chief mouthpiece, FOX News. The facts should show this is phony, a phony investigation against President Obama launched for political purposes: facts like the person who began these investigations was a self-described conservative Republican; facts like more than 500,000 pages of documents have been provided to Congress, and there is no smoking gun; facts like, of the five dozen interviews of IRS employees at 15 congressional hearings, that nothing was found.

These are the facts, but I realize some will choose to not believe the facts versus fiction. Let me provide some basic commonsense information.

The inspector general who oversees the IRS, someone who was appointed by then-President George W. Bush—someone who has admitted that he covered up political targeting of progressive groups in his report to Congress; someone who had a number of private meetings with the Republican chair of the Oversight Committee, DARRELL ISSA, and then came out to issue public statements as facts—this someone, J. Russell George, has testified under oath that he notified Congressman DARRELL ISSA of his investigation into the IRS in the summer of 2012.

Do you know what else was happening in the summer of 2012? A very close Presidential election.

Does anyone honestly think, if there was an actual scandal or an actual targeting of just Tea Party groups by the administration in the months and the weeks leading up to the 2012 elections when Barack Obama was going to the ballot, that Congressman DARRELL ISSA wouldn't blow the whistle and expose it when he was notified that an investigation was ongoing and occurring?

It just doesn't pass the laugh test. This is another phony scam in the realm of phony scams my Republican colleagues make up to go after Democratic Presidents.

But what is also interesting is that, just as the Republicans continue their crusade to discredit the IRS, the Republicans have rallied around their version of tax reform—I have a copy of the summation right here; this is just the summation—a radical version that will empower—empower—the IRS. This legislation that they are offering today will empower the IRS and raise taxes on families while cutting them for multinational corporations.

For the past several years, the public has been told that the Republicans would try to rip the Tax Code out from its roots and that it would be rewritten

by Democrats and Republicans together.

Well, guess what. Democrats were never once invited to help draft, draft this bill. Speaker BOEHNER even dismissed Democratic criticism of the process by saying, "Blah, blah, blah."

So what is the result? A radical Republican tax plan that will, if enacted, end the tax break for families to deduct their State and local income taxes that they already paid in taxes to the States and local governments. It will slash the mortgage interest deduction for homeowners. It will create a new tax on Social Security. It will tax workers for the health care offered by their employer. It will increase taxes on hundreds of thousands of our military families. It will institute the chained CPI to raise taxes, and it is also known to reduce veterans' and Social Security benefit checks.

This really does beg the question: Whose side are our Republican colleagues on? They try to look populist by creating false and fake scandals and bashing the IRS, but in reality, their words and actions mask their bill to empower the IRS and radically redesign the Tax Code, making families pay more so international corporations can pay less.

That is the real scandal here this afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I welcome the opportunity to debate tax reform, but it is obvious to me that the gentleman hasn't read the bill yet, and I think you should read the bill before you debate tax reform. That will come on another day.

But I want to get back to why we are here today. I want to point out that this is a bipartisan IRS investigation by Congress. I want to also point out, in that regard, that the Ways and Means Committee document requests are bipartisan joint requests from Chairman CAMP and Ranking Member LEVIN. Ranking Member LEVIN also admits that the investigation is incomplete.

So we have to get down to the bottom of this and let this investigation be done. The American people deserve to know what the truth is before we start issuing new law or having new regulations issued by the executive branch which will have the chilling effect of infringing on First Amendment rights.

One of the previous speakers on the other side mentioned the IRS spending money and manpower on this investigation. Yes, the IRS also spent \$40 million on conferences over the period of the targeting.

□ 1500

One conference alone cost \$4.1 million—waste. In 2012, the IRS spent \$21.6

million on union activity—taxpayer dollars on union activity. Explain that to the taxpayer. The IRS also spends about \$5 million annually on its full-service production studio in New Carrollton, Maryland.

The fact of the matter is that the American people are tired of the waste. They are tired, and they are also very concerned about the infringement on their First Amendment rights.

With that, I am very pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RENACCI).

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3865, the Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act.

Last year, northeast Ohioans and Americans across the country were deeply troubled to learn the IRS abused its power by targeting conservative groups. Many in Ohio's 16th District, my district, contacted my office to express grave concerns about the lack of accountability and transparency within the IRS. Not only did the Federal agency violate the public trust, but it infringed on our First Amendment rights.

The Ways and Means Committee began investigating allegations of potential political discrimination within the IRS nearly 3 years ago. What was discovered is disturbing. The committee found evidence that conservative groups were targeted to an extent far beyond what was initially reported. As part of its ongoing investigation, the committee requested and reviewed hundreds of thousands of internal IRS documents, and it interviewed dozens of its employees.

Recently, the IRS published draft rules that would essentially authorize the continued targeting of political groups. These rules represent a disregard for liberties outlined in our Constitution, and they demonstrate the dangers of a growing Federal Government. The IRS' actions bring to light just how rampant abuse is within this administration. The American people will not tolerate it, and neither will Congress.

This legislation is commonsense. It would require the IRS to halt this rule-making process until the committee completes its investigation. It is critical that the committee gathers all the facts before the IRS implements these rules, which were created behind closed doors. That is not political. That is just common sense. There should be no controversy at all.

This legislation builds upon a bill I introduced last year which would specifically spell out that any IRS employee, regardless of political affiliation, who targeted a taxpayer for political purposes could be immediately relieved of his duties. It passed the House with broad bipartisan support.

This is not a partisan issue. Whether you are a Republican, a Democrat or

an Independent, above all, we are Americans. Targeting anyone based on any affiliation goes against the very principles this country was founded upon. Americans of all political beliefs deserve to know that they will not be targeted by their government for political purposes.

I thank Chairman CAMP for his hard work on this important legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I just want to remind the gentleman from Ohio that this tax bill, known as the Tax Reform Act of 2014, which was made public today, will be a sucker punch to the guts of families who live in higher tax States, like Illinois, Wisconsin, Nebraska, New York, and Ohio. All of these States have representation from the Republican Party on the Ways and Means Committee. They helped to draft this legislation. The question is: Whose side are they on?

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington State (Mr. McDERMOTT).

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, here we are back in the theater of the absurd. The Republicans are wasting valuable time and resources on political theater, crafted to make the producers at FOX television happy while they should be moving forward with the country's business.

There have been six separate investigations. Not a single shred of evidence has been found demonstrating political motivation or White House involvement in the IRS grouping of the tea party applications by name. Now, one of my colleagues is a physician. He is from Louisiana. He has operated many times. You do not begin surgery until you know what is going on with the patient. We have six investigations which found no reason to operate, no reason to pass this legislation. Yet here it is. Ironically, the real trickery of this is this bill. It is designed to protect Karl Rove's Crossroads GPS and the Koch Brothers of Houston from exposing where the money that they put into the political process is being used.

Everyone knows what a 501(c)(4) is about. You give the money to the organizations. They don't have to report your name to anyone, and then the organizations can use it any way they want. Now, if an organization goes to the IRS and says, "we want a 501(c)(4)," the IRS should ask a few questions, don't you think, if they are going to give an exemption from the American people, from those people paying the taxes who put it in there? Karl Rove and all of his cohorts ought to pay taxes if they are going to use it for the political process, and it is the IRS' job to find that out. It is the same with liberal groups. Any group that comes in has to explain what it is going to do with the money.

We have had six investigations, but now we have a bill without any conclusion from any committee or any investigation that there is a problem. The floor of the House should not be the stage for the Republicans to work out their November election strategy and funding. If Republicans really want to work on behalf of the American people, they should get serious and roll up their sleeves. The production tax credit ought to pass out of here as a unanimous consent. There are a thousand things that ought to be happening here today instead of this silly bill, which will have no effect. It is not going through the Senate. The President isn't going to sign it. It is simply political theater to give the directors at FOX TV things to put on television.

If you intend to do something real, you can, but this bill is not real. It is simply to reignite the baseless allegations against the White House.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), the majority leader of the House.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act.

Political speech was considered by our Founders to be deserving of the utmost protection. The First Amendment they wrote is no less crucial to our democracy today than it was in those initial days. Since those days, Americans have come up with all sorts of ways to exercise their fundamental free speech rights, including assembling together in organizations to express their thoughts about what their government is doing.

These groups, including those known as 501(c)(4) organizations, are an important part of our democracy. Many of these groups are formed to specifically engage and educate our citizenry through candidate forums, debates, grassroots lobbying, voter registration, and other activities to promote the common good so America has an informed public.

For over 50 years, these organizations have been eligible to apply for tax-exempt status, but now, Mr. Speaker, that status is under threat from new regulations being proposed by the IRS. The goal here is clear. These regulations were reverse engineered in order to directly silence political opponents of this administration's.

That is the worst kind of government abuse. Silencing your critics is commonplace in authoritarian countries, not in the United States of America. Frankly, it is a cowardly act to silence people via backroom regulations. Those who disagree with any administration's policies, whether conservative or liberal, still deserve the constitutional protections afforded to them. This kind of government abuse must stop, and it must stop now.

Today, we have an opportunity to act in a bipartisan manner because this bill prevents these costly regulations from taking effect on groups that promote issues both sides of the aisle deeply care about. Nearly 70,000 comments have been submitted about this proposed regulation from both sides or all sides of the ideological spectrum. The majority of those submissions are negative.

Recently, the American Civil Liberties Union submitted a 26-page comment to IRS Commissioner John Koskinen, stating:

Social welfare organizations praise or criticize candidates for public office on the issues, and they should be able to do so freely, without fear of losing or being denied tax-exempt status, even if doing so could influence a citizen's vote.

The ACLU continued, stating that the advocacy work done by these groups is "the heart of our representative democracy."

The ACLU and so many others who have also spoken out in opposition to this proposed regulation are absolutely right. Political speech represents the best part of America, the ability for Americans to be able to reach out to their elected representatives and let them know when they agree or disagree with them.

No matter which side of the aisle we are on, Mr. Speaker, we must protect that fundamental freedom. So let us stand together today and pass this bill so that Americans, whether individually or collectively, can continue to strengthen our political process without fear of retribution.

I would like to thank Chairman CAMP as well as subcommittee Chairman BOUSTANY on the Ways and Means Committee and all of those across our country who have spoken out on this issue, and I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. CROWLEY. The only threat, Mr. Speaker, to the freedoms of Americans is not the bill we are discussing on the floor today but the bill that was announced this afternoon, the Tax Reform Act of 2014—the freedom of Americans to purchase their first homes, the freedom of Americans not to have attacks placed on their health care. Those are the types of freedoms that are being threatened today.

With that, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BECERRA), the chair of the Democratic Caucus of the House of Representatives.

Mr. BECERRA. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I think the best way to describe this bill is to call it the "prevent secret money from disclosure act," because that is what we are really talking about.

What matters today to most Americans? If you talk to folks back home or on the street, they will tell you: Are

you working on making sure the private sector is creating jobs? Does this bill help create jobs? No. They will say: Then at least make sure, if I am paying taxes, you are using them the right way. Does this bill help taxpayers save money? No.

So why are we doing this?

You are hearing folks talk about the Constitution. The Constitution doesn't guarantee campaign donors get special tax treatment or protections. The First Amendment protects speech, not secret contributions.

So what is the problem?

The problem is that the IRS has finally figured out that a whole bunch of folks are funneling a lot of dark, secret money into organizations that under the Tax Code are permitted and that they are using this to influence our American campaigns.

We have no idea who is making these contributions of millions of dollars—secret dollars—to influence campaigns here in America. Is it foreign governments giving these millions of dollars? We don't know. Is it money launderers trying to influence elections? We don't know. We have no idea who is giving this money because, under the Tax Code under which these organizations are filing, they have no obligation to disclose who has given them one red cent.

That Tax Code section, 501(c)(4), is very similar to the 501(c)(3), the charitable organization we are very familiar with. 501(c)(4)s are classified as "social welfare organizations." Guess what? Do you know how much those social welfare organizations spent doing campaign and political work in our elections? How much do you think the political campaigns spent, the Republican National Committee and the Democratic National Committee combined? \$255 million in the 2012 election. That is what the two political parties spent together. How much did social welfare organizations spend on campaign and political activity? More than the two political parties combined—\$256 million. Can you tell me where one penny came from? No, you can't, because it is all secret money.

What are the proponents of this bill trying to do? They are trying to hide the names of those who gave the money. Why? We don't know.

□ 1515

But it sure would be nice to know who is getting all this money, when just 8 years ago, those same social welfare organizations gave a total of \$1 million for political purposes. It was \$256 million in 2012. Eight years ago, it was \$1 million.

Something is going on in America. Someone is trying to buy elections. And we can't figure it out because those donors don't have to be disclosed. It is time to make sure that those donations are disclosed. That is all the IRS is trying to do.

It is cloaked as something different by proponents of this bill. Let's not hide the money. It is time to disclose those contractors.

Vote down this bill.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

There is no denying that we may need reforms in this. There has been a lot of debate about this. The gentleman from California and I have had those kinds of conversations. But I would point out that the investigations are not complete, and they need to be complete.

The ranking member mentioned earlier in his comments money and donors as reasons for this rule, but neither the word "donor," "money," or "contributions" appears in the regulation.

It has been cited by the former Commissioner of the IRS that there was confusion. A confusion narrative emerged, but it was on the basis of no internal investigation at the IRS. There has been no interview of the employees, no facts established. We are still doing this investigation, from our standpoint, as is the inspector general.

We know from our investigation so far, having interviews with the Cincinnati employees, that they were not confused by the rules. They were processing the applications until interference came down from Washington, from higher up in the Exempt Organizations Division of the IRS. Employees then flagged Tea Party applications and others because of what they said were "media interest," not confusion. Within 24 hours of the flagging for media interest, these Washington, D.C., officials at the IRS requested Tea Party applications.

Unlike the IRS, the Committee on Ways and Means has been investigating this matter, and we have not completed this investigation. But committee investigators have interviewed nearly three dozen IRS officials, from frontline screeners to the former commissioner. We have reviewed hundreds of thousands of documents. It is nearing completion, but this investigation is being held up.

A central figure in this investigation is Lois Lerner. We have not gotten the information that we have requested from Lois Lerner. We have put the newly confirmed Commissioner on notice that if he wants to move forward with reforms and do all the things he wants to do during his tenure at IRS, we have got to get this investigation done. We have to get the facts on the table, and this IRS has to come clean before the American people.

This agency occupies a central part of every single American's life. It affects every one of us. This agency has the power to destroy each and every one of us. And that is why the trust and the integrity needs to be restored.

All this rule does is shuts down speech. It does nothing that these gentlemen, our friends on the other side of

the aisle, have mentioned in terms of reforms and cleaning up the election system and all that. No, it does none of that. It just simply stifles speech. I don't think that is appropriate.

We owe it to the American people and we owe it to the integrity of this institution to complete this investigation, put the facts on the table, and follow these facts wherever they may lead. This is not political. This is simply looking at the facts.

Rather than a recently drafted cure for confusion, this proposed rule, like I said, simply focuses to silence some of these small groups, silence conservatives.

As early as 2011, long before the inspector general audit, IRS officials in Washington, D.C., began talking about the proposed rule. We have email from Treasury to IRS, off plan—off plan. Now we are trying to get more of those emails because we want to know what they mean by “off plan.” What was really discussed and why was all this talked about before the allegations even came forward from these various groups?

This is not right. We need to get to the bottom of it. And rather than curing confusion, the proposed rule would simply silence these social welfare organizations and have a disproportionate effect on some of these right-leaning conservative groups that were subject, in the first place, to the targeting.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My good friend from Louisiana would continue to have you believe that only right-wing and conservative groups were being investigated when in fact he knows and we know that it went well beyond that. There were progressive groups who were also subject to this investigation.

Mr. Speaker, let me also point out to my friend from Louisiana, he mentioned that maybe members of the Democratic Caucus had not yet perused the Republican Tax Reform Act of 2014. I would just point out for the record that I am assuming he read the proposed regulations. He mentioned that money was not mentioned, when in fact on the first page, in the fourth standpoint:

Contributions of money or anything of value to, or solicitation of contributions on behalf of, a candidate, political organization, or any other section 501(c) organization engaged in candidate-related political activity.

So money is mentioned on the first page, just to set the record straight, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this Republican radical tax plan will, for the first time, tax workers for their health insurance benefits that they are provided through their job and tax previously untaxed Social Security income. The question, again, is: Whose side are they on?

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. BILL PASCRELL, my friend.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I sincerely have the greatest respect for the good doctor. I think he is a reasonable man and a good person, but when you are explaining, you are losing.

I rise in strong opposition to this legislation.

After we learned last year about the inexcusable way the IRS evaluated applications for tax-exempt status—because that is what is at the heart of this issue—I was hopeful that we could have a bipartisan response. After all, it was not only conservative groups, as you have heard, that had their applications singled out solely because of words like “Tea Party.” No one is denying that. Progressive groups were inappropriately filtered as well. My Democratic colleagues and I were equally outraged by this behavior. We put it on the record. But those hopes faded quickly when it became apparent that my colleagues on the other side weren't actually interested in investigating this wrongdoing and fixing the problems.

This bill is just the latest example of how, instead, they are only concerned with scoring cheap political points. Where I am from in Paterson, New Jersey, we would call this Pyrrhic sophistry. That is what we would call it. Empty arguments, deceitful. That is what that means.

The examples the Republican leader pointed out could be under section 527. But if you are under 527, you need to disclose where the money came from. So you choose not to be under section 527 of the Tax Code. You would rather be in another section. And what is that other section? You are not tax liable and you don't have to disclose who gave you the money.

What is this? Russia? China?

You heard the numbers. We are talking about billions of dollars. The difference? They would have to disclose where the money came from.

No evidence of any retribution has been found yet within either political party. So this is really a witch hunt. For the American people, unfortunately, it is the integrity of our electoral process here that is on trial.

The fact is that the Supreme Court's rulings have legalized a torrent of hundreds of millions of dollars in corporate spending that has infected our elections.

We ask again today, join us in correcting that decision by the Supreme Court. It has infected our legal process.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CROWLEY. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. PASCRELL. One of the most egregious newly legal big spenders are organizations operating as 501(c)(4) tax-exempt groups. They could easily be

under section 527. We created a special section of the Tax Code precisely for tax-exempt political groups. No, they don't want to go under those groups, because if they go under those groups, they have got to tell us who is contributing to them.

This is absolutely chicanery. These regulations aren't some wild-eyed, down-the-rabbit-hole conspiracy theory to prosecute the President's political enemies.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has again expired.

Mr. CROWLEY. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. PASCRELL. They are simply about preserving congressional intent and providing clear rules of the road, both for tax-exempt groups and the IRS, about what exactly is political activity so they know what is permissible under the law.

This isn't about free speech. This isn't about being a Tea Party or a Progressive. Spend all the money you want to say whatever you want about any election. Just don't expect to be able to do so while calling yourself a tax-exempt social welfare group.

We are paying more taxes because these people are getting away with it. That is the bottom line. And you, I know, Doctor, are totally against that, because you would not really, in the final analysis, prefer that some groups are better than others—those particularly who don't tell us who donated to the group.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, how much time is left on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York has 4½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Louisiana has 11½ minutes remaining.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In the Nation Magazine, Nan Aron of the liberal judicial lobby, the Alliance for Justice, writes:

501(c)(4)'s are made up of over 86,000 mostly small organizations nationwide that are active participants in civic life.

They were not invented in the last election cycle. They have been around for generations. Their purpose isn't to hide donors. It is to advance policies.

Ms. Aron also adds:

These groups were involved in elections because it is often impossible to advance a policy cause without being involved in the political process.

This is from the liberal side of the political spectrum.

I am now pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana, TODD YOUNG, a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today because this is an essential issue that affects groups in my home State of Indiana, as well as groups throughout the country.

As a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, I have been present during hearings where we have learned that the IRS targeted conservative and Tea Party groups. During those same hearings, I have shared letters and documents that showed some of the targeted conservative groups were my fellow Hoosiers.

Regretfully, it appears that the IRS, rather than holding those responsible for this targeted sort of activity, is seeking to make political targeting part of their standard operating procedure. The recently proposed IRS regulation that pertains to these 501(c)(4) groups is designed to do so in a way that clearly inhibits their First Amendment activities.

501(c)(4) is the section of our Tax Code that many of the conservative groups tried to file under. They can't file as a 501(c)(3) because that would limit their ability to engage in grassroots lobbying. They can't file as a 501(c)(5) because they aren't a labor union. They can't file as a 501(c)(6) because they aren't a chamber of commerce. They can't file as a 527 because that would limit them only to political activity.

None of these other organizations are affected by the new regulations—only 501(c)(4)'s.

Now, this seems curious to me, and the regulation seems aimed at preventing such groups from engaging in civil discourse. This is why I strongly support H.R. 3865, the Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs, or STOP, Act.

This bill doesn't say that the IRS cannot regulate this issue, or even that they should not regulate this issue.

□ 1530

Instead, it just tells them to wait until the investigation into this targeting concludes before discussing whether any changes to the rules are necessary.

It is eminently reasonable. It would help protect the political speech and the civil rights of my constituents and those around the country. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM), our friend on the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, there is one thing worse than gridlock, according to my predecessor, Congressman Henry Hyde. The worst thing than gridlock is the greased chute of government.

It is ironic that the very administration that jammed through the Affordable Care Act, also known in the

vernacular as ObamaCare, the very group that foisted that on the American public in the middle of the night, without much oversight, without much discussion, just jammed it all through, now has a new remedy as it relates to this newest problem, and that is, do it again. Do it again on another issue.

We heard our friend from New Jersey posing a question, and he is misinformed. The nature of his question was somehow that the American public is paying for this, and yet, we had testimony that Mr. CAMP, the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, asked this question of Mr. Barthold, who is the chief of staff for the Joint Committee on Taxation.

He asked this question—this is DAVE CAMP, chairman of the committee:

Do these proposed regulations respond to some kind of revenue loss or some kind of tax avoidance scheme?

Answer: Not that I am aware of, sir. These organizations are generally exempt, and a revenue loss has not been identified as the basis of these proposed regulations.

So let's not kid ourselves. Here is the reality. The reality is that this stifles speech. This is from an administration that has been complicit in overseeing an Internal Revenue Service that has picked winners and losers. Mr. Speaker, has been able to say you get to participate in the public debate and you don't.

We ought not do this. There have been over 100,000 comments on this proposed regulation. For those that want to participate and offer their own comment, Mr. Speaker, they can go to roskam.house.gov/dontbesilenced to make sure that their voice is heard as well offering an official comment on this.

One thing we do know: we know that an administration which has a tendency to over-respond, we know that an administration that has not much credibility, frankly, on being thoughtful and nimble as it comes to legislation, is not the administration that we should trust at this point in time with a rule of such incredible consequence when they have demonstrated no capacity to do right things in the past.

I urge the passage of this bill.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM).

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, Federal law states that social welfare groups must exclusively promote social welfare. Social welfare includes activities like early childhood education, environmental protection, or veterans' assistance, not partisan political campaign activity.

Now, there is an important book on the House floor, and it is a dictionary. We have that book here because this is a lawmaking institution, and the precise definition of words is incredibly important.

Now, last time I looked up the word "exclusively," it meant everything, excluding everything else, solely, or only.

However, the IRS must have found an alternative definition for exclusively when it issued a regulation allowing social welfare organizations to only primarily promote social welfare. This contradiction between Federal law and IRS regulation has allowed these groups to spend over a quarter-billion dollars on political campaign activity, not their social welfare mission, while keeping their donors secret.

I urge my colleagues simply to vote against the bill and let the IRS move forward with this proposed regulation to correct this. "Exclusively" should mean exclusively.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, how much time remains?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Louisiana has 6½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE).

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Louisiana for yielding and for his leadership on holding the IRS accountable.

Mr. Speaker, we should not stand by and let the IRS target American citizens based on their political beliefs, and yet, that is what has been going on. It has been uncovered.

The President tries to act like it is some isolated incident, and yet, of course, we have got all kind of testimony that shows this goes way beyond some local office. This is widespread abuse of power by the Internal Revenue Service, and what we are seeing now, with this latest proposed rule, is literally something that would try to shut down an entire segment of American people who want to participate in the democratic process, Mr. Speaker.

The IRS should not be able to go and target people based on their political views, and yet that is what is happening, and President Obama is encouraging this kind of activity where you, literally, have the White House using enemy lists to go after people with groups like the IRS.

We have seen it with the EPA. We have seen it with the NLRB and the entire alphabet soup of Federal agencies that seems to want to go after people that might say something, exercising their First Amendment rights, that the White House disagrees with.

That is not how America works. That is not what this great country is built upon, Mr. Speaker.

If the President doesn't like the political views of somebody, that is what the great discourse of this country is all about. That is what makes our country so great, that we can disagree. We can exercise those great rights that the Founding Fathers put in place and that was later established in the Bill of

Rights, the first of those Bill of Rights being the First Amendment, encouraging free speech. It is what makes us strong as a Nation.

Yet here comes the IRS trying to shut down, use the heavy hammer of their power to try to shut down political speech of people who disagree with them.

It is not going to work, Mr. Speaker. We are not going to stand for it here in this House. I commend my colleague for bringing the legislation, which I am proud to cosponsor. Over 94,000 Americans have already weighed in on this as well, signing letters and inputting public comment, including 70 members of the Republican Study Committee who have chimed in.

We are not going to stand for this. This will be a bipartisan vote in support of this legislation to stop the abuse of the IRS.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Obviously my Republican colleagues don't want to talk about their radical Republican tax bill. I understand. I know why, because it is an actual bill on the American taxpaying public, a bill that would tax Social Security and would eliminate tax deductions on State and local taxes that taxpayers have already paid. It will implement chainsaw CPI.

Instead, they want to focus on a phony scandal—I understand it—and not this extreme scandal Republican tax bill, a bill they will force upon the American public.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN).

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague. I have listened all afternoon as my Republican colleagues have held forth about the importance of the First Amendment. No one is debating that. That is not what this bill is about, despite your best efforts to suggest it is.

What this bill is about is letting organizations spend millions of dollars of secret money, secret money, to try to buy elections to serve their special interests. That is what this bill is about.

Now, our Republican colleagues have talked repeatedly about the Treasury inspector general's report. I don't know if they have read the report, but one of the recommendations was for the IRS to revise its regulations and guidelines to clarify this particular area.

I would have hoped that all of us would want the IRS out of the business of determining whether or not a 501(c)(4) is primarily involved in political activity or primarily involved in social welfare activity.

I don't want them under the nose of every organization trying to figure it out, and that is why the IRS is trying to reform this area of the law.

So why isn't that what our Republican colleagues want?

Because this isn't about allowing those groups to exercise free speech. It is allowing those organizations to be used to channel secret money without disclosing those expenditures to the voters. That is what this is all about, because you can spend as much money as you want on political advocacy and campaigns. All you have to do is organize as a 527, which is another organization under the Tax Code which, by the way, is also tax exempt.

So why isn't that good enough?

You can say as much as you want, spend millions of dollars. I will tell you why. Because under 527's, people are spending all that money to influence elections, they have to disclose. They have to tell voters who they are spending millions of dollars to try and influence those votes.

That is not good enough for our Republican colleagues. They want to preserve this messy situation because it allows all that secret money to flow into these campaigns.

We believe voters have a right to know who is trying to spend millions of dollars to influence these votes, and by the way, eight of the nine Justices on the Supreme Court in *Citizens United*, a case which I had lots of problems with lots of parts of it, but eight of the nine Justices agree with us that transparency is important.

Here is what Justice Kennedy said. These transparency laws "impose no ceiling on campaign-related activities" and "do not prevent anyone from speaking," but they have "a governmental interest in providing the electorate with information about the sources of election-related spending."

Eight out of nine Supreme Court Justices agree with what every poll shows, that the American people overwhelmingly want transparency in our elections. Because why? Transparency brings accountability.

I think every American has an interest in knowing who is spending millions of dollars to try and get them elected to Congress, to serve particular special interests.

So, Mr. Speaker, for goodness sakes, this isn't about the First Amendment. Everyone is in favor of the First Amendment. This is about allowing secret money in campaigns, and we should not allow that. It is against the public interest.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would, first off, mention that the regulation does not mention donors.

Secondly, I would like to point out that the ACLU itself said these requirements "will pose insurmountable compliance issues that go beyond practicality and raise First Amendment concerns of the highest order."

The gentleman mentioned the Treasury inspector general report, but he

didn't quite precisely characterize what the inspector general said. The inspector general said in his report that the IRS, one of the recommendations is the IRS provide guidance on how to measure political activity, not what constitutes political activity.

So with those clarifications, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY), a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and DAVE CAMP for leading this effort to protect our free speech.

Whenever someone in Washington tells you don't worry, it is not really about free speech, trust me, it is.

A lot of Americans are frightened by the thought that their government would target them based on their political beliefs, and I am convinced the darkest days in America's history have been when the government has tried to silence the voices of those who disagree with it.

We suffered under this intimidation during the civil rights era, under the antiwar era, and now today, because conservative organizations, constitutional organizations, some who simply want to make the country better and have that voice, are now being targeted.

Make no mistake. This is not about clearing up confusion. This is about intimidation. This is about the government using one of the most powerful agencies it has, the IRS, the only agency that can destroy your life, your family, your business' life with their immense power, targeting people because of their political beliefs.

If you talk about what is free speech, I would point to this: look at organizations back home in your community. Those who want to do get out to vote, so go vote and have your voices heard. Voter registration, candidate forms, let's find out what elected officials and candidates feel about the issues.

Then just grassroots lobbying, letting their neighbors, their communities, their members understand the issues and weigh in. That is free speech. That is the First Amendment, and when this government targets Americans based on it, we have got to stop it.

Make no mistake, Republican, Democrat, Tea Party, Progressive, I don't care where you are at on there, we cannot let the government have this power. It must be stopped now.

□ 1545

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, let me simply close this debate by saying that, throughout all of this vigorous discussion, we want to make clear that this bill just simply asks for a 1-year delay in the implementation of this rule to allow ample time for Congress to complete its investigation and for the Treasury Inspector General for Tax

Administration to complete its investigation, so that we have the facts on the table.

We shouldn't be jumping ahead of the gun and possibly, and likely, infringe on the First Amendment rights of so many people unless we have the facts.

The ranking member of the committee, Mr. LEVIN, has admitted that the investigation is incomplete. Let's just give this time. We owe it to the American people to do that. We owe it to the integrity of this institution to do our work prior to having these premature judgments come forward, especially when the rule does not address all the issues that have been discussed today.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I ask that we all vote in favor of this bill, support it, and move it forward. Let's hit that pause button. Let's complete the investigation and do our due diligence.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 487, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I am opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Van Hollen moves to recommit the bill, H.R. 3865, to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Add at the end the following new sections:
SEC. 3. PRESERVING DEMOCRACY FROM THE CORRUPTING INFLUENCE OF SECRET DONORS.

Nothing in this Act shall limit, restrict, or prohibit the Secretary of the Treasury from issuing regulations requiring the disclosure of secret political donors.

SEC. 4. RESTORING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS FOR AMERICA'S JOB SEEKERS.

This Act shall not take effect until the Secretary of the Treasury has certified that the most recent percentage of the insured unemployed (those for whom unemployment taxes were paid during prior employment) who are receiving Federal or State unemployment insurance (UI) benefits when they are actively seeking work is at least equal to the percentage receiving such benefits for the last quarter of 2013, as determined by the Department of Labor's quarterly UI data summary measurement of the Unemployment Insurance reciprocity rate for all UI programs.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order against the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee.

If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended, and as the motion indicated, it addresses secret money in elections. I am trying to make sure we end that secret money. It also deals with the issue of extending unemployment insurance, which my colleague from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) will discuss in a minute.

But I want to focus on this issue of secret money because this resolution, what we are asking our Republican colleagues to join us on, is to vote on a very simple statement: to say that nothing in this act shall limit, restrict, or prohibit the Secretary of the Treasury from issuing regulations requiring the disclosure of secret political donors.

Our Republican colleagues all afternoon have said this is about the First Amendment. This is about protecting the right of people to express their views.

That is not what their bill is about. Everyone is in favor of people being able to express their views. As I indicated earlier, you can form what is known as a 527 organization; and whether you are an individual or an organization in that form, you can spend millions of dollars to try to influence the outcome of elections.

What we are saying is the voters have a right to know who is bankrolling these campaign efforts. What we have seen over the last couple of years is a huge increase, an explosion of money being spent by outside groups to try to influence the outcome of elections to try to elect Members of Congress to support whatever interests those groups may support.

This motion, what we are proposing, would still allow all this money to be spent. But—and here is the key—most of that money is now flowing through 501(c)(4) organizations because some groups have been abusing those organizations to allow them to use them as secret conduits, conduits to allow them to secretly fund campaigns.

All we are saying is let's not take away the right and ability of the Treasury Department to adopt regulations to make sure we don't allow that secret money because I thought most of us agreed in transparency, and I thought most of us agreed in accountability.

And I know that eight of the nine Supreme Court Justices, even in a controversial case, support transparency and disclosure. They say that is good for democracy. And you know what? Every poll shows that the American people overwhelmingly agree. So let's vote for disclosure and vote for this motion.

With that, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

Mr. LEVIN. Let's look at the facts. Only those who won't look don't see them.

There have been 1.9 million long-term unemployed Americans who have lost their unemployment insurance since December 28 and another 72,000 every week. Unemployment insurance lifted 2.5 million from poverty in 2012, and now hundreds of thousands are sinking into poverty because this institution and the House majority will not act.

The long-term unemployment rate in this country: 36 percent of jobless workers over 6 months; the lowest percentage of jobless receiving unemployment insurance in over 50 years. It is mindless not to act in terms of the national economy. It is heartless not to act in terms of the individual lives of hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of Americans and their families.

Vote for this motion to recommit. I don't see how anybody can go home and vote "no."

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my point of order, and I seek the time in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation is withdrawn.

The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for 5 minutes in opposition to the motion.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, this motion to recommit actually allows and perpetuates the targeting of Americans by the Internal Revenue Service. This motion to recommit permits the government to restrict the free speech of Americans.

I can't stand for this. The American people can't stand for this and should not stand for this. Vote "no" on this motion to recommit.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 191, nays 230, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 68]

YEAS—191

Barber	Green, Al	Nolan
Barrow (GA)	Green, Gene	O'Rourke
Bass	Grijalva	Pallone
Beatty	Gutiérrez	Pascarell
Becerra	Hahn	Payne
Bera (CA)	Hanabusa	Pelosi
Bishop (GA)	Hastings (FL)	Perlmutter
Bishop (NY)	Heck (WA)	Peters (CA)
Bonamici	Higgins	Peters (MI)
Brady (PA)	Himes	Peterson
Braley (IA)	Hinojosa	Pingree (ME)
Brown (FL)	Holt	Pocan
Brownley (CA)	Honda	Polis
Bustos	Horsford	Price (NC)
Butterfield	Hoyer	Quigley
Capps	Huffman	Rahall
Capuano	Israel	Rangel
Cárdenas	Jackson Lee	Richmond
Carney	Johnson (GA)	Roybal-Allard
Carson (IN)	Johnson, E. B.	Ruiz
Cartwright	Kaptur	Ruppersberger
Castor (FL)	Keating	Ryan (OH)
Castro (TX)	Kelly (IL)	Sánchez, Linda T.
Chu	Kennedy	Sanchez, Loretta
Ciçilline	Kildee	Sarbanes
Clark (MA)	Kilmer	Schakowsky
Clarke (NY)	Kind	Schiff
Clay	Kirkpatrick	Schneider
Cleaver	Kuster	Schrader
Clyburn	Langevin	Schwartz
Cohen	Larsen (WA)	Scott (VA)
Connolly	Larson (CT)	Scott, David
Conyers	Lee (CA)	Serrano
Cooper	Levin	Sewell (AL)
Costa	Lewis	Shea-Porter
Courtney	Lipinski	Sherman
Crowley	Loeb sack	Sinema

NAYS—230

Aderholt	Calvert	Dent
Amash	Camp	DeSantis
Amodei	Campbell	DesJarlais
Bachmann	Cantor	Diaz-Balart
Bachus	Capito	Duffy
Barletta	Carter	Duncan (SC)
Barr	Cassidy	Duncan (TN)
Barton	Chabot	Ellmers
Benishke	Chaffetz	Farenthold
Bentivolio	Coble	Fincher
Bilirakis	Coffman	Fitzpatrick
Bishop (UT)	Cole	Fleischmann
Black	Collins (GA)	Fleming
Blackburn	Collins (NY)	Flores
Boustany	Conaway	Forbes
Brady (TX)	Cook	Fortenberry
Bridenstine	Cotton	Fox
Brooks (AL)	Cramer	Franks (AZ)
Brooks (IN)	Crawford	Frelinghuysen
Broun (GA)	Crenshaw	Gardner
Buchanan	Culberson	Garrett
Bucshon	Daines	Gerlach
Burgess	Davis, Rodney	Gibbs
Byrne	Denham	Gibson

Gingrey (GA)	Marino	Ros-Lehtinen
Gohmert	Massie	Roskam
Goodlatte	McAllister	Ross
Gowdy	McCarthy (CA)	Rothfus
Granger	McCaul	Royce
Graves (GA)	McClintock	Runyan
Graves (MO)	McHenry	Ryan (WI)
Griffin (AR)	McKeon	Salmon
Griffith (VA)	McKinley	Sanford
Grimm	McMorris	Scalise
Guthrie	Rodgers	Schock
Hall	Meadows	Schweikert
Hanna	Meehan	Scott, Austin
Harris	Messer	Sensenbrenner
Hartzler	Mica	Sessions
Hastings (WA)	Miller (FL)	Shimkus
Heck (NV)	Miller (MI)	Shuster
Hensarling	Miller, Gary	Simpson
Herrera Beutler	Mullin	Smith (MO)
Holding	Mulvaney	Smith (NE)
Hudson	Murphy (PA)	Smith (NJ)
Huelskamp	Neugebauer	Smith (TX)
Huizenga (MI)	Noem	Southerland
Hultgren	Nugent	Stewart
Hunter	Nunes	Stivers
Hurt	Nunnelee	Stockman
Issa	Olson	Stutzman
Jenkins	Owens	Terry
Johnson (OH)	Palazzo	Thompson (PA)
Johnson, Sam	Paulsen	Thornberry
Jones	Pearce	Tiberi
Perry	Petri	Tipton
Pittenger	Perry	Turner
Pitts	Poe (TX)	Upton
Poe (TX)	Pompeo	Valadao
Pompeo	Price (GA)	Walberg
Reed	Reed	Walden
Reichert	Reichert	Walorski
Renacci	Renacci	Weber (TX)
Ribble	Ribble	Webster (FL)
Rice (SC)	Rice (SC)	Wenstrup
Rigell	Rigell	Whitfield
Rohrabacher	Rohrabacher	Williams
Rokita	Rokita	Wilson (SC)
Rooney	Rooney	Wittman
		Wolf
		Womack
		Woodall
		Yoder
		Yoho
		Young (AK)
		Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—9

Blumenauer	Jeffries	Pastor (AZ)
Ellison	McCarthy (NY)	Rush
Gosar	McCollum	Westmoreland

□ 1620

Messrs. PITTENGER, COBLE, POSEY, RICE of South Carolina, BILIRAKIS, AMODEI, ADERHOLT, SCHOCK, and Ms. GRANGER changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Ms. FUDGE, Messrs. SERRANO and COHEN changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 243, noes 176, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 69]

AYES—243

Aderholt	Graves (GA)	Paulsen
Amash	Graves (MO)	Pearce
Amodei	Griffin (AR)	Perry
Bachmann	Griffith (VA)	Peterson
Bachus	Grimm	Petri
Barber	Guthrie	Pittenger
Barletta	Hall	Pitts
Barr	Hanna	Poe (TX)
Barrow (GA)	Harper	Pompeo
Barton	Harris	Posey
Benishke	Hartzler	Price (GA)
Bentivolio	Hastings (WA)	Rahall
Bilirakis	Heck (NV)	Reed
Bishop (UT)	Hensarling	Reichert
Black	Herrera Beutler	Renacci
Blackburn	Holding	Ribble
Boustany	Hudson	Rice (SC)
Brady (TX)	Huelskamp	Rigell
Bridenstine	Huizenga (MI)	Roby
Brooks (AL)	Hultgren	Roe (TN)
Brooks (IN)	Hunter	Rogers (AL)
Broun (GA)	Hurt	Rogers (KY)
Buchanan	Issa	Rogers (MI)
Bucshon	Jenkins	Rohrabacher
Burgess	Johnson (OH)	Rokita
Byrne	Johnson, Sam	Rooney
Calvert	Jones	Ros-Lehtinen
Camp	Jordan	Roskam
Campbell	Joyce	Ross
Cantor	Kelly (PA)	Rothfus
Capito	King (IA)	Royce
Carter	King (NY)	Runyan
Cassidy	Kingston	Ryan (WI)
Chabot	Kinzinger (IL)	Salmon
Chaffetz	Kirkpatrick	Sanford
Coble	Kline	Scalise
Coffman	Labrador	Schock
Cole	LaMalfa	Schweikert
Collins (GA)	Lamborn	Scott, Austin
Collins (NY)	Lance	Sensenbrenner
Conaway	Lankford	Sessions
Cook	Larsen (WA)	Shimkus
Costa	Latham	Shuster
Cotton	Latta	Simpson
Cramer	LoBiondo	Sinema
Crawford	Long	Smith (MO)
Crenshaw	Lucas	Smith (NE)
Cuellar	Luetkemeyer	Smith (NJ)
Culberson	Lummis	Smith (TX)
Daines	Marchant	Southerland
Davis, Rodney	Marino	Stewart
Denham	Massie	Stivers
Dent	Matheson	Stockman
DeSantis	McAllister	Stutzman
DesJarlais	McCarthy (CA)	Terry
Diaz-Balart	McCaul	Thompson (PA)
Duffy	McClintock	Thornberry
Duncan (SC)	McHenry	Tiberi
Duncan (TN)	McIntyre	Tipton
Ellmers	McKeon	Turner
Farenthold	McKinley	Upton
Fincher	McMorris	Valadao
Fitzpatrick	Rodgers	Wagner
Fleischmann	Meadows	Walberg
Fleming	Meehan	Walden
Flores	Messer	Walorski
Forbes	Mica	Weber (TX)
Fortenberry	Miller (FL)	Webster (FL)
Fox	Miller (MI)	Wenstrup
Franks (AZ)	Miller, Gary	Whitfield
Frelinghuysen	Mullin	Williams
Gallego	Mulvaney	Wilson (SC)
Gardner	Murphy (FL)	Wittman
Garrett	Murphy (PA)	Wolf
Gerlach	Neugebauer	Womack
Gibbs	Noem	Woodall
Gibson	Nugent	Yoder
Gingrey (GA)	Nunes	Yoho
Gohmert	Nunnelee	Young (AK)
Goodlatte	Olson	Young (IN)
Gowdy	Owens	
Granger	Palazzo	

NOES—176

Bass	Braley (IA)	Carney
Beatty	Brown (FL)	Carson (IN)
Becerra	Brownley (CA)	Cartwright
Bera (CA)	Bustos	Castor (FL)
Bishop (GA)	Butterfield	Castro (TX)
Bishop (NY)	Capps	Chu
Bonamici	Capuano	Ciçilline
Brady (PA)	Cárdenas	Clark (MA)

Clarke (NY) Israel
 Clay Jackson Lee
 Cleaver Johnson (GA)
 Clyburn Johnson, E. B.
 Cohen Kaptur
 Connolly Keating
 Conyers Kelly (IL)
 Cooper Kennedy
 Courtney Kildee
 Crowley Kilmer
 Cummings Kind
 Davis (CA) Kuster
 Davis, Danny Langevin
 DeFazio Larson (CT)
 DeGette Lee (CA)
 Delaney Levin
 DeLauro Lewis
 DelBene Lipinski
 Deutch Loebsock
 Dingell Lofgren
 Doggett Lowenthal
 Doyle Lowey
 Duckworth Lujan Grisham
 Edwards (NM)
 Engel Lujan, Ben Ray
 Enyart (NM)
 Eshoo Lynch
 Esty Maffei
 Farr Maloney,
 Fattah Carolyn
 Foster Maloney, Sean
 Frankel (FL) Matsui
 Fudge McDermott
 Gabbard McGovern
 Garamendi McNerney
 Garcia Meeks
 Grayson Meng
 Green, Al Michaud
 Green, Gene Miller, George
 Grijalva Moore
 Gutierrez Moran
 Hahn Nadler
 Hanabusa Napolitano
 Hastings (FL) Neal
 Heck (WA) Negrete McLeod
 Higgins Nolan
 Himes O'Rourke
 Hinojosa Pallone
 Holt Pascrell
 Honda Payne
 Horsford Pelosi
 Hoyer Perlmutter
 Huffman Peters (CA)

NOT VOTING—11

Blumenauer McCarthy (NY) Rush
 Ellison McCollum Scott, David
 Gosar Pastor (AZ) Westmoreland
 Jeffries Rangel

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1627

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk to correct the name of the bill to the Protect Anonymous Special Interests Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Polis of Colorado moves to amend the title of H.R. 3865 to read as follows:

To protect anonymous special interests by prohibiting the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Peters (MI)
 Pingree (ME)
 Pocan
 Polis
 Price (NC)
 Quigley
 Richmond
 Roybal-Allard
 Ruiz
 Ruppertsberger
 Ryan (OH)
 Sánchez, Linda
 T.

Sanchez, Loretta
 Sarbanes
 Schakowsky
 Schiff
 Schneider
 Schrader
 Schwartz
 Scott (VA)
 Serrano
 Sewell (AL)
 Shea-Porter

Sherman
 Sires
 Slaughter
 Smith (WA)
 Speier
 Swalwell (CA)
 Takano
 Thompson (CA)
 Thompson (MS)
 Tierney
 Titus
 Tonko
 Tsongas
 Van Hollen
 Vargas
 Veasey
 Vela
 Velázquez
 Visclosky
 Walz
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 Waters
 Waxman
 Welch
 Wilson (FL)
 Yarmuth

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 6 of rule XVI, the amendment is not debatable.

The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 177, noes 241, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 70]

AYES—177

Bass
 Beatty
 Becerra
 Bera (CA)
 Bishop (GA)
 Bishop (NY)
 Bonamici
 Brady (PA)
 Braley (IA)
 Brown (FL)
 Brownley (CA)
 Bustos
 Butterfield
 Capps
 Capuano
 Cárdenas
 Carney
 Carson (IN)
 Cartwright
 Castor (FL)
 Castro (TX)
 Chu
 Cicilline
 Clark (MA)
 Clarke (NY)
 Clay
 Cleaver
 Clyburn
 Cohen
 Connolly
 Conyers
 Cooper
 Costa
 Courtney
 Crowley
 Cuellar
 Cummings
 Davis (CA)
 Davis, Danny
 DeFazio
 DeGette
 Delaney
 DeLauro
 DelBene
 Deutch
 Dingell
 Doggett
 Doyle
 Duckworth
 Edwards
 Engel
 Enyart
 Eshoo
 Esty
 Farr
 Fattah
 Foster
 Frankel (FL)
 Fudge
 Gabbard
 Garamendi

Garcia
 Grayson
 Green, Al
 Green, Gene
 Gutiérrez
 Hahn
 Hanabusa
 Hastings (FL)
 Heck (WA)
 Higgins
 Himes
 Hinojosa
 Holt
 Honda
 Horsford
 Hoyer
 Huffman
 Israel
 Jackson Lee
 Johnson (GA)
 Johnson, E. B.
 Kaptur
 Keating
 Kelly (IL)
 Kennedy
 Kildee
 Kilmer
 Kind
 Kirkpatrick
 Kuster
 Langevin
 Larson (CT)
 Lee (CA)
 Levin
 Lewis
 Lipinski
 Loebsock
 Lofgren
 Lowenthal
 Lowey
 Lujan Grisham
 (NM)
 Lujan, Ben Ray
 (NM)
 Lynch
 Maloney,
 Carolyn
 Maloney, Sean
 Matsui
 McDermott
 McGovern
 McNerney
 Meeks
 Meng
 Miller, George
 Moore
 Moran
 Nadler
 Napolitano
 Neal
 Negrete McLeod

Nolan
 O'Rourke
 Pallone
 Pascrell
 Payne
 Pelosi
 Perlmutter
 Peters (CA)
 Peters (MI)
 Peterson
 Pingree (ME)
 Pocan
 Polis
 Price (NC)
 Quigley
 Richmond
 Roybal-Allard
 Ruiz
 Ruppertsberger
 Ryan (OH)
 Sánchez, Linda
 T.
 Sanchez, Loretta
 Sarbanes
 Schakowsky
 Schiff
 Schneider
 Schwartz
 Scott (VA)
 Scott, David
 Serrano
 Sewell (AL)
 Shea-Porter
 Sherman
 Sires
 Slaughter
 Smith (WA)
 Speier
 Swalwell (CA)
 Takano
 Thompson (CA)
 Thompson (MS)
 Tierney
 Titus
 Tonko
 Tsongas
 Van Hollen
 Vargas
 Veasey
 Vela
 Velázquez
 Visclosky
 Walberg
 Walz
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 Waters
 Welch
 Wilson (FL)
 Yarmuth

NOES—241

Adersholt
 Amash
 Amodei
 Bachmann
 Bachus
 Barber
 Barletta
 Barr
 Barrow (GA)
 Barton
 Benishek
 Bentivolio
 Billakis
 Bishop (UT)
 Black
 Blackburn

Boustany
 Brady (TX)
 Bridenstine
 Brooks (AL)
 Brooks (IN)
 Broun (GA)
 Buchanan
 Bueshon

Burgess
 Byrne
 Calvert
 Camp
 Campbell
 Cantor
 Capito
 Carter
 Cassidy
 Chabot
 Chaffetz
 Coble
 Coffman
 Cole
 Collins (GA)
 Collins (NY)
 Conaway
 Cook
 Cotton
 Cramer
 Crawford
 Crenshaw
 Culberson
 Daines
 Davis, Rodney
 Denham
 Dent
 DeSantis
 DesJarlais
 Diaz-Balart
 Duffy
 Duncan (SC)
 Duncan (TN)
 Ellmers
 Farenthold
 Fincher
 Fitzpatrick
 Fleischmann
 Fleming
 Flores
 Forbes
 Fortenberry
 Foxx
 Franks (AZ)
 Frelinghuysen
 Gallego
 Gardner
 Garrett
 Gerlach
 Gibbs
 Gibson
 Gingrey (GA)
 Gohmert
 Goodlatte
 Gowdy
 Granger
 Graves (GA)
 Graves (MO)
 Griffin (AR)
 Griffith (VA)
 Grimm
 Guthrie
 Hall
 Hanna
 Harper
 Harris
 Hartzler
 Hastings (WA)
 Heck (NV)
 Hensarling
 Herrera Beutler
 Holding
 Hudson

Huelskamp
 Huizenga (MI)
 Hultgren
 Hunter
 Hurt
 Issa
 Jenkins
 Johnson (OH)
 Johnson, Sam
 Jones
 Jordan
 Joyce
 Kelly (PA)
 King (IA)
 King (NY)
 Kingston
 Kinzinger (IL)
 Kline
 Labrador
 LaMalfa
 Lamborn
 Lance
 Lankford
 Larsen (WA)
 Latham
 Latta
 LoBiondo
 Long
 Lucas
 Luetkemeyer
 Lummis
 Maffei
 Marchant
 Marino
 Massie
 Matheson
 McAllister
 McCarthy (CA)
 McCaul
 McClintock
 McHenry
 McIntyre
 McKeon
 McKinley
 McMorris
 Rodgers
 Meadows
 Meehan
 Messer
 Mica
 Michaud
 Miller (FL)
 Miller (MI)
 Miller, Gary
 Mullin
 Mulvaney
 Murphy (FL)
 Murphy (PA)
 Neugebauer
 Noem
 Nugent
 Nunes
 Nunnelee
 Olson
 Owens
 Palazzo
 Paulsen
 Pearce
 Perry
 Petri
 Pittenger
 Pitts
 Poe (TX)

Pompeo
 Posey
 Price (GA)
 Rahall
 Reed
 Reichert
 Renacci
 Ribble
 Rice (SC)
 Rigell
 Roby
 Roe (TN)
 Rogers (AL)
 Rogers (KY)
 Rogers (MI)
 Rohrabacher
 Rokita
 Rooney
 Ros-Lehtinen
 Roskam
 Ross
 Rothfus
 Royce
 Runyan
 Ryan (WI)
 Salmon
 Sanford
 Scalise
 Schock
 Schrader
 Schweikert
 Scott, Austin
 Sensenbrenner
 Sessions
 Shimkus
 Shuster
 Simpson
 Sinema
 Smith (MO)
 Smith (NE)
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (TX)
 Southerland
 Stewart
 Stivers
 Stockman
 Stutzman
 Terry
 Thompson (PA)
 Thornberry
 Tiberi
 Tipton
 Turner
 Upton
 Valadao
 Wagner
 Walden
 Walorski
 Weber (TX)
 Webster (FL)
 Wenstrup
 Whitfield
 Williams
 Wilson (SC)
 Wittman
 Wolf
 Womack
 Woodall
 Yoder
 Yoho
 Young (AK)
 Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—12

Blumenauer
 Ellison
 Gosar
 Grijalva
 Jeffries
 McCarthy (NY)
 McCollum
 Pastor (AZ)
 Rangel

□ 1645

Mr. CALVERT changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced

that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2431. An act to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 899, UNFUNDED MANDATES INFORMATION AND TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2013

Ms. FOXX, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113-362) on the resolution (H. Res. 492) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 899) to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ALL ECONOMIC REGULATIONS ARE TRANSPARENT ACT OF 2014

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 2804.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. ROBY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 487 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2804.

The Chair appoints the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1648

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2804) to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes, with Ms. FOXX in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Just over 6 months ago, President Obama announced that he would once again pivot to the economy. The bot-

tom line of his speech: after 4½ years of the Obama administration, “We’re not there yet.”

The President was right. We were not there yet nor are we there today. Job creation and economic growth continue to fall short of what is needed to produce a real and durable recovery in our country. The nominal unemployment rate is down, but that is not because enough workers have found jobs; it is because so many unemployed workers have despaired of ever finding new full-time work. They have either left the workforce or have settled for part-time jobs.

As long as this situation continues, Congress must stay focused on enacting reforms that will stop the losses, return America to prosperity, and return discouraged workers to the dignity of a good, full-time job. The legislation we consider today is just that kind of reform. Through its strong, commonsense measures, the ALERRT Act will powerfully and comprehensively reform the Federal regulatory system, from how regulations are planned to how they are promulgated to how they are dealt with in court.

This is legislation that Congress cannot pass too soon, for while the Obama administration’s pivot to the economy has faltered, the Federal bureaucracy has not wavered an instant in its imposition of new and costly regulation on our economy. The ALERRT Act responds by offering real relief to the real Americans who suffer under the mounting burdens of tyrannical regulation.

Consider, for example, Rob James, a city councilman from Avon Lake, Ohio, who testified before the Judiciary Committee this term about the impacts of new and excessive regulation on his town, its workers, and its families.

Avon Lake is a small town facing devastation by ideologically driven, anti-fossil fuel power plant regulations. These regulations are expected to destroy jobs at Avon Lake, harm Avon Lake’s families, and make it even harder for Avon Lake to find the resources to provide emergency services, quality schools, and help for its neediest citizens, all the while doing comparatively little to control mercury emissions, which are the stated target of the regulations.

Title I of the ALERRT Act helps people and towns like Rob James and Avon Lake to know in real time when devastating regulations are planned, comment in time to help change them, estimate their real costs, and better plan for the results as agencies reach their final decisions.

Consider, too, Bob Sells, one of my constituents and president of the Virginia-based division of a heavy construction materials producer. His company and its workers were harmed by EPA cement kiln emission regulations

that were technically unattainable and included provisions vastly changed from what EPA proposed for public comment; other EPA emission regulations that were stricter than needed to protect health, gerrymandered to impose expensive controls on other types of emissions and which prohibited commonsense uses of cheap and safe fuel that could actually help the environment; and Department of Transportation regulations that, without increasing safety, vastly increased record-keeping for ready-mix concrete drivers, unnecessarily limited their hours and suppressed their wages.

Title II of the ALERRT Act helps to protect people like Bob Sells and his workers from regulations that ask job creators to achieve the unachievable, do not help to control their stated regulatory targets, suppress hours and wages for no good reason, and inundate Americans with unnecessary paperwork.

Title III of the ALERRT Act offers long-needed help to small business people like Carl Harris, the vice president and general manager of Carl Harris Co., Inc., in Wichita, Kansas. Mr. Harris is a small home builder. Every day, he has to fight and overcome the fact that government regulations now account for 25 percent of the final price of a new single-family home.

Mr. Harris participates in small business review panels of existing law uses to try to lower the costs of regulations for small businesses, but he has seen firsthand how loopholes in existing law allow Federal agencies to ignore small business concerns while “checking the box” of contacting small businesses. One case is that of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s Cranes and Derricks Rule, which was effectively negotiated before small business was ever consulted and threatened to impose disproportionate costs on small builders.

Title III of the ALERRT Act helps small business job creators like Mr. HARRIS make sure that agencies like OSHA stop treating them like procedural hurdles and afterthoughts, take into real account the difficulties small businesses face, and lower costs on small businesses that must be lowered.

Finally, consider Allen Puckett, III, who is the fourth-generation owner of Columbus Brick Company, a family-owned enterprise that has been making fired-clay bricks in Columbus, Mississippi, since 1890. His company distributes bricks to more than 15 States, has second-, third- and fourth-generation employees, offers a fully funded, profit-sharing retirement plan and a 401(k) matching program, and has a nurse practitioner come on site twice a month to provide a free clinic to all of its employees.

Mr. Puckett’s company may now be shuttered in the face of two waves of sue-and-settle brick-making emissions

regulations that threaten to put his company and others like it out of business. After time-consuming litigation, the first regulations were thrown out in court but not before Mr. Puckett's company had already lost at least \$750,000 in compliance costs and the entire industry had lost \$100 million. The second replacement regulations threaten to be twice as expensive, so expensive that Columbus Brick Company expects to have to downsize by two-thirds or close.

The translation for hardworking Americans employed by such businesses is: higher prices for goods, fewer job opportunities and lower wages.

Title IV of the ALERRT Act helps people like Allen Puckett find out about sue-and-settle rulemaking deals in time, make sure their concerns are heard by agencies and the courts, and have a fighting chance to achieve a just result for themselves, their employees, and the families and communities that depend on them.

In all of these ways and more, the ALERRT Act brings urgently needed regulatory reform to hardworking Americans, whether they are small business people struggling to be heard by faceless Washington bureaucracies or whether they are citizens of small towns who are crushed by the impacts of regulations that force plant closings, harm families, and kill the revenues needed to provide vital services.

I thank Mr. BACHUS, Mr. HOLDING, and Mr. COLLINS for joining with me in offering the individual bills that now come to the floor together as the ALERRT Act, and I urge my colleagues to vote for this urgently needed legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Earlier this week, we had a declaration that this week would be "stop government abuse" week. My colleagues on the other side called for us to commemorate this week by the introduction of draconian anti-safety legislation that would allow businesses to declare war on the rules that protect Americans, including babies, children, and the elderly. That is why, Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2804, the Achieving Less Excess in Regulation and Requiring Transparency Act of 2014, also known as the so-called "ALERRT Act."

The ALERRT Act is a continuation of the same Republican obstruct at all costs paradigm that led to the sequester and to the shutdown of the Federal Government. This race to the bottom approach to the regulatory process is wasteful and dangerous, and it prioritizes profits over protecting Americans.

Although the ALERRT Act purports to ease the burden of regulations on American businesses, it would not cre-

ate a single job, grow the economy or help any small business to thrive, nor does it address serious issues—the minimum wage, unemployment insurance, pay equity or immigration reform—that would help so many American workers and businesses. Instead, the only purpose of this bill is to strait-jacket the same rulemaking process that protects countless Americans every day.

Title I of the bill imposes a 6-month moratorium on rules. The rulemaking process is already transparent, deliberative, and exhaustively inclusive of the views of small businesses and other interested parties.

□ 1700

Adding an additional 6 months to this process would do little except create uncertainty and increase compliance costs.

Instead of cutting through red tape, title II of the bill would add over 60 additional procedural and analytical requirements to the rulemaking process. This is yet another clear message that this bill would lengthen, not shorten or streamline, the rulemaking process, thus undermining the regulatory certainty and predictability that small businesses rely on to make long-term decisions.

In case the first two titles didn't adequately convey the message that Republicans are dead serious about helping deep-pocketed interests create regulatory mischief and confusion instead of offering serious solutions, titles III and IV would authorize virtually any party under the sun to challenge a proposed rule or intervene in litigation in Federal court no matter their connection, or lack thereof, to the issue.

Make no mistake. This bill is a wolf in sheep's clothing. It would jeopardize critical public health and safety regulatory protections and undermine the very small businesses it claims to protect.

By giving a handout to well-funded organizations to challenge proposed rules, consent decrees, and settlement agreements at every opportunity, the ALERRT Act would stack the deck against the public interest and the American taxpayer.

And who would be harmed by this deregulatory train wreck? Every American who wants to be able to breathe fresh air and who wants to drink clean water; every mother who wants safe formula for her baby and cribs that don't collapse on the baby in the middle of the night; and every small business competing for an edge in a marketplace dominated by large, well-funded competitors. And the list goes on and on and on.

I hope you will join me in my observation of stop government abuse by Republicans week and my opposition to the ALERRT Act.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this dangerous legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, it is now my pleasure to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING), a member of the Judiciary Committee and a contributor of one of the bills that has been included in the ALERRT Act.

Mr. HOLDING. Madam Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 2804, the ALERRT Act.

I would like to thank Chairman GOODLATTE, Chairman BACHUS, and the gentleman from Georgia for their hard work and contributions to making this legislation better.

In my district in North Carolina, small businesses are a primary driver of the economy. The businesses, like many across the country, are being harmed by excessive regulations. Excessive regulations mean lower wages for workers, fewer jobs, and higher prices for consumers.

Oftentimes, Madam Chairman, small businesses are not given enough notice of how new regulations will affect their everyday operations. They are faced with tough decisions like whether to cut workers' hours or wages or adjust their business plan elsewhere. That is why I introduced the ALERRT Act, to ensure that the administration publishes its regulatory agenda in a timely manner and provides annual disclosures about planned regulations, their expected costs, final rules, and cumulative regulatory costs, in general.

During President Obama's first term, our Nation's cumulative regulatory cost burden increased by \$488 billion. Compounding the problem, this administration has failed to make public, as required by law, the effects of new regulations in a timely, reasonable manner.

The administration is required to submit a regulatory agenda twice a year, but they have consistently failed to do so on time. You will recall, Madam Chairman, that in 2012 the administration made neither disclosure required by law until December, after the general election. This deprived voters of the opportunity to see how proposed regulations would increase prices for household goods, lead to stagnant wages, and decrease job opportunities. This is important when Federal regulations already place an average burden of almost \$15,000 per year on each American household. That is not a burden that folks in this economy—or any economy—should have to bear.

Madam Chairman, this bill is not about shutting down the regulatory process but about providing much-needed sunlight and transparency. It requires monthly online updates of information on planned regulations and their expected costs so everyone who is going to be affected can know, in real time, how to plan for the regulations' impacts or how to cast their vote.

The ALERRT Act is comprehensive reform that promotes economic growth

and takes steps toward reform of the regulatory system to provide the government accountability that our citizens deserve.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BARROW).

Mr. BARROW of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Chair, I rise today in support of H.R. 2804, the All Economic Regulations Are Transparent, or ALERRT, Act of 2013, and in support of the Miller-Courtney amendment.

I am pleased that this legislation includes the Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act, a bill for which I am an original cosponsor with my Republican colleague from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS).

There are 30 million small businesses in America, and they employ over half of our workforce. These are companies in my district like Sarah in the City in Baxley or Buona Caffe in Augusta. Every day they open their doors and go to work helping American families and drive American commerce.

I also rise in support of the Miller-Courtney amendment. In February of 2008, 14 people were killed and 40 people were injured in a combustible dust explosion at the Imperial Sugar refinery in Port Wentworth, Georgia. Since then, I have worked with my colleague, Mr. MILLER, to pressure OSHA to mitigate this known hazard. I am hopeful that OSHA can complete its long-overdue work in this area to save families from ever having to go through this kind of grief again.

Now is the time for us to focus on getting people back to work and creating good-paying local jobs. That is why I support the Miller-Courtney amendment and the underlying legislation.

I urge "yes" votes on both.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, at this time it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES), the chairman of the Small Business Committee.

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Madam Chair, I want to thank the chairman of the committee for working with us today.

I rise in support of H.R. 2804, the ALERRT Act. This legislation represents a very important effort to bring some common sense and transparency to an out-of-control regulatory process that is stifling job growth, especially among small businesses.

I am especially pleased that legislation which the Committee on Small Business worked on, H.R. 2542, the Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act, was incorporated into the ALERRT Act. Again, I want to thank Chairman GOODLATTE for working with the committee on the title of this bill.

For over 30 years, agencies have been required by the Regulatory Flexibility Act, or RFA, to examine the impacts of

regulations on small businesses. If those impacts are significant, agencies must consider less burdensome alternatives. The problem is that agencies still fail to comply with that law, and the result is unworkable regulations that put unnecessary burdens on America's best job creators, which are small businesses.

In numerous hearings over the years, the Small Business Committee has heard about the consequences that burdensome regulations have on farmers, homebuilders, manufacturers, and many others. Instead of using their limited resources to grow and create jobs, small businesses have to spend more time and money on regulatory compliance and paperwork.

The Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act is going to eliminate loopholes that agencies have used to avoid compliance with the RFA. Most importantly, it requires agencies to generally scrutinize the impacts of regulations on small businesses before they are finalized.

Examining whether there are less burdensome or less costly ways to implement a regulation just makes common sense. Reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens frees up scarce time, money, and resources that small businesses can use to expand their operations and hire new employees.

The Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act is bipartisan legislation. It has strong support among the business communities. It simply requires agencies to do their homework before they regulate. If agencies do their work, more Americans are going to be working.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I want to thank my good friend, Congressman JOHNSON, for his leadership and the management of this legislation.

I would just like us to take a journey down memory lane:

I am sure that many of us will be reminded of the famous Pinto and the crafting of that automobile. I have no commentary on the great industry that so many of us admire, but for those of us who have memories, we realize some of the injuries that occurred in the structure of the Pinto;

Or maybe it is cars without seatbelts or airbags;

Or maybe we recall times when we travel throughout our community and we notice not only a heavy fog but polluted air. Maybe some of us have been exposed to polluted water;

Or maybe you traveled internationally, even in the 21st century, seeing the conditions that many who live outside of the United States live in, with the utilization of dirty water because they have no other water or the food danger because it is not regulated.

Well, my friends, unfortunately, the legislation that is here on the floor of

the House seems to take us backwards down a poisonous memory lane. So it is very difficult to support this legislation.

I said today in a committee hearing that I know that Members come here with good intentions. So I will not attribute to anyone that this bill does not come to the floor with good intentions, but it is a bill that has not been, as a whole, considered by the Judiciary Committee.

This is now being brought to the floor with three separate bills combined, now called the ALERRT Act. But it really imposes unneeded and costly analytical and procedural requirements on agencies that would prevent them from performing their statutory responsibilities to protect the public health and safety. This, I believe, is an important responsibility. It creates unnecessary regulatory and legal uncertainty and increases costs for businesses and State, local, and tribal governments and impedes plain common sense.

I will offer an amendment dealing with homeland security. We just had a hearing today that emphasized the importance of the work of the Homeland Security Department. With our new Secretary of Homeland Security, Secretary Johnson, we are very much on the right track, recognizing franchise terrorism and the need for securing the border. Much of the work done by Homeland Security is a regulatory structure.

Why would we want to impede securing America?

Well, my friends, that is what is going to occur with this legislation, the All Economic Regulations Are Transparent Act.

I also offered an amendment dealing with baby formula. For those of us mothers who have raised children and tend to their needs as newborns and use infant formula, it is well known that there is a great need to regulate companies that manufacture infant formulas in an effort to protect babies from food-borne illnesses and promote healthy growth.

On Thursday, the FDA announced plans to revise, earlier this month, infant formula regulations with an interim final rule that will be published soon. But guess what. The legislation that we have will stand in the way as an iron wall, if you will, prohibiting any rule from being finalized until certain information is posted for 6 months.

How long will 6 months be in the life of an infant?

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. It will override existing statutes, such as the Clean Air and Clean Water Act, and override any

aspect of regulating this important food product, adding more than 60 additional procedural and analytical requirements to the FDA's work on trying to help babies and making it easier for rules to be delayed or stopped by allowing regulated industry and entities to intervene.

And so, in actuality, this is not saving money. It will be a quagmire of spending money. In the meantime, the protections of our innocent babies who demand the responsibility of adults to protect the food products that they need for life by good regulations will be stopped.

□ 1715

Well, Madam Chairman, I don't want to go back down memory lane and horrible car crashes and no seatbelts and no airbags and polluted air and dangerous water. That is what we will be doing.

I look forward to introducing my amendment on the floor regarding the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. I can't imagine that my colleagues would want to stand in the way of securing America.

With that in mind, I hope that we will find a way to defeat this legislation, or to make it better, and ask our colleagues who are they standing for.

Madam Chair, I rise today to speak on H.R. 2804, the "All Economic Regulations Are Transparent Act of 2014," the so-called "ALERTT Act."

H.R. 2804 makes numerous changes to the federal rule-making process, including: (1) requiring agencies to consider numerous new criteria when issuing rules, such as alternatives to rules proposals; (2) requiring agencies to review the "indirect" costs of proposed and existing rules; (3) giving the Small Business Administration expanded authority to intervene in the rule-making of other agencies; and (4) requiring federal agencies to file monthly reports on the status of their rule-making activities.

I cannot support this legislation in its present form for two reasons, one procedural and one substantive.

Procedurally, I oppose the bill because in its present form it was never considered by the Judiciary Committee. This bill was reported by the Oversight and Government Reform Committee on a party line 19–15 vote but was not acted on by Judiciary Committee.

As reported, the bill contained only provisions relating to monthly reporting requirements regarding agency rule-making.

But the bill being brought to the floor now includes three additional and very controversial Judiciary bills (H.R. 2122, Regulatory Accountability Act; H.R. 1493, Sunshine for Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act; and H.R. 2542, Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act).

This is not the way to legislate on matters that have such serious consequences for the public health and safety.

Substantively, I oppose the bill because it imposes unneeded and costly analytical and procedural requirements on agencies that

would prevent them from performing their statutory responsibilities to protect the public health and safety.

I oppose the bill also because it creates unnecessary regulatory and legal uncertainty, increases costs for businesses and State, local and tribal governments, and impedes common-sense protections for the American public.

Madam Chairman, the bill is unnecessary and invites frivolous litigation. When a federal agency promulgates a regulation, it already must adhere to the requirements of the statute that it is implementing.

Agencies already must adhere to the robust and well-understood procedural requirements of federal law, including the Administrative Procedure Act, the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA), the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA), the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), and the Congressional Review Act.

Regulatory agencies already are required to promulgate regulations only upon a reasoned determination that the benefits of the regulations justify the costs and to consider regulatory alternatives. Final regulations are subject to review by the federal courts which, among other things, examine whether agencies have satisfied the substantive and procedural requirements of all applicable statutes.

Finally, Madam Chairman, H.R. 2804 in its current form does not include an exemption for rules promulgated by the Department of Homeland Security to protect the safety of the American people and the security of our country.

For this reason, I offered an amendment that provides this important exception and I thank the Rules Committee for making it in order.

The security of the homeland is one of the most preeminent concerns of the federal government. The increased need for national security following the attacks of September 11th makes it important that the Department of Homeland Security not be unduly impeded in the promulgation of rules that may preempt attacks against our nation.

Unnecessary delays to rules set forth by the Department of Homeland Security can waste scarce resources that keep our nation safe as well as impede the regular operations of the agency.

The Jackson Lee Amendment to H.R. 2804 will improve the bill. But, on balance, the bill still has too many defects and should not be passed by this body.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, at this time it is my pleasure to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), the majority leader.

Mr. CANTOR. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman from Virginia.

Madam Chair, I rise today in support of the ALERTT Act and in defense of working middle class families who face the danger that overzealous Washington regulators will destroy their jobs and impose new red tape that cuts their wages.

An America that works allows small businesses to flourish, jobs to be created, and for folks to have more take-home pay in their pockets. America

doesn't work when Washington regulators impose more red tape on businesses, large and small, regardless of the cost. This bill fixes that.

Madam Chair, I hear a lot on this floor about the warnings of days gone by and the fearmongering attached to trying to at least instill some accountability on this bureaucracy in Washington. I don't think any of us on either side of the aisle wants to defend overzealous bureaucrats and imposing unnecessary burdens that have clogged this economy.

Now, America doesn't work when special interest groups use the courts to impose backroom regulations that destroy jobs and reduce take-home pay. This bill before us fixes that.

Now, make no mistake, excessive red tape hurts working middle class families. For example, it was recently reported that a proposed OSHA regulation would impose costs on a portion of the growing domestic energy sector equal to \$1,120 per affected employee. These employees should not have to worry that the proposed regulations could mean smaller paychecks.

Or take, for example, another emerging practice of Washington regulators that hides the real impact that excessive regulation has on jobs. Under the pretense of minimal regulatory impact, this administration argues that the jobs lost, for instance, in mining, manufacturing, or construction, will be offset by new jobs in regulatory compliance. Therefore, a majority of their regulations look a lot better and not as harmful.

This is wrong. This is not being straight with the public. We must deliver transparency and accountability on the part of this administration and its bureaucracy.

I doubt it is any solace to the plant worker who loses his or her job because of regulations that a new job in another sector will be created to comply with these regulations.

Today, we will consider an amendment by a colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, KEITH ROTHFUS, to fix these problems. This amendment will help protect middle class jobs and wages. It is exactly the kind of reform that will make America work again.

Americans should not have to settle for the "new normal" of slow economic and job growth that the Obama administration seems to have embraced. We, in this House, reject this "new normal" and we will continue to fight to create an America that works again.

I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia, Chairman GOODLATTE, and Representatives HOLDING, COLLINS and BACHUS, who have worked hard on this bill before us, and I urge my colleagues in the House to support working middle class families by supporting this bill.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mining, construction work, manufacturing, those are the kinds of livelihoods that have made this country a great nation, people being able to go to work with a lunchbox in hand and work hard every day, make a decent wage.

By the way, \$7.25 an hour for a full-time worker would equate to about \$14,500 a year. That is just simply not enough for a working person to raise a family and take care of that family. They need help when they make \$7.25 an hour. They would need help from the government if they couldn't rely on friends and relatives for support.

So that is a shame, in this day and time, where a person working a manufacturing job, or even a job in a mine or on a construction site, would be making \$7.25 an hour.

We should, perhaps, Madam Chair, be paying attention to income generators such as that kind of legislation, as opposed to legislation like H.R. 2804, which would simply make it difficult to protect those workers in those unsafe occupations like mining, like construction work, like manufacturing, keeping the work site, the job place safe. Regulations are what do that.

With that, Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, at this time it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS), the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise to support this measure, and particularly the portion that is sponsored by our colleague from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) that will ensure transparency of Federal agencies' litigation settlement practices.

In 2011, the Obama administration entered into a mega-settlement, which was a closed-door, sweeping Endangered Species Act settlement with two litigious groups that greatly increased the ESA listings and habitat designations that could impact tens of thousands of acres and thousands of river miles across the country.

These settlements shut out affected States, local governments, private property owners, and other stakeholders who deserve to know that the most current and best scientific data is being used on these decisions.

In my own district, the Fish and Wildlife Service just listed a plant subspecies, despite clear data showing that the plant was not a species likely to go extinct. In other words, settlement deadlines trumped the science.

Let me give a couple of examples. These settlement listings could result in a listing of the Lesser Prairie Chicken that would impact five Western States, and next year the listing of the Greater Sage Grouse could cover an area of 250 million acres in 13 Western States.

Then there is the long-eared bat that could impact 39 Midwestern and Eastern States.

That is not all, Madam Chairman. The settlements also mandate decisions for 374 aquatic species in the Gulf of Mexico.

The point is, important ESA discussions should not be forced by arbitrary court decisions or deadlines, or negotiated behind closed doors by Federal lawyers supposedly on behalf of the public interest.

This legislation aims to help correct this abuse by ensuring affected States and other parties can have a say in settlements before an unelected judge signs them, and it ensures that no settlement moves forward without the public knowing what is in it.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, oh, how I wish that my friends on the Republican side of the aisle cared as much about America's workers as they do about America's big businesses.

Oh, how I wish that they cared more to let a minimum wage bill come to the floor, where I believe that most Members of the House of Representatives would find it within their hearts to realize that \$7.25, you just can't make it on that without help. Everyone who goes out and works hard every day should be able to be paid a fair living wage and be able to support themselves and their family.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, at this time it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), a member of the Judiciary Committee, and chairman of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Virginia, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, for yielding me time this afternoon.

Madam Chairman, I support H.R. 2804, the Achieving Less Excess in Regulation and Requiring Transparency Act, known as the ALERTT Act.

One of the biggest concerns that I hear from Texas employers is the avalanche of unnecessary Federal regulatory costs. Regulation redirects scarce capital from investment and job creation to compliance with the Federal Government. In fact, the Small Business Administration has determined that Federal regulations cost the economy \$1.75 trillion each year.

This commonsense legislation is an omnibus package of regulatory relief bills that the Judiciary Committee has worked on in recent years to protect businesses. I previously authored two of the bills that are included in H.R. 2804, and appreciate their being considered again this Congress.

The ALERTT Act adds transparency to the regulatory process. It strengthens existing laws in order to prevent Federal agencies from bypassing cost-benefit analyses designed to protect small businesses, and the bill requires Federal agencies to pick the least costly alternative rule to achieve that statutory goal.

H.R. 2804 limits organizations' ability to bring sue-and-settle lawsuits against Federal agencies. These lawsuits result in one-sided regulations that shut stakeholders out of the process. The ALERTT Act restores the proper balance to regulatory consent decrees and settlements.

Madam Chairman, I thank Chairman GOODLATTE and my colleagues for their efforts to provide much-needed regulatory relief to American businesses, and I urge adoption of H.R. 2804.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chairman, the majority deliberately downplays the benefits of regulation and exaggerates the cost of regulation, when in fact, the benefits of regulation far exceed the costs, whether those benefits are defined in monetary terms or in terms of promoting values like protecting public health and safety, and ensuring civil rights and human dignity.

The explosion that occurred down in Texas not too long ago that wiped out an entire town, I believe it was a fertilizer plant. Many lives lost. If there had been adequate legislation and adequate regulation to protect those people and the workers in the plant, then those folks would still be here today.

What we are doing with this legislation is preventing the promulgation of the kinds of rules that would protect the health and safety of people throughout America, not just workers, but people who have to eat, people who have to drink, people who have to breathe. The benefits of regulation far outweigh the costs.

□ 1730

A 2012 draft of the Office of Management and Budget report to Congress on the costs and benefits of regulations concluded that the net benefits of regulation promulgated through the third fiscal year of the Obama administration have exceeded \$91 billion.

This amount, which includes not only monetary savings, but also lives saved and injuries prevented, is more than 25 times the net benefits through the third fiscal year of the previous administration, and these are important points that I believe my friends on the other side of the aisle like to omit from their analysis.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, at this time, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR).

Mr. BARR. Madam Chair, I thank the chairman for his leadership on the ALERRT Act, and I appreciate the opportunity to respond to my friends on the other side of the aisle who talk about the importance of taking into consideration workers in America.

And I would submit, Madam Chair, that if we truly are interested in the interests of American workers, we would vote immediately to pass regulatory relief in the form of the ALERRT Act.

If my friends on the other side of the aisle were truly interested in the welfare of the working people of America, they would stop the overly burdensome regulation that is putting the American people out of work.

In Kentucky, in my home State, if you don't think this is true, consider the facts, and the facts are these: that the unemployment rate in eastern Kentucky is 1½ percent higher than the national average. There is not a recession in eastern Kentucky.

It is a depression, and it is a depression because of overly burdensome regulations coming out of the EPA, which are putting thousands of my fellow Kentuckians and all of our fellow Americans out of work.

These are heartless policies. We have lost 7,000 jobs in Kentucky's coal mines in just the last 5 years, bringing coal industry employment in the Commonwealth to its lowest level since 1927. If you want to talk about the welfare of workers, these people need paychecks.

It is because of unaccountable, overly burdensome regulations, unaccountable bureaucrats in the executive branch, that these people no longer have the opportunity to provide for their families. This is wrong. We need to roll back these burdensome regulations.

I would just say this in conclusion, Madam Chair. It is dangerous when we combine legislative power into the hands of the executive branch. Madison, in *Federalist Paper No. 47*, in quoting Montesquieu, said:

The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands; whether of one, a few, or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective; may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny. There can be no liberty where the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person.

That is what is happening in America today.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, at this time, it is my pleasure to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS), the chairman of the Regulatory Reform, Commercial, and Antitrust Law Subcommittee, who has worked so closely with us on this legislation and who is the sponsor of one of the pieces of the ALERRT Act.

Mr. BACHUS. I thank the chairman.

Madam Chairman, when the law is against you, argue the facts. When the facts are against you, argue the law. When the law and the facts are against you, yell like hell and call your opponent names; and that is what we are seeing here.

This is a good law that we are proposing. The facts are on our side. And I have got to hand it to the gentleman from Georgia—crib-collapsing, baby formula-poisoning Republicans—you have done a good job, but let's go back to the facts. Get rid of the rhetoric, and talk about the facts.

The number one fact is that America is out of work. The chairman mentioned that. The gentleman from Kentucky, ANDY BARR, talked about people out of work. This country needs jobs.

Now, you have accused us of being against the American worker. We want American workers; we want people to have jobs; and to be an American worker, you have to have a job.

We can talk about the wages, but when you are unemployed, there is no wage. You talk about the American Dream, owning a home. It's not anymore. It is just having a job.

And 14 percent of our gross domestic product is absorbed by Federal regulations. Now, some of those are good regulations. We are not down here on the floor wanting to repeal some safety regulations for cribs. We are not trying to loosen the regulations on baby formula.

We are attacking—and let me say that there are good regulations; there are bad regulations; and then there are some really ugly regulations. \$1.8 trillion is the annual price tag in complying with Federal regulations. That is not income tax. That is not health care. That is Federal regulations.

The Small Business Administration, not some Republican, said it costs \$11,000 per American worker to comply with Federal regulations—\$11,000. We are not saying that all of that is bad, but we are saying that of the hundreds of thousands of Federal regulations—and, by the way, of that \$1.8 trillion, \$520 million of that burden was passed in the last 4 years, and there are \$87 billion worth of regulations waiting just this year to be passed.

Now, the Federal Reserve and Treasury, they come to testify at the Financial Services Committee every year, and they say: If you can increase the gross domestic product by 2 percent, we can create jobs—2 percent, if we can grow it from 2 to 4 percent. Well, let me submit that, of that 14 percent of the gross national product that is absorbed by Federal regulations, we can find one out of seven of those regulations to change.

I will close by telling you a good one. The chairman started by talking about the cement industry. The EPA proposed a regulation that would have put 200,000 American cement workers out of work.

When we asked why, they said it is because of mercury and arsenic in the air. And we had a map, and it showed no mercury or arsenic around any of our cement plants, and we said, well, where is this mercury and arsenic coming from? China and Mexico.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, it is my pleasure to yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. BACHUS. But our response wasn't to go to Mexico or China. Well, it was, really. Our response was to raise our standards or tighten our standards to be three times more stringent than the EU. It would have cost all the profits of the cement industry for 25 years to comply.

When I asked someone at the EPA and I said, Well, wait a minute, the pollution is not coming from our plants, it is coming from Mexico and China, they said: That is not our problem.

Yes, it is. Just like Andy Barr's problem, because his workers are being put out of a job, it is all of our problems. It is my problem. It is your problem. It is his problem. We are up here standing for the American worker.

If we grow this economy by 2 or 3 more percent, we won't have a problem with jobs, and these regulations will start that process.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, the gentleman speaks eloquently as a lawyer, and he makes excellent points.

Regulations do cost. So out of a \$15 trillion gross domestic product, \$1.8 trillion dedicated for regulatory expenses which protect lives—I can't put a value on one human life—but tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people are dying because of unsafe conditions on the job. It is certainly worth \$1.7 trillion out of \$15 trillion in a year.

I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Chairman, this bill is being brought to the floor during this week that has been labeled "stop government abuse week." I am here to say that this is a bill that has some stopping power, all right.

It would stop the government from protecting our health and safety by bringing the regulatory process to a grinding halt.

And I want to address title I of this antiregulatory package right now. It includes the text of the All Economic Regulations are Transparent Act. This legislation, Madam Chairwoman, is unnecessarily burdensome for agencies.

Agencies are already required to provide status updates twice a year on their plans for proposing and finalizing rules pursuant to the Regulatory Flexibility Act and Executive Order No. 12866.

This legislation would require agencies to report monthly. They are already required to report twice a year.

This takes them to monthly. It is incredibly burdensome on agencies.

But the most egregious provision in title I would prohibit agency rules from taking effect until the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs has posted the information required by the bill online for at least 6 months. This moratorium can only be avoided if the agency claims an exception from the notice and comments requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act or if the President issues an executive order. Therefore, it delays most regulations by an additional 6 months.

I think we can all agree that transparency in the rulemaking process is a good thing, but this bill sacrifices common sense in the name of improving transparency without achieving any kind of meaningful transparency.

Agencies already make significant amounts of information available during the rulemaking process on the Web site www.regulations.gov. This bill could simply require agencies to make additional information publicly available, but it doesn't do that.

Under this bill, an agency could post information about the cost of a proposed rule on its own Web site for a year; but if the administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs didn't post the information for at least 6 months, the agency would be prohibited from finalizing the rule.

Madam Chair, my amendment would strike the moratorium provision in title I. Striking that provision would ensure that an agency rule will not be needlessly held up because the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs did not post a piece of information online for exactly 6 months.

I have been assured by the Congressional Budget Office that my amendment is revenue-neutral. I urge Members to vote for my amendment.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I have no further requests for time. I believe that I have the right to close, so if the gentleman from Georgia would proceed, I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, my colleague from Alabama said that we all need to come together to find real solutions to create jobs. I submit that one way that we could create jobs, in addition to making sure that we have equal pay for equal work and that we increase the minimum wage to a living wage, another way to do that is through immigration reform.

The Chamber of Commerce and small businesses everywhere have come together in support of comprehensive immigration reform. Why? Because it creates jobs.

□ 1745

David Park, the cofounder and creator of Job Creators Alliance, wrote in 2012:

Immigration reform is key to spurring innovation and getting the economy back on

track. I am a small business owner who realizes the role legal immigrants play in creating new jobs. As founder and CEO of a boutique merchant bank, I have started or acquired nearly 30 small and midsize companies, creating hundreds of jobs for Americans across the country. I am also an immigrant and an example of how highly skilled immigrants educated in the United States can drive job creation right here.

So immigration reform, Madam Chair, is a job creator. We can't seem to get an immigration bill—which, by the way, has been passed by the Senate. We can't get it heard by this Congress. We cannot bring a bill to the floor that would pass the House that would result in comprehensive immigration reform. We cannot bring a bill to the floor of the House that would provide for a raise for Americans who work for \$7.25 an hour, full-time. \$14,500 a year is simply not enough to feed the family and take care of one's self. We can't get job-creating bills that would stimulate our economy by providing for dollars to go towards transportation and towards repairing and enhancing our infrastructure. Instead, we get caught up on messaging bills like the achieving less excess in regulation and requiring transparency act of 2014, also known as the ALERRT Act.

I oppose this bill for numerous reasons, the most important of which is that it would jeopardize critical public health and safety regulatory protections. For example, the bill requires agencies to consider potential costs and benefits associated with proposed and final rules, notwithstanding any other provisions of law. This supermandate would effectively trump all other statutes—such as the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Occupational Safety and Health Act—that prohibit or limit the use of cost information in setting health and safety standards.

In addition, title II of the bill would require agencies and Federal courts to consider whether a rule has “significant adverse effects on . . . the ability of United States-based enterprises to compete with foreign-based enterprises in domestic and export markets.” The practical effect, Madam Chair, of this definition is that it will require agencies and the courts to consider the business and regulatory environment of other nations.

Consider, for example, a proposed rule that imposes heightened clean air requirements on American steel manufacturers. H.R. 2804 would necessarily require consideration of whether this regulation—which could potentially result in higher compliance costs—could make American steel products less competitive in a country, such as China, that has a much less stringent or no regulatory regime.

While the economic analysis under this requirement may be deceptively simple, its dangerous ramifications for public health cannot be underesti-

mated. Chinese officials have only recently begun to acknowledge the health hazard risks presented by extensive air pollution; and if you have been over there and tried to breathe, you know that the air is greatly polluted over there. And so the Chinese have finally awakened to that fact, but the end result is that the public health of Americans and the safety of the environment would be compromised so that American manufacturers can better compete with their foreign counterparts. This is a shortsighted regulatory race to the bottom that prioritizes profits over saving lives.

Another fundamental flaw with H.R. 2804 is that it will greatly lengthen and not shorten the already time-consuming process by which Federal rules are promulgated. Avoiding undue delay in rulemaking is important because strong regulation is vital to protecting Americans in nearly every aspect of their lives. On average, Madam Chair, it takes between 4 to 8 years for an agency to promulgate a new rule. But instead of streamlining the rulemaking process, this bill extensively adds numerous procedural hurdles to the process.

In title II of the bill, 60 additional procedural steps to the rulemaking process are included. Not only that, title II reinstates a long discredited rulemaking process that requires trial-type procedures. Known as formal rulemaking, this time-consuming process was widely rejected decades ago as being highly ineffective.

Recently proposed regulations that could be impacted by this and other provisions in the bill include rules implementing the Food Safety Modernization Act's standards to reduce food contaminants like salmonella, and that would help prevent 1.75 million cases of illness.

Another thing that would be interrupted, another rules process, strengthening chemical facility accident prevention standards in response to the 2013 fertilizer explosion in West, Texas, that resulted in the deaths of 12 volunteer firefighters and two other individuals.

Another interruption would be preventing the manufacture and distribution of tainted and counterfeit prescription drugs.

Also impacted would be the implementation of the Justice Department's national standards to prevent, detect, and respond to prison rape.

Another interruption would be adjusting the reimbursement rates to Medicare providers for end-stage renal disease and setting payments to primary care physicians under the Vaccines for Children Program.

It would also stop the establishment of meal requirements for the National School Lunch Program under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

It would prevent implementation of the Labor Department's standards for H-2B aliens in the United States.

For all of those reasons, Madam Chair, I oppose this legislation, and I would ask my colleagues to do the same.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time, and I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense legislation.

Let's begin by reviewing the facts: \$1.8 trillion plus—and that is just Federal Government regulations, mind you. That is not State government regulations or local government regulations. \$1.8 trillion, one-eighth of the total economic production of our country, is spent on government regulations. Some of those regulations are necessary, and this law by no means eliminates the regulations. It puts them through a process whereby we will know that the regulations are needed and are done in the most cost-effective way and in the most commonsense way.

What will be the result of that? Lower costs for goods and services; lower taxes for Americans who face, right now, an average per-family cost of \$11,500 a year in higher costs of goods and services and higher taxes as a result of regulatory burdens. So imagine if some of that money were reduced what the savings would be. Imagine what it would do to job creation in our country.

We have talked a lot about manufacturing here today. Last year, for the first time in history, manufacturing in the United States reached \$2 trillion in production—\$2 trillion. It sounds remarkable until you consider that regulations cost \$1.86 trillion—just Federal Government regulations almost wiping out the entire economic production of the manufacturing sector of our economy if all those regulations apply to manufacturing, which, of course, they do not.

But consider the impact on individuals. Consider the impact upon Rob James, the city councilman in Avon Lake, Ohio, who is experiencing reduced revenues coming in to meet basic obligations like education and emergency services because regulations of power plants with unnecessary ideologically driven anti-fossil fuel burdensome regulations are expected to destroy jobs in Avon Lake.

Consider the job loss in the business of Mr. Allen Puckett and his brick manufacturing company in Mississippi who expects to have to lay off two-thirds of his employees because of the second round of sue-and-settle brick-making emissions regulation where somebody sues, and the regulatory agency makes a settlement of that in a friendly case that Mr. Puckett and his employees didn't even know about the process where the suit was being

brought and couldn't enter into it and say this is what is going to happen if you have to implement these regulations.

Or consider the impact on the cost of buying a home, one of the basic parts of the American Dream, when Mr. Karl Harris of Wichita, Kansas, says that one-quarter of the cost—one-quarter of the cost of a home today is in the form of regulation, the cost of those regulations.

With this legislation in place, businesses across America and workers across America will experience an increase in their profitability and an increase in their wages. We don't need to have government interference in the marketplace with regard to wages. They would rise on their own if the government would take practical steps in reviewing regulations before they are implemented in this country.

Finally, let me say that this is all about the individual and their freedom. Government regulation suppresses freedom of ideas and of implementing new ways of doing things. Yes, we need to have regulations to protect safety in the workplace. Yes, we need to have regulations to protect the environment, but they need to be commonsense regulations that are going about doing what needs to be done and no more, and are going about doing what needs to be done in the most effective way, and they are going about doing what needs to be done in a way that the people who are going to be impacted by those regulations, who are going to see their businesses lost, their workers lose their jobs and not even have any notice that this is going to occur.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation and yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Chair, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2804, the "Achieving Less Excess in Regulation and Requiring Transparency Act of 2014," also known as the so-called ALERTT Act.

I oppose this bill for numerous reasons, the most of important of which is that it would jeopardize critical public health and safety regulatory protections.

For example, the bill requires agencies to consider potential costs and benefits associated with proposed and final rules "[N]otwithstanding any other provision of law."

This "supermandate" would effectively trump all other statutes—such as the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Occupational Safety and Health Act—that prohibit or limit the use of cost information in setting health and safety standards.

In addition, title II of the bill would require agencies and federal courts to consider whether a rule has "significant adverse effects on . . . the ability of United States-based enterprises to compete with foreign-based enterprises in domestic and export markets." The practical effect of this definition is that it will require agencies and the courts to consider the business and regulatory environments of other nations.

Consider, for example, a proposed rule that imposes heightened clean air requirements on American steel manufacturers.

H.R. 2804 would necessarily require consideration of whether this regulation—which could potentially result in higher compliance costs—could make American steel products less competitive in a country, such as China, that has a much less stringent regulatory regime.

While the economic analysis under this requirement may be deceptively simple, its dangerous ramifications for public health cannot be underestimated. Chinese officials have only recently begun to acknowledge the health hazards presented by extensive air pollution that affects its cities, including its capital.

The end result is that the public health of Americans and the safety of the environment will be compromised so that American manufacturers can better compete with their foreign counterparts.

This is a shortsighted regulatory "race to the bottom" that prioritizes profits over saving lives.

Another fundamental flaw with H.R. 2804 is that it will greatly lengthen—not shorten—the already time-consuming process by which federal rules are promulgated.

Avoiding undue delay in rulemaking is important because strong regulation is vital to protecting Americans in nearly every aspect of their lives.

On average, it already takes between 4 to 8 years for an agency to promulgate a new rule.

But, instead of streamlining the rulemaking process, the bill extensively adds numerous procedural hurdles to this process.

Title II of the bill, for example, adds more than 60 additional procedural steps to the rulemaking process.

Not only that, title II re-institutes a long-discredited rulemaking process that requires "trial-type" procedures. Known as formal rulemaking, this time-consuming process was widely-rejected decades ago as being highly ineffective.

Recently proposed regulations that could be impacted by this and other provisions in the bill include rules: implementing the Food Safety Modernization Act's standards to reduce food contaminants like salmonella and that would help prevent 1.75 million illnesses; "strengthening chemical facility accident prevention standards in response to the 2013 fertilizer explosion in West, Texas that resulted in the deaths of 12 volunteer firefighters and 2 other individuals; preventing the manufacture and distribution of tainted and counterfeit prescription drugs; implementing the Justice Department's National Standards to prevent, detect, and respond to prison rape; adjusting the reimbursement rates to Medicare providers for end-stage renal diseases; setting payments to primary care physicians under the Vaccines for Children Program; establishing meal requirements for the National School Lunch Program under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010; implementing Labor Department Standards for H-2B Aliens in the United States; establishing the subsistence allowance for veterans under the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program; and setting the Patent and Trademark Office's fees for patents.

And, this is just a small sample of the many kinds of protections that this bill would jeopardize. I could go on and on.

This also explains why more than 150 consumer groups, environmental organizations, labor unions, and other entities, strenuously oppose this bill. These organizations include: The AFL–CIO, The Alliance for Justice; The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; The American Lung Association; The Consumer Federation of America; Consumers Union; The International Brotherhood of Teamsters; The UAW; The League of Conservation Voters; The National Women's Law Center; The Natural Resources Defense Council; People for the American Way; Public Citizen; the Sierra Club; Service Employees International Union; the Union of Concerned Scientists; and the United Steelworkers; just to name a few.

Likewise, the Administration issued a strongly worded veto threat against this bill. It warns that the bill “would impose unneeded and costly analytical and procedural requirements on agencies that would prevent them from performing their statutory duties.”

Finally, H.R. 2804 will give well-funded, anti-regulatory interests even more opportunities to derail rulemaking.

Agencies often spend many months, if not years, to perfect these rules based on feedback from these sources and their own expertise.

Under the bill, however, well-funded regulated industries could exert even more influence over federal rulemaking than they already do.

For instance, the bill's less deferential standard of judicial review gives additional opportunities for anti-regulatory interests to engage in dilatory tactics that can substantially slow down an already slow rulemaking process.

As Public Citizen, a nonprofit consumer advocacy organization representing consumer interests, warns: “This new and inappropriate role for the courts is a recipe for more activist judges, increased litigation, endless delays, and more rather than less uncertainty for regulated parties and the public.”

Similarly, the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service has expressed concerns about the provision's potential to make the rule-making process more lengthy and costly.

The American people deserve better.

Accordingly, I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this seriously flawed bill.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-38. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 2804

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the “Achieving Less Excess in Regulation and Requiring Transparency Act of 2014” or as the “ALERT Act of 2014”.

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—ALL ECONOMIC REGULATIONS ARE TRANSPARENT ACT

Sec. 101. Short title.

Sec. 102. Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs publication of information relating to rules.

TITLE II—REGULATORY ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Sec. 201. Short title.

Sec. 202. Definitions.

Sec. 203. Rule making.

Sec. 204. Agency guidance; procedures to issue major guidance; presidential authority to issue guidelines for issuance of guidance.

Sec. 205. Hearings; presiding employees; powers and duties; burden of proof; evidence; record as basis of decision.

Sec. 206. Actions reviewable.

Sec. 207. Scope of review.

Sec. 208. Added definition.

Sec. 209. Effective date.

TITLE III—REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS ACT

Sec. 301. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 302. Clarification and expansion of rules covered by the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

Sec. 303. Expansion of report of regulatory agenda.

Sec. 304. Requirements providing for more detailed analyses.

Sec. 305. Repeal of waiver and delay authority; additional powers of the Chief Counsel for Advocacy.

Sec. 306. Procedures for gathering comments.

Sec. 307. Periodic review of rules.

Sec. 308. Judicial review of compliance with the requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act available after publication of the final rule.

Sec. 309. Jurisdiction of court of appeals over rules implementing the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

Sec. 310. Establishment and approval of small business concern size standards by Chief Counsel for Advocacy.

Sec. 311. Clerical amendments.

Sec. 312. Agency preparation of guides.

Sec. 313. Comptroller General report.

TITLE IV—SUNSHINE FOR REGULATORY DECREES AND SETTLEMENTS ACT

Sec. 401. Short title.

Sec. 402. Definitions.

Sec. 403. Consent decree and settlement reform.

Sec. 404. Motions to modify consent decrees.

Sec. 405. Effective date.

TITLE I—ALL ECONOMIC REGULATIONS ARE TRANSPARENT ACT

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “All Economic Regulations are Transparent Act of 2014” or the “ALERT Act of 2014”.

SEC. 102. OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION RELATING TO RULES.

(a) *AMENDMENT.*—Title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after chapter 6, the following new chapter:

“CHAPTER 6A—OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION RELATING TO RULES

“Sec.

“651. Agency monthly submission to Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs.

“652. Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs Publications.

“653. Requirement for rules to appear in agency-specific monthly publication.

“654. Definitions.

“§ 651. Agency monthly submission to Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs

“On a monthly basis, the head of each agency shall submit to the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (referred to in this chapter as the ‘Administrator’), in such a manner as the Administrator may reasonably require, the following information:

“(1) For each rule that the agency expects to propose or finalize during the following year:

“(A) A summary of the nature of the rule, including the regulation identifier number and the docket number for the rule.

“(B) The objectives of and legal basis for the issuance of the rule, including—

“(i) any statutory or judicial deadline; and

“(ii) whether the legal basis restricts or precludes the agency from conducting an analysis of the costs or benefits of the rule during the rule making, and if not, whether the agency plans to conduct an analysis of the costs or benefits of the rule during the rule making.

“(C) Whether the agency plans to claim an exemption from the requirements of section 553 pursuant to section 553(b)(B).

“(D) The stage of the rule making as of the date of submission.

“(E) Whether the rule is subject to review under section 610.

“(2) For any rule for which the agency expects to finalize during the following year and has issued a general notice of proposed rule making—

“(A) an approximate schedule for completing action on the rule;

“(B) an estimate of whether the rule will cost—

“(i) less than \$50,000,000;

“(ii) \$50,000,000 or more but less than \$100,000,000;

“(iii) \$100,000,000 or more but less than \$500,000,000;

“(iv) \$500,000,000 or more but less than \$1,000,000,000;

“(v) \$1,000,000,000 or more but less than \$5,000,000,000;

“(vi) \$5,000,000,000 or more but less than \$10,000,000,000; or

“(vii) \$10,000,000,000 or more; and

“(C) any estimate of the economic effects of the rule, including any estimate of the net effect that the rule will have on the number of jobs in the United States, that was considered in drafting the rule. If such estimate is not available, a statement affirming that no information on the economic effects, including the effect on the number of jobs, of the rule has been considered.

“§ 652. Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs Publications

“(a) *AGENCY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION PUBLISHED MONTHLY.*—Not later than 30 days after the submission of information pursuant to section 651, the Administrator shall make such information publicly available on the Internet.

“(b) *CUMULATIVE ASSESSMENT OF AGENCY RULE MAKING PUBLISHED ANNUALLY.*—

“(1) *PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER.*—Not later than October 1 of each year, the Administrator shall publish in the Federal Register, for the previous year the following:

“(A) The information that the Administrator received from the head of each agency under section 651.

“(B) The number of rules and a list of each such rule—

“(i) that was proposed by each agency, including, for each such rule, an indication of whether the issuing agency conducted an analysis of the costs or benefits of the rule; and

“(ii) that was finalized by each agency, including for each such rule an indication of whether—

“(I) the issuing agency conducted an analysis of the costs or benefits of the rule;

“(II) the agency claimed an exemption from the procedures under section 553 pursuant to section 553(b)(B); and

“(III) the rule was issued pursuant to a statutory mandate or the rule making is committed to agency discretion by law.

“(C) The number of agency actions and a list of each such action taken by each agency that—

“(i) repealed a rule;

“(ii) reduced the scope of a rule;

“(iii) reduced the cost of a rule; or

“(iv) accelerated the expiration date of a rule.

“(D) The total cost (without reducing the cost by any offsetting benefits) of all rules proposed or finalized, and the number of rules for which an estimate of the cost of the rule was not available.

“(2) PUBLICATION ON THE INTERNET.—Not later than October 1 of each year, the Administrator shall make publicly available on the Internet the following:

“(A) The analysis of the costs or benefits, if conducted, for each proposed rule or final rule issued by an agency for the previous year.

“(B) The docket number and regulation identifier number for each proposed or final rule issued by an agency for the previous year.

“(C) The number of rules and a list of each such rule reviewed by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget for the previous year, and the authority under which each such review was conducted.

“(D) The number of rules and a list of each such rule for which the head of an agency completed a review under section 610 for the previous year.

“(E) The number of rules and a list of each such rule submitted to the Comptroller General under section 801.

“(F) The number of rules and a list of each such rule for which a resolution of disapproval was introduced in either the House of Representatives or the Senate under section 802.

“§653. Requirement for rules to appear in agency-specific monthly publication

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), a rule may not take effect until the information required to be made publicly available on the Internet regarding such rule pursuant to section 652(a) has been so available for not less than 6 months.

“(b) EXCEPTIONS.—The requirement of subsection (a) shall not apply in the case of a rule—

“(1) for which the agency issuing the rule claims an exception under section 553(b)(B); or

“(2) which the President determines by Executive Order should take effect because the rule is—

“(A) necessary because of an imminent threat to health or safety or other emergency;

“(B) necessary for the enforcement of criminal laws;

“(C) necessary for national security; or

“(D) issued pursuant to any statute implementing an international trade agreement.

“§654. Definitions

“In this chapter, the terms ‘agency’, ‘agency action’, ‘rule’, and ‘rule making’ have the meanings given those terms in section 551.”.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters for part 1 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 5, the following:

“6. The Analysis of Regulatory Functions 601

“6A. Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs Publication of Information Relating to Rules 651”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATES.—

(1) AGENCY MONTHLY SUBMISSION TO THE OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS.—The first submission required pursuant to section 651 of title 5, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall be submitted not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this title, and monthly thereafter.

(2) CUMULATIVE ASSESSMENT OF AGENCY RULE MAKING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (b) of section 652 of title 5, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date that is 60 days after the date of the enactment of this title.

(B) DEADLINE.—The first requirement to publish or make available, as the case may be, under subsection (b) of section 652 of title 5, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall be the first October 1 after the effective date of such subsection.

(C) FIRST PUBLICATION.—The requirement under section 652(b)(2)(A) of title 5, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall include for the first publication, any analysis of the costs or benefits conducted for a proposed or final rule, for the 10 years before the date of the enactment of this title.

(3) REQUIREMENT FOR RULES TO APPEAR IN AGENCY-SPECIFIC MONTHLY PUBLICATION.—Section 653 of title 5, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), shall take effect on the date that is 8 months after the date of the enactment of this title.

TITLE II—REGULATORY ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Regulatory Accountability Act of 2014”.

SEC. 202. DEFINITIONS.

Section 551 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (13), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (14), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(15) ‘major rule’ means any rule that the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs determines is likely to impose—

“(A) an annual cost on the economy of \$100,000,000 or more, adjusted annually for inflation;

“(B) a major increase in costs or prices for consumers, individual industries, Federal, State, local, or tribal government agencies, or geographic regions;

“(C) significant adverse effects on competition, employment, investment, productivity, innovation, or on the ability of United States-based enterprises to compete with foreign-based enterprises in domestic and export markets; or

“(D) significant impacts on multiple sectors of the economy;

“(16) ‘high-impact rule’ means any rule that the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs determines is likely to impose an annual cost on the economy of \$1,000,000,000 or more, adjusted annually for inflation;

“(17) ‘guidance’ means an agency statement of general applicability and future effect, other

than a regulatory action, that sets forth a policy on a statutory, regulatory or technical issue or an interpretation of a statutory or regulatory issue;

“(18) ‘major guidance’ means guidance that the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs finds is likely to lead to—

“(A) an annual cost on the economy of \$100,000,000 or more, adjusted annually for inflation;

“(B) a major increase in costs or prices for consumers, individual industries, Federal, State, local or tribal government agencies, or geographic regions;

“(C) significant adverse effects on competition, employment, investment, productivity, innovation, or on the ability of United States-based enterprises to compete with foreign-based enterprises in domestic and export markets; or

“(D) significant impacts on multiple sectors of the economy;

“(19) the ‘Information Quality Act’ means section 515 of Public Law 106–554, the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2001, and guidelines issued by the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs or other agencies pursuant to the Act; and

“(20) the ‘Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs’ means the office established under section 3503 of chapter 35 of title 44 and any successor to that office.”.

SEC. 203. RULE MAKING.

(a) Section 553(a) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “(a) This section applies” and inserting “(a) APPLICABILITY.—This section applies”.

(b) Section 553 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subsections (b) through (e) and inserting the following:

“(b) RULE MAKING CONSIDERATIONS.—In a rule making, an agency shall make all preliminary and final factual determinations based on evidence and consider, in addition to other applicable considerations, the following:

“(1) The legal authority under which a rule may be proposed, including whether a rule making is required by statute, and if so, whether by a specific date, or whether the agency has discretion to commence a rule making.

“(2) Other statutory considerations applicable to whether the agency can or should propose a rule or undertake other agency action.

“(3) The specific nature and significance of the problem the agency may address with a rule (including the degree and nature of risks the problem poses and the priority of addressing those risks compared to other matters or activities within the agency’s jurisdiction), whether the problem warrants new agency action, and the countervailing risks that may be posed by alternatives for new agency action.

“(4) Whether existing rules have created or contributed to the problem the agency may address with a rule and whether those rules could be amended or rescinded to address the problem in whole or part.

“(5) Any reasonable alternatives for a new rule or other response identified by the agency or interested persons, including not only responses that mandate particular conduct or manners of compliance, but also—

“(A) the alternative of no Federal response;

“(B) amending or rescinding existing rules;

“(C) potential regional, State, local, or tribal regulatory action or other responses that could be taken in lieu of agency action; and

“(D) potential responses that—

“(i) specify performance objectives rather than conduct or manners of compliance;

“(ii) establish economic incentives to encourage desired behavior;

“(iii) provide information upon which choices can be made by the public; or

“(iv) incorporate other innovative alternatives rather than agency actions that specify conduct or manners of compliance.

“(6) Notwithstanding any other provision of law—

“(A) the potential costs and benefits associated with potential alternative rules and other responses considered under section 553(b)(5), including direct, indirect, and cumulative costs and benefits and estimated impacts on jobs (including an estimate of the net gain or loss in domestic jobs), economic growth, innovation, and economic competitiveness;

“(B) means to increase the cost-effectiveness of any Federal response; and

“(C) incentives for innovation, consistency, predictability, lower costs of enforcement and compliance (to government entities, regulated entities, and the public), and flexibility.

“(c) **ADVANCE NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING FOR MAJOR RULES, HIGH-IMPACT RULES, AND RULES INVOLVING NOVEL LEGAL OR POLICY ISSUES.**—In the case of a rule making for a major rule or high-impact rule or a rule that involves a novel legal or policy issue arising out of statutory mandates, not later than 90 days before a notice of proposed rule making is published in the Federal Register, an agency shall publish advance notice of proposed rule making in the Federal Register. In publishing such advance notice, the agency shall—

“(1) include a written statement identifying, at a minimum—

“(A) the nature and significance of the problem the agency may address with a rule, including data and other evidence and information on which the agency expects to rely for the proposed rule;

“(B) the legal authority under which a rule may be proposed, including whether a rule making is required by statute, and if so, whether by a specific date, or whether the agency has discretion to commence a rule making;

“(C) preliminary information available to the agency concerning the other considerations specified in subsection (b); and

“(D) in the case of a rule that involves a novel legal or policy issue arising out of statutory mandates, the nature of and potential reasons to adopt the novel legal or policy position upon which the agency may base a proposed rule;

“(2) solicit written data, views or argument from interested persons concerning the information and issues addressed in the advance notice; and

“(3) provide for a period of not fewer than 60 days for interested persons to submit such written data, views, or argument to the agency.

“(d) **NOTICES OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING; DETERMINATIONS OF OTHER AGENCY COURSE.**—(1) Before it determines to propose a rule, and following completion of procedures under subsection (c), if applicable, the agency shall consult with the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. If the agency thereafter determines to propose a rule, the agency shall publish a notice of proposed rule making, which shall include—

“(A) a statement of the time, place, and nature of public rule making proceedings;

“(B) reference to the legal authority under which the rule is proposed;

“(C) the terms of the proposed rule;

“(D) a description of information known to the agency on the subject and issues of the proposed rule, including but not limited to—

“(i) a summary of information known to the agency concerning the considerations specified in subsection (b);

“(ii) a summary of additional information the agency provided to and obtained from interested persons under subsection (c);

“(iii) a summary of any preliminary risk assessment or regulatory impact analysis performed by the agency; and

“(iv) information specifically identifying all data, studies, models, and other evidence or information considered or used by the agency in connection with its determination to propose the rule;

“(E)(i) a reasoned preliminary determination of need for the rule based on the information described under subparagraph (D); and

“(ii) an additional statement of whether a rule is required by statute;

“(F) a reasoned preliminary determination that the benefits of the proposed rule meet the relevant statutory objectives and justify the costs of the proposed rule (including all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6)), based on the information described under subparagraph (D);

“(G) a discussion of—

“(i) the alternatives to the proposed rule, and other alternative responses, considered by the agency under subsection (b);

“(ii) the costs and benefits of those alternatives (including all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6));

“(iii) whether those alternatives meet relevant statutory objectives; and

“(iv) why the agency did not propose any of those alternatives; and

“(H)(i) a statement of whether existing rules have created or contributed to the problem the agency seeks to address with the proposed rule; and

“(ii) if so, whether or not the agency proposes to amend or rescind any such rules, and why.

All information provided to or considered by the agency, and steps to obtain information by the agency, in connection with its determination to propose the rule, including any preliminary risk assessment or regulatory impact analysis prepared by the agency and all other information prepared or described by the agency under subparagraph (D) and, at the discretion of the President or the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, information provided by that Office in consultations with the agency, shall be placed in the docket for the proposed rule and made accessible to the public by electronic means and otherwise for the public's use when the notice of proposed rule making is published.

“(2)(A) If the agency undertakes procedures under subsection (c) and determines thereafter not to propose a rule, the agency shall, following consultation with the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, publish a notice of determination of other agency course. A notice of determination of other agency course shall include information required by paragraph (1)(D) to be included in a notice of proposed rule making and a description of the alternative response the agency determined to adopt.

“(B) If in its determination of other agency course the agency makes a determination to amend or rescind an existing rule, the agency need not undertake additional proceedings under subsection (c) before it publishes a notice of proposed rule making to amend or rescind the existing rule.

All information provided to or considered by the agency, and steps to obtain information by the agency, in connection with its determination of other agency course, including but not limited to any preliminary risk assessment or regulatory impact analysis prepared by the agency and all other information that would be required to be prepared or described by the agency under paragraph (1)(D) if the agency had determined to publish a notice of proposed rule making and, at the discretion of the President or the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, information provided by that Office in consultations with the agency, shall be placed in the docket for the determination and made accessible to the public by electronic

means and otherwise for the public's use when the notice of determination is published.

“(3) After notice of proposed rule making required by this section, the agency shall provide interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making through submission of written data, views, or arguments with or without opportunity for oral presentation, except that—

“(A) if a hearing is required under paragraph (4)(B) or subsection (e), opportunity for oral presentation shall be provided pursuant to that requirement; or

“(B) when other than under subsection (e) of this section rules are required by statute or at the discretion of the agency to be made on the record after opportunity for an agency hearing, sections 556 and 557 shall apply, and paragraph (4), the requirements of subsection (e) to receive comment outside of the procedures of sections 556 and 557, and the petition procedures of subsection (e)(6) shall not apply.

The agency shall provide not fewer than 60 days for interested persons to submit written data, views, or argument (or 120 days in the case of a proposed major or high-impact rule).

“(4)(A) Within 30 days of publication of notice of proposed rule making, a member of the public may petition for a hearing in accordance with section 556 to determine whether any evidence or other information upon which the agency bases the proposed rule fails to comply with the Information Quality Act.

“(B)(i) The agency may, upon review of the petition, determine without further process to exclude from the rule making the evidence or other information that is the subject of the petition and, if appropriate, withdraw the proposed rule. The agency shall promptly publish any such determination.

“(ii) If the agency does not resolve the petition under the procedures of clause (i), it shall grant any such petition that presents a prima facie case that evidence or other information upon which the agency bases the proposed rule fails to comply with the Information Quality Act, hold the requested hearing not later than 30 days after receipt of the petition, provide a reasonable opportunity for cross-examination at the hearing, and decide the issues presented by the petition not later than 60 days after receipt of the petition. The agency may deny any petition that it determines does not present such a prima facie case.

“(C) There shall be no judicial review of the agency's disposition of issues considered and decided or determined under subparagraph (B)(ii) until judicial review of the agency's final action. There shall be no judicial review of an agency's determination to withdraw a proposed rule under subparagraph (B)(i) on the basis of the petition.

“(D) Failure to petition for a hearing under this paragraph shall not preclude judicial review of any claim based on the Information Quality Act under chapter 7 of this title.

“(e) **HEARINGS FOR HIGH-IMPACT RULES.**—Following notice of a proposed rule making, receipt of comments on the proposed rule, and any hearing held under subsection (d)(4), and before adoption of any high-impact rule, the agency shall hold a hearing in accordance with sections 556 and 557, unless such hearing is waived by all participants in the rule making other than the agency. The agency shall provide a reasonable opportunity for cross-examination at such hearing. The hearing shall be limited to the following issues of fact, except that participants at the hearing other than the agency may waive determination of any such issue:

“(1) Whether the agency's asserted factual predicate for the rule is supported by the evidence.

“(2) Whether there is an alternative to the proposed rule that would achieve the relevant

statutory objectives at a lower cost (including all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6)) than the proposed rule.

“(3) If there is more than one alternative to the proposed rule that would achieve the relevant statutory objectives at a lower cost than the proposed rule, which alternative would achieve the relevant statutory objectives at the lowest cost.

“(4) Whether, if the agency proposes to adopt a rule that is more costly than the least costly alternative that would achieve the relevant statutory objectives (including all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6)), the additional benefits of the more costly rule exceed the additional costs of the more costly rule.

“(5) Whether the evidence and other information upon which the agency bases the proposed rule meets the requirements of the Information Quality Act.

“(6) Upon petition by an interested person who has participated in the rule making, other issues relevant to the rule making, unless the agency determines that consideration of the issues at the hearing would not advance consideration of the rule or would, in light of the nature of the need for agency action, unreasonably delay completion of the rule making. An agency shall grant or deny a petition under this paragraph within 30 days of its receipt of the petition.

No later than 45 days before any hearing held under this subsection or sections 556 and 557, the agency shall publish in the Federal Register a notice specifying the proposed rule to be considered at such hearing, the issues to be considered at the hearing, and the time and place for such hearing, except that such notice may be issued not later than 15 days before a hearing held under subsection (d)(4)(B).

“(f) FINAL RULES.—(1) The agency shall adopt a rule only following consultation with the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to facilitate compliance with applicable rule making requirements.

“(2) The agency shall adopt a rule only on the basis of the best reasonably obtainable scientific, technical, economic, and other evidence and information concerning the need for, consequences of, and alternatives to the rule.

“(3)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the agency shall adopt the least costly rule considered during the rule making (including all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6)) that meets relevant statutory objectives.

“(B) The agency may adopt a rule that is more costly than the least costly alternative that would achieve the relevant statutory objectives only if the additional benefits of the more costly rule justify its additional costs and only if the agency explains its reason for doing so based on interests of public health, safety or welfare that are clearly within the scope of the statutory provision authorizing the rule.

“(4) When it adopts a final rule, the agency shall publish a notice of final rule making. The notice shall include—

“(A) a concise, general statement of the rule's basis and purpose;

“(B) the agency's reasoned final determination of need for a rule to address the problem the agency seeks to address with the rule, including a statement of whether a rule is required by statute and a summary of any final risk assessment or regulatory impact analysis prepared by the agency;

“(C) the agency's reasoned final determination that the benefits of the rule meet the relevant statutory objectives and justify the rule's costs (including all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6));

“(D) the agency's reasoned final determination not to adopt any of the alternatives to the proposed rule considered by the agency during the rule making, including—

“(i) the agency's reasoned final determination that no alternative considered achieved the relevant statutory objectives with lower costs (including all costs to be considered under subsection (b)(6)) than the rule; or

“(ii) the agency's reasoned determination that its adoption of a more costly rule complies with subsection (f)(3)(B);

“(E) the agency's reasoned final determination—

“(i) that existing rules have not created or contributed to the problem the agency seeks to address with the rule; or

“(ii) that existing rules have created or contributed to the problem the agency seeks to address with the rule, and, if so—

“(I) why amendment or rescission of such existing rules is not alone sufficient to respond to the problem; and

“(II) whether and how the agency intends to amend or rescind the existing rule separate from adoption of the rule;

“(F) the agency's reasoned final determination that the evidence and other information upon which the agency bases the rule complies with the Information Quality Act; and

“(G)(i) for any major rule or high-impact rule, the agency's plan for review of the rule no less than every ten years to determine whether, based upon evidence, there remains a need for the rule, whether the rule is in fact achieving statutory objectives, whether the rule's benefits continue to justify its costs, and whether the rule can be modified or rescinded to reduce costs while continuing to achieve statutory objectives; and

“(ii) review of a rule under a plan required by clause (i) of this subparagraph shall take into account the factors and criteria set forth in subsections (b) through (f) of section 553 of this title.

All information considered by the agency in connection with its adoption of the rule, and, at the discretion of the President or the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, information provided by that Office in consultations with the agency, shall be placed in the docket for the rule and made accessible to the public for the public's use no later than when the rule is adopted.

“(g) EXCEPTIONS FROM NOTICE AND HEARING REQUIREMENTS.—(1) Except when notice or hearing is required by statute, the following do not apply to interpretive rules, general statements of policy, or rules of agency organization, procedure, or practice:

“(A) Subsections (c) through (e).

“(B) Paragraphs (1) through (3) of subsection (f).

“(C) Subparagraphs (B) through (H) of subsection (f)(4).

“(2)(A) When the agency for good cause, based upon evidence, finds (and incorporates the finding and a brief statement of reasons therefor in the rules issued) that compliance with subsection (c), (d), or (e) or requirements to render final determinations under subsection (f) of this section before the issuance of an interim rule is impracticable or contrary to the public interest, including interests of national security, such subsections or requirements to render final determinations shall not apply to the agency's adoption of an interim rule.

“(B) If, following compliance with subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, the agency adopts an interim rule, it shall commence proceedings that comply fully with subsections (d) through (f) of this section immediately upon publication of the interim rule, shall treat the publication of the interim rule as publication of a notice of proposed rule making and shall not be required to issue supplemental notice other than to complete full compliance with subsection (d). No less than 270 days from publication of the interim

rule (or 18 months in the case of a major rule or high-impact rule), the agency shall complete rule making under subsections (d) through (f) of this subsection and take final action to adopt a final rule or rescind the interim rule. If the agency fails to take timely final action, the interim rule will cease to have the effect of law.

“(C) Other than in cases involving interests of national security, upon the agency's publication of an interim rule without compliance with subsections (c), (d), or (e) or requirements to render final determinations under subsection (f) of this section, an interested party may seek immediate judicial review under chapter 7 of this title of the agency's determination to adopt such interim rule. The record on such review shall include all documents and information considered by the agency and any additional information presented by a party that the court determines necessary to consider to assure justice.

“(3) When the agency for good cause finds (and incorporates the finding and a brief statement of reasons therefor in the rules issued) that notice and public procedure thereon are unnecessary, including because agency rule making is undertaken only to correct a de minimis technical or clerical error in a previously issued rule or for other noncontroversial purposes, the agency may publish a rule without compliance with subsections (c), (d), (e), or (f)(1)–(3) and (f)(4)(B)–(F). If the agency receives significant adverse comment within 60 days after publication of the rule, it shall treat the notice of the rule as a notice of proposed rule making and complete rule making in compliance with subsections (d) and (f).

“(h) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR HEARINGS.—When a hearing is required under subsection (e) or is otherwise required by statute or at the agency's discretion before adoption of a rule, the agency shall comply with the requirements of sections 556 and 557 in addition to the requirements of subsection (f) in adopting the rule and in providing notice of the rule's adoption.

“(i) DATE OF PUBLICATION OF RULE.—The required publication or service of a substantive final or interim rule shall be made not less than 30 days before the effective date of the rule, except—

“(1) a substantive rule which grants or recognizes an exemption or relieves a restriction;

“(2) interpretive rules and statements of policy; or

“(3) as otherwise provided by the agency for good cause found and published with the rule.

“(j) RIGHT TO PETITION.—Each agency shall give an interested person the right to petition for the issuance, amendment, or repeal of a rule.

“(k) RULE MAKING GUIDELINES.—(1)(A) The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall establish guidelines for the assessment, including quantitative and qualitative assessment, of the costs and benefits of proposed and final rules and other economic issues or issues related to risk that are relevant to rule making under this title. The rigor of cost-benefit analysis required by such guidelines shall be commensurate, in the Administrator's determination, with the economic impact of the rule.

“(B) To ensure that agencies use the best available techniques to quantify and evaluate anticipated present and future benefits, costs, other economic issues, and risks as accurately as possible, the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall regularly update guidelines established under paragraph (1)(A) of this subsection.

“(2) The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall also issue guidelines to promote coordination, simplification and harmonization of agency rules during the rule making process and otherwise. Such

guidelines shall assure that each agency avoids regulations that are inconsistent or incompatible with, or duplicative of, its other regulations and those of other Federal agencies and drafts its regulations to be simple and easy to understand, with the goal of minimizing the potential for uncertainty and litigation arising from such uncertainty.

“(3) To ensure consistency in Federal rule making, the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall—

“(A) issue guidelines and otherwise take action to ensure that rule makings conducted in whole or in part under procedures specified in provisions of law other than those of subchapter II of this title conform to the fullest extent allowed by law with the procedures set forth in section 553 of this title; and

“(B) issue guidelines for the conduct of hearings under subsections 553(d)(4) and 553(e) of this section, including to assure a reasonable opportunity for cross-examination. Each agency shall adopt regulations for the conduct of hearings consistent with the guidelines issued under this subparagraph.

“(4) The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall issue guidelines pursuant to the Information Quality Act to apply in rule making proceedings under sections 553, 556, and 557 of this title. In all cases, such guidelines, and the Administrator's specific determinations regarding agency compliance with such guidelines, shall be entitled to judicial deference.

“(l) **INCLUSION IN THE RECORD OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION.**—The agency shall include in the record for a rule making, and shall make available by electronic means and otherwise, all documents and information prepared or considered by the agency during the proceeding, including, at the discretion of the President or the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, documents and information communicated by that Office during consultation with the Agency.

“(m) **MONETARY POLICY EXEMPTION.**—Nothing in subsection (b)(6), subparagraphs (F) and (G) of subsection (d)(1), subsection (e), subsection (f)(3), and subparagraphs (C) and (D) of subsection (f)(5) shall apply to rule makings that concern monetary policy proposed or implemented by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System or the Federal Open Market Committee.”.

SEC. 204. AGENCY GUIDANCE; PROCEDURES TO ISSUE MAJOR GUIDANCE; PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORITY TO ISSUE GUIDELINES FOR ISSUANCE OF GUIDANCE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 553 the following new section:

“§553a. Agency guidance; procedures to issue major guidance; authority to issue guidelines for issuance of guidance

“(a) Before issuing any major guidance, or guidance that involves a novel legal or policy issue arising out of statutory mandates, an agency shall—

“(1) make and document a reasoned determination that—

“(A) assures that such guidance is understandable and complies with relevant statutory objectives and regulatory provisions (including any statutory deadlines for agency action);

“(B) summarizes the evidence and data on which the agency will base the guidance;

“(C) identifies the costs and benefits (including all costs to be considered during a rule making under section 553(b) of this title) of conduct conforming to such guidance and assures that such benefits justify such costs; and

“(D) describes alternatives to such guidance and their costs and benefits (including all costs

to be considered during a rule making under section 553(b) of this title) and explains why the agency rejected those alternatives; and

“(2) confer with the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs on the issuance of such guidance to assure that the guidance is reasonable, understandable, consistent with relevant statutory and regulatory provisions and requirements or practices of other agencies, does not produce costs that are unjustified by the guidance's benefits, and is otherwise appropriate.

Upon issuing major guidance, or guidance that involves a novel legal or policy issue arising out of statutory mandates, the agency shall publish the documentation required by subparagraph (1) by electronic means and otherwise.

“(b) **Agency guidance—**

“(1) is not legally binding and may not be relied upon by an agency as legal grounds for agency action;

“(2) shall state in a plain, prominent and permanent manner that it is not legally binding; and

“(3) shall, at the time it is issued or upon request, be made available by the issuing agency to interested persons and the public by electronic means and otherwise.

Agencies shall avoid the issuance of guidance that is inconsistent or incompatible with, or duplicative of, the agency's governing statutes or regulations, with the goal of minimizing the potential for uncertainty and litigation arising from such uncertainty.

“(c) The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall have authority to issue guidelines for use by the agencies in the issuance of major guidance and other guidance. Such guidelines shall assure that each agency avoids issuing guidance documents that are inconsistent or incompatible with, or duplicative of, the law, its other regulations, or the regulations of other Federal agencies and drafts its guidance documents to be simple and easy to understand, with the goal of minimizing the potential for uncertainty and litigation arising from such uncertainty.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections for chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 553 the following new item:

“553a. Agency guidance; procedures to issue major guidance; authority to issue guidelines for issuance of guidance.”.

SEC. 205. HEARINGS; PRESIDING EMPLOYEES; POWERS AND DUTIES; BURDEN OF PROOF; EVIDENCE; RECORD AS BASIS OF DECISION.

Section 556 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (e) and inserting the following:

“(e)(1) The transcript of testimony and exhibits, together with all papers and requests filed in the proceeding, constitutes the exclusive record for decision in accordance with section 557 and shall be made available to the parties and the public by electronic means and, upon payment of lawfully prescribed costs, otherwise. When an agency decision rests on official notice of a material fact not appearing in the evidence in the record, a party is entitled, on timely request, to an opportunity to show the contrary.

“(2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1) of this subsection, in a proceeding held under this section pursuant to section 553(d)(4) or 553(e), the record for decision shall also include any information that is part of the record of proceedings under section 553.

“(f) When an agency conducts rule making under this section and section 557 directly after concluding proceedings upon an advance notice of proposed rule making under section 553(c), the matters to be considered and determinations

to be made shall include, among other relevant matters and determinations, the matters and determinations described in subsections (b) and (f) of section 553.

“(g) Upon receipt of a petition for a hearing under this section, the agency shall grant the petition in the case of any major rule, unless the agency reasonably determines that a hearing would not advance consideration of the rule or would, in light of the need for agency action, unreasonably delay completion of the rule making. The agency shall publish its decision to grant or deny the petition when it renders the decision, including an explanation of the grounds for decision. The information contained in the petition shall in all cases be included in the administrative record. This subsection shall not apply to rule makings that concern monetary policy proposed or implemented by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System or the Federal Open Market Committee.”.

SEC. 206. ACTIONS REVIEWABLE.

Section 704 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “Agency action made” and inserting “(a) Agency action made”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: “Denial by an agency of a correction request or, where administrative appeal is provided for, denial of an appeal, under an administrative mechanism described in subsection (b)(2)(B) of the Information Quality Act, or the failure of an agency within 90 days to grant or deny such request or appeal, shall be final action for purposes of this section.

“(b) Other than in cases involving interests of national security, notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, upon the agency's publication of an interim rule without compliance with section 553(c), (d), or (e) or requirements to render final determinations under subsection (f) of section 553, an interested party may seek immediate judicial review under this chapter of the agency's determination to adopt such rule on an interim basis. Review shall be limited to whether the agency abused its discretion to adopt the interim rule without compliance with section 553(c), (d), or (e) or without rendering final determinations under subsection (f) of section 553.”.

SEC. 207. SCOPE OF REVIEW.

Section 706 of title 5, United States Code is amended—

(1) by striking “To the extent necessary” and inserting “(a) To the extent necessary”; and

(2) in paragraph (2)(A) of subsection (a) (as designated by paragraph (1) of this section), by inserting after “in accordance with law” the following: “(including the Information Quality Act)”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) The court shall not defer to the agency's—

“(1) interpretation of an agency rule if the agency did not comply with the procedures of section 553 or sections 556–557 of chapter 5 of this title to issue the interpretation;

“(2) determination of the costs and benefits or other economic or risk assessment of the action, if the agency failed to conform to guidelines on such determinations and assessments established by the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs under section 553(k);

“(3) determinations made in the adoption of an interim rule; or

“(4) guidance.

“(c) The court shall review agency denials of petitions under section 553(e)(6) or any other petition for a hearing under sections 556 and 557 for abuse of agency discretion.”.

SEC. 208. ADDED DEFINITION.

Section 701(b) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking the period at the end, and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) ‘substantial evidence’ means such relevant evidence as a reasonable mind might accept as adequate to support a conclusion in light of the record considered as a whole, taking into account whatever in the record fairly detracts from the weight of the evidence relied upon by the agency to support its decision.”.

SEC. 209. EFFECTIVE DATE.

The amendments made by this title to—

(1) sections 553, 556, and 704 of title 5, United States Code;

(2) subsection (b) of section 701 of such title; paragraphs (2) and (3) of section 706(b) of such title; and

(4) subsection (c) of section 706 of such title, shall not apply to any rule makings pending or completed on the date of enactment of this title.

TITLE III—REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS ACT

SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

This title may be cited as the “Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act of 2014”.

SEC. 302. CLARIFICATION AND EXPANSION OF RULES COVERED BY THE REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (2) of section 601 of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(2) RULE.—The term ‘rule’ has the meaning given such term in section 551(4) of this title, except that such term does not include a rule pertaining to the protection of the rights of and benefits for veterans or a rule of particular (and not general) applicability relating to rates, wages, corporate or financial structures or reorganizations thereof, prices, facilities, appliances, services, or allowances therefor or to valuations, costs or accounting, or practices relating to such rates, wages, structures, prices, appliances, services, or allowances.”.

(b) INCLUSION OF RULES WITH INDIRECT EFFECTS.—Section 601 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(9) ECONOMIC IMPACT.—The term ‘economic impact’ means, with respect to a proposed or final rule—

“(A) any direct economic effect on small entities of such rule; and

“(B) any indirect economic effect (including compliance costs and effects on revenue) on small entities which is reasonably foreseeable and results from such rule (without regard to whether small entities will be directly regulated by the rule).”.

(c) INCLUSION OF RULES WITH BENEFICIAL EFFECTS.—

(1) INITIAL REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ANALYSIS.—Subsection (c) of section 603 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking the first sentence and inserting “Each initial regulatory flexibility analysis shall also contain a detailed description of alternatives to the proposed rule which minimize any adverse significant economic impact or maximize any beneficial significant economic impact on small entities.”.

(2) FINAL REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ANALYSIS.—The first paragraph (6) of section 604(a) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking “minimize the significant economic impact” and inserting “minimize the adverse significant economic impact or maximize the beneficial significant economic impact”.

(d) INCLUSION OF RULES AFFECTING TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—Paragraph (5) of section 601 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting “and tribal organizations (as defined in

section 4(l) of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b(l)),” after “special districts.”.

(e) INCLUSION OF LAND MANAGEMENT PLANS AND FORMAL RULEMAKING.—

(1) INITIAL REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ANALYSIS.—Subsection (a) of section 603 of title 5, United States Code, is amended in the first sentence—

(A) by striking “or” after “proposed rule,”; and

(B) by inserting “or publishes a revision or amendment to a land management plan,” after “United States.”.

(2) FINAL REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ANALYSIS.—Subsection (a) of section 604 of title 5, United States Code, is amended in the first sentence—

(A) by striking “or” after “proposed rulemaking,”; and

(B) by inserting “or adopts a revision or amendment to a land management plan,” after “section 603(a).”.

(3) LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN DEFINED.—Section 601 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(10) LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘land management plan’ means—

“(i) any plan developed by the Secretary of Agriculture under section 6 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604); and

“(ii) any plan developed by the Secretary of the Interior under section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712).

“(B) REVISION.—The term ‘revision’ means any change to a land management plan which—

“(i) in the case of a plan described in subparagraph (A)(i), is made under section 6(f)(5) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604(f)(5)); or

“(ii) in the case of a plan described in subparagraph (A)(ii), is made under section 1610.5-6 of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation).

“(C) AMENDMENT.—The term ‘amendment’ means any change to a land management plan which—

“(i) in the case of a plan described in subparagraph (A)(i), is made under section 6(f)(4) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604(f)(4)) and with respect to which the Secretary of Agriculture prepares a statement described in section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)); or

“(ii) in the case of a plan described in subparagraph (A)(ii), is made under section 1610.5-5 of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (or any successor regulation) and with respect to which the Secretary of the Interior prepares a statement described in section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)).”.

(f) INCLUSION OF CERTAIN INTERPRETIVE RULES INVOLVING THE INTERNAL REVENUE LAWS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) of section 603 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking the period at the end and inserting “or a recordkeeping requirement, and without regard to whether such requirement is imposed by statute or regulation.”.

(2) COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.—Paragraph (7) of section 601 of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(7) COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.—The term ‘collection of information’ has the meaning given such term in section 3502(3) of title 44.”.

(3) RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENT.—Paragraph (8) of section 601 of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(8) RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENT.—The term ‘recordkeeping requirement’ has the meaning given such term in section 3502(13) of title 44.”.

(g) DEFINITION OF SMALL ORGANIZATION.—Paragraph (4) of section 601 of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(4) SMALL ORGANIZATION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘small organization’ means any not-for-profit enterprise which, as of the issuance of the notice of proposed rulemaking—

“(i) in the case of an enterprise which is described by a classification code of the North American Industrial Classification System, does not exceed the size standard established by the Administrator of the Small Business Administration pursuant to section 3 of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632) for small business concerns described by such classification code; and

“(ii) in the case of any other enterprise, has a net worth that does not exceed \$7,000,000 and has not more than 500 employees.

“(B) LOCAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS.—In the case of any local labor organization, subparagraph (A) shall be applied without regard to any national or international organization of which such local labor organization is a part.

“(C) AGENCY DEFINITIONS.—Subparagraphs (A) and (B) shall not apply to the extent that an agency, after consultation with the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration and after opportunity for public comment, establishes one or more definitions for such term which are appropriate to the activities of the agency and publishes such definitions in the Federal Register.”.

SEC. 303. EXPANSION OF REPORT OF REGULATORY AGENDA.

Section 602 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking “, and” at the end and inserting “;”;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraph (4); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) a brief description of the sector of the North American Industrial Classification System that is primarily affected by any rule which the agency expects to propose or promulgate which is likely to have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities; and”;

(2) in subsection (c), to read as follows:

“(c) Each agency shall prominently display a plain language summary of the information contained in the regulatory flexibility agenda published under subsection (a) on its website within 3 days of its publication in the Federal Register. The Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration shall compile and prominently display a plain language summary of the regulatory agendas referenced in subsection (a) for each agency on its website within 3 days of their publication in the Federal Register.”.

SEC. 304. REQUIREMENTS PROVIDING FOR MORE DETAILED ANALYSES.

(a) INITIAL REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ANALYSIS.—Subsection (b) of section 603 of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(b) Each initial regulatory flexibility analysis required under this section shall contain a detailed statement—

“(1) describing the reasons why action by the agency is being considered;

“(2) describing the objectives of, and legal basis for, the proposed rule;

“(3) estimating the number and type of small entities to which the proposed rule will apply;

“(4) describing the projected reporting, record-keeping, and other compliance requirements of the proposed rule, including an estimate of the classes of small entities which will be subject to the requirement and the type of professional skills necessary for preparation of the report and record;

“(5) describing all relevant Federal rules which may duplicate, overlap, or conflict with the proposed rule, or the reasons why such a description could not be provided;

“(6) estimating the additional cumulative economic impact of the proposed rule on small entities beyond that already imposed on the class of small entities by the agency or why such an estimate is not available; and

“(7) describing any disproportionate economic impact on small entities or a specific class of small entities.”.

(b) **FINAL REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ANALYSIS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 604(a) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in paragraph (4), by striking “an explanation” and inserting “a detailed explanation”;

(B) in each of paragraphs (4), (5), and the first paragraph (6), by inserting “detailed” before “description”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) describing any disproportionate economic impact on small entities or a specific class of small entities.”.

(2) **INCLUSION OF RESPONSE TO COMMENTS ON CERTIFICATION OF PROPOSED RULE.**—Paragraph (2) of section 604(a) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting “(or certification of the proposed rule under section 605(b))” after “initial regulatory flexibility analysis”.

(3) **PUBLICATION OF ANALYSIS ON WEBSITE.**—Subsection (b) of section 604 of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(b) The agency shall make copies of the final regulatory flexibility analysis available to the public, including placement of the entire analysis on the agency’s website, and shall publish in the Federal Register the final regulatory flexibility analysis, or a summary thereof which includes the telephone number, mailing address, and link to the website where the complete analysis may be obtained.”.

(c) **CROSS-REFERENCES TO OTHER ANALYSES.**—Subsection (a) of section 605 of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(a) A Federal agency shall be treated as satisfying any requirement regarding the content of an agenda or regulatory flexibility analysis under section 602, 603, or 604, if such agency provides in such agenda or analysis a cross-reference to the specific portion of another agenda or analysis which is required by any other law and which satisfies such requirement.”.

(d) **CERTIFICATIONS.**—Subsection (b) of section 605 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting “detailed” before “statement” the first place it appears; and

(2) by inserting “and legal” after “factual”.

(e) **QUANTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.**—Section 607 of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§607. Quantification requirements

“In complying with sections 603 and 604, an agency shall provide—

“(1) a quantifiable or numerical description of the effects of the proposed or final rule and alternatives to the proposed or final rule; or

“(2) a more general descriptive statement and a detailed statement explaining why quantification is not practicable or reliable.”.

SEC. 305. REPEAL OF WAIVER AND DELAY AUTHORITY; ADDITIONAL POWERS OF THE CHIEF COUNSEL FOR ADVOCACY.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 608 is amended to read as follows:

“§608. Additional powers of Chief Counsel for Advocacy

“(a)(1) Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration shall, after opportunity for notice and comment under section 553, issue rules governing agency compliance with this chapter. The Chief Counsel may modify or amend such rules after notice and comment under section 553. This chapter (other than this subsection) shall not apply with respect to the issuance, modification, and amendment of rules under this paragraph.

“(2) An agency shall not issue rules which supplement the rules issued under subsection (a) unless such agency has first consulted with the Chief Counsel for Advocacy to ensure that such supplemental rules comply with this chapter and the rules issued under paragraph (1).

“(b) Notwithstanding any other law, the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration may intervene in any agency adjudication (unless such agency is authorized to impose a fine or penalty under such adjudication), and may inform the agency of the impact that any decision on the record may have on small entities. The Chief Counsel shall not initiate an appeal with respect to any adjudication in which the Chief Counsel intervenes under this subsection.

“(c) The Chief Counsel for Advocacy may file comments in response to any agency notice requesting comment, regardless of whether the agency is required to file a general notice of proposed rulemaking under section 553.”.

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—

(1) Section 611(a)(1) of such title is amended by striking “608(b).”.

(2) Section 611(a)(2) of such title is amended by striking “608(b).”.

(3) Section 611(a)(3) of such title is amended—

(A) by striking subparagraph (B); and

(B) by striking “(3)(A) A small entity” and inserting the following:

“(3) A small entity”.

SEC. 306. PROCEDURES FOR GATHERING COMMENTS.

Section 609 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (b) and all that follows through the end of the section and inserting the following:

“(b)(1) Prior to publication of any proposed rule described in subsection (e), an agency making such rule shall notify the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration and provide the Chief Counsel with—

“(A) all materials prepared or utilized by the agency in making the proposed rule, including the draft of the proposed rule; and

“(B) information on the potential adverse and beneficial economic impacts of the proposed rule on small entities and the type of small entities that might be affected.

“(2) An agency shall not be required under paragraph (1) to provide the exact language of any draft if the rule—

“(A) relates to the internal revenue laws of the United States; or

“(B) is proposed by an independent regulatory agency (as defined in section 3502(5) of title 44).

“(c) Not later than 15 days after the receipt of such materials and information under subsection (b), the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration shall—

“(1) identify small entities or representatives of small entities or a combination of both for the purpose of obtaining advice, input, and recommendations from those persons about the potential economic impacts of the proposed rule and the compliance of the agency with section 603; and

“(2) convene a review panel consisting of an employee from the Office of Advocacy of the

Small Business Administration, an employee from the agency making the rule, and in the case of an agency other than an independent regulatory agency (as defined in section 3502(5) of title 44), an employee from the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of the Office of Management and Budget to review the materials and information provided to the Chief Counsel under subsection (b).

“(d)(1) Not later than 60 days after the review panel described in subsection (c)(2) is convened, the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration shall, after consultation with the members of such panel, submit a report to the agency and, in the case of an agency other than an independent regulatory agency (as defined in section 3502(5) of title 44), the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of the Office of Management and Budget.

“(2) Such report shall include an assessment of the economic impact of the proposed rule on small entities, including an assessment of the proposed rule’s impact on the cost that small entities pay for energy, an assessment of the proposed rule’s impact on start-up costs for small entities, and a discussion of any alternatives that will minimize adverse significant economic impacts or maximize beneficial significant economic impacts on small entities.

“(3) Such report shall become part of the rule-making record. In the publication of the proposed rule, the agency shall explain what actions, if any, the agency took in response to such report.

“(e) A proposed rule is described by this subsection if the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of the Office of Management and Budget, the head of the agency (or the delegatee of the head of the agency), or an independent regulatory agency determines that the proposed rule is likely to result in—

“(1) an annual effect on the economy of \$100,000,000 or more;

“(2) a major increase in costs or prices for consumers, individual industries, Federal, State, or local governments, tribal organizations, or geographic regions;

“(3) significant adverse effects on competition, employment, investment, productivity, innovation, or on the ability of United States-based enterprises to compete with foreign-based enterprises in domestic and export markets; or

“(4) a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

“(f) Upon application by the agency, the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration may waive the requirements of subsections (b) through (e) if the Chief Counsel determines that compliance with the requirements of such subsections are impracticable, unnecessary, or contrary to the public interest.

“(g) A small entity or a representative of a small entity may submit a request that the agency provide a copy of the report prepared under subsection (d) and all materials and information provided to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration under subsection (b). The agency receiving such request shall provide the report, materials and information to the requesting small entity or representative of a small entity not later than 10 business days after receiving such request, except that the agency shall not disclose any information that is prohibited from disclosure to the public pursuant to section 552(b) of this title.”.

SEC. 307. PERIODIC REVIEW OF RULES.

Section 610 of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§610. Periodic review of rules

“(a) Not later than 180 days after the enactment of this section, each agency shall publish in the Federal Register and place on its website a plan for the periodic review of rules issued by

the agency which the head of the agency determines have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities. Such determination shall be made without regard to whether the agency performed an analysis under section 604. The purpose of the review shall be to determine whether such rules should be continued without change, or should be amended or rescinded, consistent with the stated objectives of applicable statutes, to minimize any adverse significant economic impacts or maximize any beneficial significant economic impacts on a substantial number of small entities. Such plan may be amended by the agency at any time by publishing the revision in the Federal Register and subsequently placing the amended plan on the agency's website.

"(b) The plan shall provide for the review of all such agency rules existing on the date of the enactment of this section within 10 years of the date of publication of the plan in the Federal Register and for review of rules adopted after the date of enactment of this section within 10 years after the publication of the final rule in the Federal Register. If the head of the agency determines that completion of the review of existing rules is not feasible by the established date, the head of the agency shall so certify in a statement published in the Federal Register and may extend the review for not longer than 2 years after publication of notice of extension in the Federal Register. Such certification and notice shall be sent to the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration and the Congress.

"(c) The plan shall include a section that details how an agency will conduct outreach to and meaningfully include small businesses (including small business concerns owned and controlled by women, small business concerns owned and controlled by veterans, and small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (as such terms are defined in the Small Business Act)) for the purposes of carrying out this section. The agency shall include in this section a plan for how the agency will contact small businesses and gather their input on existing agency rules.

"(d) Each agency shall annually submit a report regarding the results of its review pursuant to such plan to the Congress, the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration, and, in the case of agencies other than independent regulatory agencies (as defined in section 3502(5) of title 44) to the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of the Office of Management and Budget. Such report shall include the identification of any rule with respect to which the head of the agency made a determination described in paragraph (5) or (6) of subsection (e) and a detailed explanation of the reasons for such determination.

"(e) In reviewing a rule pursuant to subsections (a) through (d), the agency shall amend or rescind the rule to minimize any adverse significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities or disproportionate economic impact on a specific class of small entities, or maximize any beneficial significant economic impact of the rule on a substantial number of small entities to the greatest extent possible, consistent with the stated objectives of applicable statutes. In amending or rescinding the rule, the agency shall consider the following factors:

"(1) The continued need for the rule.

"(2) The nature of complaints received by the agency from small entities concerning the rule.

"(3) Comments by the Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman and the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration.

"(4) The complexity of the rule.

"(5) The extent to which the rule overlaps, duplicates, or conflicts with other Federal rules and, unless the head of the agency determines it to be infeasible, State, territorial, and local rules.

"(6) The contribution of the rule to the cumulative economic impact of all Federal rules on the class of small entities affected by the rule, unless the head of the agency determines that such calculations cannot be made and reports that determination in the annual report required under subsection (d).

"(7) The length of time since the rule has been evaluated or the degree to which technology, economic conditions, or other factors have changed in the area affected by the rule.

"(f) The agency shall publish in the Federal Register and on its website a list of rules to be reviewed pursuant to such plan. The agency shall include in the publication a solicitation of public comments on any further inclusions or exclusions of rules from the list, and shall respond to such comments. Such publication shall include a brief description of the rule, the reason why the agency determined that it has a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities (without regard to whether it had prepared a final regulatory flexibility analysis for the rule), and request comments from the public, the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration, and the Regulatory Enforcement Ombudsman concerning the enforcement of the rule."

SEC. 308. JUDICIAL REVIEW OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ACT AVAILABLE AFTER PUBLICATION OF THE FINAL RULE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (1) of section 611(a) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by striking "final agency action" and inserting "such rule".

(b) JURISDICTION.—Paragraph (2) of such section is amended by inserting "(or which would have such jurisdiction if publication of the final rule constituted final agency action)" after "provision of law."

(c) TIME FOR BRINGING ACTION.—Paragraph (3) of such section is amended—

(1) by striking "final agency action" and inserting "publication of the final rule"; and

(2) by inserting ", in the case of a rule for which the date of final agency action is the same date as the publication of the final rule," after "except that".

(d) INTERVENTION BY CHIEF COUNSEL FOR ADVOCACY.—Subsection (b) of section 612 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting before the first period "or agency compliance with section 601, 603, 604, 605(b), 609, or 610".

SEC. 309. JURISDICTION OF COURT OF APPEALS OVER RULES IMPLEMENTING THE REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2342 of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (6), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in paragraph (7), by striking the period at the end and inserting "; and"; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (7) the following new paragraph:

"(8) all final rules under section 608(a) of title 5."

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Paragraph (3) of section 2341 of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (D), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting "; and"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(F) the Office of Advocacy of the Small Business Administration, when the final rule is under section 608(a) of title 5."

(c) AUTHORIZATION TO INTERVENE AND COMMENT ON AGENCY COMPLIANCE WITH ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE.—Subsection (b) of section 612 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting "chapter 5, and chapter 7," after "this chapter,".

SEC. 310. ESTABLISHMENT AND APPROVAL OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN SIZE STANDARDS BY CHIEF COUNSEL FOR ADVOCACY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (A) of section 3(a)(2) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(a)(2)(A)) is amended to read as follows:

"(A) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the criteria specified in paragraph (1)—

"(i) the Administrator may specify detailed definitions or standards by which a business concern may be determined to be a small business concern for purposes of this Act or the Small Business Investment Act of 1958; and

"(ii) the Chief Counsel for Advocacy may specify such definitions or standards for purposes of any other Act."

(b) APPROVAL BY CHIEF COUNSEL.—Clause (iii) of section 3(a)(2)(C) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(a)(2)(C)(iii)) is amended to read as follows:

"(iii) except in the case of a size standard prescribed by the Administrator, is approved by the Chief Counsel for Advocacy."

(c) INDUSTRY VARIATION.—Paragraph (3) of section 3(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(a)(3)) is amended—

(1) by inserting "or Chief Counsel for Advocacy, as appropriate" before "shall ensure"; and

(2) by inserting "or Chief Counsel for Advocacy" before the period at the end.

(d) JUDICIAL REVIEW OF SIZE STANDARDS APPROVED BY CHIEF COUNSEL.—Section 3(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(9) JUDICIAL REVIEW OF STANDARDS APPROVED BY CHIEF COUNSEL.—In the case of an action for judicial review of a rule which includes a definition or standard approved by the Chief Counsel for Advocacy under this subsection, the party seeking such review shall be entitled to join the Chief Counsel as a party in such action."

SEC. 311. CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 601 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting a period; and

(B) by striking "(1) the term" and inserting the following:

"(1) AGENCY.—The term";

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting a period; and

(B) by striking "(3) the term" and inserting the following:

"(3) SMALL BUSINESS.—The term";

(3) in paragraph (5)—

(A) by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting a period; and

(B) by striking "(5) the term" and inserting the following:

"(5) SMALL GOVERNMENTAL JURISDICTION.—The term"; and

(4) in paragraph (6)—

(A) by striking "; and" and inserting a period; and

(B) by striking "(6) the term" and inserting the following:

"(6) SMALL ENTITY.—The term".

(b) INCORPORATIONS BY REFERENCE AND CERTIFICATIONS.—The heading of section 605 of title 5, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§605. Incorporations by reference and certifications”.

(c) **TABLE OF SECTIONS.**—The table of sections for chapter 6 of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking the item relating to section 605 and inserting the following new item:

“605. Incorporations by reference and certifications.”;

(2) by striking the item relating to section 607 and inserting the following new item:

“607. Quantification requirements.”;

and

(3) by striking the item relating to section 608 and inserting the following:

“608. Additional powers of Chief Counsel for Advocacy.”.

(d) **OTHER CLERICAL ADENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 6.**—Chapter 6 of title 5, United States Code, is amended as follows:

(1) In section 603, by striking subsection (d).

(2) In section 604(a) by striking the second paragraph (6).

SEC. 312. AGENCY PREPARATION OF GUIDES.

Section 212(a)(5) the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (5 U.S.C. 601 note) is amended to read as follows:

“(5) **AGENCY PREPARATION OF GUIDES.**—The agency shall, in its sole discretion, taking into account the subject matter of the rule and the language of relevant statutes, ensure that the guide is written using sufficiently plain language likely to be understood by affected small entities. Agencies may prepare separate guides covering groups or classes of similarly affected small entities and may cooperate with associations of small entities to distribute such guides. In developing guides, agencies shall solicit input from affected small entities or associations of affected small entities. An agency may prepare guides and apply this section with respect to a rule or a group of related rules.”.

SEC. 313. COMPTROLLER GENERAL REPORT.

Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this title, the Comptroller General of the United States shall complete and publish a study that examines whether the Chief Counsel for Advocacy of the Small Business Administration has the capacity and resources to carry out the duties of the Chief Counsel under this title and the amendments made by this title.

TITLE IV—SUNSHINE FOR REGULATORY DECREES AND SETTLEMENTS ACT

SEC. 401. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Sunshine for Regulatory Decrees and Settlements Act of 2014”.

SEC. 402. DEFINITIONS.

In this title—

(1) the terms “agency” and “agency action” have the meanings given those terms under section 551 of title 5, United States Code;

(2) the term “covered civil action” means a civil action—

(A) seeking to compel agency action;

(B) alleging that the agency is unlawfully withholding or unreasonably delaying an agency action relating to a regulatory action that would affect the rights of—

(i) private persons other than the person bringing the action; or

(ii) a State, local, or tribal government; and

(C) brought under—

(i) chapter 7 of title 5, United States Code; or

(ii) any other statute authorizing such an action;

(3) the term “covered consent decree” means—

(A) a consent decree entered into in a covered action; and

(B) any other consent decree that requires agency action relating to a regulatory action that affects the rights of—

(i) private persons other than the person bringing the action; or

(ii) a State, local, or tribal government;

(4) the term “covered consent decree or settlement agreement” means a covered consent decree and a covered settlement agreement; and

(5) the term “covered settlement agreement” means—

(A) a settlement agreement entered into in a covered civil action; and

(B) any other settlement agreement that requires agency action relating to a regulatory action that affects the rights of—

(i) private persons other than the person bringing the action; or

(ii) a State, local, or tribal government.

SEC. 403. CONSENT DECREE AND SETTLEMENT REFORM.

(a) **PLEADINGS AND PRELIMINARY MATTERS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In any covered civil action, the agency against which the covered civil action is brought shall publish the notice of intent to sue and the complaint in a readily accessible manner, including by making the notice of intent to sue and the complaint available online not later than 15 days after receiving service of the notice of intent to sue or complaint, respectively.

(2) **ENTRY OF A COVERED CONSENT DECREE OR SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT.**—A party may not make a motion for entry of a covered consent decree or to dismiss a civil action pursuant to a covered settlement agreement until after the end of proceedings in accordance with paragraph (1) and subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (2) of subsection (d) or subsection (d)(3)(A), whichever is later.

(b) **INTERVENTION.**—

(1) **REBUTTABLE PRESUMPTION.**—In considering a motion to intervene in a covered civil action or a civil action in which a covered consent decree or settlement agreement has been proposed that is filed by a person who alleges that the agency action in dispute would affect the person, the court shall presume, subject to rebuttal, that the interests of the person would not be represented adequately by the existing parties to the action.

(2) **STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS.**—In considering a motion to intervene in a covered civil action or a civil action in which a covered consent decree or settlement agreement has been proposed that is filed by a State, local, or tribal government, the court shall take due account of whether the movant—

(A) administers jointly with an agency that is a defendant in the action the statutory provisions that give rise to the regulatory action to which the action relates; or

(B) administers an authority under State, local, or tribal law that would be preempted by the regulatory action to which the action relates.

(c) **SETTLEMENT NEGOTIATIONS.**—Efforts to settle a covered civil action or otherwise reach an agreement on a covered consent decree or settlement agreement shall—

(1) be conducted pursuant to the mediation or alternative dispute resolution program of the court or by a district judge other than the presiding judge, magistrate judge, or special master, as determined appropriate by the presiding judge; and

(2) include any party that intervenes in the action.

(d) **PUBLICATION OF AND COMMENT ON COVERED CONSENT DECREES OR SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 60 days before the date on which a covered consent decree or settlement agreement is filed with a court, the agency seeking to enter the covered consent decree or settlement agreement shall publish in the Federal Register and online—

(A) the proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement; and

(B) a statement providing—

(i) the statutory basis for the covered consent decree or settlement agreement; and

(ii) a description of the terms of the covered consent decree or settlement agreement, including whether it provides for the award of attorneys’ fees or costs and, if so, the basis for including the award.

(2) **PUBLIC COMMENT.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—An agency seeking to enter a covered consent decree or settlement agreement shall accept public comment during the period described in paragraph (1) on any issue relating to the matters alleged in the complaint in the applicable civil action or addressed or affected by the proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement.

(B) **RESPONSE TO COMMENTS.**—An agency shall respond to any comment received under subparagraph (A).

(C) **SUBMISSIONS TO COURT.**—When moving that the court enter a proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement or for dismissal pursuant to a proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement, an agency shall—

(i) inform the court of the statutory basis for the proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement and its terms;

(ii) submit to the court a summary of the comments received under subparagraph (A) and the response of the agency to the comments;

(iii) submit to the court a certified index of the administrative record of the notice and comment proceeding; and

(iv) make the administrative record described in clause (iii) fully accessible to the court.

(D) **INCLUSION IN RECORD.**—The court shall include in the court record for a civil action the certified index of the administrative record submitted by an agency under subparagraph (C)(iii) and any documents listed in the index which any party or amicus curiae appearing before the court in the action submits to the court.

(3) **PUBLIC HEARINGS PERMITTED.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—After providing notice in the Federal Register and online, an agency may hold a public hearing regarding whether to enter into a proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement.

(B) **RECORD.**—If an agency holds a public hearing under subparagraph (A)—

(i) the agency shall—

(I) submit to the court a summary of the proceedings;

(II) submit to the court a certified index of the hearing record; and

(III) provide access to the hearing record to the court; and

(ii) the full hearing record shall be included in the court record.

(4) **MANDATORY DEADLINES.**—If a proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement requires an agency action by a date certain, the agency shall, when moving for entry of the covered consent decree or settlement agreement or dismissal based on the covered consent decree or settlement agreement, inform the court of—

(A) any required regulatory action the agency has not taken that the covered consent decree or settlement agreement does not address;

(B) how the covered consent decree or settlement agreement, if approved, would affect the discharge of the duties described in subparagraph (A); and

(C) why the effects of the covered consent decree or settlement agreement on the manner in which the agency discharges its duties is in the public interest.

(e) **SUBMISSION BY THE GOVERNMENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For any proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement that contains a term described in paragraph (2), the Attorney General or, if the matter is being litigated

independently by an agency, the head of the agency shall submit to the court a certification that the Attorney General or head of the agency approves the proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement. The Attorney General or head of the agency shall personally sign any certification submitted under this paragraph.

(2) **TERMS.**—A term described in this paragraph is—

(A) in the case of a covered consent decree, a term that—

(i) converts into a nondiscretionary duty a discretionary authority of an agency to propose, promulgate, revise, or amend regulations;

(ii) commits an agency to expend funds that have not been appropriated and that have not been budgeted for the regulatory action in question;

(iii) commits an agency to seek a particular appropriation or budget authorization;

(iv) divests an agency of discretion committed to the agency by statute or the Constitution of the United States, without regard to whether the discretion was granted to respond to changing circumstances, to make policy or managerial choices, or to protect the rights of third parties; or

(v) otherwise affords relief that the court could not enter under its own authority upon a final judgment in the civil action; or

(B) in the case of a covered settlement agreement, a term—

(i) that provides a remedy for a failure by the agency to comply with the terms of the covered settlement agreement other than the revival of the civil action resolved by the covered settlement agreement; and

(ii) that—

(I) interferes with the authority of an agency to revise, amend, or issue rules under the procedures set forth in chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code, or any other statute or Executive order prescribing rulemaking procedures for a rulemaking that is the subject of the covered settlement agreement;

(II) commits the agency to expend funds that have not been appropriated and that have not been budgeted for the regulatory action in question; or

(III) for such a covered settlement agreement that commits the agency to exercise in a particular way discretion which was committed to the agency by statute or the Constitution of the United States to respond to changing circumstances, to make policy or managerial choices, or to protect the rights of third parties.

(f) **REVIEW BY COURT.**—

(1) **AMICUS.**—A court considering a proposed covered consent decree or settlement agreement shall presume, subject to rebuttal, that it is proper to allow amicus participation relating to the covered consent decree or settlement agreement by any person who filed public comments or participated in a public hearing on the covered consent decree or settlement agreement under paragraph (2) or (3) of subsection (d).

(2) **REVIEW OF DEADLINES.**—

(A) **PROPOSED COVERED CONSENT DECREES.**—For a proposed covered consent decree, a court shall not approve the covered consent decree unless the proposed covered consent decree allows sufficient time and incorporates adequate procedures for the agency to comply with chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code, and other applicable statutes that govern rulemaking and, unless contrary to the public interest, the provisions of any Executive order that governs rulemaking.

(B) **PROPOSED COVERED SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS.**—For a proposed covered settlement agreement, a court shall ensure that the covered settlement agreement allows sufficient time and incorporates adequate procedures for the agency to comply with chapter 5 of title 5, United States

Code, and other applicable statutes that govern rulemaking and, unless contrary to the public interest, the provisions of any Executive order that governs rulemaking.

(g) **ANNUAL REPORTS.**—Each agency shall submit to Congress an annual report that, for the year covered by the report, includes—

(1) the number, identity, and content of covered civil actions brought against and covered consent decrees or settlement agreements entered against or into by the agency; and

(2) a description of the statutory basis for—

(A) each covered consent decree or settlement agreement entered against or into by the agency; and

(B) any award of attorneys fees or costs in a civil action resolved by a covered consent decree or settlement agreement entered against or into by the agency.

SEC. 404. MOTIONS TO MODIFY CONSENT DECREES.

If an agency moves a court to modify a covered consent decree or settlement agreement and the basis of the motion is that the terms of the covered consent decree or settlement agreement are no longer fully in the public interest due to the obligations of the agency to fulfill other duties or due to changed facts and circumstances, the court shall review the motion and the covered consent decree or settlement agreement *de novo*.

SEC. 405. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This title shall apply to—

(1) any covered civil action filed on or after the date of enactment of this title; and

(2) any covered consent decree or settlement agreement proposed to a court on or after the date of enactment of this title.

The CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in House Report 113-361. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. JOHNSON OF GEORGIA

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 113-361.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. As the designee of Mr. CARTWRIGHT, I am offering amendment No. 1.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, after line 4, the table of sections is amended to read as follows:

“Sec.

“651. Agency monthly submission to Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs.

“652. Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs Publications.

“653. Definitions.”

Page 8, strike line 21, and all that follows after page 9, line 15.

Page 9, line 16, strike “654” and insert “653”.

Page 11, strike lines 3 through 7.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 487, the gentleman from Georgia

(Mr. JOHNSON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, this amendment simply strikes the moratorium provisions in title I of the bill. Madam Chair, a regulatory moratorium makes absolutely no sense. Cass Sunstein, the former head of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, has observed:

A moratorium would not be a scalpel or a machete; it would be more like a nuclear bomb, in the sense that it would prevent regulations that cost very little and have very significant economic and public health benefits.

□ 1800

This is yet another iteration of an attempt by the majority to obstruct at all costs and stop all regulations. In the last Congress, we considered H.R. 4078, which would have imposed a moratorium for “any quarter” where the Bureau of Labor Statistics average of monthly unemployment rates is equal to or less than 6 percent. Although the Republican-controlled House passed the bill, it of course died in the Senate.

A moratorium threatens key health and safety regulations. During the 104th Congress, the House passed the Regulatory Transition Act of 1995, a bill that imposed a regulatory moratorium pending the institution of a risk analysis and assessment regime. The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Democrats, in their dissent to the reported bill, observed that the legislation was “ill-conceived” and that it had “unknown consequences.” In particular, they noted:

The bill ignores the interests of the average American. There is no effort in this bill to sort out the good from the bad. It is a one-size-fits-all solution. The bill will threaten key health and safety regulations, such as improved meat and poultry inspection procedures, while also halting regulations favored by business, such as rules at the FCC to allocate portions of the spectrum for new telephone systems.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment that would strike the bill’s pernicious moratorium provision.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Ms. ROSELEHTINEN). The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chair, as Federal regulatory agencies attempt to pile more and more regulatory burdens on America’s struggling workers, families and small businesses, the least we can ask is that they be transparent about it. What could be more transparent than requiring them, the regulators, on a monthly basis, online, to update the public with real-time information about what new regulations are coming and how much they will cost?

Once they have that information, affected individuals and job creators will be able to plan and budget meaningfully for new costs they may have to absorb. If they are denied that information, they will only be blindsided. That is not fair.

Title I of the ALERRT Act makes sure this information is provided to the public. To provide a strong incentive to agencies to honor its requirements, title I prohibits new regulations from becoming effective unless agencies provide transparent information online for 6 months preceding the regulations' issuance.

The amendment seeks to eliminate that incentive. Without an incentive like that in existing law, what have we seen from the Obama administration? Repeated failures to make disclosures required by statute and executive order, including the administration's yearlong hiding of the ball on new regulations during the 2012 election cycle. I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, the majority is pursuing this legislation in complete disregard of various recent examples of regulatory failure. These include the Massey coal mine explosion in West Virginia which took the lives of 29 miners. In fact, next month will mark the 1-year anniversary of that explosion. The explosion of BP's Deepwater Horizon oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico that stemmed from lax regulation of oil drilling platforms is also a prominent example. The home foreclosure crisis, the 2008 financial crisis, and the ensuing Great Recession, all of which stemmed from the fact that regulators under the Bush administration lacked the direction, resources, and authority to confront the highly reckless behavior of the private sector, and particularly the lending and financial service industries.

It was a direct response to these regulatory failures in the financial realm that Congress passed the Dodd-Frank Act and other measures during the 111th Congress, and Republicans have tried to repeal those measures and have tried to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Of the 58 bills that were passed out of this so-called do-nothing Congress in the first year of this session, not one of them was a jobs bill; not one job created. Do we set ourselves up again for the kind of regulatory Wild Wild West that got us into trouble in the first place?

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chair, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS), the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. BACHUS. Madam Chair, let me say this: the gentleman from Georgia has talked about these regulations all being necessary, but the President

himself on the campaign trail said we need to repeal unnecessary Federal regulations. He stood right here in the House when he gave two State of the Unions and said we need to eliminate some of our Federal regulations, and he charged the Congress to do that. It has been part of his agenda. It has been part of what he has campaigned on and what he has brought to the Congress as his State of the Union message, and that is exactly what this bill does.

He said regulations aren't abstract ideas. They cost money. In certain cases, the benefit is simply not there. We are not talking about endangering public health. We are talking about regulations that endanger jobs unnecessarily.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, I think everyone can agree that the Federal agencies need the resources to be able to go back and review and rescind and repeal any unnecessary regulations, but we have been busy cutting government for the last 3 years. This legislation before us won't cut any regulations, but it certainly will keep any regulations from coming forward. I think that would accomplish the objective of the Republicans here, which is to protect Big Business.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chair, I yield myself the balance of my time, and just say that the fact of the matter is that the provision in the bill that this amendment attacks is a very straightforward provision that just provides for transparency. It doesn't stop any of the regulations the gentleman from Georgia referenced; it simply says if you do the regulations, tell us about them ahead of time so as you move toward the final implementation, the last 6 months before it goes into effect, the public gets to see it, the media gets to see it, the businesses that are impacted get to see it, the workers who may lose their jobs get to see it. That allows them to prepare for it, and it allows them to comment. It allows them to try to change the law. It is simply a fair way to enter into regulations. It is a commonsense provision that should be kept in the bill, and the amendment should be defeated.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. MURPHY OF FLORIDA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 113-361.

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

In the bill, strike title II and title IV, and redesignate provisions and conform the table of contents accordingly.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 487, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MURPHY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Madam Chair, as a former small businessman, I am acutely aware of the strain unnecessary regulations have on businesses. While I strongly support the underlying bill's goal of reducing the regulatory burden on American companies, truly smart regulatory reform would preserve government's ability to enforce clean air laws, food safety, and consumer protections. It would not pile on duplicative procedural hurdles on already inefficient agencies, gumming up government bureaucracy and obstructing agencies' most basic functions.

Too often, the debate up here is about more regulations versus fewer regulations, but we should be focused on smarter regulations.

We should all be able to agree that government has a role to play in clean water for Americans, an issue the people in the Treasure Coast are all too familiar with.

We should all be able to agree that when a consumer walks through the door of a bank looking for a mortgage, that government has a role to play in protecting that consumer, but these regulations should help the public without unnecessarily hindering business, our Nation's economic engine. We must both protect Americans and enable commerce. The business community is not against all regulation, they are against excessively burdensome regulation.

In my district, business owners believe that protecting the environment and clean water standards is not antigrowth. In fact, it is pro-jobs.

When I recently toured the family-run Armellini trucking company in my district, the Armellinis were not against truck safety standards. They do the right thing by their workers, and they abide by safe driving rules. They want regulations to ensure that others do the same. What they are against are new truck safety standards that hinder growth without actually making trucking any safer.

Smarter regulations should protect good businesses from bad actors.

I will give another example. Denny Hudson runs Seacoast Bank, a small community bank in Stuart, Florida. Like many small financial institutions, Seacoast weathered the financial crisis because they were not involved in risky financial behavior. They expected mortgages to be repaid on time, and they wanted the small businesses they supported to succeed.

After the financial crisis of 2008 nearly took down the global economy, most people agreed that government regulators needed to better protect our financial system, but if new regulations keep community banks like Seacoast from getting creditworthy young families into their first home, or providing capital to new small businesses, that is a problem.

My amendment is simple. While recognizing the goal of the underlying legislation to improve the regulatory process, my amendment maintains the government's responsibility to protect the environment, consumer health, and workplace safety. I propose removing costly hurdles that would make government less efficient, while protecting the right of the American people to hold their government accountable when it fails to protect their health, safety, and civil rights.

My colleagues across the aisle frequently complain about too much bureaucracy. We should not compound the problem by creating duplicative government processes. Let's examine the effectiveness of regulations already in place.

Senator KING introduced a bipartisan bill that would do exactly that. It would establish a process to identify and either strike or improve outdated and obsolete regulations. We should be doing the same thing in this body. At a time when we should be doing more with less, can we really afford to increase spending with more government bureaucracy?

I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense amendment to improve the underlying bill, save the partisan fight over controversial sections for another day, streamline the regulatory process, and save 70 million taxpayer dollars. I thank my colleagues.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. America's small businesses, workers, and families are being crushed by an annual regulatory burden that in 2012 amounted to \$15,000 per household. That is an expense bigger than any family expense except for housing, and the number of new costly regulations just keeps growing and growing.

□ 1815

In response, titles II and IV of the bill, which this amendment seeks to strike, those two titles write into statute best practices into rulemaking that help to lower costs, avoid unnecessary regulation, and keep pro-regulatory special interests from abusing the courts to force new costly regulations upon the public.

They do all of this without denying the ability of agencies to issue new reg-

ulations that are sensible to fulfill statutory mandates.

Why is this so important that the bill do that? Because although these are best practices, they are too often honored in the breach or not at all because they are not yet written into statute.

The amendment substantially guts the bill; denies important protections to American workers, families, and job creators; and unjustifiably prolongs the time during which regulatory agencies can operate without adequate checks and balances.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MURPHY).

The amendment was rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. ROTHFUS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 113-361.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Madam Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 12, after line 19, insert the following (and redesignate accordingly):

“(17) ‘negative-impact on jobs and wages rule’ means any rule that the agency that made the rule or the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs determines is likely to—

“(A) in one or more sectors of the economy that has a 6-digit code under the North American Industry Classification System, reduce employment not related to new regulatory compliance by 1 percent or more annually during the 1-year, 5-year, or 10-year period after implementation;

“(B) in one or more sectors of the economy that has a 6-digit code under the North American Industry Classification System, reduce average weekly wages for employment not related to new regulatory compliance by 1 percent or more annually during the 1-year, 5-year, or 10-year period after implementation;

“(C) in any industry area (as such term is defined in the Current Population Survey conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics) in which the most recent annual unemployment rate for the industry area is greater than 5 percent, as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the Current Population Survey, reduce employment not related to new regulatory compliance during the first year after implementation; or

“(D) in any industry area in which the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects in the Occupational Employment Statistics program that the employment level will decrease by 1 percent or more, further reduce employment not related to new regulatory compliance during the first year after implementation.”.

Page 16, line 16, insert after “domestic jobs),” the following: “wages.”.

Page 16, line 25, insert after “HIGH-IMPACT RULES” the following: “NEGATIVE-IMPACT ON JOBS AND WAGES RULES.”.

Page 17, line 2, strike “a major rule or high-impact rule” and insert the following: “a major rule, a high-impact rule, a negative-impact on jobs and wages rule.”.

Page 29, line 13, strike “and”.

Page 29, line 14, strike “major rule or high-impact rule,” and insert the following: “major rule, high-impact rule, or negative-impact on jobs and wages rule.”.

Page 30, line 2, strike the period at the end and insert “; and”.

Page 30, after line 2, insert the following:

“(H) for any negative-impact on jobs and wages rule, a statement that the head of the agency that made the rule approved the rule knowing about the findings and determination of the agency or the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs that qualified the rule as a negative impact on jobs and wages rule.”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 487, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Madam Chairman, Americans face a regulatory burden with staggering costs to our economy and with substantial impacts on family budgets.

A recent paper by the Competitive Enterprise Institute estimates that the cost of Federal regulations to the economy exceeds \$1.8 trillion. The American Action Forum predicts that \$143 billion in new regulations may be finalized this year.

These figures are very troubling. That is why the bill we are considering is so important. H.R. 2804 reforms the regulatory process and will help promote the economic growth we so desperately need to get our economy booming again and add jobs.

The amendment that I offer today with my friend, Mr. BARR, is simple and one that I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support.

If a regulation decreases employment or wages by 1 percent or more in an industry, it will be subject to heightened review and additional transparency requirements.

The amendment also requires agency heads to certify that they knowingly approved a rule that will result in lost jobs or reduced wages.

The principle is simple: If Federal bureaucrats are going to implement rules that take wages or jobs from Americans, they should take responsibility for their decisions.

It is important that Washington bureaucrats think through the impacts, the costs, and the burdens that red tape imposes on American families and communities. Bureaucratic elites are regulating solid, good-paying jobs right out of existence.

At a time when wages are stagnant for many American workers and when we so desperately need to grow the economy and add jobs, this is unbelievable.

On February 7, with my hardhat secured and my headlamp on, I had the privilege of traveling underground to learn more about the work and operations of the Madison mine in Nanty Glo, Pennsylvania. Miners like these

work hard every day to power our electric grid and to supply our steel mills.

But their way of life is being purposefully regulated out of existence. Dan, the mine electrician, recently asked me what is going to be done to curb the President's war on coal. He wrote: As a mine electrician in your district, my men are asking me questions like: Is this ever going to end, or are we all going to be looking for new jobs?

My friends, this problem extends well beyond the coalfields of Pennsylvania or Kentucky. Regulations cost each household almost \$14,700. That is almost 30 percent of an average Pennsylvania family's annual income.

Complying with this mountain of paperwork will also cost families and businesses almost 10.4 billion hours this year. Who thinks that this is the most productive use of their time?

Madam Chairman, the American people cannot afford more lost jobs and further reduced wages. Every lost job means one less person helping with the taxes needed to support Social Security, Medicare, and other critical programs for veterans, health care, education, and national defense.

I urge my colleagues to support the Rothfus-Barr amendment and the underlying bill.

Madam Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR), my friend.

Mr. BARR. Madam Chairman, I thank the gentleman and my friend from Pennsylvania for yielding. I appreciate the hard work that both he and his staff have put into this important amendment, which I had the pleasure to join him in introducing.

As I indicated earlier in the debate on the underlying legislation, in Kentucky, the overregulation of the Kentucky coal industry has really taken a toll. Under President Obama, Appalachian Kentucky has lost about 7,000 jobs in just 5 years, putting coal industry employment in the Commonwealth to its lowest level since records were first kept in 1927.

This amendment would strengthen the underlying regulatory reform legislation by holding accountable those agencies that go after already suffering workers like Kentucky and Pennsylvania coal miners.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chairman, I rise in opposition to the Rothfus amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chairman, this amendment would add an additional level of analysis in the regulatory process that examines whether or not regulations have a negative impact on jobs and wages.

Adding this additional requirement that is highly speculative and analytical would further slow down the rule-making process, adding more red tape.

I invite the gentleman to support my amendment, amendment No. 9, which

we will get to shortly, that would exclude from the bill any rule, consent decree, or settlement agreement that would result in net job creation or have greater benefits than costs.

I would also hope that my friends on both sides of the aisle would have a desire to improve the economy and take actions to foster job growth, instead of adding more red tape to the regulatory process.

To the extent that regulations have anything to do with jobs, H.R. 2804's proponents should overwhelmingly support my amendment No. 9, which exempts from the bill all rules that OMB determines would result in net job creation.

With respect to regulations stifling job creation, the evidence, Madam Chairman, is to the contrary. If anything, regulations can promote job growth and put Americans back to work.

For instance, the BlueGreen Alliance notes:

Studies on the direct impact of regulations on job growth have found that most regulations result in modest job growth or have no effect, and economic growth has consistently surged forward in concert with these health and safety protections. The Clean Air Act is a shining example, given that the economy has grown 204 percent and private sector job creation has expanded 86 percent since its passage in 1970.

In reference to the Clean Air Act, the Office of Management and Budget observed that 40 years of success with this measure have demonstrated that strong environmental protections and strong economic growth go hand-in-hand.

Regulations create valuable jobs and research across industries. For example, a pending regulation limiting the amount of airborne mercury will not just reduce the amount of seriously toxic pollutants, but create as many as 45,000 temporary jobs and possibly 8,000 permanent jobs, as The New York Times noted last month.

Heightened vehicle emissions standards have spurred clean vehicle research, development, and production efforts that in turn have already generated more than 150,000 jobs at 504 facilities in 43 States across the United States of America.

The majority's own witness clearly debunked the myth that regulations stymie job creation during his testimony at a Judiciary Committee hearing held in the last Congress on an antiregulatory bill.

Christopher DeMuth, with the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative think tank, stated in his prepared testimony:

The "focus on jobs . . . can lead to confusion in regulatory debates" and that the employment effects of regulation, while important, "are indeterminant."

The claim by the bill's proponents, namely, that regulatory uncertainty creates a disincentive for businesses to

add jobs, was rejected by Bruce Bartlett, a senior policy analyst in the Reagan and George H. W. Bush administrations.

He observed:

Regulatory uncertainty is a canard invented by Republicans that allows them to use current economic problems to pursue an agenda supported by the business community, year in and year out. In other words, it is a simple case of political opportunism, not a serious effort to deal with high employment.

That was Bruce Bartlett.

Leading scholars, such as Wake Forest Law Professor Sidney Shapiro has testified:

All of the available evidence contradicts the claim that regulatory uncertainty is deterring business development and investment.

Scant demand, not regulations, drives hiring choices.

In sum, there is no credible evidence that regulations depress job creation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Madam Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Madam Chairman, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the chairman.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for yielding.

I strongly support the amendment that he and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR) have offered. I urge my colleagues to support it as well, which protects America's workers.

I support the amendment.

Those who suffer the most from over-reaching regulations are workers who lose their jobs or see their wages cut on account of regulations that cost too much. Displaced workers suffer lower earnings once they find new work. That earnings gap persists over the long-term. Blue collar workers are the hardest hit.

Those who take too long to find new work are more likely to leave the labor force and retire. These workers, their families, and this country cannot afford to lose good work, good workers and good wages to needless regulatory excess. This amendment makes sure that agencies better analyze the potential impacts of new regulations on jobs and wages. And it makes sure that agencies come clean with the American people when they impose new regulations that they know will impose real adverse impacts on jobs and wages.

It will protect America's workers and families—and give voters the information they need to hold agencies and their enablers accountable when agencies recklessly destroy jobs and wages.

I urge my colleagues to support the amendment.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to pass this amendment. It is a good amendment. It will shine a light on the process of the regulatory elites here in Washington, D.C., and

the impact it is having on our jobs and on our wages.

I yield back the balance of my time. The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. ROTHFUS. Madam Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. BRADY OF TEXAS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 113-361.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 17, line 23, strike “; and” and insert the following: “;”.

Page 18, line 4, insert “and” after “rule;”;

Page 18, insert after line 4 the following: “(E) an achievable objective for the rule and metrics by which the agency will measure progress toward that objective;”.

Page 19, line 20, strike “and”.

Page 19, line 22, insert “and” after “statute;”.

Page 19, insert after line 22 the following: “(iii) an achievable objective for the rule and metrics by which the agency will measure progress toward that objective;”.

Page 29, line 13, strike “and”.

Page 29, insert after line 13 the following: “(G) the agency’s reasoned final determination that the rule meets the objectives that the agency identified in subsection (d)(1)(E)(iii) or that other objectives are more appropriate in light of the full administrative record and the rule meets those objectives;”.

“(H) the agency’s reasoned final determination that it did not deviate from the metrics the agency included in subsection (d)(1)(E)(iii) or that other metrics are more appropriate in light of the full administrative record and the agency did not deviate from those metrics; and”.

Page 29, line 14, strike “(G)(i) for any major rule” and insert the following: “(I)(i) for any major rule”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 487, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Chairman, we are going through a very disappointing economic recovery. Millions of people can’t find full-time work; millions more have given up looking for work; and our local businesses are just drowning in red tape.

They often ask: Doesn’t anyone in Washington consider the impact on our local businesses and the economy from all this new red tape before they put it in place? Well, sadly not often enough.

In 2012, the Federal Government imposed 3,708 new Federal rules. Guess how many of them had a cost benefit analysis? Simply ask the question: How does this affect the economy? The answer is 14—14 out of more than 3,000.

I applaud Chairman GOODLATTE’s commitment to reforming the way this government conducts red tape. I have an amendment that complements his efforts, one drawn from my own Sound Regulation Act, which I think is helpful as we move this reform through.

The point here is this: When a Federal agency sets out to adopt new rules and red tape, the agency has a responsibility to state clearly the achievable objective of those rules or regulations. After all, our citizens have the right to know what their Federal Government intends to accomplish with this red tape.

□ 1830

The agency also has the responsibility to tell the American people up front what metrics it is going to use to measure the progress toward that objective. No more manipulative statistics. No more fuzzy math. When the agency publishes the final rule, it has the responsibility to certify to the American people that the rule actually meets the objective the agency originally identified. It is just common sense.

My amendment says to regulators: Tell us your objective. Tell us how you are going to meet it and measure it. Then tell us you actually did what you promised.

It is common sense, and it may just help put this painful recovery behind us.

Madam Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the chairman of the committee.

Mr. GOODLATTE. I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding, and I strongly support his amendment.

Madam Chairman, one of the simplest, most effective, and most commonsense measures we can take to make sure agencies issue smarter regulations is to require them to do just what this amendment requires: identify achievable objectives for new regulations when they propose them; identify metrics by which they will measure whether those objectives are achieved; and at the end of their rulemakings, live by their own, stated objectives and whether the metrics say the proposed regulations can achieve them.

That is plain, simple, commonsense decisionmaking that American families and businesses live by every day. It is high time that Federal agencies be required to live by these standards, too.

I urge my colleagues to support the gentleman from Texas’ amendment.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, this amendment reminds me of how things used to be when I was a young parent and I had my children at home. When it came time for my favorite TV program, I would tell them to go upstairs and clean up their room again.

They would say, Daddy, we already cleaned up the room, and I would say, Go clean it up again.

Then when they would scamper upstairs, I would put the TV on and watch my program in peace. So it gave them some busy work.

That is pretty much what this amendment does. It creates an additional requirement in the rulemaking process for an agency to articulate achievable objectives and metrics indicating progress toward those objectives.

This amendment piles on the bill’s numerous mandatory new rulemaking requirements, and it implies that agencies issue rules that lack an achievable objective, notwithstanding the fact that regulations already go through an extensive public notice and comment period as well as being subjected to judicial review.

The bill would impose unneeded and costly analytical and procedural requirements on agencies that would prevent them from performing their statutory responsibilities. It would also create needless regulatory and legal uncertainty, increase costs for businesses and State, local, and tribal governments, and it would impede commonsense protections for the American public.

That is why, Madam Chair, there are more than 150 consumer groups, environmental organizations, labor unions, and other entities that are strenuously opposed to this bill. These organizations include the AFL-CIO, the Alliance for Justice, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the American Lung Association, the Consumer Federation of America, the Consumers Union, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the UAW, the League of Conservation Voters, the National Women’s Law Center, the National Resources Defense Council, People For the American Way, Public Citizen, the Sierra Club, the Service Employees International Union, the Union of Concerned Scientists, and the United Steelworkers, just to name a few.

Likewise, the administration has issued a strongly worded veto threat against this bill. It warns that the bill would impose unneeded and costly analytical and procedural requirements on agencies that would prevent them from performing their statutory duties.

For those reasons, I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Chair, very briefly, my friend from Georgia is a good man. I am surprised there aren't regulations about when you can send your kids up to clean their rooms again.

Look, this is just saying to Washington: tell us what your goal is—how you are going to measure it and if you achieve it—before you put this red tape on our local businesses. It is common sense and, frankly, long overdue. I urge strong support for this amendment.

Madam Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. RIGELL

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in House Report 113-361.

Mr. RIGELL. Madam Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 53, line 24, strike “and”.

Page 54, line 3, after “entities” the following: “; and”.

Page 54, line 3, insert before the first period the following:

“(8) describing any impairment of the ability of small entities to have access to credit”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 487, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. RIGELL) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. RIGELL. I would like to thank my fellow Virginian, Chairman GOODLATTE, for his leadership on the underlying bill. I also want to thank Mr. GRAVES, the chairman of the House Committee on Small Business, for working with me and my staff on advancing my amendment.

Madam Chairman, I think my amendment is noteworthy first for its brevity, as it is only 14 words long in total, yet it packs a powerful and much-needed punch because it addresses a central issue to job creation, which is a shared value and a shared objective in this House: increasing access to credit and, in some cases, not prohibiting access to credit.

This is not a theoretical issue for me. I have been a businessman for 30 years and an entrepreneur for about 23 years, and I know the great joy of looking into an applicant and fellow American's eyes and saying these incredible words: “You're hired.” Those are life-changing words.

One of the reasons that I could say those words to those who applied at

our company was that a local lender, a small local bank, was able to lend me the money I needed to start my business and to grow my business. Yet those very same small lenders—those small banks in Virginia's Second Congressional District—are reeling. They are reeling from waves of new regulations, nearly all of which are overly burdensome and so many of which are not needed at all. They should never have been written. The result is that some banks are hiring, but they are not hiring loan officers; they are hiring compliance officers.

From my own experience, Madam Chairman, and from my own deliberate and intentional listening to the small businesses and lenders of Virginia's Second Congressional District, I have come to a conclusion which is clear, which is irrefutable in my mind, and which is deeply troubling. That is that the actions of this body collectively and of the administration have made it more difficult—not easier but more difficult—for small businesses to get the credit they need to grow their businesses and to hire more people.

This cannot be reconciled with the words that President Obama shared in this very Chamber in his State of the Union speech in 2012. It was a statement that should have been the basis for common ground. He noted correctly that most new jobs and businesses, like my own, were created in startups and small businesses.

He said this:

Let's pass an agenda that helps small businesses succeed. Tear down regulations that prevent aspiring entrepreneurs from getting the financing to grow.

H.R. 2804 does just that. It is a significant and meaningful step forward in that area.

That is why I have come to the House floor this evening. What a privilege it is to be here, to be a strong voice for the hardworking men and women across this country who are laboring under an increasing level of burden from the Federal Government—one that should get out of the way, yet it continues to put roadblock after roadblock in the way of hardworking Americans who are trying to create jobs. They have mortgages on their homes. They have signed these loans personally. I understand the burden and the challenges that are faced by small business owners. One reason I sought this office was to be as strong a voice as I could be for those who, if you unleash them, are the most powerful job-creating engine the world has ever known—small business owners in America.

That is what H.R. 2804 does, and I think my amendment strengthens that. I appreciate the opportunity to speak in favor of this, and I ask my colleagues for their careful consideration of my amendment because I think, in doing so, they will vote in the

affirmative. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 2804 and for my amendment.

Madam Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chair, this amendment harkens me back to the time when my kids were young and when I was trying to make sure that they would not jump into something where one of their schoolmates might be being bullied, and then they would jump in on the part of the bully or would just participate in the antagonism against the victim, and I told them not to pile on.

This amendment is a classic case of piling on. It would add an eighth requirement for the initial regulatory flexibility analysis specified by the bill. The agency would have to provide a detailed statement describing any impairment of the ability of small entities to have access to credit. The bill already requires agencies to consider all indirect costs, which would include this issue. This amendment would allow yet another ground for a regulated entity to challenge a rulemaking.

Title III does nothing to help small businesses and other small entities reduce compliance costs or to ensure agency compliance with the RFA. Instead, this amendment would impose another unnecessary burden on agencies. This is just another piling on of the already burdensome new rulemaking requirements.

This amendment as well as the bill ignore the fact that the small businesses, like their larger counterparts, can substantially impact the health and safety of their workers as well as that of the general public. Small businesses, like all businesses, provide services and goods that affect our lives and carry the same risks of harm as the services and goods that large businesses provide. It makes no difference to someone who is breathing dirty air or drinking poisoned water whether the hazards come from a small or a large business.

Speaking of business, the American Sustainable Business Council is a growing national coalition of businesses and business organizations committed to advancing policies that support a vibrant and sustainable economy. The American Sustainable Business Council, through its partner organizations, represents over 200,000 businesses and more than 325,000 business professionals, including industry associations, local and State Chambers of Commerce, micro enterprises, social enterprises, green and sustainable businesses, local livable economy groups, women and minority business leaders, and investors and investor networks.

While some inside the beltway claim that regulations are holding back our economic recovery, the American Sustainable Business Council has a different view. It, along with other small business organizations, released a February 2012 poll of small business owners which found that small businesses don't see regulations as a major concern. Its polling confirmed that small business owners value regulations if they are well-constructed and fairly enforced.

□ 1845

They found that small business owners believe certain governmental regulations play an important role: 86 percent of them believe some regulation is necessary for a modern economy; 93 percent of respondents believe their business can live with some regulation if it is fair and manageable; 78 percent of small employers agree regulations are important in protecting small businesses from unfair competition and to help level the playing field with big businesses; 79 percent of small business owners support having clean air and water in the community in order to keep their family, employees, and customers healthy.

Madam Chair, I include the letter from the American Sustainable Business Council in the RECORD, and I yield back the balance of my time.

AMERICAN SUSTAINABLE
BUSINESS COUNCIL,

Washington, DC, February 25, 2014.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: I write you today to urge you to oppose the mini-omnibus bill of four flawed regulatory proposals (packaged into H.R. 2804) and H.R. 899, the Unfunded Mandates Transparency and Information Act. Votes on these bills are expected this week. These bills hurt small and medium sized businesses by halting the regulatory process that levels the playing group for these businesses to compete, creates incentives for innovation and protects our customers and employees.

The package of Anti-Regulatory policies these bills represent constitutes a shift away from forty years of regulatory precedent that protects the public against a range of market imperfections. These policies will also lead to a more chaotic and less competitive market. And finally, the bills will have the unintended consequence of shifting the burden of proof for environmental, health and safety issues back to taxpayers and away from powerful corporate interests. Eroding the operational capacity of regulatory agencies to do their job, as these bills appear designed to do, will not foster productive growth among small and mid-sized firms. Instead these actions will allow the largest firms to further dominate the marketplace.

Also if enacted, this package of bills would open the door for more problems like the financial and mortgage crisis of 2008. This would, in our view, would further damage our economy, stifle consumer demand and put small companies out of business.

The American Sustainable Business Council (ASBC) is a growing national coalition of businesses and business organizations committed to advancing policies that support a vibrant and sustainable economy. ASBC,

through its partner organizations, represents over 200,000 businesses and more than 325,000 business professionals, including industry associations, local and state chambers of commerce, micro-enterprise, social enterprise, green and sustainable business, local living economy groups, woman and minority business leaders, and investor networks.

While some inside the Beltway claim that regulations are holding back our economic recovery, ASBC has a different view. ASBC, along with other small business organizations, released in February 2012 a poll of small business owners which found that small businesses don't see regulations as a major concern.

Our polling confirmed that small business owners value regulations if they are well-constructed and fairly enforced:

Small business owners believe certain government regulations play an important role 86% believe some regulation is necessary for a modern economy and 93% of respondents believe their business can live with some regulation if it is fair and manageable.

78% of small employers agree regulations are important in protecting small businesses from unfair competition and to level the playing field with big business.

79% of small business owners support having clean air and water in their community in order to keep their family, employees and customers healthy.

61% support standards that move the country towards energy efficiency and clean energy.

Supporting the ASBC 2012 poll is a Wells Fargo/Gallup poll of small businesses conducted this past October, which found that only seven percent mentioned regulations as being an important challenge.

Given the important role regulations play yet there still may be a small percentage of businesses having difficulty with them, the answer is not H.R. 2804 and H.R. 899. Instead we believe the solution lies in expanding the capacity of the regulatory agencies to provide assistance to small businesses in compliance. Increasing the number of agency ombudsmen and/or ombudsmen within the SBA and giving them the resources to be more proactive as well as responsive will target federal dollars to specific areas of concern. Our experience has been that the ombudsmen process works well.

Blocking, weakening or delaying critical standards and safeguards will not address existing needed regulations that a small number of small businesses have trouble with compliance. It will only worsen the uneven economic playing field that leaves many small and medium sized businesses at a competitive disadvantage. It also inhibits innovation in new technologies that can create good, sustainable jobs and create safer products, workplaces and communities.

We call on the House of Representatives to reject this package of anti-regulatory policies.

Sincerely

DAVID LEVINE,
CEO.

FRANK KNAPP,
Co-chair, ASBC Action
Fund & CEO, South
Carolina Small Business
Chamber of
Commerce.

Mr. RIGELL. Madam Chair, I would just state to my friend and colleague that the only piling on, as I see it, are the regulations that are continuing to burden the small business owners.

I yield the remainder of my time to the gentleman from Virginia, Chair-

man GOODLATTE, my friend and colleague.

Mr. GOODLATTE. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I strongly support his amendment.

Madam Chair, title III of the ALERRT Act makes important reforms to assure that agencies identify whether their new regulations will have significant adverse effects on small businesses. One of the most important adverse effects is to identify whether these new regulations will make it harder for small businesses to obtain credit.

Small businesses create the majority of the new jobs in our economy, yet without access to credit, how can they do that? How can they even survive? The gentleman's amendment makes sure that agencies do identify whether new regulations will make it harder for a substantial number of small businesses to obtain credit. It is a reform that is long overdue and especially important as our country struggles to achieve a real and durable job recovery.

I thank the gentleman for his amendment and urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. RIGELL. Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. RIGELL).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. TIPTON

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in House Report 113-361.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 66, line 1, strike "The agency" and insert "Each year, each agency".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 487, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chairman, I would like to thank Chairman GRAVES and Chairman GOODLATTE for all of their work.

I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Chairman, I rise today in support of my amendment to title III, the Regulatory Flexibility Improvements Act, which will ensure that a requirement under current law, the Regulatory Flexibility Act, or RFA, remains intact.

As the 1970s came to a close, Congress took note of the challenges that small businesses were facing. They were struggling to run their businesses while complying with an increasing number of complicated regulations.

This led to the passage of the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, which was designed to improve agency rule-making. Under statute, the Federal Government agencies looking to regulate the private sector must evaluate the costs of doing so on small businesses, and where the costs are found to be significant, seek less burdensome alternatives to their proposed actions.

A key piece of the RFA is section 610, the "look-back" provision, which requires agencies to periodically evaluate the necessity of every existing regulation that has "significant" economic impact on a substantial number of small businesses and determine whether those regulations should be amended or rescinded to minimize burdens on small businesses. As a part of the section 610 review process, agencies must annually publish the list of regulations they plan to review in the Federal Register. This amendment makes a technical correction to the text of title III to ensure this current annual publication requirement remains in place. It is an entirely appropriate exercise for the agencies to review old regulations and weed out ones that are outdated, ineffective, or overly burdensome.

Ten years is a lifetime in terms of our private sector's ability to radically transform marketplaces. Reviewing the actual impacts of existing regulations every 10 years just makes sense. Understanding real-world consequences of a regulation on small businesses and taking into account changes in other areas of Federal, State, or local law that may affect the necessity of the regulations are just a few of the reasons that make these reviews absolutely essential.

The regulatory burden for small businesses has not lightened since the passage of RFA. In fact, agencies have been so busy issuing new regulations that they have sometimes failed to comply with already existing requirements to annually publish their list of regulations to be reviewed and then to review them. This simply isn't acceptable.

This amendment will relieve Federal agencies of any ambiguity as to whether or not this annual publication requirement still exists and ensure that small businesses can continue to make their voices heard after a regulation has become implemented.

I urge Members to vote "yes" on this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, though I am in support of this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. It is to my horror that I would agree to this

amendment, but it simply corrects a drafting error. So we do not oppose this amendment. It makes a thoroughly flawed bill slightly less thoroughly flawed.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for his support of this amendment. It speaks to a very important point. We have got to make sure that the agencies are actually doing what the law is requiring. This clarification simply achieves that.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. TIPTON. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOODLATTE. I support his commonsense amendment and urge my colleagues to join in making it unanimous.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. TIPTON) having assumed the chair, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2804) to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE ROSA L. DELAURO, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable ROSA L. DELAURO, Member of Congress:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
February 25, 2014

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have received a subpoena, issued by the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey, purporting to require that I produce certain documents, at least some of which relate to official functions, and appear to testify at a deposition on similar matters in a particular civil case.

After consulting with the Office of General Counsel, I will make the determinations required by Rule VIII.

Sincerely,

ROSA L. DELAURO,
Member of Congress.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 4303, and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, of the following Members on the part of the House to the Board of Trustees of Gallaudet University:

Mr. YODER, Kansas

Mr. BUTTERFIELD, North Carolina

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO THE BRITISH-AMERICAN INTERPARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, of the following Member on the part of the House to the British-American Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. ROE, Tennessee.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WILLIAMS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all of those associated with leadership who have allowed us to have this time tonight to discuss Black History Month.

As you are aware, Black History Month has not always been a month. It started out as a week. The father of Black History Week, which evolved into Black History Month, was Mr. Carter G. Woodson. In fact, he is renowned for not only his having started this time and made it a part of the annual events that we celebrate, but he is also known for his writings.

I would like to read an excerpt from his book, "The Mis-Education of the Negro." Dr. Woodson encapsulated a significant point with this passage that I shall read.

He indicates:

When you control a man's thinking, you do not have to worry about his actions. You do not have to tell him to stand here or go yonder. He will find his proper place and he will stay in it.

You do not need to send him to the back door. He will go without being told. In fact, if there is no back door, he will cut one for his special benefit. His education makes it necessary.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson wrote this in 1933. In 1933, he was trying to call to the attention of our country the plight of the American Negro. The plight was one that involved the mentality of the American Negro. He was calling to our attention how education was appropriate for the American Negro to become the independent person that could do for himself and take care of

himself and live a life that was based upon his fulfilling his role in the American Dream. This was in 1933.

I am honored today that we have a resolution that we have filed with the House, H. Res. 481. This resolution recognizes the significance of Black History Month.

□ 1900

This resolution has been signed onto by all of the members of the Congressional Black Caucus, as well as other Members of Congress. This resolution extols the virtues of Africans who were brought to the Americas, a people who, under harsh circumstances, were able to not only survive, but also thrive.

It really goes into much of what we call the greatest story that has yet to be told, a story of people who came to the Americas involuntarily, and who have done exceedingly well in this country. We still have a long way to go, but, thank God, we have come as far as we have.

This year, we are celebrating the civil rights in America as a theme for Black History Month, civil rights in America, and we would like to start by talking about the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

However, before you can really understand completely the Civil Rights Act of 1964, it is important to get some sense what the times were like in 1964, to get some understanding of what it was like to live in the United States of America in 1964.

This is not being done to shame anyone. It is not being done to cause persons to have some sort of guilty reflections. This is being done so as to help us commemorate some things and celebrate some others. It is important to understand the times that we lived in.

I lived during these times, and I would like to start with April 12, 1963, and then I would like to walk us up through some events that will bring us to the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

It was April 12, 1963, that Dr. King was arrested in Birmingham, Alabama. He was there to work with others to integrate a city that was deeply segregated. In so doing, he was informed by some members of the clergy and others that he was taking inappropriate action, he was acting too soon, that the time was not ripe for what he was doing in Birmingham, Alabama.

As a result of being there and protesting, Dr. King was arrested. He was taken to jail, stayed in jail for 9 days, and while in jail, he wrote his famous "Letter from Birmingham Jail" in response to a statement that was published by some other members of the clergy. If you have not read the "Letter from Birmingham Jail," I beg that you read it because it will help you better understand the times, and understand why Dr. King had to do what he was doing.

The "Letter from Birmingham Jail" is one of the greatest pieces of American literature that I have been exposed to, and I beg you to please take the opportunity to read it.

Let's move forward to June 11, 1963. This is when Governor George Wallace stood in the door at the University of Alabama to block the entry of Vivian Malone and James Hood. These were two students who were enrolling. In so doing, he caused the President, at that time, President Kennedy, to federalize the Alabama National Guard so that these two students could make their way into the University of Alabama.

These were the times that I lived in. These were events that occurred leading up to the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, also the Public Accommodations Act of 1964.

June 21, 1964. Three civil rights workers were in Mississippi—Schwerner, Goodman and Chaney. They lost their lives in Mississippi registering people to vote. When they died, it caused the country to grieve, understanding that three people who but only tried to register people to vote had lost their lives at the hands of the KKK.

These were the times that I lived in.

August 28, 1963. Dr. King called for a march on Washington, and that march took place. That march was one of the greatest events in the history of the civil rights movement. 200,000 to 300,000 people assembled, and this is when Dr. King gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

They also had a list of demands, a list of demands that included a number 8 on a list of 10. Number eight was a minimum wage of \$2 an hour. That minimum wage of \$2 an hour, adjusted for inflation, would be more than \$13 an hour today. The minimum wage was a part of the reason why we had the March on Washington, and I am so proud that Dr. King stood his ground, so as to help us develop that minimum wage that he wanted to have as a living wage.

There is before the House now H.R. 1010, a bill that would produce a living wage because it indexes the minimum wage to the Consumer Price Index. It would move the minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$10.10 an hour increments, not all at once.

It would also help persons who are tip workers, who are making currently \$2.13 an hour. It would raise their wages, and would also continue to index their wages, so that they would find themselves being able to, hopefully, live above the poverty line while working full time.

In this, the richest country in the world, a country where 1 out of every 60 persons is a millionaire—and I don't begrudge anyone who is a millionaire, a country where 1 of every 11 households is worth \$1 million, and I salute those who are worth millions of dollars, but in this country, where we

have so much wealth, I don't believe we ought to have people who work full time and live below the poverty line, and find that employers are subsidized so that these workers can be paid a wage that is at or near a poverty level and receive other subsidies from the government to help them make it in America.

So I am honored that Dr. King pushed for a wage of \$2 an hour at that time, which would be more than \$13 an hour today.

Moving forward to September 15 of 1963, a tragic occurrence at the 16th Street Baptist Church. This is when four babies—I say they were babies—Addie was 14, Cynthia was 14, Carole was 14, and Denise was 11. They all lost their lives in church, in church, four babies, four young girls.

These were the times that I lived in. These were the times that preceded the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1964 and 1965.

November 22, 1963. A President of the United States of America decided to come to Texas, and while in Texas, the President was assassinated. The Honorable John F. Kennedy lost his life in my home State. I was born in Louisiana, but Texas is my home State at this time.

When he lost his life, the country went into mourning. It was a sad day for this country to have a President assassinated, and this country found that it was necessary to move forward, however.

Another person became President, and that, of course, was the Honorable Lyndon Johnson, who was from the State of Texas, and it was Lyndon Johnson who, on July 2, 1964, signed the Civil Rights Act.

Now, this Civil Rights Act of 1964 is one that brought great benefits to persons of my generation because it dealt with public accommodation, and it integrated, or desegregated public accommodations, hotels, restaurants, places that we frequent now and we take for granted the opportunity to go into these places.

In my lifetime, we could not enter the front door of places that we now take for granted, that these things have always been this way. Many do, not all, but those of us who are of my ilk, we remember what it was like.

I can remember when we would travel across country, Mr. Speaker. We knew that there were certain places that we could stop, and we knew that there were certain places that we dare not stop under any circumstances at all, and we would make sure that we had enough fuel to make it from one stop to the next.

We knew that there were certain places that we could eat, and there were places where we would have to go to the back door, and we would, when we arrived at these places, always be courteous and kind to the people that

greeted us, and a good many of them were courteous and kind to us, but there were many who were not.

I remember once, when we were traveling across country and we wanted some water, and we stopped at a service station, and the operator, I don't know that the person was the owner so I shall use the term operator, said, yes, you may have water, but you will have to drink it out of an oil can. You can take that can and you can clean it up as best you can and you can drink your water from that can.

These were the times that I lived in, the times that the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Public Accommodations Act addressed.

I can remember the "Colored" water fountain. Whenever we went out someplace near my home, and if we wanted water, we had to drink from a "Colored" water fountain. That "Colored" water fountain was usually not nearly as clean as the "White" water fountain.

I can remember having to sit in the back of the bus. I traveled from Texas to California, and I remember sitting in the back of the bus, and when I got to someplace near California, they allowed me to sit near the front of the bus. It was the first time in my life that I had actually had an opportunity to sit near the front of the bus.

I remember having to sit in the balcony of the movie. We were not allowed, in my lifetime, to sit at the first level. We always were required to go into the balcony of the movie.

Back of the bus, balcony of the movie, and then arrested and placed in the bottom of a jail. This is the era that I grew up in that preceded the signing of the Public Accommodations Act, the Voting Rights Act of 1964.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am sure you can understand that I have great appreciation for the Voting Rights Act. The Voting Rights Act means more to me than a simple document with words on it. This document may have been written in ink, but it was signed in the blood of Schwerner, Goodman, and Chaney; signed in the blood of those babies that lost their lives at the 16th Street Baptist Church. Written in ink, but signed in blood, and it means something to people of my generation.

So I am proud tonight, and I am honored that the leadership has allowed us to have this time to talk about the Civil Rights Act in this country, the means by which we have integrated ourselves.

I am proud that my country has come a long way. Make no mistake about it: we have come a very long way in this country, and if anybody says we haven't come a long way, I would challenge them. I would challenge them because I lived through segregation.

I know what segregation looked like. I saw it on signs that said "Colored" and "White."

□ 1915

I know what it smells like. I went to the back door and to bathrooms that were not clean. I know what it felt like because I was pushed and shoved and told where to go and what to do.

These were the times that I lived in. But thank God, we have come a long way, and we no longer live in the times that preceded the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1964.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored that I have another Member here who is going to say a few words about civil rights; and then I have another Member who has something special that he will call to our attention; and then I will return; and I am going to say a little bit tonight about the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

But before I do this, I will yield to another Member from the great State of Texas, a district that includes the city of El Paso, Texas' 16th Congressional District, the Honorable BETO O'ROURKE.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor to join my colleague from the State of Texas in this Special Order hour today to recognize our history in this country when it comes to achieving civil rights and perseverance in the face of adversity and some of our shameful past that has been turned, through the very hard work—the blood, the sweat, and the tears referenced by my colleague—into victories and triumphs, victories that are not yet complete, victories that we are still working on, but victories, nonetheless.

And I thought it might be appropriate at this time to share a little bit about the community that I represent, El Paso, Texas, and its role in this struggle to achieve civil rights, human rights, and equality for all men under the law.

I will begin with one of my favorite stories about El Paso. It is the story of the 1949 Bowie Bears high school baseball team. This was a team that was made up of members who lived in the Segundo Barrio of El Paso, all Mexican American members, all members who lived in what would be seen today as extreme levels of poverty, who played baseball with balls that were made of scrap pieces of clothing, gloves that were stitched together in their own homes, and who won the city championship and won the regional championship.

And as they traveled by bus in 1949 on those country highways to our capital in Austin, Texas, they were denied the ability to stay at motels. "No Mexicans or dogs allowed."

They were unable to eat in restaurants. They had to eat in the kitchens or eat outside on the bus. The night before the championship game in Austin, Texas—against an Austin, Texas, high school team—they slept under the bleachers in the field that they were going to play on, instead of being able

to stay in a hotel or motel in that city; and they went on to win the first high school State baseball championship in Texas.

Not too long after that, in 1955, El Paso became the first city in the State of Texas to integrate its public schools; and as my colleague from Texas has pointed out, up until that point, there were separate schools for Black children, there were separate schools for White children, and not too long before that, separate schools for Mexican American children.

So in 1955, that school board in El Paso, Texas, made a very important decision to integrate schools. They were the first in Texas, one of the first in the former Confederacy.

In 1957, El Paso elected the first Mexican American mayor of a major U.S. city, Raymond Telles. And then, Mr. Speaker, on June 7, 1962, the El Paso City Council, under the leadership of Alderman Bert Williams, passed the first city ordinance of any major city in the former Confederacy outlawing segregation in hotels, motels, restaurants, and theaters; these places of public accommodation that my colleague has so eloquently described that were segregated and, in many cases, were barred to African Americans and, in some cases, in El Paso in earlier years, to Mexican Americans.

President Kennedy, in a speech that following year, in 1963, a speech which was titled a "Special Message to the Congress on Civil Rights and Job Opportunities," recognized this achievement in Texas, El Paso, where we were the first community in the former Confederacy to desegregate those places of public accommodation.

And lastly, Mr. Speaker, I would draw our attention to the 1966 Texas Western Miners, a college basketball team that fielded the first all-Black starting five to compete for a national title game.

Those five young men not only won the national championship against some of the longest of odds versus Kentucky, but in doing so, they effectively ended segregation in intercollegiate athletics and did a lot to further end discrimination more broadly in the United States.

So I would just join with my colleague and associate, myself, with his comments about the Voting Rights Act and the need to persevere in the face of adversity, to recognize those triumphs that we have achieved so far, but not to claim victory until we are assured that everyone is treated equally under the law, that everyone has access to the ballot box, and that we truly are a country that treats everyone equally under the Constitution.

So I hope that, as a representative of El Paso, Texas, a community that has such a proud history of leading in Texas and leading in the former Confederacy, in leading in the U.S. on important civil rights, human rights, and

equality issues, that I will be able to join you, Mr. GREEN, in this fight and join this Congress in doing the right thing.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. I thank you for your excellent recitation, and you have already become a part of this Congress, of course, but also of the fight. You have really hit the ground running.

I want to salute you and let your constituents know that they can be proud of what you have accomplished in a very short time in the Congress of the United States of America.

Thank you for spending time with us this evening.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Thank you.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if I may, I would like to know how much time I have remaining because I would also like to yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON) at the end of my commentary.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 35 minutes remaining.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. I assure you, Mr. GRAYSON, that I will have time for you.

I would like to now move forward to 1965—1965 and persons who assembled at a church near the Edmund Pettus Bridge. If you have not seen the Edmund Pettus Bridge, I would beg that you take an opportunity to see the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

Remember now, we are talking about civil rights in the United States of America. We talked about the Voting Rights Act of 1964. I am moving forward to 1965. I have mentioned persons assembled at a church. I have mentioned the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

These persons assembled at this church because they were going to march from Selma to Montgomery, a peaceful march. When they approached the Edmund Pettus Bridge, they knew that on the other side of that bridge were men with clubs, some on horses.

They knew that their fate was uncertain, but they marched on; and when they approached these men—I can remember the Honorable JOHN LEWIS, a Member of Congress from Georgia—he tells this story: He says that they were beating them, and he thought that he was going to die. They were beaten all the way back to the church where they started. This was in 1965, a year after the 1964 Voting Rights Act was signed.

Well, Dr. King came to Montgomery, Alabama, to Selma, Alabama; and Dr. King proceeded with the march. This was after the time that we call "Bloody Sunday." Dr. King came, and they marched from Selma to Montgomery.

But now, this is where the story gets interesting because there is a person that I have labeled "the greatest unsung hero of the civil rights movement," barring none, the greatest unsung hero of the civil rights movement,

a person who is known to very few people, a person who made it possible for Dr. King and the marchers to move from Selma to Montgomery without having to confront the constabulary that engaged in a brutal act previously and may have done a similar thing.

This man, the greatest unsung hero of the civil rights movement, was a Republican. This man was not of African ancestry. He was an Anglo. This man was appointed to a Federal judgeship by President Eisenhower. This man signed the order for them to march from Selma to Montgomery.

Now, you might say: Well, signing an order is no big deal. It was then. Remember the times. It was a big deal to sign that order. In fact, for more than a decade, he had to be protected by U.S. marshals, the Honorable Frank M. Johnson, a district court judge.

But the story of Frank M. Johnson doesn't really start with the Edmund Pettus Bridge. It actually starts with Rosa Parks. When Rosa Parks took that seat and ignited the spark that started the civil rights movement, Rosa Parks went to jail that night.

There is a White side to Black history. Rosa Parks' bail was posted by Ms. Virginia Durr and her husband. A White woman posted the bail to get Rosa Parks out of jail. There is a White side to Black history.

But let's get back to Frank M. Johnson. They decided that they would not ride the bus; and for over a year, they provided alternative transportation; and they boycotted. And in so doing, in boycotting, they brought this to the attention of not only the United States, but also to the world.

But here is the other side: The boycott was effective. It was an order from Frank M. Johnson, as a part of a three-judge panel, concluding that that segregation was unconstitutional based upon *Brown v. Board of Education*, which had been decided about a year earlier. Frank M. Johnson signed the order along with two other judges.

Frank M. Johnson went on to sign orders integrating schools, voting rights—his history is replete with orders that he signed to change the face of the South. Paraphrasing Dr. King, Frank M. Johnson gave meaning to the word "justice," a White Republican Federal judge.

I mention these things tonight because I want people to know that Black history is American history and that it includes people of all hues and genders and persuasions; and it is a history that, quite frankly, we cannot forget.

There are some aspects of it that we are not proud of, but it is a history that is ours, and we can never, ever ignore our history. Just as we cannot ignore what happened at Pearl Harbor, just as we cannot ignore what happened on 9/11, we cannot ignore many of the things that happened in the history of African Americans.

So with Frank M. Johnson having allowed the marchers to move forward by signing this order, later on, the same President, Lyndon Johnson, signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

I am probably in Congress because of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 because it provided a means by which districts could be drawn with consideration given to population, as opposed to geography.

That Voting Rights Act, section 5, is what allowed a good many people who are right here in this Congress today to be here, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and section 5 of it.

□ 1930

As you know, section 5 has been made impotent by the evisceration of section 4. Section 4 was declared unconstitutional. One of the things that I have learned in my years on the planet is that while I don't always agree with the judiciary, I do respect the judiciary. I didn't agree with the decision to declare section 4 unconstitutional, but I respect the opinion, and, as a result, I will do what I can to correct it here in the Halls of Congress.

I think that we have a great opportunity here to do something to strengthen the Voting Rights Act, the same Voting Rights Act that Mr. JOHN LEWIS marched to bring into being and that people lost their lives to bring into being. That same Voting Rights Act can be strengthened and be made useful and viable for a good many people.

So I will conclude with this. But I do want one more evidence of how much time I have remaining.

Mr. Speaker, can you give me one more count on the time? And I will come to my conclusion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 27 minutes remaining.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. GRAYSON, I assure you, you will have ample time.

I want to conclude with this: I believe that this is a great country. Notwithstanding all that I have explained about Black history, this is a great country, and I love my country. I believe that this is a country that has allowed me privileges and opportunities that I probably could not have enjoyed in another place. So let me share this brief vignette with you.

I was not born into riches, obviously, based upon the stories that I have told, but from very poor parents. My father could neither read nor write.

I remember going to work with my father one day. I have no idea as to why I was there. My father was a mechanic's helper. He was not a mechanic. He was a helper. He was the person who would clean up the wet spot on the floor. He was the person who would fetch the tools and do the things that were required that many people

would not do. And I heard them address my father by a name that I was not familiar with. They called him "Secretary." And as any child would, I suppose, I made an inquiry: Why do they call you Secretary? He explained to me that they were making fun of him, that they were aware that he could not read and that he could not write, and they were making fun of him.

I said: Well, why would you do this? Why would you let them make fun of you like this? Why would you let them do this to you?

It hurt as a young child to see your father being made fun of because he could not read and he could not write.

By the way, it was not his choice. It wasn't his choice to be a person who could not read or write.

But my father's answer is really what this story is all about. When I said to him: Why would you let them do this to you? He said to me, after having told me many more things, but he said to me: I do it, and I accept it because I want you to be able to read and write.

And isn't it wonderful that the son of a secretary can now stand in the well of the House of Representatives in the United States of America and read and write laws for the United States of America?

I thank you for the time, Mr. Speaker. I am grateful to all who made it possible for us to have this hour. And I believe that ours is the best country in the world. I believe that it really doesn't get much better than the United States of America. There are things that we need to do and things that we need to correct. But on a bad day, it is good to live in the USA. On a bad day, when your dog that you reared from a pup wants to bite you, on a bad day when your spouse wants to desert you, if you have to have your dog bite you and your spouse desert you, have it happen in the United States of America.

God bless you, and I yield to Mr. GRAYSON.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, today is a sad anniversary. Twenty years ago today, the brilliant comedian, Bill Hicks, died of cancer at the age of 32. Hicks' comedy has been an inspiration to me and millions of others. He has been voted the fourth greatest stand-up comedian of all time. And if Hicks were alive to hear that, he would complain bitterly about losing out to Gandhi, Einstein, and Stalin.

In honor of Bill Hicks, I would like to try to yield this platform to him. This is how Bill Hicks ended his own performances. He would say to the audience:

You have been fantastic. I hope you have enjoyed the show. There is a point to my act. Is there a point to my act? Let's find a point. I would say the point of my act—and I have to—but the point is this:

The world is a ride like an amusement park. And when you choose to go on it, you think it is real because that is how powerful

our minds are. And the ride goes up and down, and it goes round and round. It has thrills and chills, and it is very brightly colored, and it is very loud and it is fun. For a while.

Some people have been on the ride for a long time, and they begin to question: "Is it real or is it a ride?" And other people, they have remembered, and they come back to us, and they say: "Hey, don't worry. Don't be afraid, ever. Because it is just a ride." And we kill those people. We kill those people.

We tell them: "Shut him up. We have a lot invested in this ride. Shut him up. Look at the furrows of worry. Look at my big bank account and my family. This has to be real."

This can't be just be a ride. But it is just a ride. And we always kill those good guys who try to tell us that it is just a ride. Have you ever noticed that? And we let the demons run amok.

But it doesn't matter because it is just a ride, and we can change it any time we want. It is only a choice. No effort. No worry. No job. No savings and money. It is just a ride.

It is a choice, right now, between fear and love. The eyes of fear want you to put bigger locks on your doors and buy guns and close yourself off. The eyes of love instead see all of us as one.

Here is what we can do to change the world right now into a better ride. Take all the money that we spend on weapons and defense each year and, instead, spend it on feeding, clothing, and educating the poor of this world which we could do many times over—not just one human being, but all of us, no one excluded. And then we can explore space together, both inner and outer, forever in peace.

Thank you very much. You have been great. I hope you enjoyed it. You are fantastic. Thank you very much.

Bill Hicks wrote his own eulogy, and that was how he ended his act. This is what he said in his own final words in his own eulogy:

I left here in love, in laughter, and in truth. And wherever truth, love, and laughter abide, I am there in spirit.

Rest in peace, Bill Hicks.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. I yield back.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. WESTMORELAND (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today after 2:30 p.m. on account of attending a visitation for a funeral.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 39 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, February 27, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4812. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of General Keith B. Alexander, United States Army, and his advancement on the retired list in the grade of general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4813. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General William N. Phillips, United States Army, and his advancement on the retired list in the grade of lieutenant general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4814. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report on assistance provided for sporting events during calendar year 2013; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4815. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Kenya Airways of Nairobi, Kenya; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4816. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled, "The Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (CHIPRA) Mandated Evaluation of Express Lane Eligibility: Final Findings"; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4817. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Acetochlor; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0829; FRL-9904-19] received January 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4818. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Delaware; Attainment Plan for the Philadelphia-Wilmington, Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Delaware Nonattainment Area for the 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Standard; Correction [EPA-R03-OAR-2010-0141; 9905-88-Region 3] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4819. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Texas; Approval of Texas Motor Vehicle Rule Revisions [EPA-R06-OAR-2006-0885; FRL-9906-03-Region 6] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4820. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Utah; Revisions to Utah Administrative Code-Permit: New and Modified Sources [EPA-R08-OAR-2013-0395; FRL-9904-24-Region 8] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4821. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Utah; Revisions to Utah Rule R307-107; General Requirements; Breakdown [EPA-R08-OAR-2012-0746; FRL-9902-49-Region 8] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4822. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental

Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plans; Utah; Prevention of Significant Deterioration; Greenhouse Gas Permitting Authority and Tailoring Rule [EPA-R08-OAR-2012-0300; FRL-9903-27-Region 8] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4823. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Cyantraniliprole; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-0668; FRL-9388-7] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4824. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Diflubenzuron; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0515; FRL-9904-27] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4825. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Significant New Use Rule on Certain Chemical Substances [EPA-HQ-OPPT-2012-0182; FRL-9399-1] (RIN: 2070-AJ00) received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4826. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — alpha-Alkyl-w-Hydroxypoly (Oxypropylene) and/or Poly (Oxyethylene) Polymers Where the Alkyl Chain Contains a Minimum of Six Carbons etc.; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0210; FRL-9394-2] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4827. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting the Agency's reports containing the September 30, 2013, status of loans and guarantees issued under Section 25(a)(11) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4828. A letter from the Director, National Legislative Division, American Legion, transmitting the financial statement and independent audit of The American Legion, proceedings of the 95th Annual National Convention of the American Legion, held in Houston, Texas from August 23 — August 29, 2013, and a report on the Organization's activities for the year preceding the Convention; (H. Doc. No. 113—93); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and ordered to be printed.

4829. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a semi-annual report to Congress on the continued compliance of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan with the Trade Act's freedom of emigration provisions, as required under the Jackson-Vanik Amendment; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4830. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a report concerning the operations and status of the Government Securities Investment Fund (G-Fund) of the Federal Employees Retirement System during the debt issuance suspension period; jointly to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform and Ways and Means.

4831. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of the

Treasury, transmitting a report covering the operation and status of the relevant federal fund accounts; jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Oversight and Government Reform.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Ms. FOXX: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 492. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 899) to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-362). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. BECERRA (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. SCHWARTZ, and Mr. CROWLEY):

H.R. 4090. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to improve the Social Security Administration's ability to fight fraud, prevent errors, and protect the Social Security Trust Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 4091. A bill to authorize Members of Congress to bring an action for declaratory and injunctive relief in response to a written statement by the President or any other official in the executive branch directing officials of the executive branch to not enforce a provision of law; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. WELCH, Mr. SIRE, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. HOLT, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. POCAN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. SABLON, and Mr. HONDA):

H.R. 4092. A bill to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to establish the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy as the lead Federal agency for coordinating Federal, State, and local assistance provided to promote the energy retrofitting of schools; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 4093. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to raise the prime and subcontract goals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 4094. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to develop and implement a plan to improve the quality of data reported on bundled and consolidated contracts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. RUNYAN (for himself and Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 4095. A bill to increase, effective as of December 1, 2014, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. RUNYAN (for himself and Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 4096. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for annual cost-of-living adjustments to be made automatically by law each year in the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain service-connected disabled veterans; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. McDERMOTT:

H.R. 4097. A bill to ensure that proper information gathering and planning are undertaken to secure the preservation and recovery of the salmon and steelhead of the Columbia River Basin in a manner that protects and enhances local communities, ensures effective expenditure of Federal resources, and maintains reasonably priced, reliable power, to direct the Secretary of Commerce to seek scientific analysis of Federal efforts to restore salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committees on Natural Resources, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mr.

FLEISCHMANN, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. BARR, Mr. RAHALL, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee):

H.R. 4098. A bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to provide increased protection for horses participating in shows, exhibitions, or sales, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 4099. A bill to make supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for the tree and wood pests activities of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and for certain forest health management and urban and community forestry activities of the Forest Service; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr.

GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. BROWN of Georgia, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, and Mr. CRAWFORD):

H.R. 4100. A bill to amend the Water Resources Development Act of 1992 to permit the collection of user fees by non-Federal entities in connection with the challenge cost-sharing program for management of recreation facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mrs. ELLMERS:

H.R. 4101. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to ensure that a TRICARE beneficiary receives written notice of any

change to benefits received by the beneficiary under the TRICARE program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida (for himself and Mrs. WALORSKI):

H.R. 4102. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify that the estate of a deceased veteran may receive certain accrued benefits upon the death of the veteran, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 4103. A bill to amend title 17, United States Code, to secure the rights of visual artists to copyright, to provide for resale royalties, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. POE of Texas (for himself and Mr. KEATING):

H. Res. 491. A resolution affirming the support of the United States for Georgia's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. BECERRA:

H.R. 4090.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, to "provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States."

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 4091.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 3 Section 1

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4092.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 (relating to the power of Congress to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.)

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 4093.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution, which provides Congress with the ability to enact legislation necessary and proper to effectuate its purposes in taxing and spending.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 4094.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution, which provides Congress with the ability to enact legislation necessary and proper to effectuate its purposes in taxing and spending.

By Mr. RUNYAN:

H.R. 4095.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. RUNYAN:

H.R. 4096.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. McDERMOTT:

H.R. 4097.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution

By Mrs. BLACKBURN:

H.R. 4098.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3. The Congress shall have Power To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 4099.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COTTON:

H.R. 4100.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 4, Section 3, Clause 2—The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States.

By Mrs. ELLMERS:

H.R. 4101.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The authority to enact this bill is derived from, but may not be limited to, Clause 12 of Section 8 of Article 1 of the United States Constitution to raise and support Armies.

By Mr. MILLER of Florida:

H.R. 4102.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I. Section 8.

By Mr. NADLER:

H.R. 4103.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, sec. 8, cl. 3 (commerce clause), cl. 8 (copyright clause), and cl. 18 (necessary and proper clause).

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 38: Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. TERRY, and Mr. SMITH of Washington.

H.R. 164: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MARINO, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. COLE, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, and Mr. GINGREY of Georgia.

H.R. 223: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 259: Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 281: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 303: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 401: Ms. JENKINS.

H.R. 452: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 485: Ms. WATERS.

H.R. 533: Mr. DAINES.

H.R. 543: Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 580: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 594: Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. KEATING, Mr. SIRE, Mr. LANCE, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, and Mr. DOYLE.

H.R. 645: Mr. DOYLE and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 647: Mr. COSTA and Mr. HASTINGS of Washington.

H.R. 713: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 718: Mr. LAMBORN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. PITTINGER.

H.R. 741: Mr. GARDNER.

H.R. 794: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 812: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.

H.R. 921: Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 946: Mr. ROYCE.

H.R. 962: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 964: Ms. PINGREE of Maine.

H.R. 1010: Mr. BERA of California and Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 1015: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 1252: Mr. HUFFMAN and Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 1339: Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 1477: Mr. DEUTCH.

H.R. 1515: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.

H.R. 1518: Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 1528: Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. WITTMAN, and Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 1551: Mr. JORDAN and Mr. BARR.

H.R. 1553: Mr. FOSTER, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Mr. ENYART.

H.R. 1573: Mr. LEWIS.

H.R. 1619: Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 1658: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 1696: Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 1717: Mr. HUNTER and Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 1723: Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 1726: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 1732: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 1738: Ms. KUSTER, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. DELAULO, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 1751: Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 1812: Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 1838: Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 1851: Mr. CUELLAR.

H.R. 1915: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. RANGEL, and Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 1918: Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. McDERMOTT, and Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 1920: Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 1995: Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 2005: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 2028: Mr. HOLT and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 2078: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 2109: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 2220: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 2305: Mr. OLSON and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.

H.R. 2315: Mr. BOUSTANY and Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 2328: Mr. BARBER.

H.R. 2468: Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. ISRAEL, and Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 2548: Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 2577: Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 2656: Ms. CHU.

H.R. 2663: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 2710: Mrs. BACHMANN.

H.R. 2725: Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 2772: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 2790: Mr. CONNOLLY.

H.R. 2794: Mr. GARDNER.

H.R. 2818: Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 2841: Mr. BARBER, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. SCHWARTZ, and Mr. HINOJOSA.

H.R. 2854: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.

H.R. 2874: Ms. MCCOLLUM and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 2935: Mr. ENGEL.

H.R. 2996: Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. NEAL, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. KEATING, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 3040: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 3116: Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 3196: Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H.R. 3240: Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. COOK.

H.R. 3318: Mr. POLIS, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. NORTON, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. GARCIA, and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK.

H.R. 3335: Mrs. LUMMIS and Mr. RIGELL.

H.R. 3361: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 3367: Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 3382: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 3408: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York and Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.

H.R. 3467: Mr. DINGELL, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, and Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 3469: Mr. FLORES, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. SALMON, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. FARR, Mr. YODER, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, and Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 3471: Ms. ESHOO, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. PETERS of Michigan.

H.R. 3488: Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 3505: Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 3529: Mr. LUTKEMEYER, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. PAULSEN, and Mrs. BACHMANN.

H.R. 3556: Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. CHU, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 3571: Mr. FARR, Mr. REED, Mr. HOLT, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. BERA of California.

H.R. 3602: Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. CHU, Ms. MENG, and Mr. BECERRA.

H.R. 3649: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 3655: Mr. HONDA, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. RUSH, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. CLARKE of New York, and Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 3658: Mrs. BLACK, Ms. NORTON, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. HALL, Mr. OLSON, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. CONAWAY, Mrs. NOEM, and Mr. FLORES.

H.R. 3680: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 3687: Mr. FLORES, Mr. HARRIS, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. SALMON, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. STEWART, and Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 3698: Mr. RUSH and Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 3707: Mr. BERA of California, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. HALL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. RUSH, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 3708: Mr. GIBSON, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. LATTA, and Mr. BUCSHON.

H.R. 3710: Ms. ESHOO, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mrs. BUSTOS.

H.R. 3725: Mr. YOHO, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. JONES.

H.R. 3757: Ms. KUSTER, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. SINEMA, and Ms. DUCKWORTH.

H.R. 3761: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 3774: Ms. ESTY and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

H.R. 3802: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 3826: Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. MESSER, and Mrs. NOEM.

H.R. 3829: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. KINGSTON and Mr. GOSAR.

H.R. 3836: Mr. TERRY, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. HARPER, Mr. MATHESON, and Ms. GRANGER.

H.R. 3857: Mr. HARPER.

H.R. 3861: Mr. ENYART.

H.R. 3862: Mr. JOYCE.

H.R. 3877: Mr. LATHAM and Mr. CONNOLLY.

H.R. 3954: Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. BASS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HORSFORD, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. VEASEY, and Ms. WATERS.

H.R. 3973: Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. TIPTON, and Mr. KLINE.

H.R. 3982: Ms. PINGREE of Maine and Mr. LEWIS.

H.R. 3986: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 3991: Mr. KIND, and Mr. WELCH, Mr. LATHAM, and Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 3992: Mr. MORAN, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. WALDEN, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 3994: Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 3998: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 4006: Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina.

H.R. 4008: Mr. BENTIVOLIO.

H.R. 4012: Mr. NUNNELEE.

H.R. 4015: Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. TERRY, Mr. FARR, Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. FLORES, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 4022: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 4026: Ms. WATERS.

H.R. 4031: Mr. JONES, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, and Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.

H.R. 4033: Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 4041: Mr. POCAN, Mr. FARR, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, and Mr. McDERMOTT.

H.R. 4051: Mr. POCAN, Mr. LATHAM, and Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 4056: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.

H.R. 4066: Mr. MULVANEY.

H.R. 4070: Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. OLSON, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. NUNNELEE, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. SALMON, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. BARTON, Mr. GOHMERT, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. DESJARLAIS, and Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 4079: Mr. JEFFRIES.

H. Res. 221: Ms. SPEIER and Mr. HONDA.

H. Res. 283: Mr. DOGGETT.

H. Res. 365: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, and Mr. CASTRO of Texas.

H. Res. 418: Mr. TAKANO and Mr. MEADOWS.

H. Res. 464: Mr. POCAN, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. WELCH, Mr. BERA of California, and Ms. DELAURO.

H. Res. 480: Mr. TONKO and Ms. NORTON.

H. Res. 482: Ms. GABBARD and Ms. BORDALLO.

H. Res. 488: Mr. DUFFY, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. KEATING, Mr. COTTON, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. BILLRAKIS, and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

The amendment to be offered by Representative CUMMINGS, or a designee, to H.R. 899, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2013, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY'S BEYOND BOLLYWOOD EXHIBIT

HON. AMI BERA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History and the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center. This week, they open a new exhibition called "Beyond Bollywood: Indian Americans Shape the Nation." One out of every 100 Americans traces his or her roots back to India, me included. As a first-generation Indian American born and raised in California, I am here today largely because of the Indian Americans of my parents' generation who paved the way with their dedication to hard work, education, and family. It is important for us to recognize this remarkable community's contributions to our country.

The new exhibit examines the daily experiences of Indian Americans and highlights the impacts they've had on our Nation, from breakthroughs in medicine and technology to the election of Dalip Singh Saund, the first Asian-American member of Congress, elected in 1956. It is the first exhibit of its kind to explore the Indian American experience and celebrate the history and achievements of this community's political, professional, and cultural contributions to American life and history. I commend the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History for their support and recognition of this country's 3.3 million Indian Americans and their dedication to furthering national dialogue about a community that has become integral to the fabric of American life.

A TRIBUTE TO TANNER MERRIFIELD

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and honor Tanner Merrifield, an 18-year-old senior at Southeast Polk High School from Runnells, Iowa, who has achieved national recognition for exemplary volunteer service in his community from the 2014 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program.

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program is our country's largest youth recognition program based entirely on volunteer community service. The program was created in conjunction with Prudential and the National Association of Secondary School Principals to honor middle and high school students for out-

standing service to benefit others at the local, state, and national level. Since 1995, more than 345,000 American youths have participated in this excellent program.

Tanner was selected as one of Iowa's four distinguished finalists for undertaking an extensive project to restore two campsites that had fallen into disrepair at a local park. To tackle this task, Mr. Merrifield devoted months of hard work pursuing township approvals, soliciting donations, organizing volunteers, purchasing materials, and ultimately rebuilding the campsites. Following his hard work, each campsite now includes new trails, fire rings and landscaping. There is no doubt Tanner's selfless efforts will provide a lasting benefit to his community for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud Mr. Merrifield for his sincere dedication to positively impacting the lives of others in his community. Tanner's commitment to a cause greater than himself is a testament to the high-quality character and unwavering work ethic instilled in Iowans both young and old. Our future is bright with young people like Tanner, and it is an honor to represent him and his family in the United States Congress. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Tanner, thanking his supportive family, and thanking all of those involved in this wonderful project for their life-changing efforts.

HONORING LUKAS JAMES ERICKSON

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Lukas James Erickson. Lukas is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 75, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Lukas has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Lukas has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Lukas has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Lukas designed and constructed a privacy picket fence and rebuilt two long planter boxes at the outdoor classroom of Eugene Field Elementary in Maryville, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Lukas James Erickson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

REMEMBERING FORMER STATE REPRESENTATIVE EUGENE SCHLICKMAN OF ILLINOIS

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember former State Representative Eugene Schlickman of Illinois who passed away on January 23rd at the age of 84.

Eugene Schlickman was born on December 17th, 1929 in Dubuque, Iowa, the oldest of four children. His family moved to Rockford, Illinois, where Schlickman grew up and where his father ran the Tydee Dydee Diaper Service. Eugene attended St. Thomas High School in Rockford and later became the first in his family to graduate from college, after which he went on to earn a law degree from Georgetown University.

Schlickman was elected to the Illinois General Assembly in 1964 and served for eight terms, where he was known for reaching across the aisle and promoting bipartisan cooperation. During his tenure in the General Assembly, he led initiatives on issues including higher education, parochial schools, children's services, and regional planning. After leaving the Legislature, Schlickman practiced law in Arlington Heights and coauthored biographies of former Governor Otto Kerner and Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to give my sincere condolences to Eugene Schlickman's family and friends in Rockford and throughout Illinois and honor his years of dedicated service to our state.

INTRODUCING THE "SALMON SOLUTIONS AND PLANNING ACT"

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, American taxpayers and Pacific Northwest ratepayers have little to show for the more than \$11 billion they have spent on salmon recovery efforts in the Columbia and Snake River Basin. Since being listed for protection under the Endangered Species Act in the early 1990s, most of the thirteen native salmon and steelhead species remain near the depressed levels that triggered their protected status in the first place.

The value of these fish populations is undeniable, holding major economic, environmental and cultural significance to the Pacific Northwest. Even now, at their historically low levels, salmon add over a billion dollars to the region's economy and constitute a vital part of communities throughout the Northwest.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

While continuing our efforts to protect salmon and steelhead populations is critical, it is clear that our current approach is not working. Over twenty years and \$11 billion later, their vulnerable status remains virtually unchanged. Four Biological Opinions have been rejected by the courts as insufficient for fish survival. Last month's latest BiOp represents little change from the previous version, stoking the possibility of renewed court challenges.

It's time to reevaluate our failed efforts and consider the best approach forward, including the possibility of removing four dams on the lower Snake River. Last century, over 1,100 dams were removed throughout the country. Last month marked the start of the removal of yet another dam: the Rockford Dam on Iowa's Shell Rock River is being breached, among other reasons, to restore fish passage to 21.5 miles of the river. The legislation I am re-introducing today, the Salmon Solutions and Planning Act, commissions studies to focus our efforts so that all factors are taken into account when considering dam removal. Our salmon recovery efforts must be informed, cost effective, and successful.

Inaction is not an option. We must use the best available science to protect this vital American resource before it's too late.

IN HONOR OF THE CITY OF
YUMA'S CENTENNIAL

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the centennial of Yuma, Arizona. Though it has been a city for 100 years, Yuma has a long and storied history. The Colorado River, on the banks of which Yuma lies, has had a shaping influence on the city and is an essential part of its history. Not only did the Colorado bring the area's first European visitors—Spanish explorers who sailed up the river in 1540 and discovered a thriving Native American village on its banks—it is also the reason for the very existence of the city.

Today it is the river's water that is most important to this desert city, providing drinking water to its residents and irrigation water to its surrounding farms. Because of the ample sunshine, the plentiful irrigation, and the rich soil, Yuma County, of which Yuma is the county seat, is the winter vegetable capital of the world: 90% of the country's leafy vegetables are grown there from November to March.

Prior to the early 1900s, however, it was the physical presence of the river that shaped Yuma. Though today the river is tame at Yuma, prior to the early 1900s the Colorado's banks were in constant flux, stretching up to 15 miles across at times. This made crossing the river a challenge. There was one point, however, at which 2 outcroppings made the river narrow. It was at this strategic point, called the Yuma Crossing, where the Native American settlement that would become Yuma was first established.

Various known as Colorado City and Arizona City, the city at Yuma Crossing was incorporated under the laws of the State of Ari-

zona in 1914. The Yuma Crossing was used by thousands of people during the California gold rush, establishing the site's importance in American history. Eventually the U.S. Army built a fort at Yuma and used it as a supply base for its southwestern operations. Yuma was also the site of the infamous Arizona Territorial Prison, emblematic of the Wild West.

From its original Native American settlers to its Wild West days, Yuma's story is part of the American story. It has been an incorporated city for 100 years. Here's to 100 more.

HONORING MASTER SERGEANT
ANTHONY DANIEL CUTTER

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Master Sergeant Anthony Daniel Cutter upon his retirement from the United States Air Force. I thank him for his twenty years of dedicated and honorable service to our country.

Sergeant Cutter was born and raised in Lake County, California. In December, 1993, he joined the United States Air Force. Throughout his career, Sergeant Cutter was stationed across the United States as well as overseas. He was deployed to South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iraq and Afghanistan. For his honorable service Sergeant Cutter received two Meritorious Service Medals, one upon his return from Afghanistan in 2011 and the other in Las Vegas in 2014.

Throughout his years of service, Sergeant Cutter remained a dedicated husband and father to his four children. When home on leave, he generously volunteered his time to support Operation Tango Mike; an organization that aims to support fellow service men and women by sending care packages to troops stationed overseas.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we honor and thank Sergeant Cutter for his invaluable service to our country. His twenty years of service with the United States Air Force is both admirable and deserving of recognition. On behalf of a grateful community, I wish him a most enjoyable retirement.

COMMENDING SOCIAL SECURITY
EMPLOYEES FOR FIGHTING
FRAUD

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, millions of Americans pay into Social Security every week, knowing that when they need Social Security, it will be there for them. Without Social Security's dedicated, highly-trained workforce, we would not be able to stop fraud and errors and guard those contributions until they are needed.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) recently stopped two large fraud conspiracies,

one in Puerto Rico and one in New York. I want to commend the hundreds of Social Security employees, investigators, and state disability determination services employees, as well as state, local, and federal prosecutors and law enforcement officers who worked tirelessly to detect, investigate, and prosecute these crimes. I would also like to particularly acknowledge some of the hard-working public servants who played especially key roles.

DDS Medical Consultant Dr. Ascisclo Marxuach; DDS Medical Consultant Dr. Vicente Sanchez; DDS Systems Manager Juan Ocasio; DDS Systems Manager Javier Ortiz; District Manager and former Disability Processing Unit Manager Diane Maldonado; Disability Program Administrator Annie Malave; Program Analyst Susan Palais; and Program Analyst Maria Lora.

Area Office Supervisor Awilda Montalvo; Assistant Regional Administrator Yvonne Bastide; Lead Disability Processing Specialist Kathleen Fitzpatrick; Lead Disability Processing Specialist Michael Warner; Deputy Assistant Regional Commissioner Frank Barry; Center for Disability Deputy Director Jose Colon; Special Agent-in-Charge Edward Ryan; Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge John Grasso; Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge Anthony Piazza; Resident Agent-in-Charge Sharon McDermott; Special Agent Peter Dowd; Special Agent Manuel Rivera; CDI Team Leader Angel Rodriguez; Management Support Specialist Jaimie Arce; CDI Specialist Amanda Rios; and CDI Specialist Karen Velez.

Mr. Speaker, I commend these patriotic Americans for their work to protect Social Security for American families.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, February 25, I missed a series of rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on #63 and #64.

A TRIBUTE TO QUINN WILSON

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and honor Quinn Wilson, a 17-year-old senior of Ankeny High School in Ankeny, Iowa, who has achieved national recognition for exemplary volunteer service in his community from the 2014 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program.

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program is our country's largest youth recognition program based entirely on volunteer community service. The program was created in conjunction with Prudential and the National Association of Secondary School Principals to honor middle and high school students for outstanding service to benefit others at the local,

state, and national level. Since 1995, more than 345,000 American youths have participated in this excellent program.

Quinn was recently selected as one of Iowa's four distinguished finalists for creating and organizing a musical instrument collection program for young children who could not otherwise afford to pursue their musical passions. Quinn's program, "An Instrument in Every Hand," has assisted more than 40 local children by donating used or refurbished musical instruments. Mr. Wilson was inspired to pursue the initiative through his own experience as the recipient of a donated instrument. To ensure his program was a success, Quinn recruited a group of volunteers, arranged and advertised an instrument drive, and coordinated necessary repair assistance with a local music store. There is no doubt Quinn's selfless efforts brought immeasurable joy and lasting benefits to the young people who benefited from An Instrument in Every Hand.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud Mr. Wilson for his sincere dedication to positively impacting the lives of others in his community. Quinn's commitment to a cause greater than himself is a testament to the high-quality character and unwavering work ethic instilled in Iowans both young and old. Our future is bright with young people like Quinn, and it is an honor to represent him and his family in the United States Congress. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Quinn, thanking his supportive family, and thanking all of those involved in this wonderful project for their life-changing efforts.

IN TRIBUTE TO THE HON. ELAINE O'BRIEN

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great solemnity to share with you the recent death of the Honorable Elaine O'Brien. Elaine O'Brien was a respected lawmaker and long-term resident of Suffield, Connecticut, where she served for the last 20 years as a community volunteer and a member of local government.

Originally from Medford, Massachusetts, Elaine's focus and tenacity saw her become the youngest female graduate from the Beverly Airport flight school in 1972 before going on to be a pilot and instructor.

Moving with her family of three sons to Suffield, Connecticut, Elaine became an active part of the town in posts including President of the Parent Teacher Association; a 13-year elected member of the School Committee; and President of the Suffield Rotary Club. Recognized as a respected advocate for local issues, Elaine was elected to the Planning and Zoning Commission in 1991 followed by the Board of Education in 1993. Serving for 12 years on the Board of Education, Elaine led infrastructure projects as chairman of the Facilities and Transportation Committee and played an important role in school program development as representative to the Capitol Region Education Council.

Widely supported by her local constituents in Suffield, East Granby, and Windsor, Elaine was elected to the Connecticut General Assembly in 2010 as the Representative for the 61st District. Elaine served on the House Appropriations, Commerce, and Transportation Committees. Garnering bipartisan support to form a manufacturing caucus in the Commerce Committee, Elaine has been credited by her colleagues for her promotion of job growth in Connecticut manufacturing. Working tirelessly to improve local infrastructure, Elaine won key grants for projects such as the extension of utilities near Bradley International Airport in Suffield, and the construction of an education and conference center for the New England Air Museum.

Re-elected to the District in 2012, Elaine continued as on as a passionate legislator for issues including worker safety, health care and gun control despite her diagnosis of cancer. Elaine also remained on as Suffield Town Clerk, a position she had held since 1998.

On February 21, 2014, Elaine lost her courageous battle with brain cancer at the age of 58, and will be sorely missed by her family and Connecticut community. Elaine is succeeded by her husband, three sons, and seven stepchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in honoring the life and extraordinary service of Elaine O'Brien, and offering our condolences to the family and friends she leaves behind.

RECOGNIZING CHRIS TOMKY

HON. CORY GARDNER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chris Tomky, a farmer from Crowley County, Colorado who recently received the East Otero Conservation District 2013 Conservationist of the Year.

Chris comes from a long line of outstanding farmers. His grandfather, father and other family members are accomplished farmers. He grew up with farming in his blood, helping his family in any way he possibly could from a very young age.

Today, he is focused on producing successful yields while utilizing good farming practices that promote conservation. His efforts have ensured his operation will be as efficient and sustainable as possible for years to come.

Chris's hard work and dedication to conservation practices include installing water control structures, irrigation pipeline, grated pipe, concert ditches and land leveling on various sections of farm ground. His efforts have set a strong example for a new generation of farmers in Colorado.

I am pleased to join the East Otero Conservation District in recognizing Chris Tomky as the 2013 Conservationist of the Year.

HONORING RYAN OWENS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ryan Owens. Ryan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 75, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Ryan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Ryan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Ryan has become a Member of the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Ryan has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Ryan worked with First United Methodist Church of Maryville, Missouri, to set up a perpetual community assistance program and completed multiple projects as models for the program.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Ryan Owens for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF REGGIE MOORE

HON. JERRY MCNERNEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life and legacy of Antioch's first African-American city council member, Reggie Moore.

Reggie's tireless commitment to serving others is an inspiration to me and the residents of my district. First elected to the Antioch City Council in 2006, Reggie quickly made his mark by championing causes that would benefit the city and its residents. He also started Antioch's annual Martin Luther King Day celebration, which honors Dr. King's work by promoting volunteerism and by providing scholarships for Antioch students.

Reggie worked tirelessly to improve the lives of others, and he was a strong advocate for labor and workers' rights. Under his leadership as President of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 444 from 2003 to 2007, Reggie fought to improve working conditions and benefits for the union's employees.

As Black History Month comes to a close, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the memory of Reggie Moore—a trailblazer who was deeply committed to the cause of improving the lives of his fellow citizens.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF CHEFS FOR THEIR COMMUNITY SERVICE TO THE WYOMING VALLEY CHILDREN'S ASSOCIATION

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Brotherhood of Chefs of Northeastern Pennsylvania, who volunteered their time and expertise to host the third annual "Cooking for a Cause" event on February 24, 2014.

For the third year the Brotherhood of Chefs has donated their culinary skills to help a number of nonprofit agencies whose mission is to benefit children in need. Many of these organizations rely on events, like "Cooking for a Cause," to support their daily programming costs and without their support might find the need to scale back basic services to children with special needs. An event like this offers an opportunity for the entire community to come together to celebrate and support many worthy childhood development agencies. "Cooking for a Cause" under the able leadership of Tom Malloy, President, Nello Allegrucci, Vice President, Ed Ancas, Secretary and Carmen Allegrucci, Treasurer, along with an extremely talented team of 20 chefs has made significant contributions in its brief history.

I join with other members of my local community in congratulating the Brotherhood of Chefs of Northeastern Pennsylvania for donating their time and unique talent to making our community a better place and for focusing their efforts on children in need in our community. I believe this effort reveals the American spirit of generosity and selfless giving that is one of our greatest virtues.

CONGRATULATING FLACHTEMEIER MONUMENT COMPANY ON THEIR 140TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Flachtemeier Monument Company in Freeport, Illinois, on the occasion of their 140th anniversary.

Flachtemeier Monument was founded in 1874 when Frederick Flachtemeier began his stone carving business in Freeport. Over the next 140 years, Flachtemeier Monument Company has supported grieving families and helped them memorialize their loved ones. Ric Knox, the current branch manager, loves that his job allows him to connect with the community, explaining that "total strangers come into my life and invite me into their life."

In honor of its 140th anniversary, Flachtemeier Monument Company is partnering with the Freeport Chamber of Commerce for a community event later this year. Additionally, the company plans to donate a portion of its sales to United Way of Northwest

Illinois whenever a customer mentions one of their affiliated charities.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again congratulate Flachtemeier for reaching this impressive milestone. Ric Knox says of the people he memorializes that "their legacy lives on, if I do my job right." Through Knox and his entire company, Frederick Flachtemeier's legacy has lived on for 140 years and will hopefully continue to thrive and support our community for many more.

TREE ACT

HON. BRUCE L. BRALEY

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced the Temporary Assistance for Emergency Eradication (TREE) Act to provide communities in my home state of Iowa, and across the nation, with assistance to deal with the emerald ash borer. The emerald ash borer, first found in Michigan by way of shipping crates from China, is an invasive beetle that is thriving in America as it decimates our ash tree populations in more than twenty states. In my state alone, it will cost approximately \$3 million to remove these trees that now pose a public safety hazard.

The intent of the funding in this legislation is to address the emerald ash borer problem. The TREE Act will provide critical assistance to communities by restoring funding to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's office of Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) back to its previous level of \$37 million to continue to ramp up their work to find a means to control and eradicate the emerald ash borer. Further, it will increase funding for grant programs that directly assist local and state governments dealing with this issue as they coordinate with their communities and private property owners impacted by the infestation of the emerald ash borer.

To do so, the TREE Act would provide an additional \$15 million to the Forest Health Management Cooperative Land program to be used to help communities address emerald ash borer infestations. As well, an additional \$5 million would be provided to the Urban and Community Forestry program to increase grants available for combating the ash borer infestation, and "re-greening" efforts as communities diversify their tree populations and replenish shade where ash trees have been lost.

REMEMBERING DOUG MOHNS

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, this month the city of Chicago lost a hockey legend, Doug Mohns. Doug was a member of the Chicago Blackhawks from 1964 to 1971, where he played left wing on one of the greatest lines in NHL history—the "Scooter Line"—with Kenny Wharram and Stan Mikita.

Doug was a stalwart player in the NHL at a time when there were only six franchises. Rivalries were intense, no one wore helmets and players were intimately acquainted with the strengths and weaknesses of every opponent they faced.

Mohns earned the nickname "Dougie the Diesel" because his piston-like legs dug into the ice and propelled him like a locomotive. He enjoyed his best season with the Blackhawks in 1967, when he tallied 25 goals and 35 assists in just 61 games. His impact on the ice was instrumental to the Blackhawks' first ever regular season title. Mohns went on to have four 20-goal seasons with the Blackhawks.

Mohns' durability and versatility as a skater contributed to his remarkable longevity. During a span of 22 seasons in the NHL, he played in 1,390 games and seven all-star games, while amassing 248 goals and 462 assists.

I join the city of Chicago in remembering one of the greatest hockey players to ever step on the ice, Doug "Dougie the Diesel" Mohns.

RENEW THE WIND PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT

HON. JARED POLIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a member of the House Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition to call on Congress to renew the wind production tax credit.

The wind production tax credit incentivizes clean, domestic energy generation, and has been critical to enhancing America's renewable energy renaissance. Wind energy creates jobs, saves consumers money on their utility bills, and reduces carbon emissions.

Wind energy, and the industry it supports, is important to Colorado. Wind power supplies over 800,000 Colorado homes and employs approximately 5,000 Coloradans. In addition, a thriving wind industry has brought over \$4.2 billion in capital investments and provided land owners and communities with millions in land lease payments.

Most Americans support renewable energy. In fact, thirty states and the District of Columbia already have renewable generation standards and seven states have voluntary goals. Colorado has capitalized on its tremendous wind potential by enacting one of the highest Renewable Portfolio Standards in the nation—30 percent renewable energy generation by 2020. Colorado utilities are ahead of schedule in achieving this goal and in doing so they are discovering that wind energy makes economic sense for their ratepayers and their investors.

Last year I introduced the Renewable Electricity Standard Act with Representatives BEN RAY LUJAN and ANN KUSTER. This legislation would build on the success of state-based renewable energy standards by implementing a 25 percent renewable energy goal by 2025. Providing tax credits for renewable energy development is not just important for meeting these goals, but is also important to level the playing field with our energy industries that receive a myriad of tax credits and incentives.

The wind production tax credit has fueled a thriving U.S. wind energy market. This tax incentive drives increased investments and stimulates the economy. As a former entrepreneur, I know that uncertainty about the production tax credit will slow wind energy deployment, put good quality jobs at risk, and cause capital investments to dwindle. That is why we must renew a long-term wind production tax credit.

The wind production tax credit is essential to American jobs, economic growth, and the success of the wind energy industry. We must renew the wind production tax credit.

HONORING ZANE ALEXANDER
SMITH

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Zane Alexander Smith. Zane is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 216, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Zane has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Zane has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Zane has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Zane repainted three signs for VFW Post 919 in Trenton, Missouri. This facility's signs were in need of aid and the VFW holds a special meaning to Zane due to his involvement with the Civil Air Patrol and military veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Zane Alexander Smith for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I was not able to be present for the following rollcall vote on February 25, 2014 and would like the record to reflect that I would have voted as follows: rollcall No. 63: "yes"; and rollcall No. 64: "no."

HONORING SARALEE MCCLELLAN
KUNDE

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Saralee

McClellan Kunde, who passed away on January 26, 2014, after 66 remarkable years.

Saralee devoted her life to bettering the community and the people she so cherished. She was a tireless and passionate advocate for agriculture in Sonoma County. Raised on her family's dairy ranch, Saralee never wavered from promoting the agricultural legacy into which she was born.

She was an impassioned supporter of 4-H and the Future Farmers of America (FFA) as well as of the Sonoma County Fair and the Sonoma County Harvest Fair. She was equally as dedicated to promoting the Russian River Valley as a premiere wine region. Together with her husband, Richard Kunde, Saralee owned and operated a 265-acre vineyard that produced wine grapes for renowned wineries in the Sonoma and Napa Valleys as well as across our Nation. Perhaps most admirable about the Kunde estate was the private park Saralee and Richard created. Once an overgrown field, the park known as "Richard's Grove and Saralee's Vineyard," hosted countless community and charitable events.

Aside from her work to promote Sonoma County Agriculture, one of the most poignant examples of Saralee's devotion to bettering her community are the thousands of daffodils she planted each year along the highways and back roads of Sonoma County.

Her unwavering passion and dedication to the many causes and organizations she championed was an inspiration to all. And in turn, Saralee was beloved by all those who were fortunate enough to have known her. Saralee was inducted into the Sonoma County Farm Bureau Hall of Fame in 2013. She was honored as a Friend of Agriculture by the Sonoma County Harvest Fair, was awarded the Shining Star Award by the 4-H Foundation as well as with the Leadership in Agriculture Award by the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce.

Saralee was kind, magnetic and loving. Her zest for life and "can-do" attitude were contagious. Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we honor and thank Saralee McClellan Kunde for her life of service to a grateful community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SOCIAL
SECURITY FRAUD AND ERROR
PREVENTION ACT OF 2014

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, for 77 years, Social Security has been the bedrock of economic security for American families. Generations of Americans have contributed to Social Security with every paycheck, knowing that they and their families will be protected if they die, become disabled, or retire. As a result of their contributions—\$14.6 trillion over Social Security's lifetime—Social Security currently has a \$2.7 trillion surplus.

Social Security benefits are modest—about \$15,000 a year for an average senior and even less for a disabled worker—but for most recipients, their Social Security paycheck is more than half their monthly income.

As a representative of those Americans and the Ranking Democrat on the Social Security Subcommittee, I believe we have no more important responsibility than to make sure that Americans receive their earned Social Security benefits on time, and in full. That means protecting Social Security against fraud and errors, and it means doing so in a way that does not delay needed benefits for honest, hard-working Americans.

Social Security's overpayment rate is 0.22 percent. Most of these overpayments are because of errors, but a small part of it is fraud. But Social Security employees believe—and I agree with them—that we could do even more to safeguard Social Security.

Recently the Social Security Administration has uncovered several fraud conspiracies where Social Security contributions made by honest Americans were stolen to pay benefits to people who didn't earn them. In one of the conspiracies, the ringleaders even instructed people to pretend they were disabled as a result of the tragic events of September 11.

The good news is, when you invest in developing quality, well-trained employees to protect Social Security, it pays off. Social Security's front-line employees detected the fraud, and with the help of Social Security's trained investigators, the ringleaders have been charged with felonies and Social Security has begun the process of recovering the money stolen from the trust fund.

But the bad news is that these conspiracies show that Social Security is a tempting target for those willing to break the law, and Social Security's hardworking staff need more tools to fight them and to make sure Social Security only pays benefits to those who should receive them.

That's why my colleagues and I are introducing the Social Security Fraud and Error Prevention Act of 2014. Our bill gives Social Security new tools to find fraud and errors, recoup money that should be in the trust funds, and throw the book at people who steal from Social Security.

First, our bill makes sure that if you break the law, Social Security has the resources to make sure the crime is investigated and prosecuted. We would require SSA to have special fraud-busting investigative units covering all 50 states, provide the resources needed to staff them with the right people, and increase prosecutions of people who steal from Social Security.

Second, our bill makes sure the penalty is equivalent to the crime. Because Social Security requires applicants to prove they are eligible for benefits by providing extensive medical and vocational evidence, cheating Social Security usually requires collusion from trusted people like doctors, beneficiary representatives, and judges. Our bill would increase the monetary penalties for fraud, but most importantly, as Social Security's Inspector General recommends, we would significantly increase the penalty for fraud by those who know better. We'd make it a felony to conspire to defraud Social Security, so prosecutors can nail fraud ringleaders, and we allow prosecutors to ask for a long sentence—up to 10 years—against those who violated a position of trust to breach Social Security's defenses.

Third, our bill makes sure Social Security can afford to use the tools that have been effective in detecting and preventing fraud and errors before a single penny is paid out of the Trust Funds.

Over the years, Social Security has developed a number of proven techniques that significantly reduce fraud and errors.

What's holding them back?

To be frank, money.

Despite a growing number of Americans applying for and receiving Social Security, SSA's budget is lower now than it was four years ago. They've lost one out of ten front-line workers to budget cuts. And Republicans in Congress blocked hundreds of millions of dollars that the Budget Control Act authorized for SSA's most cost-effective methods of preventing waste, fraud and abuse.

Our bill would change that, providing SSA with guaranteed funding for their most effective strategies to prevent fraud and errors. The bill will also provide additional resources to recoup benefits that shouldn't have been paid, along with penalties, if the payments were the result of fraud.

We'd demand something in exchange for the guaranteed money: complete transparency and accountability. Social Security could only use the dedicated funds for the most important and effective strategies. They would have to report annually to Congress how much they spent and what savings their efforts generated for Social Security's trust funds. And the new funds would only be available for additional fraud and error fighting—not to replace what they're already spending out of their regular budget.

Our bill isn't the complete answer to protecting Social Security's trust fund. As we consulted Social Security employees, managers, experts, and beneficiary advocates, they all told us the same thing: The best defense against fraud and errors is a well-staffed, well-trained SSA. And for that to happen, Republicans in Congress have to agree to fund SSA's overall budget.

But providing guaranteed funding to fight fraud will at least spare SSA from having to choose between preventing fraud and processing applications so that Americans receive the benefits they earned on time and in full.

I hope we can work together in a bipartisan way to enact this bill and protect Social Security.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF JEFFREY HOUE

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about Investigator Jeffrey Houde of Rockford, Illinois, who retired from the Rockford Police Department on January 17th.

Investigator Houde joined the Rockford Police Department on July 27th, 1987 as a Patrol Officer and served the city of Rockford for over 26 years. On September 29th, 1991, he was promoted to Detective and assigned to the Investigative Services Bureau Identification

Unit. Houde remained with the Identification Unit until his retirement, eventually taking over day to day operations for five years before voluntarily returning to his role as an Investigator.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Investigator Jeffery Houde for his years of dedicated service to our community and congratulate him on his retirement.

CELEBRATING THE EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY OF MR. FREDERICK W. ANTON III

HON. KEITH J. ROTHFUS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to wish Mr. Frederick W. Anton III a happy eightieth birthday and to congratulate him on a long and distinguished career as an innovator, leader, and faithful public servant.

Mr. Anton joined the Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association over five decades ago in 1962 and became its President and Chief Executive Officer in 1975.

Today, Mr. Anton continues to lead the organization that is the leading advocate for manufacturers and workers throughout the Commonwealth. The Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association continues to be a vibrant organization with a strong voice thanks in large part to his efforts.

Mr. Anton's public service extends far beyond his work at the Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association. He has long served as a strong voice for fiscal policies that will grow the economy, add jobs, and leave a better Pennsylvania for future generations.

In the late 1980s, as President Ronald Reagan was preparing to return to life as a private citizen, Mr. Anton observed that there was no policy infrastructure in place in Harrisburg to continue to advocate for the fiscal policies President Reagan championed while in office.

To fill that void, Mr. Anton set about the work of co-founding the Commonwealth Foundation and the Pennsylvania Leadership Conference. Today, both continue to serve as important beacons of conservative fiscal policy in our Commonwealth. In fact, the Pennsylvania Leadership Conference is celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of its founding this year.

Mr. Speaker, fellow Members, please join me in wishing Mr. Frederick W. Anton III a happy eightieth birthday and thanking him for his more than fifty years of service to manufacturers, workers, and all citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

IN RECOGNITION OF PATRICK J. SOLANO FOR HIS DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Patrick J. Solano for his life-

long commitment to public service. For his distinguished civic career, Mr. Solano has been selected as the recipient of the 2013 Attorney Joseph Saporito, Sr., Greater Pittston Lifetime of Service Award.

During World War II, Mr. Solano served in the U.S. Army Air Corps. While in the military, he completed 23 combat missions over Germany with the Eighth U.S. Army Air Corps Heavy Bombardment Group. For his exemplary service to our nation, Mr. Solano was awarded the Group Presidential Citation, the Air Force Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, and the European Combat Theatre Medal with two Bronze Stars.

Upon his retirement from military service, Mr. Solano dedicated himself to serving both his community and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Mr. Solano has been an integral part of the civic leadership of Greater Pittston. He has served on dozens of local committees, boards and organizations including the Pittston Township Bicentennial Committee. Since 1969, Mr. Solano has also held numerous positions in the state government and worked with ten Pennsylvania governors. He served as the acting secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources when it was first established and was recently honored by that agency for his dedication to Pennsylvania's state parks and forests.

Mr. Solano has received numerous other awards, including the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce's Lifetime Achievement Award and the United States Army Corps of Engineers Commander's Award.

I would like to thank Mr. Solano for his years of civic service on behalf of northeastern Pennsylvania and the entire Commonwealth. I am moved by his dedication and leadership, as I'm sure many others are. It is my pleasure to recognize his work, and I am certain that his dedication to our state will continue.

WIND POWER

HON. SCOTT H. PETERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Speaker, wind energy provides thousands of jobs in my home state of California, and it is powering us towards a clean energy economy. I am proud that California leads in all sources of renewable energy and that clean wind energy is creating 5,830 megawatts of power.

In California, we have attracted over \$11 billion dollars in capital investment, and the land leases generate at least \$27 million each year for the local government. Wind powers over 2.1 million homes in California. We have always been leaders in this area, and we will continue to lead in advanced energy.

In 2013, the advanced energy economy grew twice as fast as the global economy. In order for our wind companies to compete on a global level, we need to make sure that they have certainty in federal policy. Companies, wind or not, need stability in our policies so that they can plan their growth and investments accordingly. We cannot keep enacting

one-year policies when it takes companies more than a year to apply for and receive appropriate permits. We must ensure that our tax policies, among others, are fair and encourage American businesses to grow.

Today, I would like to honor everyone who works in the American wind industry and all who benefit from its clean energy.

HONORING ZELMA LONG

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor my good friend, Zelma Long, as she celebrates her 70th birthday.

It is not uncommon to be knowledgeable about growing, producing and consuming wine in Napa and Sonoma Counties, but Ms. Long's fame and accomplishments elevate her far above the average. She and her then-husband Bob Long established Long Vineyards in my home town of St. Helena, which the two of them continue to operate today. Here she found her calling in viticulture and in producing some of the finest wines to come out of Napa and Sonoma.

She first worked with the legendary Robert Mondavi as Chief Enologist at his winery in Napa County, before becoming Vice President of Business Development at Chandon Estates winery in Napa Valley. Ms. Long moved over to Sonoma County as Vice President and later President and CEO of Simi Winery in Healdsburg. At the time, she was the first woman to assume senior management of a California winery.

Ms. Long was the first President of the Americana Vineyard Foundation and one of its founding members. This organization helped finance research in enology and viticulture. She was also a founding member of the American Viticulture and Enology Research Network. In 2000 she established her own international wine consulting business, with clients in California, Washington, Italy, France and Argentina. She and her husband, Dr. Phil Freese, are California joint venture partners in Vilafonte Vineyards in South Africa, the only South African winery to have been nominated twice for designation as "New World Winery of the Year."

She has been inducted into the James Beard Hall of Fame, named a California Wine Pioneer by Wine Spectator Foundation, selected to receive one of Italy's most prestigious wine awards, the MASI, and honored as Alumni of the Year by both Oregon State University, where she did her undergraduate work, and the University of California Davis, where she did her graduate work.

While continuing to make global wines she finds the time to further her education at UC Davis in a Ph.D. program in Performance Studies and Native American Studies, which she began in the fall of 2009.

Mr. Speaker, Zelma Long is a giant in the wine industry, a woman with a long list of accomplishments and a good friend. It is appropriate that we recognize and honor her today and wish her a very Happy 70th Birthday.

HONORING KENNETH SCHWEIZER

HON. CORY GARDNER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Kenneth Schweizer, from Rocky Ford, Colorado, who was recently named the West Otero Conservation District 2013 Conservationist of the Year.

Raised to be a farmer and rancher, at age 6, Kenneth began driving a tractor. He rented his first farm when he was just a junior in high school.

From the beginning, conservation practices were a priority for Ken. He has dedicated himself to promoting good farming practices that make his farm efficient and sustainable. His conservation practices include utilizing underground irrigation pipe, gated pipe, water control structures, pumping plants and center pivots. Ken also has a passion for building things with his hands and has built a hay stacker and a High Boy sprayer.

In addition to his farm operations, he is an active member of his community, serving in the Otero County Farm Bureau, Rocky Ford Growers Coop Association, Future Farmers of America Advisory Board, Manzanola Methodist Church, Otero County 4-H Foundation, the Horse Creek Grazing Association and the Colorado State Farm Bureau. He and his wife Arlene have contributed greatly to strengthening their community.

I am pleased to join the West Otero Conservation District in recognizing Kenneth Schweizer as the 2013 Conservationist of the Year.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF EULESS POLICE OFFICER RON WILLIAMSON

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize retiring Sergeant Ron Williamson for his many years of public service as a police officer with the City of Euless.

Ron began his career in law enforcement in the late 1970s when he served as a reserve officer for the Bedford Police Department. While serving the City of Bedford, Ron was promoted to Reserve Sergeant and was briefly employed as a Bedford Police Officer.

In 1980, Ron was hired as a patrol officer by the Euless Police Department where he served continuously until his retirement in February of 2014. Throughout his career with the City of Euless, Ron has accomplished many achievements such as obtaining the ranks of Corporal in 1991 and Sergeant in 1993. Additionally, Ron has served a decorated career earning over 40 personnel commendations, Police Officer of the Year in 1983, Supervisor of the Year in 1996, Life Saving Award in 1999, and the prestigious Blackie Sustairste Award in 2011.

Ron has a diverse background in law enforcement as evident in the following depart-

ments in which he operated. He served in the Patrol Division from 1980 to 1985, Criminal Investigation Division from 1985 to 1999 and 2001 to 2004, Community Service from 1999 to 2001, and Administrative Internal Affairs from 2004 to 2014. In each department listed, Ron has held a supervisory position. Ron has been an important leader in the Euless Police Department, and his guidance will be missed.

Ron has also earned a number of certifications and academic degrees within the field of law enforcement. The distinctions Ron has received over the years include the Basic Police Certification in 1980, Intermediate Police Certification in 1987, Dare Officer Certification in 1988, Advanced Police Certification in 1991, and Master Police Certification in 1999. In 1994, Ron graduated from the Southwest Law Enforcement Institute School of Police Supervision; additionally, he completed Basic SWAT Operations Training in 1989 to become a supervising SWAT leader. Overall, Ron received over 2,600 hours of in-service training throughout his career.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in thanking Ron Williamson for his 34 years of public service as a Euless Police Officer.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 56, had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

IN RECOGNITION OF THE OUTSTANDING DETERMINATION AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT OF STEPHANIE JALLEN, A 2014 WINTER PARALYMPIC GAMES ALPINE SKIER

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Stephanie Jallen for her remarkable and inspirational perseverance and resolve. Ms. Jallen will represent the U.S. at the 2014 Winter Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia, which take place March 7-16, and she has also been recognized by the Sunday Dispatch of Pittston, Pennsylvania as the Greater Pittston Person of the Year for 2013.

Ms. Jallen was born on February 13, 1996 with CHILD syndrome (Congenital Hemidysplasia with Ichthyosiform Erythroderma and Limb Defects Syndrome), a rare genetic birth disorder that mostly affects girls. Consequently, the left side of her body is underdeveloped. Ms. Jallen has only one leg and one fully developed arm. Despite a life-altering condition, Stephanie has thrived.

At the age of nine, Stephanie was first introduced to skiing by the Pennsylvania Center for

Adapted Sports. She met and trained with Mau Thompson, who would help her enter multiple NorAm ski races. With Mr. Thompson's assistance, Stephanie became involved with the U.S. Paralympics Alpine Skiing Team and was named to her first national team for the 2011-12 season. Since then, she has been a part of the two most recent national teams. She has competed in countries across the globe, including Germany and Australia.

Ms. Jallen is the epitome of a student-athlete. She trains and competes while also balancing academics. Stephanie is a senior in my district at Wyoming Area Secondary Center, and she has been accepted to Kings College in Wilkes-Barre where she will be starting in the fall as a freshman.

I would like to commend Stephanie Jallen on her determination to compete on a global stage and wish her the best of luck as she proudly represents our country in the 2014 Winter Games. Her remarkable story has brought her community together like few things can, and she has inspired many fellow students and citizens of northeastern Pennsylvania to be the best they can be.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,413,220,474,647.90. We've added \$6,786,343,425,734.82 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.7 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

REMEMBERING DOUG JARRETT

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, this month the city of Chicago lost Doug Jarrett, a hockey legend who dedicated 11 years of his career to keeping the Blackhawks in Stanley Cup contention during the 1960s and early 1970s. The well-respected defenseman was not only known for his strong defensive play, but also for his outgoing personality, which contributed to the team's tight-knit chemistry.

Standing 6'3", the "Chairman of the Boards" presented a stern test for opposing forwards. Rather than rely solely on brute strength, however, the crafty defender used his superior reach to stay in position and out of the penalty box. He was also considered a clean hitter, whose hip check was among the best in the league.

Aside from his defensive prowess, Doug was known for his sense of humor and engaging personality, which was always evident

when he got together with his teammate and close friend Dennis Hull. Together, Jarrett and Hull raised team spirits during the long and often challenging seasons.

Doug Jarrett's distinguished NHL career spanned over 775 regular season games and 99 post season games where he amassed 220 points. A London, Ontario native, Doug was inducted into the London Ontario Sports Hall of Fame in 2011.

For over a decade with the Blackhawks, Doug Jarrett was an outstanding defenseman and an uplifting spirit for the team. I join the city of Chicago in mourning the loss of one of our city's sports icons.

CHARLES AND DAVID KOCH

HON. MIKE POMPEO

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. POMPEO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the following:

"We are disappointed, but not surprised, that Senate Majority Leader Reid has once again falsely attacked Charles Koch and David Koch today on the Senate floor. The Democrats in general and Senator Reid in particular have targeted Charles Koch and David Koch and tried to silence their disagreement on important public policy issues since 2010, using references to the IRS on occasion to do so. Senator Reid's attack today—his third against Koch since January 30th—is particularly troubling because he appears to reference a television advertisement produced by Americans for Prosperity in which a Michigan woman suffering from leukemia shared her experiences under Obamacare. While Charles Koch and David Koch were not responsible for the advertisement in question, we believe it is disgraceful that Senator Reid and his fellow Democrats are attacking a cancer victim as part of their campaign against Charles Koch and David Koch."

PHILIP ELLENDER,
President, Koch Companies Public Sector,
LLC, Government and Public Affairs.

HONORING THERESA BURROUGHS DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2014

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to continue my commitment to paying homage to influential African Americans from the state of Alabama during this Black History Month. Today, we pause to pay tribute to one of Alabama's most courageous and daring heroines of the civil rights movement, Mrs. Theresa Burroughs. In Alabama, this American treasure is celebrated for her role in providing a safe haven to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during his visit to Greensboro, Alabama in 1968.

Mrs. Burroughs was born on August 14, 1929 in Greensboro, Alabama. She attended

Hale County Training School. At just ten years old, Burroughs was certain that her calling was in style and beauty. It was at that age that she built a clientele of women in her neighborhood who sought Burroughs for her impeccable skills as a hairstylist. She charged 25 cents for her services and built a lasting reputation with the women of Greensboro that would sustain her for the rest of her life. Her passion for beauty led her to the Besteda School of Cosmetology in Mobile and Tuscaloosa. After graduating, she returned to Greensboro to open up her very own hair salon.

But, while she found lifelong success and gratification in the business, Burroughs recalls that she grew restless over the hardships blacks endured at the hands of racism and inequality. At 18, she joined with the Rev. J.J. Simmons, a local minister that would take blacks to the Hale County courthouse to attempt to register to vote. Every first and third Monday of each month, Burroughs and others would be turned away. But after 10 attempts, the group was successful.

Burroughs credits Rev. Simmons with encouraging her to continue her role in the movement. As a result, she was on the frontlines during "Bloody Sunday" in Selma, Alabama and was among the countless marchers who were beaten during the demonstration. Her salon was also used as a meeting place for Dr. King and others as they gathered for planning sessions. She became so influential in the movement that some of her clients were instructed not to patronize her salon because she was deemed an "agitator." Nonetheless, she remained committed to doing her part.

In March 1968, just two weeks before his death, Dr. King came to Greensboro to speak at a mass meeting. After the meeting, Dr. King was warned that members of the Klan planned to assassinate him if he attempted to leave Greensboro and travel to Selma. He sought refuge in the home of Mrs. Burroughs' parents as churches were burned along his travel route. He along with the Rev. Ralph Abernathy and their driver Bernard Lee remained undetected at the home until 4 a.m. Burroughs along with others kept watch as Klansmen swarmed the streets of Greensboro in search of Dr. King.

In a recent Birmingham News article, Burroughs recalled what it meant to her to have a role in keeping Dr. King alive if only for a short time. "We helped keep Martin safe that night only to see him die two weeks later and you are tempted to think what good did we really do," said Burroughs. "But I know it mattered because Martin had another two weeks to do his work and two weeks in the life of a man like him was a lot."

Today, Burroughs continues to tell her compelling story through her work as director of the "Safe House Museum" in Greensboro, Alabama. The museum is housed in the same home where Dr. King took refuge in 1968. Mrs. Burroughs donated her parent's property to the city to preserve the historic site for future generations. At the museum, visitors are given a glimpse into what it was like for Dr. King and others on that night in 1968.

It is indeed an honor to share the story of this heroine with our nation. Her selfless contributions to the Civil Rights movement should

never be forgotten. Mrs. Burroughs risked her life to protect the most important figure in the Civil Rights movement and for that, she should be celebrated. As a benefactor of the blood that she and so many others shed, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mrs. Theresa Burroughs, an American hero.

RECOGNITION FOR ANNA JOLIVET

HON. RON BARBER

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Anna Jolivet, a renowned and deeply respected educator in Tucson, Arizona who passed away late last month at age 85.

Ms. Jolivet retired from the Tucson Unified School District as an assistant superintendent in 1989. But she continued to have influence in our community as a civic activist and supporter.

Ms. Jolivet was born in Tucson and grew up in an era when Tucson elementary and high schools were racially segregated. In 1950, she was one of three African-American women to graduate from the University of Arizona, where she received bachelor's and master's degrees in elementary education and a doctorate in education administration.

She served her community primarily as an educator—but also as a community advocate and cultural leader. She served as a member of the boards of directors for numerous local, regional and national organizations.

Ms. Jolivet was the first African-American woman to be appointed principal of a Tucson Unified School District school. And in 1996, she was the first African-American woman to be named Woman of the Year by the Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Jolivet was a founding member of the America-Israel Friendship League's Tucson chapter and of the Educational Enrichment Foundation. Anna and I founded the Educational Enrichment Foundation in 1983. The Foundation continues to serve children attending Tucson schools. In 2010, the Educational Enrichment Foundation honored Ms. Jolivet with its Ray Davies Lifetime Humanitarian Achievement Award for her involvement in programs and institutions that promote quality education and serve Tucson's youth.

On March 1, Ms. Jolivet will be honored by the Tucson Urban League at its first annual Equal Opportunity Day Awards Dinner—an event that will be held to remind the Tucson community that the greatness of our country rests upon the principle of equal opportunity for everyone. This principle was the foundation in which Anna served the children of Tucson and our community at large.

I am proud to recognize Anna Jolivet—an outstanding citizen of Tucson who has left a strong legacy that we celebrate today.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF LORI EDWARDS

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize the service of Lori Edwards. Lori has been the Supervisor of Elections in Polk County, Florida, since January 2001. As the Executive Officer responsible for administering fair elections, maintaining voter rolls, and providing voter registration services, Lori has conducted more than 150 successful elections while serving in this non-partisan elected position.

Lori is active in the leadership of the Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections, where she currently serves as president. She has created a task force to recruit and train bilingual election workers to ensure Florida's growing population of Hispanic voters are accommodated. She has also conducted many regional educational workshops for election administrators focusing on a variety of topics including redistricting, voter education and absentee voting.

Lori's recent efforts have included an emphasis on modernizing Florida's voter registration system and advocating for the advancement in voting machine technology nationwide.

As a member of the U.S. Elections Assistance Commission (EAC) Standards Board, she serves with advisors from around the nation who review voluntary voting system guidelines and provide guidance to the EAC on the administration of Federal elections.

In addition to state certification in her field, Lori earned designation as a Certified Elections Registration Administrator from The Election Center in cooperation with Auburn University. This is the profession's highest recognition, and serves as national certification. Most recently, she attended the International Center for Parliamentary Studies in London, England where she earned a Professional Certificate in Electoral Processes.

Prior to her service as Supervisor of Elections, Lori served four two-year terms in the Florida House of Representatives representing the residents of eastern Polk County in the Florida Legislature. Her major legislative projects included restructuring Florida's juvenile justice system, performance-based budgeting, worker's compensation laws, and welfare reform.

Lori has also worked for the Center for Policy Alternatives in Washington, DC, helping to develop curricula and train new State Legislators at bi-annual retreats. Training topics included conflict, values, power, and communications.

A committed environmentalist, Lori served as Florida Coordinator of the National Audubon Society's "Population and Habitat" campaign, organizing and training Florida activists to raise awareness of the impact of population growth on the environment. She is currently studying to become a Florida Master Naturalist through the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences program.

Lori is an alumna of Executive Education at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at

Harvard University, where she studied the Art and Practice of Leadership Development and participated in a program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government. She was also chosen to participate in the Program for Emerging Political Leaders offered by the Darden Graduate School of Business Administration at the University of Virginia. Lori was a Flemming Fellow at the Center for Policy Alternatives in Washington, D.C. and earned her Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Management from Warner University in Lake Wales.

I am happy to honor Lori Edwards, during Women's History Month, for her service to the Central Florida community.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF COMMISSIONER PATTY SHEEHAN

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize the contributions of Commissioner Patty Sheehan. Commissioner Sheehan was first elected to the Orlando City Council in 2000. She served as President of the Colonialtown North Neighborhood Association, and is proud to come from a servant leadership background. She attended the University of Central Florida where she earned her B.A. in art. Commissioner Sheehan was formerly an Administrator with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. She serves her constituents full time and is well known for her advocacy of pedestrian safety, safe neighborhoods, historic preservation, and a thriving downtown.

Currently, she serves as Vice Chair of the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council. The Council established some of the first neighborhood horizon planning processes, which led to successful developments like SoDo, Mills Park, and Baldwin Park.

Commissioner Sheehan has been recognized multiple times by Orlando Weekly and Orlando Magazine. She was also named "Best Elected Official" by Watermark newspaper. She was listed as one of the "Top 25 Influential Women" by Orlando Life Magazine. Commissioner Sheehan was also awarded the "Diversity Champion Award" by the Asian American Chamber of Commerce in 2013. She has twice been a finalist for "Downtown of the Year." She was also recognized as a "Woman of Distinction" by the Girl Scouts of America, Citrus Council.

Commissioner Sheehan is proudest of her role in the restoration of the iconic Lake Eola Fountain, the addition of 1.3 acres to Lake Eola Park, the preservation of the Eola House, and construction of sidewalks for children walking to and from school. She was the first openly gay elected official in Central Florida, and passed domestic partnership legislation and non-discrimination protections for the LGBT community. She is an urban agriculture advocate, and championed community gardens and urban chickens. She also worked with the Trust for Public Land to acquire the Orlando Urban Trail (OUT).

Commissioner Sheehan is a huge supporter of small business and Orlando's Mainstreet Districts. She represents the Downtown South, Mills50 and Thornton Park Mainstreets. She also lobbied and passed a Florida State Law allowing for Doggie Dining on outdoor patios in downtown Orlando. She is also the founder and chairperson for Wheels for Kids, which

has provided over 1,000 bicycles to needy elementary and middle school students in Reeves Terrace public housing.

Commissioner Sheehan enjoys many outdoor activities including gardening, paddle boarding and Dragon Boat racing. As a local artist who exhibits her "Bad Kitty" paintings in local clubs and shops, she is an avid proponent of the Arts and Culture in Orlando. She lives in a 1928 bungalow with her Chinese Crested dog, Maxine, Nina Simone (a diva kitty) and Jazz (a wild English Springer Spaniel), along with Peep, Cheep, & Bleep (her mini flock of urban chickens).

I am happy to honor Commissioner Patty Sheehan, during Women's History Month, for her leadership and service to the Central Florida Community.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ANNA ESKAMANI

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Anna Eskamani. An Iranian-American and Central Florida native, Anna graduated from the University of Central Florida (UCF) in the spring of 2012 with dual degrees in Political Science and Women's Studies, and a Certificate in Service Learning.

As an undergrad, Anna spent the majority of her time writing, advocating, and organizing for social justice. She first began her advocacy work in the environmental movement, but quickly became an advocate for international human rights via her Vice Presidency of the Iranian Student Organization. In the summer of 2010, Anna turned her focus to domestic issues, when she became Vice President of the College Democrats at UCF and the Women's Caucus Chair of the Florida College Democrats. In April 2011, Anna founded "Keep PBS In Orlando," an initiative to preserve Central Florida's local PBS station. The campaign helped create WUCF-TV.

Anna continued to write, not only in leading publications like The Huffington Post and Orlando Sentinel, but also academically. In March 2011, Anna completed her undergraduate honors thesis focusing on feminism in Iran. Anna presented her thesis, which received high remarks, at several research conferences.

Upon graduation Anna was awarded the Order of Pegasus, the highest honor that a UCF senior can receive. She also graduated with the highest GPA in the College of Undergraduate Studies, an achievement that allowed her to be a part of UCF's Platform Party during commencement ceremonies.

Anna didn't stop there. Now a graduate student at UCF pursuing dual master's degrees in Public Administration and Nonprofit Management, Anna works full-time at Planned Parenthood of Greater Orlando as the organization's External Affairs Manager. In her position, Anna maintains the organization's development and public affairs programs.

Anna continues to be very involved in the UCF and Central Florida community. In February 2013, she launched an on-campus initiative called "Project Bithlo," with the goal of engaging UCF students, faculty, and staff in the transformative work occurring in the historically neglected community of Bithlo. Only a year after its founding, Project Bithlo has connected hundreds of UCF students to Bithlo. The project is succeeding in bringing together

both the College Democrats and College Republicans in an effort to show solidarity with the families of this overlooked community.

Anna also sits on the board of numerous organizations, including the Orange County League of Women Voters, Orange County Democratic Executive Committee, Democratic Women's Club of Greater Orlando, Democratic Women's Club Florida, UCF Women's Studies Advisory Council, and Planned Parenthood's Network of Volunteer Advocates.

A lifelong feminist, Anna is excited to continue her work to better the lives of women and her local community.

I am happy to honor Anna Eskamani, during Women's History Month, for her leadership and service to the Central Florida community.

RECOGNIZING THE LEADERSHIP OF IDA V. ESKAMANI

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Ida V. Eskamani, a young woman with a passion for public service. A first-generation Iranian-American born and raised in Orlando, Florida, Ms. Eskamani believes that individual success is directly tied to the success of her community, and is committed to serving underserved and underrepresented communities.

She began her career in public service as an undergraduate at the University of Central Florida (UCF), where she was active in several campus organizations focused on women's rights, equality, environmental justice, and social justice. As President of the College Democrats at UCF, she worked to empower and educate thousands of students through voter registration drives, rallies, and marches, and established the organization as an integral part of Central Florida's progressive movement. Ms. Eskamani earned dual degrees from UCF in Political Science and Sociology in 2012. She was also awarded the national President's Service Award for devoting more than 500 hours to community service in a 12-month period; as well as UCF's most prestigious award, the Order of Pegasus, for exemplary achievements in academics, service, and leadership.

Following graduation, Ms. Eskamani led the development team of the Orange County Democratic Party, helping them to break fundraising records. She also joined Senator BILL NELSON's re-election campaign as the youngest staff member, working as a Press and Research Assistant. Following the 2012 elections, Ida was selected out of thousands of applicants to serve as a White House Intern in the Office of Presidential Personnel for the spring 2013 term. Upon her return to the Sunshine State, she spent her time as a Digital and Community Organizer with Florida CHAIN, an organization dedicated to increasing access to affordable healthcare, and as a member of the finance team for State Representative Joe Saunders' re-election campaign.

Ms. Eskamani joined Equality Florida, the states' lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender civil rights organization in 2014 as a Development Associate based in Orlando. In her role she assists in organizing and executing fundraising and development programs in Sarasota, Orlando, Jacksonville, and Tallahassee. She is also currently pursuing dual master's degrees in Public Administration and Nonprofit Management at UCF.

I am happy to honor Ida Eskamani, during Women's History Month, for her leadership and service to the Central Florida community.

HONORING ODESSA WOOLFOLK DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2014

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Black History Month, I continue to pay tribute to outstanding African Americans from Alabama. Today, I rise to honor one of Alabama's most beloved and brilliant civic leaders, Ms. Odessa Woolfolk. As a student in Birmingham's segregated public schools to, later, becoming one of the city of Birmingham's most persuasive civic leaders, Ms. Odessa Woolfolk transcended the racial and socioeconomic challenges of her time.

Ms. Odessa Woolfolk was born in the Titusville Community of Birmingham, Alabama and graduated from A.H. Parker High School. She earned her bachelor's degree in History and Political Science from Talladega College and later went on to earn her Masters in Urban Studies from Occidental College in California. She completed additional graduate work at the University of Chicago and was a National Urban Fellow at Yale University.

Ms. Woolfolk began her career as a teacher at Birmingham's Ullman High School, at the height of the civil rights movement. She displayed outstanding and fearless leadership both in her classroom and community during this turbulent time. Following her tenure as an educator, Ms. Woolfolk worked in public policy with the following organizations: the Urban Reinvestment Task Force in Washington, DC, New York State Urban Development Corporation in New York City, the YWCA in Utica, New York, the Arbor Hill Community Center and the Inter-Racial Council in Albany, New York.

After working in New York and Washington, DC, Ms. Woolfolk returned to Alabama to serve as executive director of the Birmingham Opportunity Industrialization Center and associate executive director of the Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity. For twenty-one years, she served as director of the Center for Urban Affairs at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and lectured in political science and public affairs. She also served as staff associate at the Center for International Programs and was an Assistant to the President for Community Relations.

Ms. Odessa Woolfolk's tremendous contributions to the University of Alabama at Birmingham were recognized with the establishment of the Odessa Woolfolk Presidential Community Service Award. Due to her outstanding and extensive service at UAB, Ms. Woolfolk received the UAB Honorary Alumni Award, Outstanding Faculty Award, the President's Medal, and many other awards.

Ms. Woolfolk is most known for her instrumental role in creating the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. She was its founding administrator and chair of the task force that planned

and directed its development. Annually, nearly 150,000 people honor her as they pass through the Odessa Woolfolk Gallery at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute.

Throughout her life, Ms. Woolfolk has served on the boards of numerous Birmingham and statewide organizations, including the YWCA, Region 2020, the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, UAB African American Studies Program, Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, UAB Educational Foundation, Birmingham Museum of Art, and the Birmingham Urban League. Ms. Woolfolk served as the State Chair of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, was the first African American President of Operation New Birmingham's Board of Directors, founding member of Leadership Birmingham and was the founding co-chair of the Martin Luther King Unity Breakfast.

Because of her influence in the city of Birmingham and the state of Alabama, Ms. Woolfolk was honored by Birmingham's Mayor and City Council and was inducted into the Birmingham Gallery of Distinguished Citizens. She was also inducted into the Alabama Academy of Honor and is the well-deserved recipient of the Humanities Award from the Alabama Humanities Foundation. She has received honorary doctorates from her alma mater, Talladega College, from Birmingham-Southern College and the University of the South in Tennessee.

Ms. Odessa Woolfolk is one of Birmingham's brightest luminaries. Through her continued commitment to improving her community, the State of Alabama and her nation, she remains an inspiration to all who know her. And as one of her mentees, it is my honor to recognize her on the floor of the United States House of Representatives. Our generation owes trailblazers such as Ms. Odessa Woolfolk a debt of gratitude. Today, I invite my colleagues to pay tribute to Ms. Odessa Woolfolk, an exceptional woman whose contributions have made her a shining example of exemplary service to all mankind.

TRIBUTE TO CHERRI BRANSON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Cherri Branson on the occasion of her retirement from the United States House of Representatives, after more than twenty-four years of faithful and dedicated service. She is the kind of public servant who brings credit to this institution and the people we are honored to serve.

Cherri began her long and multi-faceted career in the House in 1989 and, over two decades, has served in various policy, legal and legislative positions, including Legislative Counsel, Legislative Director, and Committee Counsel.

I first became familiar with Cherri in the late 1990s, in the course of pursuing justice for African-American farmers who, for decades, had been systematically discriminated against by

the Agriculture Department. That long-fought effort culminated in the enactment of statutory language that set the stage for a landmark discrimination settlement for impacted farmers (Pigford v. Glickman).

It was not until 2005, when I became the Ranking Member of the Committee on Homeland Security, that Cherri began working for me. In her time on the Committee, she rose through the ranks and, at retirement, was serving as the Chief Counsel for Oversight.

Among her key accomplishments on the Committee was the oversight work she led in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. The investigations that she oversaw in the wake of this massive disaster shed light on waste, fraud, and unfair practices that harmed not only impacted individuals, but the American taxpayer. This oversight set the stage for meaningful reforms to help bring about a fair and equitable distribution of resources to survivors of the disaster, better processes to ensure distribution of immediate relief in a timely manner, and more opportunities for impacted local, small, minority and women-owned businesses to participate in recovery efforts.

On the Committee, she has led investigations of national significance, including the investigation of the White House State Dinner Security Breach (the Salahi case) which led to tightened security procedures within the Secret Service's Presidential Protection process.

Prior to joining the Committee, Cherri conducted investigations with the House of Representatives Government Reform (Oversight) Committee. The most notable outcomes of those investigations included the strengthening of protections for children involved in medical clinical trials, equitable tax treatment for Holocaust survivors, and several reviews of federal policies concerning illicit drugs.

During her career in the House, Cherri has directly served on the staffs of Members of Congress from diverse geographic and demographic areas, including New York, Texas, Michigan, Illinois, Hawaii, California and Mississippi. Through her work on behalf of Committee Members, she has come to know and appreciate the concerns of Americans in nearly every corner of the country.

In her work in the House, Cherri displayed that rare combination of steadfast and reliable care for ordinary Americans and a skillful ability to do battle on their behalf.

Even as Cherri closes a chapter of distinction and accomplishment in the House of Representatives, she continues to dedicate her diverse talents to serving others. She, quite literally, is living the famous adage coined by former Speaker of the House, Thomas P. O'Neill Jr.—“all politics is local”—by taking on the responsibility of representing the residents of Maryland's Montgomery County District 5 on the County Council.

On behalf of myself, the Democratic Members of the Committee on Homeland Security, and this institution, I extend my sincere appreciation to Cherri for all her great work. I also wish to acknowledge her loving family—husband Donald, and son, Avery—on their contributions. I urge Members to join me in extending our best wishes to Cherri upon her retirement and in her future endeavors.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, February 27, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 4

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Stanley Fischer, of New York, Jerome H. Powell, of Maryland, and Lael Brainard, of the District of Columbia, all to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Gustavo Velasquez Aguilar, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, and J. Mark McWatters, of Texas, to be a Member of the National Credit Union Administration.

SD-538

3 p.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs

To hold hearings to examine strengthening United States alliances in Northeast Asia.

SD-419

MARCH 5

Time to be announced

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SR-253

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SH-216

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of L. Reginald Brothers, Jr., of Massachusetts, to be Under Secretary for Science and Technology, and Francis Xavier Taylor, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis, both of the Department of Homeland Security.

SD-342

10 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of Defense
To hold hearings to examine national security space launch programs.

SD-192

Committee on Veterans' Affairs
To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of Veterans of Foreign Wars.

SD-G50

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

To hold hearings to examine developments in the Western Balkans and policy responses, focusing on policy approaches of the United States toward the countries of the Western Balkans.

SD-106

10:30 a.m.

Committee on the Budget

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015.

SD-608

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015.

SD-215

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

Business meeting to consider the nomination of Maria Contreras-Sweet, of California, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

SR-428A

2:15 p.m.

Special Committee on Aging

To hold hearings to examine income security and the elderly, focusing on securing gains made in the war on poverty.

SD-562

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine nuclear forces and policies in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

MARCH 6

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States Central Command and United States Africa Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the American Veterans (AMVETS), Blinded Veterans Association, Jewish War Veterans, Military Officers Association of America, Military Order of the Purple Heart, National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs, National Guard Association of the

United States, The Retired Enlisted Association, Vietnam Veterans of America.

CHOB-345

10 a.m.

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Timothy G. Massad, of Connecticut, to be Chairman, Sharon Y. Bowen, of New York, and J. Christopher Giancarlo, of New Jersey, all to be a Commissioner, all of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

SR-328A

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight

To hold an oversight hearing to examine contractor performance information.

SD-342

11 a.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety, and Security

To hold hearings to examine enhancing our rail safety, focusing on current challenges for passenger and freight rail.

SR-253

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine Syria spill-over, focusing on the growing threat of terrorism and sectarianism in the Middle East.

SD-419

MARCH 11

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To hold closed hearings to examine United States Special Operations Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.

SR-222

MARCH 12

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the situation in Afghanistan.

SH-216

10 a.m.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple veterans service organizations.

SD-G50

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine military space programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal

year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

MARCH 13

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States Northern Command and United States Southern Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

MARCH 25

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

MARCH 26

10 a.m.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of The American Legion.

SD-G50

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support

To hold hearings to examine the current readiness of United States forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

MARCH 27

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Navy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

APRIL 3

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

APRIL 10

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-106

SENATE—Thursday, February 27, 2014

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ, a Senator from the State of Hawaii.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we find joy in obeying Your commands. With all our hearts, we thank You for Your guidance that keeps us on the road of abundant living. Today, make our lawmakers instruments of Your providence, measuring up to the challenges of these momentous times. As they seek to honor Your great Name, transform their common days into transfiguring and redemptive moments. Cleanse the fountains of their hearts from all that defiles, making them fit vessels to be used for Your honor. Guide today's deliberations, debates, and decisions.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, February 27, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ, a Senator from the State of Hawaii, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. SCHATZ thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 309, the Child

Care and Development Block Grant Act.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 309, S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for one hour. The majority will control the first half and the Republicans the final half.

Following morning business the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1982, the veterans benefits bill.

I filed cloture on the substitute amendment and the underlying bill. As a result the filing deadline for first-degree amendments is 10:30 this morning and for second-degree amendments it is 1:30 p.m.

At 2 p.m. there will be a series of votes in relation to the veterans bill. We also expect to consider the nomination of Michael Connor to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior today.

PROTECTING VETERANS

Mr. President, there are lots of issues on which Democrats and Republicans will always disagree. That is OK. But, historically, Democrats and Republicans have been able to agree on one issue: Congress should do everything in its power to protect those who risk their lives to protect our country.

I had hoped this work period would be more bipartisan; that the Senate could tackle issues and would be able to stop the political games we have seen so often from the minority.

That is why I scheduled floor time for a bill to expand health care and job training for veterans of the Armed Forces—a very, very comprehensive bill, worked on by the Veterans Affairs' Committee, led by Senator SANDERS. The bill is loaded, as Senator SANDERS and I discussed yesterday in detail, with Republican provisions that he put in the bill.

Democrats and Republicans alike should be able to support this bill, which is sponsored, as I have indicated, by Senator SANDERS from Vermont.

Democrats were even willing to work with our Republican colleagues to consider relevant amendments to this legislation. So it was disappointing—but, sadly, not surprising—when Republicans almost immediately injected base partisan politics into a debate over a bill that should—should—be bipartisan, insisting on an unrelated amendment on Iran that they knew would kill the bill.

I do not know what they say to the 26 veterans groups. Millions of veterans really supported this bill and did everything they could to help the chairman of the committee, the junior Senator from Vermont, to move this bill forward. But they did it on an unrelated amendment on Iran that they knew would kill the bill. I do not know all the reasons, but we had a number of speeches, especially one from Dr. COBURN, the junior Senator from Oklahoma, who came to the floor and had questions about the bill.

I did not agree with all of his assertions, but he has a right to dispute what is in the bill, and he wanted to offer amendments to the bill. We agreed he should be able to offer amendments to the bill, but the Republicans, I guess, are in turmoil internally and did not want him to be able to offer any amendments that they may have to vote for or vote against, so they figured the way to do it is to just kill the bill.

I hope all the veterans groups have witnessed this contortion the Republicans have done to defeat this bill—because it will be defeated. That was their aim from the very beginning.

Like our support for veterans, the Senate's Iran sanctions policy has historically been solidly bipartisan. The idea of Iran obtaining a nuclear weapon is unthinkable. Democrats and Republicans always worked together on this policy. Iran should not have nuclear capability. We all agree on that—I hope so at least. I know on this side of the aisle we do. But it seems Republicans are trying to erase that history and politicize an issue that has historically been above partisanship.

They are trying now—the Republicans—to mislead the American public by saying that a bipartisan majority supports moving forward with new sanctions right now. Of course, it is wrong. Absolutely, of course, it is wrong.

In fact, many Senators, including some who have cosponsored the new sanctions bill, believe we should not move forward with the bill at this time or on this important bill for veterans. It should not be used as an effort to kill this veterans bill.

But in addition to that, 10 committee chairs wrote a letter to me saying: Do not do anything now. They are some of the biggest supporters of Israel there are. But we also have Israel's strongest supporter, AIPAC, also agreeing it is not the time now to bring a sanctions package to the floor. AIPAC was unequivocal in its request for a delay on additional sanctions. In fact, this is

what they said: "Stopping the Iranian nuclear program should rest on bipartisan support and . . . there should not be a vote at this time on the measure."

Many veterans groups have also come out against including the Iran amendment on this bill, including virtually every veterans organization but especially the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, consisting of millions and millions of veterans. We also have the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America saying: Do not do it at this time. We need help. We, the veterans, need help. This legislation would give us that help. Here is specifically what the American Legion said:

Sanctions against Iran have no place in a U.S. Senate debate over legislation that aims to expand health care, education opportunities, employment and other benefits for veterans.

But Iran should make no mistake. We know that. If they fail to comply with the current interim agreement or fail to make progress toward a comprehensive agreement eliminating their nuclear weapons development efforts, Congress will act without hesitation to pass additional sanctions. We have said that time and time again.

That decision will be made in the interest of our national security, not on a partisan ploy. There is too much at stake to play politics with our Nation's Iran policy. Likewise, Republicans should stop putting American veterans at risk and help Democrats pass this crucial legislation.

Shame on the Republicans for bringing base politics into a bill to help the veterans. I have learned that the Republicans here in the Senate have many different ways of saying no, but, as always, it is just plain obstruction. I am sorry to say, again, on a bill to help millions of veterans.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

THE IRS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today is an important day. It is the last day of the so-called comment period when Americans can officially register their opinions on the IRS's latest effort to suppress free speech. So far, nearly 100,000 comments have come through—100,000. Nearly every one I have seen is opposed.

Just to put things in perspective, that is basically the largest number of comments ever—ever—for a rule like this. Even the head of the IRS said he saw more comments on this proposal than ever before "on any regulation," and that was 70,000 comments ago; 70,000 comments ago the Commissioner of the IRS said this was the most comments he had seen on any regulation.

So people are certainly making their voices heard—and loudly—and the message they are broadcasting is pretty clear: Leave the First Amendment

alone. Leave it alone. Get out of the censorship and harassment business. Stick to the job you are actually supposed to be doing.

Let's be clear. The folks who are logging opinions like these run straight across the political spectrum.

Labor unions are upset. Business organizations are upset. Civil liberties activists are upset. Taxpayer groups are upset. Grassroots groups right across the political map are upset at what they view as an assault on their First Amendment rights. All you have to do is read their own words.

One group of primarily left-leaning First Amendment advocates said the new regulation would "impose serious burdens on free speech and hinder the democratic processes it serves."

An official with the ACLU described the IRS's proposed regulation as creating "the worst of all worlds." The proposal, he wrote, could "seriously chill legitimate issue advocacy from nonprofits on [both] the right and left," and would "disproportionately affect small, poor nonprofits that cannot afford the legal counsel to guarantee compliance. . . ."

Here is what one labor union had to say:

Given the history of misuse and abuse of the IRS' immense powers in the not-so-distant past, it is disappointing and disturbing that this fundamental principle has been forgotten and that this . . . [regulation] is the IRS' proposed response to its recent missteps.

So left, right, center—folks understand what a threat this rule poses to the most cherished of civil liberties.

They also realize that a group the administration favors today could easily become a group the IRS targets tomorrow. That is why this fight is so important, why it is so inappropriate to hand this kind of power to any administration. I do not care what party the President is in. That is why I, along with several of my colleagues, recently sent a letter to the new Commissioner of the IRS explaining in some detail why the agency's proposal was such a bad idea, a terrible idea.

In that letter we also reminded the Commissioner of something else: The ball is in his court on this one. The ball is in his court. He could stop this rule tomorrow. And given the comments he made about restoring integrity to the IRS when the Senate voted to confirm him, that is exactly what we expect of him. In fact, that was essentially the mandate on which he was confirmed.

So here is the choice before him. This is the choice the Commissioner of the IRS has. He can either fulfill that mandate to the American people by restoring integrity to an agency they no longer trust, he can be a hero and say no to those who are pressuring him to crack down on the First Amendment rights of ordinary citizens—that is what the IRS Commissioner told Rich-

ard Nixon. He said: I am not going to cooperate with your efforts to target your enemies—or he can serve political masters over in the White House, and he can implement regulations that would erode our most fundamental civil liberties, regulations that would almost certainly lead to the harassment of conservative groups today and, quite possibly, the harassment of left-leaning groups in the future. In fact, a recent letter Representative CAMP received from the Treasury Department appears to suggest that unions in particular have a lot to fear from this proposal.

So, look. Now is the time to act. America's free speech advocates are standing with one voice. Thousands upon thousands made their voices heard in the opinion process. I suspect millions more are right there with them in spirit. Some who oppose this rule picked the President in the last election. Some voted for his opponent. Some may have even cast a ballot for another person entirely. But what unites us is our love of the liberties that have allowed Americans to disagree civilly for centuries.

Commissioner Koskinen, do the right thing. Stop this regulation.

IRAN

Later today the Senate will vote on the motions related to S. 1982, a bill that was not considered in committee, that greatly expands spending without any realistic offset and would vastly overwhelm the Veterans' Administration health care system. It is shameful that Senate Democrats would seek to score political points by rushing to the floor a bill which the committee did not consider and which could otherwise have been handled in a bipartisan manner through the regular order.

Unfortunately, it has become standard practice around here for the majority to pursue partisan legislation in a sort of "take it or leave it" manner, so it is unsurprising that nobody other than the majority leader and the committee chairman have been allowed the opportunity to amend the bill. Senators on both sides have been shut out of the legislative process. For example, we cannot even vote on the ranking member's veterans amendment—legislation I support—which will not add to the deficit. I am a cosponsor of this legislation, which provides full COLA restoration for servicemembers entering the military in 2014, provides advanced appropriations for VA mandatory accounts, improves services and benefits for victims of military sexual trauma, enhances benefits for survivors and dependents of disabled veterans, encourages the hiring of veterans, and, unlike the Sanders bill, is fully paid for.

As for the Iran sanctions language in the Burr amendment, as I noted yesterday, there is significant disagreement between the President and many Members from both parties in both the

House and the Senate concerning the best way to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

The Iranian regime has carried out its best attempt at a charm offensive to forestall not only the implementation but the legislative consideration of even tougher sanctions should the regime fail to fulfill its commitments according to November's interim agreement.

The interim agreement included a Joint Plan of Action, agreed to by Iran. According to that Joint Plan of Action, the U.S. administration, acting consistent with the respective roles of the President and the Congress, will refrain from imposing new nuclear-related sanctions. The agreement is spelled out clearly to the Iranians: Acting consistent with our respective roles. The Iranians can read the plain language and understand that this Congress did not agree to renounce additional sanctions. We did not agree to do that. Yet the majority leader is determined not to allow a single vote on the Kirk-Menendez bill, which could be fully debated by this body prior to a vote. We will not have that debate, apparently, nor will we vote on any amendments related to the bill before us.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Mexico.

VETERANS LEGISLATION

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, lest we forget, more than 30,000 brave Americans are still serving in harm's way in Afghanistan. Hundreds of thousands of men and women in uniform are serving around the world. They all volunteered. In return for their volunteerism, we made a number of promises. The ability to maintain the strongest and most dedicated military force in the world depends on our Nation's ability to keep those promises.

I am a proud cosponsor of the legislation being debated this week, S. 1982, which is perhaps the most significant veterans legislation to come before Congress in many years. This legislation has the strong support of virtually every veterans organization in the

country, including the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, the Vietnam Veterans of America, and the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America. These organizations support the bill because it renews our promise to our veterans.

I am very fortunate to represent the State of New Mexico, which has one of the highest rates of military volunteerism in the Nation. New Mexico, a small State of 2 million people, is home to more than 170,000 veterans, and 2,000 New Mexicans endured the Bataan Death March during World War II.

New Mexico is home to many of our Nation's finest military installations: Kirtland Air Force Base, the Air Force's sixth largest base, with over 100 partners and a strategic role in ensuring our Nation's safe, secure, and reliable nuclear weapons complex; Cannon Air Force Base, the fastest growing Air Force base in the country, leading the fight in special operations; Holloman Air Force Base, an indispensable Air Force base with unparalleled airspace now and into the future; and White Sands Missile Range, the largest military installation in the Nation, with a testing and training environment that is unmatched anywhere in the world.

Additionally, New Mexico's National Guard employs roughly 3,800 full-time and part-time military personnel.

Collectively, there are 18,000 military personnel serving today in New Mexico. Volunteerism is not simply a career choice for New Mexicans; it is a way of life. It is ingrained in our State's rich history of putting community and country first.

The bill before us today renews our promise to all of them and to all of those who are willing to lay down their lives for their country. It provides benefits to all generations of veterans and their families, and it eliminates the cost-of-living adjustment penalty on military retirees.

The legislation incorporates bills and ideas from both Democrats and Republicans to address the disability claims backlog, including one of my own. Across New Mexico I have heard from too many veterans who are frustrated with the delays they experience in receiving their disability benefits.

Last June Senator HELLER of Nevada and I introduced the Veterans Benefits Claims Faster Filing Act, which requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ensure that every veteran is informed of the vast differences in times for processing compensation claims when filing a fully developed claim versus a non-fully developed paper claim.

It takes, on average, 113 days for veterans to receive a final disability rating if they file a fully developed claim online. Compare that to over a year if

they file a non-fully developed paper claim. Filing claims online through the Fully Developed Claims Program accelerates turnaround time and makes processing more efficient. Doing so also provides an additional year of retroactive benefits as an incentive to veterans who file a fully developed claim.

The Faster Filing Act and other legislative efforts represent a collective effort to reduce the backlog and ensure that our veterans receive the benefits they have earned.

I am also proud to have cosponsored legislation introduced by my colleague from Alaska Senator BEGICH to provide advanced appropriations for all—VA spending accounts. This would ensure that veterans receive uninterrupted access to the benefits they have earned, even in the midst of a government shutdown such as the one that so irresponsibly occurred last fall. It is unacceptable that veterans would fall victim to the partisan politics of a government shutdown. The legislation today includes a fix to ensure that never happens again.

The bill also helps put veterans back to work. It reauthorizes a 2-year extension for the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program, which retrain unemployed veterans for high-demand occupations. It requires the VA to establish a 3-year program to provide young veterans under 30 the opportunity to serve in an internship that would pair veterans with private sector employers so they can gain civilian work experience.

The bill expands the VA's successful caregivers program to provide caregiver benefits to veterans of all generations, in a similar manner as post-9/11 veterans.

America's service men and women consider our Nation's principles important enough to defend them against all enemies and at any cost. They volunteer to do so. But volunteerism only works if we fulfill our promises. Few sacrifices are as selfless as those our military men and women make in defense of this Nation. We owe them more than a debt of gratitude; we owe them action in both our words and our deeds. This bill backs our word with action. It fulfills our promises. I hope we see it pass this week.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, on Tuesday I came to the floor to talk about one issue that we are rarely divided on in this building; that is, our duty to keep the promises we have made to provide not only care but opportunity to all those who have honorably served in our Nation's Armed Forces.

The comprehensive veterans legislation that is now before us is really the test for many Members of Congress.

Can we all put politics aside for the good of our Nation's veterans to keep that promise? Can we show these heroes that despite our differences, we will work as diligently toward getting them the benefits and care they have earned as they worked for our Nation?

Now, unfortunately, some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are indicating they would now prefer to put politics over promises, under the guise of an alternative to this bill. Given what we have seen recently on other bills—supported, by the way, by a majority of Americans—we should not be surprised, but I truly did think and hope this bill would be a different story because it contains ideas from both Democrats and Republicans and because this is an issue which has historically united this body and because we have all pledged to do whatever it takes on behalf of our veterans.

So once again where we are today is that some of our colleagues have decided to use unrelated issues to sour this entire effort for our veterans and their families who stand to benefit the most from this comprehensive legislation we are offering.

With their alternative bill they have now proposed to strip away life-changing programs for veterans who are looking to take the skills they learned on the battlefield to the boardroom. With this alternative, they have decided to halt the expansion of opportunities for our caregivers who are integral to the health and well-being of some of our most vulnerable heroes.

But among these and many other examples of the Republican effort to derail this landmark legislation, there is one issue I find most egregious; that is, their shameful opposition to provide our catastrophically wounded heroes with access to reproductive services they so desperately need to start a family.

This shouldn't be a political issue. This is about giving veterans who have sacrificed everything every option we have to help them fulfill a simple dream of starting a family.

As we all know, our men and women in uniform have become increasingly susceptible to reproductive, spinal, and traumatic brain injuries due to the changing weapons of war. But as we know, thanks to modern medicine, many of these servicemembers are being kept alive and they are returning home. In fact, as of the new year, there are 2,348 servicemembers who are living with reproductive, urinary or pelvic injuries as a result of this war. Similar to so many of our veterans, these men and women come home and want to return to their lives. They want to find employment and, importantly, they want to start a family.

Yet what they find when they go to the VA is that the fertility services that are available don't meet their extremely complex needs. In fact, vet-

erans who suffer from these injuries find that the VA is specifically barred from providing more advanced assisted reproductive techniques such as IVF. They are told, despite the fact that they have made such an extreme sacrifice for all of us, we cannot provide them with the medical services they need simply to start a family.

These are families such as SSG Matt Keil and his wife Tracy. Despite returning home from Iraq as a quadriplegic, Staff Sergeant Keil and Tracy started talking about exploring the possibility of starting a family together, but because his injuries prevented him from having children naturally, Tracy turned to the VA and began to explore her options for fertility treatments. But because of that VA ban they were told no and turned away. They were out of options, and the Keils decided this was important enough to them that they were willing to pay out-of-pocket, out of their own pockets, for IVF treatment in the private sector to the tune of \$32,000 per round of treatment.

Thankfully, Staff Sergeant Keil and Tracy welcomed twins Matthew and Faith into the world after only one round of treatment.

Tracy said after their birth:

The day we had our children something changed in both of us. This is exactly what we had always wanted, our dreams had arrived.

The VA, Congress and the American people have said countless times that they want to do everything they can to support my husband or make him feel whole again and this is your chance.

Having a family is exactly what we needed to feel whole again. Please help us make these changes so that other families can share in this experience.

Tracy and Matt aren't alone. There are many men and women out there who share this common thread of a desperate desire to fulfill their dream of starting a family, only to find that the catastrophic wounds they sustained while defending our country are now preventing them from seeing that dream through.

It shouldn't be that way. Unfortunately, Republicans are indicating they will not join us today in overturning this absurd and antiquated ban. Apparently, they would rather our Nation's heroes spend tens of thousands of dollars of their own money in the private sector to get the advanced reproductive treatments they need to start a family. They don't see the problem in letting our veterans' marriages dissolve because of the stress of infertility, in combination of course with the stress of readjusting to life after such a severe injury, driving relationships to a breaking point.

Any servicemember who sustains this type of extremely serious injury deserves a lot more. We came very close actually to making this bill a reality in the last Congress. In fact, Tracy

Keil, whom I just talked about, watched from the gallery when we unanimously passed this legislation—unanimously.

But I am, once again, imploring Republicans to stand and explain to our men and women in uniform—who I know are paying very close attention to this debate—why they now want to turn their backs on the catastrophic, reproductive wounds that have become a signature of these wars.

Only yesterday I spoke to a crowded room of heroes from Disabled American Veterans and told them the heart-breaking story of the Keil family that I just shared and why this legislation is so important. If their cheers and applause are any indication, I would say they wholeheartedly agree our women veterans deserve this, our male veterans deserve this, and certainly our military families deserve this.

I am on the floor to ask my colleagues a simple question: Are you willing to tell those brave men and women who didn't ask those questions when they were put in harm's way that you are going to let politics get in the way of our commitment to them?

The catastrophic wounds we have seen from injuries in Iraq and Afghanistan have meant that our veterans' dreams to start a family have been put on hold because of the tremendous cost of IVF services. We believe that is a cost of war, and we believe the VA absolutely should cover it, and it is unacceptable to let unrelated issues stand in the way.

Even the major veterans service organizations and their leaders have said to us that issues such as the Iran sanctions—that the other side wants to offer—have no place in this comprehensive veterans legislation, people such as American Legion Commander Daniel Dellinger, who said: "Iran is a serious issue that Congress needs to address, but it cannot be tied to S. 1982, which is extremely important as our nation prepares to welcome millions of U.S. military servicemen and women home from war," or IAVA founder and CEO Paul Rieckhoff, who called this comprehensive legislation "a game changer that will change the trajectory for millions of veterans for decades to come."

As serious and as timely as they may be, unrelated issues such as Iran sanctions are just calculated attempts to dismantle our bipartisan effort to expand health care, education opportunities, employment, and benefits for our Nation's heroes. We can't allow our commitment to them to lapse or get caught up in separate issues of political grandstanding.

I thank the Senator from Vermont and all of his staff for their tireless work on this comprehensive legislation they have brought to the floor. I truly

hope our colleagues will reconsider opposing this commonsense and important step to give those who have sacrificed everything the reproductive treatments they need to start a family. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, may I inquire how much time remains for the Democrats during morning business?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Twelve minutes remain.

Mr. KAINE. I ask unanimous consent to use the remainder of the Democrats' time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection.

SYRIA

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise this morning to speak about the widening dimensions of the slaughter in Syria. A country of 23 million people, a proud country, is being transformed before our eyes into skeletons, refugees, and ghosts.

Three million Syrians have fled to neighboring countries. That number will likely exceed 4 million by the end of the year. Nearly 7 million Syrians are refugees within their own country, driven from their homes by the atrocities of the Assad regime. More than 130,000 innocent people have lost their lives during the 3-year civil war. We are witnessing one of the greatest humanitarian crises since World War II, and it can be stopped.

Last summer my Committee on Armed Services colleague Senator ANGUS KING of Maine and I visited Turkey and Jordan to explore the dimension of the refugee crisis in both of those nations. We visited refugee camps and talked to government leaders and NGOs about the damaged lives and the stressed communities that result from this unprecedented displacement of Syrians.

Last week the Senator from Maine and I visited Lebanon to see the scale of the Syrian crisis in that country. In a country of only slightly more than 4 million people, there are already over 1 million Syrian refugees who have fled into Lebanon over the last 3 years, one in four. Think of the scale of that refugee crisis. If we were to receive in the United States war refugees at that scale, it would be 75 to 80 million people, nearly one in four.

In Lebanon last week we met with government leaders, NGOs, and the U.N. High Commissioner on Refugees. What we learned is staggering. The Lebanese people have been unbelievably resilient and welcoming, almost beyond the point of belief. The water and health infrastructure of that Nation is strained to the breaking point.

The Lebanese economy, already fragile, is teetering. Schools in Lebanon now operate on double shifts with Leb-

anese children in the morning and refugee children in the afternoon, accommodating tens of thousands of refugee children, with more coming every day.

The decision by the Lebanese terrorist militia Hezbollah to go all in to support the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad has led to a wave of extremist bombings against Hezbollah-connected sites and leaders within Lebanon in which many civilians are casualties. Senator KING and I witnessed a bombing in downtown Beirut while we were there, seeing it miles away. Many in our group saw the explosion, saw the smoke rise. We felt certain that our meetings would be canceled that day, but one of the most grim aspects of our trip is a bombing, a suicide bombing that killed 5 people and injured nearly 100, caused no one to change their daily routine. That is what life is in Lebanon largely because of the Syrian civil war.

The crisis extends beyond Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon. Refugees are streaming into nearby Iraq by the thousands—30,000 in 1 day in August—exacerbating the deterioration of that country's stability and drawing it deeper into sectarian conflict.

This photo is on the Iraq border with Syria, and we see these refugees stretching into the distance in the hills beyond. This is what is happening with all of the neighboring countries to Syria.

The United States is the largest provider of assistance to the refugees who have fled outside of Syria. We have provided \$1.3 billion in aid thus far, \$340 million in Lebanon alone, but getting relief into Syria is the next challenge.

The conditions in Syria are even worse than the conditions I described in Lebanon. Nearly 7 million Syrians are displaced within their own country, more than 9 million Syrians need humanitarian aid, but they have not been able to receive basic humanitarian aid, food, and medicine due to the actions of the Bashar al-Assad regime and also due to the complicity of the regime's patron, Russia.

The denial of humanitarian aid is a war crime, pure and simple. Thousands are dying of starvation. Cases of tuberculosis, polio, typhoid, and other diseases are expanding at an exponential rate. None of this is an accident. The Assad regime is using forced starvation and forced sieges as a weapon to destroy the Syrian people.

Last month I met in the Senate with Syrians who had survived the chemical weapons attacks carried out by the Assad regime in August of 2013. They described in gruesome detail what they and their families, many young children, endured in August. But the most shocking moment of the interview came when a 22-year-old survivor, who had fled Syria through Lebanon, said if she had to pick, she would rather die a death because of chemical weapons

than be hit by a barrel bomb or starved to death because death by chemical weapons would be quicker.

In recent weeks nothing has epitomized the brutality of the regime more than the use of these barrel bombs. The bombs are crude weapons. They are simple oil drums that are filled with shrapnel and explosives. Helicopters often deliver the weapons, and helicopters often hover over neighborhoods for minutes to just scare everyone who knows what is coming. The barrel bombs drop. They explode shrapnel and level neighborhoods.

This is an example of a neighborhood in Aleppo. At one point hundreds were killed when barrel bombs were dropped on Aleppo earlier this month. We see the size and scope of the devastation and see families and their children fleeing the area in the aftermath of a barrel bomb, and this is going on every day in Syria. Secretary Kerry has rightly called these barrel bomb attacks unacceptable and barbaric.

The primary architect of these crimes is Bashar Assad, but he has a patron who funds and supports what he does and who has the ability to stop the atrocities. Russia is Assad's principal support, and since the start of the Syrian civil war Russia has shown it is complicit in these war crimes. But it is also capable of stopping them.

In the United Nations Russia has used its veto power and threat of veto on the Security Council numerous times to block international action to help the Syrian people. Three of these vetoes were used to block basic humanitarian aid. What possible reason could any civilized nation have to deny war victims food and medical supplies?

But Russia has shown it can be persuaded or shamed into taking action to promote the basic safety of the Syrian citizens. In August, with the threat of U.S. military action to punish the Assad regime for use of chemical weapons against its own civilians, Russia realized it could no longer be the sole global apologist for this atrocity. So it persuaded Syria to admit to the crime, acknowledge the existence of a stockpile, and commit to the complete destruction of these inhumane weapons. While that process has been slow, the weaponry has not been used since Russia realized the world would not tolerate such a clear violation of international law.

Similarly, after repeatedly blocking U.N. action to deliver humanitarian aid in Syria, Russia decided, in the midst of the Sochi Olympics, it could no longer stand in the way of basic humanitarian aid. The eyes of the world were on it and it knew it could no longer be seen as the sole obstacle blocking people from receiving food and medicine. So it finally agreed to U.N. Security Council Resolution 2139 calling for the provision of humanitarian aid inside Syria.

When Russia could no longer comfortably block progress, when the eyes of the world were on it in the middle of the Olympics last week, it finally joined with the rest of the world in calling on Syria to allow aid to its people. In the aftermath of that resolution, the real test lies ahead, because those were words on paper and now we must see whether the aid will be delivered.

This is the situation in Syria today. This is a recent photo from a suburb of Damascus that has been under siege by the Assad regime without access to food and basic medical care. Witness this photo. Look at the destruction; look at the rubble; look at the throng of hungry people stretching to oblivion in the distance. See the hunger in their faces and bodies, and look at the questions in their eyes. It is incumbent upon the Syrian regime to allow unhindered access of humanitarian aid to all Syrians. Opposition groups have that same obligation.

In conclusion, let me say a final word about Russian responsibility to respond to these poor Syrian people. When the Russian Government and its people see this picture, it should remind them of their own history. During the siege of Leningrad during World War II, the Nazis deliberately used these same techniques and tactics—forced starvation and siege—as a tactic of war to cause horrible deprivation to the Russian population of that city. Russians should look in the eyes of these victims of intentional starvation and grapple with their responsibility to them.

Russia can cause the Assad regime, just as it did in August, to open access so these people can have food and medicine. Russia has finally agreed to words on paper at the U.N., but the world will watch the actions of this nation.

One final thought. When Senator KING and I were traveling last week in the Middle East, we went to other countries as well. In one country, where we are engaged in a back-and-forth over the provision of U.S. military assistance, where we are raising what we think are legitimate questions about some democracy reforms this nation needs to undertake if we are to be better and better partners, a leader of that nation said to me: If the United States won't provide assistance, then we will find a way to make Russia our partner.

Well, to anyone who thinks making Russia your partner is a good thing, you ought to look at this photo too, because this is what has become of Syria choosing Russia as its principal partner. Is this the kind of partner you want?

We must keep the spotlight on these atrocities; we must keep the spotlight on Assad's responsibility; we must keep the spotlight on Russia's com-

plicity to bring an end to these atrocities and work with other nations to find a resolution to the Syrian civil war.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, first of all, I want to say I am glad Senator KAINE has been here talking about this important issue today—the tragedy of Syria, the tragedy of the barrel bombs, this hideous way to kill people where you fly over with helicopters and first terrorize people who are wondering where you are going to drop these weapons, and then basically shove them out the side door of a helicopter, and the Russian complicity in this.

We are seeing even today that Russia is beginning to flex its muscles as it relates to the people of Ukraine. I had the Prime Minister from Georgia in to see me on Monday, and of course the day the Olympics were over the Russians were there the next day, more aggressively, partitioning off that part of Georgia they have seized in the last couple of years, the same argument they could easily try to make in Ukraine.

Ukraine, of the Soviet satellite states, is the one that has potentially the most future positive impact on Russia, if they could get it back. The countries of the West, the countries of the European Union, and the United States should be aggressively uniting and trying to reinforce the desire for people in Ukraine to want to have economic freedom and want to have personal freedom, and sending the strongest possible message against those who work against that, whether they are in Russia or whether they were complicit in the activities of Ukraine.

With this sudden moving around of Russian troops today, unannounced until just the last few hours that they would be maneuvering, it is usually no coincidence the Russians are moving troops around at a time of crisis on their borders. We should be very vigilant in sending the message of freedom, the message of supporting people who want freedom.

My concern about Syria is that our policy hasn't worked there either and, frankly, our policy hasn't worked in such a way that it makes it hard for us now to say there will be consequences for Russia if something happens in Ukraine. We need to be sure the world knows, when the United States talks about consequences, that there will be consequences, they will be meaningful, they will be certain, and that things such as are happening in Syria can't be allowed to continue, and worse things, such as those happening in Ukraine, can't be allowed to happen.

HEALTH CARE

I came to the floor today to talk about health care again. I heard the leader's comments over the weekend—

Senator REID's comments—where he is referring to the President's health care plan. He said: There are plenty of horror stories being told. Then Senator REID said: They are, all of them, untrue. All of them are untrue.

I don't think anybody has come to the floor more frequently than I have in the last 2 months, 3 months, 10 weeks. I believe I have been coming to the floor every week, the 10 weeks we were in session, with stories from Missourians. We call them. We talk to them about it. We say: Senator BLUNT is going to the floor and he is going to talk about what you have talked to us about. He would like to mention your first name, where you are from, but if you don't want him to do that, he won't do that. In virtually every case, they say: We told you these stories because we want other people to know. We want people to know how we are being affected by the President's health care bill.

They seem to have plenty of facts backing them up, way beyond Senator REID's assertion that all of them are untrue. They are not all untrue. In fact, I have every reason to believe they are all true, and there are many more stories out there to be told.

Today I wanted to talk about the changes in Medicare Advantage and I had to have some discussion with our team, and they asked: Well, how many of these stories are you not going to tell this week if you just tell the stories about Medicare Advantage? If you are in agreement with Senator REID's view of the world, I guess you think the active imagination of Missourians is running wild, because they are contacting our office constantly telling us about higher premiums, higher deductibles, insurance they used to have that worked and insurance that doesn't work, and it doesn't work because the Federal Government, without thinking through the goal of trying to be sure more people had access to insurance, didn't think about all of the unintended consequences.

The latest broken promise—I am afraid it won't be the last; I wish it would be the last broken promise, but it won't be the last, I suspect—relates to the 15 million people in America who have Medicare Advantage—something they liked and something they are not going to be able to have, in many cases, the way they used to have it. This is another application of that promise of if you like your insurance, you can keep it. Well, all the 15 million Americans who have Medicare Advantage, many of them, are going to find they can't keep it. And before this is over, all of them may find out they can't keep it.

The President's health care plan has already cut hundreds of billions of dollars from Medicare—not to save Medicare but to fund the new program. Everybody knows Medicare is one of the

great challenges we have going forward. How are we going to maintain Medicare? Only in Washington would you be able to get by with saying: Medicare is in real trouble, so let's cut it to start another program. This is the only place in America you wouldn't be laughed off the city council dais or off the legislative floor if you said: We have this one program that is in big trouble. We are not going to do anything to reform it, we are just going to cut it so we can start another program. Yet that is what has happened here.

We have already cut Medicare by \$300 billion—that is Medicare Advantage—and on top of this cut to Medicare Advantage we now see that plans are being changed, and they are being changed in significant ways.

Why did we have Medicare Advantage for States such as mine—the State of Missouri—with lots of rural areas, lots of rural hospitals, without always having competitive health care providers? Medicare Advantage provided the competition. It was that competition that made Medicare Advantage and Medicare Part D work and made them work at much less cost than anybody had anticipated. The marketplace works if you focus on a competitive marketplace rather than trying to run health care to be sure there is competition out there. That is what Medicare Advantage did. In our State, 1 out of 4 people on Medicare is on Medicare Advantage—237,000 Missourians on Medicare Advantage.

On February 14, I joined my colleagues in urging CMS not to make any more cuts to Medicare Advantage. There were 40 of us who signed that letter, and 19 of the 40 Senators who signed that letter were Democrats, with 21 Republicans. So there is a pretty bipartisan sense that something must be happening out there to hurt these programs. That is true, not untrue.

Why would we continue to do that? I don't know. So I have joined the Republican leaders in a letter this week calling on Secretary Sebelius to stop moving forward with these misguided policies that do things that impact people on Medicare Advantage; that do things that impact people who had health insurance with a deductible they could afford but now no longer have.

The administration's proposals continue once again to contradict the promise that if you had health care you liked, you could keep your health care policy; that if you had doctors you liked, you could keep your doctors. More and more people are seeing that is not true.

These many stories I have heard I firmly believe to be true, not untrue, no matter what the majority leader of the Senate might have said. Let me share a few of those today as I move toward the conclusion of what I want to talk about today.

Darcie from Kansas City, MO, is a registered nurse and works with Medicare patients daily. She sees firsthand the effect the rising expenses on Medicare Advantage are having on people she deals with. This is a quote from her letter:

Our seniors and other Medicare Advantage members should not, as they already do, have to make choices between paying for medicines and other healthcare related expenses or food or housing expenses.

I hope you are able to see the bigger picture, as I do, as a 30-year-old professional nurse who is on the frontlines each and every day taking care of these individuals and their families.

This sounds truthful to me.

Edward and his wife, from Saint Peters, MO, live on a fixed income. He said:

My wife and I are retired seniors living on a fixed income. I have Medicare Advantage, which is provided by Mercy—a Missouri based health insurance company. I am told I will lose coverage next year due to ObamaCare cuts. Why must the cost of ObamaCare—which Missourians did not want—be paid by cuts to seniors? Please change the ObamaCare law to leave Medicare Advantage alone.

Again, 19 Democrats and 21 Republicans signed a letter last week asking the same question. This letter didn't even say: Go back and reverse what you have done. Just stop making these cuts being made right now.

Ronald from Raytown, MO, says his copay has increased as a result of the administration's cuts to Medicare Advantage plans.

Please protect our Medicare Advantage plans. As you know, Medicare is presently underfunded. I do not appreciate those that permit Obama to willfully take [hundreds of billions of] dollars that we seniors have paid into Medicare and use those monies to fund ObamaCare. I am counting on you to protect our Medicare Advantage plans and realize that the less government involvement in our Medicare Advantage plans, the more efficient the plan. As a result of ObamaCare, my copay has increased.

My guess is Ronald knows whether or not his copay has increased. In speaking with him, I am certainly persuaded that the facts he is presenting—like the other people we are talking about today—are absolutely true.

Jennifer from Blue Springs, MO, says:

My husband and I are both on Medicare already . . . the co-pays for our "Medicare Advantage" plans have doubled and, in some cases, tripled from 2013 to 2014 . . . [and that is why I'm responding with a nightmare story].

The other thing Jennifer said is she and her husband are retired. They are musicians, and they had a business where they would go to nursing homes and play gospel music just for their expenses. She points out that because of the increased health care costs, nursing homes no longer have room in their budget for something that is entertaining, such as live gospel music. The reverberations of what happens when

the government decides that the government is better prepared to manage not just Medicare and Medicaid—as if we didn't have enough challenges already—but 16 percent or 17 percent of the economy are seen out there every day.

I certainly believe there have to be some people who are benefiting from this, but the numbers don't suggest that the overall benefit is nearly as good as the overall damage: people losing insurance at greater numbers than people getting insurance; premiums going up more than going down; deductibles rising.

It would be nice for those who supported this to convince people that all these stories are untrue, but I think too many people have true stories to tell for their neighbors and their friends not to realize what is happening because of this government interference with a health care system that was working instead of doing the handful of things we could have done to make the best health care system in the world work better. They were there. They were offered. The President knew they were there. That is not the course we followed, and the course we are following is not leading to a place where most Americans want to be.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, may I inquire what the order is in morning business relative to time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 15 minutes remaining on the Republican side.

IRAN

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I appreciate this opportunity to come to the floor to speak about a different subject but one which is imminent and necessary for us to consider; that is, the current Iranian sanctions issue.

Back in 2007, when Iran had "only" about 700 centrifuges spinning to enrich uranium, we—and by "we," I mean nearly the entire international community—determined that the behavior by the Iranian regime was simply too dangerous to tolerate. The U.N. Security Council began the process of passing a series of resolutions demanding that Iran stop enriching uranium entirely. The United States, led by many here in the Senate, began the very careful and painstaking process of amassing an international coalition to back increasingly tough sanctions, all aimed explicitly at forcing the Iranian regime to end enrichment activities.

The reason for this was because we believed a nuclear weapons-capable or -armed Iran posed an imminent threat not just to the Middle East but to the world community. That was the consensus agreed to by the world community and supported by resolution after

resolution from the Security Council of the United Nations and by proclamations by not only our country but by countries around the world.

The entire effort had, for some years, been devoted entirely to ending uranium enrichment activities. The consensus was that nuclear weapon possession or capability posed unacceptable consequences. Now that goal is nowhere in sight. Neither the interim agreement currently being employed, nor the administration, nor any of the negotiating partners even refer to these resolutions or this multiyear strategy of achieving the objective we set out to accomplish. The objective was that Iran would cease enrichment of uranium, which could be used to achieve nuclear weapons capability. This goal has suddenly been totally abandoned.

The current interim agreement explicitly concedes to the Iranians their right to continue enrichment activities with only meager limitations, all of which can be reversed by the mullahs in Iran in an instant. The mullahs in Iran boast publicly of this great negotiating victory for them, which goes against everything we have been trying to do for the past 6 or 7 years.

It seems unassailable that Iran came to the negotiating table at long last directly as a consequence of the hardship that was achieved by these international economic sanctions that were imposed on this regime. They resisted coming to the negotiating table until these sanctions really started to hit home.

But what is equally clear is that the regime wants sanctions relief and has sought this interim deal to accomplish it—and unfortunately, we have given it to them. And what do we get in return? What we get in return is having negotiated away our very core purpose for doing this in the first place. Instead of using our leverage to continue the progress we had made to bring Iran to cease uranium enrichment, we blunted our very best leverage and our very best tool. Instead of pressing our long-term advantage, we have begun to relieve the pressure on Iran to cease their efforts to gain nuclear weapon capability. And why have we abandoned our goal to stop uranium enrichment? Because the Iranian negotiating team has told us they would never tolerate an end to their long, expensive path to an enrichment industry.

So here is my central conviction on this matter: If those on the other side of the table tell us in advance that our long-held conviction and purpose is asking too much, instead of meekly complying with their request, then we must increase pressure until they change their minds, not abandon our own goal because it is perceived as too tough.

So what have we bought with this interim agreement? According to the Bi-

partisan Policy Center, of which I used to be a part, the main practical consequence of this claimed “freezing” is that the time Iran now needs to produce a critical mass of highly enriched uranium—20 kilograms—with current centrifuges has gone from an estimated 59 days to 63 days. What did we gain from the agreement? Four days—four days longer that it will take Iran, once they flip the switch, to get highly enriched uranium, which allows them nuclear capability.

It seems clear that among Iran’s principal objectives now is to break apart the strong international consensus we have worked so hard over so many years to forge. Prospects for Iran to do so look pretty darned good. Clearly Iran has not lived up to what they agreed to do or what we asked them to do. But there seems to be no prospect in place for our returning to sanctions unless the Senate, on a bipartisan basis—and there is bipartisan support for this—is able to impose the next round of sanctions should this interim agreement not achieve its objectives. Yet we are currently being blocked from bringing this legislation to the floor.

I repeat: This is bipartisan legislation led by Senator MENENDEZ of New Jersey and those who have been actively engaged and involved. But now we are being asked to stand down. We are not even given a chance to exercise our vote on this, which we are attempting to add to the pending legislation here. Again, delay, delay, delay is putting us in a position of essentially conceding to the Iranians what they want and giving them the opportunity to continue to pursue their quest for nuclear weapons capability.

Obviously, for them, it is just fine if they can turn the protracted uncertainty and gradual sanctions relief into a series of lesser agreements. But for us, more interim agreements will mean our allies will become accustomed to these gradual changes and the increasing commerce in Iranian oil. They will become less inclined to again reverse course almost regardless of Iranian actions. Following that prolonged process, we confront a stronger Iran but a weaker international coalition opposed to Iranian nuclear ambitions. Iranian ambitions and capabilities will grow, our efforts to halt the Iranian quest for nuclear capability will diminish, and we will then be left with a choice of containing or taking military action against a nuclear-capable, if not nuclear-armed, Iran.

The President has said repeatedly that “containment” is not an option. It is not for me either. Since he also said military force is an option, it seems clear to me this current course is more likely to bring us to that stark point than to a negotiated settlement.

We must be determined to do what we can in the Senate to prevent us

from reaching that point. Not only must we refocus our government and other friendly governments on the need to eliminate Iran’s nuclear infrastructure in any final agreement—no matter how difficult that might be—we must also oppose Iran’s likely intentions to prolong the negotiation process intended to continue to weaken our coalition.

The Nuclear Weapons Free Iran Act that I have cosponsored will give us great leverage in doing that. It will make it clear that the Senate will not support playing Iran’s game any longer than we already have.

I deeply regret that we are not being given the opportunity to debate this issue before the American people and among ourselves, that we are not allowed to have a vote in the Senate as to whether our current policy that this administration is pursuing is the right policy to achieve the goal which we all agreed to.

The last four Presidents—two Democrats and two Republicans—have declaratively said: A nuclear-capable Iran is unacceptable. President Obama has stated that over and over. Yet here we are engaged in a process that advances that prospect.

We are put at a disadvantage, and we are giving away the one tool that has brought Iran to the negotiating table. They have trumpeted publicly about how they have outsmarted us and outnegotiated us and achieved what they wanted to achieve and diminished our opportunity to achieve what the world community wants to achieve. We will rue the day that we almost had Iran to the point where we could have achieved our goal but stepped back and conceded to their promise and commitment to continue to enrich, to continue to add centrifuges, and to continue their pursuit of nuclear weapons capability.

If Iran is armed with nuclear weapons, it will pose unimaginable consequences to us. There has been total agreement on that among the world’s Nations. Yet here we stand at the moment of decision—right when we, in a sense, had them where we wanted to get them, and we conceded that.

I deeply regret that we have not been able to move forward with these additional sanctions to be employed if—in this first interim agreement—Iran does not live up to the objectives and goals which we have demanded.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

COMPREHENSIVE VETERANS HEALTH AND BENEFITS AND MILITARY RETIREMENT PAY RESTORATION ACT OF 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of 1982, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1982) to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reid (for Sanders) amendment no. 2747, in the nature of a substitute.

Reid amendment no. 2766 (to amendment no. 2747), to change the enactment date.

Reid motion to commit the bill to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, with instructions, Reid Amendment no. 2767, to change the enactment date.

Reid amendment no. 2768 (to (the instructions of the motion to commit) amendment no. 2767), of a perfecting nature.

Reid amendment no. 2769 (to amendment no. 2768), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 2 p.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I am thrilled that we are here at this moment debating benefits for our veterans. Our veterans have stood up for America by fighting for us overseas, and when they come home we need to be standing up for them. Over time we have come to recognize that there are a number of shortfalls in the way we address our benefits for veterans that need to be corrected, and that is what this bill is all about.

Yesterday we had a motion to close debate on whether to debate this bill, and that was successful, so here we are at this moment. Let's recognize that America has been at war for more than 12 years, that more than 6,000 Americans have lost their lives in service to our country, that more than 50,000 Americans have been wounded in combat.

At some point 2½ million Americans have left their homes and their families to serve their country in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many of these men and women have served more than 1 deployment, and 400,000 men and women have served more than 3 deployments. They have gone back to the theater of war repeatedly, with sacrifices on a personal level, sacrifices for their family and sacrifices for their health. They have gone into perilous situations on behalf of our Nation. Today we need to make sure the benefits promised are there, and where the benefits are insufficient, that they are improved.

I am hearing there is a possibility there may be an effort today to block this bill—this bill on behalf of our veterans. I certainly hope that will not be the case. How can we explain that the ongoing partisan politics that have so poisoned and paralyzed our Nation are more important than addressing the benefits of our veterans—our service men and our service women—who have fought for our country. Today is not a day for partisan politics. It is a day for keeping faith with those who have served our Nation.

I will address a particular provision that is in this bill today. The bill takes on many issues, one of which is to work very hard to shorten and eliminate the big lag in time that occurs when our veterans apply for benefits. Benefits delayed are, for a period of time, benefits denied. The Department of Veterans Services has made progress with more progress to come. This bill will make a difference in eliminating the backlog and will address the needs of our veterans in a timely fashion, and timeliness is very important.

There is another provision in this bill that I particularly want to emphasize because it comes out of conversations that occurred 6 years ago when I was talking to folks about running for the Senate. People in Oregon said: We need to take care of our Gold Star families—our families who are striving and struggling to be on their feet after they have lost a servicemember in combat. This is a challenge, of course, for the children and it is a challenge for the spouses.

A veteran brought up the fact that we needed to provide much better educational benefits. I am very pleased to have a bipartisan sponsor, Senator HELLER of Nevada, because there is nothing about helping our veterans that should be a partisan issue. There is nothing about addressing the needs of our Gold Star families who have lost a member of the family in combat that should be a partisan issue.

Mr. Robert Thornhill, a veteran, talked to me in 2008, right before I came to this Chamber, about this issue of educational benefits for the children and for the spouses. When the primary wage earner for a family is struck down in battle, the rest of the family needs a lot of help regaining their feet, and that means educational opportunities for the children. But let's not forget that the spouse who has to take over major financial responsibilities also needs educational benefits.

Shortly before I came here, the post-9/11 GI bill went into effect creating the Machine Gunnery Sergeant Fry Scholarship. That scholarship fulfilled the vision that Robert Thornhill and I had talked about, and it went even further to include housing and book stipends and support for attendance at private universities, but it only did so for the children of the fallen.

Mr. Thornhill followed up with me. He noted that we need to take on and extend these benefits to spouses as well. Over the long term children need help going to college, but in the short term spouses often have to be retrained to adopt their new role as the major breadwinner for the family.

For several years I have been advocating that we fulfill this vision of taking care of the educational opportunity issues for our Gold Star families. Education is a powerful tool to rebuild a family's financial foundation, but it has to be affordable.

There is a provision in this bill that Mr. Thornhill championed, a provision that is fundamental to fairness for our spouses of those who have fallen, and it is a provision that is fundamental to the future success of our Gold Star families.

This provision—this Spouses of Heroes Education Act—is one element among a number that our Committee on Veterans' Affairs has so ably assembled to address shortfalls in the programs that assist those who have stood for our country.

Let us not forget what we are working to do: to keep faith with those who have served our country. Let us set aside the petty, partisan, poisonous games and let's hold the faith and keep our veterans in mind.

Let's get this bill done. Let's get it to conference with the House. Let's get it to the Oval Office. Let us keep faith with those who have stood for our country.

I thank the Presiding Officer. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I am delighted the Senate is talking about our veterans. I am disappointed the bill before us did not go through the entire committee process. I am grateful that Senator BURR, the ranking member, has brought forward a side-by-side bill which I wish to discuss for a moment. I am particularly glad the Burr bill brings up the Iran sanctions issue. I know the administration has kind of backed away from the sanctions because of some things that have happened recently and does not want a sanctions bill to pass the Senate.

I have followed closely what has happened in the Middle East. I recall back to 1979 when Georgians were held hostage in the American Embassy in Tehran for 444 days. I have a lot of experience with that part of the world and I think there are some things of which we should be reminded.

This bill, the Burr bill that includes the veterans' benefits, also includes nuclear weapons sanctions on Iran and most of the provisions of the Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act. In particular, three things included are important to note.

No. 1, it reimposes existing sanctions suspended under the interim agreement

if Iran cheats on its commitment, drags its feet in negotiations, or threatens the West with long-range missiles or terrorism.

No. 2, it ensures the final agreement must require Iran to dismantle its illicit nuclear infrastructure to prevent Iran from being able to produce nuclear weapons.

No. 3, it threatens to impose additional economic sanctions in the future should Iran cheat on its commitment or fail to agree to the final deal that dismantles its nuclear infrastructure.

I have watched the television set. I have seen the international reports. I have listened to what the Iranians are saying since we have had this interim agreement, and here is what it says: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani pledged that under no circumstances—and that is a direct quote—would Iran agree to dismantle a single centrifuge in a final nuclear agreement.

This is what he is saying now and we are talking about getting to a final agreement months from now.

Second, during Iran's national day celebrations in which American flags were burned, Rouhani declared: "We will permanently continue to progress our nuclear technology."

Third, former Iranian top nuclear negotiator Hossein Mousavian told Iranian media in a recent interview that the Islamic Republic will never—I underscore never—agree to dismantle portions of its nuclear infrastructure.

Iran nuclear negotiator Majid Takht Ravanchi reiterated Iran would not accept the closure of "any of its nuclear sites."

Next, an Iran official on February 12 set aside the idea of potentially altering a nuclear reactor so that other nations would fear the production of atomic bomb fuel.

Finally, Iran will determine its needs regarding uranium enrichment on its own, the country's chief nuclear scientist said on February 25, and will not—and I underscore not—accept foreign powers dictating its enrichment policy.

Iran is advancing its nuclear ballistics testing system and it has fired nuclear missiles to test its capability. Iran has deployed two ships in the Atlantic as a show of force on the United States of America. They continue in every way possible to be a surrogate fighter in Syria, empowering the Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza, and they continue to cause the disturbances throughout the Middle East.

Why should we not as a Congress of the United States, in talking about our veterans, include within that talk a clear shot across the bow to the Iranians that America will not stand for them laughing at us or poking their finger in our face when we talk about a nuclear-free Iran?

We do not need a nuclear armed Iran in the Middle East for a plethora of

reasons. Most importantly, if they get one, there will be a nuclear arms race in a very unstable part of the world. It is the home of terrorism. It is the home of the biggest fear the United States of America has, and our best ally, Israel, lies in the path of Iranian resistance. So it is important the sanctions be reinstated and that we have conditions on the Iranians so that if they violate their promises or they look the other way on their commitments or they do what they are saying on their own national television networks today, they understand there will be a consequence to their actions.

I remember 1979. I remember when "Nightline" became a television show because for 444 days Americans were held hostage in Tehran. I remember that just the day before President Reagan was sworn in as President of the United States, President Carter finally negotiated a release of the hostages in Iran, for one simple reason: Iran knew that once President Carter was out of office and President Reagan came into office, he would follow through on what he said, and that is he would do whatever it took to free the hostages.

There is only one thing the Iranians understand. They understand someone who will fight and stand up to them, someone who will take them on, and somebody who will not settle for their looking the other way on the agreement they made. It is critical and important the Senate of the United States send a clear message to the Iranians that we will not be lied to, we will not be misled, and we expect them to live up to the commitments they have promised to live up to. If they don't, there will be consequences for their actions.

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are already pointing out that the economy of Iran is now improving, with the interim agreement we currently have. We have no certainty on a final agreement that is coming in the next few months. We have no certainty the Iranians are going to do what they say they are going to do anyway. If we sit here passively saying it will be all right, if we don't let them know there will be conditions if they violate the sanctions, if we don't let them know we mean business, then America will have turned its back on the most dangerous enemy we have, and that is the enemy of terrorism and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

I appreciate our veterans and the sacrifice they have made to try and free us from terrorism. I appreciate the volunteers who have sacrificed their sacred treasure and their families and their own personal blood and their own personal life trying to defend America and liberate the people of Iraq and the people of Afghanistan. I don't want us to turn and leave the Middle East. I want

to let the Middle East know, and its biggest ogre, the Nation of Iran, that we will not stand for a nuclear weapon in Iran. If they continue to try and progress toward that, there will be sanctions that will be crippling. America will not turn its back on Iran; we will stand toe to toe with them and say this will not stand.

I commend Senator BURR for his leadership in including that in this portion of the veterans bill, as well as those members of the Foreign Relations Committee and the other 57 Members of the Senate who have signed the Iran sanctions bill. It is my hope and plea that sometime in the weeks ahead, before the Iranians think we have no teeth left at all, that we will do the right thing on the floor of the U.S. Senate and enhance the conditions of sanctions against the Nation of Iran if they lie to us or fail to keep the promises they have made in the interim agreement and the ultimate permanent agreement we make.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, we have a lot of challenges before this Nation and this Congress. I believe the most critical challenge is how we handle financial matters that have been entrusted to us, how we handle the budget and spend the debt we are approving in America, and are we able—do we have the will, do we have the integrity—to stand up and put this Nation on a sound fiscal path.

I would note to all my colleagues that the week before last before the Budget Committee, our own Congressional Budget Office Director Mr. Doug Elmendorf repeated once again—which is absolutely accepted by virtually every economist in America—this country remains on an unsustainable debt course. This is an unsustainable path we are on. He indicated and said flatly we could, indeed, face a fiscal crisis, something like 2007, perhaps, something like Greece, because our debt is so large and growing at such a pace. We have never been here before. We are in the red zone on the tachometer. We are in the danger area, and we need to get out of it.

So I would say to my colleagues, isn't this true? Does anybody doubt it? Does anybody deny it? Then why don't we respond in an appropriate way?

I was shocked, deeply disappointed, amazed, and saddened that this headline appeared earlier in the week in the Washington Post. This is what it said: "With 2015 budget request, Obama will call for an end to era of austerity."

What does this mean? Every Member of this Congress knows what it means. It means the President of the United States is no longer interested in fiscal responsibility. He is saying: We no longer need to tighten our belt. He is saying he is going to attack anybody who suggests more spending is bad. He is going to say that he is going into this election with the idea that he is going to promise, promise, promise more and more spending, more debt, and he is not concerned about it. That is what it means. I am not exaggerating. I think every Member of this body knows exactly what that signal was.

So we will see the budget. It will be out next Tuesday, and we will have a hearing in the Budget Committee, of which I am the ranking Republican, on Wednesday. But I suspect and am confident it will do just like his last two budgets. It would increase spending \$1 trillion above the amount of spending we agreed to in 2011 and reaffirmed essentially with the Ryan-Murray bill that he signed about 2 months ago into law.

We cannot do this. This is how we destroy a country, how we weaken an economy. I cannot—I do not have words to express it.

I will say one more point. Economists are telling us that our economic growth today is below what it otherwise would be because of the size of the debt this country faces right now—not in the future, right now. It is a wet blanket on economic growth. The Rogoff-Reinhart study talks about the slower growth, and we have consistently seen projections for growth not being met.

Director Elmendorf, in his testimony—I asked him about it 2 years ago. He predicted 2013 would allow us to see 4.6-percent economic growth. It came in at 1.9 percent—a stunning miss, well below. Below 2-percent growth means you are not creating jobs, you are not creating wealth, you are basically stagnant with an increasing population.

We need to be at 4.6 percent. We need some of that kind of growth. One reason we are not is bigger government, more taxes, more regulations, and more debt.

We are not going to get out of it until we get off that path.

So now we have a veterans bill before us. Nobody, I do not believe, is more committed to veterans in this body than I have been, and so many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle want to do the right thing for veterans. But it is an audacious thing we are seeing here today.

Let's review some of the history.

Two months ago, every Senate Democrat—every Senate Democrat—voted for a bill to cut military pensions for our soldiers, our military retirees, and even our disabled veterans. It was in their bill.

Senate Democrats then blocked—not once but twice—my efforts, other Republican efforts to restore those cuts by closing a tax credit loophole for illegal immigrants.

Mr. President, I see my colleague and friend, Senator SANDERS, in the Chamber. I am going to get to the point. I will do it now because I know he has a busy agenda, and I think I know how the script will all play out.

I say to Senator SANDERS and colleagues, the pending measure before us today, S. 1982, the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014—which is a good title for a bill—would cause the aggregate level of budget authority and outlays for fiscal year 2014, deemed pursuant to section 111 of Public Law 113-67, to be exceeded. Therefore, I raise a point of order under section 311(a)(2) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I thank my friend from Alabama for accommodating my schedule. I will have more to say on this issue later this afternoon. But let me at this point simply say: Mr. President, pursuant to section 904 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and the waiver provisions of applicable budget resolutions, I move to waive all applicable sections of that act and applicable budget resolutions for purposes of the pending bill, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Well, Mr. President, reclaiming the floor, now you have it in stark clarity. This bill proposes to spend more than we agreed to spend passing the Ryan-Murray Act a few weeks ago. President Obama signed it 2 months ago. The ink is hardly dry on it, and here we have another bill to raise that, to raise the spending again. And it will not be the only one. We are going to see bill after bill after bill, and it is part of the President's strategy.

What is it? The era of austerity is over. He signed Ryan-Murray. He signed the Budget Control Act. But he had no intention of complying with it. He will not support enforcement of it. That is a failure of leadership of a monumental proportion. It is a stunning event.

I do not know why we have a Congress, why we pass laws that say we are only going to spend so much money and then we waltz in, just a few weeks later, and spend billions more than we agreed to. And, oh, we will just waive the budget we just passed. Oh, this is important. But everybody knew when we passed the limits on spending that there were going to be important bills.

I am actually shocked, even by Senate and congressional standards, how

blasé this body has been about these laws. I thought at least people would pretend to honor them. There is no pretense here. And it is a failure of responsibility in this body if such spending were to pass.

So our colleagues voted to cut the retirement pay of veterans, which I opposed and Republicans opposed. That was already in law—a commitment we made to military people that if they served 20 years, they get this retirement benefit.

They waltzed in to save \$6 billion, supposedly, and they were going to reduce their pension benefits. I did not feel, No. 1, it was necessary. There were other ways to save money. And I felt we had ways to save the money in a different way and offered legislation to that effect. So the attempts to fix it were blocked twice.

What was in the Ryan-Murray bill was fiscally responsible—bad policy but responsible fiscally. This bill is not. This bill increases, creates new veterans programs, new spending for veterans, and it is not paid for in any way. It is all borrowed money. We are already in debt, so when we enter and commit ourselves to additional obligations above what we have agreed to, every penny of that is borrowed, every penny of that will add to the debt of our country.

This bill busts the caps we agreed to. These are caps we all voted for—or at least our colleagues did, the Democratic colleagues, because I did not vote for the Ryan-Murray bill. I thought it eroded the Budget Control Act more than I wanted it to and it raised the caps. But it kept them in place. It eased pressure in several areas where the shoe was pinching badly. It eased that pressure. But that is not enough now? We have to have more?

It is using the veterans as a political tool, in my view. I do not think our veterans want their programs to be enhanced if every penny of money that is going to enhance those programs is added to the debt of the United States of America.

This is eight times at least since the Budget Control Act was passed that we have seen efforts to bust it. So our military men and women who worked tirelessly, selflessly, for the good of this country, have always put duty first. Shouldn't we put duty first?

This massive Federal budget of ours is filled with waste, filled with projects that cannot be defended intellectually. It was our duty to get rid of wasteful pet projects and do the right thing for our veterans.

I say to my colleagues, for example, you could have closed the tax credit loophole for illegal immigrants that is costing America billions of dollars. The cut to the veterans pension was about \$6 billion over 10 years. Annually, according to the President's own inspector general at his own Department of

Treasury, we are losing \$4 billion a year in improper tax credit payments to illegal aliens. Why don't we fix that? The inspector general asked that we fix that. It would save \$20 billion over 10 years. No, sir. What do they tell us? We are not doing anything on immigration.

Well, the first thing you should do to create a lawful system of immigration in America is to quit rewarding people financially who come illegally. That is the first thing. For Heaven's sakes, what is wrong with that? Is that immoral?

We had an instance in which there was a trailer, I believe in Indiana. A number of people lived there. No children. They claimed 19 children and got refunds from the United States of America of \$30,000—all of which were not proper, none of which were proper.

That is what the inspector general was talking about. You are not entitled to come to America illegally—have children in some other country—and then demand that we give you a tax credit, which is the equivalent of a direct check from the U.S. Treasury. A tax credit is not a deduction. It is a check from the U.S. Treasury.

But, oh no, we will not even discuss that. That is a nonstarter. So it looks like politics trumps helping veterans. So if we had had a plan to fix the veterans retirement, that could have all worked together on a good basis. Here we have now another veterans bill that is not going to work. Are there no programs, are there no spending plans out there that could not be trimmed, eliminated or reconfigured that could help us honor the commitments we have made to our veterans? There surely are. Lots of them. We have seen a lot of them offered.

So I challenge any of our colleagues, Senate Democrats, to come to the floor and name one program they are willing to terminate in order to help fund our veterans adequately. Come down and let's hear it. There is a circling of the wagons in this administration. What did the President mean when he said: The era of austerity is over, as the Washington Post reported? What did he mean? He meant that we are not cutting anything else. He meant that he is going to propose, as he has in the past, new spending programs, not fewer spending.

We can't even get amendments up on this legislation. The majority leader has filled the tree. He will not allow us even to vote on alternative proposals. We cannot have an honest debate in this Chamber over how to legitimately and responsibly meet the needs of veterans or any other group, it appears. So really, in effect, the majority leader and his caucus will not allow votes on proposals. He will not allow our veterans to have a vote really. As long as that is the case, you have got no right to proceed with this legislation, in my opinion.

So to those who come to the floor and attack Republicans, saying we do not care about veterans, I will issue this challenge: Tell your leader—because he cannot function without your support—tell your leader to let us offer some amendments. Let us offer some offsets that would help pay for this. Tell your leader to let this Chamber work its will in the Constitutional and historic way.

If you do not, it is clear that your goal is to create a misleading headline and not do what is right for veterans. One more thing, because Congress has refused to live within its means, interest on our debt is surging, unbelievably so. It will crowd out this kind of spending, defense spending, education spending, highway spending, throughout our whole government.

Let me draw your attention to this chart. This is what Director Elmendorf told us 2 weeks ago—last week—in his testimony before the Budget Committee on the budget of the United States of America. He told us that the interest we pay this date, this past year, was \$230 billion.

The savings from reducing veterans' retirement over 10 years was \$6 billion. The Federal highway bill for 1 year is approximately \$40 billion. The amount of money we spend on education is around \$100 billion. That is all of those programs that we spend it on. The amount of money we spend on the Defense Department is about \$500 billion.

So last year, we spent \$230 billion on interest. When we borrow money, we go into debt. We borrow the money. People loan us the money. We give them Treasury bills, with interest. Look at this chart. This year, 2013, it is \$230 billion. Look at the increase Director Elmendorf told us we can expect over the next 10 years. In 2024, 10 years from now, colleagues, interest on the debt will be \$870 billion in 1 year.

How many good projects are going to have their programs cut to just pay the interest on the debt? It is the fastest growing item in the United States budget. What do we have? We want to do something for veterans a few weeks after we agree to limit spending. We come right in with a bill to waive the budget limit, spend above that, borrow every penny of that money, and increase this interest and debt situation.

The Director did not count that. His calculations assume we honor the Budget Control Act and the Ryan-Murray spending limit. He assumes we are honoring what is in law. But what do we have? A motion to waive. Spend above that limit. This whole reckless spending is what Admiral Mullen meant when he said: The greatest threat to America's security is our deficit, our debt. It is going to crowd out other spending. It threatens our economic viability, our growth potential, and it actually places us at risk for some financial crisis in the years to come.

Our voters deserve better. Look at how they tend to maneuver this legislation. It is so absurd sometimes. We should laugh about it if it were not so serious. It is serious. The Sanders bill, the veterans bill—we are being told we must vote for it or they will accuse us of being unkind and unsupportive and unsympathetic to our veterans. That day is over. We are not going to be intimidated on this. We are going to do the right thing for veterans and America.

This bill would exceed the spending limit for the current fiscal year that Congress and the President agreed to just 3 months ago. Initially—it gets worse in the outer years—it would clearly add another \$260 million in mandatory spending and authorize another \$182 million this year, fiscal year 2014, which we are already in—\$182 million. It gets worse.

So we agreed in 2011, August of 2011, to set certain spending limits. The President signed that. Both Houses of Congress voted for it. Come January, the President of the United States, who signed that bill, laid forth his budget, which would increase spending \$1 trillion over the limits that we agreed to in August. So less than 6 months later, he was coming back before Congress completely ignoring the will, the established law, the Budget Control Act limitations on spending that he agreed to.

He actually bragged about it. This is no way to get our country on a sound financial path. It is not any way to do it. Let me point out one more thing. They say that we are cutting spending, that this is austerity, that America is cutting its spending. Look at this chart. It is just a simple chart.

In 2007, before we had the fiscal crisis, we were spending about \$2.6 trillion in that year. In 2011, right before we signed this August Budget Control Act agreement to limit the growth of spending—only the growth. It did not limit spending. It limited growth. We were spending about \$3.5 trillion. The CBO baseline projects that in 2015, that is the year we are working on now, trying to prepare our budget and so forth, we are going to spend even more than we spent then.

So the spending is going up. We made a few adjustments to curtail the growth in spending, which is good, but really not enough to get us on a sound path. The reason I assure you that we are not on a sound path, as this chart shows that, is the interest we are going to be paying over 10 years. This is last year, 2013. This is what they tell us we are going to be paying in interest in 2024. It goes up every single year. We are on an unsustainable path. You can't get something for nothing. Julie Andrews tells us: Nothing comes from nothing. Nothing ever could. It can't.

So I am flabbergasted really. The most disappointing thing to me is I

know now what we are going to see in the President's budget come next Tuesday. Any hint at belt tightening is going to be gone. We are going to see proposals for massive increases in spending. Oh, not spending, investments. That is what we are going to see.

But we do not have the money. We do not have to damage America. We do not have to destroy our country. This is what we agreed to now. It shows continual growth. Under the Budget Control Act, we are going to see growth in spending every year. There is no reduction in spending. It is going to grow every year for the next 10 years. It will not grow quite as fast, as if we did not have a Budget Control Act.

It looks like, if we continue to have efforts to waive the budget and just spend above that, it will be even worse than this. The growth will be even greater.

I want to share one point, and I will wrap up. The bill also relies on a budget gimmick. It claims that it has got some pay-for, that it is not all borrowed money. It claims this pay-for. It is really a gimmick that every honest observer who has commented on it has just mocked it. It is the OCO gimmick. The bill proposes to reduce Overseas Contingency Operations programs used to combat terrorism worldwide, Iraq and Afghanistan, our OCO, Overseas Contingency Operations.

Every penny of that is borrowed. It is not in the regular budget. It is spent above that as emergency spending, war spending. That is how it has been done. For good or ill, that is the way it is done. At least while I am troubled by the President's policies with regard to Iraq and Afghanistan, the costs are coming down. They are projected to come down every year until we basically eliminate those costs.

It claims that reducing the amount of money we borrow to fund the war and support our military is somehow now available to spend on whatever the project of the day is. Today it is veterans. It will be something else tomorrow. They have tried this before. It is ludicrous. It is like claiming credit today for the end of Vietnam. We are not borrowing money to fight the war in Vietnam, so we can spend that money.

This is how a great Nation goes broke. They want to do this to the tune of \$18 billion. That is what it is going to take to fund Senator SANDERS' bill. The problem is, the money was never going to be spent at this rate. It is not a real savings. Every piece of legislation that the majority has tried to move since January has exceeded the levels that we reached in the December agreement: unemployment insurance, the farm bill, flood insurance, and now the veterans bill. All of them spend above what we agreed to.

Colleagues, these measures represent critical needs. I know we want to do

something about all of them, and acknowledge that people have suffered and are suffering under the policies that promised to do so much good but have not.

The solution is not to abandon fiscal discipline. The solution is not to breach the agreements we reached only a few weeks ago to have some modest limitation on the growth of Federal spending.

This approach has been widely derided as a gimmick. The Congressional Budget Office says this is not real money that can be spent. Of course it is not.

Mr. Elmendorf followed up with a letter to Congressman PAUL RYAN. Budget director Mr. Elmendorf wrote:

Establishing caps on discretionary appropriations in the future would not affect spending under current law and would not offset changes in direct spending or revenues. Further, appropriations for war-related activities have declined in recent years and may decline further as military operations in Afghanistan wind down. Caps on OCO appropriations that are lower than baseline projections might simply reflect policy decisions that have already been made and that would be realized even without such funding constraints. Moreover, if policymakers believed national security required appropriations above the capped amounts in future years, they would almost certainly provide emergency operations that would not, under current law, be counted against the caps.

It points out that this is an unacceptable way to count money.

Experts on the Federal budget have said the same. Maya MacGuineas, a capable observer with the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, said:

Using the war gimmick to offset other costs or to count toward deficit reduction would send a message to the American public and our investors that we are not serious about controlling the debt. In fact, it would send the message that not only are we not serious, but we are going to try to trick everyone that we're actually doing something productive on the deficit. That's the height of irresponsibility.

Maya MacGuineas—respected on both sides of the aisle, a person committed to getting this Nation to fiscal responsibility—is from the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. She said that last November.

So we are not going to go for this. We are not going to waive the budget in this fashion. It is not going to pass, and it should have been known beforehand when Senator SANDERS and Senator REID sought to push this bill through that it was never going to pass because there are enough Senators in this body who have enough strength of will to honor the commitment we made a few weeks ago in the Ryan-Murray legislation. We are not going to use some bogus gimmick to justify busting the budget. The deal is over, nada. It is not going to happen. And I will defend my commitment to veterans and seeing that they are treated fairly in this country.

There are a lot of positive things we need to be doing in America. This is certainly not one them. We need to figure out how to run this government on the spending increases to which we have already agreed. In fact, we need to reduce those increases more than we have.

Otherwise, we are placing at risk our economy today, job creation today, and the future of our children.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. I rise this morning to speak about two issues. The first will be on the matter that is before us, the veterans legislation.

I am grateful for the opportunity to speak on this legislation. I commend the work of Chairman SANDERS and others who have brought us to this point. We know we have a challenge ahead of us to pass this legislation.

The good news is that these issues are bipartisan. Both parties have a real concern about what happens to our veterans and what happens to our veterans' families. We often have different pathways to get there, but I do think we have a bipartisan concern.

Perhaps it is appropriate to start with a reflection on what I think our obligation is as Members of the Senate, but it is our obligation as citizens as well.

Years ago I heard it expressed—we often express it by using the word "worthy." When we consider what our veterans have done for us, it is important that we express gratitude in so many different ways. Sometimes that is one-on-one expressing to a veteran: We appreciate your service. And when there is a parade or another demonstration of public support for our veterans, that is important.

But the question we have to ask ourselves both as elected officials and as citizens is the following: Are we doing everything we can to prove ourselves worthy of the valor of our veterans? The answer to that question—depending on what year it is or depending on what time period it is, we will get different answers to that question.

Most of the time we like to believe that the Congress is worthy of the valor of those veterans, that we are doing everything we can to help them. But we have to be honest with ourselves and say that there are substantial periods of time when this body and the other body—both the Senate and the House—have not been worthy of the valor of our veterans because we haven't done enough to help veterans and their families.

We hope, we pray this can be one of those moments when we prove ourselves worthy of the valor of those veterans who served their country. They didn't ask the price; they didn't put down conditions; they just served their

country, and they asked us to enact legislation and policy that is commensurate with the sacrifice and the commitment they made to their country. It is about keeping promises, and I hope we can be in one of those moments right now.

As many across the country know, the bill improves VA health care coverage. It reauthorizes important job-training programs for unemployed veterans and provides instate tuition assistance benefits for all post-9/11 veterans through the GI bill.

We know that when we look at the unemployment data, some of the highest percentages for any sector or category are post-9/11 veterans—a much higher unemployment rate than the overall unemployment rate and an even higher unemployment rate than all of their fellow veterans.

In this case, for this bill, hundreds of people across Pennsylvania have reached out to my office, urging that the Senate pass this bill. It has the support from various veterans service organizations, including the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, the American Legion, and the VFW, just to name a few.

I wish to address a couple of provisions in the bill, ones that are particularly significant to Pennsylvania and some of the work we have been doing.

The VA health care system in Pittsburgh had a terrible tragedy not too long ago where several veterans lost their lives while in the care of the VA health care system. There was a Legionnaires' outbreak. Legionella was the problem in the water system, and that terrible tragedy was obviously a devastating loss for those families. Not only the city of Pittsburgh but all of southwestern Pennsylvania was affected. We are thinking of them today when we reflect upon some of the provisions in this bill.

Veterans and their loved ones need to feel confident and secure in the care they receive at all health care facilities. The failures—and there is no other way to describe them—that occurred at the VA in southwestern Pennsylvania surrounding this outbreak of Legionnaires' disease is, in a word, unacceptable. Frankly, that is not a strong enough word to express the outrage I know people felt across southwestern Pennsylvania and beyond, so I worked and it led to the introduction of legislation. Portions of what we worked on are included in this bill, and we are very pleased about that.

Specifically, the bill requires the VA to implement local and State reporting requirements of infectious diseases. The bill also requires that the VA develop performance measures to assess whether the veterans integrated service networks and medical centers are complying with these requirements. We are pleased that is part of the legislation.

Mr. President, I wish to highlight a part of the legislation that is very important to me.

Fortunately, it includes the Corporal Michael J. Crescenz Act, which Senator TOOMEY and I introduced last year. The bill renames the VA medical center on Woodland Avenue in Philadelphia after Corporal Crescenz. He was the city of Philadelphia's only Medal of Honor recipient from the Vietnam war. I will give a description of why he was awarded the Medal of Honor for his service in Vietnam. We know it is the highest honor that can be granted to any soldier.

In this case, for his actions in Vietnam on November 20, 1968, his Medal of Honor citation states that he gave his life when he "left the relative safety of his own position, seized a nearby machine gun and, with complete disregard for his safety, charged 100 meters up a slope toward the enemy's bunkers which he effectively silenced. . . . As a direct result of his heroic actions, his company was able to maneuver freely with minimal danger and to complete its mission, defeating the enemy."

We are grateful that his family will have some measure of peace of mind that his sacrifice and his service are remembered.

I thank Chairman SANDERS for including this in the bill, and I know Senator TOOMEY joins me in that note of gratitude.

(The further remarks of Mr. CASEY are printed in the RECORD under "Morning Business.")

Mr. CASEY. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I come to floor today as a cosponsor of the legislation that is being considered now in the Senate, the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014.

The package of reforms included in this bill will help provide our Nation's veterans, to whom we owe so much, more job opportunities, greater health care access, improved educational programs, and increased oversight of the disability claims backlog, which is a real challenge that so many of our veterans are facing.

I thank the leadership of Senator SANDERS, who chairs the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. This bill includes provisions that have been sponsored by both Republicans and Democrats in the Senate, which is why more than 20 veterans service organizations have endorsed the legislation, includ-

ing the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, and the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America.

As the heroes of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan return home, they deserve our utmost gratitude and appreciation. Many of our returning veterans served multiple tours of duty, sacrificing so much to protect this Nation. They deserve nothing less than access to the best health care, the best education, and the best opportunities for employment.

Medical care for injured servicemembers is at the heart of the VA's mission. We have a basic responsibility to care for the men and women injured while protecting this country. This legislation addresses one of the most common requests from our veterans: expanded access to the VA's dental care program.

I was meeting with some folks recently who told me one of the biggest reasons our men and women serving in the military on Active Duty are not able to be deployed overseas is because they do not have some of the basic dental care they need. Anyone who has suffered from dental issues knows it can be completely debilitating. So simply put: Veterans should not have to suffer because of a lack of capacity to support this basic medical need.

The bill also contains provisions that will help expand treatment options for young men and women who have sustained major injuries that may prevent them from starting a family. Starting a family is one of the most rewarding joys of life, and we should do everything possible to make sure our military men and women are able to overcome any reproductive challenges they may face.

Access to mental health care and counseling, both for our returning service men and women and their families, is also critically important. When our brave heroes deal with these kinds of health issues, their families are also affected. This legislation would expand mental health resources available to veterans and their family members.

One of the most significant reforms that is included in this legislation is moving the entire Department of Veterans Affairs to an advanced appropriations cycle. This means that Congress would pay the VA's bills 1 year in advance, making it absolutely certain there will be no gaps in funding for veterans programs.

Several years ago Congress moved the Veterans Health Administration to a 1-year advanced appropriation. The intent was to provide increased budget certainty and protection for the hospitals, community clinics, and other health care providers taking care of our wounded veterans. By funding the Veterans Health Administration in advance, Congress made sure that budget delays would no longer affect veterans

health care. But the rest of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including the Veterans Benefits Administration, does not receive that advanced appropriation. That means during last year's government shutdown veterans were at risk of not receiving their disability payments, and some personnel involved in decreasing the disability claims backlog were not working. Veterans should not have to wait longer or be put at risk of losing their benefits because of political disagreements here in Congress, and this bill will ensure that will not happen again in the future.

As I have talked with New Hampshire veterans over the past year, this advanced appropriations process has consistently been one of their top requests. I am very glad to see it is included.

The bill also takes important steps to help create job opportunities for veterans. It reauthorizes parts of the VOW to Hire Heroes Act, including a joint program between the VA and the Department of Labor which provides 12 months of training for high-demand occupations to unemployed veterans. So far, this program has provided job retraining benefits to more than 50,000 eligible veterans.

The legislation also includes programs which help veterans train for new careers and identify and apply for existing job openings. It will award grants for hiring veterans as first responders and would cut redtape for veterans seeking licenses for skills they have developed during their military service.

We should do all we can to get our veterans in the workforce. There are far too many veterans, particularly post-9/11 vets, who have not been able to get jobs and are experiencing so many of the unfortunate consequences of being out of the workforce.

This is why I have filed amendments to this bill which will create new tax incentives for businesses to hire veterans, and will make it more affordable and easier for veteran-owned small businesses to participate in Small Business Administration loan programs.

I have also filed amendments to address the backlog at the Board of Veterans Appeals, which is one of the really unfortunate situations we have for our veterans. We have veterans in New Hampshire who have been waiting up to 4 years to have their appeals heard before the board.

Finally, another amendment I filed to the bill is in memory of my friend Charlie Morgan. Charlie was a member of the New Hampshire National Guard 197th Fires Brigade. After the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, she became one of the first servicemembers in the country to come forward and talk about the challenges of keeping her family and her private life secret while she served in the military.

What also prompted Charlie to come forward was, in addition to those challenges, she was also dealing with breast cancer. Sadly, we lost Charlie last year to breast cancer. She was just 48 years old.

I met Charlie while she was serving as a chief warrant officer in the New Hampshire National Guard, but she had actually enlisted in the Army in 1982. After serving on active duty, Charlie joined the Kentucky National Guard in 1992, because that is where she was living then. But shortly after the 9/11 attacks, she joined the 197th Fires Brigade of the New Hampshire National Guard.

I have said it before and I will say it again today: There is a very special place in this Nation's history for those who step forward to defend this country and protect the very same freedoms denied to them out of uniform. Charlie Morgan never gave up the fight for her civil rights, and neither will we.

My amendment is cosponsored by Senators MARK UDALL, BLUMENTHAL, GILLIBRAND, and the Presiding Officer, Senator BALDWIN. It ensures that all veterans and their families—no matter where they live, no matter their sexual orientation—get the benefits they have earned by putting their lives on the line for our country.

My bill passed the Veterans' Affairs Committee last July by a voice vote. I hope, first of all, we will get an amendment process on this veterans bill which allows me and so many of my colleagues to offer relevant amendments which I think would improve the bill we are hoping to consider. I hope my colleagues will support all of my amendments but particularly this important Charlie Morgan amendment because our veterans deserve nothing less.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I rise today to talk about the Iran sanctions legislation, but first I want to talk about the veterans legislation we are on, and why it is so important that we include the Iran sanctions provision.

I believe we all want to make sure we take care of our veterans. We will have on the floor two bills today which deal with our veterans, one offered by Senator SANDERS of Vermont and another offered by Senator RICHARD BURR of North Carolina.

I am asking the majority leader to allow an open process so we can craft a good bill for our veterans. This means

allowing amendments. This means allowing a vote on both bills. I believe that with an open process—with an open amendment process, by allowing votes as I have described—we can in fact build the kind of bipartisan support, the kind of bipartisan consensus we need to pass this legislation. There are provisions in the bills which I think have broad bipartisan support, which is why it is so important we have this open process.

One such provision which can help us build that kind of bipartisan support is the Iran sanctions provision in the legislation. It is sponsored by Democratic Senator BOB MENENDEZ of New Jersey and also Republican Senator MARK KIRK of Illinois, and it is cosponsored by 57 other Senators, including myself. So we are talking about a piece of legislation within the Burr bill which has 59 Senators cosponsoring the legislation.

If this legislation is put on the floor included as part of the Burr bill, it is pretty much guaranteed we can pass it. It has 59 cosponsors. If we pick up one more vote, we pass the bill. It is good for our veterans and it is also very important for our national security.

Let me talk about the Iran sanction provision for a minute.

Right now the Obama administration is trying to negotiate an agreement with Iran to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon, and while the administration is negotiating, Iran continues to develop its nuclear weapon. While President Obama and Secretary of State Kerry negotiate with President Hassan Rouhani, Iran continues to build a nuclear bomb. While the administration and our Secretary of State talk with our allies in Europe about the negotiations with Iran, the Supreme Leader and Iran continue to build a nuclear bomb.

The reality is the only thing which has brought Iran to the negotiating table is sanctions and only continuing those sanctions will get them to stop building a bomb. The sanctions should be reinstated, and they should not be lifted until, one, Iran agrees they will not build a bomb, and we have an open, verifiable transparent process to make certain they are not doing so.

Sanctions take time to work. The sanctions we applied more than 1 year ago—particularly the Kirk-Menendez banking sanctions—have had a real impact on Iran's economy. I bring a background as a banker to my work experience, both as a Governor for 10 years, and my work experience here in the Senate. The reality is that the Kirk-Menendez banking sanctions have been extremely effective. It is a well-crafted piece of bipartisan legislation which passed this body overwhelmingly, which is really effective. The reason it is so effective is because it prevents any company, any country which wants to do business with the U.S.

banking system—and countries and companies worldwide have to be able to transact with the U.S. banking system, but they are not allowed to transact with our banking system if they also do business with Iran.

If Iran can't sell its oil because it can't get paid for its oil, they are in a very tough situation. Not only do they not have the resources or the funds to build a bomb, their administration—the regime—does not have the money to operate their country. So we not only prevent them from building a bomb, but we put the regime itself at risk if they continue to build a bomb. That is why the Kirk-Menendez sanctions—those banking sanctions—have been so effective. But they work over time. They work over time.

When the sanctions are lifted, the relief is immediate, the relief is immediate because now Iran can sell and get payment for their oil. They can purchase what they need, not only to continue to build a bomb but to keep their country and keep the regime in power.

When we are talking about sanctions and negotiating an agreement to get them to stop building a bomb, it is important that we have a process that is open, transparent, and verifiable. We need to know that they have stopped building the bomb and are dismantling their nuclear weapons enterprise.

It is very important to understand that sanctions work over time, but when sanctions are lifted, the relief is immediate. That is why we cannot lift sanctions while we negotiate the agreement. We have to get Iran to stop first and give us a process to verify that, in fact, they have stopped before we can lift those sanctions.

We have the opportunity in this body right here, right now, today, to address that problem. It is incredibly important that we do address this issue. We have 59 sponsors on the legislation. We are one short. If you put it up for a vote, we will have well more than 60 votes. If we impose those sanctions now, we will tell Iran: You stop, and we make them stop. That is the option before us today. That is what we need to do.

If we don't do it, what are our options? A military strike? That is the last option. That is what we don't want to have to do. We don't want to have to do a military strike to take out their bomb-making capability. But if we don't act and reimpose those sanctions, that is the option that is left.

Today we have a choice. I ask that we be allowed to vote on the Burr legislation, that we be allowed to vote on amendments, and that we be allowed to vote to reimpose sanctions on Iran.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that following the

disposition of S. 982, the veterans benefits bill, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 561, Michael L. Connor, to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior, that there be 2 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form, and that all other provisions of the previous order remain in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Montana.

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

Mr. WALSH. Madam President, in Montana we have a long history of being represented by true statesmen—larger-than-life figures such as Senator Mike Mansfield. These men always served us well, while at the same time defending Montana's principles and freedoms. These statesmen never took their privileges for granted, and they always had the courage to put their differences aside to do what is right for our country. At a time when privilege seems to be gaining on principle, I pledge to find the same courage to do what is right.

Senator Mansfield called Butte, MT, home. Born and raised in Butte, I was brought up with a great deal of respect for Senator Mike Mansfield. It is a tremendous honor for me to stand today where he stood so many years ago and pledge to you and the people of Montana that I will take responsibility for my actions and that I will have the courage to do what is right no matter what the consequences.

Of course, I would not be where I am today without the love and support of my wonderful family. My wife of 29 years, Janet, who is here today, our sons Michael and Taylor, our daughter-in-law April, and our 9-month-old granddaughter Kennedy have stood by my side through every challenge life has handed us.

Last week, while at home, I traveled across Montana as Montana's newest Senator. I had an opportunity to talk to a lot of Montanans who believe we need more courage in Washington, and I tend to agree.

As a public servant, I have sworn an oath to protect and defend Montanans, our Nation, and our Constitution.

I am no stranger to answering the call to serve. I spent 33 years in the Montana National Guard where I served for 9 of those years as an enlisted man before becoming an officer.

I also had the honor of leading over 700 of Montana's finest young men and women into combat in Iraq. It was the largest deployment of Montana's soldiers and airmen since World War II.

In August of 2008, Governor Brian Schweitzer asked me to serve as the adjutant general of the Montana National Guard, and I was truly honored by the opportunity to continue serving our State and our Nation.

I am also extremely proud of my oldest son Michael who is now 28 and is

following in my path of public service. He is currently serving in the National Guard and is deployed to the Middle East as a C-12 pilot and a Black Hawk medivac pilot.

Throughout my many years of service, and now with my son's service, ensuring our veterans and their families have access to the services and benefits they have earned is a responsibility I take very seriously and very personally.

I recently met with student veterans at Montana State University in Bozeman, MT, where I heard from young men and women who are concerned about their mounting student debt. I also heard from veterans from all across Montana about their frustrations with the long delays in processing disability benefit claims. I have heard from veterans from across the State who are frustrated with the distances they have to travel to receive care. These failings on behalf of our veterans and their families cause me grave concern. We must, and I will, fight for them every day I am serving in the Senate.

The face of modern war has changed and the VA must keep up with the changing times. Medical care must include robust mental health benefits, and it must also include proper screenings to help mitigate the effect of post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injuries. As a military commander, I also know firsthand what the unseen injuries have done to America's heroes and their families. We can and we must do better.

The oath I have taken is one I take very seriously. It is an honor, it is a privilege, and a great responsibility that I will work tirelessly to fulfill.

To honor their service and sacrifice, we must welcome our heroes home and help them during their transition from active duty back into civilian life. I know how difficult that transition can be. I have experienced it firsthand. I have witnessed it, and I will take responsibility to improve it.

On these and other issues facing our State and our country, I look forward to working with my friend and colleague Senator JON TESTER to solve problems not only for our veterans but for all Montanans.

Last week JON and I traveled the State. We heard from members of the Little Shell Tribal Council about the importance of Federal recognition and ways to help Indian-owned businesses grow and create jobs. We heard from tribal nations across Montana about the Land Buy-Back Cooperative Agreement Program within the Department of Interior. I made a commitment to Montana's tribal leaders that I would work hard to make sure the Federal Government is being responsive and working to move this program forward in a way that works for our sovereign tribal nations.

We also had the opportunity to speak with business owners in Miles City and Wolf Point, MT, who are working hard to grow jobs while at the same time dealing with infrastructure challenges caused by the oil boom in eastern Montana. My job is to bring their voices to the Senate.

One additional issue I heard loudly and clearly from every corner of Montana is that our government is not doing enough to protect our civil liberties. As I have throughout my career, I will continue to fight to protect our civil liberties, our freedoms, and our Montana values. We must do what it takes to protect our Nation and the freedom we enjoy—something I have dedicated my life to. But we must, and we can, do it without trampling on the rights we have fought so hard for.

Bulk data collection with no transparency, whether by the government or by private corporations, is unacceptable. That is why during my first week in the Senate, I signed on to a bipartisan bill that is an important first step in this fight.

I have also heard loudly and clearly from Montanans that our national debt is unacceptable. Washington has a spending problem that we must get under control. There is no better example of privileges gaining on our principles. Responsibly cutting our debt and wasteful spending is one of my top priorities as a Senator, just as it was as Montana's lieutenant governor working alongside Governor Steve Bullock.

Congress needs the courage to cut spending without doing it on the backs of our veterans, our children, or our seniors. Almost everyone I talked to in Montana told me where they see waste in government, and they all have specific examples. We need to find the courage to stand up to special interests and cut that wasteful spending. But we must not do it on the backs of our most vulnerable citizens.

Having served for 33 years in the military, I am confident we can make the Defense budget more efficient while at the same time enhancing programs that grow our economy and protect our children and seniors.

We should start by reducing waste in contracting and procurement. Today we spend millions to have contract security guards check IDs at our bases rather than servicemembers, but no one is any safer. I take responsibility to fix this.

It is a privilege to be chosen to serve on the Agriculture Committee. I am the only member of Montana's delegation to sit on the agriculture committee. This committee is so important to Montana where our No. 1 industry is agriculture. From livestock disaster assistance to crop insurance, commonsense forest reforms, I look forward to making sure the farm bill works and works efficiently for Montana's farmers and ranchers.

I also look forward to serving on the commerce committee where I will focus on transportation, energy, rural telecommunications, and tourism. Tourism is Montana's second largest sector. It not only contributes to our State's economy, but also helps preserve the outdoor heritage that makes Montana such a slice of heaven.

I will bring Montana courage to the Senate where I will fight on behalf of the people of Montana to protect Social Security and Medicare in my new role on the aging committee. I am also prepared to help fix some of Washington's problems while serving on the rules committee.

I know I only just joined this distinguished body, but I also know there is very real work to be done to get our country on the right track again. Beginning on day one, I rolled up my sleeves and started working. My purpose here is to have the courage to do what is right for the people of Montana, our veterans, and the United States of America.

Thank you for this amazing opportunity and may God bless the United States of America.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I rise today to commemorate a very special day in Texas history, and I would say in American history. This is a day that inspires pride and gratitude in my State. I rise to commemorate Texas Independence Day, which is celebrated on March 2, this Sunday.

I will read a letter that was written 178 years ago from behind the walls of an old Spanish mission that is now in San Antonio, TX. It is known as the Alamo. It is a letter written by 26-year-old Lieutenant Colonel William Barret Travis. In doing so, I am carrying on a tradition started by the late Senator John Tower, who represented Texas in this body for more than two decades. This tradition was later upheld by his successor, Senator Phil Gramm, and thereafter by Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison. It is a tremendous honor that this privilege has now fallen to me.

On February 24, 1836, with his position under siege and outnumbered nearly 10 to 1 by the forces of the Mexican dictator Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, Travis penned the following letter:

To the People of Texas and all Americans in the World:

Fellow citizens and compatriots—

I am besieged by a thousand or more of the Mexicans under Santa Anna. I have sustained a continual bombardment and cannonade for 24 hours and I have not lost a man. The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion. Otherwise, the garrison are to be put to the sword, if the fort is taken.

I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls.

I shall never surrender or retreat.

Then, I call on you in the name of Liberty, of patriotism and everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid with all dispatch.

The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily and will no doubt increase to three or four thousand in four or five days.

If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself for as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor and that of his country.

Victory or death.

Signed: William Barret Travis.

As we have since learned, in the battle that ensued, all 189 defenders of the Alamo gave their lives. But they did not die in vain.

The Battle of the Alamo bought precious time for the Texas revolutionaries, allowing General Sam Houston to maneuver his army into position for a decisive victory in the battle of San Jacinto. With this victory Texas became a sovereign nation and an independent republic.

For nine years the Republic of Texas thrived, as I said, as a separate nation. Then, in 1845, it agreed to join the United States as the 28th State.

Many of the Texas patriots who fought in the revolution went on to serve in the Congress. I am honored to hold the seat originally held by then-General Sam Houston but later the president of the republic and U.S. Senator for Texas. More broadly, I am honored to have the opportunity to serve 26 million Americans that call Texas home because of the sacrifices made by these brave patriots 178 years ago.

May we always remember the Alamo, and may God continue to bless Texas and these United States.

IRS INTRUSION

Madam President, I will spend the rest of my time on a separate topic about which many Americans are greatly concerned, and I am one of them.

It has been more than nine months since we first found out that the IRS was deliberately targeting certain political organizations for their political beliefs. At first, the Obama administration acknowledged that any abuse by the IRS was unacceptable. But then, in subsequent days and months, it has tried to play down the scandal and blame it on a few rogue operators in the Cincinnati Field Office. Yet the more we have learned, the more we realize the abuses involved significant coordination with the IRS headquarters here in Washington, DC.

Because of these abuses, millions of Americans now worry that the Internal

Revenue Service and their own Federal Government have been corrupted, and we have become more like a banana republic. This damage to the public confidence and the public trust is immeasurable, and much of the damage may end up being irreversible.

Of course, the right response when the administration and Congress learned of these abuses would have been to clean house at the agency and give the American people ironclad assurances this would never, ever happen again. Of course, the right response would have been accountability, firing people, and strong support for congressional investigations on a bipartisan basis and the adoption of new safeguards against potential future abuses.

Instead, we have seen that the investigations, most notably led in the House of Representatives, have been met with whitewash, and there have been active efforts to prevent Congress from actually uncovering the full story. That is a shameful response, and it is dishonest. Unfortunately, it is about to get worse.

The Obama IRS is now proposing a new political speech rule that would force many 501(c)(4), or grassroots organizations, to dramatically change their activities or else form formal political action committees. If the groups are forced to register as political outfits, they will be subject to new campaign finance rules, which, of course, may be the whole point.

As the Wall Street Journal noted earlier this week:

The purpose of this disclosure is to set up donors as political targets for boycotts and intimidation so that the costs of participating in politics will be too steep.

I might note the Supreme Court of the United States addressed this concern in a very important case decades ago, *NAACP v. Alabama*, where they held that under the First Amendment to the Constitution, the NAACP was not required to disclose its membership list because, at the time, sadly, they were worried about intimidation and targeting of their members. So the Supreme Court of the United States said that under the First Amendment of the Constitution and the freedom of association included there, the NAACP did not need to disclose its membership list because of this bona fide threat.

These are not contrived concerns today. Back in 2012, donors to the Mitt Romney presidential campaign found themselves publicly attacked and slandered for daring to support Governor Romney and participating in the political process. For that matter, something even more sinister happened to one Idaho businessman by the name of Frank VanderSloot. In April of 2012, Mr. VanderSloot was one of 8 Romney donors who were condemned by an Obama campaign Web site and called "less than reputable." Shortly thereafter, a Democratic opposition re-

searcher began searching for Mr. VanderSloot's divorce records. Meanwhile, the IRS decided to audit 2 years worth of tax filings for Mr. VanderSloot and the Labor Department announced a separate audit of the workers employed on his cattle ranch. Coincidence? I suspect Mr. VanderSloot was targeted because of his political activities. It was a deeply troubling question in 2012, and it is even more troubling today, given all we have learned about the IRS targeting since that time.

I offer as my next example the experience of one of my constituents, Catherine Engelbrecht in Houston, TX. Ms. Engelbrecht is a Texas businesswoman who founded both the King Street Patriots and an organization called True the Vote. She was mainly concerned about the integrity of the ballot and training people to participate in the process and express themselves more effectively through that process. But she found herself targeted by multiple Federal agencies, including the IRS, the FBI, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, and OSHA, none of which had ever contacted her family's businesses before her involvement in grassroots activism. As Ms. Engelbrecht recently told a House committee investigating:

We had never been audited, we had never been investigated, but all that changed upon submitting applications for the nonprofit statuses of True the Vote and King Street Patriots. Since that filing in 2010, my private businesses, my nonprofit organizations, and family have been subjected to more than 15 instances of audit or inquiry by federal agencies.

Make no mistake. The proposed IRS rule would make it even harder for people such as Ms. Engelbrecht to participate in the political process—something that is her constitutional right—and it would strongly discourage other similarly interested and concerned citizens from exercising their rights. In other words, it would strike at the very heart of self government, and at the very heart of the American democracy.

The IRS was meant to be a tax collection agency, period—not to be the police of political speech and political activity. But now we know, after the Affordable Care Act was passed—now more commonly called *ObamaCare*—we now know the IRS is in charge of enforcing *ObamaCare* by collecting the penalties for people who don't buy government-approved health insurance. But, still, that is apparently not enough of a job for the IRS, even though the work they are already doing they are not doing very well. With this now 501(c)(4) rule, the IRS would effectively become a campaign finance regulator.

As the advocates for this rule are aware, we already have an agency responsible for enforcing campaign finance rules. It is called, strangely enough, the Federal Election Commis-

sion, and it is a strictly bipartisan institution, as it should be. If the President and my friends across the aisle want to change campaign finance laws, they should either draft legislation or make their case to the Federal agency that has the jurisdiction to deal with them: The election commissioners at the Federal Election Commission. But turning the IRS into a de facto arm of the FEC is just more political overreach, and it is going to be ripe for abuse. Indeed, not only would the proposed 501(c)(4) rule further distract the IRS from its core mission, it would trample the First Amendment, intimidate people from exercising their rights of free speech, and it would weaken our participatory democracy.

I also note the rule would not cover the political activities of some other tax-exempt organizations. I am sure this was just an oversight. Labor unions are exempted. So why, if the Treasury is proposing this rule—why, if this is going to be given to the IRS—would we carve out some of the largest donors and participants in the political process in America today, which is organized labor? Not for reasons of fairness, I suppose but, rather, because the proponents of this rule basically want to tilt the scale in their favor, once again, and they want to suppress the speech and the political activity of people they disagree with—which is un-American.

Not surprisingly, the IRS has received tens of thousands of comments on the rule, and most of these comments have been critical. This morning in the Senate Judiciary Committee, my colleague Senator CRUZ read a comment from the American Civil Liberties Union that was critical of this rule. I don't agree with a lot of the policies of the American Civil Liberties Union, but they are absolutely right in this instance. Given the tremendous importance of this issue, including the potential consequences and damage to First Amendment rights, we need to make sure this rule is not implemented as proposed. I urge all of my constituents in Texas and all Americans and everyone within the sound of my voice to continue making their voices heard and to continue to urge President Obama and the IRS commissioner to stop this dangerous IRS power grab.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I come to the floor today in support of S. 1982, the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014.

I believe we must keep the promises we have made to our veterans. We can do this by giving them the same quality of service they gave us, and by providing them with the care they deserve. That is why I support this bipartisan bill.

The bill contains a number of provisions that will improve the lives of the

men and women in uniform and our veterans by:

Restoring the full cost-of-living adjustment for all military retirees;

Reforming the system for processing veteran's disability claims to reduce the existing backlog;

Providing in-State tuition assistance for post 9/11 veterans pursuing a college degree;

Expanding programs designed to help veterans find a job;

Requiring new services for survivors of sexual assault; and

Improving health care services related to mental health, traumatic brain injury and other conditions.

In addition to supporting this bill, as the Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have put money in the Federal checkbook to improve the veteran's health care system so that wounded and disabled warriors get the care and benefits they need. I have worked to ensure veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, PTSD, or a Traumatic Brain Injury, TBI, receive better diagnosis and treatment through the Defense Department and the VA.

I have also led the charge to reduce the backlog in processing veteran's disability claims. I brought Secretary Shinseki to Baltimore to create a sense of urgency to end the backlog by 2015. I used my power as Chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee to convene a hearing with the top brass in the military and members of the Committee to identify challenges and get moving on solutions. I cut across agencies to break down smokestacks and developed a 10-point Checklist for Change enacted as part of the FY2014 Omnibus Appropriations bill. This plan includes better funding, better technology, better training and better oversight of the VA.

We made a sacred commitment to honor those who served by giving them the benefits they've earned. This legislation is a significant step in the right direction, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, the Veterans Benefits Act, S. 1982, purports to place caps on future years' expenditures for Overseas Contingency Operations, "OCO", ostensibly to pay for the added expenditures authorized by the bill.

OCO is an emergency expenditure. Therefore, it does not count against the statutory budget caps. How much OCO, if any, will be needed in any given year is a determination made year by year in an appropriations bill and can only be made in that year, when we know what national security contingencies our military will actually face.

If OCO caps could be used to pay for this bill, there would not be a need to waive the budget points of order against the bill. So, my vote to waive budget points of order is not a vote to use OCO caps as an offset, because they cannot be so used. Instead, my vote is

a vote in favor of the worthwhile expenditures for veterans' benefits that S. 1982 authorizes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). The Senator from Vermont. Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as chairman of the Senate Veterans Affairs' Committee, I want to thank many people for helping me bring forth the legislation we are going to be voting on this afternoon.

I thank those people who have come down to the floor to speak on behalf of our veterans. That includes Majority Leader REID, who has been so helpful throughout. Senators MURRAY, BLUMENTHAL, HEINRICH, PRYOR, DURBIN, MERKLEY, WALSH, SHAHEEN, and CASEY. I suspect I have left out some Members.

I thank my entire staff at the Veterans Affairs' Committee—Steve Robertson, Dahlia Melendrez, Travis Murphy, Kathryn Monet, Kathryn Van Haste, Elizabeth Austin, Carlos Fuentes, Ann Vallandingham, Rebecca Thoman, Jason Dean, Shannon Jackson, Shanna Lawrie, and Rafael Anderson—for their help on this effort.

I thank the 28 cosponsors of this important legislation. I will not read their names. They know who they are, and I thank them very, very much.

As I indicated earlier, this legislation is not BERNIE SANDERS' legislation. This is legislation that, by and large, comes from the hearts and souls of the veterans of this country.

As chairman of the committee, I thought it was my obligation to listen to what the veterans of our country were saying about their problems and their needs and how we might go forward, and that is what I and others on the committee did. We listened. That is the reason why this legislation is being supported by virtually every veterans organization in the United States of America, representing millions and millions of veterans. I thank them for their support—and not only for their support but for their help in crafting this legislation: the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, Jewish War Veterans, Vietnam Veterans of America, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Wounded Warrior Project, Gold Star Wives, Student Veterans of America, Air Force Sergeants Association, American Ex-Prisoners of War, Association of the United States Navy, Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, National Guard Association of the United States, Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, Fleet Reserve Association, Marine Corps League, Marine Corps Reserve Association, Military Officers of America Association, Military Order of the Purple Heart, National Association of Uniformed Services, Non Commissioned Officers Association, Retired

Enlisted Association, American Military Retirees Association, National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, National Association of State Veterans Homes, and many other veterans organizations. Thank you very much for your support for this legislation.

It is no secret that Congress today is extremely partisan and to a significant degree dysfunctional. That is why the approval rating of Congress is somewhere around 15 percent. There are problems facing the American people, and we cannot address those problems. The American people are profoundly disgusted with what we do and, in fact, with what we do not do.

I had hoped from the bottom of my heart that at least on this issue—the need to protect and defend the veterans of this country and their families, others who have given so much to us—we could rise above the day-to-day rancor and the party politics we see here on this floor almost every single day.

We will, in fact, see within a short while whether we will rise to the occasion, whether we will, in fact, stand with the veterans of this country, or whether once again we are going to succumb to the same-old, same-old politics that we see almost every day.

Let me very briefly touch upon some of the objections my Republican colleagues have made to this bill. Some of them—not a whole lot, by the way, but some have come to the floor and they have objected to this bill. So let me respond to some of their concerns.

Some of my Republican colleagues have said they cannot vote for this bill because they could not get the opportunity to offer an amendment on the Iran sanctions situation.

Mr. President, you know what. The issue of Iran sanctions is an important issue, but it has nothing to do with the needs of veterans. In case people do not understand it, this is a comprehensive veterans bill, and while Iran sanctions may be important, they have nothing to do with what we are discussing today. That is not just my opinion. Far more importantly, we have the opinion of the largest veterans organization in this country, which represents over 2 million veterans, and that is the American Legion. Here is what Daniel M. Dellinger, the national commander of the American Legion, said just yesterday on this issue:

Iran is a serious issue that Congress needs to address, but it cannot be tied to S. 1982—

This veterans legislation—which is extremely important as our nation prepares to welcome millions of U.S. military servicemen and women home from war. This comprehensive bill aims to help veterans find good jobs, get the health care they need and make in-state tuition rates applicable to all who are using their GI Bill benefits. This legislation is about supporting veterans, pure and simple. The Senate can debate various aspects of it, and that's understandable, but it cannot lose focus on the matter at hand: helping military personnel

make the transition to veteran life and ensuring that those who served their nation in uniform receive the benefits they earned and deserve. We can deal with Iran—or any other issue unrelated specifically to veterans—with separate legislation.

That is Mr. Dellinger, the national commander of the largest veterans organization in this country. I thank him very much because he is exactly right, and he reflects what the overwhelming majority of the American people believe: Deal with the issue at hand.

But it is not just the American Legion I want to thank. The Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America tweeted the other day:

The Senate should not get distracted while debating & voting on the vets bill. Iran sanctions, Obamacare, etc. aren't relevant to S. 1982.

They are absolutely right. Let's talk about veterans' needs.

Now, some other Republican colleagues, in objecting to this bill, have said they cannot vote for it because it is not bipartisan enough and it has not been fully marked up in committee.

Well, that is not quite true. Almost all of the provisions in this bill did come out of the committee. In fact, two of the major components of this bill—two separate omnibus bills—were passed by a unanimous vote. You cannot get much more bipartisan than when you have two major provisions in a bill passing with all Republicans and Democrats voting for it. That is pretty bipartisan where I come from.

Furthermore, this legislation contains a number of provisions authored and supported by Republican members of the Veterans Affairs' Committee. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, there are 26 separate provisions that Republican members have authored or cosponsored.

This legislation also includes two key provisions that were passed in a bipartisan way by the Republican House of Representatives. With almost unanimous votes, the House passed a provision that we have in this legislation that would authorize the VA to enter into 27 major medical facility leases in 18 States and Puerto Rico. In other words, this was a new provision that I did add to this bill, was not discussed in committee but, in fact, has overwhelming bipartisan support. The second provision we added to the bill not discussed in committee also passed the House with broad support, and that deals with the very important issue of ensuring that veterans can take full advantage of the post-9/11 GI bill and get instate tuition in the State in which they currently live.

So to as great a degree as possible I have tried to make this bill a bipartisan bill. That is where we are.

Now, other Republicans have come to the floor and they have objected to this bill because they argue that by expanding VA health care to veterans currently not eligible for it—veterans who

in some cases are trying to get by on \$28,000, \$30,000 a year in this tough economy; and it is true, we do expand VA health care to those veterans who do not have a whole lot of money—the Republicans who object say, well, that would open the floodgates for millions or tens of millions—I think somebody said 22 million veterans—every veteran in America would be eligible for VA health care, that the health care system would be swamped and health care, especially for those most in need, would deteriorate because so many people came into the system.

As I mentioned yesterday, this is absolutely untrue. No new veteran would be added into VA health care until the VA had the infrastructure to accommodate those new veterans. So we are not opening the door for millions of new veterans—not true—and, as currently is the case, those with service-connected disabilities would continue to get the highest priority service, as they currently do and which, in my view, should always be the case. Those who were injured in war are the top priority, and those folks must always be the top priority, and that is certainly the case in this legislation.

Then last but not least there is the objection that we are going to be dealing with in about 45 minutes—the vote we will be having—and that is that some of my colleagues basically say: Senator SANDERS, this bill is just too expensive and we just cannot afford to pass it. This bill costs \$21 billion—that is a lot of money, I do not deny it—and that is just too much money, and we cannot afford to pass this bill, which helps millions of veterans.

I want to respond to that point in two ways. First, I want to address it from an inside-the-beltway, more technical perspective, and then I want to talk to the American people about the cost of war and what we can afford and what we cannot afford.

In terms of the funding of this bill, the Congressional Budget Office—the nonpartisan scorekeeper—has estimated that mandatory spending in this bill will total \$2.88 billion over the next 10 years—\$2.88 billion. All of this mandatory spending is completely offset. Let me repeat that. All of this mandatory spending is completely offset, not by OCO funds, but through more than \$4.2 billion in actual savings from the programs within the jurisdiction of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. As a result, CBO has determined that overall mandatory spending in this bill will be reduced—will be reduced—by more than \$1.3 billion.

That is what the CBO said. In addition, this bill authorizes \$18.3 billion in discretionary spending. We have 4.2 in mandatory, more than offset, and then we have 18.3 billion in discretionary spending over the next 5 years.

As the Presiding Officer knows, there is no rule in the Senate that an author-

ization of funding has to be offset. That is what the Committee on Veterans' Affairs is. We are an authorizing committee. We are not an appropriations committee. In essence, the discretionary spending provisions in this legislation are just recommendations on how much additional funding we believe is needed for our Nation's veterans. It will be up to future legislation in the Appropriations Committee, as is always the case, to approve or disapprove of these recommendations.

In other words, the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, an authorizing committee, has made a recommendation. The final word, as is always the case when we spend money, rests with the Appropriations Committee. The discretionary spending authorized under this bill is, in fact, paid for by using savings from winding down the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, otherwise known as the OCO fund.

Again, these are recommendations. The Appropriations Committee has the final word. CBO estimates that spending for Overseas Contingency Operations will total a little over \$1 trillion over the next decade. Spending as a result of this legislation to improve the lives of millions of our veterans will be less than 2 percent of that \$1 trillion. So anybody who comes down to the floor and says this bill is going to take away from the needs of our men and women in Afghanistan or elsewhere is simply inaccurate.

One trillion dollars is what is in the fund for the next 10 years. We spend less than \$20 billion of that fund. Some people say, well, yes, that is fine. But OCO funding has to go into ammunition, it has to go into planes, it has to go into tanks. That is where it goes.

That is not quite the case. Let me give you an example of how we have spent past overseas contingency operation funds.

Since 2005, the Defense Department has used OCO funding for childcare centers, for hospitals, for traumatic brain injury research, for equipment, and schools. In 2010, \$50 million of OCO funds were used for the Guam Improvement Enterprise Fund. To my mind, if we can use money for the Guam Improvement Enterprise Fund—I do not know much about that—I do believe we should be able to use some of the OCO funds to protect the needs of men and women who made enormous sacrifices defending our country.

Last year OCO funds were allocated to a number of countries around the world: Egypt, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Somalia, South Sudan, and many other countries.

This year \$28 million in OCO funding is being used for the TRICARE health care program. In other words, we are using a tiny percentage, less than 2 percent of the funds in the OCO fund, to protect veterans. We have seen over the years OCO funding used in a whole lot of other areas.

I happen to believe that what we are trying to do with OCO funds falls well within the definition of what that fund is supposed to be used for. If we are supposed to be using that fund for military purposes, then we take care of the military personnel who served our country—totally legitimate, totally consistent.

That is kind of the technical, inside-the-beltway explanation for why I think the funding mechanism we have chosen and the approach we have taken is legitimate. But let me get actually to the far more important reason as to why this bill should be passed and it should be paid for; that is, very simply, this bill in a small way attempts to pay back and help veterans and their families for the enormous sacrifices they have made for this country, sacrifices which in the deepest sense can never, ever be fully paid back.

This is what this bill does. This bill helps Members of Congress, on Memorial Day or Veterans Day, when they go out and they meet with veterans and their families, that if a Member of Congress, Member of the Senate bumps into a young veteran who is in a wheelchair, who because of a war-related injury is unable to have a baby and start a family that he or she wanted, some of those injuries, maybe the spinal cord, some of them may have taken place in the genital region, but for whatever reason—we have over 2,000 veterans in this country today who are unable to naturally have babies. Many of them want families. If a Member of the Senate wants to look that veteran in the eyes and say to him or her that they think we cannot afford to help that individual who sacrificed so much for this country have a family, well go do that. Tell that individual that you think we cannot afford to help him or her, but when you do that, I hope you will also tell him why you voted to give \$1 trillion in tax breaks to the top 2 percent at a time when the wealthiest people in this country are doing phenomenally well. Virtually all of my Republican colleagues thought it was appropriate to provide huge tax breaks to millionaires and billionaires.

So when you speak to that young veteran who can no longer have a child and you are going to explain why we cannot afford to help that family, tell them it was OK to vote for tax breaks for the Koch brothers or the Walton family, but we do not have enough money to help them start a family.

If you as a Senator see a 70-year-old woman or 75-year-old woman pushing a wheelchair for a veteran who lost his legs in Vietnam, tell that woman, have the courage, have the honesty to tell that woman we cannot extend the caregiver benefits to her that we have, quite appropriately, for the post-9/11 veterans. Tell that woman who may be taking care of that disabled vet 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, who lives under

enormous stress, that we do not have the resources to help her with a modest stipend; we do not have the resources as the U.S. Government to maybe have a nurse come in once a week to relieve her. We do not have the resources to give her some technical help for herself, for her husband. Explain to her that we cannot afford to do that.

But then in the same breath, if you please, explain how you can support a situation where one out of four corporations in this country does not pay a nickel in Federal income taxes. It is OK for General Electric, some of the largest corporations in the world in a given year, not to pay a penny in Federal income tax, but we somehow do not have the money to give a little bit of help to a 70-, 75-year-old wife who is working 24/7 to give support to their loved ones.

I say to my fellow Senators: If you happen to meet a veteran who is trying to get by on \$28,000, \$30,000, \$35,000 a year, and you notice that the teeth in his mouth are rotting, if you notice that person may not have health insurance, one of the million veterans in this country who have no health insurance, I want you to go up to that veteran and have the courage, the honesty, to tell them that you believe the United States of America does not have the money to take care of his needs, to get him VA health care, to help him fix his teeth.

But explain to him why you may have voted for more than \$100 billion in tax breaks for the wealthiest three-tenths of 1 percent because you think we should repeal the estate tax that only applies to the wealthiest three-tenths of 1 percent, the wealthiest of the wealthy. You are prepared to vote, and virtually all Republicans are, to give millionaire and billionaire families, the wealthiest of the wealthy, the top three-tenths of 1 percent, \$100 billion in tax breaks, but we are not prepared, we supposedly do not have the money to get VA health care for someone making \$28,000, \$30,000 or dental care for someone whose teeth are rotting in his mouth.

You go explain that. Have the honesty, the courage, guys, to say: Yes, tax breaks for billionaires, but we do not have the resources to get you into VA health care. I want you to explain to a young woman who left the military, maybe broken in spirit because she was raped or sexually assaulted while in the military, tell her America does not have the resources to get her, through the VA, the proper care she needs to get her life back together after her sexual assault. Tell her that.

If you happen to meet a young man who was eligible for the post-9/11 GI bill, who today cannot afford to go to college where he lives because he is not eligible for in-state tuition and there is a gap between what the GI education bill pays and what is required in the

State he is living in of \$10,000, he cannot afford it, cannot go to college, explain to him that we do not have the money to help him.

If you bump into an old veteran—we have heard some discussion in the last couple of days that the VA lacks adequate health care facilities, we do not have enough around the country. This legislation that we are voting on right now, that in fact was already passed in the House, provides for the VA to enter into leases for 27 medical facilities all across this country in 18 different States.

Tell him, tell that 70-year-old veteran or the 80-year-old veteran who wants access to primary health care near where he lives that we do not have the resources to provide that primary care, but we can spend billions of dollars rebuilding the infrastructure in Afghanistan, where most of that money is stolen by a corrupt leadership.

Maybe, colleagues, one of you will see a young veteran, one of hundreds of thousands of veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan who are dealing with PTSD or traumatic brain injury or maybe it is a young man who has come back who just cannot find a job in this very tough economy. Go up to him and say: Yes, tax breaks for the rich are great; corporations not paying taxes, that is OK, but I do not believe we should be providing help to you.

The bottom line is what we believe in. It is not just speeches we give on Memorial Day and on Veterans Day. I know my colleagues give great speeches.

The question is, and the more important issue is, not your fine rhetoric, but are you prepared to vote for programs that help human beings in need. Speeches are great, but action is better and far more important.

This is about who we are as a people. It is about what our priorities are. In my view, at the very top of our priority list has to be to protect and defend those people who protect and defend us, those people who have given much more than we can ever repay.

There are gold star wives who want to go to college, and we allow that in this bill. They lost their husbands. They are trying to take care of their kids. They want a new shot at life. They need a college education. We say they should have that. I don't think that is asking too much.

Enough of the rhetoric, enough of the speeches, enough about how everybody loves the veterans. Now is the time for action. I implore all of my colleagues to overcome this vote, to give us the votes that we need to go forward to protect those who have protected us.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. I ask unanimous consent for Senator MCCAIN, Senator

AYOTTE, and me to engage in a colloquy for approximately 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

Mr. GRAHAM. My colleagues will be here in a moment. I will start. Thank you for recognizing me.

Senator MCCAIN has arrived.

The time has come, colleagues, for us as a body to provide some oversight that is missing when it comes to the death of four Americans at the Benghazi consulate on September 11, 2012. I will try not to get emotional.

The bottom line is all of us very much appreciate those who serve in harm's way in the State Department and in the military. When bad things happen that can cost someone their life, that is sometimes the consequence of service.

But when the system breaks down, it is utter and complete failure, nothing responsible happens to those who allow the failure, and when we really don't know the truth about how the system has failed, then they have died in a fashion that is unacceptable.

I am urging my colleague, the Democratic leader, to form a joint select committee of the relevant committees, the Armed Services Committee, the intelligence committee, the Foreign Relations Committee, and any other committee that is relevant, to get to the bottom of what happened in Benghazi.

I have come to conclude that this issue is not going away. It will not die out because four Americans lost their lives.

We have compiled an event timeline that I think does the following. The story told by Susan Rice and the President himself shortly after the attack on September 16, and for a couple of weeks later, has absolutely collapsed. It is not credible. It is a fabrication. It was a manipulation of the intel 7 weeks before an election, and I think it is abundantly clear that the information coming from Libya never suggested there was a protest and identified this as a terrorist attack from the very beginning. On September 16, 5 days after the attack U.N. ambassador Susan Rice assured the Nation that the consulate was substantially, significantly, and strongly secured.

There is absolutely nothing in the talking points about that. Clearly that was not the case. Why did she say that?

Her story about a protest caused by a hateful video being the most likely cause of the attack is not based on any facts or any reporting from Libya. We will walk through the timeline, but the head of the CIA in Libya on September 15 sent a message, an email, a cable, to the No. 2, Mike Morell, in the CIA in Washington, saying this was not—not—a protest that escalated into an attack.

That story line about a protest was misleading. It was false, it was politically motivated, in my view. The No. 2 at the CIA, Mike Morell—his testimony

before the House and the Senate is highly suspect. He testified on November 14 or 15, 2012, to the Senate and House intelligence committees.

There was one episode where Mr. Clapper, the Director of National Intelligence said: He did not know who changed the famous talking points. The talking points originally identified Al Qaeda as being involved, identified this as a terrorist attack and were completely changed in the protest story line, not mentioning Al Qaeda at all.

Mike Morell, in May of 2013, admitted to changing the talking points. But when Director Clapper said: We don't know who changed the talking points. Mike Morell was sitting right by him and never said a word.

About 10 days later, Susan Rice asked to meet with me, Senator MCCAIN, and Senator AYOTTE to explain her side of the story. This was November 24 or 25; I can't remember the date. But Mike Morell accompanied her, and we had a meeting in the classified portion of the Capitol, the secure portion of the Capitol.

One of the first questions I asked Mr. Morell was: Who changed the talking points?

He said: We believe the FBI changed the talking points.

Senator MCCAIN asked him: Why did the CIA not know about the contents of the FBI interviews of the survivors on September 15, 16, and 17? Why didn't the CIA pick up a phone and call the FBI agents interviewing the Benghazi survivors in Germany on the September 15, 16, and 17, days after the attack?

Mike Morell said: The FBI basically would not share that information because it was an ongoing criminal investigation.

My mouth dropped. When the meeting was over I ran back to my office, called the FBI, and reported to them that the No. 2, the acting director at that time, Mike Morell, has claimed that your agency, the FBI, changed its talking points, deleting all references to terrorism and Al Qaeda.

They went ballistic. They also denied that their agents ever withheld information from the CIA because it was an ongoing investigation. The FBI literally went ballistic on the phone. Hours later we got a call from the CIA saying the acting director misspoke: We may have changed the talking points, but we don't know why.

In light of this, it is now time for a joint select committee to be formed. How can we get to the bottom of the truth of what happened in Benghazi if no one has ever talked to Susan Rice about why she said what she said. Now is the time to recall Mike Morell to ask him questions about the validity of his testimony, the accuracy of his testimony to Congress.

There are a lot of people who think this is no big deal, apparently, particu-

larly in the Congress on the other side. There are a lot of Americans who feel as if their government has not been straightforward and honest with them about what happened in Benghazi.

The role of the Congress is to provide oversight. I will conclude with this thought. When the war in Iraq was going fully, when Abu Ghraib became a disaster, when Guantanamo Bay tactics became exposed and they were outside of our values, Senator MCCAIN and I joined with Democrats to get to the bottom of it. After 9/11, the Bush administration originally did not want the 9/11 Commission to be formed.

Senator MCCAIN and Senator LIEBERMAN led the charge. We are doing no more now than we did then. We just need willing partners.

I cannot say to any family member or anyone who served our Nation in harm's way that we know the truth about what happened in Benghazi at this stage.

I can say this. We know what was told to us as a nation does not hold any water, and we know that people have manipulated the facts 7 weeks before an election.

I am still not comfortable with the fact that nobody could provide help to these people for over 9 hours. Before the attack, not one person who allowed the security to deteriorate to the point of where it became a death trap in Benghazi, to the point it became a death trap—not one person—has been fired. That is unacceptable.

With that, I will turn it over to my colleague Senator MCCAIN and eventually Senator AYOTTE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with the Senator from South Carolina and the Senator from New Hampshire, who are on the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. My colleague from South Carolina laid out many of the salient facts according to how they transpired and didn't transpire.

I will go forward a bit to last Sunday where on "Meet the Press," Ambassador Rice was asked by David Gregory:

When you were last here, Ambassador Rice, it was an eventful morning on the story of Benghazi and the horrible attack on our compound there. We haven't seen you in a while. As you look back at your involvement in all of that, do you have any regrets?

David, no. Because what I said to you that morning, and what I did every day since, was to share the best information that we had at the time.

The Senator from South Carolina has just outlined the fact that the information he had at the time was drastically different from that which was articulated that Sunday morning following the attack on our embassy and the death of four great Americans. So it

was not the information that we had at the time.

Then she said:

And that information turned out, in some respects, not to be 100% correct. But the notion that somehow I or anybody else in the administration misled the American people is patently false.

The American people were misled. They were misled because she said, right after the attack, on "Face the Nation," that it was "based on the best information we have to date"—I quote from her statement back then, a few days after the attack—but based on the best information of what their assessment is:

What happened in Benghazi was in fact initially a spontaneous reaction to what had just transpired hours before in Cairo, almost a copycat of the demonstrations against our facility in Cairo, prompted by the video.

We know now for sure, and we knew then, before Ambassador Rice went on that Sunday show, that it was not because as the Senator from South Carolina just pointed out, the station chief sent a message immediately following saying that this was not—repeat, not—a spontaneous demonstration. I will submit that for the record.

Somehow we have Ambassador Rice saying this was a hateful video that sparked this demonstration. It says: Whether there were Al Qaeda affiliates, whether they were Libyan-based extremists, is one of the things we have to determine. But, again, she said: Sparked by this hateful video. There was no involvement of the hateful video.

I hate to quote myself, but I was on that same program, and immediately after she spoke I said:

Most people don't bring rocket-propelled grenades and heavy weapons to a demonstration. That was an act of terror and for anyone to disagree with that fundamental fact I think is really ignorant on the facts.

We know now that we now have facts that she was absolutely wrong. Of course, the question also remains what in the world was Susan Rice doing speaking that morning? What was she doing there? She had nothing to do with it. She was the Ambassador to the United Nations. And Secretary Clinton was "exhausted," I believe was the rationale given why she wasn't on every Sunday morning show.

So the fact is we knew at the time Susan Rice said—and this is what it really was all about. It was all about a Presidential campaign and the narrative of bin Laden is dead, al-Qaeda is on the run, because then Susan Rice, in response to Bob Schieffer, said: President Obama said, when he was running for President, that he would refocus our efforts and attentions on Al-Qaeda. Then she said—get this—we have decimated Al-Qaeda; Osama bin Laden is gone. He also said we would end the war in Iraq responsibly. We have done that.

Is there anybody here who thinks the war in Iraq has been ended responsibly?

He has protected civilians in Libya, and Qadhafi is gone.

Obviously, we have not decimated Al-Qaeda. Al-Qaida is not on the run. In fact, Al-Qaeda is increasing everywhere across the Middle East and North Africa. Anybody who believes when the black flags of Al-Qaeda are flying over the city of Fallujah, where 96 brave Americans, marines and soldiers died, and 600 were wounded, that things were "ended in Iraq responsibly," obviously that is not the case.

I think we have to understand the timing of all this. It was all part of a Presidential campaign. The President of the United States, in debate with Mitt Romney, said: Oh, I called it an act of terror. He didn't call it an act of terror. He didn't. In fact, 10 days later, at the U.N., he was still talking about hateful videos that sparked spontaneous demonstrations. The American people were badly misled.

I yield for my colleague from New Hampshire.

Mr. GRAHAM. Perhaps the Senator from New Hampshire could walk us through some of the reasons we now know the story line of a protest caused by a video doesn't hold water.

Ms. AYOTTE. I thank the Senator from South Carolina and the Senator from Arizona for everything they have done on this important issue and to get to the truth.

Frankly, I will quote the Senator from Arizona from last weekend, when he was asked what Ambassador Susan Rice said on "Meet the Press," because I agree with his sentiment: I am speechless.

I am speechless because when Ambassador Rice was asked on "Meet the Press," do you have any regrets about what you said on every single Sunday show on September 16 of 2012, she said she didn't have any regrets. She said: What I said to you that morning, and what I did every day since, is to share the best information we had at the time. The information I provided, which I explained to you, was what we had at the moment.

Actually, that is not the full picture and the information they had at the moment. That is why I think the word "speechless" applies. The fact she would have no regrets about misleading the American people is deeply troubling. Because we know that immediately after he heard about the attacks, GEN Carter Ham, who was the commander of U.S. Africa Command at the time, told Secretary of Defense Panetta this was a terrorist attack. In fact, Secretary Panetta testified before the Armed Services Committee, as did the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chairman Dempsey, they knew at the time it was a terrorist attack.

But apparently, when Ambassador Rice went on to tell the story about

this being the result of a hateful and heinous video and protest that started in Cairo, she missed that testimony and this incredibly important information held by key security leaders in our government.

We also know on September 12, 4 days before she appeared on the Sunday shows, the day after the attacks, according to testimony given before the House Oversight and Governmental Reform Committee given last May, Beth Jones, who was then the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, sent an email on behalf of our government to the Libyan Ambassador in Washington, DC, which said the following:

The group that conducted the attacks, Ansar al-Sharia, is affiliated with Islamic terrorists.

This was 4 days before Ambassador Rice went on all the Sunday shows and said this was in response to a hateful and offensive video.

That was not the case.

Let's go further. This wasn't the best information they had at the time. This raises questions as well about the role of Mike Morell, who at the time was the Deputy CIA Director. I was part of the meeting with Mike Morell and Ambassador Rice at the time, and one of the things I learned in that briefing also troubled me a great deal about the representation Ambassador Rice made on those Sunday shows, including her statement that she has no regrets, apparently, and the claim they had the best information at the time.

One of the things that goes out is called the Presidential daily brief. In fact, Ambassador Rice had a very important position in our government at the time. I still wonder why she was the person who was sent out on every Sunday show with regard to the attacks on our consulate in Benghazi, but the daily intelligence briefing at the time actually contained references to the potential involvement of Al-Qaeda in these attacks. Yet somehow, when she went on the Sunday shows, she felt she could make the statement that Al-Qaeda has been decimated and then blamed the attacks on our consulate on this hateful video, further contradicting the information we had at the time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's 20 minutes has expired.

Ms. AYOTTE. I ask unanimous consent for 1 minute to wrap up.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. AYOTTE. I thank the Chair.

I will defer to my colleagues, but the bottom line is this: We are speechless by what Ambassador Rice said last Sunday. We need to have her testimony before the Congress to get to the bottom of why these misrepresentations were made. Mr. Morell needs to be brought back before the Congress, and ultimately we need a select committee.

I defer to my colleague from South Carolina to wrap up.

Mr. GRAHAM. I thank my colleagues.

Now is the time for us to move forward to set the stage for a vote; is that correct?

Well, I will say, No. 1, as to the amendment of Senator BURR, it takes care of veterans similar to what Senator SANDERS is proposing, but it pays for it in a more responsible way. Unlike the proposal of Senator SANDERS, we have an additional element in the Burr amendment that not only takes care of veterans but it deals with a national security imperative, which is the Iran sanctions legislation. This is bipartisan in nature, with 59 cosponsors, including 17 Democrats. This would reimpose sanctions at the end of the 6-month negotiating period if we do not have an acceptable outcome regarding the Iranian nuclear program; we need to dismantle the reactor, remove the uranium, and stop enrichment.

That is the goal of the Iran sanctions legislation, and I am very pleased Senator BURR would bring that before the body. I am urging my colleagues to allow us to vote on Iran sanctions. The sanctions are literally crumbling.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All Republican time has expired.

Mr. GRAHAM. With that, I understand Senator BURR and others on our side have filed an amendment which would impose additional sanctions against the Government of Iran if it violates the interim agreement with the United States, and I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending motion so I may offer amendment No. 2752.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SANDERS. Reserving the right to object, I do find it interesting that, in the midst of this important debate about the needs of our veterans, my Republican colleagues are on the floor of the Senate and have virtually nothing to say about veterans.

This bill is not about Benghazi. This veterans bill is not about Iran sanctions, it is not about Hillary Clinton. It is about protecting the needs of our veterans. So the amendment of Senator BURR does not go anywhere near as far as we need to go in terms of veterans issues. It brings the Iran sanctions issue into a debate where it should not be brought.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. GRAHAM. In addition to Burr amendment No. 2752, there are many amendments on our side of the aisle waiting to be offered.

Parliamentary inquiry: Is it correct that no Senator is permitted to offer an amendment to this bill while the majority leader's amendments and motions are pending?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. GRAHAM. In addition to the Burr amendment No. 2752, there are many amendments on our side of the aisle waiting in the queue to be offered.

Further parliamentary inquiry: If a motion to table the Reid motion to commit is successful, would there be an opportunity to offer a motion to commit the bill to the Veterans' Affairs Committee to be reported back as a fully amendable bill with the Iran sanctions bill included?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If the motion to table is agreed to, there would be an opportunity for Senators to offer another motion to recommit with instructions to which the Senator's amendment could be offered.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, in order to offer amendment No. 2752, the Iran sanctions amendment, I move to table the pending Reid motion to commit and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) are necessarily absent.

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) would have voted "aye."

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 44, nays 52, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 45 Leg.]

YEAS—44

Alexander	Enzi	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Chambliss	Heller	Rubio
Coats	Hoeven	Scott
Coburn	Inhofe	Sessions
Cochran	Isakson	Shelby
Collins	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Cornyn	Kirk	Vitter
Crapo	Lee	Wicker
Cruz	McCain	

NAYS—52

Baldwin	Donnelly	Klobuchar
Begich	Durbin	Landrieu
Bennet	Feinstein	Leahy
Blumenthal	Franken	Levin
Booker	Hagan	Manchin
Boxer	Harkin	Markey
Brown	Heinrich	McCaskill
Cantwell	Heitkamp	Menendez
Cardin	Hirono	Merkley
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Mikulski
Casey	Kaine	Murphy
Coons	King	Murray

Pryor	Schumer	Warner
Reed	Shaheen	Warren
Reid	Tester	Whitehouse
Rockefeller	Udall (CO)	Wyden
Sanders	Udall (NM)	
Schatz	Walsh	

NOT VOTING—4

Gillibrand	Nelson
Murkowski	Stabenow

The motion was rejected.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be 2 minutes equally divided in the usual form prior to the vote on the motion to waive; further, that the remaining votes in this sequence be 10 minute votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? The Chair hears none, and it so ordered.

Who yields time?

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, this budget point of order we are now going to vote on tells us in a very significant way who we are as a people. If you vote for this budget point of order, you are saying that in this great country we do not have the resources to help our veterans with their health care, education, and to be able to deal with sexual assault. We need to help older veterans get the nursing care and build new medical facilities that they desperately need.

I personally—and I have to say this honestly—have a hard time understanding how anyone can vote for tax breaks for billionaires, millionaires, and large corporations and then say we don't have the resources to protect our veterans. We should not be supporting this point of order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, my only wish is that we had been on the Senate floor debating reforms within the system so we could fulfill and keep the promises we made to our veterans who are currently in that system.

I yield back the remainder of our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The yeas and nays were previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) would have voted "nay."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 56, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 46 Leg.]

YEAS—56

Baldwin	Heinrich	Murray
Begich	Heitkamp	Pryor
Bennet	Heller	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reid
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Boxer	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Landrieu	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Levin	Tester
Coons	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Donnelly	Markey	Udall (NM)
Durbin	McCaskill	Walsh
Feinstein	Menendez	Warner
Franken	Merkley	Warren
Gillibrand	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Hagan	Moran	Wyden
Harkin	Murphy	

NAYS—41

Alexander	Cruz	McCain
Ayotte	Enzi	McConnell
Barrasso	Fischer	Paul
Blunt	Flake	Portman
Boozman	Graham	Risch
Burr	Grassley	Roberts
Chambliss	Hatch	Rubio
Coats	Hoeven	Scott
Coburn	Inhofe	Sessions
Cochran	Isakson	Shelby
Collins	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Cornyn	Kirk	Vitter
Crapo	Lee	

NOT VOTING—3

Murkowski	Nelson	Wicker
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The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 56, the nays are 41. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected. The point of order is sustained, and under section 312 of the Congressional Budget Act the bill is recommitted to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL L. CONNOR TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Michael L. Connor, of New Mexico, to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Michael L. Connor, of New Mexico, to be Deputy Secretary of the Interior?

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 47 Ex.]

YEAS—97

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murphy
Ayotte	Graham	Murray
Baldwin	Grassley	Paul
Barrasso	Hagan	Portman
Begich	Harkin	Pryor
Bennet	Hatch	Reed
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reid
Blunt	Heitkamp	Risch
Booker	Heller	Roberts
Boozman	Hirono	Rockefeller
Boxer	Hoeven	Rubio
Brown	Inhofe	Sanders
Burr	Isakson	Schatz
Cantwell	Johanns	Schumer
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Scott
Casper	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Casey	Kaine	Shaheen
Chambliss	King	Shelby
Coats	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Landrieu	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Toomey
Corker	Lee	Udall (CO)
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (NM)
Crapo	Manchin	Vitter
Cruz	Markey	Walsh
Donnelly	McCain	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Warren
Enzi	McConnell	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Menendez	Wicker
Fischer	Merkley	Wyden
Flake	Mikulski	
Franken	Moran	

NOT VOTING—3

Coburn	Murkowski	Nelson
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid on the table.

The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I would like to speak about an issue, but first I would like to yield to the minority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2011

Mr. McCONNELL. I am here in support of what our colleague from Arizona is going to be talking about shortly. It is basically this. We have a White House that is busily at work trying to quiet the voices of those who oppose

them by doing the following: They are proposing a new regulation directed at 501(c)(4) organizations that have been active for over 50 years in expressing themselves about the issues of the day in our country. This regulation actually predates the IRS abuses we saw during the 2012 election.

I have spoken a number of times—including a couple of major speeches at one of the think tanks here in town—about what a threat it is to citizens when the heavy hand of the IRS comes down on them because they speak up against policies of the government.

This regulation that Senator FLAKE is going to speak about here in a few minutes that we would like to see delayed for a year has generated 120,000 comments. I would say to my friend from Arizona that I am told there has been no regulation in the history of the IRS that has even approached 120,000 comments. Is that the understanding of the Senator from Arizona?

Mr. FLAKE. That is. In fact, to give some kind of scale here, the Keystone Pipeline, which has been extremely controversial for months and months, has generated about 7,000 comments—7,000 comments for an issue such as that. This has generated north of 100,000.

Mr. McCONNELL. I think it is reasonable to assume that the reason for that is there are groups out there all across America, on the right, on the left, and in the center who have taken a look at this new regulation and understand that it is the Federal Government using the heavy hand of the IRS to try to shut them up, to make it impossible for them to criticize the government or people like the Senator from Arizona and myself. It is none of the business of the government to be quieting the voices of the American people.

I know our Democratic friends are upset because some conservative groups have been very active. I do not recall the same sense of outrage over the last 50 years when groups on the left were actively involved.

I would say to my friend from Arizona, since these comments are coming from all over, it appears, does it not, that there is a lot of collateral damage here, that the administration may have wanted to target their enemies, but they are hitting some of their friends as well?

Mr. FLAKE. That is correct. Many of the organizations that have sounded alarm bells here are organizations such as the ACLU, the Sierra Club, and others, social welfare organizations that advocate for policy as well, that are concerned that this goes too far.

Mr. McCONNELL. The final thing I would say to my friend from Arizona is that we have a new Commissioner of the IRS. He has an opportunity, does he not, to clean up an agency that is already in a lot of trouble because of

the IRS scandals, because of the new responsibilities they have been given to enforce ObamaCare? This is an agency in trouble already before it wades into a political thicket such as this, particularly when it appears as if this whole regulation really originated at the White House, not at the IRS.

I am reminded that the Commissioner of the IRS during the Nixon administration was asked by the White House to help target President Nixon's enemies, and the Commissioner of the IRS said: No. No.

I wonder if my friend from Arizona agrees with me that the appropriate response from the new Commissioner of the IRS—responsible for cleaning up this troubled agency—to the White House ought to be, no, I am not going to participate in your effort to quiet the voices of your political foes.

Mr. FLAKE. I would certainly agree. If the IRS wants to establish or re-establish credibility that has been lost, then the Commissioner should say to the White House: I will act independently here.

To go forward with this rule, after what has gone on, would simply be going in the other direction and would be seen—and I think justifiably so—to be working hand in glove with the White House to stifle free speech.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I commend the Senator from Arizona for his leadership on this very important issue. I do not think there is anything more important to our democracy than First Amendment freedom of speech. The last thing an agency whose principal responsibility is to collect revenue for the Federal Government—the last thing an agency like that needs to be involved in is quieting the voices of the critics of this administration—or any other administration, for that matter.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. I thank the Senator from Kentucky. I certainly echo his comments. I do rise today to urge the Senate to pass legislation to prevent the IRS from trampling on free speech rights, particularly those of 501(c)(4) organizations.

The Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act—it is a mouthful, I know—is sponsored by Senator ROBERTS from Kansas and myself. It would prohibit for 1 year the finalization of a proposed IRS regulation that would specifically limit the advocacy and educational activities of these groups.

This bill would also prevent additional targeting of 501(c)(4) organizations by restoring the IRS standards and definitions that were in place before the agency started targeting conservative groups back in 2010.

Last spring we learned that the IRS was targeting conservative groups applying for 501(c)(4) tax-exempt status, thanks to a report by the agency's in-

spector general. Since this discovery several IRS employees, including the Acting Commissioner, have resigned. Investigations by the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the Department of Justice are ongoing.

Nevertheless, on November 29 the IRS published a proposed rule that would restrict the activities of 501(c)(4) organizations, limit their speech, and curtail their civic participation. This rule singles out the same groups that were previously targeted by the IRS and threatens to limit their participation in a host of advocacy and educational activities, even nonpartisan voter registration and education drives. These activities have a clear role in promoting civic engagement and social welfare, which is the precise purpose for which 501(c)(4) organizations are structured.

Unfortunately, this proposed rule would suppress these organizations' voices by forcing them to quit these activities or be shut down.

While this administration may be focused on quieting its conservative critics, even liberal groups have denounced the rule and called attention to the detrimental impact on free speech by organizations of all ideologies. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, this rule "will produce the same structural issues at the IRS that led to the use of inappropriate criteria in the selection of various charitable and social welfare groups for undue scrutiny."

In response to the Obama administration's claim that these tax groups have become confusing in the aftermath of a Citizens United decision, Nan Aron of the Alliance for Justice Action Campaign has commented that 501(c)(4) organizations "weren't invented in the last election cycle; they've been around for generations. Their purpose isn't to hide donors, it's to advance policies."

Even the Sierra Club has hammered the IRS rule.

As of this morning, I believe it is at least 94,000 comments the minority leader mentioned, and it may be north of 100,000 now, on the proposed rule have been submitted. This marks the largest number of comments ever submitted to any rulemaking. Let me repeat that. This is the largest number of comments ever submitted to any rulemaking.

As I said before, to put it in perspective, the Keystone Pipeline proposed rule we have heard so much about has registered just over 7,000 comments. That is compared to somewhere near 100,000 comments here. Clearly the public sees through this administration's veiled attempt to quash free speech and to shut down opposition to its priorities.

Yesterday the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed this same legislation, identical legislation in the House, by a vote of 243-176. Already,

this legislation in the Senate has 40 Senate cosponsors. It clearly deserves the consideration and support of the full Senate.

However, this legislation has not been permitted to come up for debate in the full Senate. Earlier today Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee voted to oppose it, stalling further consideration. I suppose the veto threat issued by the President may have had something to do with that. This veto threat is unfortunate. It is clearly a disproportionate response to legislation aimed at protecting free speech rights of conservatives and liberals alike.

This bill is simple. It only suspends new IRS rulemaking related to 501(c)(4)s until the ongoing investigations are completed. It simply suspends for 1 year. That is prudent and necessary.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of free speech rights by these groups by approving this legislation to prevent the finalization of the IRS's rule or any other that seeks to continue to target groups based on ideology.

Madam President, with that, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 2011, that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid on the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. WYDEN. Reserving the right to object, Madam Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. This bill is clearly within the jurisdiction of the Senate Finance Committee, because it changes the Tax Code. For many months before I became the Chair of the committee, the Finance Committee staff, on a bipartisan basis, worked very hard and very comprehensively in a thoughtful way to address this issue, interviewing 28 IRS employees and reviewing approximately 500,000 pages of documents.

It is my hope—and again, I have been the Chair of the committee for only a little bit over 1 week—it is my hope and expectation that our report will be ready for release next month or in early April.

The Finance Committee, as I have indicated, is the committee of jurisdiction. It has the technical resources, the expertise, and experience to best fashion the appropriate remedies. My view is these matters are simply too important to be handled on the floor without the opportunity for the Finance Committee to address these issues, examine them in hearings, and to have meaningful debate.

The Senator from Arizona believes that the new rules from the IRS are not fair because they limit the public

debate. I want to indicate to him and to our colleagues that I don't take a back seat to anybody in terms of promoting public debate. Free speech and fair treatment for all Americans—all Americans—in the political process is absolutely central to what I believe government ought to be all about.

I have tried, with our colleague from Alaska, Senator MURKOWSKI, to show that even in these difficult, polarizing political times, the parties can come together. Senator MURKOWSKI puts it very well in terms of what the future ought to be all about. It truly embodies our campaign disclosure bill—which, I would mention, is the first bipartisan campaign finance bill in the Senate since the days of McCain-Feingold.

Senator MURKOWSKI says it best when she says that what she wants, with respect to the rules for political debate in this country, is the “even-steven” rule. She wants to make sure the same principles that apply to the NRA apply to the Sierra Club, so that all Americans, in the course of political debates, are treated fairly. Also, we both believe that shining a light on the dark money that pulses through the American political system is not going to inhibit free speech. To the contrary, it is going to enhance the public's right to know about who is behind the political ads that bombard them during the political season without accountability or transparency.

I agree with Justice Scalia when he said:

Requiring people to stand up in public for their political acts fosters civic courage, without which democracy is doomed.

So there are two reasons for my objection. First, the Finance Committee is the committee of jurisdiction that ought to have the opportunity to address these questions, and I want to assure my friend from Arizona—whom I have worked with many times on issues—that having just become the Chair, I intend to work very expeditiously on this matter, particularly with Senator HATCH.

Second, I point out to my colleagues on the floor there is a bipartisan opportunity in the days ahead to address many of these issues. It is embodied very eloquently by Senator MURKOWSKI, who says: If we are going to be serious about promoting the widest possible debate in this country and treating everyone fairly, we do it in accord with that even-steven principle.

For those reasons, I object at this time to the unanimous consent request.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. If I could, I want to respond to a few of the Senator's items.

The Senator is correct, it falls under the Finance Committee's jurisdiction. That is part of the reason why I bring

this forward. The Finance Committee is undergoing an investigation that is not yet complete, so I think it would be prudent to forestall the implementation of new rules by the IRS while the Finance Committee investigation is ongoing. I think we all agree we shouldn't move forward on imprecise or incomplete information. That is why we are simply saying we are not proposing a rule, we are saying simply delay the new rule until investigations can be completed.

Also, with regard to the issue of fairness, I should note that this applies to 501(c)(4) organizations, nonprofit organizations. There are other organizations that are also nonprofit but are not included in this proposed rule-making—for example, labor unions. They offer, under a nonprofit status as well, a 501(c)(5). They are not included here.

The Senator correctly says we should be concerned about fairness for all groups that are under this kind of nonprofit umbrella. That is concerning to a lot of people as well, because those organized under 501(c)(4) status are targeted here when those organized under (c)(5) status are not, when they have some of the same restrictions on what they can do. So we would be imposing new rulemaking and new rules on some organizations and not others. That is one concern and another reason to forestall new rulemaking until we have more complete information about what is going on at the IRS.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs. MURRAY. I come to the floor this afternoon to take some time to talk about a law this Chamber passed in 2009. I wish to talk a little bit about what it means to serve in this body, what our responsibilities are, and why our constituents sent us here in the first place.

I have served in the Senate for more than 20 years and I have seen my share of controversial legislation. I have seen Democratic bills that Republicans couldn't stand; I have seen Democratic bills that Democrats wouldn't vote for; and I have seen bills that pretty much everybody opposed. But what I have seen in the last 4 years since the Affordable Care Act was passed by Congress and signed by the President is something new altogether.

Since the day that law passed, I have seen some of my Republican colleagues set reason, and some of their basic duties as public officials, completely aside, all in opposition of a law that means millions of Americans have access to affordable, quality health insurance they couldn't get before. It is a law that means millions of young people, many of them fresh out of college,

are able to stay on their families' insurance plans. It is a law that says it is illegal for insurance companies to charge women more money just because they are women. It is a law that has provided millions of Americans with access to free preventive screenings and health care such as colonoscopies, mammograms, and flu shots. It is a law that says if you are an American and you have a preexisting condition, it is illegal for an insurance company to turn you away.

Since 2009, I have seen some of my colleagues simply refuse to acknowledge those facts about the law. I have watched them time and time again not listen to or hear stories of people in their own States whose lives have been changed by the Affordable Care Act and others who simply need access to get the benefits that are theirs. Some of my colleagues have even passed laws that make it harder to get covered under the Affordable Care Act.

One of our responsibilities as Senators, as public servants, is to help our constituents access the Federal benefits that are available to them, particularly when it comes to health care. That might mean, perhaps, putting someone in touch with a navigator to help make sure they are getting the most affordable health insurance plan. It may be helping them become aware of an enrollment event in their State where they can learn how to get covered.

But our responsibilities don't end there. We also have to have an open, honest discussion about what the Affordable Care Act means for our constituents and talk about ways to improve it.

Instead, what we have seen is some of our colleagues who have spent the better part of 4 years try to turn this law into a bogeyman and trying to score cheap political points on an issue that can literally mean the difference between life and death.

I can understand why some of our colleagues disagree with parts of this law, and I have heard from some people who had challenges, honestly. We have to look and say can we fix this in a way that makes it work better for you. But what I can't understand is why anyone elected to Congress would decide to simply ignore real-life stories of their own constituents whose lives were changed the day this law took effect.

I can't understand why anyone would ignore an opportunity to make this law better, because that is not why we were sent here. We were sent here to listen to our constituents and fight to make sure our laws work for them.

I want to give some examples from my home State of Washington about people whose lives have been changed by the Affordable Care Act, people whose stories have been pretty much ignored in Washington, DC. I know later this afternoon several of my colleagues will be doing the same thing,

so I hope everybody can turn off Fox News for a little while, not listen to Rush Limbaugh, and listen to some real stories of real live Americans who have been impacted by this law. I encourage them to go home and listen to some of the men and women in their own States, because the stories I am going to share are not unique.

I will start with the story of Susan Wellman from Bellingham, WA. She is self-employed and has had to pay for individual health insurance. Every year she has watched her health care costs rise higher and higher. It reached the point where she was paying \$300 monthly premiums with an \$8,000 deductible. All were what she described as “paying for nothing.” So as soon as she could, Susan got access to health care through our Washington State exchange, and she was so happy to have that chance. She spoke on the phone with a real-live person, and she was able to sign up for an affordable plan in just a few minutes. Now Susan is on a plan that costs her \$125 a month instead of \$300—\$125 instead of \$300—and it is a plan that has a \$2,000 deductible, not an \$8,000 deductible, and she says it actually pays for things.

Guess what. She can now afford to go to a doctor not just in the case of an emergency but for a physical or a mammogram that could save her life, not to mention thousands of dollars in health care costs. That kind of preventive care is good for Susan, and it is good for her family. It is also good for this country because when more people have access to preventive care, it makes health care cheaper for every single one of us.

Another person I have heard from whose life was changed by the affordable health care act is a man named Don Davis. He is 59 years old, and he actually goes by “Reverend Don.” He is a pastor in Seattle, and he is also a volunteer at the Boys and Girls Club. As the pastor of his church, he doesn’t get any health care through his job. He doesn’t even have a salary. That meant for a long time that Reverend Don didn’t have health insurance. So when he was hospitalized back in 2008 for severe headaches, he was only able to receive an MRI through charity care. That MRI showed that Reverend Don had several brain tumors, but when the doctors wanted to do more testing and provide more care, he didn’t have the insurance to pay for that. This is a man who has asked for nothing in life, who woke up every day willing to give to others, but he couldn’t get the basic care he needed when he got sick.

Reverend Don is healthy today. He is serving his community. Because of the Affordable Care Act, he now also has health insurance. He signed up with a navigator at the local YWCA. Now, if he gets a headache, he can afford to go to the doctor. So because of the Affordable Care Act, Reverend Don can afford

to dedicate his life to people in his community and he doesn’t need to worry that the cost of the health care he needs might be denied him.

Finally, I want to talk about a couple in Bellingham, WA, named Rod Burton and Sarah Hill. Rod is one of millions of Americans who have had the utterly maddening experience of being denied insurance because of a preexisting condition. In Rod’s case his preexisting condition was a congenital heart defect. Under our old system Rod was deemed uninsurable by most insurance plans from the moment he was born. So for a long time Rod found himself forced into purely catastrophic insurance with a very high premium that wouldn’t cover much of anything. That changed for him with the Affordable Care Act.

Despite his heart defect, Rod was able to get a plan that covers him and his wife, and they found out they were eligible for tax credits to help pay for it. So today both Rod and Sarah are covered through a silver plan with lower premiums than the plan that only covered Rod if the worst happened.

I know we have a number of other colleagues who are here to speak, and I note some of them are here to tell stories from their own States, but I would like to note that I only told three stories today of people who are benefiting from the Affordable Care Act. These are only 3 people among the 400,000 others in my home State of Washington who have now signed up for care through the exchange, Washington Healthplanfinder, and they are only 3 people among the 4 million people who have signed up across the country. For the most part, their stories are not unique. Millions of other Americans face the same kind of health care problems they do. It is time that we stop ignoring that reality. It is time that we do our job and help our constituents get the health care coverage they deserve and can now get under this law.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

IRS 501(C)(4) REGULATIONS

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I understand Senator SCHUMER wants to speak in a little while, so I will try to hurry my remarks as quickly as I can.

I rise today to speak once again on the proposed IRS regulations targeting grassroots 501(c)(4) organizations. I have already come to the floor to discuss this issue, and I expect I will be here several more times in the coming months as these proposed rules continue to move through the regulatory pipeline at the IRS.

The public comment period for these proposed regulations ends today. As of this morning, the IRS had received over 100,000 comments on this proposal, the vast majority of them negative. This is an all-time record. In fact, the

number is more than five times greater than the previous record for comments on a proposed IRS regulation. By contrast, the Keystone XL Pipeline—another item of enormous public interest—received just over 7,000 comments.

With all this public attention, the obvious question is, Why? Why has this proposal generated so much criticism from the American people? I think the answer is quite simple: The American people see this proposal for what it is—an attempt to silence this administration’s critics and keep them on the sidelines of the democratic process.

I would like to take a few minutes to describe in detail just what this regulation does.

Under the Internal Revenue Code, a 501(c)(4) organization is a nonprofit organization, the exempt purpose of which is the “promotion of social welfare.” The phrase “promotion of social welfare” has long been defined as “promoting in some way the common good and general welfare of the people of the community” or “bringing about civic betterments and social improvements.”

Such organizations may engage in political activity for or against candidates for public office so long as their primary activity falls under the category of promoting social welfare.

Under current regulations, activities such as voter registration or “get out the vote” drives are correctly treated as promoting social welfare, just like the distribution of voter guidelines outlining candidates’ positions on issues that are, in the view of the organization, important to the public.

The proposed regulations would recategorize these types of candidate-neutral activities as not consistent with the exempt purpose of promoting social welfare. This is important because over the past few days, in an effort to justify these regulations, the administration has communicated to Members of Congress that they are not banning these types of activities; they are just putting them in different categories. But lost in their justifications are some important distinctions. It is easy to get lost in the weeds, which is probably what the administration is hoping for. So let’s break this down.

Traditionally speaking, in order to keep their tax exemption, 501(c)(4) organizations have had to limit their involvement in “political activities” to around 49 percent or less of their overall activities. In other words, they can be directly involved in the political process so long as the majority of their activities are devoted to social welfare.

What this proposed regulation would do is redefine the parameters of what is considered political activity, moving a number of activities from the social welfare category to the political category. As I said, under this regulation, simply stating where candidates for public office stand on issues important

to a specific 501(c)(4) organization would be considered political activity. In fact, even mentioning a candidate's name in a communication within a specified period before an election—even if the communication does not say whether the organization supports or opposes the candidate—would be considered political activity. As I mentioned, the same could be said for voter registration drives or “get out the vote” initiatives even if the efforts are obviously and legitimately non-partisan.

Basically, this proposed regulation would instantly categorize so much run-of-the-mill behavior as partisan political activity that many existing 501(c)(4) grassroots organizations would have to stop promoting their causes altogether. And that is precisely what the administration wants. They do not want 501(c)(4)s educating the public on the issues of the day or telling voters where candidates stand on political issues. Sure, they are fine with these groups promoting social welfare so long as that promotion does not include criticism of this administration or its policies that are harmful to the general welfare of their communities.

It would be one thing if the IRS was an agency with clean hands when it came to dealing with critics of this administration. But, as we have seen, that is simply not the case. Indeed, over the last few years we have seen a record of harassment and intimidation of conservative groups applying to the IRS for tax-exempt status. The agency is under investigation in three separate congressional committees for its actions in the run up to the 2010 and 2012 elections.

Put simply, the credibility and the political independence of the IRS are very much in question. A reasonable person would think that, rather than further damaging the IRS's reputation, the administration would instead focus on rebuilding it in the aftermath of the targeting scandal. Sadly, there don't appear to be too many reasonable people working in the Obama administration, at least not when it comes to this set of issues.

We need to call this what it is: an affront to free speech and the right of all American citizens to participate in the democratic process. This is an attempt by the administration to marginalize its critics and silence them altogether.

Republicans have been very vocal in our opposition to this proposed regulation. We have spoken out in a variety of venues. But make no mistake, it is not just Republicans and conservatives who oppose this new rule. A number of left-leaning organizations have spoken out against it as well. The ACLU, for example, submitted a scathing comment letter to the IRS arguing that the proposed regulation would “produce the same structural issues at the IRS that led to the use of inappro-

priate criteria in the selection of various charitable and social welfare groups for unfair scrutiny.” The ACLU argued further that social welfare groups should be free to participate in the political process because that kind of participation “is at the heart of our representative democracy. To the extent it influences voters, it does so by promoting an informed citizenry.” We have seen similar comments from groups such as the Sierra Club. Leaders of labor unions have also publicly weighed in about the overly broad nature of the proposed regulation.

Put simply, when you have a proposal that is drawing unanimous opposition from Republicans in Congress and is being criticized by the ACLU and Big Labor, there is a pretty decent chance it is not good policy. Quite frankly, that characterization is probably too charitable for this particular proposal.

This proposed regulation needs to be stopped in its tracks. Yesterday the House of Representatives passed legislation that would do just that. If enacted, the House bill would delay the implementation of the proposal for one year. I am an original cosponsor of the Senate companion bill to this legislation, which was introduced by Senators FLAKE and ROBERTS.

Sadly, I think I know where my colleagues on the other side of the aisle stand on this issue, and I expect those of us here in the Senate who support the right of all Americans to participate in the political process are likely to be disappointed with regard to this particular legislative effort. Still, even if this legislation dies here in the Senate, that will not be the end of the line.

Earlier this month, when I came to the floor to talk about this issue, I called on IRS Commissioner Koskinen to use his authority to block these regulations. I expect him to do so. When questioned about this proposal, he has consistently deferred, usually saying he was not the Commissioner when it was drafted and published. Fine. But he is the Commissioner now, and now that he is the Commissioner, he is in a position to stop the proposed regulation from going final and acquiring the force of law. This proposal cannot take effect unless Commissioner Koskinen personally approves and signs the final regulation clearance package. That being the case, I call on him today to do the right thing—to not sign it when it reaches his desk. In fact, he ought to decry it for what it is.

In an ideal world, the administration would simply withdraw this proposal and leave this issue alone. However, we are not living in such a world. That being the case, if the administration continues its effort to push through this proposed rule, the IRS Commissioner can and should use his authority to stop it from taking effect. After all, that is one reason Congress gives the

IRS Commissioner a 5-year term. The Commissioner is supposed to be free from political pressure when making decisions and implementing our Nation's tax laws.

In light of that fact, I want to implore Commissioner Koskinen to use the power he has been granted to restore the IRS's credibility and make it clear to the American people that his agency, the IRS, will no longer be used as simply another political arm of this or any future administration. I hope he will do so because it is the right thing to do, and I am calling on him to do it.

I have faith in Commissioner Koskinen. I believe he is an honest man. I don't think he has any other choice but to stop these obnoxious regulations which people from the left to the right consider to be breaches of free speech and are wrong.

I yield the floor.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, over the next several months the Affordable Care Act is going to become less important as a Republican campaign issue because more and more Americans—from young adults all the way through seniors—are going to realize the benefits it has to offer. It is happening already.

Every day there are more positive stories about people getting cheaper coverage, better coverage or coverage for the first time. Let me say, in my State of New York the initial rollout of ACA has been a big success. We didn't have the problems of a Web site because we did our own, and because we have a lot of competition, as was intended on the exchanges, people are getting very good offers and a large number of people are getting their costs reduced.

I will tell one story. A friend of mine goes to a hairdresser in a conservative neighborhood in New York. The person who owns the beauty shop is very conservative, and when the ACA first rolled out she was very upset. She said: Look, I have looked at that Web site. I am a nice person. I pay for health care for my eight employees. It is going to cost me hundreds of dollars more for each employee. I don't even know if I can afford to stay in business. That person talked to all of her friends, I think she blogged on her Web site, and talked all about it.

I spoke to my friend a few weeks ago. Guess what. This same person actually got health care on the New York Web site which reduced the cost of health care for employees by a couple of hundred dollars each. She was very happy. Of course, I asked my friend to make sure she puts that on her Web site and tells all of her conservative friends about that.

But this story is going to be repeated over and over. There are going to be millions of seniors who realize they can get a free checkup and keep their

health good. There are going to be millions of young people who realize they can continue their health care and stay on their parents' health insurance from age 21 to 26. Millions of people are going to find out that either, God forbid, someone in their family or someone in a family they know has a pre-existing condition, and now they can get health care. Millions of businesses are going to see the cost of health care is actually going up at a much smaller rate than they are used to. So all these good things will start mounting and the positives about ACA will grow in the public's mind and eventually I believe it will catch up in the Senate and the House. Then something else too will happen and that is this: Lots of people who are not affected directly by ACA have had fear put into their souls. They listen to the rightwing talk radio and they hear: Oh, they may lose all their health care or their costs will go way up. But what they are finding is it is not happening.

I met a firefighter who works for New York City—not a volunteer firefighter—a few months ago. He said: I know ObamaCare is going to kill me. It is going to greatly reduce the health care I am getting as a New York City firefighter.

They get very good health care and they should. They are risking their lives for us. He said: It is going to happen, I hear, in the new year, January 1, 2014.

I saw the firefighter a few weeks ago, and he said to me: Hey, I still have my health care and nothing changed. Well, of course nothing changed. All the horror stories which have been launched by so many on the rightwing talk radio and those who just hate ObamaCare, whether it works or not, are starting to fade.

So we are seeing two things happen at once: We are seeing the positives increase and the negatives decrease and we are seeing it particularly with senior citizens. Because the doughnut hole is filled, millions of our senior citizens are spending much less on prescription drugs than they had to. It is a huge benefit to them. Since ACA was enacted, more than 7 million seniors and people with disabilities have saved \$9 billion. That is a huge amount of money. To seniors, many of whom are on fixed incomes, that is dramatic savings for them.

Something else is happening to our seniors. They are getting free checkups. That does two things. First, it saves money out of their own pockets but, second, it reduces our health care costs because we all know an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Free checkups are that prevention we need. It will not only save the seniors but save our system billions and billions of dollars in the years and decades to come. Somebody who finds a growth on their skin and gets it re-

moved before it becomes cancerous, somebody who might get a colonoscopy, a mammogram or a prostate exam and is saved from prostate cancer—all that is going to happen.

So the bottom line is very simple: People are learning the positives of ACA. The Web site is being improved. More people are signing up. In my State of New York alone, more than 250,000 people with Medicare saved \$246 million on prescription drugs. The numbers are higher when we count up to today because that was only the first 10 months, through November 1 of 2013. The benefits are all over the place.

One other thing. This is not our subject of the week, but I think we have to keep mentioning it. We are reducing the budget deficit through the ACA. I know our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are very careful about the budget deficit. Good. They should be. Health care costs are declining and declining significantly. Some is due to the recession, but almost every expert says much is due to the ACA.

National health care expenditures, for instance, in 2012 grew by 3.7 percent, meaning that the growth from 2009 to 2012 was the slowest since government collected this information in the 1960s. The percentage of health care spending for the first time actually shrunk from 17.3 to 17.2. At the same time, the solvency of Medicare's hospital insurance fund increased and costs declined. So this is great news.

The bottom line: I know our colleagues on the other side of the aisle think they hit political goals when they attack the ACA and call for its repeal, but the American people don't want repeal. Secondly, as we move on in time the positives of ACA will become more apparent, the negatives people perceive of ACA will decline, and I believe by November this issue will not be the political gold mine our colleagues think it is.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I thank Senator SCHUMER for his great leadership on this issue and his strong words.

I am pleased to join with my colleagues on the floor to speak about the positive impacts of the Affordable Care Act and the impact it is having on our Nation's health and particularly the health of our seniors.

We have all heard about the benefits of the Affordable Care Act in terms of increasing coverage: Over 4 million people have already signed up for the affordable private health insurance through the State and Federal exchanges, millions more have signed up for Medicaid coverage, and millions more young people are now able to stay on their parents' insurance policies until they are 26—and the numbers are growing.

But as important as these figures are, the Affordable Care Act isn't just about expanding coverage for the uninsured. It is also about improving the quality of care and the quality of coverage for all Americans, including our seniors.

Seniors in this country rely on the Medicare Program—and they should rely on the Medicare Program—because Medicare respects a promise that we made as a country to ensure that people who contribute to the program during their working years will have their health care needs taken care of after the age of 65. We have a duty to keep that promise, and we need to build on that promise.

To keep the promise of Medicare, we have to make sure the program stays afloat. The Affordable Care Act does this by improving the quality of care, by coordinating care, and by better delivering under Medicare so we reduce waste in the program and we use Medicare dollars in a way that improves health outcomes for our seniors.

The Republicans have a very different approach to Medicare solvency. They want to reduce benefits, they want to increase premiums and copays so it is harder for seniors to afford to go to a doctor, and they even want to end Medicare's guaranteed benefits entirely by turning it into a voucher system. Think about that: lower benefits, charge more, and end Medicare as we know it.

These approaches are wrong. They do not reflect our values, and they also don't reflect good policy because cutting Medicare benefits will not stop seniors from having heart attacks, it will not stop seniors from getting sick. It will just push them into emergency rooms and private insurance systems—which is more expensive and less efficient than Medicare—or, worse, it will prevent them entirely from getting the medical care they need.

Fortunately, the Republican vision is not the law of the land. The Affordable Care Act is the law of the land, and it is already showing progress in improving the solvency of Medicare and the quality of care for our seniors.

We can already see how the accountable care organizations created under the Affordable Care Act are saving money. The pioneer accountable care organizations—five of which are now operating in Massachusetts—have already saved Medicare nearly \$147 million while continuing to deliver high-quality care. New standards for hospital reimbursements have reduced the number of people who need to be readmitted, meaning that for seniors 130,000 fewer Medicare beneficiaries had to check back into a hospital last year.

Thanks to these and other changes, the Medicare trust fund will be solvent for nearly 10 years longer than was projected before we passed the Affordable Care Act. The results are clear. When

it comes to our seniors, the Affordable Care Act is saving money and saving lives.

But the Affordable Care Act does more. It builds on the promise of Medicare by improving prevention coverage and reducing actual out-of-pockets for our seniors. Last year over 70 percent of seniors—25.4 million people in Medicare—visited their doctor and received a preventive service, such as a critical colonoscopy or a lifesaving mammogram. They received it for free because of the Affordable Care Act. Despite high drug prices, the average senior in America saved an average of \$1,200 on their prescription drugs in 2013 because of the Affordable Care Act closing the doughnut hole in Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage. The Affordable Care Act has made these changes—reducing the cost for seniors, expanding benefits and reducing wasteful spending at the same time that we have improved the solvency of Medicare.

When I hear Republicans talk about repealing the Affordable Care Act, I wonder what alternative universe they are living in. In this real world there should be no confusion about what repealing the Affordable Care Act would actually mean for our seniors: higher costs for prescription drugs, higher costs for preventive services, reduced benefits, and a Medicare program that would go bankrupt nearly 10 years sooner.

The Affordable Care Act is working to help seniors with their expenses and to keep the costs of health care down. We need to improve and build on the progress the law has made and not argue over tearing it down. This should not be about politics. This should be about keeping the promise we made to our seniors. It is about building on that promise, and I will continue to fight for that.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I appreciate my colleagues—Senator WARREN, Senator SCHUMER, and Senator MURRAY—joining us on the floor today. I think we will be joined by Senator STABENOW in a few moments. I also appreciate that they were at an event we did yesterday in which we were kicking off the Affordable Care Works Campaign. The campaign is designed to tell what has been untold for much of the last 6 months, which is the increasing good news about the millions of Americans for which the Affordable Care Act is working and, indeed for many of them, changing their lives.

An announcement was made this week that 4 million Americans have now signed up for the private health care exchanges. There are now over 10 million Americans all across the country who now have insurance today that didn't have it prior to the passage of the law either because of these private

exchanges or increased eligibility of Medicaid or the law's provision that young men and women under the age of 26 can stay on their parents' insurance. Over 10 million people all across the country now have access to insurance that they didn't have before we passed this law.

As Senator SCHUMER said, there is even more good news because we now know that the second promise of the act, that it was going to reduce the deficit, is true as well. CBO tells us that from the 10-year period covering the enactment of the law to a decade later, we are going to save about \$1.2 trillion beyond what we initially estimated.

At current trajectories, we are going to be \$250 billion under CBO's initial estimate for Federal health care expenditures on an annual basis. That is a big savings to the American taxpayers. When you combine that with the millions of Americans who have coverage, you can see how the Affordable Care Act is working.

There is still work to do. There will be debates on the floor of the Senate about ways in which we can change and fix the Affordable Care Act. Because we are reordering one-sixth of the American economy, there is no doubt there will be bumps along the road, and no doubt there will be places where we can find bipartisan agreements on how we can fix the act to make it work even better.

The answer from our Republican colleagues has been pretty simple so far. It has been to simply repeal the law. They say they want to repeal and replace it, but we have yet to see any evidence of that replacement. I think when the Presiding Officer and I served together in the House of Representatives, we probably witnessed about 30 or 40 different votes to repeal all or part of the Affordable Care Act, and never once was there a vote to replace that act.

The American people don't want this bill repealed so we can go back to the days when the insurance companies ran our health care. They don't want to go back to the days when the 10 million Americans who have insurance are uninsured. They want this act to be implemented. They want it to be perfected. They want us to work to make it better. But they are understanding day by day that the Affordable Care Act is working.

Specifically for seniors there are some pretty unique benefits, many of which have been glossed over. At the outset of the implementation of this act, some pretty important things happened—sometimes while people weren't even looking.

First, the doughnut hole was cut in half almost overnight. The first year anybody who was in the doughnut hole got a \$250 rebate check. The second year, their drugs—when they were in the doughnut hole—got cut by 50 per-

cent. By the end of this decade, the doughnut hole will be completely eliminated.

The average savings for a senior, as Senator STABENOW will talk about, has been \$1,200. People often don't know that is because of the Affordable Care Act. When you go in and your drugs all of a sudden cost 50 percent less than they did, there is no stamp on that bill that says courtesy of the Affordable Care Act.

The fact is that without the Affordable Care Act, seniors—over the course of the last 3 years—would have spent \$9 billion more on drugs than they have. The number is so big that it is kind of hard to fathom. The Affordable Care Act has saved seniors \$9 billion, an average of \$1,200 per senior.

On top of that, when seniors go in to get their annual checkup or for a cancer screening or tobacco cessation program, those preventive health care visits are now free. Twenty-five million seniors have access to those programs all across the country.

In my State of Connecticut, 76,000 people with Medicare have taken advantage of free annual wellness visits under the health care law. So we are seeing tremendous benefits for seniors all across the country. This is not just about the doughnut hole or preventive health care.

In 2012, the Medicare Part B deductible dropped by \$22 to \$140. That is the first time in the history of Medicare that the Medicare Part B deductible has actually been reduced thanks to the efficiencies that are being garnered in the Medicare Part B program by the health care law.

Second, Medicare Advantage plans now can't charge more than Medicaid for things like chemotherapy, skilled nursing, and other specialized services, which results in saving thousands of dollars for seniors.

In the first 3 years of the Affordable Care Act, Medicare recovered \$15 billion in fraudulent payments under Medicare because of new tools designed to root out fraud and waste and abuse in the Affordable Care Act. Older Americans who have not yet reached Medicare age are saving money because the act reduced the amount of discrimination in premiums against older Americans by saying that insurance companies can't charge older workers more than three times what they charged younger workers.

For seniors, in particular, we are trying to make it clear that some of the unnoticed benefits, such as the fact that nobody is asking you for a copay when you go in for a Medicare checkup and that you are saving money every time you go into the pharmacy—that didn't happen magically. That didn't happen because of Republican health care policies. It happened because of the Affordable Care Act.

Finally, before I turn it over to my colleague Senator STABENOW, I want to

address some of the mythology we have been hearing on the floor of the Senate in the past few days about Medicare Advantage.

There is no doubt that there were reductions in the payment from the Federal Government to the Medicare Advantage plans in the Affordable Care Act. Why? Because we were overcompensating private health care companies for running the Medicare Advantage plan. We were giving them 13 percent more than it cost Medicare itself to run the Medicare program. That just doesn't make a lot of sense.

Private companies were telling us they could do things for the same price or less than the Federal Government. In this case we were paying Medicare private insurers a lot more than it costs Medicare to run the program. So we decided to eliminate that subsidy.

Guess what. The news has been pretty remarkable. In fact, 30 percent more seniors are on Medicare Advantage plans today than when we passed the law, and premiums under Medicare Advantage have come down by 10 percent during that time. More people are on Medicare Advantage plans, there are less costs in premiums, and the average Medicare participant has 18 different plans to choose from.

All of this apocalyptic talk about what was going to happen when we passed the Affordable Care Act with respect to Medicare Advantage and all this new apocalyptic talk about what will happen when the subsidies get further reduced has not come true. We now have cheaper Medicare Advantage plans, more seniors on them, and plenty of across-the-board availability.

I am really pleased to have been joined here by about a half dozen of our colleagues to tell the story about what the ACA has meant for seniors.

We are going to come to the floor every week. We are going to stand with patients and consumers every week to talk about the benefits for seniors, cancer patients, women, and taxpayers all in an effort to try to prove to the American people what millions of Americans are finding out, and that is that the Affordable Care Act works.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first I thank the Senator from Connecticut for his advocacy for seniors, children, families, and small businesses to have access to affordable and quality health insurance. He has been a powerful voice on this issue.

I also congratulate his State of Connecticut and the Governor of Connecticut for all of their hard work. I know they are doing a great job on their insurance pool—the health care exchange which is providing more affordable health insurance for the citizens in Connecticut.

I thank the Senator for his leadership.

I also rise today to talk about the fact that millions of American families today have access to more affordable health care. Seniors, children, small businesses, and others are getting the opportunity to have the health care they are paying for and know they can get the health care they need even if they have a preexisting condition because of the Affordable Care Act.

I will take a few moments to talk about what this means for our senior citizens—for people on Medicare. Obviously, Medicare is a great American success story and something that I strongly support, as do my colleagues who are speaking today.

As part of health care reform, we wanted to strengthen Medicare for the future. We protect the guaranteed benefits under Medicare. We have shored up the program so that the trust fund is now solvent until 2026 and will be so going forward as other savings occur over the long run. It is working because of some very tangible work we have done to put more money in the pockets of our senior citizens and to create the opportunity for them to have access to affordable health care.

I often think about the letters and emails I have received from people in Michigan prior to our passing health care reform and the kinds of stories that people told me all the time before we strengthened Medicare.

I will read one letter from a senior citizen from Warren, MI, who wrote to me a letter prior to health care reform talking about the gap in coverage in prescription drugs. Under Medicare Part-D, you are covered to a certain point, and then there is a gap and you get no help. Then if your prescription drug costs are very high, it kicks in again. Some people call that the doughnut hole. It is a gap in coverage.

A senior from Warren told me this:

I cannot afford all of my costly drugs so I have to stop taking one of them (the least risky one) and have to scrounge free samples from my doctor's office for another while paying high retail prices for the other two.

That was before we passed health reform. Now on average in our country, seniors have \$1,200 more in their pocket since we passed health care reform which helps them with their prescription drug costs. Why? Because we are closing that gap. That gap is going to go away. There is going to be no more cliff, no more doughnut hole, and no more gap in coverage. Right now seniors across the country are saving, on average, \$1,200, which is more money back in their pocket.

When we think about it in big terms, there are more than 7.3 million seniors and people with disabilities who are on Medicare who found themselves in that gap in coverage, and the health care reform law—in the big picture—has saved them about \$9 billion—on average \$1,200 for an individual, but all total so far about \$9 billion. That is \$9 billion

more available to seniors, which puts money back in their pocket—to do what? Well, to pay the rent, to pay the electric bill. In a State such as Michigan, to pay the high heating bills because of the winter we have been having; to put gas in the car. Maybe it is to do something fun with the grandkids and pay for that birthday present. Maybe it is doing something else that is needed. Whatever it is, the idea is the average person who is retired and on Medicare has over \$1,000 back in their pocket now because of health reform and what we have been able to do to strengthen Medicare. It is a great thing.

The problem is that is what Republicans want to take away. That is what they want to take away. That is what will be taken away if it is repealed; if one of the over 40 different repeal votes were actually to happen, and what the House of Representatives has already done.

Let me share another letter from Mary Ann from Rockford who wrote last fall to say she is sick of the efforts to repeal health care reform. She says:

The Affordable Care Act has already helped millions of seniors like myself. From free preventive services to lower-cost prescription drugs, we're saving money.

We are saving money.

Let me talk about another area where seniors are saving money, and that is the annual checkup. We always want folks to have the annual checkup. That checkup used to have copays and deductibles. Today, under Medicare, because of health reform, when a senior walks into a doctor's office, how much are they paying for that annual checkup? Zero. Zero, because of health reform. We don't want any seniors to feel they can't get that checkup, they can't get the mammogram they need, they can't get that lovely colonoscopy we all look forward to getting. We don't want our seniors to feel they can't get any other kinds of preventive care or cancer screens or flu shots, or whatever it is, because of the copays or deductibles. Today the cost of that checkup for preventive services is zero. If health reform is repealed, that is repealed. That is what folks who want repeal are doing; it is what they want to take away.

So I join with my colleagues who feel strongly that we need to make sure we are keeping in place those positives that are making a real difference in the lives of senior citizens, of children, of families. If there are areas going forward that need to be fixed, we need to fix them, and we will. But we certainly do not want to go back to the days when seniors are spending \$1,200 more out of their pocket for their medicine, on average, or when they are paying for the cost of an annual checkup that is absolutely critical they get for their life going forward. I am proud to stand with colleagues saying let's talk together about how we make sure things

work going forward, but let's not go back to the time when all of these important services and protections were not in place.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

FREE SPEECH

Mr. ROBERTS. Thank you, Mr. President. I come to the floor today to also speak about ObamaCare. But before I do so, I feel the need to address some comments made on the floor of the Senate yesterday that, sadly, I find to be extremely distasteful.

Yesterday, two prominent citizens were called unpatriotic merely because they have engaged—legally, I must say—in their First Amendment right to participate in the political process. I was saddened, I was dismayed, and I was discouraged to see the floor of the Senate used as a venue for such campaign-related attacks.

In order to further their own agenda, it has become commonplace for my colleagues—especially across the aisle—to suppress the free speech and rights of certain people and organizations. These are simply people with whom they do not agree and who have had the audacity to hold views different from this administration.

Make no mistake, this is all part of a coordinated plan. I call it shaping the battlefield to tamp down—maybe that is not the right word; make that suppress—political opponents in the runup to the general election as of this fall.

We have seen repeatedly since the Citizens United decision of 2010 Members of this body trying to rein in conservative groups' ability to participate in the political process. This campaign is a direct attack, I believe, on the rights of these organizations. This campaign created an environment in which the Internal Revenue Service found it necessary and possible to single out conservative organizations for extra scrutiny. And this has made it impossible for conservative groups to participate in the last two elections, and now they are at it again in 2014. There is a short phrase which describes this, and I think it is "abuse of power."

This is all troubling and shocking enough, but now we have a very direct personal attack against a Kansas company whose political views some find very objectionable. What I find even more offensive is declaring on the floor the opposing views make them "liars." Our Constitution grants every American the fundamental right to engage in the political process, and these folks have done so, fully within the bounds of the law.

Nothing Charles and David Koch have done or are doing is illegal. Their participation, their statements, their work is very far from un-American. Quite the opposite. It is the essence of what it means to be an American. Nothing is more fundamental to our

Constitution, our way of governing, than the freedom of speech.

We should be focused on our role and responsibility of governing to make things better for the American people and not using the Senate floor to further any political agenda by making personal attacks on private citizens.

That brings me to what I came here to discuss today.

(The remarks of Mr. ROBERTS pertaining to the introduction of S. 2064 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. President. It is good to see my long-time friend from Massachusetts in the Presiding Officer's chair.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VETERANS BENEFITS

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, President Kennedy, from the Presiding Officer's home State said, if I could paraphrase a bit: A nation reveals itself not only by the men and women it produces but also by the men and women it honors, the men and women it remembers.

It is our duty to take care of those who served in uniform. Today, this Nation has revealed itself, and the image is shameful. This body failed to consider the important veterans legislation of this Congress—the most important veterans legislation of this Congress: the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014.

I sit on the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. I am the first Senator from my State ever to sit on that committee for a full term. I consider that an honor. I consider it a privilege to serve those who served us in this Nation.

I have worked alongside Republicans and Democrats, as has Chairman SANDERS and Ranking Member BURR. We have produced good legislation here. Next to the post-9/11 GI bill, which Senator Webb worked on 4 or 5 years ago, it is the most important advancement in veterans legislation and assistance to our Nation's veterans at my time in the Senate. That is the good news.

The bad news is this debate has been about politics, not about veterans. Again, people in Washington want to score political points by filibuster, by obstruction, by blocking good bipartisan legislation, supported by a whole panoply of veterans organizations and community groups.

There are those who have concerns who want to add to this bill, concerns that are not related to veterans. To hold up this bill with something unrelated to veterans is unconscionable.

Whether you are in Marblehead, MA, or Mansfield, OH, we all have heard our constituents say: Why do they attach these unrelated things to legislation instead of voting them up or down on their merits? That is what people want to do here. Those who want to filibuster this bill are the people who want to add things to the bill that have nothing to do with serving our veterans.

This legislation by itself improves vital programs to honor our commitment to those who served in uniform and for those who care for our veterans. Whether it is a community-based outpatient clinic in Zanesville or Chillicothe or Springfield, whether it is a VA center in Dayton or Chillicothe or Cleveland, we care about those who care for our veterans, many of whom are veterans themselves, and we take care of those veterans.

This corrects errors in programs and benefits and, as I said, has widespread support in the veterans community. The American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, Vietnam Veterans of America, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America all support this legislation.

I will not go through a lot of the details we have discussed before that Senator SANDERS brought to the floor, but I want to talk about a couple.

This bill renews our VOW to Hire Heroes Act by reauthorizing provisions such as the VRAP, the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program. This program retrains unemployed veterans for high-demand occupations.

I traveled across Ohio throughout 2012 spreading the word about VRAP, encouraging our veterans to apply. Ohio veterans applied in larger numbers than our State's population would suggest because of the outreach of so many in encouraging people to sign up for VRAP.

I met veterans such as Everett Chambers in Cleveland, who used VRAP funds to get retrained as an electrical engineering technician at Cuyahoga Community College, or Tri-C.

I remember meeting a veteran in Youngstown who went back to school because of VRAP and got the opportunity to work at a health care center in information technology.

We know VRAP works. It helps our veterans get back to work. It lowers the unacceptably high unemployment rate for recently separated service-members who have so much to offer employers.

This program is aimed for those veterans who are a little bit older who are no longer eligible for the GI bill and those veterans who have been out of the service for a while. But it does not stop there. It adds other important improvements in education benefits, in reproductive health, in the delivery of care and benefits to veterans who experienced sexual trauma while serving in the military.

Too many Members in this body will say they support the programs in this bill but that finding the money to do so is not possible. So they are for the bill, they say, until they are not. Well, there is a disconnect between what they say and what they do. Those same elected leaders—those same elected leaders who say: I am for this bill, but we can't pay for it, so we can't pass it—those same people want to give tax breaks to companies that take jobs and factories overseas when we say we cannot find the money to provide a caregiver the support he needs to care for his wife, a veteran. We fight a decade-long war in Afghanistan that goes unpaid for and we cannot find the resources to ensure the very people who fought that war will be cared for.

It would be a little more simple than that. When a company closes down in Springfield, or Springfield, MA, and moves to Wuhan, China, or Shihan, China, they can deduct the cost of the plant shutdown in one of the Springfields and they can deduct the cost of building the new plant in Wuhan, China. That is a loophole we could close. It would mean more companies would stay in Springfield, OH, or Springfield, MA, helping our communities, helping our tax base, and it would mean those companies would not be deducting that move and that money could then be used for these veterans programs. But no, they say: We can't find the money.

It is important to end this filibuster and pass this bill.

BUYING GOVERNMENT

Mr. President, I heard my friend from Kansas talk about what he calls the personal attacks on two I believe he said great Americans, but Americans nonetheless, which they are, and prominent businesspeople in Kansas and around the country.

These two Americans—and this is not personal to me—these two Americans have spent millions of dollars trying to defeat me, as they have tried to defeat a number of people in this Chamber who think government has a role in preserving Medicare and government should provide funds for Head Start and government should give tax breaks to low-income people, not just rich people, and government should play a role, as the Presiding Officer has, in a cleaner environment and deal with climate change. But I disagree with these two Americans. I do not personally dislike them or personally know them. But I do know they have spent millions of dollars in ads, millions of dollars in an unprecedented way—they and a small number of people—to try to hijack our political system.

People are sick and tired, first, of the TV ads; second, of the lies in the TV ads; and, third, that there are people—a few billionaires—who are trying to buy elections in this country, billionaires who are looking for tax breaks for

themselves, billionaires who are looking for the opportunity to weaken environmental laws, billionaires who want to kill the union movement in this country.

I want to read from one editorial that was printed in, I believe, Roll Call or The Hill newspaper talking about some of these ads. Here is what this editorial said:

Were this an ad for Stainmaster carpet, a Koch product—Koch, this is the family, the brothers—

Were this an ad for Stainmaster carpet, a Koch product, Federal Trade Commission guidelines would require the ad to “conspicuously disclose that the persons in such advertisements are not actual consumers.” Moreover, the FTC would require them to either demonstrate that these results of ObamaCare are typical or make clear in the ad that they are not.

Needless to say, the ad meets none of these requirements, thereby conforming to the legal definition of false advertising.

That tells you a lot. I rest my case in just those terms. It is never personal. It should never be. It is whom you fight for in this body and what you fight against. But there are people in this country who think they can buy our government. We have seen that throughout our history. We have seen the oil companies try to do everything they can to at least if not buy government take a long-term lease. We saw the robber barons 100 years ago, including one from my State, Mark Hanna, who used to try to control the legislature. They used to say that he wore President McKinley like a watchfob when he was Governor of Ohio.

So we have seen this in the past. We have never seen it in such an incredibly big way as we have seen it in the last few election cycles.

MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. President, I want to speak about the minimum wage, something this Chamber, frankly, needs to do. The Presiding Officer in his time in the House saw, as I did, a number of Members of Congress who would vote to raise their own pay but then vote against a minimum-wage increase, which I find morally inconsistent or worse. But let me make a couple comments about that.

In 1991, the average price of gas was \$1.15 a gallon, a loaf of bread around 70 cents, a dozen eggs about \$1. The tipped minimum wage—that is the minimum wage for people who work in a diner who get tips, people who push a wheelchair in an airport who rely on tips, a valet, someone who does nail manicures, people who work in jobs where they are receiving tips—the minimum wage in 1991 for those workers at the local diner or the local airport was \$2.13 an hour—in 1991.

Today, the average price of gas is \$3.30 a gallon; a loaf of bread costs \$1.35, more or less; eggs are about \$2. The tipped minimum wage is still \$2.13. Its value has fallen by 36 percent in

real terms. Think about that—\$2.13 an hour.

Americans who work hard and take responsibility should be able to take care of their families. That is why I support the Fair Minimum Wage Act, which would raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour in three 95-cent increments and then provide annual cost-of-living increases linked to changes in the cost of living. The bill would also gradually raise the Federal minimum wage for tipped workers at the diner, the valet, the person doing the manicure from \$2.13 an hour to 70 percent of the regular minimum wage.

In 1980 the minimum wage for tipped workers was 60 percent of the regular minimum wage. It is now less than 30 percent of the regular minimum wage. In Canada the minimum wage in Ontario is \$11; the tipped minimum wage is \$8.90. The United States is the only industrialized nation in the world—except for Canada—where a large number of workers must depend on tips for a large share of their income. So in Canada the tipped minimum wage is only slightly less than the minimum wage. In the United States it is less than 30 percent of the minimum wage. In the rest of the world it is 100 percent of the minimum wage.

Interestingly, servers in the United States, people who work at diners or restaurants in the United States—when a European comes across the ocean and eats at a restaurant in Cleveland or in Cincinnati, the European will usually leave a really small tip because they are not used to tipping. The American worker relies on those tips for any kind of a decent wage.

Ohio's current tipped minimum wage is a little higher; it is \$3.98. That is still not enough. These are men and women who have bills to pay and families to support.

Most tipped workers do not work at fine dining establishments where the average bill is \$50, \$60, or \$70, so someone is making pretty good money on tips. A server in a high-class restaurant, an expensive restaurant, can make hundreds of dollars in a night. But for a server who works in a diner where four people come in, get coffee, spend an hour there, and have a bill of \$6, the tip might be \$1. That person has worked for an hour. They are not getting to the minimum wage with the tipped wage, and, often, neither is the valet or the person at the airport who is getting someone off the plane and pushing their wheelchair to their connecting flight. They often do not even receive tips because so often the person in the wheelchair never thinks about it, does not know that these are tipped workers, that they are only making \$2, \$3, or \$4 an hour. They are working hard.

We work hard for the money we make. We are very well paid here. It is a privilege to serve in the Senate. But

when you think about those workers who are working very hard, their minimum wage is \$2.13 an hour. There is something not right about that.

One more point. The Center for American Progress completed an analysis of 20 years' worth of minimum wage increases in States across the country. They conclude that there is no clear evidence that the minimum wage leads to further job loss during periods of high unemployment.

The opponents of raising the minimum wage say that it is going to cause price increases and that there are going to be layoffs. But what is interesting is that every time there is a minimum wage bill we are debating, the opponents say: You know, these businesses are going to have to raise their prices or lay people off to pay the minimum wage. But when an executive gets a \$1 million bonus, when a CEO gets paid \$12 million and gets a raise to \$16 million the next year, I never hear them say: Boy, they are going to have to lay people off to pay those executive salaries. It is only when it is low-wage workers that my friends on that side of the aisle stand and say: This is going to hurt business. This is going to hurt commerce. This is going to hurt employment.

Their arguments are weak. Their arguments are, in many cases, a bit hard-hearted. I wish my colleagues would do what Pope Francis said. Recently, Pope Francis exhorted his parish priests to go out and smell like the flock; go out among your parishioners and listen to them and try to understand their lives and try to live like them.

Well, a lot of those parishioners are minimum wage workers or slightly above minimum wage. Smelling like the flock might help some of my colleagues come to the conclusion that raising the minimum wage is important to do, is humane, is right for our country.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE UKRAINE

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I take this time to share with my colleagues the tragic events that unfolded these past few weeks in the Ukraine. Ukraine is an incredibly important country. The recent events are tragic, the result of a corrupt government and loss of life.

I remember the Orange Revolution that took place in Ukraine, starting in November 2004, ending in January 2005. Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians took to that protest to protest the corrupt election. They did it in a peaceful way.

They not only got the attention of the people of Ukraine but the attention of the world. As a result of that peaceful revolution, the government stood for new elections, free and fair elections. Democratic leadership was elected, and all of us thought the future for Ukraine was very positive.

I was in Kiev not long after that Orange Revolution. I had a chance to talk to people who were involved, and I talked to the new leaders. I saw that sense of hope that Ukraine at long last would be an independent country without the domination of any other country and that the proud people would have a country that would respect their rights, that would transition into full membership in Europe and provide the greatest hope for future generations.

They started moving in that direction. As the Presiding Officer knows, there were agreements with Europe on immigration. They have been involved in military operations in close conjunction with NATO. Ukraine was and is an important partner of the United States and for Europe.

Then Victor Yanukovych came into power for a second time. Mr. Yanukovych took the country in a different direction. He was a corrupt leader. He had a close involvement with Russia.

Today there is some hope. The Parliament has brought in a new interim government. Presidential elections are now scheduled for May 25. But there are certain matters that are still very much in doubt. In the Crimea, which is a part of the Ukraine which has a large Russian population, it is unclear as to what is happening there. Pro-Russian sympathizers have taken over government buildings. It is not clear of Russia's involvement.

It is critically important that the international community have access to what is happening in the Crimea and make it clear that Russia must allow the Ukraine to control its own destiny. It is time for the international community to mobilize its resources to assist Ukraine's transition to a democratic, secure, and prosperous country.

The people of Ukraine have had an incredibly difficult history and over the last century have been subjected to two World Wars, 70 years of Soviet domination, including Stalin's genocidal famine.

Our assistance at this time will be a concrete manifestation that we do indeed stand by the people of Ukraine as they manifest their historic choice for freedom and democracy. Moreover, we need to help Ukraine succeed to realize

the vision of a Europe whole, free, and at peace.

That is our desire and that is the desire of the people of Ukraine. They are moving on the right path. They critically need our help and that of the international community to make sure Russia does not try to dominate this country; that its desire to become part of Europe is realized; that free and fair elections can take place, and the rights of their people can be respected by their government.

Yesterday I heard from Swiss President and OSCE Chair-in-Office Burkhalter and welcomed his engagement and the important role the OSCE can play in Ukraine.

As a member of the Commission, I had the honor of chairing the Helsinki Commission, which is our implementing arm to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. A Foreign Minister from one of the member states usually acts as our Chair-in-Office, and this year Mr. Burkhalter is not only the Foreign Minister of Switzerland, he is also the President of Switzerland. He is the person responsible for the direction of the organization. We had a hearing with him and Ukraine took a good part of our discussions.

The guiding principles of the OSCE is if they are going to have a prosperous country, if they are going to have a secure country, they have to have a country that respects the rights of its citizens. Respecting the rights of its citizens means they are entitled to good governance. They are entitled to a country that does not depend upon corruption in order to finance its way of life. Those are the principles of the OSCE. A country with good governance, respect for human rights, that takes on corruption, is a country in which there will be economic prosperity and a country which will enjoy security. That has been our chief function, to try to help other countries.

The meeting yesterday underscored the importance OSCE can play in the future of Ukraine, and we hope they will utilize those resources so Ukraine can come out of this crisis as a strong, democratic, and independent country.

There has to be accountability. There has to be accountability for those who are responsible for the deaths in Kiev. I mention that because, yes, there is a moral reason for that. Those who commit amoral atrocities should be held accountable. That is just a matter of basic rights. But there is also the situation when they don't bring closure here, it offers little hope that these circumstances will not be repeated in the future. If future government leaders believe they could do whatever they want and there will be no consequences for their actions, they are more likely to take the irresponsible actions we saw on Ukraine.

So, yes, it is important we restore a democratic government in Ukraine. It

is important that government be independent and able to become a full member of Europe. It is important that government respect the human rights of its citizens, but it is also important they hold those responsible for these atrocities accountable for their actions.

The Obama administration took some action this past week. They did deny visas to certain members who were responsible for the Government of Ukraine, and they did freeze bank accounts of those who were involved in the corrupt practices in Ukraine. That was a good first step and I applaud their actions.

I remind my colleagues we passed the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act as part of the Russia PNTR legislation. I was proud to be the sponsor of the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act. What it does—and it says it was amended to apply only to Russia—those who are involved in gross violations of internationally recognized human rights will be denied the privilege of being able to come to America, to get a visa and we will deny them the opportunity to use our banking system.

Why is that important? Because we found those corrupt officials want to keep their properties outside of their host country. They want to visit America. They want to use our banking system. They want their corrupt ways to be in dollars, not in rubles. Denying them that opportunity is an effective remedy for making sure they can't profit from all of their corruption.

That legislation was limited to Russia not by our design. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate Finance Committee approved the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act as a global act applying beyond Russia.

Sergei Magnitsky was a young lawyer who discovered corruption in Russia. He did what he should have done—told the authorities about it. As a result, he was arrested, tortured, and killed because he did the right thing.

We took action to make sure those responsible could not benefit from that corruption. That was the Sergei Magnitsky bill. We felt, though, it should be a tool available universally. We had to compromise on that, and it was limited to Russia.

It is time to change that. Along with Senator MCCAIN, I have introduced the Global Human Rights Accountability Act, S. 1933. It has several bipartisan sponsors. It would apply globally. So, yes, it would apply to Ukraine. It would have congressional sanctions to the use of tools for denying visa applications and our banking privileges to those who are responsible for these atrocities. I believe our colleagues understand how important that is for us to do.

It is interesting that today the State Department issued its Human Rights

Practices for 2013. This is a required report that we request. It gives the status of human rights records throughout the world, talking about problems.

I am sure my colleagues recognize that human rights problems are not limited to solely Russia or Ukraine, from Bahrain to China, to Bangladesh, from Belarus to Ethiopia, to Venezuela, from the Sudan to South Sudan, Syria, the list goes on and on and on.

The report lists all of the gross violations of human rights that have occurred. Unfortunately, this list is too long. I can name another dozen countries that are spelled out in this report. Human rights are universal, and it is our responsibility to act and show international leadership.

It takes time to pass good laws, as it should, which is why we must act with urgency now. The measures contemplated in my legislation have great corrective power, but they are strongest when deployed in a timely manner, preferably before the outbreak of violence.

The year 2013 was a particularly challenging year for human rights and we cannot afford to be silent. The Global Human Rights Accountability Act serves as an encouragement for champions of democracy, promoters of civil rights, and advocates of free speech across the globe.

As the great human rights defender Nelson Mandela once said: "There are times when a leader must move ahead of the flock, go off in a new direction, confident that he is leading his people the right way."

In this great body, the Senate, we have a responsibility to lead the way in accountability for human rights. We have done that in the past. We have shown through our own example and we have shown through our interest in all corners of the world that this country will stand for the protection of basic human rights for all the people. We now have a chance to act by the passage of the global Magnitsky law. I hope my colleagues will join me in helping enact this new chapter and the next chapter in America's commitment to international human rights.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, yesterday, while relaying to the Senate some anecdotes he believed proved the success of ObamaCare, the majority leader stated this:

Despite all the good news, there are plenty of horror stories being told. All of them are untrue, but they are being told all over America.

Well, that statement, quite frankly, shocked me, and I am sure it would have shocked millions of Americans, if they had heard it, who are feeling the detrimental effects of this very unpopular law, the Affordable Care Act.

I have heard directly from countless Kansans about the devastating effects ObamaCare has had on them and their families. Most of the Kansans I speak with are concerned primarily about what the future will hold for their children and grandchildren. What type of life will we as parents and grandparents be passing on to future generations?

I can assure the majority leader that Kansans are salt-of-the-earth people. They are, most assuredly, not liars. They do not deserve to be called liars by any Member of this body.

Take Philip and his wife from Lenexa who are in their midfifties. Philip has been self-employed for the last 20 years but had maintained coverage through his wife's employer for most of that time. She now works for a much smaller company which can only pay a fraction of the cost of their insurance, so it was much cheaper for him to purchase insurance in the individual market starting in 2013. Finding affordable coverage now, in 2014, has been a much greater challenge. He writes:

With the changes in health insurance due to implementation of the ACA for the next year, we shopped the Kansas exchange for 2014 plans. What we found was shocking.

They found that for the same level of coverage, they would now have to pay a premium more than double what they paid in 2013. On top of the higher premium, they would be faced with double the deductible and nearly double the out-of-pocket maximum.

In his letter Philip says:

Frankly, we anticipate a decline in income for the next two years, but still won't qualify for subsidies; this simply makes the "Affordable Health Care" unaffordable for us.

He continues:

The icing on the cake—my wife's employer has told her they expect to drop their health care coverage for their employees altogether in 2015 because of the added expenses of the ACA! I honestly don't know what we will do; we are not wealthy by any means and have not been able to fund our retirement plan for a couple of years now. We do not have sufficient money to retire at any time soon and ACA will take everything we could afford to save. We hope Congress can come up with a logical and truly affordable option to the ACA soon!

This is common criticism I have heard many times, and I can assure the majority leader that Philip's story is true.

I have also heard from members of the Kansas Disabled American Veterans service organization who have shared the difficulty and struggle of veterans having to relinquish their preferred health care plans due to cost increases caused by ObamaCare. They are now pursuing care through the VA,

which presents a whole other host of new obstacles to receiving the care they deserve. So we have veterans who are unable to afford health care under the Affordable Care Act now coming to the veterans system and being unable to, anytime soon, enroll. In fact, their biggest concern is they will now have to wait 3 months to 6 months to get their first appointment.

The bottom line is that veterans will either pay more for their health benefits through ObamaCare and lose their preferred doctors or be forced to join the backlog of veterans seeking care. Neither is a good option for our veterans. Veterans in Kansas and across the Nation are feeling the burdens of ObamaCare. They have sacrificed so much for our country, and I can assure the majority leader that they are telling the truth.

Another example of how ObamaCare is hurting Kansans is from Salina, a town in the middle of our State. The nonprofit YMCA in Salina will be capping the schedules of part-time employees at 25 hours per week to avoid having to provide them health insurance benefits as part of ObamaCare. The administrator says:

It is unfortunate. We have a lot of good people who you'd love to have working more hours that we're going to have to make the cut. This is hitting nonprofits hard. A for-profit company, this cuts into their profits, but we don't have profits to cut into.

This YMCA is not alone in their efforts to trim costs. Numerous companies and organizations across Kansas are having to cut back the hours of part-time employees because of ObamaCare. And I can tell the majority leader once again that those people and those organizations are telling the truth.

Yesterday afternoon the majority leader came to the floor once again and read an opinion column from *The Hill* newspaper. This article, authored by Mark Mellman, supported the majority leaders' efforts to discredit the stories being told of Americans who are having very real struggles and those who have lost their health care coverage as a result of ObamaCare. The majority leader read this column on the Senate floor literally word for word; however, he stopped just short of the end of the column, and I wanted to finish reading the footnote of the column which he chose not to read. It was about the author.

Mellman is president of The Mellman Group and has worked for Democratic candidates and causes since 1982. Current clients include the Majority Leader of the Senate and the Democrat whip in the House.

I just wanted to complete the record, that the majority leader is reading an article by a Democratic consultant, employed by the majority leader, to furnish evidence that what he is saying about the untruths of people who are complaining about ObamaCare is based upon fact. Mark Mellman really is not

the person to be quoting as to whether the Affordable Care Act is working.

I would also point out that ObamaCare has been heavily debated for years now. For 5 years we have been talking about the Affordable Care Act. During this time there have been so many broken promises, so many falsehoods, and so many direct lies. We heard them all.

"ObamaCare will lower all of our health care costs."

"ObamaCare won't cut Medicare."

"ObamaCare will create jobs."

And who can forget "If you like your doctor or health plan, you can keep them."

These were lies. These were untruths. They were promises made and summarily broken. This is why so many Americans are outraged. It is time for Washington to stop dismissing their concerns and start listening to them.

Another disturbing moment—in fact, I think perhaps the most disturbing part of what the majority leader said—after he read the column from *The Hill*, he said this:

It is time the American people spoke out against this terrible dishonesty and about those two brothers who are about as un-American as anyone I can imagine.

This really bothers me. Accusations about who is un-American are deeply troubling, and to me that is an unfortunate comment when we refer to anyone. From the earliest days of our Republic, it has been a tactic exerted by those in power to humiliate and discredit those who come from different backgrounds or have a different point of view that challenges the people in power, and it is part of a strategy to convince ordinary Americans that sinister forces are working to undermine our country and our institutions. Ironically, by charging some person or group with being un-American or disloyal, the effort to stifle an exchange of ideas erodes the very foundation of our democratic government.

These accusations have been leveled during times of war, but they are just as prevalent during times of peace. We know of the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1797, the Know-Nothing Party taking aim at immigrants in the 1800s, and the Red Scare after the First World War.

In the process leading up to women's suffrage, critics of giving women the vote belittled them. One even suggested that women were too emotionally delicate to take on the task of voting. Thankfully, these ridiculous assertions could not derail the passage of the 19th Amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote.

Yet perhaps the most famous example is a Senator using his position to charge people as diverse as Hollywood actors and Army generals and Secretary of State George C. Marshall of political views which differed with the Senator's. In fact, the Senator believed their views were traitorous. He referred

to such people as "enemies from within." Why would a Senator reach such a conclusion? Because those political views disagreed with his own. Maybe it was also for the headlines and attention he craved or perhaps he was just paranoid, in search of a bogeyman. For more than 5 years this Senator leveled the charges of "disloyalty" without any real evidence. Because of his flip-pant claims, he did untold damage to so many lives, with very little consequence to himself. Not until enough of his colleagues had enough and put an end to his campaign against other citizens did this unfortunate episode in our Nation's history come to an end. This tactic didn't end in 1950 and, indeed, it continues today.

I am disappointed by those who impugn President Obama, questioning his legitimacy and sincerity as he seeks to do what he believes is his best for the country. Yet it is undoubtedly a two-way street. The President dismissed those who opposed his candidacy in 2008 as people who "cling to guns or religion" or have "antipathy toward people who are not like them."

When I served in the House of Representatives in 2009, Speaker NANCY PELOSI said in the town hall meeting in August of that year that those with concerns about ObamaCare were "un-American."

No one has the right to determine whose beliefs are American or un-American—certainly no one in the House of Representatives or the Senate.

It is troubling that there is a reflexive reaction in Congress to label political critics as un-American or disloyal. Recognizing disagreement is part of the decisionmaking process of our democracy, and a respectful dialogue between all Americans is critical to a well-functioning Republic. Certainly anything short of that is not worthy of the Senate floor.

I'm weary of repeated attempts to distract the American people from the rollout and poor performance of ObamaCare.

This week a New York Times/CBS poll found that only 6 percent of Americans believe that ObamaCare is "working well and should be kept in place as is." I ask the majority leader: Does that mean that the other 94 percent of Americans surveyed are liars?

In fact, ObamaCare is a disaster to our Nation's health care system, and it is a disaster to our country's economy. The American people have made their opinions known, and rather than remedy the situation and address their concerns, the majority leader and others are trying to change the conversation and attack the very Americans who have real, life-impacting concerns about their access to health care.

My friends on the other side of the aisle act as though the majority of Americans support ObamaCare. They

do not. They never have. We didn't listen to them when ObamaCare was passed. We have not listened to them since. In fact, the same New York Times/CBS poll found that Americans "feel things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track" by a margin of nearly 2 to 1. This poll was comprised of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents, of which 63 percent feel things have pretty seriously gotten off on the wrong track.

I agree that we are headed in the wrong direction, and I fear—like most Americans—that instead of righting the course, we have a Senate majority leader who will want to distract the hard-working Americans busy with their families, struggling, and living their lives.

Speaking of dysfunction, the majority leader is speaking about dysfunction in the Senate that he alone has the ability to control. The pilot of the plane cannot and should not blame the passengers for the turbulence.

I'm glad the majority leader mentioned the Senate feels like "Groundhog Day" or groundhog year. He is absolutely right. Over and over, how many times has the majority leader obstructed the Senate debate and votes on amendments? Over and over we see the same strategy from the majority leader to run the Senate according to his rules and his alone. He controls the Senate operations. He controls the ability to move past "Groundhog Day," and he controls whether or not his colleagues can advocate for amendments and have votes.

Republican Senators are not alone in this thinking—although I'm sure the majority leader wishes that it was just the Republicans complaining. Many Senate Democrats also feel the same way. They too have legislation. They too have amendments they would like to see in front of the Senate that would see the light of day.

One such amendment that the majority leader is using in his blame game is a bipartisan amendment offered by Senators Menendez and Kirk, a Republican and Democrat, with 59 Senate cosponsors. There is an overwhelming amount of Senate support for this amendment. So why can't we get the issue of Iran's nuclear capabilities to the Senate floor? Why does the Senate majority leader continue to obstruct the Senate process rather than return to regular order and allow the Senate to operate the way it was intended?

The dysfunction of the Senate ultimately hurts the American people, and the majority leader has the ability to change that. My hope is that we move beyond this time in the Senate's history, that we move beyond the same old, same old, and that we have the opportunity to chart a new path forward to restore the Senate to function as it should.

I have no interest in serving in a Senate that doesn't do its work. Neither

the majority leader nor any other Member of this body has the ability to represent individual Americans' interest at any given moment.

We each represent people from our respective States who have different points of view. I understand that people have a different point of view depending upon where they live, their background, their experience, and their philosophy. This diversity of opinion is what makes this country and, by extension, the Senate such a force for good in the world.

These opposing viewpoints are by their very definition American. The diversity and disagreement among ourselves is actually American, not un-American. Whether it is the Kansas small business owner who fears losing health insurance or the brave participants of the Seneca Falls Convention, Americans have the right to be heard and the right to play a part in the American political process. No one has the right to call those people un-American.

The litmus test for what is or is not American behavior cannot be administered or measured in partisan terms. Yet the bulk of the comments made by the majority leader attempted to do just that.

I am disappointed that it is even necessary for me to be on the Senate floor to talk about these disparaging comments, but the American people deserve an accountable legislature.

Whether you agree or disagree with the direction of our country—if you disagree with the direction it is heading in or you think we are doing OK, you are still an American, and you have the right to voice that opinion without having your allegiance to the United States called into question.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations on today's Executive Calendar: Nos. 568, 569, 565, and 571.

I further ask unanimous consent that the nominations be confirmed en bloc, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that President Obama be immediately

notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, Senator GRASSLEY, the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, is unable to be on the floor at this time, and on his behalf I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I will read into the RECORD—maybe tonight, but if not, I will do it Monday—statements made in the past by the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee where he talked in detail about how foolish it would be to have cloture on nominations for judges—his exact words.

I am disappointed that there has been an objection, but as I indicated yesterday, we are in groundhog year. Why would this next week be any different than the rest of this year?

They have objected and obstructed—they meaning the Republicans in the Senate—everything. Look at what we just finished—and I mean finished. We just finished a bill that had been worked on for a long time by the junior Senator from Vermont, the chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

This is a bill that would help veterans. No one disputes the bill would help veterans. All 26 veterans organizations, including the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, supported that legislation—plus 24 other veterans organizations. So what happens over here with the Republicans? They figured out a way to say no. They always do that. But the way they say no is to obstruct, and that is what they did on this veterans bill.

I hope every veteran in America understands the fact that we had something that would improve the lives of the fighting men and women who came back from Iraq and Afghanistan, and those Asian veterans from Vietnam and some from Korea and some from World War II who are still with us. Because of the continual obstruction over here to do anything they can to slow down the Obama administration, they are even willing to hurt veterans.

This was a bill that didn't take a single penny. It was paid for with leftover war money. We agreed to have amendments, but that is just all hot air from the Republicans. We would be willing to do these bills if they would allow us to have amendments, and they figured out a way to say no again.

So we have to invoke cloture on district court judges that my friend, the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, has said time and time again should not happen.

Either tonight or Monday I will read verbatim into the RECORD what he has said in the past.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF DEBO P. ADEGBILE TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 659.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Debo P. Adegbile, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Debo P. Adegbile, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Patty Murray, Barbara Boxer, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Carl Levin, Debbie Stabenow, Tom Udall, Martin Heinrich, Christopher Murphy, Michael F. Bennet, Maria Cantwell, Amy Klobuchar, Richard Blumenthal, Tom Harkin.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived for the cloture motion with respect to Calendar No. 659.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF PEDRO A. DELGADO HERNANDEZ TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 568.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Pedro A. Delgado Hernandez, of Puerto Rico, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there is a cloture motion at the desk and I ask it be reported.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Pedro A. Delgado Hernandez, of Puerto Rico, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF PAMELA L. REEVES TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 569.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Pamela L. Reeves, of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. There is a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Pamela L. Reeves, of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Robert Menendez,

Benjamin L. Cardin, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF TIMOTHY L. BROOKS TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 565.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Timothy L. Brooks, of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Arkansas.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Timothy L. Brooks, of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Arkansas.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF VINCE GIRDHARI CHHABRIA TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 571.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Vince Girdhari Chhabria, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I ask the clerk to report the cloture motion, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Vince Girdhari Chhabria, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Benjamin L. Cardin, Ron Wyden, Christopher A. Coons, Martin Heinrich, Jack Reed, Robert Menendez, Tom Harkin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray, Dianne Feinstein, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Carl Levin, Jeff Merkley, Amy Klobuchar.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF ROSE EILENE GOTTEMOLLER TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ARMS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 636.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Rose Eilene Gottemoeller, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Rose Eilene Gottemoeller, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

Harry Reid, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Ron Wyden, Christopher A. Coons, Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Jack Reed, Tom Harkin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray, Dianne Feinstein, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Carl Levin, Jeff Merkley, Amy Klobuchar.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

Mr. REID. Mr. President, is the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 309, S. 1086, now pending?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. It is pending.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 309, S. 1086, the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

Harry Reid, Tom Harkin, Barbara A. Mikulski, Benjamin L. Cardin, Christopher A. Coons, Patrick J. Leahy, Jack Reed, Robert Menendez, Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray, Jeff

Merkley, Ron Wyden, Martin Heinrich, Dianne Feinstein, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Carl Levin, Amy Klobuchar.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

JUDICIAL NOMINEES

Mr. REID. Madam President, I filed cloture on the childcare block grant. I have every assurance from my Republican colleagues that this vote will not be necessary. I hope that is the case. It would be great if we could vitiate that and move and start legislating.

I believe that will be the case. Sometimes it is a long time from today to next Wednesday, when a vote would occur. I really do believe it will not be necessary. I hope that is the case.

I indicated that I would say a few words about the man that does all of the objecting, or a lot of the objecting around here. We had the Senator from Kansas, the junior Senator from Kansas come and say he objected to these judges being approved because the senior Senator from Iowa, the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, asked him to do so.

In recent days Senator GRASSLEY has criticized my management of the Senate floor regarding nominations. The ranking member of the Judiciary Committee has said that I am responsible for the gridlock because of filibuster reform over the overuse of cloture. The past statements and recent actions of my friend, the senior Senator from Iowa, reveal his obvious either misunderstanding of what he said in the past or—I will leave it at that. There are a lot of terms that I could use, but I will not use them.

These are things that he has said in the past that obviously he did not mean at the time or he has forgotten what he said. He once stood on the floor and said he was strongly in favor of up-or-down votes on all nominations. He even said, "Filibustering the nominee into oblivion is misguided warfare and the wrong way for a minority party to leverage influence in the Senate."

That is what the man who is doing all of the objecting said before. He also said:

It is just plain hogwash to say that moving to make sure the rule is to give judicial nominees an up-or-down vote will hurt our ability to reestablish fairness in the judicial

nominating process. It is not going to hurt minority rights.

These are direct quotes from him:

It establishes what we call regular order and as it has been for 214 years. It will be fair both to Republicans and Democrats alike. All the majority leader wants to do is have a chance to vote on those nominees up or down.

He could be easily talking about me. Maybe in the past he was talking about Senator Frist or Senator Lott. But it does not matter who has this job. That is what he is talking about:

All the majority leader wants is to have a chance to vote these nominees up or down. If these individuals do not have 51 votes, they should be rejected. But if these individuals do have 51 votes, then they should be confirmed. That is according to the Constitution.

That is what he said. He said it here in May a few years ago, May 23. He also said—this is another quote.

Let's debate the nominees and give our advice and consent. It's a simple yea or nay when called to the altar to vote. Filibustering a nominee into oblivion is misguided warfare and the wrong way for a minority party to leverage and influence the Senate. Threatening to grind the legislative activity to a standstill if they don't get their way is like being a bully in the schoolyard playground.

He said that. The senior Senator from Iowa said that. He further said:

Let's do our jobs. Nothing is nuclear about asking the full Senate to take an up-or-down vote on judicial nominees.

I'm not making this up. This is what he said, the man who has the audacity to come here to the floor and object, saying what a terrible thing it is that we are having up-or-down votes on these judges.

He went on to say:

It is the way the Senate has operated for years. The reality is that Democrats are the ones who are turning Senate tradition on its head by installing a filibuster against the President's judicial nominees.

That is what he said. He slows down Senate business even on nominees he supports. How do you like that? This week alone, the senior Senator from Iowa repeatedly voted against cloture on nominations he then supported moments later: Beth Freeman, Northern District of California; James Donato, Northern District of California; James Moody, Eastern District of Arkansas; Jeffrey Meyer, Connecticut.

He voted to invoke the filibuster rule and then turns right around and votes for those judges. His obstruction, though, I am sorry to say, is not limited to nominations. When the Senate considered S. 744, the comprehensive immigration bill, Senator GRASSLEY objected to consideration or adoption of Republican or bipartisan amendments on at least four occasions.

When challenged, Senator GRASSLEY admitted to violation of Senatorial courtesy. Here is what Senator LEAHY said:

Is it not a fact that the first amendment that was brought up here was a bipartisan amendment of mine and Senator Hatch? Shortly thereafter, the Senator from Iowa came with an amendment. Following normal courtesy, I allowed mine to be set aside so he could bring up his. So isn't it a fact that we asked if he might set it aside for some non-controversial amendments on either side? He told me he could not. The Senator is correct.

You cannot talk out of both sides of your mouth unless somebody understands they are listening to what you say both times. The ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, the senior Senator from Iowa, he is talking out of both sides of his mouth. The people of Iowa should check this out and see what he said and what he does.

So he can come and criticize all he wants—criticize me. But it should be based upon facts, not standing his own statements on their head. He can't have it both ways.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that we proceed to a period of morning business with Senators allowed to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ABLE ACT

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I wish to discuss the ABLE Act, which is a piece of legislation that has been the subject of enormous and substantial bipartisan support both in the Senate and in the House.

We know that a lot of families have relied upon and have really benefited from the so-called 529 plans—a section of the IRS Code that allows families to save tax-free for education. What we are trying to do with the ABLE Act is to replicate that opportunity so that families who have a loved one with a disability—it may be one disability or it may be more than one, but every family who has a loved one with a disability should have the opportunity to save just as they might for education in a tax-free manner, in a tax-advantaged way.

We have been working on this legislation for a number of years. Senator RICHARD BURR, the senior Senator from North Carolina, and I have led this effort in the Senate. As I said, it would build upon that 529 model for education.

The ABLE Act enjoys the support of 63 Senators, 63 cosponsors. In the House, it is up to 335 Members. That is why we mentioned that over 400 Members of Congress agree. That is why the hashtag #passtheABLEact! is important to highlight.

There are few measures which come before the Senate or the House which enjoy that kind of bipartisan support. In the Senate there are no more than 5

bills that enjoy the support of 63 or more Senators. We are pleased about that, but we are not done yet. We still have a long way to go to get this legislation done.

So as important as it is to highlight the numbers, it is also important to highlight the people who did the hard work to get us there. I want to commend Members of the House and Senate, but the ones who are worthy of even more substantial commendation would be a lot of individuals, some of whom are here in Washington this week: The National Down Syndrome Society. I was just with folks from the National Down Syndrome Society this morning over on the House side. They allow a Senator to go across to the House side. Our current Presiding Officer knows this, as she served there. Once in a while we get to go over there, and they were kind enough to invite us over there this morning. They have done remarkable work on this legislation and are continuing their advocacy today, even as we speak. We are grateful for their work.

Autism Speaks is another great organization that has done enormous work to bring us to where we are today, and the Arc as well. So many Americans know a lot about the Arc, the National Down Syndrome Society, as well as Autism Speaks. So we are grateful for that support, but we still have a ways to go.

One of the best ways to ensure this legislation will get over the goal line—I don't want to use too many football analogies here—but if we are getting close, even if we are in the so-called red zone, we are not in the end zone yet. We have a ways to go. But one of the best ways to make sure that happens is to talk about the real people that legislation like this would affect.

I mentioned the number of supporters we have, but I didn't mention the full name of the bill: Achieving a Better Life Experience. That is what the acronym ABLE stands for. But I like to think about it in this way as well.

I have a constituent, Sara Wolff, who is with us here today. She knows the rules don't allow me to indicate where she is today, but she is very close by, and she is with us today. I am grateful Sara is with us because she is a great example of someone who has a disability but is very able. She has a disability, but on a regular basis—hour after hour, day after day—she finds a way to overcome her disability or to manage it as best she can. She is a remarkable speaker. She gives as many speeches in a week as I give, and I am an elected official. She is well-known in northeastern Pennsylvania where we live. We live in the same county, but I live in Scranton and she lives in Moscow. She works for the O'Malley & Langan Law Offices. She is a law clerk there.

But as smart as she is on the law and these issues, probably the most significant part of her whole personality is the dynamism she brings to issues. She is a dynamic person. She does something few of us do well—even people who work here as elected officials—because she knows how to engage with people. She knows how to deliver a message. She knows how to be candid and direct but to do it in a way that is engaging and warm and friendly. So once in a while I will take instruction from Sara Wolff. But even more than that, I take inspiration from her.

Sara is someone who is very able and talented and committed, but she is among the many Americans—Pennsylvanians in my case—asking us to pass this legislation so that if a family such as hers wants to begin to save to help pay for a whole range of services for an individual with a disability, they can do so in a tax-advantaged environment in order to save over time, and do it in a manner that doesn't put them at a disadvantage from a tax standpoint down the road.

So Sara is a great example of why the ABLE Act should pass, and she is doing more than her share to make sure that it does pass. So I am grateful to Sara Wolff for doing that, and I am especially grateful to people like Sara, who like a lot of us at some point in our lives have to overcome a tragedy. Sara lost her mother Connie not too long ago to a sudden and rapid illness. But she has been able to deal with that tragedy and still help us day in and day out to get the ABLE Act passed.

I will highlight one more story and then I will conclude. Angie Cain is a 28-year-old who lives in Indianapolis, IN, and like Sara Wolff she lives with Down syndrome. Angie has five different jobs and works 5 days a week. She works paid positions at Kohl's on Mondays and at the YMCA on Fridays. On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays she volunteers for several organizations, including a hospital, a Down syndrome office in Indiana, and the Alzheimer's unit of an assisted living facility.

Unfortunately, like so many Americans with disabilities, Angie is unable to save enough to cover her future needs—the same problem I just highlighted—if we don't change the law with the ABLE Act. Under current law, she must have less than \$2,000 in assets in order to be eligible for Supplemental Security Income. That doesn't make a lot of sense, and that is one of the reasons we have to change the law. Angie is, therefore, forced to limit the amount of money she earns and work multiple paid and volunteer positions in order to benefit from the steady benefits that SSI provides.

Angie would like to live independently and, at the same time, she knows that she has limitations in that regard because without adequate savings and

income, because of the current state of the law, she is forced to live with her family. She would like to be independent. That is something we all yearn for at some point in our lives. Angie's family is worried about her living and financial situation, especially down the line, years from now, when her family may not be with her any longer.

Stories such as Angie Cain's story, the story of Sara Wolff, and individuals across the country like Sara and Angie are the reason we have to pass the ABLE Act. They don't need a lot of help. They need just a tool, one tool in their toolbox, to be able to reach down and have the opportunity to have their families save in a way that will help them down the road.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 19 percent of Americans live with one or more disabilities, 12 percent live with severe disabilities, and many of them are unsure about their ability to cover their basic expenses in the future because they are unable to build adequate savings.

We talk a lot about how folks should save. We encourage people to save for college. We encourage families to do that, and we encourage people to save for all kinds of things. Just the principle itself—to save and to conserve—is a good one to espouse and to advocate. But we have to give, in this instance, families an opportunity to save for a loved one with a disability or, in some cases, more than one disability. So whether it is Sara Wolff or Angie or others, we have to give them an opportunity to do that and give their families that opportunity.

When you see that number of Members of Congress—400—coming together, I believe it is not simply a question of whether this will pass but only a question of when the ABLE Act will pass. I hope that will take place in the next couple of months and that we can get every single Member of the Senate and House to join us.

This is one major thing we could do this year to show the American people we get it when it comes to one challenge that a lot of families face.

TRIBUTE TO BETSY SCHMID

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, 13 months ago, I inherited an awesome responsibility. In the blink of an eye, I had become Chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, a position long held by Senator Daniel Inouye.

It was daunting to step into the shoes of a member of the "greatest generation," a Medal of Honor recipient, and one of the most respected advocates for the men and women who serve our country in uniform. It was my good luck that the gavel I inherited came with Betsy Schmid, the staff director of the subcommittee.

Betsy first came to the Senate in February 2002, on detail to the Defense Subcommittee as a Presidential management intern. While it was only a temporary assignment, I believe Betsy would be the first to tell you that she would have done anything to return.

Return she did, joining the Defense Subcommittee as professional staff in March 2003. Over the next 8 years, Betsy served as a budget analyst focusing on some of the largest, most complex, and politically sensitive programs in the Department of Defense.

After years as an outstanding budget analyst, Chairman Inouye appointed Betsy to serve as the staff director of the Subcommittee on Defense in February 2011. It is a daunting job. The subcommittee oversees more than half of the Nation's discretionary budget, plus tens of billions more for the costs of overseas conflicts.

As staff director, Betsy has done an outstanding job of serving me this year, and Senator Inouye before me. But more importantly, her time here was in service to the Senate, the Nation, and our Armed Forces.

During her service, she had been handed the unenviable task of reducing the defense budget by scores of billions of dollars.

Many said that the cuts could not be made without sacrificing major critical military capabilities, but Betsy and her staff proved them wrong. Betsy made the numbers work, and there is no doubt in my mind that our Nation is more secure today because we got many of these budgetary decisions right.

This is Betsy Schmid's last week with the Subcommittee on Defense. She has been given an offer that she simply could not refuse. I wish her well and know she will contribute in important ways, but we will miss her.

During her service in the Senate, she has continued the tradition of bipartisanship and putting the men and women of the Armed Forces and Intelligence Community first. No one has worked harder to achieve these goals, working late nights, weekends, and more than a few holidays to serve her country to the utmost of her considerable abilities.

So with this distinguished record of public service, I would like to provide my sincere thanks and congratulations to Elizabeth Lynne Schmid. I wish her the very best in her future endeavors.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I rise today in recognition of Black History Month.

First established in 1976 as part of the U.S. Bicentennial, President Gerald Ford marked the inaugural Black History Month with a call to "honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history."

The State of Illinois has played a significant role in this ongoing struggle for justice. President Abraham Lincoln led our Nation through its bloodiest war to save the Union, abolish slavery, and begin the work we continue to this day to end discrimination.

It was Illinois Senator Paul Douglas who raised the Illinois standard and joined in lending support for Hubert Humphrey's call for civil rights at the 1948 Democratic Convention. Douglas was a stalwart on civil rights as a Senator, defying filibusters and the wrath of his colleagues to make this principled stand in the 1950s and 1960s.

It was Illinois Senator Everett Dirksen who worked with Members of both parties to help pass the historic Civil Rights Act of 1964 50 years ago this July. That Dirksen Senate seat would later be filled by three of the nine African-American Senators who have served in this body—more than any other State in the Nation.

In 1992, Carol Moseley Braun became the first and only African-American woman to serve in the Senate. In 2004, I was joined here in the Senate by Barack Obama, who would of course go on to become the first African-American President in American history. Roland Burris assumed his seat when President Obama moved into the White House.

The Senate has since welcomed Senators TIM SCOTT of South Carolina, Mo Cowan of Massachusetts, and CORY BOOKER of New Jersey. This 113th Congress marks the first time that two African-American Senators served concurrently.

The Senate is changing to better reflect the diversity of this Nation, but the pace of that change is painfully slow. Our challenge is to shape a nation where America's leaders look like America and where the talents of all people are welcomed.

We proudly celebrate the tremendous work of the courageous men and women who have come before us to make this country a better place. During this month, as we do throughout the year, America continues to fight so that we may all live in a fairer and more equal nation.

SENATE EMPLOYEES' CHILD CARE CENTER

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I wish to recognize the 30th anniversary of a special place in our Senate community—the Senate employees' childcare center. The teachers and administrators at the center are some of the unsung heroes of the Senate, and it is a privilege to be able to pay tribute to them today.

The Senate employees' childcare center opened its doors on February 27, 1984, as the result of a small group of Senate employees who came together as parents to create a childcare pro-

gram for their children that would best meet the unique needs of Senate employees. Although operating out of different buildings, the center has been in continuous operation since its opening day. In 1989, the center became the first childcare center in Washington, DC, to receive accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children—a hallmark of quality in the child care world—and it has remained accredited ever since.

Over the years the center has grown in size and has moved locations several times, but one thing that has never changed is the center's commitment to excellence. Through the dedicated efforts of its administrators and faculty, the center provides an exceptional level of care and a top-notch early childhood education program. While adhering to rigorous standards, the center also remains a warm and close-knit community. It is now a separate nonprofit governed by a parent board of directors, and all of the parents regularly donate their time and their energy—from organizing the center's library to washing crib sheets and blankets—to ensure that the center runs smoothly. It is a place where everyone knows every child's name and where children rush in the doors in the morning with smiles on their faces because they know they are going to a place where they will be welcomed, where they will learn, and where they will be loved.

That loving environment is provided by the people who are truly the heart of the Senate childcare center—its teachers. Childcare workers perform some of the most difficult and most important jobs in our society. Their job is far more than feeding, diapering, and keeping children safe. They help develop young minds in the earliest, most critical developmental years. Childcare workers don't do their jobs for the money, and they often don't get the respect they deserve. They do their jobs because they love children and they love being a part of watching them grow.

The center is blessed with a particularly exceptional faculty—many of the teachers have been there for decades. They have watched the children they have cared for grow up, go to college, get married, and have children of their own, and they are still there with open arms and loving hearts for the next generation of children that walk through the door. Though they are not technically public employees, there is no doubt that they are dedicated public servants who make an invaluable contribution to the Senate community.

I want to particularly recognize a few of the most longstanding faculty members at the center. Phyllis Green, the lead teacher in the center's toddler room, has been with the center all 30 years of its operation. Parents describe her as a warm, steady, and nurturing

presence, who has helped countless children discover the world and gain new skills and new independence. Anyone who can spend 30 years with toddlers is truly a remarkable individual, and I applaud "Ms. Phyllis" for her years of service. Other teachers with longstanding service include the center's beloved assistant director, Bridgette Waters, who is marking her 20th year this year, teachers Janet Green-Tucker, Joan Middleton, Michelle Buckner, and Rosa Woodard, each of whom has served, or will soon serve, 20 years or more with the center, and teachers Pia Corona, Tangela Cassell-Johnson, Andrea Henriques, Kellie Salley, and Mishele Torbati, each of whom has served, or will soon have served, 10 years or more.

I would also like to recognize the 9 years of service provided by the center's departing director, Christine Schoppe Wauls, who will leave our community at the end of the month to enjoy her well-deserved retirement. Christine, thank you for your years of service to the Senate community. Indeed, the entire faculty and staff of the center deserve our respect and gratitude for the important work that they do each day.

I have often said that when a staffer signs up to work for the Senate, their whole family really signs up for public service. Senate families make many sacrifices so that a parent—or sometimes both parents—can serve the Senate. For the parents who send their children to the Senate childcare center, the difficult balancing act of work and family is made just a little bit easier.

It is a great comfort to Senate staffers to know that their children are in such wonderful care. It is a great comfort to us as Senators to know that our staff can do their jobs well without worrying about their children's safety and well-being. We would be a better country if every working American could have the same kind of security and peace of mind when they go to work each day.

So on this, the 30th anniversary of the Senate employees' childcare center, I offer my congratulations to the center for achieving this important milestone and my very best wishes for many more years of service.

TRIBUTE TO SETH HARRIS

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I rise today to pay tribute to the former Deputy Secretary of Labor, Seth Harris, who recently left the Department after nearly 5 years of service. In his time serving as both Deputy Secretary and Acting Secretary, Seth was an invaluable asset to the Department. He brought to these positions a deep knowledge of both the agency and labor law, and he made significant contributions to the Department both as a

manager and as a policy expert. Perhaps most important, he brought to these positions the lifelong passion for helping working families succeed that has been the hallmark of his impressive career.

Indeed, this was not Seth's first stint at the Department of Labor. He served for 7 years at the Department during the Clinton Administration, under both Secretaries Robert Reich and Alexis Herman. During this time, he served as counselor to the Secretary of Labor and as Acting Assistant Secretary for Policy, among other roles. He then moved to the academy, where he served as a professor of law at the New York Law School and director of its Labor & Employment Law Programs. While teaching at the New York Law School, his scholarship often focused on a law that is particularly close to my heart—the Americans with Disabilities Act. While teaching, Seth was also a Senior Fellow at the Life Without Limits Project of the United Cerebral Palsy Association, and was a member of the National Advisory Commission on Workplace Flexibility. When President Obama took office, Seth again answered the call to serve his country, and was confirmed as the eleventh United States Deputy Secretary of Labor in May of 2009.

I can understand why he wanted to return to the Department. As I have said on more than one occasion, of all the executive agencies, it may be the Department of Labor that touches the lives of ordinary working Americans the most on a day-to-day basis. The Department of Labor ensures that every American receives a fair day's pay for a hard day's work, and can come home from work safely each night. It helps ensure that a working mother can stay home to bond with her newborn child and still have a job to return to. It helps workers who have been laid off, veterans returning from military service, young people with disabilities entering the workforce and those who develop disabilities and are trying to reenter the workforce—it helps all of these workers to build new skills and aspire to better opportunities for the future. In addition, the Department helps guarantee that hard-working people who have saved all their lives for retirement can enjoy their golden years with security and peace of mind.

Yet, despite this important mission, it is safe to say that when Seth and the current leadership team arrived at the Department, it was an agency suffering from significant neglect. Enforcement activity was down. Vital regulations to protect workers had been weakened or repealed. The agency faced significant management challenges. Not surprisingly, the morale of the agency's career staff was low.

It has been heartening to see this critical agency revitalized under the

Obama administration. Enforcement statistics are improving. More workers are getting better training so they can find better jobs. Employee morale at the agency is improving. In short, the Department of Labor is doing what it is supposed to be doing, and doing it well. As Deputy Secretary—the official responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Department—Seth Harris played a key role in helping the Department meet these challenges.

In a message to Department staff upon his departure, Seth shared some of the agency's accomplishments over the last 5 years. I wanted to include this list in the RECORD, because it is an impressive array of achievements. To quote his message:

Last year, we achieved the lowest workplace fatality rate for miners, the fewest number of miners dying in workplace accidents, and the fewest workplace injuries in mines, ever. Over the last five years, we have twice achieved the lowest rate of fatalities in general industry, ever, including last year. And over the last five years, we achieved the lowest fatality rate in the construction industry, ever.

Last year, we conducted the largest number of whistleblower investigations, ever. Last year, we helped more miners who suffered retaliation from their employers for raising health and safety concerns than were helped in the entire second term of the Bush Administration or the entire second term of the Clinton Administration. Black lung that cripples and kills miners will become much, much rarer under a new rule we proposed. Hundreds of deaths and thousands of morbid illnesses will be prevented each year under a new rule we proposed to protect workers from exposure to silica.

Over the past 5 years, we have returned more than \$1.1 billion in wages to the workers from whom they had been stolen. We conducted the largest number of directed Davis-Bacon investigations, ever. And we did the best job, ever, of targeting our wage and hour investigations to the workplaces that had violations, even when the workers felt too threatened and too disempowered to complain. We expanded minimum wage and overtime protections to nearly 2 million home health aides. The people who care for us when we need them most will now get the most basic of worker protections.

Last year, we conducted the largest number of pension and health plan investigations over the past five years. During that same period, we recovered more than \$1.3 billion in pension and health plan benefits for more than 710,000 participants and beneficiaries through informal resolutions. We also promulgated almost two dozen rules with our colleagues at Treasury and HHS to implement the President's historic health care law.

Last year, we assured that the largest percentage of workers exiting Labor Department job training programs got industry-recognized credentials. We also helped hundreds of community colleges work with employers to give tens of thousands of workers skills that employers need right now and will need for years to come. We expanded eligibility for the Trade Adjustment Assistance and unemployment insurance under the President's Recovery Act. And we nursed all 53 jurisdictions administering UI programs through the worst unemployment crisis in seven decades.

Last year, we did the best job, ever, of targeting the very small number of union officers and staff who embezzle funds or engage in fraud. We also achieved near record efficiency in concluding investigations of union elections despite the fewest resources available ever.

Over the past five years, we have stripped away a mountain of bureaucratic and legal barriers that kept our civil rights agency from finding and remedying discrimination. And we are finding and fixing pay discrimination, in particular, at an accelerating rate. We changed the law so that hundreds of thousands more people with disabilities and veterans will get jobs with federal contractors every year.

Last year, we helped the highest percentage of federal employees with disabilities on workers compensation to return to work since we started keeping records on this activity. We also processed workers compensation claims for longshore workers and energy employees at the fastest clip, ever.

We have done the best job, ever, of managing the taxpayers' money entrusted to the Labor Department's care. We have had five consecutive years of clean financial audits, and these last two years, we had no material deficiencies in our financial audit. We replaced a 25-year-old financial management system that put us out of compliance with just about every law with a new cloud-based financial management system that helps us comply with every law, and balance our books, and spend the taxpayers' money responsibly.

Last year, we did the best job, ever, of paying our bills on time, and we paid the smallest amount of interest for late payments, ever. We paid our small business contractors faster than ever. And the percentage of contracting we are doing with small businesses is the highest, ever.

We accomplished all of this by taking seriously President Obama's direction to engage in evidence-based, data-driven management.

The Government Accountability Office recently conducted a survey of all managers in 24 executive branch departments and agencies at the GS-13 level and higher. GAO asked these federal managers a long list of questions that amounted to, "does your agency or department use evidence-based, data-driven decision making?" The Labor Department beat all 24 federal agencies that were part of the survey. We lead the federal government in Obama-style evidence-based, data-driven management.

This impressive list of accomplishments reflects an agency that is back on track. It is a testament to the hard work of Secretary Solis, Secretary Perez, Seth Harris, the DOL leadership team, and the dedicated career staff that work for the agency across the country.

While he has moved on to new challenges in his professional life, our Nation owes a great debt of gratitude to Seth Harris for his leadership and for his passionate dedication to helping working families. I know Seth's work on these issues is far from done, and I look forward to continuing to work with him in his new roles in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO JEAN MANNING

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, Jean Manning is synonymous with the

Office of the Senate Chief Counsel for Employment. Since establishing the Office in 1993 at the direction of the Joint Leadership, Ms. Manning has provided invaluable counsel to Senate offices to ensure their compliance with applicable employment laws, including the Equal Pay Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act and numerous other laws Congress applied to itself when it passed the Government Employee Rights Act of 1991 and the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995. Now, after decades of service to the Senate, Jean is retiring. While her retirement is much deserved after a long career, her wise counsel will be missed throughout this great institution.

Ms. Manning, who originally hails from Chicago, began her career as she now ends her career—with public service. After receiving a B.A. in 1972 from the University of Illinois, she took on the important role of educating junior high school students. Ms. Manning left teaching to further her education, obtaining an M.B.A. and a J.D. from the University of Illinois. While pursuing her law degree, Ms. Manning was a member and Articles Editor of the University of Illinois Law Review, in which she published an article about using multiple regression analysis to assess and remedy salary inequity between men and women, a subject about which she has always been passionate. Also while in law school, Ms. Manning was awarded the Rickert Award for Excellence in Legal Writing, an honor that anyone who has reviewed Ms. Manning's exceptional legal writing will know was well deserved.

Following her graduation from law school in 1983, Ms. Manning began her legal career in the great State of California, where she honed her legal skills as a labor and employment law litigator at several prestigious national law firms. Although she eventually moved to the East Coast in 1992, Ms. Manning still considers California her home. She returns to California several times each year to visit friends and family. In retirement, she plans to live in northern California during part of each year.

In the early 1990s, Congress as a workplace underwent a sea change when all major employment laws became applicable to Congress. The Joint Leadership selected Jean Manning as the Senate's first Chief Counsel for Employment to establish and to manage the Office of the Senate Chief Counsel for Employment. Ms. Manning's goal was to create a non-partisan, legal defense office in the Senate that would provide top-tier legal advice and representation to all Senators and Senate offices in the area of labor and employment law. Ms. Manning has far exceeded her goal. The office she established has a stellar rep-

utation throughout the Senate. On a daily basis, the Office of the Senate Chief Counsel for Employment advises and trains all Senate offices of their obligations under employment laws. Every year, the Office presents over 70 legal seminars within the Senate to ensure that Senate managers understand and adhere to all employment laws when managing their offices.

Ms. Manning also has tirelessly represented Senate employing offices at all levels of the Federal court system, including arguing before the United States Supreme Court. It is a testament to the high standards she set for herself and her entire office that, since its inception 21 years ago, the Office of the Senate Chief Counsel for Employment has never lost a case.

Throughout her Senate career, Ms. Manning has provided Senators, officers and Senate employing offices with unfailingly sound legal advice—even at times when she knew her advice might be unpopular. We thank her for her exceptional service to the Senate. The Senate is losing a great legal advocate, educator and source of institutional knowledge. The Senate is a better place for Ms. Manning's outstanding service, and she will be missed.

TRIBUTE TO VIRGINIA RENEE SIMPSON

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the dedicated career and service to the Congress and the Nation of Renee Simpson, who is retiring at the end of this month after over 30 years of service in both the Executive and Legislative branches of our government. She has dedicated her life to public service helping keep our Nation and its citizens secure, and we honor her for her longstanding dedication.

Renee is leaving the Senate as a staff member for Audits and Oversight of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. During her 3 years on the Committee, Renee has been integral to the committee's oversight of the 16 intelligence agencies. She led reviews of the intelligence community's information technology modernization and classification processes, and served as a committee liaison with the inspectors general of the intelligence community. Her knowledge and insight helped both identify items of concern and proposals for improvement.

In addition to her service with the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations, Renee has served as a Legislative Affairs Officer in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and as the Special Senate Liaison for the United States Marine Corps Office of Legislative Affairs. But perhaps her most significant assignments and accomplishments came during her 24

years of service with the U.S. Naval Reserves.

Ms. Simpson's distinguished military career began as an Operations and Readiness Officer for Desert Shield/Desert Storm and her unwavering commitment to service led her to posts around the world, including to NATO's Allied Forces Southern Headquarters Command, the U.S. Embassy in Rome, Italy, the Joint Task Force in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, U.S. Joint Forces Command, and the Office of the Director of Naval Intelligence in Washington, DC.

Renee has received numerous awards for her military service including the Defense Superior Service Medal as well as many Navy and Marine Corps Commendation and Achievement Medals.

Renee is especially close to her family and her priorities and heart lie with them in Sanford, NC. Her father, Lester Ray Simpson, is a proud Navy veteran of the Korean War who has an appreciation of fine attire with just the right bow tie. Her mom, Vivian, remains Renee's unending inspiration and role model. And according to Renee, her sister, Jane Rae Fawcett, is "a superstar and the smartest, funniest person I know." Finally, her family simply would not be complete without her anchor of a brother-in-law, Deputy Sheriff Ed Fawcett. Renee lives, breathes and loves her family above all else.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to publicly thank Renee and to note my appreciation for her dedicated and dignified efforts. We will miss your insight and experience, and your commitment to pursuing the right policies to protect our Nation.

AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Ms. STABENOW. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry Subcommittee assignments.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

UNITED STATES, SENATE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION & FORESTRY
113th Congress, Subcommittee Assignments,
February 27, 2014

SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMODITIES, MARKETS, TRADE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Sen. Donnelly, Chair, Sen. Heitkamp, Sen. Harkin, Sen. Brown, Sen. Gillibrand, Sen. Walsh, Sen. Chambliss, Ranking, Sen. Roberts, Sen. Boozman, Sen. Hoeven, Sen. Johanns.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON JOBS, RURAL ECONOMIC GROWTH AND ENERGY INNOVATION

Sen. Heitkamp, Chair, Sen. Brown, Sen. Klobuchar, Sen. Bennet, Sen. Donnelly, Sen. Casey, Sen. Johanns, Ranking, Sen. Hoeven, Sen. Grassley, Sen. Thune, Sen. Boozman.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONSERVATION, FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Sen. Bennet, Chair, Sen. Harkin, Sen. Klobuchar, Sen. Leahy, Sen. Heitkamp, Sen.

Walsh, Sen. Boozman, Ranking, Sen. McConnell, Sen. Chambliss, Sen. Thune, Sen. Roberts.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NUTRITION, SPECIALTY CROPS, FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

Sen. Casey, Chair, Sen. Leahy, Sen. Har-kin, Sen. Brown, Sen. Gillibrand, Sen. Ben-net, Sen. Hoeven, Ranking, Sen. McConnell, Sen. Chambliss, Sen. Grassley, Sen. Thune.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LIVESTOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, MARKETING AND AGRICULTURE SECURITY

Sen. Gillibrand, Chair, Sen. Leahy, Sen. Klobuchar, Sen. Donnelly, Sen. Casey, Sen. Walsh, Sen. Roberts, Ranking, Sen. McConnell, Sen. Boozman, Sen. Johanns, Sen. Grassley.

*Senator Stabenow and Senator Cochran serve as ex officio members of all subcommittees.

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN FROM GUN VIOLENCE

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, no family should be forced to endure the loss of a child. In his memoir, President Dwight Eisenhower wrote that the loss of his 3-year-old son in early 1921 was "the greatest disappointment and disaster in my life, the one that I have never been able to forget completely." That is why one of the fundamental expectations that Americans have of their government is also one of the most simple: to protect America's children; to ensure that our communities, our streets, and our families are safe.

But sadly, Congress has done little to combat the gun violence that continues to devastate American children and families. Many have characterized horrific shootings affecting children in our Nation, such as the one which occurred in Newtown, CT, as somehow separate from mainstream American society. But recent studies have shown that such incidents cannot be viewed in a vacuum. Instead, as a recent Yale University study has established, they are part of a wider, disturbing trend of gun violence wounding and killing American children. This study found that every day in the United States, around 20 children sustain firearm injuries serious enough to require hospitalization. In 6 percent of those cases, the wounds prove to be fatal. Three quarters of child hospitalizations examined by the study were the result of unintentional or accidental injuries, often cases of children playing with an unsecured firearm.

The study's rigorous clinical framework, combined with the reality that it is discussing children, makes for jarring reading. The researchers found, for example, that the most common firearm-inflicted injuries on children are open wounds, fractures, and internal injuries to the thorax, abdomen, or pelvis. Injuries to the nerves or spinal cord are also frequent. Traumatic brain injury resulting from gun violence is most often found in children younger than 5. These are not statistics of soldiers on a battlefield who volunteered

to face danger. These are innocent children, in our communities, right here at home.

This cycle of violence touches families around our Nation. Like in Detroit, where a recent Detroit News investigation showed that nearly 500 Detroit children have died in homicides since 2000, mostly as the result of gun violence. That investigation cited, as an example, the story of 12-year-old Kenis Green Jr. Last August, he was shot and killed on his front porch during his uncle's birthday party. In Texas, last October a 5-year-old boy shot himself with a .40 caliber pistol that his babysitter left unattended when she went to take a nap. In South Carolina, last December a 15-year-old boy accidentally shot and killed a 12-year-old while loading a magazine into a firearm.

If almost anything in the world was responsible for sending 20 American children to the hospital every day, or was frequently involved in teenage suicides, or was inflicting traumatic brain injuries on toddlers, Congress would spring into action to address what can only be described as a public health crisis. We would enact comprehensive safety standards to stop the bloodshed. But when firearms are responsible for these horrific effects, inexplicably, we do nothing.

I urge my colleagues to recognize this crisis and to act to protect our children from gun violence. I urge my colleagues to take up and pass gun safety measures already pending in this Congress to keep firearms out of the wrong hands and to make our society safer. We owe our children nothing less.

BROWN UNIVERSITY

Mr. REED. Madam President, today I want to recognize an extraordinary university, deeply rooted in the history of Rhode Island, Brown University. Brown is celebrating its 250th anniversary. Brown University's founding in 1764 makes it the seventh oldest institution of higher education in the United States, predating even the American Revolution. The university originally began as a small school located in Warren, RI, known as the College of Rhode Island. As Brown grew, it moved to College Hill in Providence in 1770, where it has thrived to this day and was renamed a few years later to acknowledge a \$5,000 gift from Nicholas Brown, a member of the class of 1786.

Since its founding, Brown University has played an important role in Rhode Island and our Nation's history. Indeed, it was the first Ivy League institution to admit students of all religions. Brown remains committed to diversity and access. Over 20 years ago, Brown established the Leadership Alliance, a national academic consortium of leading research universities and mi-

nority-serving institutions with the mission to develop underrepresented students into outstanding leaders and role models in academia, business, and the public sector. Brown stands out for its willingness to openly delve into its past while staying focused on the future, and it has made a vital commitment to college access through its need-blind admissions policy, ensuring that no student admitted to Brown will be turned away for financial reasons.

Brown established a truly student-driven curriculum—the Brown Curriculum—in 1970 to allow students to personalize their course of study. In an effort to continue its edge in innovation, Brown launched its Plan for Academic Enrichment in 2002 to help transform the fields of research, education, and public leadership. Fiscal year 2013 saw the University conduct more than \$170 million in sponsored research, helping the Rhode Island economy and making new discoveries that can improve lives.

The commitment of Brown's alumni to public service is also particularly noteworthy and admirable. According to a 2013 article by Washington Monthly, Brown ranks fifth among national universities and first in the Ivy League for the number of alumni working in public service. Some of the Brown alumni currently playing important roles in the public sphere include Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen, U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez, and World Bank President Dr. Jim Yong Kim. Through this commitment to service, members of the Brown community continue to find ways to improve the quality of life for people across Rhode Island, the Nation, and the world.

I am proud of the talented men and women who have contributed to the success of Brown University over these past 250 years. I congratulate Christina Paxson, Brown's 19th president, the students, the Brown Corporation, and the entire Brown community on this significant milestone.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JEFF TEAGUE

• Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I wish to recognize Jeff Teague, president of Teague Auto Group in El Dorado, AR, who was named the 2014 Time Magazine Dealer of the Year.

Awarded annually, the Time Magazine Dealer of the Year Award recognizes the auto dealer who demonstrates exceptional business performance and distinguished community service. Jeff was recognized for the positive impact he is making on the El Dorado community.

In 1981, Jeff and his father opened their first dealership as partners, a Chevrolet-Oldsmobile dealership, in

Walnut Ridge, AR. He opened his current dealership in El Dorado in 1990, and through hard work and determination, Jeff built his dealership into a thriving business. His story is an Arkansas success story which I am proud to acknowledge.

In addition to his business success, Jeff has been a licensed pilot for 26 years and frequently uses this skill to serve his community, including flying church members to charitable initiatives and serving as a standby pilot for a local liver transplant patient. He is a member of Rotary International, the El Dorado Chamber of Commerce, the El Dorado Economic Development Board, the Batesville Chamber of Commerce, and since 2007, has served as chairman of the South Arkansas Regional Airport Commission. Jeff also currently serves on the board of directors for Citizens Bank of Batesville.

Jeff and his wife, Sarah, are well known for their community involvement in El Dorado. They both are actively involved with the Boys & Girls Clubs of El Dorado, the South Arkansas Arts Center, the South Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, MusicFest El Dorado, the Salvation Army, Union County 4-H, the South Arkansas Historical Foundation, and Arkansas Baptist Children's Homes and Family Ministries.

I want to offer my congratulations to Jeff Teague on this well-deserved honor and thank him for his dedication and commitment to the community of El Dorado and to Arkansas.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:29 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1944. An act to protect private property rights.

H.R. 3308. An act to require a Federal agency to include language in certain educational and advertising materials indicating that such materials are produced and disseminated at taxpayer expense.

H.R. 3865. An act to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

The message also announced that pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 4303, and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Speaker appoints the following Members of the House of Representatives to the Board of Trustees of Galaudet University: Mr. YODER of Kansas and Mr. BUTTERFIELD of North Carolina.

The message further announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Speaker appoints the following Member of the House of Representatives to the British-American Inter-parliamentary Group: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 12:47 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 2431. An act to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1423. An act to provide taxpayers with an annual report disclosing the cost and performance of Government programs and areas of duplication among them, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1944. An act to protect private property rights; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 2530. An act to improve transparency and efficiency with respect to audits and communications between taxpayers and the Internal Revenue Service; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 2531. An act to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from asking taxpayers questions regarding religious, political, or social beliefs; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 3308. An act to require a Federal agency to include language in certain educational and advertising materials indicating that such materials are produced and disseminated at taxpayer expense; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 3865. An act to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

S. 2062. A bill to authorize Members of Congress to bring an action for declaratory and

injunctive relief in response to a written statement by the President or any other official in the executive branch directing officials of the executive branch to not enforce a provision of law.

S. 2066. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the intentional discrimination of a person or organization by an employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

S. 2067. A bill to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning tax statuses to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. LEVIN for the Committee on Armed Services.

Air Force nomination of Brig. Gen. Travis D. Balch, to be Major General.

Air Force nomination of Col. Nathaniel S. Reddicks, to be Brigadier General.

Air Force nomination of Brig. Gen. James C. Witham, to be Major General.

Army nomination of Brig. Gen. Michael E. Williamson, to be Lieutenant General.

Army nomination of Col. Thomas R. Tempel, Jr., to be Major General.

Army nomination of Maj. Gen. Kevin W. Mangum, to be Lieutenant General.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Brig. Gen. William T. Collins and ending with Brig. Gen. James S. Hartsell, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 30, 2014.

Marine Corps nomination of Lt. Gen. Robert E. Schmidle, Jr., to be Lieutenant General.

Navy nomination of Rear Adm. Jan E. Tighe, to be Vice Admiral.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, for the Committee on Armed Services I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent, to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Air Force nominations beginning with Kathryn L. Aasen and ending with John K. Walton, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with David M. Berthe and ending with Paul A. Willingham, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Amy R. Astonlassiter and ending with Aimee N. Zakaluzny, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Elizabeth R. Andersondoze and ending with Aaron T. Yu, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Wesley M. Abadie and ending with Scott A. Zakaluzny, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 9, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with William E. Dickens, Jr. and ending with Richard R. Givens II, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 30, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Kyle William Blasch and ending with Andrew T. Maccabe, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 30, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Luan Tran Le and ending with David C. Schaefer, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 30, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Cynthia B. Camp and ending with Bryan M. Winter, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 30, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Laura I. Fernandez and ending with Albert C. Rees, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 30, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Diane M. Doty and ending with Edward D. Ronnebaum, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 30, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Richard L. Allen and ending with Sandra R. Volden, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 30, 2014.

Air Force nominations beginning with Connie L. Alge and ending with Kenneth E. Yee, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 30, 2014.

Army nomination of Sun Y. Kim, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Army nomination of William T. Monacci, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Glennie Z. Kertes, to be Major.

Army nomination of Charles A. Williams, to be Major.

Army nominations beginning with Roger J. Belbel and ending with Yves P. Leblanc, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 6, 2014.

Army nomination of Michael E. Cannon, to be Colonel.

Army nomination of Aizenhawar J. Marrogi, to be Colonel.

Army nominations beginning with Thomas E. Byrne and ending with James H. Chang, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

Army nominations beginning with Christopher D. Coulson and ending with Michael Woodruff, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

Army nominations beginning with Edward Ahn and ending with D012017, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Ernest P. Abelson II and ending with David D. Zyga, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on January 7, 2014.

Marine Corps nomination of Ryan M. Oleksy, to be Major.

Marine Corps nomination of Sean T. Hays, to be Major.

Marine Corps nomination of Lakendrick D. Wright, to be Major.

Marine Corps nomination of John E. Simpson III, to be Major.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Bill W. Brooks, Jr. and ending with Michael W. Costa, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

Marine Corps nomination of James R. Keller, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Marine Corps nomination of Clennon Roe III, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Marine Corps nomination of Anthony Redman, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Marine Corps nomination of Jeffrey P. Wooldridge, to be Lieutenant Colonel.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Billy A. Dubose and ending with John P. Mullery, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Christopher S. Eichner and ending with James Smiley, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Randall E. Davis and ending with Wade E. Wallace, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Damon L. Andersen and ending with Richardo A. Spann, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Paulo T. Alves and ending with Patrick J. Toal, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Christian D. Galbraith and ending with Mark J. Lehman, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Timothy J. Aldrich and ending with Chris A. Storey, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Kenneth L. Aikey and ending with Scott B. Roland, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

Marine Corps nominations beginning with Terry H. Choi and ending with Freddie D. Taylor, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

Navy nomination of Leon M. Leflore, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Gregory D. Sutton, to be Commander.

Navy nomination of Chad C. Schumacher, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Jack D. Hagan and ending with Richard S. Montgomery, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 6, 2014.

Navy nominations beginning with Reinel Castro and ending with Dustin R. Ward, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 6, 2014.

Navy nomination of Megan M. Donnelly, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nomination of Danielle L. Leiby, to be Lieutenant Commander.

Navy nominations beginning with Michael R. Cathey and ending with Andrew J. Young, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on February 10, 2014.

By Mr. HARKIN for the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

*Portia Y. Wu, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor.

*Massie Ritsch, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for Communications and Outreach, Department of Education.

*Vivek Hallegere Murthy, of Massachusetts, to be Medical Director in the Regular Corps of the Public Health Service, subject to qualifications therefor as provided by law and regulations, and to be Surgeon General of the Public Health Service for a term of four years.

*Heather L. MacDougall, of Florida, to be a Member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission for a term expiring April 27, 2017.

*Christopher P. Lu, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Labor.

By Mr. LEAHY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Steven Paul Logan, of Arizona, to be United States District Judge for the District of Arizona.

John Joseph Tuchi, of Arizona, to be United States District Judge for the District of Arizona.

Diane J. Humetewa, of Arizona, to be United States District Judge for the District of Arizona.

Rosemary Marquez, of Arizona, to be United States District Judge for the District of Arizona.

Douglas L. Rayes, of Arizona, to be United States District Judge for the District of Arizona.

James Alan Soto, of Arizona, to be United States District Judge for the District of Arizona.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. KIRK:

S. 2050. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the national limitation amount for qualified highway or surface freight transfer facility bonds; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KIRK (for himself and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2051. A bill to provide States with greater flexibility in innovative highway financing; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. REED, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. 2052. A bill to reauthorize the weatherization and State energy programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. WARREN (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. MARKEY):

S. 2053. A bill to direct the Architect of the Capitol to place a chair honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action on the Capitol Grounds; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Mr. MURPHY (for himself and Mr. HARKIN):

S. 2054. A bill to require certain standards and enforcement provisions to prevent child abuse and neglect in residential programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. McCASKILL, and Mr. PRYOR):

S. 2055. A bill to allow for the collection of certain user fees by non-Federal entities; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND:

S. 2056. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 13127 Broadway Street in Alden, New York, as the "Sergeant Brett E. Gorniewicz Memorial Post Office"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND:

S. 2057. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 198 Baker Street in Corning, New York, as the "Specialist Ryan P. Jayne Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BEGICH:

S. 2058. A bill to establish a loan guarantee program for natural gas distribution grids to be installed in areas with extremely high energy costs; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. BEGICH:

S. 2059. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit for the purchase of heating and cooling equipment which meets the Energy Star program requirements and is used in certain high-cost energy communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. HATCH):

S. 2060. A bill to direct the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board to develop accessibility guidelines for electronic instructional materials and related information technologies in institutions of higher education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mrs. McCASKILL, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 2061. A bill to prevent conflicts of interest relating to contractors providing background investigation fieldwork services and investigative support services; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. PAUL:

S. 2062. A bill to authorize Members of Congress to bring an action for declaratory and injunctive relief in response to a written statement by the President or any other official in the executive branch directing officials of the executive branch to not enforce a provision of law; read the first time.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 2063. A bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to assist States to rehabilitate or replace certain bridges, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. ROBERTS:

S. 2064. A bill to provide for the repeal of certain provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that have the effect of rationing health care; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. LEVIN):

S. 2065. A bill to create incentives for the development of alternative fuel vehicles; to

the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 2066. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the intentional discrimination of a person or organization by an employee of the Internal Revenue Service; read the first time.

By Mr. CRUZ (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY):

S. 2067. A bill to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning tax statuses to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities; read the first time.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2068. A bill to provide for the development and use of technology for personalized handguns, to require that, within 3 years, all handguns manufactured or sold in, or imported into, the United States incorporate such technology, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BEGICH (for himself, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WALSH, Ms. HIRONO, and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 2069. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand and modify the credit for employee health insurance expenses of small employers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 2070. A bill to reduce the number of nuclear-armed submarines operated by the Navy, to prohibit the development of a new long-range penetrating bomber aircraft, to prohibit the procurement of new intercontinental ballistic missiles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BEGICH:

S. 2071. A bill to establish outer Continental Shelf lease and permit processing coordination offices, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. CRUZ:

S. 2072. A bill to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning tax statuses to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CRUZ:

S. 2073. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the intentional discrimination of a person or organization by an employee of the Internal Revenue Service; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. COONS, Mr. WARNER, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 2074. A bill to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. ENZI):

S. Res. 364. A resolution expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. NELSON):

S. Res. 365. A resolution deploring the violent repression of peaceful demonstrators in Venezuela, calling for full accountability for human rights violations taking place in Venezuela, and supporting the right of the Venezuelan people to the free and peaceful exercise of representative democracy; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. BROWN):

S. Res. 366. A resolution expressing support for the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Ms. COLLINS):

S. Res. 367. A resolution designating March 3, 2014, as "Read Across America Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. COONS, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. PRYOR, and Ms. WARREN):

S. Res. 368. A resolution designating February 28, 2014, as "Rare Disease Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. COCHRAN):

S. Con. Res. 33. A concurrent resolution celebrating the 100th anniversary of the enactment of the Smith-Lever Act, which established the nationwide Cooperative Extension System; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 135

At the request of Mr. VITTER, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 135, a bill to amend title X of the Public Health Service Act to prohibit family planning grants from being awarded to any entity that performs abortions, and for other purposes.

S. 232

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 232, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on medical devices.

S. 313

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 313, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 370

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 370, a bill to improve and expand geographic literacy among kindergarten through grade 12 students in

the United States by improving professional development programs for kindergarten through grade 12 teachers offered through institutions of higher education.

S. 489

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 489, a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to increase and adjust for inflation the maximum value of articles that may be imported duty-free by one person on one day, and for other purposes.

S. 635

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 635, a bill to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to provide an exception to the annual written privacy notice requirement.

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 635, *supra*.

S. 1008

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1008, a bill to prohibit the Secretary of Homeland Security from implementing proposed policy changes that would permit passengers to carry small, non-locking knives on aircraft.

S. 1070

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1070, a bill to make it unlawful to alter or remove the unique equipment identification number of a mobile device.

S. 1086

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

S. 1174

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1174, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers.

S. 1187

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1187, a bill to prevent homeowners from being forced to pay taxes on forgiven mortgage loan debt.

S. 1269

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1269, a bill to amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to support community college and indus-

try partnerships, and for other purposes.

S. 1322

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1322, a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act relating to controlled substance analogues.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1495

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1495, a bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue an order with respect to secondary cockpit barriers, and for other purposes.

S. 1531

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1531, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the types of wines taxed as hard cider.

S. 1562

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1562, a bill to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

S. 1657

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1657, a bill to reduce prescription drug misuse and abuse.

S. 1697

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1697, a bill to support early learning.

S. 1737

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1737, a bill to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage and to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend increased expensing limitations and the treatment of certain real property as section 179 property.

S. 1738

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1738, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

S. 1794

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1794, a bill to designate certain Federal land in Chaffee County, Colorado, as a national monument and as wilderness.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1923

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1923, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to exempt from registration brokers performing services in connection with the transfer of ownership of smaller privately held companies.

S. 1980

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1980, a bill to amend titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act to provide for 12-month continuous enrollment under the Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program and to promote quality care.

S. 2026

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2026, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income any prizes or awards won in competition in the Olympic Games or the Paralympic Games.

S. 2037

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2037, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove the 96-hour physician certification requirement for inpatient critical access hospital services.

S. CON. RES. 6

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 6, a concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act.

AMENDMENT NO. 2752

At the request of Mr. BURR, the names of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2752 intended to be proposed to S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2760

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2760 intended to be proposed to S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and

benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2762

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2762 intended to be proposed to S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED
BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. ROBERTS:

S. 2064. A bill to provide for the repeal of certain provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that have the effect of rationing health care; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to discuss ObamaCare provisions that should be keeping my colleagues and all Americans up at night. Obviously, my views are very different from my colleagues who have just propounded their views on the same subject.

Unfortunately, since the implementation of ObamaCare began, the stories and reports have only confirmed the many warnings that I and many of my colleagues made during the debate. Most of the stories Kansans tell me now involve many hundreds of dollars in increases in monthly premiums or people simply losing their coverage. These are real stories from real Kansans, and they are not lies.

Compounding the problem, this administration has made it a routine practice to do what we call a regulations dump on Friday. This is a deliberate posting of sometimes thousands of pages of regulations during the time when the American public and the press is least likely to be paying attention.

Most recent reports from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services—what we call CMS—are that millions of small businesses will face increased premium rates under ObamaCare. The President promised to make it easier for small businesses to offer coverage and, lo and behold, it may even become impossible for them to do so.

Then there are the cuts our seniors are about to face to their Medicare plans. We can't forget that the President pilfered—that is a good word, pilfered—\$1 trillion from Medicare to pay for ObamaCare. These cuts have been delayed, but the most recent regulation on Part D and Medicare Advantage will be extremely detrimental to seniors' access to the availability of Medicare plans. And because of this, for once—for once—I wish to speak about a subject where we get ahead of the curve, get in front of the next disaster, and repeal specific provisions of this law that I think will be most harmful to patients.

I have talked before about how this law comes between patients and doctors, but I think we need to bring more attention to the specter of what I call rationing—yes, rationing. In the absence of complete repeal, I urge my colleagues that these provisions must be repealed.

During the health care reform debate, and many times since then, I have spoken at length about rationing. Specifically, I want people to know about what I refer to as the four rations that are included in ObamaCare. Yes, this is a very real threat. And, yes, they will ration care.

Let me start with something called the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Innovation Center. That is a pretty big, fancy government name. The Center has an enormous budget to match, aimed at finding innovative ways to reform payment and the delivery of health care. That sounds very good, but what this means is that the "innovation center" can now use taxpayer dollars to invest in ways to reduce patient access to care.

Let me say that again. The government can now use taxpayer dollars to invest in ways to reduce patient access to care. It gives the government new powers to cut payments to Medicare beneficiaries with the goal to reduce program expenditures. The reality is they are going to reduce patients' ability to access the care they want and need—all hidden under the cloak of innovation. And that isn't innovation at all. Even if they did give it a fancy title, folks, it is smoke and mirrors. This outfit is already pushing out all of the regulations to implement ObamaCare that are now hurting patients—all the regulations we hear about from our health care providers.

Let me move to the second ration. It grants new authorities to the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force—that is another nice-sounding entity with a long title. This Preventive Services Task Force used to be a body that was scientific and academic, that reviewed treatment, testing, and prevention information, and made recommendations for primary doctors. Nothing is wrong with that. It used to be an academic body that made recommendations, not a body pushing through mandates and regulations. Many would argue that is still what they do today. However, the effect of their recommendations is they are significantly more costly and burdensome. Because of ObamaCare, the task force can now decide what should and, more importantly, should not be covered by health plans. That is not prevention, that is rationing. If the task force doesn't recommend it, then it won't be covered by health plans and patients bear the cost of the procedure. We are seeing this already with things such as prostate exams and mammograms for breast cancer which have been so helpful to so many people—saved their lives.

The third rationer is the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute. Yes, that is another mouthful. This is the outfit that was given millions and millions of dollars to do comparative effectiveness research. I am not opposed to research. I don't know anyone in this body who is opposed to research, especially when it is used to inform the conversation between doctors and their patients. But there is a reason this was formerly called cost-effective research. There is a very fine line between providing information to doctors and patients to determine the best course of care and using that information to decide whether the care or treatment is worth paying for. I have long been concerned that instead this research will be abused to arbitrarily deny patients access to potentially lifesaving treatments or services. That simply should not happen. The research should only be used for the doctor and the patient to make the best health care decision.

Finally, the fourth rationer—my personal nemesis—the Independent Payment Advisory Board—IPAD. This is a board made up of 15 unelected bureaucrats who will decide what gets to stay and what gets to go in Medicare coverage. They will decide which treatments and services will be covered and which will not, with no accountability whatsoever.

When proposed, supporters of the health care law told me: We are too close to our constituents. It is too difficult to make the hard decisions.

Then they said: Let's have somebody else do it.

That was during the debate with regard to IPAD.

I couldn't believe it. I believe we are elected to make the hard decisions and take care of the hard votes, and I believe that is the way Kansans want it, and I think that is the way virtually everybody in every other State wants it. This board diminishes our constitutional responsibility.

Even worse is the fine print of the Independent Payment Advisory Board, or IPAD. If Kansans or any Americans determine they do not like the direction the board is taking and they call my office and, down the road, any other office of any other distinguished Senator to ask me to do something about it—which is what you get when you go back home on any regulation today: what are you going to do about it?—it will take 60 votes in the Senate to overturn their decision—60.

On the surface this sounds OK until you realize that the President doubtless will never support Congress overturning the recommendation of this board made up of his bureaucrats. So he will veto it, and overriding a veto, obviously, takes a two-thirds vote. That is 66 votes to overturn a decision by the payment board.

My colleagues have been changing the rules around here because they

think 60 votes is too high a threshold. What are the chances of reaching 66? But wait. There is even more. If the Secretary appoints a board unable to make recommendations for cuts to Medicare—tough decisions, albeit—then she gets the authority to make the decision of what to cut, one person.

This President has already cut \$½ trillion from Medicare to pay for ObamaCare and gave himself the ability to go after even more Medicare dollars and have no accountability. This, my friends, is frightening; it is ridiculous; it is irresponsible; but it is not new.

I have been talking about the four rationers for a long time and what it means to patients, especially senior patients.

What upsets me, scares me, as I watch all the other warnings and broken promises come true, is what is going to happen to Kansans and all the folks back home when the warnings about the four rationers come true.

We need to protect the all-important doctor-patient relationship, which the four rationers put at risk. That is why today I come to the floor to introduce the Four Rationers Repeal Act of 2014.

For once, look beyond the current troubles we are experiencing. We have to get ahead of the curve. This legislation repeals the Independent Payment Advisory Board; it repeals the euphemistically but misleadingly named Innovation Center; it repeals the changes made to the Preventive Services Task Force; and it makes sure any—any—comparative effectiveness research, called CER, is used by the doctor and patient, not coverage providers or CMS, to determine the best care for patients.

This legislation is relatively simple. It should be supported by all of my colleagues to address some of the egregious changes from ObamaCare that are about to happen just around the bend. It is time to get ahead of the curve this time, prevent it.

I really believe that in order to protect this all-important doctor-patient relationship, we need to repeal and, most importantly, replace ObamaCare with the real reforms that work for Kansans and all Americans.

However, in the meantime we can also start taking it down, piece by piece, which is what my Four Rationers Repeal Act does. I urge my colleagues to support this proposal. For once, let's get ahead of the curve.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. LEVIN):

S. 2065. A bill to create incentives for the development of alternative fuel vehicles; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, today I join with Senator INHOFE to introduce a bill to incentivize the production and use of alternative fuel vehicles, includ-

ing natural gas vehicles, NGVs, and plug-in-electric hybrids. Encouraging the production of alternative fuel vehicles will help to diversify our fuel mix, while reducing our reliance on imported oil and also reducing carbon emissions. In the U.S. alone, NGVs offset the use of nearly 360 million gallons of gasoline in 2011. We hope our bill will help increase that number.

The moment is right to capitalize on the abundance of domestically sourced natural gas. Already, American manufacturers have benefited from the availability of domestically produced natural gas, reducing the cost of US-based production and contributing to the return of manufacturing to the United States. If we can expand the use of natural gas to fuel our vehicles, then American consumers can also benefit from this cleaner and cheaper domestic fuel.

Michigan has become a leading innovator in advanced alternative fuel vehicles and is revolutionizing our transportation sector. As automakers in Michigan and elsewhere manufacture NGVs they face the dilemma often encountered when introducing an alternative fueled vehicle: what will come first, the NGV infrastructure or the vehicle itself? This is the classic chicken and egg question. Ethanol, Diesel and electric vehicles all faced this challenge when first introduced. Our bill will allow Michigan to continue to innovate and harness the power and benefits that domestically sourced alternative fuels have to offer this country.

The benefits of expanding the number of natural gas and alternative fuel vehicles on our roads are numerous. Up to 90 percent of the natural gas used in the United States comes from the United States. We need to tap into this domestic resource for our transportation needs and take an aggressive approach to reducing our dependence on foreign oil. Consumers should also have more choice and flexibility when it comes to fueling their vehicles. This bill allows for that. At the moment natural gas is about half the price of gasoline. Consumers should be able to benefit from these reduced prices. Furthermore, vehicles running on natural gas have 20–30 percent less CO₂ tailpipe emissions than gasoline fueled vehicles. Because natural gas burns cleaner, it increases the life of the car. It has no lead or benzene or other chemicals that break down auto parts or dilute lubricants.

These are all desirable reasons to encourage more NGV production. The use of natural gas vehicles is expanding among private fleets used by airports and transit agencies where refueling infrastructure is available. However, the chicken and egg dilemma is slowing the adoption of both dedicated and bi-fuel natural gas vehicles among light-duty passenger vehicles.

Our legislation would incentivize both production and consumer demand

for alternative fuel vehicles such as natural gas vehicles and plug-in electric hybrids by expanding regulatory incentives. It would also provide consumers with an added incentive to drive natural gas vehicles by giving them access to high occupancy vehicle, HOV, lanes. Giving consumers an additional benefit such as HOV access could help increase demand for these vehicles and the fueling stations that are necessary to support them.

The President outlined in his State of the Union his goal to achieve energy independence through the use of alternative fuels. He specifically mentioned natural gas as the bridge fuel that can grow our economy, create jobs for the middle class, and reduce carbon pollution. I am pleased to introduce legislation today that takes a step toward meeting that goal.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 364—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE INTERNAL REBUILDING, RESETTLEMENT, AND RECONCILIATION WITHIN SRI LANKA THAT ARE NECESSARY TO ENSURE A LASTING PEACE

Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. ENZI) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 364

Whereas May 19, 2014, marks the five-year anniversary of the end of the 26 year civil war between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Government of Sri Lanka;

Whereas the people of Sri Lanka suffered greatly as a result of this conflict, the impact and aftermath of which has been felt by all, especially by women, children, and families;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka established a "Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission" (LLRC) to report whether any person, group, or institution directly or indirectly bears responsibility for incidents that occurred between February 2002 and May 2009 and to recommend measures to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in the future and promote further national unity and reconciliation among all communities;

Whereas the LLRC report was presented to the Sri Lankan Parliament on December 16, 2011, and officially translated into Sinhala and Tamil on August 16, 2012;

Whereas the LLRC report acknowledges important events and grievances that have contributed to decades of political violence and war in Sri Lanka and makes constructive recommendations on a wide range of issues, including the need to credibly investigate widespread allegations of extrajudicial killings; enforced disappearances; intentional targeting of civilians and noncombatants; demilitarizing the north and the country as a whole; reaching a political settlement with minority communities on

the meaningful decentralization of power; and promoting and protecting the right to freedom of expression for all through the enactment of a right to information law and additional rule of law reforms;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka developed the National Plan of Action to implement the recommendations of the LLRC and has made significant progress within limited time in the implementation of the National Plan of Action, notably in the areas of demining, rehabilitation of ex-combatants, resettlement of displaced persons, improvements of infrastructure and social services in the North and East, as well as investigations into complaints regarding persons who have disappeared during the war;

Whereas there have been reports of attacks on places of worship and restrictions on the media in several places in Sri Lanka;

Whereas the Government of Sri Lanka expressed its commitment to address the needs of all ethnic groups and has recognized the necessity of a political settlement and reconciliation for a peaceful and just society, which is a long-term process that will need to be driven by the people of Sri Lanka themselves;

Whereas the September 21, 2013, elections in Sri Lanka for the Northern, Central, and North Western Provincial Councils were an important step in fulfilling this commitment;

Whereas these elections were made possible through a sustained effort by the Government of Sri Lanka to restore infrastructure in the North and put in place a system for the conduct of the elections;

Whereas the elections allowed the people of the North of Sri Lanka to exercise their political rights that had been withheld from them for more than 20 years by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and resulted in a clear victory for the provincial wing of the Tamil National Alliance;

Whereas Sri Lanka is enjoying rapid economic growth as an important hub for shipping transport, technology, and tourism in the South Asia region;

Whereas Sri Lanka is of great strategic importance to the United States, due to its location, deep-water ports, and proximity to the world's busiest shipping lanes, an importance noticed and pursued by other significant powers; and

Whereas Sri Lanka seeks to be a key United States partner in the fight against terrorism and Indian Ocean piracy: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) calls upon the President to develop a comprehensive and well balanced policy towards Sri Lanka that reflects United States interests, including respect for human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, as well as economic and security interests;

(2) calls on the United States Government and the international community to assist the Government of Sri Lanka, with due regard to its sovereignty, stability, and security, in establishing domestic mechanisms to deal with any grievances arising from actions committed by both sides during and after the civil war in Sri Lanka;

(3) encourages the Government of Sri Lanka to put in place a truth and reconciliation commission similar to the one adopted by South Africa to help heal the wounds of war, taking into account the unique characteristics of the conflict and its aftermath; and

(4) urges the Government of Sri Lanka to improve religious and media freedoms and to bring to justice those responsible for attacks

on journalists and newspaper offices as well as places of worship, regardless of religion.

SENATE RESOLUTION 365—DEPLORING THE VIOLENT REPRESSION OF PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATORS IN VENEZUELA, CALLING FOR FULL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS TAKING PLACE IN VENEZUELA, AND SUPPORTING THE RIGHT OF THE VENEZUELAN PEOPLE TO THE FREE AND PEACEFUL EXERCISE OF REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. CRUZ, and Mr. NELSON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 365

Whereas the Government of Venezuela's chronic mismanagement of its economy has produced inflation that exceeds 50 percent annually, currency shortages, economic distortions, and the routine absence of basic goods and foodstuffs;

Whereas the Government of Venezuela's failure to guarantee minimal standards of public security for its citizens has led the country to become one of the most violent in the world, with the per capita homicide rate in the city of Caracas exceeding 115 per 100,000 people;

Whereas the Government of Venezuela has taken continued steps to remove checks and balances on the executive, politicize the judiciary, undermine the independence of the legislature through use of executive decree powers, persecute and prosecute its political opponents, curtail freedom of the press, and limit the free expression of its citizens;

Whereas, on January 23, 2014, National Representative Maria Corina Machado and Mr. Leopoldo López, leader of the political party "Popular Will", among others, called on the Venezuelan people to gather in street assemblies and debate a popular, democratic and constitutional "way out" of Venezuela's crisis of governability;

Whereas, since February 4, 2014, the people of Venezuela—responding to ongoing economic hardship, high levels of crime and violence, and the lack of basic political rights and individual freedoms—have turned out in demonstrations in Caracas and throughout the country to protest the Government of Venezuela's inability to ensure the political and economic well-being of its citizens;

Whereas the government of Nicolas Maduro responded to the mass demonstrations by ordering the arrest without evidence of senior opposition leaders, including Mr. Leopoldo Lopez, Carlos Vecchio, and Antonio Rivero, and by violently repressing peaceful demonstrators with the help of the Venezuelan National Guard and groups of armed, government-affiliated civilians, known as "collectives";

Whereas, on February 18, 2014, opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez turned himself in to authorities in Venezuela, was arrested, and charged unjustly with criminal incitement, conspiracy, arson, and intent to damage property;

Whereas the Maduro government has sought to censor information about the demonstrations and the government's violent crackdown by blocking online images and threatening the few remaining uncensored domestic media outlets;

Whereas President Maduro threatened to expel the United States news network CNN from Venezuela and has taken off the air the Colombian news channel NTN 24, which transmits in Venezuela, after news outlets reported on the nation-wide protests;

Whereas the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights released a statement on February 14, 2014, which "expresses its concern over the serious incidents of violence that have taken place in the context of protest demonstrations in Venezuela, as well as other complaints concerning acts of censorship against media outlets, attacks on organizations that defend human rights, and acts of alleged political persecution"; and

Whereas, as of February 27, 2014, there have been 13 people killed, over 100 injured, and dozens have been unjustly detained due to pro-democracy demonstrations throughout Venezuela: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) reaffirms United States support for the people of Venezuela in their pursuit of the free exercise of representative democracy as guaranteed by the Venezuelan constitution and defined under the Inter-American Democratic Charter of the Organization of American States;

(2) deplores the use of excessive and unlawful force against peaceful demonstrators in Venezuela and the inexcusable use of violence and politically-motivated criminal charges to intimidate the country's political opposition;

(3) calls on the Government of Venezuela to disarm and dismantle the system of "colectivos" or "collectives" and any other government-affiliated or supported militias or vigilante groups;

(4) calls on the Government of Venezuela to allow an impartial, third-party investigation into the excessive and unlawful force against peaceful demonstrations on multiple occasions since February 4th, 2014;

(5) urges the President to immediately impose targeted sanctions, including visa bans and asset freezes, against individuals planning, facilitating, or perpetrating gross human rights violations against peaceful demonstrators, journalists, and other members of civil society in Venezuela; and

(6) calls for the United States Government to work with other countries in the hemisphere to actively encourage a process of dialogue between the Government of Venezuela and the political opposition through the good offices of the Organization of American States so that the voices of all Venezuelans can be taken into account through their country's constitutional institutions as well as free and fair elections.

SENATE RESOLUTION 366—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. ISAKSON, and Mr. BROWN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 366

Whereas multiple sclerosis (MS) can impact people of all ages, races, and ethnicities;

Whereas MS is 2 to 3 times more common in women than in men;

Whereas while MS is not directly inherited, studies show there are genetic and,

probably, environmental, ethnic, and geographic factors that make certain individuals more susceptible to the disease;

Whereas worldwide, there are approximately 2,300,000 people who have been diagnosed with MS;

Whereas MS is typically diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50, however, it is estimated that between 8,000 and 10,000 children and adolescents in the United States are living with MS;

Whereas MS is an unpredictable neurological disease that interrupts the flow of information within the brain and between the brain and the rest of the body;

Whereas symptoms of MS range from numbness and tingling in the extremities to blindness and paralysis, and the progress, severity, and specific symptoms of MS in any affected individual cannot yet be predicted;

Whereas there is no single laboratory test available that provides a definitive diagnosis for MS;

Whereas the exact cause of MS is still unknown, and there is no cure;

Whereas the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition, a national network of independent organizations dedicated to enhancing quality of life for all those affected by MS, recognizes and supports Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week during March of every year;

Whereas the mission of the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition is to enhance cooperation among organizations to provide greater benefits to individuals and families affected by MS;

Whereas the goals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week are to invite people to join the movement to end MS, encourage people to demonstrate their commitment to moving toward a world free from MS, and acknowledge those who have dedicated their time and talent to advancing MS research and programs; and

Whereas this year Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week is being recognized during the week of March 3, 2014, through March 9, 2014: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(2) supports promoting awareness of individuals who are affected by multiple sclerosis;

(3) encourages States, localities, and the territories and possessions of the United States to support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week by issuing proclamations designating March 3, 2014, through March 9, 2014, as Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(4) commends the efforts of States, localities, and the territories and possessions of the United States to support the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week;

(5) encourages media organizations to participate in Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week by educating the public about multiple sclerosis;

(6) recognizes and reaffirms the commitment of the United States to ending multiple sclerosis by supporting multiple sclerosis research and education programs;

(7) supports all individuals in the United States living with multiple sclerosis;

(8) expresses gratitude to the family and friends of individuals living with multiple sclerosis, who are a source of love and encouragement to those individuals; and

(9) salutes the health care professionals and medical researchers who—

(A) provide assistance to individuals affected by multiple sclerosis; and

(B) continue to work towards finding new ways to stop the progression of the disease,

treat its symptoms, and end multiple sclerosis forever.

SENATE RESOLUTION 367—DESIGNATING MARCH 3, 2014, AS “READ ACROSS AMERICA DAY”

Mr. REED (for himself and Ms. COLLINS) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 367

Whereas reading is a basic requirement for quality education and professional success, and is a source of pleasure throughout life;

Whereas the people of the United States must be able to read if the United States is to remain competitive in the global economy;

Whereas Congress has placed great emphasis on reading intervention and providing additional resources for reading assistance, including through the programs authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) and through annual appropriations for library and literacy programs; and

Whereas more than 50 national organizations concerned about reading and education have joined with the National Education Association to designate March 3, the day after the anniversary of the birth of Theodor Geisel (also known as “Dr. Seuss”), as a day to celebrate reading: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 3, 2014, as “Read Across America Day”;

(2) honors Theodor Geisel (also known as “Dr. Seuss”) for his success in encouraging children to discover the joy of reading;

(3) honors the 17th anniversary of Read Across America Day;

(4) encourages parents to read with their children for at least 30 minutes on Read Across America Day in honor of the commitment of the Senate to building a country of readers; and

(5) encourages the people of the United States to observe Read Across America Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

SENATE RESOLUTION 368—DESIGNATING FEBRUARY 28, 2014, AS “RARE DISEASE DAY”

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. BARASSO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. COONS, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. PRYOR, and Ms. WARREN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 368

Whereas a rare disease or disorder is one that affects a small number of patients—in the United States, typically less than 200,000 individuals annually;

Whereas as of the date of approval of this resolution, nearly 7,000 rare diseases affect approximately 30,000,000 people in the United States and their families;

Whereas children with rare genetic diseases account for more than half of the population affected by rare diseases in the United States;

Whereas many rare diseases are serious, life-threatening, and lack an effective treatment;

Whereas great strides have been made in research and treatment for rare diseases as a result of the Orphan Drug Act (Public Law 97-414);

Whereas the Food and Drug Administration has made great strides in involving the patient in the drug review process as part of its Patient-Focused Drug Development program, an initiative that originated in the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act (Public Law 112-144);

Whereas a third of all treatments approved by the Food and Drug Administration in 2013 were orphan products intended to treat rare diseases;

Whereas lack of access to effective treatments and difficulty in obtaining reimbursement for life-altering, and even life-saving, treatments still exist and remain significant challenges for the rare disease community and their families;

Whereas rare diseases and conditions include epidermolysis bullosa, progeria, sickle cell anemia, spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD), Tay-Sachs, cystic fibrosis, pulmonary fibrosis, many childhood cancers, and fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva;

Whereas people with rare diseases experience challenges that include difficulty in obtaining accurate diagnoses, limited treatment options, and difficulty finding physicians or treatment centers with expertise in their diseases;

Whereas the rare disease community made great strides in 2013, including the passage of the National Pediatric Research Network Act (Public Law 113-55), which calls special attention to rare diseases and directs the National Institutes of Health to facilitate greater collaboration among researchers;

Whereas both the Food and Drug Administration and the National Institutes of Health have established special offices to advocate for rare disease research and treatments;

Whereas the National Organization for Rare Disorders, an organization established in 1983 to provide services to and advocate on behalf of patients with rare diseases, remains a critical public voice for people with rare diseases;

Whereas 2013 marked the 30th anniversary of the Orphan Drug Act and the National Organization for Rare Disorders;

Whereas the National Organization for Rare Disorders sponsors Rare Disease Day in the United States to increase public awareness of rare diseases;

Whereas Rare Disease Day is observed each year on the last day of February;

Whereas Rare Disease Day is a global event, first observed in the United States on February 28, 2009, and observed in 60 countries in 2013; and

Whereas Rare Disease Day is expected to be observed globally for years to come, providing hope and information for rare disease patients around the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates February 28, 2014, as “Rare Disease Day”;

(2) recognizes the importance of improving awareness and encouraging accurate and early diagnosis of rare diseases and disorders; and

(3) supports a national and global commitment to improving access to, and developing new treatments, diagnostics, and cures for rare diseases and disorders.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 33—CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENACTMENT OF THE SMITH-LEVER ACT, WHICH ESTABLISHED THE NATIONWIDE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM

Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. COCHRAN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry:

S. CON. RES. 33

Whereas May 8, 2014, marks the centennial of the enactment of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 341 et seq.), which established the Cooperative Extension System, the nationwide transformative education system operating through land-grant colleges and universities (as defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103)) in partnership with Federal, State, and local governments;

Whereas Senator Michael Hoke Smith of Georgia and Representative Asbury Francis Lever of South Carolina authored the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 341 et seq.) to bring the research-based knowledge of land-grant colleges and universities to individuals where the individuals live and work;

Whereas the first section of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 341) states that the purpose of the Act is “to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture, uses of solar energy with respect to agriculture, home economics, and rural energy, and to encourage the application of the same” through extension work carried out by the land-grant colleges and universities;

Whereas cooperative extension work is a critical component of the three-part mission of the land-grant colleges and universities to work collaboratively with research institutions, in particular the State agriculture experiment stations and 106 colleges and universities, in each State of the United States, the District of Columbia, and each territory or possession of the United States, including—

(1) part B institutions (as defined in section 322 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1061));

(2) 1994 Institutions (as defined in section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law 103-382)); and

(3) Hispanic-serving institutions (as defined in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103));

Whereas research-based education provided through the Cooperative Extension System to farmers and ranchers helped establish the United States as a leading agricultural-producing nation in the world;

Whereas, in 1924, the clover emblem was adopted by the Department of Agriculture to represent the 4-H Clubs through which the nationwide youth development program of the Cooperative Extension System is carried out;

Whereas, since 1924, 4-H Clubs have prepared millions of youth for responsible adulthood;

Whereas cooperative extension activities—

(1) prepare individuals for healthy, productive lives via sustained education, such as the nutrition education program established under section 1425 of the National Agricultural

Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3175);

(2) help to break the cycle of poverty; and

(3) reduce the expenditures of Federal and State assistance programs;

Whereas educational activities carried out under the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 341 et seq.) provide rapid response to disasters and emergencies, such as through the Extension Disaster Education Network and other similar efforts, by providing real-time alerts and resources so that educators can respond to urgent needs resulting from hurricanes, floods, oil spills, fire, drought, pest outbreaks, and infectious diseases affecting humans, livestock, and crops;

Whereas cooperative extension activities translate science-based research for practical application through local and online learning networks in which educators are uniquely available to identify emerging research questions, connect with land-grant college or university faculty to find answers, and encourage the application of the findings of that research to improve economic and social conditions;

Whereas cooperative extension activities engage with rural and urban learners through practical, community-based, and online approaches resulting in the acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and motivation necessary to strengthen the profitability of animal and plant production systems, protect natural resources, help individuals make healthy lifestyle choices, ensure a safe and abundant food supply, encourage community vitality, and grow the next generation of leaders; and

Whereas many States are celebrating the centennial of the enactment of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 341 et seq.) with resolutions and proclamations, and many land-grant colleges and universities are also commemorating the enactment of that historic Act: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes the significance of the Smith-Lever Act (7 U.S.C. 341 et seq.) to the establishment of the Cooperative Extension System;

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe and celebrate the centennial with a focus on launching an innovative and sustainable future for the Cooperative Extension System;

(3) honors the university faculty and local educators who dedicate careers to providing trusted educational programs to help people, families, youth, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills, and build a better future;

(4) thanks the volunteers who provide thousands of hours to promote excellence for 4-H Clubs, the Master Gardeners program, the Family and Consumer Sciences program, and other programs of the Cooperative Extension System in their communities;

(5) encourages continued collaboration and cooperation among Federal, State, and local governments to ensure the sustainability of the Cooperative Extension System as the premiere nonformal educational network in the United States; and

(6) celebrates millions of youth, adults, families, farmers, ranchers, community leaders, and others who engage in cooperative extension learning opportunities designed to extend knowledge and change lives.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2780. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2781. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2782. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2783. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2784. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mrs. BOXER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2785. Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. JOHANNIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2786. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2787. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2788. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2789. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2790. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2791. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2792. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2793. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2794. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2795. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2796. Mr. BENNET (for himself and Mr. JOHANNIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2797. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2798. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MURPHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2799. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2800. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2801. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2802. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2803. Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2804. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2780. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 207, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

SEC. 446. PILOT PROGRAM ON TRAINING SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY VETERANS ON FEDERAL CONTRACTING.

(a) **PILOT PROGRAM REQUIRED.**—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall commence a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing training to eligible small businesses on contracting with the Federal Government for the procurement of property or services.

(b) **ELIGIBLE SMALL BUSINESS.**—For purposes of this section, an eligible small business is a small business concern owned and controlled by veterans that—

(1) has operated for not fewer than two years;

(2) has not fewer than three full-time equivalent employees; and

(3) has experience providing a property or service to the Federal Government as a contractor or subcontractor.

(c) **DURATION.**—The pilot program required by subsection (a) shall be carried out during the five-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the pilot program.

(d) **GRANTS REQUIRED.**—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program required by subsection (a) through the award of one or more grants to one or more nonprofit organizations for the provision of instruction by professional service experts, government officials, and representatives of government agencies to eligible small businesses on contracting described in such subsection.

(e) **MATCHING REQUIREMENT.**—The Secretary may not make a grant to a nonprofit organization under this section unless the nonprofit organization agrees that, with respect to the costs to be incurred by the nonprofit organization in carrying out training for which the grant was awarded, the nonprofit organization will make available (directly or through donations from public or

private entities) non-Federal contributions in an amount that is equal to or great than the amount of the grant awarded.

(f) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$5,000,000 for fiscal year 2014 and each fiscal year thereafter through fiscal year 2018.

(g) **SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN OWNED AND CONTROLLED BY VETERANS DEFINED.**—In this section, the term “small business concern owned and controlled by veterans” has the meaning given such term in section 8127 of title 38, United States Code.

SA 2781. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 291, after line 21, add the following:

**Subtitle E—Disability Compensation
Generally**

SEC. 641. MAKING PERMANENT SPECIAL EFFECTIVE DATE FOR AWARDS OF DISABILITY COMPENSATION FOR VETERANS WHO SUBMIT APPLICATIONS FOR ORIGINAL CLAIMS THAT ARE FULLY DEVELOPED.

Section 5110(b)(2)(C) is amended by striking “and shall not apply with respect to claims filed after the date that is three years after the date of the enactment of such Act”.

SEC. 642. PROVISIONAL BENEFITS AWARDED FOR FULLY DEVELOPED CLAIMS PENDING FOR MORE THAN 180 DAYS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Chapter 53 is amended by adding at the end the following:

“§ 5319A. Provisional benefits awarded for fully developed claims pending for extended period

“(a) **PROVISIONAL AWARDS REQUIRED.**—For each application for disability compensation that is filed for an individual with the Secretary, that sets forth an original claim that is fully-developed (as determined by the Secretary) as of the date of submittal, and for which the Secretary has not made a decision, beginning on the date that is 180 days after the date on which such application is filed with the Secretary, the Secretary shall award the individual a provisional benefit under this section.

“(b) **PROVISIONAL AWARDS ESTABLISHED.**—A provisional benefit awarded pursuant to subsection (a) for a claim for disability compensation shall be for such monthly amount as the Secretary shall establish for each classification of disability claimed as the Secretary shall establish.

“(c) **RECOVERY.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may recover a payment of a provisional benefit awarded under this section for an application for disability compensation only—

“(1) in a case in which the Secretary awards the disability compensation for which the individual filed the application and the Secretary may only recover such provisional benefit by subtracting it from payments made for the disability compensation awarded; or

“(2) in a case in which the Secretary determines not to award the disability compensation for which the individual filed the application and the Secretary determines that the application was the subject of intentional fraud, misrepresentation, or bad faith on behalf of the individual.”.

(b) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 53 is

amended by inserting after the item relating to section 5319 the following new item:

“5319A. Provisional benefits awarded for fully developed claims pending for extended period.”.

SA 2782. Mr. CARDIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 33, after line 18, add the following:

SEC. 207. ONE-YEAR EXTENSION OF VETERANS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

Section 3692 is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting “31,” after “30,”; and

(B) by striking “and the Persian Gulf War” and inserting “the Persian Gulf War, and the post-9/11 operations in Iraq and Afghanistan”;

(2) in subsection (b), by inserting “31,” after “30,”; and

(3) in subsection (c), by striking “December 31, 2014” and inserting “December 31, 2015”.

SA 2783. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 367, after line 14, add the following:

SEC. 918. TRAUMATIC SERVICEMEMBERS' GROUP LIFE INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR ADVERSE REACTIONS TO VACCINATIONS ADMINISTERED BY DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1980A(b)(3) is amended—

(1) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting “(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Secretary”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(B) The Secretary shall not exclude under subparagraph (A) a qualifying loss experienced by a member as a result of an adverse reaction to a vaccination administered by the Department of Defense, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, for the purposes of military accession, training, or deployment.”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect as if included in the provisions of and amendments made by section 1032 of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005 (Public Law 109-13; 119 Stat. 257).

SA 2784. Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself and Mrs. BOXER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 367, after line 14, add the following:

SEC. 918. AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO ENHANCED-USE LEASES FOR CERTAIN BUILDINGS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AT THE WEST LOS ANGELES MEDICAL CENTER, CALIFORNIA.

(a) AUTHORITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided by subsection (b), in accordance with subchapter V of chapter 81 of title 38, United States Code, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may enter into an enhanced-use lease for a covered building for the provision of long-term therapeutic housing for covered veterans.

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The authority provided by paragraph (1) is a specific authorization for purposes of section 8162(c) of such title.

(b) PROHIBITION ON DISPOSITION OF LEASED PROPERTY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with section 224(a) of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008 (division I of Public Law 110-161; 121 Stat. 2272), section 8164 of title 38, United States Code, shall not apply to a covered building.

(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the prohibition under such section 224(a) on the disposal of a covered building.

(c) QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW AND REPORT.—

(1) REVIEW REQUIRED.—Not less than once during each five-year period in which an enhanced-use lease is in effect under subsection (a), the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall conduct a review of such lease, including by assessing each party that is entered into such lease and determining whether the terms of the lease are being upheld.

(2) REPORT REQUIRED.—During each five-year period in which an enhanced-use lease is in effect under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the review conducted under paragraph (1) with respect to such lease.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED BUILDING.—The term “covered building” means any of the following buildings located at the West Los Angeles Medical Center, California:

(A) Building 205.

(B) Building 208.

(2) COVERED VETERAN.—The term “covered veteran” means a veteran who is—

(A) homeless; and

(B) with respect to housing, requires assisted living or other similar form of care.

(3) ENHANCED-USE LEASE.—The term “enhanced-use lease” has the meaning given that term in section 8161 of title 38, United States Code.

(4) LONG-TERM THERAPEUTIC HOUSING.—The term “long-term therapeutic housing” means supportive housing consisting of clinically supportive living facilities that provide housing to a homeless veteran for a period that is sufficient for the veteran to achieve stability and require a lower level of care than is provided at such facilities.

SA 2785. Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. JOHANNIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title IX, add the following:

SEC. 918. PILOT PROGRAM TO REHABILITATE AND MODIFY HOMES OF DISABLED AND LOW-INCOME VETERANS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) DISABLED.—The term “disabled” means an individual with a disability, as defined by section 12102 of title 42, United States Code.

(2) ELIGIBLE VETERAN.—The term “eligible veteran” means a disabled or low-income veteran.

(3) ENERGY EFFICIENT FEATURES OR EQUIPMENT.—The term “energy efficient features or equipment” means features of, or equipment in, a primary residence that help reduce the amount of electricity used to heat, cool, or ventilate such residence, including insulation, weatherstripping, air sealing, heating system repairs, duct sealing, or other measures.

(4) LOW-INCOME VETERAN.—The term “low-income veteran” means a veteran whose income does not exceed 80 percent of the median income for an area, as determined by the Secretary.

(5) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION.—The term “nonprofit organization” means an organization that is—

(A) described in section 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

(B) exempt from tax under section 501(a) of such Code.

(6) PRIMARY RESIDENCE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “primary residence” means a single family house, a duplex, or a unit within a multiple-dwelling structure that is the principal dwelling of an eligible veteran and is owned by such veteran or a family member of such veteran.

(B) FAMILY MEMBER DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term “family member” includes—

(i) a spouse, child, grandchild, parent, or sibling;

(ii) a spouse of such a child, grandchild, parent, or sibling; or

(iii) any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with a veteran is the equivalent of a family relationship.

(7) QUALIFIED ORGANIZATION.—The term “qualified organization” means a nonprofit organization that provides nationwide or statewide programs that primarily serve veterans or low-income individuals.

(8) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

(9) VETERAN.—The term “veteran” has the meaning given the term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

(10) VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION.—The term “veterans service organization” means any organization recognized by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the representation of veterans under section 5902 of title 38, United States Code.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF A PILOT PROGRAM.—

(1) GRANT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a pilot program to award grants to qualified organizations to rehabilitate and modify the primary residence of eligible veterans.

(B) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall work in conjunction with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish and oversee the pilot program and to ensure that such program meets the needs of eligible veterans.

(C) MAXIMUM GRANT.—A grant award under the pilot program to any one qualified organization shall not exceed \$1,000,000 in any one fiscal year, and such an award shall remain available until expended by such organization.

(2) APPLICATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Each qualified organization that desires a grant under the pilot program shall submit an application to the Sec-

retary at such time, in such manner, and, in addition to the information required under subparagraph (B), accompanied by such information as the Secretary may reasonably require.

(B) CONTENTS.—Each application submitted under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) a plan of action detailing outreach initiatives;

(ii) the approximate number of veterans the qualified organization intends to serve using grant funds;

(iii) a description of the type of work that will be conducted, such as interior home modifications, energy efficiency improvements, and other similar categories of work; and

(iv) a plan for working with the Department of Veterans Affairs and veterans service organizations to identify veterans who are not eligible for programs under chapter 21 of title 38, United States Code, and meet their needs.

(C) PREFERENCES.—In awarding grants under the pilot program, the Secretary shall give preference to a qualified organization—

(i) with experience in providing housing rehabilitation and modification services for disabled veterans; or

(ii) that proposes to provide housing rehabilitation and modification services for eligible veterans who live in rural, including tribal, areas (the Secretary, through regulations, shall define the term “rural areas”).

(3) CRITERIA.—In order to receive a grant award under the pilot program, a qualified organization shall meet the following criteria:

(A) Demonstrate expertise in providing housing rehabilitation and modification services for disabled or low-income individuals for the purpose of making the homes of such individuals accessible, functional, and safe for such individuals.

(B) Have established outreach initiatives that—

(i) would engage eligible veterans and veterans service organizations in projects utilizing grant funds under the pilot program;

(ii) ensure veterans who are disabled receive preference in selection for assistance under this program; and

(iii) identify eligible veterans and their families and enlist veterans involved in skilled trades, such as carpentry, roofing, plumbing, or HVAC work.

(C) Have an established nationwide or statewide network of affiliates that are—

(i) nonprofit organizations; and

(ii) able to provide housing rehabilitation and modification services for eligible veterans.

(D) Have experience in successfully carrying out the accountability and reporting requirements involved in the proper administration of grant funds, including funds provided by private entities or Federal, State, or local government entities.

(4) USE OF FUNDS.—A grant award under the pilot program shall be used—

(A) to modify and rehabilitate the primary residence of an eligible veteran, and may include—

(i) installing wheelchair ramps, widening exterior and interior doors, reconfiguring and re-equipping bathrooms (which includes installing new fixtures and grab bars), removing doorway thresholds, installing special lighting, adding additional electrical outlets and electrical service, and installing appropriate floor coverings to—

(I) accommodate the functional limitations that result from having a disability; or

(II) if such residence does not have modifications necessary to reduce the chances that an elderly, but not disabled person, will fall in their home, reduce the risks of such an elderly person from falling;

(i) rehabilitating such residence that is in a state of interior or exterior disrepair; and

(iii) installing energy efficient features or equipment if—

(I) an eligible veteran's monthly utility costs for such residence is more than 5 percent of such veteran's monthly income; and

(II) an energy audit of such residence indicates that the installation of energy efficient features or equipment will reduce such costs by 10 percent or more; and

(B) in connection with modification and rehabilitation services provided under the pilot program, to provide technical, administrative, and training support to an affiliate of a qualified organization receiving a grant under such pilot program.

(5) **OVERSIGHT.**—The Secretary shall direct the oversight of the grant funds for the pilot program so that such funds are used efficiently until expended to fulfill the purpose of addressing the adaptive housing needs of eligible veterans.

(6) **MATCHING FUNDS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—A qualified organization receiving a grant under the pilot program shall contribute towards the housing modification and rehabilitation services provided to eligible veterans an amount equal to not less than 50 percent of the grant award received by such organization.

(B) **IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS.**—In order to meet the requirement under subparagraph (A), such organization may arrange for in-kind contributions.

(7) **LIMITATION COST TO THE VETERANS.**—A qualified organization receiving a grant under the pilot program shall modify or rehabilitate the primary residence of an eligible veteran at no cost to such veteran (including application fees) or at a cost such that such veteran pays no more than 30 percent of his or her income in housing costs during any month.

(8) **REPORTS.**—

(A) **ANNUAL REPORT.**—The Secretary shall submit to Congress, on an annual basis, a report that provides, with respect to the year for which such report is written—

(i) the number of eligible veterans provided assistance under the pilot program;

(ii) the socioeconomic characteristics of such veterans, including their gender, age, race, and ethnicity;

(iii) the total number, types, and locations of entities contracted under such program to administer the grant funding;

(iv) the amount of matching funds and in-kind contributions raised with each grant;

(v) a description of the housing rehabilitation and modification services provided, costs saved, and actions taken under such program;

(vi) a description of the outreach initiatives implemented by the Secretary to educate the general public and eligible entities about such program;

(vii) a description of the outreach initiatives instituted by grant recipients to engage eligible veterans and veteran service organizations in projects utilizing grant funds under such program;

(viii) a description of the outreach initiatives instituted by grant recipients to identify eligible veterans and their families; and

(ix) any other information that the Secretary considers relevant in assessing such program.

(B) **FINAL REPORT.**—Not later than 6 months after the completion of the pilot pro-

gram, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that provides such information that the Secretary considers relevant in assessing the pilot program.

(C) **INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT.**—Not later than March 31, 2019, the Inspector General of the Department of Housing and Urban Development shall submit to the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report containing a review of—

(i) the use of appropriated funds by the Secretary and by grantees under the pilot program; and

(ii) oversight and accountability of grantees under the pilot program.

(9) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated for carrying out this section \$4,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2019.

SA 2786. Mr. WHITEHOUSE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 310, strike line 21 and all that follows through page 311, line 13, and insert the following:

(b) **MAKING PERMANENT EXTENDED PERIOD OF PROTECTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF UNIFORMED SERVICES RELATING TO MORTGAGES, MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE, AND EVICTION.**—Section 710(d) of the Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-154; 126 Stat. 1208) is amended by striking paragraphs (1) and (3).

SA 2787. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 76, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

SEC. 330. COMPTROLLER GENERAL CERTIFICATION REQUIRED BEFORE CLOSURE OF MEDICAL CENTERS OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may not close any medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs unless and until the Comptroller General of the United States makes the certification described in subsection (b) with respect to such medical center and submits such certification to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(b) **CERTIFICATION.**—The certification described in this subsection is a certification that the Comptroller General has determined, pursuant to subsection (c), that the effect of the closure of the medical center described in subsection (a) on the provision of care to veterans in the catchment area of such medical center does not outweigh the budget savings to the Department resulting from such closure.

(c) **DETERMINATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—With respect to a proposed closure of a medical center of the Department, the Comptroller General shall determine whether the effect of such closure on the provision of care to veterans in the catchment area of such medical center out-

weighs the budget savings to the Department resulting from such closure.

(2) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—In making the determination described in paragraph (1), the Comptroller General shall consider the potential effect of such closure on the following:

(A) The quality of care provided to veterans in the catchment area of such medical center.

(B) The access of such veterans to specialized health care services.

(C) The access of such veterans to residential rehabilitation treatment programs of the Department and other inpatient care.

(D) Distances required to be traveled by such veterans to receive inpatient and outpatient care.

(E) The access of such veterans that are members of Indian tribes (as that term is defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b)) to medical care.

SA 2788. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 38, after line 22, add the following:

(d) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—This section and the amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs submits to Congress a certification that—

(1) during the 180-day period ending on the date on which the Secretary submits such certification to Congress, no individual who has filed a claim with the Secretary for compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code—

(A) is currently waiting for an adjudication of such claim; and

(B) has been waiting for an adjudication of such claim for a period of 125 days or more; and

(2) the Secretary has carried out the major medical facility leases described in section 381.

SA 2789. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 161, after line 25, insert the following:

SEC. 407. GRANTS FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PERSONNEL TRAINING FOR VETERANS.

Section 330J(c) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254c-15(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (7), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (8), by striking the period and inserting “; or”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(9) furnish coursework and training to veterans to enable such veterans to satisfy emergency medical services personnel certification requirements, as determined by the appropriate State regulatory entity, except that in providing such coursework and training, such entity shall take into account previous medical coursework and training received when such veterans were members of the Armed Forces on active duty.”.

SA 2790. Ms. KLOBUCHAR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 76, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

SEC. 330. DESIGNATION OF MEDICAL FACILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AS HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS.

(a) DESIGNATION AS HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREA.—Section 332(a)(1) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254e(a)(1)) is amended in the second sentence by inserting “and medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs (including State homes, as defined in section 101(19) of title 38, United States Code)” after “(42 U.S.C. 1395x(aa)).”

(b) CONCURRENT BENEFIT.—

(1) SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.—Section 338A(b) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254l(b)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (3), by striking “and”;

(B) in paragraph (4), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) not be participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Professionals Educational Assistance Program under chapter 76 of title 38, United States Code.”

(2) DEBT REDUCTION PROGRAM.—Section 338B(b) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254l-1(b)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking “and”;

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) not be participating in the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Professionals Educational Assistance Program under chapter 76 of title 38, United States Code.”

(c) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the National Health Service Corps Program under subpart II of part D of title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254d et seq.), the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall consult with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with respect to health professional shortage areas that are medical facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs (including State homes, as defined in section 101(19) of title 38, United States Code).

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2791. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 76, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

SEC. 329A. REPORT ON ABILITY OF VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION TO MEET PATIENT ACCESS STANDARDS FOR NORTHERN MARKET OF NEW ENGLAND HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.

Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a re-

port on the findings of the Secretary with respect to the Secretary's review of the ability of the Veterans Health Administration to meet patient access standards for the northern market of the Department of Veterans Affairs New England Health Care System, particularly with respect to Coos County, New Hampshire.

SA 2792. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 291, after line 21, add the following:

SEC. 633. MINIMUM NUMBER OF DECISION REVIEW OFFICERS STATIONED AT REGIONAL OFFICES.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall ensure that at least two decision review officers of the Department of Veterans Affairs are stationed at each regional office of the Veterans Benefits Administration.

SEC. 634. EXPANSION OF PROGRAM OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR SUPPORT OF PROGRAMS THAT FURNISH LEGAL ASSISTANCE.

The Dire Emergency Supplemental Appropriations and Transfers for Relief From the Effects of Natural Disasters, for Other Urgent Needs, and for Incremental Cost of “Operation Desert Shield/Dessert Storm” Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-229) is amended under the heading “SALARIES AND EXPENSES” under the heading “COURT OF VETERANS APPEALS” under the heading “INDEPENDENT AGENCIES” by inserting “or in connection with decisions to which section 7104 of such title may apply, or with other proceedings of the Board of Veterans' Appeals,” after “proceedings in the Court.”

SEC. 635. REPORT ON INCREASING NUMBER OF DECISION REVIEW OFFICERS.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the feasibility and advisability of increasing the number of decision review officers employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs to a number that is equal to or greater than the number that is 25 percent bigger than the number of decision review officers that were employed by the Department on the day before the date of the enactment of this Act. Such report shall include an assessment of the expected cost and effect of such increase on the processing of appeals of decisions of the Secretary with respect to claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

SEC. 636. REPORT ON INCREASING NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS.

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report on the feasibility and advisability of increasing the number of members of the Board of Veterans' Appeals to 75. Such report shall include an assessment of the expected cost and effect of such expansion on the processing of appeals of decisions of the Secretary with respect to claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary.

SA 2793. Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Ms. AYOTTE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to

veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 76, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

SEC. 330. AVAILABILITY OF FULL-SERVICE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTERS IN CERTAIN STATES OR PROVISION OF COMPARABLE SERVICES THROUGH CONTRACT WITH OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS IN THE STATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 17 is amended by inserting after section 1706 the following new section:

“§ 1706A. Management of health care: access to full-service Department medical centers in certain States or comparable services through contract

“(a) REQUIREMENT.—With respect to each of the 48 contiguous States, the Secretary shall ensure that veterans in a State who are eligible for hospital care and medical services under section 1710 of this title have access—

“(1) to at least one full-service Department medical center in such State; or

“(2) to hospital care and medical services comparable to the services typically provided by full-service Department medical centers through contract with other health care providers in such State.

“(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subsection (a) shall be construed to limit the ability of the Secretary to provide enhanced care to an eligible veteran who resides in one State in a Department medical center in another State.

“(c) LIMITATION ON REQUIREMENT.—Subsection (a) shall be effective in any fiscal year only to the extent and in the amount provided in advance in appropriations Acts.

“(d) FULL-SERVICE DEPARTMENT MEDICAL CENTER DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘full-service Department medical center’ means a facility of the Department that provides medical services, including hospital care, emergency medical services, and surgical care rated by the Secretary as having a surgical complexity level of standard.”

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 1706 the following new item:

“1706A. Management of health care: access to full-service Department medical centers in certain States or comparable services through contract.”

(c) REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit to Congress a report describing the extent to which the Secretary has complied with the requirement imposed by section 1706A of title 38, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), including the effect of compliance with such requirement on improving the quality and standards of care provided to veterans.

SA 2794. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 416. EMPLOYEE PAYROLL TAX HOLIDAY FOR NEWLY HIRED VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (d) of section 3111 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(d) SPECIAL EXEMPTION FOR ELIGIBLE VETERANS HIRED DURING CERTAIN CALENDAR QUARTERS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to 50 percent of the wages paid by the employer with respect to employment during the holiday period of any eligible veteran for services performed—

“(A) in a trade or business of the employer, or

“(B) in the case of an employer exempt from tax under section 501(a), in furtherance of the activities related to the purpose or function constituting the basis of the employer's exemption under such section.

“(2) HOLIDAY PERIOD.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘holiday period’ means the period of 4 consecutive calendar quarters beginning with the first day of the first calendar quarter beginning after the date of the enactment of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014 .

“(3) ELIGIBLE VETERAN.—For purposes of this subsection—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘eligible veteran’ means a veteran who—

“(i) begins work for the employer during the holiday period,

“(ii) was discharged or released from the Armed Forces of the United States under conditions other than dishonorable, and

“(iii) is not an individual described in section 51(i)(1) (applied by substituting ‘employer’ for ‘taxpayer’ each place it appears).

“(B) VETERAN.—The term ‘veteran’ means any individual who—

“(i) has served on active duty (other than active duty for training) in the Armed Forces of the United States for a period of more than 180 days, or has been discharged or released from active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States for a service-connected disability (within the meaning of section 101 of title 38, United States Code),

“(ii) has not served on extended active duty (as such term is used in section 51(d)(3)(B)) in the Armed Forces of the United States on any day during the 60-day period ending on the hiring date, and

“(iii) provides to the employer a copy of the individual's DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, that includes the nature and type of discharge.

“(4) ELECTION.—An employer may elect not to have this subsection apply. Such election shall be made in such manner as the Secretary may require.

“(5) COORDINATION WITH WORK OPPORTUNITY CREDIT.—For coordination with the work opportunity credit, see section 51(3)(D).”.

(b) COORDINATION WITH WORK OPPORTUNITY CREDIT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (3) of section 51 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) DENIAL OF CREDIT FOR VETERANS SUBJECT TO 50 PERCENT PAYROLL TAX HOLIDAY.—If section 311(d)(1) (as amended by the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014) applies to any wages paid by an employer, the term ‘qualified veteran’ does not include any individual who begins work for the employer during the holiday period (as defined in section 311(d)(2)) unless the employer makes an election not to have section 311(d) apply.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (c) of section 51 of such Code is amended by striking paragraph (5).

At the end of subtitle E of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 446. PERMANENT SBA EXPRESS LOAN GUARANTEE FEE WAIVER FOR VETERANS.

Section 7(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (18)(A), by striking “With respect” and inserting “Except as provided in paragraph (31), with respect”; and

(2) in paragraph (31), adding at the end the following:

“(G) GUARANTEE FEE WAIVER FOR VETERANS.—The Administrator may not assess a guarantee fee under paragraph (18) in connection with a loan made under this paragraph to a veteran on or after October 1, 2014.”.

SEC. 447. REPORT ON FINANCIAL PLANNING AND COUNSELING FOR OWNERS OF SMALL BUSINESS CONCERNS IN THE NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall submit to Congress a report assessing the feasibility of providing financial planning and counseling to owners of small business concerns who are members of a reserve component prior to deployment.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

(1) the term “reserve component” means a reserve component of the Armed Forces named in section 10101 of title 10, United States Code; and

(2) the term “small business concern” has the meaning given the term under section 3(a) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(a)).

SEC. 448. REPORT ON THE MILITARY RESERVISTS ECONOMIC INJURY DISASTER LOAN PROGRAM.

Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration shall submit to Congress a report on the Military Reservists Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program (in this section referred to as the “program”) authorized under section 7(b)(3) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)(3)), which shall include—

(1) a discussion of the outreach efforts of the Small Business Administration to increase participation in the program;

(2) the number of loans made under the program;

(3) an analysis of the effectiveness of the program; and

(4) recommendations for improving the program.

SA 2795. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 61, between lines 5 and 6, insert the following:

SEC. 314. SPECIAL CHANGE IN STATUS RULE FOR EMPLOYEES WHO BECOME ELIGIBLE FOR TRICARE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (g) of section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) CHANGE IN STATUS RELATING TO TRICARE ELIGIBILITY.—For purposes of this section, if a cafeteria plan permits an employee to revoke an election during a period of coverage and to make a new election based on a change in status event, an event that causes the employee to become eligible for coverage under the TRICARE program shall be treated as a change in status event.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to events occurring after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2796. Mr. BENNET (for himself and Mr. JOHANNIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title IV, add the following:

SEC. 407. AUTHORITY TO INCREASE AVAILABILITY OF PRIVATE SECTOR ON-JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS.

During the four-year period beginning on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall carry out section 3677(b)(1)(A) of title 38, United States Code, by substituting “75 per centum” for “85 per centum”.

SEC. 408. ON-JOB TRAINING AT FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.

Beginning on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall enter into agreements with the heads of other Federal departments and agencies to operate programs of training on the job under section 3677 of title 38, United States Code, to train eligible veterans or persons to perform skills necessary for employment by the department or agency operating the program.

SA 2797. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 367, after line 14, add the following:

SEC. 918. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON REVIEW OF DISCHARGE STATUS OF VIETNAM ERA VETERANS WITH POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER WHO WERE DISCHARGED UNDER CONDITIONS OTHER THAN HONORABLE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—It is the sense of Congress that individuals who served in the active military, naval, or air service during the Vietnam era, who have a service-connected post traumatic stress disorder, who were discharged or released from such service under conditions other than honorable, and who are now upstanding members in their communities, should have their less than honorable discharge or release reviewed by the applicable board for the correction of military records.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms “active military, naval, or air service”, “service-connected”, and “Vietnam era” have the meanings given such terms in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

SA 2798. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself and Mr. MURPHY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 33, after line 18, add the following:

SEC. 207. REPEAL OF TIME LIMITATIONS ON USE OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE UNDER ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 3031 is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(i)(1) Notwithstanding subsections (a) through (g) and any other provision of law, the period during which a covered individual entitled to educational assistance under this chapter may use such covered individual’s entitlement shall not end until the date that is 10 years after the date on which such covered individual begins using such benefit.

“(2) For purposes of this subsection, a covered individual is any individual—

“(A) whose basic pay was reduced under paragraph (1) of section 3011(b) of this title; or

“(B) with respect to whom an amount was collected under paragraph (2) of such section.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3020(f) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) Subsection (i) of section 3031 of this title shall not apply for purposes of this subsection.”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Subsection (i) of section 3031, as added by subsection (a), and paragraph (4) of section 3020(f), as added by subsection (b), shall apply as if such subsection and such paragraph had been enacted immediately after the enactment of the Veterans’ Educational Assistance Act of 1984 (Public Law 98–525; 98 Stat. 2553).

SEC. 208. VETERANS EDUCATION OUTREACH PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Chapter 36 is amended by adding at the end of subchapter II the following new section:

“§ 3697B. Veterans education outreach program

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide funding for offices of veterans affairs at institutions of higher learning (as defined in section 3452(f) of this title) in accordance with this section.

“(b) PAYMENTS TO INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING.—(1)(A) The Secretary shall, subject to the availability of appropriations, make payments to any institution of higher learning, under and in accordance with this section, during any fiscal year if the number of persons eligible for services from offices assisted under this section at the institution is at least 50, determined in the same manner as the number of eligible veterans or eligible persons is determined under section 3684(c) of this title.

“(B) The persons who are eligible for services from the offices assisted under this section are persons receiving educational assistance administered by the Department, including assistance provided under chapter 1606 of title 10.

“(2) To be eligible for a payment under this section, an institution of higher learning or a consortium of institutions of higher learning, as described in paragraph (3), shall submit an application to the Secretary. The application shall—

“(A) set forth such policies, assurances, and procedures that will ensure that—

“(i) the funds received by the institution, or each institution in a consortium of institutions described in paragraph (3), under this section will be used solely to carry out this section;

“(ii) for enhancing the functions of its veterans education outreach program, the applicant will expend, during the academic year

for which a payment is sought, an amount equal to at least the amount of the award under this section from sources other than this or any other Federal program; and

“(iii) the applicant will submit to the Secretary such reports as the Secretary may require or as are required by this section;

“(B) contain such other statement of policies, assurances, and procedures as the Secretary may require in order to protect the financial interests of the United States;

“(C) set forth such plans, policies, assurances, and procedures as will ensure that the applicant will maintain an office of veterans’ affairs which has responsibility for—

“(i) veterans’ certification, outreach, recruitment, and special education programs, including the provision of or referral to educational, vocational, and personal counseling for veterans; and

“(ii) providing information regarding other services provided veterans by the Department, including the readjustment counseling program authorized under section 1712A of this title and the programs carried out under chapters 41 and 42 of this title; and

“(D) be submitted at such time or times, in such manner, in such form, and contain such information as the Secretary determines necessary to carry out the functions of the Secretary under this section.

“(3) An institution of higher learning which is eligible for funding under this section and which the Secretary determines cannot feasibly carry out, by itself, any or all of the activities set forth in paragraph (2)(C), may carry out such program or programs through a consortium agreement with one or more other institutions of higher learning in the same community.

“(4) The Secretary shall not approve an application under this subsection unless the Secretary determines that the applicant will implement the requirements of paragraph (2)(C) within the first academic year during which it receives a payment under this section.

“(c) AMOUNT OF PAYMENTS.—(1)(A) Subject to subparagraph (B), the amount of the payment which any institution shall receive under this section for any fiscal year shall be \$100 for each person who is described in subsection (b)(1)(B).

“(B) The maximum amount of payments to any institution of higher learning, or any branch thereof which is located in a community which is different from that in which the parent institution thereof is located, in any fiscal year is \$150,000.

“(2)(A)(i) The Secretary shall pay to each institution of higher learning which has had an application approved under subsection (b) the amount which it is to receive under this section.

“(ii) If the amount appropriated for any fiscal year is not sufficient to pay the amounts which all such institutions are to receive, the Secretary shall ratably reduce such payments.

“(iii) If any amount becomes available to carry out this section for a fiscal year after such reductions have been imposed, such reduced payments shall be increased on the same basis as they were reduced.

“(B) In making payments under this section for any fiscal year, the Secretary shall apportion the appropriation for making such payments, from funds which become available as a result of the limitation on payments set forth in paragraph (1)(B), in an equitable manner.

“(d) COORDINATION AND PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE, TECHNICAL CONSULTATION, AND INFORMATION.—The Secretary, in carrying out

the provisions of this section, shall seek to assure the coordination of programs assisted under this section with other programs carried out by the Department pursuant to this title, and the Secretary shall provide all assistance, technical consultation, and information otherwise authorized by law as necessary to promote the maximum effectiveness of the activities and programs assisted under this section.

“(e) BEST PRACTICES AND ADMINISTRATION.—(1) From the amounts made available for any fiscal year under subsection (f), the Secretary shall retain one percent or \$20,000, whichever is less, for the purpose of collecting information about exemplary veterans educational outreach programs and disseminating that information to other institutions of higher learning having such programs on their campuses. Such collection and dissemination shall be done on an annual basis.

“(2) From the amounts made available under subsection (f), the Secretary may retain not more than two percent for the purpose of administering this section.

“(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$6,000,000 for fiscal year 2014 and each fiscal year thereafter.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 36 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 3697A the following new item:

“3697B. Veterans education outreach program.”.

SA 2799. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 367, after line 14, insert the following:

TITLE X—DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF MILITARY SERVICE

SEC. 1001. DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF MILITARY SERVICE.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CIVIL RIGHTS DEFINITIONS.—The terms “complaining party”, “demonstrates”, “employee”, “employer”, “employment agency”, “labor organization”, “person”, “respondent”, and “State” have the meanings given the terms in section 701 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e).

(2) MEMBER OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES.—The term “member of the uniformed services” means an individual who—

(A) is a member of—

(i) the uniformed services (as defined in section 101 of title 10, United States Code); or

(ii) the National Guard in State status under title 32, United States Code; or

(B) was discharged or released from service in the uniformed services (as so defined) or the National Guard in such status under conditions other than dishonorable.

(3) MILITARY SERVICE.—The term “military service” means status as a member of the uniformed services.

(b) EMPLOYER PRACTICES.—It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer—

(1) to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to the individual’s compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual’s military service; or

(2) to limit, segregate, or classify the employer's employees or applicants for employment in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect the individual's status as an employee, because of such individual's military service.

(c) **EMPLOYMENT AGENCY PRACTICES.**—It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employment agency to fail or refuse to refer for employment, or otherwise discriminate against, any individual because of the individual's military service, or to classify or refer for employment any individual on the basis of the individual's military service.

(d) **LABOR ORGANIZATION PRACTICES.**—It shall be an unlawful employment practice for a labor organization—

(1) to exclude or to expel from its membership, or otherwise to discriminate against, any individual because of the individual's military service;

(2) to limit, segregate, or classify its membership or applicants for membership, or to classify or fail or refuse to refer for employment any individual, in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities, or would limit such employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect the individual's status as an employee or as an applicant for employment, because of such individual's military service; or

(3) to cause or attempt to cause an employer to discriminate against an individual in violation of this section.

(e) **TRAINING PROGRAMS.**—It shall be an unlawful employment practice for any employer, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee controlling apprenticeship or other training or retraining, including on-the-job training programs, to discriminate against any individual because of the individual's military service in admission to, or employment in, any program established to provide apprenticeship or other training.

(f) **BUSINESSES OR ENTERPRISES WITH PERSONNEL QUALIFIED ON BASIS OF MILITARY SERVICE.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, it shall not be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to hire and employ employees, for an employment agency to classify, or refer for employment any individual, for a labor organization to classify its membership or to classify or refer for employment any individual, or for an employer, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee controlling apprenticeship or other training or retraining programs to admit or employ any individual in any such program, on the basis of the individual's military service in those certain instances where military service is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of that particular business or enterprise.

(g) **NATIONAL SECURITY.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, it shall not be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to fail or refuse to hire and employ any individual for any position, for an employer to discharge any individual from any position, or for an employment agency to fail or refuse to refer any individual for employment in any position, or for a labor organization to fail or refuse to refer any individual for employment in any position, if—

(1) the occupancy of such position, or access to the premises in or upon which any part of the duties of such position is performed or is to be performed, is subject to any requirement imposed in the interest of

the national security of the United States under any security program in effect pursuant to or administered under any statute of the United States or any Executive order of the President; and

(2) such individual has not fulfilled or has ceased to fulfill that requirement.

(h) **SENIORITY OR MERIT SYSTEM; QUANTITY OR QUALITY OF PRODUCTION; ABILITY TESTS.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, it shall not be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to apply different standards of compensation, or different terms, conditions, or privileges of employment pursuant to a bona fide seniority or merit system, or a system which measures earnings by quantity or quality of production or to employees who work in different locations, provided that such differences are not the result of an intention to discriminate because of military service, nor shall it be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to give and to act upon the results of any professionally developed ability test provided that such test, its administration, or action upon the results is not designed, intended, or used to discriminate because of military service.

(i) **PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT NOT TO BE GRANTED ON ACCOUNT OF EXISTING NUMBER OR PERCENTAGE IMBALANCE.**—Nothing contained in this section shall be interpreted to require any employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee subject to this section to grant preferential treatment to any individual or to any group because of the military service of such individual or group on account of an imbalance which may exist with respect to the total number or percentage of persons with military service employed by any employer, referred or classified for employment by any employment agency or labor organization, admitted to membership or classified by any labor organization, or admitted to, or employed in, any apprenticeship or other training program, in comparison with the total number or percentage of persons with military service in any community, State, section, or other area, or in the available work force in any community, State, section, or other area.

(j) **BURDEN OF PROOF IN DISPARATE IMPACT CASES.**—

(1) **DISPARATE IMPACT.**—

(A) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—An unlawful employment practice based on disparate impact is established under this section only if—

(i) a complaining party demonstrates that a respondent uses a particular employment practice that causes a disparate impact on the basis of military service and the respondent fails to demonstrate that the challenged practice is job related for the position in question and consistent with business necessity; or

(ii) the complaining party makes the demonstration described in subparagraph (C) with respect to an alternative employment practice and the respondent refuses to adopt such alternative employment practice.

(B) **DEMONSTRATION OF CAUSATION.**—

(1) **PARTICULAR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES.**—With respect to demonstrating that a particular employment practice causes a disparate impact as described in subparagraph (A)(i), the complaining party shall demonstrate that each particular challenged employment practice causes a disparate impact, except that if the complaining party can demonstrate to the court that the elements of a respondent's decisionmaking process are not capable of separation for analysis, the decisionmaking process may be analyzed as one employment practice.

(ii) **DEMONSTRATION OF NONCAUSATION.**—If the respondent demonstrates that a specific employment practice does not cause the disparate impact, the respondent shall not be required to demonstrate that such practice is required by business necessity.

(C) **ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE.**—The demonstration referred to by subparagraph (A)(ii) shall be in accordance with the law as it existed on June 4, 1989, with respect to the concept of "alternative employment practice".

(2) **BUSINESS NECESSITY NO DEFENSE TO INTENTIONAL DISCRIMINATION.**—A demonstration that an employment practice is required by business necessity may not be used as a defense against a claim of intentional discrimination under this section.

(3) **RULES CONCERNING CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a rule barring the employment of an individual who currently and knowingly uses or possesses a controlled substance, as defined in section 102(6) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802(6)) and included in schedule I or II of the schedules specified in that section, other than the use or possession of a drug taken under the supervision of a licensed health care professional, or any other use or possession authorized by the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 801 et seq.) or any other provision of Federal law, shall be considered an unlawful employment practice under this section only if such rule is adopted or applied with an intent to discriminate because of military service.

(k) **PROHIBITION OF DISCRIMINATORY USE OF TEST SCORES.**—It shall be an unlawful employment practice for a respondent, in connection with the selection or referral of applicants or candidates for employment or promotion, to adjust the scores of, use different cutoff scores for, or otherwise alter the results of, employment related tests on the basis of military service.

(l) **IMPERMISSIBLE CONSIDERATION OF MILITARY SERVICE IN EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES.**—Except as otherwise provided in this section, an unlawful employment practice is established when the complaining party demonstrates that military service was a motivating factor for any employment practice, even though other factors also motivated the practice.

(m) **RESOLUTION OF CHALLENGES TO EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES IMPLEMENTING LITIGATED OR CONSENT JUDGMENTS OR ORDERS.**—

(1) **PRACTICES NOT CHALLENGEABLE.**—

(A) **PRACTICES TO IMPLEMENT A LITIGATED OR CONSENT JUDGMENT OR ORDER.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and except as provided in paragraph (2), an employment practice that implements and is within the scope of a litigated or consent judgment or order that resolves a claim of employment discrimination under the Constitution or Federal civil rights laws may not be challenged under the circumstances described in subparagraph (B).

(B) **CIRCUMSTANCES.**—A practice described in subparagraph (A) may not be challenged in a claim under the Constitution or Federal civil rights laws—

(i) by a person who, prior to the entry of the judgment or order described in subparagraph (A), had—

(I) actual notice of the proposed judgment or order sufficient to apprise such person that such judgment or order might adversely affect the interests and legal rights of such person and that an opportunity was available to present objections to such judgment or order by a future date certain; and

(II) a reasonable opportunity to present objections to such judgment or order; or

(ii) by a person whose interests were adequately represented by another person who had previously challenged the judgment or order on the same legal grounds and with a similar factual situation, unless there has been an intervening change in law or fact.

(2) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to—

(A) alter the standards for intervention under rule 24 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure or apply to the rights of parties who have successfully intervened pursuant to such rule in the proceeding in which the parties intervened;

(B) apply to the rights of parties to the action in which a litigated or consent judgment or order was entered, or of members of a class represented or sought to be represented in such action, or of members of a group on whose behalf relief was sought in such action by the Federal Government;

(C) prevent challenges to a litigated or consent judgment or order on the ground that such judgment or order was obtained through collusion or fraud, or is transparently invalid or was entered by a court lacking subject matter jurisdiction; or

(D) authorize or permit the denial to any person of the due process of law required by the Constitution.

(3) **COURT FOR ACTIONS THAT ARE CHALLENGEABLE.**—Any action not precluded under this subsection that challenges an employment consent judgment or order described in paragraph (1) shall be brought in the court, and if possible before the judge, that entered such judgment or order. Nothing in this subsection shall preclude a transfer of such action pursuant to section 1404 of title 28, United States Code.

(n) **DISCRIMINATION FOR MAKING CHARGES, TESTIFYING, ASSISTING, OR PARTICIPATING IN ENFORCEMENT PROCEEDINGS.**—It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to discriminate against any of the employer's employees or applicants for employment, for an employment agency, or joint labor-management committee controlling apprenticeship or other training or retraining, including on-the-job training programs, to discriminate against any individual, or for a labor organization to discriminate against any member thereof or applicant for membership, because the employee, applicant, individuals, or member involved has opposed any practice made an unlawful employment practice by this section, or has made a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this section.

(o) **PRINTING OR PUBLICATION OF NOTICES OR ADVERTISEMENTS.**—It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer, labor organization, employment agency, or joint labor-management committee controlling apprenticeship or other training or retraining, including on-the-job training programs, to print or publish or cause to be printed or published any notice or advertisement relating to employment by such an employer or membership in or any classification or referral for employment by such a labor organization, or relating to any classification or referral for employment by such an employment agency, or relating to admission to, or employment in, any program established to provide apprenticeship or other training by such a joint labor-management committee, indicating any preference, limitation, specification, or discrimination, based on military service, except that such a notice or ad-

vertisement may indicate a preference, limitation, specification, or discrimination based on military service when military service is a bona fide occupational qualification for employment.

(p) **EXEMPTIONS.**—

(1) **INAPPLICABILITY OF TITLE TO CERTAIN ALIENS.**—This section shall not apply to an employer with respect to the employment of aliens outside any State.

(2) **COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTE AS VIOLATION OF FOREIGN LAW.**—It shall not be unlawful under this section for an employer (or a corporation controlled by an employer), labor organization, employment agency, or joint labor-management committee controlling apprenticeship or other training or retraining (including on-the-job training programs) to take any action otherwise prohibited by such section, with respect to an employee in a workplace in a foreign country if compliance with such section would cause such employer (or such corporation), such organization, such agency, or such committee to violate the law of the foreign country in which such workplace is located.

(3) **CONTROL OF CORPORATION INCORPORATED IN FOREIGN COUNTRY.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—If an employer controls a corporation whose place of incorporation is a foreign country, any practice prohibited by this section engaged in by such corporation shall be presumed to be engaged in by such employer.

(B) **FOREIGN PERSON NOT CONTROLLED BY EMPLOYER.**—This section shall not apply with respect to the foreign operations of an employer that is a foreign person not controlled by an American employer.

(C) **CONTROL.**—For purposes of this subsection, the determination of whether an employer controls a corporation shall be based on—

- (i) the interrelation of operations;
- (ii) the common management;
- (iii) the centralized control of labor relations; and
- (iv) the common ownership or financial control,

of the employer and the corporation.

(4) **CLAIMS OF NO MILITARY SERVICE.**—Nothing in this section shall provide the basis for a claim by an individual without military service that the individual was subject to discrimination because of the individual's lack of military service.

(q) **POSTING NOTICES.**—Every employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor-management committee covered under this section shall post notices to applicants, employees, and members describing the applicable provisions of this section, in the manner prescribed by section 711 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e-10).

(r) **REGULATIONS.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall issue regulations to carry out this section in accordance with subchapter II of chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code.

(s) **ENFORCEMENT.**—The powers, remedies, and procedures set forth in sections 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, and 712 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e-4, 2000e-5, 2000e-6, 2000e-7, 2000e-8, 2000e-9, and 2000e-11) shall be the powers, remedies, and procedures this section provides to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, to the Attorney General, or to any person alleging discrimination on the basis of military service in violation of any provision of this section, or regulations promulgated under subsection (r), concerning employment.

SEC. 1002. ENDING HOUSING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MEMBERS OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—Section 802 of the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3602) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(p) ‘Member of the uniformed services’ means an individual who—

“(1) is a member of—

“(A) the uniformed services (as defined in section 101 of title 10, United States Code); or

“(B) the National Guard in State status under title 32, United States Code; or

“(2) was discharged or released from service in the uniformed services (as so defined) or the National Guard in such status under conditions other than dishonorable.”.

(b) **DISCRIMINATION IN THE SALE OR RENTAL OF HOUSING AND OTHER PROHIBITED PRACTICES.**—Section 804 of the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3604) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting “or because the person is a member of the uniformed services” after “national origin”; and

(2) in subsection (b), by inserting “or because the person is a member of the uniformed services” after “national origin”; and

(3) in subsection (c), by inserting “or because a person is a member of the uniformed services,” after “national origin,”; and

(4) in subsection (d), by inserting “, or because the person is a member of the uniformed services,” after “national origin”.

(c) **DISCRIMINATION IN RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE-RELATED TRANSACTIONS.**—Section 805 of the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3605) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting “or because the person is a member of the uniformed services” after “national origin”; and

(2) in subsection (c), by striking “, or familial status” and inserting “familial status, or whether a person is a member of the uniformed services”.

(d) **DISCRIMINATION IN THE PROVISION OF BROKERAGE SERVICES.**—Section 806 of the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3606) is amended by inserting “or because a person is a member of the uniformed services” after “national origin”.

(e) **RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION OR PRIVATE CLUB EXEMPTION.**—Section 807(a) of the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3607(a)) is amended, in the first sentence by inserting “or to persons who are not members of the uniformed services” after “national origin”.

(f) **ADMINISTRATION.**—Section 808(e)(6) of the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3608(e)(6)) is amended, in the first sentence, by inserting “(including whether such persons and households are or include a member of the uniformed services)” after “persons and households”.

(g) **PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION.**—Section 901 of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3631) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting “, or because the person is a member of the uniformed services (as such term is defined in section 802 of this Act),” after “national origin”; and

(2) in subsection (b)(1), by inserting “or because a person is a member of the uniformed services (as such term is defined in section 802 of this Act),” after “national origin,”; and

(3) in subsection (c), by inserting “or because a person is a member of the uniformed services (as such term is defined in section 802 of this Act),” after “national origin,”.

(h) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—The Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 821. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION RELATING TO THE TREATMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE UNIFORMED SERVICES.

"(a) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this Act may be construed to prohibit any person from—

"(1) making available to an individual a benefit with respect to a dwelling, a residential real estate-related transaction (as defined in section 805 of this Act), or a service described in section 806 of this Act because the individual is a member of the uniformed services; or

"(2) selling or renting a dwelling only to members of the uniformed services.

"(b) **DEFINITION.**—For purposes of this section, the term 'benefit' includes a term, condition, privilege, promotion, discount, or other favorable treatment (including an advertisement for such treatment) having the purpose or effect of providing an advantage to a member of the uniformed services."

SEC. 1003. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This title shall become effective 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 2800. Mr. BLUMENTHAL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 155, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

Subtitle I—Diagnosis, Treatment, and Research on Exposure to Toxic Substances

SEC. 391. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) **ARMED FORCE.**—The term "Armed Force" means the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard, including the reserve components thereof.

(2) **DESCENDANT.**—The term "descendant" means, with respect to an individual, the biological child, grandchild, or great-grandchild of that individual.

(3) **TOXIC SUBSTANCE.**—The term "toxic substance" shall have the meaning given that term by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and shall include all substances that have been proven by peer reviewed scientific research or a preponderance of opinion in the medical community to lead to disabilities related to the exposure of an individual to those substances while serving as a member of the Armed Forces.

(4) **VETERAN.**—The term "veteran" has the meaning given that term in section 101 of title 38, United States Code.

SEC. 392. NATIONAL CENTER FOR THE DIAGNOSIS, TREATMENT, AND RESEARCH OF HEALTH CONDITIONS OF THE DESCENDANTS OF INDIVIDUALS EXPOSED TO TOXIC SUBSTANCES DURING SERVICE IN THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) **NATIONAL CENTER.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall select a medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs to serve as the national center for the diagnosis, treatment, and research of health conditions of descendants of individuals exposed to toxic substances while serving as members of the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure (in this section referred to as the "Center").

(2) **CRITERIA FOR SELECTION.**—The Center shall be selected under paragraph (1) from among medical centers of the Department

with expertise in diagnosing and treating functional and structural birth defects and caring for individuals exposed to toxic substances, or that are affiliated with research medical centers or teaching hospitals with such expertise, that seek to be selected under this section.

(b) **FUNCTIONS.**—

(1) **DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Center may diagnose and treat, without charge, each patient for whom the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has made the following determinations:

(i) The patient is a descendant of an individual who served as a member of the Armed Forces.

(ii) The individual was exposed to a toxic substance while serving as a member of the Armed Forces.

(iii) The patient is afflicted with a health condition that is determined by the advisory board established in section 393 to be a health condition that results from the exposure of that individual to that toxic substance.

(B) **TREATMENT.**—Treatment under this section is limited to treatment of health conditions for which the advisory board established in section 393 has made a determination described in subparagraph (A)(iii).

(C) **ADDITIONAL DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT.**—Nothing in this section shall preclude a patient from receiving additional diagnosis or treatment at the Center or another facility of the Department in connection with other health conditions or benefits to which the individual is entitled under laws administered by the Secretary.

(D) **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE TREATMENT.**—Recommendations for future treatment of a patient shall be transmitted to a primary care provider for that patient, with follow-up consultations with the Center scheduled as appropriate.

(E) **USE OF RECORDS.**—

(i) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Defense or the head of a Federal agency may make available to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for review records held by the Department of Defense, an Armed Force, or that Federal agency, as appropriate, that might assist the Secretary of Veterans Affairs in making the determinations required by subparagraph (A).

(ii) **MECHANISM.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense or the head of the appropriate Federal agency may jointly establish a mechanism for the availability and review of records by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under clause (i).

(2) **RESEARCH.**—The Center may conduct research on the diagnosis and treatment of health conditions of descendants of individuals exposed to toxic substances while serving as members of the Armed Forces that are related to that exposure.

(c) **SOCIAL WORKERS.**—The Center shall employ not less than one licensed clinical social worker to coordinate access of patients to appropriate Federal, State, and local social and healthcare programs and to handle case management.

(d) **REIMBURSEMENT FOR NECESSARY TRAVEL AND ROOM AND BOARD.**—The Center may reimburse any parent, guardian, spouse, or sibling who accompanies a patient diagnosed or treated pursuant to this section for the reasonable cost of—

(1) travel to the Center for diagnosis or treatment of the patient pursuant to this section; and

(2) room and board during the period in which the patient is undergoing diagnosis or

treatment at the Center pursuant to this section.

(e) **REPORT.**—Not less frequently than annually, the Center shall submit a report to Congress that includes the following:

(1) A summary of the extent and nature of care provided pursuant to this section.

(2) A summary of the research efforts of the Center under this section that have been completed within the previous year and that are ongoing as of the date of the submission of the report under this subsection.

SEC. 393. ADVISORY BOARD.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish an advisory board (in this section referred to as the "Advisory Board") to advise the center established under section 392, to determine which health conditions result from exposure to toxic substances, and to study and evaluate cases of exposure of current and former members of the Armed Forces to toxic substances if such exposure is related the service of the member in the Armed Forces.

(b) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

(1) **COMPOSITION.**—Not later than 150 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and other heads of Federal agencies as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines appropriate, select not less than 13 members of the Advisory Board, of whom—

(A) not less than three shall be members of organizations exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

(B) not less than one shall be—

(i) a descendant of an individual who was exposed to toxic substances while serving as a member of the Armed Forces and the descendant has manifested a birth defect or functional disability as a result of the exposure of that individual; or

(ii) a parent, child, or grandchild of that descendant; and

(C) additional members may be selected from among—

(i) health professionals, scientists, and academics with expertise in—

(I) birth defects;

(II) developmental disabilities;

(III) epigenetics;

(IV) public health;

(V) the science of environmental exposure or environmental exposure assessment; or

(VI) the science of toxic substances;

(ii) social workers; and

(iii) advocates for veterans or members of the Armed Forces.

(2) **CHAIRPERSON.**—The Secretary shall select a Chairperson from among the members of the Advisory Board.

(3) **TERMS.**—Each member of the Advisory Board shall serve a term of two or three years as determined by the Secretary.

(c) **DUTIES.**—

(1) **ADVISORY ROLE WITH RESPECT TO THE CENTER.**—With respect to the center established under section 392, the Advisory Board shall—

(A) oversee and assess the work of the center; and

(B) advise the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on—

(i) issues related to the provision of treatment and care at the center;

(ii) issues related to the research conducted at the center; and

(iii) the particular benefits and services required by the descendants of individuals exposed to toxic substances while serving as members of the Armed Forces.

(2) DETERMINATION THAT HEALTH CONDITIONS RESULTED FROM TOXIC EXPOSURE.—The Advisory Board shall determine which health conditions in descendants of individuals exposed to toxic substances while serving as members of the Armed Forces are health conditions that resulted from the exposure of that individual to that toxic substance for purposes of eligibility for the following:

(A) Treatment of that descendant at the center established under section 392.

(B) Medical care for that descendant under section 1781 of title 38, United States Code.

(C) Support for the family caregiver of that descendant under section 1720G(a) of such title.

(D) Support for the caregiver of that descendant under section 1720G(b) of such title.

(3) STUDY AND CONSIDERATION OF TOXIC SUBSTANCE EXPOSURE CLAIMS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Advisory Board shall study and evaluate claims of exposure to toxic substances by current and former members of the Armed Forces that is related to the service of the member in the Armed Forces.

(B) SUBMISSION OF CLAIMS.—Claims of exposure described in subparagraph (A) may be submitted to the Advisory Board in such form and in such manner as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may require by any of the following individuals or entities:

(i) A member of the Armed Forces.

(ii) A veteran.

(iii) A descendant of a member of the Armed Forces.

(iv) A descendant of a veteran.

(v) A veterans advocacy group.

(vi) An official of the Department of Veterans Affairs with responsibility or experience monitoring the health of current and former members of the Armed Forces.

(vii) An official of the Department of Defense with responsibility or experience monitoring the health of current and former members of the Armed Forces.

(C) CONSIDERATION OF CLAIMS.—Not later than 180 days after receiving a claim submitted pursuant to subparagraph (B), the Advisory Board shall consider the claim and take one of the following actions:

(i) If the Advisory Board determines that exposure to a toxic substance occurred to a degree that an individual exposed to that substance may have or develop a medical condition that would qualify that individual for health care or compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Department of Defense, the Advisory Board shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs a report described in subparagraph (D).

(ii) If the Advisory Board determines that further consideration of the claim is necessary to adequately assess the extent of exposure, the Advisory Board shall refer the claim to the Office of Extramural Research established under section 394 to conduct further research and report its findings to the Advisory Board.

(iii) If the Advisory Board determines that exposure to a toxic substance did not occur or occurred to a negligible extent, the Advisory Board shall report such determination to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(D) REPORT.—If the Advisory Board makes a determination under subparagraph (C)(i), the Advisory Board shall submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs a report that contains the following:

(i) Evidence used by the Advisory Board in making the determination under subpara-

graph (C)(i), including, if appropriate, the following:

(I) Scientific research, including any research conducted by the Office of Extramural Research established under section 394.

(II) Peer-reviewed articles from scientific journals relating to exposure to toxic substances.

(III) Medical research conducted by the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Defense, or the medical community.

(ii) Recommendations on the extent to which the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Department of Defense should provide health care, benefits, or other compensation with respect to exposure to a toxic substance to the following individuals:

(I) An individual exposed to a toxic substance as determined under subparagraph (C)(i).

(II) A descendant of that individual.

(iii) Information on cost and attributable exposure, as defined in regulations prescribed pursuant to this subtitle.

(E) PUBLICATION OF EVIDENCE.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register the evidence described in clause (i) of subparagraph (D) that is submitted with the report required by that subparagraph.

(ii) EXCEPTION.—Such evidence may not be published if the Secretary determines that preventing such publication—

(I) is in the national security interest of the United States; or

(II) protects the privacy interests of individuals exposed to toxic substances.

(F) SUBPOENA AUTHORITY.—The Advisory Board may require by subpoena the attendance and testimony of witnesses necessary to consider claims of exposure to toxic substances under this paragraph.

(G) COOPERATION OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.—The head of each relevant Federal agency, including the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall cooperate fully with the Advisory Board for purposes of considering claims of exposure to toxic substances under this paragraph.

(d) MEETINGS.—The Advisory Board shall meet at the call of the Chair, but not less frequently than semiannually.

(e) COMPENSATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The members of the Advisory Board shall serve without compensation.

(2) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—The members of the Advisory Board shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Advisory Board.

(f) PERSONNEL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Chairperson may, without regard to the civil service laws and regulations, appoint an executive director of the Advisory Board, who shall be a civilian employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and such other personnel as may be necessary to enable the Advisory Board to perform its duties.

(2) APPROVAL.—The appointment of an executive director under paragraph (1) shall be subject to approval by the Advisory Board.

(3) COMPENSATION.—The Chairperson may fix the compensation of the executive director and other personnel without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States

Code, except that the rate of pay for the executive director and other personnel may not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

SEC. 394. OFFICE OF EXTRAMURAL RESEARCH.

(a) OFFICE.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish an Office of Extramural Research (in this section referred to as the “Office”).

(1) to conduct research on wounds, illnesses, injuries, and other conditions suffered by individuals as a result of exposure to toxic substances while serving as members of the Armed Forces; and

(2) to assist the Advisory Board established under section 393 in the consideration of claims of exposure to toxic substances.

(b) DIRECTOR.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall select a Director of the Office.

(c) GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to approval by the advisory council established under subsection (e), the Director may award grants to reputable scientists and epidemiologists to carry out this section.

(2) EXCEPTION.—The Director may not award grants to individuals or organizations associated with or having an interest in a chemical company or any other organization that the Secretary determines may have an interest in the increased use of toxic substances.

(d) SUPPORT TO ADVISORY BOARD.—Not later than 180 days after receiving a request from the Advisory Board established under section 393 to review a claim of exposure pursuant to subsection (c)(3)(C)(ii) of that section, the Office shall submit a report to the Advisory Board with one of the following determinations:

(1) A determination that exposure to a toxic substance occurred to a degree that an individual exposed to that substance may have or develop a medical condition that would qualify that individual for health care or compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Department of Defense.

(2) A determination that further study of the claim is necessary, to be carried out by, or under the direction of, the Office in coordination with the Advisory Board.

(3) A determination that exposure to a toxic substance did not occur or occurred to a negligible extent.

(e) ADVISORY COUNCIL.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish an advisory council (in this section referred to as the “Council”) for the Office established under this section.

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) COMPOSITION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and any other heads of Federal agencies as the Secretary of Veterans Affairs determines appropriate, select 11 members of the Council, of whom—

(I) not less than three shall be members of organizations exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; and

(II) additional members may be selected from among—

(aa) environmental epidemiologists;

(bb) academics; and

(cc) veterans or the descendants of veterans.

(ii) REQUIREMENTS FOR SCIENTISTS.—When considering individuals who are members of

the scientific community for selection to the Council, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may select only those individuals—

(I) who have evidenced expertise in and demonstrate a commitment to research that leads to peer-reviewed scientific evaluation of the wounds, illnesses, injuries, and other conditions that may arise from exposure to toxic substances; and

(II) who are not associated with and do not have an interest in a chemical company or any other organization that the Secretary determines may have an interest in the increased use of toxic substances.

(B) **CHAIRPERSON.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall select a Chairperson from among the members of the Council.

(C) **TERMS.**—Each member of the Council shall serve a term of two or three years as determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(3) **DUTIES.**—The Council shall—

(A) approve or disapprove of grants proposed to be awarded by the Director pursuant to subsection (c); and

(B) advise the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Director on—

(i) establishing guidelines for grant proposals and research proposals under this section; and

(ii) assisting the Advisory Board established under section 393 in the consideration of claims of exposure to toxic substances.

(4) **MEETINGS.**—The Council shall meet at the call of the Chairperson, but not less frequently than semiannually.

(5) **COMPENSATION.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The members of the Council shall serve without compensation.

(B) **TRAVEL EXPENSES.**—The members of the Council shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Council.

(f) **REPORT.**—Not later than two years after the establishment of the Office under this section, the Director and the Chairman of the Council shall jointly submit to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Congress a report that contains the following:

(1) A summary of the research efforts conducted and the grants awarded under this section.

(2) A summary of the effects of exposure to toxic substances studied pursuant to this section.

(3) Recommendations for steps to be taken to care for and serve—

(A) individuals exposed to toxic substances while serving as a member of the Armed Forces; and

(B) the progeny of those individuals.

SEC. 395. PROVISION OF DEPENDENT CARE AND CAREGIVER ASSISTANCE TO DESCENDANTS OF VETERANS EXPOSED TO CERTAIN TOXIC SUBSTANCES DURING SERVICE IN THE ARMED FORCES.

(a) **DEPENDENT CARE.**—Section 1781(a) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “, and” and inserting a comma;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking the semicolon at the end and inserting “, and”; and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

“(5) an individual who is the biological child, grandchild, or great-grandchild of a veteran who the Secretary has determined was exposed to a toxic substance while serving as a member of the Armed Forces, if—

“(A) the individual has a health condition that is determined by the Advisory Board established by section 393 of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014 to be a health condition that results from exposure to that toxic substance.

“(B) the individual is homebound as a result of that health condition, and

“(C) the Secretary determines that the veteran has or had the same health condition.”.

(b) **CAREGIVER ASSISTANCE.**—

(1) **COMPREHENSIVE ASSISTANCE.**—Subsection (a) of section 1720G is amended—

(A) by striking “veteran” each place it appears (except for paragraph (2)(A)) and inserting “individual”; and

(B) by striking “veterans” each place it appears and inserting “individuals”; and

(C) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking subparagraphs (A) and (B) and inserting the following:

“(A)(i) is a veteran or member of the Armed Forces undergoing medical discharge from the Armed Forces and has a serious injury (including traumatic brain injury, psychological trauma, or other mental disorder) incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service on or after September 11, 2001; or

“(ii) is the biological child, grandchild, or great-grandchild of a veteran who the Secretary has determined was exposed to a toxic substance while serving as a member of the Armed Forces, if—

“(I) the individual has a health condition that is determined by the Advisory Board established by section 393 of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014 to be a health condition that results from exposure to that toxic substance;

“(II) the individual is homebound as a result of that health condition; and

“(III) the Secretary determines that the veteran has or had the same health condition; and”; and

(ii) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (B); and

(D) in paragraph (9)(C)(i), by striking “veteran’s” and inserting “individual’s”.

(2) **GENERAL CAREGIVER SUPPORT.**—Subsection (b) of such section is amended—

(A) by striking “veteran” each place it appears and inserting “individual”; and

(B) by striking “veterans” each place it appears and inserting “individuals”; and

(C) in paragraph (1), by striking “who are” and all that follows through “of this title”; and

(D) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by redesignating subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) as clauses (i), (ii), and (iii), respectively; and

(ii) in the matter preceding clause (i), as redesignated by clause (i), by striking “any individual who needs” and inserting “any individual who—

“(A)(i) is enrolled in the health care system established under section 1705(a) of this title; or

“(ii) is the biological child, grandchild, or great-grandchild of a veteran who the Secretary has determined was exposed to a toxic substance while serving as a member of the Armed Forces, if—

“(I) the individual has a health condition that is determined by the Advisory Board established by section 393 of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014 to be a health condition that results from exposure to that toxic substance;

“(II) the individual is homebound as a result of that health condition; and

“(III) the Secretary determines that the veteran has or had the same health condition; and

“(B) needs”.

(3) **DEFINITIONS.**—Subsection (d) of such section is amended—

(A) by striking “eligible veteran” each place it appears and inserting “eligible individual”; and

(B) by striking “covered veteran” each place it appears and inserting “covered individual”; and

(C) in paragraph (1), by striking “the veteran” and inserting “the eligible individual or covered individual”; and

(D) in paragraph (2), by striking “the veteran” and inserting “the eligible individual”; and

(E) in paragraph (3), by striking “the veteran” each place it appears and inserting “the eligible individual”; and

(F) in paragraph (4), by striking “the veteran” and inserting “the eligible individual or covered individual”; and

(G) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) The term ‘toxic substance’ has the meaning given that term in section 391 of the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act of 2014.”.

(c) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—

(1) **BENEFICIARY TRAVEL.**—Section 111 is amended—

(A) in subsection (b)(1), by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(G) An individual described in section 1720G(a)(2)(A)(ii) of this title.”; and

(B) in subsection (e)—

(i) by striking “veteran” each place it appears (except for paragraph (2)(B)) and inserting “individual”; and

(ii) in paragraph (2)(B)—

(I) by striking “a veteran” and inserting “an individual”; and

(II) by striking “such veteran” and inserting “such individual”.

(2) **COUNSELING, TRAINING, AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.**—Section 1782(c)(2) is amended by striking “an eligible veteran or a caregiver of a covered veteran” and inserting “a veteran who is an eligible individual or a caregiver of a veteran who is a covered individual”.

SEC. 396. DECLASSIFICATION BY DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OF CERTAIN INCIDENTS OF EXPOSURE OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES TO TOXIC SUBSTANCES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Defense may declassify documents related to any known incident in which not less than 100 members of the Armed Forces were exposed to a toxic substance that resulted in at least one case of a disability that a member of the medical profession has determined to be associated with that toxic substance.

(b) **LIMITATION.**—The declassification authorized by subsection (a) shall be limited to information necessary for an individual who was potentially exposed to a toxic substance to determine the following:

(1) Whether that individual was exposed to that toxic substance.

(2) The potential severity of the exposure of that individual to that toxic substance.

(3) Any potential health conditions that may have resulted from exposure to that toxic substance.

(c) **EXCEPTION.**—The Secretary of Defense is not required to declassify documents if the Secretary determines that declassification of

those documents would materially and immediately threaten the security of the United States.

SEC. 397. NATIONAL OUTREACH CAMPAIGN ON POTENTIAL LONG-TERM HEALTH EFFECTS OF EXPOSURE TO TOXIC SUBSTANCES BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND THEIR DESCENDANTS.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Secretary of Defense shall jointly conduct a national outreach and education campaign directed towards members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their family members to communicate the following information:

(1) Information on—

(A) incidents of exposure of members of the Armed Forces to toxic substances;

(B) health conditions resulting from such exposure; and

(C) the potential long-term effects of such exposure on the individuals exposed to those substances and the descendants of those individuals.

(2) Information on the national center established under section 392 for individuals eligible for treatment at the center.

SA 2801. Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 207, between lines 8 and 9, insert the following:

Subtitle F—VOW to Hire Heroes Extension

SEC. 451. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the “VOW to Hire Heroes Extension Act of 2014”.

SEC. 452. EXTENSION OF WORK OPPORTUNITY CREDIT FOR VETERANS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (B) of section 51(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “after December 31, 2013.” and inserting “after—

“(i) December 31, 2017, in the case of a qualified veteran, and

“(ii) December 31, 2013, in the case of any other individual.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to individuals who begin work for the employer after December 31, 2013.

SEC. 453. SIMPLIFIED CERTIFICATION OF VETERAN STATUS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (D) of section 51(d)(13) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(D) PRE-SCREENING OF QUALIFIED VETERANS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (A) shall be applied without regard to subclause (II) of clause (ii) thereof in the case of an individual seeking treatment as a qualified veteran with respect to whom the pre-screening notice contains—

“(I) qualified veteran status documentation,

“(II) qualified proof of unemployment compensation, and

“(III) an affidavit furnished by the individual stating, under penalty of perjury, that the information provided under subclauses (I) and (II) is true.

“(ii) QUALIFIED VETERAN STATUS DOCUMENTATION.—For purposes of clause (i), the term ‘qualified veteran status documenta-

tion’ means any documentation provided to an individual by the Department of Defense or the National Guard upon release or discharge from the Armed Forces which includes information sufficient to establish that such individual is a veteran.

“(iii) QUALIFIED PROOF OF UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION.—For purposes of clause (i), the term ‘qualified proof of unemployment compensation’ means, with respect to an individual, checks or other proof of receipt of payment of unemployment compensation to such individual for periods aggregating not less than 4 weeks (in the case of an individual seeking treatment under paragraph (3)(A)(iii)), or not less than 6 months (in the case of an individual seeking treatment under clause (ii)(II) or (iv) of paragraph (3)(A)), during the 1-year period ending on the hiring date.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to individuals who begin work for the employer after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 454. CREDIT MADE AVAILABLE AGAINST PAYROLL TAXES IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (2) of section 52(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by striking “QUALIFIED TAX-EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS” in the heading and inserting “CERTAIN EMPLOYERS”; and

(2) by striking “by qualified tax-exempt organizations” and inserting “by certain employers”.

(b) CREDIT ALLOWED TO CERTAIN FOR-PROFIT EMPLOYERS.—Subsection (e) of section 3111 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by inserting “or a qualified for-profit employer” after “If a qualified tax-exempt organization” in paragraph (1),

(2) by striking “with respect to whom a credit would be allowable under section 38 by reason of section 51 if the organization were not a qualified tax-exempt organization” in paragraph (1),

(3) by inserting “or for-profit employer” after “employees of the organization” each place it appears in paragraphs (1) and (2),

(4) by inserting “in the case of a qualified tax-exempt organization,” before “by only taking into account” in subparagraph (C) of paragraph (3),

(5) by inserting “or for-profit employer” after “the organization” in paragraph (4),

(6) by redesignating subparagraph (B) of paragraph (5) as subparagraph (C) of such paragraph, by striking “and” at the end of subparagraph (A) of such paragraph, and by inserting after subparagraph (A) of such paragraph the following new subparagraph:

“(B) the term ‘qualified for-profit employer’ means, with respect to a taxable year, an employer not described in subparagraph (A), but only if—

“(i) such employer does not have profits for any of the 3 taxable years preceding such taxable year, and

“(ii) such employer elects under section 51(j) not to have section 51 apply to such taxable year, and”, and

(7) by striking “has meaning given such term by section 51(d)(3)” in subparagraph (C) of paragraph (5), as so redesignated, and inserting “means a qualified veteran (within the meaning of section 51(d)(3)) with respect to whom a credit would be allowable under section 38 by reason of section 51 if the employer of such veteran were not a qualified tax-exempt organization or a qualified for-profit employer”.

(c) TRANSFERS TO FEDERAL OLD-AGE AND SURVIVORS INSURANCE TRUST FUND.—There

are hereby appropriated to the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund established under section 201 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 401) amounts equal to the reduction in revenues to the Treasury by reason of the amendments made by subsections (a) and (b). Amounts appropriated by the preceding sentence shall be transferred from the general fund at such times and in such manner as to replicate to the extent possible the transfers which would have occurred to such Trust Fund had such amendments not been enacted.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsections (a) and (b) shall apply to individuals who begin work for the employer after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 455. REPORT.

Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Commissioner of Internal Revenue, in consultation with the Secretary of Labor, shall report to the Congress on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the amendments made by sections 452, 453, and 454 in increasing the employment of veterans. Such report shall include the results of a survey, conducted, if needed, in consultation with the Veterans’ Employment and Training Service of the Department of Labor, to determine how many veterans are hired by each employer that claims the credit under section 51, by reason of subsection (d)(1)(B) thereof, or section 3111(e) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

SEC. 456. TREATMENT OF POSSESSIONS.

(a) PAYMENTS TO POSSESSIONS.—

(1) MIRROR CODE POSSESSIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall pay to each possession of the United States with a mirror code tax system amounts equal to the loss to that possession by reason of the amendments made by this subtitle. Such amounts shall be determined by the Secretary of the Treasury based on information provided by the government of the respective possession of the United States.

(2) OTHER POSSESSIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury shall pay to each possession of the United States which does not have a mirror code tax system the amount estimated by the Secretary of the Treasury as being equal to the loss to that possession that would have occurred by reason of the amendments made by this subtitle if a mirror code tax system had been in effect in such possession. The preceding sentence shall not apply with respect to any possession of the United States unless such possession establishes to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the possession has implemented (or, at the discretion of the Secretary, will implement) an income tax benefit which is substantially equivalent to the income tax credit in effect after the amendments made by this subtitle.

(b) COORDINATION WITH CREDIT ALLOWED AGAINST UNITED STATES INCOME TAXES.—The credit allowed against United States income taxes for any taxable year under the amendments made by this subtitle to section 51 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to any person with respect to any qualified veteran shall be reduced by the amount of any credit (or other tax benefit described in subsection (a)(2)) allowed to such person against income taxes imposed by the possession of the United States by reason of this section with respect to such qualified veteran for such taxable year.

(c) DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.—

(1) POSSESSION OF THE UNITED STATES.—For purposes of this section, the term “possession of the United States” includes American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the United States Virgin Islands.

(2) MIRROR CODE TAX SYSTEM.—For purposes of this section, the term “mirror code tax system” means, with respect to any possession of the United States, the income tax system of such possession if the income tax liability of the residents of such possession under such system is determined by reference to the income tax laws of the United States as if such possession were the United States.

(3) TREATMENT OF PAYMENTS.—For purposes of section 1324(b)(2) of title 31, United States Code, the payments under this section shall be treated in the same manner as a refund due from credit provisions described in such section.

SA 2802. Mr. BOOZMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

SECTION 918. REPEAL OF CERTAIN REDUCTIONS MADE BY THE BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2013.

Section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (Public Law 113-67) is repealed as of the date of the enactment of such Act.

SA 2803. Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. MARKEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 367, after line 14, insert the following:

SEC. ____ PLACEMENT OF A CHAIR HONORING AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR/MISSING IN ACTION ON THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL GROUNDS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) In recent years, commemorative chairs honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action have been placed in prominent locations across the United States.

(2) The United States Capitol Grounds are an appropriate location to place a commemorative chair honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action.

(b) OBTAINING AND PLACEMENT OF CHAIR.—

(1) OBTAINING CHAIR.—The Architect of the Capitol shall enter into an agreement to obtain a chair featuring the logo of the National League of POW/MIA Families under such terms and conditions as the Architect considers appropriate and consistent with applicable law.

(2) PLACEMENT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Architect shall place the chair obtained under paragraph (1) on the United States Capitol Grounds in a suitable permanent location.

(c) FUNDING.—

(1) DONATIONS.—The Architect of the Capitol may—

(A) enter into an agreement with any organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that is exempt

from taxation under section 501(a) of that Code to solicit private donations to carry out the purposes of this section; and

(B) accept donations of funds, property, and services to carry out the purposes of this section.

(2) COSTS.—All costs incurred in carrying out the purposes of this section shall be paid for with private donations received under paragraph (1).

SA 2804. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1982, to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 61, between lines 5 and 6, insert the following:

SEC. 314. PROGRAM ON ESTABLISHMENT OF SEMI-INDEPENDENT LIVING COMMUNITIES FOR VETERANS AND CAREGIVERS.

(a) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—Commencing not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall implement a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of establishing and promoting semi-independent living communities for covered veterans and their caregivers.

(b) COVERED VETERANS.—For purposes of this section, a covered veteran is any veteran who is enrolled in the system of annual patient enrollment established and operated by the Secretary under section 1705 of title 38, United States Code.

(c) DURATION OF PROGRAM.—The program shall be carried out during the three-year period beginning on the date of the commencement of the pilot program.

(d) LOCATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall carry out the pilot program in not fewer than three sites selected by the Secretary for purposes of the pilot program.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In selecting locations for the pilot program, the Secretary shall consider the feasibility and advisability of selecting locations in the following areas:

(A) Areas that provide access to complimentary services, including to services of the Veterans Administration.

(B) Areas that allow for group and individual interaction to occur through intentional community planning.

(C) Areas in different geographic locations and regions of the United States.

(e) LIMITATION ON EXPENSES.—In establishing and supporting the pilot program, the Secretary may expend amounts as follows:

(1) For planning and initial implementation of a pilot site, not more than \$250,000.

(2) For establishment and support of a pilot site, not more than \$750,000.

(f) REPURPOSING OF PHYSICAL SPACE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (e), the Secretary may, in carrying out the pilot program, authorize the repurposing of existing Federally owned space as the Secretary considers appropriate for purposes of the pilot program.

(2) REPURPOSING EXCEPTION.—Existing physical space used for the direct delivery of health care to patients may not be repurposed under paragraph (1).

(g) VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.—The participation of a covered veteran in the pilot program shall be at the election of the covered veteran.

(h) REPORTS.—

(1) PERIODIC REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the commencement of

the pilot program and not less frequently than once every 90 days thereafter until the completion of the pilot program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on activities carried out to implement the pilot program, including outreach activities to veterans and community organizations.

(2) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the commencement of the pilot program and not less frequently than once every year thereafter until the completion of the pilot program, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a report on the pilot program detailing—

(A) the timeline for completion, the locations selected, and conclusions of the Secretary as a result of the pilot program; and

(B) recommendations for the continuation or expansion of the pilot program.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 27, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 27, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 27, 2014, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “The Semiannual Monetary Policy Report to the Congress.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 27, 2014, at 10:30 a.m. in room SR-253 of the Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled “North Pacific Perspectives on Magnuson-Stevens Act Reauthorization.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the

Senate on February 27, 2014, at 11:15 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled "International Parental Child Abduction."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate, on February 27, 2014, at 10 a.m. in room SH-216 of the Hart Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled "Promoting College Access and Success For Students With Disabilities."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 27, 2014, at 1:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "Recycling Electronics: A Common Sense Solution for Enhancing Government Efficiency and Protecting Our Environment."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on February 27, 2014, at 10 a.m., in SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 27, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WATER AND POWER

Ms. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Water and Power of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on February 27, 2014, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Basant Sanghera, a Brookings fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of today's session of the Senate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my legal fellow, Don Bell, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the calendar year.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to immediate consideration en bloc of the following resolutions, which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 366, S. Res. 367, and S. Res. 368.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution en bloc.

Mr. REID. I ask consent the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to. (The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURES READ THE FIRST
TIME—S. 2062, S. 2066, S. 2067, and
H.R. 3865

Mr. REID. Madam President, there are four bills at the desk and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2062) to authorize Members of Congress to bring an action for declaratory and injunctive relief in response to a written statement by the President or any other official in the executive branch directing officials of the executive branch to not enforce a provision of law.

A bill (S. 2066) to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the intentional discrimination of a person or organization by an employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

A bill (S. 2067) to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning tax statuses to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities.

An act (H.R. 3865) to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I now ask for a second reading en bloc on each of these four measures, but I object to my own request en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MARCH 3,
2014

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 2 p.m. on Monday, March 3, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; that following morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Debo Adegbile with up to 30 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled in the usual form prior to the cloture vote on the nomination; and that for the purposes of rule XXII, Friday, February 28, 2014, count as an intervening day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. The next rollcall vote will be at 5:30 p.m. on Monday.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY,
MARCH 3, 2014, AT 2 P.M.

Mr. REID. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:46 p.m., adjourned until Monday, March 3, at 2 p.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

LISA S. DISBROW, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE, VICE JAMIE MICHAEL MORIN.

LAURA JUNOR, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A PRINCIPAL DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, VICE JO ANN ROONEY, RESIGNED.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

ROBERT W. HOLLEYMAN II, OF LOUISIANA, TO BE A DEPUTY UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR, VICE DEMETRIOS J. MARANTIS, RESIGNED.

INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION

JUAN CARLOS ITURREGUI, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 26, 2014, VICE THOMAS JOSEPH DODD, TERM EXPIRED.

JUAN CARLOS ITURREGUI, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JUNE 26, 2020. (REAPPOINTMENT)

ROBERTA S. JACOBSON, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 20, 2014, VICE ADOLFO A. FRANCO, TERM EXPIRED.

ROBERTA S. JACOBSON, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEPTEMBER 20, 2020. (REAPPOINTMENT)

BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS

KAREN KORNBLUH, OF NEW YORK, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BROADCASTING BOARD OF GOVERNORS FOR A TERM EXPIRING AUGUST 13, 2016, VICE MICHAEL P. MEEHAN, TERM EXPIRED.

February 27, 2014

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INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION

CONFIRMATION

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

ANNETTE TADDEO-GOLDSTEIN, OF FLORIDA, TO BE A
MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-
AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING SEP-
TEMBER 20, 2018, VICE JOHN P. SALAZAR, TERM EXPIRED.

Executive nomination confirmed by
the Senate February 27, 2014:

MICHAEL L. CONNOR, OF NEW MEXICO, TO BE DEPUTY
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Thursday, February 27, 2014

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 27, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BRADLEY BYRNE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I would like to enter into the RECORD this article written by Reverends Eason, Goodroe, and Castillo, all three of Spartanburg, South Carolina, who wrote an article that appeared Tuesday in the Greenville, South Carolina, News entitled, "God Often Reminds Us to Welcome the Stranger."

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I participated in another do-nothing Judiciary Committee hearing in this do-nothing Congress. This do-nothing hearing was unique. The goal was to make sure that the President was a do-nothing President as well.

It is not enough for the Republican majority to be setting records for how little they are doing. No. Ignoring immigration reform is bad enough—let alone the minimum wage, unemployment benefits, and the environment.

So the do-nothing Congress held a hearing yesterday entitled, "Enforcing the President's Constitutional Duty to Faithfully Execute the Laws." The in-

tent was clear: attack the President. It was held in the Judiciary Committee, which has jurisdiction over immigration, so there was lots of discussion about deferred action for DREAMers. This is where the President has exercised his power of prosecutorial discretion to temporarily suspend the deportation of people who came here to the U.S. as children.

Apparently, when the President stood just over there last month and delivered his State of the Union address, saying he would use his pen and phone to take executive action where the Congress was taking no action—well, that didn't go over well with this do-nothing Congress.

Look, I know it is easier for Republicans to blame Democrats and blame Obama and make excuses for why they can't do immigration reform this year. You have to keep it connected to reality. You put your principles for immigration reform on the table. You call them "standards." And there were some things I liked and some things I didn't. But what I said was: Good. Thank you. It's a nice start. Let's sit down and talk some more.

NANCY PELOSI and the leadership of the Democratic rank and file in the House said: Good. Great starting point. Let's talk some more.

And the President you don't trust said: Good. It's a great starting point. Let's negotiate.

How did the Republicans respond? When Democrats said: Yes, let's talk; the Republicans said: No, just kidding. Immigration reform is hard. We would rather just talk about how awful it is that people are getting health care through ObamaCare.

You put something on the table, we say let's talk, and you say no, and then blame Democrats for blocking immigration. It makes no sense.

Questioning whether the President has the power to stop the deportation of immigrants who came here as children and have lived here practically their whole lives in the U.S., what are you thinking? The President not only has the power to suspend those deportations, he has the duty to suspend those deportations.

So here we are, with the entire country demanding reform of our immigration system, demanding we change our law. We see the parents of U.S. citizen children being deported and their children put in foster care. And we say there's got to be a better way to handle this situation that is good for the taxpayer, good for the immigrant family,

good for our economy, and national security.

House Republicans see the situation and apparently say: No, we refuse to change the law because it is hard and we don't trust the President. And because the law is the law, we must deport them all.

When I and anyone else with a conscience looks at that American child being put in foster care because we have deported his parents and he looks at you doing nothing, we say something has to be done because it is the right thing to do from a moral perspective.

So, let me be clear, Mr. President, if you act to suspend the deportation of a person whose American child will be put in foster care, I will applaud you and so will most everyone on this side of the aisle. It will not only be us applauding. The three evangelical leaders who wrote the essay I entered into the RECORD, all three important religious leaders from Spartanburg, South Carolina, this is how they put it:

Immigration reform is an urgent need—action carries a profound human cost and we consistently see this in our ministries.

Hardworking, contributing members of our society live in constant fear of deportation. The victimization of individuals and families goes unreported, and families are torn apart as American-citizen children lose one or both of their parents to deportation proceedings.

They add:

We stand at a critical crossroads. Our broken and antiquated immigration system has precipitated an economic and moral crisis that we can ignore no longer.

Listen to your church elders. While you do nothing, the number on the board behind me continues to increase and the deportation machine continues.

If you don't, I and millions of others across this land will continue insisting that the President exercise his authority to stop deportation and separation of American families. We will force the President to act, and I assure you we will win that fight.

[From the Greenville News, Feb. 22, 2014]

GOD OFTEN REMINDS US TO WELCOME
IMMIGRANTS

(By Ricky Eason, Jim Goodroe, and Greg
Castillo)

Late last month, House Republicans released standards that will guide their efforts as they move forward on immigration reform. As evangelical leaders, we join voices from the business and law enforcement communities to strongly support this step.

We applaud any progress toward a solution for one of our nation's most complex and critical issues. With President Barack

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Obama's comments in the State of the Union address, Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers' mention in her Republican response, and now the release of these standards, bipartisan support for immigration reform is clear.

In a time of bitter division and partisan politics, we call on our nation's leaders to transcend their differences and pass commonsense, broad reform that will strengthen our economy, make our nation safer, and give our undocumented neighbors an opportunity to come out of the shadows and earn legal status.

As faith leaders who call ourselves "The Three Amigos," we represent the three largest ethnic groups in South Carolina. Although we come from communities with different cultural and political perspectives, we stand united in our Christian commitment to share the Gospel with all peoples (Matthew: 28:19), welcome and love the strangers in our midst (Leviticus 19:34, Matthew 25:31-46), and seek justice in our communities (Isaiah 1:17).

Throughout Scripture, God continually reminds His people to love and welcome the immigrants in their midst. As people who arrive to a strange place with no land, family or connections, immigrants are some of the most vulnerable people in any given community. For this reason, they consistently join widows and orphans in the Biblical "triad of the vulnerable" that God desires to protect (Exodus 22:21-22).

In our combined 60 years of ministry in the Upstate of South Carolina, we have served and ministered to immigrants from all over the world, documented and undocumented. While undocumented immigrants are often mischaracterized or used abstractly in political arguments, we know these people personally as our neighbors, friends, and brothers and sisters. Immigration reform is an urgent need—inaction carries a profound human cost that we consistently see in our ministries.

Hardworking and contributing members of our society live in constant fear of deportation, the victimization of individuals and families goes unreported, and families are torn apart as American-citizen children lose one or both parents to deportation proceedings. Striking a middle ground between the extreme positions of mass deportation and open borders, we join with House Republicans in advocating for a middle ground where those without documentation can come out of the shadows, make restitution, and get right with the law.

Such an approach is very different from amnesty, which is the absence of legal consequences. Instead, this realistic approach would allow undocumented immigrants to admit culpability and pay their debt to society without separating or harming families or causing undue harm to our nation's economy.

We stand at a critical crossroads. Our broken and antiquated immigration system has precipitated an economic and moral crisis that we can ignore no longer. The Republican standards moved us one step closer to a solution that will protect the border, help grow our economy, and provide an opportunity for undocumented immigrants to earn legal status and fully participate in our communities.

The time for further action is now. Congress needs to overcome its doubts, and keep moving toward the legislation that is so desperately needed.

We join other evangelical leaders from across the country in reaffirming our com-

mitment to earnestly pray for Congress and for immigration reform in 2014.

MODERNIZING OUR DRUG AND DIAGNOSTICS EVALUATION AND REGULATORY NETWORK CURES ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, this week we recognize the work of the tireless advocates for rare diseases. I had the honor of serving as the Republican chair of the Congressional Rare Disease Caucus. I consider it a very important responsibility as part of my service here and an honor to work for innovative treatments, new technologies, and to build an atmosphere of appreciation and understanding on Capitol Hill with the hard work of all the patient advocates. Their passion is often driven by the care of loved ones, and their personal stories are profiles in courage.

Hearing from countless advocates, many of whom are here in Washington this week, gives the members of the caucus renewed energy and purpose. Events held during Rare Disease Week highlight what has been accomplished and what still needs to be done, and there is a lot to do, but we will do it together.

I am working on important legislation in this area, the bipartisan Modernizing Our Drug and Diagnostics Evaluation and Regulatory Network, or MODERN, Cures Act. It will update the Nation's drug evaluation process to encourage the discovery and development of new treatments for chronic and rare diseases. The measure will also create a system that rewards efficiency and effectiveness to the benefit of all persons with rare diseases.

The MODERN Cures Act will encourage the development of drugs abandoned in the development process. It will create a new category of drugs known as dormant therapies for compounds with insufficient patent protection, drugs that offer the promise to treat conditions with unmet medical needs.

Updating regulatory networks such as patent reform will help open the pipeline for new innovations and therapies. Patients with degenerative conditions, cancers, and rare diseases await the genius of these new solutions. While we do not know the cause or cure of many of these rare diseases or cancers, we do know that awareness is the best protection, information is the best tool for innovation, and well-rounded care during and after treatment is the best therapy. That is our mission in the caucus: to work together to find solutions that make a lasting difference.

I again thank the families and the advocates whose challenges we may never completely understand, but whose commitment to their loved ones

is unyielding and inspiring. The caucus pursues its mission in their name.

COMPREHENSIVE DENTAL REFORM ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Children's Dental Health Month. It is a critical part of overall health, yet it is also an issue frequently overlooked.

Too often we think of dental care as an optional service, but in reality, it is a critical component of overall health. Its importance first hit home for me 7 years ago when I learned the story of a young Maryland boy named Deamonte Driver.

In February of 2007, 12-year-old Deamonte came from school with a headache, which had started as a toothache days before. His mother, who worked hard to make ends meet with low-paying jobs, searched for a dentist who would accept Medicaid for her children. She found not one dentist. Let me say that again. She found not one single dentist who would care for her children's teeth.

At wit's end, Deamonte's mother brought him to the emergency room, where he received medication for pain, a sinus infection, and a dental abscess. Unfortunately, that was not enough. The bacteria from Deamonte's cavity spread to his brain, and at 12 years old, he died for lack of a simple procedure early on to remove a tooth. He died less than 20 minutes away from where we stand today.

Deamonte's case served as a jarring lesson on the lack of access to care for many families. At the time of Deamonte's death, fewer than one in three children under the age of 20 in Maryland's Medicaid program received any dental service at all. In the years since, with the passage of the Affordable Care Act and new efforts to ensure a healthier America, we made significant progress in Maryland and across the country. In other words, we have changed the trajectory of so many children's destinies.

Now, 52 percent of children on Medicaid in Maryland receive dental services, even as the number of children enrolled has increased by 25 percent. In fact, through the work of government officials in Maryland's Dental Action Coalition, the State has led the way in increasing access for dental care for children.

Nationally, the number of children enrolled in Medicaid who received dental care in 2010 jumped to 46 percent, numbers that suggest progress, but also signal the work left to be accomplished.

The implementation of the Affordable Care Act has made a difference, allowing millions more children to receive critical medical and dental care

right now. Even more children could access these services if Republican Governors in some States reverse their decisions to block the expansion of Medicaid.

I have often said that our children are the living messages we send to a future we will never see. Yet, even with the improvements we have seen, more must be done to ensure that both children and adults have access to needed treatment and preventive care. That is why I introduced the Comprehensive Dental Reform Act.

My legislation would provide funding to improve access to dental care through health clinics, school-based services, and other options for underserved populations; extend comprehensive dental coverage to Americans on Medicare, Medicaid, and VA benefits; increase the number of oral health professionals in communities in need; help support research and education to better integrate oral health with regular care.

We have come a long way, but more must be done to protect the dental health of our children and every American. If we can assure no child loses his or her life because a dentist couldn't be found to pull a tooth, Deamonte's death won't be in vain.

□ 1015

CALIFORNIA WATER: IT'S THE STORAGE, STUPID

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago, President Obama visited the drought-stricken Central Valley of California. He announced his administration's response: he wants to spend another billion dollars to study climate change.

Well, I think I can save him the trouble. The planet has been warming, on and off, since the last Ice Age, when glaciers covered much of North America. The climate has been changing since the planet formed, often much more abruptly than it has in recent millennia.

Until the planet begins moving into its next ice age, we can reasonably expect it will continue to warm, on and off. That is going to mean less water that can be stored in snowpacks and, therefore, more dams will need to be constructed to store that water.

There, I just saved a billion dollars. You are welcome.

Everyone thinks that the Colorado River is the mother lode of all water in the Western United States, but the Colorado is a junior system to the mighty Sacramento River system.

The difference is this: we store 70 million acre-feet of water on the Colorado and only 10 million acre-feet on

the Sacramento. The rest is lost to the ocean.

Droughts are nature's fault. They are beyond our control. Water shortages, on the other hand, are our fault.

We have not built major water storage on the Sacramento system since 1979 because of opposition from the environmental left and, most recently, from this administration. Indeed, we have had to fight back against its attempts to tear down perfectly good existing dams, including four hydroelectric dams on the Klamath River.

Even in years of plenty, this administration has insisted on diverting 200 billion gallons of water from Central Valley agriculture for the amusement of the delta smelt, devastating the economy, drying up a quarter million acres of fertile farmland, and throwing thousands of California families into unemployment.

Because of opposition from the environmental left, we have been unable to even raise the spillway of the Exchequer Dam by a lousy 10 feet in order to add 70,000 acre-feet of storage at Lake McClure.

Because of radical environmental regulations, 800,000 acre-feet of desperately needed water—that is a 1-acre column of water, 150 miles deep—was drained from Shasta, Oroville, and Folsom Lakes last fall, knowing full well that we were heading into a potentially catastrophic drought.

Now, Governor Brown proposes to spend \$14 billion for cross-delta tunnels that will produce exactly zero additional storage and exactly zero additional hydroelectricity.

Yet, for a fraction of that cost, roughly \$6 billion, we could complete the Shasta Dam to its design elevation, which would mean 9 million acre-feet of additional water storage, nearly doubling the storage capacity of the Sacramento River system.

Everyone has seen the eerie pictures of Folsom Dam as its lake lay almost completely empty. For just a few billion dollars, we could complete the Auburn Dam, upriver of Folsom, that would hold enough water to fill and refill Folsom Lake nearly 2½ times.

That is in addition to 800 megawatts of electricity for the region and 400-year flood protection for the Sacramento Delta. The billions we are currently spending on delta levee repairs is to protect against a 200-year flood.

Both projects have been stalled for decades because of environmental opposition. Enough is enough.

Mr. Speaker, we are at a crossroads, and it is time to choose between two very different visions of water policy.

One is the nihilistic vision of the environmental left, increasingly severe government-induced shortages, higher and higher electricity and water prices, massive taxpayer subsidies to politically well-connected and favored industries, and a permanently declining

quality of life for our children, who will be required to stretch and ration every drop of water and every watt of electricity in their bleak and dimly lit homes.

The other is a vision of abundance, a new era of clean, cheap, and abundant hydroelectricity, great new reservoirs to store water in wet years to assure abundance in dry ones, a future in which families can enjoy the prosperity that abundant water and electricity provide, and the quality of life that comes from that prosperity.

It is a society whose children can look forward to a green lawn, a backyard garden, affordable air-conditioning in the summer and heating in the winter, brightly lit homes in cities, and abundant and affordable groceries from America's agricultural cornucopia.

This is a time of choosing.

HONORING REVEREND FREDERICK D. REESE DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, in continuing my commitment to honoring African Americans from Alabama during this Black History Month, today I rise to honor the renowned educator, pastor, and civil rights activist Reverend Dr. Frederick Douglas Reese on this occasion of Black History Month 2014.

For his dedication and distinguished service to the city of Selma and the State of Alabama, I pay tribute today to the life and work of Reverend Dr. F.D. Reese. This beloved pastor and civil rights activist marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, in 1965, along with hundreds of other supporters.

By the mid-1960s, Reese was president of the Dallas County Voters League and was also a local teacher who presided over the Selma Teachers Association. Discouraged by Selma's efforts to hinder voter registration for African Americans, Reverend Reese advocated that the teachers press to make sure that the students actually went to register to vote.

Reese invited Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and members of the SCLC to lead Selma's voting rights protest. King's staff helped organize months of demonstrations in Selma, with Reverend Reese's assistance.

Reverend Reese is a historical figure of modern history known for his support of the civil rights and voting rights movement. Reverend Reese rose to national prominence as a civil rights leader after Selma's "Bloody Sunday." He later marched with Dr. King from Selma to Montgomery as an advocate of voting rights.

Reverend Reese was born November 28, 1929. A believer in education, Reverend Reese graduated from Alabama

State University and Livingston University, and also attended Southern University, the University of Alabama, and Auburn University before receiving his doctorate of divinity from Selma University.

Reverend Reese has served the Selma and Dallas County community faithfully for over six decades, and his exemplary work and commitment to social justice is well-known. Notably, Reverend Reese has never left his beloved community of Selma, where he helped to make it a center for the voting rights movement in the 1960s.

He remains active today, and he is known for saying that his fight today is to get young people to realize that the movement is still continuing. "I tell young people," he said, "that they cannot rest on our victories. We have to remain committed. That means registering to vote and participating in what this country has to offer. That means making a difference to others."

Reverend Reese has stated that he marched so that everyone, regardless of color, could become a first-class citizen in America. Reverend Reese knows that you have to stand for what you believe in. He became nationally known for his beliefs and inspired others to stand as well.

Reverend Reese has remained committed to education and service. He became a principal in Selma, as well as a city council member, serving for over 12 years on the Selma City Council. He also ran for mayor in 1984 and led a campaign to motivate Walmart executives to hire African Americans as store managers.

In 2000, he was honored for his civil rights work by having a stretch of 3 miles of U.S. Highway 80, which was where he led the Montgomery to Selma March, named after him. It is now known as the Frederick Douglas Reese Parkway. The FDR Christian Academy in Indiana is also dedicated to him.

Reverend Reese has been a pastor of Selma's Ebenezer Baptist Church since 1965. Although he is retired from teaching, he is still very much active in Ebenezer Baptist Church, where he serves as the head minister emeritus and delivers a sermon each and every week.

On behalf of the Seventh Congressional District, the State of Alabama, and this Nation, during this Black History Month, I ask my colleagues to join me in acknowledging and celebrating the accomplishments of Reverend Dr. Frederick Douglas Reese from Selma, Alabama.

THE PATIENT OPTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROWN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, as the truth of ObamaCare continues to come out, we see that the promises of this administration are just not factual.

ObamaCare is crushing our economy. It is killing jobs, and it is hurting hardworking Americans and family businesses the most.

There is a solution. It is called the Patient OPTION Act. It is H.R. 2900. It repeals ObamaCare in full, and it replaces it with free market, patient-centered reforms.

The Patient OPTION Act is a set of reforms that will revitalize American health care, not through government interference but by giving doctors and patients full control over their dollars and their decisions. In fact, it is the only health care plan that completely removes bureaucrats from everyone's personal health care decisions.

The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons has endorsed the bill, and now FreedomWorks is standing behind the OPTION Act as well. In fact, FreedomWorks said: "The OPTION Act stands as the best conservative health care reform package yet released, and it should be considered for a vote as the House votes on alternatives to ObamaCare."

While ObamaCare continues down the path of destruction and failure, the OPTION Act stands ready to provide health care relief that the American people want and need.

The Patient OPTION Act will make health insurance cheaper for everyone, so that most Americans can buy health insurance that they need at a price that they can afford. It will provide access to good quality health care for all Americans, no matter what a person's financial status is or even if they have preexisting conditions, and it will save Medicare from going broke.

I urge the House to vote on the Patient OPTION Act so we may put the final nail into the coffin that is ObamaCare and move towards real patient-centered care.

I finally urge the American people to contact their Congressmen and their Senators to cosponsor the bill and demand from leadership a vote in the U.S. House and the Senate on the Patient OPTION Act.

Through the voice of We the People, the strongest political force in America, we can repeal ObamaCare and replace it with true health care reforms that will make health insurance more affordable and accessible for everyone.

I hope that the American people and my colleagues will look toward the OPTION Act as an example of what real patient-centered health care and insurance looks like and bring this bill before the House and the Senate for a vote immediately.

PRESS FREEDOM DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the

continued imprisonment of journalists in Egypt, and to restrictions on press freedoms worldwide.

Al Jazeera, the news network, has called today, Thursday, February 27, Press Freedom Day. Reporters in more than 30 cities around the world, including in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, are holding vigils to remember all the journalists currently at risk from governments that restrict the most valuable of international rights: the right to a free press and to freedom of speech.

The military-led government of Egypt has engaged in wholesale repression of the media, especially outlets thought to be sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood, since overthrowing President Mohamed Morsi in June 2013.

□ 1030

This repression culminated with the arrest of three Al Jazeera employees on December 29, 2013. On that day, Egyptian authorities arrested three employees of Al Jazeera and accused them of "spreading lies harmful to State security and joining a terrorist group."

Another 20 journalists were prosecuted this year for "airing false news," among other apparently meritless charges.

Today, four Al Jazeera reporters are currently being detained in Egypt in the Tora Prison compound for their reporting from Egypt. They are charged with being members of the organizations on which they were reporting, a charge that Al Jazeera and other international media organizations and press protection groups have rejected.

Peter Greste, Al Jazeera English's Nairobi-based correspondent; Mohammed Fahmy, their senior producer in Egypt; and Baher Mohamed, their producer in Egypt, are all being held in one small cell in Egypt at that prison under difficult and, to put it gently, Spartan conditions.

They are allowed out of their cell for only 1 hour a day, and they have been detained since December 29. They had been separated, but I would thank the Egyptian authorities for at least bringing them together, so they can at least lean on each other for support.

Abdullah al-Shami, the Al Jazeera Arabic correspondent, has been held since August of 2013 and has been on a hunger strike, protesting his detention since January. Their families in Australia, Canada, and Egypt are working tirelessly for their freedom.

I can empathize with the fear and concern their families face each day, worrying about the physical and mental health of their loved ones.

Locking up reporters has never stopped the world from finding out what is going on in a country, particularly in this modern world.

Egypt is a proud nation with a proud history and has been a longtime ally of the United States of America. The

Egyptian people, regardless of which government, party, or individuals they support, have made it clear: their choice is one of democracy and freedom.

For those goals to be achieved, freedom of the press and freedom of speech must be respected and promoted. I encourage the Egyptian Government and the Egyptian judiciary to immediately release these four journalists, as well as all other journalists currently detained, and to allow all members of the news media to operate in an unrestricted environment that is free from harassment, censorship, and arbitrary arrest and detention.

As White House spokesman Jay Carney has said:

The restrictions on freedom of expression in Egypt are a concern, and that includes the targeting of Egyptian and foreign journalists and academics simply for expressing their views.

Earlier this month, I sent a letter signed by 15 Members of the Congress, urging the Secretary of State to take immediate action to help secure the release of these journalists in Egypt; and as Egypt struggles to find its identity, it is important for the international community to remind the Egyptian leadership—and all world leaders—of the need for a free press.

The imprisonment and prosecution of journalists sends a clear and ongoing message of harassment and intimidation to all journalists in Egypt. Free those journalists. A free society requires a free press.

OBAMACARE IS OFF THE MARK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HUIZENGA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, if you thought the Obama administration's rollout of www.healthcare.gov was bad, believe it or not, it got worse for another section of our citizens.

Back in Michigan, the Second District is home to a higher number of Latino citizens than any other congressional district in the State of Michigan; and like thousands of other residents across Michigan, Hispanic Michiganders are forced to deal with higher costs, the potential loss of their doctor, and canceled insurance policies all because of ObamaCare. These citizens are in need of the same information that we are all in search of.

Well, after being delayed for more than 2 months, the administration finally unveiled its Spanish language Web site, cuidadosalud.gov, that contained an embarrassing amount of Spanglish. Even I couldn't come up with that much Spanglish.

Frankly, it is insulting that the administration would simply make up words, rather than provide an accurate translation of the President's signature achievement.

One friend made the humorous observation that it is just as bad in Spanish as it is in English, and nobody can work with it in Spanish either.

Well, Latinos are more adversely impacted in many ways by soaring premiums because the median age of the Hispanic population is actually 10 years younger than the national average; therefore, they are seeing these premiums soar, as it shifts those costs to younger Americans.

It is predicted that younger citizens are the very folks who are needed to sign up for this program in order to make it actuarially sound, but these are the same folks who are not doing so right now.

The focus of the debate, instead, needs to be on patient-centered solutions that not only lower costs, but deliver high-quality care to more citizens, none of which, unfortunately, ObamaCare actually does. I believe it is time to repeal and replace this failed policy.

You know, Mr. Speaker, House Republicans have led with numerous options, such as the Patient OPTION Act, as Dr. BROUN was just talking about; Dr. PRICE of Georgia; Dr. BENISHEK of my home State of Michigan; the Republican Study Committee plan—a number of plans are out there that have been proposed that I think would be a far better solution to those things that we can all agree on: having greater access for more people at a lower cost.

But I think one thing we can all agree on in any language is that ObamaCare is off the mark.

THE HOMELESS MIDDLE CLASS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the hardworking Americans who are being left behind in this country. Some sectors of our economy are recovering from the great recession, but not all boats are rising, not even close.

I recently spent a night in a homeless shelter and was dismayed that it was filled with members of the middle class and that earning above the minimum wage did not protect them from having to share a dorm room with dozens of other people.

The reality is a subclass of workers has emerged who do play by the rules and work hard, but find that they are literally only one step away from living on the streets by a single medical emergency or a slow day, if you are working for tips at \$2.13 an hour. They work full time; but after putting in a full day, they go home to a homeless shelter.

We interact with these people every day. They take our food orders; they fix our cars and bag our groceries.

They aren't looking for handouts or begrudging the success of others, but are simply trying to meet their basic needs. They face huge obstacles in finding a home in housing markets where rental costs have escalated beyond their reach.

Working 40 hours a week used to mean a minimum standard of living and a foothold on the first rung of the economic ladder to the middle class, but not anymore.

Let me tell you about some of their stories. One woman I spoke to was working at a Safeway in the bakery department. Her husband was working at OfficeMax in the warehouse. They were full-time wage earners, and they were living in a homeless shelter because they had to put together so much money for the first and last month's rent.

No one should be forced to live in shelters while they are working full time; but according to the National Center on Family Homelessness, 29 percent of the homeless in this country have jobs.

Let me tell you who else populates homeless shelters: veterans. That night, I listened to several veterans battling PTSD. One Iraq veteran who saw heavy combat said he once had a six-figure job in a Silicon Valley company before falling prey to drugs and alcohol.

We talked for a long time, as he slowly and haltingly unfolded his story about the worst side of battle that torments him to this day. He said: My country forced me to do terrible things.

Another veteran said she was raped while serving, but was eventually dishonorably discharged for admitting she was gay during the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy days. Her life has spiraled down since then.

A single mother with four children at another shelter I visited told me she was hastily evicted when the unit she rented was deemed illegal by housing authorities. Her \$19 an hour job made her too rich for child care assistance, forcing her into homelessness. By the way, the father is nowhere to be found to pay child support.

After listening to the hardships of working families, veterans, and single mothers, I left the next day, committed to doing more. We should all be doing more in Congress. We should all be spending a night in a homeless shelter in our districts to hear the stories of our constituents; or just spend a few hours at one. It will inform you in ways that go way beyond the mere numbers.

We need to understand why 1.6 million children are homeless at least one night in the year and why the number of homeless children enrolled in public schools has risen 72 percent since 2006.

Our inaction is crippling working families, single mothers, and veterans

who have sacrificed so much for this Nation. I call on my colleagues today to take the homeless shelter challenge.

Talk to your constituents who do not have a home, and meet the families who are failing because of our indifference and our inaction.

VENEZUELA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to lend my voice to those who are being brutally silenced by the Nicolas Maduro regime in Venezuela.

After 15 years of suffering under Hugo Chavez's rule, the people of Venezuela have watched their liberties continue to be violently stripped away as Maduro further radicalizes the country's failed policies.

These policies produce the highest inflation rates in Latin America, leading to shortages of such basic goods as milk and toilet paper, and sending Venezuela into a desperate downward economic spiral that worsens every day.

The corruption that is enabled by the Maduro government and its supporters has also contributed to a society that is plagued by rampant violence. In this country of 30 million inhabitants, nearly 25,000 homicides were committed last year alone.

Worse still, the vast majority of these murders went unpunished, creating a climate of impunity that leaves ordinary citizens paralyzed by fear and hopeless about their own future and the future of their country.

As if this was not harsh enough, Mr. Speaker, Venezuelans are now facing the regime's repressive and violent actions. Weeks ago, Maduro and his cronies unleashed a bloody crackdown on students as they demonstrated against the regime's failed policies and peacefully demanded their basic human rights and democratic freedoms.

These students are expressing the sentiments of millions of Venezuelans who are sick and tired of the regime's destructive policies and fear for what may happen next. These students were exercising freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, yet Maduro responded to their brave calls of liberty with tear gas, rubber bullets, beatings, and live ammunition.

As the number of Venezuelan protesters swelled to the millions, Maduro has only stepped up the violence and his attempts to silence his critics by censoring radio and social media platforms.

By controlling the flow of information and the major media outlets, Maduro perpetuates his absurd conspiracy theories which cast blame on everyone, but himself, for this crisis of democracy in Venezuela.

Through the use of intimidation, unjust detentions, and violence, Maduro

has followed the familiar playbook of other rulers who fear the desire of their citizens to live in freedom and under the rule of law.

This is especially the case with the brutal Castro tyranny, which has the biggest stake in keeping Maduro in power because of its mutual disdain for freedom, for democracy, for liberty, for the rule of law, and because of Castro's dependence on Venezuelan oil.

We have witnessed the Castro regime parachute in their own hired guns to help the Maduro regime continue its oppressive tactics against the people of Venezuela.

□ 1045

Since the countrywide protests began on February 12, Maduro's regime has murdered at least 14 Venezuelans, injured or unjustly detained hundreds more, and committed the worst abuses against protesters as stories of torture and other human rights violations continue to pour in.

This relentless repression will continue and intensify unless the United States and the international community speak with a unified voice and help to promote the rule of law, the human rights, and the democratic aspirations of the Venezuelan people.

I hope that we will be able to say that we did not stand idly by as the Venezuelan people were brutally repressed and that we had a voice in making sure that people knew what was going on in Venezuela. I hope that we will be able to say that we stood for justice, that we stood for peace, that we stood for human rights, that we stood for freedom, and that we stood for the rule of law at the moment when these were needed the most.

THE NEW CHANCE FOR A NEW START IN LIFE ACT OF 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I do believe that we in this country have an obligation, commitment, and duty—and just simply out of friendship—to be concerned about the American people in the many ways that they come to this Congress or to their Members of Congress or to their elected officials. After contributing over the years to make America great, when they are in their time of need, it is most appropriate for us to respond.

It is now going on almost a year that we have not responded to hardworking Americans who, over the years, have contributed taxes. Maybe some of them are veterans who served in the United States military and are willing to make the ultimate sacrifice, and now in their time of need we are fiddling and dillydallying. Unfortunately, we are doing so because our friends on the other side of the aisle cannot recognize

that, but for the grace of God, there go I.

No, these individuals are not standing in line to get unemployment insurance. They are standing in line to apply for jobs. Because the people who are eligible for unemployment insurance are individuals who have worked most every day of their life, but, unfortunately, they have found in times of economic upswings and downswings, maybe because of their training or maybe because of being a recent veteran, that they are not able to get a job immediately.

This Congress has delayed over and over again where our friends on the other side of the aisle and those Republicans in the other body claim that they cannot offer one vote to be able to pass unemployment insurance.

These individuals need our commitment, America's commitment, as they have given a commitment to us. Right now in America, there are now 48 million Americans living in poverty, 22 million children. Some of the individuals here were not at minimum wage, but they are individuals that are working and making minimum wage and can't make it either.

We must confront these issues. There must be the attitude of the Good Samaritan in this Congress. I have introduced H.R. 3888, the New Chance for a New Start in Life Act of 2014. It provides grants to nonprofits and State and local governments to train individuals for the emerging industries, the new jobs, so that individuals such as those waiting in line for employment can find employment. I would like to add that legislation as we move forward on the extension of unemployment insurance—1.3 million, 1.5 million and growing, because every week some individual who is unemployed maxes out on the 26 weeks of what they get in unemployment insurance in the State. That is why this is called emergency unemployment insurance. That is why it is called insurance, because it covers individuals who have worked, who have contributed and who have worked.

So it is disappointing that we are here again not being able to extend the unemployment insurance again, not being able to put on the floor of the House and get a vote for increasing the minimum wage to \$10.10, a bill that has been filed for more than a year, and to be able to look working families directly in the eye and suggest that they can survive on less than the increase of the minimum wage.

There are businesses that will support this. There are businesses who recognize that, as they provide for their employee, that employee churns into the economy. That employee is a consumer. That employee tries to buy a house or pays their rent or goes out and buys items for their children or for their elderly parents or for themselves.

Why don't we understand that investment is what America is all about? Because America is not broke, and we have the opportunity to invest and to create more research and development, but we are living under the umbrella with the big elephant in the room—sequester. That doesn't make sense, because this country is one of the richest countries in the world.

I can assure you that, if we invest in America, we will create jobs, and those jobs will then churn the economy again and continue to bring down the debt. I don't know why a commonsense approach to building this economy up should not be the direction of this country.

Yesterday, I spoke at a high-speed rail summit. It is very clear that a building of high-speed rail will create thousands of jobs and increase mobility of Americans, but yet the image is that we are broke, and that is a very sad commentary.

As I listened to the ads that were utilized in my State of Texas, individuals not running for Congress or the United States Senate but running for State offices, all they can talk about is standing up against Obama. I want to stand with President Obama and stand with him to build this country and make it greater. That should be the message: invest in people. That is what will make America the Nation that all have looked to.

AID FOR UKRAINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I first want to recognize Annie Lowrey and Michael Gordon—they are reporters from The New York Times—because I will summarize their article and plagiarize other portions of it in talking about Ukraine.

The world watched in wonder, concern, excitement, and sometimes horror, and marveled at the tenacity and the resiliency of the Ukrainian people. However, Ukraine is in desperate need now of billions of dollars—and quickly. Its economy is shrinking; its government treasury is empty; its foreign exchange funds are low; and its banking system is fragile. Which brings us to the point of: What are the next steps?

The first step is for the Ukrainian people to organize an interim government. I call upon them to do it as rapidly as they can so that the international community has someone then to negotiate with and deal with some of these pressing matters, and that they go into a positive direction in doing that.

The second thing is for the capitals of Brussels and Washington, D.C., to take immediate action to help offset some of these dire financial constraints that Ukraine has.

I want to applaud Secretary Kerry for already trying to address this and floating the idea of \$1 billion that would then go to immediate aid, and I want to call upon the European Union, headquartered in Brussels, and all the individual European countries to do the same. It is important now for this financial faith and confidence so that the people of Ukraine can continue to move forward and develop some financial security in this transitional period.

This is also critical in that this occurs as a bridge before the International Monetary Fund weighs in. The International Monetary Fund obviously needs to have a stable government to deal with. It also needs to have—and will ask for—reforms, transparency, rule of law, and some financial controls to get the ledger solidified in Ukraine, and that is what they should do.

So the important aspect of this debate is that the individual countries that have concern about the stability of what were formerly called the captive nations, the Eastern Bloc, now countries that want to be in the European community of free, democratic institutions, that there has to be a bridge so that, obviously, the chaos that has been involved in the country of Ukraine will not continue post the departure of their President and so that stability can reign.

I call upon the people of Ukraine to keep the faith and work hard and move forward on these reforms. I call on the governments—as I mentioned before, my own government, and the governments of the European Union—to offer immediate assistance, and I call for the International Monetary Fund to move as expeditiously and as quickly as possible to help stabilize the situation in Ukraine.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF TUSKEGEE AIRMAN CAPTAIN LEON "WOODIE" SPEARS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Each February during African American History Month, Americans come together to celebrate the important contributions of African Americans throughout the Nation. I am proud to share the remarkable story of one of my constituents, Hayward resident, Captain Leon "Woodie" Spears.

Growing up near an airfield, young Woodie always dreamed of flying. After attending college, he was given the opportunity to achieve his dreams. Woodie was among the few selected to join other young African Americans in Alabama at the Tuskegee Airfield, where he was trained to fly. During training, Woodie overcame very tough

odds, battling prejudice and racism, to earn his wings and the honor of serving with the Tuskegee Airmen.

Following training, then-Lieutenant Spears was sent to Italy at the height of World War II, serving with the all-African American 332nd Fighter Group.

Woodie's tensest moment came in March 1945, when his plane was hit by anti-aircraft fire at 32,000 feet. He was forced to make an emergency landing in Germany, only to be taken prisoner later by the German Army. Later, Woodie was able to locate Russian forces and found his way back to safety.

Captain Spears and his fellow Tuskegee Airmen proved themselves in battle abroad, but upon returning home, they faced another battle—the struggle for equality. Denied basic human dignity, they fought back. With like-minded citizens, they changed America for the better, and, of course, that fight, their struggle, still continues today.

For their brave service during World War II, the Tuskegee Airmen were collectively awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 2007. Captain Spears was among those present to receive this prestigious honor.

After Captain Spears' military career, he dedicated his life to public service, toured the country to share his military experiences during the time of segregation, and spoke up for equality for all. Although Captain Spears is no longer with us, we are reminded of the life motto he lived by: Dare to dream.

Captain Spears is just one of many African Americans with a unique story that makes our country what it is today. The story of Captain Spears reminds us that the United States has come a long way, but that we still have a much longer way to go to truly reach equality for all.

I will not rest until all Americans have an equal opportunity to achieve their dreams.

A RESPONSE TO TWO U.S. SENATORS REGARDING PUERTO RICO STATEHOOD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the junior Senator from Mississippi and the junior Senator from West Virginia spoke on the Senate floor about Puerto Rico's political status. Because Puerto Rico is a territory and not a State, we have no Senators who can respond to these two Senators on the Senate floor. So, as the only elected representative in Congress of the 3.6 million U.S. citizens that live in Puerto Rico, I respond now.

The Senators discussed the referendum that was held in Puerto Rico in November 2012. However, neither

Senator mentioned that, on the first question in that referendum, 54 percent of voters said they do not want Puerto Rico to be a territory, which means that my constituents no longer consent to the current status.

Likewise, neither Senator noted that, during a Senate hearing on the referendum held last August, the senior Democrat and the senior Republican on the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources agreed that it was indisputable and clear that the people of Puerto Rico oppose the current territory status.

□ 1100

Finally, in their remarks yesterday, neither Senator acknowledged that in the referendum, statehood received more votes than any other status option, including the current status. In short, the Senators' discussion of the historic referendum was clearly deficient.

In addition, both Senators expressed opposition to the Puerto Rico Status Resolution Act, which I introduced last year in the House and which was introduced earlier this month in the Senate. The two Senators have every right to oppose this legislation, which calls for an up-or-down vote in Puerto Rico on the territory's admission as a State and outlines the steps the Federal Government would take if a majority of voters favor admission. But to argue, as the Senators did, that the bill excludes other options other than statehood makes no sense. A binary vote, by definition, is not exclusive. Those who support statehood can vote "yes," and those who oppose it can vote "no." This was precisely the format of the votes that led to Hawaii and Alaska becoming States.

I ask the Senators: Do you believe those earlier votes were unfair or exclusionary? In any event, there are now 132 Members of the House and Senate who have cosponsored the Puerto Rico Status Resolution Act and, therefore, disagree with these two Senators' characterization of the bill. Both Senators sought to contrast their opposition to the Puerto Rico Status Resolution Act with their apparent support for a Puerto Rico-related appropriation that the President included in his fiscal year 2014 budget request at my urging, and that recently became law. Under this appropriation, funding would be provided for the first federally sponsored vote in Puerto Rico's history, to be held among one or more options that are consistent with U.S. law and policy and that would "resolve" the status issue. Contrary to the suggestion made by both Senators, a vote on Puerto Rico's admission as a State is a perfectly valid and logical way to structure the federally sponsored plebiscite to be held pursuant to this appropriation.

Both Senators also expressed the view that the status debate is a "dis-

traction" from efforts to tackle Puerto Rico's economic and fiscal challenges. This argument is familiar, but it is false. The reality is that Puerto Rico's economic problems are structural in nature and are rooted in the territory's unequal and undemocratic status. No wonder my constituents are relocating to the States in unprecedented numbers.

I look forward to the day when the men, women, and children I represent have the same rights and responsibilities as their fellow U.S. citizens residing in the States that the two Senators represent. We do not seek special treatment. We seek equality, and we intend to achieve it.

WAR ON POVERTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, it was 50 years ago that then-President Lyndon Johnson declared a war on poverty.

I rise today to join my colleagues in recognizing the 50th anniversary of this declaration, this promise that America will be a better place for the generations that come after us. I join them in restating our commitment to fighting for policies that lift all Americans up.

That American Dream that we so often speak of, it only happens if we embrace national initiatives that respect and encourage that dream—guaranteeing a fair wage, promoting educational opportunity, and investing in an economy that works for the 21st century. That is what we should be spending our time on here in Congress, not gutting consumer and safety protections, or political distractions like we see on this week's agenda.

I am not worried that the Republican Party has surrendered in the war on poverty; I am worried that they were never interested in it to begin with. A life in poverty shouldn't be a life sentence with no future, but for too many Americans, that is exactly what it is.

Mr. Speaker, 46.5 million Americans live in poverty today; 16 million of those are children. In my hometown of New York City, that is one in three children. One in three children. These families, these children, find themselves trapped in poverty, and they need a government that is willing to help them out of that morass.

Helping those in need has long been a part of our country's philosophy. That is why we have unemployment insurance for when workers lose a job through no fault of their own. That is why we have Social Security so that seniors no longer have to live out their final days in grinding poverty. That is why we have SNAP benefits so that no child goes hungry in the richest Nation on Earth.

These programs and other lifelines are under threat, putting millions of

Americans in danger of slipping further into poverty. We cannot let that happen. We cannot let the threads of our social safety net slip apart. We have to make sure that a hard day's work pays enough to make ends meet.

Today, we have millions of Americans who are the working poor. That means they get up every morning, get dressed, go to work, and they put in 40-plus hours of work—or I would suggest even more—every week, but they are not making enough money to pay the bills or even meet basic needs like food and shelter. To me, that is not how America should be. If you work a full-time job, you should be able to feed and support your family, but the fact is, someone who works full time on minimum wage only makes about \$14,000 a year—\$14,000 a year. That is just not enough money, no matter how many ways you slice it to make ends meet, and it is definitely not enough to take care of children or families. It shouldn't be this way.

For all of our differences, we should be united in the desire to give our children a better way of life than we had. That is what I know my grandparents were thinking when they immigrated here from Ireland, just like many others.

They passed the Statue of Liberty, the famous signal of hope and opportunity. The words at the base say, "Give me your tired, your poor." The Statue of Liberty doesn't say we should forget about poor children. No, it says give us your tired, give us your poor. Give us.

Imagine what a wonderful message that is, that America is actually about helping the poor. It is because that is who we are as Americans. That is what the war on poverty demands of us, living up to the ideals we have set for our country.

I urge every one of my colleagues to look inside themselves and recommit themselves to fighting the war on poverty, a fight that, as President Johnson said, we cannot afford to lose.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 8 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. YODER) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Compassionate and merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We pray that You bless this country we love with all our hearts. We thank You for those who founded our Republic upon faith, respect for law, and constitutional rights of individuals, and the common good of the Nation and all its citizens.

Fan the flame of freedom in the hearts of all Americans, and especially those who serve in the Armed Forces. Strengthen the resolve of all the Members of this people's House, that they, attentive to Your commands, may follow their consciences and always do what is right as they wrestle with complex issues.

Grant that what they say with their lips they believe in their hearts, and what they believe in their hearts they may bring to practice in their lives and in our Nation.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GALLEGO) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GALLEGO led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will now entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

A COMMONSENSE APPROACH TO REFORMING HEALTH CARE

(Mr. WALBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, last week, I held health care town halls all across my district. Constituents shared their experience with the President's health care law. While parts of the law have helped a few, a majority of people have been hurt.

We heard from a mother with a mentally ill, disabled son who lost his plan, small business owners who had to cut

employee hours to avoid the law's penalties, and even a woman battling cancer who is now facing an uncertain future because of the law. They aren't lying.

Many promises made before the law's passage haven't and couldn't be kept. Americans have a right to feel frustrated.

It is time Washington stops imposing a law that is clearly not working. We were promised lower costs. Instead, the President's own analysts reported at least 11 million people who work at small businesses will see their premiums climb while their take-home pay drops.

House Republicans offer a step-by-step, commonsense approach to reforming our health care system that really does lower costs, providing access to quality care that people need.

We remain focused on policies that grow the economy and make life better for all Americans.

CELEBRATING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF EL PASO

(Mr. GALLEGO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, El Paso, Texas, has a rich and vast history spanning back hundreds of years. With the Ysleta Mission established in the 1600s, it has deep roots in Catholicism, but it wasn't until 1914 that the Roman Catholic Diocese of El Paso was established by Pope Pius X.

On March 3, the Roman Catholic Diocese of El Paso will celebrate its 100th anniversary. The diocese provides invaluable and multilingual services to 10 counties covering nearly 27,000 miles of southwest Texas.

From the historic missions Ysleta, Socorro, and San Elizario, through the Davis Mountains, and on to the Big Bend country, the diocese is rich in history.

While these three missions are a focal point of the 100th birthday celebration, all the churches in the diocese play a critical role in their respective communities and, through these historic missions and the far-flung churches where priests and nuns still ride the circuit, the Diocese of El Paso has a profound impact on young and old alike.

As a member of the Diocese of El Paso, I wish them great success over the next 100 years.

Feliz cumpleaños. Happy Birthday.

SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL

(Mrs. WALORSKI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to pass additional bipartisan Iran sanctions leg-

islation. While we are all hoping the diplomatic efforts to address Iran's nuclear program are successful, Congress must not neglect its responsibility to be prepared for all outcomes.

Changes to Iran's nuclear programs have been minimal thus far, and Iran continues to assert that it will not dismantle its nuclear facilities. In fact, Iran's Supreme Leader himself has predicted that diplomatic talks "will lead nowhere."

Iranian state television continues to air documentaries showing simulated attacks on Israel and on American forces as well. Passage of additional sanctions will demonstrate to the Iranian regime that the American people will not be swayed by empty rhetoric or a disingenuous commitment to peace.

Congress must stand together and reinforce our diplomatic quest for disarmament with the legislative tools necessary to support this goal.

PACE FINANCING PROGRAMS

(Mr. MCNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in supporting clean energy initiative financing programs like PACE to help people and businesses invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.

Thanks, in part, to increased energy efficiency, consumption of energy is down 5 percent nationally from 2007 levels. However, the growth of new renewable energy capacity has slowed down from 18 gigawatts installed in 2012 to 5.4 gigawatts in 2013, in part, due to a lack of access to capital.

PACE financing programs allow property owners to pay back the costs of clean energy technologies over longer periods of time. Property owners can recoup their investments through property assessments.

By encouraging distributed energy production and energy efficiency, property owners quickly increase the value of their properties. PACE programs are voluntary, and property owners across the country are eager to sign up.

SMALL BUSINESS JOB PROTECTION ACT

(Mr. MESSER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, the President has unilaterally delayed the employer mandate again. It is hard not to blame him.

Last week, CMS reported that 11 million Americans who work at small businesses will have higher premiums because of the President's health care law. The employer mandate will make this bad situation worse.

That might be why the President decreed that it will only apply to businesses with more than 100 employees, instead of those with 50 employees, as the law requires, at least for now.

This is a needed temporary reprieve, but it should be granted by Congress, not Presidential decree.

The President's behavior is lawless. As *The Washington Post* described it, the President has shown an "increasingly cavalier approach to picking and choosing how to enforce this law."

I encourage our colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 2577, the Small Business Job Protection Act, which is my bill to permanently codify this relief. Let's not forget that Congress, not the President, makes the laws.

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND CRAWFORD W. KIMBLE

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Reverend Crawford W. Kimble, pastor emeritus of the Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church, which was originated in Freedmen's Town in 1872, and my dear friend. My sympathy to Mrs. Kimble and all of his family.

Reverend Kimble died earlier this week in Houston at the age of 95. He will be laid to rest on Saturday, March 1, 2014.

Reverend Kimble was the fifth of six pastors at the Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church. He served as pastor for approximately 35 years. His dream was part of the building of Good Hope in its current location on North MacGregor.

Reverend Kimble was born in Elgin, Texas, on March 24, 1918, and he followed the ministerial paths of both his father and grandfather. He began preaching at 33. He started his church in 1951, and he joined it.

He preached his first sermon in 1959, and later became the pastor to many giants of Texas, including the Honorable Barbara Jordan, the first African American United States Congresswoman from the South, and Dr. Lonnie Smith, who played an important role in minority voting rights in primary elections.

It is astounding to find that prior to becoming Reverend Kimble, he was in the newspaper business as an editor of the *Houston Informer*. He was also part of *The Kansas City Call*, which was the oldest African American newspaper, and it ended with *The Kansas City Call* that he was a part of.

After more than 30 years in retirement, Reverend Kimble continued to write. He had many books, and he also was part of the Crawford W. Kimble senior living facility, which he lived in in the Fourth Ward, Freedmen's Town, that was named after him by Reverend Elmo Johnson.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say that this giant is deserving of our honor and respect and commendation, and let us all remember his book, "Watch the Tree, It Might Fall on You."

Reverend Kimble, may you rest in peace. God bless you, and God bless your family.

IN SUPPORT OF WOMEN FOR LIFE

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solidarity with the Women for Life in Venezuela. These women, headed by opposition leader Maria Corina Machado and the wife of an opposition leader who is in jail, Leopoldo Lopez, who is also a leader in this march, they have dressed in white, and they have carried white flowers as they march peacefully, demanding that the Maduro government end its violent suppression of pro-democracy movements in Venezuela.

In these protests, at least 14 people have been killed by the state thugs of Maduro, and many more have been unjustly harassed, detained, and beaten.

It is poignant that these women model themselves after the Ladies of White in my native homeland of Cuba, because Maduro seeks to do to the Venezuelan dissenters what the Castro brothers do to theirs: silence them through intimidation.

This is a classic example of an autocratic regime's false notion that might is right, but we must show Maduro and other violators that the world is watching, and that we will not allow these transgressions to pass unnoticed.

I stand in solidarity with the Women for Life in Venezuela, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

SET ASIDE THE DO-NOTHING AGENDA

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the 1.9 million unemployed Americans, including nearly 21,000 in Nevada, people who are struggling to put food on the table, a roof over their heads, and gas in their car.

Despite the daily struggle that these people have making ends meet while looking for a new, good-paying job, House Republicans have refused to bring a bill to the floor that would extend their critical lifeline. In fact, since the beginning of the 113th Congress, House Republicans have failed to bring a single jobs bill to the floor.

The American people have made it clear that they want this Congress to work to find solutions that represent a balanced approach, not partisan ide-

ology that is out of touch with their needs and priorities.

I urge House Republicans to set aside their do-nothing agenda, address the serious challenges facing our country, and take meaningful action to achieve real results for the people we are sent here to serve.

TAX REFORM

(Mr. WILLIAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILLIAMS. Mr. Speaker, for more than four decades I have owned my own business. I am a business guy, and I can say with certainty that today's economy is the hardest economy our country has seen from a small business standpoint.

Taxes and regulations are killing businesses, stifling growth, and preventing educated, qualified individuals from becoming job creators themselves.

America's Tax Code deals some of the harshest penalties for those who contribute most to the economy. We have the highest corporate tax rate in the world, and the top wage earners pay most of the Federal income taxes.

To restore fairness for all taxpayers, we need to cut the corporate rate to a real 25 percent, and collapse the current six tax brackets to just two, at 10 and 25 percent.

We need to cut the capital gains tax, the dividends tax, and eliminate the inheritance tax. We need an improved R&D tax credit to give the American manufacturers the ability to compete globally. With these cuts, we need to ensure that hard-earned taxpayer dollars taken by the IRS are no longer subject to waste, fraud, and abuse.

In the end, it is about simplifying and enabling American businesses to compete worldwide, putting more money into Americans' wallets than Uncle Sam's, and creating cash flow and opportunity for America. It is a winning formula. It has worked before. Let's try it again.

In God we trust.

□ 1215

A LIVING WAGE

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I signed a discharge petition in an effort to force an up-or-down vote on legislation that I have cosponsored, and that is H.R. 1010, the Fair Minimum Wage Act, which would increase the Federal minimum wage to \$10.10 over the period of the next few years, giving up to 25 million Americans a well-deserved pay raise.

Many Americans who work at the minimum wage live in poverty; and I

know that there are some in this body, particularly on the other side, who fundamentally don't even believe that there ought to be a minimum wage. That is a minority view.

Republicans and Democrats across the country believe that not only should we have a minimum wage, but that it ought to be increased. A recent poll showed that 71 percent of Americans favor an increase in the minimum wage.

So for those who believe that there ought to be a wage that is a living wage, it has to be a wage that does not put people in poverty. For that reason, I urge my colleagues to sign the discharge petition, and let's have a vote to give Americans the raise that they deserve.

CONGRATULATING THE 2014 WINTER OLYMPIANS

(Mr. STEWART asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. STEWART. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate all 230 American athletes who participated in the Sochi Olympics, and I am proud to say that 15 of these Olympians were from my home State of Utah and that seven of them won medals. Through their talent, their skill, and dedication, they represented Utah and our country very well.

These Utah athletes come from very different backgrounds. Some of them are in the middle of their careers. Some of them are military members. Some are students. Many of them are parents.

They showed dedication and effort and that sacrifice can lead to success. These athletes should inspire all of us to strive to achieve our goals. As a father, I have seen their example inspire my six children.

While these Olympians weren't guaranteed a medal, that didn't stop them from working and sacrificing in every way to achieve their goals. We should all continue to look to these Olympic athletes for inspiration, to become better, and to be more dedicated to our goals, even when it is tough.

I wish these athletes good luck in the future and thank them for their inspiration.

WIND POWER

(Mr. LOWENTHAL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, climate change is real and is happening now. To reduce the harmful effects of human-caused greenhouse gas pollution, this Nation and the world must transition to clean energy sources. That is why I am here today to support wind power and for extending the re-

newable electricity production tax credit.

My home State of California has been a leader in deploying this key technology, and it has paid dividends. Wind powers over 2.1 million California homes, and California is the home to 21 wind manufacturing facilities which have helped to stimulate capital investments of over \$11 billion.

The California wind industry also supports over 7,000 jobs, ranking California as the second-highest wind-related job incubator in the Nation.

Wind power is part of the energy portfolio of the future. Let's make that future happen now and support the production tax credit.

OBAMACARE

(Mr. TIPTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, last week, the nonpartisan Office of the Chief Actuary for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services reported that as many as 11 million small business employees throughout the United States may see their health premiums rise after full implementation of ObamaCare.

That means approximately 14 percent of the men and women who are participating in the U.S. workforce will have less take-home pay and higher costs for services that they are forced to buy.

Just last week, I met with small businesses in Grand Junction, Colorado, and discussed this very issue. They told me about how they already provide affordable, quality health care plans for their employees. However, like many small businesses, they are concerned and confused about what the future holds for them under the President's health care law.

We can provide certainty to businesses, families, and every American looking to have affordable and accessible health care, but the President's health care law isn't the answer. Almost every week, there are new reports of increased costs and decreased access to care.

Why don't we put people first, rather than putting government first? That is why I support replacement legislation, such as H.R. 2300, making it market-based, affordable, and lower cost for our people.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MR. GEORGE SAJEWYCH

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to pay tribute to an American hero, Mr. George Sajewych, a U.S. citizen who experienced firsthand the violence in Kiev while peacefully

assembling in solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

An esteemed, long-time retired broadcaster for the Voice of America, originally from Chicago, Mr. Sajewych was one of many journalists to have endured ruthless violence firsthand when he was beaten by Berkut police forces.

The attack left him bleeding in the street, surrounded by the shreds of the helmet that he had worn for protection. His motorcycle helmet shattered by the beating. He was hospitalized after having suffered serious injuries.

I commend Mr. Sajewych for his fortitude and continuing resolve in standing for freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of the press, the fundamentals of an open society.

I urge our President to swiftly impose targeted financial and travel sanctions on any Ukrainian Government official found to have endorsed this brutal violence and to channel all financial assistance offered by our country to Ukraine only to those who are committed to upholding the rights of freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of press.

Let us praise Mr. Sajewych for his courage and inspiration, standing at liberty's side.

HONORING THE DEDICATION OF THE SAM JOHNSON HIGHWAY

(Mr. MARCHANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the naming of U.S. Highway 75 in north Texas as the Sam Johnson Highway, after my friend and our colleague, Representative SAM JOHNSON. This Monday, over 200 gathered to attend the public sign unveiling ceremony in Collin County, Texas.

This highway is a major artery in the north Texas area. The recognition it now provides is fitting, but can never repay Congressman JOHNSON for his sacrifice and service for our country, first in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean and Vietnam wars, including 7 years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam.

After returning and being reunited with his family, he put years of hard work into being an entrepreneurial homebuilder in his community. He went on to serve in the State legislature and now serves as the U.S. Representative to Collin County, which he calls home.

I am honored to work with him in this Congress and on the Ways and Means Committee. I would like to thank my friend from Texas, SAM JOHNSON, for his years of service to our communities and our Nation.

SPECIAL INTERESTS IN ELECTIONS

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, we need a government by the people and for the people, not a government run by the special interests and for the corporations. But how do we get there?

First, we remove barriers to voting. From overcoming hurdles to absentee voting and difficulty with registration, to long lines at the polls, more can be done to make sure that our elections work for all voters.

We should take a good long look at the thoughtful recommendations of the President's bipartisan election commission, which listened to voters and to election officials and bundled together the best ideas.

Second, we can't let the big money interests choose our leaders. We need public campaign financing, like the bill recently introduced by my colleague, Representative SARBANES of Maryland.

In a post-Citizens United world, the voices of special interests will be much louder than those of average Americans, unless we act now and bring back government run by the people and for the people.

VENEZUELA

(Mr. DIAZ-BALART asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, for the last several weeks, the people of Venezuela have risen up to protest the corruption, the food shortages, the soaring crime rates, and particularly, the alarming repression in Venezuela.

Mr. Speaker, since the protests began, more than 500 people have been arrested, approximately 150 injured, and over a dozen have been killed. It is disgraceful to think the Chavez-Maduro regime has actually managed to devastate the economy of Latin America's largest oil exporter to the point where, now, the Venezuelan people are facing shortages of basic goods, like cooking oil and even toilet paper.

Maduro has intensified his intimidation tactics by increasing political arrests and violence, labeling the opposition as terrorists and enemies of the State, and actually even expelling independent media, such as CNN.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the international community to aggressively express their commitment to the basic freedoms that are under assault in Venezuela; and I also, Mr. Speaker, urge our administration to—at the very least—demand that the OAS immediately convene its Permanent Council to invoke the democratic charter, since it has clearly been violated.

Now is the time to stand with the Venezuelan people.

ANNIVERSARY OF SUPREME COURT UPHOLDING 19TH AMENDMENT

(Ms. HANABUSA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HANABUSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 92nd anniversary of *Leser v. Garnett*, where the Supreme Court upheld the 19th Amendment, which protects a woman's right to vote.

Our Nation's suffragettes stood up to the injustice. They fought for their rights. Without their perseverance and fearlessness, I and many of my colleagues would not be standing here today.

These suffragettes represent a long line of women who said no to the status quo, inspiring future leaders, like our very own former Congresswoman Patsy Mink from Hawaii, who authored title IX, a historic milestone for equality in women's sports.

Today, we honor the sacrifices of these suffragettes, and we commit ourselves to further equality, whether it means breaking the glass ceiling or lifting the floor beneath their feet.

Note that women make up two-thirds of the minimum wage workers. Increasing the minimum wage to \$10.10 is critical for our Nation's hardworking women struggling to pull their families out of poverty.

It is time for my colleagues to recognize this. In the legacy of the suffragettes, we will continue to fight for what women deserve: equality.

AMERICA'S RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

(Mr. COTTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COTTON. Yesterday, I introduced the LOCAL Act, a bill allowing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to restore joint management programs with local nonprofit organizations to construct, operate, and maintain recreational facilities at lakes and reservoirs across the country.

Despite years of successful operation, the Corps recently determined they lacked the authority to continue these joint management programs and are in the process of suspending all local partnerships.

Arkansans know better than anyone how to manage our lands, and cuts to the Corps' budget shouldn't dictate our ability to enjoy these facilities. For years, these partnerships have allowed local groups, like the Friends of Lake Ouachita, to successfully maintain recreational facilities across our State.

Arkansas is known as the Natural State. One of our greatest points of pride is access to public lands and water. The LOCAL Act will ensure that facilities like Lake Ouachita and Beaver Lake remain easily accessible to future generations.

□ 1230

SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

(Mr. HOLT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, we adults ask students to be model citizens, to devote themselves to their studies, and to become tomorrow's leaders. But what is our message when their leaders can't even ensure a school building that passes code inspection? Every day, the students at Trenton Central High School attempt to learn in a building that suffers from electrical fires due to poor wiring and leaking water; dripping bathroom sewage; and an absence of science labs and general inadequacy and indignities.

To fix these problems and provide Trenton students with a facility worthy of students and teachers for the 21st century, it is projected to cost \$130 million. To bring all of New Jersey's schools up to code will cost several billions of dollars. Many States cannot manage that cost alone. We need to invest in our children by devoting Federal funds to school construction and renovation. With a modern school infrastructure, we can ask our students to become the community and world leaders we want them to be.

NATIONAL LATINO ENROLLMENT WEEK

(Mr. DENHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, the administration has declared this week to be National Latino Enrollment Week in the hopes of mounting a special push—a big rush—of Latinos rushing to sign up for the Affordable Care Act because it is supposedly going to help their lives in so many ways. Yet Latinos nationwide, like millions of other Americans, are discovering that they just can't afford the Affordable Care Act. Not only is it causing them to lose coverage, but they also see their premiums rise and have their health care plans canceled.

The Spanish site that the administration promised would help people enroll reads as if it were written by a first-year Spanish student, and it has proven to have more problems than the actual English version of healthcare.gov.

Where we live in the Central Valley, Latinos already struggle to access doctors. We have got a huge shortage of doctors, doctors that are willing to take Medicare and Medicaid, because of the reimbursement rates. So now, with the Affordable Care Act, we are going to have even fewer doctors and less access. Health care reform that doesn't

increase their access is meaningless. The Affordable Care Act has also heightened their struggles.

Mr. Speaker, we must repeal and replace this damaging law with one that benefits the Latino community and millions of others across the country.

ALL ECONOMIC REGULATIONS ARE TRANSPARENT ACT OF 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM). Pursuant to House Resolution 487 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2804.

Will the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. YODER) kindly take the chair.

□ 1232

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2804) to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes, with Mr. YODER (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Wednesday, February 26, 2014, amendment No. 6 printed in House Report 113-361 offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) had been disposed of.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. CONNOLLY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 7 printed in House Report 113-361.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

In the table of contents of the bill, insert after item pertaining to section 405 the following:

TITLE V—EXCEPTION

Sec. 501. Exception.

Add, at the end of the bill, the following:

TITLE V—EXCEPTION

SEC. 501. EXCEPTION.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the provisions of this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not apply in the case of a rule pertaining to air quality or water quality, or a consent decree or settlement agreement pertaining to such a rule. In the case of such a rule, consent decree, or settlement agreement, the provisions of law amended by this Act shall apply as though such amendments had not been made.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 487, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am pleased to offer this simple amendment that would exempt rules that further protect our Nation's air and water quality from these new proposed hurdles. It is no surprise that a 2012 American Lung Association report found that Americans support the Clean Air Act by a 2 to 1 margin. Why? Because it is working. Harmful emissions are dropping, and air quality is better than it was a decade ago. But we still have 131 million fellow Americans—42 percent of the Nation—living in communities where pollution levels are deemed harmful for at-risk populations: young people and senior citizens. In fact, the national capital region is one of those areas. It is a non-attainment area for ground-level ozone.

It is pretty clear what my friends on the other side of the aisle think of government regulation, but I am curious if they have actually asked their own constituents what they think. For example, I wonder if the residents living downstream from the West Virginia chemical spill where a toxic substance has now been carried into neighboring Ohio and other points south and west share the same disdain for water quality regulation as some of my friends on the other side of the aisle. Or what about the residents near the North Carolina coal ash spill which is affecting drinking water there and in some parts of my own home State, Virginia?

Maybe we should ask the millions of parents who own one of the child car safety seats that are now the subject of a massive nationwide recall if they would feel more comfortable with less rigorous standards for safety for their children. I introduced another amendment to this bill to exempt those rules for child car safety seats so we can continue to have rigorous standards. Unfortunately, my friends on the other side of the aisle who control the Rules Committee refused to allow a vote on that amendment.

A poll conducted by the American Lung Association found nearly three of four respondents believe we shouldn't have to choose between this health and safety standard and promoting the economy on the other hand. They understand that is a false choice and that we can and must do both. But my friends on the other side of the aisle continue to perpetuate this canard that government regulation is a heavy boot on the neck of business in America.

Another poll conducted by the American Sustainable Business Council found 78 percent of employers believe responsible regulation is important for protecting small businesses from unfair competition and leveling the playing

field. In fact, the most recent Wells Fargo/Gallup index of small businesses found just 11 percent cited regulations as a significant challenge when rated against other challenges they face in the economic marketplace.

Employers and the American people get it, Mr. Chairman. They recognize there is a role for fair, reasonable, and responsible regulation in protecting public safety and health and in promoting the economy. Again, the American Lung Association poll found a 2-to-1 majority believes environmental safeguards will spur innovation and investment and create jobs.

Now, I understand the frustration expressed by some of my colleagues that the current regulatory process can sometimes be too long, and sometimes it is, averaging 4 to 8 years in some cases. But the bill before us today will do nothing to reduce that timeline. Instead, it prolongs that process by requiring even more redundant analysis. How ironic is that?

This bill would strengthen the hand of special interests by allowing them to challenge Federal agencies on whether they assessed every possible alternative and chose the one least costly to it. Their bill would erect new hurdles for citizens to petition their government to finally act on long overdue or congressionally mandated safeguards and protections.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and to beat back these tired and hackneyed efforts by my friends on the other side who, on behalf of corporate polluters, have proposed this legislation. Our constituents expect safe drinking water, reliable child car safety seats, clean air, and countless other protections. Let's work together to improve the regulatory process rather than gut it and return our communities to the law of the jungle.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, air and water quality regulations, done properly, serve important goals, and I agree with my friend from across the aisle. He said the bill, however, his interpretation and ours are just different. The bill does nothing to frustrate the achievement of these goals.

But Federal air and water regulations have been the source of many of the most abusive, unnecessarily expensive, and job- and wage-destroying regulations in American history. Air regulations, for example, were precisely the regulations that inflicted the harm on Rob James, Avon Lake, Bob Sells and his workers, and Allen Puckett and his workers that I mentioned in, frankly, my opening statement in discussion yesterday. To remove these areas of

regulation from the bill would severely weaken the bill's important reforms to lower the crushing costs of Federal regulation.

In looking at this amendment and looking at the discussion that was just had, Mr. Chairman, by the gentleman offering, it goes back to a tired argument that is not worthy of debate on this floor. For the opposite to present an amendment is fine. To present an amendment to say that you don't like the way we are wanting to do that is fine. But to retread and rework the idea that I or my children or anybody else's children want to breathe dirty air or drink dirty water or have child seats fall apart or child restraints be broken or anything else is just not worthy of debate here on this floor.

Let's take the bill. I will take your amendment, and it is offered in good faith. But when we look at this bill, we are looking at jobs. Again, the argument that was made to protect the government bureaucracy from more work is not also an accurate statement, especially when it does protect the men and women—the workers.

I said it yesterday. I will say it again. Do you want a clear determination on what party is looking out for whom? Do you look out for government workers and more regulations, or do you look out for the moms and dads who go to work to earn their living to take care of their families, to breathe clean air, to have clean water, and to have safety environments in a limited regulatory reform, which is what our Founders intended? That is what we do here.

I urge a "no" vote on this amendment and reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Gosh, if there is a tired debate on this floor, my good friend from Georgia has just identified it. It is that hackneyed phrase, "crushing burden of regulation." Well, that would come as news to most Americans who have benefited from clean air regulation, which, by the way, has net created jobs, not destroyed them.

The Republican narrative here couldn't be more false except that they are protecting their base—their corporate base, in my view—at the expense of the average American citizen who wants to breathe clean air, who wants to drink clean water, and who wants to protect their children.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I have learned here through many times here in Congress that we do come from different areas, but I am just amazed at my friend across the aisle because I am not sure which business, which one is working out when you look at the workers that I just named and you look at the businessowners that come to my office and discuss the fact that jobs are being lost and that

things are being taken here because of regulatory burden. The tired argument here is not the fact.

The honest argument here is: What is the role that we are supposed to be doing? Where is the government role that should be there that should provide good regulatory reform? And I think what was actually said was that providing hurdles to keeping regulatory reform open. What we are saying is we want it transparent. We want businesses to be a part. And to have anything said less and to say, again, to rehash an argument that implies that others want to breathe dirty air, to drink dirty water, and to in any way harm the American people by simply bringing sense to our regulatory process is just simply a straw man. When you have got nothing else to talk about, let's throw the kitchen sink at it.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time and urge a "no" vote on this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 113-361.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

In the table of contents of the bill, insert after item pertaining to section 405 the following:

TITLE V—EXCEPTION

Sec. 501. Exception.

Add, at the end of the bill, the following:

TITLE V—EXCEPTION

SEC. 501. EXCEPTION.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the provisions of this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not apply in the case of a rule made by the Secretary of Homeland Security, or a consent decree or settlement agreement pertaining to such a rule. In the case of such a rule, consent decree, or settlement agreement, the provisions of law amended by this Act shall apply as though such amendments had not been made.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 487, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

□ 1245

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak to the Jackson Lee amendment with great enthusiasm for its seriousness, and I say to my colleagues, there are no smoke and mirrors here.

This amendment exempts rules made by the Secretary of Homeland Security or any consent decree or settlement made as a result of this rule.

I don't think that we need to further educate our very diligent Members, whether they are on the Homeland Security or Judiciary or Intelligence or Armed Services Committees, or many other committees, about the new climate in which we live in this world after 9/11. We simply have to look at the landscape that we are around as we speak: Central African Republic, South Sudan, Ukraine, Venezuela, Nigeria, and Syria. Just a few days ago, I was on the Israeli side of the Syrian border, and I could look into a city very close and see constant mortar fire.

Everybody understands that with the new climate of franchise terrorism, al Qaeda travels from one conflict area to another, each time posing a threat to the United States of America or the West. Yet, we have legislation that does not exempt the actions of the Secretary of Homeland Security, who may be required to make emergency decisions.

This particular legislation has 60 new barriers, procedural requirements, before an important rulemaking can go forward. It requires a 6-month online presence before you can move forward.

I would offer to say that the conflicts in the Central African Republic and South Sudan, the crisis in the Ukraine, on which America is standing on the sides of those who believe in democracy, the fighting in Nigeria between Christians and Muslims, and the conflict in Syria that has a terrible impact as we move forward on the Palestinian and Israeli peace process—how can we not exempt the Secretary of Homeland Security?

Mr. Chairman, not only do we deal with issues of terrorism, but it is also the stand-up agency when America faces natural disasters. For example, Hurricane Rita was the fourth-most-powerful Atlantic storm in history, and made landfall with 120-mile-per-hour winds, which had devastating consequences for many of my Texas constituents. That occurred just a few years ago. Hurricane Rita came out of the gulf, but Hurricane Sandy came out of the east coast and the Atlantic waters. It brought havoc that no one ever expected. FEMA was vital in the restoration of the lives of Americans. In that instance, I would think we would want any rulemaking process to move quickly, to be able to bring aid to those in need.

As indicated, this is a question of national security and the protection of

our people. We need swift responses to imminent threats to national security. We need to have flexibility for the Secretary of Homeland Security to make those decisions. H.R. 2804 was created under the guise of increasing transparency. I would offer to say that there are instances when all of us know that our security is crucial.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that my colleagues support this exemption for Homeland Security to protect America's homeland and national security.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong support of my amendment to H.R. 2804 that provides a common-sense exception to the "All Economic Regulations are Transparent Act of 2014."

H.R. 2804 makes numerous changes to the federal rule-making process, including:

1. requiring agencies to consider numerous new criteria when issuing rules, such as alternatives to rules proposals;
2. requiring agencies to review the "indirect" costs of proposed and existing rules;
3. giving the Small Business Administration expanded authority to intervene in the rule-making of other agencies; and
4. requiring federal agencies to file monthly reports on the status of their rule-making activities.

My amendment provides an exception to the "All Economic Regulations are Transparent Act of 2014" for rules made by the Secretary of Homeland Security or any consent decree or settlement made as a result of the rule. My amendment is simple in that it provides an exception for critical agency rules that the general safety and well-being of individuals in the United States.

Mr. Chair, Hurricane Rita, which was the fourth most powerful Atlantic storm in history made landfall with 120 mile per hour winds and had devastating consequences to Texans, many of whom were my constituents. Without Homeland Security how do Americans get through hurricanes and tornadoes?

The ALERRT Act packages four measures, all of which are designed to stop, delay, or weaken new protections. The Regulatory Accountability Act (RAA) is the most far-reaching of these measures. It amends the Administrative Procedure Act, but goes far beyond establishing procedures for rulemaking. The RAA acts as a "super mandate" overriding requirements of landmark legislation such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act and Mine Safety and Health Act.

Homeland Security is one of the most pre-eminent concerns of the federal government. The increased need for national security following the attacks of September 11th has increased the demand for Homeland Security to find more effective means to preempt attacks against our nation. And that is why my colleagues should vote to exempt the Department of Homeland Security from this legislation today.

And Mr. Chair, I was pleased to meet with, Jeh Johnson the new Secretary, on Tuesday and he appeared before the Homeland Security Committee yesterday, and I am encouraged to see that he understands just how critical his mission is and the utter importance of being able to respond swiftly to address prob-

lems as they arise. Swift responses to imminent threats to national security allow the Department of Homeland Security to protect the rights and interests of individuals in the United States. Unnecessary delays to rules set forth by the Department of Homeland Security can waste scarce resources that keep our nation safe as well as impede the regular operations of the agency.

What we have before us in H.R. 2804 is an unnecessary reporting burden for the Department of Homeland Security. The Regulatory Flexibility Act and Executive Order 12866 already requires agency status updates twice a year. H.R. 2804 requires monthly reporting, which would create additional difficulties for agency to produce requisite reports. H.R. 2804 requires the OIRA to issue an annual cumulative report even though this reporting is already part of existing laws, thus creating duplicative reporting mechanisms and wasting limited federal resources.

The additional reporting requirements create a delay on agency activity and waste valuable resources in creating extraneous and duplicative records. The bill also prematurely calls for agencies to provide cost estimates for proposed rules that are to be finalized in the following year. Executive Order 12866 does not require agencies to report full cost estimates, but rather makes cost-benefit information discretionary. Even though the rule requires the estimation of costs, it prohibits benefit calculations of agency rules.

Further, H.R. 2804 precludes rules from taking effect until the information required by the act is available on the Internet for at least six months. This provision of the bill severely limits agencies' abilities to respond to imminent threats of national security. The amendment would preclude such a delay in relation to Homeland Security rules, consent decrees, or settlements.

H.R. 2804 was created under the guise of increasing agency transparency and regulation, but in actuality, the bill serves as an impediment to the government's ability to implement national security protections with expedience. My amendment to H.R. 2804 is necessary to curb unnecessary delay, waste, and duplication and ensuring that the Department of Homeland Security is able to make haste—not waste.

I ask my colleagues to please support the Jackson Lee amendment.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, the amendment seeks to shield the Department of Homeland Security, a department in need of good government reform, from all of the government rule-making reforms in this bill. We should not do that. The bill does not threaten needed regulation in the Department of Homeland Security's jurisdiction but simply ensures that DHS will avoid unnecessary regulation, issue smarter, less costly regulation when necessary, and not enter into sweetheart backroom deals for more regulation under the cloak of judicial orders. I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman very much, and we obviously have a great deal of mutual respect, I hope, but a great deal of disagreement on the intent and the impact of this legislation.

Let me say that Homeland Security has vast jurisdiction. Congress created it. In the course of that, it has a great deal of jurisdiction dealing with humanity and the necessity to help humanity. So in the crisis of dealing with issues of individuals who have been unfairly put in front of a deportation order who need to have the response of this agency, or the agency needs to correct some aspect of the many responsibilities that it has, from natural disaster to terrorism to ensuring the security of the border, the needs of Customs and Border Protection, the needs of ICE officers for regulatory schemes that will give them better tools to ensure the security of this Nation, I would argue that a 6-month delay, that 60 barriers being put in place of that regulatory scheme, does not give comfort to the American people that their homeland is secure. Give the Secretary of Homeland Security and his fellow Secretaries or Assistant Secretaries or Directors the responsibility and the leadership that they need to have to protect the homeland.

I would just offer to say that my amendment is common sense. It deals with consent orders and settlements that the Homeland Security Secretary is making in the course of making America safe. Please support the Jackson Lee amendment, commonsense security, protecting the homeland, and having us do the job we should be doing on behalf of the American people.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I do respect the concerns raised by the gentlewoman from Texas. The Department of Homeland Security has vast jurisdiction, however, and it is an agency cobbled together, a department cobbled together with authorities from a whole host of other areas, and they have not always made things work very effectively there. One of the things that they need is more discipline and guidance in terms of how regulations are written, and that is exactly what this legislation does.

The gentlewoman raises a legitimate concern with regard to the speed with which regulations can be issued in certain emergency circumstances. I would call her attention to section 653 of the legislation, which covers just those circumstances in which the President can take action swiftly because of an imminent threat to health or safety or other emergency. As a result of that, this amendment is not needed because it takes the Department completely out of the reforms provided in this bill. Therefore, I must continue my opposition to the amendment. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOODLATTE. I am happy to yield to the gentlewoman.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman for his explanation. We have noted 653, and you are absolutely right. It thrusts that in the hands of the President of the United States, but I would argue that the Congress created the Department of Homeland Security with a Secretary to be able to be the first line of defense, and I would argue that it is important that we exempt the Secretary of the Department from that because of their number one responsibility, which is securing the homeland, and we live in a different climate.

I think the gentleman accepts the fact that terrorism has become franchised at this moment. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I ask individuals, again, to support the Jackson Lee amendment.

Mr. GOODLATTE. I thank the gentlewoman. I am not persuaded that the Department of Homeland Security, especially with a provision that provides for emergency relief from any of the provisions of the bill, cannot be greatly benefited, and all those who have to deal with the Department of Homeland Security will not be greatly benefited, if the Department is operating more effectively and if the regulations they promulgate are more efficient and more effective and more addressed toward what really needs to be done to address problems and not simply adding to the regulatory burden that businesses and American citizens face. So I continue my opposition to the amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 9 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 9 printed in House Report 113-361.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk as the designee of Mr. JOHNSON.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

In the table of contents of the bill, insert after item pertaining to section 405 the following:

TITLE V—EXCEPTION

Sec. 501. Exception.

Add, at the end of the bill, the following:

TITLE V—EXCEPTION

SEC. 501. EXCEPTION.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the provisions of this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not apply in the case of a rule that the Director of the Office of Management and Budget determines would result in net job creation and whose benefits exceeds its cost, or a consent decree or settlement agreement pertaining to such a rule. In the case of such a rule, consent decree, or settlement agreement, the provisions of law amended by this Act shall apply as though such amendments had not been made.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 487, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, as I indicated, I am moving this on behalf of Mr. JOHNSON. The amendment is simple. It would exclude from this bill any rule that would result in net job growth.

I ask that my colleagues support this commonsense amendment to promote job growth and strengthen the middle class. After all, the stated purpose of the ALERRT Act is to grow the economy and create jobs. Although this bill purports to grow the economy and create jobs, we cannot pretend that this bill's myopic focus on regulations will accomplish any of these goals.

I have profound concerns with the ALERRT Act. The bill would undermine the ability of agencies to protect the public interest. It is a continuation of the majority's obstructionist approach that led to the sequester and the shutdown of the Federal Government. The majority continues to rely on debunked and partisan studies that presuppose that regulations have harmful effects. Far from it. There is ample, bipartisan evidence that have found that regulations have a negligible effect on the economy and create jobs.

No one would argue that there is not a positive impact from the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act, and all of the regulatory scheme that has provided for a safe workplace for our workers under OSHA, and those who protect the quality of life of Americans from sea to shining sea.

Leading scholars such as Wake Forest law professor Sidney Shapiro has testified that all of the available evidence contradicts the claim that regulatory uncertainty is deterring business investment. Bruce Bartlett, a senior policy analyst in the Reagan and George H.W. Bush administrations, has observed that regulatory uncertainty is the canard invented by Republicans that allows them to use current economic problems to pursue an agenda supported by the business community year in and year out. In other words, it

is a simple case of political opportunism, not a serious effort to deal with high unemployment.

Nevertheless, the House Republican leadership continues to bulldoze its deregulatory agenda through Congress. This deregulatory train wreck threatens to send us back to the days before the Wall Street collapse, a financial catastrophe that could have been avoided by responsible policies. Instead of working together to come to a bipartisan solution and end sequestration, this Congress has continued an agenda to make life worse for American families. I urge all of my colleagues to support the Johnson amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I share and welcome the gentlewoman's concerns about the impacts of regulations on jobs, but I submit that the right way to address that concern is to join me in supporting the Rothfus-Barr amendment that would make sure that agencies do a much better job of identifying adverse job impacts before they impose them.

The gentlewoman's amendment, offered on behalf of the gentleman from Georgia, unfortunately would have the opposite effect; that is because it would give the executive branch a strong incentive to manipulate its jobs impact and cost-benefit analyses to avoid the requirements of the bill.

The amendment also puts the cart before the horse, offering carve-outs from the bill based on factors that cannot be determined adequately unless the important analytical requirements in the bill are applied in the first place.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, a few minutes ago I stood to the floor of the House and showed a picture that has been made by the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) of a long line of suit-wearing Americans looking for jobs. Yet this Congress, my friends on the other side of the aisle, have refused to pass extended unemployment insurance, emergency unemployment insurance. Yet they put legislation on the floor pretending to create opportunities for American workers. I can tell you what will create opportunities for American workers, and that is to extend the unemployment insurance, or in actuality, pass my legislation, H.R. 3888, that provides training for individuals for newly created job skills. Or, in fact, as so many of us have done, sign a discharge petition to raise the minimum wage. That is a story for creating jobs or lifting up the opportunities for the American people.

This amendment says simply, if you join us and you believe in job growth,

if there is a regulatory scheme that in fact deals with job growth, then this is the amendment that you should support. And I would argue you should support an increase in the minimum wage, and today we should put on the floor of the House the extension of the unemployment insurance, emergency insurance for my constituents and Americans across America. The number is 1.3 million in 2013, rising to 2 million now, with no relief. There is no excuse. The other body had a bill that was paid for, and yet it was refused by Republican Senators in the other body.

I would simply ask that we work together to create job growth. This amendment will say to my good friends that if it creates jobs, then we should in fact support it, that particular regulatory regulation, and we should not subject it to this legislation.

With that, I ask for the support of this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1300

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I would reiterate that the right way to address the concern about the impact of regulations on jobs is to join me in supporting the Rothfus-Barr amendment that would make sure that agencies do a much better job identifying adverse job impacts before they impose them on the businesses and individuals that have to make the tough decisions to close businesses, like the family that manufactures bricks that we referred to yesterday that is looking to have to eliminate two-thirds of the jobs in their business because of repeated increased government regulations, making it less and less likely that they can grow their business, much less add jobs, and are facing the loss of jobs and possibly the loss of the business altogether.

The way to do this is to figure out the impact on jobs before you impose the regulation, and that is what the Rothfus-Barr amendment does. I support that. I oppose this, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MR. GEORGE MILLER OF CALIFORNIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 10 printed in House Report 113-361.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I offer amendment No. 10.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

In the table of contents of the bill, insert after item pertaining to section 405 the following:

TITLE V—EXCEPTION

Sec. 501. Exception.

Add, at the end of the bill, the following:

TITLE V—EXCEPTION

SEC. 501. EXCEPTION.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the provisions of this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not apply in the case of a rule made by the Administrator of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to prevent combustible dust explosions and fires, or a consent decree or settlement agreement pertaining to such a rule. In the case of such a rule, consent decree, or settlement agreement, the provisions of law amended by this Act shall apply as though such amendments had not been made.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 487, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to offer an amendment to this misguided piece of legislation.

This bill would impose layers of red tape and erect new obstacles to protecting American lives.

Congress already has the power to disapprove any rule through the Congressional Review Act, as well as through appropriations bills and other legislation, if it disagrees with a regulation.

This new imposition of nearly 60 additional analytical and procedural requirements is a deliberate effort to impose a procedural choke hold on protecting American citizens.

One regulation that would be affected by this is a proposal by OSHA to prevent a litany of workplace fires and explosions that are caused by combustible dusts.

It has been abundantly clear for a decade that Federal regulatory action is needed to prevent combustible dust explosions and fires.

My amendment would prevent today's bill from getting in the way of this much-needed OSHA regulation, so that OSHA can continue its efforts to prevent combustible dust explosions and fires. This amendment is necessary to protect workers' lives.

In 2003, the Chemical Safety Board found that the existing protections to stop these explosions was grossly inadequate. A Board study has identified hundreds of combustible dust fires and explosions that have caused at least 119 fatalities and 718 injuries over a 15-year period.

The investigators are not alone in demanding action. Tammy Miser of Ken-

tucky testified before Congress about her brother Shawn, who was killed in a metal dust fire at an aluminum wheel plant in Huntington, Indiana, in 2003. She told us that he was left lying there on a smoldering floor after the explosion, while aluminum dust burned through his flesh and muscle tissue; and each breath caused his internal organs to be burned even more.

Shawn wasn't the first to die at work this way, and he won't be the last. It has been more than 6 years since the Imperial Sugar explosion in Georgia that killed 14 workers. That explosion resulted in hundreds of millions of dollars in damages because an unchecked accumulation of sugar dust ignited and caused a chain of explosions, leveling the plant.

These workplace explosions have not stopped. More recently, three workers were killed when a combustible metal dust explosion ripped through the AL Solutions metal recycling factory near Weirton, West Virginia. Flames shot in all directions. Two brothers died from the heat and smoke inside the building. Another man made it out, but he suffered burns over most of his body. He died 4 days later in a Pittsburgh hospital, all because the factory lacked adequate controls to manage metal powders.

In another incident, five workers were killed in three separate events at a factory north of Nashville because an iron powder processing plant failed to abate repeated dust hazards. Each of the five left behind a wife and children. One had four children under 11. These widows have called for their government to protect them.

That is where OSHA comes in. The Chemical Safety Board has recently declared that OSHA's combustible dust rule is one of the most wanted safety protections.

In 2009, OSHA finally started working on a rule to reduce the risk of these explosions. The rulemaking will involve small business panels, risk assessments, public hearings, and an opportunity to comment.

Despite the clear need to move forward, this bill would give special interests new ways to block these vital protections.

The sad truth is that the underlying bill is nothing more than an effort to put the powerful above the lives and limbs of working families and their widows.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. First, let me be very clear to my good friend from California. I share his concern about the

kinds of explosions that he is concerned about and want to see appropriate ways to deal with these problems through the regulatory process.

It is pretty clear that OSHA has done a pretty poor job of it thus far, and I believe that this legislation will help to improve the rulemaking process and create greater transparency, so that we will get to a resolution of what needs to be done and not do what does not need to be done, in the most effective way.

The amendment attempts to shield yet another agency in need of good government reform from all of the good government rulemaking reforms in the bill. The bill does not threaten needed regulation in OSHA's jurisdiction, but it simply assures that OSHA will avoid unnecessary regulation; issue smarter, less costly regulation when necessary; and not enter into sweetheart backroom deals for more regulation under the cloak of judicial orders.

Ironically, the amendment actually could slow down the progress of improving safety in the workplaces of concern. The whole point of the bill is to assure that regulation remains effective while imposing lower costs.

If employers could spend less money on equally effective OSHA dust regulations, then they would be free to invest in additional safety measures on their own; or, of course, they could use the money to hire more workers and pay higher wages.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

I would just say that OSHA has already undertaken these standards; but if this legislation passes, all of the processes and procedures that are in this underlying legislation would have to go first.

The fact is people are dying at work. They are dying at work because of the fact that they haven't been able to get this standard in place.

This is a very serious standard that directly relates to the lives of these workers in the workplace. To suggest now that they would have to go through this process, if this becomes the law, is just unacceptable when you consider the urgency of this matter.

When we took up this question of grain dust—grain dust explosions, which are some of the most powerful explosions that can take place—that look like a place has been hit by tons of TNT—that was killing workers, they have reduced the number of fatalities by 70 percent, and you rarely hear about grain explosions any longer.

But dust explosions from other sources continue to be the kind of problem that threatens workers on a daily basis when they report to work in

these various industries where the standards are not adequate to protect the workers.

As I pointed out in my opening statement, across a number of different industries, that dust collection—whether it is iron or sugar or wheat dust—becomes a huge explosive device that continues to take the lives of workers. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, in response to the gentleman from California, let me say that, with regard to the efforts that need to be undertaken when a regulatory process is already underway, is accommodated for in the bill in the new section 553(g), subsection 2(A):

When the agency for good cause, based upon evidence, finds (and incorporates the finding and a brief statement of reasons therefor in the rules issued) that compliance with subsection (c), (d), or (e) or requirements to render final determinations under subsection (f) of this section before the issuance of an interim rule is impracticable or contrary to the public interest, including interests of national security, such subsections or requirements to render final determinations shall not apply to the agency's adoption of an interim rule.

So I would argue that this is going to improve and enhance the process, but it is also going to create more transparency; it is going to create more cost-effective rulemaking; and it is going to prevent lawsuits being brought—the so-called sue-and-settle lawsuits—where a friendly government agency is sued by an organization that wants something; and the settlement of the suit leaves out all the parties who are going to have to provide for it, have to pay for it, have the impact on their workers considered. They don't even get notice of that.

So all of these reforms are good reforms that make the regulatory process better.

I do not believe that it will be appropriate to adopt this amendment. I urge my colleagues to oppose it, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 11 OFFERED BY MR. GEORGE MILLER OF CALIFORNIA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 11 printed in House Report 113-361.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I offer amendment No. 11.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

In the table of contents of the bill, insert after item pertaining to section 405 the following:

TITLE V—EXCEPTION

Sec. 501. Exception.

Add, at the end of the bill, the following:

TITLE V—EXCEPTION

SEC. 501. EXCEPTION.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the provisions of this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not apply in the case of a rule that has been recommended in writing by the Inspector General of a Federal agency, including but not limited to those which would improve protections for taxpayers, students, public and workplace safety and health, or increase effectiveness or efficiency of agency activities, or in the case of a consent decree or settlement agreement pertaining to such a rule. In the case of such a rule, consent decree, or settlement agreement, the provisions of law amended by this Act shall apply as though such amendments had not been made.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 487, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer an amendment that would exempt from this bill any regulations that have been recommended by the inspector general.

This amendment will improve protections for taxpayers and students, protect public and workplace safety and health, and otherwise increase the effectiveness or efficiency of agency activities.

Inspector generals are the taxpayers' independent watchdogs. They perform an investigative role that is above politics, seeking to find out what has gone wrong and what should be done to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government.

My amendment would ensure that IG recommendations will not be buried in mountains of red tape that this bill creates. For example, the Department of Labor's inspector general found that the Mine Safety and Health Administration had a regulation with gaping loopholes that allowed mine operators who habitually violated mine safety standards to easily evade sanctions and continue to operate unsafe mines.

Massey Energy expertly exploited these loopholes at its Upper Big Branch mine in West Virginia, Massey consistently putting coal production ahead of safety, with more than 684 mine safety violations in the 18 months prior to the tragic explosion in 2010 that killed 29 miners.

But the most powerful regulatory tool in MSHA's arsenal was not deployed. In fact, the inspector general found that the potentially lifesaving

sanctions had never been used over a 32-year period. The price of that 32-year period was the miners' lives.

The inspector general's investigation found that the rule was, by design, set up to be gamed, so it was recommended that MSHA close the loopholes. MSHA then quickly adopted the new regulations that will prevent 1,800 miner injuries each decade.

Had today's bill been the law of the land, that lifesaving rule would be delayed for years; and had this bill's requirement requiring that agencies use the least-costly rule been the law, these dangerous loopholes could be left in place.

Mr. Chairman, after every mine tragedy, elected representatives mourn the dead and declare they will take action to make sure that such tragedies never happen again. Then Congress comes along and works overtime to pass legislation like this, which would delay or block the rules that can save hundreds of lives.

Mr. Chairman, at this time, I would like to yield my remaining 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY).

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Chairman, in addition to protecting workers, the inspector general's office also makes recommendations which call for new and better regulations to protect America's taxpayers.

The Department of Education provides more than \$150 billion every year in aid to more than 15 million college students with grants and low-cost loans. An alarming audit issued just this past week by the Department of Education's IG found that we need to crack down on shysters and fraud rings related to long-distance education.

Despite the Department of Education's recent efforts to curb this fraud, the audit found that sophisticated criminals are able to scam Federal programs through false identities and phony attendance records.

The IG urged the Department to quickly create new rules to ensure that billions of dollars it offers in financial aid are not wasted on people who take advantage of our distance education programs and siphon off precious resources that students and families desperately need.

This bill would cripple and hamper that necessary work. The legislation before us would also hamper the DOE from moving forward with other inspector general recommendations to reduce student loan defaults, root out wasteful spending that would save taxpayers \$1 billion, and strengthen the overall accountability of our Nation's higher education programs.

□ 1315

The bill's lengthy list of at least 60 additional procedures would add years to the rulemaking process and would significantly hamstring the Education

Department's ability to adopt regulations that protect taxpayers and students in a timely manner. This amendment would ensure that this bill does not compromise the ability of agencies to follow up on IG recommendations and would protect taxpayers from waste, fraud, and abuse.

All who patted themselves on the back about the student loan bill last summer, you are crippling the ability of this country to help students and families pay for college, which we need as a Nation. Let's adopt the Miller amendment in order to protect the inspector general's integrity and independence to get good reforms to protect the taxpayers and students of America.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, when inspectors general find agency waste, fraud, and abuse and recommend that new regulations be issued or old regulations be modified, the natural instinct of the guilty agency is to try to evade the recommended corrections to its bad behavior. By shielding agencies from the bill's transparency and accountability requirements, the amendment would help them do just that. It would further entrench the ability of recalcitrant agencies to shirk the recommendations of inspectors general and continue their habits of waste, fraud, and abuse.

Especially in these times of fiscal austerity, we must do everything we can to make sure that agencies pay heed to inspector general recommendations and purge all waste, fraud, and abuse from their operations. The ALERRT Act includes powerful tools to make them do just that.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I was assuming that when the gentleman was speaking about the effectiveness of the inspector general reports that he was going to join in support of the amendment. I guess I misunderstood that.

The point is this:

In the case that I cited, the inspector general came in and found out the agency wasn't using the powers that it had and that it needed additional powers for miners who were trying to avert their obligations under the safety laws of this Nation. Again, that is not an action that should be delayed. That is not a finding by one party or the other or by one group of people in the Congress or the other. That is the inspector general. He looked at the situation and said that this was leading to an increased likelihood of accidents and deaths on behalf of miners and that the rules had to be changed and that they

had to be changed right away. I don't know why we would interrupt that process.

That is the point of this amendment. This Congress has a lot of trust, I believe, in the inspectors general, and we should not get in and make them run through a lot of hoops when urgency is the matter.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in House Report 113-361 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 3 by Mr. ROTHFUS of Pennsylvania.

Amendment No. 7 by Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia.

Amendment No. 8 by Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas.

Amendment No. 9 by Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas.

Amendment No. 10 by Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

Amendment No. 11 by Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. ROTHFUS

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 249, noes 162, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 71]

AYES—249

Aderholt	Barr	Bishop (UT)
Amash	Barrow (GA)	Black
Amodei	Barton	Blackburn
Bachmann	Benishak	Boustany
Bachus	Bentivolio	Brady (TX)
Barber	Bera (CA)	Bridenstine
Barletta	Bilirakis	Brooks (AL)

Brooks (IN) Harris
Broun (GA) Hartzler
Brownley (CA) Hastings (WA)
Buchanan Heck (NV)
Bucshon Hensarling
Burgess Herrera Beutler
Bustos Holding
Byrne Hudson
Calvert Huelskamp
Camp Huizenga (MI)
Campbell Hultgren
Cantor Hunter
Capito Hurt
Carter Issa
Cassidy Jenkins
Chabot Johnson (OH)
Chaffetz Jones
Coble Jordan
Coffman Joyce
Cole Kelly (PA)
Collins (GA) King (IA)
Collins (NY) King (NY)
Conaway Kingston
Cook Kinzinger (IL)
Costa Kline
Cotton Labrador
Cramer LaMalfa
Crawford Lamborn
Crenshaw Lance
Cuellar Lankford
Culberson Latham
Daines Latta
Davis, Rodney Lipinski
Denham LoBiondo
Dent Loeback
DeSantis Long
DesJarlais Lucas
Diaz-Balart Luetkemeyer
Duckworth Lummis
Duffy Maffei
Duncan (SC) Maloney, Sean
Duncan (TN) Marchant
Ellmers Marino
Enyart Massie
Farenthold McAllister
Fincher McCarthy (CA)
Fitzpatrick McCaul
Fleischmann McClintock
Fleming McHenry
Flores McIntyre
Forbes McKeon
Fortenberry McKinley
Foster McMorris
Foxy Rodgers
Franks (AZ) Meadows
Frelinghuysen Meehan
Gabbard Messer
Gallego Mica
Gardner Miller (FL)
Garrett Miller (MI)
Gerlach Miller, Gary
Gibbs Mullin
Gibson Mulvaney
Gingrey (GA) Murphy (FL)
Gohmert Murphy (PA)
Goodlatte Neugebauer
Gowdy Noem
Granger Nugent
Graves (GA) Nunes
Graves (MO) Nunelee
Griffin (AR) Owens
Griffith (VA) Palazzo
Grimm Paulsen
Guthrie Pearce
Hall Perry
Hanna Peters (CA)
Harper Peterson

NOES—162

Beatty Chu
Becerra Cicilline
Bishop (GA) Clark (MA)
Bishop (NY) Clarke (NY)
Bonamici Clay
Brady (PA) Cleaver
Braley (IA) Clyburn
Brown (FL) Cohen
Capps Connolly
Capuano Conyers
Cárdenas Cooper
Carney Courtney
Carson (IN) Crowley
Cartwright Cummings
Castor (FL) Davis (CA)
Castro (TX) Davis, Danny

Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Rahall
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Ruiz
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Scalise
Schneider
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Fudge

Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lofgren
Lowenthal

Bass
Blumenauer
Butterfield
Ellison
Frankel (FL)
Garamendi
Gosar
Johnson, Sam
McCarthy (NY)
Olson
Pastor (AZ)
Reed
Rice (SC)
Royce

NOT VOTING—19

□ 1346

Messrs. CROWLEY, GUTIERREZ and GARCIA changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

Messrs. YOUNG of Alaska, DUFFY, MEADOWS, SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California changed their vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Chair, on roll-call No. 71, had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. CONNOLLY

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 181, noes 235, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 72]

AYES—181

Barber
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (NY)
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Gabbard
Garamendi
Garcia
Gibson
Grayson
Green, Al

NOES—235

Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson

Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeback
Lofgren
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Gerlach
Gibbs
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Green, Gene
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer

Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Rahall
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher

Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—14

Bass
Blumenauer
Butterfield
Ellison
Fudge

Gosar
Hinojosa
McCarthy (NY)
Pastor (AZ)
Rice (SC)

Royce
Runyan
Rush
Upton

□ 1353

Ms. BROWNLEY of California changed her vote from “no” to “aye.” So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 180, noes 232, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 73]

AYES—180

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al

Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebach
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal

Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—232

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivoglio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert

Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham

Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)

Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perlmutter
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita

Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Valadao
Petri
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—18

Bass
Blumenauer
Bucshon
Butterfield
Davis, Danny
Diaz-Balart

Ellison
Fudge
Gosar
Hinojosa
McCarthy (NY)
Pastor (AZ)

Rice (SC)
Royce
Runyan
Rush
Upton
Waxman

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1357

Mrs. LOWEY changed her vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 9 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 179, noes 235, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 74]

AYES—179

Barber	Hanabusa	Nolan
Beatty	Hastings (FL)	O'Rourke
Becerra	Heck (WA)	Pallone
Bera (CA)	Herrera Beutler	Pascarell
Bishop (NY)	Higgins	Payne
Bonamici	Himes	Pelosi
Brady (PA)	Holt	Perlmutter
Braley (IA)	Honda	Peters (MI)
Brown (FL)	Horsford	Pingree (ME)
Brownley (CA)	Hoyer	Pocan
Bustos	Huffman	Price (NC)
Capps	Israel	Quigley
Capuano	Jackson Lee	Rahall
Cárdenas	Jeffries	Rangel
Carney	Johnson (GA)	Richmond
Carson (IN)	Johnson, E. B.	Roybal-Allard
Cartwright	Kaptur	Ruiz
Castor (FL)	Keating	Ruppersberger
Castro (TX)	Kelly (IL)	Ryan (OH)
Chu	Kennedy	Sánchez, Linda T.
Ciçilline	Kildee	Sanchez, Loretta
Clark (MA)	Kilmer	Sarbanes
Clarke (NY)	Kind	Schakowsky
Clay	Kirkpatrick	Schiff
Cleaver	Kuster	Schneider
Clyburn	Langevin	Schwartz
Cohen	Larsen (WA)	Scott (VA)
Connolly	Larson (CT)	Scott, David
Conyers	Lee (CA)	Serrano
Cooper	Levin	Sewell (AL)
Courtney	Lewis	Shea-Porter
Crowley	Lipinski	Sherman
Cuellar	Loeb sack	Sinema
Cummings	Lofgren	Sires
Davis (CA)	Lowenthal	Slaughter
DeFazio	Lowe y	Smith (WA)
DeGette	Lujan Grisham	Speier
Delaney	(NM)	Swalwell (CA)
DeLauro	Luján, Ben Ray	Takano
DelBene	(NM)	Thompson (CA)
Deutch	Lynch	Thompson (MS)
Dingell	Maffei	Tierney
Doggett	Maloney,	Titus
Doyle	Carolyn	Tonko
Duckworth	Maloney, Sean	Tsongas
Edwards	Matsui	Van Hollen
Engel	McCollum	Vargas
Enyart	McDermott	Veasey
Eshoo	McGovern	Vela
Esty	McIntyre	Velázquez
Farr	McNerney	Visclosky
Fattah	Meeks	Walz
Foster	Meng	Wasserman
Frankel (FL)	Michaud	Schultz
Gabbard	Miller, George	Waters
Gallo	Moore	Waxman
Garamendi	Moran	Welch
Garcia	Murphy (FL)	Wilson (FL)
Green, Al	Nadler	Yarmuth
Grijalva	Napolitano	
Gutiérrez	Neal	
Hahn	Negrete McLeod	

NOES—235

Aderholt	Brooks (IN)	Conaway
Amash	Broun (GA)	Cook
Amodei	Buchanan	Costa
Bachmann	Bucshon	Cotton
Bachus	Burgess	Cramer
Barletta	Byrne	Crawford
Barr	Calvert	Crenshaw
Barrow (GA)	Camp	Culberson
Barton	Campbell	Daines
Benishkek	Cantor	Davis, Rodney
Bentivolio	Capito	Denham
Bilirakis	Carter	Dent
Bishop (GA)	Cassidy	DeSantis
Bishop (UT)	Chabot	DesJarlais
Black	Chaffetz	Diaz-Balart
Blackburn	Coble	Duffy
Boustany	Coffman	Duncan (SC)
Brady (TX)	Cole	Duncan (TN)
Bridenstine	Collins (GA)	Ellmers
Brooks (AL)	Collins (NY)	Farenthold

Fincher	Lance	Rogers (AL)
Fitzpatrick	Lankford	Rogers (KY)
Fleischmann	Latham	Rogers (MI)
Fleming	Latta	Rohrabacher
Flores	LoBiondo	Rokita
Forbes	Long	Rooney
Fortenberry	Lucas	Ros-Lehtinen
Fox	Luetkemeyer	Roskam
Franks (AZ)	Lummis	Ross
Frelinghuysen	Marchant	Rothfus
Gardner	Marino	Ryan (WI)
Garrett	Massie	Salmon
Gerlach	Matheson	Sanford
Gibbs	McAllister	Scalise
Gibson	McCarthy (CA)	Schock
Gingrey (GA)	McCaull	Schrader
Gohmert	McClintock	Schweikert
Goodlatte	McHenry	Scott, Austin
Govdy	McKeon	Sensenbrenner
Granger	McKinley	Sessions
Graves (GA)	McMorris	Shimkus
Graves (MO)	Rodgers	Shuster
Grayson	Meadows	Simpson
Green, Gene	Meehan	Smith (MO)
Griffin (AR)	Messer	Smith (NE)
Griffith (VA)	Mica	Smith (NJ)
Grimm	Miller (FL)	Smith (TX)
Guthrie	Miller (MI)	Southerland
Hall	Miller, Gary	Stewart
Hanna	Mullin	Stivers
Harper	Mulvaney	Stockman
Harris	Murphy (PA)	Stutzman
Hartzel	Neugebauer	Terry
Hastings (WA)	Noem	Thompson (PA)
Heck (NV)	Nugent	Thornberry
Hensarling	Nunes	Tiberi
Holding	Nunnelee	Tipton
Hudson	Olson	Turner
Huelskamp	Owens	Valadao
Huizenga (MI)	Palazzo	Wagner
Hultgren	Paulsen	Walberg
Hunter	Pearce	Walden
Hurt	Perry	Walorski
Issa	Peters (CA)	Weber (TX)
Jenkins	Peterson	Webster (FL)
Johnson (OH)	Petri	Westmup
Johnson, Sam	Pittenger	Westmoreland
Jones	Pitts	Whitfield
Jordan	Poe (TX)	Williams
Joyce	Pompeo	Wilson (SC)
Kelly (PA)	Posey	Wittman
King (IA)	Price (GA)	Wolfe
King (NY)	Reed	Womack
Kingston	Reichert	Woodall
Kinzie (IL)	Renacci	Yoder
Kline	Ribble	Yoho
Labrador	Rigell	Young (AK)
LaMalfa	Roby	Young (IN)
Lamborn	Roe (TN)	

NOT VOTING—16

Bass
Blumenauer
Butterfield
Davis, Danny
Ellison
Fudge
Gosar
Hinojosa
McCarthy (NY)
Pastor (AZ)
Polis
Rice (SC)
Royce
Runyan
Rush
Upton

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR
The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1401

So the amendment was rejected.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MR. GEORGE MILLER OF CALIFORNIA

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amend-

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 183, noes 229, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 75]

AYES—183

Barber	Gutiérrez	Nolan
Barrow (GA)	Hahn	O'Rourke
Beatty	Hanabusa	Pallone
Becerra	Hastings (FL)	Pascarell
Bera (CA)	Heck (WA)	Payne
Bishop (NY)	Higgins	Pelosi
Bonamici	Himes	Perlmutter
Brady (PA)	Holt	Peters (MI)
Braley (IA)	Honda	Pingree (ME)
Brown (FL)	Horsford	Pocan
Brownley (CA)	Hoyer	Polis
Bustos	Huffman	Price (NC)
Capps	Israel	Quigley
Capuano	Jackson Lee	Rahall
Cárdenas	Jeffries	Rangel
Carney	Johnson (GA)	Reichert
Carson (IN)	Johnson, E. B.	Richmond
Cartwright	Kaptur	Ruiz
Castor (FL)	Keating	Ruppersberger
Castro (TX)	Kelly (IL)	Ryan (OH)
Chu	Kennedy	Sánchez, Linda T.
Ciçilline	Kildee	Sanchez, Loretta
Clark (MA)	Kilmer	Sarbanes
Clarke (NY)	Kind	Schakowsky
Clay	Kirkpatrick	Schiff
Clyburn	Kuster	Schneider
Cohen	Langevin	Schwartz
Connolly	Larsen (WA)	Scott (VA)
Conyers	Larson (CT)	Scott, David
Cooper	Lee (CA)	Serrano
Courtney	Levin	Sewell (AL)
Crowley	Lewis	Shea-Porter
Cuellar	Lipinski	Sherman
Cummings	Loeb sack	Sinema
Davis (CA)	Lofgren	Sires
DeFazio	Lowenthal	Slaughter
DeGette	Lowe y	Smith (WA)
Delaney	Lujan Grisham	Speier
DeLauro	(NM)	Swalwell (CA)
DelBene	Luján, Ben Ray	Takano
Deutch	(NM)	Thompson (CA)
Dingell	Lynch	Thompson (MS)
Doggett	Maffei	Tierney
Doyle	Maloney,	Titus
Duckworth	Carolyn	Tonko
Edwards	Maloney, Sean	Tsongas
Engel	Matsui	Van Hollen
Enyart	McCollum	Vargas
Eshoo	McDermott	Veasey
Esty	McGovern	Vela
Farr	McIntyre	Velázquez
Fattah	McNerney	Visclosky
Foster	Meeks	Walz
Frankel (FL)	Meng	Wasserman
Gabbard	Michaud	Schultz
Gallo	Miller, George	Waters
Garamendi	Moore	Waxman
Garcia	Moran	Welch
Gibson	Murphy (FL)	Wilson (FL)
Grayson	Nadler	Yarmuth
Green, Al	Napolitano	
Green, Gene	Neal	
Grijalva	Negrete McLeod	

NOES—229

Amash	Brooks (AL)	Coble
Amodei	Brooks (IN)	Coffman
Bachmann	Broun (GA)	Cole
Bachus	Buchanan	Collins (GA)
Barletta	Bucshon	Collins (NY)
Barton	Burgess	Conaway
Benishkek	Byrne	Cook
Bentivolio	Calvert	Costa
Bilirakis	Camp	Cotton
Bishop (GA)	Campbell	Cramer
Bishop (UT)	Cantor	Crawford
Black	Capito	Crenshaw
Blackburn	Carter	Culberson
Boustany	Cassidy	Daines
Brady (TX)	Chabot	Davis, Rodney
Bridenstine	Chaffetz	Denham

Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston

Kinzing (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters (CA)
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Roby

Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schradler
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—18

Aderholt
Barr
Bass
Blumenauer
Butterfield
Cleaver

Davis, Danny
Ellison
Fudge
Gosar
Hinojosa
McCarthy (NY)

McHenry
Pastor (AZ)
Rice (SC)
Runyan
Rush
Upton

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1405

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. BARR. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 75 I
was unavoidably detained. Had I been
present, I would have voted “no.”

AMENDMENT NO. 11 OFFERED BY MR. GEORGE
MILLER OF CALIFORNIA

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished
business is the demand for a recorded
vote on the amendment offered by the
gentleman from California (Mr.
GEORGE MILLER) on which further pro-
ceedings were postponed and on which
the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the
amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amend-
ment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote
has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-
minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic de-
vice, and there were—ayes 181, noes 232,
not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 76]

AYES—181

Barber
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (NY)
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Brady (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownlee (CA)
Bustos
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Jeffries
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebach
Loftgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Enyart
Eshoo
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeke
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod

Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Carney
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebach
Loftgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Enyart
Eshoo
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeke
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod

Nolan
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascarella
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—232

Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)

Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy

Chabot
Chaffetz
Cleaver
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Costa
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter

Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzing (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey

Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schradler
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—17

Bass
Blumenauer
Butterfield
Davis, Danny
Engel
Fudge

Gosar
Hinojosa
Huelskamp
Kaptur
McCarthy (NY)
Pastor (AZ)

Rice (SC)
Runyan
Rush
Stivers
Upton

□ 1410

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is
on the amendment in the nature of a
substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule,
the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose;
and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr.
RIBBLE) having assumed the chair, Mr.
YODER, Acting Chair of the Committee
of the Whole House on the state of the
Union, reported that that Committee,

having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2804) to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 487, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Ms. ESTY. I am in its present form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Esty moves to recommit the bill H.R. 2804 to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

Add, at the end of the bill, the following (and conform the table of contents accordingly):

TITLE V—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISION

SEC. 501. NO DELAY OF ANY REGULATION THAT SAVES TAX DOLLARS, HELPS SMALL BUSINESSES AND VETERANS, PREVENTS DISCRIMINATION, OR PROTECTS CONSUMERS.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not apply in the case of any rule, consent decree, or settlement agreement that—

- (1) saves tax dollars or provides refunds, rebates, or savings for taxpayers;
- (2) provides assistance and regulatory relief for small businesses;
- (3) expedites or settles cases involving veterans benefits;
- (4) prevents discrimination based on race, religion, national origin, or any other protected category, or that provides pay equity for women; or
- (5) protects the health and safety of consumers, seniors, and children, including ensuring—
 - (A) the safety of the food supply from salmonella and other food-borne illnesses; or
 - (B) a safe drinking water supply that is free from toxic substances and chemicals that can cause cancer.

Ms. ESTY (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

□ 1415

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Connecticut is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, let's be reasonable here. This bill before us is an ideological attempt to weaken and delay all regulations, even those that protect consumers and small businesses, help veterans, and keep our families safe. I think we can all agree, just as it is ridiculous to say that all regulations are good, it is also ridiculous to say that all regulations are bad.

I am the mother of three children, and I know how important regulations can be to keep our children safe. A few years ago, Congress passed a bill to strengthen standards on baby cribs. Regulations prohibited drop-side cribs and required all new cribs to have stronger mattress supports. And do you know why? To save lives. There were devastating instances of children suffocating and dying because of drop-side cribs. Clearly, this regulation is critical to our children's safety.

But, unfortunately, the bill before us today would delay the implementation of safety regulations like baby crib standards and safety regulations like those that prohibit the sale of contaminated food from China here in America like rat meat labeled as lamb in Shanghai and the Chinese chickens likely infected with bird flu. Americans have the right to know that the food they are feeding their families is safe, and that is why the bill before us today just doesn't make sense.

Delaying all regulations across the board and preventing the Federal Government from rapidly responding to situations, even when the American people are asking for safeguards, is dangerous and harmful.

This ideologically driven bill does not just harm Americans by derailing safety regulations; this bill would also weaken and delay regulations that are important to our economy, regulations that protect consumers and small businesses.

Folks, we are just 6 weeks away from when tax returns are due. Why would we want to pass a bill that may delay provisions that save taxpayers money? Why would we get in the way when taxpayers want their refunds and rebates returned quickly?

But not only that. This bill would delay regulations that would help ensure women receive equal pay for equal work. This bill would weaken regulations that could help protect small businesses against predatory loans and hinder job growth. This bill would

delay protections that could help ensure that workplace environments are safe for all workers. And this bill would delay our efforts to speed up veterans receiving their benefits.

And something that is particularly important to my State and my district, where folks are concerned about fatal accidents and service delays on the Metro-North railroad, this bill would delay the very regulations that will help ensure that Metro-North is safe and timely for commuters. On-time, safe rail service is critical to our State's economy, and this bill could jeopardize that. My district, Connecticut's economy, and our Nation's economy cannot afford this ideological, destructive bill.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am here today to offer an amendment, an amendment that will help make this bill work better for families and small businesses. I was sent to Congress to get things done, and I am working to eliminate and streamline unnecessary regulations and to help cut through red tape and save taxpayers money. At the same time, though, we know that smart regulations save money and save lives.

I hear all the time from people back home that Washington isn't working for them and that they are sick and tired of partisan gridlock. My constituents want Washington to be responsive to their needs and to get things done. And that is why I oppose this bill. It unnecessarily delays our ability to act swiftly and decisively. My amendment would work to make sure that smart regulations are not weakened or delayed—regulations that could save taxpayers money, that could help small businesses, that expedite veterans' benefits, that protect our families' safety and the safety of our food supply, and that could prevent pay discrimination just because you are a woman or because of your race or sexual orientation.

We were sent here to work together to help the American people, not to engage in an ideological battle. Let's do the right thing. Let's do the responsible thing. I ask all House Members to join with me to vote for this motion.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Congressmen HOLDING, COLLINS, and Subcommittee Chairman BACHUS for their hard work on this bill as well as committee staff on both sides of the aisle. Four bills combined into one and still under 100 pages will do much to reform, and in some cases eliminate, hundreds of thousands of pages of Federal Government regulations in the future.

Mr. Speaker, we are more than 5 years into the Obama administration.

Real unemployment is still a massive problem in this country. America's labor force participation is at record lows. The nominal unemployment rate is down, but that is only because desperate Americans dying for work are abandoning the workforce in droves.

Everybody knows that the only real long-term solution is to restart the engines of economic growth in this country. If we could just somehow increase our growth rate by as little as 2 additional percentage points, things would begin to turn around. One way to do that is to pass the ALERRT Act.

The cost of Federal regulation today is estimated to be a staggering \$1.86 trillion. That almost wipes out the \$2 trillion this Nation's manufacturers have just produced, the first time in history we have hit that level in 1 year. There is our 2 percent growth right there, and more, gobbled up by the mind-boggling tide of tyrannical regulation flowing out of Washington.

If we could just cut our regulatory burdens by a portion, we could turn this economy right around. The ALERRT Act would do that. It promises real relief from our regulatory nightmare. If enacted, it would change night to day in terms of the level of regulatory costs Washington imposes on our economy, and it would do so without stopping one needed regulation from being issued.

How do I know? Because it says so right in the bill. Right on page 27, it says:

The agency shall adopt the least costly rule considered during the rulemaking that meets relevant statutory objectives.

Take away a few key words and what does that say? The agency shall adopt the rule that meets statutory objectives.

So the rules will still be made, and statutory goals will still be met. But put the key words back in, and what happens? America starts to save hundreds of billions of dollars it doesn't need to spend, because the agency shall adopt the least costly rule that meets statutory objectives.

Do that over and over again, and that is real money that we will save, real money that can produce jobs for our constituents, real money that hard-working Americans can use to grow their businesses, all without stopping a single needed regulation from being issued.

My friends across the aisle say that won't happen. They say the bill will bring all good rulemaking to a screeching halt. My goodness, it is ObamaCare all over again. My friends across the aisle haven't read the bill. You have to read the bill to know what is in it. If you read the bill, you understand it. You see there on page 27, the agency shall adopt the rule that meets statutory objectives.

My friends, the people in my district and yours are smart. They can read the

bill. They can tell that, although Chicken Little and the Boy Who Cried Wolf seem to want to talk about this bill, the sky is not falling and the wolf is not coming on account of this bill. What is coming on account of this bill is real relief for hardworking Americans and prosperity around the corner.

Vote against this motion to recommit. Vote for this bill. Take Americans' hard-earned dollars out of the hands of Washington's bureaucrats who want to flush it down the regulatory drain. Let it stay in the hands of workers and businessowners who know how to spend it wisely and well. Oppose the motion to recommit. Support the legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time. The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by a 5-minute vote on passage of the bill, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 187, noes 229, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 77]

AYES—187

Barber	DelBene	Kaptur
Barrow (GA)	Deutch	Keating
Beatty	Dingell	Kelly (IL)
Becerra	Doggett	Kennedy
Bera (CA)	Doyle	Kildee
Bishop (GA)	Duckworth	Kilmer
Bishop (NY)	Edwards	Kind
Bonamici	Ellison	Kirkpatrick
Brady (PA)	Engel	Kuster
Braley (IA)	Enyart	Langevin
Brown (FL)	Eshoo	Larsen (WA)
Brownley (CA)	Esty	Larsen (CT)
Bustos	Farr	Lee (CA)
Capps	Fattah	Levin
Capuano	Foster	Lewis
Cárdenas	Frankel (FL)	Lipinski
Carney	Gabbard	Loebsock
Carson (IN)	Gallego	Lofgren
Cartwright	Garamendi	Lowenthal
Castor (FL)	Garcia	Lowey
Castro (TX)	Grayson	Lujan Grisham
Chu	Green, Al	(NM)
Cicilline	Green, Gene	Luján, Ben Ray
Clark (MA)	Grijalva	(NM)
Clarke (NY)	Gutiérrez	Lynch
Clay	Hahn	Maffei
Cleaver	Hanabusa	Maloney,
Clyburn	Hastings (FL)	Carolyn
Cohen	Heck (WA)	Maloney, Sean
Connolly	Higgins	Matheson
Conyers	Himes	Matsui
Cooper	Holt	McCollum
Courtney	Honda	McDermott
Crowley	Horsford	McGovern
Cuellar	Hoyer	McIntyre
Cummings	Huffman	McNerney
Davis (CA)	Israel	Meeks
DeFazio	Jackson Lee	Meng
DeGette	Jeffries	Michaud
Delaney	Johnson (GA)	Miller, George
DeLauro	Johnson, E. B.	Moore

Moran	Roybal-Allard	Speier
Murphy (FL)	Ruiz	Swalwell (CA)
Nadler	Ruppersberger	Takano
Napolitano	Ryan (OH)	Thompson (CA)
Neal	Sánchez, Linda	Thompson (MS)
Negrete McLeod	T.	Tierney
Nolan	Sanchez, Loretta	Titus
O'Rourke	Sarbanes	Tonko
Pallone	Schakowsky	Tsongas
Pascarell	Schiff	Van Hollen
Payne	Schneider	Vargas
Pelosi	Schrader	Veasey
Perlmutter	Schwartz	Vela
Peters (CA)	Scott (VA)	Velázquez
Peters (MI)	Scott, David	Visclosky
Pingree (ME)	Serrano	Walz
Pocan	Sewell (AL)	Wasserman
Polis	Shea-Porter	Schultz
Price (NC)	Sherman	Waters
Quigley	Sinema	Waxman
Rahall	Sires	Welch
Rangel	Slaughter	Wilson (FL)
Richmond	Smith (WA)	Yarmuth

NOES—229

Aderholt	Gibbs	Miller (FL)
Amash	Gibson	Miller (MI)
Amodel	Gingrey (GA)	Miller, Gary
Bachmann	Gohmert	Mullin
Bachus	Goodlatte	Mulvaney
Barletta	Gowdy	Murphy (PA)
Barr	Granger	Neugebauer
Barton	Graves (GA)	Noem
Benishek	Graves (MO)	Nugent
Bentivolio	Griffin (AR)	Nunes
Bilirakis	Griffith (VA)	Nunnelee
Bishop (UT)	Grimm	Olson
Black	Guthrie	Owens
Boustany	Hall	Palazzo
Brady (TX)	Hanna	Paulsen
Bridenstine	Harper	Pearce
Brooks (AL)	Harris	Perry
Brooks (IN)	Hartzler	Peterson
Broun (GA)	Hastings (WA)	Petri
Buchanan	Heck (NV)	Pittenger
Bucshon	Hensarling	Pitts
Burgess	Herrera Beutler	Poe (TX)
Byrne	Holding	Pompeo
Calvert	Hudson	Posey
Camp	Huelskamp	Price (GA)
Campbell	Huizenga (MI)	Reed
Cantor	Hultgren	Reichert
Capito	Hunter	Renacci
Carter	Hurt	Ribble
Cassidy	Issa	Rigell
Chabot	Jenkins	Roby
Chaffetz	Johnson (OH)	Roe (TN)
Coble	Johnson, Sam	Rogers (AL)
Coffman	Jones	Rogers (KY)
Cole	Jordan	Rogers (MI)
Collins (GA)	Joyce	Rohrabacher
Collins (NY)	Kelly (PA)	Rokita
Conaway	King (IA)	Rooney
Cook	King (NY)	Ros-Lehtinen
Costa	Kingston	Roskam
Cotton	Kinzinger (IL)	Ross
Cramer	Kline	Rothfus
Crawford	Labrador	Royce
Crenshaw	LaMalfa	Ryan (WI)
Culberson	Lamborn	Salmon
Daines	Lance	Sanford
Davis, Rodney	Lankford	Scalise
Denham	Latham	Schock
Dent	Latta	Schweikert
DeSantis	LoBiondo	Scott, Austin
DesJarlais	Long	Sensenbrenner
Diaz-Balart	Lucas	Sessions
Duffy	Luetkemeyer	Shimkus
Duncan (SC)	Lummis	Shuster
Duncan (TN)	Marchant	Simpson
Ellmers	Marino	Smith (MO)
Farenthold	Massie	Smith (NE)
Fincher	McAllister	Smith (NJ)
Fitzpatrick	McCarthy (CA)	Smith (TX)
Fleischmann	McCaul	Southerland
Fleming	McClintock	Stewart
Flores	McHenry	Stivers
Forbes	McKeon	Stockman
Fortenberry	McKinley	Stutzman
Fox	McMorris	Terry
Franks (AZ)	Rodgers	Thompson (PA)
Frelinghuysen	Meadows	Thornberry
Gardner	Meehan	Tiberi
Garrett	Messer	Tipton
Gerlach	Mica	Turner

Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)

Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf

Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—14

Bass
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Butterfield
Davis, Danny

Fudge
Gosar
Hinojosa
McCarthy (NY)
Pastor (AZ)

Rice (SC)
Runyan
Rush
Upton

□ 1431

Mrs. WAGNER changed her vote from “aye” to “no.”

Mr. GUTIERREZ changed his vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 236, noes 179, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 78]

AYES—236

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bartletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Benishak
Bentivolio
Billirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford

Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper

Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)

McCaull
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)

Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Rahall
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schrader
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson

NOES—179

Barber
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (NY)
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Capps
Capuano
Ca AEIrdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
Deutsch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia

Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud

Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela

Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz

Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman

Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—15

Bachus
Bass
Blumenauer
Butterfield
Costa

Davis, Danny
Fudge
Gosar
Hinojosa
McCarthy (NY)

Pastor (AZ)
Rice (SC)
Runyan
Rush
Upton

□ 1438

So the bill was passed.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 2084, ALL ECONOMIC REGULATIONS ARE TRANSPARENT ACT OF 2014

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Clerk be authorized to make technical corrections in the engrossment of H.R. 2804, including corrections in spelling, punctuation, section and title numbering, cross-referencing, conforming amendments to the table of contents and short titles, and the insertion of appropriate headings.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEBSTER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION SAFETY AND SOUNDNESS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2013

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous material on H.R. 3193, the Consumer Financial Protection Safety and Soundness Improvement Act of 2013.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 475 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3193.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RIBBLE) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1441

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3193) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations

issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes, with Mr. RIBBLE in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, we are now into the sixth year of the Obama administration, and probably the two most common comments I hear from my constituents are “I just can’t make ends meet in this economy” and “Washington has become arrogant, unaccountable, and out of touch.” At the apex of these sentiments, lies the newly minted Dodd-Frank government agency known as the CFPB. Although many have yet to hear of it, the CFPB is perhaps the single most powerful and least accountable Federal agency in all of Washington.

First, let’s speak of its power. Mr. Chairman, when it comes to our credit cards, our auto loans, our mortgages, the CFPB has unbridled discretionary power not only to make them less available and more expensive, but to absolutely take them away.

What does an agency with this kind of power do? It imposes rule like the qualified mortgage rule, or QM for short. Mr. Chairman, what does QM do? According to Federal Reserve data, because of QM, roughly one-third of Black and Hispanic borrowers would not meet the requirements of a QM loan.

CoreLogic, which analyzes mortgage data, has said:

Only half of today’s mortgage originations meet QM requirements.

That is egregiously unfair to hard-working Americans.

One of my small town community bankers in east Texas told me recently:

Because of QM, I can’t tell you the number of times we have had to tell our good low-to-moderate income customers that we can no longer loan them money to purchase a home to live in.

Mr. Chairman, this is what an agency with too much discretionary power does. It can actually abuse consumers, taking away their homeownership opportunities. That is unfair.

Let’s look at what happens to an agency that is not held accountable. Today, the CFPB is spending \$145 million to renovate a \$150 million headquarters building they don’t even own. The renovation rate is three times the average Washington, D.C., luxury class A renovation rate. Well, what does \$145 million buy?

Well, it is \$461 per square foot in office renovations. Mr. Chairman, that is

more per square foot than was spent to build the Trump World Tower. More than the Trump World Tower. At \$461 per square foot, that was more money than it cost to build the Bellagio hotel and casino in Las Vegas, which at the time, I am told, was the most expensive hotel ever built. Mr. Chairman, this is more money to renovate a building they don’t own than Dubai’s Burj Khalifa, the single tallest skyscraper in the world. Ironically enough, the architectural firm which designed the Burj Khalifa in Dubai is the same world renowned architectural firm that the CFPB paid over \$7 million to design their headquarter renovations.

Now, according to public documents, Mr. Chairman, some of the Bureau’s renovations include “a reflective carnelian granite water table” that will “lure in the curious passerby.” Also for \$145 million of hard-earned taxpayer money, the Bureau is buying “a shady tree bosque” to facilitate “chance interactions in a removed place of rest and contemplation.” I mean, I can’t make this up, Mr. Chairman. This is how hard-earned money is being squandered. Here it is, the architectural drawings which have been filed publicly.

I have to tell you, Mr. Chairman, I have a lot of people in my district in east Texas who live in mobile homes. They can’t afford carnelian granite water tables that apparently the CFPB is going to enjoy that my constituents have to pay for, and the only shady tree bosque to be found in east Texas in the Fifth District are those where hardworking ranchers work their cattle.

□ 1445

Instead of rest and contemplation to be enjoyed by CFPB’s employees, because of such blatant waste, my constituents, instead of rest and contemplation, lay awake at night wondering how they are going to pay the bills and make ends meet.

Mr. Chairman, this is what an unaccountable Federal Government agency does. It squanders the people’s money because it is not their own and they are not accountable to the people’s representatives.

So that is why we are here today, Mr. Chairman. We are here to pass H.R. 3193, the Consumer Financial Freedom and Washington Accountability Act, whose primary author, Mr. DUFFY of Wisconsin, has done excellent work, along with many other members of our committee. This is a package, Mr. Chairman, of commonsense reforms designed to make the CFPB more accountable and more transparent to the American people.

This bill replaces the Bureau’s single, unaccountable director with a bipartisan board. It puts the Bureau’s employees—whose compensation and benefits average \$178,521, it puts them on

the civil service pay scale. It introduces a safety and soundness check on its regulations and gives the American people greater control over the massive, massive quantities of personal financial data that the Bureau is collecting and maintaining on them at this time.

Mr. Chairman, we do need consumer protection, but consumers just don’t need to be protected from Wall Street; they need to be protected from Washington as well. H.R. 3193 will protect them from the CFPB, and the House should pass it without delay today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 3193, legislation that would gut the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, an agency that has been a critical and effective advocate for our Nation’s consumers. Today’s vote is just the latest chapter in a relentless Republican attack on consumer protection.

Since opening its doors in 2011, the CFPB has gone to bat for those who have been subject to the deceptive practices of unscrupulous financial institutions. Though it has been immensely successful, Republicans have tried to undercut it in every way possible.

Mr. Chairman, in just over 2 years, CFPB’s enforcement actions have resulted in over \$3 billion being directly refunded to more than 9.7 million consumers and servicemembers.

The CFPB has ensured that all consumers have fair and transparent access to consumer financial products and services. It has written important mortgage rules that prevent lenders from engaging in the risky and irresponsible practices that led to the collapse of the housing market and fueled the 2008 global financial crisis; and it continues to go after industries and institutions that, for years, have not been held accountable for abusive and deceptive practices.

The CFPB ensures that the tens of millions of consumers who interact with large consumer reporting agencies, debt collectors, payday lenders, and nonbanks originating mortgage loans have an advocate in their corner.

In fact, in fiscal year 2013, the CFPB was a party in 13 enforcement actions related to deceptive marketing, unlawful debt collection, discrimination on the basis of age, unlawful charging of fees, and fraudulent mortgage relief schemes, among other violations.

Since the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau opened its doors, more than 269,000 individual consumer complaints have been received, and it has stood up for our Nation’s Active Duty military who so greatly serve us, returning more than \$12.5 million to them under the Military Lending Act.

Just yesterday, CFPB announced a lawsuit against a large for-profit college chain, accusing it of preying on

students by pushing them into high-cost loans, very likely to end in default.

But my friends on the other side of the aisle don't believe that we should have a consumer advocate in government. They would prefer that these unscrupulous actors continue to take advantage of consumers without interference.

The simple fact is that H.R. 3193 would accomplish this goal, obstructing the CFPB's ability to protect consumers from deceptive marketing, unlawful debt collection, lending discrimination, overcharge fees, and other illegal activity. The bill does so by undermining CFPB's leadership, ending its autonomy, and tying its funding to Congressional appropriations, among other ways.

In fact, Republicans have brought this bill to the floor claiming a cost savings, but they know that the only way a savings is realized is by slashing the budget of the CFPB, the sole agency charged with consumer financial protections.

But that is not all. The provisions included in this measure would eliminate the position of the CFPB director in favor of some five-member commission that would increase bureaucracy—encouraging, inviting—and encumber its ability to take action on behalf of consumers. It would water down the CFPB's rulemaking authority by lowering the bar for overturning its rules.

Many of the amendments offered today would make this bill even worse. For example, the measure offered by Congressman DESANTIS would repeal the Bureau's exclusive rulemaking authority, dispersing responsibility for protecting consumers among the same regulators who failed miserably in this task in the run-up to the financial crisis.

It is striking to listen to my friends on the opposite side of the aisle talk about the importance of consumer protection and then push a measure that is an obvious attempt to completely undermine and obstruct the CFPB's ability to protect consumers, students, seniors, and servicemembers.

If holding the Bureau accountable to its mission to protect American consumers truly is a Republican's goal, then why are we considering a bill which is strongly opposed by more than 100 organizations with long records of standing up for the interest of consumers?

I would urge my colleagues to oppose this damaging measure so the CFPB can continue its outstanding work.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I am happy to yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), the distinguished chairman of our Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee and a real leader in preserving consumer opportunity and rights.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the chairman of our committee for his leadership and for yielding me time this afternoon.

I would also like to thank my colleagues Mr. DUFFY, Mr. BACHUS, and Mr. NEUGEBAUER for their leadership in drafting the components of this bill before us today.

As we have heard, the debate before us today is not new. We have been working for the past 3 years to enact commonsense structural reforms to the CFPB. During debate in the last Congress, our friends on the other side of the aisle said that it was premature to reform this burgeoning agency. They argued that it was too early to tell how the Bureau would operate.

Well, 2½ years later, this is what we know: The Bureau continues to be unresponsive to bipartisan requests for information about their operations. For example, last spring, the Bureau released guidance for indirect auto lending practices.

Over the last year, Republican and Democrat Members have requested information, both in person and in writing, about the data the Bureau used to support their guidance. Despite these requests, the Bureau refuses to provide substantive answers to the Members' questions.

Over the last year, Members—and I have in particular—expressed significant concern about the effect the CFPB's new rules will have on mortgage availability for low- to moderate-income borrowers. Despite this, the CFPB has moved forward with the rules.

We have also heard that the Bureau is spending over \$100 million to renovate its headquarters. As we learned, the renovation per square foot will cost more than building the Trump World Tower and the Bellagio.

These examples are indicative of an agency that is unaccountable to Congress and to the American taxpayers. Moving the Bureau's leadership structure to a bipartisan commission will ensure that there is a diversity of opinion as the agency crafts new rules, no matter who the President is.

A more diverse leadership structure will result in more balanced rules that provide consumers with sufficient transparency to choose the financial products that best suits their needs.

We are also bringing greater accountability to this agency by putting the Bureau on the regular appropriations schedule. Budgetary control is a critical tool for this Congress, no matter who the President is, to ensure the actions of this agency truly benefits consumers.

I thank the sponsors for their hard work.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), ranking member on the Subcommittee

on Capital Markets and Government Sponsored Enterprises.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlelady for yielding and for her hard work on the Financial Services Committee.

I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 3193, which is a blatantly partisan assault on the CFPB and on American consumers.

I think it is telling that just 4 months after the first government shutdown in 17 years, the Republicans want to remove the CFPB's independent source of funding and subject it to Congress' deeply dysfunctional appropriations process.

It is telling because it exposes the true purpose of this bill. It is not to make the CFPB more accountable, but rather to undermine, defund, and hinder its ability to act to protect consumers in every possible way.

The dysfunction that led to last year's 16-day shutdown is exactly why we gave the CFPB an independent source of funding in Dodd-Frank. We wanted to insulate the CFPB from the political games and partisan brinksmanship that, unfortunately, became a staple of the appropriations process.

Another key reason for creating the CFPB was to make sure that we have at least one regulator whose sole purpose is protecting consumers. Prior to the financial crisis, consumer protection had, unfortunately, become an afterthought of the banking regulators whose primary mission was protecting the safety and soundness of the banks, but not consumers.

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When Congress created the CFPB, the whole point was to create a regulator whose sole focus would be to protect consumers. The reason Congress did this was that, prior to the financial crisis, consumers were an afterthought, a secondary thought, a third thought, or usually not even thought about at all. So it was a huge step forward to have a department that was focused on protecting consumers from new products that were harmful and from innovations that were not tested that were harmful to the consumers and the economy as a whole, which led to the financial crisis.

This was a huge step forward for consumers when it was created. Unfortunately, this bill before us today is a huge step backwards because it would give the safety and soundness regulators more authority to veto the CFPB's consumer protections in the name of bank profits—just like in the old days. Let's remember that, in just its first 2½ years, the CFPB has already made huge strides on a number of important consumer protections—from new mortgage protections to credit cards to payday lending.

An independent source said the credit card bill of rights that was supported by the CFPB saves consumers \$20 billion a year. That is a huge step forward for consumers, and the Bureau has been willing to make sensible changes when it has needed to. Last year, the Bureau adopted amendments to the CARD Act that would allow stay-at-home spouses to take out credit cards in their own names. This was a commonsense fix for an unintended problem for stay-at-home spouses who were creditworthy, and they made the decision so that they were able to get these credit cards. That is a huge step forward, and I worked with Mrs. CAPITO on it from across the aisle. The Bureau continues to work hard to develop consumer safeguards in rapidly growing areas, such as prepaid cards and overdraft protection, both of which many Members on both sides have a keen interest in seeing going forward.

In short, the CFPB's work has already made the lives of American consumers and our constituents better on a day-to-day basis. This bill would undermine these results, and it would weaken the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, so I strongly urge my colleagues to oppose the bill.

I would like to place in the RECORD independent organizations—literally well over 100—that are in support of the CFPB and that are in opposition to this bill. They are good government groups, credit groups, individual legislators, and local and State partners, all of whom are in opposition to the bill that undermines the work of the CFPB, which is there to protect consumers.

FOLLOWING ARE THE PARTNERS OF AMERICANS FOR FINANCIAL REFORM.

All the organizations support the overall principles of AFR and are working for an accountable, fair and secure financial system. Not all of these organizations work on all of the issues covered by the coalition or have signed on to every statement.

AARP; A New Way Forward; AFL-CIO; AFSCME; Alliance For Justice; American Income Life Insurance; American Sustainable Business Council; Americans for Democratic Action, Inc.; Americans United for Change; Campaign for America's Future; Campaign Money; Center for Digital Democracy; Center for Economic and Policy Research; Center for Economic Progress; Center for Media and Democracy; Center for Responsible Lending; Center for Justice and Democracy; Center of Concern; Center for Effective Government; Change to Win; Clean Yield Asset Management.

Coastal Enterprises Inc.; Color of Change; Common Cause; Communications Workers of America; Community Development Transportation Lending Services; Consumer Action; Consumer Association Council; Consumers for Auto Safety and Reliability; Consumer Federation of America; Consumer Watchdog; Consumers Union; Corporation for Enterprise Development; CREDO Mobile; CTW Investment Group; Demos; Economic Policy Institute; Essential Action; Green America; Greenlining Institute; Good Business International; HNMA Funding Company.

Home Actions; Housing Counseling Services; Home Defender's League; Information

Press; Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy; Institute for Global Communications; Institute for Policy Studies; Global Economy Project; International Brotherhood of Teamsters; Institute of Women's Policy Research; Krull & Company; Laborers' International Union of North America; Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; Main Street Alliance; Move On; NAACP; NASCAT; National Association of Consumer Advocates; National Association of Neighborhoods; National Community Reinvestment Coalition; National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low-income clients); National Consumers League.

National Council of La Raza; National Council of Women's Organizations; National Fair Housing Alliance; National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions; National Housing Resource Center; National Housing Trust; National Housing Trust Community Development Fund; National NeighborWorks Association; National Nurses United; National People's Action; National Urban League; Next Step; OpenTheGovernment.org; Opportunity Finance Network; Partners for the Common Good; PICO National Network; Progress Now Action; Progressive States Network; Poverty and Race Research Action Council; Public Citizen; Sargent Shriver Center on Poverty Law.

SEIU; State Voices; Taxpayer's for Common Sense; The Association for Housing and Neighborhood Development; The Fuel Savers Club; The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights; The Seminal; TICAS; U.S. Public Interest Research Group; UNITE HERE; United Food and Commercial Workers; United States Student Association; USAction; Veris Wealth Partners; Western States Center; We the People Now; Woodstock Institute; World Privacy Forum; UNET; Union Plus; Unitarian Universalist for a Just Economic Community.

List of State and Local Partners

Alaska PIRG; Arizona PIRG; Arizona Advocacy Network; Arizonans For Responsible Lending; Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development NY; Audubon Partnership for Economic Development LDC, New York NY; BAC Funding Consortium Inc., Miami FL; Beech Capital Venture Corporation, Philadelphia PA; California PIRG; California Reinvestment Coalition; Century Housing Corporation, Culver City CA; CHANGER NY; Chautauqua Home Rehabilitation and Improvement Corporation (NY); Chicago Community Loan Fund, Chicago IL; Chicago Community Ventures, Chicago IL; Chicago Consumer Coalition; Citizen Potawatomi CDC, Shawnee OK; Colorado PIRG; Coalition on Homeless Housing in Ohio; Community Capital Fund, Bridgeport CT; Community Capital of Maryland, Baltimore MD; Community Development Financial Institution of the Tohono O'odham Nation, Sells AZ.

Community Redevelopment Loan and Investment Fund, Atlanta GA; Community Reinvestment Association of North Carolina; Community Resource Group, Fayetteville A; Connecticut PIRG; Consumer Assistance Council; Cooper Square Committee (NYC); Cooperative Fund of New England, Wilmington NC; Corporacion de Desarrollo Economico de Ceiba, Ceiba PR; Delta Foundation, Inc., Greenville MS; Economic Opportunity Fund (EOF), Philadelphia PA; Empire Justice Center NY; Empowering and Strengthening Ohio's People (ESOP), Cleveland OH; Enterprises, Inc., Berea KY; Fair Housing Contact Service OH; Federation of Appalachian Housing; Fitness and Praise

Youth Development, Inc., Baton Rouge LA; Florida Consumer Action Network; Florida PIRG; Funding Partners for Housing Solutions, Ft. Collins CO; Georgia PIRG; Grow Iowa Foundation, Greenfield IA; Homewise, Inc., Santa Fe NM.

Idaho Nevada CDFI, Pocatello ID; Idaho Chapter, National Association of Social Workers; Illinois PIRG; Impact Capital, Seattle WA; Indiana PIRG; Iowa PIRG; Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement; JobStart Chautauqua, Inc., Mayville NY; La Casa Federal Credit Union, Newark NJ; Low Income Investment Fund, San Francisco CA; Long Island Housing Services NY; MaineStream Finance, Bangor ME; Maryland PIRG; Massachusetts Consumers' Coalition; MASSPIRG; Massachusetts Fair Housing Center; Michigan PIRG; Midland Community Development Corporation, Midland TX; Midwest Minnesota Community Development Corporation, Detroit Lakes MN; Mile High Community Loan Fund, Denver CO; Missouri PIRG; Mortgage Recovery Service Center of L.A.

Montana Community Development Corporation, Missoula MT; Montana PIRG; New Economy Project; New Hampshire PIRG; New Jersey Community Capital, Trenton NJ; New Jersey Citizen Action; New Jersey PIRG; New Mexico PIRG; New York PIRG; New York City Aids Housing Network; New Yorkers for Responsible Lending; NOAH Community Development Fund, Inc., Boston MA; Nonprofit Finance Fund, New York NY; Nonprofits Assistance Fund, Minneapolis MN; North Carolina PIRG; Northside Community Development Fund, Pittsburgh PA; Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing, Columbus OH; Ohio PIRG; OligarchyUSA; Oregon State PIRG; Our Oregon; PennPIRG; Piedmont Housing Alliance, Charlottesville VA; Michigan PIRG; Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center, CO; Rhode Island PIRG.

Rural Community Assistance Corporation, West Sacramento CA; Rural Organizing Project OR; San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority; Seattle Economic Development Fund; Community Capital Development; TexPIRG; The Fair Housing Council of Central New York; The Loan Fund, Albuquerque NM; Third Reconstruction Institute NC; Vermont PIRG; Village Capital Corporation, Cleveland OH; Virginia Citizens Consumer Council; Virginia Poverty Law Center; War on Poverty—Florida; WashPIRG; Westchester Residential Opportunities Inc.; Wigamig Owners Loan Fund, Inc., Lac du Flambeau WI; WISPIRG.

Small Businesses

Blu; Bowden-Gill Environmental; Community MedPAC; Diversified Environmental Planning; Hayden & Craig, PLLC; Mid City Animal Hospital, Phoenix AZ; UNET.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, it is now my honor to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), the distinguished majority leader, who has been a tireless advocate for consumer choice and freedom throughout this debate on this unaccountable Bureau and who has led our Congress' effort to bring bills to the floor to stop government abuse.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank both gentlemen from Texas for their leadership on this issue.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the Consumer Financial Freedom and Washington Accountability Act.

Our constituents deserve an open government that can easily be held accountable. We in the House have got to

be focused on reforming this government so we can create an America that works again. The Founders of our country created this democratic system to include a series of checks and balances to prevent any institution from becoming too powerful, and, today, it is as important as ever to keep those checks and balances strong.

Right now, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is an independent agency within the Federal Reserve System that is full of unelected bureaucrats who enjoy an unprecedented amount of power with a serious lack of accountability to any of the three branches of government.

American consumers should not have to fear Federal bureaucrats who can eliminate access to their credit options, collect information on their personal finances without their knowledge or consent, or limit the availability of a mortgage due to the onerous Qualified Mortgage rule that the CFPB put in place last month.

Working families who are struggling to make ends meet during these hard economic times should also not have to worry about their hard-earned tax dollars being spent so recklessly and irresponsibly by government agencies. We have recently learned that the Federal Reserve's inspector general opened up an investigation to find out why a renovation to the CFPB's headquarters skyrocketed from \$55 million to \$145 million in under 2 years. This reckless waste is one of the most dangerous kinds of government abuses. The American workers' pocketbooks are not Washington's ATM machine.

The bill before us today provides solutions to these problems with important structural changes that will place the levers of power in a bipartisan panel, as opposed to a single director, while subjecting the CFPB to the regular appropriations and oversight processes, guaranteeing more accountability.

This is an opportunity for us to show the American people that we are committed to restoring trust in government. By passing these commonsense reforms in a bipartisan fashion, we can hold Washington more accountable to the people we are supposed to protect. So let's pass this bill and take one step closer to stopping government abuse.

Again, I would like to thank Chairman HENSARLING, Chairman NEUGEBAUER, Representatives DUFFY, BACHUS, WESTMORELAND, and FINCHER, and the rest of the Financial Services Committee for their hard work on this issue. I urge my colleagues in the House to support this legislation so we can begin to make America work again for everybody.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts, Representative LYNCH, who is a member of the Financial Services Committee and who is the ranking

member on the Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, U.S. Postal Service and the Census.

Mr. LYNCH. I thank the gentlelady for yielding and for her work on behalf of American consumers.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 3193, the so-called Consumer Financial Protection and Soundness Improvement Act.

Let's be clear about what my friends on the other side of the aisle are trying to do here today.

They would really like to completely repeal the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Many of the sponsors of this act are the ones who tried to defeat the creation and empowerment of the CFPB to begin with. To be mindful, this is the only financial regulator solely responsible for protecting American consumers from unfair, deceptive, and abusive financial products. My friends on the other side of the aisle would like to destroy it, so they are trying to pass off this "death by a thousand cuts" approach as improvements to the Bureau's structure.

This bill will bog down the consumer bureau in bureaucratic and congressional red tape. It will make it more difficult for the Bureau to seek out and retain qualified employees. It will also allow the companies that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is supposed to be regulating to have more information, better information—more accurate information, more extensive information—about consumers than the CFPB that is responsible for protecting them will have.

In sum, it will make the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau a second-class and ineffective regulator, sending the signal to bad actors in our financial markets that we are not really serious about consumer protections, and this bill will do nothing to make consumers safer.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in voting "no" on H.R. 3193.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I am now pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER), the chairman of the Housing and Insurance Subcommittee, who is a key coauthor of this bill, ensuring that the CFPB is accountable through the congressional appropriations process, and who is a real champion of preserving housing opportunities from Washington bureaucrats.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. I thank Chairman HENSARLING.

Mr. Chairman, I think it is kind of interesting that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle seem to want to justify this "spending gone wild" agency, an agency that last year alone had a budget overreach of nearly \$100 million.

That is the reason that I introduced title II of this bill, which really says two things: one, that we take this agency out of the Fed and make it a

stand-alone entity; and two, that we put it on budget, a normal appropriations process, where Members of Congress can begin to sit down and look at the budget that is presented to them by the agency—how you are going to spend their money. Maybe we would have prevented some of these overreaches that happened.

I don't think that anybody thinks that government should just have an unlimited purse, and this is what this agency basically has. If they run out of money—spend too much money—they just reach over into the Fed and take that money out. No other agency that I know of in the government has that, and I think the hardworking American people and the hardworking people of the 19th District feel like agencies ought to come and bring their budgets, like in other areas of government, and explain and prove why they need that money.

Interestingly enough, the CFPB has 1,500 employees, 60 percent of them making over \$100,000 and 5 percent of those making more than Cabinet secretaries. Mr. Chairman, again, we think there needs to be more accountability here.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HENSARLING. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. This agency can draw up to \$500 million each year, really. In fact, some of the requests for transfer were done on small pieces of paper.

Can you imagine a three-line paragraph saying, "Please send over \$150 million. We have run out of money"?

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 3193 begins to bring the accountability that the American taxpayers not only deserve but desire.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Washington, Representative HECK, who is a member of the Financial Services Committee and who has paid a lot of attention to this issue.

Mr. HECK of Washington. I thank the ranking member very much.

Mr. Chairman, I am from Washington State, and I am about to commit a sacrilege. We could have saved a lot of trees and a lot of time if we had had a one-sentence bill that simply said: "End the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau."

We could have had an honest debate then about whether we should have any government agency with the mandate to protect consumers from deceptive financial marketing and abusive financial practices. We could have had a discussion about what the CFPB has accomplished thus far and whether it is accessible to Americans, whether its proposed streamlined forms are more effective at educating Americans, whether its rules are thoroughly researched and revised after comments

from all sides. Instead, we are having a debate over reorganizing and defunding and subordinating and other matters of process and organization that are all, frankly, designed to kill CFPB by a thousand cuts.

I think the proposition here is fairly straightforward and remains a mystery to me. If one desires to do away with the CFPB, why not have the courage to introduce that bill straightforwardly?

Ordinarily, I don't assign motives or characterize intent on the part of people who advance legislation. The fact of the matter is many of those who are advocating for this bill's passage opposed the creation of the agency flat out. The fact of the matter is that a companion bill—granted, one not in this—even re-titled the agency and took the words “consumer protection” out. The fact of the matter is, if there were more credible arguments in support of this legislation, I think we would be a little more careful with the facts.

Here is a fact: there isn't a penny of taxpayer dollars that supports CFPB. It is fee-based. Here is a fact omitted: more than 60 percent of the costs associated with the alleged remodel budget, which is an estimate—a fact omitted—is associated with upgrading to code. Now, I know for another fact that the people who are making that argument do not want civil servants to occupy unsafe and unhealthy buildings.

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But most importantly—this is the part that really gets me—we are going to spend a lot of time on this today and in committee, and we are going to pass it to the Senate, and we all know what its fate is going to be, right down into the ground. Well, that is fine. People have the right to make their point, but what is the opportunity cost of making that point in committee and on the floor? At least one of the opportunity costs is getting to work on actual regulatory relief.

We have several bipartisan bills for regulatory relief. Some form of the CLEAR Act, not all the Members on my side support it, but some do. We could actually get to work on regulatory relief if we would set aside our efforts for this messaging and exercise.

As for me, no matter what the form, I am going to vote “no” on any bill that kills the CFPB, any bill. I will vote “no” because of the work the CFPB does on behalf of my constituents.

I will vote to preserve the Office of Servicemember Affairs and the great work that Holly Petraeus is doing. They have a special mandate to protect the men and women in uniform. I have the privilege to represent Joint Base Lewis-McChord, tens of thousands of uniformed personnel. If you ever talk to anybody—I don't see how anybody who has a military base even near their district can support this legislation.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. WATERS. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman.

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Chair, I don't see how anybody who has a military base anywhere near their district can support this legislation.

I will vote to protect the experts who are laying the groundwork for the first national consumer protection rules on payday loans and other short-term, high-interest loans. I will vote to defend the Bureau's work protecting students from high-interest-rate loans and creating a uniform set of borrower rights and protections for all student loans, public or private. If we really want a stable, predictable business environment, we wouldn't be going down this path.

At the end of the day, again, the proposition is very straightforward. If you support consumer protection, you will vote “no” on this legislation. If you oppose consumer protection, you will vote “yes.” But I entreat you, I plead with you, to please vote “no.”

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 5 seconds to encourage the gentleman from Washington to read section 1017 of the Dodd-Frank Act, and he would discover that the CFPB is funded by the Federal Reserve, which happens to be taxpayer money.

Mr. Chairman, at this time I am happy to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LUETKEMEYER), the vice chairman of our Housing and Insurance Subcommittee.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Chairman, my colleagues have done a good job of listing some of the problems of CFPB. I would like to give you an example of some of the overreach of this new agency already.

A small community bank in my district, they purchased a small lending company. With that lending company comes the lease of the building that they are operating their office out of. The CFPB comes in and says the lease is \$300 per month over the course of 9 months over what the rate should be for that area. They go in and tell the bank that they are going to fine them \$107,000 for this lease, which is nothing the bank made. It doesn't impact consumers, yet they are fined \$107,000. The bank eventually settles for \$80—plus \$30,000 in attorneys' fees.

Mr. Chairman, this is an example already of this new agency's overreach. It has got to stop. H.R. 3193 does that. I urge support for that bill.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chair, I am waiting for additional speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I am now pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT), the chairman of our Capital Markets and GSE Subcommittee.

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Chairman, the Bureau of Financial Protection claims

unlimited power to define and regulate every conceivable financial transaction in the country, and yet it claims to be unaccountable to no one. So I find it disturbing that the Bureau collects private credit card data on Americans and does so without the knowledge of those Americans. Its effort is so vast that the Bureau collects information on over 990 million credit card accounts.

According to Dr. Thomas Stratmann, Professor of Economics and Law at George Mason University:

There are costs and potential harms to collecting and maintaining massive databases of personal financial information; including the potential for abuse, or violation of consumer privacy, and security concerns in the event of a data breach.

Mr. Chairman, the Bureau believes that actions must go unquestioned, and now it wants your credit card information, too. This legislation before us protects citizens by protecting and prohibiting the Bureau from collecting Americans' nonpublic personal financial information without first receiving the express permission of the consumer.

I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to respect the financial privacy of all Americans and support this legislation.

Ms. WATERS. I continue to reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased now to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. McHENRY), the chairman of the Oversight and Investigation Subcommittee of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. McHENRY. Mr. Chair, I appreciate my colleagues for their leadership on this important legislation.

I rise in support of it to bring some balance to an otherwise unaccountable bureaucratic agency, perhaps the most powerful agency in government with the least amount of public accountability. It has no accountability to the administration, very little to Congress, and even less to the American people. As a result, it should come as no surprise that this Bureau has operated with less transparency and less concern for fiscal discipline than even a very low bar and low standard we hold for our Federal tax dollars.

Due to this lack of accountability, certain expenditures have been called into question; in fact, their building expenditures, which is a beautiful release of a \$150 million plan to renovate a building that they are leasing. Now, it is a very rare thing and pretty silly in real estate to do an enormous upfit for a building that costs \$153 million—that is the appraised value—and to put \$150 million at \$461 a square foot into that building. It makes no sense unless you understand that these are your tax dollars at work to build luxury a couple of blocks from the White House.

These buildings are just another example of why this agency needs to be

held accountable to not just the American people and the taxpayers, but to the taxpaying public and those of us who care about having access to good financial products while protecting.

So that is why I support this legislation.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chair, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I am now happy to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. HURT), the vice chairman of our Capital Markets and GSE Subcommittee.

Mr. HURT. I thank the chairman for his leadership on this issue. I thank him for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, today I rise in support of the Consumer Financial Freedom and Washington Accountability Act.

As I travel across our Virginia's Fifth District, I continue to hear troubling stories about the impacts of the CFPB. I have heard from consumers, community banks, and credit unions about how the unchecked authority of the CFPB is restricting consumer choice, creating an atmosphere of economic uncertainty, and increasing costs.

Real consumer protection requires that we shift power from Washington bureaucrats to American consumers by providing access to competitive markets with choice, information, and accountability. This bill would help achieve that goal by adding much-needed oversight and transparency to this far-reaching new government agency without weakening consumer protection.

These bipartisan checks and balances will protect our community banks and credit unions who play a critical role in providing capital to our small businesses and working families. At a time when too many Americans remain out of work, it is critical that we continue to support policies that will help restore certainty to the marketplace, create jobs, and protect our consumers.

I urge support of this good bill.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON), the chief deputy whip who also serves on the Financial Services Committee and is cochair of the Progressive Caucus.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chairman, let me thank our ranking member for the time.

I urge a "no" vote on H.R. 3193 today. It is a bad bill, and it is bad for consumers, bad for Americans.

As I listened to my colleagues, one of them mentioned the CFPB offers uncertainty. Well, here is some certainty for you. You cannot cheat consumers. That is certainty enough for me. Another one said, well, you know, the CFPB doesn't offer choice. Here is a choice. You can offer any product that is fair and transparent to consumers.

That is exactly what my friends on the other side of the aisle object to.

They don't want average Americans to be able to get a financial services product that is fair, that is balanced, and that makes sense in the marketplace.

You have nothing to fear from the CFPB if you do not offer a product that is designed to bilk consumers. If you do, I can see why you might be quite upset at the activity of the CFPB.

The bottom line is this is a bad bill. It will set our country back, and in fact, I believe consumer protection is at the very heart of the recession that we just went through.

Now, of course, we have heard ad nauseam that it was the housing goals and it was the other sort of measures that caused the recession, but the fact is the recession was caused because large numbers of home buyers were bilked into mortgages that they couldn't afford, that were difficult to understand, with high pressure tactics and were incentivized, even to be guided and steered to products that were more high cost than the ones they qualified for.

Then we packaged these things into mortgage-backed securities that were unsound to begin with. The rating agencies said they were fine, took out a form of insurance on them, and then when the house of cards fell, the whole economy went with it.

Consumer protection is at the heart of the problem. Consumer protection is the solution to this problem, and so this effort to undermine the CFPB today under the guise of H.R. 3193 is wrong.

Mr. Chair, we are at a whose side are you on moment. Are you on the side of Mom and Pop, of the small business owner, of the consumer trying to get a house loan or other form of credit? Or are you on someone else's side who is not in favor of a fair product?

I have said to my community bankers, look, your opponents before the crash didn't have the regulator; now, everyone has one. The CFPB offers a level playing field for all. Now everybody offering mortgage products has a degree of accountability. This is good for the financial services sector, not bad.

Since the CFPB was created following the financial crisis, it has received, Mr. Chair, more than 250,000 consumer complaints. Mr. Chair, who are these 250,000 complaints supposed to be directed to but for an agency that is responsive to them? Who would my friends on the other side of the aisle have these people go to to try to get their problems solved? We know that they weren't being listened to before the CFPB.

Now that the CFPB exists, a quarter of a million complaints and untold numbers of complainants have come forward to say, Please help me. Half of these complaints have been in the mortgage servicing area alone. Of the 3,135 complaints from my own State of

Minnesota, 1,320 have been related to mortgage issues. This bill threatens to turn off access to these consumers, and I will not stand silently by while they do this.

This is a bad bill.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

□ 1530

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman.

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chairman, this is a bad bill. Among the CFPB's many accomplishments, they have refunded more than \$3 billion—billion with a "b"—to more than 9 million consumers. That is good fiscal stewardship.

Now, the CFPB oversees industries that previously were not regulated by the Federal government, including credit reporting agencies, nonbank mortgage providers, debt collection agencies and payday lenders. All of that consumer protection would end if this bad piece of legislation were to pass.

Say no, resoundingly. Vote "no" on this bill.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I am now pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. STUTZMAN).

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Consumer Financial Freedom and Washington Accountability Act. I thank Congressman DUFFY and Chairman HENSARLING for their leadership on this issue.

The CFPB is disgracefully unaccountable to the American people. Richard Cordray and future directors of the Bureau are virtually unchecked by Congress and the President.

We have seen what happens when bureaucrats so powerful are left so unaccountable. In its 3 short years, the CFPB has burned through its budgets and rifled through the private financial data of millions of Americans.

Hoosiers deserve consumer protections, but they also deserve integrity and accountability. After talking with families, small businesses, community banks, and credit unions back home, I am proud to support the commonsense reforms before the House today.

Let's replace the CFPB's Director with a five-member commission to ensure healthy discussion and bring more seats to the table. Let's rein in the CFPB's budget so that the Members of Congress from both parties can protect their constituents. Let's prohibit government bureaucrats from using private personal information without the consumers' consent.

Mr. Chairman, let's protect and empower American consumers, not Washington bureaucrats.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, can I inquire whether the gentlelady has any more speakers?

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, we have one speaker on the way.

Mr. HENSARLING. We have plenty of speakers here, Mr. Chairman. I would be glad to lend the gentlelady a few if she needs some people to speak.

Otherwise, Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. MULVANEY).

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3193 which, amongst many other things, replaces the single Director with a five-member commission.

I would remind my friends across the aisle that this brings the bill into the original spirit of Dodd-Frank, which, when it left this House several years ago, had eventually a five-member commission. All we are trying to do is get back to that original intention.

Further, during the discussions in committee, we focused on the membership of that commission and how it would be a decent idea to have people who are on the commission who actually knew something about the industries that they were regulating.

For example, the CFPB regulates insured banks, non-depository financial institutions, credit unions, all of which are very unique. Wouldn't it be nice to actually have folks regulating those industries who knew something about them?

This is not rare in the world of regulation. The FDIC, which oversees State banks, has been required to have someone on its commission for years who actually has experience regulating State banks. It has not been a problem for the FDIC, and it would not be a problem for the CFPB.

We need to pass this bill for a variety of reasons but, first and foremost, we need to replace the single Director with a five-man commission, and for that, I hope that we pass the bill.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield an additional 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON).

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member.

I only rise for one simple point, and that is to correct the RECORD when it comes to this claim that the CFPB engages in massive, excessive data collection of consumers' information. It is not true.

Anyone listening to this debate, Mr. Chairman, should know that the CFPB does not monitor the accounts of particular consumers and does not track the financial behavior or activities of any individual customer.

The CFPB is already prohibited by law from collecting personally identifiable information in the course of its market-monitoring responsibility. Although the Bureau does collect certain information as part of its responsibility to identify and monitor market

trends and proactively address emerging consumer credit issues, this information is deliberately depersonalized and aggregated to ensure consumers' sensitive information is protected.

Now, this is critically important because speaker after speaker is trying to scare consumers into believing that somebody is looking at their personal data. It is not true. It is not true, and I think it is important for people listening to this debate to know that.

Requiring the Bureau to seek consent on an individual level in order for it to access aggregated or anonymous data is not only a hindrance to the CFPB's core mission of regulating the entities that offer consumer financial products or services, but it is a burdensome requirement and, of course, intended simply to slow down, gum up, undermine, and break down the institution itself.

It is not true. People's data is safe. Looking for aggregate trends and proactively addressing emerging problems, as would have been very helpful as we got closer to the financial foreclosure crisis just a few years ago, is what the CFPB is doing.

It is doing what it is supposed to do. It is doing it well, and I don't know why any fair-minded person would be against that.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds to say that the CFPB is building a database containing full credit report data on 53 million borrowers who took out mortgages since 1998. The project manager said: "It is easy to reverse-engineer and identify the people in our database."

CFPB has a credit card database of at least 991 million credit cards and approximately 136 million Americans. The Bureau is collecting a database of credit reports on 8.6 million Americans. They continue to collect personalized data from Americans without their permission. It is unacceptable.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. ROSS).

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Chairman, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is one of the largest Federal undertakings in recent history, created by Congress yet unaccountable to Congress. One man is tasked with oversight of essentially the entire financial services industry.

Director Cordray works hard for consumers, but no single individual can have sufficient expertise to make determinations that impact low-income families, community banks, mortgage lending, auto lending, credit card users and students.

A real estate lawyer in my district who represents clients who specialize in lending to low-income people, whose clients have a foreclosure rate of less than 5 percent, commented:

The only way these folks can own a home is to finance the purchase from an unconventional source. My clients get financial information from the prospective buyers relating

to their ability to pay, but it does not meet the thresholds established to qualify as a Qualified Mortgage.

This year, that lawyer advised all his clients to discontinue lending. This is the same story we are receiving from our community banks.

These are the results of an unaccountable agency with insular focus. H.R. 3193 would bring much-needed accountability and ensure that enough experts are at the decision table that American families are actually protected by Federal regulations, not harmed by unintended consequences, a situation we have seen all too often in recent months.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I would like to inquire how much time is remaining on each side.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas has 9½ minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from California has 4½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER).

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Chair, I want to thank the chairman for yielding me time. I particularly want to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY) for his leadership on this important issue and for standing up on behalf of hardworking American families.

I rise today in support of H.R. 3193 and urge its passage by this House.

The Financial Services Committee has, on multiple occasions, asked the question "Who protects consumers from the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection?"

Unfortunately, the answer for the last 3½ years has been nobody. Today, this House has an opportunity to change that.

The underlying bill includes a number of provisions to ensure that the very basic principles of good government apply to the Bureau, and it puts an end to the special treatment granted to the Bureau under Dodd-Frank.

These are commonsense, pro-consumer provisions that will help protect hardworking American families and taxpayers from yet another Washington bureaucracy that thinks it knows what is in their best interest.

I urge the passage of this bill.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR).

Mr. BARR. Mr. Chairman, this legislation is about holding Washington accountable. The Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection is one of the most powerful and unaccountable agencies in the entire Federal Government. Unfortunately, the Bureau reaches deeply into the everyday lives of Kentuckians.

In following its partisan agenda, the Bureau makes it harder for small businesses on Main Street to get a loan to grow their business. The Bureau makes it harder for families in Kentucky to obtain a mortgage to purchase a home, including for manufactured homes. The Bureau even makes it harder to get financing discounts that help Kentuckians purchase their car or truck.

The Bureau is so out of touch that it even regulates Bath County, in my district, one of the most rural counties in America, as “non-rural.”

These concerns are not only voiced inside of Washington. Just last week I was in Powell County, and a small business owner raised his hand during my public event to talk about how the Bureau’s rules are harming his ability to do business in his community.

This avalanche of red tape coming out of the Bureau is making life harder for millions of Americans, which is why we need to pass this legislation that will reform the Bureau in a way that reins in the misguided rules that stem from its partisan excesses and unaccountable culture.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), the ranking member of the Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on Government Operations.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I thank my distinguished ranking member and my friend from California.

Mr. Chairman, I rise to oppose this latest Republican assault on the CFPB. It is truly baffling to see my colleagues’ continued attempts to undermine the only Federal regulator created to protect American consumers.

Contrary to the talking points of the other side, this mash-up of bills will only burden the CFPB with more bureaucracy, not less. For example, the bill would replace the Director, who has been on the job for just 6 months, after the Senate Republicans held up his confirmation for 2 years, with a cumbersome five-person commission.

The bill also seeks to take the CFPB out of the Federal Reserve and make it subject to annual congressional appropriations. My Republican colleagues claim this is to provide tougher oversight, but that is a ruse. They have already stated they would defund CFPB altogether if they could.

As ranking member of the House Oversight Subcommittee on Government Operations, I firmly believe in accountability, but I would note that Director Cordray has been before this Congress 46 times since CFPB was created. I would call that pretty responsible oversight.

After the 2008 Wall Street meltdown, safeguarding our financial system ought to be a primary concern, but this bill would, once again, place the interest of banks over those of consumers. As we saw during the financial crisis,

innovation led to a wave of untested and sophisticated financial products, allowing dishonest actors to take advantage of many Americans.

Dodd-Frank, which my Republican friends fought against tooth-and-nail, remains Congress’ sole substantive response to the greatest financial meltdown since the Great Depression.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle found it necessary not only to fight against any attempt at regulating Wall Street, but waged much of the battle against the CFPB itself. Republicans in the Senate waged a 700-day battle to prevent a confirmation of CFPB’s Director—700 days.

In just a short amount of time, since his confirmation, CFPB has become an effective champion for all Americans. It has fielded more than 280,000 consumer complaints.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. WATERS. I yield 10 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. CONNOLLY. This bill is a bad idea. It is an anti-consumer bill. I urge my colleagues to vote against it.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

□ 1545

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Chairman, much more accountability and transparency is needed in Washington, especially at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

The Bureau wields broad and unchecked power over our economy, from banks to businesses to anyone who uses credit or payment plans. Abuses of that power, enabled by a lack of accountability and transparency, harms families and businesses up and down Main Streets in Pennsylvania and across the Nation.

That is why I rise today in strong support of the Consumer Financial Freedom and Washington Accountability Act. Importantly, this common-sense legislation better protects consumers by prohibiting the Bureau from using personal and private financial information without their knowledge and consent.

It also makes the Bureau subject to the regular authorization and appropriations process. This increases the American people’s ability to demand accountability through their elected representatives.

The legislation will also replace a single and unaccountable director with a bipartisan five-member commission and establish more reasonable thresholds for reviewing and repealing regulations.

These changes will help rein in the regulatory overreach coming from Washington, D.C., elites. It will ensure a diversity of viewpoints is represented whenever the Bureau makes decisions that will directly impact families and businesses across the Nation.

These very reasonable reforms will protect consumers and our Nation’s financial system by providing for more rigorous oversight of the powerful and unaccountable Bureau.

I urge my colleagues to support this good-government legislation.

Ms. WATERS. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I am now especially pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY), who is the vice chairman of our Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee and the chief author of the legislation of which we debate today.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman for all the work that he has put in on this consumer financial protection reform bill. This is really a bill about accountability and transparency.

As has been discussed today, the CFPB is collecting information on almost 1 billion credit cards—1 billion credit cards—which means if you are an American and you have a credit card, the CFPB is collecting and monitoring your transactions.

So what we have done is said: Listen, if you are here to protect a consumer, why don’t you ask the consumer for permission and consent to take their information?

If we care about the American citizenry—if we care about consumers and don’t care about Big Government and the information they have on us, let’s give them the power. Let’s ask them. That is all we do. Empower the American citizenry.

Again, let’s empower Congress and the American people as well. When we don’t fund agencies through this institution, we lose authority; we lose oversight.

Let’s take that power and control back into Congress, and let’s actually put the power back in the hands of the people; but if you empower the Fed to fund this agency, you have taken the control away from this institution. That is wrong.

One of the most important reform parts of this bill is meaningful to me because I come from rural America; and the way that the law is structured is that if a bad rule comes from the CFPB, it can be overturned.

You can go to FSOC and say: Listen, this rule is going to create systemic risk; meaning, it is going to have a negative impact on our economy. It should be overturned.

Now think about what kind of financial institutions can go to FSOC and say: This rule is bad; overturn it.

Is it the small community bank? Is it the credit union in rural America? Heck, no. But if you are a big Wall Street bank, you have been given a voice in the way my friends across the aisle have structured this law.

Big banks on Wall Street who created the crisis are given a voice to have

rules from the CFPB overturned, but you have left the small banks and credit unions in my district voiceless to say: this rule is going to hurt us.

That is wrong.

Listen, we want to talk about protecting consumers, giving a voice to consumers, making sure Big Government isn't breathing down their backs.

Want to know who protects consumers and finance? Our credit unions, our small community banks. And guess what? The Credit Union National Association, they endorse and support our bill. The National Association of Federal Credit Unions endorsed and support this bill. The Independent Community Bankers endorsed and support this bill.

This is the right thing to do. Let's empower Congress and empower the American people. Let's reform the CFPB and actually make it work.

Ms. WATERS. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I am now pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PITTENGER).

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman HENSARLING for the time and for allowing me to speak on this important issue; and I also thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY) for his leadership on this legislation.

This legislation is absolutely necessary to bring pragmatic reforms to CFPB. The CFPB needs transparency. It needs accountability. It needs privacy reforms.

The first main goal of this legislation is to replace the single all-powerful director with a five-person independent commission. This will allow for a healthy debate and to bring rules and regulations that are proposed at this agency.

It would put CFPB on a regular budgetary cycle with annual appropriations. This will shield the very American taxpayer from wasteful spending and allow Congress the proper oversight that this agency absolutely needs.

One of the key provisions of this bill prohibits CFPB from accessing, collecting, and analyzing the American people's personal financial data without their express permission.

In the wake of the regulation tsunami coming from D.C., it is time that Congress exercise its authority to help rein in government bureaucrats and help provide the clarity to business owners across the country.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. WATERS. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3193.

I am an automobile dealer, and my family has been in the business for 63 years.

CFPB is kind of interesting because what we have done now, we have absolutely abandoned the rulemaking process, and we have gone to another type of influencing people; and the relationship that car dealers have with their customers is sometimes to navigate a very difficult financial system to get their loans arranged.

But no, we want to do it a different way. We want to do it with guidance. Here is the way it kind of works. It is like the policeman walking his beat and pulling out his billy club and tapping it on his hand and saying: I strongly suggest you follow my guidance.

There is no oversight on this. This group of people are going to make decisions by not even consulting us, the people. We do represent the people, and I would like to think that we can come together once in a while to do what is in the best interest of the people that we represent, not a Republican issue, not a Democratic issue, but an American issue.

We have to do these things. Again, strong suggestions that you follow my guidance, as opposed to letting people sit down and negotiate themselves, that is not the way the American system works.

It never has, never will. It never should have happened. CFPB should have never come to the light of day.

Ms. WATERS. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, I want to, once again, reiterate my strong opposition to this harmful legislation which will weaken the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, an agency created to protect consumers and defend them against bad actors and practices throughout our financial system.

Just in case we are losing sight of what this Bureau is all about, we have many citizens out there who are the victims of false advertising. People advertise something. They advertise a price. They advertise a product. They go to buy the product. It is not there. It costs more money.

Debt collectors, how many of our citizens have been harassed by debt collectors, calling them in the middle of the night, asking for information, and charging them with things they have never been involved in?

Don't forget those payday loans. Poor people run out of money, go to a payday lender, get charged 500 percent for a payday loan.

What about those private postsecondary schools where all of those students who are trying to get an education are forced into getting loans, are encouraged to get loans, get ripped off, don't learn anything, can't get a job?

What about those mortgage lenders who tricked all of those people into

mortgage loans and they end up losing their homes? What about discrimination against the aged? What about what they did to our good men and women who served in different branches of the military for all of us and got ripped off by payday lenders?

This is what the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is all about. I don't know how anyone could think that we shouldn't have protection for our consumers. Our consumers are finding out that, finally, we have something.

They are calling our telephone number, (855) 411-2372, to get some help. They are going to our Web site, www.consumerfinance.gov. Over 289,000 citizens have gone to this www.consumerfinance.gov Web site. They have called this telephone number, (855) 411-2372, because, finally, they have a bureau that is paying attention to all of the rip-offs, all of the fraudulent advertising, all of the overcharging of fees, all of what they did not have protection from in the past.

We realized, at some point in time, that all of our regulatory agencies that were supposed to be paying attention were not. Now, we have protection.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

To protect consumers, you first need to make sure they have the power to consume; and under the Obama administration economic policies, tens of millions of our fellow citizens are either unemployed or underemployed. They don't have the income to consume. That is not consumer protection.

Part of the problem is the CFPB because true consumer protection, Mr. Chairman, empowers consumers in innovative, transparent, competitive markets; and it respects the intelligence and the dignity of the American citizen; and it preserves their economic liberty to choose the mortgages, the credit cards, and, yes, even the payday loans that they choose to consume.

But instead, Mr. Chairman, many of my friends on the other side of the aisle would love to take away "In God we trust" and put up there "In government we trust."

The American people are tired of unaccountable, arrogant Washington bureaucrats, the unaccountable, the unelected who are taking away their homeownership opportunities, taking away their credit cards, and insulting them by saying: I am from Washington. I am smarter than you. I am better than you. I know what is best.

It is time for us to pass the Consumer Financial Freedom and Washington Accountability Act; and I particularly thank Messrs. DUFFY, BACHUS, and NEUGEBAUER for authoring this key piece of legislation. I urge its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chair, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), which is

a cornerstone of the Dodd-Frank Act, has already proven invaluable in ensuring that financial products offered to American consumers comply with federal law and are not abusive or misleading.

The CFPB has brought transparency, accountability and clarity to our markets.

Because of the CFPB's work, our residential mortgage lending system is now governed by standards that cap the points and fees a lender may charge, limit risky loan products, and prohibit loans with terms longer than 30 years.

CFPB has also enacted new rules to end the abuses in the mortgage servicing process that were so common before the financial crisis. These rules require servicers to credit payments the day they are received and to respond to customer inquiries in a timely manner.

They also limit "dual tracking" to ensure borrowers are not foreclosed on while they wait to see if they qualify for a loan modification.

And through its enforcement actions, CFPB has already recovered approximately \$3 billion for consumers who have been the victims of abuse. As of this month, the CFPB has received and is processing more than nine thousand complaints from residents of Maryland alone.

Unfortunately, rather than ensuring the CFPB has all of the resources it needs to help consumers, Republicans in the House have routinely sought to undermine the CFPB and the bill before us today simply continues that attack.

The only way to protect our constituents from entities that would take advantage of them is to vote against this bill and oppose all efforts to roll back the consumer protections enacted in the Dodd-Frank legislation.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Chair, I rise today in strong opposition to the Consumer Financial Protection Safety and Soundness Improvement Act, H.R. 3193.

As designed by Dodd-Frank, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau—CFPB—is the only agency whose final rules can be overruled by a vote of other financial regulators.

This was explicitly included in Dodd-Frank to ensure that CFPB guidelines do not unduly jeopardize the safe functioning of the U.S. financial system.

However, the inaptly named H.R. 3193 is yet another transparent attempt by Members of the majority to weaken the authority of the only federal agency responsible for protecting consumers in their financial dealings.

If enacted, H.R. 3193 would not only broaden the ability to overturn CFPB rules, but would also lower the threshold required to do so.

This would make it more difficult for the CFPB to meet its mission of creating and enforcing federal consumer financial laws, and would be a significant step backward in the effort to improve oversight and supervision of our nation's financial institutions.

It is repugnant to me that after millions of Americans had their financial security imperiled by the predatory practices of mortgage lenders, originators and servicers, that Members of this House would consider this bill designed to weaken the one financial regulator focused on returning temperance to deals

where there was once greed, and prudence to markets where there was previously "irrational exuberance."

I urge my colleagues to stand up for the American people by voting "no" on H.R. 3193.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, H.R. 3193 is a clear attempt to undermine the independence and effectiveness of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. As such, I oppose passage of this legislation.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) was created by the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Bill in response to widespread market abuses that helped precipitate the financial crisis and is the first ever independent watchdog charged with the sole task of protecting the financial lives of America's families. Since its inception, the CFPB has handled nearly 270,000 consumer complaints and secured more than \$3 billion in relief for almost 10 million consumers through enforcement actions against bad actors who were violating the law. It has established important oversight for industries ranging from payday lenders to debt collectors to credit reporting agencies. And it has generally received high marks from industry leaders and consumer advocates alike for the openness and evenhandedness of its operations. Not surprisingly, the Senate confirmed the CFPB's first director Richard Cordray by a bipartisan vote of 66–34 in the summer of last year.

Rather than building on this track record of success, H.R. 3193 would weaken the CFPB by bureaucratizing its structure, placing additional constraints on its operations, slashing its funding and subjecting that funding to the political pressures of the annual appropriations process. If the majority really believed the annual appropriations process was necessary to ensure the proper oversight of our federal banking regulators, this legislation would be recommending similar treatment for the Federal Reserve, or the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. It doesn't—which tells you all you need to know about the consistency of the conviction underlying this bill.

In my judgment, the CFPB is succeeding at its job of protecting consumers in a fair and transparent marketplace. Accordingly, I urge a no vote.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chair, I would like to express my opposition to H.R. 3193, the Consumer Financial Protection Safety and Soundness Improvement Act of 2013. This legislation would strip essential mandates from an agency that was created to protect consumers from risky practices that caused the financial crisis.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) has successfully refunded over \$3 billion to consumers who were financially harmed by deceptive practices. The vital protections the CFPB provides must not be overlooked; without its oversight, consumers will be exposed to greater risk in financial markets.

Since its creation in 2011, the CFPB has collected over \$80 million in civil penalties from financial institutions that harmed consumers. They also have handled more than 269,900 complaints from consumers. Thirty million consumers would not be subject to federal protections from improper debt collections if the CFPB did not exist.

Additionally, without the presence of the CFPB, twelve million consumers that use pay day lending would not be protected by federal supervision, and 200 million consumer credit reports would not be protected from unscrupulous behavior. The CFPB should be applauded for its efforts to end harmful practices in the marketplace. Rather than abrogate this successful agency, the CFPB should retain its current structure and mandate so that it can continue to be an exemplary model for other bank regulators.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113–36 modified by the amendment printed in part A of House Report 113–350. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 3193

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Consumer Financial Freedom and Washington Accountability Act".

SEC. 2. FINANCIAL PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Section 1011 of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5491) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 1011. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FINANCIAL PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION.

"(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established an independent commission to be known as the 'Financial Product Safety Commission' (hereinafter referred to in this section as the 'Commission'), which shall regulate the offering and provision of consumer financial products or services under the Federal consumer financial laws. The Commission shall be considered an Executive agency, as defined in section 105 of title 5, United States Code. Except as otherwise provided expressly by law, all Federal laws dealing with public or Federal contracts, property, works, officers, employees, budgets, or funds, including the provisions of chapters 5 and 7 of title 5, shall apply to the exercise of the powers of the Commission.

"(b) AUTHORITY TO PRESCRIBE REGULATIONS.—The Commission may prescribe such regulations and issue such orders in accordance with this title as the Commission may determine to be necessary for carrying out this title and all other laws within the Commission's jurisdiction and shall exercise any authorities granted under this title and all other laws within the Commission's jurisdiction.

"(c) COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall be composed of the Vice Chairman for Supervision of the Federal Reserve System and 4 additional members who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, from among individuals who—

"(A) are citizens of the United States; and

"(B) have strong competencies and experiences related to consumer financial protection.

"(2) STAGGERING.—The members of the Commission appointed under paragraph (1) shall

serve staggered terms, which initially shall be established by the President for terms of 1, 2, 4, and 5 years, respectively.

“(3) TERMS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Each member of the Commission appointed under paragraph (1), including the Chair, shall serve for a term of 5 years.

“(B) REMOVAL.—The President may remove any member of the Commission appointed under paragraph (1).

“(C) VACANCIES.—Any member of the Commission appointed under paragraph (1) appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term to which that member's predecessor was appointed (including the Chair) shall be appointed only for the remainder of the term.

“(D) CONTINUATION OF SERVICE.—Each member of the Commission appointed under paragraph (1) may continue to serve after the expiration of the term of office to which that member was appointed until a successor has been appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, except that a member may not continue to serve more than 1 year after the date on which that member's term would otherwise expire.

“(E) OTHER EMPLOYMENT PROHIBITED.—No member of the Commission appointed under paragraph (1) shall engage in any other business, vocation, or employment.

“(d) AFFILIATION.—With respect to members appointed pursuant to subsection (c)(1), not more than 2 shall be members of any one political party.

“(e) CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION.—

“(1) APPOINTMENT.—The Chair of the Commission shall be appointed by the President from among the members of the Commission appointed under subsection (c)(1).

“(2) AUTHORITY.—The Chair shall be the principal executive officer of the Commission, and shall exercise all of the executive and administrative functions of the Commission, including with respect to—

“(A) the appointment and supervision of personnel employed under the Commission (other than personnel employed regularly and full time in the immediate offices of members of the Commission other than the Chair);

“(B) the distribution of business among personnel appointed and supervised by the Chair and among administrative units of the Commission; and

“(C) the use and expenditure of funds.

“(3) LIMITATION.—In carrying out any of the Chair's functions under the provisions of this subsection the Chair shall be governed by general policies of the Commission and by such regulatory decisions, findings, and determinations as the Commission may by law be authorized to make.

“(4) REQUESTS OR ESTIMATES RELATED TO APPROPRIATIONS.—Requests or estimates for regular, supplemental, or deficiency appropriations on behalf of the Commission may not be submitted by the Chair without the prior approval of the Commission.

“(f) NO IMPAIRMENT BY REASON OF VACANCIES.—No vacancy in the members of the Commission shall impair the right of the remaining members of the Commission to exercise all the powers of the Commission. Three members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, except that if there are only 3 members serving on the Commission because of vacancies in the Commission, 2 members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. If there are only 2 members serving on the Commission because of vacancies in the Commission, 2 members shall constitute a quorum for the 6-month period beginning on the date of the vacancy which caused the number of Commission members to decline to 2.

“(g) SEAL.—The Commission shall have an official seal.

“(h) COMPENSATION.—

“(1) CHAIR.—The Chair shall receive compensation at the rate prescribed for level I of the Executive Schedule under section 5313 of title 5, United States Code.

“(2) OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.—The 3 other members of the Commission appointed under subsection (c)(1) shall each receive compensation at the rate prescribed for level II of the Executive Schedule under section 5314 of title 5, United States Code.

“(i) INITIAL QUORUM ESTABLISHED.—During any time period prior to the confirmation of at least two members of the Commission, one member of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Following the confirmation of at least 2 additional commissioners, the quorum requirements of subsection (f) shall apply.

“(j) OFFICES.—The principal office of the Commission shall be in the District of Columbia. The Commission may establish regional offices of the Commission in order to carry out the responsibilities assigned to the Commission under the Federal consumer financial laws.”.

(b) BRINGING THE COMMISSION INTO THE REGULAR APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS.—Section 1017 of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5497) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by amending the heading of such subsection to read as follows: “BUDGET, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, AND AUDIT.”;

(B) by striking paragraphs (1), (2), and (3);

(C) by redesignating paragraphs (4) and (5) as paragraphs (1) and (2), respectively; and

(D) by striking subparagraphs (E) and (F) of paragraph (1), as so redesignated;

(2) by striking subsections (b) and (c);

(3) by redesignating subsections (d) and (e) as subsections (b) and (c), respectively; and

(4) in subsection (c), as so redesignated—

(A) by striking paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) and inserting the following:

“(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title \$300,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 and 2015.”; and

(B) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (2).

(c) ENSURING THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE COMMISSION.—The Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 is amended—

(1) in section 1012(c), (12 U.S.C. 5492 (c)) by striking paragraphs (2), (3), (4), and (5); and

(2) in section 1014(b), (12 U.S.C. 5494(b)) by striking “Not fewer than 6 members shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the regional Federal Reserve Bank Presidents, on a rotating basis.”.

(d) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION ACT OF 2010.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided under subparagraph (B), the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5481 et seq.) is amended—

(i) by striking “Director of the” each place such term appears, other than where such term is used to refer to a Director other than the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection;

(ii) by striking “Director” each place such term appears and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”; other than where such term is used to refer to a Director other than the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection; and

(iii) in section 1002 (12 U.S.C. 5481), by striking paragraph (10).

(B) EXCEPTIONS.—The Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 is amended—

(i) in section 1012(c)(4) (12 U.S.C. 5492 (c) (4)), by striking “Director” each place such term appears and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”;

(ii) in section 1013(c)(3) (12 U.S.C. 5493 (c) (3))—

(I) by striking “Assistant Director of the Bureau for” and inserting “Head of the Office of”; and

(II) in subparagraph (B), by striking “Assistant Director” and inserting “Head of the Office”;

(iii) in section 1013(g)(2) (12 U.S.C. 5493(g)(2))—

(I) by striking “ASSISTANT DIRECTOR” and inserting “HEAD OF THE OFFICE”; and

(II) by striking “an assistant director” and inserting “a Head of the Office of Financial Protection for Older Americans”;

(iv) in section 1016(a) (12 U.S.C. 5496(a)), by striking “Director of the Bureau” and inserting “Chair of the Commission”; and

(v) in section 1066(a) (12 U.S.C. 5586(a)), by striking “Director of the Bureau is” and inserting “first member of the Commission is”.

(2) DODD-FRANK WALL STREET REFORM AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT.—The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (12 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) is amended—

(A) in the table of contents for such Act by amending the item relating to section 1011 to read as follows:

“Sec. 1011. Establishment of the Financial Product Safety Commission.”;

(B) in section 111(b)(1)(D) (12 U.S.C. 5321(b)(1)(D)), by striking “Director” and inserting “Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission”; and

(C) in section 1447 (12 U.S.C. 1701p-2), by striking “Director of the Bureau” each place such term appears and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(3) ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFER ACT.—Section 920(a)(4)(C) of the Electronic Fund Transfer Act (15 U.S.C. 1693o-2(a)(4)(C)), as added by section 1075(a)(2) of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended by striking “Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection” and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(4) EXPEDITED FUNDS AVAILABILITY ACT.—The Expedited Funds Availability Act (12 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), as amended by section 1086 of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended by striking “Director of the Bureau” each place such term appears and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(5) FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE ACT.—Section 2 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1812), as amended by section 336(a) of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, is amended by striking “Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau” each place such term appears and inserting “Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(6) FEDERAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS EXAMINATION COUNCIL ACT OF 1978.—Section 1004(a)(4) of the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council Act of 1978 (12 U.S.C. 3303(a)(4)), as amended by section 1091 of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended by striking “Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau” and inserting “Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(7) FINANCIAL LITERACY AND EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT.—Section 513 of the Financial Literacy and Education Improvement Act (20 U.S.C. 9702), as amended by section 1013(d)(5) of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended by striking “Director” each place such term appears and inserting “Chair of the Commission”.

(8) HOME MORTGAGE DISCLOSURE ACT OF 1975.—Section 307 of the Home Mortgage Disclosure

Act of 1975 (12 U.S.C. 2806), as amended by section 1094(6) of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended by striking “Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection” each place such term appears and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(9) **INTERSTATE LAND SALES FULL DISCLOSURE ACT.**—The Interstate Land Sales Full Disclosure Act (15 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.), as amended by section 1098A of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended—

(A) by amending section 1402(1) (15 U.S.C. 1701(1)) to read as follows:

“(1) ‘Chair’ means the Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission.”; and

(B) in section 1416(a) (15 U.S.C. 1715(a)), by striking “Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection” and inserting “Chair”.

(10) **REAL ESTATE SETTLEMENT PROCEDURES ACT OF 1974.**—Section 5 of the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 (12 U.S.C. 2604), as amended by section 1450 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, is amended—

(A) by striking “The Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection (hereafter in this section referred to as the ‘Director’)” and inserting “The Financial Product Safety Commission”; and

(B) by striking “Director” each place such term appears and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(11) **S.A.F.E. MORTGAGE LICENSING ACT OF 2008.**—The S.A.F.E. Mortgage Licensing Act of 2008 (12 U.S.C. 5101 et seq.), as amended by section 1100 of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended—

(A) by striking “Director” each place such term appears in headings and text, other than where such term is used in the context of the Director of the Office of Thrift Supervision, and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”; and

(B) in section 1503 (12 U.S.C. 5102), by striking paragraph (10).

(12) **TITLE 44, UNITED STATES CODE.**—Section 3513(c) of title 44, United States Code, as amended by section 1100D(b) of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010, is amended by striking “Director of the Bureau” and inserting “Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(e) **DEEMING OF NAMES.**—

(1) **BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION.**—Any reference in a law, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection shall be deemed a reference to the Financial Product Safety Commission.

(2) **DIRECTOR.**—Any reference in a law, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection shall be deemed a reference to the Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission.

SEC. 3. RATE OF PAY FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE FINANCIAL PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1013(a)(2) of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (12 U.S.C. 5493(a)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

“(2) **COMPENSATION.**—The rates of basic pay for all employees of the Financial Product Safety Commission shall be set and adjusted in accordance with the General Schedule set forth in section 5332 of title 5, United States Code.”.

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to service by an employee of the Financial Product Safety Commission following the 90-day period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. CONSUMER RIGHT TO FINANCIAL PRIVACY.

(a) **REQUIREMENT OF THE FINANCIAL PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION TO OBTAIN PERMISSION BE-**

FORE COLLECTING NONPUBLIC PERSONAL INFORMATION.—

(1) **REQUIRED NOTIFICATION AND PERMISSION.**—Section 1022(c)(9)(A) of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (12 U.S.C. 5512(c)(9)(A)) is amended—

(A) by striking “may not obtain from a covered person or service provider” and inserting “may not request, obtain, access, collect, use, retain, or disclose”; and

(B) by striking “personally identifiable financial” and inserting “nonpublic personal”; and

(C) by striking “from the financial records” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “unless—

“(i) the Financial Product Safety Commission clearly and conspicuously discloses to the consumer, in writing or in an electronic form, what information will be requested, obtained, accessed, collected, used, retained, or disclosed; and

“(ii) before such information is requested, obtained, accessed, collected, used, retained, or disclosed, the consumer informs the Financial Product Safety Commission that such information may be requested, obtained, accessed, collected, used, retained, or disclosed.”.

(2) **APPLICATION OF REQUIREMENT TO CONTRACTORS OF THE FINANCIAL PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION.**—Section 1022(c)(9)(B) of such Act (12 U.S.C. 5512(c)(9)(B)) is amended to read as follows:

“(B) **APPLICATION OF REQUIREMENT TO CONTRACTORS OF THE FINANCIAL PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION.**—Subparagraph (A) shall apply to any person directed or engaged by the Financial Product Safety Commission to collect information to the extent such information is being collected on behalf of the Financial Product Safety Commission.”.

(3) **DEFINITION OF NONPUBLIC PERSONAL INFORMATION.**—Section 1022(c)(9) of such Act (12 U.S.C. 5512(c)(9)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(C) **DEFINITION OF NONPUBLIC PERSONAL INFORMATION.**—In this paragraph, the term ‘nonpublic personal information’ has the meaning given the term in section 509 of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (15 U.S.C. 6809).”.

(b) **REMOVAL OF EXEMPTION FOR THE FINANCIAL PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION FROM THE RIGHT TO FINANCIAL PRIVACY ACT.**—Section 1113 of the Right to Financial Privacy Act of 1978 (12 U.S.C. 3413) is amended by striking subsection (r).

SEC. 5. CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION SAFETY AND SOUNDNESS IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) **COUNCIL VOTING PROCEDURE.**—Section 1023(c)(3)(A) of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5513(c)(3)(A)) is amended—

(1) by striking “ $\frac{2}{3}$ ” and inserting “a majority”; and

(2) by inserting before the period the following: “, excluding the Chair of the Financial Product Safety Commission”.

(b) **REVIEW AUTHORITY OF THE COUNCIL.**—Section 1023 of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5513) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking “may” and inserting “shall”; and

(B) by striking “regulation or provision would put the safety and soundness of the United States banking system or the stability of the financial system of the United States at risk” and inserting “regulation which is the subject of the petition is inconsistent with the safe and sound operations of United States financial institutions”; and

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (3)(B)(ii), by striking “would put the safety and soundness of the

United States banking system or the stability of the financial system of the United States at risk” and inserting “is inconsistent with the safe and sound operations of United States financial institutions”;

(B) in paragraph (4)—

(i) by striking subparagraph (B); and

(ii) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (B);

(C) by striking paragraph (5); and

(D) by redesignating paragraphs (6), (7), and (8) as paragraphs (5), (6), and (7), respectively.

(c) **SAFETY AND SOUNDNESS CHECK.**—Section 1022(b)(2)(A) of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5512(b)(2)(A)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in clause (ii), by adding “and” at the end; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(iii) the impact of such rule on the financial safety or soundness of an insured depository institution.”.

The CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of House Report 113-350. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. RIGELL

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part B of House Report 113-350.

Mr. RIGELL. I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end the following new section:

SEC. 6. ANALYSIS OF REGULATIONS.

Section 1022 of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5512) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e) **ANALYSIS OF REGULATIONS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Each time the Commission proposes a new rule or regulation, the Commission shall—

“(A) carry out an initial regulatory flexibility analysis for such proposed rule or regulation, which shall be carried out as closely as possible to those initial regulatory flexibility analyses required under section 603 of title 5, United States Code, but which shall analyze the financial impact of the proposed rule or regulation on covered persons, regardless of size; and

“(B) carry out an analysis of whether the proposed rule or regulation will impair the ability of individuals and small businesses to have access to credit.

“(2) **REPORT.**—The Commission shall issue a report to the Council on each analysis carried out under paragraph (1), and make such analysis available to the public.

“(3) **USE OF EXISTING RESOURCES.**—The Commission shall use existing resources to carry out the requirements of this subsection.”.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 475, the gentleman from Virginia

(Mr. RIGELL) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. RIGELL. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank my friend and colleague from Texas, Chairman HENSARLING, and all of those who worked on this underlying legislation, H.R. 3193.

My amendment strengthens that legislation, and I really respect how it was crafted, the legislation that underlies my amendment. It really is much needed.

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My amendment is focused on one of the most critical ingredients that is necessary for those that are trying to start a new business or to grow an existing business, and that is access to credit. Now, I offer my amendment based on my own real-world experience. It is about 22 years ago that I started my business, and I was able to start it and to grow it and to say these wonderful words to so many fellow Americans in Virginia's Second Congressional District, "You are hired." I was able to say those words because one of the ingredients I had available to me was access to credit.

I offer my amendment today based, as well, on the clear, united, and truly rational voice that is being articulated by Virginia's Second Congressional District, and that is that the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is truly and irrefutably, in their view and in mine, damaging and harming their ability to have access to credit.

Common ground is something that I come to work every day seeking to advance. I am convinced, absolutely, that it is here and it can be found. In fact, this gridlock that we so often experience truly is hurting our country. But as I listen to my colleagues so often on the other side—and I have been up here and had the privilege of serving in this institution 3 years—quite frankly, when I hear statements like we don't care about consumers, I take offense at this. And I have listened to it for 3 years, and I think that it does a disservice to this House and to the American people to continually claim that we don't care about the American consumer or that we don't care about the environment or the poor or the aged. Indeed we do. And this represents my best judgment, and the best judgment of so many, that this underlying legislation in my particular amendment would help consumers. I am convinced of this.

What my amendment does is it requires the Bureau to simply do this: to consider and to calculate in a very careful way exactly how the impact—the adverse impact that these regulations that are being put forth by this organization—would affect credit. Now, indeed, isn't this common ground? It is really common sense. Before you take

any action to do something, you ought to take a moment to consider what that action might do in inhibiting individual Americans and businesses from accessing credit.

I think it is critical, too, that we look at the organization itself. This is an organization that is really outside of the scope of accountability that we really should be requiring of each and every agency in the Federal Government. It is largely outside the accountability and the influence of Congress. And this is quite striking: it is largely out of the influence of the President. In a unique way, and I think in a harmful way, it is largely outside of the accountability of the court system.

Look, common sense will just tell you that is not a good idea for any agency to be outside of accountability. Each Member here is accountable to our own district. The actions that have been taken by this organization already, sure, we can find a few that have been helpful and I think ought to continue—taking care of our military and making sure that businesses operate in an ethical manner—but, overwhelmingly, what we are seeing is this: that the sum of all things is it is hurting the American consumer, and it is hurting our ability of fellow Americans to access credit. That is why I urge support for the underlying legislation and my amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. MARCHANT). The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chair, I yield myself 3 minutes.

I rise in opposition to this amendment, and I will take a moment just to respond to the gentleman from Virginia who seemed a little bit disturbed that we would claim that they do not care about consumers. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, sir, and because of the way that the Republicans have opposed the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the manner in which we have described today that you have attempted to dismantle this Bureau, the way that you have tried to deny it having a strong Director, for all of those reasons, it is absolutely clear that you do not wish to have a Bureau that protects our consumers.

And so when we make these charges, we make them because we have proof. We have the information, we have the actions, and we have all that you have done to demonstrate that you really don't want a Bureau to protect the consumers of this country.

The fact is that Americans want banks to be regulated in order to prevent the kind of economic catastrophe that we are recovering from to this day. Because Republicans haven't been able to repeal the Dodd-Frank Act, you have focused on making it impossible

for the agencies to enact the rules required by the Wall Street reform bill. Your new strategy is to prevent our regulators from functioning by saddling them with burdensome and duplicative cost-benefit requirements.

Let's take a moment to talk about the cost of the financial crisis. The United States Department of the Treasury measured the cost of the financial crisis at \$19.2 trillion in loss of household wealth and 8.8 million in lost jobs. Communities of color were hit particularly hard, losing over 50 percent of their household wealth. Millions of borrowers have been foreclosed upon, and millions more remain underwater and struggling to stay in their homes to this day.

A report by the Government Accountability Office on the cost-benefit analysis of the Dodd-Frank Act stated:

If the cost of a future crisis is expected to be in the trillions of dollars, then the act likely would need to reduce the probability of a future financial crisis by only a small percent for its expected benefit to equal the act's expected cost.

Beyond all of this, this amendment is a solution in search of a problem. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is already required to perform cost-benefit analysis on its rules and evaluate impacts on small businesses. The CFPB has repeatedly demonstrated its commitment to minimizing the impact of its rules on small banking institutions and small businesses.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. RIGELL. Mr. Chairman, tell me how much time is remaining, please.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia has 30 seconds remaining.

Mr. RIGELL. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentlelady's remarks. I still hold the view that the sum of all things that I have heard in our district is that the Bureau is doing more harm than good.

I urge, again, my colleagues to vote for the underlying legislation and my amendment which would help protect individual Americans and businesses in their ability to seek credit, which is an essential part to keeping our economy growing and creating more jobs.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. RIGELL).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I ask for a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia will be postponed.

The Chair understands that amendment No. 2 will not be offered.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. DESANTIS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part B of House Report 113–350.

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Chair, I offer my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end the following:

SEC. 6. REPEAL OF EXCLUSIVE RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.

Section 1022(b) of the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5512(b)) is amended by striking paragraph (4).

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 475, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, James Madison told us in the Federalist Papers:

If men were angels, no government would be necessary. And if angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary.

And so as I look at this agency which lacks all the traditional measures for constitutional accountability, I am reminded by that insight. The Founding Fathers understood human nature, and they understood that people in positions of power will eventually, at some point, abuse that power. That is just inherent in the nature of man, and so they built a government to have checks and balances.

As I look at this consumer financial protection agency, I am wowed by the amount of power that has been invested in this: very limited executive accountability, the CFPB Director is essentially the financial czar of the country, and no budget oversight by Congress. I know we are trying to change that in this bill, but Madison said that the most effectual check that we have in Congress is the power of the purse.

There is this huge amount of deference in terms of what judicial review is allowed to be done. The courts are instructed to defer to the CFPB. The problem with that is that there are a lot of novel concepts in this bill. Terms are introduced that don't necessarily have a definition in other regulatory history, and the CFPB is basically going to be given carte blanche to go forward on that. And when asked about some of these terms, the CFPB Director said, well, you kind of figure it out when you see it, and it is a puzzle that we are putting together.

Well, that is not acceptable, and I think the American people need to have recourse to the courts. So what my amendment does is it reinstitutes judicial review, and it removes this excessive deference that has been granted to the CFPB.

I hear reports about all this data that is being collected on American citizens—credit card transactions and debit card transactions, millions of these things are being done. Are we just supposed to say that the people should have no recourse in case that is abused? We are just supposed to trust the CFPB in terms of how they use that data?

The bottom line is you have an agency that is combining legislative power, executive power, and judicial power. That is contrary to our constitutional structure and contrary to the separation of powers doctrine, and I don't think most Americans have confidence that some far, distant Bureau should just be left to their own devices and that somehow they will be able to make all these decisions better for individual Americans than they can make for themselves.

So I urge the adoption of my amendment, Mr. Chairman, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chair, I yield myself 3 minutes.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau was designed with one goal in mind: we were giving consumers a fair shake in the marketplace by making sure they finally had a regulator who was on their side. The CFPB is the only agency with the expertise and the mission to focus on developing trends in the consumer finance marketplace, identify abuses, and stop them before they lead borrowers into financial ruin.

Prior to the passage of the Dodd-Frank Act, consumer financial laws were supposed to be enforced by cooperation amongst all of the regulators. But as we now know all too well, safety and soundness concerns time and again trumped those of consumer protection, leading to the system where all of the regulators were responsible and none of them were accountable.

It was precisely this inattention to consumer protection that allowed the crisis to boil up under regulators' noses, leaving American families to foot the bill. Fortunately, Congress learned the lesson that strong protections for consumers are essential to maintaining a stable and sound economic foundation.

Upon passage of the Dodd-Frank Act, this House finally had put a cop on the beat with exclusive authority to issue sensible rules that protect every American. We are confident that the CFPB will continue to work diligently with prudential regulators to make sure their rules are consistent with the safe and sound operations of banks, ensuring that both rulemaking and enforcement authorities reside exclusively

with the CFPB and will increase confidence in consumer markets and also ensure certainty for businesses and financial institutions.

Returning to the broken model that existed before the crisis just doesn't make good sense. So I would urge my colleagues to reject this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1615

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to adopt this amendment. The notion that somehow we are just going to put all this trust in the CFPB and why you can't have the ability to go into court and have the courts review some of their actions to me just doesn't cut it. I would much rather err on the side of having protections for the American people from government agencies that have too much power than err on the side of giving the agency an excessive amount of power and just hoping that they exercise that in a prudent fashion.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I ask my colleagues to vote "yes" on this amendment. I applaud the other Members who have been involved in crafting this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman and Members, we have had discussions with Members on the opposite side of the aisle about protection for our consumers. We have heard them tell us everything about people should have choices. They can go and hire their own lawyers, they can go into court. They can do all of these things. The fact of the matter is, government does have the responsibility to protect consumers. This is a government of laws and rules that we put together for businesses. We allow businesses to operate in certain ways, but we cannot allow them to run roughshod over consumers.

Like I said, prior to Dodd-Frank, that is, the reform, we had nobody looking out for consumers. We had our financial services agencies of government saying that their real job was for safety and soundness, not for consumer protection. So we have had news media, we have had nonprofit agencies, we have had groups getting together trying to address all of these abuses, all of these problems all by themselves. Well, guess what? Now we have a cop on the block. It is your government. This consumerfinance.gov Web site is there for all of our citizens. This telephone number, (855) 411-2372, is there for our consumers to call, and while you are calling the Bureau, call your elected officials also and ask them why they don't stand up for you, why they are on the floor of Congress advocating against your right to have protection from all of these kinds of abuses. Enough is enough.

Americans consumers are losing dollars every day because of crooks and

schemes and thieves and on and on and on, and now you get rid of the very agency that would protect them from all of these schemes? I am so happy that we have reform. I am so happy that now the American people can rely on their government to come to their aid.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MS. MOORE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part B of House Report 113–350.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add at the end the following:

SEC. 6. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

(1) “The Congress acknowledges and honors the tremendous work of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection in protecting and providing relief to consumers from instances of unfair, deceptive, and abusive practices in financial markets.

(2) The Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection has refunded over \$3 billion to approximately 9.7 million victims of deceptive or abusive practices in financial markets since its inception.

(3) The Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection has continued to engage with consumers, industry, Congress, and other regulators to promulgate rules making U.S. financial markets the fairest, safest, and most robust in the world.

(4) Changes to the current management, oversight, or funding of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection would undermine the mission of the Bureau.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of the Congress that the Congress—

(1) acknowledges the meritorious work of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection; and

(2) supports the Bureau’s ongoing mission by preserving the current management, oversight, and funding structure of the Bureau.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 475, the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wisconsin.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Chairman, my amendment is straightforward. It simply provides a sense of Congress that acknowledges the tremendous work done by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau as it was originally

conceived in Dodd-Frank and how it has been operating to this point.

The agency, Mr. Chair, has refunded \$3 billion to 9.7 million victims of unfair, deceptive, and abusive practices in financial markets. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has helped people, and fraud has been curtailed. The message has been sent to the next generation of financial hustlers that there is a dedicated cop on the beat in financial markets.

The singular and dedicated mission of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is to protect consumers of financial products from schemes, and it inspires trust in our markets that attracts capital and promotes allocations of that capital to productive, legitimate endeavors.

My amendment affirms that the current management, oversight, and funding source, as enshrined in Dodd-Frank, are the best way to preserve the integrity and independence of the agency, and to ensure that we don’t return to the bad old days and bad old ways that put the ox in the ditch by creating the 2008 financial crisis and the \$700 billion bailout.

Now, H.R. 3193 openly acknowledges that it would alter and neuter the agency’s mission because H.R. 3193 would rename the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to the Financial Product Safety Commission, removing, Mr. Chairman, consumers from the equation, both in name and function. It would subject the agency’s funding to protect consumers to the unwieldy appropriations process, sequester, defunding amendments, instead of the outside independent funding vis-a-vis these powerful financial institutions.

Now, whether intentional or not, Republicans, Mr. Chair, have shown their hand with the omission of consumers in H.R. 3193, and despite the euphemistic name of the bill as written, this bill would alter the mission and cripple the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau by focusing on protecting financial products rather than consumers. Whatever the intent, Mr. Chairman, consumers would be thrown under the bus by removing the cop from the Wall Street beat.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I rise to oppose the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I find this to be a most curious amendment from the gentlelady from Wisconsin, and we do enjoy her participation on the committee, but it is a curious amendment because if it is accepted, and I believe the House is going to pass it, then it says the House is on record as saying we are going to do something but we just didn’t feel really good about it. In other words, her amendment does nothing to the underlying bill except a sentiment that says

we shouldn’t have passed it in the first place. So it is a curious, curious amendment, Mr. Chairman.

I personally, and I don’t think the House, want to be on record as saying that the CFPB has given us the fairest, safest, and most robust capital markets in the world. I have no doubt there are many good men and women who work there. They have done some important work. But fair? Fair, Mr. Chairman? An agency in the name of consumer protection that would deny one-third of current Black and Hispanic homeowners the opportunity to own a home? This is fair? It is just incredible.

We have brought this up several times in this debate, Mr. Chairman, and we hear crickets chirping on the other side of the aisle. Now if a private company did that, there would be riots in the street, but it is okay if government has a disparate impact on minorities. I don’t know if that is fair. We have had testimony in our committee that literally half—half—of the mortgages today, according to CoreLogic, wouldn’t qualify under the QM rule promulgated by the CFPB. I am not going to go on record saying that is fair; that it is somehow fair that half of Americans who otherwise would have qualified for a mortgage can no longer have it?

To say that somehow the current oversight is adequate to this agency, an agency that sets its own budget, an agency that is spending \$145 million to renovate a \$150 million building they don’t even own, to give us a tree bosque, to give us granite water features? This is somehow a good use of the taxpayer money, a reflective carnelian granite water table, triple the renovation rate of class A luxury space in Washington?

If there was ever an agency, Mr. Chairman, that demands accountability to the American people, this is it. You do not protect consumers by taking away their rights, their freedoms, their ability to shop in competitive and transparent markets, and you do not protect them by taking away their income and spending it on a lavish palace for unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Chairman, I always enjoy the chairman of the Financial Services Committee and his lavish explanations.

I just want to clear up some of the confusion and bewilderment that he seems to be under with regard to minority and Latin borrowers. He has said over and over and over again, he has talked about and referred to the Qualified Mortgage standards under the new rules. The new standards have just taken place, and I think that minorities will find that 95 percent of the mortgages today will fall within the Qualified Mortgage standards.

Now having said that, I will just say that the chairman should look at something other than the PATH Act toward restoring the GSEs, if he is very concerned about minorities, and I would join him in that to be able to get mortgages.

I would say that to clear up his bewilderment here, I just want to congratulate the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau because it is a fact that they have supported the refund of \$3 billion to 9.7 million victims of unfair practices.

I agree with him: the purpose of this bill and the reason that they won't accept this amendment is because they don't want to go on record that they support consumers over all of these very, very lucrative financial products that are out there, and they want no regulation, which is why we saw the 2008 meltdown, the no rules of the road. They want to return to the days when there was an ability to drive the economy over the cliff and to deceive consumers to the point that they could and would become victims. So I can understand the chairman's reluctance to accept this language.

Mr. Chairman, I enter into the RECORD our defense of our claims, and I yield back the balance of my time.

RESPONSE TO CORELOGIC ANALYSIS OF QUALIFIED MORTGAGE (QM) STANDARDS, CRL ISSUE BRIEF; FEBRUARY 20, 2013

The recently released CoreLogic report "The Mortgage Market Impact of Qualified Mortgage Regulation" has received a lot of attention due to its finding that 48 percent of the mortgage market would not qualify as a "safe loan" under new Qualified Mortgage (QM) guidelines.

CoreLogic uses a "waterfall" analysis to estimate the proportion of 2010 mortgage originations that do not meet one or more of the QM criteria. While a waterfall approach is a reasonable methodology for estimating the proportion of recent originations that fall outside of QM standards, there are problems both with the specifics of CoreLogic's model and its assumptions about the expiration of the GSE exemption that significantly undercut the usefulness of its estimates of the impact of the QM rule.

Removes Loans with Credit Scores less than 640: As part of estimating the impact of QM, CoreLogic included a restriction on credit scores. Specifically, the waterfall analysis first removes loans with credit scores below 640 "because they resemble subprime loans." In fact, five percent of originations are removed solely based on this criterion. This exclusion is not warranted because the QM guidelines do not place any restrictions on a borrower credit score.

Assumes that borrowers who received loan products with prohibited QM features would not be able to access QM-eligible loan products in the future: The other waterfall layers used to estimate the QM impact are: total debt-to-income (DTI) ratio over 43 percent; whether the loan was negatively amortizing, balloon or interest only; low- or no-documentation; and loan terms of greater than 30 years. These restrictions result in exclusions of 24 percent, 1 percent, 16 percent, and 2 percent respectively. Based on this analysis, while it might be reasonable for the report to estimate that 43 percent of 2010 origina-

tions did not meet these new QM guidelines, it is not reasonable to infer that none of these borrowers could have received QM loans if the rule had been in place in 2010. While having a high DTI may be a difficult barrier that many borrowers cannot overcome, the disqualifying loan terms, such as negative amortization options or terms of greater than 30- years, can easily be avoided in most cases by simply

Re-structuring the loans into amortizing 30 year loans. Similarly, most borrowers who received no-doc or low-doc loans in 2010, the origination year analyzed in the report, likely could have documented their incomes. Therefore, the inference that none of the 19 percent of borrowers that had disqualifying loan products could have received QM loans is unwarranted.

Assumes the GSE exemption expires: As the report recognizes, most of the 24 percent of loans to borrowers with high DTIs are currently being made by GSEs or insured by FHA and these loans automatically qualify as QM under a temporary exemption (up to seven years). Indeed, the report acknowledges that the impact of the QM rule on loans currently being made would be "minor". Given the uncertainties concerning GSE reform and mortgage finance that will need to be resolved over the next seven years, it is not at all clear that the temporary exemption will in fact end in seven years.

[From the Housingwire, Oct. 28, 2013]

IT'S OKAY TO LEND OUTSIDE QM: CFPB DIRECTOR RICHARD CORDRAY

(By Kerri Ann Panchuk)

It's likely mortgage bankers attending the Mortgage Bankers Association 100th Annual Convention & Expo in Washington, D.C., eagerly awaited the arrival of Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Director Richard Cordray.

After all, the regulatory landscape stemming from the 2010 Dodd-Frank Act has left the lending industry shell-shocked by not only the CFPB's new enforcement authority, but by all the lending/servicing rules slated to take effect in January.

If bankers are worried about this new CFPB-era, Cordray told the crowd: Don't be.

In his speech, the CFPB director basically asserted that in many cases, non-qualified mortgages with the right underwriting are perfectly fine even if they fall outside the QM boundaries. This mirrors past statements in which Cordray said he doesn't anticipate an outbreak of QM-related litigation.

Where he stops short—or simply doesn't go—is in explaining how lenders know at the beginning of the origination cycle that what they've done outside QM in terms of underwriting is sufficient enough to protect them later on if someone were to perhaps raise an ability-to-repay claim.

Lawyers up for litigation love gray lines, but those wanting to prevent future ability-to-repay litigation are likely to prefer black and white rules. Cordray shows optimism around the idea that responsible lenders are still safe outside QM, but no specifics were given on how the CFPB would address non-QM lending decisions down the road if a default were to occur. Yet, he seems to be saying don't over worry as long as standards are in place.

And when it comes to the 3% points-and-fee threshold, Cordray has another strong viewpoint, saying "though no data is available to model the precise impact of the three-percent threshold for points and fees

mandated by the statute, that threshold is more than three times the average lender origination fees reported by Bankrate.com in its most recent annual survey, and our rule provides an even higher threshold for smaller loans."

He added that the definition of a qualified mortgage already covers most of the loans made today. And even loans not covered by QM can still be generated as long as lenders use "sound underwriting standards and routinely perform well over time," the director told the MBA crowd. Again, what does "perform well over time" mean? That part is not as clear.

As an example, Cordray told the audience, he is aware of borrowers who may possess considerable other assets, but who remain stifled by high debt-to-income ratios that force them outside the QM standards. As long as lenders ensure the best underwriting standards, they should be fine, Cordray said.

"Lenders that have long upheld such standards have little to fear from the ability-to-repay rule; the strong performance of their loans over time demonstrates the care they have taken in underwriting to ensure that borrowers have the ability to repay," Cordray added.

"Nothing about their traditional lending model has changed, and they should continue to offer the same kinds of mortgages to borrowers whom they evaluate as posing reasonable credit risk—whether or not they meet the criteria to be classified as qualified mortgages."

Cordray further noted that lenders who refuse to lend outside QM will be at no greater risk, absent other factors, of facing fair lending allegations.

The CFPB director once again cited data from Mark Zandi, chief economist for Moody's Analytics, noting that 95% of the mortgages made today fall within the qualified mortgage standard.

"Some, such as CoreLogic, have put out much lower figures, but by their own admission, those figures were not intended to take account of the expanded definition of QM that will actually take effect in January but instead were offered as projections of a distant future when the temporary expansion expires," Cordray explained.

□ 1630

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I would just say to my friends on the other side of the aisle—and the gentlelady from Wisconsin, I would draw her attention to the Federal Reserve bulletin, November 2013, Volume 99, No. 4, page 37, that clearly shows, again, according to the Federal Reserve, that 34 percent of Blacks and 32 percent of Hispanics would not meet the new QM standard based upon the 43 percent debt-to-income requirement.

Now, this is Federal Reserve data. If the gentlelady or any other Member on the other side of the aisle wishes to refute this data from the Federal Reserve, they are certainly free to do so on their time.

But again, I am not going to go on record saying this is fair. I haven't heard anybody rebut what CoreLogic has said, that when fully implemented, half of today's mortgages would not qualify under the QM rule. This is not fair.

Mr. Chairman, somebody has to protect consumers from the CFPB. Consumers, yes, they have to be protected

from Wall Street, but they have to be protected from Washington as well.

You do not protect consumers by having unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats in Washington whose average salary is over \$175,000—salary and benefits—to somehow say: I am from Washington. I am smarter than you. I will decide whether or not you get a mortgage.

It is arrogant; it is unfair; it is abusive. It must stop. We should reject the gentlelady's amendment, and we should adopt the underlying legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Wisconsin will be postponed.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) having assumed the chair, Mr. MARCHANT, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3193) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 899, UNFUNDED MANDATES INFORMATION AND TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2013

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 492 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 492

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 899) to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. After general debate

the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. No amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from North Carolina is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

House Resolution 492 provides for a structured rule providing for consideration of H.R. 899, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act.

Mr. Speaker, every year, bureaucrats in Washington impose thousands of regulatory mandates on local governments and small businesses. Those mandates can be costly, stretching city and State budgets and making it harder for American businesses to hire.

The Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act, H.R. 899, will ensure that the people who write these regulations in Washington know exactly what they are asking the American people to pay and whether the costs of compliance might make it harder for family businesses to meet payroll and stay afloat.

H.R. 899 will force Washington to think more carefully about regulatory costs before it passes them on to Americans. This bill is about transparency and accountability, and it is something Democrats and Republicans can all support.

In 1995, Congress passed the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, UMRA, legisla-

tion designed to prevent the Federal Government from imposing unfunded mandates onto State and local governments or private businesses without policymakers or the public knowing the costs of such policies.

UMRA's main objective was to force the Federal Government to estimate how much unfunded mandates would cost local governments and businesses and rein in out-of-control mandates.

UMRA ensured public awareness of the crushing financial burden of Federal mandates on employers and State and local governments. However, UMRA has not been amended since 1995, and some subtle changes are needed to preserve and improve on the act's initial purpose.

UMRA was a good bill, but over time, some shortcomings became apparent such that the Clinton and, later, Obama administrations had written executive orders to fix the loopholes within it.

As many of my colleagues can confirm, it takes a lot of creativity and hard work to pass legislation as a member of a minority party.

When Democrats gained control of Congress back in 2007, I sat down with my staff to think about legislative ideas that could gain sufficient bipartisan support to clear a Democrat Congress. This bill is the result of those efforts.

H.R. 899 has bipartisan DNA. It codifies those administrative fixes championed by Presidents Clinton and Obama and promotes good government accountability and transparency.

As a testament to this fact, the bill is cosponsored by three of my Democrat colleagues here in the House: Representatives MIKE MCINTYRE, COLLIN PETERSON, and LORETTA SANCHEZ.

I owe them a debt of gratitude for their efforts in promoting this commonsense bill.

I am especially grateful to Representative JAMES LANKFORD, a Republican cosponsor of this bill, who has worked tirelessly to promote its passage here in the House. We wouldn't be here today without his efforts.

A common refrain in this business is that nobody wants to see how the sausage is made, meaning that the process of drafting and passing legislation is so ugly that it would repulse people. In this case, I disagree.

I am extremely proud of this bill and extremely proud of the process by which it has been advanced in the House. It has been a pleasure to work with colleagues from both sides of the aisle on this measure, and I appreciate their support and counsel.

The Unfunded Mandates Reform and Transparency Act of 1995 was a model for bipartisanship, and my hope is that my bill leaves a similar legacy.

I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this rule and the underlying bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina, my friend, Ms. FOXX, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, we continue down this path of considering bills that are going nowhere. I sincerely wish my friends on the other side of the aisle would stop this Conservative merry-go-round.

The majority leader called this week "stop government abuse week." Abuse? Really?

My friends on the other side of the aisle have continued to ignore the plight of middle class and working poor Americans, immigrants hoping for a better life for their families, and denying the undeniable impact of climate change, just to name a few.

This is even after shutting down the government for purely political purposes and playing a game of chicken with the debt limit; and yet, my Republican friends are calling routine government work "abuse." That seems like a stretch to me.

Abuse is when underregulated industries spill unknown chemicals into the West Virginia water supply. Abuse is when coal ash pours into the waters of North Carolina, when Wall Street bankers crash our economy after taking advantage of underfunded and over-worked regulators; that is exactly the kind of abuse that the government needs to stop.

You want to talk about abuse? Let's talk about today's measure.

This bill will not make the regulatory process more balanced or transparent. It will strangle it in red tape. It will not make rulemaking more fair. It will tip the scales in favor of businesses with the most resources.

Under this measure, improving access to health care and restraining the financial institutions that have unleashed havoc on our economy will become even more difficult.

It is nothing more than poorly disguised political fodder aimed at stymieing the executive branch's rule-making power in favor of some corporate interests that run amuck on the environment and American workers.

Most egregious is the requirement for agencies to provide the private sector early consultation on major rules.

This would give well-funded industry an unfair advantage not afforded to the general public and other stakeholders like public interest, taxpayer, and environmental groups.

Clearly, the interest in amending UMRA only extends to certain privileged parties.

If my friends on the other side of the aisle want to see what happens when you allow private interests to run rampant without any government regulations, they need only look to the smog-filled skies above China.

This bill also politicizes independent agencies designed to protect the rights

of hardworking Americans. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Securities Exchange Commission, National Labor Relations Board, Consumer Product Safety Commission, as well as the Federal Communications Commission—I might add they kind of left out the Federal Reserve for some reason I don't understand—but all of those other agencies will all have to answer to the whims of politics.

It also forces agencies to choose the cheapest regulatory option over the best. This is legislating the answer to the same kind of question that a homeowner has to decide when hiring a contractor: Do you want it done cheap, or do you want it done right?

Look, I get it. I understand where we are in the Congressional cycle; but I think that it is unfortunate that my friends across the aisle would rather score political points and write bumper stickers than actually legislate.

While I think it is a good thing that most of these partisan measures will never go anywhere, I can't help but point out that we should be making better use of our limited time here.

We should be raising the minimum wage in order to give millions of hardworking Americans the pay they have earned.

Nearly 5 years have passed since the last increase in the Federal minimum wage.

□ 1645

Currently, a full-time minimum wage worker makes less than \$16,000 per year, which is below the poverty line for a family of two or more.

This is unacceptable. It is time for Republicans to end their relentless obstruction and to join Democrats in an effort to provide for the middle class.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I really respect and appreciate my colleague from Florida, but there is nothing in this bill that would stop the development of rules and regulations by the executive branch, absolutely nothing. All we want to do is make sure that the cost of those rules and regulations is totally transparent.

Also, I appreciate my colleague's saying that we shouldn't be passing bumper sticker bills. We joked about this bill. The title for it, if you abbreviate it, is "UMITA." That anagram hardly comes trippingly off the tongue, and it really wouldn't make much of a bumper sticker for us.

He also indicates that this bill is going to be dead on arrival in the Senate, so we should just give our attention to something else. I know my colleague knows this: the House of Representatives is mentioned very first in the Constitution. I believe the Founders intended for us to do our job and to do it well here. We shouldn't be think-

ing "it is my way or the highway." This is a bill that has been cosponsored by Democrats, and I believe it will get a lot of Democrat votes. The logic from my colleague is that because this House is predominantly Republican that we should at the outset just acquiesce to the Democrat-led Senate or do nothing at all, but that is not how the legislative process works. There has to be a give and take.

I believe the House will pass this legislation tomorrow, and if the Senate wants to change it and send it back, fine—we will work it out—because that is our job, and that is the way it works, but I reject the notion that the Senate will not act on this bill. As I said, it is not a Republican bill; it is a bipartisan bill. It has Republican and Democrat cosponsors. My conversation with our Senate colleagues suggests this bill could clear the Senate and be signed into law by the President—this President.

Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that, last year, the President signed 76 laws—64 of those came from the House of Representatives and only 12 from the Senate, if I am accurate. If not, I will correct the RECORD. It is wrong for us to say we shouldn't be passing bills in the House because anything sponsored by a Republican will go nowhere in the Senate since the Democrats control it, because the evidence from last year, obviously, disproves that.

Mr. Speaker, since the 1995 passage of UMRA, experts across the political spectrum agree that the bill has led to the generation of important information about the potential impacts of mandates proposed in legislation and regulations. However, since its inception, there have been very few revisions to the law while various exclusions and exceptions have cropped up, creating loopholes limiting the act's coverage.

H.R. 899 builds on the success of UMRA by drawing upon executive orders enacted by the last two Democrat Presidents to close loopholes, streamline the cost-reporting process, and clarify the responsibilities of those in charge with complying with these requirements.

Independent regulatory agencies like the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the National Labor Relations Board, and the Federal Communications Commission are currently exempted from UMRA. H.R. 899 will require even these independent regulatory agencies to analyze the costs of their proposed mandates before they are imposed on the public.

H.R. 899 would also treat "changes to conditions of grant aid" as mandates, triggering an UMRA cost analysis. Legislation or regulations that force States or localities to make changes in order to qualify for Federal grant aid would no longer be exempt from scrutiny.

H.R. 899 will guarantee the public always has the opportunity to weigh in on regulations. Whereas UMRA only triggered cost analyses for regulations that were publicly announced through a “notice of proposed rulemaking,” this bill will require all regulations, whether a notice of proposed rulemaking was issued or not, to complete cost analyses.

H.R. 899 will also equip Congress and the American people with better tools to determine the true cost of regulations. Analyses required by H.R. 899 will have to factor in real-world consequences, such as lost business profits, costs passed on to consumers, and changed behavior costs when considering the bottom line impact of Federal mandates.

Finally, H.R. 899 will ensure government is held accountable for following these rules. If the requirements set forth by UMRA and UMITA are not met, a judicial stay may be placed upon regulations.

This legislation is purely about good government. It is about being open and honest about the cost of regulations.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I would advise my good friend from North Carolina that I have no further requests for time and that I am prepared to close or to reserve as she sees fit.

Mr. Speaker, does my colleague want me to go forward and close or does she want me to reserve?

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, we are not quite ready to close.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, according to a report issued by the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, the number of economically significant rules in the pipeline, which are those that could cost \$100 million or more annually, has increased by more than 137 percent over the past decade.

Section 12 of my bill responds to such concerns by requiring Federal agencies to conduct a retrospective analysis of an existing Federal regulation at the request of a committee chairman or ranking minority member. The retrospective analysis submitted to the requesting member and to Congress is to include:

One, a copy of the Federal regulation;

Two, the continued need for the Federal regulation;

Three, the nature of comments or complaints received concerning the Federal regulation;

Four, the extent to which the mandate may duplicate another Federal regulation;

Five, the degree to which technology or economic conditions have changed in the area affecting the Federal regulation;

Six, an analysis of the retrospective costs and benefits of the Federal regulation that considers studies done outside the government; and

Seven, the history of legal challenges to the Federal regulation.

Since the duty to promote public accountability and transparency in Federal regulatory policy is endless, this provision builds on the strengths of UMRA by helping ensure ongoing compliance with legislative intent.

This kind of ongoing monitoring, identified as a priority by section 5 of Executive Order 12866, issued by President Clinton, and by section 6 of Executive Order 13563, issued by President Obama, is critical for adapting to changing circumstances that shaped initial UMRA cost estimates.

This helps ensure a fresh look at regulations to make certain they remain consistent with their initial purpose and have not become overly burdensome, outdated, or unnecessary. This is just one of many bipartisan initiatives contained in my bill that further underscores the need for my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying legislation.

Mr. Speaker, section 3 of my bill has received praise from State and local government advocacy groups as it would allow a committee chairman or ranking member to request that the Congressional Budget Office perform an assessment comparing the authorized level of funding in a bill or resolution to the prospective costs of carrying out any changes to a condition of Federal assistance being imposed on any respective participating State, local or tribal government.

The purpose of this provision is to highlight costs the Federal Government is passing along to State and local governments that would otherwise remain hidden but borne by taxpayers regardless of which governmental entity is taxing them.

CBO Director Douglas Holtz-Eakin's statement before the Committee on Government Reform on March 8, 2005, speaks further to this issue, saying:

According to UMRA, the conditions attached to most forms of Federal aid, including most grant programs, are not mandates. Yet complying with such conditions can sometimes be burdensome. In particular, States consider new conditions on existing grant programs to be duties not unlike mandates. Two often-cited examples of such conditions are the requirements for receiving Federal funding under the No Child Left Behind Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Those laws require school districts to undertake many activities, including, respectively, designing and implementing Statewide achievement tests and preparing individualized education plans for disabled children, but only if they wish to receive certain Federal education grant funds.

In other words, these mandates escape UMRA's scrutiny because current law doesn't define this type of cost shifting as a “mandate.” My bill closes

this loophole. The landmark Supreme Court decision, the National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius, hinged, in part, on this very issue.

Although the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid expansion was not technically considered a “mandate” under UMRA, it required States to dramatically expand the program or risk losing all funding. For this reason, the Supreme Court ultimately deemed this provision unconstitutional.

Justice Roberts wrote that this portion of the Affordable Care Act violated the Constitution because:

Congress has no authority to order the States to regulate according to its instructions. Congress may offer the States grants and require the States to comply with accompanying conditions, but the States must have a genuine choice whether to accept the offer. The States were given no such choice in this case. They must either accept a basic change in the nature of Medicaid or risk losing all Medicaid funding.

In this way, the Affordable Care Act provides a contemporary, salient case study in how important it is for legislators and the public to have access to critical information concerning the costs of Federal decrees.

My bill will put this important information in the hands of Congress and the American people. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying bill.

With that, I would be prepared to close if the gentleman from Florida is prepared, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank the gentlelady.

I indicated I was prepared to close, but I have been advised that we need to occupy a little time as well. So I yield myself such time as I may consume, and we will try to be slow about it.

Mr. Speaker, in this particular legislation, the minority views that were developed allow, among other things, the following:

The Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act would be an assault on health, safety, and environmental protections. This legislation would erect new barriers to slow down the regulatory process, and it would give corporations an unfair advantage in the regulatory process;

Section 5 of the bill would repeal language that excludes independent regulatory agencies from the reporting requirements of the Unfunded Mandate Reform Act, with the exception of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve and the Federal Open Market Committee. I spoke to that earlier. I found that passage strange.

□ 1700

The Office of Management and Budget is responsible for overseeing the UMRA process. Since the independent agencies would be under the direction of OMB for purposes of UMRA compliance, this could compromise the independence of those agencies.

Section 7 of H.R. 899 would create a new point of order in the House of Representatives for legislation containing an unfunded mandate, making it more difficult to enact legislation.

Section 8 would incorporate a cost-benefit requirement from Executive Order 12866, but it would not include language from the same executive order directing agencies to perform these assessments to the extent feasible.

Section 10 would require agencies to provide impacted parties in the private sector—but not other stakeholders—with an advanced opportunity to provide input on proposed regulations. It would require agencies to conduct consultations with private sector businesses as early as possible, before the issuance of a notice of proposed rulemaking. Expanding this consultation requirement only to the private sector could allow businesses to have an advantage over other stakeholders, as I mentioned previously, such as taxpayers and environmental groups, with reference to the development of regulatory proposals.

During consideration of this bill by the committee, one of the Members offered an amendment that stated that any opportunities or rights afforded to a corporation under this section shall also be afforded to any interested individual. The amendment was rejected.

My good friend on the other side mentioned the fact that I pointed out that we continue to have one House legislation that goes nowhere in the Senate. And she pointed correctly to the fact—and I stand with her if it needs to be corrected—that there were 76 measures that reached the President's desk, and that 64 of them came out of the House of Representatives. Not knowing all of the statistical imperatives, my belief would be that of that 64 that came out of House of Representatives, a substantial number of them had companion legislation. I questioned whether or not this particular measure that we are addressing today has companion legislation in the Senate, and that is why I feel that it is not going to go anywhere.

Listen, one side is arguing that we need to start the 2014 election right now and don't do anything else that is going to allow for both bodies—it is true, as my colleague said, that the Constitution mentions the House of Representatives first, but it does not give the House of Representatives autonomy in the sense that they, and they alone, can pass legislation. So there is a requirement here that has not been being met, and that is that the Senate and House confer on matters of legislation and then offer it up to the executive branch.

We seem to have circumvented that process. And what we are doing, rather than pass, or at least address—I am fascinated by the fact that I don't be-

lieve my colleagues have the courage of their convictions. If we were to put a flood insurance measure on the floor not on suspension, I doubt very seriously that it would not pass. It will pass if it were to come to the floor that way.

I believe that if we offer up a reasonable minimum wage, I don't think anybody in this country can say that \$16,000 for a family of two or more people is sufficient in order for them to be able to meet requisites having to do with food and rent alone, let alone educating their children or providing daycare.

I don't think anybody really is against those who paid into the employment system receiving unemployment compensation, and yet we find ourselves here repeatedly addressing a significant number of matters.

Someone wrote the other day, if they got a stain on their tie, it would be because of ObamaCare. My goodness gracious, people, we are a legislative body. We could be about the business of serious legislating. That kind of legislating would require, among other things, not just bipartisan activity as this legislation has manifested itself as being bipartisan, but it would allow that we would really sit down and talk through the things that are needed in this country.

There is nobody around that doesn't believe that we have bridges that are in disrepair. I haven't found anyone that said that if we invested in infrastructure, that it would not create more jobs in this country. The people want us to do this, and not to do one-sided, one-way measures that are not going to go anywhere anytime soon.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I hear my colleague on the other side of the aisle. I frankly don't think there is much more serious legislation around here than this piece, as I said earlier. UMITA doesn't exactly come trippingly off the tongue, and it isn't the most scintillating legislation out there, but it has great bipartisan support, which is what my colleague said we should be doing. So I am curious about his going off talking about a lot of other things other than this.

I will say, Mr. Speaker, that multiple provisions in my bill, including sections 8 and 9, would codify general principles of good government embodied in President Clinton's Executive Order 12866 and President Obama's Executive Order 13563.

Section 8 closes a blatant, often exploited loophole inconsistent with legislative intent and the spirit of the law. Again, I think this legislation is doing exactly what the Congress should be doing, and that is sticking with legislative intent and making sure that we are looking after the fact that the laws we pass are adhered to.

Since title II of UMRA says that agencies must develop a written state-

ment describing the effects of their regulations on State, local, and tribal governments, as well as the private sector, "unless otherwise prohibited by law," some agencies have concluded that general statutory language limiting the consideration of economic costs in setting regulations "prohibits" them from preparing a written statement evaluating the non-cost elements.

Reasserting legislative intent, this section of my bill prevents this loophole from being exploited for purposes of ignoring UMRA requirements by clarifying that agencies must conduct UMRA analysis unless a law "expressly" prohibits them from doing so.

This simple wording change makes a world of difference by clarifying that agencies must conduct UMRA analyses unless a law "expressly" prohibits the disclosure.

Another way UMRA's cost disclosure requirements have been exploited by ambitious rulemakers is by deeming a proposal an emergency and thereby forgoing the notice of proposed rulemaking, or NPRM, process, which is the avenue through which the public weighs in on proposed regulation.

Without compromising the ability to issue mandates in emergency scenarios, section 9 of the underlining bill removes the perverse incentive for agencies to forego NPRMs by requiring them to fulfill UMRA cost disclosure requirements within 6 months of issuing the urgent decree.

Modest bipartisan provisions such as these highlight additional reasons for my colleague to support the rule and underlying bill.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time, but I am prepared to close if the gentleman from Florida is prepared.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I will insert in the RECORD the Statement of Administration Policy, and I will only lift one paragraph, and that is the last paragraph and sentence.

"H.R. 899 would unnecessarily add to the already robust analytical and procedural requirements of the rulemaking process. In particular, H.R. 899 would create needless grounds for judicial review, unduly slowing the regulatory process. In addition, it would add layers of procedural steps that would interfere with agency priority setting and compliance with statutory mandates."

I guess, not surprisingly to my friends on the other side, "If H.R. 899 were presented to the President, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill."

Mr. Speaker, contrary to my friend's favorite rhetoric, the free market does not solve all problems. Markets fail. We have seen that, have we not? Government is the actor of last resort

when the market does not create the necessary incentives for businesses and individuals to protect the public good.

What is more, Federal regulations are not strangling the economy or preventing growth. In fact, it is quite the opposite.

As the Office of Management and Budget has reported, major Federal regulations issued over the last 10 years resulted in annual benefits from \$193 billion to \$800 billion, while costs are only between \$57 billion to \$84 billion.

It seems to me that an \$84 billion investment with an \$800 million return is not a bad thing.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I am going to offer an amendment to the rule to bring up legislation that would raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour and give at least 25 million Americans a well-deserved pay raise.

A business in the constituency that I serve did this on their own. Jaxson's Ice Cream Parlour in Dania Beach raised it because they said they feel the pain of the people that work with them and that they made a fair profit and wanted to share it with them.

The American people are calling for an economy that works for everyone, not just those at the top.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and defeat the previous question. Vote "no" on the underlying bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY
H.R. 899—UNFUNDED MANDATES INFORMATION
AND TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2013

(Rep. Foxx, R-NC, and 4 cosponsors,
February 27, 2014)

The Administration is committed to ensuring that regulations are tailored to advance statutory goals in a manner that is efficient and cost-effective, and that minimizes uncertainty. By layering on additional, burdensome judicial review and other unnecessary changes to the regulatory process, H.R. 899, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2013, would introduce needless uncertainty into agency decision-making and undermine the ability of agencies to provide critical public health and safety protections. Accordingly, the Administration strongly opposes House passage of H.R. 899.

When a Federal agency promulgates a regulation, the agency must adhere to the robust and well-understood procedural requirements of Federal law, including the Administrative Procedure Act, the Regulatory Flexibility Act, the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, the Paperwork Reduction Act, and the Congressional Review Act. In addition, for decades, agency rulemaking has been guided

by executive orders issued and followed by administrations of both political parties. These require regulatory agencies to promulgate regulations upon a reasoned determination that the benefits justify the costs, to consider regulatory alternatives, and to promote regulatory flexibility.

The President's regulatory approach has been consistent throughout his Administration. We don't have to choose between protecting the health, welfare, and safety of Americans and promoting economic growth, job creation, competitiveness, and innovation—we can do both. To this end, Executive Order 13563 requires careful cost-benefit analysis, increased public participation, harmonization of rulemaking across agencies, and flexible regulatory approaches. Through executive orders and other presidential directives, agencies must ensure that they take into account the consequences of rulemaking on small businesses. And, through Executive Orders 13579 and 13610, the Administration has also taken important steps to promote systematic retrospective review of regulations by all agencies, including encouraging independent agencies to conduct such a review. Collectively, these requirements promote flexible, cost-effective regulation.

H.R. 899 would unnecessarily add to the already robust analytical and procedural requirements of the rulemaking process. In particular, H.R. 899 would create needless grounds for judicial review, unduly slowing the regulatory process. In addition, it would add layers of procedural steps that would interfere with agency priority setting and compliance with statutory mandates.

If H.R. 899 were presented to the President, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.

Ms. FOXX. I thank my colleague from Florida.

Mr. Speaker, as proud as I am of this legislation, I realize that its passage on Friday will not be front-page news.

I understand that "Bipartisan Group of Lawmakers Band Together to Close Technical Loopholes in UMRA" isn't exactly a riveting headline, but what we are doing here is important.

In Congress, we often focus our energy and attention on those issues that are most divisive and controversial. There are real substantive disagreements between the two parties and among the American people.

But Congress must do the hard things, and every now and then we get an opportunity to do something easy. This should be easy. The reforms in this bill are "low hanging fruit."

These are modest reforms supported by Republicans and Democrats alike. Some of these changes merely codify executive orders issued by the last two Democrat Presidents.

□ 1715

Some of my colleagues have suggestions for improvement and have offered amendments to this bill. Great. I welcome their suggestions. Those amendments will be discussed here tomorrow in an open and transparent process.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, every Democrat amendment that was submitted has been included in this rule.

I hope that my colleagues will join me in supporting this sensible legisla-

tion that will enhance transparency, accountability, and awareness of Federal mandates. I urge my colleagues to vote for this rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, when the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform filed its report (H. Rept. 113-352, Part 1) to accompany H.R. 899 on February 14, 2014, it included an exchange of letters between the Chairman of the Committee on Rules and the Chairman of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. The letter from Chairman Sessions was inadvertently dated February 11, 2013 and was intended to be dated February 11, 2014.

The material previously referred to by Mr. HASTINGS of Florida is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 492 OFFERED BY
MR. HASTINGS OF FLORIDA

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1010) to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommitt with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 3. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 1010.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT
IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the

control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 225, nays 192, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 79]

YEAS—225

Aderholt	Graves (GA)	Paulsen
Amash	Graves (MO)	Pearce
Amodei	Griffin (AR)	Perry
Bachmann	Griffith (VA)	Petri
Bachus	Grimm	Pittenger
Barletta	Guthrie	Pitts
Barr	Hall	Poe (TX)
Barton	Hanna	Pompeo
Benishek	Harper	Posey
Bentivolio	Harris	Price (GA)
Bilirakis	Hartzler	Reed
Bishop (UT)	Hastings (WA)	Reichert
Black	Heck (NV)	Renacci
Blackburn	Hensarling	Ribble
Boustany	Herrera Beutler	Rigell
Brady (TX)	Holding	Roby
Bridenstine	Hudson	Roe (TN)
Brooks (AL)	Huelskamp	Rogers (AL)
Brooks (IN)	Huizenga (MI)	Rogers (KY)
Broun (GA)	Hultgren	Rogers (MI)
Buchanan	Hunter	Rohrabacher
Bucshon	Hurt	Rokita
Burgess	Issa	Rooney
Byrne	Jenkins	Ros-Lehtinen
Calvert	Johnson (OH)	Roskam
Camp	Johnson, Sam	Ross
Campbell	Jones	Rothfus
Cantor	Jordan	Royce
Capito	Joyce	Ryan (WI)
Carter	Kelly (PA)	Salmon
Cassidy	King (IA)	Sanford
Chabot	King (NY)	Scalise
Chaffetz	Kingston	Schock
Coble	Kinzinger (IL)	Schweikert
Coffman	Kline	Scott, Austin
Cole	Labrador	Sensenbrenner
Collins (GA)	LaMalfa	Sessions
Collins (NY)	Lamborn	Shimkus
Conaway	Lance	Shuster
Cook	Lankford	Simpson
Cotton	Latham	Smith (MO)
Cramer	Latta	Smith (NE)
Crawford	LoBiondo	Smith (NJ)
Crenshaw	Long	Smith (TX)
Culberson	Lucas	Southerland
Daines	Luetkemeyer	Stewart
Davis, Rodney	Lummis	Stivers
Denham	Marchant	Stockman
Dent	Marino	Stutzman
DeSantis	Massie	Terry
DesJarlais	McAllister	Thompson (PA)
Diaz-Balart	McCarthy (CA)	Thornberry
Duffy	McCaull	Tiberi
Duncan (SC)	McClintock	Tipton
Duncan (TN)	McHenry	Turner
Ellmers	McKeon	Valadao
Farenthold	McKinley	Wagner
Fincher	McMorris	Walberg
Fitzpatrick	Rodgers	Walorski
Fleischmann	Meadows	Weber (TX)
Fleming	Meehan	Webster (FL)
Flores	Messer	Wenstrup
Forbes	Mica	Westmoreland
Fortenberry	Miller (FL)	Whitfield
Fox	Miller (MI)	Williams
Franks (AZ)	Miller, Gary	Wilson (SC)
Frelinghuysen	Mullin	Wittman
Garrett	Mulvaney	Wolf
Gerlach	Murphy (PA)	Womack
Gibbs	Neugebauer	Woodall
Gibson	Noem	Yoder
Gingrey (GA)	Nugent	Yoho
Gohmert	Nunes	Young (AK)
Goodlatte	Nunnelee	Young (IN)
Gowdy	Olson	
Granger	Palazzo	

NAYS—192

Barber	Butterfield	Cleaver
Barrow (GA)	Capps	Clyburn
Bass	Capuano	Cohen
Beatty	Cárdenas	Connolly
Becerra	Carney	Conyers
Bera (CA)	Carson (IN)	Cooper
Bishop (GA)	Cartwright	Costa
Bishop (NY)	Castor (FL)	Courtney
Bonamici	Castro (TX)	Crowley
Brady (PA)	Chu	Cuellar
Braley (IA)	Cielline	Cummings
Brown (FL)	Clark (MA)	Davis (CA)
Brownley (CA)	Clarke (NY)	DeFazio
Bustos	Clay	DeGette

DeLauro	Kuster	Polis
DelBene	Langevin	Price (NC)
Deutch	Larsen (WA)	Quigley
Dingell	Larson (CT)	Rahall
Doggett	Lee (CA)	Rangel
Doyle	Levin	Richmond
Duckworth	Lewis	Roybal-Allard
Edwards	Lipinski	Ruiz
Ellison	Loebach	Ruppersberger
Engel	Lofgren	Ryan (OH)
Enyart	Lowenthal	Sánchez, Linda T.
Eshoo	Lowe	Sanchez, Loretta
Esty	Lujan Grisham (NM)	Sarbanes
Farr	Luján, Ben Ray (NM)	Schakowsky
Fattah	Lynch	Schiff
Foster	Maffei	Schneider
Frankel (FL)	Maloney	Schrader
Fudge	Maloney, Carolyn	Scott (VA)
Gabbard	Maloney, Sean	Scott, David
Gallego	Matheson	Serrano
Garamendi	Matsui	Sewell (AL)
Garcla	McCollum	Shea-Porter
Grayson	McDermott	Sherman
Green, Al	McGovern	Sinema
Green, Gene	McIntyre	Sires
Grijalva	McNerney	Slaughter
Gutiérrez	Meeks	Smith (WA)
Hahn	Meng	Speier
Hanabusa	Michaud	Swalwell (CA)
Hastings (FL)	Miller, George	Takano
Heck (WA)	Moore	Thompson (CA)
Higgins	Moran	Thompson (MS)
Himes	Murphy (FL)	Tierney
Holt	Nadler	Titus
Honda	Napolitano	Tonko
Horsford	Neal	Tsongas
Hoyer	Negrete McLeod	Van Hollen
Huffman	Nolan	Vargas
Israel	O'Rourke	Veasey
Jackson Lee	Owens	Vela
Jeffries	Pallone	Velázquez
Johnson (GA)	Pascarell	Visclosky
Johnson, E. B.	Payne	Walz
Kaptur	Pelosi	Wasserman
Keating	Perlmutter	Schultz
Kelly (IL)	Peters (CA)	Waters
Kennedy	Peters (MI)	Waxman
Kildee	Peterson	Welch
Kilmer	Pingree (ME)	Wilson (FL)
Kind	Pocan	Yarmuth
Kirkpatrick		

NOT VOTING—13

Blumenauer	McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz
Davis, Danny	Pastor (AZ)	Upton
Gardner	Rice (SC)	Walden
Gosar	Runyan	
Hinojosa	Rush	

□ 1743

Ms. BONAMICI and Messrs. NADLER and YARMUTH changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. POSEY, Mrs. LUMMIS, and Mr. ADERHOLT changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 227, noes 190, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 80]

AYES—227

Aderholt Graves (GA) Palazzo
 Amash Graves (MO) Paulsen
 Amodei Griffin (AR) Pearce
 Bachmann Griffith (VA) Perry
 Bachus Grimm Peterson
 Barletta Guthrie Petri
 Barr Hall Pittenger
 Barton Hanna Pitts
 Benishek Harper Poe (TX)
 Bentivolio Harris Pompeo
 Bilirakis Hartzler Posey
 Bishop (UT) Hastings (WA) Price (GA)
 Black Heck (NV) Reed
 Blackburn Hensarling Reichert
 Boustany Herrera Beutler Renacci
 Brady (TX) Holding Ribble
 Bridenstine Hudson Rigell
 Brooks (AL) Huelskamp Roby
 Brooks (IN) Huizenga (MI) Roe (TN)
 Broun (GA) Hultgren Rogers (AL)
 Buchanan Hunter Rogers (KY)
 Bucshon Hurt Rogers (MI)
 Burgess Issa Rohrabacher
 Byrne Jenkins Rokita
 Calvert Johnson (OH) Rooney
 Camp Johnson, Sam Ros-Lehtinen
 Campbell Jones Roskam
 Cantor Jordan Ross
 Capito Joyce Rothfus
 Carter Kelly (PA) Royce
 Cassidy King (IA) Ryan (WI)
 Chabot King (NY) Salmon
 Chaffetz Kingston Sanford
 Coble Kinzinger (IL) Scalise
 Coffman Kline Schock
 Cole Labrador Schweikert
 Collins (GA) LaMalfa Scott, Austin
 Collins (NY) Lamborn Sensenbrenner
 Conaway Lance Sessions
 Cook Lankford Shimkus
 Cotton Latham Shuster
 Cramer Latta Simpson
 Crawford LoBiondo Smith (MO)
 Crenshaw Long Smith (NE)
 Culberson Lucas Smith (NJ)
 Daines Luetkemeyer Smith (TX)
 Davis, Rodney Lummis Southerland
 Denham Marchant Stewart
 Dent Marino Stivers
 DeSantis Massie Stockman
 DesJarlais McAllister Stutzman
 Diaz-Balart McCarthy (CA) Terry
 Duffy McCaul Thompson (PA)
 Duncan (SC) McClintock Thornberry
 Duncan (TN) McHenry Tiberi
 Ellmers McIntyre Tipton
 Farenthold McKeon Turner
 Fincher McKinley Valadao
 Fitzpatrick McMorris Wagner
 Fleischmann Rodgers Walberg
 Fleming Meadows Walorski
 Flores Meehan Weber (TX)
 Forbes Messer Webster (FL)
 Fortenberry Mica Wenstrup
 Foxx Miller (FL) Westmoreland
 Franks (AZ) Miller (MI) Whitfield
 Frelinghuysen Miller, Gary Williams
 Garrett Mullin Wilson (SC)
 Gerlach Mulvaney Wittman
 Gibbs Murphy (PA) Wolf
 Gibson Neugebauer Womack
 Gingrey (GA) Noem Woodall
 Gohmert Nugent Yoder
 Goodlatte Nunes Yoho
 Gowdy Nunnelee Young (AK)
 Granger Olson Young (IN)

NOES—190

Barber Butterfield Cleaver
 Barrow (GA) Capps Clyburn
 Bass Capuano Cohen
 Beatty Cardenas Connolly
 Becerra Carney Conyers
 Bera (CA) Carson (IN) Cooper
 Bishop (GA) Cartwright Costa
 Bishop (NY) Castor (FL) Courtney
 Bonamici Castro (TX) Crowley
 Brady (PA) Chu Cuellar
 Braley (IA) Cicilline Cummings
 Brown (FL) Clark (MA) Davis
 Brownley (CA) Clarke (NY) DeFazio
 Bustos Clay DeGette

Delaney Kirkpatrick
 DeLauro Kuster
 DeBene Langevin
 Deutch Larsen (WA)
 Dingell Larson (CT)
 Doggett Lee (CA)
 Doyle Levin
 Duckworth Lewis
 Edwards Lipinski
 Ellison Loebsack
 Engel Lofgren
 Enyart Lowenthal
 Eshoo Lowey
 Esty Lujan Grisham
 Farr (NM)
 Fattah Lujan, Ben Ray
 Foster (NM)
 Frankel (FL) Lynch
 Fudge Maffei
 Gabbard Maloney,
 Gallego Carolyn
 Garamendi Maloney, Sean
 Garcia Matheson
 Grayson Matsui
 Green, Al McCollum
 Green, Gene McDermott
 Grijalva McGovern
 Gutiérrez McNerney
 Hahn Meeks
 Hanabusa Meng
 Hastings (FL) Michaud
 Heck (WA) Miller, George
 Higgins Moore
 Himes Moran
 Holt Murphy (FL)
 Honda Nadler
 Horsford Napolitano
 Hoyer Neal
 Huffman Negrete McLeod
 Israel Nolan
 Jackson Lee O'Rourke
 Jeffries Owens
 Johnson (GA) Pallone
 Johnson, E. B. Pascrell
 Kaptur Payne
 Keating Pelosi
 Kelly (IL) Perlmutter
 Kennedy Peters (CA)
 Kildee Peters (MI)
 Kilmer Pingree (ME)
 Kind Pocan

NOT VOTING—13

Blumenauer
 Davis, Danny
 Gardner
 Gosar
 Hinojosa
 McCarthy (NY)
 Pastor (AZ)
 Rice (SC)
 Runyan
 Rush
 Schwartz
 Upton
 Walden

□ 1750

So the resolution was agreed to.
 The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.
 A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION SAFETY AND SOUNDNESS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEWART). Pursuant to House Resolution 475 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3193.

Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) kindly take the chair.

□ 1752

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3193) to amend the Consumer Financial

Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes, with Mr. HOLDING (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole House rose earlier today, a request for a recorded vote on amendment No. 4 printed in part B of House Report 113-350 offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE) had been postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in part B of House Report 113-350 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Mr. RIGELL of Virginia.

Amendment No. 3 by Mr. DESANTIS of Florida.

Amendment No. 4 by Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. RIGELL

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. RIGELL) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 250, noes 167, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 81]

AYES—250

Aderholt Bucshon Crenshaw
 Amash Burgess Cuellar
 Amodei Bustos Culberson
 Bachmann Byrne Daines
 Bachus Calvert Davis, Rodney
 Barber Camp DeBene
 Barletta Campbell Denham
 Barr Cantor Dent
 Barrow (GA) Capito DeSantis
 Barton Carter DesJarlais
 Benishek Cassidy Diaz-Balart
 Bentivolio Chabot Duckworth
 Bera (CA) Chaffetz Duffy
 Bilirakis Coble Duncan (SC)
 Bishop (UT) Coffman Duncan (TN)
 Black Cole Ellmers
 Blackburn Collins (GA) Farenthold
 Boustany Collins (NY) Fincher
 Brady (TX) Conaway Fitzpatrick
 Bridenstine Cook Fleischmann
 Brooks (AL) Cooper Fleming
 Brooks (IN) Costa Flores
 Broun (GA) Cotton Forbes
 Brownley (CA) Cramer Fortenberry
 Buchanan Crawford Foxx

Franks (AZ)
 Frelinghuysen
 Gallego
 Garamendi
 Garrett
 Gerlach
 Gibbs
 Gibson
 Gingrey (GA)
 Gohmert
 Goodlatte
 Gowdy
 Granger
 Graves (GA)
 Graves (MO)
 Green, Gene
 Griffin (AR)
 Griffith (VA)
 Grimm
 Guthrie
 Hall
 Hanna
 Harper
 Harris
 Hartzler
 Hastings (WA)
 Heck (NV)
 Hensarling
 Herrera Beutler
 Holding
 Hudson
 Huelskamp
 Huizenga (MI)
 Hultgren
 Hunter
 Hurt
 Issa
 Jenkins
 Johnson (OH)
 Johnson, Sam
 Jones
 Jordan
 Joyce
 Kelly (PA)
 King (IA)
 King (NY)
 Kingston
 Kinzinger (IL)
 Kline
 Kuster
 Labrador
 LaMalfa
 Lamborn
 Lance
 Lankford
 Latham
 Latta
 LoBiondo
 Long

Lucas
 Luetkemeyer
 Lummis
 Maffei
 Maloney, Sean
 Marchant
 Marino
 Massie
 Matheson
 McAllister
 McCarthy (CA)
 McCaul
 McClintock
 McHenry
 McIntyre
 McKeon
 McKinley
 McMorris
 Rodgers
 Meadows
 Meehan
 Messer
 Mica
 Miller (FL)
 Miller (MI)
 Miller, Gary
 Mullin
 Mulvaney
 Murphy (PA)
 Neugebauer
 Noem
 Nugent
 Nunes
 Nunnelee
 Olson
 Owens
 Palazzo
 Paulsen
 Pearce
 Perry
 Peters (CA)
 Peterson
 Petri
 Pittenger
 Pitts
 Poe (TX)
 Pompeo
 Posey
 Price (GA)
 Rahall
 Reed
 Reichert
 Renacci
 Ribble
 Rigell
 Roby
 Roe (TN)
 Rogers (AL)
 Rogers (KY)

Rogers (MI)
 Rohrabacher
 Rokita
 Rooney
 Ros-Lehtinen
 Roskam
 Ross
 Rothfus
 Royce
 Ruiz
 Ryan (WI)
 Salmon
 Sanford
 Scalise
 Schneider
 Schock
 Schrader
 Schweikert
 Scott, Austin
 Sensenbrenner
 Sessions
 Shimkus
 Shuster
 Simpson
 Smith (MO)
 Smith (NE)
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (TX)
 Southerland
 Stewart
 Stivers
 Stockman
 Stutzman
 Terry
 Thompson (PA)
 Thornberry
 Tiberi
 Tipton
 Turner
 Valadao
 Wagner
 Walberg
 Walorski
 Weber (TX)
 Webster (FL)
 Wenstrup
 Westmoreland
 Whitfield
 Williams
 Wilson (SC)
 Wittman
 Wolf
 Womack
 Woodall
 Yoder
 Yoho
 Young (AK)
 Young (IN)

McGovern
 McNerney
 Meeks
 Meng
 Michaud
 Miller, George
 Moore
 Moran
 Murphy (FL)
 Nadler
 Napolitano
 Neal
 Negrete McLeod
 Nolan
 O'Rourke
 Pallone
 Pascarell
 Payne
 Pelosi
 Perlmutter
 Peters (MI)
 Pingree (ME)
 Pocan
 Polis

Blumenauer
 Davis, Danny
 Gardner
 Gosar
 Hinojosa

Price (NC)
 Quigley
 Rangel
 Richmond
 Roybal-Allard
 Ruppersberger
 Ryan (OH)
 Sanchez, Linda
 T.
 Sanchez, Loretta
 Sarbanes
 Schakowsky
 Schiff
 Scott (VA)
 Scott, David
 Serrano
 Sewell (AL)
 Shea-Porter
 Sherman
 Sinema
 Sires
 Slaughter
 Smith (WA)
 Speier

NOT VOTING—13

McCarthy (NY)
 Pastor (AZ)
 Rice (SC)
 Runyan
 Rush

Swalwell (CA)
 Takano
 Thompson (CA)
 Thompson (MS)
 Tierney
 Titus
 Tonko
 Tsongas
 Van Hollen
 Vargas
 Veasey
 Vela
 Velázquez
 Visclosky
 Walz
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 Waters
 Waxman
 Welch
 Wilson (FL)
 Yarmuth

Foxx
 Franks (AZ)
 Frelinghuysen
 Garrett
 Gerlach
 Gibbs
 Gibson
 Gingrey (GA)
 Gohmert
 Goodlatte
 Gowdy
 Granger
 Graves (GA)
 Graves (MO)
 Griffin (AR)
 Griffith (VA)
 Grimm
 Guthrie
 Hall
 Hanna
 Harper
 Harris
 Hartzler
 Hastings (WA)
 Heck (NV)
 Hensarling
 Herrera Beutler
 Holding
 Hudson
 Huelskamp
 Huizenga (MI)
 Hultgren
 Hunter
 Hurt
 Issa
 Jenkins
 Johnson (OH)
 Johnson, Sam
 Jones
 Jordan
 Joyce
 Kelly (PA)
 King (IA)
 King (NY)
 Kingston
 Kinzinger (IL)
 Kline
 Labrador
 LaMalfa
 Lamborn
 Lance
 Lankford
 Latham
 Latta

LoBiondo
 Long
 Lucas
 Luetkemeyer
 Lummis
 Marchant
 Marino
 Massie
 McAllister
 McCarthy (CA)
 McCaul
 McClintock
 McHenry
 McIntyre
 McKeon
 McKinley
 McMorris
 Rodgers
 Meadows
 Meehan
 Messer
 Mica
 Miller (FL)
 Miller (MI)
 Miller, Gary
 Mulvaney
 Murphy (PA)
 Neugebauer
 Noem
 Nugent
 Nunes
 Nunnelee
 Olson
 Palazzo
 Paulsen
 Pearce
 Perry
 Petri
 Pittenger
 Pitts
 Poe (TX)
 Pompeo
 Posey
 Price (GA)
 Rahall
 Reed
 Reichert
 Renacci
 Ribble
 Rigell
 Roby
 Roe (TN)
 Rogers (AL)
 Rogers (KY)

Rogers (MI)
 Rohrabacher
 Rokita
 Rooney
 Ros-Lehtinen
 Roskam
 Ross
 Rothfus
 Royce
 Ryan (WI)
 Salmon
 Sanford
 Scalise
 Schweikert
 Scott, Austin
 Sensenbrenner
 Sessions
 Shimkus
 Shuster
 Simpson
 Smith (MO)
 Smith (NE)
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (TX)
 Southerland
 Stewart
 Stivers
 Stockman
 Stutzman
 Terry
 Thompson (PA)
 Thornberry
 Tiberi
 Tipton
 Turner
 Valadao
 Wagner
 Walberg
 Walorski
 Weber (TX)
 Webster (FL)
 Wenstrup
 Westmoreland
 Whitfield
 Williams
 Wilson (SC)
 Wittman
 Wolf
 Womack
 Woodall
 Yoder
 Yoho
 Young (AK)
 Young (IN)

NOES—167

Bass
 Beatty
 Becerra
 Bishop (GA)
 Bishop (NY)
 Bonamici
 Brady (PA)
 Braley (IA)
 Brown (FL)
 Butterfield
 Capps
 Capuano
 Cárdenas
 Carney
 Carson (IN)
 Cartwright
 Castor (FL)
 Castro (TX)
 Chu
 Cicilline
 Clark (MA)
 Clarke (NY)
 Clay
 Cleaver
 Clyburn
 Cohen
 Connolly
 Conyers
 Courtney
 Crowley
 Cummings
 Davis (CA)
 DeFazio
 DeGette

Delaney
 DeLauro
 Deutch
 Dingell
 Doggett
 Doyle
 Edwards
 Ellison
 Engel
 Enyart
 Eshoo
 Esty
 Farr
 Fattah
 Foster
 Frankel (FL)
 Fudge
 Gabbard
 Garcia
 Grayson
 Green, Al
 Grijalva
 Gutiérrez
 Hahn
 Hanabusa
 Hastings (FL)
 Heck (WA)
 Higgins
 Himes
 Holt
 Honda
 Horsford
 Hoyer
 Huffman

Israel
 Jackson Lee
 Jeffries
 Johnson (GA)
 Johnson, E. B.
 Kaptur
 Keating
 Kelly (IL)
 Kennedy
 Kildee
 Kilmer
 Kind
 Kirkpatrick
 Langevin
 Larsen (WA)
 Larson (CT)
 Lee (CA)
 Levin
 Lewis
 Lipinski
 Loeb sack
 Lofgren
 Lowenthal
 Lowey
 Lujan Grisham
 (NM)
 Luján, Ben Ray
 (NM)
 Boustany
 Brady (TX)
 Bridenstine
 Brooks (AL)
 Brooks (IN)
 Broun (GA)
 Buchanan

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 227, noes 186, not voting 17, as follows:

[Roll No. 82]

AYES—227

Aderholt
 Amash
 Amodei
 Bachmann
 Bachus
 Barletta
 Barr
 Barrow (GA)
 Barton
 Benishek
 Bentivolio
 Bilirakis
 Bishop (UT)
 Black
 Blackburn
 Boustany
 Brady (TX)
 Bridenstine
 Brooks (AL)
 Brooks (IN)
 Broun (GA)
 Buchanan

Bucshon
 Burgess
 Byrne
 Calvert
 Camp
 Campbell
 Cantor
 Capito
 Carter
 Cassidy
 Chabot
 Chaffetz
 Coble
 Coffman
 Cole
 Collins (GA)
 Collins (NY)
 Conaway
 Cook
 Cotton
 Cramer
 Crawford

Crenshaw
 Cuellar
 Culberson
 Daines
 Davis, Rodney
 Denham
 Dent
 DeSantis
 DesJarlais
 Diaz-Balart
 Duffy
 Duncan (SC)
 Duncan (TN)
 Ellmers
 Farenthold
 Fincher
 Fitzpatrick
 Fleischmann
 Fleming
 Flores
 Forbes
 Fortenberry

Barber
 Bass
 Beatty
 Becerra
 Bera (CA)
 Bishop (GA)
 Bishop (NY)
 Bonamici
 Brady (PA)
 Braley (IA)
 Brown (FL)
 Brownley (CA)
 Bustos
 Butterfield
 Capps
 Capuano
 Cárdenas
 Carney
 Carson (IN)
 Cartwright
 Castor (FL)
 Castro (TX)
 Chu
 Cicilline
 Clark (MA)
 Clarke (NY)
 Clay
 Cleaver
 Clyburn
 Cohen
 Connolly
 Conyers
 Cooper
 Costa
 Courtney
 Crowley
 Cummings
 Davis (CA)
 DeFazio

NOES—186

DeGette
 Delaney
 DeLauro
 DelBene
 Deutch
 Dingell
 Doggett
 Doyle
 Duckworth
 Edwards
 Ellison
 Engel
 Enyart
 Eshoo
 Esty
 Farr
 Fattah
 Foster
 Frankel (FL)
 Fudge
 Gabbard
 Gallego
 Garamendi
 Garcia
 Grayson
 Green, Al
 Green, Gene
 Grijalva
 Gutiérrez
 Hahn
 Hanabusa
 Hastings (FL)
 Heck (WA)
 Higgins
 Himes
 Hinojosa
 Holt
 Honda
 Horsford

Hoyer
 Huffman
 Israel
 Jackson Lee
 Jeffries
 Johnson (GA)
 Johnson, E. B.
 Kaptur
 Keating
 Kelly (IL)
 Kennedy
 Kildee
 Kilmer
 Kind
 Kirkpatrick
 Kyburz
 Langevin
 Larsen (WA)
 Larson (CT)
 Lee (CA)
 Levin
 Lewis
 Lipinski
 Loeb sack
 Lofgren
 Lowenthal
 Lowey
 Lujan Grisham
 (NM)
 Luján, Ben Ray
 (NM)
 Lynch
 Maffei
 Maloney,
 Carolyn
 Maloney, Sean
 Matheson
 Matsui
 McCollum

McDermott	Pocan	Smith (WA)	Gabbard	Lowey	Ruiz	Mulvaney	Rogers (AL)	Stewart
McGovern	Polis	Speier	Garamendi	Lujan Grisham	Ruppersberger	Murphy (PA)	Rogers (KY)	Stivers
McNerney	Price (NC)	Swallwell (CA)	Garcia	Ryan (NM)	Neugebauer	Neugebauer	Rogers (MI)	Stockman
Meeks	Quigley	Takano	Grayson	Lujan, Ben Ray	Noem	Rohrabacher	Rohrabacher	Stutzman
Meng	Rangel	Thompson (CA)	Green, Al	(NM)	Nugent	Rokita	Rokita	Terry
Michaud	Ruiz	Thompson (MS)	Green, Gene	Lynch	Nunes	Rooney	Rooney	Thompson (PA)
Miller, George	Ruppersberger	Tierney	Gutiérrez	Maloney,	Nunnelee	Ros-Lehtinen	Ros-Lehtinen	Thornberry
Moore	Ryan (OH)	Titus	Hahn	Carolyn	Olson	Roskam	Roskam	Tiberi
Moran	Sánchez, Linda	Tonko	Hanabusa	Maloney, Sean	Palazzo	Ross	Ross	Tipton
Murphy (FL)	T.	Tsongas	Hastings (FL)	Matsui	Paulsen	Rothfus	Rothfus	Turner
Nadler	Sánchez, Loretta	Van Hollen	Heck (WA)	McCollum	Pearce	Royce	Royce	Valadao
Napolitano	Sarbanes	Vargas	Higgins	McDermott	Perry	Ryan (WI)	Ryan (WI)	Wagner
Neal	Schakowsky	Veasey	Himes	McGovern	Peters (CA)	Salmon	Salmon	Walberg
Negrete McLeod	Schiff	Vela	Hinojosa	McIntyre	Peterson	Sanford	Sanford	Walorski
O'Rourke	Schneider	Velázquez	Holt	McNerney	Petri	Scalise	Scalise	Weber (TX)
Owens	Schrader	Visclosky	Honda	Meeks	Pittenger	Schock	Schock	Webster (FL)
Pallone	Scott (VA)	Walz	Horsford	Meng	Pitts	Schrader	Schrader	Wenstrup
Pascrell	Scott, David	Wasserman	Hoyer	Michaud	Poe (TX)	Schweikert	Schweikert	Westmoreland
Payne	Serrano	Schultz	Huffman	Miller, George	Pompeo	Scott, Austin	Scott, Austin	Whitfield
Pelosi	Sewell (AL)	Waters	Israel	Moore	Posey	Sensenbrenner	Sensenbrenner	Williams
Perlmutter	Shea-Porter	Waxman	Jackson Lee	Moran	Price (GA)	Sessions	Sessions	Wilson (SC)
Peters (CA)	Sherman	Welch	Jeffries	Murphy (FL)	Rahall	Shimkus	Shimkus	Wittman
Peters (MI)	Sinema	Wilson (FL)	Johnson (GA)	Nadler	Reed	Shuster	Shuster	Wolf
Peterson	Sires	Yarmuth	Johnson, E. B.	Napolitano	Reichert	Simpson	Simpson	Womack
Pingree (ME)	Slaughter		Kaptur	Neal	Renacci	Smith (MO)	Smith (MO)	Woodall
			Keating	Negrete McLeod	Ribble	Smith (NE)	Smith (NE)	Yoder
			Kelly (IL)	Nolan	Rigell	Smith (NJ)	Smith (NJ)	Yoho
			Kennedy	O'Rourke	Roby	Smith (TX)	Smith (TX)	Young (AK)
			Kildee	Owens	Roe (TN)	Southerland	Southerland	Young (IN)
			Kilmer	Pallone				
			Kind	Pascrell				
			Kirkpatrick	Payne				
			Kuster	Pelosi				
			Langevin	Perlmutter				
			Larsen (WA)	Peters (MI)				
			Larson (CT)	Pingree (ME)				
			Lee (CA)	Pocan				
			Levin	Polis				
			Lewis	Price (NC)				
			Lipinski	Quigley				
			Lofgren	Rangel				
			Lowenthal	Richmond				
				Roybal-Allard				

NOT VOTING—17

Blumenauer	Nolan	Rush
Davis, Danny	Pastor (AZ)	Schock
Gardner	Rice (SC)	Schwartz
Gosar	Richmond	Upton
McCarthy (NY)	Roybal-Allard	Walden
Mullin	Runyan	

□ 1801

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Chair, had I been present for rollcall vote No. 82, (on agreeing to the DeSantis amendment), I would have voted "no."

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MS. MOORE

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. MOORE) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 181, noes 236, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 83]

AYES—181

Barber	Cartwright	DeGette
Bass	Castor (FL)	Delaney
Beatty	Castro (TX)	DeLauro
Becerra	Chu	DeBene
Bera (CA)	Cicilline	Deutch
Bishop (GA)	Clark (MA)	Dingell
Bishop (NY)	Clarke (NY)	Doggett
Bonamici	Clay	Doyle
Brady (PA)	Cleaver	Duckworth
Braley (IA)	Clyburn	Edwards
Brown (FL)	Cohen	Ellison
Brownley (CA)	Connolly	Engel
Bustos	Conyers	Enyart
Butterfield	Cooper	Eshoo
Capps	Courtney	Esty
Capuano	Crowley	Farr
Cardenas	Cummings	Fattah
Carney	Davis (CA)	Frankel (FL)
Carson (IN)	DeFazio	Fudge

Aderholt	Dent	Hultgren
Amash	DeSantis	Hunter
Amodei	DesJarlais	Hurt
Bachmann	Diaz-Balart	Issa
Barletta	Duffy	Jenkins
Barr	Duncan (SC)	Johnson (OH)
Barrow (GA)	Duncan (TN)	Johnson, Sam
Barton	Ellmers	Jones
Benish	Farenthold	Jordan
Bentivolio	Fincher	Joyce
Bilirakis	Fitzpatrick	Kelly (PA)
Bishop (UT)	Fleischmann	King (IA)
Black	Fleming	King (NY)
Blackburn	Flores	Kingston
Boustany	Forbes	Kinzinger (IL)
Brady (TX)	Fortenberry	Kline
Bridenstine	Foster	Labrador
Brooks (AL)	Fox	LaMalfa
Brooks (IN)	Franks (AZ)	Lamborn
Broun (GA)	Frelinghuysen	Lance
Buchanan	Galleo	Lankford
Bucshon	Garrett	Latham
Burgess	Gerlach	Latta
Byrne	Gibbs	LoBiondo
Calvert	Gibson	Long
Camp	Gingrey (GA)	Lucas
Campbell	Gohmert	Luetkemeyer
Cantor	Goodlatte	Lummis
Capito	Gowdy	Maffei
Carter	Granger	Marchant
Cassidy	Graves (GA)	Marino
Chabot	Graves (MO)	Massie
Chaffetz	Griffin (AR)	Matheson
Coble	Griffith (VA)	McAllister
Coffman	Grijalva	McCarthy (CA)
Cole	Grimm	McCauley
Collins (GA)	Guthrie	McClintock
Collins (NY)	Hall	McHenry
Conaway	Hanna	McKeon
Cook	Harper	McKinley
Costa	Harris	McMorris
Cotton	Hartzler	Rodgers
Cramer	Hastings (WA)	Meadows
Crawford	Heck (NV)	Meehan
Crenshaw	Hensarling	Messer
Cuellar	Herrera Beutler	Mica
Culberson	Holding	Miller (FL)
Daines	Hudson	Miller (MI)
Davis, Rodney	Huelskamp	Miller, Gary
Denham	Huizenga (MI)	Mullin

NOES—236

Dent	Hultgren
DeSantis	Hunter
DesJarlais	Hurt
Diaz-Balart	Issa
Duffy	Jenkins
Duncan (SC)	Johnson (OH)
Duncan (TN)	Johnson, Sam
Ellmers	Jones
Farenthold	Jordan
Fincher	Joyce
Fitzpatrick	Kelly (PA)
Fleischmann	King (IA)
Fleming	King (NY)
Flores	Kingston
Forbes	Kinzinger (IL)
Fortenberry	Kline
Foster	Labrador
Fox	LaMalfa
Franks (AZ)	Lamborn
Frelinghuysen	Lance
Galleo	Lankford
Garrett	Latham
Gerlach	Latta
Gibbs	LoBiondo
Gibson	Long
Gingrey (GA)	Lucas
Gohmert	Luetkemeyer
Goodlatte	Lummis
Gowdy	Maffei
Granger	Marchant
Graves (GA)	Marino
Graves (MO)	Massie
Griffin (AR)	Matheson
Griffith (VA)	McAllister
Grijalva	McCarthy (CA)
Grimm	McCauley
Guthrie	McClintock
Hall	McHenry
Hanna	McKeon
Harper	McKinley
Harris	McMorris
Hartzler	Rodgers
Hastings (WA)	Meadows
Heck (NV)	Meehan
Hensarling	Messer
Herrera Beutler	Mica
Holding	Miller (FL)
Hudson	Miller (MI)
Huelskamp	Miller, Gary
Huizenga (MI)	Mullin

NOT VOTING—13

Bachus	McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz
Blumenauer	Pastor (AZ)	Upton
Davis, Danny	Rice (SC)	Walden
Gardner	Runyan	
Gosar	Rush	

□ 1806

Ms. WATERS changed her vote from "no" to "aye."

Mr. MAFFEI changed his vote from "aye" to "no."

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) having assumed the chair, Mr. HOLDING, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3193) to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 475, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. I am opposed to it in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Shea-Porter moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3193 to the Committee on Financial Services with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Add at the end the following:

SEC. 6. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION REGARDING DATA BREACHES, FINANCIAL FRAUD, AND PREDATORY LENDING.

Nothing in this Act, or the amendments made by this Act, may be construed as prohibiting the agency responsible for the regulation of consumer financial products and services pursuant to the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 from the following:

(1) In the case of a company that has had a data breach resulting in the release of financially sensitive personally identifiable information—

(A) consulting with the company about the breach,

(B) working with such company to identify seniors, service members, students, and other consumers affected by the breach, and

(C) providing those consumers with materials on the steps that should immediately be taken to protect themselves from financial fraud, including instructions for canceling and replacing compromised credit cards, templates for requesting that fraudulent charges be removed from credit card bills and credit reports, and information on credit monitoring products,

so long as such company refunds the agency for the costs the agency incurs in providing such services.

(2) Monitoring and supervising payday lenders on or near military bases, in order to protect service members and their families from being targeted by predatory lenders that engage in unfair, deceptive, and abusive practices, or to undertake enforcement actions against predatory lenders to provide refunds and reimbursements to service members targeted and harmed by such practices.

(3) Investigating and enforcing sanctions related to fraud concerning fees for private student loans or for the usage of automatic teller machines (“ATMs”).

Ms. SHEA-PORTER (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

Mr. HENSARLING. I object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk continued to read.

Mr. HENSARLING (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from New Hampshire is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill and will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, just a few years after a financial meltdown that crashed our economy and punished middle class families, some politicians here want to go back to the days when Wall Street wrote its own rules and consumers got the short end of the stick. We all know how that worked out. It brought a tremendous financial crisis.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau emerged out of the ashes of that financial disaster. Congress had learned a hard lesson: consumers needed a watchdog. That is what the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is all about. It is a watchdog for consumers. It stands up for people, including students, seniors, and veterans who are often targeted by predatory financial lenders with shady products. Why on earth would we want to hamper the CFPB?

In its short lifetime, the Bureau has secured more than \$3 billion for nearly 10 million consumers, including members of the military. It has received more than 270,000 consumer complaints. It has taken action against any payday lenders and debt collectors who take unfair advantage of our Nation's consumers.

The CFPB is working to protect consumers from some of the worst abuses in the financial marketplace, but the bill we are considering today would undermine its work.

□ 1815

First, the bill changes the structure of the CFPB to a five-member commission instead of a single director. In a Congress that is so divided and dysfunctional, it is not fair to mire the Bureau in political gridlock and make it less able to carry out its mission.

Second, this bill would defund the CFPB. Under the guise of transparency, its opponents want to cripple the Bureau by tying it up in Congress. They say this will result in significant cost savings. If they don't fund it properly, of course it will end up in savings.

We would also save money on food inspection if we would only stop inspecting food, but that doesn't mean we would be better off. Defunding the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau comes at the expense of American consumers.

The bill also allows other bank regulators who failed to protect consumers to overrule the CFPB, and it cripples the Bureau's ability to oversee consumer financial markets.

Our constituents don't want us to weaken consumer protections. They ac-

tually want us to extend consumer protections to include protection of our personal data and information.

Today's motion to recommit builds on this work and makes sure that Congress is focused on consumer protection. This motion ensures that seniors, servicemembers, students, and other consumers affected by security breaches are promptly notified that their data has been compromised.

Even more importantly, it makes sure that consumers know what steps to take to recover from and how to prevent additional financial fraud. In the event of a personal data breach, companies need to do more than simply alert consumers that it happened. They need to work with the CFPB to inform consumers about how to remove fraudulent charges and monitor their credit going forward.

The motion also addresses a growing problem of predatory lenders targeting our servicemembers and their families. These lenders are taking advantage of loopholes in current law to profit from bad loans that have outrageous interest rates.

They take advantage of our servicemembers by obscuring these interest rates. Some lenders even target our servicemembers looking for home mortgages. This activity is reprehensible, and Congress should stop this activity.

Students are another population this motion would protect. For example, the CFPB recently started investigating campus financial products, such as school-issued debit cards that students use to access financial aid. These cards often have hidden fees, which can add up for students and families who are already struggling to pay for college.

What makes this even worse is that many college campuses don't have fee-free ATMs, so students are being hit with debit card fees and then hit again when they want to access that money. The CFPB needs to be able to make sure that banks aren't taking advantage of our students.

Mr. Speaker, this motion to recommit will make sure that we pass a bill that is fair to consumers, not just banks.

I urge all my colleagues to vote “yes” on these commonsense changes, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, first, I am just very pleased that our friends on the other side of the aisle actually found somebody to offer the MTR since they apparently, earlier today, were having trouble finding speakers to come to the floor and defend what is probably the most powerful and least accountable government agency in the history of the Republic.

It would be difficult to defend this agency; but let me first dispense with the motion to recommit.

Number one, as we read, this Dodd-Frank did not grant the CFPB power over data breaches, so this part of the MTR is irrelevant. The other portions are redundant.

Mr. Speaker, a more important point is: How can anybody come to the floor to defend an agency that is collecting such massive quantities of data? I find it somewhat ironic that the MTR seemingly is concerned about data breaches to a government agency that is collecting data on 53 million borrowers who took out mortgages since 1998.

The person in charge of the project has testified that it is easy to reverse-engineer the identities of 95 percent of these records. The CFPB, in their credit card database, is collecting at least data on 991 million credit cards held by roughly 60 percent of the adult U.S. population.

Where is the angst and the anxiety and the concern for the possible data breaches of CFPB? How about their consumer credit panel, where they are collecting the database of credit reports on 8.6 million Americans? I mean, it seems to be a contest between CFPB and NSA who can collect the most data on American citizens. Stay tuned on who wins that competition.

And then, Mr. Speaker, we have an agency that, notwithstanding its benign yet Orwellian title, is abusing consumer rights. We have already had the QM rule—Qualified Mortgage rule—promulgated where the Federal Reserve says one-third of Black and Hispanic homeowners can no longer qualify for their mortgages. Where is the outrage there?

CoreLogic, which is a firm that collects data in our mortgage market, has said: When fully implemented, this rule of this agency that is supposed to protect our consumers, half—half—of the mortgages would no longer qualify.

So no wonder Democrats were having trouble finding speakers to defend this.

And then last, but not least, an agency that has no accountability, that sets its own budget, notwithstanding the testimony of the head of the agency who said that he was not building a palace, yet they take \$145 million of hard-earned taxpayer money to renovate a \$150 million building they don't even own.

On a square-foot basis, Mr. Speaker, this is three times the average class A luxury renovation space in Washington, D.C. On a square-foot basis, it costs more for the CFPB to have their headquarters than it cost to build the Trump World Tower.

On a square-foot basis, it costs more to renovate their headquarters than it does to build the Bellagio Hotel and Casino, at the time the single most expensive hotel in America.

Mr. Speaker, on a square-foot basis, it cost more than the Burj Khalifa in

Dubai, the single tallest building in the world, and there are similarities because the CFPB spent \$7 million on the same world-renowned architectural firm to design their building.

Mr. Speaker, again, this is one of the most powerful and least accountable agencies in the history of the Republic. True consumer protection is about competitive, innovative transparent markets that respect the dignity and the liberty of every American citizen to buy the mortgage and get the credit card that they want that is best for them and their families.

Let's respect them. Let's hold accountable government. Let's dispense with the motion to recommit, and let's vote "aye" on the Commercial Financial Freedom and Washington Accountability Act.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by a 5-minute vote on the passage of the bill, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 194, noes 223, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 84]

AYES—194

Barber	Cuellar	Higgins
Barrow (GA)	Cummings	Himes
Bass	Davis (CA)	Hinojosa
Beatty	DeFazio	Holt
Becerra	DeGette	Honda
Bera (CA)	Delaney	Horsford
Bishop (GA)	DeLauro	Hoyer
Bishop (NY)	DeBene	Huffman
Bonamici	Deutch	Israel
Brady (PA)	Dingell	Jackson Lee
Braley (IA)	Doggett	Jeffries
Brown (FL)	Doyle	Johnson (GA)
Brownley (CA)	Duckworth	Johnson, E. B.
Bustos	Edwards	Jones
Butterfield	Ellison	Kaptur
Capps	Engel	Keating
Capuano	Enyart	Kelly (IL)
Cardenas	Eshoo	Kennedy
Carney	Esty	Kildee
Carson (IN)	Farr	Kilmer
Cartwright	Fattah	Kind
Castor (FL)	Foster	Kirkpatrick
Castro (TX)	Frankel (FL)	Kuster
Chu	Fudge	Langevin
Cicilline	Gabbard	Larsen (WA)
Clark (MA)	Gallego	Larson (CT)
Clarke (NY)	Garamendi	Lee (CA)
Clay	Garcia	Levin
Cleaver	Grayson	Lewis
Clyburn	Green, Al	Lipinski
Cohen	Green, Gene	Loebach
Connolly	Grijalva	Lofgren
Conyers	Gutiérrez	Lowenthal
Cooper	Hahn	Lowe
Costa	Hanabusa	Lujan Grisham
Courtney	Hastings (FL)	(NM)
Crowley	Heck (WA)	

Luján, Ben Ray	Payne	Shea-Porter
(NM)	Pelosi	Sherman
Lynch	Perlmutter	Sinema
Maffei	Peters (CA)	Sires
Maloney,	Peters (MI)	Slaughter
Carolyn	Peterson	Smith (WA)
Maloney, Sean	Pingree (ME)	Speier
Matheson	Pocan	Swallwell (CA)
Matsui	Polis	Takano
McCollum	Price (NC)	Thompson (CA)
McDermott	Quigley	Thompson (MS)
McGovern	Rahall	Tierney
McIntyre	Rangel	Titus
McNerney	Richmond	Tonko
Meeks	Roybal-Allard	Tsongas
Meng	Ruiz	Van Hollen
Michaud	Ruppersberger	Vargas
Miller, George	Ryan (OH)	Veasey
Moore	Sánchez, Linda	Vela
Moran	T.	Velázquez
Murphy (FL)	Sanchez, Loretta	Visclosky
Nadler	Sarbanes	Walz
Napolitano	Schakowsky	Wasserman
Neal	Schiff	Schultz
Negrete McLeod	Schneider	Waters
Nolan	Schrader	Waxman
O'Rourke	Scott (VA)	Welch
Owens	Scott, David	Wilson (FL)
Pallone	Serrano	Yarmuth
Pascrell	Sewell (AL)	

NOES—223

Aderholt	Foxx	McCarthy (CA)
Amash	Franks (AZ)	McCaul
Amodei	Frelinghuysen	McClintock
Bachmann	Gardner	McHenry
Bachus	Garrett	McKeon
Barletta	Gerlach	McKinley
Barr	Gibbs	McMorris
Barton	Gibson	Rodgers
Benishek	Gingrey (GA)	Meadows
Bentivolio	Gohmert	Meehan
Bilirakis	Goodlatte	Messer
Bishop (UT)	Gowdy	Mica
Black	Granger	Miller (FL)
Blackburn	Graves (GA)	Miller (MI)
Boustany	Graves (MO)	Miller, Gary
Brady (TX)	Griffin (AR)	Mullin
Bridenstine	Griffith (VA)	Mulvaney
Brooks (AL)	Grimm	Murphy (PA)
Brooks (IN)	Guthrie	Neugebauer
Broun (GA)	Hall	Noem
Buchanan	Hanna	Nugent
Buchon	Harper	Nunes
Burgess	Harris	Nunnelee
Byrne	Hartzler	Olson
Calvert	Hastings (WA)	Palazzo
Camp	Heck (NV)	Paulsen
Campbell	Hensarling	Pearce
Cantor	Herrera Beutler	Perry
Capito	Holding	Petri
Carter	Hudson	Pittenger
Cassidy	Huelskamp	Pitts
Chabot	Huizenga (MI)	Poe (TX)
Chaffetz	Hultgren	Pompeo
Coble	Hunter	Posney
Coffman	Hurt	Price (GA)
Cole	Issa	Reed
Collins (GA)	Jenkins	Reichert
Collins (NY)	Johnson (OH)	Renacci
Conaway	Johnson, Sam	Ribble
Cook	Jordan	Rigell
Cotton	Joyce	Roby
Cramer	Kelly (PA)	Roe (TN)
Crawford	King (IA)	Rogers (AL)
Crenshaw	King (NY)	Rogers (KY)
Culberson	Kingston	Rogers (MI)
Daines	Kinzinger (IL)	Rohrabacher
Davis, Rodney	Kline	Rokita
Denham	Labrador	Rooney
Dent	LaMalfa	Ros-Lehtinen
DeSantis	Lamborn	Roskam
DesJarlais	Lance	Ross
Diaz-Balart	Lankford	Rothfus
Duffy	Latham	Royce
Duncan (SC)	Latta	Ryan (WI)
Duncan (TN)	LoBiondo	Salmon
Ellmers	Long	Sanford
Farenthold	Lucas	Scalise
Fincher	Luetkemeyer	Schock
Fitzpatrick	Lummis	Schweikert
Fleischmann	Marchant	Scott, Austin
Fleming	Marino	Sensenbrenner
Flores	Massie	Sessions
Forbes	McAllister	Shimkus

Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry

NOT VOTING—13

Blumenauer
Davis, Danny
Fortenberry
Gosar
McCarthy (NY)

□ 1830

Mr. CÁRDENAS changed his vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 232, noes 182, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 85]

AYES—232

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Benishak
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer

Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallego
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna

Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nolan
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pitts

Barber
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Ciocile
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
Deutsch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster

Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Price (GA)
Rahall
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schradner
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson

NOES—182

Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebbeck
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum

Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey

Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Waters
Waxman
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—16

Blumenauer
Fortenberry
Gardner
Gosar
McCarthy (NY)
Pastor (AZ)

Pittenger
Posey
Rice (SC)
Runyan
Rush
Schwartz

Upton
Walden
Wasserman
Schultz
Welch

□ 1839

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote No. 85, I was on the floor and voting in this vote series. However, my “yes” vote was not recorded. My vote should be recorded as “yes.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 71 on the Rothfus amendment on H.R. 2804, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

On rollcall No. 72 on the Connolly amendment on H.R. 2804, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 73 on the Jackson Lee amendment on H.R. 2804, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 74 on the Jackson Lee amendment on H.R. 2804, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 75 on the Miller (CA) amendment on H.R. 2804, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 76 on the Miller (CA) amendment on H.R. 2804, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 77 on the Motion to Recommit with Instructions on H.R. 2804, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 78 on the passage of H.R. 2804, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

On rollcall No. 79 on Ordering the Previous Question on H.R. 492, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

On rollcall No. 80 on Adoption of the Rule on H.R. 492, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

On rollcall No. 81 on the Rigell amendment on H.R. 492, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

On rollcall No. 82 on the DeSantis amendment on H.R. 492, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

On rollcall No. 83 on the Moore (WI) amendment on H.R. 492, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 84 on the Motion to Recommend with Instructions on H.R. 492, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

On rollcall No. 85 on passage of H.R. 492, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE CONSIDERED AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H.R. 3729

Ms. MENG. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered to be the first sponsor of H.R. 3729, a bill originally introduced by Representative Andrews of New Jersey, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOYCE). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

CONGRATULATING PENN STATE UNIVERSITY'S PANHELLENIC DANCE MARATHON

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Pennsylvania State University IFC-Panhellenic Dance Marathon, otherwise known as "THON," for another tremendous, record-breaking fundraising total in support of the fight against childhood cancer.

The largest student philanthropy in the world, THON is a yearlong fundraising effort where students work in numerous ways to raise money for the cause. The effort culminates with a final 46-hour event where over 700 students partake in a no-sitting, no-sleeping dance marathon, and thousands more cheer on their efforts. All proceeds from THON benefit the Four Diamonds Fund, an organization dedicated to battling childhood cancer.

This year, I had the honor of attending THON. The energy and enthusiasm from those in attendance was nothing short of breathtaking as the students went on to raise \$13.3 million, surpassing the \$12.4 million last year. Penn State has raised over \$110 million in THON's history.

Mr. Speaker, as a proud Penn State alumnus, I want to thank all of the students and families for providing this outstanding emotional and financial support to the children, families, researchers, and the staff of the Four Diamonds Fund.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

(Mr. GARCIA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Black History Month.

I am humbled by leaders in my district, like Lawrence McClain, a pioneer who opened up Homestead to new settlement; Officer Clifford Hollis, the first African American police officer in Florida City and Homestead; as well as Chief Rolle, the first African American police chief.

There have been numerous historic accomplishments in my district thanks to people like Doris Ison and Colonel Hartley, who helped in health care and made a difference to African Americans in South Dade. We have also seen the torch of public service passed down from the late Reverend Ferguson and Senator Larcenia Bullard to Florida City Commissioner Avis Brown, Senator Dwight Bullard, Commissioner Moss, and longtime civic educator and activist, Rosemary Fuller.

We must always remember the great leaders who have come before us, marching forward as we fight for civil rights and equality for all.

HONORING RED LARSON ON HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY

(Mr. ROONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROONEY. Mr. Speaker, tonight, I honor one of the most respected dairy leaders in the State of Florida, Red Larson, as he celebrates his 90th birthday.

In the 1930s, Red worked the local paper route, saving and investing his money until he could purchase his first dairy cow. By the time he graduated from high school, he owned six cows, rented eight more, and had 21 calves. After a half century of hard work, Red merged 37 dairies into the three that now make up Larson Dairy, Incorporated, which he and his two grandsons currently own and operate. Larson Dairy produces 120 million pounds of milk annually, making it one of the largest dairies in the United States. The Larson name is synonymous with Florida dairy.

Truly a constant source of knowledge and experience, Larson served on the USDA Dairy Advisory Committee, and he has been inducted into both the Dairy Hall of Fame and the Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame.

I am honored to recognize Red Larson on his 90th birthday and to thank him for his longstanding dedication and contributions to the U.S. dairy industry.

□ 1845

NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK

(Mr. DEUTCH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize National Eating Disorders Awareness Week. Approximately 30 million Americans battle eating disorders at some point in their lives. Eating disorders affect both women and men and span nearly every socioeconomic and racial demographic.

Yet, due to widespread stigma, those who struggle often struggle alone. Eating disorders are the most deadly form of mental illness. Between 10 and 20 percent of those suffering from anorexia do not survive their disease.

Indeed anorexia, binge eating, bulimia, and other eating disorders often lead to serious medical complications, including organ failure and heart disease.

Despite this grave threat to public health, our research, prevention, and treatment efforts remain shamefully underfunded.

This National Eating Disorders Awareness Week, I urge my colleagues to take action and to join me, cosponsor H.R. 2101, the Federal Response to Eliminating Eating Disorders Act. We can and we must do better.

IT IS TIME FOR WASHINGTON TO QUIT WASTING MONEY

(Mrs. HARTZLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, it is time for Washington to quit wasting money. A good place to start is to eliminate duplicative programs. Why should we pay twice for the same thing? We shouldn't.

Nonpartisan inspectors general found that management at Federal agencies wasted \$67 billion by failing to implement cost-cutting recommendations. This is unacceptable.

We must take action to eliminate duplicative and wasteful government programs such as the duplicative USDA catfish inspection scheme I fought to eliminate. This program has spent \$30 million of your money and hasn't inspected a single fish. This is just one example.

The people of this Nation deserve no less than a government that is transparent and wisely spends the hard-earned tax dollars of the people. I am proud to support legislation this week that addresses wasteful spending. It is time to rebuild trust with the American people and get government out of the way.

THE PEACE CORPS' 53RD ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Peace Corps Week

and congratulate the Peace Corps for celebrating its 53rd anniversary this Saturday. The Peace Corps is doing great work around the world with 7,200 volunteers and trainees working on projects in 65 countries. Their work reaches every corner of the world.

However, none of this could be accomplished without the great volunteers. These volunteers come from all around our country, but from my home State in Minnesota and my district, we have got a pretty good track record of producing members. In fact, there are currently over 200 different Minnesotans volunteering in the Peace Corps, and 30 of those volunteers come from the Third District.

Last year, our State ranked seventh in producing these volunteers for the Peace Corps, and my district was actually one of the highest performing in the country.

Mr. Speaker, recently I had the chance to welcome, and also join, Acting Director Carrie Hessler-Radelet to come to Minnesota to participate in a recruiting event. I can tell you that after 53 years, the desire to volunteer for the Peace Corps is as strong as ever.

I would like to commend all the Peace Corps volunteers, both past and present, for their service.

UAW NLRB ELECTION AT CHATTANOOGA VOLKSWAGEN PLANT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. POCAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Progressive Caucus. The Progressive Caucus wants to discuss with the American public issues that are important, that are timely, and that should be happening in this current Congress.

Tonight we are here to talk about a number of issues, one being the very important need to raise the minimum wage in this country.

Before we start that dialogue, we also want to talk about another issue that has happened just recently in this country and that has a little bit to do with my background growing up.

I grew up in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Kenosha, Wisconsin, was a company town. We had one very large employer, American Motors Company. We made Pacers and Gremlins and a bunch of cars that maybe were unique for their time and may be collectable now, but certainly stood out in history. But American Motors did something really amazing for the community I grew up in. We were able to grow up in a strong, middle class community. People had family-supporting wages. And the reason they had family-supporting wages is not only because of American Motors Com-

pany and later Renault and Chrysler, but also because of the United Auto-workers Union, a union that worked very collaboratively with the companies that were there in Kenosha and made sure that not only did people get a good, fair wage to support their families, but also they worked hard and they made sure those companies were profitable and delivered a very good quality product for the American people.

So, that was my experience growing up. My neighbors, my family, my friends all wound up having someone in their family working with American Motors Company or a company that fed into that, and we had good wages and people had a good chance to grow up in a middle class environment.

Unfortunately, all too often we see these attacks across the country on unions making it harder and harder for people who work for a company to have a voice in their company. What happened just 2 weeks ago was there was a union election at a Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga, Tennessee. They had an election that was conducted by the National Labor Relations Board where workers were deciding whether or not they were going to have a voice, collective voice in their workplace. They were deciding whether or not they were going to unionize and join the United Auto Workers.

There were two extraordinary things about this election: First, the company was neutral. The company had made the decision to stay out of the choice because, after all, this was a decision to be made by the workers. We have seen time and time again how employers can easily interfere with this choice by workers. After all, they write your paycheck; they can decide whether or not you get that promotion; they can fire you. So an employer can wield an immense and powerful influence over the workers who are trying to make a decision whether or not they want to unionize, and they can wield that power lawfully and sometimes they wield it unlawfully. In this case, the employer of Volkswagen said: You know what? This is the workers' decision. Let's leave it up to them.

That doesn't happen very often in this country. For that reason, the employer chose to embrace the notion that its employees had the freedom to choose. That happened in Chattanooga.

There is a second extraordinary thing that happened in this election, and that is, despite the fact that the employer was neutral, a free and fair election was still rendered impossible because of interference and threats from outside parties. What we saw here was unprecedented, and the shameful actions by outside parties interfered in a private decision by some 1,300 workers on whether or not they would organize for a better life.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Will the gentleman from Wisconsin yield?

Mr. POCAN. I yield, yes, absolutely, to Mr. MILLER from California.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding. I want to join you in your remarks in expressing outrage about the situation in Chattanooga.

In this case, these outside parties included both well-funded interest groups and publicly elected figures dead set on stopping the workers from joining the union. It wasn't enough for these outside parties to say publicly that they did not like unions. It wasn't enough for them to say publicly to the auto-workers, hey, we know what is best for you and your family, vote against the union. It wasn't enough for them to say we don't want unions to get a foothold on the south. No. They were not going to let the workers decide for themselves. They were angry with Volkswagen, who was officially neutral. They were angry that Volkswagen had a long track record of successfully working with labor unions through joint work councils that innovate and reduce company costs. They were angry that a majority of the workers actually signed cards saying they wanted the UAW to represent them. They were afraid of what would happen if the NLRB election process was actually on the level.

In the end, free and fair union elections became their biggest fear. Imagine that. In the end, a free and fair election became their biggest fear. So they decided they couldn't let that happen. If Volkswagen wouldn't scuttle this election, then these outside officials would. They laid in wait, and on the eve of the election, they then launched their assault: a barrage of untrue and inflammatory statements, the kind that we see from union busters all the time, the kind that are designed to coerce, to scare, to intimidate, to bully, and to bully, and to bully hard-working auto plant workers into rejecting the union.

One of these third parties, an elected official, went to the press on the first day of the voting, the first day the workers had a chance to vote, and he said that he had been "assured," if the workers vote against the union, Volkswagen would manufacture a new line of SUVs in Chattanooga. And lo and behold, what happened? This last-minute bombshell led to a press frenzy, banner headlines, a barrage of TV coverage, all reporting and repeating the threat that jobs in Chattanooga were now on the line with this vote. Never mind that the company denied it. Never mind that that elected official's claim wasn't true. As he said, he had been "assured," the junior Senator from Tennessee said.

Mr. POCAN. I thank my friend from California.

What you said is worth repeating. Volkswagen put out a formal denial of the claim, making clear that there was absolutely no link between the vote and the placement of the SUV facility in Chattanooga, yet this elected official went out and did it again. He moved to discredit the company, astonishingly suggesting that the company was using old talking points, suggesting that he had the company's new secret talking points.

What happened here wasn't someone just expressing their view. What happened here was someone communicating a promise of benefits if workers voted one way, backed up by some mystery assurance. What happened here was someone communicating a thinly veiled threat that jobs would be lost if the workers voted another way, again backed up by some mysterious assurance.

The National Labor Relations Act is our Nation's premiere worker rights law. Like many of our civil rights laws, many heroic Americans in the last couple of generations gave their lives to secure the right to freely associate, to take considerate action to improve their lot collectively, to bargain collectively for better wages and better job security, for health care, for fair wages, and for a safe workplace.

These workers were all brave, and they did not give in to thugs and battles. This National Labor Relations Act outlaws bribes and threats in the midst of union elections. It does so for a reason. Those acts are not speech; they are more than speech. They render a free and fair election impossible.

In the case of UAW and Volkswagen in Chattanooga, since voting was already underway when the acts were committed, there was no opportunity to cure them. The votes were cast, and after 3 days the election was over. After an election, there are now three nonunionized Volkswagen plants in the world: one in Russia, one in China, and one in Chattanooga.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. On the last point the gentleman made, the reason these worker councils—why Volkswagen was neutral is that they had found these worker councils to help them lead this industry in innovation, to be one of the largest and most successful automobile companies in the world. And, in fact, they have used these worker councils in plants all around the world because that is the mechanism by which they have continued to be a leader and continued to have the growth that they have had and to have the products that they have had. And somehow—somehow—as you point out, in Russia and in China and now in Chattanooga, that motto is being rejected, not because Volkswagen rejected it, but because the election process was not allowed in China, it was not allowed in Russia, and was

rigged and jimmied and obstructed by outside forces during that election in the United States.

□ 1900

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I thank the gentleman for taking this time.

Mr. POCAN. Thank you.

While we definitely want to make sure we are talking about all the issues that are important to this country, and minimum wage is one that we want to also talk about tonight, we wanted to take this time just to highlight what happened, this travesty two weeks ago, and we hope that this will be cured.

Outside officials, regardless of their perspective, shouldn't be involved in the election, but we want to make sure we are highlighting what happened, because that election was not fair.

Thank you very much, gentleman from California, for all your many years of service on this.

At this point, we would like to also discuss tonight something that is very important. The Democrats, this week, took on what sometimes is considered a very unique measure in this House, it is called a discharge petition, because we have been fighting for over a year to try to raise the minimum wage in this country.

There is a bill introduced by the gentleman from California and Senator HARKIN from Iowa that would raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 within 3 years.

If we had kept up with inflation since 1968, the minimum wage right now would be something like \$10.60.

Instead, we are at \$7.25, and people can't get by. You certainly can't be in the middle class on that wage, and certainly it makes it hard to aspire to be in the middle class on that minimum wage.

We need to do everything we can to help lift that rising tide for everyone who gets that minimum wage because 16.5 million people will immediately get a pay increase, and another 8 million people will very likely get an increase because they are at that margin already and their wage will be lifted already.

These aren't numbers coming from the Democrats. These are numbers coming from the Congressional Budget Office, our nonpartisan entity that provides us facts and figures.

By giving the Nation a boost in the minimum wage, we help the economy, we help those who are in the middle class and aspiring to be in the middle class, and we can make this country a lot better for everyone trying to get by.

At this point I would like to yield to one of my colleagues from the State of Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT), one of my freshman colleagues who has also been the president of our freshman class.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Thank you, Mr. POCAN.

I want to say, at the outset, that I was impressed with the colloquy that you had with our colleague from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER), and I wish to associate myself with those comments. They were very well-taken.

I, for one, and I know I speak on behalf of the entire Congressional Progressive Caucus, but I, for one, hope that the National Labor Relations Board revisits what happened in Chattanooga, because what we believe here in America is free and fair elections, and that includes labor union elections as well.

We are here to talk about raising the minimum wage, and it was only appropriate that Mr. MILLER from California was here with us this evening because he is one of the coauthors of H.R. 1010, the bill to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10, a modest proposal, I should add.

But let me attempt to address this House. I know that there are those who think that everything that could be said about raising the minimum wage has already been said, but allow me to address this House as if nothing had been said about raising the minimum wage in this country to \$10.10.

It is simply a matter of arithmetic. You know, if you just take what people were making at a minimum wage in the late 1960s in this country and put it on a cost index, a consumer price index, any kind of measure of inflation that has gone on since 1968, you see that, as my colleague and good friend from Wisconsin mentioned, it is well over \$10.10 an hour. It is something like \$10.60 an hour.

So this is indeed a modest proposal to turn the minimum wage up from the mid-sevens to \$10.10 an hour, and there are good, solid reasons we have in this country for doing this.

My fellow Members of the House, you have to remember what life is like for people who are making \$7.25, \$7.50, \$7.75. People who are in that range are not bringing home enough money to make a living wage. They don't have enough money for the necessities of life.

People who are working full time—you have heard the expression “the working poor,” that is who we are talking about. These are the working poor.

Think about what our society has to do for the working poor. These are the people who have to take advantage of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the SNAP benefits. They used to be called food stamps.

These people don't make enough money, even though they work full time, to feed their families properly, so they resort to help from the SNAP program. Who pays for the SNAP program you might ask?

All of us do. U.S. taxpayers, John Q. Public pays for the SNAP program, so it is John Q. Public, not the employers of these people making the \$7 per hour,

not the employers paying for that, it is John Q. Taxpayer picking up the difference.

It is the taxpayers paying for the SNAP benefits for the workers who, although they are working full time, their employers are not paying them enough so that they can feed their families, give them the very basic necessities.

What else?

These are people that live in section 8 housing, low-income housing. Everybody knows that, the projects. That is where they live, the people who make minimum wage right now and try to feed and clothe and shelter their families on minimum wage in this country.

So who pays the supplemental amount to keep the section 8 housing program going?

It is us. It is John Q. Public, John Q. Taxpayer. It is the American taxpayers picking up the difference because not enough is being paid to these workers so that they can sustain their families. But that is not all.

What about Head Start?

These are families that can't afford to send their kids to preschool because when they are making minimum wage, they can't pay the minimal fee to send your kid to preschool.

So where do they go?

They go to Head Start. Head Start, a federally funded program.

Who pays for that?

You already know the answer. You do. It is the American taxpayer. It is John Q. Public paying for Head Start because we have got working families that don't make enough even to send their little kids to preschool.

What is the point of all of this?

The point is that these employers paying the minimum wage to these workers are paying so little that the American taxpayers have to step in and improve the lives of these people to such a basic level that they can feed them and clothe them and shelter them and give them the basic elemental education.

In other words, these employers are freeloaders. They are getting a free ride off of the American public because they are paying the minimum wage, which is in the sevens and it should be in the tens.

Listening to this debate, the owner of a small business might say, well, wait a minute. That means I have to lay people off because I only have so much money to pay my employees, so if you up the minimum wage to \$10.10, I don't have as much money to pay each person, so I have to lay somebody off so I can pay the remaining people the \$10.10 an hour.

That is a fallacy. It is a completely bogus argument, and let me tell you why: because that assumes that your business is a zero sum game. It is not.

To prove that, we need go back a century to a great American businessman,

a self-made man, Henry Ford out of Dearborn, Michigan. What did he do?

He started one of the greatest auto companies in the world. A central tenet of his business principles was that he was going to pay his workers a living wage, and he did.

They asked him, Mr. Ford, why are you paying your workers so much? You don't have to do this.

The answer is: I want my workers to be able to afford the things that I am building. If these people can't afford what I am building, then I don't have a market.

That is where the magic word comes in: customers. If you pay \$10.10 to your employees, it is not just your employees getting that increase in wages, it is everybody else's employees. Everybody in America, instead of making in the sevens, they get up to \$10.10, and all of a sudden they have a few more coins jingling in their pockets, and they might show up in your place of business.

You are making customers out of millions and millions and millions of Americans by paying them a working wage, a living wage, a wage that will enable them to become your customers.

So don't write off this argument, and don't fall for the same old argument that has been used, trotted out time and time again for why we shouldn't raise the minimum wage. If we here in America had believed and followed that argument, the minimum wage would still be \$2.25 instead of what it is now. So think of the customers you will get. This is why raising the minimum wage just to what we would raise it to to account for inflation since 1968 makes sense.

Mr. POCAN. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania yield to a question?

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Certainly.

Mr. POCAN. So what you just said, talking about the buying power, putting that much money back into the economy, you know, I look at it this way. If you are someone who is making minimum wage and you get your wage increased to about \$10.10, that extra money is not going to go into a savings account for something in the future. You are probably going to be buying things right now. You are going to buy a sofa maybe.

The average CEO now makes 354 times what the average worker makes. Back in the late eighties it was about a 40-1 ratio. Now it is 354 times.

When we put money into an average low-wage worker, that money goes immediately into the economy. They can buy a sofa.

But when the gains that we have had in this country have gone, largely, to the top executives, the top 1 percent, the top 1 and 2 percent, how many sofas can you buy at that rate? How does that affect the economy?

Do you have any idea how many sofas you think you could buy if you are a

CEO to try to keep up with and help stimulate the economy?

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. If stacked end to end, how far into space would those sofas reach is the question.

It is a great point, Mr. POCAN. Of course, you know the answer. The answer is this: when we put that extra money in the pockets of the people who are making the minimum wage in this country, they don't put that money in their brokerage accounts just to languish and not help others in the economy. They plug that money right back into the American economy, and it turns into growth and it turns into jobs.

That is what we were doing in 1968 when our economy was humming along and we were the pride of the free world. That is what we need to do again.

We need to think about stimulating our economy the old fashioned American way, by paying American workers a living wage.

Mr. POCAN. Thank you very much again, gentleman. I appreciate it.

I would also like to yield some time to another one of my colleagues, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. NOLAN). He is a freshman, but a returning freshman from the State of Minnesota, my neighboring State, from the great iron ranges of Minnesota.

Mr. NOLAN. I want to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin, and I want to associate myself with your remarks and those of the gentleman from California regarding what has happened at Volkswagen and the importance of the union movement in this country.

If anyone wants to know where the economic success of the middle class in this country has come from, you just need to follow the union movement. As the union movement grew and strengthened, so did the middle class and jobs and opportunities, and as we have seen the decline in recent years, we have seen a similar decline in income and jobs and opportunities.

If anyone thinks for one moment that elections don't have consequences, they need to take a look at their history.

I come from the Iron Range. We have got a lot of mining and steelworkers up there. Back in 1948, if you will allow me to just do a little history here, and leading up to that, the steelworkers union proposed contracts that would allow them to negotiate pensions and health care benefits, and wouldn't you know, the NLRB, in 1947, said, no, you can't do that. That is not okay. That is off the table. That is not a subject for negotiation.

Guess what?

Not many people had pension benefits and health care at the time.

Well, it became a big issue in the 1948 election, and Harry Truman, as we all know, won the election.

□ 1915

Well, guess what? He had the opportunity to appoint a number of people to

the NLRB, and that issue was brought before the NLRB again. And guess what? This time, the NLRB ruled that, no, it is appropriate for unions to negotiate for pensions, to negotiate for health care benefits; and that is a result of an election contest and the union movement, coming together, was a genesis of a generation that had prosperity and opportunities—perhaps unparalleled—anywhere in the history of this country.

I have submitted, back when my generation entered into the employment market, if you were going to be a failure, you had to have a plan. There was just such an abundance of opportunities, and I am sometimes ashamed and embarrassed that my generation doesn't want to step up and do for this generation and the next generation what was done for us.

So I commend you for what you are doing here today, and I also want to associate myself with the remarks of the gentleman from Pennsylvania. We could go on, and we could add more to the litany of the things that are causing the rest of us to subsidize the businesses in this country.

And I know about business. I spent the last 32 years of my life in business. I am a business guy. It breaks my heart to see working men and women having to go to the food shelves to get food to feed their family.

So I rise here tonight to talk about the minimum wage just briefly. You know, we hear about all these millions of new jobs that have been created in recent years. One of my constituents said to me the other day: You know, it is a darn good thing we have created millions of new jobs because a guy needs two or three of them to make a living.

Well, that is, in fact, what is happening; and it is of small comfort to someone who is working these minimum wage jobs to know that, if they can put two or three of them together, they can provide for their family, make the rent payment, the mortgage payment, buy the groceries and clothing for the kids; but you put in two or three jobs, there is no time left for the family.

A minimum wage increase is pro-family. It is pro-American. It is the foundation of what made this country the great country that it is.

Mr. Speaker, I hear all the time in my district, as I travel and stop at the cafes and the filling stations and the convenience stores, about these people that are working two and three jobs just to make ends meet, all because our minimum wage is simply not enough to take care of our families.

The lack of a decent and fair minimum wage is unfair to families. It is unfair to children. It is unfair to the elderly. It is unfair to the hardworking mothers and fathers, men and women in this country who go to work every

day, providing the goods and services that we need so that we can continue on the path of the great Nation that we have been.

Mr. Speaker, it is time that we raise this minimum wage. Where I come from, morality and ethics dictated. If someone is willing to go to work every day and every week and every month to provide essential goods and services for the rest of us and this Nation, they are entitled to a wage that would allow them to live with a modicum of comfort and dignity. That is what this is all about.

So, Mr. Speaker, let us vote on this issue. You know what the outcome will be. We will increase the minimum wage if we are given an opportunity to vote on it here in this House. I know there are plenty of Republicans and Democrats who will vote to do that. Let's restore democracy to this institution.

Let's allow this matter to be brought before the House. Let's have a vote on it. Let's give America a pay raise now. It is desperately needed.

I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN) and Members of the House.

Mr. POCAN. Mr. NOLAN, I think what you are referring to is exactly what the Democrats are doing this week. We are initiating a discharge petition. We need to get 218 Members of this House to sign that to force a vote.

The House leadership has refused to let us have a vote on giving America a pay raise; and because of that, we are taking what is generally a pretty unusual motion—in other words, to discharge—to actually get enough people to sign and say: we want to vote on this, so we can pass it.

And I completely agree with you, Mr. NOLAN. If we put this on the floor, it will pass, unless the Republican leadership doesn't allow us to get this up here.

So I thank you for all of your efforts, not only just to get people to sign the discharge petition, but for all of the middle class families of Iron Range, Minnesota.

Mr. NOLAN. Thank you.

Mr. POCAN. One of the things that we have talked about tonight is the value of why we want to increase the minimum wage, why it is going to put money into the economy right now. Again, this isn't the Democrats saying that. These are economic experts. These are some of the economists of the country.

The Economic Policy Institute has said that, if we raise the minimum wage, we would actually create 85,000 new jobs, in their calculation, within 3 years and put a \$22 billion boost to the economy; and that means \$500 million alone to the State of Wisconsin—\$500 million to my State and \$22 billion to the overall economy.

And what is more, you would lift 900,000 Americans out of poverty, ac-

cording to the Congressional Budget Office. So we would lift people out of poverty, give people the ability to support their families and the ability to actually have a chance at living in the middle class.

Right now, on the minimum wage, your monthly gross salary is about \$1,250. Now, how many of you think you could live paying your rent or mortgage, paying for groceries, paying for your utilities, paying for gas or a bus or however it is you get around?

Think about the bills you have. Could you live on \$1,250 a month? And that is what the minimum wage is right now, less than the real value in current dollars that it was in 1968. It should be up to \$10.74, I believe, if we kept up with inflation.

There are a lot of myths out there. You are going to hear people on the other side of the aisle say: well, this is all for teenagers. Why are we going to lift the wage?

The average person who receives minimum wage is 35 years old. What percentage of the people earning minimum wage are teenagers? Twelve percent. Again, that is not the Democrats saying that. The Congressional Budget Office, the nonpartisan agency we go to for numbers, says that.

So if we raise the minimum wage, we will lift 900,000 people out of poverty, directly support 24.5 million workers, about two-thirds of those people directly with an increase in wage at the minimum wage level and another third who are at the \$10 level, who will also see a ripple effect of a boost in wages.

We will help the economy right now by putting that money into the economy in all the ways that were talked about tonight, and we know that this will not have a detrimental effect on the economy.

Now, some will say that it is going to cost jobs. I will tell you, in my State of Wisconsin, I spent 14 years in the legislature before I came to Congress; and every time we raised the minimum wage, there was an increase in jobs available. More people went into the workforce because we were actually offering a greater wage and people are given an incentive to get into the workforce.

There are studies that compare State by State, county by county, where one had a minimum wage increase and one didn't; and there has been no ill effect in the county that did versus didn't, based on raising the minimum wage.

There are 600 economists, including seven Nobel economics prize winners, who agree that it will have no or negligible effect to the increase of jobs; but everyone agrees, it will help those people who are currently either living in poverty, working for minimum wage—two, three jobs to get by—or those who are just making above it and will see that ripple effect.

So there is no question, we need to give the workers of this country a pay

raise. For all too long, we haven't done it. For all too long, we haven't kept up with inflation. You simply can't get by on roughly \$15,000 a year. That \$1,250 a month is impossible.

We are not talking about teenagers. We are talking about the average person being 35 years old, heads of households who are working one, two, maybe three part-time jobs just to get by.

So the Progressive Caucus is here tonight. And this is why we are talking not only about what happened at the union election in Chattanooga, but about raising the minimum wage.

The Democrats in this House have initiated a discharge petition to force a vote. Let us vote, Mr. Speaker. Let us vote on raising the minimum wage because if you let us vote, I know there are enough fair-minded Republicans that will join with the Democrats in this Chamber; and we will raise the minimum wage, but only if we are allowed to.

We are making every effort, and the Progressive Caucus will continue to do this. We were the ones who went and asked the President to raise it for people who get Federal contracts, and the President made that order. We are very happy the President did that.

But we are going to continue to push this in every way possible, so that people can live comfortably in the middle class and those who aspire to can get into the middle class.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I thank you for allowing the Progressive Caucus to have this time this evening, and I yield back the balance of my time.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) for 30 minutes.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, we are here today as part of the New Democratic Coalition Immigration Task Force, which I am proud to cochair along with my colleagues, Representative GARCIA and Representative CASTRO.

I am here to discuss immigration reform and what the path forward is for an issue that over 70 percent of the American people agree, an issue that right now threatens the security of this country, that continues to cost taxpayers money; but with the passage of a simple bill that already more than two-thirds of the Senate has supported would reduce our deficit by hundreds of billions of dollars, finally secure our border, restore the rule of law within our country, and ensure that, never again, will we have millions of people in this country here illegally.

More than a year ago, the New Democratic Coalition helped pave the way for immigration reform with the release of detailed principles on comprehensive immigration reform.

Our principles express support for commonsense reforms that reduce bureaucratic backlogs, reunite families, create jobs for Americans, and spur competitiveness.

In August, we issued a letter to Speaker JOHN BOEHNER, demanding that he introduce a comprehensive immigration reform bill; and if he failed to do so, we would introduce our own.

Well, no bill was forthcoming, so New Democratic Coalition members worked with a diverse group of colleagues on both sides of the aisle to introduce the House's only bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform bill, H.R. 15, last October.

Since then, we have met with countless stakeholders, from business owners to law enforcement to agriculture to the faith-based community, all who support moving the ball forward and support our bill, H.R. 15. Businesses, tech companies, faith leaders, and our voters are demanding action on fixing our broken immigration system.

Yet despite a level of consensus rarely seen in our country on an issue—and rarely seen in Washington on an issue—the loudest, most extreme voices on the other side of the aisle have thus far been successful in preventing this body from acting and solving a problem that the American people want solved.

One of my Republican colleagues even equated DREAMers—young de facto Americans who grew up in this country and know no other country and want nothing more than to pay taxes and contribute to make America better—one of my Republican colleagues compared DREAMers with drug mules, with disparaging remarks about the size of their calves; and he continues to refuse to apologize for his hateful comments.

These kinds of deplorable, intolerant remarks are dividing our country, but they should not divide this Chamber. They should not prevent a commonsense bill from coming forward.

House Republicans need to reject the offensive and unproductive rhetoric of some of their Members and finally show real leadership on immigration reform that a majority of Republican voters support.

The only floor vote that we have even had this entire legislative session on immigration was a vote to defund the Deferred Action program, to defund the docket program, a vote to deport DREAMers, to not allow DREAMers to get right with the law and get a provisional renewable working permit. Sadly, that amendment passed the House.

We were able to stop it. It didn't happen. The docket program continues. We encourage President Obama to extend the docket program.

But just to show the American people where Congress is and what the Republicans have done, the only immigration

bill that they have even voted on was to deport DREAMers. The House majority can't continue to sit by and allow extremists to define their party.

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Now, the release of immigration principles by the Republicans on reform was a very positive first step, and we encourage the Republicans to work with Democrats to construct a bill based on these principles, many of which we believe are consistent with those of the New Democratic Coalition and consistent with H.R. 15. We are happy to look at new ideas built on the principles that we can establish together and a commitment to fix our broken immigration system.

But, again, our patience can't last forever. If there is continued Republican failure to bring a bill forward, we will have no option but to take out a discharge petition on the only bipartisan bill that exists. If the Speaker won't lead, I hope that the membership of this body will lead, take the agenda into our own hands, and allow a vote that will pass, a bill that will then pass the Senate and be signed by the President.

We are joined by a cochair on the New Dem Immigration Task Force, a leader in the fight to reform our immigration system, the Representative from Texas (Mr. CASTRO.)

I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Thank you, Congressman POLIS, and thank you for your leadership on the issue of comprehensive immigration reform.

I am proud to join you and Congressman GARCIA of Florida as cochairs of the New Dem Coalition advocating for comprehensive immigration reform. As you mentioned, there are very compelling moral and economic reasons for the United States Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform in the year 2014.

We know, for example, that there are a handful of American industries, four or five or six major American industries, that literally would not exist the way they do and would not be nearly as productive as they are but for immigrant labor—both legal and undocumented immigrant labor. For example, we know that about 40 percent of the tech businesses that have been started in Silicon Valley have been started by foreign-born persons, by immigrants. We know, for example, that with respect to the agricultural industry, they self-report that 50 percent of their workers are undocumented, which probably means that 75 percent of their workers are undocumented.

So, on everything from the high-tech industry to the agriculture industry, construction and other trades, we can appreciate, especially myself coming from the great State of Texas, that Texas does more trade than any other State in the Nation. It has the longest

border with Mexico of any State in the Nation. We can appreciate the role that immigrants have played in our society and continue to play in our economy.

I want to share with you, Congressman, just a quick story of an immigrant that I met recently back home in San Antonio, because I know that over the course of this debate there has been a lot of divisiveness and some disparaging remarks that have been made about immigrants. The overwhelming majority of these folks are not people who come to America to do us any harm or to commit crimes. These are people who are fundamentally seeking a better life in the way that, throughout the generations, people have come here to this country.

A few months back, right around the time of the government shutdown, I went back home to San Antonio. I was home for about 36 hours, and my hair had gotten too long, so I decided to get a haircut. It was a Sunday, and the place that I usually go to was closed. So I drove around and I came to a strip mall. I was looking for a place that might be open.

I came across this place called J Cuts. I went inside and sat down. There was a woman who welcomed me into the chair, and she started telling me her story as she was cutting my hair. She told me the story of how she arrived in the United States. She said that she had come from Latin America I guess about 25 years ago, that she had come in a raft of inner tubes across the Rio Grande. She had ended up marrying—and I imagine, marrying an American citizen—and becoming a U.S. citizen.

This woman said that she worked for a few years cleaning houses and cleaning businesses. She had often been cheated out of money by her employers. She mentioned that one job that had promised her \$1,000 turned into \$100. After that, she worked at Fantastic Sams and Supercuts, a few haircutting chains, and that is how she learned how to speak English.

But the long and short of it is, eventually this woman, Ms. Gonzalez, came to own her own hair salon, became an entrepreneur, and was now employing other people. She said her brothers who also immigrated also were businessowners now.

So those are very promising and not atypical stories of immigrants who come here and are very productive members of our society and who have a lot to contribute.

It has been my hope throughout this debate that, in the rhetoric that comes out of the United States Congress, we will realize and acknowledge that immigrants play such an important role in the life of our Nation and that they always have, that this is a nation of immigrants and continues to be a nation of immigrants.

I would also say that there is a scarier day in America than a time when

everybody wants to come here. The scarier day is a time when nobody wants to come here, and that is a day that we should truly be worried about.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Texas.

The strength of our Nation, a nation built on immigrants, is that the best, brightest, and hardest working from across the world want to move here. The countries that have a bigger problem today are those that are losing those people—not us, the country that stands to gain some of the best, most highly motivated and talented people from across the world, just as my great-grandparents came to these shores to make our country stronger. I know that, by working together, we can accomplish that.

Have you ever seen the unprecedented degree of coalition behind immigration reform? Have you ever seen agriculture, the faith-based community, and the business community—and labor and business together—on an issue in your time in public service or before? Have you ever seen that on an issue?

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. No. You raise an incredible point. I served 10 years, five terms in the Texas Legislature. This is my first term in Congress.

But consider this: Last year, in 2013, we had what was, on record, the least productive Congress in American history. Something like only 58 bills went to the President's desk. So you can imagine in this place there is a lot of gridlock. The wheels, essentially, in 2013 came to a halt.

But of all of the major issues, immigration reform is the one that had the most bipartisan support and the strongest support. And consider this for a second: I think it was sometime in the summer the President of the United States had a press conference over at the White House, and he had standing on either side of him the head of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the head of the AFL-CIO. Now, think about that for a second. How often do you have the head of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the head of the AFL-CIO standing next to each other agreeing on anything? But that is how deep and how profound the wide range of support is for comprehensive immigration reform.

And it is not just business and labor, it is people from throughout the political spectrum: the evangelical community that, quite honestly, has been fairly conservative, so the religious community and the social advocates who are ordinarily on the left. It has just been a wide array of people from throughout the political spectrum who have come out in support of comprehensive reform, which really begs the question of why Congress has not moved on this issue when, on the other side, there has been no organized opposition.

There has been a clear indication that a majority of Americans support comprehensive immigration reform, and so it has left a lot of Americans wondering why on Earth Congress can't pass comprehensive immigration reform.

Mr. POLIS. I think most Americans, like myself, are somewhat offended that we don't have the rule of law in this country. There are millions—10 million, 12 million. We don't even know how many people that are here illegally. We don't know where they are. We don't know what they are doing. It is a security risk. It is an economic risk. Are they paying taxes? There have been studies that show they pay some; they might not be paying others. We need to fix this.

I have gone to town halls in the most conservative part of my district, and I say, is there anyone here who thinks the immigration system is working great? I haven't met a single constituent who does. They want it fixed. They want to make sure that people are required to get right with the law and get in line behind people who did it the right way and are already in line for eventual green card or citizenship.

That is exactly what the bipartisan bill proposes. It provides a way that people can register with the law, mandatory workplace authentication to ensure that anybody who gets a job going forward has at least the provisional status that allows them to have that job. Only about under 10 percent—I think it is 8 or 9 percent—of companies in this country use E-Verify. We need to improve E-Verify. There is money to do that in the bill to make sure it is correct more often. And then, of course, we need to make it mandatory along with the route, of course, for the people that need to go to work the next day to have the provisional permit that they need to go to work the next day and get in line behind other Americans, other people that are in line for citizenship or a green card.

There are a lot of misperceptions out there about the bill. One thing that is important to talk about is that this bill that is being proposed, the bipartisan immigration reform, H.R. 15, as well as the Senate bill, don't confer citizenship on anybody. Zero people are made citizens under this bill. That is as it should be. You don't want to reward illegal behavior. What you want to do is say get right with the law, pay a fine, a penalty, you violated the law.

What should the penalty be? Pay that fine, register, and get right with the law. And do you know what? If you demonstrate that you have become a productive American, you learn English, you have a job, and you support your family, in 13 years, 12 years, 15 years, you can stand for American citizenship, take a test and eventually become an American citizen.

But no one should be rewarded for violating the law under this bill, and

no one is. What it does is it creates the line. What is so frustrating today is people say, "Oh, why don't they get in line?" when, in reality, there is no line. If you are a parent of an American child who is growing up here, there is no line for you to be gone for 20 years while your child is being raised without you. That doesn't make any sense. You have to create a way that we can do this within the system of law that is to the benefit of the American people, prevents people who don't have documentation from undermining wages for other Americans, makes sure that they can buy their own health care so that taxpayers aren't left on the hook for health care for people that can't even buy insurance if they wanted.

There are practical reasons that this saves money for the average American family. This helps push up wages for the average American family. It reduces our deficit by hundreds of billions of dollars. We could use that as a pay-for. We always look for ways—we could use that as a pay-for for a tax cut for the middle class. We could use it as a pay-for to fund universal preschool. We could use it as a pay-for to ensure that we have the military preparedness we need to meet the challenges of the 21st century or to honor our veterans who have served us in our recent conflicts.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. You bring up a wonderful point, which is that you have got—we have, in our Nation, 10 to 15 million people, undocumented immigrants, who essentially are off the radar that we can't account for. And so a large part of this bill is bringing those people out of the shadows and making sure that we can account for their activities, making sure that they are paying taxes and that they are able to purchase health care insurance.

Right now, as you know in Colorado, and certainly we know in Texas, when somebody shows up at a county hospital and they can't afford to pay for their services, their emergency services, all of us, as taxpayers, end up paying those bills, and that includes a lot of undocumented folks. And those services, of course, have to be provided. Everybody needs to be provided emergency services. So this would be a way to essentially bring them under the grid, understand who they are, and bring them into society's fold. Those are definitive benefits of the bill that we propose.

Mr. POLIS. Another sector it would be great for is the real estate industry and homes. Many immigrants who don't have their status currently are forced to rent, sometimes under the table. They would be able to finance and buy their own homes, helping to revitalize areas that have high vacancy rates and lots of foreclosures. We have areas in Colorado that continue to be hit by foreclosures. We would love to

introduce new buyers to those markets and help ensure that families have good, stable homes to raise their American children in.

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Another thing that I think a lot of Americans don't realize is that in many cases the children of these families are American nationals. So you might have in one family two Americans, one person with a green card, and two that don't have paperwork. So what should the solution be? Should it be to send all of them to another country? Are you going to send an American citizen who has never even been to another country back to another country because they are an 8-year-old? Are you going to force them into the foster care system because you are just taking the parent?

This country is about family values. Immigration reform should unite families, and we should celebrate what is the backbone of our strength as a Nation, the American family.

We are joined by another leader in the battle to replace our broken immigration system with one that works for our country, the gentleman from California (Mr. CÁRDENAS), and I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. CÁRDENAS. I thank the distinguished member from Colorado.

I would like to explain a little bit about why I believe we have the greatest country on the planet. It is because people like my parents with only a first- and second-grade education, without much opportunity in the country that they were born and raised in, started a new life here in the United States of America, which gave me and my brothers and sisters, all 11 of us, more opportunities here in America than we could have had in my parents' home country.

Every day I am in this sacred Chamber serving the American people, I count my blessings. I personally know what comprehensive immigration reform can accomplish, not only for 11 million undocumented people who are already our neighbors and friends but for American businesses and the U.S. economy.

I mentioned about my mother and father with a first- and second-grade education and how their children got to go to college. We have doctoral degrees and master's degrees and bachelor's degrees. Every single one of our households pays more in taxes today than my parents ever made in gross income in any given year. I point that out because this country was founded on immigrants. It is that immigrant spirit that today is creating more jobs and American-born citizens. This is a country where people are given hope. This is a country where people come from other parts of the world, and they kiss the ground that they have arrived on and they love our country. They love

this country. They love what they have made now their country, and they are contributors to what is great about this country, the greatest economy in the world.

House Republicans have a choice to make on immigration reform. Are they going to do what is right for Americans, or will they let anti-immigrant Members of this Congress, who absurdly call good students right here in America, the DREAMers, they call them drug mules, will they let these people be the messengers of their party about immigration reform?

That is why the Chamber of Commerce and more than 630 business organizations are urging us, Congress, to modernize our broken immigration system. We must create a less cumbersome path to legal immigration. Improving our outdated system will encourage long-term success. Comprehensive immigration reform will attract young foreign workers who will help reduce the deficit by as much as \$1.2 trillion over the next 20 years. That improves America. They will help the economy grow by nearly 5 percent over the next 20 years. They will jump-start housing recovery, adding \$68 billion every year to our American construction economy.

American wages will increase, and legal immigrants will add more than \$100 billion in tax revenue to benefit all Americans.

Moreover, attracting the best and brightest talent abroad will cement America's competitiveness in the global economy for generations to come. We need to fix this broken immigration system. We need to stop sending these bright Ph.D.'s who come to love America, who get the degrees, and then we just send them home when they want to stay here and create a company that will employ American citizens, create wealth for American citizens right here on our soil.

Forty percent of Fortune 500 companies were founded by immigrants or their children. Tech giants like Google, eBay, and Intel were founded by first- or second-generation Americans. These pioneering companies employ millions of Americans. Alongside American-born citizens, immigrants have spurred significant innovation and conducted critical research, pushing the United States forward.

I urge Congress to tackle the bureaucratic immigration backlog, reunite families, and supercharge the economy for all Americans. Comprehensive immigration reform must happen, and it must be done well, creating a modern system that is fair and efficient for everyone. A comprehensive immigration reform bill will require people who came here undocumented, yes, to pay fines; yes, to learn English; and will secure our borders even more than they are secured today. That is the kind of comprehensive immigration bill that I

think every American wants to see happen. Unfortunately, the leadership of this House of Congress is unwilling to put that bill on the floor. That is why I am here today, to urge common-sense action on the floor of the United States Congress so we can do what is best for the economy of the United States of America, and that is to pass comprehensive immigration reform.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from California, who has been a tremendous leader in the fight to fix our broken immigration system, for his heartfelt comments.

I wanted to quote from last week a Wall Street Journal op-ed that criticized the Republicans' failure to act. It is not every day that The Wall Street Journal criticizes Republicans with harsh words. It is kind of one of those "man bites dog" stories, but they didn't mince words. The Wall Street Journal wrote:

Republicans have killed immigration reform for now, but a recent study shows in the real economy it is needed. The irony is that many Republicans who support hand-outs to farmers oppose reforms that wouldn't cost taxpayers a dime and would help the economy.

So rather than help farmers succeed in the private sector by hiring employees they want, the Republicans are seeking to keep them on the public dole, giving them taxpayer money rather than allowing them to operate in the marketplace and sell their products at the market.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office found that the Senate comprehensive bill, which H.R. 15 is based on, would raise wages for Americans by \$470 billion, create an average of 120,000 jobs for American citizens, and increase the growth of our GDP by 3.3 percent.

Polls continue to show that vast majorities of the American people support immigration reform—Republicans, Independents, Democrats, every demographic, every State supports immigration reform. Congress' failure to act is becoming inexcusable. Look, if the Republican majority puts together a bill based on the principles they laid out, let's have a floor discussion, and let's get something done. If they fail to fill the promising words of those principles with an actual bill, then we will take the only bipartisan bill we have, H.R. 15, and file to discharge it. What does that mean? That is the only way that the membership of the House of Representatives can bring a bill to the floor without the Speaker's blessing. We would love to work through the Speaker. We challenge the Speaker to lead. We applaud, and our new Democratic coalition put out a statement applauding the immigration principle, saying we can find common ground and pass a bill. But there needs to be a bill. If there is not, let's move forward with the one we have, which would pass tomorrow on the floor of the House.

I am honored to yield to a leader in the fight to reform immigration, a co-chair of the New Democratic Coalition Immigration Task Force, my colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GARCIA).

Mr. GARCIA. I thank the gentleman from Colorado.

There should be no question by now that immigration reform is good for America, and Americans want immigration reform. Nearly 80 percent of Americans agree, and up to 70 percent of Republicans support reform with a pathway to citizenship. The issue is not simply about justice and fairness. It is about ensuring America's economic prosperity.

In Florida alone, legalizing all the currently undocumented immigrants would generate \$1.3 billion of new tax revenue and create 97,000 new jobs.

Mr. Speaker, fixing our broken immigration system will help small businesses expand, foster innovation, increase productivity, raise wages, and help create thousands of jobs. Comprehensive immigration reform makes all Americans better, makes our country richer, and makes opportunity for all.

Mr. Speaker, one of the great tragedies of some countries is they fail to realize what they are truly good at. If there is something that America is better at than any other Nation, it is making Americans. Throughout the history of this great Nation, generation after generation, we have made new Americans better Americans and a greater America.

The statement Mr. POLIS mentioned earlier referring to DREAMers as drug mules was ludicrous, but doubling down on those remarks was downright appalling. You know, the gentleman from Iowa not only offends DREAMers, offends the undocumented, he offends all Americans. In defending this statement, claims have been made that detractors only criticize the choice of language, and then he goes further by saying those who attack him simply won't engage on the facts.

Well, yes, the choice of words is offensive, and as the son of an immigrant, I am offended, but the claims are also patently false. They shouldn't be an excuse for not moving immigration reform.

I want to thank my colleagues tonight, and I want to thank the Speaker for the time. The time has come to pass immigration reform. The opportunity is now. Let us not wait. It hurts our country.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. UPTON (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of illness.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2431. An act to reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System.

A BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on February 27, 2014, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 2431. To reauthorize the National Integrated Drought Information System.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 56 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, February 28, 2014, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4832. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Pesticides; Satisfaction of Data Requirements; Procedures to Ensure Protection of Data Submitters' Rights [EPA-HQ-OPP-2009-0456; FRL-9904-32] (RIN: 2070-AJ58) received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4833. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-176, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4834. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-187, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4835. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-188, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4836. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting extension of the waiver of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act, Pub. L. 107-511, with respect to assistance to the Government of Azerbaijan; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4837. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Transmittal No. DDTC 13-186, pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4838. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State,

transmitting decisions pursuant to the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4839. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting memorandum of justification; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4840. A letter from the Vice President, Office of External Affairs, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Regulatory Flexibility Act certification for proposed amendments to OPIC's Freedom of Information Act regulations; Privacy Act regulations; and Touhy regulations received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4841. A letter from the Chief, Branch of Permits and Regulations, Division of Migratory Bird Management, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Migratory Bird Hunting; Revision of Language for Approval of Nontoxic Shot for Use in Waterfowl Hunting [Docket No.: FWS-R9-MB-2011-0077; FF09M21200-134-FXMB1231099BFP0] (RIN: 1018-AY59) received February 12, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4842. A letter from the Acting Chief, Branch of Listing, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Threatened Status for *Eriogonum codium* (Umtanum Desert Buckwheat) and *Physaria douglasii* subsp. *tuplashensis* (White Bluffs Bladderpod) and Designation of Critical Habitat [Docket Nos.: FWS-R1-ES-2012-0017; FWS-R1-ES-2013-0012] (RIN: 1018-AX72; 1018-AZ54) received February 12, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4843. A letter from the Chief, Branch of Endangered Species Listing, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for *Chromolaena frustata* (Cape Sable Thoroughwort) [Docket No.: FWS-R4-ES-2013-0029] (RIN: 1018-AZ51) received February 12, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4844. A letter from the Acting Chief, Branch of Listing, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Designation of Critical Habitat for *Arctostaphylos franciscana* (Franciscan Manzanita) [Docket No.: FWS-R8-ES-2012-0067; 4500030114] (RIN: 1018-AY63) received February 12, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4845. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Pacific Island Fisheries; 2014 Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures [Docket No.: 131028907-4042-02] (RIN: 0648-XC954) received February 12, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4846. A letter from the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Tanner Crab Area Closure in the Gulf of Alaska and Gear Modification Requirements for the Gulf of Alaska and Bering

Sea Groundfish Fisheries [Docket No.: 120405263-3999-02] (RIN: 0648-BB76) received February 12, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4847. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Inseason Adjustment to the 2014 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Pollock, Atka Mackerel, and Pacific Cod Total Allowable Catch Amounts [Docket No.: 121018563-3148-02] (RIN: 0648-XD060) received January 29, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4848. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Commercial Quota Harvested for the State of New Jersey [Docket No.: 111220786-1781-01] (RIN: 0648-XD030) received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4849. A letter from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Little League Baseball, transmitting the Annual Report of Little League Baseball, Incorporated for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, pursuant to 36 U.S.C. 1084(b); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. GOODLATTE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 2641. A bill to provide for improved coordination of agency actions in the preparation and adoption of environmental documents for permitting determinations, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-363, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Natural Resources discharged from further consideration. H.R. 2641 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mrs. NEGRETE McLEOD:

H.R. 4104. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the 7.5 percent threshold for the medical expense deduction for people 65 or older; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. McDERMOTT (for himself, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. KILMER, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Mr. SMITH of Washington):

H.R. 4105. A bill to establish a Maritime Goods Movement User Fee and provide

grants for international maritime cargo improvements and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BARR (for himself and Mr. BERA of California):

H.R. 4106. A bill to provide for the development and dissemination of clinical practice guidelines and the establishment of a right of removal to Federal courts for defendants in medical malpractice actions involving a Federal payor, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER (for himself, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. POCAN, Mr. POLIS, Mr. QUIGLEY, and Ms. SPEIER):

H.R. 4107. A bill to reduce the number of nuclear-armed submarines operated by the Navy, to prohibit the development of a new long-range penetrating bomber aircraft, to prohibit the procurement of new intercontinental ballistic missiles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE (for herself, Mr. VARGAS, and Ms. CLARKE of New York):

H.R. 4108. A bill to establish a grant program for nebulizers in elementary and secondary schools; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CAPUANO (for himself, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. OWENS, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. GRIMM, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. FATTAH, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. NORTON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. ENYART, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. RUIZ, and Mr. LARSON of Connecticut):

H.R. 4109. A bill to require the President to designate a legal public holiday to be known as National First Responders Day; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE (for herself, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. VEASEY, and Mr. GARCIA):

H.R. 4110. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax credit to encourage private employers to hire veterans, to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the reasonable efforts an employer may make under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act with respect to hiring veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 4111. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to implement various reforms to the social security disability insurance program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE (for herself, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. HONDA, Ms. MOORE, and Mr. HASTINGS of Florida):

H.R. 4112. A bill to require that activities carried out by the United States in South Sudan relating to governance, reconstruction and development, and refugee relief and assistance will support the basic human rights of women and women's participation and leadership in these areas; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. MCNERNEY:

H.R. 4113. A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to consider projects involving rural communities in the selection of alternative water source projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. MCNERNEY (for himself and Mr. GARAMENDI):

H.R. 4114. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit for property certified by the Environmental Protection Agency under the WaterSense program; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. NOLAN (for himself, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. RIBBLE, and Mr. PETERSON):

H.R. 4115. A bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to temporarily waive certain vehicle weight limits for covered logging vehicles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4116. A bill to direct the Librarian of Congress to obtain a stained glass panel depicting the seal of the District of Columbia and install the panel among the stained glass panels depicting the seals of States which overlook the Main Reading Room of the Library of Congress Thomas Jefferson Building; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RANGEL:

H.R. 4117. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the earned income tax credit; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARSON of Indiana (for himself, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. LANCE, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. MCCAUL):

H. Res. 493. A resolution expressing support for the designation of February 28, 2014, as "Rare Disease Day"; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD:

H.R. 4104.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution

By Mr. McDERMOTT:

H.R. 4105.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. BARR:

H.R. 4106.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3.

Article III, Section 1

Article III, Section 2, Clause 1

By Mr. BLUMENAUER:

H.R. 4107.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE:

H.R. 4108.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CAPUANO:

H.R. 4109.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 1; and Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE:

H.R. 4110.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1, 3, and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 4111.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8

"... and provide for the ... general welfare of the United States ..."

"... to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers ..."

This legislation seeks to reform the Social Security Disability Insurance program. Therefore, it will affect the general welfare of the United States.

By Ms. JACKSON LEE:

H.R. 4112.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1, 3, and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MCNERNEY:

H.R. 4113.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MCNERNEY:

H.R. 4114.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 4115.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The clause states that the United States Congress shall have power "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4116.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. RANGEL:

H.R. 4117.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article XVI of the Constitution—Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes . . .

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 15: Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 20: Mr. BUTTERFIELD and Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 24: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. VISCLOSKEY, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. LABRADOR, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. COLE, and Mr. THORNBERRY.

H.R. 139: Mr. DELANEY and Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 140: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H.R. 184: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 279: Mr. BEN RAY LUJAN of New Mexico.

H.R. 365: Ms. BASS.

H.R. 460: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 515: Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 522: Mr. ROKITA, Mr. WENSTRUP, and Mr. PITTEMBER.

H.R. 562: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 647: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. RUSH, and Ms. JENKINS.

H.R. 654: Mr. LATHAM.

H.R. 683: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 713: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 719: Mr. REED.

H.R. 741: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.

H.R. 792: Mr. DUFFY, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 855: Mr. LANKFORD.

H.R. 871: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 872: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 873: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 920: Mr. LANKFORD and Mr. NUNES.

H.R. 946: Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 997: Mr. FINCHER, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H.R. 1020: Mr. GARCIA.

H.R. 1084: Ms. BASS, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. MOORE, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 1091: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri and Mr. LATHAM.

H.R. 1108: Mr. WILLIAMS.

H.R. 1199: Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 1249: Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. JOYCE, and Mr. ISSA.

H.R. 1250: Mr. SIREs and Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 1286: Mr. CROWLEY.

H.R. 1292: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 1343: Mr. ELLISON and Mr. RICHMOND.

H.R. 1461: Mr. ROHRBACHER and Mr. SANFORD.

H.R. 1462: Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 1473: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 1518: Mr. LATTI.

H.R. 1528: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, and Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 1563: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 1565: Mr. VISCLOSKEY.

H.R. 1593: Mr. FOSTER, Mr. PIERLUISI, and Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 1597: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 1599: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1694: Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 1708: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 1726: Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. OLSON, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. COHEN, Mr. HORSFORD, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. SPEIER, and Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 1750: Mr. HALL, Mr. WALDEN, and Mr. REED.

H.R. 1775: Mr. SIRES.

H.R. 1784: Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 1837: Mr. DINGELL.

H.R. 1843: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 1845: Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 1852: Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 1915: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 1953: Mr. LATTI.

H.R. 1962: Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 1979: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 2066: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 2084: Mr. CLEAVER and Mr. CLAY.

H.R. 2139: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 2160: Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 2247: Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 2315: Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 2364: Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 2368: Mr. CONNOLLY.

H.R. 2387: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 2520: Mr. FARR.

H.R. 2536: Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H.R. 2538: Mrs. BUSTOS and Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 2548: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.

H.R. 2607: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 2643: Mr. LOWENTHAL and Mr. GERLACH.

H.R. 2783: Mr. BARROW of Georgia.

H.R. 2788: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 2847: Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 2854: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 2918: Mr. CONNOLLY and Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 2939: Ms. DELAURO, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, and Mr. BROUN of Georgia.

H.R. 2959: Mr. SHUSTER, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, and Mrs. WALORSKI.

H.R. 2996: Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. TIBERI, and Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 3086: Mr. GOSAR, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. GIBSON, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. PITTENGER, and Mr. PAULSEN.

H.R. 3116: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 3155: Mr. KLINE.

H.R. 3168: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 3189: Mr. GARDNER.

H.R. 3211: Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, and Mr. BENISHEK.

H.R. 3305: Mr. SALMON.

H.R. 3318: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 3335: Mr. RIBBLE and Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 3344: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 3361: Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 3441: Mr. VISCLOSKEY.

H.R. 3461: Ms. ESHOO, Ms. LOFGREN, and Ms. BASS.

H.R. 3467: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 3469: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Mr. BUCSHON.

H.R. 3482: Mr. YODER.

H.R. 3494: Ms. BONAMICI and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 3505: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. LATTI, and Ms. BASS.

H.R. 3508: Mr. HIMES.

H.R. 3529: Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 3530: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 3544: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.

H.R. 3546: Ms. TSONGAS and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 3593: Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 3619: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 3620: Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 3629: Mr. BROUN of Georgia.

H.R. 3635: Mr. WOLF.

H.R. 3643: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 3657: Mr. CLEAVER.

H.R. 3658: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 3663: Mr. LATTI.

H.R. 3670: Ms. MATSUI, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DELANEY, and Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 3673: Mr. SHIMKUS and Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 3698: Mr. DEFazio and Mr. SALMON.

H.R. 3712: Mr. CROWLEY and Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 3723: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.

H.R. 3781: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 3793: Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 3824: Mr. SCHNEIDER.

H.R. 3850: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 3859: Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, and Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 3870: Mr. LEVIN and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 3872: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 3877: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 3892: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 3895: Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 3921: Mr. LEWIS and Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 3930: Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. COOK, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. GARDNER, Ms. FUDGE, and Mr. BACHUS.

H.R. 3978: Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. ENYART, and Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 3982: Mr. O'ROURKE and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 3986: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 3997: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 4006: Mr. BROUN of Georgia.

H.R. 4008: Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 4012: Mr. FINCHER, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. MCHENRY.

H.R. 4031: Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. KLINE, Mr. BAR-

ROW of Georgia, Mr. STEWART, and Mr. SALMON.

H.R. 4056: Ms. SCHWARTZ.

H.R. 4064: Mr. OLSON, Mr. FLORES, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. SALMON, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. ISSA, Mr. JOYCE, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 4069: Mr. GARDNER and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H.R. 4076: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. JONES, Mr. HANNA, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. DAINES, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. KLINE, and Mr. NOLAN.

H. Con. Res. 16: Mr. RAHALL, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mrs. WALORSKI, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CARTER, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Mr. BUCSHON.

H. Con. Res. 70: Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. MENG, and Mr. MICHAUD.

H. Res. 36: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.

H. Res. 109: Ms. BORDALLO.

H. Res. 112: Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H. Res. 190: Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H. Res. 356: Mr. STIVERS.

H. Res. 418: Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA.

H. Res. 422: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H. Res. 425: Mr. LATTI.

H. Res. 456: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HARRIS, and Ms. LOFGREN.

H. Res. 476: Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. SHUSTER, and Mr. LATTI.

H. Res. 479: Mr. SCHIFF.

H. Res. 480: Mr. MORAN.

H. Res. 488: Mr. ROYCE, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, and Mr. POE of Texas.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII, petitions and papers were laid on the Clerk's desk and referred as follows:

70. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the City of Wilton Manors, Florida, relative to Resolution No. 2013-0114 urging the State Administration and Florida Legislature to support the regulation and licensing of Recovery Residences and Sober Houses throughout the State; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

71. Also, a petition of the Town of Dover, New Jersey, relative to Resolution 269-2013 urging the Congress to invest additional federal dollars in maintaining the highways and improving the transportation infrastructure in the State of New Jersey; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING JAMES J. CASION, CEO
OF BAKER VICTORY SERVICES,
UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RE-
TIREMENT

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor my good friend and colleague James J. Casion as he retires from an impressive and fulfilling career of service. Jim's body of work unquestionably has improved the lives of those among us in need of special services, especially the mentally and physically disabled.

Since 1995, Jim has served as the Chief Executive Officer of Baker Victory Services, an organization that evolved from Father Nelson Baker's extensive social services programs. Today, Baker Victory provides extensive social services including adoption, residential, educational, outpatient, and services for the developmentally disabled. The organization is recognized as a leading institution in the field of behavioral health.

Jim's impact on Baker Victory Services and its predecessor organizations is commendable and noteworthy, as he has served in the Associate or Executive capacity since 1980. His comprehensive knowledge of the institution and its many facilities, built throughout his career, provides him with intimate knowledge of the challenges and best practices in his field.

Jim's passion for providing care and dignity extends into the classroom. His personal educational background includes an associate's degree in Liberal Arts from Orange County Community College, and three degrees and certificates from the University at Buffalo—a bachelor's degree in psychology, a Master's degree in Counseling, and completed a course of Special Study in Community Mental Health and Rehabilitation Counseling. To share his passion and expertise with students of the field, Jim has taught courses serving as an Adjunct Professor at the Canisius College Graduate School of Education, Trocaire College and Erie Community College.

In addition to his work at Baker Victory, Jim has served on countless boards dedicated to improving care in our community and our nation. Some of his past and present appointments and memberships include the Canisius College Graduate School of Education, the Erie County Community Coordinating Council on Children and Families, the Coalition for New York State Children's Mental Health Services, the Child Welfare League of America, Care Management Coalition, Quality Behavioral Health, the National Association for Children's Behavioral Health, the Health Foundation of Western and Central New York, the Trauma Informed Community Initiative, and Dopkins and Company.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to honor my friend Jim Casion and congratulate him upon the occasion of his retirement. His selfless work and compassion is inspiring and I admire his mission to provide all people with quality care so they may lead dignified, fulfilling lives. I am so grateful for his work, and sincerely wish him all the best in his retirement.

HONORING MS. ANNE M. ELLIS'
LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE TO
THE AMERICAN CONCRETE IN-
STITUTE

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Anne M. Ellis for her volunteer leadership to the American Concrete Institute (ACI), headquartered in Farmington Hills, MI, an organization whose work is fundamental to our nation's critical infrastructure and key to our economic competitiveness. As a Member of Congress, I am privileged and honored to recognize Ms. Ellis for her leadership and lifelong commitment to this organization and to advancing the knowledge of concrete in the United States and abroad.

ACI has been the pioneer in all concrete-related fields: research and development, structural design, architectural design, construction, and product manufacture. With 99 chapters, 65 student chapters, and nearly 20,000 members spanning over 120 countries, ACI provides knowledge and information for the best uses of concrete. Through a host of activities including continuing education, certification, seminars, publications, and conventions, ACI plays an active and vital role in the concrete industry. Core to ACI is the development of codes and standards, adopted for reference in building codes impacting potentially every concrete project in the United States. Additionally, there are some 21 countries worldwide that base part or all of their national building codes on the ACI's 318 Structural Concrete Building Code provisions.

Ms. Ellis will complete her term, as the 90th President of ACI, at ACI's Spring Convention in Reno. Her Presidency was notable for the many accomplishments typified by the new ACI motto: Always Advancing that launched during her term. Her term also bore witness to a new ACI logo, a new ACI website translatable into 70 languages, and the formation of the following ACI committees: Education, Technical and Certification Committee (ETC); International Project Awards Committee (IPAC); Codes & Standards Advisory Committee; as well as launching the Global Chapter Roundtable. These concrete actions support ACI's new strategic plan that sets it on a

course for global leadership in the 21st century.

Anne Ellis' service to ACI began long before her presidency. Ms. Ellis has served on ACI's Board of Direction, the Board of the ACI Foundation, as well as numerous other Board and Technical committees. Working with ACI colleagues, Ms. Ellis helped institute free ACI student e-membership, facilitate ACI's entry into social networking, and establish the Collegiate Concrete Council, the Student and Young Professionals Activities Committee and Sustainability Committees. She was named an ACI Fellow in 2008. Not surprisingly, she has been named by "Concrete Construction" as one of the most influential people in the concrete industry.

Currently, Ms. Ellis is Vice President of Global & Government Initiatives for AECOM, an \$8-billion global provider of professional technical and management support services. In this role, Ms. Ellis drives business-critical initiatives and engages in policy, legislative and regulatory issues affecting AECOM and the clients and markets the company serves. Additionally, Ms. Ellis oversees the day-to-day operations of the AECOM Global Advisory Board, comprised of prominent global leaders who are external to AECOM and highly accomplished in business and geopolitics.

Prior to joining AECOM, Ms. Ellis represented the Portland Cement Association and the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association. On behalf of these industries, she advocated for technical guidelines incorporated into landmark legislation that supported the development and construction of environmentally sustainable building designs. She represented the industries in the development of construction trade and supervisor training and certification programs—now standard in master specifications, with hundreds of thousands certified. Additionally, Ms. Ellis was a structural engineering project manager for numerous noteworthy entertainment, institutional and commercial building projects while at Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas; Martin, Cagley & Middlebrook; Dewberry & Davis; and Ehler/Bryan. Throughout her career, Ms. Ellis taught a variety of classes to undergraduate students, including reinforced concrete design, and continuing education classes to practicing engineers, preparing hundreds of engineers for successful completion of the FE and PE exams.

Ms. Ellis is a 2013 inductee into the Virginia Tech Academy of Engineering Excellence, an elite group composed of only 119 people out of its more than 60,000 living alumni. She is a 2007 inductee into the Virginia Tech Via Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering Academy of Distinguished Alumni. She has completed terms on the Virginia Tech College of Engineering Advisory Board and the Civil and Environmental Engineering Advisory Board, including a term as Chair.

Ms. Ellis serves on the Environmental Technologies Trade Advisory Committee (ETTAC),

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

as an appointee of the Secretary of Commerce. ETTAC provides private-sector advice to 19 federal departments and agencies on federal trade policies and programs concerning the environmental technologies industry.

Ms. Ellis is active in several business and professional organizations. She is a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and served as ASCE National Concrete Canoe Competition judge in 2004, 2005, and 2012. She was named an ASCE Fellow in 2013. The author of numerous articles and co-author of the "Concrete Design and Construction" section in the Fifth Edition of the Standard Handbook for Civil Engineers, Ms. Ellis is a frequent speaker at universities, professional societies, and industry forums. She received her Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, and has been a professional engineer since 1984.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor Ms. Anne M. Ellis' leadership and service to the American Concrete Institute.

IN HONOR OF MASTER TROOPER
ROBERT M. HUNT

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Master Trooper Robert M. Hunt of North Carolina's State Highway Patrol and thank him for his heroic actions during the snow storm that hit the Southeast.

On February 12, 2014 North Carolina was hit by a dangerous winter storm that obstructed our roadways and threatened the safety of commuters and all North Carolinians. Despite the dangerous conditions, Trooper Hunt remained committed to his duty to keep our highways and our travelers safe.

As a state trooper, Trooper Hunt heroically stands in harm's way and commits his life to the safety of others every single day. We are fortunate to have brave men and women like Trooper Hunt who dedicate and risk their lives for our well-being and security.

Mr. Speaker, Trooper Hunt is a proven leader in our community. I applaud him for his bravery during this hazardous snow storm, and I thank him for his heroic and selfless actions.

HONORING DEMOLAY INTERNATIONAL

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize DeMolay International, a youth service organization based out of Missouri's 6th Congressional District, on celebrating its 95th Anniversary.

DeMolay International is an outstanding leadership and philanthropic organization.

Since Frank Sherman Land, a business leader and community volunteer, started DeMolay International in Kansas City, Missouri, on March 18, 1919, the organization has grown exponentially. The innovative and charitable work conducted by the organization now touches the lives of millions in all fifty states, as well as, Washington, DC, Canada, Brazil, Uruguay, The Philippines, Australia, Italy, Romania and Serbia. Frank Sherman Land believed in working with others and creating strong bonds that will last a life time. DeMolay International is sponsored by and works closely with The Masons, which are a philanthropic fraternal organization that brings men together to make better communities through charitable work. Throughout history, DeMolay International has stayed true to its seven values of love of family, respect for other people's beliefs, courtesy towards all, brotherhood, honoring one's promises, cleanness in thought word and deed, and love of country. The men who serve in this organization vow to practice and live their lives by these core beliefs.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing DeMolay International for their many contributions to Kansas City and their dedication to service.

HONORING THE TONASKET UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES LEGACY SITE

HON. DOC HASTINGS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor those whose vision and hard work have made the United States Armed Forces Legacy Site in Tonasket, Washington, a reality. This site is a touching tribute to the legacy of all of America's veterans—past, present, and future.

In 2006, local veterans George Frank, Roger Castelda, and Ted Huber formed the U.S. Armed Forces Legacy Association in this rural community with the commendable mission of providing a place for veterans and members of the U.S. Armed Forces to be honored, offering a service office for veterans and their families, and presenting a military library for the use and enjoyment of all.

Originally designed by local artist Brad Hughes, the United States Armed Forces Legacy Site was completed on May 18, 2013 in conjunction with the city of Tonasket and with the hard work of many in the community. This inspirational site includes a wall for over 1,000 veterans' plaques, five basalt columns to honor each service branch, a library consisting of the history and wars of the Armed Forces, and a touching mural acknowledging America's military history.

I am pleased to see that the U.S. Armed Forces Legacy Association was named Non-profit Association of the year for 2012 by the Tonasket Chamber of Commerce and named as the best park/playground by the Omak Chronicle.

Through the efforts of numerous volunteers and donors, the United States Armed Forces Legacy Site has been a tremendous success

and truly honors those who protect and preserve the values that shaped the character of our nation. I applaud all of those who made the site what it is today and look forward to future generations being able to show their respect to our America heroes.

CONGRATULATING DONALD C. ROBINETT

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize Donald C. Robinett, or "Robby" as he is endearingly referred to by his colleagues, on the occasion of his 97th birthday. It is with great enthusiasm that I join his family and friends in celebrating this milestone and the life of Mr. Robinett, a World War II veteran and among the last of the Pearl Harbor veterans living in Ventura County.

Born in Oxnard, California and now a resident of Oak View, California, Mr. Robinett served in the United States Navy from 1935 to 1945 and served on the USS *Tracy* for over five decades.

On that fateful day of December 7, 1941, Mr. Robinett was below deck when the first bombs hit. His experiences and flashbacks of the events that unfolded that tragic morning aboard the USS *Tracy* remain intact. For over 72 years, the vivid memories of the attack on Pearl Harbor still remain with Mr. Robinett. His courage, bravery, and service during one of our Nation's most historic moments, are an example of the characteristics that define the people that have come to be known as the Greatest Generation.

Honorably discharged on September 1, 1945, Mr. Robinett's career includes 10 years in the Navy and even without a day of leave, he was able to marry Eunice Hegna in Las Vegas in 1945. Donald and Eunice had 8 children.

I want to sincerely thank Mr. Robinett for his service and recognize his unwavering commitment, not only to our country, but to the freedoms and liberties that we hold so dear today. As a country and as people united, we will be forever grateful.

It is my honor to offer my sincere congratulations to Mr. Robinett on this special occasion. I wish him a very happy birthday and many more years of continued health and happiness.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE THERAPY CHOIRS OF MICHIGAN'S ANNUAL "CAPITOL CONCERT" DURING MICHIGAN THERAPY CHOIR AWARENESS WEEK

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Therapy Choirs of Michigan, a nonprofit organization based in

Farmington Hills. This year, the Therapy Choirs of Michigan is preparing for its fifteenth annual "Capitol Concert" in Lansing, a remarkable achievement and great milestone in its history.

Created in 1998 by Len McCulloch, Therapy Choirs of Michigan was founded with a mission of bringing together members of the community affected by similar disabilities and challenges to provide them with opportunities support each other through artistic vocal expression. While providing the public with entertainment, Therapy Choirs of Michigan seeks to provide its members and their families with a fun and therapeutic experience that will inspire them in their recovery, as well as raise awareness for the disabilities and challenges faced by its members. Engaging its members in a traditional "a cappella" format, Therapy Choirs of Michigan has developed choirs tailored to youth, seniors, individuals with developmental disabilities and veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq. For each of its choirs, Therapy Choirs of Michigan provides a supportive environment of structured rehearsals that allows its members to maximize the development of improved self-esteem and build-up of enhanced social skills.

Over the last fifteen years, the members of Therapy Choirs of Michigan have performed at over 160 concerts across the state while sharing their creativity, resilience, and artistry with others. They have been featured by local television stations and newspapers in the Greater Detroit area for the impact they are making, which includes donation drives that provided the Historic Detroit Rescue Mission with clothing that helped nearly 3,000 Michigan residents in need. The efforts of its members have earned the Therapy Choirs of Michigan recognition from numerous organizations, including the Farmington Community Arts Council for outstanding achievement in the performing arts. And most recently, the work and impact of the Therapy Choirs of Michigan was recognized by the Michigan House of Representatives, which proclaimed the first week of March to be Therapy Choir Awareness Week across the entire state.

Mr. Speaker, Therapy Choirs of Michigan and its members have demonstrated the incredible resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity and remarkable courage to share their stories and raise awareness of their experiences with residents across the state. It is my honor to recognize and congratulate Len McCulloch and members of the Therapy Choirs of Michigan for the remarkable impact they are making on communities across the state and I wish them continued success and growth as they prepare for their annual "Capitol Concert" in Lansing.

NATIONAL MARFAN AWARENESS MONTH

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize February as National Marfan Awareness Month on behalf of the hundreds of thou-

sands of Americans affected by Marfan syndrome and related heritable connective tissue disorders across the country.

It is important to raise awareness of Marfan syndrome and related heritable disorders, which are rare genetic conditions. The signs of these conditions include long arms and legs, curved spine, a concave or convex chest, flexible joints, and flat feet. Some patients may display the features of these conditions from birth while others may develop them later in life.

Knowing the signs and features are important and can save lives. The heart is often affected too, which can lead to aortic enlargement and dissection, and sudden death. An early and accurate diagnosis, regular monitoring, and, in some cases, therapies or medical interventions are necessary to prevent cardiac events.

I am proud to represent the Port Washington, NY-based Marfan Foundation, which leads the effort to improve the lives of individuals affected by heritable connective tissue disorders. This year marks Carolyn Levering's 20th anniversary as President and CEO of the Foundation. Under her leadership, the Foundation has grown into an effective and compassionate organization. As a result of her dedication and the hard work of the Foundation, medical research has been advanced, treatments and diagnostic tools have been discovered, patient care has improved and, most importantly, lives have been saved.

I understand Carolyn recently announced plans to step down from her executive role at the Marfan Foundation next year. When the Foundation's Founder, Priscilla Ciccariello, first tapped Carolyn to lead the organization into the next century, there is no way she could've known just how far the heritable connective tissue disorder community could come in just two decades.

During this Marfan Awareness Month, I call on my colleagues to reflect on the progress that Carolyn, Priscilla, and the Marfan Foundation have made, and to ask themselves what they can do on behalf of their Marfan-affected constituents to ensure that the next twenty years are just as encouraging as the previous two decades.

26TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HORRIFIC ATTACK AGAINST ARMENIANS

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, the 27th of February marks the 26th anniversary of the horrific attack against Armenians in the town of Sumgait in Soviet Azerbaijan. Dozens of Armenians were killed and hundreds more were wounded. During the pogrom, Armenian women and children were raped, people were set on fire and beaten to death, while police stood by unwilling or unable to intervene.

The violence touched off a broader attack against Azerbaijan's ethnic Armenians, ultimately resulting in a war with Nagorno-Karabakh in which tens of thousands of peo-

ple were killed. The conflict remains unresolved today and the military blockade of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic continues. The pogroms precipitated a massive refugee situation displacing hundreds of thousands of people, virtually eliminating Azerbaijan's once-significant Armenian population.

Mr. Speaker, as people of conscience, this is a remembrance we must all engage in. For me, it is also a very personal remembrance. My own family fled the slaughter of the Armenian Genocide under the Ottomans, and when we learned of the massacres against Armenians in 1988, we saw history repeating itself. These vicious acts of murder, targeted at ethnic groups, must be forcefully condemned whenever and wherever we see them.

Without our recognition and our forceful condemnation, the cycle of violence will continue. Even today, Christians and other minority groups are being driven from Syria by extremists, and the once large and diverse ethnic mosaic there is all but eradicated. Without our attention and action by the world community, there will be no end in sight.

Today, Mr. Speaker, let us remember the Armenians who lost their lives in Azerbaijan 26 years ago. And then let us take up the work that our principles demand of us, standing united against ethnic violence, discrimination, extremism and brutality, wherever we find it.

IN RECOGNITION OF JUDGE AMY HATHAWAY'S SERVICE TO THE RESIDENTS OF DETROIT AND WAYNE COUNTY

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Honorable Amy P. Hathaway, a judge on the Third Judicial Circuit of Michigan in Wayne County, who is retiring from the bench after nearly two decades of service.

Judge Hathaway's service to the people of Southeast Michigan began more than twenty years ago, when she joined the Wayne County Corporation Counsel as Assistant Corporation Counsel. In this role, Judge Hathaway undertook plaintiff and defense litigation matters in county, state and federal courts, as well as oversaw the drafting of county ordinances and review of tax matters. After two years of work for Wayne County, Judge Hathaway was elected to the Third Circuit Court of Michigan, with jurisdiction over matters of equity, civil claims in excess of \$25,000 and matters involving felony violation of Michigan's criminal statutes. Prior to her public service, Judge Hathaway worked as a paralegal for Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn LLP and as an associate at Dykema Gossett PLLC following her graduation from University of Detroit Mercy School of Law in May 1987.

While serving on the bench, Judge Hathaway has been recognized by numerous community organizations for her accessibility and conduct. In 2012, the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association gave her an outstanding rating

and cited her as among the most accessible and friendly judges on the Third Circuit Court. Additionally, Dbusiness Magazine named Judge Hathaway one of its Top Circuit Court Judges in 2013. Throughout her career, Judge Hathaway is an active member of the State Bar of Michigan and has served on its Constitutional Law Committee. She has also served as a member of the Governor's Task Force on Justice for Children and was elected by her peers to the Board of Directors of the Barristers of Detroit Bar Association, where she was named its Barrister of the Year in 1991. Judge Hathaway has also taken on responsibilities as a mentor to the interns that have worked in her office.

In addition to her commitment to serving the residents of Wayne County, Judge Hathaway has remained a proud and dedicated mother to her three adult children and a strong partner for her husband, the Honorable David Groner, who also serves as a judge on the Third Circuit Court of Michigan.

Mr. Speaker, as Judge Hathaway prepares to embark upon a new chapter on her life, I congratulate her and thank her for her many years of service to the people of Wayne County. Over her more than two decades of public service, Judge Hathaway has developed expertise and experience that will cause her to be greatly missed in the court room.

WELCOMING THE CITY OF THOUSAND OAKS' SISTER CITY, SHIBEI DISTRICT OF QINGDAO OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

HON. JULIA BROWNLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the City of Thousand Oaks, California, who will be welcoming its sister city, Shibe District of Qingdao of the People's Republic of China, for their first visit to the Conejo Valley on February 27, 2014.

Formally approved on July 9, 2013, the Thousand Oaks City Council unanimously accepted the concept of Thousand Oaks, California and Shibe District, Qingdao as sister cities. The relationship between the two cities has a mission to create an environment for promoting and developing effective and mutually beneficial cooperation between the citizens of both municipalities. It is a harmonious relationship in which both parties conduct reciprocal cultural, educational, business, professional and technical exchanges. The friendly cooperation between both cities is based on the principles of mutual respect of the partners and the sovereignty of each state.

With a large Asian-American population presence in the Conejo Valley, community leaders, in collaboration with the Center for Asian Performing Arts, conceptualized the idea of a sister city relationship with China to promote Asian culture and support the cultural exchange between East and West.

There are many shared interests and commonalities among the two cities which makes it an ideal partnership. While Thousand Oaks

was named among the top ten safest large cities in the United States, Shibe District, Qingdao was named among the top ten livable cities with the most beautiful bay in China. Additionally, both cities have developed in the areas of technology.

Among the delegation members that will visit the Conejo Valley are the mayor of the Shibe District, the directors of the Bureau of Tourism and of the Bureau of Economic Development, and the deputy chief of staff for the Department of Commerce. On this momentous occasion, the mayors of both cities will sign documents declaring their formal relationship.

I want to congratulate Thousand Oaks and Shibe District on this momentous occasion and look forward to the future accomplishments and successes that this relationship will foster.

REMEMBERING THE HONORABLE MARCUS EUGENE COLLINS, SR.

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart and solemn remembrance that I rise today to pay tribute to a great man, veteran, and outstanding public servant, the Honorable Marcus Eugene Collins, Sr. Sadly, Marcus passed away on Friday, February 14, 2014, at the age of 87. The funeral service was held on Monday, February 17, 2014, at 3 p.m., in the chapel of Jamerson-Braswell Funeral Home in Pelham, Georgia.

Born on January 25, 1927, in Albany, Georgia, Marcus spent most of his life in Pelham, Georgia. As a veteran of World War II, Marcus honorably and courageously served his country.

Marcus was also dedicated to serving his local community in Georgia. He represented Pelham in the Georgia House of Representatives for twenty years and served as Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee. After his time in the House of Representatives, Marcus was appointed Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Revenue. He served in this capacity from 1983 until his retirement in 1996. Later, Marcus was appointed Executive Director of the Tobacco Community Development Board.

Hailed by his friends and family as a true Southern gentleman, Marcus was a "mover and shaker" in the community. He was ahead of his time, a true innovator, and a crucial player in South Georgia leadership. He was an inspiring mentor to me and to many others and the great legacy he leaves to all of us is the faithful and dedicated life he led.

Maya Angelou once said, "A great soul serves everyone all the time. A great soul never dies." Marcus is undoubtedly great because of his distinguished service to his community, devotion to his work, and the compassion he showed for his friends and loved ones.

Marcus is survived by his wife, Elizabeth; children, Elizabeth, Marcus, David, Jennifer, and Rebecca; and thirteen grandchildren. He was a devoted member of Lake Pleasant Baptist Church in Pelham, Georgia.

Mr. Speaker, my wife Vivian and I would like to extend our deepest condolences to the Collins family and we pray that they be encouraged by their abiding faith and the Holy Spirit during the coming days, weeks, and months ahead. I also ask my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to the Honorable Marcus Eugene Collins, Sr., and his legacy of service to the city of Pelham and State of Georgia. He loved the people of Mitchell County and he was committed to making the community prosperous and to improving the quality of life. He will truly be missed.

IN RECOGNITION OF RONALD DAVIS

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Ronald Davis who has been East Palo Alto's Police Chief for the last nine years and served on Oakland's Police Department for 19 years before that. Chief Davis has demonstrated outstanding leadership and innovation in reducing crime and increasing public trust through community policing efforts and partnerships with other agencies.

His talent and skills didn't go unnoticed nationally and Chief Davis was appointed by Attorney General Eric Holder to lead the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, COPS, at the U.S. Department of Justice. In his new capacity, Director Davis supports law enforcement allies across the country, including the East Palo Alto Police Department.

Chief Davis led East Palo Alto—once known as the murder capital of the United States—out of one of the worst crime crises in the country. He launched a first of its kind partnership between a city and the State. The East Palo Alto Police Department partnered with the California Department of Correction and Rehabilitation to implement a parole-reentry program that provided programming and enforcement services and a job program with the California Department of Transportation. The results were amazing: the return-to-custody rates dropped from more than 60 percent to less than 20 percent.

Chief Davis also worked closely with local church leaders and social service providers. He rehabilitated gang members by offering job and drug counseling along with medical care to them in exchange for giving up their criminal activities. He understood and was an integral part of his community.

His optimism and drive to improve the system have guided his life and career. Davis earned his Bachelor of Science from Southern Illinois University and completed the Senior Executives in State and Local Government Program at Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

He has co-authored multiple publications, including the National Institute of Justice's "Exploring the Role of the Police in Prisoner Reentry," the Department of Justice's "How to Correctly Collect and Analyze Racial Profiling Data: Your Reputation Depends on It," and the Police Executive Research Forum's "Chief Concerns: The Use of Force."

In 2003, a San Mateo County Grand Jury report deemed the East Palo Alto police force poorly trained and management unaccountable. Chief Davis turned that around and leaves behind a well-trained department.

Mr. Speaker, Chief Davis will be deeply missed by the residents of East Palo Alto, but he will continue his support of our community from Washington, DC, where he will continue his tireless fight for justice as the director of the Community Oriented Policing Services Office in the U.S. Department of Justice.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF SUMGAI,
KIROVABAD AND BAKU MAS-
SACRES

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, 26 years ago today was the first day in a three-day pogrom perpetrated against the Armenian residents of Sumgait in then-Soviet Azerbaijan. Although official figures reported 30 deaths, it is believed that hundreds were murdered and injured as a result of the pogrom.

Just a week before the violence erupted, the Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh voted to unify region with Armenia—the beginning of the Karabakh movement. In the days immediately after this vote Azeri civilians and local officials in the city of Sumgait held rallies calling for “death to Armenians”.

On the night of February 27, 1988, Armenian residents in Sumgait were targeted and indiscriminately raped, mutilated and murdered. Calls for help from Armenians were ignored by local police and city officials. Journalists were shut out from the area. The violence raged on for three days before Soviet troops were able to put an end to the pogrom.

Witnesses of the horrific massacres later testified that the attacks were planned, as civilians had gathered weapons and the exits of the cities were blocked in advance to prevent Armenians from escaping. The homes of Armenians were marked so that the Azeri mobs could easily target them.

Unfortunately, the perpetrators of the pogrom succeeded in their ultimate goal—driving out Armenians. Fearing more violence, Armenians fled Sumgait. Later that year, another anti-Armenian pogrom occurred in Kirovabad, Azerbaijan from November 21st to 27th, which also forced hundreds of Armenians to flee the region. In January of 1990 violent mobs targeted the Armenian community of Azerbaijan's capital, Baku.

I would like to honor the memory of Armenians killed in the pogroms of Sumgait, Kirovabad, and Baku. If we hope to stop future massacres, we must acknowledge these horrific events and ensure they do not happen again.

This month also marked the 10th anniversary of the heinous murder of Armenian Army Lieutenant Guren Margaryan at a NATO training camp in Budapest, by Ramil Safarov, a Lieutenant of the Azerbaijani Army. Safarov used an axe to hack Margaryan to death while he was sleeping. After being convicted of mur-

der by Hungarian courts, he was transferred to Azerbaijan where he was immediately pardoned and given a hero's welcome. Several Azerbaijan government officials have hailed Safarov's actions as patriotism. This is unacceptable, and the international community should hold Azerbaijan accountable for this.

Recognizing the ethnic-cleansing of the Armenians from Azerbaijan is an important step. However, we need to do more—we need to demonstrate to Azerbaijan that the United States is committed to peace and to the protection of Artsakh from coercion.

We must call for an end to all threats and acts of coercion by Azerbaijan's government against the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh.

Congress should strengthen Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act by removing the President's ability to waive U.S. law prohibiting aid to Azerbaijan because of its continuing blockade against Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. In 1992, Congress prohibited aid to Azerbaijan because of its continuing blockade against Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. However, in 2001, Congress approved a waiver to this provision and administrations have used the waiver since then to provide aid to Baku. Azerbaijan should not be provided aid from the United States as long as they continue a policy of threats and blockades against Artsakh.

I urge the Administration to remove all barriers to broad-based U.S.-Nagorno-Karabakh governmental and civil society communication, travel and cooperation.

HONORING REV. CRAWFORD W. KIMBLE, OF HOUSTON, TEXAS, PASTOR EMERITUS OF GOOD HOPE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Rev. Crawford W. Kimble, Pastor Emeritus of Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church, which originated in Freedmen's Town in 1872.

Reverend Kimble died earlier this week in Houston at the age of 95. He will be laid to rest on Saturday, March 1, 2014.

Rev. Kimble, the fifth of six pastors at Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church, served as Pastor for approximately 35 years. His dream of building Good Hope in its current location (3015 North MacGregory Way) was fulfilled in 1981.

Rev. Kimble was born in Elgin, Texas on March 24, 1918 and he followed the ministerial paths of both his father and grandfather. He began preaching at the age of 33.

Rev. Kimble joined Good Hope Baptist Church in 1951; he preached his first sermon there in 1959; and he later became pastor to many prominent Texans, namely Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, the first African American United States Congresswoman from the South, and Dr. Lonnie Smith, who played an important role in minority voting rights in primary elections.

It is astounding to find that prior to Rev. Kimble's calling into the ministry, he worked as a newspaper editor and writer! His career began as the managing editor with the Houston Informer, Houston's oldest African American newspaper; and it ended with the Kansas City Call.

After more than 30 years in retirement, Rev. Kimble continued to write and publish books. He worked out of his second floor office and living quarters, a Fourth Ward senior citizen apartment complex which was developed and named after him on April 5, 2007: Crawford W. Kimble Senior Living, located at 1025 Saulnier Street, in Fourth Ward, Texas.

Rev. Kimble's works include books entitled “Watch the Tree it Might Fall on You”, which he wrote and published at age 80; “The Adventures of Love: God's plan for a Victorious Life for His People”, which he wrote and published at age 90; and “God at Work”, his most recent publication, which answers the attacks of Rush Limbaugh on our President, President Barack Obama.

Rev. Kimble was a great man who touched the lives of all who met him. He will be missed.

COMMEMORATING THE 22ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE KHOJALY TRAGEDY

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 22nd anniversary of the Khojaly tragedy which took place on February 25–26, 1992, when the town of Khojaly in the Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan was attacked by Armenian forces. Khojaly, which was home to 7,000 people, was completely destroyed; a total of 613 people were killed.

As the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict still remains unresolved, the U.S. must increase its efforts to facilitate the resolution to the conflict in accordance with international law. Congress must also recognize that the current status quo is dangerous and a solution to the conflict is necessary to allow hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijani IDPs to return to their homes. There is no doubt that a settlement of this protracted conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan would let this region realize its huge potential and become prosperous.

Mr. Speaker, as Azerbaijan, a tested and proven strategic partner of the United States, commemorates the 22nd anniversary of the Khojaly massacre this year, I call on my colleagues in Congress to speak up on this tragedy and stand with the Azerbaijani people.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF MR. LANCELOT THOMPSON

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, during Black History month, I rise today to recognize Lancelot C.A. Thompson of Toledo, Ohio. Toledo

Blade newspaper reporter Federico Martinez wrote about Dr. Thompson when a room at the University of Toledo was dedicated in his name recently.

A chemistry instructor, Dr. Thompson was the first African American professor hired by the University of Toledo, in 1958. He explained his initial reception to the reporter: while driving to work through what was considered a white neighborhood, "The police would pull me over and accuse me of failing to stop at the stop sign. 'What are you doing over here?' the police would ask me. When I told them I was faculty at the university, they would call me a liar and give me a ticket." Arriving on campus the reception was no better. School security would try to stop him from entering the faculty parking lot. Sometimes they would threaten him; other times they would mock him for claiming that he, a black man, was a professor. "They tried to stop me from parking in the lot," Dr. Thompson said. "But I did anyways."

Dr. Thompson retired from the University of Toledo in 1998 after 40 years of teaching. He recently returned to campus for a special honor: the unveiling of the Lancelot C.A. Thompson Meeting Room in the University of Toledo's Student Union. At the ceremony, University of Toledo Athletic Director Mike O'Brien noted, "Over the years, Lance has been an adviser, a mentor, and most of all, a friend to many of our student-athletes." Among the over one hundred attendees was Dr. Thompson's longtime friend John C. Moore who said the recognition was both overdue and well-deserved. He explained that Dr. Thompson was a pioneer who paved the way for other African American professionals at the university. "He is such an intelligent gentleman who is really concerned about the fate of his fellow man. He's very educated and still wants to learn something new every day. He's fearless, and he makes it look so easy."

Lancelot Thompson was born and raised in Jamaica. His parents were teachers. He was an accomplished athlete who competed in the broad jump and 400-sprint relay during the 1946 Pan American Games held in Barranquilla, Colombia, and again during the games held in Guatemala. Both times he took second-place honors in the competition. He was a 24-year-old high school teacher when he received track scholarship offers from Morgan State University in Maryland and Tennessee State University. He recalled, "Many people in Jamaica, they told me, go to Morgan State; they will lynch you in Tennessee."

So he boarded a plane for Morgan State University and it didn't take long for Dr. Thompson to be introduced to American racism and discrimination. "Jamaica is a biracial country, so we didn't have those problems," he said. "In Jamaica, it's more about class issues. The first time I got to an airport I saw no black people, so I started to look for a place to sit down. A black janitor came over and told me I wasn't allowed to sit in that section. He sent me to another part of the airport where other black people were. That was my first experience in America."

The airport experience was just the beginning of more to come. The reporter writes that upon boarding a train to Baltimore he was dragged and deposited in the "black coach"

section of the train. "Everybody in there were black southerners," Dr. Thompson said. "I didn't understand a single word they said."

In spite of the racism, Lancelot Thompson earned a bachelor of science degree in chemistry from Morgan State in 1952 and a doctorate in physics and inorganic chemistry from Wayne State University in 1955. He went home to Jamaica with the goal of "trying to revolutionize the way we were teaching chemistry. The school books in Jamaica were old and outdated, and it was difficult to get the 'powers-that-be' to understand how much chemistry had changed over the years."

In 1957 Dr. Thompson attended a job fair in New York. He explained to the reporter that he applied for and received numerous interview requests. He soon realized that was because potential employers didn't know he was black. "A guy from Alabama, when he saw me, he turned so red I thought he was going to have a heart attack. 'You know where Alabama is, don't you?' the man asked me. 'Yes sir,' I told him. 'You know we probably don't want you,' he said. 'I probably don't want to go,' I said."

When Dr. Thompson applied for the University of Toledo job, he included a photo so there would be no surprises. The person who interviewed and hired him, Jerome Kloucek, dean of the arts college, never mentioned race. Dr. Thompson recalled in the newspaper feature. "Some of the faculty was a little uncomfortable, but I was comfortable. I was used to being around white people."

In addition to teaching chemistry, Dr. Thompson created the university's first track team. More importantly, he started the annual Aspiring Minorities Youth Conference. He served as assistant dean for undergraduate study in the college of arts and sciences from 1964–66, becoming the dean of student services from 1966–68. He was then promoted to vice president of student affairs, from which he retired in 1988. He retired as a teacher in 1998. Along the way, in 1964, Dr. Thompson was voted the school's Outstanding Teacher.

It was always important to Dr. Thompson to mentor young people, especially African American young people. He explained, "Being the only black faculty at the university for four years, I had to be a mentor. There was nobody else for them. It didn't matter if it was a black, white, Hispanic, or Asian student, my job was to teach and mentor all students." Explaining he was even harder on African American students Dr. Thompson said, "Oh yes, I was hard on them. I made sure they did the work. I was harder on them than the other students because I knew they had to be a little better than the whites to get the job. You had to be prepared."

Lancelot Thompson's legacy is carried on in those students and all those he taught. His footprint on the school carries forth through today. We salute his spirit, his tenacity and his courage even as we offer thanks for all he has given to decades of University of Toledo students and our community. Thank you always, Dr. Lancelot Thompson.

A TRIBUTE TO MRS. BARBARA FEATHERSON

HON. MIKE MCINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a truly outstanding North Carolinian, Mrs. Barbara Feathersen, who has served the Social Security Agency in Whiteville, North Carolina, for forty years. Mrs. Feathersen's service began in 1974, when she was hired for a part-time administrative position. Consistent hard work and dedication earned her the position of District Manager, and she has worked every day to provide peace of mind to North Carolinians as they prepare to retire. She has committed herself to bettering her community, and I ask you to Mrs. Feathersen's enduring commitment to her community makes her an exemplary public servant, and her accomplishments will continue to benefit North Carolina for many years to come. As her time as District Manager comes to a close, let us honor Mrs. Barbara Feathersen's long and honorable career and pray that she may receive God's richest blessings.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2014 FLOOR SPEECH

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the unique history, terrible sacrifices, and remarkable contributions that African Americans have made to build our great nation.

Black History Month calls out to all Americans to join together as we advance the unfinished march towards greater diversity and full equality for all.

151 years ago, the Emancipation Proclamation, an executive order issued by President Abraham Lincoln, freed the slaves in all states that were in rebellion against the Union, and established a broad legal framework for the future.

And just like present day executive orders issued by this administration . . . President Lincoln's action set off a fire storm of criticism from those who hated him, and thought he had acted beyond his constitutional powers.

But President Lincoln was not deterred by the vicious and vile uproar from his political opponents. Like all great leaders at pivotal moments in our Nation's history, President Lincoln ignored the politics of the moment and followed the moral compass of history.

He chose the path of courage, he chose the path not taken, in order to advance the cause of freedom.

51 years ago, hundreds of thousands of Americans, both black and white, joined together for the historic March on Washington. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stood in the shadow of the Great Emancipator, he declared in his famous "I Have a Dream" speech—"We

have come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now."

Tonight, we should hear those words again. Absorb them. Live them.

As we look back on the accomplishments of the past, let us remember that the fierce urgency of now still calls us to act boldly . . . with courage.

Equality is not to be put on hold. And the hopes of millions who have been left out of the American dream, must not be delayed or denied.

46 years ago, my father, former Congressman Bill Clay, was elected as the first African-American U.S. Representative from Missouri.

He used his experience as a civil rights activist who had been wrongly incarcerated for fighting for his beliefs—to provide a strong voice for his constituents for more than three decades, and he was one of the original 13 cofounders of the Congressional Black Caucus.

One of the St. Louis's first legendary black entrepreneurs, Miss Annie Malone, the daughter of escaped slaves, inspired people around the world as she became a black beauty product millionaire. She was a noted inventor, educator and businesswoman. And she became one of America's first prominent black philanthropists.

As we praise the achievements of these great American heroes, we are reminded of the obligation to honor all of the brave souls who have come before us . . . and to rededicate ourselves to bring honor to their memories by the quality and conduct of our own lives. We learn from and continue to be inspired by our compelling history.

But the past does not limit us. It compels us to continue the long journey towards a most just, more equal society.

That is a Black History Month lesson that everyone across the great country, and in this historic Chamber, should embrace.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, February 25, 2014, I missed one vote in a series of recorded votes. I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote No. 64 (on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1123, as amended).

HONORING GOOD360

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the organization Good360. Companies like Good360 support philanthropy in a variety of ways—cash grants, marketing consultations, and employee volunteerism, just to name a few.

More than ever before, companies are using their core resources to support community-

based partners. Driven by the desire to maximize giving while minimizing waste, the majority of growth in the nonprofit sector has come from the donation of household items that directly impact the needs of American families.

For-profit America plays an important role in addressing poverty, literacy and education, homelessness and many other social issues facing our country. The millions of nonprofit organizations across America rely on the donations of critically needed goods to continue the programs that are essential to helping those with uncertain futures get back on their feet. These programs are integral to strengthening our communities.

Giving is not just restricted to consumer staples. Consumer discretionary companies and information technology companies also make sizable proportions of their contributions in the form of non-cash donations. Their corporate sustainability efforts maximize giving to American families and minimize the amount of unused or reusable goods going to landfills.

With more than one in six Americans living in poverty and nonprofits struggling to maintain programs following significant federal and state budget cuts, the American business community plays a critical role in supporting the nonprofit programs needed to ensure that people and families in need overcome the challenges they face and are better able to pursue the American Dream.

This month, let us look to a time when more businesses give back by donating goods to support people in need, to strengthen the communities in which they do business, and to reduce the amount of products that go into our landfills.

I call upon all American companies and nonprofit organizations—small and large—to participate in activities that provide donated goods that are essential to strengthening communities across our nation.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Good360's contributions to the betterment of our community and the American people, and I ask that my colleagues join me in thanking them for their continued service.

RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

HON. ALBIO SIRE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. SIRE. Mr. Speaker, raising the minimum wage is a critical step in closing the opportunity gap and building an economy that works for everyone. Yesterday, I joined my Democratic colleagues in filing a discharge petition for an immediate vote on H.R. 1010 to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10, generating economic activity, creating jobs, and growing the middle class.

By raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour, we can restore fairness for working men and women across the country. Specifically it would raise wages for nearly 25 million people; increase pay and compensation by \$35 billion for hardworking American families; and lift between 1 and 4.5 million Americans out of poverty.

Americans deserve an economy where a hard day's work earns a decent day's pay. No

hard working American should be forced to raise their family in poverty, but the low minimum wage currently allows for just that. An increase in the minimum wage is not only the moral thing to do, but it would also provide a much-needed boost to our economy. Simply put, when one earns more, one tends to spend more. More and more private businesses are voluntarily raising the minimum wage of their workers because they see the long-term economic benefits.

It is my hope that Congress takes immediate and swift action in raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour.

HONORING THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE LUCERNE INN

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize The Lucerne Inn as it celebrates its bicentennial.

In the early 1800s, Nathan Phillips built a family home in Dedham, Maine, overlooking Phillips Lake, on land granted to John Phillips for his service in the Revolutionary War. Conveniently situated as the only stop on the road connecting the Brewer and Bangor area to Ellsworth and other points Down East, by 1814, the home quickly became a popular location for travelers of all stripes to stay and enjoy a meal. This led to the eventual transformation of the home into The Lucerne Inn.

Over the years, The Lucerne Inn has made a number of changes to include modern amenities while also maintaining its 19th century charm. The Inn currently has 31 rooms overlooking Phillips Lake and the scenic Dedham Hills. Each room includes a flat screen television, gas fireplace, and a heated towel bar. The Inn also features several dining areas that offer a diverse menu of progressive American cuisine and an award-winning wine collection. Bordering the Inn is the Lucerne-in-Maine Golf Course, which offers discounted rates and packages to guests of the Inn.

The Inn plays host to numerous weddings each year, as well as its annual October bridal show, which is attended by more than 100 brides. Additionally, many memorial ceremonies, Christmas parties, baby showers and business meetings choose The Lucerne Inn as their venue. Accommodations such as free wifi, LCD projectors and flip charts are available for such events.

To commemorate The Lucerne Inn's bicentennial, the owners, Steve and Rhonda Jones, are planning several special events and deals for guests and patrons of the Inn. These events include a public open house, wine and menu specials priced at \$18.14, and special rates for guests. I am delighted to recognize the accomplishments of this wonderful establishment and look forward to its continued success in the years to come.

Mr. Speaker, please join me again in congratulating The Lucerne Inn on its bicentennial.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,419,220,117,766.69. We've added \$6,792,343,068,853.61 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.7 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING JERRY DENBO

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the death, but more importantly celebrate the life of Jerry L. Denbo, a beloved friend and father. Jerry died at 63 on February 24, 2014.

Jerry Denbo was a genuine Hoosier man. He grew up in Bedford, Indiana where he went to high school. At Indiana University he graduated with a Master's in Education, and worked at two high schools before becoming the State Representative for District 62. Jerry retired from his General Assembly position in 2007 after 17 years of service.

Jerry Denbo was a fierce advocate for the communities he served. For many years Jerry fought to bring casino gaming to French Lick and was ultimately successful, bringing much needed economic assistance and employment to the area. Jerry had a great love for working for the state of Indiana, and brought warmth and humor to his service.

Jerry Denbo exemplified the greatness of the Hoosier spirit. His memory will live on in the prosperity he contributed to the state of Indiana.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. JEANNE
A. CONRY

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Dr. Jeanne A. Conry, President of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, who made major contributions to the betterment of women's health throughout her long and successful career.

The initiatives she has undertaken guarantee profound improvements in women's health.

Dr. Conry began her tenure as ACOG President by applauding the Affordable Care Act's priority on women's health, asserting that, "By investing in this generation, we have invested

in the next." She called on America's 58,000 ob-gyns and partners in women's health to "lead the changes that are before us, because we are truly the leaders in women's healthcare."

Dr. Conry's theme during her Presidency has been "Every Woman, Every Time," a reminder to her profession and to us all that at every contact in our health care system, reproductive health choices and well-woman care are a necessity.

Her work urges recognition that socioeconomic, demographic, biologic and behavioral differences among women can impact reproductive outcomes greatly.

As part of her leadership, Dr. Conry developed the National Maternal Health Initiative, a partnership to bring together leaders in public and private health policy to improve maternal health outcomes. It includes ACOG; the Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM); the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses; the American College of Nurse-Midwives; Merck for Mothers; and the Maternal Child Health Branch of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Dr. Conry has pointed to the successful focus on newborn outcomes that show fetal and infant mortality have decreased by almost 30 percent in the past three decades. Her research shows that maternal mortality has actually increased, however, and in some states by almost 50 percent. Her conclusions reveal African-American women have a maternal mortality rate up to four times higher than white women. These significant findings will improve pregnancy outcomes for generations to come.

Dr. Conry's efforts emphasize the reduction of maternal morbidity and mortality through access to contraception planning, and ensuring safety in maternity care. Her initiatives have led to better outcomes through life-course planning, obesity and exercise awareness, and redesigning the postpartum visit to optimize future health and pregnancy outcomes.

She has established a process to regionalize care so that women at high risk deliver at hospitals that can meet their needs. The initiative has gone toward identifying and implementing protocols for maternity risk conditions such as hemorrhaging, hypertension, thromboembolism, cardiac disease, and sepsis.

Dr. Conry has called on all leaders in maternity care to guide this change in women's health care. Her career has also been dedicated to better understanding and investigating how the environment impacts reproductive health by proposing a broader analysis of the health effects that pharmaceuticals, diet, drugs, tobacco, alcohol, radiation and chemicals in the environment have on women.

Her leadership and legacy extend to improving women's health by initiating partnerships to facilitate coordination and harmonization of clinical guidelines in Great Britain, Canada, the United States and other ob-gyn societies. These guidelines now provide direction for maternal health programs as well as the practice of obstetrics and gynecology around the world.

And of course, Dr. Conry's advocacy for women's health here in Washington, D.C. is truly exceptional. From stopping legislative interference in medical practice, to ensuring and

protecting ACA coverage of contraceptives, to leading ob-gyns as they visit the Hill in March for improved care of gestational diabetes, Dr. Conry's advocacy knows no bounds.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to honor Dr. Jeanne Conry, whose devotion and leadership has advanced the improvement of women's health by leaps and bounds here in the United States and abroad.

THE INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO
REQUIRE THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
TO INSTALL THE D.C.
SEAL IN THE MAIN READING
ROOM OF THE THOMAS JEFFERSON
BUILDING

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce a bill to require the Library of Congress (LOC) to install the District of Columbia seal in the Main Reading Room of the Thomas Jefferson Building of the LOC. The bill calls on the Library of Congress to take the appropriate action to depict the seal of the District of Columbia on the stained-glass windows in the Main Reading Room, where the seals of the states are depicted. Currently, the stained-glass windows contain the seals of all states and territories that existed when the building was constructed, except for the seal of the District of Columbia, whose seal was readily available at the time and should have been depicted. This omission was brought to my attention by a District resident, Luis Landau, a former docent at the Library. We are asking that this omission be corrected at the earliest time. In addition to the omission of the District of Columbia, the only currently unrepresented states from the stained-glass display are Hawaii and Alaska, but they were not states or territories when the building was constructed. The fact that these two states were not part of the Union at the time of the creation of the stained-glass windows argues for a depiction of the District seal as well, which, after all, was in fact the nation's capital at the time.

The residents of the District of Columbia have always had all the obligations of American citizenship, including paying federal taxes and service in all the nation's wars, including the War of 1812, during which the Capitol building, which then housed the Library of Congress, was burned, prompting construction of the current Library of Congress building with the state and territory seals. It is, therefore, without question that the District and its residents should receive equal treatment among the stained-glass windows that portray the history of the United States. D.C. residents deserve to have their history and American citizenship recognized.

There is existing evidence that the seal of the District of Columbia should have been depicted. The Members of Congress room in the Jefferson Building, which is not open to the public, has a painted depiction of the D.C. seal, along with state seals, on its ceiling. This precedent reinforces our request to be represented among the stained-glass windows in

the Main Reading Room, which is open to the public. There is no reason why the D.C. seal cannot be added with the planned restoration of the stained-glass. The right time to add the seal of the District of Columbia, whose residents pay full taxes and have served in all the nation's wars, like the residents of the 50 states, would be during the planned restoration.

Congress already automatically includes the District of Columbia and its residents, or has corrected the omission of the District of Columbia, when honoring the states. For example, the District of Columbia War Memorial honors District residents who served in World War I, the World War II Memorial includes a column representing the District of Columbia, the flag of the District of Columbia is displayed among the flags of the fifty states in the tunnel connecting the House office buildings to the Capitol, and D.C.'s Frederick Douglass statue now sits in the Capitol alongside the statues from the 50 states. In January of last year, the President signed into law the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, which contains language requiring the armed services to display the District of Columbia flag whenever the flags of the states are displayed. Legislation was also enacted to give D.C. a coin after it was omitted from legislation creating coins for the 50 states. I also successfully worked with the U.S. Postal Service to create a D.C. stamp, like the stamps for the 50 states, and worked with the National Park Service to add the D.C. flag alongside the state flags. Inclusion of the D.C. seal, along with the seals of the states, is the next step.

I urge support of this legislation.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR CITIZENS OF DIANE NASH

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, as we reflect on the events of the past month in celebration of the contributions made to our nation by African Americans, I would like to submit Diane Nash's story.

Diane Judith Nash was born on Chicago's South Side on May 15, 1938. Diane's father, Leon Nash, migrated north from Mississippi and held a clerical job in the military during World War II. Dorothy Bolton Nash, Diane's mother, also migrated north from her Tennessee birthplace. Raised by her grandmother, Carrie Bolton, until she was seven, Diane was taught to turn a blind eye toward racial injustice and strive to be a polite and accepting girl. Growing up, she attended the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament parochial school, which was operated by nuns who taught only minority students. Later she would attend public high school and go on to Washington, DC, to begin her college career at Howard University. In 1959, Diane decided to transfer to Fisk University in Nashville. It was in Nashville where she was first exposed to the full force of Jim Crow and its effect on the

lives of African Americans—exclusion from restaurants, schools, and facilities common to everyday life.

After experiencing such shocking discriminatory events, Diane decided to search for a way to challenge segregation. She began attending non-violent civil disobedience workshops led by Rev. James Lawson. Rev. Lawson had studied Mahatma Gandhi's techniques of non-violent direct action and passive resistance while studying in India. By the end of her first semester at Fisk, she had become one of Rev. Lawson's most devoted disciples.

In 1960 at the age of 22, she became the leader of the Nashville sit-ins, which lasted from February to May. Unlike previous movements, which were guided by older adults, this movement was led and composed primarily of students and young people. Students would sit-in at segregated lunch counters, accepting arrest in line with non-violent principles. Diane, with JOHN LEWIS, led the protesters in a policy of refusing to pay bail. While participating in the Nashville sit-ins, Diane first met one of her fellow protestors, James Bevel, whom she would later marry and raise two children, a son and a daughter.

Diane helped found the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and quit school to lead its direct action wing. In 1961, Diane and ten fellow students were arrested in Rock Hill, South Carolina for protesting segregation. Once jailed, they would not accept bail. Originally fearful of jail, Diane was arrested dozens of times for her activities. In 1962, although she was four months pregnant she faced a two year prison sentence for contributing to the delinquency of minors whom she had encouraged to become Freedom Riders and ride on the buses. "I believe that if I go to jail now," she wrote in an open letter, "it may help hasten that day when my child and all children will be free—not only on the day of their birth but for all their lives."

In September 1963, Diane and others were shocked by a church bombing in Birmingham which killed four young girls. After learning of this, they committed themselves to raising a non-violent army in Alabama. This plan eventually culminated in the Selma to Montgomery marches for voting rights in Alabama in early 1965. Marchers repeatedly attempted to cross the Pettus Bridge, only to be attacked by Alabama troopers armed with clubs and tear gas. The initiative culminated in the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which guaranteed the vote to citizens regardless of race. President John F. Kennedy appointed her to a national committee that prepared for the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Diane also worked closely with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as an organizer, strategist, field staff person, race relations staff person, and workshop instructor. In 1965 Diane was awarded the Southern Christian Leadership Council's Rosa Parks Award for planning and carrying out the tumultuous campaign for voter registration in Selma, Alabama.

In 2003, Diane received the Distinguished American Award presented by the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation. A year later, the LBJ Award for Leadership in Civil Rights was bestowed on Diane by the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum. One of her most recent honors was the award of the Na-

tional Civil Rights Museum's freedom Award in 2008.

Diane Nash is an outspoken advocate of civil rights for African Americans, women, veterans and young people. She is one of the most iconic female leaders to emerge from the era now commonly known as the civil rights movement. She has spoken at countless colleges and universities, youth organizations and human rights conferences. She currently resides in Chicago, where she has worked for several decades in tenant organizing housing advocacy, and real estate. Diane's life work has been to empower young people to feel that they can bring awareness to any injustice they may be experiencing in their lives through non-violent means.

Recently, Mrs. Nash traveled to Toledo, Ohio to speak at the University of Toledo's Aspiring Young Leaders Conference. She held the young audience spellbound as she related her life's story and quest for full equality of all people in our society. At age 76, Diane Nash is inspiring the next generation and leading nonviolent advancement in American society. What an incredible and rare woman is she. Thank you Mrs. Diane Nash for your brave and effective life dedicated to highest principles of human progress.

RECOGNIZING BARBARA SHIRLEY

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize my constituent, Barbara Shirley, who was recently named Florida's Principal of the Year for her leadership at Alta Vista Elementary School in Sarasota, Florida.

Since becoming principal of Alta Vista in 2007, Barbara has secured private funding and recruited volunteers to expand the school's programs to provide free summer school classes to under privileged students, and educate and assist parents.

The classes help students retain what they learned during the school year and teach parents how to manage their finances, cook healthy meals and get job training.

Barbara has been offered positions at schools in more affluent neighborhoods, but chooses instead to be principal of Alta Vista, where more than 90% of the students are on free or reduced lunch and several of the students are homeless.

While many students and schools in disadvantaged neighborhoods score low on state achievement tests, Alta Vista has maintained an A rating.

I appreciate this opportunity to bring much deserved recognition to Barbara for her successful efforts to help at-risk students and their parents.

INTRODUCING THE "MARITIME GOODS MOVEMENT ACT OF THE 21ST CENTURY"

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, Washington State's economy depends on its thriving ports. And yet, for too long, funds collected to maintain our Nation's waterways have been diverted elsewhere. In spite of urgent needs for maintenance, historically, less than half of the collected amount has actually been spent each year. As a result, American ports are struggling to make the infrastructure investments they need to support American businesses.

Since the original enactment of the Harbor Maintenance Tax (HMT) in 1986, global shipping has undergone considerable change. Current policy incentivizes maximum use of foreign ports to import US-bound goods in order to bypass the HMT on which our ports are so dependent. Annually, this amounts to \$30 million in losses to maritime infrastructure, with losses expected to increase if current trends continue. This status quo is inequitable, unsustainable and unacceptable.

Today, I introduced the Maritime Goods Movement Act of the 21st Century to address this growing state and national concern. This legislation will replace the HMT with a new user fee that will provide for the full expenditure of revenue collected to benefit waterways and freight, ensure that all US-bound cargo is treated equally regardless of point of entry, and provide federal support to address critical freight needs at our Nation's largest ports and intermodal freight choke points.

Congress has struggled for years to ensure that our Nation's waterways are funded with little to show for its efforts. It's time to move forward with a solution that will ensure that American ports remain competitive while meeting the realities of global shipping in the future.

RECOGNIZING THE WOMAN'S CLUB OF OCOEE

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the Woman's Club of Ocoee, a chapter of the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), for 90 years of volunteer service to the Central Florida community. The Club, organized in 1924, aims "to associate its members in study and efforts to advance the social, civic, educational and moral welfare of Ocoee and vicinity."

Members of the Woman's Club of Ocoee selflessly devote their time, efforts and resources to meet the needs of our community. In 2013 alone, Club members contributed more than 11,000 service hours to schools, hospitals and various community organizations.

Since its establishment in 1890, the GFWC has supported the arts, advanced education, promoted healthy lifestyles and encouraged civic involvement both domestically and internationally. Members of GFWC, whether they are advocating for congressional legislation to prevent violence against women or mentoring at-risk girls in local schools, have a "national voice and a local passion."

It is a privilege to recognize the contributions of the Woman's Club of Ocoee on this 90th anniversary. They truly demonstrate the spirit of philanthropy and volunteerism for the betterment of our community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM WALBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 70, I inadvertently voted "yea" when I intended to vote "nay."

HONORING DR. RICHARD WESTON

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and recognize the outstanding contributions of Dr. Richard Weston and to commemorate his retirement after more than 35 years of federal service.

As a constituent of Virginia's 8th district, Dr. Weston earned a Ph.D. in Health Policy and his dissertation was nominated for the Harold Lasswell Prize of the American Political Science Association. Early in his career, he worked in the U.S. House of Representatives under Rep. Ralph Metcalfe, of Chicago and Rep. Bennett Stewart, also of Chicago, and in the U.S. Senate under Sen. Charles Mathias, of Maryland and Sen. Paul Trible, of Virginia.

Dr. Weston worked for the Secretary's Panel for the Evaluation of Epidemiological Research Activities and under the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health at the Department of Energy. While at the General Accounting Office, Dr. Weston worked in the Program Evaluation and Methodology Division's Health Services Research Group. He has also worked for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry Washington Office.

Dr. Weston counts among his career highlights an article published in the New England Journal of Medicine; and considers his work this year on the chemical release at the Freedom Industries storage tank site on the Elk River near Charleston, West Virginia among the most rewarding he has done.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Dr. Richard Weston for his dedication to improving public health, and I ask that my colleagues join me in thanking him for his continued service.

RECOGNIZING GRAY GAULDING

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Gray Gaulding, a young man from Statesville, North Carolina. Mr. Gaulding recently piloted his NTS Motorsports Krispy Kreme/TruMoo Number 20 Chevrolet Impala to victory at Phoenix International Raceway, making him the youngest NASCAR K&N Pro Series winner ever. Gray is 15 years old.

Gray began his racing career on dirt bikes at the age of three. Once he found his way onto four wheels, he won an incredible 17 of the first 27 races he competed in on the youth development level. He has since amassed numerous wins on Bandolero, Legend and Super Late Model racing circuits throughout the Southeast.

I wish Gray Gaulding well as he chases the checkered flag and the championship in the NASCAR K&N Pro Series East this year. North Carolina's Fifth Congressional district is proud to be the home of this fine young man and I look forward to a bright future for this remarkable young racecar driver.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF JENNA TOSH

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Jenna Tosh. Jenna is the President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of Greater Orlando (PPGO), a non-profit provider of reproductive healthcare and education serving more than 30,000 Central Floridians. Jenna's background is in social work and teen pregnancy prevention. She previously served in Child Protective Services and as PPGO's Director of Education.

Jenna's accomplishments as President and CEO include implementing paperless medical records, expanding access to care for Medicaid and safety net populations, and adding new clinical services. She has expanded access to PPGO evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs throughout Central Florida. PPGO's education programs have been credited for contributing to a 35% reduction in teen pregnancies in Orange County.

Jenna attended the University of Florida where she received a Bachelor's degree in Political Science. She holds a Master's Degree in Political Science from the University of Central Florida (UCF), where she is also pursuing her Ph.D. in Public Affairs, Governance, and Policy Research. Jenna's dissertation research focuses on the impact of state policies restricting adolescents' access to reproductive health services on teen pregnancy outcomes.

A New York native, Jenna was raised on Long Island, and moved to Central Florida in 2001. Her husband Andrew is a Titusville native and UCF graduate. He founded a gaming

and simulation company, GameSim, in 2007. They have a 4-year-old son, and live in Winter Park, where they attend First Congregational Church.

In addition to her work for Planned Parenthood, Jenna serves on the Orange County Healthy Start Board of Directors, the Equality Florida Political Action Committee Board, and the Board of the First Congregational Church Preschool & Kindergarten.

I am happy to honor Jenna Tosh, during Women's History Month, for her service to the Central Florida community.

TEMPORARY DEBT LIMIT
EXTENSION ACT, S. 540

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation, which suspends the current statutory limit on federal borrowing until March 15th, 2015. This crucial legislation effectively increases the debt limit by \$1.2 trillion, ending the Republican manufactured crises, and includes \$2.2 trillion in deficit reduction according to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, without cutting Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid. I want to commend House Republican leadership for bringing this legislation to the floor for a vote, which represents a dramatic shift since the disastrous debt ceiling brinkmanship we saw in the summer of 2011.

The 2011 debt limit "crisis" was a political choice—a dangerous and irresponsible political stunt—manufactured by Tea Party Republicans in Congress to prevent President Obama and Congress from focusing on top priorities like job creation and strengthening the economy. As we now know, these reckless actions had real consequences for our economy and global financial markets. Studies by the non-partisan Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the Bipartisan Policy Center found that delays in raising the debt limit in 2011 cost taxpayers approximately \$19 billion over ten years in higher government borrowing costs. Consumer confidence plummeted, suffering the largest monthly decline (59.2 to 44.5) during the month of August that year, which was the most since the 2008 financial crisis. In addition, a Bloomberg survey of economists found that the debt limit brinkmanship "almost derailed the recovery." Lastly, a recent survey of the world's top economists by the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business found that 84 percent agreed that failure to raise the debt limit in a timely manner creates unneeded uncertainty and could significantly damage our financial markets. Although I am pleased that House Leadership has chosen not to repeat the same mistakes from 2011, it is worrying to see that the majority of House Republicans still oppose raising the debt limit, considering the economic damage they caused three years ago.

The legislation before us today is supported by a broad array of business leaders, including the Chamber of Commerce, the Business Roundtable, and American Bankers Associa-

tion. Lastly, Federal Reserve Chairwoman Janet Yellen recently testified that failing to raise the debt limit would be "catastrophic" for the global economy. As our country continues to recover from the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, it is Congress' duty to avoid any unnecessary brinkmanship that risks plunging our economy back into a recession.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the Temporary Debt Limit Extension Act.

COMMENDING CHINA FOR CALLING
UPON JAPAN TO "FACE UP TO
HISTORY" REGARDING "COM-
FORT WOMEN" ISSUE

HON. ENI F. H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend China for calling upon Japan to "face up to history" for forcing women and girls, many from countries including China, the Republic of Korea, Southeast Asia, and Pacific Islands, to sexually serve Japanese soldiers during World War II.

For too long Japan's government has tried to downplay and deny the crimes of its Imperial military. Such defiance goes against human conscience. How Japan chooses to face its past will determine how it goes into the future. Its history must not be forgotten and must not be denied and distorted.

I stand with China in urging the Japanese government to acknowledge its history and apologize for it with concrete actions that will win the trust of its Asian neighbors and the international community. I also commend the Chinese Foreign Ministry for denouncing Japan's enslavement of these women and young girls during World War II as "a serious crime against humanity."

I am appreciative of the work of Congressman MIKE HONDA and former Congressman Lane Evans for introducing bills calling upon Japan to apologize. As Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment, the first hearing I ever held was about this issue. The hearing, held on February 15, 2007, was the first time a hearing on this issue had ever been held in the history of the U.S. Congress, and I will always be grateful for the three women who testified.

Three survivors—Ms. Yong Soo Lee, Ms. Jan Ruff O'Herne and Ms. Koon Ja Kim—bravely testified before the Subcommittee and, consequently, their first-hand accounts of their suffering will stand forevermore on the official record of the Subcommittee as a witness against the abhorrent actions of the Japanese Imperial Armed Forces. After hearing the testimony of these three women, I have never been the same. I will never rest until justice is served.

And so, I commend my close colleague, Congressman MIKE HONDA, a Japanese-American, who also personally testified at the hearing about H. Res. 121, a resolution he introduced calling upon Japan to acknowledge, apologize and accept historical responsibility for its Imperial Armed Forces' coercion of

young women into sexual slavery. H. Res. 121, which I co-sponsored, subsequently passed the House on July 30, 2007. I believe it passed because of the three survivors who testified as witnesses.

Regrettably, Japan is again about the business of trying to whitewash its crimes. But, it is my sincere hope that the international community will hold Japan accountable and insist on a formal apology. In this cause, all peaceful nations should hold together and this is why, once more, I publicly commend China for urging Japan to "face up to its history."

IN RECOGNITION OF ANTHONY J.
ZIDICH

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Anthony J. Zidich for his 42 years of remarkable and professional service as the City Treasurer of Daly City. Tony is setting a record as the longest-serving elected official in the city's history. His perseverance, open-door policy and love of people, politics and baseball have made him a beloved institution in Daly City.

Tony was appointed City Treasurer of Daly City in December 1971 to fill the unexpired term of Joseph Lewkowicz and he assumed office the following January. He was then elected eleven consecutive times. Before that, he served on the Daly City Recreation Commission for two years. Under Tony's leadership, the Daly City treasury has been well safeguarded. In recent years, it was fashionable for some public treasurers to imagine themselves as miniature versions of Wall Street bankers. And many of these agencies suffered greatly during the Great Recession. Daly City stood up well because Tony had prudently managed the city's funds and decided to leave Wall Street banking to self-declared geniuses who, as history has since proven, were not as smart as Tony Zidich. The real genius of Tony Zidich is quite simple: He gets the job done in good times and bad, through thick and thin, and with complete integrity.

Tony was a founding member of the board of directors of the supporters of the Doelger Senior Center and continues to be its treasurer. During Tony's stewardship, Doelger has been a major institution in the city, offering senior programming, space for community events and classes of various types. A good treasurer is essential for any long-time community program and Doelger and its seniors can count on Tony to ensure that the money raised by this volunteer organization is always safe and available to support its programs.

Tony's public service is not limited to Daly City, however. He has also served on numerous boards, committees and clubs, including the board of Bay Meadows and Los Alamitos race tracks, the San Mateo County Treasurer's Advisory Board, the Daly City Police Athletic League and the Daly City Credit Union. There is a theme in Tony's service: Building fiscal and human resources to support the future.

In addition to his long and outstanding public service, Tony is a well-known realtor in Daly City. That job has earned him the trust of residents who refer to him as the "go to guy." He can tell residents the history of nearly every block of Daly City. His stories about Daly City are always entertaining and offer tremendous insights into the evolution of this remarkable community. In his office, Tony proudly displays his collection of memorabilia and toys and will engage anyone in a conversation about city politics, city history or baseball.

Tony grew up in San Francisco's Potrero Hill neighborhood. He attended Sacred Heart Cathedral Prep where his passion for baseball thrived. Known as "Babe" for his skills on the field, he was later inducted into the school's Sports Hall of Fame.

Tony joined the U.S. Army and was stationed in San Francisco during the Korean War. He met the love of his life at a dance at the Presidio. Carole Williams and Tony married in 1956 and raised their beautiful and intelligent daughter Debra in Daly City.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to honor Anthony Zidich, an extraordinary public servant, businessman and humanitarian whose energy, enthusiasm and expertise have enriched the lives of all Daly City residents. He will be greatly missed at City Hall, but if anyone comes to Daly City and wants to play ball, they'd better go see Tony first. He knows all of the players in the city, and he will freely offer game-changing advice to all who seek to build a better future for his beloved community of Daly City.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JASON BLANKENSHIP

HON. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Jason Blankenship, a constituent who was tragically taken from us last fall.

A Texan by birth, Jason made Albuquerque his home. For over ten years, Jason gave back to the community as a staff member at the University of New Mexico, including several years in Human Resources and scientific research.

A Ph.D. by education, Jason most recently put his talents to work at UNM's Center on Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Addictions, where he served as research scientist and member of a team advancing the field of study of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. This was more than just a job to Jason. He was passionate about his research and truly believed in its ability to improve the lives of those suffering from these diseases.

Even though he was engaged in such important work at UNM, Jason always found time to give back to the Albuquerque community, most notably through the Make-a-Wish Foundation where he took great pride in being a "wish granter" to children with tragic illnesses.

He was loved by all for his wonderful personality, his thoughtfulness, his dedication,

self-discipline and loyalty. Colleagues and fellow researchers remember Jason as kind, generous and highly skilled. Jason truly believed that the results of his research could positively impact the world around him. At just 43 years old, Jason was taken from us far too soon.

Mr. Speaker, may the life of Dr. Jason Blankenship serve as an inspiration to us all as we work to improve not just ourselves but the community around us.

BATTLING FOR BOBBY—MORE- HEAD WRESTLES ITS WAY TO A STATE CROWN

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, in sports, when a team is motivated by some outside cause, it can be difficult to defeat. When that team is determined to reach its goal because of a stricken leader, it can be unstoppable.

That is exactly how to describe the wrestling team at Morehead High School in Rockingham County, North Carolina. I am proud to say that the Morehead Panthers, who call the Sixth District of North Carolina home, recently won the 3A State Dual Team Wrestling Championship.

The Panthers had a theme all season: "Battling for Bobby." The aforementioned Bobby is Bobby Stewart, the former wrestling coach and Morehead's current athletic trainer who was diagnosed with leukemia. Prior to the championship bout, the team unveiled warm-up shirts that read "Battling for Bobby" on the front and "Taking Down Cancer" on the back.

The shirts worked because on February 8, 2014, Morehead defeated Fred T. Foard High School 33–28 to capture the state wrestling championship in the 3A Class. Bobby Stewart's illness focused the team all season as the Panthers compiled a 38–1 season on their way to a state crown. Morehead senior wrestler Payton Mills, who was named the championship's Most Outstanding Wrestler and won the opening match, gives much of the credit to Coach Stewart. "If it weren't for Bobby," Mills told the Reidsville Review, "I wouldn't currently be wrestling at all, let alone winning Most Outstanding Wrestler of the state duals. Mainly, I wanted to do everything I could to help my team win a state championship for Bobby because he's been such a huge influence on how I live my life today."

First-year Head Coach Daniel Bradford also told the Rockingham County newspaper that the Panthers seemed to be a team of destiny. "This is what we work toward all season," Bradford said, "and it's great to see all of that work pay off like this. I knew coming into this season that we had a very strong lineup, with a lot of great wrestlers. But it was more than that. It was a lot of great men. From the very first tournament of the year, I knew we were going to be tough and the only goal for us was to have a chance to win this title."

Coach Bradford will be the first to tell you that it took the entire team to win the state championship. Members of the squad included

Alex Bailey, Gideon Biggs, George Blackstock, Willis Booth, Tyler Bruins, Ben Bullins, Will Dabbs, Tyler Dabbs, Zane Hairston, Tylon Hodges, Steven Holland, Mike Jones, Jordan Jones, Dylan Jones, Jadakiss Jumper, Henrik Kummert, Payton Mills, Marqe Mills, Tyshawn Olverson, John Phillips, William Pryor, Cameron Sanders, Christian Santos, Jordan Servie, Wesley Strader, Dylan Willey, Tim Woods, and Alex Villa.

Aiding Coach Bradford in guiding the Panthers to the top included assistant coaches Marty White, Terry Mason, Chris Higgs, Chris Johnson, David Barker, and Robbie Horton. Team doctors Kevin Howard and John Dabbs, along with team trainers Bobby Stewart and Darrell Carter, made sure the Panthers overcame any injuries or illnesses on the path to glory.

The Morehead Wrestlerettes made sure the Panthers heard the crowd cheering them on to victory. The Wrestlerettes included Hope Booth, Anne Fitts, Rachel Gallardo, Destiny Smith, and Hannah Thompson, along with their sponsors Donna Gallardo and Shiela Thompson, and Booster Club president Carl Booth.

On behalf of the citizens of the Sixth District of North Carolina, we congratulate Principal Al Royster, Jr., Athletic Director Jason Tuggle, and the faculty, staff, and students of Morehead High School for winning the 3A State Dual Team Wrestling Championship. The Panthers said they were "Battling for Bobby" and they lived up to that motto all the way to the top.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF DR. GWENDOLYN LOUISE MCCORD HANKERSON

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Gwendolyn Louise McCord Hankerson, who sadly passed away on February 13, 2014.

Born in White Springs, Florida to the late William Quinton McCord and the late Allie Mae King McCord, Gwen dedicated her life to giving back to her community. A graduate of Dillard High School's Class of 1949, she went on to receive a Bachelor's Degree in Education from North Carolina Central University in Durham, North Carolina in 1953.

Gwen taught third grade at Carver Ranches Elementary School and later became the first principal of Dillard High Community School. In addition, she worked at numerous schools throughout the county, such as Lauderdale Manors, Nova Blanche Forman, and Norfolk Elementary.

After retiring from Broward County Public Schools in the mid 1980s, she taught at Phyllis Wheatley Elementary in the Dade County School System. Building on her teaching career, she received her Master's Degree in Education from Florida Atlantic University (FAU) in Boca Raton, Florida, as well as a Doctorate in Social Psychology and Physiology from Eastern Pennsylvania University.

Gwen made many significant contributions to her community through her passion for education. As a pioneer change agent, she was "the first" many times over in the political realm. Gwen was the first African American appointed to the Judicial Selection Board by Governor Lawton Chiles, the first African American appointed to the Personnel Advisory Board by Commissioner John Hart, the first African American female to run for office in the City of Lauderdale Lakes, the first female swimming coach for Dillard High School, and the first principal of Dillard High Community School.

When Gwen retired, she continued to be a staunch educational advocate. She was one of the founding members and one of the original incorporators of the Sistrunk Historical Festival and the Lalee Terrace Rebuild Foundation. Furthermore, Gwen founded the Broward Branch of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

She initiated the Elders Council of the African American Research Library and Cultural Center to gather stories about African American pioneers of Broward County for her book entitled, *Across the Tracks*. Additionally, Gwen was a board member for the Literacy Coalition of Broward County, chairperson of the Lauderdale Lakes School Advisory Board, Vice President of the Northwest Democratic Executive Board, Treasurer of the Pride of Fort Lauderdale Elks Lodge, Temple #395, a member of the Order of Eastern Stars, an advisor to the Dillard High School Alumni & Friends Association, Inc., and a member of the Planning and Zoning Board for Broward County.

Gwen was the recipient of numerous awards and honors. In 2011, she received the Rosa Parks Award and the Mildred Hastings Tenacity Award, which was named in honor of my late mother.

A long-time member and officer of Mount Hermon AME Church, Gwen had the very first wedding there on June 11, 1954. She was happily married to Tommie Lee for almost 60 years. She is survived by her husband; four adult children, Charles Holiday, Sr., Kenneth Hankerson, Sr., Evangelist Allison Hankerson-Harris, and Attorney Terri Lynn Hankerson; 11 grandchildren; and 12 great grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, the Hankerson family and friends, our nation, Florida, and Broward County have lost a remarkable person who made life better for humankind.

THE REDUCE EXPENDITURES IN NUCLEAR INVESTMENTS NOW (REIN-IN) ACT OF 2014

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduced the Reduce Expenditures in Nuclear Investments Now (REIN-IN) Act of 2014. The bill would save \$100 billion over the next 10 years by reducing or eliminating unnecessary nuclear weapons programs. Senator EDWARD J. MARKEY (D-MA) has introduced companion legislation in the Senate, the SANE Act.

We must significantly reduce U.S. spending on nuclear weapons, delivery systems, and related programs. Today, the United States spends more in this arena than it did at the height of the Cold War. A recent report from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that between 2014 and 2023, the costs of the Administration's plans for nuclear forces will total \$470 billion. Other estimates come close to \$700 billion, which is more than the federal government will spend on education over the next five years. Worse, there are plans in the works to spend billions of dollars modernizing our nuclear stockpile of missiles, submarines, and bombers, committing us to decades more of waste.

We need to change direction.

My legislation will make the nation safer. The large number of high-alert weapons we have now leaves dangerous room for human error. For example, in August 2007, a B-52 flew cross-country while unknowingly carrying six nuclear-armed, air-launched missiles. Just last month, the Air Force had to suspended 92 launch officers—or missileers—at Malmstrom Air Force Base, MT, where a drug investigation also uncovered that missileers may have been cheating on proficiency exams. The REIN-IN Act, which is supported by over two-dozen organizations, will increase Americans' safety by cutting the number of intercontinental ballistic missiles currently on 24-hour high alert from 450 to 150.

We don't need an expensive stockpile of nuclear weapons that will never use to create a prosperous and secure society. As costs for our nation grow, there are areas where we can cut spending. The first place we should start is with our unnecessary and expensive spending on nuclear weapons that are more suited for the Cold War than the strategic challenges we face today.

I look forward to working with the President and Congress to pass the REIN-IN Act, which will not only reduce overall spending, but reprioritize investments that will actually make the United States safer, more livable, and economically secure.

HONORING THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF MR. AL H. CHESSER

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 100th birthday of Al H. Chesser, President Emeritus of the United Transportation Union, a lifetime advocate for his brothers and sisters in labor, and my dear and wonderful friend.

I've had the blessing of working with Al for decades as he advocated and fought for the rights of countless workers throughout his career. His knowledge of the needs of our nation's workers and our labor laws, as well as his experience in the often delicate workings of Congress and our legislative process, made Al one of the most respected and relied-on leaders of the labor movement.

He began his work life in 1935, becoming a clerk at a Kroger grocery store in Kansas. He

then went on to represent the Trainmen and then UTU, and served as a Vice President of the AFL-CIO's executive council, as well as Chairman of their Constitution Committee. Hard work and long hours have followed Al since that first grocery store clerk job, and—through his dedication—our workplaces are safer and work quality has improved. He has spent his life making the rights and best interests of others his own, and to this day the lasting mark he's left on each and every worker and legislator he has encountered remains. I am proud to consider Al to be one of the most honorable and fine men I have had the blessing to work with, whether we were taking time just to speak as friends or working together to solve a rail strike.

I'm proud to recognize my dear friend Al Chesser as he is joined by friends and family in celebrating his 100 years of life on March 1, 2014, and I look forward to many more years of friendship.

RECOGNITION OF THE 26TH ANNIVERSARY OF POGROMS AGAINST ARMENIANS IN SUMGAIT

HON. TONY CÁRDENAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the twenty-sixth anniversary of pogroms against people of Armenian descent in Sumgait, Azerbaijan, and call for long-overdue justice.

On February 27th 1988, Sumgait was the scene for organized anti-Armenian violence, leading to the death of more than thirty Armenians, with hundreds more gravely injured. Armenians were attacked and maimed for three days. Despite Baku's 30-minute proximity to Sumgait, police failed to react, allowing the brutality to continue.

This brutality took many forms and was well-documented. On May 22nd 1988, The New York Times reported Armenians being "hunted" down and gave an account of a pregnant Armenian woman who had been disembowelled so that the unborn baby could be mutilated. Two months earlier, The Washington Post gave accounts of an Armenian skinned alive and a woman being raped and murdered after her breasts were cut off. These atrocities were highlighted by the Members of Congress at the time, who condemned this state-sponsored massacre against Armenian civilians.

The failure to act by the Azerbaijani authorities and our failure to compel action has resulted in a tidal wave of animosity towards the Armenians, which manifests itself in several ways. Azerbaijani forces east of Karabagh continue to disregard the ceasefire established after the Karabagh war in 1994. Ramil Safarov, who decapitated an Armenian Lieutenant while he slept during a NATO-sponsored training program in 2004, returned home as a hero and was held up as "an example of patriotism for the Azerbaijani youth" by the Commissioner for Human Rights of Azerbaijan, Elmira Suleymanova. All the while, Ilham Aliyev continues his brazen rhetoric;

consistently declaring Armenians as the national enemy in an effort to unite the Azeri public.

The hatred towards the Armenians is unrelenting, even at the expense of the freedom of their own people. When 75 year old Alcam Ayslisi—one of Azerbaijan's most celebrated

writers—had the temerity to consider the conflict from an unbiased perspective, he was subjected to a witch hunt that would not have looked out of place in medieval Europe. His books were burnt. He was stripped of his national literary awards, and, most worryingly, a

high ranking politician had promised \$13,000 to anyone who could cut off his ear.

I call upon all of my colleagues and fellow Americans to join me in condemning the continued violence and injustice, and continue efforts to ensure that these atrocities never repeat themselves.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*Friday, February 28, 2014*

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 28, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RANDY HULTGREN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As we meditate on all the blessings of life, we especially pray for the blessing of peace in our lives and in our world.

We pray especially for the people of Ukraine and Venezuela, but know that You are aware of those worldwide who suffer from violent unrest. Cover all with the balm of Your healing and peace.

May Your special blessings be upon the Members of this assembly in the important, sometimes difficult work they do. Give them wisdom and charity, that they might work together for the common good.

And bless all peacemakers for their work. May Your eternal spirit be with them, and with us always.

May all that is done this day in the people's House be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, this week is National Eating Disorders Awareness Week, a time to learn more about eating disorders, what causes them, and how to best treat and prevent them.

Eating disorders are widespread, affecting at least 14 million Americans, and are so common among our youth that at least one to two out of every 100 children in America has an eating disorder.

Research has shown that while many eating disorders are caused by a genetic predisposition, environmental factors like peer pressure and false advertising can be overriding contributors.

By the time our children turn 17, they have been exposed to over 250,000 television commercials depicting unrealistic body sizes. Too often this exposure leads to an eating disorder.

I will offer legislation to look at how advertising can more closely resemble true human form. I look forward to working with my colleagues to fight this tragic epidemic of eating disorders.

COMMEMORATING JUDY HARRIS

(Mr. KILMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commemorate a friend, Judy Harris, a home care worker who passed away last week.

The most glorious part of the job I have is the opportunity to meet and learn from people from all walks of life. I met Judy on her doorstep, and over several years she became someone I cherished—her commitment to serving, her compassion, and her advocacy.

Despite her small frame, Judy had an enormous presence as she fought fierce-

ly for justice in the community and in the halls of government. Judy's advocacy and work with the Service Employees International Union led her to traverse the Nation to make sure those depending on care and those providing care had a voice and had dignity and had respect.

I will remember until my last days the afternoon I spent with Judy for a day in her shoes. By the end of the day, I was exhausted, physically and emotionally. I was so grateful to Judy and to caregivers who do the work they do to help people live with dignity.

Andy Stern used to say that the "power of SEIU was that it was the way that ordinary people could accomplish extraordinary things and the way that the powerless could become powerful." No one demonstrated that better than Judy. I will always be grateful for her tireless work.

FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS SHOULD ALWAYS BE PROTECTED

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the American people have lost faith in the President and his administration's ability to serve in an unbiased manner. Sadly, last year's scandal revealed the IRS is targeting organizations who disagree with the President's Big Government agenda.

We should never have to worry that our First Amendment rights are in jeopardy because the government opposes our beliefs. Based on last year's revelations, it is clear that these actions were deliberate. The Founding Fathers treasured the rights of freedom of speech and to petition the government, which is why they were protected first in the Constitution.

On Wednesday, the House acted in a bipartisan vote to prevent future abuse by passing legislation that bans the Treasury Department and the IRS from implementing new requirements targeting political groups. I hope the Senate will take action on this bill so we can ensure that every citizen's First Amendment rights stand protected.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

A GEM OF THE TEXAS WINTER GARDEN AREA—CRYSTAL CITY, TEXAS

(Mr. GALLEG0 asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GALLEG0. Mr. Speaker, I use some time to talk about the 23rd District. It comprises nearly a quarter of the land area of Texas.

Everybody has heard of the character Popeye and his penchant for spinach, and the spinach capital of the world is Crystal City, Texas. It was named by its early settlers for the clear artesian spring water, and a statue of Popeye was erected there in 1936.

The Spinach Festival is now one of the biggest and best festivals in all of south Texas. It was started in 1936, stopped for a period of time during World War II, and didn't go back up until the 1980s, but it has grown significantly over time.

Crystal City also occupies a unique spot in Texas' political history in that it was the birthplace of the first Latino political party in Texas, La Raza Unida Party, which, for a time, received enough votes to qualify for a statewide ballot.

Crystal City has long been known as a core of civil rights activism, and its rolling fields are now sharing space with the booming Eagle Ford Shale economy of our region.

Come see a gem of the Texas Winter Garden area, Crystal City, Texas.

MAKING RARE DISEASES A THING OF THE PAST

(Mr. MARINO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to an issue that affects millions of American citizens.

A rare disease is defined as a disease that affects fewer than 200,000 people. There are over 7,000 rare diseases that affect close to 30 million people.

My family knows the difficulties of dealing with a rare disease. My daughter, Chloe, has suffered from cystic fibrosis her entire life. CF is a life-threatening rare disease that causes mucus to build up and block major organs. Chloe is one of only 30,000 people affected by this disease in the United States.

As a rare disease, CF requires specialized care that can cost an individual hundreds of thousands of dollars over their lifetime. Even though there have been advancements in medicine, a CF sufferer may only survive into their thirties. This is much different than it was 50 years ago, where a child was lucky to live to the age of 10.

Today we observe CF and all other rare diseases to stress the importance of funding for rare disease research. Hopefully, we can make rare diseases a thing of the past.

NEED TO RAISE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mrs. BUSTOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the urgent need to raise the minimum wage for hard-working Americans just struggling to get by. The cost of living has increased, but wages have not.

In Illinois alone, more than 1 million people—a full 20 percent of our workforce—could benefit from an increase in the minimum wage. It could also lead to close to a billion-dollar economic shot in the arm to my State.

Currently, my State's small businesses are at a competitive disadvantage because in our neighboring States of Wisconsin and Iowa, the minimum wage is lower than in ours. Raising the Federal minimum wage could help level this playing field and make small businesses in my region stronger.

Increasing the minimum wage is a win-win situation for the people I represent and for our local economy. I believe strongly that anyone who works full-time should not have to live in poverty.

Let's work together and get this done.

ELECTRIFY AFRICA ACT OF 2014

(Mr. BROOKS of Alabama asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the House Foreign Affairs Committee passed H.R. 2548, the Electrify Africa Act of 2014.

Another day in Washington, another boondoggle on the backs of American taxpayers.

I am flabbergasted that in the same week our Secretary of Defense warns of severe defense cuts caused by America's deteriorating financial condition, cuts that risk national security, Congress seeks to force American taxpayers to help build electrical power plants and transmission lines in Africa.

Financial prudence dictates that we reduce our deficits by not spending the money at all. If we must spend it and must choose between Africa or America, Mr. Speaker, I choose spending it in America.

America spends more than \$40 billion a year on foreign aid with money we do not have, borrow to get, and cannot afford to pay back. Mr. Speaker, if financial irresponsibility and economic insanity have a home, rest assured they live in Washington, D.C.

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT

(Mr. TIERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, 2 months ago today, emergency unem-

ployment benefits expired for over 1 million Americans, including 20,000 veterans, and yet this House still has not taken up legislation to provide these workers and their families necessary relief. That is shameful.

I rise to ask immediate action on my legislation, the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act, which provides a 3-month extension of benefits. 183 Members of the House—over 90 percent of the Democratic Caucus—have signed on to my bill.

Constituents from across my district and across the country have been sharing heartbreaking stories of hardship and pain because these benefits have expired. One constituent, VeraMae of Lynn, Massachusetts, wrote to me and said:

I am one of the people whose benefits expired at the end of the last year. My husband and I have tapped out all of our savings, and I'm beside myself with worry wondering how to make the little that we have remaining last longer. It is a mistake to eliminate this crucial safety net for those of us struggling to get back on our feet.

We should not leave VeraMae and others just like her out in the cold another day longer.

If the moral imperative to act isn't enough, Mr. Speaker, perhaps we should consider the economic benefits of extending unemployment insurance. In fact, economists agree that unemployment insurance is one of the best ways to spur economic growth, delivering \$1.52 in economic activity for every dollar spent.

This House should pass that bill immediately.

REMEMBERING MAJOR CHARLES SWIM

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, sadly, I rise today in remembrance of my dear friend and a great patriot, Mr. Charles Swim of Paradise, California.

Charlie was quite a character. He was very involved politically, and if he picked you as the person he thought was going to win, that virtually guaranteed your election. But more importantly, what we know him for in northern California is his service to his Nation and his community.

He was born on April 14, 1927, in Detroit, Michigan, although he claimed Kentucky. His true age at the time he enlisted in the Army was 15. They finally caught up to him when he was 17. He then soon enlisted in the Navy, where he served 6 years during World War II. After that, he rejoined the Army. He also served as a California State parole agent for 27 years, where he successfully fought for the Second Amendment rights of parole agents. Many credit Charlie's efforts to saving their lives.

After retirement, Charlie's extensive knowledge and experience in his field continued to affect those in California's First District, leading him to become appointed the first official historian for the Butte County Sheriff's Office.

He is survived by his wife of 40 years, 8 children, 11 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, 3 great-great-grandchildren, 1 niece, and 3 nephews.

Charlie's valiance and warm heart touched and changed many lives. We are very grateful to him. He was deeply loved by his family, friends, and the community, and he will be incredibly missed by all.

□ 0915

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE SERVICE OF SALVADOR LARA AND JESUS DURAN

(Mr. TAKANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Salvador Lara and Jesus Duran, two Inland Empire heroes who, after decades of being overlooked, will be awarded the Medal of Honor.

Salvador Lara served in World War II and, while in Italy in 1944, he "aggressively led his rifle squad in neutralizing multiple enemy strong points. The next morning, as his company returned the attack, Lara sustained a severe leg wound but did not stop to receive aid."

Jesus Duran served in Vietnam and saved several wounded Americans on a search-and-clear mission in 1969. According to his son, Chuy, "His platoon was in a fight and a lot of guys were killed. He thought he was going to be left for dead, so he decided to take the M60 and unload."

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, these heroes are no longer with us and they will receive their Medals of Honor posthumously, but we must never forget their sacrifice, for it is because of their bravery that we are able to continue spreading freedom throughout the world.

UNFUNDED MANDATES INFORMATION AND TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2013

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 899.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 492 and rule

XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 899.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 0916

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 899) to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes, with Mr. HULTGREN in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Last Congress, the Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee that I chaired began studying the effectiveness of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, also known as UMRA, which was enacted in 1995.

We held three legislative hearings, and we inquired with the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs about various UMRA provisions and the possible improvements to the law.

During our hearings, representatives from State and local governments, and the private sector, they all came to testify about many of the burdensome mandates that are actually not characterized and not protected under the original Unfunded Mandates Reform Act. The analyses often failed to capture the heavy burdens of those regulatory mandates.

UMRA's limited coverage is a concern because, as the chief economist of the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council testified: "Unfunded mandates and regulations continually stifle private sector growth and economic expansion."

To help raise awareness about unfunded mandates and ensure more of these mandates are captured by the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, H.R. 899, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act, was introduced by Representative VIRGINIA FOXX. It is bipartisan legislation that will close existing loopholes in the law and bring more transparency and accountability to the regulatory process.

The legislation has the support of the National Federation of Independent Businesses, the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the National Conference of State Legislatures.

The American Action Forum, which is headed by former CBO Director Doug Holtz-Eakin, also supports the concepts of this bill.

H.R. 899 requires that independent regulatory agencies comply with the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act. Independent regulatory agencies are currently excluded from review, but the regulations they promulgate can impose significant costs and burdensome requirements.

Currently, regulations issued by agencies such as the Securities and Exchange Commission, the National Labor Relations Board, they are excluded from cost-benefit analyses otherwise required of other agencies.

The Congressional Research Service found that between 2010 and 2012, nine independent agencies issued 57 major rules. Those are rules with a cost to the economy of over \$100 million. But none of those agencies monetized both costs and benefits in estimating the impacts of the rules.

H.R. 899 codifies the principles of regulation in Executive Order 12866, issued by President Clinton and reaffirmed in Executive Order 13563, issued by President Obama. It also codifies Executive Order 12866's requirement that agencies conduct a cost-benefit analysis.

H.R. 899 requires agencies to consult with the private sector prior to proposing a major rule. Currently, this requirement only applies to State, local, and tribal governments.

In light of President Obama's emphasis on early stakeholder input on the development of Federal regulations, there is no reason to exclude private sector stakeholders from early consultation in this requirement.

H.R. 899 allows the chairman or ranking member of any congressional committee to request that an agency conduct a retrospective analysis of an existing Federal regulatory mandate.

Again, President Obama even has acknowledged the need for retrospective review, stating that each agency "should periodically review its existing significant regulations to determine whether any such regulations should be modified, streamlined, expanded, or repealed to make the agency's regulatory program more effective or less burdensome in achieving the regulatory objectives." This change would ensure existing regulations are actually reviewed.

H.R. 899 extends judicial review to ensure that agencies carefully consider the least costly or least burdensome regulatory alternatives.

According to the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council, the current judicial review provision included in the original UMRA "lacks teeth" and "offers no real incentives for agencies to deal legitimately with the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act requirements."

H.R. 899 ensures that Federal agencies and the Congressional Budget Office estimate the entire cost of a Federal mandate, such as forgone profits,

costs passed on to consumers, and behavioral changes as a result of a Federal mandate.

The administration said it is “strongly supportive” of the first generation of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act. I am glad that we are here today to make the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act even stronger.

I have stated before, and I will state again, making these reforms is not an attack on the current administration. Many of the issues we are here to deal with today did not originate in this administration, and the solutions we propose will extend well beyond this administration.

It is the role and responsibility of Congress to ensure regulations are consistent with legislative intent and they are written to cause the least amount of burden and the greatest possible benefit.

I encourage all Members to support this bill.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in opposition to H.R. 899, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act. This bill is the second major piece of legislation being considered this week that will add needless and counterproductive red tape to the rulemaking process.

I have the privilege of serving as the ranking member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. The Oversight Committee has jurisdiction over the executive branch and legislative jurisdiction over government-wide policies.

It is our duty and our responsibility to ensure that the Federal Government is operating effectively and efficiently. It is also the responsibility of every Member of Congress, and we must hold that dearly.

This legislation may be well-intended, but it would have unintended consequences that would make government less efficient and less effective.

We rely on agency rulemakings to protect our children, protect our workers, and protect our economy. The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards, a group of more than 150 good government, labor, scientific, faith, health, and community organizations, sent a letter to the Oversight Committee. Here is just a portion of what that letter said:

The Wall Street economic collapse, the British Petroleum oil spill catastrophe, various food and product safety recalls, and numerous industrial disasters, including the Upper Big Branch mine explosion in West Virginia and the fertilizer plant in West, Texas, have all dramatically demonstrated the need for a stronger regulatory system that is more responsive to the public interest. Congress should be moving forward to protect the public from harm, not rolling back the clock and weakening important safeguards.

Mr. Chairman, now is not the time for us to be adding unnecessary, burdensome requirements to the rulemaking process. Our constituents expect us to make them safer, not to make it harder for agencies to keep them safe.

The bill would give private industry an unfair advantage in the rulemaking process. Under this bill, agencies would be required to consult with corporations before consulting with customers who would be protected by the regulations. In fact, the bill requires agencies to consult with private industry “before issuance of a proposed rulemaking.”

This means that, for example, if the Department of Agriculture planned to propose a new food safety rule, corporate agricultural interests would get advance access to the rule, and the opportunity to shape it, before food safety groups, children’s health groups, doctors, or independent scientists are able to participate in the process.

I believe that businesses should have the opportunity to provide comments on proposed rules. I think it is very important. They should do it through the normal public comment process, however, just like other stakeholders.

The bill also would put independent agencies in jeopardy of political interference. The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act currently exempts independent agencies from its reporting requirements. This bill removes that exemption.

That would mean that independent regulatory agencies like the Securities and Exchange Commission would have to submit their rules to the Office of Management and Budget for review, which could undermine their independence. I plan to offer an amendment to strike that provision, and I hope it will be adopted.

This is a well-intended bill with serious, negative consequences. I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, I am submitting for the RECORD letters of exchange between the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Committees on Budget and Judiciary and Rules regarding the committees’ jurisdictional interest in H.R. 899.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON RULES,
Washington, DC, February 11, 2013.

Hon. DARRELL ISSA,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ISSA: On July 24, 2013, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform ordered reported H.R. 899, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2013. As you know, the Committee on Rules was granted an additional referral upon the bill’s introduction pursuant to the Committee’s jurisdiction under rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives over rules and joint rules of the House.

Because of your willingness to consult with my committee regarding this matter, I will waive consideration of the bill by the Rules Committee. By agreeing to waive its consideration of the bill, the Rules Committee does not waive its jurisdiction over H.R. 899. In addition, the Committee on Rules reserves its authority to seek conferees on any provisions of the bill that are within its jurisdiction during any House-Senate conference that may be convened on this legislation. I ask your commitment to support any request by the Committee on Rules for conferees on H.R. 899 or related legislation.

I also request that you include this letter and your response as part of your committee’s report on the bill and in the Congressional Record during consideration of the legislation on the House floor.

Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

PETE SESSIONS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC, February 11, 2014.

Hon. PETE SESSIONS,
Chairman, Committee on Rules,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding the Rules Committee’s jurisdictional interest in H.R. 899, the “Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2013,” and your willingness to forego consideration of H.R. 899 by your committee.

I agree that the Committee on Rules has a valid jurisdictional interest in certain provisions of H.R. 899 and that the Committee’s jurisdiction will not be adversely affected by your decision to forego consideration of H.R. 899. As you have requested, I will support your request for an appropriate appointment of outside conferees from your Committee in the event of a House-Senate conference on this or similar legislation should such a conference be convened.

Finally, I will include a copy of your letter and this response in the Committee Report and in the Congressional Record during the floor consideration of this bill. Thank you again for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

DARRELL ISSA,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET,
Washington, DC, February 11, 2014.

Hon. DARRELL E. ISSA,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ISSA: I am writing to you concerning H.R. 899, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2013. There are certain provisions in the legislation which fall within Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Budget.

In the interest of permitting your committee to proceed expeditiously to floor consideration of this bill, I am willing to waive this committee’s right to sequential referral. I do so with the understanding that by waiving consideration of the bill the Budget Committee does not waive any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill which fall within its jurisdiction.

Please include a copy of this letter and any response in the committee report on H.R. 899

as well as in the Congressional Record during any floor consideration of this bill. Thank you for the cooperative spirit in which you have worked regarding this matter and others between our respective committees.

Sincerely,

PAUL RYAN,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,

Washington, DC, February 11, 2014.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding the Committee on the Budget's jurisdictional interest in H.R. 899, the "Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2013," and your willingness to forego consideration of H.R. 899 by your committee.

I agree that the Committee on Rules has a valid jurisdictional interest in certain provisions of H.R. 899 and that the Committee's jurisdiction will not be adversely affected by your decision to forego consideration of H.R. 899. As you have requested, I will support your request for an appropriate appointment of outside conferees from your Committee in the event of a House-Senate conference on this or similar legislation should such a conference be convened.

Finally, I will include a copy of your letter and this response in the Committee Report and in the Congressional Record during the floor consideration of this bill. Thank you again for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

DARRELL ISSA,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, February 11, 2014.

Hon. DARRELL ISSA,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ISSA: I am writing concerning H.R. 899, the "Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2013," which your Committee ordered reported on July 24, 2013.

As you know, the Committee on the Judiciary was given an additional referral on this measure upon introduction. As a result of your having consulted with the Judiciary Committee concerning provisions of the bill that fall within our Rule X jurisdiction, I agree to discharge the Committee on the Judiciary from further consideration of H.R. 899. The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that, by foregoing consideration of H.R. 899 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward. Our committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and requests your support for any such request.

I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would request that you include a copy of this letter and your response in the Committee Report and in the Congressional Record during the floor consideration of this bill. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,

Washington, DC, February 11, 2014.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding the Committee on the Judiciary's jurisdictional interest in H.R. 899, the "Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2013," and your willingness to forego consideration of H.R. 899 by your committee.

I agree that the Committee on the Judiciary has a valid jurisdictional interest in certain provisions of H.R. 899 and that the Committee's jurisdiction will not be adversely affected by your decision to forego consideration of H.R. 899. As you have requested, I will support your request for an appropriate appointment of outside conferees from your Committee in the event of a House-Senate conference on this or similar legislation should such a conference be convened.

Finally, I will include a copy of your letter and this response in the Committee Report and in the Congressional Record during the floor consideration of this bill. Thank you again for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

DARRELL ISSA,
Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA), the chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Chairman, let me start off on a positive note. The positive note is the regular order in which we bring this important legislation. We have held 11 full committee hearings, 30 subcommittee hearings, produced three full staff reports.

Between the work of Chairman JORDAN, Chairman LANKFORD and Congresswoman FOXX on this legislation, there have been countless thousands of hours of hard work to figure the right way to say it to make sure it is narrow and consistent with multiple Presidents' policies of both parties.

This legislation is filled with bipartisan support on each of the bills. This is, in fact, not a Republican or a Democratic idea.

Mr. Chairman, that ends the positive part. I just listened to my ranking member in opposition, and I was shocked—shocked—that he would talk in terms of rulemaking shouldn't have the interference of the private sector. Customers should not look at their supplier being involved in the production of the regulation. Locking out people who have to manufacture the goods, produce the labels, comply with the law in the process is exactly what is wrong in government today.

□ 1030

Mr. Chairman, the American people know full well that a regulation is a law; a rule is a law. The idea that laws are produced in private with often special interest groups on one side only at the table and then put out as a take it or leave it, fight it if you can, is the absurdity of the regulatory state.

Mr. Chairman, this commonsense reform is perhaps too little, rather than too much, because, Mr. Chairman, the lawmaking that is going on in the executive branch, including those so-called independent agencies, is independent of our responsibility, as Members of Congress.

We are supposed to make the laws, and we are supposed to make them in the clear light of day, with all sides having an opportunity to be heard.

Rulemaking for too long has been, in fact, done in secret, shown up without any input, and then those very manufacturers and producers and growers—the regulated—have the option of trying to come here and asking us to strike down or slow down the speed of some ill-conceived regulation.

So this important legislation—something that President Obama supported, something President Clinton supported, something that people in the executive branch understand needs to happen—needs to pass here today. I strongly urge the passage of this bill, this bipartisan legislation.

I thank Chairman LANKFORD, and I thank Congresswoman FOXX.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY), a distinguished member of the committee.

Mr. CLAY. I thank the gentleman from Maryland for yielding.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H.R. 899, the curiously named Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act. As a senior member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, which passed this ill-conceived omnibus lobbyist gift bag on a strictly partisan vote, I can assure you that the only thing transparent about this bill are the invisible benefits it promises to help our economy.

It is shameful that the majority would advance reckless legislation like this, which would seriously obstruct and weaken the Federal Government's ability to protect clean air and water, ensure a safe workplace, safeguard the purity of our food supply, provide safe medications and medical devices for the sick and injured, and protect consumers from predatory practices that have already caused so much pain across this country.

This bill puts corporate profits ahead of protecting workers and consumers. It would shackle key Federal agencies, like OSHA, the FCC, the Mine Safety and Health Administration, and CFPB. It assumes that the ability to regulate is always an evil to be evaded, delayed, or defeated.

It would give business interests advance notice of proposed regulations, but would exclude workers and the public from deliberations. My friends, that is not transparency. That is not good for our economy; and it is a prescription for more fraud and abuse, more environmental disaster, and more workplace accidents.

H.R. 899 would greatly undermine the independence of Federal agencies that the American people depend on to keep them safe at home and at work and to give them a fair shake in the economy. This bill is not a job creator.

It is a gift-wrapped offering to special interest lobbyists who advocate for no new rules, no regulation, and no consequences for their clients, regardless of how much damage they have caused.

H.R. 899 would not only delay or halt the rulemaking process by adding time-consuming and redundant procedures, it would also strip away the public's right to petition agencies when they fail to act. These proposals would severely undermine our Nation's ability to establish and enforce reasonable health, safety, and environmental standards.

Given the multiple health and safety disasters in communities and workplaces across the country that have occurred since the beginning of the year, it is hard to believe that the majority would attempt to weaken standards and safeguards for the public.

You know, Mr. Chairman, recently, the director of the CFPB, Richard Cordray, came before Congress—testified before Congress and told us that he knows there are no perfect rules in government; and there is a process for Members of this body to challenge those rules and appeal for changes in the rules.

We should follow that process and not come up with flawed legislation like this.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 6 minutes to the gentlelady from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX), who is the author of H.R. 899 and has worked on this concept for years, to try to repair the inconsistencies in the original law.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for yielding and for shepherding this bill through the committee.

I am especially grateful to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) for his tireless efforts on behalf of this legislation; not only I, but the people of this country owe him a great debt of gratitude.

I also want to commend him for employing such a wonderful staff. They have been a real pleasure to work with and have been devoted to getting this legislation passed.

I want to recognize the efforts of Chairman ISSA and his staff at the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, including his eloquent comments today. They have provided my office with five-star service.

Finally, I want to recognize my esteemed Democrat colleagues, LORETTA SANCHEZ, MIKE MCINTYRE, and COLLIN PETERSON. I am very grateful for their support and wise counsel. They realize that this legislation does not stop the Federal Government from adopting regulations.

And I am, frankly, shocked at the allegations by some of our colleagues on the other side who say this is going to stop the Federal Government from regulating and putting in commonsense rules and regulations.

If you look up the definition of "straw dog" in the dictionary, the arguments against this legislation this morning would fit the bill.

Every year, Mr. Chairman, Washington imposes thousands of pages of rules and regulations on America's small businesses and local governments. Hidden in those pages are costly mandates that make it harder for companies to hire and for cash-strapped States, counties, and cities to keep streets safe and parks clean.

Republicans and Democrats alike agree that each regulation the Federal Government hands down should be deliberative and economically defensible. This bill, H.R. 899, will ensure public and bureaucratic awareness about the cost in dollars and in jobs that Federal dictates pose to the economy and local governments.

There is precedent for bipartisanship on this issue. In 1995, Members from both parties supported and President Clinton signed the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, UMRA, which sought to expose Washington's abuse of unfunded Federal mandates.

The 1995 bill was designed to force the Federal Government to estimate how much its mandates would cost local governments and employers, not to prevent it from regulating, but to make sure its regulations were fair and efficient.

For the most part, the 1995 law has worked very well; but over the years, weaknesses in that law have been revealed—weaknesses that some government agencies and independent regulatory bodies have exploited.

My bill, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act, will correct these oversights and put some weight behind UMRA to ensure no government body purposefully or accidentally skirts public scrutiny when jobs and scarce resources are at stake.

H.R. 899, Mr. Chairman, has bipartisan DNA. It codifies administrative fixes championed by Presidents Clinton and Obama and promotes good government, accountability, and transparency, something we all believe in. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense bipartisan bill.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), a member of our committee.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the distinguished ranking member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, my good friend from Maryland, ELIJAH CUMMINGS.

Mr. Chairman, I was listening to my good friend, Ms. FOXX from North Caro-

lina; and I don't doubt her commitment to try to rein in unfunded mandates, and I certainly supported the 1995 effort, as somebody working at that time in local government, because local governments are burdened with many unfunded Federal mandates. No Child Left Behind, for example, comes to mind.

This legislation before us today, however, is not a simple extension of unfunded mandates. It is something else. Mr. Chairman, any lingering doubt about this week's Republican assault, which is orchestrated on the regulatory process as designed to benefit corporate interests, should be laid to rest with this bill.

Agencies are already required to consult with any interested party during the rulemaking process through a robust public participation and comment period. This bill, however, would single out private sector special interests and give them special treatment and an unfair advantage by requiring agencies to consult with them before a rule is even proposed.

The bill further subverts existing law by opening the door for opponents of regulation or delay to invalidate rules through frivolous litigation. Current law expressly prohibits the courts from blocking a new rule based on the advocacy of an agency's analysis. This bill would expand judicial review to give for-profit special interests a new tool to tie up regulations with unnecessary litigation.

I would remind my friends on the other side of the aisle that agencies are currently required by existing law and executive order to consider all regulatory alternatives to promote flexibility and to promulgate regulations based on a reasonable determination that the benefits, in fact, justify the costs. That is already in existing law.

Agencies are also required to conduct cost-benefit analyses and increase public participation for all interested parties, not just corporate special interests. Of course, House Republicans also fail to acknowledge that the Obama administration has directed agencies to harmonize rulemaking across agencies and conduct a systematic review of existing regulations to reduce outdated or redundant rules.

Mr. Chairman, if my Republican friends really want to do something meaningful about unfunded mandates, they could work with us to correct the historic failures of the Federal Government to meet its financial obligations to our cash-strapped State and local partners, rather than catering to special, big corporate interests with well-paid lobbyists.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL).

Mr. WOODALL. I thank my friend from Oklahoma for yielding, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate his leadership on

the Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

He has only been in this institution for 3 years, but he brought with him, when he came, a heart of service that he has been applying his entire lifetime; and it is that heart of service that I think has enabled him to work in a bipartisan way across the aisle.

I will say that it is not without a heavy heart, Mr. Chairman, that I hear folks talk about a Republican assault, a majority this, conservatives that; there are some things that happen in this institution that are party line events. There are things that happen in this institution that are Republicans driving in one way and Democrats driving in the other.

But this is an openness bill today, and by its very introduction, Mr. Chairman—I have a copy of the bill here; it is available for anyone to read online—the very first thing they will see when they open up this piece of legislation are the men and women who came together to offer it.

Now, one of those people is my good friend, the chairman of the subcommittee, Mr. LANKFORD from Oklahoma; but so, too, is the gentlelady from California, LORETTA SANCHEZ, who believes in this piece of legislation—not just believes it passing on the floor today, but believes in being a part of the process that drives this forward.

□ 0945

Yes, we heard from my friend, VIRGINIA FOXX, Republican from North Carolina, but also among the original cosponsors bringing this legislation forward, MIKE MCINTYRE, Democrat, from North Carolina.

Mr. Chairman, this bill is about one thing and one thing only, and that is providing more information and more transparency to all the stakeholders in the process. There are things that are worth doing and there are things that are worth using the power of government to do, but if we are proud of what those things are, we should be proud of sharing that information.

When you get in a car today, Mr. Chairman, there are airbags everywhere. I can't even count the number of airbags when I rent a car these days. Old cars that folks drive, they don't have them, but the new cars do. I don't know what it costs to put that airbag in. I don't know what it cost to promulgate that regulation. I would like to know. But I promise you that, if we were to look at those numbers, we would say it is worth it. It is worth it.

Regulatory burdens on this economy—and we are seeing GDP revised down again today, Mr. Chairman—are undeniable. Maybe they are worth it, but the burden is undeniable. Let's just tell folks what that burden is, and then let's come together and decide whether or not it is something worth doing.

This is not a partisan bill today, Mr. Chairman; this is a bipartisan bill. This isn't about hiding the ball today; this is about transparency. This bill is not about dividing folks; this is about, again, what my friend from Oklahoma has been about since the day he showed up in this institution, and that is bringing people together around tough challenges, but challenges that this institution can rise to do.

I am very proud of the many, many hearings that have been held, the many, many hours of effort that have been invested, and I am pleased to support this legislation on the floor here today, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time each side has remaining?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Maryland has 18 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Oklahoma has 15 minutes remaining.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, one of the most problematic provisions of this bill is the section that expands judicial review under the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, also known as UMRA. UMRA currently allows a party to challenge in court whether an agency performed the written statement required under UMRA describing the agency's analysis. A court may require the agency to prepare the written statement if the agency fails to do so. The law explicitly provides, however, that a court cannot use the inadequacy of an agency's UMRA statement or an agency's failure to prepare a written statement as a basis to hold up a rule.

Here is what the statute says:

The inadequacy or failure to prepare such a statement, including the inadequacy or failure to prepare any estimate, analysis, statement, or description or written plan shall not be used as a basis for staying, enjoining, invalidating, or otherwise affecting such agency rule.

The bill would change the statute to allow courts to review the adequacy of an agency's analysis under UMRA and to allow rules to be delayed or invalidated based on the inadequacy of an agency's statement. This clearly contradicts the intent of the original statute.

The administration issued a Statement of Administration Policy just yesterday saying that, if H.R. 899 were presented to the President in its current form, he would veto the legislation.

The statement said:

H.R. 899 would unnecessarily add to the already robust analytical and procedural requirements of the rulemaking process. In particular, H.R. 899 would create needless grounds for judicial review, unduly slowing the regulatory process, and, in addition, it would add layers of procedural steps that would interfere with the agency's priority setting and compliance with statutory mandates.

There is another allegation that has been made that I want to address, and that is the allegation that there has been a tsunami of rules issued under President Obama. This is simply inaccurate. President Bush issued 14,387 rules in his first 4 years in office. President Obama issued 13,238 in his first term. That is over 1,000 fewer rules than President Bush issued in the same period of time.

According to the Government Accountability Office, agencies published the lowest numbers of rules in 2012 since GAO began keeping data in 1997. GAO found that the first half of 2013 was also on pace to be another record low year. The Office of Management and Budget in its draft 2013 report to Congress on benefits and costs of Federal regulations compared rulemakings across the 4 years of the Clinton, Bush, and Obama presidencies. Rules issued in the first 4 years of President Obama's administration had a net benefit of approximately \$159 billion. "Net benefit" means the benefits of the rule minus the cost. Rules issued in the first term of President Bush's administration had a net benefit of \$60 billion, and rules under President Clinton's first term had a net benefit of \$30 billion. That means that the rules under President Obama had a bigger net benefit than the Bush administration and the Clinton administration combined.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I will continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, I want to make a few brief comments. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I wanted to have the opportunity to be able to just dialogue a little bit about some of the things we just heard about, things like judicial review.

It is a belief of many people on this side of the aisle and the other side of the aisle that agencies are not infallible. They do make mistakes at times, and there are times that an agency will make an estimate on a cost, and it is, let's say, \$90 million, just under the \$100 million threshold. And someone wants to challenge it and says, how did you do the math on that that you ended up just under the major rule threshold?

There is a reason to be able to go back and evaluate some of these things and to have the opportunity to go through a judicial review so in a moment of judicial review there can be a conversation to say, let's check the math before these decisions are made to be able to evaluate, because there has been a large increase in major rules. And while I understand that around election time there was a slowdown of regulations that came up, if you look at the first 5 years of this administration, of their 13,000 rules that were promulgated, 330 of them are classified as major rules—330 of those,

major rules—defined as having an estimated annual economic impact of \$100 million or more.

It is a very serious issue to be able to put that many new rules with that large of an impact. It does have a change. And while I understand that some would say this benefits to the economy, what has happened is, year after year for the last several years, CBO comes back and looks at our long-term economic forecast and gives a slower forecast.

In 2014 again, they have come out and said that, in this current economy with what is happening, it is another slowdown and another over \$1 trillion loss in our economy that CBO has estimated over the next 10 years because the economy continues to slow down. We are just asking the question, is it possible? Because so many major regulations are coming out and no one has had a check on that.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to my colleague from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS).

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Oklahoma for his leadership and for his passion.

This is one of those areas, quite frankly, as we look at unfunded mandates, that is taking the power from Washington, D.C., and giving it back to the elected officials in our States, our county governments, and our cities.

The gentleman from Virginia, from the other side, earlier said that certainly he supported this when he was a local official elected there in Virginia, and rightly so. Because I can share a personal story, Mr. Chairman, from a senator, Jim Davis, from my home State who was a county commissioner and now a State senator. I asked him, why do you have such a hard time balancing the budget here in the State? And he gave me two words: unfunded mandates.

Why is that? Because we continue to pass regulation after regulation after regulation, send them down to the States and ask the States to deal with them. The States say, well, we don't have money to implement this. They send it even further, to the county governments. So what happens is that property taxes go up at the local level, State income taxes go up there, all because we believe that we know what is best here in Washington, D.C., on how to implement rules and regulations.

Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that during the first term of the Obama administration we saw a 10 percent increase in regulatory budgets. Now, that is a 10 percent increase in regulatory budgets when the average American hardworking taxpayer saw their budgets go down.

There is something wrong with this, Mr. Chairman. And as we start to look at this, there was a study in 2011—a study in 2011—that said, with each 5 percent reduction in regulatory proc-

ess, you can create 1.2 million jobs. Well, Mr. Chairman, we have a problem with creating jobs here, and this is a commonsense solution to rein in what is happening here in Washington, D.C., and allow that control to go back to the States and local government.

So the bottom line, Mr. Chairman, is this: to vote against this is a vote that says that we know better how to do business here in Washington, D.C., than the elected officials in State, county, and local governments. I can tell you that the best decisions are made at those local and State levels. I think it is high time that we come back and roll it back in this simple process to make sure that these regulatory reforms and the unfunded mandates that accompany them truly are not a burden on those hardworking American taxpayers.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I would like to inquire as to whether the other side has additional speakers.

Mr. LANKFORD. We do not, sir. We are prepared to close.

Mr. CUMMINGS. So, therefore, Mr. Chairman, I will close. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, in closing, I want to go back to the legislative history of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995, the law that would be amended by this bill today. The Senate report on the bill that was signed into law said:

The primary purpose of S. 1, the Unfunded Mandate Reform Act of 1995, is to start the process of redefining the relationship between the Federal Government and State, local, and tribal governments. In addition, the bill would require an assessment of legislative and regulatory proposals on the private sector. The bill accomplishes this purpose by ensuring that the impact of legislative and regulatory proposals on those governments and the private sector are given full consideration in Congress and the executive branch before they are acted upon.

The bill we are considering today goes far beyond the purposes of the original law. This bill goes beyond simply ensuring that the Federal Government considers the potential impact of a regulation on State and local governments or the private sector. Instead, the bill would put the interests of corporations ahead of the interests of our own constituents. Something is wrong with that picture.

Members should vote against this bill, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1000

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill. It is a simple, straightforward bill that asks a couple of quick questions: Do the people of America work for the Federal Government, or does the Federal Government work for the people of America? It is a straightforward ques-

tion. This bill requires that the Federal Government and every agency have a conversation with the people they regulate to make sure that they actually understand what they are doing when they regulate.

I understand full well, there are plenty of well-meaning people here in Washington, D.C., who are serving our Nation faithfully, but they do not know every State in the country. They don't know every business in the country. That is not what they do full time. They manage here for the Federal Government full time, but they are given the responsibility to be able to promulgate rules and regulations that they may or may not have any idea even how that will be accomplished when they get there, or the real cost of that. The estimates that occasionally come up for the different costs we find out later are much, much higher than were ever estimated by a Federal agency.

So this bill does a few things.

In 1995, we said we are not going to put unfunded mandates on cities, States, and counties or tribes unless there is a compelling reason to do so, and then we could override and do that. This bill says that should be true of the American people as a whole, that we should not pour out some unfunded mandates across the entire economy unless there is some compelling reason to do so, and then Congress still has the authority to do that at that point, if needed.

This also says there should be some sort of judicial review so if someone in some agency makes a mistake, which we all as humans do, there is an opportunity to be able to respond to that, and an outlet where they can go to get justification for that, rather than having to go back to the agency that created the rule to say, Would you please change it? They say, No, but you can appeal it to the person in the cubicle next to me, appeal it to them. They say let's go to an outside entity. That seems to be an American system, that when you have a difference of opinion, you have an opportunity to be able to resolve that with someone outside the system.

This is an opportunity to reconnect the Federal Government back to the people that we are sent to represent and to say it is essential that we close the loopholes that exempt out some agencies, that we close the loopholes that allow agencies to move forward on putting down major regulations without evaluating those things, and we allow a distinct opportunity for the American people and their own government to have dialogue again and to say if we are going to resolve our differences on this and we are going to provide safety and security for people across the Nation, let's do it together in the least costly, least burdensome way possible.

I support this bill, and I encourage my colleagues to stand with me to provide greater transparency and greater conversation to the American people and their own government.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. WOMACK). All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule, and shall be considered as read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 899

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2013”.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is—

(1) to improve the quality of the deliberations of Congress with respect to proposed Federal mandates by—

(A) providing Congress and the public with more complete information about the effects of such mandates; and

(B) ensuring that Congress acts on such mandates only after focused deliberation on their effects; and

(2) to enhance the ability of Congress and the public to identify Federal mandates that may impose undue harm on consumers, workers, employers, small businesses, and State, local, and tribal governments.

SEC. 3. PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE STUDIES ON POLICIES INVOLVING CHANGES IN CONDITIONS OF GRANT AID.

Section 202(g) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 602(g)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) **ADDITIONAL STUDIES.**—At the request of any Chairman or ranking member of the minority of a Committee of the Senate or the House of Representatives, the Director shall conduct an assessment comparing the authorized level of funding in a bill or resolution to the prospective costs of carrying out any changes to a condition of Federal assistance being imposed on State, local, or tribal governments participating in the Federal assistance program concerned or, in the case of a bill or joint resolution that authorizes such sums as are necessary, an assessment of an estimated level of funding compared to such costs.”.

SEC. 4. CLARIFYING THE DEFINITION OF DIRECT COSTS TO REFLECT CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE PRACTICE.

Section 421(3) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 658(3)(A)(i)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)(i), by inserting “incur or” before “be required”; and

(2) in subparagraph (B), by inserting after “to spend” the following: “or could forgo in profits, including costs passed on to consumers or other entities taking into account, to the extent practicable, behavioral changes.”.

SEC. 5. EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF REPORTING REQUIREMENTS TO INCLUDE REGULATIONS IMPOSED BY INDEPENDENT REGULATORY AGENCIES.

Paragraph (1) of section 421 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 658) is amended by striking “, but does not include independent regulatory agencies” and inserting “, except it does not include the Board of

Governors of the Federal Reserve System or the Federal Open Market Committee”.

SEC. 6. AMENDMENTS TO REPLACE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET WITH OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS.

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-4; 2 U.S.C. 1511 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 103(c) (2 U.S.C. 1511(c))—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking “OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET” and inserting “OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS”; and

(B) by striking “Director of the Office of Management and Budget” and inserting “Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs”;

(2) in section 205(c) (2 U.S.C. 1535(c))—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking “OMB”; and

(B) by striking “Director of the Office of Management and Budget” and inserting “Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs”; and

(3) in section 206 (2 U.S.C. 1536), by striking “Director of the Office of Management and Budget” and inserting “Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs”.

SEC. 7. APPLYING SUBSTANTIVE POINT OF ORDER TO PRIVATE SECTOR MANDATES.

Section 425(a)(2) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 658d(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking “Federal intergovernmental mandates” and inserting “Federal mandates”; and

(2) by inserting “or 424(b)(1)” after “section 424(a)(1)”.

SEC. 8. REGULATORY PROCESS AND PRINCIPLES.

Section 201 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 201. REGULATORY PROCESS AND PRINCIPLES.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Each agency shall, unless otherwise expressly prohibited by law, assess the effects of Federal regulatory actions on State, local, and tribal governments and the private sector (other than to the extent that such regulatory actions incorporate requirements specifically set forth in law) in accordance with the following principles:

“(1) Each agency shall identify the problem that it intends to address (including, if applicable, the failures of private markets or public institutions that warrant new agency action) as well as assess the significance of that problem.

“(2) Each agency shall examine whether existing regulations (or other law) have created, or contributed to, the problem that a new regulation is intended to correct and whether those regulations (or other law) should be modified to achieve the intended goal of regulation more effectively.

“(3) Each agency shall identify and assess available alternatives to direct regulation, including providing economic incentives to encourage the desired behavior, such as user fees or marketable permits, or providing information upon which choices can be made by the public.

“(4) If an agency determines that a regulation is the best available method of achieving the regulatory objective, it shall design its regulations in the most cost-effective manner to achieve the regulatory objective. In doing so, each agency shall consider incentives for innovation, consistency, predictability, the costs of enforcement and compli-

ance (to the government, regulated entities, and the public), flexibility, distributive impacts, and equity.

“(5) Each agency shall assess both the costs and the benefits of the intended regulation and, recognizing that some costs and benefits are difficult to quantify, propose or adopt a regulation, unless expressly prohibited by law, only upon a reasoned determination that the benefits of the intended regulation justify its costs.

“(6) Each agency shall base its decisions on the best reasonably obtainable scientific, technical, economic, and other information concerning the need for, and consequences of, the intended regulation.

“(7) Each agency shall identify and assess alternative forms of regulation and shall, to the extent feasible, specify performance objectives, rather than specifying the behavior or manner of compliance that regulated entities must adopt.

“(8) Each agency shall avoid regulations that are inconsistent, incompatible, or duplicative with its other regulations or those of other Federal agencies.

“(9) Each agency shall tailor its regulations to minimize the costs of the cumulative impact of regulations.

“(10) Each agency shall draft its regulations to be simple and easy to understand, with the goal of minimizing the potential for uncertainty and litigation arising from such uncertainty.

“(b) **REGULATORY ACTION DEFINED.**—In this section, the term ‘regulatory action’ means any substantive action by an agency (normally published in the Federal Register) that promulgates or is expected to lead to the promulgation of a final rule or regulation, including advance notices of proposed rulemaking and notices of proposed rulemaking.”.

SEC. 9. EXPANDING THE SCOPE OF STATEMENTS TO ACCOMPANY SIGNIFICANT REGULATORY ACTIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subsection (a) of section 202 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1532) is amended to read as follows:

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Unless otherwise expressly prohibited by law, before promulgating any general notice of proposed rulemaking or any final rule, or within six months after promulgating any final rule that was not preceded by a general notice of proposed rulemaking, if the proposed rulemaking or final rule includes a Federal mandate that may result in an annual effect on State, local, or tribal governments, or to the private sector, in the aggregate of \$100,000,000 or more in any 1 year, the agency shall prepare a written statement containing the following:

“(1) The text of the draft proposed rulemaking or final rule, together with a reasonably detailed description of the need for the proposed rulemaking or final rule and an explanation of how the proposed rulemaking or final rule will meet that need.

“(2) An assessment of the potential costs and benefits of the proposed rulemaking or final rule, including an explanation of the manner in which the proposed rulemaking or final rule is consistent with a statutory requirement and avoids undue interference with State, local, and tribal governments in the exercise of their governmental functions.

“(3) A qualitative and quantitative assessment, including the underlying analysis, of benefits anticipated from the proposed rulemaking or final rule (such as the promotion of the efficient functioning of the economy and private markets, the enhancement of

health and safety, the protection of the natural environment, and the elimination or reduction of discrimination or bias).

“(4) A qualitative and quantitative assessment, including the underlying analysis, of costs anticipated from the proposed rulemaking or final rule (such as the direct costs both to the Government in administering the final rule and to businesses and others in complying with the final rule, and any adverse effects on the efficient functioning of the economy, private markets (including productivity, employment, and international competitiveness), health, safety, and the natural environment);

“(5) Estimates by the agency, if and to the extent that the agency determines that accurate estimates are reasonably feasible, of—

“(A) the future compliance costs of the Federal mandate; and

“(B) any disproportionate budgetary effects of the Federal mandate upon any particular regions of the Nation or particular State, local, or tribal governments, urban or rural or other types of communities, or particular segments of the private sector.

“(6)(A) A detailed description of the extent of the agency's prior consultation with the private sector and elected representatives (under section 204) of the affected State, local, and tribal governments.

“(B) A detailed summary of the comments and concerns that were presented by the private sector and State, local, or tribal governments either orally or in writing to the agency.

“(C) A detailed summary of the agency's evaluation of those comments and concerns.

“(7) A detailed summary of how the agency complied with each of the regulatory principles described in section 201.”

(b) **REQUIREMENT FOR DETAILED SUMMARY.**—Subsection (b) of section 202 of such Act is amended by inserting “detailed” before “summary”.

SEC. 10. ENHANCED STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION.

Section 204 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1534) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by inserting “**AND PRIVATE SECTOR**” before “**INPUT**”;

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting “, and impacted parties within the private sector (including small business),” after “on their behalf”;

(B) by striking “Federal intergovernmental mandates” and inserting “Federal mandates”; and

(3) by amending subsection (c) to read as follows:

“(c) **GUIDELINES.**—For appropriate implementation of subsections (a) and (b) consistent with applicable laws and regulations, the following guidelines shall be followed:

“(1) Consultations shall take place as early as possible, before issuance of a notice of proposed rulemaking, continue through the final rule stage, and be integrated explicitly into the rulemaking process.

“(2) Agencies shall consult with a wide variety of State, local, and tribal officials and impacted parties within the private sector (including small businesses). Geographic, political, and other factors that may differentiate varying points of view should be considered.

“(3) Agencies should estimate benefits and costs to assist with these consultations. The scope of the consultation should reflect the cost and significance of the Federal mandate being considered.

“(4) Agencies shall, to the extent practicable—

“(A) seek out the views of State, local, and tribal governments, and impacted parties within the private sector (including small business), on costs, benefits, and risks; and

“(B) solicit ideas about alternative methods of compliance and potential flexibilities, and input on whether the Federal regulation will harmonize with and not duplicate similar laws in other levels of government.

“(5) Consultations shall address the cumulative impact of regulations on the affected entities.

“(6) Agencies may accept electronic submissions of comments by relevant parties but may not use those comments as the sole method of satisfying the guidelines in this subsection.”

SEC. 11. NEW AUTHORITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS.

Section 208 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1538) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 208. OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS RESPONSIBILITIES.

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs shall provide meaningful guidance and oversight so that each agency's regulations for which a written statement is required under section 202 are consistent with the principles and requirements of this title, as well as other applicable laws, and do not conflict with the policies or actions of another agency. If the Administrator determines that an agency's regulations for which a written statement is required under section 202 do not comply with such principles and requirements, are not consistent with other applicable laws, or conflict with the policies or actions of another agency, the Administrator shall identify areas of non-compliance, notify the agency, and request that the agency comply before the agency finalizes the regulation concerned.

“(b) **ANNUAL STATEMENTS TO CONGRESS ON AGENCY COMPLIANCE.**—The Director of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs annually shall submit to Congress, including the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives, a written report detailing compliance by each agency with the requirements of this title that relate to regulations for which a written statement is required by section 202, including activities undertaken at the request of the Director to improve compliance, during the preceding reporting period. The report shall also contain an appendix detailing compliance by each agency with section 204.”

SEC. 12. RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS OF EXISTING FEDERAL REGULATIONS.

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-4; 2 U.S.C. 1511 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating section 209 as section 210; and

(2) by inserting after section 208 the following new section 209:

“SEC. 209. RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS OF EXISTING FEDERAL REGULATIONS.

“(a) **REQUIREMENT.**—At the request of the chairman or ranking minority member of a standing or select committee of the House of Representatives or the Senate, an agency shall conduct a retrospective analysis of an existing Federal regulation promulgated by an agency.

“(b) **REPORT.**—Each agency conducting a retrospective analysis of existing Federal

regulations pursuant to subsection (a) shall submit to the chairman of the relevant committee, Congress, and the Comptroller General a report containing, with respect to each Federal regulation covered by the analysis—

“(1) a copy of the Federal regulation;

“(2) the continued need for the Federal regulation;

“(3) the nature of comments or complaints received concerning the Federal regulation from the public since the Federal regulation was promulgated;

“(4) the extent to which the Federal regulation overlaps, duplicates, or conflicts with other Federal regulations, and, to the extent feasible, with State and local governmental rules;

“(5) the degree to which technology, economic conditions, or other factors have changed in the area affected by the Federal regulation;

“(6) a complete analysis of the retrospective direct costs and benefits of the Federal regulation that considers studies done outside the Federal Government (if any) estimating such costs or benefits; and

“(7) any litigation history challenging the Federal regulation.”

SEC. 13. EXPANSION OF JUDICIAL REVIEW.

Section 401(a) of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1571(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraphs (1) and (2)(A)—

(A) by striking “sections 202 and 203(a)(1) and (2)” each place it appears and inserting “sections 201, 202, 203(a)(1) and (2), and 205(a) and (b)”;

(B) by striking “only” each place it appears;

(2) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking “section 202” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting the following: “section 202, prepare the written plan under section 203(a)(1) and (2), or comply with section 205(a) and (b), a court may compel the agency to prepare such written statement, prepare such written plan, or comply with such section.”; and

(3) in paragraph (3), by striking “written statement or plan is required” and all that follows through “shall not” and inserting the following: “written statement under section 202, a written plan under section 203(a)(1) and (2), or compliance with sections 201 and 205(a) and (b) is required, the inadequacy or failure to prepare such statement (including the inadequacy or failure to prepare any estimate, analysis, statement, or description), to prepare such written plan, or to comply with such section may”.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to the bill is in order except those printed in House Report 113-362. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. CUMMINGS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 113-362.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike section 5.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 492, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, I am offering this amendment to strike section 5 of H.R. 899. My amendment would preserve the integrity of independent agencies.

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act currently exempts independent agencies. The bill we are considering would remove that exemption. That would mean that these agencies would have to submit their rules to the Office of Management and Budget for review.

Congress creates independent agencies to be just that, independent. Requiring these agencies to submit their rules for review by the White House, no matter who is President, would be inappropriate.

Some of the agencies that would be impacted by this provision include the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and the Federal Communications Commission.

This amendment simply maintains the exemption for independent agencies that is current in law. I urge every Member of this body to support my amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Oklahoma is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, independent regulatory agencies impose significant costs on our economy and often impose Federal mandates on State and local governments and the private sector. The Securities and Exchange Commission, the National Labor Relations Board, and the Federal Communications Commission are just a few examples of agencies that impose regulations without consideration of the actual cost or impact on the public.

Now, this bill does not prevent agencies from creating regulations. The amendment gives the impression that this will be a wild West, and all of these agencies will be limited. It only asks them to consider the cost and the impact of those regulations and to have some conversation with people on how it could be done less burdensome or less expensive.

According to a 2011 Administrative Law Review article:

Analysis conducted by independent regulatory agencies is generally the minimum required by statute. In many instances, the independent regulatory agencies appear to be issuing major regulations without report-

ing any quantitative information on benefits and costs.

OMB's 2013 draft report to Congress on the benefits and costs of Federal regulations and unfunded mandates provides a limited view of the cost-benefit analyses conducted by a limited number of independent regulatory agencies. For major rules issued by agencies included in the report, more than 35 percent were issued without any cost-benefit analysis at all.

CRS reports that from fiscal year 2010 through fiscal year 2012, 57 major rules were issued by nine independent agencies, but none of those rules included monetized cost-benefit analyses, and less than 50 percent provided any estimate as to costs at all.

The cost-benefit analyses under UMRA are essential for a transparent and accountable regulatory system. Reporting on the analyses does nothing to compromise the independence of these agencies, and we know this because OMB already reports on whether or not several independent agencies are conducting the analyses—including the Federal Trade Commission, the Federal Reserve, and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

Requiring that these agencies are covered by UMRA does not require that OMB review or approve of the analyses, only that the agencies are accountable for considering the costs and the benefits of imposing unfunded mandates on State and local governments and the private sector.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. As I close, let me say this, Mr. Chairman. Again, these are independent agencies. Independent agencies could be required to do cost-benefit analysis without requiring rules to go through OMB. This bill allows the administrator of OIRA to hold up a rule if he or she determines the agency didn't comply. I would urge Members to vote in favor of my amendment.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, as I have stated before, it is entirely appropriate for independent agencies to have to also review the cost in the actual context of what they are accomplishing and the economy itself. That is an appropriate thing for every agency to do. We should count the costs before regulations are actually imposed on our economy. So I oppose this amendment. I have great respect for my colleague, but I have to oppose this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Maryland will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. CONNOLLY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 113-362.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 13, line 6, strike "and".

Page 14, line 16, strike the period at the end and insert "; and".

Page 14, after line 16, insert the following: (4) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(d) TREATMENT OF OTHER IMPACTED PARTIES.—Any opportunity for consultation afforded to impacted parties within the private sector under this section shall be afforded to representatives of all other impacted parties."

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 492, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I am proud to offer this amendment on behalf of myself and my good friend, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH).

H.R. 899 boasts an Orwellian title that attempts to deceive the public into believing that the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act is simply an innocuous attempt to enhance transparency—rather than the subversive legislative assault on public health, safety, and environmental protections that it truly is.

H.R. 899 is simply an effort to throw a wrench into the rulemaking process, ensuring that private industry is provided privileges and rights far above any other stakeholder in the regulatory process.

In many respects, H.R. 899 represents the Mitt Romney principle on steroids, for it appears that in the minds of our friends on the other side of the aisle, not only is it a fact that "corporations are people, my friend," but under this measure, Republicans appear to be embracing an ethos that treats corporations better than people.

Regrettably, this bill provides private corporations with an unfair consultation advantage over every other stakeholder in the regulatory process. That is indefensible.

Under this bill, Federal agencies would be required to consult with private industry "before issuance of a proposed rulemaking," yet it does not afford the same level of consultation to average citizens who rely on agency rules to preserve and protect their health, welfare, and safety.

There is no justification for enacting an irrational statutory framework that requires the Federal Government to consult with private firms, such as a large agribusiness firm, prior to imposing a rule that will impact that company, yet does not require consultation with public health experts, or everyday Americans who will be forced to live with the consequences of a given regulation.

I cannot defend a regulatory framework that would provide big oil companies, for example, a guaranteed right to weigh in before any drilling regulation is promulgated, but would not require equal consultation with public interest organizations, such as entities committed to protecting and preserving our Nation's environment and natural resources, or the communities that could be directly impacted by such activities.

To be clear, I strongly support the rights of industry to have an opportunity to provide comments on proposed rules. It fosters more informed, quality rulemaking, and benefits both businesses and our broader society. Indeed, that is why our current administrative procedures mandate that a public comment process be conducted to allow any individual or corporation to participate and provide input and feedback in an equal, fair, and open process. That is current law.

The amendment that Congresswoman DUCKWORTH and I are proposing today would simply ensure that all participants in the rulemaking process be provided equal consultation rights with agencies. For example, as Ranking Member CUMMINGS noted earlier, if the U.S. Department of Agriculture were to propose a public health rule affecting agribusiness in an effort to protect the health of everyday Americans, our amendment would ensure that not only the agribusinesses, but also food safety experts, children's health organizations, medical associations, and scientific entities would also be provided an opportunity to consult with USDA prior to the issuance of the proposed rule.

I strongly urge all Members to support our commonsense amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Oklahoma is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chair, it may be a good moment to shine some facts into this debate. I agree that expanding the consultation requirements for the impacted parties is important. Those parties directly affected by the regulation should have an opportunity to be able to voice concerns about feasibility and offer sensible corrections from people with expertise from years of experience. That is a large part of what this bill does; when a regulation comes

down, impacted individuals should be able to come to the table to be able to discuss what is the impact of this.

This particular amendment is completely redundant. It requires that any opportunity for consultation afforded to impacted parties within the private sector under the section shall be afforded to representatives of all other impacted parties.

Well, UMRA already defines the private sector as individuals, partnerships, associations, corporations, educational and nonprofit institutions, but it shall not include State, local, and tribal governments since State, local, and tribal governments are already covered in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, the original one. So I have to ask the question: Who is left? If it already covers individuals, partnerships, associations, corporations, educational and nonprofit institutions, State, local, and tribal governments, it covers everyone already.

If you are impacted by legislation and by regulation, you should have the opportunity to respond to that. We completely agree.

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It is important to note this is not the only opportunity to offer suggestions and critiques though. Those not directly regulated by the rule have an opportunity for input during the comment period as required by the Administrative Procedures Act in the executive order.

This perception that somehow people are being locked out of the process is incorrect. It is the people that are impacted, though, that should have the first voice. That would be people impacted in the community, that would be people impacted in business, or any kind of government.

For example, under current law, taxpayers and public workers are not required to be consulted prior to an agency proposing a rule that will put a Federal mandate on the States and local governments, a mandate that could require public entities to ship resources that could affect hiring decisions or a reduction in public services.

Taxpayers, public workers, consumer groups, and anyone else who is interested—but not directly impacted—have that opportunity to provide input at notice and comment stage; but this amendment, however, appears to repeat the consultation requirement that H.R. 899 seeks to provide.

Those Members who want impacted parties to have an early voice in development of regulations that impose burdensome mandates on the private sector ought to just vote for the bill. Adding a repetitive requirement creates ambiguity about the intent of Congress, and for that reason, I oppose this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia has 90 seconds remaining.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I don't quite understand the opposition of my friend from Oklahoma; if it is duplicative, then it is harmless. I think clarification to make sure that citizens have the same rights as special interests and corporations is actually a good thing to clarify. I don't think it adds ambiguity; I think it adds clarity, which may be why my good friend opposes it.

I would also ask, at this time, a statement to every Member of Congress endorsing this amendment from the Coalition for Sensible Safeguards be entered into the RECORD.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

COALITION FOR SENSIBLE SAFEGUARDS,

February 26, 2014.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE, The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards (CSS), which includes more than 150 labor, environmental, public health, scientific, consumer, financial reform, and public interest groups, strongly opposes H.R. 899, the dangerous and harmful "Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2013." This proposal would undermine our nation's ability to set health, safety and environmental standards as well as new financial protections. Given that we have experienced multiple health and safety disasters in communities and workplaces across the country in recent years, it is the wrong time to thwart the progress of necessary public protections.

While CSS strongly urges members to vote no on H.R. 899, CSS encourages members to support the amendments offered below:

Amendment #1 sponsored by Congressman Cummings (MD): This amendment strikes section 5 of the bill, which would eliminate the current exemption from the Unfunded Mandate Reform Act for certain independent agencies. This crucial amendment would ensure that agencies that Congress designated to be independent of the Executive Branch remain so. Further, the amendment would ensure that the important regulations of these agencies, including the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, are not subject to this legislation's wasteful, unnecessary, and unfunded requirements and can be adopted in a timely and efficient manner.

Amendment #4 sponsored by Congresswoman Jackson-Lee (TX): This amendment adds Section 14 to the bill to clarify that the requirements of UMRA as amended by this Act do not apply if a cost-benefit analysis demonstrates that the benefits of the regulatory action exceed its costs. This commonsense amendment makes clear that regulations whose benefits to public health and safety exceed the costs to regulated industries, thereby making them good public investments, are not legislation's wasteful, unnecessary, and unfunded requirements and can be adopted in a timely and efficient manner.

Amendment #5 sponsored by Congressman Connolly (VA): This amendment ensures that other impacted entities, such as public interest organizations, are provided any opportunity for consultation afforded to the private sector under the Act. This commonsense amendment levels the playing field to allow public interest organizations the same privilege and access that the legislation only

affords to the business community and ensures that the regulatory process is fair and open to all stakeholders in an equal manner.

Sincerely,

KATHERINE MCFATE,
*President and CEO,
Center for Effective
Government; Co-
chair, Coalition for
Sensible Safeguards.*

ROBERT WEISSMAN,
*Persident, Public Cit-
izen; Co-chair, Coa-
lition for Sensible
Safeguards.*

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, there are a lot of things that I oppose in government. Duplication is one of those. Clarity is best done when it is clear and it is said one time and it is consistent.

It is already very clear. Individuals, partnerships, associations, corporations, and educational and nonprofit institutions are included in this. All those who are impacted can step up in front of an agency and say: we will be impacted.

You are a person; you are a citizen; you are an individual. You have an opportunity to be able to come and join into that conversation.

We believe strongly that you should have the opportunity, if you are impacted, to get your voice heard. Again, the Federal Government works for people; people don't work for the Federal Government. So when you are impacted, you should also have a voice as well.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Chair, I strongly support efforts to make sure that government regulations are not overly burdensome and do not needlessly harm business growth.

In fact the very first piece of legislation I introduced—the Small Business Paperwork Relief Act—sought to help small businesses lower the costs of complying with federal regulations.

But I am very concerned that H.R. 899 goes beyond well intentioned efforts to make the regulatory process more accessible to stakeholders, and instead seeks to give big businesses a voice so loud that it drowns out American consumers.

In particular, Section 10 of the bill, which would allow the private sector exclusive early access to the rulemaking process, will give just one stakeholder unnecessary and unfair influence.

Increasing stakeholder input in the rule-making process is a worthy goal, and businesses should certainly be a part of that, but we can't govern only on behalf of one stakeholder.

Our government should work for all Americans, not just some.

And we have a responsibility to balance the priorities of our society as a whole with the interests of business.

When we're talking about a rule that governs whether moms and dads in Illinois can have peace of mind that the food their children eat won't make them sick, or that a worker at a manufacturing facility in my district doesn't

have to choose between a paycheck and their workplace safety—the stakes could not be higher.

The concerns of these Americans should not matter less than those of corporations seeking to maximize their profits. They deserve a seat at the table as well.

This amendment seeks to level the playing field and improve transparency for all Americans.

It would simply give individuals the same rights provided to corporations under this bill.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this common sense, good government amendment that will stand up for the rights of all Americans.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON
LEE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 113-362.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following new section:

SEC. 14. INAPPLICABILITY OF UNFUNDED MANDATES REFORM ACT IF COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS SHOWS BENEFITS OF REGULATORY ACTION EXCEED COSTS.

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-4; 2 U.S.C. 1511 et seq.), as amended by this Act, shall not apply to a regulatory action if a cost-benefit analysis demonstrates the benefits of the regulatory action exceed the costs of the regulatory action.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 492, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, let me thank the chairman for the time and to the two managers of this particular legislation on the floor, particularly to the ranking member for his leadership, and simply ask the question: For those of us who have served in this body the time when the unfunded mandate's original legislation was passed, what possible addition this particular amendment can have?

Let me first start off by saying that I appreciate the good intentions of work that is brought to the floor of the House; but I want to remind my col-

leagues that, as we speak, the growing numbers of the uninsured continue to rise, and the emergency unemployment insurance has not been passed by this body.

In fact, not passing unemployment insurance is an unfunded mandate. For what we do is we say to the States that 1.3–1.5 million-plus, including family members, of individuals who have worked and who are out every day looking for work are no longer the responsibility of anyone here in the Federal Government.

After the States have maxed out on their 26 weeks, we simply throw these people into the streets. I would imagine that States and nonprofits may have to address their needs through homeless shelters, through food banks, soup kitchens, and other municipality resources that they can scramble together.

It is interesting that we are here discussing an unfunded mandate. As we speak, millions of Americans are suffering because we have refused to address an important issue.

In addition, the minimum wage has thrown throngs of individuals into the claws of desperation on the lack of raising it, of which I have signed a petition—a discharge petition to do so.

As I rise, I want to acknowledge my amendment, which specifically indicates that, if the benefits exceed the costs, then this industry or the industries or this particular provision would not be covering. It clarifies that the provisions of the bill do not apply if a cost-benefit analysis demonstrates that the benefits of a regulatory action exceed its costs.

My amendment improves the bill by ensuring that regulatory actions needed to protect the public health, safety, and environment can be promulgated and implemented and not be stymied by dilatory tactics.

The Jackson Lee amendment is strongly supported by the Coalition for Sensible Safeguards, an organization comprised of more than 150 public health, scientific, consumer, environmental, labor, financial, and public interest groups.

Let me say something that I think my colleagues need to know that is distinctive about this amendment. There is a requirement that Federal agencies consult with private corporations.

I heard my good friend say that the Federal Government is for the people, not the other way around. But guess what? There is no requirement for consultation with stakeholders or the public before proposing any new rules. How hypocritical is that? I must consult with private corporations—many of us represent them. We appreciate the work they create—but none of the stakeholders need to be consulted with.

So I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Oklahoma is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, I can tell you I am all for a cost-benefit analysis, but the challenge of doing a cost-benefit analysis comes down to who is doing the cost-benefit analysis and what are they putting into it.

There have been multiple times that we have had conversations about a cost-benefit analysis, and there has been a push back to say: well, let's go back and check the math on that later and see if we actually got the benefit that was proposed that we will receive for that benefit.

A benefit analysis, in particular, is kind of under scrutiny by academics, even under the Obama administration. As an example, the EPA issued a new standard for mercury emissions and reported that benefits of the rule were up to \$90 billion a year, far above their \$10 billion a year cost.

Less than .01 of that \$90 billion in benefits was attributable to actual reduction in mercury, though; instead, nearly all the benefits came from reductions in fine particles, a pollutant that was not even the purposed target of the regulation itself. Fine particle cobenefits accounted for two-thirds of the benefits of the economically significant rules in 2010.

This administration has padded the benefit analysis with private benefits. In the fuel economy standards, for instance, for cars and light trucks, nearly 90 percent of the \$338 billion in lifetime benefits were benefits to consumers, such as reduced fuel consumption, and—how about this one—shorter refueling times.

Private benefits account for 92 percent of the benefits in energy efficiency standards for washing machines and 70 percent of the benefits in energy efficiency standards for refrigerators.

Essentially, the private benefit accounting is a claim that depriving consumers of preferred choices will make them better off because benefits like fuel savings are worth more to consumers than consumers actually realized.

To exclude regulations from an UMRA analysis, based on faulty and misleading benefits analysis, would only encourage distortion. Further, the point of UMRA is to identify burdensome new mandates for the parties that have to bear the burden.

You see, that company bears the burden. That cost gets passed on directly to consumers. So this “private benefits”—that you are going to get more benefit than you thought you would ever get or will ever see—doesn't offset the cost they do see coming out of their paycheck when gasoline is more expensive, groceries are more expensive, and electricity if more expensive.

Often, parties who pay the cost of these regulations are not the same parties that actually enjoy the benefits. Even if a rule is predicted to have a net benefit, impacted entities should be made aware of sizable new burdens imposed by Federal mandates.

For this reason, I do oppose this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Texas has 90 seconds remaining.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, let me quickly say that, in the previous bill, it was well noted that there were exemptions dealing with constitutional issues and civil rights issues; so my amendment is in track, on line with the original bill that gave exemptions.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Chairman, I want us to be able to move forward on this bill. I want the American people to know that their government serves them and that individuals are able to be able to speak back to their own government when their government is imposing a regulation on them.

I think that is entirely reasonable for any affected party to be able to engage in conversation with their own government. I think it is entirely appropriate.

This is long overdue. The 1995 UMRA bill was written with large loopholes that exempted out agencies, exempted out different entities. It created an environment where it is beneficial to the agency to distort the cost. Let's clear that.

Let's just get back to doing what we should do, not people trying to sneak in rules, not people trying to sneak in a different cost-benefit analysis. Let's just have conversation again between the American people and the government that they are in charge of.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for his analysis; but let me offer to him that, first of all, this particular legislation will be subject to a veto threat because, as the President has noted, there is already a robust, analytical, and procedural requirement. I agree there should be that, and we already have it.

The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards has indicated that the Jackson Lee amendment is a commonsense amendment that makes clear that regulations whose benefits to public health safety exceed the cost of regulated industries are good public investments.

This amendment is a necessary amendment. The Jackson Lee amendment says if it is a good public investment, and it helps in order to clarify some of the untoward provisions of this

legislation that will require an interaction with a private corporation, but never talking to the public.

Mr. Chairman, if we are for the people, they should at least be there to be inquired of: What do you think?

And finally, let us end the unfunded mandate of not passing unemployment insurance extension and not lifting the minimum wage. That is an unfunded mandate.

I would ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment because it clarifies and it puts the people first. I join with my colleague. This is a place for people. We are the ones—the people who run this government. Give them an opportunity to consult under this legislation. Support the Jackson Lee amendment.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

My amendment is simple and straightforward.

The Jackson Lee amendment improves the bill by clarifying that the provisions of the bill do not apply if a cost-benefit analysis demonstrates that the benefits of a regulatory action exceed its costs.

My amendment improves the bill by ensuring that regulatory actions needed to protect the public health, safety, and environment can be promulgated and implemented and not be stymied by dilatory tactics and unnecessary delays.

That is why the Jackson Lee amendment is strongly supported by the Coalition on Sensible Safeguards, an organization comprised of more than 150 public health, scientific, consumer, environmental, labor, financial reform, and public interest groups.

Mr. Chair, H.R. 899, the “Unfunded Mandates Reform Act” (UMRA), would erect new barriers to slow down the regulatory process and would give corporations an unfair advantage in the regulatory process.

Section 5 of the bill would repeal language that excludes independent regulatory agencies from the reporting requirements of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA), with the exception of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve and the Federal Open Market Committee. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is responsible for overseeing the UMRA process.

Since the independent agencies would be under the direction of OMB for purposes of UMRA compliance, this could compromise the independence of those agencies.

Section 7 of H.R. 899 would create a new point of order in the House of Representatives for legislation containing an unfunded mandate, making it more difficult to enact legislation.

Section 8 would incorporate a cost-benefit requirement from Executive Order 12866, but it would not include language from the same Executive Order directing agencies to perform these assessments “to the extent feasible.”

Section 10 would require agencies to provide impacted parties in the private sector—but not other stakeholders—with advance notice and opportunity to provide input on proposed regulations.

Section 10 also requires agencies to conduct consultations with private sector businesses “as early as possible, before the issuance of a notice of proposed rulemaking.”

Expanding this consultation requirement only to the private sector gives corporations an unfair advantage over other stakeholders in the development of regulatory proposals.

During consideration of this bill by the Committee, Representatives GERRY CONNOLLY and TAMMY DUCKWORTH offered an amendment that would have evened the playing field by requiring that: “Any opportunities or rights afforded to a corporation under this section shall also be afforded to any interested individual.”

The Connolly-Duckworth amendment was rejected.

Section 11 would codify the role of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) in reviewing agency regulations and require that if the OIRA Administrator finds that an agency did not comply with UMRA’s requirements, the Administrator must request that the agency comply before the regulation is finalized.

Section 12 would require that, “at the request of the chairman or ranking minority member of a standing or select committee of the House of Representatives or Senate, an agency shall conduct a retrospective analysis of an existing Federal regulation issued by an agency.”

This provision would require agencies to divert resources toward conducting these analyses and away from fulfilling their missions.

Mr. Chair, as the Coalition on Sensible Safeguards says of the Jackson Lee amendment:

This common-sense amendment makes clear that regulations whose benefits to the public health and safety exceed the costs to regulated industries, thereby making them good public investments, are not legislation that is wasteful or unnecessary[.]

I urge all Members to support the Jackson Lee amendment.

COALITION FOR SENSIBLE SAFEGUARDS

February 26, 2014

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE, The Coalition for Sensible Safeguards (CSS), which includes more than 150 labor, environmental, public health, scientific, consumer, financial reform, and public interest groups, strongly opposes H.R. 899, the dangerous and harmful “Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act of 2013.” This proposal would undermine our nation’s ability to set health, safety and environmental standards as well as new financial protections. Given that we have experienced multiple health and safety disasters in communities and workplaces across the country in recent years, it is the wrong time to thwart the progress of necessary public protections.

While CSS strongly urges members to vote no on H.R. 899, CSS encourages members to support the amendments offered below:

Amendment #1 sponsored by Congressman Cummings (MD): This amendment strikes section 5 of the bill, which would eliminate the current exemption from the Unfunded Mandate Reform Act for certain independent agencies. This crucial amendment would ensure that agencies that Congress designated to be independent of the Executive Branch remain so. Further, the amendment would ensure that the important regulations of these agencies, including the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the Con-

sumer Financial Protection Bureau, are not subject to this legislation’s wasteful, unnecessary, and unfunded requirements and can be adopted in a timely and efficient manner.

Amendment #4 sponsored by Congresswoman Jackson Lee (TX): This amendment adds Section 14 to the bill to clarify that the requirements of UMRA as amended by this Act do not apply if a cost-benefit analysis demonstrates that the benefits of the regulatory action exceed its costs. This common-sense amendment makes clear that regulations whose benefits to public health and safety exceed the costs to regulated industries, thereby making them good public investments, are not legislation’s wasteful, unnecessary, and unfunded requirements and can be adopted in a timely and efficient manner.

Amendment #5 sponsored by Congressman Connolly (VA): This amendment ensures that other impacted entities, such as public interest organizations, are provided any opportunity for consultation afforded to the private sector under the Act. This common-sense amendment levels the playing field to allow public interest organizations the same privilege and access that the legislation only affords to the business community and ensures that the regulatory process is fair and open to all stakeholders in an equal manner.

Sincerely,

KATHERINE MCFATE,
President and CEO, Center for Effective
Government, Co-chair, Coalition for
Sensible Safeguards.

ROBERT WEISSMAN,
President, Public Citizen
Co-chair, Coalition for Sensible Safeguards.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in House Report 113-362 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Mr. CUMMINGS of Maryland.

Amendment No. 2 by Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia.

Amendment No. 3 by Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. CUMMINGS

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 185, noes 224, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 86]

AYES—185

Barber	Garcia	Napolitano
Barrow (GA)	Grayson	Neal
Bass	Green, Al	Negrete McLeod
Beatty	Green, Gene	Nolan
Becerra	Grijalva	O'Rourke
Bera (CA)	Gutiérrez	Pallone
Bishop (GA)	Hahn	Pascarell
Bishop (NY)	Hanabusa	Payne
Blumenauer	Hastings (FL)	Pelosi
Bonamici	Heck (WA)	Perlmutter
Brady (PA)	Higgins	Peters (CA)
Braley (IA)	Himes	Peters (MI)
Brown (FL)	Holt	Pingree (ME)
Brownley (CA)	Honda	Pocan
Bustos	Horsford	Polis
Butterfield	Hoyer	Price (NC)
Capps	Huffman	Quigley
Capuano	Israel	Rahall
Cárdenas	Jackson Lee	Rangel
Carney	Jeffries	Richmond
Carson (IN)	Johnson (GA)	Roybal-Allard
Cartwright	Johnson, E. B.	Ruiz
Castor (FL)	Kaptur	Ruppersberger
Castro (TX)	Keating	Ryan (OH)
Chu	Kelly (IL)	Sánchez, Linda
Cicilline	Kennedy	T.
Clark (MA)	Kildee	Sarbanes
Clarke (NY)	Kilmer	Schakowsky
Clay	Kind	Schiff
Cleaver	Kirkpatrick	Schneider
Clyburn	Kuster	Schrader
Cohen	Langevin	Scott (VA)
Connolly	Larsen (WA)	Scott, David
Conyers	Larson (CT)	Serrano
Cooper	Lee (CA)	Sewell (AL)
Courtney	Levin	Shea-Porter
Crowley	Lewis	Sherman
Cummings	Lipinski	Sires
Davis (CA)	Loebsock	Slaughter
Davis, Danny	Lofgren	Speier
DeFazio	Lowenthal	Swalwell (CA)
DeGette	Lowey	Takano
Delaney	Lujan Grisham	Thompson (CA)
DeLauro	(NM)	Thompson (MS)
DelBene	Lujan, Ben Ray	Tierney
Deutch	(NM)	Titus
Dingell	Lynch	Tonko
Doggett	Maffei	Tsongas
Doyle	Maloney,	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Carolyn	Vargas
Edwards	Matsui	Veasey
Ellison	McCollum	Vela
Engel	McDermott	Velázquez
Enyart	McGovern	Visclosky
Eshoo	McIntyre	Walz
Esty	McNerney	Wasserman
Farr	Meeks	Schultz
Fattah	Meng	Waters
Foster	Michaud	Waxman
Frankel (FL)	Miller, George	Welch
Fudge	Moore	Wilson (FL)
Gabbard	Moran	Yarmuth
Galleo	Murphy (FL)	
Garamendi	Nadler	

NOES—224

Aderholt	Bridenstine	Chabot
Amash	Brooks (AL)	Chaffetz
Amodei	Brooks (IN)	Coble
Bachmann	Broun (GA)	Coffman
Bachus	Buchanan	Cole
Barletta	Bucshon	Collins (GA)
Barr	Burgess	Collins (NY)
Barton	Byrne	Conaway
Benishek	Camp	Cook
Bentivolio	Campbell	Costa
Billakis	Cantor	Cotton
Blackburn	Capito	Crawford
Boustany	Carter	Crenshaw
Brady (TX)	Cassidy	Cuellar

Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Hultgren
Hunter
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)

King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci

Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—21

Bishop (UT)
Black
Calvert
Cramer
Fortenberry
Gosar
Runyan
Hinojosa

Huizenga (MI)
Maloney, Sean
McCarthy (NY)
Pastor (AZ)
Runyan
Rush

Schwartz
Scott, Austin
Smith (WA)
Stockman
Upton
Walden
Westmoreland

□ 1055

Messrs. MULLIN, HUDSON, KING of New York, OLSON, RIBBLE, McKEON, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

Messrs. ELLISON, MAFFEI, and GARAMENDI changed their vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Chair, on roll call No. 86, had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

Stated against:

Mr. HURT. Mr. Chair, I was not present for roll call vote No. 86. Had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. CONNOLLY

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 194, noes 216, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 87]

AYES—194

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego

Garamendi
Garcia
Gibson
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks

Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schraeder
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz

Wasserman
Schultz
Waters

Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)

NOES—216

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)

Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo

Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stutzman
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—20

Bishop (UT)
Black
Calvert
Cramer
Fortenberry
Gosar
Hinojosa

McCarthy (NY)
Pastor (AZ)
Peters (MI)
Runyan
Rush
Schwartz
Scott, Austin

Smith (WA)
Stivers
Stockman
Upton
Walden
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1059

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON
LEE

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 180, noes 232, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 88]

AYES—180

Bass	Gabbard	Meeks
Beatty	Galleo	Meng
Becerra	Garamendi	Michaud
Bera (CA)	Garcia	Miller, George
Bishop (GA)	Gibson	Moore
Bishop (NY)	Grayson	Moran
Blumenauer	Green, Al	Murphy (FL)
Bonamici	Green, Gene	Nadler
Brady (PA)	Grijalva	Napolitano
Braley (IA)	Gutiérrez	Neal
Brown (FL)	Hahn	Negrete McLeod
Brownley (CA)	Hanabusa	Nolan
Bustos	Hastings (FL)	O'Rourke
Butterfield	Heck (WA)	Pallone
Capps	Higgins	Pascarell
Capuano	Himes	Payne
Cárdenas	Hinojosa	Pelosi
Carney	Holt	Perlmutter
Carson (IN)	Honda	Peters (MI)
Cartwright	Horsford	Pingree (ME)
Castor (FL)	Hoyer	Pocan
Castro (TX)	Huffman	Polis
Chu	Israel	Price (NC)
Ciilline	Jackson Lee	Quigley
Clark (MA)	Jeffries	Rangel
Clarke (NY)	Johnson (GA)	Richmond
Clay	Johnson, E. B.	Roybal-Allard
Cleaver	Kaptur	Ruppersberger
Clyburn	Kelly (IL)	Ryan (OH)
Cohen	Kennedy	Sánchez, Linda
Connolly	Kildee	T.
Cooper	Kilmer	Sanchez, Loretta
Courtney	Kind	Sarbanes
Crowley	Kirkpatrick	Schakowsky
Cuellar	Kuster	Schiff
Cummings	Langevin	Schneider
Davis (CA)	Larsen (WA)	Scott (VA)
Davis, Danny	Larson (CT)	Scott, David
DeFazio	Lee (CA)	Serrano
DeGette	Levin	Sewell (AL)
Delaney	Lewis	Shea-Porter
DeLauro	Lipinski	Sherman
DeBene	Loeb sack	Sires
Deutch	Lofgren	Slaughter
Dingell	Lowenthal	Speier
Doggett	Lowey	Swalwell (CA)
Doyle	Lujan Grisham	Takano
Duckworth	(NM)	Thompson (CA)
Edwards	Luján, Ben Ray	Thompson (MS)
Ellison	(NM)	Tierney
Engel	Lynch	Titus
Enyart	Maloney,	Tonko
Eshoo	Carolyn	Tsongas
Esty	Maloney, Sean	Van Hollen
Farr	Matsui	Vargas
Fattah	McCollum	Veasey
Foster	McDermott	Vela
Frankel (FL)	McGovern	Velázquez
Fudge	McNerney	Visclosky

Walz
Wasserman
Schultz

Waters
Waxman
Welch

Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—232

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Conyers
Cook
Costa
Cotton
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Lummis
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Paulsen

Pearce
Perry
Peters (CA)
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Rahall
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Ruiz
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schrader
Schweikert
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—18

Bishop (UT)
Black
Calvert
Cramer
Fortenberry
Gosar
Marchant
McCarthy (NY)
Pastor (AZ)
Runyan
Rush
Schwartz
Scott, Austin
Smith (WA)
Stockman
Upton
Walden
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR
The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1104

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. YODER). There being no further amendments, under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) having assumed the chair, Mr. YODER, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 899) to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 492, he reported the bill back to the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. GARCIA. I am opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Garcia moves to recommit the bill H.R. 899 to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

At the end of the bill, add the following new section:

SEC. 14. EXCEPTION FOR REGULATORY ACTIONS AFFECTING VETERANS, SENIORS, CONSUMERS, AND COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY NATURAL DISASTERS.

The amendments made by this Act shall not apply to regulatory actions if they have the effect of—

(1) providing hiring preferences and jobs for veterans;

(2) protecting patient safety in hospitals and nursing homes;

(3) lowering the overall cost of health care, including out-of-pocket costs for consumers; or

(4) protecting communities from natural disasters and helping them rebuild in the event of a natural disaster.

Mr. LANKFORD (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, this is a final amendment to the bill. This will

not delay the bill. This will not kill the bill. This will not send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will proceed immediately to final passage, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, we should all be able to agree that just as it is absurd to say that all regulations are good, it is absurd to say that all regulations are bad. Unfortunately, this bill does just that.

It assumes that all regulations are bad; it weakens or delays them. Even those that advance important bipartisan priorities are going to be hurt. That is why my amendment is so important. It will ensure that this bill does not create unnecessary hurdles in several important areas, including those that help veterans find jobs, keep health care safe and affordable, and rebuild communities after natural disasters.

Mr. Speaker, there is probably no issue where there is more bipartisan support than in the need to support our Nation's veterans. Those who have risked and sacrificed more than anyone else deserve for us to help keep them safe: veterans, veterans like my constituent George Martinez, who found a job through the program for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, an important program overseen by the VA.

This bill will unfortunately weaken or delay regulations that help veterans like George find jobs when they leave the service. It would have delayed an important regulation that was finalized last year, a regulation that requires contractors to set goals for hiring veterans and list job openings so that veterans can apply for them.

According to estimates, this regulation could ultimately find additional employment for 200,000 veterans. With unemployment for veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan being at almost 10 percent, we should not be delaying this kind of regulation.

Mr. Speaker, my amendment would also keep the bill from creating unnecessary hurdles on regulations that protect patient safety. This bill would unnecessarily create hurdles for regulations that protect patient safety in hospitals and nursing homes, and lower out-of-pocket costs of health care.

These are especially important issues in my home State of Florida where 70,000 nursing home residents live, more than almost any other State in the country. These are our parents, they are our loved ones who should receive the best care possible in their later years. That is why we must ensure that nursing homes remain a safe place of rest and care for our seniors and remain an affordable option for those who need them. That is exactly what my amendment will do.

Finally, this amendment will ensure that the bill does not create unnecessary obstacles for regulations that help

protect and rebuild communities after natural disasters. In south Florida, we are all too familiar with the devastating effects of hurricanes and natural disasters when they strike. Rebuilding communities in their aftermath can take years, as my constituents in Homestead know all too well. That is why we need to move forward with my amendment. We need to have an amendment that ensures this bill does not weaken or delay regulations that facilitate the recovery and rebuilding efforts.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when we face so many important issues, we here in Congress need to come together and do what is right. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" to ensure that we support unemployed veterans, keep health care safe and affordable, and protect our communities from natural disasters.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oklahoma is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, this bill assumes one simple thing: that regulators are not infallible, they are just people. We believe that the Nation will not fall apart if Washington doesn't have more and more growing power. We believe that this Nation became strong because the Federal Government had limited power. You see, I believe and we believe the American people aren't looking for much from us; they just want the unfunded mandates to stop. Someone in Washington decides they have a good idea and suddenly everyone has to pay for their new good idea.

It seems obvious that before a major rule is put into place, the regulators should actually have a consultation with the people that will be affected to see if there is a better way to do the same thing.

It was 3 years ago that I walked into this Chamber. Many people know I don't come from a political background. I have served in churches, where, of course, there are no politics. I can tell you that the American people do not want this city to tell them what to do. They want this city to protect their rights and leave them alone.

As a new Representative, I was surprised that the vast majority of businesses that I interacted with didn't come to me asking for something; they came and said, how can you make this stop? Thousands of small regulations are coming every day. In fact, I am sure everyone read the Federal Register today. There is a new regulation that came out today that decreases the size of an orange. You cannot be an orange in America unless the Department of Agriculture tells you that you are an orange, and there is a new regulation today defining an orange.

There are also 330 major rules that have come out in the last few years

that increase and have an impact on the economy of over \$100 million each. The American people are fed up with Washington, not because we can get nothing done, but because we are already doing too much.

□ 1115

Every day, people wake up to a new regulation. They can't wait to read the Federal Register to see what happened to their business and their life last night.

The opposition to this bill seems to be a fear that it will make the government work harder. Our fear is that the government is already making the American people's work harder every single day. People are worried about how to be able to pay for things, and it is slowing down the economy.

Every mandate that is passed, the economy slows down even more. In fact, the CBO once again this year, just weeks ago, laid out their forecast for the next 10 years, that the economy is going to continue to slow down even more.

Listen, the prevailing attitude in this town that Washington knows best has to stop. It is the responsibility of the States and the Nation to carry out their own wishes. It is not the responsibility of the States and the people to carry out the wishes of Washington, DC.

A lot of people all over this Nation can make good decisions, and this perception that Washington is smarter than everyone else is absolutely not true.

I come from a place that many in this town call flyover country. It may surprise you that planes actually land in flyover country. And when you get off the plane, do you know what you find? You find smart people. People who balance their budgets, serve their neighbors, and love their kids.

They are not helpless. Right when they finally get their budget to balance or get their family back in place, Washington has a new plan for their budget.

When the President said in his State of the Union that, "The shift to a cleaner energy economy won't happen overnight, and it will require tough choices along the way," many people didn't realize that those tough choices would be on their own budgets.

In my State, electricity prices are going up. One of the electricity producers faces new compliance costs of over \$1,500 per meter—per meter—simply because of a new aesthetic air quality regulation. It is not dealing with health. It is just dealing with aesthetic air quality regulations by this administration.

When families try to figure out their paycheck and why it is not going as far anymore, they should ask the question: Why does gas cost more? Why does electricity cost more? Why does corn

cost more? Why does beef cost more? Why does health care cost more? Why are local taxes going up? And why is insurance costing more?

It is not the evil capitalists on Wall Street. It is the oceans of new regulations that are taking every spare dime from Americans' budgets because someone here in Washington thinks they know better.

Listen, whether it is a farm or whether it is on an energy platform or whether it is this Chamber that passed a bill 2 years ago straight down a party-line vote that told every American that they could not pick the health care they wanted, they had to pick the one Washington approved; they couldn't have the same doctor, they had to pick one that Washington approved; they couldn't pay what they chose to because they have to go to the hospital that Washington chose—by the way, the costs are going to go up as well because Washington put a new tax on medical devices, like a dental crown, a knee replacement, or a pacemaker, so right when they are getting hit with medical bills, they are also going to get hit with a new tax as well. What a great idea.

The problem is this government has grown and grown over decades. It is time to turn this around. Now is the moment to give the American people back what they need back, that is, freedom from the ongoing regulations.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by a 5-minute vote on passage of the bill, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 192, noes 218, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 89]

AYES—192

Barber	Capps	Connolly
Barrow (GA)	Capuano	Conyers
Bass	Cardenas	Cooper
Beatty	Carney	Costa
Becerra	Carson (IN)	Courtney
Bera (CA)	Cartwright	Crowley
Bishop (GA)	Castor (FL)	Cuellar
Bishop (NY)	Castro (TX)	Cummings
Blumenauer	Chu	Davis (CA)
Bonamici	Cicilline	Davis, Danny
Brady (PA)	Clark (MA)	DeFazio
Braley (IA)	Clarke (NY)	DeGette
Brown (FL)	Clay	DeLauro
Brownley (CA)	Cleaver	DelBene
Bustos	Clyburn	Dingell
Butterfield	Cohen	

Doggett	Larsen (WA)	Price (NC)
Doyle	Larson (CT)	Quigley
Duckworth	Lee (CA)	Rahall
Edwards	Levin	Rangel
Ellison	Lewis	Richmond
Engel	Lipinski	Roybal-Allard
Enyart	Loeb	Ruiz
Eshoo	Loeb	Ruppersberger
Esty	Lofgren	Ryan (OH)
Farr	Lowenthal	Sánchez, Linda T.
Fattah	Lowey	Sánchez, Loretta
Foster	Lujan Grisham (NM)	Sarbanes
Frankel (FL)	Luján, Ben Ray (NM)	Schakowsky
Fudge	Lynch	Schiff
Gabbard	Maffei	Schneider
Gallego	Maloney	Schrader
Garamendi	Maloney, Carolyn	Scott (VA)
Garcia	Maloney, Sean	Scott, David
Grayson	Matheson	Serrano
Green, Al	Matsui	Sewell (AL)
Green, Gene	McCollum	Shea-Porter
Grijalva	McGovern	Sherman
Gutiérrez	McIntyre	Sinema
Hahn	McNerney	Sires
Hanabusa	Meeks	Slaughter
Hastings (FL)	Meng	Speier
Heck (WA)	Michaud	Swalwell (CA)
Higgins	Miller, George	Takano
Himes	Moore	Thompson (CA)
Hinojosa	Moran	Thompson (MS)
Holt	Murphy (FL)	Tierney
Honda	Nadler	Titus
Horsford	Napolitano	Tonko
Hoyer	Neal	Tsongas
Huffman	Negrete McLeod	Van Hollen
Israel	Nolan	Vargas
Jackson Lee	O'Rourke	Veasey
Jeffries	Owens	Vela
Johnson, E. B.	Pallone	Velázquez
Jones	Pascarella	Visclosky
Kaptur	Payne	Walz
Keating	Pelosi	Wasserman
Kelly (IL)	Perlmutter	Schultz
Kennedy	Peters (CA)	Waters
Kildee	Peters (MI)	Waxman
Kilmer	Peterson	Welch
Kind	Pingree (ME)	Wilson (FL)
Kirkpatrick	Pocan	Yarmuth
Kuster	Polis	
Langevin		

NOES—218

Aderholt	Denham	Herrera Beutler
Amash	Dent	Holding
Amodei	DeSantis	Hudson
Bachmann	DesJarlais	Huelskamp
Bachus	Diaz-Balart	Huizenga (MI)
Barletta	Duffy	Hultgren
Barr	Duncan (SC)	Hunter
Barton	Duncan (TN)	Hurt
Benishek	Ellmers	Issa
Bentivoglio	Farenthold	Jenkins
Bilirakis	Fincher	Johnson (OH)
Blackburn	Fitzpatrick	Johnson, Sam
Boustany	Fleischmann	Jordan
Brady (TX)	Fleming	Joyce
Bridenstine	Flores	Kelly (PA)
Brooks (AL)	Forbes	King (IA)
Brooks (IN)	Fox	King (NY)
Broun (GA)	Franks (AZ)	Kingston
Buchanan	Frelinghuysen	Kinzing (IL)
Bucshon	Gardner	Kline
Burgess	Garrett	Labrador
Byrne	Gerlach	LaMalfa
Camp	Gibbs	Lamborn
Campbell	Gibson	Lance
Cantor	Gingrey (GA)	Lankford
Capito	Gohmert	Latham
Carter	Goodlatte	Latta
Cassidy	Gowdy	LoBiondo
Chabot	Granger	Long
Chaffetz	Graves (GA)	Lucas
Coble	Graves (MO)	Luetkemeyer
Coffman	Griffith (AR)	Lummis
Cole	Griffith (VA)	Marchant
Collins (GA)	Grimm	Marino
Collins (NY)	Guthrie	Massie
Conaway	Hall	McAllister
Cook	Hanna	McCarthy (CA)
Cotton	Harper	McCaul
Crawford	Harris	McClintock
Crenshaw	Hartzler	McHenry
Culberson	Hastings (WA)	McKeon
Daines	Heck (NV)	McKinley
Davis, Rodney	Hensarling	

McMorris	Renacci	Smith (TX)
Rodgers	Ribble	Southerland
Meadows	Rice (SC)	Stewart
Meehan	Rigell	Stivers
Messer	Roby	Stutzman
Mica	Roe (TN)	Terry
Miller (FL)	Rogers (AL)	Thompson (PA)
Miller (MI)	Rogers (KY)	Thornberry
Miller, Gary	Rogers (MI)	Tiberi
Mullin	Rohrabacher	Tipton
Mulvaney	Rokita	Turner
Murphy (PA)	Rooney	Valadao
Neugebauer	Ros-Lehtinen	Wagner
Noem	Roskam	Walberg
Nugent	Ross	Walorski
Nunes	Rothfus	Weber (TX)
Nunnelee	Royce	Webster (FL)
Olson	Ryan (WI)	Wenstrup
Palazzo	Salmon	Whitfield
Paulsen	Sanford	Williams
Pearce	Scalise	Wilson (SC)
Perry	Schock	Wittman
Petri	Schweikert	Wolf
Pittenger	Sensenbrenner	Womack
Pitts	Sessions	Woodall
Poe (TX)	Shinkus	Yoder
Pompeo	Shuster	Yoho
Posey	Simpson	Young (AK)
Price (GA)	Smith (MO)	Young (IN)
Reed	Smith (NE)	
Reichert	Smith (NJ)	

NOT VOTING—20

Bishop (UT)	Johnson (GA)	Scott, Austin
Black	McCarthy (NY)	Smith (WA)
Calvert	McDermott	Stockman
Cramer	Pastor (AZ)	Upton
Deutch	Runyan	Walden
Fortenberry	Rush	Westmoreland
Gosar	Schwartz	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1124

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 89 I was delayed getting to the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 234, noes 176, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 90]

AYES—234

Aderholt	Bridenstine	Chaffetz
Amash	Brooks (AL)	Coble
Amodei	Brooks (IN)	Coffman
Bachmann	Broun (GA)	Cole
Barber	Buchanan	Collins (GA)
Barletta	Bucshon	Collins (NY)
Barr	Burgess	Conaway
Barrow (GA)	Byrne	Cook
Barton	Camp	Costa
Benishek	Campbell	Cotton
Bentivoglio	Cantor	Crawford
Bilirakis	Capito	Crenshaw
Blackburn	Carter	Cuellar
Boustany	Cassidy	Culberson
Brady (TX)	Chabot	Daines

Davis, Rodney
DeFazio
Delaney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gabbard
Gallego
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)

NOES—176

Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Ciilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn

King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Owens
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peters (CA)
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Rahall
Reed

Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore

Bachus
Bishop (UT)
Black
Calvert
Cramer
Deutch
Fortenberry

Moran
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Scott (VA)

NOT VOTING—20

Gosar
McCarthy (NY)
Pastor (AZ)
Rigell
Runyan
Rush
Schwartz

Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

□ 1131

Mr. CÁRDENAS changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 86 on the Cummings amendment on H.R. 899, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 87 on the Connolly amendment on H.R. 899, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 88 on the Jackson Lee amendment on H.R. 899, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 89 on the Motion to Reconsider with Instructions on H.R. 899, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “nay.”

On rollcall No. 90 on passage of H.R. 899, I am not recorded because I was absent due to illness. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise for the purpose of inquiring of the majority leader the schedule for the week to come, and I yield to my friend, the majority leader, Mr. CANTOR.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland, the Democratic whip, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the House will meet at noon for morning-hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30 p.m. On Tuesday and Wednesday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning-hour and noon for legislative business. On Thursday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business. The last votes of the week are expected no later than 3 p.m. On Friday, no votes are expected.

Mr. Speaker, the House will consider a few suspensions next week, a complete list of which will be announced by the close of business today. Of note, I expect one of those suspensions to be the bipartisan flood insurance bill.

In addition, the House will consider a number of bills to address the middle class squeeze brought on by the increase in home heating costs. This winter has been one of the coldest in recent memory, and people are running their heaters longer to keep their families warm. Last fall, the Energy Information Administration predicted that 90 percent of U.S. households would see higher home heating costs this year, and low-income families already spend 12 percent of their household budget on energy costs.

America does not work if middle class families are taking home less. To lower the cost of heating a home, to increase paychecks for middle class Americans, and to build an America that works, the House will consider the following bills:

H.R. 4076, the HHEATT Act, authored by Chairman BILL SHUSTER, to make it easier to transport propane to areas with shortages;

H.R. 2641, the RAPID Act, sponsored by Representative TOM MARINO, to expedite Federal permitting for energy construction projects;

H.R. 2824, Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America, authored by Representative BILL JOHNSON, to protect coal mining from excessive and unnecessary Federal regulation; and

H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act, sponsored by Representative ED WHITFIELD, to protect electric utility plants from excessive and overly burdensome EPA regulation.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, given all the problems Americans are facing with the rollout of ObamaCare, the House will consider the Simple Fairness Act. This bill will provide relief and fairness to individuals, just as the administration has done for business, by making the individual mandate penalty zero dollars for the remainder of the year.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for the information he has given to me.

I want to comment on one of the statements he made, with which I

agree, in which, Mr. Speaker, you just told us—again, I agree—America doesn't work if middle class families are taking home less. I would urge him, consistent with that statement, in recognition of the fact that America works better when working families are making better wages, that we would hope the minimum wage could be brought to the floor.

As the gentleman I am sure knows, in 2013 dollars, the minimum wage would now be \$10.57 if it were at the same level it was over 40 years ago in 1968. The minimum wage has eroded very substantially in its purchasing power and its ability to give middle class families, as you say, and America a decent take-home pay. We believe both the minimum wage and unemployment insurance extension for the 1.8 to 2 million people who have lost that safety net is both hurting the economy and obviously hurting families. So we agree very strongly with the gentleman's statement.

Obviously, the bills he refers to he believes will also have an effect on this issue, but I would hope that you would seriously consider bringing the minimum wage and unemployment insurance to the floor. We believe—although, frankly, I don't have a precise count on your side of the aisle, which I am sure does not shock you—that both of those bills would have the votes on this floor, as the Speaker has indicated, to work its will and to pass those pieces of legislation. So I would hope the gentleman would consider that.

Secondly, Mr. Leader, we are pleased that flood insurance is moving ahead, we hope, and we want to thank you for your efforts that you have made on behalf of this. I know that Ms. WATERS from the Financial Services Committee has been working very hard on our side. We very much want to see the relief extended to those who have been confronted with these extraordinary increases in premiums which are unsustainable, particularly for middle class families, but for almost everybody; and we appreciate the work that you have done with Ms. WATERS to try to make sure that the protections that are extended are sufficient, certainly in the short term, but hopefully also in the long term, to meet both the objective of making it sustainable for families, but also, over the long term, fiscally sustainable for the Nation.

So I want to thank you for that. We look forward to considering that next week and hope that will be on the floor next week.

If the gentleman wants to comment further, I yield to him.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman for his comments about the issue of flood insurance and the need to sustain the effort to return to actuarial soundness in that program, at the same time to have affordable and sustainable in-

creases in premiums, which is important for the actuarial soundness of the program. So I appreciate that and look forward to the bipartisan effort next week on the floor with that.

As to the gentleman's comments, Mr. Speaker, about the minimum wage and unemployment insurance extension, it is interesting, if you look at the constituents that we need to focus on, those individuals who struggle to get through the month to pay the bills, those struggling at their job each week with wages that have not increased in real terms in a decade, we could do something on the floor of this House that would be as beneficial, if not more so, to the economy and would address the concerns that we have about decreasing wages, and that is we could roll back the 30-hour workweek rule under ObamaCare. If we were to do that and return it to the 40-hour workweek again—that is a 25 percent increase in wages—we could do that, and the wage earner at minimum wage would be about \$2 off from where that wage earner would be if you followed what the gentleman is suggesting in raising the minimum wage, as the President wants, to \$10.10. But the added benefit is, as CBO has warned, you don't have to go about harming job creation prospects at the same time, which means, an increase in minimum wage, as CBO suggested, could very likely result in less jobs being created.

So we can do this without harming the prospects for job creation and help those constituents right now who have been struggling for so long. That is how we can make America work again. Let's get America back to work, more Americans working.

So as far as the gentleman's suggestions about UI, at the end of the day, what we need to do—and I think what most of our constituents who are out of work would like, is they would like a job. And what we know today is there is a mismatch in terms of the job openings and the skills that those who are unemployed have.

We passed a bill on the floor of this House called the SKILLS Act, and it is something I have spoken to the President about and I have spoken to the Vice President about. I would like to work with the gentleman, Mr. Speaker, to see if we can resolve the differences on that bill that has passed this House to get the Senate to act so we can finally get the chronically unemployed in this country back on a path to productivity and give them a hope so they can get a job again. They need the skills.

Mr. HOYER. Let me say to him that I will ask my staff—and they usually do what I ask them to do—next week to sit down with your staff and to talk about the SKILLS Act. We have significant differences. It was passed on a largely partisan vote, as the gentleman knows, but I agree with him. As you

know, I have an agenda that we call Make It In America, and it deals with skills, and it deals with a 21st century workforce education, and so the objective we agree upon. I will certainly look forward to working with him on the specifics to see if we can get an agreement, a consensus, so that we can pass a bill which accomplishes those objectives, because we share those objectives.

□ 1145

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, it is interesting. I talk about the minimum wage. The majority leader answers, Mr. Speaker, that yes, the value of wages has decreased, but if we increased the Affordable Care Act to a 40-hour criteria, and less than that, 39 hours, no health care would necessarily be available to those workers, but you would increase their salary by 25 percent. Now on that theory, Mr. Speaker, perhaps if we increased the work to 80 hours a week, we would double their pay. Or perhaps we could triple their pay if you increased it to 120 hours a week. But, very frankly, it has eroded. The minimum wage is not worth what it was, and, very frankly, in 1969, the economy was not going bust. We weren't hemorrhaging jobs. We were doing pretty well.

Very frankly, CBO has said that some 25 million Americans, some directly and some indirectly, would be advantaged by increasing the minimum wage and paying a wage that did not leave a worker in the richest country on the face of the Earth in poverty working 40 hours a week. That is not an acceptable alternative in America, and we have raised the minimum wage periodically. We raised it last, of course, when Democrats were in charge in 2007. We raised it to \$7.25 over time, now \$7.25, but it is substantially less and it replaces 36 percent of average wage, as opposed to in 1968, replacing 54 percent of average wage.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that yes, we can take other steps that the majority leader has pointed out that I think we perhaps can reach agreement on, but that we ought to recognize that we expect people who can and are able to do so work in America, but they also expect us to pay them a wage on which they can have some degree of financial ability to support themselves, a family, and to live decently in America. So I would hope that we could do that.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, let me discuss a bill that we believe will help the economy greatly. The Chamber of Commerce believes it will help the economy greatly. Farm owners believe it will help the economy, and it is the broadest coalition that I have seen in the country on an issue in many respects: evangelicals, Roman Catholics, Jews, other faiths, all have said, 70-plus percent of America says we ought to pass comprehensive immigration reform.

Mr. Speaker, Speaker BOEHNER came forward with some principles in my State just a few weeks ago for moving forward on comprehensive immigration reform. We were very positively impressed with those principles. We may not have agreed on every jot and tittle of the suggestions, but we thought it was a very good basis to move forward on which to have a discussion and bring comprehensive immigration reform to the floor.

As Tom Donohue, the president of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States of America, said it was absolutely essential, I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that we could bring that to the floor, have a debate and have consideration of it. My view is it has the votes in the people's House to pass if it were brought to the floor. I would hope that could be done.

With that, I yield to my friend, the majority leader.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I would like to underscore and respond to that, that I don't believe there is the requisite number of votes in the House to pass the Senate's comprehensive immigration bill. We have taken the position on our side of the aisle that we are not for that bill. The gentleman rightfully points out that the Speaker and our leadership put out some standards to provide a path for discussion about how we go about addressing a very broken immigration system.

The problem is, Mr. Speaker, we don't have a lot of trust on our side about how this administration will implement the laws we pass; nor do I think, Mr. Speaker, one can blame us given the track record of this administration in seemingly unilaterally making decisions on how to implement a health care law when it doesn't work. This is the frustration and lack of trust that has resulted from those kinds of actions.

We do need to restore the trust in our government for the people that put us here. We do need to address a very broken system, but the administration or anyone's insistence that somehow everything has to be addressed right now our way is not something that is going to sit well, especially given the fact that there is not a lot of trust given the lack of what we believe would be full and faithful execution of the laws as to what is going on with the health care law and others on the part of the administration.

So I don't in any way accept the status quo, I would say to the gentleman on immigration, but we have got to work to see a way forward that can provide a better way.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, frankly, I have heard this trust argument before. That would be an argument for not doing anything because you don't trust the administration to execute the laws and, there-

fore, don't pass any laws. I think that is a make-wait argument, Mr. Speaker. And, very frankly, there is a way to see who is right on this, I tell my friend, the majority leader. The majority leader says he doesn't believe that it has the votes on the floor. There is a wonderful way to test that—bring it to the floor, and we will see who is right.

The American people, over 70 percent of them, believe that we ought to pass comprehensive immigration reform. Polls on their side of the aisle and polls on our side of the aisle and independent polls largely agree: over 7 out of 10 Americans believe we ought to pass this bill. In fact, seven, or very close to 7 out of 10 of their representatives in the other body voted for comprehensive immigration reform. They had a vote. They brought it to the floor. It passed overwhelmingly. It has sat here for months, unattended, but maybe that is our alternative.

Very frankly, there have been alternatives passed out of the Judiciary Committee and out of the Homeland Security Committee by the Republicans, and they are not on the floor either, Mr. Speaker. So no immigration alternatives have been offered for a vote on this floor, the people's House, a House in which the Speaker said when he took the gavel here, the people's will will be reflected because they would bring things to the floor. They accused us of not doing that. That was their right to do so, but now I suggest they are following a policy that they have severely criticized and said was wrong. So if they were sincere then, we would simply ask the majority leader to bring the bill to the floor and see if he is right or if I am right; to see whether we have the votes or we don't. The American people deserve that vote because they are overwhelmingly for that vote, and then they can take their own view from there as to who they agree with and who they don't agree with.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2014

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet on Monday next, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARR). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

CONGRATULATING DR. ABNER WOMACK

(Mrs. HARTZLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute).

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Abner Womack,

professor emeritus at the University of Missouri, for receiving the Distinguished Service Award. This is the highest award awarded by the American Farm Bureau.

As a farm boy with a knack for numbers, he has used his expertise to build the internationally renowned Food and Agriculture Policy Research Institute that provides high-quality analysis for Congress and the USDA. This system of statistical models allows congressional Members and their staff to analyze the effects and tradeoffs of competing policies. Dr. Womack's academic integrity is evidenced in the strong academic, nonpartisan reputation that FAPRI enjoys.

However, Dr. Womack's reach far exceeds that of Capitol Hill. I want to commend him for his tireless effort to reach out to farmers across Missouri and around the world. His passion for agriculture and vast knowledge of statistical models, paired with his ability to effectively communicate complex ideas in a commonsense manner, have made him a priceless asset to all he encounters.

Again, I want to thank Dr. Womack for his lifelong efforts in supporting American agriculture, and recognize him for this achievement.

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my fellow colleagues to allow an up-or-down vote on H.R. 1010, which would give at least 25 million Americans a pay raise. For many Americans, most of whom are women, who work 40 hours a week at \$7.25 an hour, they gross a mere \$290 a week. That comes out to \$15,000 per year, just barely above the Federal poverty guidelines.

In America, no one should have to work full time and raise their family in poverty. In Georgia alone, raising the minimum wage would give more than 500,000 hardworking people a raise. Most Americans support raising the minimum wage, but my Republican colleagues refuse to give it a vote. Obviously, many of them have never experienced life working at \$7.25 an hour.

The American people are calling for an economy that works for everyone—where a hard day's work earns a decent day's pay, and everyone has an opportunity to build a brighter future.

SUPPORT LOCAL ACT

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in the House

as an original cosponsor of H.R. 4100, the Local Organization Cooperative Agreement and Facility Maintenance Act, or the LOCAL Act.

For the past several years, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has partnered with local nonprofit organizations to cooperatively manage and maintain recreational facilities at lakes and reservoirs on these Federal lands.

In my district, the Friends of Raystown Lake Group in Huntingdon County have been able to collect and retain user fees generated from the public's use of the lake, which they then reinvest to perform operations and maintenance on that site. Recently, an administrative ruling forced the Army Corps to terminate these agreements at facilities across the country. The Friends of Raystown should be commended for their volunteerism, not penalized by Washington's bureaucracy. The LOCAL Act will allow these and other agreements to remain in force.

I would encourage my colleagues to support the LOCAL Act to ensure the Army Corps can continue these cooperative agreements that are good for the community and good for taxpayers.

CONSTITUTIONALITY OF EXECUTIVE ACTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, these are interesting times in America. For most of us who went to law school, we were taught that for an adversarial system of justice of law to work, there has to be active participation on both sides of an issue, of a person charged with a crime, on defense, or litigation over a law itself. So Chairman GOODLATTE from just across the river in Virginia called a hearing in the Judiciary Committee this week. We had another hearing about the constitutionality, or lack thereof, of actions by this administration, and it is very alarming.

□ 1200

Professor Jonathan Turley, with whom I have disagreed on many policy issues, has a wonderful grasp of the Constitution; and he recognizes the dangers when an administration decides to pick and choose which laws will be enforced and goes further and issues executive orders, not like prior administrations that simply explain on most occasions or illuminate some law as to how they think it is to be interpreted, but to actually make law and executive orders. That is just unconscionable for somebody that took an oath to defend the Constitution.

I can't recall times that I have agreed with The LA Times before, but

they had an editorial that indicates even The LA Times understands the danger of what is going on right now in this country with this administration.

We have an Attorney General who has been requested to produce documents lawfully, informally, refused to do so, been subpoenaed to produce information documents, has refused to do so unlawfully, to the point that the committee had a hearing and ultimately found the Attorney General of the United States in contempt of Congress, which came to this floor and, in a very unusual action found, the Attorney General, the highest law enforcement officer in this country, in contempt of Congress, basically in contempt of the Constitution.

This has far wider implications than most in America seem to grasp because, when the highest law enforcement officer in America refuses to comply with the law, holds himself out as being above any law, creates laws that he wants to defend—at least the administration creating laws that they want to defend or follow—and actually saying in this room—I just had the President of the United States say in this room: I am going to go around the Congress—if you don't do what I want, I am going to go around the Congress.

The ramifications for that are so staggering to anyone who has contemplated the founding of this country that it is beyond words. The Founders set up these checks and balances believing that, surely, there would be people in the judiciary—although they saw that as the least powerful branch, though it has now become the most powerful—they saw Congress as always being willing to defend its own laws, even to the point of defunding anything in the administration that did not protect and defend the law.

They saw a President as standing up and refusing to follow things that were not the law. They felt like each branch would judiciously protect their own powers under the Constitution, and that balance would allow this Nation to go forward as the freest Nation in the history of the world.

But today, we are living in a time where all of that is in jeopardy, when one branch can act to the total disregard of another branch or other branches. We have seen that with executive orders that just completely change the law as written and completely intentionally disregards the law of the land. It is staggering.

The LA Times had an editorial on February 27 that talked about the Attorney General's posture on just picking and choosing which laws he would provide a defense for.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here as someone—as a prosecutor, as a lawyer, as a judge, as a chief justice—who at times absolutely did not like laws—particular laws—but knew if this Nation were to remain for years to come, we

had to either change the law legally; or as lawyers, as officers of the court, as judges, as chief justices, we had to follow the law.

Back in the '80s, I was ordered by a State district judge to file an appeal—to represent a man on appeal after having been convicted of capital murder. I was then, as now, a very conservative person.

I went to the judge after I got the call that I was going to be appointed and begged the judge not to appoint me, that I was doing civil trial work, I wasn't doing criminal work, please don't appoint me to appeal a criminal conviction because I will have to go back to school to do a proper job of representing a man on appeal of the death penalty.

I knew if he appointed me—because I took an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, I would spend incredible hours to make sure I properly represented the man on appeal, even though I didn't know any more about the facts of the case than I had read in the papers. From the papers, I got the impression that he had probably gotten what he deserved.

But the judge appointed me to appeal a capital murder conviction in which the defendant was sentenced to death. I didn't want the case, didn't ask for it, begged not to have it.

But I knew that if our system was to work, I had to do everything ethically and legally I could to present my client's side of the case. As I got into it and I read the entire long, long transcript—every word of it—I realized the man had not gotten a fair trial, and unknown to the district attorney, an assistant district attorney had acted inappropriately, and it caused great harm and jeopardy to the case for the defense.

I did the very best I could for my client legally and ethically, and the case was reversed at the highest criminal court in Texas.

Even when, as attorneys, we would disagree with the law—and as we have heard from this Attorney General and people in this Justice Department over and over—even when someone is absolutely convicted, clearly is a criminal, they deserve a proper defense.

So how this administration and this Attorney General and this Justice Department can justify picking and choosing which laws they will defend and which laws they will let fall without a defense is unimaginable. For people who have learned anything about our Constitution, we have to zealously represent the clients, the laws that are put before us to represent.

This administration has now repeatedly chosen not to defend some laws when the highest law enforcement in the land, we know, actually was willing to help convicted absolutely-known criminals to get pardoned, to get lighter sentences.

We bring people in who have fought—or at least one individual who fought to get a convicted murderer of a police officer—who the evidence indicated stood over him after he shot him and shot him repeatedly—a police officer—and yet, the Attorney General can justify bringing someone in; the President justified bringing someone in by saying: Oh, no, but everybody is entitled to a defense, that is how our system works.

Then when he has a constitutional obligation to produce documents to Congress and just says: I am going to ignore that requirement of the law, I don't care, and not only am I going to ignore that requirement of the law, even after the extraordinary event of having the United States House of Representatives declare the highest ranking law enforcement officer in the country to be in contempt of Congress—which is really in contempt of the Constitution—still has the nerve to come in here during the State of the Union, which is really thumbing the nose at the Constitution—at Congress—that: I will ignore the law, I won't follow the laws I don't like, I won't defend the laws I don't like; and then this week actually go out and tell State law enforcement officers—highest ranking State law enforcement officers—that, in essence, if they don't like a law, then just don't defend it.

So this editorial, just in part, from the LA Times, points out that:

The six State attorneys general who have declined to defend their States' bans on same-sex marriage in court got some encouragement this week from U.S. Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr. In a speech to the National Association of Attorneys General, Holder said that it was sometimes appropriate for attorneys general to abandon their usual obligation to defend the constitutionality of State laws.

This page supports same-sex marriage unreservedly. But even so, we worry that Holder's comments will embolden additional State attorneys general—Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives—to pick and choose which of their States' laws they will defend in court.

It also says further down:

Yet when attorneys general are elected, as in 43 States, the temptation will be to transmute a popular political stand into a constitutional objection.

Even if Holder is right that attorneys general should refuse to defend State laws in "exceedingly rare" circumstances, those laws ought to be defended by someone.

Further down they point out that:

They probably would react differently, however, if a future Attorney General refused to defend the constitutionality of statutes that treat attacks on gays and lesbians as hate crimes.

I would imagine this Attorney General would find that unconscionable; but once we began to ignore the law and become a Nation of men—and that is generic, including men and women, whoever is in authority—instead of a Nation of laws, then we become like

the nations that so many people try to flee to come to America because there is graft, there is corruption, because the rule of law is not followed.

It is whatever the dictator, the drug group, whatever the people in power think should be the law will be the law, and it becomes an unbearable place to live.

There is a reason that fences end up being built around a country not to keep people in, as in the Soviet Union days, but because people want to come flooding in, which would overwhelm our country, overwhelm our ability to provide government services, and end the ability to be a Nation where people want to come.

□ 1215

There is a reason. It is because we have been a Nation of laws that has applied the law fairly across the board.

Clearly, because the government is composed of human beings, there will be mistakes and there will be abuses, but in abuses, even Presidents have been held to account. That keeps us being a Nation of laws. Yet, when the highest-ranking law enforcement officer in the country refuses to provide information to Congress that he lawfully is required to produce, this country is in grave jeopardy. I am pleased that even the LA Times has gotten a glimpse of the potential problems here.

In a couple of different hearings, I have asked the highest-ranking law enforcement officer in our country for the production of documents provided to the defendants, to the defendants who were convicted of supporting terrorism, making them terrorists. I have asked for the copies of the documents that were provided in discovery to convicted terrorists. I have been told there could be classification problems, and as I have pointed out, if you gave them to the terrorists, you can give them to Members of Congress.

After yet another request last June, in writing—months and months later—I finally get a response that, in essence, says, Here is a Web site where you can go look at some of these documents. We have got 500 documents that were introduced at trial, and so that should take care of it.

No, it doesn't.

The Justice Department gave terrorists thousands and thousands of pages of documents, and even in the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals' opinion, the Fifth Circuit, they point out that there were 9,600 or so transcripts of recorded conversations. Those were given to the people convicted of terrorism, and yet this Justice Department refuses to allow Members of Congress to see those.

The Founders had the idea that there would be oversight and that Congress would supervise what happened in the executive branch. That provided that balance of power to keep us from mov-

ing in the direction of a monarchy or of a totalitarian government. Yet, when this body finally gets around to some oversight, it is dismissed. What do we do? We vote to hold the Attorney General in contempt and then allow him to remain in contempt without consequences.

Perhaps the proper remedy, under the thinking of the Founders, is, if an Attorney General refuses to enforce the laws that Congress passes and other Presidents sign into law, then you defund the particular individuals in the Department of Justice until such time as they start doing their jobs. You don't defund the people who are out enforcing the law, protecting the country, but you defund those people who are thumbing their noses at the Constitution and at proper, legal, constitutional oversight. We haven't done that.

So the American public, the laws, and the Constitution remain at risk because people who have defended terrorists and who have worked to get even terrorists lighter sentences and pardons and things like that don't think laws duly passed by Congress, signed into law by the President and upheld by the Supreme Court are worth defending. Then don't stop there. Not only actually start telling the highest law enforcement officers in the country that they should start ignoring laws in rare cases but to ignore the laws when you don't think they are appropriate.

We also know we have a Justice Department that, in their efforts to avoid making radical Islamist terrorists think that we might not like them, started outreach programs under the prior administration. I asked the prior FBI Director: Since you say that this Muslim community is like every other community in the Nation, how are the other outreach programs going with the Baptists? The Catholics? The Jews? The Buddhists? There is no other outreach program to any other religious group, so that would seem to indicate there is something special here.

There are violent people in every religion, but as Thomas Jefferson was so shocked to find out, there is one religion that has a small component of it that believes that a sure way to paradise is to kill innocent men, women, and children because they don't believe religiously like those radicals do. That is the reason Thomas Jefferson got his own copy of the Koran that the Library of Congress still has. He wanted to see for himself. He was so well read. He couldn't believe there was a religion that had a holy book for a basis that would allow anyone to interpret it in such a way as to kill innocent men, women, and children.

There have been, to be sure, purported Christians over the ages who thought it was their duty to go about brutalizing people who were not Christians, but anyone who studies the

teachings of Christ about how we are to individually act knows those would not have been Christians doing the kind of violence that they did. It is not supported by the Bible. What is supported in the Bible is that if you do evil, be afraid, because God does not give the government the sword in vain. Individually, we are not supposed to judge and be vigilantes, but there is in an orderly society a need to have a government that will punish evil and encourage good conduct.

This little experiment in a democracy, in a republic and representative form of government, is so fragile. It bothers me when I read and hear those words from Ronald Reagan that freedom is never more than one generation from being gone and, even more troubling, that a generation that loses liberty does not get it back in that same generation. I have hoped that I would find a time and place where Reagan was wrong about that, but I have not yet.

So, when we see liberties being lost, privacy rights being violated right and left by our Federal Government, all kinds of snooping on American citizens without probable cause, not only by the NSA—and certainly they have the highest cause for which they are working, which is for our protection, but yet, when our privacy is completely eroded, is our safety worth losing all of our privacy completely?

We lost a dramatic amount of our privacy when, without a single vote from the Republican side of the aisle, the Democrats in the House and Senate passed what they called the Affordable Care Act, which has become so unaffordable, because the Federal Government will get everyone's medical records.

I was a bit staggered and maybe too naive. After I had heard people speak so emotionally from the heart about the protection of privacy and what happens in the bedroom, I was a little staggered over these years to see people on the Democratic side of the aisle—my friends over here—who were so thrilled to be giving every bit of private information about their most private body parts, about their most private activities, to the government in whole and bulk, and even said, That is not violation enough; let's do a contract with General Electric, and let them keep these records for us.

It is not like the government and private industry can't be hacked. Talk about loss of privacy. I don't really have anything to hide in any of my medical records, but it is nobody else's business. Yet, wholeheartedly, people rushed and applauded the giving of all of that most private information to the Federal Government.

This week, I have been so proud of my friend JEB HENSARLING, as chairman of Financial Services, who has been trying to rein in this Consumer

Financial Protection Bureau—wow, what a misnomer—that is gathering information about our credit cards, our debit card activity, our loans when these were supposed to be private between us and our lenders as long as there was proper oversight to make sure they were not violating the Constitution. Yet the Federal Government, as they are, starts getting all of our debit card and credit card information. They now have all of our medical records that they are getting. They are now watching and have the ability to check every email, to check Web sites you visit. They have the ability to examine every log of every call that you make. People who once said I was crazy for giving this example some years back may begin to realize I wasn't so crazy. The example was this:

When the Federal Government has the obligation to supervise every aspect of your health care—when you force government-run health care on the people of this Nation—and when you have that same Federal Government that can monitor every credit and debit card purchase you make and when they know where you go online and when they can go into your emails, is it so hard to believe that at some point some American citizen would not get a letter from the Federal Government, saying:

We noticed that you purchased bacon and butter at the grocery store this last weekend, and we also noticed that your cholesterol level is over 200. What were you thinking? We can't let you do something like that, so we are going to have to punish you. We are going to have to start charging you more money. We are going to have to start supervising your activity. You are going to have to start going and working out. We saw that you let your membership at the gym lapse, and you are not going anymore. We can tell by where your car goes, by following the GPS on your car, that you are not going to the gym like you used to. You need to start going back to the gym. You need to quit buying butter and bacon, and then we won't punish you financially like we are now.

□ 1230

Is that so hard to believe that that would start happening, could start happening? When you give the government this much private information, then liberty is sure to go shortly thereafter.

In quoting Benjamin Franklin, it has been written different ways over the years—some say he didn't say it—but basically, he certainly advocated that those who are willing to give up liberty for their safety deserve neither.

How much of our privacy and our liberty are the American people willing to give up just so that we can feel a little safer? Because when you do that, you will not be safe from your own government. Your own government then be-

comes the biggest threat to your liberty, to your freedom.

Things that brilliant colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle have said over the years about our liberty and about our privacy are really becoming an issue now, and I am not hearing my friends across the aisle that raised those important points now talking about them. And I know when you have someone in the White House that is from your own party, it is kind of tough to stand up and say, This is a mistake. This is wrong.

But it is time that friends across the aisle—Senators who are Democrats—start standing up in numbers and saying: Enough. You have usurped too much power that the Constitution gave to Congress.

Just because you don't like the fact that we take a long time and it is not pretty to see laws being made doesn't mean you get to skip the whole process. The Founders wanted gridlock. They wanted it tough to pass laws. They didn't want us meeting year round like we do. I am sure if the Founders were around today, they would be appalled that we meet as much as we do. And when some people back in east Texas say: Gee, why aren't you in Washington? I'm saying: You're safer when we're here because it means we're not passing another law that takes your liberty away.

The Founders wanted some gridlock. They didn't want it too easy to pass laws. Because they knew when that happened, every little emotional issue that came up would cause Congress to come in and pass something even though the moment was fleeting and we should not be doing things quickly and emotionally.

Thomas Jefferson was not part of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787. He was amazed at how good the document was. But he is reported to have indicated that if he could change one thing, he would make it a requirement that before we could pass a law, it had to be on file for a year to make sure people have plenty of time to discuss it.

We see how good an idea that would be if we didn't just run in here and do things out of emotion, and we would never, ever pass another bill so we could find out what was in it. My party has not done anything as blatant as ramming through bills. My copy of ObamaCare was right around 2,500 pages. But we have had some bills that we have not been given time to read and to properly go through.

We were going to take up a flood insurance bill yesterday, and I am grateful that it got moved off because we haven't had enough time to know what the bill has actually got in it word for word. Summaries are not enough, on many occasions. Sometimes if it is not a big deal, a summary may do it, but somebody besides some staffer needs to be looking at every word.

That is one of the benefits of going through what we call regular order. The subcommittee gets to have a markup where they discuss every part of the bill, and anyone can offer an amendment to any part of the bill. And then it goes to the full committee, and anyone at the markup can offer an amendment to any part of the bill, and it gets debate and discussion. That is a good process.

I believe that when we took the majority, we would do even better than we have. We have done a lot better than the 4 years from January of 2007 to when we got the gavel back in January of 2011. I was appalled at the completely closed rules and how it was just staggering. We had no input. Nearly half of the country basically had no representation at all on all of the important bills because they just rammed them through without any input from Republicans—who represented Democrats and Republicans. They didn't get represented in those districts.

It is important, no matter who is in charge, that if it is really a critical issue that needs immediate laws passed, changes made, that we fully vet every law that we pass.

We had an Over-Criminalization hearing today. One of the huge mistakes—and it has been a very bipartisan mistake—is that over all these years, when Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle want to show how strongly we feel about something and how tough we are, we slap a prison sentence on things, and one of the greatest injustices that Congress has done is to pass laws that say any violations of the regulations under this law will carry a term of imprisonment.

In our hearing today, there was an estimate that there are probably 300,000 regulations, the violation of which carries a prison sentence. Congress has never seen them, never debated them, and knows nothing about them.

We have heard testimony from people who have been sent to prison who did some act and had no idea there was a law against what they did. They did time in prison as a result.

There was a man from Houston who was doing business during retirement by raising orchids. He ordered some orchids from South America. They were sent to him, but the proper forms were not filled out by the people that sent them to him, and under the law, any violation of those postal regulations requires time in prison.

So what happened? He was arrested in his home in Houston. And since the law gives choice of venue and it had been mailed through Miami, they took him to Miami, where he didn't even know anybody, didn't have the money for bail, and ends up doing 18 months in prison, during which time he had a stroke. He couldn't testify. His wife had to.

There was a poor guy from Washington State that was trying to create a better battery. He had every chemical properly stored. One day, driving home, the EPA SWAT team had black Suburbans come up behind him, the side, in front, and forced him off the road, yanked him out of his car, threw him to the ground, handcuffed him, threw him in jail, and then drug him to Alaska.

His heinous crime was that when he mailed a chemical to Alaska, legally, properly, he didn't know that it was not enough to check the box that it had to go by ground. It couldn't go by air. He didn't know that you needed a little sticker that had a picture of an airplane with a red line through it. That sticker with the plane with the red line through it had to be on there. And since he didn't do that, that caused him to deserve to be run off the road by the EPA SWAT team, thrown to the ground, handcuffed, hauled up to Alaska, and put in prison.

When he got acquitted of that, the Justice Department wasn't happy with it, so they looked around and realized when they ransacked his home he had every chemical properly stored, but there was a law that says if you ever abandon these certain chemicals for over a certain number of days, then you committed a Federal felony. And even though it was the Federal Government that forced him to abandon those, and even though they were properly stored, he was in jail in Alaska and away from the chemicals beyond the time that the law allowed, so he went to prison for abandoning chemicals because the government drug him away from them.

These are the kind of laws that are out there. We ought to pass a law in this body that says no criminal penalty may attach to a violation of any regulation unless this Congress has passed a specific law putting a criminal penalty on that specific regulation. We should not be able to leave it to bureaucrats to decide what becomes an offense punishable by imprisonment.

So when you take the violations of privacy that have now been passed into law—all of our medical records, now our credit card and debit card records, our emails, all of our phone logs all being usurped and grabbed by the Federal Government—and couple that with abuses that we have seen over the years by the Federal Government of people's rights under color of law, and understanding that when this Federal Government violates your rights, your privacy, your freedoms, you have nowhere else to go and there is no appeal to anyone else, it is time this body and the Senate took action to make sure the Justice Department follows the law and doesn't just pick and choose. And also that we make sure the White House doesn't just make up law out of whole cloth and decide which laws they

liked and which ones they didn't. There are oaths involved here, and there should be consequences for not following them.

Then, we need to investigate further these executive departments who think they are above the law. And when Members of Congress duly request documents that were provided to people convicted as terrorists and we are told that terrorists can have them but you, Members of Congress, cannot, then it is time to defund people that will not abide by the law and will not participate in proper oversight.

It is also time we had a select committee that properly investigated Benghazi. It is time we had a special prosecutor, not some big donor to the President, to investigate this horrendous scandal in the IRS that not only has smidgens of evidence, it has overwhelming evidence of people's rights being violated. It is time that we started making sure as a Congress that people who enforce the law actually enforce the law.

We have seen the desire by this administration to embrace Islam as closely as possible. And I know the attitude is that if we bring people close from Islam into the administration, that will help us get across that we mean no ill will. The trouble has been we have brought foxes into the henhouse to give advice to the chickens.

We have a report from the last couple of weeks. The Clarion Project had been making Freedom of Information Act requests. They finally got some documentation that shows—and this article is from the Clarion Project. The Clarion Project investigation has discovered a jihadist enclave in Texas where a deadly shooting took place in 2002.

□ 1245

Declassified FBI documents obtained by Clarion confirmed the find, and show the U.S. Government's concern about its links to terrorism. The investigation was completed with the help of Act for America Houston.

The enclave belongs to the network of Muslims of the Americas, a radical group linked to a Pakistani militant group called Jamaat ul-Fuqra. Its members are devoted followers of Sheikh Ali Mubarak Gilani, an extremist cleric in Pakistan.

The organization says it has a network of 22 villages around the U.S., with Islamberg as its main headquarters in New York. The Clarion Project obtained secret MOA, Muslim of America, footage showing female members receiving paramilitary training at Islamberg. It was featured on the Kelly File of FOX News Channel in October. A second MOA tape released by Clarion shows its spokesman declaring the U.S. to be a Muslim-majority country.

A 2007 FBI record states that MOA, Muslim of America, members have been involved in at least 10 murders, one disappearance, three firebombings, one attempted firebombing, two explosive bombings, and one attempted bombing.

It states:

The documented propensity for violence by this organization supports the belief the

leadership of the MOA extols membership to pursue a policy of jihad or holy war against individuals or groups it considers enemies of Islam, which includes the U.S. Government. Members of the MOA are encouraged to travel to Pakistan to receive religious and military/terrorist training from Sheikh Gilani.

The document also says that "The MOA is now an autonomous organization which possesses an infrastructure capable of planning and mounting terrorist campaigns overseas."

Other FBI reports describe the MOA in similar ways with a 2003 file stating: "Investigation of the Muslims of the Americas is based on specific and articulate facts given justification to believe they are engaged in international terrorism."

MOA members believe the holiest Islamic site in the country is located at the Islamville commune in South Carolina. Other MOA entities include the International Quranic Open University, United Muslim Christian Forum, Islamic Post, Muslim Veterans of America, and American Muslim Medical Relief Team.

On further down it says:

The MOA referred to its Texas commune as Mahmoudberg in on-line instructions for a parade in New York in 2010. A posting on an Islamic message board in 2005 advertised a speaking engagement in Houston by someone from Mahmoudberg.

According to the reports, the commune is 7 to 10 acres large, is in an "extremely wooded area" and two or three trailer homes moved there in December of 2001. However, ACT members visited the area as part of Clarion's project or investigation and interviewed one nearby local who confidently said it is closer to 25 acres in size and spoke of a presence dating back to the late 1980s.

Further down, the FBI reported in 2007 that:

One commune resident used to be a leader at the MOA commune in Badger, California. That site was called Baladullah.

In March 2001, one of the Baladullah members was arrested for transporting guns between New York and South Carolina. Another was charged with murdering a police deputy that caught him breaking and entering a home.

Interviewed residents all agreed that MOA members are private, yet, when the ACT members were spotted in the area, they were immediately and repeatedly approached. At one point a commune resident gave them a final warning to leave, despite the fact they weren't even trespassing or harassing MOA MEMBERS.

"It was definitely very threatening and menacing," an ACT member told me.

Multiple sources confirmed that one resident of the commune is a police officer. According to a nearby neighbor, one of the MOA members used to drive trucks for the U.S. Army in Kuwait.

Further down it says:

"Police were denied"—this was after a shooting in 2002 out at the site—"police were denied access to the trailer homes and were not allowed to directly interview the women who covered their faces in their presence. Communication with the women had to be done by passing notes through a male intermediary."

Anyway, this was the subject of an email from one of my college friends, and one of my other college friends sent an email in response saying, this could not possibly be true because the mainstream media would have been all over this if this were really true.

Well, the report of these 22 villages is true, and the mainstream media has not, does not, probably will not cover it because the administration doesn't want to make anyone uncomfortable who might be radical Islamists.

Another article from FOX News Insider, February 20, talked about a 2007 FBI record stated that MOA Members have been involved in at least 10 murders. Talked about these things.

Other FBI reports describe MOA in similar ways, with the 2003 file stating, based on the facts, this appears to be factual information. It was obtained from FBI records. It seems to be consistent with the prior administration.

Though they brought Muslims in to give advice on dealing with radical Islam, they pursued terrorists, like in the Holy Land Foundation trial, there were around 200 or so named co-conspirators in the Holy Land Foundation trial.

The goal, as one of the prosecutors told me, was to get those convictions, if they could, and they knew it would be the most important biggest terrorist convictions in American judicial history, and if they got those, then they would go forward and start prosecuting others of the named coconspirators who were not indicted but were named.

We know there is plenty of evidence out there regarding coconspirators because there were some coconspirators that filed a motion with the Court to have their names struck from the pleadings. The Federal District Court that examined the evidence in Dallas said, no, there is plenty of evidence here to support that CAIR, Council of American Islamic Relations, ISNA, Islamic Society North America, are large front groups for Muslim Brotherhood.

Went up to the Fifth Circuit and the Fifth Circuit confirmed that there was plenty of evidence to support their names being part of it.

Yet, this administration continues to coddle and get information and instruction from CAIR, ISNA. The president of ISNA, Imam Magid, continues to be a highly praised adviser to this administration.

So, when people across the country say this couldn't possibly be true because the mainstream media would have been all over it, I can't believe our Federal Government will allow this kind of thing to go on, well, the reason it has is because, even though FBI reports continued to say over the years that these appear to be violent and associated with violent activities, the State Department, under this administration, continues to refuse to list the Muslims of the Americas as a terrorist organization, which means they get to continue to build villages, to train in paramilitary fashion around the country, from Texas, South Carolina, New York, California, across the country, until such time as this administration gets serious about what is going on.

Had the information from an article this week, this article from National Review Online, "Convicted Terrorist Worked As an ObamaCare Navigator in Illinois." It shouldn't be a surprise this kind of thing has happened because we found out that these so-called navigators, under ObamaCare, what might be more appropriately entitled the Unaffordable Care Act, these navigators are being allowed to gather people's most personal and private identification information, but they are not being vetted.

We have known from the beginning, when the law kicked in, that the navigators were not vetted for prior criminal activity. So we shouldn't be surprised that there was a convicted terrorist that worked as an ObamaCare navigator in Illinois.

Then we have people, enrollees, finding it impossible to cancel their plans. More than 6 weeks later, Weekly Standard reports, after spending 50 to 60 hours on the phone, this man's policy is still not canceled. So much for freedom when it comes to health care in this country under ObamaCare.

Another report published by foxnews.com: "ObamaCare may increase premiums for 11 million workers."

Anyway, it should be clear that, even though we heard a staggering statement by the Democrat Majority Leader in the Senate that people who were reporting the horror stories about ObamaCare, pointing out how the Affordable Care Act really isn't, it was devastating, that these were lies, they were not true.

Well, proper investigation reveals they are true. There may be some that have made stories up. When we get stories, we try to look into, are these really legitimate, but what we find is most of them are easily documented and easily legitimate.

ObamaCare is doing massive damage across the country to people's employment, to their health insurance, to their ability to see the doctor that they want and, in some cases, the doctor that has been keeping them alive.

Another report: "ObamaCare may increase premiums for 11 million workers." Well, I know it has increased them a lot. I can't afford the new policy that would be required. I liked my old one. I wasn't crazy about it. Aetna had some problems we never got worked out. But still, I had more freedom of choice before.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is, when the Federal Government has become so big and so intrusive that it gathers everyone's phone logs in the United States, can check into any phone calls made by anyone in the country any time, when the Federal Government gathers everyone's most personal and private medical information, when the Federal Government gathers people's debit and credit card

purchases to protect them, when the Federal Government can use drones to monitor, can monitor email activity, Web sites visited, and then that same government can say we are not going to follow these laws if we don't like them, don't think they are proper, and we are going to change the law over here because Congress didn't, and we prefer to have a law that says this so we will follow that, then it is no wonder that a constitutional professor like Jonathan Turley, liberal as he is, would express dire concerns about how long we can maintain this country.

We owe the American people an obligation to proper oversight, force them to follow the law.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1300

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION MONTH

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in recognition of Career and Technical Education Month; and let me say how proud I am to work alongside my colleague, Congressman G.T. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, my good friend and fellow cochair of the bipartisan Congressional Career and Technical Education Caucus.

CTE is an investment in the future of our economy, our workforce, and our country. From skills training in high schools to community colleges and professional programs, CTE plays a key role for workers at every age.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the Consolidated Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2014, which passed in January, increased authorization amounts for Perkins by \$53 million for FY 2014.

Now, that is a sharp contrast in terms of the cuts that had taken place in CTE and Perkins since 2010; so with that, I urge my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee to fully fund Perkins in the upcoming fiscal year and to make important investments in career training.

Now, all too often, Mr. Speaker, I hear from Rhode Island employers that they have job openings right now, but are unable to find local skilled workers with the expertise necessary to fill the position. Closing the skills gap is an important step to making sure that workers fit the needs of expanding industries.

With that, I look forward to continuing my partnership with Congressman G.T. THOMPSON; and I urge all of my congressional colleagues to join the CTE Caucus; and I ask them to fully support funding Perkins in FY15.

UKRAINE AND IRAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BENTIVOLIO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I think this is a good time to reflect on a couple of things. One is certainly Iran. The other is certainly Ukraine.

I think that the American people obviously have a very important stake in what is going on in both countries. In Ukraine, in Kiev, we see people marching for freedom, demanding the kinds of freedoms that we, in the United States, are used to, the freedoms that we hold so dear in our country; and we saw the people initially being countered by brutal police attacks on them.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, the right prevailed, and the people in the streets won, and they clearly said that they don't want to have Russian domination; but, instead, they want to look toward the West, rather than look East.

The European Union has been negotiating with Ukraine for some time, and their president, now deposed, said that he would rather work with Russia into the Russian Customs Union, which is sort of, in my opinion, a rekindling of the old Soviet Union. That angered many people in Ukraine, and they took to the streets.

I hope that the European Union continues to make overtures to Ukraine. I think now is a very, very critical moment, in that the United States has a role to play with our European allies, to try to tell the people of Ukraine that we would like them to look Westward and that, in looking Westward, there will be opportunities for their country.

I am concerned that if there are too many stringent rules and regulations put up before a country can affiliate with the EU—and at the same time, Putin is saying here are these billions and billions of dollars, which makes it seem like it is a lot easier to go with Putin.

This is one of those rare visceral moments where I think action by the United States and our allies in the European Union will make the difference for generations to come; and I would hope that we would deal with Ukraine in a benevolent manner, so that they would be able to say: yes, we want to look Westward, and it is going to help our economy, it is going to help our people.

There are serious problems in Ukraine. Their economy is in shambles. And, of course, there has been a total lack of freedom and democracy, and the people of Ukraine demand no less.

I think that Secretary Kerry was absolutely right and the President was absolutely right in telling Russian

President Putin that he had better think twice before he considers any kind of military intervention in Ukraine.

That is not something that can be or should be tolerated, and Russia must understand that it cannot be business as usual, that if they make any military moves into Ukraine, it is going to cost them a great deal in their relationships with the United States and with our European allies in the European Union.

It can't be business as usual—which leads me to Iran. We are in very delicate negotiations with Iran right now. The one thing that everybody in the P5+1 agrees on is that, at the end of the day, Iran must not be allowed to have a nuclear weapon.

I have been very critical of the Iranian regime through the years and continue to be so. What irks me especially is that, while they are negotiating with us, they are continuing to wreak havoc in all different parts of the world. Iran remains the leading supporter of terrorism throughout the world.

In fact, if we look just next door into Syria—and we know the Syrian civil war is a real mess. We have jihadists pouring into that country, even more so than they poured into Iraq at the height of the Iraq war. We have all kinds of foreign fighters.

Assad was on the verge of being kicked out of power by his own people. He was losing the civil war. We had the Free Syrian Army, who are the people who really are for democracy in Syria, and Assad was losing that war.

Then what happened, Mr. Speaker, Iran unleashed its proxy—its terrorist proxy—Hezbollah into Syria; and Hezbollah entered the war in Syria on the side of Assad; and that turned the war, unfortunately, to Assad's favor.

So now, we are in a position where Assad doesn't want to negotiate, doesn't want to sue for peace, certainly doesn't want to negotiate his own exit from power in Syria, which we all thought was imminent just a few months ago; and he feels he has the upper hand because his ally, Iran, has changed the course of the war in there by unleashing their proxy, Hezbollah, a terrorist group, to fight on the side of Assad.

So Assad has essentially become an Iranian puppet in his own country, and that is Iran continuing to do all kinds of mischief while they are negotiating with us, ostensibly, so that they would not be allowed to have a nuclear weapon at the end of the day.

We know that the Israelis have taken matters into their own hands, and when they see weapons are being transferred to Hezbollah, they will do what they need to do to protect their own security.

So I think—the way Putin must understand that he cannot have it both ways, I think that the Iranians need to

understand that as well. Iran must not be allowed to have a nuclear weapon. They are a theocracy, and I think that we all believe that their having nuclear weapons would cause a proliferation of nuclear weapons all throughout the area, the Middle East.

Certainly, if Iran were to have a nuclear weapon—and that must not happen—Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, so many other countries would feel the need as well to get nuclear weapons; and we would start a chain of events that—who knows how it would end? So I believe that we have to be very, very crystal-clear.

I hope that these negotiations of the P5+1 with Iran bear fruit, but I think Iran must understand that we are not backing off, we are not going back, that nothing short of their not being able to produce a nuclear weapon is acceptable; and Iran must dismantle its nuclear weapons program.

That is not something that just the United States wants. That is something that the negotiations are really and truly all about.

I have said before that it troubles me that, while we are negotiating with Iran, Iran continues to enrich uranium. It would seem to me that if Iran had good intentions, it would at least understand that if the purpose of the negotiations is that, at the end of it, Iran would not be allowed to have a nuclear weapon, then it didn't seem so great for me to say to Iran, while we are negotiating, while we are talking, and while we are talking about you not having a nuclear weapon, you need to stop enriching while the talks are going on.

Now, Iran refused to do that because they wanted a loosening even further of sanctions if they were to stop enriching, and to me, it shows a malevolent intent on the part of Iran.

So I just think that, in our negotiations, we have to be resolute, and we have to be clear that, at the end of the day, Iran must not be allowed to have a nuclear weapon. At the end of the day, Iran must dismantle its program, and at the end of the day, we have to make sure that there is no light between us in terms of the P5+1 and that we are all demanding the same thing from Iran.

I think that we are united on this. I believe that everyone understands that, for Iran to have a nuclear weapon, it is totally and absolutely unacceptable.

The United States has many interests in the Middle East; and I think it is very important that we work closely together with our partners—Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, and others who also believe very strongly that Iran must never be allowed to have a nuclear weapon.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important, as these negotiations are going

on, that we set these parameters and that Iran must understand that it is unacceptable for them to have a nuclear weapon.

We may have negotiations. They may have a new president. He may be a little softer than the previous president; but let's remember, he was allowed to run in the Iranian elections, and that means that, as moderate as some people would like to believe he might be, six hard-liners were allowed to run.

He may be the most moderate of all the hard-liners, but he is hardly a moderate. All the moderates were disallowed to run for office, and the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei clearly calls the shots.

So everything is very delicate, and we hope and pray that these negotiations work well. I support the negotiations. I support the administration. But the bottom line, again, is that Iran must never be allowed to have a nuclear weapon.

I see that our minority whip is here, and I would like to invite him to join me.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from New York, the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, for his taking the time here to discuss two critical problems that confront us, first of all, the crisis that is ongoing in Ukraine and the negotiations that are currently underway with Iran.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, mindful of the words of President Kennedy, who urged us never to negotiate out of fear, but never to fear to negotiate. While rooted deeply in the cold war's tense climate, where nuclear war loomed over us all like a Sword of Damocles, his admonition is as relevant today as it was then.

Today, we face a starkly different world, a world in which the chief threat to democracy, freedom, and prosperity is not a rival state superpower, but a complex and dangerous nexus of terrorism, instability, and autocracy.

□ 1315

America has not shied away from the challenges this new reality presents. We have taken the fight once against terrorism to al Qaeda and its allies wherever they hide, and we have continued to promote peace, democracy, and individual freedom. And together with our allies in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, we have worked carefully and with determination to confront one of the most dangerous threats to global security and stability in our day: the prospects of a nuclear-armed Iran.

The extremist regime in Tehran is at the heart of the instability that is undermining America's interests across the region. Those interests are the

safety of our troops stationed in the region, regional stability and prosperity, the prevention of an arms race that could spiral out of control, ensuring that weapons of mass destruction do not end up in terrorists' hands, the protection of trade routes and resources that fuel economies across the world, and safeguarding our ally, Israel.

Iran continues to be the leading state sponsor of terrorism directed against America and our allies, supporting Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon. As Syria's civil war has grown more deadly, Iran remains a primary backer of Syria's dictator, Bashar al-Assad, who has gassed his own people and continues to target civilians.

Secretary Kerry said just last week that Iran, along with Russia, has actively been working to subvert the negotiations aimed at ending the bloodshed in Syria and moving the country toward a peaceful transition of power. And Iran's leaders continue to vilify Israel and its people, calling for the annihilation of the Jewish state, something Israel, America, and the world will never tolerate.

Let it be absolutely clear, Mr. Speaker: the United States will always stand by Israel. And let it be even clearer to Iran and to the world: America and its allies will never accept a nuclear-armed Iran. A nuclear weapon would give Iran the ability to carry out its threats against Israel. It would destabilize the Middle East, and it would put American troops and our European allies at risk of catastrophic attack. That is why, Mr. Speaker, President Obama and Congress have worked together to enact the toughest sanctions regime in history and bring our allies together to enforce those sanctions.

The employment of sanctions to compel Iran's compliance with international norms has been a bipartisan goal going back several Congresses and several administrations, Republican and Democratic. That is because America's policy with regard to Iran, as President Obama has forcefully and repeatedly emphasized, is not containment but prevention. We have made it clear to Ayatollah Khamenei—and those who conspire with him to spread terror and use it as an instrument of statecraft—that we will use every necessary asset at our disposal to deny Iran a nuclear weapon.

While the military option remains on the table—as President Obama and Secretary Kerry have made it absolutely clear—we now have an opportunity to achieve our goals without resorting to the force of arms. That is the most desirable alternative. It is our duty and obligation to seize that opportunity.

America is great, Mr. Speaker, not only because of our military might, but because of our moral might, our unwavering commitment to the power of human freedom and dignity that overcame communism and will overcome

the terror and tyranny facing the world today.

Kennedy was right, Mr. Speaker. We must never negotiate out of fear. And we are not. But neither should we fear to negotiate. And we are. And our objective is clear. The Iranian regime did not resume negotiations last year because it somehow had a change of heart. Iran altered its approach because the sanctions passed by Congress, enforced by the administration, and supported by our allies are having a profound effect on the Iranian economy, and, of course, because the Iranian people, in electing President Rouhani, signaled a desire to stop the confrontation with the West, which was undermining their economic well-being.

The Joint Plan of Action that was signed in November of last year is a result of those sanctions and that election. But the authors of the policies pursued by Iran over the last four decades, the mullahs, remain. Iran agreed to the Joint Plan of Action not because it wanted to give up its nuclear ambitions, as they have said, but because it concluded that its national interests were better served by temporarily halting its progress towards a nuclear weapons capability in return for sanctions relief.

But that interim agreement is only a first step. It makes important progress, but it does not provide the comprehensive, long-term assurance we need that Iran has abandoned and will not again pursue its goal of a nuclear weapon. Only a comprehensive, verifiable agreement that prevents Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon will meet our and our allies' international security objectives.

Given Iran's history of deception and denial, any agreement must include reliable, independent, intrusive, and unfettered verification that Iran is abiding by its commitments and that such a verification regime remains permanently in place. Mr. Speaker, Ronald Reagan's admonition "to verify" is doubly essential in light of there being no basis "to trust" and that the consequences of breach are too catastrophic.

Among the commitments Iran must meet has to be the end of its pursuit of nuclear weapons and compliance with U.N. Security Council resolutions and cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency's robust and effective certification activities.

Mr. Speaker, U.N. Security Resolution 1737 states:

Iran shall without further delay suspend the following proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities: all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development, to be verified by the IAEA; and work on all heavy water-related projects, including the construction of a research reactor moderated by heavy water, to be verified by the IAEA.

This is the international community, acting through the United Nations, speaking, not only ourselves.

Mr. Speaker, the world has a responsibility to ensure that these goals are attained. But let there never be any doubt that should diplomacy fail—and all of us hope that will not be the case, but if it does—our military is, as Secretary Kerry said last week, "ready and prepared to do what it would have to do."

When Iran's leaders issue threats, we ought to remember the lessons of the 20th century, when the threats of tyrants and terrorists were neither effectively responded to nor heeded. History teaches us that the only way to change the behavior of regimes that threaten regional or global peace and stability is to stand up to them and hold them accountable. That is exactly what the United States and our allies are now doing.

In my view, Iran came to the negotiating table and signed the Joint Plan of Action in the hope that it might gain extended sanctions relief without having to give up the path to a nuclear weapon fully, irrevocably, and verifiably. It is past time that we make it clear to the Iranians that the only path to regaining its economic footings is to comply fully with the Joint Plan of Action and quickly conclude a long-term, comprehensive agreement which assures compliance with U.N. Security Council requirements and elimination of a nuclear-arms capability. Until that objective, Mr. Speaker, is met, there must be no doubt that all relevant sanctions will remain in effect and be fully enforced.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the administration, particularly the President, Secretary Kerry, and my dear friend, Assistant Secretary of State, Wendy Sherman. I commend them for the steps they have taken to enforce these sanctions and penalize those who seek to violate them. It ought to be clear to nations and companies around the world that Iran is not open for business.

There must also be no doubt that if Iran violates its current commitments or fails to reach an acceptable final agreement, the temporary sanctions relief will be canceled, all sanctions will be restored, and the Congress will act to put additional sanctions in place.

Iran will either comply with U.N. Security Council and IAEA determinations and foreclose any pathway to a nuclear weapon, or it will face economic decline and increasingly painful consequences.

That is not our objective for Iran or for the Iranian people. The United States does not seek war. But we will not take any option off the table to prevent Iran from acquiring the most dangerous implements of war.

While I remain skeptical, I support the administration's efforts to achieve

a diplomatic resolution to this threat to our national security and to global security.

Mr. Speaker, these talks are a test—a critical test. But they are also an opportunity for Iran, for the P5+1 nations, and for all the world to seek a peaceful resolution of this critical situation that confronts the international community. Until now, Iran has failed every test and has refused to negotiate in good faith, ignoring the will of the international community—and I would add, the best interests of the Iranian people.

We must see whether this time the pressure of sanctions means that Iran is serious about reaching an agreement to dismantle its nuclear infrastructure permanently and with ongoing verification, abandoning its sponsorship of international terrorism, respects the rights of its citizens, and determines to be a positive participant in the community of nations—or, on the other hand, if it continues to follow the path of international outlier: fomenting instability and terror in its regions and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, the Iranian people are the inheritors of a great history and culture. They have given much to the world, including a long tradition of art, culture, and innovations in math and science. They are people for whom we rightfully have great respect. But we cannot, must not, and will not allow their leaders to continue to put the world at risk.

Mr. Speaker, I support President Obama and his administration's effort to resolve this dangerous confrontation through the ongoing negotiations. As I have said, we pray for their success. The fruits of that success will be sanctions relief for Iran and its people. If it continues, however, its path of delay and deception and continues to sow unrest and tyrannies throughout the Middle East, Iran will only exacerbate its economic isolation.

Mr. Speaker, I support the administration's conviction that the failure to achieve the expressed objectives of the P5+1 is not an option. Our finest hours as a country and as a democracy have always been when the free and democratic nations of the world came together with courage and resolve to protect and preserve international security and freedom.

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And our greatest strength has always been our willingness to negotiate—in this case with a determination to attain an agreement that is fair, but with a conviction that it must assure—it must assure—that Iran does not attain a nuclear weapons capability now or in the future.

Mr. Speaker, the time is short. The consequences are profound, and success is our only option.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. UPTON (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of illness.

Mr. WESTMORELAND (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of attending a funeral.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, March 3, 2014, at noon for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4850. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Commodity Futures Trading Commission, transmitting the Commission's "Major" final rule — Treatment of Certain Collateralized Debt Obligations Backed Primarily by Trust Preferred Securities With Regard to Prohibitions and Restrictions on Certain Interests in, and Relationships With, Hedge Funds and Private Equity Funds (RIN: 3038-AE13) received February 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4851. A letter from the Director, Department of Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Anti-Money Laundering Program and Suspicious Activity Report Filing Requirements for Housing Government Sponsored Enterprises (RIN: 1506-AB14) received February 21, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4852. A letter from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Extension of Exemptions for Security-Based Swaps [Release Nos.: 33-9545; 34-71482; File No. S7-26-11] (RIN: 3235-AL17) received February 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4853. A letter from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting the Department's final rule — Energy Conservation Program: Compliance Date for the Dehumidifier Test Procedure [Docket No.: EERE-2013-BT-TP-0044] (RIN: 1904-AD06) received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4854. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's "Major" final rule — Ninety-Day Waiting Period Limitation and Technical Amendments to Certain Health Coverage Requirements Under the Affordable Care Act [CMS-9952-F] (RIN: 0938-AR77) received February 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4855. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the annual report on National HIV Testing Goals; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4856. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control,

Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final rule — Schedules of Controlled Substances: Temporary Placement of Four Synthetic Cannabinoids Into Schedule I [Docket No.: DEA-385] received February 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4857. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Introduction — Part 2, Standard Review Plan for the Review of Safety Analysis Reports for Nuclear Power Plants: Light-Water Small Modular Reactor Edition [NRC-2012-0268] received February 12, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4858. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Policy Statement; revision [NRC-2010-0292] received February 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4859. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, United States Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — D-mannose; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-0736; FRL-9905-44] received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4860. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, United States Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Chlorantraniliprole; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0235; FRL-9905-56] received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4861. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, United States Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Nonroad Technical Amendments [EPA-HQ-OAR-2012-0102; FRL-9905-35-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AR48; 2127-AL31) received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4862. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4863. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Transportation, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4864. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Maximum Civil Money Penalty Amounts; Civil Money Penalty Complaints [Docket No.: FDA-2014-N-0113] received February 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4865. A letter from the Acting Assistant Chief Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's "Major" final rule — Emergency Relief Program [Docket No.: FTA-2013-0004] (RIN: 2132-AB13) received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4866. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; CENTRAIR Gliders [Docket No.: FAA-2014-0018; Directorate Identifier 2013-CE-049-AD] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4867. A letter from the Federal Register Certifying Officer, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Regulations Governing United States Savings Bonds, Series EE and HH; Regulations Governing Definitive United States Savings Bonds, Series I; Regulations Governing Securities Held in TreasuryDirect received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4868. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Ninety-Day Waiting Period Limitation and Technical Amendments to Certain Health Coverage Requirements Under the Affordable Care Act [T.D. 9656] (RIN: 1545-BL50) received February 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2824. A bill to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to stop the ongoing waste by the Department of the Interior of taxpayer resources and implement the final rule on excess spoil, mining waste, and buffers for perennial and intermittent streams, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-364). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 3826. A bill to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-365). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 163. A bill to designate as wilderness certain land and inland water within the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in the State of Michigan, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113-366). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 931. A bill to provide for the addition of certain real property to the reservation of the Silertz Tribe in the State of Oregon; with an amendment (Rept. 113-367). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2095. A bill to prohibit an increase in the lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management until a centralized database of all lands identified as suitable for disposal by Resource Management Plans for lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the Bureau is easily accessible to the public on a website of

the Bureau; with an amendment (Rept. 113-368). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 3492. A bill to provide for the use of hand-propelled vessels in Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, and the National Elk Refuge, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113-369). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2259. A bill to withdraw certain Federal land and interests in that land from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws and disposition under the mineral and geothermal leasing laws and to preserve existing uses; with an amendment (Rept. 113-370). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. UPTON: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 2126. A bill to facilitate better alignment, cooperation, and best practices between commercial real estate landlords and tenants regarding energy efficiency in buildings, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113-371). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. JENKINS (for herself, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. NUGENT, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. WOODALL, and Mr. COLE):

H.R. 4118. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to delay the implementation of the penalty for failure to comply with the individual health insurance mandate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia (for himself, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. BARROW of Georgia, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia):

H.R. 4119. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the West Hunter Street Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HOYER (for himself and Mr. WOLF):

H.R. 4120. A bill to amend the National Law Enforcement Museum Act to extend the termination date; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 4121. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to provide for improvements to small business development centers; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Ms. BONAMICI (for herself, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California):

H.R. 4122. A bill to reauthorize the Older Americans Act of 1965, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 4123. A bill to amend the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 to eliminate the use of valid court orders to

secure lockup of status offenders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. GRIJALVA):

H.R. 4124. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to ensure that juveniles adjudicated in Federal delinquency proceedings are not subject to solitary confinement while committed to juvenile facilities; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. COSTA (for himself, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. BERA of California, and Mr. CÁRDENAS):

H.R. 4125. A bill to authorize the construction of the expansion of Shasta Dam in California; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. COSTA (for himself, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. FARR, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. BERA of California, and Mr. CÁRDENAS):

H.R. 4126. A bill to authorize the construction of the expansion of San Luis Reservoir in California; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. COSTA (for himself, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. BERA of California, and Mr. CÁRDENAS):

H.R. 4127. A bill to authorize the construction of the Upper San Joaquin River Storage in California; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. DELBENE (for herself, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, and Mr. PALLONE):

H.R. 4128. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand and modify the credit for employee health insurance expenses of small employers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HINOJOSA:

H.R. 4129. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for tax preferred savings accounts for dependent youth, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. JEFFRIES:

H.R. 4130. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to encourage mixed-income housing development; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Ms. JACKSON LEE):

H.R. 4131. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to allow States to regulate tow truck operations; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida (for himself, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. DELANEY, and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 4132. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the size of employers eligible for the credit for employee health insurance expenses of small employers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida (for himself, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. DELANEY, and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 4133. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the credit period for which an employer is eligible for the credit for employee health insurance expenses of small employers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. NUGENT:

H.R. 4134. A bill to repeal the reduced annual cost-of-living adjustment of the retired pay of retired members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62 imposed by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013; to the Committee

on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committees on the Budget, and Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SIMPSON:

H.R. 4135. A bill to clarify the standard required for the importation of sporting arms into the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. MCKINLEY, Mr. WALZ, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mr. REICHERT):

H.R. 4136. A bill to amend part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to provide full Federal funding of such part; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. CHABOT, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. MESSER):

H. Res. 494. A resolution affirming the importance of the Taiwan Relations Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois (for himself and Mrs. DAVIS of California):

H. Res. 495. A resolution encouraging people in the United States to recognize March 3, 2014, as Read Across America Day; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. HINOJOSA (for himself and Mr. STIVERS):

H. Res. 496. A resolution recognizing the importance of savings to financial security; to the Committee on Financial Services.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. JENKINS:

H.R. 4118.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8:

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia:

H.R. 4119.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I of the United States Constitution and its subsequent amendments, and further clarified and interpreted by the Supreme Court of the United States.

By Mr. HOYER:

H.R. 4120.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV Section 3 Clause 2

The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

By Ms. VELÁZQUEZ:

H.R. 4121.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power * * * To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Ms. BONAMICI:

H.R. 4122.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. CÁRDENAS:

H.R. 4123.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 1.

All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

By Mr. CÁRDENAS:

H.R. 4124.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 1.

All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

By Mr. COSTA:

H.R. 4125.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COSTA:

H.R. 4126.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. COSTA:

H.R. 4127.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. DELBENE:

H.R. 4128.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HINOJOSA:

H.R. 4129.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8.

By Mr. JEFFRIES:

H.R. 4130.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. MORAN:

H.R. 4131.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 4132.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MURPHY of Florida:

H.R. 4133.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. NUGENT:

H.R. 4134.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. SIMPSON:

H.R. 4135.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution, granting Congress the power "to regulate commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with Indian tribes"

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN:

H.R. 4136.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 32: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. CICILLINE.

H.R. 38: Mr. LATTA, Mr. RIBBLE, and Mrs. BACHMANN.

H.R. 107: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 259: Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 395: Mr. CROWLEY.

H.R. 401: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 494: Mr. COLLINS of New York.

H.R. 721: Mr. NUGENT.

H.R. 755: Mr. WALDEN, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. MCALLISTER, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. MCKINLEY, and Mr. GINGREY of Georgia.

H.R. 822: Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. DEFazio, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. LANGEVIN, and Mr. DINGELL.

H.R. 831: Ms. BASS.

H.R. 846: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 921: Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 986: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 997: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 1015: Mr. HASTINGS of Washington.

H.R. 1020: Mr. CHABOT.

H.R. 1212: Mr. KILMER.

H.R. 1249: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1250: Mr. COBLE, Mr. VELA, and Ms. HANABUSA.

H.R. 1318: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 1554: Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 1563: Mr. ROYCE.

H.R. 1591: Mr. GALLEG0 and Mr. GERLACH.

H.R. 1726: Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, and Mr. REICHERT.

H.R. 1736: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 1738: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. GARCIA, and Mr. MEEKS.

H.R. 1740: Mrs. BACHMANN and Mr. CRAWFORD.

H.R. 1795: Ms. KAPTUR.

H.R. 1806: Mr. BENISHEK and Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 1814: Mr. ADERHOLT.

H.R. 2086: Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 2135: Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 2149: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 2203: Mr. BACHUS, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. MARINO, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. MCCARTHY of Cali-

fornia, Mr. YODER, Mr. CLAY, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. DUFFY, Mr. WOODALL, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. WOLF, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. ROKITA, and Mr. GARRETT.

H.R. 2344: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 2413: Mr. POE of Texas and Mr. TAKANO.

H.R. 2414: Mr. BUCHANAN.

H.R. 2504: Mr. KIND, Mr. POLIS, and Mrs. BACHMANN.

H.R. 2536: Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 2746: Mrs. BACHMANN.

H.R. 2907: Mr. NUNNELEE.

H.R. 3083: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 3116: Mr. GERLACH.

H.R. 3135: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 3180: Mr. BISHOP of New York.

H.R. 3306: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 3333: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 3335: Mrs. BACHMANN.

H.R. 3384: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 3395: Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 3413: Mr. WEBER of Texas.

H.R. 3431: Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. VALADAO, and Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.

H.R. 3443: Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 3463: Ms. DELBENE and Mr. VELA.

H.R. 3469: Mr. STUTZMAN and Mr. JOYCE.

H.R. 3482: Mr. MCALLISTER.

H.R. 3508: Mr. NUGENT.

H.R. 3529: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.R. 3538: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 3571: Mr. TAKANO and Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 3600: Mr. O'ROURKE and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 3670: Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 3672: Mr. CONNOLLY.

H.R. 3673: Mr. BISHOP of Utah and Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 3698: Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 3722: Mrs. NOEM and Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 3726: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 3738: Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. ESHOO, and Ms. BASS.

H.R. 3740: Mr. POCAN and Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.

H.R. 3771: Ms. EDWARDS and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 3776: Mr. SCHOCK.

H.R. 3826: Mr. FLORES, Ms. FOX, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. KLINE, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. BYRNE, and Mrs. ROBY.

H.R. 3857: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3878: Mr. LEWIS, Mr. MORAN, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. LOFGREN, and Ms. DUCKWORTH.

H.R. 3930: Mr. WEBSTER of Florida and Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 3931: Mr. ROTHFUS.

H.R. 3935: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 3970: Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. VISCLOSKEY, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. HUFFMAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. ELLISON, and Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 3973: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3976: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina and Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 3987: Mr. VELA.

H.R. 3991: Mr. COOK.

H.R. 4012: Mr. MULVANEY and Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 4015: Mr. BERA of California, Mr. NUNES, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HALL, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. BENISHEK, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. RUIZ, and Mr. THORNBERRY.

H.R. 4031: Mr. COLE.

H.R. 4045: Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. COOK, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLAY, Mr. RUSH, Ms.

NORTON, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. McDERMOTT, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. SHERMAN, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 4064: Mr. CHABOT.

H.R. 4066: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.

H.R. 4070: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina and Mr. BRIDENSTINE.

H.R. 4092: Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. McDERMOTT, and Mr. GARCIA.

H.R. 4093: Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 4094: Ms. CHU, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. HANNA, Ms. MENG, and Mr. MULVANEY.

H.R. 4106: Mr. STIVERS, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, and Mr. GARRETT.

H. Con. Res. 37: Mr. PETERSON.

H. Res. 418: Mr. HONDA.

H. Res. 485: Mr. DELANEY.

H. Res. 488: Mr. WOLF.

DISCHARGE PETITIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XV, the following discharge petition was filed:

Petition 7, February 26, 2014, by Mr. TIMOTHY BISHOP on the bill (H.R. 1010), was signed by the following Members: Timothy H. Bishop, Paul Tonko, Jerrold Nadler, James P. McGovern, Anna G. Eshoo, Allyson Y. Schwartz, Janice Hahn, Richard M. Nolan, Colleen W. Hanabusa, Susan A. Davis, Barbara Lee, Niki Tsongas, David Loebsack, Jared Polis, Donna F. Edwards, Gregory W.

Meeks, Adam B. Schiff, John C. Carney, Jr., Elijah E. Cummings, John K. Delaney, C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger, Michael E. Capuano, Timothy J. Walz, Alcee L. Hastings, George Miller, Elizabeth H. Esty, Doris O. Matsui, Gloria Negrete McLeod, Ann M. Kuster, James P. Moran, Robert A. Brady, Brian Higgins, Terri A. Sewell, Sanford D. Bishop, Jr., Diana DeGette, Grace F. Napolitano, Bruce L. Braley, José E. Serrano, Xavier Becerra, Albio Sires, Michael H. Michaud, Julia Brownley, Matt Cartwright, Jim McDermott, Jim Cooper, John A. Yarmuth, Henry C. “Hank” Johnson, Jr., Derek Kilmer, Lois Capps, Peter Welch, Suzan K. DelBene, Peter A. DeFazio, Katherine M. Clark, Denny Heck, Rush Holt, Joseph P. Kennedy III, Bill Foster, Mark Pocan, Kyrsten Sinema, Nancy Pelosi, Steven A. Horsford, Nydia M. Velázquez, Grace Meng, Sean Patrick Maloney, Michelle Lujan Grisham, Dina Titus, Alan S. Lowenthal, Ron Barber, Suzanne Bonamici, Steny H. Hoyer, Eric Swalwell, Nita M. Lowey, Rubén Hinojosa, Carolyn B. Maloney, Kathy Castor, Luis V. Gutiérrez, Cheri Bustos, Robin L. Kelly, Chellie Pingree, Raul Ruiz, Scott H. Peters, Tammy Duckworth, Joe Courtney, Bradley S. Schneider, Louise McIntosh Slaughter, Joyce Beatty, Ben Ray Lujan, Tony Cardenas, Beto O'Rourke, Juan Vargas, Mark Takano, Joaquin Castro, Daniel T. Kildee, Al Green, Zoe Lofgren, Gwen Moore, Steve Cohen, John B. Larson, Michael F. Doyle, Linda T. Sánchez, Yvette D. Clarke, Maxine Waters, Donald M. Payne, Jr., John

P. Sarbanes, Janice D. Schakowsky, John Conyers, Jr., Theodore E. Deutch, David E. Price, Chris Van Hollen, Joseph Crowley, James E. Clyburn, Gerald E. Connolly, Robert C. “Bobby” Scott, Eddie Bernice Johnson, John Garamendi, Ed Perlmutter, Nick J. Rahall II, Frank Pallone, Jr., Marcia L. Fudge, Emanuel Cleaver, David N. Cicilline, Danny K. Davis, Stephen F. Lynch, Michael M. Honda, Judy Chu, James A. Himes, Gene Green, William L. Enyart, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Sheila Jackson Lee, John Lewis, Jared Huffman, Charles B. Rangel, William R. Keating, Patrick Murphy, Ami Bera, John F. Tierney, Rick Larsen, Rosa L. DeLauro, Mike Quigley, Cedric L. Richmond, Gary C. Peters, Corrine Brown, Tulsi Gabbard, Frederica S. Wilson, G.K. Butterfield, James R. Langevin, Bill Pascrell, Jr., Daniel Lipinski, Sam Farr, Lloyd Doggett, Loretta Sanchez, Bennie G. Thompson, John D. Dingell, Henry Cuellar, Marcy Kaptur, Adam Smith, Tim Ryan, André Carson, Betty McCollum, Mike Thompson, Raúl M. Grijalva, Jerry McNerney, Kurt Schrader, Sander M. Levin, Henry A. Waxman, Marc A. Veasey, Jackie Speier, Richard E. Neal, Ann Kirkpatrick, Joe Garcia, Wm. Lacy Clay, Steve Israel, Brad Sherman, William L. Owens, Lois Frankel, Eliot L. Engel, Hakeem S. Jeffries, Lucille Roybal-Allard, Daniel B. Maffei, Alan Grayson, Filemon Vela, Ron Kind, Keith Ellison, Chaka Fattah, Carol Shea-Porter, Pete P. Gallego, Karen Bass, David Scott, Jim Costa, Earl Blumenauer.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE CARTHAGE BULLDOGS FOR WINNING THE TEXAS 3A DIVISION I FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. LOUIE GOHMERT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor to have a number of outstanding football programs well established within the First District of Texas. To have two tremendous east Texas teams as the last ones standing, battling it out for a state championship title, makes me all the more proud as their Representative in Washington, D.C.

Today, we stand to recognize and congratulate the Carthage Bulldogs on a stellar high school football season in 2013 which culminated with their claiming the Texas State 3A—Division I Championship over the previously undefeated Kilgore Bulldogs, also an extraordinarily talented group of young men who were playing in their second state title match in school history.

As a result of extraordinary teamwork and athletic prowess, these two east Texas powerhouse teams faced off in what became known as the "Bulldog Bowl." This canine clash came just one year after both teams were defeated in the state semifinals. More than 17,000 fans packed the stadium the week before Christmas to witness this battle to determine who would be "top dawg" in the state of Texas for 2013. The 34–23 victory secured the Carthage Bulldogs' fourth state championship trophy since 2008, the team having captured three straight state titles from 2008 to 2010.

The Carthage Bulldogs' 2013 championship success is a testament to superb coaching, as well as a tribute to the players and all who assisted them along the way. Such championships do not come without extensive year-round preparation of everyone involved, the coaches' tireless groundwork, unrivaled discipline & selfless teamwork of players and staff, enthusiastic support and unwavering encouragement from family, friends and fans, all fueled by a dogged determination to reach the highest goal achievable in Texas football.

The lessons learned about teamwork and discipline will undoubtedly improve every participant's life in immeasurable ways. These same lessons should help boost every player, coach, and supporter through the knowledge that potential obstacles that lie ahead in life can be overcome with championship capability.

Congratulations to Superintendent Dr. Glenn Hambrick, Principal Otis Amy, Assistant Principals Pat Browning and Wade Watson, along with the entire athletic staff including Athletic Director and Head Football Coach Scott Surratt, Assistant Coaches Chris Smith,

Darren Preston, Andre Granger, Chris Cloninger, Clint Endsley, Matt Folmar, John Goodwin, Brandon Hargers, Ryan Marion, Dennis McLaughlin, Benny Mitchell, Mike Morgan, Jay Malone, Charlie Tucker, Jim Milstead, and Stephen Luman; the Junior High Coaches Paul Bishop, Brian Caver, Jeff Griffin, Brian Stacy, and Damon Roberts; Athletic Trainer Dustin Swaim; and Student Assistants Mason Brittain, Kyla Burd, David Johnson, Nicholle Moore, Cynthia Puente, Hannah Taylor, Sydnee Taylor, and Sarai Vassar; and Athletic Secretary Mamie Vanover.

And of course, we pay tribute to the championship team consisting of Jakeldric Jackson, Dylan Possoit, Keldrean Strong, Blake Bogenschutz, Terian Goree, Jeremy Matlock, O'keeron Rutherford, Clark Neuman, Kirston Ingram, Troy Davis, Roberto Jimenez, Trevor Cooper, Jarod Blissett, Ross Barron, Tevin Pipkin, Christian Allison, Micah Templeton, Jordan Romero, Juston Clough, Tredarion Jackson, Bryan Bolton, Ty Jones, Tra'Kareon Leary, James Marshall, D'Vodney Brooks, Jace Zett, Johnathan Brown, Ronald Mayweather, Javontay Brown, Christopher Howard, De'Arreus Hearn, Rafael Hernandez, Gilbert Perez, Travis Phillips, Jimmy Gonzalez, Seth Ward, Kiiron Lewis, Jonthan Sells, Ravodney Hardy, Kedrick Henderson, Cade Clinton, Garrett Harvey, Branton Halcumb, Bryce Rickert, Mario McCain, Braden Russell, Micah Johnson, Hunter Hutto, Nolan Griffin, Akashdeep Singh, Devon Nitzschke, TC Bryant, Jonathon Rayson, Griffin Bankhead, Trevor Broadway, Brandon Carlson, Adrian Goodacre, Dillon Husar, Cristian Jimenez, Jarrod McLin, Cagan Baldree, Leonard Maxwell, Marquise Guinn, Ja'Marcus Roberson, and Tavorin Pellum.

May God continue to bless these young people, their families, friends, and all those individuals who refer to Carthage as home. It is my most esteemed honor to congratulate the 2013 State Champion Carthage Bulldogs and everyone involved with this endeavor, as their legacy is now recorded in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD that will endure as long as there is a United States of America.

HONORING WESLEY CHESBRO

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague, MIKE THOMPSON, to recognize California Assemblymember Wesley Chesbro, who will be retiring November 30, 2014 after 34 years of public service.

Assemblymember Chesbro has an illustrious record of serving the North Coast as an environmental champion, public servant and community leader. He has devoted his career to

protecting the North Coast's tremendous natural resources, advocating for underserved populations, and promoting the communities and businesses that call this region home.

Beginning his public service career in the Arcata City Council, Assemblymember Chesbro served for years in the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors, the California Integrated Waste Management Board, the State Senate, and in the State Assembly. In addition to his decades in elected office, Assemblymember Chesbro left an impact on his community as the co-founder of the Arcata Community Recycling Center and later the Northcoast Environmental Center.

As a member of the California State Senate, Assemblymember Chesbro authored legislation to fund rural community clinics, protect California's natural resources, provide housing for individuals with special needs, and ensure rural law enforcement agencies are fully funded. More recently, in the Assembly, Assemblymember Chesbro has successfully introduced legislation to promote recycling statewide, support local breweries, preserve forests, and protect marine mammals.

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting and proper that we honor Wesley Chesbro upon his retirement for his work in representing the North Coast, protecting its resources, and championing its people. We express our deep appreciation for his service, and convey our best wishes for his long and happy retirement with his wife Cindy and his children Alan and Collin.

NATIONAL EATING DISORDER AWARENESS WEEK

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Eating Disorder Awareness Week. The Renfrew Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has been a leader in the education on eating disorders and the treatment of women since 1985. Its clinical excellence and supportive environment has empowered women to change their lives.

More than 8 million people in the United States suffer from eating disorders. Nearly half of all Americans personally know someone with an eating disorder. Unfortunately only one in 10 people with an eating disorder receive treatment for their disease.

The theme of this year's National Eating Disorder Awareness Week is "I Had No Idea." Since symptoms can be different for everyone, it's not always easy for friends and families to tell when a loved one is suffering from bulimia or anorexia. For someone suffering from one of these diseases, it can take over their life.

The Renfrew Center is the nation's first residential eating disorder facility. Renfrew has

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

helped more than 65,000 women with eating disorders and other behavioral health issues in their 13 locations around the country. Renfrew offers help to women suffering from bulimia, anorexia, binge eating disorder, and related health problems. Renfrew empowers women with the tools they need to succeed in their recovery and in their lives.

The stigma that comes with suffering eating disorders can often lead to other illnesses both physical and mental, and sufferers need and deserve the strong support of their family, friends, colleagues and health professionals. This is where Renfrew excels, and I am grateful for the staff and supporters of The Renfrew Center for their dedication to this important effort.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Renfrew Center and all health professionals across the country for their dedication to treating those suffering from eating disorders. In recognition of National Eating Disorder Awareness Week, it remains important today and every day to educate those in our lives about eating disorders and provide them support and hope for a better path.

TRIBUTE TO THE CHRISTIAN
APPALACHIAN PROJECT

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the members of a program dedicated to improving lives in my region of Appalachia, the Christian Appalachian Project, in honor of its 50th anniversary.

Whether employees or volunteers, the exceptional members of this organization work hard to fight the problems which have plagued eastern Kentucky and Appalachia, including natural disasters, domestic violence, and barriers to economic development.

The Christian Appalachian Project began in 1964 with Reverend Ralph W. Beiting, who provided clothing, food, and other goods to the people of eastern Kentucky with the help of members of his church and community in northern Kentucky. Over the last fifty years, the organization has grown tremendously to include a vast array of programs for children and families, individuals with disabilities, and the elderly. These programs offer hope and help.

Each of these programs is designed to help enrich the lives of eastern Kentuckians and better the community as a whole through an approach that emphasizes providing a hand up and not just a hand out. Each year, more than 1,000 people volunteer from across the nation to help make this project one of the most influential efforts in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring an incredible program which helps so many in my region get back on their feet. The program's fifty years of service is a testament to how much this program has done for Kentucky and the whole Appalachian region, and I wish them a bright and exciting future.

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATED
SERVICE OF MRS. ALICE
GEISHECKER

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to recognize the contributions of Mrs. Alice Geishecker to the United States House of Representatives and this great Nation upon the occasion of her retirement. Alice is a true American patriot with over 38 combined years of supporting Military members and families.

Since September 2001, Mrs. Geishecker served as a Congressional Liaison Representative with the United States Air Force House Liaison Office. In this capacity, she was responsible for maintaining a continuous Air Force presence in the United States House of Representatives. Her primary role was to facilitate personal contacts between Air Force leaders, Members of Congress, key personnel and professional House staff. She monitored the ever-changing political environment on Capitol Hill to advise the Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff of the Air Force. Alice was the primary focal point for administrative functions within the office to include all logistical support for events, Congressional member travel departures and arrivals, and movements of Senior Air Force Leadership within the Capitol complex. This endeared her to many Members of Congress and their offices.

Prior to joining the Air Force Liaison Office in the House of Representatives, Alice worked as a contract employee in 1978 with University of Maryland at Camp Pieri, Wiesbaden, Germany and took her oath to federal service on July 5, 1989 working Family Support Services at the United States Military Academy at West Point. Alice also worked with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) liaison officers at the Army Command and General Staff College, Directorate of Combat Development, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas and various divisions within the acquisition community and with the Director of Manpower in the Pentagon.

Alice had a varied and full civil servant career, but also served as a dedicated Army spouse to her husband Alan, a retired Lieutenant Colonel; loving mother to her three children, Cassie, Angelina, and Julie; and grandmother of eight.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the entire United States Congress, it is an honor to recognize the career and service of Mrs. Alice Geishecker. My wife Vicki and I congratulate Alice and wish her and her family all the best.

PREVENTING CARBON MONOXIDE
TRAGEDIES

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because of a preventable tragedy that occurred

in my congressional district this past weekend. On Saturday, at a local shopping mall, carbon monoxide leaked from a faulty basement pipe and tragically killed Steve Nelson, who managed the Legal Sea Foods there. 27 people were also sickened in moments by this colorless, odorless gas.

Each year, more than 400 Americans die from unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning; more than 20,000 visit the emergency room and more than 4,000 are hospitalized. Just one preventable death is too many.

This gas is so toxic because it is both odorless and colorless. In a house, for example, everyday items such as kerosene and gas space heaters, gas water heaters, fireplaces, and gas stoves are sources of carbon monoxide. A leak or improper use of these appliances can be fatal.

However, carbon monoxide detectors are an incredible weapon in our fight against carbon monoxide poisoning. These detectors, which cost as low as \$15, are designed to alert people before potentially life-threatening levels of CO are reached.

In fact, reports of carbon monoxide incidents that aren't related to fire almost doubled from 2003 to 2010. This is actually good news because it means these detectors are doing their job to alert people before it's too late.

I usually talk about carbon monoxide poisoning during natural disasters, as I did during Superstorm Sandy when many of my constituents lost power for weeks and resorted to gas generators in order to stay in their homes.

But as we learned from this past weekend, we must always be aware and we also must make sure that not only homes, but also businesses and other public areas are adequately protected.

HONORING HY RAMM

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Hy Ramm who recently passed away. Hy was a longtime friend, an accomplished business man and an asset to our community.

Hy was born in Liverpool, England and as a child he witnessed first-hand, the Nazi bombings during WWII. He was forced to grow up quickly, and the horrible things he saw during the war gave him a level of maturity and determination that I have rarely seen in others. After immigrating to Los Angeles with his family following the war, with only a fourth grade education, Hy quickly established himself as a force to be reckoned with. He worked hard to support his family and quickly rose to the level of Vice President of Dosimeter. Hy was determined to achieve success for himself and his family but always made time to give back to others. Even after his retirement, Hy worked with the Silicon Valley Coalition of Retired Executives (SCORE) and dedicated countless hours to mentoring young entrepreneurs.

Hy had a great passion for politics and public affairs and was actively involved in numerous campaigns over the years. I had the great

honor of meeting Hy in the 1960s during his term as President of the Beverly Hills Democrats and he was truly an inspiration.

Hy is survived by his wife and two children, daughter-in-law Jennifer, son-in-law Warren, and grandchildren Meredith, Annabella, Kira, Griffin and Amelia. He will be missed by all who knew him.

I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating the remarkable life and tremendous contributions of Hy Ramm. Our community owes Hy a debt of gratitude for his tremendous accomplishments and philanthropic efforts and he will not be forgotten.

HONORING DR. ETHEL HALL DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2014

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Black History month and my commitment to honoring influential African Americans that have impacted the state of Alabama and this nation. Today, I have the pleasure of sharing the inspiring story of Dr. Ethel Harris Hall. Dr. Hall was the first African American to serve on the Alabama State Board of Education and she was also the first African American Vice President of the Board of Education. In Alabama, we remember this exemplary educator for her role in breaking barriers in education and for her lifelong commitment to excellence.

Dr. Hall was born on February 23, 1928 in Morgan County Alabama to Harry and Fannie Mae Harris. The Harris' sent their daughter to Birmingham to ensure that she received a quality education. She attended Ullman High School, A.H. Parker High School, and Councill Training School. She was valedictorian of her class and went on to attend Alabama A&M University where she graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science Degree in 1948. She also obtained masters degrees from the University of Chicago and Atlanta University. She continued her studies at the University of Alabama where she obtained a doctorate in social work in 1979.

Throughout her tenure, this stellar educator taught in various schools systems throughout the state of Alabama including Hale County Schools, Birmingham City Schools, and Jefferson County Schools. Dr. Hall also taught at the collegiate level and was the first African American faculty member at the University of Montevallo. She later taught in the school of social work at The University of Alabama where she retired in 1999.

On January 19, 1987 Dr. Hall made history when she became the first black elected to serve on the Alabama State Board of Education. During her 24 year tenure, she served six terms and became vice chair in 1994. Dr. Hall served on the State Board of Education during many tumultuous battles over issues such as funding levels for schools, teacher testing, accountability standards for schools and academic standards for students. In making these tough decisions, she always remained a woman of principle-putting Alabama's children first.

In 2010, shortly before her death, Dr. Hall published her autobiography entitled "My Journey: A Memoir of the First African American to preside over the Alabama Board of Education." Dr. Hall stated that she felt it was important to share her story to inspire others to appreciate the opportunities they had been afforded. "I wrote the book because as I worked on the state board I found so many young people who took education for granted," Hall said. "They just assumed that everybody had the opportunity to go to school where they wanted to . . ." In telling her story, she hoped to not only share her experiences as a trail-blazer, but to tell others about how she saw Alabama's education system evolve through the years.

While we honor Dr. Hall for breaking barriers, we must also salute this extraordinary woman for her commitment to the students that she served. She led with grace and impeccable character that was defined by her passion for challenging students to be their very best. As a role model, she inspired her fellow educators to be servant leaders to their students and to their community. This beloved figure is also remembered for belief that all children deserved a quality education. Through her work she truly taught us to see education as the great equalizer.

During Black History month, simply saying thank you to Dr. Hall seems woefully inadequate but on behalf of a grateful nation we salute this pioneer and acknowledge her role not only in black history but American history. Her story is a perfect illustration of passionate leadership and selfless service to mankind. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Dr. Ethel Harris Hall, a phenomenal woman and a great American.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS M. HUNTER

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of Appalachia's most dedicated allies, Thomas M. Hunter. Tom will retire after 20 years of esteemed service as Executive Director of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC).

Over the years, Tom has made a tremendous impact on eastern Kentucky's communities and local economies. The ARC has consistently worked to leverage their funding in order to spur private-sector investment in commercial and industrial development, as well as provide for improved water, sewer, gas, fiber, and road infrastructure projects where they had previously been sorely needed. Many of these investments have occurred in my District, where all 28 of the counties I represent are recognized as a part of the ARC. Specifically, Tom has had oversight of the 3,080-mile Appalachian Development Highway System; noted to be the cornerstone of the ARC's transportation efforts. The ADHS is a system of modern highways that connect with the interstate highway system. The ADHS recently achieved 85 percent completion, and has already proved to be a formidable economic

stimulator for a region where roadways have traditionally been difficult to construct and often fall into disrepair. In my district, these vital corridors allow Kentuckians from even the most remote areas a chance to reach interstates with ease; thus opening up entire communities to travel and trade in a way that would have been impossible just a few decades ago.

All told, Tom Hunter has his fingerprints on hundreds of improvement projects in eastern Kentucky alone. Over the last 20 years, he has affected the lives of countless Kentuckians by overseeing the installation and repair of water lines, investments in small regional businesses via grant initiatives, and educational programs such as the Appalachian Higher Education Network—a group developed to work with high schools to increase the number of college-ready students in Appalachia. Tom has aided in tourism development with projects such as the Kentucky Artisan Heritage Trails, and actively demonstrated his interest in improving the health of Appalachians with the creation of the Appalachian Health Policy Advisory Council. Tom has done so much for my district, and for Kentucky, that it becomes difficult to fathom how he has likely been an equally significant champion for the other 12 states included in the Appalachian Regional Commission's territory. The ARC has been an extraordinary federal agency due to the constant commitment they have shown in responding to the needs of people throughout Appalachia. There is no doubt that Tom's strategic leadership was a fundamental driver behind the ARC's steady success.

As he moves into retirement, Tom leaves behind a legacy of forthright demeanor, an attentive ear, and humility in service. His wisdom, care and passion for the region will be sorely missed.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a true hero of the Appalachian region, Thomas M. Hunter. I wish him all the best in the years to come.

HONORING AUGUST "GUS" SCHAEFER ON A DISTINGUISHED 41-YEAR CAREER WITH UNDERWRITERS LABORATORIES

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to honor August "Gus" Schaefer for an extraordinary career—41 years of innovation and leadership in product and public safety at Underwriters Laboratories (UL) in the suburban Chicago district I represent. Under his watch, more than 25 billion products worldwide have earned the UL stamp of approval.

As UL's Public Safety Officer, Mr. Schaefer has pioneered and overseen countless major safety initiatives. His work and leadership have helped firefighters do their jobs better and safer. His commitment has guaranteed the safety of imports from around the world. And his dedication has helped teach fire, water, health, environmental, online and consumer safety to untold thousands of children each year.

Mr. Schaefer began his career with UL in 1973. Over the next 41 years, he built a reputation for excellent work and leadership, as well as for building partnerships and forging friendships. Mr. Schaefer successfully built teams and cultivated a team atmosphere.

His record, his experience and his work ethic earned him roles as the Director of Asian Operations and then U.S. and Canadian Operations before finally taking his position as Senior Vice President and Public Safety Officer.

Throughout his storied career, Mr. Schaefer maintained his commitment to excellence and team building. His accomplishments demonstrate the grand vision and discipline necessary to take ideas to action.

Mr. Schaefer's career has indeed been long and distinguished. I have no doubt his presence, guidance, friendship, leadership and vision will be sorely missed at UL, but his legacy and accomplishments will long be remembered and have set the foundation for years more success and safety.

RECOGNIZING JANA PAVLUS AS
THE 2015 ESCAMBIA COUNTY,
FLORIDA TEACHER OF THE
YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Ms. Jana Pavlus as the 2015 Escambia County, Florida Teacher of the Year. An outstanding educator, Ms. Pavlus has been an inspiration to her students, her colleagues, and her community, and I am proud to recognize her success and myriad of achievements.

Ms. Jana Pavlus graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Mobile in 2007 with a Bachelor of Science in Religion and Psychology. She began her teaching career in 2008 in Northwest Florida's Escambia County School District. After serving as a substitute teacher, as well as a Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) math tutor, Ms. Pavlus joined the faculty at Woodham Middle School, located in Pensacola, Florida, in 2010, where she currently serves as a seventh grade science teacher.

Ms. Pavlus not only believes that community involvement is critical in fostering a love and value of education in each student, but she understands and values the critical role she plays in the journey and professional development of her students. Throughout her teaching career, Ms. Pavlus has shown an unwavering commitment to inspiring her students and pushing them to their highest potential. In addition to helping students grasp difficult scientific theories, Ms. Pavlus also recognizes the importance of strong communications skills in improving critical thinking and is constantly challenging her students to understand why writing, analysis, and mathematics are important not only in other areas of study, but particularly in the study of science.

The dedication and commendable work Ms. Pavlus demonstrates as an educator has not gone unnoticed. She was awarded the

Woodham Middle School Teacher of the Year for 2013–2014 and was one of a few teachers invited to attend a Capturing Kids' Hearts Workshop, which has influenced her teaching style and strengthened her connection with her students.

Mr. Speaker, Northwest Florida has been blessed with an abundance of exemplary educators who constantly strive to empower as well as teach their students, and it is a privilege to recognize Ms. Jana Pavlus as the 2015 Escambia County, Florida Teacher of the Year. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Ms. Pavlus and thanking her for her commitment to serving the students and families of the Northwest Florida community. We wish her all the best for continued success.

COMMEMORATION OF SUMGAIT,
KIROVABAD AND BAKU MAS-
SACRES

HON. DAVID N. CICILLINE

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, today we commemorate the 26th Anniversary of the horrific Sumgait Pogroms. On February 27, 1988 organized mobs of Azerbaijanis aimed at killing and driving Armenian Christians living in Sumgait from their homes. Armed with sticks, axes and iron rods, they attacked Armenian men, women and children by breaking into their homes and brutally beating and killing them just because of their ethnicity. Despite Sumgait's 30 minute proximity to Baku, police allowed the pogroms to go on for 3 days, during which Armenians were burned alive and thrown from windows.

These acts were merely a continuation of the Azerbaijani authorities' unswerving policy of racism towards Armenians and ethnic cleansing of the Armenian population, with unpunished killings and deportations.

The Sumgait massacre is a black mark on history and sadly, this event sparked further violence as Armenians would be targeted less than 9 months later in Kirovabad and again in Baku in 1990.

The Azerbaijani Government has shamefully continued to undermine prospects for a lasting peace in the Southern Caucasus, recently in 2012, pardoning an Azerbaijani military officer Ramil Safarov who brutally murdered Armenian military officer Gurgen Margaryan during a NATO-sponsored Partnership for Peace exercise in 2004. Safarov confessed and was convicted in Budapest for brutally axing Margaryan while he was sleeping. Safarov never showed remorse for the murder and stated that he wished he had killed more Armenians. Immediately after his pardon Safarov received a promotion in the Azerbaijani military, an apartment, and years of back pay for his time spent in prison.

For more than 20 years, the people of Nagorno Karabakh have fought and died for their independence. From the earliest days of its formation, the Republic's freely elected governmental bodies have helped build an open democratic society through transparent elections and it is critical that the United

States support their independence and autonomy.

As we reflect on these horrific outbreaks of ethnic violence, I join with Armenians in Rhode Island, and across the world in remembering these victims and renewing our commitment to justice, independence and finding lasting peace.

I am proud to say Rhode Island was the first state in our nation to pass a resolution to recognize the Independence of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic and set an example for other legislatures to follow, like Massachusetts, Maine and Louisiana. The time has come for the United States Congress to do the same.

HONORING REV. ABRAHAM L.
WOODS, JR. AND BISHOP CALVIN
W. WOODS

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Black History Month, I rise today to continue my commitment to paying tribute to outstanding African-Americans who have made tremendous contributions to the political, economic and social fabric of Alabama and this nation. Today, I am honored to recognize brothers Rev. Abraham Lincoln Woods, Jr. and Bishop Calvin W. Woods, Sr. for their incredible audacity and courage during the darkest days of the Civil Rights Movement.

Rev. Abraham Lincoln Woods, Jr. and Bishop Calvin W. Woods, Sr. were both born in Birmingham, Alabama to Maggie Rosa Lee Wallace Woods, a homemaker, and Rev. Abraham Lincoln Woods Sr., a plant worker and Baptist minister.

In the spring of 1963, Rev. Abraham Woods led Birmingham's first demonstration at a whites-only lunch counter in downtown Birmingham. In the days and weeks following the first sit-in, Rev. Abraham Woods was arrested along with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights leaders for confronting Bull Connor. Rev. Abraham Woods had become friends with Dr. King while they were students at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia and later joined him on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial for his "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963.

Rev. Abraham Woods received a bachelor's degree in theology from Birmingham Baptist College, a bachelor's in sociology from Miles College in Birmingham and a master's in American history from the University of Alabama. He co-founded the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights in 1956 with Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth and served as the director for the Miles College Voter Registration Project.

Thirty-four years after the bombing of Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church, Rev. Abraham Woods played a pivotal role in urging the federal government to re-investigate the bombing. The new investigation led to the conviction of two Klansmen. "Even the Klan, as bad as they are," he told the New York Times in a 1997 interview, "you didn't think

they would go as far as to bomb a church on Sunday with little children in Sunday school."

While president of the Birmingham chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Rev. Abraham Woods led protests which were instrumental in integrating country clubs and golf courses in Alabama and across the nation. The P.G.A. had chosen a Birmingham country club as the site for its 1990 Championship. The protests that followed impelled major corporations to withdraw advertising from the tournament which led to the integration of the club.

Rev. Abraham Woods is also remembered as an exemplary educator. He was the first African American to teach American history at the University of Alabama. In 2002, Rev. Abraham Woods retired from Miles College after forty years on its faculty. Upon his retirement, Miles College conferred upon him the Doctorate of Humane Letters. He went on to retire as president of the Birmingham chapter of the SCLC in 2006. He served as pastor of St. Joseph's Baptist Church in Birmingham for thirty-seven years until his death on November 7, 2008 at the age of 80.

Rev. Abraham Woods had an incredible impact on the state of Alabama and this nation in his pursuit of justice. He taught all of us the importance of loving God and living for others.

In 2006, Bishop Calvin Woods succeeded his older brother as president of the Birmingham SCLC and became president of the New Era Baptist State Convention a year later.

Bishop Calvin Wallace Woods, Sr. was born on September 13, 1933 in Birmingham, Alabama. At the age of twelve, he entered Parker High School where he developed a talent for shoe repair and tailoring and a gift for public speaking.

Bishop Calvin Woods graduated from Parker High School in 1950 and went on to earn a B.S. degree in social science and B.D., B.R.E., M.B.S. and D.D. degrees from the Universal Baptist Institute, the Universal Baptist Seminary and Birmingham-Easonian Baptist Bible College.

In 1960, Bishop Calvin Woods became pastor of East End Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. During the 1960's, he was a resolute advocate for the boycott of Birmingham's segregated city bus system. He was sentenced to prison for six months and fined for his leadership in the Birmingham Bus Boycotts. Despite this setback, Bishop Calvin Woods continued his steadfast commitment to the Movement. In 1963, he was arrested and beaten by Birmingham's police for participating in public protests. Again, his dedication to fighting segregation and intolerance in the Deep South did not waver. Bishop Calvin Woods was heavily involved in the 1965 protest of Birmingham's voter registration procedures. He served as the strategy chairman for the protest of the shootings of five black protesters at a Birmingham supermarket.

Today, Bishop Calvin Woods continues to be a guiding light for the city of Birmingham and the state of Alabama. He remains an outspoken advocate for justice speaking out most recently against the verdict in the Trayvon Martin case and the Supreme Court's decision striking down Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act. I am inspired by the words he spoke at

a memorial service and wreath laying ceremony in 2012 for the 6 Birmingham youth killed on September 15, 1963. "In a sense we've crossed a stream," he said, "but still there are mighty oceans of adversity that lie ahead."

As a direct benefactor of their life's work and sacrifices, it is my honor to recognize the contributions of brothers Rev. Abraham Lincoln Woods, Jr. and Bishop Calvin W. Woods on the floor of the United States House of Representatives. Their contributions have inspired generations. On behalf of a grateful state and nation, we acknowledge these trail-blazers and their influence on the progress we have made. The City of Birmingham, the State of Alabama and this entire nation have benefited from their sacrifices and tenacious pursuit of justice. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Rev. Abraham Lincoln Woods, Jr. and Bishop Calvin W. Woods.

HONORING ANITA BLEDSOE-COVINGTON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary Black History honoree, Mrs. Anita Bledsoe-Covington.

Raised in Grenada County, MS, Mrs. Anita Bledsoe-Covington is known within the community for her entrepreneurship and an active member of the community. Born 9th out of 11 children of the late Icy Bell and Willie Sykes, the family had made strides of their own. Her mother, Ms. Icy Bell, was the head cook of a prestigious and all white restaurant, Monte Cristo, of Grenada, MS from 1963 until the year she passed 1973. Ms. Juanita Sykes, Mrs. Bledsoe-Covington's twin sister, marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. when he made his way through the south in 1967. And for her courage and civil defiance, she was arrested and jailed for this act.

With her three children, Mrs. Bledsoe-Covington moved to Yalobusha County in 1973. This move would be the first of many for Mrs. Anita Bledsoe-Covington. In 1978, she became the first black female delegate for the Mississippi Democratic Convention in Jackson, MS, as a representative for Yalobusha County.

During 1982 Mrs. Bledsoe-Covington opened Nita's Beauty Salon making her a staple in serving her community as a business woman. The salon earned Mrs. Anita numerous accolades as a beautician and entrepreneur. By 1986, she was the first black chairman of the Title I program for the Coffeenville School District as an active parent. As the 90's rolled in, Mrs. Anita was elected the first female Trustee of Coffeenville School Board District from 1991 through 1998. She also was hired as the first black female city clerk for the town of Oakland, MS in 1991.

During this time, the beginning of her career as a teacher with the Institution of Community Service head start program. Although she had already started her career as an early child-

hood school teacher, Mrs Bledsoe-Covington graduated from Coahoma Community College with an associate in early childhood education in 2003.

By 2005, in the same field, she earned her B.S. from Mississippi Valley State University. Coming full circle, 2010, Can's Chapel CME Church honored Mrs. Bledsoe-Covington as an unsung hero for Succeeding against the Odds during their Black History program. In 2012, she has obtained the Dean and President Certificate from the National Baptist Congress of Christian Education.

Now married at the age of 60 and with 10 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild later, when asked if it was her agenda to create Black History, her response was, "I've always accepted challenge and I guess maybe I did! I wanted to see if I could make a difference."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Anita Bledsoe-Covington for her quest in being a part of making history.

"GIVE KIDS A SMILE DAY"

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the thousands of dentists and volunteers who participate in the "Give Kids A Smile Day." Each February, Illinois dentists donate more than \$1 million in much-needed dental care to children. Many families cannot afford to provide their children with regular dental care. This can not only result in potentially serious health problems but is also likely to serve as an impediment to economic success. The unfortunate truth is that individuals with unhealthy looking teeth are less likely to be hired than those with better oral health. Furthermore, an inability to obtain dental care can adversely affect children before they even enter the job market—dental pain can affect both sleep patterns and school performance. Inadequate dental care is not a cosmetic concern; it has a real impact on a person's economic mobility and success.

I commend the American Dental Association for its tireless efforts to raise awareness and develop solutions so more people can receive dental care. Since the ADA's "Give Kids A Smile" program was founded twelve years ago in St. Louis, it has grown to become the world's largest oral health charitable program—encouraging parents, health professionals and policymakers to address the year-round need for oral health care for all children. Each year, thousands of the nation's dentists, dental team members and community volunteers provide free oral health care services to children from low-income families.

This February in Illinois, over 2,000 dental care professionals volunteered for "Give Kids A Smile Day," reaching upwards of 17,000 kids. Dentists in Illinois have demonstrated their commitment to giving back to the community. In June 2014, the Illinois State Dental Society and its Foundation will hold the third "Illinois Mission of Mercy" in Peoria, Illinois. The Mission of Mercy is a free, two-day dental clinic during which over 950 volunteers see

1,000 patients each day and provide over \$1 million in much-needed oral health care.

I would like to thank all the dental professionals who have volunteered their time this year to provide screenings, treatments and education to children throughout the United States. I urge my colleagues to support the ADA's efforts to improve the lives and expand opportunities for our nation's children.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF
JOE INFAUSTO

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Joe Infausto as he retires after 43 years of public service as a police reserve officer. Joe's commitment and dedication to serving his community deserves to be commended.

Joe began his career in law enforcement in 1970 with the Clovis Police Department Auxiliary Unit. In 1977, he received a Bachelor's of Science degree in Criminology from California State University, Fresno. That same year, Joe was transferred to the Fresno Police Department Reserve Unit where he served for 36 years.

As a reserve officer, Joe was a citizen volunteer who donated his time and energy to help make Fresno a better place. Throughout his law enforcement career, Joe received numerous commendations for his service and professionalism, including achieving the rank of Lieutenant in 1999.

Joe's dedication to the security of his community was not only exemplified through his service but also through the establishment of his small business, BESTEC Security in 1983. BESTEC Security provided state of the art security systems and equipment to individuals and families throughout the Central Valley for 23 years. Joe sold the business in 2006 and continued to serve as a Fresno Police Department Reserve Officer.

Prior to leaving the Reserve Unit, Joe was assigned to the Mounted Unit, where he continued to carry out his duty to protect and serve the citizens of Fresno while on horseback.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Joe Infausto as he celebrates his retirement from the Fresno Police Reserve Unit.

CONGRATULATING JON REEDY ON
BEING THE NSSGA'S 2013 SAFETY
AND HEALTH PROFESSIONAL OF
THE YEAR

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Jon Reedy of Irving, Texas, on receiving the National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association's (NSSGA) 2013

James M. Christie Safety and Health Professional of the Year award.

The award, established in 1987, gives national attention to an individual who contributes outstanding efforts to his or her company regarding healthy work practices. Mr. Reedy, Director of Environment, Safety, and Health for the South Region & Hanson Building Products, Lehigh Hanson, Inc., has been a strong advocate for a safe work environment and brought proactive changes to daily procedures, particularly in mining. His tireless efforts have led to many man-hours without workplace injuries among several facilities as well as reductions in compensation costs. He is a great asset to not only the company but the community as well. NSSGA President and CEO Michael Johnson stated that "Jon's diligent work to boost safety and health performance is a great example of the aggregate industry's commitment to worker wellness celebrated by the Christie Award."

Jon Reedy's receipt of this honor evidences his hard work and dedication to not only his company but his workers and community. Keeping a safe and healthy work environment is beneficial to all parties involved. It is an honor to represent such a distinguished and hardworking constituent in Congress and I look forward to seeing the results of that success in the form of safer workplaces in North Texas.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating Jon Reedy on his award.

HONORING CATHERINE MILLER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable Civil Rights Activist, Mrs. Catherine Miller who is a resident of Friars Points, Mississippi.

Mrs. Miller was born in the historical Taborian Hospital in Mound Bayou, Mississippi and resided with her parents the late James Lee Nolan, Sr. and Juanita Grandberry Johnson and her sixteen siblings in Friars Point, Mississippi. At the age of five her family moved to Memphis, Tennessee and after three years the family relocated to Friars Point to run their farm.

Mrs. Miller was educated in the Memphis City School District, Friars Point Elementary School, and graduated from Coahoma Agricultural High School and Coahoma Junior College. She furthered her education at Alcorn State College and received a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from LeMoyne College in Memphis, Tennessee, and continued her studies at Walden University towards a Master Degree in Non-Profit Management.

In the early 1970's Mrs. Miller participated in boycotting stores in Friars Point where people were being treated unjustly and got involved with activities which highlighted change for equality. She became a member of the Young Democratic Organization, and worked and campaigned in several Coahoma County

Board of Supervisors Elections where her interest in politics evolved.

Mrs. Miller lives by the motto, "action speaks louder than words". In 1982 she entered the political arena and ran unsuccessfully for the position of Town Clerk for the Town of Friars Point, but that did not deter her because she was determined to be the town clerk. In October, 1986 she was elected Friars Point Town Clerk. After being in this position for about two years, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen passed an ordinance making the Town Clerk's position an appointed position instead of an elected position. During this time Mrs. Miller stated that she would never run for another elected office because her mother was totally against her being involved in politics. She was employed in the appointed position as town clerk for over 20 years.

In February, 2009 Mrs. Miller left the Town of Friars Point Town Clerk's position and was hired as the Administrative Assistant to the newly elected Coahoma County Sheriff Charles Jones. A lot of things had changed in her life, with the passing away of her mother, she decided that she would no longer sit back and just talk about how she was not pleased with the leadership or the conditions of the town where she lives.

After soul searching and much prayer about the situations Mrs. Miller decided to enter the political arena, once again, in March, 2009 to seek the position of Mayor and was unsuccessful. Over the next four years she continued to show an interest in becoming Mayor of the Town of Friars Point, to see, make changes and improvements in the town. In March 2013 she threw her bid in to run for the position of Mayor of the Town of Friars Point. On June 4, 2013 her dream became a reality. She was elected the first African-American woman to become Mayor of the Town of Friars Point in over 120 years in history of being incorporated as a town.

Mrs. Miller's former position as the Town Clerk of Friars Point afforded her a wealth of knowledge and experience to assist her in the position of Mayor. In serving as Mayor she welcomes the challenges with the help of her constituents and the Board of Aldermen to move the Town of Friars Point forward.

Mrs. Miller is married to Arthur Lee Miller, Jr. and they have five children: Danielle, Domonique, Rosalind, Chantauna, Arthur, III; seven grandchildren: Cameron, Hollis, Arveon, Lauren, Itlay, Asia, London and one grandson, Carson. She is a member of the First Community Church in Dubbs, Mississippi under the leadership of Pastor Rodney Hibbler.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing an amazing Civil Rights Activist, Mrs. Catherine Miller Williams, for her dedication to change and equal rights.

HONORING THE TORNADO VICTIMS
AND SURVIVORS OF MENIFEE
COUNTY, KENTUCKY

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the victims and the surviving families of

Menifee County on this second anniversary of the devastating EF3 tornado that ravaged eastern Kentucky.

On March 3, 2012, Kentuckians were devastated by the worst storms in almost 25 years, affecting at least 27 counties. The storms were responsible for injuring over 300 people and taking the lives of 20 of our loved ones in the Commonwealth.

Today, I would like for us to especially remember three of those individuals from Menifee County: Beverly Bowman, Vershal Brown and Anita Smith. May their memories continue to live in our hearts forever.

I would also like to recognize the resilience of the residents of Menifee County as well as many of the surrounding counties that have, without question, suffered much.

The Bible promises us in Psalm 147:3 that "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." The people of Frenchburg and communities across the Commonwealth have renewed this hope and promise of healing. This catastrophic event has reminded us that when tragedy strikes, it strikes in the hearts of us all.

It is a testament to the character and compassion of Kentuckians that individuals from all across the Commonwealth were willing to step in and help so that the victims of these storms did not have to carry the burdens alone.

In the face of adversity, communities find a way to come together. Over the last two years, the citizens of Menifee have banded together, leaned on each other and come out of this tragedy stronger than ever.

OBAMACARE AND HISPANICS

HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the White House has declared this week National Latino Enrollment Week, just five weeks short of the delayed deadline for purchasing insurance.

Healthcare.gov was a mess at its rollout, but the Hispanic website was even less functional.

Once it finally opened for business, the text was riddled with basic grammar errors, as if the designers were using Google translate to build the site.

Now, Spanish-speaking Americans have the pleasure of finding out just how costly coverage in the Obamacare exchanges is.

In Pennsylvania, premiums in the individual market will run about 39 percent more than what they were previously.

Since Hispanic Americans are on average younger than the general population, they will face an even greater premium hike.

There are plenty of ways to expand access to insurance without forcing people into an expensive, government-dictated marketplace.

Obamacare is hurting many Americans, but its poor treatment of Hispanic Americans is notable.

We can do better.

IN RECOGNITION OF AUBURN HIGH SCHOOL'S SUCCESS AT THE MASSACHUSETTS "WE THE PEOPLE" COMPETITION

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Auburn High School for their selection as the state champions at the 2014 Massachusetts We the People Competition.

We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution is an innovative program designed to educate elementary, middle, and high school students about the U.S. Constitution and the founding of our country. At the high school level, the lessons prepare students for district, state, and national academic competitions, where high school teams participate in simulated Congressional hearings.

On January 25, 2014, 8 schools from across our Commonwealth competed in the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution Massachusetts High School State Finals. After a rigorous competition, Auburn High School was named the state champions, and the team was awarded the opportunity to compete at the national finals in Washington, D.C. this April.

Last month, I was pleased to meet with the bright and enthusiastic students competing on the Auburn High School team: Matthew Amiot, Connor Aubuchont, Matthew Blais, Erin Breen, John Bylund, Andrew Carpenter, Ture Carlson, Elise Cavanaugh, Erin Collins, Christopher Cubbedge, Tyler Ducharme, Matthew Frappier, Sarah Gardner, Nicole Grabowski, Liam Gribbons, Claire Hutner, Nicholas John, Katherine Johnson, Raymond Leo, Jaimee Martin, Jacqueline Matthews, Lillian McPherson, Matthew Nelson, Richard Phan, Nicole Plona, Kyle Quitadamo, Matthew Rodwill, Alekxis Rojee, Scott Ruane, Bakhtyar Shairani, Camille Thomas, Michael Travers, and Jaime Vera. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating these students for their incredible work in mastering a number of topics including the foundation of our political system and selected contemporary issues. I would also like to recognize teachers Vincent Benacchio and Spencer Kennard for their work in mentoring the Auburn High School team.

Mr. Speaker, I'm so proud of Auburn High School's We the People team, and wish them the best of luck as they prepare for the national finals. Please join me in recognizing the accomplishments of the Auburn High School team.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH AND ROSA PARKS

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, every February, we celebrate Black History Month by honoring

the achievements and contributions of those African-Americans who have courageously challenged the status quo, pushed boundaries and moved our country forward in the name of justice and equality for all.

Rosa Parks, the Mother of the Modern Civil Rights Movement, embodied courage and strength when she refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama bus to a white passenger on December 1, 1955.

Her courage and perseverance continues to inspire me, my constituents in the third congressional district of Ohio, and our nation.

I was privileged to have met her and so proud to sponsor the legislation that made Ohio the first State to recognize December 1st as Rosa Parks Day.

This Black History Month, I am honored to reflect and celebrate the rich legacy of Rosa Parks and so many other African-Americans who have shaped our Nation's history.

HONORING EDDWIN ALEXANDER SMITH

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, this is Black History Month and I rise to honor Mr. Eddwin Alexander Smith who was born on May 27, 1974 to Dr.'s Jimmy Lee and Jo Ann Smith. He has one sister, Ms. Geraldine Smith.

Mr. Eddwin Smith graduated from Port Gibson High in 1992. He matriculated through Alcorn State University receiving a B.S. degree in Elementary Education in 1996 and a Masters in Administration and Supervision in 1998.

All through Eddwin's family life, he has been heavily engaged in civil rights and politics in his community. He learned early on of the importance of people and community. As he grew and matured, this allowed him to witness his family for over two generations, come to understand why it takes a village to make change with effective leadership.

Eddwin has been in Education for 16 years in various capacities as: Teacher, Assistant Principal, and Principal. He has been employed in the: Claiborne County Public Schools, Memphis City Public Schools, Jackson Public Schools, Noxubee Public Schools and Wilkerson County Public Schools. He has demonstrated a real passion for students which he believes, "A well equipped Male/Female will make any community a better place." When he visits the different communities, where he once was employed, he can now begin to see the fruits of his labor. Some of the students are beginning to graduate from college and start their careers.

After a number of years serving in education, there came a greater calling, in terms of him wanting to become more engaged in his community, therefore, he ran for Supervisor. Eddwin ran for this office in 2011, won the election and began working in this office in January, 2012. During his first year in office, he focused on the needs of the people. In his second year, he was elected President of the

Board of Supervisors by his peers. His continued goals are to improve community and economic development through effective leadership and his success has been seen in the Community of Claiborne County.

Eddwin is a devoted father of one daughter, Embree Gwendolyn Smith, who is following in the leadership of her father. He is also a dedicated member of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Port Gibson, Mississippi. He states that, "He accepts that God wants him to be a change agent for the betterment of all its citizens in Claiborne County, Port Gibson, Mississippi."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Eddwin Alexander Smith, a sincere and dedicated man with a mission for change, during this Black History Month.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF
FRANK PROTO

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and honor the long and successful public service of Tompkins County Legislator Frank Proto. Having served since 1985, Frank will be leaving office after nearly three decades. Mr. Proto chaired numerous committees during his tenure and played a leading role in shaping our community.

Mr. Proto's impact on our region is truly difficult to quantify as he has influenced countless aspects of the community. As Chairman of the Solid Waste Committee, he oversaw the growing emphasis that was placed on recycling and the area's diminished waste production. He fought for the distinct needs of our rural communities as Chairman of the Rural Affairs Committee and promoted public library reading rooms in small municipalities. Outside of his legislative service, he spends his time assisting others through organization such as BOCES, the Cayuga Medical Center, and the Brooktondale Fire Commissioners.

Despite leaving his legislative post, Frank will continue serving the community in a variety of roles: as board member of both the Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit, Tompkins County Soil & Water Conservation District and with Slaterville Ambulance. His passion for public service and his dedication to the community are unmatched and it is with great pleasure that I honor Frank here today.

OBSERVING THE 26TH ANNIVERSARY OF UNSPEAKABLE VIOLENCE IN SUMGAI, AZERBAIJAN

HON. KATHERINE M. CLARK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, today, on the 26th observation of unspeakable violence in Sumgait, Azerbaijan, I proudly stand with the Armenian community of Massa-

chusetts in remembrance and mourning of the loss of innocent lives.

Anti-Armenian aggression in Sumgait in the early months of 1988 gave way to violent death and destruction. Thousands of Armenians were forced to flee their homes as refugees.

Today, the families of those who lost their lives, or were displaced by this violence, still seek resolution and justice.

Over decades, many displaced Armenian families have sought refuge in America, and are now making vital contributions in the Fifth District of Massachusetts. Proudly, our diverse district is home to one of the largest Armenian communities in the nation. Together, our community is a thriving example of strength and perseverance in the face of extreme adversity.

Like the persecution of too many other peoples before it, the lessons of Sumgait must not be forgotten.

As diverse families of the Commonwealth, and as Americans, we have a moral obligation to promote tolerance and justice, and we have a duty to recognize the atrocities that have kept us from our common goal.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ROBERT
"HARRY" ROGERS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Robert "Harry" Rogers who passed away on January 16, 2014, at the age of 84. As the founder of Rogers Helicopters Inc., Harry saved countless lives in firefighting, salvage, and search and rescue operations. His kind heart, talent, and tireless service to the Central Valley will be greatly missed.

Harry was born on March 28, 1929, in Clovis, California. As a child, Harry dreamed of flying and was inspired by his father, Robert, as well as other local pilots.

After graduating from Clovis High School in 1947, Harry attempted to join the Air Force but was unable to do so because of an injury he suffered while playing football in high school. However, this setback did not stop Harry from following his dream to fly and serve others. After attending Reedley College, Harry worked as a pilot and mechanic for several helicopter companies before founding his own operation.

In 1962, Harry and his wife, Wanda, founded Rogers Helicopters Inc. in Clovis. The operation remained in Clovis for three decades before moving to Fresno Yosemite International airport. Over the years, Harry and his pilots flew tens of thousands of hours in operations throughout the state of California.

Harry was an authority on flying in the Sierras, which is characterized by treacherous summer winds, icing in the winter, and few places to make emergency landings.

Many people relied on Harry's expertise and services including sheriff's deputies, park rangers, and search and rescue crews. Harry and his choppers worked tirelessly to rescue and recover stranded hikers and climbers, investigate wildfires and mountain utility lines, and transport emergency supplies to the needy.

Harry exemplified selflessness and was always dedicated to helping others. In 1965, the U.S. Army awarded Harry with a citation for flying in dangerous weather to deliver supplies to flood victims in Northern California. In one incident, Harry's chopper crashed in a river canyon, and Harry was quick to rescue his passengers seconds before the aircraft exploded.

In 1969, Harry achieved the tremendous feat of being the first person to land on top of Mount Whitney, the highest summit in the continental United States.

In his spare time, Harry liked to share his passion for flying with others. In the 1960s and 70s, Harry often took Clovis High School cheerleaders for a ride before dropping them off on the football field. Throughout his career, Harry regularly flew news crews over the Central Valley so they could photograph the beautiful scenery and was especially partial toward the Kings River in Fresno.

Harry cherished his time with family and friends. He was a devoted husband to Wanda, a loving father to his sons, Rory and Robin, and he enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren, Robby and Randy.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great respect that I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring the life of Robert "Harry" Rogers, a Central Valley pioneer in rotary-wing aviation.

HONORING MOUNT ELIZABETH
MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable rural town sanctuary, Mount Elizabeth Missionary Baptist Church.

"If you desire to eat for a year, plant rice. If you desire to be remembered ten years later, plant a tree. If you desire to save future generations, educate a child. But, if your desire is to preserve mankind, plant rice, a tree, educate a child, and build a church."

It was with this philosophy, spurred by the divine inspiration of God, that the Mount Elizabeth Missionary Baptist Church was organized. The year was 1864. Worship services began under a brush harbor on a two acre plot of land given to the church by Mr. Bolton and was originally known as Bolton Baptist Church. The first pastor was Rev. Bob Sanders.

During this time, there were many ladies who were strong believers in God, so they joined the church to help manage its affairs. By now, the Sunday school was beginning to play an important role in the church and Mr. John Williams was elected the first Sunday School Superintendent. The church was making progress and everyone turned to it as the last phase of life and hope.

In 1918, at the tender age of 54 years, Bolton Baptist Church was destroyed by fire, but with Mrs. Elizabeth Brown and other determined people, a portion of the building that the congregation now worships in was rebuilt and

named after her. This changed the name from Bolton Baptist Church to Mt. Elizabeth Missionary Baptist Church. Since the year 1864, the church has been a symbol of strength.

In 1954, when the State Highway Department began construction on New Highway 80, Mt. Elizabeth was moved from its original site to about one-fourth mile south of Highway 80. In 1964, the State Highway Department began construction on Interstate 20. At the age of 100 years, the church was moved a second time from one mile north of the town of Bolton to one mile south of Bolton, where it stands today.

Down through the years, the church was blessed with leaders, men who walked and talked with God and have kept the church moving for the past 150 years. Some of those who delivered their sermons from the pulpit were Rev. Bob Sanders, Rev. J. C. Lambert, Rev. Richard Patton, Rev. Jack Anthony, Rev. Cassidy Buckley, Rev. John C. Hunter and Rev. Wilbert Owens. Some moved on while others passed on.

In 1984, God saw that the congregation was struggling to stay together without a shepherd to lead them. God answered their call and sent to them a humble and loving Christian man, Rev. Bernard McKinley, Sr. A number of deacons and mothers were instrumental in assisting the aforementioned leadership carry on the church business, ultimately helping the congregation to grow were Deacons: Deacons Dave McCray, Edmond Jefferson, Elic Watts, John Williams, Busher Mitchell, Jim Gooden, Robert Miles, Sr., Isiac George, Marshall Richmond, J. W. Wilburn, Dave Wilkins, Van Green, Sr., Jack Bennett, David Keys, Frank Johnson, L. C. Barber, William Johnson, Thirley Lewis, Sr., Ronald Mack, J. C. Malone and Clyde Montgomery, Sr.; Mothers: Magaree Garner, Callie Green, Katie Jordan, Louise Keys, Lucille Keys, Ruth Bell Lewis, Bernice Miles, Mary Porter, Frankie Reese, Ocey Richmond, Lillian Rollins, Minerva Rollins, Lee Ann Ross, and Frances Wilson; Sunday School Superintendents: Rev. William Levi, L. J. Myles, Jesse Burns, Jr., Johnnie M. Thompson, Thirly Lewis, Jr., Kenneth R. Lewis, Deloie Lewis, Susie J. Carter, and Jimmie Lewis, Sr.; Sister Rosie Patterson served as Church Clerk/Sunday School teacher; and Brother James Malone served as musician for many decades. Under the leadership of Rev. John C. Hunter, an outdoor baptismal pool was built. In 1977 under the leadership of Rev. Wilbert Owens, indoor bathrooms, three classrooms, a pastor's study and kitchenette were added.

During the span of 30 years, the church has undergone many changes, both in physical and spiritual growth, including the purchase of an additional acre of land for a cemetery plot. In 2005, the church underwent a major renovation project, which included the addition of an indoor baptismal pool, fellowship hall (with kitchen, restrooms, and classrooms), a foyer with additional restrooms and storage spaces, and pavement of the previous dirt and gravel parking lot.

Presently, the leadership of the church encompasses Pastor Bernard McKinley, Sr.; Deacons: Steve Adams, Tywon Alexander, Sr., Jesse Burns, Jr., Michael Green, Albert Lewis, Sr., Kenneth Ray Lewis, Terrence

Sanders, and Bernard McKinley, Jr.; Deaconesses/Mothers: Linda Adams, Earnestine Alexander, Ola Cotton, Flora Green, Fannie Lewis, and Alberta Williams; Trustees Susie Carter, Edward Cotten, Wayne Gaddis, Vera Gaddis, Bobby Kirksey, and Mollie Bell McCray; Church Secretary, Sister Carolyn G. Price; and Sunday School Superintendent, Sister Johnnie M. Thompson.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mount Elizabeth Missionary Baptist Church for serving as a pillar of steadfast dedication, providing an ever growing spiritual place of worship within the Bolton community for 150 years.

CONGRATULATING SUGAR LAND PARKS AND RECREATION

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Sugar Land Parks and Recreation on being named the Texas Recreation and Parks Society's "2014 Texas Gold Medal Award Winner" in the 50,000 to 100,000 population category. This award recognizes communities who excel in resource management, park planning, and coordinating community programs and events.

Over the past three years, Sugar Land Parks and Recreation has gone above and beyond to improve our community. It established the Sugar Land Legacy Foundation to facilitate park project donations, doubled programmable space for seniors, and acquired 281 acres for future parks. Sugar Land commissioned an "Art in Parks and Public Spaces" program for community enjoyment and updated the Hike and Bike Trail Plan to encourage healthy and active lifestyles. Sugar Land Parks and Recreation also opened the City's first Indoor Recreation Center, featuring space for classes and events, as well as a gymnasium, kitchen, exercise rooms, and activity space. This award is a testament to the hard work of Sugar Land Parks and Recreation employees and their dedication to making Sugar Land a better place for all.

On behalf of all residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, it's an honor to recognize Sugar Land Parks and Recreation on earning this prestigious award. We are all very proud of your hard work.

HONORING THE CAREER OF RON WHITEHEAD

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Ron Whitehead the city manager of Addison, Texas, who is retiring today, February 28, after nearly 32 years of service for the Town of Addison and over a decade more in other Texas municipalities.

Mr. Whitehead was raised in Orange, Texas, where he learned about city manage-

ment from his father who was a city councilman and mayor. He participated in student government and graduated Stark High School in 1967. After graduating from Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas, with a degree in Government in 1971, he started interning for the City of Beaumont and eventually became the assistant director of personnel. Mr. Whitehead began work as the administrative assistant to the city manager in Irving, Texas, in 1974 and in 1977 became the assistant city manager for administration. He earned his Masters in Public Administration degree from the University of North Texas in 1980 and became the general supervisory assistant city manager in Irving the following year.

In June of 1982, Mr. Whitehead became the city manager of Addison and he has served that role until today. Over the decades, Mr. Whitehead helped Addison transform from a small town with a handful of businesses to a bustling center with approximately 1,600 registered businesses. In 1982 there were 200 family households in Addison, and today the population numbers 15,000. Today Addison has 260 full-time employees and an annual budget of \$60 million. As city manager, Mr. Whitehead helped build up the modern city with multiple projects such as Wheeler Bridge, Addison Circle, Vitruvian Park, and the Addison Airport Toll Tunnel. The Dallas North Tollway came through Addison during his tenure as well. Future projects that the city will continue to develop include work on Addison Airport, a pedestrian connectivity effort, and underground utilities along Belt Line Road.

His long-standing passion for people, service, and making a difference have earned Mr. Whitehead many board positions and awards during his 32 years in Addison. In 2006 he received the Texas City Management Association's Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2009 he was named Metrocrest Citizen of the Year by the Metrocrest Chamber of Commerce, which represents Carrollton, Farmers Branch, and Addison, Texas. He earned the William J. Pitstick Regional Excellence Award in 2013 and was commended for his strong commitment to regionalism and collaboration with neighboring cities with regard to transportation, services, art, and planning. Mr. Whitehead has also been the recipient of a distinguished alumni award from the University of North Texas, the L.P. Cookingham Award for Career Development from the International City Management Association (ICMA), as well as recognition from the ICMA on his 35th anniversary of municipal service. Among his roles in numerous associations, he has been particularly active in the Greater Dallas Planning Council, the North Texas City Management Association, the North Dallas Chamber of Commerce, and the Metroplex Mayors Association.

Mr. Whitehead has been married to his wife Donna for 27 years and they have two daughters, Maxey and Lauren. Donna is an elementary school music teacher in Good Shepherd Episcopal School and also plans to retire soon. They are involved in church and civic activities, and intend to travel together in the coming years.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating Ron Whitehead on his 32 years of service as city manager of Addison and wishing him well in retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF TIOGA STATE BANK

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 150th Anniversary of Tioga State Bank. Reaching this milestone is a testament to the hard work and commitment displayed by the Fisher family, which has operated the bank for five generations since its inception in 1864.

Over the past 150 years, Tioga State Bank has been a beacon of excellence in our community. It has continuously displayed steadfast dedication to providing financial services, creating local jobs and contributing to a vibrant economy while faithfully serving the needs of its constituents. The bank has also embraced community service, demonstrated by a recent \$20,000 donation to local food pantries in New York's 23rd Congressional District.

A core principle contributing to the success of Tioga State Bank is the commitment to "financially conservative" banking practices. This standard has enabled Tioga State Bank to stand the test of time through changing cultural and economic conditions. The business's proven track record of local job creation and economic impact has enabled Tioga State Bank to open new branches and expand into neighboring regions.

I once again congratulate Tioga State Bank on achieving 150 years of banking, service and commitment to caring for the local community. The bank is a strong example of entrepreneurial spirit and a small business's ability to blossom into an established and respected institution. I am proud to recognize this great achievement and I look forward to witnessing the continued growth and success of Tioga State Bank.

HONORING NEW GREEN GROVE CHURCH OF FAITH

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable historical church, New Green Grove Church of Faith of Greenwood, Mississippi and the great leadership it is under.

Green Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Greenwood, Mississippi was founded in 1909. It was founded by a dedicated group of people who wanted a place to worship. Services were held each fourth Sunday. In 1965, Green Grove M.B. Church was destroyed by fire and was completely rebuilt 1½ years later.

Since the church's inception, it has served under nine pastors and several outstanding officers. Reverend Milton L. Young, the eighth pastor, served for a period of fifty-four years. Reverend Young was a wonderful pastor. Under his leadership many souls were brought to Christ.

In 1995, Pastor Young's health began to fail. He suffered a stroke causing paralysis to his left leg. Reverend Milton Glass presided briefly in his absence and in July of 1995, Pastor Glass was elected "shepherd over the flock" with 25 active members.

The Church's name was changed in 1995 to New Green Grove M.B. Church. Today, it is called New Green Grove Church of Faith. From October, 1995 to August, 1996, New Green Grove began holding its services at Jones Chapel #1 because of costly water problems in its building. Easter Sunday of 2001, New Green Grove Church of Faith celebrated the dedication of its current sanctuary. On February 10, 2008, the church held its Mortgage Burning Service to celebrate the completion of their mortgage.

Under Bishop Glass' leadership, many services have been added to spiritually feed the members of the church. Worship is every Sunday with the exception of the fifth Sunday. Sunday School, Bible study and Intercessory Prayer Service are included in their weekly worship schedule.

Over the years, the pastor and members of New Green Grove Church of Faith have added spiritual growth programs to help the church become more knowledgeable of the Gospel. Some of these programs are: New Membership Orientation, Men of Standard Men's Ministry, Saturday Early Morning Prayer Service and an active Missionary Society.

The Congregational Health Ministry is an ongoing ministry to help the members take care of themselves physically, while maturing spiritually. Also established is the church website which is www.newgreengrovechurchoffaith.org. In 2010 the Audio/Visual Ministry was instituted which included the CD/DVD tape ministry.

On May 19, 2002 the sister church, The Living Word Church, a division of Catch the Vision Ministries was established in Lake City, Florida under the leadership of Pastors Vernon and Mitzi Singleton with Bishop Milton Glass as the overseer.

With the need to transport their members to and from services the church purchased a church bus in 2002. The bus served its purpose, however; in 2009, it was sold and replaced with a second van and a 25 passenger bus. The transportation ministry is always ready to assist the members who don't have a ride to church.

With the increase of its membership over the years, New Green Grove had to physically expand. One area of expansion is the purchase of twenty acres of land in 2003 located across the street from the church. In 2009, part of that land was converted into a parking lot to assist with the overflow of parking. Future plans and the vision of Bishop Glass is to use the remainder of the land to build a Spiritual Life Center to further support the outreach ministry in the community.

Currently, they are adding 4,500 sq. ft. for additional classrooms and fellowship hall

space. Today, they have over 700 members with an average attendance of 400 each Sunday.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing New Green Grove Church of Faith for its contribution to the black community and black churches.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,410,830,777,447.36. We've added \$6,783,953,728,534.28 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.7 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

STATE AND LOCAL PREDATORY ENFORCEMENT ACT

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, since the mid-1990's the authority to regulate the towing industry had been in limbo. Through a provision slipped into the Federal Aviation Administration Act of 1994 that defined the tow truck industry as an interstate carrier exempt from state and local regulation. One year later, passage of the Interstate Commerce Termination Act eliminated the federal regulatory body that oversaw the towing industry, leaving the industry without proper federal, state or local regulation.

With no federal regulator, confusing restrictions and conflicting court rulings on what states and localities are permitted to regulate, no level of government has been able to adequately regulate the towing industry. This lack of regulatory authority has led to more than two decades of major consumer abuses by some unscrupulous towing companies. These bad operators have continued to taint an otherwise much needed and respectable profession.

Complaints about exorbitant towing fees and abusive operators grew so bad that in 2005, Congress agreed, through an amendment to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act—a Legacy of Users (SAFETEA-LU), to allow some limited state regulation in the area of non-consensual towing. The amendment also directed the Secretary of Transportation to conduct a study to identify additional means to protect the rights of individuals whose vehicles are towed.

That study offers some recommendations that track with conclusions I made several years ago, that consumers and tow truck operators would be better served by removing the

last vestiges of federal preemption. It notes that consumers needing redress for overcharges today or other unfair treatment would: no longer be in the Catch-22 position of having their State case thrown out on preemption grounds only to find that they may have no real recourse at the Federal level either. Since business practices vary from place to place, it may also be more practical to have non-consensual towing regulated by the States rather than by the Federal Government.

States are the more logical place to regulate towing. They already have an established body of law in place to do so. This bill would bring those laws back into effect by removing federal preemption and allow state and local governments the ability to establish common-sense, pro-consumer trespass towing protections for their residents.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

HONORING ROBERT JAMISON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Robert Jamison.

Robert Jamison was born in Quitman County in 1954. He was a student in the Quitman County School System. In 1968, he was among the first blacks to integrate schools in Quitman County, Mississippi.

Mr. Jamison also marched with Dr. Martin L. King. He helped with changing from the "Old Stacked Voter System to the Ward Voting System", in order for blacks to have equal representation when voting. He worked as a Social Service Director at Quitman County Development Organization. He also served on numerous boards such as: North MS Legal service, Housing Authority's, Depores Health Center and Selective Service System.

Mr. Jamison is a Quitman County Veteran Service Officer and is the founder of a non-profit organization, North Delta Youth Development Center.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Robert Jamison for his dedication in being a part of the history making in Quitman County, Mississippi.

RECOGNIZING THE DELEGATION OF THE NATIONAL CEREAL PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION OF POLAND

HON. BILL FLORES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following.

Whereas, The United States House of Representatives recognizes the delegation of the National Cereal Producers Association of Poland; and

Whereas, The twenty-eight members in the delegation of the Polish farmers and rep-

resentatives of agricultural producer organizations to include the Polish Association of Cereals Producers, the Polish Agro-Business Club, the Polish Federation of Cattle Breeders and Milk Producers Zamojskie Agriculture Association are actively involved as agricultural leaders in Poland; and

Whereas, The Polish delegation's mission is to study Texas agriculture and oil & gas industries working in tandem in a safe and healthy environment making Texas the 11th largest economy in the world; and

Whereas, The goals of the program are to provide insight and educational information into United States agriculture and oil & gas industries, identify potential investments, enhance export and import opportunities and continue to build strong Texas/US and Poland/EU relationships; and

Whereas, The areas of study and business opportunities will include crops such as wheat, corn, soybeans, canola and vegetables; livestock to include cattle, horses, poultry and dairy; policies to include the farm bill, taxation, environmental regulation and tort reform; and the new technologies and production practices with oil & gas especially, shale gas; and

Whereas, The agricultural leaders from the National Cereal Producers Association of Poland represent Polish landowners and all sectors of Polish agriculture and will visit Lubbock, Amarillo, San Antonio, Panna Maria, Austin, College Station/Bryan, Brenham, Anderson, Chappell Hill, East Bernard and Houston, Texas during a two week span; the delegation will learn firsthand the diversity of Texas to include rainfall, agriculture and oil & gas production practices, temperature, soils, size and distance, population densities, infrastructure, ethnic groups and the various economic industries; and

Whereas, The Delegation of the Polish farmers and representatives of agricultural producer organizations are devoting their time and finances to explore Texas Agriculture and Oil & Gas from production to transportation to processing to storage to marketing to selling commodities while studying the issues facing Texas and the United States of America while discovering fertile opportunities to enhance business and personal relationships between Poland and Texas; they deserve recognition for their initiative and motivation to explore new opportunities to enhance food and energy production for all; and therefore, be it

Resolved, That the United States House of Representatives:

Congratulates the members of the Polish farmers and representatives of agricultural producer organizations on their involvement and participation in the agriculture industries of Poland with interest in the Texas agriculture and oil & gas industries and extend best wishes and prosperity for the future.

IN HONOR OF KENTUCKY RIGHT TO LIFE OF CENTRAL KENTUCKY

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Right to Life of Central Kentucky. As

a strongly pro-life father of two young girls, I consider protecting the unborn and the most vulnerable among us as one of my greatest responsibilities as a parent and legislator.

This organization's mission is to increase public awareness and restore legal protection to those members of our human family who are threatened by abortion or infanticide. The Right to Life Association of Central Kentucky works tirelessly to advocate for the dignity and worth of all human life.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending my friends with the Right to Life Association of Central Kentucky for their leadership, and I would like to thank them for all that they do for our community.

HONORING MELVIN C. JOHNSON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary community leader, Mr. Melvin Johnson.

Mr. Melvin Charles Johnson was born and raised in a small town of Tunica, MS. He has been married to Debra L. (Toney) Johnson for 23 years. He was introduced to politics at the early age of 10. He marched in his first Civil Rights March in Tunica, MS in 1963 and became the vice president of the SCLC Youth Organization in Tunica.

Mr. Johnson was very talented in sports. One day at school after a football game, Mrs. Velma (Turner) Brown, which was one of his high school teachers, told him that if he would put the energy that he played in football in politics, that he could help change Tunica County. So, he took her advice because she counseled him and was a great mentor.

Later, he went on to organize and establish the first voter league in Tunica County. It was called "United Voters League of Tunica." He also organized a voter registration booth in downtown Tunica in front of one of the night clubs. He collected all the information from each individual, filled out their applications and sent them to the circuit clerk's office to legally sign the papers in person.

He was one of the first that was elected State Constable in the Northern District of Tunica County. Mrs. Nellie Johnson, Mr. Miller, and Mr. Johnson contacted a TV spokesperson to tell them and to show them the conditions people were living in. This area was called Sugar Ditch at the time.

Mr. Johnson also walked with Jessie Jackson when he came to Tunica to address poor living conditions in Tunica County. After this was brought to the world's attention, several people came to him looking for advice and told him about many other concerns that needed addressing in the community.

Mr. Johnson saw in a local newspaper where they had printed an article that referred to him as the "County Community Organizer." In his lifetime, the only thing he had ever wanted to do was to help improve the living conditions in Tunica County, Mississippi. His mentors were Mrs. Lucille Hudson, Jessie Brandon Sr., and Mrs. Alice Brandon.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Melvin Johnson for his dedication in being a respected community leader.

IN COMMEMORATION OF BLACK
HISTORY MONTH

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this February we recognize and celebrate the 38th commemoration of Black History Month.

This month we celebrate the contributions of African Americans to the history of our great nation, and pay tribute to trailblazers, pioneers, heroes, and leaders like Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, U.S. Senator Blanche Kelso Bruce, U.S. Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, U.S. Congressman Mickey Leland, Astronauts Dr. Guion Stewart Bluford Jr. and Mae C. Jemison, Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, James Baldwin, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, and Gwendolyn Brooks just to name a few of the countless number of well-known and unsung heroes whose contributions have helped our nation become a more perfect union.

The history of the United States has been marked by the great contributions of African American activists, leaders, writers, and artists.

As a member of Congress, I know that I stand on the shoulders of giants whose struggles and triumphs made it possible for me to stand here today and continue the fight for equality, justice, and progress for all, regardless of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

The greatest of these giants to me are Mrs. Ivalita "Ivy" Jackson, a vocational nurse, and Mr. Ezra A. Jackson, one of the first African-Americans to succeed in the comic book publishing business. They were my beloved parents and they taught me the value of education, hard work, discipline, perseverance, and caring for others. And I am continually inspired by Dr. Elwyn Lee, my husband and the first tenured African American law professor at the University of Houston.

Mr. Speaker, I particularly wish to acknowledge the contributions of African American veterans in defending from foreign aggressors and who by their courageous examples helped transform our nation from a segregated society to a nation committed to the never ending challenge of perfecting our union. Earlier this week, I was honored to join my colleagues, Congressmen JOHN LEWIS and Congressman CHARLES RANGEL, a Korean War veteran, in paying tribute to surviving members of the Tuskegee Airmen and the 555th Parachute Infantry, the famed "Triple Nickels" at a moving ceremony sponsored by the U.S. Army commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

The success of the Tuskegee Airmen in escorting bombers during World War II—achieving one of the lowest loss records of all the escort fighter groups, and being in constant

demand for their services by the allied bomber units—is a record unmatched by any other fighter group. So impressive and astounding were the feats of the Tuskegee Airmen that in 1948, it helped persuade President Harry Truman to issue his famous Executive Order No. 9981, which directed equality of treatment and opportunity in all of the United States Armed Forces and led to the end of racial segregation in the U.S. military forces. It is a source of enormous and enduring pride that my father-in-law, Phillip Ferguson Lee, was one of the Tuskegee Airmen.

Clearly, what began as an experiment to determine whether "colored" soldiers were capable of operating expensive and complex combat aircraft ended as an unqualified success based on the experience of the Tuskegee Airmen, whose record included 261 aircraft destroyed, 148 aircraft damaged, 15,553 combat sorties and 1,578 missions over Italy and North Africa. They also destroyed or damaged over 950 units of ground transportation and escorted more than 200 bombing missions. They proved that "the antidote to racism is excellence in performance," as retired Lt. Col. Herbert Carter once remarked.

Mr. Speaker, Black History Month is also a time to remember many pioneering women like U.S. Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm; activists Harriet Tubman and Rosa Parks; astronaut Mae C. Jemison; authors Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, and Gwendolyn Brooks; all of whom have each in their own way, whether through courageous activism, cultural contributions, or artistic creativity, forged social and political change, and forever changed our great Nation for the better.

It is also fitting, Mr. Speaker, that in addition to those national leaders whose contributions have made our nation better, we honor also those who have and are making a difference in their local communities. In my home city of Houston, there are numerous great men and women. They are great because they have heeded the counsel of Dr. King who said: "Everybody can be great because anybody can serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love." By that measure, I wish to pay tribute to some of the great men and women of Houston: Rev. F.N. Williams, Sr.; Rev. Dr. S.J. Gilbert, Sr.; Rev. Crawford W. Kimble; Rev. Eldridge Stanley Branch; Rev. William A. Lawson; Rev. Johnnie Jeffery "J.J." Robeson; Mr. El Franco Lee; Mr. John Brand; Ms. Ruby Moseley; Ms. Dorothy Hubbard; Ms. Doris Hubbard; Ms. Willie Bell Boone; Ms. Holly HogoBrooks; Mr. Deloyd Parker; Ms. Lenora "Doll" Carter.

As we celebrate Black History Month, let us pay tribute to those who have come before us, and pay forward to future generations by addressing what is the number one issue for African American families, and all American families today: preserving the American promise of economic opportunity for all. Our immediate focus must be job creation, and enacting legislation that will foster and lay the foundation for today's and tomorrow's generation of groundbreaking activists, leaders, scientists, writers and artists to continue contributing to the greatness of America. We must work to get Americans back to work. We must continue to preserve the American Dream for all.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand here in celebration of the heroic and historic acts of African Americans and their indispensable contributions to this great Nation. It is through our work in creating possibilities for today and future generations that we best honor the accomplishments and legacy of our predecessors.

RECOGNIZING TEAM OF PARTICIPANTS IN SOLAR DECATHLON 2015

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a team from Alfred State College of Technology and Alfred University selected to compete in the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2015. The team will complete a series of projects and initiatives, culminating in the construction of an energy-efficient, solar-powered house. Selection for participation in this event is a remarkable honor, with positions awarded to only 20 collegiate teams from across the country and around the world.

Throughout the competition, students will develop energy-efficient designs, products, and technologies. The Solar Decathlon will provide students with practical training in engineering and architecture fields while allowing them to gain real-world experience. Students will gain valuable skills, enabling them to pursue careers in the expanding clean energy industry.

The availability of renewable energy is essential in today's world. Energy-efficient designs and technologies reduce costs and energy consumption while protecting local communities and facilitating economic growth. As the need for energy continues to grow it is critical that we develop new methods for producing sustainable sources of renewable energy. Solar Decathlon 2015 will encourage a new generation of young engineers and entrepreneurs to face this challenge. I am confident that these students will develop innovative solutions and new technologies that will benefit families and businesses in my district and across the country.

I once again congratulate the team of students from Alfred State College of Technology and Alfred University on their participation in Solar Decathlon 2015. I am proud to recognize this great achievement and I look forward to witnessing the great things that these students will accomplish.

HONORING ARCHIE TUCKER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Mr. Archie Tucker.

In 1974, while still in high school, Mr. Tucker was hired by former ARS Mid-South Director Ed King as a biological aide during a time

when there were no minority administrators or scientists at the station. Since then, Mr. Tucker has followed a nearly four-decade career as one of the highest-ranking African-Americans in the ARS's Mid-South Area.

After graduating from Leland High School, Mr. Tucker enrolled at Mississippi Valley State University while retaining his part-time job at the ARS's Stoneville station. He majored in business administration to gain administrative knowledge to go along with the research expertise he was learning each week.

After graduating from the MVSU, Mr. Tucker was promoted to a full-time biological lab technician in 1980.

Seven years later, he again was promoted to area property manager and eight years later, he became the first African-American Area Administrative Officer in ARS history. Mr. Tucker noted that each promotion brought additional responsibilities.

In 1997, Mr. Tucker became the Mid-South's Area's first African-American Deputy Mid-South Area Director and in 2011, broke another barrier by assuming his current post as Mid-South Area Assistant Director.

Mr. Tucker is charged with managing a \$110 million annual budget and has overseen the renovation of the Jamie Whitten Center, the service's main facility in Stoneville, the principal headquarters of the Mid-South area, which includes Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama and Louisiana. Here, Mr. Tucker oversees research stations employing more than 1,000 workers in all. Mr. Tucker credits others, particularly former Director King, for his advancement.

The Stoneville offices were recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, for their diversity. Mr. Tucker said the station now includes many African-American administrators and scientists.

Mr. Tucker has made assisting future scientists, a priority, collaborating on research projects with several traditionally black schools, including Alcorn State, Tuskegee and Alabama A&M Universities.

The Stoneville station also has been involved with local school districts, conducting tours for students and in 2012 launched the Future Scientists Program, a collaboration between the service and the Texas A&M University Extension Program, which has scientists visiting classrooms, judging science fairs and students touring the Stoneville facilities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Archie Tucker for his dedication to serving others and giving back to the African-American community.

IN HONOR OF HINTON MILLS

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Hinton Mills in Fleming County, Kentucky, and to congratulate them on the 31st Anniversary of their Seed Days Customer Appreciation Event.

Hinton Mills, with four locations serving the Fleming county area, was founded by Frank L. Hinton in 1918. Frank L. Hinton was born in the Plummers Mill area of Fleming County in 1891 and orphaned at the age of six. He began his own business at the age of sixteen, and opened a small store six years later.

Soon after, he began operating a much larger store; this store thrived under the leadership of Frank L. until his retirement in 1956. The store continued with success under Frank O. Hinton, who added a feed mill to the Hinton Mills family. Fleming County Farm Supply was opened in 1977. Today the fourth generation of Hintons are serving area farmers at four locations; Fleming Co. Feed Supply, Frank Hinton and Son, Jabetown Mill and May's Lick Mill.

Hinton Mills is well-known for their wide-range of products, quality feed, and customer service, and it also contributes to the region in many other ways. The Hinton family has always been involved in the community through service on various boards as well as active involvement with FFA chapters in the area.

Seed Days began as a way for Hinton Mills to honor its customers and is now in its 31st year. Food and fun abound at each of the four locations during Seed Days. While the Hinton family honors their community through Seed Days this week, I would like to honor their devotion and service to the Sixth District.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Hinton Mills on their success in business as well as the 31st Annual Seed Days. I would also like to extend my personal appreciation to Hinton Mills and all of its employees for all that they have done and continue to do for our community our the Commonwealth.

CONGRATULATIONS GAIL SANDE

HON. MARK E. AMODEI

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. AMODEI. Mr. Speaker, this week, at its Public Media Summit in Washington, D.C., the Association of Public Television Stations (APTS) honored Gail Sande, Member of the Board of Trustees, KNPB Public Broadcasting in Reno, with the 2014 National Advocacy Award for her exceptional efforts in support of public television.

Said Patrick Butler, president and CEO of APTS, "Gail is a tireless advocate for public broadcasting, helping to advance bipartisan support of public broadcasting in Congress. She has demonstrated tremendous effectiveness on both sides of the Hill and both sides of the aisle."

Gail is the immediate past Chairman of the Board and stepped down after serving in that position for three years. She is a Trustee of the National Association of Public Television Stations. Gail serves on the Nevada State Board for the Humanities and is a board member for the First Tee of Northern Nevada and the American Heart Association.

She has been a dynamic member of the Reno community for the past 37 years. Some

of Gail's activities have included serving as vice president and development chairman for the Lear Theater, a member of the Reno Tahoe Young Professional Network advisory board, treasurer of Young Audiences, president of the Roy Gomm Parent Facility Association, treasurer of the Sons of Norway, president of Law Wives and director of community relations for the Assistance League of Reno/Sparks.

A graduate of the University of Nevada at Reno—go Wolf Pack—Gail was an operations officer at First National Bank of Nevada until 1977, when she retired from the business world to be a stay-at-home mom and community activist.

Congratulations on this well-deserved honor, Gail, and thank you for all you do to make Northern Nevada a better place.

RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 28, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the voice of 184,995 workers in my state that will be positively affected by the minimum wage increase—nearly 20% of my state's total workforce.

Families and parents are struggling financially because we have failed to keep up with the rising costs of living.

The Economic Policy Institute found that "at the current federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour, a parent who works full time, year round, [still] does not earn enough to be above the federal poverty line."

For these Americans, working hard year round will not be a gateway to gradual success, because in their realities, it does not even mean that you will be above the federal poverty line.

For these parents, our very own constituents, the pursuit of happiness, the American dream, and ultimately being able to mobilize economically is but a faint light forever out of reach.

In 2009, we raised the minimum wage in order to keep up with the rising costs of living thereby admitting that an irresponsible minimum wage causes financial hardship for the families that we are elected to represent.

People, we have a track record for making the impossible possible for Americans, so, now, I speak on behalf of those families in need when I say that we have a responsibility as public servants to see to it that a parent who works full time, year round, can live above the poverty line.

It is our moral obligation to see to it that our families earning minimum wage can have the means to economic mobility. Thus, we as legislators should rise to this challenge in order to ensure that all Americans have not only the opportunity to pursue their happiness—but that they also have the means to achieving success.

SENATE—Monday, March 3, 2014

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Spirit of God, as the snow falls gently to the Earth, descend on our hearts. We praise You for Your tender mercies, for they are new every morning.

Infuse our Senators with confidence in the ultimate triumph of Your providence. May they continue to trust You even in the face of daunting opposition. Lord, make them so just and fair that falsehood may be banished by the truth that sets them free. Supply their needs from the reservoir of Your great bounty, so that they will come behind in no good thing. Thank You for the strength and vitality You provide us each day.

We pray in Your sacred Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order with respect to Executive Calendar No. 659 be modified so that following leader remarks on Wednesday, March 5, the time until 11:45 a.m. be equally divided between the chairman and the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee or their designees prior to a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the nomination, with all other provisions of the previous order remaining in effect; that if cloture is invoked, there be 4 minutes equally divided between the chairman and the ranking member of the

Judiciary Committee or their designees prior to the vote on confirmation of the nomination; that following the disposition of the Adegbile nomination, the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the motion to invoke cloture on the Hernandez nomination; that if cloture is not invoked on the Adegbile nomination, the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Hernandez nomination; further, that the remaining cloture motions filed on Thursday, February 27, 2014, not ripen prior to 2:15 p.m., Wednesday, March 5.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AUTHORITY TO REPORT NOMINATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as if in executive session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence have until Thursday, March 6, 2014, to report P.N. 1243, the nomination of John P. Carlin to be Assistant Attorney General for National Security.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Hearing no objection, so ordered.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2062, S. 2066, S. 2067, and H.R. 3865

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand there are four bills due for a second reading.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The leader is correct.

The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2062) to authorize Members of Congress to bring an action for declaratory and injunctive relief in response to a written statement by the President or any other official in the executive branch directing officials of the executive branch to not enforce a provision of law.

A bill (S. 2066) to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the intentional discrimination of a person or organization by an employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

A bill (S. 2067) to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning tax statuses to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities.

An act (H.R. 3865) to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Mr. REID. I would object to any further proceedings with respect to these bills en bloc.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard.

The bills will be placed on the calendar.

AUTHORITY TO PRINT RECORD

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that today's proceedings be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD dated March 4.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, because of inclement weather, we have had to change things around significantly. But this is a message to all Senators. We will do our utmost to get everything done on Wednesday and Thursday. There will be some debate tomorrow, but I am talking about the voting. If we can't, we will have to be here on Friday. I know that shouldn't be too hard since we haven't done anything in the first part of the week. So no one is surprised, we may have to be here Friday. We have work that needs to be done, and the weather has really harmed our ability to go forward.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2062. A bill to authorize Members of Congress to bring an action for declaratory and injunctive relief in response to a written statement by the President or any other official in the executive branch directing officials of the executive branch to not enforce a provision of law.

S. 2066. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the intentional discrimination of a person or organization by an employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

S. 2067. A bill to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning tax statuses to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities.

H.R. 3865. An act to prohibit the Internal Revenue Service from modifying the standard for determining whether an organization is operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare for purposes of section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, March 4, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the

two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business for debate only, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. The next rollcall vote will be at 11:45 a.m. on Wednesday, March 5.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 2 P.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before

the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 2:06 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 4, 2014, at 2 p.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, March 4, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 5

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SH-216

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of L. Reginald Brothers, Jr., of Massachusetts, to be Under Secretary for Science and Technology, and Francis Xavier Taylor, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis, both of the Department of Homeland Security.

SD-342

10 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine national security space launch programs.

SD-192

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of Veterans of Foreign Wars.

SD-G50

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

To hold hearings to examine developments in the Western Balkans and policy responses, focusing on policy approaches of the United States toward the countries of the Western Balkans.

SD-106

10:30 a.m.

Committee on the Budget

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015.

SD-608

Committee on Finance

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015.

SD-215

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship

Business meeting to consider the nomination of Maria Contreras-Sweet, of California, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

SR-428A

2:15 p.m.

Special Committee on Aging

To hold hearings to examine income security and the elderly, focusing on securing gains made in the war on poverty.

SD-562

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine nuclear forces and policies in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 1014, to reduce sports-related concussions in youth, S. 1406, to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, S. 1468, to require the Secretary of Commerce to establish the Network for Manufacturing Innovation and for other purposes, S. 2022, to establish scientific standards and protocols across forensic disciplines, S. 2028, to amend the law relating to sport fish restoration and recreational boating safety, S. 2049, to curb unfair and deceptive practices during assertion of patents, H.R. 2052, to direct the Secretary of Commerce, in coordination with the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, to conduct an interagency review of and report to Congress on ways to increase the global competitiveness of the United States in attracting foreign direct investment, an original bill entitled, "U.S. Merchant Marine Academy of Visitors Enhancement Act", and the nominations of Kelly R. Welsh, of Illinois, to be General Counsel of the Department of Commerce, Kathryn B. Thomson, of Virginia, to be General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, David J. Arroyo, of New York, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and nominations for pro-

motion in the United States Coast Guard.

SR-253

MARCH 6

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States Central Command and United States Africa Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the American Veterans (AMVETS), Blinded Veterans Association, Jewish War Veterans, Military Officers Association of America, Military Order of the Purple Heart, National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs, National Guard Association of the United States, The Retired Enlisted Association, Vietnam Veterans of America.

CHOB-345

10 a.m.

Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Timothy G. Massad, of Connecticut, to be Chairman, Sharon Y. Bowen, of New York, and J. Christopher Giancarlo, of New Jersey, all to be a Commissioner, all of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

SR-328A

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) reauthorization, focusing on the Federal role and current challenges to public transportation.

SD-538

Committee on the Judiciary

Business meeting to consider S. 1675, to reduce recidivism and increase public safety, and the nominations of Robin S. Rosenbaum, of Florida, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit, Bruce Howe Hendricks, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina, Mark G. Mastroianni, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts, and Leslie Ragon Caldwell, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice.

SD-226

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight

To hold an oversight hearing to examine contractor performance information.

SD-342

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

- 11 a.m.
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Subcommittee on Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety, and Security
To hold hearings to examine enhancing our rail safety, focusing on current challenges for passenger and freight rail.
SR-253
- Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine Syria spill-over, focusing on the growing threat of terrorism and sectarianism in the Middle East.
SD-419
- 2 p.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Deborah L. Birs, of Maryland, to be Ambassador at Large and Coordinator of United States Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS Globally, Suzan G. LeVine, of Washington, to be Ambassador to the Swiss Confederation, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Principality of Liechtenstein, Maureen Elizabeth Cormack, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Peter A. Selfridge, of Minnesota, to be Chief of Protocol, and to have the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service, all of the Department of State.
SD-419
- MARCH 11
- 2:15 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
To hold closed hearings to examine United States Special Operations Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program;
SD-419
- with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.
SR-222
- MARCH 12
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the situation in Afghanistan.
SH-216
- 10 a.m.
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of multiple veterans service organizations.
SD-G50
- 2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
To hold hearings to examine the current readiness of United States forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- MARCH 13
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine United States Northern Command and United States Southern Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- MARCH 25
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- MARCH 26
- 10 a.m.
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of The American Legion.
SD-G50
- 2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
To hold hearings to examine the current readiness of United States forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- MARCH 27
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Navy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- APRIL 3
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- APRIL 10
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-106

SENATE—Tuesday, March 4, 2014

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's opening prayer will be offered by Pastor Dave Weigley, President of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in the Mid-Atlantic States.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, creator and maker of all, who sits enthroned above the earth, and in whom we live, move and have our being, we praise You from whom all blessings flow. We thank You for Your sustaining power, for peace, for the freedoms we enjoy. We ask Your blessings on our great Nation, insightful leaders and dedicated lawmakers.

Establish their steps and give them discernment and courage to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly. Strengthen those who need to be uplifted, who are downcast, who need the compassionate touch of a brother's or sister's hand. Above all, may Your kingdom come, may Your will be done, and may we readily incline our ears to Your call today. This we pray in Your holy and righteous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 309, S. 1086.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN.) The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1086) to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

There will be no rollcall votes today because of the inclement weather we have had the last 3 or 4 days. The next rollcall vote will be tomorrow at 11:45 a.m.

BENEFITTING THE WEALTHY

Charles and David Koch are shrewd businessmen. Their wealth is nearly unparalleled, not only in America but in the world. The brothers inherited a small oil company. They inherited this company from their dad. They built it into a multinational corporation. It refines oil, makes carpets, manufactures fertilizers and chemicals, makes paper products, extracts minerals, produces glass, owns a cattle ranch, and lots of stuff.

Like most shrewd businessmen, the oil baron Koch brothers are very good at protecting and growing their prodigious future and their prodigious fortune. There is nothing un-American about that. But what is un-American is when shadowy billionaires pour unlimited money into our democracy to rig the system, to benefit themselves and the wealthiest 1 percent.

I believe in an America where economic opportunity is open to all. Based on their actions and policies they promote, the Koch brothers seem to believe in an America where the system is rigged to benefit the very wealthy. Based on Senate Republicans' ardent defense of the Koch brothers and the fact that they advocate for many of the same policies as the Koch brothers, it seems my Republican colleagues also believe in a system that benefits billionaires at the expense of the middle class.

The Koch brothers are willing to invest billions to buy that America. They are investing billions to buy that America. In 2010 the Supreme Court opened the flood gates of corporate money into electoral politics. That was with the Citizens United decision. Since mega donors such as Charles and David Koch can launder their huge contributions using shadowy shell groups and so-called nonprofits, it is difficult to tell exactly how much they have invested so far.

Investigative reporting done by some of the most respected news outlets in the country has revealed that the Koch brothers funnel money through a web of investor groups and advocacy organizations that are immune from disclosure rules, such as the Club for Growth, Heritage Action, the NRA, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. We may never know how much money the Koch brothers are spending to rig the system, to rig the system for themselves.

But we do know their investments have paid off already. In November

2010, the petroleum industry walked right through the door the Supreme Court had opened and spent hundreds of millions of dollars to elect a Republican majority to the House of Representatives. That Republican majority has effectively shut down any hope of passing legislation to limit the pollution that has caused climate change.

That Republican majority is, in fact, working to gut the most important safeguards to keep cancer-causing toxins and pollution that cause sickness and death out of the air we breathe and the water we drink. Without those safeguards, the Koch brothers would pass on the higher health care costs to middle-class Americans while padding their own pocketbooks.

So the Koch brothers are already seeing a return on their 2010 investment in a Republican House of Representatives that does what they want done. But they certainly have not stopped there. The Koch-backed Americans for Prosperity alone spent \$400 million in misleading attack ads last election cycle.

If you have seen an ad recently maligning the Affordable Care Act or ObamaCare, chances are, significantly, that these ads are from the Koch brothers or one of the shadow groups paid for by the Koch brothers. Koch-backed groups have spent a vast sum trying to elect Republican Senate candidates this year, a sum that dwarfs even the National Republican Senatorial Committee's own spending.

The Koch brothers and other moneyed interests are influencing the political process for their own benefit in a way not seen for generations. Republican Senators have come to the floor to defend the Koch brothers' attempts to buy our democracy. Once again, Republicans are all in to protect their billionaire friends.

Not only have Senate Republicans come to the floor to defend the Koch brothers personally, they have again and again defended the Koch brothers' radical agenda—and it is radical, at least from a middle-class perspective.

Senate Republicans have opened so many different avenues to oppose closing a single tax loophole. Senate Republicans have opposed closing even a loophole for these oil companies or corporations that ship jobs overseas. This benefits the Koch brothers. Senate Republicans have opposed asking billionaires to pay the same higher tax rate as middle-class tax families, as illustrated by Warren Buffett.

Senate Republicans have opposed environmental and workplace safety standards that might cause the Koch brothers or their corporate donors a

few extra dimes—a few extra dollars maybe. The Koch brothers are returning the favor with huge donations to Republican Senate candidates, either directly or indirectly.

Senate Republicans are addicted to Koch. In fact, Senate Republicans hardly need the NRSC any more, which for decade after decade was the main funding tool for the Republican Senate. Not any longer; the Koch brothers take care of that.

Aside from that, the NRSC cannot hide its donors' identities like the Koch brothers-funded groups can hide their donors' identities. Senate Republicans call this freewheeling spending by anonymous donors nothing more than "free speech." Senate Republicans say that whoever has the most money gets the most free speech. But that is not what America's Founding Fathers said. They did not mean that by free speech. The Founders believed in a democracy where every American had a voice and a vote.

This discussion, this fight, is not just about health care or even about a few hundred million dollars in disingenuous ads. This is about two very wealthy brothers who intend to buy their own Congress, a Congress beholden to the money and bound to enact their radical philosophy. Witness this: Senators beholden to wealthy special interests; Republican senators rush to the floor to defend the Kochs whenever I say something negative about the brothers or their radical agenda.

By the way, the words "radical agenda" are not my words. Charles Koch proudly told Brian Doherty, an editor of the magazine "Reason," about his self-described—his quote—"radical philosophy" in 2007. These are the same brothers who have lobbied against the recognition of formaldehyde as a cancer-causing carcinogen, because it might be bad for their business.

These are the same brothers whose Koch Industries ranks near the top of the list of America's worst toxic air polluters. Those are the same brothers whose company, according to a Bloomberg investigation, paid bribes and kickbacks to win contracts in Africa, India, and the Middle East.

These are the same brothers who, according to the same report, used foreign subsidiaries to sell millions of dollars of equipment to Iran, a state sponsor of terrorism. Let's make sure we understand that. I may not have said it quite right. These are the same brothers who, according to the same report, used foreign subsidiaries to sell millions of dollars of equipment to Iran, a state sponsor of terrorism. We all know that.

The Koch brothers already believe they can play by a different set of rules. Think about how an America rigged by the Koch brothers would look. The Koch brothers do not care

about creating a strong public education system in America. The Koch brothers do not care about maintaining the strong safety net of Medicare and Social Security. The Koch brothers do not care about the guarantee of affordable, quality health insurance for every American.

That is obvious from the misleading ads they have paid for all over the country. Why? Because the Koch brothers can afford to buy all of those benefits and more for themselves and their families. Their extreme vision for America means abolishing Social Security and Medicare. Their extreme vision for America means eliminating minimum wage laws. Their extreme vision for America means putting insurance companies back in charge of your health care and denying coverage for preexisting conditions. That is the way it used to be.

I guess that is what they want, running all of these ads. Their extreme vision for America means stripping tens of millions of people of the benefits in the Affordable Care Act today. Their extreme vision for America means allowing the gap between the wages women and men earn for the same work to keep growing. Their extreme vision for America means giving giant corporations the unfettered right to dump toxins in our rivers and streams, on our mountains and our valleys, and to give them even more tax breaks while they destroy our environment.

We Democrats have a different vision. Democrats believe the economy is strongest when the middle class is vibrant and growing. Democrats believe world class education leads to world class work. This work is one where people are ready to take on any challenge. Right now there are at least three people for every job available. Democrats believe in an even playing field with higher wages, affordable health care, and a secure retirement for every American so that every American can have a shot at success.

I welcome a debate over these competing visions. Average Americans share our vision for a country whose success is built on a strong middle class. The Koch brothers know Americans share our vision for a country where success is built on a strong middle class. That is why, rather than having an honest and fair debate, they are pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into a massive campaign of deception. They manufacture stories. They make up facts. They are angry that I am calling attention to their campaign of distortion and deceit.

I am not oblivious that my comments about the Koch brothers have caused some controversy. Anyone who has turned on FOX News knows that I have gotten under their skin. But I will continue to shine a light on their subversion of democracy.

When I hear my Republican colleagues defending the Koch brothers as

they have, I recall the words of Adlai Stevenson:

I have been thinking that I would make a proposition to my Republican friends . . . that if they will stop telling lies about the Democrats, we will stop telling the truth about them.

As long as the Koch brothers continue to spend hundreds of millions of dollars buying elections, I will continue to do all I can to expose their intentions.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Mr. McCONNELL. I noted with interest that the majority leader was hammering the Koch brothers again today, and I wondered why he left out billionaire Tom Steyer, who plans to spend as much as \$100 million pushing the issue of climate change in the 2014 election and "appears primed to rival the deep-pocketed and conservative Koch brothers," according to the New York Times. The truth is that these American citizens have a constitutional right to participate in the political process.

It strikes me as curious that if we are going to demonize people for exercising their constitutional rights to go out, speak, and participate in the political process, we would just pick out the people who are opposed to us and leave out the people who are in favor of us. The truth is that there are many wealthy Americans who feel deeply about the country, who are committed to one side or the other, and who are trying to have an impact on the country—as many on the left as on the right.

So we ought not to leave out Tom Steyer. I believe he also has a brother, who is also a billionaire, who has similar views and will probably try to impact the fall's election in one way or another beneficial to the things he advocates.

THE BUDGET

The release of a President's budget is usually a pretty big deal, but President Obama's latest budget, released only this morning, hasn't even ginned up much excitement. Folks just aren't taking it very seriously because it is not a very serious document.

First, it could probably never even pass the Democratic-led Senate, and in some sense that is the point. Rather than put together a constructive blueprint that the two parties could use as a jumping-off point to get our economy moving and our fiscal house in order, the President has once again opted for the political stunt—for a budget that is more about firing up the base in an election year than about solving the Nation's biggest and most persistent long-term challenges.

It would increase taxes by well over \$1 trillion in the worst economic slowdown nearly anyone can remember. It

would explode spending by \$790 billion, forcing us to borrow more money from places such as China. As I indicated, it would do almost nothing to address the most serious threats facing our children's future, and it doesn't even come close to balancing this year. No wonder the President thought the left would love it.

But this is my question for the President: What about the middle class? What is in it for them? It seems as though the President has just about given up on helping folks who are in the middle, folks who feel as if Washington doesn't take their concerns and anxieties into consideration anymore. What hope is he giving them that their medical bills won't be as high, that their wages will start going up instead of down? What is in this budget for them except for this nagging feeling that they will just keep getting squeezed?

The President is well into his sixth year of trying to fix this economy, his sixth year of trying to tax, spend, and regulate our way to prosperity—just as his ideology demands. But this much has to be clear by now: This doesn't work. Since 2009 the government has spent almost \$18 trillion. Yet millions of middle-class Americans continue to suffer, whether in the unemployment line or in jobs that barely allow them to get by.

It is time the President realized that doubling down on the same failed policies is simply not going to work. Yet that is just what this budget proposes to do. We do not need any more election-year gimmicks. What is needed is a new approach, a positive strategy that focuses on helping the middle class instead of appeasing the far left.

President Obama still has 2 years in his Presidency. It is not too late for him to try to make a positive difference for folks struggling to pay their bills, but he has to let go of the left and reach to the middle. He has to decide that bipartisan solutions are worth fighting for. If he does he is going to find significant support on this side of the aisle. We want to work with him to get important legislation done for our country. We always have. We are eager to expand opportunity for the middle class and to build more ladders of opportunity for those who aspire to it. We are eager to enact policies that can create American jobs—improving things such as the Keystone Pipeline, medical device tax repeal, and important new trade legislation, just to name a few we could do together. We are eager to find ways to control spending and put the debt on a path to elimination. We are eager to reform the regulatory state so that the rules coming out of Washington actually work for people other than the bureaucratic class who writes them.

There are bipartisan solutions to be had on these types of issues if only the

President could put the politics aside for a few minutes and actually work with us, really work with us, because the kind of unserious budget he put out today is just the type of silly politicking we need to get past. After all, why would we want a budget that grows the Federal Government while the middle class continues to shrink? Washington is doing just fine in the ObamaCare economy, but real Americans deserve a lot better. We can give it to them if we work together.

What I am saying is this: Mr. President, you have 2 years remaining in office. Work with us to make them count.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for debate only, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Connecticut.

POLITICAL SPENDING

Mr. MURPHY. First, I associate myself with the remarks of the majority leader. I certainly understand the concerns of those on the Republican side about the individual who has proposed to spend a certain amount of money supporting the global warming cause, but it pales in comparison to the money that has already been spent by the Koch brothers, who have poured hundreds of millions of dollars and will continue to pour hundreds of millions of dollars into these races, completely dwarfing any amount of money that is spent on the other side.

UKRAINE

Mr. MURPHY. Madam President, I am on the floor to talk about the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. I am pleased to have Senator McCAIN on the floor because it is very hard to describe the sensation both he and I felt at the end of the last year when we got the chance to travel to the Maidan—Independence Square—in Kiev and speak to about 1 million people. It is even harder to describe the sensation of hearing that group of people yelling back to us in unison:

Thank you, U.S.A. Thank you, U.S.A.

But that was the reality we were able to experience.

It is important to note that Senator McCAIN and I didn't go to the Maidan that day to advocate for President Yanukovich's removal even though the end of that process resulted in that

fact. In actuality we spent 2 hours that night meeting with Yanukovich, pleading with him to reverse course on his decision to abandon plans to join the EU so that he could win back the support of the hundreds of thousands of people who had gathered on that square to support our European integration and domestic political reforms. But President Yanukovich didn't listen, and instead he lost his legitimacy as a ruler when he turned his security service on his own people, resulting in the murder of over 100 Ukrainians who simply wanted to compel their leader to follow the wishes of the Ukrainian people.

I was proud to author a resolution that passed unanimously in this body that declared our support for the ability of Ukrainians to peacefully air their grievances against their government and to oppose the use of force against them. Then, I was equally proud to join Senator McCAIN and some others in a bipartisan call for sanctions against Yanukovich when he began his murderous crusade against the protesters. I was even prouder of President Obama, who through the State Department sent a clear, unwavering message to the Ukrainian people that the United States stood with them in their desire to see a better future for Ukraine, aligned with Europe and the West.

This strong bipartisan approach here in America to the Maidan movement helped the people of Ukraine as they charted their own path toward a new government. We didn't dictate the terms of Ukraine's future; we simply supported the right of the people to determine it for themselves.

But now, despite the success of the Maidan, the crisis in Ukraine has changed its face. It hasn't dissipated. And today Secretary Kerry was greeted in Kiev by Ukrainians pleading for the continued support of the United States.

Having been so clear-voiced in our support of the Ukrainian people thus far since the protests began last November, now is the moment when Democrats and Republicans should stand united in this Congress so that years from now, when a group assembles in Kiev marking the anniversary of this grave crisis, they will celebrate Ukraine's political sovereignty and economic rebirth with more chants of thanks to the United States.

In what shape should this support come?

First, we need to stand together in the next week to deliver serious financial assistance to a Ukrainian economy that is weak and is growing weaker as this crisis persists. A \$1 billion aid package is a good start, but our real work must happen within the structures of the IMF, which can provide potentially tens of billions of dollars necessary to fully right the Ukrainian economic ship. While Ukraine does need to

undergo economic and budget reforms from within, I would caution the IMF to be gentle in the timing of the conditions applied to this aid. Difficult steps need to be undertaken to right-size gas prices and trim budget deficits, but Ukraine should be given a long enough lease so that these necessary reforms don't strangle a nation today dealing with threats to its very existence.

Second, Crimea. Russia has invaded Ukraine, make no mistake. They have done so in violation of the United Nations charter and the very accord they signed in 1994 guaranteeing Crimea's territorial security. No doubt Vladimir Putin was sore at losing his erstwhile ally in the Ukrainian President's office. No doubt he didn't like the fact that the United States voiced its strong support for the right of a sovereign Ukraine to make independent decisions about its future partnerships. No doubt he is infuriated that the Ukrainian people are now on their way to getting their way. But this is not a schoolyard. You don't get to push weaker kids around just because you don't like them. This is the 21st century.

The reason we belong to organizations such as the United Nations or the reason we negotiate treaties such as the Budapest memorandum is because now we understand, after centuries of European war, how destabilizing this kind of behavior is.

The irony for Russia, of course, is that this invasion demonstrably weakens, not strengthens, their nation's position in the world. Let's say for argument's sake that the end result of this crisis is a Crimea that is more closely aligned with Russia than with Ukraine. What does that accomplish for Russia? Well, it will have won the occupation of 2 million Ukrainians while the majority of the other 43 million continue to orient themselves permanently toward the European Union.

If the United States and Europe make good on sanctions threats, which I hope we will, it will devastate the Russian economy, leaving millions of Russians out of work and adding political instability to Putin's own land at a time when he really can't afford much more instability, and it will make Russia an international pariah, shunned by the industrialized nations that help form the future path of global, political, and economic values.

Given this reality, why did Putin do it? He didn't do it to protect Russians in Ukraine because the only threat to their safety is due to the military crisis of Russia's own making. He did it because, like the schoolyard bully, he doesn't see past his own nose. He believes that he wins by temporarily flexing his muscles and by capturing the world's attention. He doesn't look to the long-term, potentially dire consequences to his own political standing and to his own people. He pulls punches

because it feels good today no matter how bad it will hurt tomorrow.

But that being said, no matter the irrationality of Moscow's behavior, we need to make sure in the case that Russia does not correct its mistake, and correct it soon, the consequences do hurt. I believe Congress should authorize broad authority for President Obama to enact strong sanctions on Russia through penalties to its banks, its oil companies, and its political and economic elite. I believe the President should only be allowed to use this authority in the case that this illegal incursion into Ukraine continues and that we should give Moscow the opportunity to reverse course or join with the international community to address their concerns about the safety of Russian citizens in Ukraine.

Let's give Russia a chance to make this better and deliver a clear message of the consequences if they don't. This, of course, can't happen without the support of our European allies. As chairman of the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on European Affairs, I will be on the phone this week with European Parliamentarians urging them to join us in proposing new sanctions on the Russian economy.

I know there is hesitance in Europe due to the integration of Russia into the European economies, but this crisis should, frankly, matter more to Europe than it matters to us. Five years ago it was a laughable proposition that Russia would invade Ukraine, but it is happening now. It may be unthinkable today that Russia, in 5 years, is going to move on a NATO ally, but if this aggression goes unchecked, then the future can be very perilous, even for our friends in Europe.

Finally, a word on the politics of this crisis. I have listened to some of my good friends on the Republican side try to score political points in connection with the Russian move on Crimea, trying to paint this somehow as Obama's fault. This is a ridiculous contention. Putin marched into Georgia in 2008 under a Republican President, who many of my Republican colleagues considered to be strong on foreign policy, and now he is doing it with a Democrat in office. President Obama is considering steps in response that seemingly weren't even considered in 2008.

What has me feeling even more suspect of the criticisms of President Obama is there doesn't seem to be any real difference between what the Republicans want the President to do and what he is actually doing. It is easy to say it is Obama's fault, but history tells us otherwise, and these political attacks mask the fortunate fact that there is pretty solid bipartisan agreement on what to do next.

Ukraine can remain whole and free and it can stay on a path to join Europe. When that day emerges from the smoke and the fire of the crisis, if we

play our cards right, then they will have America and our European allies to thank, in part, for that new day.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

UKRAINE

Mr. McCAIN. I thank my colleague from Connecticut for his thoughtful remarks on events taking place and the tragedies taking place in Ukraine as we speak. I appreciate his commitment to trying to find a way through this very difficult situation.

The Senator is dead wrong when he says this is similar to Georgia. In fact, this Senator wanted to do a lot more than we did. In fact, we did a lot more. The fundamental problem, I say to my friend from Connecticut, is that this President does not understand Vladimir Putin. He does not understand his ambitions. He does not understand that Vladimir Putin is an old KGB colonel bent on restoration of the Russian empire. It was Vladimir Putin who said: The greatest catastrophe of the 20th century was the downfall of the Soviet Union.

The Senator from Connecticut should understand that. This President has never understood this. This President is the one who ridiculed Mitt Romney when Mitt Romney said our great enemy was Russia and its geopolitical threats. This President said the Cold War has been over for 20 years. This President believes the Cold War is over, but Vladimir Putin doesn't believe the Cold War is over.

When the President of the United States is overheard to say to Mr. Putin's puppet, Mr. Medvedev: Tell Vladimir that after I am reelected I will be more flexible.

Did you get that? The President said: Tell Vladimir after I am reelected I will be more flexible. This is the same President who believed that somehow Vladimir Putin had anything but the ambitions which he is now realizing in Ukraine. In fact, I think it might be interesting for my colleagues to note that Vladimir Putin spoke to the press today and Vladimir Putin, among other things, during his answering questions from the press, said:

First of all, my assessment of what happened in Kiev and in Ukraine in general. There can only be one assessment: this was an anti-constitutional takeover, an armed seizure of power.

That was Vladimir Putin's view of what happened in Kiev as Yanukovich slaughtered, I believe, 82 innocent civilians as well as wounding hundreds.

Then he goes on to say:

I would like to stress that under that agreement Mr. Yanukovich actually handed over power.

Obviously, Yanukovich did not hand over power. He was driven from power by the good people who were tired of

his corruption and were sick of his nepotism and his crony capitalism. Anybody who believes anything good about Mr. Yanukovich should see the pictures of the home he had and the dacha he was building that cost hundreds of millions of dollars—truly a man of the people.

President Putin went on to say:

The current acting president [of Ukraine] is definitely not legitimate. There is only one legitimate president, from a legal standpoint. . . . Yanukovich is the only undoubtedly legitimate President.

Then comes more interesting things. Vladimir Putin now says:

Now about financial aid to Crimea. As you know, we have decided to organize work in the Russian regions to aid Crimea, which has turned to us for humanitarian support. We will provide it, of course. I cannot say how much, when or how. The government is working on this by bringing together the regions bordering on Crimea by providing additional support to our regions so they can help the people in Crimea. We will do it, of course.

Regarding the deployment of troops, the use of armed forces, so far there is no need for it, but the possibility remains.

Let me repeat that. This is from today. Vladimir Putin said:

Regarding the deployment of troops, the use of armed forces, so far there is no need for it, but the possibility remains.

This is a return to the old Russian Soviet doublespeak which was absolute nonsense, but they said it anyway.

He goes on to say:

What is our biggest concern? We see the rampage of reactionary forces, nationalist and anti-Semitic forces going on in certain parts of Ukraine, including Kiev. . . . When we see this, we understand what worries the citizens of Ukraine, both Russian and Ukrainian, and the Russian-speaking population in the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine. It is this uncontrolled crime that worries them. Therefore, if we see such uncontrolled crime spreading to the eastern regions of the country—

We should pay careful attention to these words of Mr. Putin—

if we see such uncontrolled crime spreading to the eastern regions of the country, and if the people ask us for help, while we already have the official request from the legitimate President, we retain the right to use all available means to protect those people. We believe this would be absolutely legitimate.

Then he goes on to say, in answer to a question:

Thus the tension in Crimea that was linked to the possibility of using our Armed Forces simply died down and there was no need to use them.

I repeat:

Thus the tension in Crimea that was linked to the possibility of using our Armed Forces simply died down and there was no need to use them. The only something we had to do, and we did it, was to enhance the defense of our military facilities because they were constantly receiving threats and we were aware of the armed nationalists moving in.

Russia has well trained, well equipped now an additional 16,000 or

more, and Vladimir Putin was worried about enhancing the defense of his military facilities because they were constantly receiving threats.

He goes on to say:

There is something I would like to stress, however. Obviously, what I am going to say now is not within my authority and we do not intend to interfere. However, we firmly believe all citizens of Ukraine, I repeat, wherever they live, should be given the same equal right to participate in the life of their country and determining its future.

My friends, we are seeing justification for intervention and serious intervention in eastern Ukraine. So the article goes on with further questions, and he goes on to take a shot at the United States saying:

Our partners, especially in the United States, always clearly formulate their own geopolitical and state interests and follow them with persistence. Then, using the principle “You’re either with us or against us” they draw the whole world in. And those who do not join in get “beaten” until they do.

Then he goes on to say:

Our approach is different. We proceed from the conviction that we always act legitimately. I have personally—

I say to my colleagues, I am not making this up. This is what Vladimir Putin said—

I have always been an advocate of acting in compliance with international law. I would like to stress yet again that if we do make the decision, if I do decide to use the Armed Forces, this will be a legitimate decision in full compliance with both general norms of international law, since we have the appeal of the legitimate President, and with our commitments, which in this case coincide with our interest to protect the people with whom we have close historical cultural and economic ties. Protecting these people is in our national interests. This is a humanitarian mission. We do not intend to subjugate anyone or to dictate to anyone. However, we cannot remain indifferent if we see they are being persecuted, destroyed and humiliated.

Here is probably the most interesting part:

Question: Mr. President, a clarification, if I may. The people who were blocking the Ukrainian Army units in Crimea were wearing uniforms that strongly resembled the Russian Army uniform. Were those Russian soldiers, Russian military?

Vladimir Putin: Why don’t you take a look at the post-Soviet states. There are many military uniforms there that are similar. You can go to a store and buy any kind of uniform.

Question: But were they Russian soldiers or not?

Vladimir Putin: Those were local self-defence units.

Question: How well trained are they? If we compare them to the self-defence units in Kiev . . .

Vladimir Putin: My dear colleague, look how well trained the people who operated in Kiev were. As we all know they were trained at special bases in neighboring states: in Lithuania, Poland and in Ukraine itself too. They were trained by instructors for extended periods. They were divided into dozens and hundreds, their actions were coordinated, they had good communication sys-

tems. It was all like clockwork. Did you see them in action? They looked very professional, like special forces. Why do you think those in Crimea should be any worse?

Question: In that case, can I specify: did we take part in training Crimea self-defence forces?

Vladimir Putin: No, we did not.

This is the same guy the President of the United States pushed the reset button for time and again. This is the same guy whom the President says we can work with—Vladimir Putin.

Then my colleague and former Member of this body on Friday—on Friday, as Putin’s forces moved into Crimea, and it was very clear to anyone the Russians were moving in—Secretary of State John F. Kerry spoke Friday with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. This is a quote from Secretary Kerry.

We raised the issue of the airports, raised the issue of armored vehicles, raised the issue of personnel in various places. While we were told they are not engaging in any violation of the sovereignty, and do not intend to, I nevertheless made it clear that could be misinterpreted at this moment and that there are enough tensions that it is important for everybody to be extremely careful not to inflame the situation and not to send the wrong messages.

I am not making that up. So after 5 years of believing that somehow Vladimir Putin was anything but what he is, we are now paying the piper. The chickens are coming home to roost.

Do we have a military option? No. But we do have a number of other options.

I wish to read one other article that was in USA Today by Jonah Goldberg entitled “Obama In Denial on Russia.”

I will not go through a lot of it, about student Obama, but here is some of the quote from the article:

In 1983, then-Columbia University student Obama penned a lengthy article for the school magazine placing the blame for U.S.-Soviet tensions largely on America’s “war mentality” and the “twisted logic” of the Cold War. President Reagan’s defense buildup, according to Obama, contributed to the “silent spread of militarism” and reflected our “distorted national priorities” rather than what should be our goal: a “nuclear free world.”

That is what student Obama said. But the remarkable thing is 2 weeks ago in response to tensions in Ukraine, the President explained that:

Our approach . . . is not to see (events in Ukraine) as some Cold War chessboard in which we’re in competition with Russia.

This is a horrible way to talk about the Cold War because it starts from the premise that it all was just a game conducted between two morally equivalent competitors.

Similar comments about Cold War rivalries and the like are commonplace of late, especially during the Sochi Olympics, when NBC commentators were desperate to portray the entire Soviet chapter as nothing more than a pivotal experience.

America surely made mistakes during the near half-century twilight struggle. The fact is there was a right side and a wrong side to that conflict and we were on the right side of it. The Soviet Union, of which Vladimir Putin was a part, murdered millions of its own people, stifled freedom in nearly every forum, enslaved whole nations, and actively tried to undermine democracy all around the world, including in the United States.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. MCCAIN. I ask unanimous consent for 5 more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCAIN. President Putin, a former KGB agent, has said the collapse of the "evil empire" was "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century." This alone should have been a clue to this White House that misspelled reset buttons weren't going to cut it. But they were too stuck in the past to see it.

I could go on and on, including the ridicule some of us were subjected to when we pointed this out from time to time, including in 2008 when I said in a debate with then-candidate Obama: Watch Ukraine. Watch Ukraine. Putin will not give up Ukraine.

We need to have an economic aid package immediately, and I am glad our Secretary of State is over there with initial U.S. loan guarantees, joining the EU, and a longer substitute package through the International Monetary Fund. We have to stabilize the economy of Ukraine which is near collapse. Financial sanctions, freezing assets, visa bans, trade embargoes—all of those can be accomplished, particularly expansion of the Magnitsky act, so people who are responsible will not have bank accounts, they will not travel, they will not ever get a visa. They need to pay a penalty for orchestrating what is happening in Ukraine right now.

Obviously we should not go to the G-8 summit. He should be thrown out of the G-8. It should now be the G-7. They obviously have to suspend military-to-military engagements. We need to have a path—and a quick one—for both Moldova and Georgia to move into NATO. Both countries are occupied by Russian troops, Moldova in Transnistria and in Georgia at Kajian South Abkhazia, and quite often Russians keep moving the fence farther and farther into the sovereign territory of these countries. In an attempt to appease Mr. Putin, we abandoned missile defense systems in Poland and the Czech Republic. We need to reinstate those and move forward as quickly as possible.

There are a number of things the most powerful Nation in the world needs to do. I am not counting on our European friends. Already there have

been statements by Angela Merkel and the leaking of a memorandum from the British Government. We may have to do a lot of these things by ourselves, because they are dependent on Russia for a lot of their energy supplies, and we have seen a significant recession in European leadership over the last 10 to 20 years. But we need to act, and we need to speak in favor of the people who are now being overtaken in Crimea by Vladimir Putin's army and military. I worry.

In conclusion, I say it is time we wake up about Vladimir Putin. It is time this administration gets real. It is also time for us to worry about what Vladimir Putin will do in eastern Ukraine on the pretext that somehow disorder and demonstrations might require Russian presence.

My friends, if we allow Mr. Putin to assert his authority over these areas because of Russian-speaking people, that message is not lost on Poland where there is a Russian population, on Romania, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Moldova. We are on the verge possibly of seeing a move to reassert the old Russian empire, which is Mr. Putin's lifelong ambition.

I have overstayed my time. I thank my colleague from Alabama.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I appreciate the opportunity to listen to Senator MCCAIN. I think facts have proven him right for many over many years of warning this country about how we have to conduct international relations in a realistic way.

I had the opportunity to be in Georgia and Ukraine about 3 years ago. In Georgia, we went to South Ossetia where the Russians had moved in, against European international law, and had set in. Last week or so, we were informed by the Prime Minister of Georgia they were building barbed wire fences along that border, digging in even deeper than they had before.

In Ukraine, we met with some of the democratic dissidents who were trying to hang on to democracy there. They had beaten Shevchenko, the fabulous lady who helped lead the Orange Revolution. She was worried about going to jail. I didn't think she would go to jail, but they put her in jail and kept her in jail for years on what EU and NATO officials have all said were bogus charges. They told us some of the democratic activists were somewhat depressed because Putin, with his intel background, was using the Russian intelligence services in Ukraine to buy up media and buy up television to propagandize the country. They were hurting, and they didn't know if they would be able to successfully resist. It was such a delight for me to see this basically nonviolent revolution in which the people stood up for their country.

Now we see Mr. Putin did not accept the sovereignty, and he is going to try to utilize military force in a way which is stunning. I have to say, Crimea is far larger and more strategically significant than South Ossetia and Abkhazia, but it is the same actions.

I thank Senator MCCAIN for his leadership.

ADEGBILE NOMINATION

Mr. SESSIONS. I will share a few thoughts on the nomination of Debo Adegbile to be the Assistant Attorney General of the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, a very important position.

There is no question he is a bright young lawyer, has a good resume. He spent 13 years with the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, one of the advocacy groups of the historic organization. They have been champions for advocacy and defense of civil rights and have done tremendous work over the years, and I have seen a lot of it. But they have also used the courts to advance political agendas which haven't always been accepted and have been seen to be improper.

While serving as the acting president and director-counsel of the legal defense fund, Mr. Adegbile positioned himself at the center of many high-profile cases—cases in the news media, and issues he dealt with. Perhaps most notably as litigation director, he chose, without being asked or without being even needed, to participate in the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the country's most notorious killer of a police officer. Abu-Jamal was tried at trial and convicted of the murder of a young 25-year-old Philadelphia police officer, Daniel Faulkner. The evidence at trial proved that Abu-Jamal shot Officer Faulkner in the back, and then stood over him and shot him three more times before firing a final shot into Officer Faulkner's face. Immediately following the murder, he stated that he hoped the officer died.

As noted by Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams, in his letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee in opposition to this nomination, he said:

Evidence at the trial established that while this was not some case of random street crime, Abu-Jamal was a supporter of the MOVE organization, an anarchist group that explicitly advocated violence against police.

This is the district attorney's summary of this case.

Some members of this body have argued that Mr. Adegbile's choice to involve himself and his organization in this case is irrelevant because it is simply a case of a lawyer representing an unpopular client.

And lawyers do that. They are called upon to do that. I live in Monroe County, AL, the home of Atticus Finch, Harper Lee, who wrote "To Kill A Mockingbird." He was asked to defend

an unpopular defendant in the setting of Macon, which is Monroeville, AL. He undertook and did his duty because he knew it was his duty.

But I will take a few moments to read from District Attorney Williams' letter to Chairman LEAHY and Ranking Member GRASSLEY which powerfully illustrates why this is not the same thing. We are talking about a lawyer's duty to take on unpopular clients and make sure every American who is charged with a crime is entitled to an adequate defense. The district attorney of this very large office goes on:

Abu-Jamal made every effort to turn the trial into political theater. He repeatedly interrupted the proceedings, insulted the judge, and chanted the name of MOVE leader John "Africa." During the appeals, his supporters attempted to intimidate the judge by massing in front of his home in a residential neighborhood. Worst of all, they have maintained a three-decade-long campaign of verbal abuse against Officer Faulkner's widow, Maureen, who simply wanted justice for her dead husband.

This is indisputable. I think no one denies it. The D.A. goes on to say:

His lawyers . . . echoed these tactics in their legal maneuvers.

In other words, the lawyers defending him used the same tactics that the defendant did.

In other words, the lawyers defending him used the same tactics that the defendant did. They were not required to do that. Lawyers are officers of the court. They should never misrepresent anything in court or take a position contrary to plain law or misstate facts. Lawyers are not entitled to do that. So District Attorney Williams' letter goes on to say:

Despite the overwhelming evidence of guilt, they have—

The defendant and the lawyers, he is saying here—

—they have consistently attempted to turn reality on its head, arguing that Abu-Jamal was framed and that it was he, rather than Officer Faulkner, who was the victim of racism. The LDF perpetuated these allegations when they took over Abu-Jamal's case. Although Abu-Jamal's death sentence was eventually overturned on the basis of new procedural rules invented after his trial, his murder conviction has been upheld, and his lawyers' bogus racial claims have been consistently rejected in both state and federal court.

That is the D.A.'s continuing summation of it. He goes on to say:

Aside from being patently false, moreover, these claims are personally insulting to me. As an African-American, I know all too well the grievous consequences of racial discrimination and prejudice. I also know that Abu-Jamal was convicted and sentenced because of the evidence, not because of his race; and I have continued to fight for the jury's verdict because it was the just result.

So I respect that opinion. I don't think he would be saying that if he didn't believe it. He goes on to say:

Given all the laudable objectives of the NAACP, it is telling that Mr. Adegbile chose

to devote his resources to this particular cause rather than the many legitimate battles that called for his formidable abilities.

I was a federal prosecutor for 15 years and attorney general of Alabama for 2 years. I am a firm believer in the essential integrity of the American criminal justice system. I have seen it too long. I have tried too many cases before a jury. I believe they do justice every time. But there are—in a place as large as Philadelphia, and in places as large as America and in any state in America, you have poor people, people who are uneducated, people who can be deprived of rights they didn't know they had. Errors by chance could occur in a trial. There are needs for groups like the NAACP, the legal defense fund, and other groups to defend people who have been caught up in the system and unfairly treated. That is a legitimate thing. So what I hear the district attorney saying is: Why choose this one to be so active about? He has good lawyers. The case was on appeal. So he goes on to say:

Of course, in our system even a radical cop-killer like Mumia Abu-Jamal is entitled to legal representation. That does not mean, however, that those lawyers who elect to arm him in his efforts are suitable to lead this nation's highest law enforcement offices. To select such a lawyer, among all those qualified for the position, speaks volumes to police officers and their families.

So he is saying: OK, you can do this. You can defend these cases. That is perfectly all right. You can pick that case out of all of them in the country and defend it, but you should not necessarily be promoted to this high position.

So this is not simply a case of a lawyer representing an unpopular client. It was a political cause. There was really no question about it.

What troubles me more than some of the other issues in the case is Mr. Adegbile's co-counsel, Christina Swarns, who actually worked for him. He was a supervising attorney. She explained the legal defense fund motivation for getting involved in this case. Why? She explained it at a "Free Mumia" rally in 2011. This is what she said at that rally:

It is absolutely my honor to represent Mumia Abu-Jamal. It is my pleasure, it is my honor to have that opportunity, and there is no question in my mind, there is no question in the mind of anyone at the legal defense fund—

I suppose, surely, that includes the nominee—

that the justice system has utterly and completely failed Mumia Abu-Jamal and in our view, that has everything to do with race and that is why the legal defense fund is in this case . . . We are acutely aware that the injustices of the criminal justice system are inextricably bound up in race.

She says the legal defense fund agreed with that. But the district attorney, Mr. Seth Williams, an African American himself, said the conviction

had nothing to do with race but everything to do with the plain fact that he murdered a police officer, was observed, confessed and admitted it, and said he hoped he died, and the jury found that. A biracial jury convicted him.

So while that is just her opinion, that is her statement, and she said she was speaking for the Fund. I serve on the Judiciary Committee, and we asked Mr. Adegbile: What about this statement by Ms. Swarns, and do you agree with it? How do you explain it, and what do you have to say about it?

Did he say he didn't agree with it? Did he say she misspoke? Did he say, I wouldn't have used those words? Did he say it was inappropriate, I didn't know about it?

This is what he said:

I do not know what Ms. Swarns had in mind when she made the comment.

That is not satisfactory to me. The question was a very serious one. I believe the comments by Ms. Swarns were inappropriate. They were false. They demeaned the integrity of the legal system of America improperly. As an officer of the court she had no right to do that. She really should have been disciplined, in my opinion. What did he say to the Judiciary Committee's written questions submitted to him? What does he say? All he said was: "I do not know what Ms. Swarns had in mind when she made the comment."

I think it is pretty clear what she had in mind. This is a radical view of criminal justice in America. It is very wrong. It is not correct. It is false. I am amazed that he would not at least take this opportunity now several years later to correct it.

In 2011 a legal defense fund press release at the time that the nominee was leading the department declared:

LDF seeks to sweep the grave injustices embodied in this case into the dust bin of history and, in so doing, give communities of color reason to believe that they can and will receive equal justice in Pennsylvania courtrooms.

So it is a direct attack on the integrity of the courtroom and the jury and the judge and the appellate courts and federal appellate courts in Pennsylvania. That is the official press release of the legal defense fund.

I don't think there is any evidence that there was any grave injustice done. In fact, justice was plainly done in this case. So that same press release, former LDF director, John Payton, is quoted as saying:

Abu-Jamal's conviction and death sentence are relics of a time and place that was notorious for police abuse and racial discrimination . . . unless and until courts acknowledge and correct these historic injustices, death sentences like Mr. Abu-Jamal's will invite continued skepticism of the criminal justice system by the African American community.

Mr. Adegbile has not rejected these statements. In fact, he is proud of his

role in the case, testifying it demonstrates America's commitment to follow our procedural rules even in those hardest cases.

I just would say that a chief of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, DC, holds an extremely important position. He is not a blind advocate for one vision of what some might call civil rights. I do not think it is a civil rights position these lawyers are taking. He is supposed to be a neutral observer. If a police officer violates the civil rights of someone under his custody, then he ought to be prosecuted, dismissed, and punished for it. But the Civil Rights Division leader is supposed to be somebody that everybody can trust, who people believe does not have an agenda, and who they believe is fair to all. So therein lies the rub.

Even someone who murders a police officer deserves legal representation. There is no doubt about that. But the Philadelphia District Attorney, Mr. Seth Williams, an African American said:

That does not mean, however, that those lawyers who elect to arm him in his efforts are suitable to lead this nation's highest law enforcement offices. To select such a lawyer, among all those qualified for the position, speaks volumes to police officers and their families.

It speaks volumes to them that this individual, this nominee for the Department of Justice, would be perceived as someone who is just voluntarily, aggressively, and improperly, in my opinion, taking the side of someone who is tried for murdering a policeman.

So the Civil Rights Division must protect the civil rights of all Americans. It must not be used to further a political agenda of any special interest groups as too often has occurred in this administration, in my opinion. It must be a place where the rights of all Americans are protected, regardless of their race and political party.

We have seen racial prejudice in the past, and it does need to be stamped out, but I do not believe the President's nominee is qualified because I do not see the required degree of objectivity and balance that will be necessary, and I will oppose the nomination.

I don't like to oppose nominees. It is no fun. I am sure this nominee has done many good things in his life. But there are points in time when we just have to say that as a Senator, I cannot vote for a nominee I don't believe is going to be objective and fair in the conduct of that important office.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). The Senator from Missouri.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to talk for a few minutes today about

health care and more inquiries I have from the people I work for in our State about health care. Like we always do, I followed up with them to verify that I understand their account, and they don't mind if I at least mention their first name and where they are from as we talk about these problems.

This morning I had a chance to speak to the American Federation of Hospitals about the challenges we face, and I mentioned the comment I made on the floor a few days ago, which was: If we were dealing with this health care debate today, in my view it would be a much different debate. Every Member of the House, every Member of the Senate, and almost every American who has been impacted in any way by the changes in health care understands this a whole lot better than we may have understood it 4 years ago.

I was in the House in 2009 and was leading our effort to come up with the alternatives that were clearly out there that I think we could have, and, frankly, should have pursued. But at that time it was clear a lot of Members had not really thought about this, and in many cases people who worked thought about it even less. We had a situation that, in many ways, was an accidental development at the end of World War II where most people in America who had insurance got their insurance at work. If the people at work liked the insurance they had, of course, among other things, they hoped they would be able to keep it. Hopefully many of them will, but clearly many of them won't.

The letters I have today are reflective of all kinds of challenges people are seeing. One of the things that was working very well in the almost 40 States that had it was the high-risk pool. The high-risk pool allowed people who had preexisting conditions a way to get insurance. They were in a pool that was pretty well defined. Not everybody with a preexisting condition had an ongoing cost. You might have a condition that was under control, you might have had a heart problem or cancer problem or another problem that stood in the way of your getting other insurance, but it didn't mean you had a lot of ongoing costs. It did mean the high-risk pool was a place you could go.

In our State, the premium for the people in the high-risk pool was 135 percent of what everybody else was paying. So you would take the average rate of what people were paying for insurance and add 35 percent to that.

Remember, these were people who everybody understood—including them—had a preexisting condition. They had a place to go. If the new plan would have reduced that 35 percent back to what everybody else was paying, that might have been a worthy goal, but that doesn't appear to be what has happened at all to the 4,000 people who left the

Missouri high-risk pool when it ended because of the new law on December 31 of last year. There was a transition for some of them.

I have a letter from Bjorn of Kansas City. He said his wife was previously insured under the Missouri Health Insurance Pool for preexisting conditions. In her case she had a back condition. That was canceled in the middle of 2012, and she was put in another high-risk pool that the law allowed to happen as a transition.

The problem that created for them was it reset their \$1,000 deductible. They met the \$1,000 in the high-risk pool, and they met the \$1,000 deductible again in the second half of that year.

The insurance they have been able to find costs them four times what they were paying before. It is not 135 percent of the old premium. I guess four times that would be 550 percent of the old premium. So somebody who was paying 135 percent of what used to be the normal premium for an individual is now paying 550 percent of what used to be the premium for the old individual. If that was the way to help people who had a preexisting condition, they better hope the Federal Government doesn't try to help them any more.

Mark, from Parkville, says his two sons—young and healthy as they were, according to him—just had a 20-percent increase in the policies they had. The only reason they were given for the increase was that the new requirements of the Affordable Care Act meant their premium would go up. Mark said he lived out of the country for 2 years and was amazed to find upon his return that the cost for the same type of health coverage he had before he left went up from \$250 a month to \$1,000 a month.

Bill, from St. James, MO, said his deductible went from \$1,000 to \$2,500.

In Missouri, West Virginia, and lots of places, you and I know that if the individual deductible is \$2,500, a family looks at that—that is just like not having insurance at all. If a couple of you happen to get sick that year, it is suddenly \$5,000.

I met with some Missouri hospital folks last week in St. Louis. They said their fastest growing uncollected debt was now among people with insurance. Why would that be? Because people with insurance suddenly have a deductible that is much higher than the average person with insurance used to have.

The point they were making was that people can't pay \$2,500 or \$3,000 or \$5,000 or an even higher deductible, so that part of the bill doesn't get paid. That is the new growing debt that hospitals have.

These people who have the high deductibles are insured for maybe lots of things they didn't used to be insured for, but they don't use any of the

things they are now insured for that they didn't used to be insured for. Bill from St. James says:

ObamaCare sure has not helped us.

I work for a small business that has renewed my healthcare and my deductible has risen from \$1,000 to \$2,500. My visits went from a \$20 copay to a \$30 copay and specialists from \$50 copay to \$75 copay.

He says he doesn't understand how he is helped by the new health care law.

Carl, in Lee's Summit, MO, said he has type 1 diabetes and his deductible went up to \$7,500. Again, for most families, a \$7,500 deductible is like not having insurance at all. If we could go back to where we had the health savings account where you had a high deductible and you had your health savings account and that high deductible would kick in only if you had to pay the high deductible—I never saw a health savings account plan that would not be cheaper than these plans that cover a lot of things, but they cover a lot of things a lot of people don't need.

Carl says:

To keep our premium rates down my employer had to raise our deductible to \$7,500 with no prescription benefit until it is met, so now instead of putting away \$400 per month for my retirement I have to spend it on insulin and diabetic supplies.

How is this ACA helping any honest working American who is trying to take care of themselves and not rely on the government?

Carl's point is that the money he used to spend to prepare for his own retirement he now spends to pay for his insulin and diabetes medicine that used to be covered—until this year—by his policy.

Christine, from Kansas City, said her husband's employer was forced to make changes in their insurance resulting in a deductible that went from \$1,300 to \$6,100.

If this had been the way we would explain this, that somehow—let's assume we are insuring more people. There is no reason to believe that yet, but let's assume we are, but we are insuring more people with what I have here today—a \$7,500 deductible, a \$6,100 and a \$2,500 deductible.

She says:

Our deductible went from a manageable \$1,300 to a devastating \$6,100.

I recently sent in scripts for my Dr and I can't imagine how much they will be. We were told they would be between \$25 & \$200 depending on the cost of the drug.

Remember, they are all before you get the deductible.

I have a letter from Fred from Columbia. He says that a drug company that makes one of his prescriptions no longer offers him a discount. The pharmacy told him it was because of the Affordable Care Act.

I am perfectly willing to believe the Affordable Care Act has become an excuse for some things, and this may be one of them. I have not talked to the pharmacy in this case, but I do know these are problems other individuals

are having because their insurance doesn't cover what it used to cover.

Fred is a retired State employee and he said his plan doesn't offer as much coverage as it used to.

Houston and Shirley from Peculiar, MO, have a supplemental health insurance. Their supplemental health insurance increased by \$330 since the Affordable Care Act was passed. They said their policy increased \$149—this is their supplemental policy.

They say:

Senator Blunt, we are on Medicare and have a supplemental health insurance. Our monthly premiums were a little less than \$165 [prior to the ACA's passage in 2010], and now as of January 1, 2014, is \$498.40. Our premium has increased by \$149.55 a month.

That is for their supplemental insurance.

Just last week Medicare Advantage, which serves people in underserved areas—whether they live in the inner cities or rural communities—has had that competition reduced as well.

I will say that if there were ever a time when we should take a second look at something—and the facts that every one of us have in our office suggest we take a look at it, and even demand we take a look at it—it is this policy that is hurting Americans and hurting families.

If we had this debate again, the country, the health care providers, and the Congress of the United States would be a whole lot better prepared to talk about what needs to be talked about than apparently the Congress was prepared to talk about in 2009 and 2010.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Several weeks ago, February 12, to be exact, as Washington, DC, was braced for a snowstorm and the Senate rushed to finish its business before the Presidents' Day recess, the senior Senator from Arkansas came to the floor to offer unanimous consent to confirm a district court judge for his State. Before he made the request, I spoke with that Senator who, to his credit, was one of only three Democrats to vote against the so-called nuclear option in November.

Although I was sympathetic to his desire to see his home State judge confirmed, I objected to his request to bypass the procedure the majority adopted in November, including recorded cloture and confirmation votes.

I did so based on principle. I did so because after 52 Democrats voted to strip us Republicans in the minority of our rights, the very least we could do is to ask the majority to utilize the procedure they voted to adopt. After all, the simple fact is that the minority can no longer stop nominees. That is the result of the nuclear option, and

that was, of course, the whole point of what the majority did in November.

So the Senator from Arkansas offered his unanimous consent request, and I withheld my consent. We had our exchange on the floor, but we did so courteously, and that is what Senators should do. Later that evening the majority leader came to the floor and made another unanimous consent. Senator CORNYN objected for the same reason I had objected. Thereafter, the majority leader exercised the power that he has—he alone possesses it—to move these judges and filed cloture on four district court nominees. That set up several votes for last Monday evening.

That evening, during our side's hour of debate time—and that is all we have anymore for Circuit judges; we have 1 hour of debate time on each side. That evening I spoke on the current state of the Senate with respect to the legislative process. I spoke about how our Founding Fathers intended the Senate to operate. I spoke on how the Senate used to operate, how it should operate and, sadly, how it does the opposite. I spoke about how the majority leader routinely files cloture on bills before debate has even begun. I spoke about how in today's Senate, in what is supposed to be the world's greatest deliberative body, the Senators from great States all over this Nation are shut out of the process of legislating and sometimes even debating.

As our side's hour of debate time neared its end, the distinguished chairman of our committee asked if I would yield him a few minutes of our time. I, of course, agreed to extend him that courtesy. I extended him the courtesy even though I knew he would use that time to argue against everything I just said. I extended him the courtesy because I know he would do the same for me, and, as a matter of fact, he has done exactly that same thing for me. That is the Senate. We are courteous to each other, even when we disagree.

As I said, that was Monday night—eight days ago. On Tuesday morning, we had a series of stacked votes related to those district court nominees. We had several cloture votes as well as confirmation votes. I voted against cloture, along with many of my colleagues. I don't presume to speak for my colleagues, but I voted against cloture to register my objection to a process arrived at via brute force—in other words, by the action of the nuclear option.

But the majority leader wasn't content to simply use the procedures he led his caucus to adopt last November when the nuclear option was adopted—when the minority rights on judges were taken away. He wanted voice votes rather than recorded votes on those lifetime appointments—and I emphasize lifetime appointments—so they deserve serious consideration. At that point, I objected, and I exercised the

right of a Senator to ask for a rollcall vote of the yeas and nays.

I supported each of the nominees on final confirmation. Some of my colleagues opposed them. But even if the votes had been unanimous, the right to demand a recorded vote is one of the most basic and fundamental rights of any Senator. There is absolutely nothing wrong with exercising that right, especially when it comes to approving lifetime appointments to the courts.

Before we had that recorded vote, I took the opportunity to remind my colleagues of how well this President is doing with respect to getting the judges he nominates confirmed by the Senate. Specifically, thus far in this Congress, we have confirmed 50 of President Obama's judicial nominees. By way of comparison, at this point in President Bush's second term, we had only confirmed 21 judicial nominees. That is 50 for President Obama and 21 for President Bush. Those numbers compare both district and circuit nominations. That is a benchmark both sides typically use.

So why are Republicans blamed by Democrats for not approving judges, especially when over the course of 5 years and 2 months now we have approved 223 judges and only disapproved two. Those are basic, unassailable facts.

In response, the majority leader described our request for recorded votes, as I was speaking about eight days ago, as "a waste of taxpayer time." Then he concluded his brief remarks by saying this: "I would suggest to my friend the senior Senator from Iowa that he not believe his own words because they are simply not true."

That was on Tuesday, a week ago. Two days later, on Thursday evening, the majority leader came to the floor and proffered a unanimous consent request for several district court judges. Senator MORAN was on the floor at the time and objected for our side. Thereafter, the majority leader filed cloture on four district court judges and the nominee to lead the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice. That is a right the majority leader has under our rules.

A few minutes later the majority leader returned to the floor so he could, as he described, "say a few words about the man who does all the objecting around here—or a lot of the objecting."

He then proceeded to quote extensively from a speech I delivered in 2005. He then accused me of violating senatorial courtesy during floor consideration of the immigration bill because I objected to consideration of amendments approved by Democrats, without assurances that we would vote on amendments Members on my side thought we had a right to offer, as any Senator should have a right to offer amendments.

Even if some of the amendments the Democrats wanted had bipartisan support, I was the Senator standing up and defending the right of our Members to offer amendments—even controversial amendments. To be clear, I was prepared to vote on any Democratic amendment provided the Republican amendments were not restricted.

The majority leader then concluded his highly discourteous remarks by saying this:

The senior Senator from Iowa is talking out of both sides of his mouth, and the people of Iowa should check this out. They should see what he says and what he does.

Given how inappropriate these remarks were and that they roughly coincided with several other inappropriate comments the majority leader made last week, I feel compelled to respond, and, of course, that is what I am doing.

Let me start by reviewing briefly how we arrived where we are today. As I said, the majority leader quoted from a speech I delivered in 2005. For the benefit of my colleagues who weren't here at the time, that was back when the Democrats were indiscriminately filibustering a host of President Bush's highly qualified nominees for the circuit courts. Make no mistake. The Democrats were utilizing the filibuster on judges at that time to an extent never witnessed before in our Nation's history.

During this time, they were filibustering 10 different circuit court nominees. So, as I said, the majority leader quoted from a speech I delivered during the debate of May 23, 2005. What he failed to mention is that six days earlier, on May 17, 2005, he said this on the Senate floor regarding the nuclear option:

It appears that the Majority Leader—

Referring to then majority leader Senator Frist—

cannot accept any solution which does not guarantee all current and future judicial nominees an up-or-down vote. That result is unacceptable to me because it is inconsistent with the constitutional checks and balances. It would essentially eliminate the role of the Senate minority in confirming judicial nominations and turn the Senate into a rubberstamp for the President's choices.

I am not going to relitigate that fight today, except to say this. At the time, Republicans, myself among them, were arguing that those nominees should be afforded an up-or-down vote. But as the quotation I just read demonstrates, Democrats refused. At the end of the day, our side lost that debate. We didn't believe judicial nominees should be subjected to a 60-vote threshold nor did we believe we should play by two sets of rules. So when the roles were reversed and there was a Democrat in the White House, Republicans utilized the tool as the Democrats did. The only difference was that we used it much more sparingly. As I

said, we have approved 223 Obama nominees to the courts and only disapproved two.

The Democrats, of course, didn't like being treated to the tactics they pioneered, so they began to threaten to utilize the so-called nuclear option.

A lot of negotiations ensued between our side and the majority leader. That is the way the Senate most often gets things done—negotiating to a consensus. Again, I am not going to review every detail, but as any Member of this body can tell us, the result of those negotiations was this. The minority—this time the Republicans—relinquished certain rights regarding nominations. We did it by negotiation.

For instance, district court nominations used to be subject to 30 hours of debate. They are now subject to only 2 hours. In exchange for relinquishing those rights, the majority leader of the Senate gave his word that he would oppose any effort to use the nuclear option.

On January 27, 2011, the majority leader said this on the Senate floor: "I will oppose any effort in this Congress or the next to change the Senate rules other than through regular order."

Notwithstanding that promise, at the beginning of the next Congress, we were, once again, on the receiving end of threats regarding the nuclear option. Once again, on January 24, 2013, after lots of negotiations, the majority leader again gave his commitment. Here is what he said on the floor of this Chamber: "Any other resolutions related to Senate procedure would be subject to a regular order process, including consideration by the Rules Committee."

That commitment mattered. It mattered to me, and it mattered to my colleagues. We as the minority relinquished certain rights. In exchange for extinguishing those rights, we received a commitment from the majority leader of the Senate.

Remember, I say to my colleagues, please: This is the Senate. Not only are we courteous to one another, but we keep our word.

Ten months after making that commitment, on November 21, 2013, the majority leader and 51 other Democrats voted to invoke the nuclear option. They chose to adopt a new set of procedures for confirming judges.

So that is how we got to where we are today. Yet three months later, when the minority has the audacity to insist that the majority utilize the procedures they voted to adopt, the majority leader comes to the floor to level an ad hominem attack.

Amazingly, given the commitments he made at the beginning of the last Congress, he accuses me of speaking out of both sides of my mouth. The fact of the matter is there is absolutely nothing wrong with demanding debate time and rollcall votes, especially on

lifetime appointments to the judiciary, and especially after the majority chose to adopt these very procedures just last November. That is not a "waste of taxpayer time," as the majority leader called it. It is representative government. While I am on the floor of the Senate and while I am on the subject of floor procedure, let me say this about the legislative process we have been following on the floor. I spoke at length on this subject a week ago yesterday, just as I have on several other occasions. I have been highly critical of the process we follow these days on the floor. But I have always tried to avoid making my criticisms personal. I have always tried to be courteous. But there is no getting around this fact. It is nothing short of a travesty that great Senators from all over the Nation must go to the majority leader to ask permission to offer amendments. Proud Senators from proud States, Republican Senators and Democratic Senators, conservative Senators, liberal Senators, northerners and southerners, appropriators and authorizers, hawks and doves, all of these Senators have been reduced to this. They are forced to come before one individual on bended knee to ask permission—permission—to offer an amendment. That is not as it should be in the world's greatest deliberative body—the Senate.

So am I highly critical of the legislative process we undergo on the floor? Absolutely, I am. But I didn't criticize the majority leader in a personal or discourteous way. I didn't accuse him of "talking out of both sides of his mouth," as he did of this Senator. I wasn't attacking him personally; I was defending the rights of 99 other Senators as well as my own rights as a Senator.

What exactly is the majority leader afraid of, anyway? Taking a few hard votes? We are paid to take hard votes. We are sent here to exercise our best judgment on behalf of our constituents. That is how our Republic is designed.

It does not have to be that way. Consider how amendments are handled in the Judiciary committee, as an example—something that ought to be followed here in the U.S. Senate.

Our chairman—I should say the senior Senator of this body, the President pro tempore, Senator LEAHY—our chairman does not tell us in the minority—Republicans—or even the Democrats what we are allowed to offer; nor does he tell us how many amendments we are allowed to offer.

He controls the agenda, as you would expect a chairman to do. But we get to offer amendments. As a result, every single Senator of our committee—whether they like it or not—contributes to the process.

The chairman controls the agenda. The minority offers amendments. And the majority has to vote on those amendments. That happens to be the process.

That is what happens when you have a chairman who respects the rights of U.S. Senators. There is absolutely no reason we could not do exactly that same thing right here on the floor of the U.S. Senate.

Let me mention one other thing about what the majority leader said the other night because I found it particularly offensive.

Immediately after accusing me of "talking out of both sides of my mouth," the majority leader suggested that the people of Iowa, my constituents, should pay attention to what I say and what I do. Well, they do.

But let me relate something to my colleagues about how I keep track, keep in touch with Iowans. The people of Iowa know who they elected to the Senate. They know that ever since I was first sworn in in this body in January 1981, I have fought all day, every day, to represent them.

I know my constituents. They know me. I go to constituent meetings in every county—every one of 99 counties—every year. Multiply that 99 by 32 years, and you get a fairly large number. I have been in 25 counties so far this year. So I talk to my constituents. I read their mail. I know, for instance, how hard ObamaCare has been on families in my State.

So I find it personally offensive for the majority leader to come to the floor, as he did last Wednesday, and accuse Americans, including my constituents, of telling lies when they share their stories about how ObamaCare is impacting them.

Last Thursday evening the majority leader came to the floor so he could, as he described it, "say a few words about the man who does all the objecting around here."

Well, Mr. President, do I object? You bet I do. So do the rest of my committee members on the Judiciary Committee when it comes to things of the Judiciary Committee; so does the rest of our caucus.

We object to the authoritarian way this Senate is being run. We object to being shut out of the legislative process. We object to dismissing constituent stories of ObamaCare as lies. We object to taking to the floor of the U.S. Senate to attack fellow citizens as "un-American" because they have the audacity to exercise First Amendment rights. And, yes, we object to the discourteous ad hominem attacks on Senate colleagues because they choose to exercise their right to demand rollcall votes on lifetime appointments.

It should stop. The Senate should return to being the greatest deliberative body in the world.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADEGBILE NOMINATION

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the nomination of Debo Adegbile to serve as Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division.

Some Americans may vaguely recall Mumia Abu-Jamal from the "Free Mumia" T-shirts and posters that once cluttered college campuses.

Maureen Faulkner will forever remember him as a cold-blooded cop killer who left her as a widow at age 24.

Maureen Faulkner has endured three decades of endless appeals and a dishonest international campaign to turn her husband's killer into a celebrated icon for some on the radical left.

Now one of the lawyers who helped promote that campaign, Debo Adegbile, has been nominated to lead the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. This cannot stand and I hope the Senate will not confirm him.

Let's review the facts.

At 3:51 a.m. on December 9, 1981, 25-year-old police officer Daniel Faulkner pulled over a car in the city of Philadelphia. The car's headlights were off, driving the wrong way down a one-way street.

The driver exited the car and began assaulting Officer Faulkner. The driver's brother, Mumia Abu-Jamal, was watching from across the street. Four eyewitnesses saw Abu-Jamal race across the street, shoot Daniel Faulkner in the back, and while Officer Faulkner was lying helplessly on the ground, Mumia Abu-Jamal shot several more bullets into Faulkner's chest and face.

Three other witnesses heard Abu-Jamal brag that he had shot Daniel Faulkner and hoped that Faulkner would die.

During the trial, when Daniel Faulkner's bloodstained shirt was displayed, the jury saw Abu-Jamal turn in his chair and smirk at Officer Faulkner's young widow Maureen.

So it was no surprise when a Pennsylvania jury took just 3 hours to convict Abu-Jamal of murder, and the next day 2 hours to sentence him to death.

Instead of allowing Daniel Faulkner's young widow to grieve in peace, a group of political opportunists decided to use this case to further their own political agendas. They fabricated claims of racism. They spread lies about the trial and the evidence. They organized rallies that, amazingly, portrayed Mumia Abu-Jamal as the victim.

Before long, Abu-Jamal was a cause celebre, complete with adoring Hollywood celebrities, "Free Mumia" T-

shirts and posters. He had his own HBO special, and they even named a street after him in Paris.

In 2009, 27 years after Daniel Faulkner's murder, the NAACP legal defense fund, or LDF, decided they would join the fray.

For decades before Mr. Adegbile assumed his leadership role in the LDF, the LDF served as a force for truth and justice for all Americans—a very important and well-deserved reputation for having done that. But, unfortunately, LDF's representation of Abu-Jamal promoted neither truth nor justice.

It is important to point out this is not a case about every accused person deserving a legal defense. That is a principle upon which I hope there is no disagreement, certainly not from me. The fact is, though, Abu-Jamal had multiple high-cost lawyers already volunteering their time.

Mr. Adegbile was director of litigation for the LDF. He told the Senate Judiciary Committee that he "supervised the entire legal staff" at LDF—18 lawyers. Also, he was, in the words of the LDF's own Web site, responsible for LDF's advocacy "both in the courts of law and in the court of public opinion."

This is important to understand because this duty to supervise has very specific implications for lawyers. A lawyer must confirm that the lawyers he oversees are honest while presenting facts in a case. The law backs this up. Supervising lawyers can be sued for malpractice or sanctioned by a court for the actions of the lawyers he or she supervises.

And how did the LDF's lawyers comport themselves under Mr. Adegbile's direction and leadership and supervision? Well, under Mr. Adegbile's oversight, LDF lawyers promoted the pernicious myth that Abu-Jamal was an innocent man and that he was framed because of his race.

There was never any merit to the claims of racism. That was a conclusion that was investigated and reached by both State and Federal courts.

In fact, the jury that convicted and sentenced Abu-Jamal to death included two African Americans and would have included one more except that Abu-Jamal himself ordered his lawyer not to seat that third juror.

Yet, in February of 2011, Mr. Adegbile's group issued a press release stating that "Mumia Abu-Jamal's conviction and death sentence are relics of a time and place that was notorious for police abuse and racial discrimination."

In May of 2011, two of the lawyers supervised by Mr. Adegbile traveled to France. They went there for a rally on behalf of Mumia Abu-Jamal.

One LDF lawyer said she was "overjoyed" that Abu-Jamal's death sentence was suspended, but she bemoaned the fact that Abu-Jamal would not

have a new trial and so could not be set free.

The other LDF lawyer described Abu-Jamal as one of the "people who are innocent" but "will continue to be put to death in America."

At another event in New York City that same year, a lawyer working for Mr. Adegbile gushed, "It is absolutely my honor to represent Mumia Abu-Jamal." She continued: "there is no question in my mind, there is no question in the mind of anyone at the legal defense fund, that the justice system has completely and utterly failed Mumia Abu-Jamal" and that failure "has everything to do with race."

I agree that the justice system has failed. But it has failed Officer Danny Faulkner and his family.

No one understands this story of injustice better than Officer Danny Faulkner's widow Maureen. Maureen Faulkner pleaded with the Senate Judiciary Committee for a chance to tell her story, for a chance to testify before the committee as they were deliberating the candidacy of Mr. Adegbile. But the Senate Democrats on the committee would not allow her to testify. They did not let her tell her story and, instead, they voted to send his name on to the Senate floor for confirmation.

I think Maureen Faulkner has a right to be heard. So I hope my colleagues will listen as I read a letter she wrote addressing all of us:

Dear Senators,

While I would have preferred to do so personally, I'm writing this letter appealing to your sense of right and wrong, good and evil as you consider the nomination of Debo Adegbile to be the next head of the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

33 years ago my husband, Philadelphia Officer Daniel Faulkner, was violently murdered by a self-professed "revolutionary" named Mumia Abu-Jamal. I was 24 years old. While most of my friends spent their summer at the Jersey Shore, I sat in a hot steamy courtroom and watched in horror and disbelief as the man who murdered my husband tried to turn the courtroom into a political stage where he could spew his hatred and contempt for this country and our judicial system.

At the moment my husband's blood stained shirt was displayed by the evidence handler, Mumia Abu-Jamal turned in his chair and smirked at me; demonstrating his contempt for law enforcement. Thankfully, a racially mixed jury that was selected by Abu-Jamal while representing himself, found him guilty. The following day they sentenced him to death for the brutal act he committed.

That's when my second nightmare began. For three decades, my family and I endured appeal after appeal—each rooted in lies, distortions and allegations of civil rights violations. And year after year, judge after judge, the conviction and sentence were unanimously upheld. Then, thirty years after the fact, my family, society and I were denied justice when three Federal District Court judges who have found error in every capital case that has come before them overturned the death sentence.

Today, as my husband lies thirty three years in the grave, his killer has become a

wealthy celebrity. He pens books and social commentaries critical of our country. He regularly uses his nearly unlimited access to the prison telephone to do radio programs, has cable TV in his cell and is permitted to hold his wife, children and grandchildren in his arms when they visit.

Old wounds have once again been ripped open and additional insult is brought upon our law enforcement community in this country by President Obama's nomination of Debo Adegbile. While publicly demonstrating that he doesn't even know my husband's name, Mr. Adegbile fawns sympathy and caring for my family and me.

In reality, Mr. Adegbile was a willing and enthusiastic accomplice in Mumia Abu-Jamal's bid to cheat us of the justice we had waited so many years for. Mr. Adegbile freely chose to throw the weight of his organization behind Mumia Abu-Jamal and he has publicly stated that he would get Mumia Abu-Jamal off death row.

Mr. Adegbile holds Mumia Abu-Jamal, a remorseless unrepentant cop killer, in high esteem. We know this because attorneys working under Mr. Adegbile's supervision have stood before public rallies held in support of my husband's killer and openly professed that it was "an extreme honor" to represent the man who put a hollow based bullet into my husband's brain as he lay on the ground, wounded, unarmed and defenseless. And while Mr. Adegbile and those who support his nomination will undoubtedly argue that he did not personally make such statements, he did nothing to counter or stop them.

In the end, like so many attorneys before him, Mr. Adegbile's allegations of civil rights abuse rang hollow. Mumia Abu-Jamal's death sentence was overturned not because of civil right abuse as alleged by Mr. Adegbile, but because three judges with a personal dislike for capital punishment conveniently determined that the wording in a standard form given to the jury might have confused them.

While Debo Adegbile may be a well qualified and competent litigator, through his words, his decisions and his actions, he has clearly and repeatedly demonstrated that he is not the best person to fill this important position. Certainly there are others with similar qualifications that would be better choices. I would argue that Mr. Adegbile's decision to defend a cop killer should preclude him from holding any public position.

Your decision means a lot to me personally. The thought that Mr. Adegbile would be rewarded, in part, for the work he did for my husband's killer is revolting.

Throughout my long ordeal I have frequently been labeled a racist by many who support my husband's killer simply because he is black and I white. I have also been asked to throw my name, my voice and my support behind political candidates from both parties. In each case I have declined. I have always believed that my husband's death and my quest for justice transcends politics and race.

From my heart, I'm asking you to do the same thing. Set aside any partisan feelings you have and do the right thing today when you vote on Mr. Adegbile's confirmation. Please spare my family and me from further pain.

Sincerely, Maureen Faulkner.

As the Justice Department's Web site explains, the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department "fulfills a critical mission in upholding the civil and constitutional rights of all individuals." Clearly, this requires that the

head of the Civil Rights Division have an absolute commitment to truth and justice. There are many highly qualified Americans who can carry out this critical mission. Mr. Adegbile's record creates serious doubts that he is among them. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to oppose the nomination of Mr. Debo Adegbile to serve as Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am here now for the 60th time to ask my colleagues to wake up to the threats of climate change. To see the damage that is being caused by our shifting climate, we need look no further than the Winter Olympics. The most recent Winter Olympics concluded last month. Over 200 countries broadcast the event to an estimated 3.8 billion people worldwide. In Rhode Island, we rooted for our very own Marissa Castelli, who brought home a bronze medal in pairs figure skating.

But what does the future hold for the Winter Olympics? As global temperatures rise and weather patterns shift, the world's glaciers are receding and snowpack in traditionally snowy regions is declining.

A report from the University of Waterloo found that February daytime high temperatures during the Winter Games have been steadily increasing from the 1920s and the 1950s to the 21st century. This forced the International Olympic Committee to take drastic measures to ensure adequate conditions: ramping up the use of snow-making machines and physically transferring large amounts of snow to the site of the games.

This is just the beginning of things to come. If our emissions are left unchecked, as the Republicans and the polluters prefer, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports we will likely see warming between 4.7 and 8.6 degrees Fahrenheit by the end of the century. The Waterloo report found that only 10 of the 19 cities to previously host the Winter Olympics would be cold enough to host the games by the 2080s. There could be no Sochi Olympics, no Vancouver or Squaw Valley or Sarajevo Olympics, and that is if we are able to stabilize and ultimately reduce our global carbon emissions before the year 2100. If carbon pollution continues on the current pace, only six of these cities could

host the games. Forget about Torino and Nagano, Lake Placid and Lillehammer.

Over 100 Olympic athletes from 10 different countries signed a letter asking world leaders to take action to curb climate change. They said:

As winter Olympic athletes, our lives revolve around the winter and if climate change continues at this pace, the economies of the small towns where we live and train will be ruined. Our sports will be forever changed and the winter Olympics as we know it will be a thing of the past.

Much as we all love the Winter Olympics, we could do without them. We cannot very well do without freshwater. Glaciers represent the largest reserves of freshwater on Earth. Their freshwater feeds our rivers and streams, waters our farms and ranches, and provides some of our drinking water. Glacier loss is happening all over the world, including right here in the United States.

Just like atmospheric warming, ocean acidification, and sea-level rise, this evidence of climate change is not a theoretical projection. It is not a complex scientific model. It is simply observation and measurement.

This is Grinnell Glacier in Montana's Glacier National Park. On top we see the glacier in 1940. On the bottom is the same spot in 2004. Grinnell Glacier has lost 90 percent of its ice in the last century. The glacier has almost disappeared or, as the U.S. Geological Survey puts it, "effects of global climate change are strikingly clear." The U.S. Geological Survey further explains:

Glacier recession is underway, and many glaciers have already disappeared. The retreat of these small alpine glaciers reflects changes in recent climate as glaciers respond to altered temperature and precipitation. It has been estimated that there were approximately 150 glaciers present in 1850 and most glaciers were still present in 1910 when the park was established. In 2010 we considered there to be only twenty-five glaciers larger than twenty-five acres remaining in Glacier National Park.

So there were 150 glaciers 100 years ago, 25 now.

Here we see a similar change at Lillian Glacier in Washington's Olympic National Park. On the top we see a large healthy glacier in 1905, and this almost unrecognizable view of the same landscape in 2010.

Of course, this is not just happening in the United States. Countries across the world are seeing rapid glacier loss.

A 2013 article published in *Nature* found clear evidence that the Tibetan glaciers—the world's third largest ice reservoir behind Antarctica and Greenland—are shrinking, even at altitudes above 20,000 feet.

South America's Andean glaciers are retreating at an amazing rate. Climatologists from Ohio State University and NASA loaned my office a piece of a plant that had been preserved

under the Quelccaya icecap in Peru for at least 5,200 years, a little bitty piece of plant. But under the pressure of the ice and the cold, it had been preserved for 52 centuries. Today, due to glacial retreat, it was exposed and I now have that piece of plant in my office.

Glaciers are some of the largest reservoirs of fresh matter on Earth. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, glaciers store 69 percent of the world's fresh water. Annual spring glacial melt provides a dependable source of water for streams, plants, spawning fish, farming, and now often hydroelectricity. In Central Asia hundreds of millions of people rely on the Tibetan glaciers to supply drinking water. The same goes for the people of Peru and Bolivia in the Andes.

This is a crisis we must take seriously. Unfortunately, Congress remains barricaded behind a blockade of polluter influence. Only last week a Republican witness at an Environment and Public Works hearing on adapting to climate change argued that we would all be better off if the glaciers just went away—if they just melted away. After all, he told the committee:

We evolved at the equator in a climate where freezing weather did not exist. . . . It could be said that frost and ice are the enemies of life.

He continued:

Obviously if the glaciers stop melting, there will be no more meltwater from them. So my questions . . . are, Are you saying you want the glaciers to stop melting? Then where would the irrigation water come from? . . . I say let the glaciers melt.

That is the witness the Republicans put up. Let the glaciers melt.

I guess he missed the difference between seasonal melting, whose annual rhythms fill our streams and rivers for drinking water, fishing and farming, and glaciers outright melting away.

There is another little trick the deniers like to play when it is winter-time. Every time there is a cold snap or a little snow falls in Washington, DC, or back in their home States, they say: How can there be global warming when it is cold out? And, yes, we have had a cold winter. But what scientists and other level-headed observers understand is the changes occurring in the climate are happening over longer periods than just one winter and across broader regions than only one State or even the United States. Moreover, short-term temperature anomalies such as a cold snap might be worse because of climate change, because of changes in the jetstream, for instance. This chart shows how worldwide winter temperatures every year since 1880 compare with the 20th century average.

Do you think there is a trend visible there? Over 100 years, yes, winter is still cold, but it is not as cold as it used to be. This change is ravaging winter sports and tourism across the United States. The National Resources

Defense Council found that between 1999 and 2010, a lack of snowfall cost our ski industry \$1 billion and up to 27,000 jobs. Before the end of the century, the number of economically viable ski locations in New Hampshire and Maine will be cut in half. Skiing in New York will be cut by three-quarters and, the report says, there will be no ski area in Connecticut or Massachusetts. If we know our geography, we know if that is true of Connecticut and Massachusetts, there goes Rhode Island's Yawgoo Valley ski area and slope.

The Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change, which I started with Representative HENRY WAXMAN, asked the National Basketball Association, Major League Baseball, National Hockey League, National Football League, and the United States Olympic Committee, to tell us what climate change means for their sports.

National Hockey League Deputy Commissioner William Daly wrote:

Hockey's relationship with the environment is unique. Our sport was born on frozen ponds, where—to this day—players of all ages and skill levels learn to skate. For this magnificent tradition to continue, it is imperative that we recognize the importance of maintaining the environment.

The Park City Foundation in Utah predicts an annual local temperature increase of 6.8 degrees Fahrenheit by 2075, which could cause a complete loss of snowpack in the lower Park City resort area of the Rocky Mountains. The foundation estimates that this will result in thousands of lost jobs, tens of millions in lost earnings, and hundreds of millions in lost economic growth.

While we in Congress equivocate and stall, the evidence of climate change relentlessly mounts. The damage is being done in our atmosphere and our oceans. The longer it takes us to wake up, the harder and more expensive it will be to fix it.

The sickening part is that everyone else is waking up. Sixty-five percent of voters support the President taking significant steps to address climate change now. Another poll found that 82 percent of Americans believe we should start preparing now for rising sea levels and severe storms from climate change.

Even in the party that won't speak the words "climate change" any longer—not since Citizens United cleared the way for big spending by polluters in Republican primaries—even in the Republican Party, among young Republican voters 35 and under, the majority of them feel that climate denial is either ignorant, out of touch, or crazy. If that is what young Republicans feel, that is a very poor foundation for the Republican Party to maintain this denier policy.

The campaign of money and denial that imprisons Congress is as poisonous to our American democracy as

carbon pollution is to our atmosphere, oceans and, yes, glaciers. It is time to fight back. It is time to wake up.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

ADEGBILE NOMINATION

Mr. CRUZ. I rise today to pay tribute to the men and women across the country serving as police officers who protect law-abiding Americans. It is out of this respect for our Nation's police officers that I also rise to oppose the nomination of Debo Adegbile to be the head of the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division.

We must always remember our Nation's fallen police officers who have bravely given their lives to serve our Nation and to protect us.

Police officers help form the backbone of our country that supports the rule of law. They risk their lives every day to help keep law-abiding citizens safe. According to the FBI, in 2012, 95 law enforcement officers were killed in line-of-duty incidents and 52,901 officers were victims of line-of-duty assaults—52,901.

The New York Times in 2012 observed: "As violent crime has decreased across the country, a disturbing trend has emerged: rising numbers of police officers are being killed."

In 2008, 41 officers were killed; in 2009, 48 officers were killed; in 2010, 56 officers were killed; in 2011, 72 officers were killed; and in 2012, 95 officers were killed.

Unfortunately, as Byron York noted today, the New York Times has not reported on the controversial nomination of Debo Adegbile to head the DOJ Civil Rights Division.

It is out of respect for all of our Nation's police officers that I rise to oppose Mr. Adegbile's nomination. Under Adegbile's leadership and supervision, the NAACP legal defense fund brazenly politicized the murder of a Philadelphia police officer, Officer Daniel Faulkner. On December 9, 1981, 25-year-old Officer Faulkner was murdered by Wesley Cook, who is widely known as Mumia Abu-Jamal. Officer Faulkner was shot several times. The fatal shot was when Abu-Jamal pointed the gun inches from Officer Faulkner's face and pulled the trigger.

During the trial it was made known that Abu-Jamal was a supporter of the MOVE Organization, an anarchist group that explicitly advocates for violence against police officers.

In a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee, Mrs. Faulkner described that during the trial, when her husband's bloodstained shirt was displayed by the evidence handler, Abu-Jamal turned in his chair and smirked directly at her, the grieving widow. The jury convened for a matter of hours before they came back with a guilty ver-

dict and a death sentence. That was 1982.

Fast forward 27 years to the year 2009. Adegbile was at the time the NAACP's legal defense fund director of litigation. In 2009, the legal defense fund began advocating for Abu-Jamal—first as an amicus and then as co-counsel. To be clear, every criminal defendant is entitled to an attorney, but Adegbile's representation of Abu-Jamal was pure advocacy.

Abu-Jamal's guilt was not in doubt. Four eyewitnesses saw the shooting. Abu-Jamal confessed and stated in front of three witnesses that he hoped Officer Faulkner died.

There was significant ballistic and forensic evidence. For example, the murder weapon was registered to Abu-Jamal and found at the scene with spent shell casings.

Abu-Jamal already had a team of high-priced lawyers working pro bono, who had filed decades of post-trial petitions and appeals, delaying the carrying out of his sentence.

Under Adegbile's supervision, LDF lawyers fanned the flames of racial tension. Through rallies, protests, and a media campaign, all portrayed Mumia Abu-Jamal, an unrepentant cop killer, as a political prisoner.

For example, a 2011 LDF press release said: "Abu-Jamal . . . is widely viewed as a symbol of the racial injustices of the death penalty."

That press release also said: "Mumia Abu-Jamal's conviction and death sentence are relics of a time and place that was notorious for police abuse and racial discrimination."

LDF lawyers under Adegbile's supervision went farther than that. They held rallies and protests.

This is advocacy. This is political advocacy. This is extreme and radical advocacy. This is not legal representation. They even went so far as to travel to France to hold multiple rallies for Abu-Jamal. The French had already named a street after Abu-Jamal in a suburb of Paris.

This prompted the House of Representatives in 2006 to vote 368–31 to condemn the murder of Officer Daniel Faulkner and to urge the French town to change that street name.

After fanning those flames of racial tension in the court of public opinion, Adegbile pressed aggressive arguments on race in our courts of law. Thankfully, the State and Federal courts rejected those arguments.

Under Adegbile, the LDF initially argued in court that Abu-Jamal's death sentence should be overturned because he believed there should have been more African Americans on Abu-Jamal's jury.

During his Senate confirmation on January 8, Adegbile said the LDF filed a legal brief regarding merely jury instructions about the death penalty.

LDF did make those arguments eventually, but Adegbile's initial arguments had nothing to do with jury instructions. They were arguments that Abu-Jamal's jury was unconstitutional because it didn't have, he argued, a sufficient number of African Americans serving in the jury.

The courts rejected those arguments. The jury that convicted Abu-Jamal had two African Americans serving on it. It would have had a third African American serving on it but Abu-Jamal instructed his lawyers to strike that person.

The Fraternal Order of Police vehemently opposes this nomination. According to a letter written by the president of the FOP, Adegbile's nomination only exacerbates the "growing division and distrust" toward local law enforcement agencies—a trend that has continued from the time now-Labor Secretary Thomas Perez was leading the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division.

Peter Kirsanow, a member on the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, wrote:

Responsible people should agree that going out of your way to defend a convicted cop-killer long after it has become unequivocally clear that he was guilty and had suffered no violation of his civil rights disqualifies one from serving as the head of a division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

The Obama administration's message with the nomination is clear: It wants even more politicization of the Department of Justice. This is insulting to law enforcement officers everywhere. I stand with the Fraternal Order of Police and oppose Adegbile's nomination, and I urge my Democratic colleagues to join the Democratic senior Senator from Pennsylvania, Mr. BOB CASEY, and vote no on this nomination.

This is not a matter of leftwing or rightwing. We all should agree that violent criminals should be punished, and we all should agree that those who go out of their way to advocate for, to celebrate, to lionize convicted cop killers are not suitable for major leadership roles at the U.S. Department of Justice.

I urge every Member of this body to oppose that nomination.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FLAKE. I rise to discuss the nomination of Mr. Debo Adegbile to head the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

I attended Mr. Adegbile's hearing in the Judiciary Committee and sub-

mitted additional written questions after the hearing. Unfortunately, after hearing testimony and reviewing his responses to questions, I remain concerned with Mr. Adegbile's ability to set aside more than a decade of advocacy on behalf of this and other liberal causes to serve as a neutral enforcer of our Nation's civil rights laws. And it appears I am not the only person who has reached this conclusion.

His nomination is opposed by numerous law enforcement officers, including those represented by the Fraternal Order of Police, National Sheriff's Association, the Major County Sheriffs' Association, the National Association of Police Organizations, the New Jersey State Policeman's Benevolent Association, and the National Narcotics Officers' Association.

This widespread opposition is clearly not driven by partisanship but by a heartfelt concern that this nominee is not suited for the position.

I have no doubt Mr. Adegbile is an intelligent and hardworking lawyer with a commendable record of advocacy, but that does not mean he should head the Civil Rights Division.

One of the responsibilities of the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division is to handle civil rights violations by law enforcement officers from across the country. However, serious questions have been raised about Mr. Adegbile's ability to apply the law fairly in these cases, given his advocacy on behalf of a convicted cop killer.

As the Fraternal Order of Police stated in its letter of opposition, in the decades Mr. Adegbile pushed this effort, he "falsely disparaged and savaged the good name and reputation of a lifeless police officer" in order to further his case.

The National Narcotics Association shares this analysis of Mr. Adegbile's advocacy, noting that he:

... fabricated a baseless and unproven defense while also defaming the victim, Police Officer Daniel Faulkner, which raises serious questions about the nominee's judgment, especially considering the important position to which he has been nominated.

There is no doubt as to Mumia Abu-Jamal's guilt. Afterward, he bragged about shooting Daniel Faulkner, and four witnesses saw the shooting. After being convicted and sentenced, Mumia's lawyers filed dozens of appeals on his behalf, which would suggest he had more than adequate legal representation. However, almost 28 years after his conviction, Mr. Adegbile decided to volunteer his time to assist Mumia. In a series of appeals and press events, Mr. Adegbile's organization called into question the motivations of the law enforcement officers responsible for Mumia's conviction and distorted the record, calling his conviction and sentence a "relic of a time and place that was notorious for police abuse and racial discrimination."

As the Philadelphia district attorney's opposition letter states, Mr. Adegbile's work on this case "sends a message of contempt to police officers who risk their lives every day to maintain the peace."

The district attorney concluded that Mr. Adegbile "is ill-suited for a pivotal role in the Justice Department."

The appalling facts of this case are well known. In fact, in 2006, the House of Representatives passed a resolution condemning the history of this case and recognizing the culpability of Mumia by a vote of 368 to 31. There are others, such as myself, now serving in this Chamber who voted in favor of that resolution.

It is deeply troubling that we are faced with voting on this nominee now, after Senate rules have been broken and the minority has no say in executive or judicial nominations. Requiring the support of at least some minority Senators discourages both the nomination and appointment of fringe or problematic nominees, something which benefits the country as a whole. Those rules ensure the Senate was the cooling saucer that George Washington and the other Founders intended. They also ensured heads of executive agencies were responsive to both the majority and minority parties. That is no longer the case.

I do not think we would be moving forward on such a divisive nominee—one who elicits widespread opposition from across the political spectrum—if the majority had not employed the nuclear option last November. I hope we don't move forward with this nomination. I hope my colleagues will join me and others in voicing opposition to this nomination moving ahead.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to join me in opposing the nomination of Debo Adegbile to head the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

The Constitution grants to the President the power to nominate individuals to head the various Federal agencies and departments, but it falls to us in the Senate to ensure those nominees are worthy of the honor and are ready for such responsibility. I don't make it a practice of opposing nominees. In fact, I generally give the President discretion there. I have voted to give him wide latitude in filling the executive branch with individuals of his choice

when I believe they are qualified. I have voted along with the minority Republicans who endorsed and confirmed a number of the President's nominees. But when it comes to a nominee who lacks the essential qualifications to fill one of these high offices, those of us charged with providing advice and consent cannot remain silent. Unfortunately, this is one of those cases.

It takes more than a law degree from a prestigious school and an impressive résumé to head an agency to support the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice. Most importantly, I think it takes judgment which cannot be measured by test scores or diplomas. It can only be measured over time through someone's actions.

If we look at Mr. Adegbile's record, it is obvious to me and so many of us in the Senate and around the country, including the Fraternal Order of Police, who have not opposed an executive branch nomination, by the way, in 17 years, who are taking a strong stand against this confirmation.

First, as some of his colleagues and my colleagues on the Senate floor have noted, Mr. Adegbile has a history of taking positions on some of our fundamental constitutional rights that I think are out of step with the views of the American people, the judgments of our judiciary, and our Nation's history.

In the case of *Hosanna-Tabor v. EEOC*, Mr. Adegbile argued that religious institutions do not have the right to hire or fire individuals responsible for conveying a church's teachings, a view that, were it to become law, would severely undermine religious liberty. Mr. Adegbile was so out of step with the Constitution on that issue that his view was rejected by the Supreme Court 9-0, which in today's typical 5-4 split in the Supreme Court is quite an accomplishment.

Mr. Adegbile's view on the First Amendment is troubling. So too are his views of the Second Amendment. He has repeatedly asserted that the Second Amendment does not "protect an individual's right to keep and bear arms." If Mr. Adegbile had his way, millions of Americans would lose one of their most cherished rights, just like that. Whenever a piece of gun control legislation comes to the floor of this Chamber, my colleagues on both sides of the aisle—and, in fact, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—assure us they will always respect a fundamental right to bear arms. It is unfortunate that despite the words of the Constitution and its interpretation by the Supreme Court, Mr. Adegbile cannot give us those same assurances.

There is the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Abu-Jamal is a murderer. In 1981 he gunned down a police officer named Daniel Faulkner on a Philadelphia street. In an act of unmatched brutality, Mumia Abu-Jamal stood over Officer Faulkner as he lay dying

and shot him in the face. A mountain of evidence from eyewitness accounts, forensics, to his own words makes it clear beyond any doubt that Abu-Jamal killed Officer Faulkner on that day in December 1981.

Still, Abu-Jamal deserved his day in court as would any other American accused of a crime. He got his day in court. He deserved competent counsel, and he got that too. He deserved an opportunity to appeal, and he got it. In fact, after the matter turned from a criminal matter to an issue of justice and to a political cause, he received some of the best counsel in the country and they filed appeal after appeal, all of which were rejected.

But that didn't stop Mr. Adegbile from claiming that Abu-Jamal was a victim of racism and a corrupt judicial system. For Mr. Adegbile, Abu-Jamal's case was apparently an opportunity to focus more on a political agenda than the case at hand. Abu-Jamal's guilt or innocence was not really the concern.

Debo Adegbile is free to make any arguments he sees fit about the First and Second Amendments. He is free to turn the murder of a police officer into a cause to advance a political agenda. When he does so, I think it says something about his judgment and it says something about his fitness to lead the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

The Department of Justice and police forces around our country should be working together to ensure that minority rights are respected and that civil rights abuses are punished. In my view, this nominee would only make that work more difficult. As the Fraternal Order of Police wrote in a letter to President Obama, if Mr. Adegbile is confirmed it will serve to "exacerbate growing division and distrust" between the Civil Rights Division—which is charged with securing our most basic freedoms—and the men and women of law enforcement who defend those freedoms by putting their lives on the line every day.

I think we can and should do better with a nominee who can work with the Fraternal Order of Police and other law enforcement around the country in ensuring that our most basic freedoms are secured through the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division.

For these reasons I oppose the nomination of Mr. Adegbile to this position, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

UKRAINE CRISIS

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I have been discussing the Ukraine crisis with my constituents and a number of Indiana media outlets for the last few days. Virtually every interview or conversa-

tion on the subject includes this question: What difference does this make to us here in Indiana? What American interests are at stake? These are legitimate questions, and they deserve an answer because before we commit America to address potential conflicts, we need to describe and define just what our interest is and why we should be engaged.

In this conflict we are not talking about the use of military force, but we are thinking about and talking about and should be examining other measures that can influence the outcome of a crisis situation that could have significant consequences for the American people.

If we can't answer that question and we can't address that with a compelling answer, then we should not get engaged. But if we can determine a compelling answer and reason why we should engage in some form, then we need to make sure the American people know why it is we are renewing this and why this is important.

Ukraine is 5,000 miles away. The trade between our two countries is minuscule and shrinking. Only 30 percent of the Ukrainian population shares our Christian faith or identifies with any faith. Ukraine is the source of no energy or crucial materials. Indeed, the country is a source of instability and corruption. So why should Americans and Hoosiers care about what is happening to a country 5,000 miles away? Well, let me suggest some reasons and then perhaps some suggestions as to what would be the best way for us to help influence this crisis situation in a way that is positive for our country and, frankly, for Western democracy and for the world.

The first and most obvious reason we should take this seriously is the central lesson of history: Conflicts—even catastrophes—sometimes grow from small beginnings. Most know that the assassination of an imperial relative in a Balkan town in 1914 led to the death by violence of 37 million people—World War I. We also know that the cataclysm of World War II began with the stealth invasion of Austria and Czechoslovakia in 1938. Despite warnings as to what this might lead to, we saw a tragic loss of tens of millions of people in World War II. This is eerily reminiscent of Russia's moves on Crimea last week.

A history lesson closer in time is taught by the Balkan wars of the 1990s. When Serb gunboats shelled Dubrovnik, a Croatian city, in 1992, the world—and most especially Croatia's European neighbors—did exactly nothing. Our own Secretary of State said repeatedly that there were no American interests at stake. Before that view was changed and NATO eventually intervened 3 years later, more than 100,000 people had been slaughtered.

If the international community had had the collective wisdom and leadership—and, frankly, courage and guts—to simply tell Belgrade that civilian European population centers are no longer shelled in modern Europe, all of that suffering could have been prevented and our own Armed Forces could have stayed in their barracks and in their homes.

We should draw from such lessons so that we need not confront later the question of whether we should intervene militarily in a Ukrainian civil war or a war between Ukraine and Russia. Instead, we must confront now the choice we have of doing nothing and letting Putin have his way or leading an American and an international response to impose penalties on Putin's Russia so that he comes to his senses.

A second and related American interest is in the stability of the European continent itself. Ukraine is not an obscure sideshow. It is comprised of remnants of two European empires and deeply embedded in the integrated structure, identity, economy, and culture of Europe as a whole. Disaster there threatens a very great deal in Europe, a continent we have spent 100 years, trillions of dollars, and hundreds of thousands of lives to stabilize. European security and stability have been at the very heart of our foreign and defense policy for an entire century. If American foreign policy and American strategic interests in the world have any permanent core, it is that interest in Europe's well-being.

Ukraine's conflict with the remnants of Soviet-style aggression portends serious threats to the rest of Russia's border lands, nearly all of which were long dominated by Red Army presence and force. The Baltic states must be alarmed right now. If we do nothing, they could panic.

Poland has already summoned NATO councils to consider consequences for its own security and therefore for the security of the alliance. Georgia painfully reflects that the paltry international response to its own war with Russia five years ago surely emboldened Putin in this latest adventure.

In other words, we could be looking at a Sudetenland moment. We hope that is not the case.

It is no secret that Putin has imperial ambitions motivated by his pathological insecurities and a quest to restore lost glories. These are dangerous delusions that, if not confronted firmly, could come to threaten us all.

Beyond history and beyond the threats to continental security instability, I am even more concerned about America's place in the world and how inaction will further harm it. Abroad, we are increasingly seen as a spent force, exhausted by interminable wars, politically divided and inert, financially strained, and floundering with-

out firm, articulate, determined leadership. This is a bleak, incomplete picture of my country that more than anything else makes me determined to be part of an effort to correct this perception of America.

In many ways, we can potentially look at the Ukrainian crisis as an opportunity. We have a chance now to summon our collective will and impose costs for Putin's irresponsible behavior. We have many robust capabilities to reward those who join us in responsible, mutually productive cooperation in managing world affairs and in punishing those who do not.

This is the moment to demonstrate our return to the leadership role that the realities of this harsh world have long imposed upon us. This situation, this crisis which we now face in Ukraine, can be a moment to demonstrate our return to a leadership role desperately needed by this tortured world where the realities of this harsh world have long imposed upon us.

It is in our national interest, in my opinion, to lead the world toward solutions that we know are best for us all. No other country can manage it. We have seen that. Without that management, we risk things that could harm us in many ways and continue to undermine our role in this world in providing for peace and stability.

For these reasons, tomorrow I will introduce a sense-of-the-Senate resolution articulating some of the steps I think we and the President should consider together. None of these steps involve military force or the preparation for using such force. Now is not the time to add to the violence but, rather, to remove the use of force by all parties as an option.

I hope the resolution will contribute to the search for both a bipartisan, unified government approach to problem-solving and an international consensus on firm actions that will change Russia's behavior. I am saying that we should stand united as Americans with a single message and a single voice led by our leader which shows we are resolute in standing together—hopefully with our European allies and others who want to join us—in condemning the actions taken by Putin and Russia and in offering and proposing meaningful sanctions and measures that will bring the reality of Russia's actions straight to Putin's desk and hopefully cause him to rethink his strategy.

The resolution will commit the Senate to work urgently with the President to identify a package of economic sanctions and other measures to compel Putin to remove armed forces from Ukrainian territory and return that territory to full Ukrainian sovereign control.

Further, I will suggest that we construct a complete comprehensive plan to isolate Putin's Russia from the community of nations. We seek a consensus

on such a plan with our friends and allies—everyone who wants to see a sovereign Ukraine, secure within its own border, able to seek its own destiny on its own terms. That is the right of every sovereign nation.

My resolution will also call upon the President to consider a number of measures to isolate and sanction Russia.

We could reschedule a meeting of the G-8 nations to take place as soon as possible, at which meeting the participating nations should seriously consider a U.S. proposal to formally expel Russia.

The United States should propose to NATO that the alliance immediately suspend operation of the Russian-NATO council. The Russian military and diplomatic representation at NATO should be expelled. A close relationship with Russian's defense officials during a time when that country has invaded and occupied a neighbor contravenes the founding purpose of NATO. How could we possibly meet on a Russian-NATO council basis when Russia has invaded and occupied a neighbor?

The President should ask the leadership of FIFA to reconsider its decision to place World Cup 2018 matches in Russia and instead award these games to a more worthy alternative country. Russia has just celebrated the Sochi Olympics. I think we got the real measure of President Putin, a former KGB lieutenant colonel, as to what his real intentions are—it is not to bring more good will and more confidence in that country.

The United States could work with other members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe—the OSCE—to deploy monitors in Ukraine to help confirm that the security of the Russian-speaking population is not threatened. This pretext for Russian aggression must be removed to international satisfaction.

Senate leadership could dispatch a congressional delegation led by OSCE Commissioners to visit Ukraine and bolster OSCE's involvement in addressing this crisis. Another option would be the United States working with OSCE and German Chancellor Angela Merkel to support her proposal to create an OSCE contact group to pursue dispute resolution and mediate direct negotiations between the Ukrainian and Russian Governments.

The United States should not maintain the current status of diplomatic relations with Russia at current levels. We could downgrade our diplomatic representation while retaining its efficacy by announcing that we will not send our new Ambassador to Moscow. Instead, we could dispatch an experienced professional diplomat to Ukraine to serve as charge d'affaires to handle the crisis. We could also reduce the diplomatic presence to focus exclusively

on crisis management, not business as usual. We could close consulates general and require Russia to make reciprocal steps to close their consulates in the United States.

I believe we in Congress should expand the Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act to sanction the Ministry of Defense officials in the chain of command responsible for this invasion, the Duma leadership responsible for rubberstamping it, and Crimean officials complicit in its execution.

The United States should also consider sanctions that might serve to convince more segments of the Russian population that their government is taking irresponsible steps contrary to the people's interests. To this end, we should suspend and could suspend Russia's eligibility for H-2B temporary or seasonal work visas.

This is just a menu of suggestions of actions we can take, actions that I think would impose upon Russia a cost for their brazen attempt to intercede in the affairs of a sovereign nation to, under the most flimsiest of pretenses, invade a country under the pretext that its citizens there, or those who favor support for Russia, are under some type of lethal threat. That is not the case. It has not been demonstrated, and it has not been proven.

Now is the time to act—to act quickly and act together. Our leverage is our leadership. We need to take up that powerful tool and show Putin that he has misjudged us. Now is the time for the United States to reassert its leadership in the world by taking direct action—not through military action but through a menu of measures designed to bring Russia to its senses and designed to protect the sovereign interests of those nations that are seeking to align with the West in a Democratic way. We need that leadership from the President. We need that support from this Congress in a bipartisan measure. And we need to speak with a united voice, hopefully with our European partners and others throughout the Western world and the free world, to send a message that Russia cannot ignore and to impose a measure of costs that will impact that country's economy and impact the decision that has to be made by their President.

Mr. President, with that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO TEQUIA DELGADO

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate is a place where we make friends. We

have our differences on policy, but we truly are a Senate family. It is just not that way with Democrats who work in the Senate, it is also the Republicans. When we work together, which we do outside the view of most of the public, we work well together.

One of the troubling things for me—I am sure it is for all of us—is when someone who is a part of the family leaves—especially it applies when you feel so close to the family member. Today, the Democratic cloakroom, the nerve center of the Senate and the entire Senate community, says goodbye to a dedicated staffer Tequia Delgado.

I and we congratulate her on her new role as a member relations advisor for the White House. After graduating from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, IL, Tequia started her Senate career as a staff assistant in my office.

But even before that she spent the summer interning for this brandnew Senator Barack Obama. In 2007 Tequia joined Senator DURBIN's staff. I have never truly forgiven him for that, for taking her from me. But he has done a lot of nice things, so I guess I will have to try to sweep that under the rug sometime, but it has been very hard. I do not think I have ever gotten over that. I have told him often that he stole her from me. But those things happen.

On a serious note, it was the right move for her. It was an advancement for her. She is from Illinois. It has worked out well for her. She became director of constituent services and then a legislative correspondent for Senator DURBIN, my dear friend.

Despite her hard work in my office and that of the assistant Democratic leader, Senator DURBIN, she found time to perform as a cheerleader for the Washington Redskins for 3 years. These are difficult jobs. They practice like the football team. It is hard. They have tryouts. It is quite an honor. So we have always recognized her for this accomplishment. That is certainly what it is.

When she joined the cloakroom staff in 2010, she brought her warm personality and always a positive spirit to her new role. So for 4 years Tequia has worked in the cloakroom, I repeat, the nerve center of the Senate. She has been an invaluable resource to all Senators. She has been an important mentor for Senate interns and pages. She has been a valued teammate and friend to our colleagues.

Tequia's talent, dedication, and friendly demeanor will be missed by me and Members and colleagues alike. I wish her well in this next endeavor. I know she will perform admirably. We are fortunate that she will continue to work closely with the Senate community. That is her job in her new role as a member of the White House team.

Congratulations Tequia and best of luck in everything you do in the future.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN ECUADOR

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I want to speak briefly, as I have several times over the past year, about the government of Ecuador's President Rafael Correa, which continues its aggressive clamp down on press freedom. Most recently, political cartoonist Xavier Bonilla was reprimanded for a cartoon he drew, and the newspaper he works for, *El Universo*, was fined for publishing it. *El Universo*, one of Ecuador's most respected dailies, has been the target of one of the dozens of harassing lawsuits filed by President Correa.

The cartoon by Mr. Bonilla, who goes by the pen name Bonil, depicts a police raid at the home of an investigative journalist, Fernando Villavicencio, who claimed to have documented evidence of corruption in the government. It shows the police knocking down the door to Mr. Villavicencio's house and parading out with computers and filing cabinets.

A government-established media oversight agency, Superintendency of Information and Communication, SUPERCOM, used Ecuador's vague communications law to sanction both Mr. Bonilla and *El Universo* for publishing an "institutional position" over the guilt or innocence of people involved in investigations. It subsequently ordered a major investigation, required a "correction" to the cartoon, and fined the newspaper. In doing so, the Correa administration sent a clear message to journalists that criticism of government misconduct will not be tolerated.

I have spoken several times about President Correa's attacks on press freedom and I will continue doing so as long as these restrictive laws are enforced and as long as journalists are threatened for their work. Most recently I recognized the efforts of Janet Hinostroza, an Ecuadoran investigative journalist who was honored by the Committee to Protect Journalists, CPJ, for her commitment to fighting for a free press. Ms. Hinostroza is continually threatened for her work exposing government corruption. Unfortunately, the harassment she and Mr. Bonilla face illustrates a norm, not an anomaly, when it comes to President

Correa's attempts to intimidate and silence his critics.

The absurdity of censoring a cartoonist aside, this latest attack further erodes what remains of an independent press in Ecuador. It explains why Human Rights Watch and CPJ continually rank Ecuador among the world's worst for press freedom. It is shameful, it is an embarrassment for the hemisphere, and the people of Ecuador deserve better.

MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, the legalization of marijuana is an issue that has generated significant media attention in recent months. Last year Colorado and Washington State became the first jurisdictions in the world to legalize the production, trafficking, possession and use of marijuana for recreational purposes. The consequences of legalization are only beginning to be understood. But one thing is clear. Legalizing marijuana does not make it any safer. Marijuana remains a Schedule I drug under the Controlled Substances Act. According to that designation, it is a substance that presents "a high potential for abuse."

Colorado's previous experience legalizing medical marijuana suggests that the consequences of full-on legalization could be dire for public health and safety. From 2006 to 2010, the number of Colorado drivers involved in fatal car crashes who tested positive for marijuana doubled. The number of Colorado students who have been suspended or expelled for marijuana use has increased considerably. Nearly three-quarters of Denver teenagers in drug treatment reported obtaining marijuana from a "medical marijuana" user. Colorado has become a source State for the distribution of marijuana throughout the United States. Law enforcement in my home State of Iowa reports that the percentage of marijuana interdicted there that originated from Colorado has increased from 10 percent in 2010 to 36 percent in 2012.

Against this backdrop, the Obama administration has recently sent mixed signals, especially to young people, about the dangers of marijuana use. President Obama recently stated that in his view, marijuana use was no worse than drinking alcohol. The Department of Justice declined to challenge State laws that have legalized marijuana, despite the obvious conflict with Federal law. Additionally, the Department issued guidance to prosecutors concerning the enforcement of the Controlled Substances Act and Federal money laundering laws that is plainly intended to permit marijuana businesses in these States to grow and flourish. These actions have caused confusion and uncertainty about whether using marijuana is really

something that should be discouraged because it is harmful.

However, many community anti-drug coalitions, healthcare professionals, public health officials, and law enforcement groups are speaking out about the dangers of marijuana use. One such group, Smart Approaches to Marijuana—or Project SAM for short—has recently begun to confront the marijuana legalization movement head-on.

One of Project SAM's cofounders, former Congressman Patrick Kennedy, has been outspoken in his efforts to fight the marijuana legalization movement. He has appeared on numerous television and radio shows, including ones where audiences may disagree with his views against legalization. He has bared his own struggles with addiction, offering himself up as a cautionary tale about the dangers of becoming addicted to marijuana and other substances. And he has broken with many in his party by speaking out against the President's permissive attitude toward marijuana use and the Obama administration's failure to enforce the Controlled Substances Act. Indeed, all former DEA Administrators, appointed by Republican and Democratic presidents alike, have joined with Project SAM and others to oppose the Obama administration's policies in this area.

According to a recent article from NBCnews.com, an article I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD, Project SAM recently launched a serious counter-offensive to the marijuana legalization movement. The organization began by placing a billboard near the Super Bowl stating that "Marijuana kills your drive." Project SAM launched a website dedicated to tracking public health incidents linked to marijuana use in Colorado and Washington to highlight the consequences of legalization in those States. It is also launching websites that will allow current or former marijuana users to share their stories about how marijuana has damaged their lives.

Project SAM has also been active in my home State of Iowa. The organization recently co-hosted town hall meetings with local community anti-drug coalitions, highlighting the risks of legalizing marijuana. Project SAM has also briefed State officials about the dangers of legalizing marijuana.

It is not every day that I have the occasion to praise a Democrat. However, Congressman Kennedy is to be commended for his courage in coming forward and participating in this debate by publicizing the dangers of marijuana use and opposing the Obama administration's failure to enforce Federal law in this area. His voice is a welcome one for those of us who believe that the legalization of marijuana is an unwise policy that will have a profoundly negative effect on public

health and the lives of many young people.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From NBCnews.com, Feb. 14, 2014]

TREATMENT OR JAIL: PATRICK KENNEDY
WAGES FIERCE ANTI-POT CRUSADE

(By Tony Dokoupil)

As a hard-partying teenager, Patrick Kennedy met President Reagan at a fundraiser for the JFK Library, a meeting captured in a photograph that the former Rhode Island congressman now hangs in his home office. He used to think of it as a funny episode, a collision of Camelot's cocaine kid and America's foremost opponent of illegal drug use. But Kennedy took his last hit of anything in 2009, and he's since honed an anti-drug message that sounds a bit like Reagan with a Boston brogue.

Kennedy believes there is "an epidemic in this country of epic dimensions when it comes to alcohol and drugs." He'd like to treat it all, but he's convinced that the single biggest threat to America's mental health is free-market marijuana. So even as Democrats favor the legalization of pot—by a 34-point margin, according to the latest WSJ/NBC News poll—the scion of America's most famous Democratic family has broken ranks, criticized the White House, and aligned with the likes of Newt Gingrich to warn voters against trying to tax and regulate today's psychoactive chlorophyll.

"I don't think the American public has any clue about this stuff," says Kennedy, after welcoming guests with a choice of Gatorade or bottled water.

The "stuff" in question is modern marijuana, of course, which gets pumped into snack foods and candies, and carries more THC (tetrahydrocannabinol, the chemical that gets you high) than the ditch weed used by the hippie generation. Kennedy calls legalization "a public health nightmare because he believes it will warm more people to a dangerous drug, and lead inevitably to 'Big Marijuana,' a blood-sucking vice industry dependent on converting kids and selling to heavy users—same as the tobacco and alcohol industries.

"The science tells the story," he says, breaking into an attack on the idea that marijuana is safer than alcohol. He ticks through studies showing that smoked marijuana is "associated with" or "linked to" IQ loss, psychosis, and self-reported dissatisfaction with life. "It takes you to the same place as cocaine or heroin," he often adds. "It just takes longer."

"Incarceration is a powerful motivator," says Kennedy, who after a prescription drug-addled crash in 2006 spent a year urinating in front of a probation officer three times a week.

Last January Kennedy went public with his beliefs, launching Smart Approaches to Marijuana, or Project SAM, a campaign to keep marijuana illegal and address the failings of the drug war through other means. But what other means? Kennedy has sometimes been vague, promising "a fresh approach that neither legalizes, nor demonizes marijuana," but never quite clarifying what makes him different from Reagan-era prohibitionists.

Not anymore. In a series of interviews, Kennedy and his cofounder Kevin Sabet—a former senior advisor to the Obama administration on drug policy—previewed SAM's aggressive new posture for 2014. It's not a new War on Pot, but it might be the most potent

campaign since Nancy Reagan made marijuana the centerpiece of her “Just say no” tour three decades ago.

As Kennedy and Sabet cut a path between the poles of legalization and prohibition, they seem to list toward the status quo. They would make the simple possession of marijuana a civil infraction, like jaywalking, which could take 750,000 annual marijuana arrests down to zero, and alleviate the disproportionate burden that prohibition puts on people who are nonwhite and poor.

But instead of handcuffs, Kennedy and Sabet propose a mandatory screening for marijuana addiction, according to the “Legal Reform” section of their website. That could lead to “marijuana education,” and ultimately a year in a “probation program to prevent further drug use.” And if the pot smoker still insists on getting high? It’s handcuffs time.

“Incarceration is a powerful motivator,” says Kennedy, who after a prescription drug-related car crash in 2006 spent a year urinating in front of a probation officer three times a week. He faced a jail term if he relapsed. “That does it for a lot of people,” he added. “That’s the turning point: hearing that judge say treatment or jail.”

“I think Madison Avenue has proven that it can get around more rules and be more ruthless than any Mexican drug cartel,” adds Sabet.

Kennedy and Sabet can also sound old-school on medical marijuana. As a member of Congress, Kennedy voted in favor of allowing patients access to pot but now says he was wrong. He’d like to repeal every law that treats smoked marijuana as medicine. Instead he hopes to see pharmaceutical-grade cannabis satisfy an FDA approval process and sell as a patch or pill. “We don’t smoke opium for morphine,” as Sabet explains, “we don’t need to smoke pot for medicine.”

SAM’s opponents argue that legalizing weed would raise tax revenue, allow law enforcement to chase more serious crime, and undercut Mexico’s violent drug cartels. Kennedy and Sabet sharply dispute all this—and so much more—but they’re particularly unapologetic about championing the continued existence of a black market. They say it’s mostly nonviolent on the American side, and will create fewer public health problems than allowing advertisers to flog for Big Marijuana.

“There is no way to minimize the greed and profit motive in promoting a dangerous substance,” says Kennedy. When it comes to pushing a product, adds Sabet, “I think Madison Avenue has proven that it can get around more rules and be more ruthless than any Mexican drug cartel.” He calls the black market, “better than having Joe Pot, heir to Joe Camel, on a bus-stop where I’m going to be hanging out with my kids before school.”

When Project SAM launched, opponents mocked the effort as foolhardy, and they had a point. Voters had just legalized marijuana by a landslide in Colorado and Washington. Polls showed that a majority of Americans supported doing the same nationwide, and Kennedy could do little at first but appear on TV as the token voice of dissent.

Now, however, SAM is poised to launch a serious counter-offensive. It began this month with a billboard outside the Super Bowl. “Marijuana kills your drive,” read the carefully-calibrated text, which picked up national coverage, spreading on a tide of the opposition’s howls and guffaws.

It was crafted by Sabet, a 34-year-old prodigy of drug politics, who launched his first

anti-drug campaign (Citizens for a Drug-Free Berkeley) while in college and is now, in the opinion of Rolling Stone, the number one national “enemy of legalization.”

“Yep,” he emailed after the ad launched. “Game on.”

“My name is John and marijuana ruined my life,” begins one entry from a young man who says that marijuana took “the gifts and potential I was born with.”

The game continues this spring, with SAM planning a response to “We Are the Marijuana Majority,” a web compendium of legalization’s best and most famous friends, launched with a grant from the Drug Policy Alliance, a leading advocate for reform. The SAM answer will be a directory of—you guessed it—the anti-marijuana majority.

The precise URL and title is still under discussion, but the webpage will feature opponents of legalization, an infinite scroll of head shots and quotes from the likes of Tina Brown, David Brooks, and Barack Obama (whose tangled statements on the subject appear to have landed him on both sites at once).

SAM’s second website will take aim at Colorado and Washington, the world’s first state-approved markets for marijuana, and to Kennedy and Sabet a slowly unfolding disaster that will prove them right in the end. The Justice Department has said it will shut down the state experiments if the regulations fail or public health falters, which is why SAM will use this site to track every known example of pot gone wrong.

The third website is tentatively titled “The Other Side of Marijuana” and it will collect stories from people who believe marijuana damaged their lives. It’s a counterpoint to the notion that marijuana is a safe, non-addictive substance. Based on a sample of entries, it’s also likely to draw more fire than anything SAM has done yet.

“My name is John and marijuana ruined my life,” begins one note from a young man who says that marijuana took “the gifts and potential I was born with.” “Most of my daughter’s former friends are in jail or dead,” adds the mother of an 18-year-old in residential treatment for marijuana addiction. She is “sickened” by the idea that marijuana will be the next big business in America.

In another note a therapist quits her practice in despair after a rise in marijuana-related patients. “I witnessed first-hand too many of the problems,” she writes, ticking off “anxiety, depression, irritability and psychosis.”

“This is the stuff of life,” Kennedy says, trying to explain his passion for drug policy, “so you bet I’m emotional about it.”

Not every pot smoker goes crazy or brainless, as Kennedy admits, but SAM is about minimizing the risk to those who—like him—start drugs young and are predisposed to break bad for life. After he got married in 2011, in his early 40s, he moved to his wife’s hometown of Atlantic City, N.J. Now he is the father of three kids under 5 (one is a step-child), and he worries they will inherit his addictions. He can also see the casinos from his backyard.

“The appetite for Americans to lose themselves is just . . .” Kennedy shakes his head and seems too pained to finish the thought. His six-week-old daughter was fussy the night before, and it was his turn to shush and pace. In the hallway, near a stairway to where his 20-month-old son is napping, there’s a toy fire engine and Kennedy’s eyes return to it again and again. Suddenly, he seems to be on the brink of tears.

“This is the stuff of life,” he says, trying to explain his passion for drug policy, “so you bet I’m emotional about it.”

The rollout of the new SAM continued this month at a conference in Washington, D.C., where Kennedy and Sabet held a standing-room-only rally for supporters. They celebrated 25,000 media mentions, and 22 states with SAM affiliates. They aired footage of Kennedy telling CNN’s Sanjay Gupta that his ballyhooed endorsement of marijuana was “shameful,” a ratings ploy that “history will not remember well.”

So far, however, the legalization side seems to have an edge in the war of ridicule. They charge Kennedy and Sabet with 21st century reefer madness, which the duo bats away as a sign that the opposition is afraid to engage with the facts. But while they can sometimes be unpopular at parties, they keep going, fueled by those letters from the public, and enthusiastic notes from past drug advisors.

“SAM is doing what no one else has done and doing a darn good job of it,” wrote Robert DuPont, Richard Nixon’s head of drug control, in a recent email to Sabet. “Absolutely brilliant presentation,” Clinton-era drug czar Barry McCaffrey added in a different note.

In a sense, nothing has changed since a teenage Kennedy gave President Reagan a sly smile. To make the world a healthier place, the anti-drug crowd wants to protect people from their most dangerous appetites. The reform side supports the same vision of health but wants to make drug use itself safer, believing that insobriety is normal and indulgence inevitable.

Neither side appears to be winning, because there’s no such thing as an “objective” position on marijuana policy. Would legalization really be so bad? Or is it the panacea its proponents claim? The honest answer is: nobody knows for sure, because no modern nation has ever tried legalization before—until now.

“Life isn’t really in our control,” says Kennedy, as another sober day fades to night. “There’s a mover in the universe, a higher power, so to speak, and we can’t imagine what we’re going to find in our universe if we let go and just let God lead us.”

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, in commemoration of World Wildlife Day on March 3, I rise to bring attention to the catastrophic effects of wildlife trafficking on global and economic security and the urgent need to crush this demand for these illegal products.

Conserving natural resources is a priority for me, particularly as chair of the Water and Wildlife Subcommittee; it is a priority for my State of Maryland, and it is a priority for this administration. But the responsibility of protecting natural resources, such as wildlife, doesn’t just sit with one State or one country. It requires a coordinated, global effort. Wildlife trafficking is a multibillion-dollar-per-year, transnational, sophisticated network of organized criminals. As the demand for elephant ivory, rhino horns, and other wildlife products resurges, the trade has become an illicit business similar to drug and arms smuggling. And as such, we must approach the

problem with an equally hard-hitting strategy.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, CITES, reports that in 2012, an estimated 22,000 elephants were slaughtered across Africa. According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, approximately 2,800 rhinos have been poached in South Africa since 2008, a more than 7,000-percent increase compared to the previous 17 years, mostly destined for Asian countries. Hundreds of park rangers are being gunned down by poachers, leaving behind devastated families with no income. Illegal wildlife trafficking threatens our species and is pushing some to the edge of extinction. The illicit trade hurts developing communities, damages tourism, risks people's livelihood or worse, ends lives.

In February, President Obama released the first-ever National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking. I joined colleagues on both sides of the aisle to urge the administration to produce a bold, goal-oriented, and whole-of-government approach to combat this growing problem of illicit wildlife trafficking. I commend the administration for its aggressive plan, and I hope we see swift implementation in the three areas of enforcement, demand reduction, and partner-building.

The image of wildlife trafficking is often tied to the African Continent. But the other side—the consumer-demand side, primarily driven in Asia—must be viewed closely as well. With growing wealth in the Asia region, wildlife is being used for traditional and nontraditional medicines, trophies, clothing or pets. As the demand grows, the price of these products continues to skyrocket. We must leverage our bilateral and regional relationships to educate communities about the real effects of this trade.

As chair of the Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific, I am particularly pleased to see the tremendous cooperation between the United States and China on this issue. At the 2013 Strategic and Economic Dialogue, the two countries committed to cooperate on enforcement issues and efforts to end the supply and demand for such products. On January 6, China destroyed more than 5 tons of ivory, publicly demonstrating their commitment to protecting elephant populations. The United States, Kenya, Gabon, and the Philippines have held similar events. In a joint 1-month global operation earlier this year, the United States and China joined with 26 countries, plus international organizations such as ASEAN, to target wildlife trafficking criminals resulting in over 400 arrests and more than 350 major wildlife seizures. This type of collaboration is critical and more needs to be done.

At the London Conference on Illegal Wildlife Trade February 12–13, 2014, representatives from over 40 countries

joined together and issued a declaration urging action. There is no doubt that governments recognize the urgency in solving this problem. But we need to build on this momentum, match our words with action, ensure developing countries have the capacity to address enforcement issues, hold criminals accountable, and educate communities to look beyond short-term benefits toward the dangerous long-term effects of illegal trafficking.

I urge all my colleagues to work together to strengthen existing laws, adopt new laws, and pressure consumers to put an end to this damaging trade before the illegal trade puts an end to our world's most precious wildlife.

SOUTH BERWICK, MAINE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the town of South Berwick, ME. South Berwick holds a very special place in our State's history, and one that exemplifies the determination and resiliency of Maine people.

While this landmark anniversary marks South Berwick's incorporation, the year 1814 was but one milestone in a long journey of progress. It is a journey that began thousands of years earlier with Native American villages on the banks of the Piscataqua and Salmon Falls rivers. In 1631, barely a decade after the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, Ambrose Gibbens established a settlement at the falls and built the first sawmill in North America. A manufacturing heritage of textile mills and iron works that developed in the 18th century continues today. The skills and work ethic of the people of South Berwick contribute greatly to the cutting-edge industries in the region, from biotechnology to aerospace and defense.

Industry is only part of South Berwick's story. In 1791, the citizens of the region recognized the importance of education and established Berwick Academy with a charter signed by Massachusetts Governor John Hancock. Located in South Berwick, the academy is the oldest educational institution in Maine and now, as a private school, remains true to its founding purpose of promoting "virtue and useful knowledge among the rising generation." In addition, the people of South Berwick remain true to the vision of their forebears by supporting an outstanding public school system.

During the Revolutionary War, the growing community provided two full companies to fight for America's independence, more than many towns of greater size. The courage and character demonstrated by the townspeople in standing for liberty echo throughout South Berwick's history. In the years before the Civil War, the many churches in the community were powerful

voices for the abolition of slavery. During that terrible conflict, more than 294 of South Berwick's young men, including 46 Berwick Academy students fought, and many died, so that all might live in freedom. The town's honor roll of current military personnel demonstrates an ongoing commitment to our Nation's founding principles.

This anniversary is not just about something that is measured in calendar years. It is about human accomplishment. We celebrate the people who, through the centuries, have pulled together, cared for one another, and built a great community that is a wonderful place to live, work, and raise families. Thanks to those who came before, South Berwick has a wonderful history. Thanks to those who are there today, it has a bright future.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

AMERICAN RED CROSS MONTH

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to the American Red Cross. March is American Red Cross Month—this is a special time to recognize and thank our everyday heroes. The Red Cross is on the frontlines every day. They volunteer their time, take lifesaving courses, and provide financial donations to help those in need.

We would like to remember our heroes in Alaska who help those in need. The Red Cross works tirelessly to help in times of disaster with the comfort of a helping hand. They provide round-the-clock support to members of the military, veterans and their families, and teach lifesaving classes in CPR and first aid.

Across the country and around the world, the American Red Cross responds to fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and wildfires—the tragedy at the Boston Marathon, and Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. When an injured servicemember enters a hospital far from home, the American Red Cross offers comfort. When a hospital's patients need blood, the American Red Cross blood donors make that happen.

We dedicate the month of March to all those who support the American Red Cross mission to prevent and alleviate human suffering in the face of emergencies. Our community depends on the American Red Cross, which relies on donations of time and money to fulfill its humanitarian mission. The American Red Cross reflects all that is right with mankind. They make America stronger by their selfless service. •

TRIBUTE TO SISTER LILLIAN MURPHY

• Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Sister Lillian Murphy,

who is retiring this June after an astounding 27 years as the CEO of Denver-based Mercy Housing, one of the largest and most effective affordable housing organizations in the country.

Since 1982, Mercy Housing has worked tirelessly to develop affordable housing options in more than 40 States. Sister Lillian took over as CEO in 1987 and has overseen enormous growth in Mercy's operations, which now houses more than 135,000 residents in nearly 40,000 homes.

Sister Lillian has won a number of awards for her work, including the prestigious Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California's Affordable Housing Leadership Award for Lifetime Achievement, and the Annual Housing Leadership Award from the National Low Income Housing Coalition. In 2009, she was inducted into the Affordable Housing Hall of Fame by Affordable Housing Finance Magazine. Sister Lillian has been a remarkable leader at Mercy Housing and she will be sorely missed.

Sister Lillian is leaving the important work of Mercy Housing in very capable hands with the incoming CEO Jane Graf. We all look forward to working with Ms. Graf to ensure that middle- and low-income families continue to have access to quality, affordable housing.●

REMEMBERING TOM GOLA

● Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to the exceptional life of Tom Gola, a Philadelphia basketball legend, who passed away on January 26, 2014.

Mr. Gola was born on January 13, 1933, to Ike and Helen Gola in Philadelphia, PA. His passion for basketball developed early in life and he became a star while playing for La Salle College High School. While there, he led his team to the Philadelphia Catholic League Championship and won the Markward Award as the league's top player.

As one of the most celebrated high school athletes at the time, many expected Mr. Gola to attend one of the big basketball schools in the country. Instead, he decided to stay close to home in Pennsylvania to attend La Salle University, where he once again quickly distinguished himself as a star player. In 1952, he led La Salle to a NIT championship, earning the championship's Most Valuable Player Award in the process. Two years later, he led the team to its first and only NCAA championship, again earning the honor of tournament MVP. Mr. Gola continued his exceptional collegiate basketball career with: a second place finish in the 1955 NCAA tournament; Player of the Year Awards in 1954 and 1955; a place on three consecutive first-team all-American squads, and; achieving the NCAA record of 2,201 career rebounds, a record which stands today.

The familiar cheer of "Go, Gola! Go!" still echoes in the memories of Philadelphia sports fans of a certain age. Another Philadelphia sports legend, the great Wilt Chamberlain once said:

Growing up, you whispered the name of Tom Gola. He was like a saint.

Following his extraordinary college career, Mr. Gola entered the NBA in 1955 to join his hometown team, the Philadelphia Warriors. He helped the Warriors win an NBA Championship the following year. He is one of only two players who played on NIT, NCAA and NBA championship teams. A five-time NBA All-Star, Mr. Gola was enshrined into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 1976.

Following his retirement from the NBA, Mr. Gola focused his considerable talents on his community. He was elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and later served as the city of Philadelphia's Controller.

Mr. Gola also returned to his alma mater as the head coach of the La Salle Explorers for two seasons. Today, the university's multipurpose arena bears his name as a testament to the indelible mark he left on the school.

I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Tom Gola for his remarkable achievements in basketball and his service to Pennsylvania. My thoughts and pray are with his wife Caroline and his son Thomas as they mourn his loss. May he rest in peace.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a nomination which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

(The message received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY ORIGINALLY DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 13288 ON MARCH 6, 2003, WITH RESPECT TO THE ACTIONS AND POLICIES OF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE AND OTHER PERSONS TO UNDERMINE ZIMBABWE'S DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES OR INSTITUTIONS, AS RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE ON FEBRUARY 28, 2014—PM 31

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message

from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2014.

The threat constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 28, 2014.

BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015—PM 32

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred jointly, pursuant to the order of January 30, 1975 as modified by the order of April 11, 1986; to the Committees on Appropriations; and the Budget:

THE BUDGET MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT

To the Congress of the United States:

After 5 years of grit and determined effort, the United States is better positioned for the 21st Century than any other nation on Earth. We have created more than 8 million new jobs in the last 4 years and now have the lowest unemployment rate in over 5 years. Our housing market is rebounding. Our manufacturing sector is adding jobs for the first time since the 1990s. We now produce more oil at home than we buy from the rest of the world. We have cut our deficits by more than half since I took office. And for the first time in over a decade, business leaders around

the world have declared that China is no longer the world's number one place to invest; America is.

We have made great progress, but we must do more to rebuild our economy on a new foundation for growth and prosperity. I believe that what unites the people of this Nation, regardless of race or region or party, young or old, rich or poor, is the simple, profound belief in opportunity for all—the notion that if you work hard and take responsibility, you can get ahead. That belief has suffered some serious blows. Over more than three decades, even before the Great Recession hit, massive shifts in technology and global competition had eliminated good, middle class jobs and weakened the economic foundations that families depend on.

Today, after 4 years of economic growth, corporate profits and stock prices have rarely been higher, and those at the top have never done better. But average wages have barely budged. Inequality has deepened. Upward mobility remains stalled. Even in the midst of recovery, too many Americans are working more than ever just to get by—let alone get ahead. And too many still are not working at all.

Our job is to reverse these trends. We need to return to an America where our success depends not on accident of birth, but on the strength of our work ethic and the scope of our dreams. That is what drew our forebears here. Opportunity is who we are. And the defining project of our generation is to restore that promise. It will not happen right away. But we must continue to strive toward that goal.

What I offer in this Budget is a set of concrete, practical proposals to speed up growth, strengthen the middle class, and build new ladders of opportunity into the middle class—all while continuing to improve the Nation's long-run fiscal position.

Earlier this year, thanks to the work of Democrats and Republicans, the Congress produced an agreement that undid some of last year's severe cuts to priorities like education and research, infrastructure, and national security. Recognizing the importance of that bipartisan compromise, the Budget adheres to the spending levels agreed to by the Congress for fiscal year 2015. But there is clearly much more we can and should do to invest in areas like infrastructure, innovation, and education that will create jobs, economic growth, and opportunity. So I am including in my Budget a fully paid for Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative that provides the Congress a roadmap for how and where additional investments should be made in both domestic priorities and national security this year.

We know where to start: the best measure of opportunity is access to a good job. With the economy picking up speed, companies say they intend to

hire more people this year. And over half of big manufacturers say they are thinking of insourcing jobs from abroad.

We need to make that decision easier for more companies. Both Democrats and Republicans have argued that our tax code is riddled with wasteful, complicated loopholes that make it harder to invest here and encourage companies to keep profits abroad. Last summer, I offered a proposal to couple business tax reform with critical investments in infrastructure. This Budget includes that proposal, using the transition revenue that will result from a shift to a simpler, more efficient tax code to create jobs rebuilding our roads and bridges and unclogging our commutes and transporting goods made in America—because in today's global economy, first-class jobs gravitate to first-class infrastructure. At the same time, this Budget lays out how my Administration will continue to act on our own to cut red tape and streamline the permitting process for key infrastructure projects, so we can get more construction workers on the job as fast as possible.

We also have the chance, right now, to beat other countries in the race for the next wave of high-tech manufacturing jobs. My Administration has already launched four hubs for high-tech manufacturing, where we have connected businesses to research universities that can help America lead the world in advanced technologies. The Budget expands on these efforts by providing funding for five additional institutes, and, through the Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative, supports the goal I announced last summer of creating a national network of 45 of these manufacturing innovation institutes over the next 10 years.

We know that the nation that goes all-in on innovation today will own the global economy tomorrow. This is an edge America cannot surrender. That is why the Budget includes investments in cutting-edge research and development, driving scientific and technological breakthroughs that will create jobs, improve lives, and open new opportunities for the American people. The Budget's Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative will allow us to push our limits even further, supporting additional biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health that will help us fight Alzheimer's, cancer, and other diseases, climate research to develop climate change-resilient infrastructure, and agricultural research that will help increase agricultural productivity and improve health.

We also know that one of the biggest factors in bringing more jobs back is our commitment to American energy. The all-of-the-above energy strategy I announced a few years ago is working, and today, America is closer to energy

independence than we have been in decades.

The Budget advances this strategy by ensuring the safe and responsible production of natural gas and cleaner electricity generation from fossil fuels. It creates new incentives to cut the amount of energy we waste in our cars, trucks, homes, and factories. It promotes clean energy with investments in technologies like solar and by expanding and making permanent the tax credit for the production of renewable energy. And it continues to strengthen protection of our air, water, land, and communities, and addresses the threat of climate change. Climate change is a fact, and we have to act with more urgency to address it because a changing climate is already harming western communities struggling with drought and coastal cities dealing with floods. That is why I directed my Administration to work with States, utilities, and others to set new standards on the amount of carbon pollution our power plants are allowed to dump into the air, and why this Budget advances new approaches to address the growing cost and damage from wildfires.

All of these efforts can speed up growth and create more jobs. But in this rapidly changing economy, we have to make sure that every American has the skills to fill those jobs. The Budget therefore invests in new efforts to drive greater performance and innovation in workforce training, including on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and other steps to equip workers with skills that match the needs of employers.

Of course, it is not enough to train today's workforce. We also have to prepare tomorrow's workforce by guaranteeing every child access to a world-class education. That is why the Budget builds on the progress we have made with new investments and initiatives to improve all levels of education, from early childhood through college.

Research shows that one of the best investments we can make in a child's life is high-quality early education. This year, we will invest in new partnerships with States and communities across the country to expand access to high-quality early education, and I am again calling on the Congress to make high-quality preschool available to every four-year-old child. The Budget also includes funding to provide access to high-quality infant and toddler care for more than 100,000 children, and supports the extension and expansion of voluntary home visiting programs.

Last year, I called on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to connect 99 percent of our students to high-speed broadband over the next 4 years. This year, the FCC is making a down payment on this goal by connecting more than 15,000 schools and 20 million students over the next 2 years, without adding a dime to the deficit.

To ensure students receive the full benefit of this connectivity, the Budget invests in training for teachers in hundreds of school districts across the country.

The Budget also supports redesigning our high schools, helping them partner with colleges and employers that offer the college-level coursework and real-world skills to prepare students for college and careers. And it launches a new Race to the Top competition aimed at closing the achievement gap, so that all children get the high-quality education they need to succeed.

And we are shaking up our system of higher education to encourage innovation, give parents more information, and reward colleges for improving quality and reducing costs, so that no middle class student is priced out of a college education. Last summer, I directed the Department of Education to develop and publish a new college rating system that will identify colleges that provide the best value to students and encourage all colleges to improve. The Budget supports the development of that rating system and provides bonuses to reward colleges that improve educational outcomes for Pell Grant recipients. And to help more Americans who feel trapped by student loan debt, the Budget expands income-driven repayment options, allowing millions the opportunity to cap their monthly student loan payments at 10 percent of their income.

We also must do more to ensure our economy honors the dignity of work, and that hard work pays off for all of our citizens. Americans overwhelmingly agree that no one who works full time should ever have to raise a family in poverty. I have already acted by Executive Order to require Federal contractors to pay their federally funded employees a fair wage of at least \$10.10 an hour. The Congress needs to go further and raise the minimum wage for all workers to that same amount. This raise will help families, and it will help the economy by giving businesses customers with more money to spend and by boosting productivity and reducing turnover. The Budget also invests in enforcement efforts to make sure workers receive the wages and overtime they have earned.

There are other steps we can take to help families make ends meet. Few policies are more effective at reducing inequality and helping families pull themselves up through hard work than the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The EITC for families with children lifts millions out of poverty each year and helps about half of all parents at some point in their lives. But as a number of prominent policymakers, both progressive and conservative, have noted, the EITC does not do enough for single workers who do not have kids. The Budget doubles the value of the EITC for workers without

children and non-custodial parents, and also makes it available to younger adult workers, so that it can encourage work in the crucial years at the beginning of a young person's career.

We also need to do more to help Americans save for retirement. Today, most workers do not have a pension. A Social Security check often is not enough on its own. And while the stock market has doubled over the last 5 years, that does not improve retirement security for people who do not have retirement savings. That is why the Budget builds on my proposal to create a new way for working Americans to start saving for retirement: the MyRA savings bond. To encourage new savers, MyRA requires a low initial contribution and guarantees a decent return with no risk of losing what you put in. Separately, the Budget also proposes to establish automatic enrollment Individual Retirement Accounts, offering every American access to an automatic savings vehicle on the job.

For decades, few things exposed hard-working families to economic hardship more than a broken health care system. With the enactment of the Affordable Care Act, we are in the process of fixing that. Already, because of the health reform law, more than 3 million Americans under the age of 26 have gained coverage under their parents' plans. More than 9 million Americans have signed up for private health insurance or Medicaid coverage. Because of this law, no American can ever again be dropped or denied coverage for a preexisting condition like asthma, back pain, or cancer. No woman can ever be charged more just because she is a woman. And we did all this while adding years to Medicare's finances, keeping Medicare premiums flat, and lowering prescription costs for millions of seniors. To continue this progress, the Budget fully funds the ongoing implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

We must always remember that economic growth and opportunity can only be achieved if America is safe and secure. At home, the Budget supports efforts to make our communities safer by reducing gun violence and reforming our criminal justice system.

Looking beyond our borders, the Budget responsibly transitions from the completion of our military mission in Afghanistan in 2014 to political and security support for a unified Afghan government as it takes full responsibility for its own future. When I took office, nearly 180,000 Americans were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, all our troops are out of Iraq and more than 60,000 of our troops have already come home from Afghanistan. With Afghan forces now in the lead for their own security, our troops have moved to a support role. Together with our allies, we will complete our mission there by the end of this year, and

America's longest war will finally be over.

In addition to responsibly winding down our operations in Afghanistan, the Budget ensures we maintain ready, modern, and capable defense forces to address any threats we might face, including threats from terrorism and cyber attacks. It funds humanitarian and diplomatic efforts in Syria, supports transition and reform throughout the Middle East and North Africa, and advances our strategic rebalancing toward the Asia-Pacific region. It enhances stability and creates new markets for U.S. businesses with investments in Power Africa and promotes peace and security by supporting global health care and addressing climate change. And it strengthens oversight of intelligence activities and enhances the protection of U.S. diplomatic facilities and personnel overseas.

The Budget also ensures that we continue to meet our obligations to our troops and veterans who have given so much to our country. To deliver on this commitment, it provides significant resources to support veterans' medical care, help military families, assist soldiers transitioning to civilian life, reduce veterans' homelessness, and reduce the disability claims backlog so our veterans receive the benefits they have earned. It also introduces necessary reforms to our military compensation system, which our uniform military leadership called for, to ensure servicemembers and their families receive the benefits that they have earned while making sure that our military can invest in the training, equipment, and support that it needs.

In addition to making these critical investments, the Budget outlines the steps my Administration is taking to create a 21st Century Government that is more efficient, effective, and supportive of economic growth. Our citizens and businesses expect their Government to provide the same level of service experienced in the private sector and we intend to deliver. The Budget includes initiatives that will lead to better, faster, and smarter services, both online and in-person. It calls on Federal agencies to share services and leverage the buying power of the Government to bring greater value and efficiency for taxpayer dollars. It continues to open Government data and research for public and private sector use to spur innovation and job creation. And it invests in the Government's most important resource, its workers, ensuring that we can attract and retain the best talent in the Federal workforce and foster a culture of excellence.

The Budget does all of these things while further strengthening the Nation's long-term fiscal outlook. Over the last 5 years, we have cut the deficit

in half as a share of the economy, experiencing the fastest period of deficit reduction since the demobilization following World War II. The Budget continues this progress, bringing deficits down as a share of the economy to below 2 percent by 2023 and putting debt as a share of the economy on a declining path.

Although we have seen a notable and significant decline in health care spending growth over the last few years, in part due to the Affordable Care Act, we know that over the long run, the growth of health care costs continues to be our Nation's most pressing fiscal challenge. That is why the Budget builds on the savings and reforms in the health reform law with additional measures to strengthen Medicare and Medicaid and encourage high-quality and efficient health care.

We also know that revenue has to be part of the solution to our Nation's long-term fiscal challenges. Given the aging of our population and the declining ratio of workers to retirees, we will need additional revenue to maintain our commitments to seniors while also making the investments that are needed to grow our economy and expand opportunity. The Budget secures that revenue through tax reform that reduces inefficient and unfair tax breaks and ensures that everyone, from Main Street to Wall Street, is paying their fair share.

Finally, if we are serious about long-term, sustainable economic growth and deficit reduction, it is also time to heed the calls of business leaders, labor leaders, faith leaders, and law enforcement—and fix our broken immigration system. Independent economists say immigration reform will grow our economy and shrink our deficits by almost \$1 trillion in the next two decades. And for good reason: when people come here to fulfill their dreams—to study, invent, and contribute to our culture—they make our country a more attractive place for businesses to locate and help create jobs for everyone. The Senate has acted to pass a bipartisan immigration reform bill that is worthy of support. It is time for the House of Representatives to finish the job.

We have made progress over the last 5 years. But our work is not done. This Budget provides a roadmap to ensuring middle class families and those working to be a part of the middle class can feel secure in their jobs, homes, and budgets. To build real, lasting economic security, we also need to expand opportunity for all so every American can get ahead and have a shot at creating a better life for their kids.

None of it is easy. America has never come easy. But if we work together, if we summon what is best in us, I know it is within our reach.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 4, 2014.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:03 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 899. An act to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2804. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3193. An act to amend the Consumer Financial Protection Act of 2010 to strengthen the review authority of the Financial Stability Oversight Council of regulations issued by the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 899. An act to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2804. An act to amend title 5, United States Code, to require the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs to publish information about rules on the Internet, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2077. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4779. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fluxapyroxad; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9906-70) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4780. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Enhancement of Contractor Employee Whistleblower Protections" ((RIN0750-AH97) (DFARS Case 2013-D010)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4781. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule en-

titled "Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Disclosure to Litigation Support Contractors" ((RIN0750-AH54) (DFARS Case 2012-D029)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4782. A communication from the Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Acquisitions in Support of Operations in Afghanistan" ((RIN0750-AH98) (DFARS Case 2013-D009)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4783. A communication from the Acting General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Deputy Secretary, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4784. A communication from the Acting General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, (2) two reports relative to vacancies in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4785. A communication from the Assistant to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Prohibition Against Federal Assistance to Swaps Entities (Regulation KK)" (RIN7100-AD96) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 21, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4786. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Suspension of Community Eligibility" ((44 CFR Part 64) (Docket No. FEMA-2013-0002)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4787. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Energy (Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy), transmitting, pursuant to law, the semi-annual Implementation Report on Energy Conservation Standards Activities of the Department of Energy; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4788. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Fossil Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve for calendar year 2012; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4789. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Idaho" (FRL No. 9907-30-Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4790. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of State

Implementation Plans; Alaska; Anchorage Carbon Monoxide Limited Maintenance Plan and State Implementation Plan Revisions" (FRL No. 9902-22-Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4791. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Utah; Revisions to Utah Administrative Code and an Associated Plan Revision" (FRL No. 9905-25-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4792. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Wisconsin; Transportation Conformity Procedures" (FRL No. 9907-08-Region 5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4793. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Colorado; Revised Transportation Conformity Consultation Process" (FRL No. 9905-67-Region 8) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4794. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; New York State Ozone Implementation Plan Revision" (FRL No. 9907-02-Region 2) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4795. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Primary Drinking Water Regulations: Minor Corrections to the Revisions to the Total Coliform Rule" (FRL No. 9906-89-OW) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4796. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutant Emissions: Group IV Polymers and Resins; Pesticide Active Ingredient Production; and Polyether Polyols Production" (FRL No. 9906-34-OAR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4797. A communication from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Medicare Determinations and Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amounts to Medicare Part B Premiums; Conforming Changes to Regulations" (RIN0960-AH47) re-

ceived in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4798. A joint communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report relative to the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control Program for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4799. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS-2014-0228); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4800. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS-2014-0229); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4801. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Poplar Island, Maryland project; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4802. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Boston Harbor Navigation Improvement Project; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. CHAMBLISS):

S. 2075. A bill to prohibit a reduction in funding for the defense commissary system in fiscal year 2015 pending the report of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2076. A bill to amend the provisions of title 46, United States Code, related to the Board of Visitors to the United States Merchant Marine Academy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. REED:

S. 2077. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. REED):

S.J. Res. 32. A joint resolution providing for the reappointment of John W. McCarter as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. Res. 369. A resolution to designate May 22, 2014 as "United States Foreign Service Day" in recognition of the men and women who have served, or are presently serving, in the Foreign Service of the United States, and to honor those in the Foreign Service who have given their lives in the line of duty; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 149

At the request of Mr. NELSON, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 149, a bill to provide effective criminal prosecutions for certain identity thefts, and for other purposes.

S. 255

At the request of Mr. WALSH, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 255, a bill to withdraw certain Federal land and interests in that land from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws and disposition under the mineral and geothermal leasing laws.

S. 452

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 452, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the incidence of diabetes among Medicare beneficiaries.

S. 462

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 462, a bill to enhance the strategic partnership between the United States and Israel.

S. 942

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 942, a bill to eliminate discrimination and promote women's health and economic security by ensuring reasonable workplace accommodations for workers whose ability to perform the functions of a job are limited by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.

S. 1014

At the request of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1014, a bill to reduce sports-related concussions in youth, and for other purposes.

S. 1067

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1067, a bill to establish within the Department of Education the Innovation Inspiration school grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 1174

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Kansas

(Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 1174, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers.

S. 1181

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1181, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt certain stock of real estate investment trusts from the tax on foreign investments in United States real property interests, and for other purposes.

S. 1204

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1204, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to protect rights of conscience with regard to requirements for coverage of specific items and services, to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit certain abortion-related discrimination in governmental activities, and for other purposes.

S. 1251

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1251, a bill to establish programs with respect to childhood, adolescent, and young adult cancer.

S. 1349

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1349, a bill to enhance the ability of community financial institutions to foster economic growth and serve their communities, boost small businesses, increase individual savings, and for other purposes.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1733

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1733, a bill to stop exploitation through trafficking.

S. 1737

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1737, a bill to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage and to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend increased expensing limitations and the treatment of certain real property as section 179 property.

S. 1811

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr.

SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1811, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to prohibit voice communications through mobile communication devices on commercial passenger flights.

S. 1817

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1817, a bill to require the Secretary to implement standards for short-term custody of individuals held in facilities of U.S. Customs and Border Protection and for other purposes.

S. 1828

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1828, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 1875

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the names of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1875, a bill to provide for wildfire suppression operations, and for other purposes.

S. 2000

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2000, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and for other purposes.

S. 2013

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) were added as cosponsors of S. 2013, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal of Senior Executive Service employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance, and for other purposes.

S. 2048

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) were added as cosponsors of S. 2048, a bill to include New Zealand in the list of foreign states whose nationals are eligible for admission into the United States as E-1 and E-2 non-immigrants if United States nationals are treated similarly by the Government of New Zealand.

S. 2066

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2066, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the intentional discrimination of a person or organization by an employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

S. 2067

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2067, a bill to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning tax statuses to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities.

S. 2072

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2072, a bill to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning tax statuses to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities.

S. 2073

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2073, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the intentional discrimination of a person or organization by an employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

S. 2074

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) were added as cosponsors of S. 2074, a bill to promote energy savings in residential buildings and industry, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 32

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. Con. Res. 32, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the need for investigation and prosecution of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, whether committed by officials of the Government of Syria, or members of other groups involved in civil war in Syria, and calling on the President to direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice and vote of the United States to immediately promote the establishment of a Syrian war crimes tribunal, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 357

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 357, a resolution expressing concern of undemocratic governance and the abuse of the rights of individuals in Ukraine.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 369—TO DESIGNATE MAY 22, 2014 AS “UNITED STATES FOREIGN SERVICE DAY” IN RECOGNITION OF THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE SERVED, OR ARE PRESENTLY SERVING, IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES, AND TO HONOR THOSE IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES IN THE LINE OF DUTY

Mr. MENENDEZ submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 369

Whereas the Foreign Service of the United States (referred to in this resolution as the “Foreign Service”) was established through the passage of the Act entitled “An Act For the reorganization and improvement of the Foreign Service of the United States, and for other purposes” (43 Stat. 140, chapter 182, commonly known as the “Rogers Act of 1924”) and is now celebrating its 90th anniversary;

Whereas the Rogers Act of 1924 established a career organization based on competitive examination and merit promotion;

Whereas, approximately 16,000 men and women of the Foreign Service are serving at home and abroad in 2014;

Whereas the diplomatic, consular, communications, trade, development, security, and numerous other functions these men and women perform constitute the first and most cost-effective instrument of our Nation to protect and promote United States interests abroad;

Whereas the men and women of the Foreign Service and their families are increasingly exposed to risks and danger, even in times of peace, and many have died in the service of their country;

Whereas employees of the Foreign Service work daily—

(1) to preserve peace and freedom around the world;

(2) to promote economic prosperity and mutual understanding around the world;

(3) to reduce poverty, end hunger and malnutrition, fight disease, combat international crime and illegal drugs, and address environmental degradation;

(4) to promote economic development, commercial enterprises, economic prosperity, global food security, American agricultural products, and United States jobs and trade;

(5) to promote American ideals and values, human rights, freedom, gender equality, and democracy; and

(6) to provide emergency and humanitarian assistance to respond to crises around the globe;

Whereas employees of the Foreign Service are often the first line of defense against international terrorism;

Whereas more than 250 members of the Foreign Service, and many more locally employed staff of the Foreign Service, have

made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of the United States;

Whereas employees of the Foreign Service personify the virtues of patriotism, sacrifice, service, and duty;

Whereas the families of employees of the Foreign Service make important and significant sacrifices for the greater good of the American people and the United States; and

Whereas it is appropriate and just for our Nation—

(1) to recognize the dedication of the men and women of the Foreign Service; and

(2) to honor those who have given their lives in the loyal pursuit of their duties and responsibilities representing the interests of the United States and its citizens:

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the men and women who have served, or are presently serving, in the Foreign Service for their dedicated and important service to country;

(2) calls on the people of the United States to reflect on the service and sacrifice of past, present, and future employees of the Foreign Service, wherever they serve, with appropriate ceremonies and activities; and

(3) designates May 22, 2014 as United States Foreign Service Day to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Foreign Service.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 4, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 4, 2014, at 3 p.m., to hold an East Asia and Pacific subcommittee hearing entitled, “Strengthening U.S. Alliances in Northeast Asia.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2077

Mr. REID. Mr. President, S. 2077 is due for its first reading, I am told.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2077) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I ask for a second reading of this legislation but object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be read a second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m. on Wednesday, March 5, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the nomination of Debo Adegbile under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF DEBO ADEGBILE

Mr. REID. Debo Adegbile is a fine man, and the fact that I don't pronounce his name very well takes nothing away from his credentials. He is a very outstanding individual. I will have more to say about him tomorrow.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. There will be up to three rollcall votes at 11:45 a.m. tomorrow. We expect to recess, following those votes, for the weekly caucus meetings and continue to work through nominations throughout the afternoon.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:14 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, March 5, 2014, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate:

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 44:

To be admiral

VICE ADM. PAUL F. ZUKUNFT

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, March 4, 2014

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 4, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JEFF DENHAM to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE SERGEANT AT ARMS OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Sergeant at Arms of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE SERGEANT AT ARMS,
Washington, DC, March 2, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER, As you are aware, the time previously appointed for the next meeting of the House is noon on Monday March 3, 2014. This is to notify you, pursuant to clause 12(c) of rule I, of an imminent impairment of the place of reconvening at that time. The impairment is due to the weather.

Sincerely,

PAUL D. IRVING,
Sergeant at Arms.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 12(c) of rule I, the Speaker established this time for reconvening and notified Members accordingly.

PRAYER

Reverend Harvey Peters, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, by whose goodness we live and move and have our being, and to whom we regularly swear allegiance in pursuit of life, liberty, and justice for all, we turn to You and humbly ask You to hear our prayers.

We are privileged to exercise our civil freedoms and make decisions that reflect the high ideals of our Nation's Founders and the aspirations embedded in our history.

Protect us from delusions or discouragement in the demanding business of governance.

Make us keenly aware we are not alone, and beckoned or not, O God, You are always present as we discern how best to fulfill our high calling with honor.

Keep us mindful of Your presence through those who labor at our side, and on our behalf; those who daily share the joys and burdens of our calling to public service, our families, our staff, our colleagues, and a host of people who continue to pray and hope for the success of our best efforts.

For them and to You, Lord God, we offer our thanks today and always.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WALZ led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

WELCOMING REVEREND HARVEY PETERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from California (Mr. PETERS) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Speaker, today I have the distinct honor of introducing the guest chaplain for the opening prayer, my father, Pastor Harvey Peters.

Harvey Peters is a retired Lutheran minister whose service in a nearly 40-year career included stops in Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, Wisconsin, and all the way to California.

While I was a kid, he was an active leader in the movement to desegregate

housing in the Detroit suburbs, an effort that, while unpopular among some of our neighbors, instilled in me and my three sisters the values of courage, integrity, and equality that I have tried to carry into my own service.

While my dad ran the congregation, my mom, RuthAnn, who is in attendance today, ran the family and worked part time as the church secretary.

It is an honor to welcome Harvey Peters, a longtime advocate for civil rights and the poor, a community leader, and dedicated father and grandfather, to the United States House of Representatives today to give the opening prayer.

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, we will finally vote on the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

Times are still tough for many hard-working families. Federal agencies like FEMA should not be in the business of making things tougher. Yet that is exactly what FEMA's callous and impractical administration of the National Flood Insurance Program is doing. Homeowners in south Florida, and throughout our Nation, cannot afford the astronomically increased insurance premiums forced on them by FEMA.

Without action to correct this agency's abuse, many family budgets that are already at the breaking point will fall apart.

Although I support passage of this vital bill today to protect our families and the American Dream of homeownership, we absolutely must do more to help bring premiums down.

CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT, VFW POST 308

(Ms. ESTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and congratulate VFW Post 308 in Newtown, Connecticut, which celebrated its 75th anniversary this past Sunday.

Since 1939, the members of Post 308 have demonstrated a remarkable commitment to civic engagement and community service in everything they do, whether it is assisting tornado victims in Oklahoma, providing college scholarships to deserving high school graduates, or supporting families affected

by the tragic shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in their hometown.

The men and women of Post 308 serve their community, their State, and their country with distinction. I congratulate Post 308 on celebrating this milestone.

THE GROWING INEQUALITY IN THIS COUNTRY

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today the Federal Register is four times larger than it was in 1970.

This weekend, columnist Peggy Noonan captured the feeling among everyday Americans:

Voters and taxpayers feel bullied, burdened and jerked around which, again, is not new, but feels more intense every day. Rules, regulations, many of them stupid, from all the agencies, local, State, Federal, on the building of a house or the starting of a business. You can only employ so many before the new insurance rules kick in, so don't employ too many. Don't take a chance, which means don't grow.

Mr. Speaker, there is growing inequality in this country, between regulators and the regulated, between large businesses wielding government influence and smaller competitors attempting to grow, between established corporations with compliance departments and upstarts with energy and ideas.

This status inequality demands our attention. Last week's bipartisan passage of the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act is a good start, but much more must be done.

OUR VETERANS DESERVE OUR HELP

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, transitioning from military to civilian life can be challenging for our veterans. The skill sets learned while serving in the Armed Forces are highly valued, and competence is extraordinary of veterans, who have a proven work ethic.

With record unemployment, we need to work together for jobs. Yesterday, the office of the Second Congressional District conducted a veterans job fair, thoughtfully hosted by the Aiken Shrine Club, to support our brave men and women who have faithfully served our country.

The event was to better connect our veterans with the resources available to them. I am very thankful for the local businesses, schools, government agencies, and veterans organizations that were on hand to offer assistance.

As the son of a veteran, as a retired member of the South Carolina National

Guard, and being the very grateful father of four sons currently serving in the military, I appreciate our veterans' dedication to protect our freedoms. It is my hope this veterans job fair will prove beneficial and recognize the service of our heroes.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Our hopes and prayers are for the people of Ukraine.

OPPOSING THE ACA'S CUTS TO MEDICARE ADVANTAGE

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of health care choices for our seniors.

Nearly 30 percent of all seniors, 15 million Americans, choose Medicare Advantage. Individuals have testified before the Energy and Commerce Committee that Medicare Advantage provides better results than traditional Medicare by embracing free-market principles.

Medicare Advantage focuses on preventive care. Before ObamaCare, competition in Medicare Advantage kept costs for beneficiaries low and choices for plans abundant. With ObamaCare, choices will be reduced and costs for seniors, unfortunately, will increase.

ObamaCare cuts Medicare by \$700 billion. Medicare Advantage has been successful for its enrollees. These cuts will reduce the access seniors have to Medicare Advantage. This is unacceptable as far as I am concerned.

Medicare Advantage should be touted. Instead, seniors are facing an on-average 13 percent rate cut in 2014, compared to 2013. We should not be penalizing seniors and reducing their access to health care to pay for others.

Medicare Advantage is a successful program, and Congress should protect it from being gutted by the Obama administration and the Affordable Care Act.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE CLERK,

Washington, DC, February 28, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, The Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on February 28, 2014, at 2:31 p.m., and said to contain a message from the President where-

by he notifies the Congress he has extended the national emergency with respect to Zimbabwe, declared in Executive 13288 of March 6, 2003.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO ZIMBABWE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113-94)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13288 of March 6, 2003, with respect to the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions is to continue in effect beyond March 6, 2014.

The threat constituted by the actions and policies of certain members of the Government of Zimbabwe and other persons to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions has not been resolved. These actions and policies continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue this national emergency and to maintain in force the sanctions to respond to this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, February 28, 2014.

□ 1415

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

HOME HEATING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE THROUGH TRANSPORTATION ACT OF 2014

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4076) to address shortages and interruptions in the availability of propane and other home heating fuels in the United States, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4076

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation Act of 2014" or the "HHEATT Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. PROPANE AND HOME HEATING FUEL EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a covered emergency exemption issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration shall remain in effect until May 31, 2014, unless the Secretary of Transportation, after consultation with the Governors of affected States, determines that the emergency for which the exemption was provided ends before that date.

(b) COVERED EMERGENCY EXEMPTION DEFINED.—In this section, the term "covered emergency exemption" means an exemption issued under section 390.23 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, or extended under section 390.25 of such title that—

(1) was issued or extended during the period beginning on February 5, 2014, and ending on the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) provided regulatory relief for commercial motor vehicle operations providing direct assistance supporting the delivery of propane and home heating fuels.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in subsection (a) may be construed to prohibit the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration from issuing or extending a covered emergency exemption beyond May 31, 2014, under other Federal law.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 4076.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I was proud to introduce H.R. 4076, the Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation Act of 2014. This bipartisan legislation will provide relief for millions of Americans suffering from the current propane and home heating fuel emergency.

An exceptionally cold winter has increased demand for propane, which is used for heating approximately 12 million homes in the United States, and for other home-heating fuels. In my district, more than 9,000 households rely on propane for home heating; and across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, there are more than 200,000 households that do the same.

So according to the National Propane Gas Association, supplies are expected to remain tight through the end of the winter because the infrastructure to deliver propane to high-demand areas is insufficient.

On February 5, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration issued a temporary emergency declaration to allow tank truck operators delivering propane and other home heating fuels to drive longer hours in order to speed up deliveries to the affected States. However, these emergency declarations can only last 30 days at a time, creating great uncertainty and limited relief.

Extreme weather conditions are not expected to subside any time soon, threatening the lives and livelihoods of those with homes, farms, and businesses that depend on heat from propane and other home heating fuels. Just yesterday, we saw another severe winter storm.

H.R. 4076 provides a guaranteed extension of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's emergency declaration until May 31, 2014. This certainty is required to address the transportation distribution issues to give much needed relief to the affected States.

Should the crisis subside prior to May 31, 2014, the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the Governors of the affected States, can determine that the guaranteed extension is no longer needed.

I would like to thank the National Propane Gas Association and the New England Fuel Institute for supporting this legislation. I will be entering their letters of support into the RECORD.

This bill has strong bipartisan support, and I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 4076.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

NPGA,

February 25, 2014.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,

Chairman, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER, On behalf of The National Propane Gas Association (NPGA), I write to share our strong support for your legislation, H.R. 4076, the Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation (HHEATT) Act of 2014.

NPGA is the national trade association of the propane industry, having a membership of about 3,000 companies, with 39 state and regional associations representing members in all 50 states. The single largest group of

NPGA members is retail marketers of propane gas who deliver the fuel to the end user for space heating, water heating and agricultural crop drying, among other applications. NPGA membership also includes propane producers, transporters and wholesalers, as well as manufacturers and distributors of associated equipment and containers. While NPGA's membership covers a broad cross-section of categories, more than 90 percent are designated as small businesses.

As you know, this winter Americans have faced severe supply disruptions in many areas of the country. A convergence of conditions—late wet grain harvest, closed pipeline infrastructure, limited railcars due to alternate service demands—have caused difficulties in delivering propane to consumers during one of the most extreme winters on record.

While the overall supply of propane in the United States is sufficient to meet demand, the propane industry is facing challenges with distribution and transportation. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the U.S. has more than 42 million barrels of propane presently in stock, located predominantly in Mont Belvieu, Texas, where the largest propane storage facility in the world is located. Overcoming the distribution challenges has been most greatly alleviated by temporary emergency declarations issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Administration which provide relief from certain federal motor carrier safety regulations for the Midwest, Eastern, Southern, and portions of the Western Service Centers. Unfortunately, these emergency declarations can only last 30 days at a time which creates uncertainty for our propane suppliers and distributors.

Chairman Shuster, we thank you for your leadership on this bill, and trust Congress will take swift action to pass this important regulatory relief. Thank you.

Sincerely,

RICHARD ROLDAN,
President & Chief Executive Officer,
National Propane Gas Association.

NEFI
February 28, 2014.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER: We commend you for the introduction of the Home Heating Emergency Assistance through Transportation or "HHEATT" Act (H.R. 4076) and are writing to endorse this important legislation.

The New England Fuel Institute (NEFI) is the nation's largest independent trade association representing the retail home heating oil industry. Our membership includes more than 1,000 mostly small business home heating oil and Bioheat® dealers and related services companies. Many NEFI members also deliver propane and other home heating fuels and retain nearly around-the-clock drivers and service technicians ready to make emergency fuel deliveries or service home heating systems in the event of an outage.

The severely inclement weather we have experienced this winter has resulted in high residential consumption rates for heating oil. As a result, heating oil dealers are increasingly challenged to resupply customer tanks without interruption and have been in need of waivers from certain regulations such as federal hours-of-service requirements. Emergency declarations issued by the

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) help to provide this relief so that heating fuel distributors can move product to where it is needed and expedite deliveries to homes and businesses.

Unfortunately, these declarations are limited to 30 days. This can create uncertainty during extended emergencies such as the long stretch of extreme cold and snowy weather we are currently experiencing. The HHEATT Act would provide added relief and certainty by guaranteeing an extension of emergency declarations through May 31, 2014. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with state Governors, may terminate the guaranteed extension before May 31st only if current emergencies subside.

This bill would provide much needed relief to our member companies and their consumers. We hope for its immediate passage and enactment. Again, thank you for your hard work in this regard.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL C. TRUNZO,
President & CEO.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 4076, a commonsense bill. I would also like to thank the chairman for always striking the proper balance between safety and the smooth operation of commerce, and the gentleman explained it very clearly.

For many of us, especially in rural areas of the Midwest, propane is the fuel of choice for heating their homes, and to get an idea of what happened here, regular folks on a regular budget would spend about \$600 to fill up their tank during the winter.

They got a refill, got a bill, and saw that it was over \$1,900 in some cases. The shock to them was one thing; but then the situation, as the gentleman so clearly stated, was exacerbated by the inability to deliver when we needed it.

And propane, while there are many factors at work here, is not like other commodities in terms of—it is not a nice-to-have thing. It is a necessity.

So the chairman's bill, this bipartisan piece of legislation addresses one of the issues here, making sure we have the trucks on the road to deliver the propane, making sure the supply is enough to start making sure these things are filled until the end of winter, and doing so in a safe manner.

I want to applaud the folks over at the FMCA that did do what they needed to do in issuing some of the waivers, but the gentleman is exactly right. A 30-day waiver is not long enough. Winter is still deep in the Midwest, and we don't need to have the waiver expire on March 15, go through it again, and have the uncertainty.

So this piece of legislation simply does as the gentleman stated. It allows an exemption without sacrificing safety to allow for the movement of propane into the markets where it is most needed, specifically the rural Midwest.

These trucks are coming from Texas. It keeps the people on the roads. It keeps the trucks running. It keeps the

propane tanks full, as those things start to happen and the market starts to stabilize a little bit, and the prices will come down.

I do think the gentleman hit on a bigger point here. The infrastructure for the delivery of propane is something we need to look at. This is a short-term emergency measure that will address the problem this winter. We need to look further down the road on some of the long-term solutions on this.

So I encourage my colleagues to support this commonsense piece of legislation, support it for all the right reasons, and then join together as we move forward to look at some long-term solutions.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SHUSTER. First, I want to thank the gentleman from Minnesota for his kind remarks. I appreciate it greatly and look forward to continue working together with you on many other legislative endeavors.

With that, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO).

Mrs. CAPITO. I thank the chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for his solid work on this, his bipartisan work, as the gentleman from Minnesota mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation Act, H.R. 4076, which is a short-term, commonsense measure.

This long winter has really hit a lot of families in their wallets and on their budgets, and a shortage of propane has made the cost of home heating even worse for many West Virginians and residents in our surrounding States.

More than 31,000 West Virginia households rely on propane for their heating. More than two-thirds of the propane sold in West Virginia is for residential use, meaning that high prices have a direct impact on our family budgets.

Local suppliers have been forced to short-fill their customers' tanks in order to spread the limited supply of propane among customers in need. Today's legislation will allow these suppliers to operate more efficiently through this spring, allowing them to make more frequent deliveries, and ensure that their customers have an adequate and affordable supply of propane to get them through the rest of the winter.

This bill is the first of five separate pieces of energy legislation the House will consider this week, all having one common thread, to make sure American families have access to affordable and reliable supplies of electricity and heating fuel.

I urge my colleagues to support the HHEATT Act and the other energy bills on the floor this week.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. I now yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN), an important new member of the committee and someone who really knows about infrastructure firsthand because he actually builds it out there in Oklahoma.

Mr. MULLIN. I thank the chairman for this opportunity to speak on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today out of concern for thousands of Americans struggling to heat their homes this winter. The bitter cold has caused an unwelcome rise in heating costs that has resulted in smaller paychecks and financial strain for individuals and organizations across Oklahoma's Second District.

Money is not going as far, especially among low-income families that already find themselves under tight budgets.

Areas that are in dire need of propane to heat their homes are left out in the cold—literally—due to a lack of adequate infrastructure. It is critical that we pass today's HHEATT Act to ensure the issues with heating fuel transportation and distribution are resolved and that relief is finally available.

Fuel costs aren't just numbers on a page. They are factors that critically impact our neighbors, our families, and our friends. The fact is we have a responsibility to maintain our Nation's public safety.

I urge my colleagues to remember your fellow Americans today and help pass this commonsense solution that will provide certainty and will quickly address a critical need.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I will continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. I now yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this act. It is really just common sense, is it not? And I think it best exemplifies how America handles crises. They adjust. They make an adjustment.

This certainly could be called a heated debate because we are trying to make sure that our constituents have that ability, to heat their homes during one of the longest winters. We don't use the term "polar vortex" back in Pennsylvania. We just call it winter.

It has been a long, long winter, and we are looking at the adjustment that would take place. It is just about transportation. It is about allowing these people that deliver this energy, this propane to these homes.

In Pennsylvania, we have over 180,000 people who rely on the delivery of this product to keep their homes heated.

That is not a difficult thing to understand. I think for this body to be able to just on the run—on the fly, as it were—make sure that our constituents have the ability to heat their homes, this is so fundamentally basic, and it is just common sense.

So I thank the chairman for bringing this bill forward. It makes sense to everybody back where I live, as they bundle up and continue to worry about when spring is finally going to get here.

We are able to release that now, change the transportation laws a bit, just so they can get there, and we are saying let's do it until May 31. Let's not do it the way we are doing it now.

Chances are, by May 31, that crisis will be gone, but the ability to get propane to their homes is very critical right now.

So I thank the chairman and ranking member for what they are doing. We are doing things that make sense for the American people, and every single American citizen benefits from this.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, once again, I thank the chairman for a smart piece of legislation. It is simple. It strikes that proper balance between safety on our roads and a smooth flow of commerce.

This is a matter of life and death. It has been a bitter cold winter, as you have heard. 21 people in Minnesota have died as a direct result of the weather. We have 250,000 people who get their heat from propane. Many of them are in rural areas.

I have been in homes across southern Minnesota. These are folks doing everything right, paying the bills, working hard. If they can afford to get the propane, that is one thing. They simply can't get the propane, in some cases.

So this is one first step. Alleviate the crisis. Do it in a safe manner. Get it out there. Start to balance things out. Then move forward because, as we said, again, keeping stability in the heating oil markets is absolutely critical, and we can get this right.

So with that, I congratulate the chairman. I thank him for bringing this, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I again thank the gentleman from Minnesota for his work on this.

I also thank the original cosponsor on this bill, Mr. RYAN from Ohio, who may be stuck in the snow out there, or maybe it has slowed down his progress to get to Washington; but the gentleman hails from eastern Ohio, right on the Pennsylvania border.

I know that this is going to impact his district, and I was glad that he and I were able to work together on this commonsense piece of legislation that is going to help hundreds of thousands of people—if not millions of people—all up and down these corridors who have had a very, very difficult winter.

I know that, looking at The Weather Channel or one of the weather stations out in Minnesota, they may need propane until the end of May because of the kind of winter they have had up there. There have been very, very, very cold, extreme weather conditions.

Again, H.R. 4076 provides the ability of the Transportation Department to extend this and help with this crisis and, as we have all said here today, strong bipartisan support; so I would urge all my colleagues today to vote on H.R. 4076.

I now yield 2 minutes to another gentleman from northwestern Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

Mr. LATTA. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important issue not only to northwest Ohio, but to the entire Midwest, so I rise today in support of H.R. 4076, the Home Heating Emergency Assistance Through Transportation Act. This legislation will ensure the trucks carrying emergency supplies of propane can be delivered to communities most in need as fast as possible.

My constituents have been at the forefront of the shortage, as many rely on propane to heat their homes and maintain important farming operations. In the face of extreme winter weather, with prolonged periods of negative degree temperatures, access to heat is not a product of comfort, but is a requirement for survival.

Further frustrating is the resulting high prices that are putting pressure on already strained family budgets. While many supply companies are urging customers to take voluntary conservation measures, many families living in my district don't have the option of reducing home heat.

Last Friday when I did get home, I found this letter in my mailbox from a constituent I have known for my entire life. The letter was written by the wife explaining the situation. Her husband, who is almost 96 years old, needs to have their home warmer this winter since he is on a blood thinner.

During the last couple of weeks, they have kept their thermostat at 69 degrees. He has been fully dressed with a hat, gloves, bathrobe, and blankets while at their home. She explains in the letter that they have not had many pleasant days, but they have made it through it.

Another constituent is a young mother with children at home and one on the way. She cannot keep their home colder, even though it would help save on their next energy bill.

Finally, a small business owner who delivers propane to customers in northwest Ohio has been working day and night to find enough propane to ensure his customers can heat their homes.

□ 1430

In cases where he simply cannot provide enough propane, he has distrib-

uted plug-in electric heaters. These actions will keep them warm but will not help when they receive their next energy bill.

These are just a few examples of what is happening throughout the Midwest. The propane shortage has created a very serious crisis that is impacting the most vulnerable members of our society. H.R. 4076 is a step towards providing short-term relief to the communities, families, and small business owners most in need.

I thank the chairman for his leadership on this legislation, and I support the legislation.

Mr. SHUSTER. I thank the gentleman from Ohio and encourage all Members to support H.R. 4076, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4076, the HHEATT Act, that would allow propane to expeditiously move across our country and be delivered to the hundreds of thousands of people who rely on this resource to heat their homes.

It is estimated that 250,000 people in my home state of Wisconsin rely on propane to heat their homes. Today, the temperature in my hometown of Fond du Lac is 11 degrees, with a high of 20 and a low of 6 degrees. The wind chill brings these temperatures down to the single digits and below zero. This is the way it's been for much of the winter during this exceptionally cold winter.

Don't get me wrong, I'm from Wisconsin, we're used to the cold.

But when you get home from work and you are unable to afford or even obtain the propane needed to heat your home, we have a serious problem. There are many factors that have contributed to the propane shortage we're now facing, and I am not here to list them all.

My home state of Wisconsin and the utility companies that serve us have been going to great lengths to assist those who are running low on propane and seek out additional supplies as far south as Texas to get them to the people that need them.

The U.S. Department of Transportation has temporarily suspended hours-of-service regulations for truck drivers carrying propane so supplies can make it where they need to go in an expedited manner. But these suspensions had been renewed in 30 day increments.

Mr. Speaker, this bill simply continues the emergency suspension of federal hours-of-service requirements for truck drivers carrying propane through the end of May. It allows the transportation of propane to continue uninterrupted by federal rules that could literally be the difference between someone sleeping in a house with heat or without it. We are making progress in resolving this shortage, but this legislation would provide certainty for thousands in my district through the rest of the cold season that they will be able to receive this valuable resource to heat their home.

I thank my colleague and Transportation Committee Chairman BILL SHUSTER for introducing this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4076.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA AS THEY PROTEST PEACEFULLY FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 488) supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic change and calling to end the violence, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 488

Whereas the United States Government should support the rule of law, and free and peaceful exercise of representative democracy in Venezuela, condemning violence and intimidation against the country's political opposition, and calling for dialogue between all political actors in the country;

Whereas, on February 12, 2014, also known in Venezuela as the National Youth Day, students began protesting in several cities Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro's inability to stem violent crime, his undemocratic actions, and a rapidly deteriorating economy marked by high inflation and shortages of consumer goods;

Whereas, on February 12, 2014, a judge issued an arrest warrant for Leopoldo Lopez, leader of the opposition party Voluntad Popular, for unfounded allegations in connection with the student protests;

Whereas, on February 17, 2014, the Government of Venezuela notified the United States Department of State that it had declared 3 consular officers at the United States Embassy in Venezuela *personae non gratae*;

Whereas over the last year, the Government of Venezuela has expelled a total of 8 United States Government officials from Venezuela;

Whereas, on February 18, 2014, opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez turned himself in to Venezuelan authorities, was arrested, and charged with criminal incitement, conspiracy, arson, and intent to damage property;

Whereas Leopoldo Lopez is currently being held in a prison at a military facility;

Whereas nongovernmental human rights organizations have alleged that the charges brought against Venezuelan opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez appear to be a politically motivated attempt to silence dissent in the country;

Whereas the Venezuelan Government has blocked users' online images as opposition groups marched through Caracas;

Whereas the Venezuelan people have been protesting economic, social, and political concerns facing their country, including corruption, rising inflation rates, shortages of everyday products, increasing crime rates, and the erosion of human rights and respect for political dissent;

Whereas, on February 19, 2014, President Barack Obama criticized the Venezuelan Government for arresting protesters, called for their release, and urged the government to focus on the "legitimate grievances of the Venezuelan people";

Whereas, as of February 26, 2014, there have been 14 people killed, over 100 injured, and many persons unjustly detained in relation to pro-democracy demonstrations throughout Venezuela;

Whereas Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro threatened to expel the United States news network CNN from Venezuela and has taken off the air the Colombian news channel NTN 24, which transmits in Venezuela, after news outlets reported on the nation-wide protests;

Whereas the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights released a statement on February 14, 2014, which "expresses its concern over the serious incidents of violence that have taken place in the context of protest demonstrations in Venezuela, as well as other complaints concerning acts of censorship against media outlets, attacks on organizations that defend human rights, and acts of alleged political persecution"; and

Whereas as a member of the Organization of American States and signatory to the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the Government of Venezuela has agreed to abide by the principles of constitutional, representative democracy, which include free and fair elections and adherence to its own constitution: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the people of Venezuela in their pursuit of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly to promote democratic principles in Venezuela;

(2) deplores acts which constitute a disregard for the rule of law, the inexcusable violence perpetrated against opposition leaders and protesters in Venezuela, and the growing efforts to use politically motivated criminal charges to intimidate the country's political opposition;

(3) urges responsible nations throughout the international community to stand in solidarity with the people of Venezuela and to actively encourage a process of dialogue between the Government of Venezuela and the political opposition to end the violence;

(4) urges the United States Department of State to work in concert with other countries in the Americas to take meaningful steps to ensure that basic fundamental freedoms in Venezuela are in accordance with the Inter-American Democratic Charter and to strengthen the ability of the Organization of American States (OAS) to respond to the erosion of democratic norms and institutions in Venezuela;

(5) urges the Organization of American States and its Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to utilize its good offices and all mechanisms at its disposal to seek the most effective way to expeditiously end the violence in Venezuela in accordance with the Inter-American Democratic Charter; and

(6) supports efforts by international and multilateral organizations to urge the Venezuelan Government to adopt measures to guarantee the rights to life, humane treatment, and security, and the political freedoms of assembly, association, and expression to all of the people of Venezuela.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 488 signals U.S. support for the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democracy in the face of Nicolas Maduro's violent repression and his crackdown on those who express their opposition to his regime's failed policies.

We must take a clear stand because the Maduro regime has responded in a deeply undemocratic manner by forcibly repressing protesters, attempting to silence critics by blocking media outlets, and even authorizing the arrests of key opposition leaders such as Leopoldo Lopez.

As protests have swelled throughout the country, the actions of regime forces have led to the deaths of at least 15 and to the unjust detention of more than 100 freedom seekers.

It is incumbent upon the Organization of American States, the OAS, to act according to the principles of its Inter-American Democratic Charter and address this crisis of democracy. Yet recent history has shown us that the Secretary General of the OAS will not lead the way in this important effort. Thus, in the absence of his leadership, responsible nations in the hemisphere must act. They cannot remain silent.

The Panamanians have stepped up to the plate. They have proposed a ministerial meeting at the OAS, but regrettably, Mr. Speaker, that proposal has not moved forward. This resolution will send a clear message to the OAS and to Nicolas Maduro that the United States condemns these undemocratic actions.

We see the plight of the people of Venezuela, and we stand on their side in the struggle for democratic change. We stand together with the Women for Life, Mujeres por la Vida, who march clad in white through the streets of Venezuela peacefully, like their companions in the struggle for freedom in Cuba—Las Damas de Blanco, the Ladies in White.

We stand with the students who take to the streets demanding the release of their fellow students who have been unjustly detained, only to be met with the clubs and the teargas of Maduro's henchmen. And we stand together, Mr.

Speaker, united with the people of Venezuela who wish to cast the yoke of repression and oppression and the influence of the Castro regime, which has been more than eager to help Maduro silence the oppression in Venezuela because it fears that the movement will sweep over the island of Cuba.

We must stand together and support those who seek freedom: freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and the freedom from government abuse and government oppression. We must speak with a unified voice, Mr. Speaker, about the crisis of democracy in Venezuela and stand in solidarity with the Venezuelan people in their spirited struggle.

But in the face of a determined autocrat who disregards expectations of right conduct and who is willing to use violence to impose his will on free citizens, well, Mr. Speaker, words are just not nearly enough. We must act, and we must act now. We must support those who are pleading for respect for democratic principles and for human rights in Venezuela.

I want to thank the chairman of our important committee, Chairman ROYCE, and my good friend, also, Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL, for getting this measure to the floor so quickly. I also want to thank their exceptional staff. I want to thank Congressmen ALBIO SIREs and MARIO DIAZ-BALART, who have supported this resolution from the very beginning. Mr. Speaker, we have worked closely together in a bipartisan and a bicameral way, including with the State Department, to ensure that this is a strong, bipartisan resolution, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 488, a resolution supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully and calling for an end to recent violence, and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would first like to recognize my good friend, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN) for offering this important resolution, but more so for her dedication for so many years to these important issues. It has been a pleasure working with her through the years.

The eyes of the world are on Venezuela as President Nicolas Maduro and his security forces crack down on peaceful protesters. It is an absolute tragedy that 17 people have been killed and 261 people have been injured during recent protests throughout the country. It sounds a little bit like Ukraine, doesn't it?

I was particularly disturbed when the government issued an arrest warrant for opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez on trumped-up charges. Mr. Lopez turned himself in on February 18 and is

currently being held in a prison at a military facility.

And, by the way, the elections that supposedly elected Mr. Maduro, as far as I am concerned, are in question because there never was a real recount. The ballots were destroyed before there could be a recount.

I am so deeply troubled by the crack-down on press freedom in Venezuela. The Colombian news network NTN24 was recently taken off the air after it broadcast footage of the protests. Journalists from CNN were also threatened with expulsion.

Today's resolution makes it clear that Congress stands with the Venezuelan people and against all acts of violence and undemocratic actions. I am pleased that President Obama and Secretary Kerry have also spoken out forcefully in condemning violence in Venezuela.

Let me be clear. It is not just the United States that has been taking notice of recent events in Venezuela. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights released a statement on February 14 which "expresses its concern over the serious incidents of violence that have taken place in the context of protest demonstrations in Venezuela, as well as other complaints concerning acts of censorship against media outlets . . . and acts of alleged political persecution."

Last week, the European Parliament passed a resolution calling on the Venezuelan Government to release jailed opposition members and protesters and to end the violence.

I hope all member states of the OAS, the Organization of American States, will similarly call on the Venezuelan Government to abide by the OAS Convention on Human Rights and the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

Finally, let me say that the only way out of this crisis is through dialogue. Our resolution makes this absolutely clear by encouraging "a process of dialogue between the Government of Venezuela and the political opposition to end the violence."

I stand with the people of Venezuela in calling for an end to the senseless violence, and I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 488, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART), our colleague who is on the Appropriations Committee who has been a leader in this fight for freedom and liberty for the Venezuelan people.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this House resolution introduced by my dear friend and one of the great leaders and champions for freedom around the world, Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN. I also want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL, speaking of folks who believe in freedom and are

always looking out for those who are repressed.

For the last several weeks, Mr. Speaker, the people of Venezuela have risen up to protest the corruption, the food shortages, the soaring crime rates, and, most important of all, the increased and alarming repression by the Maduro regime. In response to those legitimate protests—those peaceful protests—the Venezuelan regime has ordered security forces to, frankly, brutally crack down on the opposition.

Since the protests began, Mr. Speaker, more than 500 people have been arrested. Those are the ones that we can document. Approximately 150 have been injured, and more than a dozen—more than a dozen—have been killed.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but the Maduro regime has instituted something which should not surprise us, a virtual media blackout. They have blocked out images. They tried to block out images over the Internet. They even closed down, in certain parts of the country where they had the ability to do so, parts of the Internet, including Twitter. They have thrown out independent news organizations like CNN and NTN.

Why? Why are they doing this? They are doing this because the Venezuelan people are fed up with the corruption; they are fed up with, as my father would have said, this so-called "decaffeinated dictatorship." And why would he have said a "decaffeinated dictatorship"? It is a dictatorship that got there, arguably, through democratic means that then has done everything to eliminate all semblance of democracy, all semblance of human rights, all semblance of freedom of the press, and all semblance of the basic institutions of democracy.

And not only that, Mr. Speaker, there are reports of thousands of Cuban special operation forces and also intel forces that are helping the Maduro regime in the crackdown of the Venezuelan people. So at a time when a lot of the so-called international community, particularly in our hemisphere, stays quiet to the reality of the Venezuelan people's struggle for freedom, I am so proud of this Congress—this Congress, this House—that once again is standing with those who are oppressed and standing with those who are struggling for freedom. This is a House that traditionally has done that. This is a House that traditionally, in a bipartisan way, has done that, which is why I am, again, so grateful, particularly to the chairwoman, to my, I would say, younger but wiser sister, Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, to the chairman and to the ranking member; for when others are silent, they are demonstrating that the United States House of Representatives will not stay silent. We will continue to support the Venezuelan people. We will stand with the heroic Venezuelan people, those

students who have hit the streets demanding their freedom.

I urge every single one of our colleagues to express solidarity with those like over 200 years ago, how people in our country went out and struggled for freedom. Now we see that the Venezuelan young people, that the students, are doing the same thing. How proud of this House, how proud I am to see this House stand with those heroic Venezuelan people, the heirs of Simon Bolivar—los herederos de Bolivar—who are trying and will succeed in recapturing their sovereignty, their freedom, and their democracy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida will provide the Clerk a translation of his remarks.

□ 1445

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 488, supporting the Democratic aspirations of the people of Venezuela.

I would like to thank my friend, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, for her leadership and for always fighting for democratic principles. I would like to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for working to bring this resolution to the floor.

I strongly condemn the violence used by the Maduro regime: 17 dead and 261 injured in the recent protest. Peaceful assembly should never be met with the use of deadly force. This government has resorted to political intimidation and free media censorship to squash the voices of the people.

I join my colleagues today in support of the people of Venezuela to determine their own political future. It is their democratic right to seek government policies that put their country on a path to democratic and economic prosperity for all Venezuelans.

By passing this resolution, Congress will send a clear message to the people of Venezuela—and to all those around the world struggling to achieve true democracy and freedom—that we stand with you. We support your most democratic rights of free expression and peaceful assembly. Any true democracy must be accountable to its people. We call on the Maduro government to work with the people, not against them, to end the violence, and to find a political resolution.

This resolution, Mr. Speaker, makes clear to the Venezuelan people and to the Maduro regime that the United States stands for freedom and democracy, and that the human rights of the Venezuelan people matter to the American people, and they must be defended. I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and honored to yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman

from California (Mr. ROYCE), the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady for yielding to me. I also thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), our chairman emeritus, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) the ranking member, for their working together to craft this bipartisan resolution, a resolution that is focused on supporting Venezuelans, supporting their right to free expression, their right to democracy, their right for those who yearn to return to the rule of law, and, frankly, not just democratic norms, but just the most basic respect for human beings.

In recent weeks, Venezuela has been rocked by nationwide protests against the government of the late Hugo Chavez's hand-picked successor, Nicolas Maduro. I as I watched events unfold on CNN, they began as student protests. Students were going through the streets explaining that they were against rampant street crime, and they wanted the protections of the state rather than the predatory nature of what was happening with these armed gangs. Those protests have since evolved into a referendum on the government's statist policies, their destructive economic policies, the government's near elimination of civil society's freedoms in Venezuela.

Maduro's heavy-handed response, frankly, I think all of us see this now as having really worsened this crisis. We are in a situation now where more than a dozen Venezuelans have been killed, and many students have been grievously wounded. Even more than that have been jailed. The leading opposition figure right now is in prison.

These parliamentary gangs that we talked about that are so predatory, that roam the streets and commit these crimes, now they threaten civilians who are trying to peacefully express opposition. The President of the country has threatened to release, in his words, all of the military force of the country against those who oppose him, against the opposition. Even one sitting governor who had long allied himself with Hugo Chavez was driven to say that the government has gone too far. He took to the radio and said:

I am against putting down a peaceful protest with weapons.

Precisely. Precisely—and that, of course, is why the international community is concerned and we are concerned here today.

All of this, of course, is taking place in our own Western Hemisphere, just a 3-hour flight from the United States. As a major energy producer positioned along drug trafficking routes, Venezuela's instability harms the interests of all in the Western Hemisphere.

Venezuela once had a strong democratic tradition. We would like to see that democratic tradition returned. We think the right of free expression is an

important human right. Speaking out in support of those who share this vision, as we are doing today, I think is an important step in realizing that goal, and that is why I again commend Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN and Ranking Member ENGEL for this resolution that they have brought forward.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 488, and I thank my south Florida colleague and friend, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, for her leadership in introducing this measure and giving us an opportunity to stand with the people of Venezuela.

I stand in solidarity with my colleagues and the people of Venezuela to condemn the deplorable, horrific, and inexcusable violence the Maduro regime has perpetrated against its own citizens. Brave activists have taken to the streets in Venezuela to demand basic freedoms from an increasingly repressive government. These are students, lawyers, and average citizens simply asking their government to respect their basic human and democratic rights.

Since his election, President Maduro's economic and political policies have driven Venezuela's economy into the ground. His attempts to silence these outcries have not worked, and they will not work. Despite jailing leading opposition voices and expelling independent media voices, the world is watching and listening, and we still hear the calls loud and clear for democracy, for governance, and reform.

President Maduro's ridiculous accusations about United States involvement in fomenting unrest will prove to be a grossly failed attempt to distract from his own shortcomings in serving his people. We will not allow his rhetoric to try to blame the United States for what is a clear struggle between his repressive policies and the legitimate demands of his people.

My hometown of Weston is often affectionately known as "Westonzuela." Just yesterday, I spoke with community leaders in south Florida—many of them my neighbors, my friends, my constituents—about the fear and horrors that family members and their friends are experiencing.

This resolution calls upon the government of Venezuela to respect the principles enshrined in its own governing documents as well as those in the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights—including freedoms of speech and the press.

This resolution affirms what we know to be true: that the best way to address the legitimate grievances of the people is through genuine dialogue between all parties involved. It calls for our country to work with our partners in the Western Hemisphere and

through regional organizations to help facilitate this dialogue and, importantly, to do everything possible to cease this senseless violence and create the space for peace. This resolution reflects that we stand in solidarity with the people of Venezuela.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution can only be the first step to hold Maduro and his fellow regime thugs accountable for their terrible and violent response, and their abuse of Venezuelan people's liberties and human rights.

I have already begun circulating a letter amongst my colleagues in the House addressed to President Obama asking him to take immediate action against Maduro and other Venezuelan officials who are responsible for violations of their people's human rights. We are calling for the President to enact immediate sanctions against those officials under authorities granted to him under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, including denying them visas to enter the United States, blocking their property, freezing their assets in the U.S., as well as prohibiting them from making any financial transactions in the U.S. This letter already enjoys bipartisan support. I invite my colleagues to join me in signing this letter, and I hope that the President will recognize the severity of this issue and do the right thing and take these important steps.

However, Mr. Speaker, I will file a bill this week that would force the implementation of these sanctions even if the President chooses not to use these authorities granted to him under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act.

Now is not the time to dither or sit on the fence. The United States must stand up for the people of Venezuela and for the American ideals of freedom, democracy, of the rule of law, of respect for human rights. Failure to hold Maduro and his officials accountable would be irresponsible and a failure of leadership.

On the resolution before us today, Mr. Speaker, I am optimistic that the U.S. House will pass my bill expressing support for the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democracy. I hope that it will pass so that we can send a swift and strong message to Maduro that the United States House of Representatives has taken notice of the developments in Venezuela and that we will not allow these transgressions to pass by quietly.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to repeat what I said before, that I hope all member states of the Organization of American States will similarly call on the Venezuelan government to abide by their OAS Conven-

tion on Human Rights and the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

This is a very bipartisan resolution. I agree with everything that the gentlewoman from Florida said. In fact, I agree with everything that all of the speakers on both sides of the aisle have said.

The United States stands for freedom in the world, and I think it is very important that the Congress of the United States speaks out loudly and clearly when people's rights are being trampled on, as is the situation in Venezuela today.

So again, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), and I want to thank Chairman ROYCE, who once again has shown in such a bipartisan way that members of the Foreign Affairs Committee work closely together because both parties share a love of freedom and democracy. Both parties care very much that freedom and democracy around the world takes root. I can think of nothing more bipartisan than to stand up for freedom and democracy all over the world, and when a country has its rights trampled by the government that is supposed to protect it, it is time that we in the United States Congress say enough: we are not going to sweep this under the rug. We are going to speak out loudly and forcefully against it.

I again thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Chairman ROYCE.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate my strong thanks to the chairman of our committee, Mr. ROYCE, and to our esteemed ranking member, Mr. ENGEL. Both of them have been very present and very energized on the United States House of Representatives speaking in a clear voice in favor of democracy, the rule of law, freedom, and liberties being respected by the Maduro regime, and so far we have seen the opposite be true.

I want to again suggest to my colleagues that passing this resolution of solidarity with the peaceful protesters of Venezuela is an important first step, and we hope that those who support this cause will follow-up with my office and sign the letter to President Obama asking for economic sanctions against human rights violators and also co-sponsor my bill that follows and tracks that same letter.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 488, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1500

UNITED STATES-ISRAEL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 2014

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 938) to strengthen the strategic alliance between the United States and Israel, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 938

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title and table of contents.

Sec. 2. Findings.

Sec. 3. Declaration of policy.

TITLE I—UNITED STATES-ISRAEL STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

Sec. 101. Amendments to the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012.

Sec. 102. Authorization of assistance for Israel.

Sec. 103. United States-Israel cooperation on cyber-security.

Sec. 104. Statement of United States Policy Regarding Israel's defense systems.

Sec. 105. Report on other matters.

Sec. 106. Statement of policy.

Sec. 107. Sense of Congress.

TITLE II—UNITED STATES-ISRAEL ENERGY COOPERATION

Sec. 201. United States-Israel energy cooperation.

TITLE III—OFFSET

Sec. 301. Offset.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The turmoil in the Middle East poses a serious threat to United States national security interests and requires cooperation with allies that are willing to work with the United States in pursuit of shared objectives.

(2) The October 31, 1998, Memorandum of Agreement signed by President Clinton and Prime Minister Netanyahu commits the United States to working jointly with Israel towards enhancing Israel's defensive and deterrent capabilities and upgrading the framework of the United States-Israel strategic and military relationships, as well as the technological cooperation between both countries.

(3) On August 16, 2007, the United States and Israel signed a Memorandum of Understanding reaffirming United States commitment to the security of Israel and establishing a 10-year framework for incremental increases in United States military assistance to Israel.

(4) The Memorandum of Understanding signed two years later on January 16, 2009 reaffirmed the United States commitment and noted “the security, military and intelligence cooperation between the United States and Israel”.

(5) The United States and Israel conduct a semi-annual Strategic Dialogue. The Department of State, in a statement following the July 12, 2012, meeting of the Strategic Dialogue, noted that the discussions focused on such issues of mutual concern as “Iran’s continued quest to develop nuclear weapons, which the United States and Israel are both determined to prevent” and “how the continued violence of the Syrian regime against its citizens [assisted by Iran and Hezbollah] could also lead to severe consequences for the entire region”.

SEC. 3. DECLARATION OF POLICY.

Congress declares that Israel is a major strategic partner of the United States.

TITLE I—UNITED STATES-ISRAEL STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

SEC. 101. AMENDMENTS TO THE UNITED STATES-ISRAEL ENHANCED SECURITY COOPERATION ACT OF 2012.

(a) UNITED STATES ACTIONS TO ASSIST IN THE DEFENSE OF ISRAEL AND PROTECT UNITED STATES INTERESTS.—Section 4 of the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-150; 22 U.S.C. 8603) is amended—

(1) by striking “It is the sense of Congress that the United States Government should” and inserting “(a) IN GENERAL.—The President should, to the maximum extent practicable,”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the President shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of this section.”.

(b) EXTENSION OF WAR RESERVES STOCKPILE AUTHORITY.—Section 5(a) of the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-150) is amended to read as follows:

“(a) EXTENSION OF WAR RESERVES STOCKPILE AUTHORITY.—

“(1) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2005.—Section 12001(d) of the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2005 (Public Law 108-287; 118 Stat. 1011), is amended by striking ‘more than 10 years after’ and inserting ‘more than 11 years after’.

“(2) FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961.—Section 514(b)(2)(A) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2321h(b)(2)(A)) is amended by striking ‘and 2014’ and inserting ‘, 2014, and 2015’.”.

(c) AMENDMENTS TO REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO ASSESSMENT OF ISRAEL’S QUALITATIVE MILITARY EDGE OVER MILITARY THREATS.—

(1) ASSESSMENT REQUIRED; REPORTS.—Section 201 of Public Law 110-429 (122 Stat. 4843; 22 U.S.C. 2776 note) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a), by striking “an ongoing basis” and inserting “a biennial basis”; and

(B) in subsection (c)(2)—

(i) in the heading, by striking “QUADRENNIAL” and inserting “BIENNIAL”; and

(ii) in the text, by striking “Not later than four years after the date on which the President transmits the initial report under paragraph (1), and every four years thereafter,” and inserting “Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014, and biennially thereafter.”.

(2) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act,

the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on—

(i) the range of cyber and asymmetric threats posed to Israel by state and non-state actors; and

(ii) the joint efforts of the United States and Israel to address the threats identified in clause (i).

(B) FORM.—The report required under subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may contain a classified annex.

(C) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

SEC. 102. AUTHORIZATION OF ASSISTANCE FOR ISRAEL.

(a) FINDING.—Congress finds that Israel has adopted high standards in the field of export controls, including by becoming adherent to the Australia Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and the Wassenaar Arrangement control lists, and by enacting robust legislation and regulations for the control of dual-use and defense items.

(b) EXPEDITED LICENSING PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall direct the Secretary of State to undertake discussions with Israel to identify the steps required to be taken to include Israel within the list of countries described in section 740.20(c)(1) of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations (relating to eligibility for Strategic Trade Authorization).

(2) REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter for a period of 3 years or until such time that Israel is included on the list of countries determined as eligible for the Strategic Trade Authorization, whichever occurs first, the President shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate a report on the following:

(i) The current status of negotiations.

(ii) The reasons that Israel has not yet been determined as eligible for the Strategic Trade Authorization.

(B) FORM.—The report required by subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may contain a classified annex.

(c) LICENSING TREATMENT AS MTCR ADHERENT.—The President shall direct the Secretary of Commerce to ensure that, subject to the requirements of section 6(1) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. App. 2405(1)) (as continued in effect pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act), Israel is treated no less favorably than other members or adherents to the Missile Technology Control Regime designated in Country Group A:2 in Supplement No. 1 to part 740 of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations.

(d) OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION.—In carrying out its authorities under title IV of chapter 2 of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2191 et seq.), the Overseas Private Investment Corporation should consider giving preference to providing insurance, financing, or reinsurance for energy and water projects in Israel.

(e) ENERGY, WATER, AGRICULTURE, AND ALTERNATIVE FUEL TECHNOLOGIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President is authorized to carry out cooperative activities with Israel and to provide assistance to Israel that promotes cooperation in the fields of energy, water, agriculture, alternative fuel technologies, and civil space, where appropriate and pursuant to existing law.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the President is authorized to share and exchange with Israel research, technology, intelligence, information, equipment, and personnel that the President determines will advance the national security interests of the United States and is consistent with the Strategic Dialogue and pertinent provisions of law—

(A) by enhancing scientific cooperation between Israel and the United States; or

(B) by the sale, lease, exchange in kind, or other techniques the President determines to be suitable.

(f) COOPERATIVE RESEARCH PILOT PROGRAMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security, acting through the Director of the Homeland Security Advanced Research Projects Agency and with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, is authorized to enter into cooperative research pilot programs with Israel to enhance Israel’s capabilities in the following areas:

(A) Border, maritime, and aviation security.

(B) Explosives detection.

(C) Emergency services.

(2) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For fiscal year 2014, there are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Homeland Security—

(A) \$1,000,000 to carry out paragraph (1)(A);

(B) \$1,000,000 to carry out paragraph (1)(B); and

(C) \$1,000,000 to carry out paragraph (1)(C).

SEC. 103. UNITED STATES-ISRAEL COOPERATION ON CYBER-SECURITY.

It is a sense of Congress that the United States and Israel should take steps and explore avenues to increase cooperation on cyber-security.

SEC. 104. STATEMENT OF UNITED STATES POLICY REGARDING ISRAEL’S DEFENSE SYSTEMS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress—

(1) commends the first phase completion of the David’s Sling Weapon System (DSWS) by the Israel Missile Defense Organization and the U.S. Missile Defense Agency, which is designed to provide additional opportunities for interception by the joint United States-Israel Arrow Weapon System (Arrow 2 and Arrow 3);

(2) congratulates the Israel Missile Defense Organization and the U.S. Missile Defense Agency on successfully executing the Arrow 3 flyout of a more advanced interceptor, which will improve Israel’s defenses against upper tier ballistic missile threats from nations including Iran;

(3) recognizes that during Operation Pillar of Defense in November 2012, Israel deployed Iron Dome short-range rocket defense batteries to intercept Hamas-launched rockets fired from Gaza—of those rockets that posed a threat to the life of Israeli citizens, 80 to 85 percent were successfully intercepted, saving countless lives; and

(4) agrees that, as stated by former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta, “Iron Dome performed, I think it’s fair to say, remarkably well during the recent escalation . . . Iron Dome does not start wars. It helps prevent wars.”.

(b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It should be the policy of the United States that the President, acting through the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State, should provide assistance, upon request by the Government of Israel, for the enhancement of the David's Sling Weapon System, the enhancement of the joint United States-Israel Arrow Weapon System (Arrow 2 and Arrow 3), and the procurement and enhancement of the Iron Dome short-range rocket defense system for purposes of intercepting short-range rockets, missiles, and other projectiles launched against Israel.

SEC. 105. REPORT ON OTHER MATTERS.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the United States and Israel should continue collaborative efforts to enhance Israel's military capabilities, including through the transfer of advanced combat aircraft, active phased array radar, military tanker-transport, other multi-mission military aircraft, advanced or specialized munitions, and through joint training and exercise opportunities in the United States;

(2) the United States and Israel should expeditiously conclude an updated Memorandum of Understanding regarding United States security assistance in order to help Israel meet its unique security requirements and uphold its qualitative military edge;

(3) the United States should ensure that Israel has timely access to important military equipment, including by augmenting the forward deployed United States War Reserve Stockpile in Israel and by continuing to provide Israel with critical military equipment and spare parts through the Department of Defense's Excess Defense Articles program; and

(4) the United States should continue to support Israel's inherent right of self-defense.

(b) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that—

(A) reviews the progress made toward the actions and efforts identified in the report required under section 6(b) of the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-150; 22 U.S.C. 8604(b)); and

(B) provides policy recommendations, if necessary.

(2) FORM.—The report required by paragraph (1) may include a classified annex.

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate.

SEC. 106. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It shall be the policy of the United States to include Israel in the list of countries that participate in the visa waiver program under section 217 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187) when Israel satisfies, and as long as Israel continues to satisfy, the requirements for inclusion in such program specified in such section.

SEC. 107. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that the Department of State should continue and, to the furthest extent practicable, increase its coordination on monitoring and combating

anti-Semitism with the Government of Israel.

TITLE II—UNITED STATES-ISRAEL ENERGY COOPERATION

SEC. 201. UNITED STATES-ISRAEL ENERGY COOPERATION.

(a) FINDINGS.—Section 917(a) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17337(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking "renewable" and inserting "covered";

(2) in paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking "possible many" and inserting "possible—

"(A) many";

(B) by inserting "and" after the semicolon at the end; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(B) significant contributions to the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency through the established programs of the United States-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation and the United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation;"

(3) in paragraph (6)—

(A) by striking "renewable" and inserting "covered"; and

(B) by striking "and" after the semicolon at the end;

(4) in paragraph (7)—

(A) by striking "renewable" and inserting "covered"; and

(B) by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

"(8) United States-Israel energy cooperation, and the development of natural resources by Israel, are strategic interests of the United States;

"(9) Israel is a strategic partner of the United States in water technology;

"(10) the United States can play a role in assisting Israel with regional safety and security issues;

"(11) the National Science Foundation of the United States should collaborate with the Israel Science Foundation;

"(12) the United States and Israel should strive to develop more robust academic cooperation in energy innovation technology and engineering, water science, technology transfer, and analysis of geopolitical implications of new natural resource development and associated areas;

"(13) the United States supports the goals of the Alternative Fuels Administration of Israel;

"(14) the United States strongly urges open dialogue and continued mechanisms for regular engagement and encourages further cooperation between applicable departments, agencies, ministries, institutions of higher education, and the private sectors of the United States and Israel on energy security issues, including—

"(A) identifying policy priorities associated with the development of natural resources of Israel;

"(B) discussing best practices to secure cyber energy infrastructure;

"(C) best practice sharing;

"(D) leveraging natural gas to positively impact regional stability;

"(E) improving energy efficiency and the overall performance of water technologies through research and development in water desalination, wastewater treatment and reclamation, and other water treatment technologies;

"(F) technical and environmental management of deep-water exploration and production;

"(G) coastal protection and restoration;

"(H) academic outreach and engagement;

"(I) private sector and business development engagement;

"(J) regulatory consultations;

"(K) leveraging alternative transportation fuels and technologies; and

"(L) any other areas determined appropriate by the United States and Israel;

"(15) the United States acknowledges the achievements and importance of the United States-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation and the United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation and supports continued multiyear funding to ensure the continuity of the programs of the Foundations; and

"(16) the United States and Israel have a shared interest in addressing their immediate, near-term, and long-term energy and environmental challenges."

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Section 917(b)(1) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17337(b)(1)) is amended by striking "renewable energy or energy efficiency" and inserting "covered energy".

(c) TYPES OF ENERGY.—Section 917(b)(2) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17337(b)(2)) is amended—

(1) in the heading, by striking "TYPES OF" and inserting "COVERED";

(2) in subparagraph (F), by striking "and" after the semicolon at the end;

(3) in subparagraph (G), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

"(H) natural gas energy, including conventional and unconventional natural gas technologies and natural gas projects conducted by or in conjunction with the United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation, the United States-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development Foundation, and the United States-Israel Science and Technology Foundation; and

"(I) improvement of energy efficiency and the overall performance of water technologies through research and development in water desalination, wastewater treatment and reclamation, and other water treatment technologies."

(d) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—Section 917(b)(3) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17337(b)(3)) is amended by striking "energy efficiency or renewable" and inserting "covered".

(e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS.—Section 917 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17337) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (e) and (f), respectively;

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

"(c) INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may, subject to the availability of appropriations, enter into cooperative agreements supporting and enhancing dialogue and planning involving international partnerships between the Department, including National Laboratories of the Department, and the Government of Israel and its ministries, offices, and institutions.

"(2) FEDERAL SHARE.—The Secretary may not pay more than 50 percent of the costs described in paragraph (1).

"(3) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural

Resources, the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate an annual report that describes—

“(A) actions taken to carry out this subsection; and

“(B) any projects under this subsection for which the Secretary requests funding.

“(d) UNITED STATES-ISRAEL CENTER.—The Secretary may establish a joint United States-Israel Center based in an area of the United States with the experience, knowledge, and expertise in offshore energy development to further dialogue and collaboration to develop more robust academic cooperation in energy innovation technology and engineering, water science, technology transfer, and analysis of geopolitical implications of new natural resource development and associated areas.”; and

(3) by amending subsection (f) (as redesignated) to read as follows:

“(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Of the amounts made available under section 931 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 16231), the Secretary is authorized to use \$2,000,000 for each fiscal year to carry out this section.”.

(f) TERMINATION.—Subsection (e) of section 917 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17337) (as redesignated by subsection (e)(1)) is amended by striking “the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act” and inserting “September 30, 2021”.

TITLE III—OFFSET

SEC. 301. OFFSET.

Section 102(a) of the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-73) is amended by striking “\$1,500,000,000” and inserting “\$1,487,000,000”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of this legislation. This is the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Declaration.

I want to begin by thanking the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and thanking the gentleman from Florida, Mr. TED DEUTCH, for their leadership in authoring this important measure.

Israel's strategic reality has been fundamentally transformed. As it looks to its borders and looks beyond those borders, the threats to Israel are changing, and they are growing. These threats challenge Israel's qualitative military edge and that is its ability to counter and defeat any credible conventional military threat. It challenges it in ways that have, perhaps, never been quite so daunting.

Myself, ELIOT ENGEL, TED DEUTCH, and others, had an opportunity last year to travel to Israel to see the effects, see the efforts, by Israel to counter the rocket attacks that come in from Gaza by Hamas.

I had an opportunity back during the second Lebanon war, during the war with Hezbollah, to actually see the effects in August of 2006 of what was happening with rockets firing into Haifa. On a daily basis, the city was under siege.

There were literally 600 Israelis—Jewish Israelis, Arab Israelis, Druze Israelis—who were victims of these attacks from the communities in Haifa who were in the trauma hospital, and every day, these rockets would rain down.

This was not just the handiwork of Hezbollah and of Hamas that we saw last year—no. This was with rockets provided by Iran—by Iran and Syria.

In the rocket attacks that I saw in 2006, those rockets—every one of them—the cone of those rockets had 80,000 ball bearings, and they would be fired on schools, on homes, on the hospital itself, that was a target. That was done to create the maximum number of civilian casualties.

Well, so it is, in terms of the challenges that Israel faces, again, those challenges now because Iran is supplying the weaponry.

In response, the Congress continues to do everything in our power to support Israel from its security to supporting its economy. That is the intention, Mr. Speaker, of this legislation that Mr. TED DEUTCH and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN have brought before this body. It is a matter of shared values, shared experiences, and shared interests between the United States and Israel.

This legislation will not only expedite the provision of critical security assistance to Israel and require more frequent and detailed reporting on Israel's qualitative military edge, as well as a report on joint efforts to address the other threats—asymmetric threats that Israel faces, but it will also focus on expanding cooperation in areas of mutual interest by supporting a range of joint activities from civil space cooperation to homeland security measures.

Finally, it will dramatically expand our cooperation with Israel on energy production. It will link the two economies in important ways, and that is why I, again, thank ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN and TED DEUTCH for bringing this legislation before us.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, January 22, 2014.

Hon. ED ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing to you concerning the jurisdictional interest of

the Committee on Homeland Security in matters being considered in H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013.

I recognize the importance of H.R. 938 and the need for the legislation to move expeditiously. Therefore, while we have a valid claim to jurisdiction over certain sections of the bill, specifically, section 5(f), I do not intend to request a sequential referral. This, of course, is conditional on our mutual understanding that nothing in this legislation or my decision to forego a sequential referral waives, reduces or otherwise affects the jurisdiction of the Committee on Homeland Security, and that a copy of this letter and your response acknowledging our jurisdictional interest will be included in the Committee Report and as part of the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill by the House. I also ask that you support my request to name members of this committee to any conference committee that is established to consider such provisions.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, January 23, 2014.

Hon. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security,
Ford House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MCCAUL: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013. I acknowledge that by forgoing action and not seeking a sequential referral on this legislation, your Committee is not diminishing or altering its jurisdiction.

I also concur with you that forgoing action on this bill does not in any way prejudice the Committee on Homeland Security with respect to its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future, and I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 938 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to working with the Committee on Homeland Security as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, February 27, 2014.

Hon. ED ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing with respect to H.R. 938, the “United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013,” which the Committee on Foreign Affairs ordered reported favorably on January 29, 2014. As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions in H.R. 938 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, and your agreement to support mutually-agreeable changes to the legislation, I agree to discharge our Committee from further consideration of this bill so

that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 938 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation, and asks that you support any such request.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 938, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H.R. 938.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, February 27, 2014.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: Thank you for agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act, and for working with us to incorporate mutually agreeable changes to provisions within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary.

I agree that forgoing further action on this bill does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 938 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with the Committee on the Judiciary as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY,
Washington, DC, February 28, 2014.

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing to you regarding H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013. This legislation was initially referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology (among others). The bill contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

H.R. 938 has been marked up by the Committee on Foreign Affairs. Based on discussions that the staff of our two committees have had regarding this legislation and in

the interest of permitting your Committee to proceed expeditiously to floor consideration of this important legislation, I am willing to waive further consideration of this bill. I do so with the understanding that language specifically requested by the Committee will be included in the legislation when it is considered on the floor and that by waiving consideration of the bill, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology does not waive any future jurisdictional claim of the subject matters contained in the bill which fall within its Rule X jurisdiction.

Additionally, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology expressly reserves its authority to seek conferees on any provision within its jurisdiction during any House-Senate conference that may be convened on this, or any similar legislation. I ask for your commitment to support any request by the Committee for conferees on H.R. 938, as well as any similar or related legislation.

Further, I ask that a copy of this letter and your response be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 938.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for the positive negotiations between our Committees; the result is an improved bill. I look forward to working with you as this important measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEES ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, February 28, 2014.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH: Thank you for agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act, and for working with us to incorporate mutually agreeable changes to provisions within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

I agree that forgoing further action on this bill does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your Committee, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 938 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with the Science Committee as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 938, the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act.

Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, the chairman of the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee, and Mr. DEUTCH, the ranking member of that subcommittee, for authoring this legislation and for

working tirelessly over the past year to further refine some of the provisions.

This legislation comes at a critical time in the history of the U.S.-Israel relationship. On every border, Israel faces instability, at best, and violence and chaos, at worst.

Syria remains engulfed in a horrific civil war that has left more than 140,000 people dead. Israel's neighbors, including Lebanon and Egypt, are plagued by instability.

Iran has not yet abandoned its pursuit of nuclear weapons capability and continues to terrorize the world with its support for violent extremism. Iran is the leading supporter of terrorism around the world.

And, under the threat of rocket fire from Gaza, Israel is now considering new options under a framework for peace with Palestinians and the Arab world. Hamas still controls the Gaza Strip, and their disregard for human life is well known.

The U.S. cannot afford to sit idly by. We must be engaged in each of these issues and support our ally, Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East.

This legislation before us today is critical because it sends a clear and unmistakable message to America's foes: America stands with Israel. Let me repeat that: America stands with Israel.

Now is the time to reaffirm the vital importance we place on the U.S.-Israel relationship and to pursue new ways to improve our partnership at every level. Let me say the relationship between the U.S. and Israel is not a one-way street. It is a two-way street.

We share a love for democracy; we share a love for human rights; and we share a love and understanding that we share things that are so important to both countries. It is not, again, just a one-way street. It is a two-way street.

There is more collaboration between the United States and Israel on everything, each and every day. The relationship deepens, the coordination deepens—coordination in terms of military, in terms of intelligence sharing, in terms of so many other things. Israel is the best ally the United States has, not in the Middle East, but in the world.

Specifically, this bill will build on our robust defense cooperation, increase U.S.-Israel collaboration on cybersecurity, expand U.S.-Israel energy cooperation, and reaffirm our commitment to Israel missile defense programs, which have saved many innocent lives, such as the Iron Dome.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 938, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), the chairman emeritus and Middle East Subcommittee chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and, of course, the author of this bill.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman TED DEUTCH and I introduced the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act because we are committed to the security of our friend and ally in an increasingly volatile Middle East.

Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL have been instrumental in getting this important bill to the House floor today. Today is, indeed, a very significant day in the history of the relationship between the United States and Israel.

This bill takes the already strong bonds between our two countries and makes it even stronger. With over 350 Members of Congress having lent their support to this bill as cosponsors, it is truly a bipartisan measure.

This bill designates Israel as a major strategic partner of the United States and extends U.S.-Israeli cooperation in a variety of areas, including intelligence, homeland security, energy, science, trade, and so forth. It supports U.S. efforts to help Israel maintain its qualitative military edge over its neighbors and its foes.

As Israel faces even more dangerous threats than ever before, particularly now with so much uncertainty and so much violence spreading throughout the region, and as Iran continues to announce advancements on its nuclear program due to this weak interim agreement, Israel needs our support now more than ever.

Passing this bill, Mr. Speaker, will send a strong message to those that continue to seek to harm Israel and to harm the United States. It will show the rest of the world just how seriously we value our friendship with the democratic Jewish state of Israel, not only because Israel has been a true ally, but because we share the same ideals and the same values.

In a time, Mr. Speaker, when there is a worrisome movement to delegitimize Israel, a campaign by some to boycott and divest from Israel, now is the time to lend our unequivocal support to the democratic Jewish state of Israel.

With anti-Semitism on an alarming rise throughout the world, Israel and the worldwide Jewish community need to know that the United States will do everything we can to ensure Israel's continued safety and security.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us today is the product of a real bipartisan commitment to the U.S.-Israel relationship.

I would like to thank Chairman ED ROYCE and Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL for making this bill a priority of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and ensuring its consideration on the floor here today.

I would especially like to thank and recognize my colleague, my friend, my

fellow Floridian, chairman emeritus of the full committee, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for her leadership on this legislation, but not just for that, for her ongoing commitment to the strength of the U.S.-Israel relationship and for standing up, as she always does, in support of people in need in every part of the world. We are so grateful for your work.

The U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act aims to strengthen the ties that bind our two nations and enhance cooperation in multiple ways. The legislation reflects the simple truth—a very simple truth that the U.S. relationship with Israel is bound not only by mutual interests, but it is bound by deeply shared values.

Indeed, the provisions of this bill, H.R. 938, mirror the broad cooperation between the United States and Israel when it comes not only to security, but to trade, research, energy, and so much more.

This bill is, of course, crafted with the heightened security risks that Israel faces every day—with those heightened security risks in mind. The Middle East region is as volatile as ever, and the world must know that our commitment to Israel's security has never been stronger than it is at this moment.

From the threat of daily rocket attacks from Hezbollah, Hamas, and other groups that send rockets at Israel citizens indiscriminately, to the risk of spillover from the Syrian conflict, the growing humanitarian crisis there, and to the existential threat of a nuclear-armed Iran, Israel faces an array of very complex security challenges.

Recognizing these threats, the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act includes measures to ensure Israel's qualitative military edge in a tough and all too often hostile neighborhood.

H.R. 938 extends authority for the United States to expand our own forward-deployed weapons stockpile in Israel. This stockpile is critical to maintaining U.S. military readiness in the region and ensuring that our Armed Forces have access to the equipment they need to defend our interests at a moment's notice.

This legislation also reaffirms Congress' support for Israel's right to self-defense by authorizing continued cooperation between the United States and the state of Israel on innovative missile defense programs, like the Iron Dome, Arrow, and David's Sling.

These systems have proven remarkably successful at intercepting rockets and protecting the safety of the Israeli people.

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Yet, even as this bill advances the security of Israel, it ultimately serves as a reminder to the world and as a reminder to America of the depth of the

United States-Israel relationship. H.R. 938 highlights Israel's enormous contributions to water and irrigation, agriculture, homeland security, and cybersecurity by authorizing further cooperation with the United States in these fields. It significantly expands the breadth of U.S.-Israel cooperation on energy and alternative energy forms, and I would like to thank Chairman UPTON and Ranking Member WAXMAN for their work on this critical language. The bill also strengthens our trade ties to Israel by initiating a process to include Israel in export license exemptions programs and, lastly, by affirming Congress' support for Israel's inclusion in the Visa Waiver Program.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ENGEL. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. DEUTCH. Despite facing enormous security challenges, our ally Israel has thrived as an open and free society with a vibrant economy, a strong democracy and as a global innovator in agriculture, energy, and countless other fields. The United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act reflects our bipartisan commitment to a safe, to a secure, and to a thriving Jewish State of Israel.

I am deeply moved by the tremendous support for Israel in this Congress, with more than half of its membership signed onto this bill. But why should this be a surprise? The security of the State of Israel is important to our national security. A thriving economy in the State of Israel, with investments made by so many American companies, is important to our own economy. Most importantly, having an ally that shares our values, our commitment to democracy and to the rule of law is something of which the value cannot even be measured.

I urge my colleagues to pass this legislation and to send the world a message that our bond with Israel will remain unshakable.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS), an esteemed member of our committee but also one who has been extremely focused on ensuring Israel's qualitative military edge.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I do appreciate the opportunity. Of course, you and the ranking member, Mr. ENGEL, have always been supportive of me, and I do appreciate that a great deal as we work on these issues together.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013. This legislation recognizes and enhances the historic and vitally important relationship between the United States and Israel. As the only democracy in the volatile Middle East, ensuring a strong Israel should be the priority of this body and this administration.

Recently, this body passed H.R. 1992, bipartisan legislation that I introduced, along with Congressman SCHNEIDER of Illinois, to modify QME reports to reflect the ever-changing threats that Israel faces. I am pleased that H.R. 1992 was also included in this Strategic Partnership Act.

Specifically, H.R. 1992 shortens the review time of U.S. weapons sales to Israel's neighbors from 4 years to 2 years. In addition, it asks this administration to determine how much of a threat asymmetric and cyber warfare are to Israel's security.

Anyone can look in just the last 4 years at how much has changed surrounding our friend Israel. It is important that we take and lower this time frame so that we are constantly making sure they have a qualitative military edge. This is of vital importance. The administration and this Congress ought to come together, and being a part of this Strategic Partnership Act ensures that along with H.R. 1992.

The Strategic Partnership Act also addresses a number of other important aspects of our relationship, including robust cybersecurity cooperation, the facilitation of increased tourism between the two nations, and the extension of U.S.-Israel energy cooperation.

Peace between Israel and its neighbors is something that has long been sought after. I am pleased that H.R. 938 highlights Israel's missile defense system, the Iron Dome. The Iron Dome gives Israel the ability to protect its citizens and to prevent military escalation.

With this, I want to thank the really incredible work of the chairman of the subcommittee, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, and Mr. DEUTCH for their encouragement in writing this legislation and for being such avid sponsors and avid proponents of our relationship with Israel.

H.R. 938 is an important step. I urge my colleagues to continue their support and to vote "yes."

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, in closing, let me again say that this is another example of bipartisan cooperation on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

I want to again thank Chairman ROYCE for being such a great partner in ensuring that important legislation like this passes our Foreign Affairs Committee and the floor of the House in a very bipartisan way.

I am proud to support H.R. 938. It reaffirms our mutually beneficial relationship with our great ally, the Jewish State of Israel, at a critically important time. I want to again thank my colleagues, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH), for authoring this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support this.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

When we are speaking of this issue, I think Members should reflect that we

are speaking of an Israel that faces from a regime in Iran that actually speaks of wiping Israel off of the map, a regime in Iran that seeks to acquire a nuclear weapons capability and the missiles to deliver nuclear weapons, a regime in Iran that has a proxy called Hezbollah.

I remember a Deputy Secretary of State calling that organization the "A team" of terrorism in the world, Hezbollah. Hezbollah is greatly expanding its size and its influence, and it is doing so not only in Lebanon but in Syria, which neighbors Israel. It is an organization that has, probably, some 70,000 rockets by now that are aimed at Israel's population centers. We think of an Israel challenged by the proliferation of al Qaeda-affiliated organizations throughout that region. We think of the ongoing threats from Hamas to the south and the Palestinian Islamic jihad.

Those are severe challenges, but Israel never has been as strong as it is now. Think of Israel's dynamic entrepreneurial culture there. For those who have been to Tel Aviv, it is inspiring—it is unbelievable—the entrepreneurial spirit, the innovative culture. You get a better sense of why Israel is so strong but also a sense of why the bond between the United States and Israel is so great. It is that dynamic economy and society that are building blocks for Israel's qualitative military edge and its relationship with the United States.

The benefits that we get from U.S.-Israel relationships, like the development of the Iron Dome, is very strong. I think that was probably built for 10 percent the price or cost, and now all of our allies are interested in acquiring that Iron Dome; and at the same time, when you think about the Iron Dome, you think of something that we in the United States thought was impossible to develop, but in Israel, engineers did so.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation today stands by our values; it stands by our interests; and it stands by our ally Israel. It is legislation all Members of the House should support.

Seeing no additional speakers, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill.

The relationship between America and Israel, which is already extremely strong, will be deepened further by passage of this legislation. H.R. 938 includes a number of important provisions that will expedite cooperation and trade between the U.S. and Israel. These include expedited licensing procedures for items covered under the Missile Technology Control Regime and other arms control regimes, encouraging the Overseas Private Investment Corporation to give preference to providing insurance, financing, or reinsurance for energy and water projects in Israel, and measures to foster research and technology exchanges in the areas of energy, water, homeland security, agriculture and alternative

fuel technologies. Both of our nations would benefit from these latter provisions.

To help Israel meet the military challenges posed by short-range and other ballistic missiles, the bill encourages the President to provide assistance to Israel to facilitate the deployment of the David's Sling Weapons System, the enhancement of the Arrow Weapon System, and the Iron Dome System. As my colleagues know, the Iron Dome system has been used multiple times over the last several years to defeat rocket attacks staged by Hamas out of Gaza. As those attacks represent the most imminent danger to Israeli population centers, our continued support for that system is extremely important.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this legislation and I encourage all of my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. DEUTCH for sponsoring this expertly-crafted and timely legislation.

It is also a substantive bill. It expands our relationship with our closest ally by supporting the Iron Dome, David's Sling, and Arrow-3 missile defense systems, transferring defense items to Israel, pre-positioning more military equipment in Israel that both allies would have available in a crisis, and by expanding cooperation in cyber security, energy, water, homeland security, agriculture, and alternative fuel technologies. All of these are important, and as a package they do a lot to strengthen our partnership with Israel.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to point out Section 107, the amendment that I proposed at markup and which was accepted by the committee. It states the sense of Congress that the State Department should also increase its coordination with Israel on combating anti-Semitism.

While the State Department is doing excellent work in the fight against the unique evil of anti-Semitism, the government of Israel is going to have an indispensable perspective, experience—including tragic experience—and expertise on the Middle-Eastern security dimensions and implications of anti-Semitic incitement. Our government should be consulting, cooperating, and coordinating with them on this, benefiting from Israeli expertise.

As we see on a sickeningly regular basis, many governments in the Middle East (and elsewhere) propagate anti-Semitic incitement as an official or quasi-official state ideology—the hate that still kills. They do this in order to distract people from their own authoritarian rule and human rights abuses. This constant incitement is a major factor in the security situation in the Middle East. Last February I chaired a hearing at which we heard important testimony from Dr. Zuhdi Jasser on this subject. He made the point that it is not only Jews who suffer from this incitement, but that Muslims suffer too, as Middle-Eastern despots deploy anti-Semitism as one of their principal tools in the subjugation and impoverishment of entire Muslim peoples.

I'd like to put on the record my legislative intent that the State Department's engagement with Israel should include but also go beyond the Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism. In 2004 I offered the amendment that created that office, and so I've followed and supported its excellent work.

But this work is too important to be left to one small office—it should and must include the Department of State at the country team level and above.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment will add a new security dimension to our efforts to combat the pernicious evil of anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism is an ugly reality that won't go away by ignoring or wishing it away. Let's cooperate with Israel in this struggle as well.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California, the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. ROYCE, for yielding me time.

And I thank the gentlewoman from Florida, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for her work on this bill.

H.R. 938 recognizes the longstanding relationship between the United States and Israel and bolsters our cooperation in the area of offshore resources.

This bipartisan legislation expands the scope of an existing grant program to promote research and development for conventional and unconventional natural gas, water desalination, wastewater treatment and reclamation, and other water treatment technologies.

It establishes an Energy Cooperation Working Group with the Israeli government on energy activities. Furthering our dialogue and collaboration on academic innovation and technology advancement will help both our nations leverage energy development.

I commend Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman FRED UPTON and Ranking Member HENRY WAXMAN for their sponsorship of H.R. 3677, which has been incorporated into this bill, and for their leadership on this measure.

Both Republicans and Democrats support the United States' partnership with Israel and expanding our cooperation on energy efficiency and development. H.R. 938 would not only help our efforts to achieve energy independence, but also helps the Israeli people achieve stronger national security.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, anyone who turns on the news for even a few minutes will see our good friend Israel in a region of chaos and unrest.

War in Syria—with refugees pouring into Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon. Violence in Iraq. Upheaval in Egypt. And of course, the threat of nuclear advancement in Iran.

And yet, Israel remains a strong, stable, and reliable ally.

More than ever, we must do all we can to strengthen our critical relationship.

H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013, will do just that.

It designates Israel as a "major strategic partner" and increases our mutually beneficial cooperation in the areas of energy, science, water, agriculture, alternative fuel technologies, and homeland security.

At a time of deep political division in Congress, this bill has across the board support, with 351 cosponsors, a reflection that our alliance with Israel is rooted in shared national interests, common values of democracy and freedom, and a recognition that the same forces threatening Israel also threaten the United States.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 938.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 938, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2014

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2126) to facilitate better alignment, cooperation, and best practices between commercial real estate landlords and tenants regarding energy efficiency in buildings, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2126

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2014".

TITLE I—BETTER BUILDINGS

SEC. 101. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the "Better Buildings Act of 2014".

SEC. 102. ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN FEDERAL AND OTHER BUILDINGS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term "Administrator" means the Administrator of General Services.

(2) COST-EFFECTIVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURE.—The term "cost-effective energy efficiency measure" means any building product, material, equipment, or service, and the installing, implementing, or operating thereof, that provides energy savings in an amount that is not less than the cost of such installing, implementing, or operating.

(3) COST-EFFECTIVE WATER EFFICIENCY MEASURE.—The term "cost-effective water efficiency measure" means any building product, material, equipment, or service, and the installing, implementing, or operating thereof, that provides water savings in an amount that is not less than the cost of such installing, implementing, or operating.

(b) MODEL PROVISIONS, POLICIES, AND BEST PRACTICES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy and after providing the public with an opportunity for notice and comment, shall develop model commercial leasing provisions and best practices in accordance with this subsection.

(2) COMMERCIAL LEASING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The model commercial leasing provisions developed under this subsection shall, at a minimum, align the interests of building owners and tenants with re-

gard to investments in cost-effective energy efficiency measures and cost-effective water efficiency measures to encourage building owners and tenants to collaborate to invest in such measures.

(B) USE OF MODEL PROVISIONS.—The Administrator may use the model commercial leasing provisions developed under this subsection in any standard leasing document that designates a Federal agency (or other client of the Administrator) as a landlord or tenant.

(C) PUBLICATION.—The Administrator shall periodically publish the model commercial leasing provisions developed under this subsection, along with explanatory materials, to encourage building owners and tenants in the private sector to use such provisions and materials.

(3) REALTY SERVICES.—The Administrator shall develop policies and practices to implement cost-effective energy efficiency measures and cost-effective water efficiency measures for the realty services provided by the Administrator to Federal agencies (or other clients of the Administrator), including periodic training of appropriate Federal employees and contractors on how to identify and evaluate those measures.

(4) STATE AND LOCAL ASSISTANCE.—The Administrator, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, shall make available model commercial leasing provisions and best practices developed under this subsection to State, county, and municipal governments for use in managing owned and leased building space in accordance with the goal of encouraging investment in all cost-effective energy efficiency measures and cost-effective water efficiency measures.

SEC. 103. SEPARATE SPACES WITH HIGH-PERFORMANCE ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of title IV of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17081 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"SEC. 424. SEPARATE SPACES WITH HIGH-PERFORMANCE ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) HIGH-PERFORMANCE ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURE.—The term 'high-performance energy efficiency measure' means a technology, product, or practice that will result in substantial operational cost savings by reducing energy consumption and utility costs.

"(2) SEPARATE SPACES.—The term 'separate spaces' means areas within a commercial building that are leased or otherwise occupied by a tenant or other occupant for a period of time pursuant to the terms of a written agreement.

"(b) STUDY.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary, acting through the Assistant Secretary of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, shall complete a study on the feasibility of—

"(A) significantly improving energy efficiency in commercial buildings through the design and construction, by owners and tenants, of separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures; and

"(B) encouraging owners and tenants to implement high-performance energy efficiency measures in separate spaces.

"(2) SCOPE.—The study shall, at a minimum, include—

"(A) descriptions of—

"(i) high-performance energy efficiency measures that should be considered as part of the initial design and construction of separate spaces;

“(ii) processes that owners, tenants, architects, and engineers may replicate when designing and constructing separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures;

“(iii) policies and best practices to achieve reductions in energy intensities for lighting, plug loads, heating, cooling, cooking, laundry, and other systems to satisfy the needs of the commercial building tenant;

“(iv) return on investment and payback analyses of the incremental cost and projected energy savings of the proposed set of high-performance energy efficiency measures, including consideration of available incentives;

“(v) models and simulation methods that predict the quantity of energy used by separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures and that compare that predicted quantity to the quantity of energy used by separate spaces without high-performance energy efficiency measures but that otherwise comply with applicable building code requirements;

“(vi) measurement and verification platforms demonstrating actual energy use of high-performance energy efficiency measures installed in separate spaces, and whether such measures generate the savings intended in the initial design and construction of the separate spaces;

“(vii) best practices that encourage an integrated approach to designing and constructing separate spaces to perform at optimum energy efficiency in conjunction with the central systems of a commercial building; and

“(viii) any impact on employment resulting from the design and construction of separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures; and

“(B) case studies reporting economic and energy savings returns in the design and construction of separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures.

“(3) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall publish a notice in the Federal Register requesting public comments regarding effective methods, measures, and practices for the design and construction of separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures.

“(4) PUBLICATION.—The Secretary shall publish the study on the website of the Department of Energy.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 423 the following new item:

“Sec. 424. Separate spaces with high-performance energy efficiency measures.”.

SEC. 104. TENANT STAR PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle B of title IV of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17081 et seq.) (as amended by section 3) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 425. TENANT STAR PROGRAM.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) HIGH-PERFORMANCE ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURE.—The term ‘high-performance energy efficiency measure’ has the meaning given the term in section 424.

“(2) SEPARATE SPACES.—The term ‘separate spaces’ has the meaning given the term in section 424.

“(b) TENANT STAR.—The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy,

shall develop a voluntary program within the Energy Star program established by section 324A of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6294a), which may be known as Tenant Star, to promote energy efficiency in separate spaces leased by tenants or otherwise occupied within commercial buildings.

“(c) EXPANDING SURVEY DATA.—The Secretary of Energy, acting through the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration, shall—

“(1) collect, through each Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey of the Energy Information Administration that is conducted after the date of enactment of this section, data on—

“(A) categories of building occupancy that are known to consume significant quantities of energy, such as occupancy by data centers, trading floors, and restaurants; and

“(B) other aspects of the property, building operation, or building occupancy determined by the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration, in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, to be relevant in lowering energy consumption;

“(2) with respect to the first Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey conducted after the date of enactment of this section, to the extent full compliance with the requirements of paragraph (1) is not feasible, conduct activities to develop the capability to collect such data and begin to collect such data; and

“(3) make data collected under paragraphs (1) and (2) available to the public in aggregated form and provide such data, and any associated results, to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency for use in accordance with subsection (d).

“(d) RECOGNITION OF OWNERS AND TENANTS.—

“(1) OCCUPANCY-BASED RECOGNITION.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which sufficient data is received pursuant to subsection (c), the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall, following an opportunity for public notice and comment—

“(A) in a manner similar to the Energy Star rating system for commercial buildings, develop policies and procedures to recognize tenants in commercial buildings that voluntarily achieve high levels of energy efficiency in separate spaces;

“(B) establish building occupancy categories eligible for Tenant Star recognition based on the data collected under subsection (c) and any other appropriate data sources; and

“(C) consider other forms of recognition for commercial building tenants or other occupants that lower energy consumption in separate spaces.

“(2) DESIGN- AND CONSTRUCTION-BASED RECOGNITION.—After the study required by section 424(b) is completed, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, in consultation with the Secretary and following an opportunity for public notice and comment, may develop a voluntary program to recognize commercial building owners and tenants that use high-performance energy efficiency measures in the design and construction of separate spaces.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 424 (as added by section 3(b)) the following new item:

“Sec. 425. Tenant Star program.”.

TITLE II—GRID-ENABLED WATER HEATERS

SEC. 201. GRID-ENABLED WATER HEATERS.

Part B of title III of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (42 U.S.C. 6291 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 325(e) (42 U.S.C. 6295(e)), by adding at the end the following:

“(6) ADDITIONAL STANDARDS FOR GRID-ENABLED WATER HEATERS.—

“(A) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

“(i) ACTIVATION LOCK.—The term ‘activation lock’ means a control mechanism (either a physical device directly on the water heater or a control system integrated into the water heater) that is locked by default and contains a physical, software, or digital communication that must be activated with an activation key to enable the product to operate at its designed specifications and capabilities and without which activation the product will provide not greater than 50 percent of the rated first hour delivery of hot water certified by the manufacturer.

“(ii) GRID-ENABLED WATER HEATER.—The term ‘grid-enabled water heater’ means an electric resistance water heater that—

“(I) has a rated storage tank volume of more than 75 gallons;

“(II) is manufactured on or after April 16, 2015;

“(III) has—

“(aa) an energy factor of not less than 1.061 minus the product obtained by multiplying—

“(AA) the rated storage volume of the tank, expressed in gallons; and

“(BB) 0.00168; or

“(bb) an equivalent alternative standard prescribed by the Secretary and developed pursuant to paragraph (5)(E);

“(IV) is equipped at the point of manufacture with an activation lock; and

“(V) bears a permanent label applied by the manufacturer that—

“(aa) is made of material not adversely affected by water;

“(bb) is attached by means of non-water-soluble adhesive; and

“(cc) advises purchasers and end-users of the intended and appropriate use of the product with the following notice printed in 16.5 point Arial Narrow Bold font:

“‘IMPORTANT INFORMATION: This water heater is intended only for use as part of an electric thermal storage or demand response program. It will not provide adequate hot water unless enrolled in such a program and activated by your utility company or another program operator. Confirm the availability of a program in your local area before purchasing or installing this product.’”.

“(B) REQUIREMENT.—The manufacturer or private labeler shall provide the activation key for a grid-enabled water heater only to a utility or other company that operates an electric thermal storage or demand response program that uses such a grid-enabled water heater.

“(C) REPORTS.—

“(i) MANUFACTURERS.—The Secretary shall require each manufacturer of grid-enabled water heaters to report to the Secretary annually the quantity of grid-enabled water heaters that the manufacturer ships each year.

“(ii) OPERATORS.—The Secretary shall require utilities and other demand response and thermal storage program operators to report annually the quantity of grid-enabled water heaters activated for their programs using forms of the Energy Information Agency or using such other mechanism that the Secretary determines appropriate after an opportunity for notice and comment.

“(iii) CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall treat shipment data reported by manufacturers as confidential business information.

“(D) PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In 2017 and 2019, the Secretary shall publish an analysis of the data collected under subparagraph (C) to assess the extent to which shipped products are put into use in demand response and thermal storage programs.

“(ii) PREVENTION OF PRODUCT DIVERSION.—If the Secretary determines that sales of grid-enabled water heaters exceed by 15 percent or greater the quantity of such products activated for use in demand response and thermal storage programs annually, the Secretary shall, after opportunity for notice and comment, establish procedures to prevent product diversion for non-program purposes.

“(E) COMPLIANCE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraphs (A) through (D) shall remain in effect until the Secretary determines under this section that—

“(I) grid-enabled water heaters do not require a separate efficiency requirement; or

“(II) sales of grid-enabled water heaters exceed by 15 percent or greater the quantity of such products activated for use in demand response and thermal storage programs annually and procedures to prevent product diversion for non-program purposes would not be adequate to prevent such product diversion.

“(ii) EFFECTIVE DATE.—If the Secretary exercises the authority described in clause (i) or amends the efficiency requirement for grid-enabled water heaters, that action will take effect on the date described in subsection (m)(4)(A)(ii).

“(iii) CONSIDERATION.—In carrying out this section with respect to electric water heaters, the Secretary shall consider the impact on thermal storage and demand response programs, including any impact on energy savings, electric bills, peak load reduction, electric reliability, integration of renewable resources, and the environment.

“(iv) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out this paragraph, the Secretary shall require that grid-enabled water heaters be equipped with communication capability to enable the grid-enabled water heaters to participate in ancillary services programs if the Secretary determines that the technology is available, practical, and cost-effective.”;

(2) in section 332(a) (42 U.S.C. 6302(a))—

(A) in paragraph (5), by striking “or” at the end;

(B) in the first paragraph (6), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon;

(C) by redesignating the second paragraph (6) as paragraph (7);

(D) in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (7) (as so redesignated), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”; and

(E) by adding at the end the following:

“(8) for any person to—

“(A) activate an activation lock for a grid-enabled water heater with knowledge that such water heater is not used as part of an electric thermal storage or demand response program;

“(B) distribute an activation key for a grid-enabled water heater with knowledge that such activation key will be used to activate a grid-enabled water heater that is not used as part of an electric thermal storage or demand response program;

“(C) otherwise enable a grid-enabled water heater to operate at its designed specification and capabilities with knowledge that

such water heater is not used as part of an electric thermal storage or demand response program; or

“(D) knowingly remove or render illegible the label of a grid-enabled water heater described in section 325(e)(6)(A)(ii)(V).”;

(3) in section 333(a) (42 U.S.C. 6303(a))—

(A) by striking “section 332(a)(5)” and inserting “paragraph (5), (6), (7), or (8) of section 332(a)”; and

(B) by striking “paragraph (1), (2), or (5) of section 332(a)” and inserting “paragraph (1), (2), (5), (6), (7), or (8) of section 332(a)”; and

(4) in section 334 (42 U.S.C. 6304)—

(A) by striking “section 332(a)(5)” and inserting “paragraph (5), (6), (7), or (8) of section 332(a)”; and

(B) by striking “section 332(a)(6)” and inserting “section 332(a)(7)”.

TITLE III—ENERGY EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY

SEC. 301. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Energy Efficient Government Technology Act”.

SEC. 302. ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND ENERGY-SAVING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.

Subtitle C of title V of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–140; 121 Stat. 1661) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 530. ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND ENERGY-SAVING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES.

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) DIRECTOR.—The term ‘Director’ means the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

“(2) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.—The term ‘information technology’ has the meaning given that term in section 11101 of title 40, United States Code.

“(b) DEVELOPMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, each Federal agency shall coordinate with the Director, the Secretary, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to develop an implementation strategy (that includes best practices and measurement and verification techniques) for the maintenance, purchase, and use by the Federal agency of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technologies, taking into consideration the performance goals established under subsection (d).

“(c) ADMINISTRATION.—In developing an implementation strategy under subsection (b), each Federal agency shall consider—

“(1) advanced metering infrastructure;

“(2) energy-efficient data center strategies and methods of increasing asset and infrastructure utilization;

“(3) advanced power management tools;

“(4) building information modeling, including building energy management;

“(5) secure telework and travel substitution tools; and

“(6) mechanisms to ensure that the agency realizes the energy cost savings brought about through increased efficiency and utilization.

“(d) PERFORMANCE GOALS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Director, in consultation with the Secretary, shall establish performance goals for evaluating the efforts of Federal agencies in improving the maintenance, purchase, and use of energy-efficient and energy-saving information technology.

“(2) BEST PRACTICES.—The Chief Information Officers Council established under section 3603 of title 44, United States Code, shall recommend best practices for the attainment of the performance goals, which shall

include Federal agency consideration of the use of—

“(A) energy savings performance contracting; and

“(B) utility energy services contracting.

“(e) REPORTS.—

“(1) AGENCY REPORTS.—Each Federal agency shall include in the report of the agency under section 527 a description of the efforts and results of the agency under this section.

“(2) OMB GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY REPORTS AND SCORECARDS.—Effective beginning not later than October 1, 2015, the Director shall include in the annual report and scorecard of the Director required under section 528 a description of the efforts and results of Federal agencies under this section.”.

SEC. 303. ENERGY EFFICIENT DATA CENTERS.

Section 453 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17112) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (b)(3); and

(2) by striking subsections (c) through (g) and inserting the following:

“(c) STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall carry out subsection (b) in collaboration with information technology industry and other key stakeholders, with the goal of producing results that accurately reflect the best knowledge in the most pertinent domains. In such collaboration, the Secretary and the Administrator shall pay particular attention to organizations that—

“(1) have members with expertise in energy efficiency and in the development, operation, and functionality of data centers, information technology equipment, and software, such as representatives of hardware manufacturers, data center operators, and facility managers;

“(2) obtain and address input from Department of Energy National Laboratories or any college, university, research institution, industry association, company, or public interest group with applicable expertise;

“(3) follow—

“(A) commonly accepted procedures for the development of specifications; and

“(B) accredited standards development processes; and

“(4) have a mission to promote energy efficiency for data centers and information technology.

“(d) MEASUREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall consider and assess the adequacy of the specifications, measurements, and benchmarks described in subsection (b) for use by the Federal Energy Management Program, the Energy Star Program, and other efficiency programs of the Department of Energy or the Environmental Protection Agency.

“(e) STUDY.—The Secretary, in collaboration with the Administrator, shall, not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Energy Efficient Government Technology Act, make available to the public an update to the Report to Congress on Server and Data Center Energy Efficiency published on August 2, 2007, under section 1 of Public Law 109–431 (120 Stat. 2920), that provides—

“(1) a comparison and gap analysis of the estimates and projections contained in the original report with new data regarding the period from 2007 through 2014;

“(2) an analysis considering the impact of information technologies, to include virtualization and cloud computing, in the public and private sectors;

“(3) an evaluation of the impact of the combination of cloud platforms, mobile devices, social media, and big data on data center energy usage; and

“(4) updated projections and recommendations for best practices through fiscal year 2020.

“(f) DATA CENTER ENERGY PRACTITIONER PROGRAM.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall maintain a data center energy practitioner program that leads to the certification of energy practitioners qualified to evaluate the energy usage and efficiency opportunities in Federal data centers. Each Federal agency shall consider having the data centers of the agency evaluated every 4 years by energy practitioners certified pursuant to such program, whenever practicable using certified practitioners employed by the agency.

“(g) OPEN DATA INITIATIVE.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders and the Office of Management and Budget, shall establish an open data initiative for Federal data center energy usage data, with the purpose of making such data available and accessible in a manner that encourages further data center innovation, optimization, and consolidation. In establishing the initiative, the Secretary shall consider the use of the online Data Center Maturity Model.

“(h) INTERNATIONAL SPECIFICATIONS AND METRICS.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders, shall actively participate in efforts to harmonize global specifications and metrics for data center energy efficiency.

“(i) DATA CENTER UTILIZATION METRIC.—The Secretary, in collaboration with key stakeholders, shall facilitate in the development of an efficiency metric that measures the energy efficiency of a data center (including equipment and facilities).

“(j) PROTECTION OF PROPRIETARY INFORMATION.—The Secretary and the Administrator shall not disclose any proprietary information or trade secrets provided by any individual or company for the purposes of carrying out this section or the programs and initiatives established under this section.”.

TITLE IV—ENERGY INFORMATION FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

SEC. 401. ENERGY INFORMATION FOR COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS.

(a) REQUIREMENT OF BENCHMARKING AND DISCLOSURE FOR LEASING BUILDINGS WITHOUT ENERGY STAR LABELS.—Section 435(b)(2) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17091(b)(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking “paragraph (2)” and inserting “paragraph (1)”; and

(2) by striking “signing the contract,” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting the following:

“signing the contract, the following requirements are met:

“(A) The space is renovated for all energy efficiency and conservation improvements that would be cost effective over the life of the lease, including improvements in lighting, windows, and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems.

“(B)(i) Subject to clause (ii), the space is benchmarked under a nationally recognized, online, free benchmarking program, with public disclosure, unless the space is a space for which owners cannot access whole building utility consumption data, including spaces—

“(I) that are located in States with privacy laws that provide that utilities shall not provide such aggregated information to multi-tenant building owners; and

“(II) for which tenants do not provide energy consumption information to the commercial building owner in response to a request from the building owner.

“(ii) A Federal agency that is a tenant of the space shall provide to the building owner, or authorize the owner to obtain from the utility, the energy consumption information of the space for the benchmarking and disclosure required by this subparagraph.”.

(b) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Energy, in collaboration with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall complete a study—

(A) on the impact of—

(i) State and local performance benchmarking and disclosure policies, and any associated building efficiency policies, for commercial and multifamily buildings; and

(ii) programs and systems in which utilities provide aggregated information regarding whole building energy consumption and usage information to owners of multitenant commercial, residential, and mixed-use buildings;

(B) that identifies best practice policy approaches studied under subparagraph (A) that have resulted in the greatest improvements in building energy efficiency; and

(C) that considers—

(i) compliance rates and the benefits and costs of the policies and programs on building owners, utilities, tenants, and other parties;

(ii) utility practices, programs, and systems that provide aggregated energy consumption information to multitenant building owners, and the impact of public utility commissions and State privacy laws on those practices, programs, and systems;

(iii) exceptions to compliance in existing laws where building owners are not able to gather or access whole building energy information from tenants or utilities;

(iv) the treatment of buildings with—

(I) multiple uses;

(II) uses for which baseline information is not available; and

(III) uses that require high levels of energy intensities, such as data centers, trading floors, and television studios;

(v) implementation practices, including disclosure methods and phase-in of compliance;

(vi) the safety and security of benchmarking tools offered by government agencies, and the resiliency of those tools against cyber-attacks; and

(vii) international experiences with regard to building benchmarking and disclosure laws and data aggregation for multitenant buildings.

(2) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—At the conclusion of the study, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report on the results of the study.

(c) CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF DATABASE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act and following opportunity for public notice and comment, the Secretary of Energy, in coordination with other relevant agencies, shall maintain, and if necessary create, a database for the purpose of storing and making available public energy-related information on commercial and multifamily buildings, including—

(A) data provided under Federal, State, local, and other laws or programs regarding building benchmarking and energy information disclosure;

(B) information on buildings that have disclosed energy ratings and certifications; and

(C) energy-related information on buildings provided voluntarily by the owners of the buildings, only in an anonymous form unless the owner provides otherwise.

(2) COMPLEMENTARY PROGRAMS.—The database maintained pursuant to paragraph (1) shall complement and not duplicate the functions of the Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star Portfolio Manager tool.

(d) INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS.—The Secretary of Energy shall seek input from stakeholders to maximize the effectiveness of the actions taken under this section.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 2 years thereafter, the Secretary of Energy shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report on the progress made in complying with this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials in the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The benefits of energy efficiency are something that both the Republicans and Democrats agree on as evidenced by the modest but robust package we are considering today. Reducing waste and consuming less energy are commonsense strategies to cut costs and address U.S. energy demand.

I want to thank Mr. WELCH and Mr. MCKINLEY for their leadership on this energy efficiency bill. Both they and their staffs have worked very hard on this legislation as have the committee staffs, both Democrat and Republican.

The U.S. has steadily improved its energy productivity as a result of advances in technology, driven primarily by private sector innovation. In particular, the industrial and manufacturing sectors have undertaken significant efforts to improve efficiency and reap the resulting economic benefits. The Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2014 supports these ongoing efforts by spurring the use of energy efficiency technologies and processes in the commercial, industrial, and public sectors of our economy. The legislation saves consumers money through lowered energy consumption, helps create jobs, makes our country more energy

independent, and will produce associated environmental benefits. Critically, this bill will make the country's largest energy user, the Federal Government, more efficient, thereby saving taxpayer money.

I am delighted that we have this bill on the floor today. I look forward to working with the Members of the body to make sure that we pass this legislation, and I would urge their support.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, February 26, 2014.
Hon. BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure, Rayburn House Office
Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER, Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 2126, the "Better Buildings Act of 2013." As you noted, there are provisions of H.R. 2126 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and I appreciate your willingness to forgo action on the bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

I agree that your decision should not alter or diminish the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure with respect to the appointment of conferees or any future claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation, and I will support the appointment of Members of the Committee to any conference committee on such provisions.

I will include a copy of your letter and this response in the Congressional Record during consideration of H.R. 2126 on the House floor.

Sincerely,

FRED UPTON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COM-
MITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, February 26, 2014.
Hon. FRED UPTON,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce,
Rayburn House Office Building, Wash-
ington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write concerning H.R. 2126, the Better Buildings Act of 2013, as ordered reported by the Committee on Energy and Commerce. There are certain provisions in the legislation that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

In order to expedite this legislation for floor consideration, the Committee will forgo action on this bill. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding that forgoing consideration of the bill does not alter or diminish the jurisdiction of the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation. I request you urge the Speaker to name members of the Committee to any conference committee named to consider such provisions.

Please place a copy of this letter and your response acknowledging our jurisdictional interest into the Congressional Record during consideration of the measure on the House Floor.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Chairman UPTON, Chairman WHITFIELD, and Ranking Members WAXMAN and RUSH, I thank all of you for working with us to move this bipartisan legislation today.

Mr. WHITFIELD, I want to particularly thank you for your leadership on the subcommittee.

Thank you as well to my colleague DAVID MCKINLEY for partnering with me on this issue. Mr. MCKINLEY has an extraordinary background as an engineer and small business owner. He has real practical knowledge that has been extremely helpful, and he has brought invaluable expertise to our committee. I am grateful to him, and this whole body should be grateful to him for his partnership.

The bill today also includes some very good ideas advanced by other Members of Congress: Representatives ESHOO, ROGERS, MATHESON, LATTA, and CASTOR. I thank all of them for their leadership on this issue.

Lastly, I want to thank House leaders, especially Majority Leader CANTOR. He and his staff—Steve Stombres—have been enormously cooperative in dealing with some of the thorny problems that arise whenever there is a complicated piece of legislation to be considered. So thank you.

Like Mr. WHITFIELD, I have long believed that energy efficiency is an area in which we have common ground in what is too often a very divided Congress.

Mr. WHITFIELD, I thank you for focusing on that common ground.

Why is it so good?

Because saving energy does three things. It creates jobs. All of the energy efficiency labor is done by local folks who need work. It creates manufacturing jobs because 90 percent of the materials used in energy efficiency are manufactured in this country. It saves money and it improves the environment.

□ 1530

So we can, and do, disagree in this Congress on the causes of climate change and the best fuel mix to meet America's energy demands, but we can all agree that less is more. Whatever your fuel source, if you use less, you save money, and that is good for all of us concerned.

We can also agree that creating demand for American-made energy-efficient products will also create good jobs. In energy efficiency, our cheapest fuel requires, as I said, labor and manufactured goods that are made in America.

We can also all agree that cutting the energy bills of homeowners, businesses, and the Federal Government—therefore, the taxpayer—is a very good thing.

Mr. Speaker, Vermont, which I represent, has long been a leader in energy efficiency. My home State was the first

to set up what was called an energy efficiency utility. That utility, Efficiency Vermont, has done outstanding work for the past 20 years.

Basically, what it acknowledges and understands is that a kilowatt saved is a cost avoided. Last year alone, Efficiency Vermont's work yielded a lifetime customer savings of \$206 million for our small State in Vermont.

The Energy Efficiency Improvement Act is an important first step in making America more energy efficient. It includes the Better Buildings Act, also known as Tenant Star, which will drive private sector innovation in energy efficiency.

By the way, again, Mr. WHITFIELD, I appreciate this.

This is a public-private partnership. This is not a prescriptive arrangement. It requires good policy at the Federal level, with cooperation and opportunity-seizing at the private level.

Homes and buildings consume 40 percent of our energy in the United States. It is really huge. In commercial buildings, owners report that tenants consume up to 50 percent or more of the total energy output.

One of the challenges our commercial building owners and developers face has been the issue of split incentives. Building owners and renters are not always on the same page when it comes to energy performance. Part of the problem is that only one party is paying the energy bill. The other part of the problem is that, while we recognize energy efficient buildings through the Energy Star program, we have no similar recognition program for tenant spaces.

Our bill creates a voluntary Tenant Star recognition program for separate spaces in commercial buildings. When we combine Energy Star buildings with Tenant Star rentals, we can optimize energy efficiency in shortened payback periods.

A good example of this synergy can be found in Energy Star-certified Vermont Innovation Center, located in Burlington, Vermont. The Vermont Energy Investment Corporation, or VEIC, has its office in that building. VEIC took aggressive action to optimize the efficiency of its tenant space within the building. It converted the overhead fluorescent lighting to highly efficient LEDs and applied 6 inches of spray foam insulation to the exterior walls.

Making these improvements in an Energy Star building optimized an already efficient tenant space, but VEIC expects to save nearly \$11,000 a year in energy savings. Where I come from, that is real money.

However, there is no recognition program for these improvements, and we don't know what else VEIC could be doing to increase energy savings. Under this bill, we will study the best ways to optimize commercial tenant

spaces and then recognize those spaces with a new Tenant Star label.

By combining energy efficient tenant build-out with Energy Star buildings, we will double down on a successful program and optimize energy savings in commercial buildings.

In addition to Tenant Star, this legislation includes three other important energy provisions. Again, I thank Mr. WHITFIELD for his leadership in allowing other good ideas to be part of this legislation.

First, it is going to increase the energy efficiency of Federal Government data centers. They are huge energy consumers. Data centers use massive amounts of energy. This legislation will finally begin to address the enormous Federal energy bill for those facilities.

Second, this bill addresses a serious regulatory problem involving large-scale water heaters.

Sometimes we have an argument back and forth about regulations. What I love about this bill, among other things, is we are fixing a problem, not just fighting about it.

It is going to make needed changes to energy efficiency standards for large water heaters that are used in demand response programs. These water heaters act as residential energy storage devices and allow utilities to curb energy demand during peak hours.

So we are giving some of our rural electric cooperatives tools they need to keep the cost and energy demand down.

Finally, the bill will disclose the amount of energy consumed in federally leased buildings and begin benchmarking these buildings.

The Energy Efficiency Improvement Act, comprised of these four components, is an important first step towards energy efficiency, but more work remains. In the coming weeks, I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass the McKinley-Welch-Shaheen-Portman legislation, which will establish national model building codes. We also need to pass legislation to encourage performance contracting in Federal buildings and to streamline the Federal green schools project.

Energy efficiency, as Mr. WHITFIELD said, Mr. Speaker, is a bipartisan issue. I am extremely encouraged by the steps we are taking today. I look forward to working with the chairman, ranking member, and House leaders to bring more bills to the floor in the coming weeks.

I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. I want to thank the gentleman for his remarks. Also, I certainly want to thank Ms. ESHOO of California for the leadership she's had on this position, as well as our chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, Mr. UPTON.

At this time I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON).

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, today, we continue our pursuit of a true all-of-the-above energy policy as the House considers H.R. 2126, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act. I am very pleased that this bill combines four individual bipartisan proposals developed by members of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Energy efficiency measures are some of the simplest and most affordable methods to address U.S. energy demand and lower costs, but significant energy efficiency opportunities and challenges certainly remain. This legislative package helps embrace these opportunities and meet many challenges to advance U.S. energy goals.

Using a voluntary, market-driven approach, this bipartisan legislation will help harness new technologies and support private sector innovation to develop more efficient ways of utilizing energy.

H.R. 2126 also seeks to improve Federal energy efficiency, a critical initiative, given that the Federal Government is the Nation's largest user of energy. Utilizing energy savings techniques can significantly reduce the amount of U.S. taxpayer dollars spent on Federal energy costs.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to American energy, everything needs to be on the table: coal, nuclear, natural gas, hydro, wind, solar—you name it, and yes, improving energy efficiency is an important part of the all-of-the-above equation.

The passage of this important energy efficiency bill will help us as we continue to work together on a bipartisan basis in the coming months and years to tackle the many energy challenges facing the Nation. We have a lot of work to do.

Basically, what this bill does is takes four individual bills that we had. One was led by the really good work of Mr. WELCH and Mr. MCKINLEY to establish a Tenant Star program to voluntarily certify within Energy Star, which would promote energy efficiency.

It takes a Whitfield bill on grid-enabled water heaters. I commend Ms. ESHOO and MIKE ROGERS—again, a bipartisan combination—in adding more energy efficient savings technologies in a major way to help us.

It also takes a Castor bill on energy information for commercial buildings.

Together, many of us sat down with the then-chairman of the Senate Energy Committee, Mr. WYDEN, about a year ago on things that we could work on together, and we have proved it with this legislation. These bills had unanimous support within our committee. We worked together. Ultimately, it is going to help the American consumer and the Federal Government—again, the largest user of electricity—and shows we can get things done.

So we have Mr. WELCH, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. WHITFIELD, MIKE ROGERS, Ms. CAS-

TOR, and also Mr. WAXMAN and his staff, too. I know that he wishes he was on the floor. Together, we really did get this thing worked out in a way that the American public would be certainly very proud of.

I know that we have lost Mr. WYDEN. He has moved to another committee, but I would hope that a strong vote this afternoon would send a pretty good message to the Senate that in fact they can embrace these bills.

A week or two ago, the majority leader said something along the lines of he wanted to pick a number of issues we can work on together and get them out of the way and get them to the President's desk. These are pretty good bills. I would like to think that once we pass these, the new leadership there in the Senate Energy Committee could simply move these bills from the desk and get them to the President's desk in an expeditious way.

So I want to conclude by thanking my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for developing this legislation that in fact we are supporting. I would encourage all of my colleagues to stand up for an all-of-the-above energy policy and support passage of the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO).

Ms. ESHOO. I thank my friend and my colleague for yielding. I thank him for the work that he has done, as well as Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. MCKINLEY, Ms. CASTOR, and staff on both sides of the aisle. It feels good to come to the floor to speak on a package of bills that are bipartisan and that are really going to produce something for our country and help move us forward.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today in support of the package of these four bipartisan energy efficiency bills because they are going to save taxpayer dollars. They are very important.

Title III of this legislation is a bill that I authored with Congressman MIKE ROGERS of Michigan to make the Federal Government's IT and data centers more energy efficient. We have been at this for a long time. By requiring Federal agencies to utilize the best technologies and energy management strategies, our legislation will reduce the Federal Government's energy use, save taxpayer dollars, and importantly, set the standard for the private sector.

While we now routinely hear a lot about data centers, that was not the case when we started out examining this issue a decade ago. Back then, I had to explain to colleagues what a data center was. Today, just about everybody understands that data centers are a critical part of our national infrastructure and are found in nearly every sector of our economy.

In 2005, I authored language in the Energy Policy Act that mandated an EPA study relative to energy use and

energy costs of data centers. The report was transmitted to Congress in 2007 and served as a driver of both private and public investment in energy efficiency. Based on widespread agreement across government, industry, and academia, the bill before us today requires an update to that 2007 report.

Data centers can be extremely energy inefficient. Experts estimate that most data centers could slash their energy use by 80 to 90 percent. That really takes our collective breath away. There are enormous opportunities in this by simply implementing existing technologies and best practices.

So we can do this. We can get this done.

While several companies in my Silicon Valley district have taken the lead in developing efficient, sustainable data centers, we can do much better across the private sector and the Federal Government.

□ 1545

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. WELCH. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. ESHOO. I thank the gentleman.

The Federal Government is the Nation's largest landowner, largest employer, and largest energy user, and so we should lead by example in improving the energy efficiency of our own data centers within the Federal Government.

So the bill that Mr. ROGERS and I have embedded in this package requires Federal agencies to do some really rather simple things that are going to lead to terrific outcomes. They need to develop plans to use more energy-efficient technologies and best practices, and require periodic evaluation of Federal data centers for energy efficiency.

I want to thank Chairman UPTON, Ranking Member WAXMAN, the staffs from both sides of the aisle, the Members that are part of the legislation that is part of this bipartisan package.

And I also want to salute Paul Beck, who serves on my staff in my office, who has really been the wind beneath the sails of this bill. He has lived and breathed efficiency in data centers day in and day out.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY), who is the author of title I of this legislation.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2126.

While there are many differing views in Congress, there is one common ground, and that is energy efficiency. Finding ways to use energy more efficiently is simply common sense.

This legislation will provide this country with a market-driven, voluntary, best practice approach to reduce energy consumption. It is an area where Republicans and Democrats can

work together efficiently. That is why PETER WELCH and I have developed a wonderful working relationship and developed an issue on energy that crosses this and other pieces of legislation.

As one of just two engineers in Congress, and having spent nearly 50 years in the construction industry, I understand what steps we need to take to make our buildings more efficient. That is why we brought together a broad coalition of support for this legislation, supported by everyone from manufacturers, restaurants, contractors, labor, environmental groups. Even the gaming industry is supporting this legislation. It is estimated to lower energy costs by over \$2 billion and result in reduced carbon emissions by nearly 12 million tons. It helps move our Nation closer to energy independence.

I would like to thank Chairman UPTON and Ranking Member WAXMAN for allowing this bipartisan bill to come to the floor, and Congressman WHITFIELD for helping out on all the legislation, as well as Mr. WELCH.

Engineers know how to make buildings operate more efficiently. Maybe our next step would be to make Congress run more efficiently.

I urge all my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is going to take a lot more engineers to get this place operating a lot better, but this was a step.

Mr. WHITFIELD wasn't here when I was bragging on him, Mr. Speaker. You have got that practical knowledge from his year of experience in construction and that engineering background.

But here is the other thing. There is a big debate about carbon emissions. I happen to be someone who thinks it is a very, very serious problem. But if we—even under the Waxman-Markey bill, which passed the House and then did not pass the Senate, with a goal of reduction of 80 percent of carbon emissions by 2050, 40 percent were going to be achieved through energy efficiency. So this is a really big deal.

There are questions about a lot of things on energy policy, but where we do have this common ground with significant leadership on both sides of the aisle, that energy efficiency is an approach that really makes sense, then we can and should do it. So I am very grateful to all concerned in pulling together to take the first really solid step towards embracing an energy efficiency agenda as part of an all-of-the-above strategy on energy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. HIMES).

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I rise briefly just to salute the leadership of Representative MCKINLEY and my good friend from Vermont, PETER WELCH, for a bill which does some spectacular

things. Specifically, it really enshrines the idea that the cheapest and cleanest energy that we have is that energy which we conserve and don't use, that we make available for the future.

This—and I draw on my history now of building affordable housing in a green fashion—is a real win-win. It means that people are paying lower utility bills if they employ the methods that will be encouraged by this bill. It means that we are putting less carbon in the atmosphere, and this coming from somebody recently down from Connecticut where we have experienced, in the last several years, climate problems unlike any that we have ever seen. And of course, we are doing the right thing by the future.

This is also, in a challenging time for this Chamber, a remarkable example of Democrats and Republicans working together to achieve something that will benefit not just the people in this Chamber, but will benefit the country and future generations. This is something we should build on. There is so much more we can do with respect to reconfiguring our economy and our industry and our residences so that they are clean and driven by cheap, sustainable, American energy.

So, Mr. Speaker, I close now just as I opened, by thanking Representative MCKINLEY and Representative WELCH for their tremendous leadership and say that I very much look forward to supporting this bill later on today.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, we do not have any more speakers, so I would reserve the balance of my time if the gentleman wants to proceed.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Vermont has 4½ minutes remaining.

Mr. WELCH. Well, I will just close briefly. I don't believe we have any other speakers.

Again, there are several things here:

One is the wisdom of an energy efficiency policy, less is more; and whether you are consuming oil or solar, if you use less, you are going to save money. It is good for the bottom line;

Second, any energy efficiency means that we are going to keep in the ground for future use any other fuels that we may need down the road;

Third, any energy efficiency requires implementation of energy efficiency retrofits. That is local labor, good jobs, and the use of locally manufactured products;

Fourth, energy efficiency means that we do not have to build more generating capacity in order to generate. That saves money;

Fifth, what it does is it cuts down on carbon emissions. It is all a really good thing.

Then finally, several speakers have referred to Congress, and we all know we have had our challenges here, and it

is a function, to some extent, of real debates among the American people that we reflect to some extent. We can't get out of our own way sometimes with some of our rules. But what we know is that, at the end the day, this institution has to be a problem-solving institution that works for the American people. And what we have done here, with Mr. UPTON and Mr. WHITFIELD being the leaders with the responsible positions, is focused on areas where we agree. And they are meaningful areas. It is not a split-the-difference type of deal where we have just shaved so much off that it really is not significant. What we have done is put aside areas where we have real disagreement and haven't reached consensus and then doubled down on that area of efficiency where there is common ground.

We have taken good ideas, whether they have been offered by a Republican or a Democrat, and we have kept disciplined to have this legislation be about efficiency and a policy that is going to work for the American people, and we haven't turned it, either side, into a political Christmas tree that allows us to make some extraneous points. In my view, I think we need to do more of that.

I was very heartened in Congress when we had a budget agreement that was reached with the leadership of PAUL RYAN in the House and Senator MURRAY in the Senate. I was happy we had an appropriations bill that did reflect a lot of give-and-take on both sides, and I was very pleased we had a farm bill. Again, lots of things to debate in that farm bill, but we need a 5-year farm bill for the people.

And now, on energy, we finally pass something that both sides can legitimately be proud of because it is real policy. It is important policy that is going to be beneficial to the bottom line to the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to add on the words of the gentleman from Vermont, first of all, once again, just to say how much we enjoyed working with him and the others on this important legislation.

We do firmly believe that the American people will benefit from this. We all recognize that energy is one of the components that goes a long way in determining how competitive America can be in the global marketplace, and any time you can improve efficiency, you improve that competitiveness. So I would urge all of our Members to support H.R. 2126, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2014.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today, I urge the House of Representatives to pass this bipartisan energy efficiency legislation, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of

2014, that would take a best practices approach to achieving optimal performance levels in commercial buildings and identify energy efficiency improvements in federal government data centers and leased buildings. This piece of legislation will save energy, save taxpayer dollars, lower consumers' energy bills and reduce harmful pollution.

I want to thank Chairman UPTON and Ranking Member WAXMAN of the Energy and Commerce Committee and Chairman WHITFIELD and Ranking Member RUSH of the Energy and Power Subcommittee for including my bill, H.R. 3820, a bill to encourage benchmarking and disclosure of energy information in commercial buildings, as Title IV of the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act.

Existing federal law requires benchmarking of federally owned buildings. Benchmarking is a practice that allows building owners to assess the energy use of their buildings and compare their performance to similar buildings. My bill builds on existing law by requiring federally leased buildings to benchmark and disclose their energy usage data, where practical.

Benchmarking helps owners identify buildings that can most benefit from energy upgrades. The federal Energy Star Buildings program has encouraged benchmarking for many years and the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that this program has benchmarked more than 185 million square feet of U.S. commercial floor space, resulting in average energy savings of about 5 percent in these buildings.

My bill requires a benchmarking study for commercial and multi-family buildings. A number of U.S. cities encourage or require benchmarking for large commercial or multi-family buildings. This information helps building owners, purchasers and renters make more informed decisions. This piece of legislation requires the Department of Energy, in collaboration with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, to conduct a study on benchmarking methodologies so that cities and states can avoid pitfalls and implement best practices.

I hope that passage of the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act marks a period of bipartisan cooperation. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee on solving the nation's energy issues and other pressing matters.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues on the House Energy and Commerce Committee for their leadership and shared goal of promoting legislation that incentivizes stakeholders to manufacture and implement energy efficient technologies throughout our economy. Congress should always be looking for creative ways to incentivize our great American innovators like A.O. Smith to manufacture energy efficient technologies that consumers clearly want. So I commend you on your dedication to this effort and look forward to supporting H.R. 2126.

Sometimes we don't have to look too hard for ways to unleash American innovation and promote energy efficiency. Sometimes, we just have to use common sense and get the Federal Government out of the way.

One concrete way Congress can force the government to get out of the way of our job

creators would be to require the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency to recognize independent test results for air conditioning, furnace, boiler, heat pump and water heater products that are already subject to the rigors of an independent voluntary industry compliance program (or "VICP").

Through the VICP, manufacturers of these highly efficient products contract with an independent, third-party laboratory to ensure their products comply with federal efficiency and conservation standards. Manufacturers spend millions to participate and run the VICP, and the program has been a resounding success for years.

But the federal government won't accept VICP data for compliance purposes. Instead, the DOE and EPA (which manages the Energy Star program) force manufacturers that participate in the VICP to subject their products to two additional rounds of tests to satisfy agency standards. But to make matters worse, the DOE and EPA tests aren't any different than the VICP tests. Each test takes place at the same laboratories responsible for the VICP tests, with the same technicians on the same products.

The end result: manufacturers of highly efficient air conditioning, furnace, boiler, heat pump and water heater products pay for three rounds of tests to effectuate the same result: making federal regulators happy.

That, my colleagues, smacks of inefficient government bureaucracy that serves no purpose other than redirecting operational capital to satisfy the whims of the Obama Administration. We can and should do a better job of incentivizing manufacturers to innovate and invest in job creation—not to waste precious operational capital on complying with nonsensical bureaucratic mandates.

I intend to eliminate this regulatory roadblock through legislation very similar to an amendment introduced last September by Senators SESSIONS and PRYOR during debate for S. 1392. That amendment, in the words of Senator SESSIONS, would have "require[d] the Energy Department, when conducting routine testing to verify product ratings, to rely on data submitted through voluntary, independent certification programs" that satisfy a robust test of independence and transparency.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2126, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

THE BUDGET MESSAGE OF THE
PRESIDENT—MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED
STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113-84)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

After 5 years of grit and determined effort, the United States is better positioned for the 21st Century than any other nation on Earth. We have created more than 8 million new jobs in the last 4 years and now have the lowest unemployment rate in over 5 years. Our housing market is rebounding. Our manufacturing sector is adding jobs for the first time since the 1990s. We now produce more oil at home than we buy from the rest of the world. We have cut our deficits by more than half since I took office. And for the first time in over a decade, business leaders around the world have declared that China is no longer the world's number one place to invest; America is.

We have made great progress, but we must do more to rebuild our economy on a new foundation for growth and prosperity. I believe that what unites the people of this Nation, regardless of race or region or party, young or old, rich or poor, is the simple, profound belief in opportunity for all—the notion that if you work hard and take responsibility, you can get ahead. That belief has suffered some serious blows. Over more than three decades, even before the Great Recession hit, massive shifts in technology and global competition had eliminated good, middle class jobs and weakened the economic foundations that families depend on.

Today, after 4 years of economic growth, corporate profits and stock prices have rarely been higher, and those at the top have never done better. But average wages have barely budged. Inequality has deepened. Upward mobility remains stalled. Even in the midst of recovery, too many Americans are working more than ever just to get by—let alone get ahead. And too many still are not working at all.

Our job is to reverse these trends. We need to return to an America where our success depends not on accident of birth, but on the strength of our work ethic and the scope of our dreams. That is what drew our forebears here. Opportunity is who we are. And the defining project of our generation is to restore that promise. It will not happen right away. But we must continue to strive toward that goal.

What I offer in this Budget is a set of concrete, practical proposals to speed up growth, strengthen the middle class, and build new ladders of opportunity into the middle class—all while continuing to improve the Nation's long-run fiscal position.

Earlier this year, thanks to the work of Democrats and Republicans, the Congress produced an agreement that undid some of last year's severe cuts to priorities like education and research, infrastructure, and national security. Recognizing the importance of that bipartisan compromise, the Budget adheres to the spending levels agreed to by the Congress for fiscal year 2015. But there is clearly much more we can and should do to invest in areas like infrastructure, innovation, and education that will create jobs, economic growth, and opportunity. So I am including in my Budget a fully paid for Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative that provides the Congress a roadmap for how and where additional investments should be made in both domestic priorities and national security this year.

We know where to start: the best measure of opportunity is access to a good job. With the economy picking up speed, companies say they intend to hire more people this year. And over half of big manufacturers say they are thinking of insourcing jobs from abroad.

We need to make that decision easier for more companies. Both Democrats and Republicans have argued that our tax code is riddled with wasteful, complicated loopholes that make it harder to invest here and encourage companies to keep profits abroad. Last summer, I offered a proposal to couple business tax reform with critical investments in infrastructure. This Budget includes that proposal, using the transition revenue that will result from a shift to a simpler, more efficient tax code to create jobs rebuilding our roads and bridges and unclogging our commutes and transporting goods made in America—because in today's global economy, first-class jobs gravitate to first-class infrastructure. At the same time, this Budget lays out how my Administration will continue to act on our own to cut red tape and streamline the permitting process for key infrastructure projects, so we can get more construction workers on the job as fast as possible.

We also have the chance, right now, to beat other countries in the race for the next wave of high-tech manufacturing jobs. My Administration has already launched four hubs for high-tech manufacturing, where we have connected businesses to research universities that can help America lead the world in advanced technologies. The Budget expands on these efforts by providing funding for five additional institutes, and, through the Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative, supports the goal I announced last summer of creating a national network of 45 of these manufacturing innovation institutes over the next 10 years.

We know that the nation that goes all-in on innovation today will own the

global economy tomorrow. This is an edge America cannot surrender. That is why the Budget includes investments in cutting-edge research and development, driving scientific and technological breakthroughs that will create jobs, improve lives, and open new opportunities for the American people. The Budget's Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative will allow us to push our limits even further, supporting additional biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health that will help us fight Alzheimer's, cancer, and other diseases, climate research to develop climate change-resilient infrastructure, and agricultural research that will help increase agricultural productivity and improve health.

We also know that one of the biggest factors in bringing more jobs back is our commitment to American energy. The all-of-the-above energy strategy I announced a few years ago is working, and today, America is closer to energy independence than we have been in decades.

The Budget advances this strategy by ensuring the safe and responsible production of natural gas and cleaner electricity generation from fossil fuels. It creates new incentives to cut the amount of energy we waste in our cars, trucks, homes, and factories. It promotes clean energy with investments in technologies like solar and by expanding and making permanent the tax credit for the production of renewable energy. And it continues to strengthen protection of our air, water, land, and communities, and addresses the threat of climate change. Climate change is a fact, and we have to act with more urgency to address it because a changing climate is already harming western communities struggling with drought and coastal cities dealing with floods. That is why I directed my Administration to work with States, utilities, and others to set new standards on the amount of carbon pollution our power plants are allowed to dump into the air, and why this Budget advances new approaches to address the growing cost and damage from wildfires.

All of these efforts can speed up growth and create more jobs. But in this rapidly changing economy, we have to make sure that every American has the skills to fill those jobs. The Budget therefore invests in new efforts to drive greater performance and innovation in workforce training, including on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and other steps to equip workers with skills that match the needs of employers.

Of course, it is not enough to train today's workforce. We also have to prepare tomorrow's workforce by guaranteeing every child access to a world-class education. That is why the Budget builds on the progress we have made with new investments and initiatives

to improve all levels of education, from early childhood through college.

Research shows that one of the best investments we can make in a child's life is high-quality early education. This year, we will invest in new partnerships with States and communities across the country to expand access to high-quality early education, and I am again calling on the Congress to make high-quality preschool available to every four-year-old child. The Budget also includes funding to provide access to high-quality infant and toddler care for more than 100,000 children, and supports the extension and expansion of voluntary home visiting programs.

Last year, I called on the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to connect 99 percent of our students to high-speed broadband over the next 4 years. This year, the FCC is making a down payment on this goal by connecting more than 15,000 schools and 20 million students over the next 2 years, without adding a dime to the deficit. To ensure students receive the full benefit of this connectivity, the Budget invests in training for teachers in hundreds of school districts across the country.

The Budget also supports redesigning our high schools, helping them partner with colleges and employers that offer the college-level coursework and real-world skills to prepare students for college and careers. And it launches a new Race to the Top competition aimed at closing the achievement gap, so that all children get the high-quality education they need to succeed.

And we are shaking up our system of higher education to encourage innovation, give parents more information, and reward colleges for improving quality and reducing costs, so that no middle class student is priced out of a college education. Last summer, I directed the Department of Education to develop and publish a new college rating system that will identify colleges that provide the best value to students and encourage all colleges to improve. The Budget supports the development of that rating system and provides bonuses to reward colleges that improve educational outcomes for Pell Grant recipients. And to help more Americans who feel trapped by student loan debt, the Budget expands income-driven repayment options, allowing millions the opportunity to cap their monthly student loan payments at 10 percent of their income.

We also must do more to ensure our economy honors the dignity of work, and that hard work pays off for all of our citizens. Americans overwhelmingly agree that no one who works full time should ever have to raise a family in poverty. I have already acted by Executive Order to require Federal contractors to pay their federally funded employees a fair wage of at least \$10.10 an hour. The Congress needs to go fur-

ther and raise the minimum wage for all workers to that same amount. This raise will help families, and it will help the economy by giving businesses customers with more money to spend and by boosting productivity and reducing turnover. The Budget also invests in enforcement efforts to make sure workers receive the wages and overtime they have earned.

There are other steps we can take to help families make ends meet. Few policies are more effective at reducing inequality and helping families pull themselves up through hard work than the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The EITC for families with children lifts millions out of poverty each year and helps about half of all parents at some point in their lives. But as a number of prominent policymakers, both progressive and conservative, have noted, the EITC does not do enough for single workers who do not have kids. The Budget doubles the value of the EITC for workers without children and non-custodial parents, and also makes it available to younger adult workers, so that it can encourage work in the crucial years at the beginning of a young person's career.

We also need to do more to help Americans save for retirement. Today, most workers do not have a pension. A Social Security check often is not enough on its own. And while the stock market has doubled over the last 5 years, that does not improve retirement security for people who do not have retirement savings. That is why the Budget builds on my proposal to create a new way for working Americans to start saving for retirement: the MyRA savings bond. To encourage new savers, MyRA requires a low initial contribution and guarantees a decent return with no risk of losing what you put in. Separately, the Budget also proposes to establish automatic enrollment Individual Retirement Accounts, offering every American access to an automatic savings vehicle on the job.

For decades, few things exposed hard-working families to economic hardship more than a broken health care system. With the enactment of the Affordable Care Act, we are in the process of fixing that. Already, because of the health reform law, more than 3 million Americans under the age of 26 have gained coverage under their parents' plans. More than 9 million Americans have signed up for private health insurance or Medicaid coverage. Because of this law, no American can ever again be dropped or denied coverage for a preexisting condition like asthma, back pain, or cancer. No woman can ever be charged more just because she is a woman. And we did all this while adding years to Medicare's finances, keeping Medicare premiums flat, and lowering prescription costs for millions of seniors. To continue this progress, the Budget fully funds the ongoing im-

plementation of the Affordable Care Act.

We must always remember that economic growth and opportunity can only be achieved if America is safe and secure. At home, the Budget supports efforts to make our communities safer by reducing gun violence and reforming our criminal justice system.

Looking beyond our borders, the Budget responsibly transitions from the completion of our military mission in Afghanistan in 2014 to political and security support for a unified Afghan government as it takes full responsibility for its own future. When I took office, nearly 180,000 Americans were serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Today, all our troops are out of Iraq and more than 60,000 of our troops have already come home from Afghanistan. With Afghan forces now in the lead for their own security, our troops have moved to a support role. Together with our allies, we will complete our mission there by the end of this year, and America's longest war will finally be over.

In addition to responsibly winding down our operations in Afghanistan, the Budget ensures we maintain ready, modern, and capable defense forces to address any threats we might face, including threats from terrorism and cyber attacks. It funds humanitarian and diplomatic efforts in Syria, supports transition and reform throughout the Middle East and North Africa, and advances our strategic rebalancing toward the Asia-Pacific region. It enhances stability and creates new markets for U.S. businesses with investments in Power Africa and promotes peace and security by supporting global health care and addressing climate change. And it strengthens oversight of intelligence activities and enhances the protection of U.S. diplomatic facilities and personnel overseas.

The Budget also ensures that we continue to meet our obligations to our troops and veterans who have given so much to our country. To deliver on this commitment, it provides significant resources to support veterans' medical care, help military families, assist soldiers transitioning to civilian life, reduce veterans' homelessness, and reduce the disability claims backlog so our veterans receive the benefits they have earned. It also introduces necessary reforms to our military compensation system, which our uniform military leadership called for, to ensure servicemembers and their families receive the benefits that they have earned while making sure that our military can invest in the training, equipment, and support that it needs.

In addition to making these critical investments, the Budget outlines the steps my Administration is taking to create a 21st Century Government that

is more efficient, effective, and supportive of economic growth. Our citizens and businesses expect their Government to provide the same level of service experienced in the private sector and we intend to deliver. The Budget includes initiatives that will lead to better, faster, and smarter services, both online and in-person. It calls on Federal agencies to share services and leverage the buying power of the Government to bring greater value and efficiency for taxpayer dollars. It continues to open Government data and research for public and private sector use to spur innovation and job creation. And it invests in the Government's most important resource, its workers, ensuring that we can attract and retain the best talent in the Federal workforce and foster a culture of excellence.

The Budget does all of these things while further strengthening the Nation's long-term fiscal outlook. Over the last 5 years, we have cut the deficit in half as a share of the economy, experiencing the fastest period of deficit reduction since the demobilization following World War II. The Budget continues this progress, bringing deficits down as a share of the economy to below 2 percent by 2023 and putting debt as a share of the economy on a declining path.

Although we have seen a notable and significant decline in health care spending growth over the last few years, in part due to the Affordable Care Act, we know that over the long run, the growth of health care costs continues to be our Nation's most pressing fiscal challenge. That is why the Budget builds on the savings and reforms in the health reform law with additional measures to strengthen Medicare and Medicaid and encourage high-quality and efficient health care.

We also know that revenue has to be part of the solution to our Nation's long-term fiscal challenges. Given the aging of our population and the declining ratio of workers to retirees, we will need additional revenue to maintain our commitments to seniors while also making the investments that are needed to grow our economy and expand opportunity. The Budget secures that revenue through tax reform that reduces inefficient and unfair tax breaks and ensures that everyone, from Main Street to Wall Street, is paying their fair share.

Finally, if we are serious about long-term, sustainable economic growth and deficit reduction, it is also time to heed the calls of business leaders, labor leaders, faith leaders, and law enforcement—and fix our broken immigration system. Independent economists say immigration reform will grow our economy and shrink our deficits by almost \$1 trillion in the next two decades. And for good reason: when people come here to fulfill their dreams—to

study, invent, and contribute to our culture—they make our country a more attractive place for businesses to locate and help create jobs for everyone. The Senate has acted to pass a bipartisan immigration reform bill that is worthy of support. It is time for the House of Representatives to finish the job.

We have made progress over the last 5 years. But our work is not done. This Budget provides a roadmap to ensuring middle class families and those working to be a part of the middle class can feel secure in their jobs, homes, and budgets. To build real, lasting economic security, we also need to expand opportunity for all so every American can get ahead and have a shot at creating a better life for their kids.

None of it is easy. America has never come easy. But if we work together, if we summon what is best in us, I know it is within our reach.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, March 4, 2014.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1700

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) at 5 p.m.

SLEEPING BEAR DUNES NATIONAL LAKESHORE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION ACT

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 23) to designate as wilderness certain land and inland water within the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in the State of Michigan, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 23

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Conservation and Recreation Act".

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) MAP.—The term "map" means the map consisting of 6 sheets entitled "Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Proposed Wilderness Boundary", numbered 634/80,083B, and dated November 2010.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

SEC. 3. SLEEPING BEAR DUNES WILDERNESS.

(a) DESIGNATION.—In accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), cer-

tain land and inland water within the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore comprising approximately 32,557 acres along the mainland shore of Lake Michigan and on certain nearby islands in Benzie and Leelanau Counties, Michigan, as generally depicted on the map, is designated as wilderness and as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System, to be known as the "Sleeping Bear Dunes Wilderness".

(b) MAP.—

(1) AVAILABILITY.—The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

(2) CORRECTIONS.—The Secretary may correct any clerical or typographical errors in the map.

(3) LEGAL DESCRIPTION.—As soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prepare a legal description of the wilderness boundary and submit a copy of the map and legal description to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

(c) ROAD SETBACKS.—The wilderness boundary shall be—

(1) 100 feet from the centerline of adjacent county roads; and

(2) 300 feet from the centerline of adjacent State highways.

SEC. 4. ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to valid existing rights, the wilderness area designated by section 3(a) shall be administered by the Secretary in accordance with the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.), except that—

(1) any reference in the Wilderness Act to the effective date of that Act shall be considered to be a reference to the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) any reference in the Wilderness Act to the Secretary of Agriculture shall be considered to be a reference to the Secretary.

(b) MAINTENANCE OF ROADS OUTSIDE WILDERNESS BOUNDARY.—Nothing in this Act prevents the maintenance and improvement of roads that are located outside the boundary of the wilderness area designated by section 3(a).

(c) FISH AND WILDLIFE.—Nothing in this Act affects the jurisdiction of the State of Michigan with respect to the management of fish and wildlife, including hunting and fishing within the national lakeshore in accordance with section 5 of Public Law 91-479 (16 U.S.C. 460x-4).

(d) SAVINGS PROVISIONS.—Nothing in this Act modifies, alters, or affects—

(1) any treaty rights; or

(2) any valid private property rights in existence on the day before the date of enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill reflects decades of work, work by local citizens who organized to reject the dictates of the Federal bureaucracy and to protect public access and recreation. At the same time that this bill designates new wilderness, it also provides critical protections for the public's ability to visit and enjoy the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in the State of Michigan. Let me give you a little bit of background.

In 1981, the National Park Service proposed a general management plan for the lakeshore in Michigan. The plan was so restrictive as to be punitive towards recreation, and it sparked a local backlash. After years of collaboration, a new plan was agreed upon that realigned the wilderness boundaries to restore sensible public access.

This legislation would codify these negotiated changes into law and ensure the continued availability of roads for visitors traveling to remote trailheads, to beaches, to backcountry areas, and to historic areas within this geography. The bill also protects motorboater access to the shoreline. It specifically protects private property rights. It preserves hunting and fishing rights, and it does not expand Federal land ownership or add any additional costs to taxpayers.

As I stated, this effort has been going on for several decades. After the House votes today, this bill will go to the President for his signature in order to become law. Yet, Mr. Speaker, the real credit for this legislation, even though it is a Senate bill, is owed to our colleague from Michigan, Dr. BENISHEK, for making this happen. He is the lead sponsor of this legislation, or the companion legislation, in the House of Representatives. Dr. BENISHEK has been a persistent and persuasive advocate for this local proposal.

As the chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, which oversees this bill, I can state with certainty that it is because of his, Dr. BENISHEK's, bipartisan efforts that this bill will pass the House tonight. He has worked closely with both Republicans and Democrats, especially his senior Senator, Senator LEVIN of Michigan, to make this a reality. Without their personal efforts, today's vote would not happen.

Dr. BENISHEK certainly deserves recognition for this success, and I congratulate him and the people of Michigan, whom he represents, for this legislation.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank our chairman from the Natural Re-

sources Committee, and I am proud to be here on behalf of the minority to speak in favor of S. 23, which is a locally driven conservation initiative that will make the management of a national park unit more efficient and will create the first new acres of wilderness enacted into the system since 2009. Adding approximately 30,000 acres of wilderness will protect the special character of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in Michigan.

The passage of this bill is going to make a lot of people very happy, and I hope it is a sign of change to come. Congress should not stand in the way of locally driven conservation initiatives, and we look forward to working with the majority to identify more opportunities in which to work together and to move legislation that merits our attention. There are a lot more wilderness bills, monument designations, and wildlife and scenic river bills that the House should consider. We happily support the adoption of S. 23.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENISHEK), the author of the House legislation which is the companion to what we are voting on from the Senate.

Mr. BENISHEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in support of S. 23, the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Conservation and Recreation Act.

As you know, this bill, which passed the Senate by unanimous consent on June 19, 2013, is identical to H.R. 163, legislation I introduced by the same title last January with the full support of the Michigan delegation.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore is a treasured area of my home district and for the entire Nation. The park has been named America's most beautiful place by "Good Morning America," and over 1 million visitors from around the world come to see the dunes and the surrounding lakes each year.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore plays a vital role in our State's outdoor recreation economy, which contributes over \$18 billion in consumer spending and over 194,000 jobs to the State of Michigan. As Pamela of Lake Township said, "Sleeping Bear is vital to the economy of northern Michigan. Most of the money earned in this area is during the summer months when tourists from all over the country visit." From gas stations to ice cream stands to local hotels, our local businesses look forward to a full and thriving park season each year.

In 1981, Congress determined that wilderness areas should exist within this park, and over 30,000 acres of park have been managed as wilderness since

that time. When the National Park Service began to update the proposed map for the first time since 1981, the local residents discovered for the first time that the map included a number of county roads, beaches, and historic sites in this proposed wilderness area.

As you can imagine, local residents in Benzie, Leelanau, and Grand Traverse County were not pleased, and a lengthy public planning period began. Because of the very public local opposition to the original land management plan, the Park Service agreed to go back to the drawing board. They worked together with the local citizens and interest groups, ranging from area businesses to environmental groups. After gathering extensive public involvement, review, and comment, a final general management plan was adopted in January 2009. This plan ensures that all county roads will remain in control of the local governments, and beaches and historic sites will be excluded from the wilderness map.

The bill on the floor here today represents the hard work of these engaged citizens. It has been introduced each Congress, in both the House and the Senate, since 2009. This legislation, like the park, itself, has always enjoyed wide support from the entire Michigan delegation on both sides of the aisle. While we may not agree on every issue, we can agree that our local communities know best when it comes to planning for the future of our parks.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have worked with those who have come before me—from Chairman CAMP, to former Representative Hoekstra, to Representative HUIZENGA and Senator LEVIN—to shepherd this bill through Congress. My goal is simple. Like all of those who love this amazing stretch of shoreline, I want to ensure that those beaches and roads remain open.

I hope everyone will join me in visiting Sleeping Bear Dunes soon. You will get to see how truly blessed northern Michigan is to have this amazing natural wonder.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP), another cosponsor of this legislation and the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. CAMP. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the bill offered by my colleague and friend, Mr. DAN BENISHEK of Michigan.

The Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore is not just a Michigan but a national treasure. It is enjoyed by over 1 million visitors from across the State, country, and world each year. In fact, in 2011, Sleeping Bear was voted the "most beautiful place in America"

by a poll conducted by “Good Morning America.”

This bill is the product of years of work between members of the public, the National Park Service, and local, State, and Federal officials. It strikes a careful balance between conservation and recreation. In addition to protecting this vital natural resource, the bill ensures that the beaches of Lake Michigan will be accessible to the public and that hunting and fishing rights, as well as boating access, will be maintained.

I hope the rest of the House will join me today in supporting the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Conservation and Recreation Act so that this national treasure can be enjoyed to its fullest now and for many generations to come.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, just to reiterate, we fully support S. 23. I look forward to its passage, and I look forward to one day visiting this beautiful location in Michigan.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I urge the adoption of the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 23.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NORTH FORK WATERSHED PROTECTION ACT OF 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2259) to withdraw certain Federal land and interests in that land from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws and disposition under the mineral and geothermal leasing laws and to preserve existing uses, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2259

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “North Fork Watershed Protection Act of 2014”.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **ELIGIBLE FEDERAL LAND.**—The term “eligible Federal land” means—

(A) any federally owned land or interest in land depicted on the Map as within the North Fork Federal Lands Withdrawal Area; or

(B) any land or interest in land located within the North Fork Federal Lands Withdrawal Area that is acquired by the Federal Government after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) **MAP.**—The term “Map” means the Bureau of Land Management map entitled “North Fork

Federal Lands Withdrawal Area” and dated June 9, 2010.

SEC. 3. WITHDRAWAL.

(a) **WITHDRAWAL.**—Subject to valid existing rights, the eligible Federal land is withdrawn from—

(1) all forms of location, entry, and patent under the mining laws; and

(2) disposition under all laws relating to mineral leasing and geothermal leasing.

(b) **AVAILABILITY OF MAP.**—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Map shall be made available to the public at each appropriate office of the Bureau of Land Management.

(c) **EFFECT OF SECTION.**—Nothing in this section violates the rights of existing leaseholders or prohibits the Secretary of the Interior from taking any action necessary to complete any requirement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) or the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) required for permitting surface-disturbing activity to occur on any lease issued before the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 4. EXISTING USES NOT AFFECTED.

Except with respect to the withdrawal under section 3, nothing in this Act restricts recreational uses, livestock management activities, or forest management activities allowed on the date of the enactment of this Act on the eligible Federal land in accordance with applicable law.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the legislation under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The legislation before the House today enjoys bipartisan and bicameral support in Congress and the strong endorsement of the affected local communities.

Our colleague, Mr. DAINES of Montana, is the lead sponsor of this bill, and he has championed its action here in the House. I can assure everyone that it is because of his leadership, his commitment and energy that this legislation will pass the House today. Mr. DAINES has put the interests of Montana first and has been willing to work in a bipartisan way, with Republicans and Democrats, to get this bill passed.

Mr. Speaker, the North Fork Watershed Protection Act would codify protections of Federal forest lands in the North Fork watershed from development in accordance with the memorandum of understanding signed in 2010 between the Province of British Columbia and the State of Montana. Very sig-

nificantly, the bill makes certain in law that existing uses, including public recreation, livestock management, and forest management are protected and not restricted. This bill will ensure that this region stays accessible for most of the traditional activities in this beautiful part of Montana.

Mr. Speaker, in 1988, the Ninth Circuit Court enjoined the Department of the Interior from allowing any activity on issued oil and gas leases in this area. Since then, no oil and gas development has taken place in this area, and several leaseholders have voluntarily relinquished their oil and gas leases within this area. The State of Montana has made clear its desire to partner with British Columbia, as I have mentioned, to protect this watershed. H.R. 2259 would similarly protect the Federal land located within this region.

Again, I would like to recognize the author of this legislation, Mr. DAINES, for his hard work and leadership, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 2259 will protect an important watershed and recreational resource west of Glacier National Park, and we are glad to see it on the suspension calendar. It is a widely supported initiative in Montana that will conserve a treasured landscape that belongs to every American. Some places are just too special to allow short-term commercial considerations to potentially harm their long-term viability.

Stakeholders in Montana identified the importance of the North Fork watershed, an area that supports the recreation-based economy, provides clean drinking water, and allows wildlife to thrive. H.R. 2259 guarantees that this area will not be threatened by unfettered energy development. I support this bill, and I urge its adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1715

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the author of this legislation.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, I want to give my thanks to the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee for his support and leadership in moving this bill through the House.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to proudly offer H.R. 2259, the North Fork Watershed Protection Act, for consideration in the full House.

This bill is special to Montana for many reasons.

The Flathead River is one of the most cherished waterways in our great State, and our country, for trout fishing. In fact, it is considered a “red ribbon” stream. That is Montana’s version of a blue ribbon trout stream.

The Flathead is an area beloved by the local community for recreation and supporting the region's forest-based economy.

Last but not least, this watershed is a gateway to one of the crown jewels of the National Park system, Glacier National Park.

Protecting the watershed and ensuring its value extends for future generations has been a task shared by Governors and legislatures of both parties, our neighboring Canadian Province of British Columbia, as well as our local Chambers of Commerce. It is also supported by Montana Senators Max Baucus and JOHN TESTER, and myself. We all support protecting this area for future generations. It makes this bill the first lands legislation supported by the entire Montana delegation in nearly 30 years.

The North Fork Watershed Protection Act protects 430,000 acres along the North and Middle Forks of the Flathead River from mineral development. Eighty percent of leases in this area have already been voluntarily relinquished. The bill explicitly protects the rights of existing leaseholders, and there is no loss in production.

The North Fork Watershed Protection Act represents commonsense resource management. It is the kind of common sense Montanans understand and Washington, D.C., needs more of.

The North Fork Watershed Protection Act ensures the region's current uses—forest management, hunting, fishing, outdoor recreation, quality water supply for local communities, access to gravel for infrastructure maintenance, and livestock grazing—will continue for many generations to come because that is our way of life in Montana.

The North Fork Watershed Protection Act is a key to international agreement between the State of Montana and British Columbia. In fact, in February of 2010, the Province of British Columbia and the State of Montana signed a Memorandum of Understanding to preclude mineral development along the Flathead. British Columbia completed prohibition of mineral development along the Flathead River in 2011.

The North Fork Watershed Protection Act is necessary to hold up the U.S. end of the bargain and to be a good neighbor. The Canadian province has expended significant resources for the sake of upholding this agreement and strongly supports passage of this legislation so their efforts will be solidified.

The bill also has an unprecedented mix of supporters, from ConocoPhillips, Anadarko, and Chevron, to Ducks Unlimited, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, and local chambers of commerce. This unity across diverse stakeholders is reflective of the bill's strong support

among Montanans. It is time we get this done.

Montanans have been working toward protecting the Flathead for decades. Senator Max Baucus began work to protect this watershed in his very first year in Congress. That was back in 1974, when he was Montana's Congressman in the House. I am proud to be part of the effort to get it done and across the finish line.

Passage of the North Fork Watershed Protection Act is a major step towards a commonsense goal that Montanans have worked toward together for decades.

Though Senator Bachus has now retired and is serving in China, the passage of the North Fork Watershed Protection Act will send a strong message to the Senate to get it done.

I urge passage of H.R. 2259, the North Fork Watershed Protection Act.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise again to reiterate our support for H.R. 2259, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2259, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3370

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title and table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Definitions.
- Sec. 3. Repeal of certain rate increases.
- Sec. 4. Restoration of grandfathered rates.
- Sec. 5. Requirements regarding annual rate increases.
- Sec. 6. Clarification of rates for properties newly mapped into areas with special flood hazards.

- Sec. 7. Premiums and reports.
- Sec. 8. Annual premium surcharge.
- Sec. 9. Draft affordability framework.
- Sec. 10. Risk transfer.
- Sec. 11. Monthly installment payment for premiums.
- Sec. 12. Optional high-deductible policies for residential properties.
- Sec. 13. Exclusion of detached structures from mandatory purchase requirement.
- Sec. 14. Accounting for flood mitigation activities in estimates of premium rates.
- Sec. 15. Home improvement fairness.
- Sec. 16. Affordability study and report.
- Sec. 17. Flood insurance rate map certification.
- Sec. 18. Funds to reimburse homeowners for successful map appeals.
- Sec. 19. Flood protection systems.
- Sec. 20. Quarterly reports regarding Reserve Fund ratio.
- Sec. 21. Treatment of floodproofed residential basements.
- Sec. 22. Exemption from fees for certain map change requests.
- Sec. 23. Study of voluntary community-based flood insurance options.
- Sec. 24. Designation of flood insurance advocate.
- Sec. 25. Exceptions to escrow requirement for flood insurance payments.
- Sec. 26. Flood mitigation methods for buildings.
- Sec. 27. Mapping of non-structural flood mitigation features.
- Sec. 28. Clear communications.
- Sec. 29. Protection of small businesses, non-profits, houses of worship, and residences.
- Sec. 30. Mapping.
- Sec. 31. Disclosure.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

For purposes of this title, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(2) NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM.—The term “National Flood Insurance Program” means the program established under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.).

SEC. 3. REPEAL OF CERTAIN RATE INCREASES.

(a) REPEAL.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1307(g) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(g)) is amended—

(A) by striking paragraphs (1) and (2);

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking “as a result of the deliberate choice of the holder of such policy” and inserting “, unless the decision of the policy holder to permit a lapse in flood insurance coverage was as a result of the property covered by the policy no longer being required to retain such coverage”; and

(C) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (1) and (2), respectively.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The Administrator shall promulgate such regulations, and make available such rate tables, as necessary to implement the amendments made by paragraph (1) as if it were enacted as part of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957).

(3) IMPLEMENTATION, COORDINATION, AND GUIDANCE.—

(A) FACILITATION OF TIMELY REFUNDS.—To ensure the participation of Write Your Own companies (as such term is defined in section 100202(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (42 U.S.C. 4004(a)), the Administrator and the Federal Emergency Management Agency shall consult

with Write Your Own companies throughout the development of guidance and rate tables necessary to implement the provisions of and the amendments made by this Act.

(B) **IMPLEMENTATION AND GUIDANCE.**—The Administrator shall issue final guidance and rate tables necessary to implement the provisions of and the amendments made by this Act not later than eight months following the date of the enactment of this Act. Write Your Own companies, in coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, shall have not less than six months but not more than eight months following the issuance of such final guidance and rate tables to implement the changes required by such final guidance and rate tables.

(4) **REFUND OF EXCESS PREMIUM CHARGES COLLECTED.**—The Administrator shall refund directly to insureds any premiums for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program collected in excess of the rates required under the provisions of and amendments made by this section. To allow for necessary and appropriate implementation of such provisions and amendments, any premium changes necessary to implement such provisions and amendments, including any such premium refund due to policy holders, which shall be paid directly by the National Flood Insurance Program, shall not be charged or paid to policyholders by the National Flood Insurance Program until after the Administrator issues guidance and makes available such rate tables to implement the provisions of and amendments made by this Act.

(b) **ASSUMPTION OF POLICIES AT EXISTING PREMIUM RATES.**—The Administrator shall provide that the purchaser of a property that, as of the date of such purchase, is covered under an existing flood insurance policy under this title may assume such existing policy and coverage for the remainder of the term of the policy at the chargeable premium rates under such existing policy. Such rates shall continue with respect to such property until the implementation of subsection (a).

SEC. 4. RESTORATION OF GRANDFATHERED RATES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (h); and
(2) by redesignating subsection (i) as subsection (h).

(b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect as if enacted as part of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957).

SEC. 5. REQUIREMENTS REGARDING ANNUAL RATE INCREASES.

Section 1308(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(e)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “, the chargeable risk premium rates for flood insurance under this title for any properties”;

(2) in paragraph (1), by inserting “the chargeable risk premium rates for flood insurance under this title for any properties” before “within any”;

(3) in paragraph (2), by inserting “the chargeable risk premium rates for flood insurance under this title for any properties” before “described in”;

(4) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2), as so amended, as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively; and

(5) by inserting before paragraph (3), as so redesignated, the following new paragraphs:

“(1) the chargeable risk premium rate for flood insurance under this title for any property may not be increased by more than 18 percent each year, except—

“(A) as provided in paragraph (4);

“(B) in the case of property identified under section 1307(g); or

“(C) in the case of a property that—

“(i) is located in a community that has experienced a rating downgrade under the community rating system program carried out under section 1315(b);

“(ii) is covered by a policy with respect to which the policyholder has—

“(I) decreased the amount of the deductible; or

“(II) increased the amount of coverage; or

“(iii) was misrated;

“(2) the chargeable risk premium rates for flood insurance under this title for any properties initially rated under section 1307(a)(2) within any single risk classification, excluding properties for which the chargeable risk premium rate is not less than the applicable estimated risk premium rate under section 1307(a)(1), shall be increased by an amount that results in an average of such rate increases for properties within the risk classification during any 12-month period of not less than 5 percent of the average of the risk premium rates for such properties within the risk classification upon the commencement of such 12-month period;”;

(6) in paragraph (3) (as so redesignated by paragraph (4) of this section), by striking “20 percent” and inserting “15 percent”; and

(7) in paragraph (4) (as so redesignated by paragraph (4) of this section), by striking “paragraph (1)” and inserting “paragraph (3)”.

SEC. 6. CLARIFICATION OF RATES FOR PROPERTIES NEWLY MAPPED INTO AREAS WITH SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARDS.

Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(i) **RATES FOR PROPERTIES NEWLY MAPPED INTO AREAS WITH SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARDS.**—Notwithstanding subsection (f), the premium rate for flood insurance under this title that is purchased on or after the date of the enactment of this subsection—

“(1) on a property located in an area not previously designated as having special flood hazards and that, pursuant to any issuance, revision, updating, or other change in a flood insurance map, becomes designated as such an area, and

“(2) where such flood insurance premium rate is calculated under subsection (a)(1) of section 1307 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(1)), shall for the first policy year be the preferred risk premium for the property and upon renewal shall be calculated in accordance with subsection (e) of this section until the rate reaches the rate calculated under subsection (a)(1) of section 1307.”.

SEC. 7. PREMIUMS AND REPORTS.

Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(j) **PREMIUMS AND REPORTS.**—In setting premium risk rates, in addition to striving to achieve the objectives of this title the Administrator shall also strive to minimize the number of policies with annual premiums that exceed one percent of the total coverage provided by the policy. For any policies premiums that exceed this one percent threshold, the Administrator shall report such ex-

ceptions to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.”.

SEC. 8. ANNUAL PREMIUM SURCHARGE.

(a) **PREMIUM SURCHARGE.**—Chapter I of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4011 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 1308 the following new section:

“SEC. 1308A. PREMIUM SURCHARGE.

“(a) **IMPOSITION AND COLLECTION.**—The Administrator shall impose and collect an annual surcharge, in the amount provided in subsection (b), on all policies for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program that are newly issued or renewed after the date of the enactment of this section. Such surcharge shall be in addition to the surcharge under section 1304(b) and any other assessments and surcharges applied to such coverage.

“(b) **AMOUNT.**—The amount of the surcharge under subsection (a) shall be—

“(1) \$25, except as provided in paragraph (2); and

“(2) \$250, in the case of a policy for any property that is—

“(A) a non-residential property; or

“(B) a residential property that is not the primary residence of an individual.

“(c) **TERMINATION.**—Subsections (a) and (b) shall cease to apply on the date on which the chargeable risk premium rate for flood insurance under this title for each property covered by flood insurance under this title, other than properties for which premiums are calculated under subsection (e) or (f) of section 1307 or section 1336 of this Act (42 U.S.C. 4014, 4056) or under section 100230 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (42 U.S.C. 4014 note), is not less than the applicable estimated risk premium rate under section 1307(a)(1) for such property.”.

(b) **DEPOSIT IN RESERVE FUND.**—Subsection (c) of section 1310A of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4017a) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) **DEPOSIT OF PREMIUM SURCHARGES.**—The Administrator shall deposit in the Reserve Fund any surcharges collected pursuant to section 1308A.”.

SEC. 9. DRAFT AFFORDABILITY FRAMEWORK.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall prepare a draft affordability framework that proposes to address, via programmatic and regulatory changes, the issues of affordability of flood insurance sold under the National Flood Insurance Program, including issues identified in the affordability study required under section 100236 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957).

(b) **CRITERIA.**—In carrying out the requirements under subsection (a), the Administrator shall consider the following criteria:

(1) Accurate communication to consumers of the flood risk associated with their properties.

(2) Targeted assistance to flood insurance policy holders based on their financial ability to continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

(3) Individual or community actions to mitigate the risk of flood or lower the cost of flood insurance.

(4) The impact of increases in risk premium rates on participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

(5) The impact flood insurance rate map updates have on the affordability of flood insurance.

(c) **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION.**—Not later than 18 months after the date on which the

Administrator submits the affordability study referred to in subsection (a), the Administrator shall submit to the full Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the full Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the full Committee on Financial Services and the full Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives the draft affordability framework required under subsection (a).

(d) **INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS.**—The Administrator may enter into an agreement with another Federal agency to—

(1) complete the affordability study referred to in subsection (a); or

(2) prepare the draft affordability framework required under subsection (a).

(e) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to provide the Administrator with the authority to provide assistance to homeowners based on affordability that was not available prior to the enactment of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 916).

SEC. 10. RISK TRANSFER.

Section 1345 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4081) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e) **RISK TRANSFER.**—The Administrator may secure reinsurance of coverage provided by the flood insurance program from the private reinsurance and capital markets at rates and on terms determined by the Administrator to be reasonable and appropriate, in an amount sufficient to maintain the ability of the program to pay claims.”.

SEC. 11. MONTHLY INSTALLMENT PAYMENT FOR PREMIUMS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subsection (g) of section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015(g)) is amended by striking “either annually or in more frequent installments” and inserting “annually or monthly”.

(b) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—The Administrator shall implement the requirement under section 1308(g) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended by subsection (a), not later than the expiration of the 18-month period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 12. OPTIONAL HIGH-DEDUCTIBLE POLICIES FOR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES.

Section 1306 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4013), as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e) **OPTIONAL HIGH-DEDUCTIBLE POLICIES FOR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES.**—

“(1) **AVAILABILITY.**—In the case of residential properties, the Administrator shall make flood insurance coverage available, at the option of the insured, that provides for a loss-deductible for damage to the covered property in various amounts, up to and including \$10,000.

“(2) **DISCLOSURE.**—

“(A) **FORM.**—The Administrator shall provide the information described in subparagraph (B) clearly and conspicuously on the application form for flood insurance coverage or on a separate form, segregated from all unrelated information and other required disclosures.

“(B) **INFORMATION.**—The information described in this subparagraph is—

“(i) information sufficient to inform the applicant of the availability of the coverage option required by paragraph (1) to applicants for flood insurance coverage; and

“(ii) a statement explaining the effect of a loss-deductible and that, in the event of an

insured loss, the insured is responsible out-of-pocket for losses to the extent of the deductible selected.”.

SEC. 13. EXCLUSION OF DETACHED STRUCTURES FROM MANDATORY PURCHASE REQUIREMENT.

(a) **EXCLUSION.**—Subsection (c) of section 102 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) **DETACHED STRUCTURES.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, flood insurance shall not be required, in the case of any residential property, for any structure that is a part of such property but is detached from the primary residential structure of such property and does not serve as a residence.”.

(b) **RESPA STATEMENT.**—Section 5(b) of the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act of 1974 (12 U.S.C. 2604(b)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (14), by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, and the following statement: ‘Although you may not be required to maintain flood insurance on all structures, you may still wish to do so, and your mortgage lender may still require you to do so to protect the collateral securing the mortgage. If you choose to not maintain flood insurance on a structure, and it floods, you are responsible for all flood losses relating to that structure.’”; and

(2) by transferring and inserting paragraph (14), as so amended, after paragraph (13).

SEC. 14. ACCOUNTING FOR FLOOD MITIGATION ACTIVITIES IN ESTIMATES OF PREMIUM RATES.

Subparagraph (A) of section 1307(a)(1) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(1)(A)) is amended to read as follows:

“(A) based on consideration of—

“(i) the risk involved and accepted actuarial principles; and

“(ii) the flood mitigation activities that an owner or lessee has undertaken on a property, including differences in the risk involved due to land use measures, floodproofing, flood forecasting, and similar measures.”.

SEC. 15. HOME IMPROVEMENT FAIRNESS.

Section 1307(a)(2)(E)(ii) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(2)(E)(ii)) is amended by striking “30 percent” and inserting “50 percent”.

SEC. 16. AFFORDABILITY STUDY AND REPORT.

(a) **STUDY ISSUES.**—Subsection (a) of section 100236 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (4), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

“(5) options for maintaining affordability if annual premiums for flood insurance coverage were to increase to an amount greater than 2 percent of the liability coverage amount under the policy, including options for enhanced mitigation assistance and means-tested assistance;

“(6) the effects that the establishment of catastrophe savings accounts would have regarding long-term affordability of flood insurance coverage; and

“(7) options for modifying the surcharge under 1308A, including based on homeowner income, property value or risk of loss.”.

(b) **TIMING OF SUBMISSION.**—Notwithstanding the deadline under section 100236(c) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat.

957), not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the full Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and the full Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the full Committee on Financial Services and the full Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives the affordability study and report required under such section 100236.

(c) **AFFORDABILITY STUDY FUNDING.**—Section 100236(d) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 957) is amended by striking “\$750,000” and inserting “\$2,500,000”.

SEC. 17. FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP CERTIFICATION.

The Administrator shall implement a flood mapping program for the National Flood Insurance Program, only after review by the Technical Mapping Advisory Council, that, when applied, results in technically credible flood hazard data in all areas where Flood Insurance Rate Maps are prepared or updated, shall certify in writing to the Congress when such a program has been implemented, and shall provide to the Congress the Technical Mapping Advisory Council review report.

SEC. 18. FUNDS TO REIMBURSE HOMEOWNERS FOR SUCCESSFUL MAP APPEALS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1363(f) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4104(f)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting after “as the case may be,” the following: “or, in the case of an appeal that is resolved by submission of conflicting data to the Scientific Resolution Panel provided for in section 1363A, the community,”; and

(2) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: “The Administrator may use such amounts from the National Flood Insurance Fund established under section 1310 as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.”.

(b) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 1310(a) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4017(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (6), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in paragraph (7), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(8) for carrying out section 1363(f).”.

SEC. 19. FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.

(a) **ADEQUATE PROGRESS ON CONSTRUCTION OF FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.**—Section 1307(e) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(e)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by inserting “or reconstruction” after “construction”; and

(2) by amending the second sentence to read as follows: “The Administrator shall find that adequate progress on the construction or reconstruction of a flood protection system, based on the present value of the completed flood protection system, has been made only if (1) 100 percent of the cost of the system has been authorized, (2) at least 60 percent of the cost of the system has been appropriated, (3) at least 50 percent of the cost of the system has been expended, and (4) the system is at least 50 percent completed.”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following: “Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in determining whether a community has made adequate progress on the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of a flood protection system, the Administrator shall consider all sources of funding, including Federal, State, and local funds.”.

(b) **COMMUNITIES RESTORING DISACCREDITED FLOOD PROTECTION SYSTEMS.**—Section 1307(f)

of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(f)) is amended by amending the first sentence to read as follows: "Notwithstanding any other provision of law, this subsection shall apply to riverine and coastal levees that are located in a community which has been determined by the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to be in the process of restoring flood protection afforded by a flood protection system that had been previously accredited on a Flood Insurance Rate Map as providing 100-year frequency flood protection but no longer does so, and shall apply without regard to the level of Federal funding of or participation in the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of the flood protection system."

SEC. 20. QUARTERLY REPORTS REGARDING RESERVE FUND RATIO.

Subsection (e) of section 1310A of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4017a) is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting "on a calendar quarterly basis," after "submit".

SEC. 21. TREATMENT OF FLOODPROOFED RESIDENTIAL BASEMENTS.

The Administrator shall continue to extend exceptions and variances for floodproofed basements consistent with section 60.6 of title 44, Code of Federal Regulations, which are effective April 3, 2009; and section 60.3 of such title, which are effective April 3, 2009.

SEC. 22. EXEMPTION FROM FEES FOR CERTAIN MAP CHANGE REQUESTS.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a requester shall be exempt from submitting a review or processing fee for a request for a flood insurance rate map change based on a habitat restoration project that is funded in whole or in part with Federal or State funds, including dam removal, culvert redesign or installation, or the installation of fish passage.

SEC. 23. STUDY OF VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY-BASED FLOOD INSURANCE OPTIONS.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) **STUDY REQUIRED.**—The Administrator shall conduct a study to assess options, methods, and strategies for making available voluntary community-based flood insurance policies through the National Flood Insurance Program.

(2) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—The study conducted under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) take into consideration and analyze how voluntary community-based flood insurance policies—

(i) would affect communities having varying economic bases, geographic locations, flood hazard characteristics or classifications, and flood management approaches; and

(ii) could satisfy the applicable requirements under section 102 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a); and

(B) evaluate the advisability of making available voluntary community-based flood insurance policies to communities, subdivisions of communities, and areas of residual risk.

(3) **CONSULTATION.**—In conducting the study required under paragraph (1), the Administrator may consult with the Comptroller General of the United States, as the Administrator determines is appropriate.

(b) REPORT BY THE ADMINISTRATOR.—

(1) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator shall submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on

Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report that contains the results and conclusions of the study conducted under subsection (a).

(2) **CONTENTS.**—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include recommendations for—

(A) the best manner to incorporate voluntary community-based flood insurance policies into the National Flood Insurance Program; and

(B) a strategy to implement voluntary community-based flood insurance policies that would encourage communities to undertake flood mitigation activities, including the construction, reconstruction, or improvement of levees, dams, or other flood control structures.

(c) **REPORT BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL.**—Not later than 6 months after the date on which the Administrator submits the report required under subsection (b), the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) review the report submitted by the Administrator; and

(2) submit to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives a report that contains—

(A) an analysis of the report submitted by the Administrator;

(B) any comments or recommendations of the Comptroller General relating to the report submitted by the Administrator; and

(C) any other recommendations of the Comptroller General relating to community-based flood insurance policies.

SEC. 24. DESIGNATION OF FLOOD INSURANCE ADVOCATE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall designate a Flood Insurance Advocate to advocate for the fair treatment of policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program and property owners in the mapping of flood hazards, the identification of risks from flood, and the implementation of measures to minimize the risk of flood.

(b) **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.**—The duties and responsibilities of the Flood Insurance Advocate designated under subsection (a) shall be to—

(1) educate property owners and policyholders under the National Flood Insurance Program on—

(A) individual flood risks;

(B) flood mitigation;

(C) measures to reduce flood insurance rates through effective mitigation;

(D) the flood insurance rate map review and amendment process; and

(E) any changes in the flood insurance program as a result of any newly enacted laws (including this Act);

(2) assist policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program and property owners to understand the procedural requirements related to appealing preliminary flood insurance rate maps and implementing measures to mitigate evolving flood risks;

(3) assist in the development of regional capacity to respond to individual constituent concerns about flood insurance rate map amendments and revisions;

(4) coordinate outreach and education with local officials and community leaders in areas impacted by proposed flood insurance rate map amendments and revisions; and

(5) aid potential policy holders under the National Flood Insurance Program in obtaining and verifying accurate and reliable flood insurance rate information when purchasing or renewing a flood insurance policy.

SEC. 25. EXCEPTIONS TO ESCROW REQUIREMENT FOR FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), in the second sentence, by striking "subparagraph (C)" and inserting "subparagraph (B)"; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) in clause (ii), by redesignating subclauses (I) and (II) as items (aa) and (bb), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(B) by redesignating clauses (i) and (ii) as subclauses (I) and (II), respectively, and adjusting the margins accordingly;

(C) in the matter preceding subclause (I), as redesignated by subparagraph (B), by striking "(A) or (B), if—" and inserting the following: "(A)—

"(i) if—";

(D) by striking the period at the end and inserting "or"; and

(E) by adding at the end the following

"(ii) in the case of a loan that—

"(I) is in a junior or subordinate position to a senior lien secured by the same residential improved real estate or mobile home for which flood insurance is being provided at the time of the origination of the loan;

"(II) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is part of a condominium, cooperative, or other project development, if the residential improved real estate or mobile home is covered by a flood insurance policy that—

"(aa) meets the requirements that the regulated lending institution is required to enforce under subsection (b)(1);

"(bb) is provided by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group; and

"(cc) the premium for which is paid by the condominium association, cooperative, homeowners association, or other applicable group as a common expense;

"(III) is secured by residential improved real estate or a mobile home that is used as collateral for a business purpose;

"(IV) is a home equity line of credit;

"(V) is a nonperforming loan; or

"(VI) has a term of not longer than 12 months."

(b) **APPLICABILITY.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—

(A) **REQUIRED APPLICATION.**—The amendments to section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) made by section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) and by subsection (a) of this section shall apply to any loan that is originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016.

(B) **OPTIONAL APPLICATION.**—

(i) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this subparagraph—

(I) the terms "Federal entity for lending regulation", "improved real estate", "regulated lending institution", and "servicer" have the meanings given the terms in section 3 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4003);

(II) the term "outstanding loan" means a loan that—

(aa) is outstanding as of January 1, 2016;

(bb) is not subject to the requirement to escrow premiums and fees for flood insurance under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)) as in effect on July 5, 2012; and

(cc) would, if the loan had been originated, refinanced, increased, extended, or renewed on or after January 1, 2016, be subject to the requirements under section 102(d)(1)(A) of

the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended; and

(III) the term “section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended” means section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)(A)), as amended by—

(aa) section 100209(a) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920); and

(bb) subsection (a) of this section.

(ii) **OPTION TO ESCROW FLOOD INSURANCE PAYMENTS.**—Each Federal entity for lending regulation (after consultation and coordination with the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council) shall, by regulation, direct that each regulated lending institution or servicer of an outstanding loan shall offer and make available to a borrower the option to have the borrower's payment of premiums and fees for flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.), including the escrow of such payments, be treated in the same manner provided under section 102(d)(1)(A) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended.

(2) **REPEAL OF 2-YEAR DELAY ON APPLICATION.**—Subsection (b) of section 100209 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-141; 126 Stat. 920) is repealed.

(3) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section or the amendments made by this section shall be construed to supersede, during the period beginning on July 6, 2012 and ending on December 31, 2015, the requirements under section 102(d)(1) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4012a(d)(1)), as in effect on July 5, 2012.

SEC. 26. FLOOD MITIGATION METHODS FOR BUILDINGS.

(a) **GUIDELINES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1361 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4102) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(d) **FLOOD MITIGATION METHODS FOR BUILDINGS.**—The Administrator shall establish guidelines for property owners that—

“(1) provide alternative methods of mitigation, other than building elevation, to reduce flood risk to residential buildings that cannot be elevated due to their structural characteristics, including—

“(A) types of building materials; and

“(B) types of floodproofing; and

“(2) inform property owners about how the implementation of mitigation methods described in paragraph (1) may affect risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program.”.

(2) **ISSUANCE.**—The Administrator shall issue the guidelines required under section 1361(d) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4102(d)), as added by the amendment made by paragraph (1) of this subsection, not later than the expiration of the 1-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) **CALCULATION OF RISK PREMIUM RATES.**—Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(k) **CONSIDERATION OF MITIGATION METHODS.**—In calculating the risk premium rate charged for flood insurance for a property under this section, the Administrator shall take into account the implementation of any mitigation method identified by the Administrator in the guidance issued under section 1361(d) (42 U.S.C. 4102(d)).”.

SEC. 27. MAPPING OF NON-STRUCTURAL FLOOD MITIGATION FEATURES.

Section 100216 of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (42 U.S.C. 4101b) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)(1)(A)—

(A) in clause (iv), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating clause (v) as clause (vi);

(C) by inserting after clause (iv) the following new clause:

“(v) areas that are protected by non-structural flood mitigation features; and”;

(D) in clause (vi) (as so redesignated), by inserting before the semicolon at the end the following: “and by non-structural flood mitigation features”; and

(2) in subsection (d)(1)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) through (C) as subparagraphs (B) through (D), respectively;

(B) in subparagraph (C) (as so redesignated), by striking “subparagraph (A)” and inserting “subparagraph (B)”;

(C) by inserting before subparagraph (B) (as so redesignated) the following new subparagraph:

“(A) work with States, local communities, and property owners to identify areas and features described in subsection (b)(1)(A)(v);”.

SEC. 28. CLEAR COMMUNICATIONS.

Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(1) **CLEAR COMMUNICATIONS.**—The Administrator shall clearly communicate full flood risk determinations to individual property owners regardless of whether their premium rates are full actuarial rates.”.

SEC. 29. PROTECTION OF SMALL BUSINESSES, NON-PROFITS, HOUSES OF WORSHIP, AND RESIDENCES.

Section 1308 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4015), as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(m) **PROTECTION OF SMALL BUSINESSES, NON-PROFITS, HOUSES OF WORSHIP, AND RESIDENCES.**—

“(1) **REPORT.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this section and semiannually thereafter, the Administrator shall monitor and report to Committee on Financial Services of the House Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate, the Administrator's assessment of the impact, if any, of the rate increases required under subparagraphs (A) and (D) of section 1307(a)(2) and the surcharges required under section 1308A on the affordability of flood insurance for—

“(A) small businesses with less than 100 employees;

“(B) non-profit entities;

“(C) houses of worship; and

“(D) residences with a value equal to or less than 25 percent of the median home value of properties in the State in which the property is located.

“(2) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**—If the Administrator determines that the rate increases or surcharges described in paragraph (1) are having a detrimental effect on affordability, including resulting in lapsed policies, late payments, or other criteria related to affordability as identified by the Administrator, for any of the properties identified in subparagraphs (A) through (D) of such para-

graph, the Administrator shall, not later than 3 months after making such a determination, make such recommendations as the Administrator considers appropriate to improve affordability to the Committee on Financial Services of the House Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.”.

SEC. 30. MAPPING.

Section 100216(d)(1) of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012 (42 U.S.C. 4101b(d)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) by striking “subparagraph (A)” and inserting “subparagraph (D)”;

(B) by striking “and” at the end;

(2) by redesignating subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) as subparagraphs (D), (E), and (G), respectively;

(3) by inserting before subparagraph (B), as so redesignated, the following new subparagraphs:

“(A) before commencement of any mapping or map updating process, notify each community affected of the model or models that the Administrator plans to use in such process and provide an explanation of why such model or models are appropriate;

“(B) provide each community affected a 30-day period beginning upon notification under subparagraph (A) to consult with the Administrator regarding the appropriateness, with respect to such community, of the mapping model or models to be used; provided that consultation by a community pursuant to this subparagraph shall not waive or otherwise affect any right of the community to appeal any flood hazard determinations;

“(C) upon completion of the first Independent Data Submission, transmit a copy of such Submission to the affected community, provide the affected community a 30-day period during which the community may provide data to Administrator that can be used to supplement or modify the existing data, and incorporate any data that is consistent with prevailing engineering principles;”;

(4) by inserting after subparagraph (E), as so redesignated, the following new subparagraph:

“(F) not less than 30 days before issuance of any preliminary map, notify the Senators for each State affected and each Member of the House of Representatives for each congressional district affected by the preliminary map in writing of—

“(i) the estimated schedule for—

“(I) community meetings regarding the preliminary map;

“(II) publication of notices regarding the preliminary map in local newspapers; and

“(III) the commencement of the appeals process regarding the map; and

“(ii) the estimated number of homes and businesses that will be affected by changes contained in the preliminary map, including how many structures will be that were not previously located in an area having special flood hazards will be located within such an area under the preliminary map; and”.

SEC. 31. DISCLOSURE.

(a) **CHANGES IN RATES RESULTING FROM THIS ACT.**—Not later than the date that is 6 months before the date on which any change in risk premium rates for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program resulting from this Act or any amendment made by this Act is implemented, the Administrator shall make publicly available the rate tables and underwriting guidelines that provide the basis for the change.

(b) **REPORT ON POLICY AND CLAIMS DATA.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the

Administrator shall submit to the Congress a report on the feasibility of—

(A) releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program; and

(B) establishing guidelines for releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Privacy Act of 1974).

(2) CONTENTS.—The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) an analysis and assessment of how releasing property-level policy and claims data for flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program will aid policy holders and insurers to understand how the Administration determines actuarial premium rates and assesses flood risks; and

(B) recommendations for protecting personal information in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Privacy Act of 1974).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from West Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and submit extraneous materials for the RECORD on H.R. 3370, as amended, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from West Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

Last Congress, overwhelming majorities in the House and Senate, including all of my colleagues from West Virginia, voted for the passage of Biggert-Waters. There was near unanimous agreement that significant reforms were needed for the program, but when the new flood insurance rates were published last fall, I began to hear from, and met with, many West Virginians who were shocked by the increases in their flood insurance bills that had far exceeded the worst-case scenario in CBO's projection. In some cases, their only choice was to spend their life's savings on their flood insurance bills or walk away from their house, ruining their credit.

The bill before us today will make sure the people who purchased a home after the passage of Biggert-Waters, only to see their premiums skyrocket, can stay in their homes. Under this bill, homeowners will see their premiums rise towards an actuarially sound rate, but on a path that is much more affordable.

Additionally, we are taking steps to fix some of the mapping issues in the flood program. Many of my constituents have told me that they are in a Special Flood Hazard Area, despite no evidence of the area ever flooding. These two issues address the core problems of the flood insurance program: unaffordable rates and incorrect mapping.

There is no question that the NFIP is broken. We need to take steps to put it on solid financial footing, but immediately hitting people with crushing increases in their premiums just because they bought a new home is not the way to do it, and that was never the original intent of Biggert-Waters.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3307, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

Today, I am pleased to lead the Democratic Party in delivering this message to the thousands of Americans who are facing unaffordable flood insurance premiums: relief is on the way.

As we committed to many months ago, Democrats have worked to fix this problem from the moment we heard about the unintended consequences of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act.

Mr. Speaker, because I am the Waters of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act, I felt a responsibility to make sure that we deal with the concerns that were coming to us from our constituents all over this country. The rate increases were unimaginable. So Democratic lawmakers in the House and the Senate took action, spearheading bipartisan legislation that passed the Senate and garnered the support of a majority of the House of Representatives.

Today, we have worked in good faith with Republican leadership to achieve a measure that isn't perfect but that will provide real relief to the thousands of families currently facing unaffordable premiums.

I believe this House measure strikes an important balance, addressing affordability concerns, bringing accountability to FEMA, and protecting the stability of the National Flood Insurance Program. The legislation ends dramatic increases caused by events such as property sales and restores grandfathered rates for those who played by the rules and built their properties according to code.

For families hit by unaffordable premium increases, this bill provides important relief in the form of a refund.

I am proud of the dramatic improvements to this bill that were made by the Democratic Caucus. These include reasonable limitations on rate increases that one property can experi-

ence, including those newly mapped into flood zones. We have ensured that when FEMA engages in the process of remapping, it actually works with communities to make sure it is being done accurately. We have made FEMA more accountable by requiring it provide clear and accurate information to anyone who may be affected by a change in policy.

Mr. Speaker, this bill would not have come together without strong support and participation from the Democratic Party. I would like to thank Leader PELOSI and Whip HOYER, as well as Senator MARY LANDRIEU and Representative CEDRIC RICHMOND for their leadership, and the leadership of so many Democratic Members across the country, which was critical to taking this bill over the finish line. I applaud them. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Let me just say a word of thanks to someone very special on this, Mr. ERIC CANTOR, who weighed in and did everything possible to work this out in a way that we could all be comfortable with. I am pleased for the opportunity I have had to work with him. I also thank Mr. GRIMM. We started this out when others believed that we could not do anything about it. Having said all of that, we have come together to do something good for the people of this country.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GRIMM), the author of this legislation and someone without whose hard work we wouldn't be here today.

Mr. GRIMM. Thank you, Chairwoman.

Mr. Speaker, it is almost surreal standing here right now. I almost don't believe that I am about to vote on something that I promised my constituents. It is surreal because I am standing here about to do something that was the reason I ran for Congress—to be able to lead on an issue and solve a problem and come home and tell people we actually got something done that is going to change your life for the better.

I have to say a special thank you to MAXINE WATERS, the ranking member, whom I worked with from the beginning; my dear friend, GREGORY MEEKS; CEDRIC RICHMOND; and Congressman CASSIDY, who helped me write this bill. Without him, I could not have gotten this done. FRANK LOBIONDO has been tremendous, as well as Congressman PALAZZO. ERIC CANTOR has been an absolute champion on this issue.

I just have to say this is truly a collaborative effort.

□ 1730

You cannot have a more bipartisan bill. At a time when there has been gridlock and gamesmanship, we have come together to deal with a very, very

important issue because it goes to the heart of what we are here to do: make people's lives a little bit better.

So I just want to say thank you to so many that worked so hard, and I will leave the rest of the time for those of my colleagues to explain some particulars of the bill. Again, thank you so much.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) who has worked so hard on this bill, who serves on the Financial Services Committee and has been intimately involved with it.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank Ranking Member WATERS and my good friend, MICHAEL GRIMM, for working collectively to make this bill happen.

You see, it was just 17 months ago that residents in my congressional district, the Fifth Congressional District of New York, and others throughout America were devastated by Superstorm Sandy. Little did they know then that they were about to be hit by another storm.

Then came FEMA with astronomical rate increases to their flood insurance program. Two strikes in the midst of severe recession, and many of them were out.

This bill, today, once we pass it, and once the Senate passes it, it will finally give relief to individuals who were wondering what they were going to do, many whom had to pay already these astronomical rates. Help is on its way. You will get reimbursed.

Many who did not know what the values of their property would be and, if they choose down the road to sell it, whether they would be able to do it. Help is on its way. This bill fixes that.

I congratulate both sides.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING), the chairman of the full committee.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, our Nation is, tragically, going broke. Our national debt, which has skyrocketed under this President, is clearly, by any measure, on a dangerous and unsustainable path, a path that, if unaltered, will leave our children with less freedom, fewer opportunities, and a lower standard of living. That is beyond unfair. That is immoral.

One reason America is going broke is because of poorly designed and costly government-run insurance programs. The National Flood Insurance Program is one such program.

Its chief administrator has already testified that "the NFIP was, by statute and design, not actuarially sound." In fact, the program charges only 70 percent of what its administrators believe they actually need. Perhaps that is why the program is currently \$24 billion in the red to taxpayers and has no way to ever repay them.

The NFIP is not financially sound because pretty much every policyholder

receives taxpayer subsidies. Some get explicit subsidies because the law prohibits the program from charging a full and fair rate based upon their calculated actuarial risk.

Others receive implicit subsidies because, according to the GAO, the program uses a faulty model that undermeasures flood risk.

At the end of the day, the program forces roughly 96 percent of all Americans to subsidize the remaining 4 percent, regardless of income or need. That means a single mom in Dallas, where I live, who is working hard as a cashier at the Albertsons grocery store may be forced to subsidize the flood insurance for some millionaire's beachfront vacation home. If that is not the definition of unfair, I don't know what is.

To its credit, in 2012, Congress recognized that the government-run flood insurance program was fundamentally broken and unfair. We passed, almost unanimously, the Biggert-Waters Act. It phases out most of the explicit subsidies over the next few years and requires rates to be more closely based on a property's actuarial degree of flood risk.

Now, the first premiums under Biggert-Waters are starting to come due. There is sticker shock, some based on fact, some based on fear.

Clearly, there are many, many, across our Nation who have been unaware of their taxpayer-funded subsidies. There are some who simply can't afford the new premiums, and others who are now having trouble attempting to sell their homes.

This should be addressed by Congress, and that is why, over the last 8 weeks, Chairman NEUGEBAUER and myself have put four different plans on the tables for Members who approached us about making modifications to the Biggert-Waters Act.

We agreed to go slower on reforms and to temporarily cap payments as long as the program would eventually require all property owners to pay the fair amount that they owe and, overall, the program would begin to bring in more income so taxpayers could avoid yet another bailout.

Regrettably, that is not the approach we are debating today. The House bill before us, although technically PAYGO compliant, would postpone actuarially sound rates for perhaps a generation. It would kill off a key element of risk-based pricing permanently, which is necessary if we are to ever transition to market competition.

Finally, it creates brand new subsidies for a program that is already bailout broke.

Mr. Speaker, the Senate bill isn't any better. It essentially represents a 4-year freeze that is not PAYGO compliant. My fear is that either bill represents a big step backwards from reform and leaves us just a few hurri-

canes or a few short years away from the next taxpayer bailout.

Either bill will make it incredibly difficult to do what Congress must do, and that is phase out this unneeded, government-run insurance program that fundamentally represents both an unfair and unsustainable middle-income entitlement.

I respect my colleagues who have a different view. I respect my leadership for bringing a bill that may not be optimum to the floor.

But, Mr. Speaker, if we don't protect taxpayers today, how will we ever reform the gargantuan middle-income entitlements that put us on the precipice of a debt crisis?

I, for one, will vote "no" on this well-intended but misguided bill.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND), one of the co-authors of the bill that we put together to deal with this issue who has been working very hard on it.

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I thank Ranking Member WATERS, and thank you to the Republican leadership who brought this up.

We often hear in this Chamber over and over again a talk of a financial bankruptcy that is plaguing or potentially plaguing our country, and we say it so much so that we start to believe it, and we miss one thing: that we are on the verge of a moral bankruptcy in this country.

When you talk about homeowners who played by the rules, saved their money, bought a piece of the American Dream, and then all of a sudden, years, if not decades later, we come back with a well-intentioned bill but that had unfortunate, unintended consequences that would strip the American Dream and homeownership right from under them, then the question becomes to this Congress: What do you do about it?

I said this before and I will say it again. What real leadership does when they do something and they realize it had unintended consequences, they fix it.

Congresswoman WATERS realized that her name was attached to a bill that potentially would strip homeowners of the American Dream, of the largest piece of investment that you pass on from generation to generation, and she stepped up and said, that is not what we intended. We are going to fix it.

The Republican leadership, Mr. GRIMM, stepped up and said, this is unsustainable—and more than that, it doesn't make common sense.

So both sides came together to produce a bill that would have affordability, stability, and predictability.

We talk about rules all the time, that corporations just want to know the rules so they can play by them. Well, homeowners want to know that too, and homeowners who built to the

building codes and the elevations that they were required to do at the time should not come back and be penalized later.

So I just want to, again, congratulate Congresswoman WATERS because people back in New Orleans and in Louisiana today who are celebrating Fat Tuesday and Mardi Gras and having a good time, they can just party a little bit longer knowing that we are here today and we are going to fix this problem that could strip the American Dream away from them.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER), the chairman of the Housing and Insurance Subcommittee on the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition today to H.R. 3370. The National Flood Insurance Program is in trouble. It is in deep debt, and it is putting taxpayers at risk for another government bailout.

The program was added to the GAO's "high-risk list" in 2006 and remains there today because of the financial exposure it represents to the American taxpayers. Today, it is over \$24 billion in debt, and this number will continue to rise.

Recognizing this, Congress passed the Biggert-Waters Act in July of 2012. The act authorized the flood insurance program for 5 years and included important reforms to get it back on sound financial footing. One of these reforms was the gradual elimination of outdated rate subsidies.

In a rare display of bipartisanship, Republicans and Democrats overwhelmingly supported the notion that risk-based premiums were needed for the program to be self-sufficient and to protect the taxpayers from further bailouts. Over 400 Members of Congress voted for that.

Since then, we have heard concerns from homeowners facing sticker shock from the higher rates. I am sympathetic to those concerns, but I believe there are more responsible ways to address this bill than the bill before us today.

The Financial Services Committee put together four different proposals to address these concerns. The last one included an 8- to 10-year phase-in for rates and nearly a 2-year affordability cap of \$5,000. Unfortunately, each one of these proposals were rejected because they fell short of maintaining subsidies indefinitely.

That is unfortunate because maintaining these subsidies hurts everyone in the long run. It hurts taxpayers by putting them on the hook for billions of dollars in subsidies. It hurts the Flood Insurance Program by easing its path toward insolvency. It hurts homeowners by encouraging them to build in areas that jeopardize their lives and their properties.

After more than a decade, if I have learned anything in Congress, it is that the Federal Government does a terrible job of underwriting and pricing risk. Whether it is through subsidies or failures to price risk due to political considerations, the American taxpayers, unfortunately, end up footing the bill.

What is even worse under H.R. 3370 is that the taxpayers will be subsidizing rates that benefit only 1 percent of households. More than 20 percent of the program's policies are heavily subsidized, regardless of need, and of those policyholders, 70 percent go to homes in counties with the highest property values.

While H.R. 3370 may help homeowners facing high rates in the short run, it does them a disservice by not promoting a healthy, stable financial program in the future.

For taxpayers, for homeowners and, ultimately, for the future of the flood insurance, I think we can do better. I urge my colleagues to vote against H.R. 3370.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO), who has spent an awful lot of time working on this issue with all of us.

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member. I want to thank Mr. GRIMM and others for bringing this bill forward.

You have heard what the bill does. I will tell you that I want to associate myself with all of the people who support it. I actually want to associate myself with some of the remarks of people who oppose it.

I think that we need to fix the problem of short funding in the flood insurance program, but I don't think we need to do it overnight, and I don't think we need to do it on the backs of middle class people with a hammer.

So I want to fix this. I think this bill is actually a step forward to say we will fix it, but we will take some time doing it to do it right so innocent people don't get hurt.

I also want to take a minute to point out some of the things that are not in this bill that people need to be aware of. This bill does not address people who own vacation homes.

I know that some people think that everyone who owns a vacation home is a multimillionaire Donald Trump. The average income of a second homeowner is about \$96,000. The average value of a second home is about \$150,000.

Now, you don't see most of these homes on the Home and Garden Network because they are usually on wheels. They are made out of T-111. They are just inexpensive places that people get to bring their families.

Now, most of these homes are not on the shore, but they are, not all of them, but some of them, are in flood plains. We need to take this into account when we continue to address this issue as we move forward.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING), a member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 3370. At the outset, let me thank Congressman GRIMM, Congressman LOBIONDO, and Ranking Member WATERS for the work that they have done in bringing together a true, bipartisan bill to this floor.

The Biggert-Waters bill was well-intended, but there were unintended consequences, and some of those consequences would be absolutely devastating to hundreds, if not thousands, of constituents in my district who were devastated by Hurricane Sandy.

I would just state for the record that these people are not millionaires. They complied with the law, with all the building codes, all the ordinances. They never had any flood damage in their 50, 60 years prior to this—but their homes are devastated. To add to that the incredible increase they will get in premiums for flood insurance would be even the ultimate devastation.

So this bill is absolutely essential. Ironically, it will actually decrease Federal spending over the next 5 years, but it is important that we stand together to help those in need, people who complied with the laws, hard-working, blue-collar Americans who are proud of their homes, proud of their families, and want the opportunity to get back on their feet.

They were devastated once. Let's not allow Congress to devastate them again.

□ 1745

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from New York, Representative MALONEY, the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Insurance and Government Sponsored Enterprises.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I thank the gentlelady for her leadership and for authoring the Grimm-Waters bill, which I support.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will protect homeowners from drastic premium increases, provide relief to housing markets, and put the flood insurance program on a path to long-term solvency.

The bill will also put a stop to FEMA's reckless implementation of Biggert-Waters. The GAO found that FEMA doesn't even have the information that the GAO said was key to determining a property's actual flood risk; and yet, FEMA has gone ahead with massive premium increases anyway, based on back-of-the-envelope calculations and a shocking indifference to the impact on the middle class families that are suffering across this country because of Hurricane Sandy, many of whom are in my district.

This bill will require FEMA to actually complete the affordability study that was mandated in the prior legislation, so that independent experts can determine the best way to successfully balance the two main goals, consumer affordability and long-term solvency.

This bill would set a hard cap on rate increases at 18 percent a year and will protect families and businesses from the kinds of 500 percent rate increases that they are suffering from now.

I congratulate the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) on her leadership and Congressman GRIMM. I urge a "yes" vote on the Grimm-Waters bill.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PALAZZO).

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, our bill is the result of extensive bipartisan, bicameral work over the past year. This bill is both compassionate and fiscally responsible. From the start, my priority has been to ensure that flood insurance remains available and affordable not just in Mississippi, but all across the country. Our bill meets those goals.

Many of the people who are now facing unrealistic, overnight increases followed all the rules. They went to great effort and expense to build back to FEMA standards after storms like Hurricane Katrina.

Congress never intended to punish responsible homeowners, yet that is exactly what FEMA is doing, as it implements the law with flawed maps and procedures.

These actions are threatening individuals and entire communities. I am not talking about wealthy waterfront homeowners. In south Mississippi, I am hearing from teachers, veterans, fishermen, people who work at the shipyards in support of our U.S. Navy, many 100 miles inland.

Our bill holds FEMA accountable. It provides real responsible relief and lasting reforms. I urge my colleagues to join me in strong support of this bill.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts, Representative LYNCH, who is a member of the Financial Services Committee and is also the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, U.S. Postal Service and the Census, and I thank him for his hard work in putting this bill together.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from California for her leadership on this bill. She has been a tiger on this issue, trying to get this right.

I also want to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR) and the Republican leadership, as well as Mr. GRIMM from New York and Mr. RICHMOND from Louisiana who really, I think, without their work collectively, this would not be happening.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Af-

fordability Act. Over the past several months, I have had the honor of working with my colleagues, both Republican and Democrat, to roll back the harmful and unintended consequences of the original Biggert-Waters Act.

This legislation that we take up today is a culmination of a lot of efforts by a lot of individuals, as well as the activism on the part of our constituents.

I have had an opportunity to attend some rallies and meetings in my district with over 1,000 people attending, where the concerns and the fears of my constituents were brought forward in great volume.

H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, will do a number of things. One, it reinstitutes or expands the grandfathering provisions in section 4 from what they were in the previous bill.

A very important provision here, section 18 allows reimbursements for successful appeals. Now, what that will do is, if FEMA incorrectly—as they have in many cases—if they put homes in a flood zone incorrectly and a homeowner appeals that, they get the money that they expended for that appeal, for the surveying and technical assistance they need.

In addition, section 24 provides for a flood insurance advocate to actually work on behalf of homeowners to make sure that they get the full and meaningful appeal that they deserve and also that they understand what the flood mapping process requires.

More fundamentally, this bill is an example of what we can achieve when Congress works together, and I honestly hope that we will build on this spirit of bipartisan cooperation. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this critical bill.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LOBIONDO).

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong support of this legislation, and we are about to do something tonight that doesn't happen around here very often. We are going to do a bipartisan effort that has common sense and fiscal responsibility, something that we ought to be doing more often.

This is an issue maybe that doesn't affect everyone, but if you are from a district where your constituents have had their lives and their dreams ripped apart—first by Superstorm Sandy and then by the miserable implementation of a flood insurance policy that was well-intended, but not put together—how do you go back and say you are not going to fix it?

This gives us an opportunity to give them hope for the future, to give them a chance to rebuild. 16 months later, I have still got constituents who aren't able to get back into their homes. How do you tell them they are going to have such an outrageous increase on their

flood insurance, which will force them to throw their hands up and give it up?

Congress is doing the right thing tonight. We need to follow through on this, have it changed, and understand that this is the approach for the future.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey, Representative PASCRELL, and I thank him for his input on this bill.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, it must be very painful for people to watch this when affected—whether you are on a river or whether you are on the ocean—because it is painful to see that some of the people who are opposed to this bill also voted "no" on the Sandy relief, so they are being consistent anyway.

After Sandy, many of my constituents in towns such as Moonachie and Little Ferry are now experiencing a second blow from skyrocketing flood insurance rates. In particular, the home sale trigger has resulted in drastically higher flood insurance rates for prospective home buyers, putting a wet blanket on real estate markets in flood-prone areas.

The bill before us today contains some very important changes. It provides immediate relief to homeowners by repealing the home sale trigger and reducing the rate of possible increases. I am hopeful that we can revisit flood insurance reform in a way which will provide relief to second homes and small businesses.

Although these are important first steps, I know we can do better, and I thank all those who contributed to this legislation.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana, Dr. CASSIDY, one of the champions of this bill.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3370.

First let me say this affects almost all Americans. On this map, you can see, if there is a color, there is a chance that you are affected, and Chairman HENSARLING pointed out that Dallas is a hot spot of red.

That is a place where the woman he referred to will benefit because of this reform, and I will say that all Americans will because it is our job, in Congress, to protect the American citizen from agencies implementing laws in ways which are not sustainable.

The flood maps that FEMA has been using have questionable actuarial calculations, and there have been unrealistic rate increases.

The bill before us today, which I worked closely in developing with the gentleman from New York (Mr. GRIMM) and others, to strike the right balance, takes into consideration both fiscal solvency and consumer affordability.

First, the bill is paid for. It is paid for, and the funds will go into the NFIP reserve fund, so in the future, there will be money in the till, should there be another disaster.

Secondly, I will say that, if we don't do this, the National Flood Insurance Program will enter into a death spiral. CBO estimates that for every 10 percent increase in premiums, 1.4 percent of the subscribers drop off. If people are getting 2,000 percent premium increases, they will all drop off, which puts it into a death spiral.

I would say this is actually the fiscally responsible thing that puts the program on a glide path to actuarial soundness and, in the meantime, benefits Americans across the way.

A broad coalition of Republicans, Democrats, and Realtors have worked hard on this. I would like to thank Neil Bradley in Leader CANTOR's office; from my staff, Chris Gillott; and Richard Hoffman in Representative GRIMM's office, for a lot of tremendous work.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

The Florida delegation, both Democrats and Republicans, has been absolutely magnificent in helping to get us to this point, and I thank Representatives CASTOR, HASTINGS, BUCHANAN, and all of those from the Florida delegation for all of the work they have done.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. I thank the gentlewoman from California for her leadership on behalf of families all across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge all of our colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 3370 that will fix this flood insurance debacle.

A year and a half ago, a bill was passed here in the House to address the solvency of the flood insurance trust fund. That was the right thing to do. Unfortunately, it had serious unintended consequences that families and businessowners and Realtors all across this Nation have been dealing with.

But I am heartened here today because, even though this Congress has an unfortunate reputation for not addressing the challenges that face families all across this country, we are going to come together here today to address a very important financial issue for families.

I would like to thank my colleagues from Florida, Congressman HASTINGS, Congressman BILIRAKIS, Congressman NUGENT, Congressman BUCHANAN, and all of our delegation for fighting, standing together to work for them. I urge all of our colleagues here today to do the same.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), a great advocate for this bill.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation sponsored by my good friend from New York, Congressman GRIMM. It will provide relief for homeowners struggling to keep their homes. It will ensure that all participants in the program are

treated fairly, and it will eliminate an untenable financial burden during these tough economic times.

Some allege this bill will solely benefit the rich in beachside mansions. Middle class retirees and those on fixed incomes are the ones who are suffering from rate increases of \$10,000 or more. They are the ones who risk losing their homes.

If Congress fails to pass this bill, we will risk destroying all the reforms made to the National Flood Insurance Program. We cannot let the perfect be the enemy of the good.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this commonsense legislation, a solution that addresses a long-term issue and helps people immediately, and I thank Representatives WATERS, CASSIDY, and SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO for their leadership on this bill.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California, Representative GARAMENDI, who has been advising us that we really do have to make changes to the National Flood Insurance Program, and I thank him for his work.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bill, and I thank Congresswoman WATERS and Mr. GRIMM for their work.

This is desperately needed. There is a lot to be said, and a lot more work will go into this before this becomes law, but it is a major step forward.

One example: Isleton, California, in my district, in a zone that was mapped with 100-year flood protection, was downgraded by the Army Corps of Engineers and is now a high hazard area. Last year, it cost \$700 a year for the flood insurance. This year, it is \$7,000, which is about twice the mortgage on that \$115,000 house. It is not workable.

We are seeing, across my area, insurance premiums of \$10,000, \$25,000. This bill would stop that, move things back, give us time to deal with what is the fundamental problem in flood insurance, and that is the catastrophic coverage, which has to be spread out across the Nation.

□ 1800

More to be worked on, good progress, good bill. Let's vote it out of here and get this thing solved.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BUCHANAN) for his hard work.

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, flood insurance has been devastating to people in Florida. It has been in my region. I have done multiple town halls. It has gone up not 10 or 20 percent but 1,000 percent, 500 percent. Businesses can't sell their businesses. So this bill will bring some immediate relief. It also brings some certainty so people—because the market today is frozen, it will bring some certainty to people so they can buy and sell their homes.

Also, as the cochair of the Florida delegation, I want to thank my col-

leagues on both sides of the aisle because it is nice once in a while where we can work together to get something done for the American people.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oregon, Representative BLUMENAUER.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentlelady's courtesy. I have a slightly different perspective. The problem isn't FEMA. The problem is that Congress has not appropriately dealt with these issues over time.

I have spent 10, 15 years now working on flood insurance reform. This is not the last word. We are kicking the can down the road. We are putting a surcharge on other people. We are grandfathering in some of the properties that are going to get these subsidized rates and transferring it. But this money is going to run out. It is going to have to be reauthorized.

With all due respect, I think we need to look at the big picture. We have got to look at the big picture, not keep putting people back in harm's way, subsidizing people, and blaming FEMA because we don't adequately fund them and, of course, we don't want them to accurately map. We go gunnysack when that happens.

I had reservations at the time that this was too abrupt. But I am concerned that we are retreating too much on the reforms that had been made earlier, and it is going to be hard to get back, of course, until the bubble bursts, which it will.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, next I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), a great advocate for this bill and for his State.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from West Virginia for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, we have a flood insurance program that is broken. In fact, 18 different times in the last 5 years the National Flood Insurance Program has either expired or nearly expired because of all of the flaws and disagreements within Congress. And yet the result of that was that Biggert-Waters law of 2012 that is now being implemented in a way that is unworkable for the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I think if you look at what American families expect, they expect a flood insurance program that is both sustainable and affordable, and these two are not mutually exclusive. In fact, what we are achieving with this bill that is on the floor today will accomplish both. It will make the program sustainable for the future with real reforms, reforms that can actually be implemented in a way that will allow the program to move forward and pay for itself. In fact, this bill is fully paid for.

It also allows it to be done in a way that families can afford to pay their flood insurance premiums, because sending somebody a \$10,000- or \$20,000-

a-year bill on a \$200,000 house that never flooded is not an actuarially sound rate; it is a death sentence. Federal law should not be implemented in a way that literally forces millions of people out of their homes who played by the rules.

So what we are bringing to the floor today is an actual solution to a problem. This is not some delay. It is a real, long-term solution that pays for itself within the program with real reforms that allow people to move forward with a flood insurance program that will be sustainable and ultimately lead to a private market where you don't just have FEMA to go to, you can actually have private options as well for families. I urge its passage.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York, Ms. NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, a member of the Financial Services Committee.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bipartisan legislation.

Sixteen months ago, Hurricane Sandy battered New York City. Even today, efforts to rebuild continue. However, because of unforeseen consequences in previous flood insurance laws, many of the businesses, families, and homeowners affected by this storm may be hit again, this time by a flood of rising insurance premiums.

Because of how the law is structured, over 26,000 New York City homeowners and businesses will see their annual flood insurance premiums increase at least 25 percent. In some cases, people who previously paid \$430 annually could see their rates rise to \$5,000 or even \$10,000—an unsustainable amount.

Today's bill will address these unintended consequences of last year's reforms. By eliminating the property transfer trigger, buyers and sellers will now have peace of mind.

Mr. Speaker, we all want to ensure the National Flood Insurance Program is solvent, but we must do it in a way that does not harm those who have already suffered enough.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, can you tell me how much time is remaining on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from West Virginia has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from California has 4½ minutes remaining.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, but I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker and Members, I am very proud and very pleased about this bipartisan effort to fix a serious problem in this country. As a matter of fact, we should all be pleased because it is said by the media and others that we cannot work together. This is a time when we can demonstrate that we really do care about the citizens of this country

and we recognize the problems that were created by the Biggert-Waters bill.

I said earlier that my name was on that Biggert-Waters legislation, and I certainly worked in a bipartisan effort to try and do the right thing, and, of course, some day we would like to move all of these subsidies to actuarial rates.

We have unintended consequences in Biggert-Waters, and we have set out to fix them. So I want you to know that Mr. GRIMM, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. CASSIDY, and Mrs. CAPITO all have worked very hard to make sure that we addressed the concerns of our constituents.

Let me tell you, with this bill we are removing certain rate increase triggers, the reinstating of grandfathering, lower rate increases, refund of excess premium charges to homeowners, affordability study and framework; added to that, working with the bill that the Republicans brought to the floor and Democrats added to it, individual property rate increase caps, affordability goal, rate increase protection for newly mapped properties, mapping protections, consumer protections, protections of small businesses, nonprofits, houses of worship, and residences.

Mr. Speaker and Members, again, this is a bill that will address the concerns and the outcry of our constituents, some of whom were experiencing 500 and 600 percent rate increases. I tried to work with the chairman, and I was disappointed that Mr. HENSARLING saw differently. He does not support this bill, and he said so. Mr. NEUGEBAUER and Mr. HENSARLING said they had come up with other ways to deal with it. I never saw any of that. Nobody ever tried to relate to the fact that I was outreaching to try and get Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, and others who had a different opinion to come and work this out and do what we could for our constituents.

So, I am very pleased that we had Members on the opposite side of the aisle who insisted that their constituents deserved protection and that they deserved support. Working with their leadership and Mr. CANTOR working with our leadership, with the Democrats on this side of the aisle, we have come up with something that is extremely important and effective.

Now, I must say to both sides of the aisle, we have continuing work to do. This is not a permanent fix on this. What I discovered was none of us knew enough about FEMA. We have been crying for years about remapping. We don't really know how it works. We don't know the discretion that they have in making some of these decisions. We have got to spend the next few years really learning FEMA, how it works and how it makes decisions. We should never get into this kind of a situation again because we simply have

allowed them to do what they do without us being involved. They don't report to us on a yearly basis, as I would like to have them do.

So this is an opportunity for us not only to fix this problem at this time but to focus on the fact that we have got oversight responsibility that we have got to carry out to make sure that we are dealing with these issues in a way that makes good sense.

So, again, I am very proud, and I am very pleased with this bipartisan effort. I welcome the opportunity to have been able to work with some Members from the opposite side of the aisle that I had not worked with before. I think I learned a lot about them, and they learned a lot about me. I am so thankful that our leadership gave me the latitude to say go and do everything possible working with the opposite side of the aisle to get this problem fixed. So they have not only supported me, but they have supported all of the Members on our side of the aisle who have said to them that this may be one of the most important fixes that we will do this year.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the ranking member, Ms. WATERS, for her hard work on this and Mr. GRIMM, Dr. CASSIDY, and all the speakers we have had today here on both sides. We can work together to fix a definite problem, but I think we need to kind of reflect back on how did we get to this problem. We were trying to fix a bigger problem, the \$24 billion hole that the Flood Insurance Program has created because of mismanagement and not looking at it correctly.

Over 400 of us voted for that bill. So we did not realize at the time the data that we were given by FEMA gave us a certain ceiling that certain folks' premiums could rise, and as we have heard today from everybody, Republicans and Democrats, no matter where you live in the country, some of the premium escalation has just been incredible. So I am proud that we are working together.

I mentioned West Virginia. We flood a lot in West Virginia. We have got a lot of hills and hollows. Richard in St. Albans came to me in October of last year. He had just bought a home before they put the new FEMA rates into effect. He thought he was going to be paying a little over \$1,000 in his flood insurance program on a \$150,000 house. Guess what? \$14,000 was the rate that he was going to have to pay. He said:

I am just going to walk away. I will get foreclosed on. This is my dream home.

So for Richard, that is why I think all of this is important today, and for all the other Richards out there across the country who have had sticker shock, who haven't been able to cope, who have been very upset about this

and wondering, Is anybody really going to help me here?

So what I think we have learned today is whatever the scenario is, whether you are in a mountain situation by a river or if you are in an urban area in New York or if you are in Florida, that these problems were deep, expensive, and discouraging, and people were unable to understand a way out. I think that is what we are giving them today.

Many of the reforms that were built into the first Biggert-Waters bill still remain. We are refining those to make sure they make common sense. We are making sure that folks around the country can afford the homes that they have bought with the flood insurance and then get them on a glide path towards the sustainability of not just their home but also the program in general.

So I am proud of the efforts that all of us working together have had here today. I would like to encourage the other body to pass this. It is not going to work unless we get the Presidential signature that we need to make sure that we get the real relief that people need and deserve.

So with that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this bill reauthorizing the hopelessly indebted, unworkable, unfair and failed federal flood insurance program.

The National Flood Insurance Program is hopelessly in debt, over \$25 billion in fact, due to the fact that politics are responsible for setting rates, not actuarial cost. Because of this many Americans across this nation are paying rates far below what actual risk would dictate in the marketplace while others, including many who I represent, are being forced to pay into a program that they do not need or want to help subsidize lower rates for other favored groups whose risk is far greater.

In fact, over the life of the federal flood insurance program the people of my state have paid multiple times more in premiums than has been paid back in claims.

That is wrong. And this problem is expanding across the nation as the flood insurance program sinks deeper into debt.

This problem reminds me of the "risk corridors", also known as the insurance company bailout, included in Obamacare.

This Obamacare provision would be used to provide a federal taxpayer bailout to private insurance companies when premiums paid by beneficiaries do not supply enough money to pay claims.

How is the flood insurance program any different? Some have their premiums kept artificially low and then federal taxpayers are asked to pick up the tab when those areas eventually flood.

I think the "risk corridor" included in the flood insurance program is just as wrong as the one included in Obamacare.

Both Obamacare and the National Flood Insurance Program are proof that the federal government is a bad insurance company.

That is why I have continually submitted legislation to bring about a responsible end to the federal flood insurance program and allow for the creation of a private marketplace based upon actual risk.

I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing this terribly flawed bill and in finding a better way forward that brings about the end of the national flood insurance program.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Homeowners Flood Insurance Affordability Act, which removes some of the unintended consequences from the Biggert-Waters law that would increase flood insurance premiums on my constituents. This bill would repeal the premium hikes and would reinstate "grandfathered" rates for properties that were remapped into higher-risk areas.

In my own district following Superstorm Sandy, the changes in flood projections brought on by the storm will hit my constituents with higher flood insurance premiums—some as high as \$10,000 extra per year unless Congress acts to mitigate the hike.

I think we can all agree that we want to address the fiscal concerns faced by the National Flood Insurance Program—but these steep, immediate rate hikes are not the way.

This is a bipartisan bill that offers immediate protection to my constituents from financially devastating flood insurance premium hikes. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act (HR 3370), and would like to thank Mr. GRIMM and Mr. LOBIONDO, all our colleagues from New Jersey, and the Republican leadership for working together to bring this much-needed legislation to the Floor.

After Superstorm Sandy devastated the Northeast, our communities rallied, coming together to help friends and neighbors recover and rebuild. While progress has been made, some shore towns and the families who live along our coast are still struggling. Thousands of homeowners are working to rebuild their properties, and their lives—and the difficulties they continue to face cannot be overstated.

The coming rate hikes will have a chilling and dramatic impact on these communities, and mitigating the consequences for homeowners along the shore is a necessary step in the recovery effort.

At the start of this year, over 80,000 flood insurance policies were in force in Monmouth, Ocean and Mercer Counties in my Congressional District. The exploding cost of flood insurance—a program that many have paid into for years—threatens to roll back much of the progress made, and once again leave homeowners looking for answers.

The bill on the floor today makes targeted and necessary reforms and will prevent massive premium increases from hitting homeowners who simply cannot afford them—and cannot find a buyer to take them on, leaving them stranded and without a solution. Many cannot afford the recommended mitigation measures that may or may not reduce their premiums, creating a further environment of uncertainty.

Accordingly, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act slows the rate of increase that was included in the 2012 Biggert-

Waters reform bill, allowing homeowners to remain in their homes and plan accordingly to continue flood insurance policies.

While not perfect, this bill will provide relief and stability to these homeowners and their communities while bringing reform to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). It also provides a mechanism for enhanced community participation in the flood mapping process and increases transparency by making information publicly available to impacted parties.

Further, H.R. 3370 will provide individualized assistance by establishing a flood insurance advocate to help homeowners and towns obtain information and fair treatment during the mapping process. After hearing from hundreds of families, particularly in Monmouth and Ocean Counties, who are simply looking for information on how they will be impacted by changes to the flood mapping process, I am pleased that this important provision was retained in the final bill.

Mr. Speaker, there are NFIP-related issues that still must be resolved—such as ensuring proper and accurate flood mapping—but this bill is an important step in the right direction and will help mitigate the rate shock that many of my constituents are facing.

I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, as the ranking member of the House Budget Committee and someone who supported the original Biggert-Waters flood insurance reauthorization, I am keenly aware of the need for reform in this area. The federal flood insurance program is \$24 billion in debt, and its below-market rates encourage development in environmentally sensitive and flood prone areas.

Having said that, it has also become abundantly clear that the transition to market-based rates under the original Biggert-Waters bill has been unduly onerous for many homeowners, and the pace of that transition is in need of adjustment.

Today's bipartisan compromise attempts to provide that adjustment in the form of greater predictability around rate increases for covered properties, paid for with a surcharge on all policyholders. While there were certainly other ways to address this issue, and I could have supported more reform than appears in this particular bill, I will vote for tonight's compromise in order to move this program forward.

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address some of the many lingering issues surrounding the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

The bill passed by the House yesterday will help a significant number of Missourians who have been saddled with inconceivable rate increases, who cannot sell their property, and who run the risk of losing their homes. I have heard from one constituent in particular who told of an unexpected premium increase that jumped from under \$1,800 to more than \$11,000, a cost difference that she and her husband will have difficulty meeting. It is my sincere hope that this legislation helps to address these issues.

While I supported H.R. 3370, I regret that the bill presented no opportunities for an increased presence for the private insurance market. One of the primary public policy goals associated with NFIP has been to spur private

insurers to enter the flood insurance space. As long as NFIP generously subsidizes risk, however, the private market will remain a secondary player in the program. We must create a program that becomes, over time, actuarially-sound and creates a greater role for the private sector while reducing the government's role.

Yesterday the House took a step towards ensuring that our constituents are not saddled with impossible premium increases, but our work on this issue is far from done. More must be done to reign in FEMA, create more accountability in NFIP, and ensure the program is on sound footing. We must also demand more accountability from FEMA and NFIP and work to ensure that flood maps are accurate and not overly encompassing.

If NFIP has taught us anything, it is that Federal government should not be involved in the insurance industry. Many living in Missouri's Third Congressional District are in desperate need of relief, and NFIP is in desperate need of reform. Private insurance companies have a role to play, and the program should be changed to allow the private market to participate. I will continue to work to make the program sustainable, reliable and more functional than it is today, and hope that my colleagues will join me in the effort to increase the private sector role in flood insurance.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge all of my colleagues to pass H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

If this bill passes we will keep middle class families in their homes, bring relief to our local economy and provide needed reliability to middle class friends and neighbors.

Since November 2013, I have urged action on flood insurance on every bill that moved through the Rules Committee to the floor of the U.S. House.

Families who were facing massive flood insurance premium increases will now be able to breathe easier. The reforms will help ensure that flood insurance will be there in times of disaster.

This legislation allows individuals purchasing covered homes to also assume the predetermined rates and restores grandfathered properties under prior law so that owners would pay rates applicable to the original flood risk.

We have learned that we must keep a close eye on FEMA and flood maps and this legislation gives us more tools to do so. I credit the outcry many of our neighbors, realtors, chambers of commerce and others who helped focus the pressure on the Republican leaders in Congress to act.

This has been an anxious time for homeowners, but the immense pressure by families and the business community on the House GOP was an effort that paid off. This Congress has an unfortunate reputation for not addressing the challenges that middle class families face. Today, we can come together to do just that.

I thank my Florida colleagues who worked in a bipartisan manner to bring relief to more than two million National Flood Insurance Program policyholders in our state and I urge a "yes" vote on the bill.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood In-

surance Affordability Act of 2014. In my home state of New Jersey, home and business owners are continuing to recover from the devastation caused by Superstorm Sandy, now more than a year ago. Even for property owners not affected by Sandy, premium increases under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) have proven to be unaffordable and unsustainable. Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle have been working in recent months to craft the compromise before us today, and it is my hope that following bipartisan passage here in the House, this legislation will quickly pass the Senate and be signed into law by the President.

The Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act will repeal certain rate increase "triggers" that would result in dramatic premium increase from the sale of a home or lapse of a policy. The bill will restore "grandfathered" rates for home and business that were remapped into higher risk areas, often resulting in catastrophic rate increases. The bill places caps on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) ability to increase policy rates on primary homes, now capped at 15 percent annually under the bill, and enact additional caps to ensure affordability, while providing FEMA with the resources to complete a flood insurance affordability study within 18 months of the bill's enactment. This legislation will provide relief to families that have already been hit with substantial premium increases, and to communities that successfully challenge redrawn FEMA flood maps. Finally, these changes will be paid for by enacting a \$25/year surcharge on insured primary residences, and a \$250/year surcharge on all other insured properties.

I expect that the passage of this bill will provide relief and certainty to those in New Jersey and around the country dealing with premium increase, but we must not ignore the need to plan for a changing climate, sea level rise, and an increased risk of extreme weather and flooding. For those living in flood prone areas the risk of flood will only increase, stressing the limited resources available under the NFIP, and continuing to devastate communities and families.

I expect flood insurance is an issue that Congress will need to continue to revisit in coming years, but for now I believe the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act will serve to address many of the concerns I have heard from home and business owners, flood plain managers, insurers, and REALTORS in Central New Jersey.

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I support H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2013, because we need to fix the National Flood Insurance Program, create more transparency in how it is administered and get the program out of debt. This bill is a step forward in that direction. In addition to lowering rates for some policyholders who have seen sharp spikes in their annual premiums, the bill requires FEMA to implement a flood mapping program that results in technically credible flood hazard data; designate a flood insurance advocate to educate policyholders and coordinate with local officials; consult with communities before using new flood maps; and make publicly available any changes to rate tables and underwriting guidelines before instituting any such changes.

I also believe, however, that we could do more. By rushing this bill through the Congress we failed even to debate, let alone address, the Program's impact on non-primary residences—moderately priced second homes, small businesses, houses of worship, schools, non-profits. While H.R. 3370 will stop the spike in premiums for some primary homeowners, it will do nothing to keep premiums affordable for the small businesses that provide vital services to and strengthen the economies of coastal communities; and it will do nothing to ensure that the churches, schools, and non-profit institutions that anchor these communities will be able to afford their rising premiums. On the contrary, the bill includes a premium surcharge of \$250 per year on second homes and non-residential properties as a way to offset its cost.

Clearly, H.R. 3370 is not perfect, but it is an improvement over the status quo and that's why I will vote for it. On balance, I feel that it is better to accept an imperfect bill than wait for a perfect measure. However, we must continue to seek opportunities to address these defects as we move forward.

Mr. GRIMM. Mr. Speaker, I would like to stress the time sensitive need for FEMA to quickly act on the provision reauthorizing home buyers to assume the existing premium rate of sellers. Section 3(b) expressly states: "Such rates shall continue with respect to the property until the implementation of subsection (a)." Our explicit intent in including this provision is to allow a home buyer to assume the policy and rate of the current home owner upon enactment of this act. We expect FEMA to issue appropriate direction to the Write-Your-Own companies in short order to allow this process to move ahead smoothly. The purpose of this provision is to shield home buyers from excessive rates by letting them assume current rates during the period while FEMA is finalizing the guidance and rate tables to implement the other provisions of this act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3370, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1815

YORK RIVER WILD AND SCENIC RIVER STUDY ACT OF 2013

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2197) to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the York River and associated tributaries for study for potential inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.
The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2197

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “York River Wild and Scenic River Study Act of 2013”.

SEC. 2. DESIGNATION FOR STUDY.

Section 5(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1276(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“() YORK RIVER, MAINE.—(A) The York River that flows 11.25 miles from its headwaters at York Pond to the mouth of the river at York Harbor, and all associated tributaries.

“(B) The study conducted under this paragraph shall—

“(i) determine the effect of the designation on—

“(I) existing commercial and recreational activities, such as hunting, fishing, trapping, recreational shooting, motor boat use, bridge construction;

“(II) the authorization, construction, operation, maintenance, or improvement of energy production and transmission infrastructure; and

“(III) the authority of State and local governments to manage those activities; and

“(ii) identify—

“(I) all authorities that will authorize or require the Secretary to influence local land use decisions (such as zoning) or place restrictions on non-Federal land if designated under this Act;

“(II) all authorities that the Secretary may use to condemn property; and

“(III) all private property located in the area studied under this paragraph.”.

SEC. 3. STUDY AND REPORT.

Section 5(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. 1276(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“() YORK RIVER, MAINE.—The study of the York River, Maine, named in paragraph () of subsection (a) shall be completed by the Secretary of the Interior and the report thereon submitted to Congress not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this paragraph.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentlewoman from Maine (Ms. PINGREE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the legislation under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2197 authorizes the National Park Service to study 11.25 miles of the York River in the State of Maine for possible inclusion into the Wild and Scenic Rivers program.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 was intended to put a development

freeze on rivers to preserve their “free-flowing” characteristics. Although no immediately apparent risks to the river necessitating Federal designation have been identified, proponents of the study explained that they would benefit from the expertise of the National Park Service and its interaction with the surrounding community.

Due to a number of very real concerns that have arisen through prior designations, this bill includes several commonsense provisions aimed at better informing local property owners and communities about the full effects and impacts of a wild and scenic designation.

The National Park Service will be required to consider the effect of designation on commercial and recreational uses, such as hunting and fishing and boating. The study must also look at the impact on construction and maintenance of energy production and transmission.

Furthermore, H.R. 2197 requires the Federal Government to identify all existing authorities that could be utilized to condemn private property. We want property owners to know how much power the government will be given so they can form an educated opinion as to whether they should participate in or support a Wild and Scenic Rivers designation.

Finally, the bill will require the Federal Government to identify those authorities that compel it to become involved in local zoning. While Federal designation of the York River clearly has an appeal to the local advocates supporting this legislation, it is important for the community to be aware that the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires local zoning to conform to the dictates of the Federal act.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I would note that this exact legislation passed the House last Congress, but because the Senate failed to act on it, it is being considered once again in this Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am very happy to stand in support of my bill, H.R. 2197, the York River Wild and Scenic Rivers Study Act, and I want to start by thanking Mr. DEFazio, Mr. GRIJALVA, and tonight Mr. HASTINGS for their support in reporting this bill out of committee in September. I thank them and former Congressperson, now Senator MARKEY’s help in passing this bill last Congress. I very much appreciate their persistence and their willingness to help get this bill passed and into law. I know the people of Maine will appreciate their commitment, too.

This bill was really proposed by the folks back home, the same people who live and work around the York River and who care deeply about it. This bill

would allow organizations working around the York River to partner with the National Park Service to conduct a study that would provide the information that is vital to making smart decisions about the future of the York River and its communities.

I have heard from small business owners, community groups, State and local government, local and national land trusts, fishermen, hunters, school representatives, and historical and environmental conservationists, and all agree that continuing to benefit from the river depends on recognizing and protecting its important and unique qualities.

There are many unique features of the York River and the ecosystems surrounding it, and I will talk about those in a minute, but I want to start with a little history.

The first English settlers came to the York River nearly 400 years ago—but there is archaeological evidence along the shores of European settlers who were here even earlier. Before anyone came from Europe, the Abenaki Indians named the river “Agamenticus,” which means “little cove beyond the hills.”

When I last visited the York River, I spoke with members of the local community about the importance of the river to the people today, to the economy, and to the wildlife of the York River watershed. The river is home to important and rare species, including the Maine endangered box turtle and the threatened harlequin duck.

The salt marshes of the York River watershed serve as a nursery ground for nearly 30 species of fish that are vital to the Gulf of Maine ecosystem. The York River is a place where children are learning in an outdoor classroom. Students from nearby school districts gather data from the river for classes and to inform community decisions about the environment and the economy.

Maybe the most important factor is that many of the hardworking people in this part of the State depend on the York River to support their jobs. The York River is a place where people go to work. Commercial and recreational fishing operations depend on excellent water quality and reliable access to the waterfront. Farmers in the York River watershed grow pumpkins, potatoes, and other produce that help keep Maine communities healthy.

People travel to the York River to explore and appreciate its natural character and its incredible history, and while doing so, they invest in the surrounding communities.

The work of community groups has already resulted in considerable progress, but the York River needs additional protection so this vital resource is not overwhelmed by increasing development. In order to move forward to a future that protects the most

important aspects of this waterway and the jobs and the communities that depend on it, it is vital to connect these communities with the information they need. That is the goal and hopefully the eventual outcome of this important piece of legislation.

My bill is widely supported in Maine, and I look forward to it being favorably considered today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just point out that I have the privilege of chairing the House Natural Resources Committee, and the nature of that committee is such that we deal with a lot of important pieces of legislation, but pieces of legislation that are kind of parochial in nature with regard to a particular State. We have right now some 50 bills, both Republican and Democrat bills that have passed this House, many of them on suspension, that are still awaiting action in the Senate. In fact, this legislation—similar legislation passed the Congress last time and didn't go anywhere in the other body, and so here we are back one more time. I only mention that because we can't be the only House that passes legislation. It has to be both Houses in order to get something to the President.

I certainly hope that this legislation after two times will finally get through and the study can commence and we can proceed with looking at whether a designation would be in order.

With that in mind, let me talk a bit, because I mentioned this earlier in my remarks. What I am saying here regarding Wild and Scenic is in many ways applicable to wilderness designations. We passed a bill earlier today by voice vote that designated a wilderness area in Michigan. In both of those cases, what is common with both of them is that we have seen since the Wild and Scenic designation law passed and since the wilderness law passed, we see this especially in the Western part of the United States, that when these areas are designated either Wild and Scenic or wilderness, what happens is areas around them become de facto wilderness or de facto Wild and Scenic which many, many times imposes on private property rights.

Now we have experienced that more in the West than what my colleagues have in the East, and my colleague from Maine expressed, rightly so, this has very, very broad support. I am sure it does; they have worked very hard on it. The danger in the future is, if taken to the extreme, you could have, unless we had within the study—you could have some pressures on private property rights. We think that is sufficiently important to put that in the study so that those who will be affected know about it.

I hope the outcome is such that everybody believes, fine, we can work with whatever restrictions come up. That is the precise reason, Mr. Speaker, why when we look, and I say "we," being a Member from the Western part of the United States, when we look at these designations, it becomes pretty darn rigid even when you have acts of natural disaster.

With that in mind, let me tell you about something that happened in my old district prior to redistricting. There is a wilderness area in the northern Cascades. A lot of people visit it; it is a wonderful place. But to access that from the Eastern part of the United States, you have to go up a lake; it's the only way to get there. Then you have to traverse some 10 or 20 miles to the wilderness area, and the only way to get there is by a road. Well, the road—nature washed out that road many times several years ago. It is called the Stehekin Road. The community up there has been trying to rebuild that road.

Now, what does this have to do with wild and scenic and wilderness. Well, I mentioned that sometimes these things become so rigid that you can't affect something that needs to be done. Unfortunately, the road was right on the border of a wilderness area. So naturally, when you are going to rebuild it, you have to go through a wilderness area. "No, no," say all the national groups. Not the local groups, not the people who are affected, but all the national groups. "No, you can't build this road." So we are now in the third Congress. The last two Congresses, we passed bills to address this issue, but we have not been able to succeed because, as I mentioned earlier, we have to go through the Senate.

I only use this as an example of how national groups with a wilderness designation, and it has happened with wild and scenic designations, have unintended consequences on the community.

This legislation says within—with in—that study, we need to find out what these potential impacts could be. That is why we put that in this legislation.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to say to Mr. HASTINGS, I really do appreciate the work you have done in your committee, the bipartisan activity in your committee, and truly for your assistance in bringing this bill to the floor. I know you are preparing to retire, and I wanted to wish you the best on whatever journey happens next in your life, and thank you for your long service to your State and to the rest of us in Congress. You have been a wonderful colleague to work with. Thank you very much for that.

Representing Washington State, while we are at opposite ends of the

country, I think many of the concerns you have raised and that your constituents have raised, given the fact that you have a tremendous amount of open land, you have a tremendous amount of coastal shore land, you deal with some of the same issues that those of us who reside in Maine do, and I appreciate you bringing that perspective to this bill and to the many bills you have worked with.

I would just add in speaking about this particular program, it was really a wonderful experience for me when the many residents of this community, as I mentioned earlier, from all diverse walks of life, some of them were farmers and some of them were fishermen who depend on the river, some who care deeply about the history, but all of them came together, people who hadn't necessarily had the opportunity to work together before, but realized this is a very important concern, and that this particular river has enormous impacts. Because this river is in the southern part of my district, which means it is close to the southern border of Maine, it is surrounded by a very developed part of our State, although not much is that developed in Maine. We are one of the most rural States in the country with only 1.3 million people, so we are not a particularly overdeveloped State, but this is part of the southern part of the State, where there is a lot of activity going on, and people were concerned even more so because they wanted to make sure that when visitors come to our State, when residents decide to make it their home, we can count on the fact that there will be this part of the river and the area around it that will be looked at very closely when thinking about future uses and how to make sure that it is always there for those people who depend on it for jobs, for the fishing industries that are so critically important, and for the communities that care deeply about its history and about the activities that go on there. That is part of what has made this bill so particularly important to our State. I am extremely grateful to everyone on the committee who worked to help us bring it to the floor.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for her kind words, and I support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the York River Wild and Scenic River Study Act of 2013.

I want to thank my friend and colleague, Representative PINGREE, for her leadership on this bill.

A healthy York River is important to the economic and environmental vitality of Southern Maine. The river is used daily by fishermen and recreational boat users, and its beauty is a significant part of the tourist economy that is

so integral to Southern Maine. The river is an important home for wildlife, providing a home to more than 100 waterbirds and 28 species of fish.

This important legislation would create a study to determine whether or not the York River and its tributaries should be included in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Program. The study would help evaluate current and future demands on the river, and determine whether or not extra federal protection is necessary to keep the river strong and healthy.

Individuals, businesses, and wildlife depend on the York River. We must keep it strong and healthy for years to come.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2197.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1830

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 3370, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 488, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The remaining electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 306, nays 91, not voting 33, as follows:

[Roll No. 91]

YEAS—306

Amodei	Bass	Bishop (GA)
Barber	Beatty	Bishop (NY)
Barletta	Becerra	Black
Barr	Bera (CA)	Blackburn
Barrow (GA)	Bilirakis	Bonamici

Brady (PA)	Hastings (FL)	Pallone
Braley (IA)	Hastings (WA)	Pascarell
Brooks (IN)	Heck (NV)	Payne
Brownley (CA)	Heck (WA)	Pelosi
Buchanan	Herrera Beutler	Perlmutter
Bucshon	Himes	Perry
Bustos	Holt	Peters (CA)
Butterfield	Honda	Peters (MI)
Byrne	Horsford	Peterson
Calvert	Hoyer	Pingree (ME)
Campbell	Huffman	Pocan
Cantor	Hunter	Poe (TX)
Capito	Israel	Polis
Capps	Jeffries	Posey
Capuano	Johnson (GA)	Price (NC)
Carney	Johnson (OH)	Quigley
Carson (IN)	Kaptur	Rahall
Cartwright	Keating	Rangel
Cassidy	Kelly (IL)	Reed
Castor (FL)	Kelly (PA)	Reichert
Chu	Kennedy	Renacci
Cicilline	Kildee	Rice (SC)
Clark (MA)	Kilmer	Richmond
Clarke (NY)	Kind	Rigell
Clay	King (NY)	Roby
Cleaver	Kingston	Roe (TN)
Clyburn	Kinzinger (IL)	Rogers (AL)
Coffman	Kirkpatrick	Rogers (KY)
Cohen	Kuster	Rogers (MI)
Collins (NY)	LaMalfa	Rooney
Connolly	Lance	Ros-Lehtinen
Conyers	Langevin	Ross
Costa	Larsen (WA)	Rothfus
Courtney	Larson (CT)	Roybal-Allard
Cramer	Latham	Ruiz
Crenshaw	Latta	Runyan
Crowley	Lee (CA)	Ruppersberger
Cuellar	Levin	Ryan (OH)
Cummings	Lewis	Sanchez, Linda
Daines	Lipinski	T.
Davis (CA)	LoBiondo	Sanchez, Loretta
Davis, Danny	Loebbeck	Sanford
Davis, Rodney	Lofgren	Sarbanes
DeGette	Long	Scalise
Delaney	Lowenthal	Schakowsky
DeLauro	Lowe	Schiff
DeBene	Luetkemeyer	Schneider
Denham	Lujan Grisham	Schock
Dent	(NM)	Schrader
DeSantis	Lujan, Ben Ray	Scott (VA)
Deutch	(NM)	Scott, David
Diaz-Balart	Lynch	Serrano
Dingell	Maffei	Sewell (AL)
Doyle	Maloney,	Shea-Porter
Duckworth	Carolyn	Sherman
Edwards	Maloney, Sean	Shimkus
Ellison	Marino	Simpson
Engel	Matheson	Sinema
Enyart	Matsui	Sires
Eshoo	McAllister	Slaughter
Esty	McCarthy (CA)	Smith (MO)
Farenthold	McCullum	Smith (NE)
Farr	McDermott	Smith (NJ)
Fattah	McGovern	Smith (WA)
Fitzpatrick	McIntyre	Southerland
Fleischmann	McKeon	Speier
Fleming	McKinley	Swalwell (CA)
Flores	McMorris	Takano
Forbes	Rodgers	Terry
Fortenberry	McNerney	Thompson (CA)
Foster	Meehan	Thompson (MS)
Frankel (FL)	Meeks	Thompson (PA)
Frelinghuysen	Meng	Tierney
Fudge	Messer	Titus
Gabbard	Mica	Tonko
Galleo	Michaud	Tsongas
Garamendi	Miller (FL)	Turner
Garcia	Miller, Gary	Upton
Gardner	Miller, George	Valadao
Gerlach	Moore	Van Hollen
Gibbs	Moran	Vargas
Gibson	Mullin	Vela
Graves (MO)	Murphy (FL)	Velázquez
Grayson	Murphy (PA)	Visclosky
Green, Al	Nadler	Wagner
Griffin (AR)	Napolitano	Walberg
Griffith (VA)	Neal	Walden
Grijalva	Negrete McLeod	Walorski
Grimm	Noem	Walz
Guthrie	Nolan	Wasserman
Hahn	Nugent	Schultz
Hanabusa	Nunnelee	Waters
Hanna	O'Rourke	Weber (TX)
Harper	Olson	Webster (FL)
Harris	Owens	Welch
Hartzler	Palazzo	Wenstrup

Whitfield
Wilson (FL)
Wittman

Wolf
Womack
Woodall

Yarmuth
Yoho
Young (AK)

NAYS—91

Aderholt	Gowdy	Pearce
Amash	Granger	Petri
Bachmann	Graves (GA)	Pittenger
Bachus	Hall	Pitts
Barton	Hensarling	Pompeo
Benishek	Higgins	Price (GA)
Bentivolio	Holding	Ribble
Blumenauer	Hudson	Rohrabacher
Bridenstine	Huelskamp	Rokita
Brooks (AL)	Huizenga (MI)	Roskam
Brown (GA)	Hultgren	Royce
Burgess	Hurt	Ryan (WI)
Camp	Issa	Salmon
Carter	Jenkins	Schweikert
Chabot	Jordan	Scott, Austin
Cole	Joyce	Sensenbrenner
Collins (GA)	Kline	Shuster
Conaway	Lamborn	Stewart
Cook	Lucas	Stivers
Cooper	Lummis	Stutzman
Cotton	Marchant	Thornberry
Culberson	Massie	Tiberi
DeFazio	McCaul	Tipton
Duncan (SC)	McClintock	Waxman
Duncan (TN)	McHenry	Westmoreland
Fox	Meadows	Williams
Franks (AZ)	Miller (MI)	Wilson (SC)
Garrett	Mulvaney	Yoder
Gingrey (GA)	Neugebauer	Young (IN)
Gohmert	Nunes	
Goodlatte	Paulsen	

NOT VOTING—33

Bishop (UT)	Duffy	King (IA)
Boustany	Ellmers	Labrador
Brady (TX)	Fincher	Lankford
Brown (FL)	Gosar	McCarthy (NY)
Cárdenas	Green, Gene	Pastor (AZ)
Castro (TX)	Gutiérrez	Rush
Chaffetz	Hinojosa	Schwartz
Coble	Jackson Lee	Sessions
Crawford	Johnson, E. B.	Smith (TX)
DesJarlais	Johnson, Sam	Stockman
Doggett	Jones	Weasey

□ 1856

Messrs. FRANKS of Arizona, BRIDENSTINE, KLINE, ISSA, and BACHUS changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mses. MCCOLLUM, WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Messrs. HUFFMAN and HUNTER changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA AS THEY PROTEST PEACEFULLY FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 488) supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic change and calling to end the violence, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms.

ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 393, nays 1, not voting 36, as follows:

[Roll No. 92]

YEAS—393

Aderholt	DelBene	Jeffries
Amash	Denham	Jenkins
Amodei	Dent	Johnson (GA)
Bachmann	DeSantis	Johnson (OH)
Bachus	Deutch	Jordan
Barber	Diaz-Balart	Joyce
Barletta	Dingell	Kaptur
Barr	Doyle	Keating
Barrow (GA)	Duckworth	Kelly (IL)
Barton	Duncan (SC)	Kelly (PA)
Bass	Duncan (TN)	Kennedy
Beatty	Edwards	Kildee
Becerra	Ellison	Kilmer
Benishek	Engel	Kind
Bentivolio	Enyart	King (NY)
Bera (CA)	Eshoo	Kingston
Bilirakis	Esty	Kinzinger (IL)
Bishop (GA)	Farenthold	Kirkpatrick
Bishop (NY)	Farr	Kline
Black	Fattah	Kuster
Blackburn	Fitzpatrick	LaMalfa
Blumenauer	Fleischmann	Lamborn
Bonamici	Fleming	Lance
Brady (PA)	Flores	Langevin
Braley (IA)	Forbes	Larsen (WA)
Bridenstine	Fortenberry	Larson (CT)
Brooks (AL)	Foster	Latham
Brooks (IN)	Fox	Latta
Brownley (CA)	Frankel (FL)	Lee (CA)
Buchanan	Franks (AZ)	Levin
Bucshon	Frelinghuysen	Lewis
Burgess	Fudge	Lipinski
Bustos	Gabbard	LoBiondo
Butterfield	Galleo	Loebsack
Byrne	Garamendi	Long
Calvert	Garcia	Lowenthal
Camp	Gardner	Lowey
Campbell	Garrett	Lucas
Cantor	Gerlach	Luetkemeyer
Capito	Gibbs	Lujan Grisham
Capps	Gibson	(NM)
Capuano	Gingrey (GA)	Lujan, Ben Ray
Carney	Goodlatte	(NM)
Carson (IN)	Gowdy	Lummis
Carter	Granger	Lynch
Cartwright	Graves (GA)	Maffei
Cassidy	Graves (MO)	Maloney,
Castor (FL)	Grayson	Carolyn
Chabot	Green, Al	Maloney, Sean
Chu	Griffin (AR)	Marchant
Cicilline	Griffith (VA)	Marino
Clark (MA)	Grijalva	Matheson
Clarke (NY)	Grimm	Matsui
Clay	Guthrie	McAllister
Cleaver	Hahn	McCarthy (CA)
Clyburn	Hall	McCaul
Coffman	Hanabusa	McClintock
Cohen	Hanna	McCollum
Cole	Harper	McDermott
Collins (GA)	Harris	McGovern
Collins (NY)	Hartzler	McHenry
Conaway	Hastings (FL)	McIntyre
Connolly	Hastings (WA)	McKeon
Conyers	Heck (NV)	McKinley
Cook	Heck (WA)	McMorris
Cooper	Hensarling	Rodgers
Costa	Herrera Beutler	McNerney
Cotton	Higgins	Meadows
Courtney	Himes	Meehan
Cramer	Holding	Meeks
Crenshaw	Holt	Meng
Crowley	Honda	Messer
Cuellar	Horsford	Mica
Culberson	Hoyer	Michaud
Cummings	Hudson	Miller (FL)
Daines	Huelskamp	Miller (MI)
Davis (CA)	Huffman	Miller, Gary
Davis, Danny	Huizenga (MI)	Miller, George
Davis, Rodney	Hultgren	Moore
DeFazio	Hunter	Moran
DeGette	Hurt	Mullin
Delaney	Israel	Mulvaney
DeLauro	Issa	Murphy (FL)

Murphy (PA)	Rogers (KY)	Stivers
Nadler	Rogers (MI)	Stutzman
Napolitano	Rohrabacher	Swalwell (CA)
Neal	Rokita	Takano
Negetre McLeod	Rooney	Terry
Neugebauer	Ros-Lehtinen	Thompson (CA)
Noem	Roskam	Thompson (MS)
Nolan	Ross	Thompson (PA)
Nugent	Rothfus	Thornberry
Nunes	Roybal-Allard	Tiberi
Nunnelee	Royce	Tierney
O'Rourke	Ruiz	Tipton
Olson	Runyan	Titus
Owens	Ruppersberger	Tonko
Palazzo	Ryan (OH)	Tsongas
Pallone	Ryan (WI)	Turner
Pascrell	Salmon	Upton
Paulsen	Sánchez, Linda	Valadao
Payne	T.	Van Hollen
Pearce	Sanchez, Loretta	Vargas
Pelosi	Sanford	Vela
Perlmutter	Sarbanes	Velázquez
Perry	Scalise	Visclosky
Peters (CA)	Schakowsky	Wagner
Peters (MI)	Schiff	Walberg
Peterson	Schneider	Walden
Petri	Schock	Walorski
Pingree (ME)	Schrader	Walz
Pittenger	Schweikert	Wasserman
Pitts	Scott (VA)	Schultz
Pocan	Scott, Austin	Waters
Poe (TX)	Scott, David	Waxman
Polis	Sensenbrenner	Weber (TX)
Pompeo	Serrano	Webster (FL)
Posey	Sewell (AL)	Welch
Price (GA)	Shea-Porter	Wenstrup
Price (NC)	Sherman	Westmoreland
Quigley	Shimkus	Whitfield
Rahall	Shuster	Williams
Rangel	Simpson	Wilson (FL)
Reed	Sinema	Wilson (SC)
Reichert	Sires	Wittman
Renacci	Slaughter	Wolf
Ribble	Smith (MO)	Womack
Rice (SC)	Smith (NE)	Woodall
Richmond	Smith (NJ)	Yarmuth
Rigell	Smith (WA)	Yoder
Roby	Southerland	Yoho
Roe (TN)	Speier	Young (AK)
Rogers (AL)	Stewart	Young (IN)

NAYS—1

Massie
NOT VOTING—36

Bishop (UT)	Duffy	King (IA)
Boustany	Ellmers	Labrador
Brady (TX)	Fincher	Lankford
Broun (GA)	Gohmert	Lofgren
Brown (FL)	Gosar	McCarthy (NY)
Cárdenas	Green, Gene	Pastor (AZ)
Castro (TX)	Gutiérrez	Rush
Chaffetz	Hinojosa	Schwartz
Coble	Jackson Lee	Sessions
Crawford	Johnson, E. B.	Smith (TX)
DesJarlais	Johnson, Sam	Stockman
Doggett	Jones	Veasey

□ 1904

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title was amended so as to read: "Supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democracy, a reduction in violent crime and calling for an end to recent violence."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, today, the fourth day of March 2014, I was unable to cast votes on the following recorded votes. My flight from Chattanooga, Tennessee was delayed due to mechanical issues. Had I been present, on rollcall vote No. 91, H.R. 3370, I would have voted "no;" on rollcall vote No. 92, H. Res. 488, I would have voted "aye."

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 3370, HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2014

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that, in the engrossment of H.R. 3370, the Clerk be authorized to make the corrections now at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the corrections.

The Clerk read as follows:

On page 4, line 6, strike "promulgate such regulations, and".

On page 4, line 12, strike "Implementation" and insert "Implementation".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from West Virginia?

There was no objection.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3826, ELECTRICITY SECURITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4118, SUSPENDING THE INDIVIDUAL MANDATE PENALTY LAW EQUALS FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. BURGESS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113-373) on the resolution (H. Res. 497) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3826) to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4118) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to delay the implementation of the penalty for failure to comply with the individual health insurance mandate, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

FLOOD INSURANCE BILL

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as an original cosponsor of H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014.

Over the past decade, the National Flood Insurance Program has bordered on insolvency, and today it is over \$24 million in debt. Congress, in 2012, passed the Biggert-Waters Act, which created much-needed reforms to the program that were designed to more accurately reflect insurance risks and create fiscal solvency. The law mandated that the Federal Emergency Management Agency perform an affordability study before transitioning

to the newly weighted system, which they failed to do and has led to devastating flood insurance premium increases.

Mr. Speaker, there are those who think we should do nothing and let government mismanagement ruin the economic health of our communities. We cannot run away from pressing challenges. To the contrary, we must correct this policy failure in a manner that strikes a balanced solution without adding one dime to the Federal deficit.

H.R. 3370 enables Congress to develop a long-term solution that protects local economies and holds government accountable.

RECOGNIZING GABBIE ST. PETER AND ALICE WILLETTE

(Ms. PINGREE of Maine asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk for a minute about two very special young girls from Waterville, Maine.

Gabbie St. Peter and Alice Willette both celebrated their eighth birthdays last month and are in the second grade at the George J. Mitchell Elementary School. Since their birthdays are just a day apart, they decided to have a joint birthday party. But instead of presents, these two extraordinary girls asked their friends to bring the items most in need at their school's food pantry.

This amazing act of generosity and community spirit came straight from Gabbie and Alice themselves. There was never a suggestion from a parent or a teacher to do this. They planned it all themselves.

I would have to agree with their teacher, Sherril Saulter, who said these two girls have some of the biggest hearts she has ever seen. Their compassion and generosity is inspiring, and I want to recognize and thank these two emerging leaders from Maine, Gabbie St. Peter and Alice Willette, for recognizing not only that no one in their community should go hungry, but also that they have the power to effect change.

THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, on March 2, 1836, 178 years ago, the Republic of Texas was born with the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence. The last paragraph on the sacred document reads:

We, therefore, the delegates with plenary powers of the people of Texas, in solemn convention assembled, appealing to a candid

world for the necessities of our condition, do hereby resolve and declare, that our political connection with the Mexican nation has forever ended, and that the people of Texas do now constitute a free, Sovereign, and independent republic, and are fully invested with all the rights and attributes which properly belong to independent nations; and, conscious of the rectitude of our intentions, we fearlessly and confidently commit the issue to the decision of the Supreme arbiter of the destinies of nations.

May God always bless and never forget the Republic of Texas.

□ 1915

CONGRATULATING SCHENECTADY GREENMARKET ON THEIR 5- YEAR ANNIVERSARY

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Schenectady Greenmarket on their 5-year anniversary. In the half-decade since they opened their doors to the Capital Region of New York, the Schenectady Greenmarket has worked to prove that our economy and nutrition benefit when we eat local and buy local.

Schenectady Greenmarket continues to find ways to bolster public health by providing farm-to-table meals to our friends and neighbors in the Capital Region and, most recently, partnering with MVP Health Care to build a healthier, more nutrition-focused community.

I had the privilege of attending Schenectady Greenmarket's 5-year anniversary last Sunday, and was pleased to see firsthand the good work and services this nonprofit organization provides our area.

I applaud the many farmers, producers, vendors, certainly musicians, volunteers, and staff who make the Greenmarket successful.

Again, I congratulate Schenectady Greenmarket on their anniversary, and I look forward to celebrating many more milestones to come.

PRESERVING ACCESS TO SLEEPING BEAR DUNES

(Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, tonight the House passed legislation addressing an issue that is near and dear to my heart and very important to Michigan involving Sleeping Bear Dunes National Park.

For years, there has been a back and forth between the community surrounding Sleeping Bear Dunes and the National Park Service over the best way to make sure that this pristine treasure is accessible to the public.

I have personally been involved in this process for over a decade, and I am glad to see my friend and colleague, Dr. DAN BENISHEK, who now represents the area, pick up the legislative torch that my friend Pete Hoekstra and I—we introduced bills to protect the Sleeping Bear Dunes, and DAN has finally been able to take it across the finish line.

This bipartisan and bicameral solution ensures that beaches will remain open, public roads can be improved, hunting and fishing will continue to be allowed, and private property rights are actually protected.

Tonight's legislative achievement would not be possible without the hard work and tireless efforts of local citizens, local business owners, and local advocacy groups such as the Coalition for Access to the Lakeshore.

I look forward to President Obama signing this much-needed piece of legislation and the benefits that there will be for the visitors to the park, the local residents, and small businesses throughout northern Michigan.

Most importantly, let's see Sleeping Bear Dunes preserved for generations to come.

COAL-FIRED POWER UNIT SHUTDOWN

(Mrs. LUMMIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, later this month, in the State of Wyoming, a coal-fired power unit is going to shut down production for the very last time. This is going to happen 10 years before its useful life has diminished.

This is happening because of Federal regulations. This is inexpensive, abundant, coal-fired power which serves the people of this country being cut down 10 years before the useful life of this plant is spent. This is a travesty of Federal regulation which will cost the American people more than it should for their own power.

You are going to be hearing more about this later this month from me, Mr. Speaker. This is not the last word.

DEEPENING THE SAVANNAH RIVER

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, in Georgia, 352,000 jobs are related to the Port of Savannah. It is a major export facility exporting 62 percent of the goods that go through there.

We would have even more jobs if we deepened the Savannah River from 42 to 47 feet. In fact, the payoff, the cost-benefit analysis is a dollar spent and a \$5.50 return. Yet, after 14 years and \$41 million worth of study, Congress, the bureaucracy, just barely has said let's go forward.

Congress, in January, signaled that we had had enough; cut the red tape, get the project moving, and classified it as a project under construction.

The President and Vice President have repeatedly said they support the project, yet, to my shock, and those of us in Congress, in their budget, which just has come out, they have not funded this important job-creating project. I do not understand it.

I am astounded by an administration who claims to say this is the year of action. Why would they not move forward on deepening the Savannah River?

Three hundred and fifty-two thousand jobs are related to this, cost-benefit analysis of 1 to 5.5. Yet, the administration continues to dither.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

(Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the nuclear energy sector. Not only do nuclear power plants provide affordable reliable energy, they also provide many quality, high-paying jobs and are the backbone of many communities.

My district is home to a nuclear plant in Clinton, Illinois, that employs nearly 700 people. Nuclear energy is a secure energy source that plays a vital role in a responsible all-of-the-above energy policy. It is the biggest provider of reliable, efficient clean energy, and it provides on-demand energy 24/7.

The recent record cold temperatures in the Midwest show the importance of energy diversification. Many of my constituents saw steep increases in their electric bill.

While pipes froze and transportation became difficult because of iced roads and bridges, nuclear power remained consistent. I worry that things could have become worse if nuclear power wasn't able to fill the gaps where needed.

This is why I stand here today in support of nuclear energy and all of my constituents and the hardworking taxpayers of Clinton and Central Illinois.

MAKE IT IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAMALFA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much for this opportunity to delve into what is a major piece of our work here in Washington, and that is the budget and the appropriation process.

Today is one of those very, very important days in the process of govern-

ment. Today the President delivered to Congress his proposed budget. It is required by the Constitution. George Washington did it, and every President since that time has done it every year, and today, we have President Obama's budget before us.

I want to spend a few moments on that budget, together with my friend from New York, Mr. PAUL TONKO and our East-West show. So we have got California and New York here.

I would like to start off by kind of framing my own work and how I think we really need to approach what we do here.

This is from Franklin Delano Roosevelt during the Great Depression, and he laid out this test. It is on the Roosevelt Memorial here. It is etched into the granite stone there. It says: "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much. It is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."

It is how I like to frame the issues, and I think we can frame the President's budget that way, and also, this way:

Those of you that have seen us here on the floor, Mr. TONKO and myself, we often and usually talk about this issue of Making It in America, rebuilding the great American middle class by rebuilding the manufacturing sector of America.

Twenty years ago, actually 24 years ago, it was about 20 million, 19-plus million Americans were in that manufacturing sector. They were making everything from wine to automobiles and jet planes and even computers. Then we lost it. Maybe 11 million right now.

We are beginning to see the rebuilding of the manufacturing base, and along with that, we will see the American middle class rise up once again and be able to support their families, be able to take care of those things like food and shelter and education.

These are the seven ways that we talk about this. The President's budget picks up many of these, and I want to just focus on some of them tonight. My friend, Mr. TONKO, will pick up the energy piece.

In the President's budget, there are these key sectors, tax policy, education, research, infrastructure. Let's start at the bottom and work to the top.

The President has proposed a \$305 billion, 4-year transportation program for the United States. Now, anybody that has driven today here in the East Coast or in the West Coast knows that we have gridlock, we have transportation problems of all kinds.

So the President comes forward with this major initiative, really, a significant increase in what we have done in the past. He wants to focus it, first, on repairing what we already have, the potholes, the bridges that have fallen

down and others that might, saying let's get to that.

He then goes about building the more modern transportation systems that we need, expanding our highway program, but also the rail systems, the inner city rail, the inter-city rails, and the street cars and other kinds of mass transportation systems; very, very important.

He proposes how we pay for it. He says, we ought not give the oil companies, the Big Four, a \$5 billion annual tax break, literally giving them our money at the gas pump, but also giving them our tax money in unnecessary subsidies.

He has other proposals in this part of the budget so that this would be fully paid for. That is the infrastructure piece.

One of our colleagues here on the floor just a few moments ago was talking about deepening the Savannah River port. Yes, we ought to do that, and the other ports. We know the Panama Canal is going to be widened, and when it is widened, we are going to have larger ships, deeper draft. We need to deepen our ports.

That is an infrastructure project, and the President's budget directly focuses on that.

Why is this important for individuals?

Because these are jobs, these are American jobs in construction, and if we will couple it with one more thing that I have proposed, and that is that these taxpayer programs buy American-made equipment so that the steel for the bridges, the concrete, so that the trains, so that the other things that will be part of this infrastructure, the pumps and all that goes with rebuilding the levees and the sanitation systems and the water system, that they be American-made equipment and supplies.

In doing that, we not only put people to work on the infrastructure projects, but we, once again, make it in America, and we rebuild the American manufacturing.

I would like now to turn to my colleague, Mr. TONKO, who wants to pick up a special piece of this, the energy piece in the President's budget.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you Representative GARAMENDI, and thank you for introducing on this House Floor some of the concepts that have been presented by the President in his budget presentation to Congress.

Certainly, I have been waiting with great anticipation as to what the energy portion of this budget might look like. Why?

Because I think it is a cornerstone. Energy policy, energy resources are those cornerstones of rebuilding our American economy, to grow the economy, and to strengthen the prospects out there for job creation in the private sector by creating that partnership, public-private partnership where the private sector will grow those jobs.

Also, I am curious because of my past roles as energy chair, the energy committee chair in the New York State Assembly, a role that I held for some 15 years, and also my leadership in NYSEERDA, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, prior to my coming to Congress.

Now sitting on Energy and Commerce as a committee assignment, I have great, great interest in where the President wants to take us on the energy issues, and I am very favorably impressed by some of the down payments that he wants to make.

Certainly, with the \$2.3 billion that he is offering for the Department of Energy in the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, that effort, I think, is going to launch us into a new series of innovation that allows for job creation and a reduced cost of electricity and, certainly, a drawing us down on this gluttonous dependency on fossil-based fuels as the cornerstone of our energy economy.

□ 1930

So I think that this effort will, within EERE, the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Office, provide for that growing effort to promote efficiency. That ought to be our fuel of choice. This investment allows us to accept that notion and then, also, to work on efforts that will enable us to focus our efforts out there that are required for energy.

Renewable energy, no fuel costs with the sun, the wind, the soil, the water, that is part of our environment. Utilizing that in a way that generates electricity and does it in a benign way is a very strong cornerstone advanced by the President in this effort.

And also, the \$4.2 billion that he brings forth in efforts to provide for innovation and to create new outcomes for energy purposes not only with efficiency and generation, but the transmission of that energy supply and looking at efforts to expand and make permanent the production tax credits that are so important for renewable energy in this country, so those are two good, very valuable investments.

Let me then just highlight a few others that I believe will be a progressive outcome, if we are to accept this notion here in Congress. One would be to address a clean energy research program, and the President does that with a major down payment for clean energy research.

He also addresses the Advanced Research Projects Agency in the energy capacity, acronymed out as ARPA-E. It mimics DARPA from the Defense Department, and what it does is commit a very laser-sharp focus on research as it relates to innovation in the energy sector.

Will all those outcomes be successful? Perhaps not. In fact, the character—the quality of research is that

failure can be the down payment to success. So where the failure will be realized, we will retest, we will recommit our energies to fine-tune and come forth with the success stories that are required.

ARPA-E, in its short 5 years, has proven to be a very valuable investment in energy innovation. The President makes a major investment in his budget for ARPA-E. I was just with over 2,000 representatives from the ARPA-E network who came to town—came to Washington to discuss the future of the program.

I am impressed with the leadership, coming both in EERE and ARPA-E in the Department of Energy, and the President acknowledges that—recognizes it by making these commitments in his budget.

And finally, if I might, Representative GARAMENDI, I will talk about the advanced fuels agenda, where \$700 million will be invested in the transportation sector, so that we have advanced fuels. We need to be weaned off of this gluttonous dependency on fossil fuels.

So these are very promising investments suggested by the President and the administration, those that will take us into a cutting-edge, new millennium sort of thinking that enables us to continue with that pioneer spirit in this country, which has always guided us and lifted us out of tough economic times.

I am encouraged by these commitments and look forward to the budget work that we need to do here in the House of Representatives and working with our partners in the United States Senate, but I think the President has set a good tone.

He has ushered in some good thinking, and he is looking at a new wave of energy concepts that will guide this Nation in job production, in sound energy policy, and will have benign impacts on our environmental resources. As stewards of the environment, I think that is important for all of us.

So I thank you for leading this discussion this evening, and I am impressed with the energy portion, so I thank you, Representative GARAMENDI.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you very much, Mr. TONKO, and thank you for your years of service in the area of energy and for moving this entire program forward.

I think there is another very, very important piece of this, and that is that the climate is changing. The climate is changing. We know that the greenhouse gases have passed the 400 mark, which was thought to be the point of no return.

Hopefully, that is not the case, but we do know that, in the President's budget, he goes after this issue of climate change with the kind of programs that you talked about, about the programs supporting renewable energy, making permanent the energy tax

credits for renewables, which is very, very important in my district.

I have a major wind farm that starts and stops, depending upon whether the production tax credit is renewed here in Congress. Right now, it is stopping, and that is a major part of the potential energy that we need.

The President talks about an all-of-the-above strategy, and yes, we ought to do that. One of those strategies is a natural gas strategy, which is now replacing coal in our power plants and, when properly managed—that is, methane doesn't leak—it is clear that we will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by that strategy. There are many, many different pieces to this. You spoke so well to it.

I want to just pick up a couple of others very, very quickly, and it is a part of this Make It In America, particularly the manufacturing. The President proposes that we create more advanced manufacturing hubs.

These are innovation hubs. There are several in the United States. He wants to put more of these out there. They have coupled the research with the manufacturing, and that allows for the advancement here.

He also does one thing that is very important in this, and that is the education and the reeducation of our workers and our students. I was at an extraordinary manufacturing facility in Yuba City over the weekend, and they make bearings.

I am not talking about these little ball bearings that you find in small appliances and the like. We are talking about bearings that are huge. These weigh several tons. They are the bearings on a shaft in a hydroelectric plant, maybe 2 or 3 feet in diameter.

I had no idea this existed there, and the one thing they wanted me to know was that they cannot find skilled machinists that are able and capable of doing that work.

In the President's budget, he has a major program to train and retrain the workers of tomorrow, men and women that will do not only the computer work, but also men and women that are capable of becoming the machinists of tomorrow, so that we are able, in America, to produce these very extraordinarily important, unique pieces of equipment, like the shafts, the turbines, and in this case, the bearings that are so important to make those things work.

So there is this whole complex in the President's budget—education, early childhood education, going after climate change with energy, going after infrastructure—as we talked about earlier.

There are many more pieces of this puzzle, and as we come back in the future, I want us to pick up each individual piece, talk to the American public about what is in the President's budget, and hopefully persuade our Republican colleagues to go along with

this pro-growth deficit reduction budget that the President has proposed.

I think, with that, I will turn it over to you, and if you don't have any more comments, we will call it a night.

Mr. TONKO. Representative GARAMENDI, just in closing, I would state that three very important underpinnings to a modern economy—a transitioning economy, one that drives innovation—would be the investments in research, the investments in infrastructure, the investments in education; and we begin to see that in this budget.

I think the efforts here are a good challenge and a charge to this Congress to respond accordingly. That will lift us into a cutting-edge thinking that enables us to compete effectively in what is a worldwide race, as it relates to clean energy innovation and high tech.

We need these investments in order to be strong. We won the global race on space back in the sixties because we committed to winning that race, and that was just against another nation, Russia.

Now, there are dozens of nations competing to be the kingpin of the international economy. The President rightfully sees that as the opportunity for this Nation to invest accordingly, so that we can move forward; and again, with his efforts in advanced manufacturing, with the NNMI, the manufacturing initiative, there is great promise there.

That gives you a very sharp focus on specific needs of manufacturing, developing those sorts of intellects and human infrastructure, workforce development, that will give us that cutting-edge technology.

I strongly support the NNMI initiative in the budget that the President had introduced last year. I think it shows us to be in an advanced sort of thinking and is giving manufacturing a shot in the arm. Our best days in manufacturing lie ahead. We need to invest so as to make that possible, and this budget does that.

So I thank you very much, and I look forward to many more discussions on the budget as we go forward in the ensuing weeks.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Mr. TONKO, for being such a leader on these issues.

As I was about to turn around to the Speaker and sign off, I realized I had left off a major piece of the infrastructure. We have a major drought in California, and we know that for California to be able to address this issue in the future, we are going to have to prepare by building reservoir capacity.

Well, I am not supposed to speak directly to anybody on the floor, but we are going to be putting forth a series of bills to build reservoirs in California. That is another critical piece of the infrastructure.

It may be the pipes. It may be the plumbing. It may be the sanitation system. But we desperately need to store water in California, not only in surface storage, but also to store that water in the underground aquifers.

If we do that, when the droughts which come occasionally to California, as they have in the past, we will be prepared to deal with them because we will have set aside the water that we needed.

Somebody asked me about this a few days ago, and they said: Well, why do we need to do that? Well, people will just consume it.

I said: Not if they listen and read Exodus in the Bible. It is there—7 years of good, 7 years of bad. You had better put it aside during the 7 years of good.

So that is what we intend to do. We will be introducing legislation later this week on building one of the major reservoirs in California.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will look to you and say that I look forward to working with you on these projects, and I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of official business.

Ms. JACKSON LEE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and March 5.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 5, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4869. A letter from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting the semi-annual report on the activities of the Office of Inspector General for the period April 1, 2013 to September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4870. A letter from the Director, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the first annual report for Minority Depository Institutions Annual Report; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4871. A letter from the Chair, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the

Commission's 2012 Annual Report of the Securities Investor Protection Corporation; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4872. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy, transmitting Third Report to Congress, January 2014, Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Activities, Progress, and Plans: September 2010 to August 2013, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4873. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Colorado; Construction Permit Program Fee Increases; Construction Permit Regulation of PM_{2.5}; Regulation 3 [EPA-R08-OAR-2013-0552; FRL-9903-94-Region 8] received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4874. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Indiana; Allen, Greene, Vanderburgh, Warrick, and Vigo Counties; 1997 8-Hour Ozone Maintenance Plan Revision to Approved Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets [EPA-R05-OAR-2013-0414, EPA-R05-OAR-2013-0424, EPA-R05-OAR-2013-0425, EPA-R05-OAR-2013-0432; FRL-9906-50-Region 5] received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4875. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Colorado Second Ten-Year PM₁₀ Maintenance Plan for Telluride [EPA-R08-OAR-2011-0833; FRL-9906-35-Region 8] received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4876. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4877. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4878. A letter from the Chair, Merit Systems Protection Board, transmitting a report entitled, "Evaluating Job Applicants: The Role of Training and Experience in Hiring"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4879. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program Report for Fiscal Year 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 7201(e); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4880. A letter from the Acting Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting the semiannual report on the activities of the Office of Inspector General for the period April 1, 2013 through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4881. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting a recommendation modifying the authorized total project cost of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers Project; to

the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4882. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Service's final rule — Update for Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates [Notice 2014-13] received February 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4883. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Applicable Federal Rates — March 2014 (Rev. Rul. 2014-8) received February 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4884. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Safe Harbor for Disregarded Entities Under Section 108 (Rev. Proc. 2014-20) received February 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4885. A letter from the Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for WTO and Multilateral Affairs, Office of the United States Trade Representative, transmitting the Administration's Annual Report on Subsidies Enforcement, pursuant to the Statement of Administrative Action of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4886. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Extension of Expiration Dates for Several Body System Listings [Docket No.: SSA-2013-0041] (RIN: 0960-AH61) received February 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4887. A letter from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting a letter regarding the selection of the next Director of Legislative Affairs; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select).

4888. A letter from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting a letter regarding a new research program; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select).

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 3189. A bill to prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer, relinquishment, or other impairment of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture; with amendments (Rept. 113-372, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. BURGESS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 497. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3826) to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4118) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to delay the im-

plementation of the penalty for failure to comply with the individual health insurance mandate (Rept. 113-373). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. REICHERT (for himself, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. TIPTON, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. GOSAR, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, and Mr. REED):

H.R. 4137. A bill to prohibit assistance provided under the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families from being accessed through the use of an electronic benefit transfer card at any store that offers marijuana for sale; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GOWDY (for himself, Mr. ISSA, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. FORBES, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. LABRADOR, and Mr. BACHUS):

H.R. 4138. A bill to protect the separation of powers in the Constitution of the United States by ensuring that the President takes care that the laws be faithfully executed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. TURNER (for himself, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. OLSON, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Ms. JENKINS, Mr. BROOKS of Alabama, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. LUCAS, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. DENT, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. MARINO, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, and Mr. REICHERT):

H.R. 4139. A bill to promote United States economic growth and job creation and strengthen strategic partnerships with United States allies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD (for herself and Ms. BROWNLEY of California):

H.R. 4140. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide per diem payments to eligible entities for furnishing care to dependents of certain homeless veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. CRENSHAW (for himself, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. YOHIO, and Mr. MICA):

H.R. 4141. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into enhanced-use leases for excess property of the National Cemetery Administration that is unsuitable for burial purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. GOSAR (for himself, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. KIRK-

PATRICK, Mr. JONES, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee):

H.R. 4142. A bill to amend the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to prohibit the use of benefits to purchase marijuana products, to amend part A of title IV of the Social Security Act to prohibit assistance provided under the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families from being accessed through the use of an electronic benefit transfer card at any store that offers marijuana for sale, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Agriculture, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. GRANGER (for herself, Ms. BASS, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. OLSON, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. WOLF, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. COOPER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. DOGGETT, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. COHEN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. NUNNELEE, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida):

H.R. 4143. A bill to realign structures and reallocate resources in the Federal Government, in keeping with the core American belief that families are the best protection for children and the bedrock of any society, to bolster United States diplomacy and assistance targeted at ensuring that every child can grow up in a permanent, safe, nurturing, and loving family, and to strengthen inter-country adoption to the United States and around the world and ensure that it becomes a viable and fully developed option for providing families for children in need, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GRIMM (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. NUNNELEE, and Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York):

H.R. 4144. A bill to amend the provisions of title 46, United States Code, related to the Board of Visitors to the United States Merchant Marine Academy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. ISRAEL (for himself, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Ms. MENG):

H.R. 4145. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the dependent care credit to take into account expenses for care of parents and grandparents who do not live with the taxpayer; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PAULSEN:

H.R. 4146. A bill to amend the Low-Income Housing Preservation and Resident Homeownership Act of 1990; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. TAKANO:

H.R. 4147. A bill to direct the Chief Information Officer of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Deputy Under Secretary of Veterans Affairs for Economic Opportunity to submit to the Committees on

Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives a report regarding the information technology of the Department that is used in administering the educational benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of TEXAS (for himself, Mr. COLE, and Mr. BECERRA):

H.J. Res. 111. A joint resolution providing for the reappointment of John W. McCarter as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. MOORE (for herself, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Ms. LEE of California):

H. Res. 498. A resolution expressing support for designation of the week of March 2, 2014, through March 8, 2014, as "School Social Work Week"; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. REICHERT:

H.R. 4137.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution, to "provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States."

By Mr. GOWDY:

H.R. 4138.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this legislation is based is found in Article I, Section 8, Clause 9; Article III, Section 1; and Article III, Section 2, Clause 2 of the Constitution, which grant Congress authority over federal courts. In addition, each House of Congress may determine the rules of its proceedings under Article I, Section 5, Clause 2.

By Mr. TURNER:

H.R. 4139.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution: The Congress shall have Power . . . To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD:

H.R. 4140.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 8, "Congress shall have Power To Make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. CRENSHAW:

H.R. 4141.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. GOSAR:

H.R. 4142.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This legislation is constitutionally appropriate pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 8 (the Spending Clause).

The Supreme Court, in *South Dakota v. Dole* (1987), reasoned that conditions and limitations on funds were constitutional and within the power of Congress under the Spending Clause.

Thus, conditioning receipt of federal funds in order to direct appropriate spending goals and purposes are constitutionally permissible. As long as the spending is on "the general welfare" (i.e. national in scope) and the condition is clear, and related to the program being funded, the limitation is constitutional.

By Ms. GRANGER:

H.R. 4143.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution that the Congress shall have power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

By Mr. GRIMM:

H.R. 4144.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3,

By Mr. ISRAEL:

H.R. 4145.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. PAULSEN:

H.R. 4146.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. TAKANO:

H.R. 4147.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.J. Res. 111.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 17, giving Congress exclusive jurisdiction over the District of Columbia. That clause was cited as the authority for the government's ability to accept the original Smithsonian donation and the creation of the Smithsonian Institution via the Act of August 10, 1846.

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18, the Necessary and Proper clause, which provides the power to enact legislation necessary to effectuate one of the earlier enumerated powers, such as the authority granted in Clause 17 above.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 32: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 118: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.

H.R. 279: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 411: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 445: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 460: Mr. BARLETTA.

H.R. 479: Mr. VARGAS.

H.R. 494: Mr. CLAY.

H.R. 543: Mr. ISSA, Mr. FATTAH, and Mr. RICHMOND.

H.R. 597: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 627: Mr. GARCIA.

H.R. 647: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 702: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. LOFGREN, and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 755: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. STEWART, Mr. ROONEY, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Mr. WOLF.

H.R. 792: Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 822: Mrs. FUDGE and Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 867: Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 938: Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. PETERSON, and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 1015: Mrs. CAPPS.

H.R. 1179: Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 1225: Mr. COLE.

H.R. 1239: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 1249: Mr. SCALISE.

H.R. 1250: Ms. SEWELL of Alabama and Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 1313: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H.R. 1318: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1354: Mr. MICA, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. BARBER, and Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 1500: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 1505: Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 1518: Mrs. BACHMANN.

H.R. 1573: Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mr. BERA of California.

H.R. 1599: Mrs. KIRKPATRICK and Mr. DEFazio.

H.R. 1616: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1726: Mr. YODER.

H.R. 1750: Mr. KING of New York and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 1798: Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 1812: Mr. McKEON.

H.R. 1915: Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mr. PIERLUISI.

H.R. 1975: Mr. ENYART, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. BARBER, and Ms. BORDALLO.

H.R. 2012: Mr. DEFazio.

H.R. 2028: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 2053: Mr. BYRNE.

H.R. 2079: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2143: Mr. HARRIS.

H.R. 2291: Mrs. LOWEY, Ms. MENG, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. MAFFEI, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 2324: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 2364: Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 2413: Mr. BROUN of Georgia.

H.R. 2452: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 2468: Mr. GIBSON, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. TIERNEY, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. KUSTER, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 2479: Mr. RUIZ, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, and Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 2500: Mr. LANCE, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, and Mr. FLORES.

H.R. 2548: Mr. DENT, Ms. ESTY, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. KILMER, Mr. MEADOWS, and Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 2575: Mr. LATHAM.

H.R. 2709: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2791: Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 2847: Mr. COHEN and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 2882: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 2917: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 2932: Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. COSTA, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. FORBES, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. MARINO, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. RAHALL, Mr.

RICHMOND, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. HARRIS, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. WOLF.

H.R. 2939: Mrs. BACHMANN, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Ms. ESTY, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. MORAN, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. CHAFFETZ, and Mr. KLINE.

H.R. 2945: Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 2996: Mrs. BLACK.

H.R. 3040: Mr. PETERS of California and Mrs. CAPPS.

H.R. 3077: Mr. GERLACH and Mr. MCCLINTOCK.

H.R. 3116: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 3240: Mr. AMODEI and Mr. RUIZ.

H.R. 3303: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 3330: Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 3361: Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. GARDNER.

H.R. 3374: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 3384: Mr. COTTON.

H.R. 3461: Ms. PINGREE of Maine and Mrs. MILLER of Michigan.

H.R. 3482: Mr. GERLACH.

H.R. 3485: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.

H.R. 3505: Mr. COFFMAN and Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 3529: Mr. LONG, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 3530: Mr. CONAWAY and Mr. WILLIAMS.

H.R. 3537: Ms. BASS.

H.R. 3548: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 3571: Ms. ESTY and Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 3576: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 3635: Mr. CAMP.

H.R. 3641: Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 3658: Mr. COBLE, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. CAMP.

H.R. 3670: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 3708: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana and Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 3723: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.R. 3740: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 3747: Mr. BARLETTA.

H.R. 3775: Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 3833: Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 3854: Mr. DENT.

H.R. 3864: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana and Mr. REED.

H.R. 3877: Mrs. BEATTY and Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 3930: Mr. GIBBS, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. COBLE, Mr. MICA, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, and Mr. TIPTON.

H.R. 3956: Mr. ENYART.

H.R. 3991: Mr. RAHALL.

H.R. 3997: Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico and Mr. OWENS.

H.R. 4006: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.

H.R. 4012: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 4016: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 4031: Mr. BRIDENSTINE and Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 4035: Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 4041: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 4058: Mr. REED and Mr. SCHOCK.

H.R. 4075: Ms. NORTON and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 4076: Mr. HUDSON, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. ROKITA, and Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.

H.R. 4079: Mr. GERLACH.

H.R. 4091: Mr. NUGENT and Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 4092: Mr. FOSTER and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 4093: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 4094: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 4118: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. RENACCI, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, and Mr. KLINE.

H.R. 4120: Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 4121: Mr. MURPHY of Florida.

H.R. 4128: Ms. KUSTER.

H.J. Res. 25: Mr. HECK of Washington.

H.J. Res. 110: Mr. MULLIN.

H. Con. Res. 78: Mr. COHEN.

H. Con. Res. 86: Mr. ENYART, Mr. Rodney Davis of Illinois, Mrs. HARTZLER, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H. Res. 136: Mr. FOSTER.

H. Res. 283: Mr. COHEN.

H. Res. 456: Mr. POLIS, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. LATHAM, and Mrs. CAPITO.

H. Res. 476: Mr. GOODLATTE.

H. Res. 488: Mr. MICA, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. PIERLUISI.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. HASTINGS OF WASHINGTON

The amendment filed to the Committee Print for H.R. 2824 by me does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of House rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. DAVE CAMP

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Ways and Means in H.R. 4118, "Suspending the Individual Mandate Penalty Law Equals Fairness Act," do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN STRONG SUPPORT OF THE PRODUCTION TAX CREDIT AND INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to echo the concerns of Americans across the country and call upon my colleagues in Congress to extend the Production Tax Credit (PTC) and Investment Tax Credit (ITC). Yet again, these essential tax credits have fallen victim to political jockeying and were allowed to expire at the end of 2013. If we are serious about meeting our renewable energy standards and, importantly, putting Americans back to work, then it is time to end this uncertainty and bring stability to a growing industry.

The PTC has encouraged nearly \$20 billion in nationwide private investment annually over the last 5 years alone, while the ITC serves as the most fundamental federal tax incentive for offshore wind farms. As we promote investments that will reduce our dependence on foreign oil and serve as a central part in our fight against global warming and climate change, it is essential to remember the spillover of job creation and specialized expertise that will follow.

Support for the PTC and ITC is bipartisan—and vocal. It is well-understood that the voids we create with our inaction will not remain unfulfilled. They will be filled by foreign companies who will not be “Making It in America.” I find it to be nonsensical that investments in renewable energy continue to face an uphill battle.

At home, we have witnessed firsthand the critical economic development opportunities that renewable energy projects provide to States. Our region has undergone an economic regeneration with the promise of Cape Wind—slated to be the Nation's first offshore wind farm. From the Port of New Bedford, which will serve as the staging area for assembly, to the ferry captains who will provide eco-tours of offshore turbines, no sector of our community is left untouched.

Massachusetts is consistently recognized as one of the States for clean energy, particularly wind energy. 106MW of wind power is produced state-wide, powering over 32,000 homes. In my district alone, 23MW of wind energy is produced. These impressive figures do not account for the thousands more of potential wind power that exists offshore.

Support for a long-term extension is bipartisan and urgent. I call on my colleagues to join me in supporting an extension of these important incentives.

HONORING DELORES CHRISTINA BROWN OREY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late remarkable public servant, Mrs. Delores Christina Brown Orey, who was born on September 24, 1932 in Martinsville, MS (the eldest of five children) to the late Mr. Alpheus and Mrs. Ella Brown.

Mrs. Delores Christina Brown Orey attended Piney Woods School and graduated from Parish High School in Hazlehurst, MS; did further study at Tuskegee Institute; and received her BA degree in Elementary Education with a minor in Sociology from Jackson State College. She became concerned about the disparate treatment that she and other African American Mississippians received and joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People under the leadership of Dr. Aaron Henry.

She was very dedicated to the NAACP and served the organization in various capacities. She worked as Secretary in the NAACP State Office and also drove Dr. Henry around the State to investigate discrimination complaints. She was jailed for her unwavering activism and spied on by the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission.

During that time, she helped organize Voter Registration Drives and Boycotts. She invited Freedom Riders, both Black and White, to stay at her home even under the threat of violence and started a Freedom School at her church, Mt. Nebo. She attended and helped to organize many marches for Civil Rights alongside Medgar Wiley Evers, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rev. Jesse Jackson, Sr., to name a few. She also ran for the Mississippi House of Representatives, and unfortunately, her opponent was killed in an airplane crash. The Governor of record appointed a white male who had lost the race rather than following procedure for Mrs. Orey to assume the post. In her continuing quest for equality, Mrs. Orey children integrated the Jackson Public Schools.

Because of her activism on behalf of the poor and disenfranchised, she developed a special relationship with former President Jimmy Carter and was invited to represent Mississippi in his inaugural parade. She was a close confidant of former Governor Cliff Finch and this led to her son, Alfonso and his wife, Sadie, becoming the first Blacks to have an official wedding ceremony on the grounds of the Governor's Mansion. She was one of the first Head Start Directors for Mississippi Action for Progress and worked for the MS Council on Aging and was an AARP Volunteer. She loved children and served as NAACP State Youth Advisor for several terms. She

mentored many young people among them our immediate past NAACP National President, Benjamin Todd Jealous, and our current Mississippi State Conference President, Derrick Johnson. Mrs. Orey has been credited with maintaining the Jackson Branch NAACP through the years by serving in all capacities from President to Treasurer to Secretary. She received numerous honors and prestigious awards throughout her distinguished life.

Mrs. Orey enjoyed spending time with her loving family. They shared her passion for her advocacy. On numerous occasions they accompanied her to various activist events, especially her beloved national NAACP Conventions.

On January 8, 2014, Veteran Mississippi Civil Rights Worker and champion for social justice, Mrs. Delores Orey transitioned this life. She was a heroine who was truly loved by her family and friends and will be missed by all.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mrs. Delores Christina Brown Orey for her dedication to serving.

HONORING YOLANDA JORDAN, CALUMET DISTRICT'S SOCIAL WORKER OF THE YEAR

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the achievements of Ms. Yolanda Jordan on being named Calumet District's 2014 Social Worker of the Year.

Each year, the eight Illinois districts of the National Association of Social Workers select a member to receive the Social Worker of the Year award. Recipients of this award are individuals who embody the mission of the National Association of Social Workers, and who strive to help others while abiding to a strict code of ethics. These individuals have each made invaluable contributions to the people they help and the communities in which they work.

After more than 20 years of service in the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, it is clear that Ms. Yolanda Jordan was meant to receive this prestigious honor. Throughout her career, Yolanda has provided the people of Kankakee, Will, and Grundy counties with unparalleled social services. She has helped families and children navigate the complex child welfare system, and worked as a clinical practitioner, operating her own private practice.

Ms. Jordan, along with other Illinois social workers who received this award, will be honored during the month of March, which is National Social Work Month.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Jordan's service to the

● This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

members of the Calumet District, and to acknowledge the vital role social workers play in creating a healthy society.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize passage of several pieces of legislation during the week of February 24, 2014. Unfortunately, I was not able to vote for final passage of these bills because I was out on medical leave recovering from much needed hip replacement surgery.

H.R. 1211, the FOIA Oversight and Implementation Act of 2014, is important legislation that increases transparency and streamlines the process for requests of public information disclosures under the Freedom of Information Act. This legislation passed through one of my committees, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, with my support.

H.R. 1123, the Unlocking Consumer Choice and Wireless Competition Act, is a bill that reverses a previous Library of Congress rule that made the unlocking of cell phones illegal after the FCC and industry had agreed that consumers had every right to unlock their phones. It also directs the Library of Congress to issue a rule to determine whether consumers should be allowed to unlock similar devices, such as tablets.

H.R. 1944, the Private Property Rights Protection Act, is a bill to remedy a Supreme Court decision, *Kelo v. New London*, regarding governments' eminent domain powers. This legislation is very similar to one passed in the 112th Congress, which passed by voice vote. I am a strong supporter of private property rights and I agree 100 percent with the sense of Congress stated in this legislation that it should be "the policy of the United States to encourage, support, and promote the private ownership of property and to ensure that the constitutional and other legal rights of private property owners are protected by the federal government."

H.R. 3865, the Stop Targeting of Political Beliefs by the IRS Act, is an incredibly important piece of legislation designed to prevent the IRS from adopting a proposed rule that changes the way 501(c)(4) organizations are allowed to operate under the tax code. As the Oversight Committee noted in its hearing this week, this rule is tantamount to "doubling down" on the discriminatory practices against conservative groups that were uncovered in 2013. I strongly support this bill.

H.R. 2804, the All Economic Regulations Are Transparent Act, is a bill that requires federal agencies to further disclose and report on much of their processes and rules. One of my favorite provisions of this bill is that agencies and Washington bureaucrats pushing forth new regulations have to assess and disclose the costs that their proposed rules will have on small businesses and the economy. If the rules are going to be made, they should have a sound basis and fully consider the economic impact. This bill accomplishes those goals and has my support.

H.R. 3193, the Consumer Financial Protection and Soundness Improvement Act, makes a series of changes to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) to rein in much of its autocratic authority. It will replace the Director of CFPB with a five member independent commission; it makes CFPB subject to the regular authorization and appropriations process; it requires the CFPB to use the GS pay scale like other federal agencies; and it prohibits the CFPB from accessing or using personal financial data of a consumer without express permission. I support reining in the unchecked authorities of the CFPB and support this legislation.

H.R. 899, the Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act, is a bill that, among other things, enhances the ability of the public to identify federal mandates that may impose additional costs to citizens, workers, businesses, as well as State, local, and tribal governments. I am a firm believer that the Federal Government must not crush the smaller guy with undue burdens and mandates. I strongly support this important legislation.

Had I been present for these votes, I would have voted in support of these three important bills with an "aye" vote on rollcall Nos. 63, 64, 67, 69, 78, 85 and 90.

COMMENDING SECRETARY KERRY'S NEW POLICY TO DENY VISAS TO PERPETRATORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the action taken by Secretary of State John Kerry and U.K. Foreign Secretary William Hague to deny visas to perpetrators of sexual violence in times of armed conflict. This announcement sends a clear signal to sexual offenders and enablers of sexual violence that the United States will not tolerate these depraved acts.

Secretaries Kerry and Hague were joined by the U.S. Ambassador-at-large for global women's issues, Catherine Russell; the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees and Migration, Anne Richard; and United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zanaib Bangura in announcing this policy and shining a light on the sensitive yet urgent topic of rape and sexual violence as a tool of war.

Since my days in the Massachusetts state legislature and then as District Attorney, I have been a staunch supporter for survivors and victims of sexual assault. I brought this passion to Washington, where I have been proud to support passage of legislation that would strengthen whistleblower protections for those who report sexual assaults in the military, and have consistently worked to protect essential programs that serve victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, including the Violence Against Women Act and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act. And, as co-chair

of the Military Sexual Assault Prevention Caucus, I have worked to ensure that military service victims' rights are protected through access to legal assistance and expedited transfers from his or her attacker.

Secretary Kerry has exhibited commendable leadership on this issue, and I look forward to working with him, the State Department, the Department of Defense, and our global counterparts to end this culture of negligence that exists within our armed services and create a safe and transparent environment.

HONORING JOHNNIE CARR DURING BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2014

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of continuing the 7th district's commitment to honoring influential African Americans that were sons and daughters of Alabama. Today, it is my great privilege to pay homage to Mrs. Johnnie Carr, a heroine of the Civil Rights movement and a pioneer of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. In Alabama, this stalwart is referenced for her lifetime devotion to ensuring that America lived up to its ideals of freedom and equality for all.

This phenomenal woman was born on January 26, 1911 in Montgomery Alabama to John and Annie Daniels. She was educated at "Miss White's Industrial School for Girls," a private institution devoted to educating young women of color. She went on to complete coursework in nursing before launching a public service career that would continue throughout her lifetime.

During the 1930s, Mrs. Carr found her calling as a foot soldier and started with a campaign to help raise funds for the defense of the Scottsboro Boys. This historic case involved nine black men who were falsely accused of raping two white women in 1931. During this time, she also became active in the NAACP and served as secretary and youth coordinator for the organization.

In 1964, Mrs. Carr and her husband, Arlam Carr also broke barriers in public education in Montgomery. The couple filed a suit against the Montgomery Board of Education in effort to allow their son to attend an all white high school. The monumental court case, *Carr v. Montgomery County Board of Education*, is referenced as a landmark decision that led to the desegregation of public schools in Montgomery, Alabama. Despite constant death threats the Carrs remained committed to the cause and eventually won the case on June 2, 1969. As a result, their son, Arlam Jr., was one of 13 black students to integrate Sydney Lanier High School.

In addition to their contribution to the integration of public schools, Mrs. Carr and her husband would also become pillars in efforts to desegregate the Montgomery bus system. In December of 1955, shortly after Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white passenger, the Carrs agreed to follow local buses in their personal vehicle to monitor the success of the demonstration. The couple also

transported blacks that needed rides to work and provided an alternative to using the segregated bus system in Montgomery.

During the demonstration, Mrs. Carr was named president of the Montgomery Improvement Association in 1967. The organization was initially formed to oversee the bus boycotts but the entity would eventually play a huge role in ending segregation in the city of Montgomery. Mrs. Carr remained at the helm of the organization until her death in 2008. In 1984, Mrs. Carr joined "One Montgomery", an organization dedicated to improving race relations in Montgomery. Later in life, she became a celebrated lecturer on her experiences during the civil rights movement.

Throughout her lifetime, Mrs. Carr's steadfast leadership broke barriers as she boldly tackled the injustices of her time. She was at the forefront of blazing trails for me and so many others. This amazing woman was dedicated to serving as a conduit for social change. Against insurmountable odds, she remained committed to her calling. Today, we honor this great woman of strength and reflect on the countless contributions she has made to the state of Alabama and this nation.

As a benefactor of Mrs. Carr's efforts, it is indeed an honor to share her story with our nation. As we reflect on all that she has given, let us commit to honoring her legacy by never forgetting her role in American history. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mrs. Johnnie Carr, an American hero.

HONORING ETHAN CALFEE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ethan Calfee. Ethan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 75, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Ethan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Ethan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Ethan has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Ethan Calfee for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING JOHNNY B. THOMAS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Johnny B. Thomas of Glendora, Mississippi. Mr. Thomas is

also the Mayor of Glendora, March 16, 1982 to current.

Since this month is February, which is Black History month, and considering the historical journey Mr. Thomas has traveled, I felt he deserves to be honored. His present is tied to his history which is tied to an era, a place, and his parents.

Era: He was born November 30, 1953 in Glendora, MS at a time when the State of Mississippi was a segregated society. He got his early education on life as he traveled the dirt roads of Glendora, the plantations and cotton fields of Tallahatchie County and the juke joints.

In 1953 the United States was engaged in a discussion on ending segregation in schools. At the same time, Mississippi was making plans to prevent it, should it become a federal law. In 1954 the United States Supreme Court in Brown vs. Board of Education outlawed desegregation in schools. There were glaring disparities between Black and White communities. The Mississippi Sovereignty Commission was established in 1956. Disenfranchisement laws like Poll taxes and literacy tests were widespread across the State to keep Blacks from voting.

The Place: The County is Tallahatchie, also known as "The Free State of Tallahatchie." The place is Glendora and the year is 1955. Glendora is a small rural town that has always maintained a very small population. It is also one of the places tied to moments in history which helped fuel the civil rights movement. The events were the August 28, 1955 murder of Emmett Louis Till, and the December 1955 murder of Mr. Clinton Melton and his wife, Beulah Melton in March 1956. Although he was still a child the effects of this would follow him the rest of his life. No longer was Glendora unknown after this; in fact overnight it became an international sensation, forever having its own grey cloud.

His Parents: Mr. Thomas was the second child of twelve born to Mr. Henry Lee Loggins and Ms. Adeline Hill. His parents were Mississippi sharecroppers. His mother worked in a juke joint called King Place. King Place became well known as it was tied to the Emmett Till murder as the place where reporters went to get information and answers about rumors of Blacks having been involved in the murder. His mother was that witness. He often worked in King Place to earn money as a young boy. His father, Henry Lee, worked as an overseer for J.W. Milam on his farm. J.W. Milam along with his brother, Roy Bryant, were the two white men charged with and acquitted of the murder of Emmett Louis Till. His father had to make a life altering decision after being accused of participating in the Emmett Till murder. After death threats on his life and his family, he decided to leave Glendora and go into hiding to protect the family. Mr. Thomas made it his life-long quest to clear his father's name.

His Present: He said he has an etched memory of the hardships of Black folk in the segregated south, the Glendora murders and how they affected his family. It was through those experiences and others that he gained the wisdom and passion for helping his people and ultimately led to him becoming a civil rights activist in Tallahatchie County. He never shied away from a challenge or ran from danger.

Mr. Thomas has been an entrepreneur, giving it up only to answer his calling to public service. In 1975 he became the first Black constable in Tallahatchie County. In 1982, he became the second Black Mayor of Glendora.

In 1985 he became the first Black elected County Supervisor. A strong countywide effort was launched against him as the first Black supervisor even though the district in which he won was eighty percent Black. The case was taken all the way to the Mississippi State Supreme Court within thirty days of being elected. The results were not in his favor as the Mississippi Supreme Court overturned the election result and Mr. Thomas was removed from office. The NAACP selected him to serve on the original Redistricting Committee on Voting in the County. The challenges he experienced and knowledge he gained made him take the stand as a plaintiff in several lawsuits opposing countywide redistricting plans in the years 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010.

As the Mayor of Glendora, he has established the Emmett Till Historic Intrepid Center (ETHIC) which is a state of the art Museum. He is also credited with the creation and incorporation of the Glendora Economic and Community Development Corporation. To his credit is also the Emmett Till Memorial Park and Nature Trail. This trail is located on the infamous Black Bayou which is the initial drop-off site of Emmett Till's body, according to his father, Henry Lee Loggins.

The Black Bayou is also the same body of water in which the drive-off and murder of Mrs. Beulah Melton took place. Mr. Thomas's vision for Glendora has expanded to now include the Glendora Sonny Boy Williamson Bed and Breakfast. Every year to address healthcare for citizens, he and the town host an annual Breast Cancer awareness and screening to provide free breast cancer screening to all citizens. This effort is made possible through Calvary Baptist Church of New York, NY and Partners in Development of Boston, MA.

Mr. Johnny B. Thomas, a man created by an era, a place, and events but made for today. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this member of Black History, Mr. Johnny B. Thomas, the honorable Mayor of Glendora from the Second Congressional District of Mississippi.

A COMMEMORATION OF USMC SGT. LANCE DAVISON

HON. ANN KIRKPATRICK

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, Lance Clinton Davison was born on January 8th, 1979, the first son of John and Desbah Davison. In Navajo tradition, Lance is of the Hasht'ishnii Clan and born for Bilagaana.

Lance was raised in Flagstaff, Arizona, and graduated from Flagstaff High School in 1997. Upon graduation, Lance joined the U.S. Marine Corps, where he excelled and became an especially accomplished marksman and scout/sniper.

Immediately after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Lance was deployed to Afghanistan for duty with the 3rd Battalion, 23rd

Marines, 1st Marine Division. During his combat service, he received several medals and commendations, including the Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

Like so many veterans, Lance not only served his country but came home and helped strengthen his own community. He became an officer with the Flagstaff Police Department and founded Raven2 O.D.G., a disabled veteran-owned business that provides enhanced training for SOCOM Operatives and agency professionals with precision marksmanship skills. Lance's dedication to his country and community was surpassed only by his dedication to and love for his son, Korben.

Lance was a true hero. The words of American poet Thomas William Parsons aptly describe our feelings about those heroes who sacrifice for our country: "On thy grave, the rain shall fall from the eyes of a mighty nation."

Sgt. Lance Davison, a valiant Marine and devoted father, is one of the reasons that our nation is mighty. We remember, honor and mourn him—Lance left us far too soon.

Lance, and all of our veterans, deserve a community and a country that stand up for our soldiers when they come home. These men and women have served honorably, but they may also struggle mightily.

For years, I've kept a quote on my desk that was given to me by a veteran. It says: "Because they have already paid the price, fight for veterans with all of your might."

Fight for veterans with all of your might. This is how we can honor Sgt. Lance Davison.

HONORING ZACHARY WATSON

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Zachary Watson. Zachary is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Zachary has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Zachary has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Zachary has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Zachary Watson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CHICAGO BRIDGE & IRON COMPANY CELEBRATES ITS 125TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Chicago Bridge & Iron Company, a great corporate citizen as they celebrate 125 years in business.

At its founding in 1889, Benjamin Harrison was President and the Dakotas, Montana and Washington were becoming states, CB&I was establishing itself.

Since its creation CB&I has evolved from a bridge design and iron company into an energy industry problem solver that employs 50,000 people around the world, including many Americans. CB&I is known for innovation in bulk liquid storage and its unwavering support of oil exploration around the world.

This company has come a long way from the merger agreement between bridge designer Horace Horton and the Kansas City Wheelocks, George and William. During challenging international times, including World War I and World War II, CB&I helped keep our military strong and mobile. CB&I was essential in production of smaller, more maneuverable ships.

CB&I's industry milestones are many over the last century—from floating roof tanks to the double-wall liquid natural gas storage tanks to the first site-assembled thick wall steel nuclear reactor vessel—the innovations just keep coming. This success all started with a record number of bridges and structures now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Over 125 years and with workplaces in 130 countries, CB&I has evolved into one of the most energy infrastructure focused companies in the world, and it is a name The Woodlands, Texas knows well. The CB&I Tri, our local triathlon, is but one example of the worldwide support CB&I provides to the communities their employees call home. We also appreciate their efforts to use local suppliers to the fullest extent practicable.

Congratulate Philip Asherman, the President and CEO of CB&I and all those who have helped make CB&I the innovator it is today.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in congratulating CB&I on their 125th anniversary.

HONORING THE 26TH ANNIVERSARY OF YOUNG ISRAEL OF BOCA RATON AND RABBI MAYER & HENNA ENGLANDER AND YAAKOV & DR. JORIE LYONS

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of the 26th anniversary of Young Israel of Boca Raton, Florida synagogue. I would like to recognize them for their service to the Jew-

ish community of South Florida and the local community as a whole.

Founded in 1988, Young Israel of Boca Raton has served as a center of Jewish identity and education for the South Palm Beach County community. I want to particularly acknowledge Rabbi Mayer and Henna Englander and Yaakov (Jay) and Dr. Jorie Lyons, the special honorees during the anniversary celebration, for their dedication to the synagogue and its emphasis on prayer, study, and community service.

I would like to congratulate Young Israel of Boca Raton synagogue, an extraordinary Jewish community of South Florida, on their 26th anniversary. Through their example, Young Israel's philosophy and spiritual guidance can extend far beyond South Florida.

HONORING GEORGE S. COLE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Mr. George S. Cole.

Mr. George Simeon Cole, the fifth child of nine siblings born to the late Elijah Cole, Sr. and ReeAlma George Cole, is a 1967 graduate of Velma Jackson High School. He was recently inducted into the Alcorn State University Sports Hall of Fame. Mr. Cole realized a lifelong dream when he was recruited by the late Coach Theophilus Danzy, and earned a four-year scholarship to Alcorn A & M College.

As a youth, Mr. Cole showed leadership, not only as a young football and baseball scholar, but in family responsibilities. At age 16, he worked as a brick mason helper to build Velma Jackson Elementary School. Mr. Cole served as captain of the Velma Jackson High School football team for three consecutive years, and was elected to serve as president of his senior class.

Mr. Cole earned an undergraduate degree from Alcorn State University, and a master's degree from Mississippi State University. He worked as a teacher-coach, retired as school principal, and presently works as a part-time education consultant. Mr. Cole serves as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Velma Jackson High School Foundation.

In a family of Alcornites, Mr. Cole is married to Dr. Pallascene Bright Cole, father to two children: Rocky and Gilda and three grandchildren: Jaylan, Christian, and Evan Elijah.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. George S. Cole for his dedication to serving others in Madison County.

HONORING RONALD AND LINDA FARMER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ronald and Linda

Farmer of Macon, Missouri. Ronnie and Linda were married on March 14, 1964 and will be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on March 9, 2014.

Ronnie and Linda were married at the Christian Church Parsonage in Kirksville, Missouri. Ronnie would work for 48 years at Con-Agra, starting when he was a junior in high school up to his retirement in 2010. He was also very involved with the Boy Scouts and American Legion baseball. Linda has also served a very important role in her community, serving as a member of the Garden Club among other civic boards, while also playing an instrumental role in preserving the history of Macon, including the Colonel Blee's Museum. Additionally, she currently serves on the Macon City Council. Whether taking long road trips across the country, riding roller coasters at Six Flags and Worlds of Fun here in Missouri, or just taking in a Cardinals' game at Busch Stadium, Ronnie and Linda have enjoyed life together and look forward to what the future has in store.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me, along with Ronald and Linda Farmer's three sons and their wives, seven grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and many friends and family, in congratulating them on this significant occasion and wishing them many more years of happiness together.

TO COMMEMORATE THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF BROWN UNIVERSITY

HON. DAVID N. CICILLINE

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 250th academic year of Brown University. This prestigious institution has been a source of pride for Rhode Island since 1764 and was one of the first colleges in the country. Throughout its history, Brown has attracted some of the best and brightest talent from around the world, and is known for a student body that is driven by a desire for free thought and self-determined education. Brown University is a treasured Rhode Island institution, and I am honored to recognize the integral role it has maintained in our community for the last two and a half centuries.

As one of the oldest universities in the United States, Brown University has infused its students with a deep and abiding dedication to public service. Brown's student body is remarkably intelligent and high-achieving. But this institution also challenges its students to be more than intelligent; it challenges students to sincerely consider how they can make the world a better place. Brown University encourages its students to explore their interests while serving local communities in Providence, the State of Rhode Island, the United States, and throughout the global community. With its famed Open Curriculum, this renowned university stands as a monument of free thought, allowing students to challenge themselves to grow not only academically, but also as citizens of the world.

Brown University has long drawn premier talent from a wide range of academic dis-

ciplines to historic College Hill. For example, the Brown University BrainGate research team was recently recognized for its work developing neurotechnology for individuals with neurologic disease, injury, or limb loss. Researchers and students at Brown have also been recognized for their work related to the discovery of the Higgs Boson, Superfund cleanups in Rhode Island, and important advances in public health. In addition to generating top-notch work on campus, Brown has also graduated alumni who excel in the arts, government, technology, medicine, business, athletics, and a diverse set of other professions. Some notable alumni include Horace Mann, the father of American public education, philanthropist and businessman John Rockefeller Jr., President of the World Bank Dr. Jim Yong Kim, and the Honorable Janet Yellen, who is the first woman to serve as Chair of the Federal Reserve. And in my home state of Rhode Island, alumni such as Governor Lincoln Chafee, Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Roberts, and former Attorney General Patrick Lynch have served in important positions in government.

Over the past 250 years, Brown University's history has been deeply intertwined with our nation's story. Brown has evolved during moments of tremendous transition—our fight for independence, the Civil War, the Great Depression, the Industrial Revolution, and the digital age—but it continues to reflect the principles of nondiscrimination and freedom of conscience rooted in Rhode Island's founding. I am confident that Brown will continue to grow in the next 250 years, and its hallowed halls will welcome brilliant and curious students for generations to come.

Finally, on a personal note, I am proud to have attended and graduated from Brown University, and I am even more proud to represent this fine institution in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Congratulations on 250 years.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE MIDDLEBOROUGH MAY FLOWER LODGE

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Middleborough May Flower Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons upon the occasion of its one hundred and fiftieth year of continued fellowship.

The Middleborough May Flower Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons was formally organized on March 4, 1864. Since then, the Lodge has provided fellowship, charity, education, and leadership to not just its members, but also to the town of Middleborough and surrounding communities. Since its chartering, the Lodge has actively increased its membership, currently totaling to two hundred members. The Lodge has worked vigorously over the years to promote self-improvement, personal study, and social betterment through the ideals of philanthropy and community involvement. My district in Massachusetts has

great appreciation for the work that this Lodge has done, and it serves as an example for how community service and brotherhood can benefit our nation.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the Middleborough May Flower Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons upon this significant anniversary. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating them as well as wishing them many more happy and productive years ahead.

UNIQUE LITHO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Unique Litho for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Unique Litho.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Unique Litho for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

HONORING THE VICTIMS OF SUMGAIT

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the twenty-sixth anniversary of the pogrom against people of Armenian descent in the town of Sumgait, Azerbaijan, where Armenian civilians were massacred at the hands of the Azerbaijani regime. Beginning on February 27, 1988 and for three days, Azerbaijani mobs assaulted and killed Armenians. Hundreds of Armenians were wounded, women and young girls were brutally raped, and many victims of all ages were burnt to death after being tortured and beaten. The carnage created thousands of ethnic Armenian refugees, who had to leave everything behind to be looted or destroyed, including their homes and businesses. The Sumgait Pogroms were part of an organized pattern, and were preceded by a wave of anti-Armenian rallies throughout Azerbaijan, which culminated in the 1990 Pogroms in Baku.

These crimes were never adequately prosecuted by Azerbaijan authorities. Despite efforts by the Government of Azerbaijan to cover up the events which occurred in February 1988, survivors of the pogrom have come forward with their stories. They told of enraged mobs, which threw refrigerators and

furniture, among other belongings from apartment balconies and set them afire. Armenians were dragged from their apartments. If they tried to run and escape, the mob attacked them with metal rods, hatchets and knives before the victims were thrown into the fire.

The Sumgait massacres led to wider reprisals against Azerbaijan's ethnic minority, resulting in the virtual disappearance of a once thriving population of 450,000 Armenians living in Azerbaijan, and culminating in the war launched against the people of Nagorno Karabakh. That war resulted in thousands dead on both sides and created over one million refugees in both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

In the years since the fighting ended, the people of Artsakh, the region's ancestral name, have struggled to build a functioning democratic state in the midst of unrelenting hostility and threats from Azerbaijan, as well as incursions across the Line of Contact between the two sides, such as the recent murder of yet another Armenian soldier, Hrant Poghosyan, in an unprovoked attack by Azerbaijani troops against Armenian forces. Hatred towards Armenians is both celebrated and inculcated in Azeri youth, as exemplified by the case of Ramil Safarov, an Azerbaijani army captain who had confessed to the savage 2004 axe murder of Armenian army lieutenant Gurgen Margaryan, while the latter slept. At the time, the two were participating in a NATO Partnership for Peace exercise in Budapest, Hungary. After the murder, Safarov was sentenced to life in prison by a Hungarian court and imprisoned in Hungary.

In 2012, Safarov was sent home to Azerbaijan, purportedly to serve out the remainder of his sentence. Instead of serving out his sentence in an Azeri jail, he was pardoned, promoted to Major, given back pay and paraded through the streets of Baku in a disgusting and bloodthirsty welcome home.

With these appalling acts, the Azeri state reminded the whole world why the people of Artsakh must be allowed to determine their own future and cannot be allowed to slip into Aliyev's clutches, lest the carnage of Sumgait 26 years ago serve as a foreshadowing of a greater slaughter. Mr. Speaker, the memory of the victims of Sumgait must not be forgotten, and it is our moral obligation to condemn crimes of hatred, in hope that history will not be repeated.

IN TRIBUTE TO ANNA MAE
WILSON ROBERTSON

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate and honor a mother, volunteer and veteran, Anna Mae Wilson Robertson. Mrs. Robertson, a long-time resident of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, will celebrate her 90th birthday with family and friends on March 8, 2014. Annie Mae Wilson married John Robertson, who passed away in 1982, and their 33 year union produced 8 children. Mrs. Robertson's work history included jobs at Marquette University and St. Camillus Health Center.

Mrs. Robertson enlisted in the Army in 1945 and served in the Women's Army Corps (WAC) 6888 Central Postal Directory Battalion (The Six Triple Eight). The 6888 comprised of 855 women has a long list of firsts and accomplishments, including the first African American all-female battalion and the first and ONLY all women battalion to be deployed overseas. The 6888 confronted life threatening German U Boats en route to Europe in February, 1945 and upon their arrival in England were greeted by Buzz Bombs.

Letters and care packages vital to the morale of soldiers were delayed across Western Europe. The 6888 developed a new mail system housed in three air hangars from floor to ceiling for distribution to the 7 million Army, Navy, Marine Corps, civilian and Red Cross Personnel in Europe. The task was daunting with many letters addressed improperly; some letters were over two years old, and nearly 7500 Robert Smiths to be properly identified. The working conditions were abysmal with no heat in the hangars, windows blacked out due to air raids and the poor light contributed to eyestrain. However, the 6888 successfully processed 65,000 pieces of mail on each of the 3 shifts, 7 days a week.

The 6888 operated under the challenges of "dual segregation" being women and African American; they were not allowed to sleep, shower or eat with other female personnel or soldiers while in Birmingham, England. They were housed in a former boarding school and out of necessity operated their own mess hall, hair salon, and motor pool adding to their workload. The 6888 completed their assignment in 3 months instead of 6 months and were then reassigned to Rouen, France. While in France, they no longer faced the challenges of segregation. Again the 6888 completed their assignment in 3 months in Rouen, France and were reassigned to Paris, their last assignment with the war ending a short time later. Three women of the 6888 lost their lives overseas and were buried in France.

The 6888 was shipped home to Fort Dix and immediately disbanded. Anna Mae Robertson Wilson was a member of this "Band of Sisters", who served honorably, and whose story was largely untold and its successes not celebrated. Mr. Speaker, Anna Mae Wilson Robertson and the 6888 Central Postal Directory Battalion performed above and beyond expectations. I am proud to celebrate her 90th Birthday and her accomplishments as a veteran and resident of Milwaukee.

HONORING PASTOR DR. JOHN E.
CAMERON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Pastor Dr. John E. Cameron, who was born on June 11, 1932, just outside of Hattiesburg, Mississippi in Petal. His parents were the late Mr. A.C. and Mrs. Courtney Cameron. He is the fourteenth of sixteen children.

Pastor Cameron was educated in the Springfield Vocational High School in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, where he graduated in 1951. He later attended Alcorn A and M College in Lorman, Mississippi. He attended Rust College in Holly Springs, Mississippi where he received his B.S. degree. Pastor Cameron also attended the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, Tennessee where his major was social science (theology).

Pastor Cameron has been serving in a pastoral position for more than forty years. His first position was at First Baptist Church in Oxford, Mississippi. He is currently pastor at Greater Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi where he has been since 1970. Pastor Cameron has been active in numerous organizations and actively involved in the civil rights movement extending back prior to his involvement with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Pastor Cameron worked with Dr. King on voter registration campaigns in the Hattiesburg, Mississippi area.

Pastor Cameron has been involved in civic affairs which included his bid for the United States Congress Fifth Congressional District in the State of Mississippi. He was the director of the Hattiesburg Ministers' Project and served as Ambassador to Central America. Presently, he serves as a member of the Board of Directors of the Pearl River Valley Redevelopment Basin in Hinds County.

Pastor Cameron has been cited in Who's Who in Black America, Notable Americans in the Bicentennial Era and Outstanding Community Leader. He has received a proclamation from Mayor Dale Danks, Jr., a proclamation from Judge Alexander in Hinds County and he served as a colonel on Governor Cliff Finch's staff.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Pastor John E. Cameron for his dedication to serving others.

KAY EHALT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kay Ehalt for receiving the Unsung Hero Award from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

This award is given to an individual who gives of their time and resources to ensure the West Chamber remains a thriving and successful organization.

Kay Ehalt embodies all of the qualities of our unsung hero. Kay has been a West Chamber member since 1997. She was an Ambassador from the beginning, a member of the Friday morning Leads group and recently joined the West Chamber Board of Directors. You will find Kay wherever there is fun. She welcomes new members to events and makes everyone she meets feel important. Her work with the West Chamber has left an indelible mark for future West Chamber members.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Kay Ehalt for this well-deserved honor from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO WALTER EHLERS

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to a dear friend of mine, Walter Ehlers. Walter passed away on Thursday, February 20, 2014. A long time resident of California, he was a pillar of the community and he will be deeply missed.

Walter was born May 7, 1921, in Junction City, Kansas, and was raised from humble beginnings. While growing up, Walter spent many long, but rewarding days on the farm. This quickly changed when news of World War II broke and both Walter and his brother, Roland, decided that they wanted to join the Army and serve their country. The fact that Walter was underage at the time of his decision proved difficult, but after receiving special permission from his parents, the Ehlers brothers set out in 1940 to serve in the same unit. Their duty spanned from Sicily to North Africa, and became more intense as the war moved along. As what would become known as "D-Day" approached, Walter, 23, and his brother were split up into different units in an effort to better chances that at least one of them would survive the bloody attack.

The morning of June 6, 1944, Walter, a squad leader and staff sergeant, was tasked with getting his 12 men safely through the danger zone on Normandy Beach and move inland in order to fulfill their mission of collecting data on German troop activities. He and his squad survived several rounds of heavy fire as they moved along and Walter's guidance to "run for cover" proved successful time and time again. On June 10, 1944, Walter's squad came under such extreme fire that the company commander ordered a withdrawal. Walter knew that in order to get his squad out of trouble, he would have to distract the enemy. He and another soldier began shooting at opposition forces as to draw fire onto themselves while the rest of the squad snuck away. An enemy sniper managed to shoot Walter in the back that fateful morning, but he still found a way to ensure that he and his fellow soldier, who had been more seriously injured, made it to safety. Because of his efforts and quick thinking, countless Allied soldiers' lives were saved that day. D-Day became a day that would live on as a costly success for all Americans, and especially for Walter, when he found that his brother had not survived.

After the war, Walter returned to Kansas for a short time before permanently moving out west to California. He had always dreamed of making it big in Hollywood and acting in movies. Though he did earn one movie credit starring as West Point Cadet Mike Shannon in the 1955 film, "The Long Gray Line," his desire to serve within the community quickly became his top priority. Walter accepted a job as a benefits counselor at the Veterans Administration soon after and went on to help his fellow veterans in any way that he could for many years to come.

It is no surprise that Walter became very decorated over the years considering the im-

mense service he committed to the United States. He was the recipient of a Silver Star, two Bronze Stars, a Purple Heart for the injuries he sustained in combat, and the nation's highest military award, a Medal of Honor. Throughout his life Walter was highly sought after to attend speaking engagements, and also spoke to President Clinton and Queen Elizabeth II of England during the 50th Anniversary of D-Day in France. He even found himself with an invitation to every presidential inauguration since Dwight D. Eisenhower's. Walter's legacy will live on in the form of the Walter D. Ehlers Community Center in Buena Park, an action figure made in his likeness, and the street named after him in Manhattan, Kansas.

Walter is survived by his loving wife, Dorothy; daughters, Cathy Metcalf and Tracy Kilpatrick; son, Walter Jr.; sisters, Leona Porter, Marjorie Justin and Gloria Salberg; 11 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

On Saturday, March 8, 2014, a memorial service honoring Walter's life will be held. Walter will always be remembered for his incredible leadership, service to our country, fearlessness, contributions to the community and love of family. His dedication to everything he did is truly a testament to a life lived well and a legacy that will continue. I extend my condolences to Walter's family and friends; although Walter may be gone, the light and goodness he brought to the world remain and will never be forgotten.

IN RECOGNITION OF MAJOR CARLO ROBERTO BRANCATO, USMCR

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Major Carlo Roberto Brancato as he is honored as the Man of the Year by the Amerigo Vespucci Society of Long Branch, New Jersey. Major Brancato is truly deserving of this recognition for his service to the Amerigo Vespucci Society, his community and our great nation.

Major Brancato joined the Marine Corps Reserve in 1995 and worked his way up the ranks, earning his promotion to Major in 2012. He served as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and the U.S. Southern Command's Tradewinds operations in Belize and Antigua-Barbuda. He is the recipient of the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Service Medal for Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Operation Enduring Freedom Campaign Medal and the NATO ISAF Medal for service in Afghanistan. He is currently demobilized and serving as an artillery officer with the Third Battalion, 14th Regiment in Bristol, Pennsylvania and attending the Marine Corps' Command and Staff College Distance Education Program.

In addition to his service with the Marine Corps, Major Brancato is active in his local community. He is a Trustee with the Amerigo Vespucci Society, a member of the Marine Corps League and a member of the Knights of Columbus. He is currently pursuing his mas-

ter's degree in history at Monmouth University in West Long Branch.

Major Brancato is the son of Charles Erasmus Brancato and Berenice Viali Johansson and a graduate of Middletown High School North. He received his bachelor's degree in history from Loyola College, where he was also a member of the Men's Varsity Rowing Team and an inductee into Phi Alpha Theta historical honor society.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in congratulating Major Brancato on his recognition as Man of the Year by the Amerigo Vespucci Society and thanking him for his honorable service to our nation.

PLANET HONDA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Planet Honda for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Planet Honda.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Planet Honda for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

HONORING MOTHER EVELYN MARSHALL-MAYS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, Mother Evelyn Marshall-Mays. Mother Marshall spent her early years in historic Mound Bayou, Mississippi with her parents, the late Alford and Evelyn Harvey Marshall, along with nine siblings. She graduated from Mound Bayou High School in 1951.

Mother Marshall married Eddie Lee Mays in 1952, and they are the proud parents of five children. She worked diligently as a nurse for 25 years. Upon retirement, she operated a daycare center for over eight years.

Mother Marshall is an integral part of Liberal Trinity Church of God in Christ, fulfilling numerous roles: church mother, teacher of the primary Sunday school class for 57 years; mentor for young children and young women through conversation and an exemplary lifestyle, holding true to Psalm 121, encouraging everyone to love others and to follow God's Word and mandates.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mother Evelyn Marshall-Mays for her dedication to serving others.

**HONORING NELLIE LONGSWORTH
AS "A PIONEER IN PRESERVA-
TION"**

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I am writing to recognize Nellie Longworth of Maryland. As Founding President of Preservation Action, Ms. Longworth was at the forefront of America's preservation movement, working tirelessly to protect historic places from destruction.

In 1974, historic preservationists came together to create Preservation Action in order to preserve our historic assets and make historic preservation a national priority. From the historic rehabilitation tax credit to historic preservation funding, Ms. Longworth and Preservation Action built and deployed a grassroots constituency empowered with information and training to advance these worthy goals.

Mr. Speaker, Nellie Longworth's career is the embodiment of the purposes underlying the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which read in part:

The spirit and direction of the Nation are founded upon and reflected in its historic heritage;

The historical and cultural foundations of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give a sense of orientation to the American people;

The preservation of this irreplaceable heritage is in the public interest so that its vital legacy of cultural, educational, aesthetic, inspirational, economic, and energy benefits will be maintained and enriched for future generations of Americans.

All Americans who care about our nation's cultural resources are indebted to, and inspired by, Nellie Longworth. As we observe National Historic Preservation Advocacy Week, preservationists from across the nation will honor Nellie Longworth for her extraordinary legacy.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Nellie Longworth as a Pioneer in Preservation.

WELLS FARGO-APPLEWOOD

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Wells Fargo-Applewood for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other

businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Wells Fargo-Applewood.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Wells Fargo-Applewood for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

**50TH ANNIVERSARY OF STUART
COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL**

HON. RUSH HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, this year, Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart in Princeton, New Jersey celebrates its 50th anniversary as an independent, Catholic school that prepares young women for lives of leadership and civic engagement. Stuart Country Day School prides itself on educating young women of all faiths and fostering in them the strength of individual thought and expression.

Over the years, I have been fortunate to meet with the Stuart students who travel to Washington, DC and to take them on a tour of the Capitol Building. I am continuously impressed with their interest in our country's governance and with their insightful, inquisitive questions. After each visit, I come away inspired knowing they represent some of our country's next generation of leaders.

The success of the school and its students is not surprising. Even the main school building itself emphasizes the values of the school. Designed by New Jersey architect Jean Labatut 50 years ago, the building is immune to the changing fads and styles of our time. Original, warm, genuine, detailed down to the height of each step, adjusted for the demands of the 21st century, it is a model for emulation by other schools. And just like the building, its faculty and students embrace advancements in technology and pedagogy while remaining true to the personal faith, intellectual values, and social awareness so treasured by the Sacred Heart community.

I congratulate Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart for fifty years of fostering young women to reach their full potential and become their better selves. May the next 50 years bring the same success and see generations of students develop into successful, upstanding citizens.

HONORING JAMES R. FIGGS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary Black History honoree, Mr. James R. Figgs.

Mr. Figgs is an activist for the Civil Rights Movement of Mississippi and the United States. He has participated in so many activi-

ties of discrimination against people of color. Mr. Figgs was involved with the late Medgar Evers of the NAACP Council Member through Voter Registration. Blacks were not able to register, because of their inability to pass a written exam.

He was involved as a youth college student and as an employee of several organizations. Mr. Figgs' mother, Ruth E. Figgs, instilled in him as a little boy to always stand up for his rights. His mother was also a Civil Rights Leader in Marks, MS.

Mr. Figgs has dedicated his entire life to working to make life a better place for the people of color.

Now Mr. Figgs is 71 years old and still fighting for just cause. For the past 45 years, he has been fighting for the rights of people, equal opportunities for jobs without discrimination, housing and protection from police brutality.

Mr. Figgs was a part of several marches and just to name a few, marched to free Nelson Mandela and marched to make sure poor people had an opportunity to register and vote. Mr. Figgs stated that he has been marching and petitioning in Mississippi all of his entire adult life.

He learned from and worked for the late Aaron E. Henry, of the Mississippi NAACP and the late Ben L. Hooks, the National Director of the NAACP for 16 years. Mr. Figgs is still on the battlefield fighting until all of the dreams of the Civil Rights Leaders become a reality.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. James R. Figgs for his dedication, hard work and being a part of history.

WELLS FARGO-GOLDEN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Wells Fargo-Golden for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Wells Fargo-Golden.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Wells Fargo-Golden for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

HOUSTON RODEO

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it's no secret that March is the month for Texas. Starting with the Texas Declaration of Independence on March 2, the fall of the defenders of the Alamo on March 6, and one of my personal favorite times of the year: the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo—the world's largest rodeo. All in the same week, Houston saddles up to reflect on Texas history and partake in the Houston Livestock Show, where millions of people flock to from all over the world for this one-of-a-kind Texas tradition.

Everyone knows about the Texas stereotype. When "Northeasterners" find out I'm from Texas, often times I am asked if people ride horses around town and if cowboy boots are worn every day. The truth is, during the Rodeo season, that stereotype comes to life. You bet you'll see trial riders parading through downtown Houston. Most years, it's on Texas Avenue, the historic street built to accommodate the early longhorn cattle drives coming to town on their way to the rail station.

Fun and games set aside, there is a very rich history behind the Houston Rodeo, in particular. The tradition began in 1931 when a few men came up with a unique idea to get together and have a "Fat Stock Show." As strange as it might have sounded back then, the idea worked. Year after year, the show grew a little more. It used to be held in the Sam Houston Coliseum but has since been housed in different locations. I'll never forget the first year the show made its way to the Astrodome before officially landing at Reliant Park. Not to mention when the country music king, George Strait, honored and thanked the Astrodome for hosting so many years of the Houston Rodeo. He sang his famous "Cowboy Rides Away." Other famous artists who have performed include Elvis Presley, Roy Rogers, Gene Autry and my all-time favorite, Charlie Pride.

To think that just a handful of men made it their mission to show off their livestock and share their passion of agriculture with Texas 83 years ago is fascinating. Not knowing the fate of their simple idea, the rodeo has evolved into the world's biggest and best-known livestock exhibition, the largest regular-season rodeo, some of the best musical performers, and the city's most popular and popular occasions. Additionally, the rodeo holds everything from the world's largest barbeque cook-off to a Texas-size fair.

Each year, Houston experiences a significant economic lift. With the millions of people who travel to Houston for the rodeo, the city counts on a nice boost. Texans know how to show the tourists a good time and make themselves a pretty good living. The show itself has brought in more than \$320 million in the past years and has created more than 7,000 full-time jobs. Not to brag but this is something Texans should take the utmost pride in.

The men of the Houston Rodeo are also known as the "founding fathers." In 1930, they wanted to create more than just a rodeo. To

put it simply, they wanted a rodeo with a purpose so they created a charitable event that contributed to the educational and scientific advancement of Texas agriculture. Throughout the history of the Rodeo, it has awarded \$300 million to Texas youth in various forms, such as scholarships and educational programs. The best part is, all the work is done by several hundred generous volunteers.

As Texans put on their cowboy hats and boots, and saddle up for the rodeo, a Texas-sized thank you goes out to all of the thousands of volunteers who make the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo a success. For those who have never been, this is like the Texas version of Mardi Gras, but with cowboy hats. And there's nothing quite like it. For Texans, it's their cultural duty to attend. Every year, they know it's a good time comin'. God bless Texas. And that's just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY 28TH,
2014 AS RARE DISEASE DAY

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, Friday, February 28, 2014 was Rare Disease Day. And that is why I rise to let Americans know the importance of research, recognition and advocacy that is critical for individuals facing a rare disease diagnosis—and their families. The over 6,000 rare disease can be characterized by a large range of disorders and symptoms, some of which are relatively common. In the United States, a disease is considered rare when it affects fewer than 200,000 persons, and 50% of rare diseases affect children.

While we have made important strides in the diagnosis and treatment of many rare diseases, far too many remain without any treatment or cure. Additionally, these individuals are too-often misdiagnosed, or given the wrong treatments due to a lack of scientific knowledge and information.

Despite these troubling facts, there is some good news. Scientific progress continues to make it possible to cure previously-untreatable conditions. For example, the Ear Foundation of Santa Barbara, California has recently done ground-breaking research into Patulous Eustachian Tube (PET) dysfunction. This rare disease occurs as a result of the Eustachian tube in the ear continuously staying open. Because symptoms include a feeling of ear fullness or oceanic roaring sounds, many physicians are unaware of the disorder and as such are unable to properly diagnose. Thanks to similar research organizations, patient groups, private foundations, and federal research leaders like the National Institute of Health (NIH), patients with rare conditions are finding increased relief.

Additionally, Congress has been making moves to encourage better coordination among researchers to develop cures and treatments for rare diseases. For example, the National Pediatric Research Network Act, a bipartisan law I co-authored with Congresswoman MCMORRIS RODGERS from Washington, was an important step to facilitate the

creation of pediatric research consortia through NIH focused on improving pediatric disease research, with a special emphasis on rare diseases like spinal muscular atrophy (SMA). With better coordination, researchers can quickly share best practices while fostering partnerships to make research and clinical trials more accessible to those afflicted.

The next step that Congress should take to support individuals with rare diseases is to pass H.R. 460, the Patient's Access to Treatment Act (PATA), into law. This bipartisan bill that I coauthored with Congressman MCKINLEY from West Virginia would stop insurance companies from moving vital medications—often treatment for rare disorders—into costly "specialty tiers," ending a significant financial barrier for insured individuals to access the care they need. With over eighty cosponsors thus far, this bill has the opportunity to affect positive change in the lives of thousands of patients and their families. I encourage my colleagues to join me as a cosponsor of this legislation to support all Americans currently living with rare diseases and those who will be diagnosed in the future.

B J HAMBLETON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud B J Hambleton for receiving the Ambassador of the Year award from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

The West Chamber Ambassadors are the hospitality arm of the Chamber. They help members by inviting them to events, introducing them to each other and making new members feel a part of the West Chamber family more quickly.

B J has been an Ambassador since 2009, and when it comes to helping out, B J is the first person to volunteer. She is dedicated to helping members get the most out of their membership. You can find B J staffing the registration tables at most Chamber events, and she is known for her quick response to the many questions members ask.

I extend my deepest congratulations to B J Hambleton for her well-deserved honor from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

HONORING ST. GABRIEL MERCY
CENTER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable Civil Rights Organization, St. Gabriel Mercy Center in Mound Bayou, Mississippi.

On November 9, 1948 Father John W. Bowman was appointed head of the project mission in Mound Bayou. In 1949 St. Gabriel Parish began. Five acres of land were given to the Catholic Church and five acres were purchased by Father John.

On September 7, 1954 St. Gabriel Mission School for kindergarten through eighth grade was founded by the Oblate Sisters of Providence of Baltimore, Maryland, who were the first successful Roman Catholic sisterhood in the world established by women of African descent. The sisters had been invited to Mound Bayou by the Society of Divine Word Fathers under Father John Bowman.

The high school was added in 1958 and closed in 1961. The present church was built in 1960 and the convent was built in 1962.

After 30 years the Oblate sisters left and were followed by the Sisters of St. Agnes of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, who stayed five years; following from 1990–2001 by the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart from Reading, Pennsylvania, who opened an early childhood school after the grade school closed.

In 1994 the upper grades closed and the Early Childhood School opened for ages two through four year olds. In 1995 Sister Helen Papan, a Certified Parents as Teachers Educator, arrived and started a parenting program.

In 1997, the Gabriel Center was opened by Christian Brother Tom Geraghty and in 1999 three Sisters of Mercy arrived. In 2001 the early childhood school closed and the building became a community center for the citizens of Mound Bayou to continue their legacy of being an asset to an improvised community. The current Executive Director, Sister Donald Mary Lynch, joined St. Gabriel Mercy Center in 2001 and continued to expand on program offerings.

In 2002 the Mound Bayou County Library opened in the center. The library closed in 2010 due to renovations of the center and was relocated and reopened in 2011 to its current location in the Mound Bayou Community Facility Building. Sister Donald Mary Lynch is very involved in the community of Mound Bayou: working with school officials, former and current city officials, partnering with the local AARP chapter, working with the Taborian Project, serving on Congressman THOMPSON's Military Advisory Board and other civic organizations.

St. Gabriel Mercy Center offers numerous programs and services to the community of Mound Bayou and the surrounding communities such as: the Parent Education and Family Support program, which serves families throughout pregnancy until children reach the age of three; Parent Educators visit the new family in their home each month; Senior Outreach Program; Parents as Teachers; GED Program; St. Gabriel's Closet; Computer and Learning Lab; and Basic Emergency Needs & Jobs Opportunities Programs.

St. Gabriel Mercy Center continues the legacy of being a forerunner as a champion of civil rights, offering opportunities for the less fortunate, when others are afraid to take the lead.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing an amazing Civil Rights Organization for their dedication for change and equality.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today regarding one missed vote on February 28, 2014. Had I been present for rollcall 86, on the amendment offered by Mr. CUMMINGS of Maryland to H.R. 899, striking the requirement that independent regulatory agencies comply with Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, I would have voted "nay."

SHILOH HOME, INC.

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Shiloh Home, Inc. for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Shiloh Home, Inc.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Shiloh Home, Inc. for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

RECOGNIZING JULIE YOUNG

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with sincere appreciation that I recognize Julie Young for her extraordinary leadership of Florida Virtual School. This month, Julie announced her retirement after 30 years of service in public education, including 17 years as President and CEO of Florida Virtual School.

Julie took the helm of Florida Virtual School, the country's first, state-wide Internet-based public high school, at its inception in 1997. Building upon her previous experience as a teacher and Education Instructional Specialist with IBM, Julie's vision to provide high quality, online courses to students throughout the state of Florida has met our students' needs and revolutionized education. Florida Virtual School has grown exponentially to provide online learning opportunities for students in kindergarten through high school, including a wide offering of elective and advanced placement courses. Today, Florida Virtual School is an award-winning Florida public school district serving more than 410,000 enrollments.

Julie has earned numerous awards for her leadership and innovation in education. Last year, Julie received the Orlando Business Journal's Women Who Mean Business Award which honors Central Florida's most influential business women. In recent years, Julie has also been awarded the Girl Scouts of Citrus Council Women of Distinction in Central Florida Award, Dr. Carlo Rodriguez Champion of School Choice Award, Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education Award, Outstanding Individual Contribution to K-12 Online Learning Award and the Florida Diversity Council's Multicultural Award in Education, just to name a few.

Florida Virtual School has received state, national and international awards for pioneering online education. Among the numerous awards received last year, the School received Elearning! Media Group's 2013 Learning! 100 Award for being named one of the top 100 learning organizations in the world.

I am truly grateful for Julie's work to provide world-class, accessible online education to Floridians and students around the world. Our community, our state and our students are better due to her service.

ON THE PASSING OF MR. WILLIAM HENRY MANSON, JR. IN RECOGNITION OF HIS MANY CONTRIBUTIONS TO EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge and pay tribute to the life and contributions of Mr. William Henry Manson, Jr. For 88 years William Manson was a vital part of communities across North Carolina. On February 27, 2014, he passed away in Williamston, NC after a long and courageous fight with cancer.

Mr. Manson was born in Martin County, North Carolina to Mrs. Artimissie Tyner Manson and Mr. William Henry Manson on May 3, 1925. He was raised on his grandfather's farm which undoubtedly helped to develop his work ethic and guide him throughout his life and career. William joined the Back Swamp Church of Christ when he was eight years old, and went on to serve as a Sunday school teacher and as Church Treasurer for many years.

Much of Mr. Manson's success and contributions can be attributed to his passion for education, which seemed to grow with each year. He graduated from Williamston Colored High School in 1944 and went on to graduate from North Carolina College at Durham, now known as North Carolina Central University, in 1948 with a Bachelor's Degree in Science. William also studied at New York University, the University of California at Los Angeles, and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. His love for education enabled him to give back to students as a teacher, attendance counselor, and sports official in Martin County.

Beyond the classroom, William Manson left an indelible mark on many eastern North

Carolínians. He served on the Martin County Board of Commissioners for more than 20 years, where he was a strong advocate for community residents. He was also the founder and owner of Manson Mortuary, helping grieving families through some of their most difficult times. In addition, Mr. Manson was active in his community, holding memberships to Martin County Red Cross, Martin County United Way, and by serving as a Trustee of Martin Community College.

Perhaps his most important accomplishment was William's devotion to family. He married his late wife Emeline in 1952, and raised two daughters—the late Ms. Jacqueline Manson and Ms. Keisha Manson. William Manson is survived by his daughter Keisha, and his two grandchildren Mr. Isaac J. Veale and Ms. Sarina F. Veale.

There is no question that William's legacy of hard work and determination will live on not only through his family, but in each of the lives he influenced and touched. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of Mr. William Henry Manson, Jr.

ST. ANTHONY HOSPITAL

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud St. Anthony Hospital for receiving the Large Business of the Year Award from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

This award is given to an organization which exemplifies leadership, collaboration and gives back to the community.

St. Anthony Hospital moved to Lakewood, Colorado in 2011. In two years they have grown to 1,600 employees and a campus at 90% capacity in the medical office buildings. They also bring substantial financial investment, vibrancy and first class medical care to our community.

I extend my deepest congratulations to St. Anthony Hospital for this well-deserved honor from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County. I am proud to have this crown jewel in Colorado's 7th Congressional District.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,463,228,562,652.94. We've added \$6,836,351,513,739.86 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING MR. CLINTON AND MRS. BEULAH MELTON

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, this month is Black History month and I rise to honor two members of African American black history. They were two innocent lives cut short, Mr. Clinton Melton and his wife, Mrs. Beulah Melton of Glendora (Tallahatchie County), Mississippi.

Being a part of history does not always require some extraordinary feat but sometimes simply being innocent and unjustly victimized. This is the case, Mr. Speaker with Mr. Melton and his wife, Mrs. Melton. They were two young African Americans living in the small town of Glendora, MS working hard and raising their four children. He was a gas station attendant but her occupation was never mentioned because her murder was covered up and only mentioned as a reckless driving incident and not really spoken of.

Clinton Melton, Murdered: On December 3, 1955, Mr. Melton, a 33 year old gas station attendant of Lee McGarrh Firestone gas station in Glendora, went outside to gas up the car that Elmer Otis Kimball was driving. The car belonged to J.W. Milam, who had been acquitted on September 23, 1955 for the mutilation and murder of Emmett Louis Till.

The story goes that Mr. Kimball asked for \$2 worth of gas but because the amount Mr. Melton actually put in the car was not \$2 (amount unknown) he was killed. Mr. Kimball had become enraged about the gas, and very loud and publicly vowed to return and kill Mr. Melton—a promise he kept, returning shortly thereafter leaving only to retrieve his shotgun. Mr. Clinton Melton was killed instantly in front of three witnesses (the owner, a friend, and a bystander) leaving behind his young wife and children.

The trial of Elmer Otis Kimball, as in the Emmett Till's murder trial held at the Sumner Courthouse in Sumner, Mississippi (Tallahatchie County), resulted in yet another "not guilty" verdict.

Beulah Clinton, Murdered: She was a wife and mother of four who didn't deserve being murdered and forgotten about. Therefore Mr. Speaker, I rise today to also make sure her life is not forgotten by telling her story. At that time, the acquittal and humiliation of the Emmett Till murder trial was a fresh wound in Glendora, home of the murdered, and across entire Tallahatchie County. But, as a mother and wife, Mrs. Melton would not let that stop her. In March, 1956 one day, while out driving in an effort to gather information for the upcoming murder trial of her husband, Mrs. Melton was forced off the road into a bayou. In the car she had two of her small children, Debris and Clinton Melton, Jr. Both were rescued by a relative who saw the car while driving by.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the late Mr. Clinton and Mrs. Beulah Melton for Black History Month, whose lives were cut short for no justifiable reason from the Mississippi Second Congressional District.

OLINGER CROWN HILL CEMETERY AND MORTUARY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Olinger Crown Hill Cemetery and Mortuary for achieving 25 years of outstanding membership in the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

Membership in a Chamber of Commerce comes with commitment, dedication and contribution to community. Chamber members are leaders in the community mentoring other businesses, creating positive environments for business to thrive. The West Chamber serving Jefferson County is a strong and vibrant organization today due to members like Olinger Crown Hill Cemetery and Mortuary.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Olinger Crown Hill Cemetery and Mortuary for 25 years of leadership and inspiration you provide in our community. I look forward to many more years of your service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM GRIFFIN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I was delayed and missed rollcall vote No. 40 on Wednesday, February 5, 2014.

If I had been present, I would have voted "nay" for the Motion to Recommit H.R. 3590, the Sportmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement (SHARE) Act of 2013.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. LEWIS. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes during the week of February 10th due to eye surgery.

Had I been present, I would have cast the following votes: on rollcall No. 55, I would have voted "yes;" on rollcall No. 56, I would have voted "yes;" on rollcall No. 57, I would have voted "yes;" on rollcall No. 58, I would have voted "no;" on rollcall No. 59, I would have voted "no;" on rollcall No. 60, I would have voted "no;" on rollcall No. 61 regarding the Temporary Debt Limit Extension Act, I would have voted "yes;" on rollcall No. 62, I would have voted "yes."

HONORING THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF EL PASO

HON. BETO O'ROURKE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Catholic Diocese of El Paso as they celebrate their 100 year anniversary.

El Paso and the Catholic Church have shared a long history. The El Paso region was settled by Franciscan missionaries in the 1600s. Since then, the Catholic Church has contributed to El Paso in many important ways. From the founding of the first hospital in El Paso, Hotel Dieu; to building the Ysleta Mission, the oldest continuously operating church in the State of Texas; to installing the first Hispanic bishop in the nation, Bishop Patrick Flores installed in 1978.

The current Diocese serves more than 680,000 Catholics in and around El Paso. As champions of the poor and the vulnerable, the Diocese of El Paso operates one of the largest legal aid clinics in the southwest and provides health care and education to thousands in my community. It has also welcomed and given shelter to migrants and refugees from Mexico and around the world.

The Diocese of El Paso has been of the El Paso community for one hundred years. I invite my colleagues to recognize their history of service as they embark on their next century.

MAYOR STEVE BURKHOLDER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Mayor Steve Burkholder for receiving the first annual Steve Burkholder Diamond Legacy Award from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

The award is given to an individual who is recognized as a "shining star" due to their leadership and contributions in making Jefferson County a better place to reside.

Mayor Burkholder spent his adult life contributing to the betterment of Jefferson County and their residents. Steve's accomplishments are many. They include serving as past President of the Colorado Municipal League, a member of the Metro Mayors Executive Committee and serving as fellow of the Institute on the Common Good at Regis University.

Steve's latest quest is making sure every two and three year old from high risk or vulnerable families are preschool ready through the Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP). Steve is a founding member of the PCHP Jeffco Advisory Group. Their mission is to positively impact school readiness and long term learning.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Mayor Steve Burkholder for this well-deserved honor from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County. I have no doubt Mayor

Burkholder's commitment to community will be felt by Jefferson County residents for years to come.

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATED SERVICE OF MR. JOHN MORAN

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a special individual whose contributions to this country, especially its veterans, are innumerable. His name is John Moran, and he has just retired from Federal service as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for the Veterans' Employment and Training Service.

Last week, John closed out a career that has spanned 35 years of dedicated service to his country. His accomplishments in that time are remarkable. In fact, John began his career protecting the public and Members of the House and Senate as a United States Capitol Policeman.

John was born and raised in Worcester, Massachusetts. In 1979, he graduated from Westfield State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice. As I stated earlier, he began his Federal career as a member of the United States Capitol Police, then, later as a Federal Air Marshal/Special Agent with the FAA. Throughout his 35 year career, Mr. Moran progressed through a variety of managerial and senior executive positions:

Special Agent in Charge, Washington, D.C. Civil Aviation Security Field Office;

Chief of Staff, FAA Office of Airports; Program Assessment and Evaluation Officer, in the Office of Civil Aviation Security;

Director, of the Red Team and Explosives Security Division, at the Office of Civil Aviation Security.

Following the attacks on September 11th, Mr. Moran played a crucial role in helping to shape the legislation that founded the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and was instrumental in building it from the ground up. For his hard work and dedication, Mr. Moran received a September 11th Service Medal from the Secretary of Transportation in recognition of his pivotal role and unwavering service to his country.

He then became the TSA Assistant Administrator responsible for all aspects of training of a workforce of over 50,000 personnel and served as Vice Chair of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Accreditation Board. In 2005, Mr. Moran was asked to serve as the acting Associate Administrator.

Mr. Moran's final Federal service was as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Veterans Employment and Training Service or VETS at the Department of Labor. In this position, Mr. Moran was the go-to executive during a leadership transition in which he was responsible for important veterans employment programs such as the Jobs for Veterans State Grant program, the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, the Women's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, the Incarcerated

Veterans Program, the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program, and the Transition Assistance Program. Literally thousands of veterans are now employed because of John Moran's dedication to the betterment of those who have worn the nation's military uniforms.

On behalf of the House Committee on Veterans' affairs, I wish John and his family every success in the future.

HONORING LARRY W. WHITE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a self motivated and innovative man, Mr. Larry W. White. Mr. White has shown what can be done through tenacity, dedication and a desire to achieve.

Mr. White was born January 26, 1959 in Cannonsburg, MS; he is the second of seven children. His mother Josephine Jackson is his greatest inspiration.

After high school Mr. White proudly served his country from 1977 to 1997 in the U.S. Navy where he retired as an Aviation Electronic Technician. During his career, Mr. White traveled the world: Guam, Italy, France, Germany, Europe, Korea and many other countries, and was stationed in Memphis, Lemoore, Norfolk, Jacksonville and San Diego in the U.S. He received his education, training, numerous awards and certificates while serving in the Navy.

Mr. White serves on the Yazoo City Chamber of Commerce, FCC Community Development Board and is a member of the American Legion. Larry W. White is Founder, President and CEO of AA Calibration Services, LLC, a fast growing measurement and repair service for test and measurement equipment users, that was founded in 2004 after Larry became unemployed, with the closing of L-3 Communication's calibration lab. Larry purchased L-3 Communication's lab equipment and formed AA Calibration Services on the Main Street of Yazoo City, MS, he was the sole employee.

Rejected by banks for loans, Larry worked and saved to expand his business in 2010. Today, AA Calibration Services, LLC, located at 111 Roosevelt Hudson Drive in Yazoo City, MS, employs eighteen and has a customer base of about one hundred.

Mr. White is a member of King Solomon M. B. Church. In his free time he enjoys attending family functions, playing dominos, golf, fishing, and watching the Chicago Bears.

Mr. White is married to Dorothy White and to that union they have five children: Jamie, Anthony, Etoya, Yolanda and Ariel.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Larry W. White for his passion and dedication to serving our great Country and desire to make a difference in the lives of others.

IRAN SUPPORT FOR TERRORISM
WORLDWIDE

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, recent attention on Iran has focused on its nuclear weapons program—but this is not the whole picture.

Iran is also the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism.

Using both its own military operatives and its proxy Hezbollah, Iran has planned attacks around the globe.

Iran has no problem sending members of its Revolutionary Guard Corps and Quds Force to target Western interests abroad.

They also have their very own terrorist organization—Hezbollah—to do their bidding.

The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps funds, trains, arms, and directs Hezbollah, one of the world's deadliest terrorist organizations.

Years ago Hezbollah was a limited, regional threat. Today, it is an international movement.

Right now, Hezbollah is most actively engaged in Syria.

With Iran's backing, Hezbollah supports the murderous Assad regime, which slaughters innocent Syrians every day.

Without Hezbollah, Assad would have been defeated. Instead, Iran has stayed in the fight and more than 140,000 lives have been lost.

Unfortunately, Iran and Hezbollah are not confined to attacks in the Middle East.

In Afghanistan, the Iranians provide arms and training to Taliban fighters who use them to kill U.S. and Afghan forces.

In Africa, Iran and Hezbollah have planned attacks in Nigeria, Sudan, and Kenya, and are expanding their terrorist and criminal networks in Senegal and Gambia.

In Europe, Iran has attempted to assassinate foreign diplomats and tourists.

A 2012 attack in Bulgaria killed six and injured 32 people. Other attacks were also planned in Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan.

The same has been true in Asia. Iran and Hezbollah have planned numerous plots in India and Thailand.

Perhaps most troubling is Iran's expansion into Latin America and the fact that our State Department denies it is happening to this very day.

Despite clear evidence that Hezbollah is colluding with drug organizations to launder money and gather support, the Obama Administration continues to downplay this threat.

Hezbollah uses Venezuela banks to launder hundreds of millions of dollars a year and smuggle narcotics to U.S. and European markets.

It has also conducted terrorist training on Margarita Island for recruits from Venezuela and other Latin American countries.

No one is safe, including Americans abroad and even here at home.

In October 2011, the Saudi Ambassador to the U.S. was targeted in Washington, DC. There is strong evidence linking Hezbollah and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps to this attack.

Anyone who hoped that the new Iranian President Hassan Rouhani would have stopped all this is wrong.

Like his predecessor, he continues to support terrorism.

Just last month Iran's parliament claimed that Hezbollah has "tens of thousands" of missiles prepared for a battle with Israel.

Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, described it best when he said the Iran-Hezbollah relationship was "a partnership agreement, with the Iranians as the senior partner."

International efforts to combat this expanding threat have improved, but still fall short of what needs to be done.

I commend the European Union for blacklisting Hezbollah's military wing, but they must understand that there are not two separate Hezbollahs.

There is one Hezbollah. The military wing and political wing are not separate. The entire organization needs to be sanctioned in order for those tools to really bite.

2014 marks the 30 year anniversary of Iran's placement on the State Department's "State Sponsors of Terrorism" list.

This problem will only get worse if the Administration allows Iran to develop nuclear weapons.

Clearly, it is time for the United States and its allies to develop a coherent and comprehensive plan to stop Iranian-backed terrorism.

We can start by renewing the sanctions on Iran rather than easing them. Iran only can be forced to do the right thing internationally because their moral code regarding right and wrong is amiss.

And that's just the way it is.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR.
SRINIVASA YEGNASUBRAMANIAN

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Srinivasa Yegnasubramanian (Dr. Mani). The title of Dharmatma was recently bestowed upon Dr. Mani by His Holiness Shankarachari. As the first United States citizen and only the third person to be awarded this title, Dr. Mani's prestigious honor is truly deserving of this body's recognition.

Dr. Mani serves as Chairman of the Hindu American Temple and Cultural Center in Morganville, New Jersey and Chairman of Sringeri Vidya Bharati Foundation, USA (SVBF) in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. As the leader of these organizations, Dr. Mani oversees the many activities and outreach efforts provided to the communities and ensure that the centers provide outstanding spiritual and community service. Additionally, under Dr. Mani's leadership, SVBF has seen significant accomplishments and growth, including the establishment of the first goshala to be associated with a Hindu Temple in the United States and the construction of a monastery and temple in Toronto, Canada.

Over the years, Dr. Mani has been recognized by various organizations in both the United States and India for his humanitarian efforts. In addition to his most recent title of

Dharmatma, Dr. Mani has also been honored with the titles of Dharma Chintamani (the crown-Pearl of Righteous Thoughts) and Dharma Rakshamani (the crown-pearl of protector of Dharma), among many other honors.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in celebrating Dr. Srinivasa Yegnasubramanian's honor of being conferred as Dharmatma. He continues to provide outstanding leadership, service and dedication to the Hindu faith and the community.

RECOGNIZING THE DEDICATED
SERVICE OF ALICE GEISHECKER

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to recognize the contributions of Mrs. Alice Geishecker to the United States House of Representatives and this great Nation upon the occasion of her retirement. Alice is a true American patriot with over 38 combined years of supporting Military members and families.

Since September 2001, Ms. Geishecker served as a Congressional Liaison Representative with the United States Air Force House Liaison Office. In this capacity, she was responsible for maintaining a continuous Air Force presence in the United States House of Representatives. Her primary role was to facilitate personal contacts between Air Force leaders, Members of Congress, key personnel and professional House staff. She monitored the ever-changing political environment on Capitol Hill to advise the Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff of the Air Force. Alice was the primary focal point for administrative functions within the office to include all logistical support for events, Congressional member travel departures and arrivals, and movements of Senior Air Force Leadership within the Capitol complex. This endeared her to many Members of Congress and their offices.

Prior to joining the Air Force Liaison Office in the House of Representatives, Alice worked as a contract employee in 1978 with University of Maryland at Camp Pieri, Wiesbaden, Germany and took her oath to federal service on July 5, 1989 working Family Support Services at the United States Military Academy at West Point. Alice also worked with North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) liaison officers at the Army Command and General Staff College, Directorate of Combat Development, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas and various divisions within the acquisition community and with the Director of Manpower in the Pentagon.

Alice had a varied and full civil servant career, but also served as a dedicated Army spouse to her husband Alan, a retired Lieutenant Colonel; loving mother to her three children, Cassie, Angelina, and Julie; and grandmother of eight. Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the entire United States Congress, it is an honor to recognize the career and service of Mrs. Alice Geishecker. My wife Vicki and I congratulate Alice and wish her and her family all the best.

HONORING BETHEL AFRICAN
METHODIST EPISCOPAL

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a pillar of the community, Bethel African Methodist Episcopal. Bethel AME has served as a catalyst for the African American growth in Warren County and the State of Mississippi.

Founded in 1864 by Pastor Page Tyler, a missionary from Indiana, Bethel was the first African Methodist Episcopal church in Mis-

issippi. It is known as The Mother Congregation of African Methodism in the state. Although other black churches have earlier histories, they were organized as Methodist Episcopal and later united under the A.M.E. religion. Bethel, however, was the first congregation organized by the A.M.E. connection in Mississippi and the second in the southern United States.

Bethel has a rich legacy as her members served as pioneers in progressing African-American culture greatly forward in the State of Mississippi. The first African-American Masonic Lodge in Mississippi was organized at Bethel in 1875 by the first Pastor of Bethel, Reverend Dr. T.W. Stringer, a freeman from Canada. Adding to her history, in 1890, Camp-

bell College, the first African-American College in Mississippi was established and operated from an adjoining building to Bethel. The college moved to Jackson, MS in 1897 and was absorbed by Jackson State University.

In 1992 Bethel was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in the United States and the City of Vicksburg captures Bethel's historic significance with inclusion of a 19th Century Bethel and Congregation on its Riverfront Murals.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Bethel African Methodist Episcopal for its rich heritage and dedication to serving others and giving back to the community.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, March 5, 2014

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FLEISCHMANN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 5, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CHARLES J. FLEISCHMANN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

UKRAINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, last week I came down to the floor to ask the community of world democracies to provide immediate financial help to the country of Ukraine. I would like to report that the United States has committed a billion dollars, and the European Union has committed, as of the news reports today, another \$15 billion.

This is critical in the need to help them get their economy back strong after the incidences over the last couple of months. It is unlikely that Russia will pull back from the Crimea. Prime Minister Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov have said that they cannot control these self-defense forces. Who are they kidding? Russian soldiers with no unit identification does not qualify them as self-defense forces.

If the world stands by and lets this happen, it will be like Neville Chamberlain in the Sudetenland, quoting "peace in our time" as Russia continues to gobble up sovereign states.

I want to applaud the Ukrainian commander who was the only calm

man on the peninsula, Colonel Yuliy Mamchuk, when he marched his soldiers to the Belbek airbase to continue the job that they do in securing and fixing the facilities. It was a tough standoff, but Colonel Yuliy was astonished by the change of events in that he has had such a great working relationship with the Russian military over the years, and obviously, this relationship no longer resides in the relationship between Ukraine and Russia.

On September 4 through 5 of this year, the next NATO summit will be held in South Wales. I call upon members of NATO to now do what they should have done in the last summit. NATO now must offer membership action plans to those aspirational countries that are moving towards democracy, freedom, and the rule of law. In particular, they need to grant membership action plans to Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova.

Now is also the time for us to continue to license LNG facilities so that we can export natural gas to our free and democratic countries around the world, to those who are signatories of the World Trade Organization and also to those who are members of NATO. It is difficult times as you know, Mr. Speaker, but the coalition of free democratic countries must stand united against totalitarianism.

TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this is the March Madness season on Capitol Hill, when we in Congress greet thousands of our constituents, many who are here to talk about transportation. It is something that every one of our constituents cares about.

Yesterday, I was able to greet hundreds of cyclists from around the country, and then leaders of America's counties; already this morning I've visited with people from the preservation community and a large delegation from Oregon.

Next week, I will start all over again with the American Public Transit Association. These people are all desperate for a 6-year, fully funded transportation bill, with stable, non-general funded money. They are standing on the edge of a cliff due to Congress' refusal—I almost said inability—to provide necessary funds, if not to do it right, at least to do it adequately.

I came to Congress shortly after the Clinton administration and Congress last raised the gas tax. That was 21 years ago, when gasoline was \$1.08 a gallon—and I wonder if Barack had even met Michelle—and there it has remained for 21 years.

Due to inflation and fuel economy increases, the average cost per mile that the American motorist pays to the Federal transportation program has been cut in half.

I went on the Budget, and the Ways and Means Committees for the last 8 years in order to deal with this issue. Frankly, I am tired of waiting. I introduced a gas tax increase, phased in over 3 years, to fully fund a 6-year reauthorization. I was pleased to be joined by friends supporting my bill's introduction—by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the AFL-CIO, American Trucking Association, AAA, contractors, transit, local government, environmentalists, road builders.

I find it somewhat ironic that people say this will be a heavy lift, because there is little support for it. When Chairman CAMP offered \$150 billion last week in his tax reform bill or President Obama suggested \$300 billion, where was their broad base of support? Maybe that is why both proposals were declared dead on arrival in the newspapers the next day.

I had a chance to make my case for both short and long-term funding last week in an amazing conference on America's infrastructure challenges at Harvard Business School. After my presentation, I was followed by the president of the AFL-CIO, Rich Trumka, and the president of the U.S. Chamber, Tom Donohue, who said—you know, they don't agree on much—but they both agree that it is time to raise the gas tax.

One of the best examples of leadership was Bill Graves, the president of the American Trucking Association, who has been eloquent and forceful, including when he was Governor of Kansas and raised the gas tax, saying his industry wants their taxes raised.

The AAA issued a strong statement in support, even though their members are not wild about it, because it is needed.

We run out of money September 30 because we have drained the trust fund. Therefore, the United States Department of Transportation is going to stop shipping out money this summer, which means that we are going to start having local governments holding back on their contracts this spring.

While the truckers and AAA have taken a strong leadership stand—not because it is popular, but because it is needed—I hope we in Congress will stop stalling or dealing with short-term fixes. Let's take a stand to raise the gas tax, have an adult conversation with the American public about how to pay for rebuilding and renewing our communities, put hundreds of thousands of people to work, to improve the safety and morning commute for all Americans.

EATING DISORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, last week people across the Nation and in 51 other countries around the world came together to raise awareness about eating disorders. It was National Eating Disorders Awareness Week, a time not only to learn the facts but also to give people the knowledge and the resources to treat and prevent eating disorders.

Most people know that eating disorders are common in our country. They may even know about them through experience, whether through a friend, a family member, or perhaps they suffered or continue to struggle with one personally.

What is actually not known is how prevalent they are, the reasons why they occur, and what we can do to prevent these tragic illnesses.

According to the Eating Disorders Coalition, eating disorders impact at least 14 million Americans and are so common that 1 to 2 out of every 100 children in America have one. Although eating disorders affect both men and women, the young and the old, and all the races and economic classes, we know that they are seven times more likely to impact women. In fact, 1 in 200 American women suffers from anorexia, and 2 to 3 in 100 women suffer from bulimia, the two most common eating disorders.

Distinguished by an obsession with thinness and fear of weight gain, anorexia usually results in extreme weight loss because of restricted eating habits.

Bulimia is similar in that those suffering also have an obsession with weight and body image. However, while anorexics restrict their food consumption, bulimics instead purge their food after binge eating.

Both anorexia and bulimia can cause heart problems, brain damage, osteoporosis, and even death. Anorexia has the highest mortality rate of any mental illness, and those suffering from it are 57 more times likely to die of suicide relative to their peers.

Many people are also not aware that they can be genetically predisposed to an eating disorder. As reported by the

Eating Disorders Coalition, 50 to 80 percent of the factors determining who develops an eating disorder is based on a person's genes. However, just possessing one of those genes does not automatically result in an eating disorder. Other factors like peer pressure and false advertising can be the ultimate contributors.

More and more academic evidence, as well as a study by the American Medical Association, has linked eating disorders with unrealistic body images found in advertising. By the time our children reach 17 years of age, they will have been exposed to over 250,000 television commercials depicting unrealistic body sizes. Too often, this exposure, combined with other factors like predisposition, feelings of inadequacy, societal pressures, and competition, depression, or anxiety can lead to an eating disorder.

The kinds of altered or photoshopped images found in our media today can cause unrealistic expectations of what the body is supposed to look like, causing emotional, mental, and physical health issues, and often resulting in an eating disorder.

That is why I plan to offer legislation to look at how advertising can more closely resemble the true human form while making sure that artistic expression and the freedom of media outlets is not restricted. If enacted into law, this bill would have the Federal Trade Commission work with stakeholders like the Eating Disorders Coalition and other experts across our Nation to study the serious impact of advertising that promotes unrealistic body image expectations, and then report back to Congress on how to best stop the destructive impact of this practice.

Together, Congress can have a positive impact on the tragic epidemic of eating disorders. I look forward to working with my colleagues to bring this important legislation to the floor soon.

COMMEMORATION OF FERDINAND VINCENT ALLISON, JR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to honor the life and work of a remarkable community leader, Ferdinand Vincent "Pete" Allison, Jr., who passed on Monday, March 3, at the age of 91. Pete Allison was a pillar in the Durham, North Carolina, community. He was a personable, kind, and effective banking leader who took great pride in his work, but even greater pride in his family. He fought for justice; he fought for equality when and where he could.

Pete Allison successfully used his banking career to enrich the lives of countless individuals through his in-

volvement in many organizations and charities. The sympathies of the House of Representatives are with Pete's entire family during this difficult time.

□ 1015

Mr. Speaker, I last visited Mr. Allison and his family less than 48 hours before his passing. He sat in the family's living room and participated in our very serious conversation. As I departed the home, he told me that he had been so sick, and my response to him was that I knew he had had some difficult days, but that he must know that he was blessed. He was blessed to be surrounded by a loving and supportive wife and family, and he responded that he was aware of that fact.

Mr. Allison was on schedule to have been inducted into the North Carolina Banking Hall of Fame. Only 24 other individuals, Mr. Speaker, have been awarded this great honor in our State.

Pete Allison was a graduate of Hampton Institute—now known as Hampton University—an institution that he loved and revered. Following graduation, he earned a master's of business administration from New York University.

Highly educated, but not sure which career path he would take, Mr. Allison, upon graduation, made a trip to Durham to visit his family, who lived in this historic community.

His father worked at North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company. Mr. Allison was awed on that visit. He was awed by Durham and its thriving environment for African American business.

On that visit, Pete became acquainted with a gentleman named John "Shag" Stewart, who I remember so well, the president of Mutual Savings and Loan Association there in Durham, and he was offered a job as a teller; but he would become more than a teller. He became chief executive officer in less than 25 years, which was remarkable.

During his tenure at the Savings and Loan Association, he continued to build on the groundbreaking work of other men, like John Merrick, C.C. Spaulding, Aaron McDuffie Moore, Richard Fitzgerald, James E. Shepard, W.J. Kennedy, John Hervey Wheeler, Asa Spaulding, Sr., W.G. Pearson, and many, many others in helping to grow what was known nationally as the "Black Wall Street."

Pete Allison served at the helm of Mutual Savings and Loan during the institution's most successful years. He spearheaded the transition from a mutual savings and loan association to a mutual savings bank and also led the acquisitions of American Federal Savings and Loan and Greensboro National Bank.

Mr. Allison was a pillar of the Durham community for more than 60 long years. As one who led by example, his friends and former colleagues praise

Mr. Allison for having been a strong and effective leader. Most recently, in 2010, Mr. Allison received the Mechanics and Farmers Bank Founders Award, which recognized his commitment to promoting personal and community development.

Mr. Allison is survived by his lovely wife, Dr. E. Lavonia (Ingram) Allison, and we always like to include the Ingram part because that family also has a rich history. Many of our CBC members know Dr. Allison so very well for her community advocacy.

Like her husband, Dr. Allison received her undergraduate degree from Hampton and her graduate and doctoral degrees from New York University. She was a long-time member and head of the influential Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People, which I believe is the oldest and most effective political committee in the United States.

Mr. Allison was a faithful member of White Rock Baptist Church in Durham.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Pete Allison is also survived by two children, Dr. F. Vincent Allison III, his namesake; and Michele Allison-Davis; and his four grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life and work of F.V. "Pete" Allison, Jr.

POLICIES THAT WORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, as we begin the annual budget process, we need to stop thinking in terms of Democratic and Republican policies and start thinking in terms of what policies have worked and what policies have not. The successes and failures of both parties could teach us much.

We are now in the sixth year of policies that promise to restore prosperity to America by radically increasing government spending and government intervention in our economy. These 6 years have not been happy ones for our Nation.

When people say this is the worst economy since the depression, I remember a time much more recently when we suffered double-digit unemployment, double-digit inflation, mile-long lines around gas stations, and the prime interest rate at 20.5 percent. Perhaps we don't remember these times as vividly because they didn't last very long.

That was the end of the Carter administration. We elected Ronald Reagan who declared that: "Government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem."

He reduced the tax and regulatory burdens that were crushing the economy and produced one of the most prosperous periods in our Nation's his-

tory. In doing so, he was following the precedent of successful presidencies from both parties, including Calvin Coolidge in the 1920s, Harry S. Truman in the mid-1940s, and John F. Kennedy in the early 1960s.

Lest we forget, in 1995, President Bill Clinton proclaimed: "The era of big government is over." He dramatically reduced Federal spending as a percentage of GDP.

He signed what amounted to the biggest capital gains tax cut in American history. He reduced entitlement spending by reforming the open-ended welfare system. He produced 4 years of budget surpluses, and the economy blossomed.

George W. Bush pursued the opposite policies with the opposite results. He dramatically increased Federal spending as a percentage of GDP. He pushed through the biggest expansion of entitlement spending since the Great Society. He began the folly of stimulus spending. He turned in massive budget deficits, and the economy tanked.

The problem with Barack Obama is not that he changed Bush's policies, but, rather, that he did not change them. He took the worst of them and doubled down.

He has added \$6.8 trillion to the national debt, meaning that today's young people will have to pay back \$56,000, plus interest, per household through their future taxes for nothing more than to pay for this administration's overspending.

He seized one-sixth of the American economy that provides our health care and is well on the way to wrecking it for millions of American families, costing them their health plans, their doctors, their savings, and their security. He has increased annual taxes by \$551 billion. That averages about \$4,600 for every household in America.

He made a lot of promises that turned out not to be true. He promised that massive government spending would produce prosperity. Instead, average personal incomes declined \$2,600 during his presidency, and food stamp dependency is at an all-time high.

Nearly one in six Americans is now living in poverty, including 22 percent of all children. The workforce has shrunk to a smaller proportion of the population, as it was during the disastrous Carter years.

He promised a government takeover of our health care would reduce our health costs and increase coverage for Americans. It has done exactly the opposite. Millions more American families have lost their health plans and their doctors than have gained them, and the overwhelming majority has suffered ruinous increases in their health care costs.

The result is a declining standard of living at home, a declining respect for America abroad, and a generation in danger of becoming the first in our his-

tory to be less well off than their parents.

Mr. Speaker, our own experience should now tell us that these policies don't work. They didn't work under George W. Bush, and they certainly haven't worked under Barack Obama. We know what does work, reducing the financial and regulatory burdens that government has placed on the economy, as both Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton proved.

It is time that we abandon these policies of debt, doubt, and despair. It is time we recognize that this government has grown too big and too powerful at the expense of hardworking taxpayers. It is time we restored those uniquely American principles of individual liberty, constitutionally limited government, and personal responsibility that have always been the foundation of our Nation's freedom, its prosperity, and its happiness.

QUIZ: WHO IS THE "DEPORTER-IN-CHIEF"?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I have come to the floor to discuss a very serious illness afflicting Members of the U.S. House of Representatives. Dana Milbank of The Washington Post diagnosed it as "Obama derangement syndrome."

Milbank defined the syndrome as an affliction in which: "The President's opponents are so determined to thwart him that they will reverse long-held views if they believe it will weaken his stature."

I would define it as a broader and more serious condition, the irrational fear that the 44th President of the United States of America is something he is not.

From a public health standpoint, the news is pretty bad. Those of us concerned with the long-term health of the body politic have identified an aggressive fact-resistant strain of Obama derangement syndrome that affects how the Republican Caucus views immigration enforcement.

Remember, the Republicans are currently sitting on their hands when it comes to immigration reform because they say they cannot trust the President of the United States to enforce immigration laws.

Well, I thought it would be a good time to offer a quiz to determine just how fact-resistant the current epidemic of Obama derangement syndrome really is.

Here we have the last three Presidents of the United States: Bill Clinton, George Bush, and Barack Obama. Mr. Speaker, let's test our knowledge of how much or how little they have enforced the immigration laws of the United States during their terms.

Question one: Which President deported a population slightly larger than the population of the entire State of Nebraska, with almost 2 million deported so far?

Barack Obama has deported more people than the number living in the entire State of Nebraska. No one has deported more people. A star for first place goes to Barack Obama.

Question two: Who expanded immigration enforcement by local law enforcement a hundredfold? One of these Presidents expanded the Secure Communities program for deporting immigrants who are booked into local jails from 31 jurisdictions in this Nation to over 3,000.

And who was that? Yes, President Barack Obama, another dubious star.

Question number three: Let's go to "boots on the ground," where the immigration issue seems to begin and end for many Republicans. Who spent more money on immigration enforcement than all other Federal law enforcement combined? Well, if you guessed Barack Obama, you would be right.

Yes, the \$18 billion he spends is \$3.5 billion more every year than we spend on the FBI, ATF, DEA, and Secret Service—all of them combined—in order to achieve what? Unprecedented deportations, so he gets another star.

Question four: What crimes are the most prosecuted crimes in Federal court? Do you think kidnapping, murder, counterfeiting, political corruption?

No. Under Barack Obama, the number one crime prosecuted as a misdemeanor is being illegally in this country. And the number one crime prosecuted as a felony in Federal courts is what? Illegal reentry to the United States. He gets another star.

Finally, for question five, we get to detention. Which of these Presidents put more than 420,000 people in detention in just one single year of his presidency? Yes, arrested and put them in jail.

President Barack Obama has detained more immigrants in jails, prisons, and detention facilities than any other President of the United States of America.

That is five for five, and it goes to the deporter-in-chief, Barack Obama; but because Obama derangement syndrome is so fact-resistant, I am not optimistic I have convinced anybody this morning, but tell that to the more than 5,000 American citizen children who today sit in foster care because their moms or dads have been deported.

Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. The immigrant community is organized and will continue to pressure Republicans and the President until this unprecedented wave of deportation ends.

Republicans can either be participants in how this country advances more sensible immigration policies, or they can just simply sit on the side-

lines while the President does it with his phone and his pen.

And secondly, if we pass immigration reform in this body today, most of the new reforms won't take place for about 2 years. Obama won't even be President of the United States of America.

In fact, if Republicans continue to insist on making immigration reform a football in their game against the current President, they are all but guaranteeing that the President in 2 years will not be a member of your party—not a member of the Republican Party—and could very well be the wife of one of these three gentlemen.

HARRY REID V. JUSTIN CARTER RE: OBAMACARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, in September of 2013, Democrat Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID sought to marginalize and denigrate Americans who believe in America's foundational principles by calling them anarchists and fanatics.

□ 1030

Their offense? They exercised their First Amendment freedom of speech rights by speaking out against and opposing ObamaCare and socialized medicine.

In February 2014, Democrat Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID sought to marginalize and denigrate Charles Koch and Dave Koch by calling them "as un-American as anyone that I can imagine." Their offense? They exercised their freedom of speech rights by exposing how badly ObamaCare hurts millions of Americans.

Also in February 2014, Democrat Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID brazenly proclaimed that all those pesky Americans who dare exercise their freedom of speech rights by complaining about ObamaCare are all telling lies. Mr. REID said:

There's plenty of horror stories being told. All of them are untrue, but they're being told all over America.

Mr. REID's calling Americans liars puts me in a quandary because north Alabama citizens often complain to me about ObamaCare. Who should I believe, Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID or north Alabama citizens?

This week, Justin Carter of C&C Fabrication, a 47-year-old family-owned business in Laceys Spring, Alabama, told me:

C&C Fabrication was formed by two brothers, Ray and C.M. Carter, in 1967 and is today a small, family-owned and family-operated business. Through hard work and strong leadership, C&C has grown to over 100,000 square feet, with 51 skilled workers. Even as the ObamaCare corporate mandate has been delayed, its imminent implementation forces C&C to make very serious, very real decisions regarding its future. C&C's health care

premiums increased by over 10 percent in October 2013. C&C has been notified that an additional 15 percent increase is coming in October 2014.

These increases will cost C&C almost \$70,000 per year in increased health care premiums alone, and these increases do not even fully capture the impact of the corporate mandates. In order to fully comply with ObamaCare, C&C must restructure its benefits package for all employees, as well as each worker's hourly pay rate. These increased costs could rise as high as \$160,000 per year.

Failure to comply with ObamaCare will result in over \$120,000 per year in fines for C&C; however, noncompliance could actually be the most prudent, most financially sound method of survival for C&C but at a cost to its employees in the form of benefit reductions, many of whom have been employed by C&C for decades. This would force C&C employees to the exchanges to buy plans with worse coverage and with higher deductibles than is currently provided to them by C&C.

The sad reality is that because of ObamaCare and uncertain economic times, C&C will likely have only one feasible choice for the survival of the company, and that is to ensure that its corporate size stays below the limit of 50 employees. While this will exempt C&C Fabrication from ObamaCare and help it survive, it will also sacrifice the jobs of valued employees and cap the earning potential of the company, ensuring that this small business will not grow or create jobs.

C&C has been fortunate to serve the community into its third generation and has taken pride in the work it performs. Many hardworking individuals have given service to C&C, and, in turn, C&C has done its very best to provide them with a living. However, ObamaCare mandates have the potential to derail C&C's future and greatly threaten its survival.

So who is telling the truth about how badly ObamaCare is damaging America? Justin Carter, a north Alabama citizen and job creator, or Democrat Senator HARRY REID, who is desperate to keep his job even to the point of denigrating American citizens who dare to exercise their freedom of speech rights? Well, I know Justin Carter and the Carter family, and I know HARRY REID. Quite frankly, I believe Justin Carter of north Alabama is telling the truth about ObamaCare hurting Americans. And, Mr. Speaker, it is not a close call.

SUPPORTING UKRAINE'S FUTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in continued support of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation of Ukraine and stand with the people of that country for their liberty and full human rights.

The first objective of international efforts to calm Ukraine must be the overriding goal of no more bloodshed. The world community of nations must step up forcefully to affirm Ukraine's new government, and not just for the sake of tomorrow.

Morally, nations that had supported Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin or were

bystanders to communism and Naziism that slaughtered millions and millions of people inside those borders owe Ukraine an historical debt. No place on Earth suffered more. As the demonstrators on Maidan have proven, tyrants and corrupt officials couldn't kill Ukraine's people's longing for freedom and liberty.

This is Ukraine's moment, and it is a breakpoint in liberty's march that history will judge.

Where do we go from here? Our path must be diplomatic, economic, humanitarian, and military. Diplomatically, the international community must affirm Ukraine and her interim government. I commend President Obama and Secretary Kerry for their leadership. Yesterday, the OSCE announced that 18 participating countries will send 35 unarmed military observers to Ukraine. Let them reveal the truth.

Countries with large Ukrainian diaspora, like our country, along with Poland, Canada, Argentina, Italy, Portugal, Australia, the United Kingdom, and Kazakhstan, should seek constructive means to help.

Further, the world community and OSCE should assure sufficient election monitors are recruited and trained for the upcoming elections in Ukraine on May 25. Then, economically, the world community should proceed to work through Ukraine's financial challenges. However, any financial assistance to Ukraine should be contingent on repayment, and Ukraine's new government must clearly define performance standards and lay out a reasonable plan to repay any foreign aid.

Transitioning from a kleptocracy to a functioning state will require technical assistance, management expertise, and loaned personnel from governments throughout the world. In addition, the United States and other nations should impose targeted financial, economic, trade, and travel sanctions on Russian assets on a timetable that demonstrates our resolve.

The United Nations and global supporters of Ukraine must respond if Ukraine requests humanitarian relief to those places most in need. As long as Russian aggression persists, its participation in the G8 should be suspended. And, finally, militarily, the parties to the 1994 Budapest accords should enforce that agreement.

In addition, Ukraine exists in an inferior military posture to its more powerful neighboring states. To remedy this shortcoming, NATO should create a new category of provisional membership for nations whose military has fought alongside NATO member forces in the war on terrorism. Ukraine has.

As a true borderland region, Ukraine is positioned to be truly a bridge between East, West, North, and South in that most important region of Central Europe. The free world must walk with Ukraine as she moves toward a more

free and democratic future. There is no turning back.

SEVENTH CENTURY RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, much ink has been used regarding Secretary of State John Kerry's comments this weekend characterizing Vladimir Putin's outrageous incursion into Ukraine as a "19th century act in the 21st century." But if we are looking through the lens of history, it is also worth noting what a small community of Syrian Christians has been forced to endure.

Writing in National Review Online this week, stalwart religious freedom advocate Nina Shea authored a piece, headlined, "Syrian Jihadists Are Forcing Christians to Become Dhimmis Under Seventh-Century Rules." Shea notes:

The religious persecution in Syria deepened this week, as evidenced by a written ultimatum purportedly distributed by the rebel jihadist group ISIS, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, to Christians in the northern providence capital of Raqqa.

Rejecting conversion to Islam or death, some 20 Christian leaders of that city held firm in their faith and submitted to the Islamists' demands to live by as dhimmis.

Shea continued to explain the implications of this status. She said:

Under this arrangement, in exchange for their lives and the ability to worship as Christians, they must abide by purported seventh-century rules of Caliph Umar.

According to the Raqqa ultimatum, these include bans on renovating and rebuilding churches and monasteries, many of which need repair because they have been shelled and blown up over the past 3 years, and bans against the public display of crosses and Christian symbols and the ringing of bells.

She went on to say:

They are forbidden from reading Scripture indoors loud enough for Muslims outside to hear, and the practice of their faith must be confined within the walls of their remaining churches, not exercised publicly at, for example, weddings or funerals.

Many have remarked that Raqqa was once one of Syria's most liberal cities. Its Christian community numbered about 3,000 before the conflict. They have since been devastated by violence and migration. Their exact number today is unknown.

This month marks the anniversary of the uprising which eventually spiraled into the war and violence which has terrorized Syria for 3 years now. Muslims and Christians alike have experienced horrific violence. But, as Shea quotes:

The Christians who remain in Raqqa must now bear the additional suffering of dhimmitude.

Their plight, while more stark, given the official nature of their subjugation,

parallels, in many ways, that of other besieged religious minorities, specifically Christians throughout the broader Middle East.

The latest outrage finally garnered a statement from the Department of State's spokesman. But a statement provides little solace to a people facing death, forced conversion, or, in the case of these Christian leaders who refused to abandon their faith, an exacting toll to abide by the dictates of their conscience.

Such an outrage demands a response from policymakers and faith leaders alike. I have joined with Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO and others in sending a letter to Secretary Kerry urging the Department of State to cooperate with a Syria Study Group to be facilitated by the Washington, D.C.-based Atlantic Council. The study group would be charged with producing a report as quickly as possible that would help the administration and Congress identify and implement ways for bringing this crisis to a close in a manner fully consistent with the interests and the political transition objectives of the United States. Surely the protection of ancient faith communities like Syria's Christian community is one such interest.

Meanwhile, I believe that it is critical for the faith community in the West, specifically the Church in America, to find its voice on behalf of our marginalized and persecuted brothers and sisters abroad, be they in Syria, Egypt, or Iraq. I meet regularly with representatives of these groups. They are desperate for help, or at least the solidarity, and they cannot understand the seeming lack of urgency by their brethren here in America, and, frankly, nor can I.

HONORING DALLAS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL, ALABAMA'S CLASS 4A STATE BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the Dallas County High School Hornets on winning the State of Alabama title in the class 4A State basketball championship on Saturday, March 1, 2014. On behalf of the Seventh Congressional District, I pay honor and tribute to the Hornets for their exemplary athleticism and teamwork, as well as the outstanding leadership of Head Coach Willie Moore and his coaching staff.

Dallas County High School's basketball championship victory capped off an impressive season of 28 wins and 4 losses. With each victory during the season, the team remained humble and grounded. In every game, these young men and the coaching staff pursued excellence and were driven by hard work, determination, and teamwork.

Throughout the season, Coach Willie Moore encouraged the team by quoting Whitney Young, Jr.:

It is better to be prepared for an opportunity and not have one than to have an opportunity and not be prepared.

The Hornets finished the 2013–2014 season undefeated in their region and lost only four games overall. To earn their place in the championship title game, Dallas County beat other high school teams during the tournament, including Madison County, Dora, Bibb County, and Beauregard.

□ 1045

On March 1, 2014, the Dallas County Hornets came to the 4A State Championship prepared for the opportunity they had earned. The championship game against J.O. Johnson High School from Huntsville, Alabama, was a nail-biter from start to finish. The Hornets never gave up, even when they were behind. At halftime, the Hornets were down by 11 points, but in the third quarter, the Hornets made a thrilling comeback.

Senior William Lee made a 3-pointer at the regulation buzzer to force the game into overtime. The 6'9" standout and UAB signee William Lee continued to show dominance during the overtime by making three crucial free throws with 5.4 seconds to play. The Hornets won a 51–48 victory, taking the Class 4A High School Boys State Championship. William Lee scored 22 points, made 13 rebounds and seven blocks.

As the daughter of a high school basketball coach, I know that this decisive victory is the result of a tremendous effort on the part of all the players and the coaching staff at Dallas County High School. Spurred on by an enthusiastic student body and encouraging faculty and families, this team proved that outstanding achievements are possible even in rural Black Belt Alabama. I couldn't be prouder of this amazing accomplishment.

The State high school basketball championship victory is truly a reflection of the hard work and steadfast determination of the entire team and coaching staff. Members of the team include Jayden Buford, Scott Cole, Raheem Phillips, Kendell Motley, Jerrod Moorner, Henry Baker, Timothy Baker, Travon Muse, Javaris Muse, B.J. Leshore, William Lee, Ladarius Furlow, and Lowell Furlow.

I would like to also acknowledge and pay tribute to the head coach, Willie Moore, and assistant coaches, Cliff Nix, Charles Thompson, Kenny Allen, Justin Moore, and Hugh Martin for their outstanding work.

On behalf of the Seventh Congressional District, the State of Alabama, and this Nation, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the accomplishments of the Dallas County High School basketball team for their vic-

tory in Alabama's Class 4A State Basketball Championship. We honor and pay tribute to this team, the coaches and the school for this distinguished honor, and we appreciate their contributions to the school spirit and the community pride that we have in them.

Congratulations, and go Hornets.

RESTRICTIONS ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS AROUND THE WORLD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this House on Ash Wednesday to talk about a problem that should be heavy on the hearts of everyone in this body and around the Nation, and that is the persecution of Christians around the world.

Millions of Christians will start their Lenten period of fasting and penitence today, and over the next several weeks will act out their faith leading up to Holy Week, when we remember the death and crucifixion of Jesus, and then the feast of Easter, his resurrection.

Sadly, in too many parts of the world, Christians will not be allowed to openly profess their faith and act out the things that for centuries Christians have been able to do.

This chart on my left, which was prepared by the Pew Research Center, shows that around the world there is religious persecution, but it is particularly bad in Asia and, sadly, in the Middle East, the very part of the world where Jesus came from.

This next chart from the same source shows that the problem is getting worse, not better. Sadly, we are seeing that the perpetrators are now more frequently governments than private individuals in these countries. The bottom part of this chart tells us the saddest news of all: the most likely people in the world to be persecuted for their religious beliefs are Christians. This is a little-known fact to many people. For some reason, the news media has not been willing to cover it as well as they should have been, but perhaps during this season of Lent in preparation for Easter, it is a time when all of us can understand that this is a real problem, a humanitarian problem, a problem for the rights and freedoms of people all over the world.

Now, there is something we can do about it, but we need to understand the problem more specifically to do so.

This last chart perhaps is the most troubling of all. In 1914, Christians made up about 20 percent of the entire population of the Middle East. By 2013, they made up only 4 percent. In Iraq since 2003, almost a million Christians have fled that country. Since the troubles began in Syria in 2011, half a million Christians have fled. In Egypt

since the troubles there in 2011, 100,000 Coptic Christians have left that country.

Now, if you look at what is happening in Iraq and Egypt, that should be of particular concern to us because we will send this year to each of those two countries in aid over \$1 billion. That is taxpayer money that has been brought to our government and that we send to those countries from the people of the United States of America. I believe we should exercise a different foreign policy. Not only should we state that we are going to stand up for the protection of religious minorities around the world that are persecuted, but in countries like Iraq and Egypt where we send hundreds of millions of dollars of aid, we should demand it, and we should demand it not just because we are a country in which the majority of people are Christians but because it is the right thing to do, and we have historically done that as a Nation.

As we go toward Holy Week and people around the world remember that Jesus Christ himself was persecuted to death, and for centuries thereafter throughout the Roman Empire, throughout what we today call the Middle East, Christians were persecuted, we need to make sure that the clock is not going to be rolled back, as it clearly is today. The United States of America, our President, our Secretary of State, this body, the entire Congress, and the American people should do what we have traditionally done, and that is to stand up for the rights of people around the world. In this particular context, that means standing up for Christians who are being persecuted and killed merely because of their beliefs.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 52 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Dear Lord, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We use this moment to be reminded of Your presence and to tap the resources needed by the Members of this people's House to do their work as well as it can be done.

As the world observes the tensions mounting within Ukraine and Venezuela, may we all note well the crippling effects of ideological divides when a shared sense of national unity might bring greater hope and possible solution to serious political problems.

Send, O God, Your healing grace upon those torn nations and upon the Members of this assembly who struggle to see the shared hope for a better future in those with whom they disagree.

All this day and through the week, may our Representatives do their best to find solutions to pressing issues facing our Nation. Please hasten the day when justice and love shall dwell in the hearts of all peoples and rule the affairs of the nations of Earth.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance?

Mr. FITZPATRICK led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

AMERICA'S MILITARY STRENGTH

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the President unveiled his budget and used the military as a punching bag to push his Big Government programs.

According to a recent Charleston Post and Courier editorial:

Congress should proceed with extreme caution before going along with the latest recommendations for "savings" through deep defense cuts. If America rapidly retreats from world power status, our enemies will jump into the void. We can't unilaterally end the Islamic radical terrorists' war on us, and we shouldn't ignore history lessons about what happens when the United States tries to isolate itself from the menaces that threaten the international community.

At a time when threats are increasing and countries on nearly every continent are in turmoil, it is naive for the President to downgrade our military strength. Maintaining our national defense is the primary function of the national government.

I find it dangerous that the President has suggested this proposal which places American families at risk of further attacks. We should follow the advice of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Our Nation is still at war. Peace through strength.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

REMEMBERING DR. DON WILL

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a true champion for education, Donald Will, who passed away this past February. Dr. Donald Will was a fervent advocate of peace and influenced Chapman University's role in promoting peace and the study of peacemaking.

A member of the Chapman faculty since 1987, Don was described as a pillar of the Chapman community for over 25 years. He came to Chapman University when it needed his expertise most, and the world needed his peace expertise, and he has had such a magnificent effect that lasts until now.

During his time with Chapman, Dr. Will put all of his heart and time from his academic and personal life into carrying out the pursuit of peace. And don't we need it today in our world?

His commitment to his students and to the value of peaceful relations shone brightly through his teachings. He leaves a lasting legacy of humility, humanity, and dedication as he strengthened the link between school and home, both locally, nationally, and in an international way.

I am honored to have known and to have worked with Dr. Donald Will, and I ask my colleagues to honor him today.

ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE ENERGY STRATEGY

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BOEHNER. Madam Speaker and my colleagues, I know the whole House is paying close attention to the crisis in Ukraine. What is going on there is more than a cause for concern. It is a cause for action. America has a responsibility to stand up for freedom around the globe, and the House will work with the administration to support the Ukrainian people and confront Russian aggression.

In fact, the House has already taken serious steps in this regard. For years, we have been pursuing an all-of-the-above energy strategy. It is part of our focus on the floor this week, in fact. Because developing our own resources doesn't just bring jobs home, it strengthens America abroad.

Last month, the Energy and Commerce Committee released a report that says:

By becoming a natural gas exporter, the U.S. can supplant the influence of other exporters, like Russia and Iran, while strengthening ties with our allies and trading partners around the world.

The key word in that statement is "can." We can supplant Russia's influence, but we won't, so long as we have to contend with the Energy Department's achingly slow approval process.

As we speak, the administration is sitting on 24 applications for natural gas exports. It has approved just six in the last 3 years. Now, this amounts to a de facto ban that only emboldens Vladimir Putin, allowing him to sell large quantities of natural gas to our allies.

The American people have seen the threat that Mr. Putin puts forward. They know something must be done. The President should do the right thing here and end this de facto ban, so that we can strengthen both our economy and our security here and abroad.

THE BUFFALO NIAGARA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, in a recent nationwide realignment, the Transportation Security Administration made the decision to consolidate all administrative functions for its upstate region at the Albany Airport.

I believe this decision was misguided and illogical. In all of the other proposed consolidations around the country, smaller airports are being made subordinate to larger airports; but in this case, inexplicably, the TSA proposes to make the Buffalo/Niagara Falls International Airport subordinate to Albany, despite the fact that Buffalo's airport has twice the passenger volume as Albany.

Furthermore, nearly 40 percent of passengers flying out of Buffalo are Canadians and other foreign nationals, which would seem to necessitate a more complex TSA operation.

Mr. Speaker, TSA's rollout of this proposed change has been full of inconsistencies and contradictions, and that is why I have asked TSA to reconsider this flawed decision and consolidate operations where it makes sense, in Buffalo.

TUBEROUS SCLEROSIS COMPLEX RESEARCH

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Madam Speaker, as a member of the Rare Disease Congressional Caucus, I rise today in support of continued funding for tuberous sclerosis complex research in the fiscal year 2015 Department of Defense Appropriations Act.

TSC is a genetic condition that afflicts an estimated 50,000 Americans, causing tumors in the kidneys, lungs, liver, heart, eyes, skin, and brain. Researchers have linked TSC to seizures, autism, and severe intellectual disability.

Research on this condition is also having a notable impact on our understanding of traumatic brain injury and other medical conditions, like cancer and diabetes.

The TSC program at the Department of Defense is critical to our continued understanding of this condition.

With me on the floor today, Mr. Speaker, is a beautiful little girl, Stephanie from Pennsylvania, who has been diagnosed with TSC.

Her brave spirit brings light to the importance of this cause and helps remind us of others living with this condition across the United States.

It is crucial that we continue to band together as a community and a legislative body to support this significant research initiative.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. ROSELEHTINEN). The Chair reminds Members not to refer to persons on the floor as guests of the House.

DEEPENING THE SAVANNAH HARBOR

(Mr. BARROW of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARROW of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise in great disappointment that the President's budget makes no provision for deepening the Savannah harbor.

The Port of Savannah is one of the busiest in the country and is a major thoroughway for all sorts of essential goods coming in and out of the country. The State of Georgia has collaborated with the Federal Government to ensure that the port is deepened to accommodate the larger ships that will soon come through the expanded Panama Canal.

After decades of study, State and local stakeholders, congressional authorizers and appropriators, the Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the EPA have all endorsed this project as technically feasible, economically just-

tified, cost-effective, environmentally responsible, and in the national interest.

Vice President BIDEN recently visited Savannah and promised we would get this project done, "come hell or high water." Only OMB now stands in the way.

This project makes sense to almost everyone who has studied it. I share the frustration of my constituents that it continues to be stalled by bureaucracy, and I urge the President to lead, follow, or get out of the way of the effort to make this project happen.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

(Mr. WILLIAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILLIAMS. Madam Speaker, as a business owner of 42 years, I know a few things about job creation, and with more than 10 million Americans out of work, it is time to energize the energy business. We need to let the private sector drive our initiatives and promote the advancement of safe nuclear energy.

Nuclear power sustains 100,000 high-paying jobs, and 2,000 of those are in Texas facilities. In my district, the 25th District of Texas, there are hundreds of highly skilled workers at the Comanche Peak Nuclear Plant who are doing a great job and are doing great things to promote this clean, reliable, and inexpensive energy source, less expensive than coal or natural gas.

Texas plays a vital national and international role in the development of new technologies and is among the 10 States with the greatest nuclear power generation capacity in the whole country.

Nuclear energy should play a major role in our Nation's all-inclusive energy plan, and that is why our policies should support it. Nuclear creates good jobs, puts billions of dollars into our economy, and is a safe, clean, and reliable energy source we simply can't afford to ignore. Let's move forward. In God we trust.

JOHN BUHRMASTER'S ICBA NOMINATION

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate John Buhrmaster, who is president of 1st National Bank of Scotia in the capital region of New York, upon his nomination as chairman of the Independent Community Bankers of America, here in Washington, D.C.

The Independent Community Bankers of America represents almost 7,000 community banks across our great Nation, financial institutions that pro-

vide opportunity for our local small businesses and family farms to expand operations, develop surrounding economies, and hire locally.

John will provide steady leadership for an 11-person executive panel that draws expertise and know-how from across the Nation to support our small banks.

Again, I congratulate Mr. Buhrmaster on his appointment, and I look forward to working with him to boost small financial institutions and their important role in economic expansion on a community level.

□ 1215

CELEBRATING THE CENTENNIAL OF THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, this year marks the 100th anniversary of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914, which established the Cooperative Extension Service. Extension is a unique educational partnership among Federal, State, and local governments and the Nation's land-grant universities to extend research-based knowledge to the American public and private industry.

Over the years, Extension has connected individuals and families with the resources and expertise of our Nation's land-grant university system. In Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State University provides this educational network, working to help families make sound economic and nutritional choices, and help businesses increase efficiency and troubleshoot production and industry challenges.

Madam Speaker, today, the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences is on the Hill with agricultural businesses and industry advocates to share with us the importance of the Cooperative Extension Service.

As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Smith-Lever Act, I want to give congratulations and recognition to the outstanding Penn State Extension team, which is led by Interim Dean Barb Christ, and thank them for their important work to improve the lives and economic outcomes of countless families and businesses across the country.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. HAHN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HAHN. Madam Speaker, this month we join together as a nation to celebrate Women's History Month. We pay tribute to the generation of women whose courage, perseverance, and leadership have helped build our great Nation—from everyday working mothers

to women like civil rights icon Rosa Parks and labor activist Dolores Huerta. Our journey would not be possible without these great women and so many others who proudly took the seat at the table and at the front of the bus to chart the way for our Nation's progress.

But, while progress has been made in gender equality, we still have a lot more work to do when two-thirds of the minimum wage workers are women in this country and nearly one-third of families headed by a single female are living in poverty.

Instead of simply using Women's History Month to highlight the contributions of women leaders, let's take this opportunity to examine the current challenges facing our mothers, our sisters, and our daughters and ensure that these women have workplace protections such as equal pay, affordable child care, and medical leave.

Our success as a nation hinges on the success of women, because we know that when women succeed, America succeeds.

IN THE COMPANY OF WOMEN ANNUAL CELEBRATION

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I recognize the hardworking women leaders who, throughout the years, have made instrumental contributions to the district I so humbly represent and to our entire south Florida community, in fact.

On March 13, the Miami-Dade County Commission for Women, the Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade, and the Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department will be hosting the In the Company of Women Awards in celebration of Women's History Month. This annual celebration honors some of the exceptional women in our community in fields like the arts, communications, government, and athletics.

The 12 honorees this year will join the ranks of many outstanding women, including my late mother, Amanda Ros, who was honored during their third annual In the Company of Women celebration. As a fellow recipient of this award also, I am pleased that the great passion and dedication of these women leaders will be recognized, and it will inspire them to do even better work. Their many accomplishments are an example of what women everywhere can strive to attain.

Congratulations to each award winner.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST

(Mr. MORAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the President submitted a very modest but responsible budget request. It contains a host of very good ideas that should move this country forward and that this Congress ought to embrace. For example, on both sides of the aisle, we agree that we ought to eliminate the waste of resources. But the greatest waste of resources is the waste of human potential, and it starts in the earliest years.

So the President would extend access to prekindergarten education for all of our children, because he knows that that will enable us to have a far more prosperous economy and a more cohesive society, and he would pay for it with revenue from tobacco taxes—a great idea.

Similarly, he would take the \$4 billion in subsidies we give the oil and gas industry and invest it in new and cleaner alternative energy. He would take \$300 billion and invest it in surface infrastructure. I was just over in Uzbekistan this month. They have a faster, more modern rail system than we do, as does China.

Those are the kinds of good ideas that can move this country forward that this Congress should embrace.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CLYDE HOWELL OF RICHVALE, CALIFORNIA

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember and ask this House to adjourn in the memory of a dear friend from Richvale, California, Clyde Howell, who passed away on January 29. He was a longtime community leader.

Early in his life, he served in our United States Air Force in World War II. Clyde was born in Chesterfield, Idaho, later moving to Kingsburg in Central Valley, California.

What Clyde would want to be known most for, though, is not just saving our country in World War II, but also saving souls. He dedicated most of his life in his church and in his community to helping people know about God. That is what Clyde would want us to know.

Clyde was dearly loved by the community. He had a way to reach everybody, including youth. Even though he was a guy in his eighties, he had a way of talking to the young folks with that wry, crooked smile and the twinkle in his eye and a little tap on the shoulder. He had a way of connecting with people that was unique and certainly enjoyed and loved by his community.

He is survived by many, many family members, and we will all miss him in the community.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Mrs. BEATTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of March being Women's History Month. I rise today to say thank you for all the services for the women in the Third Congressional District and to the 102 women who serve in the 113th Congress in the House and the Senate.

I rise because we know when women succeed, America succeeds. I ask you to join me in making 2014 a year of action by having equal pay for equal work, providing affordable child care and access to health care.

This afternoon, I am honored to join Swin Cash, a two-time Olympic gold medalist, as we initiate the Let's Move! initiative in honor of the First Lady's Let's Move! So to America, I say let's do this thing in honor of women.

TO RESPOND TO RUSSIAN AGGRESSION, SELL U.S. NATURAL GAS TO UKRAINE

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, first, Vladimir Putin invaded Georgia. Now, the Russian bear is after Ukraine.

Ukraine is almost totally dependent on Russia for energy. Russian imperialism has proven that it is willing to use gas as a political and economic weapon to intimidate its neighbors. Twice it turned off the fuel switch in Ukraine, and I was even in Ukraine the last time Putin turned off the gas during the winter. It was cold.

Many other European nations are also at the mercy of the Kremlin when it comes to energy. We can help European countries who depend on imperialist Russia for energy by selling them natural gas from America. The demand is there, and the American supply is overwhelming. The only thing standing in the way are the bureaucrats in the Department of Energy.

That is why today I am introducing legislation that would require the Department of Energy to expedite and approve permits to Ukraine, all former Soviet nations, and all members of the European Union.

Let's eliminate Russia's natural gas monopoly. Let's respond to Russian aggression. Let's encourage the Europeans and former Soviet Republics to "Buy American."

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF WILLIAM GUSTE, JR.

(Mr. RICHMOND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a true statesman who was a guiding light for Louisiana for many years. I am talking about former Louisiana Attorney General William "Billy" Guste.

Attorney General Guste passed away last summer, but I wanted to take a moment to discuss his impact on my home State and discuss who he was as a man because he represents what was best about Louisiana.

You see, Mr. Speaker, he was a fighter. He fought for what was right. He fought for average Louisiana citizens. He fought tooth and nail for environmental justice, for racial fairness, for coastal restoration, for affordable housing, and for the homeless. During his 20 years of service as attorney general, he was always trying to fight for things that he believed would help ordinary, average people.

We should remember this lesson, Mr. Speaker, so that we remember that our fights should mean something. We should fight to improve the lives of our constituents, not to win political battles.

Growing up in Louisiana, I am a direct beneficiary of Billy Guste's courage to do what was truly right and truly compassionate. In that tradition, Mr. Speaker, I say we must honor Mr. Guste's legacy by doing the same.

HONORING SENATOR BOB DOLE AND HIS LEGACY

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a truly great Kansan, a Jayhawk, and an American hero who embodies every sense of the term "public servant."

Senator Bob Dole has spent his life as a servant to the American people: as a soldier wounded in combat during World War II; he served as a Member of this House, the Senate, and ran for President.

We in Kansas are so very proud of Senator Dole's legacy as our native son. Ten years ago, the University of Kansas, my alma mater, completed construction and opened to the public the Robert J. Dole Institute of Politics on KU's beautiful west campus.

The Dole Institute's official mission is to "promote political and civic participation as well as civil discourse in a bipartisan, balanced manner." This is precisely what Senator Dole stood for in his career, and it is what his legacy, the Dole Institute, promotes today.

We all congratulate the University of Kansas on the 10-year anniversary of the Dole Institute, and congratulate and continue our appreciation for Senator Dole and all the work he does for his native State of Kansas and for his country.

TENNESSEE NATIONAL GUARD

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, the President filed his budget yesterday, and what a budget it is. It is going to increase spending by \$791 billion—that is right, billion with a "b." You would think we had all this money to spend. And when you look a little deeper, you see that the priorities are all askew in this budget.

I want to point out just one to my colleagues, and it deals with the Tennessee National Guard and the way they are being adversely impacted by what this budget is bringing to bear, what the President would want to bring to bear.

The Tennessee Guard has flown the Kiowa Warrior helicopters all throughout Iraq and Afghanistan. They used them in our natural disasters like Hurricane Katrina and the Tennessee flood. And today, due to that budget that I have mentioned that the President filed yesterday, he would like to put them on the chopping block. All 30 Kiowa helicopters, 692 soldiers, and 113 workers are all on the chopping block.

Let's talk about priorities. It is our responsibility in the House to get this right.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3826, ELECTRICITY SECURITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4118, SUSPENDING THE INDIVIDUAL MANDATE PENALTY LAW EQUALS FAIRNESS ACT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 497 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 497

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3826) to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Com-

mittee Print 113-40. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 4118) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to delay the implementation of the penalty for failure to comply with the individual health insurance mandate. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit.

□ 1230

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 497.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 497 provides for consideration of two bills, one of which addresses the country's worsening health insurance situation due to the Affordable Care Act; the other addresses the Environmental

Protection Agency's attempts to cripple our economy with costly regulations which have dubious health benefits.

The rule before us today provides for 1 hour of debate for each bill, controlled by the primary committee of jurisdiction. The committee made in order every amendment submitted for consideration to H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act, including three amendments offered by Democrats and five amendments offered by Republicans. Finally, the minority is afforded the customary motion to recommit on each bill, allowing for yet another opportunity to amend the legislation. This is a straightforward rule for consideration of two very important bills.

H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act is a bipartisan response to the Environmental Protection Agency's wrongheaded approach to our energy future. It was carefully crafted by Democratic Senator JOE MANCHIN from West Virginia and the Republican chairman of the Energy and Power Subcommittee, ED WHITFIELD from Kentucky. The bill requires the Environmental Protection Agency to acknowledge within its greenhouse gas regulations that different sources of fuel—such as natural gas, such as coal—require different approaches to the regulatory sphere. Further, it prevents the Environmental Protection Agency from unilaterally imposing new regulations on existing power plants—those power plants that are already up and running, providing heat to our Nation, which is currently under the throes of a significant cold snap. This limitation exists until Congress has weighed in and passed a law specifying an effective date for the regulations to begin.

Finally, as is just good government, the bill requires strengthened reporting requirements from the Environmental Protection Agency.

One of the most frustrating parts of the EPA's new venture in regulating our existing energy infrastructure is that the EPA has actively blocked proper congressional oversight from receiving the science and calculations used in crafting these new costly regulations. That simply must end. If the Environmental Protection Agency is proposing new regulations because they believe they will truly make Americans healthier, let them share the data. Let them share the data with the United States Congress so it can be peer reviewed. Both the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Science Committee have continually been ignored when requesting such data. That is unacceptable. That must end. This legislation is a step toward bringing accountability to an agency that for too long has run roughshod over our economy.

The second bill contained in this rule, H.R. 4118, Suspending the Indi-

vidual Mandate Penalty Law Equals Fairness Act, addresses the disparity that President Obama and Secretary Sebelius have created between big businesses, which have been given a reprieve from having to comply with the mandates in the Affordable Care Act, and individual Americans, who have been given no such help by this President. Just this week, the press reported that the administration will delay yet another provision of the Affordable Care Act by allowing insurers to continue offering health plans that do not meet the Affordable Care Act's minimum coverage requirements. It is becoming so commonplace for this administration to waive or ignore provisions—by their own admission, this is their signature law, and they continue to waive provisions. The American people cannot seem to get an even break, and no one even seems to notice anymore. There is little doubt that this is exactly what the President is hoping for.

In the last 8 months, the President has delayed or modified over 22 provisions in his signature health care law. We are all familiar—we have all seen the headlines: delays in the pre-existing program; delays in the employer mandate; delays in the reporting requirement; changing the rules under which Congress has to buy insurance; delay, delay, delay, in his own law. The President has been quick to fix parts of the law that have political consequences for his allies and to protect his own talking points.

Yet, where is the President's protection for the American people?

Under the health care law, Americans who don't have health insurance and refuse to purchase a government-approved insurance policy will face an annual fine—an annual fine—that increases every year.

However, purchasing a government-approved plan also means you have to pay big premiums. You are forced to navigate a dysfunctional Web site. You may lose the doctor you like and place your personal information in jeopardy on an insecure Web site.

Today, Republicans are offering a legislative solution to help Americans get out from under the crushing weight of the so-called Affordable Care Act. H.R. 4118, also known as the Simple Fairness Act, will give hardworking Americans the same relief that the President has already given to big businesses across the country.

The administration has no problem delaying the employer mandate, not just once for 2014, but a second time for another full year for employers with 51–100 employees. Shouldn't that same relief be provided to rank-and-file Americans?

The President has refused to work with Congress to change the law so today, we are moving ahead and doing what is right for the American people.

The Simple Fairness Act will eliminate the penalty for 2014 for those individuals who chose not to purchase a government-approved health care plan.

It is clear that H.R. 4118 offers the only feasible lifeline to millions of Americans who are faced with purchasing an expensive health care plan that does not meet their needs. It is Congress' job to protect the American people. I urge my colleagues to pass this rule so Washington can stop making decisions about American's health care and instead individuals can be free to decide for themselves. I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule and "yes" on the underlying bills.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Texas for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is just not an ordinary day, this is a very important thing that is happening here, particularly for those of you who watch Congress a lot and want to know what it is we are about. This is a very special occasion here. As you can see by this poster on my right, we are celebrating a double golden anniversary. Today, the majority is holding the 50th vote to repeal or to otherwise undermine the Affordable Care Act under the 50th closed rule.

Now, to people who don't understand what a closed rule is, that means this rule is coming to the floor to debate these bills, and it will not allow them to be amended. That is not exactly an open Congress in a great democracy.

The majority has defied all expectations in reaching those milestones today, and as one often does when celebrating a colleague's 50th birthday or acknowledging a friend's 50th wedding anniversary, I want to take a moment to reflect on all that the majority has done to achieve this great honor.

Indeed, many Americans, including myself, were doubtful we would ever see the majority hold their 50th vote to repeal a good health care law that is already benefiting more than 9 million Americans because, why would Congress want to take health care away from people?

I remember back in 2012, when CBS News reported that the majority had spent 80 legislative hours—costing approximately \$48 million—to hold 33 votes to repeal the ACA. That is just the amount of money spent on floor time and committee time. They had held 33 votes at that time to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Given the incredible waste of time and taxpayer money, I was hopeful that the 33rd vote might be the last. But the majority has persevered, and continued to ignore the Nation's pressing priorities to make it to today's 50th vote.

Of course, getting this far wouldn't have been possible without the help of

a closed legislative process—a process that has allowed the majority to pursue a 50th vote without pause.

Last year, the majority presided over the most closed session in history, and repeatedly passed closed rules that shut out the voices of the nearly 200 duly elected Members of Congress who sit on my side of the aisle. Now today, the majority is presenting their 50th closed rule in order to hold a 50th go-nowhere vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

It is truly amazing that the majority has managed to hold the same vote 50 times while so many Americans and so much of the world cries out for help. As we know, there are global crises from Ukraine to Afghanistan. At home, there are millions still looking for work; millions more are working for a minimum wage upon which they cannot survive.

In fact, just this week the number of Americans whose emergency unemployment insurance has expired will surpass 2 million individuals, including almost 200,000 veterans. We could have averted the crisis weeks ago, and we have tried numerous times to do that, but the majority has repeatedly said “no.” Indeed, some of our colleagues have said it would be immoral to help out those who have no money coming into their home.

Meanwhile, the Center for American Progress released a report today that found that raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour would reduce Federal spending on food stamps by \$4.6 billion a year. Despite a similar estimate from the Congressional Budget Office declaring that raising the minimum wage would lift 900,000 people out of poverty, the majority refuses to join my Democratic colleagues and me to give America a raise.

Mr. Speaker, there are dozens, if not hundreds of bills that deserve our consideration, but today’s attempt to repeal a good health care law is not one of them. In fact, I have a list of 50 votes that we could be taking today instead of another vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act—everything from rebuilding our crumbling bridges and roads to creating American manufacturing jobs.

Of particular importance is a bill that I authored called the Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act that will address the immediate crisis of antibiotic-resistant diseases and help to save lives. Despite the urgent need to protect public health, we have been unable to even get a hearing on this important legislation.

The majority’s refusal to take action on any of these pressing issues is truly an achievement, not one to be proud of. I hope I have made it clear that we cannot celebrate that achievement.

Mr. Speaker, it is my sincere hope that the milestone the majority is reaching today will be the end of the

line for their tired political game. We have far too many issues that need our attention, and it is well past time that we got to work. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote “no” on today’s rule and the underlying legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

50 THINGS THE HOUSE COULD BE DOING INSTEAD OF UNDERMINING THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

1. Comprehensive Immigration Reform
2. Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2013 (H.R. 3546)
3. Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2013 (H.R. 1010)
4. Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act of 2013 (H.R. 1150)
5. Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 377)
6. Make It in America Manufacturing Act of 2013 (H.R. 375)
7. Advancing Innovative Manufacturing Act of 2013 (H.R. 1421)
8. American Manufacturing Competitiveness Act of 2013 (H.R. 2447)
9. Economy, Energy and Environment Initiative to Support Sustainable Manufacturing (E3) Act (H.R. 2873)
10. Multimodal Opportunities Via Enhanced Freight Act of 2013 or the “MOVE Freight Act of 2013” (H.R. 974)
11. American Textile Technology Innovation and Research for Exportation (ATTIRE) Act (H.R. 937)
12. Clean Energy Technology Manufacturing and Export Assistance Act of 2013 (H.R. 400)
13. Put America Back to Work Now Act (H.R. 535)
14. Build America Bonds Act of 2013 (H.R. 789)
15. The Customs Training Enhancement Act (H.R. 1322)
16. American Export Promotion Act of 2013 (H.R. 1420)
17. Currency Reform for Fair Trade Act (H.R. 1276)
18. Global Free Internet Act of 2013 (H.R. 889)
19. New Alternative Transportation to Give Americans Solutions (NAT GAS) Act (H.R. 1364)
20. Invest in American Jobs Act of 2013 (H.R. 949)
21. Enforcing Orders and Reducing Customs Evasion (ENFORCE) Act (H.R. 1440)
22. Export Promotion Reform Act (H.R. 1409)
23. Bridge to Jobs Act (H.R. 1419)
24. Reducing Waste and Increasing Efficiency in Trade Act (H.R. 3004)
25. Research and Development Tax Credit Extension Act of 2013 (H.R. 905)
26. The Bring Jobs Home Act of 2013 (H.R. 851)
27. Patriot Corporations of America Act of 2013 (H.R. 929)
28. Market Based Manufacturing Incentives Act of 2013 (H.R. 615)
29. Advanced Vehicle Technology Act of 2013 (H.R. 1027)
30. American Jobs Matter Act (H.R. 1332)
31. Small Business Start-up Savings Accounts (H.R. 1323)
32. Securing Energy Critical Elements and American Jobs Act of 2013 (H.R. 1022)
33. Resource Assessment of Rare Earths (RARE) Act of 2013 (H.R. 981)
34. Congressional Made in America Promise Act (H.R. 194)
35. Security in Energy and Manufacturing (SEAM) Act (H.R. 1424)
36. SelectUSA Authorization Act of 2013 (H.R. 1413)

37. Partnering with American Manufacturers for Efficiency and Competitiveness Act (H.R. 1418)

38. The Innovative Technologies Investment Incentives Act (H.R. 1415)

39. Cooperative Research and Development Fund Authorization Act of 2013 (H.R. 1711)

40. Advanced Composites Development Act of 2013 (H.R. 2034)

41. All-American Flag Act (H.R. 2355)

42. GREEN Act of 2013 (H.R. 2863)

43. Workforce Investment Act (H.R. 798)

44. American Manufacturing Efficiency & Retraining Investment Collaboration (AMERICA Works) Act (H.R. 497)

45. Strengthening Employment Clusters to Organize Regional Success (SECTORS) Act (H.R. 919)

46. Job Skills for America’s Students Act of 2013 (H.R. 1271)

47. National Fab Lab Network Act (H.R. 1289)

48. Workforce Development Tax Credit Act of 2013 (H.R. 1324)

49. Job Opportunities Between our Shores (JOBS) Act (H.R. 1436)

50. Broadband Adoption Act of 2013 (H.R. 1685)

□ 1245

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes for a response.

Mr. Speaker, there have been 36 changes to the Affordable Care Act since it was signed into law. It has been a little over 3 years since the bill was signed into law. Thirty-six changes means one a month.

How does the breakdown of those 36 changes occur? According to the Galen Institute published this morning, 15 times, Congress has passed and the President signed legislation changing the Affordable Care Act. Twice, the Supreme Court modified the Affordable Care Act, but 19 times, President Obama made a change unilaterally.

We are here today debating a delay on the penalties under the individual mandate, but it might interest the Congress to know that the President himself delayed the individual mandate. The administration changed the deadline for the individual mandate by declaring that customers who had purchased insurance by March 31 will avoid the tax penalty.

Previously and by law, they were required to purchase that insurance by Valentine’s Day, February 14, so there has already been a 6-week delay. We are simply trying to place in code what the President is doing unilaterally.

You want to talk about a closed process where people don’t have an opportunity to participate? That is governing by executive fiat. That is what we are trying to stop today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) will control the time for the minority.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Well, I want to come to the floor to wish the Republicans a happy anniversary. I brought a gold ring. This is the 50th repeal of ObamaCare. I want to wish my colleagues a happy 50th anniversary for the appeal of ObamaCare.

Like any marriage that lasts 50 years, it takes a lot of work. The American people have shown that they want this marriage to last. They have shown that by reelecting Barack Obama as President. They have shown that by electing a Senate that won't even consider a repeal of the Affordable Care Act; but also like any marriage, it takes work along the way to improve it, to work at it, to make changes to it.

Democrats stand ready to work with President Obama, to fine-tune this wonderful marriage celebrating the 50th anniversary of its repeal here today, to make sure it endures for another 50 repeal votes by the House Republicans here in the coming months. We are ready to make the changes that we need to, to ensure that the Affordable Care Act works for every American.

There are issues in the implementation in my district. Two of my counties, Summit and Eagle County, have among the highest insurance rates in the exchange in the entire country, these two counties. That is due to a problem that the State had in implementing it, but we would love to work with Republicans on a Federal fix for Eagle and Summit County, and the other Colorado counties that are affected by it.

I would be proud to work with my colleagues to replace the revenue and the medical and device tax with other sources of revenue to ensure that the Affordable Care Act works.

There are a lot of great ideas, and perhaps it is time that, rather than continue to celebrate anniversaries of repeal, that we enter couples counseling sessions today, and we work together in trying to find common ground.

Rather than talking about repealing ObamaCare and going back to a system we know wasn't working, in which 40 million Americans didn't have health care insurance, in which Americans and my constituents and yours were frustrated that, year after year, rates were going up 10, 15, 20 percent—rather than going back to a formula we know didn't work, let's enter couples counseling and work together to make health care work in our country, to talk about a path forward, with the President, with Democrats, with Republicans, with Independents, to ensure that these cost increases that have been epidemic the last couple of decades come to an end, that we can extend coverage to more American families, that we can ensure that the quality of health care that is our Nation's pride can continue to be available to Americans, regardless of their economic background.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Again, Mr. Speaker, I would just emphasize there have been changes by administrative action, some 19 that President Obama has done all on his own, without any influence from Congress.

Now, if the gentleman were truly interested about an offset for repealing the medical device tax, perhaps he might look more favorably on the bill before us today, H.R. 4118. The Congressional Budget Office scores a significant savings by passing H.R. 4118.

Perhaps there are some other things that could be done with that money as well; but nevertheless, the President has, on his own, delayed employee reporting, delayed subsidies through the Federal exchange. He closed the high-risk pool.

He has doubled the allowable deductibles. He has required self-attestation and eliminated the reporting requirements under the law that he signed in March of 2010.

He last fall said: Okay. I give up. Insurance can offer plans that we just told you were illegal, that they were crummy insurance, and now, we are going to allow them to be offered again.

All of these were actions taken by the executive under a closed process. With no input or oversight by the people's House—by the United States House of Representatives.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Isn't that wonderful? Isn't this great that the President has made 19 changes to improve the Affordable Care Act to make it work?

You know what? That is what a marriage takes. That is what has helped the Affordable Care Act withstand the 50th vote to repeal it here in the House. Had the President been inflexible—just like in a marriage, if one partner is inflexible, it would have been a lot harder to survive 50 votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Here, we are celebrating the golden anniversary of repeal votes, 50 votes.

But thanks to the President's flexibility with 19 changes, hopefully, there are more along the way to ensure that all Americans have access to affordable health care.

That no American faces pricing discrimination or is kept out of a plan because of a preexisting condition;

That people can move between employers;

That somebody can leave a large company to be an entrepreneur and have a startup without worrying about losing their health care if they have a preexisting condition;

Making sure that young Americans, as they are trying to find a job or working part time, can stay on their parents' plan;

Making sure that Americans have a real choice in the exchanges that choose between multiple providers.

These were some of the elements that I think the American people want to keep and one of the reasons that this health care act has not only withstood 50 votes to repeal and is celebrating its golden anniversary, but will survive the next 50 votes if the House Republicans choose to have them to try to appeal the Affordable Care Act.

The American people want to see changes to make it work. We applaud the President for the 19 changes he made. We encourage him to use the discretion that we rightly give him under the Affordable Care Act to help make it work.

We encourage the discretion at the State level that many Governors, like the Governor of Kentucky and others, have shown to make the Affordable Care Act work in their State.

We applaud the fact that there are over \$200 billion of deficit reduction in the Affordable Care Act. If we can find additional savings and replace lost revenue, we are certainly open to that discussion. So I rise in celebration of having withstood 50 repeal votes. We are ready for the next 50.

We use these opportunities to highlight the American people on the benefits of the Affordable Care Act and to say that we are ready to have a real discussion with Republicans, to exert our legislative privilege, to make changes, and in the absence of that, we applaud the President in using the abilities that we give him under the act to help make sure the Affordable Care Act truly makes health care more affordable for American families.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, here is the Affordable Care Act. The President says it is the law of the land. How does it describe the effective date for the individual mandate? Under section 1501, subparagraph D, effective date:

The amendments made by this section shall apply to the taxable years ending after December 31, 2013.

Pretty unambiguous, pretty easy to understand. It doesn't seem to have a lot of flexibility or wiggle room written into it.

How does the language read that describes the effective date for the employer mandate? Well, that reads under section 1513, subparagraph D, effective date:

The amendments made by this section shall apply to the months beginning after December 31, 2013.

It doesn't sound as if there is a lot of flexibility; yet the President, on his own, found the flexibility only within the executive branch to say that effective date is no longer valid.

We are simply saying for Mr. and Mrs. American—for the average American, we should be able to delay the effective date of the penalty because this law has been a disaster from start to finish. Stories about the Web site are now legion.

We should give the same relief to the average American that the President gave to his friends in Big Business.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill—this 50th anniversary—golden anniversary of ObamaCare repeals here in the House—50th vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act, gutting mental parity, health parity, gutting protection for Americans with pre-existing conditions, went through no hearings, no markups, no amendments that we are allowed to discuss or debate or vote on here on the floor of the House. This is not the process for improving the quality of health care for American families.

The American people have made it clear they want this marriage to last. They want to make it work. They know it requires hard work. The President has made 19 wonderful changes to the law.

I am not a constitutional lawyer. If there are folks on the other side who want to sue the President, who think that he did something contrary to the law we passed, they are certainly welcome to sue. I believe that the President was given broad discretion under the law to make it work.

I hope that this legislative body takes up the gauntlet and makes the changes we need to make the Affordable Care Act work. Any marriage takes effort. Here, we have a marriage between the Affordable Care Act and the American people, and 50 votes to repeal it are not going to break up that marriage.

It is a stronger marriage than that because the American people have voted on it. They didn't elect a Presidential candidate who wanted to repeal the Affordable Care Act. They didn't elect a Senate that wanted to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

So here we are, and we are welcome to have another 50, 100, 200 votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act; or we can get to work on an open process, letting Members of both parties offer floor amendments. This rule allows no floor amendments.

Having a markup in committee, having hearings in committee about how we can deliver better health care value to the American people will make sure affordable care is available to every American family and affordable for small businesses, to make America more competitive.

But instead of going through an open process, encouraging ideas from Republicans and Democrats to make health care work in our country, we are presented with the 50th vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

In the absence of meaningful improvements and legislation, the President is using the authority that we gave him under this bill to make the changes that he needs to make, to

make sure the Affordable Care Act works.

This body can reassert itself and take back its prerogative whenever we want by passing commonsense bipartisan bills to improve the Affordable Care Act, but it truly is hypocritical to criticize the President out of one side of one's mouth for making changes that actually improve the law and make it work better, when here in this body we are refusing to make some of those same commonsense changes.

I hope that if people think that there was authority of the law that exceeded, they are welcome to work that out in the courts. That is what the court is for, to settle the differences of separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches; but I hope, more important, because the American people care about affordable health care, that this body is willing to take up some of those improvements that we can make, to make sure that this marriage can endure for the next 50 votes as well.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

It sounds as if the gentleman is going to vote for the bill under consideration today because, after all, it is an opportunity to give long-suffering Americans an opportunity to be out of the penalty part of the Affordable Care Act.

Let's be honest, I mean this thing is one of the most coercive pieces of legislation that has ever been passed by the United States Congress. I might just remind people here in the House of Representatives that this law, which was H.R. 3590, was actually not subject to any hearings or any markups in the United States House of Representatives. Maybe it was when H.R. 3590 first passed the House when it was a housing bill in July of 2009.

But remember, what became the health care bill was a housing bill that was amended. The amendment read over in the Senate: "strike all after the enacting clause and insert."

And what was inserted was language written by special interests over in the Cloakroom of the Senate Finance Committee, was passed by the Senate on Christmas Eve, and then thrown back over here to the House.

□ 1300

Since the House had passed H.R. 3590 as a housing bill, not as a tax bill like the Affordable Care Act was but as a housing bill, the question before the House then became: Will the House now concur in the amendments to H.R. 3590? It took 3 months for the Speaker to cobble together the 217 votes that she needed to pass this thing, but H.R. 3590 was never heard as a health care bill in my committee, the Committee on Energy and Commerce. It was never heard in the Ways and Means Com-

mittee. It was never heard in the Education and Labor Committee. That was H.R. 3200. H.R. 3200 is long gone—no one has seen it for years—but H.R. 3590 is what is embodied in the President's health care law.

So, really, to say that everyone had a chance to participate in this and to debate it, that is, in fact, hypocritical. What is really hypocritical is that H.R. 3590, when it came back to the House, was presented to this House under a closed rule. That is a fact, and that is a fact that should be recognized by the minority. This bill was the product of a closed rule.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, make no bones about it. The individual mandate is a linchpin of RomneyCare—or whatever you would like to call it—modeled on, in fact, the insurance reforms in Massachusetts. This component is critical to ensuring that people with preexisting conditions are not discriminated against in pricing in the exchange. It is important to make sure that we have a younger, healthier risk pool in the exchange to bring down rates for all Americans.

If this bill were to become law, which it won't—it is simply the 50th repeal of the Affordable Care Act, the golden anniversary of repeals—the entire affordable care structure, including the pricing in the exchange, would go up for American families, and it would devastate health care reform. This is not a bill that has support from the President. It is not a bill that has support from the proponents of the Affordable Care Act. It doesn't make the Affordable Care Act better. It is, in fact, the 50th repeal of the Affordable Care Act.

I was on the Education and Labor Committee, as it was called at the time, two Congresses ago. My colleague from Texas talked about the process under which the health care bill was written. We did have a substantial markup. There were other committees: the Ways and Means Committee and the Energy and Commerce Committee. My committee was one of the committees that it was reported out of, and there were other committees it was not reported out of.

This was an amazing process of writing this bill over the period of a year. In fact, in our Democratic Caucus meetings, we even, essentially, functioned as a committee of our entire Caucus, where we went through the bill page after page, and we made suggestions. There were a number of bills that were written by Republicans that were included in the Affordable Care Act, and there were amendments that I was involved with that were included. Like in any legislative process, some that I advocated for were not included in the final bill.

Unlike this bill, which had no hearing and no markup in any form—because the gentleman from Texas is

right. This bill number came from the Senate, and that is the normal process around here. We sometimes have bills from the Senate we approve, and sometimes they originate here and go over there. So this bill number and this title came from something else, and they approved it in reconciliation.

Yet the Affordable Care Act—the bill that led to it—went through my committee. I remember being up until, really, I think, 7 o'clock in the morning. We went straight through the night, under Chairman MILLER, offering a number of amendments, some passing and some not. Sometimes I was on the prevailing side, sometimes not. We had a lively discussion over amendments from Democrats and Republicans, some of which made it into the final bill and some of which didn't. That is the legislative process.

To somehow compare that to the legislative process around this bill is like night and day. So, although the gentleman from Texas is technically correct—the bill number was a reconciliation from the Senate that the House concurred in and sent back with some changes—the work that went into forming that bill had countless hearings and had several markups, including one that I participated in and offered amendments in and voted for and against amendments from both sides of the aisle in.

We are where we are. We would love to see the Affordable Care Act go through a process now. Again, why not allow amendments under this rule? Why not allow Republicans or Democrats, who have ideas to make health care more affordable, to offer them now to the floor? If they would pass, then they would move on to the Senate.

Instead, we have a narrowly focused Affordable Care Act repeal that makes health care less affordable for American families by leading to a risk pool in the exchanges that is less healthy and older. We need to ensure that young people are part of the exchanges. Young people want to have insurance, and they want to have affordable insurance. Let's make sure they have a way to do that in the exchanges. This bill would repeal that.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, seeing no other speakers on my side, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. To the gentleman from Texas, I say it is possible I will have one more speaker. If I see her arrive, I will yield to her. Otherwise, I am prepared to close, and I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, this week, the number of people who lost their unemployment benefits as a result of Congress' failing to extend the Emergency Unemployment Compensation program has climbed to 2 million Americans. If we

defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up legislation that would restore unemployment insurance and provide much-needed relief to countless families across the country as well as to stimulate our economy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I do urge my colleagues to vote "no" and defeat the previous question and to vote "no" on the underlying bills.

We could be doing a lot of important work here in the House rather than to have, I think, what both sides would agree is a purely symbolic 50th vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act, unless there are, perhaps, some who think "50" is the magic number. I think anybody who has a degree of political sense realizes, if the other 49 didn't go anywhere, this one is very unlikely to go anywhere. Rather than proceed with something that isn't going anywhere and that gives the Democrats once again the opportunity to talk about how important it is to make health care more affordable—and the American people overwhelmingly want health care to be fixed, not repealed—we could be doing a lot of important things that the American people actually want this body to do.

Let's talk about immigration reform.

There is a bill that passed the Senate with Democrats and Republicans—68 votes. It is rare for more than two-thirds of the United States Senate to come together around a commonsense solution. How did they do that? They did that because the American people want this problem solved. They are sick and tired—and they should be; I am, too—of having over 10 million people illegally in this country. In my district, there are tens of thousands of people who are there illegally. We don't even know because there is no way to even count. President Obama has deported over 2 million people at an enormous cost to taxpayers—\$10,000 to \$20,000 per deportation. That is how much it costs taxpayers—you and me, Mr. Speaker.

Guess what? There is a bipartisan solution supported by the law enforcement community, supported by the business community, supported by the technology industry, supported by both the agriculture industry—farmers and farmworkers—and supported by business and labor, supported by the faith-based community, supported by over 75 percent of Americans across the political spectrum, supported by a majority of Republicans and a majority of Democrats and a majority of Independents. That bill is ready.

There is a bipartisan House version, H.R. 15. Let's bring that forward under a rule. That bill would have the votes to pass tomorrow if we brought it forward. We could send it to the President. We could reduce the deficit by over \$100 billion, increase our GDP, create hundreds of thousands of jobs for American citizens, as the bill has been scored. Finally, we could secure our borders so we could have control over who comes and goes, both people and illicit products. That is what the American people want. Let's get that bill through rather than celebrate yet another empty anniversary for the repeal of the Affordable Care Act.

I strongly suggest that my colleagues start bringing forward bills that the American people want to see pass. If we can bring forward immigration reform with bipartisan support and get it out of this body and to the President's desk, the American people will start to improve their opinions of this institution. When I see the polls and they say, oh, 15 percent approval is what Congress has—or 12 percent—it is really no wonder because it is a little bit like a broken record around here. They are, frankly, sick and tired of our every week, it seems like, repealing the Affordable Care Act and making health care more expensive for the American people. They don't want to see us talking about golden rings and 50th anniversaries of votes. They want to see us solving problems.

We offer the Speaker and the majority leader the opportunity to do that. We welcome the Republican immigration principles. There are ample grounds to work on a bipartisan solution based on H.R. 15 or on another bill that encapsulates those principles that the Republicans laid down on which we can find common ground so as to solve a very real problem, to grow our economy, to reduce our deficit, to secure our borders, and to ensure that America remains competitive in the global economy. I challenge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to reach a solution on that issue and to really move forward with regard to making health care more affordable.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this closed process—this closed rule—that allows no Republican ideas and no Democratic ideas to come forward, to enter this discussion. I urge my colleagues to defeat the previous question so the Democrats can bring forward the unemployment insurance bill, and I also encourage my colleagues to vote "no" on the underlying bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Talk about doing the will of the people. There was an election in Texas yesterday. There was a question on the ballot—to support or oppose the President's takeover of the health care industry in this country. Ninety-two percent of the people were recorded as

being in opposition to the President's takeover of health care. So, in fact, in the district I represent, that is a significant amount.

Today's rule provides for the consideration of two bills to provide relief for hardworking Americans who are faced with the administration's expensive and restrictive mandates both in the health insurance and energy sectors.

I want to thank my colleagues LYNN JENKINS from Kansas, the Republican Conference vice chair, as well as the chairman of the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Power, Mr. WHITFIELD from Kentucky, for their thoughtful pieces of legislation.

I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule and "yes" on the underlying bills.

The material previously referred to by Mr. POLIS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 497 OFFERED BY
MR. POLIS OF COLORADO

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 3. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3546) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided among and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means and the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 4. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3546.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To

defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on ordering the

previous question will be followed by 5-minute votes on adoption of House Resolution 497, if ordered; and the motion to suspend the rules on H.R. 938.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 221, nays 184, not voting 25, as follows:

[Roll No. 93]

YEAS—221

Aderholt	Graves (GA)	Pearce
Amash	Graves (MO)	Perry
Amodei	Griffin (AR)	Petri
Bachmann	Griffith (VA)	Pittenger
Bachus	Grimm	Pitts
Barletta	Guthrie	Poe (TX)
Barr	Hall	Pompeo
Barton	Hanna	Posey
Benishek	Harper	Price (GA)
Bentivolio	Harris	Reed
Bilirakis	Hartzler	Reichert
Bishop (UT)	Hastings (WA)	Renacci
Black	Heck (NV)	Ribble
Blackburn	Hensarling	Rice (SC)
Boustany	Herrera Beutler	Rigell
Brady (TX)	Holding	Roby
Bridenstine	Hudson	Roe (TN)
Brooks (AL)	Huelskamp	Rogers (AL)
Brooks (IN)	Huizenga (MI)	Rogers (KY)
Broun (GA)	Hultgren	Rogers (MI)
Buchanan	Hunter	Rohrabacher
Bucshon	Hurt	Rokita
Burgess	Issa	Rooney
Byrne	Jenkins	Ros-Lehtinen
Calvert	Johnson (OH)	Roskam
Camp	Jordan	Ross
Campbell	Joyce	Rothfus
Cantor	Kelly (PA)	Royce
Capito	King (IA)	Runyan
Carter	King (NY)	Ryan (WI)
Cassidy	Kingston	Salmon
Chabot	Kinzinger (IL)	Sanford
Coble	Kline	Scalise
Coffman	Labrador	Schock
Cole	LaMalfa	Schweikert
Collins (GA)	Lamborn	Scott, Austin
Collins (NY)	Lance	Sensenbrenner
Conaway	Lankford	Sessions
Cook	Latham	Shimkus
Cotton	Latta	Shuster
Cramer	LoBiondo	Simpson
Crenshaw	Long	Smith (MO)
Culberson	Lucas	Smith (NE)
Daines	Luetkemeyer	Smith (TX)
Davis, Rodney	Lummis	Stewart
Denham	Marchant	Stivers
Dent	Marino	Stockman
DeSantis	Massie	Stutzman
DesJarlais	McAllister	Terry
Diaz-Balart	McCarthy (CA)	Thompson (PA)
Duncan (SC)	McCaul	Thornberry
Duncan (TN)	McClintock	Tiberti
Ellmers	McHenry	Tipton
Farenthold	McKeon	Turner
Fincher	McKinley	Upton
Fitzpatrick	McMorris	Valadao
Fleischmann	Rodgers	Walberg
Fleming	Meadows	Walden
Flores	Meehan	Walorski
Forbes	Mica	Weber (TX)
Fortenberry	Miller (FL)	Webster (FL)
Fox	Miller (MI)	Wenstrup
Franks (AZ)	Miller, Gary	Westmoreland
Frelinghuysen	Mullin	Whitfield
Gardner	Mulvaney	Williams
Garrett	Murphy (PA)	Wilson (SC)
Gerlach	Neugebauer	Wittman
Gibbs	Noem	Wolf
Gibson	Nugent	Womack
Gingrey (GA)	Nunes	Woodall
Gohmert	Nunnelee	Yoder
Goodlatte	Olson	Yoho
Gowdy	Palazzo	Young (AK)
Granger	Paulsen	Young (IN)

NAYS—184

Barber	Bishop (NY)	Bustos
Barrow (GA)	Blumenauer	Butterfield
Bass	Bonamici	Capps
Beatty	Brady (PA)	Capuano
Becerra	Braley (IA)	Cárdenas
Bera (CA)	Brown (FL)	Carney
Bishop (GA)	Brownley (CA)	Carson (IN)

Cartwright Israel
 Castor (FL) Jackson Lee
 Castro (TX) Jeffries
 Chu Johnson (GA)
 Cicilline Kaptur
 Clark (MA) Keating
 Clarke (NY) Kelly (IL)
 Clay Kennedy
 Cleaver Kildee
 Clyburn Kilmer
 Cohen Kind
 Connolly Kirkpatrick
 Conyers Kuster
 Cooper Langevin
 Costa Larsen (WA)
 Crowley Lee (CA)
 Cuellar Levin
 Cummings Lewis
 Davis (CA) Lipinski
 Davis, Danny Loeb sack
 DeFazio Lofgren
 Delaney Lowenthal
 DelBene Lowey
 Deutch Lujan Grisham
 Dingell (NM)
 Doggett Luján, Ben Ray
 Doyle (NM)
 Duckworth Lynch
 Edwards Maffei
 Ellison Maloney,
 Engel Carolyn
 Enyart Maloney, Sean
 Eshoo Matheson
 Farr Matsui
 Fattah McCollum
 Foster McGovern
 Frankel (FL) McIntyre
 Fudge McNerney
 Gabbard Meeks
 Gallego Meng
 Garamendi Michaud
 Garcia Miller, George
 Grayson Moore
 Green, Al Moran
 Grijalva Murphy (FL)
 Gutiérrez Nadler
 Hahn Napolitano
 Hanabusa Neal
 Hastings (FL) Nolan
 Heck (WA) O'Rourke
 Higgins Owens
 Holt Pallone
 Honda Pascrell
 Horsford Payne
 Hoyer Pelosi
 Huffman Perlmutter

NOT VOTING—25

Chaffetz Himes
 Courtney Hinojosa
 Crawford Johnson, E. B.
 DeGette Johnson, Sam
 DeLauro Jones
 Duffy Larson (CT)
 Esty McCarthy (NY)
 Gosar McDermott
 Green, Gene Messer

□ 1337

Mr. NADLER, Mrs. BEATTY, and Mr. GARCIA changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mr. WEBER of Texas changed his vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 93 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

Stated against:

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for the vote on the Previous Question, rollcall vote 93, I would have voted “no.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Peters (CA)
 Peters (MI)
 Peterson
 Pingree (ME)
 Pocan
 Polis
 Price (NC)
 Quigley
 Rahall
 Rangel
 Richmond
 Roybal-Allard
 Ruiz
 Ruppertsberger
 Rush
 Ryan (OH)
 Sánchez, Linda
 T.
 Sanchez, Loretta
 Sarbanes
 Schakowsky
 Schiff
 Schrader
 Schwartz
 Scott (VA)
 Scott, David
 Serrano
 Sewell (AL)
 Sherman
 Sinema
 Sires
 Slaughter
 Smith (WA)
 Speier
 Swalwell (CA)
 Takano
 Thompson (CA)
 Thompson (MS)
 Tierney
 Titus
 Tonko
 Tsongas
 Van Hollen
 Vargas
 Veasey
 Vela
 Velázquez
 Visclosky
 Walz
 Wasserman
 Schultz
 Waters
 Waxman
 Welch
 Wilson (FL)
 Yarmuth

RECORDED VOTE
 Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 228, noes 182, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 94]

AYES—228

Aderholt Griffin (AR)
 Amash Griffith (VA)
 Amodei Grimm
 Bachmann Guthrie
 Bachus Hall
 Barber Hanna
 Barletta Harper
 Barr Harris
 Barton Hartzer
 Benishek Hastings (WA)
 Bentivolio Heck (NV)
 Bilirakis Hensarling
 Bishop (UT) Herrera Beutler
 Black Holding
 Blackburn Hudson
 Boustany Huelskamp
 Brady (TX) Huizenga (MI)
 Bridenstine Hultgren
 Brooks (AL) Hunter
 Brooks (IN) Hurt
 Broun (GA) Issa
 Buchanan Jenkins
 Bucshon Johnson (OH)
 Jordan
 Joyce
 Kelly (PA)
 King (IA)
 King (NY)
 Kingston
 Kinzinger (IL)
 Kline
 Labrador
 LaMalfa
 Coble
 Lamborn
 Coffman
 Cole
 Collins (GA)
 Collins (NY)
 Conaway
 Cook
 Cotton
 Cramer
 Crenshaw
 Culberson
 Daines
 Davis, Rodney
 Denham
 Dent
 DeSantis
 DesJarlais
 Diaz-Balart
 Duncan (SC)
 Duncan (TN)
 Ellmers
 Enyart
 Farenthold
 Fincher
 Fitzpatrick
 Fleischmann
 Fleming
 Flores
 Forbes
 Fortenberry
 Foxx
 Franks (AZ)
 Frelinghuysen
 Gardner
 Garrett
 Gerlach
 Gibbs
 Gibson
 Gingrey (GA)
 Goodlatte
 Gowdy
 Granger
 Graves (GA)
 Graves (MO)

NOES—182

Barrow (GA)
 Bass

Beatty
 Becerra

Petri
 Pittenger
 Pitts
 Poe (TX)
 Pompeo
 Posey
 Price (GA)
 Reed
 Reichert
 Renacci
 Ribble
 Rice (SC)
 Rigell
 Roby
 Roe (TN)
 Rogers (AL)
 Rogers (KY)
 Rogers (MI)
 Rohrabacher
 Rokita
 Rooney
 Ros-Lehtinen
 Roskam
 Ross
 Rothfus
 Royce
 Runyan
 Ryan (WI)
 Salmon
 Sanford
 Scalise
 Schock
 Schweikert
 Scott, Austin
 Sensenbrenner
 Sessions
 Shimkus
 Shuster
 Simpson
 Smith (MO)
 Smith (NE)
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (TX)
 Southerland
 Stewart
 Stivers
 Stockman
 Stutzman
 Terry
 Thompson (PA)
 Thornberry
 Tiberi
 Tipton
 Turner
 Upton
 Valadao
 Wagner
 Walberg
 Walden
 Walorski
 Weber (TX)
 Webster (FL)
 Wenstrup
 Westmoreland
 Whitfield
 Williams
 Wilson (SC)
 Wittman
 Wolf
 Womack
 Woodall
 Yoder
 Yoho
 Young (AK)
 Young (IN)

Bishop (NY)
 Blumenauer
 Bonamici
 Brady (PA)
 Braley (IA)
 Brown (FL)
 Brownley (CA)
 Bustos
 Butterfield
 Capps
 Capuano
 Cárdenas
 Carney
 Carson (IN)
 Cartwright
 Castor (FL)
 Castro (TX)
 Chu
 Cicilline
 Clark (MA)
 Clarke (NY)
 Clay
 Cleaver
 Clyburn
 Cohen
 Connolly
 Conyers
 Cooper
 Costa
 Crowley
 Cuellar
 Cummings
 Davis (CA)
 Davis, Danny
 DeFazio
 Delaney
 DelBene
 Deutch
 Dingell
 Doggett
 Doyle
 Duckworth
 Edwards
 Ellison
 Engel
 Eshoo
 Farr
 Fattah
 Foster
 Frankel (FL)
 Fudge
 Gabbard
 Gallego
 Garamendi
 Garcia
 Grayson
 Green, Al
 Grijalva
 Gutiérrez
 Hahn
 Hanabusa
 Hastings (FL)
 Heck (WA)
 Higgins
 Holt
 Honda
 Horsford
 Hoyer
 Huffman
 Israel
 Jackson Lee
 Jeffries
 Johnson (GA)
 Kaptur
 Keating
 Kelly (IL)
 Kennedy
 Kildee
 Kilmer
 Kind
 Kirkpatrick
 Kuster
 Langevin
 Larsen (WA)
 Lee (CA)
 Levin
 Lewis
 Lipinski
 Loeb sack
 Lofgren
 Lowenthal
 Lowey
 Lujan Grisham
 (NM)
 Luján, Ben Ray
 (NM)
 Lynch
 Maffei
 Maloney,
 Carolyn
 Maloney, Sean
 Matheson
 Matsui
 McCollum
 McGovern
 McDermott
 McGovern
 McNerney
 Meeks
 Meng
 Michaud
 Miller, George
 Moore
 Moran
 Murphy (FL)
 Nadler
 Napolitano
 Neal
 Nolan
 O'Rourke
 Owens
 Pallone
 Pascrell
 Payne
 Pelosi
 Perlmutter
 Petri
 Pittenger
 Pitts
 Poe (TX)
 Pompeo
 Posey
 Price (GA)
 Reed
 Reichert
 Renacci
 Ribble
 Rice (SC)
 Rigell
 Roby
 Roe (TN)
 Rogers (AL)
 Rogers (KY)
 Rogers (MI)
 Rohrabacher
 Rokita
 Rooney
 Ros-Lehtinen
 Roskam
 Ross
 Rothfus
 Royce
 Runyan
 Ryan (WI)
 Salmon
 Sanford
 Scalise
 Schock
 Schweikert
 Scott, Austin
 Sensenbrenner
 Sessions
 Shimkus
 Shuster
 Simpson
 Smith (MO)
 Smith (NE)
 Smith (NJ)
 Smith (TX)
 Southerland
 Stewart
 Stivers
 Stockman
 Stutzman
 Terry
 Thompson (PA)
 Thornberry
 Tiberi
 Tipton
 Turner
 Upton
 Valadao
 Wagner
 Walberg
 Walden
 Walorski
 Weber (TX)
 Webster (FL)
 Wenstrup
 Westmoreland
 Whitfield
 Williams
 Wilson (SC)
 Wittman
 Wolf
 Womack
 Woodall
 Yoder
 Yoho
 Young (AK)
 Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—20

Chaffetz Gohmert
 Courtney Gosar
 Crawford Green, Gene
 DeGette Himes
 DeLauro Hinojosa
 Duffy Johnson, E. B.
 Esty Johnson, Sam
 Jones
 Larson (CT)
 McCarthy (NY)
 Negrete McLeod
 Pastor (AZ)
 Schneider

□ 1344

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for the vote Agreeing to the Resolution, rollcall vote 94, I would have voted “no.”

UNITED STATES-ISRAEL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 938) to strengthen the strategic alliance between the United

States and Israel, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 410, nays 1, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 95]

YEAS—410

Aderholt	Cramer	Harper
Amash	Crenshaw	Harris
Amodei	Crowley	Hartzler
Bachmann	Cuellar	Hastings (FL)
Bachus	Culberson	Heck (NV)
Barber	Cummings	Heck (WA)
Barletta	Daines	Hensarling
Barr	Davis (CA)	Herrera Beutler
Barrow (GA)	Davis, Danny	Higgins
Barton	Davis, Rodney	Holding
Bass	DeFazio	Holt
Beatty	DeGette	Honda
Becerra	Delaney	Horsford
Benishek	DelBene	Hoyer
Bentivolio	Denham	Hudson
Bera (CA)	Dent	Huelskamp
Bilirakis	DeSantis	Huffman
Bishop (GA)	DesJarlais	Huizenga (MI)
Bishop (NY)	Deutch	Hultgren
Bishop (UT)	Diaz-Balart	Hunter
Black	Dingell	Hurt
Blackburn	Doggett	Israel
Blumenauer	Doyle	Issa
Bonamici	Duckworth	Jackson Lee
Boustany	Duncan (SC)	Jeffries
Brady (PA)	Duncan (TN)	Jenkins
Brady (TX)	Edwards	Johnson (GA)
Braley (IA)	Ellison	Johnson (OH)
Bridenstine	Ellmers	Jordan
Brooks (AL)	Engel	Joyce
Brooks (IN)	Enyart	Kaptur
Broun (GA)	Eshoo	Keating
Brown (FL)	Farenthold	Kelly (IL)
Brownley (CA)	Farr	Kelly (PA)
Buchanan	Fattah	Kennedy
Bucshon	Fincher	Kildee
Burgess	Fitzpatrick	Kilmer
Bustos	Fleischmann	Kind
Butterfield	Fleming	King (IA)
Byrne	Flores	King (NY)
Calvert	Forbes	Kingston
Camp	Fortenberry	Kinzinger (IL)
Campbell	Foster	Kirkpatrick
Cantor	Fox	Kline
Capito	Frankel (FL)	Kuster
Capps	Franks (AZ)	Labrador
Capuano	Frelinghuysen	LaMalfa
Cárdenas	Fudge	Lamborn
Carney	Gabbard	Lance
Carson (IN)	Galleo	Langevin
Carter	Garamendi	Lankford
Cartwright	Garcia	Larsen (WA)
Cassidy	Gardner	Latham
Castor (FL)	Garrett	Latta
Castro (TX)	Gerlach	Lee (CA)
Chabot	Gibbs	Levin
Chu	Gibson	Lewis
Cicilline	Gingrey (GA)	Lipinski
Clark (MA)	Gohmert	LoBiondo
Clarke (NY)	Goodlatte	Loebsack
Clay	Gowdy	Lofgren
Cleaver	Granger	Long
Clyburn	Graves (GA)	Lowenthal
Coble	Graves (MO)	Lowe
Coffman	Grayson	Lucas
Cohen	Green, Al	Luetkemeyer
Cole	Griffin (AR)	Lujan Grisham
Collins (GA)	Griffith (VA)	(NM)
Collins (NY)	Grijalva	Luján, Ben Ray
Conaway	Grimm	(NM)
Connolly	Guthrie	Lummis
Conyers	Gutiérrez	Lynch
Cook	Hahn	Maffei
Cooper	Hall	Maloney,
Costa	Hanabusa	Carolyn
Cotton	Hanna	Maloney, Sean

Marchant	Pocan	Sires
Marino	Poe (TX)	Slaughter
Matheson	Polis	Smith (MO)
Matsui	Pompeo	Smith (NE)
McAllister	Posey	Smith (NJ)
McCarthy (CA)	Price (GA)	Smith (TX)
McCaul	Price (NC)	Smith (WA)
McClintock	Quigley	Southerland
McCollum	Rahall	Speier
McDermott	Rangel	Stewart
McGovern	Reed	Stivers
McHenry	Reichert	Stockman
McIntyre	Renacci	Stutzman
McKeon	Ribble	Swalwell (CA)
McKinley	Rice (SC)	Takano
McMorris	Richmond	Terry
Rodgers	Rigell	Thompson (CA)
McNerney	Roby	Thompson (MS)
Meadows	Roe (TN)	Thompson (PA)
Meehan	Rogers (AL)	Thornberry
Meeks	Rogers (KY)	Tiberi
Meng	Rogers (MI)	Tierney
Messer	Rohrabacher	Tipton
Mica	Rokita	Titus
Michaud	Rooney	Tonko
Miller (FL)	Ros-Lehtinen	Tsongas
Miller (MI)	Roskam	Turner
Miller, Gary	Ross	Upton
Miller, George	Rothfus	Valadao
Moore	Roybal-Allard	Van Hollen
Moran	Royce	Vargas
Mullin	Ruiz	Veasey
Mulvaney	Runyan	Vela
Murphy (FL)	Ruppersberger	Velázquez
Murphy (PA)	Rush	Visclosky
Nadler	Ryan (OH)	Wagner
Napolitano	Ryan (WI)	Walberg
Neal	Salmon	Walden
Neugebauer	Sánchez, Linda	Walorski
Noem	T.	Walz
Nolan	Sanchez, Loretta	Wasserman
Nugent	Sanford	Schultz
Nunes	Sarbanes	Waters
Nunnelee	Scalise	Waxman
O'Rourke	Schakowsky	Weber (TX)
Olson	Schiff	Webster (FL)
Owens	Schock	Welch
Palazzo	Schrader	Wenstrup
Pallone	Schwartz	Westmoreland
Pascarella	Schweikert	Whitfield
Paulsen	Scott (VA)	Williams
Payne	Scott, Austin	Wilson (FL)
Pearce	Scott, David	Wilson (SC)
Perlmuter	Sensenbrenner	Wittman
Perry	Serrano	Wolf
Peters (CA)	Sessions	Womack
Peters (MI)	Sewell (AL)	Woodall
Peterson	Shea-Porter	Yarmuth
Petri	Sherman	Yoder
Pingree (ME)	Shinkus	Yoho
Pittenger	Shuster	Young (AK)
Pitts	Simpson	Young (IN)
	Sinema	

NAYS—1

Massie

NOT VOTING—19

Chaffetz	Green, Gene	Larson (CT)
Courtney	Hastings (WA)	McCarthy (NY)
Crawford	Himes	Negrete McLeod
DeLauro	Hinojosa	Pastor (AZ)
Duffy	Johnson, E. B.	Schneider
Esty	Johnson, Sam	
Gosar	Jones	

□ 1355

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for rollcall vote 95 on passage of H.R. 938, I would have voted "aye." I am proud that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle came together in support of continuing our nation's strong relationship with Israel and promoting Israel's right to defend itself against

threats and unprecedented challenges in the Middle East.

SUSPENDING THE INDIVIDUAL MANDATE PENALTY LAW EQUALS FAIRNESS ACT

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 497, I call up the bill (H.R. 4118) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to delay the implementation of the penalty for failure to comply with the individual health insurance mandate, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 497, the bill is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4118

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Suspending the Individual Mandate Penalty Law Equals Fairness Act" or as the "SIMPLE Fairness Act".

SEC. 2. DELAY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH INDIVIDUAL HEALTH INSURANCE MANDATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5000A(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(5) DELAY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF PENALTY.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, the monthly penalty amount with respect to any taxpayer for any month beginning before January 1, 2015, shall be zero."

(b) DELAY OF CERTAIN PHASE INS AND INDEXING.—

(1) PHASE IN OF PERCENTAGE OF INCOME LIMITATION.—Section 5000A(c)(2)(B) of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking "2014" in clause (i) and inserting "2015", and

(B) by striking "2015" in clauses (ii) and (iii) and inserting "2016".

(2) PHASE IN OF APPLICABLE DOLLAR AMOUNT.—Section 5000A(c)(3)(B) of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking "2014" and inserting "2015", and

(B) by striking "2015" (before amendment by subparagraph (A)) and inserting "2016".

(3) INDEXING OF APPLICABLE DOLLAR AMOUNT.—Section 5000A(c)(3)(D) of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking "2016" in the matter preceding clause (i) and inserting "2017", and

(B) by striking "2015" in clause (ii) and inserting "2016".

(4) INDEXING OF EXEMPTION BASED ON HOUSEHOLD INCOME.—Section 5000A(e)(1)(D) of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking "2014" (before amendment by subparagraph (B)) and inserting "2015", and

(B) by striking "2013" and inserting "2014".

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2013.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Kansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on H.R. 4118.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Kansas?

There was no objection.

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP), the illustrious chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

□ 1400

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Kansas for yielding.

I rise today in support of H.R. 4118, the SIMPLE Fairness Act, which would give Americans some much-needed relief from the added costs of ObamaCare.

I don't need to remind the American people about the failed launch of the health care law, but a failed Web site is the least of Americans' health concerns.

Millions of Americans, including over 200,000 in my home State of Michigan, went out to the mailbox and found that the health care plan they had and liked was canceled.

Millions of Americans are having their hours and wages cut as employers try to struggle with this complex law. Many find that they can no longer access the care that they relied on from their local doctor or hospital. Millions of Americans are left wondering what happened to their promised \$2,500 reduction in premiums. And next year, millions more will see their premiums skyrocket again due to the administration's failure to meet their own enrollment goals.

The American people have paid over and over for this health care law. They have paid higher premiums, and they have paid by having their hours cut back and their paychecks decreased. The last thing this law should do is penalize Americans for being unable to purchase a plan on healthcare.gov either because of multiple Web failures or that they were unable to find an affordable plan.

The Obama administration unilaterally exempted businesses from the employer mandate tax for 2014. SIMPLE Fairness demands that Congress provide the same relief to hardworking Americans.

When Congress can act to provide some relief for hardworking Americans, we should. Every Member here has heard from a frustrated constituent. This shouldn't and need not be a partisan fight. Granting relief to hardworking Americans is only fair. Voting "yes" on H.R. 4118 is the right thing to do for the people we represent.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I shall consume.

Well, here they go again. But this time, it is the 50th time that House Republicans have brought up legislation to repeal or to undermine the Affordable Care Act. But this 50th time is no golden anniversary. It is a House Republican goose egg for millions of Americans. Just look at this—fifty votes, but zero votes to raise the minimum wage, zero votes to renew unemployment insurance, zero votes to guarantee paycheck fairness, and zero votes to pass immigration reform.

So let's spend a minute looking exactly at what would be the impact of this if it became law. In 2014, we would see an additional 1 million uninsured—1 million. In 2015, 2 million more people would be uninsured than if the individual mandate stayed in effect, and in 2016, another million people.

The irony of this, and I think my colleagues on the Democratic side will speak to this, the irony is the individual mandate was a Republican idea. It was born out of the conservative Heritage Foundation in the eighties. And throughout the nineties, Republicans argued its merits. It was one of the foundations of the Massachusetts law. Its parent, at least in good measure, was Governor Mitt Romney.

I met an hour or so ago with representatives of a major insurance carrier in Massachusetts, and one explained how it is working—97, 98 percent of the people are covered. That law has sparked an improvement in the delivery of health care and in the restructuring of health care delivery systems. So here we are, instead of constructive action, essentially, we have a Republican demolition squad.

Can any law be made perfect? Yes, including this. But that isn't what the Republicans are after today. They have never come up with their own plan. Indeed, they are a wrecking crew. America deserves much better.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the enforcement of the individual mandate penalty tax is an important issue, an issue of basic fairness, and I look forward to debating this legislation on the House floor.

On February 10 of this year, the Department of the Treasury announced that it would delay enforcement of the employer mandate penalty tax for businesses with 51 to 100 employees until 2016. This delay in the President's health care law comes on the heels of a similar delay the administration announced last July, which exempted all large businesses from the employer mandate penalty until 2015.

Amidst all of these delays, it is easy to forget that the employer mandate, like the individual mandate, was required by the Affordable Care Act to be

in effect right now. The President has now acted unilaterally on two separate occasions to give Big Business relief from this tax burden. However, he has not leveled the playing field for the millions of individuals and families who are forced to comply with the individual mandate tax.

Aside from the fact that it is fundamentally unfair to give businesses special treatment that is not extended to these individuals, American families have also been forced to deal with a botched rollout of healthcare.gov and a series of confusing administration delays of the law issued via blog post. This has led to confusion, frustration, and, ultimately, difficulty complying with the law.

Nowhere is this more evident than the fact that only 4 million Americans have enrolled in health coverage on the healthcare.gov Web site. This means that with less than a month to go in this initial open enrollment period, we are still 3 million enrollees short of the original CBO projection of 7 million enrollees—one that even the administration once touted as its goal. Enrollment is still 2 million enrollees short of CBO's new projection of 6 million enrollees.

These millions can be added to the tens of millions of other American individuals and families who will now likely be forced to pay the individual mandate penalty. In my State, Kansas, the latest census information estimates that 356,000 folks are uninsured. At the last count, only 22,000 of those individuals have enrolled on healthcare.gov.

Unlike businesses, the President has offered no relief for these individuals who do not or are unable to comply with the law's mandates. I believe that this is simply not fair and that the House must act to provide parity for these folks. That is why I have introduced this bill under consideration today.

H.R. 4118 would eliminate implementation of the individual mandate penalty by 1 year. This means that the individual mandate penalty would be zeroed out this year. It would rise to \$95 or 1 percent of income in 2015, to \$325 or 2 percent of income in 2016, and \$695 or 2½ percent of income in 2017 and thereafter. I believe this is a simple concept, and considering the circumstances, I applaud this committee for taking up this legislation to provide fairness to all Americans under the President's health care law.

In closing, I would ask this: If the President can delay the employer mandate, where is the relief for everyone else? It is time to give relief to hardworking individuals and families and work toward a legislative solution to eliminate these tax penalties for everyone. Congress must pass this bill today and create simple fairness for all.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, it is now my special pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) with whom those of us on Ways and Means have worked all of these years on health care reform. He is one of the authors of this bill and the ranking member of Energy and Commerce.

Mr. WAXMAN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

The truth of the matter is no matter how many votes the Republicans cast to repeal the Affordable Care Act and no matter how many distortions they spread about the law, there are some facts they cannot change.

They cannot change the fact that, because of the Affordable Care Act, nobody in America can ever again be denied health insurance because they have a preexisting condition. They cannot change the fact that a woman can never be charged more than a man for the same coverage. They cannot change the fact that a family will never again be left without coverage just because their child's hospital bills got too high.

These facts are stubborn and they are inconvenient for my Republican colleagues, so they ignore them and they deny them. Republicans have voted—or will today—50 times to try to take away the basic security and freedom guaranteed by the Affordable Care Act. They offer absolutely no solutions for the tens of millions of Americans who need health care coverage that is secure and affordable. They have voted to repeal the law, but they have never once voted for a replacement.

Madam Speaker, if the Republicans have a solution that will expand coverage, that will end discrimination by insurance companies, and that will reduce the deficit, they need to bring it up for a vote. But they do not have solutions. What they want to do is deny health insurance coverage to millions of Americans. That is a shame, and I think we are wasting our time today voting again to turn our backs on a bill that will offer so much to the American people.

Don't we have anything else to do? All we seem to do is deny science, which is the bill that will be coming up next, when the Republicans want to stop EPA from dealing with the climate change issue or denying the rights of people to get health insurance, which the Republicans have voted over and over again to do.

I urge that we vote "no" on this bill.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, Chairman KEVIN BRADY, our chair of the Ways and Means Health Subcommittee.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the SIMPLE Fairness Act and thank the leadership of the gentlelady from Kansas in this area.

Back home, my people are frightened about the Affordable Care Act. They don't think it is a waste of time to be trying to fix and repeal and stop this. They are paying a very steep price for it.

President Obama made them some big promises when he sold them this health care plan. He promised Americans could keep the plan they like. He promised lower health care costs. He promised a functioning Web site that he said would work as well as Amazon. The White House hasn't delivered on any of these promises.

Where I am from, if you make a mistake, if you don't keep your promise, you step up and fix it. You don't blame those you have hurt. No American should have to pay a penalty because ObamaCare fell short of its promises. No American should have to pay a penalty because the Web site couldn't even accept their application or deliver the correct information. No American should be penalized for trying days on end to purchase a plan only to decide it wasn't worth the effort because it was too expensive. No American should be penalized because they are concerned about the security of their private information on this government Web site, and no American should be penalized by the IRS because of sticker shock or deciding not to purchase a plan that is so much more expensive than what was promised.

President Obama gave Big Business a break; he deserves to give average Americans the same type of break, as well. SIMPLE Fairness requires that we do the same for the American people. That is all this is about. It is all we are doing today, treating average Americans who are hurt by the Affordable Care Act the way the White House helped Big Business with the same exact problems. The American people deserve the same relief. We ought to give it to them. That is why this bill is called the SIMPLE Fairness Act, and it deserves our support.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL).

I also ask unanimous consent that the balance of my time be managed by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT), the ranking member on the Health Subcommittee.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

□ 1415

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, my colleagues, there is a cancer growing in the Republican Party in the House of Representatives, and as much of a Democrat as I am, I hate to see this happen because our government is based on a two-party system. Now this cancer, this small group of people in the Republican Party in the House,

have already torn down the credibility of the entire House of Representatives because they are doing the same insane thing 50 times without getting any results, and they are not doing anything else. It is bad enough that all of us have to go down in political favoritism, or our reputations go down, but this small group of people have gone far enough now that the national Republican Party has no credibility.

I will not embarrass anybody by asking them just who do you think nationally should serve our country from, pardon the expression, the Republican Party. You have none. Somewhere along the line, this insanity has to stop because you are not beating up on Democrats, you are beating up on people who have no health insurance.

If you don't like the President, if you don't like this bill, let's talk about the millions of people who have no health insurance instead of just for the 50th time saying you don't like the bill. It is the law. The House and the Senate have signed it. The Supreme Court has verified it. The President can veto anything you do if something did happen.

Why don't we talk about immigration reform? Rebuild the integrity of your great party from past years. Why don't we talk about the minimum wage, where all candidates will say if you work hard in America and do the right thing, then you can achieve anything you want. If you are middle class, you can achieve poverty. If you are in poverty, you can't even get a decent wage for working. There are so many things we can do.

Don't you remember the days before the Affordable Care Act when you had constituents coming in saying: I can't get insurance? How about the days when people would say: My husband was in the hospital and they cut off insurance. Or even worse: I tried to get insurance and they told me I was so sick, so I can't get any more insurance. Or the guy who is working and he is on his parents' insurance, and he is 26 years old. Don't you have any of these people in your congressional districts? Are all of your people well and can do without health insurance?

How do you go home and explain that we do have a bill and instead of perfecting it, supporting it, educating your people how they can get health insurance, that you have tried not once, you have tried 10 times, 20 times, 30 times, 40 times, now 50 times to derail and destroy it.

I don't know how you get away with it. I don't know what you put in the water that you feed your constituents, but it certainly doesn't make sense that you can try to destroy and at the same time not to substitute.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio

(Mr. RENACCI), our colleague and friend on the House Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4118, the SIMPLE Fairness Act.

According to a recent Gallup poll, 51 percent of Americans disapprove of the President's health care law, and for good reason.

The rollout of the failed, misguided law was nothing short of disastrous. Its plagued Web site prevented many Americans from purchasing health insurance on the Federal and State exchanges. Though the President promised lower costs, many are facing the reality of higher premiums and a steep penalty if they cannot afford the plans that are offered.

Recently, the administration delayed the employer mandate for a second time, leaving intact the mandate that requires individuals to purchase health insurance or pay a fine.

The bill before us today would ensure that no American will be forced to pay the individual mandate penalty tax in 2014. It is evident to this Chamber and Americans across the country that the President's health care law is too complex, too costly, and completely unworkable. Ultimately, this law should be fully repealed, but I am here today because I believe that all hardworking Americans deserve relief from the President's health care law.

Congress should afford individuals the same advantage the administration is giving to businesses and delay the individual mandate. It is simply common sense. I ask my colleagues to come together and pass this important bill and send it to the President to be signed into law.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, today is a little like "Groundhog Day." The Republican leadership has come out here and tried to decide what the weather is going to be, and they are going to get the same answer that they have gotten 49 times before. They can pass it from here, but it is not going to change anything. We have seen this poorly designed, sadly staged GOP political theater before—50 times. This is the 50th vote of this Tea Party, Koch brothers-led Congress to crash the Affordable Care Act.

It is a waste of time and resources, and ignores the facts. Americans want affordable health care, and ACA delivers it to them. ACA has saved lives and brought down our spending. New fraud measures, including new authorities imposing payment suspensions and more rigorous-provider enrollment procedures put into law by ACA, helped the Federal Government recover \$4.3 billion in taxpayer money from individuals and companies that tried to defraud the health care programs. The ACA is delivering historic results for

the American people, and yet the Republican leadership is hell-bent on a 50th stroke.

Regardless of the fact that our economic system remains stuck in neutral, nothing has been done about jobs, unemployment insurance, raising the minimum wage, and so forth.

If that was all that was going on here, this would still be insulting and absurd. The bill under consideration today, H.R. 4118, is virtually identical to H.R. 2668, a bill passed on the 17th of July, 2013. The Republicans have already passed this bill to delay the individual mandate, something the CBO knows will result in higher insurance premiums. So beyond wasting time and engaging in stunts designed to make the producers of FOX News happy, Republicans want to return Americans to the days before ACA, when a cancer victim couldn't get covered and seniors couldn't get their prescriptions; to the day when wage workers who had paid hundreds of dollars out of pocket went without; to the days of ever-changing lists of preexisting conditions when companies tried to drop coverage.

The real business of the Congress should be to stand up for those Americans and millions more like them. That is what the American people want. That is what the American people deserve. That is why they want us to vote "no."

Jim McCrery, in March, 2000, said in an article in Atlantic Monthly that an employer mandate and an individual mandate was essential.

I can't understand the Republicans saying we don't want everybody to play. We don't want everybody according to their ability to be in. Why are you so eager to let people out the door because they are going to wind up in the emergency room? Have no doubt, they will be getting health care, but they won't be paying for it. You are saying: That's okay with us, we like people who are free riders. That is not America. We are all supposed to do our part, and that is why everyone here should vote "no."

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. YOUNG), our friend and colleague on the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana. Madam Speaker, as we approach the deadline for enrolling in ObamaCare-sanctioned insurance, it has become clear the system is not working as its supporters intended. For months, we have been learning about Web site problems, spiking premiums, and lost coverage. For months, we have seen an underwhelming number of signups, not even close to matching the stated enrollment goals of this administration. For months, we have heard heart-wrenching stories from our districts about the negative impact this botched

rollout has had on hardworking American families.

Unfortunately for those families, the White House and those who helped bring us this law have consistently turned a deaf ear to Americans' concerns. Meanwhile, at the urging of the business community, we had the White House delay the employer mandate tax—twice. What must the constituents in our districts do to be heard by ObamaCare supporters? Should they form trade organizations and hire a lobbyist so maybe President Obama and champions of this law will listen?

Well, guess what? My constituents did hire someone to lobby on their behalf when they elected me to Congress. It is simply not fair when businesses get a break but the people who work at those businesses do not. I am all for delaying the employer mandate tax because it is confusing and it is cumbersome for our businesses. I also feel very strongly that the individual mandate tax is just as cumbersome for individuals and families as the employer mandate tax is for our businesses. I believe that individuals and families deserve the same sort of delay. So on behalf of my constituents in Indiana's Ninth District, and on behalf of all of yours, I encourage all of my colleagues to support this bill and to support simple fairness.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS).

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 4118, the 50th vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act, which, if passed and implemented, would increase premiums, decrease coverage, and increase the number of people who are not insured by as much as 11 million people in this country. It is unbelievable that we would be on the floor voting for the 50th time to try and turn back the clock on millions of Americans who have been denied health insurance coverage because of a pre-existing condition, didn't have enough money, or did not have accessibility to facilities.

In Illinois, over 256,000 individuals benefit from the Affordable Care Act. Nationally, more than 4 million Americans have enrolled in private plans, with 82 percent receiving premium tax credits to make health insurance more affordable. More than 3.1 million young adults have access to health insurance by remaining on their parents' plans until age 26. Millions more Americans have secured new coverage through Medicaid expansion.

Rather than decreasing or taking away, the Republican leadership and all of us ought to be increasing and providing. We ought to be affording individuals the opportunity to get insurance because they are unemployed—to get a check. So it is amazing that rather than giving, we would be talking

about taking, taking away, when the law says and all of us know that everybody ought to have access to quality health care.

I oppose this legislation.

Ms. JENKINS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE), my friend and colleague.

□ 1430

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlelady for yielding to me.

I rise in support of the SIMPLE Fairness Act and a level playing field for all Americans.

In the span of about 7 months, the Obama administration has taken action twice to provide big businesses with relief from the President's disastrous health care law. Working families, however, are still being forced to comply with the individual mandate.

Over the last year, President Obama's broken promises on health care has become almost too numerous to count. Americans were told that if they liked their health care plan, they could keep it. Tell that to the 82,000 Tennesseans who were forced out of their coverage by ObamaCare.

Americans were told that ObamaCare would lower the cost of insurance. Explain that to the 11 million people that CMS has determined will have their premiums increase.

We were told by the Democratic leader that ObamaCare would create jobs. I invite her to have a conversation with the workers at Mountain States Health Alliance in my district who lost their jobs. Even the CBO agrees that this law is discouraging work.

Throughout the implementation of ObamaCare, the one thing the President has held firm on is that working families must buy insurance—or else. He has promised a veto on this commonsense legislation simply because it delays individual mandate penalties for 1 year.

Here in the people's House, we should stand for their interests and treat people the same as big businesses. It is only fair.

Madam Speaker, I would argue that if this bill is doing so well, why would only 34 percent of the people in this country approve of it?

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to follow my good friend, Dr. PHIL ROE, on the floor because we spent last weekend—speaking of health care—along with Mr. McDERMOTT—in Houston, Texas, at a fabulous conference by the nonpartisan Commonwealth Fund to be able to deal meaningfully with health care problems and bring people together on a bipartisan basis to discuss them.

I know some things we have to do and have got to come to the floor to repeal this 50 times, but I would hope that, sooner rather than later, we reach a point where we can focus on things that bring Americans together, not divide them, something that will improve the quality of health care and actually has nothing to do with spending money, new mandates, or ObamaCare.

I am referring to the legislation that I am pleased to have cosponsored with my good friend, Dr. ROE, H.R. 1173, the Personalize Your Care bill. It has over 50 bipartisan cosponsors. It would enable, for the first time, to provide voluntary consultation on advanced care planning for Medicare and Medicaid.

Every 5 years or when somebody becomes first eligible, it would provide grants to establish and expand programs for physician-ordered life sustaining treatment. It would require that certified electronic health records could display current advanced directives and physician orders for sustaining treatment.

Bear in mind, right now, every day, there are people who are getting health care at their most critical vulnerable moments, at the end of life, that is not necessarily what they want.

The majority of Americans would rather spend their last hours or days surrounded by their families at home, but very few Americans actually are able to do that. They end up in an ICU, not necessarily because that is their choice, but because their choices haven't been recorded and haven't been respected.

It is fascinating to me that Dr. Billy Graham, in his recent book, talks about the Christian responsibility to spare one's family from impossible decisions like that, that it is a Christian responsibility to have that conversation in advance, execute the appropriate papers, and make sure nobody has to guess about whether a loved one wants to be in an ICU or at home.

Dr. Bill Frist, a fellow Tennessean of my friend Dr. ROE, had an op-ed in *Politico* a few months ago talking about his experience. Dr. Frist was a former Republican majority leader in the Senate, but he is also a respected physician.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. McDERMOTT. I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. He is also a respected heart surgeon who has faced families in this circumstance, and he knows that they need information, that they need help, and that their wishes need to be respected.

Now, maybe instead of repealing ObamaCare the 51st or the 58th or the 100th time—legislation is not going to go any place—maybe we could take a little bit of a time out and consider the

legislation that Dr. ROE and I have worked on that is not partisan, that doesn't have anything to do with ObamaCare, that would enable families in their time of need to know what their choices are and to make sure that their choices, whatever they might be, are respected, they are respected in their city, they are respected across State lines, that they protect their family, and that they get the care they want and they need as they approach end of life.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that we will find time this year from passing post office renaming and whatnot, this is a piece of legislation that could come to the floor on the suspension calendar and would make a difference for families all across America.

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia, ERIC CANTOR, our current Republican House majority leader.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlelady and congratulate her on her leadership for this bill and making sure that we reinsert a notion of fairness back into the law for the people of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the SIMPLE Fairness Act.

For the past few months, the President's health care law has been wreaking havoc on the American people. After the administration's disastrous launch of the exchanges, ObamaCare has been anything but what the President had promised it would be. It has become very clear that this law is doing more harm than good.

We now know that ObamaCare has pushed up to 5 million people off the health care plan they liked, and many are now being denied the care they had. To make matters worse, many of these new plans will force Americans to pay higher premiums and higher deductibles. This leaves them with a limited number of options for health care coverage.

Many folks are also finding out that they cannot keep the doctor or the pediatrician that they want to go to and trusted. To put it simply, this is not how America should work. The American people deserve better.

Yet, time and again, the Obama administration has shown its true colors by putting politics first and unilaterally delaying parts of the law to avoid political repercussions. This has become most evident by the administration's delay in the employee mandate for big businesses and its refusal to delay the individual mandate for working Americans.

Just yesterday, it was reported the administration will announce another major unilateral delay on their minimum coverage requirements to—and I quote the publication *The Hill*—"ease election pressure on Democrats."

Doesn't it say something that the authors of this legislation are worried

that it is being implemented before they face voters again?

And I ask: Will future Presidents, perhaps of our party, be able to simply delay or cancel all or part of ObamaCare? Will my colleagues on the other side of the aisle withhold complaint then?

There is no greater indictment of this law or proof of its failure than the fear that full implementation invokes in its authors.

It is not fair to pick and choose which parts of an unpopular law should be enforced at the expense of working individuals for political expediency, and it is just not fair that businesses and insurance companies get delays and exemptions and not hardworking Americans. It is not fair.

Millions of Americans all over the country are already living paycheck to paycheck. The last thing they need is another brazen attack on their pocketbooks from a health care law they don't want, they didn't ask for, and that doesn't work for them.

Through this administration's ad hoc implementation of ObamaCare, some people won't have to pay the penalty, but others will. Here is who I am concerned about and who the bill before us today protects, the single mom, who for whatever reason ended up without insurance for several months.

She doesn't need a new tax bill from Uncle Sam for hundreds of dollars because she can't access the coverage that Washington says she must. She could use that money to pay the heating bill or to buy groceries for her children.

All Americans—not just some—but all Americans deserve a delay from the punishing financial penalties of the President's health care law. This is our chance to make it happen. With the legislation before us today, no one in this country would be forced to pay the individual mandate tax in 2014.

This is an opportunity to stop the political games and put working Americans first. Let's stand together and support the SIMPLE Fairness Act in bipartisan fashion and give our constituents some relief from the financial burdens of ObamaCare.

I would like to thank Chairman DAVE CAMP and Representative LYNN JENKINS for their hard work on this issue and on behalf of working Americans.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to the time remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington has 12 minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from Kansas has 15½ minutes remaining.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana, STEVE SCALISE, the chairman of the Republican Study Committee.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from Kansas for yielding and for her leadership on this bill that I am proud to cosponsor.

The SIMPLE Fairness Act is about just that, providing fairness for hard-working taxpayers. If you look at how the President's health care law is being implemented, Mr. Speaker, you have got the President literally saying he is going to give exemption after exemption after exemption to the political class, to the select few who have special interest protections here in Washington.

The President, by the way, has said: Big businesses can get exemptions from ObamaCare. The President has said: Insurance companies can get exemptions from ObamaCare.

But then, when it comes to hard-working taxpayers, families out there who are struggling under the weight of this law, the President says no, you can't have that same exemption that he has given to everybody else.

So what we are saying here, Mr. Speaker, is if these exemptions are good enough for big businesses and if these exemptions are good enough for insurance companies, shouldn't they also be good enough for hardworking taxpayers who are struggling in this bad economy that the President has given us and under the weight of this unworkable law, that the President himself is acknowledging is unworkable, by giving all these exemptions away to everybody else?

Now, if you look at the law, Mr. Speaker, the President doesn't have the legal authority to just waive a law—to literally take out a pen and change the law.

What the President does have is the ability to work with us in Congress in a bipartisan way, which when you look at the vote on this bill, it will be bipartisan in support of giving these hard-working taxpayers that same exemption.

But this law, ObamaCare, is built on a foundation of broken promises. If you like what you have, you can keep it, of course, is probably the most broken promise in political history; but there is more. The President said insurance costs will be lower. Insurance costs are higher for families.

The President even said he will meet with anybody who has a better idea. Well, we do have a better idea, Mr. Speaker. Over 120 Members of Congress, including medical doctors, have cosponsored the American Health Care Reform Act.

We took the President up on his promise, now almost 3 months ago, and the President has refused to fulfill that promise of meeting with anybody who has a better idea. He won't even sit down and talk with us about a better idea to put patients back in charge of health care.

There is a better way. We ought to treat people fairly. This bill does it. I urge adoption.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Is the gentlelady from Kansas ready to close?

Ms. JENKINS. I see no other speakers, so I am prepared to close.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I have one Member who is in transit, but let me say a few things until he gets here.

□ 1445

I have been in Congress for 25 years, and I have listened to the Republicans talk about what we ought to do about health care. They have never brought a bill to the committee—a chairman's mark—for us to mark up and bring out on the floor.

Now, if you have a solution for the fact that health care costs are the biggest costs driving bankruptcy in this country, where is it since you don't like what we have here?

When I was younger, I lived through the implementation of Medicare. The American Medical Association—everybody—was just up and down, and it was the worst thing. If we put in Medicare, it was going to be the end of the world, and we would never have health care again in this country. We went on and on and on like that. They so poisoned the well that, when people went out to actually recruit people to get into the Medicare program, people said: I am not going to have any of that socialistic medicine in my house.

That is what it was called. That is what people were doing in 1964 and 1965. This is a rerun of that very same movie. The Republicans want to kill the idea and leave the American people out there on their own. It is probably the single best example of the difference between the Republicans and the Democrats.

The Democrats have put something out here, and we are trying to help all Americans. Is it perfect? There isn't anybody on my side who would say it is. If we had had some hearings in the Ways and Means Committee, the subcommittee could have done a whole bunch of things—there are all kinds of problems out there—but there haven't been any hearings on this bill, on how to fix it.

I talked to Bill Frist some months ago. He said: Jim, there is no reason to repeal it. You ought to fix it. Make it work. Make it work for the American people.

One of the interesting things that I hear over and over again—and it must be confusing to folks at home—is that the President said: If you like your health care, you can keep it. Now, implicit in that is that it will still exist. The President didn't say: I am going to tell the insurance companies you have got to keep those plans out there.

That wouldn't be the free enterprise system, what you have. You don't like the free enterprise system.

As soon as the President passed this bill, immediately, we had people in the

insurance industry pulling down plans all over the country, sending out mailings, saying: You have lost your health care coverage.

I sometimes wonder if global warming—or climate change—is really not because of Obama's health care. I hear that it is the cause of every evil—of people losing jobs. I don't know. Whatever is going on in the country, it is because of ObamaCare. That is foolishness. When you are trying to change a program for 20 or 30 million people, you are bound to have some problems. We are having them, and we are working them out. It was awful at the beginning, and it is better now. It is better today than it was 3 months ago, and it will be. It will continue to improve because the American people need it. They absolutely need it even with the foolishness coming out of here, of trying again to convince the American people to get rid of this.

I had a woman in my district who was an opera singer. She went to Germany, and she got into the German health care system. Instantly, boom, you are in. Anybody who goes to Germany is in. Her daughter got leukemia. Her daughter was treated for leukemia, and she went into remission. The mother finished her contract and came home to the United States. She could not find an insurance company anywhere in this country that would give her insurance for her daughter—none.

Now, that is what you want to go back to. You want to go back to the time when a parent can't find an insurance company that will take care of his kid, and that is the kind of thing that we have been watching for as long as I have been in Congress and before that, and this bill has begun to stop that.

We had lifetime limits. Some cancers eat up a lot of money real quickly. Bone marrow transplants are \$125,000 or more, and people wind up being unable to purchase the medication. All of that is covered by this bill, and you are saying to people: No, we want to go back to 1930. We like the Dust Bowl. We like the hard times of the thirties. We don't want any of this stuff.

In my view, this is a perfect place for Democrats to vote "no," and Republicans, of course, will vote "yes," and the American people will make a judgment in the next election.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, in closing, this bill is about fairness and about providing relief to all hard-working Americans just as the administration keeps giving to businesses. It is about leveling the playing field for the millions of individuals and middle class families who are forced to comply with this health care law.

Just last week, a stunning poll found that only 6 percent of Americans claim ObamaCare is working and want it kept intact. Opposition to this law is at an all-time high, and even the Presi-

dent admitted that the launch of this law was fumbled. Add that to the millions of Americans who are losing their health insurance that they like, are losing access to the doctors they have always seen, are submitting their personal data to an unsecured system, are paying higher premiums they can't afford, and clearly, we have a law that is not working and is not fair to the American people.

The court of public opinion is a powerful thing. The House will listen, and it will continue to listen, and it will continue to provide relief and fairness to middle class families. I hope the Senate and the President will also do the right thing for the American people.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I have always said that Congress would need to pass fixes to improve the Affordable Care Act. The original version of the bill that passed the House in 2009, and included my provision to repeal the anti-trust exemption enjoyed by the insurance industry, was much better than the Senate version that ultimately became law. Unfortunately the House Leadership has not allowed us the opportunity to vote on real fixes to the ACA. Instead the Republican leadership continues to engage in an ideological exercise of repeatedly bringing up bills that will never move beyond the House. H.R. 4118 is no different. It won't be taken up by the Senate. The President has threatened to veto it. It is not a real fix.

Instead of bringing up bills that will never become law, Congress should be working on fixes to the Affordable Care Act that will actually help our constituents. Oregonians who want to buy insurance continue to face a state exchange website that does not function. Because of this problem I fought hard to let Oregonians to keep their current insurance plan if they wanted to. Small businesses in Oregon can't use tax credits to help them provide insurance to their employees on the SHOP small business exchange because there still is no SHOP exchange in Oregon, so I am asking for small business tax credits to be available outside of the SHOP exchange.

Americans who want to take personal responsibility for all of their healthcare costs would benefit from an alternative to the individual mandate that I have proposed. My proposal would allow people to opt out of buying insurance without facing a tax penalty as long as they commit to taking full responsibility for any healthcare costs they incur.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition once again to an attempt by the majority to defeat the Affordable Care Act.

This begins the third year that the majority has attempted to put an end to affordable, available and accessible health care for all Americans.

They have ignored the law, a Supreme Court decision and a national presidential election that affirmed the establishment, legality, and popularity of the Affordable Care Act.

I oppose this bill for three reasons: there are much more pressing issues facing our nation, this bill is wrong on the facts, and the Affordable Care Act is working.

There are much more pressing issues facing our nation: unemployment, food security, housing security and access to job training that leads to employment.

We should be debating a bill to restore emergency supplemental unemployment benefits.

We should be restoring cuts the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program that was cut by nearly \$20 billion dollars over several years.

We should be voting to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour over several years and link future increases of the minimum wage to inflation.

We should be taking up the budget process with eagerness to avoid another government shutdown.

In 2013, we had a Federal government shutdown because we lost precious legislative time voting to repeal or seriously diminish the ability of the Affordable Care Act to do what it is currently doing—providing health insurance to millions of Americans.

Every wasted vote—moves this Congress another step closer to another Federal government shutdown.

The budget process takes months of work by over a dozen committees to complete.

Each vote that stops our legislative work and bring us to the floor for a debate on legislation that will not go anywhere—is time taken away from our work to avoid another government shutdown.

The American people were unaware of the cost of over 40 votes to end Obamacare until millions of citizens were put out of work when the government shutdown last year.

They are watching what is happening in Congress very closely and the consequences will fall heaviest on those who were hurt by the last government shutdown.

The 113th Congress has 70 legislative working days left on the calendar before September 30, 2014—the end of the fiscal year for 2014 and the beginning of the fiscal year for 2015.

I call on my colleagues to bring to the floor bills like H.R. 3773, the Unemployment Jobhunters Protection and Assistance Act, a bill I introduced that would extend emergency unemployment compensation (EUC) payments for eligible individuals to weeks of employment ending on or before January 1, 2015.

This Congress would find a better use of its time if it would take up consideration of H.R. 3888, New Chance for a New Start in Life Act of 2014, that would authorize the Secretary of Labor to make grants to States, units of local government, and Indian tribes to carry out employment training programs to assist long-term unemployed job hunters to obtain the skills and training they need to reenter the workforce and fill jobs in high-growth sectors of the economy.

These are just two bills that would improve the lives of people who we all serve, but there are dozens of others introduced by members who came to the Congress to serve the will of the people and not their own will.

I oppose this bill because it is wrong on the facts.

Republicans are claiming that this bill is simply logical because the Administration has already delayed the employer responsibility provision for one year.

This claim is inaccurate and disingenuous.

Nonpartisan experts agree that there is no comparison between the impacts of a delay in the employer responsibility and individual responsibility provisions.

For example, in a report in July, the nonpartisan Urban Institute concluded, "Delaying or eliminating the individual mandate would significantly decrease insurance coverage relative to the full Affordable Care Act's implementation, whereas delaying or eliminating the employer mandate will have essentially no effect on coverage."

The Affordable Care Act is good for the American People

The Obamacare is popular and growing in greater popularity everyday as consumers get past the rhetoric and experience the reality of the peace of mind that health insurance for their families and themselves brings.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, in Texas:

5,198,000 individuals on private insurance have gained coverage for at least one free preventive health care service such as a mammogram, birth control, or an immunization in 2011 and 2012. In the first eleven months of 2013 alone, an additional 1,683,800 people with Medicare have received at least one preventive service at no out of pocket cost.

The up to 10,695,000 individuals with pre-existing conditions such as asthma, cancer, or diabetes—including up to 1,632,000 children—will no longer have to worry about being denied coverage or charged higher prices because of their health status or history.

Approximately 5,189,000 Texans have gained expanded mental health and substance use disorder benefits and/or federal parity protections.

4,889,000 uninsured Texans will have new health insurance options through Medicaid or private health plans in the Marketplace.

As a result of new policies that make sure premium dollars work for the consumer, not just the insurer, in the past year insurance companies have sent rebates averaging \$95 per family to approximately 726,200 consumers.

In the first ten months of 2013, 233,100 seniors and people with disabilities have saved on average \$866 on prescription medications as the health care law closes Medicare's so called "donut hole."

357,000 young adults have gained health insurance because they can now stay on their parents' health plans until age 26.

Individuals no longer have to worry about having their health benefits cut off after they reach a lifetime limit on benefits, and starting in January, 7,536,000 Texans will no longer have to worry about annual limits, either.

Health centers have received \$293,038,000 to provide primary care, establish new sites, and renovate existing centers to expand access to quality health care. Texas has approximately 400 health center sites, which served about 1,079,000 individuals in 2012.

Every day more uninsured Americans are signing up for plans as the website gets faster and more people with insurance are benefiting from the law.

I ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to not spend any more precious legislative work on efforts to end the Affordable Care

Act or ignoring the number of people continuing to vote in favor of the new law with their insurance enrollment dollars.

Mr. Speakers, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting against this bill.

Mr. POSEY. Mr. Speaker, when the health care law was passed on a party line vote people were assured they could keep their current doctors and insurance plans, it would cost them less, it was not a tax, and there would be no rationing of medical care. Those are not my words. They are the words from the supporters of the bill in the Congress and the Obama Administration.

The stark reality is very different for many of my constituents and hundreds of them have shared with me how this health care law has adversely impacted them. I'd like to share just a few of these comments with you. They are from real people, hardworking Americans who I have the privilege of representing and they are begging for relief:

"My group rate insurance increased 100% and my deductible went from \$2,500 to \$7,500" wrote Preston in Brevard, and Margaret says her "insurances costs jumped 300%."

Paul in Brevard writes, "It has created a situation where I can't retire safely."

Norma in Indian River County says her "premiums increased \$600 per year. That's a lot for someone on a fixed income."

Tom in south Brevard wrote that the law "increased premiums and inserted unneeded benefits into our policy."

Rob in Melbourne fears for his kids, writing: "My kids cannot find a job and the cost of healthcare is three times more for them than it was previously." And another constituent wrote: "My grandchildren lost their insurance due to the exorbitant increase in monthly premiums by their employer."

A friend wrote: "My best friend's hours got cut so the company would not have to provide healthcare for him and his family." And, Ed in Titusville wrote of the impact on his daughters: "Both of my daughters have had their work hours cut [so their employers could avoid providing health insurance]."

Christine in Vero shared: "With no change in my health, my premiums went up 21% with a \$2500 deductible."

Rob in Melbourne says his insurance costs "doubled".

Ralph in Brevard says "I lost my doctor and am paying for things I don't need."

Chris in Palm Bay says he "lost his job and was forced to move and pay higher insurance costs."

Paul in Palm Bay says: "The policy increased from \$50 a month to \$350 a month."

Terri shares that her doctors won't take her private insurance.

Dave in central Brevard shared that: "It has DOUBLED my premiums!! I am very upset about Obamacare! FIX IT!"

John says he lost his plan, and Norma writes: "I have to die, because my medical bills will not be covered."

I could go on.

This bill simply delays the individual mandate tax penalty for a year so that Americans can pick a plan that they want and that they can afford, rather than one that the government in Washington tells them they must sign up for.

The President has already given large multinational corporations and labor unions the same waiver. We are simply extending this same flexibility to average Americans who want nothing more than to be treated equally.

Ultimately, when you have to pass a bill to find out what's in it, there's a good chance that you're not going to like what it says. The only way to fix this situation is to repeal this law and replace it with a plan that restores individual freedom and makes health insurance more affordable.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support the Simple Fairness Act and eliminate the individual mandate tax penalty under the Affordable Care Act for a year.

Many of my constituents in the 24th District of Texas have lost their health insurance and access to doctors they liked due to the President's healthcare law. The law is hurting millions of Americans.

The President has recognized as much, as he recently issued another delay that protects businesses from his employer mandate tax. In fact, the President has delayed provisions in his own healthcare law over 20 times in the past year.

It is simply not fair for the President to give businesses a one-year delay on the tax penalty, but not give hardworking individuals and families the same relief.

My constituents, and all Americans, deserve the same thing: fairness.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting the Simple Fairness Act.

Ms. WASERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th time this House of Representatives has tried to repeal, defund or dismantle the Affordable Care Act.

What a sad Golden Anniversary moment for the GOP.

The Affordable Care Act, which has already helped millions of Americans, is the law of the land. Instead of playing politics, let's instead work together to address concerns over its implementation while upholding its mission: to provide quality, affordable healthcare access for all Americans.

With Americans facing so many real, pressing issues every day, I urge this Congress to focus on achieving results and serving our constituents.

Two million Americans, including about 110 thousand Floridians have lost their unemployment insurance. Our immigration system is in dire need of common sense and comprehensive reforms. Women still make less than men while working equal jobs.

The list goes on. We have work to do. We have a duty and responsibility to serve the interests of the American people. These pointless partisan attacks on the Affordable Care Act must stop.

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, the more we learn about the President's healthcare law, the more the facts show it's hurting more than it's helping.

The President said premiums would go down by two thousand dollars, but instead his chief actuary finally admitted that premiums will go up for two-thirds of Americans working for small businesses.

While the administration continues to provide delay after delay, admitting that the law is

unworkable, they continue to let the individual mandate take effect. Millions of people will be hit with a mandate and new financial penalties, while losing the coverage they like, not being able to see the doctors they want, and facing higher premiums and out of pocket costs. Why is the administration willing to give big businesses a delay but not do anything to help hardworking Americans? Today, we have an opportunity to also delay the individual mandate in order to protect all Americans.

Minnesotans needed genuine healthcare reform before President Obama signed his healthcare law—and they still do now. It's time to act and spare the American people of Obamacare's costly and burdensome mandates and enact true, bipartisan healthcare reform that improves quality, increases choice, and reduces costs.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 4118, the 50th vote to undermine the Affordable Care Act.

First, let me say, I'm concerned that many Marylanders, including my constituents, are struggling to sign up for health insurance through the state-based Marketplace due to technical issues. With open enrollment coming to a close at the end of the month, I urge the Administration, state governments, and insurance carriers to come together to assist applicants in getting eligibility determinations and enrolling in coverage as soon as possible. I appreciated the guidance provided by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) last week that would allow consumers the possibility of qualifying retroactive health insurance, tax credits and cost-sharing assistance. It's critical that CMS clarify that those individuals who take retroactive coverage will be protected from any undue penalties for the months prior to the effective date of retroactive coverage.

The bill on the floor today is not about helping Marylanders or any other Americans, but rather about dismantling the Affordable Care Act and putting health insurance further out of reach for them. I want to be clear: the requirement that individuals take responsibility for ensuring they have adequate health insurance coverage was an idea espoused by the Heritage Foundation in the late 1980s. It was carefully crafted and includes exemptions for individuals facing hardships and those who can't afford insurance. Delaying the provision for everyone for a year, according to the Congressional Budget Office, would increase the number of uninsured by one million this year and two million in 2015, and lead to higher premiums. It's obvious that delaying the provision will undermine the protections and reforms that have taken effect and will introduce more instability into market.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the House leadership to put an end to these Affordable Care Act repeal votes. We want to work with you to identify parts of the law that can be improved and develop serious solutions. Unfortunately, today's bill is not one of them. I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 497, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. HORSFORD. I am in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Horsford moves to recommit the bill H.R. 4118 to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Add at the end the following new section:

SEC. 3 PROTECTING CONSUMERS FROM PREMIUM INCREASES AND DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to alter, impact, delay, or weaken—

(1) section 1402 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that reduces out-of-pocket costs and cost-sharing for individuals and families,

(2) sections 1001 and 1401 of such Act that provide tax credits and rebates for health insurance, or

(3) section 1201 of such Act that prohibits discrimination on the basis of pre-existing conditions and gender.

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order against the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nevada is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

This Republican bill represents the 50th attempt to undermine and repeal the Affordable Care Act. The Democratic motion to recommit lowers out-of-pocket costs, secures tax credits and rebates, and ensures no discrimination against those with preexisting conditions.

The bill would delay the individual responsibility provision of the Affordable Care Act to purchase health care by 1 year, which would directly impact the out-of-pocket costs of consumers and threaten the ability of millions of Americans with preexisting conditions to have health coverage.

The nonpartisan CBO estimates that the enactment of the Republican H.R. 4118 would increase the number of uninsured by 1 million in 2014, by 2 million in 2015, and by 1 million in 2016. That is 4 million Americans who would not have access to health insurance otherwise.

The White House pointed out this morning that the individual shared responsibility provision is essential to

ensuring that 129 million Americans with preexisting conditions can get coverage without being charged more or losing coverage when they get sick.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is just another example of House Republicans playing political games rather than working together to get things done for the American people. This is no longer about helping people. It never really was for the Republicans. These repeal votes are about ideological purity. They are about politics for the sake of politics. That is why people across America are frustrated and disappointed by this Congress—because this Chamber has become a bubble, and Republicans have stopped listening and have stopped working on anything productive.

It is not just on health care. It is on giving Americans a raise by increasing the Federal minimum wage. It is the refusal to bring up comprehensive immigration reform even though there are votes in the House to pass it. It is on unemployment insurance and on the failure of this Congress to extend benefits to now more than 2 million Americans who have lost coverage. It is about creating jobs and helping to improve and grow our infrastructure.

Now, this vote may seem routine. It may seem like this is just Congress' continuing Groundhog Day, but this is the 50th time that we have done this. We are wasting time, and we have a full docket of things that we need to be doing. This vote is a symptom of something very wrong in Washington, and it is time to wake up and to do something more than play Tea Party politics in this House. The bill offered by my colleagues on the other side would increase out-of-pocket costs to American consumers. It would increase health premiums and the number of uninsured Americans, and it hurts those with preexisting conditions.

Last year, I underwent a six-way bypass. Open heart surgery—no question—was terrifying, and when you are on an operating table in an emergency room, the last thing you should be focusing on is becoming medically bankrupt. You should be focusing on taking care of yourself and your family and on getting them the best care that you can. Whether it is heart disease, cancer, diabetes, or any other preexisting condition, people shouldn't go bankrupt because of an illness or a disease in this country.

Thankfully, my surgery went well. I was able to afford it. My heart condition is now a preexisting condition. There are thousands of my constituents who are in the same or worse boat but who are not financially well off. If we repeal or delay the Affordable Care Act, what are they supposed to do? There is no solution being offered by the House Republicans. It is not repeal and replace. It is repeal and return to a broken health care system. That is it. That is the Republicans' plan.

Last year, they passed H.R. 2668, a virtually identical bill to the one we are considering today. They have run out of ways to repeal this law, so now we are stuck on repeat. We should, instead, be focusing on renewing unemployment insurance benefits for 2 million struggling Americans, on passing comprehensive immigration reform so that we can fix the system that has got families torn apart, and on giving 30 million Americans a raise.

My motion to recommit would protect three of the most important provisions of the Affordable Care Act that are overwhelmingly supported by the American people: lower out-of-pocket costs for consumers, tax credits and rebates to purchase health care, and ensuring that no one in America can be denied coverage due to a preexisting condition in America.

It is time for this Congress to wake up and to do the right thing—to protect Americans and their health care.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1500

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my point of order and seek time in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The point of order is withdrawn.

The gentlewoman from Kansas is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, once again, the Democrats are simply missing the point. The President is the one who has delayed the employer mandate, the President has said this law is not ready, and the President has declined to extend the same flexibility to individuals.

This is about basic fairness. It is only fair that hardworking taxpayers are given the same treatment as businesses.

Like so many other provisions of the law that have been delayed, repealed, or declared unworkable, this is just another example that, despite the administration's promises, ObamaCare is not working for the American people.

I reject this motion.

Please support H.R. 4118, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of H.R. 4118, if ordered, and the motion to suspend the rules with regard to H.R. 2126.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 185, nays 227, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 96]

YEAS—185

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Clever
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson

Green, Al
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebbeck
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeke
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
O'Rourke

Owens
Pallone
Pascarella
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NAYS—227

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivoglio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon

Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines

Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCauley
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Rohy
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Posey
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—18

Chaffetz
Courtney
Crawford
DeLauro
Duffy
Esty
Frankel (FL)
Gosar
Green, Gene
Himes
Hinojosa
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Larson (CT)
McCarthy (NY)
Negrete McLeod
Pastor (AZ)
Schneider

□ 1529

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Messrs. FARENTHOLD, FRANKS of Arizona, REICHERT, PEARCE, and TERRY changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Messrs. BRADY of Pennsylvania, GRIJALVA, and SWALWELL of California changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for the vote on the Motion to Recommit with Instructions, rollcall vote 96, I would have voted "aye."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 250, nays 160, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 97]

YEAS—250

Amash	Graves (MO)	Peters (CA)
Amodei	Griffin (AR)	Peters (MI)
Bachmann	Griffith (VA)	Peterson
Bachus	Grimm	Petri
Barber	Guthrie	Pittenger
Barletta	Hall	Pitts
Barr	Hanna	Poe (TX)
Barrow (GA)	Harper	Pompeo
Barton	Harris	Posey
Benishek	Hartzler	Price (GA)
Bentivolio	Hastings (WA)	Rahall
Bera (CA)	Heck (NV)	Reed
Bilirakis	Hensarling	Reichert
Bishop (UT)	Herrera Beutler	Renacci
Black	Holding	Ribble
Blackburn	Hudson	Rice (SC)
Boustany	Huelskamp	Rigell
Brady (TX)	Huizenga (MI)	Roby
Bridenstine	Hultgren	Roe (TN)
Brooks (AL)	Hunter	Rogers (AL)
Brooks (IN)	Hurt	Rogers (KY)
Brownley (CA)	Issa	Rogers (MI)
Buchanan	Jenkins	Rohrabacher
Bucshon	Johnson (OH)	Rokita
Burgess	Jordan	Rooney
Bustos	Joyce	Ros-Lehtinen
Byrne	Kelly (PA)	Roskam
Calvert	King (IA)	Ross
Camp	King (NY)	Rothfus
Campbell	Kingston	Royce
Cantor	Kinzinger (IL)	Ruiz
Capito	Kline	Runyan
Carter	Kuster	Ryan (WI)
Cassidy	Labrador	Salmon
Chabot	LaMalfa	Sanford
Coble	Lamborn	Sanford
Coffman	Lance	Scallise
Cole	Lankford	Schock
Collins (GA)	Latham	Schweikert
Collins (NY)	Latta	Scott, Austin
Conaway	Lipinski	Sensenbrenner
Cook	LoBiondo	Sessions
Cotton	Long	Shea-Porter
Cramer	Lucas	Shimkus
Crenshaw	Luetkemeyer	Shuster
Culberson	Lummis	Simpson
Daines	Maffei	Sinema
Davis, Rodney	Marchant	Smith (MO)
Denham	Marino	Smith (NE)
Dent	Massie	Smith (NJ)
DeSantis	Matheson	Smith (TX)
DesJarlais	McAllister	Southerland
Diaz-Balart	McCarthy (CA)	Stewart
Duckworth	McCaul	Stivers
Duncan (SC)	McClintock	Stockman
Duncan (TN)	McHenry	Stutzman
Ellmers	McIntyre	Terry
Enyart	McKeon	Thompson (PA)
Farenthold	McKinley	Thornberry
Fincher	McMorris	Tiberi
Fitzpatrick	Rodgers	Tipton
Fleischmann	Meadows	Turner
Fleming	Meehan	Upton
Flores	Messer	Valadao
Forbes	Mica	Vela
Fortenberry	Miller (FL)	Wagner
Fox	Miller (MI)	Walberg
Franks (AZ)	Miller, Gary	Walden
Frelinghuysen	Mullin	Walorski
Gabbard	Mulvaney	Weber (TX)
Gallo	Murphy (FL)	Webster (FL)
Garamendi	Murphy (PA)	Wenstrup
Garcia	Neugebauer	Westmoreland
Gardner	Noem	Whitfield
Garrett	Nolan	Williams
Gerlach	Nugent	Wilson (SC)
Gibbs	Nunes	Wittman
Gibson	Nunnelee	Wolf
Gingrey (GA)	Olson	Womack
Gohmert	Owens	Woodall
Goodlatte	Palazzo	Yoder
Gowdy	Paulsen	Yoho
Granger	Pearce	Young (AK)
Graves (GA)	Perry	Young (IN)

NAYS—160

Bass	Grijalva	Neal
Beatty	Gutiérrez	O'Rourke
Becerra	Hahn	Pallone
Bishop (GA)	Hanabusa	Pascarell
Bishop (NY)	Hastings (FL)	Payne
Blumenauer	Heck (WA)	Pelosi
Bonamici	Higgins	Perlmutter
Brady (PA)	Holt	Pingree (ME)
Braley (IA)	Honda	Pocan
Broun (GA)	Horsford	Polis
Brown (FL)	Hoyer	Price (NC)
Butterfield	Huffman	Quigley
Capps	Israel	Rangel
Capuano	Jackson Lee	Richmond
Cárdenas	Jeffries	Roybal-Allard
Carney	Johnson (GA)	Rush
Carson (IN)	Johnson, E. B.	Ryan (OH)
Cartwright	Kaptur	Sánchez, Linda
Castor (FL)	Keating	T.
Castro (TX)	Kelly (IL)	Sanchez, Loretta
Chu	Kennedy	Sarbanes
Cicilline	Kildee	Schakowsky
Clark (MA)	Kilmer	Schiff
Clarke (NY)	Kind	Schrader
Clay	Kirkpatrick	Schwartz
Cleaver	Langevin	Scott (VA)
Clyburn	Larsen (WA)	Scott, David
Cohen	Lee (CA)	Serrano
Connolly	Levin	Sewell (AL)
Conyers	Lewis	Sherman
Cooper	Loeb sack	Sires
Costa	Lofgren	Slaughter
Crowley	Lowenthal	Smith (WA)
Cuellar	Lowey	Speier
Cummings	Lujan Grisham	Swalwell (CA)
Davis (CA)	(NM)	Takano
Davis, Danny	Luján, Ben Ray	Thompson (CA)
DeFazio	(NM)	Thompson (MS)
DeGette	Lynch	Tierney
Delaney	Maloney,	Titus
DelBene	Carolyn	Tonko
Deutch	Maloney, Sean	Tsongas
Dingell	Matsui	Van Hollen
Doggett	McCollum	Vargas
Doyle	McDermott	Veasey
Edwards	McGovern	Velázquez
Ellison	McNerney	Visclosky
Engel	Meeks	Walz
Eshoo	Meng	Wasserman
Farr	Michaud	Schultz
Fattah	Miller, George	Waters
Foster	Moore	Waxman
Fudge	Moran	Welch
Grayson	Nader	Wilson (FL)
Green, Al	Napolitano	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—20

Aderholt	Frankel (FL)	Larson (CT)
Chaffetz	Gosar	McCarthy (NY)
Courtney	Green, Gene	Negrete McLeod
Crawford	Himes	Pastor (AZ)
DeLauro	Hinojosa	Ruppersberger
Duffy	Johnson, Sam	Schneider
Esty	Jones	

□ 1538

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 97, H.R. 4118 would increase the number of uninsured. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for the vote On Passage of H.R. 4118, rollcall vote 97, I would have voted "no."

ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2126) to facilitate better

alignment, cooperation, and best practices between commercial real estate landlords and tenants regarding energy efficiency in buildings, and for other purposes, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 375, nays 36, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 98]

YEAS—375

Aderholt	Daines	Horsford
Amodei	Davis (CA)	Hoyer
Bachus	Davis, Danny	Hudson
Barber	Davis, Rodney	Huffman
Barletta	DeFazio	Huizenga (MI)
Barr	DeGette	Hultgren
Barrow (GA)	Delaney	Hunter
Beatty	DelBene	Hurt
Becerra	Denham	Israel
Benishek	Dent	Issa
Bentivolio	DesJarlais	Jackson Lee
Bera (CA)	Deutch	Jeffries
Bilirakis	Diaz-Balart	Jenkins
Bishop (GA)	Doggett	Johnson (GA)
Bishop (NY)	Doyle	Johnson (OH)
Bishop (UT)	Duckworth	Johnson, E. B.
Black	Duncan (TN)	Jordan
Blackburn	Edwards	Joyce
Blumenauer	Ellison	Kaptur
Bonamici	Ellmers	Keating
Boustany	Engel	Kelly (IL)
Brady (PA)	Enyart	Kelly (PA)
Braley (IA)	Eshoo	Kennedy
Brooks (AL)	Farenthold	Kildee
Brooks (IN)	Farr	Kilmer
Brown (FL)	Fattah	Kind
Brownley (CA)	Fincher	King (IA)
Buchanan	Fitzpatrick	King (NY)
Bucshon	Fleischmann	Kingston
Burgess	Flores	Kinzinger (IL)
Bustos	Forbes	Kirkpatrick
Butterfield	Fortenberry	Kline
Byrne	Foster	Kuster
Calvert	Fox	LaMalfa
Camp	Franks (AZ)	Lamborn
Cantor	Frelinghuysen	Lance
Capito	Fudge	Langevin
Capps	Gabbard	Larsen (WA)
Capuano	Gallo	Latham
Cárdenas	Garamendi	Latta
Carney	Garcia	Lee (CA)
Carson (IN)	Gardner	Levin
Cartwright	Garrett	Lewis
Cassidy	Gerlach	Lipinski
Castor (FL)	Gibbs	LoBiondo
Castro (TX)	Gibson	Loeb sack
Chabot	Gingrey (GA)	Lofgren
Chu	Goodlatte	Long
Cicilline	Gowdy	Lowenthal
Clark (MA)	Graves (MO)	Lowey
Clarke (NY)	Grayson	Lucas
Clay	Green, Al	Luetkemeyer
Cleaver	Griffin (AR)	Lujan Grisham
Clyburn	Grijalva	(NM)
Coble	Grimm	Luján, Ben Ray
Coffman	Guthrie	(NM)
Cohen	Gutiérrez	Lynch
Cole	Hahn	Maffei
Collins (GA)	Hall	Maloney
Collins (NY)	Hanabusa	Carolyn
Connolly	Hanna	Maloney, Sean
Conyers	Harper	Marino
Cook	Harris	Matheson
Cooper	Hartzler	Matsui
Costa	Hastings (FL)	McAllister
Cotton	Hastings (WA)	McCarthy (CA)
Cramer	Heck (NV)	McCaul
Crenshaw	Heck (WA)	McCollum
Crowley	Herrera Beutler	McDermott
Cuellar	Higgins	McGovern
Culberson	Holding	McHenry
Cummings	Holt	McIntyre

McKeon	Rahall	Smith (MO)
McKinley	Rangel	Smith (NE)
McMorris	Reed	Smith (NJ)
Rodgers	Reichert	Smith (TX)
McNerney	Renacci	Smith (WA)
Meadows	Rice (SC)	Southerland
Meehan	Richmond	Speier
Meeks	Rigell	Stewart
Meng	Roby	Stivers
Messer	Roe (TN)	Swalwell (CA)
Mica	Rogers (AL)	Takano
Michaud	Rogers (KY)	Terry
Miller (FL)	Rogers (MI)	Thompson (CA)
Miller (MI)	Rohrabacher	Thompson (MS)
Miller, Gary	Rokita	Thompson (PA)
Miller, George	Rooney	Tiberi
Moore	Ros-Lehtinen	Tierney
Moran	Roskam	Tipton
Mullin	Ross	Titus
Mulvaney	Rothfus	Tonko
Murphy (FL)	Roybal-Allard	Tsongas
Murphy (PA)	Royce	Turner
Nadler	Ruiz	Upton
Napolitano	Runyan	Valadao
Neal	Ruppersberger	Van Hollen
Noem	Rush	Vargas
Nolan	Ryan (OH)	Veasey
Nugent	Ryan (WI)	Vela
Nunes	Salmon	Velázquez
Nunnelee	Sánchez, Linda	Visclosky
O'Rourke	T.	Wagner
Olson	Sanchez, Loretta	Walberg
Owens	Sanford	Walden
Palazzo	Sarbanes	Walorski
Pallone	Schakowsky	Walz
Pascrell	Schiff	Wasserman
Paulsen	Schock	Schultz
Payne	Schrader	Waters
Pearce	Schwartz	Waxman
Pelosi	Schweikert	Webster (FL)
Perlmutter	Scott (VA)	Welch
Peters (CA)	Scott, Austin	Wenstrup
Peters (MI)	Scott, David	Westmoreland
Peterson	Sensenbrenner	Whitfield
Petri	Serrano	Williams
Pingree (ME)	Sessions	Wilson (FL)
Pittenger	Sewell (AL)	Wilson (SC)
Pitts	Shea-Porter	Wittman
Pocan	Sherman	Wolf
Poe (TX)	Shinkus	Womack
Polis	Shuster	Woodall
Pompeo	Simpson	Yarmuth
Price (GA)	Sinema	Yoder
Price (NC)	Sires	Young (AK)
Quigley	Slaughter	Young (IN)

NAYS—36

Amash	Duncan (SC)	Marchant
Bachmann	Fleming	Massie
Barton	Gohmert	McClintock
Bass	Granger	Neugebauer
Brady (TX)	Graves (GA)	Perry
Bridenstine	Griffith (VA)	Posey
Broun (GA)	Hensarling	Ribble
Campbell	Honda	Stockman
Carter	Huelskamp	Stutzman
Conaway	Labrador	Thornberry
DeSantis	Lankford	Weber (TX)
Dingell	Lummis	Yoho

NOT VOTING—19

Chaffetz	Gosar	McCarthy (NY)
Courtney	Green, Gene	Negrete McLeod
Crawford	Himes	Pastor (AZ)
DeLauro	Hinojosa	Scalise
Duffy	Johnson, Sam	Schneider
Esty	Jones	
Frankel (FL)	Larson (CT)	

□ 1546

Mr. POSEY changed his vote from "yea" to "nay."

Ms. LEE of California changed her vote from "nay" to "yea."

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to promote energy efficiency, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speakers, had I been present for rollcall vote 98 on passage of H.R. 2126, I would have voted "aye." I am proud of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for coming together in support of much-needed energy savings measures.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on March 5, 2014—I was not present for rollcall votes 93–98 due to an event in Connecticut with President Barack Obama. If I had been present for these votes, I would have voted: "nay" on rollcall vote 93, "nay" on rollcall vote 94, "aye" on rollcall vote 95, "aye" on rollcall vote 96, "nay" on rollcall vote 97, "aye" on rollcall vote 98.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. FRANKLE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote Nos. 96, 97, and 98, I was not present because of a dental emergency. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" for rollcall vote No. 96, "nay" on rollcall vote No. 97, and "yea" on rollcall vote No. 98.

ELECTRICITY SECURITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3826.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NUGENT). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 497 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3826.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1549

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3826) to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes, with Mr. FORTENBERRY in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) and the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chair, I rise this afternoon in support of H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act.

Recently, a constitutional law professor at George Washington University named Jonathan Turley issued a dire warning. Professor Turley said that he voted for President Obama in the last election, that he agrees philosophically with President Obama on many issues, but he said that, if left unchecked, the U.S. President could effectively become a government unto himself. He was referring to the fact that this President has been overly aggressive in the use of executive orders and regulations through various governmental agencies to accomplish his political goals.

The reason that we are here today is, with this legislation, it is our hope that we can overturn one of the most extreme regulations of the Obama administration.

In January of next year, it is anticipated that they will finalize a rule from EPA that will make it impossible to build a new coal-powered plant in America. That is hard to believe that that can be the situation in our great country, particularly since 40 percent of our electricity comes from coal. The reason that it would be impossible to build a new coal-powered plant because of these new EPA regulations is the fact that the emission standards have been set so high, and I might add that it is pretty clear that those emission standards, the way they were set, violates the Energy Security Act of 2005.

We have written a letter to EPA setting out our concerns. They still have not responded to us. We have talked to lawyers throughout the country who are ready to file a lawsuit if this happens because it is impossible to believe that the three plants in America that used to set the emission standards for new coal-powered plants, none of those plants are in existence today. None of them are operating today. So our legislation, we believe, is a reasonable approach to a serious problem for America.

I might add that 41 out of 50 States last year indicated that their electricity rates have gone up under the Obama administration. I know that the President is greatly concerned about the less fortunate in our society. He has talked a lot about the minimum wage bill, for example, but these electricity rates going up hit the most vulnerable in our society the most, particularly those on fixed incomes. Yet it is his policies that are driving up these electricity costs.

So the legislation that we have on the floor today is very simple. First of all, it acknowledges for the first time by legislation that EPA can regulate greenhouse gases. This bill goes farther than any other bill has. So you can

regulate greenhouse gases, but when you set the emissions standard, the unit must be in operation for a period of time. It must be commercially available to the utilities to buy it, as opposed to the proposed regulation in which the technology is simply not available.

So our legislation, as I said, we don't anticipate a new coal-powered plant to be built anytime soon in America because our natural gas prices are so low. But in Europe, which it is acknowledged is the green sector of the world, they mothballed 30 gigawatts of gas-powered plants in the last 20 months because the gas prices coming from Russia are so expensive that it is raising their electricity rates to such an extent that it is damaging the area. With our legislation, if those gas prices go up, an option available to the American people, to the American utility sector, is they can go out and build a coal-powered plant with reasonable regulations.

Then the second thing that our legislation does—and when I say “our,” I am talking about Senator JOE MANCHIN, a Democrat from West Virginia, has introduced this bill in the U.S. Senate. I, along with Democratic support, was able to get it out of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

So this debate is vitally important today because the President is going so fast, in such an extreme way, that it would make it impossible to use coal in America with a new plant, and we have never had a national debate on the issue. So today we can at least have this debate.

The second thing that our legislation does applies to existing plants. EPA said they are going to regulate existing coal plants. We say go ahead and do it, set the standards, but Congress will set the effective date for that regulation.

It is a very simple piece of legislation, one that I think is necessary to protect the American people and to ensure that America remains competitive in the global marketplace.

In addition to that, I want to make one other comment. Emissions from the energy sector in America are the lowest, CO₂ emissions are the lowest that they have been in 20 years. So America does not have to take a backseat to anyone on having a clean emission standard and regulation.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, Kofi Annan, the former Secretary-General of the United Nations wrote in *The Washington Post* earlier this year:

Climate change is the biggest challenge of our time. It threatens the well-being of hundreds of millions of people today, and many billions more in time.

Robert Rubin, the former Treasury Secretary, said recently:

There are a lot of really significant monumental issues facing the global economy, but this supersedes them all.

The Energy and Commerce Committee is the committee in the House that has the power to tackle this monumental issue, the biggest challenge of our time, but we are missing in action. Instead of listening to the scientists and working on a bipartisan basis to protect the planet for our children and future generations, we are considering today a science denial bill that would strip the EPA of authority to stop dangerous carbon pollution.

The venerable JOHN DINGELL, the longtime chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, is famously known for pointing to a photo of the Earth, which I have here to the right, to describe the committee's jurisdiction. Under his leadership, the committee was known for listening to the experts, tackling the toughest problems, and crafting responsible science-based policies. But today we need a new symbol to represent what we are doing.

The Energy and Commerce Committee has joined The Flat Earth Society. We considered a very similar bill to this one last Congress.

Here is what *Nature*, one of the world's leading science journals, said at the time:

Misinformation was presented as fact, truth was twisted, and nobody showed any inclination to listen to scientists, let alone learn from them. It has been an embarrassing display, not just for the Republican Party, but also for Congress and the U.S. citizens it represents.

□ 1600

It is hard to escape the conclusion that the U.S. Congress has entered the intellectual wilderness—The Flat Earth Society.

The United States is a major contributor to climate change. It cannot be stopped without us. We have a moral responsibility to act, but the Republican majority has brought a bill to the floor that does just the opposite. It makes the problem worse by preventing EPA from acting.

If we pass this terrible bill, we will vote to let China leap ahead of us in the race to build the clean energy economy for the future, and we will be ignoring our moral obligation to protect the planet for our children and grandchildren.

As you might have guessed, I strongly oppose this bill. Future generations will be appalled that we are considering it today. Coal-fired power plants are the largest single source of carbon pollution in the country. Today, there is no limit on how much carbon pollution these power plants can emit. That is why President Obama directed the Environmental Protection Agency to use its existing authority under law, under the Clean Air Act, to require power plants to control carbon pollu-

tion. EPA has proposed a rule to require new coal plants to use available pollution control technology to capture and sequester carbon. For existing coal plants, EPA is working with stakeholders to think through the best approach. H.R. 3826, the bill under consideration today, would stop EPA from issuing any rules and allow these plants to continue to keep emitting unlimited amounts of carbon pollution.

Republicans complain they don't like EPA's approach, but they won't even admit climate change is a problem, much less accept the President's invitation to work together on a solution. Instead, they want to pass a bill to deny the problem, block EPA action, and weaken the Clean Air Act.

My message to my Republican colleagues is simple: if you don't like what EPA is doing, tell us your plan. If you have other ideas for reducing carbon pollution to prevent catastrophic climate change, let's hear about them. If you don't, you should step aside and let the President lead.

Today is an embarrassing day for our committee on Energy and Commerce and the U.S. House of Representatives if this bill is to be passed. I hope that does not come about.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, at this time I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the majority whip.

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Mr. Chairman, in 2008 in an interview with the *San Francisco Chronicle*, President Obama warned us that under his policies for energy, “electricity rates will necessarily skyrocket.” Now it appears with high electricity costs, that this is a promise that the President chose to keep.

Today, millions of Americans are suffering from one of the coldest winters in recent memory, and in some cases, the most expensive. In New York, some homes are seeing their heating bills double, but it doesn't have to be this way. The U.S. is currently enjoying a revolution in energy production, the energy that heats our homes and keeps us warm during the cold winter nights. Americans across the country should be celebrating this breakthrough. In an economy where the Nation's income today is lower than in the year 2000, abundant energy should provide a sense of relief to strained budgets, but because of this administration's policies, Americans are simply left out in the cold with their energy bills.

First, the Democrats tried cap-and-trade, but that failed in a Democrat-led Congress. Now this administration has proposed arguably the most expensive regulation ever by the EPA, one that would render the construction of any future coal power plant impossible through the mandating of technology that isn't readily attainable.

Today, coal accounts for 37 percent of total U.S. electricity production. The EPA's regulation will cost approximately \$1,200 per household per year in lost income. That is \$100 more a month. Most importantly, this regulation will cause the greatest amount of harm, lost jobs, diminished incomes, and higher electricity bills in areas where incomes are modest, as are the lifestyles of those who live there. It isn't the rich on Fifth Avenue or in Beverly Hills who will be impacted; it is the American working class. Communities like Indiana's Second District, home to our good friend, Congresswoman JACKIE WALORSKI; or Ohio's Fourth District, home to our friend JIM JORDAN; or the First District, home to Chairman RYAN; or even Wisconsin's Second or Iowa's First District, both represented by my colleagues on the other side. All will be unnecessarily hurt by this regulation.

For all the talk from my colleagues on the other side of the aisle about fairness, this regulation is profoundly unfair. The Electricity Security and Affordability Act sponsored by my friend, ED WHITFIELD, rejects the administration's back door attacks on America's energy bills. This legislation restores opportunity and fairness by ensuring more American paychecks do not unnecessarily go to expanding electricity and heating costs.

Mr. Chairman, at a time when energy production is booming, the cost per family should be dropping, not rising. I suppose the President actually held true to another promise: he has promised an all-the-above energy policy. I had hoped that meant increasing energy production from all sources, not increasing prices on all consumers.

I urge my colleagues to reject the President's plan for higher energy costs and support this legislation.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, the previous speaker said that heating oil prices are going up, energy costs are going up. Well, if they are going up, it is not because of what President Obama has done by regulation because he has not adopted any regulations through EPA. The bill before us would stop any regulations from being adopted under current law. They would change the current law and say nothing could be adopted in the future.

The chairman of the Subcommittee on Energy made the statement no coal power plants are being proposed, yet what he is also suggesting is that we not allow them to be built in the future should they want to be built in a way that would reduce the pollution of carbon. What is unfair, it seems to me what is unfair is that coal-burning power plants can burn all the coal they want and put out all the pollution they want, and we are allowing it even though everyone is suffering from the consequences. So I find it amazing to hear the arguments: One, coal burning

power plants are not going to be built; on the other hand, we are already paying higher prices and nothing has even been passed by the EPA and put into effect.

At this time I yield 5 minutes to my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY).

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Chairman, I thank the ranking member for yielding to me, and I want to talk about this bill, H.R. 3826. Basically from where I can see, H.R. 3826 will essentially prevent the EPA from limiting coal-fired power plant emissions, including health-endangering pollution as well as carbon. We are all interested in health, but I want to talk about carbon pollution.

Climate change is one of the most important national issues we face right now, and the evidence for climate change is overwhelming, whether it is superstorms that are occurring more regularly, whether it is record-changing drought, whether it is migration patterns of biological systems, melting of the polar icecaps and the related issue, ocean acidification, all of these current phenomenon are very dangerous and very threatening. The leading scientists of this Nation and around the world agree that this is a threat, that it is a problem. In fact, about 97 percent of planet scientists believe this is a problem, and the predictions and the models for the climate sciences are horrifying enough. Unfortunately, actual measurements and actual predictions and happenings are worse than the predictions, than the actual models are predicting, so we are facing a very dangerous situation.

I ask my colleagues, Why are you willing to take this risk? Climate change is a very big problem. It is a very big risk. Ninety-seven percent of the scientists agree it is a risk, and yet we are going to say it is not really a risk, we can worry about that later. No, we have to worry about it right now, today.

The good news out there is that carbon-capture sequestration technology is coming along pretty well. What this bill would do, unfortunately, is prevent carbon-sequestration technology from being adopted in power plants. I submit that allowing carbon sequestration technology to be developed is in the interest of the coal industry. If the technology is developed and climate change keeps happening, which it is, then the public is going to demand that we incorporate climate change, carbon sequestration technology, and if it is not there, then coal plants are going to be shut down.

So now, when we have the opportunity when technology is being developed, there is money being spent by the Federal Government and by private industry to develop carbon-capture sequestration, let's go ahead and take advantage of that, implement it in our

power plants on a limited basis now so when the need is there, it will be available. I don't understand why that is being ignored.

H.R. 3826 ignores that and other possibilities. It prohibits us from using existing carbon capture projects in the United States as a technical basis for implementing that technology in coal-fired power plants. We must take advantage of this technology in the United States and abroad. We shouldn't prevent the development of this technology. CS technology is improving. It is becoming more cost effective, and it is becoming more effective technologically. It is in the best interests of the long-term coal industry, and I strongly urge opposition to this bill.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. I would just reiterate that America doesn't have to take a backseat to anyone on its emissions from energy sources. Our emissions today are lower than they were 20 years ago. Why should the U.S. unilaterally take this extreme position and other countries around the world, particularly in Europe and in Asia, are using coal and using coal, and we don't even have the flexibility to do that when they finalize this rule. So that is what we are up to today.

At this time I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Chairman, many families and businesses have had to spend more to heat their homes this cold and snowy winter. Unfortunately, regulations recently introduced by unelected elites in President Obama's EPA will increase their utility and electricity bills further.

These regulations effectively ban new power plants by forcing them to meet an emissions standard that cannot be achieved with any commercially available technology. They are unworkable and unaffordable, and will result in more lost jobs.

I stand in solidarity with the hard-working coal miners, power plant workers, steelworkers, boilermakers, carpenters, and truck drivers, but the victims of the President's war on affordable energy are the families and businesses whose energy costs are skyrocketing, and the workers who are losing their jobs and incomes because of these regulations.

I strongly support H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act. The bill will direct the EPA to adopt new coal-fired power plant emission standards that make sense and subject any new regulations on existing power plants to congressional review, where the people's Representatives can be held accountable.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to approve this job-saving bill.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, House Republicans are telling us greenhouse

gas emissions are falling in the United States. They suggest the U.S. doesn't need to do anything more about climate change, but they couldn't be more wrong.

A couple of years ago when the utilities were switching out of coal and going to natural gas because natural gas was cheaper, we saw some leveling off of those emissions, but what matters most is whether the U.S. emissions are on track to decline in the future by the amount needed to prevent dangerous climate change.

□ 1615

Scientists say we need to reduce carbon pollution by 80 percent by 2050, but will not get anywhere near that level of reductions if we go about business as usual and stop EPA from acting and Congress doing nothing to respond to this emergency.

At this time, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlelady from California (Mrs. CAPPS), a member of our committee.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague for yielding.

There is an argument on the other side of the aisle—in fact, we heard it just a few minutes ago—that we shouldn't take action to address climate change because doing so will hurt poor people.

That is a particularly galling statement because the truth is that the world's poorest have the most to lose if we don't take urgent action to cut carbon pollution.

Poor people are on the front lines of climate change. World Bank President Jim Yong Kim says that, unless we address climate change, "We could witness the rolling back of decades of development gains and force tens of millions more to live in poverty."

According to the United Nations Development Programme, without coordinated global action to address climate and environmental threats, 3 billion more people could be pushed into extreme poverty by 2050.

That is the reality. The world's poorest will be the most affected by the impacts of climate change, and yet they have the fewest resources to adapt to or respond to it.

To hear the other side tell it, the only way to protect the health and well-being of poor people is to weaken EPA's ability to cut carbon pollution, and that is nonsense.

It is time to stop denying the science and accept reality. We need to take action now to cut carbon pollution. The longer we wait, the higher the costs will be, especially for the poor.

Indeed, addressing climate change is in the economic self-interest of all of us. Consider recent comments by Robert Rubin, who was a universally respected Treasury secretary.

During his tenure, the budget deficit was reduced from \$290 billion to \$70 billion, the Dow Jones Industrial Average

more than tripled, unemployment decreased to 4.3 percent, and more than 18 million new jobs were created.

Senator Bob Dole described Secretary Rubin as a man of honesty and integrity. Alan Greenspan called him one of the most effective secretaries of the Treasury in this Nation's history. When he resigned in 1999, Secretary Rubin received glowing tributes from Democrats and Republicans alike.

Over the past year, Secretary Rubin has focused on the threat of climate change to our economic well-being. Here is what he said about climate change a few weeks ago: "There are a lot of really significant monumental issues facing the global economy, but this one supersedes all else."

Experts are telling us that inaction on climate change threatens the global economy. Responding to this threat isn't about disadvantaging ourselves; it is about seizing opportunities. There are already 143,000 solar jobs and 80,000 wind jobs in the United States.

Winning the global clean energy race will mean millions of jobs and faster economic growth. Our competitors in China and Europe understand this. We risk being left behind if we don't recognize it as well. We should abandon this bill and start getting serious about climate change and the economy.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining on both sides?

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. YODER). The gentleman from Kentucky has 19 minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 16 minutes remaining.

Mr. WHITFIELD. At this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI).

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3826. I appreciate Congressman WHITFIELD's leadership on this commonsense bill. I am proud to be an original cosponsor.

This bill addresses President Obama's sweeping proposed rule for new power plants, which set the mediation standard so strict that the creation of a new coal-fired power plant is virtually impossible.

Indiana is the backbone of manufacturing in America, but manufacturing depends on affordable energy. More than 80 percent of Indiana's electricity is coal-powered, and electricity rates in Indiana are expected to rise 32 percent by 2023, partly due to these EPA regulations.

If President Obama is able to implement his radical environmental agenda, energy prices could skyrocket, having a devastating impact on economic growth and job creating and hurting Hoosiers trying to pay their bills.

This bill provides a commonsense way to protect our environment by setting emission standards that are actually achievable.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL).

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the ranking member of the Energy and Commerce Committee yielding me this time, especially since we do not see eye to eye on this particular piece of legislation.

We do see eye to eye on numerous other issues before the Congress and the American people, such as protecting the health and safety of our Nation's coal miners and our American workers; and, indeed, we all, both sides of the aisle, share the common goal of wanting to provide clean water, clean air, and health and safety for our families each and every day of the year. In that sense, we all have that common ground.

There is a fear though in the coal fields today. I really wish the distinguished Majority Whip on that side of the aisle had mentioned my home State of West Virginia, one of the largest coal-producing States in the country when he mentioned and was going district by district about the various people that are going to be affected by these proposed regulations.

I do rise in support of H.R. 3826 as a cosponsor. I commend my coal country colleague, ED WHITFIELD, for his leadership on this issue and bringing it through his committee.

Those of us from the coal-producing regions of this country have truly become sick and tired—sick and tired—of this EPA turning out anti-coal regulations, while showing little or no appreciation of how these regulations will affect the lives and the livelihoods of the real people who have to work and live under them.

Granted, some are proposals; but, nevertheless, I remind my colleagues, it strikes fear—it strikes fear—in the very heart and soul of coal country.

Many of our coal companies that are laying off workers, as we speak, have this fear of what is coming down the pike as a main factor in laying off workers today.

Granted, there are many other factors affecting the current slump in the coal fields. I don't deny that for one minute; but we have been frustrated—frustrated—with an EPA that has, time after time and time again, pushed out piles of guidance documents, regulations, using slanted science, and inflating claims about the benefits of their regulatory agenda without any consideration—one iota—of the affects upon jobs—the affects upon jobs in the real America that their regulatory agenda means.

Last September, when the EPA proposed regulations limiting greenhouse gas emissions for future power plants, it did so hinged upon the promise that the technologies required to achieve the new standards were proven and ready.

Based on this claim, we have to question whether this EPA is actually using good, sound science or if it is picking and choosing science that sounds good to meet whatever ends the agency desires.

There are no power plants—there are no power plants in commercial service anywhere in the world that have installed and operated the CCS technologies necessary to comply with the proposed rule—none, nada.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WAXMAN. I yield an additional minute to the gentleman.

Mr. RAHALL. I thank the distinguished ranking member again.

The proposed greenhouse gas rule for new power plants may be the mother of all anti-coal regulatory measures so far promoted by this particular EPA. It spells curtains for the development of new coal-fired capacity in this country. That means decreased energy reliability and increased costs for American families and businesses.

What is more, the agency readily admits that the new regulations will have nearly zero impact on the emissions of greenhouse gases as economies around the globe continue to grow their use of coal power.

That is why this legislation is so important. It would block the EPA from unilaterally imposing these caps, requiring that any such efforts be approved by the Congress.

It would help set a course for the development of cutting-edge CCS technologies needed to ensure reliable, affordable coal-fired energy for America throughout the foreseeable future.

For those of us from coal country, this legislation is fundamental to preserving the jobs of our coal miners, those who work hard every day, going beneath the bowels of this Earth to produce the energy that fuels this Nation and the economies of our communities and, indeed, a national energy security for the United States.

I urge support of this legislation.

Mr. WHITFIELD. At this time, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, my thanks to Mr. WHITFIELD, my colleague from Kentucky, and also my thanks to my colleague who I am lucky to follow, Mr. RAHALL from West Virginia, for talking about such an important issue to my district in central Illinois.

One of the reasons I am here, Mr. Chairman, is because I saw the devastation. The largest employer in my home county 20 years ago closed down because of a signature on a piece of paper here in Washington, D.C.

Peabody Mine No. 10 shut down its coal mining families. Families whose children I went to school with and grew up with were forced to move to get a job once again.

Now, we see this attack via the EPA on coal in middle America once again. I stand here today with my colleagues to say this bill is a commonsense proposal that is going to restrict the EPA's ability to overreach and cost families—all families, even the poorest families in this country—it is going to cost them more out of their family budget to turn the light switch on; it is going to cost jobs in my district at existing coal-fired power plants.

They are some of the best jobs in central Illinois. They are organized labor jobs. This is about jobs; this is about the economy; and this is about low-cost power that allows our economy to grow.

That is what we all want, Mr. Chairman, isn't it?

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to point out that the speakers in favor of this bill describe themselves as part of the coal-producing regions of the country. They are representing, they think, the coal-producing regions of the country because they fear, if the coal industry had to use some technology that would reduce carbon emissions, that would cost jobs.

I want to dispute that in two respects. One, they claim that no one is using this technology, and that is not accurate. In fact, the control technology is already in effect, being used commercially in the United States for decades. There are seven large commercial CCS—that is carbon capture and sequestration—projects operating today.

Dr. Julio Friedmann, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Clean Coal at the U.S. Department of Energy, recently testified: "First generation CCS technology is commercially available today."

So why are they worried about jobs? They are being told by the coal miners that, if they have to use a technology that costs money, that would raise the price of coal and, therefore, coal will lose out to other technologies.

Well, that hasn't been the case. I have been in Congress for 40 years. I remember the coal industry coming in and saying: If we have to put scrubbers on, we will go broke; they will never burn coal again.

The coal industry uses scrubbers right now. The cost of scrubbers has gone down. They overstated how much it would cost. They cried about the lost jobs. It didn't happen.

The other thing I want to point out is that they talk about the coal jobs that will be lost. Well, coal jobs are being lost now because the utilities realize they can burn natural gas. It is cheaper, so coal is losing out in the market.

If natural gas is cheaper than burning coal now, they are going to burn natural gas. That is called the market. It is like cars replacing horse and buggies.

But the reality is that coal is going to be able to compete if we have new technologies imposed on them, just as they have been able to compete in the future. They can't compete if they are expensive, so they have got to figure out ways to produce coal that is less expensive.

That may happen, but we shouldn't subsidize coal to compete by having the world have to deal with carbon pollution.

□ 1630

We decided years ago that we weren't going to help coal compete by poisoning people with toxic mercury pollution when we required they use the technology to stop toxic mercury pollution. We decided they had to use scrubbers. They said they would go broke, that they couldn't afford it, that people would lose their jobs, but we required it because it reduced pollution that harmed people. Carbon pollution harms people on this planet, as we see the impact of climate change continue, because we refuse to require them to use less carbon and spew it out into the atmosphere.

Let me just say that you don't have to buy all of the arguments on climate change, but consider this: if there is a 10 percent chance that carbon pollution is going to cause greenhouse gases and climate change and do all of the terrible things that the scientists overwhelmingly tell us will happen, how many people want to take that 10 percent chance on the only atmosphere that we share on this planet?

I know that the coal people say they are willing to take that chance. They are afraid their constituents will turn against them because the coal companies will tell them to turn against them. They may lose their next elections. I don't think that is the case, but that is their fear. They are speaking from fear. They are speaking from a fear of jobs being lost, but that hasn't been the experience under the Clean Air Act, and we shouldn't repeal the Clean Air Act now as it relates to giving the EPA the authority to regulate these coal-burning power plants.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I can assure you we are not speaking from fear today. I can assure you we are not being parochial about coal. Coal is still the base load for this country—for manufacturing, industrial use, electricity at home, and for our ability to compete in the world.

I have great admiration and respect for the gentleman from California, and I am sorry that he has made the decision to leave Congress after having a distinguished career, but I can tell you there is no power plant operating in America today that is using carbon capture and sequestration, because the technology is not available.

Now, there are some plants being built with government support and would not be built without that government support, but they are not in operation. There is a difference. When scrubbers were mandated by the EPA, scrubbers were already being put in plants at private expense. The government didn't pay for those scrubbers. They were already being used. Unlike this proposed regulation, there is no technology available to meet the emission standard, so there is a significant difference in what has happened and what is being proposed.

At this time, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON), the distinguished chairman of the full Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Chairman, today, we are going to continue our pursuit of an all-of-the-above energy strategy, taking up legislation to address the EPA's pending greenhouse gas rules for power plants, which is the latest threat by the Obama administration to affordable and reliable energy.

While the President may boast support for an all-of-the-above strategy, his policies have been anything but. The President's approach seeks to limit our energy choices, to jeopardize jobs, to raise energy costs, and, indeed, to threaten America's global competitiveness.

Our Nation has become the envy of the world because of recent breakthroughs unlocking vast amounts of oil and natural gas, but the game-changing developments do not give cause to regulate an entire fuel category out of the mix—gone—especially a resource that comprises, today, 40 percent of the fuel that provides affordable electricity for millions of Americans and countless job creators. Given that the U.S. has the world's largest coal reserves and is the largest producer of coal, it should remain a critical contributor to a diverse electricity portfolio for decades to come. We should proudly embrace that we are the Saudi Arabia of coal reserves.

Fuel diversity gives us the flexibility to keep electricity costs low and to ensure reliability, particularly for the most vulnerable. As we have heard from many witnesses in hearings, the coal-fired power plant shutdowns already underway pose a serious threat to reliability in many regions, particularly in the Midwest. That threat will continue to get worse if the shutdowns increase in the years ahead while we will limit our options for new base load power. In sum, fuel diversity gives us a more stable, reliable, and affordable electricity supply, and any threat to coal, including the EPA's pending rules, is a threat to that diversity and a threat to affordable energy.

I applaud both Chairman WHITFIELD and Senator MANCHIN for their efforts in authoring a workable bipartisan and bicameral alternative to the EPA's

pending power plant rules. Their legislation is a good faith effort that requires a critical check on the EPA's misuse of the Clean Air Act to try to accomplish through regulation what was rejected by Congress through legislation.

Their approach does not prohibit the EPA from setting a standard for new plants, but, instead, it focuses on setting standards that have been adequately demonstrated—a key ingredient missing from the EPA's regulatory proposal. Just in the last 2 weeks, as Mr. WHITFIELD indicated, we have heard testimony from administration officials that carbon capture technologies, which are not yet commercially viable, could increase electricity costs by, perhaps, as much as 80 percent. This important legislation provides a role for Congress in setting the effective date for any regulation for existing plants.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire how much time we have on both sides?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 7 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Kentucky has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RENACCI).

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act.

The United States is fortunate to have more coal than any other country in the world. This vital resource is currently used to meet nearly half of our electricity needs and to support over 550,000 jobs.

As a Representative of Ohio, a State that produces more than 24 million tons of coal per year and uses it to generate over 50 percent of our electricity, I understand firsthand the importance of keeping this abundant and affordable natural resource a part of America's energy supply. Unfortunately, over the past 5 years, this administration's policies have led to the closure of hundreds of coal-fired plants across the country. In fact, in just 1 year, Ohio's coal-generated electricity dropped nearly 20 percent as a result of the current regulatory environment.

The EPA's recently proposed greenhouse gas standards for new coal-fired plants are only the latest example of the administration's regulatory assault on America's power sector. Not only do these standards rely on a technology that is not even commercially viable at this point, but they will also lead to the loss of thousands of jobs and drive up the price of energy for American families and businesses that are already struggling to make ends meet. Ohio alone stands to lose an estimated 18,000 manufacturing jobs by 2023 as a

result of these overreaching regulations. More than 1,000 of these jobs will be in my district. These estimates do not even include job losses by coal miners, utility workers, and all of those impacted directly by plant closures.

Rising energy costs are one of the main problems facing many hard-working Americans. While we are all impacted by these rules, it is the most vulnerable citizens who, unfortunately, will be hit the hardest. It is the 387,000 Ohioans who are living well below the poverty line and who spend almost 30 percent of their incomes on energy costs that these standards will hurt the most. These standards are not just an attack on coal; they are an attack on those individuals who are having to choose between paying their electric bills and providing the basic necessities for their families.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WHITFIELD. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. RENACCI. The bill before us today offers a realistic alternative to the EPA's misguided and unachievable approach to regulating new and existing power plants. I applaud Representative WHITFIELD's efforts on this critical piece of legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Indiana, Congresswoman BROOKS.

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3826 because, late last year, the EPA Administrator, Gina McCarthy, went on a listening tour through America to hear from the public about reducing carbon pollution from existing power plants. Unfortunately, the Administrator declined to go to those States most affected by the proposed regulations and, instead, opted to visit San Francisco, Seattle, and Boston. It is unfortunate that her stops didn't include places like my home State of Indiana, which stands to lose much from these misguided regulations.

If Ms. McCarthy had taken the time to visit Indiana or other States like Indiana, she would have heard from people like Nina, in Anderson, who wrote me an anxious letter about what penalizing the coal industry would do to families on fixed incomes. She explained her church already has had to help many families pay for their electric bills, and she worries about how her community will cope when the EPA's new regulations are enacted.

I wish I could tell Nina not to worry, but, sadly, her fears are very much warranted because the new regulations will have catastrophic impacts on our Hoosier economy. The State Utility Forecasting Group at Purdue University has estimated that, like Ohio, Indiana's electrical rates will increase 32

percent by 2023 because of EPA rules. The price increase will hurt every Hoosier who turns on a light switch. It will also cost up to 17,000 jobs in Indiana and permanently ruin the prestige that our State enjoys as being one of the Nation's most business-friendly States.

That is why I am proud to be a cosponsor of this important bill, which finally puts the brakes on unchecked EPA regulations and injects much-needed congressional oversight and consultation into the rulemaking agenda. We all have an obligation to leave the world a better place for our children and future generations, but we can't do it when we take away jobs and hurt the economy. That is why I support this bill, and I encourage all of my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER).

Mr. CRAMER. Thank you, Chairman WHITFIELD.

Mr. Chairman, I think pretty much everybody I talk to around here is familiar with the fact that North Dakota has 25,000 job openings with fewer than 10,000 people looking for work. It is not an accident. It helps, for sure, to have an 800-year supply of coal under the ground, to have some oil and some gas, but it also is an indication of a regulatory and tax climate that champions work, that champions investment, that doesn't apologize for having the lowest priced electricity rates in the country most times of the year. We also have a robust manufacturing economy as a result of those same policies.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that America's economic security and America's national security depend on America's energy security. I would love to see every Member of this body go to North Dakota and see what that type of development looks like. I would also like to have them breathe some of the cleanest air, see some of the cleanest water and some of the richest topsoil in the world. We are very proud of the fact that we can feed a hungry world while also meeting the growing demands of our economy.

If you really believe that there are several carbon-capture technology projects that are viable on power plants in this country, you should love this bill, because this bill actually prepares the standard for measuring that. It simply states that, for 12 consecutive months, six power plants—six different units—should be able to demonstrate it, with three of them being, of course, lignite, which is what we mine in North Dakota.

We don't have to compromise quality of life for a high standard of living—we don't do it in North Dakota, and we can replicate it across this country—but the EPA's overreach will hurt that.

I think this bill actually helps it, and I am very proud of my colleague Mr. WHITFIELD for his bicameral-bipartisan approach to this problem and to the solution that he has come up with. I urge all of my colleagues to vote for it.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, how much time is remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Kentucky has 5½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from California has 7 minutes remaining.

Mr. WAXMAN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to say that it was unfortunate to make a reference personally to Gina McCarthy, the head of the Environmental Protection Agency, on her listening tour. The Republicans have not allotted enough money to the EPA to let her go everywhere in the country, so she went to 10 regional offices as well as the Washington headquarters, and she invited people to come in and give their points of view.

□ 1645

That is the full amount of money she had available to her. So it seems to be unfair to criticize her for not going to every nook and cranny in coal country, when she went to every part of the country and had representation for those regions.

At this time I yield 3 minutes to my colleague from the State of California (Mr. PETERS).

Mr. PETERS of California. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, proponents of this bill are arguing, in part, that EPA's plan to require carbon pollution controls under section 111 is going to hurt electric utilities. But it was just last month in the Utility Air Regulation Group v. EPA case that those same leading utilities argued to the Supreme Court that if EPA intends to address climate carbon pollution, it should act under section 111, which is what this bill would prevent EPA from doing.

The Utility Air Regulatory Group represents about 60 utilities, from Duke Energy, the Southern Company, FirstEnergy, to the Salt River Project. On February 24, they told the Supreme Court that this was the appropriate way for EPA to address carbon pollution from utilities under section 111. That is exactly what the EPA would do, if it were not for this law.

I know there may be some ideological desire to deny climate change and simply hope that the issue goes away, but that is not going to happen.

More fundamentally, what we are getting caught up in today is this false choice that you hear over and over again that you have to choose, on one hand, between a healthy environment and, on the other hand, a prosperous economy. Americans deserve nothing less than both. We have to pay attention to this.

I just offer comments from some of our leading health organizations—the

American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Preventive Medicine, the American Lung Association, the American Public Health Association, and others—who point out:

Cleaning up carbon pollution and other greenhouse gases saves lives. Researchers found that efforts enacted now to reduce greenhouse gases, including carbon pollution from all sources in the United States, would prevent more than 16,000 premature deaths by 2030. The lives saved are a result of reductions in the ozone- and particulate-forming pollution that is also reduced as carbon is reduced. Cleaning up carbon pollution from power plants is essential to saving those lives.

We know, in turn, that will save money.

So it is important to remember, too, the economic effect of unregulated carbon does not just extend to the climate but also to the by-products of clean air that come and help our economy and help people be healthy and ultimately contribute to the economy.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3826. I appreciate the work that the bill's sponsor, Mr. WHITFIELD, has done on this issue, and I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this bill.

Wisconsin relies on coal for roughly two-thirds of our electricity production. Energy costs are consistently one of the many concerns my constituents share with me. The cold winter has made high energy bills the norm throughout Wisconsin. Instead of trying to alleviate these high costs, the EPA is pursuing policies that will drive energy prices even higher.

The EPA's New Source Performance Standards require that now power plants capture, compress, and store about 40 percent of the CO₂ produced in order to be compliant. However, the CCS technology required has not been adequately demonstrated. Ignoring the realities of today's technologies, the EPA is plowing full speed ahead.

This action clearly marks yet another salvo in the Obama administration's war on coal. The next volley will be the rules concerning existing power plants. If done incorrectly, these new rules could effectively make it too expensive for our coal-fired power plants to continue operating. While this might be the dream of some, my constituents and yours simply cannot afford it.

Fortunately, this bill restores common sense to the EPA's rulemaking process for power plants. By setting reasonable guidelines on the rules concerning new plants and subjecting any rules for current plants to congressional oversight, the bill will ensure that our constituents are able to afford their energy costs.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and prevent the EPA from

unleashing chaos in the energy sector and picking the pockets of consumers.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire how much time we have remaining on each side?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California has 4 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Kentucky has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from the State of Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), a great champion of environmental protection.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, Mr. WAXMAN. I appreciate your leadership and courtesy in permitting me to speak on this bill.

Mr. Chair, I would like to reference the comments a moment ago that somehow there isn't available large commercial carbon capture sequestration and that this is somehow a figment. As a matter of fact, in the United States today, there are seven large commercial carbon capture sequestration projects operating today. The projects at large commercial coal-fired power plants will come online in the United States and Canada this year.

Dr. Julio Friedmann, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Clean Coal at the U.S. Department of Energy, recently testified that:

First generation CCS technology is commercially available today. You can call up a number of U.S. and international manufacturers, and they will sell you a unit at a large scale for capture of more than a million tons per year.

The idea that CCS technologies for coal are unavailable is simply not true. I would deeply suggest that this is one of the reasons we are having this bizarre conversation today. We are just sort of out of sync with reality.

I strongly oppose H.R. 3826. The debate on this bill is about the reality of dangerous climate change.

If you accept modern science, you cannot deny the combined weight of over 10,000 peer-reviewed, published scientific studies which tell us climate change is happening, is caused by humans, and will have extremely serious impacts. If you fight wildfires, farm, run a ski resort, or live in a low-lying coastal area, you are already living with the impacts of climate change on a daily basis.

All these studies and experiences are telling us the same thing: carbon pollution produced by human activities is warming the Earth. It is driving more extreme weather events, more heat waves and droughts, longer and more intense wildfire seasons, rising sea levels, melting permafrost, and ocean acidification.

Climate disruption is harming economic activities in my State such as agriculture and ski resorts. It is affecting the insurance industry. It is beginning to impose huge costs on those

least able to bear them—people living in the poorest and most vulnerable parts of the world.

The United States is a major contributor to climate change and it cannot be mitigated without us. We have a moral responsibility to act, but H.R. 3826 does just the opposite. It makes the problem worse by preventing EPA from acting in the interest of the environment and our country.

Coal-fired plants are the largest single source of carbon pollution. Today, there is no limit on how much carbon pollution they can emit. That is why President Obama directed EPA to use its existing authority under the Clean Air Act to require power plants to control carbon pollution, something long overdue.

EPA has proposed a rule to require new coal plants to use available pollution control technology to capture and sequester carbon pollution. For existing coal plants, EPA is working with stakeholders to think through the best approach. EPA has not yet even issued a proposal, but industries are moving on.

In my region, a major utility made the decision on sound economics and environment to shut down a coal-powered plant.

H.R. 3826 would stop EPA from issuing any rules and allow these plants to keep emitting unlimited amounts of carbon pollution. For existing plants, the bill would be straight-out prohibition of any EPA rule from becoming effective unless Congress somehow passed a new law to implement the rule. As a practical matter, this repeals the EPA's existing authority to act.

Mr. Chairman, this bill is a dead letter. The Senate will never pass it, and even if it did, the President would veto it, as well he should. Let's spare him the agony and reject this misguided proposal now.

Mr. WHITFIELD. At this time I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I am a cosponsor of the Electricity Security and Affordability Act. We have heard a lot of rhetoric on the floor about what is going on, but I want you to understand something. In Pennsylvania, over 40 percent of the electricity is generated by coal-fired power plants.

If you go back to the election, during his candidacy the President said very clearly that if you want to continue to produce electricity using coal-powered power plants, you can, but we will bankrupt you. The only thing he didn't add to that was "period."

That is the war on coal. That is where we are going.

When we talk about these things, and we talk about the numbers of people in our society right now, not just the middle- and the lower middle-income,

but the low-income people, what are we affecting? Everything that they put in their mouth, everything they put on their backs, everything that they do to heat and light their homes.

The sum total of the cost of anything is everything that goes into it.

The cost of energy and using coal to get there just makes sense. Coal has done so much for this country for so many years. I am not just talking about a few people. If you do not believe this is affecting people, please come back to western Pennsylvania. Walk with me. Go into these little towns where there no longer is a coal mine open. Not only that—their towns are shut down.

Now isn't that a marvelous thing to accomplish and champion and say we are doing the right thing for America? We are going to drive your energy costs up and make it impossible for you to heat and light your homes. We are going to change the cost of everything you use to raise your children. It affects the cost of everything. The sum total is made up of energy costs also.

What we will do is we will raise the bar so high that it will no longer be possible for these people to operate at a profitable level and then we will back off and say, My goodness, they just couldn't meet the standard.

We ask, What does the standard have to be? Just a little bit better than it is now.

We say, How would we begin to measure it? Well, we haven't determined that yet. We have set standards for you, but we don't have any way of doing it. We can't get to the point where we can measure the metrics on it.

I would just ask you for one thing: I want you to think about those thousands and millions of people who have forever relied on coal and the electricity that we can supply and the energy we can supply at a unit that is low enough that they can continue to live a normal life. That is all we are asking.

This bill is common sense, which is so devoid in this House.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, to conclude, I would point out to my friends on the other side of the aisle there has been a lot of discussion today about the availability of carbon capture and sequestration. Let's not forget that the Energy Policy Act of 2005 said:

Emission standards will not be set by plants receiving funds from the Clean Energy Initiative at the Department of Energy.

To my friend from the west coast, it is costing \$5 billion, and the president of the Southern Company said:

This plant cannot be consistently replicated on a national level and cannot be the primary basis for new emission standards.

That is because they are artificially concocted.

So our legislation simply says, in the future, if natural gas prices go up,

America, like most every other country in the world, will have the option of building a new coal-powered plant.

I think it is a reasonable approach. It has bipartisan support.

This is the first time that we have been able to have a national debate with this President, who has already made up his mind he does not want coal for America. This is our opportunity to express the opinion of the American people that we need coal moving into the future.

I would urge the adoption of H.R. 3826, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3826 because it would prevent the Environmental Protection Agency from ever regulating carbon emissions to stem climate change.

H.R. 3826 moves the goalposts on the EPA's carbon emissions rules and would effectively guarantee that our nation's dirtiest power plants continue to spew carbon into the atmosphere and further exacerbate global warming.

This bill is clearly a response to the President's Climate Action Plan, a series of executive actions designed to protect future generations from the harmful effects of climate change. I welcome the President's plan, and I regret the fact that House Leadership continues to steadfastly block action on climate change. Beyond the benefits to our air and climate, the EPA's proposed rules will provide regulatory certainty to fossil-fuel generators and would spur further development of renewable energy technologies that are our best chance to turn the tide of climate change.

Simply denying that climate change is occurring is not a policy and is completely out of touch with reality. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recently concluded with 95 to 100 percent certainty that humans are the principal cause of climate change. Such findings of the world's most highly regarded scientists cannot be more certain than this.

The American people know that climate change is not a "hoax" or a "fraud," as some of our colleagues claim, because they are experiencing the hottest years on record, as well as the most severe floods, wildfires and droughts in modern history. My home state of California is currently facing an unprecedented drought which is threatening the prosperity of everyone from urban and rural communities to farmers, fishermen, wildlife, and large and small businesses.

Steps to halt and reverse the effects of climate change are well overdue, and our window to act is quickly closing. H.R. 3826 does the exact opposite, and for all these reasons, I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3826, which would short-circuit an ongoing process to engage stakeholders and develop reasonable, effective controls on carbon pollution from power plants.

This pollution poses a serious threat to public health. According to the American Public Health Association, about half of the U.S. population lives in areas where air pollution is

linked to illness, including asthma, heart attacks, lung cancer, and stroke. Moreover, an overwhelming majority of climate scientists agree that carbon pollution is linked to climate change, causing sea-level rise and more extreme weather events across the globe. That is why the Supreme Court has confirmed that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority under the Clean Air Act to address carbon pollution and safeguard our health and natural resources.

Power plants are the largest source of carbon pollution in the United States, but their carbon emissions are completely unregulated. Currently, the Environmental Protection Agency is engaged with stakeholders to develop a rule for emissions for new power plants, and they plan to address existing power plants as well. These rules would use available technologies for carbon capture and sequestration.

Today's legislation would halt that process. It leaves pollution controls on new power plants to the discretion of the plants themselves, which are unlikely to take action unless an industry-wide standard is in place. And it effectively repeals the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to limit carbon pollution from existing power plants.

By preventing any limitation on the largest source of carbon pollution in the United States, this bill recklessly endangers public health and the environment. I urge a "no" vote.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Chair, I agree with my dear friend Chairman WHITFIELD that we must provide clarity on EPA's authority to regulate greenhouse gases. However, as we have seen all too often in the 113th Congress, the legislation before us does nothing to address the underlying problem. Instead, this bill simply blocks the EPA from taking action without providing any alternative solution.

My first problem with this legislation is that it creates a peculiar and entirely new process for regulations under the Clean Air Act. This bill would take a long-established and reasonably well understood and turn it upside down to the great detriment of all of those in industry who are seeking certainty. This bill would then eliminate the delegation of rulemaking authority to EPA and set up Congress as a regulatory agency. Traditionally, Congress has given EPA the authority to develop regulations to address particular issues. I'm concerned that we may be setting a troubling precedent that allows regulations to be set without extensive public comments or technical data and input from industry and stakeholders.

Second, as I have seen time and time again this Congress, H.R. 3826 attempts to address an issue without dealing with the underlying law or providing an alternative solution. This bill does not amend the Clean Air Act to address the regulation of greenhouse gases but rather abolishes over 40 years of precedent by establishing an entirely new regulatory process. If Congress truly wants to legislate on this issue and pass legislation that can be signed by the President, let's put forward a comprehensive, bipartisan solution with both industry and other stakeholder support. I don't see anything in H.R. 3826 that approaches compromise or resembles an honest solution to the problems I've outlined.

Once again we have a bill before us that will pass with little bipartisan support, won't pass

the Senate, and won't be signed by the President. While I understand this is an election year, we should be coming together to find workable solutions that can make meaningful change instead of creating more partisan rhetoric.

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-40. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 3826

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Electricity Security and Affordability Act".

SEC. 2. STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE FOR NEW FOSSIL FUEL-FIRED ELECTRIC UTILITY GENERATING UNITS.

(a) **LIMITATION.**—The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency may not issue, implement, or enforce any proposed or final rule under section 111 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7411) that establishes a standard of performance for emissions of any greenhouse gas from any new source that is a fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating unit unless such rule meets the requirements under subsections (b) and (c).

(b) **REQUIREMENTS.**—In issuing any rule under section 111 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7411) establishing standards of performance for emissions of any greenhouse gas from new sources that are fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (for purposes of establishing such standards)—

(1) shall separate sources fueled with coal and natural gas into separate categories; and

(2) shall not set a standard based on the best system of emission reduction for new sources within the coal category unless—

(A) such standard has been achieved on average for at least one continuous 12-month period (excluding planned outages) by each of at least 6 units within such category—

(i) each of which is located at a different electric generating station in the United States;

(ii) which, collectively, are representative of the operating characteristics of electric generation at different locations in the United States; and

(iii) each of which is operated for the entire 12-month period on a full commercial basis; and

(B) no results obtained from any demonstration project are used in setting such standard.

(c) **COAL HAVING A HEAT CONTENT OF 8300 OR LESS BRITISH THERMAL UNITS PER POUND.**—

(1) **SEPARATE SUBCATEGORY.**—In carrying out subsection (b)(1), the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall establish a separate subcategory for new sources that are fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units using coal with an average heat content of 8300 or less British Thermal Units per pound.

(2) **STANDARD.**—Notwithstanding subsection (b)(2), in issuing any rule under section 111 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7411) establishing standards of performance for emissions of any

greenhouse gas from new sources in such subcategory, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall not set a standard based on the best system of emission reduction unless—

(A) such standard has been achieved on average for at least one continuous 12-month period (excluding planned outages) by each of at least 3 units within such subcategory—

(i) each of which is located at a different electric generating station in the United States;

(ii) which, collectively, are representative of the operating characteristics of electric generation at different locations in the United States; and

(iii) each of which is operated for the entire 12-month period on a full commercial basis; and
(B) no results obtained from any demonstration project are used in setting such standard.

SEC. 3. CONGRESS TO SET EFFECTIVE DATE FOR STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE FOR EXISTING, MODIFIED, AND RECONSTRUCTED FOSSIL FUEL-FIRED ELECTRIC UTILITY GENERATING UNITS.

(a) **APPLICABILITY.**—This section applies with respect to any rule or guidelines issued by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency under section 111 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7411) that—

(1) establish any standard of performance for emissions of any greenhouse gas from any modified or reconstructed source that is a fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating unit; or

(2) apply to the emissions of any greenhouse gas from an existing source that is a fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating unit.

(b) **CONGRESS TO SET EFFECTIVE DATE.**—A rule or guidelines described in subsection (a) shall not take effect unless a Federal law is enacted specifying such rule's or guidelines' effective date.

(c) **REPORTING.**—A rule or guidelines described in subsection (a) shall not take effect unless the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency has submitted to Congress a report containing each of the following:

(1) The text of such rule or guidelines.

(2) The economic impacts of such rule or guidelines, including the potential effects on—

(A) economic growth, competitiveness, and jobs in the United States; and

(B) electricity ratepayers, including low-income ratepayers in affected States.

(3) The amount of greenhouse gas emissions that such rule or guidelines are projected to reduce as compared to overall global greenhouse gas emissions.

SEC. 4. REPEAL OF EARLIER RULES AND GUIDELINES.

The following rules and guidelines shall be of no force or effect, and shall be treated as though such rules and guidelines had never been issued:

(1) The proposed rule—

(A) entitled “Standards of Performance for Greenhouse Gas Emissions for New Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units”, published at 77 Fed. Reg. 22392 (April 13, 2012); and

(B) withdrawn pursuant to the notice entitled “Withdrawal of Proposed Standards of Performance for Greenhouse Gas Emissions for New Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units”, signed by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency on September 20, 2013, and identified by docket ID number EPA-HQ-OAR-2011-0660.

(2) The proposed rule entitled “Standards of Performance for Greenhouse Gas Emissions from New Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units”, signed by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency on September 20, 2013, and identified by docket ID number EPA-HQ-OAR-2013-0495.

(3) With respect to the proposed rule described in paragraph (1), any successor or substantially similar proposed or final rule that—

(A) is issued prior to the date of the enactment of this Act;

(B) is applicable to any new source that is a fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating unit; and

(C) does not meet the requirements under subsections (b) and (c) of section 2.

(4) Any proposed or final rule or guidelines under section 111 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7411) that—

(A) are issued prior to the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(B) establish any standard of performance for emissions of any greenhouse gas from any modified or reconstructed source that is a fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating unit or apply to the emissions of any greenhouse gas from an existing source that is a fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating unit.

SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.**—The term “demonstration project” means a project to test or demonstrate the feasibility of carbon capture and storage technologies that has received government funding or financial assistance.

(2) **EXISTING SOURCE.**—The term “existing source” has the meaning given such term in section 111(a) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7411(a)), except such term shall not include any modified source.

(3) **GREENHOUSE GAS.**—The term “greenhouse gas” means any of the following:

(A) Carbon dioxide.

(B) Methane.

(C) Nitrous oxide.

(D) Sulfur hexafluoride.

(E) Hydrofluorocarbons.

(F) Perfluorocarbons.

(4) **MODIFICATION.**—The term “modification” has the meaning given such term in section 111(a) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7411(a)).

(5) **MODIFIED SOURCE.**—The term “modified source” means any stationary source, the modification of which is commenced after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(6) **NEW SOURCE.**—The term “new source” has the meaning given such term in section 111(a) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7411(a)), except that such term shall not include any modified source.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in House Report 113-373. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

□ 1700

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF TEXAS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in House Report 113-373.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 2, lines 7 to 8, strike “within the coal category” and insert “within a fossil-fuel category”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 497, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, we should not stand by and let the EPA tear down America one regulation at a time, so I thank the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. WHITFIELD) for his work on H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act.

Economic growth depends on job creators, not Federal regulators. We need to increase access to affordable energy, not take energy options off the table.

Now is the time to ensure a robust “all-of-the-above” energy strategy that includes our abundant fossil energies, as well as nuclear and renewables.

But by requiring carbon capture and storage technology that doesn't even exist, the EPA's new power proposal effectively bans new coal power. There is no coal power plant anywhere in the world that can meet the EPA's radical proposal.

What is equally troubling is that the EPA is planning to require this same unproven technology for new natural gas power.

This amendment stops the EPA's attack on natural gas. It prevents the EPA from using make-believe technologies when setting standards.

I am interested in protecting all forms of affordable energy from EPA overreach, including coal, natural gas, and renewables, and that is what this amendment does.

Under the Clean Air Act, the EPA is required to rely on a technology that has been “adequately demonstrated” in the words of the law, but once again, the EPA is trying to twist the law to suit its extremist agenda.

The EPA does this by using an old legal trick: if you can't win the argument as it stands, start arguing about definition of words. By redefining what the term “adequately demonstrated” means, the agency is requiring the use of an unproven technology. In so doing, the EPA is making a tremendous power grab, one that reaches well beyond coal.

Only in Washington can you call something “adequately demonstrated” that doesn't even exist.

Over the past few months, it has become increasingly clear that the EPA isn't just going after coal. The administration has no intention of stopping there. Coal may be taking the hardest hit today, but the EPA is gearing up to take down natural gas.

This administration has tried to demonize hydraulic fracturing and prevent the construction of the Keystone

XL pipeline, which would create thousands of jobs and provide many Americans with affordable energy.

As America is finding hope in an energy renaissance, the EPA plans to impose harsh power plant requirements on all forms of fossil energy. The EPA and the Department of Energy have already begun to tout these plans around the world.

This amendment requires the EPA to rely on proven technologies when it sets rules for any power plant. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 3826, and help prevent the EPA from implementing reckless regulations that disregard the facts.

This amendment promotes an all-of-the-above-energy strategy, supports good-paying jobs, American manufacturing, and helps us secure energy independence. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. HULTGREN). The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chair, the underlying bill, H.R. 3826, is a radical rewrite of the Clean Air Act. It effectively repeals the EPA's existing authority to address carbon pollution from coal-powered plants.

It says that EPA cannot set a standard for new plants unless the standard is already being met by power plants using technologies that can achieve that standard.

Well, why would any power plant want to spend the money to use technology to achieve a standard that their competitors do not have to achieve?

So it is a chicken and egg problem. You cannot require them to do what they are not already doing.

Well, this amendment goes a step further and it says, for natural gas-fired power plants, they shouldn't have to do anything that they are not already doing either. They would block EPA from requiring natural gas-fired power plants to install pollution controls.

The problem is, EPA's current proposal for new natural gas plants doesn't require any pollution control technology. EPA is going to set a standard, and then let that standard be achieved however the industry would accomplish it.

So this amendment would preemptively block EPA from ever considering rules that might further reduce carbon pollution from any future power plants, whether they be coal or natural gas.

I think it makes no sense. It is a disaster for the climate. I urge my colleagues to vote against this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, how much time remains on either side?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Texas has 1½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, let me say to my friend from California, we have one more speaker on this side, and if he is prepared to close, then we will go to our last speaker.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I am not prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, if you look at what is happening with this bill and this amendment, if both were passed, combined, coal and natural gas power plants emit a third of all carbon pollution in this country. They are responsible for virtually all carbon pollution from the electricity sector.

This amendment would ensure that industry can keep building new fossil fuel power plants without modern pollution controls, whether they be natural gas or coal.

So, in effect, if this amendment is agreed to, and the underlying bill is adopted, it would say, in effect, we are not going to control any of the carbon pollution coming from any power plant.

Now, if we don't control the pollution from any power plant, and we let them emit whatever pollution they choose to emit, and it is obviously cheaper to pollute than to stop polluting, we will, in effect, condemn us to all that pollution which happens to be—let me repeat this again—it happens to be a third of the carbon pollution in this country today.

That would mean there is no chance in hell that we will ever reduce the pollution in this country that we can reduce that is adding to climate change pollution, in addition to all the other pollutants coming from around the world.

Those pollutants don't go away; they accumulate in the atmosphere, and when they accumulate in the atmosphere, we see the impact on the climate.

At some point, we are going to have so many pollutants in the atmosphere from carbon that scientists are telling us we won't be able to do anything. We won't be able to continue to contribute to that pollution without making it impossible to do anything about climate change.

We have a chance to do something about climate change now. We should not lose that chance by adopting this amendment and the underlying bill. So, I would urge that we vote against the amendment and the underlying bill.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the

gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT), who is the chairman of the Environment Subcommittee of the Science, Space, and Technology Committee.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman of the Science and Technology Committee, congratulations on yesterday.

Sort of a one step off, I lost the ranking member. I was going to congratulate him on his years of service now that his decision is to leave the body.

I am obviously standing here with two separate points I want to make. One is, I actually believe the underlying bill has been substantially misrepresented.

If you take the totality of the Clean Air Act, NO_x, and all the other pollutants that are regulated, that is not what this piece of legislation touches and does.

Be that as it may, I am here to stand up and advocate for amendment No. 1, which is very simple in its elegance. It does a very simple thing. It says, this bill is not only a discussion about coal, but it is actually a discussion about all fossil fuels.

If we are going to have a regime mechanic that says this technology, once it is properly demonstrated is appropriate to adopt, should not that demonstration be on other forms of fossil fuels that may be generating power?

In many ways it is that concept of sort of optionality. If we are going to create a silo that says hey, these mechanics are only about coal, that is unfair. It should be about all forms of energy, because you would hate to find out, a year or two from now, that the bright, shiny object that I believe the EPA is often chasing has moved to something else, and we have allowed a hole here in our amendment process.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MRS. CAPPS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in House Report 113-373.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

In section 2(b)(2)(A)(i), insert "or elsewhere" after "in the United States".

In section 2(c)(2)(A)(i), insert "or elsewhere" after "in the United States".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 497, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chairman, H.R. 3826 is about denial. It denies the realities of climate change. It denies EPA the ability to do its job.

The Supreme Court has clearly stated that the EPA has the authority to regulate carbon emissions from power plants, and EPA has used that authority under the Clean Air Act to propose rules to improve the quality and safety of our air.

These EPA rules are crucial to mitigating the harmful impacts of climate change, especially given the majority's refusal to take meaningful action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

H.R. 3826 would nullify these proposed rules and restrict EPA's ability to write new ones. This not only does nothing to address climate change, it also creates tremendous uncertainty for the power sector.

The bill also bizarrely restricts EPA to considering only pollution control technologies being used in the United States when setting new power plant standards. In other words, if a viable technology is being used abroad, EPA must pretend it doesn't exist.

Under the Clean Air Act, EPA must determine the best system of emission reduction for new coal-fired power plants, and it must set standards based on this best technology. This bill would block EPA from considering pollution controls used outside of the U.S., even if such systems are readily available and proven abroad.

As the global leader in innovation and technology, it is absurd that we would bar the EPA from even looking at the best technologies available just because of where it is being used.

My amendment would make a commonsense correction to this problem. If adopted, it would simply allow the EPA to consider all existing pollution control technologies, regardless of where they are being used.

For example, the EPA has proposed standards for new coal-fired power plants that would achieve greater carbon pollution reduction through the use of carbon capture and sequestration technology, commonly called CCS. If coal is going to be part of the clean energy future, CCS is precisely the kind of technology that we need to encourage.

Understanding this, EPA and others have provided evidence to our committee that CCS is both feasible and available, and that coal-fired power plants with CCS are moving forward.

□ 1715

Some of these projects are in the United States, but some of them are

being pursued abroad; but without my amendment, these improvements or projects abroad would not be considered by this innovation. This is ridiculous and wrong.

I want to be clear. This amendment will not make this a sensible or reasonable bill, and I will be voting "no" even if my amendment should be adopted; but my amendment would at least avoid the embarrassment of the United States Congress requiring a science-based agency to pretend that technologies operating in other countries simply don't exist.

I know that some of my colleagues like to deny the science of climate change, but I hope there can be bipartisan agreement that we shouldn't deny science just because it is being used by someone else.

Effective CCS technologies are already being installed and used in other countries, including our neighbor to the north; and EPA surely should be allowed to consider these technologies. My amendment would simply ensure that EPA can do its job and consider all available technologies when setting pollution control standards.

So I ask my colleagues to support this simple and sensible change and support my amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Kentucky is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chair, I certainly have a great deal of respect for the gentlelady from California, and I might add, we have heard a lot today about climate change.

Former EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, herself, stated in a hearing:

We will not ultimately be able to change the amount of CO₂ that is accumulating in the atmosphere alone.

By that, she meant the United States, and there are a couple of reasons she said that. First of all, 96 percent of CO₂ emissions are naturally occurring; manmade is around 4 percent.

I might also point out that, in the recent fifth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, they acknowledged a lack of warming since 1998, and they acknowledged the growing discrepancy between their climate model projections versus actual readings.

So it is not that people are denying. It is that there is a significant difference among the scientific community about what is manmade CO₂ contributing and what is naturally occurring CO₂.

To the gentlelady's amendment, the Premier of Saskatchewan was in my office today, talking about the Canadian project that the gentlewoman from California referred to. It is not in operation yet.

He did say that it would not have been built without government funds;

and her amendment would simply say that, if it is working in Canada, the EPA could apply that and make it mandatory here.

We believe that the Energy Policy Act of 2005 made it illegal for EPA to even set the emissions standard that they have set in their proposed rule, and certainly, what the gentlelady's amendment would allow is the governments to put in large sums of money to make some projects work that may not, in reality, be able to be accomplished in the U.S. because of a lack of private capital.

So if technology is working in another country, it can be brought to America, and if it meets our standards set in paragraphs B and C, it would be able to be utilized; so for that reason, I would make the argument that the gentlelady's amendment should be rejected.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chair, I would just make the comment that I think there is a little bit of a misunderstanding here. I was not implying that, if there was a technology in another country, such as Canada, it would automatically have to be used in this country.

I would just propose, in my amendment, that we wouldn't want to deny a scientist the opportunity to be able to examine other technologies just because they came from a different country, such as Canada.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chair, what I object to is that the EPA would use that and mandate that private industry build that technology here in the U.S. And I think that your amendment would allow them to do that, and that is what I object to.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chairman, I will just add that I don't believe the word "mandate" or "require" is in my amendment. It would just be allowing the consideration of proposals and technologies from other countries, not just the United States, as far as my amendment was concerned.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment is simple and straightforward. It makes a small change to the bill, as I just said, which would allow EPA to consider all available technologies when developing pollution controlled systems. This is an idea that really should have bipartisan support.

My colleagues across the aisle often say how the government shouldn't be picking winners and losers, yet that is precisely what this bill does. It not only declares which technologies can be winners, but it doesn't even allow all available technologies to be considered. The bill allows polluters to keep polluting while our children and grandchildren will suffer the consequences down the road.

My amendment won't make this deeply flawed legislation something I

can support, but it will at least allow EPA to look at the full picture when making its decision.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chair, the purpose of our legislation is, whenever EPA sets the standard, we want the technology to be in the U.S. for at least a year—operating for a year, and six units have the proof of that; so that is why we object to the gentlelady's amendment, and I would urge Members to vote against her amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MRS. CAPITO

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in House Report 113-373.

Mrs. CAPITO. I have an amendment at the desk, Mr. Chair.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of section 2, add the following:
(d) TECHNOLOGIES.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to preclude the issuance, implementation, or enforcement of a standard of performance that—

(1) is based on the use of one or more technologies that are developed in a foreign country, but has been demonstrated to be achievable at fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units in the United States; and

(2) meets the requirements of subsection (b) and (c), as applicable.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 497, the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Chair, I rise to say that my amendment is a simple clarifying amendment that goes right along the discussion we were just having with the previous amendment.

It makes clear that the underlying bill does not stop the EPA from relying on foreign technologies to establish a performance standard, so long as that foreign technology has been adequately demonstrated at power plants here in the United States, and I think my colleague from Kentucky was making that point in his rebuttal.

The Electricity Security and Affordability Act is necessary because the EPA has taken the unprecedented step

of requiring the use of technology that has not been demonstrated on a large commercial scale here in the United States. The rule is, therefore, a de facto ban on new coal plants anywhere in the United States.

Well, why is this significant? As our existing coal fleet retires, either due to regulations or because plants have reached the end of their useful life, what takes their place to provide affordable and reliable electricity to families and businesses?

In January, when temperatures dropped across the Eastern part of the United States, American Electric Power, AEP, which provides power in my region of the country, was operating 89 percent of the coal capacity that will retire in 2015.

When that capacity is no longer available, our electric grid will be less reliable, and the energy prices paid by individuals and small businesses will increase.

West Virginia has vast supplies of both natural gas and coal, so I fully support the development and use of all our domestic energy resources. We need a diverse energy policy that includes coal, natural gas, nuclear, and renewable to support our economic growth and keep the energy bills that families pay each month from skyrocketing.

But we cannot turn away from coal, which provides 40 percent of our Nation's electricity and 95 percent of the electricity in my home State of West Virginia.

Other countries understand that coal provides the energy necessary to power their own economies. The International Energy Agency released a report in December, stating that global coal consumption will continue to rise and increase by more than 2 percent through 2018. Between 2007 and 2012, global coal consumption increased faster than oil or natural gas.

China and India are constructing new coal plants. Even Germany is increasing its coal capacity in 2013.

The rest of the world is willing to use coal. We, in the United States, have a strong competitive advantage because we have hundreds of years of supply. Increasingly, we are exporting coal for use abroad. West Virginia exports more coal than any other State.

While we are glad the coal exports allow for production that provides jobs—real jobs in our State, it is difficult to understand why we would turn away from using our own domestic resources at the same time other countries are turning towards our domestic resources.

Importantly, unilateral action by the United States will do virtually nothing to address the global problem of carbon dioxide emissions. In 2012, carbon dioxide emissions from energy production in the United States fell by 3.8 percent to their lower level since the mid-90s.

Despite this drop, carbon dioxide emissions from energy globally increased to their highest level on record. China's carbon dioxide emissions alone more than offset the decreased emissions from the United States.

That is why I introduced legislation that would delay the implementation of the U.S. carbon dioxide regulations until other countries comprising 80 percent of non-U.S. emissions enact equally stringent regulations. Acting in concert with our global competitors would minimize the economic consequences and maximize the environmental benefits.

Instead, the administration has chosen the opposite course, imposing a unilateral regulation that maximizes our economic pain and minimizes the environmental benefits. EPA's regulation means absolutely fewer West Virginia jobs and higher energy prices for consumers.

Let's be clear about what today's legislation does. This legislation does not stop the EPA from regulating greenhouse gas emissions from new coal plants. The bill simply requires EPA to base its regulations on the best performing existing coal plants.

We should encourage the implementation of newer, cleaner burning coal technologies, but a de facto ban on new coal plants won't encourage new technologies. It will leave promising research on the shelf while energy prices increase and the economic advantage offered by our natural resources is lost.

This is a good straightforward piece of legislation. My amendment makes it clear that we want the best commercially available technology to set the standards for new plants, regardless of where that technology is developed, as long as that technology is demonstrated in the United States coal plants.

I urge the amendment's adoption and reserve the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WAXMAN. I don't know how to oppose this amendment because it doesn't seem to make the underlying bill any worse.

The problem is this: The bill requires that, before a new standard for coal-powered plants is set, there has to be six coal-powered plants in this country that are already using this technology; and we have argued: Well, that is not going to happen because no one is going to use the technology if their competitors aren't going to use the technology.

And if there is technology outside of this country that is being used successfully, EPA can't rely on that. Mrs.

CAPPS' amendment would have changed that. That is still going to be voted on later.

Mrs. CAPITO's amendment says EPA could consider technologies developed in other countries, but only if those technologies are also being broadly adopted in the United States, as I understand it.

Well, in fact, that will lead to the exact same problem as we have in the underlying bill. Under both the amendment and the bill, EPA would still be prevented from proposing a standard based on cleaner coal technologies, such as ultrasupercritical boilers, which can reduce pollution by improving efficiency.

That kind of technology is already being used in more than 100 ultracritical coal units generating power in China, but the United States has only installed one. Well, we can't let that one and all the others that are being used in China allow the EPA to set a standard that would require that technology.

□ 1730

Under the bill and the amendment, that one U.S. plant won't be sufficient for EPA to set a new standard. So even if this amendment passes, EPA will still be prohibited from setting pollution control standards based on effective pollution controls that have been deployed overseas.

Well, I guess if you are going to pretend that climate change isn't happening, why not pretend that clean air technologies used in other countries don't exist, either? So I can't oppose—I am not going to ask for a rollcall vote. I am not going to even—I will even vote against your amendment. I am not going to vote for it. But it seems to me the amendment has a problem that the underlying bill already has, and it doesn't fix anything.

So if people want to vote for this amendment, vote for the amendment because it doesn't make anything any different than the problems that I see with the underlying bill.

With those comments, Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. MCKINLEY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in House Report 113-373.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of section 3, add the following new subsection:

(d) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out subsection (c), the Administrator of the Envi-

ronmental Protection Agency shall consult with the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration, the Comptroller General of the United States, the Director of the National Energy Technology Laboratory, and the Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 497, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, under this legislation, the EPA is required to submit a report to Congress regarding the impacts this proposed regulation will have on the economy, our competitiveness, our job losses, and electricity rates.

Quite frankly, many here in Congress and the constituents we represent across America have come not to trust the EPA to tell the truth about the impacts the proposed New Source Performance Standard rule or the upcoming existing source rule will have on our Nation.

The amendment before us adds stakeholders with whom the EPA should consult when finalizing this report. This includes the Energy Information Agency, who will provide the EPA with the necessary statistics and background. It includes the Comptroller General who oversees the Government Accountability Office because the GAO's reports have led to hearings and legislation, billions of dollars in taxpayer savings and improvements to a wide range of government programs and services.

It also includes the National Institute of Standards and Technology, who works with industry to develop and apply our Nation's technology, measurements, and standards, and, finally, the National Energy Technology Laboratory, under the direction of the Department of Energy. NETL has been leading the charge in working with the private sector and academia in developing carbon capture and sequestration technologies.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Does anyone seek recognition in opposition to the amendment? If not, the gentleman from West Virginia is recognized to close.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, during the House debate recently on Congressman GARDNER's House bill H.R. 4480, the Domestic Energy and Jobs bill, I offered a similar amendment. This amendment passed by voice vote and ensured that NETL had a seat at the table.

As background and for those of you who are unaware, NETL is our only government research, design, and development laboratory dedicated to domestic energy sources. Last year alone, NETL worked with academia and the

private sector on over 1,000 projects. This represented over 55,000 jobs and \$12 billion in project funding in every State and nearly every congressional district. It is only fitting that they, along with others, are included in this process.

Let's be clear here. If we support transparency by having relevant agencies consult with the EPA, these same agencies who provide us with statistics, develop our standards, develop our technology, and keep our agencies and Congress in line and accountable, then you would support this amendment. Members of Congress consult with their staffs, their respective committees, other Members' offices, and their constituents, so it is fitting the EPA should do the same under this amendment.

Chairman WHITFIELD and his staff are to be commended for their hard work to put together such an incredible bipartisan effort in this legislation. I am a proud cosponsor to work with him and encourage all my colleagues to support this amendment and, more importantly, the underlying bill.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. MCKINLEY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in House Report 113-373.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 5, line 17, strike “; and” and insert a semicolon.

Page 5, line 19, strike “States.” and insert “States;”.

Page 5, after line 19, insert the following:

(C) required capital investments and projected costs for operation and maintenance of new equipment required to be installed; and

(D) the global economic competitiveness of the United States.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 497, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chair, once again, I would like to reference section 3 of the underlying bill. The amendment would strengthen the analysis and reporting the EPA is required to develop under this legislation.

One of the problems our coal, gas, and oil industries face is the vast ideologically motivated regulations they must endure, such as the New Source Performance Standards. However, other nations don't seem to impose

such burdensome policies and regulations on their industries. Instead, countries in the Middle East and Asia promote their fossil fuel businesses and work to make it easier for those countries to get their fossil fuels to market. Mr. Chairman, it is called fairness.

Now, I am sure you will hear that some of the opponents of this in the past have falsely claimed that this amendment is flawed and too broad. We have heard that this amendment might open up a Pandora's box of issues as we heard from our friends 2 years ago when I offered a similar amendment. That is simply not true, not accurate.

This amendment and legislation will make certain that the United States remains viable in its manufacturing on a global scale, ensures that we don't put more people and their families or children out on the street or with uncertainty, and we can provide them with certainty and access to abundant and affordable electricity. This amendment is about protecting our liberties and providing transparency.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment so I can make a few points about this.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WAXMAN. I didn't speak on the last amendment. I didn't think that last amendment did anything worse than the bill already does. This amendment modifies a section of the underlying bill which requires EPA to report to Congress on the economic impacts of any regulation of carbon pollution from existing fossil fuel-fired power plants.

Well, this reporting requirement is largely meaningless because EPA already does this analysis, and if this bill were adopted, EPA wouldn't issue any rules to trigger the reporting requirement anyway. But this amendment would add more items to be considered in EPA's report on a rule regulating carbon pollution from existing power plants.

For example, this bill would require EPA to look at the rule's potential effects on capital, operation, and maintenance costs for pollution control equipment. But that is exactly what EPA already does for every significant rule that requires pollution controls. The amendment also requires EPA to analyze how our particular pollution control requirement may affect the global economic competitiveness of the United States. I don't think that makes any sense to add this because it is questionable whether we even have reliable economic models to make this assessment.

If this bill were adopted, EPA wouldn't be doing this report anyway, so it doesn't really matter. I am not going to object to the amendment, and

I am not going to vote for the amendment, but it won't have any effect because the underlying bill is going to prevent the EPA from acting whether it is a new power plant or existing power plants.

But I did want to single out this provision which I think is unreasonable to expect EPA to be able to do this global economic competitiveness analysis. That is not what EPA does. They are not in the position to do it, and to add that requirement, I think, is a very bad precedent.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, I thank Congressman WAXMAN.

Under this amendment, the EPA is required, as he just stated, is required to take into account the economic impacts this rule could have on our global competitiveness and the required capital investments and costs for operations and maintenance of new equipment.

We know that, under the New Source Performance Standards rule, the cost of electricity could skyrocket by as much as 70 percent. This cost will be passed on to the consumers. Consequently, American manufacturers will indeed be put at a global disadvantage, and many will lose their business.

We have seen testimony by economists, academics, and scientists who say that, under this proposed regulation, capital costs will increase by as much as 110 percent. This is unconscionable. At a time when Saudi Arabia, China, and India are helping their job creators thrive and open up global opportunities for them, this administration and its ideologically motivated EPA are exporting jobs, trading uncertainty, and trying to decarbonize America with little to show for health and economic benefits.

The EPA needs to look at what other nations are doing to grow, stabilize, and sustain their fossil fuel industries. This amendment will help us show how we can improve and stop hindering the development of our natural resources.

Ultimately, I offered this amendment because we are supposed to be a nation leading by example over the rest of the world. With nearly 23 million people underemployed or unemployed, we really ought to be saying to our regulators: Just because you can doesn't mean you should.

Mr. Chairman, again, I wish to thank Mr. UPTON and Mr. WHITFIELD for their support of this amendment and the underlying bill that goes with it. Mr. WHITFIELD's work on the overall bill shows his true leadership and caring for the people of Appalachia and all across America.

This country is a leader of the world, an innovator, and a job creator. It is time that it reins in the excessive regulations that create burdens resulting in families, children, husbands, and spouses worried about tomorrow. It is

time their regulators pull back in. This amendment and this legislation overall will create that ability that we have in the American Dream again, but not an American Dream that is driven by regulations.

I urge all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MS. SCHAKOWSKY

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in House Report 113-373.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chair, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Redesignate section 5 as section 6 and insert after section 4 the following:

SEC. 5. CONGRESSIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF SCIENTIFIC FINDINGS.

Congress accepts the scientific finding (contained in the proposed rule referred to in section 4(2)) that greenhouse gas pollution is "contributing to long-lasting changes in our climate that can have a range of negative effects".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 497, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 4 minutes.

My dear colleagues, this is the simplest of simple amendments. It asks of this House only one thing, to acknowledge the truth of these words:

Greenhouse gas pollution is contributing to long-lasting changes in our climate that can have a range of negative effects.

Our country and this Congress are at a critical moment in the history of our small planet. We are privileged as leaders of the most powerful country on Earth to be in a position to lead the world in combating climate change. There is still time.

□ 1745

If we act now, we can protect our natural resources, like water, promote job growth, and ensure that our descendants are able to live healthy lives on this planet long after we are gone.

Making the right choice begins with accepting the fact of climate change. It is hard to ignore this reality. The 10 hottest years in human history all occurred since 1998. This time last year, we had just completed the hottest year ever in the United States, a full degree hotter in terms of average temperature than the previous record. Though we are dealing with cold in many parts of

the U.S. this year, the scientists tell us global temperatures are continuing to warm.

Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau, among others, will be submerged during this century unless meaningful action is taken. Here at home, we are seeing more and more severe droughts, wildfires, storms, and hurricanes—often all in the same year.

There are tremendous economic incentives for the United States to take climate change seriously. In December, the Pew Charitable Trust estimated that the clean energy sector could generate \$1.9 trillion in revenue from 2012 to 2018. We also know that there are three times as many jobs created per dollar spent on renewable energy than on fossil fuel. As we work to create an economy that supports 21st century jobs, how can we overlook one of the world's fastest-growing industrial sectors and the millions of jobs it would support?

Large multinational corporations have joined environmentalists, scientists, and the vast majority of the American public who recognize the impact of carbon pollution on our world. For example, Coca-Cola has already suffered from a global water shortage that is driving up costs, and Coke has recognized climate change as a challenge to its future profitability.

The business plans of ExxonMobil and other Big Five oil companies assume they will have to pay for the cost of carbon in the future. This Congress should recognize the same facts that these business leaders have accepted: climate change is real and requires a different game plan. History will not be kind to climate change deniers.

The Schakowsky-Lowenthal amendment doesn't ask for much. It doesn't change the bill's provisions. It simply asks us as 21st century leaders of the most powerful country in the world to say "yes" to this simple fact: climate change is real and can have negative consequences.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I rise to oppose the gentlelady's amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Kentucky is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WHITFIELD. I have a great deal of respect and admiration for the gentlelady from Illinois. I might say, this legislation would never have been necessary if EPA had adopted a standard that had been adequately demonstrated and was not in violation of the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

I would also say in wanting to add this language to the bill, EPA itself, in discussing its proposed regulation, projected that its rule would result in almost zero CO₂ emission changes or quantified benefits in cost by 2022. So even EPA does not think that their

regulation is going to really significantly reduce CO₂ emissions because 96 percent of CO₂ emissions are naturally occurring; less than 4 percent are man-made.

I might also point out once again that no one is a denier of climate change, but more and more scientists seem to be disagreeing with the impact of manmade CO₂ versus naturally occurring CO₂.

After the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in the fall of last year, a group of scientists from the non-governmental Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in a 1,200-page report with thousands of references to peer reviewed papers made the argument that natural forces, not man-made forces, are really driving the Earth's climate. So we are particularly concerned that this regulation would prevent America from flexibility. In the future if natural gas prices go up, we would not have the option, like most every other country in the world, of building a coal plant, and so that is why we respectfully oppose her amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from California (Mr. LOWENTHAL).

Mr. LOWENTHAL. I thank the gentlewoman from Illinois for yielding and for being a steadfast leader on this issue.

Mr. Chairman, this amendment simply confirms what world's scientists already know: that greenhouse gases contribute to long-lasting changes in our climate that can have a range of harmful effects.

Disinformation by entities with conflicts of interest have fueled reports of scientific disagreement. However, the scientific community is not divided because there is no compelling scientific evidence denying human's role in climate change, period. Case closed.

Every minute we waste on the myth of disagreement is a minute longer we wait to take concrete action, making our inevitable energy transition even more expensive.

Mr. Chairman, we will be judged by our children for what we do here today. I urge an "aye" vote.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. I yield myself the balance of my time.

In reply to this case closed argument, I would just point out that the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which came out in the fall, acknowledged a lack of warming since 1998 and a growing discrepancy between the model projections and the reality of the observations actually made; that the discrepancy between the models and reality was increasing. It also acknowledged the evidence of decreased

climate sensitivity to the increases in atmospheric CO₂ concentrations. It also acknowledged that sea level rising during the period 1920–1950 was the same as in 1995 to 2012. Now that is the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

With that, I respectfully request that we defeat the gentlelady's amendment. I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois will be postponed.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MCKINLEY) having assumed the chair, Mr. HULTGREN, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3826) to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2824, PREVENTING GOVERNMENT WASTE AND PROTECTING COAL MINING JOBS IN AMERICA; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2641, RESPONSIBLY AND PROFESSIONALLY INVIGORATING DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2013; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113-374) on the resolution (H. Res. 501) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to stop the ongoing waste by the Department of the Interior of taxpayer resources and implement the final rule on excess spoil, mining waste, and buffers for perennial and intermittent streams, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2641) to provide for improved coordination of agency actions in the preparation and adoption of environmental documents for permitting determinations, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the

rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

ELECTRICITY SECURITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 497 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3826.

Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN) kindly resume the chair.

□ 1756

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3826) to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes, with Mr. HULTGREN (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, a request for a recorded vote on amendment No. 6 printed in House Report 113-373 offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) had been postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 7 OFFERED BY MR. LATTA

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 7 printed in House Report 113-373.

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer my amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 8, line 4, strike "government" and insert "Federal Government".

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 497, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of my amendment to H.R. 3826. This amendment would make a clarification to the bill to make explicit that "demonstration projects" refer to projects that have received Federal Government funding or assistance. This responds to comments raised when the bill was marked up that the definition of "demonstration project" could be construed to sweep in any project receiving government support, including local tax assistance.

This amendment helps clarify the bill and also highlights the provisions of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 which apply to the EPA's proposed standards

for new plants. The Energy Policy Act expressly prohibits EPA from considering technologies at Federally funded projects under DOE's Clean Coal Power Initiative to be adequately demonstrated. The purpose of this is to prevent the premature mandating of technologies that are commercially viable.

EPA's determination that "carbon capture and storage" or CCS, technologies for new coal-fired power plants have been "adequately demonstrated" is not borne out in the real world. In the agency's proposed rule, the EPA cites four government-subsidized CCS power plant demonstration projects that are in various stages of planning development.

First, Southern Company's Kemper County, Mississippi, project is still under construction, subject to delays and cost overruns. In the company running the project's own words, this plant "cannot be consistently replicated on a national level" and "should not serve as a primary basis for new emissions standards impacting all new coal-fired power plants."

Next, Summit's Texas clean energy project is still in the planning stage. It does not yet have financing and has also been subject to multiple delays.

The third project, Hydrogen Energy California LLC's project, is still in the planning and permitting stages.

Lastly, SaskPower's Boundary Dam CCS project, a government funded, small 110-megawatt facility rebuild project in Canada is still under construction and reportedly \$115 million over budget.

It seems very clear to the companies and institutions most involved with these CCS projects that they are not yet ready to be considered for commercial deployment. As one former Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy in the Obama administration suggested, it is disingenuous for the EPA to say that CCS is ready.

□ 1800

It should be very clear to the American taxpayers that this administration is working day and night to eliminate the use of coal in this country. In places like my home State of Ohio, where 78 percent of our energy comes from coal, the result will be higher electric bills for our families and seniors already dealing with increased health care costs as a result of ObamaCare.

We should be pursuing energy policies that will lead to more energy that is less expensive for people, rather than less energy that is more expensive for our citizens. As we know, increased energy costs impact the most vulnerable citizens in our country.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, the underlying bill prevents EPA from setting a standard or requirements for new—new coal-powered plants.

Instead of telling a new coal-powered plant they have to use technology to reduce their carbon emissions, this bill says they can't require that of new plants, unless new plants are already using technology to reduce emissions.

Well, okay, if they are already using technology, we can say everybody ought to use that technology; but then the underlying bill goes further and says: Well, not only are they using technology that accomplishes the goal, but there has got to be six plants represented all over the country that are achieving the standard using technologies, and then EPA can consider a standard for new power plants.

This is like the belts and suspenders. They can't look at foreign technology. They have to use six plants that are using technology.

Of course, one would ask: Why would anybody spend money to use technology to reduce carbon pollution if they are not required to do it? It costs money.

So it is so unlikely that they are ever going to be able to set a new standard at the Environmental Protection Agency, given the underlying bill.

But the bill also says, if there are six plants that are using technology, they better not use technology that has been funded by the government. Well, why not? That is what the government does.

We provide DOE grants to have demonstrations of new technologies. That is what the underlying bill says. If they are achieving reductions in carbon pollution because it is involving government funds, we are not going to count those.

Well, now, we have the Latta amendment that says: Well, wait a second. What if it is funds for demonstrations that are not using Federal dollars, but local dollars?

Well, fine. I don't have any objection to that, but I don't know why we would say Federal dollars can't be used to demonstrate technologies that are successful, so the Latta amendment narrows the underlying bill, but really doesn't accomplish much.

Why, I would ask: Would we want to say that the Department of Energy, using taxpayer dollars for projects to find new and better ways to improve air quality for the American people, should not be used by EPA to set a standard for future power plants?

These projects funded by the Federal Government help companies figure out how to reduce air pollution more effectively and at a lower cost. The whole point is to develop technologies that can be applied across the industry to reduce air pollution.

So if the Federal Government funds those new technologies and they are successful, we are not going to let a standard be based on that; but if the State funds the development of the new technologies that accomplish these goals, oh, we can use that, but they better be part of six, and they better fit this underlying standard—this underlying requirement that there be six in different parts of the country and on and on and on.

Well, I don't object to this amendment. I don't see what the amendment particularly does to make the bill any better. It doesn't solve any particular problem that I see, but I just want to point out how offensive this underlying bill is to not let EPA set standards for new plants when we know that technologies can reduce the carbon pollution.

But we are not going to look at it for real, unless they meet a higher standard, which is six plants; but they better not be using government-funded technologies from the Federal Government, which would be the case if this amendment is adopted.

So I just want to make these points rhetorically because I think people ought to understand how offensive this bill is.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Chairman, does the gentleman have anything further?

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire who closes the debate on this amendment?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from California has the right to close.

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. WAXMAN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 113-373.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act shall take effect when the Administrator of the Energy Information Administration certifies that a Federal program, other than a program under section 111 of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7411), will reduce carbon pollution in at least equivalent quantities to, with similar timing, and from the same sources as the carbon pollution reductions required in the aggregate by the rules and guidelines listed in paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) of section 4.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 497, the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, President Obama reached out to the Congress, to the Republican majority of this House, and he said: Let's work on ideas that could help us deal with this problem of climate change.

But he also said he wanted to make it very clear that, if the Republicans won't act because this House majority won't do anything to address climate change, he will.

The bill we are considering today shows that the Republicans' plan on climate change is to give up hope. Their plan is to let our children and grandchildren suffer the effects of climate change without lifting a finger to protect them; worse, the Republicans' plan is to stop any meaningful action to slow climate change. I think this position is indefensible.

Today's bill would amend the Clean Air Act to ensure that coal-fired power plants are able to pollute indefinitely with impunity. This bill would condition EPA's authority on conditions that simply can never be met or at least not as long as it is cheaper to dump pollution into the air rather than clean it up.

Republicans complain they don't like EPA's approach. Well, what is their plan to address climate change? For years, Democratic Members have shown that we are willing to consider any suggestion to reduce carbon pollution and to slow climate change.

We could put a price on carbon. We could put a limit on carbon pollution. We could support the development of clean energy. In the bill that I authored with now-Senator MARKEY, we dedicated \$60 billion to deploy carbon capture and sequestration technology on new coal power plants.

But what Congress can't do is simply say no to everything, no to a price on carbon, no to a limit on carbon, no to regulation on carbon.

What my amendment suggests is, if they don't want EPA to act to reduce the pollution from carbon coming from coal-burning power plants, we are saying: All right, address this problem, make sure we have some other alternative that will work.

Because if they don't have an alternative that will work, in effect, the Republicans are saying: We are not going to do anything, either we don't believe there is a problem called climate change, the scientists are all lying to us—of course, we will never let them come before our committee and testify because they will only lie to us about it—the science is wrong, we don't have to worry about it.

We have heard over and over again from Mr. WHITFIELD that 96 percent of the problem is naturally occurring carbon. Well, naturally occurring carbon is balanced; it is absorbed by photosynthesis and other processes.

But that 4 percent is upsetting the balance, and that balance that is being upset is a threat to this planet. It is a threat to our atmosphere. It is a threat to our Nation when we see hurricanes, floods, droughts, all these climate events that we hear about every night in the evening news.

So what is their alternative? If they don't want coal-burning power plants regulated, give us an alternative that will reduce that 4 percent that is upsetting the balance.

I would suggest that they are telling us they have no alternative whatsoever. I don't think that is an adequate answer to what many experts believe is the leading threat to our survival on this planet.

I would urge that we adopt this amendment. If they don't like what EPA is doing, tell us their plan. If they have other ideas for reducing carbon pollution to prevent catastrophic climate change, let's hear them; but if they don't, they should step aside and let the President lead.

I urge support for this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Kentucky is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I would point out once again, as I did in the beginning of this debate, that the Constitutional law professor Jonathan Turley, testifying before the Judiciary Committee, recently made the statement that:

If left unchecked, the United States President could effectively become a government unto himself because of excessive executive orders and excessive regulations.

The only reason that we are here today is that the President, without any real national debate, went to Copenhagen and other international groups and made commitments for the U.S. on the reduction of CO₂ emissions.

In the energy sector, our emissions are the lowest that they have been in 20 years. If EPA had adopted emission standards and technology was available that had been adequately demonstrated to meet those standards, we wouldn't have any problem, but they did not do that. In fact, they violated the 2005 Energy Policy Act in setting these emission standards.

We tried to talk to EPA; we tried to talk to the President; we tried to talk to his representatives; and we got the cold shoulder. So the only option available to us in trying to overcome these executive orders and regulations is to adopt some legislation.

In our legislation, we don't expect a coal plant to be built, but if natural gas prices go up, America—like every other country in the world practically—will be able to build a coal plant, and the technology will be available to meet those emission standards.

With that, I would respectfully oppose the gentleman's amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, my amendment doesn't stop EPA from acting if we can get an alternative, an alternative that would reduce the carbon pollution to the same level the EPA is proposing.

My friend and colleague, Mr. WHITFIELD, said the President, if left unchecked, would make these commitments. Well, President George H. W. Bush made a commitment on behalf of this country that we would try to achieve reduction of carbon to 1990 levels.

If the Republicans want to do something on their own and not let the President do it, tell us how you can accomplish these goals. If you don't want to achieve these goals, it is either because you don't believe we need to achieve them or you are not willing to do anything about the problem.

I urge support for the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I would just say that we believe the President's views are extreme when he sets a goal of reducing by 83 percent below the 2005 emission levels.

For that, we think this legislation is absolutely essential to give the American people the flexibility in the future to build a coal plant to help meet the electricity needs of this great country.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California will be postponed.

□ 1815

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Chair, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. YOH) having assumed the chair, Mr. HULTGREN, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3826) to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

THE ULTIMATE PRICE FOR FREEDOM

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, on March 6, 1836, nearly 200 Texans took their last breaths at the Alamo. A week before that, their commander, William Barret Travis, sent a final plea for help. Here are parts of that inspiring letter:

To the people of Texas and all Americans in the world, I am besieged by a thousand or more Mexicans under Santa Anna. I have sustained a continual bombardment and cannonade for 24 hours and have not lost a man. The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion; otherwise, the Garrison are to be put to the sword.

I call on you in the name of liberty, of patriotism, of everything dear to the American character to come to our aid. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due to his own honor, that of his country, victory or death.

May God and history always remember the Alamo.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE HIGH SCHOOLS IN ALABAMA'S SEVENTH DISTRICT THAT WON THE STATE BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS IN 2014

(Ms. SEWELL of Alabama asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to declare Alabama's Seventh Congressional District to be the district of high school basketball champions.

This year, in 2014, at the State tournament held by the Alabama High School Athletic Association, teams from the Seventh Congressional District of Alabama dominated, winning four boys basketball State championship titles and one girls.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Class 1A boys basketball State champions, St. Jude Educational Institute of Montgomery, Alabama; Class 3A boys basketball State champions, Midfield High School of Midfield, Alabama; Class 4A boys basketball State champions, Dallas County High School of Plantersville, Alabama; Class 5A boys basketball State champions, Parker High School of Birmingham; Class 5A girls basketball

champions, Wenonah High School of Birmingham, Alabama.

No doubt that in the Seventh Congressional District of Alabama we breed winners. I plan to provide individual remarks about each school's victory so that each school is recognized in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. For now, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating and honoring the State of Alabama high school basketball champions from Alabama's Seventh Congressional District, the district of high school basketball champions.

HONORING HENRY WILLIS NEAL

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, it is with heavy heart but a joy for his life that I rise today to honor Henry Willis "Hanq" Neal of Houston, Texas, who lost his battle in life last week. He was the music minister at the Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church, an awesome tenor voice anointed by God.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Henry Willis "Hanq" Neal, the legendary minister of music at Houston's Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church, who was called home by the Lord on Thursday, February 27, 2014. He was 57 years old.

The attack that took his life occurred the Sunday preceding, after a number of church services where he led the music ministry, and then concluding at another church a few miles away, never stopping, never ceasing to lead to the glory the Lord.

Hanq Neal possessed a distinctive singing voice that enthralled all audiences, the church and the unchurched. According to the Reverend Marcus D. Cosby, Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church's senior pastor, because of Hanq, people's lives have been comforted and we have been enriched by his musical genius.

Hanq Neal was born on September 4, 1956, one of eight children. He was raised in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, where he began to play the organ at 4 and took up the violin at 7. He performed in school orchestras and sang in the church on Sunday. He dreamed of becoming a teacher, a gifted musician, and vocalist.

Hanq Neal and two church friends formed a gospel trio, the Pentecostal Ambassadors. The group was discovered at a Gospel Music Workshop of America conference and signed to a recording contract by the gospel legend, Reverend James Cleveland.

Hanq Neal sang the lead on "If You Move Yourself," the title track of the 1980 gospel album recorded live in Detroit by the Donald Vails Choraleers.

The main thing that I want to share with all of you is that Hanq Neal was a friend. He sang at Erica Lee's, my

daughter's wedding. And he sang this song, Mr. Speaker, for the late Congressman Mickey Leland, "There Is Hope."

Hanq Neal gave hope to the world. We loved Hanq Neal. He was a hero, an American hero. We have lost a unique talent. We wish our deepest sympathy to his family, and he will be missed. You may not know him, Congress, but he is an American hero.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Henry Willis 'Hanq' Neal, the legendary Minister of Music at Houston's Wheeler Baptist Church, who was called home by the Lord on Thursday, February 27, 2014. He was 57 years old.

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Hanq Neal sang the lead on "If You Move Yourself," the title track of the 1980 gospel album recorded live in Detroit by The Donald Vails Choraleers.

In 1984, Hanq joined the Windsor Village United Methodist Church, a small-but-growing Houston congregation, and eventually established five choirs with a total membership of 600. He served there until 2001 and helped Windsor become the denomination's largest congregation.

Hanq Neal "had an awesome tenor voice anointed by God," according to Kathy Taylor, the nationally known gospel artist who succeeded him as Windsor Village's music minister.

Mr. Speaker, Hanq Neal was the preferred vocalist for Houston public occasions. He performed at mayoral inaugurations and for Queen Elizabeth II when she visited the city in 1991.

It was at the memorial service for the late Congressman Mickey Leland in 1989 that Hanq Neal gained national recognition and critical acclaim for his rendition of "There Is Hope," which became one of his signature songs.

When Hanq finished that song there were no dry eyes in the room every heart was lifted.

Hanq Neal's operatic rendition of "The Lord's Prayer" made him a popular soloist at funerals and other solemn occasions.

Hanq Neal was a unique talent and an American original. He was genuine. He broke and crossed barriers. His music brought the church to the community and the community to the church.

Mr. Speaker, Hanq Neal was a great man who touched the lives of all who heard him. He will be missed but never forgotten.

I ask a moment of silence in memory of Henry Willis 'Hanq' Neal.

THE RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Russians are invading Ukraine. I think a history lesson is in order.

I take you back to 1938. Adolph Hitler annexes a neighbor, Austria. Just took them. Took them over. The West, the world, the freedom-loving people watched. He got away with that. He took them over because he wanted to, in his statement, unify the German-speaking peoples.

That was in March of 1938. Then in October of 1938, Adolph Hitler just decided that he wanted part of Czechoslovakia, the Sudetenland, saying the same thing, that German-speaking people were being persecuted and that he wanted to help them, and he annexed the Sudetenland.

The West really agreed to that. We have heard about the appeasement of Chamberlain. Agreed to it, waived his paper, peace in our time. Not long after that, Hitler decided he wanted more Czechoslovakia. Then he invaded Poland, and then World War II started, and he invaded other countries. That was in the beginning of 1938.

Now take you to today. Vladimir Putin, Russia. He invades the Republic of Georgia, and he did so in August of 2008, and he took one-third of the country.

I happened to be in the Republic of Georgia shortly after the Russians invaded. I saw the Russian tanks on the horizon. Remember, Mr. Speaker, Putin invaded Georgia, took one-third of the land, and the Russians are still there. The world just moved on.

The Georgians are trying to figure out some way to deal with Putin's imperialistic attitude, but the Russians were there, are there—no consequences for that action.

Now that brings us to March of 2014. Of course, Georgia as we all know was a former Soviet Republic. Now Putin has his eyes on another former Soviet Republic, Ukraine. The Russian military, even though they went in with unmarked uniforms, just decided to move in and take over part of Ukraine—Crimea. That is the latest activity.

This is similar to what Adolf Hitler did back in the thirties and the forties. So, yes, Putin is similar to Adolph Hitler in that he has this appetite for other people's land, and he tries to justify it some way and he just waits to see if anybody is going to do anything about it.

This is a photograph taken by the Associated Press, Mr. Speaker, and it is

some Ukrainian women that are holding up signs. Here is a photograph of Adolph Hitler over here on the far right. They are holding a sign. This is a Russian flag with a swastika in the middle. Here is another poster being held up showing the Russian flag, comparing Putin to Hitler and the Nazis' quest and their appetite to take other people's sovereign land.

I think the analogy is in order. I think the world should understand that Putin has it somewhere in his brain that he can just, on his own, justify the taking of other people's sovereign land. I think it is important that we recognize the obvious. And what we will do about it, we shall see.

When the Russians moved into Georgia, I personally don't think much happened to the world, other than the Georgians didn't complain too much. So the Russians understood that they could do it and get away with it, Putin did. Six years later, *deja vu*, it is all over again. He believes that he can get away with the invading of sovereign nations because of this reason: these nations, to some extent, depend on Russia for their energy, including, specifically, natural gas.

The Kremlin is working to reestablish its empire by bullying countries like Ukraine, its neighbor who broke away from the Soviet Union years ago but never was quite able to get away from the influence and intimidation of Putin.

Russia has used its competitive advantage to maintain a stronghold over Eastern Europe and the European states that were formerly aligned to the Soviet Union. This is my opinion: that Russia—Putin—has its goal to try to rebring in those former Soviet Republics under the sphere of influence of Russia under some new name. That is my opinion. It looks like they have already started this.

Seventy percent of the gas that goes to Ukraine comes from Russia. Six nations in the European Union rely on Russia for 100 percent of their natural gas.

□ 1830

Much of Europe relies on the Kremlin for natural gas, although they don't get 100 percent of their gas from them.

So you have got Europe, the former Soviet Republics, and Ukraine depending on energy, natural gas, from Russia. The Russians know that. Reliance on the Russian gas shapes the foreign policy of Eastern European countries, Western European countries, and especially the former Soviet Republics, and jeopardizes, I think, political and economic reforms.

Russia understands the stranglehold and the monopoly. They can get away with the bullying because they are the source of natural gas. Two times in the last 10 years, for political reasons, they have been punished economically—that

is, the Ukrainians—by the Russians turning off the gas.

I happened to be in the Ukraine when the Russians turned off the gas one winter. Mr. Speaker, it gets cold in the Ukraine without heat. The Russians did that to make sure that the Ukrainians, I believe, come around and support Russian politics.

This past weekend, the Russians warned that the Ukrainians were not going to be able to continue to get some kind of discounted rate unless they reinstated the former Ukrainian President. They are blackmailing the Ukrainians. They want a president different than the one the Russians support.

So we can change that. People back home in Texas, like most Americans, don't think it is legal or right for the Russians to invade another country and just start moving in and taking over, but they ask this question: What are we going to do about it?

Remember, back when Hitler was in charge, it took a while for the West to react—and finally had to react militarily. Maybe we should try to react sooner and not have to react militarily, and we should do it economically.

The way to do that, I believe, is to give the Ukrainians, the former Soviet Republics, and Eastern and Western Europe an alternative to being held hostage by Putin because of their energy issues and the lack of natural gas and the lack of having an alternative.

Where should they look? They should look to the United States, and the United States should look to helping out these countries. Also, it would help us economically. We should be ready and eager to export our abundant natural gas to our European friends.

I think very few people in the energy industry would have believed 5 years ago that the United States would have so much natural gas that we would be able to export it; that we can produce it in such an efficient and clean way that we can export it to foreign countries. This is an opportunity to do so, and we should do so.

There is an ice cream company down in Texas that makes the best ice cream in the world. It is Blue Bell Ice Cream from Brenham, Texas. Their slogan is:

We eat all we can and we sell the rest.

That should be our slogan with natural gas. We use all we can in the United States and we sell the rest.

Who should we sell it to? We could start with these Eastern European Nations that are being intimidated by the Russians. We should help them economically, but also help the United States, and we should start with the Ukrainians.

An abundant and steady supply of natural gas exported from the United States would be beneficial to our allies, Eastern Europe, and let the world know that they are not going to be

held hostage by the kleptocratic Kremlin any longer.

We can export natural gas in several ways. That debate has already taken place here in the House of Representatives and in the Department of Energy about whether or not we should or could export natural gas, setting aside the Ukrainian issue.

I think that we should. We have that opportunity. It is something that we can do to relieve the pressure of the intimidation by Putin and his attitude about moving in and taking over other people's property. The demand is there in Europe and the supply is overwhelming in the United States. The only thing that stands in the way is our own government.

So what do we do about that?

For the first time in our history, we can export natural gas to foreign countries. The United States has so much, we could not use all of it in our lifetime. It is beneficial to the United States to sell natural gas abroad. It will create jobs in the United States. It will create an income. It will make us—and we have heard this phrase since we were children—"energy independent" by using natural gas, but also by selling it to our allies and our friends. The only thing that is stopping it, as I mentioned, is bureaucratic red tape.

It is ironic we talked about the year 1938. In 1938, Congress passed a law that required that any company that wanted to export natural gas had to get approval from the Department of Energy. That is in addition to the other permitting requirements that are required by FERC.

Over the last 70 years, this bureaucratic requirement that began in 1938, ironically, was hardly noticed anywhere in the United States because we were importing natural gas into the United States. By exporting, the United States can now become the Saudi Arabia of natural gas.

So technology has changed and we have an abundant amount of natural gas here in our own country. We can update the 1938 law and dismantle the bureaucratic roadblocks and take the Department of Energy out of the export license-granting process altogether. I think this country should be supporting and not stonewalling the development of this valuable resource. We can do that by legislation.

I have introduced legislation today, in fact, that would have the Department of Energy expedite the approval process for exporting natural gas to the Ukraine, former Soviet Republics, and to Europe. Let's get on with it.

Sure, it will take some time to get all of the logistics set up so we can actually send it to these countries, but we should help them. We should give them an alternative. We can do it on an economically good basis for these countries and for the United States. We

can encourage folks to look to the West, as many of the Ukrainians already do, and give them an alternative.

The second thing that we can do to let the Russians know that we don't really approve of Putin moving into other people's countries—just like Hitler moved into other people's countries—is to look at it diplomatically, in the sense that until the Russians move out of somebody else's land—the Ukrainians—they shouldn't be getting any diplomatic visas into the United States. You stay out of the United States. You respect the international rule of law. Don't be an aggressor nation. Come into the world community of non-aggressing nations, like Russia says they are.

So there should be some consequences for this activity of invading other countries. What are the consequences? No visas for Russian diplomats to come to the United States. That is a good place to start. Meanwhile, let's approve exporting natural gas to the former Soviet Republics.

So I have introduced two bills that would do both of these things. They are something we can do immediately. Let the Ukrainians know that they have a friend in the United States, and we really do believe in supporting freedom and letting a nation itself figure out what they want to do, who they want to rule over them. Let them figure out that process.

It is difficult, and they disagree, as I am speaking tonight, on what course they should take, but let them decide, not let the Russians force them into becoming another puppet of Putin.

I hope we can move this legislation as fast as we possibly can.

And that's just the way it is.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. ESTY (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business in her district.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 23. An act to designate as wilderness certain land and inland water within the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in the State of Michigan, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 6, 2014, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4889. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility, Rockland County, NY, et al. [Docket ID: FEMA-2013-0002] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8319] received February 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4890. A letter from the Program Manager, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — World Trade Center Health Program; Amendments to List of WTC-Related Health Conditions; Cancer; Revision [Docket No.: CDC-2014-0004; NIOSH-268] (RIN: 0920-AA50) received February 18, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4891. A letter from the Acting Director, Directorate of Whistleblower Protection Programs, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule — Procedures for Handling Retaliation Complaints Under Section 402 of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act [Docket Number: OSHA-2011-0859] (RIN: 1218-AC58) received February 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4892. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Texas; Revisions to the New Source Review (NSR) State Implementation Plan (SIP); Standard Permit for Oil and Gas Facilities and Standard Permit Applicability [EPA-R06-OAR-2011-0528; FRL-9906-60-Region 6] received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4893. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — *Bacillus thuringiensis* CryIF Protein in Soybean; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0704; FRL-9905-59] received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4894. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Fenpropidin; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0454; FRL-9904-31] received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4895. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Linuron; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0791; FRL-9905-22] received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4896. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Revisions to Test Methods and Testing Regulations [EPA-HQ-OAR-2010-0114; FRL-9906-23-OAR] (RIN: 2060-AQ01) received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4897. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental

Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances [EPA-HQ-OPPT-2013-0739; FRL-9903-70] (RIN: 2070-AB27) received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4898. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Thiram; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0925; FRL-9904-22] received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4899. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Media Bureau, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Section 73.622(i), Post-Transition Table of DTV Allotments, Television Broadcast Stations, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma [MB Docket No.: 13-302] [RM-11709] received February 19, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4900. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting Transmittal of D.C. Act 20-281, "Annie's Way Designation Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4901. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting Transmittal of D.C. Act 20-279, "Expedited Partner Therapy Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4902. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting Transmittal of D.C. Act 20-280, "Closing of a Public Alley in Square 150, S.O. 13-10218, Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4903. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's final rule — Visas: Wavier by Joint Action of Visa and Passport Requirements for Members of Armed Forces and Coast Guards of Foreign Countries (RIN: 1400-AD51) received February 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

4904. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting Annual Report on Disability-Related Air Travel Complaints Pursuant to the Wendell H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century (AIR-21); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4905. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Amount of the life insurance reserves taken into account under section 807 of the IRC for variable contracts (Rev. Rul. 2014-7) received February 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4906. A letter from the Acting Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting the November 2013 Annual Report of Payment Recapture Audits in Compliance with Section 2(h)(2)(D)(ii) of the Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Act of 2010; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida: Committee on Rules. H. Res. 501. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to stop the ongoing waste by the Department of the Interior of taxpayer resources and implement the final rule on excess spoil, mining waste, and buffers for perennial and intermittent streams, and for other purposes; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2641) to provide for improved coordination of agency actions in the preparation and adoption of environmental documents for permitting determinations, and for other purposes; and providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules (Rept. 113-374). Referred to the House Calendar.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

[Omitted from the Record of March 4, 2014]

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Agriculture discharged from further consideration. H.R. 3189 referred to the Committee of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, and ordered to be printed.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. MORAN:

H.R. 4148. A bill to phase out cosmetic animal testing and the sale of cosmetics tested on animals; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. BROWNLEY of California (for herself and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 4149. A bill to amend the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 to extend the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COOK (for himself and Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 4150. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Labor to enter into a contract for the conduct of a longitudinal study of the job counseling, training, and placement services for veterans provided by the Secretary, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself and Mrs. KIRKPATRICK):

H.R. 4151. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into a contract with a non-government entity to conduct a survey of individuals who have used or are using their entitlement to educational assistance under the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky (for himself and Mrs. LOWEY):

H.R. 4152. A bill to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the

Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. FORBES:

H.R. 4153. A bill to expedite the deployment of highway construction projects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 4154. A bill to deny visas and entry to the United States to officials and employees of the Government of the Russian Federation due to the Russian military intervention in Ukraine, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 4155. A bill to authorize natural gas exports to certain foreign countries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself and Mr. ENGEL):

H.J. Res. 112. A joint resolution providing for the approval of the Congress of the proposed Third Amendment to the Agreement for Co-operation Between the United States of America and the International Atomic Energy Agency that was transmitted to Congress on January 29, 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. MEADOWS:

H. Con. Res. 89. Concurrent resolution expressing support for designation of October 28, annually, as "Honoring the Nation's First Responders Day"; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. COOK, Mr. MARINO, Mr. KEATING, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Ms. ROSLEHTINEN, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. HOLT, Mr. MESSER, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. PERRY, Mr. POE of Texas, and Mr. SIREN):

H. Res. 499. A resolution condemning the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity by military forces of the Russian Federation; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. LEE of California (for herself, Mr. BURGESS, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN):

H. Res. 500. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RUSH:

H. Res. 502. A resolution congratulating the Minority Business Development Agency on its 45th anniversary and commending its achievements in fostering the establishment and growth of minority businesses in the United States; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Small Business, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. WOLF, and Mr. WEBER of Texas):

H. Res. 503. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regard-

ing the need to bring the South Sudan conflict to a sustainable and lasting end and to promote reconciliation of longstanding and recent grievances to allow for a peaceful society with good governance; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. MORAN:

H.R. 4148.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. BROWNLEY of California:

H.R. 4149.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. COOK:

H.R. 4150.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H.R. 4151.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause XII—XIV of the Constitution of the United States, which gives Congress the authority to:

To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years;

To provide and maintain a Navy;

To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;

By Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky:

H.R. 4152.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The principal constitutional authority for this legislation is clause 7 of section 9 of article I of the Constitution of the United States (the appropriation power), which states: "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law" In addition, clause 1 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution (the spending power) provides: "The Congress shall have the Power . . . to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States" Together, these specific constitutional provisions establish the congressional power of the purse, granting Congress the authority to appropriate funds, to determine their purpose, amount, and period of availability, and to set forth terms and conditions governing their use.

By Mr. FORBES:

H.R. 4153.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 4154.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 4155.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. ROYCE:

H.J. Res. 112.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 118: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 184: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 198: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 411: Mr. NEAL.

H.R. 564: Ms. PINGREE of Maine.

H.R. 594: Mr. FINCHER, Mr. WOLF, and Mr. DAINES.

H.R. 630: Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 715: Ms. TITUS, Mr. DELANEY, and Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 719: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.

H.R. 732: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.

H.R. 736: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 755: Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 861: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 921: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.

H.R. 938: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 1094: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1240: Mrs. NAPOLITANO and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 1249: Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, and Mrs. LUMMIS.

H.R. 1250: Mr. DENT.

H.R. 1263: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia and Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 1461: Mr. CRENSHAW.

H.R. 1462: Mr. ROSS and Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H.R. 1507: Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 1523: Mr. PERLMUTTER and Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 1563: Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 1579: Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 1726: Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 1798: Mr. FARR.

H.R. 1812: Mr. MCCARTHY of California.

H.R. 1852: Mr. MEADOWS.

H.R. 2001: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2016: Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 2328: Mrs. ELLMERS, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.

H.R. 2377: Mr. HUNTER.

H.R. 2413: Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. SALMON, and Mr. YOHIO.

H.R. 2444: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 2575: Mr. LAMBORN.

H.R. 2591: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.

H.R. 2663: Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 2734: Mr. HECK of Washington.

H.R. 2745: Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 2772: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 2812: Ms. CLARKE of New York.

H.R. 2852: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 2882: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER.

H.R. 2994: Mr. HIGGINS, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, and Mr. GRAYSON.

H.R. 2996: Mr. RENACCI, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3086: Mr. HOLT, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. MCKEON, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. LATTA, Mr. BARR, and Ms. WILSON of Florida.

H.R. 3121: Mr. CRENSHAW.

H.R. 3211: Mr. COTTON.

H.R. 3240: Ms. NORTON, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, and Mr. HUFFMAN.

H.R. 3318: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 3344: Mr. COTTON, Mr. SCHOCK, and Mr. PITTENGER.

H.R. 3352: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. BARBER.

H.R. 3361: Mr. NEAL.

H.R. 3383: Mr. COHEN and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.

H.R. 3435: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 3445: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 3529: Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 3543: Ms. BASS.

H.R. 3549: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 3556: Mr. TIERNEY and Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 3571: Mr. MEEHAN and Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 3600: Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mrs. LOWEY.

H.R. 3658: Mr. GARAMENDI and Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 3698: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.

H.R. 3708: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana and Mr. ROHRBACHER.

H.R. 3833: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 3872: Mr. CARSON of Indiana and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 3879: Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 3914: Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 3973: Mr. POE of Texas.

H.R. 3991: Mr. MESSER and Mr. SCHOCK.

H.R. 3992: Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. COLE, and Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER.

H.R. 4007: Mr. MARINO.

H.R. 4015: Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. TIBERI,

Mr. RANGEL, Mr. BUCHANAN, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. BISHOP of Geor-

gia, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. LONG, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mrs. BLACKURN, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. BARR, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. PETRI, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. HUDSON, Mr. DENT, and Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 4026: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi and Mr. RICHMOND.

H.R. 4031: Mr. BENTIVOLIO, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. DESANTIS.

H.R. 4064: Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. COLE, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. GIBBS, and Mr. PRICE of Georgia.

H.R. 4065: Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. FARR, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. FATTAH, and Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 4080: Mr. CUELLAR.

H.R. 4118: Mr. SCALISE, Mr. JONES, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 4132: Mr. FOSTER.

H.R. 4133: Mr. FOSTER.

H.R. 4137: Mr. NUNES.

H.R. 4139: Mr. CRAMER, Mr. COTTON, Mr. HALL, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, and Mr. MCCAUL.

H.R. 4142: Mr. COOK.

H. J. Res. 68: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H. Con. Res. 86: Mr. NOLAN, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. RIBBLE, and Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H. Res. 109: Mr. GIBSON.

H. Res. 221: Mr. HIMES.

H. Res. 231: Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H. Res. 422: Mr. ELLISON.

H. Res. 456: Mr. O'ROURKE.

H. Res. 480: Mr. KING of New York.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

The amendment to be offered by Representative JACKSON LEE, or a designee, to H.R. 2641, the Amendment numbered 4, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative LOWENTHAL, or a designee, to H.R. 2824, the Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. ROGERS OF KENTUCKY

H.R. 4152, to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

SENATE—Wednesday, March 5, 2014

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Holy God, because of Your great love, we do not cringe or falter at the challenges our Nation faces, for You have never forsaken us in our hour of need. Lord, give our lawmakers a desire to seek Your wisdom and to follow You where You lead. May they claim Your promise that no weapon formed against us will prosper. Help them to not permit the world to squeeze them into its mold as they seek to be transformed by Your powerful presence. Thank You for our many freedoms and empower us to use them to bless others.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 309, the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1086) to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, because of the inclement weather we have had to rearrange things. Senator MCCONNELL and I have been directing our staffs to help us get through what we need to do. We should be able to finish this week's work tomorrow, but that is not assured. So we are going to be working throughout the day to move forward as quickly as we can. Everyone should be aware that we could have some votes into the evening tonight and tomorrow. We may have to be here on Friday.

Following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will proceed to executive session with the time until 11:45 equally divided and controlled. At 11:45 there will be up to three rollcall votes. We expect to recess following those votes to allow for the weekly caucus meetings and work through the remaining nominations this afternoon. Senators will be notified when the votes are scheduled.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER: The Republican leader is recognized.

ADEGBILE NOMINATION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the Department of Justice and this administration have too often put politics ahead of the law. The record of the nominee before us to head the Civil Rights Division strongly indicates that if he were confirmed, the politicization of the Justice Department would increase even further. He has a long record of leftwing advocacy marked by ideologically driven positions and very poor judgment.

In the *District of Columbia v. Heller* he argued in the Supreme Court that it would be "radical" to recognize "an individual right to keep and bear arms." In fact, before the Supreme Court he repeatedly described the principle of individual liberty protected by the Second Amendment as a "radical" proposition. It was the position advocated by the nominee, however, that the Supreme Court rule was woefully at odds with the Constitution and individual liberty.

He also called the requirement to present identification before voting a "modern poll tax." Americans strongly support this basic safeguard for the integrity of our elections. It has been endorsed by liberal Democrats such as President Carter. Not surprisingly, in *Crawford v. Marion County* the Supreme Court rejected the nominee's views on that subject as well.

In *Hosanna-Tabor v. EEOC* he took the position in the Supreme Court that a church did not have the First Amendment right to hire or fire individuals who were responsible for conveying the church's message and implementing its mission. The position the nominee advocated would greatly infringe on the

free exercise of rights of religious institutions. The Supreme Court rejected his views there too, this time 9 to 0.

But it is his advocacy on behalf of the Nation's most notorious cop killer that most calls into question his fitness for the powerful government position he seeks. Back in December of 1981, 25-year-old officer Daniel Faulkner was conducting a routine traffic stop when Wesley Cook, also known as Mumia Abu-Jamal, shot him in the back. He then stood over Officer Faulkner and shot him several more times in the chest. As Officer Faulkner laid dying in the streets defenseless, Abu-Jamal shot him in the face, killing him. At the hospital Abu-Jamal bragged that he had shot Officer Faulkner and expressed his hope that he would die.

At trial he was remorseless. He turned the trial into political theater, interrupting the proceedings, insulting the judge, and even smirking at Officer Faulkner's widow when the blood-stained shirt was held up in court as evidence. Four eyewitnesses saw Abu-Jamal gun down Officer Faulkner—four eyewitnesses. Three more witnesses at the hospital heard him confess to the crime. Ballistics evidence proved that Officer Faulkner had been shot with a handgun that was registered to Abu-Jamal, which was found at the scene of the murder, along with the shell casings.

Based on this overwhelming evidence, Abu-Jamal was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death. What followed was a 30-year effort by the far left to glorify Abu-Jamal and to exonerate him. This effort was taken up by law professors, leftwing activists, and in 2009 by the organization which the nominee before us led for several years, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund.

When the Legal Defense Fund became Abu-Jamal's cocounsel in 2011, its press release called him a "symbol" of "racial injustice." It said: "Abu-Jamal's conviction and death sentence are relics of a time and place that was notorious for police abuse and racial discrimination." An LDF lawyer attended rallies for Abu-Jamal. She said it was absolutely an "honor" to represent him and that doing so was her "pleasure." She said: "There is no question in the mind of anyone at the Legal Defense Fund that the justice system has completely and utterly failed Mumia Abu-Jamal." This demagoguery of the murder of a defenseless police officer has shocked and offended law enforcement officers from across the country. Current District Attorney of Philadelphia Seth Williams wrote the Judiciary

Committee last month to oppose this nominee's confirmation. Here is what he had to say:

Apart from being patently false, moreover, these claims are personally insulting to me. As an African-American, I know all too well the grievous consequences of racial discrimination and prejudice. I also know that Abu-Jamal was convicted and sentenced because of the evidence, not because of his race. And I have continued to fight for the jury's verdict because it was the just result.

District Attorney Williams notes that, given all the cases in which the Legal Defense Fund could be involved, it was "telling" that the nominee would go out of his way to inject himself and his organization into this one. "His decision to champion the cause of an extremist cop-killer . . . sends a message of contempt to police officers."

The national Fraternal Order of Police wrote President Obama to express its "vehement opposition to the nomination." The FOP wrote that "as word of this nomination spreads through the law enforcement community, reactions range from anger to incredulity," and that it "can be interpreted in only one way: It is a thumb in the eye of our nation's law enforcement officers."

The Kentucky Narcotics Officers' Association wrote me a powerful letter in opposition to the nomination as well. In it they note: "The thought that [the nominee] would be rewarded, in part, for the work he did for Officer Faulkner's killer is revolting."

The nominee has acknowledged that as the director of litigation for the Legal Defense Fund, he "supervised [its] entire legal staff." According to LDF's own Web site, the director is responsible for coordinating "the selection of cases" the LDF chooses to get involved in. He manages "all aspects of the legal docket." He oversees "all aspects of discovery, motion practice, briefs, trials, appellate work and amicus briefing."

As director of litigation he is responsible for advocacy both in the courts of law and in the court of public opinion.

Let me repeat. He is responsible for advocacy both in the courts of law and in the court of public opinion. As the head of the Civil Rights Division, the nominee now would be responsible for fulfilling the Division's mission of upholding the civil and constitutional rights of all individuals. He would have powerful resources at his disposal as well as the discretion to determine how and on whose behalf to use them.

As the junior Senator from Pennsylvania has noted, the head of the Civil Rights Division must have an absolute commitment to truth and justice. My friend from Pennsylvania goes on to observe that, while there are many highly qualified Americans who could carry out this critical mission, the nominee's record creates serious doubts that he is one of them.

I might point out that the senior Senator from Pennsylvania also op-

poses this nominee. So I could not say it any better. Everyone deserves a fair trial and a zealous legal defense. Lawyers are not personally responsible for the actions of their clients. But lawyers are responsible for their own actions. In this case the nominee inserted his office in an effort to turn reality on its head, impugn honorable and selfless law enforcement officers, and glorify an unrepentant cop killer.

This is not required by our legal system. On the contrary, it is noxious to it. I therefore will oppose the nomination and strongly urge my colleagues to do so as well.

Finally, I would like to note the manner in which this nomination may come to an up-or-down vote. Last fall the majority chose to break the rules of the Senate in order to change the rules of the Senate. In so doing, they violated the right of the minority under the rules to require extended debate on controversial nominees to powerful Federal positions. This serious breach of the rules is an ongoing violation. It is highlighted again today by the majority's effort to muscle through the current nominee under a procedure they came up with in the majority leader's conference room, not through the rules committee and regular order as was promised.

Members of the majority who voted for this heavyhanded procedure last fall will be responsible for the nominee's confirmation today—if that occurs—regardless of how they vote on the nomination itself. And they should not be heard to complain that the nomination process is not as productive as it was only a few months ago—before they threw caution to the wind and violated our rights under the Standing Rules of the Senate.

UKRAINE

Mr. President, last week's military intervention by Russian forces into Crimea makes it clear that President Putin is determined to maintain the Russian sphere of influence there—and at a cost to his country. That is why Washington and its allies will now be of such critical importance in Ukraine.

According to the Budapest agreement, Russia has an obligation to respect the sovereignty of its neighbor, and the West should stand united in holding President Putin to that agreement.

The United States, NATO, and the EU should also work together to support the interim government in Kiev by supporting free and fair elections. And Members of Congress are already discussing loan guarantees and additional sanctions against Russia.

But if there is one thing Russia's military intervention into Crimea also makes absolutely clear, despite the best hopes of some, it is this: The foundation of the international system is governed by force, capability, and interest. Let me say that again. The

foundation of the international system is governed by force, capability, and interest. That is the reality by which we should be guided in approaching this conflict, and it is a reality by which we should be guided when it comes to American power more generally.

As I have argued before, this President has eroded American credibility in the world:

[It starts] with the arbitrary deadlines for military withdrawal . . . and the triumph and declaration that Guantanamo would be closed within a year, without any plan for what to do with its detainees. . . . there were the executive orders that ended the Central Intelligence Agency's detention and interrogation programs . . .

We all saw the so-called reset with Russia, and how the President's stated commitment to a world without nuclear weapons led him to hastily sign an arms treaty with Russia that did nothing to substantially reduce its stockpile, or its tactical nuclear weapons.

We saw the President announce a strategic pivot to the Asia-Pacific, without any real plan to fund it, and an effort to end the capture, interrogation, and detention of terrorists, as well as the return of the old idea that terrorism should be treated as a law enforcement matter.

After a decade-long counterinsurgency in Afghanistan, we've seen the President's failure to invest in the kind of strategic modernization that's needed to make his pivot into Asia meaningful.

Specifically, his failure to make the kind of investments that are needed to maintain our dominance in the Asia Pacific theater, in the kind of naval, air, and Marine Corps forces that we'll need there in the years ahead, could have tragic consequences down the road.

Let's be clear. Whether it is recent reports suggesting the Obama administration knew for years about potential Russian violations of the treaty that regulates medium-range missiles or whether it is Russia's refusal to negotiate a reduction in tactical nuclear weapons, its shipment of arms to the Syrian Government, or its invasion of Crimea, we can now put to rest for good any notion that the relationship with Russia has been reset.

President Putin sees himself as the authoritarian ruler of a great power—and one who is determined to preserve his regime. That is how we should understand him.

In invading Crimea he clearly concluded that protecting Russia's sphere of influence there was worth the risk of Russian lives and of any response on the part of the United States and Europe. We and our allies pay a price when our capabilities diminish. That is why I have continually advocated for investments in the modernization of our forces, for marrying our commitments to our capabilities, and for a recognition that receding from the world comes with consequences—mainly bad ones.

We remain a member of NATO and have treaty commitments to our fellow members. We also know that in Asia, China has pursued a policy of coercing

its neighbors and exploiting territorial disputes. American military might is the backbone of the international order, but when we diminish our capabilities, we must understand that regional powers will fill the void.

Our President is still the leader of the free world. We will support him however we can to ensure a satisfactory outcome for the Ukrainian people and to prevent this conflict from escalating into a wider war. Ukrainians deserve our support. But this is a moment when President Obama is going to have to lead.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER COLLIN T. THOMAS

Mr. President, I rise to speak in tribute to a brave Kentuckian who has given his life in service to his country. CPO Collin T. Thomas, a highly distinguished and decorated Navy SEAL, was killed in his final mission on August 18, 2010, in eastern Afghanistan in direct combat with the enemy. In his final act, he killed a Taliban fighter who had shot him and other members of his team, thus saving his teammates. For these acts of valor, he received the Silver Star Medal. He was 33 years old.

Chief Petty Officer Thomas held a rating of chief special warfare operator, was a Navy SEAL for 10 years, and served in the Navy for 13. In that time he received many awards, medals, and decorations, including the Silver Star Medal for the actions I have described, three Bronze Star Medals with combat "V" distinguishing device, a Purple Heart, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, two Joint Service Commendation Medals with combat "V" distinguishing device, a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, six Marine Corps and Navy Achievement Medals, two Combat Action Ribbons, four Good Conduct Medals, the National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medals with two campaign stars, the Iraq Campaign Medal, Marksmanship Medals with "expert" service device for both rifle and pistol, and a multitude of personal, unit and campaign awards.

On September 11, 2001, Collin Thomas's cousin, Navy weatherman AG1 Edward Earhart, was the first identified military casualty of the terrorist attack that struck the Pentagon. Sadly, this was not the first time terrorism had directly struck Collin's family. His uncle, Maj. John Macrogrou, was the senior marine killed in the Beirut barracks bombing in 1983.

Then a Navy SEAL for a little over 1 year, Collin vowed to his family to make amends for the death of his uncle and his cousin. Collin's father Clayton says:

When asked by his grandfather why he continued to be a SEAL, Collin would say that he was going to be the one to capture or kill bin Laden.

Collin was born in San Diego, and by high school he had lived in seven

States and two countries. But he always considered himself a Kentuckian.

After his father's retirement from the U.S. Marine Corps, the Thomas family settled in Morehead, where Collin attended Rowan County Senior High School. He ran track and played varsity football. Collin enjoyed camping and hunting. He liked to shoot and was good at it. His grandmother would prepare squirrel gravy from the spoils of Collin's hunting expeditions reluctantly because as much as she wanted to celebrate her grandson's marksmanship, squirrel was not a favored delicacy in her household.

A story from Collin's high school years demonstrates that the motivation to help others that was the driving force behind his Navy SEAL career was present at a young age. At age 14 Collin stood up for some younger children to bullies on the schoolbus. "He didn't even know these children, but he knew they were being bullied and denied a bus seat by bigger and older children," Clayton remembers. He "gave them his seat and told the bullies they would have to answer to him if he ever saw them bullying these or any other children again. . . . The character and sense of fairness he demonstrated taking on bullies he did not know to protect others would be repeated throughout his life."

Collin was very driven and focused from a young age on his life's goal—becoming a Navy SEAL. He began his unofficial training at age 15 after talking with a Navy master chief at the Naval Academy, who gave him an idea of the physical, academic, and psychological training Collin would need to undergo to follow his dream. By the time he received his driver's license, Collin had also completed his SCUBA open water dive certification.

Collin graduated from high school in 1995, and at Morehead State University he took every ROTC class available. The summer after his first year of college, Collin was selected for basic airborne training by his ROTC commander. He met many Active-Duty Navy SEALs there and came away convinced he was ready.

Collin enlisted in the Navy on February 20, 1997, and his oath was administered by his father Clayton, a retired marine lieutenant colonel.

Collin completed basic training, was an honor graduate at the hospital corpsman school, and trained in basic underwater demolition. He was then assigned to a SEAL team to develop his skills as a special warfare operator. He became a SEAL on June 9, 2000, and was sent on his first deployment to South America.

Chief Petty Officer Thomas was a highly skilled and capable SEAL, and his constant training took him around the world. He became certified as a paramedic and a lead climber, able to scale near-vertical cliffs. He was a mas-

ter parachutist specializing in nighttime high-altitude operations. He mastered underwater diving and was able to stay underwater for over 4 hours. He won inter-unit shooting competitions with both longbarrelled and shortbarrelled weapons. He excelled in snow skiing and skied the most difficult airdrop courses in South America, Europe, and America.

In April 2010 Collin achieved a lifetime goal when he and two of his SEAL teammates climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, the highest freestanding mountain in the world at 19,341 feet above sea level. They made most of the climb in speedy time. Near the summit, however, Collin encountered two women from California who were ill from altitude sickness. Against his guide's advice, Collin stopped to give them medical attention, delaying his final ascent. Collin's father recalled, "Somehow, one of the women found out that Collin had been killed, and she sent a letter telling the family how kind he was to them, and she felt he had saved their lives." Once again, the same young man who had stood up to bullies on a schoolbus had set his own interests aside to save others.

Collin was buried with full military honors at Forest Lawn Memorial Gardens in Rowan County, KY.

We are thinking of his loved ones today, including his parents Clayton and Paul; his sister Meghan; his fiancée Sarah Saunders, and many other beloved family members and friends.

To his father Clayton I say "Semper fidelis"—your son was always faithful.

One of Collin's senior officers, engaged in many highly sensitive and consequential missions, was unable to give his name for attribution on the Senate floor. However, he was able to say these words about Collin, which I will share with all of you. This unnamed officer said:

Collin Thomas was a brave American patriot and an incredibly gifted Navy SEAL. His tireless professionalism, inspiring passion for life, and humble demeanor made him a role model for all who knew him. We are deeply saddened by this tremendous loss of a brother in arms.

I know my colleagues share these sentiments, and we mourn the loss of CPO Collin T. Thomas. We extend our deepest condolences to his family. No words spoken in this Chamber can take away the sadness and loss Collin's family must feel, but I do want them to know this Nation and this Senate are deeply grateful for CPO Collin T. Thomas's service and sacrifice. We are humbled to pay tribute to his life and legacy.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF DEBO P. ADEGBILE TO BE AN ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Debo P. Adegbile, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11:45 a.m. will be equally divided between the Senator from Vermont and the Senator from Iowa or their designees.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, similar to my Republican leader, I come to the floor to share my concerns about Mr. Adegbile's nomination, and I will explain my voting no today.

I begin by saying I believe the nominee possesses high moral character and personal integrity. I have met him. I am also aware he has been working on the chairman's staff of the Judiciary Committee for the last few months. Unfortunately, I have reached the conclusion that this nominee isn't the right pick to lead the Civil Rights Division.

First of all, it is no secret that I believe the last individual to lead this office, the current Secretary of Labor, was very political and extremely committed to a host of political causes. Of course, I don't expect President Obama to nominate conservatives to his political appointments, but as we all know, these are very important and powerful jobs. The individual who holds them wields a tremendous amount of power on behalf of the Department of Justice.

I expect the President's nominees to be liberal, maybe even very liberal, and in the vast majority of cases the President is entitled to have people of his own choosing serving in these important positions, but the Senate must provide its advice and consent, which is what we are doing today.

In my view the President's nominees can't be so committed to political causes and so devoted to political ideology that it clouds his or her judgment. This is particularly important here, given that this office, under the leadership of the last Assistant Attorney General, was marked by controversy, and those controversies, in my view, were directly linked to that individual's deep commitment to a host of liberal causes, regardless of how well held they were. At the end of the day I believe it clouded his judgment.

With that brief bit of background, I would first note there is bipartisan opposition to this nomination. As I will discuss in a few minutes, there is also widespread opposition from the law enforcement community.

Seth Williams, a Democrat and Philadelphia's district attorney, opposes this nomination. Many of the largest national law enforcement organizations, including the Fraternal Order of Police and the National Association of Police Organizations, vigorously oppose this nomination as well. This opposition is based upon the nominee's record—and the nominee's record, in my view, demonstrates that the nominee has a long history of advocating legal positions far outside the mainstream. I believe it is a record which demonstrates he is simply too deeply committed to these causes to be an effective and fair leader of this very important Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

I am not going to mention every aspect of the nominee's record I find troubling but a few will be mentioned.

His record on First Amendment issues should give us all pause. For example, in the Hosanna-Tabor case before the Supreme Court, the nominee advocated for a position which would have infringed on the free-exercise rights of religious organizations. Specifically, he argued that a church didn't have the right to freely hire or fire individuals who were responsible for conveying the church's message and carrying out its religious mission. This is at the core of what religious freedom means under our Constitution. The nominee's view was a dramatic departure from established First Amendment jurisprudence. In fact, it was so outside the mainstream that the Supreme Court unanimously rejected it 9 to 0.

Likewise, the nominee's views on the Second Amendment to our Federal Constitution are out of step with the law. In *Heller* he argued, "The Second Amendment does not protect an individual's right to keep and bear arms for purely private purposes." He also argued that "the right protected by the Second Amendment are ones that exist only in the context of a lawfully organized militia."

The Supreme Court, of course, rejected that view, as we all know, and the Supreme Court's decision very much strengthened the right of individuals to bear arms.

I have also been disappointed by the answers the nominee provided to a number of my questions. For example, I asked whether he believed voter-ID requirements—which have been upheld by the Supreme Court in the Crawford case—are the modern-day equivalent of a poll tax. I asked this question for several reasons.

First of all, according to press reports, this nominee said as much in 2005 during a discussion in Georgia regarding voter-ID laws. According to press reports, he called voter-ID cards "a modern poll tax." But the Supreme Court upheld Indiana's voter-ID law as constitutional in the Crawford case in 2008.

So, if the nominee continues to believe that voter-ID laws are the modern-day equivalent of a poll tax and is firmly committed to that principle, I am concerned—we all ought to be concerned—that he would look for creative ways to undermine and challenge those laws, notwithstanding the Crawford case upholding Indiana's voter-ID law.

It goes without saying, of course, a significant part of this job is the enforcement of voting-rights laws, and that enforcement power should be entrusted only to someone we are confident will apply the law in an evenhanded way and, obviously, uphold what the Supreme Court has already said was constitutional.

I have also repeatedly asked the nominee whether, if confirmed, he would commit to implementing the recommendations made by the Department of Justice's Inspector General regarding the hiring process in the Civil Rights Division. The IG's report exposed a hiring process in that division which was structured in a way that systematically screened out conservative applicants. So, evidently, only one point of view is welcomed in that division. But the nominee will not commit to implementing the recommendations the IG's report has put out which addressed those issues so the office has the benefit of an ideologically diverse group of lawyers. This concerns me, and it ought to concern my colleagues. Again, this is a division in the Department of Justice which needs a clean break from the political partisanship which plagued the office under the last Assistant Attorney General.

Finally, I wish to address the nominee's involvement with and representation of Mumia Abu-Jamal. To understand why the nominee's involvement in this case is so concerning to many of us, a bit of history is in order.

Mr. Abu-Jamal is this country's most notorious cop-killer. The facts of the Abu-Jamal case are well known and cannot be seriously disputed.

Back in December of 1981 Abu-Jamal—then known as Wesley Cook—gunned down Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. Abu-Jamal first shot Officer Faulkner in the back and then several more times in his chest at close range. As Officer Faulkner lay dying in the street, Abu-Jamal stood over him and shot him in the face. At the hospital a short while later, Abu-Jamal actually boasted he had shot a police officer and said he hoped the officer would die. Ballistics evidence proved Officer Faulkner had been shot with a .38-caliber revolver registered to Abu-Jamal and found at the scene, along with spent shell casings.

No serious observer of this case can question the overwhelming evidence of his guilt. Based on the evidence, he was tried. A jury—including white and African-American jurors—convicted him and sentenced him to death.

Nonetheless, over the course of the next 25 years, opponents of capital punishment and other critics of our justice system have elevated Mr. Abu-Jamal to celebrity status. Those critics have charged that the conviction was tainted by racial discrimination. They slandered police officers and prosecutors and they have leveled accusations of police abuse. They have even organized rallies which portrayed this murderer as the victim.

Amazingly, Mr. Abu-Jamal's campaign has been somewhat successful. He has actually convinced a lot of people he is a political prisoner—if you can imagine that—and his fame isn't confined to the borders of this country. The French went so far as to name a street after him in the suburbs of Paris. In fact, it became such a high-profile issue that in 2006 the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a bipartisan resolution 368 to 31 condemning the murder of Officer Faulkner and urging the French town to change the name of its street.

I must say the disgust with Mr. Abu-Jamal's celebrity status isn't defined by partisanship. In fact, five of today's Senate Democrats were in the House of Representatives in 2006 when that resolution was passed. Four of those five voted in favor of that resolution, rejecting the political celebrity of a murderer.

In short, this case is about much more than hyper-technical legal challenges to the imposition of the death penalty. It has become, quite plainly, a cause. So it is with that background that I would like to discuss the nominee's involvement in that matter.

In 2009, Mr. Adegbile was Director of Litigation for the NAACP's legal defense fund, and it was in that role that he worked as an advocate on Abu-Jamal's behalf. The nominee and the legal defense fund first got involved when they volunteered as an amicus and then later as lead counsel for Abu-Jamal's post-conviction proceedings.

In this first phase, the legal defense fund alleged that Philadelphia prosecutors discriminated against African-American jurors in the jury-selection process during the trial. After the Third Circuit rejected that argument, the nominee submitted an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court urging the Court to take the case and hear the same arguments. The Court declined to hear that case.

After this effort failed, in 2011 the legal defense fund signed on as Abu-Jamal's lead counsel for his post-conviction challenges. It was at this point the nominee again challenged the conviction in the Third Circuit but this time under a different theory.

The nominee argued that the jury instructions were constitutionally infirm. The Third Circuit agreed, and the Supreme Court refused to hear further argument.

Now, keep in mind that Abu-Jamal never ran the risk of lacking adequate legal counsel. Highly motivated attorneys, highly motivated law professors, and legions of activists have represented him for years. They have filed literally hundreds of motions and briefs on his behalf. So this isn't a case of the nominee and the legal defense fund intervening to vindicate the rights of an indigent defendant who has been denied due process, nor is this a case of a lawyer stepping in to defend an unpopular client who couldn't otherwise find a lawyer. Abu-Jamal has enjoyed the zealous representation of some of the country's best lawyers for almost three decades.

In short, this is not John Adams defending the British soldiers after the Boston Massacre. That is not what is happening. The first attempt to challenge the conviction was unsuccessful, so the nominee and the legal defense fund redoubled their efforts and mounted a second challenge under a different theory. This was a cause in search of a legal justification.

We know this, of course, because the statements and press releases that the legal defense fund made at the time confirmed the understanding that this was a cause.

The nominee's colleagues and co-counsels explained the legal defense fund's motivations for getting involved in this case at a rally for Abu-Jamal in 2011. A lawyer with the legal defense fund said:

There is no question in the mind of anyone at the legal defense fund that the justice system has completely and utterly failed Mumia Abu-Jamal, and in our view, that has everything to do with race, and that is why the legal defense fund is in this case.

In fact, when the legal defense fund signed on as lead counsel in 2011, their press release declared:

Abu-Jamal's conviction and death sentence are relics of a time and place that was notorious for police abuse and racial discrimination.

Again, this is, in fact, a cause. It was a cause premised on the notion that this country's most notorious cop killer, Mumia Abu-Jamal, was a victim rather than a murderer, and the police officers and prosecutors and the entire judicial system were to blame, not the person who did the killing.

At bottom, this is why the law-enforcement community is so staunchly opposed to this nomination. That is why the Fraternal Order of Police calls this nomination a "thumb in the eye of our Nation's law enforcement officers."

That is why Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams wrote this in his letter of opposition:

Despite the overwhelming evidence of guilt, his lawyers have consistently attempted to turn reality on its head, arguing that Abu-Jamal was framed, and that it was he, rather than Officer Faulkner, who was the victim of racism.

District Attorney Williams went on to say:

Aside from being patently false, moreover, these claims are personally insulting to me. As an African-American, I know all too well the grievous consequences of racial discrimination and prejudice. I also know that Abu-Jamal was convicted and sentenced because of the evidence, not because of his race.

Finally, that is why Maureen Faulkner, whose husband was murdered by Abu-Jamal, wrote two letters to the Judiciary Committee, and why she wrote this:

Officers who knew Danny and who, like him, put their lives on the line every day, must now witness Adegbile, a man proud to have chosen to aid the murderer of their friend, singled out for honors and high office by the Government of the United States. It is an abomination to now reward Adegbile as if he had done something wonderful.

So to my colleagues and to the President of this body, for the reasons I have outlined here, I cannot support this nomination. I don't believe he is the right nominee to lead this office at this time. I will oppose this nominee, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

Madam President, I would suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). The clerk will call the role.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask unanimous consent that the time spent in quorum calls this morning be divided equally between the two sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, I rise this morning to speak on the nomination of Debo P. Adegbile as the candidate to serve as the Director of the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department. He would be the assistant attorney general in the Justice Department if he were to be confirmed.

It was 3:55 a.m. on December 9, 1981, when 25-year-old Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner was brutally murdered in the line of duty.

A few weeks ago, Officer Faulkner's widow Maureen Faulkner pleaded with the Senate Judiciary Committee to listen to her story. It is a heartbreaking story. It is a story about how 32 years

ago a coldblooded killer murdered her husband and how political opportunists then seized the chance to deny her justice and propagate a very pernicious set of lies.

It is also a story about how President Obama's current nominee to head the Civil Rights Department, this fellow, Debo Adebile, joined in this gross abuse of our legal system. Unfortunately, our colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee—our Democratic colleagues—did not allow Maureen Faulkner to testify when the committee was considering this nominee. I think Maureen Faulkner deserves to be heard. I think she has a right to be heard. We have heard a lot of voices and a lot of arguments in this discussion. I think Maureen Faulkner's voice deserves to be heard.

Since she was not permitted to testify before the committee, I wish to read to my colleagues in the Senate the letter she sent to all of us, and I will begin now. Maureen Faulkner writes:

Dear Senators, while I would have preferred to do so personally, I'm writing this letter appealing to your sense of right and wrong, good and evil, as you consider the nomination of Debo Adebile to be the next head of the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice.

Thirty-three years ago my husband, Philadelphia Police Officer Daniel Faulkner, was violently murdered by a self-professed "revolutionary" named Mumia Abu-Jamal.

I was 24 years old.

While most of my friends spent their summer at the Jersey Shore, I sat in a hot steamy courtroom and watched in horror and disbelief as the man who murdered my husband tried to turn the courtroom into a political stage where he could spew his hatred and contempt for this country and our judicial system.

At the moment my husband's blood stained shirt was displayed by the evidence handler, Mumia Abu-Jamal turned in his chair and smirked at me; demonstrating his contempt for law enforcement.

Thankfully, a racially mixed jury that was selected by Abu-Jamal while representing himself, found him guilty.

The following day they sentenced him to death for the brutal act he committed.

That's when my second nightmare began.

For three decades, my family and I endured appeal after appeal, each rooted in lies, distortions, and allegations of civil rights violations.

And year after year, judge after judge, the conviction and sentence were unanimously upheld.

Then, thirty years after the fact, my family, society and I were denied justice when three Federal District Court judges who have found error in every capital case that has come before them, overturned the death sentence.

Today, as my husband lies thirty-three years in the grave, his killer has become a wealthy celebrity.

He pens books and social commentaries critical of our country.

He regularly uses his nearly unlimited access to the prison telephone to do radio programs, has cable TV in his cell and is permitted to hold his wife, children and grandchildren in his arms when they visit.

Old wounds have once again been ripped open and additional insult is brought upon our law enforcement community in this country by President Obama's nomination of Debo Adebile.

While publicly demonstrating that he doesn't even know my husband's name, Mr. Adebile feigns sympathy and caring for my family and me.

In reality, Mr. Adebile was a willing and enthusiastic accomplice in Mumia Abu-Jamal's bid to cheat us of the justice we had waited so many years for.

Mr. Adebile freely chose to throw the weight of his organization behind Mumia Abu-Jamal, and he has publicly stated that he would get Mumia Abu-Jamal off death row.

Mr. Adebile holds Mumia Abu-Jamal, a remorseless unrepentant cop killer, in high esteem.

We know this because attorneys working under Mr. Adebile stood before public rallies held in support of my husband's killer and openly professed that it was "an extreme honor" to represent the man who put a hollow based bullet into my husband's brain as he lay on the ground, wounded, unarmed and defenseless.

And while Mr. Adebile and those who support his nomination will undoubtedly argue that he did not personally make such statements, he did nothing to counter or stop them.

In the end, like so many attorneys before him, Mr. Adebile's allegations of civil rights abuse rang hollow.

Mumia Abu-Jamal's death sentence was overturned not because of civil rights abuse as alleged by Mr. Adebile, but because three judges with a personal dislike for capital punishment conveniently determined that the wording in a standard form given to a jury might have confused them.

While Debo Adebile may be a well-qualified and competent litigator, through his words, his decisions and his actions he has clearly and repeatedly demonstrated that he is not the best person to fill this important position.

Certainly there are others with similar qualifications that would be better choices.

I would argue that Mr. Adebile's decision to defend a cop killer should preclude him from holding any public position.

Your decision means a lot to me personally.

The thought that Mr. Adebile will be rewarded, in part, for the work he did for my husband's killer is revolting.

Throughout my long ordeal I have frequently been labeled a racist by many who support my husband's killer simply because he is black and I white.

I have also been asked to throw my name, my voice and my support behind political candidates from both parties.

In each case I have declined.

I have always believed that my husband's death and my quest for justice transcends politics and race.

From my heart, I'm asking you to do the same thing.

Set aside any partisan feelings you have and do the right thing today when you vote on Mr. Adebile's confirmation.

Please spare my family and me from further pain.

Sincerely,

Maureen Faulkner.

To conclude, as the Justice Department's Web site explains, the Civil Rights Division "fulfills a critical mission in upholding the civil and con-

stitutional rights of all individuals." This requires the head of the Civil Rights Division to have an absolute commitment to truth and justice.

There are many highly qualified Americans who can carry out this critical mission—and it is a critical mission. Mr. Adebile's record and what he actually has done create serious doubt that he is one of them.

For these reasons I urge my colleagues to vote against cloture on the nomination of Mr. Adebile to serve as Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the nomination of Debo Adebile to serve as Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. As a representative of the city of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia police, and the family of slain officer Daniel Faulkner, I feel compelled to voice my concerns about this nomination for the record.

In 2009, while Mr. Adebile was serving as director of litigation for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legal Defense and Education Fund, that organization took on the defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Mr. Abu-Jamal had 27 years earlier been convicted of the first-degree murder of Daniel Faulkner, a Philadelphia police officer. The political theatrics surrounding this case have deprived Officer Faulkner's widow Maureen Faulkner and others of the orderly process of justice they should have received as victims of a heinous crime.

I believe strongly that people should have the right to criminal defense no matter what the circumstances. However, I am troubled by the legal defense fund's involvement in Mr. Abu-Jamal's defense at a time when he was ably represented by other counsel. The facts in the murder of Officer Daniel Faulkner while in the line of duty are not in dispute. The events and theatrics that surrounded this trial and that were fueled by the defense team here took an incredible toll on the Faulkner family, the law enforcement community, and the city of Philadelphia. From as early as the pretrial stage, Mr. Abu-Jamal disrupted the court proceedings by demanding representation by a non-attorney, refusing to accept judicial rulings on his motions and reportedly threatening the judge with violence. Since his conviction, Mr. Abu-Jamal and his supporters have engaged in an effort to discredit the judges, the Philadelphia police, Maureen Faulkner, and Officer Faulkner in this case. For many of my constituents, a vote for this nominee would have validated the activities of the supporters of Mr. Abu Jamal.

Mr. Adebile has had a long and accomplished career as a civil rights advocate, including arguing twice before

the Supreme Court in defense of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, a landmark piece of civil rights legislation. For years he has been actively working to defend voting rights and recently has been engaged in efforts to restore the protections of the Voting Rights Act for millions of Americans following the Supreme Court's ruling in *Shelby County v. Holder*. Mr. Adegbile's work on the Voting Rights Act is commendable, and all Americans benefit from his commitment to ensuring equal access to the ballot. I take very seriously my duty to advise and consent, and I have considered Mr. Adegbile's history of public service as well as my concerns about his involvement in the Abu-Jamal case.

Pennsylvanians and citizens across the country deserve to have full confidence in their public representatives—both elected and appointed. The Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights is one of the top law enforcement positions in our Nation, and the full faith and confidence of the law enforcement community is an important consideration for a nominee for this position. The vicious murder of Officer Faulkner in the line of duty and the events that followed in the 30 years since his death have left open wounds for Maureen Faulkner and her family as well as the city of Philadelphia. After careful consideration and having met with Mr. Adegbile as well as the Fraternal Order of Police, I decided to vote against this nomination.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, Debo Adegbile has the keen intellect, life experience, and knowledge sufficient to be an excellent assistant attorney general. What an American story we find in his life.

The son of Nigerian and Irish immigrants, he worked his way up from poverty—including periods of homelessness and reliance on welfare—to the top of the legal profession. He graduated from Connecticut College and NYU Law School and spent the early years of his career in one of the most highly regarded law firms in New York. Then he decided to start working at the NAACP legal defense fund, ultimately becoming the organization's acting president and directing counsel. For those who don't know the NAACP legal defense fund, I would commend to them a book called "Devil in the Grove." It is a Pulitzer Prize-winning story of the work of Thurgood Marshall in the 1940s and 1950s when the fund was literally the only voice for those

who were poor and Black in America. Time and again, Thurgood Marshall would journey to parts of America and risk his life to defend someone accused of a crime. They were the only ones who would stand and speak for the poor and those who were in minority status.

Mr. Adegbile joined the NAACP legal defense fund, and during his 20-year career he has gained experience and perspective on a wide range of issues, certainly qualifying him for this job with the Civil Rights Division. He has widespread enthusiastic support from a broad spectrum of civil rights groups, law enforcement organizations, police officers, prosecutors, business leaders, government officials, and prominent members of both political parties.

Mr. Adegbile has twice been called on to defend the constitutionality of the Voting Rights Act in oral arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court. In the year 2013, he was the only—only—African-American attorney to argue before the Supreme Court. There is no question about his competency.

He led the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund's legislative outreach and public education efforts on the Voting Rights Reauthorization Act of 2006 which was passed by a unanimous 98-0 vote in the Senate and 390-33 in the House.

He has represented minorities in case after case involving employment discrimination. He led the efforts to repeal the proposition 36 initiative, California's overly punitive three strikes law, and it passed with 70 percent of the votes of Californians.

In his private practice he has successfully represented pro bono clients. His is an extraordinary legal resume.

As these select career highlights demonstrate, he is an effective advocate who can lead the Civil Rights Division. Don't take my word for it though.

The Bush administration Solicitor General Paul Clement stated:

I've litigated both with and against Debo and have heard him argue in the Supreme Court. I have always found him to be a formidable advocate of the highest intellect, skills and integrity.

Mr. Adegbile's representation of Mumia-Abu-Jamal does not mean he lacks respect for the rule of law, and it certainly should not disqualify him from this important civil rights job.

In fact, his willingness to represent an unpopular defendant in an emotionally charged case demonstrates his appreciation for the rule of law, as well as his respect for the criminal justice system.

His critics have attempted to characterize him as someone who actively sought out this case, someone who disparaged the officer who was cut down in the line of duty, Officer Faulkner, and someone who is responsible for Abu-Jamal's death sentence being overturned.

Each of these characterizations is wrong, inaccurate, and unfair.

The NAACP legal defense fund was not involved in the Abu-Jamal case until 2006, nearly 25 years after the trial of this individual and his conviction and 5 years after the death sentence was overturned, being converted to life in prison.

LDF's president, not Mr. Adegbile, made the decision for the organization to be involved in the case. Moreover, as Adegbile stated before the committee, the briefs he signed "made no negative comments [whatsoever] about the tragic loss of Officer Faulkner."

I see the chairman of the committee is in the Chamber, and I know my time is short. Let me just say this. Time and again in the history of the United States people have stood, understanding the Constitution and the responsibility of the bar, to represent unpopular defendants.

John Adams set the standard when he made the unpopular decision to represent British soldiers on the eve of the Revolutionary War.

The Senate recalled that example in 2003 when it confirmed John Roberts to the DC Circuit. At the time, not one single Senator raised a concern about then-Judge Roberts providing pro bono representation to a man who had been convicted of killing eight people and was awaiting execution on Florida's death row.

What John Roberts did—now the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court—was entirely consistent with our Constitution and the responsibility of those of us in the legal profession.

I would say at this point we have an extraordinary man, with an extraordinary background, who has offered his services to this government in an important division where he can serve in a capacity that few can match.

The full scope of his life experience and his distinguished record make him well qualified, and I will support his nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I so strongly concur with the statement of the senior Senator from Illinois, the deputy majority leader. It is similar to statements he has made not only here but in private and in public. He has been one of Mr. Adegbile's strongest supporters throughout this matter.

Both he and I know this nominee well. We know he is qualified to be the Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division in the Department of Justice. More than that, we know Debo Patrick Adegbile as a real person and not as the caricature we have heard from some on the other side. I think all of us have a responsibility to vote yes or no on any issue, and at least to deal with the facts as they are, not with distortions like some of the ones we have heard about this wonderful person.

The Civil Rights Division was created in 1957 in the wake of the landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, and is charged with enforcing Federal laws prohibiting discrimination, and upholding the civil and constitutional rights of the most vulnerable members of our society. From protecting voting rights to combating human trafficking to protecting against religious or racial discrimination, we all know that more work needs to be done. The Civil Rights Division plays a pivotal role in protecting the civil rights of all Americans.

Debo is a man of the highest character and the utmost integrity. He is the kind of proven leader we need at the Civil Rights Division. He is a superb lawyer, to begin with. He has a compelling personal story of triumph over adversity.

He is the son of immigrants from Ireland and Nigeria. He was born in the Bronx. He grew up in poverty, amidst periods of homelessness, but he overcame all these obstacles to attend Connecticut College and the New York University School of Law. He then litigated for 7 years at one of the Nation's top law firms—picked because he was the best of the best of the best.

He then served as legal director of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, the LDF. This is a civil rights organization founded nearly 70 years ago by the great Thurgood Marshall, who recognized the need for people to stand up for the constitutional right of all Americans to fair, honest, and competent legal representation. During his time at LDF, Debo argued two landmark cases on voting rights before the U.S. Supreme Court. The nominee is widely regarded as an expert on civil rights law. He has received an outpouring of support from the civil rights community.

Think of some of the people who support him. Congressman JOHN LEWIS has expressed his “unwavering support” for Debo’s nomination, stating that his “intelligence, legal acumen, experience, and commitment to his craft, reflect deeply on his ability to offer the Civil Rights Division outstanding leadership into the future.”

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and 83 other civil rights organizations called Debo “a tireless advocate, a skilled litigator, and a well-respected member of the legal community who is extraordinarily qualified for and suited to this position.”

And the Congressional Black Caucus stated that he is “one of the pre-eminent civil rights litigators of his generation,” and “offers precisely the type of experience, professionalism, and leadership skills necessary to run the Division.”

Support for Debo’s nomination extends from the civil rights community to supporters business and law enforce-

ment. Kenneth Chenault, chairman and chief executive officer of American Express, wrote that he has been “continually impressed by his skills and professionalism—along with his steadfast commitment to upholding civil rights.”

The National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives gave its “unwavering support” to his nomination. We have letters of support from Detective Terrance Daniels, a retired member of the New York City Police Department; the New York State Attorney General; and several district attorneys and Federal prosecutors.

Paul Clement, the Solicitor General under President George W. Bush, said: “I have litigated both with and against Debo and have heard him argue in the Supreme Court. I have always found him to be a formidable advocate of the highest intellect, skills and integrity.”

We have a huge list of his supporters, and I ask unanimous consent that the whole list be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

LETTERS OF SUPPORT FOR THE NOMINATION OF
DEBO ADEGBILE TO BE ASSISTANT ATTORNEY
GENERAL, CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION

(As of March 5, 2014)

CURRENT AND FORMER PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Drew S. Days, III, Former Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division, Department of Justice; Congressman Hakeem S. Jeffries, Member of the House of Representatives for the 8th District of New York; Congressman John Lewis, 5th District, Georgia; Governor Deval L. Patrick, Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Former Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division, Department of Justice; Seth P. Waxman, Former Solicitor General of the United States, Department of Justice.

CURRENT AND FORMER PROSECUTORS AND LAW
ENFORCEMENT COMMUNITY

John I. Dixon, National President, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives; David Godosky, former Assistant District Attorney, Bronx County; former Criminal Court Judge, City of New York; David Raskin, former Assistant U.S. Attorney, Southern District of New York; New York State Attorney General, Eric Schneiderman; Kenneth P. Thompson, District Attorney, Kings County, Brooklyn, New York; Detective Terrance Daniels, Retired, New York City Police Department.

CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS

A. Philip Randolph Institute; Advancement Project; AFL-CIO; African American Ministers In Action; Alliance for Justice; American Association for Affirmative Action; American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD); American Federation of Government Employees; American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; Americans for Financial Reform; Anti-Defamation League; Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund; Asian Americans Advancing Justice—AAJC; Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote (APIAVote); Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance; Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies; Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law; Black Women’s Round-

Campaign Legal Center; Center for APA Women; Center for Community Change; Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; Children’s Defense Fund; Colorado Lawyers’ Committee; Communications Workers of America; Congressional Black Caucus; The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities Rights Task Force; Demos; Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund; Earthjustice; Fair Elections Legal Network; FairVote; Freedom to Work; Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN); Hindu American Foundation; Hispanic National Bar Association; Hmong National Development, Inc.; Human Rights Campaign; International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, UAW; Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc.; Japanese American Citizens League.

LatinoJustice PRLDEF; Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law; Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law of the Boston Bar Association; Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law of the San Francisco Bay Area; The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights; League of United Latin American Citizens; Legal Momentum; MALDEF; Mississippi Center for Justice; NAACP; NAACP Legal Defense & Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF); NALFO Educational Fund; National Action Network; National Association of Human Rights Workers (NAHRW); National Association of Social Workers; National Bar Association; National Black Justice Coalition; National Center for Lesbian Rights; National Center for Transgender Equality; National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development; National Coalition on Black Civic Participation; National Conference of Black Mayors, Inc.; National Council of Jewish Women; National Council of La Raza; National Council on Independent Living.

National Disability Rights Network; National Education Association; National Employment Law Project; National Employment Lawyers Association; National Fair Housing Alliance; National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund; National Immigration Law Center; National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health; National Legal Aid & Defender Association; National Organization for Women; National Partnership for Women & Families; National Senior Citizens Law Center; National Urban League; National Women’s Law Center; Native American Rights Fund.

People For the American Way; PFLAG National; Poverty & Race Research Action Council; Prison Policy Initiative; Project Vote; Public Counsel; Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia; Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF); South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT); Southern Coalition for Social Justice; Southern Poverty Law Center; United Food and Commercial Workers International Union; United Steelworkers International Union; Vera Institute of Justice; Washington Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights And Urban Affairs; Wider Opportunities for Women.

MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES SUPREME
COURT BAR

Lisa S. Blatt, Arnold & Porter LLP; Stephen B. Bright, Southern Center for Human Rights; David W. DeBruin, Jenner & Block; Jeffrey L. Fisher, Stanford Law School; Jeffrey T. Green, Sidley Austin LLP; George H. Kendall, Squire Sanders LLP; Peter J. Neufeld, Innocence Project; Andrew H. Schapiro, Quinn Emanuel; William F. Sheehan, Goodwin Procter LLP; Paul M. Smith, Jenner & Block.

OTHER SUPPORTERS

Paul Lancaster Adams, Philadelphia Man-aging Shareholder, Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C.; Abed A. Ayoub, Di-rector of Policy & Legal Affairs, American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; Ken Chenault, Chairman and CEO of American Express; Donna B. Coaxum, Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary, OSI Group, LLC; Alan Dial, Partner, King & Spalding; Randy Hertz, Professor of Clinical Law, New York University School of Law; Frederick R. Nance, Regional Managing Partner, Squire Sanders; LaFonte Nesbitt, Partner, Holland & Knight; John E. Page, Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary, Golden State Foods Corporation.

Nicholas J. Panarella; Christopher C. Panarella; Former NYU Classmates Anthony T. Pierce, D.C. Managing Partner, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld; Hilary O. Shelton, Director, NAACP Washington Bu-reau & Senior Vice President for Advocacy and Policy; James R. Silkenat, President, American Bar Association; Theodore V. Wells, Jr., Co-Chair of the Litigation Depart-ment at Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP; Kwamina Williford, Partner, Holland & Knight; Benjamin F. Wilson, Man-aging Partner, Beveridge & Diamond, P.C.; Pamela D. Zilly, Former President of the Connecticut College Board of Trustees Cur-rent and Former Presidents of Connecticut College.

Mr. LEAHY. I have been privileged to work in civil practice, where I defended people, and also to have spent 8 years as a prosecutor. I stand behind nobody in my support of law enforcement. I was picked as one of the three out-standing prosecutors in this country when I was a prosecutor. But I believed throughout all that time that every-body who was prosecuted deserved the best of representation.

Despite Debo's expertise, some are opposing his nomination based on a single case: Mumia Abu-Jamal's appeal of his death sentence for the 1981 mur-der of Officer Daniel Faulkner. I condemn that murder. I condemn the mur-derer for it. But, just as the British in the Boston Massacre deserved represen-tation, and got it from John Adams; just as the man who murdered a num-ber of people, including a couple of teenagers, deserved representation from John Roberts, a Republican who is now Chief Justice of the U.S. Su-preme Court; so, too, did Mumia Abu-Jamal deserve legal representation.

The murder of Officer Faulkner was a horrific tragedy, and my heart goes out to Mrs. Faulkner and all family mem-bers who have lost a loved one in the line of duty. Officer Faulkner served bravely to protect our community and to defend our system of justice and our Constitution. We are trying to defend it too.

It is officers like Officer Faulkner that drive many of us to support pro-grams like the Bulletproof Vest Part-nership Grant program. I might point out to some of my friends who stand here in righteous indignation against this nomination, saying they are standing up for law enforcement, that

former Senator Ben Nighthorse Camp-bell and I began a bulletproof vest pro-gram that has bought bulletproof vests for officers all over this country. It is up for reauthorization. It has saved the lives of police officers. Not a single Re-publican has joined me in the effort to reauthorize what was a bipartisan piece of legislation that actually saves the lives of police officers. But, they will come down here and wax elo-quently and misleadingly against this good nominee.

If you listen to them or you listen to FOX News, you might think the nomi-nee himself is a criminal. Of course he is not. These attacks launched against this nominee demonstrate a funda-mental misunderstanding of the role of a lawyer and the very constitutional system of justice that law enforcement officers all swear an oath to protect. It is time to clear the record.

First, the assertion that Debo made the decision for LDF to take on Abu-Jamal's case is simply not accurate. That decision was made by the pre-vious president of LDF. The nominee we are considering today has testified under oath that it was not his decision. But once the decision was made, and he was appointed to do it, he had a duty, as an officer of the court, to do his best to represent his client, no matter how distasteful or unpopular.

Debo's role in the Abu-Jamal case was limited to two Supreme Court briefs and one Third Circuit brief. At-tempts to attribute more to Debo, in-cluding the out-of-court statements by other LDF attorneys, are unfounded. These remind me of the attacks that were made against Thurgood Marshall when he was nominated to the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. At the time, Republican Senator Keating provided an articulate response of why such at-tacks are unreasonable and unfair:

If counsel is suggesting something that Judge Marshall must have the responsibility for every little action that is taken by any lawyer who has been appearing in an NAACP case, he is imposing a standard of responsi-bility which certainly goes beyond any point of reasonableness. Judge Marshall's conduct and his ethical standards have not been ques-tioned in these hearings. It is ridiculous to suggest that he may be disqualified for judi-cial service because some other lawyers who appeared in an NAACP case may or may not have done things which counsel considers questionable and where there is absolutely no showing that Judge Marshall has any-thing to do with the conduct at issue.

Second, and perhaps more impor-tantly, even if it had been Debo's deci-sion to represent Mr. Abu-Jamal, that should not disqualify him from public service. Our legal system is an adver-sary system, predicated upon advocacy for both sides. Without this, our justice system would be a sham. We do not criticize John Adams; we do not criti-cize John Roberts. Now-Chief Justice Roberts said at his confirmation hear-ing in 2005:

[I]t's a tradition of the American Bar that goes back before the founding of the country that lawyers are not identified with the posi-tions of their clients. The most famous ex-ample probably was John Adams, who rep-resented the British soldiers charged in the Boston Massacre. He did that for a reason, because he wanted to show that the Revolu-tion in which he was involved was not about overturning the rule of law, it was about vindicating the rule of law . . . [T]hat you don't identify the lawyer with the particular views of the client, or the views that the lawyer advances on behalf of the client, is critical to the fair administration of justice.

It is for this reason that as a nomi-nee before the Senate John Roberts was not criticized for choosing to pro-vide pro bono assistance to John Errol Ferguson, a prisoner in Florida who had been sentenced to death for killing eight people, including two teenagers, in the late 1970s.

I agree with what John Adams did. I agree with what John Roberts did. I agree with what Debo did, too. Whether it is John Adams or John Roberts, the principle that all sides deserve an ef-fective counsel is at the bedrock of our constitutional system. We cannot equate the lawyer with the conduct of those we represent if we want our jus-tice system to endure. After Debo's confirmation hearing in early January, the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee himself expressed the same sentiment when he said: "You always have to take into consideration that everybody under our constitution is en-titled to a defense."

Some have argued that the Abu-Jamal case is somehow different be-cause it became a "political cause" and was no longer just a case about defend-ing an unpopular client. But regardless of who the defendant might be, the constitutional right to a fair trial has nothing to do with politics and cannot be dismissed as merely a "political cause." In 2011, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to accept the district attor-ney's appeal of the lower court deci-sions, thereby affirming the decisions to vacate the death sentence. However unpopular LDF's decision to represent Abu-Jamal might be, these decisions by independent Federal judges affirm that this case was about defending the rights guaranteed by our Constitution and not merely some political stunt.

Finally, while criticism of a nomi-nee's qualifications is certainly part of the appointment process, some attacks are—by any measure—out of bounds. Last month, while Debo's nomination was still in the Judiciary Committee, the Washington Times published an editorial caricature of Debo that was racially-tinged, offensive, and beyond the pale. I have spoken out against the insulting attempts to defame the nomi-nees of Democratic and Republican Presidents, and I do so again today. I would also hope that those who are op-posing Debo's nomination would simi-larly distance themselves from them.

Debo Adegbile is one of the Nation's leading civil rights lawyers. Those of

us who have worked with him cannot recognize the caricature that some are trying to paint. I have seen him testify before a crowded Senate hearing room. I have heard him quietly give counsel in a private meeting room. I know him to be a thoughtful, respectful, and competent person, a good family man, a good husband and father.

I regret these attacks. I have been here 40 years. I do not know if I have ever heard a time in those 40 years when a person was so misrepresented in the attacks against him. I hope now some of those who attack him, saying they are standing up for law enforcement, would do things like join on the bulletproof vest bill and others they refuse to.

I see the majority leader. I ask unanimous consent that the majority leader have whatever time he needs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, Debo Adegbile is the President's nominee to lead the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice. He is a man who renews my faith in the American dream. He is the son of Irish and Nigerian immigrants.

To say he grew up in poverty is an understatement. There were times when he and his mom—he was raised mostly by a single mom—were homeless. Despite these challenges, he worked his way through the educational system and to the top of the legal profession.

He graduated from prestigious New York University Law School. He argued two of the most important civil rights cases of his generation before the U.S. Supreme Court. He has received numerous awards for his legal prowess and his commitment to civil rights.

He is one of the Nation's foremost civil rights attorneys. He is eminently qualified to lead the office that enforces Federal laws prohibiting every type of discrimination, including discriminatory voting practices.

His job—the job of that person who is in the Civil Rights Division—is to do everything they can do to make sure people have the opportunity to vote. We know what has happened around the country. We know how Republican Governors and other Republican officials have done everything they can to stop voting. Early voting they eliminate or they shorten the time period. They take away voting places that make it easier for people to vote.

This is an important position. The person that is best qualified to do that is going to have a vote in just a few minutes. Despite all this nominee has achieved, Republicans have not given this man a fair shot at confirmation. His time at the NAACP, where he worked for 12 years, involved many different things. But one of the things he

did not do, he did not step foot into a courtroom representing that violent murderer in Philadelphia that occurred in 1981 when he was 13 years old.

Although the condemned man was undoubtedly a very bad man, as I understand the facts: 3 o'clock, 3:30 in the morning a cab is stopped; the murderer's brother is in the cab, just by coincidence. So there were a lot of problems in Philadelphia at the time. The murderer gets out of the car and shoots a police officer viciously and wantonly, for no reason, in the head—terrible murder.

He was a bad man who was convicted of a heinous crime and given the death sentence. When the nominee got into this case, the murder had taken place 25 years earlier. Five years before he got into the case, the death penalty had already been overturned, was already gone. Where did the death penalty overturn come from? That is pretty interesting. It came from a Reagan appointee. Then the circuit court affirmed what the district court had done. They got rid of the death penalty. That district court decision was upheld by President Bush's appointees. I am sorry. The district court opinion was issued by an appointee of the first President Bush, H.W. Bush. The Third Circuit opinion that upheld it was composed of two Ronald Reagan appointees, including one of the most famous jurists of all time, John Sirica.

It is interesting. A person who wrote an op-ed piece in the Wall Street Journal not long ago—who is the district attorney—chose not to reseek the death penalty even though he is writing op-ed pieces about what a bad guy this is, a man who had nothing to do with the case.

The defendant in 2001 was resentenced to life in prison without parole. The death penalty was gone. How can we engage in guilt by association? I repeat, the nominee did not step into a courtroom, a courtroom for the murderer. He did not write one word in a brief for the murderer. He worked at the NAACP and oversaw the litigation and signed the brief third down the row. He had nothing to do with the appeal as far as arguing it.

Even the Philadelphia Inquirer, the hometown newspaper where this murder of the police officer who was so tragically slain took place, said: "It would be hard to find a better candidate for the position." I agree with that.

To argue that [the nominee], one of the country's foremost legal scholars—especially when it comes to civil rights law—should be disqualified from the Justice post because he participated in [these] appeals is an affront to what it means to live in America. This country allows every convict to exhaustively appeal a verdict, even when all the prior evidence appears to have assured his guilt.

I have met with this man on several occasions. I spent the morning in my office with him. He is a fine man. What

a story of the American dream. He has devoted his life to public service. He could be like a lot of other lawyers—nothing wrong with that—go out and see how much money he can make, but he decided not to do that. He believes in public service. He is married, has two beautiful girls.

But I am afraid he is treated by the Republicans kind of like Congressman Watt, Mel Watt, Jeh Johnson, Todd Jones, Circuit Court Judge Wilkins. They have distorted this man's good name in an attempt to score points politically and block confirmation of a faithful defender of voting rights, which the Republicans do everything they can to not prevent. They want fewer people voting. They do not want people to vote. They especially do not want poor people to vote.

The NAACP, we know their record. So much has changed in America because of their legal defense fund. Thurgood Marshall is the most famous of all, but there have been great lawyers who have been part of that program. The organization stands for the constitutional right of every American to a fair trial regardless of the nature of the crime or the content of their character. I think that is what the legal profession is all about. That is what I thought it was about when I practiced law.

I represented some very bad people. I did it a lot of time for no pay. The NAACP also advances the cause of civic engagement, economic opportunity, education, health care, freedom from discrimination. That is for all Americans. They are not out representing just African Americans—all Americans. But there is no question Mr. Adegbile actually specializes in voting rights issues.

He has worked for years at the NAACP and every other thing he has done to safeguard the right of every American to cast a ballot without discrimination or intimidation. That is how the legal defense fund got involved in this case. He did not step into a courtroom. He did not write one single word of any brief. He did not make the decision to represent the Philadelphia defendant, who was a very bad guy, nor did he appear in court or write a word in this case.

They have attempted to paint him as sympathetic to the convict. The man is still in jail. That is where he should be. The truth is lawyers—not all of them but lawyers represent unpopular clients at some point in their cause and in their careers. John Roberts, he is not known as a great trial lawyer, but he is known as a great lawyer. Chief Justice Roberts provided pro bono assistance, for example, to the defense of a prisoner on Florida's death row who was convicted of killing eight people. That was not brought up during his confirmation hearing by us because he had a job to do.

As he said, advocacy on behalf of a client is not about overturning the rule of law, but it is vindicating the rule of law. This nominee has strong support from groups all over America. I cannot express strongly enough what a fine man he is. The President of the American Bar Association wrote the Judiciary Committee. Here is what he said to Chairman LEAHY and other members of the committee. He was "alarmed to learn . . . [about] opposition to [his] nomination based solely on his efforts to protect the fundamental rights of an unpopular client."

That is all it was about this murderer. He was a bad guy, but he is entitled to a lawyer. I repeat for the fourth time: The nominee did not step into a courtroom for this guy. He did not write a word of any brief. He has constantly—this nominee stood for the constitutional rights as well as Americans' fundamental right to participate in our democracy. He is exceptionally well qualified for the job for which he is nominated.

Opponents have used his defense of the Constitution as a political weapon against him. He deserves an affirmative vote, to be judged on the body of his work and the admirable qualities of his character. I thought that is what we did here. It is a real shame that people are questioning whether he deserves this vote.

I ask unanimous consent that following the cloture vote on the Hernandez nomination, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. for the weekly caucus meetings; that at 2:15 p.m. the Senate proceed to legislative session and a period of morning business until 3:30 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak up to 10 minutes each; that at 3:30 p.m. the Senate resume executive session and the consideration of the Hernandez nomination with the time until 4 p.m. equally divided between the chairman and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee; that at 4 p.m. all remaining postcloture time be yielded back on the Hernandez nomination and the Senate proceed to vote on the confirmation of the Hernandez nomination; that upon disposition of the Hernandez nomination, the Senate proceed to the votes on the remaining motions to invoke cloture which were filed Thursday, February 27, on Executive Calendar Nos. 569, 565, 571, and 636; that if cloture is invoked on any of the nominees, with the exception of the Gottomoeller nomination, all postcloture time be yielded back and the Senate proceed to vote on the confirmation of the nominations; that there be 2 minutes equally divided in the usual form prior to each cloture vote; finally, all after the first vote be 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I would close by saying I sure hope we get enough votes for this

good man. If we do not, maybe it is time America had a good discussion on civil rights. If this man who is defending the right of the Constitution—that is what he has done. Does the Constitution mean anything? Should a man who has had nothing to do with the case of a violent murderer be used as a scapegoat for the Republicans to try to stop people from voting? I hope not.

We will have a discussion if this good man does not have the votes. We will have a discussion on civil rights. I think he will have a lot to do with the direction the discussion will take.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Debo P. Adegbile, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Patty Murray, Barbara Boxer, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed, Carl Levin, Debbie Stabenow, Tom Udall, Martin Heinrich, Christopher Murphy, Michael F. Bennet, Maria Cantwell, Amy Klobuchar, Richard Blumenthal, Tom Harkin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that the debate on the nomination of Debo P. Adegbile, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN would have voted "nay."

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 47, nays 52, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 48 Ex.]

YEAS—47

Baldwin	Hagan	Merkley
Begich	Harkin	Mikulski
Bennet	Heinrich	Murphy
Blumenthal	Hirono	Murray
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Nelson
Boxer	Kaine	Reed
Brown	King	Rockefeller
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Sanders
Cardin	Landrieu	Schatz
Carper	Leahy	Schumer
Durbin	Levin	Shaheen
Feinstein	Markey	Stabenow
Franken	McCaskill	Tester
Gillibrand	Menendez	

Udall (CO)	Warner	Whitehouse
Udall (NM)	Warren	Wyden

NAYS—52

Alexander	Fischer	Murkowski
Ayotte	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Pryor
Boozman	Hatch	Reid
Burr	Heitkamp	Risch
Casey	Heller	Roberts
Chambliss	Hoeven	Rubio
Coats	Inhofe	Scott
Coburn	Isakson	Sessions
Cochran	Johanns	Shelby
Collins	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Coons	Kirk	Toomey
Corker	Lee	Vitter
Crapo	Manchin	Walsh
Cruz	McCain	Wicker
Donnelly	McConnell	
Enzi	Moran	

NOT VOTING—1

Cornyn

The VICE PRESIDENT. On this vote the yeas are 47, the nays are 52. The motion is rejected.

The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I enter a motion to reconsider the vote by which cloture was not invoked on this nomination.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The motion is entered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The VICE PRESIDENT. The cloture motion having been presented, under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Pedro A. Delgado Hernandez, of Puerto Rico, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Benjamin L. Cardin, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

The VICE PRESIDENT. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Pedro A. Delgado Hernandez, of Puerto Rico, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. HATCH (when his name was called). "Present."

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted "nay."

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 57, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 49 Ex.]

YEAS—57

Baldwin	Harkin	Murray
Begich	Heinrich	Nelson
Bennet	Heitkamp	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Boxer	Kaine	Rockefeller
Brown	King	Sanders
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cardin	Landrieu	Schumer
Carper	Leahy	Shaheen
Casey	Levin	Stabenow
Collins	Manchin	Tester
Coons	Markey	Udall (CO)
Donnelly	McCaskill	Udall (NM)
Durbin	Menendez	Walsh
Feinstein	Merkley	Warner
Franken	Mikulski	Warren
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Hagan	Murphy	Wyden

NAYS—41

Alexander	Fischer	Moran
Ayotte	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Heller	Roberts
Burr	Hoeven	Rubio
Chambliss	Inhofe	Scott
Coats	Isakson	Sessions
Coburn	Johanns	Shelby
Cochran	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Corker	Kirk	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Cruz	McCain	Wicker
Enzi	McConnell	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Hatch

NOT VOTING—1

Cornyn

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 57, the nays are 41, with one Senator voting "present."

The motion to invoke cloture is agreed to.

NOMINATION OF PEDRO A. DELGADO HERNANDEZ TO BE U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Pedro A. Delgado Hernandez, of Puerto Rico, to be United States District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:54 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. COONS).

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 3:30 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The assistant majority leader is recognized.

UKRAINE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, Sunday was a perfect Chicago afternoon—not in terms of weather, which has not been too kind to us lately, but in terms of my events and schedule.

My first stop was at Navy Pier for the Lithuanian Independence Day celebration, an event which is important to me personally because my mother was born there. I happened to be on hand for the latest round of independence in Lithuania when the Soviet Union was finally dispelled and this country was allowed to stand on its feet. It was a great celebration with regional food people might expect, dancing and music.

I left there to go over to a section of Chicago known as Ukrainian Village. I asked, after church on Sunday, if my friends in the Ukrainian-American community would come gather and we would invite a telephone call from Kiev from the American Ambassador, Geoffrey Pyatt. I expected a nice crowd. I didn't expect an overflowing crowd, but that is what I found.

The concern of Ukrainian-Americans and many others about the situation in that country is very tense and very personal. Many of them have family members there and strong cultural family ties, and they are very worried. So the Ambassador called in and gave a few moments of remarks and then answered questions. Then we met later to talk about some of the possibilities as we consider the future of Ukraine.

I looked through the audience and found many of my Polish friends, many of my Lithuanian friends—friends from all of the different ethnic groups which had endured some form of Soviet Union or Russian aggression in the past. They felt bonded with the people of Ukraine, the Ukrainian-Americans, as we discussed this.

I had hoped a few weeks ago that we had turned a corner in Ukraine—that the difficult events of the last few months were coming to an end—but that didn't happen. We saw horrific violence in Maidan Square and sadly many innocent people were killed. Just as Ukraine seemed to be emerging from this difficult period with the departure of President Yanukovich, the Russians moved into Crimea. I think that situation has moderated somewhat, although I don't know because it changes by the hour, but their decision to have a show of force in Crimea is one we cannot ignore.

The operation in Crimea was so well orchestrated that it had to have been planned by Russian President Vladimir Putin during the 22nd Winter Olympic Games hosted in Sochi, Russia. Can anyone imagine anything so crass or brazen as to lavishly try to present

Russia to the world as a peaceful and moderate nation while secretly planning the military occupation of another neighboring country? The Russian taxpayers should get their \$51 billion back they paid to set up the Olympics. It was money wasted by Vladimir Putin to try to create an impression of Russia which sadly does not exist.

The former Ukraine President, Viktor Yanukovich, freely elected, also squandered a historic opportunity to further modernize Ukraine, to overcome corruption, and to lift the aspirations of his people. He unnecessarily and cynically divided his Nation. Instead of strengthening economic and political ties with Europe, reforming his economy, and respecting Ukraine's historical ties to Russia, he set off to become a pawn in Moscow. He saw his survival politically teaming up with Vladimir Putin. As the emerging pictures from Yanukovich's opulent palace illustrate, he enriched himself personally and his enablers while allowing the country's promising yet troubled economy to deteriorate. Ultimately, his government led the bloody assault on his own people using heavily armed snipers to massacre the Ukrainian people on the streets of Kiev.

I met with Mr. Yanukovich and many in his government just a year and a half ago. Yanukovich said he truly saw his country's future with greater ties to the West. But under enormous Russian pressure and unable to let go of his own political grudges and terrified of the transparency that an Association Agreement with the European Union would mean for his corrupt regime, he ultimately put his own political future ahead of the good and the needs of the Ukrainian people.

We all know the likely tragic consequences of such self-serving political calculations. Look at President Assad in Syria and President Maduro in Venezuela. The Ukraine will be no different.

I understand the Crimea region of Ukraine has a long and complicated history. I understand that then-Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev actually gave Crimea to Ukraine in 1954, probably never imagining the collapse of the Soviet Union and an independent Ukraine to follow.

Let's be clear about what happened. Ukraine wasn't joining NATO. Ukraine wasn't joining the European Union. Ukraine wasn't proposing cutting off its economic and political ties with Russia. Ukraine was simply contemplating signing a long-negotiated trade agreement with the European Union. For that rationale alone, Vladimir Putin decided to militarily invade and occupy Ukraine.

I know Mr. Putin says he was protecting Russian citizens, but there have been no credible examples of threats to any Russian citizens in Ukraine. In fact, the New York Times

reported this week that Russian tourists have been sent to eastern Ukraine, where they are stirring up anger and resentment against the Ukrainian Government in Kiev. Arguing that Russia can militarily invade another country any time to protect the Russian people is an ominous suggestion that raises alarms for independent sovereign nations all along the Russian borders, and it also raises the chapters of history back in the middle of the 20th century which we need not recount in detail.

One need only look at the two regions of Georgia—South Ossetia and Abkhazia—that have been militarily occupied by Russia since 2008. Russia continues to illegally occupy these areas and has erected fences along administrative lines and permanent military bases in violation of the cease-fire agreement negotiated with the European Union. I have been there myself, and I have seen the deeply troubling permanent bases and boundary fences in Georgia.

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Georgia came to see me the day after the final Olympic ceremonies at Sochi, and he said there was a report that morning after the final ceremony that the Russians were stringing barbed wire around the perimeters of the places they were occupying in Georgia. Russia even stopped some of the demarcation during the Olympics but started again, as I have said, after the games' conclusion. Russian actions in Ukraine and Georgia are a clear violation of international obligations and treaties.

For example, Russia was a signatory to the 1994 Budapest Memorandum that reaffirmed its commitment to Ukraine to respect the independence and sovereignty and existing borders of that nation, to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, to refrain from economic coercion to subordinate Ukraine to Russia's interests, and to consult in the event a situation arises that raises a question concerning these commitments.

Remember why the Budapest Memorandum was entered into by Russia, the United States, and the United Kingdom as well as Ukraine. It was entered into because the Ukrainians were surrendering their nuclear weapons. They had decided to give up their nuclear arsenal as long as they had an assurance they would be protected and their sovereignty would be respected. Russia signed on and then summarily ignored it by basically an act of aggression in Crimea in this last week.

In 1997, the Russian Federation and Ukraine signed a friendship treaty. It was during that time that Russian President Boris Yeltsin said in Kiev, "We respect and honor the territorial integrity of Ukraine." As a partici-

pating state in the Final Act of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 1975, Russia committed to respect the sovereign equality and individuality of other participating States.

It is clear that in many respects Russia has violated the very agreements it signed. It has shown an act of aggression in the sovereign nation of Ukraine.

I will concede the situation is complicated because of the basic agreement between Russia and Ukraine when it comes to that critical piece of real estate in the Black Sea, but it still does not warrant the efforts that have been made by Putin to destabilize an effort for a peaceful government.

Mr. Putin has argued that the change in government in Ukraine was just the mob in the street. Nothing could be further from the truth. The change in government in Ukraine occurred through its Parliament, through its Constitution, and with the promise of an open and free election on May 25. It is up to us in the West and all countries that believe Ukraine deserves our assistance and support to make sure that election is carefully monitored, is totally legal and free, and the people of Ukraine have the last word about their future and their leadership.

Mr. Putin ought to be part of the observation team—at least his representatives—so that there is no argument about a free and fair election in Ukraine.

We also need to help this country that is going through some extremely difficult economic times. A recent article I read suggested Ukraine needs our assistance—way beyond the \$1 billion Secretary Kerry has talked about in his visit. But in order to achieve that, they are going to have to make some significant and maybe unpopular reforms in their economy, in their gas program, and the like. It is tricky. To do that runs the risk of an unpopular backlash against these reformers. But without the reforms there can be no meaningful aid package. We need to stand with Ukraine, and Ukraine needs to stand for the reforms necessary to strengthen their economy.

This week I am working with Senators BROWN, SHAHEEN, WICKER, MURPHY, Kaine, COLLINS, and WARNER to construct a resolution condemning the Russian action in Crimea. There is more to be done. Senator MENENDEZ, at our luncheon, spoke today about the need to discuss aid, as well as sanctions, that may be necessary. I sincerely hope the sanctions will not be necessary. I hope Vladimir Putin and the Russians understand they cannot show this kind of aggression toward Crimea without a cost, but I hope they will do it soon so we can see the return of stability to Ukraine.

Ukraine is a critically important country, the second largest country in

Europe today. It was a major part of the Soviet Union, and its independence, I am sure, has rankled Mr. Putin and his dreams of Russian empire. But the people of Ukraine should decide their future, not Vladimir Putin. We need to work with those people in Ukraine to give them that chance of self-governance, to give them a chance to pursue those values which we share here in the United States.

I hope my colleagues on a bipartisan basis will join us in this effort condemning this Russian aggression and standing by the people of Ukraine.

I see another colleague in the Chamber.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

INCREASED EXPORTS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, a few years ago—actually in 2010—President Obama announced something he called the National Export Initiative. The goal of the initiative was to double American exports in 5 years. That is right, double American exports in 5 years—something certainly I support. It has been more than 4 years now, and it is pretty clear we are going to fall way short of the President's goal.

During his State of the Union Address this January, the President pledged once again to open new markets to American goods. The President specifically requested trade promotion authority. The very next day the Democrats' majority leader rejected the request. I come to the floor today to discuss how President Obama can increase American exports despite the opposition from his own party.

The President should focus on energy, and the President should take the steps needed to increase exports of American natural gas, oil, and coal. Energy exports are going to create good jobs here in America and reduce our Nation's trade deficit. American natural gas, our oil, and our coal exports will also reap important foreign policy benefits, such as helping nations in Europe such as Ukraine free themselves from Russian manipulation. That is what it is—Russian manipulation.

Last month the magazine *The Economist* published an article with the headline "The petro-state of America: The energy boom is good for America and the world. It would be nice if Barack Obama helped a bit." That is from *The Economist* last month. The article explained that the United States may already have surpassed Russia as the world's largest oil and natural gas producer. *The Economist* went on to discuss the benefits of liquefied natural gas exports from the United States. It said that natural gas exports "could generate tanker loads of cash"—"tanker loads of cash"—for America.

However, The Economist also pointed out that the process for obtaining the permits—the permits needed to export that American natural gas—is “insanely slow.” This is not an exaggeration. Over the past 3½ years the Department of Energy has used its discretion to approve only six applications to export liquefied natural gas. Meanwhile, the Department of Energy is sitting on 24 other applications. Fourteen of those have been pending for more than 1 year, and two of them have been pending for more than 2 years. To put this in context, the United States has approved only two-thirds of the amount of liquefied natural gas exports that Canada has.

Last year I introduced a piece of legislation, S. 192, the Expedited LNG for American Allies Act. It is a bipartisan bill, with supporters on both sides of the aisle, cosponsors on both sides of the aisle. This would require the Department of Energy to approve applications to export natural gas to members of NATO, to Japan, and to any other country where gas exports would promote U.S. national security interests. Think about the country of Ukraine. As Congress considers this legislation, President Obama should direct his Energy Department to expedite the existing permitting process. He should set firm deadlines for the Department in acting on pending applications.

These exports are going to create jobs all across this country—from natural gas fields in Wyoming, to steel mills in the Midwest, to ports along our coasts.

Liquefied natural gas exports will also help reduce our Nation's trade deficit, which stood at nearly \$39 billion in December.

Finally, natural gas exports will help our allies in Europe. Ukraine imports about 60 percent of its natural gas from Russia. So what is Russia's position on this? Well, we know that Vladimir Putin—Russia had actually cut off natural gas supplies to Ukraine twice before—in 2006 and in 2009. Earlier this week the Wall Street Journal reported that Russia's state-owned energy giant, Gazprom, is now threatening to raise gas prices in the Ukraine. American natural gas exports could help Ukraine and other European countries reduce their dependence on Russia.

President Obama can also increase American exports by lifting the ban on exporting crude oil. The International Energy Agency estimates that the United States is going to overtake Saudi Arabia as the world's largest producer of crude oil by 2020. This really is a remarkable development, and it has happened because of hydraulic fracturing and unconventional oil and gas production. It is estimated that unconventional oil and gas production is going to create up to 1.7 million new jobs in this country by 2020. But in January the International Energy

Agency warned that the ban on crude oil exports—the ban that exists on those exports—could impede American crude oil production.

If the President does not lift the export ban, he is going to put American oil production and thousands of jobs at risk. He will also pass up on an incredible opportunity—an opportunity to reshape the global oil market. For generations, Americans have been subject to the whims of the global oil market. Americans pay more at the pump when oil production goes offline, wherever it is located. American crude oil exports would boost the world's oil supply and help stabilize prices for American consumers.

American exports would also undermine the influence of oil-rich countries that do not like us very much. For years the United States has asked Japan and India to reduce their imports of Iranian oil. These are two of the world's largest oil importers—Japan and India. In 2012 Japan imported more than 4 percent of its oil from Iran. India imported about 8 percent of its oil from Iran. American crude oil exports could help cut off a vital supply of funding to the Iranian regime. If my colleagues are serious about ensuring that countries abide by U.S. sanctions on Iran, they should support American crude oil exports, not oppose them.

Finally, President Obama needs to promote exports of American coal. Like natural gas and oil, coal exports are going to create good jobs all across the country.

Over the last several years the Environmental Protection Agency has taken steps to block American coal exports. The EPA is asking the Army Corps of Engineers to radically expand the environmental review process for new export terminals. It wants the Corps to consider the carbon emissions that would be produced by exports after they leave the United States. I want to repeat that. The EPA wants to block exports because of the carbon emissions the exports would produce when they are used after they leave the United States.

The National Association of Manufacturers says the EPA's actions would set “a very dangerous precedent that could be used to block exports of all types.” That includes exports of American automobiles, exports of civilian aircraft, exports of heavy equipment that we manufacture here in the United States.

To its credit, the Army Corps of Engineers has said it will not expand the environmental review process for new export terminals. President Obama should ensure that the Corps will complete its work in a timely manner and do so without interference from the EPA or any other agency.

President Obama is fond of saying he has a pen and he has a phone. He has

boasted about ignoring the will of Congress. He seems to take delight in finding legal authority where he has none. President Obama should stop using his so-called authority that is authority he does not have, and he should start using authority he does have. He needs to use his authority to promote American exports. President Obama needs to lift restrictions on exports of natural gas and on oil and coal so Americans can get back to work and our country can regain its stature in the world.

THE BUDGET

I also want to speak very briefly about another area where I think the President's administration is really not doing enough.

Yesterday the White House finally released the President's budget. This budget included no evidence of leadership and no sign that the President is ready to make a single responsible decision when it comes to Washington's out-of-control debt. The budget increases spending by \$791 billion over the next 10 years. It is a 63-percent increase over where we are today—63 percent. It adds another \$8.3 trillion of debt over the next decade. That is on top of \$6.8 trillion in debt the President has already racked up. The President has never submitted a balanced budget in his life, and this one is no exception.

President Obama is now a lameduck President. That becomes more obvious every time he puts out a partisan political agenda such as this one instead of putting out a serious plan for how government should spend taxpayers' money. The President's budget does nothing to reform Washington's entitlement spending. Is this really the legacy the President wants to leave for America's young people?

The White House has called this plan “Opportunity for All.” There is no opportunity in this budget. It is just more debt, more taxes, more accounting gimmicks, budget tricks so the President does not have to make the tough, responsible decisions one would expect of the President of the United States.

On energy exports and on the budget, the President should be taking opportunities to solve some of the real challenges facing our country, not letting them pass him by.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE BUDGET

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise to offer some remarks on President

Obama's fiscal year 2015 budget proposal, some of which was released yesterday. As we all know, the release of the President's budget is an annual event here in Washington. It sets in motion a chain of processes and events that drive much of what we do right here in Congress.

Unfortunately, with President Obama's budgets in particular, this annual chain of events, for the most part, becomes an empty, almost meaningless exercise. The first problem with this year's budget is that we received it just yesterday, a full month past the statutory deadline.

What budget information we did receive yesterday is certainly incomplete. For example, when you look at the appendix of the budget, there is often reference to a section called "analytical perspectives." But those perspectives are nowhere to be found. I assume the rest of the budget information is forthcoming. Still, we can only wonder why it is being released a few pieces at a time.

Of course, the problems with this budget go well beyond the delays and the sporadic release of information. Put simply, no one in their right mind would say the substance of this budget was worth the wait. Despite the fact that they took an extra month to put this budget together, the most striking thing about it is how little there is in the way of new ideas and proposals.

Indeed, when you look for the substance of the budget, you will see the administration appears to be short on new ideas. President Obama's new budget consists largely of proposals from his past budgets, which is surprising, given that none of them have received a single affirmative vote in Congress. Let me repeat that. None of his past budgets have received a single affirmative vote in Congress.

These proposals center on three familiar themes, all of which we have seen in past budgets, and in virtually every policy proposal from this President. First, we see the administration's continued insistence that we can tax and spend our way into prosperity, and that growing the Federal Government is the same as growing our economy.

Second, there is the effort to further redistribute income and the notion that this will, on its own, somehow lead to economic growth and job creation.

Finally, we see another attempt to define "tax reform" as a process of closing whatever the administration deems to be a "loophole" in the Tax Code, and using the resulting revenue not to reduce the deficit or lower tax rates but to fuel even more Federal spending.

Using overly optimistic economic assumptions, the administration claims this budget will reduce our high debt-to-GDP ratio. However, to get there, and to help fulfill its tax-and-spend ob-

jectives, the budget envisions well over \$1 trillion of additional taxes in the face of a persistently sluggish economy.

That bears repeating. President Obama's latest budget contains more than \$1 trillion in proposed tax hikes.

No one should mistake the President's intentions. Indeed, this budget is the outline of his domestic policy priorities for the future. Once again, chief among those priorities is another massive tax increase which, if the President had his way, would come on top of all of the tax increases we have seen already under this administration. This is hardly what our struggling economy needs.

Let's talk about the economy for a moment. Someone certainly should, so I will. If this economy is any indication, President Obama certainly is not interested in that conversation. Currently we have an economy in which labor force participation has fallen from around 66 percent, prior to the financial crisis, to 63 percent with no recovery in sight. This is the lowest labor force participation rate we have seen since the Carter administration, and it is holding back our country's economic growth.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has noted that a decline in the growth of the labor force is a principal reason that potential growth in the economy will decline in the coming decade. No one seriously disputes that there is a problem except, of course, when such declines can be attributed to ObamaCare.

We all remember last month when the CBO found that, as a result of the generous subsidies and the not-so-generous taxes in ObamaCare, millions of workers would either reduce their hours or leave the workforce entirely.

Virtually every objective observer saw this as a bad thing. Yet in response to these numbers, the administration and its supporters took to the airwaves to applaud the fact that ObamaCare would "free" people from their jobs and allow them to, in the words of the White House Press Secretary, "pursue their dreams," courtesy of their fellow taxpayers.

While the economists in the administration and liberal pundits might applaud the reduced labor supply resulting from ObamaCare, it is, to say the least, difficult for me to find merit in the resulting reduction in economic growth. Of course, there is nothing in the President's budget that would address this issue. If anything, the policies contained in this new round of proposals would make all of this worse.

Returning to the latest call for well over \$1 trillion of new revenue, the administration claims—as it has for years now—that these tax hikes are needed to restore fiscal responsibility and reduce the deficit as part of a "balanced approach."

However, we need to look at the facts. If we look at the deficit reduction that has taken place over the past 5 years, we will see just how unbalanced this approach is.

In fiscal year 2009, we achieved a high deficit watermark of \$1.4 trillion. That number fell to a still high \$680 billion in fiscal year 2013. Of the \$736 billion of deficit reduction over that 5-year span, \$670 billion came from increased revenue or taxes and only \$66 billion came from reduced outlays.

In terms of budget realizations, rather than promises for the future, less than 9 percent of the deficit reduction between 2009 and 2013 came from reductions in spending. The vast majority came from increased revenue.

Yet the mantra from the administration continues—more revenues and higher taxes, along with ever more spending. One can only wonder where job creation falls into the mix, if it does at all.

Since President Obama came into office, we have heard a lot of talk about his laser-like focus on job creation. However, the record of this administration suggests that his focus is more on growing government than on growing our economy.

We have seen the failed stimulus, ObamaCare, and initiatives such as Dodd-Frank, all of which have expanded the size and scope of the Federal Government without laying any foundation for economic growth.

Sadly, the budget offered this week does not present a vision for such growth in the future. This budget is, instead, a political document. Its purpose is to galvanize support from the President's left-leaning base in an election year. Nothing more; nothing less.

This is disappointing, to say the least, particularly when we look at the challenges our Nation is currently undergoing and facing. One such challenge is our Nation's broken Tax Code. While this budget comes close to acknowledging that the Tax Code is a problem, it misses an opportunity to actually do something about it. Tax reform, if it is done correctly, would promote growth and competitiveness in jobs, the economy, and provide greater economic efficiency, simplicity, and fairness.

However—as I said earlier—in the administration's review, tax reform is guided primarily by a desire to obtain more tax revenue to fund yet more expansion of the Federal Government, along with an insistence on unilaterally picking winners and losers. The "tax reform" outlined in the President's budget uses a corporate-only approach.

In other words, it would amend the business tax system and leave the individual Tax Code largely as it is. That approach is different from the ideas outlined by the two chairmen of the tax-writing committees, both of whom

have proposed detailed comprehensive tax reform plans.

While I haven't endorsed either Chairman CAMP's or Chairman WYDEN's plan, they both recognize that the non-corporate business sector, which makes up over half of all U.S. businesses, is also in need of tax reform.

This sets them apart from President Obama and the proposals in his latest budget. Of course, let's not forget hard-working individual Americans, far too many of whom need assistance in filling out their tax returns. These people would be left behind under the President's proposal.

The President's proposal looks to raise tax revenue largely to increase more spending in what it calls "investments" in infrastructure. That sounds wonderful.

However, what is taken to be infrastructure in the minds of the Federal bureaucrats—who the President would empower to spend hard-earned taxpayer money—is sure to be guided more by politics than by economic efficiency. The so-called infrastructure bank or infrastructure finance authority—or whatever is the label of the day—that the President has continually called for would surely become the next Fannie and Freddie, putting innocent taxpayers on the hook for any losses resulting from the large Federal contractors rolling the dice on building projects.

As I said, our Nation and our economy face a number of challenges. Ongoing sluggishness threatens to become a permanent fixture on our long-term economic path. Indeed, as I referred to earlier, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has already ratcheted down its estimate of the long-run growth path of the economy—partly because of the negative effects of the ever-evolving health care law that Democrats unilaterally enacted and that the President seems intent on unilaterally implementing.

I don't think that any Member of this body would argue that the status quo in our economy is acceptable. We have a lot of work to do when it comes to creating jobs, economic growth, prosperity, and opportunity in this country.

Unfortunately, the President's recent budget does not, in my view, add to the intelligent discussion. Rather, it returns to already-rejected ideas and appears to be aimed at the politics more than the need for proven private-sector jobs.

At this critical time in our Nation's history, the American people are demanding leadership. Sadly, they aren't getting it with President Obama's latest budget, and I think that is a catastrophe.

We need to change it in Congress. Of course, the Senate seems to be slow in wanting to make any changes for the better. In fact, we hardly ever really

debate legislation anymore—and, by the way, we will probably be voting on eight different votes this evening on various judges, all of whom would have been passed by unanimous consent in December had it not been for the majority breaking the rules to change the rules.

It is pathetic, really. It is pathetic what this body hasn't done, and it is time for us to bring it into account.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF PEDRO A. DELGADO HERNANDEZ TO BE U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume executive session to resume consideration of the Pedro A. Delgado Hernandez nomination.

Under the previous order, the time until 4 p.m. will be equally divided between the Chair and ranking member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, to use part of my time, we are finally going to vote to end the filibusters of four judicial nominees to the Federal district court in Arkansas, Puerto Rico, Tennessee, and California.

None of these nominees is controversial. Timothy Brooks is to fill a vacancy in the Western District of Arkansas; Pedro Delgado Hernandez is to fill a vacancy in the District of Puerto Rico; Pamela Reeves is to fill a vacancy in the Eastern District of Tennessee; and Vince Chhabria is to fill a judicial emergency vacancy in the Northern District of California. They were voted out of the Senate Judiciary Committee with bipartisan support from both the Republicans and Democrats.

Incidentally, all of them have the highest rating by the ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary—a "well-qualified" rating. It is rare to have all four nominees with that high rating.

I mentioned this because nominees who would normally have just gone through in a matter of weeks have been held up, and held up, and held up, and held up, for no good reason. Pamela Reeves was originally nominated in May of last year—almost 1 year ago. Timothy Brooks and Pedro Delgado Hernandez were originally nominated last June. Vince Chhabria was nomi-

nated last July. Everybody knows they all could have been confirmed last year. They all had strong Republican and Democratic support in the Senate Judiciary Committee, but instead Republicans blocked their confirmation all year long until they had to be returned to the President at the end of the year. These nominees then had to be renominated and reprocessed. People who had already gone through the whole procedure had to go through it all over again.

After they had been voted out with strong support by the Judiciary Committee, Senate Republicans again forced us to file cloture to end the filibusters of these nominations. It will have taken the Senate 8, 9, and 10 months to bring these nominees up for a vote, and that is shameful.

What this does to the nominees is outrageous. These are people with distinguished careers, and all of a sudden, they have to put it on hold. Once they are nominated to be a judge, everything in their life is put on hold. Most of them have to take a big cut in pay to take the job to begin with, and then they sit there month after month after month.

Everybody has told them there is no controversy to their nomination, and that when their nomination does come to a vote, they will be easily confirmed. At some point they have to say: When is this when? It was not last year when it should have been, and we are well into this year when it comes before the Senate.

I have heard some Republican Senators say the filibuster is dead now that the rules have changed. That is simply wrong. The Senate Republicans are just filibustering nominees for the sake of filibustering them under different rules. They refuse to consent to vote on dozens of pending non-controversial judicial nominees, and that means these nominees sit on the floor for months, and months, and months before we have to overcome unnecessary procedural hurdles. The result is that precious time and resources better devoted to other critical business is wasted on overcoming the dilatory tactics of Senate Republicans.

We could be done with this, and debating and voting on things that are critically important to this country—everything from rebuilding the decaying bridges and roads of this Nation, to health care for the elderly, to health research and all the things we need. Instead we spend time on the pettifoggery and, I would say, total balderdash in the arguments from the other side holding up these nominees.

These are the same people who shut down the Federal Government last year. This government shutdown cost the taxpayers of this country tens of billions of dollars and cost the private industry tens of billions of dollars more. They caught so much grief for

this disruption that, I suppose, they do not want to have a complete shutdown of the Federal judiciary. Instead, they do it by a sort of water torture—drip, by drip, by drip. They are doing the same thing to the Federal judiciary that they did to the Federal Government, trying to close it down. It may be the case that Republicans cannot stop a noncontroversial judicial nominee from eventually receiving an up-or-down vote, but they have done a pretty darn good job of delaying five judicial nominees from filling longstanding vacancies. This kind of needless delay only hurts the American people. It is hurting the Federal judiciary. It is one of the reasons so many people in this country are angry at what happens here, when they see one thing after another delayed and slowed up.

I hope we can overcome the filibusters on the qualified judicial nominees before us, and I hope the Senate Republicans will not continue to try to shut down the Federal judiciary. I hope they have learned how much the American people are angry at them for shutting down the Federal Government last year, which cost the taxpayers tens of billions of dollars.

Timothy Brooks is nominated to fill a judicial vacancy in the Western District of Arkansas. He has worked in private practice at Taylor Law Partners LLP for approximately 25 years, first as an associate (1989–1993) and subsequently as a partner (1993–current). He has extensive experience as a litigator before both State and Federal courts, and in both civil and criminal cases. Mr. Brooks earned his J.D. with honors in 1989 from the University of Arkansas School of Law, where he served as an editor on the University of Arkansas Law Review. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary unanimously rated Mr. Brooks well qualified to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Arkansas, its highest rating. He received the support of both of his home State senators, Senator BOOZMAN and Senator PRYOR. The Judiciary Committee reported him by voice vote to the full Senate on October 31, 2013, and again by voice vote on January 16, 2014.

Pedro Delgado Hernandez has worked in private practice at O'Neill & Borges LLC for nearly 15 years, first as an associate (1986–1990) and then as a partner (1990–current). From 1995 to 1996, he served as a judge on the Circuit Court of Appeals of Puerto Rico. He previously served as solicitor general for Puerto Rico's Department of Justice by appointment from 1993 to 1995. Following law school, he clerked for Judge Juan Torruella, of the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, from 1984 to 1986. He served in the U.S. Army Reserve from 1979 to 1985. He earned his B.S. from the University of Puerto Rico in 1979. He

earned his J.D., magna cum laude, from the University of Puerto Rico School of Law in 1983. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary unanimously rated Mr. Hernandez well qualified to serve on the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico, its highest rating. He received the support of Representative PEDRO PIERLUISI of Puerto Rico. The Judiciary Committee reported him by voice vote to the full Senate on October 31, 2013, and again by voice vote on January 16, 2014.

Pamela Reeves has worked in private practice since 2002 at Reeves, Herbert & Anderson, P.A., as an attorney and managing attorney. She previously worked as a partner at Watson, Hollow & Reeves, P.L.C. from 1988 to 2002. She also served as an adjunct professor for trial practice at the University of Tennessee Law School (1991–1996). Following graduation from law school, she worked as an associate at Griffin, Burkhalter, Cooper & Reeves from 1979 to 1985. She earned her J.D. from the University of Tennessee College of Law in 1979. She has been named one of the Best Lawyers in America, and one of the Top 100 Lawyers in Tennessee, from 2006 to 2012. If confirmed, she would be the first woman to serve as a Federal judge in the Eastern District of Tennessee. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary unanimously rated Ms. Reeves well qualified to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee, its highest rating. She received the support of her home State senators, Senator ALEXANDER and Senator CORKER. The Judiciary Committee reported her by voice vote to the full Senate on November 14, 2013, and again by voice vote on January 16, 2014.

Vince Chhabria has served as a San Francisco deputy city attorney for government litigation since 2005, and has served as the co-chief of appellate litigation since 2011. He previously worked in private practice as an associate at Covington & Burling LLP from 2002 to 2004, and as an associate at Keker & Van Nest LLP in 2001. Upon graduating from law school, Mr. Chhabria served as a law clerk to three distinguished Federal judges: Judge Charles Breyer of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California from 1998 to 1999; Judge James Browning on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals from 1999 to 2000; and Associate Justice Stephen G. Breyer of the U.S. Supreme Court from 2001 to 2002. Mr. Chhabria earned his J.D., Order of the Coif, in 1998 from Berkeley Law School. If confirmed, he would serve as California's first Article III judge of South Asian descent. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary unanimously rated Mr. Chhabria well qualified to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, its highest rating. He received the support

of his home State senators, Senator FEINSTEIN and Senator BOXER. The Judiciary Committee reported him favorably with bipartisan support to the full Senate on November 14, 2013, and again with bipartisan support on January 16, 2014.

I thank the majority leader for filing cloture petitions to end the filibusters of these much needed trial court judges. And I continue to hope that Senate Republicans will change course so that we can work together to confirm without further delay noncontroversial nominees to longstanding judicial vacancies.

At some time reality has to catch up with the rhetoric around this place. I heard speeches earlier today on how people want to stand up for law enforcement. I would remind everybody that one of the things we have actually done in this body and the U.S. House of Representatives to help law enforcement was the bulletproof vest program.

This is a bipartisan program that was started by the former Republican Senator from Colorado, Ben Nighthorse Campbell, and myself to provide bulletproof vests to police departments that could not afford them. We have had some of the most gripping testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The distinguished Presiding Officer may recall one police officer from a northern State who came to testify before us. He told us how much he loved being a police officer. He said the only thing he loves more than being a police officer are his parents, his wife, and his children. He said: "If it were not for this," and he reached under the table and pulled up a bulletproof vest. You could see two bullets stuck in it. He said, "If I had not been wearing this, I never would have seen my parents or my wife or my children," all of whom were sitting behind him.

He said, "Please keep this program going." His family got to visit him in the hospital where he had a couple of cracked ribs. If he had not been wearing his bulletproof vest, he said they would have been visiting him in the morgue instead.

I only mentioned this story because every single Democrat has agreed to the reauthorization of the bulletproof vest bill. We have not had a single Republican step forward to say: We will stand up to protect the men and women in uniform of this country who protect us. Having served 8 years in law enforcement, I find that shameful.

I say, stop trying to shut down the Federal judiciary, but also stand up for the protection of the men and women in uniform in the police departments throughout this country.

From the time Senator Campbell and I first started working on this bill decades ago, this bill has always been a bipartisan bill. Decades ago, we heard testimony from a police officer talking

about seeing his parents, wife, and children when he has had to face gunfire in the line of duty.

Do not let us hear from the same parents, spouses, or children about why we did not protect their husband or wife, son or daughter, when we could have. Why did we play silly games when not one single Republican would step forward and say: Let's pass this bullet-proof vest bill. Let's stand up for the men and women in uniform in this country.

Mr. President, what is the present parliamentary situation?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is currently considering the Hernandez nomination.

Mr. LEAHY. Is there a time for a vote?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Currently, there are 3 minutes of debate time remaining.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, have the yeas and nays been requested on the nomination?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. They have not.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I request the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum and I ask unanimous consent that the time be equally divided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all time remaining be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time is yielded back.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Pedro A. Delgado Hernandez, of Puerto Rico, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Puerto Rico, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays were previously ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted "aye."

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 50 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murphy
Ayotte	Graham	Murray
Baldwin	Grassley	Nelson
Barrasso	Hagan	Paul
Begich	Harkin	Portman
Bennet	Hatch	Pryor
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reed
Blunt	Heitkamp	Reid
Booker	Heller	Risch
Boozman	Hirono	Roberts
Boxer	Hoeven	Rockefeller
Brown	Inhofe	Rubio
Burr	Isakson	Sanders
Cantwell	Johanns	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Chambliss	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Coburn	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cochran	Landrieu	Tester
Collins	Leahy	Thune
Coons	Lee	Toomey
Corker	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Crapo	Markey	Udall (NM)
Cruz	McCain	Vitter
Donnelly	McCaskill	Walsh
Durbin	McConnell	Warner
Enzi	Menendez	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Merkley	Wicker
Fischer	Mikulski	Wyden
Flake	Moran	
Franken	Murkowski	

NOT VOTING—2

Cornyn Levin

The nomination was confirmed.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form.

Who yields time?

Mr. MCCAIN. I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Pamela L. Reeves, of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Pamela L. Reeves, of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee, shall be brought to a close?

Yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted "nay."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 62, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 51 Ex.]

YEAS—62

Alexander	Hagan	Murphy
Baldwin	Harkin	Murray
Begich	Heinrich	Nelson
Bennet	Heitkamp	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Boxer	Kaine	Rockefeller
Brown	King	Sanders
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cardin	Landrieu	Schumer
Carper	Leahy	Shaheen
Casey	Lee	Stabenow
Collins	Levin	Tester
Coons	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Corker	Markey	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	McCain	Vitter
Durbin	McCaskill	Walsh
Feinstein	Menendez	Warner
Flake	Merkley	Warren
Franken	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden

NAYS—37

Ayotte	Graham	Portman
Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hatch	Roberts
Boozman	Heller	Rubio
Burr	Hoeven	Scott
Chambliss	Inhofe	Sessions
Coats	Isakson	Shelby
Coburn	Johanns	Thune
Cochran	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Crapo	Kirk	Vitter
Cruz	McConnell	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	
Fischer	Paul	

NOT VOTING—1

Cornyn

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 62, the nays are 37. The motion to invoke cloture is agreed to.

NOMINATION OF PAMELA L. REEVES TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Pamela L. Reeves, of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. It is 4:45 p.m. We have a lot of votes. We can move through these votes very quickly. They are 10-minute votes. I have some complaints from some Senators that it is not fair to wait around for other Senators when there are a lot of things going on tonight. At the end of 15 minutes, no

matter who is not here, we are going to cut off the votes. That is what everybody wants and that is what we are going to do.

Anyway, we have to do that. If it is a close vote, then we always give time for people to play around with that, but these votes haven't been that close and so I think we should get through these votes as quickly as we can. I am alerting everyone and the floor staff.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the postcloture time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Pamela L. Reeves, of Tennessee, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Tennessee.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) would have voted "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 99, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 52 Ex.]

YEAS—99

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Ayotte	Graham	Murphy
Baldwin	Grassley	Murray
Barrasso	Hagan	Nelson
Begich	Harkin	Paul
Bennet	Hatch	Portman
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Pryor
Blunt	Heitkamp	Reed
Booker	Heller	Reid
Boozman	Hirono	Risch
Boxer	Hoeven	Roberts
Brown	Inhofe	Rockefeller
Burr	Isakson	Rubio
Cantwell	Johanns	Sanders
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Schumer
Casey	Kaine	Scott
Chambliss	King	Sessions
Coats	Kirk	Shaheen
Coburn	Klobuchar	Shelby
Cochran	Landrieu	Stabenow
Collins	Leahy	Tester
Coons	Lee	Thune
Corker	Levin	Toomey
Crapo	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Cruz	Markey	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	McCain	Vitter
Durbin	McCaskill	Walsh
Enzi	McConnell	Warner
Feinstein	Menendez	Warren
Fischer	Merkley	Whitehouse
Flake	Mikulski	Wicker
Franken	Moran	Wyden

NOT VOTING—1

Cornyn

The nomination was confirmed.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to the cloture vote.

The Senator from Arkansas is recognized.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, this next nominee, Timothy Brooks of the Western District of Arkansas, is excellent in every way. He basically has the support from plaintiffs', defendants', and criminal defendants' lawyers, prosecutors, Democrats and Republicans, businesses—everybody. They really like this nominee is the total consensus on him. He has been waiting for a long time. We tried to get this going last year and got caught up in end-of-the-year stuff.

I ask all my colleagues to vote yes on the procedure and on confirming him.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The junior Senator from Arkansas is recognized.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I share my support for the nominee on whom we are about to vote.

Judge Timothy Brooks has the experience, background, and temperament to unanimously qualify him for the position of district judge. I am proud to stand before my colleagues and offer my support of his confirmation. I am pleased that we have been able to act on this vacancy and hope that Judge Brooks will be easily confirmed much like Judge Moody was for the Eastern District of Arkansas seat last week.

Again, these are highly qualified nominees. Judge Moody is a great fit for the Eastern District. I am confident Judge Brooks will complement him well in the Western District. One of the most important aspects of what we do in the Senate is the confirmation of judges, the process of selecting people with the right temperament and qualifications. I believe both Judge Moody and Judge Brooks will make excellent Federal judges and will make Arkansas proud.

I yield the floor.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Timothy L. Brooks, of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Arkansas.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Mark L. Pryor, Mark Begich, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Tom Harkin, Amy Klobuchar, Christopher Murphy, Patty Murray, Jon Tester, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Angus S. King, Jr., Claire McCaskill, Richard Blumenthal, Sheldon Whitehouse, Jack Reed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Timothy L. Brooks of Arkansas, to

be United States District Judge for the Western District of Arkansas, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 59, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 53 Ex.]

YEAS—59

Baldwin	Hagan	Murray
Begich	Harkin	Nelson
Bennet	Heinrich	Pryor
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Reed
Booker	Hirono	Reid
Boozman	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Boxer	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Landrieu	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Levin	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Markey	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	McCaskill	Walsh
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Feinstein	Merkley	Warren
Flake	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Franken	Murkowski	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murphy	

NAYS—41

Alexander	Fischer	Moran
Ayotte	Graham	Paul
Barrasso	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Hatch	Risch
Burr	Heller	Roberts
Chambliss	Hoeven	Rubio
Coats	Inhofe	Scott
Coburn	Isakson	Sessions
Cochran	Johanns	Shelby
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Cornyn	Kirk	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Cruz	McCain	Wicker
Enzi	McConnell	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). On this vote the yeas are 59 and the nays are 41.

The motion is agreed to.

NOMINATION OF TIMOTHY L. BROOKS TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Timothy L. Brooks, of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Arkansas.

Mr. CRUZ. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

Under the previous order, all postcloture time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Timothy L. Brooks, of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Arkansas?

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 100, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 54 Ex.]

YEAS—100

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murphy
Ayotte	Graham	Murray
Baldwin	Grassley	Nelson
Barrasso	Hagan	Paul
Begich	Harkin	Portman
Bennet	Hatch	Pryor
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reed
Blunt	Heitkamp	Reid
Booker	Heller	Risch
Boozman	Hirono	Roberts
Boxer	Hoeven	Rockefeller
Brown	Inhofe	Rubio
Burr	Isakson	Sanders
Cantwell	Johanns	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Chambliss	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Coburn	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cochran	Landrieu	Tester
Collins	Leahy	Thune
Coons	Lee	Toomey
Corker	Levin	Udall (CO)
Cornyn	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Crapo	Markey	Vitter
Cruz	McCain	Walsh
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	McConnell	Warren
Enzi	Menendez	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Merkley	Wicker
Fischer	Mikulski	Wyden
Flake	Moran	
Franken	Murkowski	

The nomination was confirmed.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to the cloture vote.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The clerk will report the motion to invoke cloture.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Vince Girdhari Chhabria, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Benjamin L. Cardin, Ron Wyden, Christopher A. Coons, Martin Heinrich, Jack Reed, Robert Menendez, Tom Harkin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray, Dianne Feinstein, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Carl Levin, Jeff Merkley, Amy Klobuchar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Vince Girdhari Chhabria of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of California shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 57, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 55 Ex.]

YEAS—57

Baldwin	Harkin	Murray
Begich	Heinrich	Nelson
Bennet	Heitkamp	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Boxer	Kaine	Rockefeller
Brown	King	Sanders
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cardin	Landrieu	Schumer
Carper	Leahy	Shaheen
Casey	Levin	Stabenow
Collins	Manchin	Tester
Coons	Markey	Udall (CO)
Donnelly	McCaskill	Udall (NM)
Durbin	Menendez	Walsh
Feinstein	Merkley	Warner
Franken	Mikulski	Warren
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Hagan	Murphy	Wyden

NAYS—43

Alexander	Fischer	Moran
Ayotte	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hatch	Roberts
Burr	Heller	Rubio
Chambliss	Hoeven	Scott
Coats	Inhofe	Sessions
Coburn	Isakson	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Thune
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Cornyn	Kirk	Vitter
Crapo	Lee	Wicker
Cruz	McCain	
Enzi	McConnell	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 57, the nays are 43.

The motion is agreed to.

NOMINATION OF VINCE GIRDHARI CHHABRIA TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Vince Girdhari Chhabria, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Vince Girdhari Chhabria, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of California?

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 58, nays 41, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 56 Ex.]

YEAS—58

Alexander	Harkin	Murray
Baldwin	Heinrich	Nelson
Begich	Heitkamp	Pryor
Bennet	Hirono	Reed
Blumenthal	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Booker	Kaine	Rockefeller
Boxer	King	Sanders
Brown	Kirk	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Landrieu	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Levin	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Coons	Markey	Walsh
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Franken	Mikulski	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murkowski	
Hagan	Murphy	

NAYS—41

Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Chambliss	Heller	Rubio
Coats	Hoeven	Scott
Coburn	Inhofe	Sessions
Cochran	Isakson	Shelby
Corker	Johanns	Thune
Cornyn	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Cruz	McCain	Wicker
Enzi	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—1

Udall (CO)

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE EXPLANATION

● Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, had I been present to cast a vote relative to rollcall vote No. 56 on March 3, 2014 on the nomination of Vince Chhabria to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of California, I would have voted “aye.”●

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to the cloture vote.

Who yields time?

Mr. INHOFE. I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Time is yielded back.

Who yields time in support of the nomination?

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry. I understand the Republican side yielded back their time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct. The time in opposition is yielded back.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I yield back our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time having been yielded, pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Rose Eilene Gottemoeller, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

Harry Reid, Robert Menendez, Benjamin L. Cardin, Ron Wyden, Christopher A. Coons, Patrick J. Leahy, Martin Heinrich, Jack Reed, Tom Harkin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Patty Murray, Dianne Feinstein, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Carl Levin, Jeff Merkley, Amy Klobuchar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Rose Eilene Gottemoeller, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 57 Ex.]

YEAS—55

Baldwin	Harkin	Murray
Begich	Heinrich	Nelson
Bennet	Hirono	Pryor
Blumenthal	Isakson	Reed
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Boxer	Kaine	Rockefeller
Brown	King	Sanders
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schatz
Cardin	Landrieu	Schumer
Carper	Leahy	Shaheen
Casey	Levin	Stabenow
Collins	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Markey	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	McCaskey	Warner
Durbin	Menendez	Warren
Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Franken	Mikulski	Wyden
Gillibrand	Murkowski	
Hagan	Murphy	

NAYS—45

Alexander	Fischer	Moran
Ayotte	Flake	Paul
Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blunt	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hatch	Roberts
Burr	Heitkamp	Rubio
Chambliss	Heller	Scott
Coats	Hoeben	Sessions
Coburn	Inhofe	Shelby
Cochran	Johanns	Tester
Corker	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Cornyn	Kirk	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Cruz	McCain	Walsh
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 55 and the nays are 45. The motion to invoke cloture is agreed to.

NOMINATION OF ROSE EILENE GOTTEMOELLER TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ARMS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk reported the nomination of Rose Eilene Gottemoeller, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the nominations confirmed today, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid on the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I further ask unanimous consent that following morning business on Thursday, March 6, the time until 11:20 a.m. be equally divided between the majority leader and the Republican leader or their designees; that at 11:20 the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of Calendar No. 636, the nomination of Rose Gottemoeller to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security; further, that following disposition of the Gottemoeller nomination, the Senate proceed to vote on the confirmation of Calendar Nos. 510, 511; there be 2 minutes for debate prior to each vote equally divided in the usual form; that all after the first vote be 10 minutes in length; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid on the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. We have laid out tomorrow to some degree. We have other work to do tomorrow. If we have some cooperation from both sides, we can finish sometime midafternoon; otherwise, it could be a while.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 1086

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by me, with the concurrence of Senator McConnell, the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 309, S. 1086; further, that the cloture motion filed on Thursday, February 27, with respect to the motion to proceed be withdrawn. This is the child care block grant legislation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator HARKIN be recognized, Senator COLLINS follow after him, then Senator BOXER follow after Senator COLLINS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Iowa.

ADEGBILE NOMINATION

Mr. HARKIN. Earlier today a vote was taken in the Senate that, to this Senator, marked about the lowest point that I think this Senate has descended in my 30 years here. I don't say that lightly. I was in Congress during

the impeachment process trial for President Clinton. I thought that was a low, but it didn't compare to what happened today.

The vote on Debo Adebile to be Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice sent a strong message. This is the message we sent today and, young people, listen up.

If you are a young White person working for a law firm and have a chance to defend someone who has done something wrong—even a heinous crime—my advice from what happened today is you should feel free to go ahead and do your job as a lawyer. Who knows? You might wind up as the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court one day.

However, if you are a young Black person working on civil rights issues at the NAACP legal defense fund and you—under your obligations as an attorney—are called upon to handle an appeal for someone who committed a heinous crime, the message sent today is you're putting your career on the line.

If you fulfill your duty as a lawyer, you will be denied by the Senate from being an assistant attorney general in the U.S. Department of Justice. We have a double standard, a terrible double standard.

While in private practice, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court defended a mass murderer in Florida who committed eight murders. He is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Did we hear one peep from the Republican side? I didn't hear anyone on this Senate floor at that time raising it as any issue at all for his qualifications to be a judge on the appeals court or to be the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and rightfully so. It should have never been an issue. He was fulfilling his legal obligations and his moral duty as a lawyer.

Debo Adebile, working as an attorney for the NAACP legal defense fund, did nothing different. He was only asked to work on an appeal. And because of that, and only because of that, he was excoriated on the Senate floor and denied his opportunity to be an Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.

Did anyone raise an issue of his qualifications? No. He is eminently qualified. But person after person spoke about the heinous murder that took place in Philadelphia, the murder of a police officer by a young Black man who had bragged about it—a heinous crime, a horrible crime. Debo Adebile didn't defend him at trial. He only filed appeals aimed at protecting the defendant's civil rights and the civil rights of all Americans.

I listened to the Senator from Pennsylvania this morning. He had a big poster with a picture of the police officer and his wife on their wedding day.

He was talking about how horrible a crime this was, how the murderer had bragged about it, and all that is terrible.

But it had nothing to do with Debo Adegbile. The Senator from Pennsylvania said it is why Mr. Adegbile should not be approved to be an assistant attorney general, because he worked as a lawyer on a defendant's appeal.

What about the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court? He defended a person who killed eight people. I don't see my friends on the Republican side of the aisle clamoring to institute an impeachment process. Maybe they did not know that John Roberts defended a mass murderer. But now that they do, are they going to try to impeach the Chief Justice because he fulfilled his legal obligation to defend a murderer?

I hope you see the ridiculousness of that argument and how unfair it was for Debo Adegbile to be denied—not on the basis of any qualifications but because he was fulfilling his duty as a lawyer. I have not heard one person say he is unqualified or he has done something that would disqualify him. No. He did what he was supposed to do within his legal profession—and he was denied.

Shame. Shame on this Senate. Shame on every Senator who claims to be a lawyer, who went to law school, raised their hand and was sworn into the bar. Shame on every lawyer who voted against Mr. Adegbile because he worked on an appeal.

If somebody had some question about his qualifications or felt that Mr. Adegbile is totally unqualified, that is a different story. I challenge anyone to come forward with anything remotely connected to his qualifications that would show him to be unqualified.

I wish to read—and I will close shortly—a quote from James Silkenat, the president of the American Bar Association. Listen up, lawyers.

He said:

A fundamental tenet of our justice system and our Constitution is that anyone who faces loss of liberty has a right to legal counsel. Lawyers have an ethical obligation to uphold that principle and provide zealous representation to people who otherwise would stand alone against the power and resources of the government—even to those accused or convicted of terrible crimes.

Continuing:

I was alarmed to learn that there is some opposition to Mr. Adegbile's nomination based solely on his efforts to protect the fundamental rights of an unpopular client while working at the legal defense fund. His work, like the work of ABA members who provide thousands of hours of pro bono legal services every year, is consistent with the finest tradition of this country's legal profession and should be commended, not condemned.

Shameful. It was a shameful vote today, a rush to judgment based upon emotion.

I will not name any names, but I had one Senator say: My head tells me he

should be confirmed, but my guts, my emotion, say no.

We make our decisions based on that around here? God help us. Maybe we ought to all go back and think about "To Kill a Mockingbird." Read the book, watch the movie, and know what it is to stand against the powers of government and defend someone who is unpopular.

Mr. Adegbile wasn't even the defense attorney. He only worked on an appeal relating directly to legal issues particularly important to the civil rights community.

Shame on the Fraternal Order of Police. Shame on them. I have been one of their strong supporters for my 30 years, but shame on them for doing this. Shame on them. They mounted a campaign against Mr. Adegbile just on that one thing. Shame on all of us here, especially the lawyers—especially the lawyers. It was a rush to judgment and a shameful episode in the history of the Senate.

I know Senator REID filed a motion to reconsider. I hope he will, and I hope people will pray on this and think back, especially the lawyers who are in the Senate. Think about it. Think about the ethical obligation, the ethical obligation to do what he did—and he did nothing wrong. Hopefully Mr. Adegbile, on a motion to reconsider, will have the votes to take his position as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights in the Justice Department.

It is a shameful day for the Senate.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine is recognized.

Mrs. COLLINS. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from California for allowing me to precede her in speaking on the Senate floor this evening. I very much appreciate her courtesy.

(The remarks of Senator COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 2081 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I was very interested in listening to both my colleagues, TOM HARKIN, who I thought was very passionate about the need to understand that when people do pro bono work, as Justice Roberts did, or they work for an organization, as our nominee did making the case a jury was perhaps tainted, that that not be used against them. I think he was passionate. I think Senator COLLINS makes a good point. I do wish to say she is totally right. The IRS should never, ever be used politically. We have gone through that in our lifetime, and it is absolutely wrong. I agree. But I also wish to point out that any organization taking big tax deductions which cost people money, but they are political—whether they are on the left, the right or the center—have to stop what

they are doing too. I think she points out it is a careful balance.

We also don't want Members of Congress to intimidate and harass the IRS. That is wrong and a very careful balance. I look forward to looking at her bill to see if this oversight commission is something free from politics. That, to me, is the key. IRS should never be used politically.

MILITARY JUSTICE IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mrs. BOXER. I rise in strong support of the Military Justice Improvement Act. I am so proud to stand with 17 of the 20 women Members of this Senate on both sides of the aisle and with a large number of colleagues from both sides—a majority—to fight for real change in the way our military addresses the epidemic of military sexual assault.

When one is in Washington for a while—and I have been in Washington for a while. Thanks to the good people of California, I was elected to the House in 1982 and took my seat in 1983. I have seen this issue get worse and worse. The issue of sexual assault in the military is not new. Unfortunately, it is decades old.

It was 23 years ago that dozens of women and men were sexually harassed and assaulted in the halls of a Las Vegas hotel during the Tailhook Association's annual convention. The 1991 Tailhook scandal focused a national spotlight on the issue of military sexual assault, and then-Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney declared after it was over a zero tolerance policy.

I have to be completely blunt with everybody who may be listening to this. The fact is, after Tailhook and all of these promises from everybody, I thought we would never see this epidemic grow as it has. I thought we stopped the epidemic of sexual assault in the military because it was heinous to see what they did when everyone said it would be over.

Let's take a look at how many Secretaries of Defense made a pledge. We will start from the bottom and work our way up to the top.

Secretary Cheney in 1993 said:

Well, we've got a major effort underway to try to educate everybody, to let them know that we've got a zero-tolerance policy where sexual harassment's involved.

So a real commitment from then Defense Secretary Cheney.

The next year it was Secretary William Perry. In 1996, he said:

For all reasons, therefore, we have zero tolerance for sexual harassment.

Then it was Secretary William Cohen. In 1997, he said:

I intend to enforce a strict policy of zero tolerance of hazing, of sexual harassment, and of racism.

Now we move to Donald Rumsfeld in 2004:

Sexual assault will not be tolerated in the Department of Defense.

These are beautiful words. But I say to those listening: Nothing has stopped this epidemic—Democratic or Republican Secretaries of Defense, it doesn't matter.

Then Robert Gates, who served both Republican and Democratic Presidents, what did he say.

This is a matter of grave concern. I have zero tolerance for sexual assault.

Leon Panetta, under President Obama:

We have absolutely no tolerance for any form of sexual assault.

I take sexual assault allegations very seriously. We have no place in the military for sexual assault.

Currently, Secretary Chuck Hagel, under President Obama:

It's not good enough to say we have a zero tolerance policy. We do.

But what does it mean? How does it translate into changing anything? I want to know.

These crimes have no place—no place—in the greatest military on earth.

We all agree with that. But here is what this shows you: Seven Secretaries of Defense, Republicans and Democrats, all these years—the first one being Dick Cheney in 1992—have all promised zero tolerance, and the problem of sexual assault in the military gets worse.

So Senator GILLIBRAND has issued a call to action. She has written a terrific bill, working with Republicans and Democrats, and we are getting a vote on the bill tomorrow—assuming we can break a filibuster, because there is a filibuster and we have to file cloture and we need a supermajority of 60 in order to get to an up-or-down vote.

So these promises to me ring hollow. I like so many of these people. I have worked with so many of them. They are good people. They care. But these words are hollow. We have to change the way we deal with sexual assault in the military, and that is what this vote is about tomorrow. But we have to break a filibuster.

Here is what has happened to those who have come forward: Instead of justice, sexual assault survivors have faced retaliation, revictimization, and further abuse. Instead of justice, survivors have been kicked out of the military while their attackers go unpunished.

I will share some deeply troubling statistics which speak to the scope of this problem: 26,000 cases of sexual assault occurred in the U.S. military in 2012 and 1.2 percent were prosecuted.

Mr. President, I know how deeply you care about this. You were responsible for protecting justice for the people of Connecticut. What if you had a range of cases and only 1.2 percent were prosecuted? I am sure you would admit that something was very wrong. Of course, your record speaks for itself.

The point I am making is this: How can anyone defend the status quo? Yet we have a group of people here in the Senate who are defending the status quo. Yes, they are making changes around the edges. I give them that, and I am very happy with that. But they are not getting to the root cause of the problem, which is who decides whether these cases go forward. Who is the decider? That is why the Gillibrand amendment is so critical.

So I want people to keep this chart in their minds. These are all the assaults. The number prosecuted is 1.2 percent. That means that of the estimated 26,000 sexual assaults, only 302 were prosecuted. Keep that in mind—26,000 sexual assaults in the military and only 302 were prosecuted.

Let me give another troubling figure. One in five female servicemembers reported experiencing unwanted sexual contact while serving in the military. One in five female servicemembers reported experiencing unwanted sexual contact while serving in the military. There is something wrong with the culture there. These women are putting their lives on the line, and what do they get for it? One in five is experiencing unwanted sexual contact. And by the way, many of the men are too. But we have this statistic we wanted to share.

What is this misconduct that these women—one out of five women—in the military are facing, unwanted sexual contact? This means they are experiencing rape, sexual assault, and unwanted sexual contact while serving in the military. But they don't report it because they are too scared, and that is why the Gillibrand bill is so critical, and that is why we need to make sure we defeat that filibuster—because you cannot and should not filibuster justice. Let's get an up-or-down vote. How many more women and men will become victims of these heinous crimes before we take action? For 20 years the military has had to deal with this.

I am a fairly patient person. Before I got into politics, I was not a patient person. When I got into politics, I realized, yes, change takes time. You have to be patient, you have to work hard, and you have to make the case. You have to pile up your statistics. You have to make sure you have the facts and then take action.

But 20 years of doing nothing, 20 years of commitment from all of these people—Richard Cheney, William Perry, William Cohen, Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary Gates, Secretary Panetta, Chuck Hagel; it doesn't matter whether they are Republican or Democratic—all saying the same thing; they are going to stop this heinous situation. And they don't because they cannot.

We need to listen to survivors—survivors who are going to solve the crisis of sexual assault in the military be-

cause they are going to speak up, and they have. Survivors are telling us that the only way to stop this horrible epidemic of sexual assault is to take the decision about whether to prosecute serious crimes such as sexual assault out of the hands of the commanders. Give it to the professional, trained military prosecutors outside the chain of command.

There are many people who misconstrue this. They think we are going to take it completely outside the military structure. That is not what we do. What we do is we say the professionals should deal with this. Right now you have to report to your commander. We never would allow a CEO of a corporation to make the decision about whether one of his or her employees should be prosecuted for rape. If something happened in our office and someone came to the Presiding Officer or to me and said: Something horrible has happened upstairs, and we think somebody raped someone else. We wouldn't decide whether to prosecute. We would go right to the police—right to the police. And that is what we are saying when supporting the Gillibrand amendment. We are saying these legal decisions should be made by independent, experienced legal experts so the decision to go to trial is a fair one, objective, and based on the evidence.

By the way, that helps all sides—the accuser and the accused. As a matter of fact, we have some people who are worried that the accused may not get a fair trial if we don't change things because there has been so much publicity about this.

There has been a defense advisory committee on women in the services that has advised the Secretary of Defense for over 60 years. That commission overwhelmingly supports this reform, arguing that the authority of commanders to decide whether to prosecute these cases “poses an inherent conflict of interest.” It is obvious. Of course it is a conflict of interest. If the commander is faced with a situation—remember, we are talking about people who put their lives on the line. If the commander is in a circumstance where he does not want to lose one of these guys who is, let's say, a very good fighter, he has a conflict right there. He may be friends with the guy or the gal, whoever the accused is. We have to take this away from the commander and let them focus on what they need to do.

We have been told by many commanders that they would welcome this even though the top brass is quashing it and fighting hard against them. Why? Why are they fighting against this when for 20 years they have claimed they want to solve the problem? Let's listen to retired military officers such as LTG Claudia Kennedy, the first female three-star general in the Army. This is what she said:

If military leadership hasn't fixed the problem in my lifetime, it is not going to be fixed without a change from the status quo. The imbalance of power and authority in commanders dealing with sexual assaults has to be corrected. There has to be independent oversight over what is happening.

Then we have a situation where a woman was put up for a position. This is amazing. Dr. Jo Ann Rooney was nominated to be the Under Secretary of the Navy. She was asked:

In your view, what would be the impact of requiring a judge advocate outside the chain of command to determine whether allegations of sexual assaults should be prosecuted?

Mr. President, do you know what she said? This is what she said would happen if the Gillibrand bill passed:

I believe the impact would be decisions based on evidence rather than the interest of preserving good order and discipline.

And she is against the Gillibrand bill because she put good order and discipline over justice.

Then she said:

I believe this will result in fewer prosecutions and therefore defeat the very problem I understand it seeks to address.

Many of us have said we are not going to let a vote come up on this. We have been very open about it. She is complaining that if we pass the Gillibrand bill, the decision will be based on the evidence rather than on the good old boy system. I don't get it.

We need to listen to our allies, such as Israel, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia. They have successfully made this change.

I want to say very clearly that none of us in this body should filibuster justice. And I have a very strong chart here. I am going to keep this up: "Don't filibuster justice." That is what we are facing. We have people who are going to filibuster the Gillibrand bill and not allow a vote on it, while they would vote not to filibuster the McCaskill bill. I say don't filibuster either of these bills. Vote yes on both. Both are good. But it is only the Gillibrand bill that will make sure the system that is resulting in a disastrous record of prosecutions and a disastrous record of people—90 percent of the people don't report. Isn't that true? Ninety percent of the people don't report because they are scared. These are men and women. If you don't report, you cannot have justice.

For over a year survivors of military sexual assault have been walking the halls of Congress and calling for these vicious crimes to be decided outside the chain of command. In other words, they support S. 1752. They don't want us to filibuster S. 1752. They don't want us to filibuster justice. These brave men and women deserve an up-or-down vote on the Gillibrand bill. They don't deserve the filibuster. That is wrong. They don't deserve two more decades of broken promises. We should be humble in their presence—humble in their presence.

You know, I hear people stand and say: Oh, this is terrible. It would be terrible. It would be awful.

Wait a minute. Why not ask the people who have been raped? Why not ask the people who survived that? Why not ask the people who did not report because they are frightened to death of the commander? We need to give these brave survivors what they deserve—an up-or-down vote on legislation that will fix our broken military justice system.

I want to tell a couple of stories if the numbers are not convincing enough. I want to put a face on it. This is the story of Stacey Thompson, who is a Californian. I stood next to her, and I literally held her hand when she first told the story publicly.

Stacey was drugged and brutally raped by a male sergeant in December 1999 while she was stationed in Okinawa, Japan. She did what she was supposed to do: She reported the rape to her superior. Her allegations were swept under the rug. Her attacker was allowed to leave the Marine Corps without ever facing trial. Do you hear what I am saying? He was allowed to leave the Marine Corps, where he went home and probably continued his activities of raping.

But what happened to Stacey? She became the target of a drug investigation, extending from the night of her rape because her attacker drugged her—drugged her that night and molested her on the ground. She was forced out of the Marine Corps with an other-than-honorable discharge. Stacey told me she still struggles with the emotional and psychological effects of being raped. She is fighting to have her discharge upgraded so she can access the benefits she earned.

So let me just synthesize this story. Here she is. She was raped. She was drugged. She was left on the ground. As a result of the drugging by her attacker, they began an investigation and she was drummed out of the military and denied any benefits. She is appealing, and she hopes to make progress on that appeal. Her accuser gets out of the military scot-free. Right?

I want to point out that half of the estimated 26,000 victims of military sexual assault are men, so I would like to share the story of Amando Javier.

Amando was serving in the Marine Corps in 1993 when he was raped and assaulted by a group of fellow marines. Ashamed and fearing for his life, he kept his rape a secret for 15 years.

When Amando finally found the courage to share his story with a friend, he decided to write it down. I would like to read some of his words at this time.

My experience left me torn apart physically, mentally, and spiritually. I was dehumanized and treated with ultimate cruelty, by my perpetrators. . . . I was embarrassed and ashamed and didn't know what to do. I

was young at that time. And being part of an elite organization that values brotherhood, integrity and faithfulness made it hard to come forward and reveal what happened.

Now it is two decades later and no one has been held accountable for this heinous crime. The perpetrators are still out there able to commit these crimes again and again.

Ninety percent of the assaults are not reported. We think 26,000 is a conservative number. Think of how many perpetrators there are in the military, and then when they get out of the military they continue to commit these crimes.

I also want to share the story of Ariana Klay. Ariana graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy and joined the Marine Corps. She deployed to Iraq in 2008. Following her return Ariana was selected to serve at the Marine Barracks in Washington, DC, which is a very prestigious post down the street.

At the Marine Barracks Ariana was subjected to constant sexual assault, and when she tried to report it to her chain of command, she was told to "deal with it."

In August 2010, Ariana was gang raped by a senior Marine officer and his friend at her home. Ariana bravely reported the assault, but a Marine Corps investigation determined she had welcomed the harassment because she wore makeup and exercised in shorts and tank tops.

Finally, the Marine Corps did court-martial one of her rapists but failed to convict him of rape. Instead, he was convicted only of adultery and indecent language.

Ariana's husband is a former Marine Corps officer. He joined her at the recent press conference about the importance of changing how the military handles sexual assault. Here is what Ariana's husband said:

The first step to addressing sexual assault in the military is to remove its prosecution from the chain of command. It is unfair to expect commanders to be able to maintain good order and discipline as long as their justice system incentivizes and empowers them to deny their units' worst disciplinary failures ever happened.

That was from a former Marine Corps officer who said that the first step is to remove the prosecution of these crimes from the chain of command. So we now see the whole story, and we are going to go through these charts again.

Sadly, Senator GILLIBRAND's bill—which will finally take the prosecution of these assaults outside the chain of command, keep it in the military, and give it to the trained prosecutors—is being filibustered by my colleagues. Don't you think we should have a vote on justice without having to set up a 60-vote threshold?

I say to my colleagues—none of whom are here now, and I understand since it is very late—don't filibuster justice. If you want to vote against the Gillibrand approach, vote against it

but allow us an up-or-down vote. Don't filibuster justice. That is wrong. Frankly, anyone who does that ought to lose some sleep over it. I will tell you, if we get very close—somewhere in the high fifties—this change is coming, so why not make the change now.

I will put these charts back up to remind everyone of what I said. These magnificent men and women in the military are innocent. They joined the military out of love and devotion to country. They put their lives on the line. One in five women is either getting assaulted or harassed and many men—50 percent of the 26,000 cases are men. Men have an even harder time of stepping to the plate and admitting this happened.

The commanders are making these decisions. They are choosing between two people in their unit. It is akin to a CEO determining whether he or she is going to prosecute a case for a Senator and saying: You know what. It is a he said, she said, and I will decide who is telling the truth. Wrong. That is not justice in America. That should not be justice anywhere on our streets, and it should not be justice in the military.

Look at that face. This is a woman who was destroyed. I stood next to her and had to hold her hand so she could actually get the words out. Because of Senator GILLIBRAND's bill, she is empowered to speak out. Because of a movie called "Invisible War," which focused on people coming forward and telling the truth, she is empowered.

We have to change the way the military handles this or we are just a bunch of folks who come out here and sound great. No, it is time to change.

There were 26,000 cases of sexual assault in 2012. Of those 26,000 cases, 1.2 percent were prosecuted. This is an absolute disgrace on its face and anyone who will not make the changes required is accepting this because all they are doing is tinkering around the edges. It doesn't help because that is all we have done for years.

The moment of truth is coming in the Senate—and it is coming tomorrow around 2 p.m.—and Senators will have to stand here and decide if they are going to filibuster the Gillibrand bill and filibuster justice. They are going to have to decide that.

We have been listening to words and promises and baloney for 20-odd years. I was here all that time, so I know. I was here after Tailhook. Oh, this will never happen. Dick Cheney said: it will not happen. Then we heard from William Perry, William Cohen, Gates, Panetta, Chuck Hagel. I think they meant it when they said no more and zero tolerance, but they will not step up and support the change that needs to be made.

We made a lot of changes in the military. Many years ago they would not allow Blacks and Whites to fight side by side. Those days, thank God, are

over. Gays in the military—oh, my God, that was going to be horrific and hurt morale. Thank God that is over. The military fought tooth and nail, day in and day out, and this is just part of the pattern. They protect the status quo.

Put this in your mind: There is no place for a filibuster when it comes to justice. If you don't like the Gillibrand bill, then vote no on it, but give us a chance to vote up or down. I am going to vote to allow a vote on the Gillibrand bill, and I am going to vote to allow a vote on McCaskill's bill.

I ask that the McCaskill people please join us. Let us have an up-or-down vote. Honestly, I know in my heart that these opportunities to make change don't come along very often, and this is our moment. We have all the facts on our side. We have every victims' rights group and every survivor group on our side. We know status quo is dangerous.

I just want to say about my colleague Senator GILLIBRAND how proud I am to stand with her. What an amazing Senator she is. She listens to advice from both sides of the aisle. Her bill reflects comments that were made by myself, Senator PAUL, Senator HIRONO, as well as other Senators on both sides of the aisle. People were so happy to sit and work with her and her staff.

Now we are down to the wire. To have people tell me to my face: Oh, yes. I am going to filibuster this because I don't like it—if you don't like it, then vote no, but give us a chance to vote up or down.

It is interesting because many of the same people who are going to filibuster this tell me they want to do away with the filibuster altogether. It is odd. They want to do away with it but not on this one.

We are at the moment of truth, and tomorrow Senator GILLIBRAND will lead us in the hour of time that we have. Senator MCCASKILL will offer her views of negativity on the Gillibrand bill. Senator GILLIBRAND will support both bills, as will I.

I truly pray tonight that people will think about this and will think about Stacey and the men and women who have come forward in such a difficult situation to open their hearts to talk about things that have been kept a secret for so long because they honestly think it will help bring about change.

If we don't allow a vote on that change, then I am afraid this Senate will not look very good when we awaken the next morning.

I thank the Presiding Officer, yield the floor, and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). The clerk will call the roll. The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session and proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VENEZUELA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, we are all painfully aware of the many resource rich countries whose leaders care far more about maintaining their grip on power and enriching themselves than addressing the needs of their people. The departed Ukrainian President Victor Yanukovich was a good example, and in this hemisphere Venezuela's late President Hugo Chavez and his successor President Nicolas Maduro stand out.

President Chavez, a former army officer who was swept into power in a wave of popular discontent after decades of corrupt, elitist governments, mastered the art of deception. He was a cult personality and virulently anti-United States, who dished out favors to poor communities as he ruined the country's economy, destroyed any semblance of an independent judiciary, changed the constitution so he could hold onto power indefinitely, and used the police to intimidate the press.

In the year since Chavez' death, President Maduro has tried to fill his shoes. He has adopted Chavez' divisive, anti-U.S. rhetoric, but he lacks Chavez' charisma, and the prognosis for positive change in Venezuela is increasingly bleak.

Early last month a few student demonstrations quickly spiraled into the largest public protests against President Maduro since he came to power. Having been elected by a razor-thin margin, the smallest in nearly half a century, many Venezuelans hoped the stultifying reality of widespread unemployment and economic stagnation would inspire reforms. Regrettably, President Maduro did not heed the people's message.

Instead, inflation has skyrocketed in the oil-rich country and food shortages have plagued local markets. Additionally, the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report for 2013-2014 ranks Venezuela number three on its list of economies damaged by high crime rates and violence, contributing to the resolve of the thousands of Venezuelans who took to the streets in protest. From San Cristobal,

to Maracaibo, to the capital city of Caracas, the demonstrations have attracted students, merchants, and middle-class professionals in a challenge to government repression and mismanagement.

For several weeks images of the protests trickled out of Venezuela through various social media platforms, offering a limited, unfiltered perspective amidst the state-run media's censorship of impartial coverage. Because of the fog caused by this lack of objective information, it took nearly 2 weeks for many major U.S. news sources to arrive in country to begin coverage.

The distorted, self-serving portrayal of the protestors as treasonous fascists by the Maduro administration and the state-run media has been compounded by the deaths of some 18 people and the arbitrary arrests of hundreds, and risks inciting a further crackdown against the opposition. Additionally, there have been reports that foreign journalists have been detained while trying to cover the protests, with up to 20 having been physically assaulted, according to a Colombian news source that has since been banned from Venezuela for covering the protests.

The U.S. State Department's recently released Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013 describes the Maduro government's efforts to impede freedom of expression. The increasingly heavy-handed and violent actions over the last few weeks have exacerbated the situation.

As one of Venezuela's most important trading partners, and as a nation whose people take note of the well-being and basic rights of other peoples in our hemisphere and beyond, the United States has an interest in ensuring that human rights are not violated with impunity. I hope President Maduro will not continue to make the mistake of other messianic, autocratic leaders who demonize their opponents. In Venezuela they represent roughly half of the population. He would do far better to work with all Venezuelans to reduce tensions and find real solutions to the country's problems. The people of his country deserve nothing less.

TRIBUTE TO SHERIFF DOUG GILLESPIE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise to honor Sheriff Doug Gillespie, of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, who was recently named the National Sheriffs' Association's 2014 Sheriff of the Year.

The Ferris E. Lucas Award for Sheriff of the Year is awarded to recognize an outstanding sheriff for contributions made to improve the office of sheriff at the local, State, and national levels, and for involvement in the community above and beyond the responsibilities required. By this measure, I can think of no one more deserving

than Sheriff Gillespie. His tireless service as sheriff has made the Las Vegas metropolitan area a safer and better place to live, work, and raise a family.

Sheriff Gillespie has diligently served the Las Vegas community for 33 years as a metropolitan police officer, the last 7 as sheriff. Under Sheriff Gillespie's leadership, metro has become one of only 72 intelligence-gathering fusion centers in the country. It has won the Webber Seavey Award, given for quality in law enforcement by the International Association of Chiefs of Police, for an outreach effort to strengthen police relations in the Las Vegas area. Metro is also one of only 32 departments to achieve the highest standard of accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.

In addition to his position as sheriff, he has served in many leadership roles in other law enforcement organizations, such as board director of the National Sheriff's Association Executive Committee, chair of the Homeland Security Committee for the Major City Chiefs Association, vice chair of the Nevada High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Task Force, finance committee chair for the Nevada Commission for Homeland Security, and president of the Major County Sheriff's Association.

On behalf of the U.S. Senate, I congratulate Sheriff Doug Gillespie on receiving the Ferris E. Lucas Award for Sheriff of the Year and look forward to the continuation of a career that has already made Nevada very proud.

SIMMONS COLLEGE OF KENTUCKY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor one of the oldest educational institutions in my home State of Kentucky. Recently, the Simmons College of Kentucky announced its accreditation from the Association of Biblical Higher Learning. It is the college's first national accreditation.

The story of Simmons College is one of success. After the Civil War came to an end in 1865, there was no place in my home State where African Americans could obtain a college degree. That changed in 1879 when the Kentucky Normal Theological Institute opened its doors on the corner of 8th and Kentucky Street in Louisville. The school's second president, Dr. W.J. Simmons, transformed the nascent school into a full-fledged university that offered a wide array of liberal arts and theological programs. Simmons increased the school's enrollment from 13 to over 200 during his 10-year tenure. In 1918, Charles Parrish assumed the role of president of the university and aptly renamed the school Simmons University.

Simmons flourished into the 1920s, when enrollment peaked at over 500 students, but this success could not

shield the school from the devastation that sprang out of the Great Depression. The school was forced to sell its property in 1930 and drastically scale back its academic offerings. Simmons was down, but in no way, shape, or form was it out. In 1935 its leaders obtained a new location at 1811 Dumesnil Street. At this location, Simmons continued to provide Christian education, and in 1982 the school was renamed Simmons Bible College in order to reflect this focused mission.

In 2007 the school, now bearing its current name of "Simmons College of Kentucky," returned to its old location at the corner of 8th and Kentucky. The property was purchased in 2005 by the Reverend Dr. Kevin W. Cosby—himself the grandson of a Simmons College alumnus. Dr. Cosby's immense respect for the history and mission of the school led him to launch a campaign to return Simmons to its original location. Dr. Cosby also took on the role of president of the university and worked to once again expand Simmons's educational offerings.

Dr. Cosby was helped in this endeavor by University of Louisville president James Ramsey. The two developed a friendship, and in 2010 they signed an agreement that made it easier to transfer credits between the schools. President Ramsey called the deal "historic" as well as a "testament to Reverend Cosby's persistence in seeking partnerships and opportunities for the less fortunate."

Simmons's recent accreditation by the Association for Biblical Higher Education is another enormous step forward for this venerable institution. The school continues to fulfill its mission of producing "productive citizens and agents of change in society."

Accreditation inherently brings increased credibility and prestige to the university, but it also provides more tangible benefits. With this formal recognition, Simmons is now eligible to receive government subsidies designated for historical Black colleges and universities. This money, coupled with a \$2-million private donation from the Gheens Foundation, will undoubtedly lead to even brighter days ahead for Simmons College. Cole states that the university has plans to increase their enrollment from 130 to 350 students, as well as expand the range of programs offered.

Through thick and thin, Simmons has weathered the storms of history to arrive at this moment stronger than ever. President Cosby believes that the school's past trials mustn't be forgotten but, rather, harnessed as source of strength to spur on future successes. I extend my gratitude and congratulations to the president of Simmons College, the Reverend Dr. Kevin W. Cosby, for his extraordinary success in leading the renaissance of this historic school.

Simmons College is a truly remarkable institution, and their recent accreditation serves as testament to its perseverance and the good it continues to accomplish today. I ask that my Senate colleagues join me in honoring President Cosby and this admirable school.

REMEMBERING PFC WILLIAM T. CARNEAL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this April 25, PFC William T. Carneal will be laid to rest in his hometown of Paducah, KY. Private First Class Carneal made the ultimate sacrifice in giving his life in service of his country. I rise today to honor him and to share the remarkable story that culminates in his forthcoming burial—70 years after he was killed on the island of Saipan during the Second World War.

William T. Carneal, known to his family as “Teetum,” was the youngest of Plummer and Johnnie Ella Hite Carneal’s 10 children. Raised in McCracken County, KY, William’s childhood was marked by tragedy and loss. His mother passed away when he was 18 months old and his father when he was 7, leaving the responsibility to raise William to his older sister, Ruth Anderson, and her husband, L.O.

William graduated from Heath High School in 1939 and, like so many members of the “greatest generation,” answered his country’s call of duty and joined the U.S. Army in 1941. In January of the following year he was sent to Hawaii in preparation for deployment into the Pacific theater.

On July 7, 1944, his company in the 105th infantry regiment, 27th infantry division was engaged in hostilities with Japanese forces on the island of Saipan. When the enemy counter-attacked, his company was forced to withdrawal—but William was never seen again. That day he was reported as missing in action, and a year later he was reported dead at the age of 24. Soon the war ended. Yet William’s remains were never found—still buried somewhere in the Saipan soil.

His remains stayed lost for nearly 70 years—the chances of ever finding them no better than finding a needle in a haystack. In March of 2013, however, an unlikely source happened upon that needle. Keuntai, a Japanese nonprofit dedicated to finding the remains of Japanese soldiers killed during the war, was conducting an excavation on Saipan when they discovered the remains of five American soldiers—one of whom bore a 1939 Heath High School class ring. Carneal’s dog tags were found, too, along with some loose change and a pocket-watch.

To confirm the identity of the remains, Keuntai passed them along to the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command for DNA testing. On December 4 of last year, the tests confirmed what

Carneal’s surviving family members already knew—the class ring and the remains belonged to William T. Carneal.

William’s family—nephews J.T. and Carlton, niece Mary Carneal Christian, great-nephew Jimmy Fields, and great nieces Carol Ann Fields Lindley and Beverly Fields Swift—were given the option of a burial at Arlington Cemetery. But after 70 years they thought it was time for William to come home to Kentucky, where he will be buried next to his sister Ruth.

The military believes that a grenade blast, possibly part of a suicide attack, killed William and the four other soldiers. He was found buried under 3 feet of clay. On April 25th of this year, William’s birthday, he will be laid to his final resting place. He will receive the full honors of a military burial, including a 21-gun salute and a flag ceremony. Military personnel from Fort Campbell will preside over the funeral, and local World War II veteran Edward “Earl” Gidcumb will play “Taps.”

As of December 19, 2013, there remain 73,640 U.S. personnel whose bodies have not been recovered from the Second World War. Most never will. But in this story, Sandy Hart, curator of the Kentucky Veteran and Patriot Museum in Wickliffe, KY, finds solace for the families of all the missing. “When Teetum is brought home,” she said, “a part of them are all going to be brought home.”

I ask that my U.S. Senate colleagues join me in honoring PFC William T. Carneal’s service to this country and all those who played a role in the incredible story of returning his remains, at last, to his old Kentucky home.

Mr. President, the Paducah Sun recently published an article regarding the incredible discovery and return of William’s remains. I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Paducah Sun, Feb. 26, 2014]
FAMILY GETS WORLD WAR II CASUALTY’S BELONGINGS
(By Laurel Black)

Most people wouldn’t choke up at the sight of a deteriorated poncho, a rust-eaten key or a decades-old pocket knife. But tears rose to the eyes of several members of Private First Class William T. Carneal’s family on Tuesday as they perused the items found with the World War II veteran’s remains.

The belongings, which included Carneal’s dog tags, belt buckle and a 1939 class ring from Heath High School, were recovered on the Japanese island of Saipan, where Carneal was killed in July 1944. After nearly seven decades without news of their relative, Carneal’s descendants had little reason to believe they’d ever recover his possessions or remains.

But Carneal’s possessions finally crossed the ocean and arrived in his family’s hands. During a brief presentation at Reidland Clothing Company, U.S. Army Sergeant Tyler Holt unpacked a brown cardboard box and returned the objects, one by one.

“We kind of feel like now he’s home with us,” nephew J.T. Carneal said after the presentation.

J.T. Carneal added that the family has also found closure because of a recent investigation that revealed the cause of his uncle’s death. The military believes that William Carneal, whose body was found with four others under more than three feet of clay, was killed by a grenade blast during a suicide attack by enemy forces, his nephew said.

“It’s a blessing to us that the whole family now can know what happened and put it to rest,” Carneal said. “He gave his life for his country.”

Except for a dog tag that will be given to the Veterans Museum in Wickliffe, the belongings will remain in the hands of Carneal’s descendants. Carneal is also survived by nephew Carlton M. Carneal, niece Mary Carneal Christian, great-nephew Jimmy Fields, and great-nieces Carol Ann Fields Lindley and Beverly Fields Swift.

The process of finding and returning Carneal’s possessions and remains was hardly straightforward. Japanese non-profit Keuntai, which searches for the bodies of Japanese soldiers killed in World War II, discovered Carneal’s remains a year ago and turned them over to the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command. The class ring gave the family hope that their ancestor had at last been found, but DNA testing was required to confirm Carneal’s identity. The results arrived in December.

After Tuesday’s presentation, the family gathered to make plans for Carneal’s interment, scheduled for April 25, his birthday. Although Carneal could have been buried at Arlington National Cemetery, the family agreed that he should be laid to rest next to sister Ruth Anderson at Palestine United Methodist Church in West Paducah. Following a brief ceremony at 1 p.m. at Milner & Orr, Carneal will receive full military honors at the cemetery, including a 21-gun salute and flag ceremony. The military personnel of Fort Campbell will preside over the funeral. Local World War II veteran Edward “Earl” Gidcumb has offered to play “Taps.”

“So many families exist that don’t have any idea where their loved ones are,” said Gidcumb, who also served in the Pacific theater, “and it’s an honor to be involved in this whole thing.”

EL PASO DIOCESE CENTENNIAL

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the centennial anniversary of the Roman Catholic Diocese of El Paso, which took place on March 3, 2014.

For nearly 400 years, the Catholic Church has served the needs of people in the El Paso area, beginning with the arrival of Franciscan missionaries in the late 1600s. By the time Pope Pius X founded the Diocese of El Paso on March 3, 1914, the Church had established a network of parochial schools and private sanatoriums to treat tuberculosis patients. The ministries, parishes, and schools were founded with a desire to share Catholic life and give witness to Christ. Today, under the leadership of its 6th bishop, Mark J. Seitz, the Diocese includes 64 parishes and missions, 11 schools, and a seminary that serve more than 600,000 Catholics.

I invite my colleagues to join me in celebrating the Diocese's legacy of service and faith in El Paso. I ask God's continued blessing on the leaders and members of the Diocese as they carry on their good work in providing health care, education, and spiritual care to the people of West Texas.

2014 OLYMPIANS

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate athletes with strong Idaho ties who competed in the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics and contributed to three of the U.S. Olympic team's 28 total medals. Their dedication is inspiring.

Idaho-connected Olympians earned two gold medals and one silver medal in the Olympic Games in Sochi. Kaitlyn Farrington, who was raised on a ranch in Bellevue, Idaho, earned a gold medal competing for the first time as an Olympic snowboarder in the halfpipe competition. Hilary Knight of Sun Valley competed once again in women's hockey in the 2014 Winter Olympics where the team earned a silver medal. Additionally, Sage Kotsenburg, a Coeur d'Alene native, took home the first-ever gold medal in the new men's slope style event and the first U.S. gold medal in the 2014 Winter Olympics.

Six other remarkable athletes also represented our state and nation well on the U.S. Olympic team. Nick Cunningham, a graduate of Boise State University and Sergeant in the New York National Guard, earned 12th place in both the two-man bobsled and four-man bobsled competitions. Erik Fisher, an alpine skier from Middleton, Idaho, went to Sochi as part of the U.S. Olympic team. Simi Hamilton, a Sun Valley skier, competed in cross country skiing, and he placed 6th in the men's team sprint classic and 11th in the men's 4x10k relay. Nate Holland, who grew up in Sandpoint, Idaho, placed 25th in men's snowboardcross in Sochi. Jessika Jenson of Rigby competed in the first Olympic snowboard slopestyle competition in Sochi where she finished 13th. Sara Studebaker from Boise competed in her second Olympics in biathlon competitions at Sochi where she helped earn a 7th place finish in the Women's 4x6k Relay Biathlon.

These athletes, like their fellow Olympic athletes from communities across the country and around the world, inspire us to push beyond the limits of what we may think is possible. They commit themselves to significant training and turn that preparation into achievements. Congratulations to Idaho and American Olympians for their extraordinary efforts leading up to and during these Olympics.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

COOK INLET HOUSING AUTHORITY

• Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, in 2014, Cook Inlet Housing Authority celebrates its 40th anniversary of building housing opportunities for the people of the Cook Inlet region of Southcentral Alaska.

In 1974, the Alaska State Legislature facilitated the creation of Cook Inlet Housing to ensure elders, individuals, and families in the Cook Inlet region would have access to quality, affordable housing. Since that time, Cook Inlet Housing has developed more than 1,500 energy-efficient and affordable homes for seniors and families and has catalyzed the revitalization of the Mountain View neighborhood in Anchorage.

The passage of Native American Housing Assistance and Self Determination Act by the U.S. Congress in 1996, and the flexibility allowed within it, has empowered Cook Inlet Housing to leverage funding from private and public sources and more than doubled the amount of quality, affordable housing available to families in Southcentral Alaska.

This year, Cook Inlet Housing is being recognized nationally with the prestigious HUD and American Planning Association's 2014 HUD Secretary's Opportunity and Empowerment Award. This award honors excellence in community planning resulting in measureable benefits in terms of increased economic development, employment, education, or housing choice and mobility for low- and moderate-income residents. I know the work that Cook Inlet Housing is doing for our community matters and helps transform lives.

I would like to congratulate Cook Inlet Housing Authority for their commitment to innovation and thoughtful, dynamic development that promotes their critical mission: To create housing opportunities that empower people and build communities.●

TRIBUTE TO DR. JOHN KERNER

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the 95th birthday of Dr. John Kerner, an American hero, healthcare pioneer, and cherished doctor to so many families, including my own.

John Kerner was born in Portland, OR, and raised in Boston and San Francisco. He graduated from the University of California, Berkeley and UCSF Medical School, serving in the ROTC while in school. In 1943, he was called to active duty and commissioned as a first lieutenant.

As a battalion surgeon and combat medic in World War II, Dr. Kerner served with great distinction on the battlefields of Omaha Beach, Saint-Lô,

and Bastogne. Shortly after landing in Normandy, he delivered a breech baby at a combat aid station, saving the mother and her child. On another occasion, when a group of U.S. soldiers was nearly surrounded by German SS troops, Dr. Kerner and one of his medics drove straight through the lines to deliver medical supplies and care to the wounded.

For his valiant service in World War II, Dr. Kerner was awarded the Combat Medic Badge, two Bronze Stars, five Battle Stars, and a Presidential Unit Citation. In 2007, he was awarded the Legion of Honor by French President Nicolas Sarkozy. He later recounted his experiences in a stirring memoir, "A Combat Medic Comes Home."

After the war, Dr. Kerner returned home to California, where he served the women and families of the San Francisco Bay area as an outstanding OB/GYN and the medical community as a teacher and administrator. During his residency studies at UC San Francisco, he worked closely with Dr. Herbert F. Traut, who had helped to develop the Pap smear. Along with Traut, Kerner was instrumental in ensuring that women in the community had access to these critical screenings, which drastically reduced the instances of cervical cancer. To honor Dr. Kerner and his groundbreaking work, UC San Francisco established the John A. Kerner Distinguished Professorship in Gynecologic Oncology focusing on cancer research and patient care for women.

Dr. Kerner later became the founding director of the OB/GYN Department at Mt. Zion Hospital, where he taught the next generation of physicians and served as chief of staff before establishing his own private practice. My children are among the more than 2,000 babies that he delivered over the course of his career.

Dr. John Kerner has enriched the lives of so many, from the wounded of World War II who made it home thanks to his exceptional care and courage, to the women whose health he protected and whose babies he brought into the world, to the many doctors who now do the same because he taught them how. I am honored to salute him today in the Senate.●

TRIBUTE TO ANN WAYT

• Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, when we think of those who provide treatment to our loved ones, we think of registered nurses like Ann Wayt—a longtime staff member of Affinity Medical Center in Massillon, OH. Ms. Wayt has earned both the Affinity Medical Center Nurse Excellence Award and the esteemed Cameos of Caring award from the University of Akron's College of Nursing. Patients and fellow nurses in the hospital's orthopedic unit, were touched daily by Ms. Wayt's professionalism and care. Several of Ms.

Wayt's coworkers have referred to her as a role model.

It does not come as a surprise that a nurse who cares so much about her patients also cares about her fellow workers and their working conditions. Collective bargaining in health care isn't just about a paycheck. It is about staffing levels, patient safety, and ensuring health care quality. For years, joining a union was a ticket to the middle class and ensured that those who work hard and take responsibility can still get ahead.

However, on September 26, 2012, Ann was fired by Community Health Systems, the hospital's parent company, shortly after she rallied with co-workers to organize a collective voice for better, safer workplace conditions and patient care. In fact, Ms. Wayt was fired by the hospital the day before the nurses voted to form a collective bargaining unit. Though other grounds were given, both the National Labor Relations Board, NLRB, and the Federal Court ruled Ms. Wayt was fired because she was a lead organizer for her fellow nurses.

We have seen too many attacks on workers' rights in recent years. We have seen too many efforts to hamstring the NLRB and its ability to protect the rights of workers, and we have seen too many people fired for engaging in collective activity.

Fortunately, the NLRB stepped in and held a hearing last year, and the findings speak for themselves: Community Health Systems was ordered to reinstate Ms. Wayt and to recognize the nurses' union. Community Health Systems refused to comply.

In January 2014, Federal Judge John Adams ordered Ann's reinstatement, the recognition of the nurses' collective bargaining unit and for the hospital to stop harassing the nurses because they want a voice at work.

Nurses are on the front lines of patient care and deserve to have their voices heard on important, common sense issues such as:

Minimum staffing levels based on patient acuity;

the right to refuse unsafe assignments;

the right to advocate for patients; and

lift equipment safety protections for RNs and patients.

A 2013 study by the American Nurses Association shows that when workplaces collaborate and listen to worker input, nurses are able to provide care more effectively, and hospitals gain better overall patient outcomes.

Welcome back, Ann, and congratulations.●

TRIBUTE TO COREY TAYLOR

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to honor an exceptional Nevadan, Corey Taylor.

Corey is a sophomore at Las Vegas' Northwest Career and Technical Academy and the host of her own radio show, which focuses on bullying issues in high schools. She is on a mission to end the senselessness that is bullying. Championing a safe environment through activism of acceptance, even at a young age, Corey has embraced diversity by defending individual expression.

Overcoming her own situation of adversity is just one example of character Corey stands upon as a leader in her community. The hard-earned money she saves goes to her radio show, where she reaches an audience through her words in addition to her actions. She encourages people of all ages to surround themselves with positive influences and to embrace their unique qualities.

Through her community outreach, Corey encourages her peers to be true to themselves despite any type of social pressure. She refuses to let her spirits be diminished by bullying, and her work has inspired others to do the same.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring and congratulating Corey for her service and contributions to Nevada.●

KCAM RADIO

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I wish to honor Alaska radio station KCAM on its 50th anniversary on the air.

KCAM, is a radio station located in Glennallen, AK, and it literally had an earth-shattering start. That is because KCAM signed onto the air under emergency orders late on the day of the Great Alaskan earthquake, on March 27, 1964. While the station had been planned and in preparation for going on air, its broadcast air date was advanced under emergency orders by the Federal Communications Commission so it could provide lifesaving information and aid in disaster relief communications following the largest earthquake ever recorded in North America.

At 5:36 p.m. Alaska Standard Time on Good Friday, nearly 50 years ago, an earthquake struck deep beneath Miners Lake in northern Prince William Sound, just 90 miles southwest of Glennallen. The quake, which then measured 8.6 on the Richter scale but which has since been revised upwards to 9.2, sent shockwaves up to 700 miles away. The earthquake and resulting tsunami killed 131 people, 115 in Alaska and others in California and on the west coast. Amazingly only 12 people were killed by collapsing buildings and the quake itself, 119 in the tsunami that followed.

The earthquake, which lasted more than 4 minutes, released 10 million times more energy than the atomic bomb that devastated Hiroshima,

Japan, according to a story in *The Alaska Almanac*. The quake devastated Southcentral Alaska, inundating Valdez and other coastal villages, destroying whole blocks in downtown Anchorage, the State's now largest city, but causing significant damage even north of the Chugach Mountain Range, where Glennallen is nestled.

KCAM, found at 790 on the AM radio dial, signed on in a part of east central Alaska, in the Center of the Copper River Valley, that then and even now is underserved by broadcast communication outlets. Then as now the station provides vital weather information, travel reports—valued by motorists on the Alaska Highway, the only surface route between Interior Alaska and the Lower 48 States—plus news, sports and music. The relative isolation of the region is highlighted by the fact that Caribou Clatters, the station's on air community bulletin board, is a valued way for area residents to get personal news to friends who live off the highway, in remote cabins not served by the array of telecommunication devices that many Americans today take for granted. It is a real "News from Lake Wobegon" feature, far different than radio in urban America today.

It was no small feat for KCAM to sign onto the air—having electricity and a broadcast antenna still standing—in the hours just after the great earthquake, broadcasting a signal to warn drivers on the highway heading toward the Anchorage area of the damage ahead and dangers they were to face and to give vital information to Interior Alaskans to help them survive the late winter when normal supply deliveries were largely impossible.

The station today, while operating in less challenging times, serves as a ministry of the 40-year-old Alaska Bible College. It is staffed by broadcast professionals "who love the Lord and are committed to bringing excellence in radio" to the community of about 600 residents plus visitors. It also now offers an all-music station, 88.7 FM, which is staffed by Alaska Bible College students who are involved as board operators, broadcasters, office workers, and reporters—many receiving training in broadcasting through an introductory course offered each fall semester by station manager Scott Yahr.

The station, as I know firsthand from my appearances on it, provides residents of the Copper River Valley State political news that allows them to make informed ballot choices and to know how to dress for the day ahead through its weather updates. It is a great pleasure to congratulate Scott, program director Michelle Easty, and special projects director Roger Bovee on the station's 50th anniversary. I know the station will be formally celebrating its golden anniversary during a

celebration banquet to be held on Saturday, April 12, but I wanted in advance to wish everyone connected to the station and all of its committed listeners a happy anniversary and a wish that the station continue to broadcast vital weather bulletins, important State and community news, and music and entertainment features for many decades to come.●

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGULATORY UTILITY COMMISSIONERS

● Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to acknowledge the milestone 125th anniversary of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, the national association representing our Nation's State utility economic regulators.

The work of our Nation's public utility regulators often goes unnoticed and unheralded until the lights go out or our utility rates increase. But, rest assured, the work these officials do on a daily basis impacts every single one of us in the country.

State utility regulators ensure the rates we pay for utility services are fair, just, and reasonable. They help make sure the utilities deliver these services—electricity, natural gas, water, and telecommunications—in a safe and reliable manner.

NARUC offers its members countless opportunities for education, sharing of best practices, advocacy, and much more. Since March of 1889, the Association has provided countless resources aimed at improving regulatory practices. Since just about all of us pay utility bills in some way or another, we have all benefited from NARUC's work over the last century and a quarter.

Think about it: in 1889, the electricity industry was in its infancy. Alexander Graham Bell was still perfecting his groundbreaking invention called the telephone. We were still learning how best to transport water and natural gas.

What a difference 125 years makes. We can now electrify our homes from solar rooftops. We can carry our personal computers in our pockets on our smartphones. We are using new technologies to find abundant resources of natural gas.

The one constant has been NARUC and the quality utility regulation it promotes. I thank NARUC and congratulate it on this 125th year anniversary.

Congratulations NARUC!●

CENTRAL LOUISIANA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

● Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce.

The Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce was originally founded as

the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce by 250 men from all walks of life on March 30, 1914, in the Italian Room of the Hotel Bentley. Their intent was to promote the city and the region in order to attract business and facilitate growth, and they have been continuing this work for 100 years.

Over the next few decades, the Alexandria chamber would see many accomplishments toward this goal, with railroad companies like Missouri Pacific and Texas and Pacific opening terminal and repair facilities. Likewise, in 1923 Roy O Martin would open a forestry and wood products manufacturing facility. The U.S. military established a presence with Camp Beauregard, and the Alexandria VA Hospital opened to train and care for our men during World Wars I and II. Fort Polk was opened in 1941 to support our engagement in World War II, and the Fort Polk and the Joint Readiness Training Center continues to train men and women defending the United States today.

In 1956, the Alexandria chamber would merge with its neighboring chamber in Pineville, LA, to establish the Greater Alexandria-Pineville Chamber of Commerce to expand economic development initiatives across the region. During the next 30 years, LSU opened a campus in Alexandria; commercial airlines offered flights from Esler Field; and companies such as Proctor & Gamble and Manning, Maxwell & Moore opened manufacturing plants, all in part due to the efforts of Greater Alexandria-Pineville Chamber.

In 1986, the chamber would adopt its current name, with a mission and vision to advocate for pro-business policies and provide programs that foster an environment for economic growth across the 11 parish region that it now represents, leveraging partnerships with many other organizations in the area to promote the region. The central Louisiana chamber has also prioritized helping young people in the community. The Chamber's Young Professionals Group is one such example of efforts to engage, retain, and involve Louisiana's future leaders. Also, its Work Ready Network is a partnership with the Rapides Foundation, the Orchard Foundation, and the Central Louisiana Economic Development Alliance to link education, workforce development efforts, and the region's economic needs.

Since its founding the Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce has gone on to become the largest chamber in the region with more than 1,100 member businesses representing more than 28,000 employees. The chamber been an economic, social, and political leader for central Louisiana, and I am pleased to congratulate them on a century of success.●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:15 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 23. An act to designate as wilderness certain land and inland water within the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in the State of Michigan, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2197. An act to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the York River and associated tributaries for study for potential inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

H.R. 2259. An act to withdraw certain Federal land and interests in that land from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws and disposition under the mineral and geothermal leasing laws and to preserve existing uses.

H.R. 3370. An act to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4076. An act to address shortages and interruptions in the availability of propane and other home heating fuels in the United States, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 6:23 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker had signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 23. An act to designate as wilderness certain land and inland water within the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in the State of Michigan, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 2197. An act to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate segments of the York River and associated tributaries for study for potential inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2077. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 2259. An act to withdraw certain Federal land and interests in that land from location, entry, and patent under the mining laws and disposition under the mineral and geothermal leasing laws and to preserve existing uses.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

H.R. 3370. An act to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4803. A communication from the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting a report of draft legislation entitled "Federal Agriculture Mortgage Corporation Governance; Farmer Mac Corporate Governance and Standards of Conduct" received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4804. A communication from the Acting Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of seven (7) officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4805. A communication from the General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4806. A communication from the Administrator, U.S. Energy Information Administration, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "The Availability and Price of Petroleum and Petroleum Products Produced in Countries Other Than Iran"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4807. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Property Transferred in Connection with the Performance of Services Under Section 83" (RIN1545-BJ15) (TD 9659) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4808. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Annual Price Inflation Adjustments for Passenger Automobiles First Placed in Service or Leased in 2014" (Rev. Proc. 2014-21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4809. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "2014 Calendar Year Resident Population Figures" (Notice 2014-12) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 27, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4810. A communication from the Acting Director of the Directorate of Whistleblower Protection Program, Occupational Safety

and Health Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Procedures for Handling Retaliation Complaints Under Section 402 of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act" (RIN1218-AC58) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4811. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Employee Benefits Security Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Ninety-Day Waiting Period Limitation and Technical Amendments to Certain Health Coverage Requirements Under the Affordable Care Act" (RIN1210-AB56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4812. A communication from the Executive Analyst, Office of the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary for Children and Families (Family Support), Department of Health and Human Services; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4813. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Fiscal Year 2013 Annual Report on FDA Advisory Committee Vacancies and Public Disclosures"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4814. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report on FDA's Policy to be Proposed Regarding Premarket Notification Requirements for Modifications to Legally Marketed Devices"; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4815. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary for Management, Department of Homeland Security, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4816. A communication from the District of Columbia Auditor, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, "Audit of the Administration of District Funds to the D.C. Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4817. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Placement of Alfaxalone into Schedule IV" (Docket No. DEA-370) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 28, 2014; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4818. A communication from the President, Chief Scout Executive, and the National Commissioner, Boy Scouts of America, transmitting, pursuant to law, the organization's 2013 annual report; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4819. A communication from the Chairman of the Federal Election Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to eight legislative recommendations; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

EC-4820. A communication from the Associate Administrator, Office of Government Contracting and Business Development, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "2012 Fiscal Year Report to the U.S. Congress on Minority Small Business and Capital Ownership Development"; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC-4821. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, Office of the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 20, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4822. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "National Appeals Office Rules of Procedure" (RIN0648-BA36) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4823. A communication from the Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Greater Than or Equal to 60 Feet Length Overall Using Pot Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area" (RIN0648-XD101) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4824. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic" (RIN0648-XC464) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4825. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; Trip Limit Reduction" (RIN0648-XD078) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4826. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer" (RIN0648-XD063) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4827. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Pot Catcher/Processors in the Bering Sea and Aleutian

Islands Management Area" (RIN0648-XD104) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4828. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; Trip Limit Increase" (RIN0648-XD100) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4829. A communication from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Less Than 60 Feet (18.3 Meters) Length Overall Using Hook-and-Line or Pot Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area" (RIN0648-XD114) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Ms. CANTWELL for the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

*Maria Contreras-Sweet, of California, to be Administrator of the Small Business Administration.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN for the Select Committee on Intelligence.

Caroline Diane Krass, of the District of Columbia, to be General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency.

John P. Carlin, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

Francis Xavier Taylor, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis, Department of Homeland Security.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 2078. A bill to prohibit Federal funding for motorcycle checkpoints, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. RUBIO:

S. 2079. A bill to establish a pilot program to hire individuals with alternative educational experience; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 2080. A bill to conserve fish and aquatic communities in the United States through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation, improve the quality of life for the people of the United States, enhance fish and wildlife-dependent recreation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 2081. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require notification of Congress by the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board regarding any violation of the Constitutional rights of taxpayers; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mrs. FISCHER):

S. 2082. A bill to provide for the development of criteria under the Medicare program for medically necessary short inpatient hospital stays, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. UDALL of Colorado (for himself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 2083. A bill to amend the Natural Gas Act to promote economic growth and job creation in the United States, to strengthen strategic partnerships with allies of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. PRYOR (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. 2084. A bill to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to require the Secretary of the Interior to publish and make available for public comment a draft economic analysis at the time a proposed rule to designate critical habitat is published; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. FRANKEN, and Ms. BALDWIN):

S. 2085. A bill to address shortages and interruptions in the availability of propane and other home heating fuels in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. CORKER) (by request):

S.J. Res. 33. A joint resolution relating to the approval of the proposed Third Amendment to the Agreement for Co-operation Between the United States of America and the International Atomic Energy Agency; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. COATS (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. HOEVEN):

S. Res. 370. A resolution supporting the territorial integrity of Ukraine and condemning Russian military aggression in Ukraine; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. KIRK, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. Res. 371. A resolution honoring the legacy of Jan Karski by designating April 24, 2014, as "Jan Karski Day"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. Res. 372. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of the Secondary School

Student Athletes' Bill of Rights; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BLUNT, and Mrs. MCCASKILL):

S. Res. 373. A resolution recognizing the importance of biosecurity and agro-defense in the United States; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. CARDIN):

S. Res. 374. A resolution designating March 3, 2014, as "World Wildlife Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. FLAKE):

S. Res. 375. A resolution concerning the crisis in the Central African Republic and supporting United States and international efforts to end the violence, protect civilians, and address root causes of the conflict; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 114

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 114, a bill to amend title 11, United States Code, with respect to certain exceptions to discharge in bankruptcy.

S. 192

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 192, a bill to enhance the energy security of United States allies, and for other purposes.

S. 313

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 313, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 364

At the request of Mr. WALSH, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 364, a bill to establish the Rocky Mountain Front Conservation Management Area, to designate certain Federal land as wilderness, and to improve the management of noxious weeds in the Lewis and Clark National Forest, and for other purposes.

S. 452

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 452, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the incidence of diabetes among Medicare beneficiaries.

S. 739

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 739, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish direct care

registered nurse-to-patient staffing ratio requirements in hospitals, and for other purposes.

S. 932

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 932, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for advance appropriations for certain discretionary accounts of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

S. 942

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 942, a bill to eliminate discrimination and promote women's health and economic security by ensuring reasonable workplace accommodations for workers whose ability to perform the functions of a job are limited by pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition.

S. 958

At the request of Mr. UDALL of Colorado, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 958, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce the tax on beer to its pre-1991 level, and for other purposes.

S. 1008

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1008, a bill to prohibit the Secretary of Homeland Security from implementing proposed policy changes that would permit passengers to carry small, non-locking knives on aircraft.

S. 1060

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1060, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to facilitate emergency medical services personnel training and certification curriculums for military veterans.

S. 1181

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1181, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt certain stock of real estate investment trusts from the tax on foreign investments in United States real property interests, and for other purposes.

S. 1401

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1401, a bill to provide for the development of a plan to increase oil and gas exploration, development, and production under oil and gas leases of Federal land, and for other purposes.

S. 1495

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a co-

sponsor of S. 1495, a bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue an order with respect to secondary cockpit barriers, and for other purposes.

S. 1694

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 1694, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax for the purchase of hearing aids.

S. 1733

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1733, a bill to stop exploitation through trafficking.

S. 1738

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1738, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

S. 1756

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1756, a bill to amend section 403 of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants, similar retail food establishments, and vending machines.

S. 1799

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1799, a bill to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1827, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the American Fighter Aces, collectively, in recognition of their heroic military service and defense of our country's freedom throughout the history of aviation warfare.

S. 1941

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1941, a bill to establish requirements for the adoption of any new or revised requirement providing for the screening, testing, or treatment of an airman or an air traffic controller for a sleep disorder, and for other purposes.

S. 2046

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2046, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide Medicare beneficiaries coordinated care and greater choice with re-

gard to accessing hearing health services and benefits.

S. 2049

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2049, a bill to curb unfair and deceptive practices during assertion of patents, and for other purposes.

S. 2069

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2069, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand and modify the credit for employee health insurance expenses of small employers.

S. CON. RES. 6

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 6, a concurrent resolution supporting the Local Radio Freedom Act.

S. RES. 348

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 348, a resolution expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace.

S. RES. 365

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 365, a resolution deploring the violent repression of peaceful demonstrators in Venezuela, calling for full accountability for human rights violations taking place in Venezuela, and supporting the right of the Venezuelan people to the free and peaceful exercise of representative democracy.

AMENDMENT NO. 2752

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2752 intended to be proposed to S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2790

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2790 intended to be proposed to S. 1982, a bill to improve the provision of medical services and benefits to veterans, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself and Mr. CRAPO):

S. 2080. A bill to conserve fish and aquatic communities in the United

States through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation, improve the quality of life for the people of the United States, enhance fish and wildlife-dependent recreation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about a bill I am introducing with the Senior Senator from Idaho, that will help improve the long term health and abundance of United States' fish populations. Our bill takes a comprehensive approach to stopping the single greatest threat declining fish populations, by stemming the decline of healthy aquatic ecosystem habitats that are critical to all fish species.

Improving the quality of fish habitat provides benefits beyond improving the health and abundance of fish populations. Healthier aquatic ecosystems means healthier habitats for waterfowl and other wildlife as well as safer recreational waters for Americans to swim, boat and fish in.

North America is home to nearly 700 native fish species. This abundance of fish species is one of many natural treasures we must work to protect and maintain. Much like other precious natural resources in this country our wild fish populations face unfortunate anthropogenic threats. Forty percent of our native fish populations are in decline. This is due in large part to the impairment of more than half of our nation's waters including the waters of my state's, and the mid-Atlantic region's greatest treasure, the Chesapeake Bay. Deliberate and targeted action is needed to stem the loss of our precious fish resources by ensuring that these important aquatic habitats are better preserved.

State, federal and private efforts to address this challenge of improving and protecting critical fish habitat are underway in many states and in local communities. However, too many of these efforts are uncoordinated with one another which is leading to fragmented and less effective results than if these efforts carried out in a more networked and comprehensive fashion.

Under the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act, Federal Government agencies will work in careful coordination with state and local governments, as well as stakeholder organizations and industries like conservation groups, fisherman, and companies in the outdoor recreation industry to collaboratively execute the scientifically most effective fish and aquatic habitat conservation projects possible.

Our legislation leverages funds from Federal and State natural resource agencies and private funds to build regional partnerships focused on improving critical aquatic habitats across the country. Targeting these financial resources, through government and private partnership, towards projects in

regional watersheds that will make the greatest improvements to the health of aquatic habitats will improve the health and abundance of native fish populations, improve the quality of life for surrounding communities, and improve recreational opportunities which is a boost to our national and local economies. The goal of this effort is to foster landscape scale starting at the local level through multi-state aquatic habitat improvement projects. The goal is also to engage stakeholders like commercial fisherman, anglers, outfitters and other angling and sportsmen industries to participate in this effort to make lasting improvements to the health and sustainability of our fisheries resources.

The National Fish Habitat Conservation Act authorizes \$7.2 million annually for fish habitat restoration and protection projects that are supported by regional Fish Habitat Partnerships the bill also establishes. Based on the successful North American Wetlands Conservation Act model, the National Fish Habitat Conservation Act establishes a multi-stakeholder National Fish Habitat Board to recommend projects to the Secretary of Interior for funding. Regional Fish Habitat Partnerships are responsible for implementing habitat protection and restoration projects in the watersheds that will enhance fish habitats and fish populations.

The National Fish Habitat Conservation Act applies a proven and effective model for habitat conservation to protect and restore declining quality fish habitat. Our legislation ensures collaboration between expert stakeholders and state and regional fisheries resource managers to ensure the effectiveness of the work that is done.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this important legislation.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2080

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "National Fish Habitat Conservation Act".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Findings; purpose.
- Sec. 3. Definitions.
- Sec. 4. National Fish Habitat Board.
- Sec. 5. Fish habitat partnerships.
- Sec. 6. Fish habitat conservation projects.
- Sec. 7. National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership Program.
- Sec. 8. Technical and scientific assistance.
- Sec. 9. Conservation of fish habitat on Federal land.
- Sec. 10. Coordination with States and Indian tribes.

Sec. 11. Accountability and reporting.

Sec. 12. Effect of Act.

Sec. 13. Nonapplicability of Federal Advisory Committee Act.

Sec. 14. Funding.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) healthy populations of fish depend on the conservation, protection, restoration, and enhancement of fish habitats in the United States;

(2) fish habitats (including wetlands, streams, rivers, lakes, estuaries, and coastal and marine habitats) perform numerous valuable environmental functions that sustain environmental, social, and cultural values, including recycling nutrients, purifying water, attenuating floods, augmenting and maintaining stream flows, recharging ground water, acting as primary producers in the food chain, and providing essential and significant habitat for plants, fish, wildlife, and other dependent species;

(3) the extensive and diverse fish habitat resources of the United States are of enormous significance to the economy of the United States, providing—

(A) recreation for 60,000,000 anglers;

(B) more than 828,000 jobs and approximately \$115,000,000,000 in economic impact each year relating to recreational fishing; and

(C) approximately 575,000 jobs and an additional \$36,000,000,000 in economic impact each year relating to commercial fishing;

(4) at least 40 percent of all threatened species and endangered species in the United States are directly dependent on fish habitats;

(5) certain fish species are considered to be ecological indicators of fish habitat quality, such that the presence of those species reflects high-quality habitat for fish species;

(6) loss and degradation of fish habitat, riparian habitat, water quality, and water volume caused by activities such as alteration of watercourses, stream blockages, water withdrawals and diversions, erosion, pollution, sedimentation, and destruction or modification of wetlands have—

(A) caused significant declines in fish populations throughout the United States, especially declines in native fish populations; and

(B) resulted in economic losses to the United States;

(7)(A) providing for the conservation and sustainability of fish populations has not been fully realized, despite federally funded fish and wildlife restoration programs and other activities intended to conserve fish habitat; and

(B) conservation and sustainability may be significantly advanced through a renewed commitment and sustained, cooperative efforts that are complementary to existing fish and wildlife restoration programs and clean water programs;

(8) the National Fish Habitat Action Plan provides a framework for maintaining and restoring fish habitats to perpetuate populations of fish species;

(9) the United States can achieve significant progress toward providing fish habitats for the conservation and restoration of fish species through a voluntary, nonregulatory incentive program that is based on technical and financial assistance provided by the Federal Government;

(10) the creation of partnerships between local citizens, Indian tribes, Alaska Native organizations, corporations, nongovernmental organizations, and Federal, State, and tribal agencies is critical to the success of activities to restore fish habitats;

(11) the Federal Government has numerous land and water management agencies that are critical to the implementation of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, including—

(A) the United States Fish and Wildlife Service;

(B) the Bureau of Land Management;

(C) the National Park Service;

(D) the Bureau of Reclamation;

(E) the Bureau of Indian Affairs;

(F) the National Marine Fisheries Service;

(G) the Forest Service;

(H) the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and

(I) the Environmental Protection Agency;

(12) the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the National Marine Fisheries Service each play a vital role in—

(A) the protection, restoration, and enhancement of the fish communities and fish habitats in the United States; and

(B) the development, operation, and long-term success of fish habitat partnerships and project implementation;

(13) the United States Geological Survey, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Marine Fisheries Service each play a vital role in scientific evaluation, data collection, and mapping for fishery resources in the United States;

(14) the State and Territorial fish and wildlife agencies play a vital role in—

(A) the protection, restoration, and enhancement of the fish communities and fish habitats in their respective States and territories; and

(B) the development, operation, and long-term success of fish habitat partnerships and project implementation; and

(15) many of the programs for conservation on private farmland, ranchland, and forestland that are carried out by the Secretary of Agriculture, including the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the State and Private Forestry programs of the Forest Service, are able to significantly contribute to the implementation of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan through the engagement of private landowners.

(b) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of this Act is to encourage partnerships among public agencies and other interested parties consistent with the mission and goals of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan—

(1) to promote intact and healthy fish habitats;

(2) to improve the quality and quantity of fish habitats and overall health of fish species;

(3) to increase the quality and quantity of fish habitats that support a broad natural diversity of fish and other aquatic species;

(4) to improve fish habitats in a manner that leads to improvement of the annual economic output from recreational, subsistence, and commercial fishing;

(5) to enhance fish and wildlife-dependent recreation;

(6) to coordinate and facilitate activities carried out by Federal departments and agencies under the leadership of—

(A) the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service;

(B) the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and

(C) the Director of the United States Geological Survey; and

(7) to achieve other purposes in accordance with the mission and goals of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

(2) **ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR.**—The term “Assistant Administrator” means the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(3) **BOARD.**—The term “Board” means the National Fish Habitat Board established by section 4(a)(1).

(4) **CONSERVATION; CONSERVE; MANAGE; MANAGEMENT.**—The terms “conservation”, “conserve”, “manage”, and “management” mean to maintain, sustain, and, where practicable, restore and enhance, using methods and procedures associated with modern scientific resource programs (including protection, research, census, law enforcement, habitat management, propagation, live trapping and transplantation, and the regulated harvesting of fish)—

(A) a healthy population of fish;

(B) a habitat required to sustain fish and fish populations; or

(C) a habitat required to sustain fish productivity.

(5) **DIRECTOR.**—The term “Director” means the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

(6) **FISH.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term “fish” means any freshwater, diadromous, estuarine, or marine finfish or shellfish.

(B) **INCLUSIONS.**—The term “fish” includes the egg, spawn, spat, larval, and other juvenile stages of an organism described in subparagraph (A).

(7) **FISH AND WILDLIFE-DEPENDENT RECREATION.**—The term “fish and wildlife-dependent recreation” means a use involving hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, or conservation education and interpretation.

(8) **FISH HABITAT.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term “fish habitat” means an area on which fish depend to carry out the life processes of the fish, including an area used by the fish for spawning, incubation, nursery, rearing, growth to maturity, food supply, or migration.

(B) **INCLUSIONS.**—The term “fish habitat” may include—

(i) an area immediately adjacent to an aquatic environment, if the immediately adjacent area—

(I) contributes to the quality and quantity of water sources; or

(II) provides public access for the use of fishery resources; and

(ii) an area inhabited by saltwater and brackish fish, including an offshore artificial marine reef in the Gulf of Mexico.

(9) **FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION PROJECT.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term “fish habitat conservation project” means a project that—

(i) is submitted to the Board by a Partnership and approved by the Secretary under section 6; and

(ii) provides for the conservation or management of a fish habitat.

(B) **INCLUSIONS.**—The term “fish habitat conservation project” includes—

(i) the provision of technical assistance to a State, Indian tribe, or local community by the National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership Program or any other agency to facilitate the development of strategies and

priorities for the conservation of fish habitats; or

(ii) the voluntary obtaining of a real property interest in land or water, by a State, local government, or other non-Federal entity, including water rights, in accordance with terms and conditions that ensure that the real property will be administered for the long-term conservation of—

(I) the land or water; and

(II) the fish dependent on the land or water.

(10) **INDIAN TRIBE.**—The term “Indian tribe” has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b).

(11) **NATIONAL FISH HABITAT ACTION PLAN.**—The term “National Fish Habitat Action Plan” means the National Fish Habitat Action Plan dated April 24, 2006, and any subsequent revisions or amendments to that plan.

(12) **PARTNERSHIP.**—The term “Partnership” means an entity designated by the Board as a Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership pursuant to section 5(a).

(13) **REAL PROPERTY INTEREST.**—The term “real property interest” means an ownership interest in—

(A) land;

(B) water (including water rights); or

(C) a building or object that is permanently affixed to land.

(14) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

(15) **STATE.**—The term “State” means—

(A) each of the several States;

(B) the District of Columbia;

(C) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico;

(D) Guam;

(E) the Virgin Islands; and

(F) any other territory or possession of the United States.

(16) **STATE AGENCY.**—The term “State agency” means—

(A) the fish and wildlife agency of a State;

(B) any department or division of a department or agency of a State that manages in the public trust the inland or marine fishery resources or sustains the habitat for those fishery resources of the State pursuant to State law or the constitution of the State; or

(C) the fish and wildlife agency of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, or any other territory or possession of the United States.

SEC. 4. NATIONAL FISH HABITAT BOARD.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—

(1) **FISH HABITAT BOARD.**—There is established a board, to be known as the “National Fish Habitat Board”, whose duties are—

(A) to promote, oversee, and coordinate the implementation of this Act and the National Fish Habitat Action Plan;

(B) to establish national goals and priorities for fish habitat conservation;

(C) to approve Partnerships; and

(D) to review and make recommendations regarding fish habitat conservation projects.

(2) **MEMBERSHIP.**—The Board shall be composed of 28 members, of whom—

(A) 1 shall be the Director;

(B) 1 shall be the Assistant Administrator;

(C) 1 shall be the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service;

(D) 1 shall be the Chief of the Forest Service;

(E) 1 shall be the Assistant Administrator for Water of the Environmental Protection Agency;

(F) 1 shall be the President of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies;

(G) 1 shall be the Secretary of the Board of Directors of the National Fish and Wildlife

Foundation appointed pursuant to section 3(g)(2)(B) of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3702(g)(2)(B));

(H) 4 shall be representatives of State agencies, 1 of whom shall be nominated by a regional association of fish and wildlife agencies from each of the Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, and Western regions of the United States;

(I) 1 shall be a representative of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, or any other territory or possession of the United States;

(J) 1 shall be a representative of the American Fisheries Society;

(K) 2 shall be representatives of Indian tribes, of whom—

(i) 1 shall represent Indian tribes from the State of Alaska; and

(ii) 1 shall represent Indian tribes from the other States;

(L) 1 shall be a representative of the Regional Fishery Management Councils established under section 302 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1852);

(M) 1 shall be a representative of the Marine Fisheries Commissions, which is composed of—

(i) the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission;

(ii) the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission; and

(iii) the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission;

(N) 1 shall be a representative of the Sportfishing and Boating Partnership Council; and

(O) 10 shall be representatives selected from each of the following groups:

(i) The recreational sportfishing industry.

(ii) The commercial fishing industry.

(iii) Marine recreational anglers.

(iv) Freshwater recreational anglers.

(v) Terrestrial resource conservation organizations.

(vi) Aquatic resource conservation organizations.

(vii) The livestock and poultry production industry.

(viii) The land development industry.

(ix) The row crop industry.

(x) Natural resource commodity interests, such as petroleum or mineral extraction.

(3) COMPENSATION.—A member of the Board shall serve without compensation.

(4) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—A member of the Board may be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for an employee of an agency under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from the home or regular place of business of the member in the performance of the duties of the Board.

(b) APPOINTMENT AND TERMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, a member of the Board described in any of subparagraphs (H) through (O) of subsection (a)(2) shall serve for a term of 3 years.

(2) INITIAL BOARD MEMBERSHIP.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the representatives of the board established by the National Fish Habitat Action Plan shall appoint the initial members of the Board described in subparagraphs (H), (I), (J), (L), (M), (N), and (O) of subsection (a)(2).

(B) TRIBAL REPRESENTATIVES.—Not later than 180 days after the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall provide to the board established by the National Fish Habitat Ac-

tion Plan a recommendation of not less than 4 tribal representatives, from which that board shall appoint 2 representatives pursuant to subparagraph (K) of subsection (a)(2).

(3) TRANSITIONAL TERMS.—Of the members described in subsection (a)(2)(O) initially appointed to the Board—

(A) 4 shall be appointed for a term of 1 year;

(B) 4 shall be appointed for a term of 2 years; and

(C) 3 shall be appointed for a term of 3 years.

(4) VACANCIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A vacancy of a member of the Board described in subparagraphs (H), (I), (J), (L), (M), (N), and (O) of subsection (a)(2) shall be filled by an appointment made by the remaining members of the Board.

(B) TRIBAL REPRESENTATIVES.—Following a vacancy of a member of the Board described in subparagraph (K) of subsection (a)(2), the Secretary shall recommend to the Board a list of not less than 4 tribal representatives, from which the remaining members of the Board shall appoint a representative to fill the vacancy.

(5) CONTINUATION OF SERVICE.—An individual whose term of service as a member of the Board expires may continue to serve on the Board until a successor is appointed.

(6) REMOVAL.—If a member of the Board described in any of subparagraphs (H) through (O) of subsection (a)(2) misses 3 consecutive regularly scheduled Board meetings, the members of the Board may—

(A) vote to remove that member; and

(B) appoint another individual in accordance with paragraph (4).

(c) CHAIRPERSON.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall elect a member of the Board to serve as Chairperson of the Board.

(2) TERM.—The Chairperson of the Board shall serve for a term of 3 years.

(d) MEETINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall meet—

(A) at the call of the Chairperson; but

(B) not less frequently than twice each calendar year.

(2) PUBLIC ACCESS.—All meetings of the Board shall be open to the public.

(e) PROCEDURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Board shall establish procedures to carry out the business of the Board, including—

(A) a requirement that a quorum of the members of the Board be present to transact business;

(B) a requirement that no recommendations may be adopted by the Board, except by the vote of $\frac{2}{3}$ of all members;

(C) procedures for establishing national goals and priorities for fish habitat conservation for the purposes of this Act;

(D) procedures for designating Partnerships under section 5; and

(E) procedures for reviewing, evaluating, and making recommendations regarding fish habitat conservation projects.

(2) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

SEC. 5. FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIPS.

(a) AUTHORITY TO APPROVE.—The Board may approve and designate Fish Habitat Partnerships in accordance with this section.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of a Partnership shall be—

(1) to coordinate the implementation of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan at a regional level;

(2) to identify strategic priorities for fish habitat conservation;

(3) to recommend to the Board fish habitat conservation projects that address a strategic priority of the Board; and

(4) to develop and carry out fish habitat conservation projects.

(c) APPLICATIONS.—An entity seeking to be designated as a Partnership shall submit to the Board an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Board may reasonably require.

(d) APPROVAL.—The Board may approve an application for a Partnership submitted under subsection (c) if the Board determines that the applicant—

(1) identifies representatives to provide support and technical assistance to the Partnership from a diverse group of public and private partners, which may include Federal, State, or local governments, nonprofit entities, Indian tribes, and private individuals, that are focused on conservation of fish habitats to achieve results across jurisdictional boundaries on public and private land;

(2) is organized to promote the health of important fish habitats and distinct geographical areas, important fish species, or system types, including reservoirs, natural lakes, coastal and marine environments, and estuaries;

(3) identifies strategic fish and fish habitat priorities for the Partnership area in the form of geographical focus areas or key stressors or impairments to facilitate strategic planning and decisionmaking;

(4) is able to address issues and priorities on a nationally significant scale;

(5) includes a governance structure that—

(A) reflects the range of all partners; and

(B) promotes joint strategic planning and decisionmaking by the applicant;

(6) demonstrates completion of, or significant progress toward the development of, a strategic plan to address the decline in fish populations, rather than simply treating symptoms in accordance with the National Fish Habitat Action Plan; and

(7) promotes collaboration in developing a strategic vision and implementation program that is scientifically sound and achievable.

SEC. 6. FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION PROJECTS.

(a) SUBMISSION TO BOARD.—Not later than March 31 of each calendar year, each Partnership shall submit to the Board a list of fish habitat conservation projects recommended by the Partnership for annual funding under this Act.

(b) RECOMMENDATIONS BY BOARD.—Not later than July 1 of each calendar year, the Board shall submit to the Secretary a description, including estimated costs, of each fish habitat conservation project that the Board recommends that the Secretary approve and fund under this Act, in order of priority, for the following fiscal year.

(c) CONSIDERATIONS.—The Board shall select each fish habitat conservation project to be recommended to the Secretary under subsection (b)—

(1) based on a recommendation of the Partnership that is, or will be, participating actively in carrying out the fish habitat conservation project; and

(2) after taking into consideration—

(A) the extent to which the fish habitat conservation project fulfills a purpose of this Act or a goal of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan;

(B) the extent to which the fish habitat conservation project addresses the national priorities established by the Board;

(C) the availability of sufficient non-Federal funds to match Federal contributions

for the fish habitat conservation project, as required by subsection (e);

(D) the extent to which the fish habitat conservation project—

(i) increases recreational fishing opportunities for the public;

(ii) will be carried out through a cooperative agreement among Federal, State, and local governments, Indian tribes, and private entities;

(iii) increases public access to land or water for fish and wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities;

(iv) advances the conservation of fish and wildlife species that have been identified by the States as species in greatest need of conservation;

(v) where appropriate, advances the conservation of fish and fish habitats under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.), other relevant Federal law, and State wildlife action plans; and

(vi) promotes strong and healthy fish habitats such that desired biological communities are able to persist and adapt; and

(E) the substantiality of the character and design of the fish habitat conservation project.

(d) LIMITATIONS.—

(1) REQUIREMENTS FOR EVALUATION.—No fish habitat conservation project may be recommended by the Board under subsection (b) or provided financial assistance under this Act unless the fish habitat conservation project includes an evaluation plan designed—

(A) to appropriately assess the biological, ecological, or other results of the habitat protection, restoration, or enhancement activities carried out using the assistance;

(B) to reflect appropriate changes to the fish habitat conservation project if the assessment substantiates that the fish habitat conservation project objectives are not being met;

(C) to identify improvements to existing recreational fishing opportunities and the overall economic benefits for the local community of the fish habitat conservation project; and

(D) to require the submission to the Board of a report describing the findings of the assessment.

(2) ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY INTERESTS.—

(A) ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY INTERESTS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), a State, local government, or other non-Federal entity shall be eligible to receive funds under this Act for the acquisition of real property.

(ii) RESTRICTION.—No fish habitat conservation project that will result in the acquisition by a State, local government, or other non-Federal entity, in whole or in part, of any real property interest may be recommended by the Board under subsection (b) or provided financial assistance under this Act unless the project meets the requirements of subparagraph (B).

(B) REQUIREMENTS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—A real property interest may not be acquired pursuant to a fish habitat conservation project by a State, local government, or other non-Federal entity unless—

(I) the Secretary determines that the State, local government, or other non-Federal entity is obligated to undertake the management of the real property being acquired in accordance with the purposes of this Act; and

(II) the owner of the real property authorizes the State, local government, or other non-Federal entity to acquire the real property.

(ii) ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS.—Any real property interest acquired by a State, local government, or other non-Federal entity pursuant to a fish habitat conservation project shall be subject to terms and conditions established by the Secretary providing for the long-term conservation and management of the fish habitat and the fish and wildlife dependent on that habitat.

(iii) PUBLIC ACCESS.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—Any acquisition of fee title to real property by a State, local government, or non-Federal entity pursuant to this Act shall, where applicable and consistent with State laws and regulations, provide public access to that real property for compatible fish and wildlife-dependent recreation.

(II) PUBLIC ACCESS.—Public access to real property described in subclause (I) shall be closed only for purposes of protecting public safety, the property, or habitat.

(iv) STATE AGENCY APPROVAL.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—Any real property interest acquired by a State, local government, or other non-Federal entity under this Act shall be approved by the applicable State agency in the State in which the fish habitat conservation project is carried out.

(II) ADMINISTRATION.—The Board shall not recommend, and the Secretary shall not provide any funding under this Act for, the acquisition of any real property interest described in subclause (I) that has not been approved by the applicable State agency.

(v) VIOLATION.—If the State, local government, or other non-Federal entity violates any term or condition established by the Secretary under clause (ii), the Secretary may require the State, local government, or other non-Federal entity to refund all or part of any payments received under this Act, with interest on the payments as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

(e) NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBUTIONS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), no fish habitat conservation project may be recommended by the Board under subsection (b) or provided financial assistance under this Act unless at least 50 percent of the cost of the fish habitat conservation project will be funded with non-Federal funds.

(2) PROJECTS ON FEDERAL LAND OR WATER.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), Federal funds may be used for payment of 100 percent of the costs of a fish habitat conservation project located on Federal land or water.

(3) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—The non-Federal share of the cost of a fish habitat conservation project—

(A) may not be derived from a Federal grant program; but

(B) may include in-kind contributions and cash.

(4) SPECIAL RULE FOR INDIAN TRIBES.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1) or any other provision of law, any funds made available to an Indian tribe pursuant to this Act may be considered to be non-Federal funds for the purpose of paragraph (1).

(f) APPROVAL.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of receipt of the recommendations of the Board for fish habitat conservation projects under subsection (b), subject to the limitations under subsection (d), and based, to the maximum extent practicable, on the criteria described in subsection (c)—

(A) the Secretary shall approve, reject, or reorder the priority of any fish habitat con-

servation project recommended by the Board that is not within a marine or estuarine habitat; and

(B) the Secretary and the Secretary of Commerce shall jointly approve, reject, or reorder the priority of any fish habitat conservation project recommended by the Board that is within a marine or estuarine habitat.

(2) FUNDING.—If a fish habitat conservation project under paragraph (1) is approved by the Secretary, or the Secretary and the Secretary of Commerce jointly, the Secretary, or the Secretary and the Secretary of Commerce jointly, as applicable, shall use amounts made available to carry out this Act to provide funds to carry out the fish habitat conservation project.

(3) NOTIFICATION.—If the priority of any fish habitat conservation project recommended by the Board under subsection (b) is rejected or reordered by the Secretary, or the Secretary and the Secretary of Commerce jointly, the Secretary, or the Secretary and the Secretary of Commerce jointly, shall, not later than 180 days after the date of receipt of the recommendations, provide to the Board, the appropriate Partnership, and the appropriate congressional committees a written statement of the Secretary, or the Secretary and the Secretary of Commerce jointly, as applicable, detailing the reasons why the Secretary or the Secretary and the Secretary of Commerce jointly rejected or reordered the priority of the fish habitat conservation project.

SEC. 7. NATIONAL FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director shall establish a program, to be known as the ‘National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership Program’, within the Division of Fish and Aquatic Conservation of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

(b) FUNCTIONS.—The National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership Program shall—

(1) provide funding for the operational needs of the Partnerships, including funding for activities such as planning, project development and implementation, coordination, monitoring, evaluation, communication, and outreach;

(2) provide funding to support the detail of State and tribal fish and wildlife staff to the Program;

(3) facilitate the cooperative development and approval of Partnerships;

(4) assist the Secretary and the Board in carrying out this Act;

(5) assist the Secretary in carrying out the requirements of sections 8 and 10;

(6) facilitate communication, cohesiveness, and efficient operations for the benefit of Partnerships and the Board;

(7) facilitate, with assistance from the Director, the Assistant Administrator, and the President of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the consideration of fish habitat conservation projects by the Board;

(8) provide support to the Director regarding the development and implementation of the interagency operational plan under subsection (c);

(9) coordinate technical and scientific reporting as required by section 11;

(10) facilitate the efficient use of resources and activities of Federal departments and agencies to carry out this Act in an efficient manner; and

(11) provide support to the Board for national communication and outreach efforts that promote public awareness of fish habitat conservation.

(c) INTERAGENCY OPERATIONAL PLAN.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment

of this Act, and every 5 years thereafter, the Director, in cooperation with the Assistant Administrator and the heads of other appropriate Federal departments and agencies, shall develop an interagency operational plan for the National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership Program that describes—

(1) the functional, operational, technical, scientific, and general staff, administrative, and material needs of the Program; and

(2) any interagency agreements between or among Federal departments and agencies to address those needs.

(d) STAFF AND SUPPORT.—

(1) DEPARTMENTS OF INTERIOR AND COMMERCE.—The Director and the Assistant Administrator shall each provide appropriate staff to support the National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership Program, subject to the availability of funds under section 14.

(2) STATES AND INDIAN TRIBES.—Each State and Indian tribe is encouraged to provide staff to support the National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership Program.

(3) DETAILEES AND CONTRACTORS.—The National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership Program may accept staff or other administrative support from other entities—

(A) through interagency details; or

(B) as contractors.

(4) QUALIFICATIONS.—The staff of the National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership Program shall include members with education and experience relating to the principles of fish, wildlife, and habitat conservation.

(e) REPORTS.—Not less frequently than once each year, the Director shall provide to the Board a report describing the activities of the National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership Program.

SEC. 8. TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director, the Assistant Administrator, and the Director of the United States Geological Survey, in coordination with the Forest Service and other appropriate Federal departments and agencies, shall provide scientific and technical assistance to the Partnerships, participants in fish habitat conservation projects, and the Board.

(b) INCLUSIONS.—Scientific and technical assistance provided pursuant to subsection (a) may include—

(1) providing technical and scientific assistance to States, Indian tribes, regions, local communities, and nongovernmental organizations in the development and implementation of Partnerships;

(2) providing technical and scientific assistance to Partnerships for habitat assessment, strategic planning, and prioritization;

(3) supporting the development and implementation of fish habitat conservation projects that are identified as high priorities by Partnerships and the Board;

(4) supporting and providing recommendations regarding the development of science-based monitoring and assessment approaches for implementation through Partnerships;

(5) supporting and providing recommendations for a national fish habitat assessment;

(6) ensuring the availability of experts to conduct scientifically based evaluation and reporting of the results of fish habitat conservation projects; and

(7) providing resources to secure State agency scientific and technical assistance to support Partnerships, participants in fish habitat conservation projects, and the Board.

SEC. 9. CONSERVATION OF FISH HABITAT ON FEDERAL LAND.

To the extent consistent with the mission and authority of the applicable department

or agency, the head of each Federal department and agency may coordinate with the Assistant Administrator and the Director to promote healthy fish populations and fish habitats.

SEC. 10. COORDINATION WITH STATES AND INDIAN TRIBES.

The Secretary shall provide a notice to, and cooperate with, the appropriate State agency or tribal agency, as applicable, of each State and Indian tribe within the boundaries of which an activity is planned to be carried out pursuant to this Act, including notification, by not later than 30 days before the date on which the activity is implemented.

SEC. 11. ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING.

(a) REPORTING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and every 2 years thereafter, the Board shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report describing the progress of—

(A) this Act; and

(B) the National Fish Habitat Action Plan.

(2) CONTENTS.—Each report submitted under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) an estimate of the number of acres, stream miles, or acre-feet (or other suitable measure) of fish habitat that was maintained or improved under the National Fish Habitat Action Plan by Federal, State, or local governments, Indian tribes, or other entities in the United States during the 2-year period ending on the date of submission of the report;

(B) a description of the public access to fish habitats established or improved under the National Fish Habitat Action Plan during that 2-year period;

(C) a description of the opportunities for public recreational fishing established under the National Fish Habitat Action Plan during that period; and

(D) an assessment of the status of fish habitat conservation projects carried out with funds provided under this Act during that period, disaggregated by year, including—

(i) a description of the fish habitat conservation projects recommended by the Board under section 6(b);

(ii) a description of each fish habitat conservation project approved by the Secretary under section 6(f), in order of priority for funding;

(iii) a justification for—

(I) the approval of each fish habitat conservation project; and

(II) the order of priority for funding of each fish habitat conservation project;

(iv) a justification for any rejection or reordering of the priority of each fish habitat conservation project recommended by the Board under section 6(b) that was based on a factor other than the criteria described in section 6(c); and

(v) an accounting of expenditures by Federal, State, or local governments, Indian tribes, or other entities to carry out fish habitat conservation projects.

(b) STATUS AND TRENDS REPORT.—Not later than December 31, 2015, and every 5 years thereafter, the Board shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report describing the status of fish habitats in the United States.

(c) REVISIONS.—Not later than December 31, 2015, and every 5 years thereafter, the Board shall revise the goals and other elements of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, after consideration of each report required by subsection (b).

SEC. 12. EFFECT OF ACT.

(a) WATER RIGHTS.—Nothing in this Act—

(1) establishes any express or implied reserved water right in the United States for any purpose;

(2) affects any water right in existence on the date of enactment of this Act;

(3) preempts or affects any State water law or interstate compact governing water; or

(4) affects any Federal or State law in existence on the date of enactment of this Act regarding water quality or water quantity.

(b) AUTHORITY TO ACQUIRE WATER RIGHTS OR RIGHTS TO PROPERTY.—In carrying out section 6(d)(2), only a State, local government, or other non-Federal entity may acquire, in accordance with applicable State law, water rights or rights to property pursuant to a fish habitat conservation project funded under this Act.

(c) STATE AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this Act—

(1) affects the authority, jurisdiction, or responsibility of a State to manage, control, or regulate fish and wildlife under the laws and regulations of the State; or

(2) authorizes the Secretary to control or regulate within a State the fishing or hunting of fish and wildlife.

(d) EFFECT ON INDIAN TRIBES.—Nothing in this Act abrogates, abridges, affects, modifies, supersedes, or alters any right of an Indian tribe recognized by treaty or any other means, including—

(1) an agreement between the Indian tribe and the United States;

(2) Federal law (including regulations);

(3) an Executive order; or

(4) a judicial decree.

(e) ADJUDICATION OF WATER RIGHTS.—Nothing in this Act diminishes or affects the ability of the Secretary to join an adjudication of rights to the use of water pursuant to subsection (a), (b), or (c) of section 208 of the Department of Justice Appropriation Act, 1953 (43 U.S.C. 666).

(f) DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this Act affects the authority, jurisdiction, or responsibility of the Department of Commerce to manage, control, or regulate fish or fish habitats under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.).

(g) EFFECT ON OTHER AUTHORITIES.—

(1) PRIVATE PROPERTY PROTECTION.—Nothing in this Act permits the use of funds made available to carry out this Act to acquire real property or a real property interest without the written consent of each owner of the real property or real property interest.

(2) MITIGATION.—Nothing in this Act permits the use of funds made available to carry out this Act for fish and wildlife mitigation purposes under—

(A) the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.);

(B) the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.);

(C) the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-662; 100 Stat. 4082); or

(D) any other Federal law or court settlement.

(3) CLEAN WATER ACT.—Nothing in this Act affects or alters any provision of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), including any definition in that Act.

SEC. 13. NONAPPLICABILITY OF FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to—

(1) the Board; or

(2) any Partnership.

SEC. 14. FUNDING.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

(1) FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION PROJECTS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the

Secretary \$7,200,000 for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 to provide funds for fish habitat conservation projects approved under section 6(f), of which 5 percent shall be made available for each fiscal year for projects carried out by Indian tribes.

(2) NATIONAL FISH HABITAT CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 for the National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership Program, and to carry out section 11, an amount equal to 5 percent of the amount appropriated for the applicable fiscal year pursuant to paragraph (1).

(B) REQUIRED TRANSFERS.—The Secretary shall annually transfer to other Federal departments and agencies such percentage of the amounts made available pursuant to subparagraph (A) as is required to support participation by those departments and agencies in the National Fish Habitat Conservation Partnership Program pursuant to the interagency operational plan under section 7(c).

(3) TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ASSISTANCE.—There are authorized to be appropriated for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 to carry out, and provide technical and scientific assistance under, section 8—

(A) \$500,000 to the Secretary for use by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service;

(B) \$500,000 to the Assistant Administrator for use by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and

(C) \$500,000 to the Secretary for use by the United States Geological Survey.

(4) PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018 for use by the Board, the Director, and the Assistant Administrator for planning and administrative expenses an amount equal to 3 percent of the amount appropriated for the applicable fiscal year pursuant to paragraph (1).

(b) AGREEMENTS AND GRANTS.—The Secretary may—

(1) on the recommendation of the Board, and notwithstanding sections 6304 and 6305 of title 31, United States Code, and the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999 (31 U.S.C. 6101 note; Public Law 106-107), enter into a grant agreement, cooperative agreement, or contract with a Partnership or other entity for a fish habitat conservation project or restoration or enhancement project;

(2) apply for, accept, and use a grant from any individual or entity to carry out the purposes of this Act; and

(3) make funds available to any Federal department or agency for use by that department or agency to provide grants for any fish habitat protection project, restoration project, or enhancement project that the Secretary determines to be consistent with this Act.

(c) DONATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may—

(A) enter into an agreement with any organization described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that is exempt from taxation under section 501(a) of that Code to solicit private donations to carry out the purposes of this Act; and

(B) accept donations of funds, property, and services to carry out the purposes of this Act.

(2) TREATMENT.—A donation accepted under this section—

(A) shall be considered to be a gift or bequest to, or otherwise for the use of, the United States; and

(B) may be—

(i) used directly by the Secretary; or
(ii) provided to another Federal department or agency through an interagency agreement.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 2081. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require notification of Congress by the Internal Revenue Service Oversight Board regarding any violation of the Constitutional rights of taxpayers; to the Committee on Finance.

TAXPAYER PROTECTION ACT OF 2014

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise to introduce the Taxpayer Protection Act of 2014. This bill would require the independent IRS oversight board to better fulfill its obligation to protect the constitutional rights of American taxpayers. The history of the IRS offers abundant examples of the agency trampling on these rights. In the most recent controversy, the IRS subjected applications from conservative groups that were seeking tax-exempt status to heightened scrutiny. Delaying these groups' applications suggests an effort to chill the constitutional right of speech and association by groups that hold conservative views.

The details that have emerged are truly alarming. The IRS has admitted that it deliberately targeted conservative groups' applications for tax-exempt status for extra review if they included such words as "tea party," "patriots," or "9/11" in their names or they criticized how this country is being run or if their purpose were to address government spending, government debt, taxes, or simply to make America a better place. Incredible.

These inappropriate criteria stayed in place for more than 18 months and resulted in substantial delays in processing the applications of many different groups. In some cases, the applications remained outstanding for more than 2 years.

The IRS also sought to compel some of the targeted groups to divulge their membership list. IRS officials have subsequently admitted there was absolutely no reason for agency personnel to have sought that kind of information.

Such behavior, unfortunately, is not a one-time aberration. A May 2013 "Time" magazine article notes that the IRS has been involved in scandals going back at least as far as the Kennedy administration, which used the service to investigate so-called right-wing groups. President Nixon employed a secret IRS operation to investigate and audit political opponents. During the Johnson administration, the IRS targeted antiwar activists.

In the decades since, civil rights groups, political activists from both the conservative and liberal ends of the

spectrum, and whistleblowers have been subjected to intimidating and discriminatory scrutiny by the IRS.

In 1997, the Senate Finance Committee held 3 days of hearings instigated by reports of IRS abuses. One type of abuse was the so-called Blue Sky Assessment, which then-committee chairman William Roth characterized as agents making tax assessments that had no basis in fact or law, and were, in some instances, simply levied to hurt the taxpayer. Some witnesses had to have their identities concealed out of fear of retaliation for their testimony. As witness No. 1—an IRS agent—stated, "... abuse of the taxpaying public occurs when the IRS improperly and sometimes illegally uses its vast power in the process of implementing some type of enforcement of the tax laws."

This agent went on to note it wasn't the IRS Code which abused taxpayers but rather how it was being implemented in an unfair, intimidating, and discriminatory way.

I note these 1997 hearings in particular because they coincided with an effort to reform the IRS, culminating in the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act. The act made a number of changes to the structure of the IRS and the manner in which it administers the tax laws. One such reform was the creation of the IRS Oversight Board.

By law, the Board is charged with ensuring taxpayers are treated properly by the IRS, and the Board is designed to be independent of the agency. Of the required nine members, seven must be Senate-confirmed appointees who have professional experience or expertise in business and tax administration. The IRS Reform Act also requires IRS employees be terminated for violating the constitutional rights of taxpayers.

The current IRS scandal was not, however, brought to light by this IRS Oversight Board. Instead, these abuses came to the public's and our attention through a May 2013 report by the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration. Following the release of the inspector general's report, the Oversight Board released a statement saying it would work with the IRS and the IG, among others, to meet its statutory responsibility to protect taxpayers. That is the whole purpose of this Board, and I believe it should do much more than just work with IRS officials and the IG.

So my bill would strengthen its oversight role by requiring reporting to Congress. My bill would ensure the existing laws, which are rooted in the response to prior IRS scandals, work as they should. It would require that the Oversight Board report to Congress each and every year on allegations of abuse, of taxpayers' constitutional rights, on the number of employees who were terminated for such violations, on why employees against whom

allegations were raised were not terminated, and on the effectiveness of internal controls, if any, that the IRS has put in place to prevent the unfair targeting of taxpayers.

The IRS's history of abuses demonstrates that Congress must be ever vigilant in protecting taxpayers. The agency's power allows it to pervade the most sensitive aspects of Americans' private lives. Irrespective of whether those singled out are liberal or conservative, Democratic or Republican, Independent or Green Party members, irrespective of their personal views, the targeting of private citizens for exercising their First Amendment rights is way out of bounds. It is illegal behavior and cannot be tolerated.

It has been said the power to tax is the power to destroy. The American people cannot and will not tolerate any abuse of that power.

I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this bill and let us pass it to help protect the most fundamental rights guaranteed by our Constitution against abuse by government's ability to tax.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 370—SUPPORTING THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF UKRAINE AND CONDEMNING RUSSIAN MILITARY AGGRESSION IN UKRAINE

Mr. COATS (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. WICKER, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 370

Whereas, on February 26–27, 2014, armed men in unmarked military uniforms seized key strategic objects in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (“Crimea”) in Ukraine, including the building of the Crimean Parliament and airports;

Whereas, as of March 4, 2014, the Government of Ukraine confirms that there are approximately 16,000 Russian troops occupying Crimea;

Whereas, on February 28, 2014, President Barack Obama stated that the United States is “deeply concerned by reports of military movements taken by the Russian Federation inside of Ukraine” and that it “would be a clear violation of Russia’s commitment to respect the independence and sovereignty and borders of Ukraine, and of international law”;

Whereas President Obama pledged that “the United States will stand with the international community in affirming that there will be costs for any military intervention in Ukraine”;

Whereas the armed forces of the Russian Federation have violated Ukrainian sovereignty, violated international law, threatened the stability of Ukraine and the European continent, and compelled the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to meet

in emergency session to consider threats to Poland and other NATO members states; and

Whereas President Obama has announced his intention to work with Congress to respond forcefully to the outrageous and dangerous misbehavior of the Government of the Russian Federation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) strongly condemns the Russian Federation’s military incursion into Crimea, in clear violation of Ukraine’s territorial integrity and in contravention of international law;

(2) calls on the Government of the Russian Federation to immediately withdraw all unauthorized military personnel from Crimea;

(3) pledges to work urgently and in bipartisan fashion with the President to identify a comprehensive package of economic sanctions and other measures to compel President Vladimir Putin to remove his armed forces from Ukrainian territory and return that territory to full Ukrainian sovereign control;

(4) calls upon the President to seek to reschedule a meeting of the G-8 nations, to take place as soon as practicable, where the participating nations should consider a United States proposal to formally expel the Russian Federation;

(5) urges the United States to propose to NATO that the Alliance immediately suspend operation of the Russia-NATO Council and expel the Russian Federation’s military and diplomatic representation in NATO;

(6) urges the United States to work with other members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to deploy monitors in Ukraine to help confirm that the security of the Russian-speaking population is not threatened;

(7) urges the President to consider downgrading United States diplomatic representation with the Russian Federation, including refraining from sending a new United States ambassador to Moscow and closing United States consulates general in Yekaterinburg and Vladivostok and requiring the Government of the Russian Federation to make reciprocal steps to close consulates in the United States;

(8) calls on the President to utilize all tools, including the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act of 2012 (title IV of Public Law 112–208; 126 Stat. 1502), to expand the Act’s list of sanctioned individuals to impose sanctions on all officials of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation in the chain of command responsible for the invasion of Crimea, leadership of the Duma responsible for condoning the invasion, and Crimean officials complicit in its execution;

(9) urges the President to consider additional sanctions, such as suspension of eligibility of Russian citizens for temporary or seasonal United States work visas;

(10) urges the leadership of FIFA to reconsider its decision to place World Cup 2018 matches in Russia and instead award those games to a more worthy alternative country.

SENATE RESOLUTION 371—HONORING THE LEGACY OF JAN KARSKI BY DESIGNATING APRIL 24, 2014, AS “JAN KARSKI DAY”

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. KIRK, and Mr. DURBIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 371

Whereas Jan Karski was born on April 24, 1914, in Lodz, Poland;

Whereas Jan Karski managed to escape the Soviet massacre in the Katyn forest in 1940, in which almost 22,000 Polish citizens lost their lives;

Whereas Jan Karski became a key emissary in the Polish underground resistance, the Home Army, against Nazi occupation;

Whereas Jan Karski risked his own life after escaping a prisoner of war camp, having endured Gestapo torture, to continue to act as an emissary for the Polish Underground, in order to provide critical intelligence to the Allied war effort and alert Allied governments about the Holocaust and the dire situation on the ground in German-occupied Poland;

Whereas Jan Karski traveled to allied capitals and provided critical eyewitness testimony about the horrors of Hitler’s “Final Solution” and the extermination of Jews and others in Nazi-occupied Poland to British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden and United States President Franklin Roosevelt;

Whereas Jan Karski, after living through the atrocities of World War II, went on to earn a Ph.D. from Georgetown University in 1952;

Whereas Jan Karski became a United States citizen and taught generations of students of foreign policy at Georgetown University for 40 years, dedicating the rest of his life to strengthening the idea of tolerance and respect for different religions and cultures and ensuring that the full extent of the Nazi atrocities are never forgotten; and

Whereas Jan Karski was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom posthumously on May 29, 2012, one of the highest civilian honors in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 24, 2014, as “Jan Karski Day”;

(2) recognizes the life and legacy of Dr. Jan Karski, and expresses its gratitude for his efforts alerting the free world about the atrocities committed by Nazi and totalitarian forces in occupied Poland during World War II; and

(3) applauds the awarding of the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Jan Karski for his efforts during World War II and reaffirms the importance of the United States-Poland bilateral relationship.

SENATE RESOLUTION 372—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENT ATHLETES’ BILL OF RIGHTS

Mr. MENENDEZ submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 372

Whereas over 7,700,000 student athletes participated in secondary school athletics during the 2012 to 2013 academic year;

Whereas it is estimated that in 2012, secondary school student athletes participating in 9 of the most popular high school sports, including football, boys’ and girls’ soccer, girls’ volleyball, boys’ and girls’ basketball, wrestling, baseball, and softball, suffered over 1,300,000 instances of injury;

Whereas every 3 minutes, a child is treated in an emergency department for a sports-related concussion, accounting for more than 8

percent of all sports-related emergency cases;

Whereas the number of sports-related concussion injuries has doubled in the last 15 years among student athletes aged 8 to 19, despite an overall decrease in the number of students participating in sports;

Whereas sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) is the leading cause of death for youth participating in sports or exercising, with upwards of 80 percent of those suffering from SCA being asymptomatic prior to cardiac arrest;

Whereas instances of heat-related illness have more than doubled since 1997 and affect high school football players at an average rate that is 10 times higher than that of participants in other sports;

Whereas approximately 1,500 children aged 12 to 17 were treated in an emergency department for energy drink-related emergencies in 2011;

Whereas secondary school student athletes with access to certified athletic health care professionals have lower overall injury rates, lower recurrent injury rates, and lower concussion rates than student athletes without access to certified athletic health care professionals;

Whereas in light of the increase in athletic-related injuries to student athletes, schools are encouraged to develop and adopt best practices and standards to prevent and address student athlete injury;

Whereas the Secondary School Student Athletes' Bill of Rights sets forth that secondary school student athletes have the right to—

(1) be coached by individuals who are well-trained in sport-specific safety and to be monitored by athletic health care team members;

(2) quality, regular pre-participation examinations and each athlete has the right to participate under a comprehensive concussion management plan;

(3) participate in sporting activities on safe, clean playing surfaces, in both indoor and outdoor facilities;

(4) utilize equipment and uniforms that are safe, fitted appropriately, and routinely maintained, and to appropriate personnel trained in proper removal of equipment in case of injury;

(5) participate safely in all environmental conditions where play follows approved guidelines and medical policies and procedures, with a hydration plan in place;

(6) a safe playing environment with venue-specific emergency action plans that are coordinated by the athletic health care team and regularly rehearsed with local emergency personnel;

(7) privacy of health information and proper referral for medical, psychosocial, and nutritional counseling;

(8) participate in a culture that finds "playing through pain" unacceptable unless there has been a medical assessment;

(9) immediate, on-site injury assessments with decisions made by qualified sports medicine professionals; and

(10) along with their parents, the latest information about the benefits and potential risks of participation in competitive sports, including access to statistics on fatalities and catastrophic injuries to youth athletes; and

Whereas the Secondary School Student Athletes' Bill of Rights, which sets forth goals and ideals to improve the health, well-being, and athletic experience of secondary school students, can serve as a valuable resource to reduce injury, promote athlete safety, and encourage well-being: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses support for the principles and values set forth in the Secondary School Student Athletes' Bill of Rights;

(2) recognizes the importance of proper safety measures, timely medical assessments, and appropriate environmental conditions in ensuring the health and well-being of secondary school student athletes;

(3) recognizes the role that teachers, parents, coaches, and athletic health care team members play in ensuring the safety and well-being of secondary school student athletes;

(4) expresses support for secondary schools that have successfully implemented programs, policies, and practices to emphasize and encourage student athlete safety and well-being; and

(5) encourages secondary schools to continue to take all available and reasonable efforts to ensure student athlete safety.

SENATE RESOLUTION 373—RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF BIOSECURITY AND AGRO-DEFENSE IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BLUNT, and Mrs. MCCASKILL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 373

Whereas following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the United States increased its efforts to combat the threat of global terrorism;

Whereas the September 11th attacks illustrated the vulnerability of the food supply and agriculture economy of the United States;

Whereas in 2002, Congress created the Department of Homeland Security to improve the Government's ability to respond to threats facing the United States;

Whereas the Department of Homeland Security, in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, was quick to recognize the threat posed by agroterrorism;

Whereas on January 30, 2004, President George W. Bush issued a Homeland Security Presidential Directive entitled "Defense of United States Agriculture and Food";

Whereas the Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism stated in a 2008 report that bioterrorism was a more likely threat to the United States than nuclear terrorism, and higher priority should therefore be given to efforts to combat bioterrorism;

Whereas the threat of a terrorist attack on the United States persists, and continued vigilance is necessary; and

Whereas construction of the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility began on May 28, 2013: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) as the United States combats terrorism in all forms and around the world, the safety, security, and health of our livestock and agriculture commodities must not be forgotten;

(2) research and investment in biosecurity and agro-defense should be supported by Congress;

(3) providing the resources, both intellectually and materially, for the advancement of vaccines and cures for deadly pathogens and emerging zoonotic diseases is an integral part of homeland defense;

(4) without the tools necessary to protect the people, agriculture economy, and food supply of the United States, this Nation remains vulnerable to attack;

(5) the world depends on the agriculture of the United States;

(6) the world depends on the leadership of the United States in science and technology;

(7) the United States must remain a leader in the fight against bioterrorism; and

(8) biosecurity and a strong agro-defense system are achievable goals for the United States in the global war on terrorism.

SENATE RESOLUTION 374—DESIGNATING MARCH 3, 2014, AS "WORLD WILDLIFE DAY"

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 374

Whereas wildlife has provided numerous economic, environmental, social, and cultural benefits during the course of human history, and wildlife preservation will secure these gifts for future generations;

Whereas each plant and animal species plays an important role in the stability of diverse ecosystems around the world, and the conservation of this biodiversity is critical to maintain the delicate balance of nature and keep complex ecosystems thriving;

Whereas observation of wild plants and animals in their natural habitat provides individuals with a more enriching world view and a greater appreciation of the wonders of the natural environment;

Whereas tens of millions of individuals in the United States strongly support the conservation of wildlife, both domestically and abroad, and wish to ensure the survival of species in the wild, such as rhinoceroses, tigers, elephants, pangolins, turtles, seahorses, sharks, ginseng, mahogany, and cacti;

Whereas the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (referred to in this preamble as "CITES" and also known as the "Washington Convention") was signed in Washington, DC, on March 3, 1973;

Whereas 179 countries, including the United States, are now parties to CITES;

Whereas CITES remains one of the most powerful tools in the world for biodiversity conservation by regulating international trade in wild plants and animals, including products and derivatives of wild plants and animals, ensuring the survival of plants and animals in the wild, and providing long-term benefits for the livelihood of local people and the global environment;

Whereas CITES seeks to ensure that international trade in listed species is sustainable, legal, and traceable;

Whereas the trafficking of wildlife, including timber and fish, comprises the fourth largest global illegal trade, after narcotics, counterfeiting of products and currency, and human trafficking, and has become a major transnational organized crime with an estimated worth of approximately \$19,000,000,000 annually;

Whereas increased demand in Asia for high-value illegal wildlife products, particularly elephant ivory and rhinoceros horns, has recently triggered substantial and rapid increases in poaching of these species, particularly in Africa;

Whereas trafficking of wildlife is the primary threat to many wildlife species, including elephants, rhinoceroses, and tigers;

Whereas many different kinds of criminals, including some terrorist entities and rogue security personnel, often in collusion with corrupt government officials, are involved in wildlife poaching and the movement of ivory and rhinoceros horns across Africa;

Whereas wildlife poaching presents significant security and stability challenges for military and police forces in African nations that are often threatened by heavily armed poachers and the criminal and extremist allies of such poachers;

Whereas wildlife poaching negatively impacts local communities that rely on natural resources for economic development, including tourism;

Whereas the lack of sufficient penal and financial deterrents hamper the ability of African governments to reduce poaching and trafficking;

Whereas capacity building, including material, training, legal, and diplomatic support, can significantly impact the trajectory of the illegal wildlife trade;

Whereas wildlife provides a multitude of benefits to all nations, and wildlife crime has wide-ranging economic, environmental, and social impacts;

Whereas the number of elephants killed by poachers in Kenya increased by more than 800 percent from 2007 to 2012, from 47 to 387 elephants killed;

Whereas the number of rhinoceroses killed by poachers in South Africa increased by more than 7000 percent between 2007 and 2013, from 13 to 1004 rhinoceroses killed;

Whereas the number of forest elephants in the Congo Basin in central Africa declined by approximately two-thirds between 2002 and 2012, placing forest elephants on track for extinction within the next decade;

Whereas as few as 3200 tigers remain in the wild throughout all of Asia;

Whereas approximately 100,000,000 sharks are killed annually, often targeted solely for their fins, and unsustainable trade is the primary cause of serious population decline in several shark species, including scalloped hammerhead sharks, great hammerhead sharks, and oceanic whitetip sharks;

Whereas the United States is developing strong measures to address the criminal, financial, security, and environmental aspects of wildlife trafficking;

Whereas Congress has allocated specific resources to combat wildlife trafficking and address the threats posed by poaching and the illegal wildlife trade;

Whereas in December 2013, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed March 3, the day on which CITES was signed, as World Wildlife Day to celebrate and raise awareness of the wild fauna and flora around the world;

Whereas March 3, 2014, represents the first annual celebration of World Wildlife Day; and

Whereas in 2014, World Wildlife Day commemorations will “celebrate the many beautiful and varied forms of wild fauna and flora, raise awareness of the multitude of benefits that wildlife provides to people, and raise awareness of the urgent need to step up the fight against wildlife crime, which has wide-ranging economic, environmental, and social impacts”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 3, 2014, as “World Wildlife Day”; and

(2) supports the goals and ideals of World Wildlife Day, including—

(A) raising awareness of the benefits that wildlife provides to people and the threats facing wildlife around the world; and

(B) escalating the fight against wildlife crime, including wildlife trafficking;

(3) applauds the domestic and international efforts to escalate the fight against wildlife crime;

(4) commends the efforts of the United States to mobilize the entire Government in a coordinated, efficient, and effective manner for dramatic progress in the fight against wildlife crime;

(5) encourages continued cooperation between the United States, international partners, local communities, nonprofit organizations, private industry, and other partner organizations in an effort to conserve and celebrate wildlife, preserving this precious resource for future generations.

SENATE RESOLUTION 375—CONCERNING THE CRISIS IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC AND SUPPORTING UNITED STATES AND INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO END THE VIOLENCE, PROTECT CIVILIANS, AND ADDRESS ROOT CAUSES OF THE CONFLICT

Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. FLAKE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 375

Whereas, for more than 50 years, successive governments in the Central African Republic have struggled to build a durable system of democratic institutions, to effectively secure and control the country's territory and borders, and to ensure a basic level of socio-economic development for the country's people;

Whereas, despite its natural resource wealth, the Central African Republic remains one of the poorest countries in the world and one of the lowest ranking countries in terms of a human development index according to the United Nations Development Program;

Whereas, in January 2013, regional leaders brokered the Libreville Agreements between the government of then-President Francois Bozize and the loosely allied rebel militia known as Séléka, which resulted in the formation of a government of national unity;

Whereas, despite the Libreville Agreements, President Bozize was ousted in March 2013 by the Séléka coalition, and the Séléka leader, Michel Djotodia, declared himself president;

Whereas, in April 2013, regional leaders issued the N'djamena Declaration in an effort to pursue a return to constitutional order based on the Libreville Agreements;

Whereas an influx of foreign fighters, especially from Chad and Sudan, has been a major factor in the increased number of Séléka fighters, from approximately 5,000 in March 2013, to an estimated 20,000 as of December 2013;

Whereas both Séléka forces and armed militia groups known as “anti-balakas”, which formed initially as a means of protecting communities against Séléka, have been implicated in ethnically-motivated violence and grave and systemic human rights abuses against civilians;

Whereas, over the course of the crisis, Séléka and anti-balaka groups have displayed weak control and command struc-

tures, and committed war crimes with impunity;

Whereas, according to UNICEF, thousands of child soldiers are involved in armed groups in the Central African Republic, amid the near-total collapse of the country's primary education system;

Whereas interethnic, intercommunal, and interreligious tensions and violence have risen to alarming levels and led to systematic human rights abuses in the Central African Republic, including targeted killings, rapes, acts of torture, looting, and arbitrary detention;

Whereas the United States Embassy in Bangui closed on December 25, 2012, and the ordered departure of country team staff has temporarily suspended the diplomatic presence and consular services of the United States in the Central African Republic;

Whereas more than 700,000 civilians have been internally displaced; another 230,000 have recently sought refuge in neighboring countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad, Cameroon, and South Sudan; 2,600,000 people, or over half of the population of the Central African Republic, are in need of humanitarian assistance; and 60 percent of households have no available food stocks;

Whereas a failure of the international community to appropriately respond to and address the rapidly deteriorating situation in the Central African Republic could result in further atrocities, mass displacement, and protracted instability with significant repercussions for regional and international security;

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 2127 (2013) called for urgent and increased international assistance to the African Union International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) to ensure that the force can fulfill its mandate to restore security and protect civilians, and placed an arms embargo on the Central African Republic;

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 2127 requested the Secretary-General to establish an international commission of inquiry to investigate reports of human rights abuses in the Central African Republic in order to ensure accountability for perpetrators of violence;

Whereas the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic has been hindered by a lack of resources and constrained by insecurity;

Whereas, consistent with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2127, the Government of France launched a peacekeeping operation, Operation Sangaris, in the Central African Republic to assist MISCA in fulfilling its mandate;

Whereas, on March 3, 2014, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recommended to the United Nations Security Council a transition to a United Nations peacekeeping mission with a primary mandate to protect civilians; and

Whereas the United States Government is providing support for conflict resolution efforts, humanitarian assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons, and assistance to troop contributing countries to MISCA in order to restore security in the Central African Republic, primarily by providing airlift, non-lethal equipment, military logistics, and training, as well as logistical support for France: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the violence, atrocities, abuses, and human rights violations committed by all parties to the conflict in the Central African Republic;

(2) commends the efforts of religious and community leaders in the Central African Republic condemning violence and engaging in conflict prevention and conflict resolution activities;

(3) welcomes the mobilization of international peacekeeping, conflict mitigation, humanitarian, and diplomatic resources, and encourages continued efforts to help address humanitarian needs, bring an end to the violence, and develop sustainable democratic institutions in the Central African Republic;

(4) welcomes the January 2014 decision of the Transitional National Council on the election of Catherine Samba-Panza as the Central African Republic's new transitional president;

(5) commends the African Union and its troop and police contributing countries for their work establishing and supporting MISCA;

(6) recognizes the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAS) for its leadership in the political transition process;

(7) commends France for its swift intervention under United Nations Security Council Resolution 2127, and for its contributions to stabilization efforts and other forms of assistance;

(8) welcomes the United Nations Security Council support for MISCA and the Department of Peacekeeping Operation's ongoing contingency planning for a possible transition to a United Nations peacekeeping operation;

(9) affirms support for multilateral peacekeeping and policing capacities and recognizes the important contributions these efforts have made in protecting civilians in the Central African Republic and promoting international peace and stability;

(10) calls on the President to work with international partners to develop a short-term strategy to support a full and immediate cessation of armed conflict in the Central African Republic, including attacks targeting civilians and the recruitment of child soldiers;

(11) calls on the President to develop a long-term United States strategy, in support of international and domestic efforts, to establish a durable peace and greater security for the Central African Republic and to enhance regional stability, including—

(A) engagement and coordination with the international community, including the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States, the United Nations, and other partners;

(B) appropriate assistance to help provide emergency relief and reconciliation for the people of the Central African Republic;

(C) technical, logistical and other forms of assistance, as appropriate, in support of effective disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of fighters; and

(D) support for appropriate mechanisms to ensure accountability for perpetrators of human rights abuses and violence; and

(12) urges the Secretary of State to consider the expeditious reestablishment of a United States diplomatic presence in the Central African Republic.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I would like to announce for the infor-

mation of the Senate and the public that an oversight hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Wednesday, April 16, 2014, at 1 p.m., at the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii, Manoa Campus, in Honolulu, Hawaii.

The purpose of the hearing is to examine the successes and challenges of meeting sustainability goals in Hawaii and the Pacific, including oversight of existing activities and Federal-Island partnerships in energy, water, land use, marine resources, and other sectors.

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record may do so by sending it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510-6150, or by e-mail to John_Assini@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Al Stayman at (202) 224-7865 or John Assini at (202) 224-9313.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2014, at 10:30 a.m., in room 215 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "The President's Fiscal Year 2015 Budget."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2014, at 10:30 a.m. in room SR-432 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on

Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2014, at 10 a.m. in room SD-G50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Special Committee on Aging be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2014, in room SD-562 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building at 2:15 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "Income Security and the Elderly: Securing Gains made in the War on Poverty."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 5, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Rosie Goscinski, who is a fellow in Senator HIRONO's office, be granted floor privileges for this year.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IMPORTANCE OF BIOSECURITY AND AGRO-DEFENSE IN THE UNITED STATES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to S. Res. 373.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 373) recognizing the importance of biosecurity and agro-defense in the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 373) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

WORLD WILDLIFE DAY

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to S. Res. 374.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 374) designating March 3, 2014, as "World Wildlife Day."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 374) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2077

Mr. REID. I am told that S. 2077 is due for its second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2077) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I object to any further proceedings with respect to this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be placed on the calendar.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 3370

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand that H.R. 3370 is at the desk and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for its second reading, but object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 6, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half; that following morning business, the Senate

proceed to executive session under the previous order; that upon disposition of the Roth nomination and the resumption of legislative session, the Senate execute the previous order with respect to S. 1752 and S. 1917.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there will be up to three rollcall votes at 11:20 a.m. tomorrow, and up to four rollcall votes at around 2 p.m. We also hope to consider additional nominations tomorrow, which could require rollcall votes.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:36 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 6, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 5, 2014:

THE JUDICIARY

TIMOTHY L. BROOKS, OF ARKANSAS, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS.

PEDRO A. DELGADO HERNANDEZ, OF PUERTO RICO, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO.

PAMELA L. REEVES, OF TENNESSEE, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE.

VINCE GIRDHARI CHHABRIA, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AGEN- CY ON ITS 45TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CEDRIC L. RICHMOND

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the Minority Business Development Agency on this its 45th Anniversary. Established in 1969, the MBDA has worked tirelessly and diligently to promote the growth and global competitiveness of a critical segment of the U.S. Economy, the minority business community.

Why is this important? Well Mr. Speaker it is important because investing in contracts, capital and counseling for our minority owned businesses will yield significant results for minority communities. If we help our minority businesses help themselves, their success will bring sustainable economic growth and trans-generational wealth creation that will transform many of our hardest hit areas.

At the time of the Agency's creation there were only 322,000 minority-owned firms in the nation. Today, that number stands at 5.8 million firms contributing \$1 trillion towards our nation's economy. MBDA has been a significant part of this impressive growth story. Over the last five years in particular, MBDA has helped firms gain access to over \$19 billion in contracts and capital resulting in the creation and retention of nearly 60,000 jobs. These are great numbers, Mr. Speaker and we have to thank the MBDA and its team for their efforts. But we have more work to do.

I thank MBDA for all it has accomplished over the last 45 years. In the coming years, the growth of America's workforce will come from partnerships between the public and private sector. MBDA serves as a bridge connecting government and private resources to leverage existing competencies in service to the growth of the minority business sector. I applaud MBDA's mission and will continue to support it in the decades ahead.

RECOGNIZING THE ORLANDO MUSEUM OF ART

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 90th anniversary of the Orlando Museum of Art. Since its founding, the Museum has remained committed to enriching the cultural life of Florida and developing inclusive programs that serve every segment of a diverse community.

In 1924, the Orlando Museum of Art began as a small group of artists who met informally

to display and discuss their work. They formed the Orlando Art Association, teaching art classes and arranging exhibits. In 1987, the name was officially changed to the Orlando Museum of Art, and within two years, it was acclaimed as one of the best in the region. The Museum features a dynamic set of collections ranging from contemporary art to Golden Age masterpieces and has hosted various high-profile exhibits.

The Museum has maintained its national accredited status by the American Association of Museums without interruption for over 40 years and continues to provide excellence in the visual arts. I thank the Orlando Museum of Art for its ongoing dedication to advancing the arts in our community.

H. STEVEN SMEDLEY, WEST HAN- OVER TOWNSHIP FIRE COMPANY NO. 1

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor H. Steven Smedley, a member of West Hanover Township Fire Company No. 1 and the recipient of the organization's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Mr. Smedley joined the West Hanover Twp. Fire Co. No. 1 on November 4, 1980 and quickly developed a passion for the fire service. In the 33 years he has been with the Fire Company, he has taken on many important leadership roles including 1st and 2nd Lieutenant; 1st and 2nd Captain; 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Assistant Chief; and Deputy Chief. Additionally, he has served as Recording Secretary, Vice President, President and Trustee and fulfilled the duties of an Apparatus Truck Foreman and Chief Engineer for the organization. Outside the fire company, Mr. Smedley has been active in the Dauphin County Fireman's Association, Dauphin County Fire Chief's Association, and the Dauphin County Hazardous Materials Response Team.

Mr. Speaker, for 33 years H. Steven Smedley has devoted his life to West Hanover Township Fire Company No. 1. Therefore, I commend him for his hard work and dedication and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, on March 4, 2014, I was unavoidably detained attending

to representational activities in my congressional district and thus unable to return in time for rollcall votes No. 91 and 92.

Had I been present I would have voted as follows: On rollcall No. 91, I would have voted "aye" (March 4) (H.R. 3370, Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 (Rep. GRIMM—Financial Services)); On rollcall No. 92, I would have voted "aye" (March 4) (H. Res. 488, Supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic change and calling to end the violence (Rep. ROS-LEHTINEN—Foreign Affairs)).

JAYSON TERDIMAN, 2014 U.S.
OLYMPIC LUGE TEAM

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Jayson Terdiman of Berwick, Pennsylvania who represented the United States in the men's doubles and team relay luge competitions in the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

Since the age of five, Jayson has been an active member of Berwick's athletic community, playing basketball, hockey, and baseball and running cross-country. He continued to pursue many of these activities during his time at Berwick High School, eventually graduating in 2007 with distinguished honors.

Despite his other athletic commitments, Jayson got his start in luge early, becoming a member of the USA Luge Development Team at age 12. His devotion to the sport helped him make the USA Luge Candidate Team and the USA Luge Junior National Team, before earning a spot on the 2014 U.S. Olympic Team.

Jayson has received numerous accolades for his achievements in luge. From 2007 to 2008, he won three Junior World Cup Bronze Medals and the Junior World Luge Championship Bronze Medal. He is also a two-time U.S. Junior National Doubles Champion. In 2008, he was the Norton U.S. Nationals Doubles champion, and he and his doubles partner, Chris Mazdzer, were named the 2008 Luge Team of the Year. In 2010, he won the World Cup Bronze Medal, and he won silver medals in the World Cup Team Relay competition in 2011 and 2013. During the 2014 Olympic Winter games, he placed eleventh in the men's doubles competition with his partner Christian Niccum, and he helped the U.S. place sixth in the team relay.

Mr. Speaker, every four years, our nation sends our very best athletes to represent us in the Winter Olympics. Therefore, I commend Jayson Terdiman for his hard work and achievements as part of the United States luge team, and I wish him the best in his future endeavors.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

CELEBRATING THE BICENTENNIAL
OF THE CITY OF GREENVILLE,
ILLINOIS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the City of Greenville, Illinois, on its Bicentennial Celebration. The city will celebrate throughout the year with a variety of community events, including a Labor Day gala featuring a parade, historic re-enactments and musical performances, a July 4th opening of a time capsule buried in 1990, and the burial of a new time capsule on New Year's Eve with mementos from the year's festivities. The city will also erect a permanent monument within city limits to commemorate this historic occasion.

The City of Greenville was founded in 1815 by pioneer George Davidson and is one of the oldest communities in the state. Throughout its history, Greenville has played host to many important events. Notably, the city served as a key stop on the Underground Railroad, shepherding slaves to freedom from the slaveholding southern states. The city also hosted speeches by Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas during their 1858 campaign for the United States Senate.

Since its founding, the city has grown and now is the home to more than 7,000 residents. Over the past 200 years, Greenville has produced numerous noteworthy individuals. It was once the home of Colorado Governor Job Adams Cooper, Emmy-Winning television producer Robert Brinner and Nobel Prize Laureate Edwin G. Krebs, among others.

I extend my congratulations to the City of Greenville upon this special occasion. It is my prayer that the Lord blesses its residents with another 200 years of health and prosperity.

RECOGNIZING MERNI FITZGERALD
ON THE OCCASION OF HER RE-
TIREMENT FROM FAIRFAX
COUNTY

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and commend Merni Fitzgerald on the occasion of her retirement after a long and distinguished career in public service for the residents of Fairfax County, Virginia. For the past 13 years, Merni has been the director of the Office of Public Affairs, serving as the "voice of Fairfax County." Prior to that, she spent 15 years as the public information officer for the Fairfax County Park Authority.

Throughout her career, Merni dedicated herself to keeping Fairfax citizens well informed about the great work of their local government, while promoting engagement in our community. In her role as Director of Public Affairs, she managed external and internal communications for the largest county government in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Na-

tional Capital Region. She and her staff provided communications strategy and services for more than 40 county agencies and customer service to residents and visitors.

From routine communications about Board of Supervisors meetings to emergency alerts, Merni ensured Fairfax remained in constant contact with its constituents, and she was instrumental in pushing the County onto social media to foster more opportunities for two-way communications. Whether she was sharing news and information about a notable accomplishment or a natural disaster, Merni was a calm, soothing, and informative voice for the County.

Well-respected by her peers, Merni chaired the Northern Virginia communicators group and a similar committee at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, which encompasses 21 jurisdictions in Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia. In that role, she coordinated communications for the regional Emergency Preparedness Council, where we worked together for a number of years.

Prior to her current position, Merni served two terms on the Falls Church City Council. She also served as Chairman of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission. Her keen political sense, expert communications skills, and firm grasp of the news business has earned her the trust of the elected leadership throughout the region. She was recognized as the Virginia Communicator of the Year in 2000, and in 2007 she was recognized as one of PR News magazine's PR Professionals of the Year for her "untiring service to the community and the media."

I can certainly attest to that. I had the distinct pleasure of working with Merni during my 14 years of service on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. She was a trusted member of our leadership team and helped the county manage numerous crises including: the tragic events of 9/11, which occurred shortly after her appointment as director of public affairs; local anthrax attacks, during which the government center became a screening facility and medical distribution center; the 2002 Washington sniper shootings; Hurricane Isabel in 2003, which damaged multiple roads and properties across the county and resulted in the loss of drinking water for most residents for several days; the shooting of two police officers outside the Sully District Station in 2006; a dustup over local soup kitchens caused by an over-zealous bureaucracy; the recent record snow storms, which literally shutdown the region for days; and an earthquake in 2011. Interspersed through those events, she coordinated public information about annual multi-million dollar bond referendums and countless Board "presentations."

Most people probably don't know Merni is a published author. Earlier in her career, Merni was an assistant to the Press Officer at the Peace Corps, an agency close to my heart given my international relations background and seat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. During her time with the Corps, Merni authored two books for school-age children: one commemorating the Peace Corps' 25th Anniversary and another on the role of Voice of America radio programming in U.S. efforts overseas.

As Merni begins this new chapter in her life, I want to extend my warmest regards to her and her family. I hope she is able to find a suitable new home for the growing collection of nutcrackers that adorn her office at the Government Center, and I have no doubt she will find a way to continue making contributions to our community even in retirement.

Mr. Speaker, Merni Fitzgerald's commitment to public service has set an example that will benefit our community for generations to come. Her accomplishments are truly outstanding and deserving of our sincere appreciation. When I was Chairman of the County Board, we often joked when retirement announcements like this came before the Board that we should not allow such talented and dedicated staff to leave public service, and I certainly wish that was the case here.

I wish Merni the best of luck in her retirement, and I ask my colleagues in the House to join me in expressing our appreciation for her long and fruitful service to the residents of Fairfax County and the National Capital Region.

RECOGNIZING NACDS RxIMPACT
DAY

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Sixth Annual NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill. This is a special day where we recognize pharmacy's contribution to the American healthcare system. This year's event, organized by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores, takes place on March 12-13. Nearly 400 individuals from the pharmacy community—including practicing pharmacists, pharmacy school faculty and students, state pharmacy leaders and pharmacy company executives—will visit Capitol Hill. They will share their views with Congress about the importance of supporting legislation that protects access to community and neighborhood pharmacies and that utilizes pharmacists to improve the quality and reduce the costs of providing healthcare.

Advocates from 40 states have travelled to Washington to talk about the pharmacy community's contributions in over 40,000 community pharmacies nationwide. These important healthcare providers are here to educate Congress about the value of pharmacists and protect access to the essential services they provide as part of our healthcare delivery system. And just as these providers travelled to meet with us, Members of Congress have toured retail chain pharmacies in our own communities more than 250 times since 2009. There are 106 chain pharmacies in my own Congressional District, and those stores employ nearly 10,000 Washingtonians.

Patients have always relied on their local pharmacist to meet their healthcare needs. The local pharmacist is a trusted, highly accessible healthcare provider deeply committed to providing the highest quality care in the most efficient manner possible.

As demand for healthcare services continues to grow, pharmacists have expanded

their role in healthcare delivery, partnering with physicians, nurses and other healthcare providers to meet their patients' needs. Innovative services provided by pharmacists do even more to improve patient healthcare. Pharmacists are highly valued by those that rely on them most—those in rural and underserved areas, as well as older Americans, and those struggling to manage chronic diseases. Pharmacy services improve patients' quality of life as well as healthcare affordability. By helping patients take their medications effectively and providing preventive services, pharmacists help avoid more costly forms of care. Pharmacists also help patients identify strategies to save money, such as through better understanding of their pharmacy benefits, using generic medications, and obtaining 90-day supplies of prescription drugs from local pharmacies.

Pharmacists are the nation's most accessible healthcare providers. In many communities, especially in rural areas, the local pharmacist is a patient's most direct link to healthcare. Eighty-nine percent of Americans reside within a five-mile radius of a community pharmacy. Pharmacists are one of our nation's most trusted healthcare professionals. Utilizing their specialized education, pharmacists play a major role in medication therapy management, disease-state management, immunizations, healthcare screenings, and other healthcare services designed to improve patient health and reduce overall healthcare costs. Pharmacists are also expanding their role into new models of care based on quality of services and outcomes, such as accountable care organizations (ACOs) and medical homes.

As we refine healthcare reform and seek new strategies to improve patient care, pharmacists will play a critical role. I believe Congress should look at every opportunity to make sure that pharmacists are allowed to utilize their training to the fullest to provide the services that can improve care and lower costs. In recognition of the Sixth Annual NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill, I would like to congratulate pharmacy leaders, pharmacists, students, executives, and the entire pharmacy community represented by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores, for their contributions to the good health of the American people.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN RAFFERTY

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Lieutenant Colonel John Rafferty of the United States Army for his extraordinary dedication to duty and service to our nation at the Deputy of the Army House Liaison Division on Capitol Hill. Lieutenant Colonel Rafferty will soon transition to the Legislative Director for the Commander of the International Security Assistance Force in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Army Congressional Liaison officers provide an invaluable service to both the military and Congress. They assist Members and staff in

understanding the Army's policies, actions, operations, and requirements. Their firsthand knowledge of military needs, culture, and tradition is a tremendous benefit to Congressional offices.

A native of Great Falls, Virginia, Lieutenant Colonel Rafferty enlisted in the Army in 1987 and served in Germany with the 8th Infantry Division. Two years later, he left the active Army to return to college and pursue a commission as an Army Officer. He received his commission as Second Lieutenant in the Regular Army as a Field Artillery officer. During the next twenty years, LTC Rafferty served in a variety of tactical assignments, including service in 1st and 3rd Battalions of the 75th Ranger Regiment, staff officer in the 25th Infantry Division, command of two artillery batteries in the 1st Armored Division, and command of 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division. Along with becoming an Army Ranger and Master Parachutist, he served multiple combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. Additionally, he was selected as an exchange officer for the U.S. Marine Corps Amphibious Warfare School and for the United Kingdom Joint Services Command and Staff College with the British Military.

Lieutenant Colonel Rafferty is both warrior and scholar. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History from Longwood College, a Master of Arts in Defense Policy from King's College-London, and a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.

His devotion to his country is matched only by his commitment to family. Lieutenant Colonel Rafferty is married to the lovely Tracey Lowery Rafferty. They're proud parents of a thirteen-year-old daughter, Erin, and a twelve-year-old son, Evan.

Lieutenant Colonel Rafferty's great work has not gone unnoticed. His military awards include the Combat Action Badge, Expert Infantry Badge, three Bronze Star Medals, and the Iraq and Afghanistan Campaign Medals. He was inducted into the Honorable Order of Saint Barbara and is a Distinguished Member of both the 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment and 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the selfless service of Lieutenant Colonel John Rafferty as he proceeds into the next chapter of his remarkable career and continues to serve the United States of America. I wish him the best as he continues to serve our great Nation and proceeds to the next chapter in his remarkable career.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 90, I was unable to attend the vote.

Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF JAXSON'S ICE CREAM PARLOUR

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Monroe Udell and Ms. Linda Zakeheim, the owners of Jaxson's Ice Cream Parlour located in Dania Beach, Florida.

Jaxson's has long been a staple in Dania Beach and this cultural landmark currently employs more than 70 people. Now, Monroe and Linda have taken it upon themselves to improve the standard of living for their employees. On February 24, 2014—the day of Monroe's 86th birthday—Jaxson's raised their minimum wage from \$7.93 to \$10.10 an hour.

Monroe and Linda have always appreciated the work their employees do to create a top rated restaurant. This higher minimum wage will allow their employees to enjoy a better standard of living and improved economic security. It will allow them to contribute more to the South Florida economy. And, it will show other businesses in the region that paying a higher wage is possible, profitable, and the right thing to do.

In 1965, Boisey Waiters, Dania's first African American City Commissioner, told me about Jaxson's, and I instantly became a fan. Monroe first opened the restaurant in 1953, and even then, it was a beacon. At that time, most establishments in Broward County did not serve colored people. Yet, from the very beginning Monroe took a stand against segregation by hiring and serving all restaurant patrons, regardless of race. That is why I was not surprised to hear that Monroe and Linda acted on their own conscience to help their employees afford a better lifestyle. Sixty-one years later, Jaxson's is still showing the way with their actions to better support their employees.

The employees of Jaxson's have worked tirelessly to develop the reputation of a restaurant that provides excellent food, great ice cream, and a family friendly atmosphere.

Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to acknowledge and thank Monroe Udell, Linda Zakeheim, General Manager Jerry Smith, as well as all the employees working at Jaxson's. I wish them many more years of success.

RECOGNIZING DAN "OX" OCHSNER

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dan "Ox" Ochsner for more than a decade of work as a radio host in St. Cloud, MN.

Originally from Fargo, ND, Ox began his radio career in 1991 as a rock DJ out of Fergus Falls. He's come a long way since then, now hosting an afternoon show on weekdays in St. Cloud with popularity in the Twin Cities and here in D.C.

He's not only an on-air personality and radio entrepreneur. Ox and his wife, Jan, have made an effort to stay involved and connected in the community. His involvement with Jaycees, Sertoma, Chamber of Commerce and the Boy Scouts haven't gone unnoticed. The St. Cloud Times named him one of the top 40 most influential people of the decade (2000–2010).

As I continue on in my final year in the House of Representatives, I look back with appreciation and respect for the people of the 6th District. One of those special people is Dan Ochsner. With a personality as fiery as his hair, he can always be counted on to provide a humorous take on current events to the people of central Minnesota.

There are few people kinder, funnier, and more genuine than Ox. It's an honor to represent a district in the halls of Congress with talented individuals like Dan. The 6th District of Minnesota is lucky to call Dan Ochsner one of their own.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ERIC A. "RICK" CRAWFORD

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, March 4th, 2014 I was inadvertently detained on rollcall Votes 91 and 92. Had I been present to vote I would have voted "yes" on both.

MARIA PEDRIANI, HAZLETON LODGE #200 "2013–2014 ELK OF THE YEAR"

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Maria Pedriani, the Hazleton Lodge #200 "2013–2014 Elk of the Year," for her loyal service to the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks.

Mrs. Pedriani has been a resident of Hazleton, Pennsylvania for 36 years. After graduating from Mahanoy Area High School, she took post graduate courses at Luzerne County Community College and owned her own cosmetology business in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. Since joining the Elks two years ago, Mrs. Pedriani has been an outstanding asset in accomplishing lodge goals and is well known for her superb cooking abilities.

Beyond her involvement with the Hazleton Elks, Mrs. Pedriani has been an active member of the local community. She served on the board of "Helping Hands" and is a member of the Holy Rosary Church. In 2011, she was the keynote speaker at the American Cancer Society—Relay for Life where she spoke about her successful battle with Hodgkin lymphoma. She is also a proud wife, mother, and grandmother.

Mr. Speaker, for her committed service to the Benevolent and Protective Order of the

Elks, I commend Maria Pedriani and congratulate her for being named the Hazleton Lodge #200 "2013–2014 Elk of the Year."

RECOGNIZING THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA CONSERVATION TRUST

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust for receiving accreditation by the National Land Trust Accreditation Commission. The accreditation process is very rigorous and signifies the highest standards of excellence in land conservation.

When Congress first passed the tax incentives for land conservation, it placed a high degree of trust in non-profit land trusts to manage these transactions properly. Over the years, land conservation has become increasingly complex and requires careful adherence to the national Land Trust Standards and Practices. This accreditation process helps give taxpayers confidence that land trusts are a worthy public investment.

I want to thank the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust for its dedication and effectiveness in educating the public about the importance of conservation and preserving local natural areas, trails, streams, and parks. Its work helps to protect wildlife habitat, water quality and healthy communities. Since its founding 20 years ago, the Trust has protected 5,370 acres across Northern Virginia. And, by achieving national accreditation, the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust has expanded its capacity to accomplish this mission far into the future.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in commending the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust for its hard work and commitment to our community. I wish the Trust and its supporters continued success in their conservation efforts.

IN HONOR OF CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 EDWARD "EDDIE" BALLI

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chief Warrant Officer 2 Edward "Eddie" Balli, an American hero who gave his life in service to his country. Eddie loved his job as an Unmanned Aerial System Operations Officer Platoon Leader for the 2nd Cavalry Regiment. He provided the eyes in the sky for the soldiers on the ground.

On January 20, Eddie's unit was attacked by insurgents in the Kandahar province of southern Afghanistan. Believing it was his duty to place the safety of his fellow troops before his own; Eddie was killed while providing cover to protect the rest of his unit. His sacrifice ultimately saved the lives of several civilians and his fellow soldiers.

Eddie was a native of Salinas, California, graduating from North High School. Soon after graduation, he felt the call to serve his country. Following in the footsteps of others in his family, he joined the Army in 1991. During his distinguished career, Eddie received many accolades including the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart during his many deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was an inspiration to all who served with him. Eddie made himself available to talk with younger soldiers, mentoring them and offering both professional and personal advice.

Eddie was also a devout family man. He often spoke fondly of his wife, Kristy Balli, and his three children, Michael, Momilani, and Desirae. To his family he was more than just a soldier. He was a kind and loving husband, father, brother and son who had an infectious humor and quirky personality. His family was proud of his patriotic service to his country and the care he demonstrated for his fellow soldiers.

That caring personality, as both a soldier and a family man, is what made Eddie an extraordinary person. He was an exemplary soldier, family man, and friend who put the needs of others before his own.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a true patriot and hero, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Edward Balli. Our nation is grateful for his service and we promise that his life, legacy, and his sacrifice for our country will not be forgotten.

COMMEMORATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF POGROM AT SUMGAIT

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the anniversary of the pogrom that took place in Sumgait, Azerbaijan against people of Armenian descent. A pogrom is a violent riot aimed at massacre or persecution of an ethnic or religious group. On the evening of February 27, 1988 hundreds of Armenians were massacred in the seaside town of Sumgait in Soviet Azerbaijan. This violence against Armenians continued for three days and resulted in the reported killing of 32 people, with countless others that remain unaccounted for.

It is my hope that by speaking out publicly against atrocities suffered by our brethren around the world, we will help reaffirm America's commitment to an enduring, peaceful and democratic resolution.

I ask that my colleagues join me in solemnly commemorating the death of these innocent lives. My thoughts are with the Armenian community, especially those that lost loved ones during the pogrom at Sumgait 26 years ago.

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR CHOKWE
LUMUMBA

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and legacy of Mayor Chokwe Lumumba of Jackson, Mississippi.

Mayor Chokwe Lumumba was born August 2, 1947, in Detroit, Michigan. He was the second of eight children born to Lucien and Priscilla Francis Taliaferro. Mayor Lumumba earned his Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Kalamazoo College in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He later finished first in his law school freshman class before graduating cum laude from Wayne State University Law School.

Mayor Lumumba was a nationally renowned attorney who was licensed in Mississippi, Michigan and U.S. Federal Courts. He has represented clients in over 16 jurisdictions, including Canada and the Choctaw Court. Mayor Lumumba has won settlements and/or judgments for victims of medical malpractice, employment discrimination, sexual harassment and police misconduct. He has worked in high profile cases such as the representation of the late Tupac Shakur. In 2011, he helped win the release of the Scott Sisters who had served 16 years of double life prison sentences for an \$11.00 (eleven-dollar) robbery. He successfully represented Lance Parker who was falsely accused of assault during the 1992 Los Angeles uprising which followed the brutal beating of Rodney King.

Since 1968, Mayor Lumumba has crisscrossed the globe to fight for "Human Rights for Human Beings." He supported the survivors of Katrina by serving on the Board of the People's Hurricane Relief Fund and organizing other activists to form the Mississippi Disaster Relief Coalition and co-organizing the Gulf Coast Survivors Assembly. Mayor Lumumba's work as a community activist has spanned over four decades. He has worked with organizations such as the Jackson Human Rights Coalition, which pressured the State to retry the person who murdered Medgar Evers. He has worked for over twenty years organizing, directing, coaching, and mentoring youth through programs such as the Jackson Panthers Basketball Organization. He was also a devout member of Word and Worship Christian Church.

Prior to his election as Mayor, Mr. Lumumba served as Jackson City Councilman for Ward 2. Widowed by his late wife Nubia Alake, Mayor Lumumba was a loving and devoted father to his three children, Kambon Mutope, Rukia Kai and Chokwe Antar Lumumba. He was also the proud grandfather of Qadir Lumumba-Benjamin.

Mr. Speaker, I take great pride in recognizing Mayor Chokwe Lumumba as a bright, caring, and humble individual. I commend his outstanding and historical contributions to the City of Jackson, the State of Mississippi, the Civil Rights Movement, and national politics.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, due to inclement weather on the morning of Tuesday, March 4, my flight was unable to leave for Washington, DC, from Lafayette, Louisiana. Therefore, I was unable to return in time for votes. Had I been present to vote, my voting record would reflect the following: H.R. 3370—"yea"; H. Res. 488—"yea."

I also offer the following statement in favor of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act:

I support H.R. 3370, responsible legislation keeping thousands of Louisiana homeowners from facing dramatic increases in their flood insurance premiums.

The National Flood Insurance Program must be financially sustainable and it is irresponsible for it to carry a debt of \$24 billion.

However, we must find a balance between fiscal stability and punishing homeowners who followed the rules. This legislation brings fairness to homeowners and much-needed stability to the NFIP.

I am pleased this bill restores the grandfathering provision, the home improvement provision clause, and provides meaningful protection to Pre-Firm properties. I look forward to FEMA improving the flood mapping process to help inform the decision-makers in communities across America.

Local leaders must be vigilant in managing the growth of our neighborhoods in South Louisiana to ensure they are using the best available data to drive our zoning requirements, our building codes, and our insurance ratings.

Congress must remain engaged in its oversight of this program and its implementation in the years ahead. It must be committed to finding creative ways to further strengthen the NFIP without harming policy holders or the general public.

HONORING TORIN KOOS

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor an Olympic athlete from Washington State's 8th District, Mr. Torin Koos. Mr. Koos just returned from representing our nation in the XXII Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia. Mr. Koos is an incredible athlete who has reached the pinnacle of his sport and competed in the Men's Sprint Free Qualification.

I applaud both his achievement and the hard-work and perseverance that paid off during these games. Simply to attend the Olympics is to be among an elite group of people. I thank Mr. Koos for representing America so well, and I am proud to call him a constituent and a Washingtonian.

RECOGNIZING THE ANNIVERSARY
OF THE KHOJALY TRAGEDY

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, Azerbaijan is a key strategic partner of the United States, and I am honored to be Co-Chairman of the House Azerbaijan Caucus. Azerbaijan has been a key ally in a post 9/11 era, emerging as one of the first countries to offer strong support and assistance to the United States.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the anniversary of the tragedy that took place in Khojaly, Azerbaijan, a town and townspeople that were destroyed on February 26, 1992.

We just marked the 22nd anniversary of that devastating and heartbreaking day. Sadly, today there is little attention or interest paid to the plight of Khojaly outside of Azerbaijan. However, one of our greatest strengths as elected officials is the opportunity to bring to light truths that are little known and command recognition. As a friend of Azerbaijan, I am proud to remind my colleagues that we must never forget the tragedy that took place at Khojaly.

At the time, the Khojaly tragedy was widely documented by the international media, including the Boston Globe, Washington Post, New York Times, Financial Times, and many other European and Russian news agencies.

Khojaly, a town in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, now under the control of Armenian forces, was the site of the largest killing of ethnic Azerbaijani civilians. With a population of approximately 7,000, Khojaly was one of the largest urban settlements of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan.

According to Human Rights Watch and other international observers the massacre was committed by the ethnic Armenian armed forces, reportedly with the help of the Russian 366th Motor Rifle Regiment. Human Rights Watch described the Khojaly Massacre as "the largest massacre to date in the conflict" over Nagorno-Karabakh. In a 1993 report, the watchdog group stated "there are no exact figures for the number of Azeri civilians killed because Karabakh Armenian forces gained control of the area after the massacre" and "while it is widely accepted that 200 Azeris were murdered, as many as 500–1,000 may have died."

Azerbaijan has been a strong strategic partner and friend of the United States. The tragedy of Khojaly was a crime against humanity and I urge my colleagues to join me in standing with Azerbaijanis as they commemorate this tragedy.

RECOGNIZING PAUL TAIT

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Paul Tait on the occasion of his retirement from the Southeast Michigan Council

of Governments (SEMCOG) after 42 years of dedicated service.

Paul attained his undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Michigan. He came to SEMCOG in 1972, and was named Executive Director of that organization in 1998. Under Paul's leadership, SEMCOG has used data and information to help make decisions resulting in literally billions of dollars in road, transit, and water infrastructure investment.

As important as data and information are to regional planning, local government actions are also critical. Paul recognized this and worked to give all communities—large and small—a voice in the process.

In a speech at the National Defense Executive Reserve Conference in 1957, President Eisenhower, who of course had served as Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe during World War II, made this remarkable assertion: "Plans are worthless, but planning is everything." He went on to say that while there are indeed some immutable truths, most of what we confront in our daily lives changes over time. President Eisenhower's basic point was that we shouldn't put too much faith in static plans, but rather invest in planning that assumes that conditions will change.

Eisenhower's admonition is relevant because, for more than four decades, SEMCOG has been the regional planning partnership in Southeast Michigan. Over that time, our area has seen an astonishing amount of change. SEMCOG's task has been to recognize the changing circumstances and needs in our area—whether it's land use, transportation, air quality, water infrastructure, or economic development—and help our communities shape a regional public policy that is responsive and dynamic. Paul has played a key role in SEMCOG's work and effectiveness.

Among his many other accomplishments, Paul is the devoted husband of Chris. They have four children and six grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Paul Tait for his leadership at SEMCOG and his commitment to the citizens of Southeast Michigan.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,444,385,246,890.50. We've added \$6,817,508,197,977.42 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

U.S. POLICY TOWARD SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, last week, I chaired a subcommittee hearing on U.S. policy toward Sudan and South Sudan. The hearing was very important, and not only because the United States Government has been involved in Sudan and its various crises for the past three decades. Many of us first became interested in Sudan in the 1980s because of the persistent reports of modern-day slavery, in which northern Arabs enslaved African southerners. My office helped to bring one of these unfortunate people to America for medical treatment after he was freed, and his story affected me deeply.

Ker Deng had been kidnapped into slavery while still a child, and while he was an adolescent, the man who held him in bondage rubbed peppers in his eyes, blinded him and later abandoned him. Ker is studying here in the United States thanks to his benefactor, Ellen Ratner, and is awaiting a second operation to help him recover at least some of his eyesight. How many other Sudanese will never have that opportunity or even achieve their freedom? For example, Ker's mother has never been freed from bondage.

We began supporting southern Sudanese efforts to end the oppression from the North in the mid-1990s. In 2005, we helped both North and South achieve the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, CPA, to end the long civil war and provide the steps for a mutually beneficial peace and productive coexistence. Unfortunately, the rebellion in the Darfur region distracted from efforts to fulfill that agreement.

Khartoum's alliance with the Janjaweed Arabs resulted in mass killings and displacement in Darfur. An estimated 1.9 million people were displaced, more than 240,000 people were forced into neighboring Chad, and an estimated 450,000 people were killed. At the time, Congress insisted that this was genocide. Eventually, the Bush administration concurred, but the United Nations declined to go so far in their terminology, calling what happened in Darfur "crimes against humanity."

A peace agreement between the main rebel force in Darfur and the Government of Sudan was signed in May 2006, but it did not last. In fact, no sustained agreement has been reached between the government and Darfur rebel groups—partly because these groups have continued to split and form offshoots, but also because the Khartoum government has not appeared willing to resolve the Darfur situation constructively. In June 2005, the International Criminal Court initiated an investigation that resulted in arrest warrants for Sudan President Omar al-Bashir and three other government officials and militia leaders. None of these warrants has been served, none of the four have been taken into custody and the Government of Sudan has refused to cooperate with the ICC.

Meanwhile, the CPA remained unimplemented. In January 2011, South Sudan, which had been a semiautonomous re-

gion of the country since the signing of the CPA, voted in a referendum on whether to remain part of Sudan or become independent. Having been marginalized and mistreated for decades, it was not surprising that southern Sudanese voted overwhelmingly—at the level of 98.8 percent—to become an independent nation. On July 9, 2011, South Sudan became the world's newest nation. However, these unimplemented elements of the CPA would bedevil the new country from its birth.

A referendum in the disputed Abyei region and consultations on the status of Sudan's Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states were never completed. In May 2011, Sudanese armed forces assumed control of towns in Abyei, quickly forcing at least 40,000 residents to flee. Within weeks, fighting spread to Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states, as Khartoum sought to crush the Sudan People's Liberation Army—North, which had fought with southerners in the North-South civil war. Northern attacks on residents in those three areas continue unabated.

Last year, Sudan and South Sudan engaged in a conflict over oil supplies from the South, involving allegations that Khartoum was undercutting the level of oil flow to cheat South Sudan, as well as the southern seizure of the oil town of Heglig. Again, this dispute was largely the result of unresolved issues from the CPA.

South Sudan continues to be engaged in a conflict that began last December, despite a cessation of hostilities agreement. Thousands have been killed and tens of thousands have been displaced. Exact figures are constantly shifting because this conflict continues. I will soon introduce a resolution offering a sequenced approach to reaching a lasting resolution to this newest crisis. This conflict also is the result of too little attention paid to the warning signs because of preoccupation with one of the many crises in the two Sudans.

Over the last three decades, I and other committee and subcommittee chairs have held numerous hearings on Sudan—from the North-South civil war to the Darfur conflict to the fighting in Abyei, Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile to the current conflict in South Sudan. All this attention is more than justified, but our approach to addressing them has been intermittent. Too often, each crisis is seen as a problem unto itself, unrelated to other issues in these two countries.

In fact, successive administrations and Congresses, advocacy groups and humanitarian organizations have focused so much on individual crises and issues that no one has created a panoramic view which shows how all these individual crises interrelate with each other. This "stovepiping" of government policy and public attention has meant that long-term solutions have been neglected while short-term eruptions have had to be dealt with. In reality, the two Sudans are inexorably linked and no crisis in either can be resolved successfully without taking into account the entire Sudan-South Sudan panorama.

We must end this cycle of myopic policy formulation based on the crisis of the moment and adopt a long-term, holistic vision of what the best interest of the people of Sudan and South Sudan demands—indeed, what would be in the best interest of the entire region.

As we learned in our subcommittee hearing on the Sahel crisis last May, Islamic extremists have their sights set on making inroads wherever there is conflict, across the belt of Central Africa stretching from Senegal to Sudan and beyond. Continuing unrest in the two Sudans only serves to provide training grounds or bases of operation for terrorists. Hardened ethnic conflict can spread to long-term enmity that no peace agreement alone can resolve. Hopefully, this will not be the case in South Sudan, but that conflict is headed in that ominous direction.

Two years ago, I held a meeting in my office with representatives from Sudan's Nubian, Darfuri, Beja and Nuba communities, who all believe that Khartoum is engaged in a long-term effort to exterminate non-Arab Sudanese. Have we missed such a pernicious campaign while hopping from one crisis to another as each appeared?

The purpose of last week's hearing was to examine current U.S. policy toward Sudan and South Sudan to see how we can unify our policy in order to more effectively end long-running tragedies that appear get worse despite all the busy attention to which we pay them. This involves more than what the Department of State and other executive agencies do, or even what support Congress can provide. Advocacy and humanitarian organizations also must join government in seeing the forest and not just the trees, so to speak.

We must develop, support and implement policies toward Sudan and South Sudan that make sense in the long term and not just produce temporarily satisfying peace accords that have no sustainability. Peace and prosperity for both countries are linked, and we must act accordingly. The hearing, we hope, will serve to highlight what must be done.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

HON. JASON T. SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100th Anniversary of the National Cooperative Extension Service. The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 created this educational partnership which began between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the nation's land-grant universities. The Cooperative Extension Service grants state universities funds to produce significant research which is available for the use of the public across the nation. In addition, research based education programs have improved the lives of many through the advancements made in farming, business, health services, and emergency management.

In the Show-Me State, the Missouri Extension Services have been fundamental to community development. Nearly seventy percent of Missouri's taxpayer funded research is produced by the land grant universities. This information is used to enhance vital industries like agriculture, business, and healthcare. The state of Missouri has benefitted immensely

through the active role of the Extension programs which equip our communities with vital information and educational programs.

For the advances made possible in Missouri and across the nation by the Cooperative Extension Service, it is my pleasure to recognize the 100th Anniversary of the National Cooperative Extensions in the House of Representatives.

NAGORNO KARABAKH AUTONOMOUS REGION OF AZERBAIJAN

HON. JUDY CHU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, twenty-six years ago, the Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Region of Azerbaijan petitioned to become part of Armenia. Their desire to determine their own future was met with brutal force and violence that was tragically reminiscent to events preceding the Armenian Genocide.

For the next two years, the Armenian population was the target of racially motivated pogroms. Hundreds were murdered, many more were wounded, and the Armenian community still grapples with the scars from the horrific attacks in Sumgait, Kirovabad, and Baku.

On February 20, 1988, Nagorno Karabakh began its national liberation movement with a resolution to secede from Azerbaijan, and on December 10, 1991, Nagorno Karabakh officially declared independence, becoming a democratic state committed to freedom and respect for human rights. But today, the people of Nagorno Karabakh are still forced to live under the constant threat of violence from Azerbaijan.

As we commemorate the somber anniversary of the beginnings of their struggle, we wish for the peaceful resolution of this conflict and the right of the Nagorno Karabakh people to determine their own future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, on February 25, 2014, I missed two recorded votes on the House floor. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall 63 and "yea" on rollcall 64.

TRIBUTE TO L. TOM BULLA

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the career and contributions of Mr. L. Tom Bulla, upon the occasion of his receipt of the Shepherd Center of Greenbrier Valley's Community Service Award. Mr. Bulla's work

ethic and volunteer spirit are truly deserving of this award, as he has proudly served communities, both in his professional and private life.

Tom began his career in 1962 and worked diligently to build a solid reputation as a credible leader in the North Carolina and Virginia banking communities. In 1981, he was hired as president, CEO, and director of Huntington Trust and Savings Bank in West Virginia. In 1985, Tom oversaw the successful merger of Huntington Trust with the First Huntington National Bank. Shortly thereafter, his services were requested at Charleston National Bank, where he would serve as president and CEO, and again direct the merger of two West Virginia banks; Charleston National with Bank One, in 1993. A year later, Tom accepted a position as president, CEO, and director of First National Bankshares Corporation and The First National Bank in Roncverte, West Virginia. Tom was very active in the West Virginia Bankers' Association, serving both on its Board of Directors and as its Chairman from 1996 through 1997. Additionally, Tom was selected by his colleagues to serve on the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh's Board of Directors from 1997 until 2000.

Tom's career shepherded him into public service with an appointment from Governor JOE MANCHIN as the state's first Secretary of Commerce, where he successfully managed the consolidation of seven government agencies.

As impressive as Tom's achievements in banking and the public sector have been, his contributions to our communities are equally impactful. Tom dedicated his time and energy to numerous nonprofit agencies including the Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences, Tamarack Foundation, United Way of West Virginia, Hospice, Charleston Area Medical Center, and the American Cancer Society. He served on the Lewisburg Building Commission, West Virginia Education Fund, YMCA Spirit of the Valley, and the West Virginia Economic Development Authority, along with a host of other valuable community and state organizations. And lastly, the Shepherd Center of the Greenbrier Valley, who is honoring him with its Community Service Award for Tom's fulfillment of its three tenets: lifelong learning, service to others, and spiritual growth.

Tom Bulla resides in Lewisburg, West Virginia with his wife, Nancy. Known affectionately as "Papa" or "Papa T" by his grandchildren, Tom enjoys spending time with his extended family and his lifelong love: automobiles.

Mr. Speaker, the State of West Virginia, our communities, and indeed, the United States of America owe Tom Bulla a debt of gratitude for his many years of distinguished service in his professional and personal life. I am honored to call him a friend and fellow West Virginian.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN PARTICIPATING IN A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION TO THE CONFLICT IN SYRIA

HON. ALBIO SIREs

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. SIREs. Mr. Speaker, this month marks the 3 year anniversary of the conflict in Syria. This conflict is destabilizing the region and has created the largest humanitarian crises we have ever seen. Over 100,000 people have already been killed and 9 million people are currently in desperate need of humanitarian assistance. 3 million people are in hard to reach areas and over 250,000 people have been cut off from assistance for over a year. The UN has characterized the situation as "dramatic beyond description." There have already been multiple failed attempts at peace-talks and cease-fires. The international community and Syrian forces must come together to find a long over-due peaceful agreement and end these inhumane and debilitating acts of violence.

As we celebrate International Women's Day on March 8th, 2014, there is no better time to recognize the role of women in these protracted conflicts. They are not just the victims of violence; they are the resilient leaders working tirelessly to keep their families safe. Women leaders, who are pushing for peace can help further peace negotiations, understand a country's needs for an inclusive transition process and put Syrians on a path to reconciliation.

While we continue to search for solutions, the United States joined by the rest of the world must do all it can to have an inclusive peace process that alleviates the tremendous amount of suffering being inflicted on Syria's civilian population.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for votes on Tuesday, March 4, 2014.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote 91 in support of passage of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote 92 in support of H. Res. 488 supporting the people of Venezuela. The Venezuelan people have the right to protest peacefully without fear of violence or intimidation.

THE 25TH SILVER ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS VETERANS BRAINTRUST

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate March 5, Boston's Crispus Attucks Day, and to celebrate the 25th Silver Anniversary of the Congressional Black Caucus Veterans Braintrust which took place this past September within a truly unique historical and contemporary context of Black, or African American military service and sacrifice. First, a series of national commemorations: the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812, the 150th anniversary of the Civil War to Save the Union and End Slavery, the 100th anniversary of the death of Harriet Tubman, known as "The General," the 90th anniversary of the burial of Col. Charles Young, the third black graduate from West Point, the 70th anniversary of the D-Day Invasion, the 60th anniversary of the Korean War, the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Medgar Evers, World War II veteran and Civil Rights Hero, 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War, and the 12th anniversary of 9/11; and second, amid the drum beat of war, with the U.S. threatened bombing of Syria, the senseless violence of Aaron Alexis and the Washington, DC, Navy Yard shooting rampage, and the battle of the budget, or yet another governmental shutdown on October 1st, affecting more than 800,000 employees at a cost of \$25 billion. According to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, a disproportionate number of the furloughed federal workers were Black, or African American, who made up 17.7 percent of the workforce.

Chaplain Michael McCoy, Sr., provided the Veterans Braintrust forum's invocation and benediction because we know from experience that Washington forums that start with an invocation and end with a benediction are blessed occasions. Welcoming remarks were given by Representatives CHARLES RANGEL (NY-13), SANFORD BISHOP, Jr. (GA-02), EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON (TX-30) and myself. With Representative SANFORD BISHOP, Jr. speaking in his role as the Ranking Democrat on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and as Co-Chair of the bi-partisan Congressional Military Family Caucus expressing a keen awareness of the dangers sequestration and furloughs are having on our nation's servicemembers, military families, and veterans, and further reductions to the active-duty Army, National Guard and the Army Reserves. In addition, as the representative in the U.S. House for Fort Benning, the third largest Army Base in the country where sequestration will have a dramatic impact on the soldiers, their families, and the Columbus, GA, community. Further, he emphasized, if sequestration goes forward, the Army will reduce over 210,000 soldiers to meet their budgetary requirements. Afterward Members were called away to the Capitol to talk on the floor and vote on the budget, and the forum was turned over to moderator Ron E. Armstead, Executive Director. Yet the forum remained well attended,

powerful, and there was a tremendous amount of energy in the room.

The keynote address was given by the first African American to obtain the rank of Three Star Admiral in the U.S. Coast Guard, Admiral Manson K. Brown, a native of Washington, DC, who brought greetings from the 24th Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, Admiral Robert J. Papp, Jr. As Commanding Officer of Coast Guard Headquarters he asked all veterans to stand and be recognized, and to let our Navy friends, colleagues and family members know that our thoughts and prayers continued to be with them over the tragic loss of so many lives at the Washington, DC, Navy Yard. Adm. Brown went on to say the key objective during the sequester has been to preserve the ability of the Coast Guard to meet the highest priority mission activities, including search and rescue, critical security operations, and emergency response. In addition, he pointed out that as part of Adm. Papp's commitment to support the President and First Lady's efforts to strengthen military families over the last three years, the Coast Guard has strengthened their military housing program, enhanced child development services, and improved communications between operational commanders and families by strengthening their Ombudsman network. They also launched a military family campaign, bringing a specific focus to strengthening their linkage with retirees, over the year, in order to create a vibrant national retiree network as a way to enhance outreach to Coast Guard veterans at large. In short, he reported that the Coast Guard as a military service is managing through sequestration and shielding the impacts where they can for military families and veterans. However, this is a delicate balancing act based on tough choices that senior Coast Guard leaders must make between military families and veterans, or non-mission-critical training, air and surface operations reductions, ships, aircraft and shore facilities deferred maintenance, as well as personnel staffing and travel cuts. In closing, Admiral Brown said, "In terms of today's important Congressional budgetary discussions, this situation bears watching into an uncertain future."

The keynote address was followed by two very special presentations. The first recognized Harlem's own, the late Dr. Joseph Warren, a gifted scholar, teacher and leader who inspired many. Second, the Montford Point Marines Associations recognized my efforts in the 2012 awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal, including Rebecca Lungren of 69 Productions for the upcoming Montford Point Marines movie "Black Boots."

Our distinguished panel consisted of Keith Miller, President, Foundation for Advancement in Science and Education (FASE); Dr. Mike Haynie, Executive Director and Founder of the Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) at Syracuse University; Darlene Young, National President of Blacks in Government (BIG); Col. Kevin Preston, USA, Ret., Director of the Veterans Initiative for the Walt Disney Company/ESPN; Lewis Runnion, Director of the Military Affairs Advisory Group at Bank of America (BOA); Mayor Setti Warren of Newton, Massachusetts, Chairman of the Community Development and Housing Committee, U.S. Conference of Mayors; Mike Betz,

General Manager, Military Student Initiatives, Education Corporation of America (ECA); Edward Jennings, Jr., U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Southeast Regional Administrator; John Moran, Deputy Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS); Everett Kelley, National Vice President for the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE); and Dr. Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, Director, Military Family Research Institute and Center for Families at Purdue University. Their presentations were lively and moving, but also very informative and focused to the point, thus holding the audience to the end and well worth it.

Mr. Miller read a statement about DC resident Shirley Gibson, a real hero. She and other critical incident stress management team members, along with rescue workers, put their health on the line in the aftermath of New York City's 9/11 tragedy, and were later helped by an innovative detoxification treatment that was made available to them. Such innovative treatments as this rely on research funding. Unfortunately such funding is often the first to go when there are budget cuts. Consequently, sequestration is a threat to both the quality of life and health of our veterans.

Dr. Haynie commented on the applications of sequester, and more broadly programmed reductions in federal spending, as the reductions are positioned to impact the employment situation of our nation's veterans and their families. To begin, one of the most immediate consequences of sequester for veterans is the fact that 27.3 percent of the federal workforce is composed of military veterans, many of which will more than likely be furloughed. The DoD workforce will be particularly impacted, as it will sustain approximately 52 percent of the total planned budget cuts. 44 percent of the DoD workforce are military veterans—which speaks volumes about the potential effects on our military readiness, due to the resulting loss of valuable knowledge, skills and experience. In the end, adding veterans currently employed by the federal government to the ranks of the nation's unemployed is positioned to potentially overwhelm supportive services and community-based infrastructure already strained by limited resources. Research also suggests that many of our military and veterans families are already economically vulnerable, and in the face of Congressional budget battles those families are likely to become “collateral damage” of sequester—an indiscriminate and ill-conceived approach to addressing the Nation's fiscal challenges.

Retired Army Colonel Preston commented that our nation's veterans represent a value-added proposition for the business community, and hiring a veteran is not only the right thing, but also a smart business decision. Also when considering a veteran, do not fixate on their military rank, or job title—instead, view their attributes. Equally important, realize they are coming from a very different culture, have convertible task-oriented skill, years of leadership experience, a code of ethics, and winner's attitude. Moreover, our nation's veterans represent our society's best, so “hire a vet.”

Mr. Runnion described how Bank of America's (BOA) Military Affairs Advisory Group was formed to bring together partners from

across the company to help service members reintegrate into the civilian workforce through education, employment, wellness and housing. Additionally, how BOA supports our nation's active-duty military and veterans in three major areas: (1) Recruiting and Employment, (2) Customer Support, and (3) Community Outreach. One specific example he shared was BOA's three-year commitment to make up to 1,000 properties available to military veteran support organizations and other non-profit, community-based groups, which provide housing to military veterans and their families. Again, he reasserted, BOA has supported the U.S. military for more than 90 years, by contributing to military non-profits, providing banking services to military service members, and recruiting and retaining military veterans, Guard and Reservists, and military spouses.

Mayor Warren cited the U.S. Conference of Mayors Hunger and Homeless Survey (December, 2012), sharing excerpts from the executive summary—lack of affordable housing as a leading cause, followed by poverty, unemployment, evictions and violence. In addition, he discussed sequestration's impact on U.S. cities at the local level. While pointing out that cities are the laboratories of innovation, and along with their surrounding suburbs represent 90 percent of the nation's wage and salary income, which drives the national economy. Subsequently, 163 mayors have signed the U.S. Conference of Mayor's letter expressing opposition to sequester cuts that will deeply impact cities, for example, Community Development Block Grants (the largest and most flexible stream of federal dollars to cities and municipalities), particularly in addressing the needs of homeless veterans and homeless veterans supportive services organizations, now, and leading up to 2015, or President Obama's promise to end chronic homelessness among veterans.

Mr. Betz, discussed today's trends in education, as a result of troop drawdown and increased separation from the military. First, at a time when overall educational enrollment is declining, student veteran enrollment continues to increase. Second, additional assistance and coordination with the private employment sector is needed to insure employment opportunities for our transitioning student veterans where they may provide adequately for their families. Third, he cautioned against our growing regulatory environment, which threatens to restrict awareness and access to training for our transitioning veterans and limits institutional choice.

Mr. Kelley, an Army veteran stressed how AFGE's members know firsthand the pain that sequestration and furloughs inflict on lower wage federal workers and their families. Stating “the current assault on federal employers is one of the most vicious we have ever seen. We all know the real agenda behind sequestration and reduction in force: weakening government programs that try to level the playing field for the other 99 percent.” Further, for the past five years, the VA has targeted low wage positions filled primarily by minorities, veterans, the disabled and women for “reclassification.” Or those positions that Congress created after the Vietnam War to provide entry-level job opportunities for disabled veterans. Similar, to broader-based budget cuts

at other federal agencies under sequestration, VA's downgrading initiative is both arbitrary and vicious. Furthermore, we still have a great deal of work to do to fulfill President Obama's mandate in Executive Order 13518 to make federal government the leader in creating new job opportunities for veterans. Veterans comprise nearly 42 percent of DOD's workforce, nearly 25 percent of Homeland Securities workforce, and nearly 28 percent of VA's workforce. In conclusion, he said, “we need to find a solution to the sequester, and not hold our military and their civilian supporters hostage.” That is why AFGE is supporting HR 2785 introduced by Congressman TIMOTHY WALZ (MN-01), to expand veterans preference rights for reservists, and for employees of the VA health care system who do not have title five appeal rights.

And Dr. MacDermid Wadsworth, reiterated, African Americans comprise a significant percentage of service members and veterans, and have fought for the right to fight. And there is solid scientific evidence that shows the military has provided an environment for African American service members and their families that allows them to avoid some of the significant inequities that plague civilian society. For example, in civilian society, Black men are far less likely to marry and far more likely to divorce than their white counterparts. In the military, these differentials disappear, largely because economic resources are less likely to be tied to race. The military has also provided career opportunities and resources for single parents, ensuring that their children have access to health care and childcare—something their enlisted parents would have great difficulty obtaining in the civilian labor force with just a high school education. Moreover, she said, the sequester and the military drawdown pose a number of significant challenges.

First, the sequester has had a cascading effect on family support in DOD. Because the rules of the sequester limit the ways that DOD can implement reductions, the pressure to cut programs that help to minimize the corrosion that military service can impose on families is especially intense. The furlough's have effectively reduced much of the workforce by 20 percent, and prevented the replacement of departing workers. For example: 30 percent of family support positions in the Army are currently unable to be filled.

Second, the sequester is causing reductions that may be disproportionately hurtful to the programs that prevent and reduce child maltreatment, interpersonal violence, and other important family-related issues.

Third, the drawdown will pose difficult challenges in terms of reducing military opportunities in the future for African Americans to pursue careers in an environment free of many inequities we have been unable to erase in civilian society. Careers already underway will be cut short. The black service members who are unwillingly sent to the civilian job market will need much more special assistance to ensure that they find jobs and/or positions that maintain their present trajectories.

A fourth challenge that is in part an artifact of the sequester and in-part a result of the always-evolving diversity of families, especially now that it is clear that marriage is an imperfect way to define military families. Because it

doesn't address the families of single service members whose parents, or sibling may constitute their primary support system, and it doesn't address committed partners who are unmarried. In this period of financial constraint, it might be tempting to forget about families. But every First Sergeant knows that families are key in the minds of service members, families are who they worry about while they serve, families make it possible for them to serve, families support them while they serve, and families care for them when they come home, especially when they are wounded or injured. Consequently, families are far too important to ignore, but she feels that is what could happen because of the perfect storm of sequester and policy complexities.

The question and answer period provided the attendees a long awaited opportunity to both comment and ask questions of the panelist.

While the government shutdown lasted 16 days, five fewer than in 1995—the budget battles, partisanship, gridlock and Congressional inaction have left many Americans confidence shaken with respect to the government according to several recent polls. American trust in government, and belief that it can solve pressing problems is at an all-time low. However, despite highly negative views of government, particularly Congress, according to Representative SANFORD BISHOP, Jr., the recent veterans unemployment rate, the lowest since 2001, tells a very different story. Post 9/11 veteran's unemployment is now below the national average, and for the first time since 2001 veterans are being hired at a faster rate than non-veterans. This improvement demonstrates that when Congress works together for a common cause we can make a difference.

The 25th silver anniversary gala reception and awards ceremony was held in veterans hearing room 334 of the Cannon House Office Building, and consisted of both church, and club music. Church in terms of the fellowship, spiritually uplifting and awe inspiring presentation of special Congressional Awards to Sgt. James Guilford, Jr., USA, WWII (102 years old); Kenneth Guscott, U.S. Army Air Force, WWII; Hon. Federal Judge George Leighton, Ret., USA, WWII (100 years old); Dr. Rodney Atkins, Co-Chair, Annual Texas African American Soldiers Recognition Day; Johnnie Collins, Jr., Executive Director, AMVETS, Department of DC; James "Jack" Hadley, Founder & Curator of the Jack Hadley Black History Museum; Chaplain Michael McCoy, Sr., National President of the Military Chaplain Association & Associate Director Diversity Development, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; Philadelphia City Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell, Widow of Hon. Lucien Blackwell (PA-02), a decorated Korean War veteran, Ari Merretazon, 1st Vice President of Pointman Soldiers

Heart Ministry & 2012 Black Male Engagement (BME) Leadership Award Winner for Veterans Community Development, Rev. Marsena Mungin, Commissioner of Women at Veterans Are Still Warriors, Veterans Serving Veterans, Inc., Ervin "Tootsie" Russell, USA, Vietnam veteran, AMERICAL Division. Posthumous: Capt. William Cooke, USA, WWII; John D. O'Bryant, USA; Dr. Jay Carrington Chunn, II,

USMC; Eddie Lee Washington, USA, an accomplished musician & educator and Sgt. John Wesley Motley, Jr., USA, Korean War. Historic Groups, and Film: the Crispus Attucks Museum of Indianapolis, Jack Hadley Black History Museum in Thomasville, GA, and the film "Veterans of Color," produced by the Manasota Branch of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) in Florida, and music culminating with Ray Charles soulful rendition of "America the Beautiful."

Equally important, our once in a lifetime awards guest speaker was none other than Dr. Mark Attucks, the fifth generation descendant of Crispus Attucks, the first American martyr to die during the Boston Massacre on March 5, 1770, a prelude to the American Revolution, accompanied by his father Jesse Attucks, Jr., a decorated U.S. Marine who served in Vietnam. His ancestor was the first of more than 5,000 African American Patriots who served our country in the Revolutionary War. In 1888, a monument was built to honor his forefather and the events of that fateful day in our nation's history. The following poem was written and read at the dedication ceremony by John Boyle O'Reilly.

"Where shall we seek for a hero, and where shall we find a story?

Our laurels are wreathed for conquest, our songs for completed glory; But we honor a shrine unfinished, a column with pride,

If we sing the deed that was sown like seed when Crispus Attucks died.

"Honor to Crispus Attucks, who was leader and voice that day

The first to defy, and the first to die, with Maverick, Carr and Gray

Call it riot or revolution, his hand first clenched at the crown

His feet were the first in perilous place to pull the King's flag down

His breast was the first one rent apart that liberty's stream might flow

For our freedom now and forever, his head was the first laid low

Call it riot or revolution, or mob or crowd, as you may

Such deaths have been seed of nations, and such lives shall be honored for aye."

In 1998, the U.S. Mint authorized a commemorative silver dollar honoring Crispus Attucks and the Black Revolutionary War Patriots. However, two little known facts stand out: First, his name Attucks does not have any European roots. Simply speaking the current spelling is not a "slave" name. Second, from the American Revolution to the present day an Attucks has served in the military, fighting for America's freedom, making Attucks the nation's longest serving military family.

Lastly, special 25th Silver Anniversary thank yous go to Dr. Frank Smith, Jr., Dr. William Lawson, Dr. Donna Holland Barnes, Shannon Gopaul, Clyde Sims, Jr., James Gordon, Jr., Charles Henderson, Edward Daniels II, Lela Campbell, Carolyn Williams, Rev. Marsina Mungin, Cathy Santos, Chaplain Michael McCoy, Sr., Ralph "Coop" Cooper, Ernest Washington, Jr., Anthony "Tony" Hawkins, Clarence "Tiger" Davis, LeRoy Colston II, Thomas "Tom" Harris, Mildred "Milli" Smith, Morocco "Roc" Coleman, Robert "Big Bob" Blackwell, Cheryl Holland-Jones, the Educational Corporation of America (ECA), T. Mi-

chael Sullivan and the William Joiner Institute for the Study of War and Social Consequences, and Congressional staff members Ronnie Simmons, Lee Footer, Stephanie Anim-Yankah, Jonathan Halpern, Adam McCombs, George Henry, Hannah Kim, and Reba Raffaelli.

Congratulations on 25 years, during which the journey has been the destination.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOAQUIN CASTRO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. CASTRO of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on roll-call No. 91 on H.R. 3370, Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2013, I am not recorded. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

CONGRATULATING THE MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY ON ITS 45TH ANNIVERSARY AND THE OPENING OF MBDA BUSINESS CENTER AT HOUSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Minority Business Development Agency, MBDA, on its 45th anniversary and commend its commitment and success in promoting the growth and competitiveness of a critical segment of the U.S. economy, the minority business community. For the past 45 years, the MBDA has provided an essential service to this nation, working to level the playing field for minority-owned businesses.

The results speak for themselves. At the time of MBDA's creation there were only 322,000 minority-owned firms in the nation. Today, the number stands at 5.8 million; 215,000 of which are in the City of Houston. Over the last five years in particular, the MBDA has assisted firms gain access to over \$19 billion in contracts and capital resulting in the creation and retention of nearly 60,000 jobs.

Today, the MBDA is celebrating this day in my district by launching a new MBDA Business Center at Houston Community College, which was awarded a three-year \$900,000 grant to operate the MBDA Business Center. HCC's MBDA Business Center will help boost job creation and global competitiveness of minority-owned businesses across the nation. I look forward to continuing to work with MBDA and Houston Community College to create jobs locally so that we may thrive globally.

Congratulations, MBDA, on 45 years of great work. May the next 45 years be even better.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 85, I was unable to attend the vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

HONORING PATRICK DENEEN

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor an Olympic athlete from Washington State's 8th District, Mr. Patrick Deneen. Mr. Deneen just returned from representing our nation in the XXII Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia. Mr. Deneen is an incredible athlete who has reached the pinnacle of his sport and achieved a well-deserved 6th place finish in the Men's Moguls event.

I applaud both his achievement and the hard work and perseverance that paid off during these games. Simply to attend the Olympics is an honor, and to do so well is a testament to everything Mr. Deneen has accomplished. I thank him for representing America so well, and I am proud to call him a constituent and a Washingtonian.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF DR. BENJAMIN J. LAMBERT III

HON. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of my friend and former colleague in the Virginia General Assembly, Dr. Benjamin J. Lambert III, who passed away on Sunday, March 2, 2014.

Benny, as he was affectionately known by his friends, family, and constituents, was a pioneering figure in Virginia politics. We were both elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1977. In 1980, Benny became the first African American elected to represent the Commonwealth on the Democratic National Committee. In 1985, he was elected overwhelmingly to fill the seat vacated by then-Lieutenant Governor Doug Wilder. During my time serving alongside Benny, I always admired his ability to build strong relationships with his colleagues, work across the aisle, and take the tough positions that were not always politically popular but were the ones he believed were right for his constituents.

Benny was born in Richmond on January 29, 1937 to Frances and Benjamin J. Lambert, Jr. He attended Henrico County Schools at a time when they were still racially segregated. He graduated from Virginia Randolph High School in Glen Allen, just outside of Richmond. He went on to earn his undergraduate degree from Virginia Union University, and his

graduate degree from the Massachusetts College of Optometry. After graduate school, Benny returned to Richmond and practiced optometry in the Jackson Ward neighborhood. He was an active member of the Virginia National and American optometric societies and was chosen as Virginia's Optometrist of the Year in 1980.

Benny came to the Virginia General Assembly after years of political and civic activism, which helped him to become a very influential and effective legislator during his 30 year tenure. He served on several committees in the General Assembly, including Education and Health, General Laws, Privileges and Elections, General Government, and Health and Human Resources. He also has the distinction of being the first African American in the 20th century to serve on the Virginia Senate Finance Committee.

Additionally, he chaired the Subcommittees on Higher Education and General Government, the Brown v. Board Scholarship Commission, and the Lead Abatement Subcommittee. Benny also served as a member of the Joint Commission on Health Care, the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Election Process and Voting Technologies, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission, the Commission on State Employees Health Benefits Reform, and the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus. In 2010, Governor Bob McDonnell appointed him vice chair of the Commission on Government Reform and Restructuring.

Outside of government, Benny had a very active civic life. He was a member of the NAACP, the Richmond Crusade for Voters, the Jackson Ward Civic Association, the Richmond Jaycees, the North Richmond YMCA, and he served on the board of his alma mater, Virginia Union University. Benny was also an active member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

Benny devoted his career in and out of public service to the citizens of Richmond and Central Virginia, always doing what he thought was best for his community, regardless of the political consequences.

Mr. Speaker, words alone cannot express the tremendous loss to the Richmond community and the Commonwealth of Virginia with Benny's passing. Benny Lambert was a humble optometrist that achieved so much on behalf of his community during his 77 years of life. My thoughts and prayers are with Benny's wife Carolyn, his children and grandchildren, and his many friends and admirers during this difficult time.

RED BANK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUSINESS MENTOR PROGRAM

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, The American Dream is attainable with hard work and dedication. South Carolina is very fortunate to have devoted teachers who are dedicated to helping every child succeed. This week, a group of teachers and students

from Red Bank Elementary School in Lexington, South Carolina, are visiting Washington to see the government at work. I am very proud of this group of young people, as they are dedicated to achieving a bright future by participating in their school's Business Mentor Program.

The Red Bank Elementary School Business Mentor Program engages children in learning by connecting them with local mentors affiliated with businesses in the Midlands community. Leaders from Michelin Tire Corporation, Lexington Medical Center, Prysmian Group, Riverbanks Zoo and Botanical Garden, and the South Carolina State Museum have impacted close to 150 students over the past three years. By connecting the skills each student learns in the classroom to a professional environment, these bright children are given the opportunity to chase their dreams.

As a member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, I am encouraged by the opportunities these young students are able to enjoy and appreciate the business mentors for contributing to their future.

RECOGNIZING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PENSACOLA NEWS JOURNAL

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 125th anniversary of the Pensacola News Journal. During its incredible 125 year history, the News Journal has been an invaluable resource for the people of Pensacola and Northwest Florida, and we are proud to have such a first-class newspaper in our community.

In 1889, two local newspapermen, John O'Connor and John C. Witt, gathered support from the local business community to start a daily morning paper. The paper, originally known as the Daily News, was first published on March 5, 1889, with a staff of ten people working to write and produce the paper in downtown Pensacola. The newly created paper quickly began to flourish and within a decade had a daily circulation of more than 1,500. Thanks to the success of the Daily News, a rival paper, the Pensacola Journal was started by M. Loftin in March 1897. The following year, the Pensacola Journal became a daily and began directly competing with the Daily News through publication of a highly regarded afternoon daily.

For more than two decades, these two competing papers fought to expand their reach in the growing Pensacola community. While this fierce competition raised the quality of both papers, it also required constant innovation and expansion, leaving them both in precarious financial shape. In 1922, John H. Perry, a Kentucky native, arrived in Pensacola and decided to purchase the Pensacola Journal. Two years later, he purchased the Daily News and merged the two publications to under the News-Journal Company umbrella.

With the reporting resources of both papers now working together and the business acumen of the News-Journal Company leadership, the two papers began an era of unbridled growth and expansion. The News-Journal Company moved to a new larger location in downtown Pensacola; however, because of the meteoric growth of the papers, they quickly outgrew this location and began plans for further development. In order to meet the needs of this growing company, the News-Journal Company funded the creation of an entirely new street in downtown Pensacola, which was given to the City of Pensacola at no cost to the taxpayer.

With the space available in its new location, the News-Journal Company constructed one of the most modern and advanced newspaper structures in the Southeast. The company's meteoric growth continued throughout the 1950s when it added a new pressroom and brand new state-of-the-art three-unit Goss Headliner Press. By the end of the decade, the paper required even more room to operate its growing enterprise, and by 1960 the News-Journal company headquarters had more than doubled in space and added two additional press units.

Thanks to the two papers' well-earned reputation for quality journalism, the first-rate publication infrastructure, and robust circulations, the News-Journal Company was acquired by the Nation's largest newspaper publisher, Gannett Company, Inc., in 1969 for \$15.5 million. Six years after the purchase, the News-Journal building underwent another renovation, highlighted by the construction of a new plant that was on the cutting edge of newspaper technology.

After operating under the same roof for more than six decades, the Pensacola Daily News and the Pensacola Journal were combined in 1985, to create one morning newspaper called the News Journal. The News Journal carried on the proud traditions of both long-time Pensacola institutions and continued its commitment to meeting the needs of the expanding Northwest Florida community. A new Goss Headliner offset press was installed to enhance the quality of their printing operation, and the paper won several national newspaper awards for investigative reporting and environmental coverage.

In 2004, the News Journal expanded into the digital age during coverage of the devastating Hurricane Ivan. Despite the catastrophic impact of the storm, which caused nearly \$20 billion in economic damages, the News Journal was able to use its generator and one working phone line to transmit photographs and news coverage of the storm to a sister paper to post on the News Journal's website. During this difficult time, the News Journal relayed stories to millions across the world, aid their outstanding coverage earned the newspaper a Pulitzer Prize finalist nomination, the second in the paper's history.

Pensacola's proud newspaper tradition continues today as the Pensacola News Journal celebrates its 125th anniversary. The News Journal continues to provide excellent coverage to more than 31,000 daily and 47,000 Sunday subscribers. In addition, the paper's website, pnj.com, provides constant news to more than 500,000 visitors, logging more than

4.3 million page views per month. The News Journal's tradition of evolving to meet the needs of the community will continue this summer when the company moves into a new digital facility that will help the paper continue to provide the quality reporting that local residents have grown to trust.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize the 125th anniversary of the Pensacola News Journal. Freedom of the Press, as guaranteed by the First Amendment, is one of the cornerstones of our Nation's democracy, and it has helped pave the way for American success and innovation. The Pensacola News Journal is a shining example of the kind of world-class newspaper envisioned by our Founding Fathers. They have enriched Northwest Florida for 125 years, and my wife Vicki and I send our congratulations to all the staff of the News Journal, both current and former, and wish them continued success in the future.

HONORING MIDFIELD HIGH
SCHOOL AS ALABAMA'S CLASS
3A BOY'S STATE BASKETBALL
CHAMPIONS

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Midfield High School Patriots for their victory in the 2014 Class 3A Alabama State Basketball Championship. On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, I congratulate the Patriots for the tremendous athleticism and teamwork they displayed throughout the season under the outstanding leadership of Head Coach Darrell Barber and his coaching staff. Midfield High School won its second state championship in three years with its victory over Barbour County on Saturday, March 1. These young men and their coaches pursued excellence and were driven by hard work and determination during every game of the season. The Patriots finished the season undefeated in their region and lost only 7 games overall.

As the daughter of a high school basketball coach, I know this decisive victory is the result of the tremendous efforts of both the players and coaching staff of Midfield High School. Coach Barber is known for setting high expectations for his players and assisting them in meeting those expectations. The exemplary leadership and dedicated support from the coaching staff was a major factor in the success of the Midfield Patriots.

In the championship game, the Midfield Patriots defeated Barbour County by 22 points for a final score of 62-40. The Patriots forced 11 turnovers, but only gave up the ball seven times.

In the second half, the Midfield Patriots led by as many as 25 points and never less than 13 points. During the entire fourth quarter, the Patriots never led by less than 20 points. Tournament MVP Aaron Gaines scored 22 points with four 3-pointers. Alvin Murry completed the game with 15 points and 10 rebounds. Jermaine Turner scored 11 points and made eight assists and seven rebounds.

Following the victory, Head Coach Darrell Barber thanked God, his family and the Midfield community for supporting the Patriots throughout the season. He explained how the nay-sayers gave the team motivation making them more dedicated to win. "It gave us a little fuel," he told Al.com following the victory. "As you all know myself and my guys, we play with a chip on our shoulder and we coach with a chip on our shoulder to get this program recognition."

Winning the state championship is a proud moment these boys achieved through hard work and commitment. Members of the team include: Eric Billups, Kelvin Eatmon, Aaron Gaines, Ahmad Isaac, Derrick Morse, Jabril Muhammad, Alvin Murry, Joseph Murry, Jeremy Shields, Jermaine Turner, and Cedric Russell.

I would like to commend the Midfield coaching staff under the leadership of Head Coach Darrell Barber and the assistant coaches including Coaches Matthew Epps, Courtney Jones, and Charles Thomas and the bus driver, Mr. Rod Isaac.

On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, the State of Alabama and this nation, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the accomplishments of the Midfield High School Boys Basketball Team for their victory in the Class 3A Alabama State Championship. Congratulations. Go Patriots.

RECOGNIZING TECH MOLDED
PLASTICS AS PLASTICS NEWS
PROCESSOR OF THE YEAR

HON. MIKE KELLY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my heartiest congratulations to Tech Molded Plastics Inc., a family-owned injection mold company, on being named Plastics News' Processor of the Year.

Located in Meadville, Pennsylvania, Tech Molded Plastics celebrated its 40th year in business just last year. In 1973, Bill Hanaway and his wife Eva started their family business in a rented garage. Over the years, Tech Molded has expanded and diversified its business through smart investments in their people and technology. In the mid-1990s, Tech Molded erected the factory building that now houses its company headquarters. In 2011, the company expanded again by purchasing the building adjacent to it with an investment of more than \$1.5 million. Today, sons Scott, Mark, and Doug still run the family business along with their mother, Eva, manufacturing precision parts for the electronics, automotive, and medical industry. Employing 120 Pennsylvanians and generating sales of \$17.7 million, Tech Molded Plastics embodies the best of America's family-owned small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, in light of being awarded Processor of the Year, I ask that my colleagues join with me today in recognizing Tech Molded Plastics for its national leadership in the plastics industry and for the invaluable contributions of the Hanaway family to the citizens of Meadville and Western Pennsylvania.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 6, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 11

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection

To hold hearings to examine finding the right capital regulations for insurers.

SD-538

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Subcommittee on Primary Health and Aging

To hold hearings to examine what the U.S. health care system can learn from other countries.

SD-430

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight

To hold hearings to examine whistleblower retaliation at the Hanford nuclear site.

SD-628

10:15 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine open government and freedom of information, focusing on reinvigorating the Freedom of Information Act for the digital age.

SD-226

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To hold closed hearings to examine United States Special Operations Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.

SR-222

Committee on Foreign Relations

Business meeting to consider Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing, done at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in Rome,

Italy, on November 22, 2009 (the "Agreement") (Treaty Doc. 112-04) Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean, done at Auckland, New Zealand, November 14, 2009 (Treaty Doc. 113-01), Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean, done at Tokyo on February 24, 2012, and signed by the United States on May 2, 2012 (Treaty Doc. 113-02), Amendment to the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries, adopted on September 28, 2007, at the twenty-ninth Annual Meeting of the North Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) (Treaty Doc. 113-03), S. Res. 361, recognizing the threats to freedom of the press and expression in the People's Republic of China and urging the Government of the People's Republic of China to take meaningful steps to improve freedom of expression as fitting of a responsible international stakeholder, original Ukraine legislation, and the nominations of Bathsheba Nell Crocker, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs, Robert A. Wood, of New York, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as U.S. Representative to the Conference on Disarmament, Luis G. Moreno, of Texas, to be Ambassador to Jamaica, John L. Estrada, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Joseph William Westphal, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Douglas Alan Silliman, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, Mark Gilbert, of Florida, to be Ambassador to New Zealand, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to the Independent State of Samoa, and Matthew H. Tueller, of Utah, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Yemen, all of the Department of State.

S-116

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Legislative Branch

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Congressional Budget Office and the Government Accountability Office.

SD-192

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Federal Programs and the Federal Workforce

To hold hearings to examine more efficient and effective government, focusing on improving the regulatory framework.

SD-419

MARCH 12

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the situation in Afghanistan.

SH-216

9:45 a.m.

Committee on Rules and Administration

To hold hearings to examine election administration, focusing on innovation,

administrative improvements and cost savings.

SR-301

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development

To hold hearings to examine Superstorm Sandy recovery, focusing on ensuring strong coordination among Federal, state, and local stakeholders.

SD-538

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine how a fair minimum wage will help working families succeed.

SD-430

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine management, focusing on creating a 21st century government.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine certain nominations.

SD-226

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the Air Force Sergeants Association, American Ex-Prisoners of War, Fleet Reserve Association, Gold Star Wives, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Non Commissioned Officers Association, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Wounded Warrior Project.

SD-G50

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine defense health programs.

SD-192

Committee on the Budget

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request and revenue proposals for fiscal year 2015.

SD-608

2 p.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security

To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Homeland Security.

SD-138

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for Veterans' Programs.

SR-418

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine military space programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Economic Policy

To hold hearings to examine the state of United States retirement security, focusing on the middle class.

SD-538

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 1014, to reduce sports-related concussions in youth, S. 1406, to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, S. 1468, to require the Secretary of Commerce to establish the Network for Manufacturing Innovation and for other purposes, S. 2022, to establish scientific standards and protocols across forensic disciplines, S. 2028, to amend the law relating to sport fish restoration and recreational boating safety, S. 2049, to curb unfair and deceptive practices during assertion of patents, H.R. 2052, to direct the Secretary of Commerce, in coordination with the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, to conduct an interagency review of and report to Congress on ways to increase the global competitiveness of the United States in attracting foreign direct investment, an original bill entitled, "U.S. Merchant Marine Academy of Visitors Enhancement Act", and the nominations of Kelly R. Welsh, of Illinois, to be General Counsel of the Department of Commerce, Kathryn B. Thomson, of Virginia, to be General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, David J. Arroyo, of New York, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and nominations for promotion in the United States Coast Guard.

SR-253

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine national security and foreign policy priorities in the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for International Affairs.

SD-419

MARCH 13

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States Northern Command and United States Southern Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Stanley Fischer, of New York, Jerome H. Powell, of Maryland, and Lael Brainard, of the District of Columbia, all to be a Member of the

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Gustavo Velasquez Aguilar, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, and J. Mark McWatters, of Texas, to be a Member of the National Credit Union Administration.

SD-538

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Homeland Security.

SD-342

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine tribal transportation, focusing on pathways to infrastructure and economic development in Indian country.

SD-628

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Subcommittee on Emergency Management, Intergovernmental Relations, and the District of Columbia

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

SD-342

MARCH 25

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

MARCH 26

10 a.m.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of The American Legion.

SD-G50

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support

To hold hearings to examine the the current readiness of United States forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

MARCH 27

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Navy in re-

view of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

APRIL 1

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine U.S. European Command and U.S. Transportation Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To hold hearings to examine proliferation prevention programs at the Department of Energy and at the Department of Defense in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.

SR-222

APRIL 2

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support

To hold hearings to examine military construction, environmental, energy, and base closure programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

APRIL 3

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

APRIL 10

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-106

SENATE—Thursday, March 6, 2014

The Senate met at 9:33 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's prayer will be offered by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

PRAYER

His Holiness the Dalai Lama offered the following prayer:

Firstly, as usual, I am a Buddhist monk—a simple Buddhist monk—so we pray to Buddha and all other Gods.

With our thoughts we make our world. Our mind is central and precedes our deeds. Speak or act with a pure mind, and happiness will follow you like a shadow that never leaves.

May there be joy in the world, with bountiful harvest and spiritual wealth. May every good fortune come to be, and may all our wishes be fulfilled. As long as space remains, and as long as sentient beings remain, until then, may I too remain and help dispel the misery of the world.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

WELCOMING HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my pleasure to welcome to the Senate his Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. I know I speak for the entire Senate family when I express our gratitude for the prayer to open the Senate and his words of encouragement and his blessing.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama is well known throughout the world as the spiritual leader of the Tibetan people and for spreading the gospel of peace, compassion, and love to our fellow human beings. But it is the tradition when the Senate welcomes a guest Chaplain to say a few words about the honored guest.

My friendship with His Holiness has roots from a good man from California by the name of Richard Blum who has done more, in my opinion, to help the Tibetan people and His Holiness than anyone else. His Holiness often says

that he is only a simple monk born to a farming family in northeastern Tibet.

To millions of people in Tibet and across the globe, he is much more. He is a source of hope and inspiration in a world that can sometimes seem very dark. When he was only 2 years old, His Holiness was recognized as the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama. Four years later, when he was a little boy, he began his monastic education. He studied logic, art, Tibetan culture, and Buddhist philosophy, among many other things.

At age 23 he passed his exam with honors and was awarded what would be an equivalent of a Ph.D., a doctorate of Buddhist philosophy. For more than half a century, the Dalai Lama has been traveling the world raising awareness about the concerns of 6 million fellow Tibetans—as he would say: Making new friends around the world.

In Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, the Dalai Lamas, all of them, are enlightened beings who have postponed their own nirvana, or liberation from the cycle of reincarnation, in order to serve humanity. This particular enlightened being has chosen to serve humanity by spreading a message of peace.

He motivates countless people around the world, people of every faith, to practice compassion toward one another. His Holiness urges us all: "Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible." The Dalai Lama's teachings contain lessons from people around the world and certainly within this Chamber. His Holiness also advises us: "The best way to resolve any problem in the human world is for all sides to sit down and talk." Pretty simple, but very true. It is advice that those of us fortunate enough to serve our country and our constituents in the Senate should take to heart and follow.

The presence of His Holiness in this Chamber today inspires me as I hope it does all of us to renew our commitment to speak and act with a pure mind and to help dispel the misery of the world.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 309, S. 1086.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1086) to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 10:30, with Republicans controlling the first half and the majority the final half. Following morning business, the Senate will proceed to executive session. At 11:20, there will be up to three rollcall votes on executive nominations. Following those votes, there will be 2 hours of debate on the military sexual assault bills. At about 2 p.m., there will be a series of rollcall votes in relation to the military sexual assault bills. We also expect to consider additional executive nominations which may require votes later in the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. I ask unanimous consent to be able to continue as in morning business for about 3 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WELCOMING THE DALAI LAMA

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I feel honored to be a Member of the Senate and to be President pro tempore. But I cannot think of any greater honor than this morning, when I was able to introduce to the Senate an old and dear friend, His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Marcelle and I have been friends of His Holiness for decades. We count that as a great treasure, as does Senator FEINSTEIN, whom I saw earlier on the floor, another long-time friend of His Holiness, along with her husband.

I have watched him for so many years in his representation of the Tibetan people. He is joined on the floor by another Buddhist, Senator HIRONO of Hawaii. The gracious comments of Senator REID reflect how people feel about him. I think of the faith of his people and how they are moved. I told his Holiness of this story when I walked through the streets of Lhasa, Tibet, years ago, and a man holding a small child saw me and pointed to my camera and held up a picture of His Holiness.

He was risking being imprisoned for having that. But he insisted I take his picture. I did. I have given that photograph to His Holiness. I told him the story, that when we asked the man why he risked prison to show the picture of His Holiness, he said: Because people have to know. The world has to know the great faith of the Tibetan people longing for the autonomy they deserve to practice their faith.

Fortunately, they have as a symbol of that faith the Dalai Lama, a Nobel Peace Prize recipient, a man who

touches everybody's conscience. He touches this Catholic every time I see him. It goes beyond whatever faith you are. He is a gift to the world. I am so honored to have been able to introduce him here today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, with His Holiness here in the Senate Chamber, there are a number of Senators who would like to say hello to him. So based on that, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess subject to the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 9:44 a.m., recessed until 9:46 a.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREE- MENT—EXECUTIVE NOMINA- TIONS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that following action on S. 1917, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Nos. 504, 513, 640, and 547; that the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of the nominations in the order listed; that there be 2 minutes for debate prior to each vote, equally divided in the usual form, and that the votes be 10 minutes in length; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. VITTER. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FLOOD INSURANCE AND VETERANS MEDICAL CLINICS

Mr. VITTER. I rise to talk about two very important issues for the country and for Louisiana. The first is fixing the national flood insurance system, getting it right. The good news is I think we are well on a path to doing that effectively. The second is veterans medical clinics, two of which are in Louisiana. They have been held up for completely bureaucratic reasons and aren't moving forward as they need to serve the veterans in Lafayette and Lake Charles, LA, and in about 25 other locations around the country.

First, flood insurance. Only a couple of days ago the House passed by a huge margin, over 300 votes, a strong bill to permanently fix the National Flood Insurance Program. Those aspects of the so-called Biggert-Waters act passed over 1 year ago but are unworkable, clearly creating problems on the ground.

This is great news, because unless we fix those very real problems, we would have major problems on our hands in the National Flood Insurance Program, not only in Louisiana, not only in Florida, and not only in the Superstorm Sandy area, but in every State in the country—every State. It is not a question of if these issues are coming to your State, it is a question of when and exactly to what extent.

Over 1 year ago, we passed the Biggert-Waters act. That was an important reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program. It also included reforms, and many of those reforms needed to happen to stabilize the financing of the program.

What no one understood adequately then, however, is that those well-intended reforms, in practice, in implementation by FEMA, would lead to unsustainable, completely unaffordable rate increases in a significant number of cases.

That only began to be understood in the months after the bill was passed as FEMA started to implement it, as FEMA came to homeowners, came to State authorities, came to Members of Congress, and began to lay out some of the rates we would see in certain areas.

I am not talking about modest rate increases. We need modest rate increases to stabilize the financing of the program. I am talking about completely unaffordable rate increases in some cases—flood insurance rates going from \$300 a year to \$11,000 a year or \$19,000 a year or \$26,000 a year on a modest middle-class home and on a middle-class family that followed the rules every step of the way. We can't allow that to stand.

First, it is fundamentally unfair. As I said, these middle-class families followed the rules every step of the way. They built to the right elevation when they built their homes, never let their premiums lapse, and never let their insurance lapse.

In that context, for them to be hit with truly unaffordable rate increases—increases that could literally cause them to have to walk away from their home in some significant number of cases and not be able to afford to stay there—is just plain wrong.

Secondly, it is completely counterproductive, because one of the ways we have stabilized the National Flood Insurance Program fiscally is to grow the program, to have more folks paying premiums, and to have more folks covered, not fewer. This aspect of Biggert-Waters, which would lead to truly unaffordable rate increases in a significant number of cases, is unworkable from the very vantage point of the goal of Biggert-Waters to stabilize the system. So we can't let that stand for that reason either.

The good news is, because of those very real problems, both the Senate, and now the House, have come together in a major bipartisan way to fix the issue. The Senate acted about 1 month ago passing meaningful legislation. I was an original coauthor and a strong supporter. As I said a few minutes ago, the House acted two nights ago—Mardi Gras night in Louisiana terms—to take strong action to fix this program.

The House bill is stronger and more significant in several respects, mostly because the reforms in the House bill are permanent. It is not a timeout, as the Senate bill was. It is a permanent fix that creates a much higher degree of certainty and permanence immediately.

Also, the House bill is fully paid for with a modest premium increase on everybody's premiums—very modest, completely affordable—to make sure that all of these changes are paid for. Because of these aspects of the House bill, because of the permanent nature of the fix, the fact that we create certainty and predictability immediately moving forward for homeowners and real estate markets is actually the preferable approach.

I urge all of us in the Senate to take up that bill at the soonest possible moment. Specifically, I urge the distinguished majority leader to put it on the floor, to create time on the floor, so we can deal with the House bill absolutely as soon as possible.

I know there will be some attempt to obtain unanimous consent to pass the House bill immediately. Of course, I will consent; I am all for that. But, realistically, I don't think that is going to happen on the Senate floor. The Senate bill had some objectors, the Senate bill had some opponents, and so does the House bill.

Realistically, I urge the majority leader to create the time on the Senate floor to take this up and move through the process absolutely as quickly and as expeditiously as possible. That is the way it is actually going to work and that is the way it is actually going to happen.

I hope we can do that as early as next week. I strongly support our consideration of this bill on the Senate floor as early as next week.

The second national and Louisiana issue I want to discuss has to do with veterans and veterans' health care, which we have been talking about on the Senate floor for some time, specifically the need to move forward with 27 fully approved, fully authorized, VA community-based clinics that have been stalled because of bureaucratic problems. Again, these clinics are around the country: two in Louisiana, one in Lafayette, one in Lake Charles. These clinics have been approved by the VA and have been in their plan for some time. They are fully authorized. We thought they were fully paid for until, first, the VA made some bureaucratic mistakes to delay the Lake Charles and Lafayette clinics in particular; and then, out of the blue, the CBO changed the way they score all of these clinics, all of these issues, and created another bureaucratic hurdle.

Again, the good news is we came together in a bipartisan way and have a solution to those purely bureaucratic hurdles so that all of these clinics can move forward expeditiously. The House specifically passed a bill that would take care of these bureaucratic hurdles. They passed it on the consent calendar by a whopping bipartisan margin.

So I come to the floor urging all of us to do the same. Specifically, I have an amendment to the bill that also makes it even more fiscally sustainable by having a pay-for for any conceivable cost to this bill, and that is what my amendment would do.

This VA clinic legislation was in the Sanders veterans bill last week and it was in the Burr alternative. It was in both the Democratic and the Republican veterans packages. Neither of those packages passed. The Sanders bill was defeated on a budget point of order, which I supported because I don't think it is properly paid for and is sustainable both in terms of our budget and, even more important for veterans, how the veterans system works and handles its current patient load. The Burr bill never even got a vote.

We have disagreements about those larger packages. Those are real, substantial disagreements, but in the midst of that I would hope we can agree to what we can agree on, and these VA clinics certainly fall into that category. We have cleared all objections to this VA clinic piece specifi-

cally. We have addressed all issues having to do with these VA clinics, in part through my amendment at the desk. The only possible objection I know of is the fact that a larger package is not passing.

I understand there are big arguments about that larger package. Those are legitimate differences of opinion. I don't think that should stand in the way of our agreeing to what we can agree to and moving forward with an important piece of the puzzle for veterans health care—these 27 community-based clinics around the country.

In that spirit I will be asking for a unanimous consent agreement whereby we would take up the House-passed bill. Again, this House-passed bill was actually on the consent calendar, passed with a whopping bipartisan majority. We would adopt my amendment at the desk, which addresses some fiscal concerns with the bill, and we would then pass it through the process. This would be our coming together and agreeing to what we can agree on. That is what the American people want us to do as we work on all other aspects of health care and veterans' benefits covered by both the Burr and the Sanders bill debated last week.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 3521

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 3521, which was received from the House; that my amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SANDERS. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I thank very much my colleague from Louisiana for bringing forth this very important issue. Senator MARY LANDRIEU from Louisiana has also raised this issue, as have many colleagues.

My friend from Louisiana is absolutely right; this is an important issue and this is an issue that should be passed. But I would say to my friend from Louisiana that last week we brought forth the most comprehensive piece of veterans legislation in the modern history of the United States of America, and that legislation dealt with many issues raised by veterans organizations that represent millions of men and women who have put their lives on the line to defend our country.

Let me very briefly—very briefly—touch on some of those issues included in this comprehensive piece of legislation that lacked three votes. We had 56 votes. One Senator was absent and would have voted, so we need three votes to pass this. This would have addressed some of the serious problems in

the claims backlog that my friend from Louisiana is more than familiar with. It would have addressed the crisis of advanced appropriations to make sure if there is ever again another government shutdown that no veteran—disabled veteran and no veteran who is on a pension—would fail to get their check.

This legislation also included an enormously important provision expanding the caregivers program, so wives and sisters and brothers taking care of disabled vets finally get the attention they deserve.

That legislation would have addressed a terrible problem facing some 2,300 families, where men and women who were injured in Iraq and Afghanistan and can no longer have babies receive help through in vitro fertilization or other processes or adoption, if they want the help, in order to have families.

The legislation also addressed the very serious problem that many of our young men and women are not getting the education they need because States are not allowing them to get instate tuition.

That legislation addressed many other crises, which is why that legislation had the support of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, and in fact virtually every veterans organization in the country.

So let me say this to my friend from Louisiana, and I say this sincerely. What I will not do is dismember this piece of legislation. What I will do is work with my colleague and other Republicans who voted against this comprehensive piece of veterans legislation so we can bring to the floor a bill that reflects the needs of millions and millions of veterans who are hurting.

I look forward to working with my colleague from Louisiana on a comprehensive bill, but at this point I object to his proposal.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, reclaiming the floor and my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. I find that very regretful. Of course I will continue to work with the Senator from Vermont. Of course I will continue to work on that larger package, which I have been actively involved in for some time. I will continue that. But basically the Senator from Vermont is holding a very tiny piece of this hostage—a tiny piece that will have no impact whether it is in or out in terms of passage of that broader bill.

What is happening is we have a piece that on its substance, on the substance of the clinics themselves, no one objects to; a piece that passed the House

by a huge overwhelmingly bipartisan majority. Yet it is not going to pass here today or perhaps anytime soon because it is held hostage over larger fights.

I will continue to work on that broader veterans piece. I support a broader veterans bill, if it is styled the right way and if it is fiscally responsible. I support the Burr alternative. I will continue to look for common ground between that Burr alternative and the Sanders bill. But whether this clinic piece is in or out of that discussion will have zero impact on passing that piece. I honestly think it will have zero impact.

I find it very unfortunate we can't get this done in the meantime; that what my colleague considers the perfect is now the enemy of the very good, and we can't serve veterans by coming together on what we do agree on and acting in the meantime.

With that, I urge my distinguished colleague from Vermont to reconsider over time, as we work on this larger veterans bill, because we could pass this today. The House would pass the slightly modified version immediately, and we would be moving on with 27 community-based clinics around the country which veterans in all of those communities desperately need.

Additionally, I wish to thank Senator INHOFE for his active cooperation in moving these clinics forward.

Mr. President, my good friend, the senior Senator from Oklahoma, is in support of vital legislation that recently passed the House of Representatives, H.R. 3521 the Department of Veterans Affairs Major Medical Facility Lease Authorization Act of 2013. The legislation authorizes 27 Department of Veterans Affairs clinics across this country including much needed clinics in Lafayette and Lake Charles, LA.

Mr. INHOFE. I agree with my good friend from Louisiana that this legislation, H.R. 3521, is critical to providing the best treatment for our country's veterans, and I believe that it is the government's duty to honor the promises made to our veterans. In Oklahoma, roughly 340,000 veterans call our State home, attend our churches, and contribute to our communities. On behalf of Oklahoma, we are humbled by the immeasurable dedication of each and every one of them.

Therefore, this legislation also authorizes funds for an improved Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic in Tulsa, OK. The current building lacks the space to care adequately for the large number of veterans that receive their medical treatment at the facility. Due to the size of the facility, services such as the Behavioral Health services are located several miles away. Lastly, the parking lot capacity is not acceptable. This bill will improve this clinic to include primary care, women's health, imaging, specialty care, phys-

ical therapy, audiology, optometry, mental health, prosthetics, dentistry, and a pharmacy.

Mr. VITTER. Yes, it is absolutely critical for Louisiana veterans as well that both of the clinics in Lafayette and Lake Charles are authorized and finally built. To clarify, both of the Louisiana clinics are not new projects. They would actually be nearing completion, but because of bureaucratic mistakes committed by the Department of Veterans Affairs, they have faced significant delays. Two years ago, due to an unexpected change by the Congressional Budget Office—CBO—in how it estimates the cost of VA clinics, these two vital clinics were then stripped out of a VA authorization bill. Veterans in Louisiana have waited long enough. It is time for the United States Senate to act. This legislation makes it so veterans are not forced to drive a 100 miles to receive much needed services.

Mr. INHOFE. With the passage of this bill, there will be funding to improve and expand our VA clinics in 19 States across the United States, including Louisiana and Oklahoma. The facilities would then be able to provide the services that were promised to our men and women that were willing to make the personal sacrifices necessary to serve in the defense of our country. Many of our veterans have paid the price with scars, some visible while yet many go unseen such as post-traumatic stress disorder—PTSD, depression, and traumatic brain injuries—TBI. I urge our colleagues to remember that it is our Nation's duty to care for them in return.

Mr. VITTER. This legislation makes important reforms to the VA leasing process taking into account CBO concerns, and it has received vast bipartisan support in the House passing 346-1. I urge my colleagues to provide the same support for our veterans in the Senate and pass this legislation now by unanimous consent.

With that, I yield floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me reiterate my hope that the Senator from Louisiana will in fact work with us. It is my intention to see this bill gets to the floor again before Memorial Day. I think we owe it to the men and women who have put their lives on the line to defend this country to address their serious needs.

The issue of these 27 medical facilities is one of those needs, but there are many more, and I look forward to working with the Senator from Louisiana and other Senators to do what the veterans communities want us to do and to go forward on what will be the most significant piece of legislation to take care of the needs of our veterans passed in several decades.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 12 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I, too, want to lend my voice—after listening to the discussion that just occurred on the floor—because I don't think there is any group of Americans who are more deserving of our support than the men and women who have worn the uniform of this country and so bravely and courageously defended America's freedom and our democracy. I hope, such as my colleagues who spoke just a minute ago, we can come to an agreement that would allow us to do the things on which we agree.

There are so many things on which we agree—I think 80 percent of the debate last week between what the Senator from Vermont proposed and the Senator from North Carolina proposed were the same—that we ought to be able at least to do those we agree on and address some of the very vital and urgent needs our veterans community has. So I would lend my voice to supporting efforts to get things moving.

There is a bill that has come over from the House of Representatives that addresses many of these issues, not as comprehensively as was proposed last week by the Senator from Vermont and the Senator from North Carolina. Obviously, we have some issues that need to be addressed that will support and help those Americans who have borne the cost of battle for our country and defended America's freedoms, but we should work together to find that agreement and to move legislation forward that would address those needs.

THE BUDGET

Mr. President, I come to the floor, however, to talk about the pain that ObamaCare and the Obama economy are causing Americans.

CBS News/New York Times released a new poll last week finding there is widespread dissatisfaction with President Obama: 59 percent of the American people are disappointed in the President's Presidency, the poll found, while 63 percent think the country is on the wrong track.

Just 38 percent of the people in this country approve of the President's handling of the economy, and 39 percent approve of his handling of foreign policy.

When it comes to the President's signature law, ObamaCare, just 6 percent—6 percent—of the American people think the law is working well. A whopping 92 percent support changing the health care law or repealing it altogether.

In similar news, Gallup reported last month that its Economic Confidence Index was negative for every single State. In other words, the majority of

Americans in every State have a generally negative view of the economy. Only in DC—in the District of Columbia, home of too many disconnected Democratic politicians—did Gallup find a net positive view of the economy.

Needless to say, the American people are, to put it mildly, dissatisfied. Why are they dissatisfied? Because they spent 5 years waiting for the relief they were promised and it hasn't arrived.

A Pew Research Center poll in September found that 63 percent of the American people believe the Nation's economic system is no more secure today than it was before the 2008 market crash. The same poll also found the majority of Americans report household incomes and the job situation have hardly recovered at all from the recession. President Obama may have inherited a difficult economic situation, but he has had 5 years to make it better. Instead, he is making things worse.

Over the past 5 years household income has declined by \$3,600. Income inequality is at its highest point literally since the Great Depression. The number of Americans receiving food stamps has soared from over 32 million to now more than 47 million—almost 48 million Americans receiving food stamps. That means that one in five—literally one in five—American households is on food stamps. Ten million Americans are unemployed, almost 4 million of them for more than 6 months, and the labor force participation rate is at Jimmy Carter-era lows, thanks in part to literally thousands of Americans who have simply given up hope of ever finding a job and dropped out of the labor force altogether.

Then there is the President's health care law. The President promises a health care law with lower costs while allowing you to keep the plan and the doctor you like. In reality health care costs have skyrocketed and Americans have been losing their doctors and their health care plans in droves. Seniors are being hit hard by cuts in the Medicare Advantage Program and lower income seniors are being hit the hardest. Meanwhile, businesses are struggling with the law's burdensome taxes and regulations, while workers struggle with reduced hours and fewer opportunities.

A recent report from the Congressional Budget Office found that the President's health care law will reduce the number of full-time workers by up to 2.5 million over the next 10 years. Then there is last week's report from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services that found that 11 million small businesses are going to see workers have their premiums increased as a result of ObamaCare.

Yesterday, in an attempt to improve the Democrats' steadily worsening election prospects in November, the ad-

ministration announced yet another—another—ObamaCare delay for selecting health plans, as well as a pardon for the administration's union friends. It is no wonder Americans are so unhappy.

Despite the abundance of evidence that their policies have failed, the Democrats and the President continue to dismiss Americans' stories. In fact, the Senate majority leader had the gall the other day to get up on the floor of the Senate and say every single ObamaCare horror story is untrue. That is right. Instead of looking at the overwhelming evidence that ObamaCare just isn't working, and maybe rethinking his support of that law, the majority leader decided to accuse every single American who has had a bad experience with ObamaCare of lying about his or her story. Now that is a lot of denial right there.

They say the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and hoping for a different result. Yet that is exactly what the Democrats and President are doing. Instead of looking at the evidence of the past 5 years and rethinking their policies, Democrats are piling on more of the same. For Americans hurting for jobs and opportunities, Democrats have recently taken to advocating a hike in the minimum wage—a policy, I might add, that the Congressional Budget Office said would result in up to 1 million fewer jobs and a policy that would hit the lowest income workers the hardest.

Then there is the President's budget. The President's budget proposal would have been a great opportunity for the President to rethink some of these failed strategies of the past 5 years and to focus on controlling spending and promoting economic growth. Instead the President produced a political document that panders to the far leftwing of his party and eschews any type of meaningful reform.

His budget won't control spending. Instead, it increases spending by 63 percent over the next 10 years and it adds another \$8.3 trillion to our \$17 trillion debt. To pay for some of that spending, the administration is proposing even more tax increases, over \$1 trillion worth of new tax increases on top of the \$1.7 trillion in tax increases the President has already gotten since he came to office.

The administration has even backed away from changes to our broken entitlement programs, such as gradually raising the eligibility age for Medicare, which would have helped put the Medicare Program on a stronger financial footing going forward.

And as for balancing the budget, well, that is a fantasy. The President's budget doesn't even pretend to balance. With 2 years left in his Presidency, it appears the President has given up on governing and resigned himself to playing election year politics. His lame-

duck budget will further grow the Federal Government while the middle class continues to shrink.

If the President and Democrats really want to help Americans the way they claim, there are real steps they could take right now to start turning our economy around and putting Americans back to work. Instead of a job-killing minimum wage hike, they could support initiatives to reduce the cost of hiring and give businesses incentives to hire workers. Instead of perpetually extending unemployment benefits, they could support legislation, such as a bill I introduced to provide relocation resources to allow the long-term unemployed to move to areas where the job market is stronger, and strengthen Federal worker training programs. This would help give the unemployed what they really want—not months of meager government benefits but steady, good-paying jobs with the potential for growth.

Speaking of jobs, if the President wanted to create jobs immediately, he could easily do that today with a stroke of the pen that he talks about: Approve the bipartisan Keystone Pipeline and the 42,000-plus jobs it would support. All it would take is a stroke of the pen he keeps talking about.

Then there is trade promotion authority. The President did talk about trade promotion authority in his State of the Union Address, but he abandoned it shortly afterwards as a result of some Democrats' political concerns about pushing the policy in an election year. Trade promotion authority would help farmers, ranchers, entrepreneurs, and job creators gain access to 1 billion new consumers around the globe. If the President were serious about creating jobs for Americans, he would be urging the majority leader to take up this bipartisan legislation today.

Finally, the President should be supporting bipartisan efforts to repeal the costly medical device tax in his health care law, the tax on pacemakers and insulin pumps. According to a recent study, more than 30,000 jobs in the medical device industry have been affected by this burdensome provision in the law. If this tax isn't eliminated soon, even more jobs in the industry are going to be lost or sent overseas.

It is not surprising that the American people are unhappy. ObamaCare and the Obama economy have done nothing to ease the struggles Americans have faced since the recession, and instead of proposing new initiatives, the Democrats and the President continue to push for more of the same, and to double down on the same failed policies.

Well, 5 years is long enough. It is time for Democrats to abandon their failed economic experiments and to work with Republicans to pass legislation that will actually create jobs and opportunities and put Americans back

to work. We can do that. We can do that today. The President can pick up the phone he talks about and call the majority leader. Ask him to bring up any one of these initiatives I have mentioned on which there is broad bipartisan support: the Keystone Pipeline, trade promotion authority—initiatives that would grow jobs—repealing the medical device tax. There were 79 votes in the Senate on amendments to the budget last year in support of appealing that onerous tax.

There are things we can do together, that we can do today to create jobs and grow and expand this economy, lower the cost of hiring people in this country, so we can get more Americans back to work with good-paying jobs that will help lift them higher in their economic circumstances and give them a better and a brighter future. I hope that is what the President will choose to do rather than following through on so many of these election year plays, if you will, that are simply designed to help win elections come election day rather than doing something that is meaningful to help middle-class families and the American people.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF ROSE EILENE GOTTEMÖELLER TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ARMS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Rose Eilene Gottemoeller, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11:20 a.m. will be equally divided between the majority leader and the Republican leader or their designees.

The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. It is always good to see my distinguished colleague from

New Jersey presiding before the Senate.

I come to the floor to support the nomination of Rose Gottemoeller for Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security. She has been the Acting Under Secretary since February 2012. It has been 2 years now.

She is a distinguished public servant who over her long career has played a vital role in addressing the critical proliferation challenges the United States faces. In my mind, it would be difficult to find a person more appropriate to take on the variety of new and old proliferation threats we face.

Rose Gottemoeller was the chief U.S. negotiator of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with the Russian Federation. During the Clinton administration she served in the Department of Energy overseeing its nuclear proliferation portfolio. During the critical period of 1993 to 1994, she was at the National Security Council overseeing the denuclearization of Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus—a topic of some importance given the current crisis in the Ukraine.

As we consider this nomination, it is worthwhile reviewing the array of issues and nonproliferation threats we face.

In Syria, we are facing ridding the regime of its chemical weapons arsenal, seeking to keep the pressure on Assad to fulfill his commitments and verify that Syria is in full compliance with provisions to destroy its chemical weapons production, mixing, and filling. The United States, along with the rest of the international community, is engaged in the complex process to transport and safely destroy Syria's chemical weapons stockpile.

Second, on the issue of Iran's nuclear program, we are entering a critical stage in negotiations. As I noted in remarks on the floor last month, we must, in my view, maintain the pressure on Iran to dismantle its nuclear weapons program. As part of our negotiations, we must insist on the most stringent measures to verify whether Iran is in compliance with agreements it has signed. We need to ensure that any final deal that might be signed can be precisely monitored, providing us a warning signal at the first hint that Iran is seeking to achieve nuclear breakout.

Third, in terms of North Korea, the United States has stated that we will not accept North Korea as a nuclear weapons state, which would potentially unleash an arms race in the region and threaten our security and the security of our allies.

Fourth, we have to maintain and sharpen our efforts to prevent terrorists from getting their hands on and/or using nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons.

Finally, despite all of our recent difficulties with Russia, it is vital that we

continue to implement and verify the arms control treaties we have with them, particularly the New START treaty. These treaties are not something we do as a favor to Russia; they are a vital measure for limiting the potential dangerous nuclear escalation that might occur in a crisis.

For all of these reasons and many others, we need to confirm the nomination of Rose Gottemoeller so she can fully assume her new responsibilities as Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security. She has all the authority necessary to represent U.S. security interests in the international community.

Having said that, I know there are differences within the Senate about the question as to how we should approach nonproliferation issues, but regardless of those differences, I believe there are a number of issues on which we can all agree.

We can all agree that we face a new and more complex set of proliferation threats—the threat of terrorists getting their hands on nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons, the danger of regional armed nuclear adversaries, such as North Korea and Iran, using their nuclear capabilities to blackmail our partners and allies.

In response to these threats, we all agree we need a more modern and flexible nuclear enterprise and updated policies that can respond to these new threats as well as the old threats we face. I hope we can agree that we need to confirm this nominee to be in a position with authority to help update and implement those policies with the full authority of the position.

What I would say to the Senate is that at the end of the day there are some who may disagree on verification and compliance procedures or on the nature of the modernization of our program, but we cannot disagree on the significance of the threats we face and the need to have a team in place tasked with representing our security interests at the highest national level.

This is not a time to say no to confirming a qualified, experienced nonproliferation expert when so much is at stake in Syria, North Korea, and Iran, and negotiations with Russia—not when we imagine the consequences of what the spread of these weapons can bring. I urge my colleagues to confirm this nominee in the national security interest of the United States and look forward to a strong support of her nomination.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JOHANNES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak up to 7 minutes as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO JIM YOUNG

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, I rise today with a heavy heart that I pay tribute to the life and legacy of a friend, Jim Young. Jim passed away on February 15 after a courageous battle with pancreatic cancer. My thoughts and prayers are with his wife Shirley, his children, and his grandchildren during a very difficult time.

Even as we mourn his passing, though, we celebrate his deep love for his family, his tremendous commitment to his community, and his impressive example of leadership. Jim's family, friends, coworkers, and admirers from across Nebraska and our great Nation are mourning the loss of a life defined by great service and great leadership. It is my privilege today on the floor of the Senate to honor his legacy.

Jim knew the importance of hard work and commitment to purpose. That is how he climbed the ladder of success to become the president and chief executive officer and, later, chairman of the board of Union Pacific Corporation.

Jimmy's integrity was unquestioned. He loved his work. He carried his enthusiasm beyond UP as he led the American Association of Railroads and other professional organizations.

Jimmy's leadership spurred impressive reinvestment and growth in the railroad, but many would say his true accomplishment was his focus on a positive work environment and taking care of his coworkers. His concern for their well-being was genuine, and they knew it.

It would be difficult to categorize Jimmy's greatest contributions because beyond his tremendous impact on UP and the rail industry, Jim did everything. He loved our great State. He loved his hometown of Omaha. He set a shining example of what it means to give back to the community.

The list of boards on which he served and organizations for which he volunteered could literally fill a book. From the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce to the Joslyn Art Museum, from the University of Nebraska to the Salvation Army, Jimmy's commitment to serving and to improving the lives of others is just simply unmatched.

He did not take for granted his success, and he dedicated time and attention to assisting those who had less—those with fewer resources. Evidence of his generosity can be found in all corners of the community. It would range from the Jim and Shirley Young Scholarship Program at Jimmy's alma mater, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, to his involvement in the Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben and his service as a church elder and a youth sports coach.

I am so confident I speak for all Nebraskans when I say we have lost a great leader and a community partner. I feel as though I have lost a friend.

Jim gave of himself in all he did. From the boardroom to the ballfield, his presence is going to be so missed.

It is my sincere hope that Jimmy's wife Shirley, his children and his grandchildren, find comfort knowing that so many lives were made better because of his efforts.

Jim leaves a vibrant legacy of leading by example, inspiring others by believing in every single person's potential, and of dedicating both time and treasure to opening doors of opportunity for those who just needed a champion. It would be difficult to imagine a more meaningful life legacy.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair. I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

All time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Rose Eilene Gottemoeller, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security?

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 58, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 58 Ex.]

YEAS—58

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murphy
Baldwin	Hagan	Murray
Begich	Harkin	Nelson
Bennet	Heinrich	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Isakson	Reid
Boxer	Johnson (SD)	Rockefeller
Brown	Kaine	Sanders
Cantwell	King	Schatz
Cardin	Klobuchar	Schumer
Carper	Landrieu	Shaheen
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Collins	Levin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Corker	Markey	Warner
Donnelly	McCaskey	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Merkley	Wyden
Flake	Mikulski	
Franken	Murkowski	

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Ayotte	Coats	Enzi
Barrasso	Coburn	Fischer
Blunt	Cochran	Graham
Boozman	Cornyn	Grassley
Burr	Crapo	Hatch
Chambliss	Cruz	Heitkamp

Heller	McConnell	Sessions
Hoeven	Moran	Shelby
Inhofe	Paul	Tester
Johannis	Portman	Thune
Johnson (WI)	Risch	Toomey
Kirk	Roberts	Vitter
Lee	Rubio	Walsh
McCain	Scott	Wicker

The nomination was confirmed.

NOMINATION OF SUZANNE ELEANOR SPAULDING TO BE UNDER SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the Spaulding nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Suzanne Eleanor Spaulding, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary, Department of Homeland Security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there is 2 minutes of debate equally divided.

Mr. REID. I yield back the remainder of our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Suzanne Eleanor Spaulding, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary, Department of Homeland Security?

The nomination was confirmed.

NOMINATION OF JOHN ROTH TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the Roth nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of John Roth, of Michigan, to be Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there is 2 minutes of debate equally divided.

Mr. REID. I yield back the remainder of our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, there is no further debate.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of John Roth, of Michigan, to be Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

MILITARY JUSTICE IMPROVEMENT ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. 1752, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1752) to reform procedures for determinations to proceed to trial by court-martial for certain offenses under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order with respect to the consideration of S. 1752 and S. 1917 be modified so the debate time is equally divided between Senators MCCASKILL and GILLIBRAND or their designees, with all other provisions of the previous order remaining in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I have a cloture motion at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 1752, a bill to reform procedures for determinations to proceed to trial by court-martial for certain offenses under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Barbara Boxer, John D. Rockefeller IV, Tammy Baldwin, Benjamin L. Cardin, Patrick J. Leahy, Debbie Stabenow, Richard Blumenthal, Christopher A. Coons, Claire McCaskill, Jon Tester, Mark Begich, Barbara Mikulski, Maria Cantwell, Charles E. Schumer, Dianne Feinstein.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, when American men and women decide to defend our freedoms as members of the U.S. Armed Forces, they do so with full knowledge that they could make the ultimate sacrifice—the ultimate sacrifice—on behalf of our country. These are very courageous men and women. While we can't protect every member of our military from harm at the hands of America's enemies, we should at least guarantee them protection from harm at the hands of their fellow servicemembers.

The need to address the problem of sexual assault is not lost on the military officers and officials with whom I have met. They acknowledge there is a problem. I believe they are working in good faith to fix it.

The vast majority of U.S. military personnel are appalled by sexual assault in their ranks, as are their commanders. I applaud their dedication to this Nation and their fellow service-

members. I applaud the action of those who have zero tolerance for these crimes, but I am convinced that Congress must act aggressively to eliminate a military culture that not only allows sexual assault to happen but too often punishes the victims when it does.

We have already taken some action to combat the sexual assault in the Defense authorization bill. I am pleased today we will vote on two proposals for further action.

Congress cannot stand idly by while the blight of sexual assault continues. Every military leader has the responsibility to take a stand with us for a zero tolerance approach to military sexual assault, to stand by the victims of sexual assault, and to stand with the good men and women they command.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The majority leader.

Mr. REID. We are going to have two votes at 2 o'clock. I ask unanimous consent that the additional time until 2 p.m. be equally divided and controlled.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I rise today to speak about the need to strengthen our military and stand by our brave men and women in uniform by passing the bipartisan Military Justice Improvement Act.

I start by thanking all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for the seriousness with which they have approached this issue and the effort they have put into looking at the solution survivors of sexual assault in the military are asking for. I specifically thank my friends from Missouri and New Hampshire for their determination and leadership in fighting for victims of sexual assaults in our military. I look forward to voting for their bill on the floor today.

I defer the colloquy to Senator INHOFE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, when the majority leader said 1 minute ago that Congress cannot idly stand by and not do anything, I have to remind him that we have been doing so for quite some time. We have been working on the problem of sexual assault, and the reality is that Congress has been aggressive in instituting reforms to tackle sexual assault in the military since the fiscal year 2009 Defense Authorization Act. We have enacted 47 provisions, either directly addressing sexual assault or instituting reforms to the Uniform Code of Military Justice that will improve efforts to address allegations of misconduct.

These reforms have strengthened the protections and the care of the victims while preserving the rights of the accused. These historic reforms are vital

to ensuring a sound, effective, and fair military justice system.

I look at the bill we are considering that will be coming up in a short while. The bill would modify the court-martial convening authority in a way that I believe creates very serious procedural problems.

In a January 28, 2014, letter to the Department, it cited—and I am going to cite some very technical problems:

Potentially irreconcilable and could result in long delays from bringing some cases to trial and, if a conviction ultimately results, could produce still more years of appellant litigation, perhaps ultimately culminating in the conviction's reversal.

To make matters even worse, the bill includes a requirement that the new military judge advocate billets required to perform these duties must be taken from existing billets. This is what we have been fighting and arguing about, the problems that we are having now in the overall military. No billet growth is authorized in this, so it will have to come from existing billets.

I received a personal letter from the Judge Advocate General of the Army, General Darpino.

He said:

The bill would not be cost neutral. According to initial estimates, the Army would require an additional 50 judge advocate colonels along with the increase of about 200 judge advocates of other ranks and about 150 legal support staff.

That is a quote. She went on to say:

... this is happening at a time when the services are attempting to reduce their personnel costs to accommodate shrinking budgets. And that is just the impact in the Army. On November 18, 2013, the Department of Defense provided an assessment of the devastating impact of the Gillibrand bill. The Defense Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation estimates a total cost of over \$113 million per year—

That is every year—

to implement her bill in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines. Not only is her bill not executable in a cost-neutral basis, it is not possible to grow the total inventory of nearly 600 judge advocate officers and legal assistants required by the bill within the 180 days of enactment. The decision we make today will have significant consequences for the future of our military. More specifically, the bill we are debating this week threatens to tear apart what I strongly believe is the fabric of our Armed Forces: the chain of command.

I can't find people I can confide in and talk to personally, who have been in the military, who don't agree with this. I was in the Uniform Code of Military Justice when I was in the U.S. Army—not at the level of some of the Senators who have been there more recently, such as Senator GRAHAM, for example, and at a higher level. I was an enlisted man. But I was a reporter, and a lot of times the reporters, the enlisted personnel, really know more about the situation than some of the bosses. I was firmly convinced that—granted, this was years ago—you can't mess with the chain of command.

When you stop and think about what a commander has to do—he is required to take care of the physical and medical condition of our troops. He is required to oversee their training. He is required to have medical care if they are wounded, and he has to make the decision of sending our troops into combat. It is inconceivable to me, with all of these responsibilities, that he be taken out of this chain.

It is not just me. Others agree with this. I had conversation with Col. Ana Smythe of the Marine Corps. She said at a press conference:

What you don't understand if you're not in the military is that the fabric and the essence of the military is built around the chain of command. . . . If we dismantle or weaken the chain of command, we are lost.

The CMSgt Barbara Taylor said about the Gillibrand bill:

It would be devastating to the United States military. . . . A commander cannot be held responsible if he does not have the authority to act.

So I think those of us who have had military experience and who have been involved in the military understand the serious problems that would come from the adoption of this bill. I strongly recommend we defeat the Gillibrand bill.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I yield 10 minutes to Senator COLLINS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I am relieved that legislation addressing the crisis of military assault has finally been brought to the Senate Floor, and I commend the Senator from New York, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and the Senator from Missouri, Mrs. MCCASKILL, for their leadership in bringing this important issue to the forefront.

I also acknowledge the courage and conviction of Jennifer Norris and Ruth Moore—two Mainers who were sexually assaulted while serving our country. They have made it their mission to change the broken system that has not put victims first. Through their advocacy they have helped to shine a light on this crisis, and they deserve our gratitude.

In fact, as Senator GILLIBRAND and I were coming on to the floor, we were stopped by a reporter who asked us: What has made the difference? I said it had been the leadership of the Senator from New York and the Senator from Missouri, but I also pointed to the survivors of military sexual assault who have come forward and been willing to tell their stories, painful though those stories are.

Since 2004, I have been sounding the alarm over the military's ineffective response to the growing crisis of sexual

assault in the military, including the need to ensure appropriate punishment for the perpetrators of these crimes, to provide adequate care for the survivor, and to change the culture across the military so that sexual assault is unthinkable.

It was 10 years ago, during an Armed Services Committee hearing, that I first brought up the alarming increase in the number of sexual assaults in the military. Back then the attitude of the witness, GEN George Casey, Jr., then Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, testifying at that hearing was completely dismissive, even though these are serious crimes that traumatize survivors and erode the trust and discipline fundamental to every military unit. I was appalled at the reaction.

While the attitude today among the most senior military leaders is markedly different than the one that I encountered a decade ago, the work of translating the military's stated policy of zero tolerance into reality remains unfinished business. Fostering a culture of zero tolerance so that the number of assaults is greatly diminished remains a goal, not reality. Ensuring that survivors do not think twice about reporting an assault for fear of retaliation or damage to their careers is still not part of the military culture.

In 2011 I joined our former colleague, John Kerry, in introducing the Defense STRONG Act as an initial step to address this crisis. The provisions of that bill, which were signed into law as part of the fiscal year 2012 National Defense Authorization Act, provide survivors of sexual assault the assistance of advocates with genuine confidentiality, guaranteed access to an attorney, and expedited consideration for the victim to be transferred far away from the assailant.

These were helpful first steps. But more than anything, the victims of sexual assaults, the survivors, need to have the confidence the legal system in which they report a crime will produce a just and fair result. We need to encourage more reporting, and that is what Senator GILLIBRAND's bill will accomplish. This is a goal that I believe is shared by all Members of the Senate, despite our differing opinions on the best path forward for achieving these goals.

In the 113th Congress, a number of proposals have been introduced aimed at reducing the barriers to justice that many survivors of sexual assault face in our military. I have been pleased to work with both Senators GILLIBRAND and MCCASKILL toward this end. As a result of our efforts, as well as those of many others, including Chairman LEVIN and Ranking Member INHOFE, important provisions that all of us agree on have been signed into law as part of this past year's National Defense Authorization Act.

Among those provisions is legislation that I coauthored to extend the

STRONG Act to the Coast Guard. In addition, Senator MCCASKILL and I wrote provisions mandating a dishonorable discharge or dismissal for any servicemember convicted of sexual assault. We also allowed a commander to relocate an alleged perpetrator of a sexual assault crime rather than the survivor. Why should it be the survivor who has to move?

Senator GILLIBRAND and I authored a provision that eliminates the elements of the character of the accused from the factors a commander could consider, making it more like what would occur in the civilian system. Senator GILLIBRAND, Senator MCCASKILL, and I authored a provision that eliminates a commander's ability to overturn a conviction by a jury post trial for major offenses.

I mention these reforms because I am encouraged that we have taken these steps to address this vitally important issue. But more remains to be done. I remain cognizant of the fact there are strong views at the Pentagon and within this body about how we should best move forward from here and what that may mean for the military's unique legal system. But one of the criticisms which I totally reject is that we should just wait a few more months for the result of a few more studies or wait a few more years to see if the recently enacted provisions have made a difference. I strongly disagree.

How many more victims are required to suffer before we act further? How many more lives must be ruined before we take additional steps that we know are required to solve this problem? Rather than waiting for the results of yet more studies, we must continue to enact real reforms to increase the confidence of survivors to come forward and report the crimes, to ensure that perpetrators will be dealt with appropriately, and to strengthen prevention efforts right now.

Senator GILLIBRAND's bill is a reasonable proposal designed to communicate to survivors and potential perpetrators alike that when survivors are subjected to these unacceptable, horrific crimes, they will have access to a legal system that fully protects their interests. Providing our troops with that basic confidence is the least we can do.

I believe there is no question of Congress' commitment to reducing the instances of sexual assault in the military and providing appropriate redress and care for survivors. While we debate various proposals, we are united by the need for serious reforms that will strengthen the military's response to sexual assaults. But for the leadership of Senator GILLIBRAND and Senator MCCASKILL, and the courage of those survivors who were finally willing to come forward and tell their stories and know that we would listen to them, believe them, and act, we would not be here today. I am certain that our work

will reduce the unnecessary suffering and injustice felt by those who have survived these horrific crimes.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I yield time to the Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I thank the Senator from New York.

The Defense Department has been promising Congress and the American people for a long period of time that they are working on this problem of sexual assault, and we are still looking for results, and the statistics get worse. So I believe what Senator GILLIBRAND is saying with her legislation is enough.

I am proud to be a partner in this effort. It fits into an overall principle of government that I have: Greater transparency brings accountability. And I believe this legislation will make this whole problem much more transparent and, with it, accountability to hopefully get the issue solved.

I appreciate the fact that a large number of commonsense reforms were included in the national defense authorization. These changes were long overdue. However, we are past the point of tinkering with the current system and hoping that does the trick. We have had promises about tackling the problem of sexual assault within the current system for years and years, but the problem is still not any better and, statistics show, is getting worse. We don't have the luxury of time to try some new reforms of the current system and hope they have an impact. We have had those promises before.

What is more, the current system appears to be part of the problem. I will elaborate on that.

We know from the recent Defense Department report that 50 percent of female victims stated they did not report the crime because they believed nothing would be done as a result of their reporting; 74 percent of the females and 60 percent of the males perceived one or more barriers to reporting sexual assault; and 62 percent of the victims who reported sexual assault indicated they perceived some form of professional, social, and/or administrative retaliation.

We can talk about protecting victims, and we can enact more protections, as we did in the national defense authorization, but the fact remains that the current structure of the military justice system is having a deterrent effect on the reporting of these assaults. If sexual assault cases aren't reported, they can't be prosecuted. If sexual assault isn't prosecuted, predators will remain in the military, which results in the perception that sexual assault is tolerated in this culture. That destroys morale and it destroys lives. If an enemy tried to sow that kind of discord among our military, we

wouldn't tolerate it, but we are doing it to ourselves.

The men and women who have volunteered to place their lives on the line deserve better, and our military readiness obviously demands it.

Taking prosecutions out of the hands of commanders and giving them to professional prosecutors who are independent of the chain of command will help ensure impartial justice for the men and women of our forces.

I know some Senators will be nervous about the fact that the military is lobbying against this legislation. I have the greatest respect for our military leaders, but Congress has given the military leadership more than enough time to fix this current system. We can't wait any longer. We should not be intimidated by people coming to the Hill because of their stars and ribbons. They deserve our respect but not deference to their opinion.

We also hear that this measure will affect the ability of commanders to retain "good order and discipline." Our legislation in no way takes away the ability of commanders to punish troops under their command for military infractions. Commanders also can and should be held accountable for the climate under their command. But the point here is that sexual assault is a law enforcement matter, not a military one.

If anyone wants official assurances that we are on the right track, we can take confidence in the fact that an advisory committee appointed by the Secretary of Defense supports these reforms. There is an organization appointed by the Secretary of Defense which goes by the acronym DACOWITS—the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services—which voted overwhelmingly in support of each and every one of the components of the Gillibrand bill.

DACOWITS was created back in 1951 under Defense Secretary Marshall. The committee is composed of civilian and retired military women and men appointed by the Secretary to provide advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to the recruitment and retention, treatment, and well-being of our highly qualified professional women in the Armed Forces. Historically, the recommendations by DACOWITS have been instrumental in effecting changes to laws and policies pertaining to women in the military. This isn't an outside advocacy group or ad hoc panel; it is a longstanding advisory committee handpicked by the Secretary of Defense, and it supports the substance of this legislation.

It is easier to support incremental reform. In fact, it is also prudent to try small reforms before making bigger changes. I understand why some Senators are nervous about a total overhaul of the military justice system. It isn't something I approach lightly.

However, we have waited for years as various initiatives to tackle this problem have been tried.

When we are talking about something as serious and life-altering as sexual assault, we cannot afford to wait any longer than we already have. The time has come to act decisively to change the military culture. We need a clean break from the system where sexual assault isn't reported because of a perception that justice won't be done. Our men and women serving this country deserve nothing less, and they deserve it now. They shouldn't have to wait any longer for justice.

For those reluctant to take this step, I would say that if the more modest reforms proposed by others prove insufficient and we have to come back and enact our reforms at a later time, how will you justify your vote today?

Now is the time for bold action, and I urge my colleagues to join in the effort.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I yield to the Senator from Montana, followed by the Senator from Kentucky.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. WALSH. Madam President, I thank Senators GILLIBRAND and MCCASKILL for their dedication and commitment to dealing with sexual assault in the military and for bringing a serious problem to the forefront of Congress. Their work on the 2014 National Defense Authorization Act helped reform the Uniform Code of Military Justice. But I believe we must do more.

My perspective on prosecuting military sexual assault comes from my 33 years in the Montana National Guard. My view on this is simple: The current system is failing the men and women in uniform. And failure is unacceptable.

While no legislation is perfect, I believe we must fundamentally change how we deal with sexual assault in our military. While I support the reforms that passed last year, we have moved too slowly. Today's debate is about where we go from here.

In the Armed Forces today, a military commander is ultimately responsible for the prosecution of these crimes. In the Montana National Guard, except when federalized, we did things differently. If the unimaginable happened, the prosecution of sexual assault would occur outside the purview of a military commander. Senator GILLIBRAND's Military Justice Improvement Act removes prosecutions from the purview of military commanders—much like the Montana National Guard system.

One of the arguments I have heard against this bill is that if we shift the prosecution of sexual assault outside

the chain of command, military leaders will somehow lose their authority on other matters. As a retired military commander, I am confident this is not the case. I have never found myself in a situation with the units I commanded where discipline and devotion to a mission was jeopardized by compliance with the civilian justice system. I am not talking hypotheticals. The chain of command's function is not a mystery to me. I lived it. And it is hard to convey how angry you feel when the system fails your fellow soldiers.

Today's debate is part of a broader effort to improve our military and the lives of those who have served—from the justice system, to the VA claims backlog, to ensuring that veterans find jobs when they complete their service. We have the opportunity to guarantee justice for the men and women within our military and to correct its failures. Now it is time to get it done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

Mr. PAUL. William Wilberforce wrote:

Having heard all this you can choose to look the other way, but you can never again say, "I did not know."

Having heard the stories of sexual assault in the military, we can look away, but we can never say that we have not heard of this problem, that we are going to ignore this problem. I don't think anybody in this body wants to, but the definition of "insanity" is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. We have known that sexual assault in the military has been a problem decade after decade. I think it is time we tried something new.

When I heard of a young military recruit from my State—a young woman who was raped, attacked, beaten to a pulp, three nerves pinched in her back, her legs and hips bruised such that she couldn't walk, and she considered suicide—when I heard her rape kit was lost and the case was dismissed, I was disheartened. Her assailant is still in the Navy. We have to do something different. We cannot ignore this problem.

To me it is as simple as this: Should you have to report your assault to your boss? This is what we are talking about. What if your boss goes drinking with the person who assaulted you, who is friends with them? Wouldn't we want the person you complained to completely outside the chain of command? Wouldn't we want to have lawyers involved whose specialty is this type of situation?

I am not saying it is easy. Guilt and justice are sometimes hard to find. But we have evidence that people don't trust the system. They say there are 26,000 episodes of unwanted sexual contact. They say 50 percent of the victims, though, go unreported. There are a lot of reasons for this. Even in the

private world, people are afraid or ashamed or don't feel they can talk about this publicly. But we should do everything possible to make sure it is easy to report this because we don't want this to occur.

This doesn't mean, for our men and women who serve, it is a problem that overwhelms the military. It is still a small percentage. But for the 26,000 people having this happen to them, we need to come up with a solution.

What Senator GILLIBRAND has done is an idea whose time has come. It is about justice for victims, but it also is about finding due process. Getting this out of the arbitrary nature of a commander making a decision and into a court with judges where there will be arguments on both sides I think protects the innocent as well as finds justice for the accused.

I overwhelmingly support this bill and this crusade Senator GILLIBRAND has led. I suggest to the Senate that we understand the problem goes on, and tweaking this problem or nibbling around the edges and saying: Oh, we are just going to wait and see if what we are doing is better—we have been doing this for 20 years. I think the time is now to make the change.

I stand with Senator GILLIBRAND, and I wholeheartedly support her bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. I yield 8 minutes to the Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. REED.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, there is no doubt that when a sexual assault occurs in a military unit, when a servicemember is a victim or a perpetrator of sexual assault, then we all fail. It is not just the military chain of command; it is all of us. That is why the efforts of Senator MCCASKILL and Senator GILLIBRAND have been so critical and important. They have galvanized this debate. They have forced action where action needs to be taken. Now the question is, What is the pathway forward that will achieve what we all want—the reduction of sexual assault in the military forces?

I have expressed before concerns with the approach Senator GILLIBRAND has taken because I firmly believe, based on experience in the Active military, leadership has to be involved at every stage—recruitment, training, evaluation, promotion, and retention. When we take the commanders out of any of these steps, we diminish their effectiveness in every one of these steps. Removing the commander from these responsibilities, in my view, will weaken his or her effectiveness, and the test of that effectiveness is not in the courtroom, it is on the battlefield, and the consequences of such weakness could be significant to the forces of the United States. So we have to continue

to maintain a system that recognizes the need for constant attention to this issue, constant leadership and command focus, on this issue.

We also have to recognize that the proposal we are putting forward today—and I think this is critical—is not just about sexual assault; it covers a wide range of offenses, offenses like larceny of personal equipment in the barracks. It covers a whole host of crimes that are not directly related to sexual assault.

As a result of this bifurcated system that would be created, some traditional charges, such as AWOL, have been reserved for the commander, but a significant amount of charges has been referred to this new process. This bifurcated system will cause practical problems that will undercut the effectiveness of units to perform their mission and to do what is necessary to protect their soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines.

The service JAGs—very experienced legal officers who have served in the uniformed military justice system in the United States—have pointed out several defects.

First, the proposal fails to address the complexity of these cases. Some cases will be referred to the special prosecutor, while others will remain with the commander, creating a multiplicity of venues, multiplicity of investigations, and perhaps conflicting decisions; all of which not only impose significant costs, but I think interferes with the sense the soldiers should have that they know what the system is.

Second, this proposal takes away one of the most significant aspects of the military justice system; that is, nonjudicial punishment. For example, as I illustrated before in my remarks, you could have a barracks thief who steals an iPhone and an iPad that accumulates to a certain amount to trigger a charge that has to be referred to a special prosecutor. If that special prosecutor declines to prosecute, then it goes back to the company commander. But the company or the battalion commander, given the level of jurisdiction, cannot now impose nonjudicial punishment for the simple fact that the accused has to accept the punishment, but if there is no way he or she can be court-martialed, that punishment will not be accepted.

For offenses that are properly tried or adjudicated through the Article 15 process, those offenses will literally not only go unpunished, but the whole climate of command could be significantly changed.

Third, there is a constitutional issue, which is that under this proposal, you have the creation of a single office—and again I will refer to it generically as special prosecutors—with the authority to appoint counsel—defense counsel—and members of courts-martial panels, and that raises constitutional problems.

Let me conclude by saying that we have had a vigorous debate, and it has been an important debate, but we have had the opportunity since that debate to get the results of the Role of the Commander Subcommittee from the Response Systems Panel. These are objective members—in fact, many of them have for years been in the forefront of urging sensible reforms in the military, of being the vanguard in protecting victims in many different forms. They have concluded that the commander should remain within the loop, should remain as Senator MCCASKILL, Senator AYOTTE, and Senator FISCHER proposed, with corrections and with improvements that I think are very appropriate.

I would urge that we support strongly the provisions Senators AYOTTE, MCCASKILL, and FISCHER have proposed. They strengthen the system. But I must say that to remove the commander as proposed would in the long run be detrimental not only to the effectiveness of the military forces but detrimental to our common goal, which is to reduce sexual assault in the military of the United States. If we do not, if we allow it to continue—it is a corrosive force that will undermine our forces more than anything else.

Committed to that goal, I think we should support Senator MCCASKILL, and I am pleased to do so.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I yield time to the Senator from California.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you very much, Madam President.

I thank Senator GILLIBRAND for her extraordinary leadership.

Today you will hear two things: One is to support both bills, which I believe we should do, and one is an attack on the Gillibrand bill, which for the life of me I do not understand. I am not going to filibuster Senator MCCASKILL's bill because I think it is important. I am not going to filibuster Senator GILLIBRAND's bill because it is the one opportunity to bring about the change that the survivors of rape and the survivors of sexual assault are pushing for.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the names of 45 organizations that are supporting the Gillibrand bill.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

VETERAN & WOMEN'S GROUPS SUPPORTING THE MILITARY JUSTICE IMPROVEMENT ACT

Numerous organizations support the Military Justice Improvement Act, including:

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), Vietnam Veterans of America, Service Womens Action Network, Protect Our Defenders, National Women's Law Center, National Task Force to End Sexual and Do-

mestic Violence Against Women, National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, National Research Center for Women & Families, Jacobs Institute of Women's Health, Our Bodies Ourselves, International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, Members of the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, 9to5, Baha'is of the United States, Equal Rights Advocates, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Federally Employed Women, Feminist Majority, Futures Without Violence, General Federation of Women's Clubs, GetEqual, Girls, Inc.

Hindu American Seva Communities, Institute for Science and Human Values, Inc., Jewish Women International, Joyful Heart Foundation, National Capital Union Retirees, National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence, National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, National Congress of Black Women, Inc., National Council of Churches, National Council of Jewish Women, National Council of Women's Organizations, National Organization for Women, National Women's Health Network, OWL-The Voice of Midlife and Older Women, Peaceful Families Project, Presbyterian Women in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Inc., Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, SPART*A, an LGBT Military Organization, The National Congress of American Indians, United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries, V-Day, Woman's National Democratic Club, Women's Research & Education Institute, YWCA USA.

Mrs. BOXER. So when people stand here and start attacking that bill and saying how awful it is, I want them to remember just a few of the organizations that stand with Senator GILLIBRAND: the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America—do you want to listen to the bureaucrats or do you want to listen to the people who know what is going on—the Vietnam Veterans of America; the Service Women's Action Network; the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; the National Congress of Black Women, Inc.; the YWCA. There are 45 organizations.

I have a very strong message for colleagues: Do not filibuster justice. Do not filibuster the Gillibrand bill. Do not filibuster the McCaskill bill. My goodness, these women deserve an up-or-down vote on their bills. And the only reason I think some are forcing a filibuster on the Gillibrand bill is they know we have a majority. Just how strong it is we will find out. But what a sad day, when 17 women in the Senate support both approaches—17 of the 20 women—that we are facing a filibuster on the Gillibrand bill. Do not filibuster justice. It is pretty simple. You are going to hear a lot of words from politicians like me. Fine. But I think it is important to listen to the words of the victims and find a little humility—stories of victims such as Amando Javier, who served in the Marine Corps in 1993. He was brutally raped and physically assaulted by a group of fellow marines. Ashamed and fearing for his life, he kept his rape a secret for 15 years. Do you know what it is like to keep a secret such as that, to suffer the pain and humiliation for 15 years.

When he finally found the courage to share his story with a friend, he decided to write it down. I want you to listen to his words:

My experience left me torn apart physically, mentally and spiritually. I was dehumanized and treated with ultimate cruelty by my perpetrators. I was embarrassed. I was ashamed. I didn't know what to do. I was young at the time, and being part of an elite organization that valued brotherhood, integrity and faithfulness made it hard to come forward and reveal what happened.

Well, here we are two decades later and no one has been held accountable for that heinous crime. And it goes on. I appreciate Senator PAUL reading what happened to one of his constituents. But you will hear the voices of the status quo in this body, and let me tell you, they are in great company, the voices of the status quo, the ones who are filibustering the Gillibrand bill. Let me tell you some of the voices of the status quo—and notice this: They are Republicans and Democrats.

Dick Cheney said in 1992: "We've got a major effort underway to try and educate everybody . . . let them know that we've got a zero-tolerance policy."

Secretary Bill Perry: "For all these reasons, we have zero tolerance for sexual harassment."

This has been going on for 20 years, and that spirit is being continued right here today from those who want to filibuster the Gillibrand proposal.

Secretary Cohen: "I intend to enforce a strict policy of zero tolerance."

Secretary Rumsfeld: "Sexual assault will not be tolerated."

Secretary Gates: "I have zero tolerance."

Secretary Leon Panetta: "We have no tolerance for this."

Secretary Hagel: "These crimes have no place in the greatest military on earth."

Words are swell. Who can argue with these words? But let's look at where we are today in terms of what is actually happening on the ground. I say to the voices who are standing in the way of an up-or-down vote on KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND's bill: Look at these facts. There were 26,000 cases of sexual assault in the military in 2012, and 1.2 percent of them have been prosecuted. This white circle represents the 26,000 cases. This thin sliver in green that you can barely see represents the amount that was prosecuted. Do you know what happens to these folks who get out? They continue their activities either in the military or on the streets of our cities, our counties, and our States. Yet these voices of the status quo in this Senate will tell you "oh my goodness, we cannot make this change" even though 45 organizations, including the Iraq and Afghanistan fighters, are telling us to do so.

Here is the deal. This is another way to look at it. There were 26,000 estimated sexual assaults in 2012. We have a 90-percent problem—90 percent of

these cases go unreported. Guess what, folks. Are you surprised they are afraid to go to their commander, those of you who are supporting this status quo? Just ask them. Do not listen to Senator GILLIBRAND or to me. We are not in the military. The people who are in the military are telling us, begging us, along with every organization that stands for the survivors: Please change it.

Now I ask you, if there was a rape in your office in the Senate and somebody upstairs yelled and screamed and you went up there as a Senator, what would you do? Would you decide whether the case ought to be prosecuted or would you call the police? Would you call the experts?

I do not think CEOs ought to determine whether a case of rape should be prosecuted. Do you? I don't think so. Yet that is what you are supporting here with the commander who knows all the players. Suppose he goes out to drink with the perp, knows him well, thinks he is a great fighter. I know Senator McCASKILL is trying to fix these problems around the edges—fine—but let's get to the heart of the matter.

In summation, we can continue the 20 years of baloney and not make the change that needs to be made under the important Gillibrand bill. What we do is we say we are keeping this in the military, but we are allowing the experts to make the decision. That is fair to the accuser, and that is fair to the accused. As a matter of fact, we have people supporting us because they believe it is fair to both sides, not just the accuser.

So let's not filibuster justice. Do not stand here and say how you care about this and then filibuster the Gillibrand bill because you will be judged on that vote. If you have problems with the details of the bill, vote against the bill but do not filibuster justice.

This is a chance we have, an opportunity we have. Yes, it will be revisited over and over because these problems, if we do not make these changes, are going to continue. Today is an amazing moment in time that we could come together and allow an up-or-down vote on the Gillibrand proposal. We wouldn't be filibustering justice, and I think we would bring some needed change—needed change, Madam President, that all the leading named organizations I have put in the RECORD endorse. I hope we will stand with those victims, stand with those providers, and stand with those advocacy groups and be humble and not say we know better than they.

Thank you very much, and I thank Senator GILLIBRAND.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. McCASKILL. I yield 10 minutes to the Senator from Michigan, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Mr. LEVIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, first let me thank Senator McCASKILL for her terrific leadership on this matter and Senator AYOTTE and others on our committee who worked so hard to strengthen our laws against sexual assault and strengthen the ability of our commanders to act, as we did in our defense authorization bill and in the second bill we will be voting on today.

We will be voting today on two bills regarding sexual assault in our military, and I believe the strongest, most effective approach we can take to reduce sexual assault is to hold commanders accountable for establishing and maintaining a command climate that does not tolerate sexual assault. In order to do that, we must maintain the important authority to prosecute sexual assaults that our military commanders now have, and we must add greater accountability for those commanders.

The evidence shows that removing this authority from our commanders would weaken, not strengthen, our response to this urgent problem. That is why I believe the bill offered by Senator GILLIBRAND and others, though offered in the hope that it would strengthen our efforts against sexual assault, will in fact have the opposite effect.

In the last year we have learned that in scores of cases during the period study, commanders prosecuted sexual assault cases that civilian attorneys had declined to prosecute. We have learned our military allies, whose policies have been cited in support of removing commanders' authority, generally made their changes to protect the rights of the accused, not the victim. We have learned there is no evidence that their changes resulted in any increase in reporting of assaults. So when the allies made the change—not to protect victims but to increase the rights of the accused—it did not lead to any increase in the reporting of assaults.

On January 29, we received the conclusions of a report from the Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel—an independent panel of legal and military experts of diverse backgrounds that was established by Congress to advise us on how to respond to this issue. A subcommittee of the panel addressed the role of commanders in prosecuting sexual assaults, the very issue we will be voting on today.

Here is what that subcommittee concluded:

There is no evidentiary basis at this time supporting a conclusion that removing senior commanders as convening authority will reduce the incidence of sexual assault or increase sexual assault reporting.

The subcommittee reached that conclusion, despite the fact that many

members began the process sympathetic—if not outright supportive—of the notion that we should remove the commanders' authority.

Here is what one member of the subcommittee, former Congresswoman Elizabeth Holtzman, said:

I've changed my mind, because I was just listening to what we heard. I started out . . . thinking, why not change it and now I am saying, why change it. . . . Just turning it over to prosecutors doesn't mean you are going to get the results you are looking for.

Congresswoman Holtzman authored the Federal rape shield law when she was a Member of Congress.

Another member of the subcommittee, former Federal Judge Barbara Jones, said that if you remove this authority from commanders "there is no empirical evidence that reporting is going to increase. . . . If I were persuaded that removing the convening authority would encourage victims to report then this would be a different story. But I am not persuaded of that."

Listen to Mai Fernandez, the executive director of the National Center for Victims of Crime. She was a member of the panel, and this is what she said about the proposal to remove commanders' authority to prosecute:

When you hear it at first blush, you go, "Yeah, I want to go with that." But when you hear the facts, like you would in a case, it just doesn't hold up.

The women making those statements had no stars on their shoulders; they are not Pentagon insiders. They are members of the independent panel that we in Congress tasked with reporting to us on these issues.

Underlying the crisis of sexual assault in our military is a problem of culture, a culture that has been too permissive of sexual misconduct, too unaware that a person who is successful in his professional life may also be a sexual predator. It is a culture too prone to ostracize or even act against those who report sexual assaults.

The military has unique tools to address those problems. Foremost among those tools is the authority of the commander to establish a command climate by giving orders and enforcing discipline. At every time in our history when our military has faced such cultural challenges—such as the challenge of ending racial discrimination in the 1940s and 1950s or the challenge of ending don't ask, don't tell in our time—commanders with the authority to initiate courts-martial have been essential in achieving change.

But we are not going to achieve change if—at the same time we demand of our commanders that they change the military culture to take on the sexual assault problem—we remove their most powerful tool to achieve that change.

Senator GILLIBRAND's bill creates a new, separate disposition authority to

deal with the sexual assault and other serious crimes. Our focus throughout this debate has been, rightly, on how to improve our approach to sexual assault. As a matter of fact, sexual assault would make up just a fraction of the cases this new disposition authority would deal with.

In a letter to me, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Jessica Wright recently reported in fiscal year 2012, the Department of Defense estimates it handled more than 5,600 cases that would be referred to this new disposition authority if it were created, but two-thirds of those cases did not involve sexual assault. The Gillibrand bill would shift dozens of our top military lawyers to a new authority that would spend only one-third of its time dealing with the problem we are trying to solve, the problem of sexual assault.

The National Defense Authorization Act, which we enacted just a few months ago, provides our commanders with additional tools to meet this challenge and important new protections for victims. It provides victims of sexual assault with their own legal counsel specially trained to assist them. It makes retaliation a crime when that retaliation is against victims who report a sexual assault. It requires that the inspector general investigate all complaints of retaliation. It requires that any decision by a commander not to prosecute a sexual assault complaint will have an automatic review by a higher command authority—in nearly all cases by a general or flag officer and in certain cases by the service Secretary, the highest civilian authority in each service.

The second bill we are going to vote on today—offered by Senators McCASKILL, AYOTTE, and others—provides additional protections to those we just added in the National Defense Authorization Act. The McCaskill-Ayotte bill ensures victims have a voice in deciding whether their cases will be prosecuted in the military or civilian justice system. Indeed, it requires that special victims' counsel established by the National Defense Authorization Act advise victims on the pros and cons of those two approaches. It requires that commanding officers be graded on their success or failure in creating a climate in which there is no tolerance for sexual misconduct and in which victims can come forward without fear.

These additional protections in the McCaskill-Ayotte bill help us answer the key question of how can we best strengthen our protections against military sexual assault. I believe we do so by empowering victims and by holding our commanders accountable, but we threaten to weaken those protections if we undermine the authority of the very commanders who must be at the heart of the solution. Powerful evidence should lead us to the conclusion

that we should not remove the authority of commanders to prosecute these cases.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I yield my time to the Senator from New Hampshire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I rise in strong support of Senator GILLIBRAND's Military Justice Improvement Act. I wish to recognize her and all of the Senators who have worked so hard on this legislation and all of the groups who have been involved.

I was very proud to be an original cosponsor of the legislation, and after more than 1 year of meeting with military sexual assault survivors and bringing attention to this ongoing crisis, I am encouraged by the historic opportunity we have today.

As Senator LEVIN said, this is an important debate for us to be having. I certainly applaud Senators McCASKILL and AYOTTE and everyone who has been involved in this effort because I think it sends a very important message to our leaders in the military and to those who would perpetrate crimes of sexual violence.

Today we not only have the opportunity to make meaningful, commonsense reforms to our military criminal justice system but we also have a chance to send a very powerful message to the tens of thousands of victims—many of whom have been suffering quietly for decades—that what happened to them is not acceptable; it is criminal, and it will no longer be tolerated.

Let's be clear: Sexual assault is a crime. It is not an accident. It is not a mistake. It is a violent criminal act often perpetrated by serial offenders. We can't allow sexual assault perpetrators to escape justice in any setting but particularly when these assaults occur within our Nation's military.

Unfortunately, it has been 23 years since the Tailhook scandal, and despite the repeated assurances that the chain of command is committed to addressing this issue, we are no closer to a solution. How long will we wait? How many tens of thousands of our sons and daughters will be victims? How many will be victims without reliable access to justice?

Today we have a rare opportunity to end one of the fundamental structural biases that persists in our military criminal justice system. This is not about undermining battlefield command or good order and discipline. No one wants to do that. This is about access to justice.

Survivors overwhelmingly tell us that the reason they don't come forward is because they don't trust that chain of command. They don't trust

that the chain of command will handle their case objectively, a fact that has been repeatedly acknowledged by military leaders during Armed Services Committee hearings. Placing the decision on whether to go to trial in the hands of experienced military prosecutors is a commonsense reform that will go a long way toward promoting transparency and accountability within our system.

Our military's tradition of honor and respect is too important to continue to be plagued by the status quo. We strengthen our military when victims of sexual assault have the confidence to come forward and report crimes and we remove fear and stigma from the process. We strengthen our military when we are able to deliver fair and impartial justice on behalf of victims.

Victims' eyes are on us today. There is strong bipartisan support behind the Gillibrand bill. It is on full display. I certainly urge all of my colleagues to support this measure, and let's make meaningful reform to what has happened for too long to victims of sexual assault in the military.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. McCASKILL. Madam President, I rise, together with my colleagues Senator GRAHAM and Senator AYOTTE, and ask that the Chair advise when we have used 20 minutes of time. We are going to engage in a colloquy about this important decision that is in front of the Senate.

It is, in fact, with great humility that I come to this policy debate. I don't think anyone in the Senate has spent more time in a courtroom putting perpetrators in prison who have committed sexual crimes. I don't think anybody has spent more time with victims of sexual assault. There is an incredible amount of pressure that you feel when you walk into a courtroom knowing that victim has placed trust in you to bring the evidence forward, and I am forever marked by that experience. It is with that experience that I have become convinced that the policy changes that are being advocated will not work for victims.

In fact, it is clear that when these changes have been enacted other places, reporting has not increased. It is clear that right now we have more cases going to court-martial over the objections of prosecutors than the objections of commanders. Today there is a court-martial ongoing where a prosecutor walked away from the serious charges and the commander said go forward. There have been almost 100 cases over the last 2 years where prosecutors said this case is too tough and the commanders have said, no, we have to get to the bottom of it. We can't let the commanders walk away. We cannot let the commanders walk away.

There is nothing in the Gillibrand proposal that provides additional protection from retaliation.

I ask Senator GRAHAM: If someone walks back into their unit after being victimized and the unit knows the commander has said this case is going forward, how would that contrast to walking back into his or her unit when the unit knows some lawyer in Fort Belvoir—hundreds of miles away—has said whether this case should go forward? I am trying to figure out how removing the commander provides any additional protection from retaliation to that victim.

Mr. GRAHAM. That is a very good question. The commander in the military is just not somebody. The man or woman in charge of that unit is the person to whom we give the ultimate authority to decide life-and-death decisions for that unit. So if we deal the commander out, we have a rape in the barracks. The worst thing that could happen in a unit is for the commander to say, This is no longer my problem. It is the commander's problem. Every commander I have met wants it to continue to be their problem, because when we have one member of a unit assaulting the other, it affects everybody in that unit. And the person we as a nation choose to run the finest military in the world—the commander—has the absolute authority to maintain that unit for readiness. If we don't give that commander the tools and hold them accountable, that unit will fall apart right in front of our eyes, because some lawyer somewhere is no substitute for the commander who is there every day.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. I would say to Senator AYOTTE, I am also struggling with some of the practical problems in this policy, and one of the things I can't figure out is why the amendment limits the ability to add any additional resources. It strictly prohibits the military from bringing additional resources to bear on this problem, which is counterintuitive to me. If the goal here is to do our very best job to protect victims, and the practical problem is we do not have enough of the level of JAG officers right now to set up these offices on a global basis, which means things are going to slow down because we don't have enough—I know the Senator from New Hampshire has been a prosecutor. Certainly there is nothing harder for a victim than justice delayed.

So in addition to it not increasing reporting, in addition to it not protecting from retaliation, in addition to removing commanders from their accountability, we also have some real practical implications.

Ms. AYOTTE. I thank the Senator from Missouri for her leadership. She is correct. She has prosecuted more of these cases than I think anyone in this body, so I appreciate her leadership.

Under the system that is put forward under the Gillibrand proposal—let me

thank her for her passion about this issue as well—we know it prohibits funding and personnel. How does that work when we are going to set up a whole new system? I worry about the deployability of this system. When someone is in Iraq or Afghanistan and they are a victim, where are these JAG lawyers going to be? Will they be in Washington making these decisions? But we won't be able to put any additional resources toward it. So is this system still deployable?

There are other problems with implementation. There are big concerns about the right to a speedy trial. If that happens, as we know, then the defendant can't be prosecuted.

Eliminating the ability to plea bargain—we heard Senator REID speak about that, because this proposal eliminates two-thirds of the crimes from the UCMJ out of the authority of the commander, well beyond this issue of sexual assault, which we are committed to addressing. It also creates serious due process concerns. So there are serious implementation questions about this.

I wish to raise a question that keeps coming up: We need to hold the commanders more accountable. I agree with the Senator from Missouri. We cannot allow them off the hook. If we take them out of this equation, then there will be less accountability. Our proposal actually has it as part of how a commander is going to be judged, how the commanders handle these cases. That is not the status quo, because we want the chain of command to be more accountable. But we keep hearing we want victims to come forward, and the Senator from Missouri knows that from her experience as a prosecutor.

I would say this: Does the evidence support that more victims will come forward if we actually pass the Gillibrand proposal? Because why are we here. We want more victims to come forward. Will more victims see justice if this proposal is passed? Because this is ultimately what we are trying to get at.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. We have hard data on that. In fact, I think that is one of the reasons, if we look at this quote:

I went into this thinking Senator Gillibrand's legislation made sense, but when you hear the facts, it doesn't hold up.

That is an important quote, but even more important when we realize who said it. This is the woman who runs the National Center for Victims of Crime for our entire Nation. She heard 150 witnesses, representing many of the groups that have been referenced in this debate. She realized that when they looked at the data, our allies have done this, and not in one nation, after years of experience with changing the system, has the reporting increased.

The way we increase reporting is to give the victim a safe harbor, which we

have done, to report outside the chain of command, and to have their own lawyer, and to make sure they have power and deference in the process, which we have done, along with the reforms, on which I am very proud to have worked with Senator GILLIBRAND.

Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, if we wanted to find the definition of leadership in 2014: MCCASKILL, AYOTTE, and the great Senator from Nebraska, three women taking on an issue head on. To those of my Democratic colleagues who are going to stick with making reforms without destroying a commander's role in the military: You deserve a lot of credit because people have been on your butt in the donor community to vote the other way.

To these ladies—and there have been plenty of people helping—they don't know how much it will be appreciated in the military. This is not a legal debate here. How many of my colleagues have done courts-martial? How many of my colleagues have court-martialed anybody in the military? I have done hundreds, as a prosecutor and as a defense attorney. This is not some casual event to me.

What Senator GILLIBRAND is doing is way off base. It will not get us to the promised land of having a more victim-friendly system to report sexual assaults. That is being accomplished because of the people I have just named: Senators FISCHER, AYOTTE, MCCASKILL, and Senator LEVIN. They have brought about reforms in terms of how a case is reported in the military, allowing a lawyer to be assigned to every victim. I cannot tell my colleagues how proud I am of what they have been able to accomplish. The U.S. military is going to have the most victim-friendly system of every jurisdiction in the land, including New York and South Carolina.

But this is about the commander. How many of my colleagues believe we have the finest military in the entire world? Every Member of this body would raise their hand. The question is why. Because we have the best lawyers in the world? No. Because we have the best commanders—men and women who are given the responsibility to defend this Nation and have power and responsibility that most of my colleagues could never envision. And if this is about sexual assault, why the hell are we taking barracks theft out of the commander's purview?

This is about liberal people wanting to gut the military justice system—social engineering run amok. I want to help victims, but I also want a fair trial. But the one thing I will not say to our commanders who exist in 2014: You are fired, because you are morally bankrupt. You don't have the ability to render justice in your unit because there is something wrong with you; your sense of justice is askew, so we are going to fire you and take away an authority you have had traditionally

to make sure that your unit is ready to go to war, because we feel as though you are morally bankrupt. What other conclusion can we come to?

The next time we see somebody in the military who is a senior member of the 3 percent that Senator GILLIBRAND speaks about—it is only 3 percent who make these decisions. Who are these 3 percent? They are our wing commanders, our squadron commanders, our fleet commanders, our brigade commanders—the people we entrust and hold accountable for fighting and winning the war.

I say to my colleagues, if we care about what military lawyers think, every judge advocate general is begging us not to do this. The people we are going to give the power to don't want it because they understand that the commander is different than the lawyer. The first female judge advocate general of the Army has made an impassioned plea: Do not do this.

This is not a legal issue alone; this is about how to maintain the best military in the world.

I would conclude that if we want to create confusion in the ranks and if we want to tell every enlisted person who has to—should be—looking up to the commander, the Senate just fired your boss when it comes to these kinds of matters, but you should still respect him, that is a very confusing message.

I wish to end my speech with this: We have had some bad commanders. However, to those who command the military, I have confidence in you. You will take this system to a new level. You have to up your game, but I am not going to fire you. Thank you for commanding the finest military in the world. I will do nothing to say you are morally bankrupt, because I don't believe that.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. I have great respect for the Senator's time and for working in the trenches as a military prosecutor in the JAG corps. I will tell my colleagues honestly, I am less concerned about the commanders than I am the victims. The Senator and I maybe don't see it exactly the same way in that regard. I believe there are commanders who deserve to be held accountable for their failure to act, for their want to sweep this crime under the rug throughout history, but I think we are handing the broom to the prosecutors at this point based on the data we have.

One of the things I wanted to go over and mention to Senator AYOTTE is the systems response panel. I think it is important to understand—the DACOWITS panel was mentioned. I want everybody to understand the difference between the DACOWITS panel and the systems response panel. The DACOWITS panel has been in place for years, and they took up this matter and heard no witnesses from the JAG corps. In fact, I think they heard two

witnesses or three witnesses and two of them were me and KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND. They took no time to really go deeply into this very complex subject.

The systems response panel was created by Congress, and it was for the purpose of giving us their clear eye of advice on the best way to deal with this problem in the military.

This is a majority of civilians and a majority of women who made up this panel. They heard 150 witnesses over months. They heard from all of the people who are advocating for the Gillibrand proposal. They heard from the JAGs. They heard from victim organizations. They came out overwhelmingly rejecting this proposal.

One of the most interesting members—and I will be honest; when I went to testify in front of this response panel, I was very worried that Elizabeth Holtzman maybe would not agree with me. She has a long history in Congress. She wrote the Federal rape shield statute. I assumed she would begin this process assuming that in the simple equation of victims versus commanders, I take victims. If only it were that simple. What the response panel figured out is that it is not that simple.

Judge Holtzman, the judge who wrote the decision overturning DOMA, said:

Just turning it over to prosecutors doesn't mean you are going to get the results you are looking for.

And Elizabeth—this is what Elizabeth Holtzman said: "Just turning it over to prosecutors doesn't mean you are going to get the results you are looking for." That is what Holtzman said.

Judge Jones: "There is no evidence that removing the convening authority is going to improve any of the parts of the system."

That is startling, this response, from a panel that looked at it over months, 150 witnesses, majority civilians, majority women. This is not a bumper sticker. It is not as simple as it sounds. I would never oppose anything that I thought was going to help victims or put more perpetrators in prison—ever. This will have the opposite impact that many of the advocates are indicating that it will.

Ms. AYOTTE. Let me just say, this panel took on the key question. That is why we are doing this. I am doing this because I believe victims will get justice and there will be more accountability. I want to hold commanders more accountable for not only how they handle these crimes but also for that zero tolerance policy within their unit. That is why we want them judged on this basis.

That panel has looked at this issue of reporting and found that there is no evidentiary basis at this time to support a conclusion that removing senior commanders as the convening authority will reduce the incidence of sexual

assault—which we want them to establish that climate within their unit to do so—or increase reporting of sexual assaults.

I would also say, if we want justice for victims, what about those 93 victims where the commander said: Bring the case forward, even though the JAG lawyer said no? They would not have gotten justice. So the evidence is the opposite. What would we say to those victims? The evidence shows that actually commanders are bringing cases more frequently than their JAG's lawyers and over their objections.

The panel also found that none of the military justice systems of our allies was changed or set up to deal with the problem of sexual assault. So for those allies who have taken it out of the chain of command, this panel said that none of them can attribute any changes in the reporting of sexual assault to changing the role of the commander.

We were told from the beginning of this argument that our allies changed this so that more people would come forward. Well, they have not. In fact, what we learned is many of our allies changed it to protect defendants.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Isn't it true that, in fact, our reporting is up?

Ms. AYOTTE. Our reporting has actually—since 2013, in the Marine Corps it is up 80 percent and in the Army it is up 50 percent. That is even before the legislation that we have all worked on to have special victims counsels for every single victim that we have already passed in this body.

Mr. GRAHAM. Will the Senator yield for just a second?

Ms. AYOTTE. Yes, I will.

Mr. GRAHAM. Why is it nobody seems to think taking the commander out of the loop is going to help the problem? Because you cannot solve the problem in the military unless the commander buys in. I cannot think of any change in the military that is major and substantial that can happen without the chain of command being held accountable and buying in.

I would like to say this. To those who believe our military is set up where a victim's case is never heard because you have some distant figure called the commander and they just put this stuff under the rug, O-6 commanders—the O-6 level are special court-martial convening authorities. General court-martial convening authorities are flag officers.

It is not rampant in the military, folks, where a JAG will go in to the commander and say: This is a case that needs to be prosecuted, sir, madam; and the commander says: I don't want to fool with this.

The opposite is true, where the JAG will say: Tough; and the commander says: Move forward.

Well, what have we done here. We have said to the command that if your

judge advocate recommends prosecution in the four areas in question—sexual assault—and the commander refuses to prosecute, that decision is appealed to the Secretary of the service.

So if you are wondering about rogue commanders—and there are bad commanders—you are indicting the whole chain of command here, folks. That is why I am so emotional about this. You are indicting a class of Americans who deserve praise and a chance to get their act together where they failed.

But the bottom line is, if a commander refuses to—I ask unanimous consent for 1 minute—2 minutes.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. One minute.

Mr. GRAHAM. OK.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAHAM. If the commander refuses the JAG's recommendation, it goes to the Secretary of the service. If the JAG and the commander both say this is not a case we want to prosecute, when it is in the area of sexual assault, it goes to the commander's commander. So there are built-in checks and balances.

The key to fixing this problem is the commander. The key to maintaining a well-run military is the commander. The key to fighting and winning wars is the commander. The key to bringing justice to victims is the court-martial panel, the lawyers, the judge and the juries, and the commander. But the key to American military success over time has been the commander.

Madam President, 800 trials in Iraq and Afghanistan since 9/11. This is a nondeployable military justice system that Senator GILLIBRAND is trying to create. Please do not change the structure of the military because of this issue. Fix this issue. Preserve the structure of the military that has served us so well, and keep reforming.

To the Senators I have named, you have done those in the military—victims—a great service. For God's sake, Members of the Senate, do not change the structure of the military at a time we need it the most. Hold it more accountable, not less.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I yield my time to the Senator from Nevada.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, I first would like to thank Senators GILLIBRAND, MCCASKILL, AYOTTE, and FISCHER for their hard work on this issue, and my friend from South Carolina, who has worked passionately hard on this issue also.

As someone who strongly believes in bipartisanship, I am glad to see the Senate moving forward today on debating and voting on this particular issue.

While we may not all agree on how to best solve this particular issue, we can all agree that it is too important not to debate and ultimately vote on ways to address it.

Our military is the greatest fighting force the world has ever known. The freedoms we enjoy as Americans are because men and women continue to volunteer to serve and to protect our Nation.

The vast majority of these men and women serve with honor and integrity. However, there are a few bad actors in our military who commit crimes against their fellow servicemembers. The question the Senate faces is whether or not the military justice system is equipped to properly handle sexual assault within the ranks.

After careful consideration, weighing all the facts, I feel the military today is not equipped, and that is why I support Senator GILLIBRAND's approach.

Like everyone else in this Chamber, I am disappointed we ever got to this point. No soldier should have their service degraded due to dishonorable conduct in the ranks. But there have been ample opportunities for the military to address this issue within its own ranks, and too much time has passed without this problem being resolved.

It is Congress's responsibility now to step in to protect the best America has to offer. Congress needs to address what is currently lacking for victims. Victims need to feel confident in reporting crimes of sexual assault. Victims must be protected from retaliation, and victims must be confident that justice will be served.

Senator GILLIBRAND's legislation will accomplish these goals.

If the Senate passes this bill today, loopholes in the military structure will no longer be an option to protect sexual assailants. These changes are long overdue and will hold the military to the highest standards that they strive towards.

I encourage the rest of my colleagues to join me in supporting her efforts and keeping our commitment to protect the men and women who are honorably serving our Nation.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. Madam President, I yield Senator MCCASKILL's time to the Senator from Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Madam President, I rise to speak in full support of the McCaskill-Ayotte-Fischer proposal that is before us today. It will only strengthen the historic reforms that have already been passed by this body to combat sexual assault in the military.

I also rise to express concerns with the Gillibrand proposal to remove com-

manders from this process because I believe that is going to undermine credibility and accountability.

I am glad we are having this debate on the floor because every Member of this Senate agrees that this is a problem that needs to be addressed.

Over the past year the members of the Armed Services Committee have focused on this issue. It cuts across ideology, across gender, and across regions. It also cuts across party lines.

I was happy to work across the aisle with Senator SHAHEEN on improving the standards for personnel responsible for sexual assault prevention. I was pleased to join with Senator BLUMENTHAL to ensure that victims' rights are protected under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

I would argue that our efforts to fight sexual assault show Congress at its best. It is how we are supposed to work. So although we may disagree, we do share the same goals.

Senator MCCASKILL and Senator GILLIBRAND have both been real leaders in the Senate Armed Services Committee, which held that landmark hearing with our top commanders to explore the problem of sexual violence in the ranks last June.

The committee received input from all sides, and we, along with our House colleagues, passed a series of very meaningful reforms when we passed the National Defense Authorization Act. Those are reforms of which we can all be proud.

We stripped commanders of the ability to overturn jury convictions. We made retaliation against victims a crime. We required dishonorable discharge or dismissal for those convicted of sexual assault.

Now we are trying to strengthen that. We are trying to strengthen those great reforms with the McCaskill-Ayotte-Fischer legislation. I believe our proposal will do more to strengthen the rights of victims, and it will enhance the tools to prosecute the criminals.

Specifically, our bill extends the current protections to service academies. That is so important. That is in our bill. It boosts the evaluation standards for commanders—also important. It allows the victims increased input—extremely important. So rather than revamping the entire military justice system, which I believe carries massive risk, our proposal improves and updates the current system.

Unfortunately, the Gillibrand proposal, I believe, takes radical steps, and it undermines the commander's responsibility for his or her troops. Under that proposal, almost all crimes—from forgery to sexual violence—are removed from a commander's purview. It does not bring that focus to the challenge we are facing. Our proposal does.

The other proposal detaches the commander from his or her unit, and it removes all responsibility. I do not want

to remove the responsibility from a commander. We trust these people to watch our best and our brightest, our children and our grandchildren, as they go into battle. We need to trust them in this as well.

Senator McCASKILL brings a wealth of experience to bear on this topic from her days as a prosecutor, and I believe we should all be listening to her. She mentioned in November that the other proposal was “seductively simple.” I agree. I agree that its simplicity cloaks a host of very complex policy problems. She has invested a lot of time on this issue. She has explained the technical problems, and I echo her concerns.

But I would like to underline one critical point to my colleagues. Many of our problems with the other proposal might appear to be minor procedural details. However, experience tells us that it is exactly these sorts of problems that can grind a justice system to a halt, and they can damage a legal system.

That was the case in 2007, when Congress, armed with the best of intentions, modified the rape statute. Those hasty changes disrupted the judicial process and compelled Congress to rewrite the language. Do you know what happened? It delayed justice.

So I urge my colleagues and anyone interested in completely revamping that military justice system, you need to be certain that all the questions are resolved and you need to be certain that the implementation will be bullet-proof because anything less means delayed justice or no justice at all for the victims.

I can go on and talk about the commission that brought forth their recommendations that the justice remain with the commanders. They did not say take it away from the commanders. And the makeup of that commission? Mostly civilian and mostly female.

I hope my colleagues will remember these things, look at the facts, look at how we truly can address the needs of the victims, truly find them justice. Support the McCaskill-Ayotte-Fischer proposal, and I would ask that you not support the Gillibrand proposal.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. McCASKILL. Madam President, I yield 5 minutes to my friend from Arizona, Senator McCain.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. McCain. I thank the Senator from Missouri. I want to profusely thank her and Senator Ayotte and Senator Fischer for their leadership on this very difficult and emotional issue which obviously is very unpleasant and very controversial and understandably so. We are talking about the livelihood, the right to function as members of the military, of women in the military.

It is a vital issue because there should be no organization that is at the

level of the United States military for providing an equal opportunity and equal protection under the law than the United States military. When these young men and women join the military, they do something very unique; that is, they are willing to put their lives on the line for the defense of this country.

Therefore, because of this unique aspect of their lives, that they are willing to serve for the benefit of the rest of us, there is also the responsibility of those who command them. That is unique as well. Those who command in the military may have to make the toughest decision of all and to send these young people into harm's way. No other—no other—person in American society, outside of the President of the United States, has that responsibility.

So what we are really talking about today here is, will we hold those commanders responsible for anything that happens within their command or will we take that responsibility and shift it over to a lawyer? That is what this is really all about. Right now we have units operating in Afghanistan.

Frankly, according to the Gillibrand proposal, if there was a charge, we may have to try to find some way to fly a lawyer in. I do not think that is either likely or agreeable. But the major point here is that we hold commanders responsible for what happens under their command. If they do not carry out those duties, then we relieve them of that command. If they are responsible for egregious conduct, we prosecute them.

I have had the great honor of command. I have had the great honor of commanding, at that time, the largest squadron in the U.S. Navy, some 1,000 people. There were a large number of women in that organization, even then, because it was a shore-based squadron. Now we have women throughout—I am happy to say—throughout the military, including combat roles.

I can tell you that in those days we had severe racial problems in the United States military. We had race riots on aircraft carriers. We held commanders responsible. We punished those who practiced discrimination. We had people in our chain of command that alerted and were responsible for the indoctrination and the good conduct of people who in any way showed a taint of discrimination. I am happy to say that I believe that the greatest equal opportunity organization in America today is the United States military.

We can do that with this severe and difficult and emotional issue of sexual assaults in the military. The exact wrong way to do that is to make the commanding officer less responsible because if you take the responsibility from that commanding officer, then you are eroding his ability to lead and, I would argue, their ability to fight.

We have the finest commanders in our military. We have the finest men and women who are serving in the military. We are the best military in the world. There is a reason for it. As we bring people up the ladder of promotion to positions of command, they are tested time after time. I trust these commanders. I trust them.

With the provisions in the McCaskill bill as we have today, we will preserve that command authority, but we will also have significant increases in oversight and accountability. But to take away that responsibility from the men and women who command these people, these outstanding men and women, and give to it a lawyer is not the way to go.

I hope my colleagues understand it. I also would ask one other thing before this vote. If any of my colleagues knows a member of the military whom they respect, call them. Call them and ask them whether they would think this proposal of the Senator from New York is in any way helpful to the good functioning of the military and the elimination of sexual assaults. We share the same goal. There are vastly different ways to achieve that goal.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Hawaii.

(Mrs. GILLIBRAND assumed the Chair.)

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, I rise today in support of the Military Justice Improvement Act. I commend Senator GILLIBRAND for her outstanding work on this effort and all the survivors of sexual assault in the military who have courageously worked with us on this bill.

I also appreciate the bipartisan effort to stop military sexual assaults from happening. While we all do not agree on how to get there, I know that all of us want to stop this terrible scourge in our military.

Every few years, when interest in this topic picks up, it stays relevant for a while, the military leadership promises to stamp out sexual assault in the military, and says that zero tolerance is the policy in place. Unfortunately, despite all of the good faith actions taken by the department as well as Congress, we are still at 26,000 incidents of rape, sexual assault, and unwanted sexual contact in the military.

This bill has nothing to do with telling commanders they are fired or that they are morally bankrupt. They should continue to be held accountable for creating a command climate where sexual assaults do not occur or certainly not occur by the tens of thousands.

This bill is focused on the victims, the survivors of these crimes. When we listen to them, they are in support of the Gillibrand bill. We all agree that commanders are responsible for maintaining good order and discipline in

their units. This includes creating an atmosphere of dignity and respect for everyone under their command.

Again, commanders must create an environment where sexual crimes do not occur. Our proposed changes to the military justice system do not absolve a commander of these responsibilities. It is still their job to prevent these crimes. It is still their job to maintain good order and discipline.

I have heard opponents of this legislation say that good order and discipline would be lost if the commander no longer has the court martial disposition authority. I disagree. This is similar to saying, a corporal, a sergeant or a junior officer in a unit would not act in a professional and orderly manner with respect to their O-6 commander, because the commander could no longer decide whether to proceed to trial for a rape or other felony-level offense. That does not make sense. The commander is still responsible for doling out punishment for insubordination or other negative behavior. The commander is still responsible for maintaining the kind of good order and discipline and a command climate where these crimes not occur in the first place. Historically, when changes to the status quo are proposed—these include the integration of military units, opening military specialties to women, and allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly—a familiar refrain from senior military leadership to block such changes was to claim that the proposed changes would destroy good order and discipline.

By all accounts, I would say that these successful changes to military policies do not destroy good order and discipline. When these crimes do occur, survivors deserve the ability to seek justice. They deserve a chain of command that will take their claims seriously and take appropriate action. We have data that show that many victims do not come forward because they do not trust that the chain of command within the current system will act impartially.

They feel that they might suffer retaliatory actions and ultimately do not report the crime. This allows the perpetrator to go free and commit additional crimes. The Gillibrand bill will increase trust and confidence in the system and help the survivors seek justice. It is time to make fundamental changes to how sexual assault cases are handled in the military.

Senator GILLIBRAND's bill would be a big step in the right direction. Her amendment would take the decision to go forward with a trial out of the chain of command and place it in the hands of an experienced military lawyer. This change would improve the traditional process by increasing transparency, by increasing trust. It would also eliminate potential bias and conflicts of interest because unlike the commanding

officer, the military lawyer would be unconnected to either the survivor or the accused.

I commend our colleagues once again, Senator GILLIBRAND and Senator MCCASKILL, for their tireless efforts to help survivors of sexual assault in the military. I would also commend Senator LEVIN, my Armed Services Committee colleagues, and many other Senators for working so hard on this difficult, painful issue.

We have instituted many positive changes in this area, but I urge my colleagues to take the next step and support the Gillibrand Military Justice Improvement Act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I join my colleagues today in a discussion about an issue that I think we all would agree is an issue that really tears at the heart, causes great anguish, as we think that those who have volunteered to serve our great Nation, who have agreed to put themselves on the front lines, would be in a situation where they would be made a victim—made a victim of military sexual assault and be put into a situation where they do not know where to turn, they do not know if it is safe to speak up, and they do not know how to respond.

Our military men and women, we are proud to say, are the most professional, the most highly trained and skilled and qualified. We will match them against any. Yet, when we face these very troubling and difficult issues of military sexual assault, it is an underside of the military culture that we have not been able to sufficiently address and eradicate.

The most recent report of the Defense Department Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office, which covers 2012, speaks to the statistics. These statistics have been reported so frequently on the floor of the Senate. We know them. We share them. We really agonize over them. An estimated 26,000 cases of unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault occurred in fiscal year 2012, a 37 percent increase from fiscal year 2011.

Some 25 percent of women and 27 percent of men who received unwanted sexual contact indicated that the offender was someone within their military chain of command. Then, the statistics that really just go to the heart of what we are talking about here today: Across the services, 74 percent of females and 60 percent of males perceived one or more barriers to reporting the sexual assault; 50 percent of male victims stated that they did not report the crime because they believed nothing would be done.

They have been victimized once, and now they do not believe that anything will happen if they speak. They do not believe that anything will be done with

their report. Some 62 percent of victims who reported a sexual assault indicated that they perceived some form of professional, social or administrative retaliation, retaliation from the system that they have been trained to trust, to be there for one another, and yet now fear retaliation.

This report was such an eye-opener for many of us. It certainly has galvanized the issue to address where we are today, to truly put on the front burner of this body, the issue of what has happened with military sexual assaults and what we can do to address it. It has remained on the front burner, thanks to the persistent efforts of the Senator from New York to keep it there. She has relentlessly pursued the vote that we will take today.

Regardless of the outcome, I think that she should take pride, I think we should all take pride in what we have collectively accomplished.

I also note the very fine work of my colleague from Missouri, Senator MCCASKILL, and her efforts, along with Senator AYOTTE, Senator FISCHER, and the Presiding Officer, to bring this issue to a level where we have seen changes made already, but the question that remains is, is there more that can be done.

This Congress has significantly improved the system through amendments to the military justice system that were included in the National Defense Authorization Act. The services have also done their part to improve ways to improve their sexual assault and prevention programs, such as making sure that a Naval Academy midshipman need not be driven across the State of Maryland searching for a hospital that has a sexual assault nurse examiner on duty.

In my State of Alaska, the headlines over the past year, as they related to military sexual assault within the ranks of our National Guard units, stunned us all. I recently received a further briefing from our adjutant general and folks within the Alaska National Guard in terms of what they too are doing to address, within their own system, the changes that are absolutely necessary.

But the question is whether these changes will move the needle on these statistics we have just recited. In my view, it remains to be seen. Will they give the victims more confidence in the system? Will they deter offenders by increasing the certainty that there is going to be accountability if these acts are taken?

Today the Senate considers the Military Justice Improvement Act, a measure that provides victims with the certainty they need to have confidence in the system. If they don't believe the system is going to be there for them, if they don't believe it is going to work for them, they are not going to report it. They will not expose themselves again.

As I said on the Senate floor before, this is strong medicine. It is very strong medicine to any offender who believes that the "good old boys" system will permit him to escape the consequence of his actions. In my judgment, enactment of the Military Justice Improvement Act will lead to greater consistency in charging decisions. This, again, is a very important aspect. It will ensure that those decisions are based on the facts, the law, and not any external factor. That too offers an increment of protection to victims as well as to the offenders.

The current system of military judgment relies upon the individual decisions of commanders as to whether an offense is to be punished and which charges are to be brought. We recognize we have a complex military and there are many commanders. While our code of military justice may be uniform, recent history suggests that its implementation is, unfortunately, anything but uniform.

Some have called the Gillibrand proposal a radical solution and one that will make it impossible to maintain good order and discipline in the military. I don't buy that. These were some of the statements that were made several years back when we were considering don't ask, don't tell about 3 years ago.

The military is proving it is resilient enough to implement culture change—and that is what this will take, is culture change. I believe they are resilient enough to implement a change of this magnitude, and it will be resilient enough to implement the Military Justice Improvement Act.

It is not a radical and novel solution to a difficult problem. In fact, many of our allied modern militaries have moved the decision on whether to prosecute sexual assault outside of the chain of command. They have done it. I believe it is high time we do as well.

Again, I commend those who have led so nobly on this effort to make sure that when those fine men and women stand to serve our country, there is ensured a level of justice, a level of uniformity of justice, and that we no longer see the devastating statistics we have, unfortunately, been faced with for far too long.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I ask that I be notified when 7 minutes remains.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be notified. The Senator has 4½ minutes remaining.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I ask to be notified when there is 2 minutes remaining.

All of the arguments we have heard today are technical arguments, arguments about why we can't possibly do this. But the victims and the survivors of sexual assault have been walking this Congress for more than 1 year, asking that we do something to protect them, to give them a hope for justice.

It is not whether anyone in this Chamber trusts the chain of command. The people who do not trust the chain of command are the victims. Even General Amos has admitted that. He said the reason why a female marine does not come forward is because she does not trust the chain of command, that breach of trust. That fundamental breach of trust has been broken for victims of sexual assault.

Listen to the victims. Retired Marine LCpl Jeremiah Arbogast was drugged. He was raped. He got his perpetrator to tell what happened on tape and went through trial. His perpetrator got no jail time. He saw no justice.

He said: "I joined the Marines in order to serve my country as an honorable man, instead I was thrown away like a piece of garbage."

He attempted suicide, severed his spine, and now advocates for this measure from a wheelchair.

Those are the stories we are hearing from victims over and over.

Sarah Plummer, U.S. Marine Corps, said having someone within your direct chain of command handling this case doesn't make sense and is like "getting raped by your brother and having your father decide the case."

That is the view and the perception of the survivors.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 2 minutes remaining.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I defer my remaining 2 minutes until after the Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. I yield 3 minutes to the Senator from New Hampshire, Senator AYOTTE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. AYOTTE. I thank the Senator from Missouri, and I thank the Senator from New York for her passionate and important debate. Let's not forget the work we have already done in the Defense authorization, ensuring that every victim will have his or her own attorney to represent their interests, taking commanders out of overturning verdicts, and making retaliation a crime. So we have done very important work.

But why are we here today? The issue is will more cases be prosecuted if we take it out of the chain of command?

Actually, no. There would be 93 cases under the current situation that wouldn't have been brought where commanders actually made a different

decision than their military lawyer. What about those victims and those victims having their day in court? I want more victims to have their day in court.

As we think about it, why are we doing this? Some of our allies did it. We looked at that issue. Our allies haven't seen any greater reporting, so there is no evidence that we are going to have reporting. Many of them did it to protect defendants. We are here to protect victims today. We certainly want a system with due process, but this is about having more victims coming forward.

I also want to make sure people understand that under the system now they do not have to report to their commander. We had people come to the floor and say they shouldn't have to go to their boss. They can go to a sexual assault response coordinator, clergy, minister, civilian medical personnel. Already they can come forward if they don't feel comfortable coming forward to the commander.

No evidence has been presented that we are going to help victims more or that more cases will be prosecuted or more will come forward if we take it out of the chain of command. That is why I want to hold commanders more accountable, not less. That is what Senator MCCASKILL, Senator FISCHER, and I do in our proposal. We want to make sure they are not let off the hook. We want to make sure the victims can get not only justice but make sure they get swift justice. This proposal risks delaying that justice in the system.

I ask my colleagues to vote against Senator GILLIBRAND's proposal. I ask my colleagues to say what will hold commanders more accountable. That is our proposal. I ask them to say where is the evidence that more evidence will be pursued or more cases will come forward. There is no evidence. Our proposal is based on the evidence.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Madam President, I will take a couple of moments at the close of this very difficult debate to express my deep respect to the Senator from New York, Mrs. GILLIBRAND.

While many aspects of this debate have been hard, perhaps the hardest part of this debate has been that this disagreement on policy has overshadowed the amazing work so many have done this year to enact a different day in the U.S. military when it comes to sexual assault and victims of sexual assault.

When the Sun sets today, this body will have passed 35 major reforms in less than 1 year, making the military the most friendly victims organization in the world, giving victims more

power, more leverage, holding commanders accountable, and holding perpetrators accountable. It will eliminate the ridiculous notion that how well one flies a plane should have anything to do with whether they committed a crime, professionalizing the process so that victims no longer endure a ridiculous amount of inappropriate questioning at what should be something like a preliminary hearing to establish probable cause, as opposed to some kind of rendering of questioning, torture to a victim who has come out of the shadows and is willing to go forward.

I know I can speak with confidence for Senator GILLIBRAND that she and I have walked lockstep on those 35 reforms. We have disagreed on one. I know in the future she and I will work very hard together to make sure our military does the right thing by victims and puts perpetrators where they belong—in prison—and out of the ranks of the military where they stain the good name of the bravest men and women in the world.

I thank all of my colleagues for their patience during this debate. I know this has been tough for everyone. But I stand with years of experience, holding the hands and crying with victims, with many victims, who have spoken to me and other organizations, knowing that what we have done is right for victims and right to hold perpetrators accountable.

I respectfully request that people support our amendment today and reject the one area of policy on which the great Senator from New York and I disagree.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I want the focus where it needs to be. This is not an opportunity to congratulate ourselves on the great reforms we have done. All of the reforms we have passed today are meaningful and useful, but this problem isn't even close to being solved. Under the best-case scenario, 2 out of 10 cases are being reported today.

Let's refocus on what is actually happening in our military today. Let's focus on what U.S. Air Force veteran Amn Jessica Hinves said:

Two days before the court hearing, his commander called me on a conference at the JAG office, and he said he didn't believe that he acted like a gentleman, but there wasn't a reason to prosecute.

She was speechless. She had been promised a court hearing, and she was told 2 days before the commander had stopped it.

Trina McDonald, U.S. Navy veteran, said:

At one point my attackers threw me in the Bering Sea and left me for dead in the hopes that they silenced me forever. They made it very clear that they would kill me if I ever spoke up or reported what they had done.

She did not report these attacks.

Continuing:

The people that were involved in my assaults were police personnel, security personnel, higher-ranking officers, the people that I would have to go and report.

Last but not least is Lt. Ariana Klay, U.S. Marine Corps. Her home was broken into by two colleagues and she was raped brutally. She ultimately reported the crime and attempted suicide. Her perpetrator was convicted—and convicted of what? Not breaking and entering, not rape—calling her a slut.

The thing that makes me most angry is not even the rape itself; it's the commanders that were complicit in covering up everything that happened.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time for debate has expired.

Under the previous order and pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 1752, a bill to reform procedures for determinations to proceed to trial by court-martial for certain offenses under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Barbara Boxer, John D. Rockefeller IV, Tammy Baldwin, Benjamin L. Cardin, Patrick J. Leahy, Debbie Stabenow, Richard Blumenthal, Christopher A. Coons, Claire McCaskill, Jon Tester, Mark Begich, Barbara Mikulski, Maria Cantwell, Charles E. Schumer, Dianne Feinstein.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S. 1752, a bill to reform procedures for determinations to proceed to trial by court-martial for certain offenses under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and for other purposes, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 45, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 59 Leg.]

YEAS—55

Baldwin	Franken	Merkley
Begich	Gillibrand	Mikulski
Bennet	Grassley	Moran
Blumenthal	Hagan	Murkowski
Booker	Harkin	Murphy
Boxer	Heinrich	Murray
Boxer	Heitkamp	Paul
Brown	Heller	Pryor
Cantwell	Hirono	Reid
Cardin	Johanns	Rockefeller
Casey	Johnson (SD)	Sanders
Collins	Klobuchar	Schatz
Coons	Landrieu	Schumer
Cruz	Leahy	Shaheen
Donnelly	Markey	Stabenow
Durbin	McConnell	
Enzi	Menendez	
Feinstein		

Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)

Vitter
Walsh

Warren
Wyden

NAYS—45

Alexander	Flake	Nelson
Ayotte	Graham	Portman
Barrasso	Hatch	Reed
Blunt	Hoeven	Risch
Boozman	Inhofe	Roberts
Burr	Isakson	Rubio
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Chambliss	Kaine	Sessions
Coats	King	Shelby
Coburn	Kirk	Tester
Cochran	Lee	Thune
Corker	Levin	Toomey
Cornyn	Manchin	Warner
Crapo	McCain	Whitehouse
Fischer	McCaskill	Wicker

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 55, the nays are 45. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in the affirmative, the motion is rejected. The bill is returned to the calendar.

VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT OF 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report S. 1917.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1917) to provide for additional enhancements of the sexual assault prevention and response activities of the Armed Forces.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Madam President, I have a cloture motion which has been filed at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 1917, a bill to provide for additional enhancements of the sexual assault prevention and response activities of the Armed Services.

Harry Reid, Claire McCaskill, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Tammy Baldwin, John D. Rockefeller IV, Benjamin L. Cardin, Patrick J. Leahy, Debbie Stabenow, Richard Blumenthal, Christopher A. Coons, Barbara Mikulski, Barbara Boxer, Jon Tester, Mark Begich, Maria Cantwell, Charles E. Schumer, Dianne Feinstein.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, we expect this next vote will be the last rollcall vote until Monday.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order and pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 1917, a bill to provide for additional enhancements of the sexual assault prevention and response activities of the Armed Services.

Harry Reid, Claire McCaskill, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Tammy Baldwin, John D. Rockefeller IV, Benjamin L. Cardin, Patrick J. Leahy, Debbie Stabenow, Richard Blumenthal, Christopher A. Coons, Barbara Mikulski, Barbara Boxer, Jon Tester, Mark Begich, Maria Cantwell, Charles E. Schumer, Dianne Feinstein.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S. 1917, a bill to provide for additional enhancements of the sexual assault prevention and response activities of the Armed Forces, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 100, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 60 Leg.]

YEAS—100

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murphy
Ayotte	Graham	Murray
Baldwin	Grassley	Nelson
Barrasso	Hagan	Paul
Begich	Harkin	Portman
Bennet	Hatch	Pryor
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reed
Blunt	Heitkamp	Reid
Booker	Heller	Risch
Boozman	Hirono	Roberts
Boxer	Hoeven	Rockefeller
Brown	Inhofe	Rubio
Burr	Isakson	Sanders
Cantwell	Johanns	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Chambliss	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Coburn	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cochran	Landrieu	Tester
Collins	Leahy	Thune
Coons	Lee	Toomey
Corker	Levin	Udall (CO)
Cornyn	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Crapo	Markey	Vitter
Cruz	McCain	Walsh
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Durbin	McConnell	Warren
Enzi	Menendez	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Merkley	Wicker
Fischer	Mikulski	Wyden
Flake	Moran	
Franken	Murkowski	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). On this vote the yeas are 100, the nays are 0. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the previous order, the Senate vote on passage of S. 1917 at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, March 10, with all other provisions of the previous order remaining in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. Madam President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Sen-

ate proceed to executive session to consider Executive Calendar Nos. 504, 513, 640, and 547, as provided under a previous order entered by this body.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF KATHRYN D. SULLIVAN TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR OCEANS AND ATMOSPHERE

NOMINATION OF RHONDA K. SCHMIDTLEIN TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

NOMINATION OF R. GIL KERLIKOWSKE TO BE COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL A. HAMMER TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nominations of Kathryn D. Sullivan, of Ohio, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere; Rhonda K. Schmidlein, of Missouri, to be a Member of the United States International Trade Commission; R. Gil Kerlikowske, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Customs, Department of Homeland Security; Michael A. Hammer, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Chile.

VOTE ON SULLIVAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the Sullivan nomination.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I yield back any time that is available.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Kathryn D. Sullivan, of Ohio, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON SCHMIDTLEIN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the Schmidlein nomination.

Who yields time?

Mr. REID. Madam President, I yield back all time that is available.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Rhonda K. Schmidlein, of Missouri, to be a Member of the United States International Trade Commission?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON KERLIKOWSKE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the Kerlikowske nomination.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I yield back all time that is available.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of R. Gil Kerlikowske, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Customs, Department of Homeland Security?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON HAMMER NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the Hammer nomination.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I yield back any time that is available.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Michael A. Hammer, of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Chile?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT OF 2014—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Hawaii.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 1821

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, nearly 4 months ago the most powerful storm on record struck the Philippines, killing 6,000 people and injuring 27,000 people. According to USAID, more than 4 million people were displaced, and one out of six people in the country was affected. Photographs show the immense destruction caused by Typhoon Haiyan. In some areas nearly all of the buildings were destroyed.

Today, because of the magnitude of the devastation, the Philippines has not yet recovered. It will take them a

long time. Relief efforts continue. These efforts have been aided by direct assistance from the U.S. Government to the Philippines, one of our closest allies in Asia. Relief efforts have also been funded by charitable donations made by individuals in the United States. Many of these donations come from Filipino Americans in this country, part of the extensive diaspora here that is the foundation of the deep connections between the Philippines and the United States.

I am about to ask unanimous consent to pass legislation that will encourage people to continue donating to typhoon relief efforts in the Philippines. It has been 4 months since Typhoon Haiyan but help is still desperately needed. Four months is a virtual eternity of news cycles, and other crises in other parts of the world demand our attention. But we should not forget the immense human suffering caused by Typhoon Haiyan.

This legislation, S. 1821, would allow people who make donations after the date of enactment to deduct those donations from last year's taxes. In other words, they can reduce their 2013 tax bill by contributing now. It is a modest step, but it is one we should take.

This is bipartisan legislation, cosponsored by Senator HELLER. This legislation is also cosponsored by Senator MENENDEZ and the majority leader, Senator REID. I thank them for their support.

Identical bipartisan legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives by Representatives SWALWELL and THOMPSON. That bill has 35 cosponsors, including 9 Republicans: Representatives CALVERT, FRANKS, GRIMM, HECK, ISSA, MILLER, ROYCE, VALADAO, and YOUNG. I thank them for their support.

After the earthquake in Haiti in 2010, Congress passed nearly identical legislation to encourage donations to that country. That legislation passed by unanimous consent in the Senate. The Senate companion bill, S. 2936, had 40 cosponsors, 15 of whom were Republicans. They included Senators ALEXANDER, CORNYN, ENZI, GRASSLEY, HATCH, JOHANNES, ROBERTS, and THUNE. I hope the Senate will provide the same support to the Philippines that it provided to Haiti.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 1821; that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the Hirono-Heller amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; further, that upon passage, the bill be held at the desk, and that if the Senate receives from the House a bill, the text of which is identical to S. 1821, as passed by the Senate, the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration, the bill be read

three times and passed, without any intervening action or debate; finally, that passage of the Senate bill be vitiated and the bill be indefinitely postponed, and all motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, reserving the right to object, first, I commend the Senator from Hawaii for her work and her concern over the Philippines. That country has suffered dramatically from this typhoon. Having lived on the gulf coast and walked in the places where 18 feet of water from Hurricane Katrina flooded us, washed away whole structures, I can imagine what it was like to have lost 6,000 lives. And the country is hurting. It is a great country with great people. They are excellent allies of the United States. I am very sympathetic to their needs and appreciative of the Senator's efforts in seeking this way to further contributions for their relief.

The legislation has an emergency declaration in it. That requires going through the Budget Committee and requires other findings that I am not sure are available here. I think the legislation could be perhaps drafted slightly differently, I say to the Senator, that would avoid the emergency designation part, and maybe we could reach an accord to get this done quickly, as I know the Senator wants to move on it as soon as possible.

So, Madam President, I at this time say I will object. But our staffs will immediately begin to discuss if we can put this in a little slightly different way that would accomplish the Senator's goals without offending some of the budget niceties. Being the ranking Republican on the Budget Committee, I feel very, very strongly that when we make agreements about how we are going to spend money and how it should be processed, the more we erode those agreements and the more we spend above the amount of money we agreed to spend or get around the spending limits we ourselves passed into law, the more we place at risk the financial future of the country.

This is not the most costly measure. It is a step that would help the people in the Philippines, I know. But with that explanation, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Hawaii.

Ms. HIRONO. Madam President, I thank Senator SESSIONS very much for his agreement regarding the concerns we have for our friends in the Philippines, and I look forward to working with the Senator to come up with a measure that will accomplish what my bill seeks to accomplish.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I thank the Senator, and I respect so

much her effort in this cause and will do what we can to be cooperative.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

OBAMACARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I have come to visit with you today and the Members of this body with some concerns I have about people who are being impacted by the health care law. By "impacted" I mean hurt. Their lives are being hurt as a result of the impact of the health care law. We are seeing it around the country. As people are trying to comply with the law, we are finding that many people are losing their jobs or part of their jobs if they are working part time—to be held under 30 hours a week because under that criteria, people working less than 30 hours a week do not have to be provided with health insurance.

We have seen stories around the country of municipalities, of public employees who are having their hours cut and as a result, obviously, their take-home pay is cut, their wages are cut as a result of the impact of the health care law, as communities try to comply with all the aspects of the law. We have seen it with police forces, with teachers, with coaches, busdrivers, custodians, cafeteria workers, office clerks, sanitation workers, emergency personnel, university faculty—people all around the country who are being hurt as a result of the law.

Members of the Senate come from my side of the aisle to read letters of folks who have been harmed by the health care law. The majority leader comes to the floor and says these stories are lies. These are stories from people at home to whom I talk on weekends. I will be this weekend in Buffalo, WY, at the health fair, having a chance to visit with folks who are from Wyoming who go to a health fair for low-cost blood screening; also go to visit booths that are there from the heart association, the cancer society, the diabetes association, all taking efforts to try to improve the quality of their life, the quality of their care, and the quality of their overall health.

It is interesting to hear from these people, because I do not think the President hears from them. When I hear the majority leader say the people who come to the floor to talk about them—that these stories are lies, it is calling the people of Wyoming who have honest concerns about the way their lives are being impacted by the health care law as being untruthful.

I have come to the floor with more letters today and to talk about some things. It does make me wonder, when the majority leader comes and says these things are not truthful if he is not hearing the stories from the police officers and the teachers, the coaches and the bus drivers, the custodians, the cafeteria workers, the office clerks, the sanitation workers, the emergency personnel, the university faculty in States

all around the country who have their lives impacted by the health care law.

What I do think is that other Senators, Senators who perhaps go home more often than the majority leader, Senators who maybe listen to their constituents more and read the letters, are seeing the damage that is being done by the health care law because the President is responding to their claims, their concerns, and to the point that the President himself has unilaterally delayed many components of the health care law.

These are the delays from 2013. Here is the calendar for the year. All of the X's are different days when there have been different delays. There have been dozens of delays as a result of the health care law impact on families across the country. I wish to read a couple of emails about the impact on lives of people in Wyoming.

This is from a gentleman from Casper, my hometown. I was there Monday. I will be there again tomorrow.

He writes:

My wife and I just received our new monthly premium information for our health insurance. As of March 1, 2014 it will go from \$505 a month to \$1,045 a month, an increase of over double. This is for a Bronze level plan with a high deductible and high out of pocket.

You know, I wish the President would actually kind of understand what the impact of this law has been on American families. I wish people who supported it, campaigned for it, would realize the impact on people's lives. He has gotten his premiums going from \$505 to over \$1,000, double increase, Bronze level plan, what the President wants people to have. It is the minimum level. It has a high deductible and a high out-of-pocket.

He said:

It is also the cheapest plan I have found so far for us that is available in Wyoming and complies with the ACA.

Because the law says this man needs a lot of insurance. Maybe he does not need it. The President does not know this man, does not know his life, does not know his history, does not know what he actually needs in terms of insurance. But the President claims and the Democrats who voted for this health care law believe they know better than this man what he needs.

But you know what we do find out, when he wants to comply with the law, his insurance premiums more than double, for the cheapest plan which has the highest deductible and the highest out-of-pocket.

He says:

This increase will mean that money we would probably have spent elsewhere will now need to be budgeted for the insurance increase.

We go across the State to Moran, WY. Another resident of Wyoming writes:

I am a resident of Wyoming and about half of my income comes from Social Security.

My benefits total \$958 a month. In addition to that, I work part time at a ranch. It is a seasonal job from May to October. I make about the same amount there as I do from Social Security. I have recently managed to submit an application for health care through the healthcare.gov Web site. The cost to me with my current income would be a low end of \$837 a month with a \$4,000 deductible. With the high end, it would be over \$1,300 a month with a \$1,000 deductible.

Neither of those amounts are possible with my income range. I would not be able to afford to live. Now I refigured this with only my Social Security income and found that it would be very affordable, lower deductible, lower premiums, but I wouldn't have the income. I could possibly afford that but would have to live in a very substandard poverty lifestyle by quitting working.

So he has these options: He can continue what he does, but he cannot afford the insurance, or he can get affordable insurance by quitting working but then cannot afford to live. This is what the President of the United States and the Democrats have given the people of America.

He said:

I would like to work and contribute as long as I'm able but things are looking pretty bleak for me.

This is a man who wants to work. This is a man who wants to work, but the health care law is making it a lot harder for him to do so. He said:

I am giving you this information in the hope that it will be of some value in combating the unfairness of the Affordable Care Act.

The unfairness of the Affordable Care Act. I have to believe that Senators on both sides of the aisle who actually go home and listen to their constituents hear about this, hear these stories, hear these stories all around the country, of the unfairness of the Affordable Care Act.

He then goes on and says:

Thank you so much for your service to your country and the great State of Wyoming.

So here we have dozens of delays—and this is last year. Now it has happened again. Just yesterday the President came up with another delay. It is interesting the way it has made the front page of the New York Times, a paper that has supported the President, supported the law, front page, above the fold, story by Robert Pear.

The Obama administration, grappling with continued political fallout over its health care law, said Wednesday that it would allow consumers to renew health insurance policies that did not comply with the new law for two more years—

This is the New York Times speaking, front page, above the fold. This is not me. But they are repeating the kind of things I have been saying. pushing the issue well beyond this fall's midterm elections.

So what is the idea here? Push it out beyond the elections, make people not see the reality and the danger and the damage that is coming their way until after they vote.

The article goes on, front page above the fold, today's New York Times:

The reprieve was the latest in a series of waivers, deadline extensions and unilateral actions by the administration—

Here you have them. This is just in 2013. Now we have more in 2014.

—unilateral actions by the administration that have drawn criticism from the law's opponents and supporters, many saying President Obama was testing the limits of his powers.

I believe that. I believe the President has gone way beyond the limits of his powers.

The action reflects the difficulties Mr. Obama—

The President of the United States, who told the American people, if they like what they have they can keep it; if they like their doctor, they can keep their doctor; who said insurance premiums would go down—all of which are untrue, one called the "lie of the year."

The action reflects the difficulties Mr. Obama has faced in trying to build support for the Affordable Care Act and the uproar over his promise—which he later acknowledged has been overstated—that people who liked their insurance plans could keep them, no matter what.

Over 5 million Americans got letters of cancellation, 3,500 in the State of Wyoming. A woman with a wonderful policy that worked for her, worked for her family, lost her insurance because it did not cover maternity care. She writes to me as a doctor and says:

Dr. BARRASSO, please explain to the President of the United States that I have had a hysterectomy. I don't need maternity coverage.

You would think the President would understand that. You would think the Democrats who shoved this health care law down the throats of the American people would understand that as well.

This is interesting. Still on the front page of this morning's New York Times:

Under pressure from Democratic candidates who are struggling to defend the President's signature domestic policy, Mr. Obama in November announced a one-year reprieve for insurance plans that did not meet the minimum coverage requirements of the 2010 health care law.

Wednesday's action goes much further, essentially stalling for two more years one of the central tenets of the much-debated law, which was supposed to eliminate what White House officials called substandard insurance and junk policies.

If this is what the President believes, why is he now coming out and having a delay announced—not coming to Congress, not saying: Hey, let's try to do something a little differently. Let me propose this. Let's have a bipartisan agreement to come up with some solutions to actually help people get what they wanted in the beginning with health care reform, the care they need from a doctor they choose at lower costs.

The letters I am reading show people not being able to do that. They are paying much higher rates for things they do not need, will never use. We are hearing from people all across the country who are losing their doctor, can't keep their doctor, higher out-of-pocket costs.

We hear now the President wants to do some things unilaterally because a group of Democratic Senators who are up for reelection are worried about their political future, not about the future of the American people and the health care of the American people. That is why they are doing this.

You say: No, that seems like an exaggeration.

Well, let's go on. This next paragraph in the New York Times this morning:

The extension could help Democrats in tight midterm election races because it may avoid the cancellation of policies that would otherwise have occurred at the height of the political campaign season this fall.

So the cancellations are still going to happen, people are still going to continue to be hurt. We have over 5 million people who have gotten letters of cancellation. It is not saying: Oh, the cancellations are never going to happen. It is saying: It will push them out until after the election, so people will not be so irritated, angry, and aggravated at the Democrats who voted for it, in an effort to try to save their elections, try to save their Senate seats, but not to help the American people.

This goes on:

In announcing the new transition policy, the Department of Health and Human Services said it had been devised "in close consultation with members of Congress," and it gave credit to a number of Democrats in competitive races, including Senators Mary L. Landrieu of Louisiana, Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire and Mark Udall of Colorado.

So the reason that the White House goes time after time, all these delays, all this and that, is not to help the American people; it is not to help patients; it is not to help the providers of health care; it is not to help the taxpayers; it is to help a couple of Democratic Senators whom they name—whom the Secretary of Health and Human Services names as recipients of the help because the President is worried about Democrats losing elections this fall.

The Hill newspaper yesterday. "New ObamaCare delay to help midterm Dems." Not to help Americans, not to help the people from my State who write letters about the concerns of their lives, not to help all of those people about whom my colleagues and I continue to come to the floor with letters to tell their stories, to tell about their lives, to tell about the pain they are suffering because of the health care law.

It is not about the failed Web site. We all know the Web site. The President said: It will be as easy to use as Amazon, cheaper than your cell phone

bill. You will be able to keep your doctor—several days before the Web site opened and crashed. No, it is more than about the Web site. It is about people's lives. It is about if they are able to keep their doctor. It is about cuts to Medicare Advantage and hurting our seniors who are having a harder time getting doctors. It is about people paying higher premiums. It is about people having higher out-of-pocket costs, higher copays, higher deductibles. It is all of those things.

It is about hospitals in States that are not part of any of these exchanges, people in the communities cannot go there, they have to travel further distances. Nope, the President is not doing this for any of those reasons, not to help any of those people, he is doing it to help midterm Democrats because they are afraid they are going to lose their States, their majority, afraid they are going to be impacted and thrown out of office for absolutely reckless behavior on the part of a Congress that did not work in a bipartisan way, shoved the health care law down the throats of the American people in a way not to improve their lives, but to say that Congress knows better than people back home.

I am going to continue to come to the floor with letters and stories. I will be at the health fair in Buffalo, WY, on Saturday morning talking to folks in my community, seeing what they have to say about their lives, their families, their jobs, their wages, those of them who are losing jobs or losing hours as a result of the health care law, those who cannot afford new insurance under the exchanges even though they had insurance they liked—even though they did not like the price, it was cheaper than it is now. The President said it wasn't good enough for them.

I am going to continue to work for solutions to help patients all across this country have patient-centered care—not government-centered care or insurance company-centered care—to help patients get the care they need from a doctor they chose at lower cost—a complete failure by this administration and by this health care law.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized for such time as I may consume.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut is recognized for that purpose.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, we now are in about the sixth month of the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. We have over 11 million people who have received health care—who previously had not been able to receive it—either through the private exchanges, which have signed up 4 million people all across the country; through the expansion of Medicaid, which has reached millions more; or through all of the young people who are able to stay on their parents' plans until they are 26 years old.

Taxpayers are saving money. In fact, CBO has redone their estimates for the 10-year period after the passage of the Affordable Care Act to suggest that we are now going to save \$1.2 trillion on Federal health care spending, in large part because of the reforms in the Affordable Care Act.

Across this country millions of Americans who had been kept out of the ranks of the insured because of a preexisting condition now have access to health care, and tens of millions of seniors are paying less for their health care because they get checkups for free and they are able to access prescription drugs for 50 percent or less than the original cost when they reach that doughnut hole. So the Affordable Care Act is changing lives.

When you reorder one-sixth of the American economy, there are going to be bumps along the road. No one should come to the floor—even those of us who are the most vocal proponents of the law—and suggest there are not going to be some people who are not going to have the perfect experience. Of course there is no excuse for the way in which the Web site operated for the first several months. But it is time for proponents of this law to tell the real story, and the real story is that the Affordable Care Act is working. It is working for millions of Americans who now have access to health care. It is working for taxpayers who are spending less than ever before as you look at annual rates of growth in Federal health care spending.

Today and this week my colleagues and I are focusing on the benefits for one specific group of patients, one specific set of families all across this country, and those are patients and families dealing with cancer diagnoses.

So I will start this off—I will be joined later by Senator STABENOW and some of my other colleagues—and I want to talk first about a family in Indiana. I will talk about some families

in Connecticut as well, but the Treinens have a story that is, frankly, not unique. They had insurance and they thought they had really good insurance. They didn't pay too much attention to the lifetime cap of \$1 million that was in their insurance policy because they just figured, as a relatively healthy family, there was no way they were ever going to spend \$1 million on health care over the course of their time on that insurance plan.

But as millions of families across this country know, cancer can interrupt your plans, and that is what happened to the Treinens. Their doctors diagnosed their teenage son Michael in 2007 with an aggressive form of leukemia. The treatment called for ten doses of chemotherapy that cost \$10,000 per dose. A 56-day stay in an Intensive Care Unit alone cost about \$400,000. So Michael and his family reached that \$1 million lifetime maximum in less than 1 year, and it was then left to this brave family to go out and raise money in solicitations in their neighborhood, in their community and all across the country, which miraculously allowed them to bring in \$865,000 in 6 days to keep their son's treatment going.

Needless to say, that avenue is not available to every family. But due to their ingenuity and their passion, the Treinens were able to raise almost \$1 million from private donors in order to keep their son's treatment going. But the story doesn't end well, however, for the Treinens. Even though money came in from all over the United States, and as far away as places such as Germany, Michael's cancer eventually stopped responding to chemotherapy and he died May 25, before he could receive the transplant they all hoped would save his life.

The reality is that insurance companies have been getting away with this practice for years—lifetime or annual limits that for 105 million Americans were preventing them from receiving care when they really got sick. That is what insurance really is supposed to be for. For those of us who buy insurance, we get it in the hopes that should we get very sick, that insurance plan will be there to help us. But with annual and lifetime limits, when people got really sick, especially with cancer diagnoses, that help wasn't there.

Tom Bocaccio, who is a retired police officer in Newington, CT, is still dealing with the consequences of lifetime caps. His wife past away after an 8-year struggle with adrenal cancer. After her death, the husband she left behind was saddled with a \$1.5 million bill because the Bocaccios, over that 8-year period of fighting cancer, had exceeded their lifetime cap. That changes Tom's life in a myriad of ways. He has lost his wife, and there is no way to describe the pain that comes with that, especially after that brave, courageous battle of almost a decade, but now his en-

tire life is upended by the fact that he has a \$1.5 million bill he has to pay, and he doesn't have the resources to do that.

So first and foremost, for cancer patients all across this country, 105 million Americans no longer face lifetime limits on health care benefits. For cancer patients, not only does that deliver financial security, but it delivers mental and psychological security as well—to know in the midst of dealing with this diagnosis and all the pain that comes with confronting this disease head on, they do not also have to worry about skimping on treatments, about cutting back on hospital stays that might harm the recovery or treatment of the patient simply because they are trying not to get above that annual or lifetime limit.

The benefits to cancer patients extend beyond just that protection on lifetime and annual limits. In addition, cancer patients are going to be able to keep their health care because of the ban on discrimination against families and individuals with preexisting conditions.

I have spoken about the Berger family many times on this floor. They are a family that explains exactly why we need this protection. The Bergers, from Meriden, CT, had a son who was diagnosed with cancer during the 2-week period in which the husband, through which the family had insurance, didn't have a job. He switched jobs, and during that 2-week period in which he was waiting to get insurance through his new job, their son was diagnosed with cancer. The new insurance policy decided it was a preexisting condition. The Bergers had to pay every dime of that treatment and they lost everything. They lost their savings, their home. Their lives were transformed because of the misfortune of having a cancer diagnosis at the wrong time.

No family anywhere in the country dealing with a cancer diagnosis will ever have to go through what the Bergers went through because here ever after the law of this land says that if you have a preexisting condition, you cannot be discriminated against.

There are all sorts of other benefits that matter, whether it be the fact you don't have to pay for preventive health care any longer so you can get a check-up without cost or clinical trials are now covered which many cancer patients enjoy the benefit of. Life changed for cancer patients and families dealing with cancer when the Affordable Care Act passed.

Senator STABENOW, myself, and others had a press conference earlier this week in which we heard the story of David Weis, a senior at Georgetown University who was diagnosed days before his 19th birthday with thyroid lymphatic cancer. David talks about the difference the Affordable Care Act makes for him, not only in financial

terms but in terms of how he thinks about his future. David now can go out and get a job, search for and pursue a career based on what he wants to do with his life rather than based on what job will provide him with adequate benefits to treat his cancer should it reoccur.

I have a constituent who talks about it the same way. He was 14 when he was diagnosed with a form of leukemia. He went through treatment for over 3 years. His family now knows that with the Affordable Care Act—because he is only covered on his mom's policy until he is 26—after he ages out of his mom's plan, he will be able to pursue his dreams no matter what kind of insurance plan his prospective employer has.

What we have learned over the years is there is a connection between the mind and the body. If you are stressed out about things such as how you are going to pay for treatment of your disease, it does have an effect on your body's ability to fight that disease. Unfortunately, for millions of families dealing with cancer, their treatment has been restrained, their body's recovery has been curtailed because they are obsessively—and appropriately—always worried about what will happen if their insurance runs out.

The ACA says never again. No family will have to worry because that will be guaranteed, and discriminatory policies of annual and lifetime limits disappear.

I will end with the notion that it is important to remember every time our Republican friends come down to the floor and talk about how awful they believe the Affordable Care Act is, their proposal is to return cancer patients and families dealing with cancer back to the reality in which they had lifetime limits which ended their coverage—for this family I talked about from Indiana, after only several months—and they want to go back to the days in which families such as the Bergers lose everything, their savings, their home, because of a mistimed cancer diagnosis.

This week the House of Representatives voted for the 50th time to repeal all or part of the Affordable Care Act. I was a Member of that body for 6 years, and I probably participated in about 40 of those votes. Despite the fact I heard lots of my Republican friends come down to the floor and say: We are voting to repeal and replace, they never voted once to replace the Affordable Care Act because their agenda is not to replace it. Their agenda is simply to repeal it and go back to the days in which cancer patients were treated with this kind of carelessness.

Our colleagues on the Democratic side who voted for the Affordable Care Act understand there are places where it can be better. We understand there is a process of perfecting it. But we understand—because of families such as

the Barrows, because of families such as the Weises, the Treinens, and the Bergers—for cancer patients and the families who love them, they know the ACA is working, and they know they never want to go back to the days in which their lives were put in jeopardy by a health care system which didn't work for them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I thank my friend and colleague from Connecticut for his passion and his wonderful advocacy for people who just want to know they have health care for themselves and their families, which is pretty basic. I thank Senator MURPHY for his vigilance, for speaking out and being here and talking about what is at stake.

There is an ad on TV which says something like: New car, \$30,000; new house, \$150,000; peace of mind, priceless. What we are talking about in terms of access to affordable health care, getting what you are paying for, knowing you can't get dropped just because you get sick, knowing your child with juvenile diabetes can get care even though it would be viewed as a preexisting condition, is peace of mind.

I can't imagine how scary it must be to sit in a doctor's office and have a doctor come in and say: You have cancer. You have leukemia. You have breast cancer. This is happening to people every single day, and there are many thoughts going through their minds at that time. At some point they will turn to the doctor and want to talk about: What kind of treatment do I need? Is it going to be covered? How do I get it? What is going to happen?

One in every eight women in America will develop invasive breast cancer during their lives. It is not a statistic. These are real women, such as my sister-in-law, such as many other people I know. They are our daughters, our sisters, our mothers. Men as well are being given diagnoses of breast cancer—our friends. They now have the peace of mind of knowing they are going to be able to get the care they need at an affordable price and they can't be dropped. There is no cap on how long they are going to be able to get treatment, and that is priceless.

I will share a true story about a cancer survivor whose life has been changed thanks to the Affordable Care Act. Her name is Chris G.

Chris found a lump in her breast. Every woman can imagine the thoughts which must have gone through Chris's mind. The fear must have been unimaginable. It was even worse for Chris because her husband lost his job and they didn't have insurance—the worst of all possible situations. Because she didn't have insurance, she couldn't see a doctor to get the tests she needed. Chris didn't ig-

nore her lump. You can't ignore something like that. It is on your mind every single minute of every single day. But at that moment she didn't feel she could do anything about it because without insurance, if Chris went to a doctor, her breast cancer of course would count as a preexisting condition and then she would never be able to get insurance.

But now, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, Chris and millions of women like her can get the affordable insurance they need, and marketplaces where insurance companies now have to compete for her business give their best price for her business. These are good policies which cover treatment women need to beat cancer and survive. But before the Affordable Care Act, cancer would haunt these women for the rest of their lives as insurance companies labeled their survival a preexisting condition—no more.

Thanks to the ACA, millions of cancer survivors similar to Chris have peace of mind—priceless. Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, millions of women have access to mammograms and other preventive services. Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, millions of women similar to Chris will never have to worry about annual or lifetime limits on their coverage, not being told: OK, cancer. You have eight visits. That is it. I hope it works. That is it. No more.

In fact, the ACA flips that around. It says cancer patients such as Chris will never be asked to spend more than a set amount of money in total on their treatment. Once they hit that number, the insurance company has to pick up the rest of the cost of the treatments. For women fighting cancer, this law is a lifesaver.

There are 7,000 women in my State of Michigan alone who will be newly diagnosed with breast cancer this year. This is why it is so important for women to get covered, to sign up before March 31, so they can have the health care they need this year. This is literally a lifesaving day on March 31.

Once you are covered, you get no-cost preventive services. So you can go in, get the checkup, get the mammogram, get other cancer screenings, and not have out-of-pocket costs. You get again the peace of mind of knowing you are not going to go broke because of health care. Even if you get diagnosed with cancer, it is not: Do I get the treatments I need for breast cancer or do I have a home for my family? Do I go bankrupt or do I try to survive through treatments? Those are not the choices available to women and families anymore, and there is access to your doctor instead of using the emergency room.

One of the fallacies of health care reform is this idea of somehow we ignore when people get sick and somehow we don't pay for it. Yet we all know people who don't have insurance use emer-

gency rooms. I think it is interesting to note there is a proposal, in Georgia, where the Governor has said: The way to fix the problem with emergency rooms is to say you don't have to treat people. That is one way to do it, to say we are not going to treat people who are sick, who are in a car accident or have a heart attack.

The other way is through the Affordable Care Act, where we say: Instead of people using emergency rooms without insurance and then shifting all the costs onto everybody with insurance—which is what happens now—we pay for it. We all pay for it. Instead of that happening, we will set up a way for people to take personal responsibility for their health care and create a way to make it as affordable and competitive as possible. Then people will be able to go to their doctor instead of the emergency room and be able to get the treatment they need on an ongoing basis.

As women such as Chris can attest, cancer sneaks up on you. You can't predict it. You can't avoid it. This is not one of those events where you can say just buck it up and don't get cancer. We don't want those costs, so just don't get sick.

We all know how ridiculous that is. Yet in some ways this is sort of what we keep hearing in some fashion.

The reality is you can't predict it. You can't avoid it. The only thing you can do is survive it, which millions of women are now doing who have access to the treatments and health care they need. This is why this new health care reform law is so important.

It is two things. It is health insurance reform, making sure those of us who have insurance are getting what we are paying for—as we have said before, can't get dropped, don't put artificial limits on the number of treatments. So it is insurance reform, so you are getting what you are paying for—what you thought you were paying for. It is also creating a way for more affordable insurance by creating a marketplace where insurance companies then have to bid for your business and provide you the best bid possible. We have competition to bring the costs down. I know for Chris, I know for women in my own family, and I know for people across Michigan, the peace of mind that comes with that is, in fact, priceless.

The debate on the other side is about taking that all away—not making it better, not fixing it. Medicare over the year has been improved. Medicaid has been improved. Social Security has been improved. Everything that is worth doing gets started and then has to be worked on to get improved. We are committed to doing that. But there are 50 votes now happening in the House to take it all away and to go back to saying good luck. If you are a woman, good luck. By the way, being a

woman is probably viewed as being a preexisting condition. Trying to find insurance? Good luck. Good luck trying to get what you need from the insurance companies. Peace of mind is worth fighting for, and that is what the Affordable Care Act is all about.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

SAVANNAH HARBOR EXPANSION PROJECT

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss promises made and promises broken, of hypocrisy and politics, of the difference between the photo op speeches, press releases, and real action.

Let me start at the beginning, for those who are just joining us in this decade-and-a-half battle. The Panama Canal is about halfway through a \$5.25 billion expansion which will accommodate the larger post-Panamax vessels that are too large to transit the current Panama Canal. These new post-Panamax ships are the length of aircraft carriers. From the waterline they are 190 feet tall, or nearly twice the height of the Lincoln Memorial. The ships can carry as many as 12,000 containers, or translated into TVs, a million flat screen TVs.

Thus, the United States must be prepared to accept these larger vessels by 2015, when the Panama Canal expansion is complete. The Port of Savannah in Savannah, Georgia, is the second busiest U.S. container exporter, handling 13.2 million tons in exports in 2012 alone. It is the busiest port on the East Coast. In order to accommodate the new larger ships at the Port of Savannah, the Savannah river must be deepened from its current depth of 42 feet to 47 feet.

Georgia has been working on the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project for well in excess of a dozen years. Environmental studies have been completed, permits have been issued, and state funding has been secured for 40 percent of the project. It has the support of every Member of the Georgia congressional delegation and every single leader in our State, Republican as well as Democrat. This is a unifying bipartisan project for us, one that will support hundreds of thousands of jobs each year while generating billions of dollars in revenue for the entire southeastern United States.

Until recently we had the support of the Obama administration as well. After all, this is exactly the type of project the President has been touting as the secret to our economic recovery. He even included the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project as one of the four port projects in his 2012 "We Can't Wait" initiative.

Vice President BIDEN visited the Port of Savannah along with Senator ISAKSON, myself, and Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx last year, and in comments while at the Port of Savan-

nah to the public that was gathered, he stated: "We are going to get this done, come hell or high water."

Acting U.S. Deputy Secretary of Commerce Rebecca Blank visited the port in 2012, calling SHEP a national bipartisan priority for this administration. Former Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood visited the Port of Savannah in 2011 promising to find funding for the port expansion. In fact, in every conversation I have had with various administration officials since this project started in 1997, I have been assured that we would find a way to get this project done.

So you can see how confused I was to learn this week that the administration is now stonewalling us on this project by not including the project in its 2015 budget. It is baffling to see this administration choose to ignore a congressional statute passed just 6 weeks ago that cleared all remaining obstructions to moving forward with this project.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 gave clear direction to the administration to begin construction on the SHEP project and to request the necessary funding. The administration's position as evidenced by the Office of Management and Budget is that they will ignore the clear guidance from Congress and will instead request more funding for unnecessary additional studies this year. Apparently the administration would rather pay lip service to Georgians than deliver on their promises. The State of Georgia has done its part, and I commend Governor Deal and the Georgia legislature, who have committed \$265 million to start construction. We just need the Federal Government to get out of our way so Georgia can begin construction on this very vital project.

The administration can repair some of the damage that has been done by finalizing the agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Georgia Ports Authority so that they can begin construction with State money that under the leadership of Governor Deal is now going to be available. Without any Federal funding at this point in time, the State is willing to move forward.

I urge the administration to move ahead with the securing of that agreement between the Army Corps of Engineers and the Ports Authority, and let's begin construction.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I seek recognition to speak for 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENERGY POLICY

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, we have now engaged in a debate over the last couple of weeks over whether we should begin to expand a massive exportation of American natural gas—our own natural gas—to put it out onto the world market as a way of helping Ukraine deal with Russia.

This whole notion is constantly being invoked, like an incantation—a talisman—that somehow or other this is some kind of a magic bullet that will help solve the problems in Ukraine. In fact, it really is nothing more than another aggregation encyclopedically of discredited notions, nostrums, that have no relationship to the reality of the global energy marketplace. These are actual arguments being made, false premises that do not, in fact, have any likelihood of having any substantial impact on the totality of the Ukrainian situation.

Let me give a few facts as a way of dealing with where we are right now. The United States has already approved five export terminals that could send 4 trillion cubic feet of natural gas abroad. How much natural gas is that? Let me tell my colleagues: It is more than twice what Ukraine uses in a year. The United States has already committed to doing that. More than a quarter of all of the gas Europe imports in a year would be ascribable to the amount of natural gas the United States has already approved. It would be nearly as much as every single U.S. home uses yearly. That is how much natural gas is part of the already approved export terminals in this country.

The Department of Energy found that exporting 4.4 trillion cubic feet—a level we will reach within the next approved export terminal—could raise the price of domestic natural gas up to 54 percent. That could mean that American consumers would pay \$2.50 more per thousand cubic feet. That translates into—listen to this number, I say to my colleagues—a \$62 billion energy tax every year on American consumers and businesses.

What do I mean by energy tax? I mean that but for that exportation, consumers' bills, corporations' bills, would be \$62 billion lower per year over the next 10 years. Can we imagine the debate here in the Senate over increasing \$62 billion worth of taxes on Americans in one year? We would come to a standstill if we had that kind of debate. But because it is part of energy policy, people assume it is something that is outside the purview of what should be a great national debate which we are having.

Let me tell my colleagues, low-cost domestic natural gas has allowed the

United States to add—let me say this—530,000 manufacturing jobs since 2010, according to Dow Chemical. If low prices continue, we could add 5 million more jobs in the manufacturing sector by 2020. Who says this? America's Energy Advantage. Who is in that organization? Dow, Alcoa, Nucor, and other major corporations. To what do they relate the manufacturing revival in our country? Low prices. Energy that gives them a reason to return the manufacturing jobs from overseas.

Except for the cost of labor, what is the single largest component in a manufacturing job? The cost of energy. The lower it is, the more likely the manufacturing company will have the jobs here in America. If we increase the price by 54 percent or more, which is what many people here are now proposing, we reduce the incentive for a manufacturer to create those new jobs here in the United States.

Let me give my colleagues another fact. Every dollar invested in domestic manufacturing creates \$8 in finished products. Manufacturing is at the heart of who we are as a country. This is something that right now is a discussion we should have in this country—the relationship between low-cost energy and the new manufacturing jobs we want to see. We can generate that economic value here in America, but if we send our natural gas overseas, that same kind of manufacturing future can be constructed in China. Let's have that debate here in our country.

Last month the U.S. chemical industry topped \$100 billion in new investments as a result of low-cost U.S. natural gas. According to the American Chemistry Council, those 148 new factories and expanded projects could generate \$81 billion per year in new chemical industry output and 637,000 new jobs in manufacturing here in the United States by the year 2023.

Now let's go to, in my opinion, some of the complete canards that are thrown out about where this natural gas will go if it is put out into the free market. First of all, let me say this: We are not Russia. We are not Venezuela. We are not a Communist country where the government controls where energy goes. No. We are a capitalist country. We are proud of it. The decision as to where natural gas is going to go is going to be made by the CEOs of oil and gas companies in our country, and they are going to send it to where they can get the highest dollar. Let me say this right now: The highest dollar is in China. The highest dollar is in South America. The highest dollar is not in Ukraine. So anyone who thinks that setting up these export terminals and sending our natural gas that could be helping our manufacturing sector overseas is going to help Ukraine's geopolitical situation doesn't understand the geo-economics of it, the geology of it, or the geo-

political implications of it. They have not thought through the totality of what happens when we take our precious resource and we start spreading it around the world.

Some are going to argue that it helps Ukraine. Well, it is going to help China more than it helps Ukraine. It is going to help South America more than it helps Ukraine. It is for sure going to help the CEOs of big oil and gas companies. That is what this debate is really going to be all about. Because we don't captain those ships. ExxonMobil has a tiller for those ships, and those ships are going to steer toward where the highest price is on the world marketplace. When those LNG tankers set sail for Asia or South America, we should know what else we are sending abroad on those ships. American jobs will be on those ships. They will be sailing to other countries. Fighting climate change is on those ships, because we will burn more coal here in the United States rather than natural gas, which has half of the pollutants of coal. We will be increasing the greenhouse gases the United States of America is sending up into the atmosphere.

When we are sending that natural gas overseas, we will be increasing the cost of a conversion of our large bus fleet and our large truck fleet over to natural gas as the fuel which makes it possible to drive them around our country. Here are the statistics. It is quite simple. If we move one-third of our fleet off of oil and on to natural gas as a way of fueling large buses and large trucks, then we back out 1 million barrels of oil—1 million barrels of oil—per day. That is a signal we should be sending to the Middle East. That is a signal that we are serious, that we are tired of exporting young men and women overseas and getting nothing in return.

So let me summarize by saying this: No. 1, it is a \$62 billion consumer tax. No. 2, it slows our conversion from coal over to oil in our utility industry. No. 3, it slows the conversion of vehicles over to natural gas. No. 4, it slows our manufacturing revolution. No. 5, it slows our economic recovery. Our real strength is in our strong economy fueled by this low-cost oil and natural gas in our country.

We need a huge national debate in our country about the impact on our economy before we start putting it out on the high seas believing, erroneously, it is going to have some huge impact on Ukraine.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

UKRAINE

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, Russia's invasion of Ukraine is one of the most serious breaches of the OSCE principles since the signing of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. These principles are at the foundation of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in

Europe. Russia, as a participating state, agreed to hold these principles, including territorial integrity of states, inviolability of frontiers, refraining from the threat of use of force, peaceful settlements of disputes, and others.

With this invasion, which is based, as Secretary Kerry has stated, on a completely trumped-up set of pretexts, Russia has shown its utter contempt for these core principles, indeed, for the entire OSCE process—not only the OSCE but the 1994 Budapest Memorandum signed by the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, and Ukraine that provides security assurances for Ukraine, the 1997 Ukraine-Russia bilateral treaty, and the U.N. charter, and other international agreements. Russia's military invasion of Ukraine is also a gross violation of the Vienna Document's confidence and security building mechanisms which govern military relations and arms control.

So let's examine Vladimir Putin's justification for this unprovoked invasion. He claims there is a need to protect Russian interests and the rights of Russian-speaking minorities. They characterize it as a human rights protection mission that it clearly is not. Russian officials fail to show any real evidence that the rights of ethnic Russians in Crimea—where they actually constitute a majority and have the most clout politically—and Ukraine at large have been violated. In fact, there is overwhelming evidence that the protests in some Ukrainian cities is being stoked by the Russians.

Putin and other Russian officials make all sorts of unfounded accusations, including that masked militia are roaming the streets of Kiev, although the Ukrainian capital and most of Ukraine has been calm for the last few weeks. Mr. Putin claims there is a "rampage of reactionary forces, nationalist and anti-Semitic forces going on in certain parts of Ukraine." Yet Kiev's chief rabbi and a vice president of the World Jewish Congress on Monday accused Russia of staging anti-Semitic provocations in Crimea.

Mr. Putin accuses Ukraine's new legitimate transition government—not yet 2 weeks old—of threatening ethnic Russians. Yet there is a myriad of credible reports to the contrary. Indeed, although there has been unrest in some cities, there has been no serious movement in the mostly Russian-speaking eastern and southern regions to join with Russia.

The clear majority of Ukrainians wants to see their country remain unified and do not welcome Russian intervention. All Ukrainian religious groups have come out against the Russian intervention and stand in support of Ukraine's territorial integrity and inviolability of its borders, as have minority groups such as the Crimean Tatars and the Roma.

I submit that the real threat posed by the new government is that it wants to assertively move Ukraine in the direction of political and economic reforms and in the direction of democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law—away from the unbridled corruption of the previous regime and the kind of autocratic rule found in today's Russia.

As for protecting Russian interests in Crimea, the Russians have not produced one iota of evidence that the Russian Black Sea Fleet, based in the Crimean city of Sevastopol, is under any kind of threat. Indeed, when the Ukrainians reached out to the Russians to try to engage them peacefully, they have been rebuffed.

Russian authorities need to send their troops back to the barracks and instead engage through diplomacy, not the threat or use of force. The Russian actions pose a threat beyond Ukraine and threaten to destabilize neighboring states.

I pointed out at a hearing we had this week in the subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and in a hearing of the Helsinki Commission, that if Russia can use force to try to change territories, what message does that send to the South China Sea, what message does that send to the Western Balkans?

Just as Poland has already invoked article 4 NATO consultations, the Baltic States and others in the region are wary of Russian goals.

As chairman of the Helsinki Commission and a former vice president of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, I am encouraged to see active and wide-ranging engagement of the OSCE to de-escalate tensions and to foster peace and security in Ukraine. The OSCE has the tools to address concerns with regard to security on the ground in Crimea, minority rights, and with regard to preparations for this democratic transition to lead to free and fair elections.

In response to a request by the Ukrainian Government, 18 OSCE participating states, including the United States, are sending 35 unarmed military personnel to Ukraine. This is taking place under the Vienna Document, which allows for voluntary hosting of visits to dispel concerns about unusual military activities.

Various OSCE institutions are activating, at the request of the Ukrainian Government, including the OSCE's human rights office, known as the ODIHR, to provide human rights monitoring as well as election observation for the May 25 Presidential elections. The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, Representative on Freedom of the Media, and the head of the Strategic Police Matters Unit, among others, are all in Kiev this week conducting factfinding missions. A full-scale, long-term OSCE Monitoring

Mission is being proposed, and this mission needs to go forward.

All of these OSCE efforts are aimed at deescalating tensions, fostering peace and stability, ensuring the observance of OSCE principles, including the human dimension, helping Ukraine in its transition, especially in the runup to the May elections.

These OSCE on-the-ground efforts are being thwarted by the Russian-controlled newly installed Crimean authorities. The OSCE Unusual Military Activities observers have been stopped from entering Crimea by unidentified men in military fatigues.

Also, the OSCE Media Freedom Representative and her staff were temporarily blocked from leaving a hotel in Crimea where she was meeting with journalists and civil society activists. The U.N. special envoy was accosted by unidentified gunmen after visiting a naval headquarters in the Sevastopol.

The blocking of international monitors—who were invited by the Ukrainian Government and who clearly are trying to seek peaceful resolutions to the conflict—is completely unacceptable and we should hold Russia responsible for their safety.

Russia is a member of the OSCE—one of the founding members—and they are openly violating the core principles of the Helsinki Final Act. Russia signed on to the institutions that are available under OSCE for this exact type of circumstance—to give independent observation as to what is happening on the ground. Sending this mission, at the request of the host country, into Crimea is exactly the commitments made to reduce tensions in OSCE states, and Russia is blocking the use of that mechanism.

The United States and the international community are deploying wide-ranging resources to contain and roll back Russia's aggression and to assist Ukraine's transition to a democratic, secure, and prosperous country. Both the Executive and the Congress are working around the clock on this. President Obama has taken concrete action and made concrete recommendations.

As the author of the Magnitsky Act, I welcome the White House sanctions announced today, including visa restrictions on officials and individuals threatening Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and financial sanctions against those "responsible for activities undermining democratic processes or institutions in Ukraine."

It was just a little while ago that we passed the Magnitsky Act. We did that in response to gross human rights violations within Russia against an individual named Sergei Magnitsky. What we did is say that those who were responsible for these gross violations of internationally recognized rules should be held accountable, and if they are not held accountable, the least we can do

in the United States is not give them safe haven in our country, not allow the corrupt dollars they have earned to be housed in America—no visas, no use of our banking system. The President is taking a similar action against those responsible for the invasion and military use against international rules in Ukraine.

These steps are in addition to many other actions, including the suspension of bilateral discussions with Russia on trade and investment, stopping United States-Russia military-to-military engagement, and suspending preparations for the June G8 summit in Sochi. Both Chambers are working expeditiously on legislation to help Ukraine in this delicate period of transition. We also need to work expeditiously with our European friends and allies, and I am encouraged by the news that the EU is preparing a \$15 billion aid package.

Ukraine has exercised amazing restraint in not escalating the conflict, particularly in Crimea. I applaud their restraint and their action. The people of Ukraine have suffered an incredibly difficult history, and over the last century they have been subjected to two World Wars, 70 years of Soviet domination, including Stalin's genocidal famine. They certainly do not need another senseless war. Nothing justifies Russia's aggression—nothing. Our political and economic assistance at this time would be a testament to those who died at the Maidan just 2 weeks ago and a concrete manifestation that our words mean something and that we do indeed stand by the people of Ukraine as they make their historic choice for freedom, democracy, and a better life.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

MANUFACTURING INNOVATION HUBS

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I come to the floor once again to talk about good jobs—about manufacturing jobs—and about what we can do together in this Chamber to strengthen the vital manufacturing sector of the American economy.

Last year, Democratic Senator SHERROD BROWN and Republican Senator ROY BLUNT came together in a bipartisan effort to cosponsor an important bill, S. 1468, the Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2013—an effort to build a national network for manufacturing and innovation, also known as manufacturing innovation hubs.

This bill, if enacted, would allow us to build institutes across our country dedicated to discovering the next breakthroughs in technology and translating them to the next breakthroughs in manufacturing. I have been proud to support and fight for this bill,

and now, because of my colleagues' leadership and determination, we are close to getting a vote.

We have heard about the importance of these innovation hubs for manufacturing before. Last year two hubs opened—one in Youngstown, OH, and another in Raleigh, NC. Just last week I was thrilled to hear about two more opening—one in Detroit and another in Chicago.

These hubs are good first steps, but they are being done by the executive branch, without express and explicit authorization for a whole and broader program through this bill, which would extend this national network, would make its life longer and greater, and give more specific details to the process by which they would be authorized going forward.

It is my hope, having already seen several demonstrations on a more modest scale, this Congress will come together in a bipartisan way and enact this legislation to put a framework in place for the long term.

These hubs, as I said, are good first steps, but we in Congress can and should do more. In my home State of Delaware we are blessed to have some remarkable institutions of higher learning: Delaware State University, led by the great President Dr. Harry Williams; the University of Delaware—both research institutions which benefit from federally funded research and both of which do work in energy and engineering, relevant to manufacturing. We also have Del Tech—Delaware Technical & Community College—which does great workforce training and partners with manufacturers. We also have a whole series of manufacturers, large and small; some iconic companies such as DuPont, some unknown outside my State that employ dozens or hundreds.

What a manufacturing hub would do is bring together a university that is doing cutting-edge research in a new field with companies looking to start manufacturing using that technology, with those community colleges and others who would train the new workforce, creating a network that would do the innovative work in an iterative way that would accelerate new manufacturing opportunities.

The reason this bill has such a diverse set of bipartisan backers—from Democrats such as SHERROD BROWN, DEBBIE STABENOW, and myself, to Republicans such as ROY BLUNT, LINDSEY GRAHAM, and MARK KIRK—is because these hubs represent a great example of how the Federal Government can help foster partnerships between businesses, universities, and communities in a hands-off way.

As to these first four hubs I mentioned, in these instances, the Federal Government is also getting terrific leverage. There is a more than 1-to-1 match from private, State, and local

partnerships in these existing hubs—partnerships, I might add, that have national reach, giving the hubs the potential to benefit not just their immediate regions or their immediate communities but the whole country.

General Dynamics and Honeywell, for example, are two of the partner companies in the Youngstown, OH, lab. They have footprints all across our country. At the hub in Raleigh, NC, researchers from other universities—such as Arizona State and Florida State—are collaborators as well, contributing their knowledge to the great work of these hubs and then also bringing back to their labs and their communities what is being learned through this common collaborative work.

So the Youngstown and Raleigh hubs—now well established—are about more than just those two cities, and the hubs in Detroit and Chicago will be about more than just Michigan and Illinois, and the hubs we would create, we would authorize, through this bill would be about more than just the cities or States in which they are based.

By bringing together such a wide-ranging and diverse set of partners, hubs allow many different stakeholders to pool their resources, minimizing the risks of investing in the early stage research that is critical to innovation but not feasible for one company alone to invest in.

It is about the private sector coming together with the university and public sectors to solve tough problems without just one firm bearing all the risk or the burden. R&D—research and development—as we know, is critical to our economic future. These hubs offer an innovative model for increasing our national capacity for invention.

The Federal Government acts as a convener for private firms, nonprofits, universities, and researchers, creating an environment where they can all do what they do best and share it. This idea transcends ideology or party. That is why I think Members of both parties should feel comfortable getting behind this bill. It has been endorsed by folks ranging from the National Association of Manufacturers to the Bio, which represents the bio and pharmaceutical community, and folks in the private sector and public sector in my own State and in States across the country.

Manufacturing is at the heart of what can and should make this country competitive and prosperous in this century. At the end of the day, this is about creating good jobs. Manufacturing jobs are high-quality jobs. It has a significant secondary benefit in the community as well as having higher wages and benefits than jobs in any other sector.

If we are looking for the key to a dynamic innovation economy, we need to look no further than manufacturers. They invest more in R&D than any other private sector within the coun-

try. When we think of manufacturing and innovation today, we often picture researchers in the United States inventing things and manufacturing factories overseas. But that is not how sophisticated, advanced manufacturing innovation works anymore. The reality is that innovation is just not linear. R&D and manufacturing need to be closer together. It does not just start in the lab and then get sent to a factory and then to a store and your home. More often R&D results in innovations that improve the products already in our home, that improve the manufacturing process to discover better ways to make things faster, more safely, more efficiently, and that innovative cycle can speed up the more closely connected and articulated it is.

By creating these manufacturing innovation hubs, all of which focus on a specific sector or industry, we can help fuel the discoveries that will make manufacturing a critical part of our long-term economic future, while ensuring that the discoveries that change our world are made here in America and the products that come out of them are manufactured here in America.

These hubs focus on emerging areas where there is enormous potential. For example, the hub in Youngstown, OH, is focused on 3D printing, which already has the potential to transform how manufacturing, large-scale and small-scale, is done not just in the United States but around the world. We believe—I certainly believe we should continue to be at the cutting edge of developing and deploying what 3D printing has to offer.

The one in Raleigh, NC, is about wide bandgap semiconductors or energy-efficient electronics and will likely dominate much of the next generation of electronics. Again, why would we not want to be on the ground for not just the inventing of new technologies but demonstrating how to manufacture them?

In Detroit, researchers and businesses and universities and other stakeholders in this newest hub will work together on advanced lightweight materials, on remarkable metals that are stronger, more durable, more ductile, and more lightweight than other existing materials, with applications, of course, in automobiles but across a very wide range of products and platforms.

Lastly, in Chicago, small businesses, universities, and larger companies are working together on some remarkable advances that speed up the whole manufacturing process so new ideas can go from the lab to your home faster than ever before.

Hubs such as these are central to our competitiveness because it is not just about the work happening at the lab or the institute itself; it is about how they then attract companies with a national reach to an area that is capable

of building sustainable and dynamic local economies. It is about bringing researchers and manufacturers together to spur innovation, commercialize R&D, and create good jobs that do not go somewhere else. It is about the larger impact for our communities and our country, as innovation breeds new supply chains and new businesses locally and across our country.

Today's global economy is more competitive than it has ever been. We are competing not just with developing countries that have lower labor and environmental standards or lower wages but also with developed nations that are trying to out-educate, out-research, and out-innovate us. Germany, for example, has a well-developed, well-established, well-deployed network of more than 60 manufacturing innovation hubs exactly like the ones I have just described. It also has fairly high labor and environmental standards but is the manufacturing powerhouse of Europe. It has nearly double the percentage of its GDP in manufacturing as the United States. How are they able to do this? How can they sustain these high levels of manufacturing? It is in no small part because of the manufacturing innovation hubs they have developed and deployed.

So let's get this done. There is absolutely no reason that the season of governing and of legislating here in Washington needs to be over, especially when there is so much important work to do—work that I know we can and should get done on a bipartisan basis. Senators BROWN and BLUNT have done great work and shown strong leadership in developing this bill, refining this bill, and getting it to this point.

Let's show that we can come together in areas where we do agree and put campaigns and politics aside for now and put American jobs and American innovation first.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. (Mr. BEGICH.) The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF CAROLYN B. McHUGH TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE TENTH DISTRICT

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 563.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Carolyn B. McHugh, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Carolyn B. McHugh, of Utah, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Carl Levin, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Debbie Stabenow, Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Jeanne Shaheen, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie K. Hirono, Joe Donnelly, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Tom Harkin.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF MATTHEW FREDERICK LEITMAN TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 577.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Matthew Frederick Leitman, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. There is a cloture motion at the desk, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Matthew Frederick Leitman, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Carl Levin, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Debbie Stabenow, Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Jeanne Shaheen, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie K. Hirono, Joe Donnelly, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Tom Harkin.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF JUDITH ELLEN LEVY TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 578.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Judith Ellen Levy, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Judith Ellen Levy, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Carl Levin, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Debbie Stabenow, Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Jeanne Shaheen, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie K. Hirono, Joe Donnelly, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Tom Harkin.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF LAURIE J. MICHELSON TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 579.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Laurie J. Michelson, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. There is a cloture motion at the desk I wish to have reported.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Laurie J. Michelson, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Carl Levin, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Debbie Stabenow, Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Jeanne Shaheen, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie Hirono, Joe Donnelly, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Tom Harkin.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

LINDA VIVIANNE PARKER TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 580.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Linda Vivienne Parker, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Linda Vivienne Parker, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Carl Levin, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Debbie Stabenow, Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Jeanne Shaheen, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie Hirono, Joe Donnelly, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Tom Harkin.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, March 8 is International Women's Day—a day when we can celebrate the enormous advances women have made while pledging to continue to work for greater opportunity for all women.

Rooted in the long-term struggle for equality, International Women's Day has been observed since a time when American women were fighting for basic rights, such as voting or fair employment. Today, we see women breaking ground and becoming leaders in business, government, and the military—both here in the United States and overseas. While this is encouraging, many women around the world continue to face significant social and economic obstacles.

The official United Nations theme for this International Women's Day is "Equality for women is progress for all." I couldn't agree more; empowering women is one of the most critical tools in our toolbox to fight poverty and injustice.

According to some reports, women represent nearly 70 percent of the

world's poor. In many regions of the world, a woman's ability to earn a sustained income is severely limited by cultural norms and a lack of opportunity.

Economically empowering women is one of the most important tools we have to alleviate poverty. Women around the world participate in the political, social, and economic life of their communities and play a predominant role in providing and caring for their families. Research has shown that men only reinvest 30-40 percent of their income into their households, while women reinvest 90 percent—choosing to spend their money on food, clean water, education and health care. Greater economic opportunity and earning capacity also increases equality and mutual respect within households, reducing women's vulnerability to domestic abuse.

Until women around the world have improved access to economic, political, and social opportunities, many of the great challenges we face today, from pervasive global poverty to violent extremism, will go unresolved.

We must continue to promote women's leadership and integrate gender perspectives in our development and foreign assistance programs. Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in this realm will not only lead to increased productivity and income for women but can have a positive impact for generations to come.

I urge all my colleagues to work together to call attention to the injustices women face around the world and to work to implement laws and policies that advance the cause of women both at home and abroad.

DEAMONTE DRIVER'S PASSING

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today I rise to mark the seventh anniversary of Deamonte Driver's death.

Deamonte Driver was a 12-year-old child who lived in Prince George's County, MD, whose border sits only a few miles from the U.S. Capitol Building. He died 7 years ago at the Children's National Medical Center in Washington, DC, from a brain infection caused by an untreated tooth abscess.

The Driver family, like many other families across the country, lacked dental insurance. At one time, the Drivers were covered by the Medicaid Program, but they lost that coverage when they moved into a shelter and their paperwork fell through the cracks. When advocates for the family tried to help the Drivers locate a dentist to treat Deamonte's cavities and tooth pain, it took more than 20 calls to find a dentist who would see him.

Around mid-January in 2007, Deamonte began to complain of severe headaches. A subsequent evaluation at Children's Hospital led beyond the basic dental care that the family had

anticipated to emergency brain surgery. Deamonte later experienced seizures, and a second operation was required. After additional treatment and therapy, Deamonte appeared to be recovering, but medical intervention had come too late. By the end of his treatment, the total cost to our health care system exceeded one-quarter of a million dollars—more than 3,000 times the \$80 cost of a tooth extraction.

Deamonte Driver passed away on Sunday, February 25, 2007. This child's death was a national tragedy because it could have been prevented had he received timely and proper basic dental care. It was a tragedy because it happened right here in the United States, in a State that is one of the most affluent in the Nation. It happened in the State that is home to the first and one of the best dental schools in the Nation, the University of Maryland's dental school. It happened in Prince George's County, whose border is less than 6 miles from where we are standing in the U.S. Capitol.

I have spoken on the Senate floor about Deamonte Driver several times since his death, and in the intervening years, both in Maryland and nationally, we have made tremendous progress. When Deamonte's story was brought to light, I believe it was a wakeup call for our Nation. It brought home the statement of former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop: "There is no health without oral health."

Medical research reinforces Dr. Koop's words. Scientists have discovered the nexus between tooth plaque and heart disease, that chewing stimulates brain cell growth, and that gum disease can signal diabetes, liver ailments, and hormone imbalances. They have identified the vital connection between oral health research and advanced treatments like gene therapy, which can help patients with chronic renal failure. They have found that investing in basic dental care for children and adults can reduce health care expenditures down the road for costly medical interventions related to other diseases.

But for all their research findings, we also know that without insurance coverage and adequate access to providers, the needs of millions of children and adults will remain unmet, and the complications resulting from poor oral health will persist.

That is why the progress we have made over the past 7 years is so important to America's health. I have come to the floor today to talk about what has been achieved and how we can move forward as a nation to ensure even greater access to oral health care.

Since Deamonte's passing, the State of Maryland has emerged as a national leader in oral health—launching a \$1.2 million oral health literacy campaign, raising Medicaid reimbursement rates for dentists in the program, and pro-

viding allied health professionals and hygienists the opportunity to practice outside clinics. The Deamonte Driver Dental Project Van, which was dedicated in front of the U.S. Capitol in May 2010, provides care in underserved neighborhoods in Prince George's County, thanks to efforts conceived and launched by members of the Robert T. Freeman Dental Society. An arm of the National Dental Association, the society is named for Dr. Robert Tanner Freeman, who in 1869 became the first Black graduate of the Harvard School of Dental Medicine.

It was 2 years after Deamonte's death, in 2009, that Congress reauthorized the Children's Health Insurance Program. Some of my colleagues recalled the difficulty that Deamonte's mother had finding him care. Hers was not an isolated instance. For varied reasons, it is difficult for Medicaid and CHIP enrollees to find dental providers, and working parents whose children qualify for those programs are likely to be employed at jobs where they can't afford to spend 2 hours a day on the phone searching for a provider. So part of the CHIP Reauthorization Act requires HHS to include on its Insure Kids Now Web site a list of participating dentists and benefit information for all 50 States and the District of Columbia.

Also in 2009, Congress passed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, which created the Healthy Futures Corps—a program that provides grants to States and nonprofit organizations so they can fund national service in low-income communities. The law's goal was to put into action key tools that can help close the gaps in health status—prevention and health promotion. With the help of Senator MIKULSKI, we added language to that law specifying oral health as an area of focus. Now, the Healthy Futures Corps is recruiting young people to work in the dental profession, where severe shortages of providers exist in many urban and rural communities. The law is funding the work of individuals who can help parents find oral health care for themselves and their children. It is making a difference in the lives of the Healthy Futures Corps members who work in underserved communities and in the lives and health of those who can now get care.

Then in 2010, Congress passed the Affordable Care Act, which guarantees pediatric dental coverage as part of each State's Essential Benefits health care package. The ACA also established an oral health care prevention education campaign at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which is targeted toward key populations, including children and pregnant women, and it created demonstration programs to encourage innovation in oral health delivery. The law also significantly expanded workforce training programs for oral health professionals.

Moving forward, the States have a critical role to play in ensuring that the ACA benefit is designed to incentivize prevention, recognize that some children have greater risk of dental disease than others, and deliver care based on their level of risk.

Among the most cost-effective ways to improve children's dental health are investments in prevention. Dental sealants, clear plastic coatings applied to the chewing surface of molars, have been proven to prevent 60 percent of tooth decay at one-third the cost of filling a cavity. So it is essential that prevention be part of every State's benefit package.

Further, in 2010, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services launched its Oral Health Initiative, based on a bill I introduced with Senator SUSAN COLLINS. The initiative establishes a coordinated multiagency effort to improve access to care across the Nation.

One of the most effective organizations in tracking access to care is the Pew Children's Dental Campaign, which produces report cards that grade the States on eight policies that are evidence-based solutions to the problem of tooth decay. In 2011, Maryland received an "A" grade in both reports for meeting or exceeding these benchmarks, which include dental sealant programs, community water fluoridation, Medicaid reimbursement and enrollment, and collection of data on children's dental health. Maryland's grade is significant because in the late 1990s, my State had one of the worst records in the Nation with respect to oral health care for its underserved population. Now it is one of the top-ranked States for oral health care.

Our State has just received even more good news. The number of children in Maryland with untreated tooth decay dropped 41 percent from 2001 to 2011, and the overall oral health status of Maryland children has dramatically improved, according to a 2014 report conducted by the University of Maryland's School of Dentistry. The State assessment looked at 1,723 students in 52 schools from the five regions of the State. About 33 percent of the children had at least one dental sealant on their permanent first molars, and this milestone exceeded Federal goals by 5 percent. About 14 percent of students had untreated dental caries, a drop from 23 percent in 2000, and the State's achievement exceeded Federal goals by 12 percent. According to the assessment, 75 percent of the children surveyed had a regular dentist.

Another key player in our State's effort is the Baltimore Oral Health Impact Project, which provides care to children in Baltimore's public schools. Since February 2010, its providers have seen more than 3,500 children and treated more than 1,500 for dental disease. The program places a high value

on delivering comprehensive and compassionate oral health care.

This organization has also launched the Baltimore Oral Health Academy, offering scholarships to students who choose to pursue careers as a clinical dental professional including dental assistants and hygienists, and who agree to serve in a public health setting.

Nationally, HRSA's National Health Service Corps addresses the nationwide shortage of primary care oral health providers in dental health professional shortage areas—HPSA—by offering incentives in the form of scholarships and loan repayments to primary care dentists and registered dental hygienists to practice in underserved communities. The Corps has awarded more than 1,100 new loan repayment awards to dentists and nearly 300 new loan repayment awards to registered dental hygienists. But this is not nearly enough to erase the shortages. The NHSC has also implemented a part-time service program for providers who did not wish to make a full-time commitment, and I am hopeful that this new option will increase participation in the coming years.

Our Nation has made significant progress in improving children's dental health in the 7 years since Deamonte died, but there is still much work to be done. The access problem in some communities has become so severe that many people are forced to seek treatment for tooth pain in the Nation's emergency rooms, increasing the overall cost of care and receiving uncoordinated care in the least cost-efficient setting. In fact, more people seek treatment in emergency rooms for tooth pain than they do for asthma.

I will continue to work to increase funding for grants to States and expand training opportunities for dentists. We do not have enough professionals who are trained and available to treat children and adults with dental problems, and it is our responsibility to fix that. We must improve public reimbursement to dental providers in offices and clinics so that no one who needs treatment will be turned away.

Soon, Congress will turn again to the Reauthorization of the CHIP program, and I will be once again fighting for the strongest possible language we can get to promote children's oral health. For my colleagues who may not be familiar with CHIP's track record on oral health, I would like to leave you with three facts:

First, tooth decay is the single most common chronic disease of childhood, and it is five times more common than asthma. The complications of dental disease, which we now know can be fatal, are completely and easily preventable if we give children the care they need. Second, because of Congress's passage of the 2009 Children's Health Insurance Program Reau-

thorization Act, in 2013, more than 8 million American children had comprehensive dental coverage through CHIP. Third, CHIP has kept comprehensive coverage affordable. Under CHIP, families cannot pay more than 5 percent of their annual income in out-of-pocket costs for their children's medical and dental care.

What we have been able to achieve for children is due to support in Congress and also to the efforts of the many nonprofit organizations, universities, and providers who are also working across the Nation to make sure that we will never forget Deamonte and never forget our responsibility to improving oral health care for America's children.

On this sad anniversary, in Maryland and throughout the Nation there are signs of hope for the future of oral health care. I thank my colleagues for the role they have played in this process and look forward to working with them in the months to come to strengthen oral health care access for our Nation's children.

TRIBUTE TO ANTONIA FERRIER

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to Antonia Ferrier on my staff. After 4 years of trying to keep this tough old bird in line, she'll be leaving my office in the coming days. She will most certainly be missed.

Antonia first came to Capitol Hill to work for the former distinguished majority leader and my good friend, Bill Frist from Tennessee. After that, she went on to serve on the staff of another one of our former colleagues, Olympia Snowe. Now, Maine is pretty different from Tennessee, but I'm sure it felt like a bit of a homecoming for Antonia, who is from Massachusetts. After more than 3 years with Senator Snowe, Antonia made her way across the Capitol Rotunda to work for Senator ROY BLUNT during his time as the House Republican Whip.

For a Senate purist like Antonia, one House Member probably felt like enough, but she then went on to serve JOHN BOEHNER during his time as the House Republican leader. Finally, we were able to woo her back on this side of the Capitol to come be a member of our team.

As I said, Antonia is a Senate purist. She understands the Senate's role in our system of government, she appreciates the personalities and complexities of those that are honored to serve here, and she knows how much the work we do here impacts the lives of Americans from Tennessee to Maine, and Ohio to Utah. And, given her experience, she understands the House very much as well.

I'll deeply miss having Antonia around, not only for her sage advice and counsel, but also for her wit and sense of humor, and her willingness for

straight-talk. I think she would say that the hardest part of her job is protecting me from myself. That's a tough job for anyone. And, I have to say that she's been up to the task, even during those times when I've made it particularly difficult.

I want to thank Antonia for her service to me, to Utah, and to the Senate over these last several years. She has been an amazing asset, and I wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

REMEMBERING JOHN S. WILLIAMS

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President. I am grateful for the opportunity to pay tribute to a truly extraordinary public servant, father, grandfather, and neighbor—Mr. John S. Williams. Sadly, John passed away this week leaving behind a legacy of dedication and service.

John worked for an unprecedented 27½ years as the executive director of the Five County Association of Governments, AOG; only the third person to serve in that position since the association's inception. This association was formed to address the needs and challenges facing the southwest region of Utah—Beaver, Garfield, Iron, Kane, and Washington Counties. As the director, John set a tone of hard work, commitment, and a belief in the greatness of southwest Utah. He was comfortable not only in the director's chair—but rolling up his sleeves and getting the hard work done.

He was a key figure in promoting economic development in southwest Utah, as well as the whole State. He helped formulate policy and address issues facing an increasingly expanding region including: infrastructure, public lands issues, population growth, and quality of life. The Five County AOG has a reputation throughout Utah as an association that makes a difference and helps forge the way, largely in part because of the strength of John's leadership for almost three decades.

While working with John on many occasions throughout my Senate service I have always found him as someone who deeply cared about those he served, and had ideas and solutions to address the challenges facing a very important region of Utah. The example he set will be felt for generations to come; and the five counties he served are better prepared for the future challenges and triumphs they will face in the coming years.

Elaine and I convey our deepest sympathies to John's wife Jamie, his five children, and many grandchildren. May our Heavenly Father bless them with peace and comfort at this time. The contributions and impact John made on his family, his community, and our State will be felt and appreciated for generations to come. Utah is a better State because of the service John rendered throughout his life and his strong advocacy of southwest Utah.

FREEDOM FOR BOB LEVINSON

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I rise today on the anniversary of Bob Levinson's disappearance from Kish Island off the coast of Iran.

March 9 will mark 7 excruciating years of waiting and wondering for Bob's family who have desperately sought assistance from the Governments of Iran and the United States in finding him and bringing him home.

Bob, a retired FBI agent, is now one of the longest held Americans in our Nation's history. Bob's safe return is his family's highest priority—as it must remain for the U.S. Government as well.

At the beginning of this year, this body unanimously passed a resolution urging the Government of Iran to fulfill their promises of assistance in Bob's case. At a time when our governments are talking to one another after more than 30 years, I ask that they talk about locating Bob and bringing him home to Florida. This case transcends any differences between the United States and Iran.

I continue to believe our two countries share the same goal: as a humanitarian matter both governments can readily support bringing a father home to his children and grandchildren.

I have said as much to officials in the Iranian Government, and I rise today to reiterate this same message. I will also continue to call on the U.S. Government to raise Bob's case with Iranian officials at every opportunity and do all they can to end this ordeal.

Bob and his wife Christine have seven children and four grandchildren.

For their sake, after 7 heart-wrenching years, we must all redouble our efforts to bring Bob home.

AROOSTOOK COUNTY, MAINE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, this year marks the 175th anniversary of the incorporation of Aroostook County, ME. As one who was born and raised in that wonderful place, I wish to celebrate its fascinating past, energetic present, and bright future.

If the story of Aroostook County could be summed up in one thought, it would be this: We are the largest county east of the Mississippi River, yet we are all neighbors. From the frontier to the front lines of innovation, the people of "The County," as it is known throughout Maine, have always worked hard and worked together.

The story of Aroostook County begins long before its incorporation in 1839. For thousands of years, it has been the home of the Micmac and Maliseet; the name Aroostook comes from the Native American word for "beautiful river."

French explorers, led by Samuel de Champlain, first visited the area in 1604. The settlements that followed laid the foundation for the vibrant Acadian

culture that is so important in Maine, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and as far away as Louisiana. Under French, and later, English rule, Aroostook's rich natural resources drew hardy lumberjacks and trappers to the area.

For decades after the American Revolution, Maine's northernmost region was the site of a protracted and tense border dispute between our new Nation and British Canada. As negotiations, led by the great American statesman Daniel Webster, to end what is now called the Bloodless Aroostook War neared completion, families and entrepreneurs settled in the area, and Aroostook County was incorporated. Among those early settlers was my ancestor, Samuel W. Collins, who built a lumber mill in Caribou in 1844 that was the beginning of our fifth-generation family business still in operation today.

People were drawn to Aroostook County in search of liberty and opportunity, and they have always worked and sacrificed to extend those blessings to others. In the years before emancipation, Aroostook County was the last stop on the Underground Railroad that took slaves to freedom. The Friends Quaker Church in Fort Fairfield stands today as a powerful memorial to that time of courage and compassion. Civil War monuments in villages throughout Aroostook County stand in honor of the many heroes who gave their lives so that all could be free.

Throughout the 19th century, the people of Aroostook County connected their remote region to the world with their own hands. Town by town, they built roads and railroads with pick, shovel, and wheelbarrow. These transportation networks, combined with the region's rich soil, made Aroostook County an agricultural powerhouse. The potato industry remains an essential part of the Maine economy.

During World War II, Presque Isle and Houlton both had U.S. Army bases. Houlton had a prisoner-of-war camp for German soldiers. Presque Isle's base was used to launch P-38s, C-47s, and B-17s to the European theater. During the cold war, Loring Air Force Base in Limestone, due its proximity to Northern Europe, became a crucial forward post in America's defense.

The closure of Loring Air Force base in 1994 was a difficult challenge. But the people of Aroostook County responded with the qualities that wrote their history: strength, a strong work ethic, and determination. They are building a new economy with new jobs and opportunities. Back then, biathlon was little-known, yet today Aroostook County is a world-class center for winter sports and Olympic training and the home to an Olympian in the biathlon.

Aroostook's hospitals have become national models for expert and compassionate care in rural regions, particularly for our veterans. Educational in-

stitutions and industry have joined together to lead the way in the development of renewable energy sources. The closed bases in Houlton and Presque Isle, and Loring Air Force Base have evolved into hubs of commerce and industry.

Through the years, Aroostook County has gone by many names—the Crown of Maine, the Garden County, the Last Frontier of the East, and, of course, The County. A more recent addition is the motto of the University of Maine at Presque Isle—"North of Ordinary" is the perfect way to describe a place that is truly extraordinary.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO SHAUNA JEAN RINGEL

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the outstanding work of Shauna Jean Hill Ringel, who is retiring after 22 years of employment with Madison County, ID.

Shauna is a native of St. Anthony, ID. She moved to Rexburg with her husband, Brad, in 1970, and she raised three children, Ryan, Shelli and Tracy, in Rexburg. After the death of her husband in 1987, Shauna worked at Madison School District's Burton Elementary School as the school's secretary. She began working for Madison County in 1992, and she served as a clerk of district court, 7th Judicial District. She moved to the Madison County Clerk's office in 1996, and she worked both as deputy county clerk and as Madison County's elections clerk. In 2004, she joined the planning and zoning office. She has participated in emergency management training and helped develop emergency plans for Madison County.

The community and our State have been fortunate to have benefited from her devoted assistance that includes significant public service and volunteer work. She served as the co-chair of the Madison County Centennial Committee and coordinated a year of festivities recognizing the pioneer spirit of current and former residents of Madison County. She is also active in the local chapter of the American Red Cross through which she has assisted her friends and neighbors in Red Cross evacuation centers for flooding and wildfire emergencies. She assists families in the Upper Snake River Valley whose lives are disrupted by house fires. Shauna was also deployed to New Jersey to assist with the recovery after Hurricane Sandy, and she assisted with recovery efforts in Montana after devastating wildfires.

Shauna is viewed as someone who can be counted on to go the extra mile and put the team ahead of herself. She is respected for her steady, loyal and reliable efforts. Madison County Commissioner Kimber Ricks characterized

Shauna as “a go to’ team player. She’s always been hard working and reliable; always counted on for good judgment and good nature; and always that sense of humor that helps so much in tough situations . . . Shauna will be missed, but never forgotten.”

Thank you, Shauna, for your outstanding and dedicated service. I hope that retirement affords you more well-deserved time with your friends and family, including your children and three grandsons, and opportunities to do all the activities you love the most. I congratulate you on your retirement and wish you all the best.●

REPORT RELATIVE TO THE ISSUANCE OF AN EXECUTIVE ORDER DECLARING A NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE UNUSUAL AND EXTRAOR- DINARY THREAT TO THE NA- TIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES POSED BY THE SITUATION IN THE UKRAINE—PM 33

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the “order”) declaring a national emergency with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the situation in Ukraine.

The order does not target the country of Ukraine, but rather is aimed at persons—including persons who have asserted governmental authority in the Crimean region without the authorization of the Government of Ukraine—who undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets. The order blocks the property and interests in property and suspends entry into the United States of any person determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

- to be responsible for or complicit in, or to have engaged in, directly or indirectly, any of the following:

- actions or policies that undermine democratic processes or institutions in Ukraine;

- actions or policies that threaten the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, or territorial integrity of Ukraine; or

- misappropriation of state assets of Ukraine or of an economically significant entity in Ukraine;

- to have asserted governmental authority over any part or region of Ukraine without the authorization of the Government of Ukraine;

- to be a leader of an entity that has, or whose members have, engaged in any activity described above or of an entity whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order;

- to have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, any activity described above or any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order;

- to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. All agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 6, 2014.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:49 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 938. An act to strengthen the strategic alliance between the United States and Israel, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2126. An act to promote energy efficiency, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4118. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to delay the implementation of the penalty for failure to comply with the individual health insurance mandate.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 938. An act to strengthen the strategic alliance between the United States and Israel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 2126. An act to promote energy efficiency, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 3370. An act to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 4118. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to delay the implementation of the penalty for failure to comply with the individual health insurance mandate.

S. 2097. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, March 6, 2014, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled bill:

S. 23. An act to designate as wilderness certain land and inland water within the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in the State of Michigan, and for other purposes.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petitions and memorials were laid before the Senate and were referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-198. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the State of Michigan urging the Congress of the United States to adopt House Concurrent Resolution No. 50, regarding the National Railroad Monument in Durand, Michigan; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 88

Whereas, Railroads are an integral part of our nation's past, present, and future. The railroad industry played a vital role in building and developing the United States. This role should not be forgotten; and

Whereas, Durand, Michigan, is at the historic crossroads of three major railroads and is home to one of the largest surviving train stations in the United States. The existing statuary, structures, and historic railroad equipment at Diamond District Park in Durand make it an ideal location for a National Railroad Memorial; and

Whereas, Congressional House Concurrent Resolution No. 50 would designate a National Railroad Monument located in Diamond District Park in historic downtown Durand, Michigan, as the National Railroad Memorial. This recognition would help draw visitors from around the world to the educational programming and exhibits in Durand. It would help ensure that current and future generations do not forget the historical importance of the railroad industry to our nation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, That we urge the Congress of the United States to adopt House Concurrent Resolution No. 50, regarding the National Railroad Monument in Durand; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

POM-199. A joint resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado relative to the U.S.S. Pueblo; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 14-1007

Whereas, The U.S.S. Pueblo was originally launched as a United States Army cargo ship in 1944 but was transferred to the United States Navy and renamed the U.S.S. Pueblo in 1966; and

Whereas, The U.S.S. Pueblo was named for the city of Pueblo, Colorado, and the county of Pueblo, Colorado, and was the third ship in the naval fleet to bear the name Pueblo; and

Whereas, After leaving Japan in early January 1968 on an intelligence mission, the U.S.S. Pueblo was attacked by the North Korean military on January 23, 1968; and

Whereas, According to United States Naval authorities and the crew of the U.S.S. Pueblo, the ship was in international waters at the time of the attack; and

Whereas, One crew member of the U.S.S. Pueblo was killed during the attack, and eighty crew members and two civilian oceanographers were captured and held for eleven months by the North Korean government; and

Whereas, This year marks the forty-sixth anniversary of North Korea's attack on the U.S.S. Pueblo and her crew; and

Whereas, The U.S.S. Pueblo is still in commission in the United States Navy but continues to be held by the North Korean government and is currently a museum in Pyongyang, North Korea: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Sixty-ninth General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the Senate concurring herein:

(1) That we, the members of the General Assembly, recognize the bravery and sacrifice of the crew of the U.S.S. Pueblo; and

(2) That we take pride in the fact that the U.S.S. Pueblo bears the name of a city and a county in Colorado, and, therefore, the citizens of Colorado should be aware of the incident that occurred with the U.S.S. Pueblo forty-six years ago; and

(3) That we continue the call for Kim Jong Un and the North Korean government to return the U.S.S. Pueblo to the people of the United States; and

(4) That we hereby designate January 23 each year as "U.S.S. Pueblo Day" as a day to remember and honor the brave crew of the U.S.S. Pueblo.

Be It Further Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to President Barack Obama, Governor John W. Hickenlooper, President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate Patrick Leahy, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives John Boehner, and the members of Colorado's Congressional delegation.

POM-200. A memorial adopted by the Legislature of the State of New Mexico requesting the New Mexico Congressional Delegation in Washington, D.C., to vote to support legislation that would remove the deadline for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SENATE MEMORIAL NO. 2

Whereas, equal rights for women are not specifically included in the United States Constitution; and

Whereas, the rights of women in the United States to receive equal pay for equal work, be protected against domestic violence and have fair work-leave policies and access to the reproductive health care services of their choice, among others, are daily being questioned and restricted; and

Whereas, protection of women's rights at present is through a patchwork of existing laws, executive actions and judicial decisions that address individual cases of discrimination one by one as they arise; and

Whereas, each or all of these individual existing laws, executive actions and judicial decisions may be ignored, eroded or overturned; and

Whereas, an Amendment that would guarantee rights for women that are equal to those of men would provide a fundamental legal remedy against all cases of discrimination based on gender; and

Whereas, Resolutions to pass an Amendment to the United States Constitution that would guarantee equal rights for women and men have been introduced into Congress each year since 1923; and

Whereas, thirty-five of the thirty-eight states required for the Amendment to become part of the Constitution ratified the Equal Rights Amendment by the deadline of 1982; and

Whereas, the deadline for ratification is not in the binding text of the document itself and, in fact, was later extended by another Congress for an additional three years, thus establishing the precedent that Congress has the power to do so; and

Whereas, in the One Hundred Twelfth Congress, Senate Joint Resolution 39, introduced by Senator Ben Cardin, and House Joint Resolution 47, introduced by Representative Tammy Baldwin, would remove the deadline for ratification of the Amendment so that an additional three States may ratify it; and

Whereas, New Mexicans feel justly proud that New Mexico was one of the first states in the union to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment in 1973, and it passed its own Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution of New Mexico in 1972: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of New Mexico, That it call upon the New Mexico Congressional Delegation in Washington, D.C., to vote in favor of Legislation that would remove the deadline for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment so that efforts can proceed to get ratification by the necessary additional three states so that, finally, the guarantee of equal rights for women and men in the United States will become the Law of the Land; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this memorial be transmitted to each member of the New Mexico Congressional Delegation and to the Chief Clerks of the House of Representatives and the Senate of the United States Congress.

POM-201. A resolution adopted by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of Boonton, New Jersey, urging Congress to dedicate additional federal funds for highway maintenance and infrastructure improvements in New Jersey; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

POM-202. A resolution adopted by the Commission of the City of Pompano Beach, Florida, supporting efforts to reduce gun violence and illegal firearms trafficking through more responsible gun sales and marketing practices; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. LEAHY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, without amendment:

S. 149. A bill to provide effective criminal prosecutions for certain identity thefts, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. LEAHY for the Committee on the Judiciary.

Robin S. Rosenbaum, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

Mark G. Mastroianni, of Massachusetts, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts.

Bruce Howe Hendricks, of South Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina.

Leslie Ragon Caldwell, of New York, to be an Assistant Attorney General.

(Nominations without an asterisk were reported with the recommendation that they be confirmed.)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. COATS, and Mr. BLUNT):

S. 2086. A bill to address current emergency shortages of propane and other home heating fuels and to provide greater flexibility and information for Governors to address such emergencies in the future; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. PRYOR (for himself, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. HAGAN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. 2087. A bill to protect the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act with respect to reconciliation involving changes to the Medicare program; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 2088. A bill to amend the Natural Gas Act with respect to the exportation of natural gas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2089. A bill to amend title XVI of the Social Security Act to update eligibility for the supplemental security income program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE:

S. 2090. A bill to prohibit the export from the United States of certain electronic waste, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MORAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2091. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processing by

the Department of Veterans Affairs of claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 2092. A bill to provide certain protections from civil liability with respect to the emergency administration of opioid overdose drugs; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WALSH:

S. 2093. A bill to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to modify the purposes of authorized collection of business records and to prohibit the bulk collection of metadata, to require judicial review of national security letters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BEGICH (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mrs. McCASKILL, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. VITTER, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2094. A bill to provide for the establishment of nationally uniform and environmentally sound standards governing discharges incidental to the normal operation of a vessel; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MORAN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. KING):

S. 2095. A bill to reauthorize and modify the pilot program of the Department of Veterans Affairs under which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs provides health services to veterans through qualifying non-Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. BEGICH:

S. 2096. A bill to amend the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline Act of 2004 to provide for the authorization of liquefied natural gas terminals and related facilities necessary for the export of Alaska natural gas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. HELLER (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. COATS, Ms. AYOTTE, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2097. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. TESTER (for himself and Mr. WALSH):

S. 2098. A bill to ratify and approve certain payments to school districts serving Yellowstone National Park; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 37

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 37, a bill to sustain the economic development and recreational use of National Forest System land and other public land in the State of Montana, to add certain land to the National Wilderness Preservation System, to release certain wilderness study areas, to designate new areas for recreation, and for other purposes.

S. 192

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) were added as cosponsors of S. 192, a bill to enhance the energy security of United States allies, and for other purposes.

S. 315

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the names of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 315, a bill to reauthorize and extend the Paul D. Wellstone Muscular Dystrophy Community Assistance, Research, and Education Amendments of 2008.

S. 370

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 370, a bill to improve and expand geographic literacy among kindergarten through grade 12 students in the United States by improving professional development programs for kindergarten through grade 12 teachers offered through institutions of higher education.

S. 607

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 607, a bill to improve the provisions relating to the privacy of electronic communications.

S. 727

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 727, a bill to improve the examination of depository institutions, and for other purposes.

S. 813

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 813, a bill to require that Peace Corps volunteers be subject to the same limitations regarding coverage of abortion services as employees of the Peace Corps with respect to coverage of such services, and for other purposes.

S. 836

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the names of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) were added as co-

sponsors of S. 836, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to strengthen the earned income tax credit and make permanent certain tax provisions under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

S. 865

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 865, a bill to provide for the establishment of a Commission to Accelerate the End of Breast Cancer.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) were added as cosponsors of S. 933, a bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bullet-proof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2018.

S. 972

At the request of Mr. COBURN, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 972, a bill to prohibit the Secretary of Health and Human Services replacing ICD-9 with ICD-10 in implementing the HIPAA code set standards.

S. 975

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 975, a bill to provide for the inclusion of court-appointed guardianship improvement and oversight activities under the Elder Justice Act of 2009.

S. 1114

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1114, a bill to provide for identification of misaligned currency, require action to correct the misalignment, and for other purposes.

S. 1318

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1318, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to cover physician services delivered by podiatric physicians to ensure access by Medicaid beneficiaries to appropriate quality foot and ankle care, to amend title XVIII of such Act to modify the requirements for diabetic shoes to be included under Medicare, and for other purposes.

S. 1431

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1431, a bill to permanently extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. KIRK, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. BEGICH):

S. Res. 376. A resolution supporting the goals of International Women's Day; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

S. 1507

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1507, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of general welfare benefits provided by Indian tribes.

S. 1688

At the request of Mr. KIRK, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1688, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the members of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), collectively, in recognition of their superior service and major contributions during World War II.

S. 1708

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1708, a bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to the establishment of performance measures for the highway safety improvement program, and for other purposes.

S. 1764

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1764, a bill to limit the retirement of A-10 aircraft.

S. 1799

At the request of Mr. COONS, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNES) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1799, a bill to reauthorize subtitle A of the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

S. 1828

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1828, a bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to modify the definitions of a mortgage originator and a high-cost mortgage.

S. 1920

At the request of Mr. ROBERTS, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1920, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the research and development credit to encourage innovation.

S. 1961

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1961, a bill to protect surface water from contamination by chemical storage facilities, and for other purposes.

S. 1998

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1998, a bill to amend the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act to reserve funds for American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and Tribal

College or University adult education and literacy.

S. 2085

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2085, a bill to address shortages and interruptions in the availability of propane and other home heating fuels in the United States, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 370

At the request of Mr. COATS, the names of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNES) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 370, a resolution supporting the territorial integrity of Ukraine and condemning Russian military aggression in Ukraine.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 376—SUPPORTING THE GOALS OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. KIRK, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. BEGICH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 376

Whereas there are more than 3,500,000,000 women in the world today;

Whereas women around the world participate in the political, social, and economic life of their communities, play a critical role in providing and caring for their families, contribute substantially to the growth of economies and the prevention of conflict, and, as both farmers and caregivers, play an important role in advancing food security for their communities;

Whereas the advancement of women around the world is a foreign policy priority for the United States;

Whereas on November 15, 2013, Secretary of State John Kerry stated: "Creating opportunities for women is not just the right thing to do. It's also a strategic necessity. Societies where women are safe, where women are empowered to exercise their rights and to move their communities forward—these societies are more prosperous and more stable—not occasionally, but always.";

Whereas on December 19, 2011, the Obama Administration launched the first United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (referred to in this preamble as the "National Action Plan") that included a comprehensive set of national commitments to advance the active participation of women in decision making relating to matters of war and peace;

Whereas the National Action Plan states: "Deadly conflicts can be more effectively avoided, and peace can be best forged and sustained, when women become equal part-

ners in all aspects of peace-building and conflict prevention, when their lives are protected, their experiences considered, and their voices heard.";

Whereas women remain underrepresented in conflict prevention and conflict resolution efforts, despite proven successes by women in conflict-affected regions in moderating violent extremism, countering terrorism, resolving disputes through non-violent mediation and negotiation, and stabilizing their societies by improving access to peace and security services, institutions, and decision-making venues;

Whereas the ability of women to realize their full potential is critical to the ability of a country to achieve strong and lasting economic growth and political and social stability;

Whereas according to the International Monetary Fund, "focusing on the needs and empowerment of women is one of the keys to human development";

Whereas according to the Global Gender Gap Report 2013 published by the World Economic Forum, "reducing gender inequality enhances productivity and economic growth";

Whereas according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, two-thirds of the 774,000,000 illiterate people in the world are female;

Whereas according to the United States Agency for International Development, "educated women are less likely to marry early and more likely to have smaller and healthier families. They are also more likely to get a job and earn a higher wage.";

Whereas according to the United Nations Children Fund, "adolescent girls that attend school [are more likely to] delay marriage and childbearing, are less vulnerable to disease including HIV and AIDS, and [are more likely to] acquire information and skills that lead to increased earning power. Evidence shows that the return to a year of secondary education for girls correlates to a 25 percent increase in wages later in life.";

Whereas according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the majority of women living in rural areas of the developing world are heavily engaged in agricultural labor, yet they receive less credit, land, agricultural inputs, and training than their male counterparts;

Whereas according to the World Bank, women own or partly own over one-third of small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries, and 40 percent of the global workforce is female, yet, women entrepreneurs and employers have disproportionately less access to capital and other financial services;

Whereas despite strides in recent decades, women around the world continue to face significant obstacles in all aspects of their lives, including underrepresentation in all aspects of public life, denial of basic human rights, and discrimination;

Whereas despite achievements by individual female leaders, women around the world are still vastly underrepresented in high-level positions and in national and local legislatures and governments and, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women account for only 21.4 percent of national parliamentarians;

Whereas 1 in 3 women around the world has experienced some form of gender-based violence, and 1 in 4 women has suffered abuse during pregnancy;

Whereas according to UN Women, violence against women causes more death and disability for women and girls between the ages

of 15 and 44 than cancer, war, traffic accidents, and malaria combined;

Whereas on August 10, 2012, President Obama announced the first interagency Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally;

Whereas violence against women and girls impedes progress in meeting many international global development goals, including efforts to stem maternal mortality and the spread of HIV/AIDS;

Whereas on October 11, 2013, President Obama stated that the practice of child marriage was a "threat to fundamental human rights";

Whereas according to the International Center for Research on Women, one-third of girls worldwide are married before the age of 18 and 1 in 9 girls are married before the age of 15;

Whereas according to Save the Children, pregnancy-related complications are a leading cause of death among girls between the ages of 15 and 19 in developing countries;

Whereas according to the United Nations Population Fund, women have access to fewer income-earning opportunities and tend to manage the household and partake in agricultural work, thus increasing their vulnerability to natural disasters and long-term changes in weather patterns;

Whereas it is imperative to alleviate violence and discrimination against women and afford women every opportunity to be full and productive members of their communities; and

Whereas March 8 is recognized each year as International Women's Day, a global day to celebrate the economic, political, and social achievements of women past, present, and future, and a day to recognize the obstacles that women still face in the struggle for equal rights and opportunities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals of International Women's Day;

(2) recognizes that the empowerment of women is inextricably linked to the potential of countries to generate economic growth, sustainable democracy, and inclusive security;

(3) recognizes and honors the women in the United States and around the world who have worked throughout history to ensure that women are guaranteed equality and basic human rights;

(4) reaffirms the commitment to ending discrimination and violence against women and girls, to ensuring the safety and welfare of women and girls, to pursuing policies that guarantee the basic human rights of women and girls worldwide, and to promoting meaningful and significant participation of women in all aspects of their societies and communities; and

(5) encourages the people of the United States to observe International Women's Day with appropriate programs and activities.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2805. Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Mr. KING, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2806. Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. HELLER) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1821, to accelerate the income tax benefits

for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2805. Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Mr. KING, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. —. PREVENTING REGULATORY OVER-REACH TO ENHANCE CARE TECHNOLOGY.

(a) FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.—

(1) FINDINGS.—Congress finds as follows:

(A) The mobile health and mobile application economy was created in the United States and is now being exported globally, with the market expected to exceed \$26,000,000,000 by 2017.

(B) The United States mobile application economy is responsible for nearly 500,000 new jobs in the United States.

(C) Consumer health information technologies, including smart phones and tablets, have the potential to transform health care delivery through reduced systemic costs, improved patient safety, and better clinical outcomes.

(D) Clinical and health software innovation cycles evolve and move faster than the existing regulatory approval processes.

(E) Consumers and innovators need a new risk-based framework for the oversight of clinical and health software that improves on the framework of the Food and Drug Administration.

(F) A working group convened jointly by the Food and Drug Administration, the Federal Communications Commission, and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology identified in a report that there are several major barriers to the effective regulation of health information technology that cannot be alleviated without changes to existing law.

(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(A) the President and Congress must intervene to facilitate interagency coordination across regulators that focuses agency efforts on fostering health information technology and mobile health innovation while better protecting patient safety, improving health care, and creating jobs in the United States;

(B) the President and the Congress should work together to develop and enact legislation that establishes a risk-based regulatory framework for such clinical software and health software that reduces regulatory burdens, fosters innovation, and, most importantly, improves patient safety;

(C) The National Institute of Standards and Technology should be the Federal agency that has oversight over technical standards used by clinical software; and

(D) The National Institute of Standards and Technology, in collaboration with the Federal Communications Commission, the National Patient Safety Foundation, and the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, should work on next steps, beyond current oversight efforts, regarding health information technology, such as collaborating with nongovernmental entities to develop certification processes and to promote best practice standards.

(b) CLINICAL SOFTWARE AND HEALTH SOFTWARE.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—Section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(ss)(1) The term ‘clinical software’ means clinical decision support software or other software (including any associated hardware and process dependencies) intended for human or animal use that—

“(A) captures, analyzes, changes, or presents patient or population clinical data or information and may recommend courses of clinical action, but does not directly change the structure or any function of the body of man or other animals; and

“(B) is intended to be marketed for use only by a health care provider in a health care setting.

“(2) The term ‘health software’ means software (including any associated hardware and process dependencies) that is not clinical software and—

“(A) that captures, analyzes, changes, or presents patient or population clinical data or information;

“(B) that supports administrative or operational aspects of health care and is not used in the direct delivery of patient care; or

“(C) whose primary purpose is to act as a platform for a secondary software, to run or act as a mechanism for connectivity, or to store data.

“(3) The terms ‘clinical software’ and ‘health software’ do not include software—

“(A) that is intended to interpret patient-specific device data and directly diagnose a patient or user without the intervention of a health care provider;

“(B) that conducts analysis of radiological or imaging data in order to provide patient-specific diagnostic and treatment advice to a health care provider;

“(C) whose primary purpose is integral to the function of a drug or device; or

“(D) that is a component of a device.”.

(2) PROHIBITION.—Subchapter A of chapter V of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 351 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 524B. CLINICAL SOFTWARE AND HEALTH SOFTWARE.

“Clinical software and health software shall not be subject to regulation under this Act.”.

(c) EXCLUSION FROM DEFINITION OF DEVICE.—Section 201(h) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C. 321(h)) is amended by adding at the end “The term ‘device’ does not include clinical software or health software.”.

SA 2806. Ms. HIRONO (for herself and Mr. HELLER) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1821, to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines; as follows:

On page 2, lines 7 and 8, strike “January 1, 2014, and before March 1, 2014,” and inserting “the date of the enactment of this Act, and before April 15, 2014.”.

On page 2, beginning at line 23, strike all through line 25.

NOTICE OF HEARING

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee

on Indian Affairs will meet on Thursday, March 13, 2014, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 10 a.m., to conduct an oversight hearing to receive testimony on "Tribal Transportation: Pathways to Infrastructure and Economic Development in Indian Country."

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at (202) 224-2251.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 6, 2014, at 10 a.m. in room SR-328A of the Russell Senate Office.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 6, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 6, 2014, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "Map-21 Reauthorization: The Federal Role and Current Challenges to Public Transportation."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 6, 2014, at 10:30 a.m. in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, "Enhancing Our Rail Safety; Current Challenges for Passenger and Freight Rail."

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Environment and Public Works be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 6, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-406 of the Dirksen Senate office building, to conduct a hearing entitled, "Preventing Potential Chemical Threats and Improving Safety: Oversight of the President's Executive Order on Improving Chemical Facility Safety and Security."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 6, 2014, at 11 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled "Syria Spillover: The Growing Threat of Terrorism and Secularism in the Middle East."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 6, 2014, at 2:15 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on March 6, 2014, at 10 a.m., in SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct an executive business meeting.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 6, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., in room 345 of the Cannon House Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 6, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL AND CONTRACTING OVERSIGHT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 6, 2014, at 9:30 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, "Oversight of Contractor Performance Information."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that MAJ Matthew Altman, a military fellow in my office, be given floor privileges for the remainder of the 113th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by me, with the concurrence of Senator MCCONNELL, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 512; there be 20 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form; that upon the use or yielding back of the time the Senate proceed to vote, without intervening action or debate on the nomination; the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PHILIPPINES CHARITABLE GIVING ASSISTANCE ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 1821 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that a Hirono-Heller amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; further, that upon passage the bill be held at the desk and that if the Senate receives a bill from the House, the text of which is identical to S. 1821, as passed by the Senate, the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration, the bill be read three times and passed, without any intervening action or debate; finally, the Senate bill be indefinitely postponed and all motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2806) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To change the dates during which contributions may be made to be treated as made in 2013, and for other purposes)

On page 2, lines 7 and 8, strike "January 1, 2014, and before March 1, 2014," and inserting "the date of the enactment of this Act, and before April 15, 2014,".

On page 2, beginning at line 23, strike all through line 25.

SEC. 2. ACCELERATION OF INCOME TAX BENEFITS FOR CHARITABLE CASH CONTRIBUTIONS FOR RELIEF OF VICTIMS OF TYPHOON HAIYAN IN THE PHILIPPINES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, a taxpayer may treat any contribution described in subsection (b) made after the date of enactment of this Act, and before April 15, 2014, as if such contribution was made on December 31, 2013, and not in 2014.

(b) CONTRIBUTION DESCRIBED.—A contribution is described in this subsection if such contribution is a cash contribution made for

the relief of victims in areas affected by Typhoon Haiyan, for which a charitable contribution deduction is allowable under section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(c) RECORDKEEPING.—In the case of a contribution described in subsection (b), a telephone bill showing the name of the donee organization, the date of the contribution, and the amount of the contribution shall be treated as meeting the recordkeeping requirements of section 170(f)(17) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

The bill (S. 1821), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S. 1821

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Philippines Charitable Giving Assistance Act”.

SEC. 2. ACCELERATION OF INCOME TAX BENEFITS FOR CHARITABLE CASH CONTRIBUTIONS FOR RELIEF OF VICTIMS OF TYPHOON HAIYAN IN THE PHILIPPINES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, a taxpayer may treat any contribution described in subsection (b) made after the date of the enactment of this Act, and before April 15, 2014, as if such contribution was made on December 31, 2013, and not in 2014.

(b) CONTRIBUTION DESCRIBED.—A contribution is described in this subsection if such contribution is a cash contribution made for the relief of victims in areas affected by Typhoon Haiyan, for which a charitable contribution deduction is allowable under section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

(c) RECORDKEEPING.—In the case of a contribution described in subsection (b), a telephone bill showing the name of the donee organization, the date of the contribution, and the amount of the contribution shall be treated as meeting the recordkeeping requirements of section 170(f)(17) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 3370

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand that H.R. 3370 is at the desk and due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I object to any further proceedings at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard, and the bill will be placed on the calendar.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 4118 AND S. 2097

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I understand there are two bills at the desk, and I ask for their first reading en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2097) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 4118) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to delay the implementation of the penalty for failure to comply with the individual health insurance mandate.

Mr. REID. I ask for a second reading but object to my own request, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bills will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the majority leader, pursuant to Public Law 106-567, reappoints the following individual to serve as a member of the Public Interest Declassification Board: Sanford Ungar of Maryland.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2014

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 4 p.m. on Monday, March 10, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each; that at 5 p.m. the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the McHugh nomination and the time until 5:30 p.m. be equally divided and controlled in the usual form prior to the cloture vote

on the McHugh nomination; further, that upon conclusion of the cloture vote and notwithstanding cloture having been invoked, if invoked, the Senate resume legislative session and vote on passage of S. 1917; and that if cloture is invoked on the McHugh nomination, the time during the vote on passage of S. 1917 count postcloture on the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if I didn't note, we are going to be in session at 4 p.m. on Monday. If I could add an additional comment, there will be two roll-call votes on Monday starting at 5:30.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2014, AT 4 P.M.

Mr. REID. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand adjourned until 4 p.m. on Monday, March 10, 2014.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:14 p.m., adjourned until Monday, March 10, 2014, at 4 p.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 6, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

KATHRYN D. SULLIVAN, OF OHIO, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR OCEANS AND ATMOSPHERE.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

SUZANNE ELEANOR SPAULDING, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

JOHN ROTH, OF MICHIGAN, TO BE INSPECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

RHONDA K. SCHMIDTLEIN, OF MISSOURI, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING DECEMBER 16, 2021.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MICHAEL A. HAMMER, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND Plenipotentiary of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE.

ROSE EILENE GOTTEMOLLER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ARMS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

R. GIL KERLIKOWSKA, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE COMMISSIONER OF CUSTOMS, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Thursday, March 6, 2014

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We come to the end of a short week. For many, the winter has outlived its welcome and the longing for spring and its warmth is palpable. May the longing for comity and good will in the fashioning of policies benefiting our Nation be equally manifest in the actions marking these days.

Now we approach a weekend during which many Members of this assembly will gather to remember a historic event in Selma, Alabama. Forty-nine years ago, brave men and women, Americans of all races, colors, and faiths, walked together to help guarantee freedom still denied the descendants of those who were slaves.

Bless the Members of this assembly and us all, that we would be worthy of the call we have been given as Americans, to nurture and guarantee democratic freedoms to all who dwell in our great Nation. Help us all to be truly thankful and appropriately generous in our response.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CICILLINE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 5 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

AMERICAN-ISRAEL PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE POLICY CONFERENCE

(Mr. LANCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, this week in Washington we welcome representatives from across the country attending the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee Policy Conference, the largest gathering in our Nation of friends of the Jewish State. Representatives come to the Nation's Capital to highlight the importance of the partnership between the United States and Israel and work together toward common interests and goals.

I have the honor of serving as cochair of the House Republican Israel Caucus, where protecting, strengthening, and promoting the U.S.-Israel relationship is the top priority.

Just this week, under the leadership of Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, the House passed legislation designating Israel as a major strategic partner of the United States. I commend Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN on her leadership in expanding U.S.-Israel cooperation in defense, energy, and science.

As the Iranian regime continues to advance its nuclear ambitions and current events continually demonstrate that we live in a dangerous world, it is important that Congress reaffirm our support for and commitment to our close friend and ally, Israel.

OLNEYVILLE NEW YORK SYSTEM

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I stand to congratulate Olneyville New York System, an iconic Rhode Island restaurant which last week received the James Beard Foundation's America's Classics award—a prestigious national award.

The America's Classics award honors "restaurants that have timeless appeal and are beloved for quality food that reflects the character of their community."

Despite its name, this restaurant is a uniquely Rhode Island culinary treas-

ure and is beloved by Rhode Islanders and visitors alike.

This national recognition confirms what Rhode Islanders already knew: we have some of the best food and restaurants in the country, and Olneyville New York System is a classic.

Every Rhode Islander knows the distinctive smells and sights of this local business. As mayor of Providence, I was proud Olneyville New York System played a leading role in my Main Street initiative to improve Providence's commercial districts.

Indeed, for nearly 70 years, three generations of the Stevens family have run this local establishment at the same location in Providence. Although the neighborhood has changed over time, only the Olneyville New York System has remained an iconic part of this community.

So I am saying congratulations to Greg Stevens and his sister, Stephanie Stevens Turini, on the well-deserved honor. I know that their dad is looking down on them very proudly today. Congratulations.

IMMIGRATION COVERAGE BIASED

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the issue of immigration continues to simmer, but it is not because of any substantive news in Congress. It is driven by the media and the coverage is slanted.

In the last 3 months, the three Capitol Hill publications have run over 30 stories about immigration. By a 10 to 1 ratio, they promoted amnesty for illegal immigrants over the need for border security.

Articles in The Washington Post and The Wall Street Journal reflect the same media agenda. These publications also published over 30 pro-amnesty articles, but not a single pro-enforcement article.

The national media should give the American people the facts, not tell them what to think. We need more objective news stories and fewer opinion pieces masquerading as news reports.

TEAM 26'S RIDE ON WASHINGTON

(Ms. ESTY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Team 26 for continuing the

call for commonsense gun violence prevention.

This Saturday, Team 26 begins their second Ride on Washington. This courageous group of men and women will be biking 400 miles from Newtown, Connecticut, in my district, to Washington, D.C.

Team 26 is made up of parents whose children attend or attended Sandy Hook Elementary School and folks who have lost loved ones to gun violence. They ride to honor the victims of gun violence from Newtown and from across the country, and they ride to urge Congress to act.

Team 26 rides to bring the message of peace, hope, and love. Let's listen to Team 26 and put politics aside.

Mr. Speaker, let us vote to enact meaningful gun violence prevention legislation this year.

NATIONAL FROZEN FOOD MONTH

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge National Frozen Food Month, and in doing so, one of my home State's own frozen food companies, Better Baked Foods.

Headquartered in North East, Pennsylvania, in the Fifth District of Pennsylvania, with facilities in Erie, Pennsylvania, and New York, Better Baked Foods is currently celebrating its 50th anniversary.

Over the years, Better Baked has built a reputation as an affordable option for nutritious snack foods. Today, the company proudly employs over 300 associates who produce over 325,000 pieces of frozen French bread pizzas, flatbreads, and breakfast sandwiches.

By devoting the necessary resources to its people, equipment, and facilities, Better Baked is continually working to ensure that it meets consumer demand and grows its operation.

I am proud to honor a company that is constantly innovating to improve its products while also recognizing the hard work and the efforts of its employees.

Mr. Speaker, in celebration of National Frozen Food Month, I wish to applaud Better Baked Foods and the entire frozen food industry for their hard work and continued contributions to strong local economies, through jobs and quality, affordable meals for our Nation's consumers.

BOYS 2 MEN

(Mr. FOSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud President Obama's new initiative, My Brother's Keeper,

and to highlight one organization in our district doing outstanding work to mentor young men.

Boys 2 Men was created in November 2002 by Clayton Muhammad, with the mission of bringing young Black and Latino men together to build a bond of brotherhood and to redefine manhood. The organization has been a phenomenal success.

The members of Boys 2 Men are graduating from high school, going to college, and serving our country in the military.

Boys 2 Men has produced outstanding young men like Gilberto Chaidez, a graduate of West Aurora High School and a senior at the University of Illinois majoring in civil engineering. Gilberto was named the National Star Student of the Year by the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers.

Jamario Taylor is a graduate of East Aurora High School and a senior at Western Illinois University. Jamario is a record-holder in the high jump and a top-ranked NCAA athlete.

Alexander Sewell is a graduate of Roosevelt University in Chicago. Alex went on to work in the office of Leader PELOSI; for the Secretary of Energy, Steven Chu; and now in the office of Senator LANDRIEU.

Initiatives like Boys 2 Men and My Brother's Keeper are invaluable resources to help young men get their lives on the right track, even if, despite everyone's best efforts, some of them end up working for the United States Congress.

LET'S RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. TAKANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, once again, to call for this body to bring H.R. 1010 to the floor and raise the Federal minimum wage.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle will falsely claim that this will kill jobs. They misrepresent the findings of a recent CBO report. The important takeaway from that CBO report is that raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour will raise the wages of more than 16 million Americans and bring nearly 1 million Americans out of poverty.

In the 1990s, when the Clinton administration raised the minimum wage, the Republicans also argued that doing so would kill jobs, but the exact opposite happened. What we saw following the minimum wage increase in the 1990s was the greatest number of jobs created in a 4-year period.

A rising tide lifts all boats, Mr. Speaker. Let's raise the minimum wage. Let's grow our economy, and let's put people back to work.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2824, PREVENTING GOVERNMENT WASTE AND PROTECTING COAL MINING JOBS IN AMERICA; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2641, RESPONSIBLY AND PROFESSIONALLY INVIGORATING DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2013; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 501 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 501

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2824) to amend the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to stop the ongoing waste by the Department of the Interior of taxpayer resources and implement the final rule on excess spoil, mining waste, and buffers for perennial and intermittent streams, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-41 modified by the amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. At any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2641) to provide for improved coordination of agency actions in the preparation and adoption of environmental documents for permitting determinations, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-39. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part C of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 3. It shall be in order at any time on the legislative day of March 6, 2014, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules, as though under clause 1 of rule XV, relating to a measure addressing loan guarantees to Ukraine.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

□ 0915

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule and the underlying bills.

House Resolution 501 provides a structured rule for consideration of H.R. 2641, the Responsibility of Professionally Invigorating Development Act, known as the RAPID Act. The resolution also provides a structured rule for consideration of H.R. 2824, Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America.

Lastly, the resolution provides suspension authority for legislation to provide much-needed financial relief to the government of Ukraine.

The resolution makes in order all of the amendments submitted to the Committee on Rules regarding the RAPID Act. It makes in order half of the amendments submitted to the Committee on Rules regarding the coal jobs bill.

Of the amendments made in order, more than half are sponsored by my colleagues across the aisle. The resolution provides for a robust debate in the House of Representatives.

In July, the Subcommittee on Regulatory Reform, Commercial, and Antitrust Law held a hearing on H.R. 2641. The subcommittee reported the bill favorably, without amendment, by voice vote. On July 31, the Committee on the Judiciary ordered H.R. 2641 favorably reported without amendment.

In August, the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held hearings on H.R. 2824. In November, the Committee on Natural Resources, by a bipartisan vote, voted favorably for the bill and reported it out.

Mr. Speaker, the bills before us today garnered majority support and bipartisan support for one simple reason: they ensure the regulatory process works for Americans, as intended by Congress.

Across the Nation, energy and infrastructure projects are being significantly delayed. In some cases, the environmental reviews have continued on for a decade or more. According to a study by the Chamber of Commerce, current delays are costing more than \$1 trillion in economic development; and those delays are also prohibiting the creation of 1.9 million jobs.

As our country continues to struggle through a lackluster recovery, ensuring these beleaguered studies are completed would help generate jobs and create economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, in 2011, President Obama's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness recommended action to simplify regulatory review and streamline project approvals to accelerate jobs and growth.

Just this year, in his State of the Union, President Obama called for per-

mit streamlining. He said action must be taken to "slash bureaucracy and streamline the permitting process for key projects so we can get more construction workers on the job as fast as possible."

News reports like to highlight our disagreements. In fact, it often seems that there is nothing that we can agree on. That is not true. Earlier this term, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 3080, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act. That bill passed by an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of 417-3.

The RAPID Act is nearly identical legislation to streamlining provisions contained in H.R. 3080 and the streamlining proposals from the President.

The House-passed WRRDA provided a process for Army Corps of Engineers-led studies to be concurrently reviewed in more of a parallel, as opposed to a linear fashion by multiple agencies. The President initiated a similar proposal, where studies had to be completed within 3 years.

The President and each Member of Congress who supported WRRDA should support this bill. The RAPID Act is simple. It allows multiple agencies to study the environmental impacts of a project at the same time. Because the agencies will have a better process by which to study a project, the RAPID Act establishes a reasonable and efficient timeline for completion of the study.

That is it. The RAPID Act provides a better process and a better timeline. The RAPID Act does not alter or weaken any of our environmental laws. The RAPID Act does not require that environmentally sensitive areas be developed.

The RAPID Act does not force agencies to approve projects. It simply reforms our permitting and regulatory process to allow our Nation's most important infrastructure projects to move forward in a timely manner.

The President has asked for this to happen. 417 House Democrats and Republicans have supported this already. The bill should pass the House overwhelmingly with bipartisan support. This bill will get Washington out of the way of our economic growth and put unemployed Americans on a pathway back to work.

The rule also provides for consideration of H.R. 2824, Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America. H.R. 2824 stabilizes the out-of-control regulatory scheme involving the Department of the Interior.

In 2008, after a 5-year exhaustive process, the Office of Surface Mining finalized a rule to protect our streams from excessive coal waste. The rule was supposed to go into effect on January 12, 2009.

However, the process was sidelined by a sue-and-settle gambit that the

OSM, under President Obama's administration, used to attempt to rewrite the already finalized rule.

Since that settlement, the administration has spent 5 additional years and billed hardworking American taxpayers an additional \$10 million attempting to rewrite the rule.

H.R. 2824 is simple. It tells OSM to put in place the 2008 rule, study the results, and report to Congress. If the study reveals a need to draft a new rule, then a new rule should be drafted. By putting in place the already finalized 2008 rule, H.R. 2824 ensures that our streams are safe while further study is conducted.

It is easy to see why these underlying bills should garner strong bipartisan support. They are measured and balanced in their approach to our project study and regulatory processes. For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the rule and the underlying pieces of legislation.

I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule and "yes" on the underlying bills.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, my good friend from Florida, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Just last week, I found myself standing here, managing a rule for two very similar bills. At the time, I thought we were on a merry-go-round, aimlessly moving in useless circles. I will stand by that analogy again today.

When similar bills came before Congress last session, the Senate didn't pass them. The President said he would not sign them, as he has this particular legislation. It seems to me that these measures are a foregone conclusion.

Ultimately, the same tired talking points might be a fun ride for some, but they will never actually take you anywhere. This kind of spinning in circles is a favorite tactic, it seems, of my friends on the other side of the aisle.

For example, this Congress has already taken 109 antienvironmental votes. Last Congress, it was 247. These were votes against clear air, against clean water, and to destroy our planet for future generations.

Under Republican leadership, we have also voted to repeal, as we did a day or so ago, the Affordable Care Act 50 different times, a law that, in many respects, has led to millions of Americans signing up for health insurance that didn't have it before.

And I will continue to ask my colleagues: If you don't like that particular measure, where is yours that would replace it? And apparently, nothing is forthcoming, at least until this time.

Based on the frequency of these quixotic votes, it is obvious that my friends across the aisle have given up or are

not interested in governing or addressing any of the issues that are most pressing to this Nation.

Consider, for instance, that there are 2 million Americans relying on Congress to extend unemployment insurance, with close to 200,000 of them being unemployed veterans who have sacrificed time and again for our country.

Last week, I said the following:

We should be spending the House's time on extending unemployment insurance, working on comprehensive immigration reform, and raising the minimum wage.

My friends on the other side of the aisle have continued to ignore the plight of middle class and working poor Americans, immigrants hoping for a better life for their families, and denying the undeniable impact of climate change, just to name a few.

We should be raising the minimum wage in order to give millions of hardworking Americans the pay they have earned. Nearly 5 years have passed since the last increase in the Federal minimum wage. Currently, a full-time minimum wage worker makes less than \$16,000 per year, which is below the poverty line for a family of two or more.

My friends did not take my suggestions last week, and I doubt they will take them this week. Instead, we are considering two more pointless bills that will go nowhere. One of them, the acronym for it is RAPID. That is correct. Rapidly and fastly, it will go nowhere.

The first of today's bills, H.R. 2641, ignores the fact that, for more than 40 years, the National Environmental Policy Act has provided an effective framework for all types of proposed actions that require Federal approval pursuant to a Federal law, such as the Clean Water Act.

□ 0930

H.R. 2641 is based on the assumption that the NEPA environmental review and permitting process results in project delays.

However, when we considered this measure last Congress, the Congressional Research Service reported that delays in construction project approvals "are more often tied to local, State, and project-specific factors." These factors include "primarily local/State agency priorities, project funding levels, local opposition to a project, project complexity, or late changes in project scope," not to mention the litigation that goes on surrounding these measures.

CRS goes even further, reporting that even most environmental project delays are not the result of NEPA, but actually due to "laws other than NEPA." The measure undermines current regulatory protections and could jeopardize public health and safety by prioritizing speed over meaningful analysis.

Now, turning to H.R. 2824, the other measure included in today's rule, which, like the 50 times that we voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act, my Republican friends have done that, they have also offered 50 rules which are not open rules in spite of the fact that we began this session by the Speaker of the House saying that this would be the most open House that we have had.

H.R. 2824 included in this rule is no more productive than the previous legislation offered. The legislation would overturn a court decision in order to block a buffer requirement designed to prevent damage to waterways from surface coal mining operations. These are protections that President Ronald Reagan put in place.

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that over 500 mountains have been destroyed by the practice of mountaintop removal mining, more than 1.2 million acres of forest has been eliminated, and nearly 2,000 miles of streams have been buried or polluted by these mining projects. I wonder what part of knocking a mountaintop off do people not understand as destruction, and if it is to be, that it should be done carefully.

These are protections for all of us in our society. As many as 60,000 additional cases of cancer in central Appalachia are directly linked to mountaintop removal, and more than 700 additional deaths from heart disease occur each year.

Last month, West Virginia University scientists published a study confirming high air pollution levels around mountaintop removal coal mines, suggesting a link to the higher rates of cardiovascular disease, birth defects, and cancer that is seen in these communities.

Instead of addressing these issues, H.R. 2824 would reinstate a George W. Bush administration rule that essentially prohibits the United States Department of the Interior from implementing any protections for streams against mountaintop removal and coal mining.

Let me lift the comment of Judge Charles Haden in a case called Bragg v. Robertson. The judge says:

When valley fills are permitted in intermittent and perennial streams, they destroy those stream segments. The normal flow and gradient of the stream is now buried under millions of cubic yards of excess spoil waste material, an extremely adverse effect. If there are fish, they cannot migrate. If there is any life form that cannot acclimate to life deep in a rubble pile, it is eliminated. No effect on related environmental values is more adverse than obliteration. Under a valley fill, the water quality of the stream becomes zero. Because there is no stream, there is no water quality.

The Bush rule in '08 was vacated by the District of Columbia District Court on February 20, 2014. The Obama administration started to draft new

stream protections upon taking office, into which the minority has conducted a long, fruitless investigation. Indeed, the years of investigation have uncovered no misconduct. The only results of the investigation are wasted time and taxpayer money, sending over 13,500 pages of documents, 25 hours of audio recordings, 19,000 staff hours, and costing the United States Department of the Interior and Office of Surface Mining approximately \$1.5 million.

We saw an example yesterday in one of our committees investigating the Internal Revenue Service for something that just simply has not occurred in any partisan fashion. And I can demonstrate that because, if one believes that the IRS only went after conservative organizations within the time period that was being investigated by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, then it was not during that period that my church, Mt. Hermon AME Church in Fort Lauderdale, received the same kind of notices that are being complained about; and what we did was what everybody has every right to do, which is make the necessary appeal, and we were successful in that regard.

All of these partisan witch hunts need to stop. We are a better people than this, and we should be about the business of the people of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, today's measure exists as partisan talking points, bumper sticker talk by my Republican colleagues, rather than serious legislation to move this country forward.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support for this rule which will govern debate on important legislation that my colleague, DOUG LAMBORN, and I have introduced.

This legislation, the Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America, would stop the administration from destroying thousands of direct and indirect coal mining jobs and stop the price of electricity in places like Ohio from skyrocketing.

Since the early days of this administration, Mr. Speaker, the Office of Surface Mining at the Department of the Interior has been trying to rewrite a 2008 coal mining rule. This rewrite has been fraught with mismanagement, waste of taxpayer dollars, intimidation of contractors by OSM employees towards the contractors working on the rule, and even the Director of OSM demanding that the contractors change the job loss estimates because it would look bad politically for the administration. But, look, don't take my word for it. You can go out and read the Department's own inspector general's report that highlights the administration's problems rewriting this rule.

This legislation would put an end to this nonsense and implement the 2008 rule. It would save taxpayers millions of dollars that are being wasted on this frivolous rewrite. It also would protect the thousands of direct jobs that the administration admitted would be destroyed by this rule and thousands more indirect jobs that would also be lost.

In eastern and southeastern Ohio, my constituents are the ones mining the coal that powers the economic engine in the Midwest, not to mention that America gets over 40 percent of its energy from coal, the State of Ohio gets over 80 percent of its energy from coal. This rule would put not only those jobs at risk, but also cause electricity prices to skyrocket and endanger the low electricity rates that manufacturing in this country relies on to keep moving forward.

The rule from the Department must be stopped in order to protect hard-working coal miners across America and to stop the waste of taxpayer dollars by the Department of the Interior. I urge all of my colleagues to support this rule today and to support this legislation when it comes to the floor.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would advise my good friend from Florida that I have no additional speakers at this time and would be prepared to close. So I reserve the balance of my time if you have additional speakers.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, one of the sages of America who is often quoted is Will Rogers. One of the things that I paraphrase that he said was: Buy land, because we are not making any more of that. And I use it as an analogy for mountaintop mining, knocking off the tops of these mountains. We ain't making no more mountains. Although I guess we can because in Florida we have what we call trash mountains. So I guess we can build something up, but I doubt very seriously that the quality of it will be of the kind that we see with the mountain ranges of this great America.

Mr. Speaker, these bills are about protecting special interests that happen to be near and dear to some of my friends across the aisle. We are here voting on tired, discredited, and destructive policies that have absolutely no chance of becoming law. This is a failure of leadership by my Republican colleagues and, quite frankly, a waste of time. We should not be considering measures that will help destroy this planet for our children and grandchildren. We need strong environmental protections to ensure that we have clean air, clean water, and clean food.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 3546, Mr. LEVIN's bill to extend emergency unemployment insurance for the long-term unemployed across this country for whom it has run out.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD along with extraneous material immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is a very sad thing that we continue to let people languish without fulfilling our responsibility to them with reference to unemployment insurance. It is a detriment to this Nation, and it serves us no useful purpose to continue delaying this particular effort.

While I do have the floor for a moment, I do wish to address legislation that I hope does come here with reference to our offering assistance to the people in Ukraine who should have an opportunity to make their own determination regarding their future and that we should stand with and, I am sure, are prepared to do so in an effort to assist them.

Mr. Speaker, I had the good fortune of being the president of the Parliamentary Assembly for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. During that time, I went to Ukraine on three different occasions, and during that time, I had the good fortune to be the lead monitor after the Orange Revolution; so it is not that I don't have a clear understanding of much that is going on. But what I hope my colleagues here will do is recognize that the Baltics, the Balkans, and the near abroad of Russia and Europe are in need of clarity with reference to matters and not simpleminded, non-complex answers to very difficult problems that Ukraine is now faced with. It is a nationwide, continuing problem for us.

Mr. Speaker, apparently, we do have some other speaker en route, so I am required to reserve the balance of my time, as I anticipated I might be.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, we had someone show up, and so the gentleman from Florida has allowed the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) to speak.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank both of the gentlemen for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, we just need to adopt H.R. 2824 and the rule supporting it. This is a good piece of legislation.

Unfortunately, this administration is waging what appears to many of us to be a war on coal. The stream buffer zone rule that has been proposed by

OSM, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation, is a very troubling rule. It would have adverse effects on all kinds of coal mining way beyond what the stated intention is.

□ 0945

The stated intention is to protect the quality of streams in the Appalachian area, but this rule goes way beyond that. This would have the effect of closing down much of the coal mining in that part of the country. So it is overkill. It is way beyond what is necessary.

The whole rulemaking process, Mr. Speaker, is flawed. We had a very good rewrite of the rules that was done in the last administration. That went through millions of dollars of effort, many years of rulemaking, taking comments, and the end result was a very satisfactory rewrite of the older rule. Yet, without even letting that fully take effect, this administration is throwing that rule out and wanting to go to an overly stringent and unrealistic rule. Let's go back to the last rule that was done through the proper procedures.

So H.R. 2824 is a good piece of legislation. I commend Representative JOHNSON for carrying this piece of legislation. We have looked at this in detail in our full committee and in the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources, and this is a much better approach. So I urge the full House to adopt H.R. 2824 and the rule.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and will. I will close with what I said yesterday. When I was a child, Tennessee Ernie Ford sang a song about coal mining. It was that you load 16 tons and what do you get? Another day older and deeper in debt.

I have been in Appalachia, as have many of my friends. I went to school in Tennessee, and often had an opportunity to travel to Kentucky and other areas during that period of time, and I have been in West Virginia. I have seen the conditions that many people work in.

I would only hope that they know that there are voices here who believe, just like throughout the rest of this Nation, in spite of the awesomeness of the work that they do in coal mining—and I might add as a footnote, there has been no deterioration in the job market with reference to coal mining—all that is being sought is that coal mining be done in a safe manner, and that the people living in those surroundings have the same kind of quality air, quality water, and quality food that is desperately needed by everybody.

We need look no further than West Virginia and accidents that have occurred there. Nobody wanted that to happen. Indeed, what we saw were corporate dodges of people who had taken

advantage of smaller communities. That needs to stop.

I believe my colleagues here want to see to it that we have a situation where those who are working in these environments have an opportunity for safety and have an opportunity for clean air in their regions as well as water and food.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and defeat the previous question, and to vote "no" on the underlying bill.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This rule provides for ample and open debate. It makes in order amendments from both sides of the aisle. Further, it advances bills that were favorably reported out of committee and will receive bipartisan support.

The RAPID Act is good for our infrastructure needs. It puts in place a good process that helps our agencies conduct quality and timely environmental reviews.

This bill should receive overwhelming bipartisan support. Republicans and Democrats have supported these same provisions already in this Congress.

The Florida delegation knows all too well the impact that delayed studies have on moving our critical projects forward. Port Everglades, which is in the district of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), has been under review for 17 years. That is too long. It is too much. It needs to be completed. The study of the project at Port Everglades is a prime example of Washington bureaucracy crushing America's jobs and America's future.

The RAPID Act would make it possible to move projects forward while protecting our environment. Mr. Speaker, the President has proposed a similar solution. The House passed a similar solution in the WRDA bill. We should pass this bill and give our infrastructure projects a good review process.

Our Nation's economy is sagging under an inefficient government. Our unemployed friends and neighbors are being hurt by our stagnant regulatory review system. The RAPID Act provides a better process and a better timeline. It does not change our environmental standards. It does not require agency approval of projects. It simply reforms our permitting process.

The coal jobs bill puts in place an already approved rule. It ends the regulatory limbo that has existed since 2009. It gives certainty to those who work in the coal industry.

Let's reform our review methods. Let's give our government the tools and the incentives to move America's infrastructure projects forward. When we do, we will release economic activity. We will strengthen our economy, and we will put Americans to work.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying bills are good. I urge Members of this House to vote for the rule, vote for the bills, and move our country forward.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Rule for H.R. 2641, the "Responsible and Professionally Invigorating Development Act of 2013, or as some have termed it, the "Regrettably Another Partisan Ideological Distraction Act."

If the RAPID Act were to become law in its present form, a permit or license for project would be "deemed" approved if the reviewing agency does not issue the requested permit or license within 90–120 days.

Mr. Speaker, I share some of the frustrations expressed by many members of the House Judiciary Committee, which marked up this bill last summer, with the NEPA process.

There is something odd about a system in which it can take half a year or more to approve the siting plan for a wind farm but fracking operations regulations can be approved and conducted a few hundred feet from somebody's home with no community oversight process in just a few months.

Something is wrong with this picture.

But I strongly believe that this bill is a solution in search of a problem.

The bill in its current form is an example of a medicine that is worse than a disease.

There is a major problem with the section that my amendment addresses, namely automatic approval of projects with the need for positive agency action.

I expect to speak on my amendment shortly but suffice it-to-say, this bill goes out of its way to ensure that some projects might be prematurely approved.

That's because under H.R. 2641, if a federal agency fails to approve or disapprove the project or make the required finding of the termination within the applicable deadline, which is either 90 days or 180 days, depending on the situation, then the project is automatically deemed approved, deemed approved by such agency.

This creates a set of perverse incentives. First, as an agency is up against that deadline and legitimate work is yet to be completed, it is likely to disapprove the project simply because the issues have not been vetted.

Second, frequently there are times when it is the case that the complexity of issues that need to be resolved necessitates a longer review period, rather than an arbitrary limit.

So if H.R. 2641 were to become law the most likely outcome is that federal agencies would be required to make decisions based on incomplete information, or information that may not be available within the stringent deadlines, and to deny applications that otherwise would have been approved, but for lack of sufficient review time.

In other words, fewer projects would be approved, not more.

Mr. Speaker, the new requirements contained in H.R. 2641 amend the environmental review process under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), even though the bill is drafted as an amendment to the APA.

The bill ignores the fact that NEPA has for more than 40 years provided an effective framework for all types of projects (not just construction projects) that require federal approval pursuant to a federal law, such as the Clean Air Act.

I urge my colleagues to reject this Rule and the underlying bill.

The material previously referred to by Mr. HASTINGS of Florida is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 501 OFFERED BY
MR. HASTINGS OF FLORIDA

At the end of the resolution, add the following new sections:

SEC. 4. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3546) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided among and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means and the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

SEC. 5. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 3546.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 219, nays 191, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 99]

YEAS—219

Aderholt	Bilirakis	Buchanan
Amash	Bishop (UT)	Bucshon
Amodei	Black	Burgess
Bachmann	Blackburn	Byrne
Bachus	Boustany	Calvert
Barletta	Brady (TX)	Camp
Barr	Bridenstine	Campbell
Barton	Brooks (AL)	Cantor
Benishek	Brooks (IN)	Capito
Bentivoglio	Brown (GA)	Carter

Cassidy	Hurt	Ribble
Chabot	Issa	Rice (SC)
Coble	Jenkins	Rigell
Coffman	Johnson (OH)	Roby
Cole	Jordan	Roe (TN)
Collins (GA)	Joyce	Rogers (AL)
Conaway	Kelly (PA)	Rogers (KY)
Cook	King (NY)	Rohrabacher
Cotton	Kingston	Rokita
Cramer	Kinzinger (IL)	Rooney
Crenshaw	Kline	Ros-Lehtinen
Culberson	Labrador	Ross
Daines	LaMalfa	Rothfus
Davis, Rodney	Lamborn	Royce
Denham	Lance	Runyan
Dent	Lankford	Salmon
DeSantis	Latham	Sanford
DesJarlais	Latta	Scalise
Duffy	LoBiondo	Schock
Duncan (SC)	Long	Schweikert
Duncan (TN)	Lucas	Scott, Austin
Ellmers	Luetkemeyer	Sensenbrenner
Farenthold	Lummis	Sessions
Fincher	Marchant	Shimkus
Fitzpatrick	Marino	Shuster
Fleischmann	Massie	Simpson
Fleming	McCarthy (CA)	Smith (MO)
Flores	McCaul	Smith (NE)
Forbes	McClintock	Smith (NJ)
Fortenberry	McHenry	Smith (TX)
Fox	McKeon	Southerland
Franks (AZ)	McKinley	Stewart
Frelinghuysen	McMorris	Stevens
Gardner	Rodgers	Stockman
Garrett	Meadows	Stutzman
Gerlach	Meehan	Terry
Gibbs	Messer	Thompson (PA)
Gibson	Mica	Thornberry
Gingrey (GA)	Miller (FL)	Tiberi
Gohmert	Miller (MI)	Tipton
Goodlatte	Miller, Gary	Turner
Gowdy	Mullin	Upton
Granger	Mulvaney	Valadao
Graves (GA)	Murphy (PA)	Wagner
Graves (MO)	Neugebauer	Walberg
Griffin (AR)	Noem	Walden
Griffith (VA)	Nugent	Walorski
Grimm	Nunes	Weber (TX)
Guthrie	Nunnelee	Webster (FL)
Hall	Olson	Wenstrup
Hanna	Palazzo	Westmoreland
Harper	Paulsen	Whitfield
Harris	Pearce	Williams
Hartzler	Perry	Wilson (SC)
Hastings (WA)	Petri	Wittman
Heck (NV)	Pittenger	Wolf
Hensarling	Pitts	Womack
Herrera Beutler	Poe (TX)	Woodall
Holding	Pompeo	Yoder
Hudson	Posey	Yoho
Huelskamp	Price (GA)	Young (AK)
Huizenga (MI)	Reed	Young (IN)
Hultgren	Reichert	
Hunter	Renacci	

NAYS—191

Barber	Cleaver	Farr
Barrow (GA)	Clyburn	Fattah
Bass	Cohen	Foster
Beatty	Connolly	Frankel (FL)
Becerra	Conyers	Fudge
Bera (CA)	Cooper	Gabbard
Bishop (GA)	Costa	Gallego
Bishop (NY)	Courtney	Garamendi
Blumenauer	Crowley	Garcia
Bonamici	Cuellar	Grayson
Brady (PA)	Cummings	Grijalva
Braley (IA)	Davis (CA)	Gutiérrez
Brown (FL)	Davis, Danny	Hahn
Brownley (CA)	DeFazio	Hanabusa
Bustos	DeGette	Hastings (FL)
Butterfield	Delaney	Heck (WA)
Capps	DeLauro	Higgins
Capuano	DelBene	Himes
Cárdenas	Deutch	Holt
Carney	Dingell	Honda
Carson (IN)	Doggett	Horsford
Cartwright	Doyle	Hoyer
Castor (FL)	Duckworth	Huffman
Castro (TX)	Edwards	Israel
Chu	Ellison	Jackson Lee
Ciçilline	Engel	Jeffries
Clark (MA)	Enyart	Johnson (GA)
Clarke (NY)	Eshoo	Johnson, E. B.
Clay	Esty	Kaptur

Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Meng

NOT VOTING—20

Chaffetz
Collins (NY)
Crawford
Diaz-Balart
Gosar
Green, Al
Green, Gene

□ 1018

Messrs. SCHRADER and RUPPERSBERGER changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 99 I was not present due to unavoidable air travel delays. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 225, nays 190, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 100]

YEAS—225

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishke
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)

Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne

Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)

Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Elmiers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Jordan

NAYS—190

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay

Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCauley
McClintock
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng

NOT VOTING—15

Chaffetz
Collins (NY)
Crawford
Gosar
Green, Al

□ 1028

So the resolution was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ELECTRICITY SECURITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). Pursuant to House Resolution 497 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3826.

Will the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) kindly take the chair.

□ 1030

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3826) to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes, with Mr. HASTINGS of Washington (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Wednesday, March 5, 2014, a request for a recorded vote on amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 113-373, offered by

Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Wassman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Green, Gene
Hinojosa
Johnson, Sam
Jones
McCarthy (NY)
Negrete McLeod
Pastor (AZ)
Roskam
Schneider
Schwartz

the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) had been postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in House Report 113-373 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Mr. SMITH of Texas.

Amendment No. 2 by Mrs. CAPPS of California.

Amendment No. 6 by Ms. SCHAKOWSKY of Illinois.

Amendment No. 8 by Mr. WAXMAN of California.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for each electronic vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. SMITH OF TEXAS

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 230, noes 184, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 101]

AYES—230

Aderholt	Conaway	Granger
Amash	Cook	Graves (GA)
Amodei	Costa	Graves (MO)
Bachmann	Cotton	Griffin (AR)
Bachus	Cramer	Griffith (VA)
Barletta	Crenshaw	Grimm
Barr	Cuellar	Guthrie
Barrow (GA)	Culberson	Hall
Barton	Daines	Hanna
Benishek	Davis, Rodney	Harper
Bentivolio	Denham	Harris
Bilirakis	Dent	Hartzler
Bishop (GA)	DeSantis	Hastings (WA)
Bishop (UT)	DesJarlais	Heck (NV)
Black	Diaz-Balart	Hensarling
Blackburn	Duffy	Herrera Beutler
Boustany	Duncan (SC)	Holding
Brady (TX)	Duncan (TN)	Hudson
Bridenstine	Ellmers	Huelskamp
Brooks (AL)	Farenthold	Huizenga (MI)
Brooks (IN)	Fincher	Hultgren
Brown (GA)	Fitzpatrick	Hunter
Buchanan	Fleischmann	Hurt
Bucshon	Fleming	Issa
Burgess	Flores	Jenkins
Byrne	Forbes	Johnson (OH)
Calvert	Fortenberry	Jordan
Camp	Fox	Joyce
Campbell	Franks (AZ)	Kelly (PA)
Cantor	Frelinghuysen	King (IA)
Capito	Gardner	King (NY)
Carter	Garrett	Kingston
Cassidy	Gerlach	Kinzinger (IL)
Chabot	Gibbs	Kline
Coble	Gingrey (GA)	Labrador
Coffman	Gohmert	LaMalfa
Cole	Goodlatte	Lamborn
Collins (GA)	Gowdy	Lance

Lankford	Perry	Shimkus
Latham	Peterson	Shuster
Latta	Petri	Simpson
Long	Pittenger	Smith (MO)
Lucas	Pitts	Smith (NE)
Luetkemeyer	Poe (TX)	Smith (NJ)
Lummis	Pompeo	Smith (TX)
Marchant	Posney	Southerland
Marino	Price (GA)	Stewart
Massie	Rahall	Stivers
Matheson	Reed	Stockman
McAllister	Reichert	Stutzman
McCarthy (CA)	Renacci	Terry
McCaul	Ribble	Thompson (PA)
McClintock	Rice (SC)	Thornberry
McHenry	Rigell	Tiberi
McIntyre	Roby	Tipton
McKeon	Roe (TN)	Turner
McKinley	Rogers (AL)	Upton
McMorris	Rogers (KY)	Valadao
Rodgers	Rogers (MI)	Wagner
Meadows	Rohrabacher	Walberg
Meehan	Rokita	Walden
Messer	Rooney	Walorski
Mica	Ros-Lehtinen	Weber (TX)
Miller (FL)	Roskam	Webster (FL)
Miller (MI)	Ross	Wenstrup
Miller, Gary	Rothfus	Westmoreland
Mullin	Royce	Whitfield
Mulvaney	Runyan	Williams
Murphy (PA)	Ryan (WI)	Wilson (SC)
Neugebauer	Salmon	Wittman
Noem	Sanford	Wolf
Nunes	Scalise	Womack
Nunnelee	Schock	Woodall
Olson	Schweikert	Yoder
Palazzo	Scott, Austin	Yoho
Paulsen	Sensenbrenner	Young (AK)
Pearce	Sessions	Young (IN)

NOES—184

Barber	Farr	Lynch
Bass	Fattah	Maffei
Beatty	Foster	Maloney
Becerra	Frankel (FL)	Carolyn
Bera (CA)	Fudge	Maloney, Sean
Bishop (NY)	Gabbard	Matsui
Blumenauer	Gallego	McCollum
Bonamici	Garamendi	McDermott
Brady (PA)	Garcia	McGovern
Braley (IA)	Gibson	McNerney
Brown (FL)	Grayson	Meeks
Brownley (CA)	Grijalva	Meng
Bustos	Gutiérrez	Michaud
Butterfield	Hahn	Miller, George
Capps	Hanabusa	Moore
Capuano	Hastings (FL)	Moran
Cárdenas	Heck (WA)	Murphy (FL)
Carney	Higgins	Nadler
Carson (IN)	Himes	Napolitano
Cartwright	Holt	Neal
Castor (FL)	Honda	Nolan
Castro (TX)	Horsford	O'Rourke
Chu	Hoyer	Owens
Cicilline	Huffman	Pallone
Clark (MA)	Israel	Pascarell
Clarke (NY)	Jackson Lee	Payne
Clay	Jeffries	Pelosi
Cleaver	Johnson (GA)	Perlmutter
Clyburn	Johnson, E. B.	Peters (CA)
Cohen	Kaptur	Peters (MI)
Connolly	Keating	Pingree (ME)
Conyers	Kelly (IL)	Pocan
Cooper	Kennedy	Polis
Courtney	Kildee	Price (NC)
Crowley	Kilmer	Quigley
Cummings	Kind	Richmond
Davis (CA)	Kirkpatrick	Roybal-Allard
Davis, Danny	Kuster	Ruiz
DeFazio	Langevin	Ruppersberger
DeGette	Larsen (WA)	Rush
Delaney	Larson (CT)	Ryan (OH)
DeLauro	Lee (CA)	Sánchez, Linda
DelBene	Levin	T.
Deutch	Lewis	Sanchez, Loretta
Dingell	Lipinski	Sarbanes
Doggett	LoBiondo	Schakowsky
Doyle	Loeb sack	Schiff
Duckworth	Lofgren	Schrader
Edwards	Lowenthal	Scott (VA)
Ellison	Lowe	Scott, David
Engel	Lujan Grisham	Serrano
Enyart	(NM)	Sewell (AL)
Eshoo	Lujan, Ben Ray	Shea-Porter
Esty	(NM)	Sherman

Sinema	Tierney	Visclosky
Sires	Titus	Walz
Slaughter	Tonko	Wasserman
Smith (WA)	Tsongas	Schultz
Speier	Van Hollen	Waters
Swalwell (CA)	Vargas	Waxman
Takano	Veasey	Welch
Thompson (CA)	Vela	Wilson (FL)
Thompson (MS)	Velázquez	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—16

Chaffetz	Hinojosa	Pastor (AZ)
Collins (NY)	Johnson, Sam	Rangel
Crawford	Jones	Schneider
Gosar	McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz
Green, Al	Negrete McLeod	
Green, Gene	Nugent	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote). There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1034

Mr. RICE of South Carolina changed his vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MRS. CAPPS

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 184, noes 228, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 102]

AYES—184

Barber	Courtney	Hahn
Bass	Crowley	Hanabusa
Beatty	Cuellar	Hastings (FL)
Becerra	Cummings	Heck (WA)
Bera (CA)	Davis (CA)	Herrera Beutler
Bishop (NY)	Davis, Danny	Higgins
Blumenauer	DeFazio	Himes
Bonamici	DeGette	Holt
Brady (PA)	Delaney	Honda
Braley (IA)	DeLauro	Horsford
Brown (FL)	DelBene	Hoyer
Brownley (CA)	Deutch	Huffman
Bustos	Dingell	Israel
Butterfield	Doggett	Jackson Lee
Capps	Doyle	Jeffries
Capuano	Duckworth	Johnson, E. B.
Cárdenas	Edwards	Kaptur
Carney	Engel	Keating
Carson (IN)	Enyart	Kelly (IL)
Cartwright	Eshoo	Kennedy
Castor (FL)	Esty	Kildee
Castro (TX)	Farr	Kilmer
Chu	Fattah	Kind
Cicilline	Fitzpatrick	Kirkpatrick
Clark (MA)	Foster	Kuster
Clarke (NY)	Frankel (FL)	Langevin
Clay	Fudge	Larsen (WA)
Cleaver	Gabbard	Larson (CT)
Clyburn	Gallego	Lee (CA)
Cohen	Garamendi	Levin
Connolly	Garcia	Lewis
Conyers	Grayson	Lipinski
Cooper	Grijalva	Loeb sack
Costa	Gutiérrez	Lofgren

Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens

Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)

Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swailwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry

Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland

Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler

Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Reichert
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanford
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader

Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—228

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Benishkek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)

Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCauley
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre

McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Rahall
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schradler
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster

NOT VOTING—18

Chaffetz
Collins (NY)
Crawford
Ellison
Gosar
Green, Al

Green, Gene
Hinojosa
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
McAllister

McCarthy (NY)
Negrete McLeod
Pastor (AZ)
Pitts
Schneider
Schwartz

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR
The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1038

So the amendment was rejected.
The result of the vote was announced
as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MS.

SCHAKOWSKY

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 190, noes 221, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 103]

AYES—190

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownlee (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Ciocline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Clever
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly

Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cueellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DeBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego

Garamendi
Garcia
Gibson
Grayson
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin

NOES—221

Fortenberry
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino

Massie
McCarthy (CA)
McCauley
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Pompeo
Posey
Rahall
Reed
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert

Scott, Austin	Stutzman	Webster (FL)
Sensenbrenner	Terry	Wenstrup
Sessions	Thompson (PA)	Westmoreland
Shimkus	Thornberry	Whitfield
Shuster	Tiberi	Williams
Simpson	Tipton	Wilson (SC)
Smith (MO)	Turner	Wittman
Smith (NE)	Upton	Wolf
Smith (NJ)	Valadao	Womack
Smith (TX)	Wagner	Woodall
Southerland	Walberg	Yoder
Stewart	Walden	Yoho
Stivers	Walorski	Young (AK)
Stockman	Weber (TX)	Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—19

Cárdenas	Hinojosa	Pastor (AZ)
Chaffetz	Johnson, Sam	Poe (TX)
Collins (NY)	Jones	Price (GA)
Crawford	McAllister	Schneider
Gosar	McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz
Green, Al	McIntyre	
Green, Gene	Negrete McLeod	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1042

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. WAXMAN

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This is a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 178, noes 231, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 104]

AYES—178

Barber	Conyers	Garcia
Bass	Cooper	Grayson
Beatty	Courtney	Grijalva
Becerra	Crowley	Gutiérrez
Bera (CA)	Cuellar	Hahn
Bishop (NY)	Cummings	Hanabusa
Blumenauer	Davis (CA)	Hastings (FL)
Bonamici	Davis, Danny	Heck (WA)
Brady (PA)	DeFazio	Higgins
Braley (IA)	DeGette	Himes
Brown (FL)	Delaney	Holt
Brownley (CA)	DeLauro	Honda
Bustos	DelBene	Horsford
Butterfield	Deutch	Hoyer
Capps	Dingell	Huffman
Capuano	Doggett	Israel
Cárdenas	Doyle	Jackson Lee
Carney	Duckworth	Jeffries
Carson (IN)	Edwards	Johnson, E. B.
Cartwright	Ellison	Keating
Castor (FL)	Engel	Kelly (IL)
Castro (TX)	Eshoo	Kennedy
Chu	Esty	Kildee
Cicilline	Farr	Kilmer
Clark (MA)	Fattah	Kind
Clarke (NY)	Foster	Kirkpatrick
Clay	Frankel (FL)	Langevin
Cleaver	Fudge	Larsen (WA)
Clyburn	Gabbard	Larson (CT)
Cohen	Gallego	Lee (CA)
Connolly	Garamendi	Levin

Lewis	Owens	Shea-Porter
Lipinski	Pallone	Sherman
Loeb	Pascrell	Sinema
Lofgren	Payne	Sires
Lowenthal	Pelosi	Slaughter
Lowe	Perlmutter	Smith (WA)
Lujan Grisham	Peters (CA)	Speier
(NM)	Peters (MI)	Swalwell (CA)
Luján, Ben Ray	Pingree (ME)	Takano
(NM)	Pocan	Thompson (CA)
Lynch	Polis	Thompson (MS)
Maffei	Price (NC)	Tierney
Maloney, Sean	Quigley	Titus
Matsui	Rangel	Tonko
McCollum	Richmond	Tsongas
McDermott	Roybal-Allard	Van Hollen
McGovern	Ruiz	Vargas
McNerney	Ruppersberger	Veasey
Meeks	Rush	Vela
Meng	Ryan (OH)	Velázquez
Michaud	Sánchez, Linda	Visclosky
Miller, George	T.	Walz
Moore	Sanchez, Loretta	Wasserman
Moran	Sarbanes	Schultz
Murphy (FL)	Schakowsky	Waters
Nadler	Schiff	Waxman
Napolitano	Scott (VA)	Welch
Neal	Scott, David	Wilson (FL)
Nolan	Serrano	Yarmuth
O'Rourke	Sewell (AL)	

NOES—231

Aderholt	Forbes	McAllister
Amash	Fortenberry	McCarthy (CA)
Amodei	Fox	McCaul
Bachmann	Franks (AZ)	McClintock
Bachus	Frelinghuysen	McHenry
Barletta	Gardner	McIntyre
Barr	Garrett	McKeon
Barrow (GA)	Gibbs	McKinley
Barton	Gibson	McMorris
Benish	Gingrey (GA)	Rodgers
Bentivolio	Gohmert	Meadows
Bilirakis	Goodlatte	Meehan
Bishop (GA)	Gowdy	Messer
Bishop (UT)	Granger	Mica
Black	Graves (GA)	Miller (FL)
Blackburn	Graves (MO)	Miller (MI)
Boustany	Griffin (AR)	Miller, Gary
Brady (TX)	Griffith (VA)	Mullin
Bridenstine	Grimm	Mulvaney
Brooks (AL)	Guthrie	McIntyre
Brooks (IN)	Hall	Murphy (PA)
Broun (GA)	Hanna	Neugebauer
Buchanan	Harper	Noem
Bucshon	Harris	Nugent
Burgess	Hartzler	Nunes
Byrne	Hastings (WA)	Nunnelee
Calvert	Heck (NV)	Olson
Camp	Hensarling	Palazzo
Campbell	Herrera Beutler	Pearce
Cantor	Holding	Perry
Capito	Hudson	Peterson
Carter	Huelskamp	Petri
Cassidy	Huizenga (MI)	Pittenger
Chabot	Hultgren	Pitts
Coble	Hunter	Poe (TX)
Coffman	Hurt	Pompeo
Cole	Issa	Posey
Collins (GA)	Jenkins	Rahall
Conaway	Johnson (OH)	Reed
Cook	Jordan	Reichert
Costa	Joyce	Renacci
Cotton	Kelly (PA)	Ribble
Cramer	King (IA)	Rice (SC)
Crenshaw	King (NY)	Rigell
Culberson	Kingston	Roby
Daines	Kinzinger (IL)	Roe (TN)
Davis, Rodney	Kline	Rogers (AL)
Denham	Labrador	Rogers (KY)
Dent	LaMalfa	Rogers (MI)
DeSantis	Lamborn	Rohrabacher
DesJarlais	Lance	Rokita
Diaz-Balart	Lankford	Rooney
Duffy	Latham	Ros-Lehtinen
Duncan (SC)	Latta	Roskam
Duncan (TN)	LoBiondo	Ross
Elmers	Long	Rothfus
Enyart	Lucas	Royce
Farenthold	Luetkemeyer	Runyan
Fincher	Lummis	Ryan (WI)
Fitzpatrick	Marchant	Salmon
Fleischmann	Marino	Sanford
Fleming	Massie	Scalise
Flores	Matheson	Schock
		Schrader

Schweikert	Stutzman	Wenstrup
Scott, Austin	Terry	Westmoreland
Sensenbrenner	Thompson (PA)	Whitfield
Sessions	Thornberry	Williams
Shimkus	Tiberi	Wilson (SC)
Shuster	Tipton	Wittman
Simpson	Turner	Wolf
Smith (MO)	Upton	Womack
Smith (NE)	Valadao	Woodall
Smith (NJ)	Wagner	Yoder
Smith (TX)	Walberg	Yoho
Southerland	Walden	Young (AK)
Stewart	Walorski	Young (IN)
Stivers	Weber (TX)	
Stockman	Webster (FL)	

NOT VOTING—21

Chaffetz	Johnson (GA)	Negrete McLeod
Collins (NY)	Johnson, Sam	Pastor (AZ)
Crawford	Jones	Paulsen
Gerlach	Kaptur	Price (GA)
Gosar	Kuster	Schneider
Green, Al	Maloney,	Schwartz
Green, Gene	Carolyn	
Hinojosa	McCarthy (NY)	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1046

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Chair, on rollcall No. 104 I was detained while meeting with a constituent. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FLEISCHMANN) having assumed the chair, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3826) to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 497, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I am opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Brownley of California moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3826 to the Committee on Energy and Commerce with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Redesignate section 5 as section 6 and insert after section 4 the following:

SEC. 5. SAVING CONSUMERS MONEY ON THEIR ELECTRICITY BILLS.

This Act shall not apply with respect to rules that save consumers money on electricity bills, including rules that allow for or encourage energy efficiency, demand response, and other approaches to lower the cost of electricity for consumers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to H.R. 3826, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

My amendment is a simple, straightforward improvement that I believe both sides of the aisle can agree is absolutely necessary, and would be overwhelmingly supported by the American people.

If my amendment passes, it will ensure that the American people and American businesses throughout our country will be protected from avoidable energy price increases.

Specifically, my amendment ensures that nothing in this act would limit the ability of regulators to issue rules that save consumers money on their electricity bills, including rules that allow for or encourage energy efficiency, demand response, and other approaches to lower the cost of electricity for consumers.

Making our homes and businesses more energy-efficient will save Americans trillions of dollars and, simultaneously, fight climate change by reducing our country's carbon footprint.

Energy efficiency standards have already saved Americans \$40 billion, and we are on track to save \$1.7 trillion in energy costs by 2035. Proven Federal programs, like Energy Star, boost energy efficiency and have conserved energy by helping consumers and businesses find energy-efficient appliances and products.

In fact, commercial buildings which used Energy Star technology show an average of 7 percent energy savings. Progress in energy efficiency is a win/win that is good for our pocketbooks and good for our environment. We can do more.

If just 1 in 10 households used current technology to upgrade their home heating systems, we could keep 17 billion pounds of pollution out of our air.

A vote for my amendment is a vote to ensure that we keep every tool available to conserve energy and help consumers avoid needless energy costs.

Mr. Speaker, price increases in the energy sector are a very real and very serious problem. It hurts working families struggling to make ends meet. It hurts homeowners who struggle every month to pay their mortgage and utility bills, including many of my hard-working families in Ventura County.

It hurts small and large businesses, driving up the price of doing business and impacting their ability to invest in new equipment and hire new workers.

It hurts our military and impacts military readiness, including Naval Base Ventura County, costing more to keep the lights on and operate critical facilities at Point Mugu and Port Huemene.

It hurts our seniors who live on fixed incomes and cannot afford an increase in their utility bills.

It hurts the specialty crop growers in Ventura County, our lemon, strawberry, avocado, and lettuce growers, as well as our cut flower producers, whose bottom line is so closely tied to the price of energy.

It also hurts our overall national economy and threatens to slow job creation and the recovery of our very fragile economy.

This is why it is so important that we allow regulators, like the EPA, to move forward with rules that can save consumers money on their electricity bills, encourage energy efficiency, and lower the cost of electricity for all of our consumers.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the motion to recommit to ensure a better and cleaner America for our children, our grandchildren, and many, many more generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I claim time in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Kentucky is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, if there was ever a motion to recommit that we don't need, it is this one. The entire purpose of the Electricity Security and Affordability Act, H.R. 3826, is to ensure that America remains competitive in the global marketplace by lowering electricity costs.

The Energy Information Agency reported recently that 41 out of 50 States have higher electricity rates today than they did 4 years ago. Primarily, these electricity rates are going up because of the policies of the Obama administration.

This act specifically allows in the future the opportunity to build a new

coal-powered plant in America the way coal-powered plants are being built around the world. We don't anticipate one to be built as long as natural gas prices are low, but if they go up, as they have in Europe, we want the flexibility to build a coal-powered plant in America.

The President talks frequently about an all-of-the-above energy policy, and yet, his policies, his regulations, his executive orders do not allow us to use as much coal. We simply want that flexibility. We are not mandating it, but it gives us additional flexibility.

For that reason, I would ask us to defeat the motion to recommit and adopt H.R. 3826.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PARTNERSHIP FOR A BETTER ENERGY FUTURE,

February 28, 2014.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: The Partnership for a Better Energy Future (the Partnership), a coalition of more than 100 organizations representing over 80 percent of the U.S. economy, urges your support for H.R. 3826, the "Electricity Security and Affordability Act," which is expected to receive a vote in the House next week. H.R. 3826 provides a more reasonable path forward in relation to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) greenhouse gas (GHG) regulations, while also protecting jobs, economic growth and international competitiveness.

The Partnership's fundamental mission is to promote an "all-of-the-above" energy strategy that ensures the continued availability of reliable and affordable energy for American families and businesses while also protecting the environment. Unfortunately, the EPA's proposed GHG regulations on new power plants fail to meet this test.

The EPA has begun implementing a suite of new regulations designed to address GHG emissions from the electric power sector. By law, these regulations are supposed to be flexible and take into account cost and commercial availability; however, in practice the EPA's proposed GHG regulations have been the exact opposite. The very first regulation the EPA unveiled, which applies to new power plants, mandates technologies that are not yet commercially available—effectively banning the construction of coal-fired power plants going forward. With similar regulations on existing power plants due in June, followed immediately by regulations on other energy-intensive industries, the EPA's heavy-handed approach is not an encouraging sign for the regulated community.

H.R. 3826 provides a reasonable path forward for the EPA's power plant GHG regulations, allowing the agency to regulate while also protecting a diverse energy mix. For new power plants, the bill requires separate standards for coal and gas, with the coal standard subcategorized for coal types and aligned with the best-performing commercially available generation technologies. It provides a reasonable path forward for carbon dioxide capture and sequestration (CCS), prohibiting the EPA from mandating its use until the technology has been deployed by at least six units located at different commercial power plants in the United States—in other words, until it is truly ready. Finally, it allows the EPA to craft rules or guidelines

for existing power plants, but requires Congress to review them and set a start date before they can take effect.

The members of the Partnership support regulations that are cost-effective, technologically achievable and allow for a robust "all-of-the-above" energy strategy. H.R. 3826 would achieve these goals by allowing the EPA to regulate in a balanced, reasonable fashion. The Partnership urges your support for H.R. 3826.

Sincerely,

Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute; Alabama Automotive Manufacturer's Association; Alaska Chamber of Commerce; American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity; American Farm Bureau Federation; American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers; American Knife Manufacturers Association; American Petroleum Institute; American Road and Transportation Builders Association; Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce; Associated Industries of Florida; Associated Industries of Missouri; Association of American Railroads; Automotive Recyclers Association; Balanced Energy for Texas; Baltimore Washington Corridor Chamber; Bettisworth North Architects and Planners; Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce; Brick Industry Association; Buckeye Power, Inc.

California Cotton Ginners Association; California Cotton Growers Association; California Manufacturers & Technology Association; Colorado Association of Commerce and Industry; Consumer Energy Alliance; CropLife America; Dallas Regional Chamber; Electric Reliability Coordinating Council; Florida State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; Forging Industry Association; Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce; Georgia Association of Manufacturers; Georgia Chamber of Commerce; Greater Houston Partnership; Greater North Dakota Chamber; Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce; Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce; Gulf Coast Lignite Coalition; Illinois Coal Association; Illinois Manufacturers' Association; Independent Petroleum Association of America; Indiana Chamber of Commerce; Indiana Manufacturers Association; Industrial Minerals Association—North America; Institute for 21st Century Energy; Iowa Association of Business and Industry; Kansas Chamber of Commerce; Kentucky Coal Association; Kerrville Area Chamber of Commerce; Longview Chamber of Commerce; Louisiana Association of Business and Industry; Lubbock Chamber of Commerce; Metals Service Center Institute; Michigan Manufacturers Association; Michigan Railroads Association; Midwest Food Processors Association Inc.; Minnesota Chamber of Commerce; Mississippi Manufacturers Association; Missouri Chamber of Commerce; Montana Chamber of Commerce.

Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce; National Association of Home Builders; National Association of Manufacturers; National Cattlemen's Beef Association; National Marine Manufacturers Association; National Mining Association; National Oilseed Processors Association; National Rural Electric Cooperative Association; Natural Gas Supply Association; Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry; Non-Ferrous Founders' Society; North Carolina Chamber of Commerce; Oklahoma Railroad Association; Ohio Chamber of Commerce; Ohio Coal Association; Ohio Manufacturers' Association; Ohio Rural Electric Cooperatives, Inc.; Partnership for Affordable Clean Energy; Pennsylvania Coal Alliance; Pennsylvania Manufacturers Association.

Portland Cement Association; Printing Industries of America; Railway Supply Industry, Inc.; Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council; South Carolina Chamber of Commerce; Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance; SPI: The Plastics Industry Trade Association; Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry; Texas Association of Business; Texas Cotton Ginners' Association; Texas Railroad Association; The Chamber of Sparks, Reno & Northern Nevada; The Fertilizer Institute; The Vinyl Institute; U.S. Chamber of Commerce; United Transportation Union; Valve Manufacturers Association of America; Virginia Chamber of Commerce; West Virginia Chamber of Commerce; Western Agricultural Processors Association; Wisconsin Industrial Energy Group Inc.; Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce; Wyoming Chamber Partnership.

UNITED MINE WORKERS
OF AMERICA,
Triangle, VA, March 4, 2014.

DEAR MEMBER: On behalf of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) and our members I want to ask you to vote for H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act introduced by Representative Ed Whitfield.

The UMWA is gravely concerned that the EPA has proposed an emission rate limit for new coal electric generation plants that requires carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) that has not been adequately demonstrated nor is commercially available at this time. Furthermore, EPA has based this requirement on federally-subsidized coal generation plants still under construction and that have yet to produce one kilowatt of electricity.

EPA has estimated that the CCS requirement will increase the cost of new coal generation by 30 to 80 percent. Adding this increased cost to building new coal generation clearly demonstrates that coal is not part of the Administration's "All of the Above" energy policy. Myself, along with five other Union Presidents, wrote President Obama last year with our recommendations on ways to build new efficient coal generation that would reduce carbon emissions without requiring CCS.

The Edison Electric Institute estimates that over 60 gigawatts of coal generation will close between now and 2015 as a result of EPA's final Mercury regulation and lower natural gas prices. It is important to point out that most of these plants were required to run to meet demand during the recent polar vortex.

The UMWA is very concerned about the impact the proposed NSPS regulation for existing coal plants scheduled to be released in June will have on the remaining fleet of coal plants and on UMWA members and other jobs in our rural communities. The EPA and the Administration consistently ignore the impact the loss of jobs in coal mining, utility and transportation sectors will have on rural coalfield communities.

As these well paying jobs disappear, how do we continue to provide wages, pensions, and health care benefits that miners and others have worked a lifetime to earn? How will the loss of these jobs impact the local tax base, school systems and health care facilities in these rural communities? UMWA contracts alone pump billions of dollars annually into these communities through our wages, pensions and health care. If that disappears, there will be nothing to replace it.

The UMWA urges you to vote for H.R. 3826, the Electricity and Affordability Act.

Sincerely yours,

CECIL E. ROBERTS,
International President.

AMERICAN IRON AND STEEL INSTITUTE,
March 5, 2014

To: Members of the U.S. House of Representatives, House staff assigned to steel and/or energy issues.

SUPPORT H.R. 3826—THE ELECTRICITY
SECURITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT

BACKGROUND

As the production of steel is energy-intensive, the availability and reliability of energy is essential to the international competitiveness of the domestic steel industry. In order to reduce costs and improve its competitiveness, the industry in the U.S. has reduced its energy-intensity by 27% since 1990. In fact, a recent Department of Energy-sponsored report concluded that the steel industry in the U.S. is the most energy efficient of any major steel producing country.

The steel industry in the U.S. is subject to substantial international competition, often from nations such as China, where the industry is largely state-owned, controlled, and subsidized. In fact, in two recent cases, the Department of Commerce determined that Chinese steel producers were receiving below market rates for electricity, which constitutes a subsidy. Given these challenges, policies enacted in the U.S. that raise energy costs on domestic companies threaten the industry's ability to remain competitive internationally.

SITUATION

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has undertaken a two-pronged approach to regulate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from electric generating utilities. It has proposed a rule to limit GHGs from new power plants that will likely be finalized soon, while the Agency plans to issue a draft rule on GHG emissions from existing power plants later this year. Although these regulations are placed directly on the utility sector, electricity customers will bear the costs associated with compliance. The rules will likely raise the cost of electricity to large industrial customers like steel producers, while potentially lessening the quality and reliability of our nation's electricity supply. H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act, directs EPA to use achievable and realistic standards when setting GHG limits for new power plants and would ensure a role for Congress in determining when the GHG rule for existing plants goes into effect.

REQUEST

AISI urges all members of the House to support H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act, when it is considered by the full House. Doing so will help uphold the international competitiveness of the domestic steel industry by maintaining an affordable and reliable supply of electricity.

Sincerely,

THOMAS J. GIBSON.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by a 5-minute vote on the passage of the bill, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 184, nays 223, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 105]

YEAS—184

Barber	Gallego	Napolitano
Barrow (GA)	Garamendi	Neal
Bass	Garcia	Nolan
Beatty	Grayson	O'Rourke
Becerra	Grijalva	Owens
Bera (CA)	Gutiérrez	Pallone
Bishop (GA)	Hahn	Pascarell
Bishop (NY)	Hanabusa	Payne
Blumenauer	Hastings (FL)	Pelosi
Bonamici	Heck (WA)	Perlmutter
Brady (PA)	Higgins	Peters (CA)
Braley (IA)	Himes	Peters (MI)
Brown (FL)	Holt	Peterson
Brownley (CA)	Honda	Pocan
Bustos	Horsford	Polis
Butterfield	Huffman	Price (NC)
Capps	Israel	Rangel
Capuano	Jackson Lee	Richmond
Cárdenas	Jeffries	Roybal-Allard
Carney	Johnson (GA)	Ruiz
Carson (IN)	Johnson, E. B.	Ruppersberger
Cartwright	Kaptur	Rush
Castor (FL)	Keating	Ryan (OH)
Castro (TX)	Kelly (IL)	Sánchez, Linda T.
Chu	Kildee	Sanchez, Loretta
Cicilline	Kilmer	Sarbanes
Clark (MA)	Kind	Schakowsky
Clarke (NY)	Kirkpatrick	Schiff
Clay	Kuster	Schrader
Cleaver	Langevin	Scott (VA)
Clyburn	Larsen (WA)	Scott, David
Cohen	Larson (CT)	Serrano
Connolly	Lee (CA)	Sewell (AL)
Conyers	Levin	Shea-Porter
Cooper	Lewis	Sherman
Costa	Lipinski	Sinema
Courtney	Loeb sack	Sinema
Crowley	Lofgren	Sires
Cuellar	Lowenthal	Slaughter
Cummings	Lowey	Smith (WA)
Davis (CA)	Lujan Grisham	Speier
Davis, Danny	(NM)	Swalwell (CA)
DeFazio	Lujan, Ben Ray	Takano
DeGette	(NM)	Thompson (CA)
Delaney	Lynch	Thompson (MS)
DeLauro	Maffei	Tierney
DelBene	Maloney	Titus
Deutch	Carolyn	Tonko
Dingell	Maloney, Sean	Tsongas
Doggett	Matheson	Van Hollen
Doyle	McCollum	Vargas
Duckworth	McDermott	Veasey
Edwards	McGovern	Vela
Ellison	McIntyre	Velázquez
Engel	McNerney	Visclosky
Eshoo	Meeks	Walz
Esty	Meng	Wasserman
Farr	Michaud	Schultz
Fattah	Miller, George	Waters
Foster	Moore	Waxman
Frankel (FL)	Moran	Welch
Fudge	Murphy (FL)	Wilson (FL)
Gabbard	Nadler	Yarmuth

NAYS—223

Aderholt	Black	Calvert
Amash	Blackburn	Camp
Amodei	Boustany	Campbell
Bachmann	Brady (TX)	Cantor
Bachus	Bridenstine	Capito
Barletta	Brooks (AL)	Carter
Barr	Brooks (IN)	Cassidy
Barton	Broun (GA)	Chabot
Benishek	Buchanan	Coble
Bentivolio	Bucshon	Coffman
Bilirakis	Burgess	Cole
Bishop (UT)	Byrne	Collins (GA)

Conaway	Jordan	Roby
Cook	Joyce	Roe (TN)
Cotton	Kelly (PA)	Rogers (AL)
Cramer	King (IA)	Rogers (KY)
Crenshaw	King (NY)	Rogers (MI)
Culberson	Kingston	Rohrabacher
Daines	Kinzinger (IL)	Rokita
Davis, Rodney	Kline	Rooney
Denham	Labrador	Ros-Lehtinen
Dent	LaMalfa	Roskam
DeSantis	Lamborn	Ross
Diaz-Balart	Lance	Rothfus
Duffy	Lankford	Royce
Duncan (SC)	Latham	Runyan
Duncan (TN)	Latta	Ryan (WI)
Ellmers	LoBiondo	Salmon
Enyart	Long	Sanford
Farenthold	Lucas	Scalise
Fincher	Luetkemeyer	Schock
Fitzpatrick	Lummis	Schweikert
Fleischmann	Marchant	Scott, Austin
Fleming	Marino	Sensenbrenner
Flores	Massie	Sessions
Forbes	McCarthy (CA)	Shimkus
Fortenberry	McCaul	Shuster
Fox	McClintock	Simpson
Franks (AZ)	McHenry	Smith (MO)
Frelinghuysen	McKeon	Smith (NE)
Gardner	McKinley	Smith (NJ)
Garrett	McMorris	Smith (TX)
Gerlach	Rodgers	Southerland
Gibbs	Meadows	Stewart
Gibson	Meehan	Stivers
Gingrey (GA)	Messer	Stockman
Gohmert	Mica	Stutzman
Goodlatte	Miller (FL)	Terry
Gowdy	Miller (MI)	Thompson (PA)
Granger	Miller, Gary	Thornberry
Graves (GA)	Mulvaney	Tiberi
Graves (MO)	Murphy (PA)	Tipton
Griffin (AR)	Neugebauer	Turner
Griffith (VA)	Noem	Upton
Grimm	Nugent	Valadao
Guthrie	Nunes	Wagner
Hall	Nunnelee	Walberg
Hanna	Olson	Walden
Harper	Palazzo	Walorski
Harris	Paulsen	Weber (TX)
Hartzer	Pearce	Webster (FL)
Hastings (WA)	Perry	Wenstrup
Heck (NV)	Petri	Westmoreland
Hensarling	Pingree (ME)	Whitfield
Herrera Beutler	Pittenger	Williams
Holding	Pitts	Wilson (SC)
Hudson	Pompeo	Wittman
Huelskamp	Posey	Wolf
Huizenga (MI)	Rahall	Womack
Hultgren	Reed	Woodall
Hunter	Reichert	Yoder
Hurt	Renacci	Yoho
Issa	Ribble	Young (AK)
Jenkins	Rice (SC)	Young (IN)
Johnson (OH)	Rigell	

NOT VOTING—23

Chaffetz	Hoyer	Negrete McLeod
Collins (NY)	Johnson, Sam	Pastor (AZ)
Crawford	Jones	Poe (TX)
DesJarlais	Kennedy	Price (GA)
Gosar	Matsui	Quigley
Green, Al	McAllister	Schneider
Green, Gene	McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz
Hinojosa	Mullin	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1104

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 105 I was not able to participate in this vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 105 Motion to Recommit, had I been present, I would have voted "no."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—aye 229, noes 183, not voting 18, as follows:

[Roll No. 106]

AYES—229

Aderholt	Gohmert	Nunes
Amash	Goodlatte	Nunnelee
Amodei	Gowdy	Olson
Bachmann	Granger	Palazzo
Bachus	Graves (GA)	Paulsen
Barletta	Graves (MO)	Perry
Barr	Griffin (AR)	Peterson
Barrow (GA)	Griffith (VA)	Petri
Barton	Grimm	Pittenger
Benishek	Guthrie	Pitts
Bentivolio	Hall	Poe (TX)
Bilirakis	Hanna	Pompeo
Bishop (GA)	Harper	Posey
Bishop (UT)	Harris	Rahall
Black	Hartzler	Reed
Blackburn	Hastings (WA)	Reichert
Boustany	Heck (NV)	Renacci
Brady (TX)	Hensarling	Ribble
Bridenstine	Holding	Rice (SC)
Brooks (AL)	Hudson	Rigell
Brooks (IN)	Huelskamp	Roby
Broun (GA)	Huizenga (MI)	Roe (TN)
Buchanan	Hultgren	Rogers (AL)
Bucshon	Hunter	Rogers (KY)
Burgess	Hurt	Rogers (MI)
Byrne	Issa	Rohrabacher
Calvert	Jenkins	Rokita
Camp	Johnson (OH)	Rooney
Campbell	Jordan	Roskam
Cantor	Joyce	Ross
Capito	Kelly (PA)	Rothfus
Carter	King (IA)	Royce
Cassidy	King (NY)	Runyan
Chabot	Kingston	Ryan (WI)
Coble	Kinzinger (IL)	Salmon
Coffman	Kline	Sanford
Cole	Labrador	Scalise
Collins (GA)	LaMalfa	Schock
Conaway	Lamborn	Schweikert
Cook	Lance	Scott, Austin
Costa	Lankford	Sensenbrenner
Cotton	Latham	Sessions
Cramer	Latta	Sewell (AL)
Crenshaw	Long	Shimkus
Cuellar	Lucas	Shuster
Culberson	Luetkemeyer	Simpson
Daines	Lummis	Smith (MO)
Davis, Rodney	Marchant	Smith (NE)
Denham	Marino	Smith (NJ)
Dent	Massie	Smith (TX)
DeSantis	Matheson	Southerland
DesJarlais	McAllister	Stewart
Diaz-Balart	McCarthy (CA)	Stivers
Duffy	McCaul	Stockman
Duncan (SC)	McClintock	Stutzman
Duncan (TN)	McHenry	Terry
Ellmers	McIntyre	Thompson (PA)
Enyart	McKeon	Thornberry
Farenthold	McKinley	Tiberi
Fincher	McMorris	Tipton
Fitzpatrick	Rodgers	Turner
Fleischmann	Meadows	Upton
Fleming	Meehan	Valadao
Flores	Messer	Wagner
Forbes	Mica	Walberg
Fortenberry	Miller (FL)	Walden
Fox	Miller (MI)	Walorski
Franks (AZ)	Miller, Gary	Weber (TX)
Frelinghuysen	Mullin	Webster (FL)
Gardner	Mulvaney	Wenstrup
Garrett	Murphy (PA)	Westmoreland
Gerlach	Neugebauer	Whitfield
Gibbs	Noem	Williams
Gingrey (GA)	Nugent	Wilson (SC)

Wittman
Wolf
Womack

Woodall
Yoder
Yoho

Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOES—183

Barber
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Gibson

Grayson
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Herrera Beutler
Higgins
Himes
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loeback
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Luján, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano

Neal
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmuter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schrader
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—18

Chaffetz
Collins (NY)
Crawford
Gosar
Green, Al
Green, Gene

Hinojosa
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
McCarthy (NY)
Negrete McLeod
Pastor (AZ)
Pearce
Price (GA)
Ros-Lehtinen
Schneider
Schwartz

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1111

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on roll-call No. 106 I was not able to participate in this vote. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, on March 6, 2014 I was inadvertently recorded as a "no" vote on rollcall 106—H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act. I support H.R. 3826 and fully intended on voting in favor of the legislation.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO OFFER
RESOLUTION RAISING A QUESTION
OF THE PRIVILEGES OF
THE HOUSE

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, under rule IX, I hereby give notice of my intention to offer a question of the privileges of the House.

The form of the resolution is as follows:

Whereas on March 5, 2014, during a hearing before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Committee Chairman Darrell E. Issa gave a statement and then posed ten questions to former Internal Revenue Service official Lois Lerner, who stated that she was invoking her Fifth Amendment right not to testify;

Whereas the Committee's Ranking Member, Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, clearly sought recognition to take his turn for questions under Committee and House Rules;

Whereas, Chairman Issa then quickly adjourned the hearing and refused to allow him to make any statement or ask any questions;

Whereas Ranking Member Cummings protested immediately, stating: "Mr. Chairman, you cannot run a Committee like this. You just cannot do this. This is, we are better than that as a country, we are better than that as a Committee."

Whereas, Chairman Issa then returned and allowed Ranking Member Cummings to begin his statement, but when it became clear that Chairman Issa did not want to hear what Ranking Member Cummings was saying, turned off Ranking Member Cummings' microphone, ordered Republican staff to "close it down," and repeatedly signaled to end the hearing with his hand across his neck;

Whereas Ranking Member Cummings objected again, stating: "You cannot have a one-sided investigation. There is absolutely something wrong with that";

Whereas Chairman Issa made a statement of his own and posed questions during the hearing, but refused to allow other members of the Committee, and in particular the Ranking Member who had sought recognition, to make statements under the five-minute rule in violation of House Rule XI;

Whereas Chairman Issa instructed the microphones to be turned off and adjourned the hearing without a vote or a unanimous consent agreement in violation of Rule XVI because he did not want to permit Ranking Member Cummings to speak;

Whereas Chairman Issa's abusive behavior on March 5 is part of a continuing pattern in which he has routinely excluded members of the Committee from investigative meetings, and has routinely provided information to the press before sharing it with Committee members;

Whereas Chairman Issa has violated Clause 1 of Rule XXIII of the Code of Official Conduct which states that "A Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer or employee of the House shall behave at all times in a manner that shall reflect creditably on the House"; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives strongly condemns the offensive and

disrespectful manner in which Chairman Darrell E. Issa conducted the hearing of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on March 5, 2014, during which he turned off the microphones of the Ranking Member while he was speaking and adjourned the hearing without a vote or a unanimous consent agreement.

□ 1115

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within 2 legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentlewoman from Ohio will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

PROVISION OF COSTS OF LOAN
GUARANTEES FOR UKRAINE

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4152) to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4152

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PROVISION OF COSTS OF LOAN
GUARANTEES FOR UKRAINE.

From amounts appropriated or otherwise made available under "Economic Support Fund" in division K of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113-76), and prior Acts making appropriations for the Department of State, foreign operations, and related programs, funding from unobligated balances shall be made available for the costs, as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, of loan guarantees for Ukraine, which are authorized to be provided in an appropriations Act, in accordance with section 504 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974: *Provided*, That amounts made available for the costs of such guarantees shall not be considered "assistance" for the purpose of provisions of law limiting assistance to such country: *Provided*

further, That none of the funds may be made available from amounts designated pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the consideration of H.R. 4152.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring to the floor H.R. 4152, a bill providing the authority for loan guarantees for Ukraine.

As we all sadly know, Ukraine is facing an extraordinarily difficult time. As a valued partner and friend of the United States, our Nation has a duty to provide the people of Ukraine with help when they now need it most.

This bill will provide some stability for the government and the people of Ukraine as they navigate through these troubled waters. The legislation before us will allow funds to be used to guarantee loans for the Government of Ukraine, in support of the Secretary of State's \$1 billion pledge this week. This bill does not appropriate new funds, but simply allows funds to be used from existing State Department resources.

Ukraine's economy has been in a difficult position for years, but now the country faces, of course, real risks. Russia has punished Ukraine for leaning toward the West and has suspended the assistance they planned to provide.

This bill will not solve all of Ukraine's problems, obviously, but it is an important first step that will allow the country to shore up its finances and begin to make its economy more efficient.

With this legislation, Congress—and the United States—will show that we stand by those that oppose authoritarian rule. It will show that, as a nation, we will step up to help the people of Ukraine not only with our words, but with our deeds.

Ukraine is facing an uncertain economic future, Mr. Speaker, but they are choosing the right path of democracy and reform. The American people will stand with the Ukrainian people as they chart this new course, and today we will take a first step to quickly respond to their present need.

Mr. Speaker, this is a critically important bill and one that should pass the House and the Senate and be enacted into law without delay. I urge a "yes" vote.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

We must come together today on a bipartisan basis to support the people of Ukraine and take a stand against Russia's aggression and illegal violation of Ukraine's sovereign and territorial integrity.

Since last November, the world has watched with growing alarm as the hopes and democratic aspirations of the Ukrainian people were met with violent crackdowns against activists, harassment of journalists, and restrictive legislation limiting basic democratic freedoms. The bloody images from the city square and rising death toll are horrific.

Last month, the Ukrainian Parliament, the democratically elected institution, responsibly exercised its mandate and took action on behalf of the people of Ukraine. Within days, hope returned as the Parliament ousted the reckless and dangerous former President Yanukovich, began discussions with the IMF on a financial support package, and formed a transitional government with early elections scheduled for May.

But Russia, through its dangerous and illegal military occupation of Crimea, has imperiled this progress and unnecessarily escalated this crisis. Russia has violated international law and its own treaty obligations with Ukraine. Ukraine now teeters on the brink of disaster and bloodshed, and I urgently call upon President Putin to work with Kiev and the international community to deescalate the situation immediately.

Now is the time for us to support the people of Ukraine. I strongly support President Obama's comprehensive aid package to support Ukraine, which includes \$1 billion in loan guarantees, technical assistance on trade, and recovery of stolen assets.

The IMF is working with the transitional government in Kiev and is instrumental in stabilizing the Ukrainian economy. This crisis illustrates the importance of the IMF to our national and global security interests, and I hope the final assistance package we enact for Ukraine will include support for the IMF.

In addition, I urge my colleagues in Congress to support the IMF quota reforms in the President's budget request, which would expand the IMF's capacity to respond to these kinds of crises and maintain U.S. leadership, instead of continuing to pursue shortsighted, isolationist attacks on the IMF.

In the meantime, however, we should not let the perfect stand as the enemy

of the good. In the bipartisan spirit of this bill, I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" to stand beside the people of Ukraine in their hour of darkness.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GRANGER), the committee's chairman of the State and Foreign Operations Subcommittee.

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4152 and strongly support this bipartisan legislation before us today to provide economic assistance to Ukraine during her hour of need. This loan guarantee will help stabilize the Ukrainian economy during a time of political transition and when this country's sovereignty is being tested by Russia. Now, more than ever, the United States needs to demonstrate bold leadership and stand up for those who choose democracy over tyranny.

This bill does not mean the end of Ukraine's serious challenges, but it is an important first step that will allow the government to begin to repair the economic damage caused by the former leadership and will help bring stability back to a nation that values freedom.

This legislation also sends a clear signal to Ukraine and the world that the United States stands by our friends. The Ukrainian people want democracy, justice, reform, and peace. The American people will stand with Ukraine as they chart a new course forward.

I want to thank Chairman ROGERS and Ranking Member LOWEY for their immediate, bipartisan response to this crisis in Ukraine.

Mr. Speaker, this is important legislation at a very important time. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" so we can send this bill to the President's desk for his signature without delay.

Mrs. LOWEY. I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. ENGEL. I thank my friend, the gentlewoman from New York, for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, as the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4152, legislation that would provide the Government of Ukraine with urgently needed funds to address pressing needs at a critical moment. The Ukrainian people bravely confronted a brutal and corrupt regime and stood up for democracy and justice. They need our help now. This bill is a first step in answering their call.

The bill authorizes the United States to provide repayment guarantees for bonds that the Ukrainian Government plans to issue to raise cash. These guarantees will make it easier for Ukraine to sell the bonds at the lowest possible price and at the longest term. Our guarantees would be backed up by

reserves, using existing appropriated funds that the Congress provided for exactly this type of emergency.

This bill is the initial contribution to sustaining Ukraine's new government as it seeks to restore stability and return Ukraine to political and economic health. It is part of a larger financial commitment from the EU and other states, and will also help Ukraine's efforts to reach agreement with the IMF and to implement needed reforms.

Without this support, Ukraine's progress could stall in the face of unrelenting pressure from Russia, which has illegally occupied the Crimea, is encouraging separatism and conflict, and which has substantial leverage on the Ukrainian economy.

Our country has a long history of answering the call of people who have chosen freedom and democracy. Ukraine is now making that call as its people are seeking to defend their sovereignty and territorial integrity and build a more democratic, prosperous, and just future for themselves and their country. We must answer. This bill is our first step.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4152.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN), the distinguished chairman of the Defense Subcommittee on Appropriations.

□ 1130

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation to provide critical loan guarantees to Ukraine as it struggles against Russian oppression.

A large and proud Ukrainian community has been part of my congressional district for well over a century. Initially, Ukrainians came to New Jersey in waves of immigration because of persecution under the czars, then later after the Soviet Union crushed an independent Ukraine in the 1920s.

Yes, from the days of my youth I have come to understand that Ukrainians have always cherished freedom almost more than any descendants of other Nations, peoples, and cultures. Even after living in America for decades, they remain devoted to their homeland, to independence.

Fiercely proud of their independent Nation, my constituents are now watching history repeat itself as Vladimir Putin occupies Crimea, and seems to be threatening other parts of eastern and southern Ukraine.

Mr. Speaker, the people have the right and obligation to decide what they feel is best for their Nation—either closer ties to the EU, the European Community, and the West, or shift back to Russia. That is their choice, and it cannot and must not be decided through the force of arms.

Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, I am pleased that the President has pro-

posed and the House will soon approve these loan guarantees for Ukraine. This measure is not enough. The Ukrainian people need strong leadership from the United States.

This bill sends the right message, it sends the needed loan guarantees, and I urge strong support for its passage.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF), a member of the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of Appropriations.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I stand today with the people of Ukraine and in strong support of this legislation, which will provide the administration with additional and immediate flexibility to assist Ukraine. I look forward to working with the gentleman from Kentucky and my good friend from New York on further ways to assist Ukraine in the appropriations process.

This effort cannot be just about helping Ukraine. It must also be about reversing Russian aggression, curbing Vladimir Putin's revanchist policies in Russia's "Near Abroad." President Obama's action this morning to cut off access to assets and place travel restrictions on those involved in the violation of Ukraine's sovereign is a positive first step. The pressure must be increased in the coming days if Russia fails to reverse course.

I support a slate of economic sanctions led by the United States and Europe to isolate Russia's economy and its leadership, so that Putin is made to understand that his violation of international law and the sovereignty of his neighbors will not be tolerated.

The collapse of the Soviet Union was one of the seminal events of the 20th century. The Cold War is over. Territorial aggression by Russia will not resurrect its empire but only diminish its standing in the world and the future of its people.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HARRIS), a distinguished member of our committee.

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, thank you for yielding me time to speak on this bill before us.

Mr. Speaker, the situation in Ukraine is important to all of us, but for me it has a personal aspect. My mother, now 90 years old, escaped from Ukraine and the Communists after World War II. She understood firsthand how Joseph Stalin suppressed freedoms and liberties in Ukraine—much as Mr. Putin desires to do likewise now.

We are faced with a situation in which a new Government of Ukraine is being threatened with Russian expansion into its sovereign territories. It is as if the Budapest agreement of 1994, which involved both Russia and the United States, had not guaranteed Ukraine safe borders from invasion. It is as if the Cold War never ended. Per-

haps to Mr. Putin and other Russian nationalists it never has.

Ukraine, situated between Russia and the rest of Europe, is of obvious strategic and economic importance, not only to Russia but to the United States and Western Europe.

That is why this bill is so important. It allows Ukraine to be allowed access to ESF funding. The ESF was established to, "provide assistance to allies and countries in the transition to democracy."

Mr. Speaker, that is exactly the situation in which Ukraine finds itself today—in need of our help to advance democracy and resist the invasion, economically and physically, from Russia, attempting to relitigate the Cold War. We can't let that happen. They desperately need these loan guarantees. For the sake of freedom, democracy, and international justice, I urge passage of this bipartisan effort to help our friends in Ukraine.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the ranking member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in fervent support of this legislation. This bill comes at a clearly crucial time. The people of Ukraine need to be able to preserve their Nation. We need to help.

The people of Ukraine fought for their long-desired independence. We need to help them keep it. In my capacity as cochair of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, I have had many chances to dialogue with the Ukrainian American community and members of the current Ukraine Parliament.

They have outlined in detail their determination to maintain and sustain one Ukraine against Russian aggression and any other force. The President has taken strong steps to support that endeavor.

We today should join together in unison with the President, and with, I believe, the overwhelming majority of the American people.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4152, which provides loan guarantees for Ukraine. I am deeply concerned about the crisis in Ukraine. Vladimir Putin is clearly the aggressor, but the United States and our European allies have not done enough to support freedom, self determination, and human rights in Ukraine. When America does not provide strong and reliable leadership, bad things are more likely to happen.

Unfortunately, President Obama's foreign policy of leading from behind is a failure. Even the liberal Washington Post this week said that, "President Obama's foreign policy is based on fantasy."

We in Congress must do all we can to restore missing American leadership on foreign policy, and that starts with Ukraine.

The people of Ukraine should not be pawns in Vladimir Putin's hands. We must stand with our European and our other allies and do all we can to support freedom, self determination, and human rights in Ukraine. I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 4152.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the minority whip of the House.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. I want to thank Chairman ROGERS and Ranking Member LOWEY for bringing this bill to the floor in a very timely fashion.

Mr. Speaker, Congress is coming together today to support loan guarantee authority for Ukraine that will be instrumental in stabilizing its economy and showing Ukraine's people that the United States stands with them.

I view this as a first step in what, hopefully, will be a series of actions to support the people of Ukraine, including IMF ratification authority.

I also support, Mr. Speaker, President Obama's action this morning to impose sanctions again Russian and Crimean officials who are exacerbating the crisis and put in place visa restrictions.

Mr. Speaker, I chaired the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe from 1985 to 1995. The final act says that borders cannot be changed other than by political means. The Russians need to comply with that admonition. I commend the administration's efforts to broker a diplomatic process that can resolve this dangerous situation in Ukraine.

The steps taken today are integral to that effort. We will stand hopefully as one in this Congress on behalf of this bill.

Russia has violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine in its unlawful and unwarranted military occupation of Crimea and its threats against the government in Kiev.

I do not purport to say this is a simple situation that we confront. I would commend to my colleagues an article by Henry Kissinger in today's Washington Post.

The complexities of this situation are real, but the actions of the Russians are an unacceptable response and we must take action. As a former chairman of the Helsinki Commission during the waning days of the Cold War, I have seen firsthand the yearning for freedom by the people of the former Soviet Union.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mrs. LOWEY. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. There are deep linguistic and political divisions within

Ukraine. Frankly, that is true of many other countries as well. Democracy by its nature provides an avenue to overcome those differences through peaceful cooperation and dialogue. That is what must prevail in Ukraine, and what must guide all parties forward. Not force, not intimidation, and not separatism. The United States remains committed, Mr. Speaker, to standing with all of the people of Ukraine as they seek the better future they deserve.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to overwhelmingly support this resolution and again thank Mr. ROGERS and Mrs. LOWEY for bringing this to the floor so quickly and decisively.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), a member of the Rules Committee and the ranking member of the Helsinki Commission.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong support of this legislation, which is a beginning step, and which I hope we will follow with all that we can to assist those Ukrainians who are courageous and forward leaning to be about the business of determining their own fate. I had the good fortune of being an election monitor immediately after the Orange Revolution, and I spent a lot of time talking to the people there. What I learned, if nothing more, is that they do have the courage of their convictions.

What I want us to do, and what I beg my colleagues that speak about this matter to understand, is that it is extremely complex. It is nothing that you can put on a bumper sticker, and it is unfair to President Obama for people to take to this floor and allow that he is "leading from behind," as I just heard a Member say. What that Member needs to understand is that it is not easy to make a determination in these kinds of matters. Whereas Putin is a dictator, Obama is in a democracy.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), the ranking member of the Energy and Water Subcommittee on Appropriations.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member of the full committee, Mrs. LOWEY, for yielding me this time.

I am very proud of the Appropriations Committee at this moment for bringing the first bill to the floor that stands with freedom-lovers in Ukraine and around our world. We know a threat to liberty anywhere is a threat to liberty everywhere, and I rise in heartfelt support of this loan guarantee legislation to allow Ukraine time to stabilize and secure its liberty.

This money will be repaid, and I commend the bipartisan leadership of this House in acting with dispatch. President Obama and Secretary Kerry have been working overtime on Ukraine's crisis to exert every effort to bring the nations of the free world together in their mutual self-interest, and that interest is liberty.

There are some Russian violations of international law in treaties that are so abhorrent they demand the strongest action. Russia's invasion of its undefended neighbor, Ukraine, cannot be allowed to stand. The now-20-year-old Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurance, signed in 1994 by the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, and Ukraine, set the path for Ukraine to give up thousands of nuclear weapons, and she remains undefended because of it.

□ 1145

The Budapest Accords welcomed the accession of Ukraine to the treaty of nonproliferation of nuclear weapons as a nonnuclear weapons state, so her inability to defend herself against such a powerful neighbor is very clear.

This week, in a joint statement, leaders from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, and our country said:

We join together today to condemn the Russian Federation's clear violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, in contravention of Russia's obligations under the UN Charter and its 1997 basing agreement with Ukraine.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mrs. LOWEY. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 3 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. This diverse group of nations from throughout the world coming together further illustrates the isolation Russia is certain to face if she does not relent and fall back from its aggressive push into Crimea.

In summarizing my remarks today, let me place on the RECORD, from the last century, no place in the world suffered more than the land of Ukraine, no place had more people forcibly starved, murdered, brutally beaten, buried alive, imprisoned, arrested into forced labor, including some of my ancestors.

I know, having traveled to Ukraine, how much the people of that great country want liberty. This is a moment that history will record in our new century the 21st. Joining with nations around the world, let us give Ukraine a bit of a lift to get her over this critical period she is facing.

I also wish to place into the RECORD information about what the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe has done in Ukraine to date. I will tell the body today that journalists are not being allowed to report from Crimea. They are being blocked and beaten by the government of Russia, from the reports we are getting on

the ground. How is the world community to know the full truth of what is occurring?

Russia is moving the world backwards, not forwards. This bill is an important step in helping Ukraine to transition as we join with countries from throughout the world to condemn the violation of Ukraine's sovereign borders and to help give her the courage to stand up to those who would take her liberty away.

This will be the first time in modern history that that country has a chance to become the truly borderland great nation that she is meant to be, reaching west and north and east and south.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation, which is a loan guarantee to help lift that country over this most trying time and difficult crisis in its recent history.

I thank the gentlelady for yielding me this time.

[From Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Secretary General, March 6, 2014]

OSCE TO SEND MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL TO UKRAINE

Update at 12:00, 6 March: As of now, twenty-two OSCE participating States are participating in the activity, having sent up to two representatives each. Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States. One representative from the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre is also participating.

Vienna, 5 March 2014.—Eighteen OSCE participating States decided to send 35 unarmed military personnel to Ukraine in response to its request.

The matter was discussed at a joint meeting of the Permanent Council and the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC) in Vienna on 4 March 2014.

The visit is taking place under Chapter III of the Vienna Document 2011, which allows for voluntary hosting of visits to dispel concerns about unusual military activities. Ukraine has requested all OSCE participating States to send military representatives from 5 to 12 March 2014, starting in Odessa. This is the first time this mechanism has been activated.

As of now, eighteen OSCE participating States have responded positively to the request sending up to two representatives each. Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States. One representative from the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre will also be participating. The military visit participants are on their way to Ukraine now.

OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier said: "It is my hope that this military visit will help to de-escalate tensions in Ukraine. By providing an objective assessment of the facts on the ground, the OSCE will be better placed to foster a political solution to the current crisis through dialogue."

"Confidence-building and transparency are key elements of the OSCE approach to security, which seeks to foster openness and dialogue as the best way to resolve conflicts in our region," he added.

The Vienna Document 2011 is one of the main confidence-building measures developed by the OSCE. Under this document, all participating States are required to share information on their military forces, equipment and defence planning. The Document also provides for inspections and evaluation visits that can be conducted on the territory of any participating State that has armed forces.

Note to editors: Chapter III of the Vienna Document 2011 (full text see at <http://www.osce.org/fsc/86597>)

VOLUNTARY HOSTING OF VISITS TO DISPEL CONCERNS ABOUT MILITARY ACTIVITIES

(18) In order to help to dispel concerns about military activities in the zone of application for CSBMs, participating States are encouraged to invite other participating States to take part in visits to areas on the territory of the host State in which there may be cause for such concerns. Such invitations will be without prejudice to any action taken under paragraphs (16) to (16.3).

(18.1) States invited to participate in such visits will include those which are understood to have concerns. At the time invitations are issued, the host State will communicate to all other participating States its intention to conduct the visit, indicating the reasons for the visit, the area to be visited, the States invited and the general arrangements to be adopted.

(18.2) Arrangements for such visits, including the number of the representatives from other participating States to be invited, will be at the discretion of the host State, which will bear the in-country costs. However, the host State should take appropriate account of the need to ensure the effectiveness of the visit, the maximum amount of openness and transparency and the safety and security of the invited representatives. It should also take account, as far as practicable, of the wishes of visiting representatives as regards the itinerary of the visit. The host State and the States which provide visiting personnel may circulate joint or individual comments on the visit to all other participating States.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

[For Immediate Release—March 6, 2014]

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES: Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") declaring a national emergency with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the situation in Ukraine.

The order does not target the country of Ukraine, but rather is aimed at persons—including persons who have asserted governmental authority in the Crimean region without the authorization of the Government of Ukraine—who undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets. The order blocks the property and interests in property and suspends entry into the United States of any person determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

to be responsible for or complicit in, or to have engaged in, directly or indirectly, any of the following:

actions or policies that undermine democratic processes or institutions in Ukraine;

actions or policies that threaten the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, or territorial integrity of Ukraine; or

misappropriation of state assets of Ukraine or of an economically significant entity in Ukraine;

to have asserted governmental authority over any part or region of Ukraine without the authorization of the Government of Ukraine;

to be a leader of an entity that has, or whose members have, engaged in any activity described above or of an entity whose property and interest in property are blocked;

to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. All agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA,
THE WHITE HOUSE,
March 6, 2014.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, might I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Kentucky has 1½ minutes remaining. The gentlewoman from New York has 4 minutes remaining.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, might I inquire of my colleague if she has further speakers?

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Chairman, it doesn't seem to me that we have additional speakers. We may have an additional speaker on the way.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As we wait for the additional speaker, I want to thank the chairman again. I think it is very important that we have been able to act so expeditiously in a bipartisan way to send a very strong message to Russia and to the people of Ukraine.

The people of Ukraine, as was explained so eloquently by my colleague, Ms. KAPTUR, who has been there many times, are standing up for freedom.

There are many challenges they have, the challenge of adequate housing, the challenge of adequate food, the challenge of strengthening an economy; yet the fact that we must respond as our great democracy to a situation that has been imposed by Putin is very, very troubling, when there are so many real issues to which our resources can be extended.

My grandparents came from Kiev a long time ago at the turn of the century. They escaped from the pogroms; they escaped from the lack of democracy and the impact of intolerance and

brutality that existed there. When you look back upon these years and you look at the struggles that the Ukrainian people have endured, to see the unnecessary brutality that has occurred is unacceptable.

Mr. Chairman, again, I want to thank you that we are working together in a bipartisan way to stand up for freedom, to stand up for democracy, to stand up for the people who are seeking a good future for their families.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the gentlelady for cosponsoring this legislation and working in a bipartisan fashion to be sure that it is brought up in the quickest possible manner, which this is. Like you and the others who have spoken, I am proud of our committee for acting expeditiously and doing the right thing at the right time.

It is really a sad, sad, sad state of affairs that we find in Ukraine. I remember going there many years before when it was still a part of the Soviet Union under Communist rule and visiting the wonderful church where the Eastern Orthodox Church was born in Kiev and going through the labyrinth, the catacombs; and today, to realize that that peaceful, wonderful place, the home of Christianity, really, in that part of the world, is being torn apart by people of no faith is doubly troubling.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4152. This critical legislation will make Ukraine eligible for U.S. loan guarantees, helping to bolster Ukraine's struggling economy. Strong financial aid for Ukraine will send a message that the United States and the international community are backing the Ukrainian people with more than words. This step will help free Ukraine from Russia's economic coercion.

Russia's aggressive campaign to seize Ukrainian territory in the Crimean Peninsula and beyond presents a grave threat to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. This is a crucial moment for Ukraine—a any misstep from either side at this moment could lead to all-out war. It is critical that the United States and the international community act decisively to support the Ukrainian people and isolate Russia for its transgressions.

I appreciate the work that the Obama Administration has already undertaken to suspend trade talks and military cooperation with Russia—as well as to assemble an economic aid package for Ukraine. It is fitting that the United States has quickly recognized the legitimacy of Ukraine's new government, reflecting the right of the Ukrainian people to choose their own future.

However, we must recognize that tough talk alone will not persuade Russia to change its course. Russia needs to feel tangible consequences for deploying troops in Ukraine.

Our partners in Europe, particularly Germany, are positioned to have a large economic impact on Russia through sanctions. It will be critical to bring them along in our efforts. Russia should also be stripped of its current G8 presidency and suspended from the G8. G8 members should boycott the 40th G8 Summit, scheduled for June 4 and 5, 2014 in Sochi.

I represent New Jersey's Ninth Congressional District, which is home to a large and active community of Ukrainian Americans. I am proud to have a productive and longstanding relationship with New Jersey's Ukrainian Americans. Since this crisis emerged, I have hosted meetings in my office and listened to the advice of those with close ties to Ukraine. The Ukrainian American community has proven to be an invaluable resource, and I am grateful for their guidance.

The people of Ukraine need support to realize a peaceful, democratic solution to this crisis. That's why it is so fitting that the United States act to support Ukraine. Once again, I urge my colleagues to support this vital measure for Ukraine in its time of need.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4152.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RESPONSIBLY AND PROFESSIONALLY INVIGORATING DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2013

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 2641.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KINGSTON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia? There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 501 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2641.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WOMACK) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1155

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2641) to provide for improved coordination of

agency actions in the preparation and adoption of environmental documents for permitting determinations, and for other purposes, with Mr. WOMACK in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

5½ years after the financial crisis struck in 2008, America remains in a jobs recession. Millions of Americans would call it a jobs depression.

The RAPID Act responds to America's urgent need for new jobs with critical help. According to testimony received by the Regulatory Reform Subcommittee, the RAPID Act would help to stimulate the creation of 3 million jobs.

In an economy in which the labor force participation rate has reached record lows, there is little more urgent jobs legislation that Congress could pass than the RAPID Act.

The jobs the RAPID Act would create, moreover, are high-wage, highly-skilled construction jobs. This is not just sure-fire legislation to create millions of jobs; it is sure-fire legislation to create higher wages for hardworking Americans.

Why do we need legislation to create these jobs? The reason is simple. Since before the financial crisis began and up to this day, the Federal Government's outdated and overly burdensome environmental review process has kept legions of jobs and workers waiting too long for approval from Federal bureaucrats.

The United States now ranks a dismal 34th in the world in the procedures, time, and costs needed to obtain governmental approval of new construction permits.

The heart of the problem lies with delay in the completion of reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act, commonly known as NEPA. When NEPA was first implemented, neither Congress nor the executive branch contemplated that the NEPA process would bog down responsible Federal permitting.

On the contrary, when Congress debated the issue, it talked about timeframes like 90 days to complete review. In 1981, the Council on Environmental Quality, or CEQ, thought all review could be done in a year.

A recent study, however, found that the average length of time to complete just one part of the process, the preparation of an environmental impact statement, was 3.4 years and growing. Examples abound of cases in which it takes far longer.

The port of Savannah, Georgia, for example, has seen a potential dredging project mired in review for over 13 years, with no end to review in sight. Cape Wind, a significant wind energy project in Massachusetts, took 12 years to reach the end of review.

Making matters worse, many projects that finally emerge from the administrative review process only become bogged down again in lengthy litigation challenging agencies' permitting decisions.

Clearly, the system needs to be reformed. Vice President BIDEN summed it up dramatically during a visit to the Savannah port in 2013 when he said:

What are we doing? We're arguing about whether or not to deepen this port. It's time we get moving. I'm sick of this. Folks, this isn't a partisan issue. It's an economic issue.

How do we get moving? The key is to find the right balance between economic progress and the proper level of analysis. The RAPID Act strikes this balance. It does not force agencies to approve or deny any projects. It simply ensures that the process agencies use to make permitting decisions, and the timeline for subsequent litigation, are transparent, logical, and efficient.

To do that, the RAPID Act draws upon established definitions and concepts from existing NEPA regulations. It also draws upon commonsense suggestions from across the political spectrum, including from the President's Jobs Council and the administration's Council on Environmental Quality.

Most significantly, the RAPID Act sets hard deadlines, including an 18-month maximum deadline for an environmental assessment and a 36-month maximum deadline for an environmental impact statement.

□ 1200

It cracks down on prolonged lawsuits by establishing a 180-day statute of limitations for lawsuits challenging permitting decisions and limiting claims to those presented during the permit's public notice-and-comment process, and it consolidates who manages the process by empowering lead agencies to manage environmental reviews efficiently from start to finish in order to avoid waste and duplication of effort among bureaucratic agencies.

In many respects, the bill is modeled on the permit streamlining sections of Congress' SAFETEA-LU and MAP-21 transportation legislation, which commanded bipartisan support. A study by the Federal Highway Administration found that this legislation has cut the time for completing an environmental impact statement nearly in half.

President Obama, himself, moreover, strongly supports permit streamlining consistent with the recommendations of his Jobs Council. In his 2014 State of the Union Address, the President expressed his desire "to slash bureaucracy and to streamline the permitting

process for key projects so that we can get more construction workers on the job as fast as possible."

Congress should transform the President's rhetoric into action and enact this legislation to streamline permitting on all federally funded and federally permitted construction projects.

I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO) for his leadership on this issue, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this critical legislation and cut down the time it takes America's workers to see a real jobs recovery.

I reserve the balance of my time.

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, February 27, 2014.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,

Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I write concerning H.R. 2641, the Responsibly And Professionally Invigorating Development Act of 2013, as ordered reported by the Committee on the Judiciary on July 31, 2013. There are certain provisions in the legislation that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

In order to expedite this legislation for floor consideration, the Committee will forgo action on this bill. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding that forgoing consideration of the bill does not alter or diminish the jurisdiction of the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation. I request you urge the Speaker to name members of the Committee to any conference committee named to consider such provisions.

I would appreciate your response to this letter, confirming this understanding and acknowledging our jurisdictional interest, and would request that you insert our exchange of letters on this matter into the committee report on H.R. 2641 and the Congressional Record during any consideration of this bill on the House floor.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, February 27, 2014.

Hon. BILL SHUSTER,

Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SHUSTER, Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 2641, the "Responsibly and Professionally Invigorating Development Act of 2013," which was ordered reported favorably by the Committee on the Judiciary on July 31, 2013.

It is my understanding that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has Rule X jurisdiction over portions of H.R. 2641. I am, therefore, most appreciative of your decision to forego consideration of the bill so that it may move expeditiously to the House floor. I acknowledge that although you are waiving formal consideration of the bill, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure is in no way waiving its jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in the bill. In addition, if a conference is nec-

essary on this legislation, I will support any request that your committee be represented therein.

Finally, I am pleased to include your letter and this reply letter memorializing our mutual understanding in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 2641.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2641, the so-called Responsibly and Professionally Invigorating Development Act of 2013.

Contrary to the bill's short title, H.R. 2641 would result in confusion and delay in the review and permitting process for certain construction projects. Most importantly, it would pose serious threats to public health and safety. By carving out a separate environmental review process for construction projects, which this bill doesn't even define, by the way, this bill would effectively create two different environmental review processes for the same project: one that applies to the construction phase of the project, whatever that means under the bill, and one that applies to every other phase of the project.

For instance, the bill's requirements would apply to building a nuclear reactor but not to decommissioning the reactor or transporting or storing the reactor's spent fuel after it has been decommissioned. Worse yet, this measure could jeopardize public health and safety by prioritizing project approval over meaningful analysis. It does this by restricting the opportunity for meaningful public participation, and it imposes deadlines that may be unrealistic under certain circumstances. In doing so, H.R. 2641 forecloses potentially critical input from Federal, State, and local agencies and other interested parties for construction projects that are federally funded or that require Federal approval.

This is why I have offered an amendment ensuring that the public's right to participate in the review process is not cut off by this measure, and if an agency fails to meet the unrealistic deadlines mandated by H.R. 2641, the bill would automatically green-light a project regardless of whether the agency has thoroughly reviewed the project's risks.

These failings of the bill, along with many others, explain why the President's Council on Environmental Quality and more than 20 respected environmental groups vigorously oppose this bill. It is also the reason, yesterday, the administration issued a Statement of Administration Policy, whereby the recommendation to the President, in noting that these new rules would actually cause more confusion, would be to veto the bill if passed by this House

and the Senate and once it arrives at his desk.

Last but not least, H.R. 2641 fails to address the real problem with construction projects. The RAPID Act is clearly intended to apply to infrastructure projects. Yet this bill does nothing to address the actual causes of construction delays, which is the lack of funding.

Insofar as the Savannah River port dredging is concerned, the Corps of Engineers approved that project back in 2012. Of course, since 2012, in addition to shutting down the government for 16 days, we have been cutting funds for these kinds of projects. So, today, for politicians to clamor for a spotlight and then denounce the lack of funding for these very important and crucial projects for the Nation's economic well-being, it is really ridiculous that we would stand here and act like it is regulations that are holding things back. No. It is the money.

For example, there is currently a \$60 billion backlog of projects authorized under the Water Resources Act. Although every single one of these projects has been successfully approved using existing review procedures under NEPA, not a single one of these projects has begun construction. Why? Because the most recent appropriations for the Corps' construction budget was only \$1.2 billion. That is \$60 billion in approved projects that would improve the Nation's infrastructure had they not been delayed.

Clearing this backlog would be a force multiplier in creating jobs, spurring innovation, and growing the economy. That is a jobs bill, Mr. Chairman. What is more, the Obama administration is doing everything that it can to improve the performance of Federal permitting and the review of infrastructure projects.

In March 2012, the administration issued Executive Order 13604 to modernize the Federal infrastructure permitting process and cut in half the timeline for approving infrastructure projects. This order incentivized better outcomes for communities and the environment while cutting red tape. Since implementing this order, agencies have expedited permits for over 50 major projects. In one instance, agencies shaved up to 3 years off the timeline of the Tappan Zee Bridge replacement project in New York. That is a multibillion-dollar project that is putting Americans back to work. The President then issued another memorandum in June of 2013, further directing Federal agencies to develop an integrated interagency pre-application process for significant offshore electric transmission projects requiring Federal approval.

Mr. Chairman, my Republican colleagues often claim to want to get Americans back to work, so I have to ask:

Why do we need legislation that does not create a single job—a bill that will pick winners and losers and a bill that makes the process less clear and less protective of public health and safety? Why do we need that legislation? Why must we continue to waste this Chamber's precious time on bills that do nothing?

Mr. Chairman, we should work together to address the real causes for delay in the NEPA process instead of debating this dangerous bill. In light of the bill's many serious flaws, I urge my colleagues to oppose the legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds just to say to the gentleman from Georgia that the provisions on the projects that he mentioned are exactly why we need this legislation. It is because this legislation incorporates those ideas which started, by the way, in this House with the work of the Transportation Committee, in the transportation bills, and that now needs to be codified and put into law so that it can be made available not just in those projects but in every project in which the Federal Government has a regulatory role.

At this time, it is my pleasure to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS), the chairman of the Regulatory Reform Subcommittee.

Mr. BACHUS. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Chairman, one thing that I think we all, Republicans and Democrats, agree on is that you can't have a world-class economy with a third world infrastructure, and in many cases, that is what we have today. Putting money into highways, bridges, and other infrastructure improvements is one of the best investments that the Federal Government can make. The gentleman from Georgia said that, that it is a great investment, but when we put the money in for the projects, we need to get those projects underway.

Each infrastructure project in our country creates jobs—high-paying jobs—and they modernize our transportation system. Not only does it create jobs, but it increases fuel efficiency because it increases velocity. It saves fuel, which is good for our economy, and it makes us less dependent on foreign oil. It improves safety, which not only reduces costs but saves lives. Unfortunately, there is a major roadblock out there in completing all of the work that we desperately need to do, and that is the excruciatingly slow process imposed by Washington on the permitting of new construction projects. Now, that is where, I think, the gentleman from Georgia and I disagree. He says there is not a problem.

Let me quote President Obama:

One of the problems we've had in the past is that sometimes it takes too long to get projects off the ground.

That is not I. That is President Obama.

There are all these permits and red tape and planning and this and that, and some of it's important to do, but we could do it faster.

That is the essence of this bill. We can do it faster. We both acknowledge it creates jobs. We both acknowledge it helps our economy, our fuel efficiency, and it saves lives. We can do that faster. That means less fuel wasted, less time wasted, jobs created. Boy, we need those jobs now. Let me tell you how difficult it is on projects.

The Northern Beltline, which is part of the loop around Birmingham, was first added to the National Highway System in 1995. Only this month, 19 years later, did we commence that project when a Federal judge finally said enough is enough—enough delays, enough court challenges, enough roadblocks—and he ordered the project to begin. During that period of time, there were four environmental studies done. Look, our tax dollars are limited. There were four environmental studies that had to be redone from start to finish because they became too old. They became outdated. That is money that is wasted. We can't afford to waste money or time or lives in making this economy better and in creating jobs.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BACHUS. I will yield to the gentleman in just a minute. If I have time left, I would be glad to.

Mr. Chairman, imagine. This project in 1998 began to receive authorization and funding, but it just started this month. These were people, constituents—and not only those people living in central and north Alabama—whose commutes were longer. They were people traveling through Alabama.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MARINO. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

□ 1215

Mr. BACHUS. I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO) for introducing this legislation. It will reduce the time it takes to review new construction projects and ensure that the permitting process is not endlessly held up in courts.

That is what the judge said in the case of the Northern Beltline. He said that this has been before the courts. Sometimes it takes people years to get their case to court. We don't need these unnecessary delays, legal expenses, and added environmental expenses.

We have done these same things in bipartisan SAFETEA-LU and MAP-21. Why are we all of a sudden saying this is a bad thing when earlier, in a bipartisan way, we approved very similar provisions?

Why in this Congress are we suddenly out here calling things dangerous that used to be bipartisan? I don't understand that. I don't think the American people understand this dysfunction.

I thank the Judiciary Committee, its members, Chairman GOODLATTE, and Mr. MARINO. This was too late for the people along the Northern Beltline, but it won't be too late the next time.

You cannot have a first-world economy with a third-world infrastructure. Putting money into highway, bridge, and other infrastructure improvements is one of the best investments that the federal government—or state governments—can make. Each infrastructure project in our Country creates jobs—high-paying jobs. And modernizing our transportation and infrastructure system not only creates jobs—high-paying jobs. It increases fuel efficiency, which is good for the environment. It improves safety, reduces costs, and saves time.

Unfortunately, there is a major roadblock out there to completing all of the work that we desperately need to get done, and that is the excruciatingly slow process imposed by Washington on the permitting of new construction projects.

President Obama has even said, “one of the problems we’ve had in the past is, is that sometimes it takes too long to get projects off the ground. There are all these permits and red tape and planning, and this and that, and some of it’s important to do, but we could do it faster.”

Today, it sometimes seems incredibly difficult to get permission in a timely manner for even a small project. And when it comes to large projects—such as the construction of the Northern Beltline in the Birmingham area that I represent—the challenges are even greater. While construction on the Northern Beltline has finally begun this month, it took too long to get there, almost two decades from first being added to the National Highway System and over ten years since funding was authorized, and that has delayed the economic benefits that the project will generate for the region.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I point out to my friend from Alabama that you cannot do construction projects without Federal funding. If there is no funding that has been appropriated, then the projects don't get done. That is what we have had here in this Congress.

Currently, we have a \$60 billion backlog of projects authorized under the Water Resources Development Act. Each and every one of those projects has great importance. All of the regulatory work has been done. The projects are cleared. We just simply do not fund them here because this Congress does not want it to be said by the American people that the current administration is responsible for an economic turnaround.

Despite their best efforts and most insistent efforts, the economy continues to move along favorably, though not at the rate that we need it to. So we really need to have legislation that we are considering and debating on this floor that will create jobs and economic prosperity for Americans, as opposed to these anti-regulatory bills

that come forth—it looks like about five or six every week are coming by—plus, we have to pepper in a dose of the repeal of the Affordable Care Act every once in awhile. Fifty times we have done that. Not one job created.

That is the problem that we have.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the American historical record has always been “the worse the recession, the stronger the recovery.” However, although the National Bureau of Economic Research states the recession ended 5 years ago, we can agree the recovery has been anything but strong.

Facts are something this administration fights with vehement opposition. Nevertheless, the simple fact is this is the slowest “recovery” our country has witnessed since the Truman Presidency.

After the deep recession that began in December of 2007, employment has risen sluggishly, at best, and has risen much more slowly than in the last four recoveries, for certain. According to the CBO, employment at the end of 2013 was about 6 million jobs short of where it would be if the unemployment rate had returned to its pre-recession level.

This is why I have introduced H.R. 2641, the Responsibly and Professionally Invigorating Development Act of 2013, also known as the RAPID Act.

The RAPID Act creates a streamlined Federal environmental review and permitting process that establishes transparency and certainty for job creators. Furthermore, this bill would empower lead agencies to manage environmental reviews from start to finish, as well as establish time constraints on the review process and period in which a claim can be filed.

A recent study by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce identified 351 State-level projects that, if approved for construction, could have created 1.9 million jobs annually during the projected 7 years of construction. While these numbers help put the issue in perspective, I don't need to see a study to know that bureaucracy is holding up projects and preventing job growth. I see it every day in my district.

For example, one of my constituents, PPL Corporation, filed an application with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission for a license to build and operate a state-of-the-art nuclear plant near the company's existing two-unit Susquehanna nuclear power plant. The plant would produce 1,600 megawatts of electricity, enough to power more than 1 million homes. PPL predicted this one project would create 400 construction jobs and 400 permanent jobs.

In addition, early estimates by PPL were that the project would cost \$15 billion to construct. These estimates include escalation, financing costs, ini-

tial nuclear fuel, and contingencies and reserves.

Imagine for a moment, if you will, the positive impact of a \$15 billion investment in my district in Pennsylvania, the 10th Congressional District.

However, Washington bureaucrats have prevented this project from creating jobs, and it has yet to break ground. Six years after the application was first filed in 2008, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission claims they are still reviewing the company's request for a combined operating license. If these individuals that are reviewing this after 6 years were working in private industry, they would have been fired in the first year. In fact, PPL says, realistically, a final decision on the project is still several years away.

This is ridiculous.

Let me be clear. The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 serves worthy goals, which should be preserved. I live out in the country. I get my water from a well. I love to see the deer and the bear come through my land. I raised my children there. If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle think that I would do anything to hurt my children, whether it is water, air, or the environment in general, they really should think again.

Federal agencies should be able to evaluate new projects to ensure that they don't pose a threat to the environment or to the public. However, over time, NEPA regulations have turned into an outdated, burdensome, and convoluted Federal permitting process that must be reined in.

The good news is that a bipartisan consensus exists on the need to reform the permitting process. In fact, the administration, the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness, and legislation adopted by a strong bipartisan majority in the 109th and 112th Congresses all recognize that an overly burdensome and lengthy environmental review and permitting process undermines economic growth.

The time for these reforms is now, because Americans are ready to get back to work. The RAPID Act of 2013 will remove the red tape and allow job creators to take projects off the drawing board and onto the worksite.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this commonsense reform, and I reserve the balance of my time.

MARCH 5, 2014.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: The undersigned groups strongly support H.R. 2641, the “Responsibly And Professionally Invigorating Development (RAPID) Act of 2013,” which would provide a streamlined process for developers, builders, and designers to obtain environmental permits and approvals for their projects in a timely and efficient manner, allowing jobs to be created and the economy to grow.

Every year that major projects are stalled or cancelled because of a dysfunctional permitting process and a system that allows limitless challenges by opponents of development, millions of jobs are not created. For

example, 351 stalled energy projects reviewed in one 2010 study (Project No Project) had a total economic value of over \$1 trillion and represented 1.9 American jobs not created. Project No Project showed that in the energy sector alone, one year of delay translates into millions of jobs not created.

The Responsibly And Professionally Involving Development Act of 2013 would improve the environmental review and permitting process by:

Coordinating responsibilities among multiple agencies involved in environmental reviews to ensure that “the trains run on time;”

Providing for concurrent reviews by agencies, rather than serial reviews;

Allowing state-level environmental reviews to be used where the state has done a competent job, thereby avoiding needless duplication of state work by federal reviewers;

Requiring that agencies involve themselves in the process early and comment early, avoiding eleventh-hour objections that can restart the entire review timetable;

Establishing a reasonable process for determining the scope of project alternatives, so that the environmental review does not devolve into an endless quest to evaluate infeasible alternatives;

Consolidating the process into a single Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and single Environmental Assessment (EA) for a project, except as otherwise provided by law;

Imposing reasonable fixed deadlines for completion of an EIS or EA; and

Reducing the statute of limitations to challenge a final EIS or EA from six years to 180 days.

The RAPID Act is a practical, industry-wide approach that builds on successful provisions for environmental review management found in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), and Section 1609 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The RAPID Act also embodies the procedural improvements to “cut red tape” as called for by the Obama administration, including, most recently, in his January 28, 2014, State of the Union Address.

The RAPID Act addresses the problem far too many shovel-ready projects face today: lengthy project delays from endless environmental reviews and challenges result in lost opportunities to create jobs and grow the economy. Every year of delay results in millions of jobs not created. The creation of millions of jobs is worth ensuring that our government works faster and more efficiently.

The undersigned groups strongly support H.R. 2641. The RAPID Act would be the strong action needed to speed up the permitting process and let important projects move forward, allowing millions of workers to get back to work. We urge you to support this important bill.

Sincerely,

American Architectural Manufacturers Association, American Bakers Association, American Chemistry Council, American Coating Association, American Concrete Pressure Pipe Association, American Council of Engineering Companies, American Forest & Paper Association, American Foundry Society, American Highway Users Alliance, American Iron and Steel Institute, American Petroleum Institute, American Rental Association, American Road & Transportation Builders Association.

American Supply Association, Associated Builders & Contractors, Associated Builders

& Contractors—Rhode Island Chapter, Associated Equipment Distributors, Associated General Contractors, Associated Wire Rope Fabricators, Association of American Railroads, Association of Equipment Manufacturers, Construction Industry Round Table, Edison Electric Institute, Electronic Security Association, Forging Industry Association, Foundry Association of Michigan, Independent Electrical Contractors, Industrial Energy Consumers of America, Industrial Fasteners Institute, Industrial Minerals Association—North America, Metals Service Center Institute.

Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association, National Association of Electrical Distributors, National Association of Home Builders, National Association of Manufacturers, National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors, National Black Chamber of Commerce, National Electrical Manufacturers Association, National Federation of Independent Business, National Industrial Sand Association, National Mining Association, National Oilseed Processors Association, National Ready Mixed Concrete Association, National Roofing Contractors Association, National Shippers Strategic Transportation Council.

National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association, Non-Ferrous Founders' Society, North American Equipment Dealers Association, Nuclear Energy Institute, Ohio Cast Metals Association, Pacific-West Fastener Association, Pennsylvania Foundry Association, Petroleum Marketers Association of America, Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council, South Carolina Timber Producers Association, Texas Cast Metals Association, Textile Rental Services Association, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Washington Retail Association, Wisconsin Cast Metals Association, Wisconsin Grocers Association.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, my friend and colleague from Pennsylvania pointed out in the Rules Committee last night that it was the approval process that was holding up the dredging project for the Port of Savannah.

Just yesterday, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution refuted this claim. In reality, this project—and countless others like it—are held up by a lack of funding.

To quote the article:

In the old days, a Congress that didn't agree with White House priorities simply loaded its own projects into the budget, in a bit of horse-trading.

But Republicans, particularly in the House, have placed such bargaining out of bounds—a self-imposed restriction on their own influence.

Because, under the House rules, this is an earmark.

The Savannah River Port dredging would be an earmark.

And so for us to place something in the budget which is not in the budget already—it's not allowed.

That is quoting from my colleague, Representative KINGSTON. Because it is an earmark, in other words, Congress or its representatives would be barred by our own rules from placing funding in the budget for a project.

It is unfortunate that my colleagues from Georgia on the other side of the aisle, aided and abetted by their col-

leagues on the other side of the aisle from across the country, can't seem to adjust their legislative actions to suit the people that they represent.

This Savannah River Port dredging is very important to Georgia's economy. It is the most important economic development project on the table, and it is ready to go, but the bond between these legislators and the big, bad Tea Party has them afraid to do what is in the best interest of their States. That is a shame.

I yield 5 minutes to my colleague from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me thank the manager, my friend, Congressman JOHNSON, Mr. MARINO, our colleagues on the floor of the House, and as well on the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. Chair, I rise to accept the fact that there are opportunities for discussion on streamlining and effectively expediting processes in a collaborative way in the Federal Government to continue to move forward the Federal Government, as it is responsible to the American people. Unfortunately, I believe that we are not at that place today with H.R. 2641.

President Obama has been cited repeatedly. I believe that his words at that time and today are accurate. No one would want the Federal Government to stall moving projects forward.

I might ask my colleagues, however, if they would join me in fully funding infrastructure and rebuilding this country, which we have not been able to do for almost 5 years.

By reading the Statement of Administration Policy, the administration strongly rejects the legislation's premise in H.R. 2641 that public input and responsible agency decisionmaking under current law hinders job creation. The administration believes that H.R. 2641, if enacted, will lead to more confusion and delay, limit public participation in the permitting process, and ultimately hamper economic growth.

There lies, Mr. Chairman, the underpinnings of the President's veto threat.

□ 1230

Where is this bill going?

I will, at the appropriate time, place the administration's statement into the RECORD.

So what are we talking about with this legislation? One, this legislation would narrow the scope of judicial review. In addition, this legislation would narrow the review by one Federal agency, who would allegedly coordinate other Federal and State agencies.

Let me tell you what the problem with that is, Mr. Chairman; that is that each of the agencies have their own extra expertise, so you are snuffing their expertise. You are quashing their expertise. You are forcing one agency to be the giant understander of

all the nuances of the other agencies which have a responsibility to their constituency and to the American people.

Then you have a set of circumstances that suggests, as my amendment will hope to correct, that you are going to deem up. If you don't get the job done, we are going to deem you up. Beam you up. We are going to just assume that everything has been done and you can go forward. It doesn't matter whether you trample on farmland in Texas or whether or not you are, in essence, leveling suburban homes in Pennsylvania or whether or not you are in the mountains of Georgia and cause havoc.

So I would make the argument that this is not an act that is answering the question. It is a solution searching for a problem. Frankly, the argument made by many of us is the principal causes of unjustified delay in implementing the NEPA review process are inadequate agency resources. And the Bush administration noted that NEPA was not a cause for delay.

I would ask my colleagues, how can we work together?

I think for a moment I will just pause and say that yesterday was an unfortunate incident in the House Oversight Committee. It did not reflect well on this institution or chairmen who lead committees.

I pause to say that because I believe it is an important statement to make on the Floor of the House, that we should never have a setting in a committee where a ranking member is silenced, or that a hand is used across one's neck to make a comment about an individual not being able to speak. All of us are equal.

I raise that here because we are talking about process and procedure. And even though one might argue that there was a regular process of this particular legislation, we could have been more collaborative, because I am empathetic and I am sympathetic that we all want to make sure that projects move quickly, that jobs are created.

But the administration has made an assessment that NEPA is not the delay; the Bush administration has done so. And what we need is to fully fund the government with adequate resources so that our agencies with the appropriate staff can move forward.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I am from the region of the oil spill of 2010, and that oil spill, at that time voices that were Republican and Democrat from the gulf region were raising their voices about the process of review.

What happened with BOMA? Why wasn't there some understanding that there were some cracks in the system?

Even the industry recognized that we must work on best practices, not less regulation—not bad practices, but best practices.

And what did we do? We have put in regulations that would enhance oversight of the issues of drilling.

So, Mr. Chairman, let me say that I rise to oppose this legislation. We could do it more collaboratively, and we need to treat each other with the dignity and the respect that this particular institution deserves, both in committees and on the Floor of the House.

Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2641, the "Responsible and Professionally Invigorating Development Act of 2013," or as some have termed it, the "Regrettably Another Partisan Ideological Distraction Act."

If the RAPID Act were to become law in its present form, a permit or license for project would be "deemed" approved if the reviewing agency does not issue the requested permit or license within 90–120 days.

Mr. Chair, I share some of the frustrations expressed by many members of the House Judiciary Committee, which marked up this bill last summer, with the NEPA process.

Why are we wasting time with this bill when we could be passing H.R. 3546, a bill introduced by my colleague SANDY LEVIN, the distinguished Ranking Member of the Ways and Means Committee which amends the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 to extend emergency unemployment compensation (EUC) payments for eligible individuals to weeks of employment ending on or before January 1, 2015.

Or we could bring up and pass H.R. 3888, "The New Chance For a New Start in Life Act," a bill I introduced which provides grants for training to those out of work—who are merely seeking to pull themselves up by their bootstraps—the American way.

But here we are on the Floor of the House of Representatives voting and speaking on the "Regrettably Another Partisan Ideological Distraction Act."

There is something odd about a system in which it can take half a year or more to approve the siting plan for a wind farm but fracking operations regulations can be approved and conducted a few hundred feet from somebody's home with no community oversight process in just a few months.

Something is wrong with this picture.

But I strongly believe that this bill is a solution in search of a problem.

The bill in its current form is an example of a medicine that is worse than a disease.

There is a major problem with the section that my amendment addresses, namely automatic approval of projects with the need for positive agency action.

I expect to speak on my amendment shortly but suffice it-to-say, this bill goes out of its way to ensure that some projects might be prematurely approved.

That's because under H.R. 2641, if a federal agency fails to approve or disapprove the project or make the required finding of the termination within the applicable deadline, which is either 90 days or 180 days, depending on the situation, then the project is automatically

deemed approved, deemed approved by such agency.

This creates a set of perverse incentives. First, as an agency is up against that deadline and legitimate work is yet to be completed, it is likely to disapprove the project simply because the issues have not been vetted.

Second, frequently there are times when it is the case that the complexity of issues that need to be resolved necessitates a longer review period, rather than an arbitrary limit.

So if H.R. 2641 were to become law the most likely outcome is that federal agencies would be required to make decisions based on incomplete information, or information that may not be available within the stringent deadlines, and to deny applications that otherwise would have been approved, but for lack of sufficient review time.

In other words, fewer projects would be approved, not more.

Mr. Chair, the new requirements contained in H.R. 2641 amend the environmental review process under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), even though the bill is drafted as an amendment to the APA.

The bill ignores the fact that NEPA has for more than 40 years provided an effective framework for all types of projects (not just construction projects) that require federal approval pursuant to a federal law, such as the Clean Air Act.

I urge my colleagues to reject this flawed and jaded legislation.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY
H.R. 2641—RESPONSIBLY AND PROFESSIONALLY
INVIGORATING DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2013
(Rep. Marino, R-Pennsylvania, and 10
cosponsors, Mar. 5, 2014)

The Administration strongly opposes H.R. 2641, which would undercut responsible decision-making and public involvement in the Federal environmental review and permitting processes. As the Administration said when this legislation was considered previously, H.R. 2641 will increase litigation, regulatory delays, and potentially force agencies to approve a project if the review and analysis cannot be completed before the proposed arbitrary deadlines. This legislation complicates the regulatory process and creates two sets of standards for Federal agencies to follow to review projects—one for "construction projects" and one for all other Federal actions, such as rulemakings or management plans.

The Administration strongly rejects the legislation's premise that public input and responsible agency decision-making under current law hinders job creation. The Administration believes that H.R. 2641, if enacted, will lead to more confusion and delay, limit public participation in the permitting process, and ultimately hamper economic growth. The Administration supports efforts to improve the efficiency of the environmental review processes without diminishing requirements for rigorous analyses, agency consultation, and public participation. This includes an Interagency Steering Committee that will publish a plan with 15 reforms and over 80 actions to modernize the Federal permitting and review of major infrastructure projects.

If the President were presented with H.R. 2641, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR).

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for his leadership in bringing this bill forward.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the RAPID Act. It is hard enough for working middle class wage earners, many of whom haven't seen a raise in years, to get by. With record low temperatures, polar vortexes, and damaging snowstorms, this brutal winter has created even bigger problems for America's families.

For too many, just paying the monthly heating bill has become a real challenge. A few weeks ago, my hometown paper, the Richmond Times-Dispatch, reported on record-high propane prices and the impact it has had on the 135,000 Virginia families who heat their homes with propane.

Unfortunately, cost increases are affecting families, whether they use propane, natural gas, or electricity to heat their homes. Right now, moms and dads all across America are sitting at their kitchen table looking at one of the largest home heating bills they have ever seen.

We in Congress can't do much about the cold weather, but we can enact sensible policies that expand energy supplies and reduce costs, and that is exactly what we are doing in the House this week.

If you heat your home with propane, our bills tackle the infrastructure problems that have led to record price increases. If you heat your home with natural gas, we are trying to make it easier to move the natural gas that is being developed throughout the country to your home. If you heat your home with electricity, we are halting excessive and unnecessary regulations that are expected to drive up the costs of electricity.

The bottom line? We are reducing energy costs for America's families. Middle class families in Virginia and throughout America have enough to focus on without having to worry about Washington making it more expensive for them to heat their homes.

This is an opportunity for Members of the House to stand together and to offer some relief to struggling Americans who are simply trying to pay their energy bills and provide for their families.

I want to thank Chairman GOODLATTE, Representative MARINO, and the rest of the Judiciary Committee for their hard work on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I would also like to thank Chairmen UPTON and WHITFIELD, Chairman SHUSTER and Congressman MCKINLEY for their work on all the legislation dealing with energy costs this week.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), the ranking member of the full Judiciary Committee.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I want to commend my colleague on the Judiciary Committee, Mr. JOHNSON, for the leadership that he has exercised here in bringing this discussion forward on a bill that is very disappointing to me.

This bill imposes hard-and-fast deadlines that will be unrealistic in certain circumstances and would undercut responsible decisionmaking and public involvement in the Federal review and permitting processes.

Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 2641 for various reasons.

Let's begin with the very misleading short title of this bill, namely, the "Responsibly and Professionally Invigorating Development Act."

Rather than effectuating real reforms to the process by which federal agencies undertake environmental impact reviews as required by the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, this legislation will actually result in making this process less responsible, less professional, and less accountable.

Worse yet, this measure could jeopardize public health and safety by prioritizing project approval over meaningful analysis.

To begin with, the bill—under the guise of streamlining the approval process—forecloses potentially critical input from federal, state, and local agencies as well as from members of the public to comment on environmentally-sensitive construction projects that are federally-funded or that require federal approval.

The bill also imposes hard and fast deadlines that may be unrealistic under certain circumstances.

Moreover, if an agency fails to meet these unrealistic deadlines, the bill simply declares that a project must be deemed approved, regardless of whether the agency has thoroughly assessed risks.

As a result, this measure could allow projects to proceed that put public health and safety at risk.

For example, as the Minority's witness astutely noted at the Committee's hearing on this bill, H.R. 2641 could effectively prevent the Nuclear Regulatory Commission from exercising its licensing authority pertaining to nuclear power reactors, waste management sites, and nuclear waste disposal facilities.

And, the bill could allow such projects to be approved before the safety review is completed.

This failing of the bill, along with many others, explains why the Administration and the President's Council on Environmental Quality, along with more than 20 respected environmental groups vigorously oppose this legislation.

These organizations include the Audubon Society, League of Conservation Voters, Natural Resources Defense Council, Sierra Club, and The Wilderness Society.

In issuing its veto threat, the Administration warns that the bill "would undercut responsible decision-making and public involvement in the Federal review and permitting processes."

In addition, the Administration observes that the bill will "increase litigation, regulatory delays, and potentially force agencies to approve a project if the review and analysis cannot be completed before the proposed arbitrary deadlines."

Another concern that I have with this bill—like other measures that we have considered—is that it is a flawed solution in search of an imaginary problem.

And, that is not just my opinion. The non-partisan Congressional Research Service issued a report last year stating that the primary source of approval delays for construction projects "are more often tied to local/state and project-specific factors, primarily local/state agency priorities, project funding levels, local opposition to a project, project complexity, or late changes in project scope."

CRS further notes that project delays based on environmental requirements stem not from NEPA, but from "laws other than NEPA."

So I have to ask, why do we need a measure like the so-called RAPID Act that will undoubtedly make the process less clear and less protective of public health and safety?

My final major concern with this bill is that—rather than streamlining the environmental review process—it will sow utter confusion.

H.R. 2641 does this by creating a separate, but only partly parallel environmental review process for construction projects that will only cause confusion, delay, and litigation.

As I noted at the outset, the changes to the NEPA review process contemplated by this measure apply only to certain construction projects.

NEPA, however, applies to a broad panoply of federal actions, including fishing, hunting, and grazing permits, land management plans, Base Realignment and Closure activities, and treaties.

As a result of the bill, there could potentially be 2 different environmental review processes for the same project. For instance, the bill's requirements would apply to the construction of a nuclear reactor, but not to its decommissioning or to the transportation and storage of its spent fuel.

Rather than improving the environmental review process, this bill will complicate it and generate litigation.

But, more importantly, this bill is yet another effort by my friends on the other side of the aisle to undermine regulatory protections.

As with all the other regulatory bills, this measure is a thinly disguised effort to hobble the ability of federal agencies to do the work that Congress requires them to do.

Accordingly, I strenuously oppose this seriously flawed bill.

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY).

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman, a good friend and great colleague, for bringing this RAPID Act forward because I strongly support it.

I want to just reflect. Go out of these hallowed Chambers and go into the private sector, and think about going through a permitting process and think about the longer you delay, the more you have to pay. It is just that simple.

You can drag these things out and drag these things out and drag these things out. And when you ask people: What is it that I have to do? I have already done everything you required me to do. It is just a little bit more. So the

answer is: How long is a piece of string? We don't know.

What we are doing by not getting this done, and we have talked about the number of jobs that are waiting. If we are talking about improving the economy—and these are not Republican jobs or Democrat jobs. These are American jobs. And what are we doing? American projects to help the American economy.

So today to even have a debate—and this is a bipartisan effort; there is no question about it. We both feel the same way. We both know what the problems are in our country right now. We have too many people unemployed. In fact, we have too many people who have given up even looking for a job. That is the unreported number that we never reflect.

But in this case we know that delaying only increases what we have to pay. And who is picking up the tab on this? It is hardworking American taxpayers. It is just not that much-maligned 1 percent that doesn't want to pay their fair share. This is every single American woman and man that is out there. It affects how they live their lives. It affects how they pay their bills. It affects the future of our economy.

So I know we have to have debates, and this is not a debate that is heated, but it is about heat in a way. This week we have talked about: let's heat American homes; let's make sure that we have a sustainable path; let's make sure that we are not putting on the backs of these folks too much.

There is an old saying where I come from. It is: Don't worry about the mule, just load the wagon.

Gentlemen, I have got to tell you, right now, the mule is about ready to unhook himself from the wagon and say: You have asked me to pull too much for far too long.

So, with Mr. MARINO and what he has brought forth today, a commonsense approach to creating jobs and getting improvements in our country, not improvements for just Republicans but improvements for every single American, isn't that why we are all here?

I know I represent 705,687 western Pennsylvanians. I don't know how they are registered; I don't know how they vote; I don't know how they worship; but I do know this: they sent me to Washington to represent their best interests and, in a larger sense, the State of Pennsylvania and the whole country. If we cannot agree on things like this, my goodness, where do we go from here?

So I would just ask my colleagues—and this is a truly a bipartisan effort. Mr. MARINO, thank you so much for what you have done. This just makes sense. And Lord, in a town where common sense is found in so few places, let's look at this and understand the uplift for the American people and for our economy.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, to blame the lack of job creation on the inefficiency of regulations is kind of like—it reminds me of when you are downstairs in the bathroom and something is leaking from the upstairs bathroom and then someone tells you that it is raining. It just doesn't make sense.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), my good friend and ranking member on the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for the time.

I am a bit confused. If you are listening to the debate, you have got to be confused about what this bill is really about. Now, it is apparently about rapid siting of nuclear plants or about constructing of pipelines through your backyard without you being allowed to comment or any environmental review, and somehow this is going to lead to job creation in America.

At the beginning of the debate, they were talking about transportation and infrastructure. I happen to be on that committee also. First off, we already did some streamlining in the last highway reauthorization. There is pending streamlining in the Water Resources Development Act. But let's drill down a little. What is the real problem?

The real problem is that this side of the aisle, the Republicans, don't want to make the investments necessary to put people back to work. The highway trust fund is going broke on October 1. Not a word from that side, except the brave chairman of the Ways and Means Committee who proposed to fund it with some tax reform. But nothing else from that side. No proposal on how we are going to continue to fund transportation and infrastructure in this country.

Water Resources Development Act, we have got a bill pending with some streamlining, but guess what? There are 60 billion—"b," billion—dollars of backlogged authorized water resources development projects that have gone through the full NEPA process and been approved, but the annual construction budget, thanks to my friends on the other side of the aisle, is \$1.2 billion a year. Let's see. I guess that figures out to a 50-year backlog, so it really isn't going to matter how much you eliminate NEPA review here, which is, essentially, what this bill is about, which cuts out the public and other small things like that. A 50-year backlog.

□ 1245

But this will solve that problem. We will be building those—well, no, we won't, really, because we don't have the money. Well, how about roads, bridges, highways, transit? There is an \$80 billion backlog in transit. NEPA? No, not NEPA. No money.

Federal highways. We have 140,000 bridges on the Federal system that need replacement or substantial rehabilitation or repair. No money. It isn't a NEPA review that is stopping that. It is a lack of funding. We are not making the necessary investments.

So you are not addressing jobs here. Don't pretend you are addressing jobs, don't pretend you are addressing utility rates, and don't even pretend that this bill is going anywhere.

You know, the Republican majority repeals NEPA every other day in the Natural Resources Committee. It hasn't happened yet; and now, this is a new way to come at it, through the Judiciary Committee.

I guess they get tired. I mean, we have had a lot of bills on the floor to repeal NEPA that have been passed and have gone to the Senate, and nothing has happened. So let's try to fool them. We will cloak it in a Judiciary bill, instead of in a Resources bill, and we will pretend that it is not really about NEPA or that it is about something else.

Actually, this bill is really bizarre because it creates an entirely new process for reviewing projects by amending the Administrative Procedures Act. It doesn't repeal NEPA.

So, wow, how are those conflicts going to work out? What are the agencies really going to do? I mean, it is gobbledygook legislation on top of making a number of false assertions about what it will accomplish.

What it is accomplishing is it has got a great name. It sounds good. RAPID, I love that name. That is good. We are really good at names around here, but we are not really good at getting things done.

There should be a bipartisan consensus, and there has been during my long tenure in Congress on building things and rebuilding things and building an infrastructure.

You know, it is embarrassing. The United States of America is investing less money in its infrastructure—which is falling apart—than many third-world countries, and I talked about how we are developing a third-world infrastructure.

I had a colleague who is very knowledgeable on the issue who has come up and said to me: You know, that is insulting. I said: Do you know how bad the state of our infrastructure is? He said: No, it is insulting to third-world countries because they are investing a larger percentage of their gross domestic product in infrastructure than the United States of America is investing.

It is plain and simple. You can dodge. You can weave. You can come up with great names. You can make unbelievable assertions on the floor. The bottom line facts, we need to invest in rebuilding America; and for every billion dollars we spend on infrastructure, it is somewhere between 15,000 and 20,000

jobs that are created, and these are private sector jobs.

Private sector jobs, they do the work when the government provides the money to the States, which goes out and competitively bids projects; and they build them, but without money, they aren't going to build them. It doesn't matter what the environmental review process is. No money, no projects.

Drop it, guys. Come on. Let's do something real around here for a change.

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

It is almost amusing to hear my colleagues from the other side say how much they want to work together, how much they want to get this country moving, how much they want to create jobs.

Since I have been here—this is my second term, fourth year—I have seen virtually no cooperation from the other side in creating jobs. They get up, and they give a good speech about names, but there is no substance to it. There is no substance to it at all.

As a matter of fact, this is a bipartisan piece of legislation. Both sides support this.

You know, my colleagues had control of the House prior to the Republicans controlling it 4 years ago. They touched none of these issues.

And I want to ask the American people—not my colleagues on the other side of the aisle—how has this Federal regulation system been going over the last 5 years?

Virtually no jobs created, agencies stopping everything they can under this administration, but yet they stand up and give a good speech about cooperation. I have rarely seen it here.

I have seen obstructionists because it is a power play. You know, when someone comes up with a good idea—and I blame both sides over the years for this—it is not what is in the best interests of the American people. It is who is in power that wants to keep it and who is not in power that wants to take it away. And you know something? The American people are completely forgotten about.

Well, one of the reasons—the main reason I came to Washington was to work for the American people, not to preserve my job, not to keep power, not to take power; but it was to do what is right. And if you would listen to what has taken place in some of the hearings over the past 3.5 years that I have been involved in, you don't hear cooperation. You don't hear it at all.

So now, I ask my colleagues on the other side: How is that Federal system going? How is that permitting system going—that regulating system going?

It is not going well at all. Just ask industry how much it has been slowed down because of regulation, and thou-

sands and thousands of more regulations have been implemented by this administration than ever before. So let's get serious, okay? Let's be honest with the American people about what this is about.

The Federal government doesn't create jobs. Private sector creates jobs. The responsibility of the Federal Government is to remove obstacles that allow private industry to do what they do best—better than the Federal Government.

And as I said before, I have met a lot of good people here in Congress. I have met a lot of good people in the Federal system. But there is a fair number of people in the Federal system, in these agencies, that go out and say “no,” just for the sake of saying “no,” that if they had to go to work in private industry and operated under the same premise that they did in the Federal Government, they would be fired.

It is about time we start standing up for the American people and create jobs; and I hear from this administration constantly, but there are always obstacles. There are 40-some pieces of legislation sitting on HARRY REID's desk, the leader of the Senate, the Democrat who won't even bring it to the floor for a vote.

That is a disgrace. Bring it to the floor for a vote. Vote it up or down, but let the American people know what is being voted on; and it should be brought to the floor, so they know what is going on here.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I have no further requests for time. I have the right to close, so I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chair, the Federal Government does not create a single job. I don't know exactly how many jobs we are talking about cutting in the Federal Government from the drawdown of the defense, but there will certainly be less federally employed Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine personnel and those who work in the Department of Defense to support their efforts to defend this Nation to keep us strong.

The Federal Government does not create a single job. Delivering our mail provides good-paying jobs, middle class.

But I must rise in opposition to this legislation, Mr. Chair, because it would just sow utter confusion. H.R. 2641 does that by creating a separate, but only partly parallel environmental review process for construction projects that will only cause confusion, delay, and litigation.

As a result of this bill, there could potentially be two different environmental review processes for the same project. Rather than improving the environmental review process, this bill will complicate it and generate litigation.

But more importantly, the bill is yet another effort by my friends on the

other side of the aisle to gum up the regulatory process and, thus, undermine regulatory protections.

As with all other anti-regulatory bills that this Congress has considered over the last few weeks, this measure is simply another thinly disguised effort to hobble the ability of Federal agencies to do the work that Congress requires them to do.

Accordingly, I strenuously oppose this seriously flawed bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MARINO. I yield myself the remainder of the time, Mr. Chairman.

You know, Mr. Chairman, to bring about real and durable job recovery, there can be only one conclusion about what the House can do today, and it should vote to pass the RAPID Act.

My friend on the other side talks about the post office, and I support them. My mother worked for the post office. But you know something? The post office is self-funded, okay?

Where is the \$1 trillion that this administration put into the so-called stimulus? It did nothing. It wasn't applied properly. It wasn't utilized.

This doesn't cut regulations, this legislation. It doesn't cut regulations. It cuts making a decision from 15 years down to 4.5 years. Just think in our households, how many of us would have delayed by years making decisions, were it be.

This is bipartisan legislation that would transform into immediate action the recommendations of the President's Jobs Council, the exhortations of Vice President BIDEN, and the promises President Obama made.

The President's Jobs Council stated that our system for permitting and approving job-creating projects leads to delays and litigation and recommended in 2011 that the process be streamlined. The RAPID Act does that.

President Obama, in his 2014 State of the Union Address, promised action to slash bureaucracy and streamline the permitting process, so we can get more construction workers on the job as fast as possible. The RAPID Act delivers that.

Let's come together, Republicans and Democrats, for the hardworking Americans desperate for new and high-paying jobs. The RAPID Act allows that to happen.

On average, it takes the Federal Government 10 to 15 years to approve permitting. If private industry operated in such an irresponsible manner, it would be bankrupt.

Instead of talking the talk, it is time to walk the walk and pass this legislation that will create excellent-paying jobs.

My legislation reduces permitting down to 4.5 years, and it doesn't take any authority away. It appoints a single entity, a Federal agency that has a major hand in this for oversight.

And if my colleagues are saying: well, it is not the Federal Government, it is the State and local governments.

Then that agency can light the fire under that local or State government and tell them: you must get your approvals in or, by a certain time, your opportunity to do that will be waived.

So still, in an effort to reach across the aisle and work with my colleagues and create hundreds of thousands of jobs, let's cut the red tape. Ask the people in my district about red tape—those from the VA, those from Social Security—what they have to go through with agencies—those from EPA, those from OSHA. It is a disaster.

So let's come together, Republicans and Democrats, for the hardworking Americans. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, today, the House will pass yet another bill that weakens important environmental laws. I will vote against this legislation—H.R. 2641—which if enacted would gut the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The NEPA process requires federal agencies to go through a public assessment of the environmental impacts of certain proposed federal actions. As part of this, it mandates the consideration of alternatives to those actions. The process can identify alternatives that are often less costly with fewer impacts to the environment.

H.R. 2641 undermines this important process, by placing restrictions on alternatives that can be considered, and allowing parties with vested interests in projects to prepare environmental review documents, creating potential conflicts of interest. It could also force agencies to approve projects if review and analysis cannot be completed before arbitrary deadlines.

The claimed goal of this bill is to help projects—including infrastructure projects—to move forward more quickly. The NEPA process, however, is not the reason for project delays. The reason is a lack of investment from the federal government. At the Army Corps of Engineers, there is a \$60 billion backlog of authorized water resources projects that were successfully approved under NEPA, but have not been built due to lack of funding. At the same time, our roads and bridges are in disrepair, not due to NEPA, but because the federal government is short of resources, with the Highway Trust Fund projected to need \$100 billion in additional revenue over the next six years just to stay solvent.

NEPA's positive impact has been unquestionable—it has been one of the nation's most important environmental laws, ensuring careful decision making and the right of the public to participate in planning efforts that would directly impact their communities. I will be disappointed to see H.R. 2641 pass, which will only limit the public's participation, increase confusion, and undermine responsible agency reviews.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2641, which would limit public input in the federal decision-making process and short-circuit responsible review of taxpayer-funded projects.

This legislation would create a new, convoluted review process for certain projects, setting rigid, arbitrary deadlines for even the

most complex and hazardous plans and deeming them approved if the deadlines are not met. It allows for clear conflict of interest by giving project sponsors the authority to do their own environmental review. Finally, it confuses the process and risks litigation by blurring lines between state and federal law, and agency and private sector authority.

Complicating our public input process will not jumpstart construction projects. The only way to do that is by replenishing the Highway Trust Fund to repair our crumbling roads and bridges, and investing in the backlog of already-approved water resources projects that are on hold due to lack of funds. I urge my colleagues to support infrastructure investment and vote no on this bill.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-39. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 2641

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Responsibly And Professionally Invigorating Development Act of 2013" or as the "RAPID Act".

SEC. 2. COORDINATION OF AGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS FOR EFFICIENT DECISIONMAKING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 5 of part 1 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after subchapter II the following:

"SUBCHAPTER IIA—INTERAGENCY COORDINATION REGARDING PERMITTING "§560. Coordination of agency administrative operations for efficient decisionmaking

"(a) CONGRESSIONAL DECLARATION OF PURPOSE.—The purpose of this subchapter is to establish a framework and procedures to streamline, increase the efficiency of, and enhance coordination of agency administration of the regulatory review, environmental decisionmaking, and permitting process for projects undertaken, reviewed, or funded by Federal agencies. This subchapter will ensure that agencies administer the regulatory process in a manner that is efficient so that citizens are not burdened with regulatory excuses and time delays.

"(b) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subchapter, the term—

"(1) 'agency' means any agency, department, or other unit of Federal, State, local, or Indian tribal government;

"(2) 'category of projects' means 2 or more projects related by project type, potential environmental impacts, geographic location, or another similar project feature or characteristic;

"(3) 'environmental assessment' means a concise public document for which a Federal agency is responsible that serves to—

"(A) briefly provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining whether to prepare an environmental impact statement or a finding of no significant impact;

"(B) aid an agency's compliance with NEPA when no environmental impact statement is necessary; and

"(C) facilitate preparation of an environmental impact statement when one is necessary;

"(4) 'environmental impact statement' means the detailed statement of significant environmental impacts required to be prepared under NEPA;

"(5) 'environmental review' means the Federal agency procedures for preparing an environmental impact statement, environmental assessment, categorical exclusion, or other document under NEPA;

"(6) 'environmental decisionmaking process' means the Federal agency procedures for undertaking and completion of any environmental permit, decision, approval, review, or study under any Federal law other than NEPA for a project subject to an environmental review;

"(7) 'environmental document' means an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement, and includes any supplemental document or document prepared pursuant to a court order;

"(8) 'finding of no significant impact' means a document by a Federal agency briefly presenting the reasons why a project, not otherwise subject to a categorical exclusion, will not have a significant effect on the human environment and for which an environmental impact statement therefore will not be prepared;

"(9) 'lead agency' means the Federal agency preparing or responsible for preparing the environmental document;

"(10) 'NEPA' means the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

"(11) 'project' means major Federal actions that are construction activities undertaken with Federal funds or that are construction activities that require approval by a permit or regulatory decision issued by a Federal agency;

"(12) 'project sponsor' means the agency or other entity, including any private or public-private entity, that seeks approval for a project or is otherwise responsible for undertaking a project; and

"(13) 'record of decision' means a document prepared by a lead agency under NEPA following an environmental impact statement that states the lead agency's decision, identifies the alternatives considered by the agency in reaching its decision and states whether all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from the alternative selected have been adopted, and if not, why they were not adopted.

"(c) PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS.—Upon the request of the lead agency, the project sponsor shall be authorized to prepare any document for purposes of an environmental review required in support of any project or approval by the lead agency if the lead agency furnishes oversight in such preparation and independently evaluates such document and the document is approved and adopted by the lead agency prior to taking any action or making any approval based on such document.

"(d) ADOPTION AND USE OF DOCUMENTS.—

"(1) DOCUMENTS PREPARED UNDER NEPA.—

"(A) Not more than 1 environmental impact statement and 1 environmental assessment shall be prepared under NEPA for a project (except for supplemental environmental documents prepared under NEPA or environmental documents prepared pursuant to a court order), and, except as otherwise provided by law, the lead agency shall prepare the environmental impact statement or environmental assessment. After the lead agency issues a record of decision, no Federal agency responsible for making any approval for that project may rely on a document other than the environmental document prepared by the lead agency.

"(B) Upon the request of a project sponsor, a lead agency may adopt, use, or rely upon secondary and cumulative impact analyses included in any environmental document prepared

under NEPA for projects in the same geographic area where the secondary and cumulative impact analyses provide information and data that pertains to the NEPA decision for the project under review.

“(2) STATE ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS; SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS.—

“(A) Upon the request of a project sponsor, a lead agency may adopt a document that has been prepared for a project under State laws and procedures as the environmental impact statement or environmental assessment for the project, provided that the State laws and procedures under which the document was prepared provide environmental protection and opportunities for public involvement that are substantially equivalent to NEPA.

“(B) An environmental document adopted under subparagraph (A) is deemed to satisfy the lead agency's obligation under NEPA to prepare an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment.

“(C) In the case of a document described in subparagraph (A), during the period after preparation of the document but before its adoption by the lead agency, the lead agency shall prepare and publish a supplement to that document if the lead agency determines that—

“(i) a significant change has been made to the project that is relevant for purposes of environmental review of the project; or

“(ii) there have been significant changes in circumstances or availability of information relevant to the environmental review for the project.

“(D) If the agency prepares and publishes a supplemental document under subparagraph (C), the lead agency may solicit comments from agencies and the public on the supplemental document for a period of not more than 45 days beginning on the date of the publication of the supplement.

“(E) A lead agency shall issue its record of decision or finding of no significant impact, as appropriate, based upon the document adopted under subparagraph (A), and any supplements thereto.

“(3) CONTEMPORANEOUS PROJECTS.—If the lead agency determines that there is a reasonable likelihood that the project will have similar environmental impacts as a similar project in geographical proximity to the project, and that similar project was subject to environmental review or similar State procedures within the 5-year period immediately preceding the date that the lead agency makes that determination, the lead agency may adopt the environmental document that resulted from that environmental review or similar State procedure. The lead agency may adopt such an environmental document, if it is prepared under State laws and procedures only upon making a favorable determination on such environmental document pursuant to paragraph (2)(A).

“(e) PARTICIPATING AGENCIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The lead agency shall be responsible for inviting and designating participating agencies in accordance with this subsection. The lead agency shall provide the invitation or notice of the designation in writing.

“(2) FEDERAL PARTICIPATING AGENCIES.—Any Federal agency that is required to adopt the environmental document of the lead agency for a project shall be designated as a participating agency and shall collaborate on the preparation of the environmental document, unless the Federal agency informs the lead agency, in writing, by a time specified by the lead agency in the designation of the Federal agency that the Federal agency—

“(A) has no jurisdiction or authority with respect to the project;

“(B) has no expertise or information relevant to the project; and

“(C) does not intend to submit comments on the project.

“(3) INVITATION.—The lead agency shall identify, as early as practicable in the environmental review for a project, any agencies other than an agency described in paragraph (2) that may have an interest in the project, including, where appropriate, Governors of affected States, and heads of appropriate tribal and local (including county) governments, and shall invite such identified agencies and officials to become participating agencies in the environmental review for the project. The invitation shall set a deadline of 30 days for responses to be submitted, which may only be extended by the lead agency for good cause shown. Any agency that fails to respond prior to the deadline shall be deemed to have declined the invitation.

“(4) EFFECT OF DECLINING PARTICIPATING AGENCY INVITATION.—Any agency that declines a designation or invitation by the lead agency to be a participating agency shall be precluded from submitting comments on any document prepared under NEPA for that project or taking any measures to oppose, based on the environmental review, any permit, license, or approval related to that project.

“(5) EFFECT OF DESIGNATION.—Designation as a participating agency under this subsection does not imply that the participating agency—

“(A) supports a proposed project; or

“(B) has any jurisdiction over, or special expertise with respect to evaluation of, the project.

“(6) COOPERATING AGENCY.—A participating agency may also be designated by a lead agency as a ‘cooperating agency’ under the regulations contained in part 1500 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on January 1, 2011. Designation as a cooperating agency shall have no effect on designation as participating agency. No agency that is not a participating agency may be designated as a cooperating agency.

“(7) CONCURRENT REVIEWS.—Each Federal agency shall—

“(A) carry out obligations of the Federal agency under other applicable law concurrently and in conjunction with the review required under NEPA; and

“(B) in accordance with the rules made by the Council on Environmental Quality pursuant to subsection (n)(1), make and carry out such rules, policies, and procedures as may be reasonably necessary to enable the agency to ensure completion of the environmental review and environmental decisionmaking process in a timely, coordinated, and environmentally responsible manner.

“(8) COMMENTS.—Each participating agency shall limit its comments on a project to areas that are within the authority and expertise of such participating agency. Each participating agency shall identify in such comments the statutory authority of the participating agency pertaining to the subject matter of its comments. The lead agency shall not act upon, respond to or include in any document prepared under NEPA, any comment submitted by a participating agency that concerns matters that are outside of the authority and expertise of the commenting participating agency.

“(f) PROJECT INITIATION REQUEST.—

“(1) NOTICE.—A project sponsor shall provide the Federal agency responsible for undertaking a project with notice of the initiation of the project by providing a description of the proposed project, the general location of the proposed project, and a statement of any Federal approvals anticipated to be necessary for the proposed project, for the purpose of informing the Federal agency that the environmental review should be initiated.

“(2) LEAD AGENCY INITIATION.—The agency receiving a project initiation notice under paragraph (1) shall promptly identify the lead agen-

cy for the project, and the lead agency shall initiate the environmental review within a period of 45 days after receiving the notice required by paragraph (1) by inviting or designating agencies to become participating agencies, or, where the lead agency determines that no participating agencies are required for the project, by taking such other actions that are reasonable and necessary to initiate the environmental review.

“(g) ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS.—

“(1) PARTICIPATION.—As early as practicable during the environmental review, but no later than during scoping for a project requiring the preparation of an environmental impact statement, the lead agency shall provide an opportunity for involvement by cooperating agencies in determining the range of alternatives to be considered for a project.

“(2) RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES.—Following participation under paragraph (1), the lead agency shall determine the range of alternatives for consideration in any document which the lead agency is responsible for preparing for the project, subject to the following limitations:

“(A) NO EVALUATION OF CERTAIN ALTERNATIVES.—No Federal agency shall evaluate any alternative that was identified but not carried forward for detailed evaluation in an environmental document or evaluated and not selected in any environmental document prepared under NEPA for the same project.

“(B) ONLY FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED.—Where a project is being constructed, managed, funded, or undertaken by a project sponsor that is not a Federal agency, Federal agencies shall only be required to evaluate alternatives that the project sponsor could feasibly undertake, consistent with the purpose of and the need for the project, including alternatives that can be undertaken by the project sponsor and that are technically and economically feasible.

“(3) METHODOLOGIES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The lead agency shall determine, in collaboration with cooperating agencies at appropriate times during the environmental review, the methodologies to be used and the level of detail required in the analysis of each alternative for a project. The lead agency shall include in the environmental document a description of the methodologies used and how the methodologies were selected.

“(B) NO EVALUATION OF INAPPROPRIATE ALTERNATIVES.—When a lead agency determines that an alternative does not meet the purpose and need for a project, that alternative is not required to be evaluated in detail in an environmental document.

“(4) PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE.—At the discretion of the lead agency, the preferred alternative for a project, after being identified, may be developed to a higher level of detail than other alternatives in order to facilitate the development of mitigation measures or concurrent compliance with other applicable laws if the lead agency determines that the development of such higher level of detail will not prevent the lead agency from making an impartial decision as to whether to accept another alternative which is being considered in the environmental review.

“(5) EMPLOYMENT ANALYSIS.—The evaluation of each alternative in an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment shall identify the potential effects of the alternative on employment, including potential short-term and long-term employment increases and reductions and shifts in employment.

“(h) COORDINATION AND SCHEDULING.—

“(1) COORDINATION PLAN.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The lead agency shall establish and implement a plan for coordinating public and agency participation in and comment

on the environmental review for a project or category of projects to facilitate the expeditious resolution of the environmental review.

“(B) SCHEDULE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The lead agency shall establish as part of the coordination plan for a project, after consultation with each participating agency and, where applicable, the project sponsor, a schedule for completion of the environmental review. The schedule shall include deadlines, consistent with subsection (i), for decisions under any other Federal laws (including the issuance or denial of a permit or license) relating to the project that is covered by the schedule.

“(ii) FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION.—In establishing the schedule, the lead agency shall consider factors such as—

“(I) the responsibilities of participating agencies under applicable laws;

“(II) resources available to the participating agencies;

“(III) overall size and complexity of the project;

“(IV) overall schedule for and cost of the project;

“(V) the sensitivity of the natural and historic resources that could be affected by the project; and

“(VI) the extent to which similar projects in geographic proximity were recently subject to environmental review or similar State procedures.

“(iii) COMPLIANCE WITH THE SCHEDULE.—

“(I) All participating agencies shall comply with the time periods established in the schedule or with any modified time periods, where the lead agency modifies the schedule pursuant to subparagraph (D).

“(II) The lead agency shall disregard and shall not respond to or include in any document prepared under NEPA, any comment or information submitted or any finding made by a participating agency that is outside of the time period established in the schedule or modification pursuant to subparagraph (D) for that agency's comment, submission or finding.

“(III) If a participating agency fails to object in writing to a lead agency decision, finding or request for concurrence within the time period established under law or by the lead agency, the agency shall be deemed to have concurred in the decision, finding or request.

“(C) CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER TIME PERIODS.—A schedule under subparagraph (B) shall be consistent with any other relevant time periods established under Federal law.

“(D) MODIFICATION.—The lead agency may—

“(i) lengthen a schedule established under subparagraph (B) for good cause; and

“(ii) shorten a schedule only with the concurrence of the cooperating agencies.

“(E) DISSEMINATION.—A copy of a schedule under subparagraph (B), and of any modifications to the schedule, shall be—

“(i) provided within 15 days of completion or modification of such schedule to all participating agencies and to the project sponsor; and

“(ii) made available to the public.

“(F) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY OF LEAD AGENCY.—With respect to the environmental review for any project, the lead agency shall have authority and responsibility to take such actions as are necessary and proper, within the authority of the lead agency, to facilitate the expeditious resolution of the environmental review for the project.

“(i) DEADLINES.—The following deadlines shall apply to any project subject to review under NEPA and any decision under any Federal law relating to such project (including the issuance or denial of a permit or license or any required finding):

“(1) ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW DEADLINES.—The lead agency shall complete the environmental review within the following deadlines:

“(A) ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT PROJECTS.—For projects requiring preparation of an environmental impact statement—

“(i) the lead agency shall issue an environmental impact statement within 2 years after the earlier of the date the lead agency receives the project initiation request or a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement is published in the Federal Register; and

“(ii) in circumstances where the lead agency has prepared an environmental assessment and determined that an environmental impact statement will be required, the lead agency shall issue the environmental impact statement within 2 years after the date of publication of the Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement in the Federal Register.

“(B) ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROJECTS.—For projects requiring preparation of an environmental assessment, the lead agency shall issue a finding of no significant impact or publish a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement in the Federal Register within 1 year after the earlier of the date the lead agency receives the project initiation request, makes a decision to prepare an environmental assessment, or sends out participating agency invitations.

“(2) EXTENSIONS.—

“(A) REQUIREMENTS.—The environmental review deadlines may be extended only if—

“(i) a different deadline is established by agreement of the lead agency, the project sponsor, and all participating agencies; or

“(ii) the deadline is extended by the lead agency for good cause.

“(B) LIMITATION.—The environmental review shall not be extended by more than 1 year for a project requiring preparation of an environmental impact statement or by more than 180 days for a project requiring preparation of an environmental assessment.

“(3) ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW COMMENTS.—

“(A) COMMENTS ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.—For comments by agencies and the public on a draft environmental impact statement, the lead agency shall establish a comment period of not more than 60 days after publication in the Federal Register of notice of the date of public availability of such document, unless—

“(i) a different deadline is established by agreement of the lead agency, the project sponsor, and all participating agencies; or

“(ii) the deadline is extended by the lead agency for good cause.

“(B) OTHER COMMENTS.—For all other comment periods for agency or public comments in the environmental review process, the lead agency shall establish a comment period of no more than 30 days from availability of the materials on which comment is requested, unless—

“(i) a different deadline is established by agreement of the lead agency, the project sponsor, and all participating agencies; or

“(ii) the deadline is extended by the lead agency for good cause.

“(4) DEADLINES FOR DECISIONS UNDER OTHER LAWS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in any case in which a decision under any other Federal law relating to the undertaking of a project being reviewed under NEPA (including the issuance or denial of a permit or license) is required to be made, the following deadlines shall apply:

“(A) DECISIONS PRIOR TO RECORD OF DECISION OR FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT.—If a Federal agency is required to approve, or otherwise to act upon, a permit, license, or other similar application for approval related to a project prior to the record of decision or finding of no significant impact, such Federal agency shall approve or otherwise act not later than the end of a 90-day period beginning—

“(i) after all other relevant agency review related to the project is complete; and

“(ii) after the lead agency publishes a notice of the availability of the final environmental impact statement or issuance of other final environmental documents, or no later than such other date that is otherwise required by law, whichever event occurs first.

“(B) OTHER DECISIONS.—With regard to any approval or other action related to a project by a Federal agency that is not subject to subparagraph (A), each Federal agency shall approve or otherwise act not later than the end of a period of 180 days beginning—

“(i) after all other relevant agency review related to the project is complete; and

“(ii) after the lead agency issues the record of decision or finding of no significant impact, unless a different deadline is established by agreement of the Federal agency, lead agency, and the project sponsor, where applicable, or the deadline is extended by the Federal agency for good cause, provided that such extension shall not extend beyond a period that is 1 year after the lead agency issues the record of decision or finding of no significant impact.

“(C) FAILURE TO ACT.—In the event that any Federal agency fails to approve, or otherwise to act upon, a permit, license, or other similar application for approval related to a project within the applicable deadline described in subparagraph (A) or (B), the permit, license, or other similar application shall be deemed approved by such agency and the agency shall take action in accordance with such approval within 30 days of the applicable deadline described in subparagraph (A) or (B).

“(D) FINAL AGENCY ACTION.—Any approval under subparagraph (C) is deemed to be final agency action, and may not be reversed by any agency. In any action under chapter 7 seeking review of such a final agency action, the court may not set aside such agency action by reason of that agency action having occurred under this paragraph.

“(j) ISSUE IDENTIFICATION AND RESOLUTION.—

“(1) COOPERATION.—The lead agency and the participating agencies shall work cooperatively in accordance with this section to identify and resolve issues that could delay completion of the environmental review or could result in denial of any approvals required for the project under applicable laws.

“(2) LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES.—The lead agency shall make information available to the participating agencies as early as practicable in the environmental review regarding the environmental, historic, and socioeconomic resources located within the project area and the general locations of the alternatives under consideration. Such information may be based on existing data sources, including geographic information systems mapping.

“(3) PARTICIPATING AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES.—Based on information received from the lead agency, participating agencies shall identify, as early as practicable, any issues of concern regarding the project's potential environmental, historic, or socioeconomic impacts. In this paragraph, issues of concern include any issues that could substantially delay or prevent an agency from granting a permit or other approval that is needed for the project.

“(4) ISSUE RESOLUTION.—

“(A) MEETING OF PARTICIPATING AGENCIES.—At any time upon request of a project sponsor, the lead agency shall promptly convene a meeting with the relevant participating agencies and the project sponsor, to resolve issues that could delay completion of the environmental review or could result in denial of any approvals required for the project under applicable laws.

“(B) NOTICE THAT RESOLUTION CANNOT BE ACHIEVED.—If a resolution cannot be achieved

within 30 days following such a meeting and a determination by the lead agency that all information necessary to resolve the issue has been obtained, the lead agency shall notify the heads of all participating agencies, the project sponsor, and the Council on Environmental Quality for further proceedings in accordance with section 204 of NEPA, and shall publish such notification in the Federal Register.

“(k) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The head of each Federal agency shall report annually to Congress—

“(1) the projects for which the agency initiated preparation of an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment;

“(2) the projects for which the agency issued a record of decision or finding of no significant impact and the length of time it took the agency to complete the environmental review for each such project;

“(3) the filing of any lawsuits against the agency seeking judicial review of a permit, license, or approval issued by the agency for an action subject to NEPA, including the date the complaint was filed, the court in which the complaint was filed, and a summary of the claims for which judicial review was sought; and

“(4) the resolution of any lawsuits against the agency that sought judicial review of a permit, license, or approval issued by the agency for an action subject to NEPA.

“(l) LIMITATIONS ON CLAIMS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a claim arising under Federal law seeking judicial review of a permit, license, or approval issued by a Federal agency for an action subject to NEPA shall be barred unless—

“(A) in the case of a claim pertaining to a project for which an environmental review was conducted and an opportunity for comment was provided, the claim is filed by a party that submitted a comment during the environmental review on the issue on which the party seeks judicial review, and such comment was sufficiently detailed to put the lead agency on notice of the issue upon which the party seeks judicial review; and

“(B) filed within 180 days after publication of a notice in the Federal Register announcing that the permit, license, or approval is final pursuant to the law under which the agency action is taken, unless a shorter time is specified in the Federal law pursuant to which judicial review is allowed.

“(2) NEW INFORMATION.—The preparation of a supplemental environmental impact statement, when required, is deemed a separate final agency action and the deadline for filing a claim for judicial review of such action shall be 180 days after the date of publication of a notice in the Federal Register announcing the record of decision for such action. Any claim challenging agency action on the basis of information in a supplemental environmental impact statement shall be limited to challenges on the basis of that information.

“(3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to create a right to judicial review or place any limit on filing a claim that a person has violated the terms of a permit, license, or approval.

“(m) CATEGORIES OF PROJECTS.—The authorities granted under this subchapter may be exercised for an individual project or a category of projects.

“(n) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The requirements of this subchapter shall apply only to environmental reviews and environmental decision-making processes initiated after the date of enactment of this subchapter.

“(o) APPLICABILITY.—Except as provided in subsection (p), this subchapter applies, according to the provisions thereof, to all projects for which a Federal agency is required to undertake

an environmental review or make a decision under an environmental law for a project for which a Federal agency is undertaking an environmental review.

“(p) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to supersede, amend, or modify sections 134, 135, 139, 325, 326, and 327 of title 23, sections 5303 and 5304 of title 49, or subtitle C of title I of division A of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act and the amendments made by such subtitle (Public Law 112–141).”.

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 5 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the items relating to subchapter II the following:

“SUBCHAPTER IIA—INTERAGENCY COORDINATION
REGARDING PERMITTING

“560. Coordination of agency administrative operations for efficient decisionmaking.”.

(c) REGULATIONS.—

(1) COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this title, the Council on Environmental Quality shall amend the regulations contained in part 1500 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, to implement the provisions of this title and the amendments made by this title, and shall by rule designate States with laws and procedures that satisfy the criteria under section 560(d)(2)(A) of title 5, United States Code.

(2) FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Not later than 120 days after the date that the Council on Environmental Quality amends the regulations contained in part 1500 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, to implement the provisions of this title and the amendments made by this title, each Federal agency with regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) shall amend such regulations to implement the provisions of this subchapter.

The CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part C of House Report 113–374. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part C of House Report 113–374.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 25, strike lines 1 through 19.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 501, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

□ 1300

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, my amendment strikes the provision deeming approved any project in which

the agency does not meet deadlines contained in the bill. As we have listened to the discussion, as I indicated in my earlier time on the floor, there is much that we can agree to on the issue of making more effective our Federal Government, making it work for the people. We all agree to that. In fact, I had suggested that we provide full funding for infrastructure rebuild.

But this bill ignores the value of oversight. The bill also ignores the fact that NEPA has, for more than 40 years, provided an effective framework for all types of projects—not just construction projects—that require Federal approval pursuant to a Federal law such as the Clean Air Act.

I want to read into the RECORD a comment that I made earlier, why this is a misdirected legislation. The CEQ, general counsel for 25 years during the Reagan, George H. W. Bush, Clinton, and George W. Bush administrations, who was intimately involved in the implementation of NEPA through the executive branch, observed most delays in the environmental review processes are caused by factors other than NEPA or justified by the nature of the project.

But yet this bill would indicate that if by the time that this bill designates the oversight has not been finished—that could be an oversight for a nuclear-fired plant; it could be an oversight dealing with some of the energy resources that we have that require that kind of oversight; it could be the oversight of building a major construction project through a heavily populated neighborhood; or it could be oversight on many aspects of America's business—then this bill says it is simply deemed up—deemed up, Mr. Chairman.

So how can one believe that problems will be solved by just ignoring—ignoring—the process?

There is a major problem with the section that my amendment addresses, and that is that automatic approval, that deeming up, that beaming up. And so I would ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment which relieves us of that burden of fearfully passing legislation that would, in fact, deem up.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Chair, with all due respect to my colleague with whom we have worked closely on several matters on several committees, Mr. Chairman, the American people desperately need new jobs. Just this week, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that America's labor force participation rate is at a 35-year low. Over 92 million Americans who could work are outside of the workforce. That is more than the population of all but 14 of the world's 228

countries—and more than every country in the Western Hemisphere but Brazil and Mexico.

We face this historically low rate not because Americans don't want to work, but because so many Americans have despaired of any hope of finding a new full-time job and have abandoned the workforce. The RAPID Act offers strong help to reverse this tragedy, restore hope, and produce millions of new jobs.

We must pass the bill, not weaken it, to provide these new, high-wage jobs. But the gentlelady's amendment would weaken the bill in one of the worst possible ways. It would remove the clear consequence in the bill for agencies that refuse to follow the bill's deadlines. That consequence is to deem permits approved if agencies refuse to approve or deny them within those deadlines.

Mr. Chairman, the bill provides 4½ years for agencies to complete their environmental reviews for new permit applications and reasonable additional time for agencies to wrap up final permit approvals or denials after that. 4½ years is more time than it took the United States to fight and win World War II.

If agencies can't wrap up their environmental reviews in that much time and then meet the bill's remaining deadlines, there is something terribly wrong with the agencies. The prospect of facing a default approval at the end of the substantial time the bill grants is an eminently responsible, reasonable way to assure that agencies will conduct full reviews and wrap their work up in time to make up-or-down decisions on their own.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment, and, reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, how much time remains on each side?

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Texas has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 3 minutes remaining.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me restate again what is in this legislation.

If a Federal agency fails to approve or disapprove the project or make the required finding of the determination within the applicable deadline, which is either 90 days or 180 days, depending on the situation, then the project is automatically deemed approved—deemed approved—by such agency.

Mr. Chairman, do the American people want something deemed approved that might be a dangerous and unsuitable project in their community?

And as it relates to the creation of jobs, I thank the gentleman for his explanation, but I will tell you that it is said by the Federal Highway Administration, the majority of the approved projects required limited documentation or analysis under NEPA. Further, when environmental requirements have

caused project delays, requirements established under laws other than NEPA have generally been the fault. NEPA has not stopped the creation of jobs.

But what I can tell my good friend is that, if we could pass the unemployment insurance extension, we can give opportunity to Americans to keep looking for jobs; and if we pass an infrastructure bill, we would have jobs.

So my point is that my amendment is very simple. It is just to eliminate that provision that might dangerously put Americans in jeopardy by, in essence, allowing projects to be approved while there is a studios, conscientious review of that project that is to generate jobs but to provide for the safety, the security, the tranquility, and the peace of the American people. I can't imagine that we would want to throw into legislation on streamlining an absolute hatchet that says your neck is cut off if, in fact, you are not finished with your work; the heck with it, we are going on to produce this project.

I know that the American people believe in the spirit of my good friend from Pennsylvania's intentions. We can work together. We can put legislation forward that can be constructive. But a shortened time of 4 years is nothing to celebrate if, in essence, the time is needed for review.

I have cited some of the challenges that we face: oil spills; construction projects that have seen large numbers of deaths because of the way it was done; collapse of buildings, as we have seen in the tragedy of the building that was collapsed in Pennsylvania; and other terrible disasters that have occurred that require the rebuild of certain facilities in the United States.

I cannot imagine—again, I might say that the general counsel that was general counsel for the CEQ to all of the last four Presidents has indicated NEPA is not a problem.

I ask that my amendment, the Jackson Lee amendment, be supported and make this legislation a step better and a step in a direction to get it where it should be. I ask my colleagues to support my amendment.

Mr. Chair, for this opportunity to explain my amendment to H.R. 2641, the "Responsible and Professionally Invigorating Development Act of 2013."

If the RAPID Act were to become law in its present form, a permit or license for project would be "deemed" approved if the reviewing agency does not issue the requested permit or license within 90–120 days.

My amendment strikes the provision deeming approved any project for which agency does not meet deadlines contained in the bill.

Mr. Chair, I share some of the frustrations expressed by many members of this committee with the NEPA process.

There is something odd about a system in which it can take half a year or more to approve the siting plan for a wind farm but fracking operations regulations can be approved and conducted a few hundred feet

from somebody's home with no community oversight process in just a few months.

Something is wrong with this picture.

But I strongly believe that this bill is a solution in search of a problem.

Mr. Chair, why are we wasting time with this bill when we could be passing H.R. 3546, a bill introduced by my colleague SANDY LEVIN, the distinguished Ranking Member of the Ways and Means Committee, which amends the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 to extend emergency unemployment compensation (EUC) payments for eligible individuals to weeks of employment ending on or before January 1, 2015.

Or we could bring up and pass H.R. 3888, "The New Chance For a New Start in Life Act," a bill I introduced which provides grants for training to those out of work—who are merely seeking to pull themselves up by their bootstraps—the American way.

But here we are on the Floor of the House of Representatives voting and speaking on the "Regrettably Another Partisan Ideological Distraction Act."

The bill in its current form is an example of a medicine that is worse than a disease.

There is a major problem with the section that my amendment addresses, namely automatic approval of projects with the need for positive agency action.

Under H.R. 2641, if a federal agency fails to approve or disapprove the project or make the required finding of the termination within the applicable deadline, which is either 90 days or 180 days, depending on the situation, then the project is automatically deemed approved, deemed approved by such agency.

This creates a set of perverse incentives. First, as an agency is up against that deadline and legitimate work is yet to be completed, it is likely to disapprove the project simply because the issues have not been vetted.

Second, frequently there are times when it is the case that the complexity of issues that need to be resolved necessitates a longer review period, rather than an arbitrary limit.

So if H.R. 2641 were to become law the most likely outcome is that federal agencies would be required to make decisions based on incomplete information, or information that may not be available within the stringent deadlines, and to deny applications that otherwise would have been approved, but for lack of sufficient review time.

In other words, fewer projects would be approved, not more.

The Jackson Lee Amendment sets up a trigger after a period of time for a process, which is not automatic approval, but is rather a convening of the stakeholders around figuring out what is standing in the way of the NEPA decision.

Mr. Chair, the new requirements contained in H.R. 2641 amend the environmental review process under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), even though the bill is drafted as an amendment to the APA.

The bill ignores the fact that NEPA has for more than 40 years provided an effective framework for all types of projects (not just construction projects) that require federal approval pursuant to a federal law, such as the Clean Air Act.

I urge my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee Amendment to H.R. 2641 and keep Americans working.

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Chairman, I am just going to close on this thought here. My colleague on the other side says that 4½ years is just simply not enough time to go through the permitting and licensing project. Just think about this: ask the people in the private sector when you see buildings going up, before they are going up when there is a statement on the land where the building is going to go up as to this project is going to take place in so much time, ask those people, get information to see how long it takes the private sector to do the same thing that the Federal Government is supposed to be doing. At most, a couple of years—not 10 years, not 12 years, not 15 years. Private industry can have this done in a couple of years with all the research, with all the permitting, with all the licensing, and with all the hearings.

I think one of my colleagues said this blocks out the public from hearing or making any statements. That is simply not true. That is absolutely not true. The public still has the time and can do that.

So with that, I oppose my good friend's amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. MCKINLEY

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part C of House Report 113-374.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 27, insert after line 17 the following, and redesignate succeeding subsections accordingly:

“(k) LIMITATION ON USE OF SOCIAL COST OF CARBON.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any environmental review or environmental decision-making process, a lead agency may not use the social cost of carbon.

“(2) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term ‘social cost of carbon’ means the social cost of carbon as described in the technical support document entitled ‘Technical Support Document: Technical Update of the Social Cost of Carbon for Regulatory Impact Analysis Under Executive Order 12866’, published by the Interagency Working Group on Social Cost of Carbon, United States Government, in May 2013, revised in November 2013, or any successor thereto or substantially related document, or any other estimate of the monetized damages associated with an incremental increase in carbon dioxide emissions in a given year.”.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 501, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, this amendment would prohibit agencies under this legislation from using the social cost of carbon that this administration implemented under executive order. Late on a Friday afternoon in June of 2013, this increase in the cost estimate for the social cost of carbon showed up in an obscure rule regarding microwave ovens. In typical fashion with this administration, there was no public debate, no stakeholder comment, and no vote in Congress for this estimate which increased the cost over 50 percent. But they didn't consider the social cost of mental anguish and health care for those that lose their job as a result.

Then again, this is the same administration who issued a de facto ban on new coal-fired powerhouses and refused to hold listening sessions in the areas most affected by fossil fuels. Coal production is down throughout Appalachia, and down by nearly half over the last 5 years under this administration.

Too many people in Washington just don't get it. When you shut down the fossil fuel industry in a community—in particular, a coal mine—you shut down an entire community. Railroad workers, machinists, timber and coal industries, pharmacists, and schoolteachers all are effected by these kinds of policies. Entire communities, the social fabric of our Nation, are on edge while this administration's ideologically driven policies are threatening hundreds of thousands of jobs all across America.

This is the same President who, in 2008, said he would bankrupt the coal industry. This has become personal to me, Mr. Chairman, and many people throughout the coalfields of America. The rest of the world is investing in coal, building new plants, and increasing their consumption of coal—but not here in America.

This President is gambling with our economy and risking America's future. For a President who likes to talk about fairness, Mr. Chairman, blaming our fossil fuels as a health risk isn't fair.

But then again, is it fair for the EPA to require standards that can't be achieved? Is it fair to blame man for climate change when naturally occurring CO₂ emissions represent 96 percent naturally, while U.S. coal emissions contributed only two-tenths? Let me say that again. Two-tenths of 1 percent of the emissions occur from coal-fired powerhouses.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, this amendment would prohibit an agency from considering the social cost of carbon—social cost of carbon—in an agency's environmental review of a proposed construction project.

This amendment ignores the fundamental reality that climate change is real and we need to do something about it. The social cost of carbon, or SCC, is an estimate of the social and economic benefits of reducing carbon dioxide emissions that began under the Bush administration and has been upheld by the courts. For example, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit ordered the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to include SCC in its light-truck fuel economy standards in 2007.

Thomas Sterner, an economist with the Environmental Defense Fund, cited the Obama administration's SCC estimates as “a welcome step forward, reflecting the latest versions of the underlying models.” Billy Pizer, a Duke University economist, notes that the “key thing is we are recognizing the answer is not zero. We know there are negative consequences. And we are trying to put an accurate dollar value on it.”

Even William Bumpers, an attorney with Baker Botts, who typically represents manufacturers in pollution cases, acknowledged that the “only real cost of carbon that I know is wrong is zero.”

□ 1315

Perhaps most importantly for purposes of this amendment is that there is overwhelming consensus that every ton of carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere has very real costs to human health, ecosystems, and the economy.

The SCC estimates involve extensive analysis of the best available peer-reviewed literature and climate economic assessment models. They include a broad range of costs associated with anticipated climate impacts on society, such as the property damage from increased flood risks, or the additional energy costs associated with climate oscillations.

Since 2009 alone, there have been a series of major climatic events that demonstrate the costly effects of climate change. How many so-called “hundred-year storms” have to hit a major city like New York before climate skeptics will wake up?

The 2011 Texas drought alone cost farmers and ranchers over \$5 billion. How many farmer's crops must wither on the vine before we face up to the real costs inaction?

I ask my colleagues to oppose this very detrimental amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, I think we all can admit that CO₂ emissions have increased. In the last numbers of years, 200 years, CO₂ emissions have increased from 320 parts per million to 400 parts per million. During this same period of time, however, population has expanded by eight times. Life expectancy across the world has doubled. Human cancers and viral diseases have decreased. Do opponents of our fossil fuels truly believe our society will be developed on anything other than cheap, abundant, and reliable sources of energy such as coal and natural gas?

Fossil fuels have lifted billions of people out of poverty. CO₂ is essential to human life. In *The New York Times*, Bill Gates was quoted as saying:

If you could pick just one thing to reduce poverty, by far you would pick energy.

According to statistics from the EIA, in 2010, 80 percent of the world's GDP is attributed to fossil fuels. This represents \$60 trillion.

However, the opponents of this amendment and fossil fuels in general turn a blind eye to the suffering of over 1.3 billion people across the world who have no access to electricity for heating, cooking, and water supplies. That is a social travesty.

To quote one climate scientist we spoke with:

Just so radical environmentalists can feel better about themselves, they prevent families and children living in poverty from having access to the most dependable and affordable energy resources.

That, Mr. Chairman, is immoral.

In closing, I would like to thank Chairman GOODLATTE for his staunch support of this amendment and his hard work on the underlying legislation. I urge all of my colleagues to accept this amendment and the legislation. Poverty is not just the number one threat to the environment and health in our society, but throughout the world in general.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia, Chairman GOODLATTE.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. Chair, I support the amendment.

It is bad enough that agencies already take too much time to conclude construction permit reviews. It is even worse for them to draw out the process on the basis of junk science. And that is precisely what the Obama Administration's pronouncements on the "Social Cost of Carbon" appear to be.

To be specific, multiple commenters on the Administration's latest "findings" argue that "carbon's social cost is an unknown quantity; that [social-cost-of-carbon] analysts can get just about any result they desire by fiddling with non-validated climate parameters, made-up damage functions, and below-market discount rates; and that [social-cost-of-carbon] analysis is computer-aided sophistry, its political function being to make renewable energy

look like a bargain at any price and fossil energy look unaffordable no matter how cheap."

Junk science and sophistry have no place standing between hardworking Americans and new, high-paying jobs. I urge my colleagues to support the amendment.

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from West Virginia will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. WEBSTER OF FLORIDA

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part C of House Report 113-374.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 30, line 9, insert after "subchapter," the following: "In the case of a project for which an environmental review or environmental decisionmaking process was initiated prior to the date of enactment of this subchapter, the provisions of subsection (i) shall apply, except that, notwithstanding any other provision of this section, in determining a deadline under such subsection, any applicable period of time shall be calculated as beginning from the date of enactment of this subchapter."

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 501, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEBSTER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank Chairman GOODLATTE and Mr. MARINO for putting forth this bill, the RAPID Act. This bill is a giant step toward implementing an environmental review process that works. I offer an amendment today not to alter the process, but to ensure that projects that are currently languishing in current environmental review have an opportunity to access the tools provided in this bill.

Infrastructure projects are vital to my home State of Florida. From port infrastructure to airports to seaports, road projects, even the Everglades restoration projects, my State's economy is supported by wise investment in infrastructure.

Two projects in my State have suffered greatly under the current environmental review process. Orlando International Airport has had plans to develop a piece of property for airport services for more than a decade. The expansion would create skilled, high-

paying jobs, and would be a boost to central Florida's economy. The plans have been under environmental review since 2008. A simple environmental assessment should not take more than 6 years.

Another project in our State, Port Everglades, involves deepening an existing channel by a few feet. The deepening of the channel at Port Everglades will allow more exports to flow out of our State on Post Panamax ships. This project is vital to our State as a whole, but also important to central Florida due to the large amounts of citrus that ships out of our State through Port Everglades. The more citrus we can ship, the more jobs we create. However, the channel deepening has been under environmental review for more than 17 years. For nearly two decades, Port Everglades has been caught in an endless cycle of review. The Florida delegation is committed, both Republicans and Democrats, to getting this project complete.

My amendment today is offered with these projects in mind. This amendment simply applies the same timelines that the RAPID Act establishes for new projects to projects that are currently under review.

Does it mean that they would be automatically, if it is already 4½ years into the project? No, it just means that timeline would not go beyond another 4½ years.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, this amendment would make the so-called RAPID Act, which, by the way, I would rename, as our caucus has done, the Regrettably Another Partisan Ideological Distraction Act.

This RAPID Act will apply retroactively to construction projects that are currently under review. As a result, all of the bill's problematic provisions that we have cited, including its arbitrary deadlines for environmental review and restrictions on public comment, would apply to pending construction projects that require Federal approval or Federal permitting.

This amendment, like the RAPID Act, ignores the fact that NEPA is not the problem. According to the Congressional Research Service, which is non-partisan, project approval delays based on environmental requirements are not caused by NEPA. Rather, CRS reports that these delays are caused by State and local factors like project funding levels, local opposition to a project, a project's complexity, or late changes in the project scope.

This amendment would do nothing to address the underlying problem, and that underlying problem is the lack of

funding. So we need to address, Mr. Chairman, the root causes of the delays in the process, not threaten public health and safety by automatically approving projects when agencies fail to meet arbitrary deadlines.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I want to make sure everyone understands what this does. It would limit to 4½ more years. So we have a project 17 years in. Now we are saying, all right, can you give us an answer in 4½ more years? Over two decades, and we can't get an answer? I don't know; maybe we won't. But if the answer is "no," say it. That is all they have to do. This doesn't automatically approve anything. What it says is, Give us an answer. Isn't 21 years long enough?

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I think it is appropriate that I utter this saying: Show me the money. When the money is there, projects can start being funded and work can begin. Workers can start working and getting paychecks. In that way, we will reinvigorate this economy. We have got to have—instead of anti-regulatory bills, we need job-creation bills.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO).

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Chair, just to highlight some construction that has taken place in the past before we had all this regulation: San Francisco Bay Bridge construction started July 9, 1933, and the bridge opened up on November 12, 1936. Chesapeake Bay Bridge construction started in January of 1949 and the bridge opened up July 30, 1952. Empire State Building construction started January 22, 1930, and the building opened up May 1, 1931. The Chrysler Building construction began in 1926 and was completed in 1930. One of my favorites: the new Yankee Stadium groundbreaking was in August of 2006; opening day was April of 2009.

There are thousands of comedians out of business. If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would get serious about following the premise that the American people want—less red tape—instead of trying to be funny, we would be in good shape.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. GOODLATTE. I thank the gentleman, and I rise in strong support of the gentleman's amendment.

Mr. Chair, I support the amendment.

The RAPID Act includes important reforms to assure that agencies wrap up their environmental reviews for construction permits within a generous four-and-one-half years. The current language of the bill applies these reforms to all "environmental reviews" and all "envi-

ronmental decisionmaking processes" begun after the bill's enactment.

The amendment takes the next step and applies the bill to environmental reviews and environmental decisionmaking processes begun before enactment. But it also generously provides that the time remaining for agencies to conclude a review or decisionmaking process will be calculated as if the review or process had begun on the date of enactment—just as with a new permit application. Other deadlines in the bill will likewise be calculated as if the relevant timeframe began on the date of enactment, not before enactment.

The amendment thus represents a very reasonable balance between assuring that pending permit applications will at last be wrapped up and providing agencies with adequate time to wrap them up.

I urge my colleagues to support the amendment.

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman for his support, and I urge Members to vote for this amendment. It is a good amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEBSTER).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. NADLER

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part C of House Report 113-374.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 30, line 23, insert after "112-141)." the following:

"(q) EXCEPTION.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the provisions of this section shall not apply in the case of a project described in paragraph (2), or an environmental document pertaining to such a project.

"(2) PROJECT DESCRIBED.—A project described in this paragraph is any project that pertains to a nuclear facility in an area designated as an earthquake fault zone."

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 501, the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment exempts from the bill any construction project for a nuclear facility planned in an area designated as an earthquake fault zone.

The RAPID Act would prevent meaningful input on complicated construction projects that have the potential to have disastrous impact on individuals living near them.

The meltdown of the nuclear reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant in Japan in the aftermath of a devastating earthquake and tsunami high-

lights the dangers of regulatory failure when it comes to ensuring the safe operation of nuclear reactors. In particular, the Fukushima disaster illustrates the failure in planning a construction project in an area susceptible to earthquakes and tsunamis.

March 11, 2014, next week, marks the 3-year anniversary of the Fukushima meltdown. A recent reporter visiting the site described it like this:

The site of Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan remains a post-apocalyptic landscape of abandoned towns, frozen in time.

□ 1330

Now, consider the Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant, which is only 24 miles from New York City and, according to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, could be at risk of reactor core damage from an earthquake. An estimated 17 million people live within a 50-mile radius of the Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant.

By imposing strict deadlines and limiting opportunities for agencies and the public to participate in the approval process, this bill could prevent the Nuclear Regulatory Commission from being able to protect the tens of millions who live in the greater New York Metropolitan area and millions of Americans who live near nuclear power plants from a catastrophe akin to what happened at Fukushima in Japan.

I want to point out that we have already had nuclear accidents right here in the United States. Just last month, night shift workers inhaled plutonium that was leaked from a nuclear waste burial site in Carlsbad, New Mexico.

Radioactive materials reached the surface and were inhaled by several workers. Those workers face the possibility of subatomic particles bombarding their internal organs for the rest of their lives.

Now, imagine the immense risk to human health that would result from a large-scale leak caused by an earthquake. It would be catastrophic. We cannot afford to water down nuclear regulations or restrict the ability of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission from doing its job of protecting human health.

My amendment would ensure that the inclusive and prudential construction approval process that currently exists under the National Environmental Policy Act will continue to apply to any construction projects for a nuclear facility planned in an area designated as an earthquake fault zone.

The procedures in this bill that would short-circuit the NEPA procedures are just too dangerous when you are considering an application to construct a nuclear facility in an earthquake fault zone.

I urge everyone to support the amendment because, when it comes to constructing a nuclear facility in an earthquake fault zone, we really cannot be too careful.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, the amendment is unnecessary and could needlessly block important energy construction projects from breaking ground.

The March 2011 "Project No Project" study identified 351 energy projects, including nuclear projects, that, if approved, could generate \$1.1 trillion for the economy and create 1.9 million jobs annually.

I appreciate that my colleague is concerned about the safety of nuclear power, including in earthquake fault zones. The RAPID Act does not require agencies to approve or deny any particular project or permit application.

It simply ensures that the environmental review and permitting process is conducted by agencies in an efficient and transparent manner. It is consistent with the administration's own guidance, the President's Jobs Council's recommendations, prior, bipartisan legislation, and the all-of-the-above energy strategy that America needs.

I urge my colleagues to oppose the amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I would simply point out that, no, the RAPID Act does not guarantee any nuclear power plant or anything else, but it does short-circuit the proper review.

It, for instance, says that if certain procedures are not completed within a certain period of time, the application is deemed approved. It means that the applicant can slow-walk information and get an approval automatically because the review is not complete within a period of time.

It is just too dangerous. The present procedures that we have have, in fact, allowed us to build the nuclear power plants, and other facilities have been built.

We should not play Russian roulette with the lives of millions of Americans by short-circuiting the environmental review of nuclear power plants, especially in earthquake fault zones.

Yes, we need energy. Yes, we should have energy from all sorts of power sources, but we should do it safely and not risk Fukushimas galore.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. JOHNSON OF GEORGIA

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in part C of House Report 113-374.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 32, after line 2, insert the following:

(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall have the effect of changing or limiting any law or regulation that requires or provides for public comment or public participation in an agency decision making process.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 501, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I thank the Rules Committee for making my amendment in order and urge my colleagues to support my commonsense amendment to protect the right of the public to comment on Federal projects under the NEPA review process.

The purpose of my amendment is simple. It protects the right of the public to comment. This amendment would ensure that H.R. 2641, the so-called RAPID Act of 2013, does not restrict the right of any member of the public to comment on construction projects that may have an environmental impact.

Like the administration and more than 20 well-respected environmental groups, I oppose the RAPID Act. This bill threatens public health and safety by putting a thumb on the scales in favor of private sector businesses in the project approval process.

It is yet another antiregulatory measure whose sole purpose is to grease the wheels of the approval process for projects that are environmentally sensitive.

Aside from creating duplicative and costly regulatory requirements that pertain to only certain types of projects, the RAPID Act would also limit the right of the public to comment on these projects.

The bill does that in two ways: First, by reducing opportunities for public input; and, second, by fast-tracking the approval process through arbitrary deadlines.

The NEPA approval process has protected the environment for more than 20 years, Mr. Chairman, and it is designed to be smart from the start.

Through an open, flexible, and timely process, NEPA empowers the public to

weigh in on decisions. That means that the local farmer who owns land that would be affected by a Federal construction project has equal footing as the company that would stand to benefit from that project. My amendment is vital to ensuring that the RAPID Act doesn't shut the public out of this process.

I hope that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will join me in ensuring that the RAPID Act does not foreclose public participation.

Accordingly, I urge that this committee make my amendment in order, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The RAPID Act will create jobs by ensuring that the Federal environmental review and permitting process works like it should. The RAPID Act is drafted to make agencies operate efficiently and transparently; it does not prevent citizens from participating in this process.

In fact, the bill makes sure that agencies provide the public with reasonable public comment periods. It authorizes up to 60 days of public comment on Environmental Impact Statements, up to 30 days of comment on environmental assessments and other documents, and grants the lead agency authority to negotiate extensions or provide them on its own for good cause.

This is more than fair. By comparison, the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, regulations only require agencies to allow 45 days for public comment on draft Environmental Impact Statements and 30 days for public comments on final Environmental Impact Statements.

The RAPID Act also reasonably requires that a person comment on an environmental document before challenging it in court, and bring any suit within 6 months, as opposed to 6 years. Opponents should not be able to delay a project indefinitely by playing hide-the-ball with agencies or by resting on their rights.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. WEBSTER of Florida). The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia will be postponed.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise. The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) having assumed the chair, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2641) to provide for improved coordination of agency actions in the preparation and adoption of environmental documents for permitting determinations, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I have a resolution at the desk previously noticed under rule IX.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

Whereas on March 5, 2014, during a hearing before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Committee Chairman Darrell E. Issa gave a statement and then posed ten questions to former Internal Revenue Service official Lois Lerner, who stated that she was invoking her Fifth Amendment right not to testify;

Whereas the Committee's Ranking Member, Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, clearly sought recognition to take his turn for questions under Committee and House Rules;

Whereas, Chairman Issa then quickly adjourned the hearing and refused to allow him to make any statement or ask any questions;

Whereas Ranking Member Cummings protested immediately, stating: "Mr. Chairman, you cannot run a Committee like this. You just cannot do this. This is, we are better than that as a country, we are better than that as a Committee."

Whereas, Chairman Issa then returned and allowed Ranking Member Cummings to begin his statement, but when it became clear that Chairman Issa did not want to hear what Ranking Member Cummings was saying, turned off Ranking Member Cummings' microphone, ordered Republican staff to "close it down," and repeatedly signaled to end the hearing with his hand across his neck;

Whereas Ranking Member Cummings objected again, stating: "You cannot have a one-sided investigation. There is absolutely something wrong with that";

Whereas Chairman Issa made a statement of his own and posed questions during the hearing, but refused to allow other members of the Committee, and in particular the Ranking Member who had sought recognition, to make statements under the five-minute rule in violation of House Rule XI;

Whereas Chairman Issa instructed the microphones to be turned off and adjourned the hearing without a vote or a unanimous consent agreement in violation of Rule XVI because he did not want to permit Ranking Member Cummings to speak;

Whereas Chairman Issa's abusive behavior on March 5 is part of a continuing pattern in which he has routinely excluded members of the Committee from investigative meetings, and has routinely provided information to the press before sharing it with Committee members;

Whereas Chairman Issa has violated Clause 1 of Rule XXIII of the Code of Official Conduct which states that "A Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer or employee of the House shall behave at all times in a manner that shall reflect creditably on the House": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives strongly condemns the offensive and disrespectful manner in which Chairman Darrell E. Issa conducted the hearing of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on March 5, 2014, during which he turned off the microphones of the Ranking Member while he was speaking and adjourned the hearing without a vote or a unanimous consent agreement.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution qualifies.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I move to lay the resolution on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to lay the resolution on the table.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—"ayes" 211, "noes" 186, answered "present" 10, "not voting" 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 107]

YEAS—211

Aderholt	Fincher	Kline
Amash	Fitzpatrick	Labrador
Amodei	Fleischmann	LaMalfa
Bachmann	Fleming	Lamborn
Barletta	Flores	Lance
Barr	Forbes	Lankford
Barton	Fortenberry	Latham
Benish	Fox	Latta
Bentivolio	Franks (AZ)	LoBiondo
Bilirakis	Frelinghuysen	Long
Bishop (UT)	Gardner	Lucas
Black	Garrett	Luetkemeyer
Blackburn	Gerlach	Lummis
Boustany	Gibbs	Marchant
Brady (TX)	Gibson	Marino
Bridenstine	Gingrey (GA)	Massie
Brooks (AL)	Gohmert	McAllister
Broun (GA)	Goodlatte	McCarthy (CA)
Buchanan	Granger	McCauley
Bucshon	Graves (GA)	McClintock
Burgess	Graves (MO)	McKeon
Byrne	Griffin (AR)	McKinley
Calvert	Griffith (VA)	McMorris
Camp	Grimm	Rodgers
Campbell	Guthrie	Meadows
Cantor	Hall	Mica
Capito	Hanna	Miller (FL)
Carter	Harper	Miller (MI)
Cassidy	Harris	Miller, Gary
Chabot	Hartzler	Mullin
Coffman	Heck (NV)	Mulvaney
Cole	Hensarling	Murphy (PA)
Collins (GA)	Herrera Beutler	Neugebauer
Cook	Holding	Noem
Cotton	Hudson	Nugent
Cramer	Huelskamp	Nunes
Crenshaw	Huizenga (MI)	Nunnelee
Culberson	Hultgren	Palazzo
Daines	Hunter	Paulsen
Davis, Rodney	Hurt	Pearce
Denham	Jenkins	Perry
DeSantis	Johnson (OH)	Petri
DesJarlais	Jordan	Pittenger
Diaz-Balart	Joyce	Pitts
Duffy	Kelly (PA)	Poe (TX)
Duncan (SC)	King (IA)	Pompeo
Duncan (TN)	King (NY)	Posey
Ellmers	Kingston	Price (GA)
Farenthold	Kinzinger (IL)	Reed

Reichert	Schock	Upton
Renacci	Schweikert	Valadao
Ribble	Scott, Austin	Wagner
Rice (SC)	Sensenbrenner	Walberg
Rigell	Sessions	Walden
Roby	Shimkus	Walorski
Roe (TN)	Shuster	Weber (TX)
Rogers (AL)	Simpson	Webster (FL)
Rogers (KY)	Smith (MO)	Westrup
Rogers (MI)	Smith (NJ)	Westmoreland
Rohrabacher	Smith (TX)	Whitfield
Rokita	Southerland	Williams
Ros-Lehtinen	Stewart	Wilson (SC)
Roskam	Stivers	Wittman
Ross	Stockman	Wolf
Rothfus	Stutzman	Womack
Royce	Terry	Woodall
Runyan	Thompson (PA)	Yoder
Ryan (WI)	Thornberry	Yoho
Salmon	Tiberi	Young (AK)
Sanford	Tipton	Young (IN)
Scalise	Turner	

NAYS—186

Barber	Grayson	Neal
Barrow (GA)	Grijalva	Nolan
Bass	Gutierrez	O'Rourke
Beatty	Hahn	Owens
Becerra	Hanabusa	Pallone
Bera (CA)	Hastings (FL)	Pascarell
Bishop (GA)	Heck (WA)	Payne
Bishop (NY)	Higgins	Pelosi
Blumenauer	Himes	Perlmutter
Bonamici	Holt	Peters (CA)
Brady (PA)	Honda	Peters (MI)
Braley (IA)	Horsford	Peterson
Brown (FL)	Hoyer	Pingree (ME)
Brownley (CA)	Huffman	Pocan
Bustos	Israel	Polis
Butterfield	Jackson Lee	Price (NC)
Capps	Jeffries	Quigley
Cárdenas	Johnson (GA)	Rahall
Carney	Johnson, E. B.	Rangel
Carson (IN)	Kaptur	Richmond
Cartwright	Keating	Royal-Allard
Castor (FL)	Kelly (IL)	Ruiz
Castro (TX)	Kennedy	Ruppersberger
Chu	Kildee	Rush
Cicilline	Kilmer	Ryan (OH)
Clark (MA)	Kind	Sanchez, Loretta
Clay	Kirkpatrick	Sarbanes
Cleaver	Kuster	Schakowsky
Clyburn	Langevin	Schiff
Cohen	Larsen (WA)	Schrader
Connolly	Larson (CT)	Scott (VA)
Conyers	Lee (CA)	Scott, David
Cooper	Levin	Serrano
Costa	Lewis	Sewell (AL)
Courtney	Lipinski	Shea-Porter
Crowley	Loebach	Sherman
Cuellar	Lofgren	Sinema
Cummings	Lowenthal	Sires
Davis (CA)	Lowe	Slaughter
Davis, Danny	Lujan Grisham	Smith (WA)
DeFazio	(NM)	Speier
DeGette	Lujan, Ben Ray	Swalwell (CA)
Delaney	(NM)	Takano
DeLauro	Lynch	Thompson (CA)
DelBene	Maffei	Thompson (MS)
Dingell	Maloney,	Tierney
Doggett	Carolyn	Titus
Doyle	Maloney, Sean	Tonko
Duckworth	Matheson	Tsongas
Edwards	Matsui	Van Hollen
Ellison	McCollum	Veasey
Engel	McDermott	Vela
Enyart	McGovern	Velázquez
Eshoo	McIntyre	Visclosky
Esty	McNerney	Walz
Farr	Meeks	Wasserman
Fattah	Meng	Schultz
Foster	Michaud	Waters
Frankel (FL)	Miller, George	Waxman
Fudge	Moore	Welch
Gabbard	Moran	Wilson (FL)
Gallo	Murphy (FL)	Yarmuth
Garamendi	Nadler	
Garcia	Napolitano	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—10

Brooks (IN)	Dent	Meehan
Capuano	Deutch	Sánchez, Linda
Clarke (NY)	Gowdy	T.
Conaway	Issa	

NOT VOTING—23

Bachus	Hastings (WA)	Olson
Chaffetz	Hinojosa	Pastor (AZ)
Coble	Johnson, Sam	Rooney
Collins (NY)	Jones	Schneider
Crawford	McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz
Gosar	McHenry	Smith (NE)
Green, Al	Messer	Vargas
Green, Gene	Negrete McLeod	

□1408

Messrs. CARNEY and SCHRADER changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Messrs. NUNES, MULVANEY, PEARCE, DUNCAN of South Carolina, HARRIS, MEADOWS, GINGREY of Georgia, MILLER of Florida, Mrs. HARTZLER, Messrs. MCKINLEY, CRAMER, BRADY of Texas, WALDEN, McALLISTER, DUFFY, and AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

Mmes. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, CLARKE of New York, Messrs. CAPUANO and DEUTCH changed their vote from "nay" to "present."

Messrs. CONAWAY, GOWDY, DENT, Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana, and Mr. MEEHAN changed their vote from "yea" to "present."

So the motion to table was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 107, had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

RESPONSIBLY AND PROFESSIONALLY INVIGORATING DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 501 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 2641.

Will the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) kindly take the chair.

□ 1410

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 2641) to provide for improved coordination of agency actions in the preparation and adoption of environmental documents for permitting determinations, and for other purposes, with Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (Acting CHAIR) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, a request for a recorded vote on amend-

ment No. 5 printed in part C of House Report 113-374, offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON), had been postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in part C of House Report 113-374 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas.

Amendment No. 2 by Mr. MCKINLEY of West Virginia.

Amendment No. 4 by Mr. NADLER of New York.

Amendment No. 5 by Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 180, noes 228, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 108]

AYES—180

Barber	Davis (CA)	Higgins
Bass	Davis, Danny	Himes
Beatty	DeFazio	Holt
Becerra	DeGette	Honda
Bera (CA)	Delaney	Horsford
Bishop (NY)	DeLauro	Hoyer
Blumenauer	DelBene	Huffman
Bonamici	Deutch	Israel
Brady (PA)	Dingell	Jackson Lee
Braley (IA)	Doggett	Jeffries
Brown (FL)	Doyle	Johnson (GA)
Brownley (CA)	Duckworth	Johnson, E. B.
Bustos	Edwards	Kaptur
Butterfield	Ellison	Keating
Capps	Engel	Kelly (IL)
Capuano	Enyart	Kennedy
Cárdenas	Eshoo	Kildee
Carney	Esty	Kilmer
Carson (IN)	Farr	Kind
Cartwright	Fattah	Kirkpatrick
Castor (FL)	Poster	Kuster
Castro (TX)	Frankel (FL)	Langevin
Chu	Fudge	Larsen (WA)
Cicilline	Gabbard	Larson (CT)
Clark (MA)	Galleo	Lee (CA)
Clarke (NY)	Garamendi	Levin
Clay	Garcia	Lewis
Cleaver	Gibson	Lipinski
Clyburn	Grayson	Loeb
Cohen	Grijalva	Loeb
Connolly	Gutiérrez	Lofgren
Cooper	Hahn	Lowenthal
Courtney	Hanabusa	Lowe
Crowley	Hastings (FL)	Lujan Grisham
Cummings	Heck (WA)	(NM)

Luján, Ben Ray	Perlmutter	Sinema
(NM)	Peters (CA)	Sires
Lynch	Peters (MI)	Slaughter
Maffei	Pingree (ME)	Smith (WA)
Maloney,	Pocan	Speier
Carolyn	Polis	Swalwell (CA)
Maloney, Sean	Price (NC)	Takano
Matsui	Quigley	Thompson (CA)
McCollum	Rahall	Thompson (MS)
McDermott	Rangel	Tierney
McGovern	Richmond	Titus
McNerney	Roybal-Allard	Tonko
Meeks	Ruiz	Tsongas
Meng	Ruppersberger	Van Hollen
Michaud	Rush	Vargas
Miller, George	Ryan (OH)	Veasey
Moore	Sanchez, Loretta	Vela
Moran	Sarbanes	Velázquez
Nadler	Schakowsky	Walz
Napolitano	Schiff	Wasserman
Neal	Schrader	Schultz
Nolan	Scott (VA)	
O'Rourke	Scott, David	Waters
Pallone	Serrano	Waxman
Pascarell	Sewell (AL)	Welch
Payne	Shea-Porter	Wilson (FL)
Pelosi	Sherman	Yarmuth

NOES—228

Aderholt	Frelinghuysen	Meadows
Amash	Gardner	Meehan
Amodei	Garrett	Mica
Bachmann	Gerlach	Miller (FL)
Bachus	Gibbs	Miller (MI)
Barletta	Gingrey (GA)	Miller, Gary
Barr	Gohmert	Mullin
Barrow (GA)	Goodlatte	Mulvaney
Barton	Murphy	Murphy (FL)
Benishek	Granger	Murphy (PA)
Bentivolio	Graves (GA)	Neugebauer
Bilirakis	Graves (MO)	Noem
Bishop (GA)	Griffin (AR)	Nugent
Bishop (UT)	Griffith (VA)	Nunes
Black	Grimm	Nunnelee
Blackburn	Guthrie	Owens
Boustany	Hall	Palazzo
Brady (TX)	Hanna	Paulsen
Bridenstine	Harper	Pearce
Brooks (AL)	Harris	Perry
Brooks (IN)	Hartzler	Peterson
Broun (GA)	Heck (NV)	Petri
Buchanan	Hensarling	Pittenger
Bucshon	Herrera Beutler	Pitts
Burgess	Holding	Poe (TX)
Byrne	Hudson	Pompeo
Calvert	Huelskamp	Posey
Camp	Huizenga (MI)	Price (GA)
Campbell	Hultgren	Reed
Cantor	Hunter	Reichert
Capito	Hurt	Renacci
Carter	Issa	Ribble
Cassidy	Jenkins	Rice (SC)
Chabot	Johnson (OH)	Rigell
Coffman	Jordan	Roby
Cole	Kelly (PA)	Roe (TN)
Collins (GA)	King (IA)	Rogers (AL)
Conaway	King (NY)	Rogers (KY)
Cook	Kingston	Rogers (MI)
Costa	Kinzinger (IL)	Rohrabacher
Cotton	Kline	Rokita
Cramer	Labrador	Rooney
Crenshaw	LaMalfa	Ros-Lehtinen
Cuellar	Lamborn	Roskam
Culberson	Lance	Ross
Daines	Lankford	Rothfus
Davis, Rodney	Latham	Royce
Denham	Latta	Runyan
Dent	LoBiondo	Ryan (WI)
DeSantis	Long	Salmon
DesJarlais	Lucas	Sanford
Diaz-Balart	Luetkemeyer	Scalise
Duffy	Lummis	Schock
Duncan (SC)	Marchant	Schweikert
Duncan (TN)	Marino	Scott, Austin
Ellmers	Massie	Sensenbrenner
Farenthold	Matheson	Sessions
Fincher	McAllister	Shimkus
Fitzpatrick	McCarthy (CA)	Shuster
Fleischmann	McCaul	Simpson
Fleming	McClintock	Smith (MO)
Flores	McIntyre	Smith (NE)
Forbes	McKeon	Smith (NJ)
Fortenberry	McKinley	Smith (TX)
Fox	McMorris	Southerland
Franks (AZ)	Rodgers	Stewart

Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao

NOT VOTING—22

Chaffetz
Coble
Collins (NY)
Conyers
Crawford
Gosar
Green, Al
Green, Gene

Hastings (WA)
Hinojosa
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Joyce
McCarthy (NY)
McHenry
Messer

Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

Negrete McLeod
Olson
Pastor (AZ)
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Schneider
Schwartz

□ 1415

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. MCKINLEY

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MCKINLEY) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 222, noes 188, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 109]

AYES—222

Aderholt
Amash
Amodei
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishak
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Conaway
Cook

Cotton
Cramer
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fox
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)

Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta

LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutsch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel

NOES—188

Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascarella
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rangel
Richmond
Kind
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebach
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowe
Lujan Grisham (NM)

Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Wagner
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)

Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez

NOT VOTING—20

Hastings (WA)
Hinojosa
Johnson, Sam
Jones
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McHenry
Messer
Negrete McLeod
Olson
Pastor (AZ)
Schneider
Schwartz

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR (during the vote).
There is 1 minute remaining.

□ 1420

Mr. COFFMAN changed his vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. NADLER

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 187, noes 220, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 110]

AYES—187

Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers

Cooper
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutsch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Fitzpatrick
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi

Garcia
Gibson
Grayson
Grijalva
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)

Lee (CA)	Neal	Serrano	Sessions	Thornberry	Westmoreland	Kilmer	Moore	Schiff
Levin	Nolan	Sewell (AL)	Shimkus	Tipton	Whitfield	Kind	Moran	Scott (VA)
Lewis	O'Rourke	Shea-Porter	Shuster	Williams	Williams	Kirkpatrick	Murphy (FL)	Scott, David
Lipinski	Owens	Sherman	Simpson	Turner	Wilson (SC)	Kuster	Nadler	Serrano
Loeb sack	Pallone	Sinema	Smith (MO)	Upton	Wittman	Langevin	Napolitano	Sewell (AL)
Lofgren	Pascarell	Sires	Smith (NE)	Valadao	Wolf	Larsen (WA)	Neal	Shea-Porter
Lowenthal	Payne	Slaughter	Smith (TX)	Wagner	Womack	Larson (CT)	Nolan	Sherman
Lowe y	Pelosi	Smith (NJ)	Southerland	Walberg	Woodall	Lee (CA)	O'Rourke	Sinema
Lujan Grisham	Perlmutter	Smith (WA)	Stewart	Walden	Yoder	Levin	Pallone	Sires
(NM)	Peters (CA)	Speier	Stivers	Walorski	Yoho	Lewis	Pascarell	Slaughter
Luján, Ben Ray	Peters (MI)	Swalwell (CA)	Stutzman	Weber (TX)	Young (AK)	Lipinski	Paulsen	Smith (WA)
(NM)	Peterson	Takano	Terry	Webster (FL)	Young (IN)	Loeb sack	Payne	Speier
Lynch	Pingree (ME)	Thompson (CA)	Thompson (PA)	Wenstrup		Lofgren	Pelosi	Swalwell (CA)
Maffei	Pocan	Thompson (MS)				Lowenthal	Perlmutter	Takano
Maloney,	Polis	Tierney	Barber	Green, Gene	Messer	Lowe y	Peters (CA)	Takano
Carolyn	Price (NC)	Titus	Barton	Gutiérrez	Negrete McLeod	Lujan Grisham	Peters (MI)	Thompson (CA)
Maloney, Sean	Quigley	Tonko	Chaffetz	Hastings (WA)	Olson	(NM)	Peterson	Thompson (MS)
Matheson	Rahall	Tsongas	Coble	Hinojosa	Pastor (AZ)	Luján, Ben Ray	Pingree (ME)	Tierney
Matsui	Rangel	Van Hollen	Collins (NY)	Johnson, Sam	Schneider	(NM)	Pocan	Titus
McCollum	Richmond	Vargas	Crawford	Jones	Schwartz	Lynch	Polis	Tsongas
McDermott	Roybal-Allard	Veasey	Gosar	McCarthy (NY)	Stockman	Maffei	Price (NC)	Van Hollen
McGovern	Ruiz	Vela	Green, Al	McHenry		Maloney,	Quigley	Vargas
McIntyre	Ruppersberger	Velázquez				Carolyn	Rahall	Veasey
McNerney	Rush	Visclosky				Maloney, Sean	Rangel	Vela
Meeks	Ryan (OH)	Walz				Matheson	Richmond	Velázquez
Meng	Sanchez, Linda	Wasserman				Matsui	Roybal-Allard	Visclosky
Michaud	T.	Schultz				McCollum	Ruiz	Walz
Miller, George	Sanchez, Loretta	Waters				McDermott	Ruppersberger	Wasserman
Moore	Sarbanes	Waxman				McGovern	Rush	Schultz
Moran	Schakowsky	Welch				McIntyre	Ryan (OH)	Waters
Nadler	Schiff	Wilson (FL)				McNerney	Sanchez, Linda	Waxman
Napolitano	Scott (VA)	Yarmuth				Meeks	T.	Welch
						Meng	Sanchez, Loretta	Wilson (FL)
						Michaud	Sarbanes	Yarmuth
						Miller, George	Schakowsky	

NOES—220

Aderholt	Franks (AZ)	McClintock
Amash	Frelinghuysen	McKeon
Amodei	Gardner	McKinley
Bachmann	Garrett	McMorris
Bachus	Gerlach	Rodgers
Barletta	Gibbs	Meadows
Barr	Gingrey (GA)	Meehan
Barrow (GA)	Gohmert	Mica
Benishek	Goodlatte	Miller (FL)
Bentivolio	Gowdy	Miller (MI)
Bilirakis	Granger	Miller, Gary
Bishop (UT)	Graves (GA)	Mullin
Black	Graves (MO)	Mulvaney
Blackburn	Griffin (AR)	Murphy (FL)
Boustany	Griffith (VA)	Murphy (PA)
Brady (TX)	Grimm	Neugebauer
Bridenstine	Guthrie	Noem
Brooks (AL)	Hall	Nugent
Brooks (IN)	Hanna	Nunes
Broun (GA)	Harper	Nunnelee
Buchanan	Harris	Palazzo
Bucshon	Hartzler	Paulsen
Burgess	Heck (NV)	Pearce
Byrne	Hensarling	Perry
Calvert	Herrera Beutler	Petri
Camp	Holding	Pittenger
Campbell	Hudson	Pitts
Cantor	Huelskamp	Poe (TX)
Capito	Huizenga (MI)	Pompeo
Carter	Hultgren	Posey
Cassidy	Hunter	Price (GA)
Chabot	Hurt	Reed
Coffman	Issa	Reichert
Cole	Jenkins	Renacci
Collins (GA)	Johnson (OH)	Ribble
Conaway	Jordan	Rice (SC)
Cook	Joyce	Rigell
Costa	Kelly (PA)	Roby
Cotton	King (IA)	Roe (TN)
Cramer	King (NY)	Rogers (AL)
Crenshaw	Kingston	Rogers (KY)
Culberson	Kinzinger (IL)	Rogers (MI)
Daines	Kline	Rohrabacher
Davis, Rodney	Labrador	Rokita
Denham	LaMalfa	Rooney
Dent	Lamborn	Ros-Lehtinen
DeSantis	Lance	Roskam
DesJarlais	Lankford	Ross
Diaz-Balart	Latham	Rothfus
Duffy	Latta	Royce
Duncan (SC)	LoBiondo	Runyan
Duncan (TN)	Long	Ryan (WI)
Ellmers	Lucas	Salmon
Farenthold	Luetkemeyer	Sanford
Fincher	Lummis	Scalise
Fleischmann	Marchant	Schock
Fleming	Marino	Schrader
Flores	Massie	Schweikert
Forbes	McAllister	Scott, Austin
Fortenberry	McCarthy (CA)	Scott, David
Fox	McCaul	Sensenbrenner

NOT VOTING—23

Barber	Green, Gene	Messer
Barton	Gutiérrez	Negrete McLeod
Chaffetz	Hastings (WA)	Olson
Coble	Hinojosa	Pastor (AZ)
Collins (NY)	Johnson, Sam	Schneider
Crawford	Jones	Schwartz
Gosar	McCarthy (NY)	Stockman
Green, Al	McHenry	

□ 1424

Mr. RICE of South Carolina changed his vote from “aye” to “no.”
So the amendment was rejected.
The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. JOHNSON OF GEORGIA

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 192, noes 217, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 111]

AYES—192

Barber	Cohen	Fudge
Barrow (GA)	Connolly	Gabbard
Bass	Conyers	Gallego
Beatty	Cooper	Garamendi
Becerra	Courtney	Garcia
Bera (CA)	Crowley	Grayson
Bishop (GA)	Cuellar	Grijalva
Bishop (NY)	Cummings	Gutiérrez
Blumenauer	Davis (CA)	Hahn
Bonamici	Davis, Danny	Hanabusa
Brady (PA)	DeFazio	Hanna
Braley (IA)	DeGette	Hastings (FL)
Brown (FL)	Delaney	Heck (WA)
Brownley (CA)	DeLauro	Herrera Beutler
Bustos	DelBene	Higgins
Butterfield	Deutch	Himes
Capps	Dingell	Holt
Capuano	Doggett	Honda
Cárdenas	Doyle	Horsford
Carney	Duckworth	Hoyer
Carson (IN)	Edwards	Huffman
Cartwright	Ellison	Israel
Castor (FL)	Engel	Jackson Lee
Castro (TX)	Enyart	Jeffries
Chu	Eshoo	Johnson (GA)
Cicilline	Esty	Johnson, E. B.
Clark (MA)	Farr	Kaptur
Clarke (NY)	Fattah	Keating
Clay	Fitzpatrick	Kelly (IL)
Cleaver	Foster	Kennedy
Clyburn	Frankel (FL)	Kildee

NOES—217

Fortenberry	McAllister
Fox	McCarthy (CA)
Franks (AZ)	McCaul
Frelinghuysen	McClintock
Gardner	McKeon
Garrett	McKinley
Gerlach	McMorris
Gibbs	Rodgers
Gibson	Meadows
Gingrey (GA)	Meehan
Gohmert	Mica
Goodlatte	Miller (FL)
Gowdy	Miller (MI)
Granger	Miller, Gary
Graves (GA)	Mullin
Graves (MO)	Mulvaney
Griffin (AR)	Murphy (PA)
Griffith (VA)	Neugebauer
Grimm	Noem
Guthrie	Nugent
Hall	Nunes
Harper	Nunnelee
Harris	Owens
Hartzler	Palazzo
Heck (NV)	Pearce
Hensarling	Perry
Holding	Petri
Hudson	Pittenger
Carter	Pitts
Cassidy	Poe (TX)
Chabot	Pompeo
Coffman	Posey
Cole	Price (GA)
Collins (GA)	Reed
Conaway	Reichert
Cook	Renacci
Costa	Ribble
Cotton	Rice (SC)
Cramer	King (IA)
Crenshaw	King (NY)
Culberson	Kingston
Daines	Kinzinger (IL)
Davis, Rodney	Kline
Denham	Labrador
Dent	LaMalfa
DeSantis	Lamborn
DesJarlais	Lance
Diaz-Balart	Lankford
Duffy	Latham
Duncan (SC)	Latta
Duncan (TN)	LoBiondo
Ellmers	Long
Farenthold	Lucas
Fincher	Luetkemeyer
Fleischmann	Lummis
Fleming	Marchant
Flores	Marino
Forbes	Massie

Schrader	Stockman	Webster (FL)
Schweikert	Stutzman	Wenstrup
Scott, Austin	Terry	Westmoreland
Sensenbrenner	Thompson (PA)	Whitfield
Sessions	Thornberry	Williams
Shimkus	Tiberi	Wilson (SC)
Shuster	Tipton	Wittman
Simpson	Turner	Wolf
Smith (MO)	Upton	Womack
Smith (NE)	Valadao	Woodall
Smith (NJ)	Wagner	Yoder
Smith (TX)	Walberg	Yoho
Southerland	Walden	Young (AK)
Stewart	Walorski	Young (IN)
Stivers	Weber (TX)	

NOT VOTING—21

Barton	Green, Gene	McHenry
Chaffetz	Hastings (WA)	Messer
Coble	Hinojosa	Negrete McLeod
Collins (NY)	Hurt	Olson
Crawford	Johnson, Sam	Pastor (AZ)
Gosar	Jones	Schneider
Green, Al	McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz

□ 1429

Mr. YOUNG of Indiana changed his vote from "aye" to "no."

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL) having assumed the chair, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2641) to provide for improved coordination of agency actions in the preparation and adoption of environmental documents for permitting determinations, and for other purposes, and, pursuant to House Resolution 501, she reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. DELBENE. I am opposed in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. DelBene moves to recommit the bill H.R. 2641 to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

Page 30, line 23, insert after "112-141)." the following:

"(q) PROTECTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES, PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS AND TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the provisions of this section shall not apply in the case of a project described in paragraph (2), or an environmental document pertaining to such a project.

"(2) PROJECT DESCRIBED.—A project described in this paragraph is any project that—

"(A) affects the safe drinking water supply or air quality of local communities that are located near the project;

"(B) involves condemnation or infringing the private property rights of American citizens; or

"(C) affects the health, safety, or sovereignty of Native American tribes.

"(r) MAKING IT IN AMERICA AND PROVIDING JOBS FOR UNEMPLOYED WORKERS.—Any environmental document approved pursuant to this act shall assess whether a construction project—

"(1) will utilize equipment and materials manufactured in the United States; and

"(2) will result in the hiring of unemployed workers, including veterans, who are actively seeking work and for whom unemployment taxes were paid during prior employment."

Mr. MARINO (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Washington is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Infrastructure improvements and construction projects are crucial not only for safety, but also for a robust and strong economy. Unfortunately, many of our roads and bridges are in a state of disrepair. This isn't the result of environmental review processes, but, unfortunately, a shortsighted failure to invest in our crumbling infrastructure.

We need to invest in safety improvements for our bridges and renovations along major highways, so that we don't experience tragedies like the Skagit Valley I-5 bridge collapse in my district last year.

For Washington State, moving forward on construction and infrastructure projects that efficiently move people and goods will improve connections to Washington's ports, support trade, help connect people to their jobs, and spur economic growth.

I understand that these projects are a valuable driver of job growth and can

put people back to work; and I agree with supporters of this legislation, that Congress must do everything possible to remove barriers to our economic recovery and to job creation.

But we simply don't have data to suggest that regulatory red tape and overregulation through the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, are hampering construction projects or impeding job growth.

In fact, a 2012 Congressional Research Service report called into question the idea that NEPA compliance is a source of delay in Federal highway projects and found that delays in permitting for construction projects are more often tied to, among other things, a lack of project funding, whether from State, local, or Federal sources.

This is a real problem and one that Congress can help solve by making targeted investments in our Nation's infrastructure, whether by passing a final Water Resources Development Act reauthorization bill or by reforming the highway trust fund to provide more adequate funding for roads and bridge construction.

Instead, the RAPID Act, in its current form, is based on the flawed premise that our current laws—not only NEPA, but laws like the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act—impede economic growth. In fact, these laws serve important purposes, such as protecting private property owners, local communities, and tribal governments that may be impacted by Federal actions.

While this bill has a worthy goal—to prevent delays in the approval of proposed construction projects—this cannot come at the expense of our public health and safety, our environment, or the rights of private property owners.

My amendment would ensure that this bill does not override the current regulatory protections governing certain construction projects.

Just weeks after a hazardous chemical spill harmed the water supply for residents of West Virginia, we cannot afford to undermine regulatory protections that have been in place for decades as a result of the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts.

So my amendment excludes construction projects affecting our drinking water or air quality from the weaker regulatory procedures established by this legislation. This amendment will help ensure that Americans continue to have access to clean air and water.

My amendment also makes clear that, when a Federal construction project would condemn or infringe on the private property rights of any American, it could not sidestep the review process, as provided under this legislation.

Additionally, gutting the NEPA requirements under current law for construction projects could pose unique challenges for Indian country, which is

why my amendment would continue the current NEPA process for construction projects that would impact health, safety, or tribal sovereignty of Native American tribes.

The RAPID Act, as currently drafted, fails to ensure meaningful tribal consultation on these types of projects.

Finally, my amendment ensures that we are prioritizing our investments effectively. There are too many Americans who continue to look for work, and my amendment would require that every construction project assess whether we will help long-term unemployed Americans, including veterans, get back to work.

This amendment is an opportunity for us to reduce unemployment and assist our veterans struggling to find civilian job opportunities.

The approval process should consider whether the project will utilize equipment and materials manufactured in the United States and whether it will result in the hiring of unemployed workers who are actively seeking work. We should always do our best to support American jobs and American products when spending taxpayer dollars.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARINO. "Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered," words of Representative DANIEL WEBSTER, right up there.

Mr. Speaker, this motion to recommit isn't about improving legislation. It is about imposing roadblocks, erecting hurdles, pointing to excuses to keep us from doing what we were sent here to do, which is to set the wheels of progress turning to lift the American people out of crisis and economic calamity, to lift the American people into prosperity and high-paying jobs.

People have hungered for months and years for good, new high-paying jobs. Americans want to know that Washington hears them, Washington cares about them, and Washington knows how to get the red tape out of the way so they can get back to work.

The families that depend every day on their breadwinners, finding some way to make ends meet, want to know that we can deliver on the job we were sent here to do.

For 3 years, the President's Jobs Council recommended that we streamline the Federal permitting process. Vice President BIDEN's urgent words have been echoing:

It's time we get moving. Folks, this isn't a partisan issue. It's an economic issue.

Less than 2 months ago, President Obama stood in the House and promised action to slash bureaucracy and streamline the permitting process so we can get more construction workers on the job as fast as possible.

Mr. Speaker, colleagues, this legislation does this. The RAPID Act is exactly what our private and public sector leaders have called for. It is what millions of American workers yearning for new work and hoping for higher wages need.

But what do we have before us now with this motion to recommit? It is the exact mirror image of everything that is wrong with the Federal permitting process and keeps jobs from the American people.

We have a trumped up argument, a procedural device, a tried and true tactic of delay—an excuse for Members of Congress to duck a vote and not make a needed decision that will bring millions of good, high-paying jobs to the American people.

It is time that the bureaucrats in D.C. and it is time that we, elected officials, clearly understand that we work for the American people and that the American people are the government of the United States.

It is time for we, the Members of the House and the Senate, to take the handcuffs off private industry, the job creators, and remove the boot of delay and procrastination from the throat of prosperity. Vote against this motion, and vote for the RAPID Act.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 5-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of H.R. 2641, if ordered, and suspension of the rules with regard to H.R. 4152.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 190, noes 217, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 112]

AYES—190

Barber	Braley (IA)	Castro (TX)
Barrow (GA)	Brown (FL)	Chu
Bass	Brownley (CA)	Cicilline
Beatty	Bustos	Clark (MA)
Becerra	Butterfield	Clarke (NY)
Bera (CA)	Capps	Clay
Bishop (GA)	Capuano	Cleaver
Bishop (NY)	Cárdenas	Clyburn
Blumenauer	Carney	Cohen
Bonamici	Carson (IN)	Connolly
Brady (PA)	Cartwright	Conyers

Cooper	Kelly (IL)	Peterson
Costa	Kennedy	Pingree (ME)
Courtney	Kildee	Pocan
Crowley	Kilmer	Polis
Cuellar	Kind	Price (NC)
Cummings	Kirkpatrick	Quigley
Davis (CA)	Kuster	Rahall
Davis, Danny	Langevin	Rangel
DeFazio	Larsen (WA)	Richmond
DeGette	Larson (CT)	Roybal-Allard
Delaney	Lee (CA)	Ruiz
DeLauro	Levin	Ruppersberger
DelBene	Lewis	Rush
Deutch	Lipinski	Ryan (OH)
Dingell	Loeb	Sánchez, Linda T.
Doggett	Lofgren	Sanchez, Loretta
Doyle	Lowenthal	Sarbanes
Duckworth	Lowey	Schakowsky
Edwards	Lujan Grisham (NM)	Schiff
Ellison	Luján, Ben Ray (NM)	Schrader
Engel	Lynch	Scott (VA)
Enyart	Maffei	Scott, David
Eshoo	Maloney	Serrano
Esty	Maloney, Carolyn	Sewell (AL)
Farr	Maloney, Sean	Shea-Porter
Fattah	Matheson	Sherman
Foster	Matsui	Sinema
Frankel (FL)	McCollum	Sires
Fudge	McDermott	Slaughter
Gabbard	McGovern	Smith (WA)
Gallego	McIntyre	Speier
Garamendi	McNerney	Swalwell (CA)
Garcia	Meeks	Takano
Grayson	Meng	Thompson (CA)
Grijalva	Michaud	Thompson (MS)
Gutiérrez	Miller, George	Tierney
Hahn	Moore	Titus
Hanabusa	Moran	Tonko
Hastings (FL)	Murphy (FL)	Tsongas
Heck (WA)	Nadler	Van Hollen
Higgins	Napolitano	Vargas
Himes	Neal	Veasey
Holt	Nolan	Vela
Honda	O'Rourke	Velázquez
Horsford	Owens	Visclosky
Hoyer	Pallone	Walz
Huffman	Pascarella	Wasserman
Israel	Payne	Schultz
Jackson Lee	Pelosi	Waters
Jeffries	Perlmutter	Waxman
Johnson (GA)	Peters (CA)	Welch
Johnson, E. B.	Peters (MI)	Wilson (FL)
Kaptur		Yarmuth
Keating		

NOES—217

Culberson	Hall
Daines	Hanna
Davis, Rodney	Harper
Denham	Harris
Dent	Hartzler
DeSantis	Heck (NV)
DesJarlais	Hensarling
Diaz-Balart	Herrera Beutler
Duffy	Holding
Duncan (SC)	Hudson
Duncan (TN)	Huelskamp
Ellmers	Huizenga (MI)
Farenthold	Hultgren
Fincher	Hunter
Fitzpatrick	Hurt
Fleischmann	Issa
Fleming	Jenkins
Flores	Johnson (OH)
Forbes	Jordan
Fortenberry	Joyce
Fox	Kelly (PA)
Franks (AZ)	King (IA)
Frelinghuysen	King (NY)
Gardner	Kingston
Garrett	Kinziger (IL)
Gerlach	Kline
Gibbs	Labrador
Gibson	LaMalfa
Gingrey (GA)	Lamborn
Gohmert	Lance
Goodlatte	Lankford
Gowdy	Latham
Granger	Latta
Graves (GA)	LoBiondo
Graves (MO)	Long
Griffin (AR)	Lucas
Griffith (VA)	Luetkemeyer
Grimm	Lummis
Guthrie	Marchant

Marino	Reed	Smith (TX)	Gerlach	Matheson	Roskam	McGovern	Rangel	Swalwell (CA)
Massie	Reichert	Southerland	Gibbs	McAllister	Ross	McNerney	Richmond	Takano
McAllister	Renacci	Stewart	Gibson	McCarthy (CA)	Rothfus	Meeks	Roybal-Allard	Thompson (CA)
McCarthy (CA)	Ribble	Stivers	Gingrey (GA)	McCaul	Royce	Meng	Ruiz	Thompson (MS)
McCaul	Rice (SC)	Stockman	Gohmert	McClintock	Runyan	Michaud	Ruppersberger	Tierney
McClintock	Rigell	Stutzman	Goodlatte	McIntyre	Ryan (WI)	Miller, George	Rush	Titus
McKinley	Roby	Terry	Gowdy	McKeon	Salmon	Moore	Ryan (OH)	Tonko
McMorris	Roe (TN)	Thompson (PA)	Granger	McKinley	Sanford	Moran	Sánchez, Linda T.	Tsongas
Rodgers	Rogers (AL)	Thornberry	Graves (GA)	McMorris	Scalise	Nadler	Sanchez, Loretta	Van Hollen
Meadows	Rogers (KY)	Tiberi	Graves (MO)	Rodgers	Schock	Napolitano	Sarbanes	Vargas
Meehan	Rogers (MI)	Tipton	Griffin (AR)	Meadows	Schrader	Neal	Schakowsky	Veasey
Mica	Rohrabacher	Turner	Griffith (VA)	Meehan	Schweikert	Nolan	Schiff	Vela
Miller (FL)	Rokita	Upton	Grimm	Mica	Scott, Austin	O'Rourke	Scott (VA)	Velázquez
Miller (MI)	Rooney	Valadao	Guthrie	Miller (FL)	Sensenbrenner	Pallone	Scott, David	Visclosky
Miller, Gary	Ros-Lehtinen	Wagner	Hall	Miller (MI)	Sessions	Pascarell	Serrano	Walz
Mullin	Ross	Walberg	Hanna	Miller, Gary	Shimkus	Payne	Sewell (AL)	Wasserman
Mulvaney	Rothfus	Walden	Harper	Mullin	Shuster	Pelosi	Shea-Porter	Schultz
Murphy (PA)	Royce	Walorski	Harris	Mulvaney	Simpson	Perlmutter	Sherman	Waters
Neugebauer	Runyan	Weber (TX)	Hartzler	Murphy (FL)	Smith (MO)	Peters (MI)	Sinema	Waxman
Noem	Ryan (WI)	Webster (FL)	Heck (NV)	Murphy (PA)	Smith (NE)	Pingree (ME)	Sires	Welch
Nugent	Salmon	Wenstrup	Hensarling	Neugebauer	Smith (NJ)	Pocan	Slaughter	Wilson (FL)
Nunes	Sanford	Westmoreland	Herrera Beutler	Noem	Smith (TX)	Polis	Smith (WA)	Yarmuth
Nunnelee	Scalise	Whitfield	Holding	Nugent	Southerland	Price (NC)	Speier	
Palazzo	Schock	Williams	Hudson	Nunes	Stewart	Quigley		
Paulsen	Schweikert	Wilson (SC)	Huelskamp	Nunnelee	Stivers			
Pearce	Scott, Austin	Wittman	Huizenga (MI)	Owens	Stockman			
Perry	Sensenbrenner	Wolf	Hultgren	Palazzo	Stutzman			
Petri	Sessions	Womack	Hunter	Paulsen	Terry			
Pittenger	Shimkus	Woodall	Hurt	Pearce	Thompson (PA)			
Pitts	Shuster	Yoder	Issa	Perry	Thornberry			
Poe (TX)	Simpson	Yoho	Jenkins	Peters (CA)	Tiberi			
Pompeo	Smith (MO)	Young (AK)	Johnson (OH)	Peterson	Tipton			
Posey	Smith (NE)	Young (IN)	Jordan	Petri	Turner			
Price (GA)	Smith (NJ)		Joyce	Pittenger	Upton			

NOT VOTING—23

Barton	Green, Gene	Messer
Castor (FL)	Hastings (WA)	Negrete McLeod
Chaffetz	Hinojosa	Olson
Coble	Johnson, Sam	Pastor (AZ)
Collins (NY)	Jones	Roskam
Crawford	McCarthy (NY)	Schneider
Gosar	McHenry	Schwartz
Green, Al	McKeon	

□ 1447

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 229, noes 179, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 113]

AYES—229

Aderholt	Bucshon	Denham
Amash	Burgess	Dent
Amodei	Byrne	DeSantis
Bachmann	Calvert	DesJarlais
Bachus	Camp	Diaz-Balart
Barletta	Campbell	Duffy
Barr	Cantor	Duncan (SC)
Barrow (GA)	Capito	Duncan (TN)
Benishek	Carter	Ellmers
Bentivolio	Cassidy	Farenthold
Bilirakis	Chabot	Fincher
Bishop (GA)	Coffman	Fitzpatrick
Bishop (UT)	Cole	Fleischmann
Black	Collins (GA)	Fleming
Blackburn	Conaway	Flores
Boustany	Cook	Forbes
Brady (TX)	Costa	Fortenberry
Bridenstine	Cotton	Fox
Brooks (AL)	Cramer	Franks (AZ)
Brooks (IN)	Crenshaw	Frelinghuysen
Broun (GA)	Cuellar	Gardner
Buchanan	Daines	Garrett

NOES—179

Barber	DeFazio	Huffman
Bass	DeGette	Israel
Beatty	Delaney	Jackson Lee
Becerra	DeLauro	Jeffries
Bera (CA)	DelBene	Johnson (GA)
Bishop (NY)	Deutch	Johnson, E. B.
Blumenauer	Dingell	Kaptur
Bonamici	Doggett	Keating
Brady (PA)	Doyle	Kelly (IL)
Braley (IA)	Duckworth	Kennedy
Brown (FL)	Edwards	Kildee
Brownley (CA)	Ellison	Kilmer
Bustos	Engel	Kind
Butterfield	Enyart	Kirkpatrick
Capps	Eshoo	Kuster
Capuano	Esty	Langevin
Cárdenas	Farr	Larsen (WA)
Carney	Fattah	Larson (CT)
Carson (IN)	Foster	Lee (CA)
Cartwright	Frankel (FL)	Levin
Castor (FL)	Fudge	Lewis
Castro (TX)	Gabbard	Lipinski
Chu	Galleo	Loeb
Ciavarella	Garamendi	Lofgren
Clark (MA)	Garcia	Lowenthal
Clarke (NY)	Grayson	Lowe
Clay	Grijalva	Lujan Grisham
Cleaver	Gutiérrez	(NM)
Clyburn	Hahn	Lujan, Ben Ray
Cohen	Hanabusa	(NM)
Connolly	Hastings (FL)	Lynch
Conyers	Heck (WA)	Maffei
Cooper	Higgins	Maloney,
Courtney	Himes	Carolyn
Crowley	Holt	Maloney, Sean
Cummings	Honda	Matsui
Davis (CA)	Horsford	McCollum
Davis, Danny	Hoyer	McDermott

NOT VOTING—22

Barton	Green, Al	Messer
Chaffetz	Green, Gene	Negrete McLeod
Coble	Hastings (WA)	Olson
Collins (NY)	Hinojosa	Pastor (AZ)
Crawford	Johnson, Sam	Schneider
Culberson	Jones	Schwartz
Davis, Rodney	McCarthy (NY)	
Gosar	McHenry	

□ 1454

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVISION OF COSTS OF LOAN GUARANTEES FOR UKRAINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4152) to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. ROGERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 385, nays 23, not voting 22, as follows:

[Roll No. 114]

YEAS—385

Aderholt	Braley (IA)	Cassidy
Bachmann	Bridenstine	Castor (FL)
Bachus	Brooks (AL)	Castro (TX)
Barber	Brooks (IN)	Chabot
Barletta	Brown (FL)	Chu
Barr	Brownley (CA)	Ciavarella
Barrow (GA)	Buchanan	Clark (MA)
Bass	Bucshon	Clarke (NY)
Beatty	Burgess	Clay
Becerra	Bustos	Cleaver
Benishek	Butterfield	Clyburn
Bera (CA)	Byrne	Coffman
Bilirakis	Calvert	Cohen
Bishop (GA)	Camp	Cole
Bishop (NY)	Cantor	Collins (GA)
Bishop (UT)	Capito	Conaway
Black	Capps	Connolly
Blackburn	Capuano	Conyers
Blumenauer	Cárdenas	Cook
Bonamici	Carney	Cooper
Boustany	Carson (IN)	Costa
Brady (PA)	Carter	Cotton
Brady (TX)	Cartwright	Courtney

Cramer	Jackson Lee	Palazzo	Tonko	Walberg	Williams
Crenshaw	Jeffries	Pallone	Tsongas	Walden	Wilson (FL)
Crowley	Jenkins	Pascarell	Turner	Walorski	Wilson (SC)
Cuellar	Johnson (GA)	Paulsen	Upton	Walz	Wittman
Culberson	Johnson (OH)	Payne	Valadao	Wasserman	Wolf
Cummings	Johnson, E. B.	Pearce	Van Hollen	Schultz	Womack
Daines	Jordan	Pelosi	Vargas	Waters	Woodall
Davis (CA)	Joyce	Perlmutter	Veasey	Waxman	Yarmuth
Davis, Danny	Kaptur	Perry	Vela	Webster (FL)	Yoder
Davis, Rodney	Keating	Peters (CA)	Velázquez	Welch	Young (IN)
DeFazio	Kelly (IL)	Peters (MI)	Visclosky	Wenstrup	
DeGette	Kelly (PA)	Peterson	Wagner	Whitfield	
Delaney	Kennedy	Petri			
DeLauro	Kildee	Pingree (ME)			
DelBene	Kilmer	Pittenger	Amash	Graves (MO)	Rooney
Denham	Kind	Pitts	Bentivolio	Griffin (AR)	Sanford
Dent	King (IA)	Pocan	Broun (GA)	Kingston	Stockman
DeSantis	King (NY)	Polis	Campbell	Massie	Weber (TX)
Deutch	Kinzinger (IL)	Pompeo	DesJarlais	McAllister	Westmoreland
Diaz-Balart	Kirkpatrick	Posey	Duncan (TN)	Mulvaney	Yoho
Dingell	Kline	Price (CA)	Gohmert	Rice (SC)	Young (AK)
Doggett	Kuster	Price (NC)	Graves (GA)	Rohrabacher	
Doyle	Labrador	Quigley			
Duckworth	LaMalfa	Rahall			
Duffy	Lamborn	Rangel	Amodei	Green, Gene	Negrete McLeod
Duncan (SC)	Lance	Reed	Barton	Hastings (WA)	Olson
Edwards	Langevin	Reichert	Chaffetz	Hinojosa	Pastor (AZ)
Ellison	Lankford	Renacci	Coble	Johnson, Sam	Poe (TX)
Ellmers	Larsen (WA)	Ribble	Collins (NY)	Jones	Schneider
Engel	Larson (CT)	Richmond	Crawford	McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz
Enyart	Latham	Rigell	Gosar	McHenry	
Eshoo	Latta	Roby	Green, Al	Messer	
Esty	Lee (CA)	Roe (TN)			
Farenthold	Levin	Rogers (AL)			
Farr	Lewis	Rogers (KY)			
Fattah	Lipinski	Rogers (MI)			
Fincher	LoBiondo	Rokita			
Fitzpatrick	Loeb sack	Ros-Lehtinen			
Fleischmann	Lofgren	Roskam			
Fleming	Long	Ross			
Flores	Lowenthal	Rothfus			
Forbes	Lowe y	Roybal-Allard			
Fortenberry	Lucas	Royce			
Foster	Luetkemeyer	Ruiz			
Fox x	Lujan Grisham	Runyan			
Frankel (FL)	(NM)	Ruppersberger			
Franks (AZ)	Lujan, Ben Ray	Rush			
Frelinghuysen	(NM)	Ryan (OH)			
Fudge	Lummis	Ryan (WI)			
Gabbard	Lynch	Salmon			
Galle go	Maffei	Sánchez, Linda			
Garamendi	Maloney,	T.			
Garcia	Carolyn	Sanchez, Loretta			
Gardner	Maloney, Sean	Sarbanes			
Garrett	Marchant	Scalise			
Gerlach	Marino	Schakowsky			
Gibbs	Matheson	Schiff			
Gibson	Matsui	Schock			
Gingrey (GA)	McCarthy (CA)	Schrader			
Goodlatte	McCaul	Schweikert			
Gowdy	McClintock	Scott (VA)			
Granger	McCollum	Scott, Austin			
Grayson	McDermott	Scott, David			
Griffith (VA)	McGovern	Sensenbrenner			
Grijalva	McIntyre	Serrano			
Grimm	McKeon	Sessions			
Guthrie	McKinley	Sewell (AL)			
Gutiérrez	McMorris	Shea-Porter			
Hahn	Rodgers	Sherman			
Hall	McNerney	Shimkus			
Hanabusa	Meadows	Shuster			
Hanna	Meehan	Simpson			
Harper	Meeks	Sinema			
Harris	Meng	Sires			
Hartzler	Mica	Slaughter			
Hastings (FL)	Michaud	Smith (MO)			
Heck (NV)	Miller (FL)	Smith (NE)			
Heck (WA)	Miller (MI)	Smith (NJ)			
Hensarling	Miller, Gary	Smith (TX)			
Herrera Beutler	Miller, George	Smith (WA)			
Higgins	Moore	Southerland			
Himes	Moran	Speier			
Holding	Mullin	Stewart			
Holt	Murphy (FL)	Stivers			
Honda	Murphy (PA)	Stutzman			
Horsford	Nadler	Swalwell (CA)			
Hoyer	Napolitano	Takano			
Hudson	Neal	Terry			
Huelskamp	Neugebauer	Thompson (CA)			
Huffman	Noem	Thompson (MS)			
Huizenga (MI)	Nolan	Thompson (PA)			
Hultgren	Nugent	Thornberry			
Hunter	Nunes	Tiberi			
Hurt	Nunnelee	Tierney			
Israel	O'Rourke	Tipton			
Issa	Owens	Titus			

NAYS—23

NOT VOTING—22

□ 1501

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker on rollcall vote No. 114 on March 6, 2014, for H.R. 4152, to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine, I was recorded as voting “no” when I wanted to be recorded as voting “yes.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I was unable to vote in Washington, DC and missed the following votes:

1) Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2641 and H.R. 2824. Had I been present, I would have voted “no” on this bill.

2) H. Res. 501—Rule providing for consideration of both H.R. 2641 and H.R. 2824. Had I been present, I would have voted “no” on this bill.

3) Smith (TX)/Schweikert Amendment to H.R. 3826—Had I been present, I would have voted “no” on this amendment.

4) Capps/McNerney Amendment to H.R. 3826—Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on this amendment.

5) Schakowsky/Lowenthal Amendment to H.R. 3826—Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on this amendment.

6) Waxman Amendment to H.R. 3826—Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on this amendment.

7) Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 3826. Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on the motion to recommit.

8) Final Passage of H.R. 3826—Electricity Security and Affordability Act. Had I been present, I would have voted “no” on this bill.

9) Motion to Table the Fudge Privileged Resolution. Had I been present, I would have voted “no” on this motion to table.

10) Jackson Lee Amendment to H.R. 2641—Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on this amendment.

11) McKinley Amendment to H.R. 2641—Had I been present, I would have voted “no” on this amendment.

12) Nadler Amendment to H.R. 2641—Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on this amendment.

13) Johnson (GA) Amendment to H.R. 2641—Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on this amendment.

14) Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 2641—Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on the motion to recommit.

15) Final Passage of H.R. 2641—Had I been present, I would have voted “no” on this bill.

16) H.R. 4152—To Provide for the Cost of Loan Guarantees for Ukraine—Had I been present, I would have voted “yes” on this bill.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) for the purpose of inquiring of the schedule for the week to come.

Mr. CONAWAY. I thank the gentleman from Maryland, the Democratic whip, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday the House is not in session. On Tuesday, the House will meet at noon for morning-hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30 p.m. On Wednesday and Thursday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning-hour and noon for legislative business. On Friday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business. Last votes of the week are expected no later than 3 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the House will consider a few suspensions next week, a complete list of which will be announced by close of business tomorrow.

Today, in a strong bipartisan vote, the House passed a bill to provide the administration with the authority to extend loan guarantees to the government in Ukraine, and I want to thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for his support, along with Chairman HAL ROGERS and Ranking Member NITA LOWEY. I urge the Senate to act promptly on this bill and send it to the President for his signature.

Building upon this support, I expect the House to consider a resolution under suspension next week to express our support for the people of Ukraine and their territorial integrity.

In addition, the House will consider a number of bills to address the executive overreach of the Obama administration. Mr. Speaker, these bills are designed to restore the balance of power created by our Founders and require that this President faithfully execute our Nation's laws. The House will consider the following bills to reestablish the rule of law:

H.R. 3973, the Faithful Execution of Law Act, authored by Representative

RON DESANTIS, to require Federal officials to report to Congress when the administration fails to faithfully enforce current law;

H.R. 4138, the ENFORCE Act, sponsored by Representative TREY GOWDY, to establish procedures under which the House, or the Senate, may authorize a lawsuit against the executive branch for failure to faithfully execute laws; and

H.R. 3189, the Water Rights Protection Act, authored by Representative SCOTT TIPTON, to ensure privately held water rights.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, as you know, the patch for the Medicare sustainable growth rate expires at the end of the month. For this reason, I expect the House to consider H.R. 4015, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014, sponsored by Representative MICHAEL BURGESS, next week. This completely paid-for bill will replace the flawed SGR formula.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for the information he has given to us.

Let me say that on Ukraine, I think the House acted properly. It acted in a timely fashion to express the views of this House with respect to the Russian violation of international law and the agreements that they have with Ukraine, and I am pleased we were able to join together to pass that through the House. Hopefully the Senate will pass it quickly.

I just make the observation that the Senate I know believes that the reform of IMF will be important to work with that extension. We will see what happens on that. I thank the gentleman and his side of the aisle for acting promptly. We were pleased to join in that action.

Let me ask the gentleman, the gentleman mentioned as we know that by March 31 the authorization for the sustainable growth rate payment will expire and the payment to physicians for Medicare services will be substantially reduced under present law. There is, I think, a strong feeling by many of us that this needs to be fixed. It needs to be fixed permanently, and it needs to be paid for.

It is my understanding that the bill H.R. 4015, a bipartisan agreement on the SGR payment policy, as the gentleman knows, does not have a pay-for in it. Is it my understanding that that will be amended before it is brought to the floor, or will there be an amendment on the floor to add the pay-for?

I yield to the gentleman

Mr. CONAWAY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

We all are concerned about the SGR fix. We have seen this movie more than four, five, six times. Physicians were in town this week explaining to us exactly the impact of not getting this done on time, so that their billing systems and their cash flows are not inter-

rupted. We have a keen interest in small businesses, which are most physician offices, so there is a keen interest to do that. That will be amended on the floor to include the pay-for that will offset the SGR.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman. Let me clarify, Mr. Speaker, this will be under a rule and there will be an amendment made in order to add the pay-for; is that correct?

Mr. CONAWAY. No, the pay-for will be added through the Rules Committee.

Mr. HOYER. So before it comes to the floor, it will be paid for.

I ask the gentleman, it is my understanding that the pay-for, I don't know if I am accurate on this, but my understanding is that the pay-for is the repeal of the individual mandate. If so, can the gentleman tell me whether he has any indication that the Senate would be in agreement on that, and I say that because obviously there hasn't been agreement in the past, and if we use that as a pay-for, it seems to me it puts at risk meeting the March 31 deadline.

Mr. CONAWAY. The specifics of the pay-for have not yet been finalized. There are lots of things under consideration. We, too, want this done in advance of the March 31 date so, like I said earlier, physician offices can continue their billing as is without the interruption that a failure to extend or fix the doc fix would cause. We are keen on making that work, and the specifics of what the pay-for will be are currently under discussion.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman, and I would say I am hopeful in light of the fact that the bill itself is a bipartisan, or at least the two committees have agreed on it, and I think there is general agreement on the fix for the SGR, but the pay-fors have been contentious. I would hope that, as the bill has been a product of agreement, that the pay-for, which is essential, would also be a product of that. I would hope we would see a bill come to the floor that does have agreement of both sides of the aisle so we can, as the gentleman points out and we fully agree, ensure that the SGR is fixed and put on a sustainable path for our Medicare and for the provider community prior to March 31. I would hope that could happen.

Next, I don't know whether the gentleman has watched colloquies in the past, but the majority leader and I have had an ongoing discussion about immigration reform. Both of us believe the immigration system is broken. Both of us believe it needs to be fixed. Can the gentleman tell me whether there is any likelihood of an immigration bill coming to the floor anytime soon? Again, we have a relatively short period of time left to go, and we believe this legislation is one of the most important pieces that are pending on the agenda, and I would be, as I told the majority leader, very inclined to try to

work with the majority on behalf of the minority, and I know the minority would like to get an immigration reform bill that we can both agree on passed as soon as possible.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. CONAWAY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

There is nothing scheduled for next week, and I would tell the minority whip, beyond that I am not aware of any further scheduling other than I know it is not next week.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman. I hope if it is not next week, it will be soon. I thank the gentleman for his information.

I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, MARCH 10, 2014

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 2 p.m. on Monday, March 10, 2014, and that the order of the House of January 7, 2014, regarding morning-hour debate not apply on that date.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COTTON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

MILITARY SERVICE IS NOT ENTITLEMENT TO CONGRESS

(Mr. PERRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, recently recorded in political dialogue was a statement about one of my colleagues somehow feeling that his military service "entitled him to a seat in Congress."

Mr. Speaker, no one in the military feels that their service entitles them to anything. I am deeply disappointed in the implication that because I served my country, I feel entitled to serve in this esteemed body—or, for that matter, to anything. My colleague didn't pledge an oath of service to God and country because he felt he would get something in return.

Mr. Speaker, this type of statement not only is regrettable, reprehensible, and offensive, but it diminishes the sanctity of military service and those who tirelessly and selflessly dedicate themselves to it.

□ 1515

VETERANS UNEMPLOYMENT

(Ms. DUCKWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. Speaker, the unemployment rate for veterans is more than 10 percent. 900,000 veterans receive food stamps each month. Nearly \$104 million in food stamps were redeemed at military commissaries in

fiscal year 2013, yet the majority has repeatedly failed to bring the extension of unemployment insurance to a vote.

Since it expired last year, more than 2 million individuals, including 200,000 veterans, have been cut off from this vital lifeline.

I know firsthand how important this program is for hardworking veterans. After I completed flight school and returned home to Illinois, I relied on unemployment insurance to help me transition back to civilian life.

The unemployment rate for veterans recently separated from the military is now sitting at 10 percent. 246,000 veterans who served since 9/11 are now out of work.

For those coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan, this transition has been especially challenging. They have enough to worry about without suffering from cuts to unemployment insurance.

Taking an up-or-down vote on extending unemployment insurance is the right thing to do, Mr. Speaker. We need to renew this for those searching for jobs and those who are getting back on their feet.

Our veterans and unemployed have not given up on finding work, and we cannot give up on them.

MAKE COMMON SENSE CHANGES TO END HUNGER

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans, led by Budget Committee Chairman PAUL RYAN, criticize our Nation's antipoverty programs. Some want to drastically change them, and others want to eliminate them altogether. Over the past 6 months, we have seen \$19 billion in cuts to SNAP alone, our Nation's premier antihunger program.

Participation in SNAP reached an all-time high a few years ago because of the Great Recession, the worst economic period since the Great Depression. That is because people were either unemployed or underpaid.

If you want to reduce SNAP participation, it is simple: put more people back to work and better paying jobs. Yesterday, the Center for American Progress released a report showing how easy one step is. They found that increasing the minimum wage to \$10.10 would move about 3.5 million people off of SNAP, simply because they wouldn't need it.

We shouldn't arbitrarily cut anti-poverty programs like SNAP. We must make commonsense changes like increasing the minimum wage if we are truly going to end hunger in this country.

WELCOME HOME, STAFF SERGEANT NICHOLAS LAVERY

(Mr. KENNEDY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Staff Sergeant Nicholas Lavery from Medway, Massachusetts.

Nick graduated from UMass with a degree in criminal justice and enrolled in the Special Forces in 2007. After graduating as a distinguished honor graduate from the Special Forces Qualification Course, he became a Green Beret.

There is an excerpt from a letter that I wanted to share with you that Nick left his loved ones when he first deployed.

If I should fall, do not let your heart fill with sadness. Know that I passed doing what I love to do, what I believe in, what brings me happiness, that is protecting those who cannot fend for themselves, protecting the United States of America, and all those who I love so dearly. Look back on me with kindness and happiness, be happy knowing that I could not have chosen a better way to go.

With love filling my body for my friends and family, I tried to always be there for you all. Whether the shirt off my back or somebody's teeth, if you needed it, I would get it for you. Happiness was brought to me through the eyes of my loved ones. Seeing you all happy brought me such joy.

I live for you. I never wanted money, accommodations, or even any sort of recognition. None was necessary. I hope I served you all well. I gave it my all. No need for thank you. The pleasure was all mine.

Mr. Speaker, this weekend, Nick Lavery will be coming home, loved, alive, and a hero.

Since enlisting in 2007, Nick has been awarded three Purple Hearts. In the spring of 2013, Nick and his team were involved in a green-on-blue attack, which is a strike against coalition members by people dressed in their own uniform. Nick sustained injuries to his right leg during that attack and subsequently had it amputated below his knee.

He will receive a Silver Star with Valor and a Bronze Star with Valor at Fort Bragg on March 27.

After over a year in Walter Reed, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the town of Medway is proud to say to Nick: welcome home.

PLANT VOGTLE

(Mr. BARROW of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARROW of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Department of Energy's recent loan guarantee for Plant Vogtle in Burke County, Georgia. Plant Vogtle is the first nuclear power plant built in the United States in almost 3 decades, and I am proud to represent the district where

our Nation's nuclear renaissance has begun.

Throughout my time in Congress, I have supported the expanded use of nuclear power as part of a comprehensive energy policy. Plant Vogtle will not only provide safe, reliable energy for Georgians, but it will also create the kind of good-paying jobs that we need.

The expansion of Plant Vogtle will create 5,000 jobs at the height of construction and 800 permanent jobs after construction is complete.

The Federal Government's guarantee is expected to save Georgia electric customers nearly a quarter of a billion dollars in interest expense—a direct dollar-for-dollar savings for Georgia customers, Georgia workers, and Georgia businesses.

This is exactly the sort of investment the Federal Government should be making. At virtually no risk to the Federal taxpayer, we save money for Georgia taxpayers as they pay for the infrastructure that will create good-paying jobs that support the lifestyles of virtually everyone else in the Georgia economy.

I commend all of the stakeholders for coming to this agreement, and I look forward to all of the good things that it will lead to.

HONORING REV. DR. LAFAYETTE FERNANDEZ CHANEY, SR.

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, with great sympathy and sadness, I rise to pay tribute to the late Dr. Lafayette Fernandez Chaney, Sr., the extraordinary leader who touched the lives of many through his education and religious endeavors.

Under his leadership, Damascus Missionary Baptist Church in Houston experienced tremendous growth, both spiritually and financially. The beloved Rev. Dr. Chaney was requested to join our Lord on Friday, February 28, 2014; and he was 96 years old.

He gained his bachelor of arts and his bachelor of divinity from Paul Quinn, got a master of arts degree from Texas Southern University, studied for his doctorate at Baylor, and received his doctorate from Texas Southern University.

He was a teacher. He taught mathematics and science at Moore High School. He taught it in Waco at the Oakwood Elementary School. He taught at Waltrip Senior High School. He loved children.

He was someone who was a builder. He had professional memberships in a lot of educational associations. He was pastor at a number of churches, but his greatest gift and his greatest cherished memory was the pastorate for 50 years at Damascus Missionary Baptist Church.

Even when the church was without a home and he had to hold the congregation together to help build the beautiful church that we have, he was there to support and grow that church.

He, as well, was someone who enjoyed leadership in a variety of organizations and was courageous enough to appoint the first female minister at the Damascus Missionary Baptist Church, Evangelist LaSandra Easter.

I enjoyed, Mr. Speaker, my time with Pastor Chaney and visiting him at his last church commemoration—his anniversary and the church anniversary. It was my pleasure to be with him to share in the glory of the celebration of his wonderful life. He has run a great race. He has finished the course. He has gone on to receive his great reward.

I ask this body to have a moment of silence in his honor.

Thank you, Reverend Chaney, for being a great Houstonian and a great Texan and, yes, a great American.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the late Rev. Dr. Lafayette Fernandez Chaney, Sr., the extraordinary leader who touched the lives of many through his educational and ecclesiastical endeavors. Under his leadership, Damascus Missionary Baptist Church in Houston experienced tremendous growth, both spiritually and financially. The beloved Rev. Dr. Chaney was requested to join our Lord on Friday, February 28, 2014 as he departed this life at 9:30 a.m. He was 96 years old.

Lafayette Fernandez Chaney, Sr., was born March 27, 1917 in Waco, Texas to proud and loving parents, Adell and Tom W. Chaney. He was educated in the public schools of Waco and Le Vega Independent School District, graduating from Moore High School in Waco, Texas.

Rev. Dr. Chaney received both his Bachelors of Arts and Bachelors of Divinity Degrees from Paul Quinn College. He received his Master of Arts Degree from Texas Southern University and studied in the doctorate program at Baylor University from 1968 to 1975. In August 1982, he received his Doctorate Degree in Higher Education from Texas Southern University.

Rev. Dr. Chaney taught mathematics and science at Moore High School in Waco, Texas for twelve years and was principal of Oakwood Elementary School in Waco, Texas for eleven years. From 1972 to 1986, he taught mathematics and psychology at Waltrip Senior High School in Houston. During the same period, he was an adjunct professor of mathematics and psychology for Houston Community College.

Reverend Dr. Chaney's professional memberships and honors include: past president of Waco Classroom Teachers Association, Waco Administrators Association and the Central Texas District Teachers Association. In 1965, he was nominated for "Who's Who" amongst professional men in Texas. He was a member of the American Association of University Professors, Phi Delta Kappa and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternities.

He was pastor of the following churches: Little Tehuacana Baptist Church in rural Waco, Texas; Sweethome Baptist Church in Mexia,

Texas; First Baptist Church in Thornton, Texas; Second Baptist Church in Itasca, Texas; Shiloh Baptist Church in Madisonville, Texas and served as Senior Pastor for 50 plus years at Damascus Missionary Baptist Church in Houston, Texas.

He served as Senior Advisor of the Youth Convention of the General Baptist Convention of Texas, Teacher of the Youth Department of the National Baptist Convention of America, Director of the Ushers and Nurses of the Independent General Association of Texas, member of the Evangelical Board of the General Baptist Convention of Texas, and President of Union Bible College in Houston.

His crowning glory was completing his life as Senior Pastor of Damascus Missionary Baptist Church. During this time, he successfully held the congregation together during the homeless years from May 25, 2003 through September 2, 2007, while the church's new home at its current location was being constructed.

Rev. Dr. Chaney also made history by appointing the first female minister at Damascus Missionary Baptist Church, Evangelist LaSandra Easter.

Mr. Speaker, Rev. Dr. Chaney lived a consequential life and made a difference. He has run the great race; he has finished the course. He has gone on to receive his great reward: a place in the Lord's loving arms.

I ask that a moment of silence be observed in memory of the Rev. Dr. Lafayette Fernandez Chaney, Sr.

PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION THANK YOU

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud President Barack Obama for signing the Presidential proclamation recognizing March 2014 as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.

I would also like to give a special thanks to the 146 Members of Congress who signed onto the letter I authored and sent to the President requesting the issuance of this proclamation.

Finally, but more importantly, thank you to the colorectal cancer community who have given their time, sweat, and tears to raise awareness about prevention and early detection. Our efforts have not gone unnoticed.

This month, the highest office in the land, the President of the United States, brought national attention to our fight.

What better way to pay tribute by remembering those who have lost their battles to colon cancer, such as my late father, the honorable Congressman Donald Payne, Sr., who I followed into Congress, who lost his battle with cancer 2 years ago today.

This proclamation honors his memory and it honors those who are fighting the battle against colon cancer today.

MONEY AND POLITICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the issue of money and politics. I address it knowing that many of my constituents and many Americans across the country are in a pretty bad mood about Washington, about politics as usual, about Congress.

They are angry because they feel like their voice can't be heard. They are frustrated because they feel like somebody else writes the rules, somebody else makes the policy, and their opinions on issues don't matter.

A big part of the reason for that frustration and that anger is they look out and they see these super-PACs and other Big Money campaign donors and PACs and special interests pouring money into Washington, pouring money into our political system.

They feel like those are the folks that call the shots here in Washington, that when it comes time for us to make public policy, too often the institution of Congress leans in the direction of the Big Money and the special interests and away from the priorities and the needs and the concerns and the demands of everyday citizens.

People are pretty smart. Americans are pretty smart. If they are feeling this way, there is probably a good reason for it. When you do the research, when you track the numbers, when you look at the amount of money that is pouring in here, it is no wonder that Americans have become cynical and angry and fed up and disillusioned. It is no wonder that the favorability rating—the approval rating of this institution is as low as it is.

Let's look at some of those numbers. In the 2012 election cycle, Big Energy—the big energy industry poured \$140 million into Congressional campaigns. That is in one election cycle. They spent another \$380 million on lobbying expenditures here in the city of Washington, here on Capitol Hill.

Wall Street, they were at the top of the list. Again, in one election cycle, in the 2012 election cycle, the financial industry contributed \$660 million to Congressional campaigns and spent another \$490 million—almost a half a billion dollars—on lobbying up here on Capitol Hill.

Sometimes, we ask ourselves—and I know my constituents ask me, and I know Americans raise this from time to time—how is it the case that an industry like the oil and gas industry in 2011 posted profits—the top five oil and gas companies posted profits of \$132 billion?

How is it that an industry like that continues to get taxpayer subsidies every year to the tune of \$5 billion?

How are they able to preserve that loophole when they are making all those profits and they don't need that taxpayer subsidy? How does that come to pass?

Well, I just read you the numbers. If you are pouring \$140 million into campaigns and you are spending another \$380 million on lobbying, you can keep those loopholes in place.

Why can't we close some of these loopholes that Wall Street and the financial industry enjoys? The same answer applies. Look at how much influence is coming from the money that pours in from those industries.

When Americans feel in their gut that somehow their voice isn't being heard and it is the interests of Big Money that rules the roost around here, there is a factual basis for that, and it is something that we need to address.

□ 1530

Whatever the priority is that Americans care about—whether it is jobs and the budget, whether it is health care and education, whether it is protecting our environment, whether it is reining in the influence of Wall Street and making sure that important regulations are in place—whatever the priority is that Americans want to see, the fact of the matter is that Big Money gets in the way of those priorities. It pours into campaigns; it pours into lobbying shops; and it stops often coming out of the gate these priorities that everyday Americans put at the top of their lists. It is no wonder that so many Americans are fed up. In fact, when you talk to them, when you get them to start talking about how they really feel, the fact of the matter is that many are downright disgusted by the influence that Big Money has on our politics and on our government.

We have got figure out what to do about this. If we want to reclaim some of the trust of the American people, if we want Americans to have confidence that their government is actually working for them, we have got to address this problem. The first step to any recovery is to recognize the problem, and the fact of the matter is that the institution of Congress is too dependent upon Big Money and special interests. As a result, when it comes time to make public policy, it leans away from the public's interest and in the direction of the special interests.

So what can we do?

A month ago, joined by 128 original cosponsors, I introduced the Government by the People Act. This is a first step. This will not cure all of the ills that bedevil Congress and Washington, and it is not waving a magic wand, but it is an important first step in Americans' being able to say: We want to take our government back from the special interests and Big Money. We want our government to work for us.

The Government by the People Act is premised on the idea that we have to put ordinary Americans—everyday citizens—at the center of the funding of campaigns and take that away from the PACs and the special interests and the Big Money campaign donors. The fact that we had so many cosponsors on this bill at the point of introduction, I think, shows that Members of this institution are hearing from their constituents and understand the anger and frustration that is out there and recognize that they need to do something about it. Let me tell you about the Government by the People Act because it is really designed to make sure that the voices of everyday citizens are as powerful as the voices of the Big Money campaign donors.

The first thing it does is to provide a \$25 tax credit, what we are calling the My Voice Tax Credit—a \$25 refundable tax credit—to any American who makes a contribution to a congressional campaign in both of the 2 years of the election cycle.

Now, why did we do that?

If you look at the numbers right now, you will see that a very small percentage of Americans actually participates in the funding of campaigns. The funding is dominated by a small group that tends to be of the more wealthy citizens in society, and ordinary Americans out there are not getting into the role of helping to power campaigns on the funding side. We want to encourage them to do that. We want to say to those citizens who want to support a good candidate who is turning to them and listening to their concerns: If you are willing to put \$15 or \$20 or \$25 behind that candidate who stands for the right thing, we will help you do that. We will provide this tax credit to make it a little bit easier for you to step up and be a part of the solution.

So the My Voice Tax Credit does exactly that. It gives a voice back to everyday citizens who feel right now like their voices can't be heard, like they are not empowered to participate in the system, to participate in the solution. That is why we created the My Voice Tax Credit, and that is the first important element of the Government by the People Act.

The second is that we want to make sure that the voice of the everyday citizen can be loud enough to compete with the big money out there, so we created something called the Freedom From Influence Matching Fund. This would provide matching dollars that would come in behind those grassroots donations and boost them up—amplify the voice of the grassroots—so that now those everyday citizens can get the attention of candidates or of Members of Congress who might otherwise be inclined to go spend their time on K Street or on raising money from Big Money campaign donors. Now they have an incentive to go do a house

party back in their districts and raise small donations, knowing that those matching funds will come in behind it, and they will be able to raise sufficient dollars to run competitive campaigns.

So we combine those two elements to try to change the way campaigns are funded—the My Voice Tax Credit to promote those small donations, those grassroots donations, and the Freedom From Influence Matching Funds to come in behind it and amplify it so the voices of everyday people can actually be heard, can actually compete with the megaphone that Big Money has and special interests have. That is what the Government by the People Act is designed to do—to empower everyday citizens to really have a voice again in their own democracy.

The third piece is just as critical. Over the last two election cycles, Americans have seen the spending by super-PACs and by outside groups go through the roof, and they have been turned off by it. They know that there are good candidates who run for office who make a strong case on issues that matter to the public but that they get into those last 60 days—the home stretch of a campaign—and suddenly a super-PAC comes in and pours money into negative advertising, and before you know it that candidate's voice is wiped off the playing field. So we said that, in that home stretch—in those 60 days—we wanted to make sure, of a candidate who chooses to participate in this system, who chooses to reach out to everyday citizens and lift their voices up, that that candidate's own voice would be able to stay in the mix, because that candidate's voice represents the voices of thousands of small donors and other supporters who have stepped up behind him. So, in the last 60 days, candidates who choose to participate in this system would get the benefit of some additional dollars to help them stay in the game, to help keep their voices in the mix, up to Election Day.

There is evidence, Mr. Speaker, to show that, of candidates who work hard to reach out and build relationships with their constituents, if they can get enough dollars in that final stage to stay in the game—to keep their voices there, to keep representing the interests of everyday citizens—then even if a super-PAC or some outside group comes in and throws a lot of money at them, they can still prevail. That is the way it ought to be. Candidates who are doing the right thing—Members of Congress who are trying to serve their constituents and lift up the voices of their constituents—ought to be able to survive the process where some outside group is coming in and trying to wipe them off the face of the map.

So those are the three pieces of the Government by the People Act—the My Voice Tax Credit to encourage and

help everyday citizens participate on the funding side of campaigns, a Freedom From Influence Matching Fund that will come in behind that and provide matching dollars to amplify the voices of the grassroots and everyday citizens, and then some extra dollars in that final stretch for participating candidates who suddenly face an attack from a super-PAC or from some other outside group so that their voices and the voices of the people they represent, who have invested in them, can still be heard.

I have talked about why this is so important in terms of changing the perception that Americans have of Washington and Congress, the notion that if everyday citizens feel that Members of Congress can continue to represent them because they are the ones who powered their campaigns instead of the special interests and Big Money being the ones to underwrite their campaigns that that can begin to restore some confidence. It won't change it overnight—it won't cure all the ills of this place—but it will begin to restore some confidence on the part of everyday citizens that their voices can actually be heard here, that when the campaign is over and governing begins, this institution will continue to listen to them because they are the ones who helped to lift that candidate up on his shoulders.

I want to come at it from another angle for a moment. If you have a system like this that allows a good, strong candidate who knows how to reach out and network in his district to be competitive, you will see a different kind of person coming to Washington. Right now, more than half of the people who serve in Congress are millionaires. That is not surprising because, to run for office, you need a lot of money, and you need to know a lot of people who have a lot of money—that is the reality—but if you have a system where small donors and matching funds can lift up a candidate and power his campaign, you will get people running for Congress and being competitive who in the past would never have had a chance.

I was recently in Maine or in New Hampshire, and I sat on a panel with a legislator from Maine. In Maine, they have a system that helps candidates who reach out to the grassroots be able to assemble the funds to be competitive. This legislator said, but for that system, she would not be a member of the Maine State Legislature because she wouldn't have been able to raise the dollars she needed to run for office and represent the people in her district, but because a system like that existed, she is now in the Maine State Legislature.

I believe that we would see people competing for Congress and succeeding and being elected who right now have no way to access this place, and those

are the kinds of people who represent the broad American constituency. Another way to begin restoring people's faith in this institution is if they look here and they say: Do you know what? There is somebody who is a community activist in my district. There is somebody who volunteered at my church who decided to get into politics, who decided to put his name in the ring. Because there is a system for funding campaigns now that combines small donations with matching funds, that person was able to run and compete and be elected. I think that that will lift up many Americans and make them believe that their voices actually make a difference here, that their voices can be heard.

I want to put this in another context as well. There are many things that we can do to try to address the influence of Big Money in our politics. We need more disclosure and transparency in terms of where these independent expenditures are coming from. I support the DISCLOSE Act, which is sponsored by my colleague, Representative CHRIS VAN HOLLEN of Maryland, because Americans deserve to know where this big money comes from and who is spending it so they can make a judgment about whether that is fair and whether the people to whom that money is going ought to be representing them here in Washington. We need that transparency and we need that disclosure. That is an important reform.

It is important also, I believe, to try to address the decisions of this Supreme Court, in particular the Citizens United decision, which basically took the lid off of outside campaign spending and expenditures by these super-PACs and other independent groups, and has resulted in this flood of negative campaign commercials and advertising to come in in the final weeks and months of the campaign cycle.

□ 1545

So we need to address that.

There are proposals that have been introduced in this body for a constitutional amendment that would rein in the spending of these outside groups. I think we need to address that, too. Those are important measures that we need to undertake. I also think it is critically important that there be something that is part of the reform agenda that has to do with empowering everyday citizens.

If you think about it, disclosure and putting limits on the spending of these outside groups and super PACs is about reining in the conduct and the behavior of the bad actors out there—the people who have kind of gone too far, but we also have to do something to empower and lift up the good actors—everyday citizens who just want to see their government do the right thing and who have commonsense solutions and want

the people they elect to Congress to reflect that commonsense perspective.

That is why we need the Government by the People Act. It would create a system that would empower everyday citizens. It would allow them to feel that their voice is being heard and that they are not just standing back as observers watching the titans, the Big Money players, the super PACs sort of duking it out in the ring like two professional wrestlers, but that they can participate.

Everyday citizens could step in the ring and say, You know what? My voice is just as important as the voice of that big donor, and I demand to be heard. That is what that everyday citizen is saying. They want their voice to be heard, but we have got to give them a system that will allow for that.

We called this bill the Government by the People Act because when I, and others, listen to Americans across the country, we hear them saying, We are tired of a government that appears to be of, by, and for the special interests and the Big Money. Put very simply, we want our government back. We want it back.

The Government by the People Act is an attempt to begin to change business as usual and to create a system that will give government back to the people that it is supposed to represent. That is our only path back to relevancy, in the eyes of the general public. That is our only path back to restoring a trust and confidence that we need as an institution in order to get things done, and let me tell you something: when it comes to relevancy and trust and confidence, we are hanging on by a thread right now.

When you look at the polls and the surveys in terms of what people think about Washington, and they feel that the priorities of this place have become Big Money and special interests, in the minds of most Americans, our relevancy is hanging by a thread.

We need to do something. The Government by the People Act is a reform that can begin to reclaim government and democracy and the political system back for everyday citizens out there that are so frustrated with what is going on.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am optimistic. I am optimistic by nature. I think we can get this reform. When we introduced the bill, we had 128 cosponsors at the point of introduction. We have 140 as of today.

I think Members of this body themselves are at a point where they want to see something different. A lot of Members of Congress are exhausted by the current system. They wish they could raise money a different way. They wish they could run their campaigns and fund their campaigns by turning to the people they represent instead of having to chase the PAC money and the Big Money and the special interests all the time.

There is something wrong with an equation where people go into the voting booth, they pull the lever for you and send you to Washington to represent them, and the day you get to Washington, you have to start representing the Big Money and the special interests because that is the only way you can raise money to fund your campaign.

Let's think about it in those terms. What happens to the franchise when somebody gets here and they have to turn their back on the people who elected them because they have got to go raise the money from someplace else?

What if the place you went to power your campaigns was back to your constituents—everyday citizens—because you had a system that would match their small donations and be able to lift a candidate up and power them forward? That would change the way things operate around here.

I invite people listening to this to go back through the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and read the statements of Members of the House and the Senate who announce their retirement and—sometimes within 24 hours—go to the floor of the Senate or the House and talk about the problem of money and politics and how corrosive it has become. Liberated finally from the current system by the fact that they have decided to move on, they are able to stand back and in a clear-eyed and candid way talk about this problem of influence that comes from Big Money and special interests and what it is doing to this place.

I want to read you a quote because I think this really goes right to the heart of the matter. People are fed up with the gridlock and dysfunction here. We can connect a lot of that to this issue of money and politics.

Let me read you a quote from 1982:

When political action committees give money, they expect something in return other than good government. It is making it much more difficult to legislate. We may reach a point where if everybody is buying something with PAC money, we can't get anything done.

Do you know who said that in 1982? Robert Dole, the minority leader at that time and a Republican Member of the U.S. Senate. That was in 1982.

The influence of Big Money on our politics and on our governing has metastasized since then, but even then, on the front edge of this trend, Bob Dole could see what it would do to the institution, and he was lamenting it.

So a public that is upset about gridlock and dysfunction of this place needs a solution that will address the influence Big Money has here. Because that will help, I think, change the whole way in which we operate. Other Members have made similar comments, as I mentioned a moment ago.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I said, I am optimistic. I think we have a good piece of

legislation. I think it goes to the heart and tries to address a lot of the cynicism that so many Americans have out there that their voice can't be heard.

I want to mention that we have at this stage over 40 national organizations who have gotten behind this legislation. This is a new development. We have had reform bills in the past—good ones—but they didn't have that kind of broad support from grassroots organizations across the country—civil rights groups like the NAACP; environmental groups like the Sierra Club and Green Peace; labor groups who have been out there trying to address the issues of working families, like CWA and others.

Why are they coming to this? Because they figured out what the American people have figured out. The good things they want to see when it comes to the environment or to creating jobs or to making sure people are treated fairly in this society, all those good things are being thwarted by the influence that Big Money has over the way this institution operates.

So they are coming to this fight now, saying, If we care about the environment, if we care about jobs, if we care about economic justice, we have to adopt reforming the way campaigns are funded as part of our own efforts.

Already, within the first 3 or 4 weeks since we introduced the bill, over 400,000 citizen cosponsors from across the country have signed petitions supporting the Government by the People Act because they understand that this reform is meaningful and will make a difference.

So I am optimistic that we can get this done. We are not going to get it done tomorrow. We are not going to get it done next week. But with the opportunity to channel in a constructive way some of this anger and cynicism and frustration that the American people are feeling right now that their voice is not heard, if we have a vehicle to channel that and organize it into a strong momentum, then when the opportunity presents itself to actually achieve this reform, I think we can do it.

I think that if we don't do it, Americans will finally turn away completely from this place and say, You can't help us any more.

That is what is at stake here: the relevancy of this institution and the relevancy of this, the people's House, to the people, and until we address the problem of the influence of Big Money over our system, we are not going to be able to reclaim the confidence and the trust of the American people.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I close, I wanted to tell the story of a person in my district. A couple of years ago, he came to one of my house parties. He is a long-time supporter of mine. He came up to me after the House party was over and said, Look, I would like to contribute \$25 to your campaign.

He said, I can't do more than that. I can't afford more than that, but I would like to do it. I would be proud to do it. I just don't know if it will make a difference. Will it matter?

He was, I think, saying what many Americans are saying, which is, Do our voices count? Can we really compete with the Big Money out there? Is anybody listening to us?

That is what he was saying to me.

If we can pass legislation like the Government by the People Act and create a new way of funding our campaign that puts everyday citizens in the middle of the equation, make them the ones to sort of solve this problem for us, and empower them, then I will be able to say to constituents like that person who came up to me and was feeling marginalized by the current system, Not only are you relevant, not only is your voice important, your voice is the most important part of the way we power campaigns in this country.

That is the message we need to send. That is the outreach we need to do.

So we can move with this legislation from a system of politics, a democracy that is too often of, by, and for the Big Money campaign donors and the special interests, to a government that truly is of, by, and for the people.

I yield back the balance of my time.

BLOCKING PROPERTY OF CERTAIN PERSONS CONTRIBUTING TO THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113-95)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CRAMER) laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) (IEEPA), I hereby report that I have issued an Executive Order (the "order") declaring a national emergency with respect to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the situation in Ukraine.

The order does not target the country of Ukraine, but rather is aimed at persons—including persons who have asserted governmental authority in the Crimean region without the authorization of the Government of Ukraine—who undermine democratic processes and institutions in Ukraine; threaten its peace, security, stability, sovereignty, and territorial integrity; and contribute to the misappropriation of its assets. The order blocks the property and interests in property and suspends entry into the United States of

any person determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State:

- to be responsible for or complicit in, or to have engaged in, directly or indirectly, any of the following:

- actions or policies that undermine democratic processes or institutions in Ukraine;

- actions or policies that threaten the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, or territorial integrity of Ukraine; or

- misappropriation of state assets of Ukraine or of an economically significant entity in Ukraine;

- to have asserted governmental authority over any part or region of Ukraine without the authorization of the Government of Ukraine;

- to be a leader of an entity that has, or whose members have, engaged in any activity described above or of an entity whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order;

- to have materially assisted, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services to or in support of, any activity described above or any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order;

- to be owned or controlled by, or to have acted or purported to act for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, any person whose property and interests in property are blocked pursuant to the order.

I have delegated to the Secretary of the Treasury the authority, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to take such actions, including the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the order. All agencies of the United States Government are directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 6, 2014.

□ 1600

MARCH 6 FROM A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this is March 6, and I want to talk about March 6 in a historical perspective, history that is very important that Americans know about.

Yesterday, on the House floor, I talked about the things that are going

on in the Ukraine and compared Mr. Putin's aggressive actions toward Europe, similar to the actions of Adolf Hitler and the Nazis.

Before I do that today, I would like to yield some time to two of our Members who have discussions on other issues. First, I would like to yield as much time as he wishes to consume on a different issue to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF).

STUTTERING FOUNDATION

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Texas for his courtesy.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to discuss something very close to me. I want to talk about stuttering. I have been a lifelong stutterer, and when I was young I experienced some very difficult times, but that is a story really for another day.

More than 70 million people stutter. One in every 100 people in the world stutter. In the U.S., more than 3 million Americans stutter. You probably have a friend, a neighbor, a classmate, a coworker, or a family member who stutters. Most people do.

About 5 percent of all children go through a stuttering phase that lasts 6 months or more. Some will recover by late childhood, but one out of every 100 children will be left with long-term stuttering.

I would like to take this time to tell you a little bit more about stuttering, what it is and how family members and friends can help.

Stuttering is a disorder where the flow of speech is broken by repetition, prolongations, or abnormal stoppages of sounds and syllables. For some people, unusual facial and body movements may happen when they try to speak.

Stuttering is most likely caused by four factors:

One, Genetics;

Two, child development. For example, children with other speech and language problems or developmental delays are more likely to stutter;

Three, the makeup of the brain. An ongoing research study by Dr. Anne Smith with the Purdue University Stuttering Project shows that people who stutter seem to process speech and language differently than those who don't;

And four, lastly, family dynamics have an impact. High expectations and fast-paced lifestyles can also contribute to stuttering.

People who stutter are no different from those who do not stutter. In fact, studies by Dr. Ehud Yairi at the University of Illinois show that people who stutter are as intelligent and as well-adjusted as those who don't.

Contrary to what many people believe, stuttering can be treated. I want to let anyone know out there who stutters or who has a child who stutters, much can be done.

Speech-language pathologists, therapists trained to help deal with speech issues like stuttering often work in schools, clinics, at universities, and in private practice to help treat stuttering.

The most important thing, and many experts agree: early intervention is key. The earlier we can identify stuttering in our children and get them the help they need, the better chances we have at helping them to speak more fluently.

If you stutter, or if a child or loved one stutters, or if you even think they might be stuttering, get help immediately.

One of the best ways to help is by visiting the Stuttering Foundation. The foundation was started by Malcolm Fraser more than 70 years ago. His book, called "Self-Therapy for the Stutterer," was originally published in 1978, and still is one of the best books on stuttering available.

You can visit the foundation's Web site at www.stutteringhelp.org. They have lots of well-trusted, expert information available for free, including Malcolm Fraser's book, as well as countless brochures and videos and other materials for parents and teachers.

Unfortunately, there is no instant miracle cure for stuttering, no surgery, no pills, no intensive weekend retreats. Stuttering takes time and effort and commitment to work through.

Some people outgrow it. Some people respond well to years of therapy and learn to speak fluently, with almost no trace of difficulty. For many others, stuttering becomes a lifelong struggle, as it has for me.

For those of us who stutter, and for the millions of parents with children who stutter, we all know stuttering becomes more challenging for teenagers. Kids can be tough on classmates who stutter and, for some, the teasing and the mocking can be too much.

We must help people who stutter understand that there are many people who know firsthand how difficult it is for someone who stutters, and that help is available.

We need to be patient, kind, understanding, and attentive. We need to know and show that we care.

If you stutter, let me just tell you something: Don't give up. So much can be done.

I thank the gentleman for giving me the time.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier, I believe history is something that we should remember and talk about.

Today, is March 6. It probably doesn't mean much to a lot of folks in the United States, but to those of us from the State of Texas, March 6 is an important day.

I want to put it in context. There are 3 important, very important days for

those of us from Texas, March 2, March 6, and April 21, and I will get to the significance in just a moment.

Many, many years ago, parts of Texas, Mexico, Central America, and even South America, were controlled by the European country of Spain. It controlled all of that area.

The people of Mexico decided that they wanted to have their own independent country. It sounds familiar, does it not?

They rebelled against the Spanish, and they formed the Republic of Mexico. They established a Constitution. It was called the Constitution of 1824.

As sometimes happens with new democracies, the President takes over. His name was Santa Anna. Santa Anna, when he took power legally, constitutionally, under a democratic regime, did what some dictators, unfortunately, still do. He abolished the government. He abolished the Constitution of 1824. He created a centralist, authoritarian government.

But several areas, states, if you will, in Mexico dissented, objected, vocally objected, even rebelled. Those areas of Mexico were Coahuila y Tejas, the state of Coahuila and Texas; Durango; Jalisco; Nuevo Leon; Queretaro; San Luis Potosi; Tamaulipas; Yucatan; Zacatecas; and a couple of others.

Most of those areas, those states did nothing more than just object, dissent, and quickly Santa Anna moved in to quell any disruption or disturbances.

But there were three of those areas that actually formed their own republics, if you will. There was the Republic of the Rio Grande, the Republic of the Yucatan, and the Republic of Texas.

Santa Anna quickly, of course, moved to stop these new countries, if you will, areas, that were seeking independence from this totalitarian dictator named Santa Anna. As history has shown, they all failed—except the Republic of Texas.

That is what I would like to talk about this evening, Mr. Speaker. What happened in Texas was that the people objected, people of all races, both Tejanos—and Tejano is a uniquely Texan name; a Tejano is someone of Mexican or Spanish descent that is, or was, born in what is now Texas—and the Anglos as well dissented, objected to Santa Anna's imperialistic dictatorship.

It started over a cannon. In October of 1835, the Mexican government sent some military over to the little town of Gonzalez, Texas, and demanded that the colonists, the people there, give up their cannon, their arms, and they objected. They refused to do it, and so there was a skirmish between the Mexican regulars and the colonists who lived in Gonzalez.

Shots were fired on both sides. I don't know that anybody was really hurt too bad. A couple of folks were wounded. More importantly, the Mexi-

can military left, and they did not get the cannon, and thus started the Texas War of Independence.

You may have heard of the flag, the Come and Take It flag. The Texans, as they called themselves, painted a cannon on a white background and wrote underneath it, "Come and Take It," being defiant.

In any event, that started the battle. That started the Texas War of Independence against a dictator, a person who had abolished, remember, the Constitution of the Republic of Mexico.

Santa Anna then decided he would put down this rebellion, all of these rebellions that I talked about, and he successfully did so in other parts of Mexico, in those areas that I had mentioned. Then he moves across the Rio Grande River with three different armies coming into Texas to put down this so-called rebellion against his dictatorship.

So the first battles of Texas independence were successful, in 1835, October of 1835, and that brought us into 1836.

Success was not the norm in 1836. On March 2, 1836, 54 Texans, including Lorenzo De Zavala, Thomas Rusk, Antonio Navarro, and that famous person, Sam Houston, gathered not too far from San Antonio in a place called Washington-on-the-Brazos, declared their independence from Mexico, wrote a constitution, declaration of independence, rather, very similar to the American Declaration of Independence. It was signed by all of them on March 2, 1836.

Turned out March 2 also happens to be the birthday of Sam Houston. Imagine that. That is the first important date.

Meanwhile, assembled down the road from Texas, declaring independence at Washington-on-the-Brazos, were a group of volunteers. They were all together in this old, beat-up Spanish church that was 150 years old at the time. It was a town called Bexar. We know it now as San Antonio.

The place that they assembled themselves to fight off the invasion of the dictator was the Alamo.

This is an artist sketch of the way the Alamo looked at the time that the 187 volunteers defended the place.

□ 1615

You will notice, Mr. Speaker, the flag that is flying over the Alamo was not what a lot of people think, the Lone Star flag, which was the flag of the Republic of Texas, the flag of Texas now. It is the flag of 1824. It is very similar to the Mexican flag.

But what the defenders had done was remove the Mexican eagle and put the number 1824. Why did they do that? Because when they went into the Alamo, what they were wanting—what they were trying to do was reestablish a constitutional government in Mexico,

and they wanted the constitution of 1824. That is why that flag flew over the Alamo.

The people who entered the Alamo did so on February 23, 1826. They did so before March 2, before the declaration of independence, because they knew that the invaders were coming under the direction of the president, the dictator, and the general, Santa Anna.

It is interesting, these people who were in the Alamo, they were all volunteers, Mr. Speaker. They came from almost every State in the United States and 13 foreign countries, including Mexico; and I will just mention some of the States that they came from.

They came from Alabama, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, several from Massachusetts. They came from the State of Mississippi, Missouri, as far away as New Hampshire, New Jersey, several folks from New York, North Carolina, Ohio.

A great number came from Pennsylvania and, of course, South Carolina, even one from Rhode Island; and many, many came from the State of Tennessee. There were also native Texans in the Alamo, if you would refer to them as that; and they were the nine—at least nine Tejanos that fell in the Alamo. There may have been more. We don't know. There was also one from Vermont and several from Virginia.

They were also from foreign countries, Denmark, several from England, Ireland, Germany, Scotland, Wales, France, and some other countries as well.

Mr. Speaker, I will now place into the RECORD a list of the defenders who fell at the Alamo and the States or countries that they were from.

THE DEFENDERS OF THE ALAMO

1) Buchanan, James, Alabama; 2) Fishbaugh, William, Alabama; 3) Fuqua, Galba, Alabama; 4) White, Isaac, Alabama; 5) Baker, Isaac G., Arkansas; 6) Thompson, Jesse G., Arkansas; 7) Warnell, Henry, Arkansas; 8) Jennings, Gordon C., Connecticut; 9) Grimes, Albert (Alfred) Calvin, Georgia; 10) Melton, Eliel, Georgia; 11) Shied, Manson, Georgia; 12) Wells, William, Georgia; 13) Wills, William, Georgia; 14) Lindley, Jonathan L., Illinois; 15) Bailey, Peter James III, Kentucky; 16) Bowie, James, Kentucky; 17) Cloud, Daniel William, Kentucky; 18) Darst, Jacob C., Kentucky; 19) Davis John, Kentucky; 20) Fauntleroy, William H., Kentucky.

21) Gaston, John E., Kentucky; 22) Harris, John, Kentucky; 23) Jackson, William Daniel, Kentucky; 24) Jameson, Green B., Kentucky; 25) Kellogg, John Benjamin, Kentucky; 26) Kent, Andrew, Kentucky; 27) Rutherford, Joseph, Kentucky; 28) Thomas, B. Archer M., Kentucky; 29) Washington, Joseph G., Kentucky; 30) Despallier, Charles, Louisiana; 31) Kerr, Joseph, Louisiana; 32) Ryan, Isaac, Louisiana; 33) Garrard, James W., Louisiana; 34) Smith, Charles S., Maryland; 35) Flanders, John, Mass.; 36) Howell, William D., Mass.; 37) Linn, William, Mass.; 38) Pollard, Amos, Mass.

39) Clark, M.B., Mississippi; 40) Millsaps, Isaac, Mississippi; 41) Moore, Willis A., Mississippi; 42) Pagan, George, Mississippi; 43)

Parker, Christopher Adams, Mississippi; 44) Baker, William Charles M., Missouri; 45) Butler, George D., Missouri; 46) Clark, Charles Henry, Missouri; 47) Cottle, George Washington, Missouri; 48) Day, Jerry C., Missouri; 49) Tumlinson, George W., Missouri; 50) Cochran, Robert E., New Hampshire; 51) Stockton, Richard Lucius, New Jersey; 52) Cunningham, Robert W., New York; 53) Dewall, Lewis, New York; 54) Evans, Samuel B., New York; 55) Forsyth, John Hubbard, New York; 56) Jones, John, New York; 57) Tylee, James, New York.

58) Autry, Micajah, North Carolina; 59) Floyd, Dolphin Ward, North Carolina; 60) Parks, William, North Carolina; 61) Scurlock, Mial, North Carolina; 62) Smith, Joshua G., North Carolina; 63) Thomson, John W., North Carolina; 64) Wright, Claiborne, North Carolina; 65) Harrison, William B., Ohio; 66) Holland, Tapely, Ohio; 67) Musselman, Robert, Ohio; 68) Rose, James M., Ohio; 69) Ballentine, John J., Pennsylvania; 70) Brown, James Murry, Pennsylvania; 71) Cain (Cane), John, Pennsylvania; 72) Crossman, Robert, Pennsylvania; 73) Cummings, David P., Pennsylvania; 74) Hannum, James, Pennsylvania; 75) Holloway, Samuel, Pennsylvania; 76) Johnson, William, Pennsylvania; 77) Kimble (Kimbell), George C., Pennsylvania; 78) McDowell, William, Pennsylvania; 79) Reynolds, John Purdy, Pennsylvania; 80) Thurston, John M., Pennsylvania; 81) Williamson, Hiram James, Pennsylvania; 82) Wilson, John, Pennsylvania.

83) Martin, Albert, Rhode Island; 84) Bonham, James Butler, South Carolina; 85) Crawford, Lemuel, South Carolina; 86) Neggan, George, South Carolina; 87) Nelson, Edward, South Carolina; 88) Nelson, George, South Carolina; 89) Simmons, Cleveland Kinloch, South Carolina; 90) Travis, William Barret, South Carolina; 91) Bayliss, Joseph, Tennessee; 92) Blair, John, Tennessee; 93) Blair, Samuel C., Tennessee; 94) Bowman, Jesse B., Tennessee; 95) Campbell, James (Robert), Tennessee; 96) Crockett, David, Tennessee; 97) Daymon, Squire, Tennessee; 98) Dearduff, William, Tennessee; 99) Dickinson, Almeron, Tennessee; 100) Dillard, John Henry, Tennessee; 101) Ewing, James L., Tennessee; 102) Garrett, James Girard, Tennessee.

103) Harrison, Andrew Jackson, Tennessee; 104) Haskell, Charles M., Tennessee; 105) Hays, John M., Tennessee; 106) Marshall, William, Tennessee; 107) McCoy, Jesse, Tennessee; 108) McKinney, Robert, Tennessee; 109) Miller, Thomas R., Tennessee; 110) Mills, William, Tennessee; 111) Nelson, Andrew M., Tennessee; 112) Robertson, James Waters, Tennessee; 113) Smith, Andrew H., Tennessee; 114) Summerlin, A. Spain, Tennessee; 115) Summers, William E., Tennessee; 116) Taylor, Edward, Tennessee; 117) Taylor, George, Tennessee; 118) Taylor, James, Tennessee; 119) Taylor, William, Tennessee; 120) Walker, Asa, Tennessee; 121) Walker, Jacob, Tennessee.

122) Abamillo, Juan, Texas; 123) Badillo, Juan Antonio, Texas; 124) Espalier, Carlos, Texas; 125) Esparza, Gregorio (Jose Maria), Texas; 126) Fuentes, Antonio, Texas; 127) Jimenez, Damacio, Texas; 128) King, William Phillip, Texas; 129) Lewis, William Irvine, Texas; 130) Lightfoot, William J., Texas; 131) Losoya, Jose Toribio, Texas; 132) Nava, Andres, Texas; 133) Perry, Richardson, Texas; 134) Andross, Miles Deforest, Vermont; 135) Allen, Robert, Virginia; 136) Baugh, John J., Virginia; 137) Carey, William R., Virginia; 138) Garnett, William, Virginia; 139) Goodrich, John Camp, Virginia; 140) Herndon,

Patrick Henry, Virginia; 141) Kenny, James, Virginia; 142) Main, George Washington, Virginia; 143) Malone, William T., Virginia; 144) Mitchasson, Edward F., Virginia; 145) Moore, Robert B., Virginia; 146) Northcross, James, Virginia.

147) Zanco, Charles, Denmark; 148) Blazeby, William, England; 149) Bourne, Daniel, England; 150) Brown, George, England; 151) Dennison, Stephen (or Ireland), England; 152) Dimpkins, James R., England; 153) Gwynne, James C., England; 154) Hersee William Daniel, England; 155) Nowlan, James, England; 156) Sewell, Marcus L., England; 157) Starr, Richard, England; 158) Stewart, James E., England; 159) Waters, Thomas, England; 160) Wolfe, Anthony (Avram), England; 161) Wolfe, son age 12, England; 162) Wolfe, son age 11, England.

163) Burns, Samuel E., Ireland; 164) Duvall, Andrew, Ireland; 165) Evans, Robert, Ireland; 166) Hawkins, Joseph M., Ireland; 167) Jackson, Thomas, Ireland; 168) McGee, James, Ireland; 169) Rusk, Jackson J., Ireland; 170) Rusk, Jackson J., Ireland; 171) Ward, William B., Ireland; 172) Courtman, Henry, Germany; 173) Thomas, Henry, Germany; 174) Ballentine, Richard W., Scotland; 175) McGregor, John, Scotland; Robinson, Isaac, Scotland; 177) Wilson, David L., Scotland; 178) Johnson, Lewis, Wales; 179) Brown, Robert, France.

180) Day, Freeman H.K.; 181) Garvin, John E.; 182) George, James; 183) McCafferty, Edward; 184) Mitchell, William T.; 185) Mitchell, Napoleon B.; 186) Roberts, Thomas H.; 187) Smith, William H.; 188) Sutherland, William Depriest; 189) White, Robert; 190) John (last name unknown).

As I mentioned, they were all volunteers. They did not look like an army. They were everything from lawyers, doctors, shopkeepers, frontiersmen, adventurers, people who had served in other armies. They were all, though, freedom fighters who volunteered to go into the Alamo on February 23.

Commanding the Alamo was my favorite person in all of history, William Barret Travis. William Barret Travis was a lawyer. That is one reason I like him. I am a lawyer. But he was a 27-year-old individual, first born in South Carolina, raised in Alabama, and found his way to Texas; and he was a revolutionary. He wanted independence for the State of Texas—or the Republic of Texas.

He took command of the Alamo, and he sent out “scouts”—would be the term—asking that people who lived in the area come to the Alamo and help defend the Alamo, fight against this imperialistic dictator, and get Texas independence.

He sent his best friend, who also came from South Carolina, Jim Bonham, out as a scout, along with others—Juan Seguin was one—trying to get folks to come to help out at the Alamo.

Unfortunately, only one small town responded in the affirmative, and that was Gonzales, Texas, where it all began. There were 32 volunteers from Gonzalez, all men—young men—primarily the entire population of Gonzales, Texas, marched from Gonzalez to the Alamo. They were the only reinforcements that were there.

Now, if you would, Mr. Speaker, think about frontier life, the harsh frontier where the male population—basically the entire male population of a small town leaves. They headed to the Alamo where they figured that they were not going to be able to return.

The ones that were left were those strong-willed frontier women and their children, who later had to forge their own history, absent their spouses—remarkable women, remarkable men who went to the Alamo.

It is said, in history, that when these 32 defenders showed up at the Alamo, Travis looked down and said to his friend: They came here to die.

Now, William Barret Travis, in his plea for help to go and fight for liberty, independence—as I told you, most of the folks did not go. They were there already, the ones that were going to fight. He sent out many dispatches, and he sent a letter asking the people to go to the Alamo.

I have a copy of that letter, and I have another copy on my wall in my office. I have had that since the days I was a prosecutor and a judge in Texas, and many other Members from Texas have what I think is the most passionate plea for liberty written by anybody anywhere in the world.

So you see the surroundings, 186 men surrounded by thousands of other enemies, military. Here is what he said in that letter, Mr. Speaker. It is dated February 24, 1836, at the Alamo.

To all the people of Texas, fellow citizens, and compatriots, I am besieged with 1,000 or more of the enemy under Santa Anna. I have sustained a continuous bombardment and cannon fire for over 24 hours, but I have not lost a man.

The enemy has demanded surrender at its discretion. Otherwise, the fort will be put to the sword. I have answered that demand with a cannon shot, and the flag still waves proudly over the wall. I shall never surrender. I shall never retreat. I call upon you in the name of liberty, patriotism, and everything dear to our character to come to my aid with all dispatch.

If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself for as long as possible and die like a soldier that never forgets what is due his honor and that of his country.

Victory or death, William Barret Travis, commander of the Alamo.

We all know what happened later. He and his fellow freedom fighters were killed. Some historians say that before it was impossible to leave the Alamo, William Barret Travis brought the whole group—garrison, 186 volunteers, drew a line in the sand and said: if you are with me, cross the line.

Everybody crossed. They had the opportunity to leave, but they did not.

After 13 days of glory, if you will, at the Alamo, Travis and his men sacrificed their lives on the altar of freedom. March 6, 1836, that is why I mention March 6, because today is March 6. It is an anniversary of those people who gave up their lives willingly to

fight for freedom, similar to the history of the United States.

You know, America took 7 years to gain independence from the British. They lost a lot of lives, men and women, during that. It seems as though freedom always has a cost. Good things always do. Important things always do.

You see, some people in history have down in their soul, Mr. Speaker, that living free is more important than anything, including their own lives; and if they can't live as free people, they will fight and give up their lives in exchange for that belief. Those are remarkable people who have done that throughout history all over the world.

But today, we remember those 186 defenders of the Alamo, people like William Barret Travis, Davy Crockett from Tennessee, Jim Bowie from Louisiana, the 11 Tejanos that I have mentioned, because they were willing to do that.

Travis said, in the last letter that he sent from the Alamo, that victory will be worse for Santa Anna than defeat because of the losses. It turns out that was true. He was able to delay Santa Anna's march into Texas while a Texas Army was being built, surrounded by their commander, General Sam Houston, which I will get to in a minute.

Jim Bonham is another person of interest, I think. He was the scout, along with Juan Seguin, who went out to send the word: come to the Alamo for help.

As legend says, when he got to Washington-on-the-Brazos, where the Texas Republic was being formed, on March 2, 1836, drafting the declaration of independence, he asked for those men there to come to their Alamo.

They refused to do it. They said forming a government was more important than going to the Alamo. Bottom line, they didn't go.

So he gets on his horse, and he starts to ride back to the Alamo. The men there at Washington-on-the-Brazos tried to stop him: What are you doing? You will be killed.

And he said: My friends have the right to know that no one is coming.

I don't know if that happened or not. Some historians say it did. It just shows you the type of people that they were at the Alamo.

So after 13 days, Santa Anna did what he said he was going to do. He flew the red flag, blew the bugles. It was said that they would not offer any quarter to anyone unless they surrendered at a certain time.

They did not surrender. None of the men in the Alamo were given any quarter. They were all killed. Santa Anna then continued his march through Texas.

Remember, if you will, Mr. Speaker, he had already established his domain militarily over other peoples in Mexico that had the desire to object to his dic-

tatorship and suppressed them militarily.

Now, he had moved that experienced army into Texas, one at the Alamo, and was moving towards Sam Houston, who was moving his army toward the eastern part of Texas, toward the United States. That time in history is called the "Runaway Scrape."

The colonists, everybody between San Antonio and the American/Texas border, was moving east. They were leaving their property. It was being burned. They left in what is called the Runaway Scrape, not only the volunteer army, but the families as well.

So Sam Houston kept moving toward the east. He did not pitch a battle right away. He formed the army, as I said, all volunteers. Juan Seguin and his band of scouts, cavalry, if you will, had ended up joining Sam Houston.

And then, in April 1836, on the plains of San Jacinto—most Americans don't even know where that is—but it is down there near Houston, Texas. You probably have heard of that place.

In the marsh, in the swamp, these same type of individuals who were at the Alamo were in Sam Houston's army. It was a little larger, almost 600, and these were individuals of all races.

They were people from the United States, foreign countries, from Mexico, Tejanos; and they finally decided, on April 20, that they were going to stop where they were on the plains of San Jacinto in the marsh and pitch a battle.

□ 1630

Now, the plan was to have the battle held April 22. What had happened was Santa Anna had already caught up with them. He had pitched his tents, he had his thousand or so soldiers. He had two other armies still in Texas moving in to reinforce him, and everyone expected this battle to take place on April 22.

But history and war determines when battles are to take place. Sam Houston talked to his commanders. They decided it was time on April 21 to do battle. Now, history has always shown that battles take place at dawn. They still do. Well, these Texans they didn't get around to it until the afternoon on April 21. And they decided that they would just attack the Mexican Army, Santa Anna, who was not prepared for an attack. And sure enough, in the middle of the afternoon, this outnumbered Texas Army attacked Santa Anna's army.

The battle lasted 18 minutes. Something that I thought was quite unique and clever, once again, as I have mentioned, his Tejanos, of course, were fighting for Texas' independence. They were pushing for Texas' independence against the dictator Santa Anna. But they weren't wearing uniforms, not like the Mexican Army. They wore whatever they had. They looked pretty rough and pretty tough.

So Sam Houston, to make sure that the Tejanos weren't mistaken for Santa Anna's army, he had all of them put a playing card in their hatband. In those days, playing cards weren't little like we have today; they were big. So they would stick a playing card in their hatbands so they could be recognized.

His cavalry protected the flanks. The Texas Army marched in one long column. They didn't have enough for two columns. They marched down and in 18 minutes defeated Santa Anna's army, caught them by surprise, and captured almost all of them. In fact, they captured more than were in Sam Houston's army. Casualties on the part of the Texans were minor. Sam Houston was wounded in the leg. And the rest, they say, was Texas history. It was American.

Texas quickly declared and set up its own government and claimed a lot of Texas. Things have changed. When Texas became a country in 1836, here is a map of what they claimed was Texas. I won't make any editorial comments about whether we think that still should be Texas or not, Mr. Speaker, but, anyway, you see what is now modern-day Texas over here. But Texas claimed part of New Mexico, part of Arizona, all of Oklahoma, Colorado, and up to Wyoming. And you may ask: Well, how did you lose that land? Well, when Texas became part of the Union, Texas sold that to the Federal Government to pay off its debts for the war.

So, anyway, that is the way Texas used to look. It doesn't look like that anymore. We have no plans to retake this territory, Mr. Speaker. I just thought I would mention it. Anyway, that was the Republic of Texas. And Texas was an independent country for 9 years. Some say we should have stayed an independent country. I don't know about that.

Texas wanted to join the Union. Finally, after several votes, Texas got into the Union. After one Louisiana Senator switched his vote, Texas joined the Union and became part of the United States. Because of the fact that Texas was a republic, Texas can divide into five States. I don't see that happening, not like California, who is thinking about it. I don't think that is going to happen in Texas. Texas flies the Texas flag even with the American flag because Texas was a republic.

I think Texans still have that independent spirit that our ancestors had. Things are different in Texas. It is a whole different country, and the reason is because our history is different. The reason, Mr. Speaker, is because the people of Texas of all races, backgrounds, and religions still have that independent spirit about freedom, remembering our ancestors who gave their lives and gave their property so that we could have freedom and independence, and Texas could be an independent country even for 9 years.

That is why historically I think that we appreciate those people who want independence. We appreciate people who want liberty. Right now, it is those folks in Ukraine trying to keep out some dictator—I call him a dictator—President Putin of Russia.

So, Mr. Speaker, we celebrate today and honor today, March 6, because it is one of those three important days: March 2, Texas' independence; March 6, 1836, the Alamo failed, we remember those people; and then April 21, 1836, is when Texas actually got independent and started its quest into being an independent entity.

In closing, I would like to read the lyrics of a song that Marty Robbins wrote a long time ago. Mr. Speaker, you are old enough to maybe even have heard of this song, but Marty Robbins wrote it in honor of the people at the Alamo. It goes like this. It says:

In the southern part of Texas in the town of San Antone,
There's a fortress all in ruin and the weeds have overgrown.
You may look in vain for crosses and you'll never see a one,
But sometime between the setting and the rising of the sun,
You can hear a ghostly bugle as men go marching by;
You can hear them as they answer to that roll call in the sky:
Colonel Travis, Davy Crockett, and 180 more;
Captain Dickinson, Jim Bowie, stand present and accounted for.
Back in 1836, Sam Houston said to Travis:
"Get some volunteers and go fortify the Alamo."
Well, the men came from Texas and from old Tennessee and a lot of other places.
They joined up with Travis just to fight for the right to be free.
Indian scouts with squirrel guns, men with muzzle loaders,
Stood together heel and toe to defend the Alamo.
"You may never see your loved ones," Travis told them that day.
"Those who want to can leave now, those who fight to the death, let 'em stay."
So in the sand he drew a line with his army sabre,
Out of 185, not a soldier crossed the line.
With his banners a-dancin' in the dawn's golden light,
Santa Anna came prancin' on a horse that was black as the night.
He sent an officer to tell Travis to surrender.
Travis answered with a shell and a rousin' yell.
Santa Anna turned scarlet: play Deguello, he roared.
"I will show them no quarter, every one will be put to our sword."
185 holding back 5,000.
Five days, 6 days, 8 days, 10; Travis kept holding again and again.
Then Travis sent for replacements for his wounded and lame,
But the troops that were comin', never came, never came, never came.
So twice Santa Anna charged and then blew recall.
But on that fatal third time, Santa Anna breached the wall and he killed them one and all.
Now the bugles are silent and there is rust on each sword,

And the small band of soldiers lie asleep in the arms of the Lord.

In the southern part of Texas, near the town of San Antone,

Like a statue on his pinto rides a cowboy all alone.

He sees the cattle grazin' where a century before,

Santa Anna's guns were blazin' and the cannons used to roar.

His eyes turn a little misty, and his heart begins to glow,

And he takes his hat off slowly to those men of the Alamo,

To the 13 days of glory at the siege of Alamo.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's just the way it is.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business in the district.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 39 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, March 10, 2014, at 2 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4907. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Enhancement of Contractor Employee Whistleblower Protections (DFARS Case 2013-D010) (RIN: 0750-AH97) received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4908. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement: Acquisitions in Support of Operations in Afghanistan (DFARS Case 2013-D009) (RIN: 0750-AH98) received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4909. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Disclosure to Litigation Support Contractors (DFARS Case 2012-D029) (RIN: 0750-AH54) received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

4910. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Mexico pursuant to Section 2(b)(3) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945, as amended; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4911. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to TAAG Angola Airlines of Luanda, Angola; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4912. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the FY 2012 report on activities to preserve and promote minority ownership of insured financial institutions; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4913. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Alkyl Alcohol Alkoxyate Phosphate and Sulfate Derivatives; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0862; FRL-9906-24] received February 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4914. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Oklahoma; Regional Haze and Interstate Transport Affecting Visibility State Implementations Plan Revisions; Withdrawal of Federal Implementation Plan for American Electric Power/Public Service Company of Oklahoma [EPA-R06-OAR-2013-0227; FRL-9906-81-OAR] received February 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4915. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Oklahoma; Regional Haze and Interstate Transport Affecting Visibility; State Implementation Plan Revisions; Revised BART Determination for American Electric Power/Public Service Company of Oklahoma North-eastern Power Station Units 3 and 4 [EPA-R06-OAR-2013-0227; FRL-9906-93-Region 6] received February 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4916. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; Prevention of Significant Deterioration and Nonattainment New Source Review; Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) [EPA-R03-OAR-2011-0927; FRL-9906-67-Region 3] received February 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4917. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — GS-omega-kappa-Hxtx-Hv1a; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0389; FRL-9904-92] received February 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4918. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — N-(n-octyl)-2-pyrrolidone; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0093; FRL-9906-17] received February 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4919. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Saflufenacil; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0775 and EPA-HQ-

OPP-2013-0008; FRL-9905-87] received February 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4920. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's report on Foreign Policy-Based Export Controls for 2014; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4921. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report including matters relating to the interdiction of aircraft engaged in illicit drug trafficking; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4922. A letter from the Acting Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's Agency Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2014-2018; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4923. A letter from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting a Congressional Notification: Integrated Mission Management Committee and the National Intelligence Management Council; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select).

4924. A letter from the Director of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting a Congressional Notification: Appointment of National Intelligence Managers for Europe/Eurasia and Africa; to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select).

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 311. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to change the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure rule with respect to certain farms (Rept. 113-375). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. UPTON, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. BARTON, Mr. OLSON, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. LANCE, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. SCALISE, Mr. LATTA, Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia, Mr. PITTS, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. HALL, Mr. TURNER, Mr. BOUSTANY, and Mr. WOMACK):

H.R. 6. A bill to provide for expedited approval of exportation of natural gas to World Trade Organization countries, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SHUSTER (for himself, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. LOBONDO, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington):

H.R. 4156. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to allow advertisements and so-

licitations for passenger air transportation to state the base airfare of the transportation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. CRAWFORD (for himself, Mr. COSTA, Mr. TERRY, and Mr. MCINTYRE):

H.R. 4157. A bill to protect the information of livestock producers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, Agriculture, and Science, Space, and Technology, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROSKAM (for himself, Mr. JORDAN, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. YOHIO, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. GRAVES of Georgia, Mr. GOWDY, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mrs. BLACK, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. LANCE, Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. MCHENRY, Mrs. NOEM, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. ROONEY, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. HARRIS, Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER, Mr. MESSER, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. BYRNE, and Ms. JENKINS):

H.R. 4158. A bill to establish the Office of the Special Inspector General for Monitoring the Affordable Care Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Natural Resources, Education and the Workforce, Ways and Means, Oversight and Government Reform, House Administration, the Judiciary, Rules, and Appropriations, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (for herself, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. HOYER, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. KILMER, Mr. BERA of California, Ms. ESTY, Mr. VEASEY, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. TAKANO, and Ms. KELLY of Illinois):

H.R. 4159. A bill to provide for investment in innovation through research and development and STEM education, to improve the competitiveness of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. ELLMERS:

H.R. 4160. A bill to prohibit further action on the proposed rule regarding changes to Medicare prescription drug benefit programs; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (for herself and Ms. GRANGER):

H.R. 4161. A bill to encourage and further research on the engagement of underrepresented youth in the STEM fields; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. HIMES, Mr. HOLT, Mr. HONDA, Mr. NADLER, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. ESTY, Mr. ENYART, and Mr. DELANEY):

H.R. 4162. A bill to establish a Financing Energy Efficient Manufacturing Program in the Department of Energy to provide financial assistance to promote energy efficiency and onsite renewable technologies in manufacturing and industrial facilities; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SMITH of Washington (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KILMER, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. BERA of California, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. COOPER, Mr. COURTNEY, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. GARCIA, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. HECK of Washington, Mr. KIND, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. MORAN, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. NEAL, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. OWENS, Mr. POLIS, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. SCHRADER, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. HIMES, and Ms. ESTY):

H.R. 4163. A bill to extend the trade adjustment assistance program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HURT (for himself and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama):

H.R. 4164. A bill to exempt smaller public companies from requirements relating to the use of Extensible Business Reporting Language for periodic reporting to the Securities and Exchange Commission, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. FRANKS of Arizona (for himself, Mr. COSTA, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. POE of Texas, and Mr. GOSAR):

H.R. 4165. A bill to protect crime victims' rights; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. THOMPSON of California:

H.R. 4166. A bill to transfer recreational management authority for Lake Berryessa in the State of California from the Bureau of Reclamation to the Bureau of Land Management, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. BARR:

H.R. 4167. A bill to amend section 13 of the Bank Holding Company Act of 1956, known as the Volcker Rule, to exclude certain debt securities of collateralized loan obligations from the prohibition against acquiring or retaining an ownership interest in a hedge fund or private equity fund; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. ISRAEL:

H.R. 4168. A bill to provide payment for patient navigator services under title XIX of the Social Security Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. EDWARDS (for herself, Ms. BASS, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. KEATING,

Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. TONKO, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. FOSTER, and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico):

H.R. 4169. A bill to prevent deaths occurring from drug overdoses; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. FATTAH:

H.R. 4170. A bill to provide for a Youth Mental Health Research Network; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. FITZPATRICK (for himself, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. MCINTYRE, and Mr. MATHESON):

H.R. 4171. A bill to establish a commission to examine the processes used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to provide unemployment rates and to make recommendations to Congress for any changes in methodology or improvements to such processes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. GIBSON (for himself and Ms. SINEMA):

H.R. 4172. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to clarify when certain academic assessments shall be administered; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. HAHN (for herself and Mr. GIBSON):

H.R. 4173. A bill to establish the Brownfield Redevelopment and Economic Development Innovative Financing program to promote urban renewal, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. ISSA (for himself and Mr. FARENTHOLD):

H.R. 4174. A bill to amend title 39, United States Code, to modernize and improve Alaska bypass freight mail transportation; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut:

H.R. 4175. A bill to provide for the issuance of a Victory for Veterans stamp, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. LOFGREN (for herself, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. MICHAUD, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. POLIS, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. LEWIS, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. ESTY, and Ms. KUSTER):

H.R. 4176. A bill to establish a position of Science Laureate of the United States; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

By Mr. PAULSEN:

H.R. 4177. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow Medicare beneficiaries participating in a Medicare Advantage MSA to contribute their own money to their MSA; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. POLIS (for himself, Mr. SALMON, Mr. GARCIA, and Mr. AMODEI):

H.R. 4178. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for reforms to the EB-5 immigrant investor program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. POLIS:

H.R. 4179. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to establish requirements relating to marijuana impaired driving, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 4180. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permit rollovers from health savings accounts to Medicare Advantage MSAs; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 4181. A bill to appropriate funds for carrying out certain provisions of the Public Health Service Act relating to emergency care and trauma services; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri:

H.R. 4182. A bill to provide that the Ozark National Scenic Riverways shall be administered in accordance with the general management plan for that unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TIERNEY:

H.R. 4183. A bill to amend the Truth in Lending Act to empower the States to set the maximum annual percentage rates applicable to consumer credit transactions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. TITUS (for herself, Mr. COOK, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. HONDA, Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. MEEKS, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. BENTIVOLIO, and Mr. MCNERNEY):

H.R. 4184. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the manner in which an advance payment of initial educational assistance paid by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is charged against the entitlement of a veteran to such assistance; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. MEEHAN (for himself, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. WAXMAN, and Mr. ISRAEL):

H. Con. Res. 90. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. RANGEL (for himself, Mr. COBLE, Mr. CONYERS, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas):

H. Con. Res. 91. Concurrent resolution encouraging reunions of divided Korean American families; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. FUDGE:

H. Res. 504. A resolution raising a question of privileges of the House.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. NADLER, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. GRIMM, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. CHABOT, Ms. TITUS, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. WOLF, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida):

H. Res. 505. A resolution strongly recommending that the United States renegotiate the return of the Iraqi Jewish Archive to Iraq; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. CANTOR, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Mr. HOYER, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky):

H. Res. 506. A resolution honoring the life and legacy of Václav Havel by directing the House of Representatives Fine Arts Board to provide for the display of a bust of Václav Havel in the United States Capitol; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. BARBER (for himself, Mr. BARROW of Georgia, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. DELAUNO, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. ENYART, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HONDA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. RUSH, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. TITUS, Mr. TONKO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VARGAS, and Ms. WILSON of Florida):

H. Res. 507. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives in support of a women's economic bill of rights; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. NORTON:

H. Res. 508. A resolution expressing support for designating October 6, 2014, through October 12, 2014, as "Naturopathic Medicine Week" to recognize the value of naturopathic medicine in providing safe, effective, and affordable health care; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SHIMKUS:

H. Res. 509. A resolution expressing support for designation of August 23 as "Black Ribbon Day" to recognize the victims of Soviet Communist and Nazi regimes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

173. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Legislature of the State of New Jersey, relative to supporting Senate Bill 1926 to delay implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012; to the Committee on Financial Services.

174. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the State of South Carolina, relative to a Congressional Resolution consenting to the Health Care Compact; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. GARDNER:

H.R. 6.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. SHUSTER:

H.R. 4156.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically Clause 3 (related to regulation of Commerce among the several States).

By Mr. CRAWFORD:

H.R. 4157.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the enumerated powers listed in Article I, Section 8, which include the power to "regulate commerce . . . among the several States . . .".

By Mr. ROSKAM:

H.R. 4158.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

(a) Article I, Section 1, to exercise the legislative powers vested in Congress as granted in the Constitution; and

(b) Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, which gives Congress the authority "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof"; and

(c) Article I, Section 9, Clause 7, which states that "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time"; and

(d) Article II, Section 2, Clause 2, which states that the President, "by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States. . ."

By Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 4159.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mrs. ELLMERS:

H.R. 4160.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The authority to enact this bill is derived from, but may not be limited to, Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ:

H.R. 4161.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States, as enumerated in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4162.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 (relating to the power of Congress to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States.)

By Mr. SMITH of Washington:

H.R. 4163.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section 8 Clause 3—"To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and within the Indian Tribes."

By Mr. HURT:

H.R. 4164.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. FRANKS of Arizona:

H.R. 4165.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 Clause 1, which reads: The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States; Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18, which reads: The Congress shall have Power To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. THOMPSON of California:

H.R. 4166.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution: The Congress shall have Power . . . To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof

By Mr. BARR:

H.R. 4167.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. ISRAEL:

H.R. 4168.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution

By Ms. EDWARDS:

H.R. 4169.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress is authorized to enact this legislation under the Commerce Clause, Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, "to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes." Additionally, Congress has the authority to enact this legislation pursuant to the Preamble of the Constitution, "to promote the general welfare."

By Mr. FATTAH:

H.R. 4170.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I Section 8 Clause 3 of the United States Constitution, which states the United States Congress shall have power "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes".

By Mr. FITZPATRICK:

H.R. 4171.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. GIBSON:

H.R. 4172.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Ms. HAHN:

H.R. 4173.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1 and 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ISSA:

H.R. 4174.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

To establish Post Offices and post Roads;

By Mr. LARSON of Connecticut:

H.R. 4175.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 7, section 8, of article I to establish Post Offices and Post Roads, in combination with clause 18, section 8, article I to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Ms. LOFGREN:

H.R. 4176.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. PAULSEN:

H.R. 4177.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8

By Mr. POLIS:

H.R. 4178.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. POLIS:

H.R. 4179.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8, clause 1 (relating to the general welfare of the United States); and Article I, section 8, clause 3 (relating to the power to regulate interstate commerce).

By Mr. ROSS:

H.R. 4180.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1:

The Congress shall have the power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imports and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. RUSH:

H.R. 4181.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Sec. 8 of the United States Constitution—

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; . . .

By Mr. SMITH of Missouri:

H.R. 4182.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the constitution states that: "The Congress shall have the power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any

claims of the United States, or of any particular state."

By Mr. TIERNEY:

H.R. 4183.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8.

By Ms. TITUS:

H.R. 4184.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 32: Mr. PERLMUTTER.
H.R. 118: Mr. CARTWRIGHT and Mr. SCHIFF.
H.R. 148: Mr. SARBANES.
H.R. 411: Mr. CALVERT.
H.R. 460: Mr. SENSENBRENNER and Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 515: Mr. MEEKS.
H.R. 522: Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. POSEY, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. GOODLATTE, and Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 533: Ms. BORDALLO.
H.R. 647: Mr. MCALLISTER.
H.R. 688: Mr. RUIZ and Mr. KILDEE.

H.R. 689: Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 778: Mr. WITTMAN.
H.R. 795: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
H.R. 808: Mr. DEFazio.

H.R. 822: Mr. TIERNEY, Ms. BASS, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. TERRY, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. MAFFEI.

H.R. 863: Mr. WALZ, Ms. CHU, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. MENG, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. HANNA, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mrs. CAPITO, and Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 956: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, and Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 1084: Mr. CÁRDENAS and Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 1201: Mr. STIVERS, Mr. MORAN, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mrs. WALORSKI, and Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 1249: Mr. PRICE of Georgia.

H.R. 1252: Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 1263: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 1310: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 1331: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H.R. 1354: Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. MULVANEY, and Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 1386: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 1427: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 1475: Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 1507: Mr. NEAL.

H.R. 1528: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 1551: Mrs. BLACK, Mr. BYRNE, Mr. FORBES, and Mr. POMPEO.

H.R. 1563: Mrs. WAGNER and Mr. AMODEL.

H.R. 1591: Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 1692: Mr. NADLER and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1701: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 1726: Mr. ROTHFUS.

H.R. 1751: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 1832: Mr. NEAL and Mr. COOK.

H.R. 1915: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 1953: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.

H.R. 1998: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 2005: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 2021: Mr. SCHWEIKERT and Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 2235: Mr. KING of New York, Mr. MICHAUD, and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 2291: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.

H.R. 2315: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2364: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 2377: Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois and Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H.R. 2452: Mr. PETERS of California.

H.R. 2453: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2456: Mr. BROUN of Georgia.

H.R. 2510: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 2529: Ms. PINGREE of Maine.

H.R. 2560: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 2582: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 2591: Mr. RUNYAN and Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 2646: Ms. SPEIER.

H.R. 2654: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. COOK, and Mr. LAMALFA.

H.R. 2707: Mr. JONES and Mr. ROTHFUS.

H.R. 2772: Mr. BACHUS.

H.R. 2825: Mr. SIRE.

H.R. 2847: Mr. BISHOP of Utah and Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 2901: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California and Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 2921: Mr. HANNA, Ms. DELBENE, and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 2932: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Ms. EDWARDS, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. SARBANES, and Ms. SINEMA.

H.R. 2935: Ms. BASS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 2939: Mr. DESANTIS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. PAULSEN, and Mr. KINGSTON.

H.R. 2996: Mr. MESSER.

H.R. 3022: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.

H.R. 3043: Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 3086: Mr. HIMES and Mr. CALVERT.

H.R. 3116: Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 3118: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 3155: Mr. KING of New York and Mr. BILIRAKIS.

H.R. 3211: Mr. HURT and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 3240: Mr. HECK of Nevada.

H.R. 3305: Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 3318: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 3384: Mr. SCHNEIDER and Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 3397: Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. TONKO, Mr. SIMPSON, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. STEWART, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 3431: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 3464: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 3474: Mr. SCHOCK, Ms. JENKINS, and Mr. LIPINSKI.

H.R. 3482: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 3494: Ms. MATSUI and Mr. GIBSON.

H.R. 3505: Mr. TAKANO and Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 3508: Mr. BENTIVOLIO.

H.R. 3530: Mr. SESSIONS and Mr. CARTER.

H.R. 3600: Mr. ROE of Tennessee and Mr. PERRY.

H.R. 3620: Ms. LEE of California and Mr. ENYART.

H.R. 3663: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.

H.R. 3673: Mr. HARRIS and Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 3698: Mr. SESSIONS and Mr. CAPUANO.

H.R. 3717: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio and Mr. SCHWEIKERT.

H.R. 3725: Mr. ROKITA.

H.R. 3732: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 3740: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 3749: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 3829: Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 3873: Mr. SCHOCK and Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 3929: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 3930: Mr. KING of New York.

H.R. 3958: Mr. JONES, Mr. O'ROURKE, and Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 3978: Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 3982: Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 4015: Ms. ESHOO, Mr. KIND, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. PAULSEN, Mr. REED, Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. COHEN, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. HONDA, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. TONKO, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. HARPER, and Mr. GINGREY of Georgia.

H.R. 4026: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mrs. BUSTOS, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. TITUS, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, and Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 4031: Mr. COLLINS of New York and Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.

H.R. 4040: Mr. RYAN of Ohio and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 4041: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 4045: Mr. BARROW of Georgia, Mr. GRIMALVA, Mr. KIND, Mr. OLSON, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. FARR, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KILMER, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico, Mr. MAFFEI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCINTYRE, Ms. MENG, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. MOORE, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. NEAL, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. WELCH, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. GOWDY, and Mr. WILLIAMS.

H.R. 4060: Mr. FINCHER, Mr. BARR, and Ms. GRANGER.

H.R. 4068: Mr. TERRY and Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 4070: Mr. YOHO, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, and Mr. GIBBS.

H.R. 4092: Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. HIMES, Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Mr. PALLONE, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 4106: Mr. COFFMAN and Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 4128: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 4137: Mr. TIBERI.

H.R. 4138: Mrs. WAGNER, Mr. POE of Texas, and Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.R. 4139: Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, and Mr. FLEMING.

H.R. 4140: Ms. BROWN of Florida.

H.R. 4152: Ms. GRANGER, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. JEFFRIES.

H.J. Res. 68: Mr. WAXMAN.

H. Con. Res. 16: Mr. ENYART, Mr. ROHR-ABACHER, Mr. SCHRADER, and Mr. BYRNE.

H. Con. Res. 77: Mr. LIPINSKI.

H. Con. Res. 86: Mr. SOUTHERLAND and Ms. DELBENE.

H. Res. 36: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H. Res. 231: Mr. FARENTHOLD.

H. Res. 418: Mr. WAXMAN.

H. Res. 442: Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. OLSON, Mr. ROKITA, and Mr. HARPER.

H. Res. 476: Mr. ROTHFUS.

H. Res. 494: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H. Res. 498: Mr. POCAN.

H. Res. 499: Mr. SCHNEIDER.

DISCHARGE PETITIONS—
ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

The following Member added his name to the following discharge petition:

Petition 7 by Mr. BISHOP on the bill (H.R. 1010): BOBBY L. RUSH.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO IOWA DONOR
NETWORK**HON. TOM LATHAM**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize the Iowa Donor Network for twenty years of saving and enhancing lives in our great state through organ and tissue donation.

The Iowa Donor Network plays a unique role in our state as the sole, federally designated organ procurement organization. For two decades, this remarkable organization has saved and improved countless lives through organ and tissue recovery. By expertly employing the five core values of care, responsibility, adaptability, integrity, and respect, the Iowa Donor Network has made great strides towards fulfilling its vision of increasing Iowa's viable donations and reducing waiting periods for those in need of transplants.

Mr. Speaker, the great work done every day by the Iowa Donor Network, and all organ procurement organizations across the country, provides a crucial and life-changing service to our communities. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in saying "yes" to individual organ donation and I thank all organ and tissue donors for their invaluable and selfless contribution. It is a great honor to represent so many Iowans in the United States Congress who have been positively impacted by organ and tissue donation, and I look forward to many more years of the Iowa Donor Network's positive impact in Iowa.

CELEBRATING MR. MERVIN FIELD

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Mr. Mervin Field on the occasion of the Tiburon Heritage & Arts Commission event to be held on March 10, 2014 to honor more than seven decades of Mr. Fields' service. As founder of the Field Poll, the results of which could make or break careers, he has had tremendous influence in the political history of California and has been the recipient of numerous awards for his work, including the New York-based Market Research Council's Hall of Fame award.

Mervin also served his country by joining the Merchant Marines in 1942, where he was on active duty for three years in the North Atlantic and South Pacific.

After years of such impressive accomplishments, Mr. Field was awarded by the Trustees of the California State University with an hon-

orary Doctor of Laws degree, noting that he had become "a highly respected leader" and "a trusted advisor to academia, civic associations, governmental institutions and the business community."

Mervin is a community treasure, and we are grateful for his long and impressive record of service. Please join me in expressing deep appreciation to Mr. Mervin Field for his many years of dedication and long-lasting impact on California politics.

HONORING CARTER R. THOMPSON

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Carter R. Thompson. Carter is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 310, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Carter has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Carter has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Carter has earned the rank of Warrior in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say, has become a Brotherhood Member of the Order of the Arrow, and serves as his troop's Senior Patrol Leader. Carter has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Carter cleared a trail and replaced a vandalized handrail at the organized campground at Longview Lake in Lee's Summit, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Carter R. Thompson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE 10TH ANNUAL
VETERANS SNOWMOBILE RIDE**HON. DAN BENISHEK**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 10th annual Veterans Snowmobile Ride, which will occur on Saturday, March 8, 2014.

This event, founded by Don and Diane Reed, veterans and owners of the Fox River Motel and sponsored by the Seney Snowmobile Association, leads riders through approximately one hundred miles of the scenic

Upper Peninsula of Michigan in honor of those who have fought to defend the American way of life.

Beginning in 2004 with just 50 riders, it has grown to nearly 300 in the 2013 ride. The Veterans Snowmobile Ride has the distinction of being the largest veterans ride of this type in the United States.

In addition to those who ride their snowmobiles in this event, I wish to commend all those who help to realize the Veterans Snowmobile Ride motto of "be a Vet, bring a Vet, thank a Vet."

This event is a poignant way to thank those who have defended our country and a continuation of the Northern Michigan outdoorsman tradition.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ERIC A. "RICK" CRAWFORD

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, March 5, 2014 I was inadvertently detained on rollcall vote 97. Had I been present to vote I would have voted "yes."

HONORING DANIEL J. GILBERT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Daniel J. Gilbert. Daniel is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 865, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Daniel has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Daniel has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Daniel has earned the rank of Firebuilder in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say, has become an Ordeal Member of the Order of the Arrow, and earned the Ad Altari Dei religious award. Daniel has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Daniel dismantled an old playground set, then expanded and mulched the playground area at the Hope House in Lee's Summit, Missouri, in order to prepare the site for a new playground.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Daniel J. Gilbert for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

H.R. 2548, ELECTRIFY AFRICA ACT
OF 2013

HON. PETER J. ROSKAM

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise in support of H.R. 2548, the Electrify Africa Act, which will help enrich the lives of the some 589 million people who live in an electricity depleted part of Africa.

This legislation will bring much needed support to a region that desperately needs it. As you are aware, 68 percent of the population in sub-Saharan Africa does not have access to electricity. This bill, if enacted, would establish a base of infrastructure from which economies can grow, improve health and education outcomes, and contribute to sustainable poverty reduction.

I have visited Ghana and Liberia and seen firsthand the struggles that people deal with every day as they try to live a normal life. Power outages are a regular occurrence, while families may wait hours, days, or even weeks for electricity to be restored. A reliable electrical grid will help give businesses looking to make investments in Africa a greater degree of confidence in the infrastructure. The investments they make could help pull many out of poverty and hunger as local economies grow and people gain steady employment.

There are not just economic benefits to consider, though. Electricity is also crucial to health outcomes. Certain medicines and vaccines require strict temperature regulation that is impossible to achieve without access to reliable electricity. Lifesaving devices and monitoring devices also require energy to function. An improved electrical infrastructure could also reduce the prevalence of illnesses like respiratory diseases that come from the use of harmful household fuels. On average, there are more than 3 million annual premature deaths from respiratory disease in sub-Saharan Africa. Shockingly, this number is higher than the annual number of deaths from HIV/AIDS and malaria.

One final benefit I want to highlight is the educational improvement achievable as schools with a dependable source of energy can harness technology to educate the rapidly-growing youth population in Africa. In some countries, more than half of the population is under the age of 25. Quality education for this generation of young people could further contribute to dynamism and innovation in their countries' economies.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 2548 will bring many positive opportunities to a continent that is in great need of assistance. I truly appreciate you and the committee giving this bill the attention it deserves. Electrifying Africa will not only create a brighter future for those who live in the region, but will also strengthen Africa's independence, promote continued economic development, and ensure the continent remains a vibrant source of art, culture, and history for generations to come.

RECOGNIZING LINDA MARTIN

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Mrs. Linda Martin, a finalist for the 2014 School Counselor of the Year award. This distinguished award, presented by the American School Counselor Association, honors school counselors "who have made outstanding and exemplary contributions to students, the school community, and the school counseling profession."

Mrs. Martin has led the Comprehensive Guidance Program at Palm Lake Elementary School for 20 years. As an innovative teacher, she founded the Kids Who Care program to serve Palm Lake Elementary, the Orlando community and Nkomo Primary School, a sister school in South Africa. Her classroom lessons cover a wide range of topics including character development and leadership.

Mrs. Martin's remarkable service has also been recognized on the county and state levels. In 2012, she was named Orange County School Counselor of the Year, and, in 2013, was awarded Elementary School Counselor of the Year by the Florida School Counselor Association.

School counselors play an invaluable role in students' academic and personal development, teaching important life skills and compelling them to strive toward their goals. It is my pleasure to recognize Mrs. Martin for her exemplary dedication to the students of Palm Lake Elementary.

IN HONOR OF THE ARIZONA STATE
LIBRARY

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Arizona State Library. The 150th anniversary of the Arizona Territorial Library, which was established in 1864 and became the State Library in 1915, was celebrated this year. Next year is the State Library's 100th anniversary.

A department of the Secretary of State's office, the State Library provides access to historical records and operates the Arizona Capitol Museum. In the beginning, the State Library was mainly a law library, recording the laws of the territorial government and conducting legislative research. In recent years, this institution has grown to house historical archives, public records, and special collections such as the Arizona Memory Project, which is a collection of digitized records about the history and geography of Arizona. It also provides consulting services to county and local libraries and other government agencies to help them better manage public records. As part of the Library of Congress's Chronicling America territorial newspaper collection, the State Library also houses the Arizona Digital Newspaper Project. It was recently recognized

as the Federal Depository Library of the Year for 2013 and is Arizona's only complete federal documents collection.

Congratulations to the Arizona State Library for its many years of service to the people of Arizona.

COMMEMORATING THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ST. PETER'S PARISH OF THE NEW YORK ARCHDIOCESE

HON. MICHAEL G. GRIMM

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. GRIMM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 175th Anniversary of the founding of St. Peter's Parish, the mother parish of Staten Island. The social vitality and spirit of community that the St. Peter's Parish brings to my district cannot possibly be overstated and, as the oldest Roman Catholic parish on Staten Island, this historic occasion is of great significance to our entire community. With the Catholic population of Staten Island consisting of only around 100 people at the founding of the parish in 1839, Father Ildefonso Madrano, the first minister of St. Peter's, was also tasked with serving the Catholic communities of Perth Amboy, New Brunswick, and Princeton, New Jersey. While the congregation met in an abandoned factory for five years, construction on a dedicated church moved slowly yet steadily, made possible by a generous donation of land by the New Brighton Association.

Quickly turning into a staple of life on Staten Island, the pastors of St. Peter's directed the construction of a grammar school as well as additional parishes on the island as the local population continued to grow. At the same time, church ministers showed their dedication to the local community by tending to Staten Islanders' various spiritual and material needs. One of St. Peter's early pastors, Father Patrick Murphy, gave his life in the service of those in need, contracting cholera while tending to the thousands of Irish immigrants quarantined in a hospital in the nearby Tompkinsville neighborhood of the Island.

It is in the same spirit that the parish of St. Peter's has exemplified the communal spirit of caring and service over the past 175 years. Thanks to the resilience of community members and parishioners, St. Peter's has survived and even expanded its educational role with the establishment what is now the St. Peter's Boys High School under Monsignor Joseph Farrell in the early 20th Century. The contributions of the St. Peter's community continue up to this day, with the parish under the faithful guidance of co-vicar Monsignor James J. Dorney since 1986.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply humbled to represent this dedicated congregation in Congress, and I would ask my esteemed colleagues to join me in honoring and celebrating the virtues that the St. Peter's parish has displayed over its long history. I cannot imagine what the Staten Island community would be like today without the contributions of the St. Peter's congregation, and I sincerely wish this

incredible institution a happy 175th birthday, with hopefully just as many more to come.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE AND
CONTRIBUTIONS OF PATRICK J.
MCDONOUGH

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, Robert Mansker, a longtime and now retired staff member in the House, asked me to recognize the passing of another longtime and dedicated staff member of this body: Patrick J. McDonough, as Chief of the Publications and Distribution Service.

The House lost a fine citizen on Sunday, November 10. Patrick J. McDonough of Friendship Heights passed away from a continuing struggle with respiratory problems. His illness took him from us far too soon. He was a very familiar face to the long-time employees of the House.

When the House maintained the "Folding Room" in years past, Pat rose to the position of Chief of the Publications and Distribution Service, as it was formally known. He maintained an incredibly personable demeanor, and he worked well with both Democrats and Republicans.

Born October 25, 1943, Pat was originally from Parkersburg, West Virginia, where he attended the Parkersburg Catholic School System. He continued his higher education at The Pontifical College Josephinum, Catholic University and American University.

Pat taught high school religion at St. Anthony's Catholic High School in Washington, DC, and coached junior varsity basketball during the period John Thompson, Sr. was head coach. He was an avid supporter of the Georgetown Hoyas, always inviting friends to join him to share his mid-court seats at the Verizon Center for home games.

Pat then began his career in government, when he came to the House of Representatives. He then served in the Clinton Administration in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, until his retirement.

Pat was a proud member of The Society of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick in the City of New York and joined with them each year when the group convened.

A celebration of his life was held at St. Margaret Mary Church in Parkersburg on Sunday, November 18, followed by his burial at Mt. Carmel Cemetery. Our condolences are extended to his family and to his many friends.

RECOGNIZING VICTIMS OF THE
MASS MURDER OF ARMENIANS

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise awareness of the mass murder of Armenians during the state-spon-

sored pogroms 26 years ago in Sumgait, Azerbaijan. These ethnically motivated mass killings were an affront to basic human rights and the continued lack of international recognition and acknowledgment represents a grave injustice.

Peaceful demonstrations by Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh, who sought freedom and protested against policies that discriminated against Armenians, were met with violence against the Armenians of Sumgait, who were hundreds of miles away, defenseless, and targeted simply because they were Armenians. Nearby security forces allowed the violence to continue unabated and turned a blind eye to the horrific violence directed against Armenian civilians. True democracies must respect the rights of the minority and the human rights of all residents.

On July 27, 1988, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed Amendment 2690, which called upon the Soviet government to "respect the legitimate aspirations of the Armenian people", and noted that "dozens of Armenians have been killed and hundreds injured during the recent unrest." The U.S. Senate passed an amendment in July 1988, acknowledging that even the Soviet authorities had described these massacres as a 'pogrom'.

Today, I remember the victims and ask this body to join me in honoring their memories.

ECOGRAPHICS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud EcoGraphics Printing and owner Scott Feavel for receiving the Small Business of the Year award from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

The Small Business of the Year is awarded to a business with 50 employees or less and is involved and engaged in improving the business community in Jefferson County.

EcoGraphics Printing produces excellent work for their clients. As the leader of the company, Scott Feavel is involved with the community on many fronts. He generously raises money for Children's Hospital cancer ward, donates to several associations throughout Jefferson County and mentors other chamber members and small business people.

I extend my deepest congratulations to EcoGraphics Printing and owner Scott Feavel for this well deserved honor from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County. I have no doubt Scott and EcoGraphics Printing will exhibit the same dedication and character in all their future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS A. SHERMAN

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to a man who has dedi-

cated 50 years of his life in the service of the State of California and to the United States of America. I say with the utmost sincerity there are few who have contributed more to the understanding and development of the challenging and dangerous discipline of wildland firefighting as Thomas A. Sherman. Riverside County is fortunate to have enjoyed the leadership and experience that Tom Sherman has provided. On March 8, 2014, he will formally retire from the Bureau of Land Management Fire Service as Division Chief of California Desert District Fire and Aviation. In total, Tom has served in multiple capacities of the fire service at the county, state, and federal level.

The roots of Tom's service go back generations when the Sherman (Schermarm) Family left Germany in the late 1800s to become some of the first settlers of the San Jacinto Mountains. Many years later, Tom was born in Upland, California on July 6, 1946 to Jack and Georgette Sherman. He spent a great deal of his youth in the Santa Ana Canyon learning from his grandfather and attending elementary school in Corona. He began what would become a long and thriving career in firefighting in 1963 as a Seasonal Firefighter with the California Division of Forestry (CDF) in Corona. After graduating from Blythe High School in 1965, he worked as a Firefighter with CDF in San Jacinto, California until 1966.

In September of 1966, Tom answered his nation's call and was drafted into the U.S. Army. He attended basic training at Fort Ord, California and was subsequently sent to Vietnam in 1967 as a soldier with the 1st Battalion, 84th Artillery of the 9th Infantry Division. His potential was recognized by his superiors with a promotion to Sergeant and gun-crew NCO in charge. He and his battalion earned two Presidential Unit Citations for their gallant service. Tom returned to the United States in March of 1968 and took the knowledge learned in Vietnam to train new artillery soldiers at the Artillery School at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky. He was honorably discharged from the Army in June of 1968 as a Specialist 5th Class. Tom returned to California and immediately resumed his job at CDF as a Firefighter in Orange County.

Tom's natural leadership led to the initiation of numerous firefighting programs that exist to this day. He designed the Riverside County Fire Department emblem, which was formally adopted in 1976 and is still used. That same year while buying guitar strings at the Corona Music Center he met MaryAnn Colapinto. Not long after they were walking down the aisle to be married.

As the 1970s progressed, he was appointed the first Fire Captain in the Riverside County Fire Department (RCFD). In that capacity he further revolutionized wildland fire response through the development of rapidly deployable hand-crews and a state-recognized crew relief driver program. His vast experience led the transformation of obsolete fire trucks into "Brush Engines" specifically designed for the unique terrain of Southern California. In 1985 he was recognized as a California State Certified Fire Captain for the impacts made across the county and state. Tom continued to advocate issues at the RCFD as both the President of the Riverside County Volunteer Fire Association and Vice President of the Riverside County Fire Chiefs Association.

In the mid-1990s Tom expanded his influence when he was hired by the US Forest Service. There he was promoted to the position of Fire Crew manager for the Cleveland National Forest's Hotshot Crew. He transitioned to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as a seasonal Fire Prevention Technician at the Barstow District, Apple Valley Fire Center. His leadership was soon recognized, and he was promoted to Battalion Chief and permanent Fire Prevention Officer for Palm Springs and South Coast Regions. In 2003 was promoted to Division Chief and filled the position of California Desert District Fire Operations Supervisor. There, he was responsible for training, equipping, and standardizing engine crews, thus increasing professionalism of the teams and interoperability throughout the district. Most recently, Tom has acted as California Desert District Fire and Aviation Manager, where he enhanced interagency cooperation throughout the State of California, formalized federal air support to fire, and reinforced the reputation of BLM as a viable fire-fighting service.

Today, Tom and MaryAnn reside in Corona, where MaryAnn is a Librarian of 25 years at Jefferson Elementary and a member of the Corona Library Board of Trustees. Tom has also been a member of the Elks Club and supports veterans issues as an active member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Their son, Tom began following his father's footsteps as a volunteer firefighter until he entered the United States Air Force Academy in 1991. He is currently a Colonel-Select in the United States Air Force's Security Forces and a student at the National War College at Ft McNair. Their daughter, Nancy, is a Global Clinical Research Program Manager at City of Hope in Pasadena, California.

Throughout his career, Tom's unending love for the fire service created a drive that never ceased to encourage those around him. Fortunately, his legacy will live on through the countless firefighters he has mentored. I am proud to honor such a tremendous member of our community. Passion of this level is rare, but it is the standard that Tom has set for his family, his fellow firefighters, and his community members. I believe I speak for the countless individuals who have benefited from Tom's service when I thank him for the contributions he has made and salute him as he retires after 50 years of service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I want to state for the record that on Wednesday, March 5, 2014, I unfortunately missed rollcall votes as I traveled to New Britain, CT, with President Barack Obama on official business.

Had I been present I would have voted:

"No" on the Previous Question (roll #93). Had a majority of the House voted no, this bill would have allowed a vote to renew the emergency unemployment insurance to help over 35,000 jobseekers in Connecticut;

"No" on H. Res. 497 (roll #94), which prevented any amendments to H.R. 4118 from being considered;

"Aye" on H.R. 938, the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act (roll #95), which I proudly co-sponsored;

"Aye" on the Motion to Recommit H.R. 4118 (roll #96) to prevent H.R. 4118 from altering, weakening, or delaying the ACA's prohibition of discrimination based on pre-existing conditions or gender and tax credits and rebates;

"No" on H.R. 4118 (roll #97). Back in July of last year, I was concerned that the federal marketplace would not be ready for the October 1, 2013, start date for enrollment under the Affordable Care Act. And, in fact, as we saw last fall, the federal website was not ready to handle the volume from states that didn't set up their own exchange. The website problems were unacceptable. Based on the situation that I saw eight months ago, I believed that giving folks an extra year to learn about the benefits and responsibilities under the new law without penalty was a reasonable modification, particularly with misinformation spread about the Affordable Care Act and the uncertainty about the readiness of the marketplace.

I believe that my job is to solve problems and vote based on actual facts in my state and district, not ideology. And the facts in Connecticut in March 2014 are quite different than they were in July 2013. The exchanges have been up and running for five full months, and Connecticut is leading the way. With less than one month left in the enrollment period, over 130,000 people in Connecticut have signed up for health coverage through Access Health CT, exceeding the state and federal government's goals. Now is not the time to retroactively delay the individual mandate. As I've previously stated, the individual mandate, upheld by the Supreme Court, is a critical part of the Affordable Care Act. Since July 2013, I've held workshops for small businesses and individuals to learn more about the Affordable Care Act and how to sign up for health insurance. I've heard stories from constituents about how the Affordable Care Act has helped them access affordable, quality health care. A woman from Canaan, a breast cancer survivor, is now saving over \$1,500 on her monthly premium; a former small business owner in New Britain can afford health insurance for the first time in 12 years.

The law is not perfect, and improvements can, should, and have been made. I will continue to raise concerns I've heard from folks in my district and to work with the Obama Administration to fix problems as they arise. But there is no question that the responsible course of action is to continue to move forward;

"Aye" on H.R. 2126, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act (roll #98), which was a bipartisan bill to expand energy efficiency standards.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote No. 98 on Wednesday, March 5, 2014, I was inadvertently recorded as "nay" when I intended to vote "aye" on H.R. 2126, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2014, as amended.

I've long been a proponent of improving energy efficiency across the board. I know the cheapest and cleanest kilowatts are the ones we don't need to generate because we are using energy more efficiently.

I've even authored my own bill to improve the energy efficiency of consumer electronics, the Smart Electronics Act. I whole heartedly support the package of measures that were included in H.R. 2126, which include improving energy efficiency at federal data centers, increasing efficiency standards for grid-enabled water heaters, promoting efficiency retrofits on low-income housing, and creating incentives for landlords and tenants to boost energy savings in commercial properties.

I hope that House passage of this bill will enable progress in the Senate on energy efficiency legislation; and I want to reiterate my support for H.R. 2126, which I had intended to express through an "aye" vote.

CONGRATULATING THE OXFORD HILLS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Oxford Hills Chamber of Commerce Business and Community Award Winners. The Oxford Hills Chamber of Commerce serves the people and business communities of central and western Maine, working hard to strengthen economic opportunity throughout the region and the state.

Each year, the Oxford Hills Chamber of Commerce recognizes local businesses, business leaders, and individuals who promote and advance a vital and healthy business environment. These individuals and businesses are committed to strengthening opportunity and prosperity in Maine.

This year's award recipients include: Oxford Federal Credit Union, recipient of the Business of the Year Award; Ronald Kugell, recipient of the Community Service Award; Catherine Fanjoy-Coffey, recipient of the Employee of the Year Award; and Buy the Fire, recipient of the Rising Star Award.

These recipients are among the best that Maine has to offer. Through their leadership and incredible commitment to their communities and the region, Maine is a better place in which to live and do business.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Oxford Hills Chamber of Commerce and these award recipients on their outstanding service and achievements.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following regarding two missed votes on March 4, 2014.

"Yes" on H.R. 3370, Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act.

"Yes" on H. Res. 488, Supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic change and calling to end the violence.

ALEXSANDER HAY**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Alexander Hay for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Alexander Hay is an 11th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Alexander Hay is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Alexander Hay for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING A.H. PARKER HIGH SCHOOL AS ALABAMA'S CLASS 5A STATE BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS 2014

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, continuing in the tradition of the "District of Champions," I rise today to honor the A.H. Parker High School Thundering Herd on winning the 2014 State of Alabama title in the 5A State Basketball Championship—the first state title since 1975. On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, I pay tribute to the Thundering Herd for their exemplary athleticism and teamwork as well as the outstanding leadership of Head Coach Reggie McGary and his coaching staff. We are extremely proud of these young men!

Parker's championship victory capped off an extraordinary season of 23 wins and 6 losses. Coach McGary credited his team's success to the leadership of his assistant coach, Randal

Smith. According to McGary, Smith's persistence in stressing the importance of defense was the team's key to victory. Throughout the championship game, Smith demanded that his defensive players bring their best to the court.

To earn their spot in the championship game, Parker High School dominated their opponents during the Steele City Invitational Tournament last December. The Thundering Herd faced its rival Ramsay High School to clinch the state title on March 1, 2014. During the championship game, the thundering herd played with the same skill and intensity that sustained them throughout the season. The team was celebrated for their consistent ability to defensively shutdown their opponents. Their strategy was no different when they competed for the state title as the Thundering Herd held Ramsey to just six points during the third quarter.

Although the team trailed 23–20 with 2:17 left in the first half, they would not allow their opponent to score again until the end of the third quarter. Senior Marquell Olivier led Parker with 15 points and nine rebounds while Omani Williams served as a defensive force for the team. Alontae Johnson also contributed nine points to the Thundering Herd's 56–46 victory. The win occurred on the 50th anniversary of the Thundering Herd's 1964 National Black High School Championship won at Tennessee State University.

As the daughter of a high school basketball coach, I know this decisive victory is the result of the tremendous efforts of both the players and coaching staff of A.H. Parker High School. The exemplary leadership and dedicated support from the coaching staff was a major factor in the success of the Thundering Herd. I commend Head Coach Reggie McGary and assistant coach Randal Smith and I am so proud of all they have accomplished.

On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, the State of Alabama and this nation, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the accomplishments of the A.H. Parker High School Boys Basketball Team for their victory in the Class 5A Alabama State Championship.

Congratulations! Go Bisons!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, February 28, 2014, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. I would have voted:

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 86 (on agreeing to the Cummings Amendment to H.R. 899),

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 87 (on agreeing to the Connolly Amendment to H.R. 899),

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 88 (on agreeing to the Jackson Lee Amendment to H.R. 899),

"Yes" on rollcall vote No. 89 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 899 with instructions), and

"No" on rollcall vote No. 90 (on passage of H.R. 899).

TRIBUTE TO ELIZABETH HEIM HASKELL

HON. ROBERT HURT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. HURT. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of myself and Representative MORGAN GRIFFITH, I submit these remarks to commemorate the life of Elizabeth Heim Haskell, who passed away February 11, 2014.

Mrs. Haskell was a pillar in her community and across the Commonwealth. She ran her own environmental consulting firm for nine years and authored many books and articles on the environment. She served on numerous boards and commissions, including the Air Pollution Control Board. She then served as Virginia's Secretary of Natural Resources under Governor Douglas Wilder.

After completing her term, Mrs. Haskell returned to Martinsville to work in her family's newspaper business as the director and vice president of The Martinsville Bulletin. She became involved with local civics, serving four years on the Martinsville City Council. She also was a member of the New College Planning Commission and then New College Institute's Board of Directors, where she promoted her firm belief in the important role of higher education in the area's economy. For her many contributions, particularly her work to further higher education in Southwest Virginia, the Virginia General Assembly named Mrs. Haskell the Outstanding Virginian in 2005.

Elizabeth Haskell exemplified commitment to bettering the lives of all Virginians. She will long be remembered for her distinguished service. She was predeceased by her husband, Robert H. Haskell III, and is survived by her son, Andrew Haskell of Morristown, N.J., three grandchildren, Chase Winn Haskell, Catherine Antoinette Haskell, and Harrison Robert Haskell, and her brother, Henry C. Heim of Gig Harbor, Washington.

Congressman GRIFFITH and I note with great sadness the loss of Elizabeth Haskell, a prominent leader in the Martinsville community and all of Virginia.

THE OCCASION OF MAJOR ALEX CROSS' RETIREMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

HON. JOHN KLINE

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize and pay tribute to Major Alex Cross, United States Marine Corps, on the occasion of his retirement. My colleagues and I have had the pleasure of working with Major Cross over the past three years, to include his service as part of my congressional staff and later as the Deputy Director of the USMC Liaison Office in the United States House of Representatives.

From his arrival in January of 2011, Major Cross was a valuable member of my legislative team. Major Cross represented the Marine Corps with honor while providing expertise on

Marine Corps programs and policies, and advising me on issues ranging from defense authorization to foreign affairs. Major Cross's work on my personal staff culminated in his recommended changes to Department of Defense recruitment policies signed into law in the FY13 National Defense Authorization Act that resulted in expanded opportunities for students of all educational backgrounds to join the Armed Forces.

From 2012 to 2014, Major Cross served as Deputy Director of the USMC House Liaison Office. During his time in the House Liaison Office, Major Cross planned, led, and executed many of the Marine Corps' most difficult and challenging legislative initiatives. Major Cross distinguished himself as a leader and as a visible example of Marine Corps professionalism and values. Through his direct and skillful engagement with numerous Members of Congress, Major Cross ensured the Marine Corps' concepts, programs, and requirements were widely understood which resulted in direct and lasting improvements to Marine Corps war fighting capabilities, and the quality of life for Marines throughout the Marine Corps.

Major Cross also successfully planned, coordinated, and escorted more than 20 international and domestic trips for Congressional and Staff Delegations. These delegations traveled world-wide and visited heads of state, military commands, and deployed US military personnel. His meticulous planning, attention to detail, and anticipation of requirements allowed members of the House and staff to focus on fact-finding and learning new information to guide critical decisions made by the Members of Congress.

Throughout his tour, Major Cross personally responded to hundreds of Congressional inquiries, many of which gained national level attention. Through his exceptional interpersonal skills and broad knowledge in a wide range of military affairs, he assisted the Director, Marine Corps House of Representatives Liaison Office, in gaining the Members' support for issues critical to the Marine Corps. Major Cross also supported USMC House Liaison operations, to include planning and coordinating receptions and meetings on Capitol Hill for USMC personnel. These events included New Member Orientation for the Freshman Congressional Class of the 113th Congress and three Marine Corps Birthday Cake Cutting Ceremonies. He also scheduled and facilitated several hundred office calls for the leadership of the USMC to include the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, and numerous other General Officers conducting business on Capitol Hill.

Major Cross, through his dedication to professional engagement with Congress, has contributed immeasurably to the Marine Corps' reputation throughout Capitol Hill. The rapport he developed with Members of the House has made a lasting impression and set the tone for a lasting partnership between the Marine Corps and Congress for years to come. The time he has spent supporting my constituents and other Members of the House has been truly noteworthy. He has made lasting contributions to the United States House of Rep-

resentatives and we wish him well in retirement.

ANGEL LUTHMAN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Angel Luthman for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Angel Luthman is an 8th grader at Oberon Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Angel Luthman is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Angel Luthman for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following. I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote Number 93 on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule "Providing for consideration of H.R. 3826, Electricity Security and Affordability Act, and providing for consideration of H.R. 4118, Suspending the Individual Mandate Penalty Law Equals Fairness Act" (H. Res. 497). Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote Number 94 regarding the Rule "Providing for consideration of H.R. 3826, Electricity Security and Affordability Act, and providing for consideration of H.R. 4118, Suspending the Individual Mandate Penalty Law Equals Fairness Act" (H. Res. 497). Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote Number 95 regarding the "United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013" (H.R. 938). Had I been present, I would have voted "yes".

I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote Number 96 regarding the Motion to Recommit with Instructions on "SIMPLE Fairness Act" (H.R. 4118). Had I been present, I would have voted "yes".

I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote Number 97 regarding the "SIMPLE Fairness Act" (H.R. 4118). Had I been present, I would have voted "no".

I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote Number 98 regarding the "Better

Buildings Act of 2014" (H.R. 2126). Had I been present, I would have voted "no".

RECOGNIZING CHRISTOPHER WARE

HON. RODNEY DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Christopher Ware of Clinton, Illinois, a man who has overcome great personal obstacles and dedicated his life to public service and helping others.

Mr. Ware has worked for State Farm Insurance Company in Bloomington, Illinois as a Security and Safety Specialist for over twenty-two years. Christopher also served as a law enforcement officer with the Bloomington Police Department until he suffered a severe stroke in 1997. During his time with the police department, Christopher helped to coordinate outreach programs within his community.

In his limited spare time, Christopher has dedicated himself to public service and volunteering in his community. He currently serves as Chairman of the DeWitt County Housing Authority Board, Precinct Committeeman for DeWitt County, and trustee of the DeWitt-Livingston-McLean Counties Regional School Board.

In addition to his public service work, Christopher has volunteered countless hours for the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, serving in many leadership roles. In 2005, he received the "Award of the Year" or "Hero Award" from the Coast Guard Foundation for his work during Hurricane Katrina. In 2004 and 2011, Ware received the Lifetime Achievement Award in the USA Freedom Corps for his volunteer service activities. In 2002, the Governor of Illinois appointed Chris to the Illinois State Rehabilitation Council and in 2012 he was appointed to the Illinois Stroke Task Force.

It is my honor to recognize Christopher Ware for his lifetime dedication to helping others.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SEAN P. DUFFY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, on Tuesday, March 4, 2014, I missed two recorded votes on the House floor. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall 91 and "yea" on rollcall 92.

PATIENT SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK AND THE NATIONAL PATIENT SAFETY FOUNDATION

HON. ANN KIRKPATRICK

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, this week is Patient Safety Awareness Week, and today

I'd like to recognize the National Patient Safety Foundation and the organizations in my district that work to promote and improve patient safety.

In Arizona's District One, we have several facilities that are committed to patient safety, including Oro Valley Hospital, Flagstaff Medical Center, and Ventana Medical Systems.

Oro Valley Hospital has been nationally recognized for its efforts, which include daily safety huddles and employee empowerment. At Flagstaff Medical Center, their patient safety program also encourages employee collaboration.

My district is home to Ventana Medical Systems, a world leader in developing solutions for tissue-based diagnoses. Ventana has a new advisory board that brings together experts to review patient safety.

I applaud the National Patient Safety Foundation and the hospitals and companies in my district and nationwide who are leading the way to keep patient safety as a top priority.

BRADY HOGOBOOM

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Brady Hogoboom for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Brady Hogoboom is a 7th grader at Drake Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Brady Hogoboom is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Brady Hogoboom for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

IN HONOR OF OPHELIA DEVORE-MITCHELL

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding and truly one-of-a-kind woman, Dr. Ophelia DeVore-Mitchell. Sadly, Dr. DeVore-Mitchell passed away on Friday, February 28, 2014. A Repast and Celebration of Life will be held on Sunday, March 23, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. at the Gallery at Fountain Park in Columbus, Georgia.

Dr. DeVore-Mitchell was widely known as one of our nation's first African-American models and the founder of the first black model

agency. She was more well-known in Columbus, Georgia as the longtime owner of the Columbus Times newspaper, which is now owned and operated by her daughter, Ms. Carol Gertjegerdes.

Dr. DeVore-Mitchell was born in 1922 in Edgefield, South Carolina but moved to New York City, where she majored in Mathematics at New York University. At the age of 16, she was working for Ebony magazine and in 1946, she enrolled in the Vogue School of Modeling, which up until then had excluded women of color.

She was acutely aware of how African Americans were stereotypically depicted in the media, and she made it her mission to change this public perception. In 1946, Dr. DeVore-Mitchell opened the Grace del Marco Modeling Agency and in 1948, she founded the Ophelia DeVore School of Self-Development and Modeling. These agencies were pivotal in transforming the social landscape of America by paving the way for African Americans to pursue careers in the fashion and entertainment industries at a time when it was not the norm for black women to be recognized for their beauty.

In 1955, Dr. DeVore-Mitchell and her models made history as the hosts of ABC's "Spotlight on Harlem," New York's first television program produced by and for African Americans. She went on to produce several other New York cable television shows, including the "Ophelia DeVore Show." She again made history in 1959 and 1960 when two of her clients, Ms. Cecilia Cooper and Ms. LaJeune Hundley became the first Americans, Black or White, to win titles at the Cannes Film Festival in Paris, France.

Dr. DeVore-Mitchell helped shape the lives and careers of the country's top African-American models and entertainers. She has received more than 300 awards and honors over her lifetime and in 1985, she was appointed by President Reagan to the John F. Kennedy Center Committee on the Arts. In addition to her accomplishments in modeling and producing, Dr. DeVore-Mitchell was a newspaper owner and publisher, business executive, and consultant.

Maya Angelou once said, "In diversity, there is beauty and there is strength. We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of that tapestry are equal in value no matter their color." Ophelia DeVore-Mitchell used beauty as a public platform to address injustice and prejudice, blazing a trail for countless others along the way. By challenging the status quo and championing diversity, she helped to ensure that future generations would enjoy a robust and truly unique American culture that recognizes all members of society.

Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me, my wife, Vivian, and the nearly 700,000 people in Georgia's Second Congressional District in paying tribute to Ophelia DeVore-Mitchell for her numerous outstanding achievements and her everlasting dedication to promoting African-American power, pride, and presence. May her family members and friends be consoled and comforted by the knowledge that she made a great difference in this world and helped to build a better, more equitable America.

HONORING LEROY "POP" MILLER
FOR HIS SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY
AND OUR COMMUNITY

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to the memory of Leroy "Pop" Miller who recently passed away after living a life of courage, dedication, and bravery. He left behind a legacy of honor, a family who will forever remember him, and a community of friends who say goodbye with gratitude in their hearts.

Leroy Miller—known simply as Pop—left us at the rich age of 94 years old. He was a longtime member of my church, St. James United Methodist, where he found a spiritual home after moving to Kansas City from Charlotte in the early 2000s. He came to Kansas City after his wife, Sadie, passed away. His loving son, William Miller, urged his Dad to make the move so he could be closer to his family, in particular his two grandsons—William, Jr., and Jordan.

Before joining our community, Pop was nothing short of an historical figure in his home state of North Carolina. He was a member of our Greatest Generation and one of the few surviving African-Americans who fought in World War II. Just days after graduating from North Carolina A&T University in 1942, he was drafted into the United States Army where he was stationed in Europe and became a member of the famous Red Ball Express.

Red Ball drivers, mostly African American men, were drawn from the Army's Quartermaster Corps and fought both the enemy and the hazards of the road and weather to successfully deliver their loads. Pop's unit drove trucks from the Cherbourg Peninsula all the way to the North Sea, and throughout France, Germany, and Holland.

Despite his continued display of bravery, Pop and other African American soldiers also had to battle the racist forces that existed among their fellow Americans. When he returned home after serving—and sacrificing—for our country, he found what so many others discovered as well. African Americans were still not treated as equals. Even with his college education, he found his own job choices were very limited. But Pop was a fighter, on and off the battlefield, and became an educational pioneer, helping to break down the barriers of segregation in Charlotte, North Carolina, and throughout the United States.

Pop is remembered as a strong leader who enforced discipline at a time when fights and riots accompanied integration in schools. He is remembered as a strict educator who valued academics as much as sports, and worked to see straight A students recognized as publicly as star athletes. And Leroy "Pop" Miller is remembered as a man who wanted to be known not as a successful African American principal, but simply as a successful principal.

I am honored to have had Leroy "Pop" Miller as a member of the St. James congregation and as a constituent of the Fifth District of Missouri. He touched the lives of many and will remain in our hearts, and in our memories, for years to come.

HONORING ST. JUDE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE AS ALABAMA'S CLASS 1A BOY'S STATE BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS FOR 2014

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the St. Jude Pirates for capturing their second-straight victory in the Class 1A Alabama State basketball Championship on February 28th. On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, I congratulate the Pirates for the tremendous athleticism, determination and energy they displayed throughout their season under the resolute leadership of Head Coach Earl Taylor and his coaching staff.

With their victory over Parrish, the St. Jude Pirates won their eighth Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) state basketball championship and tenth in school history. The Pirates finished their season with 24 wins and 5 losses. Throughout the season, the Pirates faced some of the state's biggest and best teams which helped to prepare them to perform at the regional and championship levels.

While Parrish scored the championship game's debut shot, the Pirates responded with incredible energy leading by 21 points at halftime. The Pirates' suffocating defense left the opponent scoreless for more than six minutes. The Pirates held Parrish to 37 points overall, tallied 8 steals, retrieved 21 defensive rebounds and blocked four shots. Tournament MVP Jacob Winston finished the game with 21 points, 9 of which came from behind the 3-point arc. Winston grabbed 10 rebounds and Senior Andrew Rogers scored 18 points while LaDarius Brinson scored 10. Overall, the Pirates were 15-of-16 at the foul line.

Winning the state championship reflects the combined efforts of the coaches, players and supporters. I would like to commend the team, Coach Earl Taylor and his coaching staff. Members of the team include: Darian Adams, LaDarius Brinson, Tommy Burton, Keondre Davis, Taylor McCurdy, Andrew Rogers, Roderic Scott, and Jacob Winston.

At the conclusion of the game MVP Player Jacob Winston told reporters, "We try to be a defensive-minded team, but all the dunks and stuff is just a result of that," he said. "Coach Taylor's always taught us to play hard whatever's going on. The dunks and 3s come from defense."

St. Jude's has collected AHSAA state championships in 5 different decades with titles in 1973, 1977, 1985, 1998, 2006, 2008, 2013 and 2014. The team also won two state championships as members of the AIAA before 1968. As the daughter of a high school basketball coach, I know the Pirates' success is the result of the combined efforts of not only the players and the coaching staff, but also the support of the St. Jude faculty and staff and the entire community.

I am honored to represent such a talented group of young men, their dedicated coaching staff and proud community. As I declare the 7th Congressional District as the "District of

Champions," the St. Jude Pirates represents one of our very best. On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, the State of Alabama and this nation, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the accomplishments of the St. Jude Pirates for their victory in the 1A Alabama State Championship.

Congratulations! Go Pirates!

BRUKLIN WOMACK

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Bruklin Womack for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Bruklin Womack is a 12th grader at Wheat Ridge High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Bruklin Womack is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Bruklin Womack for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, March 7 is Employee Appreciation Day. I rise today to mark my appreciation for the staff members who so ably help me serve the people of North Carolina's Fourth Congressional District.

My staff are model public servants. They work long hours and late nights. Every year, the staffers working in my North Carolina district offices help thousands of constituents, and all of our local communities, navigate federal agencies. They help me reach out to local businesses and educational institutions to ensure their needs are represented in Washington. Every year, my Washington, D.C. office staff researches thousands of pieces of legislation. They help me hear and respond to hundreds of thousands of constituent communications. They help constituents arrange tours, and they join me in meetings with constituent groups, local and State representatives, universities and businesses on every issue imaginable. The list of tasks my staff helps accomplish could go on and on, but most importantly, they help ensure that the people of the Fourth District have a voice in the people's House.

The previous year has been a challenging one for congressional staff. Congressional

staffers were not immune from the unnecessary and mindless across-the-board sequestration spending cuts that affected so many programs that invest in our people, ensure our strength and security, and protect our poorest citizens. Like employees of many executive departments, my staff endured furloughs and reduced pay over the previous year. I truly admire the all-hands-on-deck approach my staff took to maintain a high-level of constituent service in the face of these challenges, and their efforts to ensure sequestration was replaced and critical programs were fully funded once again.

In recognition of their dedication and diligence, I would like to include in CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the name of each staffer currently employed by my office.

Nadia Alston, Sonia Barnes, Jean-Louise Beard, Nora Blalock, Andrew High, Asher Hildebrand, James Hunter, Tracy Lovett, Sean Maxwell, William Munn, Cassie Rice, Kate Roetzer, Dave Russell, Laura Thrift, Jackson Tufts, Justin Wein, Robyn Winneberger.

I would also like to extend special thanks to the staffers who have departed my office over the previous year and to include their names in the RECORD. I want them to know that their years of dedicated service strengthened our district and our State, and that their hard work did not go unnoticed or unappreciated. I wish them well as they pursue new and promising opportunities.

Robin Bolash, Sandra Massenburg, Beau Mills, Teresa Saunders, Kate Schisler.

I am grateful, Mr. Speaker, for the effort that my staff continues to put forth and for the opportunity Employee Appreciation Day offers to say thank you.

**RECOGNIZING FIRE CHIEF
EDMOND LEWIS**

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Edmond Lewis, Chief of the Monterey Volunteer Fire Department in Beaver Dams, New York.

Mr. Lewis has served as a member of the Monterey Volunteer Fire Department for an impressive 36 years. He assumed the position of Chief last year and was faced with the enormous task of overcoming a dire financial situation which nearly forced the fire department into bankruptcy. In addition to the financial challenges, when he began his tenure as chief, the department had fewer than twelve members and no junior recruits.

Chief Lewis has never stopped fighting for the department or his community throughout the recovery process. His leadership has been vital in restoring the integrity, financial solvency, and strength of the Monterey Volunteer Fire Department. Through his guidance, the department has increased its ranks to 54 members, including 14 junior firefighters. The hard work and dedication of Chief Lewis has restored the fire department to a position of capably protecting public safety in the community.

Edmond Lewis exemplifies selfless service and true leadership. His generosity and willingness to assist anyone in need has earned him the highest level of respect throughout Schuyler County. Mr. Lewis regularly extends a helping hand beyond his duties at the fire department by volunteering at a local food bank and preparing meals at the Office for the Aging.

I commend Mr. Lewis for all the great work he has done, and will continue to do, at the Monterey Volunteer Fire Department and in our community. He is a selfless and generous individual who has made countless positive contributions to New York's 23rd Congressional District, and I am proud to recognize him today.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
COUNTY ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the 100th anniversary of the county Engineers Association of California.

The County Engineers Association of California was established in 1914 and is made up of county engineers, public works directors, county road commissioners and professional personnel throughout California's 58 counties.

The purpose of the association is to advance county engineering and management by providing a forum for exchanging ideas and information to improve service to the public. The association has a close relationship with the California State Association of Counties and is supportive of advocacy work to develop policies that benefit counties and citizens.

The County Engineers Association of California works on many issues toward improving the state of our water. Specific issues include wastewater, storm water, flood control infrastructure, in addition to matters regarding clean and safe drinking water.

Through much collaboration, the County Engineers Association of California strives to provide, create, and maintain infrastructure that aids in the health, safety, and general welfare for California.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the County Engineers Association of California for their 100 years of outstanding contributions to the community.

RECOGNIZING THE HEALTH
WAGON

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, today I write in recognition of The Health Wagon, a nonprofit health clinic that works to provide mobile health services in Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell, Lee, Scott, and Wise Counties as well as the City of Norton. Last

year, The Health Wagon helped more than 11,000 patients receive health care valued at over \$1 million, and through partnerships The Health Wagon's Pharmacy Connect program provided patients with approximately \$1.2 million in pharmacy assistance.

For this and its important work with the annual Remote Area Medical event, its community health fairs and outreach programs, its women's health programs, its emphasis on education and prevention, its clinics including dental, eye, and specialty services, and more, I am grateful to The Health Wagon and its staff, supporters, and volunteers for serving the people of Southwest Virginia. There is no doubt that The Health Wagon's hard work and dedication has had an impact on countless lives.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,467,228,205,267.47. We've added \$6,840,351,156,354.39 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

SHANE ROBERT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Shane Robert for receiving the Young Professional of the Year award from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County.

The West Chamber Young Professionals engage and connect young professionals throughout Jefferson County. By building relationships with other local business leaders, West Chamber young professional members advance their careers and become leaders in the community.

Shane is a vital contributing member and leader of the West Chamber Young Professionals. He is instrumental in helping the Young Professionals grow over the past two years with particular emphasis on helping with their marketing, donating brochure designs and social media services.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Shane Robert for his well deserved honor from the West Chamber serving Jefferson County. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all his future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker on rollcall No. 91, I was not present due to unavoidable air travel delays. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

IN RECOGNITION OF DARWIN L.
CURLS FOR HIS DEDICATED CAREER OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize one of our own. On Friday, March 7, 2014, Mr. Darwin Lenard Curls is retiring from my office after serving the past nine years for the Fifth Congressional District as the Director of Community Affairs and dedicating nearly half-a-century of public service to our community.

Born on October 17, 1943, to a family of public servants, Darwin learned at an early age the importance of giving back to his community. His parents, Fred and Velma Curls raised Darwin and his five siblings to help those less fortunate. His father was a pioneer for civil and political rights in our community and was one of the original founders of Freedom Incorporated, an African-American political organization, based in Kansas City, Missouri. Darwin observed his father's efforts to better the community, such as with his fight against restrictive covenants in residential neighborhoods in our community. His brother, Phil Curls, went on to become a State Senator and President of Freedom Inc. Along with Darwin's help, Freedom rose to be known as one of the most potent political organizations in the United States. Darwin remembers well his father's saying "make it happen", and took to heart those words by dedicating his life to making things happen. Make-no-mistake, through his career of action and advocacy in our great state of Missouri, Darwin has been the embodiment of the "Show me State".

As a young man, Darwin attended De La Salle Military Academy, before earning his Bachelor of Arts degree from Park College. He eventually found his calling when he landed a position with the Blue Hills Homes Corporation—a community development corporation focused on improving neighborhoods in the urban core through creating quality housing opportunities. Darwin spent nearly 23 years with Blue Hills.

In 1994, Darwin chose to run for public office and was elected overwhelmingly for the Kansas City Missouri School Board. During a challenging time for the School District, Darwin brought much-needed, common sense approaches to ensure children were given the best opportunities to succeed. After retiring from the School Board, he accepted a Trustee position with the Kansas City Public School Retirement System where he served for 16

years to ensure the employees of the Kansas City School District were treated fairly thru their retirement.

In 1999, Darwin joined the Congressional staff of my predecessor, Representative Karen McCarthy. He served for five years, handling casework and outreach. After a brief stint with Swope Community Builders, I asked Darwin to join me shortly after my election. He started on February 1, 2005 as my Director of Community Affairs. In that capacity, Darwin has overseen the office's casework, helping constituents with issues dealing with the Internal Revenue Service, Social Security Administration, Housing and Urban Development, and much more. He has helped hundreds of individuals traverse the challenges of the federal bureaucracy, helping people to receive back payments, or keep their housing. He was always available to constituents, sometimes just lending a shoulder during their time in need. Equally valuable, he has been an integral part of our outreach efforts, regularly providing remarks at meetings and events on behalf of the office. Over the years, I have relied heavily on his insights and feedback about our community and their concerns, as he has always had his fingers on the pulse of our District.

Darwin has been married for forty-five years to his wife, Sandra, and they are blessed to have three amazing children and seven grandchildren. Their daughter, Shalonn "Kiki" Curls, is continuing the family tradition of public service as a State Senator.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing and honoring Mr. Darwin Curls for a lifetime of dedicated service to our community. While he embraces this next phase of life in retirement, I wish to thank him for his guiding counsel over the years. He has served as a role model to many in our office and in the African-American community. The lives of hundreds of constituents he has helped, our neighbors, community, and Missouri's Fifth Congressional District, have been enhanced because he chose to "make it happen."

IN MEMORY OF THE HONORABLE
HENRY "HANQ" NEAL

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor the memory of a spiritual leader and an extraordinary musical artist from Houston, Texas, the Honorable Henry "Hanq" Neal.

Mr. Neal was born in Fort Wayne, Indiana on September 4, 1956. He had a lifelong love of music, especially gospel music, singing in his youth choir at church. Mr. Neal went on to become a legendary gospel singer, musical artist, and minister of music. Throughout his career, he performed with several different gospel acts and was nominated for a Grammy for his rendition of "If You Move Yourself" with the legendary gospel group Donald Vails Choraleers in 1980.

He also inspired his community with his work as a minister of music at Windsor Village United Methodist Church and then Wheeler

Avenue Baptist Church in Houston. Both churches credit Mr. Neal with expanding and revolutionizing their choirs. Throughout Mr. Neal's career, he was consistently in demand for his musical talents, performing at mayoral inaugurations, for Queen Elizabeth II in 1991, and Congressman Mickey Leland's memorial service in 1989.

As we bid farewell to an exceptional talent and man of God, we acknowledge that our community has lost a resounding voice for faith. Although this is a significant loss, we must find consolation in knowing that many of our lives have been forever changed by the God-given talent of the Honorable Henry "Hanq" Neal.

IN HONOR OF IRA LOOMIS
FLOWERS

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart and solemn remembrance that I rise today to pay tribute to a great man and close friend, Mr. Ira Loomis Flowers. Sadly, Mr. Flowers passed away on Friday, February 28, 2014. A service celebrating his life will be held on Saturday March 8, 2014 at 11:00 a.m. at First Missionary Baptist Church in Thomasville, Georgia.

Mr. Flowers was born on January 4, 1953, in Washington, DC, to Bessie Lee Flowers Moore and the late Guyte Smith, Sr. After obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree in English at Stillman College, Mr. Flowers dedicated much of his life to youth development. He served in the Boys and Girls Club of Houston, Texas, before serving as a director at the YMCA in Columbus and Thomasville, Georgia, as well as the director of the Thomasville Resource Center. He worked for the Colquitt County Board of Education before retiring. He was steadfastly dedicated to furthering the success of men and women in his church, workplace, and community. He worked tirelessly to open doors and to level the playing field for at-risk youth in Southwest Georgia.

Mr. Flowers was an influential member of society and a local civil rights legend. He organized and was president of the Malcolm X Liberation Front. My Brother in the Bond, Mr. Flowers was also devoted to our beloved Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. and was heavily involved in fraternity activities.

Most important to Mr. Flowers was his sturdy and enduring relationship with the Lord. He was a longtime member of First Missionary Baptist Church.

Maya Angelou once said, "A great soul serves everyone all the time. A great soul never dies." We are all so blessed that Mr. Flowers passed this way and during his life's journey did so much for so many for so long. He leaves behind a great legacy in service to all the children, families, and members of the community whose lives he touched.

The race of life isn't given to the swift or to the strong, but to those who endure until the end. Mr. Flowers has run the race of life with grace and dignity and God has blessed him over his lifetime.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me and my wife, Vivian, in saluting Mr. Ira Loomis Flowers for his outstanding service to his community. We pray that Mr. Flowers' family, friends and loved ones will be consoled and comforted by an abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks and months ahead.

ANAJELY AGUILAR

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Anajely Aguilar for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Anajely Aguilar is an 8th grader at Wheat Ridge 5-8 and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Anajely Aguilar is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Anajely Aguilar for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

COMMEMORATING THE SUMGAIT
POGROMS

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the Sumgait pogroms. The Sumgait pogroms consisted of the murder of hundreds of Armenians, making it a particularly atrocious event in a long history of hostility against the Armenian people. I would like to recognize the anniversary of the Sumgait pogroms and remind all of us that it is our duty to act when a people are targeted with violence. Our commitment to remembering this injustice strengthens our determination to obtain peace.

In 1988, hundreds of Armenians were brutally murdered, some of them burned alive and thrown from windows. Women and children were raped and maimed by Azerbaijani rioters. Apartments were robbed, shops demolished, and thousands of people became refugees. Despite Sumgait's proximity to Baku, police turned a blind eye to this dire situation, allowing the pogroms to go on for three days. And since that time, authorities in Azerbaijan have sought to erase all traces of these crimes. Yet, the Congressional Armenian Issues Caucus is resolutely committed to ensure that those Armenians who lost their lives are not forgotten.

I ask my colleagues to solemnly condemn all intimidations and acts of aggression against the Armenian people. The Congressional Armenian Issues Caucus will do its very best to

ensure that basic rights to life, liberty and security are not violated. I also ask my colleagues to join me in calling upon the Azerbaijani government to acknowledge Ramil Safarov as a convicted murderer and immediately take action to bring him to justice for the murder that he committed against an innocent Armenian man.

As co-chair and founder of the Congressional Armenian Issues Caucus, I will continue to promote peace and security throughout the Caucasus region. I look forward to the day when the Armenian people never have to fear such attacks.

IN HONOR OF OSCAR VILLEGAS

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Oscar Villegas to recognize his numerous contributions and years of service to the people of West Sacramento. Oscar has served on the West Sacramento City Council for 14 years and was recently appointed by California Governor Jerry Brown to serve on the Yolo County Board of Supervisors.

Oscar is a hometown public servant from the Bryte neighborhood and has proudly served his community in different capacities. He was first elected to the City Council in 2000 and then reelected in 2004 and 2008, during which time he served as Mayor Pro Tem on five occasions. Prior to his election, Oscar served on the West Sacramento Planning Commission from 1997–2000. Oscar has served on many boards and commissions, including the Sacramento-Yolo Port District Commission, the Sacramento County Regional Sanitation District Board, the Yolo County Transportation District, and the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Board. He is also Chairman of the City's Up for West Sacramento Executive Board, an early learning program.

Oscar has been a strong advocate for a number of programs that have transformed the City of West Sacramento. He played an important role in advocating for the development of Raley Field, the riverfront Bridge District, the new Arthur F. Turner Community Library, the revitalized West Capitol Avenue, the City's park system and the bicycle master plan. His passion and commitment are evident in his ability to listen and relate to his constituents. His deep understanding of local issues and his strong relationships with the community will serve him well on the Yolo County Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Oscar Villegas for his many years of service to the City of West Sacramento, and wish him the best in his new appointment to the Yolo County Board of Supervisors.

**BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INNOVATIVE FINANCING ACT OF
2014**

HON. JANICE HAHN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduced the "Brownfield Redevelopment and Economic Development Innovative Financing Act of 2014," legislation that will help redevelop large brownfield redevelopment projects that have the potential to create jobs, provide affordable housing opportunities and transform regional economies.

Across the country, from Baltimore to Los Angeles, there are large redevelopment sites that communities have identified as the economic development futures of their regions. Older manufacturing sites, retired steel mills, automotive legacy sites and landfills within communities are in need of transformation.

These sites, known as brownfields, are untapped resources that, when environmentally remediated and redeveloped, will address tax base shortfalls, provide affordable housing, create jobs, attract new businesses as well as unify communities with planned sustainable development that will meet the needs of a changing economy and a growing population.

For instance, in my district, the city of Carson provides a shining example of how large brownfield properties can be redeveloped and transformed into successful redevelopment projects.

In 2003, using \$90 million of redevelopment funding, Carson invested in the cleanup of an 160 acre site along the 405. Immediately, the private sector matched the city's funding and the project moved forward with the cleanup of the site.

The project, called The Boulevards, is set to finish construction in 2016, and will have two hotels, retail space, affordable housing, office buildings, restaurants and movie theatres that will raise an estimated \$107 million in property tax revenues over the next 30 years.

The Boulevards is a great investment for Carson and for the region and will ultimately end up paying for itself. What's changed for Carson, like most communities, is that they do not have another \$90 million dollars to quickly redevelop their other large brownfield projects.

Unfortunately, there is no current federal funding or financing mechanism to support and leverage local and private sector resources to move large brownfield redevelopment sites forward.

While Title I of the 1949 Housing Authority Act used to provide a line of federal credit to local communities to undertake major redevelopment projects during the 1970's, this was later replaced with the current Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program administered by HUD. And CDBG funds are currently stretched too thin to be able to adequately address the needs of large scale redevelopment projects.

Additionally, private lenders are hesitant to loan money for these projects since the extensive remediation and clean up of these sites means investors aren't going to begin seeing returns for possibly a decade or longer.

That's why I have introduced the The Brownfield Redevelopment and Economic Development Innovative Financing Act of 2014. This bill creates a pilot program that re-establishes a partnership with communities by providing the HUD Secretary the authority to guarantee the repayment of principal and interest on loans made by lenders to local governments for large brownfield redevelopment projects.

By providing a federally backed loan guarantee for brownfield redevelopment, this will eliminate traditional lending risk and thus attract private resources for projects that otherwise wouldn't have received funding. At the same time, this bill grants local governments enough time to remediate and develop their properties so they won't need to begin making loan repayments until they start receiving revenue.

These tools will provide communities with the ability to make an immediate and long term economic impact on their region and will be the drivers that help move our national economy forward.

That is why this bill is supported by public and private stakeholders alike, including, Weston Solutions, CH2M Hill, Parsons Brinckerhoff, the American Council of Engineering Companies, Smart Growth America, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National League of Cities, the National Brownfield Association, the League of California Cities, the California State Association of Counties, and the city of Carson, California.

By providing a platform for partnerships and innovative financing tools, we will finally arm communities with the necessary tools to fully plan, invest and develop their futures.

**RECOGNIZING DEPUTY POLICE
CHIEF MIKE BORGES**

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Deputy Police Chief Mike Borges of the Ceres Police Department for his 34 years of outstanding service and commitment to public safety in the community.

Deputy Chief Mike Borges grew up in the Modesto area and worked at a dairy. He graduated from Modesto High School in June of 1974 and joined the Army in March of 1976, where he served in the Military Police until November of 1979. Mr. Borges left the Army at the rank of Sergeant, and returned home to begin his career as a police officer.

In April of 1980, Mr. Mike Borges was hired by the City of Ceres as a police officer. The Ceres Police Department sponsored him while he attended the police academy, and he ultimately chose to remain in Ceres. During his tenure, Borges worked in many different positions within the agency. From 1984 to 1987, he served as a Detective and in 1987, became a Field Training Officer and Corporal. In 1988, he was promoted to the position of Sergeant.

As a Sergeant, Mr. Borges served as a patrol Watch Commander and Supervisor, and

served as the agency's Police Explorer Advisor for over 10 years. In addition to this, he served as the SWAT team leader for eight years, and spent over four years supervising the Detective Bureau for the Ceres Police Department. In August of 2005, he was appointed as the Police Division Commander, and in December 2007, Mr. Borges became Deputy Chief.

Deputy Chief Borges earned an Associate of Arts degree in Administration of Justice from Modesto Junior College, and a Bachelors of Science degree in Business Management, with a focus in Human Resources from California State University, Stanislaus. He graduated from the Sherman Block Supervisor Leadership Institute, Class 11; a program designed to stimulate personal growth, leadership, and ethical decision-making in California law enforcement's front line supervisors.

Mr. Borges has been a longtime board member and has previously served as the president of Ceres Youth Baseball. He is also one of the founding members of the Ceres Police Officers Association. He has been an active member in the Ceres Lions Club since 2004, where he has also served as a board member. Mr. Borges enjoys sports, staying active, being involved with community youth, and spending time with his family.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Mike Borges for his 34 years of service and outstanding contributions of the Ceres community as well as our country.

BIANCA NUNEZ-MARTINEZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Bianca Nunez-Martinez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Bianca Nunez-Martinez is an 11th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Bianca Nunez-Martinez is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Bianca Nunez-Martinez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

IN HONOR OF CRISP COUNTY
SHERIFF DONNIE R. HARALSON

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart and solemn remembrance

that I rise today to pay tribute to a great man and outstanding public servant, Crisp County Sheriff Donnie R. Haralson. Sadly, Sheriff Haralson passed away on Tuesday, March 4, 2014. Funeral services will be held on Friday, March 7, 2014 at 4:00 p.m. at Cordele First Baptist Church.

Following in his father's footsteps, Sheriff Haralson began his law enforcement career with the Cordele Police Department in 1977. After years of hard work and determination, he became Cordele's Chief of Police. A well-respected member of his community, Sheriff Haralson was reelected to a seventh term as Crisp County Sheriff in 2012, a capacity in which he served dutifully for twenty-seven years.

During his tenure, Sheriff Haralson established local programs that benefitted both the community he served and the inmates in his care, including personal safety classes and an inmate GED program. Sheriff Haralson was influential in obtaining a regional youth detention center in Cordele and also helped to secure inmate labor in the building of a recreation facility, a significant cost-saving initiative.

Sheriff Haralson was actively engaged in his community and served on numerous committees both locally and statewide. As the longest sitting sheriff in Crisp County history, Sheriff Haralson embodied the definition of a public servant through strong leadership, steadfast dedication and unwavering compassion. His years of distinguished service in law enforcement earned him the Governor's Public Safety Award in 2000 and Georgia's 2010 Sheriff of the Year distinction.

Maya Angelou once said, "A great soul serves everyone all the time. A great soul never dies." Sheriff Haralson is undoubtedly great because of his dedication and service to the community that he loved so dearly. As a lifelong resident of Crisp County, Sheriff Haralson's legacy will live on for years to come in the minds and hearts of all those whose lives he touched in Southwest Georgia.

Sheriff Haralson is survived by his wife, Peggy; daughters, Amanda and Crystal; grandsons, Thomas and Eli; sisters, Sharon and Kadron; and his nephew, Cory. He was a longtime member and a Deacon of Cordele First Baptist Church.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to Sheriff Donnie Haralson and his legacy of service to Crisp County, Georgia. He loved the people of Crisp County and dedicated his life and career to improving the quality of life for his fellow citizens. He will truly be missed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, on March 5, 2014 I joined President Obama on a trip to Connecticut to discuss the importance of raising the federal minimum wage and missed several recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted:

"no" on rollcall No. 93, on ordering the Previous Question on H. Res. 497;

"no" on rollcall No. 94, on passage of H. Res. 97;

"yes" on rollcall No. 95, on passage of H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013;

"yes" on rollcall No. 96, on motion to recommit H.R. 4118 with instructions;

"no" on rollcall No. 97, on passage of H.R. 4118, the SIMPLE Fairness Act;

"yes" on rollcall No. 98, on passage of H.R. 2126, the Better Buildings Act of 2014.

THE INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 4110
"HELPING TO ENCOURAGE REAL
OPPORTUNITY FOR VETERANS
TRANSITIONING FROM
BATTLESPACE TO WORKPLACE
ACT OF 2014"

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, study after study has documented the difficulties experienced by a majority of men and women transitioning from the Armed Services to the civilian sector.

Veterans regard one of their greatest challenges to be finding a meaningful job even though nearly 90% of them believe they have the general skills needed to land their ideal job such as problem solving, leadership, ethics, and time management and most believe they possess specific marketable skills, such as information technology, health care, mechanical, and aviation.

Some of the major challenges faced by veterans are:

1. Overcoming the difficulty in translating to employers the value of the skills they learned in the military;

2. Competing with candidates who have been in the workforce longer;

3. The perceived reluctance of employers to hire due to concerns about multiple deployments or military training and time commitments of the Reserve Component, and fears of dealing with veterans' disabilities.

That is why I have introduced H.R. 4110, the "Helping to Encourage Real Opportunity for Veterans Transitions from Battlespace to Workplace Act of 2014" or "Transitioning HERO Act."

The Transitioning HERO Act addresses these problems by providing strong incentives for employers to hire, retain, and employ veterans in positions that take maximum advantage of their skills and experience.

It does this by providing tax credits for those employers who employ Military Relations Managers (MRM), who will be experts in understanding how military-acquired training translates into useful skills in the civilian labor market.

Military Relations Managers (MRMs) will:

1. work with hiring agencies and within their companies to promote the hiring of transitioning military leaders; and

2. advocate and represent the interests of veterans thoroughly by focusing on placement of veterans within companies in positions that reflect the breadth of leadership and technical

skills obtained and utilized during military service.

My bill also directs the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish, maintain, publicize, and make available to employers a Military Skills Translator Database. This database will assist private sector employers in understanding, applying, and valuing military skills and experiences to the civilian economy.

The tax credit provided under the bill is \$1000 per hired veteran. To be eligible to claim the credit, an employer must employ and utilize a Military Relations Manager.

This important legislation will benefit both veterans and hiring companies, by giving our transitioning veterans the jobs and positions that are appropriate to their invaluable experience and by encouraging companies to examine the application of veterans' acquired skills with quality representation.

Mr. Speaker, Americans want Congress to focus on jobs and economic growth, not more political posturing.

Instead of trying to repeal or undermine the Affordable Care Act for the 50th time, we should be focusing on the real problems of the American people, like extending unemployment insurance and providing training opportunities for the long-term unemployed and helping our veterans transition from the battlespace to the workplace by passing H.R. 4110, the "Transitioning HERO Act."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SEAN P. DUFFY

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, on Tuesday, March 5, 2013, I missed several recorded votes on the House floor. Had I been present, I would have voted the following ways: "yea" on rollcall 93; "yea" rollcall 94; "yea" on rollcall 95; "nay" on rollcall 96; "yea" on rollcall 97; "yea" on rollcall 98.

BRITTANY CHICOINE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Brittany Chicoine for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Brittany Chicoine is a 12th grader at Wheat Ridge High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Brittany Chicoine is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Brittany Chicoine for winning the Arvada Wheat

Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 92, I was not present due to unavoidable air travel delays. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

TRIBUTE TO LYLE W. JENKS

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the life of an American hero, Lyle W. Jenks, who will be celebrating his 94th birthday on March 29.

Like many young Americans, Lyle was horrified by the attack on Pearl Harbor. His immediate response was to serve and defend his country. The following day, December 8, 1941, Mr. Jenks enlisted in the United States Army.

Mr. Lyle Jenks left his job in Lansing, Michigan, and left to complete his basic training at Camp Roberts in Central California. He later was stationed at Fort Custer, Michigan.

Mr. Jenks was deployed to the Aleutian Islands in June of 1943 on the island of Attu. While he was stationed in Attu, he worked in the message department. He stayed there until January 10, 1945 when he was assigned to the message department at the Pentagon. He was discharged on November 3, 1945 at Fort Myer, Virginia. He was proud to serve his country in the Army during the entire period of World War II.

He received many awards and medals during his tour of duty. These medals included: the Good Conduct Medal, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, American Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Motor Vehicle Drivers Medal, and Mechanic's Badge with W bar.

Mr. Jenks was also honored with the Expert Infantryman Badge, Honorable Service Lapel Button, WW at Expert Infantryman Badge, Marksman Badge with Carbine bar, and Sharpshooter Badge with a Rifle Bar.

Mr. Lyle Jenks went back to work just days after his separation from the military. He supported his family as a construction supervisor and maintenance worker until he was 80 years old. Lyle helped many elderly people who could not pay to repair their homes. He also served diligently in his church.

Lyle and his wife Helen were married 35 years until she was taken from him by cancer. Lyle and Helen were not able to have children together.

Lyle Jenks then married Patsy Savage and instantly her children became his children. Together, they now share the joy of grand-

children. They will celebrate 32 years of marriage this year.

HONORING F. V. "PETE" ALLISON, JR.

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call our colleagues' attention to the passing last Monday of a great North Carolinian, F. V. "Pete" Allison, Jr. Mr. Allison died at age 91 after an extraordinary life as a businessman and banker, community, church, and political leader, husband, father and grandfather, and friend and mentor to many. A memorial service is planned for Saturday at the White Rock Baptist Church in Durham, which I am certain will witness an outpouring of community appreciation, affection and respect.

A native of Greenville County, Virginia, Pete Allison came to Durham after receiving his undergraduate degree from Hampton Institute and his master's in business administration from New York University, and he never left. Remarkably, he worked for only two institutions his entire career—in the business office of Hampton Institute and, after 1953, Mutual Savings and Loan of Durham, where he started as a teller and accountant. Mr. Allison rose steadily through the ranks, becoming chairman and CEO in 1978. He saw Mutual through its conversion to a community savings bank and through the acquisition of two other institutions. The bank, which he led with a strong hand until his retirement in 1996, became a mainstay of Durham's African-American community, making home ownership possible for thousands of families and helping launch and expand hundreds of businesses.

Pete Allison's professional and civic endeavors could fill several pages. He was especially proud of chairing the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority during the period when direct flights to London were inaugurated. He received a gubernatorial appointment to the N.C. Education Assistance Authority. He took leadership roles in the American League of Financial Institutions, the U.S. League of Savings Institutions, and the Savings and Community Bankers of America. In Durham, he was the chair and long-time treasurer of the Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People, chaired the Durham Business and Professional Chain, helped lead the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce, and served on the board of visitors for N.C. Central University's business school. For his extraordinary contributions, Governor Jim Hunt named Pete Allison to The Order of the Long Leaf Pine, North Carolina's highest honor for service to the state.

The list goes on, Mr. Speaker, but such a recounting cannot do full justice to the qualities of leadership and friendship that made Pete Allison beloved by so many. His generosity, warmth, and strength of character shone through. I was fortunate to experience this personally in representing the Durham community in Congress and being associated with him in various political and civic endeavors. I always looked forward to seeing Pete, to

hearing his observations as to what was going on at the moment. Indeed, he was a keen observer, but he expressed his views gently, with humor and compassion, and he much preferred reaching agreement to dictating his views. People wanted to follow Pete and to work with him because they liked and respected him so much and were assured of his integrity and his genuine concern for them and for the community.

Durham and North Carolina will miss Pete Allison and the wise counsel, encouragement, and inspiration he offered. He is survived by a son, Vincent, a daughter, Michelle, and his wife of 59 years, Lavonia Ingram Allison. Pete and Lavonia have been partners in a commitment to social justice and to community leadership over many decades. Lavonia's political and civic endeavors, including chairmanship of the Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People, have been ground-breaking, and Pete supported and encouraged her every step of the way. She has been likewise devoted to him, and has especially exemplified compassion and care during Pete's long final years of illness.

Mr. Speaker, it is people of character, compassion, and courage like Pete Allison who make our communities and our country flourish. At this time of loss, we give thanks, in the words of the apostle Paul, "for every remembrance" of him.

CARLY BAUER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Carly Bauer for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Carly Bauer is an 11th grader at Ralston Valley High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Carly Bauer is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Carly Bauer for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ACCELERATING MEDICINES PARTNERSHIP (AMP) AND COMPLEX DISEASE RESEARCH

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Accelerating Medicines Partner-

ship and to reaffirm our commitment to responding to lupus, Alzheimer's disease, type 2 diabetes, and rheumatoid arthritis.

This long-awaited and vital partnership brings together the National Institutes of Health, 10 biopharmaceutical companies, and several nonprofits to transform the way we identify and validate biological targets of disease for diagnostics and drug development for debilitating diseases like lupus. Through this initiative, we can work on disease prevention and reduce the amount of risks in the drug development process. We hope that the partnership will stimulate investment in new effective treatments and help improve the quality of life of the millions of people worldwide living with lupus and other recurring diseases.

Lupus is a chronic autoimmune disease that affects an estimated 1.5 million Americans. Approximately 90 percent of those with lupus are women, but men and children can also develop lupus. Lupus strikes without warning, has unpredictable, sometimes fatal effects, and has no known cause and no known cure. Lupus is also difficult to diagnose, and on average it takes an individual four years and three doctors to get an accurate diagnosis. Traditionally, there has been a lack of investment in research of this debilitating disease. This partnership is a strong step in the right direction. As co-chair of the Congressional Lupus Caucus, I applaud this important initiative, and I have confidence that is a step in the right direction toward finding a cure for this disease.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing the Accelerating Medicines Partnership and in thanking these tireless advocates for their persistence and dedication to improving the lives of millions in the United States and around the world.

HONORING WENONAH HIGH SCHOOL ALABAMA'S CLASS 5A STATE GIRLS BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS 2014

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Wenonah High School Lady Dragons on winning the State of Alabama title in the 5A State Basketball Championship on Saturday, March 1, 2014. On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, I pay tribute to the Lady Dragons for their exemplary athleticism and teamwork as well as the outstanding leadership of Head Coach Emanuel Bell and his coaching staff. We are extremely proud of these young ladies for their stellar performance!

Wenonah's championship victory came at the end of an extraordinary season of 27 wins and 7 losses. Coach Bell's longstanding motto for his team is "hard work pays off." He not only commands the best from his team, he commits his personal time year-round to molding the young ladies he leads. The 20 year veteran coach has been a driving force in producing winning teams and leading the Lady Dragons to multiple state titles. The 2013-2014 season was no different.

The Lady Dragons faced Sylacauga High School to clinch the state title on March 1, 2014. The rival squad was favored to win due to having one of the top scorers of the season but Coach Bell believed in his team. In a Birmingham News article, Coach Bell boldly expressed his confidence in the Lady Dragons. "Everybody kept asking, 'What are you going to do about that girl?'" said Coach Bell. "Hey, I've got eight girls. I've got 12 girls. If she can run with us, we've got a problem."

During the championship game, the Lady Dragons forged ahead with three players who contributed double digits in scoring. The group effort would sustain the Lady Dragons as they worked to contain their opponent's scoring powerhouse.

Wenonah took the lead in the opening minute of the game and trailed briefly late in the first half. However, the Lady Dragons went into halftime with a five point lead. With 5:28 left in the game, both teams were tied at 36 before Wenonah pulled away with a 6-0 run to secure their 57-46 victory. Jameka Holmes led the Lady Dragons with 25 points, followed by Aja Cumbie with 12 points and 11 rebounds, and 10 points from Kaitlyn Rodgers. Holmes added 15-of-21 free throws and had six steals.

As the daughter of a high school basketball coach, I know this decisive victory is also the result of the tremendous efforts of both the players and coaching staff of Wenonah High School. The exemplary leadership and dedicated support from the coaching staff was a major factor in the success of the Lady Dragons. I commend Head Coach Emanuel Bell for his program of excellence.

Mr. Speaker, the Lady Dragons of Wenonah High School are another fine example of the "champions" we breed in Alabama's 7th Congressional district. On behalf of the 7th Congressional District, the State of Alabama and this nation, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the accomplishments of the Wenonah High School Girls Basketball Team for their victory in the Class 5A Alabama State Championship.

Congratulations. Go Lady Dragons.

IN HONOR OF CHEF DARRYL E. EVAN

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart and solemn remembrance that I rise today to pay tribute to a great man and close friend, Chef Darryl E. Evans. Sadly, Darryl passed away on Wednesday, February 26, 2014. A home-going celebration in his honor will be held on Saturday, March 8, 2014 at 1:00 p.m. at New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in Lithonia, Georgia. Interment will take place on Sunday, March 9, 2014 at 1:00 p.m. at Green Acres Cemetery in Columbus, Georgia.

A Columbus, Georgia native, Darryl was a graduate of Carver High School Class of 1979. In 1986, he graduated from the American Culinary Federation (AFC) apprenticeship

at Georgia State University in Atlanta, Georgia.

One of the very few executive chefs of color in the hospitality industry, he achieved national recognition and earned numerous awards and accolades throughout the years. He was the first African American to compete in the International Culinary Olympics in Frankfurt, Germany, where he won three gold medals and one silver medal in 1988 and 1992. He is a three-time recipient of the AFC Chef of the Year Award and was named Chef and Culinarian of the Year by the Greater Atlanta Chef's Association in 1991, 1993, and 1996. He has served as visiting Chef for numerous functions held by the United States Congress and various state governments.

Throughout his career, Darryl trained and mentored generations of culinarians. He made a living from feeding others, but he truly fulfilled his calling by helping to feed the hungry through organizations such as Taste of the Nations, the 1993 World Cooks Tour for Hunger in Johannesburg, South Africa, and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, as well as through his church, New Birth Missionary Baptist Church, where he served as the Chef of the church for many years.

Darryl loved his life's work. He knew that food was much more than just for sustaining one's body. He strongly believed that food was an important part of history and culture—whether as part of signing a peace treaty, blessing an event or ceremony, or by simply bringing a family together.

Darryl has achieved numerous successes in his life, but none of this would have been possible without the grace of God and his loving wife, Deborah; two sons, Brandon and Brandon-Michael; and the rest of his devoted family and friends.

Mr. Speaker, my wife Vivian and I, along with the more than 700,000 people of the Second Congressional District salute Chef Darryl Evans for his numerous remarkable achievements. I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join us in extending our deepest sympathies to Darryl's family, friends and loved ones during this difficult time. We pray that they will be consoled and comforted by an abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks and months ahead.

IN RECOGNITION OF NANCY OATES

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Nancy Oates upon her retirement after thirty-one years of service to her community.

In April 1983, Ms. Oates was first elected to serve the town of Duxbury as Town Clerk. She has since been re-elected ten times, and has honorably served her community during her thirty-one years in office. During her tenure, Ms. Oates has supervised many town, state, and federal elections, and she has provided invaluable assistance to the citizens of Duxbury every day. She has long been known as a kind and trusted figure within the town,

and her many accomplishments have been invaluable to the people she has served.

Mr. Speaker, it brings me great pride to honor Ms. Nancy Oates upon her retirement. I ask that my colleagues join me in thanking Ms. Oates for her many years of public service.

IN RECOGNITION OF MEMBERS OF THE DENTON COUNTY LEADERSHIP DELEGATION WHO ARE VISITING WASHINGTON, DC THIS WEEK

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Denton County, Texas and members of the Denton County leadership delegation who are visiting here in Washington, DC this week. These local officials and business leaders understand that what goes on here in Washington affects their local communities back home. So this trip, which they make every two years, is a very important one.

During their time here, the group is meeting with members of the leadership here in Congress, as well as Senators and Representatives from Texas and across the country. Additionally, they have had a chance to tour the Marine Corps Barracks and meet with members of the U.S. Chamber of Congress and business associations of Denton County, along with several Denton County local officials, to the Nation's Capital.

Mr. Speaker, I submit the following names of the Denton County delegation:

Diane Callahan, Chuck Carpenter, James Cline, Martha Davis, Patrick Davis, Andrew Eads, Neil Ferguson, Lori Fickling, Thomas "TJ" Gilmore, Ray Hernandez, Kelly Heslep, David Hodges, Kathy Hodges.

Cindi Howard, William Meek, Julie Meyer, Mark Payne, Nate Prevost, Kimberly Reasoner, Lori Salisbury, Todd Salisbury, Greg Tierney, Drea Ueckert, Lori Walker, Mike Walker, Brian Weale.

HONORING FRANK AND TERESSA'S ANCHOR BAR ON THE 50TH ANNI- VERSARY OF THE CHICKEN WING

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Frank & Teresa's Anchor Bar and the 50th anniversary of their signature dish, the chicken wing. The Anchor Bar is an establishment that is deeply ingrained in the fabric of Buffalo, New York; its story exhibits its resilience and ambition that define the city in which it stands as well as the people who live in it. This Thursday, March 6, is a date which signifies the 50th anniversary of the chicken wing and its legacy, which transformed the landscape of American cuisine, and made Buffalo, New York synonymous with

a finger food that has left its lasting impression on the culinary industry.

Frank Bellissimo was born in Montemaggiore Belsito, a little town in the province of Sicily, Italy. His parents immigrated to the U.S. when he was just four years old. At the age of 14 during a night out in downtown Buffalo, Frank fell in love with the ambiance and persona of the city. He vowed to one day be a part of it.

Frank met his wife Teresa while he was a butcher. Teresa, the daughter of Sicilian immigrants as well, was born in Buffalo. The two became married in 1934 and discovered their shared love of cooking.

After accumulating a few hundred dollars, the two decided to open a restaurant and in 1935, rented a place on Canal Street at the foot of Main Street in downtown Buffalo. Teresa noticed how the sailors docking their boats in the adjacent Buffalo River would drop their anchors into the water. Henceforth, the Anchor Bar was given its emblematic name.

The bar quickly grew in popularity, forcing Frank and Teresa to move to 1047 Main Street—the address at which the bar is located to this day. Not long after that, the dish that would revolutionize pub food was created.

Frank and Teresa's son Dominic was tending bar at his family's restaurant on a late Friday night in March 1964. Some friends stopped by to pay him a visit and have a few drinks. Before long, they asked Dominic for something to eat, though they yearned for something out of the ordinary—something they could eat with their fingers while retaining the ability to drink and converse. Dominic went to his mother Teresa for help. She had recently received a large shipment of wings that were "too meaty" to be used in the stockpot for soup. Remembering those wings, she decided to deep fry them, toss them in a spicy red sauce recipe and serve them with celery sticks and blue cheese dressing. At 12:10 a.m. on Saturday, March 6, 1964, the chicken wing was invented in Buffalo, New York.

Though Dominic and his friends were skeptical, the chicken wings became an instant hit, and the rest is history. Before long, word spread across the city, state, and the country. Today, Anchor Bar serves up more than 70,000 pounds of chicken per month, and its bottled wing sauce retails in over 5,000 supermarkets worldwide. Consumers can even purchase Anchor Bar's famous wings online and have them shipped anywhere in America. Countless celebrities have graced the bar's Main Street location to experience the sensation for themselves.

In 2003, Anchor Bar was presented with the prestigious James Beard Foundation award, given to restaurants "that have timeless appeal, beloved for their quality food that reflect the history and character of their community." In 2014, the Anchor Bar has franchised that timeless appeal and is proudly serving their famed wings at locations in the Buffalo International Airport, Darien Lake Amusement Park, Hamilton, Ontario, and will soon be serving them on the West Coast at a location in Temecula, California.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to honor the 50th anniversary of the chicken wing. In doing so, I recognize a restaurant that stands as a testament to the

American Dream. The children of Italian immigrants, Frank and Teressa Bellissimo took the creativity and resourcefulness of Italian cuisine and combined it with American values of innovation and ingenuity. What was produced was not only a business that has profited for over 65 years and remains a family owned and operated enterprise, but also a symbol that the American Dream, still stands proud today.

HONORING GEORGE ANDREW
POUNCEY

HON. STEPHEN LEE FINCHER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2014

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Andrew Pouncey on being

selected as the 2014 Citizen of the Year by the Lions Club of Germantown, Tennessee. This public recognition is well deserved and stands in support of the career of Mr. Pouncey, who has consistently strived for the betterment of others.

After graduating from both Rhodes College in Memphis and Mississippi State University, Mr. Pouncey began his career in both Planning and Landscape Architecture. Beginning in 1990, Mr. Pouncey served in numerous capacities for the city of Germantown, Tennessee. From Chief Planner to the Director of Economic and Community Development, Mr. Pouncey helped the Mayor and Board of Aldermen, the government of Germantown, and its residents enjoy this wonderful city. Additionally, the Riverdale Nature Garden, Civic Club Plaza, GPAC, Code of Ordinances, Urban Growth Boundary, and Smart Growth

have been touched by the work of Mr. Pouncey.

This dedication to preservation also found itself in the non-governmental life of Mr. Pouncey. Serving as the President of the Memphis Belle Memorial Association, board member of the Tennessee Preservation Trust, and the Germantown Museum, he spent numerous years saving our Tennessee heritage for future generations. Mr. Pouncey has selflessly left his mark on safeguarding the history of the United States of America.

On behalf of Tennessee's 8th Congressional District, I congratulate Mr. Pouncey on being the 2014 Citizen of the Year. I wish him the best of luck for all future endeavors.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Monday, March 10, 2014

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 10, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ANDY HARRIS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We thank You once again that we, Your creatures, can come before You and ask guidance for the men and women of this assembly. Send Your Spirit of peace, honesty and fairness upon the Members of this House. May their ears and hearts be open to listen to the hopes and needs of those whom they represent.

Bless the people of this great Nation with wisdom, knowledge and understanding that they might responsibly participate in our American democracy.

Please keep all who work for the people's House in good health that they might faithfully fulfill the great responsibility given them in their service to the work of the Capitol.

Bless us this day and every day. May all that is done here this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the House stands adjourned until noon tomorrow for morning-hour debate.

There was no objection.

Thereupon (at 2 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, March 11, 2014, at noon for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4925. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket No.: FEMA-2013-0002] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8321] received February 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4926. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — List of Non-conforming Vehicles Decided to Be Eligible for Importation [Docket No.: NHTSA-2013-0092] received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4927. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; New Mexico; Transportation Conformity and General Conformity Requirements for Bernalillo County [EPA-R06-OAR-2010-1055; FRL-9906-65-Region-6], pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4928. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Colorado; Revised Transportation Conformity Consultation Process [EPA-R08-OAR-2011-0562; FRL-9905-67-Region 8] received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4929. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Utah; Revisions to Utah Administrative Code and an Associated Plan Revision [EPA-R08-OAR-2013-0474; FRL-9905-25-Region 8] received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4930. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Wisconsin; Transportation Conformity Procedures [EPA-R05-OAR-2013-0645; FRL-9907-08-Region 5] received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4931. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Idaho [EPA-R10-OAR-2013-0418; FRL-9907-30-Region 10] received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4932. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; New York State Ozone Implementation Plan Revision [EPA-R02-OAR-2013-0734; FRL-9907-02-Region 2] received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4933. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting Transmittal of D.C. Act 20-288, "LGBTQ Homeless Youth Reform Amendment Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4934. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting Transmittal of D.C. Act 20-289, "Public Service Commission and People's Counsel Terms of Service Harmonization Amendment Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4935. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting Transmittal of D.C. Act 20-290, "Electric Company Infrastructure Improvement Financing Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4936. A letter from the Regulatory Liaison, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendments to ONRR's Service of Official Correspondence [Docket No.: ONRR-2013-0001; DS63610300 DR2PS0000.CH7000 134D0102R2] (RIN: 1012-AA14) received February 14, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4937. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Helicopters [Docket No.: FAA-2013-0501; Directorate Identifier 2011-SW-036-AD; Amendment 39-17732; AD 2014-02-04] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4938. A letter from the Regulations Officer, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Design-Build Contracting [FHWA Docket No.: FHWA-2013-0043] (RIN: 2125-AF58) received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

4939. A letter from the President Of The United States, transmitting His Economic report, together with the 2014 annual report of the Council of Economic Advisers, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1022(a); (H. Doc. No. 113-83); to the Committee on the Joint Economic Committee and ordered to be printed.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. GOODLATTE:
Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 3973. A bill to amend section 530D of title 28, United States Code (Rept. 113-376). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GOODLATTE:
Committee on the Judiciary.

H.R. 4138. A bill to protect the separation of powers in the Constitution of the United States by ensuring that the President takes care that the laws be faithfully executed, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-377). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4185. A bill to revise certain authorities of the District of Columbia courts, the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia, and the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. BUCSHON (for himself and Mr. SMITH of Texas):

H.R. 4186. A bill to provide for investment in innovation through scientific research and

development, to improve the competitiveness of the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Small Business, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4185.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:
clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. BUCSHON:

H.R. 4186.
Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: The Congress shall have power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes; and

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 6: Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. ROYCE, and Mr. HUNTER.

H.R. 274: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 594: Mr. SENSENBRENNER and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.

H.R. 964: Mr. PERLMUTTER.

H.R. 1148: Mr. VALADAO.

H.R. 1530: Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 1892: Ms. EDWARDS and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 2430: Mr. HORSFORD.

H.R. 2663: Mr. MAFFEI.

H.R. 2988: Mr. ROHRBACHER.

H.R. 3097: Ms. FUDGE.

H.R. 3383: Ms. KELLY of Illinois and Mr. JONES.

H.R. 3474: Mr. RENACCI, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. ROSKAM, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. KLINE, and Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 3508: Mr. DIAZ-BALART and Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 3546: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

H.R. 3560: Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. CÁRDENAS.

H.R. 3670: Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. SHIMKUS, and Mr. PALLONE.

H.R. 3708: Mr. AMODEI.

H.R. 3747: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 3877: Mr. DUFFY and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 3892: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 3929: Mr. ENYART.

H.R. 4012: Mr. SCHOCK.

H.R. 4015: Mr. GRIMM, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. RUSH, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. LEWIS, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. DEFazio, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. HANNA, Mr. LANCE, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. POMPEO, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. LATTA, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mrs. BLACK, and Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 4049: Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 4075: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 4100: Mr. LONG.

H. Con. Res. 86: Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. KIND, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. KLINE, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. YOHO.

SENATE—Monday, March 10, 2014

The Senate met at 4 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, who has watched over our going out and coming in, strengthen our Senators in their labors. Give them the higher vision and the larger perspective, making them aware of their accountability to You and history. Bless and keep them and their loved ones, enabling them to find joy in Your presence.

Help us all to remember that Your ways are true and righteous and will empower us to reach the destination of abundant living. Today, lift the light of Your countenance upon us and give us Your peace.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to Calendar No. 309, S. 1086, the child care development and block grant reauthorization.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1086) to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Following leader remarks, there will be a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

At 5 p.m. the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider Executive Calendar No. 563, Carolyn B. McHugh of Utah, to be United States district judge for the 10th Circuit, with the time until 5:30 equally divided and controlled in usual form.

At 5:30 there will be two rollcall votes on the motion to invoke cloture

on the McHugh nomination and on the passage of S. 1917, the Victims Protection Act of 2014.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 4118 AND S. 2097

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2097) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 4118) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to delay the implementation of the penalty for failure to comply with the individual health insurance mandate.

Mr. REID. I would object to any further proceedings with respect to these bills en bloc.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bills will be placed on the calendar.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

Mr. REID. Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). Without objection, it is so ordered..

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. SESSIONS. It has been reported that a number of our colleagues in the Democratic majority in the Senate intend to speak on the Senate floor tonight on the question of climate change. Sometimes they will say "global warming," and I guess that is ceasing to be the No. 1 phrase now.

An article in the USA Today said this "effort is cause for some confusion because these Senators are calling for action in a chamber they control but without any specific legislation to offer up for a vote."

No legislation—this is, indeed, confusing. Why wouldn't the majority leader bring a bill to the floor of the Senate to expressly approve President Obama's climate agenda or to approve his rigorous regulations that constrict Americans with it.

Why not? The answer is it wouldn't pass. The American people do not support this and neither does Congress. A lot of his Democratic colleagues, I would suggest, don't want to vote on it. It raises a lot of questions about what the deal is and what we need to do as a Nation to handle pollution, carbon dioxide, climate change, and how we need to deal with it and how we should think about it. There was an article in today's Washington Times by Mr. William C. Triplett II that points out the following:

In mid-February, billionaire and major Democratic National Committee donor Tom Steyer held a dinner at his palatial San Francisco home for 70 of his closest friends. Former Vice President Al Gore was the headliner, and in attendance were Democratic Senators Harry Reid. . .

The Democratic Senate leader and four other Senators were present.

He has pledged to give \$50 million to a campaign to defeat, mainly, Republicans because they don't agree with his global warming agenda.

Mr. Triplett says:

What has everyone's attention is this number: \$100 million. Mr. Steyer has announced that he intends to put \$50 million of his own money into Democrats' races in 2014 and has challenged his fellow deep-pocket liberals to match it with an additional \$50 million of their own. His issue is "climate change."

We have to talk after this conference. We will have a lot of talk tonight about this question.

With regard to Congress, I will try to be as brief as I can. In 1970 Congress passed the Clean Air Act before global warming had ever been discussed. In fact, there was some discussion of global cooling in 1970. It passed.

Carbon dioxide is an odorless, tasteless gas that plants take in and breathe out oxygen; and people breathe in oxygen again and let out carbon dioxide. It is a naturally forming, odorless, tasteless, nonharmful gas.

It was contended that this gas was causing global warming. It made some sense to me. CO₂ apparently is some sort of a global warming gas and creates a blanket effect and could increase the temperatures. Who knows—that was the argument and it seemed to make some sense.

However, JOHN DINGELL, a Democrat from Michigan who was there at the time of the Clean Air Act and was one of its authors said: "I think the

Supreme Court came up with a very much erroneous decision on whether the Clean Air Act covers greenhouse gases”

So what happened was the Supreme Court, in a 5 to 4 vote—after it was contended through the International Panel on Climate Change that CO₂ could be causing climate change—ruled this was a pollutant, as are particulates like NO_x and SO_x—sulfur dioxide, and, therefore, under the 1970 law, which never mentioned CO₂, the Environmental Protection Agency was required to regulate it. That gave these unelected bureaucrats—people in that agency—the power to regulate an individual American’s barbecue grill, their lawnmower, and every major business in America the amount of CO₂ they emit from their businesses and their plants. It is a remarkable development from a pure constitutional question. If the issue were brought up today it would not pass. There are not sufficient votes, apparently, to overturn it, but there would never have been enough votes to pass legislation to do what the Supreme Court said.

We are not looking at cost and benefits when we deal with this issue. We are talking about billions of dollars in cost and what kinds of benefits we get for that. Even if we were to reduce our CO₂ emissions in the United States by 80 percent by the year 2050, in line with what the President says our goal should be, there would be virtually no reductions in predicted global temperatures if you take the models the experts utilize, even 90 years from today around the year 2100.

So it is not improper for us to raise questions about this, and as to how much power we should be giving to the Environmental Protection Agency, and how much cost can be pushed down onto the American people to pay for this agenda when there are some interesting facts that keep coming out.

In January of 2014, in the *Scientific American* magazine, which has been a staunch supporter of global warming legislation, it contained an article entitled “The Long Slow Rise of Solar and Wind,” which explains some of the reasons for the “slow pace of energy transition.” The article explains, “each widespread transition from one dominant fuel to another has taken 50 to 60 years,” and “there is no technical or financial reason to believe [renewables] will rise any quicker.”

It just takes time to transition. Even if we can make this happen, we can’t make it as fast as a lot of people would like it to see it. The article says:

From 1990 to 2012 the world’s energy from fossil fuels barely changed, down from 88 percent to 87 percent.

So we remained on the same path, even though we have been working on this for many years. The article concludes that “energy transitions take a long time.” They just do.

Then we have the problem of exaggeration to the point where exaggeration is really not a fair word to describe it, in my opinion. It becomes more than an exaggeration but a deliberate misrepresentation.

On November 14, 2012, President Obama said, “The temperature around the globe is increasing faster than was predicted even 10 years ago.” Increasing faster than even 10 years ago it was predicted to increase. So I wrote former EPA director, Administrator Lisa Jackson, in December of 2012 asking her to provide the best available data that EPA had and that they would rely upon to support the President’s statement. I asked her to send us the data to support that claim.

A few months later, in February of 2013, Gina McCarthy, then Assistant Administrator of the EPA, wrote me a response but she did not provide any of the requested data relating to the average global temperature and the so-called increases.

Then in April, 3 months later, after she was nominated to be head of EPA, I asked Ms. McCarthy again and she said she would provide additional followup information to support the President’s statement that global temperatures are increasing faster than what was predicted. On April 30 she responded in writing to me—I am on the EPW Committee—but not with any requested analysis or the chart I asked for that would show official predictions versus actual global temperatures. She simply stated:

EPA has not produced its own analysis, but we expect a definitive comparison in the forthcoming [IPCC] Fifth Assessment Report.

Then on May 29, 2013, President Obama did it again. He claimed:

[We] also know that the climate is warming faster than anybody anticipated 5 or 10 years ago

This is the President. I challenged the statement at the committee before his top environmental official, Administrator McCarthy. She could not produce any information to back this up. And he repeats it again. This is very disturbing to me.

So on June 24, 2013, I was joined by all EPW Republicans in a letter to Ms. McCarthy to ask that she provide data supporting the President’s claims, but she didn’t provide any data.

Why? There is no such data. The climate is not warming faster than was predicted by the experts several or even 5 to 10 years ago. Nothing close. Let us look at this chart. On this chart the red line is a projection compiled of 102 predictive computer models. These models are used by experts at various universities and think tanks around the globe in trying to predict what is going to happen. They believe with CO₂ and other global warming gases the temperatures will increase and we have to take extraordinary steps, they say,

to avoid this because it can be damaging to us.

This is what the average of those models predicted, going up substantially from almost a degree by 2020. That is 1 degree, in 20-some-odd years. That is noticeable. That is an impact, if it were to happen.

However, these two lines are actual temperature measurements starting in 1980 and through the current date, right here. And the temperatures haven’t gone up. It has been an extraordinary thing. The computer models have been wrong virtually every year and experts are admitting, even the IPCC admits this is a problem for them. They do not know why the temperature hasn’t been increasing. CO₂ has been going up. Why isn’t the temperature increasing, such as they predicted?

Yet the President continues to say the temperature around the globe is increasing faster than was predicted even 10 years ago. It is hardly increasing at all in the last 17 years.

So we have to have some truth, and I hope, if our colleagues talk about this issue, they will ask EPA Administrator McCarthy what information she has that would justify such a statement. And I hope they do not make that same statement. Actually, I said to her it would be nice if she would tell the President to quit saying it. I will say he hasn’t said it since last year.

Again, the facts, as I show them here, show a flat temperature. And those facts are pretty much undisputed.

Now we have all these allegations that say: Well, extreme weather. The problems from CO₂ and greenhouse gases are causing extreme weather. We all heard that when Hurricane Sandy hit the northeast. We don’t normally have one in the northeast, but it hit the northeast, and it was fairly strong. It was not an exceedingly powerful hurricane, but it did a lot of damage for people who have been living on the water and weren’t prepared for it. It did a lot of damage.

Al Gore, former Vice President, recently asserted “all weather events are now affected by global warming pollution.” Senator BARBARA BOXER, chairman of our committee—the EPW Committee—said Superstorm Sandy is “evidence of climate change mounting around us.”

In January of this year, before the Senate EPW Committee, the administration’s top wildlife official Dan Ashe declared there were “more frequent and severe storms, flooding, droughts and wildfires.” This is the top person in the wildlife department. He said we have “more frequent and severe storms, flooding, droughts and wildfires.” And he, therefore, supported President Obama’s climate action plan. So I wrote him and asked him to provide any data he had personally evaluated that would support his claim. He

testified before a U.S. Senate committee. I asked him if he had any data to back it up. And, of course, he didn't.

Dr. Holdren, the top science adviser in the country, also declared the President will talk about "the connection between the increasing frequency and intensity of droughts and climate change when he speaks tomorrow. He has actually repeatedly talked about the connection between climate change and extreme weather."

Well, what do we know about that? We have had experts before our committee to discuss that very subject. Dr. Roger Pielke, who is a climate impacts expert, agrees with the view that global warming is partly caused by human emissions. He testified in the EPW Committee last year. He talked to us. He talked about this very issue—extreme weather—and here is what he said:

It is misleading, and just plain incorrect, to claim that disasters associated with hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, or droughts have increased on climate timescales either in the United States or globally.

He said it is not true. It is misleading. It is false. Dr. Roy Spencer of the University of Alabama at Huntsville also testified before our committee last year saying:

There is little or no observational evidence that severe weather of any type has worsened over the last 30, 50 or 100 years.

The American Enterprise Institute looked at the data on this question and this is what they found:

In brief, tornado, hurricane and cyclone activity are at historically low levels, wildfires are in a long-term decline except in government forests, there is no trend in sea-levels related to increases in greenhouse gas concentrations, the record of the Arctic ice cover is ambiguous, there is no drought trend since 1895, and the same is true for flooding over the past 85 to 127 years.

When I asked Dr. Holdren—the President's science adviser—about this, he responded: "The first few people you quoted are not representative of the mainstream scientific opinion on this point."

That was a baseless accusation, as he had no data to dispute their information. Hurricanes, tornadoes, droughts, and floods are measured every year. We have objective data.

Dr. Pielke went back and examined the hurricanes—with category 5 being the strongest, down to 1 being the least—and categorized them 50-plus years, and we are not having more or bigger hurricanes, we are not having more floods, we are not having more tornadoes. We had an outbreak of very severe tornadoes a few years ago in Alabama, but the data would indicate clearly that nationwide we are not having more. We have always had tornadoes, and this one did a lot of damage and got a lot of coverage, but it was not a trend. I was sort of surprised to see this idea.

There are a lot of things I think we can do which would move us in the

right direction where we could have compromise, and maybe nuclear energy would be one which we have support on both sides of the aisle for and would be good for the environment and good for energy and keep costs at a reasonable level without any pollution. So there are a lot of things we can do.

As we discuss the hundreds of billions of dollars in costs which are being imposed on our economy as a result of some of the ideas to deal with climate change and extreme weather, I asked my colleagues: Would you please check the data; is it truly so that we are having more hurricanes, tornadoes, droughts, or floods? Dr. Pielke says no. Let's see somebody dispute those numbers. They haven't been disputed.

Is it true the temperature is increasing faster than was predicted even 5 years or 10 years ago? The IPCC data doesn't show it and neither does any other objective data. So I asked the EPA Administrator to submit some data to show me if that is true: Do you have any? If so, won't you ask the President to quit saying that? Shouldn't the President lead us and tell the truth about the situation?

I don't suppose we know enough now to answer this question conclusively either way, but I would say there has been a lot of exaggeration and a lot of hype. The American people are feeling the crunch already in their electric and gasoline bills, and manufacturing costs are going up as a result of these efforts to stop storms, which seem to be down, to stop a rise in temperature which doesn't seem to be rising right now. We will have to evaluate overall what the right thing to do is as a nation, but I think it is time for us to be a bit more cautious, to be less alarmist, and to focus more on the science of the situation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, the Senate takes another step forward in combating sexual assault in the military. Thanks to the leadership of Senators McCaskill, Ayotte, Fischer, and others, we can improve legislation which adds important new protections for victims of sexual assault and strengthens our ability to investigate and prosecute these crimes.

This legislation we will be voting on bolsters and improves upon the provisions to combat sexual assault which were included in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014. Among the reforms included in that bill and are now law were provisions which make it a crime to retaliate against a servicemember for reporting a sexual assault; that require every servicemember who reports a sexual assault to get a special victims' advocate

who works for them, not for the command or for the court; and also this recently enacted law requires a higher level review of decisions not to prosecute an allegation of sexual assault.

The reforms in the bill we will be voting on shortly are significant additions to that recently enacted law. First, this bill will be making an important change in how we prosecute sexual assault crimes by amending the Military Rules of Evidence to eliminate what is known as the good soldier defense, which has allowed servicemembers to argue that their good military performance is evidence of their innocence when charged with a crime. The military culture has been too slow to grasp the painful truth that even a successful professional can also be a sexual predator. This important reform in the bill we are considering will help to alter that culture.

The bill also strengthens oversight of commanders' decisions on prosecution. Under reforms we passed last year, any decision by a commander not to prosecute a sexual assault case is reviewed by the next highest authority in the chain of command. When that decision contradicts a recommendation to prosecute from the commander's senior legal adviser, that review is done by the service Secretary, the highest civilian authority in each military service. The bill we are now going to consider would require the same review if a commander's decision not to prosecute conflicts with the recommendation of the senior prosecutor who would try the case.

The bill also strengthens victims' input into prosecution decisions. The reforms we passed last year require that every victim of a military sexual assault be provided with a special victims' counsel—an attorney who works not for the commander or the court but for the victim. The bill before us requires that these victims' counsels advise victims on the advantages and disadvantages of seeing their case prosecuted in a military court or in a civilian court. The bill also requires that when victims express a preference for one or the other, that preference be given great weight.

The bill before us includes other important new protections for sexual assault victims. For example, it allows victims of a sexual assault who leave the military to challenge the terms or the characterization of their discharge. The bill requires a confidential process enabling victims to seek a review of discharge decisions in order to look for possible instances of retaliation for their having reported a crime.

The bill we will soon vote on also includes an important new provision to boost accountability for commanders. It requires their performance appraisals analyze whether they have established a command climate in which sexual assault allegations are properly

and fairly handled and in which a victim can report a sexual assault without fear of reprisal or ostracism.

These and other provisions in the McCaskill-Ayotte-Fischer bill add further weight to the important reforms included in the National Defense Authorization Act we adopted and was enacted very recently. The bill we will be voting on contains real important reforms which deserve not just our support and our votes but our thanks to Senators McCaskill, Ayotte, Fischer, and others for crafting these additional reforms because they will surely make a major contribution in protecting the troops who protect us.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I rise in support of S. 1917, the Victims Protection Act of 2014, and S. 1752, the Military Justice Improvement Act of 2013.

I have worked on this issue for years, and I am tired of lip service and empty promises of zero tolerance policies. Sexual assault in the military and service academies continues to rise. The data speaks for itself. Roughly 26,000 sexual assaults took place in the military last year.

I am so proud of the seven women on the Armed Services Committee who led this effort. And I appreciate the fine men who supported them, especially Chairman Carl Levin.

We are now 20 women total in the Senate. We disagree on some issues, even the bills before us. But we agree on the goal of providing more prosecutorial tools to punish criminals, ensuring fairness in the process, and getting help to victims.

The 2013 National Defense Authorization Act, NDAA, included more than 30 reforms addressing sexual assault in the military. They include: 13 prosecutorial reforms, 5 reforms to improve reporting of crimes, 10 reforms to improve victims services, and 2 reforms to expand the training of first responders.

This is a historic piece of legislation that takes a serious and significant step towards addressing this issue.

However, our work is not done. That is why I support Senator McCaskill's and Senator Gillibrand's bills to further reform our military justice system.

Senator McCaskill's bill builds on the provisions included in the 2013 NDAA by providing additional support to victims. It prevents defendants from using a good military character defense unless it is relevant to the crime. And it ensures these improvements also apply to the service academies which are also dealing with the epidemic of sexual assault.

I also support Senator Gillibrand's bill which would take the job of deciding which crimes to prosecute out of the hands of commanders and, instead, give it to independent military prosecutors with expertise in these crimes.

This approach has value for victims, commanding officers, and the accused.

Victims are assured of a fair process. Commanders are given an independent source on an issue that they might not have expertise or experience. And those accused of sexual violence get legal protections through the process.

These two bills take another step towards cracking the code on addressing sexual assault in the military. Our men and women in uniform face enough stresses on the battlefield. We can't allow sexual violence to be another one.

I urge my colleagues to support these bills.

I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Ms. COLLINS pertaining to the introduction of S. 2100 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Ms. COLLINS. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT ANNIVERSARY

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, it was just one year ago last week that victims of violence, members of law enforcement and those committed to working against domestic and sexual violence celebrated the signing of the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Act reauthorization and the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act. The signing of this important legislation on March 7 last year was an enormous accomplishment for a divided Congress, which came together to pass meaningful and historic legislation that protects all victims. One year later, we honor those victims and survivors by renewing our commitment to our shared goal of ending domestic and sexual violence.

Our bipartisan effort last year is making lives better today. The new nondiscrimination provisions we fought so hard to protect are ensuring that all victims, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, have access to lifesaving programs and cannot be turned away. As I have said many times, "a victim is a victim is a victim." While some called for us to cast the most vulnerable groups among us aside and pass a watered down bill, I am proud that we held firm in our beliefs. This could not have been done without the leadership and commitment of Senator Crapo and Senator Murkowski, who fought within their caucus to preserve a fully inclusive re-

authorization and stood with me in the Senate to protect all survivors. In the House, Congressman Tom Cole was a critical voice in calling for the particularly urgent need to address abuse on tribal lands. I thank them today, as I did 1 year ago, for their dedication and their partnership.

Every week, we are learning more about the impact of this important law. Last month, the Department of Justice launched a pilot project in which three tribes—the Umatilla, the Pascua Yaqui, and the Tulalip—will begin to exercise their authority to prosecute non-Indian offenders who commit acts of domestic violence against an Indian on tribal land. Until now, non-Indian abusers were essentially immune from prosecution, a fact they would use to terrorize their victims. This new authority marks the beginning of the end of those days and is a watershed moment in our commitment to end the epidemic of violence against Indian women that has for too long been ignored. We fought hard to ensure this provision remained in the bill and it will save lives. Attorney General Holder, associate attorney general West and deputy associate attorney general Hirsch deserve praise for making careful implementation of the Leahy-Crapo Violence Against Women Act a top priority.

Less than 2 weeks ago, the Department of Homeland Security announced it was taking additional steps under our VAWA reauthorization to prevent the sexual assault and abuse of immigrants in our detention facilities. This was in response to a provision in the VAWA law requiring that all DHS facilities comply with the Prison Rape Elimination Act to prevent sexual abuse and assault. There is still much work to be done to protect immigrant women, and I look forward to continuing to work with DHS to ensure that they are doing all they can to protect those in their custody. I also remain committed to passing legislation to increase the number of U visas available for immigrant victims of violence. That powerful law enforcement tool helps keep all of us safe by encouraging victims to report criminals who pose a danger to our communities.

And last week, we heard about the impact services under VAWA have on victims—and how much more we must do. The National Network to End Domestic Violence, in their annual National Domestic Violence Counts Census, found that every day 9,000 service requests go unmet because of a lack of resources. This is not acceptable. Every day tens of thousands of victims turn to domestic and sexual violence services providers for support through emergency safe shelters, legal assistance, and child support groups, and we must do all we can to ensure these needs are met.

In my nearly 40 years in the Senate, few issues have meant more to me than

passing an inclusive Violence Against Women Act. The law is an example of how the Federal Government, in cooperation with state and local communities, can help solve problems. By providing new tools and resources to communities all around the country, we have helped bring the crimes of rape and domestic violence out of the shadows. I am proud of the work we did last year and I hope that a bipartisan Senate can come together this year to pass other, meaningful bills to support law enforcement and victims, like the Justice For All Act and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF CAROLYN B. MCHUGH TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Carolyn B. McHugh, of Utah, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order the time until 5:30 p.m. will be equally divided and controlled in the usual form.

The Senator from Vermont.

(The remarks of Mr. LEAHY are printed in today's RECORD under "Morning Business.")

Mr. LEAHY. I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask that the time be charged on both sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is currently considering the McHugh nomination. We are not in morning business.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I am going to proceed on my leader time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has that right.

APPALACHIA DEPRESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, there is a depression in Appalachia—an absolute depression. Families are losing work because of government attacks on the coal industry and communities are hurting.

Tonight we are going to hear 30 hours of excuses from a group of people who think that it is just OK that we have a depression in Appalachia. Well, it is not OK. It is cruel. It is cruel to tell struggling coal families that they can't have a job because some billionaire in San Francisco disagrees with their line of work.

Let me relay a message from a Kentucky miner named Howard. What you are going to hear over the next 30 seconds is more important than anything these antioal liberals will say over the next 30 hours.

Here is what Howard had to say:

I say to you, Mister President of the United States . . . We're hurting. You say you're the president of the people? Well, we're people too. No one loves the mountains more than we do. We live here. We crawl between them. We get up every morning and we go to the top of a mountain in a strip job in the cold rain and snow to put bread on the table. Come and look at our little children, look at our people, Mr. President. You're not hurting for a job; you've got one. I don't.

That is Howard from eastern Kentucky.

I am not sure how anyone can hear something like that and think that attacking coal families is OK. It is not just coal families who are suffering.

I have two electric bills from a farmer named John in Shelbyville. Shelbyville is not in coal country. It is in another part of our State. But 90 percent of our electricity is from coal-fired generation. We have some of the lowest utility rates in America. At least we used to.

In July of 2008, the year before the President took office, John's electric bill was \$64.70. That was John's electric bill before the President took office. In July of 2013, he paid \$107.30. This same farm, a new President, and a 66-percent increase in utility bills in my State outside of coal country. That is a cost increase the people of Kentucky and the Nation simply cannot afford.

My colleagues say they will spend the entire night talking about how we need to wake up and take action. They are going to spend all night saying how we need to wake up and take action. I wish to challenge them to think about acting in a way that puts the Americans I represent first and not spend 30 hours pretending as though they don't exist.

As I said, we have a depression in the coalfields of Kentucky created by this administration. Utility bills are soaring all over my State because of the actions of this administration. Tonight our colleagues are going to spend all night talking about just how great that really is. There is another side to

the story. We need to care about and think about the people who are being hurt by the policies of this administration.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If neither side yields time, the time will be equally divided.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Madam President, I am pleased to have the nomination of Judge Carolyn McHugh before the Senate today. Throughout her life Judge McHugh has demonstrated a commitment to the highest standards of academic excellence, professional distinction, and public service.

Judge McHugh graduated magna cum laude from the University of Utah, where she later earned her jurist doctorate, graduating Order of the Coif and serving as the editor on the Utah Law Review.

After excelling in law school, Judge McHugh clerked for the Honorable Bruce Jenkins of the District of Utah. She then spent more than 20 years in private practice, where she excelled, focusing on complex commercial litigation.

Throughout her career in private practice, Judge McHugh has demonstrated a strong commitment to pro bono work. She has been awarded several honors for her work to advance women in the legal profession. In 1996 the Utah State Bar recognized her with a Distinguished Committee Award from the Needs of Children Committee.

It was nearly 10 years ago when I first met Judge McHugh when I was working for then-Governor Jon Huntsman. During his first year as Governor, it was time for him to appoint someone to the Utah Court of Appeals. At that point the nominating commissions began their work, and shortly after their work concluded, the Governor's staff started interviewing various applicants, various people who had been considered by the nominating commission. It soon became apparent that there was a real standout in this very impressive group of candidates for this court of appeals position, and Judge McHugh's name rose to the top of the list.

During discussions I had with her and with my colleagues, as well as with Governor Huntsman, I found her to possess a keenly insightful legal mind, and I found her to be someone who really understands the role of judges—the necessarily limited role—and the crucial function of the judge in our system. She has served with great distinction on the Utah Court of Appeals during those intervening years.

For that reason I am confident, based on the knowledge she has acquired, the skills she has developed and honed over the years, and the commitment to public service she has displayed up to this point in her career, Judge McHugh will, in fact, excel as a judge on the

U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit. I strongly urge my colleagues to support her confirmation.

Thank you, Madam President.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, in the last few weeks, we have wasted precious floor time and energy to overcome filibusters on several judicial nominations. The majority leader was forced to file cloture on judicial nominees in Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Puerto Rico, and Tennessee. This was the case, even though every single one of those nominations had the support of home State Senators—whether Democrat or Republican. In fact, seven of the eight judges confirmed in the last 2 weeks after filibusters were defeated were confirmed overwhelmingly with 90 or more votes. So why were we forced to overcome unnecessary procedural obstacles even though these judges were non-controversial and were filling longstanding vacancies in their districts? It is because Senate Republicans continue to try to slow down all confirmations in the Senate.

Today, we must again vote to end a filibuster on a judicial nomination. Carolyn McHugh, nominated to fill a vacancy on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, is a distinguished jurist who has served on the Utah Court of Appeals for nearly a decade. She has the support of both her home State Republican senators—Senator HATCH and Senator LEE. Her nomination could and should have been confirmed last year. She was unanimously reported out of the Judiciary Committee on November 14, 2013, but because Republicans refused to consent to a confirmation vote by the full Senate and Senate Republicans would not consent to holding her nomination in the Senate, Judge McHugh's nomination was returned to the President at the end of last year. She then had to be re-nominated and re-processed through committee this year and was again reported out of the Judiciary Committee without opposition on January 16, 2014.

After tonight's vote to end this unnecessary Republican filibuster, the Senate will waste up to 30 hours waiting for post-cloture time to burn, even though Judge McHugh will then be confirmed overwhelmingly. It is unlikely that much, if any, of the 30 hours will be used to explain why Republicans found it necessary to block the Senate from promptly considering Judge McHugh's nomination last year and again this year.

Republicans continue to obstruct on every nomination, even though there are currently 89 Federal judicial vacancies, 34 of which have been deemed emergency vacancies by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. In stark contrast, there were only 56 judicial vacancies at the same point in President Bush's tenure. The comparison is even more troubling when you

consider the 33 judicial nominees currently pending on the Executive Calendar. We could lower the number of judicial vacancies today to less than 70 if Senate Republicans would simply consent to voting on the pending nominees. We have not had fewer than 70 vacancies since May 2009, more than 4 years ago. And for most of President Obama's tenure in office, judicial vacancies have hovered around 80 and 90 because of Senate Republican obstruction. Nevertheless, Senate Republicans continue to object to votes on judicial nominations even when they cannot muster anything upon which to justify their delay.

There are no excuses for the delays except sheer partisanship. Twenty-one of the 33 judicial nominees currently pending on the Executive Calendar had hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee last year. And 31 of the 33 judicial nominees currently pending on the floor were voted out of Committee with bipartisan support. It is clear that Senate Republicans have decided to use the rules change as another excuse to further accomplish their partial government shut down. Before the rules change, Senate Republicans used anonymous holds to delay confirming qualified judicial nominees, and dragged their feet every step of the way to slow down the confirmation process. Senate Democrats changed the rules precisely because of these delay tactics, which were causing great harm to the judicial system and negatively impacting those Americans who were seeking justice in our Federal courts. The American people who have sought to obtain justice in our Federal courts deserve speedy and prompt justice. These petty partisan tactics on display are not worthy of the Senate.

Shortly, I hope we can overcome the filibuster of the nomination of Judge Carolyn McHugh to fill a vacancy in the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals. She has served since 2005 as a judge on the Utah Court of Appeals and as the presiding judge of that court since 2012. She previously worked in private practice at Parr Brown Gee & Loveless as an associate (1983–1987) and subsequently as a shareholder (1987–2005). She has served as an adjunct professor at the University of Utah Law School and at the University of Utah College of Social and Behavioral Science. Judge McHugh earned her J.D., Order of the Coif, from the University of Utah Law School in 1982. After law school, she clerked for Judge Bruce S. Jenkins of the U.S. District Court for the District of Utah. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary unanimously rated Judge McHugh “Well Qualified” to serve on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the tenth Circuit, its highest rating. She has the support of her home State senators, Senator HATCH and Senator LEE. The Judiciary Committee reported her

unanimously by roll call vote to the full Senate on November 14, 2013, and by voice vote on January 16, 2014.

I thank the majority leader for filing a cloture petition to end the filibuster of Judge McHugh's nomination. I hope my fellow senators will join me today to end this filibuster so that she can begin working on behalf of the American people.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Carolyn B. McHugh, of Utah, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Carl Levin, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Debbie Stabenow, Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Jeanne Shaheen, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie Hirono, Joe Donnelly, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Tom Harkin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Carolyn B. McHugh, of Utah, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DONNELLY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 62, nays 34, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 61 Ex.]

YEAS—62

Ayotte	Franken	Manchin
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Markey
Bennet	Graham	McCaskill
Blumenthal	Hagan	Menendez
Booker	Hatch	Merkley
Boxer	Heinrich	Mikulski
Brown	Heitkamp	Murkowski
Cantwell	Heller	Murphy
Cardin	Hirono	Murray
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Nelson
Casey	Kaine	Pryor
Collins	King	Reed
Coons	Klobuchar	Reid
Donnelly	Landrieu	Rockefeller
Durbin	Leahy	Sanders
Feinstein	Lee	Schatz
Flake	Levin	Schumer

Shaheen	Udall (CO)	Warren
Stabenow	Udall (NM)	Whitehouse
Tester	Walsh	Wyden
Toomey	Warner	

NAYS—34

Alexander	Cruz	Portman
Barrasso	Enzi	Risch
Blunt	Fischer	Roberts
Boozman	Grassley	Rubio
Burr	Hoeven	Scott
Chambliss	Inhofe	Sessions
Coats	Isakson	Shelby
Coburn	Johanns	Thune
Cochran	Johnson (WI)	Vitter
Corker	McConnell	Wicker
Cornyn	Moran	
Crapo	Paul	

NOT VOTING—4

Begich	Kirk
Harkin	McCain

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 62 and the nays are 34.

The motion is agreed to.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT OF 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the pending business.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1917) to provide for additional enhancements of the sexual assault prevention and response activities of the Armed Forces.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is on the passage of the bill.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) and the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 62 Leg.]

YEAS—97

Alexander	Brown	Coons
Ayotte	Burr	Corker
Baldwin	Cantwell	Cornyn
Barrasso	Cardin	Crapo
Begich	Carper	Cruz
Bennet	Casey	Donnelly
Blumenthal	Chambliss	Durbin
Blunt	Coats	Enzi
Booker	Coburn	Feinstein
Boozman	Cochran	Fischer
Boxer	Collins	Flake

Franken	Levin	Sanders
Gillibrand	Manchin	Schatz
Graham	Markey	Schumer
Grassley	McCaskill	Scott
Hagan	McConnell	Sessions
Hatch	Menendez	Shaheen
Heinrich	Merkley	Shelby
Heitkamp	Mikulski	Stabenow
Heller	Moran	Tester
Hirono	Murkowski	Thune
Hoeven	Murphy	Toomey
Inhofe	Murray	Udall (CO)
Isakson	Nelson	Udall (NM)
Johanns	Paul	Vitter
Johnson (SD)	Portman	Walsh
Johnson (WI)	Pryor	Warner
Kaine	Reed	Warren
King	Reid	Whitehouse
Klobuchar	Risch	Wicker
Landrieu	Roberts	Wyden
Leahy	Rockefeller	
Lee	Rubio	

NOT VOTING—3

Harkin	Kirk	McCain
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The bill (S. 1917) was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, all postcloture time be expired and the vote on confirmation of Calendar No. 563 occur at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 12, 2014; further, that on Tuesday, March 11, 2014, at 11:30 a.m., the Senate proceed to vote on cloture on Executive Calendar Nos. 577, 578, 579, and 580; further, that if cloture is invoked on any of these nominations, notwithstanding rule XXII, all postcloture time be expired and the votes on confirmation of the nominations occur on Wednesday, March 12, following disposition of the McHugh nomination, in the order upon which cloture was invoked; further, that following Senate action on these nominations, the Senate proceed to vote on confirmation of Calendar No. 512; further, that there be 2 minutes for debate prior to each vote and all roll-call votes after the first vote in each sequence be 10 minutes in length; further, that following disposition of Calendar No. 512, the Senate resume legislative session and proceed to consideration of Calendar No. 309, S. 1086, the childcare and development block grant bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that Senator AYOTTE be recognized for up to 3 minutes to comment on the passage of S. 1917; further, that following her remarks, the Senate proceed to a period of morning business; that the time be controlled in alternating 45-minute blocks, with the majority controlling the first 45 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I thank my colleague Senator MCCASKILL, as well as Senator FISCHER. The Senate voted 97-0—unanimously—to support the Victims Protection Act. This act builds on important work that was done in the Defense authorization bill to ensure that victims of sexual assault in the military will be treated with dignity and respect; that there will be full accountability for commanders to ensure the climate within their unit is one of zero tolerance toward sexual assaults; and that when a victim comes forward, that victim—male or female—is supported within this system.

The Victims Protection Act, passed today by a vote of 97-0—and few things in the Senate pass with a 97-0 vote—will ensure there is another level of review when a commander disagrees with the recommendation of a prosecutor to prosecute a sexual assault case. It will then go up to the civilian secretary for another level of review.

The bill also ensures commanders are judged in their evaluations on the climate within their unit for addressing sexual assault and how they handle these types of cases.

It also eliminates the so-called good soldier defense. Because even if you have been a good soldier, if you have committed sexual assault, you need to be held accountable for your actions. So this bill will ensure people who are perpetrators are held accountable for their actions.

The bill also allows important input from the victims so they can have a say as to whether they believe a case should be brought in a military or a civilian system for prosecution.

This act adds on the important work we have done together in the Defense authorization bill but it is not the end. We will continue in the Armed Services Committee to make sure the reforms that have been passed are implemented, that commanders are held accountable for a climate of zero tolerance within their units, and that victims of sexual assault are treated with dignity and respect and know they will be supported if they come forward to report.

So I thank the Chair, and I again thank Senator MCCASKILL for her leadership on this bill. So few things pass in this body unanimously, but this shows the bipartisan commitment we have to stopping this scourge of sexual assault in the military.

I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

CLIMATE CHANGE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, just last week one of the world's most well-known spiritual leaders, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet, visited the Capitol. He talked about the moral imperative to protect the planet we call home. The Dalai Lama spoke with passion and longing of his native Tibet, where mountain snows melt in spring to feed the rivers to provide Bangladesh, China, India, Nepal, and Pakistan with water.

The Himalayas are sometimes called the "third pole" because they contain nearly a third of the world's nonpolar ice. But in recent years, manmade climate change has caused milder winters, less snow, and less water for 1.3 billion people living downstream from Tibet.

In the Western United States we face a similar problem. For more than a decade drought has plagued the Colorado River, both upstream and downstream—the lifeblood of a number of Western States, including Nevada, California, Arizona, and other States.

During this period of time, we have had some so-called average snows in the Upper Colorado but none of it reaches the river. The climate has changed. Milder winters have meant less Rocky Mountain snowpack and less spring runoff to feed the river. Combined with more extreme summer heat and other issues connected with climate change, the shrinking western snowpack threatens the water source for more than 30 million people. Far more than 30 million people, because 38 million people in California are affected very adversely because of what is going on with the Colorado River.

The seriousness of this climate problem is not lost on the average American. The vast majority of Americans believe climate change is real. They believe it is here.

A quarter century ago the first President Bush promised to use "the White House effect" to combat the "greenhouse effect." That is what President Bush said, but not much has happened, I am sorry to say.

Despite overwhelming scientific evidence and overwhelming public opinion, climate change deniers still exist. There are lots of them. They exist in this country. They exist, I am sorry to say, in this Congress—in the House and in the Senate.

So I am very grateful to Senator SCHATZ, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and the chairman of the very important environmental committee, Senator BOXER, and many other Senators who will join this climate change debate and presentation tonight for standing up against the deniers.

Climate change is real. It is here. It is time to stop acting as though those who ignore this crisis—for example, the oil baron Koch brothers and their allies in Congress—have a valid point. They don't. Climate change is here. Climate change has brought harsh and drastic situations all over our country.

In the last few years alone, the Midwest has experienced the most punishing drought since the Great Depression. Wildfires have ravaged the West, with places burning which have never burned before. The mighty Mississippi nearly ran dry, and barge traffic had to be brought to a stop because the river wasn't deep enough for them to travel.

While record droughts affected some parts of the United States, torrential rains and extreme thunderstorms struck others. Temperatures topped 60 degrees in Alaska in January. February brought a blanket of snow and ice to Atlanta, GA—the South.

In other parts of the world, glaciers and ice sheets which have been frozen for tens of thousands of years are melting and melting quickly. Fires have consumed vast forests and monsoons and superfloods left millions homeless all over the world. Since this new year, the United Kingdom has had its wettest winter perhaps ever but far more than in the last 100 years. Tokyo, Japan, in a period of a little over 2 weeks, got 4 years' worth of snow. Australia experienced its hottest summer in the history of Australia.

The vast majority of scientists say this is just the beginning of the ravages of our world changing. Dozens of reports from scientists around the globe link extreme weather to climate change, and the more extreme the climate change gets, the more extreme the weather is going to get. Everyone has to understand that. It is easy to see the urgency to confront climate change, but this challenge is also an opportunity—and it truly is.

We have the ability now to reduce our reliance on oil and other fossil fuels, increase our production of clean energy, and create good-paying jobs which can never be outsourced. We have the ability to choose the kind of world in which we live. We have that choice.

In Nevada we have done some good things. We have chosen clean renewable energy as we retire older polluting powerplants. We only have one left. We imported millions of tons of coal.

I remember I was in the House of Representatives and one powerplant was on its way out. Al Matteucci, attorney for Nevada Power, was telling me that little powerplant was importing 2 million tons of coal a year. I said: What are you talking about? I thought, 2 million tons of coal? But that is the way it was, just one relatively small powerplant. We are no longer doing that in Nevada. We have only one coal-fired plant left, and we have done this

by going of course to some natural gas, but we have done so many good things with renewable energy. With geothermal we finally passed California. We are the most productive State in the Union with geothermal energy.

We have done other things with renewable energy. This old plant I just talked about, where millions of tons of coal came in every year, why are we getting rid of that? For lots of reasons. But one reason is this polluting powerplant, built on Paiute Indian land in Moapa, NV, about 35 miles outside of Las Vegas, during the Johnson administration was closed.

Next week, a week from this coming Friday, we are going to have a groundbreaking on the Moapa land, where they are going to have hundreds and hundreds of jobs because they are going to produce huge amounts of energy through solar, and that energy is going to go to California. We have huge amounts of solar energy all over the State of Nevada and we are shipping it to California because California did the right thing. They passed a law saying by a certain period of time one-third of all their power must come from renewable sources. This is a progressive State. It is important, and we are helping them meet those demands, but we are also doing a lot to produce our own energy.

I talked about this powerplant. The powerplant, Moapa, at this Indian reservation, is the first solar project to be built on tribal lands—certainly in Nevada and likely in the whole country.

The largest solar plant in the world opened last month on the Nevada-California border, the largest one in the world. Dozens of geothermal wells on public lands power the cities of Reno and Sparks in northern Nevada. Because some of Nevada's best renewable energy resources are located in the rural areas, we recently completed a power line connecting renewable energy sources. It was part of the Obama program to help stimulate the economy, which certainly has done that all over the country, but it certainly has done it in Nevada. We have this power line connecting the northern part of the State and the southern State for the first time ever.

What is being put into that power line? Renewable energy. Solar, wind, geothermal. This power line connecting renewable energy resources with the people and businesses that need them and making the electric grid more efficient is a part of what we used to talk about all the time, a smart grid. It is actually here. Nevada is the first place where we actually have Federal programs which got us the smart grid. We have permission to take this power line from northern Nevada to southern Nevada, now into the great Northwest.

So we are doing some good work. This is what the smart grid is all about. Nevada has proven it is very

easy to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, which is good for the economy and good for the environment.

But as the Dalai Lama said:

We have the capability and the responsibility to act. But we must do so before it is too late.

He went on further to say:

This . . . is not just a question of morality or ethics, but a question of our own survival.

I believe him.

I ask unanimous consent that following my opening remarks the following Senators be recognized for up to 90 seconds in the order listed: DURBIN, SCHUMER, MURRAY, BOXER, WHITEHOUSE, SCHATZ, FEINSTEIN, WYDEN, NELSON, CANTWELL, CARDIN, KLOBUCHAR, UDALL of Colorado, UDALL of New Mexico, SHAHEEN, MERKLEY, BENNET, FRANKEN, COONS, BLUMENTHAL, HEINRICH, KING, KAINE, WARREN, MARKKEY, BOOKER, and GILLIBRAND.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The assistant majority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in this Chamber we spend a lot of time debating how our actions will affect future generations and the obligations we have to leave future generations a better nation and a better world.

Nowhere is this responsibility more apparent than when it comes to the issue of climate change. It is critical we leave our children and grandchildren a sustainable planet with a promising, bright future.

We can no longer shy away from the fact that over 98 percent of all working climate scientists believe that human activities have led to climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has found it to be unequivocal that the world is warming due to human activities. The existence of manmade climate change is not a debatable issue, nor is it a vague or distant threat. It is a situation which requires serious attention immediately.

I have heard it said there is only one major political party in the world which denies what I just said: the scientific evidence which points to climate change and the fact the world we are living in is changing with extreme weather patterns the life we lead and the future for many generations.

I hope, during the course of this debate, if the Republican Party comes to the floor, they will dispute what I just said. I am calling on them to name any other major political party in the world which agrees with the proposition that they stand for, questioning whether there is scientific evidence supporting climate change. I believe there is, and I believe we should act now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues. They did an amazing job on the Climate Action

Task Force, particularly Senators BOXER and WHITEHOUSE, who led the task force, and the indefatigable new Member Senator SCHATZ for organizing and coordinating this effort.

The overwhelming majority of the world's scientists believe humans are changing the Earth's climate. Climate deniers like to claim there are competing stories about whether this is true, usually pushing polluter talking points that there is not a scientific consensus on climate change. We know this is utterly false, and I would pose the following question to my colleagues who think "the jury is still out" on climate change: If you went to 100 doctors and 98 of them said you were sick and should take medicine, but two told you that you were fine and should do nothing, what would you do?

Climate change deniers need to wake up and realize the scientific diagnosis about warming the planet is real. We need to take action, much of which will be outlined tonight. I hope my colleagues and the American people are listening.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, as a member of the Senate Climate Action Task Force, I am very proud to join with all of our colleagues to talk about an action which is needed.

Climate change is real. We have seen it in the overwhelming scientific evidence which is occurring today. It is not just about science. It is impacting all of us. We see the rise in asthma attacks. We see the impacts in my home State of Washington. I hear this concern from my constituents, and we know rising sea levels are threatening all of us. We see it in our rural communities where we are seeing drought. We are seeing it in our forests where the dry weather is turning our woods into kindling. We see it in our local fishing communities where ocean acidification is hindering our shellfish development. These impacts have enormous costs. They are devastating to our families and communities who are suffering from droughts, superstorms, and wildfires.

But it is not just an environmental issue; it is not just a health issue. It is a budget issue. It is not just about rising temperatures; it is about rising costs. As chair of the Budget Committee, I can tell you this issue is a burden to our taxpayers. Federal disaster recovery spending alone has increased year after year as the number and size of weather-related disasters rise. These costs will continue if we don't act.

Climate change is real. Unfortunately, while so many of my colleagues across the aisle talk about the need to address our debt to avoid burdening future generations, too many of these

same Senators refuse to take action to address the climate debt we are passing on. Most frustrating of all, we know what can be done to fix this problem.

We know the solutions to reduce pollution and emissions that cause climate change create good-paying jobs. Jobs that put money back in families' pockets through low-cost energy sources and increased efficiencies in homes. These solutions make our Nation more energy independent, and our businesses more globally competitive. They give us cleaner air and water, and protect the health of our children and grandchildren.

I know that we can take these steps because I have seen it in my home State of Washington. In Washington, our biodiesel producers are replacing imported oil with clean, renewable, home-grown fuels. Companies like McKinstry, who have made a home in the Northwest, are leaders in helping cities, hospitals, and others create energy efficient, sustainable buildings.

In the past, the United States has led the world in innovative ways to create energy, but recently we have ceded our clean energy leadership to countries like China and Germany because too many have stood in the way of making necessary investments. When we passed the Bipartisan Budget Act this past December, we proved that Democrats and Republicans can put ideology aside and work together to make progress on our Nation's challenges.

Climate change is no less a challenge than any of the other issues we face, and we have a moral obligation to address it. As I have said, addressing this challenge will create good-paying jobs here at home in fields like pollution management, energy efficiency, and renewable energy goods. And best of all, we can pass a healthier planet on to our children.

I'm hopeful that Republicans and Democrats can find common ground and come together to move us forward.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mrs. MURRAY. We know the jobs we can create with new economic opportunities of climate change will help bring us out of the budget deficits we face.

I congratulate all of our colleagues who are here tonight to talk, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, we know all Senators care deeply about their constituents and their families. If any one of us saw danger looming, we would do everything in our power to save them. Yet in the face of irrefutable scientific agreement, the Senate does nothing to make sure polluters pay for the carbon they emit, which would move us toward a clean energy economy and away from catastrophic climate change.

Yes, there is money, big money, behind the polluters. Yes, those polluters

are raging against us with layers of lies. Yet and still the environment which used to be a bipartisan issue has turned truly bitterly partisan, but we cannot and we must not and we will not give in because it is our job. We must preserve our environment for our people, which is pretty basic.

The deniers have given in to the power of wishful thinking, just as those defending cigarette addiction did.

To those who would say let China lead, I say this is shameful. In China 1.2 million people died in 2010 from air pollution. That is a fact, not a fantasy. America doesn't sit around and wait for someone else to protect the health and safety and the quality of life of our people. It is wrong. So I am so proud tonight to stand with my resolute colleagues as we fight back against those polluters who would put their self-interests ahead of the salmon we have sworn to protect.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Thank you, Mr. Presiding Officer.

The problem of carbon pollution could not be more real for my home State of Rhode Island. It is real for our country's future. I will be here in the wee hours and I will yield my time so we can compress this. We have a lot of Senators who want to speak in a short period of time.

I want to yield my time and express my gratitude to Senator SCHATZ of Hawaii who has coordinated tonight's event.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. I rise with 29 of my colleagues with a simple message for Congress and for our Nation: Climate change is real; climate change is caused by humans; and climate change is solvable. We will not rest until Congress wakes up and acts on the most pressing issue of our time.

Why are we doing this? Why are we taking this particular action to take the floor tonight and into the morning right now? The answer is simple: This is the floor of the U.S. Senate, the greatest deliberative body in the world. This is where historically America has addressed some of its toughest challenges. Tonight has to be the historic beginning of us facing the challenge of our generation. The real question ought to be: Why haven't we done this sooner and, perhaps more pointedly, why isn't every single Member of this body down here with us?

Tonight is just the beginning. We are going to continue to push throughout the year, and the public is with us—Independents, Democrats, and Republicans. Americans are calling for action. The only place where climate change is still an open debate is within the four corners of this Capitol.

I have seen what can happen when there is a real commitment to clean

energy and clear goals laid out. In my home State of Hawaii we set aggressive goals and doubled our use of clean energy in just 3 years. Tackling climate change is going to require the entire country working together.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator from Hawaii has expired.

Mr. SCHATZ. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Thank you, Mr. President.

I thank Senator SCHATZ for all the work he did to put together this effort tonight.

I simply want to say that when you look at the data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Academy of Sciences, I believe you reach a blunt judgment: Climate change is the scientific equivalent of a speeding Mack truck. So tonight it is appropriate that Senators start getting into these issues with practical approaches. We have done our part in a bipartisan effort to promote hydropower. I am very pleased the President has a new approach in terms of dealing with wildfire, which is also bipartisan, because fires we are seeing are getting bigger and hotter, and there are steps we can take to deal with those urgent problems. This evening is all about sensible action.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, one of the places that is threatened most is a low-lying area such as Bangladesh, but do you know what area is threatened most in the Continental United States? The Miami area. I am going to be taking the commerce committee during the April recess to have a hearing on climate change and sea level rise particularly right in the heart of a city that has been experiencing flooding over and over because of this climate change.

Florida is ground zero for sea level rise. We have a compelling story to tell. Our leaders are making key decisions and investments today so that our coastal economy will thrive. We are going to pull all this together in the hearing. There are several members of the commerce committee here tonight. I invite Senators during the April recess to come to this hearing. Thank you all for organizing this all-night event, and I look forward to the material that will be coming out this evening.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, climate change is not a problem of the future. Climate change is drastically impacting our oceans today. Acidification is increasing at astonishing rates, and our oceans take up 25 percent of our

carbon emissions. Carbon and ocean acidification kill our oysters, crabs, and other shellfish, and impact the shellfish that other sea life depends on, such as our salmon, so the impact to an industry in our State that is worth \$30 billion and supports 148,000 jobs is serious.

Just last week there was a huge die-off of scallops in British Columbia, resulting in 30 percent of employees in that region being laid off. So climate change is not only killing oysters and scallops, but it is killing our fishing jobs. That is why we are here tonight, because we know we need to act to save jobs and help our economy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, as a member of the Climate Action Task Force, I couldn't be more proud of my colleagues on the floor tonight. I thank Senator BOXER, Senator SCHATZ, and Senator WHITEHOUSE for organizing this evening.

The information we want to present is clear. The facts are clear. Science indicates what we do here on Earth is affecting the livability of our planet, and we can do something about it. This is an urgent issue, from climate refugees around the world, the visible signs we see in China, to each of our individual States.

I am honored to represent the people of Maryland, where 70 percent of citizens live in coastal zones. The Chesapeake Bay is iconic to the survival of Maryland as we know it today and yet it is at risk.

But here is the good news: We can do something about it. We can reduce our carbon footprint. We can reduce our carbon pollution, and in doing so we not only help our environment, we also help our economy and job growth, help make America more energy secure, which helps our national security. So let's take the reasonable steps necessary to help our future generations, help our economy, and help our environment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. I am also very pleased to talk about one of the most pressing challenges confronting our Nation and my State of Colorado, and that is climate change. We have seen in my State this is not an obscure threat or distant problem. We have had catastrophic floods and mega wildfires that have been the result of drought, of a whole series of changes in a way we see climate systems operating in Colorado. It is threatening our way of life.

I have a powerful photograph here. We have had in the past 2 years three successive mega fires. Last year's Black Forest fire brought destruction to Colorado Springs. Over 500 homes burned and we lost 2 lives. This fire

quickly surpassed the Waldo Canyon fire which was the most destructive fire in Colorado history.

Now is the time to act. Now is the time to grab the opportunity to create new emergency technologies, to enhance our national security and, by the way, to keep faith with our children. We do not inherit this Earth from our parents. We are borrowing it from our children. If we do not act on climate change, we will leave them a less bright future. If we do act, we can create jobs and protect the environment.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, along with the Presiding Officer, we can enhance our Nation's security with these new technologies. Let's act now. I am here in this Congress and this Senate to protect our way of life. If we act now, we can protect that special way of life.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. President, thank you very much, and let me first of all congratulate my chairman, Chairman BOXER, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and Senator SCHATZ for organizing this effort and what we are calling an up-all-night conversation.

New Mexico is in the bull's-eye when it comes to climate change. Everyplace else, if it goes up 1 degree, New Mexico and the Southwest go up 2 degrees, so we know we are hit really hard. I am going to talk later in this conversation about all of the impacts.

It is clear, forest fires, as my cousin talked about, droughts, huge die-off in terms of trees, extreme rain events after fires, and flooding are devastating. But New Mexico has been at the forefront of the solution. When it comes to renewable energy, we are out there—solar energy, wind, bio, advanced biofuels such as algae. We are working in the direction we need all of us to be working in together in this country, to make sure we orient toward renewables and tackle this problem. I will be able to expand on this later.

I would yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. CANTWELL. Thank you, Mr. President.

I am pleased to join my colleagues tonight in talking about the economic and environmental imperative of addressing climate change. I thank all of the members of the climate task force, all my colleagues who are here, and particularly Senator SCHATZ from Hawaii, for organizing tonight.

The fact is, as we have heard, climate change is real and it is happening. According to the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a group of 3,000 scientists from over 130 countries who have studied climate change for over 20 years, global emissions must be stabilized by midcentury in order to avoid the most catastrophic and irre-

versible consequences of climate change.

Studies from the National Research Council and the U.S. Global Climate Research Program reinforce that global temperatures are steadily rising and contributing to more extreme weather events and rising sea levels. Scientists from the University of New Hampshire have found that humans are responsible for releasing large amounts of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere that are causing rapid climate change. I only need to look at New Hampshire to see the real economic and health implications.

In New Hampshire, climate change is contributing to sea level rise, which imperils businesses, homes, and coastal communities such as Portsmouth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator from New Hampshire has expired.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. The outdoor recreation community has less snow, resulting in fewer tourism dollars. Wildlife health is becoming increasingly vulnerable to disease. What is happening in New Hampshire is happening around the world. We must take action now.

I look forward to coming back later this evening to talk more about what we are seeing in New Hampshire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, Theodore Roosevelt said:

Of all the questions which can come before this Nation, short of the actual preservation of its existence in a great war, there is none which compares in importance with the great central task of leaving this land even a better land for our descendants than it is for us.

We should reconsider those words now in the context of carbon pollution—carbon pollution which is a direct assault to our rural resources, on our farming, fishing, and forestry. In Oregon we had three worst-ever droughts we have faced over a 13-year period, devastating to the farmers, their families, and the farm economy.

In fishing, everyone who goes to their favorite trout stream knows that if there is no snowpack, the stream is warmer and smaller in summer and a poor place to fish, and certainly worse for iconic salmon and steelhead.

The forests are burning, from pine beetles, which spread throughout the land in the context of not having those cold snaps in the winter, and in the context of tinderbox conditions on the forest floor. Those forest fires have been some of the worst we have seen in a century, and more is yet to come. We cannot wait for 20 or 30 or 40 years to act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. MERKLEY. We cannot wait for 2 or 3 or 4 years to act. The carbon pollution is real and the damage is real. It is time for this Chamber to act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Why are we here tonight. We are here because if we fail to act, our planet will be destroyed. As exaggerated as that claim sounds, it is strikingly, irrefutably true. We are here because our future is at stake, and not only ours but our children's. We are here because of climate change, which is really climate disruption and planet destruction. It is real and it is urgent.

Anyone who lives in Connecticut knows about the snowstorms and hurricanes, Superstorm Sandy, the rising tide that will eventually destroy our coastline, the rising temperatures that will emaciate our vegetation and our produce. There are real human effects but also economic effects. There are immense economic perils but also tremendous economic promise. There are immense economic perils but also tremendous economic promise if we invest in the steps that have to be taken to stop climate disruption.

We can take advantage of the immense opportunity and obligation we face by acknowledging the reality that our planet is at stake and defeating and discrediting the climate change deniers, who are as much a part of the problem as any of the natural forces or elements at stake.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. That is why we are here tonight, and that is why we will stay the course.

I yield the floor.

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, as a member of the climate change task force, I am pleased to join my colleagues in calling for action on tackling one of our Nation's greatest challenges. I wish to start by thanking Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator SCHATZ, and Senator BOXER for their leadership on this issue.

Tonight we will illustrate that climate change is not theoretical and cannot be ignored. We will discuss how sound science can be used to better understand and manage climate impacts. We will highlight the moral imperative that we have in Congress to implement real solutions.

In my home State of New Mexico we are seeing bigger fires, dryer summers, more severe floods when it finally does rain, and less snowpack in the winter. Our Nation's second most extreme year for weather on record was in 2012, but in New Mexico we experienced the hottest year on record. Over the last 4 years alone, we have seen the two largest fires in New Mexico's history.

The reality is that things are only going to get worse if we don't act. If we have any hope of reversing the effects of climate change—and we truly must—it is critical that we embrace this challenge now and lead the world

in innovation, efficiency, and clean energy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, Joe Sewall, David Huber, Harry Richardson, Hoddy Hildreth, and Sherry Huber—those names mean nothing in this Chamber, but they meant everything in Maine in the 1970s. They were the parents of the environmental movement in our State. What do they all have in common? They are all Republicans.

I rise tonight in puzzlement as to how this issue became a partisan one. It is a scientific issue. Light travels at 186,000 miles per second. That is science. That is not a partisan or debatable issue. The science on this question is definitive.

I would not call myself a denier, but I was a skeptic until several years when I encountered a chart, which I will show in a large version later this evening, that talks about CO₂ in the atmosphere for the last million years. Yes, it varied over time between 150 and 250 parts per million, but in the 1860s, at the dawn of the fossil fuel age, it started to go up, and now it is at 400 parts per million. That number has not been seen in this world for 3 million years. The last time we were at that figure, the sea level was 80 feet higher.

We are playing with the future of this planet. We have to do something, and that is why we are here.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, as a member of the climate change task force, I am proud to join my colleagues today. I particularly wish to thank Senators SCHATZ, WHITEHOUSE, and BOXER for getting us organized and bringing attention to the urgent need to address climate change. We are on the cusp of a climate crisis. We are at a point of no return that will threaten our health, our economy, and our planet.

For the next several hours and all through the night and into tomorrow, dozens of Senators will add their voices to the millions of voices around the country of people who are committed in the fight against climate change.

I got ready for this event by asking people for help. I sent out an email asking a simple question: What do people think the world will look like 25 years from now if we don't do anything at all to stop climate change? Nearly 5,000 emails have already poured in from workers, teachers, grandparents, and students. These Americans see what is happening to our environment. They see the paralysis of our politics. They see that we are headed down a dangerous path. They see that we—our country and our Congress—must change.

This is where we start—a moment of great peril for Massachusetts, for America, and for the world, but also a

moment of great opportunity. This is a time for us to come together.

During my time on the floor, I plan to read letters from some of the people who have emailed me.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Ms. WARREN. I yield the floor.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, the science proves there is a danger, the economics prove there is a solution, and the politics tonight begin the process of saying there is a way to deal with this issue.

The planet is running a fever, but there are no emergency rooms for planets. We have to engage in the preventive care so that we deploy the strategies which make it possible for our planet to avoid the worst, most catastrophic effects of climate change. We can do it and do it in a way that helps our economy.

There are now 80,000 people working in the wind industry in the United States. There are 142,000 people in the solar industry. That is 220,000 people. There are 80,000 people in the coal industry. Most of the wind and solar jobs have been created in the last 5 years. This is a job-creating revolution which is taking off.

Tonight we are going to stay up all night to talk about this climate change issue in the hopes that tomorrow will be the dawn of a new era where the Congress begins to do something about this issue and where it responds to its historic duty to the next generation to end this crisis.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, climate change is real and it is here. Rising sea levels, disappearing coastlines, longer droughts, colder winters, hotter summers, and massive so-called storms of the century are occurring routinely, such as Hurricanes Irene and Lee and, of course, Superstorm Sandy that devastated the Northeast. But powerful special interests and too many politicians who should simply know better would have us believe that it is a hoax or that any reasonable action would kill jobs.

I, for one, refuse to believe that somehow harmful pollution is the only way to grow and sustain our economy. I, for one, know for a fact that what is good for our environment can be good for business when we act responsibly.

It is time to invest in clean energy with wind, solar, biofuel, and other sources of energy that do not pollute our environment and contribute to climate change. We have everything it takes from sustainable resources, American innovation, and manufacturing know-how to produce new sources of clean energy that are made here in America. That is how we can cut our dependence on costly foreign oil and make us more secure; that is

how we can spark new businesses, new jobs, and a stronger middle class, all while protecting the air we breathe and the water we drink and preserving all the beauty of our most cherished places for the next generation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, how much time remains under the control of our side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 3 minutes 30 seconds.

Mr. INHOFE. If the Senator needs more time, I will not object.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. That is kind of the distinguished Senator, but I think we have managed to come within our time.

As we close, I wish to thank so many colleagues who have participated in this early lightning round of statements by Senators. We expect to have 30 Democratic Senators speaking on this issue during the course of the night, through the night, and into tomorrow morning.

It is a matter we are overdue in addressing. It is a matter that is really beyond legitimate scientific dispute—at least as to the fundamental truth of the planet warming and why. Indeed, Abraham Lincoln was the President when a scientist named Tyndall—over in England—first presented to the Royal Academy of Sciences his work showing that carbon dioxide in the atmosphere warms the Earth as it increases its density. We are now more carbon dense.

As Senator KING said, we spent about 800,000 to 3 million years in a zone of 150 to 300 parts per million. We had never been at 400 parts per million in the history of human habitation on the face of this planet until just a few months ago when the first 400-parts-per-million reading was recorded. We have to pay attention to this.

I will close by saying that not only is this a vital point for our home States, it is vital for California, which is riven by drought. It is vital for New Mexico and Colorado, which have also seen drought and wildfires. It is also vital for New York, which was clobbered by Superstorm Sandy. It is vital for Hawaii, which is seeing sea level rise and acidification. It is vital for Massachusetts, where the sea level is up 10 inches, and we are beginning to see fisheries move north and away from our waters to avoid the warming seas. It is vital for Connecticut, which has virtually lost its lobster fishery because of its warming season. And, of course, it is vital for Rhode Island. My Narragansett Bay is 3 to 4 degrees warmer in the winter, and that means that fisheries, such as the winter flounder fishery, are simply gone—90-plus percent crashed.

We have to face this as States, we have to face this as a nation, and if we fail, we will have failed the fundamental test of every American generation. The fundamental test of every

American generation is, will you bring the reputation of this country and the integrity of this democracy forward through your time so the next American generation can carry it forward with honor?

We received our democracy from the "greatest generation." They fought world wars to make it safe for us. If we fail now, we will not be the greatest generation; we will be a disgraced generation. I intend to do everything I can to make sure we do not get there.

I yield back the rest of the Democrats' time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, all night long? Well, that is going to be fun.

By the way, the Oklahoma City Thunders are not playing tonight, so we may get a few more viewers.

It is nice to look over and see probably the most articulate and knowledgeable of all of the alarmists historically as our newest Senator from Massachusetts, ED MARKEY.

You can be good friends and still disagree. The Senator from Rhode Island certainly knows that because we had a little disagreement last week. The Senator from California certainly knows this as well.

We have been working on this for a long time. This started with the Kyoto Treaty. I think most people have forgotten about that. During the Clinton-Gore administration, Gore came back from Rio de Janeiro and said we are all going to die from global warming. I will say that he knows what he is doing. The New York Times speculated that Al Gore is very likely the first environmental billionaire in existence, so I guess he knows what he is doing there.

In spite of the fact of what has happened recently, I think it is probably necessary to have something all night, something to get the attention of the American people, because they keep saying—and I hear it over and over—climate change is real, global warming is real; it is real; it is real; it is real. If you say it enough times, then people are going to think it is real.

Tonight, all night long, you can say "it is real, it is real, it is real," but I think people have heard that before and times have changed. A couple of things have happened, and I know a lot of you regret this.

I remember so well when Lisa Jackson was the Administrator of the EPA.

I have often said some very good things about her, even though she is very liberal and I am ranked most of the time as the most conservative Member of the Senate. Yet when she is asked a direct question, she always comes out with an honest answer.

I asked my good friend Senator MARKEY just a few minutes ago, who was there—first of all, let me say the United Nations started all this stuff.

They have one big annual party, and it is usually in very nice places. I think at last count 190 countries were there. I remember talking to one of my good friends from one of the sub-Saharan African countries who was there with his administration. I said: You don't believe this stuff, do you?

He said: No, but this is one of the biggest parties of the year.

One of the big parties in 2009 was Copenhagen. They set a record of how cold it was in Copenhagen. I remember that very well. I remember at that time—and I hope I get this right because we had several people from the administration. We had at that time Senator John Kerry, of course, Congressman ED MARKEY, NANCY PELOSI, and President Obama, who was Senator Obama at that time—no, he was already President at that time. Their job was to convince the 191 other countries that were in Copenhagen that we in the United States were going to pass some type of real cap and trade legislation.

So we had a hearing. At that time I think the Republicans were in control. But I said to Lisa Jackson: I am going to go to Copenhagen tomorrow to be a one-man truth squad. Everybody has been there talking about what we are going to do here in the United States and somebody has to tell them the truth. So I said: I have a feeling when I leave tomorrow, you are going to have a declaration and when you do, it has to be based on some type of science. I could tell by looking at her that they were going to have the endangerment finding.

I ask my friend if he remembers that, the endangerment finding.

Anyway, I left the next morning for Copenhagen, and that afternoon they had the endangerment finding. Before I left I said: When you have the endangerment finding, it has to be based on some type of science. What science are you going to use?

She said: Well, mostly the IPCC, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

So that is the kind of science they have been using for a long period of time.

But, ironically, the timing couldn't be better. It wasn't a matter of weeks after that; it was a matter of hours after that, that climategate was exposed. Climategate was the—it all started with East Anglia University's Climate Research Unit—the CRU—one of the main universities that helps put together the information about global warming for the IPCC. There it was disclosed that the IPCC was systematically distorting the facts, cooking the science of global warming to either cover up data that didn't tell the story they wanted everyone to hear and exaggerating the impacts of changing climate to help drive people out of fear into action.

There are three things one needs to know about the IPCC. First of all, the

Obama administration has referred to the IPCC as the gold standard of climate change science and global warming. Some say its reports on climate change and global warming represent the so-called consensus of the science opinion about global warming. IPCC and Al Gore were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 for their efforts to build and disseminate greater knowledge and doing so through the IPCC. Simply put, what this means is that in the elite circles, the IPCC is a big deal.

So as a result of climategate—when they found they had been lying all this time—when ABC News, when The Economist, when Time Magazine, when The Times of London, among many others, report that the IPCC's research contains embarrassing flaws and that the IPCC chairman and scientists knew of the flaws but published them anyway, we have the makings of a major scientific scandal. There are two examples of how the IPCC was cooking the science.

The IPCC claimed that the Himalayan glaciers would melt by 2035. Of course, this is not true. It is simply false. Yet it was put into the IPCC's fourth assessment report. According to The Sunday Times, the claim about the Himalayas was based on a 1999 story in a news magazine which, in turn, was based on a short telephone interview with someone named Seyed Hasnain, who is a very little-known Indian scientist.

Next, in 2005, the activist group World Wildlife Fund cited the story in one of its climate change reports. Yet despite the fact that the World Wildlife Fund report was not scientifically peer reviewed, it was still referenced by the IPCC. Next, according to The Times, the Himalayan glaciers are so thick at such high altitude that most glaciologists believe it would take several hundred years to melt at the present rate.

Anyway, all of that was taking place. It has to be really disturbing to a lot of those individuals who are alarmists, that all of a sudden this backbone of the science they have been referring to of the IPCC was exposed.

I remember one of the emails in 1999. These were the emails that were exposed. These are the ones that are behind—giving the information to the IPCC:

I've just completed Mike's Nature trick of adding in the real temps to each series for the last 20 years, i.e., from 1981 onwards, and from 1961 for Keith's to hide the decline.

So they were actually adding higher temperatures to give the trends they wanted.

In 2009:

The fact is that we can't account for the lack of warming at the moment, and it is a travesty that we can't.

These are the people who were supplying the information to the IPCC.

I could go on and on; there is not time to get to all of them.

Christopher Booker of the U.K. said: "This is the worst scientific scandal of our generation." He was talking about the IPCC. That is the basis of all of this.

Clive Crook, *Financial Times*: The closed mindedness of these supposed men of science . . . is surprising, even to me. The stink of intellectual corruption is overpowering.

IPCC Prominent Physicist Resigns: Climategate was a fraud on a scale I've never seen.

U.N. Scientist Dr. Phillip Lloyd calls out IPCC "fraud"—"The result is NOT scientific."

Newsweek: Once celebrated climate researchers feeling the used car salesman.

Some of the IPCC's most quoted data and recommendations were taken straight out of unchecked activist brochures . . .

Now, I am quoting right now. This was in *Newsweek*.

George Monbiot—I probably mispronounced that. He is a columnist who is on the other side of this issue from me. He said:

It's no use pretending that this isn't a major blow. The emails extracted by a hacker from the climatic unit at the University of East Anglia could scarcely be more damaging . . . I'm dismayed and deeply shaken by them . . . I was too trusting of some of those who provided the evidence I championed. I would have been a better journalist if I had investigated the claims more closely.

We have the other problem, and that is that instead of increasing, we are going through now some cold spells that are just shocking and setting new records. In January of 2014, 4,406 cold temperature records were set around the country. In January of 2014, in my city of Tulsa, it got down to minus 2 degrees, breaking a record that was held since 1912—over 100 years; in Enid, OK, minus 3 degrees. In Bartlesville, it went down to minus 14 degrees—colder than the South Pole, where it was only minus 11 on that same day.

February 2014: 5,836 cold temperature records set around the country. March 2014: Snow cover at third highest level on record; 1969, 1978 were higher. The Great Lakes, second highest ice cover on record—91 percent; 1979 is highest at 94 percent.

This is not surprising given the 15-year pause in global warming. *Nature* magazine stated that over the last 15 years "the observed [temperature] trend is . . . not significantly different from zero [and] suggests a temporary 'hiatus' in global warming."

The *Economist* magazine said the same thing.

The President hasn't acknowledged this. On multiple occasions he has said—this is a quote from the President: "The temperature around the globe is increasing faster than was predicted even 10 years ago."

Unfortunately for his talking point, the data that has been reported in *Nature*, *The Economist*, and even in the United Nations IPCC report shows that this simply is not true. Increases in global temperature have stalled over the last 15 years.

This has to be really shocking to an awful lot of advocates who put their reputation and their lives on the idea that this world is coming to an end and global warming is a reality.

Several weeks ago, in a hearing held in the EPW Committee, Gina McCarthy—she is the one who is the current EPA Administrator—was pressed on this point. Asked whether or not President Obama's statement was true, she responded: "I can't answer that."

With all this in mind—climategate, recent cold temperatures, and a 15-year hiatus—how could Congress, in good conscience, move forward with legislation that gives EPA the authority to regulate greenhouse gases? How could EPA, more importantly, move forward with regulations based off of this cooked science?

There have been several votes on global warming-related legislation over the past decade since we first started debating it here in the late 1990s, but they have all failed to show that there have even been the 60 votes required to pass cap and trade.

In 1997 the Byrd-Hagel legislation, 95 to 0, the United States should not be a signatory to the Kyoto Treaty. The Kyoto Treaty was a treaty that was negotiated with Al Gore down in South America.

In 2003 we had the McCain-Lieberman bill. It failed 43 to 55. Then we had the McCain-Lieberman bill again in 2005, and it failed 38 to 60. The trend is going in the wrong direction for them.

In 2008 the Lieberman-Warner bill failed 48 to 36.

In 2010, a resolution of disapproval on EPA's greenhouse gas rule was 47 to 53.

In 2011, the Inhofe-Upton prohibition on greenhouse gas regulation was 50-50. In 2013, the Inhofe-Upton prohibition on greenhouse gas regulations as a budget amendment was 47 to 52.

What I am saying here is the sentiment of the House and the Senate is going in the reverse direction. So it has been virtually impossible to try to pass a cap-and-trade bill.

I know there are a lot of people who at one time were looking at this and feeling as though this was something that was going to be a reality. But I have to say this. One of the reasons—this is kind of interesting. I am sorry my good friend from Massachusetts is not on the floor right now. But I can remember back when Republicans were in the majority in the Senate, and I was the chairman of a subcommittee of the Environment and Public Works Committee that was addressing this item. At that time everyone was talking as though global warming was here and it must be true, and I believed it probably was true, until they came out with the financial analysis. What would it cost if we passed cap and trade as a law?

At that time the scientists and the economists from the Wharton School of

Economics and from MIT who participated—all of the estimates were between \$300 billion and \$400 billion a year. That is something we want to be very careful about. I know every time we hear "billion dollars" it doesn't really register how much that is. In my State of Oklahoma, what I do at the end of each year is I get the total number of people who filed a Federal tax return, and then I do my math as to what it is going to cost. For \$300 billion to \$400 billion a year, it would cost each taxpayer in the State of Oklahoma some \$3,000 a year. That could be really significant, but not if there is a problem they are addressing out there. Getting back to Lisa Jackson, who is the Obama appointee to be Administrator of the EPA, I asked the question—and this was at a hearing, and I am sure the Senator from California remembers this as well because it was in one of the hearings of that committee, live on TV.

I said: Right now we are looking at different bills. We are looking at the Waxman bill and several others. The cap and trades are pretty much cap and trades. If we were to pass this, any of this legislation, would this have the effect of lowering the release of CO₂?

Her answer was: No. The reason is this is not where the problem is. The problem is in China, in India, in Mexico, and in places where they do not have any regulations.

In fact, you can carry it one step further. If we were to pass that either by regulation or by legislation, and go ahead and incur this huge tax increase—the largest tax increase in the history of America—if we were to do this, as she said, it would not lower greenhouse gases. It could increase them because we would have to be chasing our manufacturing base where they could find the generation of electricity; and that would be in countries I just mentioned where they have no restrictions at all. So it could increase, not decrease, the greenhouse gases.

This is very significant, but it is in the weeds to the point where it is rather difficult to understand. Under the Clean Air Act, the EPA—well, I want to talk about the timing just for a minute because we are going through this. Under the Clean Air Act, the EPA must finalize new rules within 1 year of its publication in the Federal Register.

What I am saying now is, what they could not get done through legislation they are trying to do through regulation. One of the things they are trying to do is have the greenhouse gas legislation come under the EPA.

Anytime you have a new EPA rule, it has to be finalized within 1 year of its publication in the Federal Register. So the rule was released on September 20, 2013, but it was not published until January 8, 2014. Why do you suppose that was? Had the new rule been published on September 30, the rule would

have gone into effect 6 weeks prior to the midterm elections and people would have known how much it was going to cost them.

If there is any doubt in anyone's mind, I have an article that was published on December 14 in the Washington Post that goes through the details as to why they did this so people would not know when they were voting how much all these regulations were going to cost. I ask unanimous consent this article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Dec. 14, 2013]

ICYMI: WHITE HOUSE DELAYED ENACTING RULES AHEAD OF 2012 ELECTION TO AVOID CONTROVERSY

(By Juliet Eilperin)

The White House systematically delayed enacting a series of rules on the environment, worker safety and health care to prevent them from becoming points of contention before the 2012 election, according to documents and interviews with current and former administration officials.

Some agency officials were instructed to hold off submitting proposals to the White House for up to a year to ensure that they would not be issued before voters went to the polls, the current and former officials said.

The delays meant that rules were postponed or never issued. The stalled regulations included crucial elements of the Affordable Care Act, what bodies of water deserved federal protection, pollution controls for industrial boilers and limits on dangerous silica exposure in the workplace.

The Obama administration has repeatedly said that any delays until after the election were coincidental and that such decisions were made without regard to politics. But seven current and former administration officials told The Washington Post that the motives behind many of the delays were clearly political, as Obama's top aides focused on avoiding controversy before his reelection.

The number and scope of delays under Obama went well beyond those of his predecessors, who helped shape rules but did not have the same formalized controls, said current and former officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the topic.

Those findings are bolstered by a new report from the Administrative Conference of the United States (ACUS), an independent agency that advises the federal government on regulatory issues. The report is based on anonymous interviews with more than a dozen senior agency officials who worked with the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA), which oversees the implementation of federal rules.

The report said internal reviews of proposed regulatory changes "took longer in 2011 and 2012 because of concerns about the agencies issuing costly or controversial rules prior to the November 2012 election."

Emily Cain, spokeswoman for the Office of Management and Budget, said in a statement that the administration's "approach to regulatory review is consistent with long-standing precedent across previous administrations and fully adheres" to federal rules.

Administration officials noted that they issued a number of controversial rules during Obama's first term, including limits on mer-

cury emissions for power plants and Medicaid eligibility criteria under the Affordable Care Act.

"OMB works as expeditiously as possible to review rules, but when it comes to complex rules with significant potential impact, we take the time needed to get them right," Cain said.

But Ronald White, who directs regulatory policy at the advocacy group Center for Effective Government, said the "overt manipulation of the regulatory review process by a small White House office" raises questions about how the government writes regulations. He said the amount of time it took the White House to review proposed rules was "particularly egregious over the past two years."

Previous White House operations have weighed in on major rules before they were officially submitted for review. But Jeffrey Holmstead, who headed the EPA's Office of Air and Radiation in the George W. Bush administration, said the effort was not as extensive as the Obama administration's approach.

"There was no formalized process by which you had to get permission to send them over," Holmstead said, referring to rules being submitted to the White House.

The recent decision to bring on Democratic strategist John Podesta as a senior White House adviser is likely to accelerate the number of new rules and executive orders, given Podesta's long-standing support for using executive action to achieve the president's goals despite congressional opposition.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), who chairs the Judiciary Subcommittee on Oversight, Federal Rights and Agency Action, said he's concerned about the real-world impact of the postponements in the first term.

"Legal protection delayed is protection denied," Blumenthal said. "I've spoken to officials at the top rungs of the White House power structure and at OIRA and we're going to hold their feet to the fire, and we're going to make sure they're held accountable in a series of hearings."

The officials interviewed for the ACUS report, whose names were withheld from publication by the study authors, said that starting in 2012 they had to meet with an OIRA desk officer before submitting each significant rule for formal review. They called the sessions "Mother-may-I" meetings, according to the study.

The accounts were echoed by four Obama administration political appointees and three career officials interviewed by The Post.

At the Environmental Protection Agency, for example, a former official said that only two managers had the authority to request a major rule in 2012: then-administrator Lisa P. Jackson and deputy administrator Bob Perciasepe. Perciasepe and OIRA's director at the time, Cass Sunstein, would have "weekly and sometimes semi-weekly discussions" to discuss rules that affected the economy, one said, because they had political consequences, the person said.

"As we entered the run-up to the election, the word went out the White House was not anxious to review new rules," the former official said.

Sunstein, who has returned to his post as a Harvard Law School professor, declined to comment.

Several significant EPA proposals were withheld as a result of those meetings, officials said, including a proposal requiring cleaner gasoline and lower-pollution vehicles

that had won the support of automakers but angered the oil industry.

That regulation, which would reduce the amount of sulfur in U.S. gasoline by two-thirds and impose fleetwide pollution limits on new vehicles by 2017, was ready in December 2011, said three officials familiar with the proposal. But agency officials were told to wait a year to submit it for review because critics could use it to suggest that the administration was raising gas prices, they said. The EPA issued the proposed rule in March.

Other EPA regulations that were delayed beyond the 2012 election included rules on coal ash disposal, water pollution rules for streams and wetlands, air emissions from industrial boilers and cement kilns, and carbon dioxide limits for existing power plants.

Ross Eisenberg, who serves as vice president of energy and resources policy at the National Association for Manufacturers and has criticized several EPA regulations, noted that in the past year the administration moved ahead with proposals such as the rules on greenhouse gas emissions and boilers.

"The agenda certainly did slow down, but it doesn't change," he said.

The administration also was slow to handle rules pertaining to its health-care law. Several key regulations did not come out until after the 2012 election, including one defining what constitutes "essential health benefits" under a health plan and which Americans could qualify for federal subsidies if they opted to enroll in a state or a federal marketplace plan.

The latter focused on what constitutes "affordable." Treasury proposed a regulation in August 2011 saying an employer plan was affordable as long as the premium for an individual was no more than 9.5 percent of the taxpayer's household income. Several groups—including labor unions—argued that the proposal did not take into account that the premium for a family plan might be much higher than that standard.

Unions represent a vital part of the Democratic coalition, in part because they help mobilize voters during elections.

The Treasury Department held the proposal back while finalizing all the other tax-credit rules on May 23, 2012. Treasury officials later told those working on the regulation that it could not be published before the election, according to a government official familiar with the decision who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of its sensitive nature. The department made the rule on Feb. 1.

OMB has reduced the length of time that rules are pending this year. The agency has cut the number of rules that were under review for more than 200 days by more than half.

But while the administration is pressing ahead, activists say the delays took a toll. Peg Seminario, director of safety and health for the AFL-CIO, points to an update of the nation's silica standards proposed Sept. 12 after a long delay. The rule, which would prevent an estimated 688 deaths and 1,585 silica-related illnesses each year, won't be finalized until 2016.

Jon Devine, a senior lawyer in the Natural Resources Defense Council's water program, said small streams and wetlands remain vulnerable because of the administration's foot-dragging. The EPA recently withdrew a proposal to outline what kind of water bodies deserve federal protection that had been pending since February 2012 and announced it would issue a legally binding rule instead.

"What's disappointing is it leaves waters subject to the existing, weak state of affairs until they get the rule over the final hurdle," Devine said.

Mr. INHOFE. There are more impacts that are taking place. The greenhouse gas regulations for existing powerplants are expected to be released in June of 2014.

The other regulations that are out there—and I am not going to spend any time on this because there are too many. But on the greenhouse gas legislation—even though when it started, it was Charles Rivers and the Wharton School and MIT—they came out with the approximation of \$300 to \$400 billion a year; and that is every year. The greenhouse gas regulatory costs under the Clean Air Act are totally different. No one has even calculated this yet.

I would like to make sure we understand that under the bill my good friend ED MARKEY and WAXMAN put forth, it would regulate the emissions of those organizations that emit 25,000 tons or more. However, if you do it through the Clean Air Act, it would be 250 tons. So you are talking about instead of 25,000 tons—which might be only the very large organizations; refineries and that type of thing—under the Clean Air Act, which is what they are attempting to do today as we speak, it would be just 250 tons, which would be every school, every hospital, every shop, and many residences.

So the greenhouse gas regulatory costs—if it costs \$300 to \$400 billion to regulate organizations that emit 25,000 tons, how much would it be if they emitted 250 tons? It is something that has not even been calculated yet.

So we have all of these impacts of the regulations that take place. But the greatest of all would be, if you think about the cumulative impact study back—I have introduced legislation, along with several others. I know JOHN BARRASSO and several others have co-sponsored legislation that would tell the public the cumulative effect of all these regulations.

For example, as to the ozone regulations: 77 Oklahoma counties would be out of attainment; 7 million jobs would be lost.

As to Utility MACT—that is something that did pass—a \$100 billion cost—1.65 million jobs lost. It has already been implemented.

Boiler MACT—and every manufacturing company has a boiler; and "MACT" means "maximum achievable control technology"—Boiler MACT is costing \$63 billion, and 800,000 jobs have already been lost.

The BLM fracking regulations would be \$100,000 per well—duplicative of effective State regulations, which have been doing very well now since 1948.

And there are greenhouse gas costs of \$300 to \$400 billion.

So I guess what I am saying here—and I know I am using up quite a bit of

time, but it is important to look and see what has happened since the time they were all talking about global warming. Everybody was talking about it, and how they are going to have an all-night thing to try to revive it because the public has gone in the other direction.

George Mason University had a study where they actually interviewed several hundred of the TV meteorological people. Mr. President, 63 percent of them said that if global warming is taking place, it is from natural causes, not from global warming.

Polar bears. Everyone is concerned about polar bears. I know my good friend from California gave me a polar bear. It is my favorite coffee cup and I use it all the time. But between the 1950s and 1960s, the number of polar bears that were wandering around out there was between 5,000 and 10,000. Today, it is between 15,000 and 25,000.

The threats. A lot of times when people cannot win an argument, then they threaten. NASA's James Hansen said this is "high crimes against humanity." Robert Kennedy, Jr., called me a "call girl," a "prostitute." Robert Kennedy, Jr., also said: "This is treason. And we need to start treating them as traitors." In other words, we need to start killing people.

In 2006, the eco-magazine *Grist* called for Nuremberg-style trials for skeptics. September 29, 2007: Virginia State climatologist skeptical of global warming loses his job after a clash with the Governor. "I was told that I could not speak in public."

Barone: Warmists have a "desire to kill heretics."

The Weather Channel—Heidi Cullen, by the way, is a meteorologist on the Weather Channel. She is off with an environmental group right now, so she is not around anymore.

Polling—where the American people are going; I think it is important to understand—this is a Gallup poll that is a current one right now. According to a Gallup poll, climate change is the least important environmental issue among the voters.

In March of 2010, the same Gallup poll: Americans rank global warming dead last, 8 out of 8 environmental issues.

In March 2010, Rasmussen: 72 percent of American voters do not believe global warming is a "very serious problem."

The global warmist Robert Socolow laments:

We are losing the argument with the public, big time. . . . I think the climate change activists, myself included, have lost the American Middle.

So there are definitely some things going on here that are not in their favor.

I would like to mention this, though. I think a lot of people have talked about the various scientists. On my

Web site you can look up several thousand—this is a long time ago—I think we passed through 1,000 qualified scientists way back in 2006, and it has gone up since that time to many, many, so it is something where there are a lot of scientists. One of my favorite scientists is one because he is a Nobel prize-winning Stanford University physicist. He said:

Please remain calm. The earth will heal itself—climate is beyond our power to control. The earth doesn't care about governments and legislation. Climate change is a matter of geologic time . . . something the earth does on its own without asking anyone's permission or explaining itself.

Richard Lindzen of MIT was a former U.N. IPCC receiver. He said: If the government wants carbon control, that is the answer the NAS will provide. He is the one who also said: The ultimate controlling factor is once you control CO₂, you control people.

The Harvard Smithsonian Study. The study examined the results of more than 240 peer-reviewed papers published by thousands of researchers over the past four decades. The study covers a multitude of geophysical and biological climate indicators. They came to the conclusion that climate change is not real and that the science is not accurate.

Dr. Fred Seitz—he is the former president of the National Academy of Sciences—said: "There is no convincing evidence that human release of carbon dioxide, methane, or other greenhouse gases is causing or will, in the foreseeable future, cause catastrophic heating of the Earth's atmosphere and disruption of the Earth's climate."

So we have a lot of scientists on both sides of this issue. I think the American people have woken up. I use something quite often because it is a little bit comical—and this is just kind of from memory, but this is something that actually did happen. Mr. President, 1895 was the first time we had, in recent history—we have had cold spells before, and we had the medieval warm period and all of that stuff; that was a long time ago—but in 1895—starting with current, more modern history—they had a cold spell that came in. That is where, I say to my friend from New Hampshire, they first came up with a new ice age that was coming. That was in 1895. That lasted from 1895 to 1918. Then, in 1918, they came along with a warming period. That was the first time we heard the term "global warming." That was in 1918, and that lasted until 1948.

And get this. These are about 30-year cycles. That lasted until about 1945. In 1945, all of a sudden it changed from this warming period to a cooling period. That lasted until 1975. Then it changed to a warming period. Now, since 2000, it has leveled off, and we are going into another cycle. You can almost set your watch by these cycles.

Here is an interesting thing about that. In 1948, when it changed from a warming period to a cooling period, that coincided with the greatest single release of CO₂ in history. That was right after World War II.

So these are the things that are happening. I know they are going to enjoy staying up all night. They will have an audience of themselves, and I hope they enjoy it.

But I have to say this in all sincerity. When you see something, and instead of going right along with the public and saying, it must be true because everybody is saying it—and everybody goes over and over again and talks about the climate is real and the science is real, and all that—well, that happens when it is not real, and that is what we have been going through.

Right now I know President Obama is going through all kinds of efforts to try to do through regulations what the elected people would not do in the House, as well as in the Senate. When people realize—and they will be reminded again, even though it has been a while—now, I think it might be clever that after several years now where people have been talking about global warming that now they are trying to revive it, and that is what you are going to hear all night long here tonight.

It is kind of interesting that this is happening at a time that we are going through this cold spell. It certainly has not been much fun in Oklahoma.

So I think the American people are not ready to pass the largest tax increase in the history of America, and we will have to wait and see.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, it was with great interest that I listened to my friend. I suppose we are making progress. He used to call climate change a hoax, and he did not say that. So maybe he is moving in our direction.

But I also want to point out, he says we are going to be talking to ourselves. I am happy to report that I just learned of two petitions, one that has 65,000 signatures calling on us to act and another that has 30,000 signatures calling on us to act, and the night is young.

Now, my friend from Oklahoma—

Mr. INHOFE. Will the Senator yield for an observation, since the Senator mentioned my name?

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, if the time is taken off their time, I am happy to yield.

Mr. INHOFE. The reason I did not use the word “hoax” is because then I might be guilty of advertising my book, and I certainly did not want to do that.

Mrs. BOXER. That is wonderful. I am so happy you did not use hoaxes, and

maybe there is a way for us to come closer together on this issue. But let me say this: People are listening. People care. Because when 97 to 98 percent of the scientists say something is real, they do not have anything pressing them to say that other than the truth. They do not have any other agenda. They do not work for the oil companies.

I will tell you, as chairman of the environment committee, every time the Republicans choose a so-called expert on climate, we have tracked them to special interest funding, those 3 percent. They know where their bread is buttered. I am sorry my friend left. I guess he could not stand to hear the truth. So I will put that truth into the RECORD.

I do not know how my Republican colleagues can continue to deny that climate change is happening. One would think they could see it out their window, because as my colleague says: Oh, there was such cold weather. That has been predicted by the scientists, extreme weather. Here is the U.S. Global Change Research Program, their National Climate Assessment draft: Some extreme weather and climate events have increased in recent decades. We have seen heavy downpours, more severe droughts, and some extremes.

At the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works climate change briefing, Dr. Marshall Shepherd, president of the American Meteorological Society, and a director of the Atmospheric Sciences Program at the University of Georgia, said:

Climate change is increasing the probability of extreme events, and in some cases maybe strengthening their intensity or increasing their frequency. We are loading the dice towards more Sandy or blizzard-type storms.

So when my friend says: The planet is not warming; it is cold, we all know it is not about the weather. It is about the climate. It is about the long term—and, yes, we are going to see these extreme weather conditions.

I would say that when my friends call us alarmists, that is ridiculous. We are trying to do our job. We are not scientists. We are not doctors either, for the most part, but we want to make sure people have health care coverage. We are not scientists, but we want to protect our people from the ravages of climate.

I would ask my colleague Senator SCHATZ would he like me to go another 5 minutes, 10 minutes or 2 minutes? It is up to him. I can withhold. I am going to be here for quite a few hours.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. If the Senator from California wanted to go for another 2 or 3 minutes, I could give remarks for about 10, and then the senior Senator from Oregon has remarks to give as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Absolutely. Will the Presiding Officer tell me when I have used 3 minutes and then I will yield the floor at that time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator will be so notified.

Mrs. BOXER. We just heard 45 minutes from my friend JIM INHOFE, whom I have a very friendly relationship with but who I think is a dangerous denier, a dangerous denier in the face of 97 percent agreement among scientists.

He talks about international groups. I wish to talk about the National Academy of Sciences. Here is what they said: “Levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses in earth’s atmosphere are exceeding levels recorded in the past millions of years.”

That is our own National Academy of Sciences. I guess if we went out and asked the public do they support the National Academy of Sciences, I think it would come in at 90 percent, and the other 10 percent would say, I will get back to you.

Then we have more from the National Academy:

Climate change is occurring. It is very likely caused primarily by the emission of greenhouse gasses from human activity.

They go on:

Human activities have increased greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide, the main greenhouse gas, is emitted by human activities and it has risen almost 40 percent over the past 150 years.

So when you hear my colleagues on the other side of the aisle stand and deny this, how about the U.S. National Climate Assessment? This is the United States of America, our experts:

Global sea level has risen by about 8 inches since reliable recordkeeping began. It is projected to rise another 1 to 4 feet by 2100.

That is dangerous. We have already seen it happening. I could go on, and I will come back, but I will conclude with this. I am, in my concluding remarks, going to tell you about every incredibly prestigious scientific group that has warned us about climate change: The joint world science academies’ statement, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Chemical Society, the American Geophysical Union, the American Institute of Biological Scientists, the American Society of Plant Biologists, the Association of Ecosystem Research Centers, the Botanical Society of America, the Crop Science Society of America, the Natural Science Collections Alliance, the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics, the Soil Science Society of America, the American Medical Association, the American Meteorological Society, the American Geophysical Union—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used 3 minutes.

Mrs. BOXER. I ask unanimous consent for 30 additional seconds.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. The Geological Society of America. All I can say is, to come down here and accuse the Democrats of being alarmist, when all we are trying to do is protect the health and safety of the American people, of their families and future generations, is extreme while we are in the mainstream.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I would like to address some of the tropes that our climate deniers tend to use. I will go through a couple of those before our great senior Senator from the great State of Oregon gives his remarks.

The first trope is: It is not warming. The "it is not warming" crowd will not even admit that the Earth is warming. Their favorite tactic is to point out the window during winter and say: Look at the snow on the ground. Climate change is bunk.

That is not an adult argument. Under that theory, winter weather anywhere disproves climate change. Snowstorms are weather. Weather is not climate. Weather is a local phenomenon over extremely short timespans. Weather is what it is going to be like tomorrow. Weather is not climate. Climate is long-term weather trends over vast regions. This is not difficult to distinguish among adults. It is easy to make a joke about how cold it is and therefore climate change is bunk.

But the vast majority of science disproves that assertion. Pointing out the window on a cold day and laughing about climate change is one of the most profoundly unserious things that otherwise good and responsible leaders in this Chamber do. Part of this country's greatness is our pragmatism. We see the world as it is and fix the things we can. For that, we need reliable information. When it comes to climate change, we have reliable information. We ignore it at our peril.

For those who say the Earth is not warming, I would like to talk about thermometers. They measure temperature. We have them all over the world, very sophisticated ones run by very smart people. They provide a lot of data that has proven beyond a doubt that the atmosphere and that the oceans are warming. Even prominent climate skeptics such as American scientist Richard Muller can no longer argue.

After exhaustive research, Dr. Muller said in 2012:

Our results show that the average temperature of the earth's land has risen by two and a half degrees Fahrenheit over the last 250 years, including an increase of one and a half degrees over the most recent 50 years. Moreover, it appears likely that essentially all of this increase results from the human emission of greenhouse gases.

This was a prominent climate denier previously.

Two, relying on anecdotes to disprove what is actually happening. A research vessel got stuck in summer ice in Antarctica. More and more deniers are being forced to rely on out-of-context anecdotes to support their false claims. In December, they got very excited about a research vessel that was stuck in the summer sea ice in Antarctica, claiming it as proof that the Earth is not warming. Here is the thing. It is an Antarctica. It is at the bottom of the Earth. It is one of the coldest places in the world. One summer's ice in Antarctica does not suddenly invalidate millions of worldwide temperature measurements from all over the planet.

They do this whether glaciers are growing or melting. Even though 90 percent of the world's glaciers are melting, they pick off one and use it as proof that climate change is somehow not an established scientific fact, even though it is.

The fourth trope we hear, and this is a pivot, we are starting to hear it more and more: It may be warming, but maybe we did not cause it. They begrudgingly admit that the Earth is warming but say: Hey, this is part of a natural cycle. Natural cycles have happened before and they will happen again.

Recently, Dr. James Powell, a geochemist, former college president and National Science Board member, studied all peer-reviewed articles on climate change—all peer-reviewed articles on climate change from 1991 to 2013. He found just over 25,000 articles written since 1991. Of 25,000 articles, only 26—only 26 rejected the premise of human-caused climate change. This is no longer a real debate. It is only a debate in the four corners of this Capitol. People across the Nation, insurance companies, the Department of Defense, most governments across the planet, our biggest corporations, regular people of all political stripes and in every State understand that this is what is happening to us.

Some deniers also like to use responsible scientists' methods against them. The truth about scientists is that they are scientists, which is to say they entertain doubt; they ask questions; they are not afraid to express their doubts; they observe and refine their theories. So deniers cannot in good conscience use the scientific process as evidence that doubt still exists. Sure, there is uncertainty among scientists, but it is pretty much just about whether future impacts of climate change will be really bad or extremely bad.

The sixth trope is: It is not a big deal. Maybe it is even good. As deniers paint themselves even further into a corner, they become desperate. We now come to the category of those who admit the Earth is warming, admit it is caused by humans but claim the effects are negligible or, even more posterously, they might be good for us.

My colleagues and I have presented evidence from study after study after study showing that while the changes so far are manageable in some places, if we do not change our ways, the bad news will start coming faster and faster. Absent major reforms, the rate of change will increase. We may not notice half a degree of average temperature increase here and there, but on a geological timescale, these changes are occurring at recordbreaking speed.

In many cases, they may be happening too quickly for nature or humanity to adapt. A 2012 study commissioned by 20 governments, which was written by more than 50 scientists, economists, and other experts, found that by 2030 the cost of climate change and air pollution combined will rise to 3.2 percent of global GDP, with the world's least-developed countries most impacted, possibly suffering losses of up to 11 percent of their GDP.

Developed countries will not be exempt from these impacts. The study finds that climate change could wipe out 2 percent of our GDP by the year 2030. That is a big deal.

Finally, the trope that China is doing nothing so our actions do not matter. This category of deniers accepts the reality, causes, and seriousness of climate change, but then they say it is hopeless because countries such as China and others are doing nothing to reduce their image.

That is flat wrong. Here is the evidence. In September, the Chinese State Council released its atmospheric pollution action plan, which called for a reduction in the construction of new coal-fired powerplants and a goal of generating 13 percent of its electricity from clean energy from renewable sources by 2017.

Chinese officials have announced they plan to institute a tax on carbon pollution in 2015 or 2016. Certain regions have also begun to implement pilot cap-and-trade programs, and they have plans to create a national carbon market by 2020.

How about current investments? In 2012, the United States spent about \$35 billion on renewables, while China spent \$64 billion.

Finally, there is the nothing-we-can-do denial trope. Let's throw in the towel. This crowd accepts the science, accepts the impacts but seems to have just given up.

When did we start thinking we couldn't solve America's big problems? When did we start thinking we were too small or not important enough to make a difference?

I don't believe that. I believe that when America leads, the world follows. For this country to lead, this Congress needs to act.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, earlier this evening I touched on the numbers that underlie this debate—the

numbers from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the numbers from the National Academy of Sciences—and said they really drive me to the judgment that climate change is the scientific equivalent of a speeding Mack truck. But I believe numbers don't really capture this discussion fully because what people want to know is the impact of climate change in their community, what it truly means for them in their part of the country.

To get into those impacts, I will start with one that is shellacking my home State; that is, the wildfires that are burning longer, getting hotter, and starting earlier. Drought and high temperatures from climate change are driving all of this. During the early part of this past year's fire season, intense wildfires once again burned across the Western United States, threatening population centers and destroying hundreds of homes. This winter, fires have already burned in western Oregon—something that used to be very rare. The number of houses that have burned in our country from wildfires has increased a staggering 400 percent in only the past couple of years and is projected to get far worse. In 2012, 2 percent of my home State of Oregon burned in just one summer and nearly 1.5 million acres burned across the Pacific Northwest. Wildfires, of course, have always been part of life in my home State, but the fires of recent years are getting hotter and are significantly more threatening to homes.

Our country's top scientists say the conditions that caused these recent fire seasons to become more severe, including drought accompanied by above-average temperatures, are more common now due to human-induced climate change. Over the past 30 years the fire season has become 2½ months longer and both the number and severity of forest fires in the American West have increased several-fold. Scientists who have examined this issue say climate change is a significant factor behind it.

To their credit, the Obama administration has indicated that they want to work with Senators of both political parties to tackle this issue. In particular, what they have suggested—and Senator CRAPO, the Republican Senator from Idaho, and I have pushed this strongly—is that instead of shorting the prevention fund, which is the heart of the problem—we have to go in and thin out these overstocked stands—instead of shorting the prevention fund, which is what happens every year now, because these fires are so big and so hot, what happens is the bureaucracy comes in and takes money from the prevention fund in order to suppress the fires, and the problem, of course, gets worse because we don't have the funds for prevention.

The administration wants to work with Democrats and Republicans in the

Senate and in the other body so that the most serious fires—only the most serious ones—get handled from the disaster fund. We believe this is going to free up additional support for efforts to prevent these fires, and that will be beneficial to our communities.

Second, I would like to focus on power sector vulnerability. The drought and high temperatures that can lead to the wildfires and make our power grid more vulnerable also raise the question of the implications for our grid and for taxpayers.

Much of that vulnerability comes from changes in water supply and water temperature. Water plays two critical roles in generating electricity. Water is needed for generating hydropower—something we do a lot of in the Pacific Northwest. It is also needed for cooling in many other types of generation, such as nuclear, biomass, and coal. For those generators, water must not only be available in sufficient quantities, but it has to be cool enough to allow the plants to run safely and efficiently. That means climate change poses a double threat to some of these facilities.

This is not a hypothetical situation; recent history has already shown the power sector's vulnerability to both drought and high temperatures. In 2001, for example, severe drought in the Pacific Northwest and California significantly reduced hydroelectric generation, causing tight electricity supplies and high prices throughout the West. That drought was estimated to have an economic impact of between \$2.5 billion and \$6 billion.

High temperatures have also made water too hot to actually be able to cool some powerplants. In 2007 the Tennessee Valley Authority had to temporarily shut down its Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant because the intake water temperatures were too high. In 2012 the Millstone nuclear plant that powers half of Connecticut had to take 40 percent of its capacity offline for almost 2 weeks because the cooling water it was getting from Long Island Sound was too warm. In that same year the Braidwood nuclear facility in Illinois had to get an exemption to use intake water that was 102 degrees instead of shutting down during a heat wave. When somebody has their air-conditioning on high because it is over 100 degrees, that is not a time that we can afford to be taking a base load powerplant offline.

So far it has been possible to get through the heat- and drought-related shutdowns of these powerplants without major outages, but let's make no mistake about it—the ratepayers have definitely felt them in their power bills. In Texas during the summer of 2011, for example, electricity was selling on the spot market for \$3,000 per megawatt hour—well over 100 times the normal rate.

Next I would like to talk about the effects of climate on energy infrastructure. The power sector isn't the only bit of energy infrastructure that is vulnerable to climate change. Recently, I—along with the majority leader, Senator REID, Senator FRANKEN, Senator HARKIN, and Senator MARK UDALL—asked the Government Accountability Office to look into the effects of climate change on energy infrastructure.

That report was just released. What the Government Accountability Office found is that climate changes are projected to affect infrastructure throughout all major stages of the energy supply chain—of course, once again increasing the risk of energy disruption.

In addition to power sector vulnerabilities, the GAO also found vulnerabilities among the infrastructure for producing and extracting natural resources, including oil and gas platforms, refineries, and processing plants. This infrastructure is often located near the coast, making it vulnerable to severe weather and sea level rise.

Fuel transportation and storage infrastructure, including pipelines, barges, railways, and storage tanks, are also susceptible to damage from severe weather, melting permafrost, and increased precipitation.

I close by outlining some of the steps that can actually be taken to deal with these issues. I am sure people who are following this discussion tonight are saying: All right, they are making a good case about the nature of the problem. So what else. What comes next in terms of our ability to take action to deal with this.

I have said before that there are a host of areas where we are going to have to work in a global kind of manner to build support with other countries for tackling climate change, but there is no question that this Senate can put points on the board this year in the fight against climate change.

I am very pleased to have been able to work with our colleague Senator MURKOWSKI, the ranking Republican on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, over this past year. Until recently I served as chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and we were able to pass a major law to spur development of hydropower, which is one of America's forgotten renewables. Hydropower already makes up two-thirds of our country's renewable power, so this is obviously a vital renewable source of energy. Our legislation makes it easier to put hydro on existing dams, irrigation canals, and conduits, and we believe it is going to spark big investments in clean renewable power. The National Hydropower Association estimates that there are 60,000 megawatts of potential new hydropower in our country yet to be harnessed.

In addition, our committee passed an important bill to cut redtape associated with developing geothermal power on public lands.

My colleagues and I urge the administration to take steps to have tools at their disposal to invest in energy efficiency and use the savings to pay for those upgrades.

I look forward, here on the floor of the Senate, to being able to pass what I would call the platonic ideal of consensus energy legislation; that is, the bill that has been sponsored by our colleagues, Senator SHAHEEN and Senator PORTMAN. I am very pleased that we had a promising development over the past few weeks where we brought together those who care about trying to promote clean and renewable energy in Federal buildings. We have been able to get common ground between Senators of differing views. I look forward to seeing that bill, the Shaheen-Portman bill, on the floor of the Senate.

The fact is a number of our renewable energy sources have been on a roll over the past several years, demonstrating their potential.

For example, onshore wind has installed tens of thousands of megawatts of capacity in recent years when the policy support has been in place. As expected, the costs have come down with technology improvements, experience, economies of scale, and as a deep domestic supply chain has built up to manufacture all of the components of the wind turbines and towers. The policy support has been working, and wind is now knocking at the door of competitiveness with fossil technologies.

Offshore wind is also picking up steam, even off the coast of my home State, where the waters have always been too deep for offshore wind to be possible. A company called Principle Power is trying to solve that problem by demonstrating floating offshore wind turbines just off the coast of Coos Bay in my home State. Putting a turbine on a floating platform instead of mounting it on a tower on the ocean floor has the potential to dramatically change the potential for offshore wind. It would let developers tap into the huge windy resource above the deep waters off the coast of Oregon and elsewhere but without the footprints on the ocean floor and without affecting views from the coast. It is a promising technology, but, like all first-of-a-kind technology, it is going to cost a bit more. That is why we ought to get policy support—so we can realize the potential of commercial-scale energy.

Finally, the costs of solar power have also been dropping like a rock. The potential for sustainable biomass to provide a quadruple win of low-carbon energy, increased forest health, reduced danger of forest fires, and economic growth is still there waiting to be fully developed.

I wish to touch on two remaining issues, and one is before the Senate Fi-

nance Committee. It is my strong view that the tax treatment of all energy production in the United States ought to be modified so that all energy sources compete on a technology-neutral level playing field. That ought to be one of the major goals of comprehensive tax reform, which, in my view, is really the grand bipartisan prize for Senate Finance Committee members.

In the short-term, we have another challenge. We shouldn't let the renewable energy industries that are so important simply fall off the cliff just when the supply chains have been developed and just when they are reaching a level of competitiveness where they can really take off.

It is my hope that it is possible to work in a bipartisan way. I intend to talk to Senator HATCH, the ranking Republican on the Finance Committee, and colleagues on both sides of the aisle to work on a tax extenders package that includes a variety of clean energy and efficiency credits. Senator HATCH and I have been interested in moving forward this spring through the regular order and markup of this kind of energy package in the Finance Committee.

I will close by talking about natural gas because to capture all of the climate benefits we also have to factor in the dramatic shale gas revolution. We understand that natural gas has turned the energy equation upside down over the past few years. Along the way, it has provided a low-cost way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the same time. Increased usage of natural gas has helped our country to reach its lowest level of greenhouse gas emissions since 1994, even as the economy has been picking up steam. Manufacturing and industrial operations have been moving back to the United States to take advantage of cheap reliable gas.

This is good news that was almost unimaginable just a few years ago, but we have some major challenges as well. I am concerned that methane emissions from leaky compressors and leaky pipes could undermine the emission benefits of natural gas in a way that isn't being accounted for. A recent report which showed a leakage rate of just 3 percent through the entire natural gas supply chain can make burning natural gas the same as burning coal from a climate perspective. So I have been pushing hard with colleagues here in the Senate to keep that leakage rate below 1 percent from production to usage to make sure that climate benefits come to reality.

There are technologies that can address the issue of leakage, and they already exist. They can be put in place at almost no net cost, with many of the measures paying for themselves. There has been a comprehensive survey of the measures for reducing methane leaks

through the natural gas supply and usage chain, and it found emissions could be reduced by 40 percent with technologies that already exist and are practical today.

The scale of this problem is, of course, immense, and it is what Senators are talking about here tonight. It is going to take everyone pulling together at every level to make the meaningful changes actually happen. We are going to need continued leadership from our entrepreneurs, who aren't sitting idly by but are innovating to come up with solutions to climate change. We are going to need savvy consumers demanding lower carbon and more efficient goods and services. We will need leadership from retailers who are going to ask more of their suppliers and supply chains to give them products to sell to those consumers. Of course, the key is always innovation in the private sector—the private-sector leaders working with our national labs and universities.

I am especially proud that my home State of Oregon is going to lead the State efforts in trying to promote sustainability, renewables, and efficiency at the local level.

To wrap up my remarks, let me state the obvious. It is going to take new leadership from the Congress. The Congress is going to have to lead if we are going to get a long-term framework for a low-carbon economy that innovators, entrepreneurs, and others can use in the days ahead to address the global nature of this problem, and I think we are up to it here in the Senate. I think we are up to doing it in a bipartisan way, and that is what I look forward to being part of in the days ahead.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, Senator FEINSTEIN is scheduled to speak next, and we are delighted that she is.

DINNER INVITATION

I just wanted to make a public service announcement at this point in the evening. Any staff, Senators who are here through the night, any floor staff, Republican floor staff as well, all are invited; and for any of the parliamentary staff who are interested, there is dinner available in Room S. 219, and better to get it while it is hot.

That is the end of the public service announcement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I ask unanimous consent that the order with respect to alternating blocks of time be vitiated and that the Senate remain in a period of morning business until 8:45 a.m., Tuesday, March 11, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for between 20 and 30 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I want to begin by thanking my friend and colleague, Senator BOXER, for her leadership. It was 2 years ago that she began a climate action task force that took place at noon, when all our stomachs were grumbling for food, but it provided some very interesting advice, very interesting knowledge, from interesting scholars who came to speak. She was then joined by Senator WHITEHOUSE, when he came. Now there is Senator MARKEY, and there is quite a large number—certainly of Democratic Senators—who attend these Tuesday meetings at noon. So I want to thank them very much for this leadership.

As we have heard already, debate over climate change has raged for years here on Capitol Hill, but the scientific facts actually have been conclusive for some time now. Most people I have found don't realize that the greenhouse gases we put into the atmosphere just don't go away. They do not dissipate. These gases can stay for decades. Our actions—the greenhouse gas pollution we put into the air and the forests we cut down—are changing the composition of Earth's atmosphere, increasing the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to above 400 parts per million.

Just look at this chart. As this chart shows, these are global warming gases. This is carbon dioxide. You can see how it has run quite along at this level, and then in the last few years it has begun to jump up, so much that the average in 2013 was 396 parts per million. People don't know this—that all these gases remain in our atmosphere year after year, decade after decade, and century after century.

This change is altering how our atmosphere interacts, with massive amounts of solar energy radiating out from the center of our solar system. It is well known within the scientific community that the Earth's blanket—our atmosphere—is getting more effective at trapping heat. The full effects of this stronger blanket—or shield or whatever you want to call it—must be projected into the future. Different projections show different effects, but we know this. Change is coming, and it has already begun.

A lot of people also believe our Earth is immutable, that we can't destroy it and that it can't change. They assume our planet has always been pretty much the same. But the last time the Earth's atmosphere contained 400 parts per million of carbon dioxide was more than 3 million years ago when horses and camels lived in the high Arctic in conditions that averaged 18 degrees warmer than today. Seas were at least 30 feet higher, at a level that today

would inundate major cities around the world and flood the homes of a quarter of the United States population.

Concentrations of carbon dioxide have risen, as I said, from the 280 parts per million to more than 400 parts per million in just the last 150 years. Scientists tell us there is no known geologic period in which concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere have increased as quickly. Bottom line: Never has our planet faced a faster or more ecologically devastating change.

To settle the scientific debate over climate change, the Bush administration appointed a National Academy of Sciences Blue Ribbon Panel. The group, which included former climate change deniers, reported to Congress in 2001 that greenhouse gases are “causing surface air temperatures and subsurface ocean temperatures to rise.” They said: “Temperatures are, in fact, rising.”

The United Nations created its Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a group of more than 600 leading scientific experts; and what did they say? They said the “warming of the climate system is unequivocal, and since the 1950s, many of the observed changes are unprecedented over decades to millennia.”

Average temperatures over lands and ocean surfaces globally have increased 1.53 degrees Fahrenheit from 1880 to 2012, with the highest rate of increase in the past 3 decades.

Just look at this. See the line indicating carbon dioxide concentration. Start from here. Now notice that the temperatures are still down. Watch the line start to go up and notice the climate warm up to where it is today.

The IPCC report continued: “The atmosphere and ocean have warmed, the amounts of snow and ice have diminished, sea level has risen, and the concentrations of greenhouse gases have increased.”

This makes that clear. If we don't reduce the greenhouse gas emissions, the National Research Council predicts the average global temperatures will increase by as much as 11.5 degrees—11.5 degrees by 2100. Such a dramatic and rapid increase would be catastrophic to our planet Earth. It would change our world permanently.

As temperatures have increased, we have seen that ice sheets that cover the North and South Poles have begun melting. The average annual Arctic sea ice area has decreased more than 20 percent since 1979. That is when satellite records first became available. The Greenland ice sheet has melted by nearly 30 percent.

Here we can see the Arctic, the red line shows what it was in 1979, and current picture shows what has been lost and what is left.

The melting of glaciers and ice caps, along with expansion of ocean water due to the increase in temperature

have caused the global sea level to rise by 8 inches since 1870, with over 2 inches just in the past 20 years. If we do nothing to stop climate change, scientific models project that there is a real possibility of sea level increasing by as much as 4 feet by the end of this century—4 feet.

Now, what would 4 feet do? At risk are nearly 2.6 million homes located less than 4 feet above high tide nationwide.

Let me speak about my home State of California. We have, within those 4 feet, the homes of 450,000 people, 30 coastal power plants with generating capacity of 10 gigawatts, 22 wastewater treatment plants with capacity of 325 million gallons per day, 3,500 miles of roadway, 280 miles of railway, 140 schools, and 55 hospitals and other health care facilities. These could all be inundated by the end of the century.

Oakland and San Francisco International Airports are susceptible to flooding, and both are today studying expensive new levy systems to hold back the tides.

Sea level rise in California would also cause flooding of low-lying areas, loss of coastal wetlands, such as portions of the San Francisco Bay Delta, erosion of cliffs and beaches, and saltwater contamination of drinking water. Bottom line: Rising seas put California's homes, public facilities, and environmental resources in great peril, and adapting to this change will impose great cost.

Temperatures in California have increased 1.26 degrees Fahrenheit over the past 4 decades. The warmer climate could be particularly devastating to us where threats from catastrophic wildfire and reduction in water resources will likely make sunny California a desert State. The Sierra Nevada snowpack—and we are hearing a lot about that now—which includes Lake Tahoe—is the State's largest source of water. It equals about half the storage capacity of all of California's man-made reservoirs. If we do nothing, the Sierra Nevada spring snowpack could drop by as much as 60 to 80 percent by the end of the century, eliminating the water source for nearly 16 million people.

Only four States have populations as large as 16 million people, and the largest agricultural State in the United States—California—needs water resources to farm and grow crops. The 38 million people living in California also need water to drink, to bathe, to water flowers, for businesses to flourish.

Major fire is another danger because the size, severity, duration, and frequency of fires are greatly influenced by climate. This is the Rim Fire, from not too long ago. It gives us an idea of how things burn. Fire seasons in the West are starting sooner and lasting longer. The average length has increased by 78 days since 1970, a 64-percent increase. This isn't a coincidence,

and climate change is suspected as a key mechanism for that change. The change is apparent.

During a recent Senate hearing, U.S. Forest Service Chief Tidwell testified:

On average, wildfires burn twice as many acres each year as compared to 40 years ago, and there are on average seven times as many fires over 10,000 acres per year.

I believe this: We cannot stop climate change from happening. We do not have a silver bullet. There is no action we can take to stem the tide. But if we can hold the warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius, we can accommodate for it. But if the warming reaches 5 degrees to 9 degrees Celsius, the effects are catastrophic for our planet Earth. Dramatic and catastrophic effects are far more likely. Through a series of incremental but somewhat aggressive policy steps, we can slow the change.

The combustion of fossil fuel—coal, oil, and natural gas—accounts for 78 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in our country. Most of the fossil fuel emissions come from the smokestacks of our power plants and the tailpipes of our vehicles.

The bottom line: To address climate change, we must take steps to use fossil fuels more efficiently, and we must initiate a shift away from fossil fuels where we can and toward cleaner alternatives.

I believe we can attack this problem by: establishing aggressive fuel economy standards to reduce emissions from the transportation sector; enabling a shift to renewable sources of power; limiting the emissions from stationary sources, especially power plants; and, most important, putting a price on heat-trapping carbon pollution.

Let me mention some steps we have taken because we have begun a transition to a cleaner energy economy. The good news is that carbon dioxide emissions have dropped 12 percent since 2005, due in part to the policies we have adopted.

One of my proudest achievements was working with Senators Snowe, Inouye, Stevens, CANTWELL, Lott, Dorgan, CORKER, CARPER, and many others in the 2007 Ten-in-Ten Fuel Economy Act, raising the corporate average fuel economy known as CAFE at the maximum achievable rate.

Let me say what these new standards mean. They mean we will have a fleetwide average of 54.5 miles per gallon in 2025. These standards will cut greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light trucks in half by 2025, reducing emissions by 6 billion metric tons over the life of the program, more than the total amount of carbon dioxide emitted by the United States in 2010. Better yet, these standards will save American families more than \$1.7 trillion in fuel costs, resulting in average fuel savings of more than \$8,000 per vehicle.

Our legislation also directed the administration to establish the first ever fuel economy standards for buses, delivery trucks, and long-haul 18 wheelers. The first standards, which apply to trucks and buses built from 2014 to 2018, will reduce greenhouse gas pollution by approximately 270 million metric tons.

I am very sorry Senator Snowe from Maine isn't here today because I began this effort with a simple sense of the Senate resolution in 1993 with Senator Slade Gorton from Washington, Senator Bryan from Nevada, and myself, and we couldn't get a simple statement passed. We then tried an SUV loophole closer, which was to bring SUVs down to the mileage of sedans and we couldn't do this.

We then did the Ten-in-Ten and we didn't think it was going to go anywhere. Senator Stevens and Senator Inouye put it in a commerce committee bill. Senator Stevens changed his view on it, put it in a commerce committee bill, and it swept through the Senate and through the House, was signed by the President, and is now the law. Today President Obama has made completing CAFE standards for trucks built after 2018—which are required by our 2007 law—a key part of his Climate Action Plan.

Power plants are our largest single source of greenhouse gas emissions. It is fair to say Federal tax incentives and financing, State mandates, federally funded research, and a dramatically improving permitting process have led to a recent shift away from coal-fired power plants and toward renewable energy and lower emission natural gas.

Additionally, renewable energy production has more than doubled since 2008, and it continues to boom. Last year 4,751 megawatts of solar were installed nationwide. This is a 41-percent increase over the previous year. Power plant carbon dioxide emissions have dropped 17 percent since 2005.

The lesson is clear: We must continue the policies which are working, such as the wind and geothermal production tax credits, the solar investment tax credit, and a project-permitting process which advances projects on disturbed and less sensitive lands expeditiously, but we must also take longer term steps to ensure that power plant emissions continue to drop.

I support the President's plan to use Clean Air Act authorities to limit greenhouse gas emissions. The Supreme Court's landmark global warming case, *Massachusetts v. EPA*, found greenhouse gases are pollutants with the potential to endanger human health and welfare. President Obama and EPA have an obligation to comply with these directives to limit such emissions. So I very much look forward to the President advancing a strong rule which will use market-based mechanisms.

I also believe Congress could act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from power plants by putting an explicit price on pollution. It has taken me a long time to get there—approximately 20 years. I supported various other mechanisms—and will continue to support—but I am convinced, based on information by the Energy Information Administration, a fee on greenhouse gas emissions from power plants starting at only \$10 per ton could reduce emissions 70 percent to 80 percent by 2050, if the fee steadily increases over time. This is the emissions reduction level experts say is necessary to stabilize the climate at less than 2 degrees Celsius warmer than today. If we can do this, we save planet Earth. If the climate goes 5 degrees to 9 degrees warmer by the end of the century, we have lost.

Such a fee could be responsive to emissions performance. If emissions were falling consistent with science-based emissions targets, the fee would not have to go up every year. It is estimated a fee on power plant emissions would be nearly as effective in reducing heat-trapping emissions as an economy-wide fee. The difference is 2 percent. So both policies deserve consideration.

Such a fee would provide industry with cost certainty, and the revenues—exceeding \$20 billion annually—could help address our Nation's debt. They should go back to the general fund. The revenue could finance other important national priorities, such as tax reform, income inequality, energy research development.

An MIT study found that if the fee revenues were used to cut other taxes or maintain spending for social programs, “the economy will be better off with the carbon (fee) than if we have to keep other taxes high or cut programs to rein in the deficit.”

Science has clearly shown the planet is warming and now at a faster rate than ever. We know this. Now we as leaders must make a choice: Do we act, do we lead, do we tackle the problem or do we wait until it is too late? Do we continue the progress we have made on fuel economy by taking on other large emitters or do we simply claim it is impossible, it is intractable, we can't do anything about it? Do we blame the problem on China? And China has a big problem. Do we deny undeniable facts due to current politics?

I believe we have an obligation to lead. There is no question it is difficult and there is no question there are hard choices, but we have an obligation to control our own pollution. Our Nation has the opportunity to demonstrate to the rest of the world it can be done, and tonight shows there are some leaders.

I thank Senator BOXER, Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator MARKEY, and Senator SCHATZ for their leadership,

not only on this evening but for the years they have led on this issue. So let's get it done.

Before I end, I would note that my legislative assistant, the young man sitting next to me, is leaving to work for the Department of Energy. He has worked on fuel efficiency standards, climate change, energy, transportation, and a number of other issues.

Matthew Nelson, I want you to know your expertise, your unique creativity and capacity, and your dedication will be missed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, may I thank the distinguished Senator from California for her speech. For those who know of her history with this issue and her leadership on pollution issues over many years, this was an important speech, and I thank the Senator very much.

Before we turn to Senator BOXER, I wish to say a few things about the comments the Senator from Oklahoma made earlier, I suppose in an effort to suggest climate change is not all that we shake it up to be. The first point he made was about a group of emails that came out of East Anglia University, which the climate denier community seized on and nicknamed climategate, as if like Watergate there was a big scandal in those emails. There were some probably not entirely appropriate comments that were said in the emails, but the question is, Was the science underlying it affected or compromised in any way?

So-called climategate was actually looked at over and over again. Because it was at the University of East Anglia, the University of East Anglia did an investigation. Because it involved scientists at Penn State, Penn State did an investigation. Both of those universities gave a complete clean bill of health to the underlying science that was at the base of this.

The House of Commons—the British House of Commons did its investigation. That is how much fuss the deniers kicked up about this. They came back and they said: Nothing wrong with the science there. Nothing wrong with the science. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and National Science Foundation also did investigations, as did the inspector general of the Department of Commerce. Three for three, those investigations came back as well, saying: If they did say anything inappropriate, nothing wrong with the science.

After all that, after six published reviews whose results confirmed that there was nothing wrong with the science as a result of these emails, for people to continue to come to the floor and to suggest that the email chain revealed some flaw in the data or some flaw in the science, it is untrue. It is as simple as that. It is just not true.

In fact, if you wanted to nickname this properly, you would actually call it climategate-gate because the real scandal is the phony scandal that was whipped up about these emails when the underlying science had been confirmed by every single investigation that followed. So much for climategate or climategate-gate, more properly said.

He also indicated that because the IPCC report had said the Himalayan glaciers were retreating, but they weren't, that there was something obviously wrong with the science. Let us start with some glaciers closer to home. This is Grinnell Glacier in Montana. Here is what it looked like in 1940. That is all snow. Here is what it looks like in 2004. It is melted down to this little puddle of snow and ice.

We are indeed losing our glaciers. Have a look in Washington at Lillian Glacier in Washington's Olympic National Park. This is in 1905. Look at the size of that glacier. Here it is, the same bowl, virtually dried of snow—glacier gone.

The fact that glaciers are disappearing is something people see in front of them all around the world. All you have to do is go to mountains with glaciers and look. I went with Senator BOXER to the glaciers in Greenland. You could see the glaciers retreat. You could see the increased speed as the ice moved more rapidly down and out to sea because of the melt.

Now the question of the Himalayan glaciers has also been reviewed. A recent article in *Nature* said:

The Tibetan plateau and surroundings contain the largest number of glaciers outside polar regions. These glaciers are at the headwaters of many prominent Asian rivers and are largely experiencing shrinkage. . . .

Which is exactly what one would expect from the science of climate change.

Now the National Academy of Sciences recently did a report on this very subject about 6 months ago, and a quote on that report says:

The report examines how changes to glaciers in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region, which covers eight countries across Asia, could affect the area's river systems, water supplies, and the South Asian population. The mountains in the region form the headwaters of several major river systems—including the Ganges, Mekong, Yangtze, and Yellow rivers—which serve as sources of drinking water and irrigation supplies for roughly 1.5 billion people. So the irrigation and drinking water for 1.5 billion people is nothing to laugh about.

Here is the conclusion:

The entire Himalayan climate is changing, but how climate change will impact specific places remains unclear. . . . The eastern Himalayas and Tibetan Plateau are warming, and the trend is more pronounced at higher elevations. Models suggest that desert dust and black carbon, a component of soot, could contribute to the rapid atmospheric warming, accelerated snowpack melting, and glacier retreat.

The Senator also mentioned the cost of a carbon fee. Just to make the record completely clear, I would propose a carbon fee whose every dollar of revenue was returned to the American people if as a result of a carbon fee they end up paying more in their energy bill somewhere.

Every dollar of that should come back to the American people. It could come back in the form of a check to the head of a family. It could come back in the form of lower tax rates. It could come back in a variety of ways, and I hope soon we are actually having that discussion. But do not think there is any need for this to be a net cost to the economy. Every dollar can go back to the American people. Because of the nature of this tax, it is actually probably more efficient than others, so it should create economic lift for a net economic gain if you are truly offsetting the revenues. So I reject the proposition that this would create a cost. It would be easy to design it in such a way that it is actually net improvement.

Finally, I will agree with something Senator INHOFE said. He said this has to be international; and indeed it does have to be international. India has a vote. They have a lot of powerplants. China has a lot of powerplants. They have to work together. We can do that.

America can lead in the world. If the others are slow to come, we can erect tax adjustments at our border that protect us and our products. We can make this happen, and we should.

The last is job loss claims. If you go back through the history of regulation of big industries, every time you roll something out they say it is going to be a huge economic disaster. They said this about the ozone layer; the Clean Air Act; the Clean Water Act. In fact, in some cases such as in the Clean Air Act, subsequent review showed the amount that is saved from not being polluted exceeds the cost of compliance by as much as 30-to-1. Why would we not want a deal like that, particularly where the costs of climate change are going to be so severe?

The Senator said it is important to look at what has happened since the original IPCC report. Here is what happened since the original IPCC report. They doubled down. They are even more sure than they were of their findings on climate change. Other scientific organizations such as NASA have chimed in in unflinching language. I happen to have a lot of respect for NASA. If you can put a vehicle the size of an SUV up and out of our atmosphere, into orbit, send it to Mars, land it safely on Mars, and then drive it around, I think there is a pretty safe bet that you have some good scientists who know what they are talking about. I will put them up against the scientists paid for by the polluters every day.

I will yield the floor first to Chairman BOXER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Ms. BOXER. I wish to thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his leadership. We are now 30 minutes behind, so I would take up to 30 minutes, and then I will be followed by Senator FRANKEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection.

Ms. BOXER. Madam President, I have been on this floor since early this evening and it is very clear that deniers are standing with 3 percent of the scientists while we Democrats who are here tonight calling for action are standing with 97 percent of the scientists.

As I mentioned before, every time the Republicans call a so-called expert to the Committee on Environment and Public Works, I track their path and they seem to be tied to the oil industry or to major polluters. That is just a fact. I am going to talk a little bit later about what has happened and why this suddenly has become a bitter partisan fight. It never used to be. It never used to be, but it is and it is wrong.

No one party can put together the votes needed. We have to share responsibility and that is critical. People have said to me, the press: What is the point of this all-nighter? I said, very simply: The Senate Climate Action Task Force, which has membership of getting toward 30 percent of the Senate, we want to wake up the Congress to the fact that time is running out. We have to act now. We have to do everything we can legislatively in every way.

The good news—and there is some good news which has nothing to do with the Senate. It is all bad news for the Senate, frankly. But the good news is that we have a President who gets this and who is moving forward with a climate action plan. I am sorry to say every step he takes we have people trying to repeal what he is doing. So far we have beat back those naysayers and those voices of the polluters.

One of the major functions of the Senate Climate Action Task Force is not just rallying around the scientists and calling attention to climate change, but it is clearly to play defense when we see attempts to roll back the President's plan.

We have already seen a CRA, which stands for congressional review act, that is in the works to overturn what the President is trying to do to clean up coal-fired plants before they even finish the rules. Senator MCCONNELL is talking about a race to repeal it before it is even put into place. I do not understand this—well, I understand it, but it is wrong.

We have to stand up for our families. As I said in my earlier remarks, if you saw any member of your family or any one of your constituents standing in

the wake of a disaster, say an oncoming car, you would do everything in your power—everything in your power—to save that constituent or that family member.

We are facing an out-of-control problem here with our climate. It is out of control. If we do not wrap our arms around it, we will have catastrophic warming. It has already started and it will lead to horrible pain and suffering whether it is heat waves and deaths. We have already seen it in Europe. Colleagues from New Mexico and Colorado have already talked about horrible floods and fires. I can tell you more about fires in my State.

I have never seen anything like it. We have seen drought. All of this was predicted by the scientists back in the early nineties. I cannot believe that is 20 years ago that they told us. I think we have proven the point that deniers are standing with 3 percent of the scientists and every major scientific organization has warned us to act.

One of my colleagues, Senator INHOFE, came down and said: Oh, it is snowing. It is cold. It is called extreme weather, and it is what was predicted. The vortex up in the Arctic, we are feeling the impacts of a weakened jet stream. We are seeing these terrible temperatures in an extreme fashion hit the lower 48 States, some of which have never had it before. We have seen with our very own eyes snow in places such as Atlanta, people stuck on highways. No one knew what to do because it has never happened before. I think we have made the clear case.

I say to my colleague Senator SCHATZ, who has worked so hard with Senator WHITEHOUSE to put this together, we have proven the point. I believe that we stand with science in the mainstream, and our colleagues—most of whom have not come to the floor to debate us—are standing with the extreme and, frankly, the special polluting interests. Now, after they get done with denying, they have a fall-back position, and they say: Well, even if you believe there is climate change, we should not act until China acts. Since when does the greatest country on Earth sit back and allow China to lead us out of a climate change impending disaster? Since when do we cede that authority?

I want to talk about that. All you have to do is take a look at China to see what happens to a country that throws the environment under a bus. Let's take a look at some of the people in China and what it looks like. These are people on their bicycles. You can't see anything around them. They have masks on. We are going to wait for China to lead us out of the climate change problem? I don't think so.

I went to China on a very interesting trip with Leader REID a couple of years ago. We were there for a good 10 days. We really saw the country. It is fas-

cinating. There are a lot of interesting things going on there with transportation and so on. We never saw the Sun—never.

One day the Sun was behind the smog, and the guy who was with us said: What a beautiful day.

I said: No, it is not. This is terrible.

We went to the American Embassy. They have a measuring tool that tells them how dirty the air is in China. It is a hazardous duty post. People who were there with their kids were told not to go out because it was too dangerous. China has hazardous levels of pollution and toxic emissions which have had very harmful effects on the Chinese people.

We are supposed to wait for China to clean up carbon pollution? I don't think so. According to a scientific study from the Health Effects Institute, outdoor air pollution contributed to 1.2 million premature deaths in China in 2010 alone. This is not fiction; this is fact.

We have voices on the Republican side of the aisle who are begging us: Don't do anything on carbon pollution until China acts. Air pollution was the fourth leading risk factor for deaths in China. The threat is expected to get worse.

Urban air pollution is set to become the top environmental cause of mortality worldwide by 2050—ahead of dirty water and lack of sanitation. It is estimated that up to 3.6 million people could end up dying prematurely from air pollution each year, mostly in China and India. Think about that. Yes, we will hear our colleagues say China and India too.

I represent a very large and great State with a population of 38 million people. We are on the cutting edge of a clean environment. We are tackling carbon pollution. We are seeing great jobs being developed in solar, wind, and geothermal. We are going to have one-third of our electricity generation come from clean sources by 2020. I am so proud of my State. The special interests came in there and they tried to repeal all of our laws that had to do with cleaning up carbon pollution, and the people—even though they were faced with millions of dollars in oil company ads—said no.

So the people who say this isn't real, we have already disproved that. I put out the names of every possible organization. If you ask the American people about those organizations, they would say: We respect those organizations. So that is out.

Then they say: Wait for China. That is out. In January the U.S. Embassy issued warnings to China's citizens that the air quality in Beijing was so bad it exceeded the upper limits of its measurements, and the exposure to fine soot was many times above what the World Health Organization considers hazardous. They call it an

“airpocalypse.” It forced the Chinese Government to close highways because the visibility was so bad.

This goes on in cities across China. A woman looked out her window in Harbin and said: “I couldn’t see anything outside the window, and I thought it was snowing.” Then she realized it wasn’t snow; it was dangerous toxic smog. That is what the people are living with. They are beside themselves. They walk around with masks. They can’t go out. They are suffering and dying. And this is the country that my colleagues say we ought to wait for before we tackle climate change? You have to be kidding me. This is an embarrassment. Citizens of Harbin can see only 10 yards in front of them because small particle pollution soared to a record 40 times higher than international standards.

By the way, the cost of environmental degradation in China was about \$230 billion in 2010 or 3.5 percent of the Nation’s gross domestic product.

We know that Superstorm Sandy cost us about \$60 billion. One storm cost \$60 billion. So when you talk about the economic impact of putting a price on carbon polluters who are polluting this country, put that into the context of what happens if you let them continue polluting. Superstorm Sandy—we all lived through it. We all saw what happened.

I have seen the fires in California. We have seen them in New Mexico and Colorado. We know the costs that come from those fires. We have seen the drought. The President was out there. Thank God he came out there to give some money. Do you know that our ranchers were destroying their cattle, killing their cattle because there was no feed? The President went out there and made sure that emergency help was delivered so they could buy feed for those cattle.

When people say it is going to cost a lot to solve climate change, I beg them to think about the costs if we do nothing. Look at China. They did nothing about clean air, and they are paying the price with premature deaths, lost productivity, and people who are miserable.

Here is the thing: We learned a long time ago that stepping up to an environmental challenge pays off. Decades ago, the United States experienced damage and degradation—tremendous damage—to our environment. The Cuyahoga River in Ohio was on fire, massive air pollution hung over our cities, and lakes were dying from pollution. The American people demanded action. Guess what. We didn’t wait for China or India or anybody else to act. We came together as Democrats and Republicans and said: This isn’t appropriate.

President Nixon helped on the environment, President George Herbert Walker Bush helped on the environ-

ment, Jimmy Carter helped on the environment, Bill Clinton helped on the environment, and Barack Obama is helping on the environment. But now it has become a partisan issue.

The Clean Air Act goes back to 1970, and it was strengthened in 1990. Since 1990, the United States has cut fine particulate emissions. Those are the emissions that get into your lungs and cause all of our problems. Since 1990 we have cut those particulates by 57 percent because Democrats and Republicans came together. Now Republicans want to repeal all of that, but we won’t let them. Fine particulate emissions is what is making the Chinese people sick.

In 1976 there were 166 days when health advisories were issued in southern California to urge people with asthma and other people with lung sensitivities to stay indoors. That was in 1976. The American people said: No, no, no; this isn’t right. The people of California said: This is terrible. There were 166 days where I couldn’t go out and breathe the air and take a walk and take my kids out.

Thanks to the action taken by Democrats and Republicans who worked together to pass the Clean Air Act and carry it out, the number of smog-related health advisories in 2010 in southern California dropped to—drum roll—zero days. So anyone who stands here and says, “Oh, this problem is too big. I can’t wrap my arms around it. China and India have to act,” no, no, no, that is not America.

We have brilliant people in this country with great technological skills. Many of our States—and I am so proud of my State—have the latest technologies to clean up the air and water, make cars fuel efficient. My friend Senator FEINSTEIN spoke about fuel efficiency in cars, and I am so pleased we have done that. President Obama is now applying it to trucks.

We are literally saving lives because we know outdoor air pollution causes cancer. We know that. Let me tell you what the National Climate Assessment—that is our country—is saying about climate change:

Climate change threatens human health and well-being in many ways, including impacts from increased extreme weather events, wildfire, decreased air quality, diseases transmitted by insects, food and water . . . Some of these health impacts are already underway in the U.S.

Clearly we have proven tonight that we stand with science. We are not scientists, but we are humbled before the science.

We know our Nation has shown great leadership in the environmental movement for years. We started this back in the 1970s when that river caught on fire and we said: What are we doing to our planet?

We should not and we must not wait for other countries to act. We must

take action now, and that is the purpose of the Senate Climate Action Task Force. I am so proud of my colleagues who are here tonight and who go to those meetings every Thursday. ED MARKEY is leading us in meetings on Tuesdays, which is the clearinghouse. The clearinghouse is more of a think tank where we bring in the experts. We listen and question them. On Thursdays we meet with the task force. Members of the task force speak to the Democratic caucus.

I say to HARRY REID, if he is listening, how much I appreciate his leadership on this issue. He has seen some of the horrible impacts of climate change in his great State. His State has leaders in alternative clean energy. They are moving away from coal and toward clean energy. They are creating good-paying jobs.

When we put a price on carbon, the dirty industries start to pay for the pollution they are causing, and that will move us toward clean energy. When we move to clean energy, we will see a tremendous difference in the amount of carbon pollution in the air, and we will be able to avert the most dire predictions for climate, which is 7 degrees Fahrenheit. We don’t want to see that for our children and our grandchildren and our great grandchildren because that will literally change the face of the way America lives.

We have it in our hands. Tonight we are saying: Wake up, Congress. Please, wake up. To my colleague from Oklahoma, Senator INHOFE, who is my friend, who said: You guys are just talking to each other; good luck, good night, I respond: I am proud to say more than 100,000 people have so far signed petitions calling on Congress to act, and this is just early in the evening. We are going to be going another almost 11 hours.

To Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator SCHATZ I say thank you for organizing this. It is a little like herding cats, getting us all here, but it is working. It is working because Senators here get it. They know they are going to be here for a finite time, and when we get a challenge such as this, we stand up to it. We find the solutions and we fight for them, and we fight for the people of this great Nation.

Thank you so much, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAINE). The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. FRANKEN. Thank you, Mr. President. I thank Senator BOXER and Senator SCHATZ and Senator WHITEHOUSE for organizing this.

I rise tonight to talk about climate change, along with 25 to 30 of my colleagues who will be speaking through the night.

The recent extreme weather events we have experienced across the United States are our call to action. We in this

body need not just to talk about climate change but to take action to address it. If we fail to act, the extreme weather events we have seen will only grow more extreme in the future.

This winter has been exceptionally cold in many areas of the United States, including Minnesota. Some deniers have taken this as a sign that climate change isn't happening. They have pointed to the cold weather as evidence that global warming is not occurring. But they are missing the point. We already know that on average the Earth is warming. This isn't complicated. We have been using thermometers to make measurements around the globe for a long time. We know average temperatures have gone up significantly in recent years.

But climate change isn't just about the average temperature. As the average temperature continues to rise, most experts agree we will see ever more frequent extreme weather events, including drought, storms, floods, and other extreme events. It is important to remember that we are not attributing any one event to climate change, but we can say there will be more extreme weather events as the Earth grows warmer.

As the Presiding Officer knows, we have seen the polar vortex bring Arctic weather to much of the United States during this winter. According to White House Science Adviser Dr. John Holdren, we can expect to see more of this kind of extreme cold as global warming continues. This is going to have serious consequences—it already has.

In my home State of Minnesota, the extreme cold has contributed to very serious propane shortages. Many rural residents are unable to properly heat their homes. Turkey growers are finding it difficult to heat their barns and, therefore, their turkeys. This is not just a problem in Minnesota. Other areas of the country have been affected. We in the Senate have to talk about what is happening and start taking action in the face of climate change threats.

The ongoing drought in California and other States is another example. The situation is particularly grave in California where vast regions have been classified as D4, which is the most severe drought category. This has cost farmers their crops and livestock and created severe water shortages for residents and businesses. Farmers have had to stop farming half a million acres of what normally is irrigated land. That is about 6 percent of the entire State of California. According to the California Farm Water Coalition, it is already costing that State \$5 billion. These costs get passed on to every American. As a result of this drought, Americans have to pay more and will continue to pay more for groceries this winter.

Unfortunately, droughts such as this are becoming commonplace. In 2012, drought caused more than 70 percent of U.S. counties to be declared disaster areas. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration estimated the economic impact of droughts to be \$30 billion. The droughts destroyed or damaged major crops all over this country, making corn and soybeans more expensive and increasing animal feed costs. Again, Americans pay more for meats and other animal-based products because of drought.

In the Midwest, the 2012 drought dramatically lowered water levels in the Mississippi River, seriously interfering with our ability to transport our agricultural goods to market to compete with those from other countries. So that barges wouldn't run aground, shippers sent them down the Mississippi only half full with, say, soybeans. This made Minnesota soybeans less competitive with Brazilian soybeans.

Climate change is also exacerbating our Nation's wildfires, as we heard Senator WYDEN from Oregon describe about his State. When Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell testified in 2012 before the Senate Energy Committee, I asked him about the link between climate change and forest fires. He told us that throughout the country we are seeing longer fire seasons—more than 2 months longer—compared to fire seasons in the 1970s. Wildfires are also larger and more intense. I asked Chief Tidwell whether scientists at the Forest Service thought climate change was causing this increase in the size and intensity of wildfires and extending their season, and without hesitation he said yes. The Forest Service is spending more and more fighting wildfires—now about half of its entire budget.

Longer fires and larger, more intense fires are going to eat up more and more of that budget. In addition, these wildfires—especially ones that occur at the wildland-urban interface—are increasingly threatening homes and property. Most importantly, more intense fires are costing lives. The 19 brave firefighters who perished in Arizona last June should be a reminder of the gravity of this issue.

Of course, we cannot talk about climate change without talking about sea level rise. As I said, I serve on the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. In 2012, I attended a hearing on sea level rise and heard testimony about how rising sea levels are increasing the size of flood zones and increasing damage from storm surges. One example they used—they said this is a possibility—is that a few inches of sea level rise could result in a storm surge that could flood the New York City subway system. It sounded like something out of science fiction. Yet 6 months later, that is exactly what happened when Hurricane Sandy hit New

York City and flooded the subways. My colleagues do not need to be reminded of the cost of Hurricane Sandy. It cost taxpayers a staggering \$60 billion.

So when people talk about the harmful consequences of climate change and its costs in terms of homes and dollars and lives, they are not talking about some far-off future problem. Climate change is already hurting us.

Unfortunately, only one of my colleagues from the other side of the aisle—the ranking member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Senator MURKOWSKI from Alaska—attended that hearing. This has been pretty much the case whenever we have a hearing that even tangentially relates to climate change.

A number of my colleagues in Congress don't believe human activity is contributing to climate change. Many others, I suspect, don't talk about climate change because addressing it requires that we make some difficult choices.

This is despite the fact that even some of the major fossil fuel companies that previously funded anti-climate change efforts have turned the page on this issue. ExxonMobil used to fund the Heartland Institute, one of the leading organizations spreading climate change denial propaganda. But if we go to ExxonMobil's Web site today, it states: "Rising greenhouse gas emissions pose significant risks to society and ecosystems." That is ExxonMobil.

Shell Oil states on its Web site: "CO₂ emissions must be reduced to avoid serious climate change." That is Shell Oil.

So even the major oil and gas companies have begun to acknowledge that climate change is real. I would respectfully suggest that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle here in Congress also need to engage in a serious conversation on climate change.

At a time when Americans are dealing with record droughts and other extreme weather events, the Senate cannot afford to simply ignore climate change. Ultimately, we have to come together to start addressing climate change before its damage and costs to society get out of control.

I know this is not going to be easy. Some will point out that climate change is a global problem—sometimes called global climate change—and that we can't solve it alone. They are right. Emissions in the developing world are on the rise. China now surpasses the U.S. in total greenhouse gas emissions. But China is also starting to wake up to its serious pollution problem. In fact, at the opening of the annual meeting of its parliament last week, the Chinese Premier stated that his country is declaring a war on pollution. Overcoming pollution challenges will require China to invest heavily in renewable and other environmentally friendly technologies. It is going to

make the global clean energy race even more competitive. If we are going to win this race and create good-paying jobs for Americans, we have to invest in clean energy.

We know that government investment in energy can pay off. Take the example of natural gas. We are currently experiencing a natural gas boom in this country. Sometimes my colleagues forget that this boom happened in large part because of years of Federal support to develop hydraulic fracturing technology. The Eastern Gas Shales Project was an initiative the Federal Government began back in 1976, before hydraulic fracturing was a mature industry. The project set up and funded dozens of pilot demonstration projects with universities and private gas companies that tested drilling and fracturing methods. This investment by the Federal Government was instrumental in the development of the commercial extraction of natural gas from shale. In fact, microseismic imaging—a critical tool used in fracking—was originally developed by Sandia National Laboratory, a Federal energy laboratory.

The industry was also supported through tax breaks and subsidies. In fact, Mitchell Energy Vice President Dan Stewart said in an interview that Mitchell Energy's first horizontal well was subsidized by the Federal Government. Mr. Mitchell said:

DOE—

That is the Department of Energy—DOE started it, and other people took the ball and ran with it. You cannot diminish DOE's involvement.

This is from one of the pioneers of horizontal drilling: "You cannot diminish DOE's involvement."

So the basis of the natural gas revolution that is helping make America more energy independent can be traced back to Federal research and Federal support.

In the same way, we have to support the renewable energy sector now. We have to be the ones who will develop these technologies and the ones who sell them to other nations. We need to lead the world in clean energy innovation.

(Mr. MERKLEY assumed the Chair.)

At the moment, we are not doing enough. Last year the Senate Energy Committee heard testimony regarding a report from the American Energy Innovation Council entitled "Catalyzing Ingenuity." The report, authored by Bill Gates, Microsoft; former Lockheed Martin CEO Norman Augustine; and other business leaders, states:

The country has yet to embark on a clean energy innovation program commensurate with the scale of the national priorities that are at stake. In fact, rather than improve the country's energy innovation program and invest in strategic national interests, the current political environment is creating strong pressure to pull back from such efforts.

The report is a wakeup call and makes a convincing case for why government needs to support innovation in the energy sector.

Unfortunately, it has been difficult for Congress to pass comprehensive clean energy legislation, even though this is an essential prerequisite if we are going to win the global clean energy race. The good news is that many individual States, which really are the laboratories of our democracy, have gone forward with their own clean energy programs.

As chair of the Energy Subcommittee on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I recently held a hearing on lessons from State energy programs. Among the innovative programs developed by many States are goals and mandates for renewable energy production as well as for increased energy efficiency of government and commercial buildings.

I say to the Presiding Officer, you probably know this because you are Senator MERKLEY and you know a lot. You probably know this. But over half the States have renewable portfolio standards. These standards are improving the air, creating jobs, and growing the economy.

My home State of Minnesota is one of the leaders in this area. We have a 25-by-25 renewable portfolio standard in place, which means that 25 percent of the State's electricity must come from renewable sources by the year 2025. Excel Energy, Minnesota's largest utility, is following an even more ambitious plan of generating over 30 percent renewable energy by the year 2020, and they are on track to do that.

I believe the Federal Government should follow what the States are already doing and put a comprehensive and long-term clean energy plan in place.

One of the issues we discussed in my subcommittee was the upcoming EPA rules to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from existing coal-fired powerplants. I know that a number of my colleagues are concerned about these regulations and have argued that they will increase the cost of electricity, especially in areas that are heavily dependent on coal and coal-fired plants.

I understand these concerns. I believe these regulations should be crafted using common sense. For example, if you give flexibility to States to implement these regulations, you can allow powerplant operators to offset their emissions by investing in energy efficiency in homes and buildings. Buildings consume about 36 percent, 37 percent of the energy in this country. If you retrofit our buildings, you will get the same environmental result at a lower cost to powerplant owners. And just as important, you will unleash energy efficiency manufacturing and installation jobs throughout the country. It will reduce our energy use. It will

benefit the environment and send a signal throughout the business sector that we are serious about deploying long-term energy-efficient solutions. That is why NORESO, a major energy service company that testified at my hearing, was a strong proponent of this proposal.

In fact, we learned during my hearing that there was universal agreement among witnesses—both Democratic and Republican witnesses—that giving States more flexibility to implement these regulations would be good.

So when we talk about taking on climate change, let's start with what we can all agree on. Let's do that stuff first. Let's do Shaheen-Portman.

The stakes are simply too high to ignore this issue. We cannot leave it to future generations. Last year my first grandchild Joe was born, and I do not want to look back in 20 years and tell Joe that when we were in a position to do something about climate change we chose not to because it involved some difficult choices.

Now, Joe is going to live through this century and, God willing, into the next. Unless we act now, his generation will pay a very high price for our inaction. Tonight, throughout the night, you are going to be hearing about that. You are going to be hearing about the Department of Defense research into this and the costs that we will pay when we have to address this.

I do not want to have to have my grandson think of me long after I am gone and ask: Why didn't we do anything to address climate change while we could.

So I invite my colleagues from both sides of the aisle—both sides—to join in this endeavor. We really owe it to the Nation, and we owe it to future generations.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

MR. SANDERS. Mr. President, as I begin, I thank Senator BOXER for her wonderful leadership of the Environment Committee and for her strong activism regarding climate change. I thank Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator SCHATZ, as well, for organizing this important discussion tonight.

The scientific community has been extremely clear—no debate—climate change is real, climate change is man-made, and climate change is already causing severe damage in terms of drought, floods, forest fires, rising sea levels, and extreme weather disturbances. Given that reality, I find it extremely disturbing that virtually all—not all but virtually all—of my Republican colleagues continue to ignore the scientific evidence and refuse to support serious legislation which will address this planetary crisis. My hope is that my small State of Vermont will be a national leader, will be a model for

the rest of the country in transforming our energy system, moving us away from fossil fuels and into energy efficiency and sustainable energy. And doing that, by the way, will not only help the United States become a leader in reversing climate change but can, over a period of years, create millions of good-paying jobs in this country. And that has to be the goal.

Some people ask—many people ask—they say: Well, why aren't you guys doing anything on this issue? The scientific community is almost unanimous about the causation of climate change or about its severity. What are you doing?

Let me answer that by just very briefly reading an exchange that took place in the Senate Environmental and Public Works Committee on April 11, 2013. Let me preface my remarks by saying Senator JIM INHOFE of Oklahoma is a friend of mine. I like JIM INHOFE. He is an honest person, a straightforward person. But on this issue, he is dead, dead wrong. This is the exchange that took place on April 11, 2013. I was in a committee hearing, and this is what I said:

What Senator Inhofe has written—
And he has published a book on this issue—

What Senator Inhofe has written and talked about is his belief that global warming is one of the major hoaxes ever perpetrated on the American people. That it's a hoax pushed by people like Al Gore, the United Nations and the Hollywood elite.

Senator INHOFE was also in this committee hearing, and I said:

I think that is a fair quote from Senator Inhofe. Is that roughly right, Senator Inhofe?

He was right here, and Mr. INHOFE said:

Yes, I would add to that list: Moveon.org, George Soros, Michael Moore and a few others.

So that is where we are. We have a gentleman—again, a very honest, decent man whom I like—a former chair of the Environment Committee, a former ranking member of the environment committee, who believes that global warming is a hoax pushed by people like Al Gore, the United Nations, and the Hollywood elite. So when people ask me why we are not doing anything, I would say that is pretty much the reason.

But let me respond to that, to Mr. INHOFE's views, by saying the following: Climate change is real, and there is no longer a scientific debate about that. In the words of the U.S. Global Change Research Program, which includes EPA, NASA, the National Science Foundation, and the Departments of Defense, Energy, State, Health, Interior, Transportation, and Commerce: "global warming is unequivocal and primarily human-induced."

It is not my view. It is not Senator BOXER's view, not Senator SCHATZ's

view. That is the view of the U.S. Global Change Research Program, which includes some of the major agencies of the U.S. Government. By the way, clearly it is not just the U.S. Government or agencies that believe that. There are agencies representing virtually every country on Earth that have come to the same conclusion.

Now, when some people say: Well, there is a debate; the evidence is not yet clear; the scientific community is not quite sure, let me clear the air on that one. According to a study published in the journal *Environmental Research Letters* in May of last year, more than 97 percent of the peer-reviewed scientific literature on climate supports the view that human activity is a primary cause of global warming.

I believe I read yesterday that the minority leader, Senator McConnell of Kentucky, was saying: Well, for every person who believes that climate change is real, there is another person who disagrees. Well, the polling indicates that is not quite accurate. But what is really important is not what this person feels or what that person feels, it is what those people who have studied the issue extensively believe. That is really what matters. And for those people—the 97 percent of the peer-reviewed scientific literature on this issue—they say very clearly that climate change is real and that human activity is a primary cause of global warming.

I am reminded—I think Senator BOXER made this point a while ago—that the debate we are having now is very reminiscent of the debate we had 30 or 40 years ago about the role tobacco plays in cancer, emphysema, heart conditions, and so forth. We had people, well-funded by the Tobacco Institute, coming before the American people, putting ads on television, saying: You know smoking is okay; there is no evidence linking smoking to cancer.

Well, they were lying, as a matter of fact. Many of these people were being funded by the Tobacco Institute. I think we are in the same position now. A lot of the information—misinformation—which is coming forward is funded by the fossil fuel industry. We should be clear about that.

Is there still a scientific debate about anything related to climate? What is the debate? Well, the only remaining scientific debates are about just how devastating climate change will be. Of that, the scientists are not exactly sure. There is a disagreement. Are we on track for a 2-degree change by the end of the century? Will the planet warm by 2 degrees? Will it warm by 4 degrees? Will it warm by 6 degrees? People are not exactly sure. But they are certainly sure that it will warm. Will sea levels rise by 1 foot? Will they rise by 3 feet? By 4 feet? Again, scientists are not clear. But they are absolutely clear that sea levels will rise.

As a result of industrial greenhouse gas emissions, Earth's climate warmed more between 1971 and 2000 than during

any other 3-decade interval in the last 1,400 years, reports a paper in the journal *Nature Geoscience*, based on research conducted by 78 scientists from 24 nations, analyzing climate data from tree rings, pollen, cave formations, ice cores, lake and ocean sediment, and historical records from around the sea.

The globe has already warmed 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit from 1880 to 2012, and the vast majority of that warming, 1.1 degrees Fahrenheit, has happened since 1950. According to NOAA, November 2013 was the hottest November on record, and 2012 was the warmest year on record in the contiguous United States, and saw at least 69,000 local heat records set.

2013 was the fourth warmest year ever recorded since 1880. The World Bank, no bastion of left-leaning environmental thinking, is among those expressing grave concern about the trend. The World Bank concluded that limiting the global temperature increase to 2 degrees centigrade might allow us to keep sea level rise by 2100 to less than 2.3 feet.

Unfortunately, the World Bank also acknowledges we are on track for a 4-degree centigrade increase, which would result in extreme heat waves and life-threatening sea level rise. Since 1901, the global sea level has risen about 7.5 inches and it is getting worse; over the last 20 years seas have been rising nearly twice as fast.

All over the world glaciers and ice packs are melting. Glaciers in the Mount Everest region have shrunk by 13 percent in the last 50 years. Glaciers on Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania have already shrunk by 80 percent and are expected to be completely gone by 2020. Greenland's ice sheets lost ice at a rate of about 60 cubic miles per year between 2002 and 2011. This is six times faster than the ice was melting during the decades before that. All of these impacts and more can be traced directly to carbon emissions and their effect on the atmosphere.

In 2013, as the Presiding Officer knows, we witnessed an ominous milestone: The daily mean concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere surpassed 400 parts per million. The last time CO₂ levels were this high was probably between 2.2 million and 3.6 million years ago, when it was so warm there were forests in Greenland.

What does climate change mean? What are the consequences of global warming? How is climate change already impacting our lives—not in 5 years, not in 50 years, but right now? For one thing, climate change is making droughts in the Western United States and in other parts of the world more severe, longer lasting, and more frequent. Scientists expect the precipitation pattern will continue shifting, expanding the geographic extent of the dry subtropics, leading to warmer and drier weather, which then causes air temperatures to increase even more.

This helps explain why drought-stricken Texas saw the hottest summer ever recorded for a U.S. State in 2011, leading to a combination of drought and wildfires, costing \$10 billion in damage, and the drought continues. As of last month, Texas had only received 68 percent of its normal rainfall between 2011 and 2013, and reservoirs are at their lowest levels since 1990.

We should be very clear about this: When we talk about global warming, we are talking about the globe, the global community, not just the United States, not just Texas, not just California. Australia last year endured an "angry summer," which is what it was called, which brought both the hottest month and the hottest day the country had ever witnessed, and a 4-month heat wave, severe wildfires, and torrential rains and flooding, causing \$2.4 billion in damage.

Last year's heat wave in China was the worst in at least 140 years. These droughts have very real consequences for water availability. Many regions in Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, are expected to experience a decline of 20 percent in water availability if the climate warms 2 degrees centigrade and a 50-percent decline if the climate warms by 4 degrees centigrade. What we are talking about here is the inability of people to get water to drink, the inability of people to get water to farm. This then leads to other problems, including mass migrations and struggles of limited natural resources.

With sustained drought and heat waves comes wildfire. As Thomas Tidwell, Chief of the US Forest Service, explained to Congress last year: America's wildfire season now lasts 2 months longer than it did 40 years ago—2 months longer than just 40 years ago—and burns up twice as much land as it did then because of the hotter, drier conditions from climate change.

We are seeing this very horrendous and expensive situation of wildfires in the southwest of this country. The wildfires, in fact, are expected to increase 50 percent across the United States under a changing climate, while some studies predict increases of more than 100 percent in parts of areas of the Western United States by 2050. When you think about climate change and you think about drier forests, we are looking at very serious problems regarding wildfires.

Rising sea levels, another great concern and impact of climate change, also lead to more destructive storm surges. According to NOAA, Hurricane Sandy's storm surge exceeded 14 feet in places, which was a record for New York City. The National Academy of Sciences estimated every 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit increase in global average surface temperature could be a twofold to sevenfold increase in the risk of extreme storm surge events similar to Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy.

When some people tell us: Well, gee, we cannot afford to address the problems of climate change, I would suggest we cannot afford not to address this crisis, if only for the kinds of money we are going to have to be spending repairing the damage of hurricanes like Sandy, and maybe hurricanes that are even worse.

We heard during a recent Senate environment committee hearing that the State of Florida has already seen 5 to 8 inches of sea level rise in the past 50 years, with no end in sight. In the Florida Keys we expect that nearly 90 percent of Monroe County would be completely inundated at high tide, with just 3 feet of sea level rise, and New Orleans can expect to see an ocean level increase of well over 4 feet by the end of the century.

In other words, what we are looking at here, in Florida, Miami, Louisiana, New Orleans, Massachusetts, Boston, New York City, what we are looking at is seas rising, which actually threatens the very existence of parts of those cities.

Experts are predicting that cities such as Miami, Fort Lauderdale, New York, and New Orleans will face a growing threat of partial submersion within just a few decades as sea levels and storm surge levels continue to climb. What will it mean if the seas continue to rise and extreme weather events—severe drought, wildfires, storms, flooding—become much more common? One of the most important consequences will be massive human dislocation all over the world.

More than 32 million people fled their homes in 2012 because of disasters such as floods and storms. An estimated 98 percent of this displacement was related to climate change. So when you look into the future—and one of the reasons that agencies such as the CIA and the Department of Defense and other security agencies worry very much about climate change is they see the national security implications of massive dislocations of people in different States or regions of the country fighting over limited resources, water, land, in order to survive.

The Department of Defense, in its 2010 Quadrennial Review, called climate change a potential "accelerant of instability or conflict." The potential economic impact of climate change on agriculture, for example, is huge. Water scarcity will make it harder to irrigate fields, and higher temperatures will make some areas unsuitable for growing crops. A study from the International Food Policy Research Institute found that globally climate change will greatly increase prices for staple crops such as corn, wheat, rice, and soybeans, including an approximately 100-percent increase in the price of wheat.

What this means for Americans, for people all over the world who are al-

ready struggling economically, is that climate change will mean less areas being farmed and higher food prices, something we cannot afford right now.

I think the question some viewers may have is, if the science is so clear—and it really is quite clear here in the United States and around the world—why do we not fix it? Why do we not come up with the bold strategy we need so America is a leader in the world in cutting greenhouse gas emissions and transforming our energy system? The good news here is the transformation of our energy system is going to be less expensive, if you like, than doing nothing.

Doing nothing means that we will see higher food prices, we will see wildfires, we will see scarcities of food, and we will see weather disturbances wreaking havoc on communities all over America and around the world, requiring huge amounts of monies to address those problems. What is the alternative? What do we begin to do?

The answer and the good news is that we—right now, today—have the technology to begin the process of significantly transforming our energy system. We know how to do it with today's technology, and that technology will only be improved in months and years to come.

I will give a few examples of some of the good news that is happening in terms of the ability that we now have to move to sustainable energy.

The cost of solar—which certainly will be one of the major sustainable energy technologies that we look to in the future—continues to plummet.

The Solar Energy Industries Association, in a report issued only last week, reported that the average weighted cost of a solar PV system was \$2.59 per watt, a 15-percent drop from the year before.

According to the Solar Energy Industries Association, utility-scale solar—perhaps the best comparison to utility-scale conventional electricity generation—now costs on average 7.7 cents per kilowatt hour compared to about 10 cents per kilowatt hour on average for power plants now operating across the United States.

The cost of wind energy is also comparable to or even less than the cost of other more traditional energy sources. The average cost of wind power coming online between now and 2018 is estimated to be 8.6 cents per kilowatt hour, even without including the value of the production tax credit.

Moving to sustainable energies such as solar, wind, geothermal, biomass, and hydropower clearly is something that we should be doing very aggressively.

When we do that, we not only cut greenhouse gas emissions, we not only significantly cut air pollution but in the process we create many jobs as we transform our energy system. But sustainable energy is only one part of the

equation. What we must also do is invest very significantly in energy efficiency and in sustainable energy. Every dollar invested in efficiency and low-income households through the Weatherization Assistance Program results in \$2.53 in energy and nonenergy benefits for a community.

I suspect the story is the same in Maine as it is in Vermont, but I can remember meeting with two older women who were sisters. They lived in Barre, VT, and they were able to get their homes weatherized. Their home, as many of the homes in Vermont, was old, leaking energy, not well insulated, did not have good windows, did not have good roofing, and the heat was just going right through the walls. As a result of a weatherization project in their home, their fuel bill went down by 50 percent.

These were seniors and low-income citizens. When we move in this direction, we can save Americans substantial sums on their fuel bills. We create local jobs. We cut greenhouse gas emissions. If that is not a win-win-win situation, then I don't know what is.

It seems to me that we should be investing substantially in subsidies such as the Investment Tax Credit and the Production Tax Credit. Every dollar we invest in these efforts yields many more in savings.

It is also true that when some of my friends object to the government helping to assist sustainable energies or putting money into energy efficiency, they seem to forget that the very mature and very profitable fossil fuel industry benefits very substantially from the subsidies that we have provided them. In fact, American taxpayers are set to give away over \$100 billion to the oil, gas, and coal industries over the next decade through a wide range of subsidies, tax breaks, and loopholes.

If we can subsidize the coal industry, if we can subsidize ExxonMobil and the oil industry, if we can subsidize the gas industry, we sure as heck can subsidize and provide support for wind, solar, and other sustainable energies.

I come to the end of my remarks and suggest the following: The time is now for us to take bold and decisive action. As my colleague Senator FRANKEN mentioned, those of us who have kids—and I have four—and those of us who have grandchildren—I have seven beautiful grandchildren—they will look us in the eye 20 years from now and say: Why did you let this happen? Didn't you know what was happening? Didn't you understand what lack of action would do for our country and the planet?

That is the issue we face. We need to have the courage now to stand up to extremely wealthy and powerful forces in big energy—and that is the coal companies, the oil companies, the gas companies—and come up with an alternative vision for energy in America.

In that regard, I am proud to have joined with my colleague, the chair of the environmental committee, Senator BARBARA BOXER, to introduce last year the Climate Protection Act.

Our bill does what, at the end of the day, every serious person understands must be done, and that is to establish a fee on carbon pollution emissions—an approach, by the way, endorsed not only by progressives but also by moderates and even prominent conservatives such as George Shultz, Nobel laureate economist Gary Becker, Mitt Romney's former economic adviser Gregory Mankiw, former Reagan adviser Art Laffer, and former Republican Congressman Bob Inglis.

In other words, there is an understanding that if we are to be serious about addressing the need to cut carbon emissions, there has to be a tax on those emissions.

Our legislation, which has been endorsed by, I believe, almost every major environmental organization, does several things. What we do in a very significant way is to invest in energy efficiency and weatherization because that is the low-hanging fruit. What we also do is invest, very significantly, in sustainable energy. Also, importantly, in the event that folks are paying increased costs for electricity or for other areas, much of the money is returned directly to taxpayers.

Let me conclude by saying we can have an honest debate about the best path forward to transform our energy system. This is complicated stuff, and I don't think anyone has the magic answer, but we can debate that. What we can no longer debate is whether climate change is real, whether it is caused by human activity or whether it is today causing serious harm to our country and serious damage all over this planet or whether that devastation will only get worse in years to come.

Right now we have to summon up the courage to acknowledge that we are in a crisis situation and that bold action is needed now. I happen to believe that with the United States playing a leadership role, China, India, Russia, and other major consumers of fossil fuels will follow our leadership. Our credibility is not much if we are not what we are talking about. If we want to lead the world, we have to act. This is something our children, and our grandchildren expect of us and something I hope we can, in fact, do.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. I thank my colleagues for drawing attention to this critical issue and problem.

I want to start with the solution. The solution to climate change is American innovation. The solution to climate change is American innovation.

We have to get beyond the idea first that we need to choose between a clean

environment and a strong economy. We all want cleaner air and water. We all want jobs. They don't have to contradict each other.

When we frame the debate as a conflict between an economy and the environment, we talk past one another and we are not realistic about our own history. This is, at the beginning, kind of a math problem. According to the EPA's annual inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, the U.S. pumped about 6 billion tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere in 2005—6 billion tons.

The overwhelming scientific consensus is that putting this much pollution into the air is bad for the planet, bad for our kids, and bad for our grandkids. Most scientists tell us we need to reduce emissions about 17 percent from that peak by 2020 and over 80 percent by about 2050 in order to contain climate change to manageable levels.

So the question is this. How do we establish the appropriate incentives to get that number lower to produce energy more cleanly, at prices we can afford, in quantities that support modern life.

We have to reduce pollution. We need to create jobs. Instead of arguing which is more important, let's figure out how we can use American innovation to do both.

My colleague from Vermont has talked a lot about some of the evidence. It is important to pay attention to patterns. In Virginia, we have huge areas of risk of the negative impacts of climate change, especially sea-level rise, all effects that can be traced to carbon pollution.

The Hampton Roads area of Virginia is the second-most populous part of our State, 1.6 million people, and it is the second-most vulnerable community on the east coast after New Orleans, the eastern half of the United States, to sea-level rise.

Our second-largest area, which is the home of the largest concentration of naval power in the world, and critical to our defense, is deeply vulnerable to climate change.

In fact, I have friends who live in Hampton Roads in a historic neighborhood where homes have been occupied for 150 years. In the last 15 years, their home has become completely unable to be occupied. They cannot sell it. There is no way the bank will take it back, and there is no way anyone will issue insurance to them.

In addition to being vulnerable because of our coast, our largest industry in Virginia is agriculture and forestry. If we want to talk about an industry that is affected by climate, that is our industry, \$70-plus billion a year of economic activity in our State—our largest industry affected by climate.

Tourism is big in Virginia industry—outdoor tourism. That is \$20-plus billion a year. We are directly affected by

climate, and we see extreme weather patterns. It is not only a Katrina, a Sandy or an Ike. It is the pattern of one after the next, droughts one after the next, fire damage one after the next.

To use a recent example, we are having to deal with this in these halls. We passed a flood insurance bill to delay sharp premium increases for flood insurance policies that are subsidized by the National Flood Insurance Program.

For those who weren't around when we had that debate, these increases in premiums were not because of new beach homes that millionaires are building on the flood plain out on the beach. No, these were policies for homes whose owners had lived in them for decades. They were never in flood plains before, but they are now in flood plains because of sea-level rise.

My Portsmouth friends are people who fit into that category, with a home that never had these challenges—that is now a home that they cannot sell because of the sea-level rise in that area.

The debate in the Chamber focused on what it would cost to delay premiums, how many people would be affected and impacted by the solvency of this national program. The larger point is this: Premiums are higher because flood risk is higher. When we see flood risk getting higher in every coastal area of the country, we have to pay attention to what the pattern tells us. If we don't, we are foolish.

Now, we have naysayers. There are two kinds of naysayers. There are science deniers and leadership deniers, and I want to talk for a minute about both. The first are a group of people who, despite the overwhelming scientific consensus, say: Oh no, there is no scientific evidence that humans affect climate change or that there is even any change in the climate going on at all, despite this overwhelming scientific consensus. The Senator from Vermont mentioned some quotes from Members in this body who deny science exists.

To science deniers, I am happy to say that Virginians are pro-science. We are pro-science. The quintessential Virginian, Thomas Jefferson, was the pre-eminent scientist of his day. You cannot be a proud Virginian and be anti-science. We accept the science in Virginia. In fact, the polling overwhelmingly, among the Virginia public—and we are not the bluest State in the country; we are a coal-producing State, which I will get to in a minute—even in coal-producing Virginia, the polling shows overwhelmingly that the Virginia public accepts that humans are affecting climate, causing bad things to our economy, and we have to do something about it.

Now, there is a second argument. It is not science denial; it is leadership denial. These folks may not deny the

climate science, but they deny that the United States can or should be a leader in taking steps. They say: Look, even if we reduce U.S. emissions to zero, it wouldn't offset world emissions unless China or India did something, so let's just not do anything.

It is just not the American way, folks, for us not to lead on something as important as this. It is true that we need every country to reduce emissions in the long run, but that is not an argument for the United States to do nothing; that is an argument for the United States to step up and be leaders.

Part of leadership is sending the right signals into the market at the right time. That is one of the reasons I think it would be very good if the President rejected the proposal to expand use of tar sands oil in the Keystone Pipeline program. We ought to send the right message right now. That is one of the most powerful things we could do in our country and beyond to show we are going to be leaders.

It is very difficult to lead and impossible to get people to follow if you are not willing to take a step as the most powerful and innovative economy in the world. We are the largest economy in the world, and we have been since 1890. We are the global economic leader. We have a burden of leadership. And if we lead, we will succeed.

It is not too hard to reduce emissions. We can reduce them. In fact, we are already starting. The Senator from Vermont mentioned this. I mentioned that in 2005 the United States was putting 6 billion tons of CO₂ into the atmosphere. That was our base year. We have now actually dipped down to 5.6 billion tons. We have reduced it since 2005 thanks to greater energy efficiency, natural gas, uptick in renewables, and better fuel standards in our vehicles. So we are already on a positive path. We are actually on the way to meeting our goal of reducing emissions 17 percent by the year 2020. We are on the right track; we just have to take more steps forward.

So what is the strategy we need? I hear the President sometimes and others—and I may even use these words on occasion—talk about an “all of the above” energy strategy, and I have decided I really don't like that phrase. When I hear somebody say “all of the above,” it is like when I ask one of my teenagers something and he says: “Whatever.” I don't like “whatever” as an answer because it kind of sounds indifferent and anything goes and who cares and what difference does it make. “All of the above” kind of has that attitude a little bit.

Now, sure, we should use all of our energy resources—I get that—in a comprehensive strategy, but what we really need is a comprehensive strategy that reduces CO₂ emissions—that reduces CO₂ emissions. Such a strategy

to reduce emissions does mean everything: wind, solar, geothermal, tidal, and advanced biofuels. I think it also means natural gas as bridge fuel to reduce our carbon footprint; nuclear, if we can reduce costs and resolve disposal issues; and, yes, coal, so long as we always work to make it burn cleaner.

This is my punch line of what we have to do: We have to do everything cleaner tomorrow than we are doing it today—everything cleaner tomorrow than we are doing it today.

We will have fossil fuels with us for some time, and we won't bring emissions to zero anytime soon. But just because we can't immediately go from 6 billion to zero tons of CO₂, we can't rest in our effort to reduce our CO₂ every day a little bit more. On fossil fuels, we have to take any progress we can that replaces dirty with less dirty even if it doesn't get us the whole way. Over time, the portion of our total energy footprint that is carbon based will get smaller as we develop more non-carbon alternatives, and it will also get cleaner as we reduce carbon-based energy emissions with better technology.

This is why I am against dirty fossil fuels, such as tar sands, which make us dirtier tomorrow than today. I want to be cleaner tomorrow than today. Tar sands oil is about 15 to 20 percent dirtier than conventional oil. Let's not be dirtier tomorrow than today. We have the trendline moving in the right direction. We are reducing CO₂ emissions. Let's be cleaner tomorrow than today. Why would we embrace tar sands oil and backslide to be dirtier tomorrow? The bottom line is that we have to create energy cleaner tomorrow than today.

Remember, it is a math problem—6 billion tons a year. We have 6 more years to reduce it 17 percent, 36 years to reduce it by more than 80 percent. So we have our goal. We have our goal. We have to give innovators the tools they need to meet it. Since innovators will solve this problem, here is the really fundamental challenge. This is the fundamental challenge. Will Americans be the innovators? See, innovation will solve this problem. Will Americans be the innovators or will we bury our heads in the tar sands and let other nations' innovators be the ones who grab leadership in this new energy economy. I don't want to bury my head in the tar sands. I want us to be the leader. Will we create the new technologies and sell them to other nations or will we be late to the game and have to buy all the technologies from other nations?

The good news is, as I said, we are already on our way to the 2020 goal, so we don't have to make it all dire. Let's celebrate a little success and then figure out how to accelerate our success.

The transportation sector, the fuel economy standards for cars, changing

to natural gas in power production—all these things have helped us move toward lesser emissions. Wind is the fastest growing source of new electricity capacity in the world and in the United States, even above natural gas, which is growing rapidly. In a few years Virginia will be contributing, with some of the first offshore wind turbines near Virginia Beach.

I would like to talk now for a second about a specific Virginia issue because I am not sure how many folks who are in this all-nighter speaking on this come from States that have coal and have produced coal, and Virginia does. I want to talk about coal for a second.

EPA is expected to issue standards later this year on reducing pollution from coal-fired powerplants, and, in fact, there is already talk on the other side of introducing a bill to repeal the regulation before the regulation has even come out. I am not exactly sure that is kosher, but I suspect we will be having that debate later.

There is a natural anxiety in a coal-producing region such as southwest Virginia. That is where my wife's family is from. It is five counties in southwest Virginia. They are hard-hit counties. Coal is a big part of their economy, and traditionally it has been. We mine as much coal today in Virginia as we did 50 years ago with one-tenth of the workers because it is a heavily mechanized industry, but there are jobs at stake. And it is not just jobs; coal has been traditionally low priced, and so the issue that is important—and even States that don't have any coal often use a lot of coal to produce power, and the low price has been helpful to consumers who rely on cheap and abundant electricity made possible by coal.

Coal has been hit hard in some recent years, but I disagree fundamentally with the cynical argument that is made by some—mostly in the coal industry—who blame coal's woes on a regulatory “war on coal.” When I talk to folks in the industry, they are always talking about there is a Federal “war on coal.”

I am going to tell you what is hurting coal. What is hurting coal is innovation and natural gas. Innovation in the natural gas industry has brought natural gas prices down, and utilities are deciding to use natural gas rather than coal. That is what is hurting coal these days, and we ought to take a lesson from that. Innovation is driving environmental cleanliness. Innovation is driving lower cost. The solution is not to stop innovation. The solution is not to shake your fist and blame regulation. The solution is to innovate.

Coal currently accounts for 37 percent of U.S. electricity generation and about the same percentage in Virginia. Today we don't have 37 percent of anything else that can step right in and replace coal, which means we need coal

and we are going to be using it for a while.

Since we need to reduce emissions—do it cleaner tomorrow than today—and we are going to need coal for a while, the challenge is to convert coal to electricity more efficiently and with less pollution than we do today. We have to innovate to make coal cleaner for that portion of the pie chart. I learned this as Governor working to permit a state-of-the-art coal plant in Wise County, VA. It opened in 2012. It is designed in a way that dramatically reduces sulfur dioxide, nitrous oxide, mercury emissions, and water use. It was also a plant that was only permitted when the company that wanted it agreed to take a dirty coal plant—one that preexisted the Clean Air Act and was grandfathered in for all of its pollution—and to convert that to natural gas. That was innovative. The fuel mix of this plant needed to run the burners accommodates biomass and waste coal as well.

If we can use innovative practices to reduce these emissions, we can do the same with carbon emissions. But coal cannot stand still, let others innovate, and then complain if it is not competitive. Coal has to be as innovative as everything else, and we have to figure out ways to assist.

That is why I support Federal investments in advanced fossil energy research and development. Last fall the Energy Department made available \$8 billion in advanced fossil energy loan guarantee authority for low carbon fossil technologies. I advocated for appropriations for fossil energy R&D, and there is a strong boost for those programs in the omnibus budget bill. There is a great Center for Coal & Energy Research at Virginia Tech that is doing some of this research that can help us take that portion of the pie chart, make it cleaner, and over time make it smaller as we expand non-carbon energy.

We have to make sure the upcoming standards the EPA will put out are ambitious and appropriate incentives to get cleaner and disincentives to get dirtier and at the same time avoid catastrophic disruptions in reliability or affordability.

I am going to come back and conclude where I started. Remember, when I started I said I am going to give a solution. The solution to climate change is American innovation, and I want to finish there.

Reducing CO₂ emissions is a hard problem, maybe harder than any pollution problem we face because most pollutants tend to come from a particular economic sector, but CO₂ comes from transportation and buildings and manufacturing and power production—all sectors. So the solution won't be simple. But we do not have to accept the false choice of an environment against the economy. Instead, we just need to

innovate to find the solution. That is the innovation challenge we have.

I make it a habit—apparently unlike some of my colleagues here—to never bet against American innovation. We are the Nation that said we would put a man on the Moon in a decade with computers that had less in them than your cell phones do, and we did it. We are the Nation that harnessed the power of the atom. We are the Nation that unwrapped the riddle of DNA and are now using that knowledge to cure disease. Nobody should ever bet against American innovation.

In fact, we have already shown it again and again, that innovation and regulation—smart regulation—can help us tackle pressing environmental problems.

When we were kids and my wife was growing up in Richmond, where we now live, nobody—and I mean nobody—fished or swam in the James River in downtown Richmond. You would be taking your life into your hands if you swam or if you ate fish you caught in that river because of ketone pollution, other industrial pollution, and poor treatment of municipal solid waste. But the Nation passed the Clean Water Act and we got serious about cleaning up our rivers.

Naysayers said: It will damage the economy. It will bring our economy to its knees.

But come and see what the Clean Water Act has meant to my hometown. You can swim or fish in the James River today, and you can eat the fish you catch. You can see herons and bald eagles there that were never there before. You can see residents and tourists who flock to the James River because they enjoy it.

It took a law, it took some tough regulations, it took American ingenuity in finding new ways to clean up industrial and municipal waste, but we did it, and our environment and economy are better off as a result.

When we needed to reduce nitrous oxide and sulfur dioxide emissions because of acid rain, industry said that any new law would be a burdensome job killer, just as they are saying today. But President George H.W. Bush worked with Congress to pass a cap-and-trade law to bring down these emissions. After the new law, somebody invented the catalytic converter. After the new law, somebody invented the sulfur scrubber. Not only weren't they burdensome job killers, they improved air quality, and they created jobs for American companies that manufacture catalytic converters and sulfur scrubbers, and our economy and environment are better off as a result.

Not long ago we heard requiring automakers to make cars which got better gas mileage would be devastating to the American auto industry. But President Obama struck a deal with the industry, and guess what. The

quest to build more fuel-efficient vehicles helped revitalize an American auto industry which was on its back. Plants operating with skeleton crews just sweeping the floors at night now have multiple shifts making better vehicles which save drivers more money every day. The skeptics were loud, but we moved ahead with smart regulation and American innovation, and our environment and economy are better off as a result.

It is the skeptics and the deniers who fight against these strategies who are actually naive, because again and again they always claim that taking steps to help the environment will hurt the economy, and again and again they have been proven wrong. Protecting the environment is good for the economy and good for the planet.

So I say to the skeptics of whatever variety, climate denier or leadership denier, don't underestimate American innovation. We can solve the problem of climate change for the good of the economy and the good of the planet. The story of American innovation is a story of solving the hard problems, and I know we can solve this one.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I appreciate the words of my colleague from Virginia, especially his focus on innovation and how it must be a major part of the solution to our climate change problem.

As I look around the Chamber and see Senators from Vermont, Virginia, Hawaii, California, we may be 5,000 miles apart, but what unites us today—including the Presiding Officer's home State of Maine—is the focus on climate change and the recognition we are connected by the impact of global climate change. It is time for Congress to wake up and tackle this issue. This is why we are staying up all night tonight to make that major point.

The consequences of climate change include rising seas and larger tidal surges for seaside communities, the devastating drought and water shortage we are seeing in California, extreme weather harming the habitat for native animals in Hawaii, but it also impacts the Midwest, which I don't think is the first area of the country people think about where we are seeing climate change problems.

We have seen increased potential in my home State of Minnesota for extreme weather wreaking havoc on our local economies, particularly those anchored in forestry and farming. In Minnesota we export about one-third of our agricultural production which contributes significantly to our country's record high agricultural trade surplus of \$38 billion. This is a major part of our economy and the second biggest industry in my State.

The 2012 drought in Minnesota threatened our ability to produce the

food needed to feed a growing world. Look at our lakes and our rivers. For many years our snowmobilers, the tourism industry, and ice fishers couldn't even get out. They had to cancel many activities because—not this year but many years before—we had issues with the heat in the middle of the winter. We certainly have issues with the heat in the summer.

What is this industry? Every year nearly 2 million people fish in our lakes and streams, and close to 700,000 people hunt our fields and forests nationwide. The hunting and fishing industry is valued at \$95.5 billion a year and brings in \$14 billion in direct tax revenue. This is why, as a member of the farm bill conference committee, we worked very hard with conservation groups such as Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever to make sure we had strong conservation protection in the bill and new ideas, such as the sod saver provision Senator THUNE and I introduced and got signed into law.

For the people of our State, the economic impact of climate change is about their livelihood. It is about a way of life. I mentioned the 2012 drought. It was the worst drought since 1956 and cost over \$30 billion in damage nationwide. The drought was uneven in our State. For one farmer their crops were fine; in the next county crops would be devastated. At the same time, as some farmers were experiencing not enough rain, farmers in other parts of our State actually lost their crops due to flash floods.

Research which looks at weather changes in Minnesota indicates that extreme weather events, which include heavy rainfall, are becoming more and more frequent. These are costs borne heavily by farmers, ranchers, and consumers. These production costs lose revenue, they lose supply, and they drive up costs at the grocery store for everyone.

One of the things I don't think people always think about when they think about the economic connection with climate change—in the Midwest we think about our crops; we think about extreme weather, with tornadoes, flash floods, and extreme heat and drought. But it actually affects the transportation of goods to market.

In 2012 Lake Superior was near its lowest level in the last 80 years, impacting our ability to transport cargo. It is simple: The heat was there, the water wasn't. The barges couldn't be filled all the way because the water was simply too shallow. Why is this happening? In the years when we don't have solid ice cover, the ice is melting more quickly so the water evaporates and you see lower water levels in places such as Lake Superior.

This isn't just a problem for Lake Superior; it is also a critical issue impacting the shipping industry on the Mississippi River. The Mississippi

moves hundreds of millions of tons of goods, such as corn, grain, coal, and petroleum. The Mississippi River starts in Minnesota. In Minnesota one can actually walk over the Mississippi at Itasca State Park. The 2012 drought led to low water conditions which made barge travel down the Mississippi very difficult. If shipping were completely cut off, as was possible, the economic repercussions would be severe. If barge traffic is disrupted, cargo valued at over \$7 billion could experience shipping delays, including 300 million bushels of farm products, 3.8 million tons of coal, and 5 million barrels of domestically produced crude oil. A prolonged shipping delay would be devastating to the bottom lines of farmers, businesses, and common citizens. These are just a few examples of the economic costs of climate change.

Global climate change is a challenge with so many dimensions, some moral, some economic, some scientific, and I will spend a few minutes talking about the science. My colleague from Virginia talked about Virginia being the home of science. I kind of wanted to break in and say we have the Mayo Clinic. Minnesota is truly a home of science. We are the home of great medical institutions. We helped launch the green revolution in agriculture with University of Minnesota alumni Norman Borlaug one-half century ago. We have brought the world everything from the pacemaker to the Post-it note. We believe in science.

As we know, climate change doesn't mean every day we will have a hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico or every day will be as hot and sticky as a 100-degree, humid Minnesota afternoon. But scientists say we are sure to see more days outside the range of normal, which includes extremes of all kinds.

In fact, scientists at NASA found that at 2013, factoring all the cold temperatures Minnesotans bravely endured last year, the United States was still warmer by 1.1 degrees Fahrenheit than the mid-20th century average.

The last time the United States had a below-average annual temperature was 1976. Climate change means simply, over time, the average temperature is getting warmer and weather patterns are changing and becoming less predictable. How many times have we heard in our States: This is the hottest summer I can remember. I can't believe it warmed up this quickly. I can't believe the ice is melting this quickly.

The debate on whether climate change is happening should be over. The facts are in and the science is clear.

The National Academy of Sciences finds climate change is occurring, is very likely caused primarily by the emission of greenhouse gases from human activities, and poses significant risk for a range of human and natural

systems. We know certain kinds of gases, including carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide, absorb or trap the Sun's heat as it bounces off the Earth's surface.

This wouldn't be such a big problem except that carbon dioxide doesn't dissipate quickly. It stays in the atmosphere for five decades or more, causing Earth's temperatures to rise. This means most of the carbon dioxide produced in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s is still in the atmosphere. It means carbon dioxide produced today will still be in the atmosphere in 2050 and beyond. This carbon dioxide-trapping heat is in our atmosphere. Over time, it means global temperatures rise; in turn, sea levels rise, both because water expands and glaciers melt.

The 2013 draft National Climate Assessment found human-induced climate change is projected to continue and accelerate significantly if emissions of these heat-trapping gases continue to increase.

In short, there is robust scientific evidence that human climate change is occurring. Climate change is impacting our Nation's systems in significant ways, and that is likely to accelerate in the future. The result is ocean levels are rising, glaciers are melting, violent weather events are increasing, and certainly we have seen them in my State.

When it comes to climate and environmental policy, I think we all know we have seen gridlock in this country, just as we have seen in so many ways—despite the Presiding Officer's good efforts as the Senator from Maine in trying to break through and mine as someone who came out of a background which wasn't at all partisan. I was involved early on in Kent Conrad's bipartisan energy group during my first few years in the Senate, where we were trying to forge some kind of a compromise on a policy approach to energy and the environment which brought people together. We were stymied in our effort. I served on the environmental committee for many years under Senator BOXER's leadership. We were again stymied in our efforts.

As I look back at the moments where we could actually move on the issue, where the Nation was captivated, I think we blew it.

We blew it when President Bush stood before the American people after 9/11; and if he had truly sold the Nation on energy independence from the countries involved in that tragic historic moment, if he had made the case for a new American energy agenda, I believe 80 percent of Americans then would have said sign me up. That didn't happen.

The second moment we lost was during the summer of 2008. The Presiding Officer wasn't a Senator then; I was a brandnew Senator. We actually took action. We raised gas mileage standards for the first time since I was in

junior high. We also made some energy efficiency improvements. I called them "building a bridge to the next century." But we fell short of one important thing, and we didn't just fall short. We fell one vote short of beating the filibuster to get a national renewable electricity standard like we have in Minnesota. That was a lost moment by one vote.

The third moment we lost was when President Obama first came into office. We had some new Senators. We were in the middle of a downturn. It was an incredibly tough time. But I still believe, as I have said many times, if we had moved forward on a renewable electricity standard at that time in those first 6 months with those new Senators, we would have passed it with the House of Representatives. We chose to do some other things with the environmental committees. We passed a bill, but we were, unfortunately, unable to get it done on the Senate floor. That is where we are.

So when is the next opportunity? The next opportunity is now. We have the potential for leadership on energy. We have the potential because of the people in this country—the innovators Senator KAINE so eloquently talked about. I continue to be optimistic. I wouldn't be standing here late at night if I wasn't. This desk is the desk of Hubert Humphrey, who was known as the Happy Warrior. He was willing to tackle anything which came his way.

Why am I optimistic? The first is the leadership of Gina McCarthy at the EPA. Her background working with Republican Governors, her reputation among business leaders as being tough but fair, and her experience navigating the ways of Washington make her well suited to look at the bigger picture issues.

As someone who comes from an agricultural state, I understand full well how the EPA can sometimes get bogged down in minor issues from my perspective, taking on things that create a huge firestorm that actually do not solve the problem. I believe this Administrator, Gina McCarthy, is going to look at the larger mission of the EPA, especially when it comes to climate change.

Secondly, I am optimistic because we still have some good happening here. There is some realism going on in Congress. The Washington Post ran an editorial last fall where the editorial board wrote:

The overriding problem is that Congress hasn't faced up to the global warming threat. Instead of updating clean air rules and building a policy that addresses the unique challenge of greenhouse emissions, it has left the EPA and the courts with a strong but sometimes ambiguous law that applies imperfectly to greenhouse gas emissions.

That is true, and that is why we have something to do here.

Given the current mix right now, given what we are facing on this issue, I still believe.

What can we do this year? This year we can be pragmatic. We can foster leadership. We passed the farm bill. It had good measures in it for conservation and the environment.

Another example is the Shaheen-Portman energy efficiency bill which contains a range of policies that would reduce residential, commercial, and industrial use. Not every bill is supported with everyone from the Chamber and NAM to many environmental groups. This bill is.

This leads to my third reason for hope. There are a lot of businesses out there that realize they cannot afford the pure cost of the old way of doing things. More and more businesses are seeing the good in going green, whether it is Walmart in its push toward energy efficiency or Apple which is working toward a goal of getting 100 percent of its energy from renewables.

The fourth reason to be positive is because there are some current economic positives and market changes out there that are actually moving in the right direction. We have reduced our dependency on foreign oil in just the last 7 years from 60 percent to 40 percent. It is a combination of things. Yes, some of the natural gas and drilling in North Dakota is a major force, but we also have stronger vehicle gas mileage standards. We have biofuel. We have cleaner fuel. We are moving on a number of fronts.

Look at the efforts on the State level ranging from the rules in Texas that are helping to encourage the construction of transmission lines bringing wind energy from the plains to the homes and businesses, to Colorado's strong renewable portfolio standard and the use of woody biomass for power.

I would add my own State of Minnesota where we have a renewable electricity standard requiring 25 percent of electricity coming from renewable sources by 2025. Xcel Energy, our largest utility, is on its way to meet their even more ambitious standard. By law they will get 30 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2020. I have met with their CEO. They are more than on their way to meeting that standard. They believe in wind. They believe in renewable.

The bill we passed in Minnesota, which could be a model for the Nation, has overwhelming bipartisan support. It had bipartisan support, and when it passed, nearly every legislator voted for it and it was signed into law by former Governor Tim Pawlenty.

What does this mean? The investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency technology means that Xcel is actually on its path to reduce its greenhouse emissions by 31 percent. Xcel will cut its emissions a full 11 percentage points by 2020, more than the

standards proposed by the passed cap-and-trade law that came out of the environment committee.

Minnesota Power is another utility in our State that is working to meet the State's renewable portfolio standard by bringing more wind energy onto the grid. They are looking to keep costs low to their consumers by using Canadian hydropower to back up their wind resources. Because the wind doesn't always blow in Minnesota, the hydropower will act as a battery, storing energy when there is too much on the grid, and providing electricity when it is needed. By working together we can get more wind and solar energy on the grid in a way that provides reliable service and keeps prices low for our consumers.

The Rural Electric Co-op also implemented another way to make better use of wind energy in Minnesota, to make our goal of 25 percent by 2025. They installed large capacity hot water heaters in people's basements. How can something as basic and boring as a hot water heater play a role in reducing energy consumption and climate change? The hot water heaters are only turned on at night when the wind blows the strongest and the demand for energy is the lowest. In the morning when people wake up and turn on their lights, the heater is already off. The wind energy is stored in the form of hot water that can be used throughout the day. Heating water is a major source of energy consumption and our co-op could find a way to provide an important service in a way that incentivizes wind development and saves consumers money.

It was the Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis who said that "the states are the laboratories of democracy." We are certainly seeing that right now with energy and environmental policy.

I would like to see a major Federal policy back at those moments that I went through back when Bush was President and the tragedy of 9/11 occurred, back when we had that vote in the summer, when we missed the renewable electricity standard by just one vote. But I am hopeful that we are going to get back to a point where compromise is possible in Washington, and we will get there just as the American people have demanded. And when we get there, we know that the States are useful models for how to get this done.

Before we can act on a comprehensive national blueprint for climate policy in this country, we need to bring together Americans who share these values and speak with a common voice. We are starting that discussion tonight. The message is to get Congress to wake up and get this job done.

As I close, I think about this challenge and I recall a prayer from the Ojibwe people in Minnesota. Their philosophy told them that the decisions of

great leaders are not made for today, not made for this generation, but leaders must make decisions for those who are seven generations from them. That would be an Ojibwe philosophy, that led them to take care of their land. This is now a part of our burden and our challenge as we approach this issue. I have always believed we should be stewards of the land.

In the past, leaders from both parties—you know this so well from me—have worked to protect our land, keep our air and water clean. President Theodore Roosevelt took executive action to create the National Parks System which Ken Burns famously called "America's best idea."

Congress has come together to make great progress to protect our natural resources. The 1970 Clean Air Act passed in the Senate 73-0 and the House by a vote of 371-1. The Clean Water Act in the House, the final vote was over 10-1 in favor of this landmark legislation to protect our water.

Global climate change is our generation's challenge to solve. It is our generation's challenge. I believe if we work together constructively, we can address this threat. We can be stewards of our world.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I am honored to be joining Senator SCHATZ who has been working with Senator WHITEHOUSE and with Senator BOXER to put together this very important discussion, very important evening.

While we are discussing climate change, I thought I would first talk a little bit about baseball. Something very funny happened in baseball. From 1920 all the way through the entire modern baseball history, the average number of players who hit more than 40 homeruns in a season was 3. That is all—Babe Ruth, Hank Greenberg, Willie Mays, Mickey Mantle, Ted Williams, Joe DiMaggio. No matter who was playing in the United States, the average number of players was 3.3 who made it over 40 homeruns in a season.

Then something very strange started to happen. All of a sudden there was a dramatic spike in the number of players who could hit more than 40 homeruns. In 1996 it went up to 17 players all of a sudden, with an average of only 3.3 who hit more than 40 homeruns. Year after year the same thing was occurring.

Then it occurred to someone, maybe they are injecting these players with steroids. Now some people said, no, the ballparks are getting smaller, maybe they are corking the bats, maybe they are juicing the baseball. But, no, it turned out that they were injecting steroids into baseball players. And all of a sudden the average of 3.3 players averaging more than 40 homeruns in a

season had spiked to three and four times that, until Major League Baseball decided that they were going to test for steroids. A very strange thing started to happen. The average number of players hitting more than 40 homeruns went right back down to the traditional average.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, NOAA has the same kind of chart for our climate. NOAA has been able to do the calculation going back to 1880 of what the average temperature is on the planet. As you can see, it stayed at a pretty current level until all of a sudden, especially beginning in the 1970s, there is a dramatic spike. As we all know, 20 of the warmest 30 years ever registered have occurred in the last 30 years. As we all know, the fourth warmest year of all time ever recorded occurred just last year, 2013. But we haven't applied the same steroids equivalent test for this change in temperature. We have a pretty good idea of what has happened because scientists all across the United States agree on this issue: It is man-made. The chemicals we are putting into the atmosphere are causing the same kind of chemicals ballplayers were putting into their bodies were causing in the dramatic rise in the number of homeruns that were being hit in Major League Baseball.

(Ms. KLOBUCHAR assumed the Chair.)

This is basically an obvious correlation between what we are doing as human beings and impact on the world in which we live. And just as those homeruns went up when the players used chemicals, so too has the temperature on the planet. And the same distortions that occurred in our national pastime are now occurring on our planet.

Ladies and gentlemen, the planet is running a fever, but there are no emergency rooms for planets. There are no hospitals to go to. We have to engage in preventive care. We have to put in place the measures that reduce dramatically the likelihood that we are going to see the worst catastrophic effects of this dangerous warming of our planet.

If you are still skeptical, perhaps the findings of another skeptic, Dr. Richard Muller and his colleagues at the Berkeley Earth Surface Temperature Project, will reassure you. Let me quote from Dr. Muller's July 2012 New York Times column entitled "The Conversion of a Climate Change Skeptic." Here is what he said:

Our results show that the average temperature of the earth's land has risen by two and a half degrees Fahrenheit over the last 250 years, including an increase of one and a half degrees over the most recent 50 years. Moreover, it appears likely that essentially all of this increase results from the human emissions of greenhouse gases.

Our current understanding of human influence on climate change rests on 150 years of wide-ranging scientific observations and research. It is informed

by what we see today with our own eyes measured by our own hands. Global temperatures are warming, glaciers are melting, sea levels are rising, extreme downpours are increasing. The ocean is becoming more acidic.

But climate change is more than just numbers in a scientist's book. In my home State of Massachusetts it is having tangible impacts now. My State, Massachusetts, loses an average of 49 football fields of land to rising sea levels each and every year. Rates of sea level rise from North Carolina to Massachusetts are two to four times faster than the global average. Extreme downpours and snowfall in New England have increased by 85 percent since 1948.

According to scientists at the University of New Hampshire, New England winters have become 4 degrees warmer on average since 1965. In other words, we now have in New England the same weather that Philadelphia had in 1965. We are 4 degrees warmer than we were in New England in 1965. We have Philadelphia's weather. Thank God in Boston we do not have their athletic teams, but we do have their weather and it is getting warmer.

In Massachusetts and most of New England, spring has sprung 5 days earlier on average than it did in the latter part of the 20th century.

Around the iconic Walden Pond, plants now flower 10 days earlier on average than they did in the 1850s, according to the careful records kept by Henry David Thoreau. Our iconic cod have been moving north as ocean temperatures warm. Cod need cold water. As the ocean warms, they are moving farther and farther north. In Massachusetts, Cape Cod is our iconic beach front, ocean front, and fishing front. The cod are moving north and away from our State because they need cold water.

The coastal communities that depend upon them are being affected negatively by the absence of these fish. Scientists are just beginning to understand the consequences of the increasingly acidic ocean on scallops, lobsters, and plankton, which are the base of the food chain in the gulf of Maine.

As Dr. Aaron Bernstein, from the Harvard School of Public Health, has written, climate change is a health threat, no less consequential than cigarette smoking. Increasing temperatures increase the risk for bad air days, and in turn it increases the risk of asthma attacks. It is worse for people with lung disease.

I have two stories. Rachel is from Cambridge and Sylvia is from Amherst. Their moms talked about the impact of pollution on the health of their children. I think it is important for us to understand that asthma and other illnesses that are created by pollution are preventable but only if we here in the Senate put in place the policies that

make it possible for us to reduce the risk to these young people all across our country.

I strongly support all of the efforts the Members are putting together tonight to focus on this issue. It is not just the planet, it is the children of the planet who are negatively impacted by all of this additional pollution. Left unchecked, the impacts of climate change will only become worse in the future.

An analysis by the Sandia National Lab found that changes in rainfall alone could cost Massachusetts \$8 billion in GDP and nearly 38,000 jobs between 2010 and 2050. That is Massachusetts alone. New England could see a \$22 billion hit to our GDP and almost 100,000 jobs lost from changing precipitation patterns. Sea-level rise will also threaten coastal communities where one-third of the Massachusetts population lives.

The seas are getting hotter and they are getting higher. Those hotter, higher seas are making storms more damaging. Storm surges on top of sea-level rise could cause hundreds of billions in damages to cities on the Massachusetts coast during the next decade.

In 1775 Paul Revere warned Massachusetts revolutionaries of an invasion coming from the sea. With climate change, Boston and the Bay State could face an invasion of the sea itself in Massachusetts and all across New England.

As sea levels rise and storms become more severe, many of Boston's best known landmarks will be threatened, including Faneuil Hall, Quincy Market, North Station, Fan Pier, Copley Church, John Hancock Tower, the Public Garden. The Back Bay will revert to its original personality as a bay.

We have to be realistic about this. The threats are there. The scientists are warning us. This can happen. There but for the grace of God and a few degrees, Hurricane Sandy would have damaged the city of Boston. We have been warned. Anyone who hasn't been hit by a Hurricane Sandy yet has been warned. It is coming, and it will be worse than Hurricane Sandy.

By the end of this century, Massachusetts summers could feel like North Carolina's summer—not Philadelphia. By the end of the century, the temperatures are going to keep warming. By 2100, Maine could be the only State in New England that still has a skiing industry. That is how rapidly the snows are disappearing. The economic impact of climate change isn't confined to New England because we already feel the cost of climate disruption. The GAO added climate change to its 2013 high-risk list based in large part on two reports they did at my request. GAO found that climate change presents a significant financial risk to the Federal Government. GAO could just as easily say it presents a significant financial risk for all of America.

As daunting as the impacts of climate change are, the good news is we have the solutions to address it. We can generate good jobs in America that are also good for saving all of creation.

With wind and solar, we have a tale of two tax policies. Here is the solar industry in the United States. Back in 2007, there was a production of perhaps 200 megawatts of electricity from solar. It was at the dawn of the solar industry. It wasn't as though the Sun had not been up there or that the technologies did not exist or could not have been created in order to capture it, but the tax policies were not there.

In 2008, Congress passed a law which added an 8-year tax incentive for the solar industry. We can see what happened to this industry. It had been denigrated for years—up until last year when there was 5,000 new megawatts. Think of five Seabrook nuclear powerplants of electricity generated by solar in 1 year. That tax break stays on the books until the end of 2016, and by the end of 2016, there is an expectation that 10,000 new megawatts of solar will be installed in the United States in 1 year, ladies and gentlemen, if we keep those tax breaks on the books. We can see what happens when there is a consistent, predictable tax policy on the books.

Let me show you another tax policy. This is the tax policy for the wind industry. The wind industry has not had the same good fortune which the solar industry has had. Every time there is a tax policy that is put on the books, wind starts to build upwards of 2,000 megawatts in 2001, but then the tax policy evaporated and it collapsed as an industry. When we put it back on the books, it went back up to 2,000 megawatts. It expired at the end of that year and collapsed again.

In 2005, we put a policy on the books that began to see the kind of installation of wind that we knew was possible from the beginning of time. We all knew it. We all knew the Dutch were right with those windmills. We all knew there was something to it, but there was no tax policy that was consistent, until we reached 2012 when, unbelievably, 13,000 new megawatts of wind was installed in the United States—13 nuclear powerplants. There is only 100,000 megawatts of nuclear power in the United States after 70 years of tax subsidies. Look at what happened with wind in 1 year—13,000 megawatts. But then it expired, and it collapsed down to only 2,000 megawatts in the year 2013.

That is our challenge, ladies and gentlemen. If we give the same kind of predictable tax and policy treatment to these renewable energy resources that were given to the oil industry over the last century, they have a lot to worry about. By the way, you don't have to worry about the oil or the gas industry. Their tax policies stay the same.

Through the good times and the bad times, the oil industry keeps the same tax breaks on the books. They know they can rely upon that. Those two industries know the \$7 billion in tax breaks they rely upon are going to be there year after year after year.

Let's talk about what else can happen in other industries. Let's talk about the automotive industry. The Senator from Minnesota just talked about the fuel economy standards we put on the books. Look what happened since the fuel economy standards were put on the books and implemented by Barack Obama. George Bush did not implement them. I am proud to be the host author of those fuel economy standards, but it took Barack Obama to put them on the books—54.5 miles per gallon by the year 2026. Look what has happened. We are now nearing 600,000 hybrids, plug-in vehicles, and all-electric vehicles per year. It is skyrocketing. Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler are reporting record profits and record sales. People will buy them, but you have to create the policy in the country.

By the way, that one policy—the fuel economy standards that were put on the books in 2007 in this body, and over in the House of Representatives—backs out 4 million barrels of oil per day that we import into our country by the year 2040 when all of these standards that we put on the books are finally implemented.

How much is that? The United States imports 3 million barrels of oil a day from the Persian Gulf. We are backing out 4 million barrels just by putting together a policy that incentivizes the industry to invest in the kinds of technologies that Americans want to buy and citizens around this planet want to buy. Wind, solar, hybrids, all-electric vehicles—it is all there. It is what we can do in order to create jobs and at the same time save the planet.

I will talk about some other numbers that I believe are really relevant. The coal industry now has 80,000 employees. The wind industry has 80,000 employees in the United States. We saw how low it was in 2007. Well, they now have 80,000 employees. The solar industry has 142,000 employees. Coal only has 80,000 employees. We saw what happened from the moment that predictable tax policy went on the books until today, and it is continuing to go off the charts, but we know there will be people who are going to be out here fighting to take away those tax breaks and will compromise the ability of the EPA or the Department of Transportation to keep those standards on the books.

Back in the 1990s, I was the chairman of the Telecommunications Committee in the House of Representatives, and I was able to put three bills on the books. One bill created the 18-inch satellite dish, another one created the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth cell phone

license. That is what drove the price of a phone call from 50 cents a minute down to 10 cents a minute. It was 1996 when you started to have one of these devices in your pocket. At 50 cents a minute, you didn't have one. By the way, it was the size of a brick before that bill passed.

Finally, the 1996 Telecommunications Act moved us from analog to digital. It moved us from narrow band to broadband. It created this revolution of Google, eBay, Amazon, YouTube, and Facebook. All of that happened because of the policies created by the House and Senate and signed by the President, and it unleashed \$1 trillion worth of private sector investment. It revolutionized villages in Africa and Asia. We invented those technologies and sold them around the world.

We have the same kind of economic possibility for renewable energy and new energy technologies as we had in the telecommunication sector, and we have a chance to cap another \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion worth of investment in the private sector.

Let's move on to our Nation's carbon emissions from energy due to fossil fuels. The total amount of greenhouse gases in our country from energy sources fell from 2005 to 2012 by 12 percent. We installed more wind, solar, and fuel-efficient vehicles. We got more efficient and we reduced our coal use from 2005 to 2012, but in 2013 that reversed, and the U.S. carbon dioxide emissions from energy sources increased by 2 percent in 2013. What happened? The price of natural gas increased in 2013 by 27 percent. As a result, U.S. electric utilities returned to burning more coal and using less natural gas. U.S. energy-related carbon emissions are still 10 percent below 2005 levels, but to keep driving them down, we need to keep the price of natural gas low and continue to drive the deployment of wind and solar up.

For the oil and gas industry, the crisis in the Ukraine is an opportunity to throw open the doors to unrestrained exports of American natural gas. But the notion that gas exports will help Ukraine is an illusion. It is a talisman, some lucky charm. This is a simple matter of geo-economics, geology, and geopolitics. We have already approved five export terminals that could send 4 trillion cubic feet of natural gas abroad every year. That is nearly equal to all the gas consumed by every home in America. Just take that slice of the pie, and we are going to export all that natural gas. That is twice as much as Ukraine consumes every year.

Exporting natural gas could raise U.S. prices upwards of 50 percent and create an energy tax of \$62 billion each year on American consumers and businesses, and it will put the coal industry back in business because coal will then be less expensive than natural gas.

Then our ability to meet this goal of reducing greenhouse gases will be replaced by a policy to export all the natural gas we can get to the ports of the United States, and the lower our supply is, the higher the price is going to be for the remaining natural gas within our boundaries. The Energy Information Agency says that just with the terminals that are now being proposed, it is a 52-percent increase in the price of gas here. We saw it last year. When gas went up 27 percent, coal replaced natural gas, and our emissions went up, not down. So we just have to be realistic about this whole debate in Ukraine about what it means for us in handling this issue.

By the way, it is what has been leading to manufacturers returning to the United States. It is what is a big part of why there is a move towards natural gas vehicles, which also backed out imported oil. But the higher natural gas prices are the more we undermine our ability to make real progress on climate change, on manufacturing, on natural gas vehicles, on utilities moving from coal over to natural gas. That is our challenge as a people.

Then, finally, we are the leader, not the laggards. The whole world is looking at us. So much of that CO₂ is red, white, and blue, and they look to us to be the leader. You started your industrial revolution in the 19th century, they say to us. If you want us to reduce our greenhouse gases, you reduce yours. So we cannot abdicate this responsibility.

Last week I attended a conference here in Washington called Globe. There were 100 legislators from around the world who came here—the key players on energy and the environment in each country in the world. We had a conference over in the Russell Building. Each of these legislators said they are looking to us for leadership. Five hundred new laws have been put on the books over the last 15 years in these countries on climate change. But the question comes to us. What are you going to do this year, next year, the year after on these issues? Their countries are even more vulnerable than our country. They do not have the resources which our country has. So that is our opportunity.

HENRY WAXMAN and I built a coalition of utilities, of businesses, of labor, of faith and environmental groups, and concerned citizens in 2009. The pieces are still out there, I say to my colleagues. We can do it again, but we are going to need everyone's help.

Recently, the books of Massachusetts author and national treasure Doctor Seuss have been popular and read on the Senate floor. I wish I had time to read the entirety of his environmental classic "The Lorax." But since there are so many Senators who want to talk about the impacts of climate change and the benefits addressing it will

bring our country, I will just have to close with this short portion. Here is what it says:

But now says the Once-ler, now that you're here, the word of the Lorax seems perfectly clear. Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.

So to my colleagues in the Senate and to everyone watching and following tonight, thank you for caring a whole awful lot. This is not for us; it is for all the subsequent generations of this country and this planet who are looking to this Chamber for leadership. We are going to make things better from tonight onward. This is a moment. The science is clear; the economics are clear; and now the politics is clear. We are going to have a big fight about this in 2014 because future generations are going to look back and know that this Senate stood up and we had the debate on the most important issue facing this planet.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (MR. MARKEY). The Senator from Maine.

MR. KING. Facing challenges is hard. The bigger the challenge, the harder it is to face it because facing a significant challenge always involves risk, always involves a little uncertainty, always involves effort, always involves cost, always involves inconvenience, and always involves change. The most profound observation I ever heard about change is that everybody is for progress and nobody is for change.

In the 1930s, Europe and particularly England faced a challenge. They faced a challenge that was to their very survival. But for almost the entire decade of the 1930s, England didn't face that challenge. They did not act, even though the data was overwhelming, even though the facts were compelling, even though their greatest parliamentarian, the greatest parliamentarian in English history—at least recent English history—continuously warned them. Winston Churchill spent a good part of the 1930s warning his country about the dangers of the rise of Nazi Germany. But people didn't listen, and they didn't listen for much the same reason I think people aren't listening now—because it is hard to take on a new challenge. It is hard to take on something that will have a cost. It is hard to take on something that will entail risk. But ignoring warnings has consequences. In the case of the 1930s in England and ignoring Winston Churchill's warnings, the consequences were 55 million people dead. Most historians believe Hitler could have been stopped in 1938, 1939, but instead of facing the challenge, people said it was too expensive; it was too inconvenient; it was too much of a change. They were exhausted from World War I.

That was perfectly understandable, but the consequences were catastrophic.

That is where we are today. We are facing a daunting challenge. For all of us speaking tonight, this isn't easy. We can outline the problems, but the solutions aren't easy, and the solutions aren't going to be free. The solutions are going to involve change; they are going to involve investment; they are going to involve innovation; and they are going to involve facing up to a challenge that is very serious.

There are lots of ways to think about this. One way is this example: All of us have health insurance. We all have homeowners insurance—even simpler than health insurance. Homeowners insurance means basically we are insuring our home against burning down. What is the risk of our house catching fire? One in two? No. One in 365. Will your house burn down once a year. No. One in 3,650? I suspect the risk is somewhere around 1 in 10,000 or 20,000. But every family in America is paying an average of \$800 or \$900 a year to insure against a 1 in 10,000 risk. But we are being told in this body—in this country—that we can't take steps to insure ourselves against a risk which 98 percent of the scientific evidence says is a dead certainty. I don't want to take that risk.

People say: You are wrong, ANGUS. This isn't true. It isn't going to happen. Maybe I am. Maybe we are. Maybe that 98 percent of climate scientists who have spent their lives studying this issue is wrong. I hope they are. I hope I am. But what if we are not wrong? The consequences are almost unimaginable.

Although I have a long history of involvement in environmental matters in Maine, I was a climate skeptic. I heard all the arguments about it, and I said, I don't know whether this is really true. We can argue it both ways. Then, about 5 years ago, I ran across a little chart and the chart to me answered the whole question. Here is the chart.

This chart shows a million years of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. We often hear carbon dioxide naturally goes up and down in the atmosphere. Well, yes, it does. That is what these figures show. But for 900,000-plus years, it ranged between 160 parts per million to about 250 or 275. That is the range. Then all of a sudden, we get up to the year 1,000, and it is still in the same higher range. Then right here, 1860, when we started to burn fossil fuels in large quantities, and there it goes. It goes to levels that we haven't seen on this planet for 3 million years. The last time we saw 400 parts per million of CO₂ in the atmosphere, the temperatures were 12 to 14 degrees warmer and the oceans were 60 to 80 feet higher.

This isn't politics. This isn't speculation. These are actual measurements based on the Greenland ice cores. This is what the CO₂ concentrations were, and here we are at the beginning of the industrial revolution.

This chart, it seems to me, answers two of the three basic questions on the subject. The first question is: Is something happening? Yes, inevitably. We just can't look at this and say this point and this point are so different, and this is a million years. Something is happening.

The second question about this whole issue is this. Do people have anything to do with it? This is when we started burning stuff. This answers that question. Of course, people have something to do with it. It is just too weird a coincidence to say all of a sudden, when we started to burn fossil fuels in large quantities and release them into the atmosphere and increase the CO₂, it just happened to happen at the same time. One fellow I know said it is volcanoes. I am sorry. We didn't have an outburst of volcanoes in the 1850s and 1860s. We had little fires all over Europe, all over America. We had steel mills. We had the beginnings of the industrial revolution. We started to burn coal and later oil. This is what happened.

I mentioned there were three questions. No. 1, is something happening? Yes. No. 2, do people have anything to do with it? Yes.

The third question is, So what. CO₂ is going up in the atmosphere. So what. What does that mean? This answers that question. This is the relationship between CO₂ and temperature. The red line is carbon dioxide and the black line is temperature, an almost exact correlation. If the CO₂ goes up in the atmosphere, and we are at about 500,000 years, we can see CO₂ goes up, temperature goes up; CO₂ goes down, temperature goes down. So this is the answer to the third question, so what. The answer is temperature.

One of the things that worries me, and the reason I am here tonight, is some research that has been done at the University of Maine. We have a climate study center at the University of Maine. I was there a year or so ago, and I was meeting with them. It was one of these meetings where we are going around and we go to the university, factories, and schools and meet with people and they give us briefings, and I was listening to a briefing on climate change when a word crept into that discussion that I had not heard before, and the word was "abrupt."

Climate change, I always assumed, happened in a very slow, long, historic, geological time kind of way. That is not the case.

These are two lines on this chart. The yellow line is temperature; the red is the extent of the ice in the Arctic. The point of the chart is, look at these vertical lines. That is in a matter of a few years. It is not a matter of 1,000 years or 10,000 years; it is a matter of a few years. It is as if someone throws a switch, and I do not want to be around when that switch is thrown,

and I certainly do not want to be the cause of the switch being thrown.

Abrupt climate change, that is what keeps me awake at night; that this is something we are sort of assuming is going to be the next generation's problem or the generation after that or by 2100. Who knows about 2100? Who thinks about 2100? Well, it could be a lot sooner than that.

If things such as this cause a melt-off in the Arctic ice and the Greenland ice sheet, and it changes the currents in the Atlantic or anywhere else in the world, for that matter, everything changes.

Without the Gulf Stream, England, Scotland, Ireland, and Scandinavia are essentially uninhabitable. I do not know about the Presiding Officer, but I have always thought of England as a being to the east. It is not to the east; it is way to the northeast. England is on the same latitude as Hudson Bay. The only reason it is of temperate climate is because of the Gulf Stream. If something happens to the Gulf Stream, Northern Europe is almost uninhabitable.

These changes can happen abruptly. Again, maybe I am wrong. I hope I am wrong. But what if I am right? What if the science is right. Are we willing to take that risk? Do you want to be the person who says to your grandchildren: We saw this coming. All these people talked. They talked all night in the Senate. But we decided not to do anything because it would be expensive and it would disrupt some of our industries and might cost us a few jobs, which, by the way, would be replaced in other industries.

Do you want to be the person who says: Well, we had this warning but, no, we didn't feel we had to do anything. I do not want to be that person.

Does it have practical effects? It does have practical effects. There is not a theoretical discussion. This is not just a science lesson. This has effects in all of our States. We have heard them here tonight—about the water temperature in the streams in Minnesota, the forest fires in Colorado, the drought in the West, in California, that is rendering millions of acres potentially unproductive that have been the breadbasket of America.

In Maine, it is the lobster, the iconic product of the coast of Maine. What is happening is the ocean is getting warmer. As the ocean is getting warmer, the lobsters do not necessarily—they are not too unhappy about it getting warmer, but the center of gravity of lobsters is going to go where the water is colder, and that is what is happening. That is what the lobstermen have told me.

The center of gravity of lobstering in Maine used to be right off of Portland in what is called Casco Bay, where I live. But over the last 10 or 15 years, it has slowly moved northward. Now the

lobsters themselves have not moved northward, but the heavy catch has moved northward.

Here is a dramatic picture of what has happened. In 1970, here was the hotspot for lobster: south of Massachusetts, south of Rhode Island, off the end of Long Island. This is where they were catching the most lobster. Here is where they are in 2008. They are up along the coast of Maine, headed for Nova Scotia. This is the center of gravity of the lobster industry.

People around here may not know what is happening in the climate, but the lobsters of Maine know it, and the green crabs and the shellfish and the moose and the deer and the trees, they know it because that is what is changing in my State.

There is another thing that is happening that I do not think has been discussed tonight; that is, that the ocean is becoming a giant sink for all this carbon that is in the atmosphere. When the atmospheric carbon dioxide goes into the water and is dissolved in the water, it turns into something called H_2CO_3 —carbonic acid. Carbonic acid attacks shellfish. Shellfish cannot form their shells because the ocean is becoming acidic. This is a recent observation, and it is the result of the massive load of carbon that we have been putting into the atmosphere.

Here is another practical result, and the Presiding Officer talked about this in terms of Boston. These are charts that show what happens if the sea goes up varying levels—6 meters, 1 meter. One meter is shown in dark red on the chart. Look what happens to Virginia Beach in North Carolina at just 1 meter, and that is predicted in the next 100 years as the sea level goes up. Then we look at all these communities: New York, Boston, Savannah, and Charleston, Virginia Beach, Miami, Louisiana. Then we can multiply this all around the world. I do not know the percentage, but a very significant percentage of the world's population lives within about 40 miles of the coast—everywhere in the world.

These are real consequences, and these are the kinds of consequences that are unbelievably expensive and unbelievably destructive.

There is another piece of evidence, which is the sea ice extent. We are now talking about the famous Northwest Passage actually existing. Ships can now go from the Atlantic to the Pacific across the Arctic because the ice is disappearing.

Here it is, as shown here, just from 1979 to the present. This is evidence. This is data. This is irrefutable.

Here is essentially a chart of the Arctic sea ice. The red line was the extent of the ice, the average place the ice was in 1979 through the year 2000, and here is where we are in 2012. As it continues to shrink, several things happen: the ocean levels rise, the acidification of

the ocean continues, and there is a threat of a change in the ocean's currents, which would be catastrophic for many parts of the world.

Another example is the Muir Glacier in Alaska. These two photographs I have in the Chamber were taken from exactly the same spot. In 1941, here is the glacier. In 2004, here is the lake. The glacier is gone. That has changed, and that is a change that is the canary in the coal mine. That is the change that tells us something is happening and we ignore it at our peril.

What are the consequences? What are the consequences? I have talked about the economic consequences: forest fires, floods, lobsters, agriculture, all of those people living in low-lying areas. Multiply Superstorm Sandy by two, three, four, five, and we are talking billions of dollars of economic costs; we are talking about lost jobs. Something like 30 percent of the businesses that were wiped out by Superstorm Sandy never came back. They never came back. To each one of those businesspeople, to each one of those insurers that insured those businesses, to those families it is gone forever. That is the result of these superstorms we are seeing more and more frequently.

An enormous economic risk, an enormous cost. Yes, it is going to cost something to prevent this, but it is going to cost us either way. The old ad I remember when I was a kid: Pay me now or pay me later. In this case, it is pay me now or pay me more later.

But there is a second level of risk that is almost as significant as the economic risk; that is, the national security risk. We have had panels of retired judges and admirals who have looked at this issue. Global climate change is a major national security risk. Why? Because it is going to lead to friction, to riots, to famine, to loss of agricultural land, to loss of homes, to territorial disputes about water, and that increases our risk.

I am on the Armed Services Committee and Intelligence Committee. I have spent the last year and a half listening to testimony about Al Qaeda and what we are doing to confront Al Qaeda. Part of our strategy is to fight them and to kill them, but we cannot kill them all. It is like the Hydra. You cut off one head and two come back. What we have to do is get at the basis of why young people are joining an organization such as that and change their lives. This climate change, which threatens people's livelihoods, particularly in the developing world, is a grave threat to our national security because it generates the very people who are dangerous. The most dangerous weapons of mass destruction in the world today are large numbers of unemployed 20-year-olds who are angry and dispossessed and have no hope and are willing to take up arms against any

authority they can find, and unfortunately that may be us.

This is a national security risk. Water, I predict, will be one of the most valuable commodities of the 21st century. It is going to be something people fight about. It is going to be something people get into wars about. Water is an enormously valuable commodity that global climate change threatens.

Finally, on the question of what are the consequences, it is an ethical risk. It is an economic risk, a national security risk, but it is also an ethical risk. Another aspect of this that has struck me that is not strictly related to climate change but is related to our consumption of fossil fuels is what right do we have in two or three generations to consume the entire production of fossil fuels that the world has produced in the last 3 or 4 or 5 or 10 million years.

It reminds me of a dad sitting down at Thanksgiving dinner, where all of his children are sitting around the table, mom brings in the turkey, puts it in front of him, and he says: This is all mine. None of you get any. I am going to take it.

None of us would do that, but that is exactly what we are doing. We are saying this oil, this precious oil that is an amazing commodity, can do all kinds of different things, we are going to burn it up in about 200 years. It takes millions of years to make it, and we are going to burn it all up. I think that is an ethical risk.

OK. I hate talking about problems and not talking about a solution. What are the solutions?

I believe in markets. I believe in free markets as the best way to allocate goods and services. But the market, in order to be efficient, has to be accurate, and it has to accurately reflect the true costs and price of the commodity. Right now we are not paying those costs. The cost of climate change is not factored into the cost of consuming fossil fuels. If you factor it in, then you have a free market and people will make their decisions based upon their economic situation and also their commitment to the environment, but the real costs are not factored in.

I am old enough to remember when this debate took place in the 1970s, when I worked here. But the debate then was about environmental law itself, and the debate was characterized as payrolls versus pickerel. I can remember that term, "payrolls versus pickerel."

The idea was that if you clean up the water and clean up the air, it is going to put people out of business, we are going to lose jobs, industry is going to run away, we can't possibly do it. Well, a man named Edmund Sixtus Muskie from the State of Maine did not believe that. He was raised in a paper mill town on the Androscoggin River—one

of the most polluted rivers in America. They used to say it was too thick to drink, too thin to plow. Muskie did not believe it, and Muskie stood in this body and fought for the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act.

Here is the amazing thing. I was asked to do some research and to do a presentation about Muskie's environmental leadership. I went back and looked at the record. I could not believe my eyes, particularly in light of where we are here today—tonight—in this body and in this city. The Clean Air Act passed the Senate unanimously. In the midst of the debate, Howard Baker, the minority leader, the Republican leader, gave his proxy to Muskie. Can you imagine that happening today? It passed unanimously. We could not pass the time of day unanimously in this body. Yet it happened.

That brings me to a question that really puzzles me. How did this become a partisan issue? How did it come to divide us so cleanly along environmental lines? This discussion tonight is important, but it is all Democrats and people—BERNIE and I, the two Independents—Senator SANDERS, the Senator from Vermont, and I, the two Independents—no people from the other party. I do not understand that. The leaders, the giants of the environmental movement in Maine when I was a young man were all Republicans.

When Ed Muskie got the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act passed through this body, it was with the support of the overwhelming majority—in the case of the Clean Air Act, all of the Republicans, including very conservative Republicans. Senator Buckley from New York supported the Clean Air Act. I do not know how or why this became a partisan issue. Maybe it was because it was invented by Al Gore. I do not know. But somehow it has become this divisive partisan issue. It should not be. This is our future that is at stake. This is our children and grandchildren's future. This should not be a partisan issue.

In my experience, if we can develop a common understanding of the facts, we can find solutions. They will not be easy, but they are there. Right now the problem is that we do not have a common, shared understanding of the facts.

So what are the solutions? The market is one. Innovation, as Senator Kaine from Virginia said, is another. There are ways to use electricity and generate electricity through innovation that will be much cleaner, support just as many if not more jobs, and help prevent this tragedy from befalling us.

By the way, it does not mean we cannot burn coal. Coal is an abundant resource that we have in this country that is loaded with energy, but unfortunately it is also loaded with CO₂ and other pollutants. So I think part of our commitment should be intense re-

search on how to use coal efficiently, effectively, and cleanly. That should be part of the deal. We are not trying to put any region of the country out of business or control people's use of valuable resources, but let's use them in the most efficient and effective and environmentally safe way. That can be done in part through innovation.

I was a lobbyist in Maine 30 years ago. One of the things I lobbied for was to get rid of pop-top beer cans. The Presiding Officer probably remembers the first ones. You grabbed the ring, pulled it off, and it became a little razor. People threw them on the ground. You would step on them. They were dangerous.

I remember going to the lobbyist for the bottlers and I said: We want to get rid of those things.

He said: There is no way. Our engineers have looked at it. It is impossible to make one that you do not have to tear off.

Well, lo and behold we passed a law banning those pull-off tabs, and the industry found a way to do it safely and in an environmentally sound manner. Sometimes you have to help people find a way.

The final piece when it comes to solutions is that this has to be international. I agree with my colleagues who say we cannot just do it here. We cannot just do it here. If we just do it here and nobody else in the world does it, if China and India do not do it, then it is not going to be effective. We will have imposed costs on our society that will simply make their businesses more competitive if they are ignoring these externalities, these realities of price. It has to be done through international cooperation.

I think the moment may be right. From everything I understand about the air quality in China, they may be ready to discuss this. They may be ready to take steps along with us. But we are going to have to be the leaders. We are going to have to show what can be done and how it can be done. We are going to have to innovate our way out of this. But we have to do it with our international partners. Movement of air does not respect boundaries.

When Ed Muskie was promoting the Clean Air Act, he would take a globe—I do not think we are allowed to take props onto the floor of the Senate—he would take a standard globe—imagine I have it here—and everybody used to have these in their library. On a globe is a coating of shellac to make it shine. That coating of shellac is the same thickness in proportion to the globe as our atmosphere is to our real globe. In other words, it is very thin and very fragile. We destroy it and threaten it at our extreme peril.

I can boil it all down to one simple concept. This is a Maine concept. It is the Maine rototiller rule.

For those of you from urban States, a rototiller is a device that you use to

turn the ground in your garden. I guess it is a homeowner's plow. It turns the dirt. Not too many people own rototillers, but enough do so that you can borrow one when you need it for that one day in the spring when you are going to put in your garden.

The Maine rototiller rule is very straightforward: When you borrow your neighbor's rototiller, you always return it to them in as good shape as you got it with a full tank of gas. That is all you need to know about environmental policy. We do not own this planet. We have it on loan. We have it on loan from our children, our grandchildren, and their grandchildren. We are borrowing it from them. We have a moral, ethical, economic, and security obligation to pass it on to those people in as good or better shape than we got it. That is what this issue is all about.

I deeply hope we can put aside the partisanship and the arguments, agree on the facts, and then have a robust and vigorous discussion of solutions. It is not going to be easy. It is not going to be free. But it will make all the difference in the world to the people to whom we owe our best work—the future of America and the world.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I appreciate so much the comments of my colleague from Maine, bringing his insights and his expertise through the years and his stories about how the land and waters of his home State are being impacted and our responsibilities to the broader planet.

I am reminded of the comment that Henry David Thoreau said, which is, "What is the use of a house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put it on?" His comment now seems very much ahead of the time and the context of the issue we are discussing tonight.

Then we have the insight from Theodore Roosevelt, who said, in terms of our responsibility, "Of all the questions which can come before this Nation, short of the actual preservation of its existence in a great war, there is none which compares in importance with the great central task of leaving this land even a better land for our descendants than it is for us."

But right now we are failing that challenge. Carbon pollution is a direct threat to our resources on this planet, a direct threat to our forests, to our fishing, and to our farming. So I am going to take a little bit of time tonight to talk about those aspects.

I would like to start by taking a look at our forests. Indeed, if there is something that symbolizes some of the dramatic impacts carbon pollution is making, it is the spread of the pine beetle.

This is a picture of a forest devastated not by fire, not by drought, but by the spread of the pine beetle. I have

gone up in a plane and flown over a vast zone of the Cascades known as the red zone, where the pine beetle has killed thousands of acres in my home State. They start out looking red because the needles turn red. That is why it is called the red zone. Then the needles fall off, and you have essentially this brown desolate remainder of what was once a thriving forest.

Timber is something that is very close to our hearts in the State of Oregon. So many of us—myself included—are children of the timber industry. My father was a millwright—that is the mechanic who keeps the sawmill operating—a job he absolutely loved. He used to say that if he did his job right, then everyone had a job to come to, and the mill made money and everyone was happy as long as the machinery ran. Oregon is still the top American producer of plywood and softwood lumber. The industry certainly is a big component of our gross domestic product in my State.

When this happens, then not only do we have zones that are not good environmental zones, but they are not good timber zones either. It is a lose-lose situation. It happens, and it is spreading for one reason: The winters are not as cold as they used to be, and the pine beetle is very happy about that because it is not knocked back and largely wiped out with cold snaps each winter, and it is easy to spread much more quickly, and it is able to spread to much higher elevations.

Then these dead forests become a component in another huge problem, which is forest fires.

This picture you will see in a moment is a picture of the Biscuit Fire in 2002—a wall of flames.

The summer before last, I went down and flew about the State of Oregon to look at the innumerable forest fires that were burning. One of the reasons we had so many forest fires—10 years after this fire—was because the floor of the forest was so dry. It is estimated that a 2-by-4 that you see in a Home Depot has about a 6-percent moisture content. The material on the floor of the forest was even drier than that. Then you throw in far more lightning strikes due to the pattern of the weather, and you have this magic combination, this combination of tinderbox dryness, pine beetle devastation, and then lightning strikes. What you have are some of the largest fires we have ever seen. Indeed, the Biscuit Fire in 2002—500,000 acres. Half a million acres. Fast-forward 10 years. In 2012, 750,000 acres burned in my State. With the combination of the ongoing effects of carbon pollution—that being pine beetle damage, more lightning strikes, and far drier, drought-driven fire seasons—it is going to get worse and worse.

The seven largest fire years since 1960 have all happened in the last 13 summers. It is pretty amazing to recognize

how that transition is occurring. If we think about projecting into the future, the National Research Council predicts that for every 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit temperature increase, the area burned in the western forests will quadruple.

This led our Energy Secretary to tell me a few weeks ago about a draft of a study that says the western forests will be dramatically impacted, devastated in the course of this century due to these factors.

We have a triple threat, that of drought and bark beetles, increased temperatures, and the result is decimation of an incredibly important world resource, our forests.

But carbon pollution is not only an attack on our forests, it is also an attack on our farming. Indeed, drought across the U.S. is a huge and growing threat to agriculture.

In the State of Oregon, we have had the three worst-ever droughts in the Klamath Basin in a 13-year period. It was 2001, then the worst-ever drought of 2010, then the worst-ever drought of 2013—and now we are looking at the possibility of a drought even worse than any of those—the worst-ever drought of 2014. Hopefully, we will have a lot of precipitation and a lot of snow in the coming weeks and that won't be the case, but if we are looking at the snowpack, it is possible that we will have the fourth worst ever in a 14-year period. It is absolutely devastating to our rural economy, absolutely devastating.

Let's look at the impact coming from smaller snowpacks. Snowpacks are a significant piece of this puzzle. If we were to look at the Pacific Northwest, we would basically draw a circle like this. What we see are these zones where there is a huge percentage decrease in those snowpacks. The snowpacks then provide far less irrigation and water available, and therefore dry their foundation for the summer drought, which then has a devastating impact on agriculture. This is not good for our farming families, and it is certainly not good for our farm economy.

Those snowpacks have another impact. I am going to skip forward to the impact on our streams and our fish.

Folks who like to fish for trout and go to their summer streams know that it is going to be better if the stream is large and cold than if it is small and warm. But the last of those snowpacks means that the summer streams are smaller and warmer, and they are very bad for trout. That is what we are seeing in this particular picture: dead trout from the Deschutes River. Last fall thousands of fish died in the river from low flows attributed to drought.

Clearly, not only is it bad for trout, it is bad for salmon; it is bad for steelhead. It is certainly bad for our fishing industries.

Let's turn to another part of our fishing industry, and this is an impact that we see over on the coast of Oregon.

I specifically want to take a look at the impact that we see on our oysters. Oysters have to fixate a shell at the beginning of their life. They are called oyster seed, the baby oyster. We have hatcheries, and those hatcheries have been having challenges. The Whiskey Creek oyster hatchery in Oregon has had a big problem. Indeed, at one point it had a huge impact.

I will read part of an article:

Peering into the microscope, Alan Barton thought the baby oysters looked normal, except for one thing: They were dead. Slide after slide, the results were the same. The entire batch of 100 million larvae at the Whiskey Creek Shellfish Hatchery had perished.

It took several years for the Oregon oyster breeder and a team of scientists to find the culprit: a radical change in ocean acidity.

This is why, because when we have greater carbon pollution in the air, that carbon then is absorbed by the ocean, a significant portion of it. That dissolved carbon dioxide combines with water and becomes H_2CO_3 , otherwise known as carbonic acid.

That carbonic acid is preventing the baby oysters from forming their shells. We can think of this as the canary in the coal mine for our world's oceans because if baby oysters are having a challenge forming their shells because of a 30-percent increase in acidity since the start of the Industrial Revolution, what other impacts are there going to be along in the shellfish world and the food chains that depend on those shellfish, not to mention the impact on our shellfish farmers.

I was noting this in Washington State and I was told: You know, our oyster farmers are experiencing a similar problem, and they are going to Hawaii and to Asia. This is not only an Oregon problem.

The manager of the hatchery in Oregon, David Stick, said in an article:

I do not think people understand the seriousness of the problem. Ocean acidification is going to be a game-changer. It has the potential to be a real catastrophe.

Let's recognize another part of the planet that is having a problem with warmer waters and ocean acidification; that is, our coral reefs. We have, in Oregon, a researcher at Oregon State university. His name is Professor Hixon. Professor Hixon is recognizing that the coral reefs around the world are in trouble. As he said in a presentation, he studied dozens of reefs. They are his children. Then he said: My children are dying. One of the key reasons is acidification, but another is the oceans are getting warmer.

I have a chart showing the warming of the ocean. The oceans are absorbing carbon dioxide, and they are also absorbing heat. As they become warmer, they create a real problem for coral reefs. Coral is an animal. We may think of it as a plant, but it actually is an animal, and it lives in a symbiotic relationship with a type of algae.

They depend on each other. What happens when the water gets warmer around a coral reef is that the algae start to multiply in a fashion that overwhelms the coral.

The coral, in an effort to survive, ejects the algae, throws them out of the host. Then the coral, having ejected the algae, dies. This is called bleaching, and it is something we are seeing in coral reefs around the world. That is why Professor Hixon noted: My children are dying.

I will state something else about the warming that is occurring, and this is more about warming that is occurring in terms of the temperature of our planet. It is affecting our recreation industry and our snow industry.

I am going to start by taking a look at what is driving that in terms of a chart related to carbon dioxide. Specifically, this chart shows the dramatic change that has gone on. We see the fluctuations in carbon dioxide over hundreds of thousands of years, into the modern time and then, boom, 400 parts per million of carbon pollution.

What does this come from? It comes from burning fossil fuels.

This carbon—carbon dioxide, as a component of the atmosphere, traps heat. To summarize, our planet has a fever. The temperature is going up. Let's take a look at how that carbon dioxide correlates with temperatures.

We have, in this case, showing since 1880—basically, the start of the Industrial Revolution—the increase in temperature on our planet, the global surface mean temperature. We have seen a significant increase.

If we want to find a way that this impacts our economy, let's take a look at how it impacts our recreation industry. This is an article that I grabbed from the New York Times. It is a lengthy article, but it is the title and the picture that I really wanted to show. It is from the Sunday Review and it is called "The End Of Snow."

This article basically documents how our ski resorts around our planet are suffering because they don't have as much snow as they used to have. There is a picture of artificial snow being created and put on the slope. It notes how much energy this requires, how many dollars it costs to provide that energy, how this is making many of our resorts not feasible, and how many of them will go out of the business. This is just another angle on the impact that carbon dioxide is having, in this case, on our recreation industry.

Of course, it is having other impact on our recreation industry. When we think of those smaller streams, we can think of fewer kayaks, for example, and rafting companies operating.

Let's turn from these multitudinous impacts. First, before we return to recognizing that we have the power to take on carbon pollution, let's recognize when folks say isn't that global

warming issue about some computer programmer using some assumption and some model. Isn't there some dispute about it; is it real.

Put all of that aside. We don't need a computer model to show us the impact from the pine beetle. We don't need a computer model to show us the impact on our trout streams. We don't need a computer model to show us the impact today on droughts. We don't need a computer model to show us impact on forest burning. We don't need a computer model to show us the impact on our coral. We don't need a computer model to show us the impact on the oyster industry, and we don't need a computer model to show us the impact on our snow-based recreational activities and the industries that are associated with it.

In other words, carbon pollution is here and now. Global warming is here and now. It is making an impact wherever we look. We can feel it, we can touch it, we can see it, and we can smell it. It is here, and it is our responsibility, our responsibility as American citizens, our responsibility as policy leaders in this esteemed Chamber of the Senate to take on this issue.

There is so much we can do because it boils down to this. We have to replace our appetite for fossil fuels with renewable fuels, renewable energy. We can do that. We can do that in a host of ways.

I will start. Let me start by noting a little bit about the growth of solar energy. When one realizes this chart is just from 2001 to 2013, it is phenomenal the deployed amount of installed capacity in megawatts in solar energy. From 2012 to 2013, we have more than 3,000 additional megawatts of energy, solar energy, solar potential, deployed.

A similar explosion of renewable energy is happening in the source of wind. Let's take a look at that.

We have deployed capacity in wind energy. If we were to recognize that, again, from 2001 to 2013 there was a huge growth in the industry—and I want to point out a particular factor here going from 2011 to 2012. This large bump on the chart was 13,000 megawatts of installed capacity and wind energy in 1 year. The next year there was only 1,000.

The difference, as pointed out by one of my colleagues earlier on this floor, is the difference in tax credits, of consistently available production tax credits that the wind industry can depend on.

We give all kinds of subsidies to the fossil fuel industry. Why can't we create a steady, reliable source to promote renewable energy to help replace those fossil fuels. We have this policy potential in our hands, and we need to exercise it. There are many other forms of renewable energy. There is offshore wind, there is geothermal energy, and there is wave energy. Oregon has

some of the best winds for offshore wind energy and waves for wave energy, but we already have the ability through the technologies we have today to dramatically reduce our consumption of fossil fuels.

What this chart shows is that in different parts of the country the mix between biomass and geothermal and wind onshore, wind offshore, wave energy and solar energy, concentrated solar power energy would be different in different parts of the country, but everywhere around the country there is the potential to essentially replace our appetite for fossil fuels.

Then there is the conservation side. We can certainly do a tremendous amount in our fuel standards for cars, a tremendous amount in our fuel standards for trucks, and a significant amount in terms of energy-saving retrofits to our buildings.

In the farm bill we just passed, we have a program for low-cost loans for energy-saving retrofits, and that program—the Rural Energy Savings Program—will help retrofits occur in commercial buildings and residential buildings, and it will allow people to pay back the loan on their electric bill. Often, they will be able to pay back that loan simply with the savings in energy—electricity consumption—from the changes they make to their building. So it is a win-win—creating jobs, saving energy, yet being paid for without much additional expense for the consumer.

All of these possibilities exist and more. It is our challenge as policymakers to take on this issue, to work on how we can generate electricity with far fewer fossil fuels, how we can conserve electricity in transportation. How do we conserve electricity and other fuels? In fact, in both cases—transportation and heating our homes, energy consumed in our buildings—how do we do this with far fewer fossil fuels and do it with renewable energy?

I applaud my colleagues for coming here tonight to raise this issue and say we must come together and take on these challenges. My colleague from Delaware is about to speak and share some stories from his experiences that bear on this, but every Senator in this Chamber can talk about issues from their home State and where they see the impact of carbon pollution and call upon us, call upon our moral responsibility to tackle this issue.

With that, I yield the floor to my colleague.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I would like to thank my colleague from Oregon, Senator MERKLEY, who has done a tremendous job laying out the scientific case, the compelling economic case, the cultural case, and the global case for why we here in the Senate need to wake up, need to listen to the

indisputable evidence of what climate change is doing in our home States, to our country, and around the world.

Mr. President, even now as we speak in this Chamber, my own three children—Maggie, Michael, and Jack—are asleep at home. And as I reflected on this past summer, I was struck by something—an experience we had—that was a simple and telling reminder of the steady changes wrought by climate change in our Nation.

Last summer we took a family vacation—a trip—to Glacier National Park. For those who have had the opportunity to hike in this majestic national park in Montana, it is the site of many striking and beautiful scenes, but there was one hike we took in particular that stayed with me. It was a hike to historic Grinnell Glacier—a glacier that is by many photographs over decades documented in its steady receding. In fact, since 1966 it has lost nearly half of its total acreage. We took a long and winding hike up the trail that takes you to Grinnell Glacier. You can't quite see until you come up over the last rise that most of what is left of Grinnell Glacier in the summers today is a chilly pool of water.

For my daughter Maggie and for my sons Mike and Jack, as I look ahead to the long-term future, I think we all have to ask ourselves this question: How many more changes are we willing to accept being wrought on creation, on this Nation, and on the world by the steady advance of climate change?

I know we can't simply take the examples of things such as Grinnell Glacier or what to me seemed a striking change in the cap of Mount Kilimanjaro. I first climbed it in 1984 and visited it again last year. There is a striking change, a visually powerful change. These aren't scientific.

There are lots of other arguments, perhaps, as to why these two particular glaciers have retreated, but I still remember hearing a presentation at the University of Delaware by Dr. Lonnie Thompson of Ohio State University, a glaciologist who presented a very broad and I thought very compelling case based on ice cores for the actual advance of climate change over many decades.

In fact, I see my colleague from Rhode Island has a photographic history of Grinnell Glacier in Montana's Glacier National Park, so the point I was just making in passing he is able to illustrate here. That is as of 10 years ago. The glacier has retreated even further from that. But this striking glacier from 1940 is now almost completely gone in just one generation. This and so many other glaciers that were monuments in our national parks are today receded or altogether gone.

Well, I think we have to ask ourselves fundamentally, what is our path forward? We have heard from other Senators. TIM KAINE of Virginia spoke

about the importance of innovation, and ANGUS KING, the Senator from Maine, spoke about the importance of markets and of making sure our inventions and innovations in trying to solve these problems are also shared internationally. I think these are great and important insights.

One of the things I wanted to bring to the floor today first was insights from my own home State of Delaware, where our Governor, Jack Markell, impaneled a sea level rise advisory committee starting in 2010 that looked hard at how climate change might affect my home State.

At just 60 feet, Delaware has the lowest mean elevation of any State in the country, and that already makes it more susceptible to sea level rise than almost any State in the country. In my State of Delaware, we have seen and will continue to see the impact of climate change on our businesses, our communities, and our local environment. As the sea level rises, we are seeing the effects more and more.

Sea level rises essentially for two reasons. First, as the planet's ice sheets melt—the much larger sheets than Grinnell Glacier—they add to the amount of water in the ocean. Second, saltwater actually expands as it warms as well. So as the planet's average temperature has steadily risen, so too has the level of its saltwater seas.

The fact that the Earth's oceans are rising each year isn't new information. It has been rising as long as we have been keeping track. But what is really jarring is that rate of rise is increasing and increasing significantly. When the data was tracked from 1870 to 1930, the sea level was rising at a rate of 4 inches per 100 years. Over the next 60 years it rose at a rate of 8 inches per 100 years—more than double. In just the last 20 years the sea level has been rising at a strikingly more rapid rate of 12.5 inches per 100 years. The water is rising, and in Delaware it is rising fast.

The land itself in my State is also actually sinking. There is actually a documented vertical movement of the Earth's crust under the mid-Atlantic coast. It is called subsidence. It has been happening in Delaware slowly but gradually since the ice age at a pace of just 2 millimeters of elevation every year. I know that doesn't sound like a lot, but it adds up to another 4 inches over the century.

So we have the water rising and the land sinking, making climate change and sea level rise—specifically for my home State—a very real issue.

A wide array of scientists have studied this and its impact on Delaware, and they have developed three models for a future scenario. In the conservative model, by the year 2100 the sea level in Delaware will have risen about 1.5 feet. In another model, the water off Delaware rises another full meter. In another and the most disconcerting

model, it is 1.5 meters or about 5 feet. Unfortunately, at present, this broad group of scientists—inside and outside of government—are estimating that is the most likely scenario.

Let's make this real. Here is a projection of these three different scenarios in one area of Delaware. This is Bowers Beach. This shows how now this is a well-established beach community. The most conservative model, we still have something of the land; in the middle, it is completely cut off here from the mainland; and then in the most likely, sadly, given the most current evidence, there is literally nothing left except a little sandbar out by itself in the Delaware Bay. That gives one example of why the difference between these three scenarios matters so much. Unfortunately, there is no scenario in which Bowers Beach is still a viable beachfront community by the end of this century. This beach community of Bowers Beach is very close to Dover Air Force Base and ends up underwater.

Now let's take a look at South Wilmington. The city in which I live is Wilmington, DE, and South Wilmington is a neighborhood in the largest city in our State. As the water rises in the Atlantic Ocean, it also rises up the Delaware Bay, the Delaware River, and the Christina River, which runs right through most of my home county, Newcastle County, and rises in the Peterson Wildlife Refuge too.

The impacts here are potentially devastating. We are talking about water 1.5 feet higher than what Delaware experienced during Superstorm Sandy—not for a brief storm surge but each and every day. Again, take a look at today the conservative, the middle, and the most likely, most aggressive scenario in which virtually all of South Wilmington is underwater by the end of this century. The calculation of whether we are hit with a half a meter, a full meter, or 1.5 meters of sea rise comes down to the rate of acceleration of climate change globally, and it leaves for us a central and so far unanswered question: whether we try to slow the rate at which climate change is affecting our planet and maybe somehow turn the tide. This is the part of climate change policy called mitigation.

Priority one in this strategy is cutting the emissions we are pumping into our atmosphere. To do that, we can and must diversify our energy sources and reduce our dependence on polluting fossil fuels. Clean energy technology, energy efficiency programs, public transportation, and more will help cut down on these emissions, but it will require a global effort in order to avoid or minimize local impacts.

The second part of climate change policy is adaptation based on an acceptance of the reality that our climate is changing and will have real ef-

fects on our planet and all of our communities. The truth is that even if we stopped all greenhouse gas emissions today—if we shut down powerplants, stopped driving cars, stopped using gas-powered farm equipment, trains, and ships, and all the rest—the amount of greenhouse gases, of CO₂ and others already in the atmosphere would still take many years to dissipate. Changes in the world's climate are at this point inevitable. It is already happening and affecting communities, and we can expect these impacts to intensify as the rate of climate change continues to accelerate. We can modify our behavior to prevent those effects from being catastrophic. We can and should make better choices now to prevent disaster later.

In Delaware, for example, we have had two laws on the books for now 40 years that have helped us adapt. The first was championed in the 1970s by a Republican Governor, Russ Peterson, a hero of mine and of our Governor's and others. It is called the Coastal Zone Act, and passing it cost him his career in politics. It prohibited future industrial development on a long strip of coastal land, allowing the State and Federal government to preserve it and reduce the impacts of flooding and coastal erosion. Ultimately, in the long run, Governor Peterson has been proven a visionary in preserving this vital barrier all along Delaware's coast.

The second law empowered the State to protect and replenish the State's beaches, including the beaches on Delaware Bay, which are often overlooked. This has allowed our State to build a berm and dune system that protects infrastructure and protects property from being washed away.

More important than these significant landmark laws of 40 years ago, today, instead of running away from the science, Delaware's leaders have embraced it. The State agency that manages environmental issues for Delaware—known as DNREC and ably led by secretary Collin O'Mara—has taken the lead on a governmentwide project to assess the State's vulnerability to sea level rise and, as I mentioned, recommend options for adaptation.

Delaware's Sea Level Rise Committee spent 18 months looking at 79 different statewide resources—roads, bridges, schools, fire stations, railroads, wetlands, people and their homes and businesses—and layered all of this onto maps to show just how far the water would reach at different models for sea level rise.

If the sea level does get to 1.5 meters, we lose more than 10 percent of our State. The water claims 20,000 residential properties, significant percentages of wetlands, farms, highways, and industrial sites. We would lose 21 miles of our Northeast corridor rail lines to flooding, shutting down the vital

Northeast corridor that transports so many millions every year.

The Port of Wilmington would be rendered useless, nearly all the State's acreage of protected wetlands could be inundated, nearly three-quarters of our dams, dikes, and levees flooded out. In short, this scenario for our lowest-lying State would be devastating.

As Secretary O'Mara said:

We're looking at big risks for human health and safety, and not just at the Delaware Bay beaches. We have big concerns about [communities in Delaware]. It's much more complex than just the bay beaches or a community here or there.

He is right. So once again, remember, we have two basic approaches to climate change policy: adaptation and mitigation.

Once Delaware compiled its 200-page vulnerability assessment on sea level rise, the committee got to work on an adaptation strategy to protect our State and came up with slightly more than 60 options and hosted a whole series of public meetings and townhalls to discuss it. We are now working on a broader vulnerability assessment to examine the full range of impacts from climate change, even beyond sea level rise—changing temperatures, extreme weather, changes in precipitation—impacts which will affect us and our neighbors.

Climate change will affect the distribution, abundance, and behavior of wildlife, as well as the diversity, structure, and function of our ecosystem. We are already seeing changes in natural patterns. As Senator MARKEY of Massachusetts commented earlier this evening, many commercial and recreational fish stocks along our east coast have moved northward by 20 to 200 miles over the past 40 years as ocean temperatures have increased. Scientists expect migratory species to be strongly affected by climate change, since animal migration is closely connected to climate factors, and migratory species use multiple habitats and resources during their migrations. These changes are impacting our own multimillion bird watching and waterfowl hunting, an important economic driver for us and critical parts of our heritage.

According to the draft National Climate Assessment released in 2013, our farmers are expected to initially adapt relatively well to the changing climate over the next 25 years. But later, as temperature increases and precipitation extremes get more intense, crop yields and production of poultry and livestock are expected to decline. More extreme weather events—drought and heavy downpours—will further reduce yields, damage soil, stress irrigation water supplies, and increase production costs. All in all, this is a fairly grim long-term outlook in the absence of decisive action.

I am proud of my State. Delaware was the first State to thoroughly assess the vulnerability of specific resources in as comprehensive a way as they have, and we are determined to confront these changes to our planet head on and to protect our communities and the way of life we have built.

I will briefly review. There is so much we can and should do here in Congress in a bipartisan way to lay the groundwork for the actions we have to take. We can improve our energy efficiency. We could take up and pass the bipartisan bill recently reintroduced by Senators SHAHEEN and PORTMAN to increase the use of energy-efficient technology across all sectors in our society. The new version of the bill has 12 cosponsors—six Democrats and six Republicans—and includes 10 new commonsense amendments which would save consumers electricity and money, a small but meaningful start on a journey toward changing our direction on climate change. Or we could level the playing field and help new clean energy technologies get off the ground by giving them the same tax advantages currently utilized by fossil fuel projects. The bipartisan Master Limited Partnerships Parity Act—which I am proud to cosponsor with my colleagues Senators MORAN, STABENOW, MURKOWSKI, LANDRIEU, and COLLINS, Democrats and Republicans working together—would level the playing field for renewables and give them and other new technologies a fighting chance in our energy market.

There are so many other steps we could do in combination, if we would but get past this endless, pointless debate which has long been resolved in the halls of science, and move forward in a way which better serves our country and our world.

The bottom line is that our climate is changing. We know this. With this knowledge comes the responsibility to reduce our emissions, to mitigate the impacts, and prepare for and take action to deal with the coming changes.

As I reflect on our own responsibilities as Senators, I am in part moved to respond to the challenge of climate change—not just because it is an environmental issue, an economic issue, a regional issue or global issue, but it is also for me and for many others a faith issue. It is a question of how we carry out our responsibility to be good stewards of God's creation, to be those Senators we are called to be each from our own traditions who stand up and do what is right, not just for the short term, not just for the concerns of the day, but for the long term.

As I move toward my close, I will share with those in the Chamber and watching one of the things most encouraging to me as I have reflected on the change in the climate change movement over recent years is it has begun to draw support from all across

the theological spectrum. There was last year, July of 2013, a letter sent to Speaker BOEHNER, Majority Leader REID, and all Members of Congress by 200 self-identified Christian evangelical scientists from both religious and secular universities all across the United States, a powerful and incisive letter which says:

As evangelical scientists and academics, we understand climate change is real and action is urgently needed. All of God's Creation—human and our environment—is groaning under the weight of our uncontrolled use of fossil fuels, bringing on a warming planet, melting ice, and rising seas.

I urge any watching to consider reading it. It is posted on line. It goes on to quote Christian Scripture at length in making the case we have an obligation, if we are concerned about our neighbors and about the least of these in this world, to take on the challenge of making sure we are good stewards.

Those of the Roman Catholic faith might be inspired by Pope Francis, who has taken the name of the patron saint of animals and the environment, and recently issued a call for all people to be protectors of creation.

Last, I might read from a letter issued by the president of the National Association of Evangelicals, a group not commonly known for their close alignment with my party. Leith Anderson wrote in a letter in 2011:

While others debate the science and politics of climate change, my thoughts go to the poor people who are neither scientists nor politicians. They will never study carbon dioxide in the air or acidification of the ocean. But they will suffer from dry wells in the Sahel of Africa and floods along the coasts of Bangladesh. Their crops will fail while our supermarkets remain full. They will suffer while we study.

This couldn't be more true. I urge all of us in this Chamber to reflect on whatever traditions sustain and bring us here that we have an obligation to those who sleep soundly in our homes now, to those from our home States around the country, to stand up and take action, to look clearly at the challenge which lies in front of us and to act in the best traditions of this body and of this Nation, to be good stewards of creation and to stand up to the challenges of this time.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I thank all of my friends who are speaking on the floor tonight for their continued commitment to not just bring attention to climate change, but to push for decisive action on the issue.

As experts from around the world show us beyond a reasonable doubt that we, as a global community, are contributing to rising temperatures, there are those that would deny that human actions can have any effect on our climate and environment. Too often, lawmakers try to legislate their own "science" rather than properly utilizing the conclusions and recommendations made by skilled ex-

perts—yet nature does not conform to our laws. That is why the United States must be an innovator in reducing our greenhouse gas emissions, and a leading light in the clean energy sector.

My own home State of New Jersey has shown strong leadership in moving our country towards a sustainable energy future. We have developed and implemented an aggressive Renewable Portfolio Standard that requires over 20 percent of New Jersey's electricity to come from renewable sources by 2021. We have put in place strong incentives for energy customers of all sizes, from single families to the many businesses that call New Jersey home, to become energy efficient and even clean energy producers, by installing solar panels on their homes and buildings. New Jersey is also beginning to realize some of its extraordinary potential to harness wind power off our coast, with multiple offshore wind projects currently in development. I am encouraged by some of the progress that I have seen in the renewable energy sector in New Jersey and other leading States, and hope that others will follow suit.

New Jersey's many exemplary institutions of higher learning have also been at the forefront of the vital research that has helped us to understand the causes and consequences of global climate change. Important work is being done at the Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences at Rutgers University into how climatic changes in the Arctic impact weather in the U.S., and Princeton University's Cooperative Institute for Climate Science is at the forefront of climate change mitigation options and response strategies.

Some of my Senate colleagues from fossil fuel producing States have been hesitant to act, they say, because oil and coal production are home State issues for them. Well, for me, climate change is a home State issue. Not just because of the excellent work being done in New Jersey, but because my State has seen firsthand the devastating effects of a warmer climate that brings with it powerful storms, rising seas, and destructive flooding.

Not 18 months ago, New Jersey and much of the eastern seaboard was battered by an unprecedented superstorm that washed away much of the New Jersey coastline. Superstorm Sandy caused an estimated \$65 billion in economic losses. 159 people lost their lives, 650,000 homes were damaged or destroyed, and 8.5 million households and businesses lost power, many of them for weeks. Power outages caused severe gas shortages, with traffic backed up for miles, and people waiting for hours to obtain fuel to feed the generators that were keeping their families warm and their food from spoiling.

Now, New Jersey has persevered. We worked together and helped each other

rebuild lives, businesses, homes, and our famous beaches and boardwalks. Efforts have been undertaken to make our coastal communities and critical infrastructure more resilient to future storms of this magnitude. But unless we act to implement responsible energy policies that cut our greenhouse gas emissions and incentivize investment in renewable energy infrastructure, these damaging superstorms will only become more powerful and frequent. Those who deny the reality of climate change tend to emphasize the economic costs of regulating carbon emissions, but these costs pale next to the economic and social costs of doing nothing.

I am proud to join my colleagues tonight, and for the duration of my time serving the people of New Jersey in the Senate, to call for real solutions to our climate challenges. The decisions that we make in this body now will shape the future for our children and grandchildren. Years from now, I hope to humbly reflect on my time in the Senate, and be able to say I was a part of the Congress that finally reigned in big oil and coal, and put the United States on a path towards sustainability and environmental responsibility. Future generations of Americans deserve no less, and our planet demands it.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, nearly 30 years ago, I joined a good friend, the late Hub Vogelmann, along with a Republican Congressman, a Democratic Governor, and President Reagan's EPA Administrator, on a hike to the summit of Vermont's iconic peak, Camel's Hump. We had a goal in mind. We wanted to observe first-hand the effects of acid rain. When we arrived at the summit, we saw the evidence we feared. You did not have to be a scientist to see it: a scar burned across the peak of Camel's Hump and across all of the peaks of the Green Mountains and the Adirondacks. Due to human action, weather patterns had changed, altering the very chemistry of rainfall on a grand scale. As a result, we caused profound and large-scale damage to life sustaining ecosystems.

There were Democrats and Republicans, scientists and bureaucrats on that mountain. We returned to Washington, united and eager to address the problem. It was not easy. We had to overcome strong objections from industry and develop an entirely new cap-and-trade regulatory framework. In the end, a Democratic majority in Congress passed, and Republican President George H.W. Bush signed into law, the Clean Air Act amendments.

Once again, we are confronted with irrefutable evidence that humans have altered not just the weather of a region, but the climate of the entire planet. This time, we do not need to climb mountains to see the damage. We see it in New England's flood ravaged river valleys, California's

scorched farmland, Alaska's retreating glaciers, Wyoming's burnt forests, and super-storm ravaged coastlines.

Before we even get to the accumulated—and accumulating—scientific evidence for climate change and the carbonization of our fragile envelope of atmosphere, we only need to apply common sense. As we look around us, anywhere, everywhere, and at any time, doesn't it just stand to reason that human activity is contributing to documented changes in our atmosphere, and to climate change? I certainly have seen it in my lifetime. But I have also seen people try to deny all reason and the evidence all around us.

The scientists have done their work. We now better understand the human causes of climate change and we understand its profound and accelerating impact. Unfortunately, too many policy makers deny the evidence, or refuse to cross political lines to solve the problem. I say it is time we wake up and act on climate change.

We have taken some steps in the right direction. This past summer, President Obama announced his Climate Action Plan to cut carbon pollution. The Environmental Protection Agency has begun creating new carbon emission standards for future power plants. The Department of Energy is working on ground-breaking energy technologies, and the Department of Transportation is studying transportation planning to address future risks and vulnerabilities from extreme weather and climate change. The Transportation Department is also addressing vehicle fuel efficiency which is saving vehicle owners and operators billions of dollars a year. These are all positive changes, but before we rest on our laurels, we have to understand that there are not nearly enough to address the problem at hand. Congress needs to cast aside partisan blinders by enacting legislation that prioritizes renewable energy development, supports energy efficient technologies, and taxes carbon pollution.

It is time to take a stand against misguided policies and projects that put future generations at risk, and in my State, we believe that includes the Keystone XL pipeline. The State Department recently released its long-awaited environmental impact statement on the Keystone XL pipeline. I am deeply troubled that the State Department's analysis did not take into account the overwhelming evidence that this project will further accelerate the release of greenhouse gas pollution, which will intensify climate change. There is a mountain of evidence that the carbon pollution, drinking water threats, public health threats, and safety threats from this pipeline are so great that it is not in our national interest, and its permit should be denied. I realize this goes against some public opinion polls, but I believe we must

stamp out our addiction to fossil fuels and fight back against these threats to our land, water, air, and healthy communities around the world.

We have to understand that climate change is not simply an environmental challenge. Creating a green energy sector is not just about cutting greenhouse gas emissions. It is about providing jobs for Americans in the renewable energy and energy efficiency fields. It is about strengthening national security in America by having greater control over our energy sources and breaking the stranglehold of oil on the transportation system. What should unite all of us, Republicans and Democrats alike, is assuring that our children and grandchildren have clean air to breathe.

We have come together before. We did it back in the time of President George H.W. Bush. We joined hands across the aisle and across regions of this great country to solve problems. Why can't we do it again? Isn't that the least we owe to our planet? Isn't that the least we owe to our children and grandchildren?

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Delaware for his powerful words and his participation in this great debate.

There is plenty of room for a robust discussion about what set of choices we need to make in order to deal with this very real challenge. We are here tonight to ask for that discussion, for that debate, in the tradition of this great body. Climate change is the challenge of our generation, and the debate of how we confront it belongs here in the Senate.

We have no illusions about being able to reach the number of votes we need to pass significant legislation during this Congress, but we must start this conversation now. We must start now. We are here agreeing it is time for us to find a way to work together to find solutions.

The Senate is supposed to be the place where we address and debate the big issues. I hope we can work with the House on how best to tackle climate change as well. But there is no room for those who deny science itself exists or those who deliberately propagate misinformation and scare tactics because they profit from pollution.

I know people are smart enough to know the difference between today's weather and what is generally happening with the climate. People cannot be misled into thinking that just because winter still exists, the planet isn't warming in totality. We can't possibly believe that because there was a snowstorm last week, there is no such thing as climate change.

Since 1991, scientists have published more than 25,000 scholarly articles on

climate change. Only 26 out of the more than 25,000 articles reject the existence of climate change. This is 1 in 1,000. The idea that because scientists, frankly, are scientists and always leave a little room for additional information or for the possibility of revising their projections, assessments, and estimates somehow introduces significant doubt about what climate change is does violence to the very principles on which science operates.

This problem is no longer confined just to our wilderness areas or to those of us concerned with biological diversity or environmental issues. In other words, this is no longer an environmental problem. This is an economic one. All we have to do is look at the extreme weather and the way it has affected both the Nation's fiscal condition and our continuing ability to deal with natural disasters, and the very real possibility that many of our coastal communities will be literally flooded by the end of the century. There is no way we can allow this issue to remain a priority for only one party in American politics. This is everyone's problem. This issue impacts every single American.

Every single Senator should be down here. This is our responsibility for future generations, not just to preserve birds and butterflies but to preserve the American economy and our way of life. Scientists, leaders of States, cities, and counties, the leadership in our Department of Defense, the rest of the world, the business community, the largest insurance companies—which insure actual risk—all agree on the reality of climate change. The only place where we are proceeding as if this is an actual open question, as if the science is not settled, is in the four corners of the U.S. Capitol.

I am not going to point to any one extreme weather event and say it was caused by climate change, but climate change has increased the likelihood of increasingly strong and frequent storms, drought, and floods.

Through the 1980s, the United States experienced an average of two to four billion-dollar disasters per year for storms severe enough to rack up more than \$1 billion in damage. But 2011 and 2012 together experienced 25 individual billion-dollar storm events. This is over \$25 billion in damages in just 2 years.

I will talk a little bit about what is happening with our Department of Defense. There is growing consensus within the Department of Defense that climate change is shaping the global security environment in new and profound ways which will affect the U.S. military. Climate change is dramatically shaping the U.S. military's strategic operating environment. In its 2010 strategic planning document, the Quadrennial Defense Review, the Department of Defense concluded that:

While climate change alone does not cause conflict, it may act as an accelerant of instability or conflict, placing a burden to respond on civilian institutions and militaries around the world.

The U.S. military concluded that it is increasingly likely to be called on to respond to crises which manifest as a result of climate-related instability. These include natural disasters which emanate from extreme weather events, which climate scientists expect to become more frequent and more severe as a result of climate change, because, like many first responders, the U.S. military has an obligation to respond when called for help, and indeed, the U.S. military is often the only organization capable of helping, with its fixed-and rotary-wing lift capacity and personnel to get relief supplies to those most in need.

Admiral Locklear, the head of the U.S. Pacific Command, headquartered in my home State of Hawaii, said last year that climate change is the greatest long-term security threat in the Asia-Pacific region, an area covering more than half the Earth's surface area and almost 60 percent of its population. Upheaval and political instability from climate change, he said, "Is probably the most likely thing that is going to happen . . . that will cripple the security environment, probably more likely than the other scenarios we all often talk about."

Eleven retired three-star and four-star admirals and generals in 2007 stated that climate change is "a significant national security challenge" which can serve as a "threat multiplier for instability in some of the most volatile regions of the world."

Climate change is also likely to impact the U.S. military's facilities and capabilities. America's military installations may be particularly vulnerable to climate change, and the Department of Defense has dedicated resources to assess the risks. According to a 2008 National Intelligence Council finding:

More than 30 U.S. military installations were already facing elevated levels of risk from rising sea levels.

The Department of Defense's own QDR acknowledged that the U.S. military's operational readiness hinges on continued access to land, air, and sea training and test space, which means ensuring that climate change does not prevent the military from accessing these critical training and range areas. This may require costly intervention to adapt to sea level rise and other climate impacts that might otherwise undermine defense readiness and preparedness.

The Department of Defense is already working to map out its vulnerabilities with offices like the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program, helping installation planners develop the tools they need and to plan accordingly. Climate change has be-

come an urgent national security challenge that our military cannot and will not ignore.

Secretary of State John Kerry was right when he said that among the global challenges "know no borders"—"terrorism, epidemics, poverty, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction"—"the reality is that climate change ranks right up there with every single one of them."

Let me talk about the insurance industry. I make this point about the Department of Defense not because this admiral or these generals are members of the Sierra Club or the National Resources Defense Council. It is because when they do their defense review, they have a single-minded objective: To analyze what they see as their strategic challenge. They are not grinding an ideological ax. They are talking about what is real.

Insurers are risk experts in a different way. They are not paid to care about the environment or conservation or future generations or to steward resources. If insurers have personal environmental opinions or whether they voted for President Obama or Governor Romney, they do not bring that point of view to the table when it comes to risk assessment. They can only think about and quantify risk. Their goal is to figure out what is going to happen and how much it is going to cost to cover it. What they are saying about global climate change is it is happening. Climate change is presenting real risk. They have determined that climate change is underway already and is causing economic damage and therefore needs to be insured and underwritten. From their standpoint, when billions and trillions of insurance and reinsurance dollars are in play, they recognize what is real, which is the threat of climate change.

When it is the highest stakes, projections, and assessments, these people look at the world with very clear eyes and say climate change is real. It is happening now, and it is already causing economic damage. When money is on the line, whether these people are Democrats, Republicans or Independents or do not vote, they are looking at the facts and measuring the risk. They have determined that this risk is already upon us. It is not imaginary.

Let's talk about big business. Big businesses, from Nike to Coca-Cola to Starbucks, and insurers like Lloyds of London, recognize the economic threat of climate change as well because it affects their bottom lines. For them it is simple numbers. Their motivation is simple: Protect the bottom line. With billions and trillions of dollars at play, risk experts such as Lloyds are making high stakes risk projections to protect their business models. These projections are telling them that the risk is increasing.

For many multinational companies, climate change has moved from a corporate social responsibility issue to a bottom-line issue. They are starting to see the impact of unpredictable and extreme weather and realize that investing in environmental protection means investing in the economy. Climate change affects the supply of key inputs, disrupts factories, demolishes infrastructure, and drives up prices. The economic calculus is shifting for them.

Major companies doing business in America have signed the climate declaration, which acknowledges that tackling climate change is one of America's greatest economic opportunities of the 21st Century, and it is the right thing to do. These companies include Apple, Avon, eBay, GM, Ikea, Intel, Levi's, Mars, Microsoft, Nestle, Nike, Owens Corning, Starbucks, Swiss Re, Symantec, The North Face, and Unilever. If we do not make serious changes, the only thing we can be certain of is that uncertainty will increase. Extreme weather events, drought, floods, spreading infectious diseases, resource wars and other tests of human civilization will test us repeatedly. Our economy thrives on certainty. Climate change increases uncertainty. The pragmatic, conservative approach requires us to take action.

We have heard the argument tonight, earlier in the evening from the Senator from Oklahoma, from some in this body at other moments, about climate change today, that there is either nothing we can do or that action will be too expensive. Regulations will kill jobs and hurt the economy, driving up prices on everything from gas to bread. Opponents of the Clean Air Act, vehicle efficiency standards, energy efficiency, and removing lead from gasoline all used the same arguments. They denied it was happening, they spread misinformation, and they sowed fears of economic destruction. In every case they were wrong.

Largely as a result of government regulations between 1970 and 2011, total air pollution dropped 68 percent while the U.S. gross domestic product grew by 212 percent, more than doubling.

Well designed solutions to environmental problems can, in fact, contribute to a healthier and growing economy. America can innovate its way out of this problem. Inaction comes with financial costs. Climate change is absolutely right now hurting our economy. It is affecting individual fishermen everywhere from my home State of Hawaii, to the Presiding Officer's home State, to the lobstermen in Maine—which my good friend from Maine has already discussed.

A 2012 study commissioned by 20 governments which was written by more than 50 scientists, economists, and other experts found that climate change is already contributing to multiple deaths per year costing the world

\$1.2 trillion in 2010, and reducing global GDP by 1.6 percent.

The study also said by 2030 the cost of climate change and air pollution combined could rise to 3.2 percent of global GDP with a 2 percent hit to the U.S. GDP. Similar effects could cost China \$1.2 trillion. Every time we try to move forward with environmental or public health legislation there are people who will say that the U.S. economy will collapse as a result. This happened with the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act. Almost every time they are proven wrong.

The American economy is an innovation economy. Whenever we require our American companies to innovate, whether in the interest of public health, the environment or the economy, they have thrived. They step up to the plate. Climate change is a challenge where America can once again be the global leader. We have to believe in our ability to innovate our way out of this problem.

When the U.S. economy and our businesses are presented with opportunities to innovate, they thrive. During the debate on the Clean Air Act we heard those standards would destroy the economy, but since 1970 every dollar invested in compliance with the Clean Air Act standards has actually produced \$48 in economic benefits. It is not just that the American economy and business can innovate and thrive in this context, it is also that we are still the indispensable Nation. America is still the Nation where other countries look to see whether real leadership will be displayed. For that reason we need to act.

On this issue that affects every single American and the entire planet, we cannot afford to give up on American leadership. We have to believe in our ideas and the power of our ability to innovate, in the strength of our economy and in the American ideal that whatever problem our generation is faced with, we will meet it.

The idea—and we have heard it before on this floor from climate change deniers—that we shouldn't do anything because China won't do anything misses the point. If we do something, China will do something.

Some are saying let's not do anything because of China and India. I am saying let's do something because of China and India. If we lead here we will have the economic advantage.

In fact, China has already begun the work to fight pollution and to transition to a clean energy economy. Last week at the opening of China's annual meeting of the parliament, the Chinese Premier said that China will declare war on pollution in the coming years. China faces a two-fold threat of extreme local pollution and the effects of climate change, and it recognizes that transitioning to clean energy sources is an economic and political stability imperative.

In January the executive secretary of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change said that China is "doing it right" as it begins to tackle climate change. She said that the Chinese are "not doing this because they want to save the planet, they are doing it because it is in their national interest."

The Chinese State Council's September Atmospheric Pollution Prevention Action Plan set specific goals: A reduction in the construction of new coal-fired power plants, a goal of generating 13 percent of its electricity from clean energy resources by 2017.

Last year China installed 12 to 14 gigawatts of solar panels and is expected to do it again this year. Prior to 2013 no country had ever added more than 8 gigawatts of solar in a single year. A price guarantee for utility-scale solar projects known as a feed-in tariff, as well as low-cost panels drove this dramatic growth. China is taking decisive action. I, for one, do not want to give up on American leadership here.

We have to believe in our ideas, in the power of our ability to innovate, and the strength of our economy, and the American idea that whatever problem our generation is faced with, we will address it.

I would like to talk a little bit about our Hawaii experience. I have seen firsthand from our experience in Hawaii that with commitment and specific goals, real progress can be made. We have led the way to building clean energy infrastructure, producing renewable energy, and reducing our petroleum dependency. I know we can achieve this kind of change across the Nation. As Lieutenant Governor, I led our efforts toward Hawaii's 70-percent clean energy goal by the year 2030, and we have made encouraging progress. The Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative Partnership has the enthusiastic support of our business community, the U.S. DOE and DOD, the State government and even our monopoly electric utility company. By 2013 it would surpass our 2015 goal of 15-percent clean energy while having one of the lowest unemployment rates in the Nation. Hawaii's progress has taken creativity, collaboration, and innovation, the same qualities that have helped America overcome other seemingly unsolvable problems.

Transformation did not come easily and would not have occurred without collaboration between Federal, State, county, and private sector partners. But because of their hard work, we are now on track to achieve the highest renewable energy portfolio in the Nation, with 40 percent by the year 2030. Not everything we are doing in the State of Hawaii will work in all states, but we are learning that some policies have broad application. We know that climate change is a real problem, and

that it is caused by humans, but we also know that it is a problem that we can fix, and we know what to do.

The challenges of climate change won't disappear overnight if Congress acts, but for the U.S. or the world to fight climate change while Congress sticks its head in the sand is like trying to fight with one hand tied behind their back. Americans agree that climate change is real and caused by humans. They agree that something must be done. Congress is a necessary but not sufficient part of this problem, for we face the biggest collective action problem in the history of humankind—bigger than war, bigger than disease, bigger than poverty.

America must continue our role as a leader that does not shy away from the big problems. Climate change is an economic issue, a health issue, and a national security issue.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the many professionals who have made tonight possible. The Senate stands out as the greatest deliberative body in the U.S. and, in my opinion, the world. Even in our disagreements, our remarks are generally at least collegial and usually friendly. The reason is simple: Respect. Respect for one another as representatives of the concerns of our home States, respect for the diversity of experiences that qualify us to serve as Senators but, most of all, respect for this institution, which is so much more than the physical infrastructure.

Even for the short time I have had the honor of serving, what I see is an institution built on people. The Capitol may be made of bricks and mortar, but the Senate lives and breathes through the people who work here. Often in the course of our daily business, we thank the people we work with for their help. But in light of the unusual demands that our event requires tonight, I would like to thank not only the individuals but their offices and departments. Without them, we would be unprotected, we would be in the dark, and we would be unable to function.

I would like to start with the Sergeant at Arms and all of its departments: doorkeepers, capitol facilities, media galleries, executive office, recording studio, printing and graphics, direct mail, the fleet office, and the U.S. Capitol Police. You keep our Senate orderly, safe, and functioning smoothly, and we thank you for that.

We almost must recognize the Secretary of the Senate: the executive office, the office of the Bill Clerk, the Captioning Services office, the Daily Digest office, the office of the Enrolling Clerk, the office of the Executive Clerk, the office of the Journal Clerk, the Legislative Clerk, our Parliamentarians, and the Official Reporters of Debates. You maintain order in the legislative process and record our actions so this body's work can be trans-

parent and accountable to the American people, and we thank you.

The cloakrooms help to preserve order on the floor so that our deliberations perpetuate the rule of law in our great Nation, and we thank you.

The Senate librarians and CRS make it possible for us to make informed statements based on the best information available, and we thank you.

The Senate pages stepped away from their usual classrooms and schoolmates to support our actions here and participate in American democracy. We thank you.

While all have roles to keep tonight moving smoothly, I would like to call special focus on the Official Reporters of Debates. These folks transcribe every word we speak here tonight for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, which is then distributed the following day to more than 20,000 subscribers.

In 1956, then-Senate majority leader Lyndon Johnson explained the importance of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Locked in its pages are the debate, the resolutions, the bills, the memorials, the petitions, and the legislative actions that are the reason for the existence of the Senate. Without them, our words tonight would be lost, so I offer on behalf of all the Members who have helped to coordinate tonight our sincerest thanks.

I am happy to yield to the Senators from New Mexico and New Jersey if they are ready; otherwise, I would be happy to continue to speak.

Does the Senator from New Mexico need a few minutes to prepare or would he like to start?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. Speaking through the Chair to the Senator from Hawaii, I am happy to get started and give an opening statement and focus on the State of New Mexico and some of the climate impacts we have seen in the last decade, and then perhaps engage in a conversation with my colleague the Senator from New Jersey.

I think it bears saying that this is a historic evening. This is an incredible first step in recognizing the challenge that lies ahead. I am here tonight as a member of the climate change task force. I join my colleagues in calling for action on tackling what is unquestionably one of our country's greatest challenges but a challenge we are up to meeting.

We are here to illustrate, for starters, that climate change is not rhetorical. We are here to discuss how sound science can be used to better understand and manage the very real impacts of climate change that we are seeing and to highlight the moral imperative we have in Congress to implement real solutions.

I thought I would start tonight with something that is just about anywhere

in the United States. If you are a gardener, if you are a farmer, if you are a horticulturist, if you have an orchard of fruit trees, you probably know these maps. They are the U.S. Department of Agriculture plant hardiness zone maps.

When I hear people deny our climate is changing and how much our climate has already changed, I think it is very helpful to look back to the year 1990—the year I graduated from high school—and to look at the USDA plant hardiness zone map for the United States and to compare it to the one that came out in 2006. What you see when you look at this map is literally every single plant hardiness zone. If you are a gardener, you take these to the bank. This tells you whether a certain crop can grow in your zone. If you are in Minnesota, the answer to what is going to thrive in your garden is going to be very different than if you are in Arizona or New Mexico. What you see when you look at these maps is all of these zones have literally moved north.

In the case of my home State of New Mexico, there are zones that existed in the northern part of the State—up around Taos and Chama, and at a high elevation, where the Sangre de Cristo mountains reach up to over 13,000 feet. There are zones that existed in 1990 that exist nowhere in the State today because it has warmed so much. In fact, those zones only exist at the highest elevations in the State of Colorado to our north.

I don't think you can look at this map and say our climate is not getting warmer. It captures year after year of real-world experience of the people who rely on these maps to make sure our food supply and all the plants we use for other purposes as well are safe and productive.

In my home State of New Mexico, one of the other impacts we are seeing we have heard from other Western States tonight, as well as up and down the intermountain West and the Rocky Mountains, has been the impact of forest fire. We are seeing bigger fires and drier summers. We are seeing more severe floods when it does rain and less snowpack in the winter.

In 2012, looking back just 2 years ago, it was our Nation's second most extreme year on record for weather. In New Mexico, it was actually the hottest year we have experienced since we started collecting temperature records. With humidity levels lower and temperatures higher, we are dealing with fire behavior in the Southwest that is markedly more intense than anything we have seen in the past.

When people think of the State of New Mexico, and if they have not been to New Mexico, they often think of it as one of the southwestern arid desert low-elevation States. The reality that I grew up with was the high elevation forests of New Mexico. We literally have millions of acres of mountains

and forests. If you just saw a photo, you might say: Well, that looks like Colorado or that looks like Montana. Those are all up and down our mountain ranges from the southern part of the State. We have the Gila. Up in the northern part of the State, we have the Santa Fe National Forest, the Carson National Forest, the Jemez mountains, and the Sangre de Cristo mountains.

One of the things that has evolved over the years which exists in the high elevation western forests is the ability to deal with forest fire, in particular, our Ponderosa pine forests. We used to have a regime where every 10 years or so we would have a fire in those forests. That fire would not burn the forest down. It would move through the Ponderosa pine. It would burn fine fuels, as we call them, such as the needles that fall from the canopy of the Ponderosa pine forest, the small pieces of woody debris, and the grass that grows in between the Ponderosa pine trees, and it would sort of clean out the understory and it would leave this incredible cathedral of high elevation Ponderosa pine forest with grass in between the trees, but that is changing.

This incredibly sad photo is exhibit A on what happens when the temperature increases just a little bit. We are seeing fire behavior in New Mexico that is like nothing in the historical record and nothing within the context of normal behavior. We are seeing what they call stand-replacing fires. I believe this was a couple of months after the Las Conchas fire a few years ago. If I remember correctly, the Las Conchas fire was in 2011 in the Jemez mountains. It was the single largest fire in our State's history at the time. Since then, we have had a bigger fire, the White-water-Baldy fire.

What was particularly concerning about the Las Conchas fire is how it burned—how intensely it burned, how it burned down slope with stand-replacing flames, and how it literally didn't leave behind any of those big fire-protected trees. Those Ponderosa pines are built to survive fire after fire throughout the course of their lives. They may live to be 300 years old. They have such thick bark that typically in the past they survived dozens and dozens of fires in the course of their lifetimes.

As we can see from this, almost nothing survived large parts of this fire, and that is what we are seeing as temperatures increase. As those temperatures increase, the humidity level in the fuels goes down, and the fuels burn hotter. The fuels are able to jump up into the canopy and literally burn out the entire forest. We can see a few patches of green here. This is one of the most destructive fires in our State's history.

Over the last 4 years alone, as I mentioned, we have seen the two largest fires in our State's history. With elevated temperatures, studies by Los Al-

amos National Labs predict that three-quarters of our evergreen forest in New Mexico could be gone by 2050. In my lifetime, three-quarters of our high-elevation conifer evergreen forest could be gone.

These are places we rely on for our economy. They hold snow in the winter. They produce an enormous number of jobs. We have approximately 68,000 jobs that are tied to public lands recreation in the State. Many of those are centered around these high-elevation forests where people hunt for elk in the fall. They produce the waters that allow people to raft in the Rio Grande during the summer. They are the places where people cross-country and alpine-ski in the winter. They are under direct threat from a changing climate.

We now know that the extreme weather we are seeing comes at an enormous economic cost. There was a new study produced in the journal *Frontiers in Ecology and Environment* that reveals the trend and how much ignoring this problem has cost the American taxpayer over the course of the last couple of decades. They went back and looked at firefighting in the early 1990s, around 1993. The average cost of fighting fires in our national forests at that time was \$350 million a season. That is a lot of money; that is real money; and that is spread over many different States. Fast forward to today, and on average we are spending \$2 billion, with a B, a fire season fighting fires.

Yesterday the Washington Post reported that the study's conclusions "underscore what the agencies responsible for fighting wildfires—the Interior Department, the Agriculture Department's Forest Service—have said for years. Global warming is accelerating climate change in the West, resulting in winters with less precipitation and a drier landscape. The wildfire season that historically started in June and ended in September now starts in May and ends in September." I would say that in New Mexico we haven't been lucky enough to have it begin in May and end in September; we have actually had some fires that were completely outside of that window.

I remember a few years ago as I was running for Congress in the fall of 2007, leading up to the 2008 elections, I watched as the Monzano Mountains near my home in Albuquerque burned in November, around Thanksgiving time. We saw extreme fire behavior there—fires once again burning down slope, in November, and fire behaviors even in the middle of the night that we normally wouldn't see except in the middle of the day in the middle of summer.

It has been something that has touched our State dramatically. It happens now with such regularity that we are almost used to it, but it puts lives

at risk. It puts property at risk. Many people in this Chamber probably remember all of the brave firefighters who literally lost their lives in Arizona last year fighting these fires. In fact, those firefighters helped on a New Mexico fire before in the very area we saw with the picture I showed of how the Las Conchas fire burned.

One of the related issues is the relationship between the economy of my home of New Mexico and the impact of snowfall and how snowfall has changed as a result of a changing climate.

This is a map of the Four Corners States. This is Albuquerque, NM, here, Santa Fe; this is the Four Corners area where Utah, Arizona, Colorado, and New Mexico all come together. Historically, our economy relies very much on not just rainfall and precipitation but the value of a strong snowpack. Agriculture in the Southwest does not work as it does in other parts of the country where crops are literally watered by rain. We store our snowpack in reservoirs. We rely on the fact that snow lasts longer and is released slowly from the high elevation forests and mountains. It gets stored in reservoirs and then is used to irrigate hundreds of square miles up and down the Rio Grande Valley throughout the heart of New Mexico, as well as other valleys in the State, such as the Pecos Valley. We have seen dramatic changes in the extent of both snow cover as well as the amount of water that is stored in that snow.

These two images show snow cover in 2010 and in 2014. They illustrate a trend that is becoming all too common with the current drought conditions and with warming winter temperatures. So 2010 was a relatively good year for us. We had snow cover, as my colleagues can see, across much of the northern part of the State. As we move into even higher elevation areas up in Colorado, very intense snows in the San Juans that drain down into the Rio Grande, the San Juan rivers in New Mexico. If we look at the Mogollon Rim, which goes all the way from Gila, NM, up through Arizona on its way toward the Grand Canyon, just a long, high-elevation geologic feature that stores snowpack for both Arizona and New Mexico, we can look over at the 2014 image and what we see is a dramatic reduction in the amount of snow cover. As a result, the runoff we have experienced in this drought has been a fraction of what we used to think of as normal. It is sort of the new normal.

In December of 2012, two researchers affiliated with the University of New Hampshire unveiled a study around snow and winter tourism impacts called "Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy in the United States." That report, completed for the Natural Resources Defense Council and Protect Our Winters, an organization founded in 2007 by professional

snowboarder Jeremy Jones, concluded that the economies that rely on winter sports tourists have a lot to lose if we fail to take action on climate change.

The Presiding Officer probably heard some of the recent stories around the Sochi Olympics—stories I couldn't have imagined as a child—of literally covering up huge amounts of snow to insulate it from the elements so it didn't melt, so it could be used in some of those sports. The report states that December 2011 through February 2012 was the fourth warmest winter on record since 1896 and the third lowest snow cover extent since 1966 when satellites began giving us images just like these.

When it doesn't snow in the Inter-mountain West, communities that rely on winter sports tourists take an enormous economic hit. Fewer people lodge in their hotels, fewer people shop in their stores, and fewer people eat in their restaurants. If we were to ask the businesses in places such as Taos, NM, or Ruidoso in the south central part of the State, Red River and others spread across the high-elevation portions of my State, they will tell us when there is no snow; they see an enormous reduction in the amount of business activity, in the gross receipts in those small towns, and it ripples through the entire economy.

That report points out that ski resorts in the northern part of New Mexico are the primary drivers of New Mexico's \$182 million ski industry. Winter tourism in New Mexico provides more than 3,100 jobs. We are a State of only 2 million people, but 3,100 jobs has a \$104 million impact on our economy. In low snowfall years, New Mexico lost out on an estimated \$48 million in ski resort revenue and had nearly 600 fewer jobs compared to higher snowfall years. Winter sports tourists are an extremely important part of my State's economy, and I am very concerned that if we continue to do nothing about climate change, we will lose those tourist dollars.

Climate change is very real and it is impacting our bottom line in the State of New Mexico. Climate change is also leaving a devastating imprint on our agricultural industry in the State of New Mexico. These images are striking to me, and these are satellite images from NASA.

This is the largest reservoir in the State of New Mexico. It is called Elephant Butte Reservoir. It is in the central part of the State. If a person is used to growing up in a State such as New Mexico and a person knows there are certain crops that are just iconically connected to the State, including green chili being at the top of the list, red chili—they are actually the same plant, but we will save that for another day—pistachios, pecans, all of these things are tied to irrigation and the ability to irrigate hundreds of

square miles of agricultural land along the Rio Grande throughout the State.

In 1994, in the midnineties, Elephant Butte Reservoir was functioning as it had since the early 1900s, storing all of that snowpack we talked about a few minutes ago, making sure it was released to serve agriculture, to extend the irrigation season, to make sure those crops were realized. Then we began to get into this long-term, persistent drought. My colleagues have probably heard the stories about California and its drought and its impact on agriculture. New Mexico has experienced just as intense a reduction in snowpack, in predictability of summer precipitation. We get a lot of our moisture in the summer monsoon, the wettest time of the year outside of the winter. So we get some in the wintertime in snowpack typically and then in the summertime we have the summer thunderstorms, and the predictability of that has all changed now. But as we can see, so has the quantity.

Elephant Butte Reservoir is about 2 million acre feet in capacity. An acre foot of water is literally taking an acre of land and covering it in water 1 foot deep. It is about 325,000 gallons, if my memory serves me well. This is about 2 million acre feet. People can do the math. But it is literally the largest single body of reservoir water for agriculture and other uses in the State of New Mexico.

Fast forward to 2013. These were both taken in the same month, the month of July, which is kind of the height of the irrigation season. Three percent is what was left in Elephant Butte Reservoir. It literally doesn't even look like the same place. The northern extent of the reservoir has been dry land for much of the year in this photo. This has enormous ramifications for agriculture in our State and for other industries that use and rely on that water.

Farmers and ranchers are often first to see the effects of extreme weather. A 2012 study found that by 2020, New Mexico agriculture and ranching will lose \$73 million annually due to climate change. We can layer that on to the \$48 million we talked about a little while ago from impacts to the winter ski season. We start to see the very real cost of not doing anything about climate change.

The agricultural sector is incredibly vulnerable due to the sustained threat to the water supply, to soil and vegetation from sustained drought. Livestock levels in many areas of New Mexico were one-fifth of normal levels last year due to the scarce forage. So year after year of drought—not just 1 year but over and over again—is what leads to this incredible inability to even manage water. We don't have the water in the reservoir to be able to deal with the fact that we are not getting enough precipitation. We have over the years

sort of used our savings account, and now we are down to a very small amount of water that has to be stretched as far as we can in summer irrigation season. We have seen a number of parts of the Rio Grande run dry in the summer as a result.

Things are only going to get worse if we don't act and begin to address some of these conditions. If we have any hope of reversing the effects of climate change—and we truly must—it is critical we embrace this challenge now and that we lead the world in innovation, in efficiency, and in clean energy.

As our colleagues Senators PORTMAN and SHAHEEN know, there is no cleaner source of energy than the ones we don't use in the first place. Energy efficiency and conservation should be the centerpiece of any strategy to address climate change. The easiest way we can reduce the amount of carbon pollution, methane pollution, and other greenhouse gases that make it into the atmosphere is to not use those in the first place.

Conservation pays enormous dividends. I remember when my wife and I bought our first home, we decided we wanted to make it as sustainable as we could, but it was a retrofit, so where do we start. Well, we have had solar on the roof of that home in Albuquerque for many years now, but that is not where we started. That wasn't the first place we put our investment. It wouldn't have made sense. The first thing we did is we insulated a home that had been built without insulation. We replaced windows that were leaking warm air to the outside all through the wintertime, not keeping cool air inside during the summertime. Efficiency is absolutely critical if we are going to begin to address our overall energy usage in this country and to reduce the amount of carbon pollution in particular we are putting into the atmosphere.

Getting the most out of each unit of energy, kilowatt, Btu should be a concern at every level of our government. The U.S. Federal Government is the largest energy consumer in our country, and the Federal Government has an obligation to lead by example when it comes to energy performance.

We heard a lot about the transportation sector and the advances we have made due to the fuel economy standards. But buildings are also an enormous part of our carbon and our pollution footprint in this country. They account for about 40 percent of our energy use, and they offer the greatest opportunities for savings. Investing in energy efficiency in those buildings isn't just good for our environment and for reducing air pollution; it is literally one of the fastest and most cost-effective ways to grow our economy.

We have seen business energy efficiency take off in recent years and produce high-quality jobs all across

this country. Energy efficiency is a large, low-cost, underutilized U.S. energy resource. Increasing our energy efficiency in the residential sector, commercial sector, industrial and governmental sectors offers Americans savings on their energy bills, opportunities for more jobs, improves our Nation's competitiveness, and it stretches every tax dollar further.

To help the Nation transition to cleaner and renewable sources of energy, I am also supporting efforts to streamline permitting for renewable energy projects on our public lands, while protecting access to those public lands for families and sportsmen to enjoy.

Another key to further development of renewable energy is to alleviate the bottlenecks in our electric power grid. Much of our power grid was developed decades ago, some of it nearly 100 years ago, and I am working in New Mexico to help tap our renewable resources by adding new transmission capacity and smart grids to an aging infrastructure.

We need to find better ways to make sure new transmission projects are well planned to protect the environment but can also move forward in a reasonable timeframe. Whether for our national security, our energy independence or our Nation's ability to compete in the global economy, our efforts and our solutions should be rooted in fact and driven by the best available science.

As we heard earlier tonight from our friend and colleague from Oklahoma, not everyone agrees. There are some who deny that climate change exists. There are some who are simply paralyzed by how big the problem is—the fear of the economic or political costs along the way. But one of the things that has bothered me the most, as we have had this debate, is too often we see scientific integrity undermined. We see scientific research politicized in an effort to advance ideological or purely political agendas or to protect certain industries and interests. Too often we see that some in Washington believe they are not just entitled to their own opinions but believe they are somehow entitled to their own facts. Frankly, none of us are entitled to our own facts.

No area of innovation in science will be more important than our Nation's ability to tackle climate change and lead the world in clean energy technology. We saw a lot of information earlier in the evening about the incredible growth we have seen in renewable sources of energy in recent years, particularly in wind and solar. The cost of solar has come down precipitously in recent times. It reminds me that in 1961 President John F. Kennedy made a bold claim that an American would walk on the Moon by the end of the decade. To many people that seemed absolutely ludicrous.

This is a similar challenge we face. Eight years after President Kennedy made that claim, Neil Armstrong did just that. It did not even take a decade. We need that kind of effort to be able to address the incredible challenge we have with a warming globe. We need to think big, we need to execute, and we need to innovate, as the Presiding Officer said.

Innovation is going to be so important as we deal with this issue. Frankly, in the United States we have met issue after issue that people said could not be solved or was too big or would cost us too much. We turned those around and into opportunities to grow new jobs and grow new industry.

As we look at this particular challenge, the real question is, is the economic activity that is going to be associated with solving these challenges—are we going to get the benefit of those technologies? Are we going to get the jobs from manufacturing, installing, developing those things or are we going to cede that leadership to other countries around the world?

Even the sleeping giant in China, with all of their policies over the years that have led to the incredible, dangerous pollution levels we see—where students actually put masks on statues in China to make a political point that there is no clean air to be had—even China is realizing they have to invest in this innovation, that they have a national interest in it.

We have the most innovative folks in the world. We have our National Laboratories. We have scientists and entrepreneurs who can come up with solutions that will take us further than we have seen with the incredible growth in wind and solar in the last few years. We need to make the commitment and move from just having a debate about these issues to employing the policy changes that will drive that innovation.

(Mr. SCHATZ assumed the Chair.)

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. President, I would be happy to yield to the Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The Senator's point about China makes me think that if you look at the behavior of the Chinese with respect to this power, you see a couple things. You see, first of all, that they have worked very hard to try to undercut our domestic innovation by dropping prices on solar artificially. You see that particularly if you are involved on the Intelligence and Armed Services side, the extraordinary efforts they have made to hack into our intellectual property and to try to steal it back to China so their companies can compete unfairly against ours.

When you see this activity, particularly in the area of solar and renewables, and you see the extent to which the Chinese are investing in solar and

renewables, what conclusion must one draw about what the Chinese see as the future of solar and renewables?

Mr. HEINRICH. The Senator from Rhode Island brings up a very good point because obviously the Chinese have come to the conclusion that it is in their best interests to innovate and to do it as rapidly as possible. He brings up some issues that, frankly, are not necessarily what I would call the most responsible or moral ways to move rapidly through that ladder of innovation. But, nonetheless, it is unmistakable that they are realizing just how important this is.

I think it is important for us to come to the same conclusion. I think it is important for us to realize if we cede these industries to China, they will be selling us the products of the future. We have seen this already with their ability to undercut the price and artificially lower the cost of producing solar panels and how deleterious that has been to our domestic manufacturing base for those technologies.

We need to make sure we are making the technologies of tomorrow's clean energy economy here and installing those technologies ourselves and getting the jobs, all the way from the innovation to the manufacturing, to the supply chain, to make sure we see the opportunities in this as well as other challenges.

I think what motivated me to be part of tonight is that, similar to the Presiding Officer, I have a couple of young kids at home—a 7-year-old named Micah, a 10-year-old—soon to be 11 years old—named Carter.

When I think of some of the issues the Senator from Rhode Island brought up and the briefings I receive on the Intelligence Committee—and not only the intellectual property theft that has been reported in the open media but also the impacts we are seeing in places such as Central Asia, the glaciers that an enormous part of the world's population relies on for their fresh water, a place that has inherent and sometimes volatile conflicts right below the surface, where Pakistan and India and other countries come together—when we look around Southeast Asia and realize there is an enormous amount of the world's population living just a few feet above sea level who are exposed to those superstorms in a way that even those of us who have had to deal with superstorms such as Sandy cannot imagine because they did not have a home to shelter in or at least a home that looks like the places we have, it certainly sobered one.

I see the Senator from New Jersey is here.

Mr. BOOKER. If I may interrupt for a question because I would like to stay on point.

Mr. HEINRICH. Absolutely.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with the

Senator from New Jersey who knows firsthand what some of these superstorms are capable of.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOOKER. I would like to continue to have the Senator from Rhode Island as well involved in this colloquy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BOOKER. Because he brings up a tremendous point.

For all of us who are competitive and have this belief that this Nation of ours should remain a leader in the globe, the Senator from Rhode Island makes a very good point. We are a nation that has led in innovation, led in ingenuity. Generation after generation, we have seen our country excel and exceed economically because of American innovation.

What the Senator from Rhode Island brings up so pointedly is that in this area—the technologies of the future that are going to have us have an ability to produce the energy of the future—America runs the risk of falling behind some of our most fierce competitors.

But what I would like to ask the Senator from Rhode Island—because it goes further than that—we know that as to the challenges of the future, we can look at the past and see how economic policy has so dramatically influenced foreign policy. You can go back to right after World War II, how America's economic dominance helped us to advance.

Looking at the Suez crisis, when America and Britain had different agendas, it was a fact that we held their debt, that we had the economic advantage that allowed us to press our interests, but there are other threats too.

What is interesting to me is, as has been stated tonight already—and I would love to talk to folks because both of you have already talked about Senate intelligence briefings and military briefings—I would like to read from a document that talks about Navy ADM Samuel J. Locklear, III, the commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific, stating very dramatically—and I would love to get the reaction of the Senator from Rhode Island to this—that significant upheaval related to the warming of the planet, the admiral says, “is probably the most likely thing that is going to happen . . . that will cripple the security environment, probably more likely than the other scenarios we all often talk about.”

You see, Admiral Locklear focuses on risk management and preparedness for our Nation. He does not have time for philosophy. He does not have time for politics. He is focusing on a concrete risk analysis when it comes to the safety, security, and preparedness of our Nation.

He goes on:

While resilience in the security environment is traditionally understood as the ability to recover from a crisis, using the term in the context of national security expands its meaning to include crisis prevention.

I read on:

Admiral Samuel Locklear had a meeting the other day with national security experts at Tufts and Harvard. After this session, he met with a reporter who asked him what the top security threat was in the Pacific Ocean. Rather than highlighting Chinese ballistic missiles, the new Chinese Navy aircraft carrier, North Korean nuclear weapons, or other traditional military threats, Admiral Locklear looked to a larger definition of national security.

Locklear commented that “People are surprised sometimes” that he highlights climate change—despite an ability to discuss a wide range of threats from cyber-war to the North Koreans. However, it is the risks—from natural disasters, to long-term sea level rise threats, to Pacific Nations—that have his deepest attention.

Here he is being quoted:

You have the real potential here in the not-too-distant future of nations displaced by rising sea levels. Certainly weather patterns are more severe than they have been in the past. We are on super typhoon 27 or 28 this year in the Western Pacific. The average is about 17. Climate change merits national security military attention for very pragmatic reasons.

So the Senator from Rhode Island—we have talked about many things tonight—understands this issue, and he is one of the motivating factors for an amazing array of Senators from all around the country tonight to be talking about the impacts on our individual States, which I hope to do about New Jersey soon.

But the bigger issues at stake are long-term economic competitiveness, which the Senator from New Mexico has talked about, and also the threat that our military experts see to our Nation and global security. I wonder if the Senator for a moment would comment on that.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. On the point the Senator from New Jersey makes about economic power being the foundation for military power and the power of persuasion around the globe, one really does not have to look any further than back to the decline and fall of the Soviet Union, which is widely viewed as being based on a country that spent so much on its military without an underlying economic engine powerful enough to support it that it finally fell in.

So when we are looking out at a clean energy market that has been estimated to be a \$6 trillion market, the idea that it is in America's interest to cede that entire market to the Chinese, to let them be the manufacturers, to trust that we will be fine if they are manufacturing solar and wind and all of the new battery technologies and that we are just consumers of that, is crazy. That economic weakness has national security overtones.

In addition, as the distinguished Senator from New Jersey pointed out, in

addition to Admiral Locklear—and the distinguished Senator from Hawaii mentioned Admiral Locklear as well, but he is not alone. Secretary Mabus, Secretary of the Navy, has pointed out the same thing. We are at risk from global warming from a national security perspective. The Joint Chiefs of Staff is on record about the national security consequences of climate change to our country. As the Senator from New Mexico knows from his time on the Intelligence Committee, there are NIEs—National Intelligence Estimates—that speak to the danger climate change presents for America, for our national security interests when it happens in other lands. The Defense Quadrennial Review, which is the key document that drives our defense policy, has over and over again emphasized climate change as a national security risk, as a liability for our country. So, yes, it is very important that we deal with this.

I had a conversation with Henry Kissinger the other day. He was speaking generally. He used an interesting phrase. He said that the big upheavals and revolutions in the world have always come from a confluence of resentment—a confluence of resentment.

So I would add to the immediate risk of climate change causing upheaval and causing military problems that threaten our national security interest the larger problem is that America stands for something in this world, and we all benefit because America stands for something in this world, and the rest of the world knows it. If we come to the point where around the world people are seeing in their homes, in their lives, in their villages, in their hamlets, and on their shores the effects of climate change and it is bad for them—the fish they used to catch are not there; the crops they used to grow will not grow any longer; the river they used to irrigate is not running as strong any longer; and their lives have been hurt as a result of that, and they look around, what greater resentment could there be than a resentment of the country that knew this was coming, that said it was a leadership nation, and that did nothing about it when it knew.

Now, there is a confluence of resentment around the world. That, too, creates a national security risk for our country.

Mr. BOOKER. I appreciate that from the Senator from Rhode Island. I have only been in the Senate for about 4 months. As soon as I made a decision to run for this office, I asked for national security briefings to study hot points in our country. I figured if I was going to win this office, New Jersey would expect me to be prepared to serve and deal with national security issues.

I was amazed that, when I was being briefed by a group of folks who focus on

national security issues, a general came up to the briefings in New Jersey as well and began to be very intent and intense on letting me understand that the military is not waiting for us to figure this out in Congress. They are preparing. He told me about flying planes on biofuels, thinking about the resiliency of our military bases here and abroad. It was amazing to hear this general talk in such fierce pragmatism about what we must do to protect the safety and the sanctity of our country.

But I will tell you this: We are in a bad economy right now. When I go back to New Jersey, I hear people talking to me about jobs. I hear people talking to me about government spending. I hear about the strength of our country.

If the Senator from New Mexico would allow me to ask him a question, what moved me about your remarks—I have to say, again, I am a new Senator. But the Presiding Officer and I have both gotten to know the Senator from New Mexico. The Senator lives and bleeds New Mexico. Our conversations when we are in the cloakroom are amazing. I have learned more about New Mexico than the Jersey boy ever did back in my own State. It is amazing the pride with which you talk about your State. I hope your constituents understand how much you are about New Mexico every day you are here.

What was amazing to me as I listened to you speak was the numbers that rolled off your tongue about the financial impact of climate change on the New Mexico economy. When you started talking about the billions—you emphasized “b”—spent on fire protection, you mentioned the grievous loss of life of firefighters in Arizona who nobly fought fires in New Mexico. You talked about the grievous impact—hundreds of millions of dollars—on industries in your State, and those numbers, to me, which fly off the tongue, represent jobs, represent government tax dollars which are being used in your State to fight forest fires but which could be reinvested in the things that rebuild infrastructure, educate children, do research.

It is an undeniable fact that fires are burning hotter, that reservoirs are getting emptier, and that is having a serious impact on your economy, but this is the truth about our country: We are not New Mexico, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Hawaii; we are the United States of America. As much as we might think your economy is insulated from mine, that is not true. When I heard Senator KLOBUCHAR talking about what it is doing to crops in her State, that affects food prices in New Jersey. When I heard the Senator from Maine talking about the lobster industry, we eat lobster in New Jersey as well. We are one integrated economy. King said it so profoundly—that “in-

justice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

So if the Senator would comment for me a little deeper because I know when you leave here and go back to your State, you are not looking at data or the statistics, you are talking to people whose lives are not just being disrupted by climate change but severely affected, I wonder if the Senator could—we have seen lots of data and charts tonight and all day, but I was hoping the Senator could speak a little bit more to the grievous financial damage it is doing in our interconnected economy, to the people of your State and thus to the people of America.

Mr. HEINRICH. I thank my friend the Senator from New Jersey. These issues have such a profound impact on individual people and communities. When I think back to that Las Conchas fire that I talked about a little bit in my comments, I cannot help but think about Santa Clara Pueblo. Actually, maybe we can put up this other image too, because normally the fires lie down at night. That is what they used to do, at least. Here you can see the fire burning north of Los Alamos in the Jemez mountains in the middle of the night. You can imagine, this was sort of a scene from Espanola and Santa Fe across the valley. Everyone I talked to at the time had never seen a conflagration in the northern part of the State quite like it.

One community that was particularly impacted and is still recovering today is Santa Clara Pueblo. They have this incredible, beautiful canyon that is tied to their identity and their religion and who they are as a people. Unfortunately, this fire burned the headwaters of that canyon, and that produces the water for their irrigation, as well as with the Rio Grande. It is more than just economics. It is an identity. It is a place that cannot be separated from the community and the people there.

The impact of that, unlike a typical disaster we think about, such as an earthquake, where you have the disaster and then you have the recovery from the disaster, these fires in these communities happen multiple times. You have the fire, and it is usually in May or June, which is the driest time of the year in the State of New Mexico. It is the time when the snowpack is long gone and we have not had precipitation, oftentimes in months. Then you get these early lightning strikes that do not actually have rain associated with them.

You have the fire. Finally, the fire goes out when the rains come, and then you have the thunderstorms that come and flood these communities and take their farmland and bury it under 6 inches of cobble and gravel or a foot of everything but topsoil, so they cannot use it. You have roads literally impassable and infrastructure destroyed, irri-

gation ditches that have been in place for hundreds of years blown out or filled with sediment so they cannot be used.

It happens not just that first year, but until these places recover with some sort of vegetation—I have to say that they are not coming back as the same kind of forest in many cases. But as the vegetation does recover, you finally get a more moderated situation where you do not get those floods.

But I just have been too many times now with people at the Pueblos Nambe across the valley, same situation, different fire. It is touching everyone and their communities. It is really a struggle, when we cannot even recognize the problem here in Washington, DC, to look at my constituents, you know, and say: Hopefully, through FEMA and other measures, we can address the emergency. But we have to start addressing the problem.

I want to ask the Senator from New Jersey—I mean, your State just came through one of the most unbelievable superstorms in our country’s recent history with Superstorm Sandy. I can only imagine—we have very different States. My problem is usually not enough moisture. Oftentimes in extreme weather events you have too much. We certainly do not have coastal issues. I would love to hear more about the direct economic impact of what it meant—the Senator from New Jersey is someone who comes to this Chamber with something that I value enormously, which is the experience of governing at the local level where you are close to the people. I was a city councilor. You were a mayor of a huge city. You know what those impacts are to infrastructure and economy and to small businesses when a storm such as that hits your State. I would love to have a little bit of that perspective because I think it is important, as this grows and grows and the challenge faces us head-on, to understand how it is impacting your constituents and their small businesses and all of the things you have direct experience with from your local government work.

Mr. BOOKER. I am grateful to the Senator from New Mexico for giving me this opportunity to say a word about my State. To keep the conversation going, if the Senator from Rhode Island would indulge me in answering that question, but I would like to get back to the Senator from Rhode Island.

I want to say to the people who are watching this, perhaps on C-SPAN or others, the reason why I am so grateful to the Senator from Rhode Island is because I have been here, again, for a little over 4 months. But the Senator from Rhode Island is—and forgive me if this sounds in any way disrespectful to say it this way, but I almost think the Senator from Rhode Island reminds me

of the movie "Shawshank Redemption." I say that because one of my favorite moments in Shawshank was that guy—

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I am just waiting to hear what character I remind the Senator of, because this could be for good or it could be for very ill.

Mr. BOOKER. No. I am reminded that Morgan Freeman or the main character of the movie wanted to get a library for the prison. Frankly, their strategy was every single day they sent a letter. The reason why I have great respect for the Senator from Rhode Island is he has been relentless, to my knowledge, in a way I did not know about before I came to the Senate—but relentlessly and constantly nonstop, not only one time when we are going for an entire day, but every single week going to the floor and speaking to this issue, speaking truth to power, using his office to try to not only speak to issues pertaining only to his State, but to speak to issues that relate to our planet, and I have generated a lot of respect for the Senator in his consistency.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I appreciate that very much.

Let me say for the RECORD I would be Morgan Freeman all day long and all night long, for that matter.

Mr. BOOKER. The Senator has it. But before I get to my Senate colleague from Rhode Island, allow me for a moment to answer the question of my colleague because I am grateful that he asked me about what is happening in New Jersey.

We know this, that no storm, no flood, no drought, was caused singularly—no single episode could be said to be caused by climate change. That would be irresponsible and give an opening for those people who choose to criticize those who talk about climate change, give an opening to pounce on that.

But we do know, when these extreme weather events happen—and I believe they are happening more frequently because of climate change—what we know factually is that when these extreme weather events happen, they become more extreme because of indisputable climate change that is happening.

Forest fires, as the Senator said, become more extreme because of a warming climate. We know in New Jersey, and we have seen painfully from Hurricane Sandy, that when flooding happens it is more extreme and more severe because of rising sea water.

We know in New Jersey that the storm had painful effects. Let me put it in numbers, and then I want to talk about people.

The numbers that affect people so dramatically are powerful. I am going to read some of them. This is a Rutgers University report that rising sea levels, as I mentioned before, mean hurricanes

will produce more severe damage such as the damage caused by Hurricane Sandy, more frequent extreme weather events, heat waves. Inland flooding from heavy rains present a growing challenge to our New Jersey economy, to the environment, and to the everyday way of life of New Jerseyans and I say to Americans.

The images left by Sandy's wakes are seared into the minds of so many New Jerseyans. We saw what happened to some of the most precious parts of our State up and down the coast. The State's vulnerability to these extremes we see, the storm and its immediate aftermath resulted in 34 people dying in the State of New Jersey, and it cost New Jerseyans an estimated \$37 billion. The storm, in its entirety, impacted and claimed more than 150 lives and exceeded \$50 billion in damage. In New Jersey, nearly 7 million people and 1,000 schools lost power. Transit systems and streets were completely flooded, damaging our infrastructure. More than 8,000 jobs were lost in the month after the storm.

(Mr. WHITEHOUSE assumed the Chair.)

There were power interruptions that lasted for days and days, putting people into hardship. As the mayor of a city, I saw that the power disruptions actually cost people lives. There were two people who were without power in the city of Newark who tried to sustain themselves with artificial heat. It produced carbon monoxide from which they died. Hurricane Sandy displaced more than 116,000 people and damaged or destroyed 346,000 homes in New Jersey.

We have seen in our State these horrific stories and know for a fact that should more hurricanes hit with rising sea levels, they are going to do more and more extreme damage.

What I wanted to do, in answer to your question, is those were numbers, but the stories that came from Hurricane Sandy rip your gut.

This is one story of Christina, a homeowner from Toms River, as reported in the Huffington Post. They had evacuated her house before Hurricane Sandy hit, Christina did, and then returning found a mysterious note. The letter was hastily scrawled by a person who had broken into her house and taken a blanket and a black jacket to keep hypothermia at bay. The author of the note was sure he was dying.

These storms rushed in so quickly and so severely that it put people in conditions where life and death happened quickly.

I saw them as mayor of Newark. One of the people who died in my city due to Hurricane Sandy was with folks we came to evacuate from Sandy in a low-lying area east of Newark. I will never forget this because the group of men said they did not want to leave. They were going to stay on the higher floor

of a structure, but one of them went to move his car at the exact time the water was rushing in so quickly and so fast that he drowned in his car.

This story continues. The man identified himself as a 28-year-old man named Mike and left contact information so that the homeowner could contact his father and tell him he had died.

The note reads: Whoever reads this, I am dying. I am a 28-year-old. My name is Mike. I had to break into your house. I took blankets off the couch. I have hypothermia. I didn't take anything. A wave threw me out of my house and down the block. I don't think I am going to make it. The water is 10-feet deep at least. There is no rescue. Tell my dad I love him, and I am trying to get out. His number is—he gives it to the newspaper and his name is Tony.

He continues: I hope you can read there in the dark. I took a black jacket too. God Almighty, help me.

The heartbreaking last words of a Hurricane Sandy victim made its rounds on social media. In an interview later, Mike told listeners the harrowing story of how he was swept out to sea.

I wish to give a couple more quick vignettes. This is Theresa, 41, Middlesex County, NJ: Walking out of my house the morning after the storm and seeing my neighbors, it was unreal. It was like a war zone. We were unprepared for what happened.

June, 51, Union Beach, NJ: Living through the storm in one of the hardest hit bay towns of New Jersey, I learned that God is good. In the midst of the hardship and trauma, I saw His love through average people, people who care enough to smile, serve, hug, and weep with me. I saw such compassion in the young and old. I saw the best in humanity.

This is what should be driving us at the core. The heroism we see at these extreme weather conditions, made worse by climate change, shows the grit of America. It shows our strength and our courage, our willingness to be there for one another in times of crisis.

But the point of the matter is we are in a larger crisis right now, and that demands we should act. There is an old saying the only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing. Well, good people in New Jersey did a lot during Hurricane Sandy as our State had billions of dollars of damage to their communities, displaced people who are still not back in their homes. But as we look at rising sea levels in and around New Jersey, we know that if future storms hit that the damage as the sea level rises will be increasingly worse. So we have an affirmative obligation to act. That is who we are as Americans. We see that right now in our country there is a crisis. It is unmistakable. Every Senator

who has spoken tonight has pointed to charts with the facts. We talked earlier about the military recognizing what is happening. They are active.

But of this body, the question will be asked, did this body, when the evidence was clear, when the damage was being done, when homeowner after family after neighborhood after farm town after urban area—when we knew the crisis was coming, did we do everything we could to prevent that challenge, that damage, that infliction of economic, emotional, physical pain from coming?

I ask the Senator, as I wish to switch back in a second, the cost of not doing anything is great. But the Senator mentioned before the benefit of acting. I thought that was one of the more powerful remarks of the Senator. But actually there are rewards for acting, in creating economic activity, in creating jobs, in improving environmental conditions, and in saving money.

I was wondering if the Senator would highlight some more of that intelligent, enlightened action that could actually not be as much of a sacrifice as people are talking about at the beginning.

Mr. HEINRICH. Through the Chair, I thank the Senator from New Jersey in particular for sharing those stories, because we need to take some inspiration from people all across this country, and certainly in New Jersey, who have faced up to incredible challenges such as Superstorm Sandy and shown that when we put our minds to it Americans can accomplish just about anything. We need to take that inspiration and find the will in this body to move forward on what we know are the facts and to start to have a conversation about what are the policies we are going to put in place to make sure we do meet that challenge. How are we going to do it in a way that recognizes what the Senator from New Jersey had said a number of times tonight, that right now people care so much in this country about the fact that we need jobs and we need economic development. Even though one can look at the stock market and say there has been some sort of recovery in this country, most of our constituents will tell us they are not feeling it.

We have an opportunity to create a whole new generation of jobs. The question is are we going to create them in the United States or are we going to let someone else create them somewhere else in the world.

One of the speakers earlier tonight, the Senator from Massachusetts, brought up the incredible innovation that has happened in recent years in the auto industry with hybrids, plug-in hybrids, and even electric vehicles. Certainly my State is one of the Southwestern States competing, if you will, to try to get Tesla, a disruptive technology manufacturing company, to

possibly put their battery manufacturing facility in the State of New Mexico. They are looking at a number of States in the Southwest, but we think with our combination of two national laboratories, Los Alamos and Sandia, the rail lines that we have in the State, the innovativeness around renewable energy that is part of their values, that we offer something unique we hope they will look at as their site and where to put that facility. But think of all the jobs in an industry and a company that a few years ago a few people wouldn't have believed in.

Mr. BOOKER. I beg the indulgence of the Senator, because I am going to put him on the spot. The Senator was talking about Tesla, the innovative company of today. The Senator and I were sharing stories earlier, and this goes to the point of the ingenuity of our country. I know some of the people involved in Tesla, and they are so inspiring.

But the Senator, years ago, when he was in not quite in high school or college—

Mr. HEINRICH. College.

Mr. BOOKER. College. The Senator got involved in building solar cars and racing around our country. To me, that is a tribute to the lessons of what you are talking about; that is, No. 1, we are the leader globally in innovation, but we are also one of the leaders globally in education and training and preparing people.

So this idea—and I see it in schools in Newark and in New Jersey—is kids innovating in robotics competitions, kids innovating in sciences, kids using technology and using the platforms created by big companies to do things that have value and work.

So let me put my colleague on the spot. Forget Tesla. Long before we even knew what Tesla was, my colleague was doing something with solar cars back in college.

Mr. HEINRICH. Before there was a Tesla, when I was in college in the early 1990s—and this is one of the things that makes me such a strong believer in innovation and really gives me the optimism to say that we can do just about anything as a country when we set our mind to it—my fellow students and I joined the Sun race in 1993. At the college I attended, a number of my colleagues who were studying electrical engineering—I was studying mechanical engineering, and we had people who were studying material science—we all got together and we designed and built a car, a solar car, that we raced across the United States. We raced from Dallas, TX, up to Minneapolis, MN.

People were asking us along the way: When are we going to be driving solar cars? That really wasn't quite the point, but it was a great opening to say this isn't about having solar cars. We are not going to have solar cars because you need a pretty big car to get

enough sunlight to do the job. But it is about driving that innovation and engaging the best—and we have the best—education system at the collegiate level in the world and putting that to work to make sure we are growing the next generation of jobs and the opportunity that represents.

While there are not solar cars riding around in the United States today, there are now electric cars, and many of the fundamental innovations we made are now showing up throughout the auto industry. In fact, one of the things, if you look at how disruptive the Toyota Prius was a few years ago, one of the reasons why it was so efficient was a little thing called regenerative braking, where when you step on the brakes, instead of all that energy being wasted, the heat through the brakes is turned into electricity and put back in the batteries in the car. Now you are seeing that in hybrids throughout the auto industry. That is something we used in the early 1990s in this contest with our solar car.

We had LED lights long before anybody had LED lights in their cars. We were making turn signals and lights on the solar car with LEDs. We built our car out of carbon fiber. It kind of looked like an upside-down wing. All of these kinds of innovations are now standard fare. They are things that get used in the American auto industry in cars built right here in the United States to make all of our cars more efficient and to create some really good jobs along the way.

I believe we ought to be able to do that more broadly with clean energy technology to help address some of these climate issues.

Mr. BOOKER. I think my colleague's point has been seen in history, before he and I were even born. We had a President put forth a noble ambition to make the Moon not a dream but a destination. What he did was he set in motion, by charting a course for America to be first, to lead the globe to be the innovators and to go beyond human imagination. It actually affected everyone, all the way down to our schools and our classrooms and what kids were studying. Generations came up with that, and not only did we win the space race, but it fueled new technologies, new innovations for our generation.

Think about this. This company in Silicon Valley, I think it was called Keyhole, looked at the satellite information borne out of the space race. That company was bought by another company called Google, and that turned into Google Maps, something my colleague and I probably both have on our phones.

So it is amazing when America has this attitude that we are not going to put our heads in the sand and deny a new world is upon us; we are going to lead the country. That has multipliers of collateral benefits that are not anticipated. As mayor, I became not a

convert, because I knew this was an issue, but I became a zealot about this idea that you could create a multiplier effect of benefits when you talk and innovate around making the American Dream a green dream.

Let me share this with my colleague. We see in a 2012 report by the Rockefeller Foundation that it was estimated that more than \$279 billion could be invested in retrofitting existing buildings making them more energy efficient. This goes back to the point we were talking about—job creation and leading. This investment, the Rockefeller Foundation study found, could yield more than \$1 trillion of energy savings over 10 years, reducing United States emissions by as much as 10 percent. But this is the kicker. This creates energy savings, reduces emissions, and creates a healthier environment for cities such as Newark and Camden that are on these heat islands that ratchet up asthma. So we lower those emissions, lower the heat in those areas, which has collateral benefits. Here is the one we should be talking about right now while we are coming out of a recession. It could create more than 3.3 million new jobs, direct and indirect, in the U.S. economy.

That is just by investing in retrofitting and getting a return on the investment, with \$279 billion, getting a return of \$1 trillion in energy savings, and reducing energy costs for families, for governments. These jobs cannot be outsourced. They are not about foreign competition. It is about putting people here to work, and not only do these energy efficiency retrofits utilize local workers, the vast majority of the materials used for the retrofits come from where, Senator?

Mr. HEINRICH. Right here at home.

Mr. BOOKER. Right here. Energy retrofits are manufactured right here in the United States of America. This is the collateral benefit, the multiplier effect we are talking about. Attic insulation, replacement windows, and new furnaces—more than 90 percent of the energy efficient materials are made in the USA, putting Americans to work, fueling our economy, and making us strong and successful in a multiple of layers.

That is all in just one segment of the green economy. I am just talking about retrofitting. Hundreds of thousands of jobs have already been created, as we both know, in the wind and solar sectors. People don't know, but New Jersey is one of the leaders in the solar industry. Only California does better than we do, and those sectors are still in their infancy.

We can have a healthy environment and a healthy economy. These false choices that people seem to be putting up are simply that: false choices. It is not the tyranny of the "or;" it is the liberation of the "and." They are not mutually exclusive.

When I was mayor of Newark we took action. Understanding this data and these facts, we worked with the building trades, and they created a laborers local, local 55 in my area, that focused on weatherizing residential properties in Newark. We recruited Newark residents who were taught how to perform energy audits and residential retrofits. Our residents had new job opportunities, and our homeowners who participated in the program saw energy savings.

We first did this as a pilot focusing on senior citizen homes in the south ward of my city, and it was amazing. They were seeing reductions in energy costs of 25 percent or more. It was amazing. So we were able to save senior citizens money, employ young people from our community, and improve our environment, all at the same time.

We found this was of value on all the issues. We knew one of the issues was just planting trees. We said: Hey, we are going to take action by increasing our tree canopy. We brought in private dollars at the neighborhood level through community organizing, and we began the process of making Newark greener, thus cooler, and making sure that new generations had opportunities.

My colleague and I both know that one of the great definitions of leadership is that great leaders are those who plant trees under whose shade they will never sit. By our taking action on climate change, we will benefit generations to come, but the truth is—the exciting thing for me—it is going to help us in our economy right now. This is why this doesn't have to be a political issue. It can be one about pragmatism where left and right can come together.

If my colleague will allow me, on that point of left and right coming together, I want to explain why this should not be a political issue. The opportunities are too great for America not to lead, for us to bolster our economy, for us to improve our environment, for us to reduce these savage weather anomalies. What inspires me about this is that there are a lot of people—Republicans—who are realizing this is not a Republican-Democratic issue.

When forest fires rage in New Mexico, they hurt Republicans, Democrats, and Independents in that State. When droughts hit the Midwest, they hurt the farms of Republicans, Democrats, and Independents. When the lobster industry suffers in Maine or scallops in Cape May, this affects all of us. If my colleague will allow me, and then I would love to get his comments on this afterwards, I love this editorial, and I think it is worthy of reading into the record right now. The writers are former Administrators of the EPA. Listen to this. This was written by Lee Thomas and William Kelly and this incredible woman from New Jersey

named Christie Todd Whitman. She was our governor. She came and joined the Bush administration. These are heads of the EPA, people who had to deal with the facts, the pragmatism, every single day. Their job was to analyze what was going on around the country, and they wrote a letter, and I think it is worthy of reading, if the Senator will indulge me.

Mr. HEINRICH. Please do.

Mr. BOOKER. Thank you. They say:

We served Republican presidents, but we have a message that transcends political affiliation: the United States must move now on substantive steps to curb climate change at home and internationally.

I'm telling you right now, and my colleague knows this, when we lead, other nations follow.

The letter continues:

There is no longer any credible scientific debate about the basic facts: our world continues to warm, with the last decade the hottest in modern records, and the deep ocean warming faster than the earth's atmosphere. Sea level is rising. Arctic ice is melting years faster than projected. The costs of inaction are undeniable. The lines of scientific evidence grow only stronger and more numerous. And the window of time remaining to act is growing smaller: delay could mean that warming becomes "locked in."

I know my colleague and I both believe in the free market.

Mr. HEINRICH. Absolutely.

Mr. BOOKER. But we know we see businesses now that are internalizing profits and externalizing costs. I see this in New Jersey. We are cleaning up the Passaic River, and it is costing taxpayer dollars. When we hear complaints about high taxes, it is going to this kind of stuff—cleaning up the Passaic River because corporations and businesses are dumping pollutants in there and do not internalize the cost. They said: Some future generation is going to pay for it. We are that future generation.

So getting back to this—because I love the free market—I want people who externalize the cost to internalize it. If you are polluting the air and hurting the planet, you need to pay for that.

A market-based approach like carbon tax would be the best path to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but that is unachievable in the current political gridlock in Washington. Dealing with this political reality, President Obama's June Climate Action Plan lays out achievable actions that would deliver real progress. This is amazing to me. Four Republicans who served under Republican Presidents as heads of the EPA are saying President Obama's June Climate Action Plan lays out achievable actions that would deliver real progress.

The President also plans to use his regulatory power to limit the powerful warming chemicals called hydrofluorocarbons. People understandably don't like overregulation,

but the reality is that if this is being released as pollutants into the air, we should be doing something about it.

Mr. HEINRICH. If the Senator would yield, we have heard time and time again that when we allowed the market to innovate and deal with these same kinds of challenges—whether it is NO_x and SO_x or other pollutants we have been able to address in the past; whether it is the hole in the ozone layer—I mean, talk about a global issue of pollution—the market was able to solve those.

Mr. BOOKER. I don't mean to question the Senator's integrity, but I just don't know if he was alive at the time.

Mr. HEINRICH. I think I read it in a book somewhere.

Mr. BOOKER. Allow me to continue because the Senator is absolutely right. I heard some incredible examples from other Senators talking about things we did. I love the story by the Senator from Maine about the pull-top cans.

Mr. HEINRICH. It reminded me of growing up as I did. My mother worked in the auto industry, and there was a time when we had a great debate. My grandfather complained based on something he heard on the radio about these catalytic converters which were going to ruin the American auto industry.

What happened is when we decided to clean up emissions from the auto industry, we actually created an entire new industry around catalytic converters, which for many years afterward was an export industry for the United States. Since we took the first step, none of the other countries understood the technology well and could manufacture it well. So as the rest of the world followed our lead to clean up their pollution, they were importing our catalytic converters.

We can look at example after example where this has been the case. When we allow the market to innovate, we can solve the most challenging pollution problems.

Mr. BOOKER. I love that. Never bet against America's ability to innovate, to be resilient, to be industrious.

So I continue on this editorial written by four past Republican EPA Administrators:

The president also plans to use his regulatory power to limit the powerful warming chemicals known as hydrofluorocarbons and encourage the United States to join with other nations to amend the Montreal Protocol to phase out these chemicals. The landmark international treaty, which took effect in 1989, already has been hugely successful in solving the ozone problem.

Rather than argue against his proposals, our leaders in Congress should endorse them and start the overdue debate about what bigger steps are needed and how to achieve them—domestically and internationally.

As administrators of the E.P.A. under Presidents Richard M. Nixon, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, and George W. Bush, we held fast to the common-sense conservative principles—protecting the health of the

American people, working with the best technology available and trusting in the innovation of American business and in the market to find the best results for the least cost.

Highlighting the Senator's words.

That approach helped us tackle major environmental challenges to our nation and the world: the pollution of our rivers, dramatized when the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland caught fire in 1969; the hole in the ozone layer; and the devastation wrought by acid rain.

These are all points just made by the Senator from New Mexico.

They continue:

The solutions we supported worked—

Government acted. They worked—

although more must be done. Our rivers no longer burn, and their health continues to improve. The United States led the world when nations came together to phase out ozone-depleting chemicals. Acid rain diminishes each year, thanks to a pioneering, market-based emissions-trading system adopted under the first President Bush in 1990. And despite critics' warnings, our economy continued to grow.

Climate change puts all our progress and our successes at risk.

It says what the Senator and so many others have said: Climate change puts all of our successes and our communities—like Toms River, like Cape May County—at risk.

If we could articulate one framework for successful governance, perhaps it should be this: When confronted by a problem, deal with it. Look at the facts, cut through the extraneous, devise a workable solution and get it done.

We can have both a strong economy and a liveable climate. All parties know that we need both. The rest of the discussion is either detail, which we can resolve, or purposeful delay, which we should not tolerate.

Mr. Obama's plan is just a start. More will be required. But we must continue efforts to reduce the climate-altering pollutants that threaten our planet. The only uncertainty about our warming world is how bad the changes will get and how soon. What is most clear is that there is no time to waste.

Republicans who echoed to me these words—and I know the Senator knows who wrote them, but I will read them first and cite them later. We heard four Republicans speaking today echoing the words of someone who wrote in the 1960s:

We are now faced with the fact, my friends, that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there "is" such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is still the thief of time. Life often leaves us standing bare, naked, and dejected with a lost opportunity. The tide in the affairs of men does not remain at flood—it ebbs. We may cry out desperately for time to pause in her passage, but time is adamant to every plea and rushes on. Over the bleached bones and jumbled residues of numerous civilizations are written the pathetic words, "Too late."

As the Senator obviously knows, those are the words of Martin Luther King.

I know for the people in New Jersey, who stand with the understandable an-

guish of a State still recovering from Hurricane Sandy, that should the sea levels continue to rise in the coming years, we know cities such as Atlantic City and others could see not hundred-year floods but ten-year floods, which will severally damage those cities' ability to continue as we know them today. For my State, there can be no "too late." We must act now. And the Senator sees that urgency as well in New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. I do. And I think it is worth noting that when we speak about the four Republican Administrators of the EPA, they have all looked at the history of this argument and how it really reflects on a conversation we have had since the 1960s—and I think the Senator put it so eloquently—that it is not about jobs or quality of life; it has to be about both.

Those Republican Administrators of the EPA have watched as the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act and the work done on the Montreal Protocol—all those debates were fundamentally identical to this one. People said that this was going to cost too much, that we were going to lose jobs if we made these decisions to clean up our environment. And what happened? If we look back at 1980 and today and the policy changes made, we have a GDP twice as big as what we had in 1980. We have doubled our country's economic output at the same time we have cleaned up our air and water and said we are going to have the cleanest country in the world. We are not going to be like China, where kids walking to school have to wear masks and can't play outside.

When we think about young people in this country, the thing that always strikes me is that when we talk about climate change and when I go home, people are concerned about impacts and the things we talked about before—not the fact that forest fires are happening but that they are happening too often and with such extreme fire behavior now; the fact that drought is getting to be the norm, not the exception. But kids understand this issue, young people understand this issue in a way that calls out for action. I think that is why it is so important that we are doing this tonight, to send a message that we are hearing that because when I talk to high school students or kids in junior high or at college campuses, they understand they are inheriting all the weight of inaction.

I remember as a kid hearing explanations of how the greenhouse effect works and what this is going to do long term. Here we are close to 35 years later, and we are seeing the impacts. Our kids and our grandkids are going to see impacts a whole lot more extreme than even what our constituents have already shouldered. We can't wait anymore. We have a moral obligation. We can argue about what the best way

to address these challenges is and we should. We should find a way to address these challenges that gets the buy-in of a majority of this deliberative body. But we can't step aside any longer and say we are not going to act. That would be irresponsible.

Mr. BOOKER. I will ask the Senator about some of the vulnerable communities in his State, but I will go about it this way. I have such great memories of my father and grandfather, both of whom passed away. Probably the first time I passed through the Senator's State was in a mobile home, in which my grandfather took us and drove us across the country. I saw America, north and south. We did that a number of times. I remember standing with him and looking at Mount Rushmore. My grandfather had a great sense of humor, and if he didn't know a historical fact, he would just make it up. But he taught us to appreciate and love this country. My father was the same way. He grew up in the mountains of North Carolina and took me there as a little boy and with such pride showed me mountains and lakes, and I fell in love. My mom also took me around New Jersey to some of our great parks and hiking the Palisades of New Jersey. I have incredible memories of the Jersey Shore and walking the boardwalk with my hand in my parents' hands. All these memories are so great. My father had this story that I think makes this point about tonight. One of the slogans for tonight is "Wake Up."

My father tells a story about a guy walking along and sees a porch, a man sitting in a rocking chair, and this hound dog sitting next to him. The hound dog is just howling away like he was in great pain. The man says, "What is wrong with your dog? Why is he howling so much?"

And the man says, "Well, he's sitting on a nail."

And the other man says, "Why doesn't he get up?"

And the man says, "Because he's not hurting bad enough yet."

I tell you, the story used to always get me because my father used to always say: Son, get up. Do not tolerate bad. You are better than that. Do not just lie there.

I think about our country and know our history.

You and I have been talking about our history. You and I were born in an amazing generation. We were born after the dawn of the civil rights movement, born after going to the Moon. So much we are talking about tonight is the history of our elders who did give to us a country of unbridled possibilities. We are America, but we are hurt. We are hurt, and we represent communities that feel all this pain.

This is the point I wish to make. I heard Senator LANDRIEU from Louisiana in the debate about flood insurance and how these waters are rising.

These are becoming more severe problems. I heard some of my Northeastern colleagues talk about the erosion, how we are losing acres and acres every year with rising sea levels. One of the times I got very moved listening to Senator LANDRIEU talk was when she was reacting to people who say this is about people who have lost their vacation home. I heard this in New Jersey as well. What bothered me about that is what many folks do not realize is the pain of climate change often affects the most vulnerable Americans most—the poorest people.

She was talking about those people who make a living, scratch out a living in her State, whose livelihoods—who really have not that many other choices. I was in Cape May County talking to these fishermen and listening to the kind of tough jobs they have. These aren't people who are millionaires. They go out there. Talk about an honest day's work. I have to say I am a northern New Jersey boy, listening to these men talk about the toils of pulling from the sea. Cape May is one of the most productive areas to bring in the sea's bounty in our country. They say it is No. 4.

To hear them talk about their jobs—but their fear, their worry in their eyes that with the warming waters their catch is moving north. They are getting less out of the sea. I know this as a former mayor of Newark. I see this when I go to my schools and talk to my school nurses, and they use the word "epidemic" with asthma, seeing the warming climate, what it is doing to the lung development on these children.

I know from Sandy that when a storm like that hits, everybody assumes why not get in the car, drive someplace, stay in a hotel. Many people, No. 1, do not have cars, cannot just pull out of their pocket a couple hundred bucks to stay in a nice hotel for 1 month or 2 months. When they lose their home, they lose everything, and then when they come back, they are told they have to build in a certain way. So this is something that affects us all.

As King said, to quote him again in the letters from the Birmingham jail:

We are all part of an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a common garment of destiny.

In America there is no rich destiny and poor destiny. There is no Republican destiny and Democratic destiny. There is no Black destiny and White destiny. We have one destiny here. But the truth is, in this country, the people who are most immediately impacted by this growing problem are these vulnerable populations. We have to talk more about those folks. They cannot hire lobbyists to come down here. They do not represent some industry we give tax breaks to but folks who cannot engage in expensive fundraisers. The Sen-

ator from New Mexico has a State—and again, the goodness you have done to educate me. I hope I have done as good a job educating my friend about New Jersey, and he is welcome to come to our State.

Mr. HEINRICH. I am learning every day, but I am looking forward to visiting too.

Mr. BOOKER. My colleague from New Mexico represents everything from Native American peoples to a very diverse State. I am wondering if he could talk for a moment about the urgency he sees of this problem for the more vulnerable populations who are becoming—the situation they are in right now is becoming much more dire and should call to the consciousness of our country and should challenge our morality as a people, should expand our moral imagination about what we can and should do and must do.

Mr. HEINRICH. I think the Senator has hit the nail on the head when he said that those among us with the least economic means often bear the highest cost.

That is certainly true in New Mexico. We have enormous economic challenges. We have communities where people cannot afford to get up and move because the climate situation changed. We have literally cities where wells are dry and there is no water. Reservoirs run dry, and there is no water. Las Vegas has come within—Las Vegas and New Mexico has come within a month or two, several times now, of their reservoir literally going dry. A town such as Magdalena, NM. Their well lost water to the town for a number of weeks and they had to come up with a plan for how to deal with that and diversify their water supply again at huge costs to local residents and the State.

These are real challenges being borne by people who do not have discretionary income to be throwing at these challenges. We have people who live a very traditional lifestyle, who are living in these forests. When there are wildfires, they are the first to bear the economic brunt of that.

We see the impact drought has had. The Senator mentioned fishing off the coast of New Jersey. That is kind of how many of our traditional communities view mule deer and elk and wild game that have always called New Mexico home. We see direct impacts to our rival population when people—when the mule deer population crashes or there is a fire that literally you cannot hunt in the same places because this year it is closed due to the damage by fire and they are not letting anyone in.

There are people who rely on that activity to literally get them through the winter. Those impacts are always felt by the people who have the least need to be in control of that situation, and that is an enormous challenge. We

should do a better job of illustrating some of those stories and making sure we make clear what the impacts are to the people who have the least means. They cannot stay in a hotel simply because there is an extreme weather event on the coast of New Jersey or there is a fire in New Mexico.

There are many of my constituents who could not afford to stay in a hotel, and they are the ones bearing the brunt of the challenges. Traditional farming communities that used to be able to grow, they are cut off from the irrigation season. If they get cut off from water halfway to a crop that produces—some sort of production that is not like growing grass or alfalfa, but they literally cut off the water before their crop comes in, they lose it all. Even if they got to 90 percent but didn't quite get to where their crop actually produces, they can lose it all. It is those kinds of impacts my constituents feel when we have some of these extreme weather events.

Mr. BOOKER. I guess what makes me emotional, I have to say, is I do not need to imagine what the future will be like because I have seen it in the urban area I have represented for the last 7-plus years. Let me go a little bit deeper into what I mean.

We wanted to do urban gardening. We were told by environmental regulators in our State that we couldn't dig into our soil because the soil in my city was toxic. Not one of my residents did it, not the folks who had been living there for generations. It is toxic because folks put things in the soil.

We have the biggest urban gardening city, Newark, NJ, but they are planting in beds above ground. I already talked to you about the air quality. This is why so many cities in New Jersey now are working very hard—and I am proud—on two items, and one of them is we have epidemic asthma rates. Go to urban places around the country and you will see that. Now we are separated from the air, separated from the soil. Go to your river. It used to be, if you were poor, you could just go to the river and get some shellfish. Go fishing, eat a meal. But somebody took that away, and now you cannot do that. Now you have to find money and see if you can buy something from the store that nature used to provide in the safe river. So you are separated from your water. So the collateral damage all through the populations, I do not have to see what it is going to be, I see it now.

Mr. HEINRICH. You see it now.

Mr. BOOKER. There is wisdom in my community. There is still wisdom. If you will, allow me to share a story with you.

I have learned my best lessons in life from some of the humblest folks who have this wisdom. There is something about the DNA of human beings that knows we have to respect the environ-

ment that gives us everything. We are a people that used to be an agrarian society.

In my city there is a gentleman. I talked about this gentleman in the State of the City Address once who was living in a high-rise building across the street from a lot. It was fenced in by some iron, but the iron had given way, so it was full of debris and junk. There were some guys who dealt drugs out there. People looked at that as an area you just do not go to. This guy got a stimulus check in the mail. You were saying before how expensive it is. James Baldwin, the great American author, said something about is very expensive to be poor. But I also find there are those who have the least who are the most generous to others.

This retired State worker, instead of just saying, great, I got a check in the mail—he didn't do that—he said: I am going to use this check. So he went and bought a lawnmower, a rake, and gardening materials. He went into the lot the drug dealers were using—the elderly man goes into the lot and he tended to the earth; cleaned it up, mowed the lawn, a little bit every day. He didn't do it all at once.

First, people were worried about it. The drug dealers didn't pay him any mind. He tended to the earth. Before he knew it he became a hero in his building, not just because that lot became more beautiful than the White House lawn down the road but because after he made it look so beautiful, what happened to the drug dealers? They left. They left that spot.

I heard about this gentleman. I went to visit him in his building, and it was just to me this amazing story of the pride people have, of the desire they have to take care of their community.

Mr. HEINRICH. The amazing thing is that in our conversations we have sort of educated each other on these two States that are kind of close to each other in the alphabet—

Mr. BOOKER. Right.

Mr. HEINRICH. But miles and miles apart. New Jersey has a coastline. New Mexico does not have anything resembling an ocean anywhere near us. Our States have incredibly different histories and yet so many of the same kinds of issues. I think another State that could have a different set of issues, yet many of the same threads run through it, is obviously the State of Hawaii. Our colleague Senator SCHATZ of Hawaii took it upon himself to help organize this. I have been amazed at the things that my home State of New Mexico has in common with the State of Hawaii. I wonder if the Senator would maybe spend a little time talking about what with regard to his constituents inspires him when the Senator sees how they are stepping up and doing what we need to do in the Senate, recognizing there is a problem that we as a nation or at least in our

communities have the potential to solve.

Mr. BOOKER. Can we pause for station identification in the sense that the Senator from Hawaii is really the ringleader, so to speak, in bringing us together in almost a 24-hour period. The Senator has done a great job of pulling our colleagues together. There have been a little more than two dozen Senators who have come to the floor.

I thank my friend from Hawaii for his extraordinary leadership on bringing this issue to the floor. He has spoken so eloquently about Hawaii and the impact of the severe weather changes. I am very much looking forward to hearing that now.

I do want to say that right after I turned 17 and got my New Jersey driver's license, one of the earliest places where I drove was on a trip to Hawaii—the only trip I had ever taken—and I found it to be an extraordinary State.

Mr. HEINRICH. The Senator didn't drive to Hawaii.

Mr. BOOKER. I did not drive to Hawaii. I thank the Senator from New Mexico for that clarification. I appreciate that for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

I do want to say that Hawaii was a paradise, except that it lacked some fundamental things. For one, it lacked a good Jersey diner. In a future career, the Senator might want to open a diner. It would be so successful there.

Please, Senator, go ahead.

(Mr. HEINRICH assumed the Chair.)

Mr. SCHATZ. I thank the Senator from New Jersey and the Senator from New Mexico for such an energetic discussion at this earlier or late hour, depending on how you define it. It is nearing bedtime in my home State, but for the rest of us across the Nation, many of us are asleep. But we are up for climate. The hashtag is up4climate, and we encourage you to jump on that hashtag.

I thank both of the Senators for participating in that discussion.

I spent a fair amount of time on the Senate floor today talking about how serious, how dire, and how real climate change is. But I think it is important—and consistent with what Senator KAINE from Virginia and Senators BOOKER and HEINRICH have talked about—to talk about the opportunity for American leadership in economic and technological innovation. There are such incredible opportunities for our country in innovation that it is really worth drilling down and talking about the details.

First, let's talk about battery storage. One of the challenges in the State of Hawaii is this. We have abundant wind and solar energy. We are the most isolated populated place on the planet. We still burn 85 percent of our energy as low-sulfur fuel oil. In other words, we import oil and burn it for electricity, which at this point in time is

really unheard of and overly expensive. Three to four times the national average is what we pay for our electricity. It is really hurting us in the pocketbooks, and so we are adopting solar and wind and other clean-energy resources as fast as we possibly can.

The challenge with a grid system that is island by island is this. When you need the energy, you need the energy. If the sun is not shining, and it is the evening time, or if the wind is not blowing, you need either dispatchable power or some other kind of reliable power. The breakthroughs with battery storage that are being driven by this new clean-energy economy in the State of Hawaii is really extraordinary.

The technicians that have run the utility companies for many years used to think that the maximum penetration of renewable energy on to the grid—a grid like Hawaii—ought to be around 15 percent. Well, we blew through 15 percent in parts of our grid 3 or 4 years ago. There are parts of our grid that are in the high 20s to low 30s. We are on the leading edge of all of this.

The good news is that on the utility side—in terms of battery storage—the consumer side, and the power-producer side, we are making tremendous breakthroughs in battery storage. That brings us to this overall question of the smart grid.

The smart grid means a lot of things to a lot of people. It means increasing the resilience of our infrastructure in the case of either a manmade or a natural disaster. It means making sure we are not wasting energy by curtailing power. What is curtailing power? It basically means that sometimes there is clean energy coming onto the grid that cannot be used. Because battery storage is still overly expensive, there is no way to store that energy.

Although the wind might be blowing on the island of Maui—sometimes the wind is blowing and the turbines are turning, but we can't utilize that power because we don't have a smart enough grid. So what we are doing is attracting investment from all over the planet to develop a smart grid.

We have a partnership in Maui County and with the State of Hawaii with the Hitachi Corporation and the Japanese government. They are investing tens of millions of dollars in little Maui County to better understand how to integrate large-scale penetration of renewable energy into a relatively small grid.

There is a new area that I am learning about where we are really innovating in the State of Hawaii, and that is aerodynamics and hydrodynamics. Unlike the Presiding Officer, I do not have a background in engineering, but I understand aerodynamics and hydrodynamics in the following way: It is basically trying to get things to move through water or air as effi-

ciently as possible. This has tremendous implications.

As you can imagine, the Air Force is very interested in aerodynamics because fuel costs are really out of control for all branches of the service, but in particular in the Air Force and the Navy. The Navy is also looking at hydrodynamics to try to figure out how their ships and other vessels can move through the water as efficiently as possible, and again, not for conservation reasons. It is not because they are so interested in the climate, but because they want to save money on fuel. So we are making really good progress in aerodynamics and hydrodynamics.

We have a company that has a test case where they think they can increase the productivity of a wind turbine by 15 to 25 percent. What would that mean? If they can actually prove this technology out, every existing wind farm—if they just swapped out the turbines—could be 15 to 25 percent more productive for the grid. That means no additional siting and no additional permitting. If we could simply swap out new wind turbines, we could see a massive new increment of clean energy onto the grid.

Solar energy is another area that is exploding all across the country. I was talking to somebody who was working in the Capitol Rotunda as we were doing a live television show this afternoon. He was telling me how he just got solar energy, and that is happening all across the country. Solar is just absolutely going crazy in the State of Hawaii. With costs of 38 to 40 cents a kilowatt, solar energy makes a lot of sense for everybody.

We are doing utility scale solar, but we are also doing distributed solar because people want to get their own savings. They want to participate in a clean-energy economy, but speaking practically—this is not ideological, this is not political, this is a pocketbook thing—they are doing the math. These people are not Democrats or Liberals or Independents. They don't wake up every morning—like many of us—thinking about how to solve this problem. They are looking at their own bottom line and saying solar makes sense.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. SCHATZ. I am happy to yield.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Michael Brune, who is the head of the Sierra Club, came in to see a number of Senators the other day. He told an interesting story that lines up with what Senator SCHATZ said about how solar is a pocketbook issue and not a political issue.

This story involves Atlanta, GA, which is not exactly a hotbed of liberal sentiment. In Atlanta, the cost of solar on a residential rooftop—the cost of putting a solar panel on your home—has now leveled out with the cost of electricity at the plug in your home. As a result, residential installations of solar energy started to boom.

Now, for economic reasons, the fossil fuel polluters were against that, and so the Koch brothers and the polluters got behind this group called ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council, which is basically a front group for them. They tried to put through a tax on rooftop solar installations so that if you put a solar panel on your roof, you would get taxed for it because they didn't like the fact that solar had actually caught up to polluting fossil fuel power at the plug.

Who came together to fight that tax? The Sierra Club and the tea party. The Sierra Club and the tea party worked together to beat that tax and to beat ALEC and to beat the Koch brothers and the polluters back on that. Again, if you have the Sierra Club and the tea party pulling side by side, you know it is not ideology. You know at that point it is a pocketbook issue, and that people are starting to see savings from putting solar on their own home and they don't want anybody to interfere with that. That is a story that is a long way from Hawaii, but it helps to illustrate that point.

Mr. SCHATZ. I thank the Senator. Although the tea party is in the State of Hawaii, they are not as strong there as they are in other places across the country. We do have a strong strain of conservatives across the State of Hawaii who want to get off the grid or at least want to participate in the clean-energy economy, and it has to do with the very simple fact that we pay 38 cents a kilowatt hour for the privilege of burning low-sulfur oil for electricity. That is not a left-right issue. That is a "this makes no sense" issue.

We are one of the very few States where we have a good bipartisan consensus. We have been moving forward with our clean-energy initiative previously under a Republican Governor with the participation of the Republicans in our legislature, with our Chamber of Commerce, with our business roundtable, with our tourism industry, with our Department of Defense. It is exactly what the Senator from Rhode Island has been talking about. It is about doing what makes sense rather than subscribing to any particular political ideology.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. It is interesting that my friend should mention his Chamber of Commerce. In Rhode Island, we too are seeing very active participation by our local Chambers of Commerce in green, solar, alternative energy, energy efficiency, and other such endeavors. They see it is a pocketbook issue. They see it makes sense.

It is a stark comparison with the so-called U.S. Chamber of Commerce—the national organization—which tends to represent the multinational corporations which have very little, if any, allegiance to this country and the big polluters. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has been an absolute menace in

terms of any responsible dealings with climate change. But as soon as you get away from the so-called U.S. Chamber of Commerce—the multinational Chamber of Commerce is what it should probably be called—and get down to these Chambers of Commerce that are grounded with our States, grounded with local businesses, grounded in commonsense, you immediately see that they step right up and want to be a part of this solution.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we be given permission to engage in a colloquy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHATZ. One of the things I would like to add is a specific technology that is happening that is trying to be developed in the State of Hawaii and which is a perfect example of the kind of partnership between the clean-energy industry and some of the more traditional companies. It is called seawater air conditioning. Even with my nonengineering background, I can understand it. It is cold water from deep within the ocean that cools air conditioning systems.

Rather than using electricity to try to cool water and cool air and blow it through, you just grab the cold water and put it into the pipes and it cools systems. This makes perfect sense for Waikiki and for the physical plant of Waikiki as well as our millions and millions of visitors and our thousands and thousands of hotel rooms and our 38-cent kilowatt costs.

One of the highest cost drivers—more than labor and more than our physical plant—is the cost of energy for the Waikiki hotels. We believe that having a private sector company—one that is trying to build a seawater air conditioning system which would be environmentally conscious—move into Waikiki can literally save 40 percent for all Waikiki hotels. This is an extraordinary opportunity.

The Sheraton and the Royal Hawaiian and the Hilton Hawaiian Village and the Queen Kapiolani Hotel, and all of these wonderful hotels, I know their GMs, I know the work they do, I know their employees, and they are all doing great work. But they are not interested in sea water air-conditioning necessarily because of its environmental benefits. They are looking to save 40 percent on their electricity bill and that it just makes sense. That is what this is all about.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Let me mention one thing. The Senator from Hawaii was good enough to mention that our hashtag tonight is upclimate, with the “4” being a numeral, so up numeral 4 climate. There was a remark made earlier that we are just going to be up late at night talking to ourselves and that nobody is going to be paying attention. The reports I have are that the League

of Conservation Voters is tracking this with a Web site and 70,000 people have gone to their Web site to support us in our effort tonight. 350.org has 15,000 people who have gone to their Web site to support us. Our own Web site has 40,000 people, for a total of 120,000 signatories just on these Web sites. We also have people who have been going out on Twitter on this. We have people such as Leader PELOSI from the other side of the Capitol. They are locked down hard by the polluters over in the House right now. Nevertheless, Leader PELOSI wanted her voice to be heard, and so she has tweeted out and put out a release about this. OFA has tweeted out about what we are doing tonight, and they reach 42 million people.

So if anybody thinks nobody is listening to what is going on tonight, wrong. Millions of people are following this on Twitter, have been notified about it on Twitter, and literally over 100,000 people have joined these Web sites with more to come, I hope.

Mr. SCHATZ. I wish to ask the Senator from Rhode Island to give us a little bit of context. The Presiding Officer and I are new to the Senate. I think it is important to understand tonight in context.

From my perspective, having 30 Senators on the floor, to take the floor for about 15 consecutive hours to speak about one topic, with the emphasis, with the clarity, with the unanimity of this group, 28 Democrats and 2 Independents, is significant. It is historically important. But I am wondering whether the Senator from Rhode Island can give us a little context and let us know what has happened in the past and how he views tonight in the arc of our efforts to take action on climate.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I think this is an important turning point, an important launch point for the final phase of getting to responsible climate legislation. We were so close. We were heartbreakingly close when the House passed Waxman-Markey and in the Senate we failed to bring up any bill that could have gone to conference. We just failed to do it.

There was a period after that when the White House would barely mention climate change. It was deeply discouraging for people across the country to see the Senate fail that way and the White House retreat that way, but that has changed. The White House is back. The President is reengaged. He has announced a very strong climate action plan that has as a critical element putting some regulation on the big powerplants that are doing so much of the polluting. By the way, when I say big powerplants that are doing so much of the polluting, I mean 50 top polluting powerplants in this country put out more carbon than Korea, which is a very industrialized country, put out more carbon than Canada. That is just the top 50 polluting powerplants.

So that was a big shift when the White House did that, and this signals a shift that is coming to the Senate. The next big shift we need to get to is one where this line in the Senate, marking Democrat from Republican, is not such a harsh line on this issue. There is no need for it to be. This has in the past been a bipartisan issue.

Senator Lieberman on our side and Senator Warner on the Republican side did one of the early climate bills. This is an issue where Republican candidates for President who served here still campaigned for President on the issue of climate change. There is a Member on the other side of the aisle who was the original cosponsor of a climate fee bill. There are Republican Members who when they were in the House voted for Waxman-Markey. There are a number of Republican Senators who have publicly said they think a carbon tax or a carbon fee is a sensible idea or is an idea they would support under the right circumstances.

So there is a great opportunity to reach out to colleagues on the other side of the aisle. Once we get past people who are elected politically, we see Republicans in abundance supporting doing something about climate.

The Presiding Officer, the distinguished Senator from New Jersey, discussed earlier the Republican former EPA Administrators who came forward to say: Hey, guys, time to wake up. This is serious. You have to be responsible about it.

George Schultz has campaigned for a carbon fee, to put a proper price on carbon so we can deal with this issue. Former Representative Bob Inglis is out barnstorming around the country arguing that there should be a Republican conservative carbon fee proposal.

So even though that side of the Senate has been empty all night since Senator INHOFE left—and he was here to deny there is a problem—so there has been no voice for doing anything responsible about climate change all night from that side of the aisle. It has been absolutely silent, absolutely empty. But it is closer than it looks when we actually look at the history of Members on that side of the aisle, when we look at the position of Republicans who are not up for election.

Mr. SCHATZ. I wish to speak a little bit about how I believe taking action on climate is consistent with conservative principles. My understanding of conservative principles—and I am a progressive—but my understanding of conservative principles is basically that they value incrementalism, that they understand the importance of institutions, that they try to move slowly where possible, that they try not to make radical changes to communities or societies or organizations unless it is absolutely necessary. There is no more radical change that we could make to our economy, to our physical

environment, to our communities, to our government than to allow climate change to move forward.

It seems to me what the Senator is saying is exactly right. There are plenty of conservatives who are prepared to take action in this area. Right now what we need is a Republican dance partner. I think we have them. I think there are those who understand and may have quiet conversations with us and nod and agree that the situation is getting increasingly dire and increasingly real and scientifically based in fact, but they don't want to be the first one caught making sense. They don't want to be putting themselves at the tip of that spear.

So one of the reasons we are here tonight is to hopefully galvanize the American public to go back to their more reasonable Republican Members and say: Remember when you said you would be a middle-of-the-road Republican. This is the way to demonstrate that you are a middle-of-the-road Republican. This is the way to demonstrate that you are a true moderate.

When the Department of Defense is saying this is a real strategic challenge, this is not the province of the League of Conservation Voters anymore. I love them. But listen. This is beyond conservation organizations. This is beyond my particular passion for Hawaii's environment. This is about the future of the United States of America and our economic viability. So there are going to be Republican dance partners, but we all as—not just as a Senate but as a country—have to create a political environment in which they can operate with us and we can get to 60 votes. We don't have those votes right now. But as the Senator from Rhode Island said, it always looks more difficult than it is, and it is always impossible until you get it done.

So that is what this is about tonight. Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Here is a fairly well-known Republican conservationist; indeed, perhaps the greatest conservationist President in American history: Theodore Roosevelt, a Republican. He had two very important characteristics that there is no reason the Republican Party should not be following today; one was he cared about America as a physical and spiritual space. It wasn't just about the money. It wasn't just about who could make money buying and selling what, who could make money extracting this or doing the other. He cared about America as a physical and a spiritual place. He would go out and camp in the forests with John Muir to get the experience and to embody the value of America as a physical and a spiritual space.

So that was one characteristic that was very important.

Here is the other one: He was willing to stand up against the big money. He was willing to tell the big money, basi-

cally: I am against you. I am willing to have a fight with you. The fact that you are big money is not alone enough for your argument to prevail with me. He went after the big trusts and he stuck up for the little guy against the big money. There is nothing that says the Republican Party couldn't do that again, although right now that is not their situation.

I mentioned earlier how we had a former Republican Presidential candidate who campaigned on climate change, how we have a Republican Senator who was a cosponsor of a climate fee bill, how we have a Republican Senator who voted for Waxman-Markey when he was in the House, how we have Republican Senators who have spoken for a carbon fee. All of that happened before 2010. What happened in 2010 that drove every Republican back underground on this issue? I will tell my colleagues what happened. The U.S. Supreme Court decided a case called *Citizens United*, and the instant they decided *Citizens United*, the Koch brothers and the big polluters put enormous amounts of money into elections. They didn't just put the money into elections between Republicans and Democrats, they put money into elections between Republicans and Republicans. They went into primary elections and they went after Republicans who were not consistent with their orthodoxy on climate change. Unless you are a denier, they either punish you or threaten you.

Since that time, that is why there has been silence on the Republican side. It is not because there is not a tradition of Republicans caring about the environment. The Environmental Protection Agency was established by a Republican President. Theodore Roosevelt was our greatest conservationist. There is a Republican tradition of standing up to the big money and sticking up for regular people but not since *Citizens United*, not since that baleful decision cast an absolute avalanche of dark money—of unlimited money and anonymous money—into the elections. I will speak more about that later, but that is what the problem has been. The only thing it takes to cure that is for the Republican Party to become more worried about the reality of climate change and the opinion of the American public than they are about the Koch brothers' millions and what is going to be spent against them.

If the American public makes it clear in the coming months that they are tired of Congress being stuck, if the American public decides it is time to wake up here in Congress, then the choice becomes inevitable. As the Senator from Hawaii said, the dance partners on the Republican side have to come off the wall and come back onto the dance floor. There is a conservative

way to do a carbon fee, as Secretary Schultz and Representative Inglis and Reagan's budget officer, Laffer, have all come forward to say.

Mr. SCHATZ. I would just add there is another motivation that I think will come to bear among all of our colleagues. Actually, the Presiding Officer spoke passionately along these lines, and that is our conscience. There is no doubt there are people of good will on both sides of the aisle in this Senate and in the House, and what is happening to people as a result of climate change pricks everyone's conscience.

I wish to talk a little bit about a small island state that probably most people have never heard of. It is called Kiribati. It has become a cautionary tale for low-lying places across the Asian Pacific region and the world. It is 900 miles south of Hilo. Kiribati's Fanning Atoll is the closest land feature to Hawaii, making Kiribati actually way closer to Hawaii than to California.

Put another way, the people of Kiribati are our neighbors. More than 100,000 people live on 21 of Kiribati's 33 corral islands. Thirty-two of those islands are low-lying atolls where most of the population lives just 2 meters above sea level.

The close proximity to the sea is already taking its toll, as rising seas contaminate water tables with salt water, denude fertile land, and decimate the few island crops the land can support.

Kiribati's President, Anote Tong, has taken great pains to focus attention on his country's plight. His sobering remarks from last November are worth recounting. He said:

The outer island communities have been affected, we have a village which has gone, we have a number of communities where the sea water has broken through into the freshwater pond and is now affecting the food crops.

That is happening on different islands, it's not an isolated event, serious inundation is being witnessed. These are the realities we are facing, whether they are climate change induced or not.

If you travel around Kiribati, it is impossible to miss the long stretch of seawalls people have built to protect their homes from the encroaching sea. Besides the sea level rise, low-lying atolls such as Kiribati face risk of being pummeled by the next tempest. Barely above the water's edge, places such as Kiribati face the risk of having storm surge and sea level rise amplified by the typhoon that roars through the Pacific, washing over runways, roads, and homes lying just above sea level.

The risks are even more acute for families living in these Pacific island states where, because of the limited space for agricultural and commercial development, population density remains extraordinarily high.

Take South Tarawa, the capital of Kiribati, where the population is close

to 5,000 people per square kilometer—one of the most densely populated areas on the planet. These densely populated areas make Mother Nature's destructive power even more devastating. The cards would appear to be stacked against countries like Kiribati, and not surprisingly outside observers have been less sanguine about its fate.

Journalist Jeffrey Goldberg described it this way:

The apocalypse could come even sooner for Kiribati if violent storms, of the sort that recently destroyed parts of the Philippines, strike its islands.

He said:

For all of these reasons, the 103,000 citizens of Kiribati may soon become refugees, perhaps the first mass movement of people fleeing the consequences of global warming rather than war or famine.

Almost 6,000 nautical miles away, in the Indian Ocean, the Maldives face a similar fate to Kiribati. The island state of nearly 400,000 faces risks of sea level rise and extreme weather events that threaten to inundate its communities with swells of storm surge that leave families and their loved ones literally underwater.

In 2009, leaders in the Maldives staged a dramatic demonstration ahead of the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, when they held a cabinet meeting on the bottom of the ocean floor to foreshadow their impending fate if the world failed to act in the face of climate change.

Maldives President Mohamed Nasheed told observers:

We're now actually trying to send our message, let the world know what is happening, and what will happen to the Maldives if climate change is not checked.

If the Maldives cannot be saved today we do not feel that there is much of a chance for the rest of the world.

Leaders spent 30 minutes on the ocean floor that day. When later asked about what would happen if the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen failed to produce an agreement among states, President Nasheed simply said: "We are going to die."

In addition to sea level rise, island nations face other immense challenges from climate change. Slight changes in ocean temperature from increased warming and increased ocean acidity, which scientists explain as a consequence of oceans observing more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, disproportionately affect communities living on island nations.

I would like to ask the Senator from Rhode Island to talk a little bit about ocean acidification and the impact it is having on fisheries in the Northeast. I know it is having a real cultural and economic and environmental impact, and I am not totally sure people are fully grasping how dangerous this is, not just from an ecological standpoint but from a food security standpoint, from a price of food standpoint, from the standpoint of jobs and the econ-

omy. I am hoping the Senator from Rhode Island can elucidate this.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I would love to. But before I do that let me follow up on the point Senator SCHATZ was making because you do not have to go to far-away island nations to see people who are being hurt by rising sea levels and eroding shorelines. You do not have to go to island nations. You can go to Rhode Island and you can see it.

Here is a photograph of some homes at Roy Carpenter's Beach on the south shore coast of Rhode Island in Washington County after Hurricane Sandy.

This is Governor Chafee, former Senator Chafee, who used to serve in this body. These homes—I remember speaking to a lady who was with us that day, and I do not remember if it was this house in the picture or this house that was hers. But she had started coming as a very little girl. Her childhood memories were on this beach. This house used to have a lawn in front of it. She can remember playing badminton on the lawn in front of her house. On the other side of the lawn was a road—just a dirt road—so cars could come in and out. On the other side of the road was a parking lot, where the cars could park, and on the other side of the parking lot began the beach.

She can remember, as many little children who have been to the beach can remember, that when that hot Sun beats down on the sand, it gets hot, and on the child's little feet that heat can hurt. So she would have to run. She would have to run across this long, expansive beach. She can remember the distance running across the hot sand until her feet got into the cool, sparkling waters of the ocean.

Those were her memories of a Rhode Island summer: playing on the lawn, seeing the cars come to the beach, running across the hot sand to the cool water.

In her lifetime the beach is gone, the parking lot is gone, the road is gone, the lawn is gone, and the ocean is tearing out the underpinnings of these homes.

You can go as far away from Rhode Island in the United States as you can get on the mainland and where do you end up? Alaska. What do you see? A very similar phenomenon of houses falling into the sea. This is a town called Shishmaref. It is a little bit different in Alaska as to the reasons. It is often because the ice that protects the shore from winter storms—because the waves break against the ice and not the shore—the ice is not there. The ice has melted away. So now the winter storms beat directly against the shore.

There are villages like Shishmaref that have been at their location for as long as the memories and the traditions of the indigenous tribes who live there go. For as long as the memory of man runneth in those areas, those vil-

lages have been there. But now, in a generation, they are going.

We see it in comparisons like this. This was, again, after Sandy. Here is a beachfront building at the South Kingstown Town Beach in Rhode Island. You can see the ocean right up against it.

That is what it used to look like not too long ago, as shown in this picture, in just 1994. This building is that building now shown in this other picture. This walkway is that walkway. As you can see, this walkway was broken up by the storm. The ocean has now come to here. The entire beach has gone.

So we see it in Rhode Island, I say to the Senator, as much as we do in far-away island kingdoms. But to the Senator's point about acidification, the seas are an honest witness. The oceans do not lie. You can measure what the oceans are telling us about climate change, and they are telling us they are getting warmer. It is not complicated. You measure that with a thermometer. They are getting bigger, higher. The law of thermal expansion means that when you warm fluids, they expand and the seas, therefore, rise. You measure that with, more or less, the equivalent of a yardstick. Thermometers and yardsticks—it is not complicated. It is undeniable.

The third piece, as the Senator mentioned, is ocean acidification, which everybody who has an aquarium knows how to measure acidity. It is a litmus test. You can do it in any laboratory. You do it in school. It is not complicated. You can take measurements like that of the ocean and you can see it is acidifying.

It is acidifying for very simple reasons. One-third of the carbon that goes into our atmosphere gets absorbed by the oceans. Ninety percent of the heat from climate change gets absorbed into the oceans; 30 percent of the carbon. The oceans bear witness to what is happening, and right now, if you look at the rate at which the oceans are acidifying, it is happening—here is a graphic on the effects. Where does the heat go? Mr. President, 93.4 percent goes into the ocean; 2.3 percent goes into the atmosphere. The oceans are getting bombarded with this heat, and they are also acidifying.

Mr. SCHATZ. I ask the Senator, what does that mean as a practical matter for the fisheries industry, for people who like to eat fish? What is the impact of ocean acidification? Because the Senator has, in very plain language, explained the science of this.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Yes.

Mr. SCHATZ. But what does this mean to a regular person?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. When the carbon is absorbed by the ocean, it makes it more acidic; and when the ocean becomes more acidic, it makes it more difficult for all the little critters that live in the oceans that have a shell to

make that shell. Because shells are made out of something called calcium carbonate, and the calcium carbonate is eaten away by acidic waters. So it means a small creature such as a pteropod has a harder time making its little shell, so they do not grow as well, and ultimately they could be eliminated by acidified waters.

Who cares about the humble pteropod? Most people have never heard of the humble pteropod. I will tell you who cares about the humble pteropod. Salmon care about the pteropod. For some species, it is a huge part of their diet.

So if they are not there, then the salmon are in trouble. If the salmon are in trouble, the salmon fisherman and the salmon industry are in trouble. It really hit home on the west coast of America a few years ago when oyster fisheries—on the coast of Washington I think it was, but Oregon was hit as well—literally got wiped out when a sudden upwelling of Pacific waters that had become heavily acidified washed into where the young oysters were being grown. The waters were so acidic that the little baby oysters, the little spat, could not grow their shells. The water was too acidic for them to grow their shells.

Again, you can say: Who cares about an oyster? Well, people who grow oysters care a lot about them. It is a big industry in a lot of places. We are actually rather proud of our Rhode Island oysters.

Mr. SCHATZ. You should be proud of your Rhode Island oysters. I care about oysters.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I will turn it back to you. Because one of the things that Hawaii is famous for that we do not have much of in Rhode Island is tropical coral reefs. Coral reefs are affected by acidification, by runoff, by warming, and they can bleach. When they do, what once was a healthy reef, rich with fish, a nursery for all of the species that we end up consuming, can end up looking like this, dead remnants of what was once living coral. I know Hawaii faces that problem. So why don't I turn to you to discuss that.

Mr. SCHATZ. Well, it is really important to dwell on the question of what is happening to our oceans, not just because it is critically important but because I think that because it is more difficult to see it does not get enough attention. What is happening to our fisheries is every bit as drastic, in some cases more drastic, than what is happening in our agricultural sector. When there is a drought or when there is difficulty in our agricultural sector, it is ably represented in the Senate by its able home State Senators. Yet when there is a fisheries difficulty, it is more difficult to pin down. It does not necessarily become the new story a drought or any difficulty in a growing season may create.

This is something we have to talk about both on the recreational fisherman side as well as on the commercial fishing side. I know that in a lot of States in the Southeast, in the northeast, on the west coast and certainly in Hawaii, people who fish, maybe recreationally, maybe for subsistence, or maybe as a commercial venture, it is really part and parcel of the culture of the place. It is not purely an economic issue, it is something you do with your children and their children. It is part of where you live. It is part of what it means to be from Hawaii or from Louisiana or from Florida or from Rhode Island. This is part of the American experience.

To the degree and extent we are diminishing that experience, setting aside the economics for the moment, that is very significant. I know people across the State of Hawaii grew up fishing and treasure that opportunity to share what is in the ocean with their families.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. May I tell you story about a Rhode Island fisherman. There is a fishing captain, Christopher Brown, who came recently to testify before the Environment and Public Works Committee. He has been fishing all of his life. He is a real Rhode Island fisherman. He used to go out with his dad, who was a Rhode Island fisherman. When he was probably 20 years old, he built himself a fishing boat and then went out and began fishing on his own. He fished that fishing boat he built for 30 years. He is the real deal when it comes to fishing.

He can remember as a boy fishing offshore with his dad, dragging nets behind them, trawlers. Now he goes out to those same waters, and he gets completely different fish. He says he pulled up a net full of spot. When he was out with his dad, his dad virtually never saw a spot. He said now he is catching fish like grouper and tarpon that his dad never saw in his life. The waters are changing.

When you have regulations over what you can and cannot catch that are not keeping up with the changing fisheries, it is a nightmare for fishermen. So we are going to do our best to update our fisheries laws, but the underlying problem is that fisheries that have existed for as long as Rhode Island fishermen remember them are changing in unprecedented ways.

I will close. As one fisherman said to me when he came to visit here in Washington maybe a year ago, he said something unforgettable. He said, "Sheldon, it's getting weird out there."

Mr. SCHATZ. I thank the Senator from Rhode Island.

I am going to talk about something that I think is astonishing. The Senator from New Mexico earlier talked about this, but this is mind-boggling to me, and it may be a surprise that the Senator from Hawaii is talking about

this. I have a 10-year-old son and a 6-year-old daughter. It has been at least that long since I have been snowboarding, but I enjoyed it when I was a lot younger and my knees were better. But what is happening to winter recreation is really bad news. One source states that roughly 23 million people participate in winter sporting activities, adding \$12 billion to the economy and employing almost 212,000 people. Roughly 20 million Americans over the age of 6 ski or snowboard. The industry generates more than \$11 billion across 38 States.

You do not have to be a climate scientist to recognize that skiers are dependent upon consistent, plentiful snow. You do not have to be an economist to realize that ski areas are only sustainable in places with plentiful snow and cold weather, aside perhaps from the indoor ski slopes in certain places such as Dubai.

So what does it tell you when you see ski resorts struggling to meet their bottom lines due to winters so warm that even with enormous artificial snow systems, they cannot keep snow on their mountain? Mountains cannot move. They cannot migrate. So when the climate warms, ski resorts that depend on them face difficult choices, if they have any choice at all.

According to one study on the impact of climate change on the ski and snowboard industry, more than half of all sky resorts in the northeast will no longer be viable by 2039. I will repeat that. More than half of all ski resorts in the northeast will no longer be viable by 2039.

Another study of Washington State ski resorts found that almost 13 percent of the ski areas in the Cascades and fully 61 percent of the ski areas in the Olympic mountain range are at risk from the future effects of climate change.

Another study of ski areas in southern Ontario Canada cautioned that by the year 2080, with current snow-making technology, the ski season will be reduced by anywhere from 11 to 50 percent. Operators of ski areas do not have too many ways to adapt. They can move their runs to north-facing slopes, landscape trails to reduce the need for snowpack, and move to higher altitudes. All of these efforts, however, involve massive capital investments. It is difficult to know with certainty if these changes are real solutions or just stopgap.

Of course, skiing and snowboarding are just two examples of outdoor recreational activities that are increasingly in peril as a result of future climate change. Sportsmen such as hunters and fishers should keep a watchful eye on the changing climate as well. We all know that Americans in every State love to hunt and fish. In 2011, almost 14 million people, or 6 percent of the United States population 16 years

old and older, went hunting. Hunters spent \$34 billion on trips, equipment, and licenses. More than 33 million people 16 and older fished in 2011, spending almost \$42 billion on trips, equipment, licenses, and other items. As the climate warms, hunters and anglers will see decreased opportunities as a result of lower streamflows, population declines, and changing migration patterns.

Organizations such as the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership which exist to promote hunting and fishing recognize this trend and believe it is in the best interest of the hunting and fishing communities to take action on climate change. The organization's director, Bill Geer, published a cautionary note in 2012 that is worth recounting:

Contentious or not, climate change is real, and it is already affecting our natural resources, fish and wildlife and outdoor opportunities. At the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership we aim to educate sportsmen about the effects of climate change and ensure sportsman involvement in mitigation efforts.

This is another example of conservatives, of independents, of progressives, of basically everybody outside of the four corners of the U.S. Capitol recognizing that is what is actually happening is actually happening. It is only in the four corners of this Capitol that the debate rages on, as if we can ignore the facts of the matter. This is no longer confined to conservation organizations or people who are concerned primarily with biological diversity.

Look, I am a hiker. I am a surfer. I love Hawaii's natural environment, in particular. So that is the origin of my passion for this issue. But the way this issue has evolved, it is way beyond any of those questions. It is national security; it is economic security; it is our ability to grow our own food and catch our own protein; it is literally the American way of life that is at stake here.

I think the reason we have had such great participation last night and well into the morning is because there is a growing recognition on the left, right, and center that we have got to take action.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. To follow up on Senator SCHATZ's point in terms of the bipartisanship we can hope for here sooner or later, on the skiing question and snowboarding question that was raised, the Park City Foundation in Utah, which runs all of the Park City resorts, the Park City Foundation in Utah predicts an annual local temperature increase of 6.8 degrees Fahrenheit by 2075. That would cause a complete loss of snowpack in the lower Park City resort area—a complete loss of snowpack. The foundation—this Utah foundation—estimates it will result in thousands of lost jobs, tens of millions in lost earnings, and hundreds of millions in lost economic growth.

We have to be able to find a way to work with Senators from Utah on that. The point that Senator SCHATZ made about the northeast comes home because when you drill down into the report a little further, they say the number of economically viable ski locations in New Hampshire and Maine will be cut in half; that skiing in New York will be cut by three-quarters. I do not know what that does to skiing in New Jersey, but I will say that they said there will be no ski areas in Connecticut or Massachusetts. They overlooked Rhode Island. They did not mention Rhode Island. But I can promise you, knowing geography, if there is no ski area that can survive in Connecticut or Massachusetts, then Yawgoo Valley in Rhode Island is in trouble. That is our sky slope. So this really does hit home.

I want to mention, the bicameral task force that HENRY WAXMAN and I run brought in all of the major sports leagues to talk about how climate change is affecting their sports. We had the National Basketball Association, we had Major League Baseball, we had the U.S. Olympic Committee, we had the National Football League and the National Hockey League. They all agreed we need to take action on climate change. In particular, the NHL talked about the history of their sport, with kids growing up and playing on frozen ponds. Many of those frozen ponds do not freeze any longer or they freeze so little that a child does not have a chance to learn to skate and develop that skill out on the pond. So the NHL has been active. I appreciate that.

The other point I wanted to mention is a lot of these winter sports are part of the Winter Olympics. There was a study done by the University of Waterloo that took a look at all of the different locations in which there have been Winter Olympics, all of the way up to Sochi. The green shows that from 1981 to 2010, all of these locations for the Winter Olympics were climate reliable for snow conditions.

Then they run a couple of different scenarios, 2050s with low emissions, 2050s with high emission; 2080s with low emissions, 2080s with high carbon emissions; and one by one the sites of previous Winter Olympics fall away as reasonable sites. If we go to the 2050s low-emissions scenario, there goes Sochi and there goes Grenoble. If we go a little bit further, Vancouver, Squaw Valley, Sarajevo are in trouble. When we go to this part of the chart, a number of the sites where we have had Winter Olympics are no longer climate suitable for Winter Olympics, including Lillehammer, Nagano, Torino, Innsbruck, Oslo, Sarajevo, Squaw Valley, Vancouver, Chamonix, Grenoble, and on.

So the people who are involved in these winter sports know about this. One hundred athletes of the Sochi

Olympics from 10 different nations wrote a letter saying we have to take climate change seriously. They particularly focused on the small towns in the mountains where skiers and snowboarders train and where the economy is based on snowboarding, skiing, and winter sports, and the devastation that would happen in those small towns if that economy collapsed because of climate change.

I yield to the Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. I thank the Senator from Rhode Island.

I would like to offer a personal story from a young lady in Hawaii because I think it is very important to think of this in generational terms. Her name is Kara Tanaka, and she is a senior at a school called Hanalani. She wrote me a letter, and I will read it into the RECORD.

She states:

Recently, I read that Hawaii is one of two destinations being considered for the World Conservation Congress.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature is the organization that convenes this meeting which brings together nations to discuss conservation on a global scale.

As this meeting has never been held in the US, Hawaii hopes to be selected as the host location. For many reasons, Hawaii is the perfect place to hold this meeting.

Hawaii is the most remote set of islands in the world and has the most concentrated examples of flora and fauna that are in jeopardy in the United States, our islands could be subjected to rising waters caused by global warming.

(Mr. MURPHY assumed the Chair.)

Continuing:

The outer reefs that protect our shores will be in crisis if the current environmental challenges are not addressed and solutions enacted upon.

I have been blessed in growing up on the north shore of Oahu and have experienced the beautiful scenery of nature which surrounds me.

As a first generation Japanese American, my 92 year old grandpa loves to tell me stories about spending his youth living on the plantation fields in Mokuleia. During our early morning hikes up Peacock Flats and lunches on the beach, my grandpa enjoys telling me about all the edible plants we walk by and can identify all the animals that we hear and see.

My grandpa also shares with me the things that are no longer around: dry streams, less wildlife, and lower water levels. Although there may be other factors affecting the environment, I truly believe that climate change is a major reason causing these changes.

For both my grandpa and me, climate change is real, he sees the changes. It is a very important thing because Hawaii's wildlife is a very sentimental and beautiful part of our life.

Scientists tell us that the effect of climate change could be catastrophic.

For example, the rising temperatures will cause loss of habitat, there will be changes in water supply, and it could push certain species to the endangered species list. The animals my grandpa and I look and hear for may soon no longer be there at all.

In addition, I can't even imagine how it will be like if our coral reefs die from global

warming. Beach erosions will multiply rapidly and people's homes will be prone to destruction. Hawaii's beaches could be gone. Not only would this affect Hawaii's beauty, but it would affect Hawaii's economy because of the heavy reliance on tourism. Climate change is real and in need of full attention.

I have seen many programs for sustainability in my community from the recently built wind turbines by my house to programs in elementary schools, like Aina in the Schools, that have raised the awareness of climate change.

I believe that there needs to be more research about climate change and its effect on the environment. When I become a parent, I hope I can share the same sounds and sights that my Grandpa has shared with me, to experience wildlife with my children rather than teach them how the environment could have been or was like before.

Kara's words, spoken from her heart, reflect the deepest feelings of her generation, not only in Hawaii but throughout the United States. I repeat the most resonant of her thoughts:

When I become a parent, I hope I can share the same sounds and sights that my Grandpa has shared with me.

Indeed, Hawaii has a remarkably beautiful environment. Yet I think we all agree that throughout our home States, from sea to shining sea, there are lands that define who we are and that call upon us to teach what is right and to rightfully protect them.

These thoughts from Kara inspire me. I think they inspire all of us. There is a Kara Tanaka in every community who inspires us to take action. It is time to wake up. That is why we are up for climate, and that is why we are in this fight.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. If I may, let me ask people who are listening to think back in time. Think back in time to many years ago when Abraham Lincoln was President of the United States, when this room was just under construction and soldiers coming down occupied it, camped here, camped in the lounge, and actually made fires in the lounge across the way to cook their bacon. One could hear cannon fire from the Capitol. The Civil War was happening in America.

When that took place, there was a scientist named John Tyndall who delivered a paper that showed that when you added carbon dioxide to the atmosphere, it warmed the Earth. That is how long it has been that we have known that when you add carbon dioxide to the atmosphere, it warms the Earth.

Since that time, we have probably added close on 2,000 gigatons, 2,000 billion tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. What happens when we do that? This goes back to 800,000 BC. That is nearly 1 million years. We can see that in the time we have measured here, 800,000 years, there has been a very clear range of carbon concentration in the planet.

We kicked in around 200,000 years ago as human beings. This is about where

homo sapiens showed up. So long before there were homo sapiens, the Earth stayed between about 170 and 300 parts per million of carbon dioxide. For every single year human beings have inhabited this planet, we stayed within that window. But then that 2,000 gigatons started to kick in, and here it goes, up through 250, up through 300, up through 350, and for the first time it hit 400 parts per million. So that is very real.

If people are worried about deniers out there, we can't deny Tyndall's theory. Nobody denies that when we add carbon dioxide to the atmosphere, it has this effect. Nobody denies that we have put roughly close on 2,000 gigatons of carbon into the atmosphere since then, and nobody denies these measurements. These are measurements. This isn't theory; these are measurements.

It is one thing if the Republican Party wants to be the party that is against science. I doubt they want to go so far as to be the party that is against measurement, but here we are at 400.

Sure enough, some strange behavior is showing up, and this shows where all the land and ocean temperature anomalies are showing up. If we look, starting in 1880 it goes from blue—the cold anomalies—to red, and we can see a very distinct line.

People who look at it say: Well, that is that undeniable climate change happening. That is that 400 parts per million. That is the increase in carbon dioxide.

How many people think that? Well, about 14,000 peer-reviewed articles think that; 24 reject global warming. That is the little red line if you are comparing the two. The blue is the universe of peer-reviewed articles on climate change, and that tiny little red line is the 24 out of 14,000 who reject climate change.

I ask my friends on the other side of the aisle, you are betting the reputation of the Republican Party on your current de facto premise that climate change isn't real? Do you really want to take a 24 out of 14,000 article bet? Is that the smart place to put the reputation and the honor of the Republican Party? I don't think so.

That is another reason I am confident we can get to a bipartisan solution. I don't think it is smart for Republicans to take the reputation and honor of their party and bet it on a theory that is 24 out of 14,000.

If we look a little bit behind the climate denial operation, we will see that it is actually very sketchy. It is very sketchy. A lot of these organizations have a tradition of denial. They denied that the ozone hole was growing. They denied that tobacco caused cancer. Heck, some of them probably even denied that seatbelts made auto travel safer. That has been their industry.

They have been in the denial industry. But that is a dangerous place to be, particularly because the oceans don't lie. The oceans tell the story, and they tell it in ways we can't deny.

It is big—what happens in the oceans—because 93 percent of the heat goes into the oceans. What do we see? We know perfectly well what happens to liquids when they get warmer. That is a law of science. It is called the law of thermal expansion. When liquids get bigger—get warmer, they get bigger. Sure enough, when the ocean gets bigger, the sea level rises.

Here is a time series showing the sea level rise taking place.

So we have the principle of carbon dioxide warming the temperature of the Earth. We have the addition of the carbon dioxide. We have the measurement in the atmosphere of the effect of that addition. We have the laws of nature which show what happens when the ocean warms and rises. Then we go back out, measure, and we see it coming through exactly as predicted.

By the way, it is 93 percent of the heat, but it is 30 percent of the carbon.

We can go into a regular chemistry lab and we can do the experiment of adding carbon dioxide to saltwater and watching its acidification go up. Sure enough, we can go to the ocean and do this as well. Again, this isn't theory; this is measurement.

Does the Republican Party want to be the party that doesn't just deny science but denies measurement? I don't think so. There is no future in that.

Responsible people who back the Republican Party need to bring their party back from the brink of one of the most embarrassing fiascos any political party could get itself into.

Mr. SCHATZ. If I may, the Senator from Rhode Island has elucidated the problem with respect to climate change deniers. I wish to read a few quotes from Members of Congress, unfortunately. They would be funny if they weren't so alarming. These are direct quotes from Members of Congress who are denying the reality of climate change.

The first quote: Is there some thought being given to subsidizing the clearing of rain forests in order for some countries to eliminate that production of greenhouse gases?

Second quote: We don't know what those other cycles were caused by in the past. It could be dinosaur flatulence, you know, or who knows. Global warming is a total fraud, and it is being designed because what we have got is you have got—

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. May the record reflect that this is perhaps the first reference in the history of the Senate to dinosaur flatulence.

Mr. SCHATZ. I would hope.

Global warming is a total fraud, and it is being designed because what you

have got is you have got liberals who get elected at the local levels, want State government to do the work and let them make the decisions. Then at the State level they want the Federal Government to do it, and at the Federal Government they want to create global government to control our lives.

Here is one about global climate change.

It could just be a shift on the axis.

I don't even know what that means. And they are a little humorous except these are sitting decisionmakers. So it is time to wake up. It is time for those folks who are denying the reality of climate change to move off of their position, and for those who are quietly agreeing with us about the sciences but not stepping forward and showing leadership to show leadership.

Frankly, I think it is time for those of us who have been passionate about this issue to work together and to redouble our efforts. But I have 20 or 30 pages worth of quite alarming quotes. Again, they would be funny if they weren't from sitting decisionmakers who have real authority over this question.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The one we hear the most often right now is: Don't worry, climate change has leveled off. Global warming and the temperature increases have leveled off.

Well, as you just saw, 93 percent of the heat goes into the ocean. So if you are measuring just the atmosphere, a tiny wobble in the 93-percent share the oceans take up will make a massive effect in the atmosphere.

But more to the point, if you take a graph, here is the leveling they show over the last 15 years. The problem is, if you go back through the data, you can show it leveled here, and then it leveled here, and then it leveled here, and then it leveled here, and then it leveled here. There are constant levels in an upward-going staircase. If you cherry-pick the data, you can say: OK, it has gotten level for that period. But if you really look at the trend of the identical data, that is the real trend. That is the actual trendline through the data.

So when somebody comes to you and says: Ignore that trendline; instead look at it having gotten flat. And by the way, forget all those other times it got flat before. What do you think about somebody who makes an argument to you like that. It is a ridiculous argument. It ruins the credibility of the person who makes it. How you can believe that is astonishing.

Mr. SCHATZ. I think the Senator is exactly right. In some ways that is a more dangerous argument than some of the other denier arguments, because it sounds like science. It is not, but it sounds like science.

But the most recent, and in my view most absurd, and we have now I think seen it for three or four winters, is

every time there is snow—and at first I thought it was sort of a little jab, a little rhetorical joke—but they are actually saying that because it was snowing last week there must not be climate change. That is an argument they are relying upon.

I think because in the face of actual evidence they are now having to rely on anecdotes, on the fact that it is icy in Antarctica or there was a snowstorm in DC, or it was unseasonably cold for a weekend in Georgia or whatever it may be, but to rely on individual anecdotes about the weather I think is pretty tough stuff to take and I want to make sure we don't let that stand; that the idea you get to look out the window and understand what is happening with the climate is a lack of understanding about the climate.

Climate is long-term patterns over large swaths of land or ocean. The weather is you get to check it on your iPhone app tomorrow morning. That is the weather. It is not the climate. It may or may not be hot or cold tomorrow. That doesn't tell you a thing about what is happening to climate change. And to the extent someone wants to pick off a day and say: Look, it is 32 degrees in Seattle and, therefore, climate change is not real, I don't think anybody actually believes that argument. But it is important the American public realizes how specious that claim is.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Climate science doesn't tell you that every day is going to get a tiny little bit warmer. Climate science tells you that putting that extra energy into the system will make the weather extremes worse, both warmer and colder. So the fact there have been cold snaps is actually perfectly consistent with climate science. Not only does that argument ignore the difference between weather and climate, it also takes advantage of people who haven't drilled into the climate science. Because if you knew the least little bit about the underlying science, you would know the point made no sense because that is exactly what the people who predict global warming predicted would happen. If anything, it confirms the argument that people are trying to rebut. So it really, really is a dishonest argument.

Mr. BOOKER. Mr. President, may I ask a question of the Senator from Rhode Island.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey is recognized.

Mr. BOOKER. There are a number of issues here and the first is: Are temperatures going up? And for me, the air temperature is increasing. We have objective measurements on that. Ocean temperatures are increasing. We have objective measurements on that. The ocean is becoming more acidic. We have objective measurements of that. Sea levels are rising because of the expansion of warming oceans. Obviously,

that is just basic, basic science we learned in our earlier years. The amount of land covered in snow is decreasing in the northern hemisphere. We have evidence of that. Glaciers are melting away. There is evidence of that. Arctic sea ice is decreasing. We have evidence of that. Again, we see in New Jersey evidence of measurements of these things happening.

Scientists at Tufts and Rutgers estimate the New Jersey shore will experience a sea level rise of 1.5 feet by 2050. This is based upon what is happening right now that they can measure. The projections for the New Jersey coast are higher than projected for average sea levels that rise globally. The projected sea level rise of 1.5 feet by 2050 for the New Jersey coast in places such as Atlantic City, if there were a 10-year storm—not a 50-year storm or a 100-year storm, but just the scale of a storm that, on average, we see every 10 years—flood levels from that storm would be worse than any flooding that has ever been seen in Atlantic City, even worse than those from Superstorm Sandy.

The temperature issues in New Jersey are the same as well. In New Jersey, the statewide average temperature in 2012 was the highest in 118 years of recording it. Nine of the ten warmest calendar years on record in New Jersey as an objective measurement have occurred since 1990, and the five warmest years have occurred since 1998. Scientists predict that by 2050 summer temperatures in New Jersey will regularly surpass the current hottest temperatures on record, making the State begin to have more such as that of Alabama. I know Senator SESSIONS and Senator SHELBY can tell me a lot about those temperatures, but that is not the New Jersey we know.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. We are seeing the same thing in Rhode Island. Indeed, Newport, RI, is known for being a summer destination. The first summer visitors to Newport, RI, the first people who made it the summer capital of the United States were traders from the Carolinas, who sailed up the coast with their families to get away from the baking fetid heat of the Carolinas and enjoy the cool shores of Narragansett Bay.

Well, what is happening is that due to climate change and the warming climate, that very climate those Carolina traders sailed up to Newport, RI, to get away from is inching its way up the coast and will soon be the climate in Newport, RI.

Mr. BOOKER. So I guess my question is—first of all, there is no denying what is happening. The bait we often get pulled into, by using a ridiculous paucity of a study, as compared to the grand total of the other studies, is what is causing this. Is it manmade or is this some regular fluctuation? But let us hold that in abeyance for a second, that question, and just deal with

what we talked earlier about—the military that deals with the fierce urgency of now. Even not dealing with the question of how this issue is created, we should be doing things right now to deal with the consequences—investments in resiliency and adaptability along our coasts. There is so much we should be compromising on both sides of the aisle. If they want to argue about what is causing it, that is an argument we should take, and I believe we will win, but absent that, even if you say these trends are happening, now what are we going to do as a country? Nothing or are we going to prepare for that? Isn't there a lot of action we can take even before we get to the argument of whether this was manmade? Because these are trends that are happening and there are things we should be doing about it.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The Senator knows better than I what is happening in New Jersey. You know how hard New York and New Jersey in particular were hit by Sandy. You have our sympathies, because we had some Sandy damage in Rhode Island but we just caught a glancing blow. The full thrust of that hit was on New York and New Jersey, and you guys paid the price.

In the recovery, FEMA and other Federal agencies and your State agencies are starting to look at this in a whole new way. They are saying: We can't build back the same. The same didn't work last time. And by the way, with that sea level rising, the same is probably going to not only not be enough for the last time, it is going to be way less than is necessary for next time. So the very way in which the U.S. Government, the State of New York government, the State of New Jersey government, the city of New York government are taking a look at how they respond to Sandy and how they recover and how they rebuild for the future is a perfect living example of the point my colleague is making. For that purpose, it doesn't matter whether this is manmade. The fact that it is happening, the fact you can predict it means it would be reckless and foolish not to take that into account as you rebuild.

Mr. BOOKER. Right. So that is sort of the frustrating thing for me. We see these challenges mounting up all around us and we still do nothing. It reminds me of this crazy story my brother told me when I was a young guy. I think originally it was a story from Lou Holtz. You will appreciate this, because if you are in it, doing nothing is not an option.

This is a story of a very wealthy man who had no heirs to leave his money to. So he lined up a whole bunch of young strapping guys in front of his big old Olympic-sized pool with a cover over it and said: OK, anybody who can swim across this pool gets my inheritance. You are the ones. So all these young

men got ready to jump across the pool, and he pushed the button, the pool cover opened, and there in the water were snakes and alligators and piranhas, and a very mean, vicious-looking duck.

Basically he waited there, and all the men now backed off and didn't do anything. He finally had enough of it and said: Aw, shucks, and turned around. But just as he walked away, thinking none of those young men were going to be up to the challenge, he hears this big splash. He turns around and he sees navigating across the pool the youngest of all the men—a guy the age of Senator SCHATZ—navigating through this water and battling alligators, pushing back the poisonous snakes, kicking back piranhas, dodging that vicious-looking duck, working his way over, and heaving himself onto the other end of the pool. He is now bloodied and tired and breathing hard, and the man runs over and says: I can't believe it, boy. You did it. I can't believe it. You did it. Anything you want, it is yours. Anything you want, it is yours.

The young man looks up at the guy and says: Well, all I want is to know who pushed me.

I asked my brother, after he told me the story, what is the moral of the story? He said: CORY, the moral of the story is: If you are in it, you don't do nothing. If you have challenges up to your neck, you don't do nothing. You keep moving across those challenges.

So my colleague's point is excellent, that we are at a point in America where we see clearly the challenges we are facing, but right now, because of a deadlocked legislature, we are not doing that much. The cost of inaction we can actually calculate by watching countries around us begin to advance the ball down the field in innovation and new technologies that can help reduce the dependency on carbon fuels. We see vulnerabilities being created from Hawaii to New Jersey, up and down the east coast and the west coast that we are not doing anything about. Lacking the investments and that kind of resiliency will cost us more in the long run.

The point I am trying to make is, when we hear from the military that we need to do work and they are starting to do things to learn how to run their planes on biofuels and learn how to better secure property, when we hear from people in industries who say we have to be ahead of the curve on innovation, ahead of the curve on these new technologies other countries are challenging us on, when we hear even on the issue of job creation and government responsibility in terms of saving taxpayer dollars, retrofitting buildings, lowering energy costs, helping people save more money and keep it there—all of these things should be enough alone to compel us to act before we even get to the debate about what is causing this.

So what I am asking is, understanding that debate, having been in the Senate only for about 4 months, where is the bipartisan work on what is factually happening—warming seas, rising sea levels and the obvious stuff knowing these challenges are there? Why aren't we doing more as a Nation to wake folks up and invest in what we know will make us a better, stronger, and safer Nation?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The bipartisan work I think is mostly being done at the local level—at the level of Governors and mayors, at the level of local city councils.

One example which comes to mind is the City of Miami. Miami is really ground zero for climate change. On high-tide days, their streets already flood with water which is pushing up through what should be ways for water to flow off the streets but comes up into the streets—saltwater. The freshwater supply is already being inundated by saltwater as it pushes through the porous limestone the Miami area is built on. They realize they have a real problem. So four county governments came together to deal with this. The four counties are led two by Democrats and two by Republicans.

I mentioned earlier we used to have bipartisanship on this issue until Citizens United was decided by the Supreme Courts, until all the big money came in, until all the dark money came in, until people on the Republican side who were willing to speak up about climate change were punished and threatened so badly they could no longer do it. The Citizens United effect hasn't worked its way down to Governors and counties, so they still see the real action.

I think the Senator as a mayor will also remember there were reality-based problems to be dealt with—not every day but 10 times a day or 15 times a day.

Abraham Lincoln in the movie "Lincoln" said: I like to get my public opinion bath by having real people in. The Senator got a reality bath every day as mayor, and every mayor out there is getting a reality bath every day. Here, we don't deal with that. Here, it is different. We don't have to live in the same real world. We live in a more political world. So people can say things which are, frankly, irresponsible, untrue, and get away with it longer. The intimidation factor of big money is worse here.

So where is the bipartisanship? It will be back here. It is inevitable. But we know there can be bipartisanship here by looking at bipartisanship live and healthy and in action on climate at the municipal, State, and county level.

Mr. BOOKER. I share the Senator's sense of hope about our ability to come together as a country, crisis after crisis, generation after generation, and we

come here to do the right thing. I know this from the history my parents and grandparents have talked to me about—whether it was against an external threat of fascism, and how folks pulled together, from victory gardens and conserving, to people who stormed beaches in Normandy. I know for the civil rights movement we came together as a Nation and overcame those people who were trying to deny equal rights and equal opportunity in this country. It is those past victories which fuel my hopes about the present.

We as a Nation have already set limits for arsenic, mercury, lead, and other types of pollution. We have already done that and said if a private company is going to spew this filth into our climate, they are going to have to face limitations and take responsibility for those actions. In other words, they are going to have to internalize the costs and not externalize them, not put the burden on people. Again, I have seen this in countless cities across America where, when we didn't do that, people were still paying the price in the money we spent here in the Federal Government for brownfield remediation and public tax dollars paying for the cleanup of land often in urban spaces which other people dirtied up. So it is just common sense not to allow polluters to release unlimited amounts of pollutants in the air.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. It is a win. The only thing I would distinguish a little bit is the example of the boy who went into the pool filled with piranhas and alligators and snakes.

Mr. BOOKER. Don't forget about the duck.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. And the particularly vicious looking duck. The solution on climate is not the equivalent of piranhas, alligators, snakes, and a vicious duck. The solution on climate is actually a triple win.

The Senator mentioned the earlier limits on pollutants. We found over and over that despite the regular claims by the industry that this was going to be the end of civilization as we know it and an economic catastrophe would ensue, when we actually look back, people saved money because of the harm they were spared. I think the Clean Air Act is \$30 saved for every \$1 we had to invest in cleaning up. So the limits actually saved money.

In this case, we will add—as the Senator mentioned before—the growth in new industries, the \$6 trillion clean-energy industry we want to be in rather than trailing behind and buying from China. Finally, if we believe in market theory, if we believe markets are the most efficient way to make choices, then we have to set up a market which is a fair one. This business the Senator mentioned of a business being able to externalize its costs by saying, “That is not my responsibility. I don't have to pay for that. I am just going to

dump it.” This is no more fair than a New Jersey neighbor or a Hawaii neighbor or a Connecticut neighbor or a Rhode Island neighbor, instead of cleaning up their lawn, just shoveling their leaves over to the next guy's wall. We don't get to do that. We are responsible for cleaning up our own lawn when the leaves fall, in the same way these companies that are making this mess are responsible for cleaning it up.

So it is actually a triple win. We have markets which work correctly, limits which save money for people in the long run, and the proper investment in green industries which are going to grow. So if that is alligators, snakes, and piranhas, I think it is the exact opposite. It is abundance and opportunity and innovation.

Mr. BOOKER. Again, the Senator said it. On the local level, dealing with the urgencies of the moment, we don't have time to philosophize and don't have time for politics. We have to solve problems. The Senator's point is something I experienced as a mayor on multiple occasions. We got teenagers and trained them in solar panel installation. What happened to the buildings? It reduced the costs. People saved money. Our surrounding environment actually improved, burning less fossil fuels, putting less carbon in the air.

Every time we attended to our environment, we were able to find wins. We looked at that and said: Let's create multiple farms and create more locally-grown food. We found a way to address crime issues in our city.

By the way, there are studies which show cities with more trees and plant life and what have you often see some correlations with crime. We did it in a different way. We created greenfields, planting food, locally-grown produce, able to source it to restaurants over in New York across the Hudson River. But what excited me is we created a re-entry program for men and women coming home from prison.

So this is the creativity we see in industry and local communities, people realizing that this is not an either-or choice, the economy or the environment. No. That is a false choice.

So people who see this as incredibly threatening haven't looked at the facts that we can create wins on multiple levels for the United States of America. So we can get the win on the economy. We can get the win on the environment. We can get the win on the costs being spent. We can get the win from being less dependent upon nations who have helped destabilize our planet. Then the biggest patriotic win of them all is an America that can lead again in this area, that can show the world the way to go. Frankly, we can show other countries that are saying: Why should I do anything on this issue, we can show a way forward which isn't about self-interest. It is about enlightened self-interest, if you go the way we are going.

We heard one of the other Senators talk tonight about what China is already seeing in terms of their pollutants and environment and how the public is reacting to that. That is one area I might question one more time—the hope that somehow bipartisanship will come here. The feeling I have is the statistics the Senator was reading about the number of people on the Web site is such an important thing for me. Often as I look at the history of this institution, change does happen here, but often it comes from people demanding it, standing up for it, letting their politicians know: I don't care if you are a Republican or a Democrat; if you don't get on board with this, you are going to pay for it at the polls.

What gives me hope is it is such common sense that folks are going to start putting pressure on this body—just like I have seen on some other issues which have come around of recent—pressure on folks to say: Hey, you have got to get on board because this is common stuff which is going to benefit my neighbor, my community, my school, my kids, my country.

I am hoping those numbers you were revealing show some of that energy. I wonder if that is your view.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. The energy is definitely out there. There is no doubt about it. Poll after poll shows how strongly Americans feel about climate change.

My favorite one, because it involves Republicans, is a poll taken of self-identified Republican voters under the age of 35—young voters, the future of the party, the future of the country, the future demographic they need to reach out to. When asked what they feel about climate denial, 53 percent of young Republican voters described climate denial with three words: Ignorant, out of touch or crazy.

So there are lots of reasons to have confidence. But one reason to have confidence is young people in this party view the climate denial strategy which we heard here earlier this evening from the one Republican who came—they view that theory as ignorant, out of touch or crazy. If this is what the young people in their own party think about it, that is not a position they can hold. Up against the common sense and the reality, up against the force of public opinion, and up against the effort of this evening which Senator SCHATZ has done so much to make happen, there shows a new spirit of stirring in the Senate. Then I think we win. I think the American people win, more to the point.

Mr. BOOKER. I will ask one more question and then invite Senator SCHATZ—who has been the catalytic agent in pulling this all together—to address this idea of a level playing field and free markets, the subsidy that is given to oil and coal, and the predictable subsidies that have been given to

oil and coal which have helped fuel the industry, compared to the unpredictable subsidies that are given to alternative energy sources such as wind, which has led to more disjointed advancements in those areas.

Again, I think of arguments about picking winners and losers. I heard a lot about this when I came to Washington. "Why is Obama picking winners and losers?"

It seems to me this is anti-philosophy of allowing the free market to work, because we seem to be favoring—based, I imagine, on very powerful lobbies—favoring tax loopholes and tax breaks for certain industries and not allowing them for other industries, and the industries of the future that would help us to have a more blended all-of-the-above strategy.

I know you have a lot of insight into this, which to me flies in the face of conservative ideology. It flies in the face of progressive ideology. The only ideology that seems to make sense is money interests that want to corrupt a free market, corrupt common sense, and corrupt what we think should be a unifying force toward moving as a nation toward a more sound energy policy.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. If you have two factories working side-by-side and one factory is paying attention to making its products and doing the best it can and being as efficient as it can and making a great product and going out and selling it, and then the factory next to it has figured out a way to take a big chunk of its costs and push them off on to other people—let's say one factory has to clean up its effluent, and the other one just dumps it in the river; let's say one factory has to pay for cleanup of its trash and disposal and the other just shovels it in the neighbor's yard at night; no matter how that second factory is cheating by offloading costs onto other people instead of putting them in, you do not have a fair market between those two factories. You have one that is playing by the rules, playing by market theory, and you have one it cannot compete with because the other one is cheating.

When fossil fuels dump carbon into our atmosphere and we now know the harm it causes, and it comes home to folks at Roy Carpenter's Beach in Rhode Island, and people's homes are falling into the water; when it comes to storms that smash on the shorefront of New Jersey; when it comes to the wildfires and droughts that we heard of tearing through New Mexico and Colorado; when it comes to ocean acidification, those are real costs to real people, and they have been pushed onto the rest of us by those polluters, and it simply isn't fair. It is a violation of basic market theory. So, if as the Republican party so often says, "We want to be the free market party," fine, be the free market party, but have it be a

fair market. It cannot be a racket of a market. It has to be a free and fair market in which the costs of a product are in the price of a product. Otherwise it is just picking winners and losers.

Mr. BOOKER. For us then to take the innovators that are trying to invest the money and the resources to keep America on the cutting edge of alternative fuels to be denied any kind of flexibility, and for the Senator illustrating earlier what is happening at a local level as the money interests from fossil fuel firms that get involved in legislatures that are trying to do things to create a level playing field, to me that should be something we should all say no to. It should stop completely.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Here are two families. Here are two families who paid a price. That wasn't built into the price of fossil fuels, but they sure as heck paid it and they just didn't pay it in the wrecked front of a building and entirely ruined their little house there. They paid it also in the loss of all the memories of all the summers where they grew up back when this was their summer home. That is a real price. People paid a lot when this happened. And to write that off as if it is nothing, and have the polluters just keep going at it—no, that is not right.

I yield the floor.

Senator SCHATZ, I know you have some remarks you would like to make, and let me take another opportunity to thank you again for your leadership in bringing us together.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. I thank the Senator from Rhode Island and the Senator from New Jersey for engaging in such an energetic dialogue about these issues.

Allow me to brag about Hawaii a little bit. I would like to speak about the incredible work Hawaii has done in energy transformation. We have taken a problem—high energy prices, no in-state fossil fuel resources—and turned it into an opportunity to transition the State to clean energy. Hawaii, like Alaska and the territories, is geographically isolated from the rest of the country. This relative isolation presents unique challenges.

Hawaii has some of the highest energy costs in the country. Our energy mix is heavily reliant on oil and our multiple islands mean we have multiple electric grids. This challenging picture also presents unparalleled opportunity because the high cost of energy makes renewables not only competitive but often the low-cost option. We have abundant natural resources in solar, wind, geothermal, and ocean energy. But that doesn't make a transition to clean energy easy. Current policies, entrenched modes of thinking, longstanding business models, along with high upfront costs for capital for

clean energy mean we need to aggressively encourage market transformation using a variety of policy tools. Thankfully, farsighted and committed policymakers have helped Hawaii to develop and implement some of the most aggressive clean energy and efficiency goals in the country.

This effort began in earnest in 2008 with a unique partnership between Hawaii and the U.S. Department of Energy that became the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative. Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative, or HCEI, is a partnership between the state, the Federal Government, the not-for-profit and the private sectors. It helped to lay out a roadmap for Hawaii to achieve our aggressive clean energy goals.

Our job is far from done, but as a result of this effort I am optimistic about Hawaii's energy future and our ability to reduce carbon pollution. I strongly believe that despite Hawaii's unique characteristics, opportunities exist for other States and regions to replicate the successes we have had. Already energy regulators and policymakers from other parts of the country and the world are coming to Hawaii to learn what we are doing. I say that with great appreciation for the enormous work others are doing to transition to a clean energy future. I do not claim Hawaii has all the answers, but I do think we have discovered some of them.

Let's start with a brief overview of the energy sector. We are the most geographically isolated major population center in the world and we are also internally separated, with seven different populated islands. We are the most oil-dependent State in the Nation.

In 2010, 75 percent of the State's electricity came from foreign petroleum. This reliance leads to both high and volatile energy costs. Hawaii's electricity rates are the highest in the Nation at around 37 to 40 cents per kilowatt hour. This is three times the national average and twice as high as Alaska's rate, the country's second highest. Hawaii's multiple islands mean multiple grids that all must be managed independently.

Looking forward, the State is considering an undersea transmission cable as one of the key possibilities for sharing renewable energy and reducing rates throughout the islands. A major consequence of our geography is that the best clean energy resources are not located in the same places as our demand center.

Oahu is by far the most populated island with the highest electricity demand, with Waikiki and the Pacific Command, and yet technical analysis has shown that Oahu may only be able to realistically generate 30 percent of its own energy. Hawaii has been unable to take advantage of the mainland's natural gas, while our State continues to pursue its clean energy goals. Various groups have begun to explore

bringing low-cost LNG to Oahu to further transition away from our dependence of low sulphur fuel oil for electricity.

So back up to 2008 with high energy costs and the desire for greater energy security and the pressing need to get serious about reducing carbon solutions. It was clear we needed to do something. HCEI was founded on a memorandum of understanding signed between the State of Hawaii and the U.S. DOE in 2008. This partnership resulted in an ambitious plan to reduce energy consumption by 30 percent and increase electrical generation from renewables to 40 percent of the total mix by the end of 2030. These renewable and efficiency goals are now law. But such goals, even enshrined in law, need a suite of policy tools to help implement them, and they need the political will to relentlessly see them through.

One of the key policy tools aiding compliance with the State's RPS, and especially the efficiency standards, is the decoupling of the electric utility's income from fluctuations in sales and revenue. This is crucial in a place such as Hawaii where distributed generation is playing an important role in meeting our goals. This way we can ensure that the utility receives financial incentives for increasing renewable production from independent power producers and decreasing total energy use. Hawaii's decoupling policy began in 2011 and allowed the State utility to be compensated through revenue-balancing rate adjustments approved by the PUC. Like many other States, Hawaii supplements Federal tax incentives to deploy greater technology such as wind, solar, and geothermal. Our incentives create tax incentives for producers at every level for commercial and residential.

In June of last year Hawaii passed legislation to establish a green infrastructure financing program. The Green Energy Market Securitization Program, which we call GEM, creates an integrative financing model that will help low-to-moderate-income households, including renters, to take advantage of clean energy improvements and energy efficiency. It aims to address the financial barriers of investing in and installing energy cost-savings products.

The heart of the program is an on-bill financing structure backed by state issue rate reduction bonds that allow customers to overcome the high upfront costs of clean energy products. What does that mean? It does this by allowing customers to pay for clean energy investments over time via surcharge on their electricity bill. In other words, you can simply sign up for clean energy. Some of the savings go to the company that is providing you the clean energy, and some of the savings go to you, and all of it gets taken care of by the electric utility on your bill.

On-bill financing is a wave of the future whether it is in electricity generation or in energy efficiency. This program will begin by targeting distributed solar, but will quickly expand to other technologies.

HCEI also works to promote Hawaii as an attractive place to invest in commercial production of clean energy technologies and serve as a test bed for demonstrating and proving out cutting-edge ideas and energy management practices. Outside groups have looked at Hawaii, especially when it comes to smart grid development.

In May of 2011, Japan-based New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization, NEITDO, contributed \$37 million as a partner to our Maui smart grid project. This is a demonstration project to reduce peak loads through demand response to integrate intermittent energy sources, to incorporate grid scale battery storage technology.

What does that mean? It means on the island of Maui we have lots and lots of wind energy and yet we are lacking in the ability to actually utilize all of that energy at the same time. So we are looking at using distributed electric vehicles to take that energy off of the grid and be stored in electric vehicles. Hitachi Corporation, NEITDO, the U.S. DOE, our Natural Energy Lab, they are all very interested in trying to figure out how to make our grid more intelligent and more efficient. Hawaii's high levels of renewable energy penetration, especially on our neighbor islands, make it an excellent place for utilities on the mainland to come and observe grid operators manage the grid under demanding circumstances. What we are hearing from grid operators across the continental United States is they come to Hawaii to understand the kinds of pressures their grid is going to be under in 3 to 5 to 7 to 10 years depending on where they are from.

Public investment and early-stage technology companies continue to play a key role. In September of 2013, the Office of Naval Research provided \$30 million to support an energy accelerator startup program. This program has already invested in projects that are attracting private investment including from the local utility. So far it has helped 17 energy companies bring their product to market. These products have subsequently been able to raise over \$38 million in follow-on funding. Let's take a quick look at how Hawaii's energy sector has fared in the years since HCEI began.

In 2012 Hawaii reached an important new milestone by generating almost 14 percent of its electricity from renewable resources. We are close to our stated goal of 15 percent by 2015, which means we are on track to reach our interim target of 25 percent by the year 2020.

In terms of distributed generation—primarily rooftop solar—2012 saw installations more than double from over 5,000 in 2011 to more than 12,000 in 2012. At the end of 2012 the cumulative number of systems sold statewide totaled 22,000, with a total capacity of 138 megawatts.

In energy efficiency, Hawaii had reduced consumption by 14.5 percent as of 2012. One of the questions people ask when you make good progress in energy efficiency is whether it is simply tracking the economy. In other words, generally speaking, when the economy goes down, so does energy consumption. But our energy efficiency gains have been made whether or not our economy has been growing or shrinking. They have been extraordinarily strong over the last 5 years because we have a great and aggressive energy conservation program that is really groundbreaking. Rapidly improving energy efficiency efforts, along with increased renewables, have contributed to decreasing energy costs in Hawaii.

From 2008 to 2012 electricity use has declined while the State GDP grew by 9 percent. Hawaii's transformation to a clean energy economy has helped to create many of the State's 14,000-plus green jobs. Hawaii ranked third in clean energy job growth nationally.

The implementation of HCEI goals has not come without challenges. One of the biggest challenges has been integrating intermittent renewable energy sources into our various grids—grids that are often quite small in scale.

Making things even more challenging, much of our renewable energy is distributed, which means that our utility companies don't even know whether they are coming or going. They have no visibility into what is happening with rooftop solar. They are trying to develop technologies to understand what is happening with the grid. For example, wind farms on Maui were recently forced to spill about 28 percent of their energy production due to lack of demand on the island. In other words, 28 percent of our wind energy was actually wasted.

Here is a real success story of learning by doing. This fall the Maui Electric Company announced recent operational changes to bring that number down to 9 percent. That is a huge achievement. We didn't have to install any additional wind turbines, but we are now able to use more clean energy on the grid because of technological improvements.

In Hawaii we are particularly concerned with ensuring that every citizen can participate in the clean energy economy and benefit from the competitive cost of renewables. I am confident that the State's GEMS Program will be a groundbreaking State-level policy that will make clean energy and efficiency investments available to all.

Finally, we need to keep the momentum going in the face of a changing

State legislature, State administration, and evolving Federal policies—the latter of which is perhaps the biggest challenge. The recent expiration of the production tax credit and a host of energy efficiency and biofuel incentives have had a profound effect on economics of clean energy technologies. These incentives must be renewed, and Congress must and should act to ensure continued growth of the clean energy sector.

I am particularly grateful to the chairman of the Finance Committee for joining the task force tonight in calling for action on climate change and greatly appreciate his leadership on these issues.

Many, if not most, States and territories are doing excellent work to encourage clean energy, and I am sure Hawaii has a lot to learn from those States. But the HCEI model can be an effective tool for States, the Federal Government, and for other countries. It is profoundly difficult to get all or even some of the interests in the energy sector to agree. HCEI, especially at the beginning, provided a forum for Hawaii's different groups to come together and find common ground and then move forward. At its core, HCEI is designed to be a collaborative effort between all citizens of Hawaii to leverage their respective strength in achieving a clean energy future. Without the participation and cooperation of all of the key players involved and the support of the general public, HCEI would not succeed.

I also can't stress enough the importance of the partnership we have with the U.S. DOE. DOE offers a unique ability to act as convener, facilitator, and an active, long-term partner in HCEI. DOE continues to serve as a conduit between Hawaii and other entities, such as the national labs, Federal programs, R&D groups, other Federal agencies, and national organizations that support the strategic planning process and contribute to the execution of core activities. DOE provides assistance to the State for producing technical and economic tools and analysis necessary to realize the goals of initiatives as well as the implementation of pilot projects. If the States are truly the laboratories of democracy, then we in Congress should provide them with the tools they need to experiment and innovate.

The United States faces the same energy and environmental challenges as the State of Hawaii. A majority of energy assets in this country are ready for retirement or replacement, and decisions made today will have lasting impacts. The energy sector faces a wave of new technology, new regulations, and rapidly evolving market and business conditions. These uncertainties will impact investment decisions, policy formulations, and ultimately economic growth.

We must meet the challenge of climate change head-on. We have more frequent and intense extreme weather events, and we need to reduce localized pollutants and address the increasing number of cyber and physical attacks on our energy infrastructure. These challenges are not physically constrained by State boundaries, jurisdictions, or even our international borders. Recent blackouts and regional fuel shortages have highlighted the interconnected nature of U.S. energy systems, with energy disruptions starting in one State and extending to neighboring States and regions. This fundamental property of U.S. energy systems means that preparing for uncertainty and threats in a robust and effective manner will require regional and national strategies and plans if we are going to successfully address the challenges we face in the coming years.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). I welcome and recognize the Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I would like to offer my grateful thanks to the Presiding Officer and Senator SCHATZ and Senator BOXER, who I know was down here earlier. All of you are true heroes, as well as some of our other colleagues who have manned the quiet hours of the overnight. I know Senator HEINRICH and Senator BOOKER spent long hours on the floor arguing with great voracity and passion about the cause that brings us here today. I am humbled to pick up where many of my friends have left off and thankful for the bringing of all of us here today.

In thinking about this event and thinking about how to frame this debate, I asked some of my friends in Connecticut how they were thinking about this issue of climate change. I received a number of different responses—one that maybe didn't actually stand out but was emblematic about the way my State of Connecticut thinks about climate change—a State that has most of its population right along the shoreline.

All of our economic assets essentially buffer the State from the rising coastal levels. Our State has now gone through—as the Presiding Officer's has—four record and once-in-a-lifetime storms in a period of a handful of years. This is a State that has been called to action.

A rabbi in the greater New Haven area wrote me a very simple note. He became an activist on the issue of climate change after Superstorm Sandy. Senator BOOKER was down here, and clearly his State was hit with the worst of it, but Connecticut was hit hard too. We were hit hard in a physical sense and economic sense, but we were also hit hard in a psychological sense. A lot of people who believed in climate change in Connecticut decided to stand up and do something about it when Sandy hit.

Rabbi Ratner remembers that night when Sandy hit. He said: The winds were so ferocious that my family feared our house would be torn apart by the trees on our property. My wife and I grabbed our three little children and we brought them into our room for safety. Throughout that long night we huddled together, blocking the windows and praying that we would make it through. The experience and the sense of paralysis and powerlessness reverberated with me and my family for a long time. As a parent, it is not something I am content to let happen again and again.

This rabbi has become an activist on the issue of climate. For him, it comes from this experience of that evening in Connecticut.

I don't live in the extreme coastal parts of Connecticut, but I remember that after the lights had gone out that night, the only connection I still had to what was happening along the coastline, as the worst of that storm came in—predicted to be at the level of historic tidal high tides along the Connecticut shoreline—was my smartphone. I was trying to keep up via Twitter as to what was happening in places such as Greenwich, Bridgeport, and Norwalk. What I started to see in the moments before I finally lost battery power was what appeared to be a coming apocalypse. Thanks to lucky coincidence, the worst-case scenario did not happen. In fact, in Connecticut the historic high tide and the worst of the surge did not actually hit at the same moment as predicted. Lives were spared, and the economic costs were only in the hundreds of millions of dollars rather than in the tens of billions of dollars.

But for Rabbi Ratner and thousands of others in Connecticut, this was the last straw. This was another once-in-a-lifetime storm happening once again and putting their families, their communities, and our economy at risk. What Rabbi Ratner talks about is this sense of paralysis he felt that night. There is a sense of powerlessness as you are huddled and holding your children in your home wondering if the walls will still stand up to yet another historic storm as a consequence of changing climate. And what the rabbi figured out is that he actually was not powerless. That night all he could do was really hunker down and hope they would survive, but the next morning he could go out and do something about it.

The problem is that moment is fleeting. There are only so many hours left before the trendlines that have developed—shown so well by Senator WHITEHOUSE in chart after chart—are very hard to turn around. If I have some time later on, I will talk about some of the most insidious trendlines that come not from carbon dioxide emissions but from what we call fast-acting

pollutants, such as methane, HFCs, and black carbon. Once they get into the air, it is very hard to turn back around.

You are kind of reminded about the parable of the boiling frog. If you put a frog into a pot of boiling water, he will jump right out, but if you put him into a pot of cold water and you just gradually turn up the temperature, he will die because he won't recognize over the course of those minutes that the water is heating up to an intensity that he can't survive.

There are only a handful of moments when that frog can choose to jump out before the die is cast because his future is written and his death is guaranteed. That is the moment we are in. We can sort of sit back and say: Well, it does not seem half bad today. Now we have these storms that are bigger, and crops are vanishing, and species seem to be migrating, but, you know, the water around us is not boiling yet. We only have a matter of minutes for the frog to jump out before it is too late. We are in that period of time in which if we do not make some decisions, pollutants will be so locked into the atmosphere, and the trend lines will be heading so clearly in one way, that there is no way to turn around.

But this is the moment, as Rabbi Ratner shows, where we have power to do something. I do not want to overstate this analogy because there is no reason to equate anyone with the heroism of people like JOHN LEWIS and ELIZABETH HOLMES NORTON. But I went with them this past weekend down to Mississippi and Alabama to commemorate what is this year the 49th anniversary of the Selma march that resulted in Bloody Sunday, that eventually inspired LBJ to introduce the 1965 Civil Rights Act, what many people see as a fulcrum point in the civil rights movement.

Of course, the idea that had been perpetuated upon African Americans in the South was an idea that, one, it is not that bad. Yes, you have to go to separate facilities, and, yes, your schools are not the same as our schools, but we treat you really nice, and we still allow you to drink from the water fountain, just not our water fountain. We still allow you to go to schools, just not the same schools as we do. And there is the sense of powerlessness, that you really cannot do anything about it.

As we recreated this march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge with Congressman LEWIS, I got the chance to march next to one of the foot soldiers in the civil rights movement. Searese Crawford was not a figure that made any headlines, and Searese is not anybody that you will find if you Google her name in the civil rights movement. But Searese has a story to tell. She was there in Birmingham when the hoses mowed down hundreds of protesters and the dogs were let out to

chew up the ankles and knees and legs of those who dared to confront the white power structure. She went to jail at 18 years old for 5 days, which has to be a harrowing affair, and then she marched on Washington at 19 years old, traveling all the way up here to be a part of that moment.

I asked her, I said: Searese, why did you do it?

She kind of looked at me with a funny look on her face as if it was a silly question. She said: Well, who else was going to do it?

I said: So all of your friends did it?

She said: No, none of my other friends did it.

I said: Did you tell your parents?

She said: No, I didn't tell my parents. I just did it because I knew it was the right thing to do.

She knew that the situation was not OK. She knew that she was not powerless, that she could do something about it. That is why I feel inspired tonight to be down here with all of the other Senators—not because I am trying to equate this small act of civil disobedience with those of the civil rights movement, but because this is an attempt, as the presiding officer has said over and over in his soliloquies on the Senate floor, to wake up to this issue and to the idea that what is happening today is real, that it is almost irreversible, and that we are not powerless to do something about it.

So I want to talk for just a little while this morning about my State of Connecticut, which as I mentioned is particularly impacted by climate change. I want to talk a little bit about that dual discussion, about how we recognize that this is a real problem, not one that can be papered over by the oil companies and by the fossil fuel companies and by the Koch brothers and everyone else who would try to perpetuate this mythology across this country that we do not have to pay attention to the issue of climate change, not unlike the white power structure in the South perpetuated the mythology that African Americans really did not have to worry about the way in which they were being treated. Then I also wish to talk a little bit about the path forward and how hopeful it is.

I thought the presiding officer's comments were spot-on—in response to a very apt parable and story from Senator BOOKER—in which the presiding officer sort of challenged this idea that there is really any danger in lurching into all of the things necessary to fix the problem of climate change.

In fact, there is enormous opportunity, not just moral opportunity because we are doing the right thing. That is, of course, probably our first charge as Members of the most powerful legislative body in the world, but also there is enormous economic potential in the ability for this country to capture literally millions of jobs that

some nation across the world is going to have as we try to combat climate change.

So let me first tell you about what climate change means to us in Connecticut. Here is an example of what it means to the Nation as well through the lens of one company in Connecticut, and that is Electric Boat. Electric Boat is a company that employs a lot of folks in both the presiding officer's State and my State. For those of you who do not know what Electric Boat does, they make submarines. They, along with a company in Virginia, make every single submarine that goes out across this world in order to protect the people of this country. There is maybe no more important defense asset to the United States today than the submarines which provide a multisystemic platform with which to protect this country. We do reconnaissance and surveillance off of them. We use them in times of war to launch attacks to defend our homeland, for charting the maneuvers and operation of other navies across the world.

The reality is that you cannot make submarines inland. It probably goes without saying, but you have to make submarines right next to the water because these suckers are big. When you finish making them, you have to deliver them right into the water. So we make them in Groton, CT. Since the inception the submarine building program in Groton, we have lost 100 feet of coastline in Groton at Electric Boat.

Now, 100 feet of coastline, that is a lot of coastline anywhere. But maybe you can manage that if you are in a residential area or in an area of marshland; maybe you can figure out ways to adjust. But when you have a multibillion dollar presence sitting right on the water, when you have literally hundreds of millions of dollars of machinery and equipment and training resources right on Long Island Sound, the loss of 100 feet of coastline jeopardizes the ability to make submarines.

With sea levels rising at 4 millimeters a year, it is not long before the entirety of our submarine building industry is compromised by rising sea levels. Every day, Electric Boat, a for-profit private company that protects this Nation, is thinking about ways to try to force the water back out of their facility so that they can continue to make boats that protect this country.

I know the presiding officer has talked already about the effect on local agriculture. People do not think about Connecticut as an ag State, but we are. We have already seen the impact of these changing climates on Connecticut. I will just give one example. Cranberry Hill Farm is a specialty crop producer in Ashford, CT. They produce heirloom vegetables. They produce heritage breeds of chickens. They produce a lot of firewood for the community, and they produce maple syrup.

The owner of Cranberry Hill Farm is adapting to managing a farm in a wildly unpredictable climate. In April of 2012, Connecticut faced a 90-degree heat wave for a week. We are used to heat waves in the Northeast, but we are certainly not used to the number of extended periods of high-level temperatures that we are having today as a result of climate change. So this heat wave caused the strawberry crop at Cranberry Hill to bloom early. Then, when the temperatures dropped back down to average-April levels, the strawberry crop did not survive. Strawberry crops cannot survive a 90-degree heat wave in April. They are not built for that. So Cranberry Hill Farm lost the entirety of their strawberry crop for that season.

I wish that was the exception to the rule. But that story can be repeated over and over across Connecticut. Farmers, especially small farmers in Connecticut, that is what we have. We have a lot of farmers. We have a growing number of farms, frankly. We have more and more people going into farming. But they farm pretty small plots of land, and they cannot be, with small acreage, terribly diversified. So when a farm like Cranberry Hill loses a strawberry crop, that jeopardizes their whole operation. There just is not the resiliency in New England farming because of the small size and limited scope that you may not have in other places.

But at least when it comes to something like strawberries or other specialty crops, they can hope that they are going to be able to do better next year. But for their maple syrup operations, which is a big deal in Connecticut and across the Northeast, the prospects are pretty seriously dire. As Connecticut summers get hotter and they got longer, what we are seeing is a receding sugar bush tree line. The sugar bush is a temperate tree and the hot summers are driving those trees farther northward. So with record-breaking heat waves hitting my State every single summer, Connecticut's maple syrup industry may not survive at all.

In Connecticut, that is a big deal. That is an industry that employs a lot of people. I just personally would panic if I did not have my Connecticut maple syrup. But what we have seen is that the hotter temperatures are moving industries further north. Senator KING maybe told this story earlier tonight if he was on the floor. I have heard him tell it before. He talks about the temporary benefit that Maine has received because our Nation's lobsters are moving.

As the temperature of the water on the Atlantic coastline grows hotter and hotter, the lobsters are pretty quickly figuring that out. They are not as dumb as you may think. They are retreating north. So for the time being, Maine is having a bounty because they

have all of Connecticut's lobsters. That, however, has been disastrous for States like ours. In places like Connecticut and Rhode Island, we have seen the wholesale evisceration of the fishing industry, especially those lobstermen in Connecticut who were once a defining feature of our landscape and of our economy.

They had to move or just shut down operations because the temperature of the water, in part, is forcing the lobsters to move to a different place. So whether it is maple syrup or strawberries or lobsters, Connecticut's maritime industry and our agricultural sector have already been fundamentally transformed.

Let's talk about two other things that really matter to us in Connecticut. I heard the presiding officer reference one of these subjects a little bit earlier. We have a pretty big tourist industry in Connecticut. One of the reasons for that is that over the course of the fall, we get hundreds of thousands of people, certainly at least tens of thousands of people, who drive through the beautiful stretches of northwestern Connecticut and eastern Connecticut in which the fall foliage just lights up New England like a Christmas tree.

Those tourists bring with them to Connecticut their wallets, their pocketbooks, and they deposit a little bit of money with us in what we colloquially will call leaf-peeping season. It is a big deal to our State.

Climate change is having today and will continue to have an effect on fall foliage. For a lot of people that sounds like maybe a small, minor consequence, that leaves in Connecticut will look a different color, but in Connecticut it is a big part of our fall industry.

Climate change is making our summers much hotter, making there be more 90-degree days and this, in turn, will affect these brilliant fall colors on the trees. Many of those trees will migrate north or die out, and the timing of that transition from summer to fall fundamentally changes in a lot of ways. Many of these tree species which present the most vibrant colors may completely be gone.

Skiing is another industry that matters to us in Connecticut. We don't have the big mountains Vermont and New Hampshire and Maine have, and I know our friends out in the Midwest don't even accept what we have to offer in the northeast qualifies as big mountains, but in New England, of course, skiing is a very big deal and it is a major industry. We are having trouble, as we speak, keeping Connecticut slopes open.

We have had one, I guess it is a hill—not a mountain—that brings in millions of dollars to Connecticut's economy called Powder Ridge not far from my home in Cheshire, CT. It has been

an off-and-on prospect with families and operators starting it up, stopping it, starting it up and stopping it, because they are on a year-to-year lifeline due to the fact that there is less snow and less people coming onto the slopes.

Estimates suggest that over the course of the next half a century, the skiing industry is likely to vanish in Connecticut.

This is a multimillion dollar industry in places such as Ski Sundown, Mo hawk Mountain, and others that are in small towns in places such as northwestern Connecticut. Those small-town economies will essentially collapse if they don't have the central organizing principle of their winters, which are the ski mountain, the ski lodge, and the thousands of families who come from all over Connecticut and all over New England to ski there. Our ski industry in Connecticut already is in jeopardy, but it is going to get worse if we don't do something about it.

Maybe what is scariest, though, is what is happening with these storms along the coastline. I mentioned this a little bit in the story of the rabbi who sheltered his family, but we are not unlike most other States across the Atlantic in that we were initially, as a State, a maritime community, so we built up our State along our waterways. To us, that was essentially Long Island Sound and the Connecticut River. Today, if you track development, it has migrated outside of those corridors. It is still basically centralized along the Connecticut River, which now is not coincidental to Interstate 95 and the Long Island Sound which is not coincidental to both Interstate 95 and the Amtrak line.

What is most troubling is the fact that these storms attacking us with increasing ferocity and severity are no longer a nuisance. They present a catastrophic potential for Connecticut's entire economy.

I will give us one example of how close we came during Superstorm Sandy to an absolutely economy-ravaging disruption of our rail lines. The Amtrak line runs down Connecticut's coastline. If we take a little kayak down across the Long Island Sound—which I will do virtually every summer—there are long stretches of that kayak ride in which we can see the Amtrak line lying literally on top of the wetlands that shelter the land from the sea or within just a handful of yards. Now whether that was a smart decision, in retrospect, I can't tell you. But we built up our main rail line, which provides billions of dollars of economic benefit to the entirety of the Northeast corridor in Connecticut right on the shoreline. This is a line that obviously millions of Connecticut consumers use but connects Boston to New York and to Washington, DC. It is the vital life link between some of the

biggest economic centers in the entire world.

When Superstorm Sandy hit, it completely obliterated a sand dune near Rocky Neck State Park that essentially took the bullet for a rail bridge that was just feet behind it. We were fortunate at this sort of point of exposure to have an enormous sand dune that was standing right next to the rail bridge. All of our ecologists and all of our disaster experts tell us that if that sand dune wasn't there, then that bridge would have been obliterated.

If you lose just a stretch of track, you can probably rebuild that in a handful of days or weeks. But if you lose a bridge along the Amtrak line, that is a disruption that will likely take you months to recover from. That is a disruption that will be, as I said, catastrophic to the entire northeastern corridor. If you lose the ability to move people by rail from New York to Boston, that kills thousands, tens of thousands, of jobs. If you can no longer take a train from Rhode Island to Washington, DC, that eliminates commerce. That kills jobs.

That sand dune is gone. So if there is another storm, then all that is left to protect the rest of Connecticut from that storm surge is that rail bridge, and it is likely to come down.

We are going to do the hard work of rebuilding that sand dune, but that is not the only place along the Connecticut shoreline in which the Amtrak line is in harm's way. As we talk on the floor about the rising sea level tides we have, it is just a matter of time before there is no sand dune that is big enough to withstand the storm surge that will hit the Amtrak line and knock it out of service potentially for weeks and for months.

Our beaches are part of our economy as well. The estimate with respect to Hammonasset Beach State Park—which is a beautiful beach that tens of thousands of Connecticut residents go to—but people from all across the country and all across the world flock to every year—frankly, I am lucky enough to spend a good part of my summer down on the Connecticut shoreline. My family has had a little beach house in Old Lyme that I get to go to, which is essentially right next to the Hammonasset Beach State Park. I can't tell the number of license plates we see from Canada, Quebec, and Ontario, that are coming down to spend their summers on the Connecticut beaches. They rent a little house or they park their RV or they camp out on the campground surrounding both Rocky Neck State Park and Hammonasset Beach State Park. They spend thousands of dollars, each family, over the course of August or the several weeks that they come down in the local part of the economy. So much of that part of the State is built up over beach tourism that comes into

Hammonasset Beach State Park and to Rocky Neck State Park.

The Department of Energy & Environmental Protection tells us that by the end of this century—and it could come faster if the worst-case scenarios come true—Hammonasset Beach State Park will be gone. It just won't exist any longer. The scope of the tides and the water will be such that our economy-driving, dollar-generating State Park—which is a beautiful place to go and which brings joy to thousands of families—will not exist any longer.

While I don't have the estimate for Rocky Neck, I know the geography and it would suggest to me that if Hammonasset is going to be gone by the end of this century, then Rocky Neck is probably not far behind.

The insurance industry is not located along our shorelines, but it employs thousands of people. We are the insurance State, Hartford, CT. We are the insurance capital of the world. If our friends on the Republican side of the aisle don't believe the scientists, then hopefully they may believe the market. Our Republican friends tell us that they take their cues from the private market. The private market is very quickly having to adjust to the reality of climate change because, as storm after storm hits the northeast and as storms ravage the gulf coast and more severe weather—often in the form of tornados—hits the Midwest, it is the insurance companies that in most cases ride to the rescue. They ride to the rescue with billions of dollars that they have to pay out. The only way they adjust is by raising premiums on all the rest of us. Companies such as Travelers and The Hartford, some of the biggest property casualty insurers in the world, which are headquartered in Hartford, CT, will tell us their models are fundamentally changing because they know climate change to be a reality.

They aren't budgeting premiums in the future on the belief that these are just freak temporary occurrences. The biggest insurance companies in the country—indeed, in the world—are making economic decisions based upon their rock-solid belief that the 99 percent of climate scientists that are referred to on the floor are telling the truth. So rates are increasing. The exposure for Connecticut's insurance industry is expanding.

I think about the expansion of flood plain zones. Today, about 11 percent of New York City is in a flood-risk zone. Within the next several decades, the estimates from the insurance industry are that 34 percent of New York City is going to be in flood-risk zones. If you are in one of these zones, you obviously pay a severe premium when it comes to your insurance cost. Now while maybe in some way, shape, or form I am glad that part of that money will migrate to Connecticut's insurance companies, it

gets sucked out of millions of businesses all across this country. They are having to pay the insurance premiums because the insurance companies are planning on climate change.

The insurance companies are planning on this body doing absolutely nothing about it, resulting in billions of dollars more in premiums from small companies, big companies, mom-and-pop stores, and homeowners all across this country.

We are going to become a sicker State as well, and that comes with costs too. Lyme disease—named after a particularly beautiful part of the world, Lyme, CT, and Old Lyme, CT—absolutely ravages tens of thousands of people in Connecticut. If someone knows anyone with Lyme disease, they know how insidious a disease it is because it initially presents with systems that are a little hard to detect that are masked by other illnesses. It is still sometimes very troublesome and tricky to treat. Often antibiotic treatments will zap Lyme disease within the first couple of days or months, but there are people across the State of Connecticut with what we refer to as chronic Lyme disease and who don't respond to antibiotic treatment. It is life changing. It really is life changing and it forces many people to be bedridden, out of the workforce, and living fundamentally different lives than they had planned.

With warmer and wetter conditions in Connecticut, our epidemiologists and our disease scientists tell us we are going to see an increase in the deer tick. We are going to see, as we have already, an increase in the diagnosis of Lyme disease. And the mosquito-borne diseases, such as eastern equine encephalitis virus, along with Nile virus, which impacts people but also livestock—horses—and wild birds, are going to become more prevalent as well.

As you sort of figure out what the consequence of this is, the story just gets worse and worse. So as you have wetter and warmer conditions, as we have today, and the mosquitoes and the deer ticks start to infest, especially in our coastal areas, then you have to engage in mosquito-control measures, and that historically has involved draining or ditching wetlands, which has enormous environmental consequences for those areas. That further erodes a lot of our maritime industries that depend in part on those wetlands staying healthy and happy.

The other way you deal with mosquitoes is you spray aerially. After decades of bad history with pesticides and aerial spraying, we know how careful you have to be about that. The reality is that you are going to see a mist floating down on tens of thousands of homes and neighborhoods and kids as we try to stamp out the increasing numbers of mosquitoes that come to

places such as Connecticut as climate change guarantees warmer and wetter climates.

So we lose jobs, we increase costs, we see entire industries evaporate from Connecticut, and we become a more expensive and a sicker place. But the folks I got to spend some time with this last weekend in places such as Selma and Jackson, and tiny little towns in the Mississippi Delta, such as Money and Ruleville, saw a better day. They saw the ability to change their circumstances.

On the other side of that fight an epic battle that, not unlike the fight we have here today, combined individual decisions people had to make to change their lives and the way they treated people, small testaments of courage by people such as Sarah C. Crawford, but it also involved a fight here in the Senate that eventually culminated in the Civil Rights Act. They recognized that the path to justice for African Americans didn't actually come with much pain at all, that the path to economic and racial justice for Blacks across this country lifted up everybody.

And if you talk to a lot of White Mississippians or White citizens of Alabama, they will tell you that they felt as if there was a psychological and mental weight lifted from them, and they saw the economies of their States improve.

I don't know all of the history, but many people suggest that in the years following World War II, Birmingham, AL, was poised to become the economic crossroads of the South, that it could have become an economic powerhouse rivaling cities of today such as Atlanta in the South, but it didn't because of the fact that racial injustice held it back. Once they figured out that was both a moral stain on that State and an economic stain, they changed their ways.

Again, not to overstate the comparison—it is just in my brain because I was there this last weekend—so goes the story for the fight against climate change in the sense that the pathway to addressing this issue runs through the creation of millions of jobs in this country as well as cleaner air to breathe and cleaner water to drink for all of our citizens and kids across the country. So if I could, I would like to run through a handful of examples of how this could matter to my State as well.

Connecticut has built a pretty serious and I think pretty impressive fuel cell industry. Fuel cells aren't renewable resources in the sense that they use a small amount of gas that mixes together with elements inside the fuel cell to produce what is essentially an ultra-clean source of energy. There is virtually no pollutant coming out of fuel cells, so there is almost no contribution to global warming from these

fuel cells. They are changing the climate, but they are also creating a lot of jobs in Connecticut.

On December 20, 2013, Connecticut opened its first utility-scale fuel cell farm in Bridgeport, CT. It was manufactured and built by a company in Connecticut that employs hundreds of people—the world's biggest fuel cell company, Fuel Cell Energy. It is located on a former brownfield. It is the first powerplant like this of fuel cells in North America, and at 15 megawatts it is producing enough power to supply power to 15,000 homes. It is a serious facility, and it is creating hundreds of jobs in places such as Danbury and Torrington, CT.

The problem, though, is this fuel cell farm in Bridgeport, CT, is the exception rather than the rule. Fuel Cell Energy is selling most of its products in Asia. It is selling most of its products in Korea. Over the years the Korean Government has kind of figured out what the gig is, that its main seller of fuel cells is creating jobs in the United States while they are selling product into Korea. So Korea has essentially said to Fuel Cell Energy: Your time is up. We will continue to buy a handful of these fuel cells from you over the coming years, but by the end of this decade we want to produce all of those fuel cells in Korea, and we want you to transfer the technology and transfer the jobs to us.

Fuel Cell Energy doesn't have any choice in this matter because if Korea decides they do not want to buy from them, they will buy from somebody else. So they have to essentially do an agreement in which they transfer that technology and transfer those jobs. Those are hundreds of jobs today in Connecticut but potentially thousands of jobs in the future as we power up fuel cells all across the country.

The reason they are not selling fuel cells in this country is because we don't have a renewable energy strategy to really advantage those sources, which, admittedly, today costs a little bit more than purchasing energy from a grid powered by things such as coal and by oil. But when you weigh the jobs that can be created in the fuel cell industry against the slightly marginally higher cost of getting that energy from a fuel cell rather than getting that energy from a coal-fired powerplant or an oil-fired powerplant, there is a pretty darn good argument that you should invest in fuel cells.

So, to Connecticut, this is a matter of jobs, especially in the fuel cell industry.

Greenskies Renewable Energy is a company in Middletown, CT, and they design and install big solar arrays. They do not manufacture the equipment, but they design these big solar arrays and they install them. It was started in 2008 by a former Peace Corps volunteer in Mali. The company

doesn't charge customers any upfront costs for solar power. Instead, they typically sign customers to long-term contracts, and Greenskies purchases the solar energy they are producing on their buildings. Greenskies has installed over 70,000 solar panels across the country, and they have offset 15 million pounds of CO₂. That is the equivalent of 763,000 gallons of gasoline being burned.

In 2012 they got their biggest contract yet. They won a contract to build solar arrays on 27 Walmart stores in Massachusetts. That is a \$30 million contract.

In 2013 they announced plans to build a 43-acre solar farm in East Lyme that is going to be 16,000 solar panels. That solar farm alone in East Lyme will be able to power 6,300 homes. That is pretty significant in terms of the amount of power it is going to be able to put on the grid, but it is also significant in terms of the number of jobs that will be created. Today Greenskies may be employing dozens of people, but they are going to be hiring hundreds and thousands of people as they install all of these solar arrays in Connecticut and Massachusetts and for clients all across the Northeast.

Another company playing in the solar space is a company called Apollo Solar. It is based in Bethel, CT. It is a small company. Today it only employs about 10 people. But they manufacture the electronic equipment that filters power from a solar cell and allows it to be stored in a battery. That is really the future, the idea that every individual home is going to be a small powerplant where you can put solar panels on your roof, then take the power that is being produced by the solar panel, store it in a battery, and then use it at the moment at which prices on the grid are the highest or, if you want, sell it back to the grid at the moment at which you can get the most return for this little stored amount of energy you have created by the solar panels on your roof.

Today, Apollo Solar has become a significant supplier for cell phone towers in the developing world, especially in Africa. Countries in Africa just don't have the electric grids we have, so if they want cell towers to be able to provide lifesaving cell coverage to their residents, then they have to essentially power these cell towers on an individual tower-by-tower basis. And if you don't do it with solar arrays, then you have to do it with diesel generators, which produce enormous amounts of black carbon. That makes the air very difficult to breathe, and it is also much more expensive.

Apollo Solar has produced this technology for cell towers. Right now it is being used in places such as Africa, but eventually this technology can be used in millions of homes all across Connecticut and all across the country,

and that is going to fundamentally change the way in which we engage with the electric grid.

We think Apollo Solar is poised to become an industry leader on this issue. Today it is only a handful of people, but this is one example of thousands of companies all across Connecticut and all across this country that are poised to explode in growth if we do the smart thing and decide we are going to create a renewable energy market here in the United States.

It is important to say that neither Greenskies nor Apollo Solar is making those solar panels because much of that work is being done in other countries—countries that do have domestic markets for renewable energy, countries such as Germany and China. So despite the successes of companies that install these big solar arrays and successes of companies such as Apollo Solar that create the attendant technology attached to the solar panels, there is so much more we could do if we had that domestic market here.

The point is that we have an enormous opportunity to create millions of jobs in this country based on this technology. The imperative should be one surrounding the public health effects of climate, the imperative should be around the life-changing catastrophic consequences of rising sea levels, the added cost to our economy that comes with entire industries such as those in Connecticut—the maple syrup industry, the fall tourism industry, the skiing industry, and the lobster industry—evaporating and disappearing before our eyes. That should be the imperative.

Being a country that has only 5 percent of the world's population but 25 percent of the world's pollution in carbon emissions, we more than any other nation in the world have to play a role in this global economic and environmental imperative. But beyond that, there are enormous job gains to come if we make the right decision.

Lastly, before I turn it back over to the Senator from Hawaii for some remarks—and I will stay on the floor because I would like to maybe talk a little about short-lived climate pollutants, if I have the time—New England is an example of a place that has figured out how to do this the right way. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative—we call it RGGI—is the first market-based regulatory program in the United States to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It is a cooperative effort amongst Northeastern States to cap and reduce carbon dioxide emissions from the power sector. It is essentially just a miniversion of legislation which we have debated here in Congress. We essentially set a cap for how much carbon we are going to produce in the northeast. We allow emitters of pollution to trade credits and decide for themselves what cost point-source pol-

luters are willing to pay for the ability to send carbon dioxide into the air.

We have heard over and over the horror stories coming from our friends on the Republican side. As a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee in the House of Representatives, when we debated the Waxman-Markey bill, we heard over and over that electricity prices were going to dramatically spike; and, yes, you are going to have the benefit to the environment from reducing carbon dioxide, but you are going to have catastrophic consequences for the economy because everybody is going to have to pay for it.

I guess I can understand how people would believe that if there wasn't any empirical evidence to test their theory. Luckily, New England has just that evidence. New England has tested this idea. Frankly, the whole world has tested this idea because we have reduced ozone-depleting pollutants based on a similar protocol. But in New England we have taken on this issue.

RGGI has been an unqualified success. Our carbon-reducing plan in New England has prevented the release of 2.3 million tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, the equivalent of taking 435,000 cars off the road for a year. The program will offset 8.5 million megawatt hours of electricity generation and avoid the release of 8 million tons of CO₂. The program is going to generate \$1.6 billion in net economic benefit regionwide, and it is putting \$1.1 billion in electricity bill savings into the pockets of consumers in the region over the next decade. That is maybe the most important number.

In addition to preventing the release of 2.3 million tons of CO₂ pollution, it is reducing the energy bills for New England consumers by over \$1 billion. Wow. How does that happen? How do you restrict emissions and then reduce pollution? We take all the money we glean in people buying the credits necessary to pollute and we put it right back into energy efficiency. We put it right back into programs which actually allow consumers to use less electricity, to make their homes more efficient, to transfer over to furnaces which will use less energy. All of these energy efficiency investments cancel out and override the price to the energy producers of having to comply with the new requirements.

It is pretty simple calculus, but it works for us in New England. We have taken the equivalent of two coal-fired powerplants offline, and we have returned \$1 billion in savings to rate payers. We have done something about the scourge of climate change that people have been talking about overnight and we have saved people a whole boat load of money.

I guess this is why the Presiding Officer and Senator SCHATZ decided to engage in this exceptional exercise, to come down to the floor of the Senate

tonight because we just don't understand how people don't see this.

If this were really a fight as some people make it, between the quality of our air and the quality of our economy, then let's have at it. Let's come down and have that debate. But it is not, and we have proved that in Connecticut. This isn't just guesswork. This isn't estimation. This isn't conjecture. In Connecticut we have proved we can make significant gains to reduce climate pollutants, create jobs, and save people money.

This is a triple whammy. We get a cleaner environment, become a global leader, create a whole bunch of jobs and save a whole bunch of people money. Why on earth wouldn't you do that? Unless this debate has been hijacked by the very small number of people today who make money off the status quo. I don't have the exact quote. I should have brought it down here. We probably shouldn't look to Machiavelli for political advice. He, before anybody else, painted for us a picture of the challenge presented to the reformer. The reformer's job, he said, is the toughest job in the world, because those who will benefit from the new order have trouble seeing it today, but those who will be harmed by the new order, those who exist in the status quo, see the peril in the most acute sense and fight the hardest to preserve it.

So, yes, there are people who face a perilous future, but they are a very small number of people, and they are people who run the old-line energy businesses which are clinging to the status quo today, who are flooding this debate with millions of dollars to try to affect it. But as even they will find, there are even bigger, brighter opportunities on the other side. I imagine even the Koch brothers are industrious enough and innovative enough to figure out how to make a whole mess of money off of the renewable energy economy. I argue they will make even more money.

So I thank Senator SCHATZ, Senator BOXER, and the Presiding Officer for leading this effort. I will stick around on the floor to engage in discussion, but this is a triple win: Combat climate change, create jobs, and save people money. It is time for the Senate and time for the Congress to wake up.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I am honored to follow my colleague and very good friend, the Senator from Connecticut, and to join him, the Presiding Officer, the Senator from Rhode Island; the Senator from Hawaii, Senator SCHATZ; and Senator BOXER, the Senator from California, in this really very inspiring and exciting occasion.

I was driving to the Capitol early this morning and I saw in the black

sky the beautiful dome which words can barely capture in its beauty. Many have tried. But I felt so fortunate to be here as a spokesperson and an advocate for this cause which truly is about the rest of this century, the rest of this planet's life, our children and their children, and to be part of a debate which has reached through the night. But in fact it is night only here. In many parts of the world already it is day.

If we think globally, we realize the planet truly never sleeps. It is awake for the night here. Someplace in the world there is daylight. Hopefully, during this debate we have shed light at a time of darkness on a debate which is so critical to the future of our Nation.

We are only a few Members of the Senate here, but I cannot help recalling what the famous scientist and conservationist Margaret Mead said about this cause and the importance of people in this cause: Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Around the world where it is daylight or still dark, there are groups of committed people willing to put their lives and their voices on the line to save this planet from climate disruption. We are not talking about climate change. We are talking about disruption—planet disruption. We are not talking about small consequences which may alter the quality of life a bit here and there. We are talking about horrendous, gargantuan changes because they are incremental and they accumulate one by one, bit by bit, until they alter our shoreline in Connecticut, our vegetation, our produce, our recreation industry, all of what makes Connecticut the great State it is in its scenic and natural beauty, and all of what makes America the great country it is—not only in its beauty but in its economic strength and its vision for the future.

I thank Senators WHITEHOUSE, BOXER, and SCHATZ for bringing us together, all of my colleagues for joining in this debate, and all who worked through the night—whether it is the guards or the pages or all who tirelessly gave us the opportunity to really make the case, much as we would in court—whether it is a closing argument or an opening statement—for the need that all of us unite in this critical cause.

The gravity of climate disruption cannot be denied. There are people who deny it. No question that there are deniers. But the science is irrefutable. The facts are there. And as Ronald Reagan said, facts are a stubborn thing. We can't change them by rhetoric in this body, and we can't make them go away in storytelling. We can read our children's books, Dr. Seuss or others, about the wonderful things which happen in fantasy or nightmares which may occur to people also in their dreams.

But in the real world, the science is well established. The science tells us climate disruption is happening as we speak, relentlessly and tirelessly. This is why we are here today.

The compassion that we as legislators demonstrate indicates we care about the people who occupy this planet now, but also about the many others who will follow us. We are here to break the culture of indifference in a busy world which is awake all the time, is so global in its reach, and is digitally connected at all moments. There is a tendency to move forward and forget about what is fundamental and important, and that is climate disruption.

To break this culture of indifference toward pollution and climate disruption, we must reverse the practices and policies which accelerate this dramatic and destructive trend in our world.

In Connecticut we have already seen firsthand the effects of climate disruption. Severe weather events used to occur once in a generation. They are now becoming the new norm. These monstrous storms—whatever they are called, Irene or Sandy—they are the new norm. In just the time I began serving in the Senate, since January 2011, Connecticut has experienced four major storms claiming lives and costing millions of dollars in damage, culminating in the unprecedented Superstorm Sandy. Now we can call Sandy a hurricane or superstorm or whatever you will. We can call these weather events inevitable or surprising, but they are becoming the new normal because of climate disruption. In February 2011 a snowstorm cost the State \$20 million, and the leadership of our Governor was exemplary, but remedying the effects of the storm does not prevent them, and even preparing for them does not forestall them, because the weather is bigger than any action of man, and man can control it only by fundamental changes in the way he or she lives. The snowfall in February 2011 was followed by tropical storm Irene that wreaked \$546 million in damages. The people of Connecticut had barely any time to recover before a freak October snowstorm brought an additional \$614 million of devastation to the State.

Hurricane Sandy struck a year later, causing record-breaking damage and devastation to Connecticut as well as the states of New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island when the storm cleared. When all this destruction was tallied, Connecticut found itself facing damage of \$770 million as well as incalculable harm to houses, beaches, and other places along the coast. I toured the coast. I saw the damage. The ferocity and fury of that storm could be comprehended only by seeing that damage or being in the midst of it, which I was for a short period at the very start when I went to tour the en-

ergy operations center in places such as Norwalk and Greenwich, along the coast where preparation was beginning for that storm. Driving back on I-95 as the storm gathered in its ferocity and fury, I was frightened in a way that all of us should now share as we see the prospect of that fury and ferocity of nature, destructively impacting our entire planet, our world, and our children's world.

We must heed Hurricane Sandy's warning as well as the alarms sounded by other storms and take steps to stop climate destruction and global warming. The evidence beyond the anecdotal facts that we all see is irrefutable scientific evidence. Climate disruption impacts our ocean and atmosphere, disrupting actual temperature cycles and variations in climate, leading to an increasing number of severe weather events, snowstorms as well as hurricanes, cold and rain, as well as heat and drought across the country.

Severe storms and other things such as floods and tornadoes and drought are happening at a rate four times greater than the average 30 years ago. These storms are costing us. They are costing our families, local communities, and taxpayers more and more of their hard-earned dollars, and Connecticut families and our people are impacted severely. So Washington has an obligation and opportunity to act. This body must face the responsibility at hand and act in the interests of the American people. Climate change is a real and present and urgent danger. The threat is now. We should face this with a sense of immediacy just as we would a house burning or a storm coming, much as we did the coming of Sandy when the brave first responders, our firemen and police, braved the storm but did the right thing knowing they must act to protect our people.

The sense of urgency this issue requires and, indeed, demands is lacking today, which is why we are here, to break the culture of indifference and despair. Outside the insularity of Washington, outside of repeated recalcitrance and political stagnation—dysfunction I think is the word most often used—which has paralyzed our politics, the American public is understanding. The American public gets it. They understand that climate disruption is happening. It is happening in their everyday lives. It is affecting their homes near rivers and oceans, affecting their drinking water supplies and the crops we need for food. They understand that if nothing is done this problem will only get worse. Communities in the Midwest know why they are experiencing some of the worst drought in decades. Families in California know why their water supply is dwindling dangerously lower and lower. Lobstermen in Connecticut, Long Island Sound, dwindling in number, understand why lobster numbers are

shrinking. Surviving lobster populations are moving farther north. The lobsters are our modern-day canary in the coal mine. From Montana to Arizona to New Mexico people see why clearly the wildfire season is starting earlier in the year and lasting later into the fall. We have seen the pictures here on the floor of some of those wildfires that have devastated our forests. The American people understand why our forests are burning, and the American people get it, but Congress still does not.

We have reached the time where we must do the job we were elected to do. It is time to fight for a remedy, fight for relief, to firefighters, to farmers, to lobstermen, to ordinary American people, who want to take their families to the shore and see it as they knew it when they were children.

Every generation in this Nation makes a covenant. Every generation has an obligation to leave this Nation better than when we found it. We are in danger of leaving a lesser America in so many ways, most important in what matters to everyday life, our climate, our weather, our soil and trees, what we see when we wake in the morning and before we go to bed, the natural world that is essential to our survival, not to mention our thriving.

In my home State of Connecticut the people are not waiting for answers from Washington. We have waited long enough in Connecticut, because Congress has not fully awakened. Indeed, it is still asleep. As my colleague Senator WHITEHOUSE has said time after time, just a few feet from me, America and the world must wake up. The failure to do so, waiting and watching as disaster develops, could spell devastation for America and for our climate. That is why Connecticut is taking steps to address climate change effects like rising sea levels and storms. State officials are researching areas especially along our coast and along our waterways that are vulnerable to storm surges and inland flooding, and figuring out how best to protect infrastructure that is at risk.

I know the citizens of Senator SCHATZ's State of Hawaii are doing the same, taking an issue and implementing policy to rein in solutions, taking steps on their own, voting with their feet, not just their voices but their actions. And that is what the citizens of Rhode Island are doing as well, seeking to do whatever they can as individuals. They are a small group of intelligent and dedicated people, but they are seeking to change the world for the better, because a small group seeking to do so is the only thing that ever has, as Margaret Meade has said. The citizens and states from California, in the Northwest and all the way to New England, are joining in this effort. This citizens' movement to save the planet from climate disruption eventu-

ally will prevail. Eventually there will be action. But will it be in time?

I want to read an article in the Hartford Courant on January 27, 2014, just a few weeks ago. It captures how people of Connecticut are paying attention to the growing threat upon them and how they are taking steps to address it. I am quoting:

The changing climate is expected to make Connecticut a different place with more extreme weather, hotter summers and more precipitation, disrupting the natural world around us and testing our ability to respond and adapt.

Some changes will be volatile and abrupt while others will be more nuanced.

For example, maple syrup production could decline while grape growing improves which would bode well for Connecticut's wine industry.

At the end of the century Connecticut summer heat is expected to feel more like the sticky dog days of Washington, DC or perhaps, Savannah.

A warmer summer could seem rather pleasant on its face if Connecticut were to have a summer more like those in the south, but the changes come with greater volatility.

"As the climate gets warmer, you put more moisture into the atmosphere, and it just gets a little more violent," said Richard Houghton, president of the Woods Hole Research Center in Falmouth, MA, a nonprofit research organization that focuses on environmental sciences.

"There's a lot more energy around. . . . that comes out in unexpected ways, generally not to the betterment of gardens and forests and so on," Houghton said.

The changes have been studied and monitored by universities, state and federal agencies and others who have combed for decades of data on everything from changes in trees' growth rings to lobster habitat in Long Island Sound. Extensive collections of scientific data have been the source of documents for metaanalyses saying, in effect, that big changes are underway disrupting a mostly climatological period of thousands of years.

Perhaps more worrisome is the likelihood of severe weather events such as floods.

Quoting here:

"Even if you had the same amount of rain, it is going to be delivered in these more punctuated, very intense rain events, which are more likely to wash out bridges, roads, cause damage to people's basements, flooding, things like that that cost more," said Brenda Ekwurzel, senior climate scientist with the Union of Concerned Scientists, an organization started in Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1969, and which is now an alliance of more than 400,000 citizens and scientists.

"We haven't designed our infrastructure, especially the aging infrastructure of the Northeast to handle these times of drainage needs."

In 2007, the Northeast Climate Impacts Assessment was conducted by scientists at more than a dozen universities, including Harvard and Princeton, in addition to experts at the U.S. Geological Survey, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

In 2009, several Federal agencies that are part of the U.S. Global Research Program released another large report with specifics about what will change and what will happen to the northeast and Connecticut as a result of climate change.

Here are some highlights of the two reports: The northeast could see 20 to 30 percent more winter precipitation and more of that could be rain rather than snow, assuming a greater level of heat-trapping emissions from human activities.

The higher emission scenario assumes a continued heavy reliance on fossil fuels while a lower emission scenario assumes a shift to cleaner energy by the middle of the century. Heavy downpours of rain have increased across the Northeast in recent decades causing intense spring flooding in 2006, 2007, and 2010.

Cities that experienced only a few 100-degree days each summer might average 20 such days per summer while others, including Hartford, would average nearly 30 days at 100 degrees or hotter.

Large portions of the Northeast could be unsuitable for growing popular varieties of apples, blueberries, and cranberries in a higher emission scenario. Heat stress could reduce milk production in dairy cows. However, the longer growing period could be better for gardeners and farmers so long as they can adapt to the likelihood of summer droughts and flooding rains in the spring.

Hotter weather is expected to shift growth range for maple, beech, and birch forests to the north, disrupting the maple sugar industry and shifting the food sources for animals that rely on those forests, such as migratory song birds, such as the Baltimore oriole. Long-lived trees might endure, but they would be vulnerable to stresses of competition, bugs, and disease. Some parts of northern Connecticut will retain those hardwoods.

Sea levels are expected to rise 10 inches to 2 feet by the end of the century, and those projections do not account for recent observed melting of the world's major ice sheets, which means the estimates could be too conservative.

What is now considered a once-in-a-century coastal flooding in New London and Groton along the Thames River could occur as frequently as every 17 years. Several experts agree that modeling sea-level rise is more difficult than predicting other effects of climate change because there are so many variables related to the ocean. In any scenario, the seas are expected to rise.

Houghton, the head of the Woods Hole Research Center, said that what happens to the climate depends on a multitude of factors around the globe—from deforestation in tropical areas to the burning of fossil fuels for energy. One important distinction is that weather and climate are different. Climate future does not predict when and where it will rain. Instead, it predicts patterns, such as overall warmer temperatures or the greater likelihood for violent floods, such as tornadoes or floods. For climate change, it is more

about general trends and extreme changes as a result of global warming.

As more erratic and extreme weather becomes more likely, property owners, town governments, cities, States, and the Federal Government will be put to new tests of their responses and adaptability.

Dr. Ekwurzel said that maybe 30 years down the road we will have gotten better at dealing with those extreme events because they are going to become the new normal. I would say in the next decade—15 or 20 years—we are going to have some hard lessons as to how to deal with this.

The work of responding and adapting is already underway and has been for years, though there is renewed concern after power outages and widespread property damage during Tropical Storm Irene and the October storm of 2011 and Superstorm Sandy in 2012. “They were clearly wake-up calls,” said Jessica Stratton, director of policy in charge of climate issues at the State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

Connecticut has a wide-ranging climate strategy that ranges from buying energy that produces less carbon which causes further warming and a less predictable climate to better preparation for greater extremes. In terms of preparing for higher sea levels and inland flooding from harsh rain, there are three priorities, according to Jessica Stratton.

First, Connecticut is researching areas vulnerable to rising sea levels and storm surges and inland flooding. Second, the State is looking to critical infrastructure, facilities, and property at risk in those high-hazard areas. Third, the State, and other parties, will work to develop best practices to protect infrastructure and habitat and to mitigate or reduce risk to the greatest extent possible. The last measure will involve assisting residents, State, and local government.

In 2010 a committee of scientists, engineers, farmers, policymakers, public health officials, and business owners published a 195-page document called “The Impacts of Climate Change on Connecticut Agriculture, Infrastructure, Natural Resources and Public Health.”

“We think it is highly probable that we are going to experience these kinds of events more frequently,” Stratton said of recent storms and flooding.

She continued:

And because of that, I don't want to sit here and just say, “OK. We'll take it. We'll pick up the pieces afterward.” Let us do what we can to lessen the negative impacts, and those are human, those are property, those are business losses. There are a whole bunch of things. So, let us take whatever steps we can to enable our society as it currently is to function as well as it can and to get back to normal as quickly as it can.

I have quoted so extensively from this article in the *Courant* because it

summarizes many of the facts that cannot be denied. Those facts are stubborn. Those facts presage a disaster that we have the power to ignore, but we also have the power to act and to deal with it and to take advantage of the immense opportunity that lies ahead. This is an opportunity that could actually create jobs and economic growth, and that is the key point.

The problem of climate disruption is also a tremendous opportunity. It is an opportunity not only to change mindsets and culture—the culture of indifference—it is an opportunity to change the way we live, create jobs, a new lifestyle, and economic growth.

The real and serious health impact of climate change impacting millions of Americans should be enough to force Congress to act, but if that is not enough evidence, let us look to the economic impact of inaction. Take the asthma rates—just one example of climate change impact on health costs.

According to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, the United States spends approximately \$3,300 per person with asthma per year. In the 5-year period between 2002 and 2007, asthma costs grew 6 percent, from \$53 billion to \$56 billion.

NOAA, the National Climate Data Center, estimates that the extreme weather events that occurred across the country in 2012 alone, which included tornadoes in the Plains States and the South, the wildfires in the West, and the Midwest drought and Hurricane Sandy, cost the American economy \$1 billion in rebuilding and lost economic productivity. That estimate is no doubt low and conservative.

A rocket scientist is not needed to understand the effects that rising sea levels will have on our coastal communities, which include many of America's large cities and population centers. America's cities will be underwater, and we will have to rebuild their defenses at great cost.

There is another side of this situation. There is a different side of this coin of climate disruption. Yes, climate disruption can be devastating to our economy; indeed, it has already begun to be so, but it also offers the hope and opportunity of spurring new technology, reducing our dependence on oil, and thus driving down greenhouse gas emissions in a way that will empower and drive economic growth.

The U.S. Economic and Statistics Administration reports that the country's 2010 trade deficit in petroleum-related products was \$265 billion or approximately \$855 per American citizen. The EPA and the DOT—the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Transportation—estimate that the corporate average fuel economy standards that require vehicles to be more fuel efficient and emit less CO₂ by 2025 save \$8,000 per vehicle over each

car's lifetime. Upgrading and retrofitting buildings to be more energy efficient and creating jobs by creating new technologies and training workers to develop skills to execute the retrofit and to work in burgeoning alternative energy industries will generate tremendous return for our economy.

The bipartisan Shaheen-Portman Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act, which I was proud to sponsor, is waiting in the wings for congressional action. It would create over 190,000 jobs and save \$16 billion a year for consumers by 2030. We must make the Shaheen-Portman bill law. It is only one example of what the Senate can and must do to help stop climate disruption. It is a small measure—modest in its impact—but it is a start. If we do nothing else as a result of this debate tonight, let it lead us to bring back the Shaheen-Portman bill.

So even if—unlike the overwhelming majority of scientists—you have doubts about the science of climate change, remember that the economic benefits of addressing it, even if you think it is a dream, a nightmare or some fantasy supporting renewable energy, promoting greater efficiency in motor vehicles and buildings will save money, add jobs, make for stronger buildings and better vehicles. Most important, it will save wasteful energy use. That argument ought to be enough to convince anyone that these investments are smart for America.

So whatever your reasons may be, whether you are motivated by the need to ensure a livable climate for future generations, whether you are moved to action by Americans suffering by millions from health problems, exacerbated by a more polluted environment, whether you understand the threat to the U.S. economy that is created by not only the more intense weather events but a more efficient energy landscape—whatever your motivation, whether it is fear or anxiety, apprehension about the future or simply a desire to save money from wasteful use of energy, the intense weather events are becoming more intense and they are becoming the new normal. Inefficiency in energy is becoming a norm as more people around the globe use energy, and we can lead by example in the United States. The Nation must wake up. Congress must awaken, and now is the time to act.

I wish to close by reading some letters from the people of Connecticut because I think they speak eloquently to the reason we are here and the reason the people of Connecticut are taking this kind of action.

They are letters to me from constituents in all walks of life expressing their personal feelings about this issue. Patricia Wallace of New Haven wrote:

As the director of elderly services for the City of New Haven last year when we had 34 inches of snow, I heard from seniors who

could not get out of their front or back doors and had no way to move that much snow, who could not get fuel delivered, who could not get food. I have a husband who uses a wheelchair to get to work. It was nearly impossible for us to move the snow that city plows pushed up on the side of the street so that he could get on the lift of the van to get to work.

A few years back, many senior housing complexes lost power during Sandy and had no generators. When they were built, we did not face the frequent severe weather that is now routine. Two non-profit nursing homes have generators, but they are not built for the length of time we have had to operate during these severe weather storms.

Another Connecticut resident named Diane Taber-Markiewicz told me:

The global warming of our planet is now creating a push back from the environment that is causing millions of people around the world to lose their way of life. This affects us all and results in a loss of people and other valuable resources needed to sustain and progress our species. Personally, we deal with severe weather events regularly; power outages that cause us to lose work and cost us in wasted food that spoils during outages. Our local, regional, national infrastructure is dangerous in its deteriorated state and our tax dollars go to assisting the very companies and politicians who support our demise.

Lenore Lewis-Foreman of Bridgeport wrote me to say:

I have a nerve disorder. Because of this, the weather plays a significant part of my day-to-day activities. Some days I am okay enough to get out of bed and participate in society while being productive. There are days the pains are so bad that my eyes blur and I cannot move. The past season has made it increasingly difficult for me to even motivate myself enough to get out of bed. I have many family and relatives who have been affected by climate change. Some have passed on or moved to another State. A few have decided to stay here in the northeast and stick it out.

Countless Connecticut residents, in other words, countless members of our communities across our State have written to me with their positions and concerns. Like these three writers whose letters I shared with you, many Connecticut citizens fear that climate change will disproportionately affect the most vulnerable among our population: the elderly, the ill, and people without financial resources. People understand that climate change will have consequences, not only for their personal lives but for our food and water, our way of life. People are already bearing the burden of climate change and disruption every day. They know that if nothing is done, it will only get worse for them and for future generations. Again, the time for action is now. America must wake up.

Let me close by reading a small part of a book that was quoted earlier in this debate by my colleague from the State of Oregon, Senator MERKLEY, who cited the "Lorax" book by Dr. Seuss. It says in part:

Now I'll tell you, he says, with his teeth sounding gray, how the Lorax got lifted and taken away. It all started way back, such a

long time back, way back in the days when the grass was still green and the pond was still wet and the clouds were still clean.

It goes on to describe the degradation and the tree cutting and the disregard for that environment. I know Senator MERKLEY has quoted it at length so I will not do so. But it closes with a very poignant and dramatic observation that maybe others, maybe many in this body have read to their children.

I worried about it with all of my heart, but now says the Once-ler, now that you are here, the word of the Lorax seems perfectly clear. Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better, it's not. So Catch! Calls the Once-ler. He lets something fall. It's a Truffula Seed. It's the last one of all. You're in charge of the last of the Truffula Seeds. And Truffula Trees are what everyone needs. Plant a new Truffula. Treat it with care. Give it clean water. And feed it fresh air. Grow a forest. Protect it from axes that hack. Then the Lorax and all of his friends may come back.

In a certain sense, the stories we read our children have a message they understand. Our children understand in many ways better than we do, because they understand what it means to play in the snow or have sunny skies or a day that is not filled with superstorms. They understand what it means to act individually, to take care of the environment and our planet. I would like to think it is because we have read them the stories of environmental heroes who championed the right causes, who cared enough to act. I would like to think the leadership of some in this body, their leadership by example and countless others across the Nation, who take stands, stand up, speak out against climate disruption, against the emissions that threaten the very existence of our planet, provide those young people with leadership by example. I would like to think they are learning from some of us and the stories we tell them and read to them from Dr. Seuss or others.

The story from Dr. Seuss is not about games, about fantasies. It may seem like a fantasy and it may be spoken as a story, but it carries a message that the trees are what everyone needs; we need to plant them. Fresh air is what everyone needs, and we must preserve it. We need to protect this planet from the axes that will hack at them, as climate change most assuredly will do.

Climate disruption—call it climate change, global warming, whatever you will—is a threat that we have the opportunity and obligation to counter. We are taking baby steps. We need great strides. America must wake up and so must the world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. May I inquire through the Presiding Officer if the Senator from Connecticut would be willing to engage in a brief colloquy. If the answer to that is yes, I would propound the following question:

I know the senior Senator from Connecticut to be a very deeply believing patriot. He spoke in his remarks about how each American generation takes upon itself a covenant. I also know the senior Senator from Connecticut serves on the Armed Services Committee and has to consider, as part of his responsibilities in the Senate, the power that America projects around the world, which is sometimes military power, but also sometimes the soft power that comes from our role.

I know also, as a student of history, Senator BLUMENTHAL knows that President Lincoln described the United States of America as the "last best hope of earth" and that Thomas Jefferson, in his first inaugural, described this American government as the "world's best hope."

Finally, I heard the Senator say that climate change will have consequences. I wonder if he would care to comment on what a failure to address climate change by the United States of America, knowing the information we know, would mean in terms of the kind of hope America is to the world, in terms of the kind of credibility America needs to project its soft power. Is there a consequence the Senator could foresee in our foreign policy and in our national security from fumbling and dropping this ball at this time?

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. If I may respond to the Senator, my colleague and friend from Rhode Island, with a question that summarizes one of the key reasons we are here today. I see we have been joined by the senior Senator from Rhode Island who is senior to me on the Armed Services Committee and so knows better than I probably some of the answers that can be made to the question posed by the Senator from Rhode Island. But let me say at the outset, the military understands, in some ways better than America, the crisis of energy waste and climate disruption this Nation and the world faces. Indeed, the military has taken steps to be greener in its energy use, to use fuel cells and other renewable sources of power, because it knows the cost of excessive energy consumption, particularly oil dependence and energy reliance on powers that will do us no good and mean us harm.

Energy dependence cannot be good for America's strategic interest or American defense. That is one of the reasons why our military is seeking to lead by example. I thank them for doing so. The Secretary of the Navy, for example, has spoken to me at great length, Secretary Mabus, about the use of new sources and renewable sources of power on the ships that take the navy to the farthest corners of the globe. So the American military is leading by example. But America can lead by example. Thomas Jefferson and our Founders thought America would be the best hope for the world in its example of leadership. Thomas Jefferson

said, "The world belongs to the living." Let us resolve that the living have a world that is worthy of that covenant we make as Americans to leave this Nation better and stronger than it was when we took over.

Let's not have failed on our watch. America can be a shining example in what it does, inspiring the world by that example, not by its mandates or its military, but by its peaceful use of energy in a way that preserves the planet. We can use renewables. In fact, in Connecticut, we make fuel cells that can power the world in a much more energy-efficient and environmentally friendly world. Fuel cells are our future. They are made in Danbury and Torrington and the Hartford area by companies that are growing, another example of jobs creation and economic boom that can result from addressing the opportunities as well as the obligation of climate change.

I have spoken on the floor about those companies, as well as about the Connecticut climate action plan launched in 2005, the main goal of which is to substantially cut the amount of greenhouse gases being produced within our State. In Connecticut, we are moving ahead, just as the Nation must move ahead with these kinds of initiatives.

The Connecticut Sea Grant College Program, another example, understands the opportunity and the obligation of this time in our history. We can translate climate disruption into a positive through these kinds of measures we use to show the world that there are profoundly important gains at hand.

The regional cooperation Connecticut has helped to lead in the Connecticut Energy Finance and Investment Authority, the RGGI program. That kind of initiative is, in a microcosm, what America can do for the world.

So the question posed by the Senator from Rhode Island, who has helped to lead this debate, goes to the heart of what we are as Americans, as leaders in providing the world an example of energy savings, respect for our planet, addressing the problem that exists for us now, and denying the deniers their sway in this debate.

I have heard from others on the floor about how it is all a product of our imagination, but, as Ronald Reagan said, facts are stubborn things, and the facts show, regrettably and tragically, that climate disruption is destructive, implacable, relentless, and only we can stop it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise this morning to join my colleagues in calling for action to address climate change. This is a global challenge that

has far-reaching consequences for our economy, our public health, and our national security.

I begin by thanking my colleague Senator SCHATZ, who is with us; Senator WHITEHOUSE, my colleague from Rhode Island; Senator BOXER; and members of the Senate Climate Action Task Force for their leadership and for bringing so many of our colleagues to the floor last evening and through the early hours of this morning to call attention to the critical issue of climate change.

This issue is daunting and difficult. One reason it is so daunting and difficult is that it is a slow-moving crisis. We are often faulted for not responding to critical issues before us, but we are certainly faulted for not responding to those that have evolved over many months and many years—the nature of our political process, the nature of our attention span, and the fact that other issues crowd out these longer term issues. But what we have seen as we look back is a clear path of evidence suggesting that our climate is changing. Our climate is changing in ways that are going to disadvantage us—disadvantage us in terms of our economic productivity, our national security, and it is going to disadvantage us in terms of things that we take for granted.

Senator BLUMENTHAL, Senator MURPHY, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and I grew up along the New England coast. I am a little older than my colleagues, but in the 1950s and 1960s those coasts had wide beaches and homes built along those beaches for middle-class workers. All of that has literally eroded over the last several years—particularly these superstorms that have come up our coast. Now we are seeing that places we saw as our summer ideal, beautiful places, have literally been lost. Homes have been upended by storms. Areas that were frequently places for summer relaxation are now gone because of rising seas and because of changing climates around oceans, bays, and our estuaries. This is only one example. I could go on and on. This evidence is so clear-cut, so condemning, and so convincing that we have to take steps now.

Across the globe, these issues are also increasingly important. It is not simply a localized issue. This is an issue which is impacting every person across every part of the globe. We see temperatures increasing, seasons shifting, sea levels rising, extreme water events becoming more frequent, and heat-related illnesses and diseases on the rise.

As I said before, these changes are being felt everywhere—they are being felt in Rhode Island, Connecticut, Hawaii, and all across this country. California has been enduring a crippling drought, and in other parts of the world we have seen unusually large

rains. All of these weather patterns suggest that there is a changing dynamic that has consequences. We have to deal with these consequences.

There are some who would argue that we should take no action to mitigate these impacts because there is a cost of addressing these issues, a cost to our economy. In fact, there have been proposals introduced in Congress that would greatly restrict the U.S. EPA, for example. Their position is: See no evil. Hear no evil. Do nothing.

That approach is only going to make this problem worse. That approach is going to make the cost for us but also, more profoundly, for our children and the next generation of Americans, much more severe. We have to act wisely now. We have to move forward wisely now.

I think we have to do so with the notion—which I think is quite obvious and true—that sound environmental protection is not in contradiction to economic growth. In fact, they work together hand in hand. We have to have the long-term combination of sound environmental policy to encourage sustainable, economic growth. A healthy environment is essential for our economy and for our quality of life. Indeed, the strength of the economy depends on the health and resilience of our people, our critical infrastructure, and our natural resources. The cost of inaction, as I have suggested, is substantial, and it will be paid.

We talked today about rising seas, and as we look at most of our major cities, many of them are clustered on the ocean. They started there. They were ports. They were points of entry into the United States. They are the economic engines that drove this country from its founding until today.

But as our seas rise, critical infrastructure is jeopardized. There have been discussions in New York City, for example, of building walls in certain low-lying areas of Manhattan. That whole process is likely a multimillion-dollar process, and it might well have to be taken—certainly, if we do nothing—because the rise of these tides seems inevitable. But if we act now, it might be mitigated or lessened or, through different techniques, avoided. But it takes action now. That is why my colleagues have tried to galvanize us into this session to underscore the need to act and the need to act promptly.

According to the U.S. Global Change Research Program, economic losses from weather-related events, including floods, droughts, and storms, have been significant and have been increasing. That is sort of the dynamic we are seeing. Not only are we seeing an increase in these weather incidents, but we are seeing them in a larger scale and it seems to be an accelerating process—more and larger weather incidents creating more damage.

We in Rhode Island and our sister States, Connecticut and Massachusetts, saw significant damage from Sandy, but we did not receive the brunt of the storm. However, that was a factor that could have altered, indeed, hours before the storm hit. We were concerned it would come straight, pouring down on Rhode Island with catastrophic effects.

Fortunately we missed the worst of it, but that was not the fortune of New Jersey and New York. They suffered billions of dollars in damage. They are still trying to restore communities, and they are still trying to restore services. We have had some effects, too, that we are dealing with.

But what we have seen is these storms coming repeatedly. My sort of vague history of hurricanes in Rhode Island—it was the 1938 hurricane that came roaring through. I was not there, but that was a devastating event. Then there was the 1954 hurricane, Hurricane Carol, and that was a devastating event. But there was, it seemed to me at least—and this is anecdotal more than analytical—a decade or more, 15 years, almost 20 years between storms. In the interim the storms were the old-fashioned nor'easters. They would come and go, and there would be a little damage but nothing significant. But that pattern and intensity of storms seem to have increased in their repetitiveness and their nearness of time. What we are seeing is a barrage, really, of economic events—huge environmental events—that have huge economic costs.

According to data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, since 1980 the United States has sustained 151 weather-related disasters where overall damages reached or exceeded \$1 billion. The total cost of these events tops \$1 trillion. In 2012 Superstorm Sandy, the prolonged Midwest drought, and the nine other weather-related disasters led to damages in excess of \$110 billion, making 2012 the second costliest year for disasters.

Let's stop and think. These disasters—that is \$110 billion or so for Superstorm Sandy and some of the other incidents that took place in 2012—if they were avoided or mitigated, could allow public resources to be used for other things. That is one of the facts we have to face. This is not free to us.

If this prolonged drought in the West produces more forest fires—and there is a rough correlation between those two—we will pay for that. We will have to fight those fires. That is a huge amount of Federal spending before \$1 goes to an Indian health care center or \$1 goes to a Federal program to support higher education. Before \$1 goes anywhere, we have to respond to those fire crises. That is only one example that is coming from the conditions established by a drought.

When we look at the coastal storms that are bearing down on us, we have to fix the infrastructure, we have to fix the shattered roads that line the coastlines, and we have to fix the sewer systems that have been shattered by these storms. It is not avoidable. So these costs keep accumulating.

Then there is another cost; that is, the opportunity cost of not being able to invest more in schools, invest more in other infrastructure, invest more in lowering the cost of energy—all of these things. We have to recognize that. As I said before, my State has been impacted, along with every other State, by these different weather phenomenon. The Sandy storm—mercifully we missed the brunt, but we still sustained significant damages.

Our coastline is increasingly vulnerable. That is the other factor. These storms weaken our coastlines and our barrier beaches. So when the next storm comes, the damage is even more severe, and when the next storm comes, it is worse. This cumulative effect is accelerating so rapidly that these damages are making us more and more vulnerable to storms.

In fact, it goes back to the frequency and the intensity of these storms. There used to be—at least anecdotally—a period of time where literally the coast could recover. There was a decade or so where, instead of severe storms every summer or fall, we had a period of accumulation of beach sand, of the ocean depositing sand, not ripping it away in a storm. That doesn't seem to be happening. We have to recognize that.

We also have to recognize that we have a Federal perspective, but the States are also spending a huge amount of money on responding to the effects of the storm, and that also diverts their efforts from education, from health care, and from all of the things States have to do.

This is not only a national issue. This is not only a regional issue. This is, as everyone has said on this floor, a global issue. Because of the global characteristics, it touches on interests of national security, which my colleague the Presiding Officer from Connecticut spoke about.

Rising waters—and they are rising for a very simple reason: As the water temperature increases, water expands. That is just simple thermodynamics. It is science. Simple thermodynamics is all I remember from West Point. As the water expands, sea levels rise, and that is going to keep happening.

If we mention the temperatures in the waters around New England over the past 20 or 30 years, they have gone up. And the water levels have also gone up. There is no sinister force out there. There is no whirling machine that is driving the water. There is no high-level combination of winds coming together. That might happen; that is the

nature of a storm. But water keeps rising because molecules keep getting farther and farther apart as they heat up.

That water rise is significant to us in Rhode Island, but it is catastrophic to other places. Bangladesh is a country that is essentially on the water, and many parts of it are close to being underwater. If the sea waters rise there you have a situation of a relatively poor country that has had problems with its neighbors, and just to seek shelter people will be forced to move in and to put pressure on the boundaries. It could cause tremendous problems. That is just one example.

In Pakistan, we have invested a huge amount of money to work with the government of Pakistan to provide assistance as they battle the Taliban, to provide assistance as we move supplies through there to our forces in Afghanistan. The floods, the seasonal droughts, the chaotic weather they have seen there weakens an already weak government. This is repeated time and time again around the globe.

So this is, again, not just an issue about whether we are going to preserve our beaches, preserve our coasts or save money here in the United States to devote to more meaningful reasons. It could pose a serious national security threat as people are forced together with political issues already and now are under the threat of environmental catastrophe. They are changing borders, migrating, moving in conflict, and creating huge problems, undermining the weak governments that already exist in these areas of the world and providing further pressure on these governments. The result is chaotic situations which are the breeding ground for much of the terror and much of the carnage we see across the globe. This is related and we have to recognize that.

There is another part of this, too, that is often neglected. It is a challenge, yes, and a serious challenge, but also it is an opportunity. It is an opportunity to create jobs to deal with this evolving problem. Frankly, in the American spirit, one of our greatest characteristics is when we have seen a challenge, we also saw opportunity. Other nations just saw a challenge. They didn't roll up their sleeves and deal with some of the issues as we did, as our predecessors did, as our parents did. Now it is our turn. Will we roll up our sleeves, look at this as a real serious challenge, and not ignore it but deal with it?

If we do that, we can create good jobs. We can create jobs that will reward people and contribute to an improved environment. Weatherization, for example, supports thousands of highly skilled workers and additional jobs in related businesses, materials suppliers, vendors, manufacturers, et cetera. This is a very straightforward way to deal with the issue of climate change. When we make homes more

weather tight and better insulated, when we don't waste energy, when we don't have to use as much, when we cut down demand and don't have to generate as much and put as much pollution into the atmosphere, and we do these things on a widespread basis, we put a lot of people to work. These are the types of jobs that many people have the skills to do and that are rewarding. They can do them, and we save ourselves energy. We save the pollution, we save the warming that comes from just spewing excess emissions into the environment, and we put people to work.

This is a low-cost, effective way to deal with employment and with energy. We have to do more of these things. It is not, as they say, rocket science. This is no fabulous, new, high-tech application that we need to develop. This is giving people and communities the resources and the support to go out there and to put better insulation in buildings, to try to use more alternate energy sources, to put better windows in and better doors to hold the heat. This is just straightforward but very powerful. It can help curb energy consumption. Particularly for low-income people, it can reduce the cost of energy.

One of the problems, again and I see my New England colleagues around that we face in New England is our energy costs are much higher than the rest of the country. One is because we have a poor distribution system; and two, we have a system also where we are paying for some of the pollution in the Midwest that comes out of stacks and is taken at high altitudes and then it descends into New England and the Northeast. So we have to compensate not only for our pollution but also for other areas of the country. So all these factors come together.

My point is we can do a lot collectively across the country. It is not just a challenge, it is a huge opportunity, and that means getting our public policies here in Washington right. That means investing in better energy, investing in better distribution systems, investing in improving those systems that exist.

One of our problems in terms of the natural gas distribution in New England is not only that it is old and inefficient in terms of delivering gas, but it leaks methane, which is not a very good environmental component to release.

So we have these challenges before us, and we want to go ahead and deal with these challenges. We see around the globe increases in precipitation, increases in sea level rise, storm surges becoming greater, and all of these are putting to the test every system we have.

Our road systems—I haven't seen the roads as poor in the Northeast in my life. Highways—I-95, there are potholes

everywhere. Why? We have had so many storms over the last 2 years, so much plowing, and so little dollars to do the repairs. The roads now leave you bouncing along on the highway like you are not in the United States of America but in some second or Third World country. That is a consequence—indirect, but a consequence—of the weather and our inability to marshal the resources to deal with the weather. Not just clearing the snow, but then going in and repaving the roads. We see that everywhere. But we have to do more.

This is a threat to our fisheries. It is a threat to our drinking water. It is a threat to our quality of life. Again, growing up in Rhode Island, we took for granted in the 1950s and 1960s that short ride to a beautiful beach—a big, broad, beautiful beach—swimming in the water and not worrying about the beach being closed because of environmental conditions, toxic conditions in the water. Some of that has changed, and we have to go back and reestablish that quality, that lifestyle. It is not just all about dollars and cents. It is also about the quality of our lives.

As I said before, and let me conclude, this is not just an issue of domestic policy, localized issues. This touches upon our national security. Ironically, we debate budgets of billions and billions of dollars about platforms, about what kinds of systems we will have in the air, on the sea, under the sea; what types and sizes of units we will have on the ground and what their training is like. But ironically, one of the things that is likely to trigger the engagement of our forces is this growing environmental crisis throughout the world.

Someone, I think it was one of the defense ministers in Nigeria, said one of the greatest problems the east faces, with the rise of these bands of radicalized young people, is the fact that because of desiccation of parts of his country, traditional farming, traditional aspects of economic growth and jobs and livelihood have been taken away, and so young people can get a gun and that is their new job. I think we have to be very serious about the national security consequences. So as we are moving forward, I hope we will recognize that these environmental challenges are also national security challenges.

There is one thing that was very revealing to me, and that was a few years ago when the Navy announced the Arctic Ocean would be able to be commercially transited during certain parts of the year. Again, growing up in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, if someone had told me the Arctic Ocean was going to be a commercial highway for ships, I would have said that is preposterous. It is frozen. It is always frozen. It will always be frozen. Well, that is not the case. Last year, Arctic sea ice reached an all-time low, and as climate change

accelerates, the melting of sea ice will invariably make that a source of navigation.

It will create new opportunities, such as shipping routes, but also new challenges. Who will patrol those seas? Will we have to create not only a Pacific fleet but an Arctic fleet? That costs money. Who owns the rights? Who has access to that area?

So we are looking at huge problems that even 10 years ago we thought were fanciful.

That underscores the final point I want to make. We see this climate process, this climate change coming, and it doesn't seem to be affecting us minute by minute, so there is this tendency to be rather cavalier about it. Beyond the people who out-and-out deny it, which I think ignores the facts of science, even people who do tend to recognize it think, yes, well, we have time. But what we are seeing is not just the intensity of these incidents; we are seeing them accelerating, and the consequences of accelerating with such rapidity is that what we thought might be a huge problem 2 or 3 years from now might occur in half that time. So we have to act.

I want to conclude by thanking my colleagues, Senator BOXER, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and Senator SCHATZ because they have called us to come forward and to recognize this issue—to seize the challenge but also to seize the opportunity. In doing so, they have done remarkable work for the Senate and for this country.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

MR. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, before I yield the floor to Senator UDALL of New Mexico, this may be my last chance to speak before the all-night session comes to its end, because I am about to relieve the Presiding Officer. In fact, I am overdue for that.

But I did want to take this moment to say a few thank-yous. As one of the instigators of this episode, I thank my staff in particular for all the work that went into this. I thank the parliamentarians and the Senate clerk staff, who had a long night with us, and I appreciate it very, very much. There is only one page I see on the floor remaining—no, there is another one. I want to thank all the pages. Many of them stayed here through the night, and it was a very long night for them, and I appreciate very much their effort. Then throughout the building, because the Senate had to be kept open, there were people who were kept here—the Capitol police and others—and it is much appreciated.

One of the things about the Senate is when we are in session, the light on the top of the Capitol stays on. So all night last night, people across the city could look and see that the light on the Capitol stayed on. I hope that wasn't the

only light that was shed last night, but at least it is an example, and I just express my appreciation to all of the people who we have inconvenienced in order to make this point.

Mrs. BOXER. Will the Senator yield before we hear from my good friend.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I thank also everyone who made this evening possible, and I want to say to my co-chair of the Climate Action Task Force, Senator WHITEHOUSE, what a privilege it is to work with him, as his passion on this runs deep; to Senator SCHATZ, who, from Hawaii, is witnessing climate change in real time, just as so many of us are who are from coastal States.

I am so looking forward to hearing Senator TOM UDALL, and I am not going to quote him but I hope he will say what he said in front of the environment committee when he was a new Member. He called attention to what is happening in the West, and all one has to do is read the papers to see the suffering that is going on.

So I also want to say, because time is wasting here, that this was something that I think has caught on, that has caught the attention of people. I can tell you that well over 100,000 people—well over that—have signed various petitions calling on Congress to wake up.

I am under no illusions that our colleagues on the Republican side watched us. So let's be clear. Senator INHOFE said before he left: You are talking to yourselves, and I took great offense at that because the vast majority of the American people understand climate change is real. There is no doubt about it, no more doubt than people have that cigarettes don't cause cancer. We know this is a fact. And for us to close our eyes to this fact is closing our eyes to the people we represent and about whom we care.

Again, my deepest thanks to all the staff in the entire building. To all my colleagues, Senator WHITEHOUSE informed me we are about to hear from the 30th Senator. That is incredible. Thirty percent of the Senate is participating.

I yield back my time, again, with my deepest thanks. There is more to come from the Climate Action Task Force. We are just getting started. We will have lots more. The next time we do something, we will engage a lot of other folks as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WHITEHOUSE). The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. President, I thank Senator BOXER for her very kind words. She is the chairman of the committee which deals with climate change legislation and has been ever present in terms of trying to see if we can come up with a bipartisan solution and get legislation. I was very

proud to serve on her committee when the Obama administration came in and the Senate sat down to work and was trying to do something about climate change. Unfortunately, we ran out of time.

But as we can see by the number of Senators who have spoken—we are up to 30 now—we still have incredible passion about this issue. We know it is a serious problem, the American people know it is a serious problem, and we want something done.

What have we learned? I have watched my colleagues over the night. I am No. 30 and I have watched what they have been talking about. The tradition here in the Senate is normally if we are talking like this and our colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle want to come down and exchange with us, they can do that. That is our tradition, to say we speak and then they speak. What we have ended up seeing is one Republican Senator show up in this 12-plus-hour period is my understanding. I think I am right. This is what was reported on NPR this morning. To me, this is tremendously sad, because in the glory days of the Senate in the 1960s and 1970s major environmental legislation, major conservation organization legislation—remember the Wilderness Act, the Clean Water Act, Clean Air, Endangered Species—was passed with significant bipartisan support. We don't see that effort today. It makes me very sad. We are here all night trying to engage and say: This is something the American people believe is serious, and we need to engage on this issue.

Today I am going to talk a little bit about New Mexico, and how New Mexico and the Southwest are at the bull's-eye when it comes to climate change.

What do I mean by that? If New Mexico is at one temperature and we compare it with the rest of the country—let's say in the rest of the country we have a 1-percent rise—New Mexico is going to be 2 percent, so there is a doubling effect in the Southwest. This is a map of New Mexico, but we are talking the Southwest.

First let me talk a little bit about the drought we have had. Here we are from June 2011 to the present, a drought of epic proportions. The U.S. drought monitor shows more than 90 percent of New Mexico is in extreme drought. Northern and western New Mexico got some precipitation last year, but several other areas of the State remain mostly dry. We can see this is extreme; the other is moderate. Added together, it is a significant impact. These are the kinds of challenges we are going to face with climate change.

To talk a little bit more about these impacts, I would now like to go to chart 2 and look at the snowpack in the northern New Mexico and southern Colorado watersheds. They only range

from one-half to three-quarters of what normally would be there.

This is a winter picture. Normally in northern New Mexico at this time of year we would see a massive snowpack. Why is that important? Because in the summer when we start using the water, we start irrigating, the farmers start doing things, they recharge the aquifer. So if we don't have a snowpack, we don't have that kind of recharge and we don't have the storage levels of drinking water.

Just to pick one of our communities, Santa Fe, NM, gets 40 percent of its water from the ground and it gets another big chunk of the water from reservoirs. Those reservoirs are fed when we have a snowpack and when the ground gets recharged and it flows off and flows into those reservoirs, so this is something which makes a huge impact when we don't have a snowpack and when we have a decreasing amount of precipitation. We are going to see more and more of this as we move down the road, when we look at the modeling which has been done by the experts who are working on this issue.

This next slide is particularly disturbing in terms of water. I remember it being roughly at this place on the Rio Grande just last year in the middle of the summer. This photo is showing a very meager amount of water. When I was there last summer, there was no water. It was completely dry. So here, the river which flows the whole length of the State of New Mexico down to southern New Mexico—El Paso, TX, relies on it; Mexico, our neighbor to the south, relies on it—there was no water to be seen. Once again, it dramatically shows the impacts of climate change and the impacts as we see this move down the road.

One experience with ranchers and farmers I think really brings this home in terms of water. There was a flood control project in Tucumcari, NM, created in the middle of the Great Depression. Everybody in the community invested in it. The Federal Government invested in it. These projects have a dual purpose. One is, if there is a big flood, to try to control the flood. The second thing is to hold the water, so when we get to the irrigation season we can have irrigated farmland. They did this in the 1930s. I think about 600 or 700 farmers and ranchers rely on this project and have been relying on this project since the 1930s.

I visited this community recently and learned from the people who run the project and from the farmers and ranchers, in the last couple of years, zero water. No water at all. They had never seen this since the 1930s, even though when we went through very serious conditions in the 1950s it was thought to be one of the biggest droughts and no water. The last 10 or 12 years, this particular project, the same thing: very, very little water.

What ends up happening as a result? Farmers and ranchers cannot plant. Ranchers sell off their herds. Just to show how dramatic it is, in New Mexico we saw 50 percent of our cattle herds sold off this last year. People are hurting so badly in terms of this drought, they are unable to keep their livestock on the land and they end up having to pull the livestock off. This has a devastating impact to people who live closest to the ground.

I have been out on the land in New Mexico with conservationists and scientists and talked to them about climate change. One of the things I try to describe in what I have learned—and I think this is what Chairman BOXER is talking about—when I made a presentation in one of the committees, is if we take the modeling which has been done on climate change in the Southwest, and particularly focusing on New Mexico, what we do with that modeling is ask ourselves: Where are we going to be 50 years down the line?

We just had a study at Los Alamos National Laboratory which says by 2050—in less than 50 years—we are not going to have any forests in New Mexico. So much of this area of northern New Mexico and down here, the forests throughout this area, they are saying it looks like no forests and much less water, as I have just talked about. If we don't get snowpack, we can't charge the system back.

The most dramatic description to me is what happens here 50 years from now. These are conservative numbers. These aren't the ones many of the scientists nowadays are saying we have. We are taking conservative numbers, and many scientists are saying it is happening quicker, it is moving faster.

What they tell us is—imagine on a computer screen how we can drag things. New Mexico is over 300 miles. If we click on New Mexico and drag it 300 miles to the south—so we are moving the top of New Mexico down 300 miles to the south—what do we get? We are in the middle of the Chihuahuan desert in Mexico. So what was a dramatic forested area, what was an area which was very acceptable to farming and ranching: Devastating impacts.

So those are the kinds of things. I could go on and on here. But the thing about the impacts—and we could talk about how one of our reservoirs at Elephant Butte has the lowest level in 40 years. This is a great recreational lake which people used. This is a picture of the reservoir in June of 1994. Here is the picture today—dramatically different.

I wish to highlight as I close here—because I know we are trying to wrap up after we have been going for many hours—New Mexico has been focusing on solutions. One of the solutions sitting right in front of us is renewable energy. We know we are going to have to deal with this problem one way or

another. It is much better to deal with it earlier. In New Mexico we are doing everything we can to foster the solar power industry. This slide shows solar power to beat coal prices in New Mexico. Right now, the solar installations going up are very competitive in terms of coal.

Wind power. Once again, in New Mexico we have installed wind capacity of 778 megawatts. New Mexico ranks 19th for the total megawatts installed. So all over New Mexico, up on our mesas, as we can see here, we have wind turbines collecting the energy from the wind. The number of wind turbines: 575. New Mexico ranks 17th for the number of utility-scale wind turbines. Current wind generation in New Mexico is 6.1 percent.

Just a few years ago when we put in place a renewable electricity standard, we had a lower level and we have been pushing that up. This is one of the things we need to do at the national level. My cousin and I worked in the House of Representatives before we were in the Senate to get a national renewable electricity standard. This is something we have to do which is a solution.

As I laid out all of the things earlier, the devastating impacts, one of the things we should realize is there are solutions; they are here today; the technology is perfected; and we are able to put those into place.

The final area of renewable energy I wish to talk about and we have huge potential here in the Southwest is called advanced biofuels. I have been to this facility and seen the experimentation they are doing. They have taken land and are farming algae. What eventually happens with this algae is it is refined and the algae becomes a very good fuel. So this is something which is, once again, a solution to this problem.

We shouldn't despair when we look at the impact of climate change and when we look in the future as to what people are going to predict, because we know we have the ability to cultivate solutions.

I am very proud of my State and how we have really worked to cultivate these sources of renewable energy, and we are moving it up with our renewable electricity standard higher and higher every year. I am very proud to have been a part of this effort, the 30th Senator to stand and speak about this. I guess we have been going about 13 hours, 14 hours.

Once again, I can't close without mentioning I wish we had our friends and colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle down here to engage us. I don't know what to conclude but that either they don't care about this or don't want to engage with us. We only had one Republican Senator in this 14-hour period show up. This sure isn't like the glory days of the Senate when

so many Republicans participated with Democrats to tackle the big problems which faced our country. This is a problem which faces the entire world, so we need the U.S. Senate and the entire world working together in a cooperative way to solve this.

I thank the Presiding Officer, who was a key person in terms of organizing this, Senator WHITEHOUSE from Rhode Island, and I yield for my good friend from Massachusetts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I thank Senator UDALL.

I am proud to join with my colleagues in speaking on climate change. Senators have been speaking on this issue since yesterday, all through the night, to add their voices to the millions of voices around the country who are committed to fighting climate change.

The level of commitment we have seen from these Senators is extraordinary, and we will need an extraordinary commitment here in Congress, around the country, and around the world to address this issue. We will need that commitment because we are on the cusp of climate crisis, a point of no return, which will threaten our health, our economy, and our world.

We are also on the cusp of innovation in clean energy and energy efficiency which has the possibility of transforming energy production and consumption. In other words, we are at a moment of great danger and great opportunity, a moment where we must make choices about whether we will go boldly into the future, investing in innovation, establishing serious and smart regulations, and committing to address the climate crisis or whether we will continue to subsidize fossil fuels of the past and ignore the risks to our future. It is up to us.

Doing something new is hard, because when it comes to environmental and energy issues in this country, powerful, entrenched, deep-pocketed corporations are lined up to fight any change from the status quo. These powerful corporations defend policies which poison our air and foul our water with little regard for the well-being of future generations. These powerful interests work hard to tilt the playing field so energy entrepreneurs and innovators have a hard time getting a foothold in the market. These powerful interests too often have a stranglehold on our political system, blocking not only bold change, but even conservative, market-based reforms.

When it comes to environmental and energy policy, the system is rigged—it is rigged against our families and it is rigged against our future. Let me give one example.

In 2012, the five biggest oil companies—ExxonMobil, Shell, Chevron, BP, and ConocoPhillips—made combined

profits of \$118 billion. At the same time, they sucked down billions of dollars in tax subsidies from the American people. Over 10 years, oil and gas companies will receive \$40 billion in taxpayer subsidies. And if the Republicans have their way, these companies will get even bigger breaks in their taxes.

Think about what \$40 billion could mean for our future: a serious investment in research to figure out the problem of energy storage and to develop better incentives for wind and solar installation; certainty and predictability for investors and entrepreneurs who have a big idea in green energy or energy efficiency and want to build a new business. And here is the point to underline: We can invest in research and develop new markets without spending any new money, if we just shift our priorities from old fossil fuel energy to new clean energy.

A tax policy which protects these powerful interests of the past is a tax policy which is rigged against the entrepreneurs, small businesses, and innovators of the future. It is rigged against families who want their children to live in a world where they can drink the water and breathe the air.

In preparation for the speech I am giving this morning, I asked Americans to write in and talk about how their lives will be affected if we do not get serious about climate change. My question was a simple one: If we don't do anything at all to stop climate change, what do you think the world will look like 25 years from now?

I would like to read some of the responses for the record. These are just a few of the more than 5,000 letters I received on this issue. It is obvious to me the people of Massachusetts and the people of our great Nation are worried about this problem. So let me read from some of their letters.

Blake Cady of Brookline, MA, writes:

I served on a US Navy icebreaker in the Arctic from 1959-1961 and saw th[at] relatively pristine region with intact permafrost and heavy sea ice well into the summer off Baffin Island and further north. Now, much of the Arctic Ocean ice cover is disappearing and is predicted to be entirely gone by the end of the 2030 summer season.

Currently there is open water across the Northwest Passage in the summer, and shipping has become routine, [which is] a profound change already. There will be untold alterations—from the warming Arctic Ocean to accompany the rapidly melting Greenland ice cap—which have the potential to change global currents and further escalate global warming trends.

There is still a narrow time window to address this looming climate disaster, but action must be forceful and rapid to escape its worst aspects. I fear for my children's and grandchildren's future.

A letter from Susan Timberlake of Florence, MA:

I used to be a clinical chemist. We made up "buffers" as part of our tools that kept a solution at the pH [that is, relative acidity]

that you desired even as you added things that would upset the pH.

Really good buffers have really good capacity. CO₂ dissolved in water as a bicarbonate has pretty good buffering capability. Once all the buffering capacity is used up the pH change is precipitous. The pH shifts radically and directly as anything else is added to the solution. You lose any control you had over the chemical reaction(s).

And here is where she makes the connection.

The oceans are where much of our excess CO₂ is going. . . . So far the oceans have been absorbing the CO₂. . . . But the coral reefs and the starfish on the west coast of America don't lie. We have no idea . . . how much buffering capacity is left (or not). If we keep this up we will have a well carbonated, acidic—and quite dead—ocean.

[That's] [n]ot something I can bear leaving for my children and grandchildren. (And I am a registered Republican—[a] conservationist in the real sense.)

A letter from Nilan M. MacDonald of Scituate, MA:

I live in Scituate, MA, on Boston's South Shore. We are about two miles from the coast. In 25 years we could be flooded out. Also, storms are worsening, and we have been left without power for days at a time, which has endangered our health ([and] we are seniors).

In 25 years, populations who live at sea level will become climate refugees as sea levels rise. This will affect people worldwide. Crops will be threatened by droughts and floods. Diseases now in check will become rampant as the planet warms. Mosquitos are the deadliest animal vector for human diseases—and their numbers and range will greatly increase with climate change.

Dorothy Bagley of Hudson, MA writes:

If folks think that this has been a bad winter in New England and weird all over the world, [consider] how much worse it will be in 25 years. Areas of concern to me [are]: weather changes affecting crops, water supplies, flooding, etc. Our whole style of life is in danger . . .

I am a retired Chemistry Teacher and I know what the effect of temperature is on chemical reactions. Our World is one big chemistry experiment . . . with so many variables which compound the problems.

We can take steps, however small they may seem, like lessening pollution due to carbon-containing fuels, lower speed limits, increase[d] use of alternative fuels, chang[ing] the Nation's attitude about recycling . . . chang[ing] our transportation by . . . mak[ing] our cars more efficient, etc.

Education and focus are the keys. People need to know that they can effect a change both positively and negatively. Unless citizens' attitudes change toward any of the above, nothing will help to minimize what will be in 25 years.

A letter from Mon Cochran of Orleans, MA, who writes:

Dear Elizabeth,

I am 72 years old and living on Cape Cod, where I grew up. When I was a kid back in the 1940s my parents and other very old people used to tell scary stories about the Hurricane of 1938, and how it knocked down all the trees and blew the roofs off houses. We saw pictures of boats smashed on the shore or carried up into the streets by the flood tides.

As I grew up in Orleans, we experienced a series of hurricanes, starting with Carol in

1954 and then Diana the next year. Each time our parents remember 1938—and each time I remember being very, very scared as the storms barreled across the bay like furious freight trains while we cowered in the basement. In 1960 Donna came through, and even though I was 18 years old by then the fear that the house would be destroyed brought nightmares.

Now I am a grandfather, and know much more about what causes hurricanes and why they can be so destructive than my parents did back then. For the past twenty years or so we have been lucky on the Cape—most of the really bad storms have been confined to the Caribbean or turned inland before reaching us.

My grandchildren Tom and Kay and I have been learning about global warming together, and we have noticed, in particular, how our bay, and the ocean it connects to seems to be warmer every year. The ocean water over at Nauset Bay is so warm in the summer that we can boogie board indefinitely without getting cold. What we have been reading about hurricanes is that the warmer the water is, the more energy that is available to the storm and the stronger it becomes.

Kay and Tom were very scared by the pictures of Superstorm Sandy they saw on TV and were worried that a storm like that, or worse, might hit us here in South Orleans. As for me, I think it is just a matter of time, but I don't tell them that. They live in Boston and have visions of a great wall of water roaring into Boston Harbor, knocking down all the buildings in the waterfront and surging up into the neighborhood where they live in Roslindale.

From what I have been learning, we have already pumped so much extra carbon into the air, that these much more extreme storms are likely to occur no matter what we do. If we redouble our effort to switch to clean energy—solar, wind, hydro, tidal, geothermal, and biofuels—the way they are doing now in Europe, and even in countries such as China and India, then 25 years from now Tom and Kay will know that a sustainable lifestyle is possible and their children can look forward to a much safer and more secure second half of the 20th century.

From Ken Marien of Westminster, MA:

[I expect to see] [m]ore severe weather patterns, colder colds, warmer warms, drier days, wetter floods, bigger storms, higher winds, more dust, more mud, loss of marginal growth plant and animal life.

I have many more letters. As I said, I received more than 5,000 letters from people in Massachusetts and across the country. I wish I could read every one of them. I don't kid myself. We are up against an army of lobbyists, and we will not win all the fights ahead. But here in the Senate we have leaders who will fight as hard as we can to protect our environmental future.

The Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, has shown dedication to addressing climate change and his commitment to ocean issues and the coastline has been visionary.

My colleague from Massachusetts, Senator MARKEY, has committed his long career to protecting and preserving the environment.

Senator BOXER, from California, who chairs the Environment and Public

Works Committee in the Senate has been a force to fight to protect our environment. Senator SCHATZ, from Hawaii, organized Senators to speak through the night on this issue and is quickly distinguishing himself as a leader in the fight against climate change.

In a few minutes, Senator CARDIN will come forward and continue this important discussion.

I am proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with such dedicated public servants and with all of the Senators who have held the floor for so many hours to draw attention to our urgent need for climate change.

We are on the cusp of a climate crisis, a point of no return. We can continue to subsidize polluters and ignore the warnings all around us or we can invest in a future that can create jobs, a future that can strengthen our national security and, most of all, a future that can save our planet.

This is our moment in history. We can act, we must act, and we will act. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of New Mexico). The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, first, I wish to compliment and thank Senator WARREN for her comments. Senator WARREN has brought up a lot of issues that I can relate to because our States share the Atlantic Ocean. We talk about climate refugees around the world, and we are starting to see those in our own States. As sea levels are rising, we see dead zones in the oceans and in our bays. We need to take action in order to protect our people.

In my State of Maryland, you can see firsthand the effects of the rising sea level. One example is Smith Island. Smith Island is a habitable island in the Chesapeake Bay that is home to many of our watermen who have been practicing their professions for many years. They are at risk.

You need a boat to get from one of the towns to the other. Smith Island only has a couple of hundred remaining residents, but they are losing their land daily as they fight to counter the rising sea level change—I think that is a very visible sign of what we are up against—and the urgency of dealing with climate change.

I am so proud to be identified with the Climate Action Task force. Many of the leaders have been mentioned, and I thank Senator SCHATZ and Senator WHITEHOUSE for organizing this opportunity for us to put a spotlight on climate change and the need for urgent action. I thank Senator BOXER, the chair of the Environment and Public Works Committee, for her extraordinary leadership.

Throughout last night and into this morning, we have highlighted the science, which is indisputable, as to the fact that over millions of years we

have seen catastrophic changes on our own planet. Because of our activities and what we are doing on Earth, within a very short period of time—just hundreds of years, and less than that now—we are causing a catastrophic impact on our climate. It is urgent. We have seen firsthand the impacts of climate change.

I was in Beijing, China, last year. I was there 3 days. There wasn't a cloud in the sky, but I never saw the Sun because of the pollution that was in the air—their carbon emissions. We have seen the costs of climate change in lives and in dollars we spend to try to adapt to the new realities of extreme weather conditions.

I will use the few moments I have to talk about the issues that are closer to home in my own State of Maryland. Seventy percent of Maryland's population lives in coastal zones. It is now predicted by the Maryland Climate Change Commission that we will see a 1.4-foot increase in the sea level by 2050 and 3.7 feet by the end of this century. That is going to have a dramatic impact on many Marylanders who live in the coastal area.

I can give another example. Ocean City, MD, is a popular place for Marylanders and people from outside our State to enjoy the beautiful beaches. I must say that I am very proud that this Congress has appropriated millions of dollars for beach renourishment. Those dollars have returned multiple times because they prevent the full force of these nor'easter storms that are more frequent and more severe in Maryland and along the Maryland coast. There is a limit as to what we can do if we don't take action to deal with the sources of climate change. We want to protect our property owners, and the best way to protect our property owners is to do something about the causes of climate change.

We saw the impact of Sandy along the east coast of the United States. I know that the most severe impact was in New Jersey and New York, but in Maryland we saw in Crisfield, MD, the full effect of Sandy. The people there know they are at risk because of the severe storms that are becoming more frequent and more severe.

The Chesapeake Bay itself is at risk. I have talked on the floor many times about the importance of the Chesapeake Bay, and how it is a national treasure. It is important just by the fact that it is the largest estuary in our hemisphere. It is important because of its coastline and its impact. It is also important because of its impact on our economy. The blue crabs and oysters are critically important to Maryland. Yet they are at risk.

The blue crab is a little complicated, but we know one of the factors that is affecting the blue crabs is the ability of juvenile crabs to be able to survive in seagrasses. Yet the seagrass popu-

lation is declining because of temperature rise in the Chesapeake Bay. That is just one example of the challenges we have because of climate change. It is affecting the economy of my State, and it is affecting the economy of our country.

The Port of Baltimore is the largest single economic factor creating jobs in our community, and the Port of Baltimore depends upon a stable coastal climate.

The tourism industry is directly affected by climate change. People love to come to our State to hunt and fish. One of the most valuable assets we have along the bay is the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.

The Presiding Officer has heard me talk about that frequently in the Environment and Public Works Committee. The bald eagles have returned to Blackwater. It is an incredible sight. People go there just to see the beauty of nature and to visit our wildlife and our waterfowl.

Blackwater is at risk. It is important for tourism, and it is important for our environment. It is also the land in which Harriet Tubman conducted the underground railroad, so it has a lot of significance. Yet, between 1938 and 2006, we lost 5,000 acres of marshland to open water, and that is accelerating. It is not slowing down. If we don't reverse the impacts of climate change, we are going to see a more dramatic impact on those types of treasures in Maryland and nationally.

I will also mention the fact that, of course, this is a Federal legislature, and we should be concerned about the Federal facilities as well. In Maryland we have Pax River, which does incredibly important work for our Navy so they can do their research and flight testing on the coast of our State, and that is at risk by the rising sea-level.

I serve on the Board of Visitors at the Naval Academy, and I can tell you I have visited the Naval Academy when it has been flooded because of storms. It is a little below sea level at some of its locations. The rising sea level jeopardizes that iconic institution that is so important to our national defense.

The Aberdeen Proving Grounds is also located on our coast and does critical work in national security. All of these facilities are being jeopardized because of the climate change that is occurring in our community.

I will talk a little bit about some good news. We can reverse what has happened. We can slow down the effects. We can change the course that we are on. We have already done a significant amount. I congratulate President Obama and his policies because he has taken on the major areas that deal with climate change.

The United States has to lead internationally, but it starts with action right here in the United States. We have to lead by example. Other countries are far ahead of us. We have to

join with other countries to produce a strategy that works because our environment does not end at our borders. We have to work internationally, but first we have to work at home.

What has President Obama done? He has taken on the transportation sector, which is one of the greatest uses of carbon fuels, with our CAFE standards—our efficiency of our automobiles. We now have standards that would lead to having an automobile get 54½ miles per gallon by 2025. That is ambitious. They said we couldn't do it before, but we did it. We met those standards, and we will meet these standards. We will significantly reduce the amount of fuels that we need to fuel our transportation in this country.

We are investing in transit facilities, and that reduces our carbon footprint. High-speed rail reduces our carbon footprint. We are committed to those types of solutions that are common sense to help our environment.

The Obama administration is moving ahead on the regulation of carbon pollution under the Clean Air Act. They recognize that the energy sector can help reduce our carbon footprint substantially.

Senator WARREN was absolutely correct when she said that we don't have a level playing field today. We subsidize the fossil fuels, but we don't with the renewable fuels. We can expand our renewable energy sources.

Quite frankly, we are showing innovation among all of our stakeholders. Buildings use a lot of energy and generate a lot of carbon. The Federal Government is leading in the LEED certification, as is the private sector, in doing things that are much more energy efficient in the building sector.

Therefore, we have seen progress in transportation and buildings and the generation of electricity. We have been reducing our carbon footprint, which will help the people on Smith Island by reducing the sea level changes.

The Presiding Officer and I saw firsthand the impact of the glacier melts when we were in Greenland. I thank Senator BOXER for arranging that opportunity. We saw very visually the glacier melts and how much has occurred in a very short period of time. We can reverse that by showing leadership in transportation and the way we use our buildings and the way we generate electricity. We can work together with the international community.

The good news is that the solutions for dealing with climate change will help our national security by consuming less fossil fuels. We want to get to zero as far as our need for imported energy in this country.

We can get that. We now know the threats that are made from Russia to Ukraine to the Middle East. We can eliminate that threat to our national security. We can create more jobs. Green energy will give us more jobs in

the fossil fuel industry. We need good-paying jobs. We can leave our children and grandchildren a cleaner planet and a better future. That is what is at stake. That is why we have taken this time. I am proud to be identified with so many who have spoken on this issue. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I thank my colleague from Maryland. I thank him for all his work on the Chesapeake and so many important issues as it relates to this issue and for being here up all night with my colleagues on this important climate issue.

I thank Senators BOXER and WHITEHOUSE and SCHATZ for organizing this endeavor and for everybody participating. Obviously we are here to talk about climate change, but like my colleagues we know climate change is actually impacting jobs now because it is impacting our climate now. So while we are here to talk about what might happen in the future, I am here right now to specifically talk about what is happening to our economy and why we need to take action because ocean acidification is an economic issue and it affects so many different people in our economy in the Pacific Northwest.

It affects our shellfish growers, which is a major industry. We have three and four generations of shellfish growers who are threatened now by the impact of carbon in our oceans and the warming of our oceans. So when you talk about climate and you talk about acidification of our oceans, you are talking about an industry that is key to the Northwest that is being affected today.

Also, our crab fishermen are being affected today, which is an important part of our fishing industry all the way to the Bering Sea. A lot of people do not realize that the Alaska crab fishermen are based in Alaska and in Washington State. They very much depend on making sure we deal with this issue in the future if we want to protect these jobs and the important industry that is there.

Sea levels are rising and forcing communities to deal with this issue. We want to help ticket these jobs, even jobs for the salmon fisherman. A lot of people watch "Deadliest Catch" and understand the seafood industry, but they may not understand that even salmon depend on a food source that is affected by ocean acidification, that it is not just killing oysters and shellfish, but it is also killing these pteropod that the salmon industry depends on too.

You can see I am here to talk in relation to jobs because commercial fishing in Washington State is a \$30 billion coastal economy with 42,000 jobs and contributes about \$1.7 billion to our gross economic product. So for us this

is the impact of climate that is being felt today, not in the future. It is being felt today. It threatens a key industry. Not only is that industry important to Washington State, it is also important to the Nation. It contributes \$70 billion to the U.S. economy and supports over 1 million fishing jobs. So our inaction in Congress, deciding not to do something, basically threatens those 1 million jobs because the climate is impacting our oceans and our oceans are impacting the food supply these fishermen harvest.

If we do not do something about this, we are going to have severe problems in the future. Why is this? The key point—if we could have just one chart today played over and over, I would have this chart—is our oceans absorb 25 percent of the CO₂ emissions. That is right. All of the CO₂ emissions, 25 percent of them basically sink into the ocean. So that means carbon emissions from fossil fuels are being absorbed into the ocean. That basically creates a very corrosive environment in our waters.

So the notion that people think we can continue doing what we are doing and not make the change, I guarantee you the problems we are causing for our oceans is a serious threat. This graph shows you the kind of acidification that is happening in our sea water.

That ocean acidification has increased 30 percent over the last 200 years. Oceans are on track to be 150 percent more acidic by the end of the century. The current rate of acidification is 10 times faster than anything Earth has experienced in the last 50 million years.

As you can see, this increase of carbon and an increase of the acidity level in water, an increase in acidification, is what is causing this problem for us. Again, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who think this is just something that we do not have to deal with are ignoring the real science and the state of our oceans.

What does that acidification cause? I guess if there was another chart here I would make this chart also the star of the show, because this is not a science experiment, this is the current state of oyster larvae. Last night I was at a restaurant here in town and they offered Washington oysters, shellfish on the menu. That is great to see.

But this is a picture of actual larvae, the beginning stages of these shellfish that are being impacted. You can see here that this is what acidification is doing to that larvae. It is not able to form. We saw in 2005 when shellfish production plummeted on the West Coast, it seemed like a freak accident, but then it happened again in 2006 and in 2007. Then in 2008, more than 80 percent of the oysters at Whiskey Creek Shellfish Hatchery died before they could be planted into the shellfish farm. In total, billions of shellfish died

because of that acidification. These images from Oregon State University show ocean acidification, what it does to the larvae because that acidification erodes and becomes corrosive and actually kills the oysters.

As I said, these are third- and fourth-generation jobs in my State. It is very important that we protect them. They have been a big driving part of our economy. But when corrosive sea water increases and then you have a 60-percent decrease in production, you are talking about hundreds of jobs in Washington State that are being impacted. We need to do something right now to act.

It does not just affect the larvae of oysters, acidification destroys other shellfish. This again is another example of a pteropod, which just happens to be the food source for salmon. Some of these shellfish are what salmon feed off of for a protein source. Yet these same shells are not being able to form. Over 30 percent of the marine life in Puget Sound is a calcifier. So these calcifiers basically are species that are a calcium carbonate shell, just like the oysters and the shellfish, that needs to form. That is 30 percent of our marine life, of our food source.

So if we do not do something about ocean acidification, these shells are not forming, and we are going to have an even more serious impact to our salmon industry in Washington State.

My constituents know these are big issues. In fact, the Seattle Times ran a groundbreaking series called "Sea Change," the highlighting of the impact of carbon to the oceans because it could—as this article details—cause a collapse of that huge Alaska crab fishing industry—a collapse. I know my colleagues from the Northeast are here. They understand what a collapse to a fishing industry means. They understand it means a lot of people without jobs, it means a lot of people who depend on the fishing industry as ancillary or related jobs end up without jobs. They understand that a collapse of the fishing industry means a collapse to the economy overall in their region.

So if we do not do something to address acidification, we are talking about climate change impacting a key jobs sector and causing huge job losses. That is what this chart shows. Basically it shows how the crab harvest industry is being impacted by ocean acidification and that it could cause a very precipitous decline.

We cannot afford that. I will show you why we cannot afford that. We just recently—people might have caught it on the west coast. You might think what I just showed you is about oysters and about the pteropod for a salmon source, but scallops, we just had I think 1 week ago a massive die-off, another canary in the coal mine. Basically it shows that 10 million scallops

died off the coast of British Columbia. Acidification was to blame. So acidic water was blamed for west coast scallop die-off.

It shut down a processing plant and one-third of its workforce. You can see these things basically are killing jobs. So ocean acidification kills jobs. Us doing nothing about ocean acidification or about CO₂ in the atmosphere is going to cause us economic problems.

I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to make sure we support measures that will allow us to mitigate now the impact of this and plan for the future because we cannot have what is happening now.

We have a buoy system that we have deployed all across the United States. That buoy system helps us identify acidification levels and helps the fishermen come up with alternative strategies about when to do their planting. Let's just say it this way: They figure out when is a perfect moment to actually have the seeding. If you have too much CO₂ and a warming of the oceans, then figuring out that very moment where it might not be so acidic or challenging and then actually doing the planting is giving us some problems.

But these are high-risk tactics. We actually have to reduce the level of CO₂. We are here this morning to talk about how this issue impacts the industry in my State. But this last chart shows a picture that is irrefutable. This is ocean acidification's effects on coral. Here is healthy coral. You can see it is vibrant, colorful. If you have ever been off our coast or walking on the beaches, you can see the shell life that exists in a healthy coral reef.

This is the same coral reef years later with an unhealthy effect. We are here this morning to talk about jobs, to talk about climate and its impact on our economy today. It is important that we address this issue. I have sponsored bipartisan legislation with my colleague on the other side of the aisle called the CLEAR Act. It is just one idea, but the premise of that is that we have to not only reduce greenhouse gases now, we have to mitigate the impact and plan for a more diverse energy source in the future.

That is what we are talking about. We are talking about trying to save jobs in the United States of America by doing a better job of planning on this important issue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I wish to agree with Senator CANTWELL, our colleague from Washington State, because in New Hampshire we are also seeing the impact of climate change on our traditional industries. It is contributing to sea level rise, it imperils businesses and homes in coastal communities such as Portsmouth. New Hampshire's very popular Hampton Beach is

experiencing greater storm surges and beach erosion. The outdoor recreation community is facing shorter winters, less snow, and that results in fewer tourism dollars.

Wildlife and public health are becoming increasingly vulnerable to diseases. In New Hampshire, tourism is our State's second largest industry. It accounts for \$9.3 billion in the State's economy. It provides jobs and economic growth throughout the State, but climate change could put some of New Hampshire's best attractions in jeopardy. The fall foliage in New Hampshire is a main draw for visitors from around the world who spend millions annually to see our beautiful landscape. As climate change continues, those warmer temperatures are causing dulling and browning of climate-stressed unhealthy trees.

Another driver of tourism in New Hampshire is our State's outdoor recreation activities, such as downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling. As temperatures increase due to climate change, the ski industry has to make more snow, and that increases their expenses. In fact, the EPA has predicted that by the end of the century, summers in New Hampshire could be as warm as summers in North Carolina, which would drastically shorten fall foliage without cooler temperatures starting in September. We are already seeing it in terms of fewer snow days in New Hampshire and earlier ice out on our lakes.

Maple sugar production is being affected. It depends on prolonged cold temperatures with freezing nights and warm daytime temperatures to create the optimal sugar content and sap production. With warming underway, maple sugar producers in New Hampshire tell me they are already seeing an impact on production. According to a report by the New Hampshire Citizens for a Responsible Energy Policy, "Current modeling forecasts predict that maple sugar trees eventually will be completely eliminated as a regionally important species in the northeastern United States"—that is, if we fail to act on climate change.

New Hampshire's seacoast is facing rising sea levels along our 18 miles of shoreline. The coastline is one of the most developed parts of the State, and flooding could devastate coastal towns and their economies. Ted Diers, who is the administrator of the Watershed Management Bureau of the NH Department of Environmental Services, recently said:

Sea level has been rising at 6 to 8 inches a century. What we're seeing right now is a tripling of that.

Climate change is expected to cause widespread tree deaths, which could cause extensive wildfires. We are already seeing that in the West. There

are large increases in pest and pathogen outbreaks and a lag in the establishment of new forests for several decades. It is also a threat to animals and their habitats.

The moose population in New Hampshire is declining due to warming trends in winter and summer. The fact is that New Hampshire's moose population is down 40 percent this year, and it is the result of ticks. We have not had winters that are cold enough to cause those ticks to die off, and so we are seeing that across our wildlife population.

What is happening in New Hampshire is happening around the world. We must take action now to slow these harmful trends, and we can make progress. We should be looking at all kinds of ways to make progress, to address what is happening to our environment.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate to find smart and sensible solutions because New Hampshire's economy, the health of our citizens, the U.S. economy, the world's economy, and our health all depend on it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I want the 31 colleagues who have been on the floor to know how proud I am. As I have watched throughout the evening and this morning, I have seen our colleagues continue to hold this floor to try to bring attention to climate change. I am very proud of them.

I have the privilege of being the cleanup hitter in this session that has gone on for hours and hours. I want to speak from the perspective of the part of the United States that is going to be and is most affected by sea level rise, which is a consequence of climate change; that is, the State of Florida. I also want to speak from the perspective of outer space.

When someone looks back at the planet through the window of a spacecraft—which I had the privilege of doing 28 years ago in the early part of the space shuttle program, the space shuttle *Columbia*, which was piloted by now-retired Marine Gen. Charlie Bolden, who is the head of NASA and has been for the past 5 years—when we look back at our home, we see this incredible creation that is so colorful suspended in the midst of nothing. Space is nothing. Space is an airless vacuum that goes on and on for billions of light years, and there is our home and it is so beautiful, yet it looks so fragile from that perspective of miles and miles away. What the naked eye can see from that altitude as we orbit the Earth at 17,500 miles an hour is incredible in the detail we can see, but some of that detail is quite disturbing.

For example, coming across the Amazon I could see the color contrast. I

could see the destruction of the rain forest. Then I could look to the east coast of Brazil at the mouth of the Amazon. I could see the silt that discolored the waters of the Atlantic for hundreds of miles, the extra silt coming off the destruction of the trees upriver.

On the other side of the globe, for example, coming across Madagascar 28 years ago when they were cutting down all of their trees for fuel, for fires, and as a result there was no vegetation, and when the rains came, the water ran down the hills, the silt came into the rivers, and we could see for miles and miles at the mouths of the rivers from Madagascar—flying 203 miles above the surface of the Earth, we could see the effects. We could see those kinds of effects in the midst of that God-given beauty, that the Earth is so fragile.

We could look at the rim of the Earth and see this thin film. It went into a blue band that then went into the blackness of space, and we could see what sustains all of life—the atmosphere. As a result, I certainly became more of an environmentalist because I saw in its entirety how fragile this ecosystem is.

We could see the effects of storms. We were up in January, so we saw a hurricane in the Southern Hemisphere going clockwise, not counterclockwise as in the Northern Hemisphere. For hundreds of miles, there was this storm in the Indian Ocean. We could see from that perspective of the window of a spacecraft the delicacy of this God-created ecological balance.

What we have done, as we burn more fuel and carbon dioxide goes into the air, instead of what was created where the Earth's rays come in and hit the surface—where the Sun's rays come in through the atmosphere and hit the Earth's surface and reflect back into space, suddenly the excess gases in the atmosphere create a kind of greenhouse effect, which then traps the heat. The heat, as it reflects off of the Earth's surfaces and bounces as it radiates back into space, can't get out and the Earth continues to heat.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change projects that the globe could warm 1.5 to 4.5 degrees Celsius by the end of the century. It also estimated that sea levels could rise from 1 foot to 3 feet over the same period.

Since we are talking about inches, degrees, and hundreds of years, now I want to go from space to my home in my native State of Florida, which is ground zero for the sea level rise. What will Florida look like in the year 2100? Florida has a population closing in on 20 million people. We are surpassing New York as the third-largest State. About 14 million of those people live along the coast, and that number is going to double by the year 2100. In those coastal cities and towns, there are homes, schools, powerplants, water

treatment plants, roads, and bridges which could be underwater as the sea level rises. This isn't only hypothetical; this is real. Florida's Atlantic University, one of our great State universities, indicates that Florida has recorded 5 to 8 inches of sea level rise in the last half century. This rate is a rate of 1 foot per century, and it is about 8 times the average rate over the past 2,500 years. Today at high tide we can see for ourselves the flooded roads. They are a regular occurrence. We can see the flooded neighborhoods. We can see what happens when the infrastructure is flooded.

If we just take a few years further in this century, 2060, we are going to see close to 1 to 2 feet of sea level rise. According to the National Research Council, by 2100 that number could be as much as 3 feet. Do you want to see what 3 feet is? Three feet of sea level rise—look at the heavy population of southeast Florida. Look at all of these portions of the Everglades. Look at the Florida Keys—gone, under water. Look at the Fort Myers area, the Caloosahatchee River, Charlotte Bay, and look at Tampa Bay. Look where our space shuttle launched from pad 39A, Cape Canaveral—under water. Look at all of the coast of Florida, look over here at the tremendous Apalachicola oyster estuary—under water, and so forth and so on. That is what prominent scientific organizations have estimated at the end of this century: a 3-foot rise in the sea and 14 million people—a population that over the course of the next few decades will double; 28 million people living on the coast of Florida—are going to be under water. Why aren't people paying attention?

Before I came to the Senate, I had one of the toughest jobs I had ever had in elected public service. I was the elected insurance commissioner in Florida. The task fell to me in the aftermath of the monster storm Hurricane Andrew to resuscitate the insurance marketplace back to life.

Back then, in the early 1990s, we could see monster storms meant warming of the climate, warmer ocean temperatures, more frequency and ferocity of storms. So as the then-insurance commissioner, I tried to go to the insurance companies to try to start getting them interested in protecting the investments they insured, and they kept their heads in the sand. We couldn't get it.

So you can see that 75 percent of the State's population on the coast makes up 80 percent of the State's total income. Because we have more beaches than any other State, we have more coastline than any other State, save for Alaska, and a warmer climate, we have a great tourism industry—a tourism industry that attracts 37,000 companies to Florida—businesses related to the coast, from boating, to fishing,

to lodging, to leisure recreation, all told employing a quarter of a million people.

This 1,350 miles of coastline is a magnet for visitors. They come and they enjoy the beaches. They fish for red snapper in Destin, up here. They look for red snapper off of Panama City. Maybe they go for scallops off of Cedar Key. Maybe they go to see the spring training games in Tampa. Maybe they watch the sunsets from the Florida Keys. Well, you can see what is happening. The most recent data from the State indicates that in 2011 tourists spent \$67 billion in Florida and contributed \$4 billion to our State treasury.

So while a lot of people have their heads in the sand, some local leaders, happily some local elected leaders are starting to do something about it. The city of Miami Beach already experiences flooding and drainage problems due to the high tides. They are planning to spend \$200 million to purchase more pump stations, raise seawalls, and upgrade stormwater storage. Do you know whom we are talking to? Holland, the Netherlands. We are trying to learn about large-scale dikes and engineering fixes and how the Dutch have kept their lands dry. Miami Beach is taking the initiative so that homes and businesses will continue to thrive.

The higher sea levels—get this—also threaten the water supply. Do you know why? Because Florida is basically land on top of a vast limestone honeycomb. Like a sponge, it holds freshwater deep underground, but when the sea level rises, the saltwater moves in and replaces the freshwater, so those aquifers become too salty or brackish. You can't drink that. That is happening, and it is happening in a little town on the southeast coast of Florida called Hallandale Beach. Their local officials are spending right now \$16 million to upgrade their stormwater system and move the city's drinking water system to the west side of the city, further away from the coast.

So local leaders are making the tough decisions to prepare for the future, and that is one reason I have the privilege of having the support of Senator ROCKEFELLER, the chairman of the commerce committee, and we are going to take a commerce committee field hearing during the April recess down to South Florida, to Miami Beach, and we are going to hear what local governments, businesses, and even reinsurance companies are doing in the wake of the sea level rise.

One additional thing. I described what CO₂ does, going into the air and creating the greenhouse effect, which stops the radiating of the Sun's heat back out into space. But there is another thing it does. Because carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is making our oceans more acidic, it threatens the coral reefs and all of the creatures in the ocean, from lobsters to clams.

This is a picture of a healthy coral reef.

This is not.

The coral reef system in Florida is responsible for bringing in \$3.5 billion in sales and income, and off of the coast of South Florida it supports 36,000 jobs. More acidic water means oysters, crabs, and lobsters are threatened. Biologists tell us that when shelled organisms are at risk, the entire food web may also be at risk because the reefs provide the core reproductive and feeding habitat for the marine life.

So I come to the end of my comments, Mr. President. Whether you look at it from the perspective of the Senator from Florida, whose State is severely threatened at this moment, or from the perspective of the window of a spacecraft, looking back at this creation we call home, planet Earth, we are in severe jeopardy, and it is time for us to get out of our lethargy and recognize the problem happening in front of our very eyes.

I am so proud of my colleagues. Before the Senators came in, I said that I had been watching on C-SPAN during the course of last evening and this morning, and I am so proud of you for what you have done in bringing attention to this issue.

HAWAII TRAVEL AND TOURISM

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, as you have heard here tonight, climate change is real, it is caused by humans, it is happening now, it is solvable, and it is time for Congress to wake up and take action.

I want to talk now about an important sector of the U.S. economy and how it is specifically impacted by climate change.

I am talking about travel and tourism. It is a major economic driver in this country, representing almost 3 percent of the gross domestic product. It generates nearly \$1.5 trillion in economic output and supports nearly 8 million jobs.

This sector is critical to my home state of Hawai'i but as chairman of the commerce committee's tourism subcommittee, I am also concerned about the economic impacts climate change could have on this critical industry for the entire Nation.

The U.S. welcomed nearly 70 million international arrivals in 2012 who spent almost \$130 billion on hotels, restaurants, airline tickets, shopping, attractions, and more. This is significant.

As the United States works to meet our national goal of welcoming 100 million international visitors annually by 2021, we must think of how climate change factors into the equation for this economic sector as well as how the industry itself contributes to climate change.

Travel and tourism is responsible for about 5 percent of global CO₂ emis-

sions. Transportation generates three quarters of these emissions with the majority coming from air travel.

In addition to transportation, the hospitality sector also consumes significant amounts of water for bathrooms, landscaping, laundries, and kitchens, and consumes sizeable quantities of electricity for lighting, heating and cooling systems and elevator and other equipment.

Changes in extreme weather caused by climate change will impact this industry and the experience our visitors have while exploring our States and territories by potentially damaging travel and tourism-related infrastructure, increasing the required investment in emergency preparedness to prepare coastal tourism communities for disasters, increasing operating expenses to do business in challenging and uncertain conditions; and discouraging travel to affected areas.

As we certainly know here in Washington, DC, the United States has experienced an extreme winter season this year, with record cold temperatures and plenty of snow. As extreme weather events continue to occur, made more frequent by a changing climate, the travel and tourism industry will continue to feel the impact.

To put this into real terms, economists estimate that the cancellation of one domestic flight for weather-related reasons costs over \$31,000 in passengers' lost economic activity or \$3.5 billion in 2013.

The travel and tourism industry is a major economic driver in Hawaii. It is the biggest generator of jobs. More than eight million visitors came to Hawaii in 2013 and spent \$14.5 billion in Hawaii. Damage to our visitor industry will cost us jobs and threaten our economic prosperity.

If we don't act now, climate change over the next several decades could have a negative impact on Hawaii's visitor industry. Climate change affects the quantity and quality of Hawaii's tourism assets, including our beaches, coral reefs, and tropical ecosystems.

Extreme weather and natural disasters, like droughts and hurricanes, are also made worse and more severe by climate change and impact residents and visitors alike.

But it is not enough to just recognize the impacts of climate change on tourism. One of the themes here tonight is that climate change is solvable.

We have a responsibility as policymakers to strike a sensible balance between the positive and negative aspects of travel and tourism and ensure that it is conducted in an environmentally sustainable way.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, "There is now a wide recognition of the urgent need for the tourism industry, national governments, and international organizations to develop and implement

strategies to face the changing climate conditions and to take preventive actions for future effects, as well as to mitigate tourism's environmental impacts contributing to climate change."

The U.S. travel and tourism industry recognizes its impacts and is stepping up to the challenge of mitigating its contribution to climate change.

The US Travel Association says that, "the [U.S.] travel community as a whole and its sectors individually are committed to taking actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and explore mitigation measures needed to address climate change impacts."

In my home State, Hawaiian Airlines is working to reduce its emissions. It was awarded the first ever aviation-based carbon credit in 2012 for its use of the EcoPower engine wash system, which reduces fuel consumption—saving the company money at the same time.

One of our biotech companies is working on producing advanced biofuels for aviation and has signed a deal to produce green fuel for Alaska Airlines, perhaps as soon as 2018.

Hotels have gone far beyond simply asking guests to reuse towels and close lanai doors to save on water and energy. They have invested in technology to improve lighting efficiency, manage energy use in unoccupied spaces and improve the efficiency of building equipment to decrease energy and water use while not impacting guest services. And they are continuing to look for more ways to operate efficiently, including technology such as seawater air conditioning.

We can solve the problem through reductions in our energy use by improving energy efficiency, increasing the use of renewable energy, changing how we conduct business, and adopting policies that promote sustainable tourism.

We need to work together to implement policies that support the continued growth of this important sector to support jobs and economic prosperity. We need to protect the natural resources that bring visitors from around the world to our beautiful country and to my home state of Hawaii.

It is time for Congress to act.

ASIA PACIFIC

Mr. President. We have heard from many colleagues tonight about the challenges of climate change and the need for urgent action. Left unaddressed it has the potential to impact the lives and livelihoods of nearly everyone on the planet.

As Secretary of State John Kerry cautioned recently in a speech in Jakarta, climate change is akin to many other global challenges that "know no borders," like terrorism, disease, poverty and nuclear proliferation.

"The reality is that climate change ranks right up there with every single one of them," he said. I could not agree more.

But with every challenge comes an opportunity. And just as the world has come together to confront the crises of pandemic disease and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, climate change too holds the potential for collective action.

So I would like to spend some time tonight discussing climate change in a different way—not just as a problem to be solved, but as an opportunity for the U.S. to exercise its leadership in the world; an opportunity for the U.S. to develop long-lasting and effective partnerships with the international community.

Regardless of whether all Americans believe global climate change should be a top priority and an issue worthy of immediate Congressional attention, I believe that we all can agree this issue should be a part of our diplomatic and development efforts with countries facing the gravest and most immediate climate change impacts.

Nowhere is this more true than in the Asia-Pacific region, where America's partners and allies face acute and imminent risks associated with climate change, such as sea-level rise, extreme weather, flooding, and environmental degradation.

According to the U.N.'s Environmental Program:

Asia-Pacific is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change and impacts are likely to become more intense in the future. Rising temperatures and extreme weather events have contributed to loss of crop yield in many countries. Crop yields are projected to decline by a further 10 percent by 2020.

Sea-level rise is likely to result in significant losses of coastal ecosystems and put nearly a million people along the coasts of South and Southeast Asia at risk. Diarrheal disease primarily associated with climatic changes will also put many lives at risk in South and Southeast Asia. In addition, the greenhouse gas emissions of a number of Asia-Pacific countries are large and will grow significantly in future if actions are not taken to curb emissions."

The Obama administration's foreign policy rebalance to the Asia Pacific has been well-covered in recent months. With nearly a third of the Earth's population and one quarter of global GDP, "America's future prosperity and security are intertwined with the East Asia Pacific region." What America's rebalance to the region will mean for U.S. military engagement and U.S. traditional diplomacy in the region has been widely discussed. Yet, issues such as the region's huge proportion of the planet's biodiversity vulnerable to climate change have gone largely unnoticed in the discussions.

To strengthen our existing relationships and to develop new partnerships, we must bring our engagement with Asia-Pacific countries on global climate change issues to the forefront of diplomatic and development efforts. This includes promoting efforts to help countries adapt to their most vulner-

able risks. By developing a robust global climate change engagement plan, we are also countering the naysayers who claim that the United States rebalance to the Asia Pacific is only about projecting military power in the region.

In fact, promoting climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies as part of our foreign policy toolkit would serve to deescalate military tensions in the region by demonstrating that our realignment to the region is more than military power. I would like to spend the next few minutes detailing several avenues for addressing climate change in the region, with some specific examples of how we and our partners are already engaging on the issue.

First, I will discuss our traditional diplomatic efforts and the importance of developing and enhancing bilateral and multilateral agreements and partnerships.

Second, I will highlight how climate change mitigation has become an integral part of our development and foreign aid packages. Finally, I will advocate for a cross-sector approach that brings together private sector investments, non-governmental organizations, and educational and scientific partners.

It is important for the United States to collaborate in ways that, first and foremost, promote America's interests. However, we must also recognize that we can learn valuable lessons from our partners and allies as well. As a recent progress report on President Obama's Climate Action Plan states: "Just as no country is immune from the impacts of climate change, no country can meet this challenge alone."

In that light, we have much to learn from other countries confronting the crisis of climate change, just as much as we have to share about our efforts to manage the challenge ourselves.

In June 2013, President Obama presented his Climate Action Plan, which laid out the case for action on climate change and the steps his administration will take to address it. The Climate Action Plan includes measures to lead international efforts to address global climate change.

It is particularly important that we expand bilateral cooperation on climate change with the major emerging economies in the Asia-Pacific region, China and India, and the President's plan has started to do that.

Climate change was a central theme of the United States-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue in July 2013. The United States-China Working Group on Climate Change launched five focus areas to deepen bilateral efforts to address greenhouse gas emissions: reducing heavy-duty vehicle emissions; smart grids; carbon capture, utilization, and storage; collecting and managing greenhouse gas data; and energy efficiency in buildings and industry.

In December, during Vice President BIDEN's visit to China, the United

States and China committed to reviewing their fossil fuel subsidies under the G20 process. In addition, China committed to implement aggressive low sulfur fuel and motor vehicle emissions standards. These standards can pave the way toward the adoption of more fuel efficient technologies, and ultimately lower greenhouse gas emissions. The United States is also working with China to combat short-lived climate pollutants.

During Indian Prime Minister Singh's visit to Washington in October 2013, the United States and India launched a new large-scale off-grid clean energy initiative to help bring clean energy to those under-served by the electricity grid, as well as an initiative to help India deploy advanced space cooling technology.

We must also continue to engage in the region through multilateral organizations like the United Nations, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ASEAN, and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, APEC. ASEAN members are also attempting to tackle climate change issues in the region. Several countries have announced voluntary mitigation targets, including Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore. ASEAN has also developed a Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint, an innovative strategy to "enhance regional and international cooperation to address the issue of climate change and its impacts on socioeconomic development, health and the environment in ASEAN Member States through implementation of mitigation and adaptation measures, based on the principles of equity, flexibility, effectiveness, common but differentiated responsibilities, respective capabilities, as well as reflecting on different social and economic conditions."

On the economic and energy front, APEC leaders have:

proposed a regional goal to reduce energy intensity by at least 45 percent by 2035. To this end, APEC Ministers determined to improve energy efficiency and support the use of cleaner and more efficient energy technologies by setting individual goals and action plans; collaborating with the International Energy Agency to develop energy efficiency indicators; sharing information on energy efficiency policies and measures; and encouraging APEC economies to contribute to and utilize the APEC Energy Standards Information System. Economies are held accountable through the APEC Peer Review Mechanism on Energy Efficiency.

This peer review is also a vehicle for economies to share their respective policies, experiences, information and ultimately to improve energy efficiency.

United States development assistance is also rising to meet the challenges of climate change in the Asia-Pacific region. Three projects are particularly noteworthy:

The United States Agency for International Development is investing \$7.3 million in the Indonesia Forestry and Climate Support program, which works

with the Indonesian government, the private sector, and communities to improve forest governance and planning at the district level; promote sustainable forest management in target landscapes; and increase sustainable development of local economies by engaging private sector partners who can provide financing and technical expertise;

The United States Agency for International Development is investing \$2.9 million in the Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Support Facility, known as ADAPT. ADAPT will work with governments in the Asia-Pacific region to support training on the preparation of financeable adaptation projects, and provide assistance for analysis and financial review of selected project proposals. The program will link climate fund managers with representatives of government adaptation projects to identify adaptation investment opportunities and facilitate access to climate funds. A regional knowledge platform will also broadly disseminate best practices, climate fund eligibility requirements, and application procedures;

The United States Agency for International Development is investing \$2 million in the Maldives Program to Enhance Climate Resiliency and Water Security. The United States Agency for International Development will partner with the Maldives Ministry of Housing and Environment, provincial utility service providers, and Island Councils and residents on two northern islands to assess long-term climate vulnerability and develop cost-effective adaptation strategies. The program will support innovative solutions to the growing problem of water scarcity, which is made worse by climate change and sea level rise. The program will assist the Government's goal of developing the standards and criteria for a "climate resilient island" model program that can be replicated throughout the country, and potentially in other small island developing states.

As a Senator from the island State of Hawaii, I have a particular interest in this last project. Hawaii stands in the center of the Asia-Pacific region.

The people of Hawaii—including native Hawaiians who have lived on our islands for millennia—and Hawai'i-based institutions such as the East-West Center provide a unique cultural and geographic perspective on global climate change and stand ready to serve as ambassadors for climate change issues in the region.

In Hawaii, I have been involved with the Asia Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience, APDR3 initiative, which was launched at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meetings in Honolulu in 2011. APDR3 recognizes that "there are steps we can take to mitigate the impact of natural disasters, but we must work together across all sectors of society in order to maximize our effectiveness.

The APDR3 network, hosted by the University of Hawaii Foundation, is a collaborative initiative, which works across six sectors of society—academia, business, government, military, non-profit organizations and civil society, and philanthropy. The network believes that by working together through a 'whole of society' approach, we can enhance our ability to reduce risks from disasters and build more resilient communities and economies in the Asia-Pacific region.

Government and international organization efforts to mitigate climate change are important, but the public sector cannot do it alone. If we are to truly make significant progress, the APDR3's cross-sector approach must be replicated on a much wider scale. Innovative solutions are being developed in think-tanks, universities and other non-profit institutions across the United States.

To cite just one example, International Food Policy Research Institute fellow Mark Rosegrant has published findings that climate change could cause the production of irrigated and rain-fed staple crops—rice and wheat in Asia, and taro, sweet potatoes, and cassava in the Pacific—to decline by as much as 25 percent by 2050.

According to Rosegrant, "this will have a direct effect on nutrition, increasing the number of malnourished children in the area by an additional 9 to 11 million." However, Rosegrant proposes solutions to the worst scenarios. Through "targeted, aggressive investment in agricultural research, rural roads, and irrigation," Rosegrant believes we cut the increase in childhood malnutrition due to climate change significantly. This type of investment, however, hinges on "regional cooperation on research" and "non-agricultural investments for clean water and maternal education."

"In addition to these increased investments, Rosegrant's other recommendations include establishing regional centers of excellence in the Pacific countries to link national and international research centers; forming integrated data management, monitoring, and evaluation systems for a wide range of market and climate information; opening the global agricultural trading regime to share risk and increase resilience; and revitalizing extension systems to include local participation and effectively coordinate public, private, and NGO providers."

Many of these ideas would help countries in the region mitigate other potential effects of climate change as well. It is crucial that governments utilize studies and recommendations such as these when developing policies on climate change.

I close with this reminder: climate change is not merely a complicated problem to be solved; it is an opportunity for the United States to demonstrate forward-thinking leadership

and positive engagement with the world community. Climate change diplomacy, especially in the Asia Pacific, has the potential to transform our relationship with present and future partners and strategic allies for years to come.

It must serve as cornerstone of our rebalance to the region. Let us seize that opportunity.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. President. One of the themes that we have heard tonight is that climate change is a challenge that affects all Americans—from small businesses and local farmers to major corporations and agricultural communities. But there is one community that I would like to focus specific attention on because the consequences of climate change fall on its shoulders in unique ways: the U.S. military.

In an interview last year, ADM Samuel J. Locklear III, commander of the United States Pacific Command in my home State of Hawaii, argued that climate change is the greatest long-term security challenge in the Asia-Pacific region. Upheaval and political instability from climate change he said “is probably the most likely thing that is going to happen . . . that will cripple the security environment, probably more likely than the other scenarios we all often talk about.”

His comments echoed those of 11 retired 3-star and 4-star admirals and generals who, in 2007, unequivocally stated that climate change is a “significant national security challenge” that can serve as a “threat multiplier for instability in some of the most volatile regions of the world.” Their comments are not without a sense of urgency.

As Admiral Locklear explained last year, “I’m into the consequence management side of it. I’m not a scientist.” When he testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee last April, Admiral Locklear made his point clearer when he explained the urgency for preventive action. He said:

We are also seeing—if you go to USAID and you ask the numbers for my PACOM AOR how many people died due to natural disasters from 2008 to 2012, it was about 280,000 people died. Now, they weren’t all climate change or weather-related, but a lot of them were due to that. About 800,000 people were displaced and there was about \$500 billion of lost productivity.

Admiral Locklear’s comments and those of his former colleagues before him are not out of the ordinary. They reflect the growing consensus within the Department of Defense and the broader national security community that climate change is real and already shaping the global security environment in new and profound ways.

The Department of Defense is focused on two areas in particular.

First, climate change is shaping the U.S. military’s strategic operating en-

vironment, forcing the Department of Defense to grapple with new mission requirements that it generally did not anticipate a decade ago.

In its 2010 strategic planning document, the Quadrennial Defense Review, the Department of Defense for the first time concluded that, “While climate change alone does not cause conflict, it may act as an accelerant of instability or conflict, placing a burden to respond on civilian institutions and militaries around the world.”

Simply put, the drivers of instability that fragile States already confront—drought, food shortages, water scarcity, and pandemic disease—may be made worse as a consequence of climate change. These stresses could break the backs of weak central governments and institutions in countries around the world where the United States has enduring interests—places such as Burma and Pakistan, to name a few.

Last week, the Department of Defense confirmed its initial conclusions when it published its 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, noting that:

The pressures caused by climate change will influence resource competition while placing additional burdens on economies, societies, and governance institutions around the world. These effects are threat multipliers that will aggravate stressors abroad such as poverty, environmental degradation, political instability, and social tensions—conditions that can enable terrorist activity and other forms of violence.

The more pressing concern for the U.S. military, perhaps, might be with those countries that are most vulnerable to extreme weather events and least capable of responding to them. Like drought, food shortages and other environmental grievances, natural disasters can overwhelm weak governments, contributing to the conditions that lead to instability and violence.

With each passing day, as we pump more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, we know that we are increasing our chances of extreme weather events that carry with them dangerous consequences.

The Asia-Pacific region is particularly at risk of extreme weather events that may become more frequent and severe as a result of climate change. The National Intelligence Council cautioned last year that, “Asian cities are vulnerable to the severe weather connected to climate change, which amplifies storm surges and flooding of low-lying areas.”

The tragic typhoon that struck the Philippines last November, while not directly attributable to climate change, is a stark reminder of the kinds of natural catastrophes that the U.S. military gets called on to respond to.

As Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel noted not long after this awful event:

Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines is a reminder of humanitarian disaster brought on

by nature. And climatologists warn us of the increased probability of more destructive storms to come.

The Department of Defense recognizes that it has a role to play in supporting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions. And like many first responders, the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces have an obligation to respond when called on because the U.S. military is often the only organization with the capability and personnel necessary to support those most in need, including fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft that can bring relief supplies to communities otherwise cutoff from the outside world.

But we should not be resigned to be the world’s 911 first responder—crouched in a reactive posture to respond to the next climate-related disaster. As the Department of Defense has already noted and planned for, “Proactive engagement with these countries can help build their capability to respond to such events.”

And as Admiral Locklear stated, U.S. Pacific Command can play an important role in helping our partners and allies build their capacities to respond to natural disasters, building their civil defense forces so that they can mobilize ahead of an impending storm. The U.S. military can work with them to professionalize their air forces, training them to be more efficient users of search and rescue aircraft and other capabilities so that they can do more with less.

Next month, Hawaii will host the inaugural United States-ASEAN Defense Forum in Honolulu, convening 10 of the defense ministers from the Association of Southeast Asia Nations to discuss challenges that our countries face in the region. I hope that leaders use this forum in part as an opportunity to discuss the urgency of climate change and an opportunity for proactive engagement to weather any climate-related impacts in the future.

Proactive engagement is cost-effective and can serve as a force multiplier for U.S. military forces in the future by helping our partners and allies develop the resources and skills they need to help themselves; freeing our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and coastguardsmen to defend our interests elsewhere, responding only when absolutely necessary.

The simple fact though is that the U.S. has treaty obligations and agreements with many of these vulnerable states. But regardless of those commitments, we also have a moral obligation to help those countries most in need. When the next disaster strikes, the U.S. military will be called on to provide relief. And that will force defense planners to make tradeoffs somewhere else. But if we can reduce the number of military assets and personnel required to support natural disaster relief by making it possible for other

countries to help themselves then we should do that.

In an increasingly lean budget environment, we owe it to the U.S. military to make wiser investments where possible. Preventive engagement is a smart solution. Such a commitment of our time and resources would recognize an age-old truism that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Besides the prospect of more frequent humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions, the Department of Defense is also facing new mission requirements as a result of a new theater of operations that until recently has largely been quiet—the Arctic.

Rapid environmental change at the top of the world is quickly making the Arctic one of the most accessible maritime domains on the planet. Secretary Hagel declared last November that, “Climate change is shifting the landscape in the Arctic more rapidly than anywhere else in the world.”

What is striking is how quickly the region is changing. Chief of Naval Operations ADM Anthony Greenert wrote recently in the U.S. Navy’s updated Arctic Roadmap that “ice conditions in the Arctic Ocean are changing more rapidly than first anticipated.”

The pace of change in the region compelled the Department of Defense to develop its first-ever arctic strategy to provide for a “secure and stable Arctic,” which Secretary Hagel presented last November to an international security forum in Halifax, NS.

To achieve the strategic aims that he laid out for the Department, Secretary Hagel presented eight simple objectives, to include “[evolving] Arctic infrastructure and capabilities at a pace consistent with changing conditions.”

Simply put, the U.S. military will likely face new mission requirements in the Arctic as a result of climate change, and those requirements might develop sooner than we may expect.

These new mission requirements did not come out of the blue, of course. The U.S. military operated in the Arctic during the cold war, and there had been growing acceptance that as climate change continues to take its toll on the region it would operate in High North once again.

The Defense Science Board concluded in 2011, for example, that “Climate change is currently having a major impact on the demands of military operations in the Arctic,” and that the military would need “additional capabilities to meet the demands of the expanded Arctic mission.”

What sets today’s Arctic apart from yesterday’s is the mission that the U.S. military is likely to confront. During the cold war, the U.S. Navy largely stayed under the ice. But many suspect that with the ice disappearing, the U.S. Navy’s surface fleet could play an ever increasing role in the region.

The need for additional capabilities in the Arctic may also require the U.S.

Navy to think anew about whether its tried and tested capabilities are well calibrated for a changing operating environment.

There is new evidence to suggest, for example, that climate change could have direct and indirect effects on the Navy’s operating environment, particularly in the Arctic.

A study by one national security think tank found that, “ice melt will change water densities, as an infusion of fresh water lowers the density of high-latitude northern waters, while increased evaporation from a warmer atmosphere increases the density of tropical waters.”

The study cites one example when, “In 1999, the Sturgeon-class nuclear-powered attack submarine, USS *Hawkbill*, noted how changes in water salinity—attributed to polar ice melt—made it harder for the captain to maintain neutral buoyancy”—essentially, making it difficult for the submarine not to sink or rise.

The same study found that:

Water density affects not only submarine mobility but also sonar . . . Sonar detection is especially crucial in arctic regions, where it is necessary for detecting underwater ice ridges. Accurate detection will be critical in the coming years, as submarine operators have to contend with the continued break up of major ice sheets, which can drive ice ridges deeper under water. In the 1999, aforementioned expedition by the USS *Hawkbill*, the crew noted risks associated with detecting ice ridges.

Outside the Arctic, the Department of Defense must confront other operational challenges that could result from climate change. This is the second area of concern that bears mentioning, and one where the Department of Defense has focused considerable time and resources.

The Department of Defense has warned that climate change is likely to impact the U.S. military’s facilities and capabilities. In particular, America’s military installations may be particularly vulnerable to climate change.

According to a 2008 National Intelligence Council finding, “more than 30 U.S. military installations were already facing elevated levels of risk from rising sea levels.”

The Department of Defense’s recent Quadrennial Defense Review acknowledged that the U.S. military’s “operational readiness hinges on continued access to land, air, and sea training and test space,” which means ensuring that climate change does not prevent the military from accessing these critical training and range areas.

Following the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review, the Department of Defense began working in earnest to map out its vulnerabilities, with offices like the Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program helping installation planners develop the tools they need to plan accordingly.

Last year, the Department of Defense released its climate change adaptation roadmap which lays out in greater de-

tail a plan of action for managing the short- and long-term consequences of climate change. Referencing the 2010 findings from the Quadrennial Defense Review, the adaptation roadmap concluded that, “The military is potentially vulnerable to climate change in many of the same ways as the rest of society, and in ways that are unique due to its operations and mission.”

There is still much work that the Department of Defense must do to assess its vulnerabilities at the regional and installation level, including where to best prioritize adaptation efforts at each of the most vulnerable bases.

The Department of Defense committed itself in its 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review to “complete a comprehensive assessment of all installations to assess the potential impacts of climate change on our missions and operational resiliency, and develop and implement plans to adapt as required.”

Although these assessments are ongoing, the last several years have nevertheless witnessed a groundswell of support in an effort to better understand the specific mission vulnerabilities that the U.S. military may face as a consequence of climate change.

These vulnerabilities are not specific, but they can better frame the risks that the Department of Defense faces so that we in Congress can ensure that they have the resources they need to plan accordingly.

These risks include the potential for: increased occurrence of test/training limitations due to high heat days; reduced land carrying capacity for vehicle maneuvers; increased maintenance cost for roads, utilities, and runways; limits on low-level rotary wing flight operations; temporary or prolonged disruption of military operations or test and training activities due to intense storms and resulting storm damage; inundation of and damage to coastal infrastructure; degradation or loss of coastal areas and infrastructure; increased cost of infrastructure reinforcement to withstand increased storm intensities; and “coastal installation vulnerability.”

These potential vulnerabilities are particularly worrying in my home State of Hawaii, where U.S. Navy and Marine Corps installations like Pearl Harbor Naval Base and Marine Corps Base Kaneohe Bay are literally on the water’s edge. I am glad that the Department of Defense is assessing these risks now and making short- and long-term plans to adapt where it needs to.

Hawaii is America’s anchor for the strategic rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region. A cornerstone of that rebalance rests on ensuring that America’s military presence in Hawaii and the region can cope with the turbulence of more frequent and severe weather events, operate under those conditions, and help America’s partners and allies do the same.

I have focused on the U.S. military because of the unique ways in which the men and women of the Armed Forces are and will continue to shoulder the burden of managing the challenges of climate change.

But to say that climate change is a challenge that can only be managed by the U.S. military would be wrong and undermine the serious efforts underway within the broader foreign policy and national security communities to confront this issue.

The men and women of our diplomatic corps and consular services are invaluable to facilitating cooperation between our partners and allies, and will continue to play an important role in ensuring that we are providing the resources they need to plan for the future. Aid workers with the U.S. Agency for International Development have the expertise that is necessary for designing and deploying toolkits that can help vulnerable communities improve their resiliency to natural disasters and other environmental crises.

The Department of Defense has an important role to play in helping the United States manage the challenges of climate change. But in many ways it is other agencies, not the U.S. military, which must lead on our climate engagement abroad.

What the Department of Defense's efforts to date show is that climate change is no longer solely the purview of conservationists concerned about protecting endangered species, or of environmentalists concerned about preserving the Earth for future generations.

Climate change is an urgent national security challenge.

Secretary of State John Kerry put it well when he said recently that among the global challenges that "know no borders . . . terrorism, epidemics, poverty, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction . . . the reality is that climate change ranks right up there with every single one of them." Secretary Kerry went on to add that the United States cannot confront this challenge alone. That like the challenge of confronting nuclear weapons proliferation, we must come together as a global community and take collective action to confront the challenge together.

The consequences of inaction are too real. For "in a sense," Secretary Kerry said, "climate change can now be considered another weapon of mass destruction, perhaps the world's most fearsome weapon of mass destruction." We must attack the challenge with the same fierceness and urgency that we would nuclear weapons proliferation, because the consequences are no less real.

Congress can begin by giving climate change the rightful attention that it deserves, rather than ignore its responsibility of dealing with the hard

choices of managing one of the greatest challenges a generation of Americans faces.

ENERGY SECTOR

Mr. President, I will discuss the role of the power sector in the United States. Modern sources of fossil energy have been a tremendous force for good, but they also come with a cost—pollution—requiring us to quickly and decisively transition to cleaner sources of energy.

The effects of pollution are both local and global, and as many of my colleagues have discussed here tonight climate change, caused by the burning of fossil fuels, is one of the greatest threats to the future prosperity and health of the human race.

As we look for ways to combat climate change, we must redouble our efforts to transition away from fossil fuels, reduce energy use, and build an energy sector based on renewable and low-carbon power.

Humanity has been using fossil fuels for centuries. It was not until the industrial revolution of the late 1700s and early 1800s that its use really began to take off. The first U.S. commercial coal mine opened in Virginia in the 1740s, and as the industrial revolution came to the U.S. in the 1800s, coal was the driving energy source behind steamships, railroads, and factories.

From 1800 to 2000, the world saw total energy use increase 80 to 90 times over. Fossil fuels drove almost all of that growth and today account for three quarters of global energy use.

As coal, then oil and natural gas grew in availability, humanity found new ways to use these new energy resources, driving even further development in energy hungry industries. The widespread adoption of fossil fuels during this time contributed to unprecedented global population growth and urbanization.

There is no doubt this explosion of fossil fuels and the multiple opportunities it presented for use was a major driver of American and global economic growth. And this had enormous benefits for humanity. It helped increase efficiencies in agriculture, improved human health, created increased opportunities for trade, and improved standards of living for many people in the world.

I say all of this to make it clear that when I call for a transition away from fossil fuels—it is not because of some inherent dislike for them, or some capricious judgment of those who make a living in that industry. But as their use increases, the downside of fossil fuels—pollution, and a dramatically changing climate—is too big an issue to ignore.

Global pollutants—greenhouse gases that contribute to the warming and changing climate on the entire planet, and chemicals that threaten the earth's protective ozone layer—are causing global pollution. And global

pollution requires global solutions. No one country can solve the problem alone—but let me be clear here—any solution will require bold leadership by the United States.

My colleagues and I have stressed the following points all evening: Climate is real, and it is caused by burning fossil fuels. Analysis of peer-reviewed scientific studies finds that over 99 percent of actively publishing climate scientists are firmly convinced that climate change is real, that human activities are a significant cause, and it will increase if we continue to burn fossil fuels.

The most recent United Nations International Panel on Climate Change report calls evidence that the earth is warming "unequivocal" and plainly states many of the changes to the climate we see today are "unprecedented over decades to millennia."

And at the risk of repeating myself this evening, it is important to note the IPCC report shows that the biggest driver to the changing climate is "the increase in the atmospheric concentration of CO₂ since 1750." This is a key point, because humanity's use of fossil fuels for energy, heat, and transportation—is responsible for close to two-thirds of global greenhouse gas emissions each year.

The U.S. electricity sector is the largest user of fossil fuels in the country. In 2012 we used coal to generate 37 percent of our electricity and natural gas to generate almost 30 percent. Nuclear power, which emits little to no greenhouse gases, was almost 20 percent of the mix, with renewable energy from wind, solar, geothermal, and hydropower contributing just under 13 percent of the Nation's electricity.

This overreliance on fossil fuels is exactly why I support President Obama's Climate Action Plan to set carbon pollution limits for new and existing power plants, and to continue to push the transportation industry towards advanced vehicle technologies, advanced biofuels, and greater fuel efficiency standards. President Obama's plan is a good one, but there is only so much he can do. Without decisive legislative action, Congress is choosing to hold American innovation and leadership in check.

We must do more to transition energy to renewables, reduce emissions, and improve efficiency. The world has made tremendous strides in developing and improving renewable energy technologies, and the United States has benefited. Between 2008 and 2013 total U.S. renewable energy generation, not including hydropower, almost doubled. 2014 will likely be the first year generation from hydropower is overtaken by generation from other renewable energy technologies.

Prices, one of the major barriers to renewable energy deployment, have dropped dramatically. Solar module

prices have declined by 99 percent since 1976 and a stunning 80 percent in the last 6 years. Wind power costs have also declined markedly to the point where wind is often the low-cost option. For example, a utility in Michigan decided to lower its customers' rates 6.5 percent for 2014, and one of the major factors it cited in the decision was its ability to provide low-cost wind power.

Solar power is growing by leaps and bounds both at the utility and distributed scales, as homeowners in some parts of the country are finding that putting solar panels on their roofs can lower their energy costs. My home State of Hawaii is a prime example of this. Distributed energy installations have skyrocketed in recent years, with the total number of annual installations doubling from 2011 to 2012. At the end of 2012, Hawaii had a total capacity of 138 MW in distributed generation—most of it coming from solar power.

Wind energy has been an incredible success story in America. Aided by important tax incentives and State renewable energy goals, wind power in 2012 was the number one source of new U.S. generation capacity for the first time in history. This represented a \$25 billion investment in the United States. Wind energy is also a great story for American jobs. Over 70 percent of the content of wind turbines is made right here in the United States.

Globally, investment in clean energy has been strong, hitting an all-time high of \$318 billion in 2011 following the great recession. But in order to successfully drive down costs and accelerate deployment, investment in clean energy must increase, and Congress can help.

In order to help the United States do its part in avoiding the most extreme effects of climate change, Congress must double, triple, or perhaps quadruple-down on current policies to drive down costs of clean energy technologies and accelerate widespread adoption.

Reauthorizing and extending important tax credits for wind, geothermal, marine and hydrokinetic power, efficiency improvements, and advanced biofuels should be a number one priority. There is no excuse for the on-again off-again policies of Congress which create false boom-and-bust cycles for crucial industries. I applaud the new Chairman of the Finance Committee for making an extension of these incentives his first order of business.

Congress must also encourage technologies which help with the transition to renewable energy. I am proud to be a cosponsor of a bill that would create incentives for energy storage, which can help with grid management, especially as we move towards intermittent resources.

The United States and Europe have done incredible work improving energy

efficiency over the last several decades. As recently as the early 1990s, electricity sales in the United States were growing by over 2 percent per year.

According to a new study by the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy, growth in electricity sales has stopped. In fact, retail sales in 2012 were almost 2 percent lower than in 2007. This study finds that the drop in economic activity due to the great recession cannot fully explain this decline in electricity demand. Rather, energy efficiency in the residential and commercial sectors plays a critical role. The last several years have been the first in which energy use and economic growth have moved in opposite directions—a highly encouraging sign for a leaner and meaner American economy.

I wish to highlight energy efficiency as an important part of the solution to reducing carbon pollution. By being able to do more with less power, we reduce the need to burn additional fossil fuels in the short term, and we save ourselves money by having to build less new power generation capacity in the future.

At the commercial and utility level, innovative financing mechanisms and business models are driving energy efficiency. Energy Savings Performance Contracts allow building owners to work with efficiency experts that reduce their clients' energy bills and get paid through a portion of the savings.

As the largest energy user in the country, the Federal Government continues to expand its use of these contracts—a goal specifically highlighted by President Obama in his Climate Action Plan. I have introduced a bipartisan bill which would offer the government even more choice in executing these energy savings contracts. It is an excellent example of a commonsense small step we can take immediately to save money and energy.

I would be remiss here without mentioning the important work done by Senators SHAHEEN and PORTMAN on their pragmatic bipartisan energy efficiency legislation. It is another commonsense piece of legislation that deserves immediate consideration by the full Senate.

I wish to turn now to discuss the incredible government support enjoyed by the fossil fuel industry over the decades, and make the argument that renewable energy technologies deserve a similar commitment.

Because of their importance to U.S. and global economic growth, fossil fuels began to receive government subsidies early in their commercial development. From 1916 to 1970, Federal energy tax policy focused exclusively on promoting oil and gas production. In addition, government-funded research into fossil fuel production helped to create the technologies that today drive one of the biggest energy booms

the world has ever seen. This sustained and ongoing Federal support has provided unbelievable certainty for the fossil fuel industry.

The energy crisis of the 1970s showed just how dependent on foreign energy the United States is, and spurred an additional focus on efficiency and alternative sources of transportation fuels. After a brief dalliance with renewable energy incentives in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Congress enacted incentives for wind and biomass electricity generation in the early 1990s. This credit was sparingly used, however. It wasn't until 2005—not even 10 years ago—Congress finally began to show real commitment to incentives for renewable energy and energy efficiency.

And in just that short time, with stop and start policies in recent years; look at the success of renewable energy in America. We are on the verge of full-fledged, competitive domestic industries in wind, solar, advanced biofuels and geothermal, but if we stop now and don't nurture these industries, we may lose them to other countries. We cannot go backwards.

Congress should seriously examine, and consider repealing, tax incentives for fossil fuels. The billions of dollars spent per year to subsidize one of the most mature and profitable industries in the world is not money well spent. Nor is there sufficient evidence these subsidies result in lower fuel prices for Americans.

Rather, we should use this money to invest in innovative federal financing programs for cutting-edge technologies and incentives to help deploy more renewable energy systems.

Let me be clear, fossil fuels have done a lot for humanity. They have, in a very real sense, reshaped our civilization. But if we continue to rely on them, they will reshape our world once again, and this time not for the better.

We know we cannot switch completely to low or zero emissions sources of energy overnight—especially in a sector which makes long-term, capital-intensive investments. This will take a sustained commitment from individuals, States, and the Federal Government. The best thing Congress can do to unleash innovation in the private sector is to send a clear message to the private sector by crafting policies that encourage renewable energy technologies, reward efficiencies, invest in our national infrastructure, and remove hundred-year-old subsidies for already mature industries. We need to give our energy sector the tools to reshape itself, and we need to do it now. The world will not wait.

INSURANCE INDUSTRY

Mr. President, I wish now to speak about how the insurance industry is dealing with climate change today and preparing for it in the future.

Insurers are risk experts—it is not their job to care about the environment. Their job is to look at the facts to calculate value and the odds of loss—and then put a price tag on insuring the value. As hardnosed folks who work from spreadsheets and calculators, they keep their personal politics out of the equation. And they say the risks are real.

In 2009, Lloyd's of London issued its assessment: "Climate Change and Security: Risks and Opportunities for Business." The report recognizes the uncertainty of the exact timeline for climate change, and instead focuses on a simple message—to be successful, businesses must adapt:

As climate change takes hold, few businesses will be able to escape the impact of greater competition for resources. As nations become more protective of their assets, and markets become more volatile, it can no longer be business as usual.

Lloyd's of London is not alone. Major players like Allianz, Swiss Re, and Munich Re have all published their own reports on climate change to urge businesses to start planning now.

Their motivation is simple: protect the bottom line. With billions and trillions of dollars in play, risk experts like Lloyd's are making the high stakes risk projections to protect their own business models. Those projections are telling them the risks are increasing, and so outreach to industry is part of their pro-active plan to manage their own risk.

To understand other ways insurers are adapting to climate change, the Government Accountability Office issued a report in 2007 examining the substantial climate related risks to insurers in coming decades. The general findings should come as no surprise: the insurance industry has concluded that climate change is real, that it is happening, and that it will have an enormous effect.

Their projections are telling them the risks are increasing, and so they are acting to reduce their exposure to catastrophic events in reinsurance and primary insurance coverage along the gulf coast and the east coast.

Part of "reducing exposure" means the outreach and education I just discussed, but it also means raising insurance premiums in coastal States.

Even these pro-active measures may not be enough. According to a Congressional Research Service report, there is serious concern both within the insurance industry and among policymakers about the ability of the insurance industry to pay for extremely large disasters or multiple catastrophic events that happen within a short period of time.

The report says that, and I quote:

Insuring increasingly vulnerable residential private property risks will likely require a substantial increase in risk transfer capacity that is currently beyond the existing property and casualty insurance industry's total claims paying capacity.

In other words: the increasing intensity of many natural disasters means increasing risk of catastrophic loss—and one day, we may reach the point where the insurance industry will be unable to cover our losses.

When disaster strikes, insurers and reinsurers bear the initial costs of reconstruction. Those costs get passed on to the public in the form of: increased insurance rates; reduced coverage; withdrawal of insurers from some high risk locations; and increased demands on government-run insurance programs.

This is already happening because some extreme weather events are happening more frequently, as the reinsurance industry has testified before Congress. For the risk experts the facts are clear: the rate of major natural catastrophic events increased both globally and in the U.S. between 1980 and 2012.

Frank Nutter, President of the Reinsurance Association, has spoken out to Congress. Last year, Mr. Nutter testified on climate change before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. In his testimony, he quoted the reinsurance industry giant, SwissRe which said:

Today, global warming is a fact. Since the beginning of industrialization and the rapid growth of world population, man's activities—along with natural variability—have contributed to a change of climate manifesting itself as a considerable increase in global temperature . . . the financial services industry can help guide society towards an effective response.

However, the industry can only be effective in this role if the regulatory and legislative framework establishes the right incentives for emissions reduction and adaptation . . .

Mr. Nutter's testimony is not an empty pledge. Hartford, one of the oldest insurance companies in the U.S., agrees with this analysis and is acting:

The Hartford Financial Services Group recognizes the clear consensus in the scientific community that climate change is of real and increasing concern.

As an insurer, investor, employer, property owner and responsible corporate citizen, Hartford is committed to understanding, managing and mitigating the risks associated with climate change.

Suiting actions to words, Hartford has engaged in an effort to promote energy efficiency and reduce waste and emissions. By 2012, the company reduced its own greenhouse gas emissions by 42% from their 2007 base year. It has also worked with the American Insurance Association to advocate for land use planning and building codes that reflect risk exposure. Raising premiums is also part of the response, and so they have warned that "proper pricing will send appropriate risk signals to the most vulnerable areas."

Hartford is not alone. Allianz is an integrated financial services and insurance company that is over 120 years old and has over 80 million customers worldwide. Here is what it says about climate change:

Human-induced global warming threatens to radically change our climate. This poses a major risk to the global economy, and for a global insurance company like Allianz, could have a severe impact on our business. In recognition of this, we have been implementing a group-wide strategy covering climate-related risks and opportunities for our business and our clients.

As an integrated financial services provider, we are well aware that climate change could result in a range of compound risks and opportunities that affect our entire business. As a result, we are committed to supporting the development of a low-carbon economy, and see this as not just a sustainability priority—it is a viable business and investment case.

Insurance and re-insurance companies are risk experts. They measure risk, they are seeing risk all around them from climate change. And they are speaking up and acting to protect their bottom lines.

As a Congress, we need to support their efforts by establishing incentives for industry to incorporate the risks from climate change into their business plans.

AGRICULTURE

Mr. President, I want to discuss how climate change potentially hurts our farms. Agriculture is profoundly affected by climate change, and we must take action now to ensure that we are able to protect crop diversity, yields, and food security in coming decades for a growing population.

Farmers and ranchers occupy an important cultural part of the American psyche, even if recent decades have seen a consolidation of the farming sector. Concepts of ample subsistence, self-reliance, and the virtues of farming pepper early-American literature.

More than anyone else, Thomas Jefferson articulated the notion of a country founded on agriculture. In 1785, he wrote, "Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interests by the most lasting bands."

During World War I and World War II victory gardens became an effective way to relieve the pressure on the food supply, as well as a symbol of patriotism—farming became a civic duty.

Today, amidst incredible changes in global agriculture and an increasingly scientific and mechanized approach to farming, a noticeable trend towards organic farming, local agricultural economies, and crop diversity has reinvigorated the cultural importance of farming in the United States. Farmers markets have become an increasingly visible sight, especially in urban areas.

Agriculture is an extremely important part of the American economy and contributes at least \$200 billion to the economy each year. U.S. farmers are the most productive in the history of the world, and food is more affordable here than in any other developed country.

Climate change could have an enormous impact on farming worldwide, and this could come at a time when the world's producers must prepare to grow even more. Today the world population stands at 7.2 billion people. By 2050 the world will be home to more than 9.6 billion people. The World Bank estimates that agricultural production must increase by 70 percent during that time in order to feed the population.

One of the myths that climate deniers spread is that climate change will mean longer growing seasons and more carbon dioxide for plants, which will translate into increased yields and abundant food resources. That does not align with what our scientists say. While slightly warmer temperatures could bring some benefits, climate change brings much more than rising temperatures and increased carbon dioxide. Both observation and modeling estimate that by midcentury and beyond, any CO₂-related benefits to crops may be outweighed by the downsides of global temperature increases. For example, scientists have projected that for each degree Celsius of warming, yields of corn in the United States and Africa, as well as yields of wheat in India, could drop by 5 to 15 percent. As yields fall, farmers must deal with increasing threats. They currently spend over \$11 billion per year dealing just with weeds. Warming means that crop pests, weeds, and plant diseases will expand in both geographic range and frequency, potentially affecting crop yields and increasing the need for pesticides and fungicides.

As shortages become more common, prices could go up, especially as the population grows, and increasing extreme weather events may further threaten crops.

This future is not far off. A 2013 Department of Agriculture report found that within 40 years, climate change might have a negative effect on both farming and ranching in the United States. This will have an economic cost for both the private sector and the Federal Government. A GAO report that studied crop insurance and climate change found that the three biggest causes of loss to crops were "drought, excess moisture, and hail." It is worth repeating that scientists agree that climate change will mean more extremes: wet places get wetter and dry places get drier, meaning that it is possible that crop insurance claims—and government costs—will increase.

We need to do the big things necessary to fight climate change but in the meantime, we are taking small steps.

I am proud to have supported the 2014 farm bill and appreciate the leadership of the chairwoman of the Agriculture Committee. This bill authorizes almost \$900 million in mandatory funding for energy, which includes important pro-

grams for advanced biofuels like biodiesel. It also supports the Rural Energy for America Program, which is a major source of funding for renewable energy systems in rural America. Importantly, these programs are available to small businesses and non-profits in rural America, not only to farmers.

The farm bill's conservation programs also deserve mention.

Perhaps the most important achievement is the linkage between crop insurance assistance and basic conservation practices, which requires that farmers take common sense steps to conserve soil health in return for crop insurance assistance.

But we can and must do more—both to fight climate change and to adapt to its effects. Farming is a practice that knows no political boundaries. Farmers and ranchers might feel the effects in red and blue States alike, and if they don't have the resources to be able to adapt, in the long-term their production and income could suffer, which means that every American might pay more for fruits, vegetables, bread, and milk.

There is a representative in Congress from every single part of the country. As a body that must balance both local and national interests, Congress should be acutely aware of the need for action on climate change. It may have real economic consequences on our farmers and ranchers in the coming years. And those consequences threaten a part of our culture with deep roots in the history of our Nation. We must act to preserve that culture and come to the aid of those farmers who "are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interests by the most lasting bands."

TRANSPORTATION

Mr. President, I will take some time now to talk about climate change, transportation, and infrastructure. Every day millions of Americans rely on cars, trucks, transit, trains, ships, and planes to get to work, visit relatives, and go to the doctor. Transportation is vital to the continued success and growth of our economy. But we know that our transportation system is a major driver of climate change, and if we are to tackle this problem, we will need to reduce this sector's contribution to global greenhouse gas pollution.

Thankfully, we have solutions—solutions that are creating jobs and improving the ease and efficiency of moving people and goods. We are on the right track, but we need to continue in this direction by making our vehicles more efficient, building resilient infrastructure, and making smarter decisions about how we get around. This will take a strong commitment from government, business, and the American people.

Transportation accounts for more than 30 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. In Hawaii,

this is even more pronounced, where transportation accounts for approximately 50 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions. We all face different challenges, but regardless of where we are from, we can't tackle climate change without addressing the emissions generated by getting people and goods from point A to point B.

In the United States transportation grew as a contributor to climate change through economic and population growth—our more affluent population takes more trips on planes, trains, and by car. Demand for consumer goods has increased, and sprawling development patterns have increased auto travel. We are seeing some of these trends across the world. Currently, the transportation sector accounts for 15 percent of worldwide emissions. But in many countries, this trend is expected to grow. In China, for example, energy consumption and CO₂ emissions are expected to increase almost fourfold in 2030 compared to 2005.

Even as transportation is contributing to climate change, severe weather is threatening our critical national infrastructure—our roads, bridges, ports, and airports. Severe weather can wipe out our infrastructure connections quickly and catastrophically. We saw this with the tragic Superstorm Sandy, which devastated the Northeast when it made landfall in October 2012, washing away roads and bridges and flooding the subway system and two major rail tunnels under the Hudson River.

These Hudson River tunnels—critical access points on the busiest commuter corridor in the nation—were flooded with more than 3 million gallons of water, halting all Amtrak Northeast corridor and New Jersey Transit service into Manhattan for roughly 5 days. Let me repeat that. Commuter and subway tunnels in New York City were flooded with more than 3 million gallons of water. That is not a projection; that is a fact. This impacted nearly 600,000 daily riders and caused significant economic disruption.

Former Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood highlighted the importance of building our infrastructure to withstand storms:

Hurricane Sandy exposed the risks of relying solely on a system of century-old tunnels for rail access into New York City. We were fortunate that these tunnels were not destroyed during the hurricane, and providing Amtrak with funds to preserve its ability to build a second tunnel will provide much-needed resiliency to the Northeast Corridor in case of future disasters.

I am glad Congress directed emergency funding to be used to harden and rebuild our infrastructure. But we need to invest much more.

Continued weather fluctuations will amplify issues we face today. For example, derailments during extremely hot days are safety hazards, and hundreds of thousands of rail commuters

are inconvenienced by slower travel times. Air traffic disruptions due to severe weather have already cost airlines and passengers \$5.8 billion this year, according to a recent study.

We also need to plan for the longer term impacts of climate change, which will wear down our infrastructure even faster. Transportation infrastructure is expensive and built to be long-lived. Studies show that climate change impacts will shorten that infrastructure life. Temperature fluctuations continue to degrade our pavement and bridges while severe flooding damages low-lying infrastructure, imposing significant costs to drain and rebuild.

Water temperatures are expected to affect the volume and rates of water flows throughout our marine highways, threatening to reduce shipping access to docks. All this translates into higher maintenance and construction costs for a system that already has significant needs—the American Society of Civil Engineers estimates the United States will need to invest approximately \$2 trillion by 2020 to maintain and expand our transportation infrastructure.

In Hawaii, we can't escape the reality that climate change is threatening the way we move our people and our goods. It affects all aspects of transportation infrastructure—our ports, airports, roads, bridges, and transit systems. On Maui, we need a new bus storage facility because the current facility is now in the flood plain. By 2100, all of our most critical transportation assets—our harbors, airports, and roads—will be highly vulnerable to sea level rises, storm surges, or high intensity rainfall.

We don't even yet know how much it will cost to protect against climate change. As an island State, we are more vulnerable to the disruption of transportation infrastructure than most. First, 90 percent of Hawaii's goods are imported into the State, which means that if severe weather or environmental change disrupts transportation, we lose access to food and other necessities.

That makes Hawaii especially vulnerable to maritime disruptions—but also to disruption of truck and rail transport to west coast ports. We can't afford to have our transportation system disrupted; we need to invest now in resiliency.

Recent estimates put the minimum cost of hardening our infrastructure in the tens of billions of dollars each year. For example, annual costs for strengthening our bridges alone are estimated at around \$2 billion between now and 2090. The full costs—which also include rebuilding and restoring services after extreme events and maintaining and making design changes for the full range of critical infrastructure—could easily rise to hundreds of billions of dollars each year.

Building in resilience is common sense management to protect our infrastructure investments, but simply hardening existing infrastructure will not solve our problems because the costs of this approach will grow over time.

In order to build true resilience we need a combination of traditional mitigation measures and forward-looking approaches that find resilience in other ways—from green infrastructure, to growing our own energy and food independence.

At the national level, the U.S. Department of Transportation is already working to integrate climate change impacts and adaptation into future planning and operations. But we need to do much more to help our States and cities address the costs of climate change. This includes smarter, integrated planning, prioritization, and funding.

We also need to make our transportation sector cleaner and more efficient. The good news is that the United States can lead by example. We have already begun implementing a number of solutions developed by industry with public sector support that are cutting into transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions. New technologies are being developed for all modes of transportation that are cleaner and more efficient.

U.S. automobile manufacturers are working hard to increase fuel efficiency and develop vehicles that run on alternative energy such as fuel cell, hybrid, and electric vehicles. They have paired with our universities and research institutions to advance biofuel development and alternatives to oil.

These investments promote research and manufacturing jobs and save money for consumers at the pump. In turn, they have more in their pockets to spend in the U.S. economy.

Many of these advances are part of the President's Climate Action Plan. CAFE standards are helping to improve fuel economy. In 2013, more than 400 models that achieve 30 miles per gallon or better were on our Nation's highways. And we will continue to see improvements in fuel efficiency of our light-duty fleet. I applaud President Obama's recent call for new fuel efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions standards for medium and heavy-duty trucks by 2016.

Focusing on these trucks will get us more bang for our buck—20 percent of the transportation-related emissions in this country are from heavy-duty trucks, even though they make up only 4 percent of vehicles on the road.

Across the country our universities and industry are working together to develop ideas and solutions to decrease transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions. In my home State of Hawaii, a number of innovative state and private sector initiatives are leading

the country in the areas of bioenergy and other alternative fuels and vehicles. For example, Hawaii BioEnergy, a consortium of three of Hawaii's largest landowners as well as partners in the venture capital community, is planning to use locally grown feedstocks to produce biofuels. Last year, Hawaii BioEnergy announced a deal to supply Alaska Air with sustainable biofuel for their aircrafts possibly as soon as 2018. Pacific Bio-Diesel is producing diesel from recycled cooking oil that is used in public transit buses and other vehicles. Hawaii is home to a number of demonstration projects, including the sustainable hydrogen project at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam that demonstrated the use of hydrogen produced by solar and wind in aircraft towing vehicles, trucks, small buses, and cars made by General Motors. General Motors has also deployed fuel cell cars in Hawaii, and the Department of Energy has funded a project on Hawaii Island to demonstrate the use of buses powered by hydrogen produced with geothermal energy that would otherwise have been curtailed. The State of Hawaii used stimulus funds to deploy the Hawaii E V Ready Program—a network of electric vehicle charging stations to encourage early adoption of this exciting technology. The Maui Smart Grid Project now includes fast chargers as part of an initiative to demonstrate the use of electric vehicles as part of an electric grid management project.

It is important to note that many of the exciting projects my State is working on extend past improving efficiency for our trucks and cars. We are committed to making travel by sea and sky more efficient and cost-effective.

Our consumers and businesses don't want the instability of the wild fluctuations in the oil market. This is especially important in Hawaii, where we are so dependent on air travel, and I am proud that Hawaiian Airlines is one of the Nation's most fuel efficient airlines.

As a nation we are investing billions of dollars in Next Generation Air Transportation System upgrades, which will help to make air travel more safe, productive, and sustainable. Through improving efficiency and easing congestion in our skies, NextGen will improve air quality and limit aircraft emissions. The FAA predicts net reductions of the climate impact from all aviation emissions over the long term by 2050.

We need to continue to support critical clean energy research and development to further these types of advances. In addition, we need to act now to extend important tax credits for advanced biofuels and advanced vehicle technologies.

In the same way that we look at increasing fuel economy for our trucks and planes, we can improve the efficiency of our transportation systems

by making smarter choices about how we build our communities. By providing American workers and families options other than driving to get to where they need to go, we can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase mobility, and improve the quality of life for all Americans.

In Hawaii, we recognize that in addition to making our vehicles more fuel efficient, improving reliable transportation options is a critical part of reducing our impact on climate change. This is one of the reasons why I have been such a staunch supporter of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project. Electrically powered rail transit will not only ease traffic congestion in Honolulu, but it will also advance Hawaii's goal of 70 percent clean energy by 2030.

As noted by the National Resources Defense Council, "By investing in transit we can give people real transportation choices so people aren't forced to burn a gallon of gas every time they need to pick up groceries or get to work. Along with other solutions—like charging stations for electric cars, smart traffic technology, or communities where people can walk or bike to shops, schools and work—transit can help break our addiction to oil. Laying the groundwork for a 21st Century transportation system that makes our communities more productive and efficient will free us from constantly worrying about prices at the pump while boosting our economy, safeguarding our environment, and improving our quality of life."

Major transit investments, like Honolulu Rail, have the added benefit of attracting development around stations. Transit-oriented development, or building neighborhoods with homes and businesses close together and accessible to transit, allows residents to choose to make at least some trips without a car, reducing emissions. The market is showing that more and more Americans want these options, and for good reason.

Transportation is the second largest item in the average American household budget, and more options can shorten commutes and save money. Families can save on gas or forego that second car and the payments that come along with it. When communities become livable and walkable, property values skyrocket. And when our children and seniors can walk and bike to school, community centers, and shopping destinations, we see health benefits. Building our communities with housing and transportation near jobs, schools, stores, and restaurants can help support local economies while protecting the environment.

I am working hard to find ways to support these types of commonsense options at the Federal level. One of those commonsense solutions I have championed is my Military Installations Enhancement Act of 2013, which

was included in the 2013 defense authorization. Commanders now have more authority to make smart, cost-saving choices about how we use space on facilities. Using less space is more efficient.

It is also about improving quality of life on bases, connecting our military families housing to jobs, the commissary, and the rest of the community.

In Hawaii we are already moving on this. Honolulu is in the process of building our rail system, and the military is working with the local transit authority to situate two stations next to Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

Though the Department of Defense has been looking at these benefits primarily to promote defense readiness, they also help address climate change by making bases more sustainable over the long term. With destinations closer together, people who work on or visit the base can choose to walk, bike, take transit, or drive. Having these options means less air pollution and less traffic on roads.

Biking and walking are great ways to take zero emissions trips, but taking that trip isn't an option if it means you risk your life to do it. I recently introduced the Safe Streets Act of 2014 with my colleague, Senator BEGICH. The Safe Streets Act would require complete streets policies in all States, meaning that roads would be built to be safe for all of the people who use them, including bikers and walkers. This is especially important in Hawaii, where we have some of the most dangerous roads in the Nation for seniors.

AARP highlighted how important this bill is: "Safe mobility options are . . . essential to the independence and well-being of mid-life and older Americans. Fully one-fifth of persons ages 65 and above does not drive. Yet almost half of respondents to an AARP survey of persons age 50 and above said they cannot safely cross the main roads in their neighborhoods . . . AARP supports Safe Streets legislation because it would ensure that federal transportation infrastructure investments provide safe travel for all—whether driving, bicycling, walking, or taking public transportation."

Smarter improvements that allow older adults to travel by foot will benefit younger road users as well. Your bill will help ensure that all users are safe, that scarce transportation dollars are spent wisely, and that Americans have choices in how they move around their neighborhood."

Smarter transportation choices improve mobility, save money, and reduce emissions. We have an opportunity in the next surface transportation authorization to ensure that we continue Federal support for transit, biking, walking, and smart development.

All these innovations in the transportation sector to reduce carbon pol-

lution have benefits beyond climate change. The research, design, development, and production of fuel efficient vehicles and airplanes help to create new high paying jobs. Such innovations will help America reduce its dependence on foreign oil and shield consumers from the volatility of fluctuating foreign oil prices. Moreover, high-quality public transportation surrounded by mixed-use developments will increase mobility and expand job opportunities for all Americans. Overall, this is a win-win for businesses, consumers, and the environment.

It is time for Congress to wake up to the realities of climate change and take action to reduce our consumption of fossil fuels, but we can make real and lasting changes to our transportation sector and infrastructure without climate change being our primary motivation. Reducing our dependence on oil just makes long-term economic sense. It is a pragmatic decision that will have dramatic impacts to our economy, our health, and our way of life.

WATER RESOURCES

Mr. President, without water, life on Earth would not exist. Water sustains our ability to grow crops and raise livestock. It quenches. It cleans. It provides habitat for plants and animals and produces electricity. It is perhaps the world's most valuable resource. Yet many of us in the United States take water for granted on a daily basis when we turn on our faucets, flush our toilets, water our plants, cook our food, and drink from our cups. Others around the globe do not have that luxury. The World Bank estimates that 1.6 billion people live in countries or regions with "absolute water scarcity" and that number is expected to rise to 2.8 billion people by 2025.

Growing up in Hawaii and now representing my State in the Senate, I know the value and scarcity of our planet's water resources, especially as we confront the effects of climate-driven changes to our environment.

As stated by the Center for Island Climate Adaptation and Policy, "Hawaii water experts have recognized that alterations in rainfall, temperature, wind, or other climate phenomena have the potential to devastate natural resources and human communities" on our islands. Our freshwater resources are particularly at risk.

Water resource issues are by no means confined to my State. Most of the other 49 are also facing or may soon face water-related problems, such as changes in precipitation and runoff patterns, drought, flooding, and sea level rise, that have the potential to be catastrophic. From California, through the American Southwest and Midwest, down to Florida and up the east coast, our cities, farms, and communities are at risk.

I will begin tonight by stating the facts. Climate change is real, and it is perhaps most real in its effects on the water patterns of the planet. Countries around the world, including the United States, have always been afflicted by some degree of variability. Droughts have stricken portions of North America for thousands of years. Floods have been commonplace on our major rivers and tributaries. But never before has this variability been caused by humans.

Scientists predict that warmer temperatures have three major effects on the planet's water: increased evaporation, increased precipitation, and a rise in sea levels.

These in turn may drastically affect our water resources. Increased evaporation, caused by higher temperatures, heightens our risk for longer and more severe droughts—what scholars have termed “megadroughts”—especially in our already vulnerable drought-prone areas. Changes in precipitation and runoff patterns leave areas near rivers, lakes, and streams much more susceptible to devastating floods. And sea level rise endangers the homes and infrastructure in our coastal communities and can taint their drinking water.

When it comes to these water resource issues, the future is now. The effects of climate change on our water resources are already upon us.

Drought is among the earliest documented events related to climate and has been a part of human history much longer. Evidence even exists to suggest that a megadrought in Africa more than 100,000 years ago may have caused the migration of our ancestors out of the continent.

A report by the Congressional Research Service notes that precolonial North America was subject to “severe, long-lasting droughts” that “may have been a factor in the disintegration of Pueblo society in the Southwest during the 13th century, and in the demise of central and lower Mississippi Valley societies in the 14th through 16th centuries.”

More recently, “droughts in the 1930s Dust Bowl era and 1950s were particularly severe and widespread. In 1934, 65 percent of the contiguous United States was affected by severe to extreme drought, resulting in widespread economic disruption and displacement of populations from the U.S. heartland—many relocating to California's Central Valley—and revealing shortcomings in agricultural and land use practices.”

The CRS report states that in the past 50 years, human-induced climate change has caused scientists to question whether we are entering a “new megadrought era” akin to the worst megadrought periods of the past, which are believed to have been caused by a warming climate. Large areas of the

United States, such as the American Southwest and California, would be particularly susceptible to megadroughts.

In California, the snowpack in the Sierra Mountains as of February 2014 was, according to the CRS report, “well below normal, and water levels in multi-year reservoirs were below average conditions for that time of year.” This follows 2013, which was California's driest year on record. Now I want to be clear: We still cannot connect any single weather event or drought directly to human-caused climate change, but we can use these extreme weather events as examples of what future climates might look like. We know firsthand the economic consequences of major weather events.

Looking to examples in our history will help illuminate the future. Islands like Hawaii with small land masses and limited water resources also face difficult times ahead if global temperatures continue to rise due to greenhouse gases. Recent studies have shown that most of the Hawaii islands have experienced a steady decline in rainfall over the past 20 years, which has had an enormous effect on our ranching industry.

I am pleased that Governor Abercrombie and the Hawaii Department of Agriculture are working to improve our State's irrigation systems and to develop long-term solutions to help the farmers of Hawaii deal with the effects of climate change.

To quote Scott Enright of the Hawaii Department of Agriculture, “We know we will experience climate change in Hawaii and the department has been putting through legislation to help us with that.” Such efforts at the State level are crucial to helping the agricultural sector adapt.

Like droughts, floods have been a scourge to humanity since the beginning of civilization. Climate science predicts that severe floods may result from global warming.

According to the National Resources Defense Council, “Climate change has contributed to a rise in extreme weather events.” These events “will increase the frequency of heavy rainstorms, putting many communities at risk for devastation from floods. Flooding can cause a range of health impacts and risks, including: death and injury, contaminated drinking water, hazardous material spills, increased populations of disease-carrying insects and rodents, moldy houses, and community disruption and displacement. As rains become heavier, streams, rivers, and lakes can overflow, increasing the risk of waterborne pathogens flowing into drinking water sources. Downpours can also damage critical infrastructure like sewer and solid waste systems, triggering sewage overflows that can spread into local waters.”

I turn now to the issue of sea level rise, which, as National Geographic has

noted, can have “devastating effects on coastal habitats. As seawater reaches farther inland, it can cause destructive erosion, flooding of wetlands, contamination of drinking water and agricultural soils, and lost habitat for fish, birds, and plants.”

Like drought and floods, sea level rise due to climate change is already upon us. A recent joint report from the National Academy of Sciences and the British Royal Society shows that since 1901, global sea level rose by about 8 inches, with a large percentage of that rise coming in the past two decades.

If greenhouse gases continue to increase on their current trajectories, it is projected that sea level may rise by as much as 3 feet by the end of the 21st century. And “rising sea levels will not stop in 2100; sea levels will be much higher in the following centuries as the sea continues to take up heat and glaciers continue to retreat.”

Eight inches of sea level rise might not sound like a big deal, but it is.

Even very small increases in sea level, such as those seen already, can have devastating impacts, one of which is saltwater intrusion into freshwater sources, which is a fancy way of saying that drinking water along some coasts will become salty and undrinkable.

“Rising sea levels are causing saltwater to flow into the Ganges, India's biggest river, threatening its ecosystem and turning vast farmlands barren in the country's east,” according to a Reuters article from several years ago. In the United States, the Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel reports that Florida aquifers, which provide much of the freshwater to communities throughout the State, are in danger of oversalinization.

More than half of freshwater used in Florida is from underground sources like the Biscayne Aquifer. The consequences of climate change induced sea level rise are dire for some low-lying coastal areas.

The combination of sea level rise and a growing population are putting strains on freshwater sources in Florida. A local natural resources official noted in the Sun-Sentinel article that “potable water supply is obviously a major concern long-term.” One possible solution proposed by the Southeast Florida Utility Council is reengineering stormwater runoff to drain into the aquifers, instead of flowing back out to sea. This would beat back the saltwater intrusion and replenish freshwater.

Saltwater intrusion also poses problems in low-lying parts of my State and many other Pacific island nations and U.S. territories with limited freshwater supplies. If sea levels continue to rise, these areas could quickly become uninhabitable.

The United Nations reports that rising sea levels have left and are leaving salt deposits in the soil and contaminants in the groundwater supply. Both

of these have adverse impacts on agriculture, food, and water security. Many small Pacific nations face the risk of saltwater intrusion of their freshwater supplies.

Allow me to share with you a few words from the Honorable Enele S. Sopoaga, Prime Minister of Tuvalu, who spoke at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2013: "Some have suggested that the people of Tuvalu can move elsewhere. Let me say in direct terms. We do not want to move. Such suggestions are offensive to the people of Tuvalu. Our lives and culture are based on our continued existence on the islands of Tuvalu. We will survive." It is our duty as a Pacific nation to help the people of Tuvalu and other island communities do just that—survive.

Let me end on a positive note and describe some of the additional ways that I have supported protecting our water resources through legislation at the national level.

As chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power, I have introduced the SECURE Water Amendments Act of 2014 to conserve water resources and promote sustainability.

As part of the SECURE Water Amendments Act, I am fighting for funding for a national water inventory. In its last major report on water use in the United States in 2005, the U.S. Geological Survey reported that over 400,000 million gallons of water are withdrawn every day. However, we also need to know how much water we have and where we have it so that we can better prepare for the effects of climate change on our water resources.

Finally, I support the National Integrated Drought Information System Reauthorization Act, which President Obama signed into law on March 6. As the White House noted in its official statement, "This bipartisan legislation ensures that the federal government can continue to provide timely, effective drought warning forecasts and vital support to communities that are vulnerable to drought. States, cities, towns, farmers, and businesses rely on tools and data from the National Integrated Drought Information System to make informed decisions about water use, crop planting, wildfire response, and other critical areas."

Mr. President, I am joined tonight by many of my colleagues, who also understand what is happening to our planet and what will continue to happen if we do not address the causes and effects of climate change. As I conclude, however, let me speak not just as a Member of Congress but as a father. Every parent worries about the future that their children face, and I am particularly troubled about the planet we are leaving for our children.

Several decades from tonight, when my son and daughter are the same age

I am now, will they have adequate water resources? And if they have chosen to live in Hawaii or any of the other communities in the United States with water resource issues, will there even be any useable water left at all?

Despite my worries, I am hopeful that this scenario will not play out. It has been said that water seeks its own level. I see this as true both literally and figuratively. Those who are convinced that climate change is real and who also have real solutions are seeking each other out. And someday, in the not too distant future, I am confident we will reach that critical mass of people who firmly believe that we can no longer sit idly by in the face of climate change and that the time to act is not tomorrow but now.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Mr. President, I now will use some time to discuss the impact of climate change on our Nation's security and resiliency.

The effects of climate change will require additional investments in our communities in order to protect our most critical infrastructure, such as our roads, bridges, and powerplants. As extreme weather events become more frequent and severe, there will be a need for increased disaster assistance and mitigation efforts.

These events will have a direct impact on our economy. One need only look at the \$1 trillion dollars in damages that the United States has accumulated since 1980 due to extreme weather events, which scientists know are becoming more frequent and severe. This is one of many reasons why Congress must wake up and take action now to address climate change.

We know we cannot attribute any one event to climate change, but what science is telling us is that with each passing day, as we pump more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, we are increasing our chances of extreme weather events that carry with them dangerous consequences.

Global average temperatures have risen by more than 2 degrees in the last 50 years. Climate scientists caution that this warming increases the chances of more intense and frequent droughts and heat waves. Rising temperatures in various parts of the country could also increase the severity and frequency of wildfires.

Precipitation levels have increased by an average of 5 percent and heaviest downpours have increased by 20 percent over the last 50 years. These higher levels of precipitation can lead to more flood events throughout the country.

A changing climate could cause hurricanes to become more intense and severe. And this is particularly worrisome in the Pacific, where hurricanes have increased in strength since the 1980s. Moreover, sea levels have risen in the past 50 years along our coastlines and will continue to do so as the Earth

warms. As a result, our coastal areas are becoming increasingly vulnerable to flooding, erosion, and damage caused by storms. The combination of sea level rise and increased strength of hurricanes amplify the destructive force of Mother Nature by putting more coastal communities at risk of dangerous storm surge.

My home State of Hawaii is expected to experience worsening severe weather. Last year, researchers at the University of Hawaii found that warming temperatures and changing storm patterns will lead to fewer but stronger tropical cyclones that will track more toward Hawaii in the future.

Across the country, we are seeing an increasing number of disasters. The number of Presidential disaster declarations has increased from 65 in 2004 to 98 in 2011.

During that time, FEMA provided more than \$80 billion in disaster assistance. As the severity and frequency of weather-related disasters continues to increase, FEMA will need to spend more to help communities respond to and recover from disasters. For instance, disaster assistance for Hurricane Sandy totaled around \$60 billion.

In addition, due to the increasing potential of flood related events, more funding will be needed for the National Flood Insurance Program. This program is currently \$24 billion in debt due to increasing costs and payouts because of extreme weather events.

Last year, the Government Accountability Office added managing climate change risks to its high risk list. According to GAO, "Climate change creates significant financial risk for the federal government, which . . . provides emergency aid in response to natural disasters." Overall, the fiscal impact of climate change on the United States economy could top more than \$1 trillion by the year 2050. Emergency managers at all levels of government would have to stretch their budgets even further to prepare for and respond to such devastating events.

We know how severe weather-related events can endanger our communities and put lives at risk. But these events also threaten our critical infrastructure. Last month, the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Infrastructure Protection testified before the Senate Homeland Security Committee that "higher temperatures and more intense storms may damage or disrupt telecommunications and power systems, creating challenges for telecommunications infrastructure, emergency communications, and the availability of cyber systems."

Many of our roads, bridges, water systems, and electrical grids are already very old and in need of repair. According to GAO, "Infrastructure is typically designed to withstand and operate within historic climate patterns. However, according to the National Research Council, as the climate changes

and historical patterns—in particular, those related to extreme weather events—no longer provide reliable predictions of the future, infrastructure designs may underestimate the climate-related impacts to infrastructure over its design life, which can range as long as 50 to 100 years. These impacts can increase the operating and maintenance costs of infrastructure or decrease its life span, or both, leading to social, economic, and environmental impacts.”

Additional funding will be needed to spend on adaptation, which is the process of adjusting systems to possible climate risks. This is to ensure that businesses and communities are protected against changes in the climate.

FEMA has already established an Agency-wide directive to integrate adaptation planning into its policies and operations. Federal agencies are working to develop guidelines that incorporate climate change into risk-based analysis to ensure that infrastructure is more resilient.

Emergency managers will be required to better coordinate with all levels of government for better mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery. Federal emergency managers are trying to mitigate the impact of climate change by raising awareness. But it is important that Congress promote these policies too.

We need a unified national approach to encourage investments in making our infrastructure more resilient to extreme weather events brought on by climate change. We need to promote weather-ready planning and ensure that funding is available to emergency managers to effectively prepare for these types of events. We also need to equip individuals to be prepared by increasing their awareness.

Congress needs to wake up and act now. Failure to do so puts our Nation at risk.

INTERNATIONAL ACTION

Mr. President, the only place where people continue to debate whether climate change is real is right here in Congress. But while Congress is paralyzed by inaction, the rest of the world is acting.

People around the world are concerned about what the science is telling them. A Pew Research Center poll published last year found that a majority of publics in many of the countries surveyed said that global climate change is one the greatest challenges facing their countries. Concerned communities spanned from Latin America and Europe, to Sub-Saharan Africa and the Asian-Pacific.

Not surprisingly, leaders in these countries are already acting to confront climate change with the sense of urgency it deserves. Some of them have focused on efforts to mitigate climate change by placing caps on their greenhouse gas emissions; others have fo-

cused on efforts to adapt to climate change with targeted investments in coastal defense and other programs that will make them more resilient in the face of climate uncertainty in the future.

The steps that these representatives have taken to confront climate change are proof of what is possible when we cast aside partisanship and decide to act on the science.

Just across the Atlantic, our allies in the United Kingdom have demonstrated what is possible. In 2008, leaders in London made the United Kingdom the first country in the world to adopt legally binding targets that required the country to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the first country to require businesses to report their carbon emissions. The 2008 Climate Change Act was a seminal piece of legislation that has put the United Kingdom on track to confront its contribution to climate change, with a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions at least 80 percent from its 1990 levels by 2050 below the nation's projected baseline.

In 2012, Mexico followed in the United Kingdom's footsteps, becoming only the second country in the world to set legally binding reductions on greenhouse gas emissions. The landmark bill signed into law that year committed Mexico to cutting its greenhouse gas emissions 30 percent by 2020 and by 50 percent by 2050.

What is most remarkable about the legally binding targets that the United Kingdom and Mexico enacted and have continued to advance is that it proves that both developed and developing countries are both capable of cutting carbon pollution.

While greenhouse gas targets are important, that is only one activity that countries across the world are undertaking to address climate change. Given that climate change is already happening, many countries are being forced to take matters into their own hands and adapt to the reality around them.

We have heard numerous accounts tonight about how one of the most pernicious impacts of climate change is sea level rise.

Sea level is expected to rise nearly one meter by 2100. This seems like a distant challenge. But with each passing year, as the seas inch higher, tides grow more threatening and storm surges more dangerous. Even slight changes in sea level rise pose serious dangers to coastal communities, from the Pacific Island nation of Kiribati to the mangrove villages along the Bay of Bengal in eastern India.

The Netherlands is wasting no time in preparing for sea level rise. The seawall of the Netherlands is 42 feet high and 50 yards thick at its base. The people have raised the wall several times since 1976, when it stood half as tall.

Over the next 100 years, the Netherlands plans to invest \$25 billion in strengthening existing sea defenses. With \$2.5 trillion worth of existing infrastructure, the seawall is vital to the Netherlands's future.

The Netherlands is just one dramatic example of how countries are working to adapt to the challenges of climate change.

In addition to leading the world in crafting national greenhouse gas legislation, the United Kingdom is working to assess its climate vulnerabilities. In order to better examine the risks that climate change poses to its communities, the government has produced its first Climate Change Risk Assessment and plans to release an updated assessment every 5 years, informed by the best available science.

Denmark has, in recent years, increased wind power to generate over 30 percent of its electricity and aims to be 100 percent fossil fuel free by 2050. While these efforts are in part to help the country reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, its embrace of renewables is also likely to make it more resilient to climate change in the future by diversifying their energy portfolio. It is no wonder that Denmark is, according to the Climate Change Performance Index, No. 1 in taking actions against climate change.

Efforts to confront climate change head on are not unique to developed countries either.

In 2013, Kenya launched its National Climate Action Plan, which outlined options for low carbon emissions, climate resilient development, and ways to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. Like most developing nations, Kenya's greenhouse gas emissions are low compared to those of developed nations. However, Kenya feels the effects of climate change and is planning for increased uncertainty in the future. Indeed, leaders in Nairobi know too well that climate change will disproportionately impact the world's poorest, and they need to be prepared.

Developing countries have long understood the risks of a warming planet, even though the world community has continued to debate who, precisely, is responsible. In the 1990s, the government of the African state Seychelles prepared its own Environmental Management Plan.

The purpose of the plan was to conform to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change. Part of the plan was dedicated to sustainable development of the islands, to ensure that proper environmental protections were taking place throughout the country's development.

Leaders in the Seychelles, which at the time had a population of only 70,000, took it upon themselves to make sure they took the necessary steps to protect their home. Today, Seychelles, comprised of 115 granite and coral islands, is at risk from sea level rise.

Seychelles has been dumping granite boulders on sand beaches to prevent them from washing away.

Ronald Jemeau, Seychelles' Ambassador to the United Nations and the United States, offered these sobering remarks in 2010 that are worth repeating at length:

We're having the problems of the coral reefs. And coral reefs are central to our economy, central to our culture, central to our way of life. What many people don't realize about coral reefs is not—it's not that they're just beautiful for diving and, as we call them, the rainforests of the ocean. But coral reefs are where many of the deep sea fishes spawn and grow up. It's a nursery for small fish. So if coral reefs die, you are affecting fish in the deep seas, which we use for—which we fish. Also, coral reefs are the first defense—natural defense of violence against ocean waves. When the coral reefs die because of—after they're bleached, they break down, and they allow the waves to hit the shore.

For some time now, our islands are being—have been eroded away, islands actually changing shape because of the problem of—on the one hand, the dying reefs. On the other, you have much more serious, much more intense storm events, higher tides, very strong tides which have been really eroding our beaches. And the only defense we've been able to do—we have a lot of granite. We are the oldest oceanic islands because we have a lot of granite. And we've been dumping granite boulders on our sand beaches to prevent them from being swept away. That's not exactly the reason tourists come to Seychelles. They come to see beaches with white sand, not beaches strewn with boulders.

Mr. President, I want to take a moment to address opponents of action who say: Well, China is the biggest polluter of them all, and they aren't doing anything, so even if the United States does act, it wouldn't mean a thing.

By the way, notice how that argument implicitly accepts the realities of climate change. It is no longer a scientific argument; it is a collective action argument.

Well if that is all that is holding some Americans back from taking action, then I have news. China is working to fight pollution and climate change. The United States is the laggard.

Last week at the opening of China's annual meeting of Parliament, the Chinese Premier said that China will "declare war on pollution" in the coming years. China faces the twofold challenge of extreme local pollution and the effects of climate change and recognizes that transitioning to clean sources of energy is a decision that has enormous implications for its economic and political stability.

In January, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change said that China is "doing it right" as it begins to tackle climate change. She continued to say that the Chinese are "not doing this because they want to save the planet. They're doing it because it's in

their national interest." Regardless of their motivations, the Chinese are acting.

So what exactly is China doing? Last September, the Chinese State Council released its Atmospheric Pollution Prevention Action Plan, which called for a reduction in the construction of new coal-fired powerplants and a goal of generating 13 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2017.

In 2013, China installed 12 to 14 gigawatts of solar panels and expects to do it again this year. Prior to 2013, no country has ever added more than 8 gigawatts of solar in a single year. A price guarantee for utility-scale solar projects known as a feed-in-tariff, as well as low-cost panels, drove this dramatic growth.

The argument that the United States shouldn't act until China acts doesn't fly anymore because China is taking action.

Chinese officials have announced that they plan to institute a tax on carbon pollution in 2015 or 2016. Certain regions have also started to implement pilot cap-and-trade programs and are beginning to develop plans to create a national carbon market by 2020.

How about current investments? In 2012 the United States spent about \$35 billion on renewable energy, while China spent \$64 billion.

The overwhelming buzz of climate action that we hear coming from capitals around the world is a stark contrast to the deafening silence here in Washington.

I worry about the message that Congress's inaction sends to the rest of the world, that while so many countries are going to great pains to confront climate change, too many Members of Congress would deny that change exists at all.

Many of these world leaders are looking for American leadership. They want American leadership. European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso acknowledged this ahead of the 2007 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali when he said, "We can succeed only if we have the United States with us." We must meet our partners on this issue. We risk conceding our credibility on this issue to others who are rising to the occasion.

I am grateful that we have a true champion on climate change in President Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry. Despite our neglect here in Congress, Secretary Kerry has been America's ambassador to the world on climate change, working hard to preserve our leadership position on this crucial issue.

Secretary Kerry has thoughtfully said before that "those who deny the science or choose excuses over action are playing with fire." I have no doubt that leaders in these countries know, through their dialogue with him, that

he is committed to tackling climate change and, through him, America's commitment is real. I have no doubt that despite Congress's stubbornness, America understands the challenge.

Washington might be paralyzed, but the rest of the world is not. Once you get outside of Washington, outside the grip of special interests, the rest of America is further ahead in confronting climate change.

Take my home State of Hawaii.

Besides being on the cutting edge of climate science research, policymakers in Hawaii have shown incredible leadership in adopting pragmatic and principled legislation to confront the challenge of climate change.

In 2007, Hawaii became only the second State in the country to adopt binding targets for greenhouse gas emissions. The bipartisan Global Warming Solutions Act committed Hawaii to an aggressive goal of reducing its greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.

At the time, skeptics of the legislation thought that the legislation would doom Hawaii given the State's outsized reliance on fossil fuels for electricity. But, in fact, it is working in concert with the aggressive greenhouse gas targets that legislators adopted that year with a burgeoning partnership between Hawaii and the Department of Energy that became the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative.

The Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative has been perhaps one of the most successful partnerships between the State, Federal Government, nonprofit, and private sector. It helped lay out a road map for Hawaii to achieve its aggressive greenhouse gas emissions goals with clean energy as the means for doing it. Our job is far from done, but as a result of this effort I am optimistic about Hawaii's energy future and our ability to reduce carbon pollution.

Hawaii is just one example of the many efforts under way outside of Washington to confront climate change. All across the country, cities, counties, and State representatives are waking up to the reality of climate change, just as international leaders already have.

The only people who are asleep on this issue are here, right here in Congress. It is time for them to wake up.

OCEAN ACIDIFICATION

Mr. President, I will now address another impact of rising carbon dioxide: ocean acidification, or OA. The ocean absorbs CO₂ gas from the atmosphere based on its concentration level: the higher the levels of CO₂, the more the oceans will absorb. When this happens, the CO₂ reacts with water to become more acidic.

Although acidity levels vary from place to place, NOAA scientists estimate that since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, the acidity of

surface ocean waters has risen approximately 30 percent.

Future predictions indicate that the oceans will continue to absorb carbon dioxide and become even more acidic. Estimates of future carbon dioxide levels, based on business as usual emission scenarios, indicate that by the end of this century the surface waters of the ocean could be nearly 150 percent more acidic, resulting in acidity levels that the oceans haven't experienced for more than 20 million years.

Scientists have been studying rising CO₂ levels and ocean acidification for years, and I am proud to report that Hawai'i in particular has been at the forefront. Our Mauna Loa observatory sits at an elevation of over 11,000 feet above sea level on the island of Hawai'i, and has been recording CO₂ levels since the mid-1950s, making it the oldest continuous CO₂ measurement station in the world. As such, it is the primary global benchmark site for monitoring the increase of this gas that contributes to both global warming and ocean acidification.

In addition to watching CO₂ levels at Mauna Loa, Hawai'i has also kept track of ocean chemistry at Station ALOHA, just north of Hawai'i where the University of Hawai'i monitors a variety of oceanographic conditions in a project known as HOT—the Hawai'i Ocean Time-series. With continuous observations of ocean waters at Station ALOHA since October 1988, scientists have learned that the surface ocean grew more acidic at exactly the rate expected from rising levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere. Their research indicated the need for further inquiry, however, because the year-to-year rate of change varied considerably.

For marine animals, ocean acidity is similar to humans living with air pollution: the increased acidity can cause health issues—particularly for shellfish and coral. Most species of coral, oysters, clams, and mussels experience slower shell and skeleton growth as the waters become more acidic, which will have significant impacts on coastal communities and their economies.

The stakes from ocean acidification are high. According to NOAA: In 2009, U.S. shellfish accounted for about half of the Nation's estimated annual seafood revenue of \$3.9 billion. Coral reefs provide habitat for an estimated 1 million species, and offer food, income, and coastal protection for about 500 million people globally.

Unfortunately, the negative impacts of OA are not speculative. The shellfish industry has already started to feel the effects of OA along the Pacific Northwest, where failures at oyster hatcheries beginning in 2007 have been confirmed as a result of the growing acidity of coastal waters.

To get a sense of the impacts, consider this: NOAA estimates that Washington's seafood industry is estimated

to contribute over 42,000 jobs and at least \$1.7 billion to the gross State product through profits and employment at businesses such as restaurants, distributors, and retailers.

This is not an abstract, theoretical problem, so to illustrate, I would like to highlight the efforts of several firms that are finding ways to adapt to adversity brought on by the changing climate.

Penn Cove Shellfish, Coast Seafoods, Taylor Shellfish and Goose Point Oyster Company—among the largest shellfish farms in America—provide sustainably farmed shellfish products to customers nationally and across the world: as seed mussels, clams, and oysters for other farmers to grow out, and as fully grown shellfish, ready to eat.

After their hard work to develop their businesses, I can only imagine the panic they must have felt when suddenly, some of their mainland shellfish hatcheries started to see production rates declining sharply, and it appeared that something was affecting the health of the larvae.

Working with scientists and researchers, the problems were diagnosed as being caused by ocean acidification. The researchers found that as more and more atmospheric CO₂ was absorbed by the ocean, the special form of calcium used by shellfish to create their shells—known as aragonite—declined. This lack of aragonite prevented the shellfish larvae from creating their protective shells, and so many of them died as a result.

Fortunately, research on ocean acidification is not just science for science's sake, so when the shellfish industry's hatchery problems were definitively linked to ocean acidification, Federal science agencies like NOAA found ways for businesses to adapt to increasing CO₂ conditions. Together, scientists from NOAA, academia, and the shellfish industry formed a strong partnership to help industry to adapt.

Here's how NOAA described the team's efforts:

Together these researchers determined that acidification was threatening oyster production and offered an approach to address it. They installed carbon chemistry monitoring equipment at shellfish hatcheries. Real-time data from offshore buoys now serves as an early warning system for shellfish hatcheries; these buoys are capable of signaling the approach of cold, acidified seawater 1-2 days before it arrives in the sensitive coastal waters where larvae are produced. The data have enabled hatchery managers to schedule production when water quality is good and avoid wasting valuable energy and other resources when water quality is poor.

These efforts solved the immediate problem, but the experience set them thinking about long-term environmental risk to their businesses.

First, they recognized that based on the best available science, ocean acidity levels can vary greatly—so to find a

way to insulate themselves from changes to the waters in coastal Washington, they figured they should look to a different State altogether.

That State wound up being my own home: Hawai'i. It happens that we had existing infrastructure at the Natural Energy Lab of Hawaii; NELHA, to support shellfish aquaculture in Kona on Hawai'i Island, and so Penn Cove and Coast Seafoods negotiated and moved in at Kona Coast Shellfish, and Taylor Shellfish followed suit with a separate hatchery at the same facility. More recently, the Goose Point Oyster Company has developed a new hatchery known as Hawaiian Shellfish near Hilo. Now, in addition to having more security for their supply chain, the increased production has allowed them all to expand sales to reach new North American and Asian markets, and grow their business.

Their case is an object lesson on how adaptation can create economic opportunity, and I am grateful they chose Hawai'i to locate their backup facilities! But it's also a stark reminder of how changes in ocean chemistry have already disrupted the ability of shellfish to live in their native habitats and why there is so much urgency to act now.

Hawai'i is also connected to the other side of ocean acidification: its effects on coral reefs. Unfortunately, ocean acidification is not the only pressure on coral reefs.

Warming ocean waters, pollution and sedimentation from the land, and overfishing all reduce coral growth and vitality, making it harder and harder for reefs to survive into the future. Like the impacts on shellfish, the threat to corals from ocean acidification is invisible—unless you work with them on a daily basis, like coral scientists do. However, considering that coral reefs provide the habitat for an estimated 1 million species, and offer food, income, and coastal protection for about 500 million people globally, it is a problem that everyone should care about.

Because it's their daily bread, coral scientists at the University of Hawai'i see vividly how ocean acidification is changing our reefs and they are doubling down to refine scientific understanding of corals and to find solutions. For others, like Dr. Bob Richmond, it's about maintaining strength in science, while reaching out to elected officials, community leaders, and members of the public to share what researchers have learned.

The Honolulu Star Advertiser recently recognized Dr. Richmond's efforts:

Ocean scientists were urged . . . to go beyond their own scientific research and inject themselves into the political realm to give politicians and decision-makers the information they need to make the best policy decisions.

Robert Richmond, director of the University of Hawai'i's Kewalo Marine Laboratory,

used his own research on coral reefs to illustrate how it can be done in a speech before hundreds of scientists from around the world at the 2014 Ocean Sciences Meeting at the Hawai'i Convention Center.

Richmond, president of the International Society for Reef Studies, said there's a need to teach scientists to be better communicators.

In discussing his own research, Richmond described talking to chiefs in Palau, community members in Guam and Pohnpei and to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in East Honolulu to accomplish successes in support of coral reefs on the local level.

He urged the scientists to work with local organizations, elected and traditional leaders, and stakeholders to effect change. "It requires partnerships. I've worked with groups I never intended to, from economists to cultural practitioners."

Dr. Richmond's approach to bridge science and policy led him to work with colleagues to develop a Consensus Statement on Climate Change and Coral Reefs, which has been signed by over 3,000 coral reef scientists from all over the world.

The consensus statement expresses the shared conclusions of the science community about the impacts of greenhouse gases on the world's coral reefs, along with their best predictions about the future. The statement is intended to assist people like us—government officials—to make decisions with a firm foundation of objectively verifiable science.

The science presented in the consensus statement is clear and sobering: If CO₂ emissions continue at the current rate, the combination of warming and acidification of ocean waters will reach levels that have not occurred since 55 million years ago. At that time, there was a "coral reef crisis" where environmental conditions caused a dramatic reduction in reef development, and scientists fear that we will face a similar situation in our lifetimes.

The situation is grave, but the consensus statement also details the science-based steps we can take to improve the outlook for our corals.

The topline item, however, is one that my colleagues here tonight and I have long suspected: that we need a dedicated and consistent effort to reduce climate change through reduction in CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions throughout the world. This is simply the only long-term, comprehensive solution to the problems of climate change.

Scientific research shows that we can also make a difference by taking steps to reduce the damage done by local actions. For example, communities can: Rebuild fish stocks; Reduce runoff and pollutants coming from the land; Rebuild populations of iconic species like turtles, whales, seals, and dolphins; Identify and protect the most resilient reefs; and Promote aquaculture without increasing pollution and runoff.

Unfortunately, these steps alone will not solve the challenge facing coral

reefs, but they will empower individuals to claim a role in protecting their reefs.

Another notable Hawai'i coral scientist, Dr. Ruth Gates, who is based at the University of Hawai'i's Hawai'i Institute for Marine Biology, has focused on a different science-based approach: finding resilient corals that can stand up to the pressure of global warming and ocean acidification. Her work was featured in the Honolulu Star Advertiser last week:

"We can confirm that reefs are declining. There's no disputing that," Gates said on a recent morning, a cool breeze blowing off a cloudy Kaneohe Bay behind her. "But it's not all doom and gloom."

Using the popular Oahu bay's turquoise waters as a laboratory, Gates has spent the past several years scrambling to find the hardest, strongest coral—the "professional athletes" of the bunch—that can endure the warmer and more acidic seas of the future.

The idea is to then take those corals' traits and breed them on a large scale similar to breeding preferred traits in dogs and other animals.

In Hawai'i, a State that has become a flash point in the debate over the use of genetically modified organisms, the Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology researcher is quick to stress that her concept of selective coral breeding is something entirely different.

"We're looking for the supercorals that already exist" several feet from a stretch of coral just offshore, Gates explained. The approach would not introduce foreign DNA into coral, as is done in the controversial GMO process.

It's more than just scientists who are working to save reefs in the face of ocean acidification and global warming. Community leaders, cultural practitioners, scientists, and the general public have all come together to designate a National Estuarine Research Reserve in O'ahu's He'eia estuary in Kaneohe Bay, and I am doing all I can to support their efforts. When we succeed, the He'eia site will provide a rich base of information from diverse knowledge bases: Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners; The University of Hawai'i's Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology, which specializes in coral research, and is located on a small island in Kaneohe Bay; and The local community of Kaneohe.

Because the site lies within the footprint of Kaneohe town, we can use it to learn how best to live with coral reefs so that we can preserve the economy and the environment at the same time.

As legislators in the national Congress, we have a role to play as well. My distinguished colleague from Florida, BILL NELSON, has developed an impressive reauthorization of the Coral Reef Conservation Act. In addition to continuing the strong efforts already present in the Federal Government, this bill would empower local action and mandate the development of an international strategy for coral conservation. I am a proud cosponsor of his bill.

We can also continue to support the Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring Act, or FOARAM, which provided the science that helped

the shellfish industry. I understand that my friend from Washington State, MARIA CANTWELL, is working hard to develop a reauthorization of this bill. She is a real ocean champion, and I am grateful for her leadership on this important issue. I look forward to supporting her efforts.

Finally, we need to continue to support NOAA's Integrated Ocean Observing System, which provides critical data that coral scientists rely on to understand how the changing acidity of the ocean impacts our reefs.

I was glad to help organize a bipartisan coalition of 15 colleagues from this Chamber to express support of the program to our distinguished colleague, Appropriations Chairwoman BARBARA MIKULSKI.

Friends, the threat of ocean acidification is real and imminent, but we can still take action. Thank you for your time to hear me out on this issue of great national and global significance.

BIG BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Mr. President, when the financial crisis hit, global economic output dropped 1.3 percent. It was catastrophic.

The world now faces the risk of another major blow to global GDP—climate change. By some estimates, the impact could be several times the size of what we saw during the financial crisis.

Climate change could be the biggest shock to the global economy we have ever seen.

To put the cost in context, consider what the United States spent trying to recover from the financial crisis. We committed almost \$500 billion to stabilize the financial system, and the Federal Reserve continues to pump trillions of dollars into the economy to stimulate growth. That investment will seem tiny in comparison to what it will cost to deal with the fall-out from climate change.

Climate change is not a new challenge. What is new is that big business is finally starting to pay attention.

Big businesses are vulnerable to changes in our climate—and they know it.

Already, these changes are affecting their bottom lines by driving up the price of inputs, disrupting global supply chains, and introducing uncertainty into their business plans.

Now that we have the attention of multinational corporations, it is time to harness those powerful economic interests to drive solutions to climate change before it is too late. It is time to get the attention of those in Congress who would even deny a problem exists.

The impact of climate change on our global economy will be massive.

Climate change is likely to hurt industries that are sensitive to changes in the environment—such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and tourism.

The global economy will also be hit by higher costs as we need to do more to cool our environments. We will spend more to get the water needed for industry and human consumption, and to repair the damage caused by extreme weather, which will continue to disrupt global supply chains. The cost of these disruptions will ripple throughout the world economy.

We can also expect to see negative impacts on capital flows, investment, and savings as a result of lower economic output and uncertainty about the future.

The economic impact of climate change will not just be felt in our markets. We will face rising healthcare costs as a result of the spread of infectious diseases and health problems associated with intense heat waves, droughts, and floods.

So what do we know about the actual cost of climate change? Quite a bit, actually.

Just within America's borders, we have seen how costly extreme weather events can be—Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Sandy, record droughts on the west coast, wildfires and floods in Colorado, devastating floods in the Midwest, and record heat waves in the Northeast.

The price tag is not just the cost of rescuing people from harm's way, repairing the damage, and rebuilding communities. There is also the cost of higher food prices, lower tourism revenue, and the loss of economic productivity when people can't work.

A recent study was commissioned by 20 governments of countries that are highly vulnerable to climate change. The study estimated that, in 2010, climate change cost the world over \$1.2 trillion, or 1.6 percent of global GDP. It also showed that, by 2030, climate change will cut global economic growth by over 3 percent.

The International Monetary Fund is paying close attention to the risk that climate change poses to the world economy. In its view, studies that attempt to estimate the global economic damage of climate change tend to be underestimates.

That is because these studies are based on fairly conservative estimates of changes in global temperatures. And they have a hard time taking into account the multifaceted and far-reaching impact of climate change.

As an example, Lord Nicolas Stern, author of the most respected study on how climate change will impact the economy said the following:

"I got it wrong on climate change—it's far, far worse."

Keep in mind that his initial study predicted dire economic consequences for the world. And now, just 6 years later, he's saying those predictions were not dire enough.

Americans are taking action. Former Mayor of New York Michael Bloomberg

and former Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson teamed up with the founder of a global investment capital firm in a nonpartisan effort to conduct an assessment of the economic risks of climate change to the United States.

In Mayor Bloomberg's words, "If the United States were run like a business, its board of directors would fire its financial advisers for failing to disclose the significant and material risks associated with unmitigated climate change."

Big business is finally paying attention.

Unlike Congress, big business has finally woken up to the reality and urgency of climate change.

A recent article in the New York Times ran with the headline "Industry Awakens to Threat of Climate Change."

According to the article, senior officials at Coca-Cola and Nike are joining a growing group of American business leaders who see climate change as a major challenge to global economic growth.

A senior official at Coca-Cola listed risks to the company's bottom-line: in his words, those risks include "increased droughts, more unpredictable variability, [and] hundred-year floods every two years." These risks are not hypothetical—Coca-Cola has already seen the effects in real time. In 2004, Coca-Cola lost a major operating license in India because of a serious water shortage.

Likewise, Nike has seen its supply chain disrupted by changes in climate and extreme weather. Floods have shut down Nike's factories in Southeast Asia. Droughts have lowered production of the cotton the company relies on to make its athletic clothes. Nike, like many other corporations, now includes the risks posed by climate change on its financial risk disclosure forms to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Recently, Chipotle made headlines when its annual financial report disclosed that climate change could have a significant impact on the price or availability of its avocados. The company warned that if costs went up too much, it could have to stop serving its much beloved guacamole.

Starbucks also has its eye on how climate change will impact its bottom-line. The company sources nearly two-thirds of its coffee from small-scale producers in Latin America, Africa, and Indonesia. These regions are vulnerable to both droughts and excessive rain. Changes in weather patterns are likely to reduce their coffee yields and hurt the quality of their beans. Extreme weather is also likely to affect the roads that the company relies on to move its goods around the world. These risks are not far-off or theoretical. They affect the company today.

Some deniers accept the science but say we're better off doing nothing.

They should start listening to the business world.

They say it's too expensive: regulations will kill jobs and hurt the economy, driving up prices on everything from gasoline to bread and milk.

We have heard this argument before; many times in fact, and it is always proven wrong. Over and over again, large-scale collective action on environmental problems has helped to grow the economy and improve human health.

For example, a 2011 peer-reviewed EPA study found that programs established by the 1990 Clean Air Act amendments will yield direct benefits to Americans vastly in excess of the costs. In just a couple of decades, the study estimates that the benefits of this legislation will exceed the costs by a margin of 30 to 1—and may even approach 90 to 1.

What kind of benefits am I talking about? The study estimated that in 2011 alone the cleaner air we now enjoy avoided more than 160,000 premature deaths from things like heart attacks. It also avoided millions of cases of acute bronchitis and asthma attacks. These meant 13 million fewer lost workdays and 3.2 million fewer lost schools days.

National vehicle efficiency standards, put in place in 1975—have achieved a major reduction in pollution and significant economic benefits to consumers, despite dogged resistance from opponents. And new standards implemented by President Obama are projected to not only reduce our consumption of gasoline but also yield significant savings.

One study finds the following: "The standards will save consumers \$140 billion in 2030. When compared to a typical vehicle on the road today, a new car buyer will save more than 8,000 dollars over the lifetime of a new 2025 vehicle, even after paying for the more fuel-efficient technology."

The Department of Energy efficiency standards for appliances are another great example of Federal standards that both reduced pollution and saved consumers money. As a result of the standards under this program, the Department reports that consumers saved close to \$40 billion on their utility bills, just in 2010 alone. They estimate that by 2030, total cost savings from these standards will be well over 1½ trillion dollars—and will reduce carbon pollution equivalent to the annual emissions from 1.4 billion cars. And yet still today, members of Congress waste time and effort trying to get rid of efficiency standards for things like light bulbs—standards that the lighting industry itself has requested.

The removal of lead from gasoline has had enormous positive impacts. In the 1960's, scientists began to establish that humans were contributing enough lead to the environment to have an effect on human health. And scientists

and doctors were showing that lead pollution was contributing to IQ deficits in children, nerve damage, anemia, and mental retardation.

Industry, as you can imagine, resisted strongly. In 1965, the American Petroleum Institute responded to reports that lead was increasing in the environment with the following quote:

These findings "have no real bearing on the public health aspects of lead . . . the mass of evidence proves unquestionably that lead isn't a significant factor in air pollution and represents no public health problem in any way."

It took over 10 years and a major court decision for the EPA to even begin phasing out lead in gasoline, and that's due to outright falsehoods such as this one.

By 1986, studies showed that the health benefit to cost ratio was 10 to 1. Blood levels of lead across the country dropped significantly as soon as the lead phase-out began.

From 1978 to 1991 they dropped 78 percent.

If you remember one statistic from this speech, remember this one. Largely as a result of government regulations, between 1970 and 2011, total air pollution dropped 68 percent, while the U.S. gross domestic product grew 212 percent.

The evidence is overwhelming. Well-designed solutions to environmental problems aren't harmful; they contribute to a healthier and growing economy. A warming planet and changing climate is what will hurt the economy.

For many multinational companies, climate change has moved from a corporate social responsibility issue to a bottom-line issue. They are starting to see the impact of unpredictable and extreme weather and realize that investing in environmental protection means investing in the economy. Climate change affects the supply of key inputs, disrupts factories, demolishes infrastructure, and drives up prices.

The economic calculus has shifted—business as usual will lead to no business at all.

Businesses have woken up to the risks of climate change, and they are calling out for Congress to act. It is time for Congress to wake up.

ASCENT CONFERENCE MINI-SPEECH

Mr. President, finally, I wish to report on activities in my home State of Hawaii that show how our Nation is making progress toward sustainability and adaptation to climate change. Back at home, we see the effects of climate change up close and personal. Our coral reefs, our beaches, and the lush vegetation that greens our landscape—it's all imperiled by climate change, and people are standing to take action.

They recognize that the rhetoric of denial will not hold back rising sea levels. They understand that junk science

will not save our coral reefs—or bring back the tradewinds and rain that supplies our water when climate change has traded it for cycles of hurricane and drought.

That is why they have come together to host a first-of-its-kind conference in Hawaii on sustainable development and climate adaptation. From transportation to energy to community development, the conference will bring local and national leaders together to share stories of success, and inspire action for the future. We call it "Ascent" to recognize our upward progress, and to challenge ourselves to aim higher and higher.

Our Ascent conference will be held on April 15, 2014, when University of Hawai'i Sea Grant College Program, University of Hawai'i Chancellor Tom Apple, and I will hold a 2-day-long conference and Senate field hearing featuring world-renowned experts from across the State and Nation. These experts will address key underlying issues of sustainability, and engage directly with high school and college students who are poised to lead these efforts in the future.

We will be happy to welcome Mr. Nainoa Thompson, president, Polynesian Voyaging Society; Mr. Geoffrey Anderson, president, Smart Growth America; and Mr. Jeff Seabright, vice president, Environment & Water Resources for The Coca Cola Company, among other visionaries at the conference. They will be partnering with State and local experts as well as Hawai'i's youth to examine risks and propose solutions to energy and water resource security, and the complexities of climate change.

That evening, we will also welcome former U.S. Vice President Al Gore, who will present a free public lecture on sustainability and climate at the University of Hawai'i.

The Ascent conference was created because we recognize that the only way to solve a problem is to own it, and act. I respect our colleagues from across the aisle for their work to focus on the fiscal issues our Nation faces. Together we have rolled up our sleeves and found solutions. Now we need to do the same on climate change. Denying the problem and trying to muzzle the opposition will not make environmental change go away. Owning up, and facing it together will.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleagues to bring attention to the important issue of climate change. It is time to wake up and take action—we owe it to our planet, to our country, and to generations to come. I thank the organizers of this event, Senator BOXER, Senator WHITEHOUSE, and Senator SCHATZ, for their leadership on this issue. This is a problem that must be addressed, and this call to action is long overdue.

Maryland is one of the most vulnerable States to climate change. Our ex-

pansive coastline is greatly affected by rapidly rising sea levels that are eroding our shoreline and causing flooding. We are also starting to see the effects of more frequent extreme weather events, such as flooding, heavy precipitation, heat waves, and droughts. This will cause environmental damage to our shoreline, the Chesapeake Bay, and our water and air quality. It could impact our health by increasing respiratory illnesses. And this will cause economic damage by costing our coastal cities billions of dollars in lost tourism, our farmers heavy losses from droughts and heat waves, and many Marylanders property damage from flooding.

Maryland is leading the way in responding to the dire problem of climate change. Maryland has developed a Climate Change Plan that will reduce greenhouse gases 25 percent by 2020, contribute \$1.6 billion to Maryland's economy, and create 37,000 jobs. I am very proud of my State for setting an example and tackling this problem head-on.

The Environmental Protection Agency is also moving forward with its efforts to put forth commonsense rules for curbing greenhouse gas emissions. This has included standards to promote a new generation of clean vehicles, which are expected to save more than 6 billion barrels of oil through 2025 and reduce more than 3,100 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions. It has also included an effort to limit emissions from new powerplants, and the EPA has pledged to hold listening sessions as it develops rules for existing plants. I support the EPA's actions—they are offering tailored solutions to a complex problem, and working within the Clean Air Act to protect public health.

Even though Congress hasn't been able to agree on a long-term solution to combat climate change, I have worked hard to fund the research that informs us about climate change and will help us develop solutions. As the chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee and the Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations Subcommittee, I funded over \$3 billion for climate-related research in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014. This includes \$226 million for NOAA, which uses peer-reviewed research initiatives and partnerships with universities to study regional climate data and make climate predictions. It includes \$1.85 billion for NASA's Earth Science program, which examines the Earth on a global scale and develops data that is used for climate prediction models. It also includes \$958 million for climate-related research at the National Science Foundation within the Geosciences Directorate and the National Center for Atmospheric Research. I commend the employees at these outstanding institutions who are

working every day to develop long-term solutions for climate change, and I will continue to fight hard for robust funding for these agencies.

Climate change is an enormous problem, but it is not enough for us to just recognize the problem. When it is a problem of this magnitude, we must truly rise to the occasion. The science is sound, and the reasons to act are numerous. Let's move it on climate change—the time is now.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

SCOUTING

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask that a copy of my remarks to the Wilson County Friends of Scouting Luncheon in Lebanon, TN be printed in the RECORD.

The remarks follow.

LESSONS FROM SCOUTING

Thank you very much. In a little book I did a few years ago called Lamar Alexander's Little Plaid Book, it has lots of rules in it and one of them is "If you want a standing ovation, seat a few friends in the front row." So, thanks to the front row for that. And, thanks to Rob, my friend, for inviting me here and all of the others of you who did, and for the terrific job you do as aldermen and for your friendship. Jason Flannery, Peter Williston, Chris Crowell, Bobby Kane, Quin Cochran, thank you for your remarks, which will come a little later. Representative Mark Pody is here, and Mayor Hutto and Mayor Craighead and Mayor Jennings all are here. It's exciting to be in Lebanon and to hear about all of the good things that are happening here.

I had a great friend Alex Haley, the author of *Roots*, who once heard me make a speech and he came up afterwards and said, "Lamar, may I make a suggestion?" And I said "Well, of course, Alex." And he said "Well, if when you start, instead of making a speech you would say 'Let me tell you a story,' people might actually listen to what you have to say." So let me tell you a few stories from scouting.

I was about 13 years old. It was in a hot summer over in East Tennessee. But, when you're in scouting and you go up in the Smokies, you learn that it drops about five degrees every thousand feet, so by the time you get to the top of Spence Field Mountain on the Appalachian Trail, it's pretty nice. So, our explorer scout group had gone up there one August day, and we'd loaded up our packs with Bisquick and bacon and all the things that you cook for breakfast because that's when all of the blueberries were ripe on Spence Field and we were going to make blueberry pancakes the next morning.

We stayed in one of the trail shelters along the Appalachian Trail—we'd done that many times before—with our explorer scout leader, Dick Grave, who later was the head of Alcoa in Tennessee, and went to bed that night. At about 3 a.m., I noticed someone rustling around—these trail shelters had an open front—fire out front, and then three sides were closed. I was sleeping down on one end and I noticed some rustling around in the middle around where our packs were. So, I thought it was one of the boys getting up and I looked over there and there was a bear. Well, I woke everybody up, which didn't take

long, and we did the only thing you do in a circumstance like that which was, we climbed up on top of our trail shelter with our aluminum pans and our cooking utensils, and we beat the cooking utensils on the aluminum pans and shouted unprintable things at the bear, who took all of our packs, including what we had for breakfast, down to the spring in front of the Spence Field Shelter. I learned a lesson about not sleeping with your breakfast bacon on top of the Smoky Mountains when the bears are around.

That's not the only thing I learned in Boy Scouts. About the same time, about the same age, when the weather was just as hot, we went spelunking in Monroe County in East Tennessee. That means you go down in caves. And if you have been down in caves, you know that they're all about the same temperature—I forget, but it's about 57 degrees, something like that, but it was a hundred degrees outside. I decided, which thirteen-year-old boys will do sometimes, to try something I'd been told I couldn't do, which was to have a chaw of tobacco. So, I took it down into the cave with me, got down in there, and with a couple of other boys, we tried it. Then, we came back up to the top in 103 degree weather, which made us as sick as I have been in my entire life. And so ever since that day, I've never even thought of having a chew of tobacco. I learned that lesson in Boy Scouting as well.

I learned how to go on a snipe hunt in boy scouting. Essentially, you take a bag, and you're told you sit out there all night with the bag open and you'll catch a snipe. I learned a lesson there as well.

I learned a lesson when my father, when I was twelve or thirteen, drove me the day after Christmas with two other explorer scouts not much older, maybe a year or two older, and just dumped us out on Newfound Gap at about 5,000 feet in the Smokies with three feet of snow on the ground and said he'd pick us up in Gatlinburg at the end of the day. The three of us walked up to the top of Mount LeConte, and then down, and we got to Gatlinburg. It wasn't very easy, but we learned a lot about the importance of getting to your destination on that day.

I was at Camp Pellissippi, which was our scout camp nearby Maryville and Knoxville and I learned a little bit about authority. We had a camp director named Kyle Middleton. He must have been 7'10" tall, at least he looked that tall to us, and we would all assemble in the amphitheater at the first day of Camp Pellissippi, and Mr. Middleton would stand up in front of us. Actually, we all called him "Kyle." I don't know why we would do that, he was so familiar, but I think it was because he told us to, and this is what he'd say. He said, "Camp is now open, and we have one thing we need to get straight. I think I'm in charge. Does anyone here think I'm not?" And, of course, none of us did, and we learned a little bit about the importance of authority. I joined the order of the arrow there. I learned about how to make a fire with flint and steel. One of my friends from Maryville, a couple of years older than me, would have been the first person ever to walk the entire Appalachian Trail through my area, from Maine to Georgia, but he made the mistake of getting all the way down to Virginia (he started in Maine), and he called his father in August and his father said he had to come home and go to college. So I learned the importance of education.

And even in Cub Scouts, we learned lots of lessons. One of the most vivid was when we

were playing baseball and knocked the ball through the upstairs window of the neighbor's house. And, we all looked at each other wondering what to do until Bill Ernest, I'll remember this until I die, said, "What we should do is go tell Mr. Smith (or whoever it was) what we did." So, we all trooped up to his house and knocked on the door and said, "Mr. Smith, we just knocked a baseball through your upstairs window."

For more than 100 years, the Boy Scouts of America have talked about leadership, have taught lessons of community service. There are 110 million scouts in the world in 185 countries, and 2 million Eagles. There are 9 Eagles in the United States Senate. There are a million adult volunteers in the Boy Scout movement. It is the largest and most prominent youth organization in the world. Its job is helping to turn boys into men.

Looking back, I realize how much I took for granted, all the time that our volunteer scout leaders gave to us. I know there are a lot of volunteers here in the room, but we just thought the world was made that way, that Mr. Studley—Joe Studley—and Mr. Miller, that they just had all this time to give to us. And because we grew up at the edge of the Smoky Mountains, close to the great American outdoors, just like you do in Middle Tennessee, we were out there all the time. Almost every weekend or every other weekend, we were hiking or camping or learning about the great outdoors. They taught us to love the Great American Outdoors, and as important, they taught us not to be afraid of the Great American Outdoors.

Today we have fewer parents who take their kids into the Great American Outdoors and I don't think it's because the boys are afraid of the outdoors. I think it's because a lot of the parents never had the chance to be in scouting and to know what to do in the outdoors. I still remember the Scout Law. I imagine most of you can say it: "trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, careful, thrifty, brave, plain, reverent." I remember that. And I remember the motto, "Be Prepared." That's a good lesson in life whether you're preparing for a piano concert or whether you're running in a Republican primary. Over the years I've tried to apply those rules to whatever I was doing in life, and I've found it hard to improve on the Boy Scout lessons.

I've put my love of the outdoors to work as a senator, trying to protect the parks, trying to keep the air clean, trying to keep enough open space so that our children and grandchildren can enjoy the outdoors as I did. And I've tried my best to teach my boys and girls, or as Honey likes to say, "our boys and girls," our family about the outdoors and to help teach those grandchildren as well.

Some people say that it's naïve in this tough world that we live in to take the simple Boy Scout lessons, like to walk up and say, "Mr. Smith, I just knocked a baseball through your window and I take responsibility for it." That's the right thing to do but some people say it's naïve in the sophisticated world in which we live.

Well, let me close with a story that suggests it's not naïve at all. Shortly after I graduated from law school, I had the privilege of working in the White House for a man named Bryce Harwell, who had also worked for President Eisenhower. He was President Eisenhower's favorite staff member. He was a diminutive little fellow who took shorthand, gave good advice, wrote good speeches, and everybody loved him. And he told me this story about President Eisenhower's cabinet meeting. The Eisenhower cabinet was

meeting one day in the cabinet room in the White House right off the Oval Office where the president works, and they had a particularly difficult decision to make.

Now, Eisenhower as we know, was a sophisticated man. He was a five-star general. He was in charge of our troops during World War II, the Allied forces, in fact. He was president of a university, he was the head of NATO and now he was the president of the United States. He was a sophisticated fellow who knew how to operate in a tough world, who even knew how to win world wars. So he put an issue on the table, and asked the cabinet members what to do. The secretary of state said, "Oh, Mr. President, as a matter of foreign policy, we should do x." The secretary of the treasury was next, and he said, "No, Mr. President, we couldn't possibly do that; that would damage the economy." The secretary of defense said, "No, we couldn't do either one of those two options, because it would hurt our military strength." And so all the way they went around the table and down the line, every single member of the cabinet pointing out a problem with the option based on how it would affect their particular department.

So, finally, President Eisenhower asked this question of his cabinet: "What would be the right thing to do?" The secretary of state said, "Oh, Mr. President, the right thing to do would be x," and the secretary of the treasury said, "Mr. President, that's right, the right thing to do would be x." And so said the secretary of defense and the secretary of commerce and on down the line. So the president, this sophisticated man who had won the world war asked that question, "What would be the right thing to do," heard from his cabinet what it would be, turned to his press secretary and said, "Mr. Hagerty, then go out and tell the press that that's what we'll do."

The moral of the story, I think, is whether you're a Cub Scout who's just broken a window, or whether you're a Boy Scout trying to learn about life, that the lessons you learn in scouting are lessons that are good for the rest of your life. And another lesson, and I think particularly for this group today, as we honor and salute the volunteers and the supporters and the scouts in Wilson County, and those in the Walton Trail district, is that it's hard to think of anything more important that you could be doing with your time and with your money for your community and for our country than teaching these lessons of life that help these boys become men. Thank you very much.●

REMEMBERING BOB "MAC" MCQUILLEN

● Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Bob "Mac" McQuillen, who passed away on February 4, at Catholic Medical Center in Manchester, NH, at the age of 90. Bob was a veteran of two wars, a nationally renowned musician, a respected teacher, a police chief and a friend to all who had the joy of knowing him. He was an icon in New Hampshire and in the folk music world.

Mac, as he was known by friends, was born in Massachusetts in 1923 shortly before the Great Depression and moved north with his mother to New Boston, NH, as a teenager. In 1943, he answered his country's call in World War II, joining the U.S. Marine Corps and serving

in the South Pacific. Although he came from a musical family, it was only when he befriended a guitar player during the war that he came to appreciate music. When he returned to New Hampshire in 1946, that love of music grew immeasurably as he traveled around Cheshire and Hillsborough counties in the southwest part of the State, attending contra dances in town halls and churches. Mac fell in love with contra dancing and the rhythm of the music, taking up the accordion and piano in a local band. He even met his wife-to-be, Priscilla Scribner from Dublin, NH, at a contra dance. Mac reenlisted in the Marines in 1951, and for a time before fighting in Korea, he taught marksmanship at Marine Corps Base Quantico in Virginia. It was a critical experience for him as it was in this capacity that he discovered one of his life passions, teaching.

After his tour in Korea, Mac attended an esteemed institution in New Hampshire, Keene State College, graduating in 1959 with a degree in education. Mac put his education to good use right away, teaching shop class and weightlifting at Peterborough High School, which is now called ConVal Regional High School. He was also one of the bus drivers, and it didn't take long for him to become one of the most popular teachers in the school.

Throughout Mac's 35 years of teaching, he played music constantly and composed over 1,500 of his own tunes. He also created a fund to teach young people contra dance music. In 2002, for his impact on traditional music and dance in New England, Mac received the Nation's highest honor in traditional and folk art, the National Heritage Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Mac's ability to find the good in everyone and his upbeat outlook on life will be sorely missed. His dedication to his community, his Nation, and to traditional folk music will always be remembered; and his songs, his jokes, and his spirit will live on in the hills, barns, churches and town halls of New Hampshire.

Along with his many admirers and mentees, Mac is survived by two of his three children: his son, Daniel; his daughter, Rebecca; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and also his former students, colleagues and lifelong friends. He is predeceased by his wife, Priscilla, and his son, William. The generosity of this patriot, mentor, musician and friend will be dearly missed by all.

I ask my colleagues and all Americans to join me in honoring Bob "Mac" McQuillen and his rich life of service.●

RxIMPACT DAY

● Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the sixth annual RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill. This is

a special day where we recognize the contributions of pharmacies to the American health care system. This year's event, organized by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores, takes place this week. Nearly 400 individuals from the pharmacy community—including practicing pharmacists, pharmacy school faculty and students, State pharmacy leaders and pharmacy company executives—will visit Capitol Hill. They will share their views with Congress about the importance of supporting legislation that protects access to community and neighborhood pharmacies and that utilizes pharmacists to improve the quality and reduce the costs of providing healthcare.

Advocates from 40 States have traveled to Washington to talk about the important role that over 40,000 community pharmacies nationwide play in big cities and small towns all over the country. Patients have always relied on their local pharmacist to meet their healthcare needs. The local pharmacist is a trusted, highly accessible healthcare provider deeply committed to providing the highest quality care in the most efficient manner possible.

As demand for healthcare services continues to grow, pharmacists have expanded their role in healthcare delivery, partnering with physicians, nurses and other healthcare providers to meet their patients' needs. Innovative services provided by pharmacists do even more to improve patient healthcare. Pharmacists are highly valued by those that rely on them most—those in rural and underserved areas, as well as older Americans, and those struggling to manage chronic diseases. Pharmacy services improve patients' quality of life as well as healthcare affordability. By helping patients take their medications effectively and providing preventive services, pharmacists help avoid more costly forms of care. Pharmacists also help patients identify strategies to save money, such as through better understanding of their pharmacy benefits, using generic medications, and obtaining 90-day supplies of prescription drugs from local pharmacies.

Pharmacists are the Nation's most accessible healthcare providers. In many communities, especially in rural areas, the local pharmacist is a patient's most direct link to healthcare. Eighty-nine percent of Americans reside within a 5-mile radius of a community pharmacy, and that is one of the reasons that pharmacists are one of our Nation's most trusted healthcare professionals. Utilizing their specialized education, pharmacists play a major role in medication therapy management, disease-state management, immunizations, healthcare screenings, and other healthcare services designed to improve patient health and reduce overall healthcare costs. Pharmacists are also expanding their role into new

models of care based on quality of services and outcomes, such as accountable care organizations, ACOs, and medical homes.

As we continue to implement healthcare reform and seek new strategies to improve patient care, pharmacists will play a critical role. As the chairman of the Senate Community Pharmacy Caucus, I believe Congress should look at every opportunity to make sure that pharmacists are allowed to utilize their training to the fullest to provide the services that can improve care and lower costs. In recognition of the sixth annual NACDS RxIMPACT Day on Capitol Hill, I congratulate pharmacy leaders, pharmacists, students, executives, and the entire pharmacy community represented by the National Association of Chain Drug Stores, for their contributions to the good health of the American people.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

FISCAL YEAR 2015 BUDGET: APPENDIX, ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVES, AND HISTORICAL TABLES, RECEIVED DURING ADJOURNMENT OF THE SENATE ON MARCH 10, 2014—PM 34

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with accompanying reports and papers; which was referred jointly, pursuant to the order of January 30, 1975 as modified by the order of April 11, 1986; to the Committees on Appropriations; and the Budget:

Hon. JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.,
President of the Senate,
Washington, DC.

Dear Mr. President:

I transmit herewith the following hard copy volumes of the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget: Appendix, Analytical Perspectives, and Historical Tables.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 10, 2014.

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 4:07 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2641. An act to provide for improved coordination of agency actions in the preparation and adoption of environmental documents for permitting determinations, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3826. An act to provide direction to the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency regarding the establishment of standards for emissions of any greenhouse gas from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4152. An act to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2097. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4118. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to delay the implementation of the penalty for failure to comply with the individual health insurance mandate.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4830. A communication from the Chief of the Policy and Rules Division, Office of Engineering and Technology, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Part 15 of the Commission's Rules to Establish Regulations for Tank Level Probing Radars in the Frequency Band 77-81 GHz" ((ET Docket No. 10-23) (FCC 14-2)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 26, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4831. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Use of Additional Portable Oxygen Concentrators on Board Aircraft" ((RIN2120-AK35) (Docket No. FAA-2013-1013)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4832. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Prohibition on Personal Use of Electronic Devices on the Flight Deck" ((RIN2120-AJ17) (Docket No. FAA-2012-0929)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4833. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Minimum Altitudes for Use of Autopilots" ((RIN2120-AK11) (Docket No.

FAA-2012-1059)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4834. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (50); Amdt. No. 3573" ((RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4835. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Standard Instrument Approach Procedures, and Takeoff Minimums and Obstacle Departure Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments (63); Amdt. No. 3574" ((RIN2120-AA65) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4836. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment to Class D and E Airspace; Christiansted, St. Croix, VI" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0757)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4837. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment to Class D and E Airspace; Grand Forks, ND" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0950)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4838. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment to Class E Airspace; Morrisville, VT" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0683)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4839. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment to Class E Airspace; McMinnville, TN" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0682)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4840. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Modification of Class D and E Airspace; Kailua-Kona, HI" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0622)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4841. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of Class E

Airspace, Amendment of Class D and E Airspace, and Revocation of Class E Airspace; Salinas, CA" (RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0708)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4842. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Metconazole; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9906-13) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 4, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4843. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fluopicolide; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9906-19) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 4, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4844. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Triflumizole; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9906-47) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 4, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4845. A communication from the Director, Naval Reactors, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program's reports on environmental monitoring and radioactive waste disposal, radiation exposure, and occupational safety and health, as well as a report providing and overview of the Program; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4846. A communication from the Chief Counsel, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment to the Public Assistance Program's Simplified Procedures Project Thresholds" (RIN1660-AA81) (Docket No. FEMA-2014-0009) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 4, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4847. A communication from the President and Chief Operating Officer, Resolution Funding Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's Statement on the System of Internal Controls and the 2013 Audited Financial Statements; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4848. A communication from the President and Chief Operating Officer, Financing Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Corporation's Statement on the System of Internal Controls and the 2013 Audited Financial Statements; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4849. A communication from the Acting Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the progress made in licensing and constructing the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4850. A communication from the President and Chief Executive Officer, United States Enrichment Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's nineteenth annual report regarding its activities as Executive Agent for the U.S. government in the implementation of the 20-year contract to pur-

chase low enriched uranium derived from dismantled Russian nuclear weapons; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4851. A communication from the Acting General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to Auxiliary Installations, Replacement Facilities, Siting and Maintenance Regulations" (RIN1902-AE62) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 5, 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4852. A communication from the Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a semiannual report relative to the status of the Commission's licensing and regulatory duties; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4853. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Missouri" (FRL No. 9907-32-Region 7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 4, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4854. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Washington: State Implementation Plan Miscellaneous Revisions" (FRL No. 9907-38-Region 10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 4, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4855. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Effluent Limitations Guidelines and Standards for the Construction and Development Point Source Category" (FRL No. 9906-51-OW) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 4, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4856. A communication from the United States Trade Representative, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 2014 Trade Policy Agenda and 2013 Annual Report of the President of the United States on the Trade Agreements Program; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4857. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act (DDTC 13-178); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4858. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report prepared by the Department of State on progress toward a negotiated solution of the Cyprus question covering the period October 1, 2013 through November 30, 2013; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4859. A communication from the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department of Veterans Affairs Vehicle Fleet Report on Alternative Fuel Vehicles for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first

and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. COATS:

S. 2099. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to establish uniform requirements for thorough economic analysis of regulations by Federal agencies based on sound principles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 2100. A bill to promote the use of clean cookstoves and fuels to save lives, improve livelihoods, empower women, and protect the environment by creating a thriving global market for clean and efficient household cooking solutions; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Mr. HELLER, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND):

S. 2101. A bill to amend the Interstate Land Sales Full Disclosure Act to clarify how the Act applies to condominiums; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Ms. COLLINS:

S. 2102. A bill to clarify the application of certain leverage and risk-based requirements under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mrs. SHAHEEN):

S. Res. 377. A resolution recognizing the 193rd anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 313

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) were added as cosponsors of S. 313, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax treatment of ABLE accounts established under State programs for the care of family members with disabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 394

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 394, a bill to prohibit and deter the theft of metal, and for other purposes.

S. 526

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 526, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make permanent the special rule for contributions of qualified conservation contributions, and for other purposes.

S. 582

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr.

CHAMBLISS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 582, a bill to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline.

S. 709

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 709, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to increase diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, leading to better care and outcomes for Americans living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

S. 755

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 755, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to apply the Medicaid primary care payment rate to additional physician providers of primary care services.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) and the Senator from Washington (Mrs. MURRAY) were added as cosponsors of S. 933, a bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2018.

S. 1044

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1044, a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to install in the area of the World War II Memorial in the District of Columbia a suitable plaque or an inscription with the words that President Franklin D. Roosevelt prayed with the United States on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1413

At the request of Mr. PRYOR, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1413, a bill to exempt from sequestration certain fees of the Food and Drug Administration.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Mr. FRANKEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1507

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Michigan

(Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1507, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of general welfare benefits provided by Indian tribes.

S. 1675

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1675, a bill to reduce recidivism and increase public safety, and for other purposes.

S. 1690

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1690, a bill to reauthorize the Second Chance Act of 2007.

S. 1739

At the request of Mr. HOEVEN, the name of the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1739, a bill to modify the efficiency standards for grid-enabled water heaters.

S. 1756

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1756, a bill to amend section 403 of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act to improve and clarify certain disclosure requirements for restaurants, similar retail food establishments, and vending machines.

S. 1827

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY), the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER), the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from Virginia

(Mr. WARNER), the Senator from Mon-

tana (Mr. WALSH), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Utah (Mr. HATCH), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1827, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the American Fighter Aces, collectively, in recognition of their heroic military service and defense of our country's freedom throughout the history of aviation warfare.

S. 1899

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1899, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a consumer renewable credit for a utility that sells renewable power, and for other purposes.

S. 1917

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1917, a bill to provide for additional enhancements of the sexual assault prevention and response activities of the Armed Forces.

S. 1948

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1948, a bill to promote the academic achievement of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children with the establishment of a Native American language grant program.

S. 2008

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the names of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of S. 2008, a bill to strengthen resources for entrepreneurs by improving the SCORE program, and for other purposes.

S. 2047

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2047, a bill to prohibit the marketing of electronic cigarettes to children, and for other purposes.

S. 2086

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2086, a bill to address current emergency shortages of propane

and other home heating fuels and to provide greater flexibility and information for Governors to address such emergencies in the future.

S. RES. 348

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 348, a resolution expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace.

S. RES. 365

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 365, a resolution deploring the violent repression of peaceful demonstrators in Venezuela, calling for full accountability for human rights violations taking place in Venezuela, and supporting the right of the Venezuelan people to the free and peaceful exercise of representative democracy.

S. RES. 370

At the request of Mr. THUNE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 370, a resolution supporting the territorial integrity of Ukraine and condemning Russian military aggression in Ukraine.

S. RES. 376

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) and the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 376, a resolution supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 2100. A bill to promote the use of clean cookstoves and fuels to save lives, improve livelihoods, empower women, and protect the environment by creating a thriving global market for clean and efficient household cooking solutions; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Clean Cookstove Support Act. This legislation addresses a serious global public health and environmental issue, and I am very pleased to be joined in this effort by my friend and colleague, Senator DURBIN.

Nearly half of the world's population cooks over open fires or with inefficient, polluting, and unsafe cookstoves using wood, agricultural waste, dung, coal, or other solid fuels. Smoke from these traditional cookstoves and open fires is associated with chronic and acute diseases and affects women and children disproportionately.

Alarmingly, the Global Burden of Disease Study of 2010 doubled the mor-

talities estimates for exposure to smoke from cookstoves referred to as household air pollution from 2 million to 4 million deaths annually in the developing world. The GBD indicates this is more than the deaths from malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS combined. The GBD ranks household air pollution as the fourth worst overall health risk factor in the world and as the second worst health risk factor in the world for women and girls. Millions more are sickened from the toxic smoke and thousands suffer burns annually from open fires or unsafe cookstoves.

Traditional cookstoves also create serious environmental problems. Recent studies show that the emissions of black carbon or common soot from biomass cookstoves significantly contribute to regional air and climate change. In fact, cookstoves account for some 25 percent of black carbon emissions. Each family using a traditional cookstove can require up to 2 tons of biomass cooking fuel, and where demand for fuel outstrips the natural regrowth of resources, local land degradation and loss of biodiversity often results.

Moreover, the collection of this fuel is a burden that is shouldered disproportionately by women and children. In some regions of the world, women and girls risk rape and gender-based violence during the up to 20 hours a week they spend away from their families gathering fuel.

Replacing these cookstoves with modern alternatives would help reverse these alarming health and environmental trends. This would be relatively inexpensive. In fact, there are stoves that are coming on the market now that cost as little as \$20 and are 50 percent more efficient than the traditional cooking methods. It also could be done quickly. It is what scientists call the low-hanging fruit of environmental fixes.

Through the leadership of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and the United Nations Foundation, the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves was formed in 2010. Recognizing the serious health and environmental issues posed by traditional cookstoves, the alliance aims to save lives, improve livelihoods, empower women, and combat pollution by creating a thriving global market for clean and efficient household cooking solutions. Alliance partners are working to help overcome market barriers that currently impede production, deployment, and use of cookstoves that are clean in the developing world.

To assist in this important endeavor, several Federal agencies and departments have committed a total of up to \$125 million to the sector for the first 5 years of the alliance. These include a wide variety of departments, including the Departments of State, Energy, and Health and Human Services, the U.S.

Agency for International Development, USAID, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Science Foundation, and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, NOAA, and the Peace Corps have also made commitments to provide technical assistance in the developing world.

To help advance the alliance's goal to spur the adoption of clean cookstoves in 100 million households by the year 2020, the U.S. Government has focused its commitments on applied research and development, diplomatic engagement to encourage a market for clean cookstoves, and to improve access, international development projects to help build commercial businesses, and development efforts, including humanitarian and empowerment programs for women and girls.

The legislation Senator DURBIN and I are introducing today reinforces this commitment and would require the Secretary of State to work to advance the goals of the alliance. In addition, the bill authorizes the existing funding commitments made by our government to ensure that these crucial pledges toward preventing unnecessary illness and reducing pollution around the globe are met.

By supporting the work of the alliance and the commitments of the U.S. Government to replace traditional cookstoves with modern versions that emit far less soot, this bill aims to directly benefit some of the world's poorest people and to reduce harmful pollution that affects us all. It offers a way for us to address the second leading contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in a way that is inexpensive, not burdensome to the people of this country, and will benefit poor people living in developing nations.

There is yet another reason for my colleagues to support this initiative. Addressing persistent global issues of poverty and underdevelopment makes our country more secure by undercutting some of the key drivers of extremism and militancy around the world.

I urge my colleagues to join Senator DURBIN and me in supporting the Clean Cookstoves and Fuel Support Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 377—RECOGNIZING THE 193RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF GREECE AND CELEBRATING DEMOCRACY IN GREECE AND THE UNITED STATES

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mrs. SHAHEEN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 377

Whereas the people of ancient Greece developed the concept of democracy, in which

the supreme power to govern was vested in the people;

Whereas the founding fathers of the United States, many of whom read Greek political philosophy in the original Greek language, drew heavily on the political experience and philosophy of ancient Greece in forming the representative democracy of the United States;

Whereas Petros Mavromichalis, the former Commander in Chief of Greece and a founder of the modern Greek state, said to the citizens of the United States in 1821, "It is in your land that liberty has fixed her abode and . . . in imitating you, we shall imitate our ancestors and be thought worthy of them if we succeed in resembling you.";

Whereas the Greek national anthem, the "Hymn to Liberty", includes the words, "most heartily was gladdened George Washington's brave land";

Whereas the people of the United States generously offered humanitarian assistance to the people of Greece during their struggle for independence;

Whereas Greece, in one of the most consequential "David vs. Goliath" victories for freedom and democracy in modern times, refused to surrender to the Axis forces and inflicted a fatal wound at a crucial moment in World War II, forcing Adolf Hitler to change his timeline and delaying the attack on Russia, where the Axis forces met defeat;

Whereas Winston Churchill said, "if there had not been the virtue and courage of the Greeks, we do not know which the outcome of World War II would have been" and "no longer will we say that Greeks fight like heroes, but that heroes fight like Greeks";

Whereas hundreds of thousands of people of Greece were killed in Greece during World War II in defense of the values of the Allies;

Whereas, throughout the 20th century, Greece was one of a few countries that allied with the United States in every major international conflict;

Whereas Greece is a strategic partner and ally of the United States in bringing political stability and economic development to the volatile Balkan region, having invested billions of dollars in the countries of the region, thereby helping to create tens of thousands of new jobs, and having contributed more than \$750,000,000 in development aid for the region;

Whereas the Government and people of Greece actively participate in peacekeeping and peace-building operations conducted by international organizations, including the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and have more recently provided critical support to the operation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Libya;

Whereas Greece received worldwide praise for its extraordinary handling during the 2004 Olympic Games of more than 14,000 athletes and more than 2,000,000 spectators and journalists, a feat the Government and people of Greece handled efficiently, securely, and with hospitality;

Whereas Greece, located in a region where Christianity meets Islam and Judaism, maintains excellent relations with Muslim countries and Israel;

Whereas the Government of Greece has taken important steps in recent years to further cross-cultural understanding, rapprochement, and cooperation in various fields with Turkey, and has also improved its relations with other countries in the region, including Israel, thus enhancing the stability of the wider region;

Whereas the governments and people of Greece and the United States are at the forefront of efforts to advance freedom, democracy, peace, stability, and human rights;

Whereas those efforts and similar ideals have forged a close bond between the people of Greece and the United States; and

Whereas it is proper and desirable for the United States to celebrate March 25, 2014, Greek Independence Day, with the people of Greece and to reaffirm the democratic principles from which those two great countries were founded: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) extends warm congratulations and best wishes to the people of Greece as they celebrate the 193rd anniversary of the independence of Greece;

(2) expresses support for the principles of democratic governance to which the people of Greece are committed; and

(3) notes the important role that Greece has played in the wider European region and in the community of nations since gaining its independence 193 years ago.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2807. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2808. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2807. Mrs. GILLIBRAND submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . ABOVE-THE-LINE DEDUCTION FOR CHILD CARE EXPENSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part VII of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(1) by redesignating section 224 as section 225, and

(2) by inserting after section 223 the following new section:

"SEC. 224. CHILD CARE DEDUCTION.

"(a) ALLOWANCE OF DEDUCTION.—In the case of an individual for which there are 1 or more qualifying children with respect to such individual for the taxable year, there shall be allowed as a deduction an amount equal to the employment-related expenses paid by such individual during the taxable year.

"(b) DOLLAR LIMITATIONS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount allowed as a deduction under subsection (a) with respect to the taxpayer for any taxable year shall not exceed—

"(A) \$7,000, if there is 1 qualifying child with respect to the taxpayer for such taxable year, or

"(B) \$14,000, if there are 2 or more qualifying children with respect to the taxpayer for such taxable year.

"(2) ADJUSTMENT FOR INFLATION.—In the case of a taxable year beginning after 2015,

each of the dollar amounts in paragraph (1) shall be increased by an amount equal to—

"(A) such dollar amount, multiplied by

"(B) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) for the calendar year in which such taxable year begins, determined by substituting 'calendar year 2014' for 'calendar year 1992' in subparagraph (B) thereof.

If any amount as adjusted under the preceding sentence is not a multiple of \$100, such amount shall be rounded to the next highest multiple of \$100.

"(c) DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL RULES.—For purposes of this section—

"(1) QUALIFYING CHILD.—The term 'qualifying child' means a dependent of the taxpayer (as defined in section 152(a)(1))—

"(A) who has not attained age 13, or

"(B) who is physically or mentally incapable of caring for himself or herself.

"(2) EMPLOYMENT-RELATED EXPENSES.—The term 'employment-related expenses' has the meaning given such term by section 21(b)(2), applied as if the terms 'qualifying child' and 'qualifying children,' within the meaning of this section, were substituted for the terms 'qualifying individual' and 'qualifying individuals', respectively.

"(3) SPECIAL RULES.—Rules similar to the rules of paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (9), and (10) of section 21(e) shall apply.

"(d) DENIAL OF DOUBLE BENEFIT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—No deduction shall be allowed under this section for any expense with respect to which a credit is claimed by the taxpayer under section 21.

"(2) COORDINATION RULE.—For coordination with a dependent care assistance program, see section 129(e)(7)."

(b) DEDUCTION ALLOWED ABOVE-THE-LINE.—Subsection (a) of section 62 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after paragraph (21) the following new paragraph:

"(22) CHILD CARE DEDUCTION.—The deduction allowed by section 224."

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Subsection (e) of section 213 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting " , or as a deduction under section 224," after "section 21".

(d) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for part VII of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking the item relating to section 224 and by inserting the following new items:

"Sec. 224. Child care deduction.

"Sec. 225. Cross reference."

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to expenses paid or incurred in taxable years beginning after December 31, 2014.

SA 2808. Mr. MURPHY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. ____ . INCREASE IN DOLLAR LIMITATION ON EXCLUSION FOR EMPLOYER-PROVIDED DEPENDENT CARE ASSISTANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (A) of section 129(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking "shall not exceed" and all that follows and inserting the following: "shall not exceed—

"(i) in the case of a taxpayer whose modified adjusted gross income for such taxable

year is less than \$100,000 (twice such amount in the case of a joint return), \$10,000 (half such amount in the case of a separate return by a married individual), and

“(ii) in any other case, \$5,000 (half such amount in the case of a separate return by a married individual).”.

(b) MODIFIED ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME.—Paragraph (2) of section 129(a) of such Code is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) MODIFIED ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘modified adjusted gross income’ means the adjusted gross income of the taxpayer for the taxable year increased by any amount excluded from gross income under section 911, 931, or 933.”.

(c) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—Paragraph (2) of section 129(a) of such Code, as amended by subsection (b), is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) INFLATION ADJUSTMENT.—In the case of any taxable year beginning in a calendar year after 2014, each dollar amount contained in subparagraph (A) shall be increased by an amount equal to—

“(i) such dollar amount, multiplied by

“(ii) the cost-of-living adjustment determined under section 1(f)(3) for the calendar year in which the taxable year begins, determined by substituting ‘calendar year 2013’ for ‘calendar year 1992’ in subparagraph (B) thereof.

Any increase determined under the preceding sentence shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of \$50.”.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2013.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet on March 11, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Access and Cost: What the U.S. Health Care System Can Learn from Other Countries.”

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Bill Gendell of the committee staff on (202) 224-5480.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet on March 12, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “From Poverty to Opportunity: How a Fair Minimum Wage Will Help Working Families Succeed.”

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Sarah Cupp of the committee staff on (202) 224-5363.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will meet on March 13, 2014, at 10

a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Protecting the Public Health: Examining FDA’s Initiatives and Priorities.”

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact Emily Schlichting of the committee staff on (202) 224-6840.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Carly Robinson, a fellow in the office of Senator MARK UDALL, be granted the privilege of the floor during the Senate’s session of today, March 10, 2014.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Harsh Desai, a fellow in the office of Senator FEINSTEIN, be granted the privilege of the floor during the duration of the overnight debate on climate change.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Samuel Bockenhauer, a fellow in my office, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the 113th Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that two science policy fellows from my office, Anna Mebust and Melissa Holtmeyer, be granted floor privileges through the end of the session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Brian Beall, James Chang, Jamie Lawrence, Mohsin Syed, and Timothy Torma, who are fellows from Senator SCHATZ’s office, be given floor privileges for the remainder of this session of Congress.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 2014

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9 a.m. today, Tuesday, March 11, 2014; that following the prayer and the pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 11:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and that the time be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first hour and the Republicans controlling the next hour; that

at 11:30 a.m. the Senate proceed to executive session, as provided under the previous order; and that following the cloture vote on the Parker nomination, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, at 11:30 a.m. there will be a series of four cloture votes on the Leitman, Levy, Michelson, and Parker nominations, all to be district judges for the Eastern District of Michigan.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9 A.M. TODAY

Mr. NELSON. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 8:54 a.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 11, 2014, at 9 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

ERIKA LIZABETH MORITSUGU, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, VICE PETER A. KOVAR, RESIGNED.

NANI A. COLORETTI, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, VICE MAURICE A. JONES, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

ESTEVAN R. LOPEZ, OF NEW MEXICO, TO BE COMMISSIONER OF RECLAMATION, VICE MICHAEL L. CONNOR, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

MONICA C. REGALBUTO, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY (ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT), VICE INES R. TRIAY, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ANDREW H. SCHAPIRO, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE CZECH REPUBLIC.

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 271(D):

To be rear admiral

LINDA L. FAGAN
THOMAS W. JONES
STEVEN D. POULIN
JAMES E. RENDON

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

LT. GEN. JOHN E. HYTEN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be general

LT. GEN. DARREN W. MCDEW

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. KATHLEEN A. COOK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS THE DEPUTY JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE AND APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 8037:

To be major general

COL. JEFFREY A. ROCKWELL

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

VICE ADM. JOHN W. MILLER

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be colonel

JOSE A. SANCHEZ

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY AS CHAPLAINS UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 624 AND 3064:

To be major

PETER P. ALERIA

TROY D. ALLAN
ANDREW K. ARRINGTON
PETER BAEK
CHRISTIAN J. BANG
JEREMY A. BLANFORD
JEFFERY A. BRYAN
TODD A. CHENEY
BENJAMIN P. CLARK
THOMAS E. COLLIER
BERNARD CORNELL
CHAD B. DAVIS
ERIC O. DEAN
MILLER J. EICHELBERGER
MICHAEL W. FOX
LUIS A. GARAYUA III
VINCENT M. GARCIA
WILLIAM J. GLENN
WESLEY A. GORNALL
MATTHEW M. HAMRICK
WILLIAM I. HARRISON
BENJAMIN L. HINES
PETER T. HOFMAN
KEVIN M. HOVAN
TRACY C. HUDGINS
CHUL W. JEON
DAVID M. JOHNSTON II
STUART D. KAZAROVICH
SCOTT F. KENNAUGH
DANIEL P. KERSEY
KEHMES A. M. LANDS
MICHAEL D. MCCAWLEY
GREGORY S. MCVEY
JOSHUA A. METZ
MARK S. MILLER
DARIN M. MITCHELL
JEFFREY S. MITCHELL
DAVID MVONDO
RALPH D. NAB
LISA A. NORTHWAY
JOSEPH R. ODELL

TROY D. PARSON
DEREK M. POTTINGER
RALPH L. B. PRICE
JAMES W. RAMSEY
LEX M. REED
MARK A. RENDON
WILLIAM B. ROBINSON, JR.
RAMON P. SANTILLANO, JR.
JOHN E. SCOTT
JAVON A. SEABORN
ANDREW S. SHRIVER
KURT W. SPOND
MATTHEW W. SPRECHER
MICHAEL E. SWARTZ
OMARI S. THOMPSON
JASON D. UNSWORTH
DAN S. URQUHART
ROY H. VAUGHN
BRUCE A. WAGNER
RICKIE E. WAMBLES, JR.
AARON D. WHITE
SHAY L. D. WORTHY

WITHDRAWAL

Executive Message transmitted by the President to the Senate on March 10, 2014 withdrawing from further Senate consideration the following nomination:

NANI A. COLORETTI, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY, VICE DANIEL M. TANGHERLINI, RESIGNED, WHICH WAS SENT TO THE SENATE ON JANUARY 6, 2014.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ELIZABETH ALVIDREZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Elizabeth Alvidrez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Elizabeth Alvidrez is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Elizabeth Alvidrez is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Elizabeth Alvidrez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 90 I had to depart DC to fly to Georgia in order to attend the funeral for a longtime friend. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

DOMINIC SANCHEZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Dominic Sanchez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Dominic Sanchez is a 12th grader at Arvada West High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Dominic Sanchez is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Dominic Sanchez for winning the Arvada

Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

ON THE 49TH ANNIVERSARY OF
"BLOODY SUNDAY" AND THE IM-
PORTANCE AND CONTINUING
NEED FOR AN EFFECTIVE VOT-
ING RIGHTS ACT**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday marked the 49th anniversary of "Bloody Sunday." On Sunday, March 7, 1965, more than 600 civil rights demonstrators, including our beloved colleague, Congressman JOHN LEWIS of Georgia, were brutally attacked by state and local police at the Edmund Pettus Bridge as they marched from Selma to Montgomery in support of the right to vote.

"Bloody Sunday" was a watershed moment in the history of Civil Rights Movement and of our country. It crystallized for the nation the necessity of enacting a strong and effective federal law protecting the right to vote of every American.

Nearly a half century later, I rise today to address the House on the continuing need for an effective Voting Rights Act. As a senior member of the House Judiciary Committee, I strongly supported and worked for the successful reauthorization in 2006 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which proudly bears the name: Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, Coretta Scott King, Cesar E. Chavez, Barbara C. Jordan, William C. Velasquez, and Dr. Hector P. Garcia Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006.

Mr. Speaker, in signing the Voting Rights Act on August 6, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson said:

The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison men because they are different from other men.

In answering the call of history and justice, great legislator-statesmen strongly supported the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and worked across the aisle and with President Johnson to ensure its passage. Men like Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Montana), Senate Minority Leader Everett McKinley Dirksen (R-Illinois), Speaker John McCormack (D-Massachusetts), House Majority Leader Hale Boggs (D-Louisiana), House Judiciary Committee Chairman Emanuel Celler (D-New York), and House Minority Leader and former President Gerald Ford (R-Michigan).

Mr. Speaker, since its passage in 1965, and through four reauthorizations signed by Re-

publican presidents (1970, 1975, 1982, 2006), more Americans, especially those in the communities we represent, have been empowered by the Voting Rights Act than any other single piece of legislation.

Section 5 of the Act requires covered jurisdictions to submit proposed changes to any voting law or procedure to the Department of Justice or the U.S. District Court in Washington, DC for pre-approval, hence the term "pre-clearance." Under Section 5, the submitting jurisdiction has the burden of proving that the proposed change(s) are not retrogressive, i.e. that they do not have the purpose and will not have the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color.

In announcing his support for the 1982 extension of the Voting Rights Act, President Reagan said, "the right to vote is the crown jewel of American liberties." And Section 5 is the "crown jewel" of the Voting Rights Act.

But a terrible blow was dealt to the Voting Rights Act on June 25, 2013, when the Supreme Court handed down the decision in *Shelby County v. Holder*, 570 U.S. 193 (2013), which invalidated Section 4(b), the provision of the law determining which jurisdictions would be subject to Section 5 "pre-clearance."

In 2006, the City of Calera, Alabama, which lies within Shelby County, enacted a discriminatory redistricting plan without complying with Section 5, leading to the loss of the city's sole African-American councilman, Ernest Montgomery. In compliance with Section 5, however, Calera was required to draw a non-discriminatory redistricting plan and conduct another election in which Mr. Montgomery regained his seat.

According to the Supreme Court majority, the reason for striking down Section 4(b) was that "times have changed." Now, the Court was right; times have changed. But what the Court did not fully appreciate is that the positive changes it cited are due almost entirely to the existence and vigorous enforcement of the Voting Rights Act. And that is why the Voting Rights Act is still needed.

Let me put it this way: in the same way that the vaccine invented by Dr. Jonas Salk in 1953 eradicated the crippling effects but did not eliminate the cause of polio, the Voting Rights Act succeeded in stymying the practices that resulted in the wholesale disenfranchisement of African Americans and language minorities. But it did not eliminate them entirely. The Voting Rights Act is needed as much today to prevent another epidemic of voting disenfranchisement as Dr. Salk's vaccine is still needed to prevent another polio epidemic.

Many of us remember what it was like before the Voting Rights Act but for those too young to have lived through it, let us take a stroll down memory lane. Before the Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965, the right to vote did not exist in practice for most African Americans. And until 1975, most American

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

citizens who were not proficient in English faced significant obstacles to voting, because they could not understand the ballot.

Even though the Indian Citizenship Act gave Native Americans the right to vote in 1924, state law determined who could actually vote, which effectively excluded many Native Americans from political participation for decades. Asian Americans and Asian immigrants also suffered systematic exclusion from the political process.

In 1964, the year before the Voting Rights Act became law, there were approximately 300 African-Americans in public office, including just three in Congress. Few, if any, black elected officials were elected anywhere in the South. Because of the Voting Rights Act, there are now more than 9,100 black elected officials, including 43 members of Congress, the largest number ever.

The Voting Rights Act opened the political process for many of the approximately 6,000 Latino public officials that have been elected and appointed nationwide, including 263 at the state or federal level, 27 of whom serve in Congress. Native Americans, Asians and others who have historically encountered harsh barriers to full political participation also have benefited greatly.

Aided by Section 5, the Voting Rights Act was successful in preventing the states with the worst and most egregious records of voter suppression and intimidation from disenfranchising minority voters. So successful was the Voting Rights Act that the Supreme Court apparently saw no harm in invalidating the provision that subjected those states to the federal supervision responsible for the success it celebrated.

Now to be sure, the Supreme Court did not invalidate the preclearance provisions of Section 5; it only invalidated Section 4(b). But that is like leaving the car undamaged but destroying the key that unlocks the doors and starts the engine.

According to the Court, the coverage formula in Section 4(b) had to be struck down because the data upon which it was based—registration rates and turn-out gaps—was too old and outdated. Like many others, I disagreed. I thought the Court got it wrong and said so in an op-ed published in the *Forward Times of Houston*, in which I wrote:

The Court majority confuses the symptom with the cause. Congress' focus was not on

voter registration or turnout rates. Congress instead was focused on eliminating the causes or at least eradicating the effects of racial discrimination in voting in states that had a "unique history of problems with racial discrimination in voting." *Shelby*, 570 U.S. 193, (Ginsburg, J., dissenting), slip op. at 19 (June 25, 2013).

I believe Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was exactly right when she wrote in her dissent that the question in 2006 was not which states were to be covered by Section 4(b) and thus subject to pre-clearance as was the case in 1965. Rather the question before Congress in 2006:

Was there still a sufficient basis to support continued application of the preclearance remedy in each of those already-identified places?

There were many commentators, pundits, and opponents of the Voting Rights Act who viewed the Court's *Shelby* decision as the death knell of the Act.

But they underestimated the resolve of men and women of good will across the country who revere the Voting Rights Act. They underestimated the determination of my colleagues in the House and Senate, on both sides of the aisle.

They discounted the commitment of persons like: Republican JAMES SENSENBRENNER and Democrat JOHN CONYERS, each a former Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee; Congressman JOHN LEWIS, who shed his blood on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama on "Bloody Sunday"; Northern members of Congress like Democratic Whip STENY HOYER, Republicans STEVE CHABOT of Ohio and SEAN DUFFY of Wisconsin; and Southern members like SPENCER BACHUS of Alabama, ROBERT "BOBBY" SCOTT of Virginia and SHEILA JACKSON LEE of Texas.

These members, joined by several of their colleagues, refused to let the Voting Rights Act die. They recognized and understood that for all the progress this nation has made in becoming a more inclusive, equitable, and pluralistic society, it is the Voting Rights Act "that has brought us thus far along the way." And so we went to work. You know the saying: "Don't cry about it, be about it." And so we were.

Led by Congressman JIM CLYBURN of South Carolina, I was honored to be a member of the working group tasked with sharing ideas, making recommendations, and crafting and

drafting the legislation that would repair the damage done to the Voting Rights Act by the Supreme Court decision and capable of winning majorities in the House and Senate and the signature of the President. After months of hard work, consultation, negotiation, and collaboration, we were able to produce a bill, H.R. 3899, "Voting Rights Amendments Act of 2014," that can achieve these goals.

To be sure, this legislation is not perfect, no bill ever is. But—and this is important—the bill represents an important step forward because it is responsive to the concern expressed by the Supreme Court and establishes a new coverage formula that is carefully tailored but sufficiently potent to protect the voting rights of all Americans.

First, H.R. 3899 specifies a new coverage formula that is based on current problems in voting and therefore directly responds to the Court's concern that the previous formula was outdated. The importance of this feature is hard to overestimate. Legislators and litigators understand that the likelihood of the Court upholding an amended statute that fails to correct the provision previously found to be defective is very low indeed.

H.R. 3899 replaces the old "static" coverage formula with a new dynamic coverage formula, or "rolling trigger," which works as follows:

1. for states, it requires at least one finding of discrimination at the state level and at least four adverse findings by its sub-jurisdictions within the previous 15 years;
2. for political subdivisions, it requires at least three adverse findings within the previous 15 years; but
3. political subdivisions with "persistent and extremely low minority voter turnout" can also be covered if they have a single adverse finding of discrimination.

The "rolling trigger" mechanism effectively gives the legislation nationwide reach because any state and any jurisdiction in any state potentially is subject to being covered if the requisite number of violations are found to have been committed.

Prior to *Shelby County v. Holder*, the Voting Rights Act covered 16 states in whole or in part, including most of the states in the Deep South. Those states originally covered in whole were:

Original States Covered	Applicable Date	Fed. Register	Date
Alabama	Nov. 1, 1964	30 FR 9897	Aug. 7, 1965
Georgia	Nov. 1, 1964	30 FR 9897	Aug. 7, 1965
Louisiana	Nov. 1, 1964	30 FR 9897	Aug. 7, 1965
Mississippi	Nov. 1, 1964	30 FR 9897	Aug. 7, 1965
South Carolina	Nov. 1, 1964	30 FR 9897	Aug. 7, 1965
Virginia	Nov. 1, 1964	30 FR 9897	Aug. 7, 1965
Arizona	Nov. 1, 1972	40 FR 43746	Sept. 23, 1975
Texas	Nov. 1, 1972	40 FR 43746	Sept. 23, 1975
Alaska	Nov. 1, 1972	40 FR 49422	Oct. 22, 1975

The rolling trigger contained in H.R. 3899, however, does not cover all of these states. To compensate for the fact that fewer jurisdictions are covered, the bill also includes several key provisions that are consistent with the needs created by a narrower Section 5 trigger.

For example, H.R. 3899:

1. Expands judicial "bail-in" authority under Section 3 so that it applies to voting changes

that result in discrimination (not just intentional discrimination);

2. Requires nationwide transparency of "late breaking" voting changes; allocation of poll place resources; and changes within the boundaries of voting districts;

3. Clarifies and expands the ability of plaintiffs to seek a preliminary injunction against voting discrimination; and

4. Clarifies and expands the Attorney General's authority to send election observers to protect against voting discrimination.

The right to vote, free from discrimination, is the capstone of full citizenship conferred by the Civil War Amendments. And it is a source of eternal pride to me that in pursuit of extending the full measure of citizenship to all Americans that in 1975, Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, who also represented the historic 18th

Congressional District of Texas, introduced, and the Congress adopted, what are now Sections 4(f)(3) and 4(f)(4) of the Voting Rights Act, which extended the protections of Section 4

(a) and Section 5 to language minorities. Language minorities in emerging communities have distinct and particular interests that ought to be considered.

"Emerging communities" are those located in states such as Alabama, Arkansas, Tennessee, and South Carolina that historically were not home to large numbers of Hispanics or Asian-Pacific Americans but have in recent years experienced tremendous population growth which is expected to accelerate. The concern is that as these Hispanic and Asian-Pacific voters in these areas become more numerous in these states and capable of having a tangible influence on electoral outcomes, some communities may respond by adopting measures that violate principles of fair and equal treatment.

Such measures may include:

1. Changes from single-member to at-large election districts;
2. Changes to jurisdictional boundaries through annexation; or
3. Changes to multilingual voting materials requirements.

I think we can all agree that language minorities and those residing in emerging communities deserve protection from any such retaliatory election changes. The question is how this can best be achieved consistent with the overriding goal of bringing to the floor a bill that can pass both houses of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is no ordinary piece of legislation. For millions of Americans, and many of us in Congress, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is sacred treasure, earned by the sweat and toil and tears and blood of ordinary Americans who showed the world it was possible to accomplish extraordinary things. In 2006, during the floor debate on the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act, I said:

With our vote today on H.R. 9, each of us will earn a place in history.

Therefore, the question before the House is whether our vote on the Voting Rights Act will mark this moment in history as a "day of infamy," in FDR's immortal words, or will commend us to and through future generations as the great defenders of the right to vote, the most precious of rights because it is preservative of all other rights.

For my part, I stand with Fannie Lou Hamer and Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King, great Americans who gave all and risked all to help America live up to the promise of its creed.

I will vote to reauthorize the Voting Rights Act for the next 25 years.

I am as committed to the preservation of the Voting Rights Act today as I was then and will not rest until the job is done. As I stated during the historic 2006 debate:

I stand today an heir of the Civil Rights Movement, a beneficiary of the Voting Rights Act. I would be breaking faith with those who risked all and gave all to secure for my generation the right to vote if I did not do all I can to strengthen the Voting Rights Act so that it will forever keep open doors that shut out so many for so long.

This is why I intend to work with my colleagues and others as H.R. 3899 works its

way forward and to do all I can to protect the voting rights of all Americans.

DIANA ARANDA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Diana Aranda for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Diana Aranda is a 12th grader at Arvada High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Diana Aranda is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Diana Aranda for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

HONORING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALEXANDRIA TRANSIT COMPANY AND DASH BUS SYSTEM

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the honoring of the 30th anniversary of the Alexandria Transit Company's (ATC) and the initiation of the city's DASH bus system.

Mayor Charles "Chuck" Beatley was the champion and father of DASH, and had a vision over 30 years ago of a bus system that would serve the local transit needs of the community and provide high quality transit service to the residents, workers, and visitors of the City of Alexandria. The ATC Chairman of 22 years, Mr. William "Bill" B. Hurd shared the Mayor's vision and helped to create the organization that became so successful under his leadership; and who fostered a back-to-basics approach of operating safe and reliable service with clean buses and friendly and courteous drivers.

The DASH transit plays a vital role in the city of Alexandria by providing clean, safe, affordable, and reliable transportation service every day to thousands of commuters, city residents, workers, and visitors. The total ridership over the past 30 years has increased by over 360%, with a total annual ridership of over four million, an average of 14,500 passengers riding DASH every weekday and 12,000 passengers riding on the weekends; and expanded service from 582,000 miles in the first full year of service to over 1.6 million miles today.

I am pleased to say that DASH contributes to the quality of life and preserving the livability of Alexandria by mitigating traffic impacts, improving circulation and mobility throughout the city, and providing easier access to local businesses, retail and employment centers, residential developments, and to the regional Metrorail and the Virginia Railway Express commuter rail systems. Over the past four years, DASH has been purchasing environmentally friendly and low-floor hybrid electric buses and trolleys, which have provided great benefits including: reduced air pollutant emissions, reduced fuel consumption, increased transmission and brake life, and reduced engine noise, while improving accessibility and dwell times, and providing a smoother ride overall.

Metro Magazine named DASH one of the "10 Great Transit Systems to Work For," and the Alexandria Commission for Women recognized the DASH General Manager, Sandy Modell, with the Salute to Women Leadership in Business and Career Development Award.

On behalf of the residents of the 8th Congressional District of Virginia, I congratulate the entire DASH bus system, its employees, and the Board of Directors, for their efforts and significant contributions to the Alexandria community to improve mobility and accessibility throughout the city, and for their achievements that have been recognized both nationally and by the Commonwealth of Virginia, in providing the highest quality of transit service to Alexandria residents, workers, and visitors, and in helping to make Alexandria a truly Livable, Green, and Prospering City.

DANIA HERNANDEZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Dania Hernandez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Dania Hernandez is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Dania Hernandez is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Dania Hernandez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RON BARBER

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, due to a meeting with members of the House Armed Services Committee, I missed one recorded vote on March 6. I would like to indicate at this point how I would have voted had I been present for that vote.

On rollcall No. 110, agreeing to the amendment offered by Mr. NADLER of New York to exempt from the bill any construction project for a nuclear facility planned in an area designated as an earthquake fault zone, I would have voted "aye."

EDGAR HERNANDEZ**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Edgar Hernandez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Edgar Hernandez is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Edgar Hernandez is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Edgar Hernandez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 69, I had to depart DC to fly to Georgia in order to attend the visitation of a funeral for a longtime friend. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

COZBI ESCOBAR**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Cozbi Escobar for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge

Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Cozbi Escobar is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Cozbi Escobar is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Cozbi Escobar for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING WHITICAR BOAT WORKS FOR THE 50-YEAR CELEBRATION OF THE "ELEGANTE"

HON. PATRICK MURPHY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. MURPHY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Whiticar Boat Works on the occasion of the 50-year celebration of their 1961 Motor Yacht *Elegante*, built in the same location that this family-run business still resides at in Stuart, Florida. Founded in 1947 by Curt Whiticar, who just celebrated his 103rd birthday last month, this renowned business has expanded but still remains family-run by Curt's son John Whiticar, and nephew Jim Dragseth.

Fifty years ago, Whiticar built the *Elegante* on the very location where they now celebrate the motor yacht's anniversary. Originally called *Aphrodite*, the yacht was built for Fishers Island, New York resident John Hay "Jock" Whitney, a U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom and publisher of the New York Herald Tribune. For many years, Jack Whiticar, a brother of the company's founder, served as the captain of the yacht for Mr. Whitney. The yacht, now known as the *Elegante*, is currently owned by Pat and Bill Anton and remains the sole motor yacht ever produced by Whiticar Boat Works.

I am extremely proud of Whiticar for the great work they have done for so many years on the Treasure Coast. From its founding over 66 years ago to the present day, Whiticar has demonstrated a commitment to excellence in serving the boating community and producing excellent custom sport fishing boats. Passed from fathers to sons, Whiticar is a testament to hard work and dedication, a reminder of the important role family-owned businesses play in strengthening our economy. But not only has Whiticar Boat Works contributed greatly to our local economy and boating industry, but has played an integral role in our community, supporting coastal cleanups and efforts to clean our local waterways, encouraging boating safety, and benefiting local organizations such as the Boys & Girls Club. We are so very lucky to have Whiticar as part of our Martin County community.

Mr. Speaker, I again congratulate Mr. Whiticar and Whiticar Boat Works for the 50-

year celebration of the *Elegante*, and I am honored to recognize the work they have done over these many years. I am proud that such a terrific organization has made its home in my district, and I wish them continued success and many more milestones to celebrate.

CASSIDY OSBORNE**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Cassidy Osborne for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Cassidy Osborne is an 8th grader at Moore Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Cassidy Osborne is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Cassidy Osborne for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTS, PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICE, AND COURT SERVICES AND OFFENDER SUPERVISION AGENCY ACT OF 2014

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce an important bill for the administration of justice in the District of Columbia. The bill would make minor, technical changes to the authorities of the District of Columbia Courts (Courts), the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia (PDS) and the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency for the District of Columbia (CSOSA), placing these entities in the same position as their federal counterparts for more effective management and operation.

This bill would allow the Courts to collect debts owed to it by its employees (e.g., debts from loss or damage to property, improper credit card payments, erroneous payments to employees). The Executive Officer of the Courts would have to provide employees with at least 30 days' written notice regarding the debt collection, and employees would have the right to a hearing conducted by an independent officer. The bill would also give the Courts the authority to purchase uniforms to ensure the safety of its building engineers, facilities maintenance workers and mail personnel. These service employees must regularly access buildings run by the Courts at all

hours. The increase in the number of security incidents in courthouses throughout the country and the location of the Courts in the nation's capital require visual security and uniformity of staff to help ensure that unauthorized persons do not enter secure areas.

The bill would expressly allow PDS to accept and use public grants, voluntary and uncompensated services, such as unpaid law clerks and interns, and private contributions made to advance PDS's work. It would also allow PDS board members to be treated as PDS employees for purposes of liability. Apparently, a drafting oversight in the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 makes PDS's volunteer board of trustees District of Columbia employees for purposes of any action brought against board members. This bill would rectify this oversight.

Finally, the bill would allow CSOSA to develop and implement incentive-based programming to accompany its current sanction policies. Combining both sanctions and incentives has been proven to be more effective in improving compliance with supervision. The bill also would authorize CSOSA to solicit, receive and use gifts for the purpose of advancing its work, and would require the Director to keep detailed records on the use of CSOSA's gift authority. It would also permit the Director to enter into cost-reimbursable agreements with the D.C. government for space or services provided. The D.C. government is a frequent partner of CSOSA due to its location in D.C. and CSOSA's mandate to assist in the reintegration of D.C. code offenders into society. Giving CSOSA the authority to enter into reimbursable agreements with the District is necessary to assist CSOSA in its daily work.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

DAKOTA TURNER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Dakota Turner for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Dakota Turner is a 12th grader at Arvada High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Dakota Turner is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Dakota Turner for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize passage of several pieces of legislation as well as to voice strong opposition to another bill for recorded votes during the week of March 3, 2014. Unfortunately, I was not able to vote for final passage of these bills because I was out on medical leave recovering from much needed hip replacement surgery.

H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, is poorly crafted legislation that will make an already insolvent program worse. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is currently \$24 billion in debt. This legislation will continue the federal governments failed involvement in administering flood insurance. H.R. 3370 undoes important reforms that were just passed in 2012 and were our only hope in making this terrible program sustainable. When it became clear the House did not have the votes to pass this legislation last week, the bill almost tripled in size over the weekend and came back a worse bill than even the Senate version in order to get enough Democrats to support this piece of junk. I strongly oppose this wasteful and inefficient bill.

H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014, recognizes the importance of Israel as our closest ally and allows for new partnerships in relation to cyber-security, economic prosperity and defense. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this important legislation.

H.R. 4118, the Suspending the Individual Mandate Penalty Law Equals Fairness Act, is legislation that seeks to delay Obamacare's individual mandate by one year. This bill would bring parity for the American people as President Obama has twice suspended the employer mandate for businesses. Obamacare is a train wreck. The President should not selectively choose by executive order what parts of this terrible law to enforce. If the President thinks this law is good enough for the American people then it should be good enough for his cronies and everyone else. I will continue to fight to repeal and replace Obamacare.

H.R. 2126, the Energy Efficiency Improvements Act, is a bill that will assist with increasing energy efficiency throughout commercial buildings.

H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act, seeks to reinstate economic sanity to EPA proposed regulations and give Congress a role in the process. This legislation allows the EPA to propose regulations for existing American power plants, but requires Congressional approval before they can take effect. More importantly, it will prohibit the mandate for CSS technology for new power plants until it is viable and has been tested at a few select power plants around the country. This Administration has waged a war on coal and I'm proud to be a cosponsor of this critical bill that pushes back against this overreach by the EPA.

H.R. 2641, the Responsibly and Professionally Invigorating Development Act, is im-

portant legislation that streamlines the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to allow for a more timely completion of construction projects. This bill will create jobs and allow for projects that are critical to our economy to move forward.

H.R. 4152, to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine, would add Ukraine to the list of countries eligible for loan guarantees from the state department. This legislation seeks to undermine Mr. Putin's atrocious behavior and support the Ukraine interim government. This bill does not require any new appropriations, but merely adds Ukraine to a list of nations eligible for State Department monies. I personally condemn the actions of Russia, and I am hopeful this crisis is resolved soon for the Ukrainian people.

Had I been present for these votes, I would have voted in support of these important bills with a yea vote on roll call numbers 95, 97, 98, 106, 113 and 114.

Additionally, I would have opposed the dangerous flood insurance reform bill with a nay vote on roll call number 91.

DANIEL ZHURBA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Daniel Zhurba for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Daniel Zhurba is a 12th grader at Arvada West High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Daniel Zhurba is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Daniel Zhurba for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

COMMENDING THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE'S 'SMART ON CRIME INITIATIVE'

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, last August, at the direction of the Attorney General Eric Holder, the Justice Department launched the "Smart on Crime" initiative, a set of internal policies and reforms to ensure federal laws are enforced more fairly and efficiently. These reforms are consistent with the President's constitutional obligation to take care that the laws are faithfully executed.

One of the smart reforms is a modification in the department's charging policies so that certain low-level, nonviolent drug defendants, with no significant ties to large-scale organizations, gangs, or cartels, will no longer be charged with offenses triggering mandatory minimum sentences. Instead, they will be charged with offenses that allow judges to impose sentences appropriate to their conduct.

The "Smart on Crime" initiative is an exciting development that should be welcomed and supported by everyone because the status quo simply was not making the criminal justice system better, it was creating more problems than it solved. And we are spending more than \$6.5 billion annually to incarcerate inmates, money that could be better used to fund job training, and educational opportunities, invest in infrastructure, support veterans, and promote reentry programs to reduce recidivism.

Thirty years ago, there were less than 30,000 inmates in the federal system; today, there are nearly 216,000, an increase of 800 percent. The United States incarcerates nearly 25 percent of the world's inmates, even though it only has 5 percent of the world's population. No other country imprisons a larger percentage of its population than the United States or spends anywhere near the amount we do to incarcerate our citizens.

The cost of imprisoning so many non-violent offenders is fiscally unsustainable and morally unjustifiable and it will take the combined efforts of policy makers, reform advocates, legal professionals, and private citizens to solve the problem.

There is no shortage of stories chronicling the damage done to the lives of thousands of individuals and their families by the draconian sentencing laws passed by Congress and state legislatures beginning in the late 1980s in the so-called "War on Drugs." Few are as tragic as the story of Clarence Aaron, who grew up in a public housing project in Mobile, Alabama.

In 1992, shortly after his grandfather's death, Clarence made a mistake that would change his life. He agreed to introduce an old high school football teammate to a college classmate whose brother was a drug dealer. Clarence was present during one of the brother's drug transactions and during another attempted transaction for which he received \$1,500.

Clarence was later arrested by federal law enforcement officers and charged with conspiring to process 20 kilograms of powder cocaine and distribute it as crack cocaine. Even though this was his first offense, Clarence was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. Shocking as this sounds, the judge was powerless to adjust the punishment to fit the crime because he was required by law to impose the sentence called for by the then-mandatory federal sentencing guidelines.

It would be comforting to think that the case of Clarence Aaron is an aberration, a rare miscarriage of justice in a system that otherwise works well for all Americans. It would be comforting but it would also be wrong.

The sad fact is that for thousands of inmates in the federal penal system, especially African Americans and Hispanics, the case of Clarence Aaron is not the exception but the

rule. As recently as 2010, more than half of all inmates in the federal system (52%) were incarcerated for drug offenses, a rate more than three times as great (17%) as found in the state penal system.

And the racial and ethnic composition of federal inmates incarcerated for drug offenses is equally troubling story because while whites and African Americans use drugs at similar rates, African Americans are much more likely to be arrested and sentenced for drug offenses. Indeed, African Americans and Hispanics comprise more than 6 in 10 federal inmates incarcerated for drug offenses.

Moreover, according to the U.S. Sentencing Commission African American offenders receive sentences that are 10 percent longer than white offenders for the same crimes and, according to a report by the Sentencing Project, African Americans are 21 percent more likely to receive mandatory-minimum sentences than white defendants.

Many persons concerned about the fair administration of justice were alerted to and alarmed by the danger posed by the imposition of mandatory-minimum sentences for non-violent drug offenses and worked to restore balance and justice to sentencing policy.

In 2005, I introduced the "No More Tullias Act of 2005" (H.R. 2620) in response to the infamous drug task force scandal in Tulia, Texas that occurred six years earlier, during which 15 percent of the town's African American population was arrested, prosecuted and sentenced to decades in prison based on the uncorroborated testimony of a federally funded undercover officer with a record of racial impropriety.

This legislation, which was endorsed by more than 50 of the leading civil rights, religious, and criminal justice reform organization was designed to help put an end to these abuses by enhancing the evidentiary standard required to convict a person for a drug offense, improving the criteria under which states hire drug task force officers, and denying federal money to states that do not have laws preventing convictions for drug offenses based solely on uncorroborated testimony.

Later, in 2007, I introduced the "Drug Sentencing Reform and Cocaine Kingpin Trafficking Act of 2007" (H.R. 4545), bipartisan legislation eliminating the unjust and discriminatory 100 to 1 disparity between crack and powder cocaine sentences in federal law. Companion legislation in the Senate was introduced by then Senator JOSEPH BIDEN of Delaware (S. 1711).

This legislation attracted widespread support because scientific research had by this time clearly refuted the myth upon which the 100 to 1 ratio was based that use of crack cocaine was far more addictive and dangerous than powder cocaine. Instead, the pharmacological effects of crack cocaine were repeatedly shown by scientific and medical experts to be no more harmful than powder cocaine and that the effect on users is the same. Since there was no pharmacological difference between the two drugs, the "Drug Sentencing Reform and Cocaine Kingpin Trafficking Act" removed the distinction in federal law between them for sentencing purposes. Similar bills to remedy the inherent unfairness in federal drug sentencing were introduced by Senators Ed-

ward M. Kennedy and ORRIN HATCH, and JEFF SESSIONS.

In 2010, after years of working to reform our drug sentencing laws, our efforts finally bore fruit when the Congress passed and President Obama signed into law the "Fair Sentencing Act of 2010" (P.L. 111-220), which finally ended the 100:1 ratio that had resulted in unconscionable racial disparities in the average length of sentences for comparable offenses. Indeed, the 100:1 regime was so draconian that it typically resulted in African Americans serving as much time in prison for non-violent drug offenses as whites did for violent offenses. The "Fair Sentencing Act" incorporated all of the key components of my "Drug Sentencing Reform and Cocaine Kingpin Trafficking Act" and is a watershed moment in the fight for fair and equitable drug sentencing policy.

But since the provisions of the "Fair Sentencing Act" are not retroactive there is still much work left to be done. The federal prison system still houses thousands of inmates sentenced under the old, unfair 100-1 ratio regime. We need to keep working for reform until all federal inmates sentenced under the old regime are afforded the opportunity to have their sentences reconsidered under the provisions of current law.

Happily, Clarence Aaron will not be one of those who still must wait. For after serving more than 20 years in federal prison, Clarence Aaron will be freed on April 17 because he was one of eight persons granted executive clemency, or a reduction in sentence, by President Obama on December 19, 2013. The power to grant a reduction in sentence is among the powers vested exclusively to, and committed to the sound discretion of, the President by the Pardon Clause (Art. II, §2, Clause 1) of the U.S. Constitution.

President Obama's grant of executive clemency to Clarence Aaron and seven others was an act of simple justice and a welcome development. So too is the recent announcement by the Department of Justice that it intends to be more aggressive in identifying and recommending to the President additional candidates for executive clemency consideration. This is not amnesty. These inmates have been incarcerated for many years.

Applications for executive clemency that are most likely to receive favorable consideration are those submitted by non-violent, low-level drug offenders who were not leaders of, or had any significant ties to, large-scale organizations, gangs, or cartels. Petitions from first-time offenders and offenders without an extensive criminal history also may be good candidates for favorable consideration.

In light of these recent positive developments, I am optimistic that Congress can build upon the progress made to date by passing the "Federal Prison Bureau Nonviolent Offender Relief Act," (H.R. 62) that I have introduced. This legislation directs the Bureau of Prisons to release prisoners who have served one half or more of their terms of imprisonment if they have (1) attained age 45; (2) never been convicted of a crime of violence; and (3) not engaged in any violation involving violent conduct of institutional disciplinary regulations.

The benefits of such a law are two-fold. First, it will give non-violent offenders who

have paid their debt a second chance to redeem their lives while they are still young enough to contribute to society. Second, it will go a long way toward reducing the \$6.5 billion that the Nation spends annually on prisoner incarceration.

Another area in which reform advocates and legal professionals can make an immediate difference is in identifying and assisting potential candidates for executive clemency and in assembling commutation petitions which effectively present the information needed by the Department of Justice and the President.

It is past time for us to get not only our fiscal house in order but the penal one as well. Increased exercise of the executive clemency power by the President is a step in the right direction.

DISA BATTAGLIA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Disa Battaglia for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Disa Battaglia is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Disa Battaglia is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Disa Battaglia for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 67 I had to depart DC to fly to Georgia in order to attend the visitation of a funeral for a longtime friend. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

RECOGNIZING DANIELLE CLARK AS THE 2015 SANTA ROSA COUNTY, FLORIDA, TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mrs. Danielle Clark as the 2015

Santa Rosa County, Florida, Teacher of the Year. True educators, like Mrs. Clark, are an inspiration not only to their students but to their peers and the surrounding community, and I am proud to honor her great achievements.

Mrs. Clark graduated from the University of West Florida in 2003 earning a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. Her accomplishments in the realm of academia are evidenced by her induction into the Alpha Sigma Lambda Honor Society. She began her teaching career shortly thereafter, as a fourth grade teacher at Holley Navarre Intermediate School in Gulf Breeze, Florida, and for the past ten years, Mrs. Clark has established herself as an integral part of the Santa Rosa County School District.

Unwavering in her commitment to excellence and achievement in the classroom, Mrs. Clark has been instrumental in the implementation of cutting-edge learning techniques such as the use of iPads in the classroom, differentiated math instruction, data analysis, and a book study focusing on reading entitled "Strategies that Work." Additionally, she is a mentor for student teachers and practicum students in Santa Rosa County, while also serving in various leadership roles.

Her extensive involvement in the Santa Rosa County community is another accolade of Mrs. Clark's. From the Caring and Sharing Food Drive to a campaign of Share the Love Santa Rosa, Mrs. Clark's philanthropy knows no bounds. She has inspired her students to do good deeds for one another ranging from giving a greeting card of appreciation to a peer to passing out cookies at Thanksgiving.

Mr. Speaker, teachers who empower their students to not only learn within the classroom, but grace the outside community with their leadership, knowledge, and benevolence, are a blessing to Northwest Florida. It is a privilege to recognize Mrs. Danielle Clark as the 2015 Santa Rosa County, Florida, Teacher of the Year. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Mrs. Clark and thanking her for her service and commitment to the students and families of the Northwest Florida community. We wish her, her husband David; and their two sons, Brandon and Garrett; all the best for continued success.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, March 11, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 12

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the situation in Afghanistan.

SH-216

9:45 a.m.

Committee on Rules and Administration

To hold hearings to examine election administration, focusing on innovation, administrative improvements and cost savings.

SR-301

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development

To hold hearings to examine Superstorm Sandy recovery, focusing on ensuring strong coordination among Federal, state, and local stakeholders.

SD-538

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine how a fair minimum wage will help working families succeed.

SD-430

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine management, focusing on creating a 21st century government.

SD-342

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Cheryl Ann Krause, of New Jersey, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit, Richard Franklin Boulware II, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada, Salvador Mendoza, Jr., to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Washington, Staci Michelle Yandle, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Illinois, and Leon Rodriguez, of Maryland, to be Director of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security.

SD-226

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the Air Force Sergeants Association, American Ex-Prisoners of War, Fleet Reserve Association, Gold Star Wives, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, Non Commissioned Officers Association, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and Wounded Warrior Project.

SD-G50

10:30 a.m.

Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Department of Defense

To hold hearings to examine defense health programs.

SD-192

- Committee on the Budget
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request and revenue proposals for fiscal year 2015.
SD-608
- 2 p.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Department of Homeland Security
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Homeland Security.
SD-138
- Committee on Veterans' Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for Veterans' Programs.
SR-418
- 2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces
To hold hearings to examine military space programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR-222
- Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Subcommittee on Economic Policy
To hold hearings to examine the state of United States retirement security, focusing on the middle class.
SD-538
- Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine national security and foreign policy priorities in the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for International Affairs.
SD-419
- MARCH 13
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine United States Northern Command and United States Southern Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine the Food and Drug Administration's initiatives and priorities, focusing on protecting the public health.
SD-430
- Committee on the Judiciary
Business meeting to consider the nominations of Gregg Jeffrey Costa, of Texas, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, Tanya S. Chutkan, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, M. Hannah Lauck, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia, Leo T. Sorokin, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts, and John Charles Cruden, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice.
SD-226
- 9:55 a.m.
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Business meeting to consider the nomination of L. Reginald Brothers, Jr., of Massachusetts, to be Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Science and Technology.
SD-342
- 10 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
To hold hearings to examine an overview of proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Transportation.
SD-138
- Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Stanley Fischer, of New York, Jerome H. Powell, of Maryland, and Lael Brainard, of the District of Columbia, all to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Gustavo Velasquez Aguilar, of the District of Columbia, to be Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, and J. Mark McWatters, of Texas, to be a Member of the National Credit Union Administration.
SD-538
- Committee on Finance
To hold hearings to examine innovative ideas to strengthen and expand the middle class.
SD-215
- Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of Homeland Security.
SD-342
- Committee on Indian Affairs
To hold an oversight hearing to examine tribal transportation, focusing on pathways to infrastructure and economic development in Indian country.
SD-628
- 10:30 a.m.
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2015 for the Department of State and Foreign Operations.
SH-216
- 11 a.m.
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security
To hold hearings to examine the United States aviation industry and jobs, focusing on keeping American manufacturing competitive.
SR-253
- 11:15 a.m.
Committee on Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine Keystone XL and the National Interest Determination.
SD-419
- 2 p.m.
Select Committee on Intelligence
To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.
SH-219
- 2:30 p.m.
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Subcommittee on Emergency Management, Intergovernmental Relations, and the District of Columbia
To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
SD-342
- Joint Economic Committee
To hold hearings to examine the Economic Report of the President 2014.
LHOB-1100
- MARCH 25
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- MARCH 26
- 10 a.m.
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of The American Legion.
SD-G50
- 2:30 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
To hold hearings to examine the current readiness of United States forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR-232A
- MARCH 27
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Navy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- APRIL 1
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine U.S. European Command and U.S. Transportation Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SD-G50
- 2:15 p.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities
To hold hearings to examine proliferation prevention programs at the Department of Energy and at the Department of Defense in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.
SR-222
- APRIL 2
- 9:30 a.m.
Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support
To hold hearings to examine military construction, environmental, energy, and base closure programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.
SR-232A

APRIL 3

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

APRIL 10

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-106

POSTPONEMENTS

MARCH 12

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 1014, to reduce sports-related concussions in youth, S. 1406, to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, S. 1468, to require the Secretary of Commerce to establish the Network for Manufacturing Innovation and for other purposes, S. 2022, to establish scientific standards and protocols across forensic disciplines, S. 2028, to amend the law relating to sport fish restoration and recreational boating safety, S. 2049, to curb unfair and deceptive practices during assertion of

patents, H.R. 2052, to direct the Secretary of Commerce, in coordination with the heads of other relevant Federal departments and agencies, to conduct an interagency review of and report to Congress on ways to increase the global competitiveness of the United States in attracting foreign direct investment, an original bill entitled, "U.S. Merchant Marine Academy of Visitors Enhancement Act", and the nominations of Kelly R. Welsh, of Illinois, to be General Counsel of the Department of Commerce, Kathryn B. Thomson, of Virginia, to be General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, David J. Arroyo, of New York, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and nominations for promotion in the United States Coast Guard.

SR-253

SENATE—Tuesday, March 11, 2014

The Senate met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Father, the center of our joy, as the Senate ends its 35th all-night session, thank You for the faithful work of the members of each Senator's staff. Remind these staff members that You see their diligence and will reward their patriotism.

Today, give our lawmakers confidence that You are in control of our world. May their trust in Your providence deliver them from hindrances that prevent them from serving You and this land we love. Empower them to be workers who need not be ashamed, striving to please You in all that they do. As the Sun sets on this day, may they be nearer to You than when this day began.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The assistant bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 11, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, a Senator from the State of Maryland, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. CARDIN thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 309, S. 1086.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 309, S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11:30 a.m., with the majority controlling the first hour and the Republicans controlling the next hour.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

I ask unanimous consent that Senator FEINSTEIN be allotted a full hour. I have taken some of her time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. At 11:30 this morning, the Senate will proceed to executive session and there will be four rollcall votes on the motions to invoke cloture on four nominees to be United States district judges.

Following the votes, the Senate will recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for our weekly caucus meetings.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 11:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first hour and the Republicans controlling the second hour.

The Senator from California is recognized.

CIA DETENTION AND INTERROGATION REPORT

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Good morning.

Mr. President, over the past week there have been numerous press articles written about the intelligence committee's oversight review of the detention and interrogation program of the CIA.

Specifically, press attention has focused on the CIA's intrusion and search

of the Senate select committee's computers, as well as the committee's acquisition of a certain internal CIA document known as the Panetta review.

I rise today to set the record straight and to provide a full accounting of the facts and history.

Let me say up front that I come to the Senate floor reluctantly. Since January 15, 2014, when I was informed of the CIA's search of this committee's network, I have been trying to resolve this dispute in a discreet and respectful way. I have not commented in response to media requests for additional information on this matter. However, the increasing amount of inaccurate information circulating now cannot be allowed to stand unanswered.

The origin of this study.

The CIA's detention and interrogation program began operations in 2002, though it was not until September 2006 that members of the intelligence committee, other than the chairman and the vice chairman, were briefed. In fact, we were briefed by then-CIA Director Hayden only hours before President Bush disclosed the program to the public.

A little more than a year later, on December 6, 2007, a New York Times article revealed the troubling fact that the CIA had destroyed videotapes of some of the CIA's first interrogations using so-called enhanced techniques. We learned that this destruction was over the objections of President Bush's White House counsel and the Director of National Intelligence.

After we read about the destruction of the tapes in the newspapers, Director Hayden briefed the Senate intelligence committee. He assured us that this was not destruction of evidence, as detailed records of the interrogations existed on paper—in the form of CIA operational cables describing the detention conditions and the day-to-day CIA interrogations.

The CIA Director stated that these cables were "a more than adequate representation" of what would have been on the destroyed tapes. Director Hayden offered at that time, during Senator JAY ROCKEFELLER's chairmanship of the committee, to allow members or staff to review these sensitive CIA operational cables, given that the videotapes had been destroyed.

Chairman ROCKEFELLER sent two of his committee staffers out to the CIA on nights and weekends to review thousands of these cables, which took many months. By the time the two staffers completed their review into the CIA's early interrogations in early 2009, I had become chairman of the committee and

President Obama had been sworn into office.

The resulting staff report was chilling. The interrogations and the conditions of confinement at the CIA detention sites were far different and far more harsh than the way the CIA had described them to us. As a result of the staff's initial report, I proposed and then Vice Chairman Bond agreed, and the committee overwhelmingly approved, that the committee conduct an expansive and full review of the CIA's detention and interrogation program.

On March 5, 2009, the committee voted 14 to 1 to initiate a comprehensive review of the CIA detention and interrogation program. Immediately, we sent a request for documents to all relevant executive branch agencies, chiefly among them the CIA.

The committee's preference was for the CIA to turn over all responsive documents to the committee's office, as had been done in previous committee investigations.

Director Panetta proposed an alternative arrangement: to provide, literally, millions of pages of operational cables, internal emails, memos, and other documents, pursuant to the committee's document requests at a secure location in northern Virginia. We agreed but insisted on several conditions and protections to ensure the integrity of this congressional investigation.

Per an exchange of letters in 2009, then-Vice Chairman Bond, then-Director Panetta, and I agreed—in an exchange of letters—that the CIA was to provide a “stand-alone computer system” with a “network drive . . . segregated from CIA networks” for the committee that would only be accessed by information technology personnel at the CIA, who would “not be permitted to” “share information from the system with other [CIA] personnel, except as otherwise authorized by the committee.”

It was this computer network, notwithstanding our agreement with Director Panetta, that was searched by the CIA this past January, and once before, which I will later describe.

In addition to demanding that the documents produced for the committee be reviewed at a CIA facility, the CIA also insisted on conducting a multi-layered review of every responsive document before providing the document to the committee. This was to ensure the CIA did not mistakenly provide documents unrelated to the CIA's detention and interrogation program—or provide documents that the President could potentially claim to be covered by executive privilege.

While we viewed this as unnecessary, and raised concerns that it would delay our investigation, the CIA hired a team of outside contractors—who otherwise would not have had access to these sensitive documents—to read, multiple

times, each of the 6.2 million pages of documents produced, before providing them to fully cleared committee staff conducting the committee's oversight work. This proved to be a slow and very expensive process.

The CIA started making documents available electronically to the committee staff at the CIA-leased facility in mid-2009. The number of pages ran quickly to the thousands, the tens of thousands, the hundreds of thousands, and then into the millions. The documents that were provided came without any index, without any organizational structure. It was a true “document dump” that our committee staff had to go through and make sense of.

In order to piece together the story of the CIA's detention and interrogation program, the committee staff did two things that will be important as I go on.

First, they asked the CIA to provide an electronic search tool so they could locate specific relevant documents for their search among the CIA-produced documents—just like you would use a search tool on the Internet to locate information.

Second, when the staff found a document that was particularly important or that might be referenced in our final report, they would often print it or make a copy of the file on their computer so they could easily find it again. There are thousands of such documents in the committee's secure spaces at the CIA facility.

Now, prior removal of documents by the CIA.

In early 2010, the CIA was continuing to provide documents, and the committee staff was gaining familiarity with the information it had already received.

In May of 2010, the committee staff noticed that the documents that had been provided for the committee's review were no longer accessible. Staff approached the CIA personnel at the off-site location, who initially denied the documents had been removed. CIA personnel then blamed information technology personnel, who were almost all contractors, for removing the documents themselves without direction or authority. Then the CIA stated that the removal of the documents was ordered by the White House. When the committee approached the White House, the White House denied giving the CIA any such order.

After a series of meetings, I learned that on two occasions, CIA personnel electronically removed committee access to CIA documents after providing them to the committee. This included roughly 870 documents—or pages of documents—that were removed in February 2010 and, secondly, roughly another 50 that were removed in mid-May 2010. This was done without the knowledge or approval of committee members or staff and in violation of our written agreements.

Further, this type of behavior would not have been possible had the CIA allowed the committee to conduct the review of documents here in the Senate. In short, this was the exact sort of CIA interference in our investigation that we sought to avoid at the outset.

I went to the White House to raise the issue with the then-White House counsel. In May 2010 he recognized the severity of the situation and the grave implications of executive branch personnel interfering with an official congressional investigation. The matter was resolved with a renewed commitment from the White House counsel and the CIA that there would be no further unauthorized access to the committee's network or removal of access to CIA documents already provided to the committee.

On May 17, 2010, the CIA's then-Director of Congressional Affairs apologized on behalf of the CIA for removing the documents. And that, as far as I was concerned, put the incident aside. This event was separate from the documents provided that were part of the internal Panetta review which occurred later, and which I will describe next.

At some point in 2010, committee staff searching the documents that had been made available found draft versions of what is now called the internal Panetta review. We believe these documents were written by CIA personnel to summarize and analyze the materials that had been provided to the committee for its review. The Panetta review documents were no more highly classified than other information we had received for our investigation. In fact, the documents appeared based on the same information already provided to the committee.

What was unique and interesting about the internal documents was not their classification level but, rather, their analysis and acknowledgment of significant CIA wrongdoing. To be clear, the committee staff did not hack into CIA computers to obtain these documents, as has been suggested in the press. The documents were identified using the search tool provided by the CIA to search the documents provided to the committee. We have no way to determine who made the internal Panetta review documents available to the committee.

Further, we do not know whether the documents were provided intentionally by the CIA, unintentionally by the CIA, or intentionally by a whistleblower. In fact, we know that over the years on multiple occasions the staff have asked the CIA about documents made available for our investigation. At times the CIA has simply been unaware that these specific documents were provided to the committee. And while this is alarming, it is also important to note that more than 6.2 million pages of documents have been provided. This is simply a massive amount of

records. As I described earlier, as part of its standard process for reviewing records, the committee staff printed copies of the internal Panetta review and made electronic copies of the committee's computers at the facility. The staff did not rely on these internal Panetta review documents when drafting the final 6,300-page committee study. But it was significant that the internal Panetta review had documented at least some of the very same troubling matters already uncovered by the committee staff, which is not surprising in that they were looking at the same information.

There is a claim in the press and elsewhere that the marks on these documents should have caused the staff to stop reading them and turn them over to the CIA. I reject that claim completely. As with many other documents provided to the committee at the CIA facility, some of the internal Panetta review documents—some—contained markings indicating that they were “deliberative” and/or “privileged.” This was not especially noteworthy to staff. In fact, CIA has provided thousands of internal documents to include CIA legal guidance and talking points prepared for the CIA Director, some of which were marked as being “deliberative” or “privileged.”

Moreover, the CIA has officially provided such documents to the committee here in the Senate. In fact, the CIA's official June 27, 2013 response to the committee study which Director Brennan delivered to me personally is labeled “deliberative process, privileged document.”

We have discussed this with the Senate legal counsel who has confirmed that Congress does not recognize these claims of privilege when it comes to documents provided to Congress for our oversight duties. These were documents provided by the executive branch pursuant to an authorized congressional oversight investigation, so we believe we had every right to review and keep the documents.

There are also claims in the press that the Panetta internal review documents, having been created in 2009 and 2010, were outside the date range of the committee's document request or the terms of the committee study. This, too, is inaccurate. The committee's document requests were not limited in time. In fact, as I have previously announced, the committee study includes significant information on the May 2011 Osama bin Laden operation, which obviously postdated the detention and interrogation program.

At some time after the committee staff identified and reviewed the internal Panetta review documents, access to the vast majority of them was removed by the CIA. We believe this happened in 2010, but we have no way of knowing the specifics, nor do we know why the documents were removed. The

staff was focused on reviewing the tens of thousands of new documents that continue to arrive on a regular basis.

Our work continued until December 2012 when the Intelligence Committee approved a 6,300-page committee study of the CIA's detention and interrogation program and sent the executive report to the executive branch for comment. The CIA provided its response to the study on June 27, 2013.

As CIA Director Brennan has stated, the CIA officially agrees with some of our study, but, as has been reported, the CIA disagrees and disputes important parts of it. And this is important. Some of these important parts the CIA now disputes in our committee study are clearly acknowledged in the CIA's own internal Panetta review. To say the least, this is puzzling. How can the CIA's official response to our study stand factually in conflict with its own internal review?

Now after noting the disparity between the official CIA response to the committee study and the internal Panetta review, the committee staff securely transported a printed portion of the draft internal Panetta review from the committee's secure room at the CIA-leased facility to the secure committee spaces in the Hart Senate office building. And let me be clear about this. I mentioned earlier the exchange of letters that Senator Bond and I had with Director Panetta in 2009 over the handling of information for his review. The letters set out a process whereby the committee would provide specific CIA documents to CIA reviewers before bringing them back to our secure offices here on Capitol Hill.

The CIA review was designed specifically to make sure that committee documents available to all staff and members did not include certain kinds of information, most importantly the true names of nonsupervisory CIA personnel and the names of specific countries in which the CIA operated detention sites. We had agreed upfront that our report didn't need to include this information, and so we agreed to redact it from materials leaving the CIA's facility.

In keeping with the spirit of the agreements, the portion of the internal Panetta review at the Hart building in our safe has been redacted. It does not contain names of nonsupervisory CIA personnel or information identifying detention site locations. In other words, our staff did just what the CIA personnel would have done had they reviewed the documents.

There are several reasons why the draft summary of the Panetta review was brought to our secure spaces at the Hart building. Let me list them: No. 1, the significance of the internal review, given disparities between it and the June 2013 CIA response to the committee's study. The internal Panetta review summary, now at the secure com-

mittee office in Hart, is an especially significant document, as it corroborates critical information in the committee's 6,300-page study that the CIA's official response either objects to, denies, minimizes, or ignores.

Unlike the official response, these Panetta review documents were in agreement with the committee's findings. That is what makes them so significant and important to protect.

When the internal Panetta review documents disappeared from the committee's computer system, this suggested once again that the CIA had removed documents already provided to the committee in violation of CIA agreements and White House assurances that the CIA would cease such activities.

As I have detailed, the CIA has previously withheld and destroyed information about its detention and interrogation program, including its decision in 2005 to destroy interrogation videotapes over the objections of the Bush White House and the Director of National Intelligence. Based on the above, there was a need to preserve and protect the internal Panetta review in the committee's own secure spaces. The relocation of the internal Panetta review was lawful and handled in a manner consistent with its classification. No law prevents the relocation of a document in the committee's possession from a CIA facility to secure committee offices on Capitol Hill. As I mentioned before, the document was handled and transported in a manner consistent with its classification, redacted appropriately, and it remained secure with restricted access in committee spaces.

Now the January 15, 2014, meeting with Director John Brennan. In late 2013, I requested in writing that the CIA provide a final and complete version of the internal Panetta review to the committee, as opposed to the partial document the committee currently possesses.

In December, during an open committee hearing, Senator MARK UDALL echoed this request. In early January 2014, the CIA informed the committee it would not provide the internal Panetta review to the committee citing the deliberative nature of the document.

Shortly thereafter, on January 15, 2014, CIA Director Brennan requested an emergency meeting to inform me and Vice Chairman CHAMBLISS that without prior notification or approval, CIA personnel had conducted a “search”—that was John Brennan's word—of the committee computers at the offsite facility. This search involved not only a search of documents provided by the committee to the CIA but also a search of the stand-alone and walled-off committee network drive containing the committee's own internal work product and communications.

According to Brennan, the computer search was conducted in response to indications that some members of the committee staff might already have had access to the internal Panetta review. The CIA did not ask the committee or its staff if the committee had access to the internal Panetta review or how we obtained it.

Instead, the CIA just went and searched the committee's computers. The CIA has still not asked the committee any questions about how the committee acquired the Panetta review. In place of asking any questions, the CIA's unauthorized search of the committee computers was followed by an allegation—which we have now seen repeated anonymously in the press—that the committee staff had somehow obtained the document through unauthorized or criminal means, perhaps to include hacking into the CIA's computer network.

As I have described, this is not true. The document was made available to the staff at the offsite facility and it was located using a CIA-provided search tool running a query of the information provided to the committee pursuant to its investigation.

Director Brennan stated that the CIA search had determined that the committee staff had copies of the internal Panetta review on the committee staff's shared drive and had accessed them numerous times. He indicated at the meeting that he was going to order further forensic investigation of the committee network to learn more about activities of the committee's oversight staff.

Two days after the meeting, on January 17, I wrote a letter to Director Brennan objecting to any further CIA investigation due to the separation of powers constitutional issues that the search raised. I followed this with a second letter on January 23 to the Director, asking 12 specific questions about the CIA's actions—questions that the CIA has refused to answer.

Some of the questions in my letter related to the full scope of the CIA's search of our computer network. Other questions related to who had authorized and conducted the search and what legal basis the CIA claimed gave it authority to conduct the search. Again, the CIA has not provided answers to any of my questions.

My letter also laid out my concern about the legal and constitutional implications of the CIA's actions. Based on what Director Brennan has informed us, I have grave concerns that the CIA's search may well have violated the separation of powers principles embodied in the U.S. Constitution, including the speech and debate clause. It may have undermined the constitutional framework essential to effective congressional oversight of intelligence activities or any other government function. I have asked for an

apology and a recognition that this CIA search of computers used by its oversight committee was inappropriate. I have received neither. Besides the constitutional implication, the CIA's search may also have violated the Fourth Amendment, the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, as well as Executive Order 12333, which prohibits the CIA from conducting domestic searches or surveillance.

Days after the meeting with Director Brennan, the CIA inspector general David Buckley learned of the CIA search and began an investigation into the CIA's activities. I have been informed that Mr. Buckley has referred the matter to the Department of Justice given the possibility of a criminal violation by CIA personnel.

Let me note, because the CIA has refused to answer the questions in my January 23 letter and the CIA inspector general is ongoing, I have limited information about exactly what the CIA did in conducting its search.

Weeks later, I was also told that after the inspector general referred the CIA's activities to the Department of Justice, the acting counsel general of the CIA filed a crimes report with the Department of Justice concerning the committee staff's actions.

I have not been provided the specifics of these allegations or been told whether the Department has initiated a criminal investigation based on the allegations of the CIA's acting general counsel.

As I mentioned before, our staff involved in this matter have the appropriate clearances, handled this sensitive material according to established procedures and practice to protect classified information, and were provided access to the Panetta review by the CIA itself. As a result there is no legitimate reason to allege to the Justice Department that the Senate staff may have committed a crime. I view the acting counsel general's referral as a potential effort to intimidate this staff, and I am not taking it lightly.

I should note that for most, if not all, of the CIA's detention and interrogation program, the now-acting general counsel was a lawyer in the CIA's Counterterrorism Center—the unit within which the CIA managed and carried out this program. From mid-2004 until the official termination of the detention and interrogation program in January of 2009, he was the unit's chief lawyer. He is mentioned by name more than 1,600 times in our study.

Now this individual is sending a crimes report to the Department of Justice on the actions of congressional staff—the same congressional staff who researched and drafted a report that details how CIA officers, including the acting general counsel himself, provided inaccurate information to the Department of Justice about the program.

Let me say this: All Senators rely on their staff to be their eyes and ears and to carry out our duties. The staff members of the intelligence committee are dedicated professionals who are motivated to do what is best for our Nation. The staff members who have been working on this study and this report have devoted years of their lives to it, wading through the horrible details of a CIA program that never, never, never should have existed.

They have worked long hours and produced a report unprecedented in its comprehensive attention to detail in the history of the Senate. They are now being threatened with legal jeopardy just as the final revisions to the report are being made so parts of it can be declassified and released to the American people.

I felt I needed to come to the floor to correct the public record and to give the American people the facts about what the dedicated committee staff have been working so hard on for the last several years as part of the committee's investigation.

I also want to reiterate to my colleagues my desire to have all updates to the committee report completed this month and approved for declassification. We are not going to stop. I intend to move to have the findings, conclusions, and the executive summary of the report sent to the President for declassification and release to the American people. The White House has indicated publicly—and to me personally—that it supports declassification and release. If the Senate can declassify this report, we will be able to ensure that an un-American, brutal program of detention and interrogation will never again be considered or permitted.

The recent actions I have just laid out make this a defining moment for the oversight of our intelligence committee. How this will be resolved will show whether the intelligence committee can be effective in monitoring and investigating our Nation's intelligence activities or whether our work can be thwarted by those we oversee.

I believe it is critical that the committee and the Senate reaffirm our oversight role and our independence under the Constitution of the United States.

I thank the Presiding Officer for his patience, and I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

MR. LEAHY. Mr. President, while the distinguished Senator from California is on the floor, I will tell her through the Chair that I have had the privilege of serving in this body for 40 years. I have heard thousands of speeches on this floor. I cannot think of any speech by any Member of either party as important as the one the Senator from California just gave.

What she is saying is that if we are going to protect the separation of powers and the concept of congressional oversight, then she has taken the right steps to do that.

The very first vote I cast in this body was for the Church Committee, which examined the excesses of the CIA and other agencies—everything from assassinations to spying on those who were protesting the war in Vietnam. There was a famous George Tames picture, where then-chairman of the Armed Services Committee John Stennis was berating Senator Frank Church for proposing this committee. He said that he, Senator Stennis, could find out what he wanted to find out but didn't really want to know everything.

I was standing behind George Tames when he took that picture in my first caucus. There is pressure on the junior Members—and I was the most junior Member of the Senate at that time—not to vote for the Church Committee.

Senator Mike Mansfield said to me—as did Senator Fritz Mondale and others—that the Senate is bigger than any one Senator. We come and go, but the Senate lasts. If we do not stand up for the protection of the separation of powers and our ability to do oversight—especially when conduct has happened that is, in all likelihood, criminal conduct on the part of a government agency—then what do we stand for? We are supposed to be the conscience of the Nation.

The Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, has spoken to our conscience—to every one of the 100 Senators, men and women, of both parties. She has spoken to our conscience. Now let's stand up for this country. Let's stand up as the Senate should and as the Senator from California has.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMENDING SENATOR FEINSTEIN

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I wish to take a minute to commend Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN. There is not a more dignified, competent Senator in this body than DIANNE FEINSTEIN. She works tireless hours leading the Intelligence Committee. It is a very difficult job, always away from the press, one that is very important to our country.

Her statement outlined I believe one of most important principles we must maintain; that is, separation of powers.

The Founding Fathers were visionary in creating this great government of ours, three separate but equal branches of government: executive, judicial, and legislative.

Her statement today pronounced, in a very firm fashion, that must continue, that separation of powers. The work the committee has done over the last many years dealing with what went on in the prior administration is imperative.

I do not know much of the details as to what they are working on, but I know what they have been working on generally. I admire what she has done and the committee has done, and especially her statement today was one of courage and conviction. We know, those of us who have worked with her over the years, that no one has more courage and conviction than DIANNE FEINSTEIN.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

BATTLING DISABLING DISORDERS

Mr. MCCONNELL. As a survivor of polio as a child, I have always empathized with children battling life-threatening or disabling disorders. I also have a special place in my heart for those who work day in and day out to help kids who are battling childhood diseases. That is especially true when these researchers and physicians are working with children in my home State of Kentucky at places such as the University of Louisville, the University of Kentucky, and Kosair Children's Hospital. That is why I have long been a strong supporter of pediatric medical research.

I cosponsored and helped shepherd the Childhood Cancer Act of 2008 through the Senate. I also voted for the Combating Autism Act of 2006 and, as Republican leader, helped to secure its reauthorization in 2011. These were not partisan initiatives. They were areas where the two parties had generally worked together to advance the common good. Maybe that is why we don't hear that much about them, but I think we all agree there is more to be done.

Late last year the House passed bipartisan legislation, which I strongly support, to shift funding from lower

priority programs to pediatric research, including childhood cancers, autism, Down syndrome, Fragile X, and countless other disorders and diseases that affect our children and don't yet have a cure. These efforts could be paid for by using taxpayer funding of the Republican and Democratic political conventions.

Frankly, it is hard to imagine that there would be any objection to moving these funds to do something we can all agree is a very high priority, and that is pediatric research.

Thanks to the leadership of House Majority Leader ERIC CANTOR, the Gabriella Miller Kids First Research Savings Act, which was named in honor of a young girl from Virginia, passed the House on a wide bipartisan majority with nearly 300 votes. After it arrived in the Senate, I asked my colleagues on the Republican side to pass it and send it to the President for his signature, because I saw the positive impact these funds would have on pediatric research. All Republicans agreed to pass the bill on January 7, and today marks the 63rd day that Senate Democrats have failed to act—although I must say I understand it has now cleared and I think that is excellent. It is about time we passed this bill out of the Senate. I believe we are about to do that. This is the type of bipartisan legislation that should move easily through the Senate. We should be able to pass the measure today and it is my understanding we will be able to do that.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I am pleased today the Senate will pass legislation I support, the Gabriella Miller Kids First Research Act. This bipartisan legislation honors the memory of Gabriella Miller, a young girl from Leesburg, VA who was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor at age 9.

In the face of her own diagnosis, Gabriella worked to help other children with pediatric diseases. She raised money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, spoke at local and national awareness events and authored a special writing in a children's book about cancer.

Gabriella and her family started the Smashing Walnuts Foundation, dedicated to finding a cure for childhood brain cancer. The organization was named for the walnut-sized tumor in her brain. Gabriella passed away last year, but her dedication to raising awareness and funding for pediatric disease research is part of her legacy.

The Gabriella Miller Kids First Research Act will require the director of the National Institutes of Health to allocate \$126 million—\$12.6 million each year for 10 years—of appropriated funds for pediatric research. The money would be allocated into needed research grants for pediatric autism, cancer and other diseases.

The fight for funding pediatric research is far from over but this is a

step in the right direction. As Gabriella said, “You may have a bad day today, but there’s always a bright shining star to look forward to tomorrow.” It is my hope that this legislation will help fund research that leads to future treatments and cures.

I would like to thank Senator MARK WARNER and Senator ORRIN HATCH for supporting this legislation and Congressman CANTOR for championing the bill through the House of Representatives.

This bipartisan effort is about making sure pediatric disease research is a high priority. I am proud we were able to pass legislation that honors Gabriella Miller, her family, and her inspiring work as an advocate for pediatric disease research.

GABRIELLA MILLER KIDS FIRST RESEARCH SAVINGS ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 289, H.R. 2019.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

An act (H.R. 2019) to eliminate taxpayer financing of political party conventions and reprogram savings to provide for a 10-year pediatric research initiative through the Common Fund administered by the National Institutes of Health, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to proceeding to the measure?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I reserve the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we on this side accept this measure, but I do have a few things I want to say before saying there is no objection.

Sequestration cut \$1.6 billion from NIH last year—\$1.6 billion. In the omnibus we passed, we gave them current level funding, but that hole for NIH is still there. NIH has lost huge amounts of money over the past few years in the way that we have struggled to get financing for our country. We in the past have been the guiding light for research on diseases and conditions. We are still there, but we are losing ground. Every country in the world looks at the NIH as a place they would like to be.

This is a small amount of money, but it will be extremely helpful to the NIH.

I would hope my Republican colleagues would join with us in increasing funding for the National Institutes of Health.

Senator DURBIN is going to introduce a bill today that will fund NIH at levels they need to be funded. It has to be paid for, but it is so very important that we not claim victory for the NIH because of this. It is a small victory

and I accept that. I think it is extremely important that we understand the NIH is billions of dollars short of being able to maintain the place they have had in years past.

I repeat, they have been losing ground. The last 5 years have been extremely tough for them. We need to do better for the National Institutes of Health. We have scientists around our country who want to do good work. They want to devote their lives to medical research, but they are not applying for these grants. So many of them are turned down that they are basically—well, maybe I won’t even bother trying.

I am pleased to hear the Republican leader move forward. It is something that is a small step forward to help children who badly need help in the ways of these diseases, which are so difficult for the kids, of course, for the parents and families and certainly our country.

Again, before we leave this issue, I would hope that the appropriations process we are going to go through this year will help us get money. What we have done today is only an authorization, and the public out there should understand it is only an authorization. Until we have appropriations going, there will be nothing going to pediatric research at the National Institutes of Health. We have to carry forward and not have all of these banner headlines that the kids are going to suddenly get help they deserve. That will not happen until we appropriate money for this.

I do not object.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid on the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 2019) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I wish to reiterate what we have done. H.R. 2019, which will now go to the President for signature—the original author is Majority Leader ERIC CANTOR in the House—will eliminate taxpayer financing of political party conventions and reprogram savings to provide for a 10-year pediatric research initiative through the Common Fund administered by the NIH.

GLOBAL WARMING

Mr. President, our friends on the other side who run the Senate spent a lot of time talking last night. I am not sure what any of it accomplished. The reviews seem to be pretty terrible. The AP dubbed the talk-athon a lot of hot air about a lot of hot air and said the speeches were little more than theatrics.

Maybe, as some speculate, Senate Democrats were just trying to please the left-coast billionaire who plans to finance so many of their campaigns.

The talking Senators didn’t really introduce any new legislation. I didn’t hear the talking Senators announce votes on bills already pending before the Senate. They basically just talked and talked and tossed out political attacks at a party that doesn’t even control the Democratic-run Senate.

No wonder the American people have such a low opinion of Congress.

The so-called talk-athon perfectly illustrated something else too—the emptiness of today’s Washington Democratic majority.

I remember a time when Democrats could say with some legitimacy that they were the party for working people. Those days seem to be receding further and further into the rearview mirror. Because whether it is addressing the opportunity gap in the ObamaCare economy or building the Keystone Pipeline or last night’s whatever that was, Washington Democrats keep opting for the empty political stunt over the reasonable, substantive solutions for the middle class.

Here is the thing: We need two serious political parties in this country debating serious ideas. When we see Washington Democrats throwing seriousness out the window like this, it is bad for everybody. If Washington Democrats are actually serious about all of the talk last night, they should follow it with action. The Democrats control the Senate. Bring up, bring up the cap-and-tax bill and let’s have a debate, put it on the agenda, and let’s debate it.

As the AP noted, despite all of the bravado, Democratic leaders made it clear they have no plan to bring a Democratic climate bill to the floor this year. So what was all the talking about?

Our friends on the other side set up the agenda. Call up the bill. The reason they won’t isn’t because of obstructionism or whatever else they might want to claim. It is because too many Members of their own party would vote against it.

Remember, Washington Democrats couldn’t even pass that bill when they controlled the Senate with a filibuster-proof majority back in 2009 or 2010. More importantly, the American people don’t want a national energy tax that would make their utility bills even higher than they already are.

Look. Americans have widely differing opinions about how Washington should be approaching environmental policy. That much is very clear. But one thing we should all be able to agree upon is this: Imposing massive restrictions upon our own economy, devastating the lives of our own mining families, and imposing higher energy bills on our own seniors makes about

zero sense, while huge carbon emitters such as China and India continue to ramp up energy consumption.

Global carbon emissions would hardly be affected anyway, but millions of lives here certainly would be. The American middle class would be deeply and adversely affected.

Left, right, and center, we should all be able to agree this is simply nonsensical. What we should all be working for is an "all of the above" energy strategy that will utilize more of our domestic resources to create jobs and meet America's energy needs. It is a smart and focused approach that accommodates both our economy and our environment, and it is one that Republicans strongly support and Democrats should as well.

Democrats should also work with us to pass the legislation that would allow Congress to actually vote on environmental regulation to ensure Washington's rules strike the right balance between protecting the environment and creating jobs. That legislation is so important to my home State of Kentucky.

Case in point. I spent this past week-end with hundreds of coal miners and their families at a rally in eastern Kentucky, and I heard from them how the administration's war on coal is hurting so many who struggle every day just to get by. It is a war that is taking away hope and destroying jobs.

Let's be honest. The most immediate crisis in the Obama era is the jobs crisis—the jobs crisis. It always has been. If only our friends on the other side were willing to talk a little less and work with us a little more. There is so much we could get done on that front. There is so much we could be doing to create jobs and grow the middle class today. We could build a Keystone Pipeline that would create thousands of American jobs right away. We could increase U.S. exports and expand American jobs with trade legislation. We could reform our tax and regulatory structures to free small businesses so they can grow and hire and enrich their communities. And we could pass the dozens of House-passed jobs bills just sitting on the majority leader's desk—so many that even House Democrats are starting to complain. These are the kinds of things we could get done once Washington Democrats show they are ready to work with us.

Talk is cheap. We know that. And America's middle class is tired of all the talk. They want action. Let's provide it on jobs.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMERICAN ENERGY RENAISSANCE

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, with the very unfortunate events in Ukraine in the headlines and the Ukrainian people close to our hearts, I rise today to speak to a topic that has significance not only for that European crisis and for our own well-being but also bearing a little bit on the longer term subject of climate change, which, of course, was a big discussion here last night.

This morning I am speaking to the American energy renaissance and its broader benefits to us all.

Today American technology and know-how are delivering energy abundance, keeping energy affordable, enabling energy to be cleaner than the next most likely alternative, permitting us to rely on ever more diverse energy sources, and, finally, improving energy security for our people here in this country and around the world.

America's overall production of nearly every type of energy is rising. The efficiency of just about everything—whether it is our vehicles or whether it is our buildings—is increasing. And in comparing our supply with our demand, we are rapidly approaching a self-sufficiency rate of 90 percent. The American energy revolution has generated a variety of welcome benefits. It is creating jobs. It has generated revenues. It has helped reduce both energy prices and price volatility. And as our Nation imports less, the simple fact is there is more energy available for others. That, in turn, is creating the kinds of supply conditions in the world oil market that allow all of us to deal with the bad actors from a position of relative strength.

There was a recent essay in *Foreign Affairs* which argued that energy has been viewed as a strategic liability in the United States since back in the 1970s. Now energy is becoming a strategic asset—a strategic asset—and one that can boost the U.S. economy and grant Washington newfound leverage around the world. It is really hard to disagree with that.

The question then becomes, What will we do with this strategic asset? How will we use our newfound position? There was a survey of responses to Russia's disregard for Ukrainian sovereignty, and of those prudent areas where the United States might go. Energy is clearly among the most major strategic assets we possess. How we use it to bring about geopolitical stability can really define our leadership in the world.

Our first real challenge as a nation is how to keep this American resurgence going. There are two specific areas where we have to make some decisions; that is, whether to grant access to new

lands and new markets, and that will go a long way in determining whether we actually do that.

As I noted, America's total energy production has increased dramatically in recent years, but within those numbers there is a serious dichotomy. Nearly the entire oil and gas production resurgence here in the United States has occurred on State and private lands, not the millions of acres managed by the Federal Government. Despite the discussion of all of the above and no small amount of credit taken by the administration, combined carbon fuel production on Federal lands actually fell from 2008 to 2012. That is a disappointing trend which, in my view, needs to be reversed.

Consider, for example, the opportunity we are missing in my State of Alaska. Thirty years ago, in March 1984, Alaskan crude oil production stood at 1.6 million barrels per day. The Trans-Alaska Pipeline System had been completed just a decade earlier. There were debates over opening new areas to production and even allowing exports of crude oil from the State, but the Federal Government did not act at that time. It did not seize Alaska's best and most obvious opportunities. Production peaked at 2.1 million barrels per day in March 1988. It has been on general decline ever since then. Alaska's production has dipped below the half million barrels per day marker several times since 2012. This is a fall of nearly 75 percent from its high.

Back home we keep talking about a pipeline that is less than half full. The difference is not only geography, it is also policy. Our Federal policies are not working as they should. State policies, combined with private sector inventiveness, powerful as they are, cannot overcome the Federal barriers. In North Dakota, where we see a booming energy market, only 4 percent of that State is federally held. In Texas, it is just 2 percent of Federal lands. In Alaska, 62 percent of our lands are Federal, and most of our untapped resources are within these Federal areas.

Alaska's falling production is a missed opportunity—a missed opportunity—to create jobs, to generate revenues, to stabilize world energy prices, to diversify world energy supplies. And it is not the only place in America where potential growth is going unrealized. We are passing up tremendous opportunities off of our Atlantic coast, in the eastern Gulf of Mexico, and in the Rocky Mountains West. We also have increasingly burdensome regulations that slow the pace of development in the Federal lands that are open.

All of this highlights the need to reexamine our Federal energy policies and really reorient them for a new century.

That leads us to the subject of exports.

Back in January I laid out the case for why we need to renovate the architecture of U.S. energy trade. We have substantial opportunities for exports of coal, petroleum products, natural gas, natural gas liquids, renewable technology, nuclear technology, and even crude oil. I have called for the lifting of the de facto prohibition on crude oil exports as a preemptive measure. I say what we need to do is lift it to prevent future losses of production and jobs when our trade restrictions inevitably collide with this surge of light tight oil and condensate production that comes out. The conversation I hoped to frame last year in January when I submitted my "Energy 20/20" report is really very well underway.

My point is that we must increase the value of energy as an American strategic asset for global security and price stability.

I wish to say a couple of words—maybe more than a couple but a few words—about climate change. Many groups have formed to go on the offensive to "wake Congress up" on the issue of climate. They want to force the Nation to talk about this subject no matter what the issue of the day might be. Unfortunately, they also seem to want to blame Republican Members and somehow also to adopt policies that this body has rejected year after year. So much of the climate change conversation seems to be defined by old ideas that have been rejected. It seems that if one is not supportive of yet another regulatory edifice, either through cap and trade, a carbon tax, or letting the EPA expand its authority without any checks by the people's representatives in Congress, then somehow or other one is against the environment. I reject that.

I want to see greater balance. I know we can achieve it, and I think it is important that, again, we reframe the conversation. I think finding agreement on environmental policy is hard, but it is not impossible. I think what we need to do is kind of pull back and change the conversation we are having.

What I want to remind my colleagues of is that part of the opposition I have had to some of the ideas I have heard from folks is based on what those policies would mean for our affordability of energy. Here I mean not just for Americans who are energy insecure, including residents in my State and in some of our most remote areas who already face exorbitant energy costs, but also the 1.3 billion people across the globe with no reliable access to electricity. Worldwide—worldwide—families are struggling to attain the basic necessities of life. Although many portray climate change as our most pressing moral issue, I would suggest it is but one of many. Energy poverty and energy insecurity are others, and ones that we simply cannot ignore and we should certainly not make worse.

Another part of my opposition to cap and trade or a carbon tax is based on what we have seen in Europe as compared to what has actually happened here in the United States. Without climate legislation, but with the advent of increased domestic production here through shale gas production, our greenhouse gas emissions are now 11 percent below our rate of emissions in 2005. Yet our friends across the Atlantic, who actually did pass cap and trade several years ago, haven't exactly seen the expected results. In the face of weak growth, high unemployment, and high debt, some European nations are now dialing back the extremely expensive subsidies they have offered and, at the same time, many of our NATO allies are clamoring for the cheap and the abundant natural gas that we are now producing on our State and our private lands, and they are importing our abundant and affordable coal.

The unfolding situation in Ukraine also highlights the compelling importance of energy security—something that neither a carbon tax, cap and trade or any climate bill we have seen in the Senate has properly accounted for.

Then there is the approach the President seems to want to take. Earlier this year he threatened to use his regulatory authority to regulate greenhouse gases if Congress failed to act. It is really quite a choice here. He suggests either to pass legislation that we don't like or he will enact regulations that we don't like, either way to be carried out under the Clean Air Act, just not according to the Clean Air Act.

It is difficult to consider really whether this is a serious offer. What we can say, though, is this threat and the rulemakings that will follow is contrary—contrary—to what our forefathers envisioned. Executive authority foregoes the benefits and protections of a legislative process and it curbs the debate that is needed to ensure fair and balanced policy, and particularly in this area where we need to ensure they are fair and balanced policies.

To effectively combat climate change we have to safeguard our economy. Prosperity is key to the resources that we will need to make progress. The Nation has to pursue all forms of energy and stress energy security. We cannot exclusively count on renewables to achieve a low carbon environment. Emission free nuclear energy has to be part of the solution. Technology must play a role in reaching the goals that we set for our country.

Finally, as we discuss the issues and the approaches to these issues, we have to do so with humility, keenly aware of the unintended consequences that could be worse than no action at all. Climate change is a global issue that requires global acknowledgment of the

issue and global action. But through it all we must be deeply concerned and always aware about the impacts of our actions on the individual family.

I spend a lot of time in the rural parts of my State. We don't even call them rural; we use the terminology "bush" because it is just so remote, and these are areas where the only way to access the communities is either by air or by boat, up the river by barge. Supplies are brought in two times a year, if you live on the river system. You look around and you may be able to see the impact of climate change, and that is an awareness the people in this region have, but first and foremost, these people need to be able to live. This is where they have lived for thousands of years.

When you appreciate the costs they are paying for their energy right here and right now, I can't support anything that is going to increase the energy cost for the people in my State who are already paying—some—close to 50 percent of their income for fuel to stay warm in the wintertime.

I have one letter here that I received just last week from a village by the name of Kwigillingok. This is an area out in the coastal villages region. In this letter from the tribal council they state:

The current cost of heating fuel is 6.02 per gallon and gasoline at 6.52.

If I were to suggest to the fine people in Kwigillingok that in order to arrest what we may be seeing with increased emissions around the globe that their energy prices are going to double, that the cost of their heating fuel is going to go from \$6.02 per gallon to \$12, how will these people live?

We have to be aware of the energy insecurity, the energy poverty in far too many places in this country and truly around the world.

So as we discuss these very important issues about energy and how we do right by all, again let us do so with a level of humility and a level of respect for people all throughout our Nation.

I see that my colleague from Texas is here, another fine producing State. In fact, Texas is a State that is really doing quite well right now when it comes to our energy and our energy resources. Through the efforts of States such as Texas, North Dakota, and California we are seeing a true resurgence in our energy production, and I think an opportunity for us as a Nation to again not only provide for our energy security as a Nation but to provide for security and stability on the global scene as well.

With that, I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican whip.

Mr. CORNYN. I thank the Senator from Alaska for her wise words. I wasn't here for all of her remarks, but I was able to hear the percentage of her

State that is owned by the Federal Government, which is extraordinary. I think she cited roughly 2 percent in Texas. That was a deal we cut in 1845, and it turned out it was a pretty good deal because Texas lands are overwhelmingly private lands rather than government lands.

I think part of the point she was making as well is that while we have seen a resurgence of activity on private land, particularly when it comes to the shale gas, and on oil plays on public lands we haven't seen that same sort of productivity. If the Federal Government would simply take the same approach that the private sector is taking when it comes to developing these God-given natural resources, it could really boost our economy further and lower unemployment.

So I thank my colleague for her wise words this morning.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak as in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I want to talk about a number of subjects starting, of course, with the fact that millions of Americans have lost their health insurances because of the unintended consequences of the Affordable Care Act, or ObamaCare.

We also know that in addition to losing the coverage they had, which they were told they could keep, many have now been forced to pay higher premiums. The sticker shock from that has been something we have been reading a lot about. But whether there is sticker shock because of the higher premiums, many people have been finding that their deductibles are huge, making them effectively self-insured up to \$5,000 for their health care costs, definitely not something they were promised as a result of ObamaCare.

We also know that roughly 10 million people, about 10½ million people, remain unemployed in America and that 3.8 million of them have been unemployed for more than 6 months. Since the recession has ended—and, of course, a recession is, technically speaking, two consecutive quarters of negative growth—I think, if asked, most Americans today feel as though we are still in a recession because of what is happening to them personally. We know that since the recession ended, median household income—one measure of economic health in the country—has gone down by \$2,500. So at the same time people are experiencing higher costs for health care, for groceries, for gasoline, and other necessities of life, they are seeing that their median household income has declined by \$2,500—a double whammy.

According to a Joint Economic Committee analysis, if the Obama eco-

nomics recovery had been as strong as an average post-1960 recovery, we would currently have millions more private sector jobs.

I had the pleasure this last weekend of hearing a fascinating debate with Larry Summers, economic adviser and former president of Harvard University—a brilliant economist—and another brilliant economist, Senator Phil Gramm, who taught at Texas A&M. Senator Gramm was making the point that if we had had a typical recovery after a recession, it would have been a V-shaped recovery. We did not get that. The economy continues to grow slowly, unusually slowly, and they were both exploring the reasons for that. A lot has to do with uncertainty about the role of the Federal Government when it comes to taxes, when it comes to regulation, and when it comes to our escalating national debt—now over \$17 trillion—and what that might mean in the future.

But add all this up and Americans are continuing to feel increasingly pessimistic about the state of our economy, the state of their personal health care relationships with their doctors and hospitals, and the future of the country. That is something all of us ought to be profoundly concerned about.

Yet rather than promote real health care reform that actually deals with the unaffordability of health coverage or something that will get the economy growing again, my friends across the aisle, many of them, spent last night—all night—talking about climate change. That is right, climate change.

So the message to millions of people out of work or who have lost their health coverage or to people who are living from paycheck to paycheck because median household income has actually declined is that what America really needs right now is more taxes and more regulation and the big government that goes along with it.

It is easy to see why many people think Washington is just out of touch with the concerns of average hard-working American families, and last night was an example. It is hard to square the message with the genuine concern for the middle class and middle-class prosperity. I mean, if we are really concerned about hardworking American families working from paycheck to paycheck just to make ends meet, I doubt we would have an all-night debate on climate change.

If my friends across the aisle really did believe that job creation should be our top priority, they wouldn't have wasted precious time with last night's political stunt. For that matter, they wouldn't be opposing the Keystone XL Pipeline, which would single-handedly create thousands of well-paying American jobs.

I realize that many people have good-faith concerns about the long-term im-

plications of rising greenhouse gas emissions. Over the next three decades worldwide emissions are indeed projected to surge. But that has almost nothing to do with the United States and almost everything to do with developing countries such as China. As a matter of fact, the ranking member of the energy committee, the Senator from Alaska, and certainly the Senator from Wyoming know this very well. One of the reasons why carbon emissions in the United States are going down is because of the natural gas renaissance we have seen—because of unconventional shale gas exploration in places such as Texas and all around the country. So we are finding ways to reduce carbon emissions for those who are worried about those, as a result of taking advantage of the resources we have here in the United States, together with the innovative technology that is used to develop it.

Those of us who oppose bigger, more intrusive government in the form of cap and trade legislation or higher taxes such as carbon taxes or other job-killing greenhouse gas regulations are not denialists. I prefer to say we are realists.

We understand America's contributions to global emissions over the coming decades will be relatively minuscule. We understand the economic costs of President Obama's regulations through the Environmental Protection Agency would vastly outweigh the environmental benefit.

So why do they want to put a big wet blanket on the economy and on the aspirations and dreams of hard-working families in order to pursue policies in which the negative will vastly outweigh the positive benefit to American families?

In fact, the Obama EPA itself has admitted its proposed greenhouse gas rule would not have a notable impact on U.S. carbon dioxide emissions until the year 2022.

I would also note, despite having Members of his party talk about climate change all night—which is all it was, talk—there is no legislation they are offering, nor will the majority leader, who controls the agenda of the Senate, bring legislation to the floor to actually vote on it. So it is just talk or, perhaps I can say, it was just a lot of hot air.

Our colleagues across the aisle—including the majority leader who controls the agenda of the floor in the Senate—seem to be content letting the President use his pen and phone, skirting the legislative process, not engaging with Congress to try to do things which actually are the priorities of the American people but instead to rely on unelected EPA bureaucrats. I could be surprised, but I would be surprised to learn if the consensus in America wouldn't be that we should be focusing on policies which create jobs, rather

than destroy jobs and punish families in return for meager or nonexistent benefits.

Speaking of destroying jobs and punishing families, the Congressional Budget Office—which is the official budgetary scorekeeper for Congress—recently estimated the President's proposal to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour would actually destroy up to 1 million jobs.

I believe sometimes here in Washington people think those who actually create jobs can absorb regulations, taxes, and other economic burdens, together with the uncertainty many of those policies cause, and it will have no impact on their ability to continue to create jobs, grow jobs or to grow the economy. But the Congressional Budget Office has stated what should perhaps be intuitive, which is, if you raise the cost of doing business on businesses, they are going to have to find someplace to cut.

What that means is they are going to have to cut more people from their jobs. They estimated up to 1 million people would lose their job if we raised the minimum wage 40 percent to \$10.10 an hour.

Remember, in the President's State of the Union Message he said a minimum wage hike like that would help low-income families. It is certainly a mystery to me how it would help a low-income family who is relying on a wage earner to provide income when they end up losing their job as a result of the policy.

So the President's definition of "help" is unique, to say the least, because any policy which destroys up to 1 million jobs would be an absolute disaster for low-income families.

The President also made his pitch for a higher minimum wage in the context of his concern about income inequality. He claims to be greatly concerned about income inequality. Yet his policies actually threaten to make it worse.

But don't take my word for it. A news report from a major labor union argues that in its current form, the President's health care law will "heighten the inequality that the administration seeks to produce."

These are not political adversaries of our President and his party. These are supporters of the Affordable Care Act—ObamaCare—who have now said in its current form, unless changed, the Affordable Care Act—or ObamaCare—will heighten the inequality the administration seeks to reduce.

The report also notes that ObamaCare "threatens the middle class with higher premiums, loss of hours, and a shift from part-time work and less comprehensive coverage."

I think those would be very troubling words to the President and his allies who passed the Affordable Care Act—or ObamaCare—but so far they have fallen on deaf ears.

Again, this report just in terms of its credibility was not issued by some Republican or conservative organization which was opposed to ObamaCare from the beginning. It was issued by a labor union which supported ObamaCare which has now found that what was promised has not actually been delivered in terms of its implication.

So what union members and their families are learning the hard way is the promise of ObamaCare is very different from the reality. We were promised ObamaCare would actually expand coverage, it would reduce costs, it would help our economy, all without disrupting existing health care arrangements.

In reality, the law has forced millions to lose their coverage and forced millions to pay higher premiums or higher deductibles, effectively being self-insured. Meanwhile, the Congressional Budget Office projects it will effectively shrink America's labor force by 2.5 million full-time workers over the next decade.

Remarkably, the administration now wants us to believe it is actually a good thing so many people are reducing their work hours in order to keep their government-mandated health care. For example, chief White House economist Jason Furman has said working less to keep ObamaCare benefits "might be a better choice and a better option than what they had before."

Of course, they don't have a choice to keep what they had before because they have been forced into ObamaCare. If you don't buy the government-mandated insurance, then you are going to be fined by your friendly Federal Government.

But think about it: The White House chief economist is celebrating the possibility of a dramatic decline in American work hours. I would remind Mr. Furman that America's labor force participation is already at historic lows. It is as low as it has been for 30 years. In other words, the percentage of people looking for work in America is at a 30-year low already, and Mr. Furman is celebrating the further depressing impact of ObamaCare on work in America.

All else being equal, a reduction in work hours means a reduction in economic growth. It certainly means a reduction in income for the people working. We know a further reduction of economic growth will make it harder to create new jobs, improve living standards, and achieve broad-based prosperity—something I know we all hope for in America.

This is a dangerous cycle, and it is definitely not something we should be celebrating. It is something we should be fixing.

A truly compassionate agenda—not one that focuses on things which are largely irrelevant to the lives of Americans working families, but a truly

compassionate agenda would seek to improve opportunity rather than encourage dependency. A truly compassionate agenda would place a much higher value on the dignity and self-reliance of American workers by making sure they have jobs.

For that matter, a truly compassionate agenda would aim to dismantle ObamaCare and replace it with patient-centered alternatives which encourage work and encourage job creation.

The type of agenda I have described is pretty much the exact opposite of what we have seen over the last 5 years, and the results speak for themselves. There is absolutely no reason we have to accept the status quo. With the right mix of economic policies, America can turn this ship around and restore the strong growth rates and robust job creation we enjoyed in the 1980s and 1990s. We will on this side of the aisle continue to promote such policies, and we look forward to working with our colleagues across the aisle when they finally come around to the realization the path we are heading on now is not one the American people are happy with or that they have to settle for.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

THE THREE ES

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I congratulate my colleague from Texas for his comments, and I agree with his concerns. These are the same concerns I hear at home in Wyoming.

I was in Buffalo, WY, at a health fair this past weekend. Hundreds of people from the community turned out. They have concerns about the health care law. They have concerns about their take-home pay. They have concerns about their jobs. And Wyoming is an energy State.

I am the only Republican Senator who is both on the energy committee as well as the Environment & Public Works Committee, and so I think about the three Es: energy security, economic growth, and environmental stewardship. We need energy security for our country, economic growth for our citizens, as well as to protect the environment and be good stewards of the land. I believe in Wyoming we continue to do all of those.

The American people have made it very clear that what they want from Washington is a focus on jobs and the economy. This is not what I have heard, though, over the last 24 hours from the Democrats on the other side of the aisle. The American people I talk to want us to make it easier for them to get back to work, to provide for their families, to get the kids back to school so they can go off to work. People's jobs are linked to their identity, to their dignity, to their self-

worth. I think more of these regulations make it harder for people to have a job, to keep a job, and to provide for their families.

So we had an all-night talkathon, and what did it accomplish? To me, the only accomplishment was a waste of time and more hot air. It seemed to be a dog-and-pony show to satisfy their big liberal donors.

The majority leader spent part of the weekend in California with a big liberal donor who has promised \$100 million to the Democrats on the issue they decided to hold an entire night talkathon on. They had five or six Democratic Senators at this man's home in California basically saying: We want your money. We want your money. This is what the Democrats did.

So they put on an entire dog-and-pony show, showing that Democrats and their leadership—including the majority leader—is beholden to that liberal money that wants to call the tune for this Senate.

It is astonishing this would happen in the United States; that the majority leader of the Senate would take a number of Democratic Senators to California specifically to go to the home of somebody who says: I want to give \$100 million to promote what he said was his agenda—his agenda—and make the majority leader dance to that tune. This is what we saw for the last 24 hours.

The majority leader could call a vote tomorrow—he could call it today—on a national energy tax. I think everybody on this side of the aisle is ready and prepared to vote on that. But for most of these folks, they wanted to just talk all night. They don't actually want to do anything. They just want to talk.

The Democrats control the agenda. They control the majority. They have changed the rules in terms of approving nominees. They have it all lined up.

It is astonishing that the most vulnerable Democrats who are running for office this year didn't show their faces last night. They wanted nothing at all to do with this.

So we hear about regulations which are going to crush jobs and make it harder for people to go to work. As a doctor having taken care of people who are out of work for a long time—and I am sure the Presiding Officer knows people like this as well—I know that being out of work impacts their identity, the way they view themselves, and their human dignity. In fact, it affects their health as well.

As a doctor, I have put together an entire report: "Red Tape Making Americans Sick," a report on the health impacts of high unemployment. Studies show EPA rules—the rules, regulations, and redtape—cost Americans not just their jobs but also their health.

For people who are chronically unemployed, we know there are higher

rates of cancer, higher rates of suicide, higher rates of heart disease, higher rates of stroke, and higher rates of abuse—whether it is substance abuse, spousal abuse, child abuse. All of these add to hospital visits, premature deaths, all in communities where there is high joblessness. It is because of regulations which continue to come out of the EPA which are burdensome, which are expensive, which are time consuming. The costs are real, the benefits are theoretical, but yet this is what the Democrats on the other side of the aisle were talking about all night last night.

So I would say, instead of spending 24 hours on extreme regulations which result in a national energy tax, Democrats ought to be listening to the American people and focus on jobs and on the economy.

It is too bad Democrats would rather talk about a national energy tax for 24 hours than vote on the President's budget, a budget which never balances. Then vote on the Keystone XL Pipeline, a pipeline proposal which would bring, according to the State Department, 42,000 more individuals in our country into the workforce or even discuss and vote on other job proposals.

They don't want to talk about job creation ideas. I will continue to do so in terms of the Keystone Pipeline and in terms of exporting liquefied natural gas. We have an abundance in the United States which would be helpful to our economy, helpful to jobs, as well as helpful in our foreign policy as we work toward not just energy security but global security as well.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senator from South Dakota.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I want to compliment my colleagues from Wyoming and Texas for talking about the issues that are important to the American people. People in this country care about jobs and the economy. I think one of the reasons there were not more Democratic Senators down here last night is because a lot of them, as some pointed out, hit the snooze button, didn't want to come down here and talk about an issue which they realize ranked very low in people's assessment of what is really important in their daily lives. I think that is probably why most Americans, by and large, tuned out the all-night session we had on the floor.

We did have a number of Senate Democrats who came down and engaged in what they referred to as a talkathon on climate change. I don't know who coined the term "talkathon" to describe the event, but it is a perfect term. It really fits, since the event was all talk and no action.

In fact, writing ahead of the talkathon, USA Today noted, and I quote:

The Democratic effort is cause for some confusion, because these Senators are calling for action in a chamber they control, but without any specific legislation to offer up for a vote or any timetable for action this year.

Well, that is exactly right. Last night's filibuster was not designed to advance any legislation, nor was it a protest about the lack of legislation. After all, the Democrats control the Chamber and they can bring up a bill any time they want. Although last night's event may have had all the trappings of significant Senate action, it was nothing but talk.

If the Democrats really think government action on climate change is so important, one would assume last night they would have used it to debate a bill or try to persuade their leadership to bring one up on the floor. But they didn't, because it is an election year and Democrats are already deeply worried about their election prospects, and they know very well the American people do not like the climate change legislation they have offered up. The climate change bills Democrats have proposed almost invariably involve tax hikes that would drive the cost of energy sky high for ordinary families and kill jobs, all for extremely dubious environmental gains. The last time Congress debated the cap-and-trade bill was in 2009. That bill was estimated to destroy 2.5 million jobs. Perhaps that is why several Democrats who represent energy-producing States didn't make it to last night's talkathon. They must be tired of defending more job-destroying policies.

For families who are already struggling with reduced income and high health care costs that have characterized the Obama economy for the past 5 years, increased energy prices and more job losses are the last thing they want to face. Democrats know that climate change legislation is a nonstarter in an election year, but they still have their radical environmental base to worry about, the same base that is pushing the President not to approve the Keystone Pipeline despite five separate environmental reviews that found its impact on the environment would be negligible.

Last night's talkathon, designed for maximum media exposure, allowed Democrats to assure their donors that they are focused on climate change without actually having to do anything, anything that would be difficult or politically damaging, such as going on the record and actually voting for a specific bill.

Last month Gallup released a poll on America's top concerns. Climate change didn't even make the top 10. Jobs and the economy, on the other hand, came in at the very top, not surprisingly. The American people have a

very good assessment of what is important. Gallup polling shows that those two issues have been among Americans' top five concerns for most of the past 6 years. Despite this, however, Democrats have shown very little inclination to take real action on the economy. In fact, most of their policies are making our economic situation worse.

The policy that is doing the most economic damage is ObamaCare. Any way you look at it, ObamaCare means bad economic news for just about everybody. Millions of Americans have had the plans they like canceled, and far too many of them have found their ObamaCare alternative will cost more and offer them less.

Families around the country have enrolled in exchange plans that have left them wondering how they are going to be able to afford the plan's \$10,000 and \$12,000 deductibles. Low-income seniors enrolled in Medicare Advantage are wondering how they will afford the premium hikes and the benefit reductions that will soon hit them, thanks to ObamaCare's Medicare cuts. Eleven million small business workers are not sure how a bill that promised more affordable health care is actually raising—raising—their health care costs.

Then there are the businesses that are changing their plans to hire new workers because ObamaCare's mandates and fees mean they cannot afford to expand. The workers who are having their hours cut because ObamaCare means their employer cannot afford to keep them on as full-time workers. The Congressional Budget Office recently estimated ObamaCare will mean 2.5 million fewer full-time workers and approximately \$1 trillion in lower wages. That is a lot of lost economic opportunity.

But you do not have to take my word for it, because Republicans are not the only people who are worried about ObamaCare's effects on the economy and on the middle class. A lot of the President's allies are worried too. Democrats who are running in red States are running scared and are starting to talk about the need to amend the law.

And then there are the unions. Unions are, of course, historically Democratic supporters and they were instrumental in getting ObamaCare passed in the first place and helping to get the President reelected. Now unions are rethinking their support. At the end of last week UNITE HERE, which is a huge union with over one-quarter of a million members from all over the hospitality industry, published a white paper on ObamaCare which they called "The Irony of ObamaCare: Making Inequality Worse."

What does the document say? Well, it says what Republicans have been saying all along, that ObamaCare is going to make things much worse for the

middle class. I want to quote from the first page:

Ironically, the administration's own signature healthcare victory poses one of the most immediate challenges to redressing inequality. . . . without smart fixes, the Affordable Care Act threatens the middle class with higher premiums, loss of hours, and a shift to part-time work and less comprehensive coverage.

That is from a white paper put out by one of the Nation's major unions. In 12 pages that document demolishes the administration's claim that the bill will help the middle class. It takes aim at the administration's ridiculous assertion that the law will not discourage business expansion or result in employers cutting hours. Worker hours, the union points out, have already been cut at nearly a third of U.S. franchise businesses.

Other businesses have chosen to replace full-time workers with part time workers, and still others have announced their intention of staying below 50 employees to avoid being hit by the worst of the law's mandates. The union also points out the likelihood of employers dumping employee health plans thanks to the law's requirements, leaving employees to obtain health care in the exchanges.

Here is what the union has to say about dropped employees, and again I quote:

For dropped employees, being pushed onto the exchanges will mean a major loss of income for health benefits. Families moving to the exchanges may lose between 4 percent and 25 percent of income to maintain equivalent benefits.

Again, that is from the union white paper on ObamaCare. Major loss of income or health benefits, families within the exchanges may lose between 4 and 25 percent of income—between 4 percent and 25 percent of income.

We are not talking about rich families here. We are talking about families who are making \$40,000 or \$50,000 or \$60,000 a year. Even a 4-percent income loss would make a huge dent in these families' budgets. A 25-percent income loss for a family making that amount of money would be devastating.

Finally, the union concludes by pointing out a study in the Brookings Institution—again, not exactly a bastion of conservatism—that shows that those making below \$25,000 will get some benefit of the Affordable Care Act. But those right above them, families with incomes of \$20,000 to \$38,000, will lose income. "Only in Washington," the report concludes, "could asking the bottom of the middle class to finance health care for the poorest families be seen as reducing inequality."

Again, that is a quote from that report by UNITE HERE labor union.

I want to remind everyone this is not a Republican document. It is a document produced by some of President Obama's biggest supporters. In fact,

UNITE HERE was actually the first union to endorse then-Senator Obama in 2008. So this isn't an organization seeking to damage the President politically or to provide Republicans with talking points. But like so many Americans around the country, UNITE HERE has been forced to an inescapable conclusion, and that conclusion is that ObamaCare just isn't working. It is doing the opposite of what it was intended to do. It is making health care more expensive for families. It is discouraging employees from hiring. It is reducing Americans' health care choices.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent for an additional minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. It is reducing Americans' health care choices, and it is encouraging employers to cut hours and benefits. Our health care system may have needed reform, but this was not the way to do it. Even the President's strongest supporters are having buyers' remorse, and a lot of Americans are hurting right now thanks to the President's health care law.

As we hear from more Americans, South Dakotans, people all across this country, who are struggling under the law, I hope the Democrats here who I believe privately are rethinking their vote for this law will have the courage to publicly join us in calling for its repeal.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

ENERGY

Mr. HOEVEN. Thank you, Madam President.

Last night the majority party had an all-night session talking about energy, but there is no specific proposal coming forward. We are here ready to vote to do our job representing the American people and actually craft a plan, a comprehensive energy plan for this country that works.

Since we didn't hear one last night, I thought I would come today and propose one. I would like to propose a States-first all-of-the-above energy plan. This isn't new. This is a plan I proposed along with others, my good colleague from South Dakota, my good colleague from Wyoming who was just here, and others. This is a comprehensive approach, a bipartisan approach, and actually specific legislation, a number of bills that will create a comprehensive plan to not only produce more energy for our country but to create more jobs, to grow our economy, to help expand our tax base, so we can reduce the deficit and the debt without raising taxes and, maybe most importantly of all, actually providing national security so we do not have to

import oil from the Middle East—a specific action plan with legislation drafted and introduced that, instead of talking about it here on the Senate floor, let's do it. Let's start voting. Let's pass it. Let's put solutions in place for the American people.

Now this is not one big monolithic one-size-fits-all Federal plan, Federal approach. Instead, it is a series of bills sponsored, as I say, by Members on both sides of the aisle that would truly create a States-first, all-of-the-above energy approach. It includes measures such as my good colleague from South Dakota just said. Let's approve the Keystone Pipeline. The administration has been working on it for 5 years. Maybe they are going to work on it for another 5 years. I don't know. Well, let's approve it here in Congress. Let's act.

Another bill, the Dominion Energy and Jobs Act, is a bill I introduced that has already been passed by the House. It is a series of 13 different pieces of legislation that would help us produce more energy in this country both onshore and off.

The Empower States Act is another piece of legislation I put forward that would address hydraulic fracturing which is unleashing new areas of energy production in our country, or the coal ash recycling bill, that not only would help us recycle coal ash, but provide better standards to make sure that we are storing ash that is recycled in environmentally sound ways, addressing a problem that EPA is working on, and has to come up with a solution by the end of the year. We work with the EPA to come up with a commonsense solution that also encourages recycling coal ash to use on highways and buildings and other construction, and for other construction purposes. There is the Domestic Fuels Act, which is another piece of legislation that not only helps us market traditional fuels at the pump, such as traditional oil and gas products, but also renewable fuels, such as biofuels, biodiesel, ethanol, hydrogen, other types of energy that we are working to develop—renewable fuels. Let's make it easier to give consumers choice at the pump and more competition that will help reduce their costs.

This is the same kind of comprehensive plan that we developed in North Dakota when I was Governor. I was a Governor there for 10 years. We developed a plan that we called EmPower North Dakota, and of course the whole idea was to unleash the energy resources of our State—all of our resources. I am not just talking about oil and gas—traditional sources of energy—but all traditional and renewable energy that have truly made our State an energy powerhouse for the country. We did it at the State level, and we can do it at the national level.

So how does it work? Quite simply, it empowers States to build on their rel-

ative strengths. It does so by giving them the primary role, or the primary responsibility, in terms of regulating energy development and growth in their State. That may be oil, gas, nuclear, biofuels, hydro, wind, solar, biomass or whatever else may be an area of strength or expertise for their respective State.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. HOEVEN. I ask the Chair for 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOEVEN. I thank the Presiding Officer.

If you think about it, it builds on the very foundation and very concept of how our country works. The United States is the laboratory of democracy. The States are the laboratories of democracy. Let's make them the laboratories of energy development in this country. Why not? Let's make them the laboratories of energy development in this country, whether it is Wisconsin, Michigan, North Dakota, South Dakota or Wyoming. You name it. Different places have different strengths.

When it comes to producing energy, let's empower them to produce the type of energy that works best in their respective State. It is bipartisan, it is inclusive, and it includes not only the Federal Government, but it includes the Federal Government in a way where they are working with the States and building on the very strength of our country.

I know my time is limited. I will be back later today to talk about it some more.

I want to leave with this point: It is not just about energy. It is about better environmental stewardship because we unleash the very investment that drives and deploys the new technology that produces more energy and does so with a better environmental stewardship.

It is about a growing economy that creates revenues without raising taxes to help address the deficit and debt. It creates good-paying jobs that we need in this country.

It is also about national security. Think about what is going on in Europe right now. Is the European Union going to join with us and impose sanctions on Russia? Are they? Do they have the will or are they concerned that 30 percent of all of the natural gas that goes to Europe comes from Russia and half of it goes through the Ukraine?

Are they so concerned about their energy future that they are not willing to stand with us to do the things we need to do to make sure that an aggressor like Russia doesn't invade another sovereign country?

So energy is very much about national security, and we can be energy secure in this country in very short order with the right approach.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Ms. STABENOW. There are currently 89 judicial vacancies in Federal courts across the country, including four on the eastern court for the Eastern District of Michigan. Two of these are considered emergency vacancies because they have been vacant for over 19 months. With so many vacancies the case backlog isn't getting any smaller. It is a real problem.

The good news is that today we have the opportunity to vote to move forward on four excellent nominees to fill vacancies in the courts.

Our Michigan nominees are highly qualified and represent some of the best legal minds we have. Two of the nominees are sitting judges, one nominee is a U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District of Michigan, and the other nominee is currently in private practice at one of Michigan's top law firms.

Throughout the confirmation process, they have all proven to be thoughtful and prudent stewards of the law. So not only are they excellent nominees, but they are ready to go to work.

The first nominee is Judith Levy. She has served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Eastern District of Michigan since 2000. She was a cum laude graduate at the University of Michigan Law School. She has received numerous awards for her legal work.

Ms. Levy clerked for the Honorable Bernard Friedman, the former chief judge on the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. He was, in fact, a Reagan appointee.

She is nominated to fill a judicial emergency vacancy created more than 18 months ago.

Ms. Levy is an excellent nominee. The people of Michigan deserve to have her on the bench, and she will serve with great distinction for all of us.

Second, we have Judge Laurie Michelson. Judge Michelson has served as a U.S. magistrate judge in the Eastern District of Michigan since 2011.

Prior to her appointment to the bench, she spent nearly 18 years in private practice where she specialized in media law, intellectual property, and white collar criminal defense.

She earned her law degree from Northwestern University in 1992. She served as a law clerk for Judge Cornelia Kennedy on the U.S. court of appeals. Judge Kennedy, as you may recall, was selected by President Reagan for his short list of Supreme Court candidates to replace Justice Potter Stewart.

Judge Michelson is an excellent nominee, and again the people of Michigan deserve to have her on the bench, and she will serve with distinction.

Next we have Judge Linda Parker. Judge Linda Parker has served as a judge on the Third Judicial Circuit Court of Michigan since 2009. Judge Parker has served in State and for the Federal Government for over a decade. Before that, she worked in private practice as well.

She earned her law degree from George Washington University and began her career as a law clerk in the District of Columbia Superior Court.

She has been recognized for her commitment to the community through pro bono legal work and as a board member of an organization that provides assistance to underserved academically gifted children.

Judge Parker is also an excellent nominee, and the people of Michigan look forward to her service.

Next is Matthew Leitman. Mr. Leitman is a principal at the Law Firm of Miller Canfield in Troy, MI, where he handles complex commercial litigation, criminal defense, and appellate matters before both State and Federal courts.

Prior to joining Miller Canfield in 2004, he spent 10 years in private practice.

He earned his law degree magna cum laude in 1993 from Harvard Law School and began his career as a clerk to Justice Charles Levin on the Michigan Supreme Court.

Mr. Leitman's nomination will also fill a judicial emergency vacancy which has been open for nearly 2 years.

Mr. Leitman is also an excellent nominee, and the people of Michigan, again, deserve his service on the bench. We look forward to his service and to the service of all four of those nominees that we will be voting on today.

We have four excellent nominees for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. They are thoughtful, they are prudent, and they are ready to get to work.

I encourage and ask that all of my colleagues join together today in a strong bipartisan vote to be able to move these nominations forward and bring them to the floor tomorrow morning for the final vote.

We are very pleased with the President's nominees and with their qualifications. We are very confident of their service to the courts and to the people of Michigan.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KAINE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session.

Under the previous order, there is now 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a cloture vote on the Leitman nomination.

Who yields time?

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to yield back the time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

All time is yielded back.

The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Matthew Frederick Leitman, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Carl Levin, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Debbie Stabenow, Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Jeanne Shaheen, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie Hirono, Joe Donnelly, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Tom Harkin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Matthew Frederick Leitman, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan shall be brought to a close? The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. McCASKILL) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 63 Ex.]

YEAS—55

Baldwin	Booker	Cardin
Begich	Boxer	Carper
Bennet	Brown	Casey
Blumenthal	Cantwell	Collins

Coons
Donnelly
Durbin
Feinstein
Franken
Gillibrand
Hagan
Harkin
Heinrich
Heitkamp
Hirono
Johnson (SD)
Kaine
King
Klobuchar

Landrieu
Leahy
Levin
Manchin
Markey
Menendez
Merkley
Mikulski
Murkowski
Murphy
Murray
Nelson
Pryor
Reed
Reid

Sanders
Schatz
Schumer
Shaheen
Stabenow
Tester
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Walsh
Warner
Warren
Whitehouse
Wyden

NAYS—43

Alexander
Ayotte
Barrasso
Blunt
Boozman
Burr
Chambliss
Coats
Coburn
Cochran
Corker
Cornyn
Crapo
Cruz
Enzi

Fischer
Flake
Graham
Grassley
Hatch
Heller
Hoeven
Inhofe
Isakson
Johanns
Johnson (WI)
Kirk
Lee
McCain
McConnell

Moran
Paul
Portman
Risch
Roberts
Rubio
Scott
Sessions
Shelby
Thune
Toomey
Vitter
Wicker

NOT VOTING—2

McCaskill
Rockefeller

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 55, the nays are 43.

The motion to invoke cloture is agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a cloture vote on the Levy nomination.

The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I want to assure our colleagues that these nominees from Michigan have been selected—obviously by us—following a very thorough screening committee with its broadly based recommendations. All four of these nominees are highly qualified, have judicial temperament, and Senator STABENOW and I can recommend them highly to the Senate.

I thank my colleagues who are voting for cloture and then hope that the next vote after cloture we will see them confirmed.

Again, we want to provide that assurance to our colleagues that this is a broadly based screening committee that we appoint which has recommended these nominees.

I ask that all time be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has been yielded back.

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state:

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Judith Ellen Levy, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Carl Levin, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Debbie Stabenow, Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Jeanne Shaheen, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie K. Hirono, Joe Donnelly, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Tom Harkin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Judith Ellen Levy, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rules.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. JOHNSON).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 56, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 64 Ex.]

YEAS—56

Baldwin	Harkin	Murray
Begich	Heinrich	Nelson
Bennet	Heitkamp	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Boxer	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Landrieu	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Levin	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Markey	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	McCaskill	Walsh
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Feinstein	Merkley	Warren
Franken	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden
Hagan	Murphy	

NAYS—42

Alexander	Enzi	McConnell
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Barrasso	Flake	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Chambliss	Heller	Rubio
Coats	Hoeven	Scott
Coburn	Inhofe	Sessions
Cochran	Isakson	Shelby
Corker	Johanns	Thune
Cornyn	Kirk	Toomey
Crapo	Lee	Vitter
Cruz	McCain	Wicker

NOT VOTING—2

Johnson (WI) Rockefeller

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 56, the nays are 42.

The motion is agreed to.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the

motion to invoke cloture on the Michelson nomination.

The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent all time be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, and pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Laurie J. Michelson, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Carl Levin, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Debbie Stabenow, Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Jeanne Shaheen, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie K. Hirono, Joe Donnelly, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Tom Harkin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Laurie J. Michelson, of Michigan, to be United States District Court Judge, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 56, nays 43, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 65 Ex.]

YEAS—56

Baldwin	Harkin	Murray
Begich	Heinrich	Nelson
Bennet	Heitkamp	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Boxer	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Landrieu	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Levin	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Markey	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	McCaskill	Walsh
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Feinstein	Merkley	Warren
Franken	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden
Hagan	Murphy	

NAYS—43

Alexander	Blunt	Chambliss
Ayotte	Boozman	Coats
Barrasso	Burr	Coburn

Cochran	Hoeven	Risch
Corker	Inhofe	Roberts
Cornyn	Isakson	Rubio
Crapo	Johanns	Scott
Cruz	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Enzi	Kirk	Shelby
Fischer	Lee	Thune
Flake	McCain	Toomey
Graham	McConnell	Vitter
Grassley	Moran	Wicker
Hatch	Paul	
Heller	Portman	

NOT VOTING—1

Rockefeller

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 56 and the nays are 43.

The motion is agreed to.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at 2:15 today the Senate proceed to morning business until 6 p.m. tonight. Senators may speak for up to 10 minutes each.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to the cloture vote.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I yield back any time on the subsequent nomination on which we are about to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the time is yielded back.

Under the previous order and pursuant to rule XXII, the clerk will report the motion to invoke cloture.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Linda Vivienne Parker, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Carl Levin, Richard J. Durbin, Barbara Boxer, Debbie Stabenow, Charles E. Schumer, Patty Murray, Jeanne Shaheen, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Udall, Sheldon Whitehouse, Mazie K. Hirono, Joe Donnelly, Jack Reed, Brian Schatz, Tom Harkin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Linda Vivienne Parker, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 56, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 66 Ex.]

YEAS—56

Baldwin	Harkin	Murray
Begich	Heinrich	Nelson
Bennet	Heitkamp	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Boxer	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Landrieu	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Levin	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Markkey	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	McCaskill	Walsh
Durbin	Menendez	Warner
Feinstein	Merkley	Warren
Franken	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murkowski	Wyden
Hagan	Murphy	

NAYS—42

Alexander	Enzi	McCain
Ayotte	Fischer	McConnell
Barrasso	Flake	Moran
Blunt	Graham	Paul
Boozman	Grassley	Portman
Burr	Hatch	Risch
Chambliss	Heller	Roberts
Coats	Hoeven	Rubio
Coburn	Inhofe	Scott
Cochran	Isakson	Shelby
Corker	Johanns	Thune
Cornyn	Johnson (WI)	Toomey
Crapo	Kirk	Vitter
Cruz	Lee	Wicker

NOT VOTING—2

Rockefeller Sessions

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 56, the nays are 42.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I request permission to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FORTY-SECOND IDITAROD

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I am happy to be on the floor this afternoon to give the announcement and the update about the running of the 42nd Iditarod in my State of Alaska. It is an extraordinarily famous and fabulous sporting event where man and dog test the elements of a course of almost 1,100 miles beginning in Willow, AK, and going all the way to Nome.

This year there were 69 teams that started out, and the first team crossed the finish line at 4 a.m. Alaska standard time this morning. It was one of those races that truly came down to almost a photo finish, with the leaders trading off literally in the last several hours. This was a situation we honestly have not seen in quite some time with the Iditarod.

With that buildup, I am pleased to announce that this year Dallas Seavey has become the winner of the 42nd running of the Iditarod, beating out Aliy Zirkle by 2 minutes 22 seconds. He and

Aliy Zirkle battled it out in the last hour of the race not even understanding that the frontrunner, who had been in place of Aliy and in place of Dallas, Jeff King, had to scratch because of a ground blizzard that forced him off the trail, losing his sled and effectively having to call and ask for assistance. It was a very dramatic ending to a pretty fascinating race.

The weather has been problematic throughout. We had warm weather conditions at the outset of the race, and then to have the weather really be the No. 1 opposition at the end made it something we are going to be talking about for years.

The Presiding Officer has had the opportunity to attend the ceremonial start of the Iditarod and is familiar with the excitement when there are 60 to 70 dog teams, mushers, and all their supporters around handling the dogs. There were literally 1,000 dogs in the downtown area of Anchorage. It is really quite exciting. It is a fabulous way to come to understand the history of the Iditarod but, more importantly, to understand the mindset of some of these mushers and the dedication they have to this sport and the passion they have for their dogs.

This year I was in the chute, and I like to visit with each of the mushers as they are coming down. Dallas Seavey was in the chute, and I was talking to him. He was really excited about the course because he said: This is going to be fast. This is going to be the quickest course we have seen. It is just perfect for someone like me who is young and fit and can stand up on his sled and literally be running next to his sled the whole way.

Three mushers later is Jeff King, and Jeff is telling me: This race is the perfect race for us older guys.

Jeff is my age.

He said: It is perfect because it takes the maturity and the wisdom and having been through a series of Iditarods to know exactly how to handle a course like this.

I think both of them were right. We saw the energy and determination of young Dallas Seavey 2 years ago. When he won for the first time, he was the youngest musher to win. He demonstrated a level of energy and determination that truly knocks your socks off. But what Jeff King was able to do with his methodical planning and strategy that goes into that race is certainly something to be embraced. And then, of course, Aliy Zirkle, a 44-year-old woman demonstrating once again that tough, independent female spirit—my gosh, she was in there all the way. This is the second year now that she has come in—actually, it is not the second year she has come in second. She has come in second more times than any other musher out there.

Dallas Seavey broke the Iditarod record this morning at 4 a.m. He came

in at 8 days, 13 hours, 4 minutes, 19 seconds. He shaved off almost 5 hours from John Baker's previous win back in 2011.

There were a lot of firsts and a lot to be celebrated. There are still more mushers out on the trail.

When I talked to Dallas about an hour ago to congratulate him, I said: You must be pooped and ready to go to sleep after the last 8 days.

He said: Well, I am going to wait up for my dad.

His dad, Mitch Seavey, is in third place at this point in time. We expect him to come across the finish line.

I said: Isn't it nice to know that after all the years your dad waited up for you, you get to wait up for your dad before you take a break?

Alaskans are pleased with the outcome. We are happy to celebrate amazing athletes—both human and canine—doing amazing things in an amazing State. I am pleased to be able to announce today's results.

I thank the indulgence of the Chair.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 6 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I want to take a moment to recognize our Republican colleagues in the House of Representatives who last week cast the 50th vote in their effort to dismantle the Affordable Care Act—their 50th. I know it is a tradition to give gold in celebration of a 50th milestone. I instead would like to gift my colleagues on the other side of the aisle with a reality check.

More specifically, today I would like to talk about a certain group of people who arguably stand to lose if their antics continue. So I have come to the floor this afternoon to set the record straight on the Affordable Care Act and how it is working for women in America. It is not much of a stretch for me to say the Affordable Care Act is probably one of the most significant pieces of legislation for women in my lifetime. Not because of the battles we fought to get it to the President's desk, not necessarily because of the size or scope of the law, but because of the

tangible and positive impact it has had and will continue to have on the health and well being of women in America.

Four years ago health insurance companies could deny women care due to so-called preexisting conditions such as pregnancy or being a victim of domestic violence. Four years ago women were permitted to be legally discriminated against when it came to insurance premiums and were often paying more for coverage than men. Four years ago women did not have access to the full range of recommended preventive care, such as mammograms and prenatal screenings and more. Four years ago the insurance companies had all the leverage. Four years ago too often women were the ones who were paying the price. That is why I am proud today to highlight just how far we have come for women in the past 4 years.

Since the Affordable Care Act became law, women have been treated fairly with increased access to affordable health insurance, benefits, and services. Deductibles and other expenses have been capped so a health care crisis does not cause a family to lose their home or their life savings.

Women can use the health care marketplaces to pick quality plans that work for them and their families. If they change jobs or have to move, they are able to keep their coverage. Starting in 2012, we saw these benefits for women expand even further. Additional types of maternity are now covered. Women are now armed with proper tools and resources in order to take the right steps to have a healthy pregnancy.

Women now have access to domestic partner violence screening and counseling, as well as screening for sexually transmitted infections. Now women finally have access to affordable birth control. As public servants here, it is our job to help our constituents access Federal benefits available to them, particularly when it comes to health care. Since 80 percent of women are not only making health care choices for themselves but also their families and loved ones, it is our responsibility to serve as a guide when it comes to understanding how to best access these benefits.

It might mean putting them in touch with a navigator to ensure they are getting the most affordable health insurance available or making them aware of an enrollment event where they can get information on available coverage options. But our responsibilities do not end there. It is our job to have an open, honest discussion about what the Affordable Care Act means for our constituents and to talk about ways to responsibly improve it.

Instead, as we saw in the House last week, others have spent the better part of the last 4 years trying to take away the critical benefits that I just talked

about, trying to score cheap political points on an issue that can literally mean the difference between life and death. I can understand why some of our colleagues disagree with certain parts of this law or maybe how it was implemented, but what I cannot understand is why anyone elected to Congress would decide to simply ignore real life stories of their own constituents whose lives were changed the day this law took effect.

It is people like Susan Wellman. She lives in Bellingham in my home State of Washington. She is self employed. She has had to pay for individual insurance. Every year she has watched her health care costs rise higher and higher. It got to the point where she was paying \$300 monthly premiums with an \$8,000 deductible, all for a plan she described as "paying for nothing."

So as soon as Susan could access health care through the Washington State health care exchange, she jumped at the chance. She spoke on the phone with a real live person. She was able to sign up for an affordable plan in a matter of minutes. Now Susan is on a plan that costs her \$125 a month instead of \$300. It is a plan that has a \$2,000 deductible that actually pays for things. Guess what. She can afford to go to the doctor, not just in the case of an emergency but for a physical or a mammogram that could save her life, not to mention thousands and thousands of dollars in health care costs.

That kind of preventive care is good for women like Susan. It is good for her family, and it is good for this country because when more people have access to preventive care, it makes health care cheaper for every single one of us.

It is also good for women like Carrie Little. She is a certified organic farmer who lives in Orting, WA. A few weeks ago she was working outside when one of the rams on her farm attacked her, leaving her with bruises and a broken leg. Fortunately, because of her new health plan, her visit to the emergency room was painless. Well, as painless as it could be with a broken leg. But her hospital bills, her cast, and her visits to the orthopedic physician were paid in full.

Until last year, Carrie had been spending half of her income for a catastrophic-only health plan, forcing her to pay out of pocket for even the most basic of care. Carrie wrote an op-ed, and I want to quote from it. She said:

What a welcome relief that my new health plan covers preventive care, like mammograms, immunizations, and yearly doctor visits. I can keep the primary care doctor I have been seeing for years. And I no longer worry about family members getting kicked around due to pre-existing conditions. Thank goodness. In agriculture, profits and losses shift like the weather, so for our community, it is crucial that health premiums stay affordable.

Or women like Ingrid Gordon. Ingrid is a small business owner from Seattle

who immediately enrolled in coverage when it became available. After an hour on the Web site, she told us, with minimal technical difficulties, Ingrid was enrolled and received her insurance card in the mail a few days later. Since her coverage began on January 1, Ingrid had her first dental and physical exams in 14 years. She cured a skin disorder thanks to prescription medicine. She scheduled a colonoscopy now that she is 50, and finally had her bothersome knee x-rayed.

All of those exams, visits and prescriptions would have cost Ingrid thousands if not tens of thousands of dollars out of pocket just 1 year ago. But thanks to the Affordable Care Act, Ingrid paid a grand total of zero dollars in copays.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, women like Susan and Carrie and Ingrid are now fully in charge of their own health care, not their insurance company. That is why I feel so strongly that we cannot go back to the way things were. While we can never stop working to make improvements, of course, we owe it to the women of America to make progress and not allow the clock to be rolled back on their health care needs.

As we all know, unfortunately, there are efforts underway all across the country, including here in our Nation's capital, to severely undermine a woman's access to some of the most critical and life-saving services that are provided by the Affordable Care Act. No provision of this law has faced quite as much scrutiny as the idea of providing affordable, quality reproductive health services to the women of America.

We have seen attempt after attempt to eliminate access to abortion services and low-cost birth control all while restricting a woman's ability to make personal decisions about her own care. I guess we should not be surprised. The truth is that the tide of these politically driven, extreme efforts continues to rise.

In 2013 our Nation saw yet another record-breaking year of State legislatures passing restrictive legislation barring women's access to reproductive services. In fact, in the past 3 years the United States has enacted more of these restrictions than in the previous 10 years combined. That means that now more than ever, it is our job to protect these kinds of decisions for women, to fight for women's health, and to ensure that women's health does not become a political football.

For this reason I was very proud to lead members of my caucus in filing a brief with the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of *Sebelius v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc.*, where a secular corporation and its shareholders are trying to get in between a woman and her health.

Just like the many attempts before this case, there are those out there who

would like the American public to believe that this conversation is anything but an attack on women's health care. To them it is a debate about freedom, except of course freedom for a woman to access her own care. It is no different than when we are told that a tax on abortion rights is not an infringement on a woman's right to choose; they are about religion or State's rights; or when we are told that restricting emergency contraception is not about limiting a woman's ability to make her own family planning decisions; it is about protecting pharmacists; or just like last week, when an Alaskan State Senator said he did not think there was a compelling reason for the government "to finance other people's recreation." That was in reference, of course, to contraception coverage in health care. In fact, after doing some research, this State Senator concluded that since birth control costs about "four or five lattes" the government should really have no reason to cover this cost to women.

The truth is that this is about contraception. This is an attempt to limit a woman's ability to access her own health care. This is about women. Allowing a woman's boss to call the shots about her access to birth control should be inconceivable to all Americans in this day and age, and it would take us back to a place in history when women had no voice and no choice.

In fact, contraception was included as a required preventive service in the Affordable Care Act on the recommendation of an independent, non-profit institute of medicine and other medical experts because it is essential to the health of women and families.

After many years of research, we know ensuring access to effective birth control has a direct impact on improving the lives of women and their families in America. We have been able to directly link it to declines in maternal and infant mortality, reduced risk of ovarian cancer, better overall health outcomes for women, and far fewer unintended pregnancies and abortions, which is a goal we all should share.

But what is at stake in this case now before the Supreme Court is whether a CEO's personal beliefs can trump a woman's right to access free or low-cost contraception under the Affordable Care Act.

Every American deserves to have access to high-quality health care coverage, regardless of where they work. Each of us should have the right to make our own medical and religious decisions without being dictated to or limited by our employers. Contraceptive coverage is supported by the vast majority of Americans who understand how important it is for women and their families.

In weighing this case, my hope is that the Court realizes women working for private companies should be af-

forded the same access to medical care regardless of who signs their paychecks. We can't allow for-profit secular corporations or their shareholders to deny female employees access to comprehensive women's health care under the guise of religious exemption. It is as if we are saying: Because you are a CEO or a shareholder in a corporation, your rights are more important than your employees', who happen to be women. That is a slippery slope that could lead to employers cutting off coverage for childhood immunizations if they object to that idea or prenatal care for children born to unmarried parents if they think it is wrong, or blocking an employee's ability to access HIV treatment.

I was proud to be joined in filing the brief by 18 other Senators who were here when Congress enacted the religious protections under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 and who were also here when Congress made access to women's health care available under the Affordable Care Act of 2010. They are Senators who know Congress did not intend for a corporation or, furthermore, its shareholders to restrict a woman's access to preventive health care.

In the coming weeks, as the Supreme Court prepares to begin oral arguments in this case, these Senators and our colleagues who support these efforts will echo those sentiments, because we all know that improving access to birth control is good health policy and good economic policy. It means healthier women, healthier children, healthier families, and it will save monies for our businesses and consumers.

I know many of our colleagues here believe that repealing the Affordable Care Act and access to reproductive health services is a political winner for them. But the truth is this law and these provisions are a winner for women, for men, for our children, and our health care system overall.

I am very proud to stand with my colleagues who are committed to making sure the benefits of this law don't get taken away from the women of America, because politics and ideology should not matter when it comes to making sure women get the care they need at a cost they can afford.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

MEDICARE PROTECTION ACT

Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, I know others are waiting, so I will make some brief remarks about something that is very important to me.

I rise today to discuss S. 2087, the Medicare Protection Act.

Over the past few years one of the things we have witnessed in the Senate is, unfortunately, an irresponsible few

who are trying to turn Medicare into a voucher system and raise the eligibility age for benefits. This would not only have a catastrophic effect on seniors' health but also on their financial security. It would force seniors to pay more for their doctor visits and for prescription drugs.

People in my State have figured this out. In fact, I recently got a little note from Philip of Jonesboro who said: "Raising the Medicare eligibility age would shift thousands of dollars in costs to seniors and drive up premium costs."

He got it exactly right. That is what it will do. That is what pretty much every study I have seen, at least, says it will do.

In Arkansas alone, we have well over 500,000 seniors who depend on Medicare. I encourage all of my colleagues to look at the numbers in their States. My guess is everyone has a large number of seniors in their State and the seniors understand how vitally important it is that we protect Medicare.

Turning Medicare into a voucher system or fundamentally changing it in any way by using some sort of voucher—they call it premium supplement, I don't know; they have a different word for it sometimes—or raising the eligibility age or cutting benefits would be very detrimental to the people in my State, and I am sure in all 50 States.

As Rebecca from Fayetteville said:

Raising the Medicare age would simply force seniors such as my mother and me to pay more out-of-pocket. We need responsible, common-sense solutions to keep Medicare strong . . .

I agree with that. That is exactly what we need. We need these responsible commonsense solutions. Hopefully they are going to be bipartisan solutions. That is how we get things done in Washington, by working in a bipartisan way. I am hoping, over time, this Medicare Protection Act will become a great bipartisan vehicle for us to protect Medicare.

It does two things, in a nutshell. First, it amends the Congressional Budget Act to define any provision in reconciliation legislation that makes changes to Medicare to reduce or eliminate guaranteed benefits or restrict eligibility criteria as extraneous and an improper use of the reconciliation process.

I know that is technical and that is kind of getting down in the weeds, but that is a very smart way to do it, to use the Congressional Budget Act to protect Medicare.

Secondly, it expresses the sense of the Senate that the Medicare eligibility age should not increase and that the Medicare Program should not be privatized or turned into a voucher system.

Again, if we look back over the years, there have been attempts to do this, most of them originating in the

House of Representatives, but we have had a few of those attempts here.

As Hubert Humphrey once said: "The moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped."

The Medicare Protection Act is the right thing to do. I hope my colleagues from both sides of the aisle will look at this legislation, give it serious consideration, and join me in supporting this critical piece of legislation. It is a great way to protect our Medicare system.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

McHUGH NOMINATION

Mr. HATCH. I express my strong support for the nomination of Carolyn B. McHugh to the Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit. Judge McHugh received her undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Utah. She is exactly the kind of outstanding nominee of varied legal experience that I set out to find to fill this vacancy.

She has both practiced and taught law. She has practiced in both State and Federal court. She has extensive experience both before and behind the bench. She has served the county and State bars, as well the State judiciary on committees and on commissions. She has been widely recognized and awarded for her distinguished legal career.

Somehow, along the way, Judge McHugh has found time to serve her community with groups such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, Voices for Utah Children, and Catholic Community Services of Utah.

Judge McHugh's 22 years of litigation experience were almost evenly split between State and Federal court. In nearly a decade on the Utah Court of Appeals, currently as the presiding judge, she has heard more than 1,100 appellate civil and criminal cases that ultimately reached judgment.

When she is confirmed to the 10th Circuit, I think Judge McHugh may have one of the shortest learning curves on record of any judge in any circuit court of appeals to this country.

When we have a judicial vacancy in Utah, I spend a lot of time talking to lawyers and judges throughout our State's legal community, and so does Senator LEE. We both work together on these nominations, and I appreciate the input that he has and what a great deal of legal expertise and understanding he brings to these matters.

Judge McHugh received much praise, but perhaps the most common description was simply that she works harder

than anyone else. Her former law partner said it, judges said it. Over and over the same comment came up: She works incredibly hard.

I have been doing this a long time and have participated in the nomination or confirmation of more than half of the judges who have ever served on the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals. I know a first-rate nominee when I see one.

Judge McHugh's varied experience, her personal character, intelligence, and her work ethic make her one of the best. The Judiciary Committee approved her nomination without opposition, and I expect the same result in the Senate.

I do have to say that this nomination could have been confirmed months ago. Despite some controversy over a few nominees, the confirmation process was working well. In his first 5 years, President Obama appointed 24.6 percent of the Federal judiciary, compared to 25.8 percent in President George W. Bush's first 5 years.

The Congressional Research Service says the Senate confirmed a higher percentage of President Obama's appeals court nominees than it did so for President Clinton and did so faster than it did for President Bush.

In President Bush's first 5 years, Democrats conducted 20 filibusters of appeals court nominations, compared to only seven in President Obama's first 5 years. Filibusters were much less of a factor in the confirmation process under President Obama than they had been in the past, but that was not good enough. Last November, Democrats abolished nomination filibusters altogether.

For more than 200 years the minority in the Senate, no matter what their political party, had a real role in the confirmation process. The possibility of a filibuster had two effects. First, it suggested to the President that he might want to send more moderate nominees to the Senate. Second, it prompted the minority to cooperate with the majority in confirming noncontroversial nominees.

The new confirmation process that Democrats created has no real role for the minority. As a result, neither of those positive effects exists anymore. The President has no incentive to choose more moderate nominees to consult with home State Senators or to look for a consensus, and the minority in the Senate no incentive to waive rules or to agree to shortcuts.

There used to be balance in this process. The minority could filibuster a few of the more extreme nominees and so the minority helped process the large majority of noncontroversial nominees. That balanced approach was apparently unacceptable to the current majority. Democrats took that approach away, leaving a process—it can be called that—that only the majority controls.

Democrats did not want the minority's cooperation. They did not want a process that has some give-and-take in it. Democrats wanted a process that is all take and no give, and so here we are.

Part of the process we used to have would have been confirming additional nominations before adjourning the first session of the Congress. The nomination before us would have been confirmed that way months ago—as well as a whole raft of other judges that we are now voting on *ad seriatim*. Instead, we are forced to do things in this new way.

Judge McHugh is the same highly qualified, noncontroversial nominee. There is no good reason why the majority will want to take months longer to confirm a nomination such as this. But this is the confirmation process the Democrats created. They got the control they wanted, and I believe this distortion of the process harms the Senate as an institution. By creating unnecessary controversy and delay, this new process also harms the other branches to which nominations have been made. It did not have to be this way. It should not have been this way.

I might add that I wrote a Law Review article a number of years ago that I did not believe we should filibuster judicial nominations at all. That is why I voted "present" on so many of the President's judges, but there is no reason for me to do that anymore because the Democrats have changed the rules. They have broken the rules to change the rules, and so I might as well vote no along with the rest of the Republicans on some of these nominees—just as an expression that we don't like the way the Democrats are handling this matter. I have been, in the last few days, changing from "present" to no or yes depending upon the person.

CLIMATE CHANGE

I will take a few minutes to talk about the Senate Democrats' latest effort to grab headlines and energize their base.

Although the business on the floor has officially been nominations, my friends on the other side of the aisle came in overnight to talk about climate change and the supposed need to change the way we produce and consume energy in this country.

We have heard a lot of talk about science and its supposed refusal on the part of Republicans to acknowledge the "truth." What we haven't heard is a plan for lowering energy costs or for putting Americans back to work.

The fact is, when the Democrats talk about climate change, more often than not they are advocating policies that would do exactly the opposite. The funny thing is they have to know it by now. They have to know that is what they are doing. They are talking about proposals that would increase energy costs for American families and businesses. They have to know that, and

they are pushing policies that will put even greater stress on our economy and make it more difficult for our citizens to find and even keep a job. That is why we have an underemployment rate of over 12 percent.

For example, last year, the President announced his Climate Action Plan, which directs the EPA to implement and impose new oppressive regulations on the energy industry that will have a significant impact on jobs and the pocketbooks of the American people. Increasing the cost of energy, which this plan would surely do, will not only make our struggling manufacturing sector less globally competitive, it will impose costs directly onto the American people in the form of higher prices on electricity and other costs as well.

Put simply, in order to create jobs and improve our global competitiveness, we need to find ways to help businesses reduce the amount of money they spend on energy. Unfortunately, this President is trying to do the exact opposite. At the same time, we should be exploring ways to make raising a family more affordable.

Unfortunately, the President's plan would increase the cost of living for every household in America. Talk about inequality. I was very interested that one of the leading unions—one of the first to support the President—said that he has caused more inequality than anybody. When I say “he,” they mean the President. Unfortunately, the President's plan would increase the cost of living for every household in America. This is the height of irresponsibility.

At a time when so many people are still feeling the impact of the great recession, the administration, not to mention its allies in Congress, wants to put in place regulations and mandates that will cripple American businesses and cause direct harm to American families trying to make ends meet.

I find it striking that throughout all the lectures we have seen on climate change science on the floor over the past 2 days, none of my colleagues appear to be willing to acknowledge the very real impact of their preferred policies. Thousands of communities across the country depend on the responsible development of our Nation's natural resources for a living. Access to abundant and affordable energy is attractive to domestic investment and provides high-paying jobs in our local economies. We can develop these resources in an environmentally friendly way. But my colleagues on the other side of the aisle don't appear to be willing to have that conversation. Instead, they want to demagogue the use of fossil fuels and impose costly mandates and regulations on the harvesting of our resources and on the production of our energy. What is interesting is they are doing it to a lot of the people in a lot of the States that used to support them.

We need to be pushing an “all of the above” inclusive approach to the development of energy if we are going to improve our energy security and become a global leader in energy production. It is not the job of the government to pick winners and losers. Yet with all their talk about climate change and the need for Republicans to “wake up,” that is precisely what my friends in the other party want to do.

I would hope, given all the challenges facing our Nation—from sluggish economic growth to lackluster jobs creation, to jobs providing less than 30-hour work weeks and on and on and on—my colleagues would devote more of their time trying to find real solutions for the American people instead of trying to please their liberal base with alarmist rhetoric about climate change and false promises about the future of energy production in this country.

We all know that some of their preferred production of energy is not producing. We all know it never will produce enough to solve our problems. We all know people have lost jobs time and time again in this country because of the lack of energy. We all know it has made us a weaker country. Yet we have this blind faith that they are right and everybody else is wrong.

I think jobs are the conversation the American people want us to talk about. Yes, we would like to keep things clean and good and orderly. On the other hand, you can't do that without jobs. You can't do that without people being able to earn a living. You can't run our inner cities and towns without energy. We are giving in to some of the most radical theories I have ever seen in the whole time I have been here.

We ought to get rid of these false promises and we ought to do the very best we can to clean up our environment in every possible way we can without destroying the energy and the energy capacities we know we have and loosen all the jobs that would come with that. That is the conversation the American people want to hear, and I hope eventually that is a conversation we can have in the Senate.

This is an issue where my colleagues are very sincere. I don't want to disparage any of them. On the other hand, in many respects they are sincerely wrong and they are costing America its greatness.

One of the problems I have with our current President is that I don't believe he believes in American exceptionalism, and he is doing so many things that are destroying our exceptionalism. The rest of the world knows it, but our folks here in America are having a rough time grasping it. I think it is a desire to always treat everybody well, to try to support our Presidents, which certainly we ought to try to do, but there is a reason we are starting to slip.

There is a reason the average wage in this country has gone down \$4,000 to \$5,000. There is a reason why, according to the Joint Committee on Taxation of just a few years ago, 51 percent of the American people are not in the process of paying one dime of income taxes. I am the last one to want them to pay income taxes, those who shouldn't, but, my gosh, you can't run a country this way. We are going to have to start facing the music that the greatest country in the world is losing its nerve, it is losing its verve, and there is no excuse for it. No other country in the world can even compare with us. So why are we doing things that are making us less and less and less and less?

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 3521

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I rise to again advocate that we move forward, we come together across the aisle as Democrats and Republicans to agree on what we do agree on and to do some things constructively—specifically, to help veterans across our country.

There are 27 community-based VA clinics that are on the books at the Veterans' Administration ready to go. The VA is ready to break ground, move forward, and build these expanded community-based clinics to serve areas around the country and veterans around the country in a much better way. I am particularly interested because 2 of those 27 clinics are in Louisiana, in Lafayette and in Lake Charles.

All of these clinics have gotten stuck in the mud through several rounds of bureaucratic delay at the VA—funding delays, authorization delays, and a dispute about whether moving forward with these clinics was kosher under the budget rules. We have solved all of those problems. We have figured out solutions to all of those problems that satisfies everyone. The House of Representatives has taken those solutions, put them together in a bill and passed it overwhelmingly out of the House with over 400 votes in support—virtually unanimous. Now we are on the Senate floor and all we have to do is take that bill, adopt a simple non-controversial amendment and pass it through the Senate. No one in the Senate disagrees with the substance of this bill. No one disagrees with the substance of the amendment we would add

to this bill. No one disagrees with the importance of moving forward with these 27 VA clinics. Yet we are still finding it difficult to move this simple noncontroversial matter through the Senate. Why? Because, quite frankly, some of our colleagues who have a much bigger, broader veterans package want to hold this hostage for their veterans package. While I applaud their sincerity, I applaud their passion, I think we should agree on what we can agree on and move forward with what we agree on. Let's not get bogged down and defeat 27 very important community-based veterans clinics because there are major and sincere disagreements about the much broader package.

I also think it will build good will to resolve some of those issues and come forward with a compromise version of a larger package if we do that. In that spirit, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 3521, which was received from the House; that my amendment, which is at the desk, be agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SANDERS. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I appreciate the interest of Senator VITTER in this very important issue. Senator LANDRIEU of Louisiana shares his concern, as do Senators from many States in this country because, as Senator VITTER indicated, this bill will authorize the VA to enter into 27 major medical facility leases in 18 States and Puerto Rico. So this is, in fact, a very big issue.

But as Senator VITTER knows very well, 2 weeks ago this very same provision was part of a comprehensive veterans bill supported by the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, and virtually every veterans organization in this country because the veterans community is facing a host of problems.

Senator VITTER points out one problem. He is right. But there are many other problems. I say to my friend, we could have resolved this problem 2 weeks ago if I could have had four more Republican votes, including his, to pass this legislation.

What this bill does, and the reason it is supported by millions of veterans all over this country, is that it addresses the major problems facing our veterans community. I say to my friend from Louisiana, and any other Senator, if

you are not prepared to stand with veterans in their time of need, don't send them off to war. If you don't want to pay for the care veterans need, don't send them off to war and then tell us it is too expensive to take care of them.

The legislation that again is supported by virtually every major veterans organization in this country, expands the caregivers program, improves and expands dental care, provides advanced appropriations for the VA—something many of us feel is terribly important—takes a major step to end the benefits backlog, deals with the very serious problem of instate tuition assistance for post-9/11 veterans, and addresses the horrible problem that women and men in the military face when they are sexually assaulted. We address that issue as well.

This legislation also addresses the issue of reproductive health. We have 2,300 men and women who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and who were wounded in the war in such ways they are unable to have babies. They want families but can't have babies, and so we help address in this bill that issue; whether through in vitro fertilization, adoption or other ways to help them have families. That is what this legislation does.

So I look forward to working with my colleague and friend from Louisiana to get that legislation passed or to sit down and work on a compromise piece of legislation.

I would say to my friend from Louisiana, today you can be a hero. Today you can get your concern passed and the concerns of veterans all over America by supporting my unanimous consent request to pass the bill that came up 2 weeks ago.

Mr. President, I object to Senator VITTER's proposal.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 297, S. 1950; that a Sanders substitute amendment, the text of S. 982, the Comprehensive Veterans Health and Benefits and Military Retirement Pay Restoration Act, be agreed to; the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). The first objection is heard to the request by the Senator from Louisiana.

Is there objection to the request by the Senator from Vermont?

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, on behalf of 43 Members of the Senate, I object based on substantive disagreements about this very broad-based bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, reclaiming the floor and my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. VITTER. I think it is really regrettable. The Senator from Vermont and I can talk about the substance. I will be happy to talk about the substance of his big bill. But the bottom line is that 43 Members of the Senate disagree with him about serious substantive issues.

Because there is major disagreement—almost half of the Senate, 43 Members of the Senate—he is going to block moving forward with 27 clinics to serve veterans around the country, about which there is no disagreement. On my bill, as amended, there is zero disagreement on the substance of that bill. Because he can't get his way fully on a bigger package, he is going to take the bat and take the ball, and home plate, first base, second, and third, and go home. I don't think this is the approach and spirit in which the American people want us to work. I think the American people want us to agree when we can agree. I think we should bend over to agree in those instances where we can agree and actually accomplish substantive, concrete things. We would be doing that by moving forward separately with these 27 important community-based clinics. And by the way, I think we would be creating a much better environment to continue to work on a compromised broader package.

I commend this approach again to my friend from Vermont. I think we should come together where we agree. I think we should accomplish what we can and continue to work on a broader package. But taking these 27 clinics hostage is not doing that, is not creating an atmosphere which is conducive to progress on a broader package, and is not properly serving the American people.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I would remind my colleague from Louisiana that the vote on that bill was 56 to 41. This is a 15-vote plurality. There is another person who was not here who would have voted for us on that bill, so 57 votes. But because of a Republican request for a budget point of order, we need 60 votes. So a strong majority of the Members in the Senate support this comprehensive legislation. We are three votes shy of passing it. I intend to reach out to the Senator from Louisiana and every other Senator to see whether we get these three votes so we can pass the most comprehensive veterans legislation brought to the floor of the Senate in many decades.

This is not a complicated issue. On Veterans Day and on Memorial Day, every Member of the Senate and House goes back to his or her district and tells veterans just how much they respect them and love them and so forth and so on. That is all fine and well.

Speeches are important. But at the end of the day, serving our veterans means a lot more than giving speeches. It means voting for programs that will improve their lives.

I will not disagree with anybody who says veterans programs are often expensive. They are expensive. When somebody goes off to war and comes back without any legs, without any arms, losing their eyesight or their hearing or dealing with TBI—traumatic brain injury—or PTSD—post-traumatic stress disorder—or suffering from sexual assault, it is an expensive proposition to make those folks as well as we possibly can. But, as I said earlier, if we are not prepared to support the men and women who come back from war, don't send them off to war in the first place.

So I very much hope I will be successful in working on an agreement with the Senator from Louisiana and some of my other Republican colleagues so we can do what the veterans community wants us to do.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I spoke last night in anticipation of this all-night session that was going to take place. I was not surprised at the general topics that were covered. There are probably five all together that they were stated over and over. I would like to clarify a couple of things that probably are worthwhile this afternoon.

One is my good friend from California—this is a quote, we took it down—said:

When 97 to 98 percent of the scientists say something is real, they do not have anything pressing them to say that other than the truth. They do not have any other agenda. They don't work for oil companies. And I will tell you, as chairman of the environment committee, every time the Republicans chose a so-called expert on climate, we have tracked them down to special interest funding, those 3 percent. They know where their bread is buttered.

That is kind of an interesting and a timely statement to make because what they are not telling you—and I am talking about the Senator from California and the other Democrats—is that the hedge fund billionaire and climate activist Tom Steyer plans to spend \$100 million through his NextGen PAC. The NextGen PAC is his political action committee. He has made the statement that he is going to be spending \$100 million in the midterm elec-

tions of 2014 and is going to be looking very carefully to make sure that all of the Democrats go along with his activist agenda.

That was actually a statement that was made, that has been written up. It is all documented. I am going to submit for the RECORD at this point all of the newspaper articles, the Washington Post, the Washington Times, and others that talk about this climate activist Tom Steyer, who is going to be spending \$100 million in the next election.

What I would like to do is cover the points that were made. As I say, they were made over and over, different people saying them, the same talking points. I am sure Tom Steyer's people had the talking points well prepared and moveon.org and George Soros and Michael Moore and the Hollywood elites and that crowd all had their talking points to sound real good. I noticed that so many of them were reading those points and were not familiar with the issues.

But last night many of my colleagues pointed to weather as the reason for manmade climate change. Yet they failed to quote meteorologists in the speeches. Let me read just what the meteorologists are saying about climate change.

A recent study by George Mason University reported—that was over 400 TV meteorologists—they reported that 63 percent of the weathercasters believe that any global warming that occurs is the result of natural variations and not human activity. That is a significant 2-to-1 majority.

Another study by the American Meteorological Society last year found that of their members, nearly half did not believe in manmade global warming. Furthermore, the survey found that scientists who professed liberal political views were more likely to proclaim manmade climate change than the rest of their colleagues.

I think we can name names here. Certainly one of the more prominent names is Heidi Cullen. She was with the Weather Channel. She spent most of her time with a background of very liberal thinking, liberal agenda, talking about this until she is no longer there anymore. She is now with one of the groups, the very liberal groups.

This is a good one, a lifelong liberal Democrat. His name is Dr. Martin Hertzberg. He is a retired Navy meteorologist with a Ph.D. in physical chemistry who also declared his dissent of warming fears in 2008. This is a quote from Dr. Martin Hertzberg:

As a scientist and life-long liberal Democrat, I find the constant regurgitation of the anecdotal, fear mongering clap-trap about human-caused global warming to be a disservice to science. The global warming alarmists don't even bother with data! All they have are half-baked computer models that are totally out of touch with reality and have already been proven to be false.

CNN, not exactly a bastion of conservatism, had yet another of its meteorologists dissent from global warming fears. His name is Chad Myers, a meteorologist for 22 years and certified by the American Meteorological Society, spoke out against anthropogenic climate change on CNN in December of 2008.

He said, "You know, to think that we could affect weather all that much is pretty arrogant."

Since they are talking about the weather, here are a few facts that are not mentioned on drought and hurricanes. Several of the people came to the floor during the evening to talk about increase in drought, the increase in hurricanes and all of that. According to NOAA, hurricanes have been in decline in the United States since the beginning of records in the 19th century. The worst decade for major—category 3, 4, 5—hurricanes was in the 1940s. Severe drought in 1934 covered 80 percent of the country. The current one, the drought we went through a year and a half ago was 25 percent of the country.

Then they talked about, last night, the icecaps are melting and all of that. My colleague Senator FEINSTEIN from California pointed to melting icecaps as proof of climate change. Yet reports on what is not melting show a different story. This past December a research expedition of climate scientists got stuck in deep ice in Antarctica. We all remember that. I remember talking about that and showing pictures on the floor when that took place. That was a bunch of people who were going up there to try to solidify their case on global warming. They were stuck in ice for weeks on end. It took a couple of weeks and a couple more icebreakers getting stuck before the research vessel was finally freed.

A paper published in the October Journal of Climate examines the trend of sea ice extent along the east Antarctic coast from 2000 to 2008 and finds a significant increase, average of 1.43. That is 1.5 percent a year of increase of ice in the Antarctic.

Greenland, the IPCC—now, keep in mind, I talked yesterday about the IPCC. That is the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. In a minute, I will show how it was discredited. But in Greenland they said—they admitted that in 2001, to melt Greenland the ice sheet would require temperatures to rise by 5.5 degrees Celsius and remain for 1,000 years. The ice sheet is actually growing by 2 percent a year. That is what is going on right now on this very ice sheet. Everyone is concerned about Greenland. Yet it is actually growing, not decreasing.

In January 2010, Time magazine: Himalayan Melting: How a Climate Panel Got it Wrong: "Glaciergate" is a black eye for the IPCC and the climate-science community as a whole.

In December of 2008, Al Gore said—this is good. Al Gore said, “The entire—

That is a little over 5 years ago. Gore said, “The entire North polar icecap will disappear in 5 years.” It is now 5 years and 1 month past the deadline, December of 2013, and the Arctic ice is actually doing pretty well. Last month, BBC reported that the Arctic icecap coverage is close to 50 percent more than in the corresponding period in 2012. So contrary to what Al Gore predicted, that it would be gone by now, it did not disappear.

I had a good quote there by Richard Lindzen talking about Gore. This is Richard Lindzen, one of the foremost authorities, scientific authorities on climate anywhere in the world. He is MIT. He has been quoted extensively. He said, talking about Gore:

To treat all changes as something to fear is bad enough. To do it in order to exploit that fear is much worse.

I mentioned last night that the New York Times designated Al Gore as perhaps the first environmental billionaire in the United States. He said the entire North polar icecap would disappear in 5 years. It has actually increased substantially.

Last night they talked about the IPCC is the gold standard of climate science. Senator WHITEHOUSE defended the credibility of the IPCC despite climategate, saying last night:

So after all that, after six published reviews whose results confirmed that there was nothing wrong with the science as a result of these emails—

We are talking about climategate now.

—for people to continue to come to the floor and suggest that the email chains revealed some flaw in the data or some flaw in the science, it's untrue. It's as simple as that. It's just not true.

But we know this is not the case. The emails are very clear that the scientists were manipulating the data to generate a result they wanted. This is what some of the emails disclose: One of the scientists said, and the emails disclosed, that the IPCC was systematically distorting facts, cooking the science of global warming to either cover up data that did not tell the story they wanted everyone to hear and exaggerating the impacts of the changing climate to help drive people—out of fear—into action.

Here are two examples. We have about 12 examples. I have read them all in the past on the floor of the Senate. But here are a couple of examples of how the IPCC was cooking the science. The IPCC claimed the Himalayan glaciers would melt by 2035. Of course it is not true. Yet it was put into the IPCC's fourth assessment report.

The assessment report is a report the IPCC has that the media picks up and the public consumes. According to the Sunday Times, that is in the UK, this

claim was based off of a brochure that was used by the World Wildlife Fund to promote global warming activism. They put it on a brochure after finding a paper from a little-known scientist in India.

That scientist was wrong. According to the Times, Himalayan glaciers are so thick and at such a high altitude that most glaciologists believe it would take several hundred years to melt them at the present rate. More alarming, from the East Anglia University's Climatic Research Unit, the CRU, disturbing evidence was revealed that the climatologists had been increasingly cooking the books. One leaked email from 1999—keep in mind, these are the guys who are giving the science to the IPCC.

I've just completed Mike's Nature trick of adding the real temps to each series for the last 20 years, i.e., from 1981 onwards, and from 1961 for Keith's to hide the decline.

In other words, they were falsifying the increase in the temperature. What he is saying is that he changed the numbers to show the warming is happening when it has not happened.

Another e-mail that was revealed in 2009:

The fact is that we can't account for the lack of warming at the moment, and it is a travesty that we can't. Our observing system is inadequate.

Despite this, the IPCC has continued to say global warming is continuing to happen.

The media outcry from these email leaks was surprising because we did not hear as much about it in the United States as we did in the UK and other places. It seemed to be the mainstream press organizations that have been strong partners with the global warming activists, alarmists, that began to question their confidence in the whole premise.

Here are some quotes. Keep in mind these are from legitimate organizations, publications, major publications that are credible.

Christopher Booker of the UK, the Telegraph—one of the largest papers in the United Kingdom—said that what has happened with climate change is they are talking about falsifying the information to make the public believe this is actually happening. They said it is the “worst scientific scandal of our generation.” That is very serious, I say to the Presiding Officer, the “worst scientific scandal of our generation.”

Clive Crook of the Financial Times stated: “The closed mindedness of these supposed men of science . . . is surprising, even to me. The stink of intellectual corruption is overpowering.” That was from the Financial Times. We are all familiar with that publication.

A prominent IPCC physicist said: “Climategate was a fraud on a scale I've never seen.”

U.N. scientist Dr. Philip Lloyd said: “The result is NOT scientific.”

Newsweek magazine said: “Once celebrated climate researchers feeling like the used-car salesman.”

“Some of the IPCC's most quoted data and recommendations were taken straight out of unchecked activist brochures.”

George Monbiot is a columnist for the Guardian. He was on the other side of this issue. He was upset because people were finding out the truth and said: “It is no use pretending that this isn't a major blow. The emails extracted by a hacker from the climatic unit at the University of East Anglia could scarcely be more damaging . . . I'm dismayed and deeply shaken by them . . . I was too trusting of some of those who provided the evidence I championed. I would have been a better journalist if I had investigated their claims more closely.” He is one of the strongest supporters of global warming.

Last night we heard more and more, and now we get to the rest of the story, and that would be what is most important. I say this is the most important because many years ago—this would have been about 2002, when almost everyone believed the world was coming to an end and it was global warming that was causing it—they all talked about how it must be true. Frankly, I thought it was true at that time until we did some checking to find out what would it cost to regulate greenhouse gases. I mean, even if it were a legitimate problem that was destroying this country, what would it cost?

The first reports we got were from Charles Rivers and from the Wharton School. Some of their economists came up with it. The range is between \$300 to \$400 billion a year. This is based off of a regulatory threshold of 25,000 tons. This is very tough.

I have a good friend, Senator ED MARKEY, who was in the House with me for quite some time. We disagree on this issue, but the last bill that came up, the last legislation to force us to have a type of cap-and-trade, was based on capping these people who emit 25,000 tons or more. That is based off of the regulatory threshold of 25,000 tons. Only the largest facilities, such as oil refineries and powerplants, would have been affected. But doing by regulation what they cannot do by legislation, they have to do it under the Clean Air Act.

This is kind of under the weeds, but it is very important. I thought the bill was too costly for the American people. It would regulate those who emitted 25,000 tons or more, but the Clean Air Act would regulate those at 250 tons or more. That is every church, every school, every small shop would be covered, apartment buildings in America.

So when you stop and think about it, we have never been able to calculate. No one disagrees with the fact that if we did it through regulation, it would cost between \$300 to \$400 billion a year.

For those people who are listening right now, \$300 to \$400 billion a year may not mean too much. But every year I calculate, in my State of Oklahoma, how many people, families we have who file a federal tax return. Then I do the math. That would have meant \$3,000 to each family in the State of Oklahoma. So it is a big deal. That is what it would cost them.

While they are extremely costly, the agency is busy doing other things that also include other types of regulations. The ozone, for example, their regulation—and it hasn't gone through yet—all 77 of my counties in Oklahoma would be out of attainment. That would be 7,000 jobs lost in my State.

Utility MACT is something that has already been implemented. That is what put coal out of business—\$100 billion in cost, 1.65 million jobs.

Boiler MACT is already implemented also. Every manufacturing company has a boiler, and so they would regulate those boilers. The cost of that is \$63 billion, costing 800,000 jobs that were lost. That is already implemented.

The BLM fracking regulations would be about \$100,000 per well. On fracking, I can remember when hydraulic fracturing was something not many people knew much about. I did because the first hydraulic fracturing took place in my State of Oklahoma. It was 1948.

I remember when the last Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, Lisa Jackson, made the statement when I asked her the question live on TV—I said: Is it causing groundwater contamination? She is the one who said there has never been a documented case of groundwater contamination by using hydraulic fracturing.

President Obama, in his effort and his war on fossil fuels, is trying to stop them. We have heard him say several times: Well, we have good, cheap, abundant, plentiful natural gas to take care of our energy needs in America. That part was true, but then the next thing he said was: We have to stop hydraulic fracturing. Without hydraulic fracturing, we can't get 1 cubic foot of gas.

What I have tried to do is let the public know the cumulative impact of all of these regulations. A lot of people think of regulations as only affecting large corporations. If someone talks to Tom Buchanan of the State of Oklahoma—he was recently elected president of the Oklahoma Farm Bureau. If we ask him what the most critical thing is for the farmers in the State of Oklahoma, he will say the overregulation by the EPA. He said: Overregulation by the EPA is much more significant to the ag community in Oklahoma and across the country than anything in the farm bill.

So the cumulative impact of all of these regulations so far is about \$630 billion annually and about 9 million jobs lost.

I would only say that last night they had a good time talking about these things, and the same story was told over and over using a slightly different slant on it.

But in terms of the cost, this is the reason that they have tried ever since the Kyoto Convention. The first bill was introduced in 2002 and several of them since then. They were never able to pass a bill through the House and the Senate on regulating greenhouse gases because cap and trade is so costly.

But what people have to realize—I know right now as I speak that there are a lot of people out there who really believe global warming is happening, really believe the world is going to come to an end, really believe we are going to have to do something about it, and so we start in the United States. So knowing that these people are out there—and there are even people in my State of Oklahoma who have bought into this—when Lisa Jackson, who at that time—she is not there anymore. She was Obama's pick and was the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. I asked her the question on the record, live on TV in one of our committee hearings—I said: Let's assume that we pass legislation and that we impose the cost of \$300 to \$400 billion on the American taxpayer. If that is the case and if they did that, would that have the effect of reducing greenhouse gases worldwide? Her answer: No, it wouldn't, because the problem isn't in the United States; the problem is in China and India and Mexico and other places.

Now, you could carry out that argument even further and say that those people who want to do away with emissions and have cap and trade in the United States—that could cause it to have actually more, not less, emissions of CO₂ because we would be chasing our manufacturing base to countries that didn't have any requirements. So if you really believe it, then still it isn't true.

I would end with one more quote. Dr. Richard Lindzen of MIT, whom we talked about 1 minute ago, was asked this question: Why is it that so many of the bureaucrats, the very liberals who want government to be controlled from Washington, want our lives to be controlled from Washington, why is it that they are so concerned with carbon regulations? Richard Lindzen's answer was this: "Controlling carbon is a bureaucrat's dream. If you control carbon, you control life."

It is unfortunate. There are a lot of people even in this body who believe we should have much more power in the Senate. I can assure you that the problems we are facing now are problems because of too much power being concentrated in Washington, DC.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CHESAPEAKE BAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I have taken to the floor many times to talk about the Chesapeake Bay—the largest estuary in the Northern Hemisphere, and declared a national treasure by not only President Obama but by several U.S. Presidents.

For the 17 million people who live in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, it is part of their life. From the residents of Smith Island, which is the last inhabitable island in the Maryland part of the Chesapeake Bay, to those who enjoy fishing for rockfish in the bay, to its oysters, its crabs, the over 11,000 miles of shoreline created by the Chesapeake Bay, the 150 major rivers that feed into the Chesapeake Bay, and the \$1 trillion to the economy, the Chesapeake Bay is truly part of the life of those of us who are privileged to live in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

I have spoken about this bay many times because it is being threatened. Over 30 years ago, Maryland, Virginia, and Delaware, along with the EPA and other partners, entered into a Chesapeake Bay agreement.

This has grown to six States, including the Presiding Officer's State of West Virginia, and other governmental entities in the private sector. The Chesapeake Bay agreement has been revisited over time, and the most recent effort to update this agreement was the draft submitted by the Obama administration on January 29 of this year. This draft agreement is what I wish to speak about with my colleagues.

The development of sound policies to restore the Chesapeake Bay has been a top priority of mine over the course of my career in Congress. I have been fortunate to have great partners in Congress representing the Bay States. Together we have worked to develop effective conservation and ecosystem restoration programs in the farm bill, the Water Resources Development Act, the Clean Water Act, and elsewhere in law supporting a variety of conservation and ecosystem approaches across different sectors.

The Army Corps, USDA, and EPA are not the only Federal agencies doing important Chesapeake Bay work. NOAA, USGS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service are also important Federal partners in the broader effort to restore the Bay.

President Obama's May 2009 Chesapeake Bay Executive order recognized both the national interest in restoring

the Chesapeake Bay and improving Federal coordination of restoration efforts because of a wide-ranging involvement of different departments and agencies of the Federal Government. The coordination of seven jurisdictions, hundreds of local communities, seven cabinet-level Federal departments, and stakeholders of all stripes have necessitated the development of the Chesapeake Bay agreement to affirm the conservation goals of everyone involved in this effort.

I wish to stress the importance of broad involvement of all stakeholders in the effort to restore the Chesapeake Bay. The populations living and working in the bay watershed must realize we are all in this together. The major stakeholders in regard to our conservation action include farmers. Farming is not only a way of life in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, it is a desirable activity within the Chesapeake Bay watershed for the future of the Chesapeake Bay. But there are certain challenges as a result of farming as it relates to nitrogen in the bay and in the sediments.

Developers. We are proud of the fact people want to live in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. We have seen a major increase in population. But with that comes the challenge of storm runoff, and we have to do a better job of preventing storm runoff dumping pollution into the bay, and the municipalities which are responsible for the growth of populations have to deal with how they treat wastewater, and the wastewater treatment plants need to be updated so we can have the maximum results in removing the pollution which otherwise would end up threatening the future of the bay.

The Chesapeake Bay agreement outlines a fairly comprehensive approach to continuing efforts to restore the bay which is dependent upon all stakeholders doing their part. The draft agreement is a good outline, but there is room for improvement in the draft agreement as well. I hope that while the agreement is in this period of public comment, the final will be approved.

The Chesapeake Bay program partnership was formed in 1983, when the Governors of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, the Mayor of the District of Columbia, the chair of the Chesapeake Bay Commission, and the EPA signed the first Chesapeake Bay agreement. For more than 30 years these entities have remained committed to the goal of restoring the Chesapeake Bay. As the science has determined and the interest in Bay stewardship has broadened, this partnership has since expanded to become a basin-wide effort where all six States of the basin are now party to the agreement.

Working together to achieve the various goals of the agreement is what will help ensure the Chesapeake Bay

we will leave for our children is healthier tomorrow than it is today. The agreement does acknowledge the partnership cannot address every goal in the agreement instantaneously. Certainly some goals may take longer to realize than others, but all the goals are achievable, and some I think should be even more ambitious. They are based upon best science. We think science needs to judge what we can do as far as cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay.

The agreement wisely suggests action be taken in a strategic and cost-effective manner. We want to make sure this is doable. We understand the burdens which can be caused. We want to make sure this is layered in a way which achieves best science results but does it in the most cost-effective manner.

Of the principles laid out in the agreement, I wish to acknowledge the partnership's commitment to transparency and consensus building. We want all stakeholders involved in the process, and we want local involvement. We think local governments know how we can best achieve our results. The goals of the agreement deal with very sensitive issues such as natural land preservation, nutrient pollution reduction, and others.

The process must be fair and open. The strategic development process and achieving the agreement's conservation goals must be devised in an all-inclusive manner which is open to the public so that all are included in the process.

There is a great deal of skepticism in certain communities about the government's role and its actions to protect and restore the bay. I have heard that skepticism from certain constituencies. I have learned that having an open dialog with stakeholders, carefully explaining intentions, listening to concerns, and answering questions goes a long way toward building consensus and acceptance.

The agreement acknowledges the role the bay TMDL plays in achieving the water quality goals of the bay. A majority of the waters of the Chesapeake Bay are within the boundaries of the State of Maryland. Thousands of Maryland watermen make their living on the bay. The property value and tourism draw of communities up and down the Eastern and Western Shores of Maryland, not to mention the Marylanders who swim and fish in the bay, all depend upon a healthy bay.

But there is no degree of action Maryland can take on its own, no matter how drastic, which will improve the bay quality—not without the other five States and the District of Columbia in the watershed doing their part as well. The TMDL assures that all Bay States are coordinated in their efforts to improve bay water quality. The agreement acknowledges the importance of the TMDL.

The TMDL gives us a level playing field so we can make sure all stakeholders in all geographical areas are treated fairly in achieving the goals of reducing pollution in the bay. I support the fisheries goal of the agreement. Restoring the iconic Maryland blue crab in the bay is important for so many reasons. The agreement sets the goal of maintaining a population of 215 female adult crabs through 2025. Blue crabs are a vital part of the food chain throughout the bay's ecosystem and they are at the heart of the Mid-Atlantic's multibillion dollar seafood industry.

Restoration of native oyster habitat and replenishing the bay's oyster population is critical from both an economic and water quality standpoint. The agreement sets the goals of restoring native oyster habitat and populations to the ten tributaries of the bay by 2025.

As I am sure the Presiding Officer is aware, our oyster population is a fraction of historic levels. The oyster is not only an important cash crop in the bay; it also acts as a filter to the pollution in the bay, restoring bay water quality. Bay oysters are another important seafood commodity for watermen making their living on the bay. Oysters are also important to improving water quality. Oysters are bivalve mollusks which play an important role in reducing nitrogen pollution in the bay.

Oyster populations had been in sharp decline due to the destruction of oyster beds along the seafloor of the bay. Habitat restoration efforts led by the Army Corps, the growth of oyster farming operations, and Virginia and Maryland's efforts are helping oysters rebound across the bay, which is good for the economy and water quality of the bay.

The agreement's wildlife habitat and wetlands restoration goals are, in my opinion, too low. I would encourage the partnership to consider setting more ambitious goals. Wetland restoration is critical to flood protection and water quality improvement as well as providing important duck habitat and fish spawning habitat.

Reauthorizing the North American Wetland Conservation Act, which I am a cosponsor of and was happy to see the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee recently report with unanimous support, will provide additional financial and technical assistance to help achieve improved wetlands conservation in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Programs such as the North American Wetland Conservation Act, the Corps' Chesapeake Bay Ecosystem Restoration Program, and the farm bill's Regional Conservation Partnership Program, along with numerous State efforts to restore wetlands and habitats across the six-State region, are why I believe the agreement can do better.

I also believe the agreement's goals to improve fish passage along the bay's rivers and tributaries could be more ambitious. The agreement aims to open an additional 1,000 stream miles to fish passage. The revisions to the Continuing Authorities Program in WRDA will help fund critical dam removal projects around the watershed which will improve fish passage. If the decisions to remove dams and other barriers to fish passage are strategically made, this goal could be far exceeded, which is why I think the goal should be revised and be based upon the execution of strategic fish passage projects. This would include improving eel passage on the Conowingo Dam. I am pleased to know that the dam's operators are aware of and interested in helping us devise practical solutions.

With respect to the agreement's goals on forest buffer and tree canopy, I believe there is room for improvement in the goals the draft agreement sets. The agreement sets the goal of restoring 900 miles of riparian forest per year and expands the urban tree canopy by 2,400 acres by 2025. This seems to be low given the opportunity which exists to grow more trees in urban areas because of how desirable trees are to improving the quality of life and character of urban communities and importance of trees to reducing storm water runoff in urban areas.

The agreement sets the goal of protecting an additional 2 million acres of land throughout the watershed. This is critically important to stem poor land-use planning and sprawl while also establishing lands which serve as critical water quality improvement mechanisms.

One omission from this land conservation goal I think is important is to ensure public access to lands conserved by the State, local, and Federal Government. Public-preserved for the purpose of protecting habitat and improving the ecosystem within the watershed is important, but so is providing outdoor recreational access to the public. After all, ensuring public access to conservation lands and encouraging people to experience these lands is critical to building the public's understanding of the environment and developing an appreciation for all conservation efforts happening around the watershed.

In Maryland, my colleague in the House, Congressman SARBANES, has been very instrumental in the leadership of No Child Left Inside. By this we mean the education of our children including getting outdoors to understand the importance of the Chesapeake Bay and understanding what they can do to help the bay. Access to these restoration projects—by the public, by our students, by all—helps build the support base we need to get these programs moving forward and also understanding what we do here in the water-

shed and the importance it has on the future of the Chesapeake Bay.

Lastly, I wish to speak about a couple issues the agreement does not address. Reducing the presence or improving the secure storage of toxic chemicals in use around the watershed is a growing problem. As the Presiding Officer knows, while the recent chemical spill in West Virginia was not in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, the incident does highlight the risk facilities such as the one which failed in Charleston pose to our great water bodies. In the Chesapeake Bay watershed there are dozens of chemical storage facilities and industrial activities which use toxic chemicals on a regular basis. Improving the security and reducing the contamination risks from these facilities should be a part of the Chesapeake Bay agreement.

The agreement also makes no mention of the single greatest threat to the bay and the world over. Adapting to the effects of climate change should also be part of the bay restoration plan. I talked about this earlier today, as many of the Senators who came to the floor to talk about climate change: Rising sea levels pose threats to the hundreds of Chesapeake Bay communities and millions of people who live in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Aquatic acidification poses a long-term threat to all aquatic species, including blue crabs, oysters, rockfish, sturgeon, menhaden, and other hallmark species of the bay. If the fish and shellfish go, so does a way of life for many thousands of families around the bay.

Let's deal with these problems. We have a chance in the Chesapeake Bay agreement to be more ambitious in dealing with acidification in our ocean and in the bay. And we must adapt our water infrastructure to handle the effects of more intense weather events in the bay region to reduce the water quality impacts of these events and to protect individuals' property.

The agreement is an important step toward the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Billions have been spent and progress has been made. And I wish to stress that we have made progress. We have done a lot of good things in the Chesapeake Bay. But our resources are large and fragile and face unprecedented pressure, and it is going to continue to take increased resources to restore and protect for future generations. So the good news is we have made progress.

We can do much more. We can preserve the iconic Chesapeake Bay for future generations, so people, our children and grandchildren, can enjoy the fishing, crabbing, swimming, and the sheer beauty of the Chesapeake Bay, and can benefit from its economic importance to our region. We can do this for future generations.

Let's be more ambitious in the Chesapeake Bay agreement. Let's work

together, use best science, and be practical. But let's be on a constant path of improving the Chesapeake Bay.

Mr. President, I would suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask for unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DOMESTIC FUEL TAX

Mr. HOEVEN. This morning I spoke on the floor and I talked about energy. I talked about the need for a States first, all-of-the-above approach to a comprehensive energy plan that will not only produce more energy for our country but will get us to energy independence or energy security within a very short period of time and will also help with environmental stewardship and will help us deploy the technology that will not only produce more energy—and do it in a dependable, cost effective way—but at the same time the same technology as we deploy it will help us produce that energy with better environmental stewardship.

That is the right kind of plan for America. We have legislation that I introduced along with my colleagues both on the Republican side of the aisle and the Democratic side of the aisle to accomplish that plan, including a good friend of mine, a Senator from West Virginia, a Democrat. I am a Republican, but we have been able to work together on legislation that will empower hundreds of billions in private investment into the energy sector to produce more energy more cost-effectively, more independently, more efficiently, more reliably, and with better environmental stewardship because it deploys the new technologies that not only will make a difference in this country, but will be adopted by other countries around the globe.

That means lower-cost energy. That means more energy, and at the same time better environmental stewardship. That is the right approach. That is the right approach to a comprehensive energy policy.

The fact is, we do not just have one bill to do what I am talking about—not just one big, monolithic Federal approach—but rather we have a whole series of bills that would create a step-by-step approach to a comprehensive energy plan for this Nation that would truly create a States first, all-of-the-above approach. That would create more jobs and economic growth. It would create tax revenue to help address our deficit and our debt without raising taxes through economic growth.

It would create more domestic energy, and more domestic energy means

national security, not being dependent on oil from the Middle East. This country does not want to be dependent on oil from the Middle East and there is no reason that we should be. Together with our closest friend and ally Canada, we can produce more than enough energy for our needs. That means national security, and as I said, with the new technologies and better environmental stewardship.

As I said, I put forward legislation with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to accomplish just that. Again, this isn't one big, comprehensive 1,000-page bill that you have to pass to understand what is in it. These are individual bills that are very understandable, that are common sense—legislation that includes approval of the Keystone XL Pipeline. As I said this morning, the administration has been reviewing the Keystone XL Pipeline for more than 5 years. This Congress can approve it, and it should.

It includes items such as the Domestic Energy and Jobs Act, which has already been passed by the House. It includes a whole series of bills that would help us to develop a strategic, comprehensive plan and goals to make sure we are producing more energy in this country on public lands both onshore and off.

The Empower States Act makes sure that States have a primary responsibility for regulating hydraulic fracture. Hydraulic fracturing is enabling us to tap new areas of energy that we never thought we would be able to develop.

Coal ash recycling legislation. Together with my good friend from the great State of West Virginia, we have a coal ash recycling bill. This bill not only will help us recycle coal ash for building materials, for building roads, but it will also help make sure that when we landfill coal ash, it is done with good environmental stewardship. That is a win-win.

This is something the EPA is working on. They have to have a solution in place by the end of the year, and we have worked with the EPA to actually come up with something that is clear and understandable and works, not only to make the landfill safer but to make sure we can recycle coal ash in a way that reduces the cost of our roads and our buildings. Again, just another commonsense example of what is in the Domestic Fuels Act.

The Domestic Fuels Act allows marketers, gas stations, to not only sell oil and gas products but actually makes it easier for them to sell renewable fuel as well—ethanol, biofuels, hopefully hydrogen and other fuels of the future. It makes it easier for them to get permitted and to use the same equipment to sell a whole variety of different types of fuels. What does that mean? That means consumer choice. That means more competition to help bring

down the price at the pump. Now this is the same kind of comprehensive plan that we developed in my State of North Dakota. We called our energy plan EmPower ND—EmPower North Dakota.

The idea was to unleash all of our energy resources, both traditional and renewable. Our State is now an energy powerhouse for the Nation. The only State that produces more oil for this country now is Texas. We are closing in on a million barrels a day of oil, and producing it in new ways with new techniques that people thought were not possible a few years ago, and with a smaller footprint and better stewardship. That is what the technology does.

When you create an environment where you empower the investment, that technology unleashes the energy and does it with better environmental stewardship. We did that as a State, and we can do it as a country. It builds on the very foundation of how our government works.

The States in our great country are the laboratories of democracy. What I am proposing is that we also make the States the laboratories of energy development. We do that by giving them the primary role in how they develop energy, how they develop their energy resources and how those energy resources are regulated.

So whether it is oil or gas or nuclear or biofuels, hydro, wind, solar, biomass or whatever else may be an area of strength for that State, they decide and they figure out how to develop it. Who will be more concerned about good environmental stewardship than the people who live right there and deal with it every single day?

It is a States first, all-of-the-above comprehensive plan for energy development for this country instead of the current approach, an approach where there is too much regulation, taxation, and restriction by big Federal policies. This one-size-fits-all approach is, in fact, preventing investment in energy development in this country.

I will give you the Keystone XL Pipeline as a great case in point. There is \$5.3 billion in investment and not one penny of Federal spending, but \$5.3 billion that has been held on the sideline now for more than 5 years. In 2011 the Chamber of Commerce put forward a study. They cited hundreds of projects across the country totaling hundreds of billions of dollars that were being held up that would create energy and jobs and economic activity for our country. If you think about it, you cannot regulate it. The Federal Government cannot regulate our way to a solution—think about it—even if you put out regulations. If the Obama administration could say, OK, only these kind of energies can be produced and they have to be produced this way—even if that worked in this country, what about the rest of the globe?

This is a global issue. So instead of holding up the development and de-

ployment of these new technologies with regulatory barriers, we need to empower that investment. As you empower investment and you produce energy and you deploy new technologies, you get better environmental stewardship.

It doesn't happen in just this country. It will happen in other countries too. Why? Because they will adopt the technology we develop. That is how it works. When somebody develops a better technology, then other companies, other countries adopt it.

So let me contrast what is going on right now. One of the things I worked on both as a Governor and now here in the Senate is getting the Keystone XL Pipeline approved. It has been more than 5 years—more than 5 years—and the administration still refuses to make a decision. That is defeat by delay, sidelining \$5.3 billion of private investment that the administration's own studies show will create jobs. The final environmental impact study produced by the Department of State said that the Keystone XL Pipeline project will create 42,000 jobs without spending a penny of Federal money. The \$5.3 billion in private investment would create 42,000 jobs at a time when we need to get the economy growing and creating jobs. It also will create hundreds of millions in revenue that will address the deficit and the debt at the local, State, and Federal level. It will also create hundreds of millions in revenue over many years at a time when we have deficit and debt without raising taxes. It also strengthens national security.

There is no question when you go to the public and say: Do we want to get our oil from the Middle East or would we rather get our oil from right here in the United States and Canada, if we can produce it ourselves and get it from Canada, is that what we want or do we want to continue to rely on the Middle East, obviously that is a pretty easy answer, isn't it?

In a recent public poll performed last week, March 7, by the Washington Post and ABC, two-thirds of Americans support building the Keystone XL Pipeline and 22 percent oppose. After 5 years and study after study, the administration still can't make a decision. Yet two-thirds of Americans know what we need to do. Two-thirds of the American people say: Build the pipeline. What are you waiting for? Only 22 percent oppose it.

The final environmental impact—I believe it is either the fourth or fifth environmental impact study—done by the Obama administration came out and again it showed there was no significant environmental impact. That was released at the end of January.

The inspector general's report that was released at the end of February said there was no conflict of interest by the company hired to do the environmental impact statement. Yet still

we wait. There is still no decision. So you wonder why. You look at our economy and you say: Why isn't our economy growing faster? Why isn't our economy stronger? Why isn't unemployment going down? Why is there so much investment capital sidelined? Why aren't businesses growing? Why aren't small businesses growing? Why aren't small businesses across the country hiring people? Then we see regulations which are holding up approvals for more than 5 years. Maybe that is the answer.

America has always been the place where everybody came to do business because it was easier to do business. As a result our economy has always been the greatest economy in the world. When we have a government that can't even make a decision on a regulatory approval to approve a project billions of dollars after its own agency has come out time and time again and said there is no reason not to go forward, maybe that is the problem.

Obviously the people of this country know that. That is why when you go out and ask them a commonsense question, they give you a commonsense answer: Build the pipeline. We listened to the arguments about how we can't build the pipeline because of CO₂ emissions because using oil from the oil sands in Alberta, Canada, will create CO₂.

The reality is—and as the environmental impact study done by the State Department clearly shows—you have more CO₂ emissions without the pipeline than you do building it. How does that make sense? How does it make sense to hold it up on the basis of CO₂ emissions when you have more CO₂ emissions without the pipeline than with it?

Of course the net result is instead of having the energy come to the United States, it goes to China. And what do we do? We keep importing oil from the Middle East.

What I am talking about is commonsense legislation. That was just one example. I can give you others.

Earlier this year we passed a bill I put forward with other Members. It is the BLM bill, Bureau of Land Management streamlining bill. It is a simple, commonsense bill. It simply says BLM offices can work across State lines. For example, the BLM office in Miles City, MT, can work across the State line in North Dakota. That just makes sense because we have so much oil activity in our State. Not only can they work in our State, they can also work on the reservation.

We have the three affiliated tribes reservations: Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara. It is a very large reservation in our State with incredible oil activity, but they have to get all these regulatory permits to drill wells too, and the Bureau of Land Management could not keep up in our State or on the res-

ervation. Now they can bring their people from other offices in to help.

When we look at this, it is not just about producing more energy, is it? That is a simple, commonsense act which we passed in both this Chamber and the House. It is now law. It not only helps us produce more energy in our States, such as North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, and other places, but it also helps our reservations.

We now have activity on the three affiliated tribes' reservations. They have tremendous employment and tremendous growth. They are getting revenue from their oil wells that they can use for social programs to help needy families, to pay for education, and to use for roads and vital infrastructure.

Tomorrow—along with Senator BARRASSO and Senator ENZI of Wyoming—we will introduce another similar bill that makes it easier to build gas-gathering systems both on reservations and off. Instead of flaring off gas at the wellhead site, you are able to build gathering systems and get that gas to pipelines and get it to market and use it. Again, that is not just about producing more energy; that is an example of better environmental stewardship.

By putting these commonsense measures into place, we create economic activity and more energy, but as I said from the outset, we get better environmental stewardship. I mentioned that the Domestic Energy and Jobs Act is part of that comprehensive plan to have the States first all-of-the-above energy approach for our country; that legislation will help us produce more energy both onshore and offshore on our public lands.

Again, that is good for all the reasons I have identified but think about it in this context too: By producing more energy on public lands, we will also create more revenue for the Federal Government. Without raising taxes, we create more revenue for the Federal Government. That is important to address our deficit and our debt.

We have something else coming up that we are going to have to find a revenue source for; that is, a highway bill. In September the highway bill expires, and we are going to have to have a highway bill. We want a 5-year highway bill that is a very strong, well-funded highway bill to address the infrastructure needs in this country. Whether you talk to Republicans or Democrats in this Chamber, they will tell you we need to address infrastructure across this country.

In order to address infrastructure, we have to have a way to pay for it. How are we going to pay for it? How are we going to pay for that next highway bill? Right now the trust fund doesn't have the money to do it, so we are going to have to find a source. How about we tap into more energy on our Federal lands onshore and offshore?

Without raising taxes, we have a revenue source so we can actually pass a 5-year highway bill. That is a long-term revenue source that we can actually use to fund the highway bill and address the infrastructure in this country.

It is about more than energy. This commonsense approach to building an energy plan for our country—and again it is not that big 1,000-page, one-size-fits-all Federal approach where everybody has to do the same thing. It is a step-by-step process to build a comprehensive plan that empowers the States to build on their strengths and make things happen. We can do it. It has all of those benefits. As I mentioned earlier, it even comes down to our national security.

I will close on this point: Think about what is happening in Western Europe. We have a situation where Russia—President Putin has decided he is going to invade Ukraine and he is going to take Crimea and put it under Russian rule and maybe more. We will see. So what do we do? What does the European Union do?

One of the decisions the European Union has to address is the energy situation. They are asking: What is the energy situation in Europe? Right now 30 percent of the natural gas the European Union utilizes comes from Russia and half of that goes through Ukraine. It is a particularly acute issue for West Germany.

What do they do? Are they going to be willing to get tough with Putin when they are dependent on Russia for their natural gas for their energy? What decision do they make?

The same thing for our country: What decisions do we make when we continue to get our oil from places such as the Middle East and Venezuela? We say no to getting oil from Canada and force our closest friend and ally to turn to exporting that oil to China.

How do we deal with China? How are we dealing in that situation with our allies, such as Canada, that want to work with us, and how are we dealing with countries that have different interests than we do?

All of these things tie together to a good energy plan and a good energy policy. We all want better environmental stewardship, but we want solutions. The American people want solutions. They want commonsense, real solutions to address these problems. We put forward an approach that can make a big difference for our country, and I call on my colleagues to join with me and to work to put that in place for the good of our country today and for future generations.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO SHAUN CAREY

Mr. REID. Madam President, I rise today to honor and thank Shaun Carey, who is retiring from his position as Sparks city manager on April 4, 2014.

After serving the city of Sparks for over 20 years, Sparks native Shaun Carey leaves behind an impressive legacy of accomplishments. He played a major role in streamlining city services, in building Golden Eagle Regional Park—one of the largest artificial turf sports complexes in the United States—and in turning an abandoned hole in the ground into the Sparks Marina, a community gathering point and anchor for further development. Mr. Carey has also helped lead city staff in rebranding Sparks as a premier event destination, hosting events in “downtown” Victorian Square and throughout the city.

Shaun Carey grew up in Nevada, graduating from Sparks High School in 1975 and receiving his civil engineering degree from the University of Nevada, Reno shortly thereafter. Mr. Carey began his career in public service in 1982 and worked as a civil engineer, traffic engineer, and city engineer throughout the West before he returned to Sparks in 1992 to assume the position of public works director. He held this position for 7 years, becoming assistant city manager in 1999. Just 1 year later, in 2000, he was named City Manager.

Mr. Carey’s training as an engineer reflected his desire to create systems designed to improve citizens’ lives. This background also explains his longevity and success as a public servant; as he told the Sparks Tribune, “I got to do things I enjoyed. I got to be a part of building communities and producing things that I found very rewarding.”

Geno Martini, the mayor of Sparks, spoke eloquently of Mr. Carey’s contributions to the Silver State, saying, “I can’t find a big-enough word to tell you how I feel about Shaun and the professionalism, dedication, and commitment he has shown for more than two decades . . . [He] has gotten things done, and is largely why so many residents are proud to call Sparks home.”

We thank Mr. Carey for proudly serving his hometown of Sparks and wish

him, his wife Jane, and his sons Scott and Pat all the best.

VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President, had I been here yesterday, I would have voted for S. 1917, the Victims Protection Act of 2014. This important bill would increase protections for victims of sexual assault in the Armed Forces, while retaining commanders’ authority to convene courts martial.

Every allegation, every anecdote, and every instance of sexual assault in our military is unacceptable. An important debate has been taking place in Congress and among our Armed Forces, and I am grateful that we aren’t sitting idly by while this problem claims more victims and threatens the integrity and effectiveness of our Nation’s military.

We have heard from the victims, and we have recognized that change was needed to protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable. With that knowledge, Congress included over 30 reforms in last year’s national defense authorization Act, NDAA, including removing the ability of commanders to overturn jury convictions; requiring review of decisions not to refer charges; criminalizing retaliation against victims; and providing special victims’ counsel to victims of sexual assault to support and assist them through all proceedings.

The Armed Forces have also instituted major reforms and worked hard to improve the reporting climate for victims. As a result, the Marine Corps, for example, has seen a large increase in sexual assault reporting since initiating a sexual assault prevention and response campaign last year.

I supported the NDAA reforms as well as the measure the Senate passed yesterday. We should give these reforms the opportunity to work before enacting any change that would take the matter out of the chain of command. Some very strong voices agree.

First, according to a congressionally mandated independent panel that examined the role of the commander reported definitively that it would be a mistake to remove the chain of command’s authority to convene courts martial. That panel, called the Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel, also found that removing courts-martial authority would not reduce the incidence of sexual assault, increase reporting of sexual assaults, improve the quality of prosecutions, increase the conviction rate, increase confidence among victims about the fairness of the military justice system, or reduce concerns about potential retaliation.

The independent panel also examined our allies’ military justice systems in Israel, the UK, Australia, and Canada for comparison and concluded that

none of the improvements they witnessed in the reporting of sexual assault in their militaries were connected to the role of the commander. The panel also found that there was no evidence that removing the commander from the decisionmaking process increased reporting of incidences of sexual assault.

Second, Vice Admiral DeRenzi, Judge Advocate General in the U.S. Navy, has spoken eloquently about the issue and underscored the essential role of the commander in solving the problem in testimony before SASC and before the Response Systems Panel. I encourage everyone to read her full testimony before these panels. In addition to urging Congress to retain commanders’ authority, it details major reforms implemented in the Navy in the past 3 years and demonstrates the Navy’s commitment to eradicating sexual assault from their ranks. I would like to highlight some of her statements for the record.

In her testimony, Admiral DeRenzi said:

“Beyond the immeasurable toll on individual victims, sexual assault is an existential threat to our core values and directly impacts operational readiness and unit cohesion. This is rightfully recognized as a leadership issue, not merely a legal issue. Exemplifying this commitment, the Navy implemented a multi-faceted, commander driven approach to address awareness and training, prevention, victim response, and accountability.”

“Permanent, effective change must be implemented through our commanders.”

“Additionally, any legislation must retain the commander’s authority over his or her Sailors. Commanders are responsible and accountable for the safety, health and welfare of their people; commanders must have authority commensurate with this responsibility, and that includes the authority to maintain good order and discipline.”

My commitment to taking decisive action when necessary to ensure the security and success of our men and women in uniform had me support the reforms in the most recent NDAA and support Senator MCCASKILL’s bill. Taken together, these reforms meaningfully will change how our Armed Forces address the scourge of military sexual assaults, but they do so in a way that recognizes the unique purpose of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and ensures that our commanders have the tools they need to facilitate that much needed, long-overdue change.

REMEMBERING THOMAS EDWARD

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, I was saddened to learn of the passing of Thomas Edward “Ed” Braswell, Jr., and I offer my sincerest condolences to his family. Two former chairmen of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Sam Nunn and John Warner, joined in expressing their gratitude for Mr. Braswell’s exemplary service at a recent committee hearing.

Mr. Braswell joined the Armed Services Committee staff in 1953 and served as staff director and chief counsel to the committee under the leadership of two of the titans of the Senate—Richard Russell and John Stennis—for 23 years. Mr. Braswell served the committee from the beginning of the Eisenhower Presidency to the end of Gerald Ford's, helping see the committee through most of the Cold War and all of the Vietnam war and its aftermath. As chief counsel to the committee, Mr. Braswell helped to write the first of our annual National Defense Authorization Acts in 1962, and stayed on long enough to play a key role in the next 14 NDAA's, helping start a tradition of legislative accomplishment that continues to this day.

The Armed Services Committee has been blessed over the years with a number of staff members who have served the committee for a period of decades, dedicating their careers to the committee, the Congress, our national security, and our men and women in uniform and their families. Our staffers work behind the scenes, providing us with the informed advice that we need as we consider the myriad of national security issues facing the Department of Defense and the Congress. The long hours and large workloads required for such a career often require significant sacrifices by both our staffers and their families. Without the advice and assistance of these committed public servants, the business of the Senate could not be carried out.

Ed Braswell began his career by serving in the old Army Air Corps during World War II. He went on to go to Harvard Law School and worked briefly for the Department of Justice before joining the committee staff. In addition to his hefty commitments in the U.S. Senate, Mr. Braswell also made time to give back to his community. He served as the chairman of the Alexandria Planning Commission for more than 30 years and was instrumental in many of the commission's historic preservation efforts.

I know my Senate colleagues join me in recognizing the mighty contributions of our staff members, both past and present. It is the hard work and dedication of individuals like Ed Braswell who make our work possible, and for that we are very grateful.

2014 PARALYMPIANS

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I wish to recognize the impressive accomplishments of the New Hampshire athletes who will be representing the United States this month in the 2014 Winter Paralympics in Sochi, Russia.

These athletes are an inspiration to all of New Hampshire and athletes around the country. They have exhibited incredible dedication to their respective sports and have proven their

remarkable abilities in competitions nationally and internationally. A selection to the U.S. Paralympic team is a great honor and a fitting reward for their years of hard work and training.

With access to the unparalleled beauty and terrain of the White Mountains, thousands of miles of trails, and nearly 1,000 lakes, Granite Staters are at home on the snow, on the ice and in the air.

New Hampshire is proud to acknowledge our State's Paralympians and is excited to show the world their talents during the Sochi games.

Taylor Chace of Hampton Falls, NH will be competing in sled hockey. A 3-time Paralympian, a member of the defending Paralympic gold medal sled hockey team and reigning top defenseman from the 2010 Paralympic Games, Taylor will hopefully help Team USA win the gold medal again.

Chris Devlin-Young of Bethlehem, NH will be competing in alpine skiing. As a five-time member of Team USA and 4-time Paralympic medalist, we are excited to see Chris compete again on the Paralympic stage and hope that he can regain the podium in Sochi.

Tyler Walker of Franconia, NH will be competing in alpine skiing. We are rooting for Tyler who is representing Team USA for the third time, and are hopeful that his previous Paralympic experience and recent successes at the World Cup and U.S. Paralympics Alpine Skiing National Championships will translate into victory this year in Sochi.

Each member of the U.S. Paralympics team has overcome incredible challenges and with their resolve, hard work and courage, they represent the best of our Nation.

It is my honor to congratulate these New Hampshire athletes. I wish each of them, and all of Team USA, the best of luck as they seek to bring home the gold at the 2014 Sochi Winter Paralympics.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIE DAVIS, JR.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, I wish to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the distinguished public servant and deacon, Mayor Willie Davis, Jr. Mayor Davis began his tenure as Mayor in 1992, though evidence of his service begins much sooner. During the Korean Conflict, Mayor Davis served the country he loved as a member of the United States Army. He also happily served Zion Hill Missionary Baptist Church as a diligent and hard-working deacon, treasurer, and Sunday school teacher for over 20 years.

Mayor Willie Davis, Jr. devoted his career to building up his city of Farmerville and continuing to expedite its economic development. During his four terms as Mayor of Farmerville, Mayor Davis was instrumental in constructing the Farmerville Recreation

Center which now bears his name. He also helped to build new police and fire complexes and led the expansion of ConAgra Poultry facilities into Farmerville.

Perhaps Mayor Davis' most memorable impression came from his relationships with the constituents that he served, and even those that he did not. Mayor Davis met no strangers; he was a mentor to many, an example to others, and a friend to all. Mayor Davis' motto and the words that he lived by, "May the work I've done, speak for me," became more than just his campaign slogan. Let us remember his words as we reflect on his life, the great works that filled it, and his impact on Farmerville and the entire State of Louisiana.

Mayor Davis has been and continues to be an inspiration to all those who have benefitted from his 16 year career as Mayor of Farmerville and his decades of service to his church and community. It is with my heartfelt and greatest sincerity that I ask my colleagues to join me along with Mayor Willie Davis Jr.'s family in recognizing the life and many accomplishments of this incredible Mayor, mentor, and deacon, as well as his lasting impact throughout the Nation.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

KCAM RADIO

• Mr. BEGICH. Madam President, 50 years ago KCAM AM Radio 790 in Glennallen, AK, began airing its signal. Today I commend this remarkable achievement.

KCAM signed on the air March 27, 1964, the day of the magnitude 9.2 Good Friday Earthquake that devastated Anchorage and caused a tsunami that wiped out Valdez and other coastal communities. The community of Glennallen also felt the effects of the quake.

KCAM had not yet received Federal Communications Commission permission to broadcast, but since their tower was undamaged, the Civil Defense Authority asked the station to go live under Emergency Orders. They signed on and kept residents, emergency workers, and those fleeing the damaged areas up-to-date.

It was quite a beginning for a shoe-string station that was founded five decades ago by the late Vince Joy. In 2014, the station is still going strong with a state-of-the-art studio, reaching listeners throughout the Copper River Valley via the airwaves and online streaming.

Along the way, KCAM has earned awards from the Associated Press and was named Inspirational Station of the Year by Skylight Network and Small Market Station of the Year by Focus on the Family.

I want to extend my congratulations to the current crew at the station, including president and manager Scott Yahr, program director Michelle Eastty, special projects manager Roger Bovee, and countless other staff and interns over the years who helped keep it going.

As part of their celebration, a newly released book commemorates 50 years of uninterrupted operation by chronicling stories from listeners who have been affected by the broadcasting and reprinting their photos. Anyone who has lived in a small town knows that a radio station is often at the center of the fabric of the community. Such is the case with KCAM, which not only provides music, news, weather, sports, talk shows, and entertainment, but also sends personal messages and makes community announcements.

I send my best wishes to my friends at KCAM Radio, the "Voice of the Copper River Valley," as they observe their anniversary in April 2014.●

REMEMBERING JEFF BAYLESS

● Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, I wish to pay tribute to Jeff Bayless. Jeff was a senior captain in the Anchorage Fire Department. He was born and raised Alaskan, and lived his entire life bettering our great State. Jeff began his road to serve in 1986 when he became a certified State of Alaska EMT. He then went on to complete paramedic training, and began serving with the Mat-Su Borough EMS and the Central Mat-Su Fire Department.

In 1991, Jeff was hired by the Anchorage Fire Department. And in 1995 when the Fire Department Emergency Medical Services and Fire Operations merged, Jeff made the move from paramedic to firefighter. In May of 2005, Jeff's steadfast dedication was recognized when he was promoted to senior fire captain. He served at Fire Station 9 in South Anchorage and Fire Station 11 in Eagle River.

Although a hero in is chosen occupation, Jeff was also a champion in his community. As a North Star Bible Camp board member, a youth instructor, and with his involvement in the Alaska Fallen Firefighters Memorial Committee, he was a pillar of leadership and a stalwart example of selfless service.

Jeff died after participating in a training activity on Friday March 7, 2014. He will be sorely missed. His commitment to God, family, and community will be felt for generations to come. Jeff Bayless is truly an Alaskan hero, and we mourn with his wife, Gail, his entire family, and his brothers and sisters in the Fire Department.●

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message from the President of the United States was communicated to

the Senate by Mr. Thomas, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate a message from the President of the United States submitting a nomination which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

(The message received today is printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 4:43 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 2019. An act to eliminate taxpayer financing of political party conventions and reprogram savings to provide for a 10-year pediatric research initiative through the Common Fund administered by the National Institutes of Health, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 4152. An act to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine.

S. 2110. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and to improve Medicare and Medicaid payments, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4860. A communication from the Chair, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4861. A communication from the Acting Chairman, Consumer Product and Safety Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Agency Financial Report for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4862. A communication from the Director, Mississippi River Commission, Department of the Army, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Annual Report for calendar year 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4863. A communication from the Chairman, Farm Credit System Insurance Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the requirements of the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act and the Inspector General Act of 1978; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4864. A communication from the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Farm

Credit Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administration's annual report concerning its compliance with the Sunshine Act for calendar year 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4865. A communication from the Administrator of the General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Administrator's Semiannual Management Report to Congress; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4866. A communication from the Chief Financial Officer of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to financial integrity for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4867. A communication from the Chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Semiannual Report of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2013 through September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4868. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-281, "Annie's Way Designation Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4869. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-280, "Closing of a Public Alley in Square 150, S.O. 13-10218, Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4870. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-279, "Expedited Partner Therapy Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4871. A communication from the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Department's Semiannual Report from the Office of the Inspector General for the period from April 1, 2013 through September 30, 2013 and a report entitled "Compendium of Unimplemented Recommendations"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4872. A communication from the Chairman, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4873. A communication from the Acting Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Commission's Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4874. A communication from the Chairman, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's fiscal year 2013 Performance and Accountability Report; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4875. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Under Secretary for Intelligence and Analysis, Department of

Homeland Security, received during adjournment in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4876. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Department of Homeland Security, received during adjournment in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4877. A communication from the Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States, transmitting, a report of three recommendations and one statement adopted by the Administrative Conference of the United States at its 59th Plenary Session; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4878. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pay for Senior-Level and Scientific or Professional Positions" (RIN3206-AL88) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 5, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4879. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-288, "LGBTQ Homeless Youth Reform Amendment Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4880. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-289, "Public Service Commission and People's Counsel Terms of Service Harmonization Amendment Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4881. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 20-290, "Electric Company Infrastructure Improvement Financing Act of 2014"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4882. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "United States and Area Median Gross Income Figures" (Rev. Proc. 2014-23) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4883. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Method Changes for Tangible Property Disposition" (Rev. Proc. 2014-17) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4884. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Withholding of Tax on Certain U.S. Source Income Paid to Foreign Persons and Revision of Information Reporting and Backup Withholding Regulations" ((TD 9658) (RIN1545-BL18)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 10, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 361. A resolution recognizing the threats to freedom of the press and expression in the People's Republic of China and urging the Government of the People's Republic of China to take meaningful steps to improve freedom of expression as fitting of a responsible international stakeholder.

S. Res. 365. A resolution deploring the violent repression of peaceful demonstrators in Venezuela, calling for full accountability for human rights violations taking place in Venezuela, and supporting the right of the Venezuelan people to the free and peaceful exercise of representative democracy.

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment and with an amended preamble:

S. Res. 375. A resolution concerning the crisis in the Central African Republic and supporting United States and international efforts to end the violence, protect civilians, and address root causes of the conflict.

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment and with a preamble:

S. Res. 376. A resolution supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

S. Res. 377. A resolution recognizing the 193rd anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States.

By Mr. LEAHY, from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1410. A bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1675. A bill to reduce recidivism and increase public safety, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Joseph William Westphal, of New York, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Nominee: Joseph W. Westphal.

Post: Ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.

2. Spouse: None.

3. Children and Spouses: James Westphal: None; Candice Westphal: None; Heather Miele: None; Anthony Miele: None; Amy Stewart: None; Tavis Stewart: None; Lindsay Westphal: None; Xavier Keutgen.

4. Parents: James W. Westphal: Deceased; Margaret Westphal: Deceased.

5. Grandparents: Guillermo Westphal: Deceased; Lidia Westphal: Deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Arthur Westphal: \$560.00, 2012, Act Blue; \$1120.00, 2013, Act Blue; Laura Westphal: N/A.

7. Sisters and Spouses: N/A.

*Douglas Alan Silliman, of Texas, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class

of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the State of Kuwait.

Nominee: Douglas Alan Silliman.

Post: Kuwait.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: none.

2. Spouse: Catherine Raia Silliman, none.

3. Children and Spouses: Benjamin Douglas Silliman unmarried; none; Zachary John Silliman unmarried, none.

4. Parents: Robert Harvey Silliman, none; Elsie Pearl Silliman, deceased.

5. Grandparents: Chauncy Henry Silliman—deceased; Mildred Silliman—deceased; Roy Homer Skidmore—deceased; Pearl Bieneman Skidmore—deceased.

6. Brothers and Spouses: Gregory Scott Silliman, none; Mary Adelsberger, none.

7. Sisters and Spouses: none.

*Luis G. Moreno, of Texas, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Jamaica.

Nominee: Luis G Moreno.

Post: Jamaica.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, donee:

1. Self: \$200/\$100, 2008/2012, Obama.

2. Spouse: N/A.

3. Children and Spouses: N/A.

4. Parents: N/A.

5. Grandparents: N/A.

6. Brothers and Spouses: N/A.

7. Sisters and Spouses: N/A.

*Mark Gilbert, of Florida, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to New Zealand, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Independent State of Samoa.

Nominee: Mark D. Gilbert.

Post: New Zealand and the Independent State of Samoa.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, donee, date, and amount:

Mark Gilbert: DWS PAC, 04/22/09, \$2500; ACTBLUE, 04/26/09, \$4800; Evan Bayh Committee, 04/26/09, \$2400; Evan Bayh Committee, 04/26/09, \$2400; Evan Bayh Committee, 3/10/2010, -\$2400; Paul Hodes for Senate, 12/29/09, \$2400; Robert Wexler for Congress Cmte, 03/21/09, \$2400; Kendrick Meek for Florida INC, 12/31/09, \$1000; DNC 03/31/09, \$7600; DNC, 06/23/09, \$7600; DNC, 10/01/09, \$15200; Ted Deutch for Congress, 12/29/09, \$2400; Klein for Congress, 03/21/09, \$2400; Michael Bennet, 09/30/10, \$500; Allen Boyd for Congress, 04/22/10, \$2400; Jack Conway for Senate, 09/30/10, \$1000; DCCC, 03/

31/10, \$2500; DNC, 02/25/10, \$7600; DNC, 03/24/10, \$7600; DNC, 04/01/10, \$15200; Lori Edwards Campaign Cmte, 08/11/10, \$500; Joe Garcia for Congress, 10/13/10, \$1000; Paul Hodes for Senate, 09/21/10, \$2400; Patrick J Murphy for Congress, 03/30/10, \$1000; Patrick J Murphy for Congress, 09/23/10, \$1000; Friends of Schumer, 03/31/10, \$1000; Kendrick Meek for Florida INC, 03/31/10, \$500; Kendrick Meek for Florida INC, 06/24/10, \$541; Kendrick Meek for Florida INC, 09/21/10, \$2400; Kosmas for Congress, 03/30/10, \$1000; Suzanne Kosmas, 04/14/10, \$1400; Martha Coakley for Senate, 01/15/10, \$1000; Friends of Harry Reid, 10/15/10, \$2400; Debbie Wasserman Schultz, 02/08/10, \$2400; Klein for Congress, 06/23/2010, \$2400; Berkley for Senate, 12/30/11, \$2500; McCaskill for Missouri, 04/26/11, \$2500; McCaskill for Missouri, 11/25/11, \$2500; Bill Nelson for U.S. Senate, 06/21/11, \$2500; Bill Nelson for U.S. Senate, 06/21/11, \$2500; Ben Cardin for Senate, 03/29/11, \$1000; Obama Victory Fund, 04/04/11, \$5000; Kaine for Virginia, 04/05/11, \$2500; Debbie Wasserman Schultz, 06/21/11, \$2500; DNC, 02/03/11, \$30800; Swing State Victory Fund, 12/21/11, \$9200; Berkley for Senate, 05/23/12, \$2500; Keith Fitzgerald for Congress, 09/25/12, \$250; Joe Garcia for Congress, 09/25/12, \$250; Joe Kennedy for Congress, 03/19/12, \$1000; Klobuchar for Minnesota 2018, 02/21/12, \$1000; Elizabeth for MA inc, 02/09/12, \$2500; Hillary Clinton for President, 06/07/12, \$1050; Gillibrand for Senate, 02/29/12, \$500; Friends of Sherrod Brown, 09/25/12, \$250; Montanans for Tester, 09/25/12, \$250; Obama Victory Fund, 09/12/12, \$1000; Tammy Baldwin for Senate, 03/28/12, \$1000; Democratic Party of Wisconsin, 09/30/12, \$1848; Lois Frankel for Congress, 05/29/12, \$2500; Friends of Patrick Murphy, 05/29/12, \$2500; Ted Deutch for Congress, 03/28/12, \$500; Swing State Victory Fund, 01/23/12, \$6600; Swing State Victory Fund, 02/18/12, \$10000; Swing State Victory Fund, 02/29/12, \$14200.

Nancy Gilbert: Kosmas for Congress, 05/23/09, \$500; Patrick Murphy for Congress, 05/23/09, \$2400; DNC, 10/28/09, \$5000; Ted Deutch for Congress Cmte, 12/29/09, \$2400; Kosmas for Congress, 08/06/10, \$1900; FL Victory Fund, 09/26/10, \$2400; Ron Klein, 08/04/10, \$2400; Kendrick Meek for Florida INC, 08/14/10, \$1800; DNC, 04/30/10, \$15200; DNC, 11/21/10, \$15200; DNC, 12/6/10, —\$25; Ron Klein for Congress, 09/26/10, \$2400; Debbie Wasserman Schultz, 11/25/11, \$2500; Debbie Wasserman Schultz, 12/13/11, \$2500; Friends of Patrick Murphy, 12/30/11, \$2500; Kaine for Virginia, 11/08/11, \$2500; Nelson for U.S. Senate, 10/21/11, \$2500; Nelson for U.S. Senate, 10/21/11, \$2500; Obama for America, 05/10/11, \$5000; Obama Victory Fund, 05/10/11, \$30800; Swing State Victory Fund, 12/21/11, \$9200; Shelly Berkley for Senate, 08/13/12, \$1000; McCaskill for Missouri, 05/23/12, \$2500; Lois Frankel for Congress, 09/21/12, \$2500; Swing State Victory Fund, 03/21/12, \$30800; Dollars for Democrats, 06/04/12, \$250; Democratic Party of Wisconsin, 09/30/12, \$1848.

Danielle Gilbert (daughter): Barack Obama, 05/15/11, \$250.

Karen Gilbert (sister): Barack Obama, 10/10/12, \$200; Barack Obama, 10/28/12, \$200; DNC, 5/23/13, \$500.

Jeffrey Gilbert (brother): Debbie Wasserman Schultz, 09/26/11, \$200; Barack Obama, 07/25/11, \$250.

Doris Brooks (mother-in-law): DNC, 04/21/10, \$1500; Debbie Wasserman Schultz, 11/29/11, \$250; Barack Obama, 05/06/11, \$2000; Barack Obama, 09/13/12, \$2200.

*John L. Estrada, of Florida, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Nominee: John Learie Estrada.

Post: Trinidad & Tobago.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: \$250.00, 5/12/2012, John L. Estrada; \$400.00, 10/16/208, John L. Estrada; \$400.00, 01/29/2013, John L. Estrada.

2. Spouse: None.

3. Children and Spouses: None.

4. Parents: None.

5. Grandparents: None.

6. Brothers and Spouses: None.

7. Sisters and Spouses: None.

*Maureen Elizabeth Cormack, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Nominee: Maureen E. Cormack.

Post: Bosnia and Herzegovina.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: None.

2. Spouse: William E. Cormack (None).

3. Children and Spouses: Elizabeth J. Cormack (None); Margaret K. Cormack (None); William G. Cormack (None).

4. Parents: Girard Lynch (deceased); Elizabeth Lynch (deceased).

5. Grandparents: Robert and Elizabeth DiVall (deceased); Jerald and Molly Lynch (deceased).

6. Brothers and Spouses (none).

7. Sisters and Spouses (none).

*Matthew H. Tueller, of Utah, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Yemen.

Nominee: Matthew H. Tueller.

Post: Sanaa.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions, amount, date, and donee:

1. Self: none.

2. Spouse: DeNiece G. Tueller: none.

3. Children and Spouses: Marie Amara Tueller: none. Kyle Newkirk: none. Margaret Tueller Proffitt: none. Clark Proffitt: none. David G. Tueller: none. Ayae T. Tueller: none. Daniel B. Tueller: none. Christian M. Tueller: none.

4. Parents: Blaine C. Tueller: \$100, 8/4/2010, Democratic Party of Utah County; Jean Marie Tueller: none.

5. Grandparents: Lamont Tueller—deceased, none; Elva C. Tueller—deceased, none; Leland Heywood—deceased, none; Marie E. Heywood—deceased, none.

6. Brothers and Spouses: James B. Tueller, none. Beth D. Tueller, none.

7. Sisters and Spouses: Jan T. Lowman, none. Winfield N. Lowman, none. Anna T.

Stone, \$185, 10/2008, Barack Obama. Bernell Stone, \$200, 8/2008, Claralyn Hill, UT; \$200, 06/2008, Common Dream. Marie T. Emmett: none. Chad Emmett: none. Diane T. Pritchett: \$1000, 10/2008, Barack Obama. Lant H. Pritchett: \$4514, 2008, Barack Obama; \$1000, 2008, Obama Victory; \$1000, 2008, DNC. Martha T. Barrett: none. Jeff Barrett: none. Elisabeth T. Dearden: none. Kirk Dearden: \$100, 2008, Barack Obama. Rachel Tueller: none. Jeanne T. Krumperman: none. Paul Krumperman: none.

*Suzan G. LeVine, of Washington, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Swiss Confederation, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Principality of Liechtenstein.

Nominee: Suzan Gail LeVine.

Post: Ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

Nominated: January 30, 2014.

(The following is a list of all members of my immediate family and their spouses. I have asked each of these persons to inform me of the pertinent contributions made by them. To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this report is complete and accurate.)

Contributions (timeframe): January 2010–February 2014).

Self & Spouse

Donor, recipient, date, amount:

Suzan LeVine: Patty Murray, 7/17/2010, \$1,875; Murray Victory 2010, 10/15/2010, \$500; Obama Victory Fund 2012, 4/27/2011, \$1,000; Gabrielle Giffords, 6/22/2011, \$250; Obama Victory Fund 2012, 9/13/2011, \$35,800; Obama Victory Fund 2012, 9/17/2011, \$1,000; Cantwell-Warren 2012, 11/28/2011, \$1,250; Swing State Victory Fund, 12/15/2011, \$9,200; Obama Victory Fund 2012, 1/20/2012, \$30,800; Maria Cantwell, 1/28/2012, \$2,500; Maria Cantwell, 1/28/2012, \$875; Tim Kaine, 3/23/2012, \$500; Tim Kaine, 3/23/2012, \$3,000; Tammy Baldwin, 5/29/2012, \$125; Suzan DelBene, 6/13/2012, \$1,000; Obama Victory Fund 2012, 7/27/2012, \$500; Jon Tester, 8/21/2012, \$2,500; Dennis Heck, 9/11/2012, \$1,000; Derek Kilmer, 9/17/2012, \$2,500; Tim Kaine, 9/30/2012, \$2,000; Americans United for Change, 10/18/2012, \$3,200; Lon Johnson, 11/4/2012, \$500; Jeanne Shaheen, 2/12/2013, \$2,000; Mark Begich, 2/20/2013, \$2,000; Ed Markey, 3/6/2013, \$2,000; Patty Murray, 3/5/2013, \$1,000; Democratic National Committee, 3/29/2013, \$32,400; Patty Murray, 4/12/2013, \$500; Patty Murray, 4/12/2013, \$500; Suzan DelBene, 6/1/2013, \$2,000; Mark Warner, 6/18/2013, \$1,500; Bruce Braley, 5/31/2013, \$2,000; Maria Cantwell, 5/31/2013, \$1,000.

Eric LeVine: Obama Victory Fund, 11/29/2011, \$35,800; Swing State Victory Fund, 12/17/2011, \$9,200; Obama Victory Fund, 1/24/2012, \$30,800; Jay Inslee, 1/25/2012, \$3,600; Maria Cantwell, 1/30/2012, \$2,500; Maria Cantwell, 1/30/2012, \$2,500; Derek Kilmer, 7/28/2012, \$500; Derek Kilmer, 9/24/2012, \$2,000; Tim Kaine, 10/1/2012, \$1,500; Suzan DelBene, 10/1/2012, \$2,500; Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, 11/1/2013, \$32,400.

Remainder of the family:

Name, amount, date, donee:

Children—Sidney LeVine: None (he's 11 yrs old).

Children—Talia LeVine: None (she's 8 yrs old).

Parent—Phyllis Davidson: \$200, 8/27/2012, Obama Victory Fund; \$150, 10/17/2012, Obama Victory Fund.

Parent—Maurice Davidson: Deceased.

Grandparent—Louis Davidson: Deceased.

Grandparent—Tillye Davidson: Deceased.
 Grandparent—Phillip Fox: Deceased.
 Grandparent—Helen Fox: Deceased.
 Brother—Phillip Davidson: None.
 Sister-in-Law—Ruth Davidson: \$1,000, 7/22/2011, Obama Victory Fund.
 Sister—Hanna Fox: None.
 Brother-in-Law—Edward Gormley: None.
 Brother—Samuel Davidson: None.
 Sister-in-Law—Margaret Klopff Garet White: None.

*Bathsheba Nell Crocker, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (International Organization Affairs).

*Peter A. Selfridge, of Minnesota, to be Chief of Protocol, and to have the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service.

*Robert A. Wood, of New York, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as U.S. Representative to the Conference on Disarmament.

*Deborah L. Birx, of Maryland, to be Ambassador at Large and Coordinator of United States Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS Globally.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BOOZMAN (for himself, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. ROBERTS):

S. 2103. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue or revise regulations with respect to the medical certification of certain small aircraft pilots, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. LEE, Mr. HATCH, and Mr. CORKER):

S. 2104. A bill to require the Director of the National Park Service to refund to States all State funds that were used to reopen and temporarily operate a unit of the National Park System during the October 2013 shutdown; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. COCHRAN (for himself, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. MORAN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BURR, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. HATCH, Mr. ENZI, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. JOHANNES):

S. 2105. A bill to prohibit the Federal funding of a State firearms ownership database; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. VITTER, Mr. WICKER, and Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin):

S. 2106. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the individual health insurance mandate not apply until the employer health insurance mandate is enforced without exceptions; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 2107. A bill to increase students' and borrowers' access to student loan information within the National Student Loan Data System, and to encourage improved outreach to and communication with borrowers; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND:

S. 2108. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to encourage teachers to pursue teaching science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects at elementary and secondary schools; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Ms. AYOTTE):

S. 2109. A bill to eliminate duplicative, outdated, or unnecessary Congressionally mandated Federal agency reporting; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. WYDEN:

S. 2110. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and to improve Medicare and Medicaid payments, and for other purposes; read the first time.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. COATS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CORKER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WICKER, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KIRK, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. ISAKSON, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. RISCH):

S. Res. 378. A resolution condemning illegal Russian aggression in Ukraine; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY):

S. Res. 379. A resolution congratulating the Pennsylvania State University IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon ("THON") on its continued success in support of the Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. BURR (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU):

S. Res. 380. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work Day; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. HATCH):

S. Res. 381. A resolution congratulating the athletes from the United States who participated in the 2014 Olympic Winter Games as members of the United States Olympic Team; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 192

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the names of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) were added as cosponsors of S. 192, a bill to enhance the

energy security of United States allies, and for other purposes.

S. 257

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 257, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the educational assistance programs administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to charge veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate, and for other purposes.

S. 338

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 338, a bill to amend the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 to provide consistent and reliable authority for, and for the funding of, the land and water conservation fund to maximize the effectiveness of the fund for future generations, and for other purposes.

S. 409

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 409, a bill to add Vietnam Veterans Day as a patriotic and national observance.

S. 452

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) were added as cosponsors of S. 452, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce the incidence of diabetes among Medicare beneficiaries.

S. 489

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 489, a bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to increase and adjust for inflation the maximum value of articles that may be imported duty-free by one person on one day, and for other purposes.

S. 775

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 775, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax incentive for the installation and maintenance of mechanical insulation property.

S. 862

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 862, a bill to amend section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional religious exemption from the individual health coverage mandate.

S. 907

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor

of S. 907, a bill to provide grants to better understand and reduce gestational diabetes, and for other purposes.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 933, a bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2018.

S. 1064

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1064, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for treatment of clinical psychologists as physicians for purposes of furnishing clinical psychologist services under the Medicare program.

S. 1091

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1091, a bill to provide for the issuance of an Alzheimer's Disease Research Semipostal Stamp.

S. 1156

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1156, a bill to amend the Higher Education Opportunity Act to add disclosure requirements to the institution financial aid offer form and to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to make such form mandatory.

S. 1318

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1318, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to cover physician services delivered by podiatric physicians to ensure access by Medicaid beneficiaries to appropriate quality foot and ankle care, to amend title XVIII of such Act to modify the requirements for diabetic shoes to be included under Medicare, and for other purposes.

S. 1659

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1659, a bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 regarding proprietary institutions of higher education in order to protect students and taxpayers.

S. 1694

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1694, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against income tax for the purchase of hearing aids.

S. 1704

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut

(Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1704, a bill to expand the use of open textbooks in order to achieve savings for students.

S. 1737

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1737, a bill to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage and to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend increased expensing limitations and the treatment of certain real property as section 179 property.

S. 1803

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1803, a bill to require certain protections for student loan borrowers, and for other purposes.

S. 1808

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1808, a bill to prevent adverse treatment of any person on the basis of views held with respect to marriage.

S. 1811

At the request of Mr. ALEXANDER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1811, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to prohibit voice communications through mobile communication devices on commercial passenger flights.

S. 1862

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1862, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Monuments Men, in recognition of their heroic role in the preservation, protection, and restitution of monuments, works of art, and artifacts of cultural importance during and following World War II.

S. 1893

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1893, a bill to require the Transportation Security Administration to implement best practices and improve transparency with regard to technology acquisition programs, and for other purposes.

S. 1908

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1908, a bill to allow reciprocity for the carrying of certain concealed firearms.

S. 2024

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2024, a bill to amend chapter 1 of title 1, United States Code, with regard to the definition of "marriage" and

"spouse" for Federal purposes and to ensure respect for State regulation of marriage.

At the request of Mr. JOHANNIS, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2024, *supra*.

S. 2046

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2046, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide Medicare beneficiaries coordinated care and greater choice with regard to accessing hearing health services and benefits.

S. 2062

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2062, a bill to authorize Members of Congress to bring an action for declaratory and injunctive relief in response to a written statement by the President or any other official in the executive branch directing officials of the executive branch to not enforce a provision of law.

S. 2069

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2069, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand and modify the credit for employee health insurance expenses of small employers.

S. RES. 348

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 348, a resolution expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace.

S. RES. 365

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 365, a resolution deploring the violent repression of peaceful demonstrators in Venezuela, calling for full accountability for human rights violations taking place in Venezuela, and supporting the right of the Venezuelan people to the free and peaceful exercise of representative democracy.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 378—CON-DEMNING ILLEGAL RUSSIAN AGGRESSION IN UKRAINE

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. COATS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CORKER, Mr. BROWN, Mr. Kaine, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WICKER, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. INHOFE, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. KIRK, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COONS,

Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. ISAKSON, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. RISCH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 378

Whereas the recent unprovoked Russian military occupation of the Crimea region of Ukraine, and further military threats against additional Ukrainian territory, are an affront to international norms and agreements and a threat to global peace and security;

Whereas, under President Vladimir Putin, the Russian Federation has a history of bullying neighboring countries in an attempt to rebuild Russian dominance on its borders—often under the guise of protecting Russian citizens—including forcibly seizing the South Ossetia and Abkhazia regions of the independent Republic of Georgia in 2008;

Whereas the Russian Federation continues to illegally occupy South Ossetia and Abkhazia and has erected fences along administrative boundary lines and permanent military bases in violation of the cease fire agreement negotiated with the European Union;

Whereas, during 2013, then-President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich faced similar Russian coercion to not sign a long-negotiated Association Agreement with the European Union, including threats to gas contracts, the supply of which the Russian Federation turned off in 2006 and 2009;

Whereas, in November 2013, President Yanukovich abruptly canceled plans to sign the Association Agreement, saying Ukraine could not afford to sacrifice trade with the Russian Federation as a result;

Whereas, for three ensuing months, hundreds of thousands of protesters in Ukraine endured cold and government harassment and violence to protest the decision and demand closer ties to the West;

Whereas, on February 20, 2014, Ukrainian security forces, including heavily armed snipers, fired on demonstrators in Kyiv, leaving dozens dead and the people of Ukraine reeling from the most lethal day of violence since the Soviet era, and many of Yanukovich's political allies, including the mayor of the Kyiv, resigned from his governing Party of Regions to protest the bloodshed;

Whereas, on February 22, 2014, the Ukrainian parliament found then-President Yanukovich unable to fulfill his duties, exercised its constitutional powers to remove him from office, and set an election for May 25, 2014, to select his replacement;

Whereas, amid Ukraine's economic hardships, President Yanukovich amassed a lavish secret estate that included a private zoo, exotic gardens, numerous automobiles, and a tall ship;

Whereas, on February 27, 2014, heavily armed soldiers without identification or insignia began securing key facilities in the Crimea, including its regional parliament and two airports, and in the ensuing days encircled Ukrainian military facilities and gained effective control of the region;

Whereas the military forces are clearly Russian troops, and on March 1, 2014, President Putin sought and received rubber stamp parliamentary approval to use military force against greater Ukraine, having argued that the Government of the Russian Federation

acted because of the “threat of violence from ultranationalists”;

Whereas there has been no credible evidence of serious threats to Russian citizens in Crimea or elsewhere in Ukraine, and the Russian Federation's military invasion has been widely condemned internationally;

Whereas the Russian Federation, as a signatory to the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, reaffirmed its commitment to Ukraine, to respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine, to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, to refrain from economic coercion to subordinate Ukraine to Russia's interests, and to consult in the event a situation arises that raises a question concerning these commitments;

Whereas, in 1997, the Russian Federation and Ukraine signed a friendship treaty, during which time Russian President Boris Yeltsin said in Kyiv, “We respect and honor the territorial integrity of Ukraine.”;

Whereas the Russian Federation, as a participating state in the Final Act of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 1975 (Helsinki Final Act), committed to respect the sovereign equality and individuality of other participating states, including the right of every state to territorial integrity and to freedom and political independence, to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, to regard as inviolable all one another's frontiers as well as the frontiers of all states in Europe, and to refrain from making each other's territory the object of military occupation;

Whereas, under United Nations Charter Article 2, all members shall settle international disputes by peaceful means in a manner that international peace and security are not endangered and refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state;

Whereas President Putin himself wrote in 2013, “Under current international law, force is permitted only in self-defense or by the decision of the Security Council. Anything else is unacceptable under the United Nations Charter and would constitute an act of aggression.”;

Whereas the North Atlantic Council stated that Russian military action against Ukraine is a breach of international law and contravenes the principles of the NATO-Russia Council and the Partnership for Peace and that Russia must respect its obligations under the United Nations Charter and principles of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), on which peace and stability in Europe rest;

Whereas leaders of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States and the presidents of the European Council and the European Commission condemned the Russian Federation's clear violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity, in contravention of the Russian Federation's obligations under the United Nations Charter and its 1997 basing agreement with Ukraine;

Whereas, on February 28, 2014, President Barack Obama stated that the United States is “deeply concerned by reports of military movements taken by the Russian Federation inside of Ukraine” and that it “would be a clear violation of Russia's commitment to respect the independence and sovereignty and borders of Ukraine, and of international law”; and

Whereas President Obama pledged that “the United States will stand with the inter-

national community in affirming that there will be costs for any military intervention in Ukraine”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the unprovoked and illegal Russian military seizure of the Ukrainian Crimea and demands the immediate withdrawal of Russian forces except as specifically allowed for by treaty;

(2) demands the immediate release of besieged Ukrainian security forces in Crimea, who have shown remarkable restraint under threat;

(3) warns that failure to do so or any additional military action against other areas of Ukraine will lead to swift and significant consequences in the Russian Federation's relations with the United States and those nations who share our views;

(4) urges the President to use all appropriate economic elements of United States national power, in coordination with United States allies, including loan guarantees matched with requirements of international financial institutions regarding Ukrainian economic reforms and transparency, to strengthen the Ukrainian economy and protect the independence, sovereignty, and territorial and economic integrity of Ukraine;

(5) urges the President to use appropriate economic and diplomatic measures, including calibrated sanctions, against those responsible for the illegal seizure of Crimea;

(6) urges the President to propose to G-8 nations to suspend the Russian Federation, and to propose to our NATO allies to suspend operation of the NATO-Russia Council and suspend the Russian Federation's military and diplomatic representation at NATO;

(7) condemns the economic coercion pursued by the Russian Federation beginning in July 2013 against Ukraine, Moldova, Lithuania, and other countries in the region in order to obstruct closer ties between the European Union and the countries of the Eastern Partnership and supports the people of Ukraine in their desire to forge closer ties with Europe;

(8) supports assisting Ukraine and United States allies in the region in gaining energy security in order to alleviate their vulnerability to the Russian Federation's threats and manipulations;

(9) expresses its continuing support for democratic allies who regularly face aggression on their borders from the Government of the Russian Federation and supports enhanced security cooperation with, and security assistance to, states in Central and Eastern Europe, including Ukraine;

(10) encourages governments in Europe to take similar and coordinated actions to make it clear to the Government of the Russian Federation that violating the territorial integrity of sovereign nations will have swift and significant consequences;

(11) calls for the immediate acceptance of a credible international observer mission in Crimea and other parts of the Ukraine;

(12) calls on the Government of the Russian Federation to seriously engage with the Government of Ukraine in a political dialogue on a political and diplomatic path that respects Ukrainian sovereignty and the Crimea's complex historic and ethnic makeup;

(13) supports the efforts of the Government of Ukraine to bring to justice those responsible for the acts of violence related to the anti-government protests that began on November 21, 2013;

(14) supports the efforts of the Government of Ukraine to recover and return to the Ukrainian state funds stolen by former President Yanukovich, his family, and other

current and former members of the Government of Ukraine and elites; and

(15) calls upon the leadership of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) to reconsider its decision to place World Cup 2018 matches in Russia.

SENATE RESOLUTION 379—CONGRATULATING THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY IFC/PANHELLENIC DANCE MARATHON (“THON”) ON ITS CONTINUED SUCCESS IN SUPPORT OF THE FOUR DIAMONDS FUND AT PENN STATE HERSHEY CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL

Mr. CASEY (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 379

Whereas the Pennsylvania State IFC/Panellenic Dance Marathon (referred to in this preamble as “THON”) is the largest student-run philanthropy in the world, with 711 dancers, more than 375 supporting organizations, and more than 15,000 volunteers involved in the annual event;

Whereas student volunteers at the Pennsylvania State University annually collect money and dance for 46 hours straight at the Bryce Jordan Center as part of THON, bringing energy and excitement to the campus for THON’s mission to conquer cancer and raise awareness about the disease;

Whereas all THON activities support the Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Hershey Children’s Hospital, which funds cancer research and provides financial and emotional support to pediatric cancer patients and their families;

Whereas in each year since 1977, when the 2 organizations first became affiliated, THON has been the single largest donor to the Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Hershey Children’s Hospital;

Whereas THON has raised more than \$113,000,000 in total for the Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Hershey Children’s Hospital;

Whereas in 2014, THON set a new fundraising record of \$13,343,517.33, besting the previous record of \$12,374,034.46, which was set in 2013;

Whereas THON has helped more than 3,300 families through the Four Diamonds Fund, is helping to build a new Pediatric Cancer Pavilion at Penn State Hershey Children’s Hospital, and has supported life-saving pediatric cancer research that has increased the survival rates for some pediatric cancers to nearly 90 percent; and

Whereas THON has inspired similar events and organizations across the United States, including at high schools and institutions of higher education, and continues to encourage students across the United States to volunteer and stay involved in great charitable causes in their community: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the Pennsylvania State University IFC/Panellenic Dance Marathon (“THON”) on its continued success in support of the Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Hershey Children’s Hospital; and

(2) commends the Pennsylvania State University students, volunteers, and supporting organizations for their hard work in putting together another record-breaking THON.

SENATE RESOLUTION 380—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF TAKE OUR DAUGHTERS AND SONS TO WORK DAY

Mr. BURR (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 380

Whereas the Take Our Daughters To Work program was created in New York City as a response to research that showed that, by the 8th grade, many girls were dropping out of school, had low self-esteem, and lacked confidence;

Whereas in 2003, the name of the program was changed to “Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work” so that boys who face many of the same challenges as girls could also be involved in the program;

Whereas the mission of the program, to develop “innovative strategies that empower girls and boys to overcome societal barriers to reach their full potential”, now fully reflects the addition of boys;

Whereas the Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work Foundation, a nonprofit organization, has grown to be one of the largest public awareness campaigns, with more than 37,400,000 participants annually in more than 3,000 organizations and workplaces in every State;

Whereas in 2007, the Take Our Daughters To Work program transitioned to Elizabeth City, North Carolina, became known as the Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work Foundation, and received national recognition for the dedication of the Foundation to future generations;

Whereas every year, mayors, governors, and other private and public officials sign proclamations and lend their support to Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work Day;

Whereas the fame of the Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work program has spread overseas, with requests and inquiries being made from around the world on how to operate the program;

Whereas 2014 marks the 21st anniversary of the Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work program;

Whereas Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work Day will be observed on Thursday, April 24, 2014; and

Whereas Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work Day is intended to continue helping millions of girls and boys on an annual basis through experienced activities and events to examine their opportunities and strive to reach their fullest potential: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the goals of introducing our daughters and sons to the workplace; and

(2) commends all participants of Take Our Daughters and Sons To Work Day for their ongoing contributions to education, and for the vital role the participants play in promoting and ensuring a brighter, stronger future for the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 381—CONGRATULATING THE ATHLETES FROM THE UNITED STATES WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE 2014 OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES AS MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES OLYMPIC TEAM

Mr. THUNE (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. BENNET, and

Mr. HATCH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 381

Whereas the 2014 Olympic Winter Games were held in Sochi, Russia from February 7, 2014, to February 23, 2014;

Whereas 230 Olympians competed on behalf of Team USA in Sochi, Russia;

Whereas members of Team USA earned 28 medals in total for the United States, including 9 gold medals, 7 silver medals, and 12 bronze medals;

Whereas Mikaela Shiffrin became the youngest woman ever to win the gold medal in the Women’s Slalom;

Whereas Joss Christensen, Gus Kenworthy, and Nicholas Goepper swept the podium in the Men’s Ski Slopestyle;

Whereas Erin Hamlin won the United States’ first-ever medal in the Women’s Singles Luge;

Whereas Lindsey Van, Jessica Jerome, and Sarah Hendrickson became the first American women to compete in ski jumping in an Olympic Winter Games;

Whereas Ted Ligety became the first American man to win the gold medal in the Giant Slalom, and became the first American man to win 2 gold medals in Alpine Skiing;

Whereas Meryl Davis and Charlie White won the United States’ first-ever gold medal in Ice Dancing;

Whereas the people of the United States stand united in respect and admiration for Olympians, and the athletic accomplishments, sportsmanship, and dedication of those athletes to excellence in the 2014 Olympic Winter Games;

Whereas the many accomplishments of Team USA Olympians would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of many others, including the United States Olympic Committee, the relevant United States national governing bodies, and the many administrators, coaches, and family members who provided critical support for the athletes;

Whereas David Wise and Maddie Bowman both won the United States’ first-ever gold medals in the events of Men and Women’s Freestyle Skiing Halfpipe;

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate extends sincere congratulations for the accomplishments and gratitude for the sacrifices of all athletes throughout the United States on the United States Olympic Team and to everyone who supported the efforts of those athletes at the 2014 Olympic Winter Games.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2809. Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2810. Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2811. Mr. HARKIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2812. Mr. ENZI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the

bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2813. Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2814. Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. BLUNT, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2815. Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2816. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2817. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2818. Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself and Ms. MIKULSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2819. Mr. SCOTT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2809. Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Mr. BURR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . SAFE CHILD CARE ACT.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Safe Child Care Act of 2014”.

(b) **BACKGROUND CHECKS.**—Section 231 of the Crime Control Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 13041) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “subsection (b)(3)” and inserting “paragraph (3)”; and

(B) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (4);

(2) by moving paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (b) to subsection (a), and inserting them after paragraph (1) of that subsection;

(3) in subsection (a)(3), as redesignated by paragraph (2) of this subsection, by striking “subsection (a)(1)” and inserting “paragraph (1)”; and

(4) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) A background check required by subsection (a) shall be initiated through the personnel programs of the applicable Federal agencies.

“(2) A background check for a child care staff member under subsection (a) shall include—

“(A) a search, including a fingerprint check, of the State criminal registry or repository in—

“(i) the State where the child care staff member resides; and

“(ii) each State where the child care staff member previously resided during the longer of—

“(I) the 10-year period ending on the date on which the background check is initiated; or

“(II) the period beginning on the date on which the child care staff member attained 18 years of age and ending on the date on which the background check is initiated;

“(B) a search of State-based child abuse and neglect registries and databases in—

“(i) the State where the child care staff member resides; and

“(ii) each State where the child care staff member previously resided during the longer of—

“(I) the 10-year period ending on the date on which the background check is initiated; or

“(II) the period beginning on the date on which the child care staff member attained 18 years of age and ending on the date on which the background check is initiated;

“(C) a search of the National Crime Information Center database;

“(D) a Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint check using the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System;

“(E) a search of the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16901 et seq.); and

“(F) a search of the State sex offender registry established under that Act in—

“(i) the State where the child care staff member resides; and

“(ii) each State where the child care staff member previously resided during the longer of—

“(I) the 10-year period ending on the date on which the background check is initiated; or

“(II) the period beginning on the date on which the child care staff member attained 18 years of age and ending on the date on which the background check is initiated.

“(3) A child care staff member shall be ineligible for employment by a child care provider if such individual—

“(A) refuses to consent to the background check described in subsection (a);

“(B) makes a false statement in connection with such background check;

“(C) is registered, or is required to be registered, on a State sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006; or

“(D) has been convicted of a felony consisting of—

“(i) murder, as described in section 1111 of title 18, United States Code;

“(ii) child abuse or neglect;

“(iii) a crime against children, including child pornography;

“(iv) spousal abuse;

“(v) a crime involving rape or sexual assault;

“(vi) kidnapping;

“(vii) arson;

“(viii) physical assault or battery; or

“(ix) subject to paragraph (5)(D), a drug-related offense committed during the preceding 5 years.

“(4)(A) A child care provider covered by paragraph (3) shall submit a request, to the appropriate State agency designated by a State, for a background check described in subsection (a), for each child care staff member (including prospective child care staff members) of the provider.

“(B) In the case of an individual who is hired as a child care staff member before the date of enactment of the Safe Child Care Act of 2014, the provider shall submit such a request—

“(i) prior to the last day of the second full fiscal year after that date of enactment; and

“(ii) not less often than once during each 5-year period following the first submission date under this subparagraph for that staff member.

“(C) In the case of an individual who is a prospective child care staff member on or after that date of enactment, the provider shall submit such a request—

“(i) prior to the date the individual becomes a child care staff member of the provider; and

“(ii) not less often than once during each 5-year period following the first submission date under this subparagraph for that staff member.

“(5)(A) The State shall—

“(i) carry out the request of a child care provider for a background check described in subsection (a) as expeditiously as possible; and

“(ii) in accordance with subparagraph (B) of this paragraph, provide the results of the background check to—

“(I) the child care provider; and

“(II) the current or prospective child care staff member for whom the background check is conducted.

“(B)(i) The State shall provide the results of a background check to a child care provider as required under subparagraph (A)(ii)(I) in a statement that—

“(I) indicates whether the current or prospective child care staff member for whom the background check is conducted is eligible or ineligible for employment by a child care provider; and

“(II) does not reveal any disqualifying crime or other related information regarding the current or prospective child care staff member.

“(ii) If a current or prospective child care staff member is ineligible for employment by a child care provider due to a background check described in subsection (a), the State shall provide the results of the background check to the current or prospective child care staff member as required under subparagraph (A)(ii)(II) in a criminal background report that includes information relating to each disqualifying crime.

“(iii) A State—

“(I) may not publicly release or share the results of an individual background check described in subsection (a); and

“(II) may include the results of background checks described in subsection (a) in the development or dissemination of local or statewide data relating to background checks if the results are not individually identifiable.

“(C)(i) The State shall provide for a process by which a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) may appeal the results of a background check required under subsection (a) to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in the criminal background report of the staff member.

“(ii) The State shall ensure that—

“(I) the appeals process is completed in a timely manner for each child care staff member;

“(II) each child care staff member is given notice of the opportunity to appeal; and

“(III) each child care staff member who wishes to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information in the criminal background report of the child care staff member is given instructions about how to complete the appeals process.

“(D)(i) The State may allow for a review process through which the State may determine that a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member)

disqualified for a crime specified in paragraph (3)(D)(ix) is eligible for employment by a child care provider, notwithstanding paragraph (3).

“(ii) The review process under this subparagraph shall be consistent with title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.).

“(E) Nothing in this section shall be construed to create a private right of action against a child care provider if the child care provider is in compliance with this section.

“(F) This section shall apply to each State that receives funding under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.).

“(6) Fees that the State may charge for the costs of conducting a background check as required by subsection (a) shall not exceed the actual costs to the State for the administration of such background checks.

“(7) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent a Federal agency from disqualifying an individual as a child care staff member based on a conviction of the individual for a crime not specifically listed in this subsection that bears upon the fitness of an individual to provide care for and have responsibility for the safety and well-being of children.

“(8) In this subsection—

“(A) the term ‘child care provider’ means an agency of the Federal Government, or a unit of or contractor with the Federal Government that is operating a facility, described in subsection (a); and

“(B) the term ‘child care staff member’ means an individual who is hired, or seeks to be hired, by a child care provider to be involved with the provision of child care services, as described in subsection (a).”; and

(5) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(c) **SUSPENSION PENDING DISPOSITION OF CRIMINAL CASE.**—In the case of an incident in which an individual has been charged with an offense described in subsection (b)(3)(D) and the charge has not yet been disposed of, an employer may suspend an employee from having any contact with children while on the job until the case is resolved.”.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on October 1 of the second full fiscal year after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 2810. Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . RIGHT START CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION ACT OF 2014.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Right Start Child Care and Education Act of 2014”.

(b) **INCREASE IN EMPLOYER-PROVIDED CHILD CARE CREDIT.**—

(1) **INCREASE IN CREDITABLE PERCENTAGE OF CHILD CARE EXPENDITURES.**—Paragraph (1) of section 45F(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “25 percent” and inserting “35 percent”.

(2) **INCREASE IN CREDITABLE PERCENTAGE OF RESOURCE AND REFERRAL EXPENDITURES.**—Paragraph (2) of section 45F(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “10 percent” and inserting “20 percent”.

(3) **INCREASE IN MAXIMUM CREDIT.**—Subsection (b) of section 45F of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “\$150,000” and inserting “\$225,000”.

(4) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2014.

(c) **INCREASE IN DEPENDENT CARE CREDIT.**—(1) **INCREASE IN INCOMES ELIGIBLE FOR FULL CREDIT.**—Paragraph (2) of section 21(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “\$15,000” and inserting “\$30,000”.

(2) **INCREASE IN PERCENTAGE OF EXPENSES ALLOWABLE.**—Paragraph (2) of section 21(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(A) by striking “35 percent” and inserting “50 percent”; and

(B) by striking “20 percent” and inserting “35 percent”.

(3) **INCREASE IN DOLLAR LIMIT ON AMOUNT CREDITABLE.**—Subsection (c) of section 21 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(A) by striking “\$3,000” in paragraph (1) and inserting “\$6,000”; and

(B) by striking “\$6,000” in paragraph (2) and inserting “\$12,000”.

(4) **CREDIT TO BE REFUNDABLE.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended—

(i) by redesignating section 21 as section 36D, and

(ii) by moving section 36D, as so redesignated, from subpart A of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 to the location immediately before section 37 in subpart C of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1.

(B) **TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS.**—

(i) Paragraph (1) of section 36D(a) of such Code (as redesignated by subparagraph (A)) is amended by striking “this chapter” and inserting “this subtitle”.

(ii) Paragraph (6) of section 35(g) of such Code is amended by striking “21(e)” and inserting “36D(e)”.

(iii) Paragraph (1) of section 36C(f) of such Code is amended by striking “21(e)” and inserting “36D(e)”.

(iv) Subparagraph (C) of section 129(a)(2) of such Code is amended by striking “section 21(e)” and inserting “section 36D(e)”.

(v) Paragraph (2) of section 129(b) of such Code is amended by striking “section 21(d)(2)” and inserting “section 36D(d)(2)”.

(vi) Paragraph (1) of section 129(e) of such Code is amended by striking “section 21(b)(2)” and inserting “section 36D(b)(2)”.

(vii) Subsection (e) of section 213 of such Code is amended by striking “section 21” and inserting “section 36D”.

(viii) Subparagraph (H) of section 6213(g)(2) of such Code is amended by striking “section 21” and inserting “section 36D”.

(ix) Subparagraph (L) of section 6213(g)(2) of such Code is amended by striking “section 21, 24, 32,” and inserting “section 24, 32, 36D”.

(x) Paragraph (2) of section 1324(b) of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting “36D,” after “36C”.

(xi) The table of sections for subpart C of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 36C and inserting the following:

“Sec. 36D. Expenses for household and dependent care services necessary for gainful employment.”.

(xii) The table of sections for subpart A of such part IV is amended by striking the item relating to section 21.

(5) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2014.

(d) **3-YEAR CREDIT FOR INDIVIDUALS HOLDING CHILD CARE-RELATED DEGREES WHO WORK IN LICENSED CHILD CARE FACILITIES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subpart A of part IV of subchapter A of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after section 25D the following new section: “**SEC. 25E. RIGHT START CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION CREDIT.**”

“(a) **ALLOWANCE OF CREDIT.**—In the case of an individual who is an eligible child care provider for the taxable year, there shall be allowed as a credit against the tax imposed by this chapter for the taxable year the amount of \$2,000.

“(b) **3-YEAR CREDIT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The credit allowable by subsection (a) for any taxable year to an individual shall be allowed for such year only if the individual elects the application of this section for such year.

“(2) **ELECTION.**—An election to have this section apply may not be made by an individual for any taxable year if such an election by such individual is in effect for any 3 prior taxable years.

“(c) **ELIGIBLE CHILD CARE PROVIDER.**—For purposes of this section—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The term ‘eligible child care provider’ means, for any taxable year, any individual if—

“(A) as of the close of such taxable year, such individual holds a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education, child care, or a related degree and such degree was awarded by an eligible educational institution (as defined in section 25A(f)(2)), and

“(B) during such taxable year, such individual performs at least 1,200 hours of child care services at a facility if—

“(i) the principal use of the facility is to provide child care services,

“(ii) no more than 25 percent of the children receiving child care services at the facility are children (as defined in section 152(f) of the individual or such individual’s spouse, and

“(iii) the facility meets the requirements of all applicable laws and regulations of the State or local government in which it is located, including the licensing of the facility as a child care facility.

Subparagraph (B)(i) shall not apply to a facility which is the principal residence (within the meaning of section 121) of the operator of the facility.

“(2) **CHILD CARE SERVICES.**—The term ‘child care services’ means child care and early childhood education.”.

(2) **CLERICAL AMENDMENT.**—The table of sections for such subpart A is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 25D the following new item:

“Sec. 25E. Right Start Child Care and Education Credit.”.

(3) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2014.

(e) **INCREASE IN EXCLUSION FOR EMPLOYER-PROVIDED DEPENDENT CARE ASSISTANCE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subparagraph (A) of section 129(a)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking “\$5,000 (\$2,500)” and inserting “\$7,500 (\$3,750)”.

(2) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by this subsection shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2014.

SA 2811. Mr. HARKIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by

him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 88, line 8, insert “, such as rural and remote areas” after “underserved areas”.

SA 2812. Mr. ENZI submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ REVIEW OF FEDERAL EARLY LEARNING AND CARE PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, shall conduct an interdepartmental review of all early learning and care programs in order to—

(1) develop a plan for the elimination of duplicative and overlapping programs, as identified by the Government Accountability Office’s 2012 annual report (GAO-12-342SP); and

(2) make recommendations to Congress for streamlining all such programs.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretary of Education and the heads of all Federal agencies that administer Federal early learning and care programs, shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives, a detailed report that outlines the efficiencies that can be achieved by, as well as specific recommendations for, eliminating duplication, overlap, and fragmentation among all Federal early learning and care programs.

SA 2813. Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 82, lines 9 and 10, strike “to receive services under this subchapter while their families” and insert “and children in foster care to receive services under this subchapter while their families (including foster families)”.

SA 2814. Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself, Mr. BLUNT, and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 93, strike lines 3 and 4 and insert the following:

11432(g)(1)(J)(ii);

“(VII) State agencies and programs serving children in foster care and the foster families of such children; and

“(VIII) other Federal programs

SA 2815. Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted an amend-

ment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 98, strike line 15 and insert the following:

view.

“(U) CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE.—The plan shall include an assurance that and describe how the State will develop and implement strategies to increase the supply and improve the quality of child care provided under this subchapter for children in foster care with foster families who, notwithstanding section 658P, may or may not have a family income that exceeds 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size.”;

SA 2816. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 79, strike lines 18 through 22 and insert the following:

“(I) which may include the acquisition of course credit in postsecondary education or of a credential, aligned with the framework;

“(II) which, notwithstanding clause (v), shall require each child care provider described in clause (i) to ensure that, not later than September 30, 2021—

“(aa) each child care staff member providing direct services to children who was hired before that date has earned a degree, which may be an associate’s degree or a baccalaureate degree, in early childhood education or a closely related field; and

“(bb) on and after that date, the child care provider will hire only individuals who have earned that degree as staff members described in item (aa); and

“(III) which shall be accessible

SA 2817. Ms. LANDRIEU submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 136, strike line 15 and insert the following:

658L(b).

“(4) EVALUATION.—

“(A) RESERVATION.—The Secretary shall reserve not more than 1 percent of the amount appropriated under this subchapter for each fiscal year, to conduct the evaluation described in subparagraph (B).

“(B) QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION.—The Secretary shall evaluate the quality and effectiveness of activities carried out under this subchapter, using scientifically valid research methodologies, in order to increase the understanding of State and local program administrators concerning the practices and strategies most likely to produce positive outcomes. The Secretary shall disseminate the key findings of the evaluation widely and promptly.”; and

SA 2818. Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself and Ms. MIKULSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize

and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 98, strike line 15 and insert the following:

view.

“(U) DISASTER PREPAREDNESS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall demonstrate the manner in which the State will address the needs of children in child care services provided through programs authorized under this subchapter, including the need for safe child care, during the period before, during, and after a state of emergency declared by the Governor or a major disaster or emergency (as such terms are defined in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122)).

“(ii) STATEWIDE CHILD CARE DISASTER PLAN.—Such plan shall include a statewide child care disaster plan for coordination of activities and collaboration, in the event of an emergency or disaster described in clause (i), among the State agency with jurisdiction over human services, the agency with jurisdiction over State emergency planning, the State lead agency, the State agency with jurisdiction over licensing of child care providers, the local resource and referral organizations, the State resource and referral system, and the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care as provided for under section 642B(b) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)).

“(iii) DISASTER PLAN COMPONENTS.—The components of the disaster plan, for such an emergency or disaster, shall include—

“(I) guidelines for the continuation of child care services in the period following the emergency or disaster, including the provision of emergency and temporary child care services, and temporary operating standards for child care providers during that period;

“(II) evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, and lock-down procedures, and procedures for communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, and accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions; and

“(III) procedures for staff and volunteer training and practice drills.”.

SA 2819. Mr. SCOTT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 140, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

SEC. 10A. PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

Section 658Q of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858o) is amended—

(1) by inserting before “Nothing” the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) PARENTAL RIGHTS TO USE CHILD CARE CERTIFICATES.—Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed or applied in any manner—

“(1) that would favor or promote the use of grants and contracts over the use of child care certificates; or

“(2) that would disfavor or discourage the use of such certificates for the purchase of child care services, including those services

provided by private or nonprofit entities, such as faith-based providers.”.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 11, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 11, 2014, at 2:15 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 11, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Access and Cost: What the U.S. Health Care System Can Learn from Other Countries.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on March 11, 2014, at 10:15 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Open Government and Freedom of Information: Reinvigorating the Freedom of Information Act for the Digital Age.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 11, 2014, at 2 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Federal Programs and the Federal Workforce of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 11, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, “A More Efficient and Effective Government: Improving the Regulatory Framework.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 11, 2014, at 2:15 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL AND CONTRACTING OVERSIGHT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Financial and Contracting Oversight of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 11, 2014, at 11 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled, “Whistle-blower Retaliation at the Hanford Nuclear Site.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Protection be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 11, 2014, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “Finding the Right Capital Regulations for Insurers.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Capt. James Holt, a Marine Corps fellow in my office, be granted the privilege of the floor for the remainder of this legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations: Calendar Nos. 670, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, and all nominations on the Secretary's desk in the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, and Navy; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; the motions to reconsider be made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be made in order to any of the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

IN THE AIR FORCE

The following Air National Guard of the United States officer for appointment in the Reserve of the Air Force to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 12203 and 12212:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. Travis D. Balch

IN THE ARMY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade of indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Brig. Gen. Michael E. Williamson

The following named officer for appointment as Chief of the Dental Corps and Assistant Surgeon General for Dental Services, United States Army, and for appointment to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., sections 3036 and 3039(b):

To be major general

Col. Thomas R. Tempel, Jr.

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Army to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Maj. Gen. Kevin W. Mangum

IN THE MARINE CORPS

The following named officers for appointment in the United States Marine Corps Reserve to the grade indicated under title 10, U.S.C., section 12203:

To be major general

Brig. Gen. William T. Collins

Brig. Gen. James S. Hartsell

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Marine Corps to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be lieutenant general

Lt. Gen. Robert E. Schmidle, Jr.

IN THE NAVY

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601:

To be vice admiral

Rear Adm. Jan E. Tighe

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE AIR FORCE

PN1327 AIR FORCE nominations (13) beginning KATHRYN L. AASEN, and ending JOHN K. WALTON, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1329 AIR FORCE nominations (15) beginning DAVID M. BERTHE, and ending PAUL A. WILLINGHAM, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1330 AIR FORCE nominations (34) beginning AMY R. ASTONLASSITER, and ending AIMEE N. ZAKALUZY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1332 AIR FORCE nominations (60) beginning ELIZABETH R. ANDERSONDOZE, and ending AARON T. YU, which nominations

were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1385 AIR FORCE nominations (158) beginning WESLEY M. ABADIE, and ending SCOTT A. ZAKALUZY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2014.

PN1387 AIR FORCE nominations (2) beginning WILLIAM E. DICKENS, JR., and ending RICHARD R. GIVENS, II, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 30, 2014.

PN1388 AIR FORCE nominations (3) beginning KYLE WILLIAM BLASCH, and ending ANDREW T. MACCABE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 30, 2014.

PN1389 AIR FORCE nominations (3) beginning LUAN TRAN LE, and ending DAVID C. SCHAEFER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 30, 2014.

PN1390 AIR FORCE nominations (4) beginning CYNTHIA B. CAMP, and ending BRYAN M. WINTER, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 30, 2014.

PN1391 AIR FORCE nominations (9) beginning LAURA I. FERNANDEZ, and ending ALBERT C. REES, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 30, 2014.

PN1392 AIR FORCE nominations (10) beginning DIANE M. DOTY, and ending EDWARD D. RONNEBAUM, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 30, 2014.

PN1393 AIR FORCE nominations (15) beginning RICHARD L. ALLEN, and ending SANDRA R. VOLDEN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 30, 2014.

PN1394 AIR FORCE nominations (180) beginning CONNIE L. ALGE, and ending KENNETH E. YEE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 30, 2014.

IN THE ARMY

PN1395 ARMY nomination of Sun Y. Kim, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 30, 2014.

PN1406 ARMY nomination of William T. Monacci, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 6, 2014.

PN1407 ARMY nomination of Glennie Z. Kertes, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 6, 2014.

PN1408 ARMY nomination of Charles A. Williams, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 6, 2014.

PN1409 ARMY nominations (3) beginning ROGER J. BELBEL, and ending YVES P. LEBLANC, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 6, 2014.

PN1423 ARMY nomination of Michael E. Cannon, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1424 ARMY nomination of Aizenhawar J. Marrogi, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1425 ARMY nominations (2) beginning THOMAS E. BYRNE, and ending JAMES H. CHANG, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1426 ARMY nominations (6) beginning CHRISTOPHER D. COULSON, and ending

MICHAEL WOODRUFF, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1429 ARMY nominations (80) beginning EDWARD AHN, and ending D012017, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

PN1310 MARINE CORPS nominations (404) beginning ERNEST P. ABELSON, II, and ending DAVID D. ZYGA, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 7, 2014.

PN1430 MARINE CORPS nomination of Ryan M. Oleksy, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1431 MARINE CORPS nomination of Sean T. Hays, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1432 MARINE CORPS nomination of Lakendrick D. Wright, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1433 MARINE CORPS nomination of John E. Simpson, III, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1434 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning BILL W. BROOKS, JR., and ending MICHAEL W. COSTA, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1435 MARINE CORPS nomination of James R. Keller, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1436 MARINE CORPS nomination of Clennon Roe, III, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1438 MARINE CORPS nomination of Anthony Redman, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1439 MARINE CORPS nomination of Jeffrey P. Wooldridge, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1441 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning BILLY A. DUBOSE, and ending JOHN P. MULLERY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1442 MARINE CORPS nominations (2) beginning CHRISTOPHER S. EICHNER, and ending JAMES SMILEY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1443 MARINE CORPS nominations (3) beginning RANDALL E. DAVIS, and ending WADE E. WALLACE, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1444 MARINE CORPS nominations (3) beginning DAMON L. ANDERSEN, and ending RICHARDO A. SPANN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1445 MARINE CORPS nominations (3) beginning PAULO T. ALVES, and ending PATRICK J. TOAL, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1446 MARINE CORPS nominations (4) beginning CHRISTIAN D. GALBRAITH, and

ending MARK J. LEHMAN, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1447 MARINE CORPS nominations (6) beginning TIMOTHY J. ALDRICH, and ending CHRIS A. STOREY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1448 MARINE CORPS nominations (6) beginning KENNETH L. AIKEY, and ending SCOTT B. ROLAND, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1449 MARINE CORPS nominations (8) beginning TERRY H. CHOI, and ending FREDDIE D. TAYLOR, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

IN THE NAVY

PN1396 NAVY nomination of Leon M. Leflore, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 30, 2014.

PN1410 NAVY nomination of Gregory D. Sutton, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 6, 2014.

PN1411 NAVY nomination of Chad C. Schumacher, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 6, 2014.

PN1412 NAVY nominations (2) beginning JACK D. HAGAN, and ending RICHARD S. MONTGOMERY, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 6, 2014.

PN1413 NAVY nominations (4) beginning REINEL CASTRO, and ending DUSTIN R. WARD, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 6, 2014.

PN1450 NAVY nomination of Megan M. Donnelly, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1451 NAVY nomination of Danielle L. Leiby, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

PN1452 NAVY nominations (16) beginning MICHAEL R. CATHEY, and ending ANDREW J. YOUNG, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of February 10, 2014.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

REAPPOINTMENT OF JOHN W. MCCARTER AS A CITIZEN REGENT OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent the Rules Committee be discharged from further consideration of S.J. Res. 32 and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the joint resolution by title. The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 32) providing for the reappointment of John W. MCCARTER

as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the joint resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent the joint resolution be read a third time and passed; and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The joint resolution (S.J. Res. 32) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed, as follows:

S.J. RES. 32

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, in accordance with section 5581 of the Revised Statutes (20 U.S.C. 43), the vacancy on the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, in the class other than Members of Congress, occurring by reason of the expiration of the term of John W. McCarter of Illinois on March 14, 2014, is filled by the reappointment of the incumbent. The reappointment is for a term of 6 years, beginning on March 15, 2014, or the date of enactment of this joint resolution, whichever occurs later.

CONDEMNING ILLEGAL RUSSIAN AGGRESSION IN UKRAINE

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 378, submitted earlier today by Senator COATS and myself.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 378) condemning illegal Russian aggression in Ukraine.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 378) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration en bloc of the following resolutions submitted earlier today: Senate Resolutions 379, 380, and 381.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid on the table en bloc, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2110 AND H.R. 4152

Mr. DURBIN. I understand there are two bills at the desk, and I ask for their first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title for the first time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2110) to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and to improve Medicare and Medicaid payments, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 4152) to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine.

Mr. DURBIN. I now ask for a second reading en bloc and object to my own request en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will be read for the second time on the next legislative day.

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 2014

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, March 12, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and the time be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half; that at 10:30 a.m., the Senate proceed to executive session, as provided under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THANKING STAFF

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, before the final statement, I wish to give a special thanks to those clerks, pages, Capitol Police, doorkeepers, and so many others for the extra work they

put in during the early morning hours as the Senate went virtually all night. I know it was a sacrifice personally to them and to their families. We appreciate their continued service to the Senate. They have our gratitude for sticking through this long ordeal and being part of the history of this Senate, an institution of which we are all proud to be a part.

PROGRAM

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, at 10:30 a.m. there will be a series of up to six rollcall votes on the confirmation of the McHugh, Leitman, Levy, Michelson, Parker, and Raskin nominations. Upon disposition of the Raskin nomination, the Senate will begin consideration of S. 1086, the childcare and development block grant reauthorization bill.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:13 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, March 12, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nomination received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

LESLIE JOYCE ABRAMS, OF GEORGIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF GEORGIA, VICE W. LOUIS SANDS, RETIRING.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 11, 2014:

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. TRAVIS D. BALCH

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL E. WILLIAMSON

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF THE DENTAL CORPS AND ASSISTANT SURGEON GENERAL FOR DENTAL SERVICES, UNITED STATES ARMY, AND FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 3036 AND 3039(B):

To be major general

COL. THOMAS R. TEMPEL, JR.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. KEVIN W. MANGUM

IN THE MARINE CORPS

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be major general

BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM T. COLLINS
BRIG. GEN. JAMES S. HARTSELL

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

L.T. GEN. ROBERT E. SCHMIDLE, JR.

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be vice admiral

REAR ADM. JAN E. TIGHE

IN THE AIR FORCE

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KATHRYN L. AASEN AND ENDING WITH JOHN K. WALTON, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DAVID M. BERTHE AND ENDING WITH PAUL A. WILLINGHAM, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH AMY R. ASTONLASSITER AND ENDING WITH AIMEE N. ZAKALUZY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ELIZABETH R. ANDERSONDOZE AND ENDING WITH AARON T. YU, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH WESLEY M. ABADIE AND ENDING WITH SCOTT A. ZAKALUZY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 9, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH WILLIAM E. DICKENS, JR. AND ENDING WITH RICHARD R. GIVENS II, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 30, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KYLE WILLIAM BLASCH AND ENDING WITH ANDREW T. MACCABE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 30, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH LUAN TRAN LE AND ENDING WITH DAVID C. SCHAEFER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 30, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CYNTHIA B. CAMP AND ENDING WITH BRYAN M. WINTER, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 30, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH LAURA I. FERNANDEZ AND ENDING WITH ALBERT C. REES, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 30, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DIANE M. DOTY AND ENDING WITH EDWARD D. RONNEBAUM, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 30, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH RICHARD L. ALLEN AND ENDING WITH SANDRA R. VOLDEN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 30, 2014.

AIR FORCE NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CONNIE L. ALGE AND ENDING WITH KENNETH E. YEE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 30, 2014.

IN THE ARMY

ARMY NOMINATION OF SUN Y. KIM, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.
ARMY NOMINATION OF WILLIAM T. MONACCI, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF GLENNIE Z. KERTES, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATION OF CHARLES A. WILLIAMS, TO BE MAJOR.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ROGER J. BELBEL AND ENDING WITH YVES P. LEBLANC, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 6, 2014.

ARMY NOMINATION OF MICHAEL E. CANNON, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATION OF AIZENHAWAR J. MARROGI, TO BE COLONEL.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH THOMAS E. BYRNE AND ENDING WITH JAMES H. CHANG, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHRISTOPHER D. COULSON AND ENDING WITH MICHAEL WOODRUFF, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

ARMY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH EDWARD AHN AND ENDING WITH D012017, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

IN THE MARINE CORPS

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH ERNEST P. ABELSON II AND ENDING WITH DAVID D. ZYGA, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON JANUARY 7, 2014.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF RYAN M. OLEKSY, TO BE MAJOR.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF SEAN T. HAYS, TO BE MAJOR.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF LAKENDRICK D. WRIGHT, TO BE MAJOR.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF JOHN E. SIMPSON III, TO BE MAJOR.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH BILL W. BROOKS, JR. AND ENDING WITH MICHAEL W. COSTA, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF JAMES R. KELLER, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF CLENNON ROE III, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF ANTHONY REDMAN, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATION OF JEFFREY P. WOOLDRIDGE, TO BE LIEUTENANT COLONEL.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH BILLY A. DUBOSE AND ENDING WITH JOHN P. MULLERY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHRISTOPHER S. EICHNER AND ENDING WITH JAMES SMILEY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH RANDALL E. DAVIS AND ENDING WITH WADE E. WALLACE, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH DAMON L. ANDERSEN AND ENDING WITH RICHARDO A. SPANN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH PAULO T. ALVES AND ENDING WITH PATRICK J. TOAL, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH CHRISTIAN D. GALBRAITH AND ENDING WITH MARK J. LEHMAN, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH TIMOTHY J. ALDRICH AND ENDING WITH CHRIS A. STORREY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH KENNETH L. AIKEY AND ENDING WITH SCOTT B. ROLAND, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

MARINE CORPS NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH TERRY H. CHOI AND ENDING WITH FREDDIE D. TAYLOR, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

IN THE NAVY

NAVY NOMINATION OF LEON M. LEFLORE, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF GREGORY D. SUTTON, TO BE COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF CHAD C. SCHUMACHER, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH JACK D. HAGAN AND ENDING WITH RICHARD S. MONTGOMERY, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 6, 2014.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH REINEL CASTRO AND ENDING WITH DUSTIN R. WARD, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 6, 2014.

NAVY NOMINATION OF MEGAN M. DONNELLY, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATION OF DANIELLE L. LEIBY, TO BE LIEUTENANT COMMANDER.

NAVY NOMINATIONS BEGINNING WITH MICHAEL R. CATHEY AND ENDING WITH ANDREW J. YOUNG, WHICH NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY THE SENATE AND APPEARED IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2014.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, March 11, 2014

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 11, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JEFF DENHAM to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

BIG BEND COUNTRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GALLEGO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, in my continuing efforts to highlight the 23rd District of Texas, I would like to talk about one of my favorite and one of the most rural parts of the 23rd District, the ghost town of Terlingua. Terlingua, the ghost town, is located near Big Bend National Park.

There are not a lot of ghosts there. There is a lot of history. There are very few people. The population is about 100 people or so. The name comes from tres lenguas, which is Spanish for three tongues because three creeks flow together nearby. It was founded in the mid-1880s as a mining town after the discovery of cinnabar.

There are many things to do there every day. You can go rafting or kayaking on the Rio Grande, mountain biking, camping, hiking, motorcycling, and many, many other outdoor activities.

On the first Saturday in November, more than 10,000 chiliheads convene for two annual chili cookoffs, the Chili Appreciation Society International and

the Frank X. Tolbert/Wick Fowler World Chili Championships.

In the 1970s, as a matter of fact, the chili cookoff also sponsored a Mexican fence-climbing contest to parody the U.S. government's plan to reinforce chain link fences along the U.S.-Mexico border.

The other interesting thing about Terlingua is the unique politics of Terlingua. Clay Henry, the first mayor elected, was elected in 1986. Clay Henry was a beer drinking goat, and he defeated a local dog. Some of his campaign posters are still around, and now, they are worth a lot of money.

I invite everyone to explore the beauty of the Big Bend Country and the beauty of the 23rd District.

OBAMACARE WILL LEAD TO DESTRUCTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, ObamaCare is a fundamentally unfair law that is hurting the middle class and lower-income Americans across the country.

In fact, just this week, the labor union Unite Here issued a scathing report on the President's health care law, charging ObamaCare will lead to the destruction of the health care plans for their members and the like, and it will make inequality in our Nation worse.

Unite Here was the first labor union to endorse the then-Senator Obama in his race for President in 2008. So even one of the President's closest union allies has turned against ObamaCare because, as they report, it will hit the average, hard-working American where it hurts the most, in the wallet.

The President and congressional Democrats sold this law as something that would reduce health care costs for the American people.

It is completely unfair to force the people to participate in a program that doesn't live up to that promise. This law was supposed to help insure the uninsured; yet it has never been more unpopular among those without health insurance.

In fact, a recent Kaiser Family Foundation poll found that 56 percent of the uninsured have an unfavorable opinion of ObamaCare.

A recent McKinsey study found that affordability was the number one reason cited by the uninsured for why they aren't signing up. The uninsured who cannot afford ObamaCare are set

to be hit with another cold reality of the President's signature health care law: they will be penalized for being put into this situation.

The President has the audacity to fine hard-working Americans for not being able to afford his costly and disastrous health care product. This despite the fact that he has exempted big business from ObamaCare, and members of his own administration do not have to purchase ObamaCare plans for themselves.

This kind of selective enforcement is unfair to low-income and middle class families. It is why, last week, my House Republican colleagues were joined by 27 Democrats to pass legislation to eliminate the individual mandate tax penalty under ObamaCare for 1 year.

Through ObamaCare, the President is marginalizing the very people he says he wants to help, and now, even his closest allies have taken notice.

Mr. Speaker, President Obama's labor union friends are right. ObamaCare is destructive to low- and middle-income families, and the politicians who are responsible for this train wreck must be held accountable.

OUR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, hundreds of men and women are in Washington, D.C., this week representing America's transit agencies, millions of transit users, with the highest ridership in over a half century: 10.7 billion rides.

Tomorrow, they will be joined by over two dozen streetcar cities. This is one of the fastest growing new development and transit tools that is taking place all across the United States. They are here seeking the Federal Government to step up and do its job.

For the first time in over 150 years, the Federal Government is in retreat on infrastructure. It all started, as you know, with the Constitution designating postal roads as one of the first obligations of our new country, and then we were involved with the development of a system of canals to help promote American commerce.

152 years ago, the Transcontinental Railroad Act was passed that ultimately tied America together from coast to coast and led to the finest passenger and freight rail system in the world.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Later, there were massive water projects in the West, electrification projects that brought the magic of electricity to rural and smalltown America. The interstate freeway system that began germinating under the administration of President Franklin Roosevelt during the Great Depression, blossomed into full flower, signed by President Eisenhower in 1956.

Mr. Speaker, we have established mass transit, with Ronald Reagan establishing a transit account, guaranteeing 20 percent of the gas tax revenues for that critical function and actually raising the gas tax a nickel a gallon, legislation signed by President Reagan.

And then there was the legislation in 1992, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, that promoted flexibility and a large-scale vision process to make the system work. Even the much-maligned Recovery Act, the so-called stimulus, had billions of dollars to help rebuild the country. But we have been stuck now for over a decade.

In 204 days, the bottom falls out of the highway trust fund, which means the Feds are going to have to cut back on transportation funding this summer, which means this spring, State and local governments are going to be holding back.

I have been working with business, labor, and environmental leaders, local governments, AAA, the truckers, bicyclists, and contractors to be able to come forward with a funding program that will work. The first gas tax increase in 21 years is what we have proposed that would be indexed for inflation so we wouldn't have to go through this anymore.

In addition, H.R. 3638 would explore the new methodology that was used in an Oregon pilot project that would pay for road use based on a user fee for the distance traveled. It has the opportunity not just to fund transportation but to transform the travel system in the United States.

Congress needs to step up. What are their solutions if they don't want to raise the gas tax for the first time in 21 years? Maybe we could have a hearing before the Ways and Means Committee on how we are going to finance the reauthorization.

We can, in fact, solve this problem. We can put millions of people to work to revitalize our communities and to make our families safer, healthier, and economically secure. When these men and women visit you on Capitol Hill, please be prepared to say: If not raising the gas tax, tell them what is your solution so that we don't fall off the cliff in 204 days and retard vital progress?

IN HONOR OF JOHN HENRY DAYTON

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BLACK). The Chair recognizes the gen-

tleman from California (Mr. DENHAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DENHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of one of my constituents, John Henry Dayton, who passed away on February 9.

John was born in Turlock, California, to Charles and Florence Dayton. He was raised on a ranch in Hughson, California, with his three siblings. Mr. Dayton attended grammar and high school in Hughson and then Oregon State University. In college, he married Beverly Jean Tack. Together, they raised two children.

After college, Mr. Dayton moved back to California. In 1971, John and his business partner, Harold Copp, opened Oakdale Village Pharmacy in the city's first shopping center. Eventually, they opened additional pharmacies in Escalon and Modesto.

Mr. Dayton was later remarried to Susan Thorpe in 1995. Together, they raised two children.

Throughout more than four decades of business in the Oakdale area, John earned a reputation as a knowledgeable, personable, and trustworthy local pharmacist.

In November 2012, John was diagnosed with stage four brain cancer. He was preceded in death by his father, Charles Dayton, and stepson, Kevin Cooper.

Madam Speaker, please join me in celebrating the life of Mr. John Henry Dayton and all of his contributions to his family and our community.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BLACK) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Dear Lord, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

At the beginning of a short workweek, we use this moment to be reminded of Your presence, and to tap the resources needed by the Members of this House to do their work as well as it can be done.

May they be led by Your spirit in the decisions they make. May their faith in You deliver them from any tensions that might tear the people's House apart, and from worries that might wear them out.

All this day, and through the week, may they do their best to find solutions to pressing issues facing our Nation. Please hasten the day when justice and love shall dwell in the hearts of all people and rule the affairs of the nations of Earth.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.
Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GALLEGO) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GALLEGO led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

IRAN ARMS SHIPMENT

(Mr. HOLDING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLDING. Madam Speaker, last week we once again saw what Prime Minister Netanyahu correctly described as "the true face of Iran."

After Israeli Defense Forces intercepted an illicit shipment of rockets, bullets, and mortars reportedly bound for Hamas fighters in Gaza, Israel was able to publicly show how Iran continues to fund and supply terrorism across the globe.

This operation also demonstrated Israel's inherent right and need to defend its people and homeland from neighboring terror groups. Madam Speaker, while the administration is quick to negotiate terms of a nuclear deal with the regime in Tehran, last week's event should serve as yet another stark reminder of whom this administration is really dealing with, but more importantly, whom they are choosing to trust.

While the face of the regime and some of their rhetoric has changed, Madam Speaker, it is clear that the Iranian regime's true intentions and end game has not.

MAYOR CLAY HENRY

(Mr. GALLEGO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GALLEGO. Madam Speaker, earlier I was on the floor and I mentioned

Clay Henry as one of the former elected officials in the district that I represent. I referred to him as the mayor of Terlingua; and you would think having grown up there and lived there all of my life, I would have remembered that he was actually at one time the mayor of Lajitas. Lajitas is a wonderful resort community in the Big Bend Country, right next to Terlingua. Perhaps I had too many visits with Mayor Clay Henry.

I will tell you that one of the most beautiful parts of the world and one that I urge everyone to get familiar with is the Big Bend Country of west Texas: the Rio Grande River, the canyons. It is an amazing place. I urge everyone to get familiar with that part of the world, as there is really nothing like it in the entire United States.

THE IRS SHOULD BE FORTHCOMING

(Mr. COLLINS of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, the American people have not received the answers they deserved from the IRS. Lois Lerner appeared before the Oversight Committee last week and again refused to provide any insight into her IRS actions in this case.

How can the President claim that there isn't even a "smidgeon of corruption" in the IRS targeting scandal? The investigation is still ongoing. If the President truly believes that the IRS did nothing wrong, then instruct them to cooperate with our investigation.

If Lois Lerner truly did nothing wrong, which I doubt, then she should testify and lay the issue to rest. If, as the evidence suggests, the targeting of conservative groups was intentional, then what would be wrong with her explaining why she refuses to testify and continues to reassert her Fifth Amendment rights?

The American people deserve to know if their freedom of speech was abridged for political reasons and if this administration is dedicated to silencing those with opposing views. I call on Lois Lerner and the IRS to be forthcoming so we can ensure that this never happens again.

RECOGNIZING WORLD PLUMBING DAY

(Mrs. NEGRETE McLEOD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. NEGRETE McLEOD. Madam Speaker, today is World Plumbing Day. It is easy to take for granted that we can simply turn on a facet and enjoy clean water; however, we should not neglect the importance that clean water conveyance presents.

It is imperative that we keep improving water infrastructure through sound legislation to guarantee every citizen access to clean water. It is important to support and collaborate with groups such as the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials, who for almost 90 years have been developing codes and standards that are used to protect systems around the world as well as ensuring America's public health for our communities.

On this World Plumbing Day, I recognize how quality, efficient plumbing systems and those highly trained professionals who work in the industry save our country money and precious resources while enhancing our quality of living, thereby keeping people safe and healthy each and every day.

VOTERS OPPOSE PATH TO CITIZENSHIP

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, the American people continue to oppose amnesty, and they are putting their Member of Congress on notice.

A Washington Post-ABC national survey released last week shows that 39 percent of registered voters are less likely, and only 27 percent more likely, to vote for a congressional candidate who supports a path to citizenship for those in the country illegally.

There is even less support for amnesty among self-described Independents. Forty-one percent are less likely, and only 28 percent more likely, to back a candidate for Congress who favors a pathway to citizenship for illegal immigrants.

Considering the media bias in favor of amnesty, these are astounding figures. According to the poll, a supermajority of Republicans, 60 percent, claim that they are less likely to support a candidate who favors amnesty. This stands in stark contrast to the meager 14 percent of GOP voters who want their candidate to confer citizenship on those here illegally.

We should listen to the voters, not amnesty proponents.

DECLARING MARCH 31 AS NATIONAL LINEMAN APPRECIATION DAY

(Mr. MULVANEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MULVANEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to extend a special thank-you to the hardworking men and women across the Nation, but especially in South Carolina, who dedicate themselves to keeping the lights on during this difficult winter. For so many of us, switching on the light switch is something that we take for

granted. It is easy to forget all the hard work that goes into making that happen.

A couple of weeks ago, Winter Storm Pax hit South Carolina leaving a path of destruction in many of the smaller communities in my district without power, crippled by the ice and snow. It is something that was so dramatic that the executive director of the South Carolina Office of Regulatory Staff said that the storm was the most significant weather event in South Carolina since Hurricane Hugo. And I can assure you that, for us, that is saying a lot.

To give some quick numbers as to what happened, more than 3,000 people went to work in South Carolina. The folks from Duke Energy alone cleared more than 7,000 trees off of the power lines in South Carolina. It is these types of efforts that these folks put in every single winter to make sure that something that we take for granted actually happens when we flip on the lights.

In recognition of those efforts, the efforts that they undertake every single winter, I am introducing a bill today to declare March 31 as National Lineman Appreciation Day.

I hope we can count on my colleagues to send this very small thank-you. It is not much, but it is the least we can do to let these folks know that we don't always take them for granted.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY SCHOOL FROM REDDING, CALIFORNIA

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University Preparatory School from Redding for winning first place in the 2014 Regional Science Bowl competition.

The National Science Bowl is an annual competition sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy that brings together some of the best and brightest students from across our country. Teams compete in a face-off competition featuring questions on a range of science disciplines including biology, chemistry, earth science, physics, energy, and math. The event, while very competitive, also promotes and encourages discovery, innovation, and teamwork and a commitment to bettering our Nation's future.

We are very proud of all the north State teams that competed against dozens of California high schools for a chance to represent California at the National Science Bowl. Their interest and diligent studies in math and science are a testament to the outstanding work from our students, educators, and parents across our region.

Best of luck to Bond, Tyler, Nathan, Kay, and Colleen, who will be traveling

to Washington, D.C., next month to compete against teams from across the country in the National Science Bowl. I know you will make us proud. Good luck.

EXECUTIVE OVERREACH

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to once again remind the President that it is Congress that makes the laws, not the Executive. It is time the President works with Congress, not around it, to achieve realistic policy goals to help grow the economy for hardworking Americans. They work hard and they play by the rules. We need an administration that does the same.

The President's willingness to go around Congress harms the balance between the branches that our Founders sought to protect. Furthermore, it makes both Chambers consider whether legislation they pass will be faithfully executed—all at a time when it is hard enough to come together on the very critical issues.

Governing by Executive fiat and acting as a Congress-of-one does little to restore the faith of the American people in their government. The businesses and families we represent deserve a government willing to work together.

Mr. President, it is time to stop the overuse of Executive actions and get back to the real work of growing our economy and making our Nation a better place for all Americans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 10, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 10, 2014 at 2:19 p.m.:

Appointments:
Public Interest Declassification Board.
With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following commu-

nication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 11, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 11, 2014 at 9:45 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1917.
With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 11, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, U.S. Capitol, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 11, 2014 at 10:45 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 2019.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

TRANSMITTAL OF ADDITIONAL FISCAL YEAR 2015 BUDGET DOCUMENTS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113-84)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed:

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, March 10, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I transmit herewith the following hard copy volumes of the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget: Appendix, Analytical Perspectives, and Historical Tables.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 14 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1530

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BYRNE) at 3 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

FARMERS UNDERTAKE ENVIRONMENTAL LAND STEWARDSHIP ACT

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 311) to direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to change the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure rule with respect to certain farms.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 311

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Farmers Undertake Environmental Land Stewardship Act" or the "FUELS Act".

SEC. 2. APPLICABILITY OF SPILL PREVENTION, CONTROL, AND COUNTERMEASURE RULE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator, in implementing the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure rule with respect to any farm, shall—

(1) require certification of compliance with such rule by—

(A) a professional engineer for a farm with—

(i) an individual tank with an aboveground storage capacity greater than 10,000 gallons;

(ii) an aggregate aboveground storage capacity greater than or equal to 42,000 gallons; or

(iii) a history that includes a spill, as determined by the Administrator; or

(B) the owner or operator of the farm (via self-certification) for a farm with—

(i) an aggregate aboveground storage capacity greater than 10,000 gallons but less than 42,000 gallons; and

(ii) no history of spills, as determined by the Administrator; and

(2) exempt from all requirements of such rule any farm—

(A) with an aggregate aboveground storage capacity of less than or equal to 10,000 gallons; and

(B) no history of spills, as determined by the Administrator.

(b) CALCULATION OF AGGREGATE ABOVEGROUND STORAGE CAPACITY.—For the purposes of subsection (a), the aggregate aboveground storage capacity of a farm excludes

all containers on separate parcels that have a capacity that is less than 1,320 gallons.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act, the following terms apply:

(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

(2) FARM.—The term “farm” has the meaning given such term in section 112.2 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) GALLON.—The term “gallon” refers to a United States liquid gallon.

(4) SPILL PREVENTION, CONTROL, AND COUNTERMEASURE RULE.—The term “Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure rule” means the regulation promulgated by the Environmental Protection Agency under part 112 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 311.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Farmers Undertake Environmental Land Stewardship Act—or the FUELS Act—is an important piece of legislation that brings much-needed relief to the Nation’s agricultural community. H.R. 311 is a bipartisan bill that currently has 73 cosponsors from Members on both sides of the aisle.

It passed the House unanimously last Congress and again last year as an amendment to the farm bill. Additionally, this legislation has gained the support of more than 30 producer organizations, including every major farm group.

The EPA-mandated SPCC—or Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure—rules requires that oil storage facilities with a capacity of over 1,320 gallons make costly infrastructure modifications to reduce the possibility of oil spills.

These mandated infrastructure improvements, along with the necessary inspection and certification by a specially licensed professional engineer, would cost farmers tens of thousands of dollars.

The SPCC program dates back to 1973, shortly after the Clean Water Act was signed into law. In the last decade, it has come down harshly on agriculture, and the rules have been amended, delayed, and extended dozens of times, creating enormous confusion in the farming community.

On top of that, the EPA has failed to engage in effective outreach to producers and cooperatives on SPCC’s compliance.

The FUELS Act is simple. It revises the SPCC regulations to be reflective of a producer’s spill risk and their financial resources. The exemption level would be adjusted upward from an unworkable 1,320 gallons of oil storage to an amount that would protect small farms, 10,000 gallons.

The bill would also place a greater degree of responsibility on farmers and ranchers to self-certify compliance if their oil storage facilities exceed their exemption level. To add another layer of environmental protection, the producer must be able to demonstrate that he or she has no history of oil spills.

The University of Arkansas conducted a study, concluding that this bill would exempt over 80 percent of producers from SPCC compliance, saving up to \$240 million in costs in Arkansas alone. For the entire country, it could save small farmers up to \$3.36 billion.

The last thing the government should be doing is imposing an expensive regulatory burden on farming families. There is no scientific justification for such action, bolstered by the fact that the EPA cannot provide data or even anecdotal evidence of agricultural spills.

A 2005 USDA report found that more than 99 percent of farms surveyed haven’t experienced a single incident. In fact, one year after this report was published, EPA endorsed the 10,000-gallon exemption threshold I am proposing in this bill. Unfortunately, they moved the goalpost again a few years later.

By the nature of their occupation, family farmers are already very careful stewards of the land and water. No one has more at stake than those who work on the ground from which they derive their livelihood.

I urge support of the FUELS Act and our Nation’s small farmers.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my concern on consideration of H.R. 311. This legislation would inexplicably weaken environmental safeguards against oil spills for one specific sector of our economy, American farms.

Under current law, any facility that stores certain quantities of oil is required to take precautionary steps to prevent the discharge of oil into U.S. waters. These requirements apply across the board based on the quantity of oil stored in the facility, which can range from an industrial facility to a service station to, of course, a farm.

These steps, outlined in the EPA’s implementation regulations, known as the Spill Prevention, Control, and

Countermeasure—or SPCC—rule, require facilities put in place appropriate measures to prevent any spilled oil from entering the water, which can include both the construction of containment systems or more simplistic measures to capture small leaks.

The SPCC rule also requires such facilities to have a plan in place in advance that identifies additional measures to clean up any oil that might otherwise escape such containment. These provisions generally have been in place since 1974 and have been in force for farmers since May 2013.

Since that time, all farmers who fall within the guidelines of the SPCC rule should now have put in place appropriately scaled countermeasures based on the size of their facility and the likelihood of an oil spill reaching U.S. waters; yet H.R. 311 would modify the existing obligations for farmers to comply with the SPCC rule.

In many instances, H.R. 311 would alleviate existing SPCC obligations for farmers to develop oil spill contingency plans, especially for those farmers that store less than 10,000 gallons of oil in above-ground containers.

In summary, this bill would tell farmers that currently have these measures in place to stop taking precautionary efforts to prevent spills.

Why does this legislation make this change? Is it because the oil stored on farms is less likely to spill or to pollute U.S. waters than other facilities that store oil? There is no empirical evidence in the committee record that this is the case.

Is it because the oil stored on farms is any different from oil stored at other facilities? Again, the answer is likely no.

The stated reason for this legislation is that these safeguards simply cost too much for American farmers, but the reality is, for many farmers, many of these costs have already taken place, especially any capital costs that might have been required for containment structures.

So, in reality, many of the compliance cost concerns expressed in this bill may well be overstated, as annual compliance costs may now be reduced simply to cover periodic maintenance.

Mr. Speaker, again, I have concerns with this legislation, and I hope that, as we continue to work through this issue, we will come up with a more sensible way of addressing the protection of our American farms, as well as the protection of our U.S. waters.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL,
Washington, DC, March 11, 2014.
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: Today, March 11, the House of Representatives is scheduled to consider H.R. 311, under suspension of the rules. This bill would decrease the oversight of oil storage and safeguards against spills at

locations around the country for one class of facilities without showing that they are safer than other facilities with the same volume of oil.

H.R. 311 increases the amount of storage capacity that triggers various requirements under the spill prevention, control and countermeasure (SPCC) rules for any "farm," defined as "a facility on a tract of land devoted to the production of crops or raising of animals, including fish, which produced and sold, or normally would have produced and sold, \$1,000 or more of agricultural products during a year." Consequently, more operations will be subject to weaker requirements or will be exempt altogether, as compared to the safeguards currently in place.

Oil is no less harmful to waterways and the people and wildlife that depend on the nation's waters if it happens to be spilled at an agricultural operation. It is common sense that any facility located such that a spill could reasonably reach waterways and cause harm—including agricultural facilities—should take steps to prevent spills and plan to respond to those that occur. Coming so soon after the chemical and coal slurry spills in West Virginia and the coal ash spill in North Carolina, it is nothing short of astonishing that Congress would weaken protections that seek to prevent, plan for, and address spills that could contaminate drinking water supplies or harm aquatic life.

The changes that H.R. 311 would impose would weaken current protections enormously. Take for instance the provisions that exempt facilities from the SPCC requirements; under H.R. 311, agri-businesses with an "aggregate aboveground storage capacity" of oil of 10,000 gallons or less would be exempt, compared with 1,320 gallons under current law. That provision alone is troubling, but the bill is even weaker than it appears at first blush, as it would also change the threshold for storage containers that can be ignored in the calculation of aboveground storage capacity from 55 gallons to 1,320 gallons, so long as a facility has not had a history of spills. That would allow covered operations to avoid the SPCC planning and prevention requirements entirely by having an unlimited number of 1,319-gallon tanks on site.

Agri-business operations already have been given significant flexibility in meeting the SPCC requirements. They have had an extended period of time to comply with changes to the applicable provisions; other facilities have been subject to these requirements since 2010 or 2011, whereas agri-businesses with the requisite oil storage capacity were due to comply in May, 2013. Section 1416 of the March, 2013 continuing resolution, Public Law 113-6, later prohibited the use of funds to enforce this requirement until September, 2013. The rules also provide flexibility in developing plans for certain operations with smaller storage volumes and a good history with respect to spills. And EPA provided for individual extensions of the deadline under some circumstances. Given that the deadline has now passed for farms, it is hard to understand what H.R. 311 would accomplish, aside from allowing newly-exempt operators to ignore the plans and procedures they have already developed, and rewarding those facilities that did not comply with the rules on time.

Congress should not gamble the nation's water resources for the sake of one industry. Please maintain sensible safeguards against oil spills and oppose H.R. 311.

Sincerely,

SCOTT SLESINGER,
Legislative Director,
Natural Resources Defense Council.

Mr. CRAWFORD. I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time and yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlelady for her comments. I would say that the 10,000-gallon threshold that we have described here is actually taken right from the EPA.

Up to 2005, they were perfectly comfortable with the 10,000-gallon threshold, so we are basically saying that we definitely want to work with the EPA and use the thresholds that they see as viable or that they did see up to that point.

The other thing is that, in agriculture, it is not a one-size-fits-all type of a scenario, where there are different scales of production and different levels of production.

Economies of scale are certainly better equipped and use lots more fuel on their farm, and so we are trying to implement some guidelines that do respect the financial resources as well as the size of the operation.

And, again, there is no empirical evidence that there have been any kind of spills that would warrant this level of regulation for farmers and certainly not to the degree that 1,320 gallons calls for, and that would catch up virtually every farmer in the United States.

What we are trying to do is to implement some common sense into this in a way that even the EPA has already agreed to in past rules; so I just would, again, urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation. This will be, I believe, in total, the sixth time that we will have passed this out of the House.

Again, I think this is good common-sense legislation. I urge my colleagues to join in supporting H.R. 311.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 311.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF VÁCLAV HAVEL

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 506) honoring the life and legacy of Václav Havel by directing the House of Representatives Fine Arts Board to provide for the display of a bust of Václav Havel in the United States Capitol.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 506

Whereas Václav Havel, former President of the Czech Republic, passed away on December 18, 2011, at 75 years of age, at his country home in Hrádeck in the Czech Republic;

Whereas Václav Havel is widely recognized and respected throughout the world as a defender of democratic principles and human rights;

Whereas through his extensive writings, Václav Havel courageously challenged the ideology and legitimacy of the authoritarian communist regimes that ruled Central and Eastern Europe during the Cold War;

Whereas Václav Havel, who was imprisoned multiple times by the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia for his advocacy of universal human rights and democratic principles, maintained his convictions in the face of repression;

Whereas Václav Havel was one of the founders of Charter 77, a group of 242 individuals who called for the human rights guaranteed under the 1975 Helsinki accords to be realized in Czechoslovakia;

Whereas Václav Havel was a cofounder of the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Prosecuted, an organization dedicated to supporting dissidents and their families which helped to advance the cause of freedom and justice in Czechoslovakia;

Whereas Václav Havel, as leader of the Civic Forum movement, was a key figure in the 1989 "Velvet Revolution", the peaceful overthrow of the Czechoslovakia communist government;

Whereas, on February 21, 1990, Václav Havel addressed a Joint Session of Congress where he stated, "Thomas Jefferson wrote that 'governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed'. It was a simple and important act of the human spirit. What gave meaning to that act, however, was that the author backed it up with his life. It was not just his words but it was his deeds as well.";

Whereas following the Velvet Revolution, Václav Havel was democratically elected as President of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic in 1990, and after a peaceful partition forming 2 separate states, democratically elected President of the Czech Republic in 1993;

Whereas under the leadership of Václav Havel, the Czech Republic became a prosperous, democratic country and a respected member of the international community;

Whereas also under his leadership the Czech Republic became a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on March 12, 1999, and continues to be a valued ally of the United States;

Whereas during his lifetime, Václav Havel received praise as one of the world's great democratic leaders and was awarded many international prizes recognizing his commitment to peace and democratic principles;

Whereas, on July 23, 2003, President George W. Bush honored Václav Havel with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award of the United States Government, for being "one of liberty's great heroes";

Whereas after leaving office as president of the Czech Republic in February 2003, Václav Havel remained a voice on behalf of democratic dissidents worldwide and against authoritarian regimes; and

Whereas the legacy of Václav Havel inspires those that advocate and work for freedom from tyranny: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That to honor the life and legacy of Václav Havel, the House of Representatives Fine Arts Board shall provide for the display of an appropriate bust of Václav Havel in the House of Representatives wing of the United States Capitol.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the House resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

I rise in support of H. Res. 506, directing the House Fine Arts Board to place a bust of Václav Havel in the United States Capitol, which will serve as an honor of his exemplary life and legacy.

Václav Havel was a man of many talents and contributions to the world. He was a Czechoslovakian playwright, essayist, and poet.

Born and raised in Prague, during his formative years, Havel and his family were among the countless who fell under oppression when the Communists came to power and confiscated all their property; yet, still, he carried on, finding his way professionally working in the arts, but he knew he had more to give.

Havel's contributions to society are without measure. Havel used his gifts of the written word to rally his countrymen behind the true meanings of freedom and the need for the human spirit to break free from the clutches of the communist empire.

Within his well-known essay, "The Power of the Powerless," he insightfully pointed out how citizens under communist regimes were forced to "live within a lie." He stood as someone who would not be oppressed and served as a lead negotiator, actually, in what would be the end of more than four decades of communist rule.

Many remember him for his instrumental role in the Velvet Revolution, where he became a dominant figure in the final push for a democratic government.

Havel fought for his home, Czechoslovakia, with words and with ideas, and he aided the fight for the oppressed, and he won. Havel became a leader when his countrymen and women needed him the most.

He was so respected by his peers in Czechoslovakia that he was chosen to

lead postcommunist Czechoslovakia first as an interim President and then was voted unanimously to become President of Czechoslovakia in December of 1989 by its Parliament.

□ 1545

In today's environment, it is somewhat awe inspiring that he was so respected that he was unanimously elected to President. You don't find that too often these days.

Six months later, Havel was elected as President at a popular election in July of 1990; and through his leadership and influence, Mr. Havel helped guide states from underneath the Soviet regime to their place in respected democracies in Europe. He helped bring down the Iron Curtain, and he aided his country's transition into a free market economy. He certainly deserves to be honored with his bust in this building that celebrates our own democracy and supports democracy, liberty, and freedom across the globe.

So I urge my colleagues to support the resolution. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 506, and I wish to associate myself with the words of the gentlewoman from Michigan, as well.

Václav Havel was an iconic defender of democracy, a protector of human rights, and an inspiration to people all over the world in their struggle to assert human rights as a universal freedom. His writings and his activism were essential in bringing democracy to a region long plagued by the authoritarianism of a Communist dictatorship.

In 1990, Mr. Havel was elected President of the former Czechoslovakia and later, in 1993, the Czech Republic. Under Mr. Havel's administration, the Czech Republic became and remains to this day a staunch ally of the United States. After his time in elected office, Mr. Havel continued to serve as a voice for the oppressed throughout the world and a champion of freedom until his death in 2011.

This bust of Václav Havel in the United States Capitol is a very fitting tribute because it is a tribute to an international leader and a man whose works helped to reshape the map of the world and the hope for freedom and human rights throughout the world.

I urge all the Members of this body to support H. Res. 506 unanimously, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, at this time, it is my privilege to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), who is the distinguished chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, as the author of this resolution, I rise today to honor the life of a rather extraordinary man, Václav Havel.

As we watch the crisis unfolding in Ukraine, I think it is important to reflect upon the life of the man who led the people of Czechoslovakia out from under the thumb of the totalitarian system he had grown up under, out from under the Soviet Union, and played a very key role in the founding of not one, but of two vibrant European democracies, one of them the Czech Republic and the other the Slovak Republic.

I remember a young Croatian journalist, with tears in his eyes, saying, if only we had had someone, someone like Václav Havel, when it came to the divisions in the former Yugoslavia. Because, as he stated, the ideals that Václav Havel had enunciated, political pluralism, tolerance, and democratic capitalism, the way forward, the same way forward as was broadcast by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty—broadcasts, by the way that were never heard in Yugoslavia; we never broadcast there. But he said those themes managed, without the loss of a single human life, for Václav Havel not only to bring independence for the Czechoslovakian people, but then to set up a separate Slovakia and a separate Czech Republic after the referendum.

As a playwright, Václav Havel revealed the absurdity he lived under under communist ideology. He discredited—he discredited—the repressive Czechoslovak Communist regime, and following the brutal Soviet suppression of the 1968 Prague Spring, which was a movement for greater political liberalization, Havel was banned from the theater. Their attempt to silence him was to not allow his words to be heard. But instead, they greatly underestimated his passion for freedom, because instead of succumbing to their intimidation, Václav Havel became the voice and increased—increased—his political activity.

Havel played the central role in drafting the now famous Charter 77 Manifesto and was a founding member of the dissident organization based upon those very principles, and in 1979 he founded the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Persecuted. These and other opposition efforts earned him multiple stays in prison as a so-called guest of the Communist authorities.

But Havel and the cause of freedom prevailed. Following the successful Velvet Revolution of 1989, Václav Havel became President of Czechoslovakia, and that was by a unanimous vote of the Federal Assembly, and that ended 41 years of repressive Communist rule.

The following year, Czechoslovakia held its first free elections in four decades, resulting in overwhelming support for Havel to retain the Presidency. As leader of an independent Czechoslovakia, Havel presided over the peaceful separation of the Czech and Slovak Republics, a momentous and challenging task. As President of the

Czech Republic, he paved the way for the country's entrance both into NATO and into the European Union.

A strong supporter of Radio Free Europe, President Havel invited this U.S. international broadcaster to move to Prague, offering the former Czechoslovak Parliament building as a headquarters for them. And when some questioned the broadcaster's role after the fall of communism, Havel stated:

We need your professionalism and your ability to see events from a broad perspective.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he might consume to the gentleman.

Mr. ROYCE. Havel's zeal for liberating oppressed people did not diminish in later years, when he continued to advocate for democratic reforms in places such as Belarus, Burma, Cuba, and Iran.

In reference to his role as a democratic activist, Havel simply wrote:

We never decided to become dissidents. We simply went ahead and did certain things that we felt we ought to do, that seemed decent for us to do, nothing more nor less.

The legacy of this freedom fighter serves as an inspiration for peaceful, democratic activists today. It is fitting, therefore, for us to pass this resolution and provide for a bust of Václav Havel to be displayed in the Capitol Building, the workplace of our great democracy. There alongside similar images of the great champions of freedom—Winston Churchill, Louis Kossuth, Raoul Wallenberg—his statue will remind future generations of the impact one man can have in the advancement and in the protection of liberty.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the original cosponsors of this resolution, as well: Majority Leader CANTOR, Minority Leader PELOSI, Majority Whip MCCARTHY, Minority Whip HOYER, Appropriations Chairman ROGERS and Ranking Member LOWEY, and the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, ELIOT ENGEL, with whom I worked particularly closely in trying to advance the values of Václav Havel.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, we want to thank Mr. ROYCE, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, for introducing this resolution and promoting the idea of having a bust of Václav Havel in the U.S. Capitol. We completely agree with his motivation and the words that he has shared with us today.

With that, I urge unanimous support for this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I would simply close by saying Václav Havel passed away on December 18, 2011, in the Czech Republic. He was 75 years old. And what an incredible life this man led, and I think

certainly displaying his bust in the United States Capitol is certainly an appropriate and fitting tribute. So I would urge my colleagues, as well, to unanimously support this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the extraordinary Mr. Václav Havel who died in 2011 at the age of 75.

Mr. Havel will forever be remembered as a defender of democracy and human rights in the former Soviet Union, having fought against communism and repression throughout the Cold War. Mr. Havel played a central role in the 1989 Velvet Revolution that ultimately paved the way toward democratic governance in the Czech Republic.

Mr. Havel went on to serve as the first post-communist President of the Czech Republic. His leadership and vision helped lay the groundwork for the country's prominent standing in our democratic community of nations.

I join my colleagues in support of this bipartisan resolution.

It is time that we honor Mr. Havel's legacy by allowing his bust alongside those of Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr., Raoul Wallenberg, Sir Winston Churchill, and Sojourner Truth in the U.S. Capitol. Their busts serve as a timeless celebration of some of our most cherished human rights defenders.

Mr. Speaker, I urge your support.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as we stand here today in this chamber as Members of the People's House sworn to support and defend the Constitution of the United States and the ideals enshrined therein—freedom and democracy—it would only be fitting that we honor the life and legacy of a man who embodied those ideals.

Authorizing a bust of Václav Havel to be forever memorialized in these hallowed halls of the United States Capitol alongside some of the world's greatest voices for freedom, equal rights, and human dignity would be an apt testament to a man who was a tireless advocate for liberty, human rights and for the right of self-determination for the people of Czechoslovakia.

It was Václav's unwavering commitment to his country and to democracy that inspired generations to rise up and break free from decades of communist rule.

But the fervor for which he opposed ruthless dictators wasn't limited to just Eastern Europe, but to wherever they may be.

His support of the people of my homeland, Cuba, meant a great deal and revealed Václav's true nature.

Václav advocated for the rights, dignity, and liberation of the Cuban people and created the International Committee for Democracy in Cuba in order to increase the visibility of the plight of the Cuban people and generate global support for freedom and democracy on the island.

I was honored to have authored the House Resolution in 2012 that celebrated the life and legacy of Václav Havel after his passing, and I stand here today to express my utmost support for H. Res. 506.

Every time we will see his bust in the Capitol will serve as a reminder that we must never give up the struggle against tyranny and oppression—and that is how we will forever honor the memory of Václav Havel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 506.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING VIOLATION OF UKRAINIAN SOVEREIGNTY, INDEPENDENCE, AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 499) condemning the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity by military forces of the Russian Federation, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 499

Whereas the United States has been strongly committed to the sovereignty, democratic development, and prosperity of Ukraine since it secured its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991;

Whereas on January 29, 2014, the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives agreed to House Resolution 447, supporting the democratic and European aspirations of the people of Ukraine and their right to choose their own future free of intimidation and fear, which resolution was agreed to by the House of Representatives on February 10, 2014;

Whereas the Ukrainian people have the right to freely determine their future, including their country's relationship with other countries and international organizations, without interference, intimidation, or coercion by other countries;

Whereas closer relations with Europe hold out the prospect of a more stable and prosperous Ukraine, which would be of benefit to all countries, including Russia;

Whereas the military intervention by the Russian Federation in Crimea is a violation of Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity;

Whereas this military intervention is a violation of international law, including the Russian Federation's obligations under the United Nations Charter;

Whereas this military intervention is a violation of the Russian Federation's obligations under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, in which it pledged to respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine and to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine;

Whereas by its military intervention in Ukraine, the Russian Federation has violated the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act Declaration of Principles Regarding Relations Between Participating States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe;

Whereas the Russian Federation's military intervention in Crimea represents a reckless

escalation of its long-standing efforts to pressure Ukraine through political, diplomatic, and economic means to reduce its ties to Europe and the West and force it into a closer association with Russia, including through the establishment of a Eurasian Union;

Whereas the Russian Federation has used and is continuing to use coercive economic measures, including the manipulation of energy prices and supplies, and trade restrictions to place political pressure on Ukraine and other countries in the region;

Whereas the Government of Ukraine has exercised extraordinary restraint to date in response to the use of force against it on its territory;

Whereas the instability in Ukraine has forced 230 Peace Corps volunteers to leave Ukraine; and

Whereas the immediate deployment of international monitors from either the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe or the United Nations to Crimea and in other Ukrainian regions would provide transparency and objective reporting regarding threats of violence and military activity, and regarding civil and political rights, and also enhance the security of the Ukrainian people in all regions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity by military forces of the Russian Federation;

(2) states that the military intervention by the Russian Federation—

(A) is in breach of its obligations under the United Nations Charter;

(B) is in violation of the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, in which it pledged to respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine and to refrain from the threat of use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine; and

(C) poses a threat to international peace and security;

(3) calls on the Russian Federation to remove all of its military forces from Ukraine's Crimean peninsula, other than those operating in strict accordance with its 1997 agreement on the Status and Conditions of the Black Sea Fleet Stationing on the Territory of Ukraine, and to refrain from interference in all regions of Ukraine, including by ending its support of separatist and paramilitary forces in Crimea;

(4) declares that the Ukrainian people have the right to determine their own future free from outside interference;

(5) commends the Ukrainian Government for its continued restraint and avoidance of military provocations;

(6) calls on the Ukrainian Government to continue to protect the rights of all minority populations within Ukraine and make clear that it represents all Ukrainian citizens;

(7) calls on all Ukrainians to respect the legitimate government authorities in all parts of Ukraine, including in eastern and southern Ukraine, as well as to respect all Ukrainian laws and the Constitution of Ukraine;

(8) calls for the deployment of independent monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in Crimea and other areas of Ukraine;

(9) calls on NATO allies and European Union member states to immediately suspend military cooperation with Russia, including restricting sales to the Russian government of lethal and non-lethal military equipment that might be used to support fur-

ther aggression in Ukraine or elsewhere in the region;

(10) calls upon the President and the leaders of other democratic states to boycott the G-8 summit in Sochi, Russia, to convene a G-7 summit in June 2014 outside of Russia that does not include Russia, and to consider expelling Russia from the group, given its record of international aggression, domestic repression, and human rights records that are inconsistent with democratic standards;

(11) calls on the Administration to work with our European allies and other countries to impose visa, financial, trade, and other sanctions on senior Russian Federation officials, Russian and Ukrainian oligarchs and others complicit in Russia's intervention and interference in Ukraine, majority state-owned banks and commercial organizations, and other state agencies, as appropriate;

(12) states that the United States should participate with its European allies, other countries, and international organizations in a coordinated effort to provide the Ukrainian government with financial, economic, and technical assistance, including asset recovery, to assist a domestic economic recovery program that includes fundamental reforms and effective anti-corruption measures;

(13) calls on the United States, its European allies, and other countries and international organizations to provide assistance to ensure that new elections scheduled for May 2014 are free, fair, and in full accordance with international standards;

(14) calls on the United States and its European allies, other countries, and international organizations to develop a long-term strategy to support economic development and reform in Ukraine, including through enhanced relationships with Western countries, organizations and institutions;

(15) calls on Ukraine and European countries and former Soviet Republics to support energy diversification initiatives to reduce Russian control of energy exports, including by promoting energy efficiency and reverse natural gas flows from Western Europe, and calls on the United States to promote increased natural gas exports and energy efficiency;

(16) supports efforts by Ukraine to achieve energy independence;

(17) supports efforts by Ukraine to improve transparency, combat corruption, and protect individual rights through an independent judiciary and strong rule of law; and

(18) affirms the right of all countries in the region to exercise their sovereign rights within their internationally recognized borders free from outside intervention and to conduct their foreign policy in accordance with their determination of the best interests of their peoples.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 499, a very important declaration of support for the people of Ukraine in this time of peril. This measure condemns Russia's unprovoked aggression in clear and in unmistakable terms. The U.S. has a strong interest in a democratic and prosperous Ukraine and a Ukraine with its territorial integrity intact.

I would like to take this time to recognize, also, Ranking Member ENGEL for coauthoring this bipartisan resolution, and I would also like to thank the members of the Committee on Foreign Affairs for their work to strengthen this resolution at last week's markup where it passed unanimously.

This resolution is an important part of the larger effort to aid Ukraine and impose real costs on Russia, to give Russia something to weigh in the balance, something to take into account for its unacceptable action in the Crimea section of Ukraine.

Among other resolves, the resolution condemns the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity by military forces of the Russian Federation, and it declares that the Ukrainian people have the right to determine their own future free from outside interference.

Importantly, the resolution calls on the administration to work with our allies to impose visa, financial, and other sanctions, as appropriate. Russia's actions cannot go unchallenged.

To show Moscow how isolated its aggression has made it, world leaders are speaking out. Today, the House of Representatives is joining those voices. Ukraine's new government is confronting an economic and financial crisis brought on by years of mismanagement and corruption by previous government officials, and it is doing this while under military invasion and economic coercion by neighboring Russia.

The new government in Kiev cannot succeed without strong and rapid support by the international community. Last week, the House acted quickly on a loan guarantee provision. This is conditioned on Ukraine's undertaking fundamental economic reforms to stabilize its economy.

Addressing Ukraine's energy security must be part of our response here. While the United States recently became the world's largest producer of natural gas, Russia is still the largest exporter. Moscow freely uses its energy resources to advance its foreign policy goals, including by blackmailing countries which are dependent on Russia.

Russia has repeatedly used its natural gas to pressure Ukraine economically and politically. It recently announced that it will significantly hike its prices, a deliberate effort to squeeze Ukraine in order to worsen its current economic crisis and to control it politically.

Fortunately, we have a readily available option to help counter this threat, namely, reducing the current impediments to exports of American natural gas to Ukraine. While Vladimir Putin is selling oil and gas around the world, we still maintain major restrictions on selling our energy to all but a handful of countries.

We should end these self-imposed sanctions on our energy exports to Ukraine. This would undermine Putin's influence. It would bolster our allies throughout Europe and create jobs at home.

I urge all Members to support this important measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, March 7, 2014.

Hon. ED ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE, I am writing with respect to H. Res. 499, "Condemning the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity by military forces of the Russian Federation." As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions in H. Res. 499 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, I agree to discharge our Committee from further consideration of this resolution that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H. Res. 499 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and that our Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this resolution or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H. Res. 499, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H. Res. 499.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, March 7, 2014.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: Thank you for agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H. Res. 499, condemning the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity by military forces of the Russian Federation.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future.

I will seek to place our letters on H. Res. 499 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the resolution. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with the Committee on the Judiciary

as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, March 7, 2014.

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing concerning H. Res. 499, "Condemning the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity by military forces of the Russian Federation," which was favorably reported out of your Committee on March 6, 2014.

As you know, H. Res. 499 has been referred to the Committee on Ways and Means. In order to expedite floor consideration of the resolution, the Committee on Ways and Means will forgo action on H. Res. 499. This is being done with the understanding that it does not in any way prejudice the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or its jurisdictional prerogatives on this or similar legislation.

I would appreciate your response to this letter, confirming this understanding with respect to H. Res. 499, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration.

Sincerely,

DAVE CAMP,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, March 10, 2014.

Hon. DAVE CAMP,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN CAMP: Thank you for agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H. Res. 499, condemning the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity by military forces of the Russian Federation.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this resolution or similar legislation in the future.

I will seek to place our letters on H. Res. 499 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the resolution. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with the Committee on Ways and Means as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

□ 1600

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself whatever time I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support of H. Res. 499, a resolution that condemns the recent violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity by Russia.

I want to begin by thanking Chairman ROYCE for his leadership on this issue, as well as Ranking Member ENGEL, and for their introducing this resolution.

As the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats, I, along with Leader PELOSI and Whip HOYER and my colleagues on the Ukrainian Caucus and the Foreign Affairs Committee, have watched the developments in Ukraine with concern, particularly over the last 9 months.

Long before the Vilnius Summit and then-President Yanukovich's surprise announcement in November that he would not sign an Association Agreement with the EU, our administration noted with concern the pressure exerted over Ukrainian authorities to act against the interests of their own people.

It began with Russian threats of trade embargo and gas supply cutoffs in Ukraine if they signed the Association Agreement.

After peaceful demonstrators took to the streets in subzero temperatures, chilling cold, risking their own well-being in Kiev to protest the decision, Russia threatened to withhold billions of dollars in promised financial assistance if Yanukovich did not crack down on it.

In mid-February dozens of peaceful protesters were tragically killed by Ukrainian special police receiving orders from then-President Yanukovich.

Now, under the most disingenuous of pretexts, Russian President Putin has ordered his troops to invade an independent, sovereign country in blatant violation of international law. Enough is enough. We must stand with the people of Ukraine at this critical moment.

The people of Ukraine, and the people of all countries in the region, and throughout the world for that matter, have the right to determine their own future free of pressure, free of threats. As Ukrainians attempt to chart out their own course, they should know that the United States stands with them and that we are committed to helping them build a more democratic, prosperous, secure, and just Ukraine.

Before I go any further, I would like to commend the administration, and in particular Secretary Kerry, Assistant Secretary Nuland, Ambassador Pyatt, and the women and men of our Embassy in Kiev, who have worked so tirelessly throughout this crisis to support the democratic aspirations of Ukrainian people.

I witnessed them work tirelessly during this effort, not letting 2 days go by without imploring the leadership in Ukraine to move forward. I noticed the Vice President interceding virtually 3 times a week in that same effort. So I welcome the administration's initial actions in response to Russia's invasion of Crimea, including the announcement of an executive order authorizing visa bans and sanctions on individuals and entities responsible for activities threatening Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

If Russia continues to refuse to pull back troops to its bases, there must be further consequences. These consequences must be severe, including trade and economic sanctions and expulsion from the G8. This resolution puts President Putin on notice that his reckless actions will have consequences. It calls on him to accept international monitors in Crimea and return his troops to its bases. It makes clear our support for meaningful assistance to Ukraine and to Ukraine's interim government.

Therefore, I call on all my colleagues to support this House resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING), a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I would like to first thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for their leadership on this issue in the Foreign Affairs Committee.

The situation in Ukraine continues to be grim. Now is the time to support those who strive for democracy. Included in H. Res. 499 is an amendment I offered in committee to strengthen the language expressing the support of the House to work with our partners in the Ukraine to improve transparency, combat corruption, and protect individual rights through an independent judiciary and strong rule of law.

This resolution, Mr. Speaker, is an important first step, but there is more we must do to address Russia's violation of Ukraine's sovereignty.

I hope to work with the chairman and the ranking member to quickly pass a strong package of sanctions that targets those responsible for the invasion of Crimea and lets Russia know that annexation of Crimea or any part of Ukraine is not an option.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), a leader and a voice for Ukraine's strong move to democracy, a person who is co-chair of the Ukrainian Caucus and a person who is committed to Ukraine and is one of the strongest voices here in the U.S. for that.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this important resolution supporting the people of Ukraine and condemning the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence by Russia.

Unified, bipartisan American support is needed now more than ever as the Ukrainian people and their freedom are under threat from Russian aggression.

Last week, the House spoke with one voice and took a critical step in support of Ukraine by passing a loan guarantee bill. This resolution is another positive step.

Mr. Putin's military incursion into Crimea is a blatant violation of Rus-

sian obligations under a number of multilateral agreements. It demands a strong response, and the administration and Congress have responded accordingly.

In addition to condemning Russia's military occupation to Crimea, this resolution supports the Obama administration's efforts to provide U.S. and international financial assistance to Ukraine.

It also supports the administration's work with our European allies to impose targeted financial, travel, and trade sanctions on Russian officials and institutions responsible for violations of international law.

The Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, which I cochair, has always operated in a spirit of bipartisanship with much success. This has been especially true since the crisis in Ukraine began, because supporting fundamental human rights and democracy in Ukraine and opposing illegal efforts by one country to dominate another, all of this should not be partisan issues.

In closing, I urge the House to once again speak with one voice in support of Ukraine and pass this resolution.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for his comments.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER).

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this important bipartisan resolution. I want to commend Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for bringing this measure forward.

The United States has been committed to Ukraine's prosperity and sovereignty since it gained independence in 1991. There has never been a more critical time to reaffirm this commitment than right now.

President Putin's unilateral decision to expand Russia's military operations in Ukraine was made with the calculation that the world would respond with words, not deeds. He was wrong. The world must send a clear message to Russia that there will be real consequences for these violations of international laws.

Failure to deter Russia's aggression will embolden President Putin to continue seeking illegitimate power and further threaten stability in this important region of the world. Just as importantly, failure to act would embolden bullies in other areas of the world who are no doubt watching.

This resolution calls for strong action by the United States, such as suspending military cooperation with Russia, boycotting the G8 summit, and imposing sanctions on those involved in this breach of international law. America should also take this opportunity to expand energy production and energy exports to send a clear message to

Ukraine, Russia, and our allies that America will not allow Russia to use its energy resources to intimidate the world.

These actions are necessary to show Russia and the rest of the world that the United States will not sit on the sidelines when people are being used as political pawns by so-called leaders seeking to enhance their own power by the use of force.

I urge our colleagues to support this important resolution and demonstrate to friend and foe alike that America still stands for freedom and the ability of people everywhere to determine their own destiny, not have that destiny determined for them by threats, intimidation, and military might.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, this is important, not just with what the resolution says; it is important how we say it as a country. We are gathered here today, and it is no surprise in this Chamber that from time to time we do not see eye to eye on issues. This important matter has brought both sides together, Republican House Members standing shoulder to shoulder with Democrats, joining with the other Chamber, the Senate, both Democrats and Republicans alike with one voice with the administration.

It was only a few weeks ago that I was in Munich and had the opportunity to sit down with Vitali Klitschko, who has been in the midst of all this move for democracy, and, tragically, in the midst of all the violence and killing that has occurred. He spoke with sincerity and passion over what his people are going through right now. He spoke about his country's need to be a free people with a rule of law, stamping out corruption and moving forward in a democratic fashion. He asked that the U.S. speak as well. With this resolution, we have the opportunity to speak in one united, loud, determined voice for democracy.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the new Prime Minister of Ukraine will visit Capitol Hill tomorrow, and this resolution is a strong show of support in the House. It shows we will support the people of Ukraine as they try to build a democratic country, a country that is more prosperous, a country that is free of illegitimate outside influence. It also sends a clear message to the leaders and elites in Russia that annexation of territory in a neighboring state will not extend Russia's influence but will instead lead to political and economic isolation.

Let me also speak to the issue of Russia's state-controlled gas company, Gazprom.

□ 1615

They have just threatened to cut off supplies to Ukraine. This is not new. In the past, disputes over natural gas supplies and prices and debts have resulted

in Russia shutting off the pipelines in Ukraine in January of 2006 and in January of 2009, not surprisingly, in the middle of the winter, when they would inflict the most damage.

These actions also hit several countries in Europe, which are heavily dependent on Russian gas that transits by pipeline through Ukraine. Those countries are Hungary, Poland, the Slovak Republic, and Romania. This shortfall would reverberate throughout Europe.

I believe it is very important that we pass this resolution out today.

I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield to the gentlelady from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), the cochair of the Ukrainian Caucus.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for allowing me this time.

I want to commend the committee of jurisdiction for bringing this bill before our body in a very timely manner. I am very proud of our country, the standard bearer for liberty across this world.

We as a Congress, in this House in particular, are in the leadership role of standing up for people in another sovereign nation who seek to have the same freedoms that we enjoy. These freedoms are hard earned.

This resolution today, H.R. 499, allows Congress to take the next steps to our firm and continued commitment to Ukrainian sovereignty, territorial integrity, and democratic advancement so Ukraine can become the great borderland nation she is destined to be.

Additionally, H.R. 499 accompanies H. Res. 447, which this House passed on January 29 and on which those of us here on the floor today were original cosponsors.

The Russian Federation's military invasion of Crimea is a clear violation of every treaty and agreement to which she is a part, including her membership in the United Nations and its 5-member permanent Security Council.

Russia's action is not only a violation of Ukraine's territorial integrity, but also the 1994 Budapest Accord and a complete breach of obligations under the United Nations charter.

The United States continues to condemn those violations. We call on Russia to immediately withdraw all military forces from Crimea. No two nations should shed bloodshed anymore that have the histories of Ukraine and Russia.

We call on the Obama administration and our European allies to impose financial, trade, and visa sanctions in increasing severity on those in Russia responsible for this travesty.

I urge my colleagues to fully support House Resolution 499, and I wish to thank the Ukrainian Caucus founded by Members here today, especially Congressman SANDER LEVIN of Michi-

gan, who has fought at our side for so many decades in word and deed for the freedom of Ukraine.

I want to thank the chairman of the committee, Mr. ED ROYCE of California, for his continued leadership and vigilance, and Congressman BILL KEATING of Massachusetts for allowing me the time today.

Most Americans and people in the world don't know the full history of Ukraine, but no place suffered more in the 20th century than that place, through forced starvation of its own people by the then Soviet Union, by the Great Terror of elimination of millions of minority groups in its borders, by then the invasion of the Nazis and the German government a while later.

Over 14 million people were slaughtered or starved to death or assassinated or buried alive inside the boundaries of what we call greater Ukraine and Belarus. There is no greater moral obligation for the world community than to stand at Ukraine's side now in her fateful hour.

I am so very proud of our country for being a positive force to get a diplomatic resolution and a peaceful settlement so the world community can muster full strength to stop any further bloodshed. What a shame that would be in this 21st century, a century that should be one of democratic advancement and liberty for all.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts has 7½ minutes remaining.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I also want to mention that it was just a few weeks ago, also, I met with Prime Minister Yatsenyuk, as well. We had time to discuss this issue. We had time to, again, recount the valor and courage of those people who took the streets and risked their lives.

It is worthwhile to note that the Prime Minister is in Washington this week, and we want to commend him for his efforts and stand beside him.

Mr. Speaker, at this point, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), our minority whip, who has taken this action forward, who has spoken so loudly, and has provided great leadership on this issue.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Chairman ROYCE for bringing this bill to the floor and Ranking Member ENGEL, and my good friend from Massachusetts for his great leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for this resolution. Hopefully, it will pass unanimously.

Russian forces continue to occupy Crimea in gross violation of international law and binding agreements

signed between Ukraine and Russia in 1994 and 1997.

Mr. Speaker, I chaired the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe from 1985 to 1995. It was an extraordinary era, where the Soviet Union crumbled under the weight of its bad economic system and its political terrorism. It is starting to rear its ugly head again.

President Obama and Secretary Kerry have made it very clear—and we need to make it very clear—that Russia cannot interfere in Ukraine without serious costs; and when I say, “serious costs,” I mean exactly that, it cannot be empty words. It cannot be “you ought not to.” It needs to be “you must not,” and “we will not allow.”

Last week, the President proposed sanctions and travel bans against Russian leaders complicit in their military's intrusion into Crimea. If Russia were to annex Crimea, those costs would rise. A referendum has no legitimacy when there are military forces in the streets.

In any event, as I said, I chaired the Helsinki Commission. The Helsinki Final Act, passed in July of 1975 and signed by President Ford, said emphatically and explicitly that borders cannot be changed other than by political and peaceful means. Military incursion is not an option.

This resolution will send a powerful message on behalf of the American people. The people of Ukraine who want to build a future based on democracy and freedom will hear us and be strengthened by our support.

How do I know that? Because Vaclav Havel, the leader of Czechoslovakia, a Helsinki Final Act activist, spoke from that podium where the President of the United States gives the State of the Union and said the Helsinki Final Act made an extraordinary difference.

Us speaking out will give courage and encouragement.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. KEATING. I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. HOYER. Those who undermine that project and who threaten Ukraine's territorial integrity or its economic activity will hear us as well.

As I understand the 1994 agreement, Great Britain and the United States, two of the great powers in this world, said that we would protect and come to the aid of Ukraine when they gave up their nuclear weapons in consideration, in part, of that representation, made by us and made by the Russians.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to approve this resolution and send a strong and unmistakable message of solidarity with the people of Ukraine and of unity in defense of democracy in Ukraine and, indeed, throughout the world.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the right to close.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, just recounting the fact that so many of us in this Chamber have the opportunity to travel, to go to different countries, I must say that, each time I go, I will look at different countries, and I will look at the fact that there is no strong rule of law, I will look at the fact that there are no human rights protections, no protections against someone's freedom of religion, freedom of association, freedom of speech.

I come back to this country, and I kiss the ground that we walk on and take for granted daily.

I have looked at what has transpired in this region. I have looked at the way that laws were put in place in Ukraine and, fortunately, repealed that denied the right to gather together, that denied the right to speak up, human rights violations that I found to exist, too, in Russia, the country that is moving in such an aggressive manner towards Ukraine.

Since 1991, the United States has strongly supported a democratic, prosperous, sovereign Ukraine. In keeping with this commitment, we supported a peaceful, negotiated resolution of the recent crisis there and as hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian citizens came out in the streets of Kiev and throughout Ukraine to express their desire for a more democratic and just state, many of them risking their lives, too many sacrificing their lives.

The recent selection of a new interim government signaled that Ukraine was back on a path toward stability and political and economic health; but instead of gathering here to welcome this event, sadly, we are gathered, now, dealing with an international crisis in Crimea.

We must support Ukraine's efforts. Their efforts are our efforts. Their move for democracy is the staple of our own government.

I urge the entire membership to join with us, to join with Chairman ROYCE, to join with Ranking Member ENGEL, and the rest of this House on the resolution moving forward.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to begin by thanking the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING) for his work on this resolution, as well as our ranking member of the committee, ELIOT ENGEL of New York, and also recognize the long, hard work that Congresswoman MARCY KAPTUR of Ohio and Mr. GERLACH of Pennsylvania have put into their engagement on this issue with Ukraine.

I would also add that, if we do not recognize that Russia is using energy as a weapon, we are missing what is really going on in Eastern Europe and Central Europe. It was, in part,

Ukraine's reliance on Russia's energy that pushed the now-deposed Ukraine President Yanukovych to abandon the trade deal with the European Union.

□ 1630

It was that attempt to pressure him, and he was tempted by promises of discounts on natural gas. He was pressured by the threat of turning off the valve on that gas. He was pressured to turn toward Russia instead of to the European Union. We believe that Ukraine should have the right to trade with Russia and with the European Union—to trade east and west and north to Poland and south to Moldova. This should be the decision of the Ukrainian people.

I believe the administration must do far more to isolate Russia diplomatically than it has to date and that the Treasury Department should also make clear that the U.S. is on the lookout for Russian enterprises, especially banks, that are involved in illicit activities such as the transfer of stolen Ukrainian assets.

We must remember that the purpose of our pressure on Russia is not simply to punish aggression and certainly not to escalate the confrontation but, instead, to move Putin toward a resolution that protects the independence and the territorial integrity of Ukraine. That is the goal that all of us share, and I urge all Members to support H. Res. 499 and to stand with the people of Ukraine.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about the escalating situation in Ukraine. Russia's military occupation of Crimea is a blatant violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and a breach of international law. The United States and our allies must support the Ukrainian people and use all diplomatic and economic options available to address Russia's dangerous actions and unprovoked aggression. That is why I strongly support H. Res. 499, a resolution stating that Russia must immediately withdraw its military from Ukraine, adhere to international law and respect Ukrainian sovereignty.

The people of Ukraine must be able to exercise their sovereign, democratic right to decide their own future without interference or intimidation from Russia. As a member of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, I will continue working with my colleagues to explore options—including banking sanctions, visa bans and freezing assets of officials—to move President Putin toward a peaceful resolution that ends this crisis and protects Ukraine's rights and borders.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution.

Just today, a CNN camera crew reported evidence that Russian troops are literally digging in on the Crimean peninsula, including the installation of minefields along the new, illegal border they have created with the Ukraine. The world community cannot stand idly by in the face of this unprovoked Russian aggression against another sovereign member

of the United Nations. The House, by passing this resolution, will be taking an important step towards that end.

There are several provisions in this resolution calling on the new Ukrainian government to implement measures to end political corruption, respect the human rights and civil liberties of ethnic minorities in the Ukraine, and so on. These and other reforms are essential for Ukraine to truly consolidate its revolution and ensure a transition to a truly open, democratic society.

But the people of the Ukraine will find it difficult to maintain their freedom and independence if their largest neighbor continues its illegal occupation of the Crimea, threatens additional areas of eastern Ukraine with invasion, and takes steps—overt and covert—to undermine the new Ukrainian government. The resolution before the House today calls upon the Obama administration to boycott the upcoming G8 summit and work with our partners to expel Russia from the G8. Given that the Russian government refuses to recognize Ukraine's new government and is proceeding with a sham "referendum" on Crimea's future, I believe the Administration must take the steps called for in this resolution. I also call upon the Administration to keep the Congress fully and currently informed on any indications that further Russian aggression may be attempted elsewhere in the Ukraine.

There is one amendment to this resolution that the committee adopted that concerns me, and it involves a call to increase U.S. natural gas exports. Simply, the U.S. does not currently possess the ability to export LNG to Ukraine or other European allies, and export facilities currently under construction will not be operational until late 2015, at the earliest. It is opportunistic and frankly not based in fact, to have natural gas companies and their allies in Congress using this crisis as a catalyst for increased LNG exports.

Further, the U.S. does not have a state run energy conglomerate like Russia, and we cannot simply turn our energy exports up or down following a single executive decree. LNG export terminals cost billions and the companies making these investments will not proceed with their construction unless they have already secured LNG supply contracts, typically with Asian countries, like Japan, China, and India, where high natural gas prices will result in the greatest profits. If our concern is ensuring Ukraine has reliable energy sources, we should be talking to our European partners about how best to accomplish that goal.

Again, I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 499, a resolution condemning the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity by military forces of the Russian Federation.

This resolution is a loud, strong message from this body, the House of Representatives, the People's House, that the people of the United States stand firmly behind the people of Ukraine in their mission to maintain their independence, free from Russian aggression.

Our friends in the world must always have full assurance that we are with them, that our resolve is unshakeable, and that nothing will intimidate us.

This resolution lays out what our game plan looks like as we take concrete steps to back our friends in Ukraine. I want to focus on one key part of this plan: achieving energy independence for Ukraine and the region.

For too long Russia has used the threat of manipulating energy prices and supplies to impose economic and political pressure on Ukraine and other countries. This has got to stop.

We can provide a reliable source of energy to our partners in Europe. Congress is ready to do its part. However, the Obama administration needs to speed up the permit approval process to get liquid natural gas flowing to our friends in Europe, approve the Keystone XL pipeline, and take other pro-American, pro-growth, pro-energy actions. There is truly no better time than now.

We can hit Vladimir Putin where it hurts—in the wallet. We can strengthen Ukraine's hand in the short run and sell them the fuel they need for the long haul. We can create jobs for American workers—good, meaningful jobs. It just makes sense.

I urge support for H. Res. 499.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 499, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CARE AND HEALTH ACT

Mr. SCHOCK. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1814) to amend section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional religious exemption from the individual health coverage mandate.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1814

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Equitable Access to Care and Health Act" or the "EACH Act".

SEC. 2. ADDITIONAL RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION TO HEALTH COVERAGE MANDATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Paragraph (2) of section 5000A(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) ADDITIONAL RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Such term shall not include an individual for any month during a taxable year if such individual files a sworn statement, as part of the return of tax for the taxable year, that the individual was not

covered under minimum essential coverage at any time during such taxable year and that the individual's sincerely held religious beliefs would cause the individual to object to medical health care that would be covered under such coverage.

“(ii) NULLIFIED IF RECEIPT OF MEDICAL HEALTH CARE DURING TAXABLE YEAR.—Clause (i) shall not apply to an individual for any month during a taxable year if the individual received medical health care during the taxable year.

“(iii) MEDICAL HEALTH CARE DEFINED.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term ‘medical health care’ means voluntary health treatment by or supervised by a medical doctor that would be covered under minimum essential coverage and—

“(I) includes voluntary acute care treatment at hospital emergency rooms, walk-in clinics, or similar facilities, and

“(II) excludes—

“(aa) treatment not administered or supervised by a medical doctor, such as chiropractic treatment, dental care, midwifery, personal care assistance, or optometry,

“(bb) physical examinations or treatment where required by law or third parties, such as a prospective employer, and

“(cc) vaccinations.”

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect as if included in the amendments made by section 1501 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHOCK) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SCHOCK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. SCHOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Just yesterday, a Washington newspaper headline read: “Worst Congress Ever.”

The thrust of the article was an indictment against Washington partisanship for its failure to move significant legislation on behalf of the American people. Now, to some degree, I suppose we have all felt at times that Congress just isn't making any laws. Of course, there are times, however, when Congress must make no law if we are to honor the oath we have sworn, which is to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. Indeed, “Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

Today, we have the opportunity to work together, across the aisle, to reaffirm this founding principle of our democracy. Together, we will reinforce the constitutional protection for sincere believers of all faiths against the

unnecessary entanglement of government with their private religious expression. H.R. 1814 slightly expands the religious conscience exemption of the Affordable Care Act to include individuals with “sincerely held religious beliefs” among those eligible for an exemption from the individual mandate penalty.

In order to qualify for the exemption under the EACH Act, an individual must affirm on an annual tax return that he or she cannot purchase coverage due to a sincerely held religious belief. This term, as defined by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and as widely recognized by the courts, is designed to protect various types of religious believers, not just those who belong to a traditional, organized religion.

Today's bill must become law. Among the many problems with the Affordable Care Act, the current conscience exemption only protects the religious exemptions of a few select faiths. Now, I am fully aware that not every organization purporting to defend religious liberty is in favor of today's measure. I am, nevertheless, thankful that my good friend from the other side of the aisle, Mr. KEATING, joined me in this effort. His home State of Massachusetts incorporated a similar religious liberty exemption in their State law, and it seems to be working out just fine. Since the law passed, only 6,500 Bay Staters have claimed the conscience exemption.

This fact serves to reinforce the very principle of religious liberty we affirm today. The Constitution does not only protect the religious practices and beliefs of majority faith traditions, but, rather, the First Amendment protects even the smallest faith group and even the single individual against laws that infringe upon their sincerely held religious beliefs.

Yet H.R. 1814 isn't only about constitutional jurisprudence and legislative correctness. It is about real people in my district and in yours who feel that their free exercise of religion is encumbered under the current law. One of them is a constituent of mine named Andrew, who lives in Chillicothe, Illinois. Andrew is a sincere believer whose religious commitment leads him to pursue only nonmedical health care options. According to Andrew, under the current law, he will be required to pay a fine once the individual mandate penalty kicks in. Regrettably, Andrew's religious beliefs were not considered when the present conscience exemption was enacted.

Today, the EACH Act gives individuals like Andrew the ability to practice his religious beliefs without coercive government fining him for coverage he does not intend to use nor can he use and remain true to his most sincere religious beliefs. We recognize, however, that the immense unpopularity of

ObamaCare among many Americans might entice otherwise law-abiding citizens to claim an exemption under the EACH Act in order to escape the law's penalty. In order to ensure that individuals do not game the system, this bill includes a strong provision that revokes the exemption and requires the individual to pay a stiff penalty if he or she seeks medical treatment at any point during that year.

H.R. 1814 walks that fine line between protecting the First Amendment for every American and safeguarding taxpayers against potential fraud. Congress has long sought to uphold both of these commitments, and, today, this bill affords us a bipartisan opportunity to do it once again. I urge my colleagues to support this important fix to the Affordable Care Act and to pass H.R. 1814.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN), the ranking member on the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Mr. WAXMAN. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I know that this legislation carries important personal significance for some of our colleagues, and I respect that, but I want to express some real concerns about the bill because I feel it is overly broad. It could seriously undermine the Affordable Care Act and would establish a bad precedent for our tax laws.

The bill states that individuals would not be required to obtain health insurance coverage if their "sincerely held religious beliefs" cause them to object to treatments that would be covered. The bill does not narrowly define "sincerely held religious beliefs" as those of Christian Scientists or other groups who rely on a religious method of healing. As a result, the bill would force the IRS to either accept virtually all attestations of exemption or to determine which Americans' religious beliefs meet that standard. This is impossibly difficult to enforce, and, frankly, it is not a role we want the IRS to take on.

If the IRS chose to define "sincerely held religious beliefs" broadly, H.R. 1814 could allow, essentially, anyone opposed to the Affordable Care Act to opt out of coverage. That would lead to an increase in the number of uninsured Americans, and it would shift costs on to other taxpayers. Even if we assume the IRS could set a standard, there are significant problems with the legislation.

The bill claims that individuals receiving "voluntary" medical care would lose their exemptions, but the IRS has no way to monitor individuals' use of voluntary medical care, making this totally unenforceable. Further-

more, individuals receiving "involuntary" care, such as expensive emergency care, would be allowed to remain exempt from the coverage requirement, passing the costs of their care on to hospitals and other taxpayers.

I understand this is a sensitive issue. If religious groups that receive Medicare and Social Security benefits do not want to obtain health insurance, we need to examine that issue carefully. This bill should have been the subject of hearings. It should have been marked up in committee. Unfortunately, it was not.

The Affordable Care Act is about moving our Nation towards universal health insurance coverage. That is the right thing for the health of our Nation. So I believe we need to tread very carefully when opening up new loopholes or exemptions, and we must be very cautious before assigning such sensitive duties to the IRS.

Because of these concerns, I cannot support this legislation at the present time and in its present form. I hope our colleagues in the Senate will take a careful look at it and make substantial changes before considering it further.

Mr. SCHOCK. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend's comments from California. I would just remind the gentleman that this is a near carbon copy of language that was implemented in the State of Massachusetts. It has had a very minimal effect, and it has impacted and has helped a very small number of people. It is why this bill has received such bipartisan support and is on the suspension calendar here tonight.

With that, I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK), my good friend.

Mrs. BLACK. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give my strongest support to my friend Mr. SCHOCK's legislation, the Equitable Access to Care and Health Act.

Even some of the President's most ardent supporters now recognize that ObamaCare is a fundamentally unfair law, and I am happy to see that so many Democrats join us in support of this important bill.

Instead of having Federal bureaucrats decide who and what groups should be allowed religious conscience exemptions from this law's tax penalty, individuals, themselves, should be empowered to affirm their objections to this law's onerous and controversial mandates. That is what this commonsense bill would do, and I urge its swift passage to help protect Americans from the Obama administration's war on religious liberties.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY), the distinguished gentleman from the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1814, the Equitable Access to Care and Health Act.

One of our inalienable rights as American citizens is that we have the right to proscribe in whatever faith we so choose. With this right comes also the freedom from persecution and different treatment under the law. This body has long recognized the freedom of religion and has worked to ensure individuals of all faiths are treated fairly under the law. Even the Affordable Care Act, which imposes the burden of mandating the purchase of insurance, includes a religious conscience exemption from that individual mandate. However, this exemption is not fairly distributed to all Americans.

□ 1645

While covering many faiths, it doesn't cover all who seek protection. What the EACH Act does is to ensure that this exemption equally applies to every American who wants it. It also protects individuals' First Amendment rights from being placed in jeopardy because of a requirement to purchase health insurance or pay a penalty.

This is commonsense fairness legislation that extends a fundamental right to all Americans that have religious objections to standard medical care. This is a chance for us to right a wrong that I believe was just a drafting oversight.

Of course, we ensure that the government doesn't impose a \$1.5 billion tax on Americans simply because of their religious beliefs.

I thank my good friend and colleague from Illinois on the Committee on Ways and Means (Mr. SCHOCK) for his leadership, as well as the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING) for introducing this bipartisan legislation.

I urge all my colleagues to support this bill and vote "yes" for religious freedom.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to my good friend and neighbor from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Thank you to the gentleman and my colleague from the great State of Illinois for introducing this important bill.

As somebody who has the only Christian Science college in the Nation in his district, this is a very important issue for religious freedom and religious rights.

Principia College in Elmhurst, Illinois, has 550 students. They sent me this card. They have much more artistic talent than I do. It says:

Thank you. We are so grateful for your defense of religious freedom and hope that you will continue to advocate for this bill until it passes.

This is the voice of those who need this exemption. This is the voice of

those who need their religious rights protected. This is why I am standing here today with my colleague from Illinois to talk about this bill and making sure that it passes.

I would urge all of my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, to respect the students and the faculty that work and attend this college in my district. I would hope that they would support this bill with us.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I respect very much the specific impetus for this bill. Unfortunately, though, there have been no hearings on this legislation, and it was not marked up in committee.

I would like to provide information on current law, on the scope of this legislation, and its potential consequences on our health care system.

This is why I do not support this bill in its present form.

First, it is important to note that the Affordable Care Act contains a religious exemption incorporating one that has been in the Internal Revenue code since 1965. This provision permits an exemption to members of religion that join together to provide mutual aid as a community—for example, the Amish and Mennonite faiths—or participate in a health care sharing ministry, which is akin to insurance. These groups do not participate in government-funded social services, including Medicare or Social Security. This is a longstanding, well-defined, easy to implement exemption, and it was carried over to the ACA.

The ACA's minimum essential coverage requirement was challenged in Federal court under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. The court rejected the challenge, concluding that ACA did not impose a substantial burden on plaintiffs' religious exercise, despite claims that the plaintiffs "believe in trusting in God to protect them from illness or injury" and did not "want to be forced to buy health insurance coverage."

Second, a requirement to purchase minimum health insurance is not a burden on one's exercise of their religious beliefs in the medical treatment they seek. The ACA does not preclude coverage for spiritual healing or prayer treatments. Indeed, the Church of Christ, Scientist explains on their Web site that under current law:

Various U.S. Federal, State, and private health insurance plans provide for the reimbursement of Christian Science nursing care and practitioner treatment.

Christian Scientists participate in Medicare, and Medicare covers some Christian Science services.

It is the breadth of the language in the bill and the potential unintended consequences implementing it on a national basis that concerns me.

The language provides an exemption if a person files a sworn statement to

the IRS that their "sincerely held religious beliefs" would cause them to object to the "medical health care" that would be covered under ACA's minimum essential health care requirement.

There is no indication as to how the IRS could implement this provision and, as a result, the exemption could essentially be available to anyone opposed to the ACA. While the bill states that individuals receiving "voluntary" medical care would lose their exemption, the IRS has no way to monitor individuals' use of voluntary medical care and to enforce this provision.

Under the legislation, individuals receiving "involuntary" care—such as emergency care—would be allowed to remain exempt from the coverage requirement, passing the cost of such care on to hospitals and other taxpayers.

Because the bill does not define the "sincerely held religious beliefs" an individual would need to cite to avoid purchasing coverage, the IRS would be forced to determine which Americans' beliefs met the standard. Yet just 2 weeks ago, the House considered and passed H.R. 2531, the Protecting Taxpayers from Intrusive IRS Requests Act, that specifically prevented the IRS from asking taxpayers about their religious, political, or social beliefs.

I regret that normal order has not been followed on H.R. 1814 so that these concerns could be surfaced and further information on the broad and problematic consequences of H.R. 1814 considered.

For example, today, the American Academy of Pediatrics just expressed their concerns about the impact of H.R. 1814 on children. The American Civil Liberties Union also opposes the legislation, and the CBO just indicated today that the bill would increase the deficit by \$1.5 billion over 10 years and increase the uninsured by about 500,000 each year.

Current religious exemptions in the Tax Code are circumscribed and well-defined. This bill would create a broad and difficult to determine exemption in the individual responsibility requirement and force the IRS to take on an inappropriate role. Congress should take a more careful approach to this issue.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SCHOCK. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I would just remind my good friend from Michigan that had regular order been used when ObamaCare was passed, perhaps we would not be attempting to try and fix it now that it is law.

The U.S. Supreme Court upheld ObamaCare in a 5-4 ruling 2 years ago this summer. The Justices did so by affirming that Congress, contrary to the repeated assurance by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, had effectively created a tax that falls under

the enumerated powers of article I of the Constitution, and, like a tax, compliance is mandatory, and enforcement is the job of the Internal Revenue Service.

Since the summer of 2012, we have learned some things about the IRS that raise concerns about the agency's ability to do its job fairly. Likewise, we have watched the Obama administration usurp congressional authority and refuse to enforce the law that bears the President's name.

Among the many "executive fixes" that seem to flow from the administration with increasing frequency, none have touched upon one of the most serious problems with ObamaCare, namely, current law will either force millions of Americans to violate their sincerely held religious beliefs or punish them for exercising those beliefs.

We are not likely to agree today—or any day—on the underlying law. ObamaCare is as controversial now—and perhaps even more so—than when it was passed, but we can agree on this:

Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

Less than a mile from this Chamber, on the bank of the tidal basin, are inscribed in marble these words:

Almighty God hath created the mind free. All attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burdens are a departure from the plan of the Holy author of our religion. No man shall suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief, but all men shall be free to possess and maintain their opinions in matters of religion.

Those words, written by Thomas Jefferson, the first Democrat to be called "Mr. President," capture the very essence of today's bill. It is our duty—even our oath that we take before God—to protect the religious freedoms of every American. ObamaCare does not do that. Today's bipartisan measure is a small but necessary step if Congress is to honor the great tradition of religious liberty enshrined in our founding documents and extended to succeeding generations of Americans by law.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 1814, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the EACH Act on behalf of my constituents in Massachusetts that are seeking to continue to take advantage of the religious conscience exemption to the individual mandate that is currently provided to them under the 2006 Massachusetts health reform law.

Since the individual mandate went into effect in Massachusetts, Donna Smiley, a Christian Scientist from Centerville, has taken advantage of the religious exemption provided in the law that prevents her from being penalized for her religious beliefs. Each year on her state tax return, the form has included a section for her to attest that because of her sincerely held religious beliefs she has chosen not to purchase medical health insurance.

With the passage of the Affordable Care Act, Donna would no longer be able to take advantage of the Massachusetts religious conscience exemption and would be penalized by the federal government for not having insurance. The EACH Act, modeled after the process that has been in place in Massachusetts for the past seven years, would ensure that a fair solution is reached so that Donna and other Americans are not penalized for their religious beliefs next year.

The legislation would modestly expand the religious conscience exemption in the Affordable Care Act to certain individuals who have sincere religious beliefs against medical insurance and related medical care. As we saw in Massachusetts, which served as the model for the Affordable Care Act as well as the EACH Act, it is clear that a similar exemption in no way adversely affected the risk pool or generated a rise in abuse or fraud. According to the most recent report from Massachusetts' health insurance exchange, approximately 0.1% of the population or 6,500 residents apply annually for a religious exemption.

Allowing for this narrow exemption to the Affordable Care Act is the fair and equitable path forward to ensure religious diversity.

I believe there is a bipartisan coalition of support for this measure.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I support the Equitable Access to Care and Health (EACH) Act. This bill provides a modest expansion of the religious conscience exemption in the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

This bipartisan legislation has 218 cosponsors. The ACA currently provides for a religious conscience exemption; however, the exemption gives preference to only a few faiths. This exemption should be expanded to accommodate other religions whose "sincerely-held religious beliefs" would cause them not to purchase insurance.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this important piece of legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHOCK) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1814.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2013

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3474) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of the employer mandate under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3474

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Hire More Heroes Act of 2013".

SEC. 2. EMPLOYEES WITH HEALTH COVERAGE UNDER TRICARE OR THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MAY BE EXEMPTED FROM EMPLOYER MANDATE UNDER PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4980H(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(F) EXEMPTION FOR HEALTH COVERAGE UNDER TRICARE OR THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION.—Solely for purposes of determining whether an employer is an applicable large employer under this paragraph for any month, an employer may elect not to take into account for a month as an employee any individual who, for such month, has medical coverage under—

"(i) chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code, including coverage under the TRICARE program, or

"(ii) under a health care program under chapter 17 or 18 of title 38, United States Code, as determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, in coordination with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary."

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2013.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3474, the Hire More Heroes Act, introduced by Representative RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois.

The Hire More Heroes Act will help ease the burden on small businesses while incentivizing them to hire veterans who have found themselves out of work as they return home from overseas.

President Obama has repeatedly said:

If you've got good ideas, bring them to me—let's go.

Well, Mr. President, here is a really good idea. So let's go.

Our veterans have sacrificed for our country, and as they return home they deserve opportunities and they deserve a job.

One thing I routinely hear from my communities back home is that entrepreneurs want to invest in America and they want to grow their businesses. Well, here is an opportunity to do both.

Too often, we use the term that something is a win-win. Well, I can think of no better term. This is a win for businesses who need workers with outstanding skills and ethics, and a win for veterans who just want a job.

The Hire More Heroes Act allows businesses that hire a veteran enrolled in TRICARE or through the VA to not count that veteran towards the 50-employee threshold for triggering the ACA employee mandate. The 50-employee threshold has been a big disincentive for small businesses to grow. If they have more than 50 workers, they fall under that mandate, and their costs go up.

□ 1700

So firms with 45, 46, 47 workers are very reluctant to grow any bigger, but if they hire a veteran, under this legislation, that won't count for purposes of determining if they have enough workers to trigger the mandate. If that isn't an incentive to hire more veterans, I don't know what it is.

These are veterans who already have health care. They just want and deserve a job. I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This bill, as has been discussed, encourages veteran employment and the growth of midsize businesses.

For post-9/11 veterans, the unemployment rate has continued to decline. However, the rate of unemployment is still higher than the national average.

For February 2014, the unemployment rate for veterans from this period was 9.2 percent higher than the national average of 5.3.

I am so happy that the Republicans, at this moment, are trying to help the ACA work for veterans, for businesses, and for all Americans. I hope we will join in supporting this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS), the author of this bill, whose family is a small business-owning family, whose bill came from his own Veterans' Advisory Committee.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from the great State of Texas for being here tonight to talk about this important piece of legislation, bipartisan piece of legislation.

The Hire More Heroes Act is a jobs bill. It is a jobs bill that will not only encourage the hiring of veterans but also one that will allow us businesses

to expand and grow our economy without being penalized.

H.R. 3474 would exempt veterans who have health insurance through the VA or the DOD from being counted toward the 50-employee limit under ObamaCare's employer mandate.

Today, an estimated 8.9 million veterans receive health coverage through the VA, yet they will still be counted as an employee in need of health coverage under the employer mandate.

This is a commonsense bill simply saying that a veteran who already has coverage through TRICARE or the VA cannot be counted twice. You are either someone in need of health insurance or you are not.

I introduced the Hire More Heroes Act last year in response to an issue raised at one of my veterans advisory board meetings by Brad Lavite, the superintendent of the Madison County Veterans' Assistance Commission. That commission does great work by providing services to approximately 35,000 veterans in southwestern Illinois, including helping those veterans find employment.

Although veterans returning from combat have 5 years to sign up for TRICARE, they are returning to an economy full of hiring freezes, layoffs, and unemployment rates above 9 percent. The unemployment rate for post-9/11 veterans jumped from 7.9 percent in January to 9.2 percent in February. Our veterans deserve more.

We know that our military members receive some of the best training in the world, and we should do everything we can to encourage businesses to take advantage of those skills by hiring those veterans.

A recently released study by the National Small Business Association found that 91 percent of small businesses saw increases in their health care costs, and two-thirds of their members said it was the reason they have held off new hiring of employees.

It is not a secret that we need to address the true drivers of our skyrocketing health care costs. Families see this every day when they pay their monthly premiums or get a medical bill in the mail.

Placing more and more unnecessary regulations on our small businesses does nothing to address this and only exacerbates the problem by forcing businesses to make up for these costs by cutting hours or preventing pay increases.

Forcing employers to offer health insurance is a much more complicated issue than I think some in Washington thought it was going to be.

With the administration delaying the employer mandate yet again, I think we need to start seriously looking at the issue surrounding the employer mandate, and it starts today with passing H.R. 3474, the Hire More Heroes Act, and the other health care reform bills on the floor today.

I want to thank Brad Lavite again, and all of the workers and volunteers at the Madison County Veterans' Assistance Commission for their assistance they provide to veterans, and encourage my colleagues to vote for this commonsense bill to help veterans find work and assist small businesses in hiring qualified, well-trained employees, while providing much-needed relief from ObamaCare.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the cosponsors, the bipartisan cosponsors of this commonsense piece of legislation, especially a couple today that are with us on the floor, my good friend, the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD), a veteran herself, and my good friend, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR).

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, it is a special privilege to yield as much time as she shall consume to the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD), a veteran who I think is going to relate her own experience.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I am rising today in strong support of the Hire More Heroes Act introduced by my friend, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

When he first came to me with this idea, it was a no-brainer that I would want to support this effort because of the key constituencies that it serves.

I think that everyone would agree that the intent or the goal of the Affordable Care Act is to make sure that all people have access to affordable health care. That is a large piece of legislation. It needs some work. It needs some fixing, and this legislation seeks to do that.

First of all, the Affordable Care Act requires employers with 50 or more full-time employees to provide health insurance, or to pay a per-employee fine. This measure does a very important thing that would encourage these small business owners to do two things: to grow, as well as to hire more veterans by exempting those who receive insurance, either from the VA, or those reservists, like I was—I was covered under TRICARE for a long period of time after my deployments. It would make it so these employers would not have to count these veterans towards that 50 total.

Secondly, this bill serves veterans. We are facing an unfortunate and unacceptable huge number of unemployed veterans, many people who are young and who are capable and coming back from conflicts overseas, and these are veterans who will serve as a huge asset to businesses of any size because they come with a unique amount of training.

They are highly disciplined. They know what it means to work as a member of a team. They know what it means to put the mission first, and they are servant leaders at their very best.

This bill provides an incentive for businesses to hire veterans. This is a commonsense improvement to the Affordable Care Act that will benefit both of these important groups. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3474.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR), another champion for veterans.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas, and I rise in support today of the Hire More Heroes Act sponsored by my friend and colleague from Illinois, Congressman RODNEY DAVIS. I applaud the work of Congressman DAVIS in championing this cause.

I also would like to compliment my friend and colleague from the great State of Hawaii for her service to her country, and also for her bipartisan cooperation on this important piece of legislation.

Unfortunately, too many veterans cannot find work these days as a result of flawed Washington policies like ObamaCare that are hindering job creation. This legislation will give those who have selflessly served our country more employment opportunities by providing American small businesses with the ability to hire more veterans.

Although this administration has delayed the employer mandate, many small businesses in my district in central and eastern Kentucky have expressed deep concern that ObamaCare would discourage them from hiring more workers.

I want to thank, again, Congressman DAVIS for introducing this commonsense legislation that will help our veterans find work without punishing small businesses for hiring these qualified and well-trained employees. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 3474, the Hire More Heroes Act.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief because I think the bill speaks for itself, and those who have spoken on its behalf have spoken so eloquently on behalf, especially of the veterans of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as we close, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS), the author of this bill.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, thank you to my colleague from Texas for your support on this bill and for managing it here on the floor tonight. It shows today that bipartisanship does happen in the U.S. House of Representatives.

This is a commonsense bill supported by Republicans and Democrats alike. This is something that comes out from the grass roots in Madison County, Illinois, and now has a chance to become law.

I am humbled by the support that we have seen for this piece of legislation and I, again, urge my colleagues to support the Hire More Heroes Act.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3474.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3979) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3979

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act of 2014”.

SEC. 2. EMERGENCY SERVICES, GOVERNMENT, AND CERTAIN NONPROFIT VOLUNTEERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 4980H(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating paragraphs (5), (6), and (7) as paragraphs (6), (7), and (8), respectively, and by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

“(5) SPECIAL RULES FOR CERTAIN EMERGENCY SERVICES, GOVERNMENT, AND NONPROFIT VOLUNTEERS.—

“(A) EMERGENCY SERVICES VOLUNTEERS.—Qualified services rendered as a bona fide volunteer to an eligible employer shall not be taken into account under this section as service provided by an employee. For purposes of the preceding sentence, the terms ‘qualified services’, ‘bona fide volunteer’, and ‘eligible employer’ shall have the respective meanings given such terms under section 457(e).

“(B) CERTAIN OTHER GOVERNMENT AND NONPROFIT VOLUNTEERS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Services rendered as a bona fide volunteer to a specified employer shall not be taken into account under this section as service provided by an employee.

“(ii) BONA FIDE VOLUNTEER.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term ‘bona fide volunteer’ means an employee of a specified employer whose only compensation from such employer is in the form of—

“(I) reimbursement for (or reasonable allowance for) reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of services by volunteers, or

“(II) reasonable benefits (including length of service awards), and nominal fees, customarily paid by similar entities in connection with the performance of services by volunteers.

“(iii) SPECIFIED EMPLOYER.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term ‘specified employer’ means—

“(I) any government entity, and

“(II) any organization described in section 501(c) and exempt from tax under section 501(a).

“(iv) COORDINATION WITH SUBPARAGRAPH (A).—This subparagraph shall not fail to apply with respect to services merely because such services are qualified services (as defined in section 457(e)(1)(C)).”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2013.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to begin by first rising in support of this bill, the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act.

I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA), the author of this very important bill.

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of my bill, H.R. 3979, the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act.

This is a good, bipartisan bill that protects our first responders, our volunteer firefighters, and emergency services personnel by ensuring that they are not considered employees under the employer mandate provision of the Affordable Care Act.

If they were, fire companies would be forced to pay for the volunteers’ health insurance or pay a fine, driving many fire departments out of business. Simply put, this is a public safety issue.

I first learned about this issue from a volunteer firefighter back home, and I began a crusade to clear this up for volunteer firefighters and localities and the residents of Pennsylvania and every other State.

Here is why this is so important. In my home State of Pennsylvania, 97 percent of fire companies are either en-

tirely or mostly volunteer. Nationally, it is 87 percent.

To be clear, forcing volunteer fire companies to comply with the Affordable Care Act will not extend health insurance to the uninsured. Rather, it will close firehouses, placing people at risk.

Last month, the IRS issued a final rule upholding this bill’s intent. However, this is too important of a public safety issue to be left to the changing positions of Federal bureaucrats. We must pass this bill and encourage our friends in the Senate to do the same.

We owe our emergency service volunteers who risk their lives every day rock-solid certainty. This legislation says, once and for all, that volunteer firefighters are just that, volunteers, and should not be subjected to the employer mandate.

I strongly urge passage of the bill.

□ 1715

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I shall consume and rise in support of the bill.

Well, first of all, let me mention that this bill followed regular order. It was brought up in our committee, it was discussed, and it was passed unanimously; and I think that is a plus and, I think, is a good precedent.

Let me also say that this is an important issue, and it was one responded to by Treasury in its regulation. I think there has been a lot of misshaping as to what the regulation process is all about, and there have been times when we essentially have wanted to stop the regulatory process.

I think that has been a serious mistake. It is sometimes used for a purpose, I think, unrelated to the substance of the issue.

In this case, as I said, Treasury listened to the concerns that were expressed—and I think important concerns—and issued their final regulation; and essentially, what we are now doing is to say that what Treasury has decided in its regulation is correct. I think there is no concern about it being changed.

However, this legislation says: let’s put it in the books as legislation. And I think so be it because it is so important for this Congress to join the administration in recognizing that volunteer first responders are absolutely critical to the safety and security of communities across the country.

I think it is sometimes not fully understood that 70 percent of all firefighters across the country are volunteers, and for the communities aided by volunteer first responders, the services donated annually by these volunteers are estimated to be worth more than \$140 billion.

So I rise in support of this legislation, as I said, and I want to emphasize that it was raised in regular order. It was brought before our committee. It

was discussed within our committee. We took a vote. It was unanimous. Treasury had responded appropriately to the concerns expressed by us.

So I now think we should give a further imprimatur to this legislation and support it, I hope, unanimously.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

This is such a commonsense and important bill, and this challenge was brought to me as well by one of my local firefighters, the fire chief of Magnolia Volunteer Fire Department, Gary Vincent.

The bill introduced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BARLETTA) ensures the work our Nation's volunteers, including volunteer firefighters and emergency responders, are honored, protected, and recognized.

The tradition of volunteer firefighting dates back to colonial times, yet remains vital to thousands of communities throughout the country who rely exclusively upon volunteer fire departments for fire protection and emergency medical services.

The problem is the Affordable Care Act is a complicated law, and sometimes, the IRS has treated volunteers as full-time workers for other purposes. This confusion in the law has created uncertainty for local communities and their firefighters and could jeopardize their ability to respond to emergencies.

No one wants to put local governments and nonprofits at a risk of huge cost increases that could result if volunteers were considered employees under the Affordable Care Act.

The White House does not want that, and neither does Congress. This bill is critical to permanently protecting the 780,000 volunteer firefighters and emergency responders and all other volunteers at our Nation's nonprofits and tribal governments.

The bill provides the certainty of congressional action, rather than relying on regulations that could be repealed, changed, or amended.

I call on my colleagues to put a bipartisan stamp on this bill to honor a value we all agree on, volunteerism. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3979, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleague how many further requests for time he has, and I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, yielding myself such time as I may consume, I have about 4 or 5 additional speakers to move through on this important bill.

At this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), a fellow member of the Ways and Means Committee, who has been a champion on this issue as well.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from

Texas and also my friend from Pennsylvania.

As you heard Congressman BARLETTA talk about, 90 percent of the 1,800 fire departments in Pennsylvania are all volunteer. These are men and women from the community that just come forward to serve.

When you look at what is going on right now, what we have tried to do is close a gap. This is Treasury guidance, so by no means has it been codified. I think what we are doing with this piece of legislation, with H.R. 3979, we make certain—in a time where there is so much uncertainty—that these folks will be protected, will not be looked at in a way that does not make sense to them.

Now, I have got to tell you that I was at an installation of officers back in my hometown of Butler. Ed Kirkwood, the manager of Butler Township, when asked about what could possibly happen, said:

The township has over 130 volunteer firefighters serving the community. By my calculation, if this is not fixed, the township could go bankrupt. It would require a tax increase of 13.56 mills, or an increase of over two-and-a-half times the current rate to comply.

Basically, if this is not fixed, Butler Township either doubles its taxes or loses their volunteer fire department.

Chief Mike Cadman of Jamestown, when asked about this, said: that would be political suicide.

I would venture that it is worse than political suicide. It is putting our citizens at risk when we don't have to.

Now, at a time when it is so hard and the public looks and says you guys don't get along on anything, this is something, I think, where we have come together and say let's just do something that makes sense. Let's just do something that puts into effect now—it eliminates all the guesswork that these folks are not going to be looked at in a different way under the Affordable Care Act.

And a piece of legislation, the Affordable Care Act, which is so hard to understand and so many are wondering what exactly is covered and what is not covered and how would I comply and how would I not comply, this is just commonsense legislation out of this body that makes sense for all of those volunteers that spend countless hours and time serving the needs of our communities all over our country.

But in Pennsylvania, as I said, 90 percent of our 1,800 fire departments are all volunteer—all volunteer. These folks give up their time and their hours to train, so that they can serve others.

I thank the gentleman for his legislation.

Mr. LEVIN. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RENACCI),

another one of the new, young leaders on the House Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. RENACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act.

Each day, we continue to learn more about just how broken the government-run health care system is and how it continues to negatively impact families and small businesses.

Now, it is clear that the employer mandate, a key provision within the law, will not only cost jobs, but it could force fire companies to close their doors which would jeopardize public safety.

As a former volunteer firefighter and former mayor of a small town in Ohio, I know that our volunteer fire companies and emergency responders rely primarily on donations to fund their operations.

Throughout the country, nearly 90 percent of all fire departments are volunteers. If these volunteers are forced to comply with the employer mandate, it is undeniable that our local communities will be devastated, as we witness fire companies forced to close their doors because they simply cannot afford to continue operations. This is truly unacceptable.

I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Representative BARLETTA, for introducing this important legislation, of which I am a proud cosponsor. I urge all of my colleagues in the House to join us in standing up for our hard-working local heroes by supporting the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act.

Mr. LEVIN. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE), another champion of firefighters and emergency responders.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, there is uncertainty in volunteer fire departments across the country, including in my home State of New Jersey, about the negative consequences of ObamaCare's harmful employer mandate. That is why I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3685, the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act.

Designating volunteer firefighters as paid employees under ObamaCare is bad public policy. It threatens public safety. The passage of this legislation will provide a permanent statutory solution that will ensure our Nation's volunteer first responders are protected from ObamaCare's employer mandate.

I urge passage of H.R. 3685.

Mr. LEVIN. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I thank the gentleman from Texas, Congressman BRADY.

Mr. Speaker, somewhere across America, right now or later tonight, a tone is going to go off. That tone is going to go off, and a husband or a wife, a son or a daughter is going to respond. They are going to get out of their beds. They are going to get out of their workplaces. They are going to respond.

They are going to go to a place of danger, a place to help, a place, from their heart, to do something they want to do.

I remember that tone, for I used to answer that tone at Hollingsworth Volunteer Fire Department in Banks County. When you hear the tone go off, you go out not knowing what you may face or whether you will come home or not.

I am so pleased to stand in support, Mr. Speaker, of H.R. 3979, sponsored by Congressman BARLETTA, because it takes at least part of the uncertainty out of other things in life, when all these men and women want to do is to serve the community.

By taking this uncertainty out and not counting them as full-time employees, it gives those volunteer personnel and their chiefs less to worry about. Instead, they are able to spend more time making sure they are doing what all these great Americans want to be doing, and that is to serve their communities.

The West Jackson Fire Department in my district is really frightfully scared of this rule because it is going to cost them more than they can afford.

So all I ask is for the bipartisanship that has been shown here today. And, for those watching, when the tone goes off, the brave men and women of our country respond. What they don't need is to have a tone go off from Washington that puts them in further jeopardy.

Mr. LEVIN. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. At this time, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR).

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, today, the House has the chance to more permanently establish in law a provision that firefighters across Kentucky's 6th District have told me is vital to their ability to continue protecting our communities.

The Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act will simply ensure, once and for all, that these departments will not fall victim to the costly employer mandate in ObamaCare.

Over 90 percent of Kentucky's fire departments are either fully or mostly volunteer. Fire chiefs have told me that they do not have the resources to provide the health benefits mandated

by ObamaCare's employer mandates to these brave and selfless volunteers who have no expectation of receiving such benefits or receive their benefits through other lines of work.

I remain committed to replacing ObamaCare with reforms that will actually lower the cost of health care without jeopardizing the safety of our communities. As an original cosponsor, I am pleased to help introduce this critical legislation.

I commend Congressman BARLETTA for introducing it, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this critical legislation.

Mr. LEVIN. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague LOU BARLETTA from Pennsylvania for introducing this commonsense piece of legislation.

□ 1730

As we see, this is another unintended consequence of ObamaCare. I have received a letter from one of my volunteer fire departments just a few months ago that talked about this bill, and it said that the provision that is hurting our firefighters could be devastating to fire departments. Many volunteer fire departments rely upon local donations and fundraisers to fund their basic operations. The addition of a requirement to provide health insurance would present a serious financial challenge to them. Some departments have taken steps to reduce staffing levels and shifts in order to fall under the 50 FTE and 30-hours-worked threshold, which reduces the fire department's baseline emergency response capabilities.

I would like to thank Staunton, Illinois' fire chief for the fire protection district in Staunton, Rick Haase, for sending me this letter, and I would urge my colleagues to support this piece of legislation.

Mr. LEVIN. I just want to close by stating—it can be done very briefly—the importance of this legislation. I think we have heard eloquent testimony to it, and I hope we can proceed on a bipartisan basis, as has been true before.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. BRADY of Texas. In closing, I would like to reference the title of this bill, Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders. Democrats and Republicans coming together today are here to make sure that is the law of the land. We are protecting our volunteer firefighters and emergency responders. This bill deserves our support, and I urge its passage.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, Mr. LARSON, for being such a champion

for our volunteer firefighters and first responders.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act.

I'm proud to cosponsor this bipartisan bill with Mr. BARLETTA.

This bill makes a sensible fix to the Affordable Care Act that protects volunteer firefighters and first responders in Connecticut and across the country.

I heard concerns from fire chiefs in my district—including Chief Jack Casner from my hometown of Cheshire—that the IRS may incorrectly count volunteers as employees.

We rely on hundreds of volunteer firefighters to keep our community safe.

These men and women are proud to volunteer—and do a terrific job.

And so, with my colleagues, I immediately expressed their concerns to the Obama Administration.

This bipartisan bill codifies important clarifications. . .

and shows that we can work together—as Democrats and Republicans—to make the Affordable Care Act work better for the American people.

I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting H.R. 3979.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3979, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE CHAKA FATTAH, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable CHAKA FATTAH, Member of Congress:

MARCH 10, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker,
Washington, DC.

MR. SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, that I have received a subpoena, issued by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, for certain documents from my Congressional Offices.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined under Rule VIII that the subpoena seeks some information that is not material and relevant, and that is not "consistent with the privileges and rights of the House." Accordingly, I intend to move to quash the subpoena to that extent, but to otherwise comply with the subpoena to the extent that it is material

and relevant, and to the extent that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

CHAKA FATTAH,
Member of Congress.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION PROCESS REFORM ACT OF 2013

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3675) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3675

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act of 2013”.

SEC. 2. FCC PROCESS REFORM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title I of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 151 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 12 the following new section:

“SEC. 13. TRANSPARENCY AND EFFICIENCY.

“(a) INITIAL RULEMAKING AND INQUIRY.—

“(1) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act of 2013, the Commission shall complete a rulemaking proceeding and adopt procedural changes to its rules to maximize opportunities for public participation and efficient decisionmaking.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS FOR RULEMAKING.—The rules adopted under paragraph (1) shall—

“(A) set minimum comment periods for comment and reply comment, subject to a determination by the Commission that good cause exists for departing from such minimum comment periods, for—

“(i) significant regulatory actions, as defined in Executive Order 12866; and

“(ii) all other rulemaking proceedings;

“(B) establish policies concerning the submission of extensive new comments, data, or reports towards the end of the comment period;

“(C) establish policies regarding treatment of comments, ex parte communications, and data or reports (including statistical reports and reports to Congress) submitted after the comment period to ensure that the public has adequate notice of and opportunity to respond to such submissions before the Commission relies on such submissions in any order, decision, report, or action;

“(D) establish procedures for publishing the status of open rulemaking proceedings and proposed orders, decisions, reports, or actions on circulation for review by the Commissioners, including which Commissioners have not cast a vote on an order, decision, report, or action that has been on circulation for more than 60 days;

“(E) establish deadlines (relative to the date of filing) for—

“(i) in the case of a petition for a declaratory ruling under section 1.2 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, issuing a public notice of such petition;

“(ii) in the case of a petition for rulemaking under section 1.401 of such title, issuing a public notice of such petition; and

“(iii) in the case of a petition for reconsideration under section 1.106 or 1.429 of such title or an application for review under section 1.115 of such title, issuing a public notice of a decision on the petition or application by the Commission or under delegated authority (as the case may be);

“(F) establish guidelines (relative to the date of filing) for the disposition of petitions filed under section 1.2 of such title;

“(G) establish procedures for the inclusion of the specific language of the proposed rule or the proposed amendment of an existing rule in a notice of proposed rulemaking; and

“(H) require notices of proposed rulemaking and orders adopting a rule or amending an existing rule that—

“(i) create (or propose to create) a program activity to contain performance measures for evaluating the effectiveness of the program activity; and

“(ii) substantially change (or propose to substantially change) a program activity to contain—

“(I) performance measures for evaluating the effectiveness of the program activity as changed (or proposed to be changed); or

“(II) a finding that existing performance measures will effectively evaluate the program activity as changed (or proposed to be changed).

“(3) INQUIRY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act of 2013, the Commission shall complete an inquiry to seek public comment on whether and how the Commission should—

“(A) establish procedures for allowing a bipartisan majority of Commissioners to place an order, decision, report, or action on the agenda of an open meeting;

“(B) establish procedures for informing all Commissioners of a reasonable number of options available to the Commission for resolving a petition, complaint, application, rulemaking, or other proceeding;

“(C) establish procedures for ensuring that all Commissioners have adequate time, prior to being required to decide a petition, complaint, application, rulemaking, or other proceeding (including at a meeting held pursuant to section 5(d)), to review the proposed Commission decision document, including the specific language of any proposed rule or any proposed amendment of an existing rule;

“(D) establish procedures for publishing the text of agenda items to be voted on at an open meeting in advance of such meeting so that the public has the opportunity to read the text before a vote is taken;

“(E) establish deadlines (relative to the date of filing) for disposition of applications for a license under section 1.913 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations;

“(F) assign resources needed in order to meet the deadlines described in subparagraph (E), including whether the Commission's ability to meet such deadlines would be enhanced by assessing a fee from applicants for such a license; and

“(G) publish each order, decision, report, or action not later than 30 days after the date of the adoption of such order, decision, report, or action.

“(4) DATA FOR PERFORMANCE MEASURES.—The Commission shall develop a performance measure or proposed performance measure required by this subsection to rely, where possible, on data already collected by the Commission.

“(b) PERIODIC REVIEW.—On the date that is 5 years after the completion of the rulemaking proceeding under subsection (a)(1), and every 5 years thereafter, the Commission

shall initiate a new rulemaking proceeding to continue to consider such procedural changes to its rules as may be in the public interest to maximize opportunities for public participation and efficient decisionmaking.

“(c) NONPUBLIC COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 552b of title 5, United States Code, a bipartisan majority of Commissioners may hold a meeting that is closed to the public to discuss official business if—

“(A) a vote or any other agency action is not taken at such meeting;

“(B) each person present at such meeting is a Commissioner, an employee of the Commission, a member of a joint board or conference established under section 410, or a person on the staff of such a joint board or conference or of a member of such a joint board or conference; and

“(C) an attorney from the Office of General Counsel of the Commission is present at such meeting.

“(2) DISCLOSURE OF NONPUBLIC COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSIONS.—Not later than 2 business days after the conclusion of a meeting held under paragraph (1), the Commission shall publish a disclosure of such meeting, including—

“(A) a list of the persons who attended such meeting; and

“(B) a summary of the matters discussed at such meeting, except for such matters as the Commission determines may be withheld under section 552b(c) of title 5, United States Code.

“(3) PRESERVATION OF OPEN MEETINGS REQUIREMENTS FOR AGENCY ACTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall limit the applicability of section 552b of title 5, United States Code, with respect to a meeting of Commissioners other than that described in paragraph (1).

“(d) ACCESS TO CERTAIN INFORMATION ON COMMISSION'S WEBSITE.—The Commission shall provide direct access from the homepage of its website to—

“(1) detailed information regarding—

“(A) the budget of the Commission for the current fiscal year;

“(B) the appropriations for the Commission for such fiscal year; and

“(C) the total number of full-time equivalent employees of the Commission; and

“(2) the performance plan most recently made available by the Commission under section 1115(b) of title 31, United States Code.

“(e) FEDERAL REGISTER PUBLICATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any document adopted by the Commission that the Commission is required, under any provision of law, to publish in the Federal Register, the Commission shall, not later than the date described in paragraph (2), complete all Commission actions necessary for such document to be so published.

“(2) DATE DESCRIBED.—The date described in this paragraph is the earlier of—

“(A) the day that is 45 days after the date of the release of the document; or

“(B) the day by which such actions must be completed to comply with any deadline under any other provision of law.

“(3) NO EFFECT ON DEADLINES FOR PUBLICATION IN OTHER FORM.—In the case of a deadline that does not specify that the form of publication is publication in the Federal Register, the Commission may comply with such deadline by publishing the document in another form. Such other form of publication does not relieve the Commission of any Federal Register publication requirement applicable to such document, including the requirement of paragraph (1).

“(f) CONSUMER COMPLAINT DATABASE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In evaluating and processing consumer complaints, the Commission shall present information about such complaints in a publicly available, searchable database on its website that—

“(A) facilitates easy use by consumers; and

“(B) to the extent practicable, is sortable and accessible by—

“(i) the date of the filing of the complaint;

“(ii) the topic of the complaint;

“(iii) the party complained of; and

“(iv) other elements that the Commission considers in the public interest.

“(2) DUPLICATIVE COMPLAINTS.—In the case of multiple complaints arising from the same alleged misconduct, the Commission shall be required to include only information concerning one such complaint in the database described in paragraph (1).

“(g) FORM OF PUBLICATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In complying with a requirement of this section to publish a document, the Commission shall publish such document on its website, in addition to publishing such document in any other form that the Commission is required to use or is permitted to and chooses to use.

“(2) EXCEPTION.—The Commission shall by rule establish procedures for redacting documents required to be published by this section so that the published versions of such documents do not contain—

“(A) information the publication of which would be detrimental to national security, homeland security, law enforcement, or public safety; or

“(B) information that is proprietary or confidential.

“(h) TRANSPARENCY RELATING TO PERFORMANCE IN MEETING FOIA REQUIREMENTS.—The Commission shall take additional steps to inform the public about its performance and efficiency in meeting the disclosure and other requirements of section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act), including by doing the following:

“(1) Publishing on the Commission's website the Commission's logs for tracking, responding to, and managing requests submitted under such section, including the Commission's fee estimates, fee categories, and fee request determinations.

“(2) Releasing to the public all decisions made by the Commission (including decisions made by the Commission's Bureaus and Offices) granting or denying requests filed under such section, including any such decisions pertaining to the estimate and application of fees assessed under such section.

“(3) Publishing on the Commission's website electronic copies of documents released under such section.

“(4) Presenting information about the Commission's handling of requests under such section in the Commission's annual budget estimates submitted to Congress and the Commission's annual performance and financial reports. Such information shall include the number of requests under such section the Commission received in the most recent fiscal year, the number of such requests granted and denied, a comparison of the Commission's processing of such requests over at least the previous 3 fiscal years, and a comparison of the Commission's results with the most recent average for the United States Government as published on www.foia.gov.

“(i) PROMPT RELEASE OF STATISTICAL REPORTS AND REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than January 15th of each year, the Commission shall identify, catalog, and publish an

anticipated release schedule for all statistical reports and reports to Congress that are regularly or intermittently released by the Commission and will be released during such year.

“(j) ANNUAL SCORECARD REPORTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—For the 1-year period beginning on January 1st of each year, the Commission shall prepare a report on the performance of the Commission in conducting its proceedings and meeting the deadlines established under subsection (a)(2)(E) and the guidelines established under subsection (a)(2)(F).

“(2) CONTENTS.—Each report required by paragraph (1) shall contain detailed statistics on such performance, including, with respect to each Bureau of the Commission—

“(A) with respect to each type of filing specified in subsection (a)(2)(E) or (a)(2)(F)—

“(i) the number of filings that were pending on the last day of the period covered by such report;

“(ii) the number of filings described in clause (i) for which each applicable deadline or guideline established under such subsection was not met and the average length of time such filings have been pending; and

“(iii) for filings that were resolved during such period, the average time between initiation and resolution and the percentage for which each applicable deadline or guideline established under such subsection was met;

“(B) with respect to proceedings before an administrative law judge—

“(i) the number of such proceedings completed during such period; and

“(ii) the number of such proceedings pending on the last day of such period; and

“(C) the number of independent studies or analyses published by the Commission during such period.

“(3) PUBLICATION AND SUBMISSION.—The Commission shall publish and submit to the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate each report required by paragraph (1) not later than the date that is 30 days after the last day of the period covered by such report.

“(k) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) AMENDMENT.—The term ‘amendment’ includes, when used with respect to an existing rule, the deletion of such rule.

“(2) BIPARTISAN MAJORITY.—The term ‘bipartisan majority’ means, when used with respect to a group of Commissioners, that such group—

“(A) is a group of 3 or more Commissioners; and

“(B) includes, for each political party of which any Commissioner is a member, at least 1 Commissioner who is a member of such political party, and, if any Commissioner has no political party affiliation, at least one unaffiliated Commissioner.

“(3) PERFORMANCE MEASURE.—The term ‘performance measure’ means an objective and quantifiable outcome measure or output measure (as such terms are defined in section 1115 of title 31, United States Code).

“(4) PROGRAM ACTIVITY.—The term ‘program activity’ has the meaning given such term in section 1115 of title 31, United States Code, except that such term also includes any annual collection or distribution or related series of collections or distributions by the Commission of an amount that is greater than or equal to \$100,000,000.

“(5) OTHER DEFINITIONS.—The terms ‘agency action’, ‘ex parte communication’, and ‘rule’ have the meanings given such terms in section 551 of title 5, United States Code.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATES AND IMPLEMENTING RULES.—

(1) EFFECTIVE DATES.—

(A) NONPUBLIC COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSIONS.—Subsection (c) of section 13 of the Communications Act of 1934, as added by subsection (a), shall apply beginning on the first date on which all of the procedural changes to the rules of the Federal Communications Commission required by subsection (a)(1) of such section have taken effect.

(B) SCHEDULES AND REPORTS.—Subsections (i) and (j) of such section 13 shall apply with respect to 2014 and any year thereafter.

(2) RULES.—Except as otherwise provided in such section 13, the Federal Communications Commission shall promulgate any rules necessary to carry out such section not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3. CATEGORIZATION OF TCPA INQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS IN QUARTERLY REPORT.

In compiling its quarterly report with respect to informal consumer inquiries and complaints, the Federal Communications Commission may not categorize an inquiry or complaint with respect to section 227 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 227) as being a wireline inquiry or complaint or a wireless inquiry or complaint unless the party whose conduct is the subject of the inquiry or complaint is a wireline carrier or a wireless carrier, respectively.

SEC. 4. EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.

Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall relieve the Federal Communications Commission from any obligations under title 5, United States Code, except where otherwise expressly provided.

SEC. 5. APPLICATION OF ANTIDEFFICIENCY ACT TO UNIVERSAL SERVICE PROGRAM.

Section 302 of Public Law 108-494 (118 Stat. 3998) is amended by striking “December 31, 2015” each place it appears and inserting “December 31, 2020”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials into the RECORD on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oregon?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALDEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the communications sector is one of the most innovative, competitive, and robust sectors of our economy. But for innovation and investment in communications to continue, we must not weigh industry down with needless red tape and delay.

Now, despite the lackluster overall economy, the communications and technology market continues to grow at a very rapid pace. In fact, in 2012, Mr. Speaker, the industry invested \$68 billion in broadband infrastructure

alone. That totals \$1.2 trillion invested in upgrading broadband infrastructure networks since just 1996—\$1.2 trillion.

Communications and technology companies, as well as the consumers that enjoy their products and benefit from their services, deserve a transparent and responsive government agency. While agency process has improved under recent chairmen, this legislation will ensure that reforms remain in place from one administration to the next.

Even with the positive changes at the Commission, recent examples of bad processes have resulted in what I would say are dangerous outcomes at the Commission. To wit, late last year, the Federal Communications Commission issued a notice for a study that would call into question the editorial decisions of journalists in their own newsrooms, which I think threatens their First Amendment rights. Somehow, an item as controversial as this study made it all the way through the FCC without so much as a Commission vote. Americans deserve greater accountability and transparency from their government.

So this bill is the result of a multiyear process, ending with bipartisan agreement that takes important steps towards improving this very important agency. This legislation will produce a joint effort where the Commission establishes procedures to achieve the goals established by Congress.

The Commission is charged with setting its own deadlines and timelines. While the legislation allows the Commission a good deal of flexibility in meeting the goals we have set, the bill includes backstops to ensure accountability. The annual scorecard we call for in the bill requires the Federal Communications Commission to report to Congress on the agency's success in meeting its own self-imposed metrics.

The bill requires the FCC to undertake two separate proceedings, Mr. Speaker. The first requires a notice and comment rulemaking, resulting in the FCC's adopting rules to address several different reforms. Setting a minimum time period for comments in an FCC rulemaking will allow for certainty for those who wish to comment—the public.

In addition, adopted rules must address issues like data dumps at the end of a comment period, transparency as to items pending before the Commissioners, and publication of the language of proposed rules. All those are very important parts of a more open and transparent government and a process that taxpayers can rely upon.

The rulemaking also requires the Federal Communications Commission to adopt deadlines for action on several types of filings before the agency. As I know all too well from my own experience, having been regulated by the

Federal Communications Commission when my wife and I were in the radio industry, items can sit at the agencies for literally years without any action, and then they are acted upon and the person bringing the action may have 30 days on something that sat there for 10 years.

Now, the second proceeding is an inquiry that deals with more complex issues, giving the Federal Communications Commission flexibility in deciding whether and how to implement those reforms. Now, by giving the FCC flexibility when setting procedures and deadlines, we are not constraining the agency; rather, we are providing them with goals to meet and allowing them, the professionals there at the FCC, to determine the best way to meet those goals.

Now, many of the reforms in the bill are things that the Commission itself already has the authority to do under existing law; however, the bill also changes the existing Sunshine Act to allow for greater collaboration among the Commissioners themselves. I think that will bring about better government—all of these reforms combined will.

The FCC has started its own review of agency processes, and in a report released earlier this year, many of the areas the agency itself found needing reform mirror provisions of our legislation, H.R. 3675.

The American public expects and deserves a transparent and accountable Federal Government no matter who is in charge in the White House. So let's start this reform with this agency that oversees one of our most innovative and robust sectors of the economy.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DOYLE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with my friend and colleague Mr. WALDEN, in support of H.R. 3675, the FCC Process Reform Act of 2013.

The Federal Communications Commission is charged with overseeing industries that make up one-sixth of our national economy. The communications and technology sectors are driving economic growth across the Nation, connecting businesses to markets large and small and delivering innovative, new products and services to consumers. Perhaps more importantly, communications networks are part of the very fabric of our democracy, providing the news and information that makes us informed citizens and voters.

With a mission this critical, both Democrats and Republicans believe that the FCC must be efficient, transparent, and accountable.

We started this debate in the Energy and Commerce Committee with different perspectives about how to achieve these goals. Last Congress, our work on this issue, unfortunately, de-

volved into a partisan process and a vote on a bill that was dead on arrival in the Senate. But this Congress, thanks to Chairman WALDEN's leadership and consultation with Ranking Members WAXMAN and ESHOO, we were able to come to an agreement on a set of bipartisan reform proposals that were unanimously supported by the committee.

I want to highlight several key provisions in this bill that we believe will improve the functioning of the FCC.

The first reform is the Sunshine Act, to allow FCC Commissioners to collaborate more closely while preserving the transparency of agency decision-making. I introduced this legislation along with Representatives ESHOO and SHIMKUS, and I am pleased to see it incorporated in the bill we are considering today.

The second area that I am particularly pleased with is the incorporation of a provision to provide an exemption to the Antideficiency Act for the Universal Service Fund. Today, the FCC relies on temporary exemptions from the Antideficiency Act to be able to administer the Universal Service program that supports connectivity to schools and libraries, known as E-Rate.

The bill we reported out of the Energy and Commerce Committee would have permanently exempted the Universal Service Fund from the Antideficiency Act, but, unfortunately, we were unable to reach agreement with CBO about the impact of this provision.

I want to thank my colleagues in the majority for working with us to come up with an alternative that provides a longer—if not permanent—exemption. I believe it demonstrates our committee's bipartisan support for providing the FCC with the flexibility it needs to administer the E-Rate program.

I also want to compliment FCC Chairman Wheeler for his actions to address transparency and efficiency of FCC decisionmaking. From his very first day at the helm of the agency, he has focused on remedying the concerns identified in the bill that we are considering today.

I urge the FCC to continue to move forward on reforms they can make under their own initiative while we continue to work on this legislation.

Finally, I want to close by saying that I think the manner in which the FCC Process Reform Act was developed should be a model for the entire House going forward. Working together, members of the Energy and Commerce Committee crafted legislation that addressed the concerns from both sides of the aisle. I am proud to have been a part of this effort.

I want to thank my colleague, Chairman WALDEN, for his work. I urge all my colleagues to support this important legislation to make the FCC more efficient, transparent, and accountable.

I look forward to working with our colleagues in the Senate and continuing to help this bill become law.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALDEN. I thank the gentleman for his kind comments and his diligent work on this effort and that of his colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle.

I think when it comes to reforming the FCC and getting something that really worked for the public, we are joined at the hip. So I appreciate their input and the work we did together. Our subcommittee has actually done quite a bit of bipartisan work over the last couple of years moving forward with an incentive auction program to free up more spectrum for all of these new wireless devices that are out there and new technology and innovation. We are really at the center of the ability of the country to grow, innovate, and produce really good-paying jobs. So I appreciate Mr. DOYLE's comments.

I now yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA), the vice chair of the Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, who has been an extraordinary member of our team in working on this and other major communications policy going forward. He will play a key role tomorrow when we have our hearing on the reauthorization of the Satellite Viewer Act.

Mr. LATTA. I appreciate the hard work that you have done on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3675, the Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act of 2013.

The communications industry represents a promising sector of our economy that has fostered widespread investment, innovation, job creation, and greater consumer choice. As the industry evolves and makes unprecedented technological advancements, the possibilities for future innovation and modernization are endless. As Members of Congress, we have to ensure that businesses and entrepreneurs are equipped with the opportunity and flexibility to continue making that sustained progress.

□ 1745

The FCC Process Reform Act would facilitate this effort.

This legislation would initiate much-needed regulatory reforms to the Federal Communications Commission and bring additional transparency and accountability to the agency. I applaud Chairman WALDEN for his efforts and leadership in developing this bipartisan piece of legislation, and I look forward to working with him and other members of the subcommittee as we work forward on this important piece of legislation.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, we have no other speakers, and so I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I conclude by again thanking my colleagues on the Democratic side of the aisle for their good work on this legislation, and their partnership on this. This is good government. This is how we get things done on the Energy and Commerce Committee, and it is how we are going to improve the activities and procedures of these agencies to restore a little confidence in at least this sector of government.

The Federal Communications Commission has a lot of work to do. It is very important work for the future of our country.

Tomorrow, as I said, our committee will take up draft legislation to make sure that those who watch television over satellite will be able to continue that process, and we will do some other reforms along the way. Throughout this year, Mr. Speaker, our Subcommittee on Communications and Technology plans to solicit all kinds of information from individuals around the country on how to update the antiquated Telecommunications Act that dates back to either 1934 or 1992 or 1996, depending upon which law. So we have a lot of work to do, Mr. Speaker, and this bill moves an important piece forward. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3675, the Federal Communications Commission Process Reform Act of 2013, a bipartisan bill aimed at giving the FCC flexibility while promoting openness, transparency and accountability.

Two years ago, the House of Representatives considered a very different version of the legislation, one which I opposed and that passed largely on partisan lines. I support the bill before us today because it gives the FCC flexibility to evaluate and adopt procedural changes to its rules, rather than putting rigid requirements in statute. The bill enhances transparency by establishing a publicly available, searchable consumer complaint database and provides the Universal Service Fund (USF) with a short term exemption from the Antideficiency Act.

I'm also pleased that the bill includes the FCC Collaboration Act of 2013, a bipartisan bill I introduced last year with Reps. SHIMKUS and DOYLE. For years, current and former FCC Commissioners have called on Congress to pass 'sunshine reform,' so that three or more Commissioners can hold non-public collaborative discussions, as long as no agency action is taken. While I'm disappointed that this provision will not take effect immediately upon enactment, I'm hopeful that the Senate will modify this provision before passing similar legislation. A delay in implementation is the unnecessary delay of a much needed reform.

I thank Chairman WALDEN for working with me and my staff to put forward a bipartisan bill and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3675.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WAL-

DEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3675, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 47 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order: H.R. 3474, H.R. 3979, and H. Res. 499, in each case by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3474) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of the employer mandate under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 406, nays 1, not voting 23, as follows:

[Roll No. 115]
YEAS—406

Aderholt	Deutch	Keating
Amash	Diaz-Balart	Kelly (IL)
Bachmann	Doggett	Kelly (PA)
Barber	Doyle	Kennedy
Barletta	Duckworth	Kildee
Barr	Duffy	Kilmer
Barrow (GA)	Duncan (SC)	Kind
Barton	Duncan (TN)	King (IA)
Bass	Edwards	King (NY)
Beatty	Ellison	Kingston
Benishke	Ellmers	Kinzinger (IL)
Bentivolio	Enyart	Kirkpatrick
Bera (CA)	Eshoo	Kline
Bilirakis	Esty	Kuster
Bishop (GA)	Farenthold	Labrador
Bishop (NY)	Farr	LaMalfa
Bishop (UT)	Fincher	Lamborn
Black	Fitzpatrick	Lance
Blackburn	Fleischmann	Langevin
Blumenauer	Fleming	Lankford
Bonamici	Flores	Larsen (WA)
Boustany	Forbes	Larson (CT)
Brady (PA)	Fortenberry	Latham
Brady (TX)	Foster	Latta
Braley (IA)	Fox	Lee (CA)
Bridenstine	Frankel (FL)	Levin
Brooks (AL)	Franks (AZ)	Lipinski
Brooks (IN)	Frelinghuysen	LoBiondo
Brown (GA)	Fudge	Loeb
Brown (FL)	Gabbard	Lofgren
Brownley (CA)	Gallego	Long
Buchanan	Garamendi	Lowenthal
Buchshon	Garcia	Lowey
Burgess	Gardner	Lucas
Bustos	Garrett	Luetkemeyer
Byrne	Gerlach	Lujan Grisham
Calvert	Gibbs	(NM)
Camp	Gibson	Lujan, Ben Ray
Campbell	Gingrey (GA)	(NM)
Cantor	Gohmert	Lummis
Capito	Goodlatte	Lynch
Capps	Gowdy	Maffei
Capuano	Granger	Maloney,
Cardenas	Graves (GA)	Carolyn
Carney	Graves (MO)	Maloney, Sean
Carson (IN)	Grayson	Marchant
Carter	Green, Al	Marino
Cartwright	Green, Gene	Masse
Cassidy	Griffin (AR)	Matheson
Castor (FL)	Griffith (VA)	Matsui
Castro (TX)	Grijalva	McCarthy (CA)
Chabot	Grimm	McCarthy (NY)
Chaffetz	Guthrie	McClintock
Chu	Hahn	McCollum
Cicilline	Hall	McDermott
Clark (MA)	Hanabusa	McGovern
Clarke (NY)	Hanna	McHenry
Clay	Harper	McKinley
Cleaver	Harris	McMorris
Clyburn	Hartzler	Rodgers
Coble	Hastings (FL)	McNerney
Coffman	Hastings (WA)	Meadows
Cohen	Heck (NV)	Meehan
Cole	Heck (WA)	Meeks
Collins (GA)	Hensarling	Meng
Collins (NY)	Herrera Beutler	Messer
Conaway	Higgins	Mica
Connolly	Himes	Michaud
Conyers	Hinojosa	Miller (MI)
Cook	Holding	Miller, George
Cooper	Holt	Moore
Cotton	Honda	Moran
Courtney	Horsford	Mullin
Cramer	Hudson	Mulvaney
Crawford	Huelskamp	Murphy (FL)
Crenshaw	Huffman	Murphy (PA)
Crowley	Huizenga (MI)	Napolitano
Cuellar	Hultgren	Neal
Culberson	Hunter	Negrete McLeod
Cummings	Hurt	Neugebauer
Daines	Israel	Noem
Davis (CA)	Issa	Nolan
Davis, Danny	Jackson Lee	Nugent
Davis, Rodney	Jeffries	Nunes
DeFazio	Jenkins	Nunnelee
DeGette	Johnson (GA)	O'Rourke
Delaney	Johnson (OH)	Olson
DeLauro	Johnson, E. B.	Owens
DeBene	Johnson, Sam	Palazzo
Denham	Jones	Pallone
Dent	Jordan	Pastor (AZ)
DeSantis	Joyce	Paulsen
DesJarlais	Kaptur	Payne

Pearce	Ryan (WI)	Thompson (PA)
Pelosi	Salmon	Thornberry
Perlmutter	Sánchez, Linda	Tiberi
Perry	T.	Tierney
Peters (CA)	Sanchez, Loretta	Tipton
Peters (MI)	Sanford	Titus
Peterson	Sarbanes	Tonko
Petri	Scalise	Tsongas
Pingree (ME)	Schakowsky	Turner
Pittenger	Schiff	Upton
Pitts	Schneider	Valadao
Pocan	Schock	Van Hollen
Poe (TX)	Schrader	Vargas
Polis	Schweikert	Veasey
Pompeo	Scott (VA)	Vela
Posey	Scott, Austin	Velázquez
Price (GA)	Scott, David	Visclosky
Price (NC)	Sensenbrenner	Wagner
Quigley	Serrano	Walberg
Rahall	Sessions	Walden
Rangel	Sewell (AL)	Walorski
Reed	Shea-Porter	Walz
Reichert	Sherman	Wasserman
Renacci	Shimkus	Schultz
Ribble	Shuster	Waters
Rice (SC)	Simpson	Waxman
Richmond	Sinema	Weber (TX)
Rigell	Sires	Webster (FL)
Roby	Slaughter	Welch
Roe (TN)	Smith (MO)	Wenstrup
Rogers (AL)	Smith (NE)	Westmoreland
Rogers (KY)	Smith (NJ)	Whitfield
Rogers (MI)	Smith (TX)	Williams
Rohrabacher	Smith (WA)	Wilson (SC)
Rokita	Southerland	Wittman
Rooney	Speier	Wolf
Ros-Lehtinen	Stewart	Womack
Roskam	Stivers	Woodall
Ross	Stockman	Yarmuth
Rothfus	Stutzman	Yoder
Roybal-Allard	Swalwell (CA)	Yoho
Royce	Takano	Young (AK)
Ruiz	Terry	Young (IN)
Runyan	Thompson (CA)	
Ruppersberger	Thompson (MS)	

YEAS—1

NOT VOTING—23

Amodei	Gosar	Miller (FL)
Bachus	Gutiérrez	Miller, Gary
Becerra	Hoyer	Pascarell
Butterfield	Lewis	Rush
Costa	McAllister	Ryan (OH)
Dingell	McCaul	Schwartz
Engel	McIntyre	Wilson (FL)
Fattah	McKeon	

□ 1854

Messrs. NUGENT, ROHRABACHER and CASSIDY changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3979) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 410, nays 0, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 116]
YEAS—410

Aderholt	Daines	Himes
Amash	Davis (CA)	Hinojosa
Bachmann	Davis, Danny	Holding
Bachus	Davis, Rodney	Holt
Barber	DeFazio	Honda
Barletta	DeGette	Horsford
Barr	Delaney	Hoyer
Barrow (GA)	DeLauro	Hudson
Barton	DelBene	Huelskamp
Bass	Denham	Huizenga (MI)
Beatty	Dent	Hultgren
Becerra	DeSantis	Hunter
Benishke	DesJarlais	Hurt
Bentivolio	Deutch	Israel
Bera (CA)	Diaz-Balart	Issa
Bilirakis	Doggett	Jackson Lee
Bishop (GA)	Doyle	Jeffries
Bishop (NY)	Duckworth	Jenkins
Bishop (UT)	Duffy	Johnson (GA)
Black	Duncan (SC)	Johnson (OH)
Blackburn	Duncan (TN)	Johnson, E. B.
Bonamici	Edwards	Johnson, Sam
Boustany	Ellison	Jones
Brady (PA)	Ellmers	Jordan
Brady (TX)	Enyart	Joyce
Braley (IA)	Eshoo	Kaptur
Bridenstine	Esty	Keating
Brooks (AL)	Farenthold	Kelly (IL)
Brooks (IN)	Farr	Kelly (PA)
Brown (GA)	Fattah	Kennedy
Brown (FL)	Fincher	Kildee
Brownley (CA)	Fitzpatrick	Kilmer
Buchanan	Fleischmann	Kind
Buchshon	Fleming	King (IA)
Burgess	Flores	King (NY)
Bustos	Forbes	Kingston
Byrne	Fortenberry	Kinzinger (IL)
Calvert	Foster	Kirkpatrick
Camp	Fox	Kline
Campbell	Frankel (FL)	Kuster
Cantor	Franks (AZ)	Labrador
Capito	Frelinghuysen	LaMalfa
Capps	Fudge	Lamborn
Capuano	Gabbard	Lance
Cardenas	Gallego	Langevin
Carney	Garamendi	Lankford
Carson (IN)	Garcia	Larsen (WA)
Carter	Gardner	Larson (CT)
Cartwright	Garrett	Latham
Cassidy	Gerlach	Latta
Castor (FL)	Gibbs	Lee (CA)
Castro (TX)	Gibson	Levin
Chabot	Gingrey (GA)	Lipinski
Chaffetz	Gohmert	LoBiondo
Chu	Goodlatte	Loeb
Cicilline	Gowdy	Lofgren
Clark (MA)	Granger	Long
Clarke (NY)	Graves (GA)	Lowenthal
Clay	Graves (MO)	Lowey
Cleaver	Grayson	Lucas
Clyburn	Green, Al	Luetkemeyer
Coble	Green, Gene	Lujan Grisham
Coffman	Griffin (AR)	(NM)
Cohen	Griffith (VA)	Lujan, Ben Ray
Cole	Grijalva	(NM)
Collins (GA)	Grimm	Lummis
Collins (NY)	Guthrie	Lynch
Conaway	Hahn	Maffei
Connolly	Hall	Maloney,
Conyers	Hanabusa	Carolyn
Cook	Hanna	Maloney, Sean
Cooper	Harper	Marchant
Cotton	Harris	Marino
Courtney	Hartzler	Masse
Cramer	Hastings (FL)	Matheson
Crawford	Hastings (WA)	Matsui
Crenshaw	Heck (NV)	McCarthy (CA)
Crowley	Heck (WA)	McCarthy (NY)
Cuellar	Hensarling	McClintock
Culberson	Herrera Beutler	McCollum
Cummings	Higgins	McDermott

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, due to travel arrangements, I missed the following rollcall votes: Nos. 115–117 on March 11, 2014 (today).

If present, I would have voted: rollcall vote No. 115—H.R. 3474—Hire More Heroes Act of 2013, On Passage, “aye”; rollcall vote No. 116—H.R. 3979—Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act of 2014, as amended, On Passage, “aye”; rollcall vote No. 117—H. Res. 499—Condemning the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity by military forces of the Russian Federation, as amended, On Passage, “aye.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I want to state for the record that today, March 11th, I was unavoidably detained in my district and missed several rollcall votes. Had I been present I would have voted: “aye”—rollcall vote 115—On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 3474—Hire More Heroes Act of 2013; “aye”—rollcall vote 116—On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 3979—Protecting Volunteer Firefighters and Emergency Responders Act of 2014, as amended; “aye”—rollcall Vote 117—On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H. Res. 499—Condemning the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity by military forces of the Russian Federation, as amended.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4138, EXECUTIVE NEEDS TO FAITHFULLY OBSERVE AND RESPECT CONGRESSIONAL ENACTMENTS OF THE LAW ACT OF 2014, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3973, FAITHFUL EXECUTION OF THE LAW ACT OF 2014

Mr. NUGENT, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113–378) on the resolution (H. Res. 511) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4138) to protect the separation of powers in the Constitution of the United States by ensuring that the President takes care that the laws be faithfully executed, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3973) to amend section 530D of title 28, United States Code, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CELEBRATING BRAIN SCIENCE AWARENESS WEEK

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Brain Science Awareness Week and to highlight amazing advances made by south

Florida’s neuroscience community to unravel the mysteries of the mind.

At the University of Miami’s Miller School of Medicine, research is yielding new insights for the treatment of devastating neurological disease, like Alzheimer’s. My mother died from complications of Alzheimer’s, so I know how terrible this disorder is.

Investigators at The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis are translating progress into hope for understanding traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries that are impacting thousands of our bravest warriors returning home from Afghanistan and Iraq.

On Saturday, March 22, scientists will introduce students to the wonders of the human brain at the Miami Brain Science Fair in hopes of inspiring young people to pursue the educational and professional fields that will fuel the next significant scientific discoveries.

□ 1915

CONGRATULATING MICHAEL C. HOFFMAN FOR WINNING THE FLAME OF HOPE AWARD

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to recognize Michael C. Hoffman of Saratoga Springs for receiving the prestigious Flame of Hope Award from the Epilepsy Foundation of Northeastern New York. This award highlights Mike’s outstanding dedication and commitment to the Epilepsy Foundation, raising awareness and funds to support the organization’s mission of overcoming the challenges created by epilepsy and curing the disease.

Mike is a successful businessowner and has worked for almost four decades to improve the community around him in the capital region of New York. Through his many impressive years as an active member of the Epilepsy Foundation, I am very pleased to see him receive this award.

Again, I thank Michael C. Hoffman for his tireless efforts to improve our communities and congratulate him upon winning the Flame of Hope Award from the Epilepsy Foundation of Northeastern New York.

OBAMACARE IDEOLOGY AND RURAL REALITY

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the importance of rural health care providers.

Once again, we see President Obama standing on ideological grounds rather

than actually taking the time to understand who provides medical care to seniors and how they do it. At the same time he is giving stump speeches and trying to convince us that ObamaCare is working, he is taking \$422 billion out of Medicare.

Now, part of these cuts come from critical access hospitals, and I am referring to the cuts that he is making to Medicare in his fiscal year 2015 budget. It is similar to what he did each of the past 2 years. He targets the critical access hospitals. In order to pay for ObamaCare, he is proposing to cut Medicare payments to the providers who are providing such an important service—our rural health care providers.

These patients have an extremely difficult time with access to medical care. They are poorer and are less likely to have employer-provided insurance or prescription drug coverage.

Critical access hospitals are the safety net for many Americans. They provide exceptional care. I see it in my district every day. I commend the rural providers.

USE ALL WE CAN AND SELL THE REST

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, “We eat all we can and we sell the rest.” That is the slogan for the Blue Bell Creameries in Brenham, Texas, that makes the best ice cream in the world. With the U.S. overabundance of natural gas, especially in Texas, that should be America’s foreign energy policy: “Use all we can and sell the rest.” In fact, we have so much natural gas in the Dakotas, they are flaring off gas wells.

Mr. Speaker, Ukraine has been invaded by the bully bear Putin. Ukraine buys 60 percent of its natural gas from Russia. In fact, numerous former Soviet republics in Europe are held hostage and rely on Russia for natural gas. We should give these nations an option to buy our gas, but we can’t even start the process until our government speeds up the approval of exporting gas.

Russian aggression can be responded to with an energy policy that helps Ukraine and the United States. Meanwhile, the roar of the Russian bear threatens to devour more sovereign territory in Ukraine.

And that’s just the way it is.

THE NEIL SIMPSON COAL-FIRED POWER PLANT

(Mrs. LUMMIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, on March 21, the Neil Simpson coal-fired power plant unit in Gillette, Wyoming, is going to shut down 10 years before its useful life is up. And it is shutting down because the EPA created this rule called Boiler MACT. That stands for "maximum attainable control technology."

If it was attainable control technology, the company wouldn't shut it down 10 years before its useful life is up. It is being shut down because it is not attainable. The EPA did not tell the truth when they told people this can be attained. And now that plant will be disassembled, taken to another country and put back up and be burning coal there.

This is not wise policy, Mr. Speaker.

PROPOSED DEACTIVATION OF THE 440TH AIRLIFT WING

(Mr. HUDSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I have grave concerns about the proposed deactivation of the 440th Airlift Wing located at Pope Army Airfield contained in the President's budget. The 440th is absolutely critical to conducting the kind of training that both airborne and special operations forces located at the epicenter of the universe in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, rely on to conduct the high-risk missions they are charged with in combat.

Beyond the immediate hit on readiness, the retirement will have an impact on over 1,200 servicemembers and their families directly associated with the unit.

While I understand we face challenging fiscal times, I expect the Department to take a broad approach when it comes to finding savings. While retiring a particular airframe may make sense on paper, it is incredibly important that we take into account the value of a joint force structure. I find it hard to believe that out-of-State units can provide the same quality of training and operations as the local units that have the long-term relationship with the commanders on the ground.

Additionally, cutting Fort Bragg's airborne operations by an estimated 23 percent could further erode our readiness at a time when the United States simply cannot afford it, eliminating the ability to rapidly mobilize, train, and deploy our most in-demand forces, namely the airborne and special operators.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to prevent these devastating cuts to our forces.

CONGRATULATING EDINA HIGH SCHOOL HOCKEY CHAMPS

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend the Edina High School hockey team for becoming repeat State champions.

This weekend, the Edina Hornets won the State high school hockey championship when they cruised to an 8-2 victory in the tournament finals against the tough Lakeville North squad. The Curt Giles-coached team became the very first AA high school hockey team to win back-to-back State championships in 20 years.

Led by senior captain and Minnesota Mr. Hockey finalist Tyler Nanne, the Hornets rolled through the three-game State tournament winning by a combined score of 17-4.

It is certainly a testament to the hard work of these young men that they spend countless hours on the ice honing their craft while still balancing their schoolwork, family time, and other endeavors. Becoming State champs does not happen overnight but through years of dedication.

Mr. Speaker, the teachers, the parents, the students, and the entire school district are tremendously proud of these young student athletes.

Congratulations again to the high school hockey champions in Edina.

THE MANVEL LADY MAVERICKS—TEXAS 5A STATE CHAMPIONS

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, 1 week ago, I stood in the parking lot of Manvel High School waiting. A few minutes before 4 p.m., the Texas women's 5A State champs came home.

To win State, the Manvel Lady Mavericks had to go through a door blocked by the two-time defending State champion, the Duncanville Panthers. In November, the Lady Mavs knocked on the Panthers' door. It didn't open. For three quarters in the State championships, they banged on the Panthers' door. It didn't budge. But in the last quarter, the Lady Mavs kicked that son of a gun opened and walked through to become the State 5A champs.

As we say in Manvel: Hoka hey, champs, hoka hey.

HONORING FAIRCHILD AIR FORCE BASE'S 92ND AFW FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

(Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take time to recognize the men and women of Fairchild Air Force Base in my home, eastern Washington.

Last week, the 92nd Air Refueling Wing welcomed home the last plane from Manas Transit Center in Kyrgyzstan. For nearly a decade, the Manas Transit Center was home away from home for these men and women. And every day, Fairchild's tankers would launch out of Manas and then refuel the warplanes supporting coalition troops on the ground.

Day in and day out, these gas stations in the sky gave fighters more time over their enemy targets and saved American lives. These crews provided lifesaving fuel for fighters when Osama bin Laden was found.

As the KC-135s and the airmen are returned to Fairchild, we must not forget those we lost. Last spring, Captains Mark Voss, Tori Pinckney, and Tech Sergeant Tre Mackey died in a tanker crash in Kyrgyzstan. I pray for peace for these families and give gratitude to these incredible airmen who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

Thank you to all the leaders and community members at Fairchild Air Force Base for their dedication to our country over the last 9 years. God bless you.

OBAMACARE IMPLEMENTATION FAILS MOTHERS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, recently, I received a heart-breaking email from Connie in Irmo, South Carolina. Because of ObamaCare, Connie's health care policy premiums have increased \$100 a month, and her deductible has grown to over \$2,500 a year. She explains the truth, despite Senate smears. These unexpected costs have created significant financial burdens for her family. Connie is the mother of a child who suffers with mental health issues. It is shameful that government regulations are making her choose between seeking medical assistance and feeding her family.

Connie writes:

It is heart wrenching that as a mother I now have to second-guess myself any time I think about taking my children to the doctors. I may have coverage, but after I pay my premiums, I don't have enough left to pay for the doctor visit itself.

ObamaCare is threatening the middle class and destroying American families and jobs. On behalf of mothers and fathers across this Nation who are suffering at ObamaCare's expense, it is time for the President to work with Congress to repeal this unworkable law and replace it with commonsense solutions.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

THE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO CARE AND HEALTH ACT

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today the House acted on an important piece of legislation that strikes at the very heart of our democracy—the Equitable Access to Care and Health Act, or EACH Act.

The individual mandate of the 2010 health care law included a very narrow exemption for religious groups, meaning that members of certain recognized religious sects could be exempted from the requirement to purchase health care or face a penalty of a tax for non-compliance.

To qualify for the current exemption, individuals must waive all public and private insurance benefits, including Social Security and Medicare. Individuals who participate in Social Security and Medicare but whose religious beliefs cause them to object to medical health care are not eligible for the existing exemption.

The EACH Act, which had bipartisan support, expands this exemption for individuals whose sincerely held religious beliefs would cause them to object to medical health care provided under such coverage.

Mr. Speaker, religious freedom must be protected for all Americans. Passage of the EACH Act is a step forward in safeguarding this fundamental and enduring principle.

□ 1930

UKRAINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DAINES). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, my remarks this evening will focus on the crisis facing Ukraine and our world, the most significant test of the will of liberty-loving people since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

The events halfway around the world remind us how precious our own liberties are and how important it is for the world community of liberty-loving nations, those that respect human life and those that believe in democratic advancement. We have common cause with those who stood in the streets in the subzero temperatures of Ukraine, whose futures are uncertain as I deliver my remarks this evening.

The world community of liberty-loving nations and those that respect treaty obligations and their roles as members of the United Nations Security Council cannot let the kind of illegal invasion of another country stand.

Russia, one of the permanent members of the Security Council of the United Nations, has invaded a sovereign country, violating her territorial integrity and putting off the day that Ukraine can handle its own internal affairs in order to get rid of the corruption of the former regime and allow the voices of people who so very much want to live in a free society to fully develop.

Our Nation and the world have to stand up for freedom, democracy, and human rights in Ukraine. These precious values will be diminished everywhere if we fail to raise our voices in support of those whose lives are at risk. The West, involving our allies from around the world, has to exert strong diplomatic initiatives, economic reform, including a financing package that the International Monetary Fund and other nations are putting together, humanitarian relief, if requested, and military assistance to strengthen our NATO alliance and the protection of borders.

Recently, the Ambassador from Ukraine to the United States, Ambassador Motsyk, wrote a letter to Members of Congress, and tonight I am going to read it into the RECORD so every American can hear it:

Dear Members of the United States Congress:

I would like to begin by thanking the United States of America, and specifically the United States Congress, for the unwavering support of Ukraine at these challenging times.

For the past couple of months, Ukraine has been in the world's headlines. The whole world saw the determination of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians who took to the streets to stand for a better life—for freedom, democracy, and the end of blatant corruption that stifled our country for far too long. Yet the Yanukovich regime tried to silence the protesters with guns. Peaceful and unarmed demonstrators were met by special forces with snipers who shot dead almost a hundred people and wounded hundreds more.

In an attempt to prevent further bloodshed and resolve the crisis, on February 21, 2014, leaders of the opposition Vitali Klychko, Oleh Tyahnybok, and Arsenii Yatsenyuk on one side, and the corrupt regime of Viktor Yanukovich on the other, signed an agreement that had been negotiated with the help of foreign ministers of Poland, Germany, and France. Russia's Special Envoy, Vladimir Lukin, was present, but refused to sign it. Therefore, the suggestion by the Russian side that the opposition failed to implement the agreement is groundless.

The agreement called for an end of violence, restoration of the Ukrainian Constitution of 2004 and early presidential elections. However, on February 22, 2014, President Viktor Yanukovich fled the capitol and de facto removed himself from his constitutional authority. Therefore, on February 27, 2014, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine was the only legitimate authority in Ukraine at that time, given the resignation of the government and the President's self-removal from exercising his functions, and restored the 2004 Constitution (approved by 386 votes out of 450), recognized that Viktor Yanukovich removed himself from his constitutional duties through unconstitutional means by 386

votes, including 140 votes from the pro-Yanukovich Party of Regions, and set the early elections of the President of Ukraine on May 25, 2014 (328 votes).

That was 328, a vast majority of members of their Congress, of their Rada, voted for that.

According to Article 112 of the Constitution of Ukraine of 2004, in case of early termination of powers of the President of Ukraine, the functions of the President of Ukraine shall be carried out by the speaker of the Parliament until a new President is elected and inaugurated, the only legitimate supreme authority in Ukraine is the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

The Verkhovna Rada is their Congress.

The Rada elected its new speaker, Mr. Oleksandr Turchynov (by 288 votes), who acts as the President of Ukraine until the elections, and appointed Mr. Yatsenyuk as the Prime Minister (by 371 votes). These actions were made in full compliance with Ukrainian laws.

That is over three-quarters of the membership. As the American people listen to what is happening there, you are watching a country trying to hold its government together. It was like at the beginning of our Republic when we weren't quite sure exactly how it was all going to be put together, but we were trying mightily to create a republic. However, even after the Ukrainian Congress did that, Russia did not recognize these changes and considers the former President, Viktor Yanukovich, its legitimate President, despite the votes of the Parliament, the highest standing body in the Nation of Ukraine.

Producing a piece of paper purporting to be Mr. Yanukovich's letter asking Mr. Putin to send Russian troops to Ukraine, the Federation Council of Russia, upon Mr. Putin's request, approved such a decision.

Some of us who are old enough to remember, remember what it was like living with the Soviet Union, a Soviet Union that invaded its neighbors, a Soviet Union that moved its tanks across Europe, a Soviet Union that killed over 14 million of its own people. There are some Americans old enough to remember that.

Now, the former President of Ukraine, Mr. Yanukovich, who stole from his own people—those are my words, not the Ambassador's—

Mr. Yanukovich is no longer the President of Ukraine, particularly after his escape from Kyiv on February 22, 2014. Therefore, none of his statements have any significance under either Ukrainian or international law. But in any way, even if the legitimate President of Ukraine called upon a foreign country to intervene with its armed forces in Ukraine, such a statement would also be worth nothing, because under the Constitution of Ukraine, Article 85, only the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, its Congress, can approve decisions on admitting units of armed forces of other states to the territory of Ukraine. The Rada clearly stated it had not made any such decisions.

Seeing that Ukraine is determined to pursue its European course, Russia, under the

completely trumped up pretext, invaded Crimea with its armed forces.

People of Hungarian-American ancestry understand what it is like to be invaded. People of Polish-American heritage understand what it is like to be invaded. People of Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian heritage understand what it is like to be invaded by the Big Bear. There are plenty of American people who understand what the Ukrainian people are facing right now.

The Russian forces are seeking to establish complete control over Ukraine's military facilities in Crimea, trying to block and disarm Ukrainian military garrisons and border guard bases, blocking airports and ships. The Russian troops and armored vehicles are moving uncontrollably around Crimea, one of Ukraine's states, and numerous Russian military planes and helicopters violated Ukrainian airspace.

Russia's power far outweighs Ukraine, which is nearly defenseless facing this massive force, and yet, Ukrainian soldiers have hunkered down in army bases, in air control stations, trying to stand up as they are surrounded; what courage. What courage.

By countless provocations, Russian military is seeking to instigate an armed conflict and replicate in Ukraine the Abkhazia and South Ossetia scenario. However, Ukrainian servicemen act with utmost restraint and don't react to such provocations, but there's a threat that Russia may engineer provocations against its own troops, and blame them on Ukraine.

Don't forget, Russia's President was head of the KGB, their secret police. He knows these techniques well.

There is also an ongoing accumulation of Russian equipment on the Russian territory in close proximity to the border of Ukraine in the Kharkiv, Luhansk, Donetsk and Chernihiv oblasts.

What does that mean?

These actions may indicate preparedness of the Russian side for possible intervention into the Ukrainian territory across the land border.

The military intervention is accompanied by a huge outburst of fabrications. I can assure you that Russian-speaking citizens of Ukraine enjoy the same rights and freedoms as other citizens of my country. Nobody has ever forbidden, forbids, or will forbid the use of the Russian language, as the Russian propaganda tries to demonstrate.

In fact, if you go to Ukraine, people speak many languages. They speak Ukrainian, they speak Russian, some speak a combination. Some speak Polish as well. Some speak German. There are many languages spoken in the nation of Ukraine.

As of today, there is no proof of any violations of Russian minority rights in Ukraine; there were no appeals to the relevant Ukrainian authorities, neither from those allegedly affected nor from Russia's officials. In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between the Parliamentary Commissioner on Human Rights of Ukraine and the Ombudsman of the Russian Federation in case of such appeals to the Russian side, they are transferred to the Ukrainian Ombudsman.

The actions by the Russian Federation constitute an act of aggression against the state of Ukraine. Russian Federation brutally violated the basic principles of Charter of the United Nations obliging all member states to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state.

What has happened is serious.

Ukraine in the strongest possible terms protested such actions, but Russia officially rejected Ukrainian proposals to hold immediate bilateral consultation (under article 7 of the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership between Ukraine and the Russian Federation of 1997).

Again, another treaty violation.

Russia's actions pose a serious threat not only to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, but also to the peace and stability in the whole region. Moreover, Russian's action provoke a disbalance in the international security system, and can lead to violations of the regime of international nuclear nonproliferation on a global scale.

When in 1994, Ukraine became a party to the Nonproliferation Treaty and voluntarily surrendered the third-largest nuclear arsenal in the world, it did so exclusively under certain conditions. These conditions envisaged granting security assurances to Ukraine by the five nuclear states. On December 5, 1994, the United States, the Russian Federation, and the United Kingdom signed the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances to Ukraine. The French Republic and the People's Republic of China support the memorandum by signing separate declarations.

Ukraine has thoroughly implemented its commitments under the Nonproliferation Treaty and has taken and fulfilled additional obligations by getting rid of all of its stockpiles of highly enriched uranium.

□ 1945

Today, we witness the situation when the Russian Federation attempts to undermine the NPT regime not only by violating the Budapest Memorandum, but also by violating the Nonproliferation Treaty, which clearly states in its preamble that "States must refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner."

Nonadherence by one guarantor state—the Russian Federation—to its commitments under the Budapest Memorandum by the military invasion in Ukraine creates a situation when the threshold states may consider international legal instruments insufficient to ensure security, territorial integrity and inviolability of their borders.

We rely on the commitments contained in the Budapest Memorandum of 1994 and the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO in Ukraine, as well as the U.S.-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership and other bilateral documents.

Ukraine is asking the world community to pay attention.

We need help from the guarantor states, the United Nations, NATO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe—

Who, by the way, have been denied access on repeated attempts to enter Crimea unarmed to observe, Russia has denied them entry.

—the European Union, all civilized nations to protect our sovereignty and territorial integrity by all available means and to prevent

a war which would shatter peace in Europe and will have grave and irrevocable consequences for peace and security on a global scale.

Ambassador Motsyk goes on:

The aggression must be stopped, and we rely on the strong and unified position of the global community.

Military units deployed from Russia must leave the territory of Ukraine immediately, and those belonging to the Russian Black Sea Fleet must return to their barracks. Armed gangs that came from Russia must also immediately leave Ukraine.

Crimea is an inalienable part of Ukraine, with citizens of all ethnic backgrounds.

All issues should be resolved through negotiations. There is no alternative to a peaceful and diplomatic solution of the crisis. We hope that wisdom will prevail.

We need America's help, and we count on it.

Sincerely yours,
Olexandr Motsyk
Ambassador of Ukraine to the United States

I also want to say that there has been some conjecture in the news that we have heard the President of Russia say that Crimea really doesn't belong in Ukraine because, back in the 1950s, when there was a Russian leader by the name of Nikita Khrushchev, that he got drunk one night and he kind of consigned Crimea to Ukraine by accident—by accident—because he wasn't thinking.

There are also very interesting facts contained in a book published in Moscow in 2003 entitled "Ukraine is not Russia." Do you know who it was written by? It was written by the former President of Ukraine, President Leonid Kuchma.

In chapter 14 of that book, President Kuchma devoted 13 pages to trace the history of Crimea and Ukraine. He called it the "Crimean knot."

The former President said—when he discusses the politics around the transfer of Crimea to Ukraine in 1954, he says the then-transition to Ukrainian administration after Ukraine became independent and how he dealt with separatist forces during his tenure as President.

Kuchma maintains that the transfer of Crimea from Russia to Ukraine came in response to petitions from the Crimeans themselves, who felt Moscow was too far away and insufficiently responsive to their everyday concerns, where their own country, their own capital of Kiev, was likely to be more attentive, particularly on issues of water and other utilities; so they could provide for Crimea better than Moscow, located far, far away.

Crimea then, Kuchma writes, was a desert and frontier land. He is referring back to the post-World War II period, particularly after the devastation of World War II.

That area was just violated and leveled to such an extent. It is hard for people in the West who have never experienced that to fully accommodate what happened there.

The residents believe Ukraine would be a better fit administratively, so he says—President Kuchma who had headed that country—the story of a drunken Nikita Khrushchev ceding Crimea to Ukraine as a gift is a fairytale. Those are his own words.

In 1954, right after Stalin's death—and what a butcher he was—Khrushchev hardly had the unbridled authority to make such unilateral decisions. At the time, he was vying for power inside his own country.

The actual act of transferring Crimea to Ukraine was signed by the head of what was called the Presidium, Kliment Voroshilov, not Khrushchev.

So the President of Russia maybe didn't read history, I don't know; but the point was the transfer to Ukraine came in 1954. It was a consequential date, and it has remained in Ukraine as part of that region for the entire second half of the 20th century and the first decade of this century. I thought it was important to put that on the RECORD.

I also wanted to say, as a Member of Congress, I am so very, very proud of the work that has been done by the Verkhovna Rada, the legal authority in Ukraine that is holding that Nation together. They are our counterpart. They are a legislative branch of their government, just as we are here.

We for many years now, since 1999, have had a parliamentary exchange with Ukraine, founded and signed by all of our Members, with the former speaker of their Parliament, Mr. Oleksandr Tkachenko, and our Speaker here for many congresses back, Speaker Dennis Hastert. That agreement lives today.

Over the last decade and a half, we have had many parliamentary exchanges. We have had teleconferences. We have had journeys by Ukrainian parliamentarians here and American Members of Congress there.

We believe that the collective intelligence of Ukraine is contained in that Rada. We are very proud of the work they are doing, and we want to continue working with them.

Our agreement says that we want to build upon the strategic partnership between the United States and Ukraine, first established in 1996, and that our parliamentary exchange would serve as a conduit in further developing and continuing economic and political cooperation between our two countries.

The types of discussions that we have held—and will continue to do in the future—will encompass economic relations, trade, space exploration, health care, the environment, agriculture, natural resources, and any other matter important to the promotion of close ties between the United States and Ukraine.

This is a moment for more robust engagement with the Parliament of

Ukraine and our own Congress. The idea is that we can learn from one another, we can be mutually supportive, and we know how important legislative bodies are to nations that actually expand freedoms, rights of free speech, rights of assembly, rights of free press, rights of free expression of religion, and we are very proud to be partnered with the Verkhovna Rada.

I would also like to read this evening from an excellent article that was written for *The New Republic* by Yale scholar Dr. Timothy Snyder, the author of a recent bestseller called "Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin," during World War II. It is incredible work.

But in this particular article, he talks about where Putin is vulnerable, where his soft spots are. He states at the beginning of the article:

In dispatching troops to Ukraine, Russia has violated international law, flouted multiple treaty commitments, and set the stage for a European war.

It is right that the American people are paying attention; it is right that we are using our power to try to put the bear back where it belongs and to try to move the situation to stability. The price of poor diplomacy, I think, would be catastrophic.

In this article, Dr. Snyder ends by saying:

Russian propaganda derides Europeans as feeble and helpless, and we too often tend to agree. But the European Union does have instruments of influence. Its greatest power, of course, is its attractiveness to societies on its borders, such as Ukraine. But even where membership is not an option, and the European Union faces unambiguous hostility, it can act. Russia's very contempt for the European Union might force Europeans to undertake a more active foreign policy and to take responsibility for their neighborhood.

The United States has to use our power to help push the situation in that direction.

I just wanted to ask if our dear colleague from Iowa, does he have his own Special Order, or does he wish to join in this Special Order? Congressman KING of Iowa.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I very much appreciate the gentlelady for yielding to me. I have a few topics I intend to bring up in the subsequent hour.

I want to thank the gentlelady for raising this topic and for the significant information that has been delivered here with regard to Ukraine, the Russians, and the political scenario that we are in.

I am contemplating what this means to the world. I will say, Mr. Speaker, that I am more troubled than many about the circumstances that have unfolded off of the Black Sea.

I have watched as Putin set up the Olympics. It looked like part of it was for self-glorification. When I think about what this means politically, much of the world is looking at Putin, thinking, well, look at all of the \$50-

plus billion you invested in the Olympics, and now, you see the world opinion now has turned against you when you had all of that good will that was garnered at the Sochi Olympics.

I think it is a little bit different perspective from where I sit, that is that the component of this is true, but I don't think Putin cares about world opinion. I think he cares about how much hegemony he can deliver from the seat that he has. I think that the good will that came among the Russian people, his popularity numbers had to go up.

Remember, this is a man who went through a difficult contentious election in 2012. There were demonstrations in the streets in multiple places around Russia. The tension that was there, as any leader, his hold on power can't just be by force and fear alone, there has to be some support that is there.

I believe that the Olympics actually helped Putin and gave him the support base at home that would allow him to pull off an invasion—an illegal invasion of the Crimea.

I don't think he cares about what we think. I don't think he cares what the President thinks, Mr. Speaker. I don't think he cares so much even what the European Union thinks, as long as they continue to buy gas from him and keep his economy going, but I think that was a component.

The next thing is that I have watched him for a good number of years, and perhaps not with the attention to detail the gentlelady from Ohio has delivered here tonight, but I have long concluded that Vladimir Putin is committed to restoring, to the extent that he can in his time, the old Soviet Union.

I think he sees this as a giant geopolitical chess game. I would think back at the time in 1984 when then Ronald Reagan's ambassador to the United Nations Jeane Kirkpatrick stepped down as ambassador to move on with her career.

I remember picking up on page 3 or 4 of the newspaper a little tiny article there that mentioned it. It wasn't any examination, but it said a little quote that I think she was very well known for, Jeane Kirkpatrick.

□ 2000

We were in the depths of the cold war at the time, I would add, and she said: What is going on in this cold war between the United States of America and the Soviet Union is the equivalent of playing chess and Monopoly on the same board. The question is: Will the United States of America break the Soviet Union economically in the Monopoly component of the game before the Soviet Union checkmates the United States militarily?

That was the contest. That was a contest as Reagan and Thatcher saw it.

That was the contest as far as Pope John Paul II saw it, I believe. We know how that turned out at least in the temporary. The strength of the economy of the United States and our ability to continue to develop more and more technology—to put SDI up in order to restore our national defenses—became the deciding factor. The Soviet Union could no longer keep up with the United States, and the Soviet Union couldn't keep up with the free world. The juggernaut of our economy overwhelmed the managed economy of the Soviets. Of course, Gorbachev was a player in this, and we had glasnost and perestroika. So I think he saw that he couldn't hold it together anymore, and to the extent that he cooperated with Lady Thatcher and President Reagan, we saw the worm turn of history.

I hold in my office a piece of the Berlin Wall. That is framed in my office, and I have had it since 1989. Excuse me. Actually, it was on September 12 of 1990 that that piece was chiseled out of the wall for me. I didn't get to do that myself. That piece of the Berlin Wall represents a piece of the Iron Curtain, itself. The Berlin Wall was the physical structure of the Iron Curtain that Winston Churchill described at Fulton, Missouri, in 1948. The Iron Curtain was drawn by, I believe, the finger of Winston Churchill, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Joseph Stalin, whom the gentlelady has mentioned, at Yalta, on February 11, 1945, when we didn't know how World War II was going to turn out.

The Allies got together when we were allied with the Russians, and they drew a line across the map. On the east side of that line, they were going to live under the Soviet Union, under the iron fist of communism. On the west side of that line, people were going to live and be free, and the destinies of hundreds of millions of people were determined at Yalta. It is curious to me that Putin has invaded and occupied Crimea, which includes Yalta.

One day, I hope to stand on that real estate and look out across the bay where that decision was made. It was a momentous time in history, and it began the domino effect of the military invasion and occupation of free country after free country. It spilled over to the east—into Korea, Southeast Asia. I have long believed that, had we held a different position—a stronger negotiating position—and if we had insisted with Stalin that we were not going to hand the Eastern Bloc countries over to him, we might have ended up with the map that we see today rather than the map that was so hard fought through the cold war. Think how different it is.

Now I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that when people think about this—and the gentlelady from Ohio and I discussed this in some of the very engaging conversations we have had—think about

how the Iron Curtain was constructed, defined at Yalta on February 11 and 12 of 1945, and how that line moved when the Berlin Wall came down in November 1989 as each of the Eastern Bloc countries stepped up and grasped their freedom. I think of the people by the tens of thousands standing in the square in Prague, rattling their keys in the square at Prague. Over time, they rattled their keys into, essentially, a bloodless revolution that brought about the freedom of the Czechs for the first time in decades. That kind of desire—that heart for freedom—washed across Eastern Europe. It actually washed across Russia for a time. There was a time that I said that freedom echoed all across Europe and all the way to the Pacific Ocean. I believed that for a while, Mr. Speaker.

Of course, we don't believe this today because the Russia that is ruled under Putin isn't the Russia that the Russian people believed they were going to get when the Soviet Union melted down and imploded, and that became what we thought for a time—hoped for a time—was the end of the cold war. Now I fear that it has relaunched and restarted. Yet we should look at this map of where the new Iron Curtain is. It is at the border of Russia. It doesn't go west of the border of Russia, and it should not be allowed to creep west of the border of Russia.

That is what I believe the gentlelady and I are committed to working towards—to restoring the strength and the prosperity of the people who live free and who give the inspiration to those who do not to live as we do, as a free people.

I very much appreciate the gentlelady.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman KING for being here this evening, also for attending the briefing this afternoon and for participating fully in that effort.

As you were speaking, I have a piece of the Berlin Wall in my office. I knocked it off with a hammer in 1989, and I have it framed, and it will be there for the people of my region forever. It is all framed, and it is labeled in memory of that incredible moment.

What we learned during that period of time, post World War II, was that we have to maintain our resolve. I say this to the people of Ukraine that we will not forget you, and if liberty-loving nations use their collective power, change is possible, that change for the better is possible. So, for those who have fear and trepidation, know that there have been models of states before.

Take Hungary, which was invaded in 1956. I can remember Cardinal Mindszenty, from my own denomination, being locked up. When the Russian tanks came into Budapest, Cardinal Mindszenty became a symbol of freedom for the whole world. He was held in the U.S. Embassy. They gave

him a closet there, and I actually saw it when I was traveling in Budapest. He became a symbol in the West for defiance against the regime, and our government played a role in that. Cardinal Mindszenty was not an American. He was a Hungarian. He was a Roman Catholic prelate. He risked his life, and he never came out of that Embassy. He became a symbol.

If we look at what happened in the fifties and the sixties in Poland, as labor union members began to demonstrate and be killed, Father Jerzy Popieluszko lost his life in standing up for their right to have a better way of life, and, ultimately, Pope John Paul II became a Pope from inside the Iron Curtain. We saw how religious leaders struggled with the people to give them full voice. It is just so historically compelling and from another realm, from an advanced realm of where the human soul seeks to bring a better way of life to people who seem to be fighting against the odds. They don't have a lot of guns and weapons and nuclear weapons and battleships at their behest, but there is a spirit that attends to those who want to build a better way of life. In standing with the people and in thinking with the people of Ukraine, we hope we embody that spirit.

We were graced with the presence at the National Prayer Breakfast recently with the head of the Orthodox Christian congregations of Ukraine's Patriarch Filaret. We also had other leaders from the Greek Catholic, the Baptist, the Jewish denominations in Ukraine. I have this hope that as the Easter and Passover season approaches that the religious leaders will find a way to invite the world community that wants so very much for the people of Ukraine to be free, that we will find a way to pray for their future together. We hope the religious leaders of Ukraine invite us. I would love to be in that procession. What a place for the world community to be in this Easter-Passover season.

There were Muslims and imams who stood in the square in Kiev; there were Orthodox; there were Baptists; there were Catholics; there were Christian leaders; there were union leaders. What courage. They had no weapons. The weapons were all around them, but they stood their ground. The power of that message is not lost on the people of Ukraine. It is not lost on her neighbors. Frankly, it is not lost on Russia. It is a great power to stand with the spirit of those who want to be free and to find a way to do that, to find a peaceful way to do that.

The Russian Government has never known freedom. They have never had a free election. They have no concept of how to run a free society. I first traveled into that region in 1973, trying to find the shattered remnants of our

family, and the further I got—the further we drove—we ended up, I remember, going through then-Czechoslovakia as we entered. We were the only civilian car on the road. Every single vehicle on the road was either a little, white delivery truck or a military truck. I can remember our beloved mother, Anastasia, and I were sitting there in the car, and I was driving.

The further we got as we headed toward Prague, the military soldiers would lift the tarp up on the back of the trucks and look at us—these two women, driving in this orange car with a Western license plate. We must have been a real curiosity, and completely unarmed as they checked you before you went over the border. I remember going over that border—and the gun turrets and the barbed wire—as we proceeded east and how our luggage and our car was examined at every border. The further we got, the more lonely it became until we were the only vehicle on the road as we entered Ukraine for the first time, crossing the border at a place called Uzhhorod, and the Soviets making us wait 5 hours at the border so they could take our car apart. It was just a little car. We had just two suitcases. They couldn't believe we were Americans. They thought we would have brought seven trunks. They looked under the car. They held us at the border until it was night. There were no streetlights, and there were no traffic signs.

We had to find our way from Poland to Lviv, the major city on the western side of Ukraine. In riding over the roads, which had huge rocks, I thought, boy, we are going to get a flat. There were no gas stations. I mean, there was nothing. There was no electricity. We just drove into the wilderness in trying to find that town. When we finally got there, which was very late at night, I saw this little sign called "In-Tourist." That was where they allowed guests or foreigners to stay.

I said to Mom: This must be the place.

It was dusty. There was nobody. There was nobody on the streets, and there were no vehicles. There was just this tiny, little sign in the window.

I went in. There was one desk clerk and one gentleman who was dressed in an elevator operator outfit. He didn't speak any English, and I didn't speak his language. He signaled to me that he wanted me to take the car. He was in the car, and we drove it to the Lviv Opera House, which was in complete disarray. I mean it wasn't fixed up like it is today. The car was then seized. It was put behind those closed gates, and I never saw it again until we left the country. So we had to go everywhere on foot, and we were watched everywhere. We were trying to find the pieces of our family. Our grandparents had come to America 100 years before.

I remember how grim it was. I remember people didn't laugh a lot. They

didn't have a lot to eat. We tried to find our relatives. We had, through relatives in Poland, tried to notify the village from which our grandparents came. We stayed in the hotel for 3 days, and we thought, well, nobody is coming. Then our mother, who spoke Polish and who could understand Ukrainian and Russian, heard our name on the third day. Here people had been trying to find us for 3 days. We were the only people in the hotel, and they were told that we weren't there. I can remember how awful that was. Of course, the room we stayed in was up on the second floor of a building now that they call the St. George Hotel, but then it was just the In-Tourist Hotel. They stationed a very large woman outside our hotel door there, with a table and a water bottle, and she knew whether we were coming or going or who came in, and there was a listening device in the wall. There were no curtains on the windows, and there was no hot water. I just remember how sparse it was.

□ 2015

I am probably in Congress today because of what I experienced back then and the understanding I came to have of what life was like there and how difficult it was. I can't go into it all this evening, but I learned about the suffering of the people firsthand.

I think one of the shocking experiences I had was how poorly the Soviet government treated its veterans. They asked me for wheelchairs, they asked me for crutches. I couldn't believe how little respect they had for their own people.

So when I see Vladimir Putin invade Ukraine and invade Crimea, he has no respect for the people there.

We got into the villages. You could only go to certain approved villages in those days. I found that in the village of our grandparents they had to build an outhouse for us to visit, with this little tiny set of stones going back to the outhouse. Americans say, What? I said, Yes. Their life was so basic.

I thought I would never eat a potato in my life because all we ate was potatoes with lard on top for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and tomatoes that had been canned. They gave us the best they had.

I thought, So this is communism.

The life of the ordinary person is so pitiful. They had no fresh water. I got deathly ill. There were no doctors. You couldn't get medicine. I learned what dysentery was. I learned what unsafe food was. I learned how the relatives, including one of my great uncles, had been tortured and sent to work camps. They called them gulags. His brother died there. I began to understand the full price that families pay who live under those kinds of systems.

So President Putin has no clue to what a free society really means. So much unneeded suffering.

We have this moment in history to make a difference. I know the American people are considering how to make that difference. Freedom-loving people around the world are as well.

I find the judicious and firm acts of President Obama and Secretary Kerry to be very constructive. America can't be the babysitter for the world. On the other hand, there is a conscience that rises in freedom-lovers, and, thinking together, America will make the right decisions, with her allies around the world, to right this situation and to allow those who want their liberty, after paying such an egregious price, to have that moment in their own history.

I see our dear colleague from New York, Congresswoman CAROLYN MALONEY, who is appropriately attired this evening in full Ukrainian spirit, has joined us.

Welcome.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Thank you so much, Congresswoman KAPTUR, for your leadership and for organizing a briefing earlier today for Members of Congress with head leaders from the State Department on the actions that are happening, and for your leadership in passing H. Res. 499 today, which condemned the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity by military forces of the Russian Federation. We appreciate very much your making that happen and helping us to pass that resolution.

Once again, the Russians have rattled their sabers and tightened their grip on the Ukraine. In the past 24 hours they have seized a Ukrainian naval base. Even though the Constitution declares Crimea to be an integral part of Ukraine, the pro-Russian regional authorities in Crimea continue to sever links to Ukraine's capital today, canceling incoming flights from Kiev. They have also run out of town any of the monitors that have come from the United Nations or the independent free world. Flights to and from Turkey also have been suspended.

The Russians have threatened to confiscate Western assets and refuse to even speak to the Ukraine's interim prime minister on the phone. The interim prime minister has found \$80 billion missing—even loan guarantee money. This Congress needs to work together to find that money and return it rightfully to the Ukrainian people.

Yanukovich, the disgraced former President, did the Russians' bidding and appealed to Ukrainian military units to refuse to follow the orders of the new interim authorities.

Once again, today, the Russians ignored international norms, calls for restraint, and all the cries for justice for all those who were gunned down in Independence Square.

Congresswoman, are you aware that there has been no action to punish the

people who killed community leaders and others in Independence Square? Eighty-two people were murdered.

My constituents have held vigils. They have memorials that they have constructed. In their churches they have pictures of every single martyred hero and heroine, with their stories. Yet no one has been held accountable for that crime against decency and humanity of killing innocent people.

They have ignored Ukrainian sovereignty, treaties, and the rule of law, all in an effort to reestablish a disgraced petty tyrant whose secret life of obscene opulence included—this is hard to say—gold-plated toilets—that is what they are saying on the Internet—along with pictures of all of his zoos and his house and all kinds of things where he wasted the money of the Ukrainian people on wasteful things.

On the other hand, the Ukrainians have already done the right thing for the world around them. In 1994, they signed the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances and willingly gave up the third-largest stockpile of nuclear weapons. They are a peace-loving people. With the peaceful stroke of a pen this eliminated a far greater threat to world peace than North Korea and Iran combined.

The key thing the Ukrainians were promised in return was security assurances against threats or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine. The U.S. and Russia, Congresswoman, were signatories to that statement.

President Obama has made it clear that America will stand with the Ukrainian people. We are all watching everyday on television what is happening, and what has struck me the most was the scene where the Russians were shooting in the air and shouting at the Ukrainians, and they marched peacefully towards them. One general called out: America stands with us.

That is true. America stands with peace-loving people around the world and for democracy. We so often take for granted the freedoms, the liberties, the democracy that we have that others are struggling for around the world.

Tomorrow, the Ukraine's interim prime minister is scheduled to meet President Obama at the White House here in our country. The White House has announced visa restrictions on Russians and Crimeans who are threatening the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. The President is working with America's allies to craft economic sanctions that will punish and isolate the architects of this aggression.

Secretary of State John Kerry has traveled to Kiev to mourn for the fallen in Independence Square and to bring \$1 billion in American loan guarantees and pledges of technical assistance. We overwhelmingly passed the \$1 billion loan guarantee without a cap here in

our Congress. It was an important vote. We all stood with the Ukrainians.

Now it is time for Congress to make it clear that we stand with the Ukrainian people. The resolution we passed today is a good start—condemning the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity by military forces of the Russian Federation.

To paraphrase the Ukrainian anthem: Their persistence and toils should be rewarded. Let freedom's song resound.

We should be asking our friends in Russia, What is their word worth? What is their signature worth on any document, on any treaty, or on any contract? What is their word worth?

I would like to invite the distinguished Congresswoman to join me this Saturday with the Ukrainian community on Roosevelt Island, named after FDR, who went to Crimea for Yalta and spoke of the four freedoms: freedom of want, freedom of religion, freedom of democracy, freedom of speech. These freedoms are what the people in the Ukraine are fighting for, longing for, working for.

We are going to gather at the Four Freedoms Park in Manhattan to pray with, to be with, and to stand with the Ukrainian people who are bravely fighting as we speak for their freedoms, for their independence, for American values that they want as their values. America stands with them. The American people are standing with the Ukrainians.

I thank the gentlelady for having found the Ukrainian Caucus here in Congress, of which I am a member, and also for having crafted resolutions and so many statements in their support and helping to organize in a bipartisan way. Because this country is united. We are speaking with one voice, Republicans and Democrats, in support of the Ukrainian people.

I thank the gentlelady for her magnificent leadership.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank Congresswoman CAROLYN MALONEY of New York for taking time out of a very busy day to work way over time tonight and to be here and to join our plea for the people of Ukraine. Thank you for your leadership in the Ukrainian Caucus, and thank you for wearing a peasant blouse, which has a long, deep history in Ukraine.

Ukraine breadbasket to Europe breadbasket to the world—now the third largest exporter of grain, despite all of the hardship that the corrupt government of that country has placed on their farmers, who simply want to earn a living from the soil and share their great gifts with the world. They have faced so many roadblocks.

Thank you for appreciating the artistry and magnificent beauty of that country and for your steadfast support of liberty both here and abroad. You

have just been a magnificent member. We thank you so much for coming down here this evening.

As she was speaking about New Yorkers who are going to gather in Four Freedoms Park in New York City, a home to people from throughout the world, I wanted to say that there are more Ukrainians living outside Ukraine than inside its borders because of the tragedies that have occurred there over the last century and more, particularly because of the Stalin and Soviet period.

Ukrainians live in Canada, Portugal, Italy, Argentina, and Australia. The pieces of humanity are strewn across the globe, and as I mentioned in earlier remarks this evening, millions of her own people were either starved to death or murdered. They were killed by their own government, the government of the Soviet Union, which tried to eliminate Ukrainian culture, Polish culture, the Jewish religion.

Now we are worried about the Tatars in Crimea because they don't share the majority religion. They are a minority. The history of tyrannical leaders in that part of the world has, unfortunately, been to kill those who don't agree with them rather than to create a civil society in which all views can be expressed, even though we might not agree with them.

So we worry about the people there. We are trying to be a voice for them here in our own country—a voice for freedom, not for brutality or repression. A voice for encouragement, not force alone.

I want to thank Congresswoman MALONEY and Congressman KING for joining us this evening.

May God bless America, and may God bless the people and the legitimate government of Ukraine as she seeks to build a freedom of liberty and justice for all her people.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 2030

HISTORICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE SITUATION IN UKRAINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to be recognized by you and to address you here on the floor of the House of Representatives.

I would first like to say I appreciate the gentleladies'—and that is plural—presentation and the breadth of their attention to the part of the world that has been the center of our discussion here tonight and that should be the center of our American discussion, and will be, for some time to come.

As I watch this unfold, and think of the time in 2008 when I found myself in

the Nation of Georgia within a little more than a week after the Russians invaded two provinces or states of Georgia, one of them South Ossetia, and having arrived there and met with the leadership in Georgia, including President Saakashvili and his cabinet that were young people, and a minister of defense that was still awaiting his 30th birthday, I heard the narrative from inside Tbilisi on what the Russians had planned and what the Russians had done.

Now, history is little bit undecided, Mr. Speaker, about who fired the first shot in Georgia. It may have been the Russians baited the Georgians into it. It may have been that the Russians actually fired on the Georgians and the Georgians fired back.

In any case, the narrative that I received there that was part of a briefing that was synced with our State Department and with the representatives of the Nation State of Georgia brought together information that there was a single underpass, there was a two-lane underpass; that within a 24-hour period of time, some 2,200 Russian vehicles, tanks, armor and other equipment went under that underpass.

They had to have staged that invasion of Georgia. It could not have been a spontaneous response on the part of the Georgians firing on the Russians or the Russians who may well have fired the first shots at Georgia.

In any case, when the Russians went in and occupied those parts of Georgia, that began a movement, a strong movement of hegemony, and I think that it was passed off that the Georgian circumstances were somehow an anomaly, that somehow it was regional tensions that were brought up, and that the eye to the sea wasn't necessarily what Putin was thinking about.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe that he was. I believe it was the first piece on the giant geopolitical chessboard, the chessboard that our President doesn't seem to think actually is in play any longer, that Cold War chessboard.

But when I look at the map of that part of the world and look at the flow of energy that goes back and forth, Ukraine and Georgia have similarities. One is, they have ports.

The second one is that they are a nexus for energy, transmitting energy through their countries with pipelines and, in the case of Georgia, rail lines. It is important that if you can control Georgia you can control a lot of the energy that comes through from the east, and if you can control Yugoslavia, you can control a lot of the energy that comes through from the east.

Those two things, plus the historical involvement of the Russians in the Crimea. I take us back to the gentle lady from Ohio who laid out the case of the 1994 treaty that the Russians signed and the interested parties signed that

all would respect the territorial and sovereign borders of the Ukraine, and of course the Russians violated that.

I don't expect much of anything else to happen. I don't think they are bound by their honor in any way. I think they are only bound by the limitations of the static tension that comes from power, and that power can be economic, it can be political. It is probably not very much cultural, but it also is, in the highest degree it is military.

When there is no military deterrent in place, then Putin is going to be determined to move forward and reconstitute the old Soviet Union. He lamented years ago that the worst thing that happened in the 20th century was the implosion of the Soviet Union, or the disintegration of the Soviet union.

I would also point out that the world is not going to tolerate a lone superpower, which the United States of America is, the unchallenged greatest nation in the world, the strongest superpower there has been, with global reach everywhere.

When the United States pulls back—first, Mr. Speaker, we project power. We project power in the ways that I said, economically, culturally, militarily and strategically, and when the United States pulls back from that, when we decide that we are not going to exert influence in parts of the world, then the lust for power that comes in the embodiment of someone like Putin fills that vacuum. In fact, it is pushing constantly. It doesn't need a vacuum to push in.

Russian pushed into Georgia in 2008. They gave us a preview of what was to come.

Now, here we are, these few years later, these six or so years later, and we are watching now, as Putin finished up with his Olympics, his 50-plus billion dollar endeavor, I think a lot of it had to do with raising the spirits of the Russian people and their sense of support for him so that he could get away with this cold tactic of a military invasion and conquest of the Crimea.

I don't have any doubt that he has got his eyes on the balance of the Ukraine, that he has got his eyes on the balance of the Soviet Union in whatever order that he can pull this off.

If we show weakness, if we don't stand strong, if we don't stare him down, if we don't put the kind of equipment and resources in place to block his move, then Putin is going to march through these countries, one after another.

It is a fairly long hiatus between Georgia and the component of the Ukraine that has now been invaded and occupied that we call now the Crimea, but I think it is interesting and I think it is ironic, Mr. Speaker, that it is the Crimea that has been grabbed as part of the Ukraine, and now they are seek-

ing, the Russians have already annexed it, Mr. Speaker, and now they are about forcing a referendum this Sunday.

When they talk about how the Duma has to operate and what the legal structure is in Russia, it is all a matter of what does Putin command. Whatever the sequential order of the Duma is, and whatever we might think they have to jump through for hoops, I think it is just this: if Putin commands, then they will jump through the hoops at his command.

We should think about this. Georgia, and now the Crimea and the eyes of the Russians and Putin, in particular, looking into the Ukraine, and think about what happened the last time we had a dictator who had such a desire for conquest and occupation.

I would take us back to this piece of history where, as I saw this happen, when the Russians went into the Crimea, Mr. Speaker, immediately, I began to rethink the sequence of history, when Adolf Hitler demanded that they receive the Sudetenland, a component and the western perimeter of at the time Czechoslovakia. The pretense that he used was identical to the pretense that Putin has used to go into the Crimea.

It was Hitler that said there are German-speaking people and they deserve German representation, and someone has got to protect them and represent them, and I need to do that, as the leader, the Führer of Germany. They are German-speaking people, they are German people, they need to be under German rule. That was the pretense that he used that forced the negotiations that took place in Munich in 1938.

Before we go to that spot, there was a peaceful march into and invasion of the Nation of Austria, and pulling us back in that history, Mr. Speaker, there was significant pressure that was put on the Austrians that began back prior to 1938, and Hitler made the arguments too.

Austria, still, to this day, is a German-speaking country. They identify very closely with the German people. They flow back and forth. The difference between an Austrian and a German isn't a particularly distinct one, although they are separate nation states today.

But Hitler put pressure on the Chancellor of Austria, and as he brought them to an agreement and got the Chancellor of Austria to make some appointments of Austrian Nazi officers, he weakened the resistance of the leadership by doing so.

On March 12 of 1938, essentially the day—March 11, the Chancellor of Austria resigned. March 12 Nazi troops flowed into Austria. By the 13th of March they had declared Austria to be a protectorate, a separate protectorate of the German empire that had begun.

Now, this is a recovery of a nation that was defeated in World War I. They

had gone through tremendous economic crisis and chaos, as had Austria, and they were vulnerable, and Austria was powerless to stand in the way of the Nazi military machine, and the Wehrmacht. So March 12 was essentially the date that the flow of the Nazis marched into, went into Austria and Vienna, March 12 of 1938, Mr. Speaker.

Now, think of this. In the spring of 1938, Nazi troops flow into Austria, essentially annex the country without firing a shot. Pretty similar to the Russians going into the Crimea.

Now, they did fire some shots in Georgia, a lot of shots in Georgia, and people were killed, and a number of Russian planes were shot down by the Georgian military, but we are back in 1938. Spring of 1938, Austria taken over by the Nazis. In September of 1938, Hitler has been spending the whole summer agitating that the Sudetenland needs to also come into the German sphere of influence in a similar fashion that Austria had been brought into the German sphere of influence.

Neville Chamberlain, the now infamous failed peacekeeper, peacemaker then flew to Munich to meet with Hitler and made an agreement called the Munich Agreement with Hitler and signed off on it and got a letter that Adolf Hitler signed which said, we are going to have peace now in Europe if you just give me the Sudetenland, the German-speaking area which was the western perimeter of Czechoslovakia.

The date was September 29, 1938, when Neville Chamberlain met with Hitler in Munich. He flew back to England and landed, had a press conference on the airstrip on September 30 of 1938 and waved the letter in his hand that said, peace for our time.

We remember it as peace in our time, but he actually said peace for our time and waved the letter, did the press conference, and let all of England and the free world know that Hitler didn't have any further designs on any kind of real estate; he didn't intend to take over any other part of Europe, that he was going to be happy with what he had achieved, which was Austria and the Sudetenland, the western perimeter of Czechoslovakia. Peace for our time.

So after that press conference, I am sure that Neville Chamberlain went to bed thinking that he had accomplished something, and the very following day the Nazis then flowed into Sudetenland, and they stayed there and occupied throughout the winter.

That takes us through the winter of 1938 and the spring of 1939. By March 16, the Nazi troops had flowed throughout the balance of Czechoslovakia, occupied it.

Now, you would think that we were going to have peace for our time at that time because, after all, Hitler didn't announce his planned operations to go in and invade and occupy any

other part of Europe. He had been announcing that he was peaceful. He signed the letter. He just didn't keep his word.

Sound a little curious, doesn't it, Mr. Speaker. The Russians signed the agreement with the Ukrainians in 1994 that they would respect the territorial boundaries of the Ukraine. They kept that deal as long as it was suitable to the Russians.

The Russian signature, of course, means nothing to Putin if they have territorial aspirations, if they have territorial greed. So Putin, in a very similar fashion to Adolf Hitler, went into the Crimea and took the Crimea over.

He had it planned. He had it strategized. He should have been able to see it coming. I would like to think that our intel predicted this as a strategic move, rather than just a response to a military move. I don't know that and probably will never know that, if that was ever the dialogue of the people who were watching very closely in that part of the world.

When Hitler went in and occupied the balance of Czechoslovakia, and we had the summer then of 1939 wondering, but not very intensively, we have got peace in Europe again. Land for peace. Worked out pretty well, Neville Chamberlain thought.

Yet, September 1, 1939, Hitler invaded Poland. He had already cut a deal with the Russians that they were going to carve Poland up. It took the Russians another 12 days to get mobilized to go in and start carving up their part of Poland, but the Nazi divisions were prepared to go, and they launched a blitzkrieg invasion of Poland and invaded and occupied and penetrated to the predetermined line that he and Stalin had agreed to, and Poland was carved up.

□ 2045

Now that crossed the line for the rest of Western Europe. That did launch World War II in a formal fashion. So as the Western World began to mobilize for a war that they hoped to never see fought and were not very well prepared for, the following spring, in April of 1940, the Nazis invaded Norway. April 13, they invaded Greece and Yugoslavia.

Think how fast this took place. They had been planning for a long time. They had mobilized for a long time. They had the strategy put in place, and by April 13 of 1940, in a short 2-year period of time, they had gone through Austria, the Sudetenland, the balance of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, Greece, and Yugoslavia by April 13, 1940.

Mr. Speaker, this was a dramatic takeover of real estate and property. At some point, Hitler no longer needed to put up the pretense because the war was declared then, and it was declared on September 1 of 1939, shortly after September 1 of 1939, Mr. Speaker.

These are dramatic changes that took place across Europe. They were ideological clashes, economic clashes, geographic clashes, and cultural clashes that came to a head in that part of the world. We think it can't happen again or it won't happen again. We fought the cold war for 45 years, and, finally, the Berlin Wall went down, and MARCY KAPTUR went over and chiseled a piece out with her own hand. I learned that tonight on the floor. I am impressed, and I am proud of her for having the conviction to go and do that, knowing and understanding what that meant then and what it means today.

Mr. Speaker, we are watching a Russia push back on this. We have seen the character and the culture under Stalin; we have seen it under Brezhnev; we have seen it under Khrushchev; and we have seen it under Lenin, the territorial hegemony attitude of the Russians and a Putin who would like to reconstruct the old Soviet Union and do so by military conquest. That is what we have in the Crimea. I don't have any doubt he is looking again at Ukraine.

Now I will go through some of the rest of these countries that fell at the beginning of World War I. I have taken you through Austria, the Sudetenland, Czechoslovakia, and Poland carved up by Russia and the Nazis. They made a deal, a cold and cruel agreement to carve Poland up, and they executed a lot of Jews, and they executed a lot of Poles just for being Jews and Poles.

History marks that kind of brutality on both sides of that line that came into Poland. I recall meeting in Cologne, Germany, a few years ago with some leaders in that part of the world. The gentleman who was sitting next to me at a dinner table and I got into a conversation—about the same age—what did our parents do during the Second World War? Mr. Speaker, I listened as he told me that his father fought at Auschwitz. I said: Did he fight to liberate Auschwitz? He said that he fought in the Russian invasion of Auschwitz in September of 1939 when the Russians went in and invaded Poland from the east and invaded and occupied, and Auschwitz was part of that territory that the Russians carved out.

It is quite a thing to listen to that kind of a narrative. Clear over on the east side of the line that we didn't think about enough throughout that course of history, there were people that were invading armies that were launched in September of 1939 to go and take the free country of Poland and carve it up in a cold-blooded and greedy way to latch on to the property of Poland.

So the pattern is there. And they are on this together, and they are staring each other down across this line. But it takes us through 1939 and into 1940, when Norway and Greece, in the

spring, were occupied along with Yugoslavia. And then on the 10th of May, the Nazi panzer divisions rolled through Belgium and into France. Belgium lasted about 18 days and ended about May 28, 1940, when they fully surrendered. And France lasted until about the 22nd of June. Paris capitulated and surrendered June 14, and the balance of France was handed over under Nazi control with Vichy cooperation as late as June 22 of 1940.

Then the Battle of Britain began—and that was fought over the English Channel, much of it, and over the land area of Great Britain. That essentially ended. You don't know when it ends, but looking back on the calendar, it ended in the late fall of 1940. And we are still not in this war, Mr. Speaker. This country is still sitting here watching the lot of the rest of the world engage in the conflict—not that I wanted to be in that conflict any earlier than that—but we were neutral, although we were trying to help out our Allies and help out the British. And I am thinking, what are the Russians looking at at the time? They are wondering, their ally, Hitler, was not very reliable, but they went through 1940 and through all of the spring of 1941 believing that they had made an agreement to carve up Poland, and somehow they were going to have the static border between Germany and the Russians. They probably believed that Hitler didn't have any further land aspirations either.

Now, I bring this up because we should not believe that Putin doesn't have further aspirations. Hitler did have. On June 22, 1941, he launched Operation Barbarossa and invaded Russia itself, from a treaty to carve up Poland to an all-out assault and offensive on Russia, to invade and occupy Russia, and nearly got it done.

That, Mr. Speaker, is a very long and complex history that can be read in a book entitled "Absolute War," written by Chris Bellamy. It is about 750 pages. It goes through the details, in great detail, of that Operation Barbarossa and the German invasion of Russia. It was, of course, turned back at Stalingrad.

While that went on, it was easy to see that Hitler was planning the invasion of Russia for a long, long time. He was retrofitting his railcars to be able to go on the different gauge rails as they were sending men and equipment into Russia. He had an agreement with the Russians that they were going to send him the things he needed, raw materials and feed grains and the raw materials that they could use and that they needed badly in Germany in exchange for German engineers going to Russia. He had his German engineers that were helping the Russians develop and build military equipment and munitions, except the German engineers were ordered to slow-walk the Russians and do very little to help move them

along in their progression of developing their military capability, all the while raw materials—food and supplies that Hitler needed from Russia—were pouring into Germany and becoming part of the resources for the war effort that was about to come.

That launched June 22. It would have been earlier by about 6 weeks if it hadn't been for an uprising revolution in Yugoslavia that took five German divisions to go down there to put the uprising down, the revolution down in Yugoslavia. That delayed the planned invasion of Russia for Hitler from May 12 up until June 22. It likely was the difference in whether the Nazi troops would have been successful in Stalingrad and in Moscow.

But if one, today, Mr. Speaker, travels to Moscow and you land at the airport and take ground travel from the airport, that long high traffic area on into Moscow, you will see just outside of Moscow a large tank barrier that is sitting there which marks the furthest most easterly advance of a German tank that was part of the invasion attempts in Moscow.

We don't think about how close that came. It came within perhaps weeks of being successful, that difference between the delay of that invasion which would have been scheduled for May 12 that turned out to be June 22, 1941. We don't study this in our history very much, Mr. Speaker, because we turn our focus to Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, and then the need and the necessity for us to launch a two-front war almost immediately.

That conflict set the borders for today, a conflict of the Second World War. I take you through this piece of history, and I will be naming some of the countries that may well be targets of Putin. But I take you through this history to get, Mr. Speaker, people that are paying attention to this discussion, to get you to Yalta on February 11, 1945. I briefly mentioned it while the gentlelady from Ohio had the floor.

I think about that meeting between Franklin Delano Roosevelt, between Josef Stalin and Winston Churchill, the three leaders that were the central players in the Second World War European theater—not the Japanese or Pacific theater, but the European theater. They met at Yalta. It is ironic to me that Yalta is in the Crimea. Putin has annexed, not only annexed the Crimea, he annexed Yalta itself, the very place where those three leaders took a map of the world, of Asia and Europe, and drew a line on that map.

West of the line—after the war was over, they planned that they would defeat this Nazi Germany that has marched through all these countries that I have described. They planned that they were going to defeat Nazi Germany, that they were going to invade and occupy all of the countries

from the east on the Russian side and from the west the Allied side. By that time, it was just post the Battle of the Bulge, which ended near the end of January in 1945.

So they decided they were going to carve up Europe. If the war ended in victory for them, then the Russians were going to take a half of Germany. We know where that line was. It became the Iron Curtain wall, and in Berlin it became the Berlin Wall. And they were going to take the Eastern Bloc countries that we know of, and that was Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria, the list goes on, Yugoslavia, those countries, parts of them.

So that agreement was made at Yalta. The agreement was agreed to by Churchill, by Roosevelt, and by Stalin. And then they collapsed in on Germany and carved that part of the world up according to the plan at Yalta.

Now, can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, sitting at Yalta in the Crimea with a map of the world and drawing on that map, this is the line east of which people will live under the Soviet influence—which hadn't technically formed yet—west of this line people will live under Western influence and, by the way, even carved up Berlin itself so that we had a U.S. sector, we had a French sector, a British sector, and a Russian sector of Berlin itself.

That set the destiny for a lot of history that was to come after that. What we saw happen over the course of, then, 45 years of cold war, Mr. Speaker, was that these countries that had been taken over by Russia, and some of them were closely within the sphere, but I will say the countries that are Eastern Bloc satellites of the Soviet Union, occupied and influenced by them, Hungary, Georgia, I mentioned the Crimea, Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Baltics, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic and now the Slovak Republic, Croatia, Austria, Belarus, to name some, to leave some out, but to get most of them, these are countries that are now on Putin's list. He puts Crimea in his little pocket and says, I have got that, I am going to hold it, and not many people in this country can devise a plan to get it back. He has got parts of Georgia in his hand.

If we don't step up our resources so that there is a deterrent in place, this man, Putin, will march on down the line. I believe he will march into eastern Ukraine. I believe that some of those operations could be going on now. I think he will be looking very closely at Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, members of NATO, member countries that we are pledged to defend. But I think that Putin looks in the eyes of our Commander in Chief and wonders how much resolve is actually there, and I think he concluded that the resolve wasn't there. That is one of the contributing factors that Putin went into the Crimea.

I don't suggest that he would not have done it if we had had a different President; although, I suspect that if this had been a stronger President, I will just say, Mr. Speaker, it is less likely if we had had a stronger President.

Now, the countries that are along that perimeter, that see Russia on their border and they see what has happened with troops marching into the Crimea and they see the threats that the balance of Ukraine is under, they see what has happened in Georgia—and, by the way, the amount of Georgia that remains as sovereign is a fairly large share of their original real estate. They are the furthest, most easterly outpost of Western civilization in the nation of Georgia.

They have a strong spirit. They love freedom, they love free enterprise, and they love Americans. That is the case for a lot of countries up and down through that part of the world. We need a stronger presence in each one of them. We need to have a stronger force lined up. I would say one of the first moves that we need to make, and I recall the Poles and the Czechs, but under the Bush administration, we had negotiated the placement of missiles and radar in Poland and Czechoslovakia, respectively, and shortly after our President was elected, Mr. Speaker, he canceled the agreement to place the missiles and the radar in those two countries.

□ 2100

The headlines in the Warsaw paper—and they found out about this in the news. It wasn't the President calling them up saying, I'm not going to follow through on this; they found out about it in the news. The headlines in the Warsaw paper read: "Betrayed." The United States agreement with Poles and the Czechs was a betrayal of our word, and it was because Putin influenced Barack Obama into canceling the agreement that established the missiles and the radar in Poland and Czechoslovakia. The headlines said "Betrayed" in Poland. They were betrayed.

I have had some conversations with Poles since the invasion of Crimea, and I am convinced that they would accept the missiles again even though we haven't been very reliable in our partnership. They are taking a lot of heat. They are right there. Russia is next door, and the Poles have stood in the middle of invasions going two directions in the memory of many of the Poles yet today. They have enjoyed a long period of peace, fairly long considering their history, but the Poles, I believe, would accept the missiles today, and we ought to place them there. The Czechs, I don't have as good a measure on, but I would be hopeful we could place a radar there and start to build up the missile defense shield.

We did operations on the ground in Poland last August. We need to ramp them up again and do more ground operations, more joint military exercises. We need to expand those exercises along that part of the world, working in conjunction with the NATO troops and the troops of the sovereign countries along that border that is now on the west side of the new Iron Curtain that Putin has essentially announced by his invasion into the Crimea. We need to put whatever kind of advisory support the Ukrainians need right into Ukraine so that their people are trained and their people are ready to step up and defend themselves. If Putin decides to move into the balance of Ukraine, how could they do anything but defend themselves. I think they must. I would like to see that they are ready.

Mr. Speaker, I am known as a fiscal conservative in this House. I supported the resolution that advanced the \$1 billion in loan guarantees to the Ukrainians. I don't think that is enough. I think we should be prepared in this Congress to go down the line and match Putin dollar per dollar with loan guarantees, provided we could condition them in such a way that Putin himself doesn't get his hands on those resources. We need to demonstrate our commitment to the Ukrainians and let them know that we will be there.

We need to invite Georgia into NATO. We should have done that back in 2008. We should have brought Ukraine into NATO during that same period of time. Those kind of things could well have been a deterrent to Putin, and we didn't take advantage of the opportunity to bring them in the NATO sphere of influence.

So I would offer again to Georgia, come on into NATO. Ukraine, get stabilized a little bit so we can see what kind of government is going to emerge, but we ought to consider a stabilized government of Ukraine being an eligible candidate for NATO. We need to build our defenses up along those borders. We need to understand that, back to that static nature, that this is the renewal of the cold war launched by Putin, and we can't continue to back up thinking that he is not going to push.

I have read through and delivered the history of the Nazi regime from 1938, March of 1938 on until the invasion of Russia by the Germans, by the Nazi regime, because there is a distinct difference, on June 22, 1941, when the Second World War was launched in a large way. This is not going to happen in a way that Putin is going to put it out on the calendar and tell us that he has his eye on some of the eastern regions of the Ukraine and then maybe he thinks he is going to put a little pressure on some of the other countries, maybe back to Georgia again or Belarus, but they are so closely aligned

there, it is hard to draw a distinction. Maybe it is one of the other countries along the way. Maybe it is Estonia. Maybe it is Latvia. Maybe it is Lithuania; maybe it is all of them. I have gone through this history of what happened at the beginning of World War II, and I think we understand how quickly it can happen and how little is the time to get ready and how important it is to be prepared.

Mr. Speaker, we must be a strong military Nation. We must be prepared. About the same time that Secretary Hagel announced drastic military cuts is about the same time that Putin went into the Crimea. It is possible it is a coincidence, but the military cuts information was already out. I think we should suspend those cuts now. I think we should be prepared to match Putin dollar per dollar in the Ukraine. I think we need to put the missiles up and the radar up in Poland and Czechoslovakia. I think we need to sail a few more operational ships into the Black Sea. I think we need to have more presence in that part of the world, and we need to get our military back to ready. If they are cutting our military down to pre-World War II levels, and I look at some of the troop levels that we have for all of our arenas of operation, and I see what can be mustered by the Russians in one location, and I see how weak the military is in Western Europe, and how weak their resolve is, Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned that this second cold war has been relaunched, and you never know if it is going to turn into a shooting war, but trading land for peace has no successful precedent in history that I can think of.

Neville Chamberlain tried to trade off the Sudetenland for peace. What did it get us? That gave up the rest of Czechoslovakia and the invasion of Poland. I recall the Gaza Strip being traded off, land for peace, and what does that get? That gets tunnels, and it gets rockets shot out of the Gaza Strip into the balance of Israel. Land for peace, Mr. Speaker: if someone can show me a successful trade of land for peace, I do not know what it is throughout the course of history.

It isn't that this is something—the Second World War that happened a long, long time ago in a different place and a different time. A lot of Americans are buried in that soil in Europe, and they gave their lives so that freedom could live.

We are going to commemorate and celebrate the successful landing at Normandy this upcoming June 6. That should be enough to bring our focus to what transpired then in that period of history, and it should bring our focus into the prevention of anything like that happening again. It should bring our focus into having peace through strength, being strong militarily, being strong economically, and being strong

spiritually and strong culturally. Those are the credentials of the United States of America, to live free and be strong.

Each time we have been involved in wars that were, some would say as critics, foreign interventionism, then we have decided there was a peace dividend, chopped our military down. We don't need them so much anymore; we will have a core group of our military because, after all, we are Americans. Just being Americans is a deterrent.

Obviously, it is not. Putin thumbs his nose at us. I will take us through the cycles. We were late getting into World War I. We went over there very highly mobilized, and made a significant difference to help close out the end of World War I. It was a travesty in that part of the world, and World War I did not end it. It did not end decisively and conclusively, and it set the stage for World War II.

We instead cut our troops back down going into 1940. We were weak. The Japanese knew it. That is why they had the audacity to attack us in Pearl Harbor in 1941. The Nazis didn't respect us or they would have been more hesitant in their part of the world they were invading and occupying.

A strong America has always been successful. Ronald Reagan came onto the scene, and recognized that we were weak. He recognized, Mr. Speaker, that there was a cold war and a geopolitical chess game taking place. As Jeane Kirkpatrick described it, chess and monopoly on the same board. The only question was, during the cold war—and this was in 1984 when she said this, and 5 years later, we found the answer. In 1984, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Ambassador to the United Nations, appointed under Ronald Reagan, as she stepped down, she said chess and monopoly on the same board in this cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union, and the question is whether we bankrupt the Soviet Union economically before they checkmate us militarily.

We know the answer to that. We bankrupted the Soviet Union before they checkmated us militarily. They could not keep up with our investment and America's innovativeness. They couldn't keep up with our missile defense system that we were putting place, either, the Strategic Defense Initiative that was announced by President Reagan, and should I say demagogued here on the floor of the House of Representatives by Democrats calling it Star Wars. I thought it was a tactical and a messaging error on the part of President Reagan not to embrace it and say that's right, it is Star Wars. We are going to build a missile defense system, and that seemed a long reach at the time. It doesn't seem like such a long reach today, and that defense system should have deployed in Poland and Czechoslovakia.

There is a defense system that is deployed in other places around the world, and a defense system, of course, that is deployed to protect Israel today. That is a product of SDI, that is the vision of SDI; but the vision of Putin, Vladimir Putin, is hegemony. That means if you were once a Soviet state, he wants you back as a Soviet state. If he can get it militarily, he will get it militarily. If he can get it politically, he will get it politically, but we should understand that these countries that I have named off are countries that he looks at, that he would like to have back as part of the Russia Federation, to re-create the old Soviet Union. I will name these countries again: Georgia. He invaded and occupied Crimea, that is part of it. Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Croatia, Austria on the edges, and Belarus. That is some of them, not all of them. We have a big challenge in front of us.

Mr. Speaker, I would challenge and encourage the Members of this Congress to get better informed, to get up to speed on what is taking place in foreign relations.

For about the last six months, I have been very concerned that I don't hear a foreign policy discussion or debate here on the floor of the House. I don't see much for legislation come through. I don't hear it in the dialogue among my colleagues. I hear a handful of Senators on the other side of the Rotunda that will go out and engage in foreign policy and have those kinds of discussions.

Yes, I agree, the President sets the foreign policy and he is the Commander in Chief, but he is not the sole source of knowledge and input. He needs good advisers. I think he needs to make better decisions than he has made. He needs to be strong and he needs to be bold. He needs to be able to look Putin in the eye and see the KGB that JOHN MCCAIN identified, and understand that there is an agenda there, and Putin can be deterred if the price is high, but the price has to be high enough to deter Putin.

I want to challenge and encourage the Members of the House, Members of the Senate, get engaged in foreign policy. Travel and meet the leaders of these countries and build relationships in those countries. When it is time that things must be done, it is too late to start building a relationship; then it is time to act. Build a relationship first, build an understanding first, and we need far, far more expertise on foreign policy than we have today.

We have a Presidential election that is starting to emerge, and among the Presidential candidates, I strongly encourage them, get your foreign policy credentials up. Travel now while you can. As the campaign gets closer, there is less time available to do it, and it will look more and more like you are

trying to burnish your foreign policy credentials. From my standpoint, you need to go to those countries and you need to see the leaders. You need to know them face to face and eye to eye. They need to recognize you when you walk into the room.

This Congress needs to get more focused on foreign policy. This country needs more focus on foreign policy. When something like that happens, then we can have a more open discussion. I was encouraged to hear the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) talk in depth on the relationship with Ukraine, and as chair of the Ukrainian Caucus, MARCY KAPTUR has been very good on these issues. There are not enough of us engaged in a similar fashion.

Here is what I would do if I were moving the pieces around on this chess board, rather than having my voice and my vote here in the House of Representatives. I would put the missiles and the radar back up in Poland and Czechoslovakia. I would amp up our energy production here in our part of the world. I would release it so we could ship liquefied natural gas out of the United States over to Europe, to help give them, back them up in the event that Putin decides to shut their gas off.

□ 2115

Having that supply stream would be very useful. Putting more energy out on the market does go into Russia's economy and it makes it harder and harder for Putin to have the resources to be able to do the things he wants to do militarily. I think that is all delayed reaction, however, and in the short-term offer NATO membership to Georgia. Take a look at doing that as soon as the government could be established by and for the people of Ukraine by bringing them into NATO. I would encourage the EU to take a look at broadening their membership also, because I think it is easier to support a NATO membership if they are also a member of the EU, although I am only slightly thrilled about that particular proposal.

Special trainers in operations and forces to help support the Ukrainians in any place up along the border of the countries that border on Russia, and land operations up and down through that entire theater. Build then a military shield of deterrent, and start building it so that he knows that any aggressive move that he makes is going to be met by a countermove, strategic countermove. And the Ukrainians need to be prepared to fight for their land.

At this point, I haven't heard very much about what they might do if Putin decides to go forward and invade. You may not be the military that can stand up to the Russian military, but if you don't defend your own country, no one else is going to be able to step in and help. I say that, Mr. Speaker, to

the Ukrainians, and encourage them: love freedom; love liberty.

Let's strengthen our relationships with the Ukrainians so that the growing economy of the West, the freedom that comes with free enterprise and liberty-loving people, strengthens the Ukrainian people and all the people up and down along that border.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to see a replay of what happened at the beginning of World War II. I don't want to see countries on the Eastern Bloc side eventually taken over, some without firing a shot, some by a brutal invasion.

But I will just go through the march that took place from Hitler again, and it started in 1938. Austria, then the Sudetenland, then the balance of Czechoslovakia, then Poland invaded by the Nazis and by the Russians in September of '39, then Norway in the spring of 1940 by the Nazis, and then Greece and Yugoslavia by the Nazis, then on into France essentially the same day. France capitulated June 22. A year later, Hitler invaded Russia in Operation Barbarossa and nearly succeeded in his invasion of Russia.

That is the march that went through by a country that essentially was fighting a two-front war—Germany. The Russians don't have that problem. They are a one-front situation. But the hegemony of Putin needs to be recognized. He will take the old Soviet bloc countries when he thinks he can get away with it. He will only be restrained by that. If he thinks he can't achieve, then he can be restrained. The ways that we make him do that are: respect economic power and respect the military deterrent.

We need to call upon our European allies to remember these lessons of the Second World War that I have described. I know that some of them announced that they have had a vote that declares them to be neutral in every conflict. I recall sitting in Vienna not that long ago with some of the leaders of their country and they announced they are a neutral country, and their policy is they will be neutral in any conflict and they will never fight another war and that nothing good comes from war. That was a discussion.

I happen to have been to the site that overlooks the Battle of Vienna that took place in September 11 and 12 of 1683 when the Polish King Jan Sobieski launched a cavalry charge down into the Turks that had Vienna surrounded, and they were a matter of days before they would have succeeded. The Turks would have succeeded in invading and occupying Vienna, and if they were successful, nothing likely would have stopped them in a march all the way across Europe.

I pointed out to the Austrians: it is a good thing that your ancestors didn't have such a resolution in September of 1683, because we would all have been

occupied by the Ottoman Empire if it hadn't been for the courageous battle that took place right there in Vienna where we sat, and it was the West versus the East.

So history does turn on battles; it does turn on wars. They are enabled by or sometimes stifled by a successful or a failed economy. They are promoted by people who believe in themselves, and the overreach of brinksmanship brings about war.

I am opposed, of course, to war. I don't want to see our American troops go overseas. I don't want to deploy our military in a place like that. But we have got to provide support. We need to provide that support in a nonkinetic way now. If we do that, we might be able to deter what otherwise likely could come, which could very well be Putin deciding that in his lifetime he is going to reconstruct the entire Soviet Union.

That is what I fear, Mr. Speaker. That has to be our caution and our byword. If we act as if it is not a threat, as if it is not going to happen, if we turn our policy to let's make sure that—and this seems to be the policy that is emanating from the White House, Mr. Speaker. Give Putin an off-ramp. Don't close the gate on the off-ramp. Let's push a little bit, give him a little pressure, but give him room to pull back out of Crimea.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you it is not about an off-ramp for Putin. He pulled in there, he is not pulling out. He wants Crimea. He is going to hang on to it, and his eyes are on the balance of Ukraine right now.

The idea that we are going to coalesce our foreign policy around not pushing on Putin too hard because otherwise there isn't a way for him to get on an off-ramp, I would mark the times it was mentioned by our administration on my hand, and I have, in Sarah Palin-style, eight different marks on my hand the times that they mentioned "off-ramp."

It isn't about an off-ramp, Mr. Speaker. We can't be obsessing about an off-ramp. Putin doesn't want an off-ramp. If he wanted an off-ramp, he never would have gone up the in-ramp that he took to go into the Crimea.

This is about deterring him from going into the balance of the satellite states, in particular, in Eastern Europe. It is necessary that we put the deterrents in place. It is necessary that we go through these steps that I have described, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate your attention and urge all those that have listened to my words to follow them.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MCINTYRE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of travel difficulties.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 1917. An act to provide for additional enhancements of the sexual assault prevention and response activities of the Armed Forces; to the Committee on Armed Services; in addition, to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; and to the Committee on the Judiciary for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly an enrolled bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2019. An act to eliminate taxpayer financing of political party conventions and reprogram savings to provide for a 10-year pediatric research initiative through the Common Fund administered by the National Institutes of Health, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 12, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4940. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Oranges, Grapefruit, Tangerines, and Tangelos Grown in Florida; Increased Assessment Rate [Doc. No.: AMS-FV-13-0074; FV13-905-3 FR] received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4941. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Irish Potatoes Grown in Colorado; Decreased Assessment Rate for Area No. 2 [Doc. No.: AMS-FV-13-0072; FV13-948-2 FR] received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4942. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Softwood Lumber Research, Promotion, Consumer Education and Industry Information Order; Changes to the Membership of the Softwood Lumber Board [Document Number: AMS-FV-13-0038] received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4943. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Cotton Futures Classification: Optional Classification Procedure [AMS-CN-12-0043] (RIN: 0581-

AD33) received February 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4944. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Paper and Paper-Based Packaging Promotion, Research and Information Order [Document Number: [AMS-FV-11-0069 FR] (RIN: 0581-AD21) received February 24, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4945. A letter from the Chief of Staff, Office of the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's 2014 Report to Congress on Sustainable Ranges; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4946. A letter from the Acting Chairman, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Seventeenth Report on the Progress Made in Licensing and Constructing the Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 16523 Public Law 109-58, section 1810; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4947. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's 2013 Annual Report on the Food and Drug Administration Advisory Committee Vacancies and Public Disclosures; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4948. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the annual report on the Medicare and Medicaid Integrity Programs for Fiscal Year 2012; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4949. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Finding of Failure to Submit State Implementation Plans Required for the 2008 Lead National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) [EPA-HQ-OAR-2014-0032; FRL-9906-80-OAR] received February 11, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4950. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plans: Alaska; Anchorage Carbon Monoxide Limited Maintenance Plan and State Implementation Plan Revisions [EPA-R10-OAR-2013-0421; FRL-9902-22-Region 10] received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4951. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Fluxapyroxad; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0638; FRL-9906-70] received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4952. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutant Emissions: Group IV Polymers and Resins; Pesticide Active Ingredient Production; and Polyether Polyols Production [EPA-HQ-OAR-2011-0435; FRL-9906-34-OA] (RIN: 2060-AR02) received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4953. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Primary Drinking Water Regulations: Minor Corrections to the

Revisions to the Total Coliform Rule [EPA-HQ-OW-2008-0878; FRL-9906-89-OW] received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4954. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the March 2014 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2291(b)(2); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4955. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the Department's report entitled, "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013"; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4956. A letter from the Executive Analyst, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4957. A letter from the Acting General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting three reports pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4958. A letter from the HR Specialist, Small Business Administration, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4959. A letter from the HR Specialist, Small Business Administration, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. NUGENT: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 511. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4138) to protect the separation of powers in the Constitution of the United States by ensuring that the President takes care that the laws be faithfully executed, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3973) to amend section 530D of title 28, United States Code (Rept. 113-378). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. ROSKAM (for himself and Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 4187. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to encourage the development and use of new antimicrobial drugs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RENACCI (for himself, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. JOYCE, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. TURNER, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. TIBERI, Mr.

LAMALFA, Mr. PERRY, Mr. SAM JOHN-SON of Texas, Mr. GIBBS, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas):

H.R. 4188. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to adjust the Medicare hospital readmission reduction program to respond to patient disparities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. STIVERS:

H.R. 4189. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4000 Leap Road in Hilliard, Ohio, as the "Sergeant Shawn T. Hannon and Master Sergeant Jeffrey J. Rieck and Veterans Memorial Post Office Building"; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. GUTHRIE (for himself, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Mr. YOUNG of Indiana):

H.R. 4190. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage under the Medicare program of pharmacist services; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. WALZ (for himself, Mr. BARBER, Mr. DENHAM, Ms. ESTY, Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. KUSTER, and Mr. O'ROURKE):

H.R. 4191. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the treatment of medical evidence provided by non-Department of Veterans Affairs medical professionals in support of claims for disability compensation under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. ISSA (for himself and Ms. NOR-TON):

H.R. 4192. A bill to amend the Act entitled "An Act to regulate the height of buildings in the District of Columbia" to clarify the rules of the District of Columbia regarding human occupancy of penthouses above the top story of the building upon which the penthouse is placed; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ISSA (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. WOODALL, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mr. FARENTHOLD):

H.R. 4193. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to change the default investment fund under the Thrift Savings Plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ISSA (for himself, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mr. WOODALL):

H.R. 4194. A bill to provide for the elimination or modification of Federal reporting requirements; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. ISSA (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. CONNOLLY):

H.R. 4195. A bill to amend chapter 15 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the Federal Register Act), to modernize the Federal Register, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio:

H.R. 4196. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to eliminate Exchange cost-sharing subsidies, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to create a Medicare Advantage Improvement

Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CUMMINGS (for himself, Mr. ISSA, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Mr. CONNOLLY):

H.R. 4197. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to extend the period of certain authority with respect to judicial review of Merit Systems Protection Board decisions relating to whistleblowers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DENHAM:

H.R. 4198. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to reinstate the requirement for an annual report on the capacity of the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide for specialized treatment and rehabilitative needs of disabled veterans; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. FLORES (for himself and Mr. O'ROURKE):

H.R. 4199. A bill to name the Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Waco, Texas, as the "Doris Miller Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4200. A bill to amend the Investment Advisers Act of 1940 to prevent duplicative regulation of advisers of small business investment companies; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. DENHAM:

H.R. 4201. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require Medicare Advantage organizations to disclose certain information on the changes made to the MA plan offered by such organization pursuant to changes required by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HONDA:

H.R. 4202. A bill to provide for cost-of-living increases for certain Federal benefits programs based on increases in the Consumer Price Index for the elderly; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform, and Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ISRAEL (for himself and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 4203. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit interference with communication frequencies used by emergency response providers; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MAFFEI:

H.R. 4204. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a credit against tax for job training expenses of employers; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER (for himself, Mr. ROSS, Mr. MEEKS, and Ms. MOORE):

H.R. 4205. A bill to amend the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 to authorize the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to carry out a loan repayment program for certain architects, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, and Mr. SOUTHERLAND):

H.R. 4206. A bill to authorize a State or a portion of a State to conduct a demonstration project designed to test methods of program integration and coordination of services with the goals of moving individuals and families towards self-sufficiency, reducing welfare dependence, and increasing work and earnings; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, Financial Services, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RICHMOND:

H.R. 4207. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 in order to allow the Secretary of Education to award job training Federal Pell Grants; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. BARLETTA (for himself and Mr. CARSON of Indiana):

H. Con. Res. 92. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National Peace Officers Memorial Service and the National Honor Guard and Pipe Band Exhibition; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. KINGSTON:

H. Res. 510. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the National Institutes of Health should develop a pilot program to improve medical trial participation, retention, efficiency, effectiveness, and diversity; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. MULVANEY:

H. Res. 512. A resolution recognizing linemen, the profession of linemen, the contributions of these brave men and women who protect public safety, and expressing support for the designation of March 31, 2014, as National Lineman Appreciation Day; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. RUPPERSBERGER:

H. Res. 513. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of the week of May 3, 2014, through May 10, 2014, as "National Osteogenesis Imperfecta Awareness Week" to celebrate the progress made, and recognize the work yet to be done toward educating our communities, promoting research programs and raising vital resources for doctors, nurses, and healthcare providers and everyone touched by the Osteogenesis Imperfecta community; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. ROSKAM:

H.R. 4187.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

(a) Article I, Section 1, to exercise the legislative powers vested in Congress as granted in the Constitution; and

(b) Article I, Section 8, Clause 18, which gives Congress the authority "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof"; and (c) Article I, Section 9, Clause 7, which states that "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time."

By Mr. RENACCI:

H.R. 4188.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 the general welfare clause.

By Mr. STIVERS:

H.R. 4189.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to establish Post Offices and post roads, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 7 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GUTHRIE:

H.R. 4190.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

By Mr. WALZ:

H.R. 4191.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ISSA:

H.R. 4192.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 17 of section 8 of Article I of the Constitution To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District

By Mr. ISSA:

H.R. 4193.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. ISSA:

H.R. 4194.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18.

"To make all Law which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing powers . . ."

By Mr. ISSA:

H.R. 4195.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18.

"To make all Law which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing powers . . ."

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio:

H.R. 4196.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. CUMMINGS:

H.R. 4197.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution of the United States grants the Congress the power to enact this law.

By Mr. DENHAM:

H.R. 4198.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. FLORES:

H.R. 4199.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

United States Constitution, Article I Section 8

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 4200.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states, as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

Additionally, Article 1, Section 7, Clause 2 of the Constitution allows for every bill passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate and signed by the President to be codified into law; and therefore implicitly allows Congress to amend any bill that has been passed by both chambers and signed into law by the President.

By Mr. DENHAM:

H.R. 4201.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Mr. HONDA:

H.R. 4202.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution.

By Mr. ISRAEL:

H.R. 4203.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the powers granted to the Congress by Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. MAFFEI:

H.R. 4204.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1 of Section 8 and Clause 18 of Section 8, of Article 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PERLMUTTER:

H.R. 4205.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article IV, Section 1

By Mr. REED:

H.R. 4206.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1

By Mr. RICHMOND:

H.R. 4207.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional authority for this bill stems from Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

[Omitted from the Record of March 10, 2014]

[The following action occurred on March 7, 2014]

H.R. 3973: Mr. SESSIONS and Ms. JENKINS.

H.R. 4138: Mr. RIGELL and Mr. SESSIONS.

[Submitted March 11, 2014]

H.R. 20: Ms. HANABUSA.

H.R. 36: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas and Mrs. WAGNER.

H.R. 38: Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. LOEBSACK, and Mr. HENSARLING.

H.R. 118: Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 164: Mr. CONYERS, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, and Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 494: Mr. ENYART and Mr. KING of Iowa.

H.R. 543: Mr. DENT and Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 679: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 702: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. ELLISON, and Ms. BASS.

H.R. 710: Ms. TITUS and Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 792: Mr. MCCLINTOCK.

H.R. 794: Ms. HANABUSA.

H.R. 831: Mr. HIGGINS and Ms. SPEIER.

H.R. 855: Mr. RUSH.

H.R. 920: Mr. RUSH, Mr. LONG, and Mr. SHIMKUS.

H.R. 921: Mr. ELLISON and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 1020: Mr. HECK of Washington.

H.R. 1078: Mr. WOODALL.

H.R. 1084: Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 1141: Mr. EDWARDS.

H.R. 1148: Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 1150: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 1173: Mr. HIMES.

H.R. 1176: Mr. ROTHFUS.

H.R. 1250: Mr. BUTTERFIELD and Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 1252: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 1286: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 1310: Mr. STEWART.

H.R. 1312: Mr. HONDA and Mr. JORDAN.

H.R. 1354: Mr. MEEKS, Mr. YOHO, and Ms. ESTY.

H.R. 1385: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 1386: Mr. BACHUS and Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H.R. 1429: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 1518: Mr. AMODEI.

H.R. 1573: Mr. HOLT, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 1591: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 1701: Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. STEWART, Mr. WOMACK, and Mr. MULVANEY.

H.R. 1710: Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 1775: Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 1812: Mr. MEEKS.

H.R. 1814: Mr. KLINE, Mr. GOWDY, Mr. SHERMAN, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. ENYART, Mr. HENSARLING, Ms. CLARKE of New York, and Mr. ROONEY.

H.R. 1852: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER and Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 1854: Mr. DEFazio.

H.R. 1921: Mr. HIGGINS and Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 1945: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 1998: Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 2005: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

H.R. 2020: Mr. ENGEL.

H.R. 2027: Mr. FORTENBERRY.

H.R. 2028: Mr. SABLAN.

H.R. 2110: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 2116: Mr. JEFFRIES.

H.R. 2171: Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 2172: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 2288: Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 2315: Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 2328: Mr. MAFFEI.

H.R. 2350: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 2377: Mr. COOPER.

H.R. 2413: Mr. ROE of Tennessee.

H.R. 2428: Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 2429: Mr. BENTIVOLIO, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. PETRI, and Mr. SOUTHERLAND.

H.R. 2553: Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 2591: Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and Mr. HUNTER.

H.R. 2652: Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 2672: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.

H.R. 2690: Ms. KAPTUR and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 2692: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 2785: Ms. KELLY of Illinois.

H.R. 2791: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 2807: Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 2917: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.

H.R. 2969: Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 2983: Mr. POCAN.

H.R. 2994: Mr. STIVERS, Mr. ELLISON, and Ms. LEE of California.

H.R. 3040: Mr. GRIMM.

H.R. 3047: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 3118: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 3367: Mr. ENYART, Mr. VALADAO, and Mr. MATHESON.

H.R. 3377: Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 3403: Mr. WEBER of Texas.

H.R. 3408: Mr. CARTER.

H.R. 3461: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, and Mr. THOMPSON of California.

H.R. 3463: Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 3470: Mr. FORBES.

H.R. 3474: Mr. RUIZ, Mr. DAINES, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. GIBBS, and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois.

H.R. 3481: Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 3485: Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. HENSARLING, and Mr. HULTGREN.

H.R. 3490: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 3494: Mr. MATHESON, Mr. ENYART, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.

H.R. 3548: Mr. COHEN and Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 3556: Mr. ENGEL.

H.R. 3560: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 3571: Mr. LEWIS.

H.R. 3579: Mr. HENSARLING.

H.R. 3600: Mr. POSEY, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Ms. SEWELL of Alabama.

H. R. 3620: Mr. PETERS of Michigan.

H. R. 3658: Mr. GRIMM, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. LUETKEMEYER, Mr. BACHUS, and Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 3660: Ms. JACKSON LEE.

H.R. 3665: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 3673: Mr. LEWIS.

H.R. 3676: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 3698: Mr. VISCLOSKEY and Mr. RIBBLE.

H.R. 3708: Ms. JENKINS and Mrs. WALORSKI.

H.R. 3712: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 3717: Mr. ROTHFUS.

H.R. 3776: Ms. JENKINS.

H.R. 3833: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 3840: Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 3854: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DELANEY, Mrs. NEGRETE McLEOD, Ms. HANABUSA, and Ms. MOORE.

H.R. 3857: Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.R. 3867: Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JONES, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. HIGGINS, and Mr. GARAMENDI.

H.R. 3939: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.
 H.R. 3954: Mr. ELLISON and Ms. SPEIER.
 H.R. 3969: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
 H.R. 3978: Mr. DOYLE, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. O'ROURKE, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
 H.R. 4008: Mr. BRIDENSTINE.
 H.R. 4015: Mr. CHABOT, Mr. CRAWFORD, Mr. BARROW of Georgia, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. ROONEY, Mr. RIGELL, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. FORTENBERRY, and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.
 H.R. 4016: Ms. NORTON and Ms. CLARKE of New York.
 H.R. 4026: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
 H.R. 4031: Mr. FORBES, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. BROUN of Georgia.
 H.R. 4036: Mr. HOLT.
 H.R. 4040: Mr. MCNERNEY and Mr. CÁRDENAS.
 H.R. 4049: Mr. RIBBLE.
 H.R. 4075: Ms. MOORE.
 H.R. 4101: Mr. CARTER.
 H.R. 4148: Ms. NORTON, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. TITUS, Mr. COHEN, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Mr. GRIMM.
 H.R. 4156: Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. SIRES, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. SOUTHERLAND, Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mrs. CAPITO, and Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 4157: Mr. DENHAM, Mr. LAMALFA, and Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.
 H.R. 4160: Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LAMALFA, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. LANCE, and Mr. MCKINLEY.

H.R. 4162: Mr. POCAN and Ms. NORTON.
 H.R. 4165: Mr. CRAMER.
 H.J. Res. 50: Mrs. LUMMIS.
 H.J. Res. 104: Mr. LUCAS.
 H. Con. Res. 52: Mr. GRAVES of Missouri.
 H. Con. Res. 86: Mrs. BUSTOS and Mr. DENHAM.
 H. Con. Res. 87: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
 H. Res. 36: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.
 H. Res. 94: Ms. KUSTER.
 H. Res. 188: Mr. FOSTER.
 H. Res. 231: Mrs. BLACKBURN and Ms. DELAURO.
 H. Res. 365: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, and Ms. BASS.
 H. Res. 422: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York and Mr. MCGOVERN.
 H. Res. 425: Mr. BROUN of Georgia.
 H. Res. 440: Ms. SHEA-PORTER.
 H. Res. 456: Mr. TAKANO, Mr. COURTNEY, and Mr. CICILLINE.
 H. Res. 476: Mr. POSEY.
 H. Res. 479: Ms. WATERS.
 H. Res. 494: Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. GARRETT, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. SALMON, Mr. HANNA, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. PERRY, Mr. SIRES, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.
 H. Res. 499: Mr. SHUSTER.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks,

limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. CAMP

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Ways and Means in H.R. 4015, "SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014," do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives.

OFFERED BY MR. GOODLATTE

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Judiciary in H.R. 4015 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. UPTON

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Energy and Commerce in H.R. 4015 do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative CONYERS, or a designee, to H.R. 4138, the Enforce Act, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of rule XXI.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

JAMI MARQUEZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jami Marquez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jami Marquez is an 8th grader at Wheat Ridge 5-8 and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jami Marquez is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jami Marquez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

HONORING CLEON KIMBERLING

HON. CORY GARDNER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Cleon Kimberling. He was recently inducted into the Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame because of 50 years of leadership in the agricultural industry as a veterinarian and member of the Colorado State University Department of Veterinary Medicine.

Dr. Kimberling received his Bachelor's Degree and DVM at Colorado State University and then earned a Masters of Public Health from the University of Minnesota. Since then, he has devoted his time to Colorado State University students and those in the agriculture industry in Colorado. His vocation has allowed him to focus on herd health management of dairy livestock, range beef cattle and range sheep. His expertise in range sheep management is unrivaled and has benefitted many, many producers. Dr. Kimberling's work has taken him from the high mountains and plains in Colorado, to the Navajo Nation and to over 15 countries around the world.

Dr. Kimberling's work has resulted in the development of surgical instruments for animals, and tests for several diseases in various animals. His inventions have earned him a U.S. patent and brought efficiencies to the agricultural industry. He has written two books, authored five chapters, fourteen auto-tutorials, fifty-four referenced journal articles, as well as a host of other educational resources.

Because of his teaching and his expertise in Veterinary Medicine, he has received many awards and recognition over the last fifty years. However, many of his contemporaries note that even though he is a recognized veterinarian, his true impact in this world has been in his role as a passionate teacher. The number of veterinarians he has trained, both at CSU and around the world is countless. His caring, sharing and teaching are only a part of who he is. His contributions to the health and productivity of Colorado's livestock industry, along with his dedication to Colorado State University students and his overall improvement to mankind are examples for all to follow. I am honored to recognize him today.

RECOGNIZING MARCH AS
NATIONAL FROZEN FOOD MONTH**HON. JACK KINGSTON**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work of one of Georgia's great schools and my alma mater, the University of Georgia, UGA, for its recent groundbreaking research on the nutritional value of frozen fruits and vegetables. March is frozen food month, and this study by UGA conclusively demonstrates the nutritional value of frozen fruits and vegetables and will help families make smart, informed decisions on how to eat in an affordable, healthy way.

The University of Georgia, in partnership with the Frozen Food Foundation, conducted a unique study comparing the nutrient content of commonly purchased frozen and fresh fruits and vegetables. This study mimicked consumer purchasing and storage habits for a variety of fruits and vegetables and the results revealed that frozen fruits and vegetables are nutritionally equal to, and in many cases superior to their fresh counterparts.

Research such as this provides insight into the value of frozen fruits and vegetables. UGA found that at-home storage of fresh fruits and vegetables can lead to significant nutrient loss but with frozen fruits and vegetables, consumers receive the nutritional benefit of produce that is harvested and then frozen at peak ripeness. Freezing is a natural pause button that locks-in nutrition.

As families look for easy-to-prepare, affordable ways to improve their diet, they can reach for frozen fruits and vegetables and, reaffirmed by this UGA research, they can know they are receiving the same nutritional benefits as fresh products.

Mr. Speaker, in celebration of National Frozen Food Month, I wish to applaud UGA and frozen food makers for their role in providing American families with important facts about increasing nutrients to support good health. I

am proud to acknowledge research done in Georgia that allows families to make informed decisions about the nutritional benefits of the fruits and vegetables they consume.

JACQUELINE DELGADO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jacqueline Delgado for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jacqueline Delgado is an 11th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jacqueline Delgado is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jacqueline Delgado for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

SFC DOUG LESH

HON. JEFF DUNCAN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Sergeant First Class Douglas Lesh, in honor of his retirement from the United States Army and his extraordinary dedication to duty and service to the United States of America. Sergeant First Class Lesh and his wife Amanda will be moving on from his current assignment as the Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of the Office of the Chief, Legislative Liaison's Travel section.

Army Congressional Liaisons provide an invaluable service to both the military and Congress. They assist Members and staff in understanding the Army's policies, actions, operations, and requirements. Their first hand knowledge of military needs, culture, and tradition is a tremendous benefit to Congressional offices.

A native of Grass Valley, California, Sergeant First Class Lesh enlisted in the Army on August 5, 1993, and entered infantry basic training at Ft. Benning, Georgia.

Sergeant First Class Lesh's assignments have taken him to Tong Du Su Shon, Korea;

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Fort Stewart, Georgia; Fort Carson, Colorado; Sacramento, California; Fort Benning, Georgia; Ramadi and Baquba, Iraq; The Joint Staff at The Pentagon, and the 1st Battalion 3rd Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard).

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of a grateful Nation, I join my colleagues in recognizing and commending Sergeant First Class Lesh for his dedicated service to this country. For all he and his family have given and continue to give to our country; we are in their debt. We wish him, his wife Amanda, his son Logan, and daughters Chloe and Hattie, all the best in their future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING 35TH ANNIVERSARY
OF TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT AND
REPRESENTATIVE KING PU-
TSUNG

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, today I come to the floor of the House of Representatives to recognize the importance of the Taiwan Relations Act which this Congress passed thirty-five years ago. The Taiwan Relations Act passed this Congress and was signed into law on April 10, 1979. For the last three and a half decades this legislation has been a cornerstone of our defense relationship with Taiwan and the result has been peace and prosperity for our important ally.

Peace in the Taiwan straits remains among the highest national interests of our country, indeed the entire Asia-Pacific region. Congress and the U.S. people remain steadfast in their support for Taiwan and maintaining strong defense and economic relations.

Since the Taiwan Relations Act was signed into law, the U.S.-Taiwan relationship has been fostered by a series of thirteen representatives from Taiwan. For the last year and a half that representative has been King Pu-tsung who will soon be returning to Taiwan to serve as Secretary-General of Taiwan's National Security Council. I have enjoyed the opportunity to work closely with Representative King and applaud his efforts to continue the strong relationship our two countries enjoy.

As we look ahead to the 4th decade of the Taiwan Relations Act we should continue our work to advance our relationship, particularly as it relates to trade and bilateral investment.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on these issues of mutual concern for both nations as our relationship with Taiwan continues to develop and evolve.

HAYLEE VANNOY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Haylee Vannoy for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Haylee

Vannoy is a 7th grader at Drake Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Haylee Vannoy is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Haylee Vannoy for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

TRIBUTE TO WINNER'S CIRCLE
AWARD WINNER, RICHARD PETTY

HON. RENEE L. ELLMERS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mrs. ELLMERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend sincere congratulations to Randolph County's very own Richard Petty, as he was one of five people selected statewide to receive the Winner's Circle award. The annual Winner's Circle award is given to individuals who have made significant and lasting contributions to North Carolina's tourism industry. Without a doubt, Richard Petty has been instrumental in enticing visitors from near and far to visit our great state.

There is a reason that NASCAR is North Carolina's official state sport, and Richard Petty has played a significant role in contributing to the sport's popularity. As one of the founding families in stock car racing, and one of the most decorated drivers in NASCAR history, Richard Petty has remained committed to establishing both his race shop and race museum in Randolph County, North Carolina. Tourism is a powerful force to our state's economic well-being, and Richard Petty has been influential in bringing racing fans from across America to the Tar Heel state. We are fortunate to have a North Carolinian who remains so steadfast in promoting the uniqueness of our state and the sport at large.

RECOGNIZING DR. JAMES
SYVERTSEN

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize one of my constituents, Dr. James Syvertsen, on his selection as a Fulbright award recipient. Dr. Syvertsen, a professor in biology at the University of Florida, taught in Uruguay as a Fulbright scholar from September through November 2013.

The Fulbright Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, is supported by the United States, participating foreign governments and the private sector. Established by

Congress in 1946, the Program's purpose is to "build mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the rest of the world." Fulbright awardees are selected for academic excellence, professional achievements or demonstrated leadership in their fields.

I thank Dr. Syvertsen for his commitment to education and for representing the United States through the Fulbright Program in Uruguay.

HOLLY ANDERSON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Holly Anderson for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Holly Anderson is an 8th grader at Wheat Ridge 5-8 and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Holly Anderson is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Holly Anderson for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

IN HONOR OF U.S. PARK POLICE
OFFICER CARL HIOTT

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor U.S. Park Police Officer Carl Hiott and thank him for his heroic actions during the tragic Navy Yard shooting.

Officer Hiott grew up in North Carolina's Eighth Congressional District. He attended Southwestern Randolph High School where he excelled in football and wrestling. After graduating from North Carolina State University with a degree in criminal justice, Officer Hiott followed the call of duty and currently serves as a U.S. Park Police officer in Washington, D.C.

On September 16, 2013, a lone gunman entered the headquarters of the Naval Sea Systems Command with malicious intentions. Within minutes, law enforcement officials responded and took immediate action to quell the gunman. On this morning, Officer Hiott responded to the Navy Yard and, without hesitation, entered into building 197.

While on the third floor, Officer Hiott, Park Police Officer Andrew Wong, and Metropolitan Police Department Officer Dorian DeSantis encountered the gunman and engaged in a gunfight. Officer Hiott provided cover and engaged

the shooter in the final gun battle, for which he received a Medal of Honor and a Combat Medal from the U.S. Park Service, and a Medal of Merit from the Metropolitan Police Department. Though all of the details of that morning are yet to be uncovered, one thing is certain: Officer Hiott and his colleagues are true American heroes.

That fateful morning, 170 law enforcement officers responded to the call. The swift actions of these brave men and women and the courageously they displayed saved many lives. Despite the imminent danger, Officer Hiott remained committed to his duty to protect the national parks, monuments and the White House and keep our citizens safe.

Mr. Speaker, Officer Hiott is an outstanding citizen and a proven leader in our community. We are fortunate to have brave men and women like Officer Hiott who dedicate and risk their lives as police officers for our well-being and security. I applaud Officer Hiott for his bravery, and I thank him for his heroic and selfless actions.

JADE GOMEZ-CHAVARRIA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jade Gomez-Chavarria for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jade Gomez-Chavarria is a 12th grader at Everitt Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jade Gomez-Chavarria is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jade Gomez-Chavarria for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PASTOR JAMES FAVORITE

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an inspirational leader in the Tampa Bay community, Pastor James Favorite. I am pleased to recognize his remarkable career and years of distinguished public service. Pastor Favorite was born in Vacherie, Louisiana. He obtained a Bachelor's and Master's of Science Degree in Health, Physical Education, and Social Studies from Southern University in Baton Rouge. Pastor Favorite also holds a Doctor of Ministry Degree and an Honorary Doctor of Divinity Degree from the Maryland Theological Seminary College.

Throughout his career, Pastor Favorite has been a prominent spiritual leader in the Tampa Bay community. He became an ordained minister in 1985 at Morning Star Baptist Church in Catonsville, Maryland. He then moved to Tampa where he has been a guiding force in interfaith dialogue. He is President of Pastors on Patrol, a group of ministers in the Tampa Bay area committed to bring revival to the city. He is the Chairman of both the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS Tampa Affiliate and the Board of Directors of the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS. He is the former President of the Progressive National Baptist Convention's Southern Region and also served as National Chair of the Progressive National Baptist Convention's HIV/AIDS Initiative.

Pastor Favorite has been a dedicated community volunteer across Tampa Bay. He is a member of the Children's Board committee looking into strategies to increase state and local funding support to vital children and family support programs. He serves as a member of the Hillsborough County Chamber of Commerce Urban Enterprise Initiative Committee for East Tampa. He previously chaired the African-American Family Support Initiative program that studies and develops ways to strengthen families in the African American community.

Since 1995, Pastor Favorite has led Beulah Baptist Institutional Church where he is now celebrating 19 years of dedicated service. Under Pastor Favorite's extraordinary leadership Beulah has received substantial growth in membership and revenue. It has become deeply integrated in the life of the Tampa Bay community. Under his leadership, Hillsborough County funded Beulah as one of only two satellite library sites in the county. He spearheaded an Outreach Ministry to Jamaica with a team of doctors and nurses which delivered more than \$100,000 in medical supplies and equipment to more than 5,000 individuals in ten years. He has developed renowned programs ranging from teaching young parents to develop parenting skills to programs on repairing credit and making sound financial investments. He has also ensured that the Beulah summer program for children has received over \$2 million dollars in funding from the Children's Board for the past five years.

Pastor Favorite's tireless, selfless service has helped to create a better and spiritually strengthened Tampa Bay community. Mr. Speaker, I join Beulah in congratulating Pastor Favorite for 19 years of outstanding service as a pastor, mentor, and tremendous community leader.

HONORING DR. NORMAN DALSTED

HON. CORY GARDNER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Norman Dalsted, who was recently inducted into the Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame.

Dr. Dalsted was born and raised in North Dakota, and was active in FFA. He attended

North Dakota State University. Upon graduation, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army and served in the Panama Canal Zone and Vietnam. Dr. Dalsted's military career has always been a large part of his life, and he has shared his experiences with his students every year. His glimpses into the past have made tremendous impacts on his students. He received his Ph.D. from Colorado State University, and was immediately hired as an extension farm management specialist. He was promoted to Professor in 1992.

Dr. Dalsted is known throughout Colorado for his enterprise budgets for agriculture commodities grown in Colorado. These budgets have been updated regularly and are still in use some thirty years after first being published. During the tumultuous years of the early 1980s, Dr. Dalsted organized a series of training programs for agriculture lenders across the state. The programs provided basic training in financial statements, ratio analysis, enterprise budget and whole farm analysis, and business organizational form. Lenders used this knowledge and educated others by holding private seminars for local agriculture producers.

In the late 1980s, Dr. Dalsted spent a significant portion of his time researching new Chapter 12 Bankruptcy protection options for farming operations. He wrote several scholarly papers on the subject. He used his expertise to help local producers reorganize their struggling operations. He eventually found himself involved in many Chapter 12 cases across the state and continues to be an expert in cases today.

Dr. Dalsted was also part of the Integrated Ranch Management program at Colorado State University. He helped develop several classes that covered basic economic concepts and tolls in the context of ranch management. From this, several software programs were developed that could be used by producers to assist in making management decisions. Dr. Dalsted's research at CSU has resulted in an impressive list of publications in journals, articles, chapters in books, proceedings, software programs and university publications. He has also been recognized by students as an outstanding teacher and educator. Dr. Dalsted has had a long and distinguished career at Colorado State University and in Colorado agriculture and it is my honor to recognize him today.

ERIKA LOPEZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Erika Lopez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Erika Lopez is a 12th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Erika Lopez is exemplary of the type of achievement

that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Erika Lopez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE SUMGAI POGROMS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise as I do every year in recognition of the anniversary of the pogroms against the people of Armenian descent in Sumgait, Azerbaijan. On February 27, 1988, anti-Armenian forces began killing Armenians and driving them from their homes. Scores of Armenians were killed, hundreds were wounded, and thousands were left as refugees without their homes or livelihoods. The violence went on for three days as Armenian women and girls were viciously raped.

Days before this massacre, the Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh began peacefully protesting against the Soviet Azerbaijani oppression and discrimination. From this peaceful protest and the fires of the pogroms arose the spark that started the democracy movement that ultimately brought down the Soviet Empire.

Sadly, anti-Armenian rhetoric and cross-border attacks continue at the hands of the Azerbaijani government. Azerbaijan has consistently obstructed the peace process, walked away from its own agreements, and continued to threaten war. This is unacceptable, and the violence and harmful words must come to an end.

Today, I ask my colleagues to stand with me in remembrance of the Sumgait pogroms, in support of a true and lasting peace in the region, and in recognition of the contributions of Armenian Americans to the San Joaquin Valley I call home and the entire Nation.

REMEMBERING MAYOR M. JANE SEEMAN

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and remember a dear friend, Mayor M. Jane Seeman, who selflessly served the Vienna, Virginia, community for more than a decade and passed away on February 23, 2014, at the age of 76.

Jane was born on June 1, 1937, in Hays, Kansas. She graduated from Fort Hays State University with a bachelor's degree in economics and business. While in college, she met her husband, Rodger, whom she married

in 1959, and in 1968 the couple moved to Vienna so that Rodger could pursue a job with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The Seemans shared a passion for public service, with Rodger serving on the Vienna Town Council for nearly two decades. When he passed away in 1996, his wife completed his unfinished term, going on to win two terms of her own before successfully running for Mayor in 2000. Jane was well-respected and much-admired by the Vienna community, winning reelection six times.

While greatly involved in the community, Jane understood well the importance of enjoying life to its fullest. She was passionately devoted to her children and grandchildren and, as a travel enthusiast, made a point to include her family on her many ventures. Jane was a longtime sports fan, cheering on the Washington Nationals for many years. Of Jane's many commitments, perhaps her greatest was to her Christian faith, which motivated and sustained her throughout her life. She was a beloved member of the Vienna Presbyterian Church, which she attended for more than forty years.

Jane's son, Bill, perhaps said it best when he declared that 76 years was hardly enough time for his mother. She will be sincerely missed by her family, friends, and the Vienna community, but her legacy will long-endure. While we mourn her loss, we also importantly celebrate the exemplary life of love, faith, and humble service by which we will always remember her.

I submit the following article from the McLean Sun Gazette, which pays tribute to Jane's admirable life.

[Mar. 3, 2014]

VIENNA MAYOR EULOGIZED FOR DEVOTION TO FAMILY, TOWN

(By Brian Trompeter)

Vienna bade farewell to its longtime Mayor M. Jane Seeman in a Feb. 28 funeral service that drew hundreds of people and featured remembrances from her children and grandchildren.

Seeman, 76, who had served on the Vienna Town Council since late 1996 and as mayor since 2000, died of lung cancer Feb. 23.

Mourners filled the lower sanctuary level and some of the balcony area at Vienna Presbyterian Church, which Seeman had attended since fall 1968.

A broad swath of the Vienna community came to the service, including Seeman's Vienna Town Council colleagues, some Board of Supervisors members and at least one member of Congress.

"I think we shut down Vienna with all of us being here," said Pastor Peter James.

The mayor's daughter, Linda Colbert, said the family had been inundated with messages from friends following her mother's death and that those outpourings of support helped the family cope with their loss.

"My mother was my best friend. She was also my first friend," Colbert said. "We always loved to talk to each other."

The late mayor volunteered more than 3,000 hours of her time at Patrick Henry Library and loved chatting with patrons, asking them about the books they were turning in or checking out.

The mayor was keenly interested in people's lives and dedicated to serving others and the town, Colbert said.

"She served because she wanted to, not for a pat on the back or to be recognized," she said.

Madena Jane Seeman was born June 1, 1937, in Hays, Kan., to parents Madena and Herbert Seeman.

The future mayor wrote for a newspaper in that town of about 10,000 people, then attended Fort Hays State University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in economics and business. She met her future husband, Rodger, at the university and married him on June 1, 1959.

Seeman became a rabid fan of the University of Kansas Jayhawks while the couple lived in Lawrence, Kan. The Seemans later lived in Kansas City, then moved to Vienna in 1968 after Rodger Seeman took a job with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The Seemans bought a house on Blackstone Terrace, N.W., for \$25,000 and lived there until their deaths. They had two sons and one daughter.

Rodger Seeman served on the Town Council from the early 1980s until his death in November 1996. His wife was appointed to fill his unexpired term and after being elected to full terms in 1997 and 1999, she ran for mayor in 2000, following the death of Mayor Charles Robinson Jr. The mayor won re-election six times, but had decided not to seek re-election this May.

One of her sons, Bill Seeman of Fairfax Station, said his parents were determined to give their kids "fantastic childhoods."

Seeman recalled his days of playing baseball on crude schoolyard fields and then getting to pitch at Yeonas Field, which had dugouts and other "big-league" amenities. He pitched disastrously there, though, and blamed his performance on the new experience of throwing from a raised mound.

That night, the boy's parents worked in their back yard to build him a raised pitching mound.

The mayor was a big sports fan, loved the Washington Nationals and had a crush on player Bryce Harper, Bill Seeman said.

She also enjoyed traveling and ventured to such places as France, Belgium, Russia and Greece. The mayor took her family on a cruise in Alaska a couple years ago and took Bill Seeman and his sons on jaunts to sports hall of fame facilities in Springfield, Mass., and Cooperstown, N.Y., as well as the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, he said.

"Seventy-six years really was not enough for my mom," Bill Seeman said. "She lived about 10 normal people's lives. She was a rare gift to all of us."

Music played a central role in the memorial service. Pat Talamantes played the organ and those in attendance sang the hymns "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" and "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee."

One of Seeman's granddaughters, Hannah Colbert, sang "Amazing Grace" while her father, Michael Colbert, accompanied her on guitar.

Colbert choked up on the final stanza and had to be comforted. Pastor James later told her she never needed to apologize for being emotionally moved by that song.

After the service, a funeral procession led by Fairfax County and Vienna police motorcycle officers went from the church down Maple Avenue to Flint Hill Cemetery in Oakton, where Seeman was buried near her late husband. Following the burial, mourners attended a reception back at the church.

Vienna Town Hall closed early that afternoon so town employees could attend the 2 p.m. funeral. Flag were flown at half-mast at the Vienna Town Green, the creation of which Seeman considered to be the Town Council's biggest accomplishment during her tenure.

EMMA EAKER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Emma Eaker for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Emma Eaker is an 11th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Emma Eaker is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Emma Eaker for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 114, I was unable to attend. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

HONORING LES HARDESTY

HON. CORY GARDNER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Les Hardesty. Mr. Hardesty, a native of Colorado and leader in the dairy industry, has been a true visionary and unrivaled advocate for the local, Colorado, and national dairy industry.

After Mr. Hardesty graduated from Colorado State University, he and his wife started Painted Prairie Dairy. He and his family were involved in that undertaking for thirty years. It was during that time that he and his family saw the need to educate people about the dairy industry. He built an education facility, the Cozy Cow Dairy in Windsor, Colorado, and used it as a showcase farm. The Cozy Cow dairy featured a visible milking parlor and provided an up-close experience for tens of thousands of visitors. Many families have been able to see the true face of the dairy industry because of Mr. Hardesty's efforts. Even though he was busy running the dairies, Mr. Hardesty still found time to become involved in dairy organizations and became a respected leader in many of them.

His expertise in global dairy marketing and his understanding of the national dairy pricing

system earned him a solid reputation among producers. His specialized experiences in dairy farm business, exports, global dairy issues, dairy production, dairy processing, as well as pricing issues and marketing techniques, made him a tremendous asset to our nation's dairy farms.

Mr. Hardesty has been described as an open-minded man of great integrity with superior family values. He has given himself selflessly for the betterment of the dairy industry and agriculture in general. I am honored to recognize him today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ERIC A. "RICK" CRAWFORD

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, March 6, 2014 I was inadvertently detained on rollcall votes 101, 106, 109, and 113. Had I been present to vote, I would have voted "yes" on each. In addition, I was inadvertently detained on rollcall votes 102, 103, 104, 105, 110, 111, and 114. Had I been present to vote, I would have voted "no" on each.

GAVIN DAWSON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Gavin Dawson for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Gavin Dawson is an 8th grader at Drake Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Gavin Dawson is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Gavin Dawson for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

IN THE COMPANY OF WOMEN
ANNUAL CELEBRATION**HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I recognize the hard-working women leaders who, throughout the years, have made instrumental contributions to

the district I so humbly represent and to our entire South Florida community, in fact.

On March 13th, the Miami-Dade County Commission for Women, the Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade, and the Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department will be hosting the "In the Company of Women Awards" in celebration of Women's History Month. This annual ceremony honors some of the exceptional women in our community in fields like arts, communications, government, and athletics.

The honorees during this year's event will be: Valerie Riles, Wendy Kallergis, Jacqueline Menendez, Judy Brown, Honorable Migna Sanchez-Llorens, Alyce Robertson, Nilda Peragallo Montano, Marie-Elsie Dowell, and Angela Smith.

In addition, Linda Robinson, the former Vice-Mayor of Palmetto Bay, a village I represent, will receive the Mayor's Pioneer Award.

Constable Thelma Hardison will be bestowed with the Posthumous Award, and Marcia Fernandez-Morin will be presented with the Community Spirit Award.

These 12 honorees will join the ranks of many outstanding women, including my late mother, Amanda Ros who was honored during the third annual "In the Company of Women" celebration.

As a fellow recipient of this award also, I am pleased that the great passion and dedication of these women leaders will be recognized, and it will inspire them to do even better work.

Their many accomplishments are an example of what women everywhere can strive to attain.

Congratulations to each award winner.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, on March 6, 2014, I missed the following votes due to previously-scheduled commitments in my congressional district. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: rollcall No. 107—"yea"; rollcall No. 108—"nay"; rollcall No. 109—"yea"; rollcall No. 110—"nay"; rollcall No. 111—"nay"; rollcall No. 112—"nay"; rollcall No. 113—"yea"; rollcall No. 114—"yea."

HONORING THE LIFE OF JOHN
HENRY DAYTON**HON. JEFF DENHAM**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to posthumously honor the life of John Henry Dayton who passed away on February 9, 2014 surrounded by family.

John Henry Dayton was born in Turlock, California to Charles and Florence Dayton. He lived the epitome of a rural life, being raised on a 10-acre ranch in the Hughson, California with his siblings, Cheryl, Lonn, and Paul.

Mr. Dayton attended grammar and high school in Hughson. At Hughson High School, John enjoyed track, basketball, football, and playing the trombone in band. Mr. Dayton was well known for his kindness, humor and intelligence, earning him the "Wittiest Student Award" during his junior year and the "Biggest Cut-Up Award" his senior year.

John attended Oregon State University where he received a Bachelor of Science degree at the School of Pharmacy in 1966. While at Oregon State, he married Beverly Jean (Wyatt) Tack from Portland, Oregon. Together, John and Beverly raised two children, Kristin and Mike.

After college, Mr. Dayton moved back to California and worked as a pharmacist in the Modesto area. In 1971, John and his business partner, Harold Copp opened Oakdale Village Pharmacy in the city's first shopping center. The independently owned and operated drug store thrived and competed with the larger retail chains. Eventually, John and Harold opened additional pharmacies in Escalon and Modesto.

Mr. Dayton was later remarried to Susan Thorpe in 1985. Together they raised two children, Kevin Cooper and Tasha Poslaniec of Modesto.

Throughout more than four decades of business in the Oakdale area, he earned a reputation as a knowledgeable, personable, easy-going, dependable, helpful and trustworthy pharmacist. John enjoyed every aspect of business and working with people.

In November 2012, John was diagnosed with stage 4 brain cancer. At the time, he was in the midst of starting a new compounding pharmacy in Sonora and building a home on Horseshoe Road outside of Oakdale. He told his family that the new compounding pharmacy would provide him with the means to eventually re-open a pharmacy in downtown Oakdale, where he would once again enjoy the camaraderie of long-time patrons and employees.

Despite the grim prognosis and a marital separation, John remained optimistic, kind-hearted, and faithful. In sickness, his family rallied around him. His grace, courage and faith left an indelible mark on his loving family.

Mr. John Henry Dayton is survived by his mother, Mrs. Charles Dayton; daughter, Kristin (Debra Bringham) Dayton; son, Mike (Alanna) Dayton; sister, Cheryl (Jim) Harlan; and brothers, Lonn (Pam) Dayton, and Paul Dayton. John was grandfather to six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his father, Charles Dayton; and stepson, Kevin Cooper.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating the life of Mr. John Henry Dayton and all of his excellent contributions to his family and community.

HELINA THOMA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Helina Thoma

for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Helina Thoma is a 7th grader at Mandalay Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Helina Thoma is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Helina Thoma for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING THE INAUGURAL
CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL
CATHOLIC SISTERS WEEK

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the inaugural celebration of National Catholic Sisters Week. National Catholic Sisters Week is a worthy addition to National Women's History Month and will be recognized each year during the second week of March.

National Catholic Sisters Week is being launched by the Sisters of Saint Joseph at Saint Catherine University in Saint Paul, Minnesota. The week is intended to recognize the many contributions made by Catholic sisters around the world, past and present, to support and advance children, education, health care and anti-poverty efforts.

In the 1800s, many Catholic nuns moved to the American West with the frontier, settling into dangerous territories to build hospitals and schools for immigrant communities. They provided aid during the Chicago fire, cared for orphans during the California Gold Rush and brought professional nursing skills to field hospitals during the Civil War.

In the 1900s, American nuns opened thousands more hospitals, built the Nation's largest private school system, and brought the Catholic Church into the Civil Rights movement with courage and vision.

The good works of our Catholic sisters continue to be a saving grace. Today they press the frontlines of social change, gathering in chapels, at kitchen tables and at the steps of cathedrals and capitols. They shelter homeless families, aid immigrants, tutor students, guide pregnant teens, launch nonprofits, care for the environment and fight human trafficking. Their blood, sweat and prayers are a powerful force providing peace, comfort and justice to so many throughout our Nation, and indeed the world.

I am grateful that the Sisters of Saint Joseph were part of my own education and mentorship as I pursued my higher education at Saint Catherine's. Their great generosity of spirit and wise leadership continue to help to

guide my own commitment in Congress to excellence in education, protecting the environment and expanding health care access for all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to recognize the very first of many National Catholic Sisters Weeks. We owe a debt of gratitude to the Catholic sisters who sustain our great Nation day in and day out.

HONORING MR. JOHN ADENT

HON. CORY GARDNER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. John Adent who was recently inducted into the Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame. Mr. Adent was awarded the Rising Star in Agriculture award for 2014. He grew up on a fruit orchard and hog farm in southwestern Michigan. There, he developed a love for agriculture. He graduated from DePaul University with a double major in Economics and Chinese.

After graduation, Mr. Adent joined Ralston Purina management training program and was given the opportunity to spend time in Canada, Korea, and Taiwan. That training eventually paid off, as he was named Director of Business Development of several international markets, including China and the Philippines. He was promoted to vice president of operations for Europe in 1998. He eventually became the Managing Director for Agribands Europe Hungary, the number one executive position in the company's fastest growing region.

John then made a change and joined the team at Lextron, Inc., a Colorado-based company. Lextron, now Animal Health International, has grown under his leadership by leaps and bounds. His vision and direction along with his strategic planning has grown the company to over 150 employees in Colorado and over 1400 across the United States and Canada. In 2012, Mr. Adent served as the chairman of the National FFA Foundation Sponsors Board. He is currently working with a team to expand the number of secondary agriculture education programs in Larimer County, Colorado.

His leadership of one of North America's premier companies based in Colorado, his strong support for youth, and his passion for agriculture make Mr. Adent a rising star in Colorado agriculture. I am honored to recognize him today.

HONORING WILLIAM RICHARD
(DICK) COOLEY

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, last month, Portland lost an extraordinary citizen with the passing of William Richard (Dick)

Cooley. It was my honor to know and work with Dick Cooley for most of our professional lives. My friend was first and foremost a planner. It ran in his blood, he came by it honestly.

His father, Bill Cooley, was a big picture guy, a successful developer who served on the Multnomah County planning commission and was someone who was extraordinarily helpful to me when I was a new county commissioner. He had great depth of understanding about what was then Oregon's second largest city: unincorporated mid-Multnomah County. Bill Cooley played a significant role as a developer in an area where homes spring up rapidly, but he didn't just help build the community, he located his family in the middle of it, and then helped lead it.

Dick Cooley grew up in the midst of this dramatic change in the region. I had a connection being in an adjacent high school district, Centennial, next door to him. His high school alma mater was David Douglas, which was then the largest high school in the state of Oregon. It was then a symbol of excellence and Dick Cooley fit right in. It's where he developed the characteristics and skills that would serve him so well later in life. He was far more than a planner; he was a successful developer and builder who also had a career in banking and later, was in key business positions in the real estate arm of Pacific Power and Light, Pacific Development. This company took the audacious step of buying a huge tract of urban central city property known as the Lloyd district, well over 100 acres of opportunity that has continued to be a source of developmental activity, to be a key new district now blossoming within the central city. Dick Cooley was an investor who made strategic property purchases not just on the highest rate of return or the fastest rate of return, but working to put the pieces together to create long-term value.

It was this combination of the instincts of planner and an investor that made him a natural choice to follow in his father's footsteps to become a member of the Multnomah county planning commission.

I was pleased to appoint him to the Portland Planning Commission where he was an extraordinarily valuable leader in the important activities of the late 1980s and 1990s. He provided leadership not just as the chair of the planning commission, but understanding how to help people come together to create value. He played a vital role in helping shape and guide my Albina community plan, which was perhaps the high water mark in Portland's planning for people. This led to the revitalization of some of Portland's most troubled neighborhoods. Streets you wouldn't feel comfortable driving down then, you can now stroll with visitors to show Portland at its best. Dick was essential in bringing fellow planning commissioners, citizens and the city council together to make it happen.

Yet his planning, patience and investment strategies were most compelling when it came to people. It started with his circle of family and friends, especially his loving 20 year relationship with his wife Leslie. It was a joy to be around them both. No one worked harder at being a parent than my friend Dick, and his children, Sarah and Alex were never far from his thoughts.

Whether Dick was planning, being a father, husband, friend, he was always giving of himself. He never forgot that he was a kid from mid-Multnomah County, David Douglas High School, and he would return to his community roots time and time again. Most notably and recently, the countless hours he spent trying to assist his former neighbors contend with a community that is now fighting decline. He worked with them helping realize their vision for the gateway area, long after he left the planning commission.

He could not keep himself from providing leadership. He provided leadership until last year for the Portland street car, another Dick Cooley contribution to revitalizing our community and inspiring cities across America. Dick's values blended seamlessly. Friendship, family, business, community; they were all part of a broader sense for the greater good. It is trite to say, but he was truly a unique human being. I've never seen anyone tie together those pieces the same way in such shy, quiet, unassuming fashion. He was smart as a whip and credentialed, but he didn't care about status and credentials, for himself or anyone else. He was still the kid from David Douglas, who just happened to be student body president, an athlete, an actor, a successful scholar who went off to Harvard. He didn't just wear this well, he disguised it. What he cared about was the human connection. If you knew Dick well, that was what you expected; you almost took it for granted. If you went on an early morning walk, he was the guy with the flashlight for you, maybe an extra bottle of water wondering if you're going to be late for your next appointment. He was always asking how you were. It was a detailed sort of checking in, about how you were really doing, your family, what you were thinking, who you were connected with.

His men's group was a critical part of who Dick was for two decades, but he wanted to share and understand that type of experience. He encouraged others to stake out their own circles to have the same connection. Dick will always be connected to us. Truly an extraordinary human being, who left us too soon, but who lived an amazingly rich and full life. We're all richer for that connection with him today, which continues every evening at 6:30 as his friends pause to remember Dick and what he meant to us all.

JACOB BACK

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jacob Back for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jacob Back is a 9th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jacob Back is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and persever-

ance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jacob Back for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS
OF MOLLY K. MORRISON

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Molly K. Morrison on the occasion of being honored with the Eighth Annual Rebecca Lukens Award by The Greystone Society of Coatesville, Chester County, Pennsylvania. As an outstanding candidate for this recognition, Molly was chosen for this honor for the same love of community she has as the award's namesake, Rebecca Lukens.

A Chester County native, Molly Morrison learned to appreciate the importance of land preservation by spending time on her grandparents' farm in northern Chester County, a place where her German immigrant ancestors had been farming since the early 1700s.

After pursuing an English degree at Ursinus College and Masters in Communications at Syracuse University, Molly worked at the Brandywine Valley Association and then for Chester County, where she served in a variety of positions over a 21-year period, most recently as Director of Policy and Planning. In that role, she oversaw the development and implementation of the County's nationally recognized open space program, as well as the policy development of and program implementation for planning, parks, water resources, and community development.

As President of Natural Lands Trust, she has been instrumental in creating conservation strategies for complex land transactions, including the acquisition of the 1,263-acre ChesLen Preserve in Newlin Township. In addition to providing strategic leadership and fundraising for a staff of 60, Molly oversees a network of 42 nature preserves and 361 conservation easements, totaling more than 44,000 acres. Molly has also served on a variety of boards, including the YMCA of Greater West Chester, the Chester County Art Association, and the Chester County United Way, among others.

Mr. Speaker, in light of her years of immeasurable contributions to the community and litany of outstanding accomplishments, I ask that my colleagues join me today in recognizing Molly K. Morrison on the occasion of her being honored with The Greystone Society's Rebecca Lukens Award.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF STATE
REPRESENTATIVE KAREN CASTOR DENTEL

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize State Representative Karen Castor Dentel. Karen is a third-generation Floridian raised in Tampa. She earned a degree in Elementary Education from Vanderbilt University, a Masters from UNC Chapel Hill, and a PhD from the University of Florida.

Karen taught in a number of local elementary schools before her passion for teaching led her to become a voice for education in Tallahassee. When state policies regarding teacher evaluations and an increasing emphasis on testing began affecting her students, children, and colleagues, Karen sought election to the Florida House of Representatives in order to make an impact on education policies. In 2012 she was elected as State Representative for District 30 covering parts of Orange and Seminole counties.

Karen comes from a long line of public servants. Her mother, Betty Castor served in the Florida Senate and as Florida's Commissioner of Education. Her stepfather, Sam Bell also served in Florida's House of Representatives. Her father, Don Castor was a judge and her brother Frank is currently a judge in south Florida. Finally, her sister U.S. Representative KATHY CASTOR currently serves Hillsborough County in the United States Congress.

Karen is married to Eric Dentel and has two children, Wyatt and Caroline. An active member of her community, Karen is involved with the Maitland, Winter Park, and Greater Seminole Chambers of Commerce, and the League of Women Voters. She is a former member of the Junior League of Greater Orlando and a former Board member of the Orange County Regional History Center, where she chaired the Education Committee. Karen and her family are members of the First Congregational Church of Winter Park. In her spare time, Karen enjoys learning about Florida history, birding, reading, and spending time with her family and friends.

Karen is delighted to continue her family's legacy of service and is grateful for the honor of representing the Central Floridians of District 30.

I am happy to honor State Representative Karen Castor Dentel, during Women's History Month, for her leadership and service to the Central Florida community.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AMY RITTER

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Amy Ritter. Amy, a 27-year-old communications and activist powerhouse, has made her mark on Florida politics through her innovative messaging and organizing skills. Her "Pink Slip Rick" campaign was one of the most dynamic branding campaigns in Florida's recent political history.

Born in Chicago, Amy's family moved to Coral Springs, Florida, in 1992. She attended public school and graduated from Broward College in 2006 with High Honors and an As-

sociate's Degree in Political Science. Amy became part of the Gator Nation in 2007 and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and a minor in International Development and Humanitarian Assistance.

While at the University of Florida, Amy interned on a local campaign that successfully fought for maintaining LGBT civil rights in Gainesville. The campaign helped Amy realize that universal change can start in one small town, or with just one person.

In 2009, Amy moved to Orlando and continued her work on local and congressional races until she was hired as Director of Research for Florida Watch Action in 2011. Amy helped propel Florida Watch Action to the national spotlight with the cutting-edge "Pink Slip Rick" campaign, a branding campaign on Governor Rick Scott. Through the campaign, Amy helped galvanize middle class Floridians statewide. "Pink Slip Rick," which quickly became a movement, would go on to serve as a model for progressive groups throughout the country. Amy also launched Florida's first legislative tracking program, for which she received the Florida Netroots Nation "Rookie Activist of the Year" award in 2011.

During the 2012 presidential election, Amy served as Field Director for the Orange County democratic campaign and was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention.

Saint Petersburg named Amy one of "30 under 30" rising stars in Florida politics in 2013. She noted that her inspiration came from her father and a lifelong sense of urgency to stand up against injustice. Also in 2013, Amy became Director of Communications for the Orange County Tax Collector, Office of Scott Randolph, where she has transformed the office's communications, online, and social media presence.

Amy has served on the boards of the Orange County Democratic Executive Committee and the Democratic Women's Club of Greater Orlando. In 2014, she founded the Orlando chapter of the New Leader's Council, a progressive fellowship program for young professionals. A firm believer in equality and equal access, Amy remains committed to advocacy and supporting social justice organizations such as Planned Parenthood, Organize Now, and Equality Florida.

I am happy to honor Amy Ritter, during Women's History Month, for her passion and service to the Central Florida Community.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DARYL FLYNN

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Daryl Flynn. Ms. Flynn was first elected to the Orange County School Board in 2006. She is a native of Florida and was educated in the Sarasota County public school system. She received an AA from Manatee Jr. College and a BA in political science from Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Florida. She holds an MPA from Florida Atlantic University with an emphasis on environmental growth management.

Prior to joining the school board, Flynn was an active member of the PTA at the local, county, and state levels for more than 15 years and served as chair of her son's middle school SAC. She was president of the Orange County Council of PTA from 2001-2002. Flynn also served on both the Orange County Public School (OCPS) Reapportionment Committee

and the Superintendent's Accountability Committee in 2001. She was also a member of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Education. In December 2009, Ms. Flynn became a Certified Board Member through the Florida School Boards Association.

Flynn's community involvement, both past and present, includes the East Orlando Chamber of Commerce, the East Orange County Relay for Life, and the East Orange County Kiwanis Club. She is also a member of the Orange County League of Women Voters and serves on the Board of Directors for Magic Curtain Productions.

Flynn's professional career includes environmental and emergency response planning, as well as meeting planning. She has been a franchised Jazzercise Instructor with active status since 1983 and now teaches at the Waterford Lakes Jazzercise Center.

Ms. Flynn lives with her husband, Jim, in the Waterford Lakes area. They have one son, Jimmy, who is a graduate of University High School and the University of Central Florida.

I am happy to honor Daryl Flynn, during Women's History Month, for her service to the Central Florida community.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SHERI MORTON

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize the service of Sheri Morton. For over 45 years, Sheri Morton has been an active and dedicated volunteer for progressive causes. From the peace, civil rights, and women's movements in the 1960s to voting and equal rights in the 2010s, Sheri has volunteered tens of thousands of hours to making our community, and our country, a better place to live. Sheri has been a longtime supporter of quality, affordable health care for all Americans a goal which has been the major impetus and inspiration for her extensive volunteer efforts.

Mrs. Morton began volunteering as a teenager and continued doing so throughout her time at Harvard College. She earned a Masters Degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where she was later employed. Sheri went on to become an attorney after receiving her J.D. Now retired, she continues actively volunteering and advocating for important issues, often donating more than 50 hours of service a week.

Over the years, Sheri has volunteered for over a hundred political candidates. Currently, she serves as Secretary of the Democrats of Celebration, as well as Campaign Committee Chair. She is a Precinct Committeewoman on the Osceola Democratic Executive Committee and a member of the Executive Committee of the Democratic Hispanic Caucus of Florida. She is also a member of the Osceola County Library Advisory Board.

Sheri has traveled extensively. She has spent significant time in Mexico, Spain and Israel and visited Morocco, Egypt, Japan, Taiwan, China, Canada, and various European countries. These journeys have contributed to her progressive global perspective on issues.

Her volunteer work has ranged from teaching English to immigrants and tutoring a blind student in high school math to collecting food for Appalachia's needy and warm clothes for the homeless.

When her husband was asked what his biggest success has been, he did not hesitate before responding, "My wife!"

Some of Sheri's numerous current volunteer efforts include encouraging Floridians to enroll in health insurance under the Affordable Care Act and urging the state of Florida to expand Medicaid.

For Sheri, volunteering is serious business. Through good times and bad, triumphs and setbacks, Sheri has continued to volunteer, working to improve the quality of life for people in Florida, our country and the world.

I am happy to honor Sheri Morton, during Women's History Month, for her dedication to volunteering and advocacy.

RECOGNIZING THE LEADERSHIP OF BARBARA M. JENKINS, ED.D.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize the service of Dr. Barbara Jenkins, an educator who has been serving the needs of students for more than 25 years. Dr. Jenkins was named Superintendent for Orange County Public Schools in 2012.

As the former Deputy Superintendent for Orange County, she served as the superintendent's designee, overseeing five area superintendents and the division of Teaching and Learning. In her prior tenure as Chief of Staff, she also oversaw Human Resources, Public Relations, Labor Relations, and Strategic Planning and served as the chief negotiator for the district. She also coordinated executive functions for the district and provided support to the school board.

From 1998 through 2005, she was the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district in North Carolina. As Assistant Superintendent, she was responsible for Employee Relations, Licensure, Benefits, Information Systems, Compensation and Employment. During her time in Charlotte, she was recognized for her innovative strategies which increased equity among schools, including accelerated staffing strategies, teacher incentives, and the use of a balanced scorecard.

Dr. Jenkins received her undergraduate and doctor of education degrees from the University of Central Florida. She previously served as Senior Director for Elementary Education in Orange County, where she supervised principals and schools. She has also been a classroom teacher, staff developer, and principal.

Dr. Jenkins is a fellow of the nationally recognized Broad Urban Superintendents Academy. She was named the 2013 District Data Leader of the Year by the Florida Department of Education. In addition, she was honored with a Professional Achievement Award from the University of Central Florida College of Education and Human Performance in November 2013.

Deeply engaged in the community, Dr. Jenkins serves on the board of the United Arts of Central Florida, the Winter Park Health Foundation, the YMCA of Central Florida, the Central Florida Regional Commission on Homelessness, and the Orange County Youth Mental Health Commission. Recognizing her commitment and influence, an Orlando Sentinel-hosted survey of "informed" Central Floridians voted Dr. Jenkins the ninth most powerful person in Central Florida in December 2013. Orlando Magazine also recognized her as one of the "50 Most Powerful People in Orlando" in July 2013.

I am happy to honor Barbara Jenkins, during Women's History Month, for her dedication and commitment to education.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ROSEMARY DUROCHER

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Rosemary DuRocher. A retired Guidance Counselor, Rosemary graduated from Immaculata College, and has a Master's Degree from Rollins College and a Doctorate from the University of Florida.

During her career, Rosemary worked as a teacher in the Executive Internship Program in the Orange County Public School system and as a Counselor and Director of the Winter Park High School Guidance Department. Prior to retiring, she set up the Guidance Department at the Florida Virtual School.

While working full-time Rosemary was always active in the community. She served as President of the League of Women Voters, was appointed to serve on Governor Bob Graham's Task Force on the Criminal Justice System, and chaired a task force on Women in the County Jail.

Politics has been a lifelong interest of Rosemary. Every election season you will find her active in campaigns.

Rosemary is active in her church. She has served as Chair of the Committee on Ministry, co-chaired the Canvass Committee, and served on the interim search committee. Currently, Rosemary facilitates a discussion group at Orlando Lutheran Towers and serves on the activities committee.

Rosemary was married to Joe DuRocher for almost 51 years. She is the mother of three children, Beth Little, John DuRocher, and Mike DuRocher, and the grandmother of two.

I am happy to honor Rosemary DuRocher, during Women's History Month, for her contributions to the Central Florida community.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF THE
LIFE OF DR. ALEJANDRO
ZAFFARONI

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life of an extraordinary American, Dr. Alejandro Zaffaroni, who passed away peacefully at his home in Atherton, California, at the age of 91.

Dr. Zaffaroni was born on February 27, 1923, in Montevideo, Uruguay. He earned a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Montevideo in 1941, and came to the United States on a Fulbright Scholarship to the University of Rochester, where he earned his Ph.D.

In 1951, after finishing an NIH Fellowship, Dr. Zaffaroni joined a privately held Mexican chemical company, Syntex. He was a major force in its transformation and brought it to the U.S., shaping it into a global pharmaceutical company located near Stanford University in Palo Alto, California. It became most known for pioneering the development of therapeutic corticosteroids and the birth control pill. Dr.

Zaffaroni eventually became President of Syntex Laboratories and Director of Research.

Dr. Zaffaroni was widely hailed as not only a pioneer in the field of biotechnology, he was often referred to as the father of biotechnology in the United States and a Silicon Valley legend. His extraordinary accomplishments include the founding of the DNAX Institute, Alza Corporation, Affymax Inc., Affymetrix, Alexa Pharmaceuticals, Symyx Technologies and Maxygen.

He was the recipient of many prestigious awards and honors, including the National Medal of Technology and Innovation in 1995. He was also honored by the creation of a \$10 million financial aid program for Latin American students at Stanford University, the Alejandro and Lida Zaffaroni Scholarship and Fellowship Program, funded by colleagues who were inspired by Dr. Zaffaroni and his work. Dr. and Mrs. Zaffaroni are widely hailed for their extraordinary generosity to many humanitarian causes.

I have had the privilege of knowing Dr. Zaffaroni and his family for many years. Always the consummate gentleman, he was a mentor and an inspiration to me. He was a man of great integrity, and his wise counsel and warm friendship will remain with me for a lifetime.

Dr. Zaffaroni leaves his devoted wife Lida who was always his source of inspiration and support over a lifetime, his son, Dr. Alejandro Zaffaroni, his daughter-in-law Leah, his daughter Elisa, and his two beloved grandsons, Peter and Charles.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our deepest condolences to Dr. Zaffaroni's wife, Lida, and his family. We honor this singularly brilliant man through whom unparalleled achievements were made to treat disease and prevent suffering. These are his lasting legacies. Dr. Zaffaroni was a national treasure and his contributions to science and medicine are and always will be heralded around the world as extraordinary gifts to the betterment of humankind.

HONORING MR. DONALD SVEDMAN

HON. CORY GARDNER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Donald L. Svedman, who has recently been inducted into the Colorado Agriculture Hall of Fame. Mr. Svedman was born and raised in Windsor, Colorado on his grandfather's homestead. His family had both irrigated and dry-land farm ground in addition to cattle, sheep, hogs and dairy. He was active in 4-H and was named Outstanding Male 4-H member for the state of Colorado.

He entered Colorado State University, and then almost immediately joined the United States Navy for four years. Upon returning, he finished his CSU career with a degree in Animal Science. Mr. Svedman was extremely active in various clubs and organizations while at CSU. After attending CSU, he received a Master's Degree from Kansas State University. He then returned to Colorado and began a career

as a County Extension Agent in Boulder, Fremont, and Custer counties for multiple years.

He was elected to Executive Secretary of the Colorado Hereford Association in 1965, and named the Manager of the Colorado State Fair in 1966 by Governor John Love. He was and is an unwavering advocate for the betterment of the Colorado State Fair and worked tirelessly to improve the fair and its facilities. Because of his efforts, he was named Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture for the State of Colorado in January of 1970. He served 12 years as Deputy Commissioner and became well-known and highly respected as an asset to Colorado Agriculture. Mr. Svedman exemplifies the spirit of continued learning, service to profession, and commitment to community. I am honored to recognize him today.

**HONORING THE LA VEGA ISD
LADY PIRATES BASKETBALL
TEAM**

HON. BILL FLORES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the La Vega High School girls' basketball team for winning the Texas 3A state championship title.

On February 29, 2014, the La Vega Lady Pirates played in the 3A state championship game against the Argyle Lady Eagles. The Lady Pirates won with a score of 47-42.

The opposing team had taken the lead going into halftime and carried it through a majority of the second half. The Lady Pirates never gave up hope and continued playing tough. They persevered and came through with success at the end.

There is no better way to cap off such an incredible season, in which the Lady Pirates went undefeated, than with their first ever state championship title.

La Vega's Calveion Landrum, named MVP of the game, scored her team 23 points for her team as they defeated Argyle.

The Lady Pirates' coach, Amy Gillum, was finally able to achieve the goal she started pursuing as a player at La Vega 19 years ago. The championship was won as a result of both the players' and coach's hard work and dedication to their basketball program.

I congratulate Coach Gillum on the victory that would not have been possible without her guidance and the devotion from her players and fans.

Mr. Speaker, before I close I just want to say congratulations to an outstanding Texas District 17 high school girls' basketball team, coaching staff, fans, and community.

Go Lady Pirates.

**COMMEMORATING THE 150TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF OMEGA CHRISTIAN
CHURCH**

HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 150th anniver-

sary of Omega Christian Church in Arcadia, Indiana. It is a pleasure to congratulate the church in celebration of this special occasion.

Omega Christian Church was founded during some of our Nation's darkest days, in 1863 during the midst of the Civil War. At the time of the church's founding, the area was known as Bethany, but later became called Omega and is now Arcadia. Exemplifying the best of the hardworking and enterprising Hoosier spirit, the residents built the church themselves using local timber. Joseph Lacy oversaw the construction, and Dr. Silas Blount gave the dedication sermon in November of 1863. It was in this humble wooden structure that Knowles Shaw (1834-1878), an early minister of the church who was a prominent evangelist and composer of religious music, wrote the hymnal "Bringing in the Sheaves."

In the years following the war, the community around Omega Christian Church began to grow and prosper. After construction was finished on the church, a sawmill, general store, resident doctor, blacksmith, and post office were also established. In 1926, sixty-three years after the completion of the original structure, the church was moved and enlarged to make room for the growing congregation. The framework and sanctuary of the church are original and are still in use today, making the Omega Christian Church the oldest building in White River Township.

The church continued to grow and expand throughout the following years, including major structural improvements. While the physical building may have changed and evolved, Omega Christian Church's mission remains the same from its founding in 1863: to serve God, to serve his people, and to be a light in the community where stability, comfort, strength, and family can be found, all in the name of Jesus Christ. Today I am proud to recognize this small country church and thank them for their contributions to the spiritual well-being of their community. May the next 150 years be equally blessed.

**DON'T SINK THE SHIP—A TALE OF
TWO WWII BUDDIES**

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, throughout life, people come and go. Some stay for a lifetime. Some you might wonder how, out of the billions of people in the world, you end up next to them again after 90 years with everything from a war and life's triumphs in between. It's a rare occurrence, but the life story of two World War II veterans right here in Houston, Texas.

Hymie Abramson and Milton "Mittie" Tartakov celebrated birthdays together for years. They were both born on June 6th, 1924, at St. Joseph's Hospital in Houston. The coincidence of their birth date and place are only the beginning of their life story. Twelve years later, Mittie and Hymie found each other again on the San Jacinto High School baseball field. And that's where their true story began.

Mittie was a talented middle infielder and Hymie a utility outfielder. They stuck together through all the games, practices, and championships. Whatever event it was, they stuck by each other. Little did they know, that was only preparing them for what was to come. Shortly after graduating high school, Mittie and Hymie received their draft cards. Though it wasn't quite a surprise given the demand in WWII, going off to war is never easy to process. Questions and doubts, rightfully so, arose, and they had each other to help answer them. The first question became Army versus Navy, with many to follow. Mittie's older brother served in the Navy and Hymie's older brothers served in the Army. But they decided the U.S. Navy was for them. When Hymie questioned Mittie about how happy he was with his decision to join the Navy over the Army, he grinned and said, "We're still alive, aren't we?" That became their life motto.

During a conversation with Mittie, he smirked and said, "We were two green-faced kids fresh out of high-school, who thought we were going to San Diego for boot camp where there would be beaches, sun and girls. So we gathered what little money we had and, with the shirts on our back, planned for our travels. But the Navy had other plans, in fact, we were sent to Chicago, in the dead of winter, to train on Lake Michigan." The two battled the brutal winter on Lake Michigan while preparing for War, having never been further from Houston than Lubbock. This was the first of many realities they would face during their service.

After training together, both Hymie and Mittie were commissioned as Aviation Machinist Mates for the same ship the USS *Savo Island*—an escort carrier departing from the Kaiser Shipyard in Astoria, Oregon, heading for the South Pacific. During this time, both men learned a lot. The USS *Savo Island* was nicknamed a "jeep carrier" because of the relatively small size of the aircraft carrier. It held 40 planes, 15 bombers called TBM Avengers, and 25 fighter planes. The Avengers were torpedo bombers targeting enemy surface ships. They had internal fuel tanks in the wings for additional fuel storage that would allow them to travel farther distances. Additionally, they had Yehudi lights which were used to match the brightness of the sky creating counter-illumination camouflage. The camouflage would allow them to get closer to the enemy without being seen until they were within the 3,000 yard range. Quite a different life from the baseball field where they first "officially" met.

The journey was unpredictable for both of the men who, at this point, were basically brothers. Every day was different. One day, about 6 months into deployment, Mittie and Hymie were playing football. Given their love for sports, it was their way of unwinding but maybe not on this day. During a casual game of football, Hymie went for a pass and fell off the flight deck, causing him to break his leg. No break is a good break but the outcome for him wasn't exactly what he had hoped for. There was no other option but for him to be taken to the hospital on Tulagi Island. The two men were separated at this moment for several years.

The days weren't easy. Nights were warm and days registered around 120 degrees with the sun beaming down on the men. On those

kinds of nights, Mittie would seek refuge from what felt like an inferno by sleeping on the flight deck instead of down below in the bunks. Most of the nights anyway, men would rarely sleep through the night as they always had to be on-guard: submarine attacks and bombers were a frequent occurrence. There was a critical shortage of tail-gunners during this time. The tail-gunner position was the most dangerous on the bombers. Enemy aircrafts targeted this position often, as it was the most vulnerable on the plane. But Mittie volunteered for the position as a tail gunner. Courtesy of the TBM's camouflage, it was the most forward plane of the squadron, closest to the enemy and furthest from the ship. While Mittie was working as a tail-gunner down range, Hymie regained his health and was sent stateside to continue work as an aviation machinist for the remainder of the War.

The USS *Savo Island* made a remarkable journey, fighting in seven invasions. The last combat mission they fought was in Okinawa, where the ship's radar tower was hit by a kamikaze. From there, the ship sailed to Guam, and there it was repaired before traveling to Alaska for refuge. It was off the shores of Alaska when Mittie was finally told the great news: Victory over Japan. The USS *Savo Island* continued its voyage for port at Pearl Harbor. While in Hawaii, the Navy treated the men to a 6 month R and R before heading back home. But as far as Mittie was concerned, Houston, Texas, sounded more like paradise than Hawaii. Before he finally returned home, the USS *Savo Island* earned the Presidential Unit Citation—the highest honor a ship can earn. That marked the day Mittie was permitted to wear the ribbon with “the star” on his uniform.

In 1946, Mittie and Hymie were both discharged at Camp Wallace in Galveston, Texas. Shortly after being discharged, the two veterans joined A-Jayes, a young mens social club. Mittie went on to attend college at the University of Houston. Upon graduation, he began working for a lumber yard, of which he eventually took ownership. He renamed it Milton's Lumber and Building Co. It was a success for 53 years.

Hymie owned Metropolitan Furniture with his brothers, where he worked on developing advertisements, design and even helped with the construction of the building. Despite everything Hymie and Mittie had in common throughout life, they chose different career paths. But that didn't come between them in any way. Both businesses were down the street from each other on Jensen Drive, and the best friends managed to eat lunch together almost every day.

The year 1953 would change both Hymie and Mittie's lives. It was the year they both met their wives, Blanch and Sally. These two women not only brought the two men closer but the two couples became best of friends. They did everything together from bowling leagues every week to traveling the country.

Five years ago, Hymie and his wife, Blanch, moved to the Hampton Post Oak. Sure enough, 2 years later, Blanch convinced Mittie to move there as well. Up until yesterday, Mittie and Hymie spent their days playing Texas Hold'em with their friends at The Hampton on Post Oak.

On March 10, 2014, Mittie went to be with the Lord. We are forever indebted to men like Mittie and Hymie for their service to America. They are the rare, special breed that has shaped our country into the great Nation we are today. They are the Greatest Generation. And that's just the way it is.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE RETIREMENT OF CHARLES D. MCCRARY AS PRESIDENT AND CEO OF ALABAMA POWER

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, with my Alabama delegation colleagues ROBERT ADERHOLT, SPENCER BACHUS, MO BROOKS, BRADLEY BYRNE, MARTHA ROBY, and TERRI SEWELL, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize Charles D. McCrary. Mr. McCrary is retiring March 2014 from Alabama Power as the president and Chief Executive Officer.

Mr. McCrary has served since October 25, 2001, as the 10th president and CEO of Alabama Power, which provides electricity to 1.4 million customers in Alabama. He joined Alabama Power during the summer of 1970 following his freshman year at Auburn University and has held various positions of increasing responsibility within Southern Company, including vice president for Southern Nuclear Operating Company, and later held the positions of president of Southern Company Generation, chief production officer of Southern Company and president of Southern Power Company.

Mr. McCrary was born in Birmingham in 1951. He graduated from Shades Valley High School and earned his Bachelor of Science in mechanical engineering from Auburn University, followed by a Juris Doctor from Birmingham School of Law and was admitted to the Alabama State Bar in 1979.

Mr. McCrary is married to the former Phyllis Brantley of Birmingham and the father of two sons, Doug and Alex.

Mr. McCrary has been an active leader in the community and state of Alabama while serving as chairman of the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama and on the boards of Regions Financial Corporation, Mercedes-Benz U.S. International Inc., Protective Life Corporation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Southern Research Institute and the Auburn University Board of Trustees.

Mr. McCrary has been a coalition builder and a leader in economic development for the region and state through his vision and commitment calling for greater cooperation between cities, counties and business leaders. He was instrumental in bringing several large industries, to Alabama, including automotive, aerospace and steel manufacturers.

He implemented Target Zero, a safety program to ensure employees are properly trained and equipped to do their jobs safely, and the program has become a model for the utility industry. Mr. McCrary led the company and its customers through some of its greatest

natural-disaster challenges, including Hurricane Ivan in 2004, which caused the largest number of outages in company history (825,701); Hurricane Katrina in 2005 with 636,891 outages; and the tornado disaster on April 27, 2011 with 412,000 outages. He made the decision to publicly announce restoration commitments after storms, a move that allowed the company to communicate to customers when they could expect to have power restored, making that practice standard today.

Mr. McCrary worked closely with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and managers to strengthen the relationship between the IBEW and management. He helped change the culture so management and labor have a mutual respect, creating a united front on behalf of all employees for various initiatives, including safety, employee morale and customer satisfaction and providing a business model throughout the industry.

Mr. Speaker, please join me and the entire Alabama Delegation in thanking Charles McCrary for his tireless dedication to Alabama Power. His service to our state is an inspiration. We wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was not able to be in Washington on March 4 through March 6, 2014 for votes because of the inclement weather and meetings in the district with the Secretary of Energy and EPA Administration.

If I had been here, I would have voted as follows:

On passage of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, as amended, I would have voted “yes.”

On passage of the resolution supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic change and calling to end the violence, I would have voted “yes.”

On the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule for H.R. 3826, the Electricity Security and Affordability Act, and H.R. 4118, the SIMPLE Fairness Act, I would have voted “no.”

On H. Res. 497, the resolution providing the rule for H.R. 3826 and H.R. 4118, I would have voted “no.”

On the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act, as Amended, I would have voted “yes.”

On the Motion to Recommit H.R. 4118, I would have voted “yes.”

On passage of H.R. 4118, I would have voted “no.”

On passage of the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act, I would have voted “yes.”

On the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule for H.R. 2824, the Preventing Government Waste and Protecting Coal Mining Jobs in America Act, and H.R. 2641, the RAPID Act, I would have voted “no.”

On H. Res. 501, the resolution providing the rule for H.R. 2824 and H.R. 2641, I would have voted “no.”

On the Smith of Texas and Schweikert Amendment, I would have voted "no."

On the Capps/McNerney Amendment, I would have voted "yes."

On the Schakowsky/Lowenthal Amendment, I would have voted "yes."

On the Waxman Amendment, I would have voted "yes."

On the Motion to Recommit H.R. 3826, I would have voted "yes."

On final passage of H.R. 3826, I would have voted "no."

On the Motion to Table H. Res. 504, I would have voted "no."

On the Jackson-Lee Amendment, I would have voted "yes."

On the McKinley Amendment, I would have voted "no."

On the Nadler Amendment, I would have voted "yes."

On the Johnson of Georgia Amendment, I would have voted "yes."

On the Motion to Recommit H.R. 2641, I would have voted "yes."

On final passage of H.R. 2641, I would have voted "no."

On passage to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine, I would have voted "yes."

BROWN'S 250TH BIRTHDAY

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of Brown University's 250th birthday.

Since 1764, the crown jewel of Rhode Island's higher education has been turning out scholars, thinkers, researchers, and leaders. Few of the sixty original signatories to the Brown charter could have conceived of where the university would stand today. Brunonians today lead the world in particle physics, neurology, renewable energy, and many other disciplines that two and a half centuries ago seemed beyond human comprehension.

As a lifelong citizen of Rhode Island, I am especially proud that our values of intellectual freedom and religious tolerance are reflected in Brown University. The mission of the university remains as relevant as ever: "To serve the community, the nation and the world by discovering, communicating and preserving knowledge in a spirit of free inquiry, and by educating and preparing students to discharge the offices of life with usefulness and reputation."

Perhaps inspired by these heady words, many graduates have chosen a life of public service. This includes Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen; Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez; Governors Maggie Hassan, Jack Markell, Bobby Jindal, and Rhode Island's own Lincoln Chafee; as well my colleague, Congressman CICILLINE.

In addition to the many individual contributions Brunonians have made to the civic com-

munity, Brown has been, itself, a leader among institutions of higher education. The New Curriculum is a model for academic exploration that encourages students to take intellectual risks and reflect deeply about their scholarly choices. These values can be seen in the exemplary Program in Liberal Medical Education, an innovative synthesis of traditional and professional courses of study, and in the University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice, which examined the connections between the school's namesake family and the slave trade.

For the past 250 years, Brown has stood as a shining example of the success of free inquiry and the powers of creative discovery. Under President Christina Paxson's leadership, Brown is continuing to build on her past successes and remains a global leader in education. Just as her founders could not have envisioned the breadth of research being done today, I am excited to see what new fields Brown will lead in the future.

I join all of my Rhode Island colleagues in wishing Brown well on her 250th Birthday, as we all look forward to even greater things to come.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BEURT R. SERVAAS, M.D.

HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Beurt R. SerVaas of Indianapolis, Indiana. He passed away on February 2, 2014, at the age of 94. Beurt was an exceptional civil servant, businessman and philanthropist who was devoted to bettering the city he loved. He served both Indianapolis and his country with integrity and honor.

A lifelong Hoosier and resident of Indianapolis, Beurt graduated from Shortridge High School and later from Indiana University. After completing his degree, he bravely served in the United States Navy during the Second World War as a member of the American Intelligence Command's Office of Strategic Services in China. He later continued his service to our nation as a member of the newly formed Central Intelligence Agency.

Returning to Indianapolis, Beurt began his storied career as a businessman in 1949 when he purchased his first company. Over the following decades, he would buy and sell nearly fifty businesses in Indiana and around the world, including the venerable Saturday Evening Post. An avid learner, he obtained his M.D. in his forties from the university he helped create, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). Beurt SerVaas exemplified the best of the Hoosier spirit: hard work, determination and entrepreneurship.

Beurt was not only a business leader, but also a civic leader whose work fundamentally shaped the city of Indianapolis. Along with

then-Mayor Richard Lugar, he was instrumental in the creation of Unigov, the government consolidation that expanded the boundaries of Indianapolis to include all of Marion County. After the transition, Beurt served on the City County Council for forty years, including twenty-seven as the president, and served under four different mayors. I was immensely proud to work with Beurt during my time as Deputy Mayor of Indianapolis. He was always kind and generous, and he provided invaluable guidance on how to keep the residents of Indianapolis safe and secure.

Dr. Beurt SerVaas is an irreplaceable pillar of the Indianapolis community whose legacy will continue to inspire Hoosiers for generations to come. Without his tireless devotion and visionary leadership, Indianapolis would not be the world-class city it is today. He brought the world's attention to his beloved hometown and helped Indianapolis compete on the global stage. My condolences and well wishes go out to his wife, Cory Jane SerVaas, his five children, his nineteen grandchildren, and his two great-grandchildren. My thoughts and prayers are with the family during this difficult time.

CONGRATULATING THE ROCKFORD RESCUE MISSION ON THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Rockford Rescue Mission in Rockford, Illinois, on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.

Rockford Rescue Mission first opened in 1964 with a sign on the door reading "All are welcome here. The alcoholic, the addict, the stranger, the sojourner, the pilgrim, the poor. There is hope for all who enter here." Over the last 50 years, Rockford Rescue Mission has continued to open its doors to those in our community who need help, operating 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. The Mission offers meals, short term housing, and prevention and recovery services for addictions, abuse and destructive relations.

In one year, Rockford Rescue Mission provides almost 60,000 nights of lodging and over 160,000 meals, as well as more than 10,000 counseling sessions to people all across northern Illinois. The Mission relies on private donations and support from over 500 volunteers annually providing almost 45,000 hours of service.

Mr. Speaker, I again congratulate Rockford Rescue Mission for reaching this impressive milestone. I want to thank them for their incredible efforts over the past 50 years and their continued dedication to providing services to those in need in our community.

SENATE—Wednesday, March 12, 2014

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, You are the way, the truth, and the life. Shine Your light upon our Senators' pathway, keeping them from straying from Your will. Lord, keep them from sluggish thinking or ambiguous expression or coldness of heart or weakness of will. As they experience Your constancy, enable them to see Your higher wisdom, which is a lamp for their feet and a light for their path. Continue to guide them until they see You more clearly, follow You more nearly, and love You more dearly each day.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable EDWARD J. MARKEY, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. MARKEY thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 309, S. 1086, the

Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 309, S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m., with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the final half.

Following morning business the Senate will proceed to executive session. At 10:30 a.m., there will be up to 6 roll-call votes on the confirmation of several executive nominations.

Upon disposition of the nomination of Sarah Bloom Raskin to be Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, the Senate will begin consideration of S. 1086, the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act reauthorization bill.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2110
AND H.R. 4152

Mr. REID. Mr. President, there are two bills at the desk due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2110) to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate, and for other purposes.

An act (H.R. 4152) to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine.

Mr. REID. I would object to anything at this time as to these two matters.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bills will be placed on the calendar.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in our great country we think of a college education as the key to unlock our children's success. But many families in this country struggle to afford child care, leaving no money whatsoever for higher education.

In 2011, in most States, 1 year of daycare for an infant was more expensive than 1 year of tuition at a public university.

Let me repeat that. In America, in almost every State, 1 year of daycare is more expensive than 1 year of tuition at a public university. It is no wonder

that middle-class families are struggling with sticker shock, and for many low-income families childcare is simply out of reach.

For millions of families in the United States, childcare is their single largest household expense at nearly \$15,000 a year. In an economy where most families have two working parents, childcare isn't a luxury, it is a necessity.

That is why President Bush signed the first Child Care and Development Block Grant Act into law in 1990. He did this to ensure working families have access to quality, affordable childcare.

I thank HELP Committee Chairman HARKIN and Senators BURR, MIKULSKI, and ALEXANDER for their diligent bipartisan work to reauthorize this measure.

The program serves more than 1.6 million children, including more than 7,300 in Nevada, making access to affordable, high-quality care possible. But the program serves only a fraction of the need. We should be doing more to guarantee every parent who wants to work can afford adequate supervision for their children and for every child, regardless of income, so that kids have a safe place to learn.

This bipartisan measure is an investment in America's mothers, 65 percent of whom work outside the home. Yet women earn less and are less likely to go back to work after having children—than men—in part because of the shortage of safe, affordable daycare.

This program is helping millions of parents, and especially mothers, get back to work to help support their families. In the two decades since this important program was last authorized, we have learned a great deal about the importance of early childhood education and high-quality childcare.

This bipartisan measure builds on that knowledge, updates health and safety standards for childcare centers, and requires providers to undergo comprehensive background checks.

This reauthorization is only the first step. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle on the larger effort to broaden access to quality early childhood education.

We are going to take up this bill later today. As I have said before, and I will say again so everyone understands, this is a bipartisan bill. I hope the managers of this bill will do everything they can to move this expeditiously through this body. But we are going to finish—not finish it this week, but I prefer finishing it, and I hope we can do that.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

Mr. REID. Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein in for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RASKIN NOMINATION

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, shortly we will be voting on some nominees, and I want to thank all the nominees and their families for their willingness to serve the public. This is a real sacrifice. People are giving up other opportunities in order to serve their country. It is not just the individual who accepts these positions of public service, it is a family matter, and so I applaud them all for their service to our country.

I would like to speak in particular about the last vote we will have in this series, and that is the confirmation of Sarah Bloom Raskin as Deputy Secretary of the Treasury. Sarah is a person who has given much to public service throughout her career. I know her personally. She is a Marylander, and we are very proud of the fact she is a Marylander.

If Sarah is confirmed, she will be the highest ranking woman in the history of the Treasury, and I am very proud of that accomplishment. She has been very active in Maryland and at the national level. For the past several years Sarah has served on the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. Her deep financial and regulatory knowledge and sound judgment made her an essential asset during her tenure there. As the Presiding Officer knows, this has been a very turbulent time in regard to the economy of our Nation, and during this great economic unease her dedication to strong consumer protections has been especially valuable.

Even before joining the Board of Governors, Sarah was no stranger to successfully navigating choppy economic

waters. In 2007 she was appointed Commissioner of Financial Regulation for the State of Maryland, so I have had the chance to observe her and her dedication and her effectiveness at the State level and also at the national level.

At the State level she has significantly improved consumer protections and supported banks through the many challenges of the financial crisis. That is where I got to see her work firsthand and her thoughtfulness and how dedicated she was, and her ability to bring people of different persuasions together, different stakeholders in our financial community, and to chart a course where we could have a positive result not only for the financial institutions but for consumers and for our economy.

Sarah is also part of a family of government service. Her husband Jamie is a member of the Maryland State Senate and has an excellent record of public service in his own right. So this is a family that has given much to public service. We need people in the administration like Sarah Bloom Raskin. Her background, her education, and her job training all serve to make her particularly well suited to be the deputy secretary.

I, for one, am thankful to Sarah and her family that she is willing to serve in an extremely challenging position. This is not going to be an easy position, obviously, as Deputy Secretary of the Treasury. It gives me great confidence to know Sarah will be handling the many responsibilities demanded of the deputy secretary, and it gives me great pride that a fellow Marylander may continue to be among the financial leaders who guide our economy toward our future growth and stability.

I urge my colleagues to support her confirmation. We are indeed fortunate to have a person of her skills willing to serve as Deputy Secretary of the Treasury.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I got the chance to meet David Weis, a 22-year-old student at Georgetown University, about a week ago. David's story, unfortunately, although it may sound exceptional, is not. He was just about to celebrate his 19th birthday, when 2 days before it, in 2010, he was diagnosed with thyroid and lymphatic

cancer—a devastating diagnosis that came just as he was preparing to start college.

As most of his classmates were enjoying the first days of their freshman year at Georgetown University, David was dealing with a rigorous course of treatment for his disease that left him tired, left him confused, and left him anxious about his future. David had an ace up his sleeve, and that was the fact he had insurance. But he only has it as long as he is covered as a student.

David came to the U.S. Capitol last week to testify in favor and in support of the Affordable Care Act, because he knows that with the passage of this bill his diagnosis will not be a death sentence; that he will be able to get the coverage he needs; and that he will be able to pursue his dreams when he graduates rather than have his life decisions dictated by his illness—having to choose a job simply because it provides health care or having to be locked into a career simply because he can't afford going without insurance to cover his cancer.

David's story can be repeated hundreds of thousands of times all across this country by young people in their teens and their twenties and in their thirties who thought they were invincible but who got knocked off their feet by a devastating disease such as cancer and who desperately need health care insurance at the time of that illness in order to get back onto their feet.

Some of the best news that has come out over the past several months, as the enrollment has started to ramp up on the Affordable Care Act, has been the number of young people who have signed up. We have seen that 31 percent of all of the people who have signed up for insurance exchanges all across this country are 34 years or under. This is a real signal that young people are recognizing that, although they may feel as if they are going to live forever, they desperately need insurance, just as everyone else does. So that is why I was so glad to see President Obama yesterday go on the show "Between Two Ferns," with Zach Galifianakis, to talk about the importance of young people signing up.

We all know about the "Two Ferns" effect. Previously unknown stars such as Will Ferrell and Bradley Cooper went on "Two Ferns" and were catapulted to stardom. I am glad to see the "Two Ferns" effect has had the same impact on health care enrollment. Since President Obama went on "Two Ferns," 19,000 people were referred to the Web site of enrollment from the "Funny or Die" Web site. By 6 p.m. that day the video had sent 32,000 people to healthcare.gov. HHS officials said traffic on healthcare.gov had risen by 40 percent on Tuesday to over 890,000 visits in 1 day.

It is a signal that when young people, through whatever means is available to

them, find out about the benefits of the Affordable Care Act, they are interested and they are signing up. I hope President Obama uses more innovative tools and methods to try to get the word out to young adults in their late teens, twenties, and thirties about the importance of signing up for the Affordable Care Act because it is important. Some 70,000 adolescents and young adults are diagnosed with cancer every single year in this country. There are 151,000 people below the age of 20 living with diabetes right now. So despite the fact that we may think we are going to live forever or think we may not need coverage, young people need it as well. It is affordable.

The President said yesterday on this show: You effectively can get coverage for the cost of a cell phone bill. And it is true. Having a cell phone is pretty important, but being able to get treatment when you get a serious disease is pretty important as well.

In Connecticut the numbers are pretty reasonable. A 22-year-old in Hartford making a \$25,000 salary—which is the salary I made in my first job in Hartford—can get a bronze policy for as low as \$66 a month through Anthem. A 25-year-old living in Bridgeport making a little more, \$30,000, can get a bronze policy for as low as \$108 a month. About two-thirds of all young adults across the country who are currently uninsured are eligible for these subsidies.

For all of these young people who were previously going to the marketplace and often having to pay full price, often buying insurance on their own with no ability to negotiate a group discount, this health care law is transformational. Fifty or sixty dollars a month is the price for bronze plans. And this doesn't even count the catastrophic option open to most young people as well.

The good news continues to roll in when it comes to the numbers of people signing up. Yesterday the administration announced that 4.2 million people have enrolled in marketplaces through March 1; 943,000 people enrolled in the short month of February; and 31 percent of all those people are 34 or younger. And, of course, we haven't even gotten to crunch time yet.

I wish this weren't the case, but I know something about how young people think. Too many leave big decisions until the last minute, whether it be studying for a test, writing a term paper, or signing up for health care.

As we have seen in the past on a lot of these enrollment deadlines, like the enrollment deadline for Medicare Part D, the surge comes in the final few weeks of enrollment. So we expect to see the numbers pick up in a significant way through March.

Knowing how people in their twenties and thirties think, I expect we will see a major surge in enrollment from

young people as well. But they shouldn't wait until the last minute. It does take more than a few hours to look at the choices and decide which is best. In Connecticut we have three insurance plans offering coverage, but each one of them has three or four different plans. So I hope young adults in their twenties and thirties take more than a few hours or a day to sign up because we want to make sure they get the plan available for them. It is easy to do with a phone call to an enrollment center, a visit in Connecticut to the in-person centers in New Britain and New Haven, and very simple to do on healthcare.gov.

In Connecticut our exchange is going like gangbusters. We had a goal of signing up 80,000 to 100,000 people, and a full 30 days before the deadline we have signed up 152,000 people. Of those individuals in Connecticut, about 25 percent are 25 years or younger. We are on track to double our original estimates in Connecticut.

Connecticut is a State that had a pretty high rate of insured to begin with, so our delta to get to full insurance was relatively small compared to other States. But guess what Connecticut is doing. Connecticut is actually working to implement the law rather than working to undermine the law. We put a lot of time and thought into getting a working Web site, into doing the kind of outreach other States are not doing to get people to sign up. When we have done that, young people and old people across the board have flocked to sign up.

I was glad to see the President do his outreach yesterday to young people all across the country. I was glad to see the spike in interest on healthcare.gov. I am glad to see that 4.2 million people have signed up for health care, as more people all across the country—young people especially—are realizing the Affordable Care Act works.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

ENERGY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, too often in Washington our friends on the left seem to operate under a very dangerous assumption: that good intentions are more important than a good outcome. I say it is dangerous because we see all the time how liberal Washington politics that aim to alleviate problems such as poverty or wage stagnation or other social or economic problems just seem to make things worse. Yet, despite the evidence, the policies never seem to change. More money just gets thrown at the same

failed programs year after year with barely any thought as to whether they actually work.

ObamaCare is a case in point. Here is a big-government bill that Washington Democrats thought they could just pass and—poof—health care would magically be made more affordable for everybody. Yet for millions of Americans just the opposite happened. Contrary to the assurances, ObamaCare has upended lives and businesses all across our country. It has forced painful choices for people who could barely get by as it was. It is a mess.

So one would assume Washington Democrats would step back and take a long hard look at the accumulating evidence and start thinking about ways to keep this thing from pummeling even more Americans. But we would be wrong. They just keep doubling down.

When the Web site crashed, they called it a glitch. When people started losing their doctors and their plans, they told them: You can live with it. When Americans started sharing their ObamaCare horror stories, they basically called them all liars. That would tell us something we need to know about how much Washington liberals care about middle-class Americans. They are captive to the most extreme ideologies of the left, and they don't even try to hide it anymore. Forget reason or economics or sound argument; it is all about ideology with these guys.

We saw it all on vivid display a couple nights ago with the Democrats' all-night talkathon on global warming. The reason for the all-nighter was pretty obvious: It was a command performance for a leftwing activist donor out in California. And the fact that taxpayers were basically subsidizing the whole thing was bad enough, but what about the basic substance of the issue Democrats were talking about the other night. What about that. It is just one more case where good intentions trump the impact their proposals would have on ordinary Americans.

See, the Obama administration seems to think that if it just wishes really hard and issues enough regulations, it can singlehandedly reduce global carbon emissions—without bringing Beijing and New Delhi onboard. It is an alternate universe where “victory” means U.S. emissions going down by some negligible amount—and where China and India don't simultaneously eclipse that tiny emissions reduction with expanded energy of their own. It is a universe where the massive economic consequence of acting so recklessly doesn't seem to matter, and it is a universe where middle-class Americans somehow don't take the hit to our economic output right on the chin. In other words, it is the kind of thing that could only make sense to a party blinded by extremist ideology.

Of course, Washington Democrats love to pull out that old straw man and

say: Either you support our approach completely—even if it won't actually solve the problem it purports to—or you hate the environment. It is kind of like when they said: Either you vote for ObamaCare or you hate affordable health care. Well, our constituents remember how that worked out, and our constituents are quite capable of seeing the complexity in the world which so often eludes our friends on the left. They are capable of caring deeply about the environment, for instance, while disagreeing with the administration's ideological crusade.

Of course, every ideological crusade needs an enemy. In the administration's war on coal, Washington Democrats appear to have found their foil. It is not some fat cat. It is not some Wall Street titan. No. This time it seems to be middle-class Kentucky families—miners who struggle every day just to put food on the table, the kinds of Americans who work hard so the rest of us can have a better life. Well, it is unfair and it is wrong.

Where Washington Democrats seem to see faceless adversaries, I see human beings, people who are hurting. I wish my Democratic colleagues would join me sometime as I travel around Kentucky listening to their concerns.

At one recent hearing, a miner named Howard Abshire had this message for President Obama:

Come and look at our little children, look at our people, Mr. President. You're not hurting for a job; you've got one. I don't have one.

Another miner, Gary Lockhart, said his biggest worry was just trying to keep a roof over his family's head and food on the table. When it comes to his fellow miners, here is what he had to say:

Many of these men, who have never asked the government for any kind of assistance in their lives . . . [are] having to go home and tell their families that their pay's going to be cut to practically nothing, [that] there'll be very little Christmas this year, no vacations, nothing extra.

Miners aren't the only ones affected by all the pain out there in coal country. I will read a letter I received from Bill Scaggs, a businessman and pastor from Pikeville. Here is what Bill had to say:

We have had to lay off employees due to the closings of mines and the [effect] they have had. Our business is losing thousands of dollars due to the negative impact of the EPA. As a pastor . . . our benevolence to the community has increased fivefold with help for food, power bills, clothing, and just the day to day living expenses that families need.

Americans may not always know it, but they owe a lot to coal miners like the ones I represent in Kentucky. Whether it is watching a TV show, drying a pair of jeans, or saving some leftover takeout for tomorrow, we often probably have a miner to thank for the electricity that makes it all possible.

That is also true if we try to keep the lights on all night long.

So I hope our friends on the other side will remember to be thankful for the electricity that makes all-night talkathons actually possible. Honestly, I still don't get the point of the stunt. They didn't introduce legislation or schedule votes on the national electricity tax they seem to want so badly. Remember, they control the Senate, so they can bring it up for debate whenever they want to. Where is the climate change debate? Where is the bill? People who were speaking all night control the Senate. Bring up the bill. Here is the point: Republicans care deeply about the environment. We also care deeply about creating jobs and growing the middle class, and we do not think our country should have to sacrifice one priority for the other. The American people do not either. So it is time for Washington Democrats to drop the billionaire-approved ideological crusades, to quit all the talk and get on-board with sensible forward-looking action to create jobs. We have tried the left's wish-upon-a-star approach already and real people have been hurt. So why not try some things that will actually work.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Will the Senator withhold his request?

Mr. McCONNELL. I will withhold.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the new numbers that have been released on the President's health care plan. Yesterday the administration announced that slightly more than 4.2 million people have signed up for health plans through the exchanges. As we all know, that is substantially below their first goal and substantially below their adjusted goal just a few weeks ago.

One of the things, in an effort by the Washington Post to find out how many of those people hadn't had insurance before—the group that was supposed to be served well by this—their estimate was in an article also this week, about 1 million people—an incredible amount of effort to add 1 million people to the insurance rolls, particularly with the stories from the millions of people who were on the insurance rolls that come to our offices every day; stories that clearly reflect problems with this law and problems, more importantly, for the American families who are impacted.

I brought a few of them with me today—since I was talking about this topic last week—that have come to our office. These are stories where we reached back, contacted these people, said I was going to come to the floor

with their story. I mentioned their first name and where they are from, are they concerned with that. Time after time people say, oh, no, we want this story told, which is why we reached out to you.

Gary in Lake Ozark, MO, says what so many people are saying—that his deductible is now the problem. In fact, his deductible on the policy he can now have—let me just read what he said:

Before I knew I'd be able to stay on my company's plan—

He was going to be able to stay on his company plan 1 year longer than he thought he was just a few months ago—

Before I knew I'd be able to stay on my company's plan, I went to the exchange to seek coverage. I found a plan available to me but was shocked to learn that my deductible was going to be over \$8,000 per family member.

This is quickly becoming the new group of people who aren't able to meet their health care costs. I met with a number of health care administrators, hospital administrators from Missouri recently. They said their fastest growing category of unpaid bills, of unpaid debt, is from people who have insurance. So many people with insurance now have a deductible that is a deductible they believe they cannot pay, and because they believe they cannot pay it, they simply do not pay it. So whether it is the \$8,000 on Gary's policy or the other lower amounts—hopefully, I will find some lower amounts here.

Here is one from another Gary. This Gary is in southeast Missouri. His wife's deductible went from \$500 to \$1,800—story after story. What happens when you have that growing deductible, whether it is the \$1,800 or the \$3,000 or the \$8,000, if it was \$500 and that was all you were going to have to pay, you might figure out how to put together \$500 or maybe even more than that, but when you see \$1,800 or \$3,000 or \$8,000, apparently people who used to pay their \$500 deductible say they can't possibly pay that, so the hospital needs to write that off, I guess, as bad debt. They are going to come after me for \$7,500 just like they would have for \$8,000.

So a deductible that used to be reasonable and was paid, now the family looks at that and says we cannot possibly ever get to that deductible, so there is no reason to even start down that path.

I have a whole list of Gary's here on top of this. I don't think they are all making up the name Gary. This Gary from Higginsville—I could have organized these to have a little more variety in the first three, but this is Gary from Higginsville, MO. They said his prescription costs for his premium for Humana Gold Plus Medicare Advantage and his copays have all gone up significantly. He is concerned about Medicare Advantage.

Just a few days ago I was here—in fact, I ran into this person. Reading this letter:

I am the man you spoke with outside Starbucks in Independence, MO, across from the mall. You leaned down on my car door of which the window was down. . . .

He called me over to talk about ObamaCare.

What has changed is that several of my medications have gone up in price . . . my premium has gone up for Human Gold Plus Medicare Advantage. My deductibles and co-pays have gone up—

Things that are the result of the cuts made to Medicare now actually cost him the money that used to be paid for by Medicare. When you cut Medicare \$500 billion to start a new program, somebody who is on the old program is going to be impacted by that. It is not like when we debated this we said, well, this Medicare Program is in such great shape that now we can start a new program and use money from Medicare to do that. That was done in the face of the understanding that Medicare, one of the principal obligations the country has made to retired people—people over 65, going back to 1965—that this was a program that wasn't going to be able to support itself.

So what do we decide to do as a Congress—and I voted against it and I am glad I did, but the ultimate decision was we are going to cut Medicare to start a new program, and we will see what happens to a program we already know is in trouble when we do that.

Frank from Kansas City's policy was canceled for not meeting the Affordable Care Act requirements. So he was forced to sign up on the exchange for himself, his wife, his 22-year-old daughter, his 19-year-old son, his 11-year-old daughter.

Frank was told that his 11-year-old daughter would qualify for Medicaid. He submitted three applications that they said they never received. After 2 months they asked him for additional information about his daughter, including tax information not available until April 1. Because of all this the Affordable Care Act is causing his daughter to go uninsured, according to Frank, until at least June.

This is one of those States that has an exchange the States have set up. A couple of places have never been able to sign up one single person. It is not October 1, it is now much closer to April 1, and this system is just not meeting the needs of families or meeting the goals that clearly it set for itself.

Farrell from Versailles, MO, says he is facing financial hardship because his employer cut his hours to avoid covering his health insurance. The employer told him ObamaCare was the reason they were cutting his hours. He was teaching at a community college as an adjunct professor for 8 years. He

said he quit his full-time job because, according to him, he was teaching four courses each semester and a course over the summer and that appeared to be meeting his needs.

Suddenly the new law comes along and his employer says: If you work as much as you have been working, we will have to provide health insurance.

Something that you and I would both be interested in too, having worked together for a long time, is seeing the response that even local governments and State governments have had for people they always—because they thought it was the right thing to do—provided health care. But sadly when the Federal Government said here is what you have to do, then that drew an interesting line across our society. It also means if you have to do this, you do not have to do anything for people who do not meet the requirement—the 30-hour workweek, the impact it has had on people.

I was in a location the other day, and I said to the manager of the store: How are you doing, meaning I thought this would be a skill discussion; how are you doing with the skill levels you may need to find here for people who are dealing with customers. He said it is harder all the time because now we have to hire four people, where we used to have to hire three people because nobody new whom we are hiring is working more than 29 hours a week. So instead of finding three people to do that job to work 40 hours a week, now we are having to find four people who work less than 30 hours a week.

He went on to say managers and people who were already working, nobody's getting their hours cut, but he said: When we are hiring new people, we are doing what our competitors are doing, which is hiring part-time people who do not have benefits.

Emmett at Lake Ozark, despite the fact that he was paying all his premiums through his employer, his employer dropped early retirees from the company policy.

He did not feel comfortable submitting his information to healthcare.gov, he says, for security reasons. By the way, nobody contends that this Web site is secure or that the information people put on it is secure. In fact, it is just the opposite. Every indication has been it is not secure. He did say he used "the website to find a plan, but three months later, when I finally got a quote, it was unaffordable, and much higher than the quotes I was able to find" outside of the exchange.

Bob from Wentzville, MO, said he has seen his insurance increase by 15 percent over the past 3 years. I feel like writing back to Bob, saying, based on all the other letters, with 15 percent you should be feeling pretty good about that, but nobody feels good about a 15-percent increase. It is just that so many people are seeing an increase that is so much higher than that.

On the other hand, his insurance premiums have increased by 15 percent, but—back to the earlier discussion—his deductible has gone from \$500 annually to \$4,000 annually or \$8,000 for the family.

Is this the kind of insurance families need? They used to pay a premium that was just a little bit less, 15 percent less, but they had a \$500 annual deductible, not a \$4,000 annual deductible.

Beverly from Potosi, MO, went to her doctor for her annual screening and was told she could only have one now every 2 years because of the Affordable Care Act. Although her risk of cancer increases with age, she believes she is getting less care than she got before.

Holly from Jefferson County, MO, is a registered nurse who is now working two part-time jobs. She is living paycheck to paycheck. Here is what she says in her letter:

I am a registered nurse that is only working part-time at 2 jobs. I live paycheck to paycheck like most people since the economic crisis. I am barely able to keep my bills paid much less able to add another one. I am upset that my right as a US citizen has been taken away from me to decide for myself if I want health insurance or not.

I think she could have added to that, to decide for herself whether she wanted it and what she wanted. I cannot tell what the President's latest announcement was, but it appears to be if you had insurance, even if it has been canceled because it didn't meet the qualifications, now somehow it is not canceled—and how you deal with that as someone who has maybe gotten another policy or maybe moved beyond the insurance you had and do not qualify to go back.

I don't know how many times we can change this law without finally admitting the law is not working. Let's take everything we know now, which is so much more than the country knew and most Members of Congress knew when the law passed—let's take everything we know now and go back and do this the right way.

Jason from Pleasant Hill and his wife purchased plans through their employer. Again, they experienced price increases without added benefits and in fact with less benefits than they had before.

There is one letter after another coming to our office in various ways every day. I could stand here and read them for a long time, but if I read the clock correctly, I think my time is out and we are ready to move on to other business.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, the last two days, we have spent unnecessary floor time overcoming procedural obstacles so that we can vote to confirm the five judicial nominations before us today. Every single one of the nominees that we will vote on today has bipartisan support and will be confirmed

by significant margins. Judge Carolyn McHugh was nominated last May, while all four nominees to the Eastern District of Michigan were nominated last July. All of these nominees could and should have been confirmed before we adjourned last year. Instead, because Republicans refused to consent to hold these nominations in the Senate, and every single one had to be returned to the President at the end of last year. They then had to be re-nominated and re-processed through Committee this year and were all reported out with bipartisan support on January 16, 2014.

We have not had a vote on a judicial nomination this year that was not subjected to a Republican filibuster. I appreciate very much the two Republican senators, Senator COLLINS and Senator MURKOWSKI, who have voted each time to end the filibuster of judicial nominees. For other Republican senators, however, I have started to notice a pattern of voting to end filibusters only if a nominee is from a state with at least one Republican home state Senator. Most recently this happened earlier this week on the cloture vote for Judge McHugh with nine Republicans voting to end the filibuster. It should not require a judicial nominee to be from a state with one or more Republican home state senators for some senators to do the right thing. Filling vacancies so that our Federal judiciary can be fully functioning should not be a partisan issue.

Today, we will finally vote to confirm the following nominees:

Judge Carolyn McHugh has been nominated to fill a vacancy in the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals. She has served since 2005 as a judge on the Utah Court of Appeals and as the Presiding Judge of that court since 2012. She previously worked in private practice at Parr Brown Gee & Loveless as an Associate, 1983–1987, and subsequently as a Shareholder, 1987–2005. She has served as an Adjunct Professor at the University of Utah Law School and at the University of Utah College of Social and Behavioral Science. Judge McHugh earned her J.D., Order of the Coif, from the University of Utah Law School in 1982. After law school, she clerked for Judge Bruce S. Jenkins of the United States District Court for the District of Utah. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary unanimously rated Judge McHugh “Well Qualified” to serve on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, its highest rating. She has the support of her home state senators, Senator HATCH and Senator LEE.

Matthew Leitman is nominated to fill a judicial emergency vacancy in the Eastern District of Michigan. He has worked in private practice for almost 20 years, including as senior principal, 2005–present, and senior counsel,

2004, at Miller, Canfield, Paddock, and Stone, P.L.C. and as Partner, 2000–2004, and Associate, 1994–1999, at Miro, Weiner, & Kramer, P.C. He earned his J.D., magna cum laude, from Harvard Law School in 1993. Following his graduation from law school, he served as a law clerk to Justice Charles L. Levin of the Michigan Supreme Court. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary unanimously rated Mr. Leitman “Well Qualified” to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, its highest rating.

Judith Levy is nominated to fill a judicial emergency vacancy in the Eastern District of Michigan. She has served since 2000 as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District of Michigan, where she has served as the Chief of the Civil Rights Unit since 2010. She has also worked as an Adjunct Professor of Law at the University of Michigan Law School, 2005–present, and as a trial attorney for the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 1999–2000. She earned her J.D., cum laude, from Michigan Law School in 1996. Following her graduation from law school, she served as a law clerk to Judge Bernard Friedman of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, 1996–1999.

Judge Laurie Michelson is nominated to fill a vacancy in the Eastern District of Michigan. She has served since 2011 as a U.S. Magistrate Judge in the Eastern District of Michigan. Prior to her judicial service, she worked in private practice for 18 years at Butzel Long as an associate, 1993–2000, and subsequently as a shareholder, 2000–2011. She has also served for 3 years as an Adjunct Professor at Oakland University, 2003–2006. She earned her J.D. from Northwestern University Law School in 1992. Following her graduation from law school, she served as a law clerk to Judge Cornelia G. Kennedy of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. The ABA Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary unanimously rated Mr. Leitman “Well Qualified” to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, its highest rating.

Judge Linda Parker is nominated to fill a vacancy in the Eastern District of Michigan. She has served since 2009 as a circuit court judge on the Third Judicial Circuit of Michigan. Prior to her judicial service, she worked as director of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, 2003–2008, as Director of Development at the Detroit Institute of Arts, 2000–2003, as Executive Assistant United States Attorney in the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Eastern District of Michigan, 1994–2000, in private practice at Dickinson Wright as associate attorney, 1989–1992, and partner from (1992–1994), and as a staff attorney to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, 1985–1989. She earned

her J.D. from George Washington University Law School in 1983. Following graduation from law school, she served as a law clerk to Judge William S. Thompson of the District of Columbia Superior Court, 1983–1985.

All four of the district court nominees have the support of their home state senators—Senator LEVIN and Senator STABENOW. I hope my fellow senators will join me today to confirm these nominees so that they can begin working on behalf of the American people.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, consideration of judicial nominees is among the most important duties of the Senate. I am pleased that four, well-qualified nominees to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan will now be before the Senate, and I urge my colleagues to confirm them. Each of them has demonstrated a commitment to impartial justice and a thorough knowledge of the law. Each was recommended by an independent screening committee that Senator STABENOW and I have formed. It is broadly based and chaired by one of Michigan's truly outstanding lawyers, Eugene Driker.

Each of the nominees has a distinguished background. Matthew Leitman served as a clerk to Justice Charles Levin on the Michigan Supreme Court and has extensive experience in private practice, focusing on complex commercial litigation, criminal defense, and appellate litigation. He has argued before State and Federal trial courts, as well as numerous appeals before State and Federal appellate courts, and has written a number of influential journal articles on important aspects of State and Federal law such as immigration and fraud enforcement. He has on many occasions been recognized by his peers as one of the most effective and knowledgeable litigators in our State.

He is also dedicated to public service. He has been a pro bono honoree for the Eastern District of Michigan every year since 2008.

Judith Ellen Levy worked in private practice and as a trial attorney for the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in Detroit. She has conducted research and taught classes and seminars at the University of Michigan. Since 2000, she has served as an assistant U.S. attorney and Civil Rights Unit chief in the U.S. Attorney's Office in Detroit. There, she is responsible for investigating and litigating civil rights cases on behalf of the United States, including fair housing, fair lending, disability access, and police misconduct cases, and for handling citizen civil rights complaints addressed to the office and conducting outreach regarding a variety of office programs.

Ms. Levy has also received numerous awards for her dedication to community service, including several Department of Justice Civil Rights Division

Certificates of Commendation and an award from the University of Michigan Council for Disability Concerns.

Judge Laurie J. Michelson served as law clerk to the Honorable Cornelia G. Kennedy of the U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit and then for nearly 18 years worked in private practice in the areas of white-collar criminal defense and media and intellectual property law. She was sworn in as a magistrate judge for the Eastern District of Michigan in February 2011.

In private practice and as a magistrate judge, Judge Michelson has ably navigated some of the most complex areas of Federal law but has never lost sight of the fact that the law has a human impact.

Judge Linda Vivienne Parker served as the director of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights from 2003 to 2008. She also worked in private practice and served as the first executive assistant U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan under U.S. attorney Saul A. Green from 1994 to 2000. In 2008, she was appointed to the Third Judicial Circuit Court in Wayne County. In addition to her criminal docket, Judge Parker serves as a judge in the Adult Drug Treatment Court.

Judge Parker has dedicated her legal career to public service and has committed a great deal of time to serving and advocating for homeless families and teenage mothers. She served as the Chair of New Steps, an organization committed to providing services for economically disadvantaged new mothers in substance abuse recovery.

Each of these nominees knows the law and is ready to bear the responsibilities of a Federal judge. I urge my colleagues to confirm their nominations so they can begin serving the people of the Eastern District of Michigan.

I would yield the floor.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF CAROLYN B. McHUGH TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Carolyn B. McHugh, of Utah, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on the McHugh nomination.

All time has expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Carolyn B. McHugh, of Utah, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit?

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 67 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Franken	Moran
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baldwin	Graham	Murphy
Barrasso	Grassley	Murray
Begich	Hagan	Nelson
Bennet	Harkin	Paul
Blumenthal	Hatch	Portman
Blunt	Heinrich	Pryor
Booker	Heitkamp	Reed
Boozman	Heller	Reid
Boxer	Hirono	Risch
Brown	Hoeven	Roberts
Burr	Inhofe	Sanders
Cantwell	Isakson	Schatz
Cardin	Johanns	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Scott
Casey	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Chambliss	Kaine	Shaheen
Coats	King	Shelby
Coburn	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Landrieu	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Toomey
Corker	Lee	Udall (CO)
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (NM)
Crapo	Manchin	Vitter
Cruz	Markey	Walsh
Donnelly	McCain	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Warren
Enzi	McConnell	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Menendez	Wicker
Fischer	Merkley	Wyden
Flake	Mikulski	

NOT VOTING—2

Rockefeller Rubio

The nomination was confirmed.

NOMINATION OF MATTHEW FREDERICK LEITMAN TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the nomination.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Matthew Frederick Leitman, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes of debate equally

divided prior to the vote on the nomination.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I yield back the remaining time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Matthew Frederick Leitman, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 68 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Franken	Moran
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baldwin	Graham	Murphy
Barrasso	Grassley	Murray
Begich	Hagan	Nelson
Bennet	Harkin	Paul
Blumenthal	Hatch	Portman
Blunt	Heinrich	Pryor
Booker	Heitkamp	Reed
Boozman	Heller	Reid
Boxer	Hirono	Risch
Brown	Hoeven	Roberts
Burr	Inhofe	Sanders
Cantwell	Isakson	Schatz
Cardin	Johanns	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Scott
Casey	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Chambliss	Kaine	Shaheen
Coats	King	Shelby
Coburn	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Landrieu	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Toomey
Corker	Lee	Udall (CO)
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (NM)
Crapo	Manchin	Vitter
Cruz	Markey	Walsh
Donnelly	McCain	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Warren
Enzi	McConnell	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Menendez	Wicker
Fischer	Merkley	Wyden
Flake	Mikulski	

NOT VOTING—2

Rockefeller Rubio

The nomination was confirmed.

NOMINATION OF JUDITH ELLEN LEVY TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the Levy nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Judith Ellen Levy, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

Mr. LEAHY. I yield back time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Judith Ellen Levy, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan?

Mr. PAUL. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 97, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 69 Ex.]

YEAS—97

Alexander	Franken	Moran
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baldwin	Graham	Murphy
Barrasso	Grassley	Murray
Begich	Hagan	Nelson
Bennet	Harkin	Paul
Blumenthal	Hatch	Portman
Blunt	Heinrich	Pryor
Booker	Heitkamp	Reed
Boozman	Heller	Risch
Boxer	Hirono	Roberts
Brown	Hoeven	Sanders
Burr	Inhofe	Schatz
Cantwell	Isakson	Schumer
Cardin	Johanns	Scott
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Sessions
Casey	Johnson (WI)	Shaheen
Chambliss	Kaine	Shelby
Coats	King	Stabenow
Coburn	Kirk	Tester
Cochran	Klobuchar	Thune
Collins	Landrieu	Toomey
Coons	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Corker	Lee	Udall (NM)
Cornyn	Levin	Vitter
Crapo	Manchin	Walsh
Cruz	Markey	Warner
Donnelly	McCain	Whitehouse
Durbin	McCaskill	Wicker
Enzi	McConnell	Wyden
Feinstein	Menendez	
Fischer	Merkley	
Flake	Mikulski	

NOT VOTING—3

Reid Rockefeller Rubio

The nomination was confirmed.

NOMINATION OF LAURIE J. MICHELSON TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes of debate prior to the nomination.

Mr. LEVIN. I ask unanimous consent that the time be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

All time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Laurie J. Michelson, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan?

Mr. COONS. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 70 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Franken	Moran
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baldwin	Graham	Murphy
Barrasso	Grassley	Murray
Begich	Hagan	Nelson
Bennet	Harkin	Paul
Blumenthal	Hatch	Portman
Blunt	Heinrich	Pryor
Booker	Heitkamp	Reed
Boozman	Heller	Reid
Boxer	Hirono	Risch
Brown	Hoeven	Roberts
Burr	Inhofe	Sanders
Cantwell	Isakson	Schatz
Cardin	Johanns	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Scott
Casey	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Chambliss	Kaine	Shaheen
Coats	King	Shelby
Coburn	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Landrieu	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Toomey
Corker	Lee	Udall (CO)
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (NM)
Crapo	Manchin	Vitter
Cruz	Markey	Walsh
Donnelly	McCain	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Warren
Enzi	McConnell	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Menendez	Wicker
Fischer	Merkley	Wyden
Flake	Mikulski	

NOT VOTING—2

Rockefeller Rubio

The nomination was confirmed.

NOMINATION OF LINDA VIVIENNE PARKER TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the Parker nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Linda Vivienne Parker, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to the vote.

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, I yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Linda Vivienne Parker, of Michigan, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan?

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) and the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 60, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 71 Ex.]

YEAS—60

Baldwin	Grassley	Mikulski
Bennet	Hagan	Murphy
Blumenthal	Harkin	Murray
Booker	Hatch	Nelson
Boxer	Heinrich	Pryor
Brown	Heitkamp	Reed
Cantwell	Hirono	Reid
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Sanders
Carper	Kaine	Schatz
Casey	King	Schumer
Chambliss	Kirk	Shaheen
Coats	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Landrieu	Tester
Coons	Leahy	Udall (CO)
Corker	Levin	Udall (NM)
Donnelly	Manchin	Walsh
Durbin	Markey	Warner
Feinstein	McCaskill	Warren
Franken	Menendez	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Merkley	Wyden

NAYS—37

Alexander	Flake	Paul
Ayotte	Graham	Portman
Barrasso	Heller	Risch
Blunt	Hoeven	Roberts
Boozman	Inhofe	Scott
Burr	Isakson	Sessions
Coburn	Johanns	Shelby
Cochran	Johnson (WI)	Thune
Cornyn	Lee	Toomey
Crapo	McCain	Vitter
Cruz	McConnell	Wicker
Enzi	Moran	
Fischer	Murkowski	

NOT VOTING—3

Begich Rockefeller Rubio

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the nominations confirmed today, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF SARAH BLOOM RASKIN TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report the Raskin nomination.

The assistant bill clerk read the nomination of Sarah Bloom Raskin, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of the Treasury.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on confirmation.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to yield back 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I yield back our time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Sarah Bloom Raskin, of Maryland, to be Deputy Secretary of the Treasury?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session and proceed to consideration of S. 1086, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1086) to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill which had been reported from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

S. 1086

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. SHORT TITLE AND PURPOSES.

Section 658A of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9801 note) is amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 658A. SHORT TITLE AND PURPOSES.

"(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This subchapter may be cited as the 'Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990'.

"(b) **PURPOSES.**—The purposes of this subchapter are—

"(1) to allow each State maximum flexibility in developing child care programs and policies that best suit the needs of children and parents within that State;

"(2) to promote parental choice to empower working parents to make their own decisions re-

garding the child care that best suits their family's needs;

"(3) to assist States in providing high-quality child care services to parents trying to achieve independence from public assistance;

"(4) to assist States in improving the overall quality of child care services and programs by implementing the health, safety, licensing, training, and oversight standards established in this subchapter and in State law (including regulations);

"(5) to improve school readiness by having children, families, and child care providers engage in activities, in child care settings, that are developmentally appropriate and age-appropriate for the children and that promote children's language and literacy and mathematics skills, social and emotional development, physical health and development, and approaches to learning;

"(6) to encourage States to provide consumer education information to help parents make informed choices about child care services and to promote involvement by parents and family members in the education of their children in child care settings;

"(7) to increase the number and percentage of low-income children in high-quality child care settings; and

"(8) to improve the coordination and delivery of early childhood education and care (including child care)."

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 658B of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858) is amended by striking "subchapter" and all that follows, and inserting "subchapter, such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2020."

SEC. 4. LEAD AGENCY.

(a) **DESIGNATION.**—Section 658D(a) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858b(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking "chief executive officer" and inserting "Governor"; and

(2) by striking "designate" and all that follows and inserting "designate an agency (which may be an appropriate collaborative agency), or establish a joint interagency office, that complies with the requirements of subsection (b) to serve as the lead agency for the State under this subchapter."

(b) **COLLABORATION WITH TRIBES.**—Section 658D(b)(1) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858b(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by striking "and" at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period and inserting "; and"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(E) at the option of an Indian tribe or tribal organization in the State, collaborate and coordinate with such Indian tribe or tribal organization in the development of the State plan."

SEC. 5. APPLICATION AND PLAN.

(a) **PERIOD.**—Section 658E(b) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858c(b)) is amended, by striking "2-year" and inserting "3-year".

(b) **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.**—Section 658E(c) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858c(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting "or established" after "designated";

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by inserting a comma after "care of such providers";

(B) by striking subparagraphs (D) through (H); and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

"(D) **MONITORING AND INSPECTION REPORTS.**—The plan shall include a certification that the

State, not later than 1 year after the State has in effect the policies and practices described in subparagraph (K)(i), will make public by electronic means, in a consumer-friendly and easily accessible format, organized by provider, the results of monitoring and inspection reports, including those due to major substantiated complaints about failure to comply with this subchapter and State child care policies, as well as the number of deaths, serious injuries, and instances of substantiated child abuse that occurred in child care settings each year, for eligible child care providers within the State. The results shall also include information on the date of such an inspection and, where applicable, information on corrective action taken.

"(E) **CONSUMER EDUCATION INFORMATION.**—The plan shall include a certification that the State will collect and disseminate (which dissemination may be done, except as otherwise specified in this subparagraph, through resource and referral organizations or other means as determined by the State) to parents of eligible children and the general public—

"(i) information that will promote informed child care choices and that concerns—

"(I) the availability of child care services provided through programs authorized under this subchapter and, if feasible, other child care services and other programs provided in the State for which the family may be eligible;

"(II) if available, information about the quality of providers, including information from a Quality Rating and Improvement System;

"(III) information, made available through a State website, describing the State process for licensing child care providers, the State processes for conducting background checks, and monitoring and inspections, of child care providers, and the offenses that prevent individuals and entities from serving as child care providers in the State;

"(IV) the availability of assistance to obtain child care services;

"(V) other programs for which families that receive child care services for which financial assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter may be eligible, including the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families established under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), Head Start and Early Head Start programs carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), the program carried out under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.), the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children established under section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786), the child and adult care food program established under section 17 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1766), and the Medicaid and State children's health insurance programs under titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq., 1397aa et seq.);

"(VI) programs carried out under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.); and

"(VII) research and best practices concerning children's development, including language and cognitive development, development of early language and literacy and mathematics skills, social and emotional development, meaningful parent and family engagement, and physical health and development (particularly healthy eating and physical activity);

"(ii) information on developmental screenings, including—

"(I) information on existing (as of the date of submission of the application containing the

plan) resources and services the State can deploy, including the coordinated use of the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment program under the Medicaid program carried out under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) and developmental screening services available under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.), in conducting developmental screenings and providing referrals to services, when appropriate, for children who receive assistance under this subchapter; and

“(II) a description of how a family or eligible child care provider may utilize the resources and services described in subclause (I) to obtain developmental screenings for children who receive assistance under this subchapter who may be at risk for cognitive or other developmental delays, which may include social, emotional, physical, or linguistic delays; and

“(iii) information, for parents receiving assistance under the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) and low-income parents, about eligibility for assistance provided in accordance with this subchapter.

“(F) COMPLIANCE WITH STATE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall include a certification that the State involved has in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided within the State, and provide a detailed description of such requirements and of how such requirements are effectively enforced.

“(ii) LICENSE EXEMPTION.—If the State uses funding received under this subchapter to support a child care provider that is exempt from the corresponding licensing requirements described in clause (i), the plan shall include a description stating why such licensing exemption does not endanger the health, safety, or development of children who receive services from child care providers who are exempt from such requirements.

“(iii) REQUESTS FOR RELIEF.—As described in section 658(d), a State may request relief from a provision of Federal law other than this subchapter that might conflict with a requirement of this subchapter, including a licensing requirement.

“(G) TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall describe the training requirements that are in effect within the State that are designed to enable child care providers to promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children and that are applicable to child care providers that provide services for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter in the State.

“(ii) REQUIREMENTS.—The plan shall provide an assurance that such training requirements—

“(I) provide a set of workforce and competency standards for child care providers that provide services described in clause (i);

“(II) are developed in consultation with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (designated or established pursuant to section 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i)));

“(III) include an evidence-based training framework that is designed to promote children's learning and development and school readiness and to improve child outcomes, including school readiness;

“(IV) incorporate knowledge and application of the State's early learning and developmental guidelines (where applicable), and the State's child development and health standards; and

“(V) to the extent practicable, are appropriate for a population of children that includes—

“(aa) different age groups (such as infants, toddlers, and preschoolers);

“(bb) English learners;

“(cc) children with disabilities; and

“(dd) Native Americans, including Indians, as the term is defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b) (including Alaska Natives within the meaning of that term), and Native Hawaiians (as defined in section 7207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517)).

“(iii) PROGRESSION OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.—In developing the requirements, the State shall develop a statewide progression of professional development designed to improve the skills and knowledge of the workforce—

“(I) which may include the acquisition of course credit in postsecondary education or of a credential, aligned with the framework; and

“(II) which shall be accessible to providers supported through Indian tribes or tribal organizations that receive assistance under this subchapter.

“(iv) ALIGNMENT.—The State shall engage the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care, and may engage institutions of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)), and other training providers in aligning training opportunities with the State's training framework.

“(v) CREDENTIALS.—The Secretary shall not require an individual or entity that provides child care services for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter to acquire a credential to provide such services. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a State from requiring a credential.

“(H) CHILD-TO-PROVIDER RATIO STANDARDS.—

“(i) STANDARDS.—The plan shall describe child care standards, for child care for which assistance is made available in accordance with this subchapter, appropriate to the type of child care setting involved, that address—

“(I) group size limits for specific age populations;

“(II) the appropriate ratio between the number of children and the number of providers, in terms of the age of the children in child care, as determined by the State; and

“(III) required qualifications for such providers.

“(ii) CONSTRUCTION.—The Secretary may offer guidance to States on child-to-provider ratios described in clause (i) according to setting and age group but shall not require that States maintain specific child-to-provider ratios for providers who receive assistance under this subchapter.

“(I) HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS.—The plan shall include a certification that there are in effect within the State, under State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children that are applicable to child care providers that provide services for which assistance is made available in accordance with this subchapter. Such requirements—

“(i) shall relate to matters including health and safety topics (including prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma) consisting of—

“(I) the prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunization) and the establishment of a grace period that allows homeless children to receive services under this subchapter while their families are taking any necessary action to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements;

“(II) handwashing and universal health precautions;

“(III) the administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent;

“(IV) the prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and other allergic reactions;

“(V) prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices;

“(VI) sanitary methods of food handling;

“(VII) building and physical premises safety;

“(VIII) emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster, or a man-caused event (such as violence at a child care facility), within the meaning of those terms under section 602(a)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5195a(a)(1));

“(IX) the handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of biocontaminants;

“(X) identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic;

“(XI) for providers that offer transportation, if applicable, appropriate precautions in transporting children;

“(XII) first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation; and

“(XIII) minimum health and safety training, to be completed pre-service or during an orientation period, appropriate to the provider setting involved that addresses each of the requirements relating to matters described in subclauses (I) through (XII); and

“(ii) may include requirements relating to nutrition, access to physical activity, or any other subject area determined by the State to be necessary to promote child development or to protect children's health and safety.

“(J) COMPLIANCE WITH STATE AND LOCAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS.—The plan shall include a certification that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers within the State, that provide services for which assistance is made available in accordance with this subchapter, comply with all applicable State and local health and safety requirements as described in subparagraph (I).

“(K) ENFORCEMENT OF LICENSING AND OTHER REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS.—

“(i) CERTIFICATION.—The plan shall include a certification that the State, not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, shall have in effect policies and practices, applicable to licensing or regulating child care providers that provide services for which assistance is made available in accordance with this subchapter and the facilities of those providers, that—

“(I) ensure that individuals who are hired as licensing inspectors in the State are qualified to inspect those child care providers and facilities and have received training in related health and safety requirements, child development, child abuse prevention and detection, program management, and relevant law enforcement;

“(II) require licensing inspectors (or qualified inspectors designated by the lead agency) of those child care providers and facilities to perform inspections, with—

“(aa) not less than 1 precursors inspection for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards, of each such child care provider and facility in the State; and

“(bb) not less than annually, an inspection (which shall be unannounced) of each such child care provider and facility in the State for compliance with all child care licensing standards, which shall include an inspection for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards (although inspectors may or may not inspect for compliance with all 3 standards at the same time); and

“(III) require the ratio of licensing inspectors to such child care providers and facilities in the State to—

“(aa) be maintained at a level sufficient to enable the State to conduct inspections of such child care providers and facilities on a timely basis in accordance with Federal and State law; and

“(bb) be consistent with research findings and best practices.

“(ii) CONSTRUCTION.—The Secretary may offer guidance to a State, if requested by the State, on a research-based minimum standard regarding ratios described in clause (i)(III) and provide technical assistance to the State on meeting the minimum standard within a reasonable time period, but shall not prescribe a particular ratio.

“(L) COMPLIANCE WITH CHILD ABUSE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—The plan shall include a certification that child care providers within the State will comply with the child abuse reporting requirements of section 106(b)(2)(B)(i) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5106a(b)(2)(B)(i)).

“(M) MEETING THE NEEDS OF CERTAIN POPULATIONS.—The plan shall describe how the State will develop and implement strategies (which may include the provision of compensation at higher payment rates and bonuses to child care providers, the provision of direct contracts or grants to community-based organizations, or other means determined by the State) to increase the supply and improve the quality of child care for—

- “(i) children in underserved areas;
- “(ii) infants and toddlers;
- “(iii) children with disabilities, as defined by the State; and
- “(iv) children who receive care during non-traditional hours.

“(N) PROTECTION FOR WORKING PARENTS.—

“(i) MINIMUM PERIOD.—

“(I) 12-MONTH PERIOD.—The plan shall demonstrate that each child who receives assistance under this subchapter in the State will be considered to meet all eligibility requirements for such assistance and will receive such assistance, for not less than 12 months before the State re-determines the eligibility of the child under this subchapter, regardless of a temporary change in the ongoing status of the child's parent as working or attending a job training or educational program or a change in family income for the child's family, if that family income does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size.

“(II) FLUCTUATIONS IN EARNINGS.—The plan shall demonstrate how the State's processes for initial determination and redetermination of such eligibility take into account irregular fluctuations in earnings.

“(ii) REDETERMINATION PROCESS.—The plan shall describe the procedures and policies that are in place to ensure that working parents (especially parents in families receiving assistance under the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)) are not required to unduly disrupt their employment in order to comply with the State's requirements for redetermination of eligibility for assistance provided in accordance with this subchapter.

“(iii) PERIOD BEFORE TERMINATION.—At the option of the State, the plan shall demonstrate that the State will not terminate assistance provided to carry out this subchapter based on a factor consisting of a parent's loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or educational program for which the family was receiving the assistance, without continuing the assistance for a reasonable period of time, of not less than 3 months, after such loss or cessation in order for the parent to engage in a job search and resume work, or resume attendance at a job training or educational program, as soon as possible.

“(iv) GRADUATED PHASEOUT OF CARE.—The plan shall describe the policies and procedures that are in place to allow for provision of continued assistance to carry out this subchapter, at the beginning of a new eligibility period

under clause (i)(I), for children of parents who are working or attending a job training or educational program and whose family income exceeds the State's income limit to initially qualify for such assistance, if the family income for the family involved does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size.

“(O) COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall describe how the State, in order to expand accessibility and continuity of quality early childhood education and care, and assist children enrolled in pre-kindergarten, Early Head Start, or Head Start programs to receive full-day services, will coordinate the services supported to carry out this subchapter with—

“(I) programs carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), including the Early Head Start programs carried out under section 645A of that Act (42 U.S.C. 9840a);

“(II) programs carried out under part A of title I, and part B of title IV, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311 et seq., 7171 et seq.);

“(III) programs carried out under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.);

“(IV) the maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting programs authorized under section 511 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711), as added by section 2951 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148);

“(V) State, Indian tribe or tribal organization, and locally funded early childhood education and care programs;

“(VI) programs serving homeless children and services of local educational agency liaisons for homeless children and youths designated under subsection (g)(1)(J)(ii) of section 722 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii)); and

“(VII) other Federal programs supporting early childhood education and care activities, and, where applicable, child care programs funded through State veterans affairs offices.

“(ii) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in clause (i) shall be construed to affect the priority of children described in clause (i) to receive full-day prekindergarten or Head Start program services.

“(P) PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.—The plan shall demonstrate how the State encourages partnerships among State agencies, other public agencies, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and private entities to leverage existing service delivery systems (as of the date of the submission of the application containing the plan) for early childhood education and care and to increase the supply and quality of child care services for children who are less than 13 years of age, such as by implementing voluntary shared services alliance models.

“(Q) PRIORITY FOR LOW-INCOME POPULATIONS.—The plan shall describe the process the State proposes to use, with respect to investments made to increase access to programs providing high-quality early childhood education and care, to give priority for those investments to children of families in areas that have significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment and that do not have such programs.

“(R) CONSULTATION.—The plan shall include a certification that the State has developed the plan in consultation with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care designated or established pursuant to section 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i)).

“(S) PAYMENT PRACTICES.—The plan shall include a certification that the payment practices of child care providers in the State that serve children who receive assistance under this sub-

chapter reflect generally accepted payment practices of child care providers in the State that serve children who do not receive assistance under this subchapter, so as to provide stability of funding and encourage more child care providers to serve children who receive assistance under this subchapter.

“(T) EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDELINES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall include an assurance that the State will develop or implement early learning and developmental guidelines that are appropriate for children from birth through entry into kindergarten, describing what such children should know and be able to do, and covering the essential domains of early childhood education and care and early childhood development for use statewide by child care providers. Such child care providers shall—

“(I) be licensed or regulated under State law; and

“(II) not be a relative of all children for whom the provider provides child care services.

“(ii) ALIGNMENT.—The guidelines shall be research-based, developmentally appropriate, and aligned with State standards for education in kindergarten through grade 3.

“(iii) PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.—The plan shall include an assurance that funds received by the State to carry out this subchapter will not be used to develop or implement an assessment for children that—

“(I) will be the sole basis for a child care provider being determined to be ineligible to participate in the program carried out under this subchapter;

“(II) will be used as the primary or sole basis to provide a reward or sanction for an individual provider;

“(III) will be used as the primary or sole method for assessing program effectiveness; or

“(IV) will be used to deny eligibility to participate in the program carried out under this subchapter.

“(iv) EXCEPTIONS.—Nothing in this subchapter shall preclude the State from using a single assessment (if appropriate) for children for—

“(I) supporting learning or improving a classroom environment;

“(II) targeting professional development to a provider;

“(III) determining the need for health, mental health, disability, developmental delay, or family support services;

“(IV) obtaining information for the quality improvement process at the State level; or

“(V) conducting a program evaluation for the purposes of providing program improvement and parent information.

“(v) NO FEDERAL CONTROL.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize an officer or employee of the Federal Government to—

“(I) mandate, direct, or control a State's early learning and developmental guidelines, developed in accordance with this section;

“(II) establish any criterion that specifies, defines, or prescribes the standards or measures that a State uses to establish, implement, or improve—

“(aa) early learning and developmental guidelines, or early learning standards, assessments, or accountability systems; or

“(bb) alignment of early learning and developmental guidelines with State standards for education in kindergarten through grade 3; or

“(III) require a State to submit such standards or measures for review.”;

(3) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “as required under” and inserting “in accordance with”;

(B) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) by striking “The State” and inserting the following:

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The State”;

(ii) by striking “and any other activity that the State deems appropriate to realize any of the goals specified in paragraphs (2) through (5) of section 658A(b)” and inserting “activities that improve access to child care services, including use of procedures to permit immediate enrollment (after the initial eligibility determination and after a child is determined to be eligible) of homeless children while required documentation is obtained, training and technical assistance on identifying and serving homeless children and their families, and specific outreach to homeless families, and any other activity that the State determines to be appropriate to meet the purposes of this subchapter (which may include an activity described in clause (ii))”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL SYSTEM.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—A State may use amounts described in clause (i) to establish or support a system of local or regional child care resource and referral organizations that is coordinated, to the extent determined appropriate by the State, by a statewide public or private non-profit, community-based or regionally based, lead child care resource and referral organization.

“(II) LOCAL OR REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.—The local or regional child care resource and referral organizations supported as described in subclause (I) shall—

“(aa) provide parents in the State with consumer education information referred to in paragraph (2)(E) (except as otherwise provided in that paragraph), concerning the full range of child care options, analyzed by provider, including child care provided during nontraditional hours and through emergency child care centers, in their political subdivisions or regions;

“(bb) to the extent practicable, work directly with families who receive assistance under this subchapter to offer the families support and assistance, using information described in item (aa), to make an informed decision about which child care providers they will use, in an effort to ensure that the families are enrolling their children in high-quality care;

“(cc) collect and analyze data on the coordination of services and supports, including services under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.), for children with disabilities (as defined in section 602 of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1401));

“(dd) collect and analyze data on the supply of and demand for child care in political subdivisions or regions within the State and submit such data and analysis to the State;

“(ee) work to establish partnerships with public agencies and private entities to increase the supply and quality of child care services in the State; and

“(ff) as appropriate, coordinate their activities with the activities of the State lead agency and local agencies that administer funds made available in accordance with this subchapter.”;

(C) in subparagraph (D)—

(i) by striking “1997 through 2002” and inserting “2015 through 2020”; and

(ii) by striking “families described in paragraph (2)(H)” and inserting “families with children described in clause (i), (ii), (iii), or (iv) of paragraph (2)(M)”;

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(E) DIRECT SERVICES.—From amounts provided to a State for a fiscal year to carry out this subchapter, the State shall—

“(i) reserve the minimum amount required to be reserved under section 658G, and the funds for costs described in subparagraph (C); and

“(ii) from the remainder, use not less than 70 percent to fund direct services (provided by the State) in accordance with paragraph (2)(A).”;

(4) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

“(4) PAYMENT RATES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The State plan shall certify that payment rates for the provision of child care services for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible children to child care services that are comparable to child care services in the State or substate area involved that are provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive assistance under this subchapter or to receive child care assistance under any other Federal or State program and shall provide a summary of the facts relied on by the State to determine that such rates are sufficient to ensure such access.

“(B) SURVEY.—The State plan shall—

“(i) demonstrate that the State has, after consulting with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care designated or established in section 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i)), local child care program administrators, local child care resource and referral agencies, and other appropriate entities, developed and conducted (not earlier than 2 years before the date of the submission of the application containing the State plan) a statistically valid and reliable survey of the market rates for child care services in the State (that reflects variations in the cost of child care services by geographic area, type of provider, and age of child);

“(ii) demonstrate that the State prepared a detailed report containing the results of the State market rates survey conducted pursuant to clause (i), and made the results of the survey widely available (not later than 30 days after the completion of such survey) through periodic means, including posting the results on the Internet;

“(iii) describe how the State will set payment rates for child care services, for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter—

“(I) in accordance with the results of the market rates survey conducted pursuant to clause (i);

“(II) taking into consideration the cost of providing higher quality child care services than were provided under this subchapter before the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014; and

“(III) without, to the extent practicable, reducing the number of families in the State receiving such assistance to carry out this subchapter, relative to the number of such families on the date of enactment of that Act; and

“(iv) describe how the State will provide for timely payment for child care services provided in accordance with this subchapter.

“(C) CONSTRUCTION.—

“(i) NO PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to create a private right of action.

“(ii) NO PROHIBITION OF CERTAIN DIFFERENT RATES.—Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to prevent a State from differentiating the payment rates described in subparagraph (B)(iii) on the basis of such factors as—

“(I) geographic location of child care providers (such as location in an urban or rural area);

“(II) the age or particular needs of children (such as the needs of children with disabilities and children served by child protective services);

“(III) whether the providers provide child care during weekend and other nontraditional hours; or

“(IV) the State’s determination that such differentiated payment rates are needed to enable

a parent to choose child care that is of high quality.”; and

(5) in paragraph (5), by inserting “(that is not a barrier to families receiving assistance under this subchapter)” after “cost sharing”.

(c) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 658F(b)(2) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858d(b)(2)) is amended by striking “section 658E(c)(2)(F)” and inserting “section 658E(c)(2)(I)”.

SEC. 6. ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE.

Section 658G of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858e) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 658G. ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE.

“(a) RESERVATION.—

“(1) RESERVATION FOR ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE SERVICES.—A State that receives funds to carry out this subchapter for a fiscal year referred to in paragraph (2) shall reserve and use a portion of such funds, in accordance with paragraph (2), for activities provided directly, or through grants or contracts with local child care resource and referral organizations or other appropriate entities, that are designed to improve the quality of child care services and increase parental options for, and access to, high-quality child care, provided in accordance with this subchapter.

“(2) AMOUNT OF RESERVATIONS.—Such State shall reserve and use—

“(A) to carry out the activities described in paragraph (1), not less than—

“(i) 6 percent of the funds described in paragraph (1), for the first and second full fiscal years after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014;

“(ii) 8 percent of such funds, for the third and fourth full fiscal years after the date of enactment; and

“(iii) 10 percent of such funds, for the fifth full fiscal year after the date of enactment and each succeeding fiscal year; and

“(B) in addition to the funds reserved under subparagraph (A), 3 percent of the funds described in paragraph (1), for the first full fiscal year after the date of enactment and each succeeding fiscal year, to carry out the activities described in paragraph (1) and subsection (b)(4), as such activities relate to the quality of care for infants and toddlers.

“(b) ACTIVITIES.—Funds reserved under subsection (a) shall be used to carry out not fewer than 2 of the following activities:

“(1) Supporting the training, professional development, and professional advancement of the child care workforce through activities such as—

“(A) offering child care providers training and professional development that is intentional and sequential and leads to a higher level of skill or certification;

“(B) establishing or supporting programs designed to increase the retention and improve the competencies of child care providers, including wage incentive programs and initiatives that establish tiered payment rates for providers that meet or exceed child care services guidelines, as defined by the State;

“(C) offering training, professional development, and educational opportunities for child care providers that relate to the use of developmentally appropriate and age-appropriate curricula, and early childhood teaching strategies, that are scientifically based and aligned with the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children, including offering specialized training for child care providers who care for infants and toddlers, children who are English learners, and children with disabilities (as defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401));

“(D) providing training concerning the State early learning and developmental guidelines, where applicable, including training concerning early mathematics and early language and literacy development and effective instructional practices to support mathematics and language and literacy development in young children;

“(E) incorporating effective use of data to guide instruction and program improvement;

“(F) including effective behavior management strategies and training, including positive behavioral interventions and supports, that promote positive social and emotional development and reduce challenge behaviors;

“(G) at the option of the State, incorporating feedback from experts at the State’s institutions of higher education, as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002), and other early childhood development experts and early childhood education and care experts;

“(H) providing training corresponding to the nutritional and physical activity needs of children to promote healthy development;

“(I) providing training or professional development for child care providers to serve and support children with disabilities;

“(J) providing training and outreach on engaging parents and families in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways to expand their knowledge, skills, and capacity to become meaningful partners in supporting their children’s learning and development; and

“(K) providing training or professional development for child care providers regarding the early neurological development of children.

“(2) Supporting the use of the early learning and developmental guidelines described in section 658E(c)(2)(T) by—

“(A) developing and implementing the State’s early learning and developmental guidelines; and

“(B) providing technical assistance to enhance early learning for preschool and school-aged children in order to promote language and literacy skills, foster school readiness, and support later school success.

“(3) Developing and implementing a tiered quality rating system for child care providers, which shall—

“(A) support and assess the quality of child care providers in the State;

“(B) build on licensing standards and other State regulatory standards for such providers;

“(C) be designed to improve the quality of different types of child care providers;

“(D) describe the quality of early learning facilities;

“(E) build the capacity of State early childhood education and care programs and communities to promote parents’ and families’ understanding of the State’s early childhood education and care system and the ratings of the programs in which the child is enrolled; and

“(F) provide, to the maximum extent practicable, financial incentives and other supports designed to help child care providers achieve and sustain higher levels of quality.

“(4) Improving the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers through activities, which may include—

“(A) establishing or expanding neighborhood-based high-quality comprehensive family and child development centers, which may serve as resources to child care providers in order to improve the quality of early childhood education and care and early childhood development services provided to infants and toddlers from low-income families and to help eligible child care providers improve their capacity to offer high-quality care to infants and toddlers from low-income families;

“(B) establishing or expanding the operation of community or neighborhood-based family child care networks;

“(C) supporting statewide networks of infant and toddler child care specialists, including specialists who have knowledge regarding infant and toddler development and curriculum and program implementation as well as the ability to coordinate services with early intervention specialists who provide services for infants and toddlers with disabilities under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.);

“(D) carrying out initiatives to improve the quality of the infant and toddler child care workforce, such as providing relevant training, professional development, or mentoring opportunities and linking such opportunities to career pathways, developing career pathways for providers in such workforce, and improving the State credentialing of eligible providers caring for infants and toddlers;

“(E) if applicable, developing infant and toddler components within the State’s quality rating system described in paragraph (3) for child care providers for infants and toddlers, or the development of infant and toddler components in a State’s child care licensing regulations or early learning and developmental guidelines;

“(F) improving the ability of parents to access information about high-quality infant and toddler care; and

“(G) carrying out other activities determined by the State to improve the quality of infant and toddler care provided in the State, and for which there is evidence that the activities will lead to improved infant and toddler health and safety, infant and toddler development, or infant and toddler well-being, including providing training (including training in safe sleep practices, first aid, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation).

“(5) Promoting broad child care provider participation in the quality rating system described in paragraph (3).

“(6) Establishing or expanding a statewide system of child care resource and referral services.

“(7) Facilitating compliance with State requirements for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety, and with State licensing standards.

“(8) Evaluating and assessing the quality and effectiveness of child care programs and services offered in the State, including evaluating how such programs and services may improve the overall school readiness of young children.

“(9) Supporting child care providers in the pursuit of accreditation by an established national accrediting body with demonstrated, valid, and reliable program standards of high quality.

“(10) Supporting State or local efforts to develop or adopt high-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development and providing resources to enable eligible child care providers to meet, exceed, or sustain success in meeting or exceeding, such standards.

“(11) Carrying out other activities determined by the State to improve the quality of child care services provided in the State, and for which measurement of outcomes relating to improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or school readiness is possible.

“(C) CERTIFICATION.—Beginning with fiscal year 2015, at the beginning of each fiscal year, the State shall annually submit to the Secretary a certification containing an assurance that the State was in compliance with subsection (a) during the preceding fiscal year and a description of how the State used funds received under this subchapter to comply with subsection (a) during that preceding fiscal year.

“(d) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Each State receiving funds under this subchapter shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Secretary, which shall include information about—

“(1) the amount of funds that are reserved under subsection (a);

“(2) the activities carried out under this section; and

“(3) the measures that the State will use to evaluate the State’s progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State.

“(e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall offer technical assistance, in accordance with section 658I(a)(3), which may include technical assistance through the use of grants or cooperative agreements, to States for the activities described in subsection (b).

“(f) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as providing the Secretary the authority to regulate, direct, or dictate State child care quality activities or progress in implementing those activities.”.

SEC. 7. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 658G the following:

“SEC. 658H. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—A State that receives funds to carry out this subchapter shall have in effect—

“(1) requirements, policies, and procedures to require and conduct criminal background checks for child care staff members (including prospective child care staff members) of child care providers described in subsection (c)(1); and

“(2) licensing, regulation, and registration requirements, as applicable, that prohibit the employment of child care staff members as described in subsection (c).

“(b) REQUIREMENTS.—A criminal background check for a child care staff member under subsection (a) shall include—

“(1) a search of each State criminal and sex offender registry or repository in the State where the child care staff member resides and each State where such staff member resided during the preceding 10 years;

“(2) a search of State-based child abuse and neglect registries and databases in the State where the child care staff member resides and each State where such staff member resided during the preceding 10 years;

“(3) a search of the National Crime Information Center;

“(4) a Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint check using the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System; and

“(5) a search of the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16901 et seq.).

“(c) PROHIBITIONS.—

“(1) CHILD CARE STAFF MEMBERS.—A child care staff member shall be ineligible for employment by a child care provider that is licensed, regulated, or registered by the State or for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter, if such individual—

“(A) refuses to consent to the criminal background check described in subsection (b);

“(B) knowingly makes a materially false statement in connection with such criminal background check;

“(C) is registered, or is required to be registered, on a State sex offender registry or repository or the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16901 et seq.); or

“(D) has been convicted of a felony consisting of—

“(i) murder, as described in section 1111 of title 18, United States Code;

“(ii) child abuse or neglect;

“(iii) a crime against children, including child pornography;

“(iv) spousal abuse;

“(v) a crime involving rape or sexual assault;
 “(vi) kidnapping;
 “(vii) arson;
 “(viii) physical assault or battery; or
 “(ix) subject to subsection (e)(4), a drug-related offense committed during the preceding 5 years.

“(2) **CHILD CARE PROVIDERS.**—A child care provider described in paragraph (1) shall be ineligible for assistance provided in accordance with this subchapter if the provider employs a staff member who is ineligible for employment under paragraph (1).

“(d) **SUBMISSION OF REQUESTS FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—A child care provider covered by subsection (c) shall submit a request, to the appropriate State agency designated by a State, for a criminal background check described in subsection (b), for each child care staff member (including prospective child care staff members) of the provider.

“(2) **STAFF MEMBERS.**—Subject to paragraph (4), in the case of an individual who became a child care staff member before the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, the provider shall submit such a request—

“(A) prior to the last day described in subsection (i)(1); and

“(B) not less often than once during each 5-year period following the first submission date under this paragraph for that staff member.

“(3) **PROSPECTIVE STAFF MEMBERS.**—Subject to paragraph (4), in the case of an individual who is a prospective child care staff member on or after that date of enactment, the provider shall submit such a request—

“(A) prior to the date the individual becomes a child care staff member of the provider; and

“(B) not less often than once during each 5-year period following the first submission date under this paragraph for that staff member.

“(4) **BACKGROUND CHECK FOR ANOTHER CHILD CARE PROVIDER.**—A child care provider shall not be required to submit a request under paragraph (2) or (3) for a child care staff member if—

“(A) the staff member received a background check described in subsection (b)—

“(i) within 5 years before the latest date on which such a submission may be made; and

“(ii) while employed by or seeking employment by another child care provider within the State;

“(B) the State provided to the first provider a qualifying background check result, consistent with this subchapter, for the staff member; and

“(C) the staff member is employed by a child care provider within the State, or has been separated from employment from a child care provider within the State for a period of not more than 180 consecutive days.

“(e) **BACKGROUND CHECK RESULTS AND APPEALS.**—

“(1) **BACKGROUND CHECK RESULTS.**—The State shall carry out the request of a child care provider for a criminal background check as expeditiously as possible, but in not to exceed 45 days after the date on which such request was submitted, and shall provide the results of the criminal background check to such provider and to the current or prospective staff member.

“(2) **PRIVACY.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The State shall provide the results of the criminal background check to the provider in a statement that indicates whether a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) is eligible or ineligible for employment described in subsection (c), without revealing any disqualifying crime or other related information regarding the individual.

“(B) **INELIGIBLE STAFF MEMBER.**—If the child care staff member is ineligible for such employment due to the background check, the State

will, when providing the results of the background check, include information related to each disqualifying crime, in a report to the staff member or prospective staff member.

“(C) **PUBLIC RELEASE OF RESULTS.**—No State shall publicly release or share the results of individual background checks, however, such results of background checks may be included in the development or dissemination of local or statewide data related to background checks, if such results are not individually identifiable.

“(3) **APPEALS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The State shall provide for a process by which a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) may appeal the results of a criminal background check conducted under this section to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in such member's criminal background report.

“(B) **APPEALS PROCESS.**—The State shall ensure that—

“(i) each child care staff member shall be given notice of the opportunity to appeal;

“(ii) a child care staff member will receive instructions about how to complete the appeals process if the child care staff member wishes to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in such member's criminal background report; and

“(iii) the appeals process is completed in a timely manner for each child care staff member.

“(4) **REVIEW.**—The State may allow for a review process through which the State may determine that a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) disqualified for a crime specified in subsection (c)(1)(D)(ix) is eligible for employment described in subsection (c)(1), notwithstanding subsection (c). The review process shall be consistent with title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.).

“(5) **NO PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to create a private right of action if the provider is in compliance with State regulations and requirements.

“(f) **FEES FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS.**—Fees that a State may charge for the costs of processing applications and administering a criminal background check as required by this section shall not exceed the actual costs to the State for the processing and administration.

“(g) **CONSTRUCTION.**—

“(1) **DISQUALIFICATION FOR OTHER CRIMES.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent a State from disqualifying individuals as child care staff members based on their conviction for crimes not specifically listed in this section that bear upon the fitness of an individual to provide care for and have responsibility for the safety and well-being of children.

“(2) **RIGHTS AND REMEDIES.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to alter or otherwise affect the rights and remedies provided for child care staff members residing in a State that disqualifies individuals as child care staff members for crimes not specifically provided for under this section.

“(h) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘child care provider’ means a center-based child care provider, a family child care provider, or another provider of child care services for compensation and on a regular basis that—

“(A) is not an individual who is related to all children for whom child care services are provided; and

“(B) is licensed, regulated, or registered under State law or receives assistance provided in accordance with this subchapter; and

“(2) the term ‘child care staff member’ means an individual (other than an individual who is related to all children for whom child care services are provided)—

“(A) who is employed by a child care provider for compensation;

“(B) whose activities involve the care or supervision of children for a child care provider or unsupervised access to children who are cared for or supervised by a child care provider; or

“(C) who is a family child care provider.

“(i) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—A State that receives funds under this subchapter shall meet the requirements of this section for the provision of criminal background checks for child care staff members described in subsection (d)(1) not later than the last day of the second full fiscal year after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014.

“(2) **EXTENSION.**—The Secretary may grant a State an extension of time, of not more than 1 fiscal year, to meet the requirements of this section if the State demonstrates a good faith effort to comply with the requirements of this section.

“(3) **PENALTY FOR NONCOMPLIANCE.**—Except as provided in paragraphs (1) and (2), for any fiscal year that a State fails to comply substantially with the requirements of this section, the Secretary shall withhold 5 percent of the funds that would otherwise be allocated to that State in accordance with this subchapter for the following fiscal year.”

SEC. 8. REPORTS AND INFORMATION.

(a) **ADMINISTRATION.**—Section 658I of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858g) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by inserting a comma after “publish”; and

(ii) by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

“(3) provide technical assistance to States (which may include providing assistance on a reimbursable basis), consistent with (as appropriate) scientifically valid research, to carry out this subchapter; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) disseminate, for voluntary informational purposes, information on practices that scientifically valid research indicates are most successful in improving the quality of programs that receive assistance under this subchapter.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) **PROHIBITION.**—Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed as providing the Secretary the authority to permit States to alter the eligibility requirements for eligible children, including work requirements that apply to the parents of eligible children.”

(b) **REQUESTS FOR RELIEF.**—Section 658I of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, as amended by subsection (a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) **REQUEST FOR RELIEF.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The State may submit to the Secretary a request for relief from any provision of Federal law (including a regulation, policy, or procedure) affecting the delivery of child care services with Federal funds, other than this subchapter, that conflicts with a requirement of this subchapter.

“(2) **CONTENTS.**—Such request shall—

“(A) detail the provision of Federal law that conflicts with that requirement;

“(B) describe how modifying compliance with that provision of Federal law to meet the requirements of this subchapter will, by itself, improve delivery of child care services for children in the State; and

“(C) certify that the health, safety, and well-being of children served through assistance received under this subchapter will not be compromised as a result.

“(3) **CONSULTATION.**—The Secretary shall consult with the State submitting the request and the head of each Federal agency (other than the

Secretary) with responsibility for administering the Federal law detailed in the State's request. The consulting parties shall jointly identify—

“(A) any provision of Federal law (including a regulation, policy, or procedure) for which a waiver is necessary to enable the State to provide services in accordance with the request; and

“(B) any corresponding waiver.

“(4) **WAIVERS.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and after the joint identification described in paragraph (3), the head of the Federal agency involved shall have the authority to waive any statutory provision administered by that agency, or any regulation, policy, or procedure issued by that agency, that has been so identified, unless the head of the Federal agency determines that such a waiver is inconsistent with the objectives of this subchapter or the Federal law from which relief is sought.

“(5) **APPROVAL.**—Within 90 days after the receipt of a State's request under this subsection, the Secretary shall inform the State of the Secretary's approval or disapproval of the request. If the plan is disapproved, the Secretary shall inform the State, in writing, of the reasons for the disapproval and give the State the opportunity to amend the request.

“(6) **DURATION.**—The Secretary may approve a request under this subsection for a period of not more than 3 years, and may renew the approval for additional periods of not more than 3 years.

“(7) **TERMINATION.**—The Secretary shall terminate approval of a request for relief authorized under this subsection if the Secretary determines, after notice and opportunity for a hearing, that the performance of a State granted relief under this subsection has been inadequate, or if such relief is no longer necessary to achieve its original purposes.”.

(c) **REPORTS.**—Section 658K(a) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858i(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(A) in clause (ix), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in clause (x), by inserting “and” at the end; and

(C) by inserting after clause (x), the following: “(xi) whether the children receiving assistance under this subchapter are homeless children.”; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “1997” and inserting “2014”; and

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking “section 658P(5)” and inserting “section 658P(6)”.

(d) **REPORT BY SECRETARY.**—Section 658L of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858j) is amended—

(1) by striking the section heading and inserting the following:

“**SEC. 658L. REPORTS, HOTLINE, AND WEB SITE.**”;

(2) by striking “Not later” and inserting the following:

“(a) **REPORT BY SECRETARY.**—Not later”;

(3) by striking “1998” and inserting “2016”; and

(4) by striking “to the Committee” and all that follows through “of the Senate” and inserting “to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) **NATIONAL TOLL-FREE HOTLINE AND WEB SITE.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall operate a national toll-free hotline and Web site, to—

“(A) develop and disseminate publicly available child care consumer education information for parents and help parents access safe, affordable, and quality child care in their community; and

“(B) to allow persons to report (anonymously if desired) suspected child abuse or neglect, or violations of health and safety requirements, by an eligible child care provider that receives assistance under this subchapter.

“(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—The Secretary shall ensure that the hotline and Web site meet the following requirements:

“(A) **REFERRAL TO LOCAL CHILD CARE PROVIDERS.**—The Web site shall be hosted by ‘childcare.gov’. The Web site shall enable a child care consumer to enter a zip code and obtain a referral to local child care providers described in subparagraph (B) within a specified search radius.

“(B) **INFORMATION.**—The Web site shall provide to consumers, directly or through linkages to State databases, at a minimum—

“(i) a localized list of all State licensed child care providers;

“(ii) any provider-specific information from a Quality Rating and Improvement System or information about other quality indicators, to the extent the information is publicly available and to the extent practicable;

“(iii) any other provider-specific information about compliance with licensing, and health and safety, requirements to the extent the information is publicly available and to the extent practicable;

“(iv) referrals to local resource and referral organizations from which consumers can find more information about child care providers, and a recommendation that consumers consult with the organizations when selecting a child care provider; and

“(v) State information about child care subsidy programs and other financial supports available to families.

“(C) **NATIONWIDE CAPACITY.**—The Web site and hotline shall have the capacity to help families in every State and community in the Nation.

“(D) **INFORMATION AT ALL HOURS.**—The Web site shall provide, to parents and families, access to information about child care 24 hours a day.

“(E) **SERVICES IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES.**—The Web site and hotline shall ensure the widest possible access to services for families who speak languages other than English.

“(F) **HIGH-QUALITY CONSUMER EDUCATION AND REFERRAL.**—The Web site and hotline shall ensure that families have access to child care consumer education and referral services that are consistent and of high quality.

“(3) **PROHIBITION.**—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to allow the Secretary to compel States to provide additional data and information that is currently (as of the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014) not publicly available, or is not required by this subchapter.”.

SEC. 9. RESERVATION FOR TOLL-FREE HOTLINE AND WEB SITE; PAYMENTS TO BENEFIT INDIAN CHILDREN.

Section 658O of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858m) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following:

“(3) **NATIONAL TOLL-FREE HOTLINE AND WEB SITE.**—The Secretary shall reserve not less than \$1,000,000 of the amount appropriated under this subchapter for each fiscal year for the operation of a national toll-free hotline and Web site, under section 658L(b).”; and

(2) in subsection (c)(2), by adding at the end the following:

“(D) **LICENSING AND STANDARDS.**—In lieu of any licensing and regulatory requirements applicable under State or local law, the Secretary, in consultation with Indian tribes and tribal organizations, shall develop minimum child care

standards that shall be applicable to Indian tribes and tribal organizations receiving assistance under this subchapter. Such standards shall appropriately reflect Indian tribe and tribal organization needs and available resources, and shall include standards requiring a publicly available application, health and safety standards, and standards requiring a reservation of funds for activities to improve the quality of child care provided to Indian children.”.

SEC. 10. DEFINITIONS.

Section 658P of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858n) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

“(3) **CHILD WITH A DISABILITY.**—The term ‘child with a disability’ means—

“(A) a child with a disability, as defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401);

“(B) a child who is eligible for early intervention services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.);

“(C) a child who is less than 13 years of age and who is eligible for services under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794); and

“(D) a child with a disability, as defined by the State involved.

“(4) **ELIGIBLE CHILD.**—The term ‘eligible child’ means an individual—

“(A) who is less than 13 years of age;

“(B) whose family income does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size; and

“(C) who—

“(i) resides with a parent or parents who are working or attending a job training or educational program; or

“(ii) is receiving, or needs to receive, protective services and resides with a parent or parents not described in clause (i).”.

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (5) through (9) as paragraphs (6) through (10), respectively;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (4), the following:

“(5) **ENGLISH LEARNER.**—The term ‘English learner’ means an individual who is limited English proficient, as defined in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801) or section 637 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832).”;

(4) in paragraph (6)(A), as redesignated by paragraph (2)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “section 658E(c)(2)(E)” and inserting “section 658E(c)(2)(F)”;

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “section 658E(c)(2)(F)” and inserting “section 658E(c)(2)(I)”;

(5) in paragraph (9), as redesignated by paragraph (2), by striking “designated” and all that follows and inserting “designated or established under section 658D(a).”;

(6) in paragraph (10), as redesignated by paragraph (2), by inserting “, foster parent,” after “guardian”;

(7) by redesignating paragraphs (11) through (14) as paragraphs (12) through (15), respectively; and

(8) by inserting after paragraph (10), as redesignated by paragraph (2), the following:

“(11) **SCIENTIFICALLY VALID RESEARCH.**—The term ‘scientifically valid research’ includes applied research, basic research, and field-initiated research, for which the rationale, design, and interpretation are soundly developed in accordance with principles of scientific research.”.

SEC. 11. STUDIES ON WAITING LISTS.

(a) **STUDY.**—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct studies to determine, for each State, the number of families that—

(1) are eligible to receive assistance under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.);

(2) have applied for the assistance; and

(3) have been placed on a waiting list for the assistance.

(b) *REPORT.*—The Comptroller General shall prepare a report containing the results of each study and shall submit the report to the appropriate committees of Congress—

(1) not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) every 2 years thereafter.

(c) *DEFINITION.*—In this section, the term “State” has the meaning given the term in section 658P of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858n).

SEC. 12. CONFORMING AMENDMENT.

Section 319C-1(b)(2)(A)(vii) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d-3a(b)(2)(A)(vii)) is amended by inserting “or established” after “designated”.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

AMENDMENT NO. 2811

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I am pleased the Senate is now considering the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. I have a first-degree amendment to the committee-reported substitute amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. HARKIN] proposes an amendment numbered 2811.

Mr. HARKIN. I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To include rural and remote areas as underserved areas identified in the State plan)

On page 88, line 8, insert “, such as rural and remote areas” after “underserved areas”.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, we are now on the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. I know Senator ALEXANDER and I, and others, are anxious to consider amendments. I encourage people who have amendments to bring them to the floor so Senator BURR, Senator ALEXANDER, Senator MIKULSKI or I could look at them and get things lined up.

It is my intent—and I hope I can speak for Senator ALEXANDER on this too—to have an open yet managed process with respect to this bill and for Senators who have relevant amendments to have the opportunity to have them offered and to be voted on. I expect we would have a couple of votes within the next few hours. I don't even know when but sometime soon. So again, I strongly encourage Senators with amendments to bring them over and file them so we can get them discussed expeditiously.

This bill was voted unanimously out of the HELP Committee last September. I hope it will receive strong bipartisan support here on the Senate floor. I give tremendous credit and

thanks to Senators MIKULSKI and BURR, the sponsors of this legislation, for their leadership in this process over a couple of years working together, creating a bill which takes huge steps in improving the lives of children and their families.

At the outset I also thank our ranking member Senator ALEXANDER for his partnership and for working with us to reauthorize this vital program. Our offices have worked collaboratively over the last couple of years to produce a strong bipartisan bill.

I would start first by saying this program has a big impact in my State of Iowa. Right now Iowa serves about 15,800 children every month with CCDBG funds: 28 percent infants and toddlers; 26 percent ages 3 to 4; and about half or 46 percent, ages 5 to 13.

Most people think of this simply as a childcare-type bill for infants and toddlers, but this is not true. This goes to age 13, but over half goes to those under the age of 5.

The last time this was reauthorized in 1996, 18 years ago, this program was basically looked at as mainly a work support program, taking care of kids while parents went to work. It was only incidentally thought of as something which could have a real impact on the lives of kids. Well, 18 years later and backed by scientific research, we know the program can and should be much more. In addition to providing vital work support for parents, it could be a rich early learning opportunity for children.

In 2000 the National Research Council published a groundbreaking report called “Neurons to Neighborhoods.” The report's author said:

From the time of conception to the first day of kindergarten, development proceeds at a pace exceeding that of any subsequent stage of life. . . . that what happens during the first months and years of life matters a lot, not because this period of development provides an indelible blueprint for adult well-being, but because it sets either a sturdy or fragile stage for what follows.

What this bill does is set that sturdy stage.

This report that I talk about from the National Research Council reinforces what we already know—that learning starts at birth and that preparation for learning begins even before birth. Eighty percent of a child's brain develops between birth and age 3. Because much of a child's intellect and skills develop before he or she begins kindergarten, we need to give all children every opportunity to reach their full potential at their earliest stages in life. This means supporting access to high-quality early-learning programs, including high-quality childcare.

The bill before us represents a strong and positive advance for low-income families who benefit from the childcare subsidies. The bill makes many needed improvements that will help establish high expectations for federally sub-

sidized childcare in this country. The bill accomplishes a lot of good. I will highlight two or three items here.

First of all, education and training for childcare workers. Under this bill the States that apply and get these block grants will need to develop minimum education and training requirements for childcare workers that describe what they must know and be able to do to promote the health and development of the children they serve. Just as we know that a great teacher is one of the most important factors in a classroom, we also know that one of the most critical components of early development in children is whether they have supportive nurturing interactions with caring adults.

Another important thing we do in the bill is to promote safety and health standards. This bill ensures that licensed childcare providers receive a preclosure inspection and one annual inspection thereafter. Alarming, some States inspect childcare centers only once in 5 years. Some States don't even do a preclosure inspection until a provider is serving more than a dozen children.

The bill also stipulates and focuses on vulnerable populations, including children with disabilities, infants and toddlers, and children whose parents work nontraditional hours. I want to highlight that the sponsors of this bill, Senator BURR and Senator MIKULSKI, took great care to ensure that childcare programs supported through this block grant would be well-suited for children with special needs and their families. The legislation asks States to consider the unique needs of children with disabilities when developing training requirements for childcare workers. A childcare worker may be trained to take care of non-disabled children. But taking care of a child with a disability requires a little bit more expertise and a little extra training, and that is what this bill does provide. It also lets parents know the types of services available through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The bill also provides families with stability and continuity of care for families. Once they receive care, they are going to get it for at least 1 year if they are initially deemed eligible. Currently, some States require parents to reapply for care after only a few months. In some cases States will kick parents off of care if they receive a small pay raise that makes them ineligible under the State's eligibility guidelines. This bill remedies this by ensuring that as long as a parent is working or is in a training program and whose income does not exceed 85 percent of the State's median income, they will get care for at least 1 year without having to work. Again, this helps children because we know that a lot of times these kinds of disruptions

can really set a child back, and this allows at least for continuity for 1 year.

The bill also supports the development of a Web site. I know Senator BURR was very interested in that and helped promote and put that in the bill. The Web site is going to be available for all parents to show them the range of childcare providers in their area so they can shop around and see what is out there.

Right now the law says States can set the eligibility requirement as long as it does not exceed 85 percent of the State's median income. If you look at all of the children ages 0 to age 13—because the bill covers up to age 13—if you look at preschool age kids 0 to 5, we do a little bit better. States are serving a little more than a quarter of the children who would be eligible under the Federal guidelines. I think this shows the present landscape right now. Out of 100 percent of the kids that are eligible, we have 73 percent eligible preschool-aged children not being served. There are about 27 percent of preschool-aged children being served. So we do have a long way to go. As chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, our committee has fought for years to increase funding so we can serve more children. The fiscal year 2014 omnibus included more than a \$154 million increase for the childcare program. I know that sounds like a lot, but all that it did was replace the \$118 million cut that happened because of sequestration. We replaced the \$118 million plus whatever that figures out to—about another \$36 more million. So it helps. The increased funding will help States improve access to quality and affordable childcare by increasing the number of kids who can receive it.

But actually we have a long way to go. The last chart shows what is happening. If you look at the blue line at the bottom, that is the actual funding in this program. If you go back to 2005 and see what was in place, we are about \$600 million short of where we would be if we kept up with inflation. You see, this is 2005. Those who have been around since then, we know what it was like before that. We have lost a lot of ground. So we need to make that up, and I hope we can do that in our appropriations bills that are coming up.

This bill changes the landscape and makes it a lot better for families out there. The bill authorizes the funding, but the appropriations have to fund it. I hope that we can in fiscal year 2015 continue to be able to keep up the funding increases for the childcare development block grants.

It is a good bill. I am very proud of this bill, proud of the efforts that Senator BURR and Senator MIKULSKI put into it over a long period of time. So I urge my colleagues to join in the bipartisan spirit of cooperation that we have

witnessed in the health committee over the last year.

If Senators have amendments that are germane to the bill, I encourage them to bring them over so we can take a look at them and determine a fair path forward with respect to those amendments.

Again, I thank Senator ALEXANDER for a great working relationship on this committee and thank him for working so hard to help bring this bill forward to the bill today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I want to say to the Senator from Iowa how much I appreciate working with him.

We were talking yesterday, and he told me—I think I have these facts about right—that our committee in this Congress has reported 17 bills that have passed the Senate and 10 that have become law, which I suspect exceeds that of any other committee. As our hearing this morning on the minimum wage showed, it is not because we always agree with each other all the time. We probably have the most ideologically split committee in the Congress by party, but we get a lot done. That is due in great measure to the way the Senator from Iowa leads the committee, and I appreciate that very much.

I will have more to say about Senator BURR and Senator MIKULSKI in a few moments because they have done the yeoman's work on this. They are the leaders of this effort. They immersed themselves in it for the last two years. They brought it to a position which convinced everybody on the committee it was time to move ahead, but that is not where we were when we started. We had lots of differences of opinions, and we came to a conclusion that they will be explaining in detail.

So the way we will proceed today is this. After my remarks, Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR will step up and begin to manage the bill. Senator HARKIN and I will be here. We are continuing right through the afternoon.

We hope that Senators will bring their amendments to the floor. What we are hoping to do is to have a debate about the child care and development block grant. We are hoping to have amendments, and we will have votes on those amendments. It is not our desire to pick this Democratic amendment or this Republican amendment. If you have an amendment on the child care and development block grant that is related to the bill, please bring it over and talk to Senator BURR, Senator MIKULSKI, Senator HARKIN, or me, and we will start lining them up. There will be time for debate. There will be a vote and it will be considered.

Our hope is to have votes this afternoon, votes tomorrow morning, and to

let Senators know that there won't be votes tonight so they can plan their schedules. Senator BURR will talk more about that and the time for attempting to conclude the bill tomorrow. That is our goal. That is the way the Senate traditionally has worked. It is the way we hope it works today.

Since Senator MIKULSKI from Maryland and the Senator from North Carolina have done the principal amount of work on the bill, I see no need for me to go through the details of the bill. I think they are better equipped and prepared to do that. Let me try to put the whole effort in perspective before I step aside and Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR step up.

During World War II there were a great many mothers, women, who took jobs outside the home. That was different. In our agricultural society families worked together. As the industrial society in America developed during the 20th century, men largely went away from home to work and women mostly worked at home.

But in World War II something different happened. Many of the men were overseas fighting. There was a lot of work to be done at home, and so women took jobs in the factories that they didn't have before. That produced a new phenomenon in the American society which was called worksite daycare. Someone had to take care of the children. In many cases companies employing large numbers of women during World War II provided sites at the workplace so that mothers could bring their children while they worked.

Then after the war was over, things went back to the way they were before, and most American women worked at home. That began to change probably in the 1970s. It is probably fair to say that the greatest social change in our country over the last 40 years has been the gradual and steady phenomenon of more women in the workplace outside the home and the adjustments our society has made to that.

I was lucky. I had an early head start in the little town of Maryville, Tennessee, where I grew up at the edge of the Smoky Mountains. My mother had one of the town's two preschool education programs. She had it in a converted garage in her backyard. She had been trained in Kansas and in a settlement house in Chicago. It is hard for me today to imagine how she could do this, but she had 25 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds in the morning and 25 5-year-olds in the afternoon. That was Mrs. Alexander's preschool, which we called the institution of lower learning.

She had nowhere else to put me, so I became the first Senator to have 5 years of kindergarten, which I probably needed, but which gave me a head start. It gave me the understanding of what Senator HARKIN said earlier—that research then, but especially now, shows the brain develops at least from

the moment of conception and that all of the influences around an infant are important to that person's development over a long period of time.

Most parents who understand that want to make sure that they are with a child at a very early age stimulating that child, or if they can't be with their child for some period of time for some reason, someone else is looking after their child. Along with the changing role of women in the workforce came the idea of more childcare.

I remember in 1986 when I was Governor of Tennessee, the head of our human services division—a woman named Marguerite Sallee, now Marguerite Kondracke—came to me, and she proposed that I ask the businesses in Tennessee to create 1,000 worksite daycare places. I was kind of taken aback by that because I didn't understand the need for it, and I didn't think the businesses would do it voluntarily.

Well, we did that, and we got twice as many worksite daycare places as we requested. It was good for businesses to do and there was plenty of demand for it from the parents who had to take their children to work. The next year I was out of a job—I was through with my time as Governor—and so was Marguerite. Along with Captain Kangaroo—Bob Keeshan—my wife, and Brad Martin, we founded a company called Corporate Child Care, which provided worksite daycare places. After about 10 years, it merged with its major competitor Bright Horizons, and they became what is today the largest provider of worksite daycare in the world.

Companies have realized the importance of worksite daycare, but not all mothers and fathers can send their children to Bright Horizons while they work, and so there came to be a recognition that there needed to be some response by the Federal Government.

The next year, about 1988, the first Federal childcare programs came into existence. In 1996, the law we are considering today was basically a part of the reform of the Welfare Act. It is a remarkable law because it involves lots of State flexibility. In other words, it acknowledges that what is good for Maryland may not be good for North Carolina. It models our higher education system by letting the money follow the child to the institution that the parent thinks is best for their child. These are vouchers. It has gradually grown to an area where we spend \$5 billion or \$6 billion of taxpayers' money each year to provide about 1½ million children with an opportunity for childcare.

I will mention one success story so we have an example of exactly what we are talking about. I am thinking of a young mother in Memphis, TN, who was attending LeMoyné-Owen College and earning a business degree. She had an infant child, and so she put that

child in a childcare center she chose. The voucher, through this program we are talking about today, provided \$500 to \$600 a month to help pay for the bill. Infant childcare is especially expensive. If you think about it, this is understandable.

The success part of the story is that she earned her degree. She is now an assistant manager at Walmart in Memphis. She has a second child who attends the same childcare center now, but she earns enough to pay the full cost.

This program encourages work, it encourages job training, and for those Americans who are low income and working or low income and training or educating themselves for a job, this helps them get that job. This is an important bill for many families.

In Tennessee, we have about 20,000 families affected each month and nearly 40,000 children. It is a big help to them. It makes a difference in their lives.

I thank Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR for their work on this legislation. I know of no two Senators in this body who approach issues in a more serious, effective, and determined way. They also understand that in a body of 100 Members, where we each have a right to object, that no bill is going to be exactly what any of us want.

For example, I am leery of the extent of the background checks required by this bill, which is one of its major accomplishments. As a former Governor, I am very skeptical of Washington setting rules for States, but I accept the compromise they have agreed to with the background checks. We talked that matter through, and I think it is a sound proposal. I congratulate them for the way they have done this over the last 2 years and the way we have approached it.

I will conclude with where I started. We are asking Senators to join us in a debate about the child care and development block grant. We hope Senators will come to the floor with their ideas on it. We know there are a number of Senators who have amendments on both sides of the aisle. What we are saying to those Senators is if you have an amendment that is related to our bill, you will have a chance to talk about it and you will have a chance for it to be voted on and perhaps accepted by the full Senate, and hopefully this bill will go to the House and become law.

We know that has not been the story as often as it should be in the Senate, but we would like to see that happen more often. It requires a little bit of restraint on the part of each of us as Senators. We can't all exercise all of our rights all the time and get anything done. It requires some trust and restraint on the part of our leaders, Senator REID and Senator MCCONNELL. We

appreciate them turning the management of the bill over to Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR, with Senator HARKIN and me in support of their efforts.

We appreciate the cooperation of the many Senators who have already come up with excellent amendments and notified us about them. Senator BURR and Senator MIKULSKI know about them and will talk about them.

At this stage, I wish to step down and turn this matter over to Senator MIKULSKI first, and then Senator BURR. We invite Senators to come over. We will continue through lunch and discuss, debate, talk, and begin voting on the Child Care and Development Block Grant Reauthorization.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I am so pleased to bring to the floor this very important bipartisan legislation, the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. I am standing here today to speak on behalf of families and children across this Nation.

I am excited to bring forward this bill for two reasons; one, the content it represents—a reauthorization framework for the childcare and development block grant, one of the most important tools families have to be able to afford child care so they may go to work. It is a childcare development bill and it is a work assistance bill.

I am also proud of the process by which we are undertaking this bill, the process by which we arrived at and brought this bill to the floor today.

This legislation has not been reauthorized since 1996. Senator RICHARD BURR of North Carolina and I serve on the HELP Committee, of which the Presiding Officer is a member. We once shared the Subcommittee on Children and Families. Senator BURR and I, who have a longstanding professional relationship, said: Let's see what we can get done on that committee. Where can we find common ground? Where can we find that sensible center? How can we move things forward on a bipartisan basis where we add value to our country but don't add to our debt?

We put our heads together, and by looking at the childcare needs in our country, we began a regular order process. We held three hearings, lots of meetings with stakeholders, over 50 organizations, as well as meetings with our staffs and each other, characterized by three factors: mutual respect, focusing on national needs, and how we could be smart in terms of our policies yet frugal in terms of the way we went about the money. We didn't expand the vouchers the way some of us would like, but we looked at how we could expand value by focusing on quality. Because of the tone we set with each other, we were able to do this.

This is how the Senate should operate. We should have mutual respect,

talking with each other and not at each other, listening to the experts, listening to the grassroots, and paying attention to the bottom line. We were able to accomplish what we set out to do.

Today, as we come to the floor, this is an open amendment process. We talk a lot about regular order. There are very few Members of the Senate—particularly those who have been elected since 2006—who know what regular order is. A quick thumbnail of it means legislation is brought to the floor, we offer an open amendment process, debate, deliberate, and vote. This is how we hope to be able to proceed today.

There will be no strong-arming, no stiff-arming, no heavy hand, just regular order, regular debate, with every Senator having the opportunity to have their day and their say. This is how the Senate should operate.

What also excites me in coming to the floor is not only being the Senator from Maryland, but also, as the Presiding Officer knows, I am a professionally trained social worker. I have a master's degree in social work. I was a foster care worker for Catholic Charities, and I was a child abuse worker for the Department of Social Services. One of the reasons I came into politics was to be able to take the value of a social worker and bring it to the floor of the U.S. Congress to make sure we looked at families and their needs. This is what I think this bill does.

We are looking at childcare. Every family in America with children is concerned about childcare. They wonder if it is available. They wonder if it is affordable. They worry if it is safe, and they are also concerned about whether it will help their children to be ready to learn.

We all say that children are one of our most important resources, which also means childcare is one of our most important decisions. Families will scrimp and save to make sure they have adequate childcare. If you are a single parent and working a double shift, you wonder if childcare is safe and sound. If you are a student working toward a degree, you want to make sure that while you are in school, your children are in a good preschool or daycare program. These worries weigh heavily on the shoulders of parents everywhere, and our bill lifts that burden. This bill gives families and children the childcare they need.

This bill, as I said, is the product of a bipartisan effort. Childcare is something all families worry about, regardless of income or ZIP Code. This bill ensures that all children get the care they need and deserve. What we did was focus on those needs.

Childcare has not been evaluated since 1996. At that time the program was solely a vision as a workforce aid. What we know today is that this is also the time of the most rapid period of

brain development, and that is why it is imperative we ensure our young children are in high-quality childcare programs. We need to make sure that childcare nurtures their development, prepares their minds, and prepares them for school.

The current program is out of date. It doesn't go far enough to promote health and safety and also make sure that the staff is ready to meet emergency responses and take care of the needs of those children.

When we worked on this legislation, we focused on quality. I will elaborate on that in more detail.

Way back when this bill was first signed into law, it was under George Herbert Bush. It was so women could go from welfare to work. President Clinton came in, and part of the welfare reform was to be able to do that. Now it is a new day, and we want to make sure that childcare not only helps the parents but it also focuses on the children. We want to ensure that when parents leave their children at daycare, they know their children's providers are trained, that the environment is safe, and their program will help their children prepare for their education.

We know there are differences in North Carolina compared to Maryland. We know there are differences in Utah compared to Maine. So what we have provided is the ability to make sure there is incredible State flexibility. I will go into that in more detail.

I hope my colleagues will join Senator BURR, Senator ALEXANDER, Senator HARKIN, and myself in passing this bill. I look forward to further debate and discussion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I thank the Chair, and I thank my good friend and colleague from Maryland, Senator MIKULSKI.

In the Senate, for those of us who have been around for a while, we understand how it works. I am not sure the media does justice to the American people in terms of how difficult it is for legislation to actually pass the Senate. As a matter of fact, the historical threshold of 67 and then 60 in agreement means that if a Senator is a serious legislator and their interest is to work on good policy—not perfect; I think Senator ALEXANDER said we have never seen a perfect bill—then the first thought that goes through a Senator's mind as they work on a legislative agenda is, who on the other side of the aisle can I look to whom this would be appealing to from the standpoint of their interests and, No. 2, an individual who understands how to get through difficult times? I am here to say to my colleagues that BARBARA MIKULSKI is a Senator who fills that category not just as it pertains to this legislation but as it pertains to so much because

of her great depth of knowledge and, more importantly, her tenacity and her willingness to tell people no and to pursue what is right. Because at the end of the day—I think I can speak for both of us—this is not about headlines; this is about looking at a generation of kids who will be benefited by reforms to a reauthorization that hasn't happened since 1996.

Historically on this issue, George H.W. Bush started the program, and it was under the Clinton administration, under welfare reform, that we formalized these vouchers. The vouchers were really created so families who struggled to keep a job and were low income but had childcare needs didn't have to worry about the childcare piece. There was Federal assistance that was determined on a sliding scale.

By the way, let me say to my colleagues, if a State doesn't provide a waiver to a family, then they have skin in the game on these vouchers. So this is not free across the board.

This has benefited now 1.6 million families. In North Carolina, there are 74,000 vouchers on an annual basis that benefit our children. Those are family members who are either in education or who work, and they can commit to those jobs because they know that childcare is available and the cost is affordable because of this Federal voucher program.

I think Senator MIKULSKI would agree with me in saying we hope we never see a program that waits this long to be reauthorized. Every program here deserves to be reevaluated every 5 years—No. 1, on its effectiveness, and No. 2, do we still have the problem we had when the program was started. I daresay in her time here—and she has been here a lot longer than I have, and I don't say that with regard to her age—there are programs still on the books that don't have a constituency anymore. But the hardest thing for Congress to do is to get rid of something or to consolidate. I think Senator MIKULSKI and I have always taken the attitude that if we can make this better and have a positive effect on the folks it was intended for, then that is our job. That is our responsibility as Members of the Senate.

So I certainly look forward, after the 2 years we have spent on an issue—some might listen to the debate today and say: Geez, why didn't they go to the floor and pass it by unanimous consent?

That is an option. But we also believe we are not perfect, and by reaching out to Members and colleagues and saying: Come to the floor; if Senators can make this bill better, then come to the floor and offer amendments—if a Senator comes to the floor with an amendment and we think it makes the bill worse, then we are going to vote against it, but we promise this: We will have a vote. That is an important part

of the Senate, that Members always feel they can put their fingerprints, they can put their State's interest into every piece of legislation whether or not they are on that committee or subcommittee. We have now, with this bill, returned to a process that I think reaches out and incorporates that.

Let me say to our colleagues, it is our intent when I finish speaking to start accepting amendments. At some point, with both leaders' agreement, this afternoon we will target a period when we will vote on whatever stacked amendments we have been able to process. After that, we will hopefully go back and consider more amendments. I think it is our intent to not have votes tonight but to work with the leaders in order to roll those votes to tomorrow morning.

Let me make this perfectly clear to our colleagues: It is our intent to finish this bill tomorrow afternoon, period. So the way to effect positive change in this legislation—to get Senators' input into it and fingerprints on it—is to not wait until tomorrow afternoon but to come down this afternoon and debate the amendments, process the amendments, and let's work as the Senate is designed to work. So I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do that.

I rise today to speak about S. 1986, the childcare development block grant reauthorization bill, with my good friend Senator MIKULSKI. I must say we wouldn't be here if it weren't for the cooperation of Senator HARKIN and Senator ALEXANDER. Senator HARKIN has a long history of interest and involvement with policies that affect children. He is passionate about it. Senator ALEXANDER has a similar lifetime commitment, a Senator who has served as the education governor of Tennessee, the Secretary of Education of the United States, and the president of the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. So both of them come with a tremendous amount of expertise and passion for this issue.

This legislation is actually necessary to build on what the Child Care Development Block Grant Program was established for. As I said earlier, 1.6 million children nationally are served today—74,000 in North Carolina—and there tends to be a lot of talk in this body about strengthening job training, getting people back to work, and incentivizing self-reliance. I wish to recommend to my colleagues that is exactly what the Child Care Development Block Grant Program does. It says to a family: Work and we will help you with childcare. Get additional education and we will help you with childcare.

But one of the problems since 1996 when this program was created was the way we looked at one's income was an instantaneous snapshot. So as a parent, if I was offered a second shift where I

could earn a little more money, I would look at how that might affect my child's childcare voucher and realize that they will take my voucher away if I take that second shift or if I work overtime and get time-and-a-half pay.

Well, this is evidence that we have looked at all angles. We have reached out to the communities that are affected. We have talked to people who are providers. We have talked to parents. We have looked at the difficulties they struggle with, because our intent is to make sure we have a piece of legislation that parents can choose to accept that shift offer, can accept working overtime and know they are not going to be adversely affected because now we are looking at the yearlong versus the individual snapshot.

So through Federal vouchers, parents who demonstrate that they are working or they are in job-training programs or furthering their education and who are below 85 percent of the State median income are eligible to receive the childcare voucher and to use that at a childcare provider of their choice in their State. This is not one where we are saying: You have to go here and you have to go there. We open it for the choice of the parent.

In addition, CDBG requires families, as I said earlier, to have skin in the game on a sliding scale based upon their income. As a block grant, States have great flexibility in how they administer these funds but are generally required to set health, safety, and quality guidelines to promote parental choice, assist parents in becoming independent through work promotion, and provide good consumer information so parents can make good decisions about their child's care.

S. 1086, the legislation we have offered, would reauthorize this law for the first time since 1996. It would do so by making some commonsense changes that address the realities which I have highlighted, prioritizing the safety of children who receive care with Federal dollars.

First, we would require all providers and individuals who have unsupervised access to children to submit to a criminal background check. That check would ensure our young children are not left alone with individuals who have committed felonies such as murder, rape, child abuse, neglect, robbery, and other serious offenses. This provision is the result of legislation I introduced over the past several Congresses called the Child Care Protection Act, which I believe will do a great deal to improve the safety of our children.

Let me just stop there and say this is incredible because I think most Americans probably believe these background checks take place today. And to some degree they are right. States such as North Carolina have been responsible, and they do carry out some degree of background checks—although

not all States, not all providers. But when this bill becomes law, it will say to all States and to all providers that receive Federal vouchers: You must do this. You must assure every parent that these felons are not part of the workforce that has unsupervised access to your children.

Second, this bill asks States to monitor through inspections the quality of childcare settings so that basic health and safety precautions are taken. Many States currently conduct no checks at all for certain settings or conduct them years apart, all while providers receive State and Federal tax dollars. At the very least, parents who are working several jobs just to make it should know that their child is in someone's care who has been trained in the basics of CPR, fire prevention, and other commonsense precautions.

I think one of our colleagues—Senator LANDRIEU—will come to the floor sometime this afternoon and offer an amendment that requires evacuation plans. Well, for a Senator from Louisiana who lived this firsthand, this is really important. It is a great job of where a Member's amendment is going to help to perfect our bill. For anybody who lives in a coastal State such as North Carolina—I am sorry I didn't think of exactly what she did—but when we look at tornadoes and when we look at fires, we are all susceptible to the need of a daycare facility having an evacuation plan so that local officials and, more importantly, parents and the providers who work there understand what to do.

Third, it asks States to make transparent all the information as widely as possible so parents are armed with all the information they need when they shop for childcare under the Federal childcare vouchers.

Fourth, in keeping with the maximum flexibility afforded to States under the CDBG, this bill provides States the option of seeking waivers from any Federal law that funds early learning or childcare that might have conflicting or onerous results for the delivery of that care and requires the Secretary of HHS to work with other agencies to provide a waiver for those requirements so States and childcare providers can focus on providing quality care and not just complying with Washington's confusing set of requirements. In other words, the focus of this is to make sure the childcare quality component is the single most important feature to providers.

Fifth, it promotes continued employment incentives for parents to move higher in their careers by providing better guidance to States on how they determine the eligibility of parents and their children. To me, it is just common sense that we should not penalize a parent from taking on an extra shift or working overtime. But at the same time we require States to make sure

that only the most needy parents receive the childcare vouchers and that they can demonstrate they are following the law's work rules. Let me say again—because I think this is lost because we have not talked about this in almost two decades—for many in the communities we all represent, this is the difference between a family being able to keep a job or to be 100 percent on assistance. What we have is a Federal program that is not just beneficial, we have the data to prove it works, and that matrix continues to be in place.

Finally, it asks States to place a greater emphasis on building quality care settings by gradually increasing the amount of Federal dollars that can be set aside from the current law's 4 percent to 10 percent over the several years that must be used to improve quality programs.

Let me explain. Today, we say you can set aside up to 4 percent for quality. We want to extend that. We want to create an incubator that is an investment in what we can do to further enhance the quality of what these children are exposed to.

I think Senator HARKIN, Senator ALEXANDER, and Senator MIKULSKI have all pointed out that when we go from infancy to age 13, we have the majority of the learning period of a child's life. Some of it we pick up in the education system. But if they go to childcare after that or they go to childcare before it, we want to make sure the quality of that, and, more importantly, the innovation of that quality, is such that all students, all children can advance because of it.

This bipartisan legislation is the result of work in the HELP Committee. It was influenced and really ramrodded by my good friend Senator MIKULSKI. She was tireless at inviting experts. She sought practitioners in all of our States. It was that, and the leadership of our chairman and our ranking member, that brings us here today.

I believe this legislation will go a long way toward improving childcare in our country but also toward promoting self-sufficiency and independence for working parents. This is not a Federal handout. This is a partnership between the Federal Government and the opportunity for parents to have a better life. I think the way we have addressed the commonsense changes in reauthorization makes it more likely, not less likely, that more parents will succeed at that.

So I encourage my colleagues to support this bill. But I really do stress with my colleagues, now is the time to come to the floor. Bring your amendments to the floor. Let's debate the amendments. Let's vote on the amendments. Let's prove the Senate can function in a very open process because in this particular case those vulnerable parents and those children, who are the

next generation, really do matter and what we do really does affect them.

I thank the Presiding Officer, I thank my colleague from Maryland, and I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I know we will be offering amendments throughout the afternoon, and we look forward to ample debate and discussion on them.

I want to reiterate my appreciation to Senator BURR for the way we have worked together on this bill. He was very generous in his comments to me and about me, and I appreciate it. But what I so appreciated in working with him is that his whole focus was: How do we protect these children? And his work to ensure that the children are safe when they are at the daycare, regardless of the size of the provider, was important. So, yes, we have good background checks. At the same time, we were looking at health and safety standards, making sure the staffs are at least trained in the elements of first aid, so that if the children needed help because they swallowed something—until the 911 responders could be there—they would have that training. That is really important.

Yet we had to look at it in a way in which we did not overregulate. So we wanted quality standards, but we did not want to have so many rules, so many regs—exactly what Senator ALEXANDER cautioned us about: Let's not overregulate so that we then stifle or end up shrinking the pool. So we, again, worked on what—the phrase “sensible center” comes from Colin Powell: that if we work hard and listen to each other, we can find that sensible center. So it was the balance between Federal standards but also local flexibility on the best way to achieve those standards, and also to help States pay the bill for the training. One of the aspects of our bill is to set aside 3 percent of funding to expand access to improve the quality of care, especially for infants and toddlers—the most vulnerable populations because they cannot tell you things. They cannot tell you where they hurt or some of these other things.

In addition, the amounts States set aside for quality improvement also must be at least 10 percent within 5 years of enactment. And States must say what they choose to invest in. We hope not only to have reporting and accountability but to get an idea for best practices that we can circulate among providers. We think this will be important.

The other area we focused on was in the area Senator BURR talked about, providing protections for children who receive assistance. That is exactly what I heard in Maryland. This is all income based; in other words, your voucher. This is a means-tested pro-

gram. But if your means change in the program, you could lose your daycare. So it was an actual disincentive from improving yourself or maybe taking a seasonal job. So if you had the opportunity perhaps to work in retail during the holiday season—exactly for your own family's holiday celebration—you were going to be tremendously disadvantaged because it would be a boost, it would look like you were going up, when actually your income might be the same if you have taken that part-time job.

We want to reward work. We want to reward personal responsibility. So we were able to provide that flexibility that when parents redetermine their eligibility, they will give them ample opportunity to do so. So if your child is in daycare, and you take that part-time job or your income goes up, you will not lose the daycare you have for that year or that determination. We thought that was important.

The other was meeting the needs of children with disabilities. This is a strong passion of Senator HARKIN, a well-known advocate for people with disabilities, and I know he will speak to that. But it will require States to examine: What are they doing to coordinate with the IDEA programs, again for preschool-age children with disabilities. Often a child who faces a disability is at a disadvantage because the daycare they are in does not promote learning.

I have a constituent in Maryland. She spoke at our press conference yesterday. Her name is Cathy Rivera. She is the mother of two children, ages 7 and 2. She is also a resource person working at the CentroNia family center, which is information services and also focuses on early childhood education.

Her little girl was born without an ear. That is rough going. So imagine being an infant, then a toddler, trying to learn a language, your family is bilingual—that could be a great asset, but when you cannot really hear, and the doctors are doing the most for you to help you, you still need to be in an environment that acknowledges that and is helping with the learning in childcare, at your pace, your way, so that your language skills are also developing because language and brain development are tied together. So without the proper environment, this little girl would have been doubly disadvantaged—one, with the physical situation from birth, but then the learning situation because of where she was.

Well, fortunately—with her mother working in the field of daycare, working at an agency that provides information and resources, with the help of the childcare subsidy—this little girl could be in the daycare that she needs, to not only look out to see that her physical needs are being met but that her learning needs are being met.

Isn't that a great story? But here is a mother who is working, a bit strapped financially, but with her own sense of motherhood and personal responsibility, she found what she needed. The childcare subsidy was able to help her pay for the daycare, and now this little girl has a chance. It is going to be a challenging future for her, but she is up for this challenge.

That is what this is. This is not only about numbers and statistics. So when we talk about improving quality, we have really tried to take into consideration these needs.

Daycare is expensive. In Maryland, the Maryland Family Network tells me that they had—with all of the licensed daycares—over 23,000 children who were on the wait list for this program—not for daycare—that is even larger—but for this program.

So this is why we want to pass this bill and really be able to move forward on it. But, again, I am going to come back to this bipartisan effort of focusing on safety, security, and also learning readiness.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and I will say more later.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I want to take this opportunity to say to my colleagues, we are now at a point where we would like to consider amendments. So if you have improvements to this bill, it is now after lunch. Before you take a nap, come down to the Senate floor, offer your amendment. Let's talk about it, and let's process as many as we possibly can. It is our intent to consider amendments for the majority of the afternoon, at some point—with the cooperation and agreement of leaders on both sides—to set a time that we would then vote on the amendments that have been processed, hopefully continue to take some amendments early in the evening, but our intent would be not to have votes tonight so that the schedules are predictable, and to come back in the morning, with the leaders' agreement, at a specified time to consider the votes that might be stacked, any additional amendments that need to be debated and voted on, and it would be Senator MIKULSKI's and my intent, and it is our goal—and when she has a goal, let me say to my colleagues, she will achieve that goal—it is our intent and our goal to finish this bill tomorrow afternoon.

We want to make sure we have accommodated every Member who has an amendment, every Member who wants to make an improvement to this bill, but we ask Members to come to the floor, preferably today, to introduce that, call it up, debate it, let us schedule in a queue of votes, and we will feel more confident of exactly the timeline we are on as that process starts.

I remind my colleagues that the key enhancements in this bill are it im-

proves quality while simultaneously ensuring that Federal funds support low-income and at-risk children and facilities; two, it addresses the nutritional and physical activity needs of children in a childcare setting; three, it is strengthening coordination and the alignment to contribute a more comprehensive early childhood education and care system; four, it meets the needs of children with disabilities who require childcare; five, it provides protections for children and families who receive assistance; six, it safeguards the health and the safety of children.

I cannot think of points that are more important as it relates to changes to a bill that was created in 1996 and still embraces, I might say, the context that it was negotiated in, which was welfare reform.

How do we provide the avenue for more individuals to enjoy what great things this country has to offer for those who are willing to work? Welfare reform was a pathway, bipartisanship agreed to, to lead people from unemployment to employment and hopefully to continue to whatever degree of prosperity they chose to pursue.

We all know that means you have to have a partner and you have to have flexibility, whether that flexibility is being able to meet the hours that might put you up for a promotion or to get the skills you need to consider a different career or the next level. Every parent should probably look at this as I did with mine; that they are the single most important part. There are sacrifices every parent makes for themselves because of what they provide for their children. That is the right thing to do. But through this partnership, for 1.6 million children and for 900,000-plus families, we have now provided for over two decades a Federal program that helps make that decision so it is not either/or; they can pursue a career, they can pursue advancement, they can increase their skills, they can increase their education without sacrificing that Federal subsidy that provides them the ability to drop their kids off in the morning and those kids are taken care of.

This is a win-win. It is what welfare reform was written to do. I am proud to work with my good friend Senator MIKULSKI to make sure we get this across the finish line. Come to the floor. Bring your amendments. Make this bill better. Let's debate them, let's vote them, but we are going to finish tomorrow afternoon.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I reiterate Senator BURR's request. People wanted an open amendment process. We are open. Come on and amend. We are looking forward to it. While we are waiting for our Members to come careening to the floor to offer amendments—by the way, 20 have been filed, so here we are.

I wish to comment on something else.

GIRL SCOUTS

You notice I am dressed in green today. I also have on a Girl Scout pin. Do I not look like a Girl Scout standing here? I feel like a Girl Scout. I was a Girl Scout. Once a Girl Scout, always a Girl Scout.

Today we are celebrating the 102nd anniversary of Girl Scouts in America. What started out as a group of 18 girls in Georgia, organized by Juliette Low, has grown into an organization of 3.2 million girls and women.

As a Girl Scout, I knew firsthand about what it was like learning, about leadership and service. I loved working on my badges. I liked the camaraderie of working with other girls on the various challenges we had. I was a child during World War II. The Girl Scout program run out of our parish was very important. It provided important activities for girls after school. There were comparable Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts, just like we had the Daisies and the Girl Scouts.

These were important activities because in my community women were working as "Rosie the riveter." So these afterschool programs were critical so we could be in a safe environment. We learned wonderful skills. We learned about our responsibilities.

I cannot think enough about Ms. Helen Nimick, who was my Girl Scout leader. I wanted to grow up and be like Ms. Nimick, who seemed to know how to do 43 things with oatmeal boxes. I do not know if they did it in the days of the Presiding Officer; there is a little bit of an age difference between us.

But you know what I loved the most were our pledges. I will just say today, first of all, you know the Girl Scout promise: "To serve God and my country, to help people at all times, and live by the Girl Scout law." Pretty good. But here is the Girl Scout law. I actually carried this in my wallet. I will tell you why. Because if you follow the Girl Scout law, you are in pretty good shape. By the way, I think over 90 percent of the women in the Senate were either a Daisy or a Girl Scout, but the Girl Scout law says this: "I will do my best to be honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and responsible for what I say and what I do, and to respect myself and others, respect authority, use resources wisely, make the world a better place, and be a sister to every Girl Scout, and a sister to every Boy Scout."

I think this is great. To Girl Scouts everywhere, whether they are Daisies or senior leadership, we say congratulations on the 102d anniversary. But I want to do a particular shout out to the leaders, people who give of their own time and their own dime to help young women learn about their country, the world they live in, working collegially and in comradeship, camaraderie with others.

I believe the values I learned as a Girl Scout, though I smile about it today, were the lessons of a lifetime. Quite frankly, if I can live up to the Girl Scout law, I think I will be a pretty good Senator. So hats off to Girl Scouts everywhere, a big thanks to the leaders who do it, and let's eat those cookies, even if you are on a different kind of program than they are often called for.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Madam President, let me admit I was not a Girl Scout. I guess I should have assumed BARBARA MIKULSKI was a Girl Scout because scouting has made a significant difference in the lives of so many, not just in America but globally.

It is many of the qualities that come from that experience that lead to some of our most important national leaders, both in the past and in the future. So I join her in recognizing this significant milestone for the Girl Scouts. I know it must be challenging in today's nutritional environment to actually fund everything off of cookies. But as we have seen the drastic change in the way they are marketed, I will assure you we are raising a generation of Girl Scouts who are the most creative in how they market and sell their products to fund their programs of any generation I have seen today.

I think when kids are challenged at that age to be their own entrepreneurs, it is good for this country. We should be proud as parents and we should continue to support programs such as Scouting.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I wish to pay tribute to the Girl Scouts as the organization celebrates Girl Scout Day. One hundred and two years ago, on March 12, 1912, Juliette "Daisy" Gordon Low founded the first chapter of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America in Savannah, GA. Today, the Girl Scouts count over 2 million girls as members, including nearly 100,000 in my home State of New Jersey.

We all know and enjoy their incredibly successful—and delicious—Girl Scout Cookie program, but beyond the cookies, this program is the largest and most successful business run by girls in the world, earning nearly \$800 million a year. By participating in this program, girls are taught five essential entrepreneurial skills, including goal-

setting, decision-making, money management, people skills, and business ethics. This has helped the Girl Scouts teach their members financial literacy and business skills, and has inspired generations of women business owners and executives.

The mission of the Girl Scouts has been and continues to be building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place. In that respect, I commend the Girl Scouts for launching a program in 2012 known as Be a Friend First, or BFF, to tackle bullying among middle school girls. A recent study found that girls developed key relationship and leadership skills from this program, and that Hispanic girls experienced a particular benefit from the Girl Scouts' gender-specific program.

I would also like to applaud the Girl Scouts for their continuing efforts to encourage careers in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, STEM, fields. Only 1 year after they were founded, in 1913, the Girl Scouts began awarding their first merit badges in STEM fields, the electrician badge and the flyer badge. Today, the Girl Scouts continue to encourage girls to consider pursuing careers in STEM fields. For the United States to be able to continue to remain the world's leading innovator, the participation of women in STEM fields is critical. Therefore I commend them for their efforts towards increasing the participation of women in STEM careers and education.

On this Girl Scout Day, for these reasons and for many others, I applaud the Girl Scouts for the outstanding work that they do in our communities and for girls across America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. HELLER are printed in today's RECORD under "Morning Business.")

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HATCH. Madam President, I rise today to discuss my disappointment in the recent turn of events involving the sustainable growth rate formula, or what we call the SGR or the doc fix. Enacted in 1997, the SGR was conceived as a means of trying to balance the budget by restraining health care costs in Medicare, but it was deeply flawed

from the start. Its reimbursement cuts to physicians would cripple seniors' ability to get the quality health care they deserve from their doctors.

Consequently, since 2002, when the SGR came into effect, Congress has patched it on a regular basis, and there has been bipartisan support for doing so. These "patches" have frequently been cobbled together at the midnight hour between leadership of both parties and included in larger legislation, without the input of the Members or even going through the regular legislative process. Now, this perverse annual dark-of-night ritual has to stop. Seniors and physicians understand that. Republicans and Democrats in the House and Senate understand that.

For the better part of a year, Congress—to the surprise of many—worked to fully repeal the SGR and replace it with more reasonable reforms that moved Medicare's physician fee-for-service reimbursement system toward a system that rewards doctors for providing quality care based on outcomes, and we have made tremendous progress. Senator BAUCUS and I worked for months on a bill that sailed through the Finance Committee on a bipartisan basis. The two relevant House committees passed bipartisan legislation repealing the SGR as well.

Then, in a turn of events that is all too rare these days, the chairman and ranking members of the Senate Finance Committee, the House Ways and Means Committee, and the House Energy and Commerce Committee worked tirelessly to come up with one unified policy that House and Senate Democrats and Republicans could all support. Believe it or not, we succeeded. We succeeded by involving all stakeholders, including the influential American Medical Association, in a fair and equitable manner that resulted in near-unanimous support across the health care community. For the first time since its enactment in 1997, the House and Senate united behind a policy that gets rid of this flawed Medicare reimbursement system.

So, Madam President, if we have moved this far, what is the problem? Why am I disappointed? Well, I am going to tell you.

Last night I was informed that the majority leader is bringing straight to the floor of this body the very policy we successfully negotiated—tacking on what are known as the health care extenders which the Finance Committee passed but which were not included in what the House and Senate agreed upon with the SGR. But—and here is the problem—the Democrats have no plans whatsoever to pay for it. So Senate Democrats want to pass a bill that has a roughly \$177 billion price tag without even trying to offset any of the cost. Sadly, these same Democrats don't seem to care that they have quickly turned what was a true bipartisan accomplishment into another

partisan political ploy. This is deeply disappointing.

I am very sympathetic to those who say that since Congress has never let the SGR go into effect, we should not have to pay for it. But let's be honest—there is no way that right now a bill that would add close to \$200 billion to the deficit is ever going to pass the House. And I don't blame the House. This is reality.

Democrats in the Senate have blasted the House SGR repeal bill that is paid for by repealing ObamaCare's individual mandate. The Senate majority leader has said that what the House is doing has "no credibility" and that House Republicans "gotta find something else" to pay for it. But can't the very same thing be said of what the Senate Democrats are doing—that their plan has "no credibility" and that they have to find a way of paying for this if they are going to do it? I think we all know the answer to that.

I just don't understand how we have gotten here. I don't understand why there are these unfortunate attempts to poison a bipartisan product with needless partisanship. We all want to repeal the SGR, so let's dispense with the games and get back to work figuring out a real path forward and one that involves an offset.

What is even more astonishing is that Senate Democrats are proceeding in this manner on the very week some of my colleagues are trying to make the Senate work. Senators BURR and MIKULSKI have put forward a bill that the Senate is set to consider to reform the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program. That is an important bill—certainly to me because I was one of the few who rammed that through way back when and took a lot of flak in the process. But it has worked amazingly well.

Now Senators BURR and MIKULSKI have put forward this bill, after a lot of work by Senator ALEXANDER and Senator SCHUMER to get the Senate working again, to allow amendments and debate, and I have to say I commend them, and I think Senators BURR and MIKULSKI deserve great applause and commendation, as do Senators ALEXANDER and SCHUMER. That is what I don't understand.

Everybody here knows I have a record of working across the aisle, sometimes to the chagrin of Members of my own party and certainly sometimes to the irritation of some of our very far-right people in Utah. Why turn this bipartisan proposal into a partisan exercise when so many Senators want to work together to fix the problems the American people face each and every day?

Let me be clear. I support what House Republicans have proposed. It is a reasonable approach to paying for a full repeal of the doc fix. Almost every week, the White House delays or re-

peals another part of ObamaCare, so it is time for the American people to get a reprieve as well. It is the right thing to do. But I am interested in a result.

I want to fix the SGR system once and for all, and I hope that after this pointless exercise designed for political cover we can come together to do what is right. Let's go back to our winning formula and get our bipartisan, bicameral negotiations underway to find a responsible path forward.

Look, I like both of our leaders. They are strong people. They have differing philosophies. There is much to commend both of them and I suppose some would say much to criticize in each case. But there is no reason for this type of ramming something through that has no chance of passing the House. Frankly, it doesn't have much chance of having any Republican support at this point because we believe this kind of a program has to be offset to literally be valid and to be viable. I think everybody here knows that, and so we have to find an offset to do it. If we can't find an offset, we have to keep the SGR alive until we do. But to make it into a partisan game at this point, after all the bipartisan work that has been done, is really a tragedy.

We were on the verge of getting this solved. I hope that doesn't happen this time because a lot of us have worked our guts out to get this to this point, on both sides of the aisle. It would be an absolute tragedy if we can't get the cooperation to get this through.

The Democrats, if they do not like the offset the House has come up with, although it seems to make sense to me, they control this body, can come up with an offset both sides can agree to. But we have to have an offset and we have to do this the right way or we will be right back at base one after all the work that has been put into it in a bipartisan way to get this done.

Madam President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COONS). The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2812

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendment be set aside and I be allowed to call up my amendment No. 2812.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Wyoming [Mr. ENZI] proposes an amendment numbered 2812.

Mr. ENZI. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, to conduct a review of Federal early learning and care programs and make recommendations for streamlining the various programs)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ REVIEW OF FEDERAL EARLY LEARNING AND CARE PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, shall conduct an interdepartmental review of all early learning and care programs in order to—

(1) develop a plan for the elimination of duplicative and overlapping programs, as identified by the Government Accountability Office's 2012 annual report (GAO-12-342SP); and

(2) make recommendations to Congress for streamlining all such programs.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretary of Education and the heads of all Federal agencies that administer Federal early learning and care programs, shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives, a detailed report that outlines the efficiencies that can be achieved by, as well as specific recommendations for, eliminating duplication, overlap, and fragmentation among all Federal early learning and care programs.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, when the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program was first created in the 1990s, it was seen primarily as a way to help parents enter the workforce or get job training.

The program, which is administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, gets about \$5.2 billion a year in Federal funding plus State matching funds, although the fiscal year 2014 appropriation is approximately \$2.4 billion.

The last reauthorization of this program took place nearly 20 years ago. This bipartisan CCDBG reauthorization, the Mikulski-Burr-Harkin-Alexander bill, puts a greater emphasis on the quality of the childcare programs children are entering. The bipartisan bill would refocus the program on quality, not just access.

The legislation emphasizes the protection of vulnerable populations, incentivizing self-sufficiency and individual responsibility. The bill also improves coordination among Federal early childhood education programs.

As a block grant, States have a great deal of flexibility in how they administer child care and development block grant funds but are generally required to set health, safety, and quality guidelines, promote parental choice, assist parents in becoming independent through work promotion, and provide consumer information so parents can make decisions about their child's

care. The money helps States provide grants to low-income parents to cover the cost of childcare and afterschool care, typically through a voucher which parents can use at the home-based program or childcare center of their choice.

My amendment requires the Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Education to carry out an interdepartmental review of all early learning and childcare programs administered by the Federal Government—and we have lots of them.

We all agree the funding invested in early education programs saves taxpayers money down the road. So for a long time the Federal Government has been doing a lot to increase access to these important programs. Federal support for early learning and childcare developed over time to meet emerging needs, but at this point multiple Federal agencies administer this important investment through numerous programs.

What my amendment does is ask Health and Human Services and the Department of Education to report back to Congress with a plan for eliminating duplication and overlap, as well as a plan with ways we can streamline these programs.

Every year the Government Accountability Office, GAO, submits a report to Congress with recommendations for ways to reduce duplication, overlap, and fragmentation in Federal Governmental programs. In its 2012 annual report to Congress, GAO recommended the Department of Education and Health and Human Services should extend their coordination efforts to other Federal agencies with early learning and childcare programs to combat program fragmentation, simplify children's access to these services, collect the data necessary to coordinate operation of these programs, and identify and minimize overlap and duplication.

GAO identified 45 early learning and childcare programs funded by the Federal Government. Twelve of these programs explicitly provide only early learning or childcare services. These 45 programs are administered by multiple agencies, including the Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Agriculture, Department of the Interior, Department of Justice, Department of Labor, Department of Housing and Urban Development, the General Services Administration, and the Appalachian Regional Commission. When I was chairman of the HELP Committee, the late Senator Ted Kennedy and I worked to eliminate duplication and overlap in programs under our jurisdiction—we got it down from about 119 to 69—but could not look at any of the programs administered by other agencies. We knew there was room for streamlining programs at other agencies, but we couldn't work on it, which

was frustrating and shows how far-flung some of these programs are. Let me report again: the 45 programs administered by multiple agencies, including not only Education but Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Interior, Justice, Labor, Housing and Urban Development, General Services Administration, and the Appalachian Regional Commission.

We have to believe we ought to be able to do some consolidation there and save some money and improve the quality of programs while we are at it.

In a recent GAO report issued on February 5, 2014, GAO noted that as of December 2013, Education and Health and Human Services has taken initial steps toward greater coordination but had not yet included all Federal agencies which administer these early learning and childcare programs in their established interdepartmental workgroup.

This amendment takes a further step in identifying fragmentation, overlap, duplication, and inefficiencies in the Federal Government's delivery of numerous learning and care programs beyond the Government Administration Organization's report. Streamlining programs to eliminate duplication is essential for program integrity and good governance but also for eliminating service gaps for eligible children.

We are doing a lot. We can do better with less through coordination and getting it down to where there are less sources and less places where there has to be permission, regulation, and oversight. We can do better for the kids, and all we are asking for with this is to come up with a plan. It doesn't force anything, but hopefully it is a plan we will pay attention to and not just put it on the shelf.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I first thank Senator ENZI again for working with us for a long time on the committee to put this bill together, and I thank him for this amendment.

Basically, GAO's 2012 annual report noted the Department of Education and Health and Human Services should be increasing their coordination efforts in dealing with childcare and early learning programs. This amendment would require them to collaborate and conduct a comprehensive review of the 45 programs which currently support early learning and childcare across the country. This would ensure better coordination, reduction in duplication, and effective programming for children.

I say to my friend from Wyoming, on Monday I was in my home State of Iowa, in Des Moines, visiting an early learning center. On Saturday, I was in Ames visiting an early learning center in preparation for this bill to be on the

floor. Monday, I was meeting with everyone there. With all of the different funding streams which come through and all of the different cross-purposes, I finally said: Stop a minute. I am confused.

They said: If you are confused, so are we.

Even the people running the programs—everything has some different thing they have to fill out paperwork for to qualify.

So I am particularly sensitive to the Senator's amendment, having just tried to wade through all of that just a couple days ago in Iowa.

I thank my friend from Wyoming. It is a good amendment and should be adopted. We certainly support the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I also applaud my colleague Senator ENZI. This is a needed amendment. It makes the bill better.

I will note for my colleagues, most recently the 2014 Omnibus appropriations legislation created two new programs, including the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships Program funded at \$500 million and the Race to the Top pre-K program funded at \$250 million.

I point these out because both of these further underline the interactions which might exist with the current programs. I would think any attempt of this would be an administrative responsibility to find ways to consolidate, but clearly this is a case where more is not better.

This requires the Secretary to look at all these programs and find ways to consolidate in a way which provides a better outcome for those who are the beneficiaries. So I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

I also say to my colleagues, through their staffs, it is probably the intent of the Senate to have some votes about 2:30. I think there are notifications going out on both sides, but I just want Members to be aware. We are trying to accommodate the afternoon schedules of both sides of the aisle on commitments they have, one at the White House and a Member's meeting on Ukraine this afternoon. So it is our intent right now to have up to two votes by 2:30 this afternoon.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, might I ask the Senator from Iowa and the Senator from North Carolina, is it not also likely, given the good progress we are making, we may be able to have another vote or two between 5 and 5:30 this afternoon so as not to interfere with meetings or the briefing many Senators are attending at 5:30?

Mr. BURR. I would say, it is our intent probably right before the Ukraine

briefing to hopefully be in a position to dispose of about two additional amendments.

Mr. ALEXANDER. So that would be two votes at 2:30 and perhaps two more at probably about 5:15.

Mr. HARKIN. I concur.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the Senators from Iowa and North Carolina.

I also thank the Senator from Wyoming for his leadership. For a number of years he was the ranking member of the Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee, and while he was there he focused on trying to help us spend our money more efficiently—which all of us want to do.

Sometimes we forget that Head Start is not the only early learning program we have in the country. It is the most famous. It is best known. It is very popular with most people. It is about \$8.6 billion, but the bill we are debating today, the child care and development block grant, is another \$5.3 billion. It is two-thirds the size of Head Start and affects 1.5 million children. And then there is another of \$5 billion or so of Federal funding for early learning and early childhood. Without getting into a debate about whether we should have new programs, I think there is a consensus among most of us that we should at least start by taking the money we are spending for early childhood and spend it wisely.

One step we took a few years ago was to create centers of excellence for Head Start. This was, I believe, in 2007. The idea there was that the Governor of each State would be permitted to pick at least two communities or cities where they were doing the best job of spending money in a coordinated way for early learning and childhood development. Not only are these 18 billion Federal dollars being spent, but many States have additional funding for early childhood, most States have kindergarten programs, and many States have programs for 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds. The idea was to see if we could encourage Nashville or Denver or Des Moines to take a look at all the children between 0 and 6 and all the dollars being spent—public, private, Federal, State and local—and see who is doing the best job of putting that all together. It is always a problem with a big, complex country such as this when you have a decentralized government and there are several layers. There are lots of silos, and children don't live in silos. They are by themselves needing help and we need to find a way of getting the money to them. So the centers of excellence was a modest beginning to try to encourage better spending of what is up to \$18 billion of money already being spent.

I think Senator ENZI's amendment, which I strongly support, would give us more information about how to better spend the Federal dollars we already

spend for early childhood. I simply wanted to call the attention of the Senate and others who may be paying attention to that centers of excellence program. In the committee chaired by the Senator from Iowa, we had excellent testimony from the representative from Denver who had one of the first centers of excellence. She talked about the progress they have made in taking all the available money and using it in the most effective way to help children.

I hope as we move along through the process of dealing with the debate about how do we do a better job of early childhood education that we consider centers of excellence, and I hope Senator ENZI's amendment is adopted today because it will help us. It will make us a better steward of taxpayer dollars, and that means doing a better job of helping children.

Thank you, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

AMENDMENT NO. 2818

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator LANDRIEU, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment and call up her amendment No. 2818.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. HARKIN], for Ms. LANDRIEU, for herself and Ms. MIKULSKI, proposes an amendment numbered 2818.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require a statewide child care disaster plan)

On page 98, strike line 15 and insert the following:

“(U) DISASTER PREPAREDNESS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall demonstrate the manner in which the State will address the needs of children in child care services provided through programs authorized under this subchapter, including the need for safe child care, during the period before, during, and after a state of emergency declared by the Governor or a major disaster or emergency (as such terms are defined in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122)).

“(ii) STATEWIDE CHILD CARE DISASTER PLAN.—Such plan shall include a statewide child care disaster plan for coordination of activities and collaboration, in the event of an emergency or disaster described in clause (i), among the State agency with jurisdiction over human services, the agency with jurisdiction over State emergency planning, the State lead agency, the State agency with jurisdiction over licensing of child care providers, the local resource and referral organizations, the State resource and referral system, and the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care as pro-

vided for under section 642B(b) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)).

“(iii) DISASTER PLAN COMPONENTS.—The components of the disaster plan, for such an emergency or disaster, shall include—

“(I) guidelines for the continuation of child care services in the period following the emergency or disaster, including the provision of emergency and temporary child care services, and temporary operating standards for child care providers during that period;

“(II) evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, and lock-down procedures, and procedures for communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, and accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions; and

“(III) procedures for staff and volunteer training and practice drills.”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2822

Mr. HARKIN. On behalf of Senator FRANKEN, I call up his amendment No. 2822.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. HARKIN], for Mr. FRANKEN, for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. THUNE, proposes an amendment numbered 2822.

Mr. HARKIN. I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To reserve not less than 2 percent of the amount appropriated under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 in each fiscal year for payments to Indian tribes and tribal organizations)

On page 136, strike lines 8 and 9 and insert the following:

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary”;

(ii) by striking “1 percent, and not more than 2 percent,” and inserting “2 percent”;

and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) LIMITATIONS.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall only reserve an amount that is greater than 2 percent of the amount appropriated under section 658B, for payments described in subparagraph (A), for a fiscal year (referred to in this subparagraph as the ‘reservation year’) if—

“(i) the amount appropriated under section 658B for the reservation year is greater than the amount appropriated under section 658B for fiscal year 2014; and

“(ii) the Secretary ensures that the amount allotted to States under subsection (b) for the reservation year is not less than the amount allotted to States under subsection (b) for fiscal year 2014.”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 2:30 p.m. today the Senate proceed to votes in relation to the following pending amendments, in the order listed: Enzi amendment No. 2812 and Franken

amendment No. 2822; further, that no second-degree amendments be in order to either amendment prior to the votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection to the request?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I would like to modify my request for unanimous consent that the second vote be a 10-minute vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. FRANKEN. Thank you.

AMENDMENT NO. 2822

I rise in strong support of the child care development and block grant, or CCDBG, and to urge my colleagues to support the amendment Senator MURKOWSKI and I put forward.

Our amendment would help strengthen CCDBG by making sure we are addressing some of our Nation's communities that will benefit most from it, the people who are members of tribes or tribal organizations all over this Nation. American Indians experience exceptionally high unemployment levels compared with the rest of the Nation. Furthermore, American Indian children and youth experience some of the poorest educational outcomes in America. These are exactly the sort of challenges CCDBG is designed to address. Our amendment would lift the current ceiling on tribal childcare funding so CCDBG can go to where the funds are needed most. This would enable more funds to flow to tribes and tribal organizations but without reducing the amount that goes to States. The amendment specifies that the amount of CCDBG funds reserved for tribes only rises if the overall funding level for CCDBG goes above its current levels.

I thank our cosponsors, Senators MURRAY, THUNE, HIRONO, BALDWIN, and HEITKAMP, for their support of this amendment. I thank Senators HARKIN and ALEXANDER and Senators MIKULSKI and BURR for working together to bring this bill to the floor.

Thank you very much.

I would yield for my colleague from North Carolina.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise in strong support of the amendment, and I urge my colleagues—this is a reasonable improvement to the bill, and I

think Senator FRANKEN stated it very well.

This amendment increases the amount of CCDBG funding set aside for tribes from not more than 2 percent to not less than 2 percent. It sounds like not much of a difference, but this has a tremendous impact on the predictability to tribes of the dollars that are going to be available to them.

So I would urge my colleagues to support the Franken-Murkowski amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. I wish to join with Senator BURR in supporting the amendment.

AMENDMENT NO. 2812

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2812.

Mr. BURR. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) is necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 72 Leg.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Franken	Moran
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murkowski
Baldwin	Graham	Murphy
Barrasso	Grassley	Murray
Begich	Hagan	Nelson
Bennet	Harkin	Paul
Blumenthal	Hatch	Portman
Blunt	Heinrich	Pryor
Booker	Heitkamp	Reed
Boozman	Heller	Reid
Boxer	Hirono	Risch
Brown	Hoeven	Roberts
Burr	Inhofe	Sanders
Cantwell	Isakson	Schatz
Cardin	Johanns	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (SD)	Scott
Casey	Johnson (WI)	Sessions
Chambliss	Kaine	Shaheen
Coats	King	Shelby
Coburn	Kirk	Stabenow
Cochran	Klobuchar	Tester
Collins	Landrieu	Thune
Coons	Leahy	Toomey
Corker	Lee	Udall (CO)
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (NM)
Crapo	Manchin	Vitter
Cruz	Markley	Walsh
Donnelly	McCain	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Warren
Enzi	McConnell	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Menendez	Wicker
Fischer	Merkley	Wyden
Flake	Mikulski	

NOT VOTING—2

Rockefeller Rubio

The amendment (No. 2812) was agreed to.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, for the benefit of Senators, I wish to ask something about the schedule. I would like to ask the Senator from Iowa, the Senator from North Carolina, and Senator MIKULSKI about the schedule of this bill. We are off to a fast start. We have the Franken amendment to be voted on now. This is my understanding of the schedule, and I want to see if I have it about right and then ask the chairman and the floor managers if it is right.

We expect there to be a colloquy from 3 o'clock until about 4 o'clock involving several Senators on the child care and development block grant. Then at 5:15 we expect to have a vote—at least one vote—and may accept others by voice and maybe have some nominations. Senators who have other amendments are free to come and speak between 4 o'clock and 5 o'clock. We would expect to have other votes tomorrow before lunch and finish the bill, it is my understanding, if we don't run into a snag, right after lunch tomorrow, about 2:00 or 2:15. That is the course we hope to be on.

I thank Chairman HARKIN and Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR for getting us off to a fast start. We have had about 20 amendments from both sides brought forward. We have been able to deal with them all.

Is that about right in terms of the schedule?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Yes, that sounds exactly how we are proceeding.

I thank the Senator from Tennessee for all the good work and the cooperation we have had on both sides. I think we are on a good path.

I reiterate and reemphasize that if anyone has amendments they want to offer and speak about, I would say between 4 and 5 is a good time to do it today. Then we will have two votes probably around 5:15. We are hoping maybe one can be voice voted at that time.

AMENDMENT NO. 2822

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2822.

Mr. BURR. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 93, nays 6, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 73 Leg.]

YEAS—93

Alexander	Flake	Merkley
Ayotte	Franken	Mikulski
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Moran
Barrasso	Graham	Murkowski
Begich	Grassley	Murphy
Bennet	Hagan	Murray
Blumenthal	Harkin	Nelson
Blunt	Hatch	Portman
Booker	Heinrich	Pryor
Boozman	Heitkamp	Reed
Boxer	Heller	Reid
Brown	Hirono	Risch
Burr	Hoeben	Roberts
Cantwell	Inhofe	Rockefeller
Cardin	Isakson	Sanders
Carper	Johanns	Schatz
Casey	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Chambliss	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Coats	Kaine	Shaheen
Coburn	King	Stabenow
Cochran	Kirk	Tester
Collins	Klobuchar	Thune
Coons	Landrieu	Udall (CO)
Corker	Leahy	Udall (NM)
Crapo	Levin	Vitter
Cruz	Manchin	Walsh
Donnelly	Markey	Warner
Durbin	McCain	Warren
Enzi	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Feinstein	McConnell	Wicker
Fischer	Menendez	Wyden

NAYS—6

Cornyn	Paul	Shelby
Lee	Sessions	Toomey

NOT VOTING—1

Rubio

The amendment (No. 2822) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, now, for the next hour, you are going to see the women of the Senate, on a bipartisan basis, speaking up on the issue of childcare. We have worked long and hard together.

I am going to withhold my time and turn to the Senator from Nebraska. What you need to realize is we are not a caucus. We disagree on many things, but on childcare we are united that this bill is a good bill. It could be improved through the amendment process. We recognize that.

So here we are, as a force trying to change the tone, trying to change the tide, and really help America's children.

I yield to Senator FISCHER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program. I thank the Senator from Maryland for her courtesy. In addition, I would like to address an amendment I have proposed to the underlying bill.

Promoting policies that enable job creation is a basic duty of the people's government. This bill we have on the floor before us now provides low-in-

come, hard-working mothers and fathers with the opportunity to have quality childcare while they earn a steady paycheck or as they go back to school.

Americans work hard. They work hard to provide for their families and to make a better life for their children. As a mother and a grandmother I understand that knowing your children are safe and secure is essential to maintaining a steady job. We need to encourage responsible adults to enter and to maintain their presence in our workforce. That is why I appreciate my colleagues' work and their compromise on this bipartisan legislation. I also appreciate how this effort has helped to bring some regular order back to the processes of the Senate. I especially want to recognize Senators BARBARA MIKULSKI, LAMAR ALEXANDER, and RICHARD BURR, who I know worked very hard in a collaborative and bipartisan fashion in order to get this bill to the floor.

As part of that process, I filed a proposed amendment that I have with Senator KING and Senator RUBIO to the child care and development block grant reauthorization. Our bipartisan amendment is a commonsense solution to the FDA's overregulation of low-risk health information technology. That includes mobile wellness apps, scheduling software, and electronic health records. Under current law, which was established in 1976, the FDA can apply its definition of a "medical device" to assert broad regulatory authority over a wide array of health IT, including applications that do not pose any threat to human safety.

Our amendment allows the FDA to keep its focus on regulating medical devices, while creating a modernized oversight framework for low-risk categories of health IT. Since proposing this amendment, I have had the opportunity to speak with Senator ALEXANDER, the ranking member of the Senate HELP Committee. I am happy to say he has expressed an interest in that amendment. That is identical to the language introduced as a stand-alone bill called the PROTECT Act.

I look forward to having the opportunity to work with him and committee members to advance the core ideas included in the PROTECT Act, because I believe with the guidance of the committee, and with the guidance of other Senators, we will be able to achieve another bipartisan success in this Chamber.

At Senator ALEXANDER's request, and in response to his kind offers to work collaboratively on the PROTECT Act, I have agreed not to formally offer this amendment to the bill on the floor, but I do look forward to working with the Senator from Tennessee and others to improve upon that.

Again, I thank the leadership of Senator MIKULSKI, Senator ALEXANDER,

and Senator BURR on the important legislation before us today. I thank them for their work. I thank them for their courtesies in allowing me to rise and speak on this very important amendment. I also thank them and look forward to working with them on the PROTECT Act in the future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I now yield 5 minutes to the Senator from New York, another cosponsor of the bill, Senator GILLIBRAND.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Mr. President, I wish to start by thanking Senator MIKULSKI for championing the reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program, which is a bipartisan bill that reflects the values of this country. It serves more than 1.5 million children nationwide every month, including over 120,000 children in New York State alone. I also thank Chairman HARKIN for his leadership in bringing this important legislation through the committee and to the floor.

Everywhere I go in my State of New York I listen to families. I hear the exact same sense of struggle from every single one of them, that they are doing everything they can do to get by, to provide for their kids and give them the best possible chance to succeed. But no matter how hard they work, making ends meet is difficult. Their day-to-day expenses keep going, while their paychecks either stay the same, or, sadly, are diminished.

As a result, too many families feel they cannot get ahead. So for our economy to get going again, it has to face the reality that the face of the American workforce has changed. We still have workplace policies that reflect the realities of decades ago, in the 1950s and 1960s. But in fact, today, 48 percent of the workforce in my State are women.

In order for us to unleash the full potential of our economy, we have to recognize that women are the new more often breadwinners of too many families. They are the primary income earners for a growing share across America. For that reason, we have to focus on an immovable reality for working mothers. That is childcare.

Today, more women are going back to work sooner after having a child, creating a greater demand for affordable childcare that allows them to stay in their jobs. In 2012 New York ranked the second least affordable State in the Nation for full-time daycare for an infant, according to a report by Child Care Aware.

A two-parent family in New York spends an average of 16.5 percent of their annual income to care for an infant. For a single mom in New York,

the cost was greater than 57 percent of her income. If you cannot afford childcare, as many middle-class families cannot, and you do not have a family option, the choice you are left with is to leave your job and stay home to care for your child. That means less income for working families, more women leaving the workforce and a weaker middle class. It does not have to be this way. We can keep more working mothers in their jobs and more children in quality daycare when we make it affordable.

Our policies must reflect today's reality that women have to work for a living. It is not a lifestyle choice for most working mothers, it is a fact of survival. That is why I support Senator MIKULSKI's outstanding bill, because it will make daycare more affordable for millions of children every single year. It is also why I am a cosponsor of Senator BOXER's amendment that will double the childcare tax credit families can take to cover the cost of childcare and make it refundable.

Making the tax credit refundable would help those who are working and struggling the most but do not earn enough to use the tax credit. It means more savings going right back into the pockets of working families.

I also have an amendment that will make middle-class tax cuts better for childcare expenses. It will let them deduct the cost of childcare as a business expense.

This proposal, called childcare deduction, will allow you to deduct up to \$14,000 for two kids or more. That makes perfect sense, because in New York, the average daycare for a toddler is \$12,000; for an infant it is almost \$15,000. This will go a long way to making sure our hard-working middle-class families have the funds they need to provide for their kids.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I yield 5 minutes to the Senator from Michigan, also a sister social worker and a real advocate for good nutrition for children.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first, as everyone else, I congratulate our leader on this issue and on so many issues, including having the right kind of appropriations process to invest the dollars that Americans work hard to earn, to make sure they are invested in ways that help families, children, and to help the middle class to be able to succeed in this country.

I thank Senator MIKULSKI, the senior Senator from Maryland. Her work on this issue, the child care and development block grant, has been extraordinary and bipartisan, as is all of her work. She is laser focused on creating opportunities for children and families to succeed.

I think all of, certainly, the women who are speaking today and hopefully

all of our colleagues understand that quality, affordable childcare is not a frill. I realize the Presiding Officer has wonderful children as well and understands this is a necessity.

We care for our children. We want to make sure we are able to work, put a roof over their heads, food on the table, to be able to buy their school clothes and get them what they need, to be able to pay for college, and to be able to do all the things we want to do for ourselves, our children, and our families. The costs of childcare are part of that equation, being able to do those things for our families that we need to do.

The average cost of childcare for 2 children is \$14,872 a year. I have heard from my friend and colleague from New York that it was higher in New York. I am sure it is higher in many places. But, on average, across the country, families are having to come up with almost \$15,000 a year which equals, if they are working minimum wage, a 40-hour workweek, working full time for a year. Think about that. If someone is in a minimum-wage job—and hopefully we are going to change that by raising the minimum wage—trying to make it and they work for 1 year, that is the average childcare cost for two children. That is why this investment in children and families is so important. This is the highest household expense for many families.

In most States 1 year of daycare is more expensive than 1 year of tuition at a public university. We are all talking to parents. They are all worried about saving for college. With three small grandchildren, I think how can I help be part of that process of saving for college. Yet 1 year of daycare is more expensive than 1 year of tuition at a public university. This is too much for many of our families to afford. Very difficult choices are being made, choices that families are agonizing over.

This is especially unaffordable for so many hard-working families who are trying to climb the ladder of opportunity, trying to get into the middle class or maybe holding on by their fingertips and trying to stay in the middle class. That is why we have child care and development block grants to be able to help families afford a necessity and something that is critical for our society, which is having safe, affordable, quality childcare for our children.

This is a critically important program signed into law by President George H. W. Bush that 1.6 million children every month rely on; 1.6 million children in our country and their parents rely on this every month.

States use this funding to help low-income families gain access to quality, affordable childcare and afterschool programs. These families are trying to make ends meet and make sure their

children have the opportunities they need to be successful. I want to stress that this funding goes to parents who are working—are working—are training for work or are enrolled in school.

I believe the reason we have strong bipartisan support is people understand how critical it is to hard-working families. This is an investment in our families. It is an investment in America's moms and dads. Sixty-five percent of moms work outside the home. In fact, if they go back to work, they are earning, in Michigan, only 74 cents on every dollar. They don't get a discount on their childcare, just because women are only getting three-quarters of a salary. Somehow, they are still paying the full price, but this is particularly critical for women across America.

This program helps millions of families, as I indicated, especially moms—especially moms getting back to work without having to worry about whether their children are going to be safe. Talk about peace of mind, this is peace-of-mind legislation for moms and dads to make sure their children will have a quality place, affordable place, and a safe place to be while they are working to earn a living for their families.

It has now been 24 years since this law was signed by President Bush, 18 years since it was last reauthorized. It is time to update it to reflect the changing conditions and challenges for our families.

This bipartisan reauthorization addresses issues facing families who need childcare. It improves program quality, making sure funds go to families in need; ensures children and childcare get the things they need to succeed: good nutrition, which is so critical for their growth, physical activity, well-being by developing guidelines and incorporating health and wellness training for professional development; making sure children's needs are addressed when children have disabilities. It is very important for them and their families, making sure all childcare providers are properly trained to care for children and have been screened. That means first aid, CPR, how to prevent sudden infant death syndrome, child abuse, and undergoing a background check.

The bottom line is this is a bill that we need to pass. I am grateful and appreciative of the bipartisan support that has gotten us to this point, and the 45 national organizations that support it, including the Afterschool Alliance, the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children, the National Association for Family Child Care, Teach for America, United Way Worldwide, and so many others.

I am pleased to join with all of my colleagues and urge them that we pass this bill as quickly as possible.

Again, congratulations to our leader, the senior Senator from Maryland, who

has gotten us to this point. I know we will get it all the way through the process.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I yield the floor to Senator BALDWIN of Wisconsin, one of our newest Members but not new to this issue. Her record in the House on advocacy for children is well-known and respected.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Ms. BALDWIN. In America, we know that quality education and a fair shot at work is the path to the middle class, economic security, and getting ahead. Today we have an opportunity to make an important bipartisan action to help strengthen that path to the middle class.

For many families in this country, quality, affordable childcare is a challenge they struggle with every morning. This is why President George H. W. Bush signed the child care and development block grant law in 1990, to ensure that working families have access to quality, affordable childcare.

Today I join a bipartisan group of my Senate colleagues in calling for reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act because of the support it provides working families across this country and across the State of Wisconsin, my home State.

I thank HELP Committee Chairman HARKIN and Ranking Member ALEXANDER, and Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR for their working across party lines to move this important legislation forward.

This bipartisan work is an endorsement of our shared responsibility to build a shared path to the middle class that begins by investing in affordable childcare and high-quality early learning programs.

I am proud to say that Wisconsin has long been a leader in investing in our children early. Education for 4-year-olds was part of Wisconsin's Constitution in 1845, and the first kindergarten in the United States was founded in Watertown, WI, in 1856. Wisconsin is nearing universal 4K, with over 90 percent of school districts offering kindergarten for 4-year-olds.

My State has also recognized the importance of effective collaborations to support early childhood care and education. Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners is a statewide partnership representing over 50 public and private agencies, led by Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction, with the goal of providing every child access to a comprehensive delivery system for high-quality education and care.

I am proud that my State has undertaken a community approach to implementing high-quality childcare and early education. More work remains to

be done, however, both in Wisconsin and nationwide to ensure high-quality childcare and education is accessible to every family.

Our Nation continues to recover from the most severe economic downturn since the Great Depression. As our country continues this recovery, families have had to get by with less. Americans are in need of affordable childcare now more than ever. My home State of Wisconsin is no exception to this trend. Today, many parents are in the workforce, including over 70 percent of mothers in Wisconsin. For many hardworking middle-class families, childcare is necessary but also expensive. For millions of families in the United States, childcare is their single largest household expense at nearly \$15,000 per year.

In Wisconsin, the cost of childcare for an infant is approximately 40 percent of a single mother's median income. Two-parent families can expect to spend more than 10 percent of their income on childcare.

Further, in Wisconsin, nearly one-third of children receiving the child care and development block grant funding are under the age of 3, making this a truly sound investment in those crucial years of early life.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act is a bipartisan effort to reauthorize, reform, and revitalize the block grant program by strengthening Federal safety standards and placing a greater focus on the quality of childcare programs.

This investment in affordable quality childcare will help more than 1.5 million children, including over 30,000 children in Wisconsin.

I once again thank my colleagues for working in a bipartisan manner to guide us in reauthorizing this vital legislation. High-quality childcare and education is essential to the future success of our children and our overall success as a nation.

I am proud to support this legislation as it focuses on improving the quality and safety of childcare programs, focuses on supporting infants and toddlers with high-quality care, and reflects the realities of working families in this difficult economic environment. But, as importantly, I am proud to join a bipartisan effort in Washington that is squarely focused on both parties working together to build a stronger future for our middle class.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 2813 AND 2814 EN BLOC

Ms. MIKULSKI. I ask unanimous consent to make pending Landrieu amendments No. 2813 and No. 2814.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendments en bloc.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maryland [Ms. MIKULSKI], for Ms. LANDRIEU, for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mr. INHOFE, proposes an amendment numbered 2813.

The Senator from Maryland [Ms. MIKULSKI], for Ms. LANDRIEU, for herself, Mr. BLUNT, and Mr. INHOFE, proposes an amendment numbered 2814.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendments be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 2813

(Purpose: To allow children in foster care to receive services under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 while their families (including foster families) are taking necessary action to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements)

On page 82, lines 9 and 10, strike "to receive services under this subchapter while their families" and insert "and children in foster care to receive services under this subchapter while their families (including foster families)"

AMENDMENT NO. 2814

(Purpose: To require the State plan to describe how the State will coordinate the services supported to carry out the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 with State agencies and programs serving children in foster care and the foster families of such children)

On page 93, strike lines 3 and 4 and insert the following:

11432(g)(1)(J)(ii);

"(VII) State agencies and programs serving children in foster care and the foster families of such children; and

"(VIII) other Federal programs

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I note that on the floor are three outstanding Senators who wish to speak on this bill: Senator CANTWELL, Senator MURKOWSKI, and Senator COLLINS. They come as the deans of the Republican women. I ask unanimous consent that they each be allowed to speak for 5 minutes in the order in which I stated: Senator CANTWELL, Senator MURKOWSKI, and then Senator COLLINS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I thank Chairman HARKIN and certainly Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR for their leadership on this bipartisan issue but especially Senator MIKULSKI for her constant leadership in making sure families in America are cared for.

This is important bipartisan legislation, and the reauthorization of this legislation—the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014—will help ensure that families have access to quality, affordable childcare.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Program serves more than 1.6 million children per month nationwide. In my State it serves more than 39,000 children per month. With the support of these grants, parents can work, look for work, and participate in job-training programs while their children receive affordable childcare at quality centers or in the child's home.

The child care and development block grants are a primary source of Federal support for childcare assistance, and they play a key role in promoting healthy development of children, especially at young ages. Research on the effects of early childhood development has continually shown that the foundation provided by early learning and childcare networks can prevent the achievement gaps at a young age. This bill enables States to invest in the programs that have proven to work for children and families.

In Washington more than half of the children served by the child care and development block grants are younger than 4 years old, so in my State these grants are vital for preparing our youngest children with the support and skills they need to stay ahead once they enter into kindergarten.

Professor Cathryn Booth-LaForce, at the University of Washington, said:

Child care affects so many children that for society at large, even small effects are important.

This bill would provide an additional 22,000 children across our Nation with childcare. That is a major effect. Expanding access to quality care can help thousands more children across the Nation get a running start on school. By preventing achievement gaps for our youngest children, we are creating successful students and building a skilled workforce for the future.

This bill allows Washington to make the important investments in our youngest learners and in our future economy. So I am so proud to be here in support of this bipartisan effort, and again I thank Senator MIKULSKI, Senator BURR, and others for working together at a time when people didn't think this level of compromise would result in such an important piece of legislation moving forward.

Once again I particularly wish to thank the dean of the women Senators, Senator MIKULSKI, for this effort and encourage my colleagues to support this bill, S. 1086, and make sure we get it passed before the end of this week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I, too, am pleased to rise today to join my fellow women Senators on the floor this afternoon to speak in support of the bipartisan Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. I also commend Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR on their leadership in developing a truly bipartisan bill as we are moving forward. They have worked diligently and they have worked in a positive and constructive manner that does credit to the Senate operations. I also would like to recognize and commend Senator HARKIN and Senator ALEXANDER, as they have brought this bill through the committee and onto the floor.

I believe this legislation walks that line between asking the States, our tribes, and providers to plan ways to improve childcare quality without actually dictating the who and how and the what of every aspect of childcare. What the bill really does is it strengthens the ways in which providers can combine CCDBG, Head Start, title I, and IDEA funds to serve more kids, and if we can serve more kids, that is all good. It asks them to take an updated look at how they serve children with disabilities and how they will address nutrition and fitness and health and safety issues, but it will continue to let them figure out the best ways to achieve the goals, and that really does make sense.

In addition, as a result of the bipartisan nature of how this bill has come together, Alaskan voices were heard on this, and Alaskan concerns about several provisions in the original draft of the bill were addressed. For example, States that will be required to perform health, safety, and fire inspections may delegate to qualified agencies those inspections that require specialized expertise. That helps us in Alaska.

The committee report clarified that States' disaster preparedness standards include specific mention of children with disabilities and family reunification.

I was pleased to work with my colleague from Hawaii, Senator HIRONO, to make sure the bill managers included the technical amendments she had requested, which ensured that Native Hawaiian children were not inadvertently left out.

I again thank Senators MIKULSKI, BURR, ALEXANDER, and HARKIN for accepting those amendments that have made this bill that much better.

Mr. President, ensuring that families and children are well served by the childcare they pay for, in part with CCDBG assistance, is an important task before the Congress because this is not just about daycare or early learning, as important as those topics are. The fact is that access to high-quality, safe, and affordable childcare is really the key component when we are talking about those things that build strong economies and strong American communities.

This assistance allows parents to get the education or the training they need to qualify for a good job. It allows them to accept and keep a good job that will help pay those bills. It helps employers hire qualified employees who are then able to work. It helps the children get the foundation they need both academically and socially to be prepared to succeed in school and life.

Getting CCDBG-funded childcare up to speed with the 21st century is a key element in addressing income inequality and the deep recession that is still present for so many low-income American families. This is especially true

for American Indian and Alaska Native families. American Indians and Alaska Natives experience exceptionally high unemployment levels compared to the rest of the Nation. I think the Presiding Officer knows this from his State, but in many regions of Alaska unemployment among our Native people is more than double our statewide rate. In the lower 48, unemployment on our Indian reservations was at approximately 50 percent in 2012.

We also know that high-quality early education can have an important and positive effect on the often very difficult academic and social outcomes we can see with our American Indians and our Alaska Native children if they do not have some of these foundational opportunities before them. So increasing these families' access to quality early education can have an important, positive effect on these children by improving their academic outcomes and their economic opportunities and really bringing hope to the community.

I thank the Senators on the floor for supporting the amendment we just had in front of us. Senator FRANKEN and I had offered the tribal set-aside. This change, which moves the set-aside from a ceiling to a floor, will provide tribes with an opportunity to work with HHS to receive additional support for the childcare opportunities that are so needed in Indian Country.

I am proud of the work we are doing in the Senate this week. We could have hotlined this bill and passed it by unanimous consent, but I think the path we have taken is the right one in bringing the bill to the floor and giving each Member the opportunity to be heard on ways to improve the bill. Holding votes on amendments in the regular order is the right thing to do. I applaud the chairwoman and those who have worked so hard, and I look forward to supporting this bill as we see its conclusion.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I am pleased to join my colleagues this afternoon in expressing support for the reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program, and I too commend Senator MIKULSKI, Senator BURR, Senator HARKIN, and Senator ALEXANDER for crafting this bipartisan bill and bringing it to the Senate floor for debate and amendment.

Childcare for working parents is essential to families throughout the Nation, and Maine is no exception. For years the CCDBG Program has assisted low-income parents in affording childcare. The support provided by this important program enables parents to obtain needed care for their children so they may work or improve their own skills and education.

Mr. President, 2,600 children from 1,800 Maine families receive Federal

childcare subsidies through this program. Particularly during these difficult economic times, this program goes a long way in helping families in Maine and across the country.

I have seen firsthand the impact of high-quality early learning on a child's ability to succeed and grow. Educare Central Maine, located in Waterville, which I visited a few years ago, is a state-of-the-art early learning center that serves more than 200 mostly low-income children from birth to age 5. Almost half of these children come from families that are eligible for assistance, and many rely on the CCDBG voucher to help cover the cost of their attending Educare. Educare is a great example of quality childcare in my State and of the real impact of this program's funding at work in our communities.

As I saw at Educare in Waterville, the vouchers provided under this program allow parents to choose the best childcare setting for their children. That is a critical aspect of this program. Vouchers give parents the flexibility they want and need to make the best choice for their children about the kind of care that best serves their needs, whether it is at a childcare center, at a family care home, or with a relative or friend. The voucher program helps to keep the decisions in the hands of parents.

I am also pleased this reauthorization requires coordination among the early learning advisory councils and Head Start and the IDEA programs that serve children with special needs. Aligning these programs will help to improve the quality of all services offered for infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children.

High-quality early learning experiences help ensure that children are well prepared for school. This bill improves the current program by making sure those providers receiving funding are qualified, receive training, and are regularly inspected and monitored.

I also express my gratitude to the members of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee for including in this legislation provisions from the Child Care Infant Mortality Prevention Act. That is a bill I introduced with the Senator from California, DIANNE FEINSTEIN. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as the American Academy of Pediatrics, half of the approximately 4,500 sudden infant death syndrome cases in the United States are entirely preventable with effective training and implementation of correct sleep practices. I am very pleased this reauthorization includes sudden infant death syndrome prevention and safe sleeping practices among the new health and safety training topics for providers.

Childcare is not only important to the developmental health of our chil-

dren but also to the well-being of their parents. When parents know their children have a place to go where they will be safe and where they will learn, then parents have the peace of mind to earn a living to support their families.

Balancing the need to work with the need for childcare can be very difficult. At times, a parent's salary would be almost completely offset by the cost of childcare in a low-income family. This bill will help more parents get the support they need while reinforcing the requirement for high-quality care in healthy, stimulating, and safe environments.

Mr. President, I urge all of my colleagues to support this reauthorization bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I thank the Senators from Maine and Alaska for their comments, as well as the Senator from Washington State. Wasn't it impressive that for the last hour, from both sides of the aisle, the women of the Senate have spoken out. Yet this bill is not a woman's bill. This is a family bill, where the men and women of the Senate came together on a bipartisan basis and have developed a framework for a sensible, affordable reauthorization of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

I am so pleased to be a part of this with Senator HARKIN, chairman of the health and education committee, Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER, and Senator RICHARD BURR, my counterpart on the subcommittee, where we worked so hard to do this.

We the women of the Senate often joke, but it is no laughing matter when we say we work on the macro issues of our economy and of our national security. But we also work on the macaroni and cheese issues affecting America's families, and there is no bigger macaroni and cheese issue than general education, and of course early childhood education, which occurs both in the home—remember, the first teachers are always the family—and then childcare. With now more than 40 percent of American women in the workforce, childcare is indeed a compelling issue.

Childcare is one of the most important decisions a parent can make in raising their child. Yet when one asks who is worried about childcare or when there is a single mom working double shifts because she might make the minimum wage and she is trying to hold body and soul together or a married couple where the wife is working in the marketplace as a lab technician and the father has a job which might have him commuting more than 2 hours a day one way, they need to be able to have affordable childhood care. What about the police officer who works the night shift? When we say "police officer," it could be female or male.

Our bill helps lift the burden, giving families and children the childcare they need. This is why I am so proud the Senate women have joined me to support this bill. Many families want childcare which is reliable, undeniable, safe, affordable, and accessible. This bill does just that.

So how does it work? The Federal Government provides States and Indian tribes with funding. This funding is used to help lower-income families afford childcare while their parents work or train for work. Families are given vouchers based on their income level to help cover the cost of care. These vouchers can be used by parents for care in a childcare home, care in a relative's home or in a child care center.

Every month the CCDBG Program helps more than 1.5 million American children. In my own home State of Maryland, 20,000 children are served monthly; 20,000 families benefit from this.

So why is the program important? Childcare is expensive. Even when parents are contributing to childcare, it is often one of their highest expenditures. On average, Maryland families spend 20 percent of their family income on child care. Maryland has 54,000 working moms with infants under the age of 1 year. The childcare for this is \$13,000 a year. We have 148,000 single moms with children under the age of 18. We have 200,000 working moms with children under the age of 6. Childcare for them for a 4-year-old is about \$9,000 a year. This is more than what it costs to go to a community college. This is what it costs to go to more than some of the campuses at the University of Maryland.

Childcare is expensive. Taking care of children who are preschool is expensive because in order to do the right thing they have to have trained staff who not only provide a safe environment for the children, but the kind of environment which nurtures their development, develops their mind, and prepares them for school. This is why we focused on high-quality childcare.

Safeguarding their health and safety, ensuring children have a continuity of care, making sure their nutritional concerns are also addressed. We have done this, again, on a bipartisan basis to make sure when we provide childcare, and we also provide local flexibility.

The needs in a rural State like Utah or Montana are different than Maryland or New York. Look at the lead sponsors of this bill: Tennessee, North Carolina, Iowa, Maryland. So we provide the local flexibility which is so important.

This bill will make sure we have strong background checks to make sure the children are safe. We are going to make sure they meet certain basic health requirements where the staff knows basic first aid. We are also going

to make sure there is money for training and curriculum development so each child benefits in a safe learning environment.

There is much more I could say about this bill, but the most important is this. Let's get our amendments done and let's move it. I am proud of what we have done, and I really think that if we work together, we can offer our amendments and be done by sometime tomorrow.

So I again reach out to all of my colleagues. We have a good bill. It is a bill which helps families and, at the same time, it does not really increase bureaucracy.

I yield the floor and look forward to a continuing debate on the bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). The Senator from Iowa is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 2824 AND AMENDMENT NO. 2809

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendments be set aside, and call up the following amendments: Bennet-Isakson No. 2824; and, Boxer-Burr No. 2809.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. HARKIN], for Mr. BENNET and Mr. ISAKSON, proposes an amendment numbered 2824;

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. HARKIN], for Mrs. BOXER and Mr. BURR, proposes amendment numbered 2809.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendments be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 2824

(Purpose: To require States that elect to combine funding for early childhood education and care to describe the manner in which they use the combined funding)

On page 91, line 17, insert "efficiently" before "coordinate".

On page 93, strike line 9 and insert the following:

"(i) OPTIONAL USE OF COMBINED FUNDS.—If the State elects to combine funding for the services supported to carry out this subchapter with funding for any program described in subclauses (I) through (VII) of clause (i), the plan shall describe how the State will combine the multiple sets of funding and use the combined funding.

"(iii) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Not-

On page 128, line 16, strike "chapter; and" and insert "chapter;"

On page 128, strike line 22 and insert the following:

"(5) after consultation with the Secretary of Education and the heads of any other Federal agencies involved, issue guidance, and disseminate information on best practices, regarding use of funding combined by States as described in section 658E(c)(2)(O)(ii), consistent with law other than this subchapter."; and

AMENDMENT NO. 2809

(Purpose: To amend the Crime Control Act of 1990 to improve the quality of background checks for Federal agencies hiring, or contracting to hire, individuals to provide child care services)

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . . . SAFE CHILD CARE ACT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the "Safe Child Care Act of 2014".

(b) BACKGROUND CHECKS.—Section 231 of the Crime Control Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 13041) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking "subsection (b)(3)" and inserting "paragraph (3)"; and

(B) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (4);

(2) by moving paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (b) to subsection (a), and inserting them after paragraph (1) of that subsection;

(3) in subsection (a)(3), as redesignated by paragraph (2) of this subsection, by striking "subsection (a)(1)" and inserting "paragraph (1)";

(4) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

"(1) A background check required by subsection (a) shall be initiated through the personnel programs of the applicable Federal agencies.

"(2) A background check for a child care staff member under subsection (a) shall include—

"(A) a search, including a fingerprint check, of the State criminal registry or repository in—

"(i) the State where the child care staff member resides; and

"(ii) each State where the child care staff member previously resided during the longer of—

"(I) the 10-year period ending on the date on which the background check is initiated; or

"(II) the period beginning on the date on which the child care staff member attained 18 years of age and ending on the date on which the background check is initiated;

"(B) a search of State-based child abuse and neglect registries and databases in—

"(i) the State where the child care staff member resides; and

"(ii) each State where the child care staff member previously resided during the longer of—

"(I) the 10-year period ending on the date on which the background check is initiated; or

"(II) the period beginning on the date on which the child care staff member attained 18 years of age and ending on the date on which the background check is initiated;

"(C) a search of the National Crime Information Center database;

"(D) a Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint check using the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System;

"(E) a search of the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16901 et seq.); and

"(F) a search of the State sex offender registry established under that Act in—

"(i) the State where the child care staff member resides; and

"(ii) each State where the child care staff member previously resided during the longer of—

"(I) the 10-year period ending on the date on which the background check is initiated; or

"(II) the period beginning on the date on which the child care staff member attained 18 years of age and ending on the date on which the background check is initiated.

"(3) A child care staff member shall be ineligible for employment by a child care provider if such individual—

"(A) refuses to consent to the background check described in subsection (a);

"(B) makes a false statement in connection with such background check;

"(C) is registered, or is required to be registered, on a State sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006; or

"(D) has been convicted of a felony consisting of—

"(i) murder, as described in section 1111 of title 18, United States Code;

"(ii) child abuse or neglect;

"(iii) a crime against children, including child pornography;

"(iv) spousal abuse;

"(v) a crime involving rape or sexual assault;

"(vi) kidnapping;

"(vii) arson;

"(viii) physical assault or battery; or

"(ix) subject to paragraph (5)(D), a drug-related offense committed during the preceding 5 years.

"(4)(A) A child care provider covered by paragraph (3) shall submit a request, to the appropriate State agency designated by a State, for a background check described in subsection (a), for each child care staff member (including prospective child care staff members) of the provider.

"(B) In the case of an individual who is hired as a child care staff member before the date of enactment of the Safe Child Care Act of 2014, the provider shall submit such a request—

"(i) prior to the last day of the second full fiscal year after that date of enactment; and

"(ii) not less often than once during each 5-year period following the first submission date under this subparagraph for that staff member.

"(C) In the case of an individual who is a prospective child care staff member on or after that date of enactment, the provider shall submit such a request—

"(i) prior to the date the individual becomes a child care staff member of the provider; and

"(ii) not less often than once during each 5-year period following the first submission date under this subparagraph for that staff member.

"(5)(A) The State shall—

"(i) carry out the request of a child care provider for a background check described in subsection (a) as expeditiously as possible; and

"(ii) in accordance with subparagraph (B) of this paragraph, provide the results of the background check to—

"(I) the child care provider; and

"(II) the current or prospective child care staff member for whom the background check is conducted.

"(B)(i) The State shall provide the results of a background check to a child care provider as required under subparagraph (A)(ii)(I) in a statement that—

"(I) indicates whether the current or prospective child care staff member for whom the background check is conducted is eligible or ineligible for employment by a child care provider; and

"(II) does not reveal any disqualifying crime or other related information regarding

the current or prospective child care staff member.

“(ii) If a current or prospective child care staff member is ineligible for employment by a child care provider due to a background check described in subsection (a), the State shall provide the results of the background check to the current or prospective child care staff member as required under subparagraph (A)(ii)(II) in a criminal background report that includes information relating to each disqualifying crime.

“(iii) A State—

“(I) may not publicly release or share the results of an individual background check described in subsection (a); and

“(II) may include the results of background checks described in subsection (a) in the development or dissemination of local or statewide data relating to background checks if the results are not individually identifiable.

“(C)(i) The State shall provide for a process by which a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) may appeal the results of a background check required under subsection (a) to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in the criminal background report of the staff member.

“(ii) The State shall ensure that—

“(I) the appeals process is completed in a timely manner for each child care staff member;

“(II) each child care staff member is given notice of the opportunity to appeal; and

“(III) each child care staff member who wishes to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information in the criminal background report of the child care staff member is given instructions about how to complete the appeals process.

“(D)(i) The State may allow for a review process through which the State may determine that a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) disqualified for a crime specified in paragraph (3)(D)(ix) is eligible for employment by a child care provider, notwithstanding paragraph (3).

“(ii) The review process under this subparagraph shall be consistent with title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.).

“(E) Nothing in this section shall be construed to create a private right of action against a child care provider if the child care provider is in compliance with this section.

“(F) This section shall apply to each State that receives funding under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.).

“(6) Fees that the State may charge for the costs of conducting a background check as required by subsection (a) shall not exceed the actual costs to the State for the administration of such background checks.

“(7) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent a Federal agency from disqualifying an individual as a child care staff member based on a conviction of the individual for a crime not specifically listed in this subsection that bears upon the fitness of an individual to provide care for and have responsibility for the safety and well-being of children.

“(8) In this subsection—

“(A) the term ‘child care provider’ means an agency of the Federal Government, or a unit of or contractor with the Federal Government that is operating a facility, described in subsection (a); and

“(B) the term ‘child care staff member’ means an individual who is hired, or seeks to

be hired, by a child care provider to be involved with the provision of child care services, as described in subsection (a).”; and

(5) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(C) SUSPENSION PENDING DISPOSITION OF CRIMINAL CASE.—In the case of an incident in which an individual has been charged with an offense described in subsection (b)(3)(D) and the charge has not yet been disposed of, an employer may suspend an employee from having any contact with children while on the job until the case is resolved.”.

(C) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on October 1 of the second full fiscal year after the date of enactment of this Act.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 5:15 p.m., the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the following amendments in the order listed: Landrieu No. 2818; Landrieu-Grassley No. 2813; Landrieu-Blunt No. 2814; and Bennett-Isakson No. 2824; further, that no second-degree amendments be in order to any of these amendments prior to the votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. For the information of all Senators, it is our understanding that only one of these four amendments will be subject to a rollcall vote, Landrieu No. 2818, and the others will hopefully be done by voice votes at 5:15.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that upon disposition of the Bennet-Isakson amendment, the Senate proceed to executive session for consideration of the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 682, 617, 614, 545; that the Senate proceed to vote in the order listed without intervening action or debate on the nominations; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, would the Senator yield 2 minutes?

I thank the Senator from Iowa for his generosity spirit, and I rise in strong support of the bill.

Since 1990 this important block grant has helped States provide vouchers to our low-income families to help them afford quality childcare programs. We all know how important that is.

With over 70 percent of moms in today's workforce, it certainly is a critical issue for our children and their families and for our economy.

I have been involved in this issue both when I was a young mom and now

as an older grandmother. Childcare can be very expensive. The average low-income family spends over 32 percent of their income on childcare every month and about the same for their rent. They don't have much left over. It is very difficult. In California we have almost 6 million children whose parents are working, and in our State we were able to help over 100,000 children through this very important program.

I commend the sponsors of this bill, the HELP Committee, for the great work they have done. I have a couple of amendments, and I will finish in just a moment.

Senator BURR and I have proposed amendment No. 2809, which simply ensures that all childcare programs on Federal facilities, such as military bases, conduct the same comprehensive background checks the bill already requires of childcare providers on State land. So it is like a little bit of an oversight that was left out.

So we make sure if there is a childcare center on Federal lands—and, by the way, there are many—it is taken care of. Unfortunately, we have had experiences of all kinds of assaults on Federal lands, and I don't need to go into that.

Amendment No. 2810 would help more parents afford quality childcare by increasing the child and dependent care tax credit from \$3,000 to \$6,000 per child, and making it refundable.

I do hope we all support the underlying bill, and I thank the Senator from Iowa for his generosity.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Iowa is recognized.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, in the last few weeks I have come to the floor many times to speak about how the Senate has deteriorated from being the deliberative body it is supposed to be. Considering the comity on the floor on this bill under the direction of Senator HARKIN, my colleague from Iowa, and other people, this is probably not the most appropriate time to give a speech like this. But we still have problems in the Senate and I wish to address them.

We need to restore the Senate as a deliberative body. I am very concerned the Senate is no longer living up to its reputation as the “World's Greatest Deliberative Body.”

I have outlined how the Senate ought to function by quoting at length the writings of the primary architect of the U.S. Constitution James Madison. When trying to understand what the authors of the Constitution intended the role of the Senate to be, we can't do any better than James Madison, the father of the Constitution.

The writings of Madison, along with Hamilton and Jay, in the Federalist

Papers comprise the most comprehensive and detailed explanation of what the framers of the Constitution intended. This provides an important and very nonpartisan frame of reference about the role the Senate is supposed to play in our system of government. By going back to our founding document and first principles, we can rise above petty partisan squabbling and start working on how to restore the Senate as the deliberative body it is supposed to be.

I will start by recapping some of the lessons from the Federalist Papers where the Senate has gone off course. Then I will talk about solutions to restore the Senate. I am introducing this solution today with cosponsorship of other Senators, which I will get to in a minute.

In Federalist No. 62, this new creation of a Senate is being explained to the people of New York to convince them to ratify the Constitution. It tells of the lessons Americans learned in the first years of independence under the Articles of Confederation, which had a unicameral legislature, as did most of the States at that time. Based on lessons learned from practical experience then of these State legislatures, James Madison lists four problems that a republic such as ours could face if it doesn't have a properly functioning Senate.

The first problem Madison recounts is a tendency for a group to form in a legislative body that pushes its own agenda as opposed to what the people elected them to do. Madison explains that having a second Chamber like a Senate makes such "schemes of usurpation or perfidy" less likely because they would have to capture both Chambers at the same time. The Senate, with longer staggered terms as the Constitution spells out, makes that even less likely.

The second lesson is that a single-chamber legislature with lots of Members tends to "yield to the impulse of sudden and violent passions and to be seduced by factious leaders into intemperate and pernicious resolutions."

If that sounds like the House of Representatives today, that is because it is supposed to work that way. The House is supposed to reflect the immediate passions of the day, even if those passions take on a partisan pen. However, when laws are made only by factious leaders, you end up with what Madison calls, "intemperate and pernicious resolutions."

So that is where he says the function of the Senate as a deliberative body comes into play.

Madison's third lesson has to do with a need for a body with longer terms that is serious about doing the hard work of legislating, instead of pushing short-term agendas, such as might be the case in a House of Representatives.

To quote Madison:

What indeed are all the repealing, explaining, and amending laws, which fill and disgrace our voluminous codes, but so many monuments of deficient wisdom; so many impeachments exhibited by each succeeding against each preceding session; so many admonitions to people, of the value of those aids which may be expected from a well constituted senate?

In other words, what Madison was saying: It is better to take the time to get it right the first time than to have to constantly go back and fix ill-conceived laws. That is what the Senate is composed to do under our Constitution, to make sure we do not get sudden changes or bad legislation out of the other body.

In the fourth and final point, Madison explains that if a legislature is constantly churning out new laws, even if they are good ideas, it causes chaos because no one knows what the law says from day to day. It changes constantly, in other words.

To this point Madison says: "A continual change even of good measures is inconsistent with every rule of prudence and every prospect of success."

Madison also points out a problem caused by overactive legislating that we tend to think is unique in modern times; that is, special interest groups that are hired as lobbyists and lawyers. To quote Madison: "Another effect of public instability is the unreasonable advantage it gives to the sagacious, the enterprising, and the moneyed few over the industrious and uniformed mass of the people."

That is a criticism we still hear today.

Just to recap, the Senate was specifically written into our Constitution to solve certain problems; namely, but repetitively, to prevent an agenda that does not reflect that of the American people, to prevent legislation based upon short-term partisan passions, and to pass fewer but better thought-out laws. Of course, starting in 2007, we had a House and a Senate controlled by the same political party and intent on enacting the President's agenda, top of which was his health care law. The deliberative process was cut short and the legislation was rammed through the Senate over the objections of Senators representing 40 percent of the States. The President's health care law is practically the poster child for what Madison called "intemperate and pernicious resolutions," reflecting a partisan agenda that did not enjoy broad support among the American people when it was passed. You know what. It enjoys less support today.

The fact that Congress didn't take the time to think through every aspect of that important health care legislation and work out a consensus that could attract broad support of the Senate has resulted in the need of a series of, as Madison said, "repealing, explaining and amending laws."

Of course, the President claimed for himself the authority to unilaterally

suspend or amend parts of the law that aren't working rather than come back to Congress that under the Constitution is supposed to be the legislative body. Of course, what the President is doing now is not what the authors of the Constitution intended either. We wouldn't be in this predicament, with a deeply flawed health care law, if the Senate had been allowed to function as it was intended.

Now with neither party today having 60 votes needed to steamroll Members of the minority party, the Senate should go back to functioning as it was intended. Yet that hasn't happened. Instead we have seen an unprecedented abuse of Senate rules to block Senators from participating in the deliberative process. These abuses of Senate rules threaten to fundamentally transform the Senate from the greatest deliberative body in the world into a purely partisan rubberstamp for the agenda of the majority and its leadership. If we allow that to happen, we will see even more of the problems Madison warned about.

The Senate was intended to be a deliberative body and only functions properly when deliberation is allowed. That means we must have debate and amendments.

I hear frequent complaints from Iowans about Congress passing huge bills without Members of Congress having the opportunity to understand all the provisions, much less the people they are supposed to represent having a chance to understand the bills and to weigh in on them. It is now routine for cloture to be filed immediately upon bringing up a matter for consideration. That is not the deliberative process or how the Senate is supposed to operate.

Cloture was invented to allow the Senate to end consideration of a matter after the preponderance of Senators had concluded it had received sufficient consideration. Even that part was a compromise. Before cloture was invented, there was no way to end debate as long as at least one Senator thought a matter needed further consideration.

Cloture was introduced to balance the desire to get things done with the principle that each Senator, as a representative of his or her State, has a right to participate fully in that legislative process. The threshold was later adjusted down from two-thirds of Senators voting to three-fifths of all Senators. That is the famous 60 votes we have to have if we want to end debate. Each time this matter has been revisited, the balance has tilted more in favor of speeding up the process at the expense of allowing Senators to fully represent the people of their States.

At the beginning of the current Congress, the Senate passed changes to the Senate rules to shorten the amount of debate time after cloture is invoked for certain nominees and to expedite consideration of legislation in some situations. These changes were agreed to in

exchange for a promise—a real promise—that the so-called nuclear option would not be used.

Notwithstanding that commitment, just a short 10 months later, the nuclear option was used, setting a new precedent that debate on nominations can be cut off by a simple majority of Senators, ignoring the plain text of the cloture rule that is still on the books.

At the end of the day, Members of this body agreed to extinguish certain rights in exchange for the promise not to use the nuclear option only to have additional rights stripped away 10 months later by a simple majority vote. Taken together, those two episodes represent a dramatic shift toward domination of the Senate by one faction, contrary to Madison's stated intent.

I say all that by way of background, but that is history and the other side will have to learn to live with the ramifications of changes to the nomination process that they forced upon this body.

I would like to turn the focus now to the legislative process and what can be done to restore the Senate to the role envisioned by the authors of the Constitution before it is too late and the idea that I have and some of my colleagues have joined me in a rule change along this line.

When it comes to legislating, we have gotten off track from how the Senate was designed, but we have an opportunity to restore the Senate as a deliberative body. That was an understanding at the beginning of this Congress, that there would be some return to regular order. In exchange for rule changes that expedite the legislative process, the majority leadership would turn to the longstanding tradition of an open amendment process.

In other words, there was an understanding that the Senate would take its time to consider legislation and Senators from both sides would be free to propose amendments and have them voted on. That understanding lasted until Republicans submitted amendments that some on the other side were nervous to have to take a position on. It is no secret the majority leader has gone out of his way to keep Members of his caucus from having to take votes that may hurt them with the people back home.

The Senate rules provide that any Senator may offer an amendment to a bill being considered. Therefore, in order to shield Members from having to take tough votes, the majority leader now routinely moves to shut down all consideration of a bill before amendments are considered.

As I said at the beginning, maybe today isn't the time to give this speech because we have great comity on the bills before the Senate, but we still have a major problem.

Cloture is supposed to be used after the Senate has considered a measure

for a period of time and a preponderance of the Senate think it has deliberated enough. Cloture should not be used to prevent any meaningful deliberation from taking place. The average number of cloture motions filed under each session of the Congress under this majority leadership is more than double what it was in prior sessions of Congress under majority leaders of both parties going back to 1987. This alone is an indication that cloture is being overused, even abused, by the majority.

The majority leader will tell you he is forced to file cloture because of Republican filibusters. He might have a point if—and that is a big if—if it was true that after extensive debate and plenty of opportunity to consider amendments Republicans were dragging out debate purely for the sake of delay. However, we can hardly claim that the Senate's deliberation has dragged on too long when it hasn't even begun consideration of the matter in the first place.

We are now at the point where the overwhelming number of motions to cut off debate are made before debate has even started, much less than in response to a filibuster because, obviously, we have to have debate before we have a filibuster.

Let's look at a chart I have that was put together by the Congressional Research Service on cloture motions in relation to legislative business filed the same day a matter is brought before the Senate—in other words, before debate starts—because we have to have debate before we have a filibuster.

I have color-coded each Congress based on which party controlled the Senate. You will notice that use of same-day cloture averages out to 29 times per Congress up until the 110th Congress when this majority leadership takes over. Then there is a huge jump to 98 same-day cloture motions. That is more than three times the previous average. You will notice a trend toward slightly more use of same-day clotures in the years leading up to 2007 and, of course, that makes both parties guilty.

You can see an unprecedented use of same-day clotures starting when this majority leadership took over. The trend has continued at more than double the previous average in each Congress since this majority leadership took over.

There were 65 same-day cloture motions in the 111th Congress and 67 in the 112th Congress compared to 29 the last time Republicans controlled the Senate, which coincidentally is also the previous average I have talked about.

The last line on the chart shows the total as of January, when we were only halfway through the current Congress. At that time we were already up to 30 same-day cloture motions. That is more than we saw for the entire Con-

gress the last time Republicans were in the majority. We are back to an unprecedented use of cloture to end deliberations before deliberations have even begun, and that is clearly abusive and cannot be justified.

Some people might argue that same-day cloture motions on the motion to proceed should not be counted because the motion to proceed can't be amended. That is debatable, but I will point out that the last column shows same-day cloture filings excluding the motion to proceed, and the trend is exactly the same.

What do we do about this abuse of cloture to end consideration of a bill before it has been considered? Today I am introducing the Stop Cloture Abuse Resolution. That appropriately spells out the acronym SCAR because cloture abuse threatens to scar the body of the Senate. The Stop Cloture Abuse Resolution will amend Senate rules to prohibit the filing of cloture until at least 24 hours after the Senate has proceeded to the matter. That means you will have debate before you file cloture. Debate could be a filibuster, but you have to have debate to have a filibuster. This reform will end, once and for all, the practice of attempting to shut down debate and amendments before the debate has started.

It is important to keep in mind that when Senators are blocked from participating in the legislative process, the people they represent are disenfranchised. By that I don't mean the citizens of the 45 States who elected Republicans. The citizens of States who elected Democratic Senators also expect their Senators to offer amendments and engage with their colleagues and different parties. Forcing a cloture vote before any deliberation prevents even Members of the majority party from offering amendments that may be important to the people they represent. Voters have a right to expect the people they elect to actually do the hard work of legislating, not just be a rubberstamp for the leadership's agenda.

Senators who go along with the tactics that disenfranchise their own constituents should have to explain to those who voted them into office why they are not willing to be full-fledged Senators. The Senate is the world's most deliberative body, and constituents rightfully expect their Senators to be able to vote. They should explain why their loyalty is to party leadership and not to the people of their State.

A Senator's job includes offering amendments. Being a Senator also means sometimes you have to take tough votes on other Senators' amendments that reveal to your constituents where you stand on various issues. It is the job of Senators, quite plainly, to deliberate and to legislate.

The Stop Cloture Abuse Resolution will make it clear that deliberation is

the rule, not disenfranchisement. It would establish that a deliberative process is expected, and at least some deliberation must occur before any attempt to silence the voices of Senators and by extension the voices of the people of their respective States.

This is just one reform idea I am proposing for the Senate to consider as we work to restore the Senate as a deliberative body, and that will be introduced today. It would only address, I have to admit, part of the problem. The Senate will also have to address the abuse of filling the tree to block amendments.

The ability to block Senators from offering amendments is actually not found in the Senate rules. Filling the tree is an abuse of Senate precedents. In some ways that makes it the easier problem to address; whereas, a cloture abuse is an abuse of the Senate cloture rule. The practice of filling the tree to block amendments can be eliminated simply by establishing a new precedent.

As everyone remembers from the nuclear option, establishing a new precedent is a simple process that only requires a majority vote. However, like the nuclear option which established a precedent that the Senate would ignore, the plain text of a rule is still on the books. Ending the ability of a majority leader to block amendments would simply involve replacing the old precedent with a new precedent.

For now, the Stop Cloture Abuse Resolution—going by the acronym SCAR—would be a good start. It would eliminate the scar on the Senate. Adopting the Stop Cloture Abuse Resolution would send a strong message that the Senate will once again deliberate over issues rather than ramming through all of them without careful consideration.

This reform will reduce the urge to force legislation through the Senate based on a short-term partisan agenda and result in fewer but better laws just as James Madison and the other Framers of the Constitution intended. Amending the Senate rules should not be a last resort, and this move should not be necessary.

We have been told the bipartisan child care and development block grant bill will be considered—and is being considered—under an open amendment process. If that happens, and if that marks the beginning of a return to regular order where all Senators are allowed to represent their States to the best of their ability once again, then perhaps this move will not be necessary.

Given the record of the past three Congresses, I don't think anybody should hold their breath on that happening.

It is a good day in the U.S. Senate that this legislation is being considered under the process the Senate was set

up to perform—to deliberate, offer amendments, and debate.

If a fully open amendment process is not permitted after all, and if this rare instance of bipartisanship proves to be an exception to the rule, it will prove that the Senate is fundamentally broken and only significant reforms, such as the Stop Cloture Abuse Resolution, can restore the Senate as the world's greatest deliberative body.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2837

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment so I may call up my amendment numbered 2837, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the amendment. The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from South Carolina [Mr. SCOTT], for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU, proposes an amendment numbered 2837.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To clarify parental rights to use child care certificates)

On page 140, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

SEC. 10A. PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

Section 658Q of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858o) is amended—

(1) by inserting before “Nothing” the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) PARENTAL RIGHTS TO USE CHILD CARE CERTIFICATES.—Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed in a manner—

“(1) to favor or promote the use of grants and contracts for the receipt of child care services under this subchapter over the use of child care certificates; or

“(2) to disfavor or discourage the use of such certificates for the purchase of child care services, including those services provided by private or nonprofit entities, such as faith-based providers.”.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, I offer amendment No. 2837 to S. 2086, the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. My amendment seeks to clarify that the statute does not favor or promote the use of grants or contracts over the use of childcare certificates, nor does it adversely impact the use of certificates in faith-based or other settings.

What we are talking about today boils down to parental choice and State

flexibility—two issues the Federal Government should be thinking a lot harder about on a constant basis.

I ask my colleagues to support my bipartisan amendment to ensure low-income working parents have a choice and that States have the flexibility they need to find the childcare that best suits their child.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business for up to 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I rise this afternoon to talk about the Medicare Program, which of course, is a lifeline—a guarantee for 50 million older Americans. In particular what the Senate wants to do is make sure that those older people have access to primary care doctors, nurse practitioners, specialists, and other providers in their local communities because they provide critically needed care to our seniors day in and day out.

Many of those seniors have no idea that by March 31—just a few weeks from now—Congress has to act on their behalf to preserve access to the care that seniors depend on. Suffice it to say those providers would much rather be delivering the care than waiting for this Congress to act.

Now, fortunately, there is a roadmap for getting this done—getting good care to seniors not just for a short period of time but, I say to my colleagues, once and for all. And I wish to this afternoon urge my colleagues to seize this opportunity.

Beginning my remarks, I declare I can take little credit for the opportunity before us. The path that got us here, that got us started in the effort to make the needed reforms to protect our seniors, is a direct result of the leadership of my friend and colleague Senator ORRIN HATCH. Just as Senator HATCH has done so many times over the course of an illustrious career, he was key to forging a bipartisan solution to a challenging, longstanding problem.

So what I would like to do in the beginning is to recognize that effort by Senator HATCH; my predecessor as chairman of the Finance Committee, Senator BAUCUS; House Ways and Means chairman DAVE CAMP; House Ways and Means Ranking Member SANDER LEVIN; House Energy and Commerce chairman FRED UPTON; and House Energy and Commerce Ranking Member HENRY WAXMAN. The work they have been doing over the last few

months is exceptional. In effect, they have given us the opportunity to take this flawed system of setting a kind of Medicare budget known as SGR—sustainable growth rate—they have given us the opportunity to repeal and replace this flawed system with one that I think is going to make a huge difference in the days ahead by pushing up the goal of good-quality affordable care and doing it in a bipartisan way. I hope these colleagues will take it as a compliment that the SGR bill now before the Senate incorporates all of that good bipartisan work they have been doing, along with the work that was done on the Senate Finance Committee.

I see our colleague from North Carolina, who has contributed mightily to that effort, as well as, of course, the Presiding Officer of the Senate Senator BROWN, who has been such an eloquent spokesperson, particularly for those without political power and political clout. I thank both of them for their efforts.

To be specific, the legislation I introduced last night incorporates what those six Members agreed to—the six Members I just named, the three Democrats and the three Republicans—in S. 2000. In effect, that legislation, along with the health extenders passed by the Senate Finance Committee in S. 1871, is essentially what we have the opportunity to move in the days ahead. Every single item in this bill has strong bipartisan support, and I hope we can all come together and with resounding bipartisan support get this bill passed before March 31.

There are a variety of reasons why Democrats and Republicans, in my view, can band together and repeal and replace what I have characterized as a flawed, really dysfunctional system we have today known as the SGR, but before I go through the list of reasons, I wish to make clear to my colleagues—colleagues who know me—that I am interested in sound, sensible policy and that we move in a bipartisan way—not politics, not message, but sound policy.

That is why I am here on the floor today. I have always tried to make it possible for both sides to secure their principles—principles that are important to them—and still allow us to go forward in a bipartisan and innovative fashion to get things done.

I will say to my colleagues, it is not possible any longer to just put one patch or another up and say we are going to fix the Medicare challenge. It is not going to work.

For the last 10 years Congress has always blocked these cuts. So I say it is time to stop pretending these upcoming cuts—fittingly scheduled for April Fools' Day—are any more real than the 16 times the Congress has intervened. What we ought to do, I say to my colleagues, is stop playing Medicare make believe. It is time to set aside a flawed

formula that prevents the Congress from really moving ahead constructively on Medicare and to start with a clean slate.

I thought the Wall Street Journal editors really summed it up very well on February 19. In talking about the bipartisan bill I laud tonight, the editors of the Wall Street Journal said: “Simply pass the bill as is and forgo the pretense of fake-paying for it.” We need to think about those words. The editors of the Wall Street Journal basically said this is all a bunch of fakery because the cuts aren’t going to be made, the savings aren’t going to be realized, because we have tried that route. So the Wall Street Journal said pass this good bipartisan bill.

If the Congress fails to fully repeal the flawed Medicare payment formula now, I believe there will be cuts to other providers—hospitals, home health care providers, drug companies, skilled nursing facilities. Make no mistake about it. Those providers are going to be the ones who pay for yet another patch. So a lot of this budget fakery isn’t real, but the people who are going to pay for the patch are going to face very real cuts.

In total, the 16 bandaid patches have already cost \$150 billion. That is the same cost as fully repealing and replacing the flawed SGR plus taking care of the health extenders. Those cuts, as I have indicated, have largely been paid for in the past by cuts to other providers. In the last 2 years alone, the hospitals have been forced to produce nearly \$30 billion to pay for the temporary patches.

Under the status quo, the SGR will always call for cuts that are too steep for providers to bear and Congress will step in with yet another patch paid for by still more cuts to other providers. How can we make a case for more of the same, especially when we have an opportunity to not only repeal the flawed formula but also to enact reforms that finally move Medicare away from the flawed fee-for-service approach that rewards quantity instead of quality and value?

Second, I offered the Medicare SGR Repeal and Beneficiary Access Improvement Act of 2014 in order to eliminate the ongoing threat to our seniors and the providers who serve them. Under this legislation, which reflects the bipartisan, bicameral legislation Senator HATCH and Senator BAUCUS offered last month, physicians would receive annual payment increases of .5 percent for 5 years. The following 5 years physicians would not receive automatic increases but, rather, would be eligible for payment increases based on performance. Medicare would transition to a new focus—on greater equality, value, and accountability.

This legislation would strengthen Medicare physician payments in a number of ways. It would reward the

quality of care. It would improve payment accuracy. It would expand the coordination of care for patients with chronic care needs. It would encourage participation in alternative models of payment.

The bill addresses other critical Medicare and Medicaid issues. They are known as health care extenders. With these extenders, it would be possible for the Congress on a bipartisan basis to ensure that low-income seniors can have affordable Medicare premiums and guarantees that beneficiaries will have access to the therapies they need.

Under the bill, rural beneficiaries will have the security of knowing the hospitals and physicians will be there when they need them. I know rural health care, for my friend from North Carolina, my friend from Iowa, and the Senator from Ohio, is a priority. If we pass this bill, which was put together by the bipartisan group in the House and Senate, we give a big boost for rural health care and the services seniors depend on under Medicare.

Finally, something I am especially proud of because Senator GRASSLEY was good enough to work with me for a number of years on it is this would significantly expand Medicare transparency. This legislation would open Medicare’s treasure trove of payment data and patients would have the information they need to make informed choices about their care. Researchers and professionals will have the data needed to develop evidence-based methods. So this afternoon, in addition to thanking the colleagues I have already mentioned, I thank Senator GRASSLEY for all of those years working with me. Senator HARKIN knows Senator GRASSLEY has been a strong advocate for transparency in health care and other vital services, and we see his good work in this bill.

This bill is bipartisan. It doesn’t cut providers or increase cost-sharing for seniors. I defer to my colleagues to decide if it is better to offset the costs of SGR repeal by reducing future war spending or unpaid for, but the bottom line is the same: We ought to act now. We should act now and put this flawed formula known as the SGR, which has produced Medicare migraines for frustrated providers and seniors alike, behind us.

Every single thing in the bill I offer today has strong bipartisan support, and it represents a compromise.

I know this isn’t an easy vote for colleagues on either side of the aisle, but I submit that it sure means we will be able to accomplish what we were sent here to do—to find a way to do what is best for seniors and the doctors who care for them. With that clean slate—and I have enjoyed talking to the Presiding Officer about this because I think what this bill is all about is doing what is right for seniors, doing what is right for the doctors, setting in

place a plan for the future that ensures seniors are going to get better care than in many instances will cost less. That is what I hope Senators will take home after we break tomorrow for the work period.

This is a chance to do what is best for seniors, what is best for doctors, and what is going to pay off for taxpayers in the long run.

Nobody wins with Medicare make believe. After these 16 patches, when we have the Wall Street Journal editors joining with seniors and providers and we have a bill that has strong bipartisan support, I think this is the kind of measure Senators ought to flock to.

I will close by saying we all know the public is frustrated with a fair amount of what happens in the Congress, and there is a fair level of disappointment. The Senator from North Carolina and I were talking about a variety of issues on this point this morning. But I look around this Chamber and I see Senators who have spent a significant amount of time in public life, and a number of colleagues who are on the floor, I am old enough to remember joining them in the other body before we came to the Senate, and we are here for a purpose. We are here to get things done. On this Medicare issue, which suffice it to say has been one of the most polarizing in the American public debate—in fact, I would venture to say that on the domestic side of the budget, there are few issues that have been as divisive and polarizing as Medicare—this is an opportunity, colleagues, to check the partisanship at the door, come together, and set in place a new system of paying providers under Medicare that is going to produce better quality at lower costs. We ought to support it in a bipartisan manner.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). The Senator from North Carolina.

AMENDMENT NO. 2821

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to call up Lee amendment No. 2821.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from North Carolina [Mr. BURR] for Mr. LEE, proposes an amendment numbered 2821.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To prohibit States from providing the Secretary with reports containing personally identifiable information)

On page 136, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

(e) PROTECTION OF INFORMATION.—Section 658K(a)(1) of the Child Care and Development

Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858i(a)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(D) PROHIBITION.—Reports submitted to the Secretary under subparagraph (C) shall not contain individually identifiable information.”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2821, AS MODIFIED

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be modified with the technical correction which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the modification?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

On page 136, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

(e) PROTECTION OF INFORMATION.—Section 658K(a)(1) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858i(a)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(E) PROHIBITION.—Reports submitted to the Secretary under subparagraph (C) shall not contain individually identifiable information.”.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I believe this amendment is agreeable on both sides, and I know of no further debate on the amendment. I would ask for the question.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment, as modified.

The amendment (No. 2821), as modified, was agreed to.

Mr. BURR. I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 5 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss one of the most concerning issues our country faces today, an issue that Chairman HARKIN particularly has been outspoken on, and that is the growing retirement crisis.

A couple weeks ago I chaired in the Finance Committee the first congressional hearing on the MyRA retirement plan for low- and middle-income workers that President Obama proposed in his 2014 State of the Union Address. We will explore some of the issues, especially the Harkin legislation, later. But I want to talk for a moment about that hearing.

We know for many Americans, the traditional three-legged retirement system—Social Security, defined pension benefit, and personal retirement savings—that three-legged stool is simply no longer working. For many, two of those legs are gone, and the third leg—the Social Security monthly payment for low-income workers—is, frankly, way too short.

We know that Social Security remains the safeguard of retirement se-

curity for working-class families. But, as I said, it was never meant to be the only method of saving for retirement.

As we emerge from the greatest recession since the Great Depression, the private retirement system is not working.

Over the last 30 years, the defined pension benefit has, for far too many people, disappeared. The new system of tax incentives for 401(k)s and IRAs only works if you are middle income, typically, or wealthier. The top fifth—the top quintile, if you will—of households hold three-quarters of all 401(k) and IRA assets. The average worker nearing retirement—believe this—has \$12,000 in savings.

So the question our subcommittee asked was: What do we do?

One point of bipartisan agreement is that Social Security works. Witnesses from Vanguard to senior advocates agree on that point. We heard testimony from the left and from the right, from the private sector and from the Treasury Department. Everyone agreed that for low-income workers, Social Security is the most important and the most reliable way to guarantee a secure retirement. But it is not enough.

An upper income worker, once receiving Social Security, may get as much as \$2,000 or more a month in Social Security earned benefits, while a low-income worker, who is used to receiving \$9 or \$10 or \$11 an hour or less—even though working as many as 25 or 30 years—may get less than \$1,000 a month in Social Security. That is the only wealth, that is the only income, so often, those in the bottom half have.

The only question, obviously, is whether the benefit is adequate. Too often it is not.

Two-thirds of low-income families are at risk of not having enough income to maintain anything close to their standard of living in retirement. Expanding Social Security could be the difference between a modest retirement—an earned modest retirement—and living in poverty.

The hearing discussed the administration's new MyRA accounts. “MyRA” stands for “my retirement account”—a play, obviously, on the words of the IRA, the individual retirement account. It represents a small but important first step. Access to tax preferred retirement accounts must not be something workers receive when they cross the threshold into the middle class but a tool that helps them start their journey into the middle class.

There is no easy fix to retirement savings. But in a system where we primarily administer our programs to encourage private retirement accounts through the Tax Code, we need to make sure the incentives are going to the people who need them.

So what we are doing through the Tax Code, as Senator CARDIN from

Maryland, who has been a long-time advocate of stronger, better retirement security for seniors—and he attended our subcommittee hearing; he is a member of the Finance Committee—are the issues we need to work on.

When President Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act, he said: “This law represents a cornerstone in a structure which is being built, but is by no means complete.”

The same could be said, maybe even more so, for our retirement system today. That structure is still being built. It is up to this body to ensure that it is built, that it does not collapse in the meantime, and that we can bring more retirement security to far more Americans who have worked their entire work lives.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2818

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the Landrieu amendment No. 2818.

Mr. HARKIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays are ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 74 Leg.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Corker	Inhofe
Ayotte	Cornyn	Isakson
Baldwin	Crapo	Johanns
Barrasso	Cruz	Johnson (WI)
Begich	Donnelly	Johnson (SD)
Bennet	Durbin	Kaine
Blumenthal	Enzi	King
Blunt	Feinstein	Kirk
Booker	Fischer	Klobuchar
Boozman	Flake	Landrieu
Boxer	Franken	Leahy
Brown	Gillibrand	Lee
Burr	Graham	Levin
Cantwell	Grassley	Manchin
Cardin	Hagan	Markey
Carper	Harkin	McCain
Casey	Hatch	McCaskill
Chambliss	Heinrich	McConnell
Coats	Heitkamp	Menendez
Cochran	Heller	Merkley
Collins	Hirono	Mikulski
Coons	Hoeven	Moran

Murkowski	Rockefeller	Toomey
Murphy	Sanders	Udall (CO)
Murray	Schatz	Udall (NM)
Nelson	Schumer	Vitter
Paul	Scott	Walsh
Portman	Sessions	Warner
Pryor	Shaheen	Warren
Reed	Shelby	Whitehouse
Reid	Stabenow	Wicker
Risch	Tester	Wyden
Roberts	Thune	

NOT VOTING—2

Coburn Rubio

The amendment (No. 2818) was agreed to.

Mr. HARKIN. I move to reconsider the vote.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2813

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, we have no objections to this amendment. We agree to it and urge its adoption.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Landrieu-Grassley amendment No. 2813.

The amendment (No. 2813) was agreed to.

Mr. HARKIN. I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2814

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the Landrieu-Blunt amendment No. 2814.

The amendment (No. 2814) was agreed to.

Mr. HARKIN. I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2824

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the Bennet-Isakson amendment No. 2824.

The amendment (No. 2824) was agreed to.

Mr. HARKIN. I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF HEATHER L. MACDOUGALL TO BE A MEMBER OF THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW COMMISSION

NOMINATION OF FRANCE A. CORDOVA TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

NOMINATION OF JAMES H. SHELTON III TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

NOMINATION OF BRUCE HEYMAN TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO CANADA

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Heather L. MacDougall, of Florida, to be a Member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission; France A. Cordova, of New Mexico, to be Director of the National Science Foundation; James H. Shelton III, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Secretary of Education; and Bruce Heyman, of Illinois, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Canada.

VOTE ON MACDOUGALL NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Heather L. MacDougall, of Florida, to be a Member of the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON CORDOVA NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of France A. Cordova, of New Mexico, to be Director of the National Science Foundation?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON SHELTON NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of James H. Shelton III, of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Secretary of Education?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON HEYMAN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Bruce Heyman, of Illinois, to be Ambassador Extraordinary

and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Canada?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are made and laid upon the table, the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate will resume legislative session.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—Continued

AMENDMENT NO. 2837

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I understand the Scott amendment No. 2837 and the Boxer-Burr amendment No. 2809 have been cleared on both sides of the aisle; I know of no further debate on either amendment, and I urge adoption of these two amendments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Scott amendment No. 2837 is pending.

The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2837) was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2809

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment 2809 is the pending amendment.

If there is no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2809) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, we have had a very productive day on the child care and development block grant bill, and we have processed a number of amendments, some by voice, some with record votes. All Members have had the opportunity to come to the floor during the day and offer their amendments, and we continue to have amendments that are either filed or talked about. It is still the intent of Senator HARKIN, Senator ALEXANDER, Senator MIKULSKI, and myself that we finish this bill tomorrow afternoon. We see no reason why we can't do it with the level of cooperation all Members have shown.

Let me try to sketch out for my colleagues what our intent will be. We intend hopefully to go to a period of morning business, a length to be determined by the leaders, when we conclude our remarks. At some point in the morning, probably 10:30, we would resume consideration of amendments and we would process those amendments until shortly before lunch. It is our hope Members would take the opportunity to file those amendments tonight so that our staffs can work with

them to make sure as many amendments as possible can be adopted with the support of both sides of the aisle.

We certainly can't force everybody to do so, but I implore Members on both sides of the aisle, file those amendments tonight, work with our staffs. They will be here as late as they need to be. By 10:30 tomorrow morning we should be able to move to amendments, have debate on those where there is additional debate needed; hopefully, start any votes by 12:15 and finish the amendment process before both sides break for lunch. It would be my hope we could come back right after lunch, with the leader agreements, and have passage on the child care and development block grant bill.

Let me just say, Mr. President, that I want to thank Chairman HARKIN, Ranking Member ALEXANDER and Senator MIKULSKI. I think we have gone into this and we have tried to urge our colleagues, if they can make this bill better, to come to the floor and to do that. I think we have seen, by the action of people who have done this in a responsible way, that we have worked in a bipartisan way to make sure we could present to the Members of the Senate amendments that didn't cause a great deal of concern, and, in fact, they did improve the bill.

So I encourage my colleagues to file those amendments tonight, to be prepared to finish this bill before the middle of the afternoon tomorrow, and we can expect to have a successful passage of this bill.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. First, Mr. President, I concur in everything the Senator from North Carolina just said. This is a very good bill. It is a great bill. The Senator from North Carolina has put a lot into this bill over the last couple of years, and we are close to seeing the finish line. So I hope Senators and their staffs who may not be present but who are watching will do just as the Senator suggested. If they have amendments, get them over to the floor tonight during morning business; we will take those up, our staffs can work those out, and, hopefully, we will be on track to finish the bill tomorrow.

Again, I thank the Senator from North Carolina for all the hard work he has put in over a long period of time.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider the Landrieu amendment No. 2818 be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning

business until 7 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the bipartisan Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. I thank Senator MIKULSKI for her great leadership, Senator BURR for his leadership, and Senators HARKIN and ALEXANDER. We have had a great afternoon.

We also had a number of people confirmed today, which I am very pleased about, including the Ambassador to Canada. I think it is pretty important we have an ambassador to Canada because Canada is our biggest trading partner. We haven't had one now for months, and this is a very good outcome.

But back to the bill. It has been almost 20 years since the Senate last reauthorized CCDBG. Since that time we have learned if we want strong communities, a robust workforce, and students who are ahead of the curve, we need to ensure that every child has access to high-quality childcare.

As the country's primary Federal childcare program, CCDBG provides millions of families with the assistance they need to ensure working parents can keep their jobs or finish schooling knowing their children are safe and receiving quality care. We know that a child's early years are critical to building a strong foundation for their lives. Up to 90 percent of brain development happens before age 5. Just think about that: 90 percent of brain development happens before age 5. That is why it is so important to invest in quality care and education. When we do, it pays off for the rest of us by giving us better informed citizens and a more productive workforce.

Investments in the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program also give parents the option of affordable childcare. Research indicates that higher childcare costs have a negative impact on a mother's employment because women are more likely to leave their jobs when childcare costs are high. That can have a lasting negative impact on families' finances and women's future earnings.

As the Senate chair of the Joint Economic Committee, I released a report last year that looked at the critical role mothers play in the financial well-being of their families. My report found that lower income families are especially dependent on the money earned by mothers who work outside the home. In families in the lowest 10 percent of the income distribution,

mothers account for over half of family income. The high price of childcare these days—it averages over \$14,000 each year for two children—means the child care and development block grant assistance makes a big difference between families rising into the middle class or falling further behind.

Working families across the country are counting on us to get this done. Since the child care and development block grant was last reauthorized in 1996, families have seen the cost of childcare increase while access to quality care has become more difficult to find.

This bipartisan legislation would provide the opportunity for Congress to make critical improvements to the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program to ensure that children are safe and healthy in their childcare setting, that families have access to quality programs, and that States have a coordinated system of early care and education for children from birth to age 13.

One of the primary updates in the 2014 reauthorization is the requirement that all childcare providers receiving this assistance must go through comprehensive background checks. It is unbelievable that currently only 13 States require comprehensive background checks for childcare providers. We have had a number of incidents in our State where children have had tragic injuries and tragic ends because of the lack of background checks. As a former prosecutor, I saw firsthand how abuse harmed young children, tore families apart, and challenged local law enforcement agencies, our court system, and our social service and health care providers. Our kids deserve better. We need to do everything we can to make sure people caring for our kids undergo comprehensive background checks before receiving child care and development block grants.

The bill also requires States to conduct regular health and safety inspections of the childcare settings so we can make sure kids are learning and developing in safe environments.

The legislation cuts redtape by giving families more flexibility around enrollment procedures.

These changes will not only strengthen the program's integrity but also improve transparency so that the 1.5 million children being served through this program every month get the best care possible.

Raising the next generation has always been a difficult job, and it has never been more expensive. The future of our Nation rests on making sure parents have the support they need to give their children a strong start.

I urge the Senate to reauthorize this bipartisan bill and ensure children and working families get the quality care and education they need to thrive. It is the best investment we can make.

I see the Senator from North Carolina Mr. BURR just came in. I thank him for his great work not only on this bill but also in allowing for this amendment process, which I believe is very important for the future of the Senate.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I wish to talk about two amendments I will call up on S. 1086, the child care and development block grant bill. The first one I will speak to is amendment No. 2834, which Senator MURKOWSKI and I are offering in relation to tribal childcare facilities.

As my colleagues know, I recently took over as chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, and 2 weeks ago I held my first hearing. This hearing focused on early childhood development and education in Indian Country. This hearing was timely, as some of the testimony the committee received related to the child care and development block grant. At that hearing a childcare program director from the White Earth Nation—who is also the chair of the National Indian Child Care Association—testified about the needs of her program and the needs of all Indian childcare providers. One of the needs she highlighted was improving the condition of tribal childcare facilities in Indian Country.

According to the Administration for Children and Families, of the 260 Indian tribe or tribal organizations that receive CCDBG funds, only 14 of them constructed new tribal childcare facilities in the last 10 years.

In an effort to improve and replace facilities, my amendment allows tribes more flexibility in the use of their grant funds. Renovation and construction of tribal facilities is already an allowable activity under this legislation, but the law explicitly states that Indian tribes or tribal organizations cannot reduce services—even temporarily—to improve or replace their facilities.

This amendment allows the Secretary to grant a waiver to an Indian tribe or tribal organization, permitting them to temporarily reduce services if they can prove the outcome will improve capacity or improve services as a result of the construction. It is a simple, commonsense amendment that will improve the quality of life in Indian Country, and I urge its adoption when it comes up.

I will now speak to amendment No. 2835. Under current law, a parent who suffers the tragedy of the death of a child has to rely on their employer's compassion for time off to grieve. Many times this is not an issue. There are thousands of compassionate employers out there who give parents the space they need. But not everyone is so fortunate. Some folks who just aren't

ready to come back after a few days end up having to choose between returning to work while struggling with the aftermath of their child's death or losing their job.

This amendment would fix the Family and Medical Leave Act to include the death of a child as a trigger for benefits provided under the FMLA. The FMLA currently allows parents to take time off to care for a child battling a serious health issue. But children between the ages of 1 and 14 are more than twice as likely to die suddenly from an accident than from cancer, flu, and pneumonia combined.

The FMLA protects parents who are caring for their children; it should support parents who are grieving for their children as well. This is a small amendment, but it will mean so much to parents who suffer the unimaginable loss of a child. I urge my colleagues to stand for compassion, and I urge adoption of this amendment when it is brought up.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise somewhat reluctantly today to speak about an intelligence committee matter.

Allegations in the past 24 hours have been discussed rampantly in the halls of Congress and in the press. Based on press reports today, yesterday, and even last week, allegations have been made regarding the Central Intelligence Agency's actions toward the committee, as well as staff and Members' actions on the Senate intelligence committee toward the CIA.

The reason I feel compelled to speak on this matter is the following: Although people speak as though we know all of the pertinent facts surrounding this matter, the truth is we do not. The Republican committee members on the Senate intelligence committee and staff were not involved in the underlying investigation of the detainee and interrogation report. We do not know the actual facts concerning the CIA's alleged actions or all of the specific details about the actions by the committee staff regarding the draft of what is now referred to as the "Panetta internal review document."

Both parties involved have made allegations against one another and have even speculated as to each other's actions, but there are still a lot of unanswered questions that must be addressed. No forensics have been run on the CIA computers—or, as my colleagues refer to them, "the SSCI computers"—at the CIA facility to know

what actually happened regarding the alleged CIA search or the circumstances under which the committee came into possession of the Pannetta internal review document.

Given that both of these matters have now been referred to the Department of Justice, it may take us a while before any accurate factual findings can be reached and a satisfactory resolution of these matters can be achieved. It may even call for a special investigator to be named to review the entire factual situation. Eventually, we will get to the bottom of this, but today I cannot make a statement that will reflect what actually occurred and therefore what recommendations we ought to make as we move forward.

Right now our committee members are conducting an internal assessment of the facts and circumstances involved in both of these matters. This will be an ongoing process which should not be described or discussed in the public domain but, like all other intelligence committee matters, should remain within the purview of the confines of the intelligence committee.

Today I simply wanted everyone to know where I stand on this matter and how we need to get to the ground truth of these very important matters.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. CASEY are printed in today's RECORD under "Morning Business.")

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, we know it is well past time—and that is an understatement—to take up the reauthorization of this important legislation, the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program, which has not been reauthorized since 1996. It is hard to comprehend that, but that is true.

In the nearly two decades since, our understanding of early childhood development and the importance of high-quality childcare in early learning has expanded dramatically. Investing in high-quality early learning opportunities, such as childcare and prekindergarten, sets children on the path to success.

I like to say if children learn more now, they will earn more later, and that is why there is a direct nexus with the quality of the childcare we provide. The quality of early learning connects directly with our economic growth.

Our gross domestic product—our future economic growth and success as a country—is substantially dependent on the quality of early learning and the quality of childcare. It is good we are focused in a bipartisan way on the childcare aspects of this challenge.

We must update the Federal standards that relate to childcare to ensure

that the Federal Government is supporting high-quality childcare—not just any quality childcare—for low-income children.

The bill we are considering sets a new standard for childcare in America. It makes sure Federal dollars are going to providers who are committed to providing childcare that meets certain criteria, such as health and safety standards.

Many of these changes reflect proposals I put forth in previous Congresses to improve the child care and development block grant. The Starting Early Starting Right Act was legislation I introduced.

I am encouraged we are able to reach consensus on many of the provisions I supported in the past and that they are represented in this bill. I, and I know many others, would have liked to have gone further to provide more of an investment both by way of dollars and more of an investment by way of quality, but these are significant changes and we should all support them.

In terms of the increase in incentives that I would hope we can do at a future date, I described them in this way: incentives for States to invest in quality ratings and improvement systems. We know a lot of acronyms. This is QRIS, Quality Rating and Improvement Systems, which encourages childcare providers to make continuous improvements in the care they provide and the facilities they use often through financial incentives, such as higher reimbursement rates, when a certain quality level is reached.

However, I still believe the bill we have in front of us represents a substantial and significant improvement over the current law. We owe our most vulnerable children nothing less.

For the first time we are requiring all States to develop a robust health and safety set of standards and to institute a consistent background check for childcare providers. We are requiring States to formally coordinate their early learning programs to improve service coordination and delivery. We are allowing children who qualify for a subsidy to receive 1 year of care before their eligibility is redetermined. This will help promote stability and continuity for the entire family and encourage the child to develop strong relationships with his or her teachers and peers in childcare.

Finally, we are increasing the investment in quality from the 4-percent quality set-aside per year—currently required in law—to 10-percent within 5 years, including a separate set-aside for infants and toddlers. Quality is a continuum and continual investment. It is not a one-time purchase. It is something we need to support and sustain.

This bill is about investing in our children's future and supporting working parents. I urge all of my colleagues

to join us in supporting the CCBDBG reauthorization—a nice acronym for a long bill.

I mentioned earlier that if children get quality early care and learning, they will learn more now and earn more later when they are in the workforce. There is no question about that. All the studies indicate that. We know that. There is no disagreement about that.

We also have to recognize that there are so many families—somewhere in the millions—that have two parents working, and we know the stress and challenge that creates. In addition, we have just come through the worst economic downturn since the 1930s. Climbing out of that hole and having all of the economic pressures on these families, they are often also heavily burdened or even crushed by the cost of childcare.

We have an opportunity with this legislation to move forward and make needed changes on issues, such as health and safety standards and making sure we are setting aside more dollars for infants and toddlers.

There are a whole range of actions we are taking, but we still have a ways to go to speak directly to the needs that working families have in terms of the cost of childcare and ensuring the kind of quality they have a right to expect.

Finally, on a related topic, we need to make sure we are making a national and substantial commitment to early learning. The President has talked about this issue. People from both parties and CEOs tell us about it all the time. We need to get together on these other issues even as we pass this bipartisan legislation.

I wish to commend the work of Senator HARKIN and Ranking Member ALEXANDER, who are working to get this done, and the good work over several years now done by Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR.

We need to get this done and then get to work on some of the childcare and early learning challenges our country faces and families are often burdened with.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NEVADA SESQUICENTENNIAL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, throughout this year, my home State will celebrate the 150th anniversary of its path to Statehood, on October 31, 1864.

Next week, while I will be home visiting my family and constituents, the Battle Born State will celebrate the day that Congress passed and President Abraham Lincoln signed legislation paving the way for Nevada to become the 36th State. At that time Congress was in a rush to welcome Nevada into the Union. It was during the Civil War; it was raging.

The only other State admitted to the Union during the war was West Virginia, which seceded from Virginia to remain part of the Union in 1863.

Congress didn't want to wait until the next session to admit another new State—a new State that could swing the Presidential election in Lincoln's favor and provide crucial votes for the 13th Amendment, which abolished slavery. Nevadans had already rejected one proposed State constitution, so there was no time to waste.

On March 21, 1864, in the waning hours of the 38th Congress, a law was passed allowing Nevada to enter the Union whenever voters finally passed and President Lincoln approved a State constitution.

It wasn't during the normal course of business, but this wasn't the normal course with the Civil War going on. Typically Congress would get the final word on admission of a new State to the Union.

But these, as I have indicated, were certainly not normal times. Even today we acknowledge Nevada's unique path to Statehood on our State flag with the words: "Battle Born."

Throughout this year, we will celebrate Nevada's 150th birthday with events in every corner of the State. From my hometown of Searchlight to Virginia City to Elko, there is a 150th anniversary event to match every interest.

Nevada is a very large State. Area wide it is the seventh largest in the country. It is a unique State with more mountains than any place other than Alaska. We have 314 separate mountain ranges. We have one mountain that is 14,000 feet high. We have 32 mountains over 11,000 feet high. We have wide-ranging land, and we have some of the coldest places in the Nation and some of the hottest places in the Nation.

We have all kinds of wildlife. Theodore Roosevelt created an antelope range that is large and sparsely populated. We have not only the antelope, we also have desert bighorn sheep. In Nevada we have mountain goats; we have almost 3 million acres of wilderness. It is a very beautiful State. It is more than the bright lights of Las Vegas, Reno, and Lake Tahoe—even though we are very proud of sharing the stewardship of Lake Tahoe with the State of California—as Mark Twain said: "the fairest picture the whole earth affords."

We will mark Nevada's second constitutional convention, the day Nevada

voters finally approved its constitution and the day, Halloween, October 31, 1864, that Lincoln proclaimed Nevada's Statehood. The 150th anniversary of our admission to the Union provides a wonderful opportunity to study Nevada's history. It is also the birthday of my young brother, so it is easy to remember—admission day, Halloween, and my brother's birthday all occurred the same day.

It is also a chance to reflect on Nevada's unique pioneer spirit—a spirit that continues to make our State very special.

Mr. HELLER. Madam President, I rise to recognize the great State of Nevada, as we celebrate 150 years of statehood. It is a remarkable opportunity to speak on the floor of this Chamber about this milestone, given the role the Congress played in the formation of the Silver State. The movement to make the Nevada Territory a State began within the territory, but the first attempt to formulate a Constitution failed.

Shortly after, the 38th Congress passed an enabling act for Nevada statehood. Signed by President Abraham Lincoln on March 21, 1864, this bill made it possible for Nevada to eventually adopt a State constitution. Lincoln proclaimed Nevada a State on October 31, 1864.

The guarantee of statehood was given to us by Abraham Lincoln, who, without assistance, would go on to pass the 13th amendment, win the Civil War, and heal our broken Nation.

Marking the 150th year of Nevada's statehood takes me back to Carson City when I was just 4 years old. It was Nevada's centennial celebration, the date was October 31, 1964. I remember being with my family, sitting on the lawn, listening to the Carson City Municipal Band lead the festivities at the State capitol.

During that same year, 1964, Lyndon Johnson was reelected over Barry Goldwater and would go on to declare a war on poverty. In 1964, race riots broke out in Harlem. Across the Nation, President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law. The 24th amendment to abolish the use of poll taxes was ratified. In 1964, the Summer Olympics were held in Tokyo. Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, which ultimately allowed for increased military action in Vietnam. The James Bond film "Goldfinger" began its run in the United States and "Bewitched" premiered on television.

So much has changed in these past 50 years, but the character of Nevada has not. From its first birthday to its 100th, to its 150th, Nevada continues to be shaped by its people, people who are entrepreneurial, fiercely independent, and as diverse as our terrain. We are molded by the grit, hard work, and pioneering spirit of individuals determined to succeed.

The list of men and women who have molded our State is long. Where some saw impossibility, a Nevada Senator by the name of Newlands saw opportunity. To this day, his legacy lives on in the hay, the cattle, and the very fields that were made possible by the waters he brought to this desert.

Standing among our Nation's great, frozen in bronze, greeting visitors to the Nation's Capitol is another Nevadan, Sarah Winnemucca. She, similar to many Nevadans, challenged the status quo. She refused to accept the injustices brought on her Native American brothers and sisters.

Instead of fighting with a weapon, she fought with her pen. Through her words, the plight of our fellow Americans living on reservations was heard.

Of course, in Nevada, Mark Twain was born. Samuel Clemens adopted the famous pen name while covering the news for the Enterprise in Virginia City. Twain wrote eloquently about Nevada, from the rough-and-tumble attitude of the Wild West to the beauty of Lake Tahoe, dubbing it "surely the fairest picture that the whole earth affords." Any visitor to this pristine landscape would also agree.

More recently, I think of Paul Laxalt, the former Lieutenant Governor, Governor, and U.S. Senator from Nevada. Among other things, he was instrumental in preserving Lake Tahoe and establishing our State's first community colleges and our medical school; or former Representative Barbara Vucanovich, who will be recorded in the history books as the first woman to represent Nevada in the U.S. House of Representatives. This alone is a remarkable achievement, but the integrity and determination with which she fulfilled her duties makes her achievement even grander.

Former State Senator Bill Raggio also comes to mind. He was a true statesman and the longest serving member in the history of the Nevada State Senate. These individuals have left their mark, but it is the people of Nevada who have forged the Silver State.

During the formation of our State's constitution, Nevadans demanded that our State's mothers and sisters be heard. The women of Nevada were granted the voice of a vote before the 19th Amendment was ratified by our Nation. We helped pioneer the vote for all.

During World War II, when our brave soldiers fought for peace and prosperity, Nevadans who were not able to fight abroad brought forth minerals such as magnesium from the ground. Magnesium, harvested near the township of Henderson, was considered a miracle metal for the munitions and airport parts which would help lead to us victory.

The residents of Boulder City built the Hoover Dam, a government infrastructure project which holds back 26

million acre-feet of water. The dam was completed early and under budget. With an expected 2,000-year lifespan, the Hoover Dam supplies clean energy to the grid, water to thirsty cities across the Southwest, and protection to downstream communities.

Ever since we were borne into the battle to mend our broken Nation, Nevadans have been willing and able. Although our population is small, our caliber is high. From all walks of life, brave Nevadans have heard and responded to the call to arms. At Naval Air Station Fallon, we host the Navy's top gun school. The elite men and women of our Armed Forces who train here push the limit, compete, and set the tone for global air superiority.

Welcoming tourists from across the globe, farming, mining, engineering, ranching, and serving in the Armed Forces, these are just a few things we Nevadans do. And as our State motto goes, all of these are done "all for our country."

Recent times have been tough in Nevada, but our pioneer spirit lives on. We continue to move forward. We have seen the booms and now, more than most, we continue to feel the most recent bust. Like many in our great Nation, Nevadans have lost homes, livelihoods, and the promise of a steady paycheck, but this will not deter us. Our State is battle born. We will continue to fulfill our 150-year-old promise of being willing and able to give all for our country.

I am a proud Nevadan, and as the son of a auto mechanic from Carson City, it is a privilege to stand on this Senate floor to recognize our State's 150 years of Statehood.

Before I close, I thank Lieutenant Governor Brian Krolicki, chair of the Nevada Sesquicentennial Commission, for the hard work he has put into recognizing this important milestone. Over the course of this year, the commission has planned and overseen many events and activities, providing Nevadans an opportunity to reflect on where we have been and where we are going.

SYRIA

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise tonight to talk about Syria and the humanitarian crisis this conflict has created. This week we mark a very grim anniversary: the third anniversary of the beginning of the conflict in Syria. So we are entering our fourth year.

There is much to cover and talk about. I will be brief tonight, but it is important that we don't forget what is happening to the Syrian people and especially to the children in Syria.

Over the past 3 years the brutal Assad regime has unleashed a campaign of unspeakable violence against its own citizens, with 9.5 million people now needing humanitarian assistance in Syria. Syria's neighbors are overflowing with 2.5 million refugees. This

week Amnesty International and Save The Children released reports that underscore the atrocities the Syrian people have suffered and continue to suffer. These reports describe the regime's use of starvation tactics against its own citizens: Syrian children dying from preventable diseases and newborns, newborn babies freezing to death in underequipped hospitals. UNICEF reported this week that Syria is now one of the most dangerous places on Earth to be a child.

These unspeakable horrors confirm my worst fear about the conflict: that the most vulnerable and innocent are at the center of President Assad's siege against his own people.

I want to share the story of a 10-year-old Syrian boy when he recounted his experience with the conflict, this 10-year-old boy in his account from Save The Children's 2012 report entitled "Untold Atrocities, The Stories of Syria's Children." Here is one of the stories in his own words:

When the shells started to fall I ran. I ran so fast. I ran and I cried at the same time. When we were being bombed we had nothing. No food, no water, no toys, nothing. There was no way to buy food—the markets and shops were bombed out. After that we came back home. To make our food last we ate just once a day. My father went without food for days because there wasn't enough. I remember watching him tie his stomach with a rope so he would not feel hungry. One day men with guns broke into our house. They pulled out our food, threw it on the floor, stamped on it, so it would be too dirty to eat. Then we had nothing at all.

That is the recollection of a 10-year-old boy in Syria. And you go through the report, the catalog, really, of misery that was compiled by Save the Children from young boys and young girls of all different ages and every one of them has a tale of horror just as he outlined. Some are worse and more graphic than what I read.

This most recent report by Save the Children is entitled "A Devastating Toll," and it describes the impact this conflict has had on children in great detail.

I commend the report to my colleagues.

In an article in the New York Times, in this case by Nicholas Kristof, he said, "Syria is today the world capital of human suffering."

Anyone who knows the work done by Nicholas Kristof knows he has seen a lot of places in the world where there is terrible misery and suffering. So for him to say that is a substantial indication of how bad the conditions are in Syria. Of course, when he made that statement it was back in September, many months ago. As bad as it was then, it is even worse now.

So today I call on all Senators, both parties, and the international community to support the efforts to bring this terrible chapter in Syrian history to a close. Peace talks could be a way to

end the conflict. However, I am disappointed that the talks this past month did not lead to any tangible progress. The Assad regime has refused to negotiate in good faith.

Diplomacy is part of the solution, but what we need now is to change the momentum on the ground. Peace talks and diplomacy are fine, but unless something changes on the ground, unless we can take some action or take a series of steps to affect what is happening on the ground, all the talks in the world will be to no avail.

The Assad regime and their supporters calculate that they can defeat the opposition and remain in power. The United States should be working with our international partners to tip the balance in favor of the opposition. If we do, not another round of talks will yield the same result: No change.

The international community took a good step in ushering in the passage of U.N. Security Resolution 2139 on February 22. With U.S. leadership, Russia and China—which have obstructed other such resolutions—finally joined the international community in demanding an end to attacks on civilians and that the Syrian regime facilitate humanitarian aid to the besieged areas.

U.N. Security Council Resolution 2129 also condemned detention of journalists. We do not talk enough about this issue. Both international and Syrian journalists have bravely gone into areas of Syria that many other non-combatants would not dare, and many have paid the ultimate price. So far 60 journalists have reportedly been killed inside Syria. These courageous individuals have given us a window into the devastation inside of Syria.

I know myself from reading news reports or columns by journalists in this country how much information we can glean from what is happening inside the country where very few people can go to get information. So we need to focus on that aspect of the problem in the crisis as well.

But we shouldn't allow this crisis to continue worsening before our eyes. We need to act. I have been working on a bipartisan basis to put legislation and legislative support behind efforts to bring this conflict to an end.

In 2012 I worked with Senator RUBIO to introduce S. Res. 370, which called for democratic change in Syria, and S. 3498, the Syrian Humanitarian Support and Democratic Transition Assistance Act of 2012. In 2013 I traveled to Turkey where I met with opposition political and military leaders to discuss the situation inside of Syria. They asked for aid to help build the capacity of the political opposition as well as support to the military opposition in the form of communications gear, night vision goggles, and bulletproof vests.

A year ago Senator RUBIO and I proudly introduced S. 617, Syria Democratic Transition Act of 2013. This bill

would, among other things, first increase U.S. assistance to victims of the conflict, both inside of Syria and outside of the country; No. 2, support a political transition by authorizing bilateral assistance to build the capacity of the moderate political opposition to prepare for a transition; No. 3, provide nonlethal equipment to vetted elements of the armed opposition; and fourth, expand sanctions against the Central Bank of Syria and designated individuals, especially any foreign entities that continue to do business with the Assad regime.

After picking up 10 bipartisan cosponsors to our bill, we worked to ensure that the important aspects of S. 617 was incorporated into another bill, S. 960, the Syria Transition Support Act, which then passed the Foreign Relations Committee in a substantial bipartisan manner last year, last summer.

I sent a letter to Secretary Kerry earlier this year urging him to resume nonlethal aid in order to help bolster the opposition before the talks in Switzerland. I was pleased to see that aid resumed not long after I sent the letter. We know Senators KAINE and RUBIO are working on many of the principles that I and others have been pushing for the past 3 years, reiterating the need for unfettered international aid for those in need in Syria and the surrounding region, emphasizing the neutrality of medical professionals and aid providers working inside Syria. Their legislation would support civilians who have suffered during this conflict, particularly women and children. I commend Senators KAINE and RUBIO for their leadership on this resolution. I intend to support this resolution when it is introduced and I urge all my colleagues to do the same.

I believe we can agree on a bipartisan basis that this kind of horrific human suffering is both unconscionable and unacceptable, and we have a national security interest in ending this conflict and countering the influence of Iran and Hezbollah in the region. It is one of the reasons it is in our direct national security interests to make sure we play a substantial role in ending the conflict. Every day the conflict goes on the regime in Iran strengthens to export terrorism and all the trouble the regime imposes upon the region, and secondly, Hezbollah and other extremist elements are empowered the longer the conflict goes.

We need to send a clear message from the Senate that we support efforts to bring Assad's tyrannical rule to an end and to respond to this devastating humanitarian crisis which threatens to destabilize the region and scar a generation of young Syrians.

When we talk about this, we are talking now about millions of children—by one estimate 5.5 million children—being adversely impacted. Thousands—

by one estimate more than 10,000—of those children have already been killed. And the ones who have not been killed have seen the kinds of horrors no human being should ever see, even as adults. It would be very difficult to recover from some of the horror and some of the trauma these children have seen. It will be with them for the rest of their lives. We have an obligation to do everything we can to provide pathways to help them, but also to change the dynamic on the battlefield so those children will never have to see this kind of horror again.

Before I wrap up this segment of my remarks, I do want to note that despite the challenge here, the dynamic on the ground that hasn't gone very well, the opposition and the extremist elements within the opposition make it very difficult for us to be helpful even when our government is trying.

The humanitarian crisis that I just outlined is substantial, and the refugee issue in the region is substantial. Just imagine this: In Lebanon alone there are almost 1 million refugees in a country that cannot handle that kind of number. In Jordan, the number is just below 600,000. Most people think the number is a lot higher than that in Jordan. Lebanon, as I said, is almost 1 million; Turkey is 600,000—that number may be low, as well; more than 224,000, by estimates, in Iraq; 134,000 in Egypt. These are the numbers of refugees in just those five countries. Millions of people are being impacted, millions more within the country. If you subtract the refugees who have left the country and subtract the numbers I talked about with regard to children, just the adults within Syria who have been affected are in the millions.

Despite all that horror I think it is important for us to point out that our government has helped enormously. The Obama administration deserves a lot of credit, commendation for what they have done already. They get criticized a lot, but we should highlight some of the good things they have done. The humanitarian assistance provided by the administration, paid for by U.S. taxpayers, is substantial and should be noted. It is now more than \$1.7 billion. No country comes even close when it comes to the support our taxpayers and our government have provided. About half of that \$1.7 billion has been to help within the country. By one USAID estimate, about \$878 million is for help within Syria. The balance of that, something on the order of a little more than \$850 million, of course, is helping refugees in neighboring countries. So substantial help by the American people should be noted. I think we need to figure out ways to do more. There is probably not a lot of room for more dollars and humanitarian aid, but we should consider that if we can. But there are lots of ways we can help here without directly

engaging any of our troops or any of our military might on the ground.

There are lots of ways to help and we urge the administration to keep focus on a new and more substantial strategy, which I know they have been working on. They should consult with Congress and work with us as we move forward.

TRIBUTE TO DAVID KESSLER

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, earlier this year, after 39 years of public service, most recently as the National Zoo's keeper for the Small Mammal House, David Kessler turned in his keys and turned toward retirement. He has dedicated two-thirds of his life to caring for the howler monkeys, lemurs, and shrews living at the zoo.

In addition to feeding the animals and cleaning out their enclosures, Kessler spent his days watching, closely observing any changes in appetite or behavior that might suggest something was amiss. He remembers the endless hours he spent with William, a gibbon, after William's traumatizing experience at the hospital that left him afraid of humans and ostracized from his parents. Kessler holds on to a photo of William sleeping on his shoulder.

At the zoo, it wasn't just about Kessler caring for the animals; it was about connecting with them. They kept him as much as he kept them. He admits he wouldn't be the same person if it weren't for the animals. Their connection has kept him in the moment and happy.

I was touched to read a moving profile of David's career and of his last day in the Small Mammal House. His love for the small mammals for which he cared is evident. Health may have rushed his retirement, but by any measure his was a career spent in service to some of the most interesting creatures visited at our Nation's zoo. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD this touching profile from the Washington Post of a career well worth celebrating.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, March 6, 2014]

NATIONAL ZOO'S LONGEST-SERVING KEEPER
BIDS FAREWELL

(By Rachel Manteuffel)

On his last night as the longest-serving keeper at the National Zoo, David S. Kessler checks and rechecks the locks on the enclosures in the Small Mammal House. He collects his farewell gifts and mementos and softly narrates to himself what needs to be done. "Okay, lights out here, good. Hi, babies!" he says to Reuben and Jolla, the howler monkey couple. "Aagh, g'night, sweetheart. Did I wake you up? I'm sorry." He checks the seven timers on the lights, saying "timer" aloud at each. He's not thinking, he says, about how this January night is the last time after 39 years, two-thirds of his life, at the zoo. Now Gus the rock hyrax—

who looks like a four-pound guinea pig but is more closely related to the elephant—catches his attention in the dark. It's as if the little guy knows something is up.

Considering the personal magnitude of the occasion, everything is going fine as Kessler prepares to walk away from the animals who he says rescued him, who might just have saved his sanity.

"Gus is sticking his head out—" Kessler notes, then stops. He sobs once, his knees buckle, and he drops face-down on the floor of his House.

Earlier in the day, Kessler talked about his career. "I like to work with animals that nobody thinks about," he said. Small mammals, it's true, are not headliners. Hey, kids, let's go see the shrews! In the past few years, Kessler has been lavishing his attention on the naked mole rat, an animal that resembles a flaccid penis with buck teeth. He always has a favorite weirdo. He has been the red panda guy, the house shrew guy, the Prevost's squirrel guy and the moonrat guy. Moonrats have no natural predators, Kessler says with admiration and a little pride, because they smell so bad.

There aren't a lot of jobs like zookeeper. Technically, Kessler's job has been biologist, but the caretaking—the keeping—is what he loves best.

"It's the care of living things. To keep, that's a beautiful thing. The longer you watch an animal or a person just doing their thing, the more you feel connected to them."

A keeper feeds the animals and mucks out their enclosures, but the real work is observation, watching their bodies and behavior closely for subtle changes that mean something is wrong. And figuring out how to fix it.

Take the lemurs, smallish primates with doglike faces, some of the most social creatures in the Small Mammal House. Cortes and Coronado are recent acquisitions—Kessler drove them down from the Bronx Zoo in his Honda Civic—who are being carefully phased in with Molly, who has been the sole lemur at the Small Mammal House since her mate died. The keepers noticed the new lemurs were keeping low to the ground, unlemurlike behavior. Lemurs are at home in treetops, and the damp ground was irritating one of Cortes's paws. Perhaps Molly was being territorial. They would wait and see, maybe give Molly more attention. And keep watching.

Kessler and his colleagues would eventually determine Molly wasn't behaving aggressively toward the other two lemurs. A volunteer noticed it was the rock hyraxes antagonizing Cortes and Coronado. The rock hyraxes were moved to a different exhibit and, voila, the lemurs returned to the trees.

Lemurs are comparatively easy to read. You can spend less than half an hour watching Molly and feel as if you almost understand her thought process. You can become so absorbed you forget who and what you are, and that you are watching. It can become like reading a novel, the closest humans can get to having someone else's consciousness for a change.

It took a year and a half in the reptile house, but eventually Kessler could tell when something was wrong with a snake.

He's about average height, and he has had a beard most of his 59 years, but not now. He wears khakis and polos to work, with big rubber boots, disposable gloves and face masks. Primates can pass each other disease easily, he says. A keeper's herpes cold sore can kill a gorilla.

In conversation, Kessler tosses out bits of philosophy, science, novels, plays—knowl-

edge you should have, if you had time to read, and he acts as if you probably know them, too.

He knows each of the hundred-odd residents of the Small Mammal House by their six-digit reference number. He has also published or co-written about a dozen research papers. Written three unpublished novels. He once went on a radio show to compose sonnets on demand. He mentors high school students and oversees their research projects. Every year Kessler takes off work to see as many shows in the Capital Fringe Festival as possible, since they often run past midnight and his work would start at 6:30 a.m. He spends an hour a day on the treadmill. He lives in Silver Spring and has been married for 30 years—he still writes his wife, Patricia, sonnets. He smiles when he happens upon a picture of her unexpectedly. They have a grown son, Ben, who co-owns an urban farming company in Charlottesville.

When friends asked, he officiated their 2006 wedding, working with them to write a personalized service, complete with sermon. Kessler took lessons from an actor friend on how not to cry. He always cried at weddings but didn't want to distract while performing one. He was asked to officiate another wedding in Rockville, even though he was racing to New Jersey and back to be with his dying father. His father died. Kessler made the arrangements so his mother and sisters wouldn't have to, then drove from New Jersey to the rehearsal dinner that night. When another friend needed him to, he was the one to officially identify her husband's body.

For a while he fronted a calypso-reggae band. He is universally beloved among colleagues and friends—suspiciously so, if you are a person suspicious of that sort of thing.

Kessler's last "Meet a Mammal" demonstration for zoogoers, on his last day at work, was attended by Linda Hopkins, a zoo electrician who'd known him 11 years and brought him a bottle of wine, and Susie Kane, who had never met him, but she had heard he was leaving, and in 2005 he had kindly answered her e-mailed question about building a naked mole rat habitat for her dorm room.

In December, Scientific American declared the naked mole rat Vertebrate of the Year. He is a happy man who's leaving the job he loves.

He's retiring young because of his psoriatic arthritis. It's much better these days—he gets injections of monoclonal antibodies. But it is progressive. "I only have so much health left," he says, and zookeeping is physically taxing. He wants to travel with his wife, and write.

A loved one once told him that he would probably be happier as a hermit. He wasn't insulted.

"I'm more comfortable by myself and with animals than I am with people," he says. "I don't feel like I fit around people." Around people, he is giving a sort of performance. "But an honest performance." Sometimes he loves it, performing, fronting a band, officiating at weddings. "There's tension, but fun tension, like scary movies. I like the attention and the tension."

So ask to watch him work, ask him to ignore you, and it doesn't work. That's a private part of him, reserved for himself and the animals. He'll start offering you books or telling you stories, and if you patiently sit around, pretending to use a computer in his office until he forgets you're there, he will not forget you're there. He will grow slightly agitated and need some alone time with the lemurs after you're gone.

His last day is a whirl of well-wishers, friends, leftover food from the party the day before, paperwork, gifts, tears and hugs. "I don't like to be touched," he says to one hugger, "but being hugged is fine."

He hadn't been assigned to do the lines that morning—the shift that starts before sunrise, when the animals get their breakfast and their enclosures are cleaned out. He had e-mails to read, but people kept coming by for hugs and predicting he'll be back. He says no, never coming back. He seems to mean it.

Even friends who aren't physically present are distracting him. "Happy birthday to you," he sings into a friend's voice mail, gawling the last line. "Happy Jimmy Page's birthday, happy your birthday, happy your aunt's birthday yesterday." He attends to the needs of the humans for hours, their need to say goodbye, to say they would miss him. He almost always has a specific memory or thought for each, as he thanks them and assures them he won't miss this place and, after some time, they won't miss him.

He's proudest of his work with William the gibbon in 1978. William was a juvenile living with his parents when he got stuck in the enclosure and broke his arm. He was in the hospital so long—so long in the company of humans—that his parents rejected him when he got back. And because his hospital experience was scary and painful, people now made William fearful and angry. He was kept out of the exhibit for a while, off by himself.

Kessler sat in his enclosure each day, doing nothing except being nonthreatening. No mask, no gloves. Back then, this was acceptable zookeeper behavior—interaction not initiated or welcomed by the animal.

William would brachiate around in the farthest corner from Kessler, swinging limb to limb, elaborately ignoring the 130-pound human in the room. Over the course of a week, William came closer and closer, until his feet would brush his keeper's head as he swung by. Eventually he would put his head on Kessler's sweatshirt and go to sleep. There's a picture with William's arms around Kessler's head.

One thing he will miss from the zoo: watching the howler monkeys eat. Jolla likes beets but not the squiggly end of the taproot. She will pick it up, put it down, eat something else, return as if to see if the bit she doesn't like is still there. Maybe it got better! You can learn so much about optimism from her, Kessler says. "People tell me she's just stupid," he says, shaking his head at that human stupidity.

Twelve years ago, Kessler walked with a cane, couldn't turn his head and could sleep only an hour and a half at a time because of his arthritis.

Thirty-six years ago he called his psychiatrist to say he had everything ready to commit a tidy, no-fuss suicide, just a hose and towels in a car exhaust pipe. His doctor had him hospitalized for four days.

Then, at 27, he taught himself to be happy. "You learn from evolution, from animals. If you have a strategy that doesn't work, change your strategy."

His new strategy was to avoid introspection. Completely. "Working with animals made me start thinking about other things more. And when I was able to start thinking about other animals more, I was able to include humans in that group." Understanding William the gibbon, for example, and building his trust, was a big "breakthrough with myself."

"The real change was Patricia," he says. "But I probably couldn't be with her if I hadn't been working with animals."

According to dominant psychology and philosophy, introspection is the key to living right. But Kessler's unexamined life is the only kind he wants to live.

For obvious reasons, it's difficult for him to explain how he stopped being introspective. Working with animals is one way, but there were others. When he worked alone off-exhibit, he narrated his novels in his head. He noticed that closing certain doors in the building was musical, producing two notes, a seventh interval: the first two notes of a song from "West Side Story": "Somewhere."

Sometimes he needs to go alone to see if Molly wants a belly rub. Lemurs and Reuben the howler are the only ones in the Small Mammal House to much enjoy the touch of a human. But lemurs are not pets. They did not evolve to be companions for humans, to cheer us up or give us something to love. Molly indicates if she wants a belly rub, not unlike a dog, and a keeper may administer it, but the belly rub is entirely for the animal. That's important to Kessler.

It turns out Molly wants a belly rub on Kessler's last day, after he has finally gotten rid of all the people and sneaks off to see her.

Afterward, he keeps putting off leaving, until his shift stretches to 11 hours. And because the rock hyraxes have been moved away from the lemurs they were scaring, here's Gus, too present-focused to understand "goodbye" but seeming to say goodbye, popping his head up, watching the keeper leave for the last time, and the keeper—finished with crying, hugs and goodbyes with people—goes down, face first.

Suzanne Hough, the volunteer coordinator, is leaving with him, and she joins him on the floor. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry," he says. "No. No, no, it's okay."

After a moment, Hough speaks. "The floor can be tricky this time of night," she says, generously. She helps him up. He's fine, as far as he lets anyone know.

Moments later he is calm again, and performing. "Well, that was a surprise!" he says breezily. Hough and Kessler walk out into the cold night.

Inside the House, the hundred-odd residents have no sense that their time as keepers of David S. Kessler has come to an end.

TRIBUTE TO KATHERINE PATERSON

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I come to the Senate floor today to talk about a treasured Vermont author, Katherine Paterson. Her award-winning prose has won accolades near and far, but her writing has reached more than just those who have read her published words. In 2004, she started a letter exchange with an American soldier based in Afghanistan. Upon his return, she helped him launch his writing career.

Trent Reedy of the Iowa Army National Guard was enthralled with Paterson's master work, "Bridge to Terabithia," while deployed to Farah, Afghanistan. Reedy's wife Amanda sent him the book, and he loved it so much that he read it in one sitting and sent a thank you note to the author.

Katherine's husband John, whom I knew as a gentle soul, sorted her mail and made sure that his wife saw the letter from Trent. A correspondence began between the two, and Trent finally revealed his intent to become a

writer. Upon his return, Trent visited Katherine and John in Vermont and at Katherine's urging, and with her recommendation, studied writing at the Vermont College of Fine Arts and later wrote his first novel, "Words in the Dust."

As someone who considers Katherine and her late husband to be special friends, I was thrilled to read Sally Pollak's article in the Burlington Free Press, "Soldier finds lifeline in letter exchange with Vermont author." In fact I was so pleased, I called Katherine the day the story was published.

In addition to being a Vermont treasure, Katherine is an acclaimed author whose stories will be read for generations. Marcelle and I have enjoyed them, our children have enjoyed them, and now our grandchildren enjoy her stories. Katherine's influence is also felt through the many writers she has mentored, including Trent Reedy.

In honor of Katherine Paterson, I ask that Sally Pollak's story from the February 23, 2014, edition of the Burlington Free Press be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Burlington Free Press, Feb. 23, 2014]

SOLDIER FINDS LIFELINE IN LETTER EXCHANGE WITH VERMONT AUTHOR

(By Sally Pollak)

While serving in Afghanistan Trent Reedy wrote Katherine Paterson to say thank you; the friendship that emerged changed his life.

The truck pulled into the U.S. Army base in Farah, Afghanistan, on another scorching desert day. This July, 2004, delivery promised exciting things: The cook was expecting a load of steak. He had rustled up some potatoes to serve with the meat.

The soldiers in the unit, housed in a stable with a well that often ran dry, were eager for a real meal. They'd been eating field rations called MREs, meals ready to eat. Yet when the cook opened the coveted steak he almost vomited. The meat had gone rancid en route, recalled Trent Reedy, a soldier in the unit. The meal was scrapped.

The truck also carried the mail. In it was a package for Reedy, sent by his wife in Iowa. She had mailed him a book by Katherine Paterson, "Bridge to Terabithia."

Paterson, who lives in Barre, is an acclaimed novelist who writes books for children and teenagers. She is a former National Ambassador for Young People's Literature whose honors include two National Book Awards and two Newbery Medals, the first for "Bridge to Terabithia," published in 1977.

Reedy's wife, Amanda, read "Bridge to Terabithia" in sixth grade. She sent her husband the book after he mentioned to her that the stories he was thinking about concerned young people. Reedy had never read a Paterson book.

The day it arrived at the army base, he read "Bridge to Terabithia" in one sitting. It would become a kind of lifeline for a frightened young man in a faraway place with dreams of writing. Reedy read Paterson's book in the place that would be the setting for his first novel. "Bridge to Terabithia" was also the starting point of a friendship between Reedy and Paterson.

"It was amazing," Reedy said the other day by telephone from his home in Spokane, Wash. "I needed that reminder that there was still hope and still beauty in the world. At that time in my life there was none. There was nothing except guns and fear. I was really not at all sure that I was ever going to get out of that place."

"This book gave me a little bit of beauty at that time, and I needed it. Not the way I need a new app for my iPad. I needed it to keep my soul alive."

EVERYTHING WAS DIFFERENT

Reedy, 35, was an English major at the University of Iowa when he enlisted in the Iowa Army National Guard. Clinton was president. Reedy never imagined he'd be deployed to fight in a war. He had graduated from college and was working two jobs: substitute teacher and monitoring a security camera at a store.

Ten years ago, on a shift at his security job, Reedy got a phone call from his sergeant.

"Stampede," the commanding officer said, using the code word that signaled the guard soldiers were activated for war, Reedy said.

"With one phone call, everything was different," he said.

After basic training at Fort Hood, Texas, Reedy was sent to western Afghanistan. Paterson's book reached him about six months after the word "stampede" altered his life. The day "Bridge to Terabithia" arrived, Reedy had a rare break from his three-part routine: the unit's mission (providing security for reconstruction efforts), guard duty, sleep. He read the book.

"Bridge to Terabithia" is about two friends—a boy and a girl—who create an imaginary forest world where they play together and share adventures. The world is shattered by an accident: the girl drowns in the river the friends cross by rope swing to get to Terabithia. Paterson wrote the book after her son David's close friend was killed by lightning when the children were eight.

After reading the book, even as he carried his loaded M16 "scanning my sector to make sure there weren't any hostiles in the area," all he could think about was Paterson's novel.

"I thought maybe I can keep going if I remember kids are still having friendships," he said. "And the adventures of growing up."

On Aug. 1, 2004, from Farah City, Afghanistan, Reedy wrote Paterson a letter. He sent it through her publisher—unsure if it would reach her. The letter begins with an apology that he didn't type it. Reedy explains that he is writing from Afghanistan, where he is on a mission "in support of Operation Enduring Freedom."

He thanks Paterson for a book that "mesmerized" him.

"You wrote an absolutely beautiful novel and I, like Jessie Aarons, fell in love with Leslie Burke," Reedy wrote, referring to characters in Paterson's book. "... Maybe it was because she was a spark of beauty in a land and a war where beauty is of so little importance."

In Vermont, where Paterson moved with her family 28 years ago, Reedy's letter made its way to her Barre home. It arrived in a batch of mail sent from her publisher. Paterson, 81, estimates she gets hundreds of letters a year, many from students who are encouraged by their teachers to write.

(Paterson described a humorous note: "You're the best writer in the world," the student wrote. "Sometime I'm going to read one of your books.")

A WRITER ON MY HANDS

Paterson was married for 51 years to John Paterson, a pastor who died in September.

They raised four children together, and have seven grandchildren. After John Paterson's retirement in 1995 from the First Presbyterian Church in Barre, he took up the practice of reading Katherine Paterson's mail. Each year, he passed on to Katherine Paterson a handful of letters among the hundreds he read. John Paterson selected Reedy's letter and gave it to his wife.

"You just read it and weep," Katherine Paterson said. "And you think this poor, lonely kid out there, not knowing what was going to happen to him."

She was struck by another aspect of his letter: "By the time I finished that letter," Paterson said, "I knew I had a writer on my hands."

The two became pen pals, a friendship whose beginnings remain a source of happy amazement for Reedy.

"I didn't need to hear back," Reedy said. "I just wanted to thank her for letting me keep going. And I thought she should know that what she's doing is really important."

Yet he received a response in October, 2004. "She talked about how special it feels for a reader to appreciate this story she had written that seemed, at the time of her writing it, to be almost too personal to share," Reedy recalled.

The next month, on leave in Iowa, Reedy bought all the Katherine Paterson books he could find and brought them back to Afghanistan with him.

"I read those and loved them," he said. "There were some Afghans who were learning English, and I passed along the books to them and talked about how much I enjoyed her books."

What Reedy initially kept to himself in his correspondence with Paterson was that he aspired to be a writer. He decided to share this when it occurred to him he might not make it home alive. But he never sent her any writing (apart from the letters), mindful of imposing on her.

Reedy did seek Katherine Paterson's advice about graduate writing programs, and she recommended Vermont College of Fine Arts in Montpelier. Paterson is a trustee of the college, whose low-residency programs include children's and adult literature.

"I said 'impose,'" Paterson recalled. "Plenty of people impose on me that I don't like nearly as much as I like you."

Based on his letters, Paterson offered to write a letter of recommendation for Reedy. He accepted only after a letter he expected fell through, she said.

Reedy was accepted at Vermont College of Fine Arts, the only MFA program he applied to. It was there that he wrote the manuscript for his first novel, "Words in the Dust." The book, published by Arthur A. Levine Books, tells the story of an Afghan girl and her family. It concerns the girl's love for words; and her search for a connection to her dead mother, and for beauty in a place where it's not so easy to find that.

Reedy's story was inspired, in part, by a girl he met in Afghanistan. Like the character in the novel he would write, the child had a cleft lip. Soldiers in Reedy's unit pooled their money to pay the girl's transportation to a hospital, where a U.S. Army doctor performed surgery to repair her face.

"She faced this whole thing with this wonderful sort of quiet courage, this incredible dignity," Reedy recalled. "I promised her that I would do whatever I could to tell her story. She couldn't understand me, but that's what I told her. In the army, we have to keep our promises, so you don't make many. I think if I hadn't made that promise,

I wouldn't have been able to stick through to the end to write that book."

He was also encouraged by Katherine Paterson to continue writing the book. Her support came amid concerns about cross-cultural writing: a white man from Iowa writing a novel about a disfigured girl in war-torn Afghanistan.

"I asked her if this made any sense, and if she thought it was a good idea to write this," Reedy said. "And she said, 'Well, I think you should try.' And that was all the permission I needed."

Paterson, who was born in China, has written books set in Japan and China. The notion that a writer can't write about a foreign culture, its people and places, essentially says imagination is worthless, she said.

"Ideally, she could write her own story," Paterson said of Reedy's protagonist. "But she can't yet. And somebody needs to tell it for her. And I do believe in the power of imagination. Tolstoy can write about women very well, and he has never been one."

TO BE A WRITER

Reedy's book, with an introduction by Katherine Paterson, was published three years ago. He dedicated it to Paterson and his father.

"I loved the book," she said. "And if my name was going to call attention to it and my name was going to help promote it, I'd write an introduction."

In her introduction, Paterson wrote in part: "I am profoundly grateful for an introduction to a land and culture that are foreign to me through this beautiful and often heartbreaking tale of one strong and compassionate girl. She will live on in my heart and, I feel sure, the heart of every reader of this fine book."

Before his first trip to Vermont, Reedy wrote once more to Katherine Paterson. He said he'd be honored, should he be accepted to Vermont College, to buy her a cup of coffee. Sure, she said, but Paterson also had an idea: Why don't you come and stay at our house the night before your residency begins?

In July, 2006, Katherine Paterson "and Mr. Paterson," to use Reedy's words, picked him up at the airport in Burlington and drove him to their Barre home.

He was very nervous about meeting Katherine Paterson, Reedy said, expecting her to show up in an expensive car and drive him to her rich mansion. But he found that Paterson, "arguably the most successful middle-school author who is really around," drives a regular car and lives in a "normal house."

The MFA program at Vermont College "gave me my dream," Reedy said. Yet Katherine Paterson taught him what it means to be a writer.

"Nobody has taught me more about how to be the kind of writer I want to be than Katherine Paterson has," Reedy said. "No one has taught me more about how to live as a writer. She has, I think, modeled the need for humility and generosity."

Once, feeling he didn't belong at Vermont College of Fine Arts and that he was "hopelessly outclassed," Reedy conveyed this in a letter to Katherine Paterson. He wanted to steal lines from Emily Dickinson and walk around campus saying: "I'm nobody. Who are you?"

Paterson wrote back that she, too, is nobody. If she ever forgets that, she's in big trouble.

VERMONT COFFEE COMPANY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Vermont is known for its small and large busi-

nesses alike. Vermonters take pride in buying locally, and as a result, businesses like the Vermont Coffee Company have been able to expand and become forces in their respective industries.

When Paul Ralston started the Vermont Coffee Company over 30 years ago in the small town of Middlebury, VT, he did so based on the belief that coffee creates community. Today, he continues his commitment to a high-quality farmer-friendly coffee blend by using only fair trade, certified organic coffee beans from around the world.

Paul's passion for coffee has created an opportunity for him to forge his own path to success, and he has expanded Vermont Coffee Company's distribution to retail outlets throughout the Northeast and along the Atlantic coast. His business continues to expand, and his success is just one hallmark of the respected Vermont Brand. I congratulate his success, and I ask that the text of an article appearing in the Burlington Free Press on February 20, 2014, about his success be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Burlington Free Press, Feb. 20, 2014]

MIDDLEBURY COFFEE ROASTER STILL GROWING AFTER 30 YEARS

(By Melissa Pasanen)

MIDDLEBURY, VT.—Vermont Coffee Company in Middlebury was ahead of the curve when it started roasting organic, fair trade beans 30 years ago. Its continued success is based on a simple philosophy.

In the front hall of Vermont Coffee Company's offices and production facility, dozens of photos of happy people, some with coffee cups in hand, smile down from the wall.

In keeping with the company's longtime tagline—"Coffee roasted for friends"—these are not just customers, founder-owner Paul Ralston clarified on a recent tour: They are friends.

"Before there was Facebook," Ralston, 61, said. "We had our friends' wall."

Ralston has always been a little ahead of the curve, since his first foray into roasting coffee beans some 30 years ago as a tiny bakery-based operation.

There have also been plenty of curves in the road he has traveled since then, but this year Ralston expects Vermont Coffee Company to purchase half a million pounds of green coffee beans, which will be roasted in its recently doubled 15,000-square-foot facility and shipped to accounts ranging from a small, highly regarded group of New York City coffee shops to Costco.

COFFEE CULTURE

It was during his ownership of Bristol Bakery from 1977 to 1983 that Ralston first stumbled upon the smoky and aromatic process of coffee-roasting in Manhattan's Bowery neighborhood while shopping for used bakery equipment. The smells conjured up memories of the strong espresso his Italian grandmother carefully brewed every Sunday when he was a child.

When he came back to Bristol, Ralston serendipitously found a classic turn-of-the-20th-century roaster, installed it in the bakery's front window and began roasting

batches of green coffee beans well before the trend of small, local coffee roasters swept the country.

After selling the bakery, Ralston returned to school at Burlington's Trinity College to study business administration and planned to pay some of his tuition bills by running a Church Street espresso cart. But Starbucks was just opening its first Seattle coffeehouse and most people didn't know what to make of his cart. "It was a huge flop," he said ruefully.

More than a decade went by, during which Ralston spent time in the San Francisco Bay area working in nonprofit arts management and appreciating the region's vibrant cafe culture before he and his wife, Deb Gwinn, returned to Vermont where he helped grow the cosmetics and skincare company Autumn Harp to \$6 million in annual sales. That led to a job with The Body Shop in England where, he noted, "There was a coffee drought, so I drank tea."

BROWN-BAGGING IT

In 1997, Ralston and Gwinn returned again to Vermont and to the antique Royal Roaster #4, which had been gathering dust in their Bristol garage. "I hooked it up in the garage and started roasting and taking the coffee to gatherings for feedback," Ralston said. As he developed his new business idea over the next few years, he kept things simple, both by design and by default.

Like back in the Bristol Bakery days, Vermont Coffee Company used brown paper lunch bags to package the coffee and a friend made a rubber stamp to label the bags. "The brown bag was the starting principal," Ralston said. "When you would get something fresh and from a local shop, there wouldn't be a lot of packaging."

"We started with just dark and decaf," he said. "What else do you need?" And the coffee was available only as whole bean. "We refuse to grind coffee. As soon as you grind it you start the staling process," Ralston explained.

Ralston's approach was also influenced strongly by his former boss, Body Shop founder, Anita Roddick, who he described as "a pioneer in trade, not aid," cultivating mutually beneficial trade relationships with developing countries and communities to help them become self-sufficient rather than simply providing financial or other aid. When he first told Roddick he was thinking of getting back into coffee, he recalled that she said to him, "Your coffee should be 100 percent organic and 100 percent fair trade." There wasn't a brand like that at the time, "and it turned out there was a good reason for that," Ralston said. "Everyone thought I was nuts. At the time, organic was just gnarly vegetables."

WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

Count Vermont coffee expert Dan Cox among those who thought Ralston was a little nuts. Cox had been the first full-time employee of what was then Green Mountain Coffee Roasters. He worked there for a dozen years before he founded his own Burlington-based coffee-testing business, Coffee Enterprises, which does analysis for many major national coffee companies. "Paul came to me and said, I want to learn everything about roasting," Cox recalled. "He told me he wanted to be like Peet's [a leading San Francisco Bay area coffee roaster], which is like the Guinness of coffee. I said, This isn't the Bay area. The East Coast is not into dark roast. Like with Guinness, for every customer you turn on, you'll turn four off."

In addition, Cox remembers Ralston outlining his "folksy" marketing plan with the

brown bags and emphasis on selling to friends. "I said, That's a little far-fetched, pal." And he said, That's all I've got."

Ralston spent six months learning how to evaluate green coffee beans, blend, roast and control quality and despite Cox's initial concerns, he carved out a niche and grew steadily. "He was still there in five years and then another five," Cox said. "He was very savvy, always asking for a better way to do something . . . and he has stayed true to his style. His packaging is still relatively unsophisticated but it works for him. He makes a respectable coffee and a pretty darn good decaf."

A few other factors worked in Ralston's favor, Cox added: "Number one, he had a passion for it, and number two, nobody really came right after him. He had a window of opportunity that doesn't exist today."

SOLID FOCUS

As Cox noted, the competitive frame is very different today with new micro-roasters popping up regularly, but Ralston has stayed focused on his initial vision.

Since its official launch in 2001, Vermont Coffee Company has expanded to retail outlets all over Vermont, as well as New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Hampshire with distribution growing at a healthy clip around the Northeast and down the Atlantic coast. The company has about 23 employees, about half of those full-time and many part-time by choice, older and partly retired or younger with children. "Part of our business model is a flexible workforce," Ralston explained.

Ralston, who is sole owner, would not share sales figures but Vermont Coffee Company projects 20 percent growth in 2014. The flagship line of retail packaged whole beans remains simple and straightforward in its descriptors: Dark, Medium, Mild and Decaf. The down-to-earth brown bag packaging remains, although it takes the form of a brown box for Costco.

With the exception of one line from the Dominican Republic, rather than emphasizing single-sourced coffees from specific regions like many other small roasters, Vermont Coffee Company has always led with its blends.

"We are blenders. There's nothing magical about our beans," said Ralston. "The goal is to keep our blends tasting the same, month to month, year to year."

Vermont Coffee Company buys certified organic beans following principles set by the International Fair Trade Federation, Ralston said. The annual coffee harvest occurs at different times in different climates and over a year beans could be sourced from Ethiopia, Indonesia, Peru, Bolivia, Guatemala and Nicaragua, among other countries.

The beans are stacked high in burlap bags in a large storage room in Middlebury all tagged with their country, producer, and lot number. As he demonstrated how the beans are pulled for evaluation through a long hollow spiked tool that can dig deep into each bag, Ralston explained how different beans contribute to the overall blend. Coffee from Guatemala, for example, he said, "We call them our spice beans. They add fruity and floral notes."

The company's modest marketing budget still emphasizes grassroots relationship-building (now via social media), coffee sampling and offering loyal customers Vermont Coffee Company merchandise such as t-shirts and mugs for returning proof-of-purchases, which they do by weaving strips of brown bags into quilts, folding them into origami and even, in one case, using them to craft a

collage of Johnny Cash drinking coffee—black, of course.

Another thing that has not changed, Ralston noted with a smile: "We always smell like coffee. When we go to the bank, they know who we are . . . It's a sensory business. We're in it for what it smells and tastes like."

SLOW ROAST, SLOW GROWTH

Changes have come gradually, many in the form of process improvements such as the adoption of the Japanese production scheduling system, Kanban; new pieces of equipment to mechanize jobs previously done by hand like bag-folding; and increased roasting capacity.

In the roasting room recently, a brand new, shiny stainless steel roaster with capacity of 150 pounds was in the process of being installed. It cost about \$350,000 to purchase and install and would double Vermont Coffee Company's roasting capacity, Ralston said.

"The thing that makes it big, bold coffee is how we roast it," Ralston explained, pausing in front of one of the company's two smaller roasters where a small circular window gave a peek into the pre-roasted, dull grey-green beans while the glossy dark brown, roasted beans swirled below. Vermont Coffee Company roasts its beans about twice as long as many other larger roasters, Ralston said. He believes the longer, slower roast is key to building rounded flavors, similar to slowly caramelized onions or the depth of a long-cooked Cajun or Creole roux sauce base. "It's a long, slow caramelizing roast," he said, "which results in coffee with more body and sweeter, chocolate, caramel notes and a smoky tang and lower acidity."

With a similar careful approach, Ralston has planned and budgeted for growth. Over his varied career, Ralston said, "I've made all the mistakes you can make." He has seen firsthand, he said, that "growth offers new ways to screw up."

"We follow a model called bootstrapping," he said. "We use yesterday's cash flow to finance growth. We're not extravagant." The company's credit line, he said, usually has a zero balance. An additional challenge these past four years has been Ralston's commitment to the Vermont legislature to which he was elected in November of 2010. He ran, he said, because "I think there is a need for more people with active business experience in the legislature."

He feels good about what he has accomplished there, he said, but it's been "very hard" balancing the four-month, four-day-a-week commitment with running an actively growing business. "I think we would be further ahead if I hadn't done it," he said.

Looking ahead 15 years, Ralston said with a smile, "I hope to still be grooving on coffee." He also hopes to be able to spend more time "at origin," in countries where coffee is grown. "It happens to be warmer than here," he added.

At home in Vermont, Ralston imagines a slightly bigger office "with a wood-burning stove, a couch and a bigger coffee table where friends will come by to visit and sit to have a coffee."

TRIBUTE TO BOB KLEIN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I would like to recognize the more than three decades of contributions by Bob Klein, one of the greatest conservationists in Vermont history, on the occasion of his retirement after 35 years as State Director of the Vermont Nature Conservancy.

Bob Klein is the founding Director of the Vermont Nature Conservancy, and under his guidance, its mission has been to protect Vermont's unique and rare landscapes, important wildlife habitat and biodiversity. Parcels are selected for their natural attributes, not necessarily for size, and in total, the Vermont Nature Conservancy has helped to conserve an incredible 188,000 acres during Bob's tenure. I followed his example, and one of my priorities through my work in the Senate has been to add approximately 200,000 acres to the Green Mountain National Forest. Bob has accomplished this scale of conservation within the framework of a relatively small private organization.

The Vermont Nature Conservancy has transferred most of the conserved land to the State and other land managers, while retaining ownership of the gems, to ensure their careful stewardship. These parcels included 55 natural areas dispersed across the State and open to visitors and naturalists. Bob has guided the Nature Conservancy in protecting forever iconic Vermont landscapes such as Camel's Hump, Hunger Mountain, Shelburne Pond, Alburgh Dunes, the Maidstone Bends of the Connecticut River and the Green River Reservoir.

Bob's contributions to conservation go well beyond lands that the Nature Conservancy has purchased. His leadership within the State was instrumental in the 132,000 acre Champion Lands conservation project when he helped bring together the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Vermont legislature and multiple private partners. At the Nature Conservancy, Bob has carefully assembled a team of conservation biologists, geographers and naturalists whose work has transformed conservation thought and practice. Vermont State agencies, recreational trails organizations, Federal agencies and private developers look first to the Nature Conservancy when seeking a better understanding of Vermont's ecosystems and how to protect them.

Other Nature Conservancy Chapters across the United States have been modeled on the Vermont office that Bob created. Bob's patient, generous and kind work with members and the general public is reflected in the fact that the Vermont has, by far, the highest per-capita Nature Conservancy membership of any State. I have often looked to Bob for advice on national conservation policy and he has led national Nature Conservancy visits to Washington, D.C.

Bob is retiring as the State Director of the Vermont Nature Conservancy but I know that he will continue to pursue his passions of botany, photography and exploration of nature. Bob's photographs have graced national publications and gallery walls. I will continue to look to Bob as an advisor on conservation policy and wish him all the best as he begins this new chapter.

TRIBUTE TO AUGUST SCHAEFER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on February 28, 2014, August Schaefer, better known as Gus, stepped down from his post as chief safety officer of Underwriters Laboratories, after dedicating 41 years to the company.

Underwriters Laboratories is an independent safety certification organization that tests products, conducts factory inspections, and writes standards for safety. Gus has served in many leadership roles during his time at UL, but in all capacities he has been dedicated to promoting public safety.

Under his leadership, UL launched the Firefighter Safety Research Institute which works to provide first responders and firefighters with additional information on burning buildings and the behavior of specific materials in fires.

In 2012, Mr. Schaefer shared his expertise on the safety and effectiveness of flame retardant chemicals as he testified before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government. His testimony on the effectiveness of flame retardant chemicals and furniture flammability standards was a significant contribution to the hearing.

Mr. Schaefer also worked to have UL, as part of a partnership with Disney, bring safety education campaigns to children all over the world through the Safety Smart Ambassador Program. The program's video campaign educates children on fire safety, personal safety, water safety, health, environmental protection, and online safety.

UL, under his guidance, expanded its operations overseas. In response to a growing number of imports, UL has increased its presence in Asia, where it tests products intended for consumers in the United States. UL also has expanded its safety outreach to India, establishing an annual Road Safety Council where fire officials work to solve challenges in a developing nation.

Mr. Schaefer's service in Illinois is felt well beyond product safety and testing. Under his leadership, UL established annual Living the Mission Celebrations, which encourage UL staff to spend a day volunteering in the community.

Gus Schaefer's leadership at UL has made the world a better—and safer—place. When we use products approved by Underwriters Labs, we thank Gus Schaefer. I thank him for his many years of service and wish him the best in his retirement.

NATIONAL YOUTH SYNTHETIC DRUG AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am pleased to join Senator KLOBUCHAR in cosponsoring a resolution designating the week of March 9, 2014, as National Youth Synthetic Drug Awareness

Week. The abuse of synthetic drugs has grown rapidly in a very short amount of time. Calls into poison control centers concerning synthetic marijuana, also known as "K2," doubled between 2010 and 2011 and remained elevated throughout 2012. Emergency room visits connected to synthetic marijuana use more than doubled, to 28,000 visits, from 2010 to 2011. In addition, other synthetic drugs commonly known as "bath salts" produced over 22,000 emergency room admissions.

The serious symptoms associated with synthetic drug use range from rapid heart rate, psychosis, and agitation which may lead to suicide, cardiac arrest, or organ failure. In 2010, a constituent of mine named David Rozga committed suicide shortly after ingesting "K2" with his friends. After smoking the drug, David became highly agitated. His friends calmed him down, and he decided to go home. Not long afterward, however, he committed suicide. David's death was one of the first in the United States attributed to synthetic drug use.

I worked with Senators KLOBUCHAR, SCHUMER, and FEINSTEIN, along with many others, to place many of these terrible drugs on the list of Schedule I controlled substances. I am grateful that the Senate and the House worked together to pass the Synthetic Drug Abuse Prevention Act of 2012. Our efforts were an important step in allowing the Drug Enforcement Administration to begin enforcement actions against those who are poisoning our communities.

However, new synthetic drugs have emerged since the passage of that law. In fact, the Drug Enforcement Administration has moved to administratively place an additional 17 chemical compounds on the list of schedule I narcotics in recent months. Included among these drugs is a compound called 5F-PB-22, which was blamed for the deaths of three young Iowans last year. Moreover, in just the past few days, police in Iowa have arrested six people and raided multiple stores in the Des Moines area for selling synthetic drugs. These tragic deaths and arrests of those pushing these substances underscore the ongoing need to raise awareness of these deadly drugs.

The good news is that people, including in my home State of Iowa, are fighting back against the scourge of synthetic drugs. The Rozga family has been active in sharing David's story. They have also started a Web site, K2drugfacts.com, which creates a forum for other parents, friends, and people who have survived terrifying experiences with synthetic drugs to share their stories and spread the word that these drugs are destructive. Other anti-drug organizations and coalitions are raising public awareness in Iowa. For example, a local community group in Johnson County, Iowa called Iowans

Against Synthetics has raised synthetic drug awareness throughout that county.

The National Youth Synthetic Drug Awareness Week resolution encourages other individuals and organizations throughout the country to continue their efforts to raise awareness about the deadliness of these drugs. I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING CONNOR PERKINS

• Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Connor Perkins on obtaining one of the Boy Scouts of America's highest ranks of Eagle Scout.

Connor began this journey as a Cub Scout in 2005 and 5 years later became a Boy Scout with Troop 695. His commitment to excellence continues to expand his record of 35 merit badges, 80 hours of community service, and 100 miles of hiking. Connor has also assumed leadership roles in the Scouts, serving as a den chief for the newer members, including his younger brother Bradley. Furthermore, Connor has lead as troop guide and historian, and he is presently the troop's senior patrol leader.

As one of tomorrow's leaders, Connor enhances my faith in our great Nation's future. It is truly an honor for me to help in celebrating his advancement to Eagle Scout. Continuing at this level of accomplishment, with such a strong commitment to civic duty, Connor will certainly be a strong, contributing citizen of this great Nation.

Connor plans to continue being an active Scout, even after receiving his Eagle status. The guidance of his loving parents and Scout leaders has undoubtedly instilled him with these motivations to do a good turn and make change daily wherever he may go. I am proud to have such a loyal and prepared member in my family and the Boy Scout family.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Connor on his loyal service and contributions to his troop and community.●

TRIBUTE TO SEAN T. HAYES

• Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, it is a pleasure to congratulate Capt. Sean T. Hays on being selected for promotion to the rank of major within the U.S. Marine Corps.

Every day, the men and women of the Armed Forces make incalculable contributions to our society. Nearly 22 years ago, Major (select) Hays swore an oath to protect our Nation and to lead by example. Entering the Marine Corps

as a private, the lowest rank, he has diligently worked his way up through the ranks and continues to serve as a role model for his peers.

I had the distinct honor of meeting Major (select) Hays while he was deployed in Afghanistan. He is one of Colorado's best and brightest. His dedication to protecting his country speaks for itself, and I am confident that as a senior officer, he will continue to lead and protect with pride.

Congratulations to Major (select) Hays. I know his continued service will contribute to a stronger U.S. military and a safer nation.●

REMEMBERING THELMA SAYLER

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to honor the life of Thelma Sayler.

Thelma Sayler was born in Lynch, NE, on September 3, 1924, to Mads and Ruth (Christensen) Nelson. In 1927, she moved with her parents and younger sister, Donna Faye, in a Model T with the company of 24 chickens, to a one-room "shack" north of White River. Ten years later her father tore down an old house and hauled the lumber in the Model T, using it to build a new house for the family. They moved into their new house just 1 day before Christmas, where Thelma had her own bedroom, which was a mansion to her.

Since there were no boys, the girls helped with farming, ranching, and chores around the house. Thelma liked to remember how she, her sister and mother, during the dirty thirties, used aprons to shoo away the Mormon crickets to save their garden.

Thelma graduated from White River High School in 1942. After high school, she traveled with her Aunt and Uncle to Oregon to work in the shipyards during the war. When traveling, she sat in the back of a pickup on a chair. In 1949, Thelma, and her daughters Karen and Sharon, moved back to White River. A couple years later they moved north to the "Old Rassy Place."

In 1953, Thelma accepted a teaching job at the Cottonwood School that was about 2 miles from their home. In 1954, she taught in Jones County. When she started teaching, she worked without certification for a number of years. She eventually started taking classes during the summer through Black Hills State Teacher College, and earned her bachelor's degree in 1969. In 1971, Thelma and her family moved 10 miles north of White River to the "Teddy Fredericks Place," where she then began teaching second grade in Murdo.

She taught in Murdo until retiring in 1987. Even after retirement, Thelma continued her passion to educate, which included volunteering at the school, substitute teaching, and even providing snacks for students and staff. Thelma was a lifelong member of the Cottonwood Ladies Aide and volunteered at the Mellette County Museum

& Library, blood drives, and the Grand Stand Committee. She was also a long-time member of the United Methodist Church in Murdo.

Thelma Sayler passed away at the age of 89 on February 9, 2014, at her daughter's house in White River. She will be forever remembered for her love of teaching and for all that she has done for her community.

I was among Thelma Sayler's many students. She was a teacher in the truest and best sense of the word, and I am forever grateful for her investment in me. She was patient and kind but tough when needed—and most importantly, she was passionate about seeing kids learn and truly committed to her work. Like so many others who passed through her classroom, I was blessed to have her as a teacher and later in life to call her a friend.●

REPORT OF THE CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO IRAN THAT WAS DECLARED IN EXECUTIVE ORDER 12957 ON MARCH 15, 1995—PM 35

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared on March 15, 1995, is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 2014.

The crisis between the United States and Iran resulting from the actions and policies of the Government of Iran has not been resolved. The Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) between the P5+1 and Iran went into effect on January 20, 2014, for a period of 6 months. This marks the first time in a decade that Iran has agreed to and taken specific actions to halt its nuclear program and to roll it back in key respects. In return for Iran's actions on its nuclear program, the P5+1, in coordination with the European Union, are taking actions to implement the limited, temporary, and reversible sanctions relief outlined in the JPOA.

Nevertheless, certain actions and policies of the Government of Iran are

contrary to the interests of the United States in the region and continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to Iran and to maintain in force comprehensive sanctions against Iran to deal with this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 12, 2014.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY) reported that he had signed the following enrolled bill, which was previously signed by the Speaker of the House:

H.R. 2019. An act to eliminate taxpayer financing of political party conventions and reprogram savings to provide for a 10-year pediatric research initiative through the Common Fund administered by the National Institutes of Health, and for other purposes.

At 5:43 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 311. An act to direct the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to change the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure rule with respect to certain farms.

H.R. 1814. An act to amend section 5000A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide an additional religious exemption from the individual health coverage mandate.

H.R. 3474. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of the employer mandate under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

H.R. 3675. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3979. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 311. An act to direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to change the Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure rule with respect to certain farms; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

H.R. 3675. An act to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to provide for greater transparency and efficiency in the procedures followed by the Federal Communications Commission, and for other purposes; to

the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2110. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and to improve Medicare and Medicaid payments, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4152. An act to provide for the costs of loan guarantees for Ukraine.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2122. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and to improve Medicare and Medicaid payments, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4885. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fenamidone; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9906-99) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4886. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence), transmitting, pursuant to law, a notification that the annual report on the current and future military strategy of Iran will be delivered to Congress in May of 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4887. A communication from the Assistant Administrator for Procurement, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "NASA FAR Supplement: Proposal Adequacy Checklist" (RIN2700-AE13) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2014; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4888. A communication from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Global Strategic Affairs), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report on Proposed Obligations for Cooperative Threat Reduction"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4889. A communication from the Acting Deputy Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to proposals on military compensation included in the President's fiscal year 2015 budget; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4890. A communication from the President of the United States of America, transmitting, pursuant to law the Economic Report of the President together with the 2014 Annual Report of the Council of Economic Advisers; to the Joint Economic Committee.

EC-4891. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule en-

titled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; State of Colorado; Second Ten-Year PM 10 Maintenance Plan for Pagosa Springs" (FRL No. 9907-57-Region 8) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4892. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of California; 2012 Los Angeles County State Implementation Plan for 2008 Lead Standard" (FRL No. 9907-14-Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4893. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, Placer County Air Pollution Control District" (FRL No. 9905-18-Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4894. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Disapproval of State Implementation Plan Revisions; Clark County, Nevada" (FRL No. 9907-56-Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4895. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Texas; Stage II Vapor Recovery Program and Control of Air Pollution from Volatile Organic Compounds" (FRL No. 9907-55-Region 6) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4896. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan; South Coast Air Quality Management District and El Dorado County Air Quality Management District" (FRL No. 9905-26-Region 9) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4897. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; New Hampshire; Manchester and Nashua Carbon Monoxide Limited Maintenance Plans" (FRL No. 9906-76-Region 1) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2014; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4898. A communication from the Legal Counsel, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law,

the report of a rule entitled "Waivers of Rights and Claims in Settlement of a Charge or Lawsuit under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act" (RIN3046-AA58) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4899. A communication from the Inspector General of the Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's Congressional Budget Justification for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4900. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Schedules of Controlled Substances: Temporary Placement of 10 Synthetic Cathinones into Schedule I" (Docket No. DEA-386) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 7, 2014; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4901. A communication from the Federal Liaison Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Changes to Permit Delayed Submission of Certain Requirements for Prioritized Examination" (RIN0651-AC93) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2014; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4902. A communication from the Federal Liaison Officer, Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Changes to Continued Prosecution Application Practice" (RIN0651-AC92) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 6, 2014; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4903. A communication from the Vice President of Government Affairs and Corporate Communications, National Railroad Passenger Corporation, Amtrak, transmitting, pursuant to law, a notification of a delay in submitting Amtrak's operations update and a general and legislative annual report; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4904. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Modification of the Dallas/Fort Worth Class B Airspace Area; TX" (RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2012-1168) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4905. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0791) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4906. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters (Type Certificate previously held by Eurocopter France)" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0737) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4907. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; ATR-GIE Avions de Transport Regional Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0799) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4908. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc. (Bell Helicopters)" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0735) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4909. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2014-0054) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4910. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0210) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4911. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Various Restricted Category Helicopters" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0736) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4912. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce Deutschland Ltd and Co. KG Turbofan Engines" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0342) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4913. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; BAE SYSTEMS (OPERATIONS) LIMITED Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0793) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4914. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2012-0997) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4915. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Costruzioni Aeronautiche Tecnam srl Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0888) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4916. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0632) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4917. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0538) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4918. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France (Eurocopter) Helicopters" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2014-0039) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4919. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Agusta S.p.A. (Type Certificate currently held by AgustaWestland S.p.A.) (Agusta) Helicopters" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0478) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4920. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Beechcraft Corporation Airplanes" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0611) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4921. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France (Eurocopter) Helicopters" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0679) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4922. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Eurocopter France Helicopters" (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0501) received in the Office of the President of the Senate

on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4923. A communication from the Paralegal Specialist, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Establishment of Area Navigation (RNAV) Routes; Atlanta, GA" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0891)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4924. A communication from the Regulations Officer, Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Design-Build Contracting" (RIN2125-AF58) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4925. A communication from the Program Analyst, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "List of Nonconforming Vehicles Decided To Be Eligible for Importation" (Docket No. NHTSA-2013-0092) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4926. A communication from the Program Analyst, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Occupant Crash Protection" (RIN2127-AK56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 25, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

The following petition or memorial was laid before the Senate and was referred or ordered to lie on the table as indicated:

POM-203. A resolution adopted by the House of Representatives of the State of Michigan urging complete hydrologic separation of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins, calling for the formation of a regional body to negotiate terms of hydrologic separation, and urging Congress and other entities to take interim steps to prevent Asian carp movement into the Great Lakes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 305

Whereas, The Great Lakes constitute one of the world's greatest inland waterway systems. Recreational opportunities on the lakes make Michigan and the region an attractive place for businesses to locate. The Great Lakes support jobs across a spectrum of industries that include manufacturing, tourism, recreation, shipping—including freight transport and warehousing—agriculture, science, engineering, utilities, and mining. The protection of the Great Lakes is essential to local and national economic growth; and

Whereas, The Great Lakes are central to Michigan's state identity and economy with a \$15 billion annual tourism industry and more than 1 million licensed anglers contributing \$2 billion to the economy; and

Whereas, Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are one of the foremost challenges facing the Great Lakes. Economic and environmental

damage from invasive species in the Great Lakes basin is estimated at \$5.7 billion per year, and commercial and sport fishing in the Great Lakes basin have suffered losses estimated at \$4.5 billion; and

Whereas, Asian carp pose an imminent threat to the Great Lakes ecosystem and economy. The leading front of the Asian carp population has been confirmed 25 miles downstream of the electric barriers located on the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, and monitoring has detected Asian carp DNA between the electric barriers and Lake Michigan. Research by U.S. and Canadian fishery experts shows that there is a significant risk of Asian carp surviving, spreading, and establishing populations in the Great Lakes, particularly in shallow, near-shore areas like Green Bay, Saginaw Bay, Lake St. Clair, and Western Lake Erie. Once established, they can reproduce rapidly, consume large quantities of food, disrupt local ecosystems, out-compete native fish species, and devastate recreational fishing and boating opportunities. If populations of Asian carp become established in the Great Lakes, they will be difficult, if not impossible, to control or eradicate, and thus, the federal government has recognized Asian carp as "the most acute [aquatic invasive species] threat facing the Great Lakes today"; and

Whereas, A recent study conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service showed that the electric barriers in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, designed to prevent the spread of Asian carp and other invasive fish, are not effective in stopping the movement of all fish, especially small fish, and that barges can sweep fish through the electric barrier; and

Whereas, The Restoring the Natural Divide report prepared by the Great Lakes Commission and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative in 2012 presented three alternatives for hydrologically separating the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins. The report demonstrates that a long-term solution to prevent AIS transfer—while maintaining or enhancing water quality, flood control, and transportation—is possible; and

Whereas, The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released the Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS) report presenting a range of eight options and technologies to prevent AIS movement between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins, including two alternatives for full hydrologic separation. The GLMRIS report recognizes hydrologic separation as the most effective way to keep Asian carp out of the Great Lakes and mitigate flooding; and

Whereas, Complete hydrologic separation of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins would be a project measured in decades, not months or years. Asian carp pose a near certainty of establishing populations in the Great Lakes before the implementation of hydrologic separation from the Mississippi River basin unless strong, strategic interim measures are implemented; and

Whereas, While the long-term solution is developed and implemented, priority in the near-term should be given to effectively preventing the movement of Asian carp into the Great Lakes from the Mississippi River basin through technologies, waterway system improvements, technology demonstrations, and continued aggressive management practices leading to real reductions in populations. One-way or partial separation to prevent fish from moving upstream may be possible to achieve in the near-term without having to

address major flooding and water quality issues. A short-term plan of action should include study and evaluation of the impacts on shipping infrastructure to provide feasible options for promoting new alternative long-term solutions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we find that complete hydrologic separation is the most effective long-term solution for protecting the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins from aquatic invasive species (AIS) transfer and urge its implementation; and be it further

Resolved, That we memorialize the Congress of the United States to call for immediate action on a suite of measures to reduce the risk of Asian carp and other invasive species passing through the Chicago Area Waterway System until hydrologic separation can be completed, including:

1. Continued implementation of the Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework and related efforts;

2. Continued support of extensive monitoring and control efforts, including commercial fishing in the Chicago Area Waterway System, led by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and its federal partners;

3. Design and engineering of modifications to the Brandon Road lock and dam structure or other appropriate lock to reduce the risk of one-way transfer into Lake Michigan, including additional electric barriers at the entrance and exit of the lock, use of carbon dioxide as a fish deterrent, modifications of the gates on the dam, and other technologies; and be it further

Resolved, That we urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to implement physical separation immediately through lock closure should Asian carp pose an imminent threat of passing through the Brandon Road Lock; and be it further

Resolved, That we call upon commercial navigation industries to identify practices to reduce the risk of AIS transfer that can be instituted on an escalating pace commensurate with the advance of Asian carp toward Lake Michigan; and be it further

Resolved, That we urge the United States Department of Transportation to study and evaluate the current and future infrastructure needs in the affected region to ensure the continued flow of commerce in and out of the region; and be it further

Resolved, That we call for the assembly of a consensus-building body of state and federal agencies, industries, regional commissions, and nongovernmental organizations to negotiate terms of hydrologic separation of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins even while planning for interim measures are underway; and be it further

Resolved, That we request that Congress call upon the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to provide a lead role in accomplishing these goals and coordinating efforts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other federal agencies through the Asian Carp Control Strategy Framework and the national control plan for Asian carp; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of the Interior, the Commanding General of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers—Chicago District, and the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment:

S. 2124. An original bill to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. 2111. A bill to reauthorize the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, and Mr. ENZI):

S. 2112. A bill to authorize the approval of natural gas pipelines and establish deadlines and expedite permits for certain natural gas gathering lines on Federal land and Indian land; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. COBURN (for himself, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. BURR, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. ENZI, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. HATCH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. VITTER, and Mr. WARNER):

S. 2113. A bill to provide taxpayers with an annual report disclosing the cost and performance of Government programs and areas of duplication among them, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. COBURN):

S. 2114. A bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 with respect to disclosures to investors in municipal and corporate debt securities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. REED, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. BOXER, and Mrs. HAGAN):

S. 2115. A bill to provide for the establishment of a fund to provide for an expanded and sustained national investment in biomedical research; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. UDALL of New Mexico):

S. 2116. A bill to direct the Secretary of Agriculture, in consultation with Indian tribes, to make grants, competitive grants, and special research grants to, and enter into cooperative agreements and other contracting instruments with, eligible entities to conduct research and education and training programs to protect and preserve Native American seeds, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 2117. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to change the default investment fund under the Thrift Savings Plan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. BLUNT (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. MORAN, Mr. PAUL, Mr. THUNE, Mr. VITTER, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. KIRK, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. COBURN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. AYOTTE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. HATCH, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. FISCHER, and Mr. ISAKSON):

S. 2118. A bill to protect the separation of powers in the Constitution of the United States by ensuring that the President takes care that the laws be faithfully executed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. LEE:

S. 2119. A bill to amend the Head Start Act to authorize block grants to States for pre-kindergarten education; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mrs. GILLIBRAND:

S. 2120. A bill to expand the prohibition on the manufacture, distribution, and importation of children's products that contain phthalates, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. WALSH (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, and Mr. TESTER):

S. 2121. A bill to repeal title II of the REAL ID Act of 2005; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. HATCH (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, and Mr. CORNYN):

S. 2122. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and to improve Medicare and Medicaid payments, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. FRANKEN (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. 2123. A bill to authorize the exchange of certain Federal land and non-Federal land in the State of Minnesota; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. MENENDEZ:

S. 2124. An original bill to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Foreign Relations; placed on the calendar.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. COBURN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. COATS, Mr. PAUL, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. HATCH, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. RISCH, Mr. INHOFE, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. LEE, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BURR, Mr. VITTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. RUBIO):

S. Res. 382. A resolution to amend the Standing Rules of the Senate to modify the provision relating to timing for filing of cloture motions; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 411

At the request of Mr. ROCKEFELLER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 411, a bill to amend the Internal

Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and modify the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 635

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 635, a bill to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to provide an exception to the annual written privacy notice requirement.

S. 775

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 775, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax incentive for the installation and maintenance of mechanical insulation property.

S. 824

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 824, a bill to amend the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 to require shareholder authorization before a public company may make certain political expenditures, and for other purposes.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 933, a bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2018.

S. 948

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 948, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage and payment for complex rehabilitation technology items under the Medicare program.

S. 1135

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1135, a bill to amend the Safe Drinking Water Act to repeal a certain exemption for hydraulic fracturing, and for other purposes.

S. 1150

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1150, a bill to posthumously award a congressional gold medal to Constance Baker Motley.

S. 1364

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1364, a bill to promote neutrality, simplicity, and fairness in the taxation of digital goods and digital services.

S. 1397

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr.

KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1397, a bill to improve the efficiency, management, and interagency coordination of the Federal permitting process through reforms overseen by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and for other purposes.

S. 1431

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1431, a bill to permanently extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act.

S. 1456

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. HAGAN), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP), the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO), the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN), the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY), the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1506

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1506, a bill to provide tax relief for persons affected by the discharge of oil in connection with the explosion on, and sinking of, the mobile offshore drilling unit Deepwater Horizon.

S. 1708

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1708, a bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to the establishment of performance measures for the highway safety improvement program, and for other purposes.

S. 1737

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1737, a bill to provide for an in-

crease in the Federal minimum wage and to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend increased expensing limitations and the treatment of certain real property as section 179 property.

S. 1738

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1738, a bill to provide justice for the victims of trafficking.

S. 1793

At the request of Ms. KLOBUCHAR, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1793, a bill to encourage States to require the installation of residential carbon monoxide detectors in homes, and for other purposes.

S. 1802

At the request of Mr. DONNELLY, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1802, a bill to provide equal treatment for utility special entities using utility operations-related swaps, and for other purposes.

S. 1803

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1803, a bill to require certain protections for student loan borrowers, and for other purposes.

S. 2004

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2004, a bill to ensure the safety of all users of the transportation system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, children, older individuals, and individuals with disabilities, as they travel on and across federally funded streets and highways.

S. 2024

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SESSIONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2024, a bill to amend chapter 1 of title 1, United States Code, with regard to the definition of "marriage" and "spouse" for Federal purposes and to ensure respect for State regulation of marriage.

S. 2053

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2053, a bill to direct the Architect of the Capitol to place a chair honoring American Prisoners of War/Missing in Action on the Capitol Grounds.

S. 2077

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2077, a bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

S. 2082

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr.

BROWN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2082, a bill to provide for the development of criteria under the Medicare program for medically necessary short inpatient hospital stays, and for other purposes.

S. 2086

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2086, a bill to address current emergency shortages of propane and other home heating fuels and to provide greater flexibility and information for Governors to address such emergencies in the future.

S. 2099

At the request of Mr. COATS, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2099, a bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to establish uniform requirements for thorough economic analysis of regulations by Federal agencies based on sound principles, and for other purposes.

S. 2106

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2106, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the individual health insurance mandate not apply until the employer health insurance mandate is enforced without exceptions.

S. CON. RES. 33

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Indiana (Mr. DONNELLY), the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. JOHANNES), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 33, a concurrent resolution celebrating the 100th anniversary of the enactment of the Smith-Lever Act, which established the nationwide Cooperative Extension System.

S. RES. 348

At the request of Mr. BURR, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Ms. MIKULSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 348, a resolution expressing support for the internal rebuilding, resettlement, and reconciliation within Sri Lanka that are necessary to ensure a lasting peace.

S. RES. 355

At the request of Mr. GRAHAM, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 355, a resolution calling on the

Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to cease the extra-judicial release of Afghan detainees, carry out its commitments pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding governing the transfer of Afghan detainees from the United States custody to Afghan control and to uphold the Afghan Rule of Law with respect to the referral and disposition of detainees.

S. RES. 365

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 365, a resolution deploring the violent repression of peaceful demonstrators in Venezuela, calling for full accountability for human rights violations taking place in Venezuela, and supporting the right of the Venezuelan people to the free and peaceful exercise of representative democracy.

At the request of Mr. THUNE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 365, *supra*.

S. RES. 377

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) and the Senator from Alaska (Mr. BEGICH) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 377, a resolution recognizing the 193rd anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States.

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 377, *supra*.

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 377, *supra*.

AMENDMENT NO. 2812

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, her name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2812 proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2814

At the request of Mr. CASEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2814 proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2818

At the request of Ms. LANDRIEU, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2818 proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. CASEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2818 proposed to S. 1086, *supra*.

AMENDMENT NO. 2819

At the request of Mr. SCOTT, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2819 intended to be proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. 2111. A bill to reauthorize the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I am please to introduce legislation that would reauthorize the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area located in Yuma, AZ. A companion bill is being introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman RAÚL GRIJALVA and Congressman ED PASTOR from Arizona.

The Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area is a unique success story in the National Heritage Areas, NHA, system. It was first authorized in 2000 under legislation sponsored by myself and former Senator Jon Kyl, P.L. 106-319. Yuma Crossing NHA has proven to be a central component in a collaborative effort by local, tribal and federal partners to transform the City of Yuma downtown riverfront area and restore riparian habitat along the banks of the Colorado River. Like many other NHAs, it was established as a means of encouraging historic preservation at a local level without assigning large federal resources for the management of land as a National Park. The Yuma Crossing NHA model continues to involve a broad coalition of local businesses, farmers, and the Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Indian Reservation among others.

Yuma Crossing NHA was the first NHA to be established west of the Mississippi River. Its purpose is to preserve and share the history of the Yuma Crossing, which is a narrow granite outcropping on the Colorado River that for centuries served as the only transportation gateway for those traveling west to California, including Spanish missionaries, American pioneers, and gold rush prospectors. Prior to the completion of the transcontinental railroad in the 1860's, if you wanted to trade or travel to California, you had to go through Yuma Crossing.

The NHA designation has enabled the City of Yuma to develop plans to leverage about \$80 million in private investments, not Federal funding, for the revitalization of downtown Yuma and the historic landmark. The Yuma Crossing NHA also played a critical role in saving a former Arizona State Park unit, the historic Yuma Quartermaster

Depot, which had closed and fallen into disrepair due to state budget cuts. Moreover, the Yuma Crossing NHA has led the way in a remarkable environmental project along the Colorado River known as the Yuma East Wetlands project, which aims to remove 1,400 acres of non-native, water-guzzling salt cedar thickets and re-vegetate the area with native willows, cottonwood, and mesquite trees. The 400 acres completed thus far has aided in the initial recovery of a number of endangered and migratory bird species, including the Yuma clapper rail, the yellow-billed cuckoo, and the southwestern willow flycatcher.

As a testament to its successes, the National Park Service has downgraded the Yuma Crossing historic landmark from Threatened to Watch status. However, more work remains to be done. For example, the Yuma East Wetlands project has secured a funding commitment from non-federal parties for the next fifty years. Because NHA's have an authorization period of 15 years, it's critical that Congress reauthorize the Yuma Crossing NHA before the end of Fiscal Year 2015 so that this effort continues uninterrupted. I understand there may be a need to offset the federal spending that's authorized by this legislation, and I hope to address this concern as the bill advances through the legislative process. I encourage my colleagues to support the passage of this bill.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. REED, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BROWN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. BOXER, and Mrs. HAGAN):

S. 2115. A bill to provide for the establishment of a fund to provide for an expanded and sustained national investment in biomedical research; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2115

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "American Cures Act".

SEC. 2. BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH FUND.

(a) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this section to establish a Biomedical Research Fund (referred to in this section as the "Fund"), to be administered by the Secretary of the Treasury, to provide for an expanded and sustained national investment in biomedical research through the programs and agencies described in subsection (b)(2).

(b) USE OF FUND.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For each fiscal year, amounts shall be transferred from the Fund to the accounts related to the programs and

agencies described in paragraph (2) to ensure that funding for such programs and agencies for such fiscal year does not fall below 105 percent of the level of funding provided for the fiscal year immediately preceding the fiscal year for which the determination is being made and an additional amount to account for any increases in the Gross Domestic Product for the year involved.

(2) AGENCIES.—The programs and agencies described in this paragraph are the following:

(A) The National Institutes of Health.

(B) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

(C) The Department of Defense health program.

(D) The medical and prosthetics research program of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(c) MINIMUM CONTINUED FUNDING REQUIREMENT.—Amounts appropriated for each of the programs and agencies described in subsection (b)(2) for a fiscal year shall not be less than the amounts appropriated for such programs and agencies for fiscal year 2014.

(d) FUNDING.—There are hereby authorized to be appropriated, and appropriated, to the Fund, out of any monies in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, such sums as may be necessary in each fiscal year to enable the transfers to be made in accordance with subsection (b)(1).

(e) TRANSFER AUTHORITY.—The Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives may provide for the transfer of funds in the Fund to eligible programs and agencies under this section, subject to subsection (b).

(f) EXEMPTION OF CERTAIN PAYMENTS FROM SEQUESTRATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 255(g)(1)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act (2 U.S.C. 905(g)(1)(A)) is amended by inserting after “Advances to the Unemployment Trust Fund and Other Funds (16–0327–0–1–600).” the following:

“Biomedical Research Fund.”.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to any sequestration order issued under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900 et seq.) on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 382—TO AMEND THE STANDING RULES OF THE SENATE TO MODIFY THE PROVISION RELATING TO TIMING FOR FILING OF CLOTURE MOTIONS

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. COBURN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. COATS, Mr. PAUL, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin, Mr. HATCH, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. RISCH, Mr. INHOFE, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. LEE, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BURR, Mr. VITTER, Mr. THUNE, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. SCOTT, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. BARRASSO, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration.:

S. RES. 382

Resolved,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This resolution may be cited as the “Stop Cloture Abuse Resolution”.

SEC. 2. TIME PRE-CLOTURE.

Paragraph 2 of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate is amended in the first undesignated subparagraph—

(1) by inserting “after the end of the 24-hour period beginning at the time the Senate proceeds to consideration of a measure, motion, or other matter” after “at any time”; and

(2) by striking “any measure” and inserting “the measure”.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2820. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2821. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra.

SA 2822. Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. THUNE, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, and Mr. HEINRICH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra.

SA 2823. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2824. Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. KIRK) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra.

SA 2825. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2826. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2827. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2828. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2829. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2830. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2831. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2832. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2833. Mr. RISCH (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2834. Mr. TESTER (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2835. Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2836. Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2837. Mr. SCOTT (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra.

SA 2838. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2839. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2840. Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2841. Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2842. Ms. WARREN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2843. Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. UDALL of Colorado) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2820. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 98, strike line 15 and insert the following:

view.

“(U) IDENTIFICATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall contain an assurance that the State will—

“(I) require each parent, who applies for assistance for child care services for a child under this subchapter, to include the name and valid identification number of the child on the application; and

“(II) check the number before providing the assistance.

“(ii) DEFINITION.—In this subparagraph, the term ‘valid identification number’ means a social security number issued to an individual by the Social Security Administration. Such term shall not include a taxpayer identification number issued by the Internal Revenue Service.”;

SA 2821. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 136, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

(e) PROTECTION OF INFORMATION.—Section 658K(a)(1) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858i(a)(1))

is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(D) PROHIBITION.—Reports submitted to the Secretary under subparagraph (C) shall not contain individually identifiable information.”.

SA 2822. Mr. FRANKEN (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. THUNE, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. TESTER, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, and Mr. HEINRICH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 136, strike lines 8 and 9 and insert the following:

(1) in subsection (a)—
(A) in paragraph (2)—
(i) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary”;
(ii) by striking “1 percent, and not more than 2 percent,” and inserting “2 percent”;

and
(iii) by adding at the end the following:
“(B) LIMITATIONS.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall only reserve an amount that is greater than 2 percent of the amount appropriated under section 658B, for payments described in subparagraph (A), for a fiscal year (referred to in this subparagraph as the ‘reservation year’) if—

“(i) the amount appropriated under section 658B for the reservation year is greater than the amount appropriated under section 658B for fiscal year 2014; and

“(ii) the Secretary ensures that the amount allotted to States under subsection (b) for the reservation year is not less than the amount allotted to States under subsection (b) for fiscal year 2014.”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

SA 2823. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. ____ . ALLOTMENT OF SPACE IN FEDERAL BUILDINGS FOR CHILD CARE.

Section 590(b)(2) of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

“(C) the allotment officer determines that—

“(i) the space will be used to provide child care services to children of whom at least 50 percent have 1 parent or guardian who—

“(I) is employed by the Federal Government; or

“(II)(aa) has met the requirements for a master's degree or a doctorate degree from an institution of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)); and

“(bb) is conducting research under an arrangement between the parent or guardian and a Federal agency; and

“(ii) for available child care services in the space, the child care provider will give—

“(I) first priority to Federal employees; and

“(II) second priority to persons that meet the requirements described in items (aa) and (bb) of clause (i)(II).”.

SA 2824. Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. ISAKSON, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. KIRK) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 91, line 17, insert “efficiently” before “coordinate”.

On page 93, strike line 9 and insert the following:

“(ii) OPTIONAL USE OF COMBINED FUNDS.—If the State elects to combine funding for the services supported to carry out this subchapter with funding for any program described in subclauses (I) through (VII) of clause (i), the plan shall describe how the State will combine the multiple sets of funding and use the combined funding.

“(iii) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing on page 128, line 16, strike “chapter; and” and insert “chapter.”.

On page 128, strike line 22 and insert the following:

ance with this subchapter.

“(5) after consultation with the Secretary of Education and the heads of any other Federal agencies involved, issue guidance, and disseminate information on best practices, regarding use of funding combined by States as described in section 658E(c)(2)(O)(ii), consistent with law other than this subchapter.”; and

SA 2825. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 99, strike lines 16 through 20 and insert the following:

tivity described in clause (iii)).”;

(iii) by striking “, with priority” and all that follows through the period and inserting the following: “. In using those amounts for child care services, the State shall give priority for services first to children with disabilities from low-income families (whose family income does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size), then to children of families with very low family incomes (taking into consideration family size), and then to children with disabilities.”; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) REPORT BY INSPECTOR GENERAL.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September 30 of the first full fiscal year after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, and September 30 of each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services shall prepare and submit to the Secretary a report that contains a determination about whether each State uses amounts provided to such State for the fiscal year involved under this subchapter in accordance with the priority for services described in clause (i).

“(II) PENALTY FOR NONCOMPLIANCE.—For any fiscal year that the report of such Inspector General described in subclause (I) indicates that such a State has failed to give priority for services in accordance with such clause, the Secretary shall withhold 5 percent of the funds that would otherwise be allocated to that State in accordance with this subchapter for the following fiscal year.

“(iii) CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL SYSTEM.—”

SA 2826. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 120, strike line 12 and insert the following:

preceding 5 years; or
“(E) has been convicted of a violent misdemeanor, such as assault or domestic violence, against a child.

SA 2827. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 78, line 9, insert “and early language and literacy development” after “readiness”.

SA 2828. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 68, line 22, strike “such sums as may be necessary for each” and insert “\$14,400,000,000 for the period consisting”.

SA 2829. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. ____ . EVALUATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF DUPLICATIVE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE PROGRAMS.

(a) ELIMINATION OF DUPLICATIVE PROGRAMS.—

(1) CHILD CARE ACCESS MEANS PARENTS IN SCHOOL PROGRAM.—Subpart 7 of part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070e et seq.) is repealed.

(2) EVEN START.—Subpart 2 of part B of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6371 et seq.) is repealed.

(3) EARLY READING FIRST.—Subpart 3 of part B of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6381 et seq.) is repealed.

(4) EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES ACT.—The Early Learning Opportunities Act (20 U.S.C. 9401 et seq.) is repealed.

(5) EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM.—Subsection (e) of section 2151 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6651(e)) is repealed.

(b) RESTRICTED USE OF FUNDS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no funds appropriated for any of the following programs or activities shall be used for child care or early education:

(1) Any assistance provided by the Appalachian Regional Commission under chapters 143 or 145 of title 40, United States Code.

(2) The Safe Start Program administered under part C of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5651 et seq.).

(3) The SMART Prevention grant program under section 41303 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043d-2).

(4) The transitional housing assistance for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault grant program under section 40299 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 13975).

(5) The migrant and seasonal farmworker programs under section 167 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2912).

(6) The Native American programs under section 166 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2911).

(7) Adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities under chapter 5 of subtitle B of title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2861 et seq.).

(c) REPORT.—

(1) DEFINITION OF APPLICABLE SECRETARY.—In this subsection, the term “applicable Secretary” means a Secretary with authority over a program, activity, service, or provision of law described in paragraph (3).

(2) IN GENERAL.—Not later than March 1, 2015, each applicable Secretary shall submit to Congress, and make available through the Internet on the public website of the agency of the applicable Secretary, a report on the outcomes of each program, activity, and service described in paragraph (3) under the authority of the Secretary. Each such report shall include—

(A) a determination of the total administrative expenses of the applicable program, activity, or service;

(B) a determination of the expenditures for services for the applicable program, activity, or service; and

(C) an estimate of the number of clients served by the applicable program, activity, or service and beneficiaries who received assistance under the applicable program, activity, or service (if applicable).

(3) COVERED PROGRAMS.—The programs, activities, and services described in this paragraph are the following:

(A) The local educational agency grant program for Indian education under subpart 1 of part A of title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7421 et seq.).

(B) The Native Hawaiian education program under part B of title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7511 et seq.).

(C) Any Indian child and family service program funded by a grant awarded under title II of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1931 et seq.).

(D) Assistance provided to schools under section 1121(b)(3) of the Education Amendments of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 2001).

(E) The Indian child and family education program authorized under part B of title XI of the Education Amendments of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 2000 et seq.).

(F) The Alaska native educational program under part C of title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7541 et seq.).

(G) The grant program for the improvement of educational opportunities for Indian children authorized under section 7121(c) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7441(c)).

(H) The Race to the Top State incentive grant program under section 14006 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 112-10).

(I) The grant program for special education for infants, toddlers, and families authorized under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.).

(J) The special education grant program for preschool-aged children authorized under section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419).

(K) The child care development block grant program under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.), including funds provided under section 418 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 618).

(L) Programs provided under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.).

(M) Space allotted in a Federal building for child care services under section 590 of title 40, United States Code.

(N) Any assistance provided by the Appalachian Regional Commission under chapters 143 or 145 of title 40, United States Code.

(O) The child and adult care food program established under section 17 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1766).

(P) The school lunch program established under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.).

(Q) The school breakfast program established by section 4 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1773).

(R) The special milk program authorized under section 3 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1772).

(S) The full-service community school grant program carried out under subpart 1 of part D of title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7243 et seq.).

(T) The promise neighborhood grant program carried out under subpart 1 of part D of title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7243 et seq.).

(U) The education for homeless children and youth program under subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.).

(V) The English language acquisition and language enhancement program under subpart 1 of part A of title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6821).

(W) The education of migratory children program under part C of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6391 et seq.).

(X) The local educational agency grant program authorized under part A of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311 et seq.).

(Y) The special education State personnel development grant program under subpart 1 of part D of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.).

(Z) The State grant program for children with disabilities under part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.).

(AA) The technology and media services for individuals with disabilities program under section 674 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1474).

(BB) The community services block grant program under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.).

(CC) The program of block grants to States for social services under subtitle A of title XX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1397 et seq.).

(DD) The program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.).

(EE) Grants provided under the Community Development Block Grant program established under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42

U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) for areas that are not nonentitlement areas.

(FF) Grants provided under the Community Development Block Grant program established under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) for insular areas, as defined in section 102 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 5302).

(GG) Grants provided under the Community Development Block Grant program established under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) for nonentitlement areas in Hawaii.

(HH) The Safe Start Program administered under part C of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5651 et seq.).

(II) The SMART Prevention grant program under section 41303 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043d-2).

(JJ) The transitional housing assistance for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or sexual assault grant program under section 40299 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 13975).

(KK) Migrant and seasonal farmworker programs under section 167 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2912).

(LL) Native American programs under section 166 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2911).

(MM) Adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities under chapter 5 of subtitle B of title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2861 et seq.).

(NN) The donation of surplus Federal personal property through State agencies under section 549 of title 40, United States Code.

(d) COMBINATION OF INDIAN, NATIVE HAWAIIAN, AND ALASKA NATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS.—By not later than September 15, 2015, the Secretary of Education and the Secretary of Interior jointly shall—

(1) review the program outcomes reports required under this section for the programs, activities, and services described in subparagraphs (A) through (F) of subsection (c)(3); and

(2) prepare and submit to Congress a plan, including legislative and administrative recommendations, regarding how to combine such programs, activities, and services into a single program serving the same populations.

SA 2830. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ____ . ELIMINATION OF CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES FOR MILLIONAIRES.

(a) INTERNAL REVENUE CODE.—

(1) NO HOUSEHOLD AND DEPENDENT CARE CREDIT FOR MILLIONAIRES.—Section 21 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g) and by inserting after subsection (e) the following new subsection:

“(f) NO CREDIT FOR MILLIONAIRES.—No credit shall be allowed under this section for any taxable year with respect to any taxpayer with an adjusted gross income equal to or greater than \$1,000,000 for such taxable year.”.

(2) NO DEPENDENT CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR MILLIONAIRES.—Section 129(a) of

the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) **NO EXCLUSION FOR MILLIONAIRES.**—No exclusion shall be allowed by reason of this section for any taxable year with respect to any taxpayer with an adjusted gross income equal to or greater than \$1,000,000 for such taxable year.”.

(3) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) **FEDERAL PAYMENTS.**—

(1) **NO CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES FOR MILLIONAIRES.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal funds may be used to make payments relating to child care or child care services for any individual whose adjusted gross income in the preceding year was equal to or greater than \$1,000,000.

(2) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The prohibition under this subsection shall apply to any payments made on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2831. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Beginning on page 132, strike line 10 and all that follows through page 136, line 17, and insert the following:

(d) **REPORT BY SECRETARY.**—Section 658L of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858j) is amended—

(1) by striking “1998” and inserting “2016”; and

(2) by striking “to the Committee” and all that follows through “of the Senate” and inserting “to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate”.

SEC. 9. PAYMENTS TO BENEFIT INDIAN CHILDREN.

Section 658O(c)(2) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858m(c)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

SA 2832. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. ELIMINATION OF CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES FOR HIGH-INCOME INDIVIDUALS.

(a) **INTERNAL REVENUE CODE.**—

(1) **NO HOUSEHOLD AND DEPENDENT CARE CREDIT FOR HIGH-INCOME INDIVIDUALS.**—Section 21 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating subsection (f) as subsection (g) and by inserting after subsection (e) the following new subsection:

“(f) **NO CREDIT FOR HIGH-INCOME INDIVIDUALS.**—No credit shall be allowed under this section for any taxable year with respect to any taxpayer with an adjusted gross income equal to or greater than \$250,000 for such taxable year.”.

(2) **NO DEPENDENT CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR HIGH-INCOME INDIVIDUALS.**—Section 129(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of

1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) **NO EXCLUSION FOR HIGH-INCOME INDIVIDUALS.**—No exclusion shall be allowed by reason of this section for any taxable year with respect to any taxpayer with an adjusted gross income equal to or greater than \$250,000 for such taxable year.”.

(3) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to taxable years beginning after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) **FEDERAL PAYMENTS.**—

(1) **NO CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES FOR HIGH-INCOME INDIVIDUALS.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no Federal funds may be used to make payments relating to child care or child care services for any individual whose adjusted gross income in the preceding year was equal to or greater than \$250,000.

(2) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The prohibition under this subsection shall apply to any payments made on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2833. Mr. RISCH (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 80, line 15, insert after “services,” the following: “The Secretary shall not promulgate any rule (including any regulation), issue any guidance, or take any other action, that incentivizes, encourages, or mandates any such individual or entity to acquire such a credential.”.

SA 2834. Mr. TESTER (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 136, strike line 16 and all that follows through page 137, line 7, and insert the following:

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end the following:

“(D) **LICENSING AND STANDARDS.**—In lieu of any licensing and regulatory requirements applicable under State or local law, the Secretary, in consultation with Indian tribes and tribal organizations, shall develop minimum child care standards that shall be applicable to Indian tribes and tribal organizations receiving assistance under this subchapter. Such standards shall appropriately reflect Indian tribe and tribal organization needs and available resources, and shall include standards requiring a publicly available application, health and safety standards, and standards requiring a reservation of funds for activities to improve the quality of child care provided to Indian children.”; and

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

“(C) **LIMITATION.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in clause (ii), the Secretary may not permit an Indian tribe or tribal organization to use amounts provided under this subsection for construction or renovation if the use will result in a decrease in the level of child care

services provided by the Indian tribe or tribal organization as compared to the level of child care services provided by the Indian tribe or tribal organization in the fiscal year preceding the year for which the determination under subparagraph (B) is being made.

“(ii) **WAIVER.**—The Secretary shall waive the limitation described in clause (i) if—

“(I) the Secretary determines that the decrease in the level of child care services provided by the Indian tribe or tribal organization is temporary; and

“(II) the Indian tribe or tribal organization submits to the Secretary a plan that demonstrates that after the date on which the construction or renovation is completed—

“(aa) the level of child care services will increase; or

“(bb) the quality of child care services will improve.”.

SA 2835. Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. _____. FAMILY LEAVE BECAUSE OF THE DEATH OF A SON OR DAUGHTER.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Parental Bereavement Act of 2014”.

(b) **FAMILY LEAVE.**—

(1) **ENTITLEMENT TO LEAVE.**—Section 102(a)(1) of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. 2612(a)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(F) Because of the death of a son or daughter.”.

(2) **REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO LEAVE.**—

(A) **SCHEDULE.**—Section 102(b)(1) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 2612(b)(1)) is amended by inserting after the third sentence the following new sentence: “Leave under subsection (a)(1)(F) shall not be taken by an employee intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule unless the employee and the employer of the employee agree otherwise.”.

(B) **SUBSTITUTION OF PAID LEAVE.**—Section 102(d)(2)(B) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 2612(d)(2)(B)) is amended, in the first sentence, by striking “(C) or (D)” and inserting “(C), (D), or (F)”.

(C) **NOTICE.**—Section 102(e) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 2612(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) **NOTICE FOR LEAVE DUE TO DEATH OF A SON OR DAUGHTER.**—In any case in which the necessity for leave under subsection (a)(1)(F) is foreseeable, the employee shall provide such notice to the employer as is reasonable and practicable.”.

(D) **SPOUSES EMPLOYED BY SAME EMPLOYER.**—Section 102(f)(1)(A) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 2612(f)(1)(A)) is amended by striking “subparagraph (A) or (B)” and inserting “subparagraph (A), (B), or (F)”.

(E) **CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.**—Section 103 of such Act (29 U.S.C. 2613) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) **CERTIFICATION RELATED TO THE DEATH OF A SON OR DAUGHTER.**—An employer may require that a request for leave under section 102(a)(1)(F) be supported by a certification issued at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may by regulation prescribe. If the Secretary issues a regulation requiring such certification, the employee shall provide, in a timely manner, a copy of such certification to the employer.”.

(F) FAILURE TO RETURN FROM LEAVE.—Section 104(c) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 2614(c)) is amended—

(i) in paragraph (2)(B)(i), by inserting before the semicolon the following: “, or a death that entitles the employee to leave under section 102(a)(1)(F)”; and

(ii) in paragraph (3)(A)—

(I) in the matter preceding clause (i), by inserting “, or the death,” before “described”; and

(II) in clause (ii), by striking “or” at the end;

(III) by redesignating clause (iii) as clause (iv); and

(IV) by inserting after clause (ii) the following:

“(iii) a certification that meets such requirements as the Secretary may by regulation prescribe, in the case of an employee unable to return to work because of a death specified in section 102(a)(1)(F); or”.

(G) EMPLOYEES OF LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES.—Section 108 of such Act (29 U.S.C. 2618) is amended—

(i) in subsection (c)—

(I) in paragraph (1)—

(aa) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting after “medical treatment” the following: “, or under section 102(a)(1)(F) that is foreseeable,”; and

(bb) in subparagraph (A), by inserting after “to exceed” the following: “(except in the case of leave under section 102(a)(1)(F))”; and

(II) in paragraph (2), by striking “section 102(e)(2)” and inserting “paragraphs (2) and (4) of section 102(e), as applicable”; and

(ii) in subsection (d), in paragraph (2) and (3), by striking “or (C)” each place it appears and inserting “(C), or (F)”.

(C) FAMILY LEAVE FOR CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES.—

(1) ENTITLEMENT TO LEAVE.—Section 6382(a)(1) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(F) Because of the death of a son or daughter.”.

(2) REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO LEAVE.—

(A) SCHEDULE.—Section 6382(b)(1) of such title is amended by inserting after the third sentence the following new sentence: “Leave under subsection (a)(1)(F) shall not be taken by an employee intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule unless the employee and the employing agency of the employee agree otherwise.”.

(B) SUBSTITUTION OF PAID LEAVE.—Section 6382(d) of such title is amended, in the first sentence, by striking “or (E)” and inserting “(E), or (F)”.

(C) NOTICE.—Section 6382(e) of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) In any case in which the necessity for leave under subsection (a)(1)(F) is foreseeable, the employee shall provide such notice to the employing agency as is reasonable and practicable.”.

(D) CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.—Section 6383 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) An employing agency may require that a request for leave under section 6382(a)(1)(F) be supported by a certification issued at such time and in such manner as the Office of Personnel Management may by regulation prescribe. If the Office issues a regulation requiring such certification, the employee shall provide, in a timely manner, a copy of such certification to the employer.”.

SA 2836. Ms. BALDWIN (for herself and Mr. PORTMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by

her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. . QUALITY FOSTER CARE SERVICES.

(a) INCLUSION OF THERAPEUTIC FOSTER CARE AS MEDICAL ASSISTANCE.—Section 1905 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (28), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (29) as paragraph (30); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (28) the following new paragraph:

“(29) therapeutic foster care services described in subsection (ee); and”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(ee)(1) For purposes of subsection (a)(29), subject to subparagraph (C), therapeutic foster care services described in this subsection are services provided for children who have not attained age 21, and who, as a result of mental illness, other emotional or behavioral disorders, medically fragile conditions, or developmental disabilities, need the level of care provided in an institution (including a psychiatric residential treatment facility) or nursing facility the cost of which could be reimbursed under the State plan but who can be cared for or maintained in a community placement, through therapeutic foster care programs that—

“(A) are licensed by the State and accredited by the Joint Commission, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, the Council on Accreditation, or by another equivalent accreditation agency (or agencies) as the Secretary may recognize;

“(B) provide structured daily activities, including the development, improvement, monitoring, and reinforcing of age-appropriate social, communication and behavioral skills, trauma-informed and gender-responsive services, crisis intervention and crisis support services, medication monitoring, counseling, and case management, and may furnish other intensive community services; and

“(C) provide foster care parents with specialized training and consultation in the management of children with mental illness, trauma, other emotional or behavioral disorders, medically fragile conditions, or developmental disabilities, and specific additional training on the needs of each child provided such services.

“(2) In making coverage determinations under paragraph (1), a State may employ medical necessity criteria that are similar to the medical necessity criteria applied to coverage determinations for other services and supports under this title.

“(3) The services described in this subsection do not include the training referred to in paragraph (1)(C).”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply to calendar quarters beginning on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 2837. Mr. SCOTT (for himself and Ms. LANDRIEU) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 140, between lines 2 and 3, insert the following:

SEC. 10A. PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

Section 658Q of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858o) is amended—

(1) by inserting before “Nothing” the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) PARENTAL RIGHTS TO USE CHILD CARE CERTIFICATES.—Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed in a manner—

“(1) to favor or promote the use of grants and contracts for the receipt of child care services under this subchapter over the use of child care certificates; or

“(2) to disfavor or discourage the use of such certificates for the purchase of child care services, including those services provided by private or nonprofit entities, such as faith-based providers.”.

SA 2838. Mr. THUNE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 88, line 5, insert “offering child care certificates to parents,” after “tions,”.

SA 2839. Mr. BENNET submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. . ALLOTMENT OF SPACE IN FEDERAL BUILDINGS FOR CHILD CARE.

Section 590(b)(2)(C) of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

“(i) the space will be used to provide child care services to children of whom at least 50 percent have 1 parent or guardian who—

“(I) is employed by the Federal Government; or

“(II)(aa) has met the requirements for a master's degree or a doctorate degree from an institution of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)); and

“(bb) is conducting research under an arrangement between the parent or guardian and a Federal agency.”.

SA 2840. Mr. MANCHIN (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 122, between lines 16 and 17, insert the following:

(5) IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT OFFER.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), a child care provider covered by subsection (c) may not make an offer of employment as a child care staff member to an individual, even for employment on a conditional or temporary basis, until the individual—

(A) obtains a qualifying background check result for a criminal background check described in subsection (b); or

(B) qualifies under paragraph (4).

SA 2841. Ms. STABENOW (for herself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an

amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 141, after line 4, add the following:
SEC. 13. QUALITY MEASURES FOR MATERNITY CARE UNDER MEDICAID AND CHIP; QUALITY COLLABORATIVE GRANTS.

(a) QUALITY MEASURES FOR MATERNITY CARE UNDER MEDICAID AND CHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 1139A of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b-9a) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(j) MOTHER AND INFANT CARE (MIC) QUALITY MEASURES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—As part of the pediatric quality measures program established under subsection (b) and the Medicaid Quality Measurement Program established under section 1139B(b)(5)(A), the Secretary shall—

“(A) review quality measures endorsed under section 1890(b)(2) that relate to the care of childbearing women and newborns, particularly with respect to the application of such measures to the Medicaid and CHIP programs under titles XIX and XXI, and identify omissions and deficiencies in the application of those measures to such programs;

“(B) develop and publish a set of maternity care quality measures for the Medicaid and CHIP programs under titles XIX and XXI (in this subsection referred to as the ‘Mother and Infant Care (MIC) quality measures’) in accordance with the requirements of paragraphs (2) and (3); and

“(C) on an ongoing basis, review the MIC quality measures and develop and publish any modifications of, or additions or deletions to, such measures that reflect the development, testing, validation, and consensus process described in paragraph (4).

“(2) PROCESS FOR INITIAL REVIEW AND PUBLICATION.—

“(A) CONSULTATION AND PUBLIC COMMENT.—Not later than January 1, 2016, the Secretary shall—

“(i) solicit public comment on the proposed MIC quality measures; and

“(ii) consult with the stakeholders identified in paragraph (6)(A) regarding such measures.

“(B) PUBLICATION OF INITIAL SET OF MEASURES.—Not later than January 1, 2017, the Secretary shall identify and publish the initial MIC quality measures.

“(3) REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The MIC quality measures shall—

“(i) be evidence-based;

“(ii) utilize risk adjustment or risk stratification methodologies, if appropriate;

“(iii) utilize attribution methods to specify the clinicians, facilities, and other entities that the measures are applicable to;

“(iv) be pilot-tested with regards to scientific validity, feasibility, and attribution method; and

“(v) include a balance of each of the types of measures listed in subparagraph (B).

“(B) LIST OF TYPES OF MEASURES.—The measures listed in this subparagraph are the following:

“(i) Measures of the process, experience, efficiency, and outcomes of maternity care, including postpartum outcomes.

“(ii) Measures that apply to—

“(I) women and newborns who are healthy and at low risk, including measures of appropriately low-intervention, physiologic birth in low-risk women; and

“(II) women and newborns at higher risk.

“(iii) Measures that apply to—

“(I) childbearing women; and

“(II) newborns.

“(iv) Measures that apply to care during—

“(I) pregnancy;

“(II) the intrapartum period; and

“(III) the postpartum period.

“(v) Measures that apply to—

“(I) clinicians and clinician groups;

“(II) facilities;

“(III) health plans; and

“(IV) accountable care organizations.

“(vi) Measurement of—

“(I) disparities;

“(II) care coordination; and

“(III) shared decisionmaking.

“(C) PHYSIOLOGIC DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘physiologic’ means characteristic of or conforming to the normal functioning or state of the body or a tissue or organ, normal, and not pathologic.

“(D) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as supporting the restriction of coverage, under title XIX or XXI or otherwise, to only those services that are evidence-based, or in any way limiting available services.

“(4) ONGOING REVIEW OF THE MIC MEASURES; eMEASURES.—

“(A) CONTRACTS WITH QUALIFIED ENTITIES.—Not later than June 30, 2017, the Secretary, acting through the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, in consultation with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, shall enter into grants, contracts, or intergovernmental agreements with qualified measure development entities for the purpose of identifying quality of care issues that are not adequately addressed by the MIC quality measures and developing, testing, and validating modifications of, or additions or deletions to, the MIC quality measures, and creating eMeasures for data collection related to the MIC quality measures.

“(B) QUALIFIED MEASURE DEVELOPMENT ENTITY DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘qualified measure development entity’ means an entity that—

“(i) has demonstrated expertise and capacity in the development and testing of quality measures;

“(ii) has adopted procedures for quality measure development that ensure the inclusion of—

“(I) the views of the individuals and entities referred to in paragraph (3)(B)(v) and whose performance will be assessed by the measures; and

“(II) the views of other individuals and entities (including patients, consumers, and health care purchasers) who will use the data generated as a result of the use of the quality measures;

“(iii) for the purpose of ensuring that the MIC quality measures meet the requirements to be considered for endorsement under section 1890(b)(2), has provided assurances to the Secretary that the measure development entity will collaborate with—

“(I) the Secretary;

“(II) the consensus-based entity with a contract under section 1890(a)(1); and

“(III) stakeholders (including those stakeholders identified in paragraph (6)(A)), as practicable;

“(iv) has transparent policies regarding governance and conflicts of interest; and

“(v) submits an application to the Secretary at such time, and in such form and manner, as the Secretary may require.

“(C) eMEASURES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—A qualified measure development entity with a grant, contract, or

intergovernmental agreement under subparagraph (A) shall consult with the voluntary consensus standards setting organizations and other organizations involved in the advancement of evidence-based measures of health care that the Secretary consults with under subsection (b)(3)(H) and section 1139B(b)(5)(A) to create, as part of the MIC quality measures, eMeasures that are aligned with the measures developed under the pediatric quality measures program established under subsection (b) and the Medicaid Quality Measurement Program established under section 1139B(b)(5)(A).

“(ii) eMEASURE DEFINED.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term ‘eMeasure’ means a measure for which measurement data (including clinical data) will be collected electronically, including through the use of electronic health records and other electronic data sources.

“(D) ENDORSEMENT.—Any modifications of, or additions or deletions to, the MIC quality measures shall be submitted by the qualified measure development entity to the consensus-based entity with a contract under section 1890(a)(1) to be considered for endorsement under section 1890(b)(2).

“(5) MATERNITY CONSUMER ASSESSMENT OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS AND SYSTEMS SURVEYS.—

“(A) ADAPTION OF SURVEYS.—Not later than January 1, 2018, for the purpose of measuring the care experiences of childbearing women and newborns, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality shall adapt the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems program surveys of—

“(i) providers;

“(ii) facilities; and

“(iii) health plans.

“(B) SURVEYS MUST BE EFFECTIVE.—The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality shall ensure that the surveys adapted under subparagraph (A) are effective in measuring aspects of care that childbearing women and newborns experience, which may include—

“(i) various types of care settings;

“(ii) various types of caregivers;

“(iii) considerations relating to pain;

“(iv) shared decisionmaking;

“(v) supportive care around the time of birth; and

“(vi) other topics relevant to the quality of the experience of childbearing women and newborns.

“(C) LANGUAGES.—The surveys adapted under subparagraph (A) shall be available in English and Spanish.

“(D) ENDORSEMENT.—The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality shall submit any Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems surveys adapted under this paragraph to the consensus-based entity with a contract under section 1890(a)(1) to be considered for endorsement under section 1890(b)(2).

“(E) CONSULTATION.—The adaption of (and process for applying) the surveys under subparagraph (A) shall be conducted in consultation with the stakeholders identified in paragraph (6)(A).

“(6) STAKEHOLDERS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The stakeholders identified in this subparagraph are—

“(i) the various clinical disciplines and specialties involved in providing maternity care;

“(ii) State Medicaid administrators;

“(iii) maternity care consumers and their advocates;

“(iv) technical experts in quality measurement;

“(v) hospital, facility and health system leaders;

“(vi) employers and purchasers; and
 “(vii) other individuals who are involved in the advancement of evidence-based maternity care quality measures.

“(B) PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.—The stakeholders identified under subparagraph (A) may include representatives from relevant national medical specialty and professional organizations and specialty societies.

“(7) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated \$16,000,000 to carry out this subsection. Funds appropriated under this paragraph shall remain available until expended.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(A) Section 1139A of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b-9a) is amended—

(i) in subsection (a)(6), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “and the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission” after “Congress”; and

(ii) in subsection (i), by striking “subsection (e)” and inserting “subsections (e) and (j)”.

(B) Section 1139B(b)(4) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b-9b(b)(4)) is amended by inserting “and the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission” after “Congress”.

(b) QUALITY COLLABORATIVES.—

(1) GRANTS.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this subsection referred to as the “Secretary”) may make grants to eligible entities to support—

(A) the development of new State and regional maternity care quality collaboratives;

(B) expanded activities of existing maternity care quality collaboratives; and

(C) maternity care initiatives within established State and regional quality collaboratives that are not focused exclusively on maternity care.

(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The following entities shall be eligible for a grant under paragraph (1):

(A) Quality collaboratives that focus entirely, or in part, on maternity care initiatives, to the extent that such collaboratives use such grant only for such initiatives.

(B) Entities seeking to establish a maternity care quality collaborative.

(C) State Medicaid agencies.

(D) State departments of health.

(E) Health insurance issuers (as such term is defined in section 2791 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300gg-91)).

(F) Provider organizations, including associations representing—

(i) health professionals; and

(ii) hospitals.

(3) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS.—In order for a project or program of an eligible entity to be eligible for funding under paragraph (1), the project or program must have goals that are designed to improve the quality of maternity care delivered, such as—

(A) improving the appropriate use of cesarean section;

(B) reducing maternal and newborn morbidity rates;

(C) improving breast-feeding rates;

(D) reducing hospital readmission rates;

(E) identifying improvement priorities through shared peer review and third-party reviews of qualitative and quantitative data, and developing and carrying out projects or programs to address such priorities; or

(F) delivering risk-appropriate levels of care.

(4) ACTIVITIES.—Activities that may be supported by the funding under paragraph (1) include the following:

(A) Facilitating performance data collection and feedback reports to providers with respect to their performance, relative to peers and benchmarks, if any.

(B) Developing, implementing, and evaluating protocols and checklists to foster safe, evidence-based practice.

(C) Developing, implementing, and evaluating programs that translate into practice clinical recommendations supported by high-quality evidence in national guidelines, systematic reviews, or other well-conducted clinical studies.

(D) Developing underlying infrastructure needed to support quality collaborative activities under this paragraph.

(E) Providing technical assistance to providers and institutions to build quality improvement capacity and facilitate participation in collaborative activities.

(F) Developing the capability to access the following data sources:

(i) A mother's prenatal, intrapartum, and postpartum records.

(ii) A mother's medical records.

(iii) An infant's medical records since birth.

(iv) Birth and death certificates.

(v) Any other relevant State-level generated data (such as data from the pregnancy risk assessment management system (PRAMS)).

(G) Developing access to blinded liability claims data, analyzing the data, and using the results of such analysis to improve practice.

(5) SPECIAL RULE FOR BIRTHS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), if a grant under paragraph (1) is for a project or program that focuses on births, at least 25 percent of the births addressed by such project or program must occur in health facilities that perform fewer than 1,000 births per year.

(B) EXCEPTION.—In the case of a grant under paragraph (1) for a project or program located in a State in which less than 25 percent of the health facilities in the State perform less than 1,000 births per year, the percentage of births in such facilities addressed by such project or program shall be commensurate with the Statewide percentage of births performed at such facilities.

(6) USE OF QUALITY MEASURES.—Projects and programs for which such a grant is made shall—

(A) include data collection with rapid analysis and feedback to participants with a focus on improving practice and health outcomes;

(B) develop a plan to identify and resolve data collection problems;

(C) identify and document evidence-based strategies that will be used to improve performance on quality measures and other metrics; and

(D) exclude from quality measure collection and reporting physicians and midwives who attend fewer than 30 births per year.

(7) REPORTING ON QUALITY MEASURES.—Any reporting requirements established by a project or program funded under paragraph (1) shall be designed to—

(A) minimize costs and administrative effort; and

(B) use existing data resources when feasible.

(8) CLEARINGHOUSE.—The Secretary shall establish an online, open-access clearinghouse to make protocols, procedures, reports, tools, and other resources of individual collaboratives available to collaboratives and other entities that are working to improve maternity care quality.

(9) EVALUATION.—A quality collaborative (or other entity receiving a grant under paragraph (1)) shall—

(A) develop and carry out plans for evaluating its maternity care quality improvement programs and projects; and

(B) publish its experiences and results in articles, technical reports, or other formats for the benefit of others working on maternity care quality improvement activities.

(10) ANNUAL REPORTS TO SECRETARY.—A quality collaborative or other eligible entity that receives a grant under paragraph (1) shall submit an annual report to the Secretary containing the following:

(A) A description of the activities carried out using the funding from such grant.

(B) A description of any barriers that limited the ability of the collaborative or entity to achieve its goals.

(C) The achievements of the collaborative or entity under the grant with respect to the quality, health outcomes, and value of maternity care.

(D) A list of lessons learned from the grant.

Such reports shall be made available to the public.

(11) GOVERNANCE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A maternity care quality collaborative or a maternity care program within a broader quality collaborative that is supported under paragraph (1) shall be governed by a multi-stakeholder executive committee.

(B) COMPOSITION.—Such executive committee shall include individuals who represent—

(i) physicians, including physicians in the fields of general obstetrics, maternal-fetal medicine, family medicine, neonatology, and pediatrics;

(ii) nurse-practitioners and nurses;

(iii) certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives;

(iv) health facilities and health systems;

(v) consumers;

(vi) employers and other private purchasers;

(vii) Medicaid programs; and

(viii) other public health agencies and organizations, as appropriate.

Such committee also may include other individuals, such as individuals with expertise in health quality measurement and other types of expertise as recommended by the Secretary. Such committee also may be composed of a combination of general collaborative executive committee members and maternity specific project executive committee members.

(12) CONSULTATION.—A quality collaborative or other eligible entity that receives a grant under paragraph (1) shall engage in regular ongoing consultation with—

(A) regional and State public health agencies and organizations;

(B) public and private health insurers; and

(C) regional and State organizations representing physicians, midwives, and nurses who provide maternity services.

(13) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated \$15,000,000 to carry out this subsection. Funds appropriated under this paragraph shall remain available until expended.

SA 2842. Ms. WARREN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 111, strike line 17 and insert the following:

early neurological development of children; and

“(L) connecting child care staff members of child care providers with available Federal and State financial aid, or other resources, that would assist child care staff members in pursuing relevant postsecondary training.

SA 2843. Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. SCHATZ, and Mr. UDALL of Colorado) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. 13. NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION ACT.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Native American Indian Education Act”.

(b) **FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**—

(1) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds the following:

(A) Nontribal colleges that serve Native American Indian students have a valuable supplemental role to that provided by tribally controlled community colleges in making available educational opportunities to Native American Indian students.

(B) Some 4-year colleges serve Native American Indian students by providing tuition-free education, with the support of the State in which the institutions are located, as mandated by Federal statute, to hundreds of Native American Indian students in fulfillment of a condition under which the United States provided land and facilities for colleges to a State or college.

(C) The value of the Native American Indian student tuition waiver benefits contributed by these colleges and the States that support them today far exceeds the value of the original grant of land and facilities.

(D) The ongoing financial burden of meeting this Federal mandate to provide tuition-free education to Native American Indian students is no longer equitably shared among the States and colleges because it does not distinguish between Native American Indian students who are residents of the State or of another State.

(E) In fiscal year 2012, the State of Colorado paid approximately \$13,000,000 in tuition fees to support the education of Native American Indian students at Fort Lewis College in Colorado. In the State of Minnesota, the University of Minnesota waived \$2,600,000 in tuition for Native American Indian students in fiscal year 2012.

(F) Native American Indian student tuition waiver benefits are now at risk of being terminated by severe budget constraints being experienced by these colleges and the States which support them.

(2) **PURPOSE.**—It is the purpose of this section to ensure that Federal funding is provided in order to relieve constrained State education budgets and to support and sustain the longstanding Federal mandate requiring colleges and States to waive, in certain circumstances, tuition charges for Native American Indian students admitted to an undergraduate college program, including the waiver of tuition charges for Native American Indian students who are not residents of the State in which the college is located.

(c) **STATE RELIEF FROM FEDERAL MANDATE.**—Part A of title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1057 et seq.) is

amended by inserting after section 319 the following:

“SEC. 319A. STATE RELIEF FROM FEDERAL HIGHER EDUCATION MANDATE.

“(a) **AMOUNT OF PAYMENT.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), for fiscal year 2014 and each succeeding fiscal year, the Secretary shall pay to any eligible college an amount equal to the charges for tuition for such year for all Native American Indian students who—

“(A) are not residents of the State in which the college is located; and

“(B) are enrolled in the college for the academic year ending before the beginning of such fiscal year.

“(2) **ELIGIBLE COLLEGES.**—For purposes of this section, an eligible college is any institution of higher education serving Native American Indian students that provides tuition-free education as mandated by Federal statute, with the support of the State in which it is located, to Native American Indian students in fulfillment of a condition under which the college or State received its original grant of land and facilities from the United States.

“(3) **LIMITATION.**—The amount paid to any eligible college for each fiscal year under paragraph (1) may not exceed the amount equal to the charges for tuition for all Native American Indian students of that college who were not residents of the State in which the college is located and who were enrolled in the college for academic year 2012–2013.

“(b) **TREATMENT OF PAYMENT.**—Any amounts received by an eligible college under this section shall be treated as a reimbursement from the State in which the college is located, and shall be considered as provided in fulfillment of any Federal mandate upon the State to admit Native American Indian students free of charge of tuition.

“(c) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section shall be construed to relieve any State from any mandate the State may have under Federal law to reimburse a college for each academic year—

“(1) with respect to Native American Indian students enrolled in the college who are not residents of the State in which the college is located, any amount of charges for tuition for such students for such academic year that exceeds the amount received under this section for such academic year; and

“(2) with respect to Native American Indian students enrolled in the college who are residents of the State in which the college is located, an amount equal to the charges for tuition for such students for such academic year.

“(d) **DEFINITION OF NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENTS.**—In this section, the term ‘Native American Indian students’ includes reference to the term ‘Indian pupils’ as that term has been utilized in Federal statutes imposing a mandate upon any college or State to provide tuition-free education to Native American Indian students in fulfillment of a condition under which the college or State received its original grant of land and facilities from the United States.”.

(d) **OFFSET.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, \$15,000,000 in appropriated discretionary funds are hereby rescinded, on a pro rata basis, by account, from all available unobligated funds.

(2) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall determine and identify from which appropriation accounts the rescission under paragraph

(1) shall apply and the amount of such rescission that shall apply to each such account. Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall submit a report to the Secretary of the Treasury and Congress of the accounts and amounts determined and identified for rescission under the preceding sentence.

(3) **EXCEPTION.**—This subsection shall not apply to the unobligated funds of the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, or the Department of Education, or any unobligated funds available to the Department of the Interior for the postsecondary education of Native American Indian students.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 12, 2014, at 9 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 12, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet, during the session of the Senate on March 12, 2014, at 9 a.m. in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “From Poverty to Opportunity: How a Fair Minimum Wage Will Help Working Families Succeed.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 12, 2014, at 9 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “Management Matters: Creating a 21st Century Government.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 12, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled “Nominations.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 12, 2014, at 9:45 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Election Administration: Innovation, Administrative Improvements and Cost Savings."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 12, 2014, at 10 a.m. in room SD-G50 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 12, 2014, at 2 p.m. in room SR-418 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC POLICY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs subcommittee on Economic Policy be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 12, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled "The State of U.S. Retirement Security: Can the Middle Class Afford to Retire?"

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, March 12, 2014, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled "Superstorm Sandy Recovery: Ensuring Strong Coordination Among Federal, State, and Local Stakeholders."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 12, 2014, at 2:30 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Max Freedman, an

intern in Senator AYOTTE's office, be granted floor privileges for the duration of today's session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the period for morning business be extended until 8 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

T'UF SHUR BIEN PRESERVATION TRUST AREA ACT

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 299, S. 611.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 611) to make a technical amendment to the T'uf Shur Bien Preservation Trust Area Act, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill which had been reported from the Committee on Indian Affairs, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

S. 611

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Sandia Pueblo Settlement Technical Amendment Act".

SEC. 2. SANDIA PUEBLO SETTLEMENT TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.

Section 413(b) of the T'uf Shur Bien Preservation Trust Area Act (16 U.S.C. 539m-11(b)) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence of paragraph (4), by striking "conveyance" and inserting "title to be conveyed"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(6) FAILURE TO EXCHANGE.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—If the land exchange authorized under paragraph (1) is not completed by the date that is 30 days after the date of enactment of this paragraph, the Secretary, on request of the Pueblo and the Secretary of the Interior, shall transfer the National Forest land generally depicted as 'Land to be Held in Trust' on the map entitled 'Sandia Pueblo Settlement Technical Amendment Act' and dated October 18, 2013, to the Secretary of the Interior to be held in trust by the United States for the Pueblo—

"(i) subject to the restriction enforced by the Secretary of the Interior that the land remain undeveloped, with the natural characteristics of the land to be preserved in perpetuity; and

"(ii) consistent with subsection (c).

"(B) OTHER TRANSFERS.—After the transfer under subparagraph (A) is complete, the Secretary of the Interior, with the consent of the Pueblo, shall—

"(i) transfer to the Secretary, consistent with section 411(c)—

"(I) the La Luz tract generally depicted on the map entitled 'Sandia Pueblo Settlement Technical Amendment Act' and dated October 18, 2013; and

"(II) the conservation easement for the Piedra Lisa tract generally depicted on the map enti-

tled 'Sandia Pueblo Settlement Technical Amendment Act' and dated October 18, 2013; and

"(ii) grant to the Secretary a right-of-way for the Piedra Lisa Trail within the Piedra Lisa tract generally depicted on the map entitled 'Sandia Pueblo Settlement Technical Amendment Act' and dated October 18, 2013."

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported substitute amendment be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The bill (S. 611), as amended, was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

SUPPORTING A VENEZUELAN DEMOCRACY

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 323, S. Res. 365.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 365) deploring the violent repression of peaceful demonstrators in Venezuela, calling for full accountability for human rights violations taking place in Venezuela, and supporting the right of the Venezuelan people to the free and peaceful exercise of representative democracy.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I would like to express my strong support for S. Res. 365, a resolution I cosponsored deploring the violent repression of peaceful demonstrators in Venezuela, calling for full accountability for human rights violations taking place in Venezuela, and supporting the right of the Venezuelan people to the free and peaceful exercise of representative democracy.

Since February 4, 2014, the Venezuelan people have taken to the streets on a daily basis to express frustration with the country's high inflation, corruption, food shortages, lack of press freedoms, lack of due process, violent crime, and other grievances. Addressing these legitimate concerns is a basic function of a democratic government. Instead, we have seen a crackdown on protests through unlawful use of force, a stifling of the media, and the detention of opposition leaders. Over 22 people have been killed, hundreds injured, and over 1,000 people arrested during these protests.

The Venezuelan Government is an elected government and, as such, it should act like a democratic government by immediately addressing the

core concerns of its people through meaningful dialogue, halting the use of force, and providing a safe space for the Venezuelan people to express their views peacefully. Without a genuine, transparent conversation to address the central concerns raised by the protestors, Venezuela faces a bleak future.

Contrary to comments by the Venezuelan Government, this crisis is not about the United States; it is about the Venezuelan people. But the crisis does have implications for peace and security in the hemisphere and the broader international community. The United States always has stood and always will stand for basic freedoms, including freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and freedom of the press. We will not back down on protecting and promoting these universal values, nor should the international community. It is incumbent upon neighboring countries and regional organizations to be vocal during this critical point, to take a stand for universal human rights, and to expect the highest level of respect for representative democracy from its hemispheric neighbor.

Today, we see tension and unrest around the world. Each situation is unique; however, the desire for fundamental human rights is universally recognized. I call on my colleagues and nations around the world to stand up for these basic freedoms and support a path toward a stable, peaceful, and prosperous Venezuela.

Mr. CASEY. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 365) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2122

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I understand there is a bill at the desk and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2122) to amend XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and to improve Medicare and Medicaid payments, and for other purposes.

Mr. CASEY. I ask for a second reading and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be

read for a second time on the next legislative day.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DIFFERING VIEWS

Mr. REID. I apologize to the Presiding Officer and all the staff, but I have been conducting for the last hour and a half or more a meeting in the classified room dealing with Ukraine. I am sorry I couldn't be here, but I just couldn't because I had to conduct that meeting.

Mr. President, the senior Senator from Iowa is my friend, but I am quite disappointed in my friend the senior Senator from Iowa. This afternoon he delivered another one of his "Alice in Wonderland" speeches. He has delivered a few of these, but the one today especially is a view of reality that only exists in fairy tales.

He complains that I file too many cloture motions. His complaint is like that of an arsonist who complains about having to hear the sirens of too many fire engines.

The real reason I have had to file so many cloture motions is because Republicans have engaged in a systematic pattern of obstruction—and not last week, not last month, but this has been going on for 5 years. We have come to see this as something of the pinnacle, the landmark, the zenith of obstructionism led by my Republican colleagues.

I have now had to file cloture motions during the time I have been the majority leader more than 500 times. Lyndon Johnson, who had the job for 6 years—I have had it a little longer than that—only had to face one filibuster. I have had to deal with 500.

I don't file cloture, as the Senator from Iowa would like folks to think, in this fairy tale world he believes in, I guess, because I enjoy it. It is not something I enjoy. It takes a lot of my time, the staff's time, the Senate's time, and the country's time. I don't like to do it. I file these motions because Republicans have made it clear that we can't get a vote on anything without going to cloture, and that is basically true.

What is the solution of the Senator from Iowa to the problem? Listen to this. Now, this really is "Alice in Wonderland." He proposes it should take longer to file. He proposes it should take longer to file cloture. Now, that is some dreamland that I don't understand. He says the solution to the prob-

lem of Republican obstructionism is to make obstruction easier.

We have on the Executive Calendar 140 nominations. We have Ambassadors—there is an Executive Calendar here someplace. The pages have stripped all the desks of the calendars, but they are always around. The Republic of Mauritania, the Republic of Colombia—South America is a continent that has been our friend for decades—we have most all countries in Africa waiting to have Ambassadors appointed: Zambia, Niger, Peru, Belize, Albania, Angola, Palau, Cameroon, Sierra Leone, Lesotho, Namibia, Tanzania, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Hungary, Iceland, U.S. Human Rights Council.

I am not going to take more of the staff's time, but throughout this Executive Calendar there are about 40 Ambassadors—40 Ambassadors—who are waiting to be confirmed and 35 or so judges. Do the math yourself. That is 75 or 80 very important jobs they have stopped.

So my friend from Iowa is living in a dream world. I don't know where it exists, but it doesn't exist here in the Senate. And his solution is to give them more time? Can you imagine that. This is an "Alice in Wonderland" speech from the Senator from Iowa, and he should have better use of his time than playing fairy tales in the Senate.

The obstruction led by Republican Senators from all over this country is an embarrassment to our country. It is preventing the people of this country from getting what they need.

Now, I know people around the country are not too worried about an Ambassador to some foreign country, but to our country it is important. Our foreign policy is important. Being able to get work done here legislatively is important, and we have been stymied every step of the way.

I am sorry to say my friend has stepped over the line with his speech here today about what a terrible thing has happened here, that we have filed cloture 500 times. The record speaks for itself.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2014

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 13, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; that following any leader remarks, the Senate be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, and the time be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or

their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half; and that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of S. 1086, the child care and development block grant reauthorization bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. DURBIN. Rollcall votes are expected throughout the day tomorrow in an effort to complete action on the child care and development block grant bill. We are also working on an agreement on the flood insurance bill. Senators will be notified when votes are scheduled.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:43 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 13, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 12, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

SARAH BLOOM RASKIN, OF MARYLAND, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BRUCE HEYMAN, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO CANADA.

THE JUDICIARY

CAROLYN B. MCHUGH, OF UTAH, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE TENTH CIRCUIT.

MATTHEW FREDERICK LEITMAN, OF MICHIGAN, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN.

JUDITH ELLEN LEVY, OF MICHIGAN, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN.

LAURIE J. MICHELSON, OF MICHIGAN, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN.

LINDA VIVIANNE PARKER, OF MICHIGAN, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

JAMES H. SHELTON III, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF EDUCATION.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

FRANCE A. CORDOVA, OF NEW MEXICO, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION FOR A TERM OF SIX YEARS.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW COMMISSION

HEATHER L. MACDOUGALL, OF FLORIDA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH REVIEW COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING APRIL 27, 2017.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, March 12, 2014

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 12, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

FREE AMERICA TO PROSPER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, in 1945, at the end of World War II, America's Federal debt to gross domestic product ratio was 120 percent. Washington responded with leadership. In 1946, the Federal budget was slashed a massive 40 percent.

In 1947, the Federal budget was slashed by another 38 percent. The result? America rose to the challenge, and America prospered. By 1980, even though per-capita inflation adjusted Federal spending had tripled, Federal debt had shrunk to 30 percent of GDP.

Since 1980, America's per-capita Federal spending has exploded to five times more than 1948 levels. The result? America faces a skyrocketing \$17 trillion debt burden.

America's Comptroller General warns that America's financial path is unsustainable. Instead of confronting our debt dependence, Washington kicks the can down the road and immorally sells our children into the equivalent of indentured servitude and poverty, while driving America's Federal debt to dangerous levels.

To preserve the liberty and prosperity our ancestors sacrificed to give us, we must free Americans to again earn their prosperity and significantly cut Federal non-defense spending to restore financial responsibility and provide the stable monetary environment needed for economic growth.

If the Federal Government will be financially responsible and stop killing job creation, America's economy will soar because we have, within our grasp, a massive new technology and energy boom.

Mark Mills, adjunct fellow, Manhattan Institute states:

By 2020 or so, the United States is expected to surpass Saudi Arabia in oil output and Russia in gas, according to the International Energy Association's best estimate.

Dan Yergin, one of the world's leading energy experts, estimates that the United States turnaround in energy has generated 1.7 million new jobs . . . and that number should almost double by 2020.

The RAND Corporation adds:

The pace of technological change—whether through advances in information technology, biotechnology, or such emerging fields as nanotechnology—will most certainly accelerate in the next 10 to 15 years, with synergies across technologies and disciplines generating advances in research and development, production processes, and the nature of products and services.

Amazing economic possibilities abound if the Federal Government will simply allow Americans to seize them.

Unfortunately, too many paternalistic Washington politicians distrust the American people to earn a better life for themselves or to take care of each other without government coercion or intervention.

Financially irresponsible Washington politicians insist on spending money we do not have, risking a debilitating American insolvency and bankruptcy, debasing our currency, punishing success, rewarding destructive behavior, and strangling job creation in bureaucratic red tape.

The Federal Government, by attempting to supply and command all things, saps America's spirit of energy and devours the financial capital needed for innovation, productivity growth, and jobs.

America must stop kicking the can down the road to a day when the debt challenge is even more daunting. The time to act is now, while America has sufficient economic strength to succeed. We cannot wait until America is bankrupt and defenseless, our currency is valueless, and we are overwhelmed by closed businesses, lost jobs, and poverty.

Congress must use the debt limit, the budget, appropriation bills, and every other means available to free America from the growing burden of crushing debt and a dictatorial Federal bureaucracy.

America ended Democrat President Jimmy Carter's economic malaise with one election in 1980, giving us the wildly successful economic policies of Republican President Ronald Reagan in 25 years of unparalleled prosperity.

America's choice is between economic depression brought about by socialist, heavy-handed, bureaucratic Big Brother economic policies and prosperity brought about by policies centered on free enterprise, individual liberty, and faith in the American people—the same economic policies and freedoms that made America the greatest Nation in world history.

America, please choose wisely. Your future and America's depends on it.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE IN NEVADA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAMALFA). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HORSFORD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, right now, thousands of Nevadans have the full-time job of looking for work. It has gotten worse for many since December 28 of last year, when emergency unemployment insurance benefits for many expired.

There are now over 2 million Americans, Mr. Speaker, who have been cut off from unemployment insurance because of Congress' failure to act. That includes 26,023 Nevadans. These are not numbers; these are real people.

Every week that Congress fails to act, it is projected that an additional 842 Nevadans will lose their benefits each week during the first half of 2014.

Nevada's economy has lost over \$54 million because Congress has stalled; but I, along with many of my colleagues, have not forgotten about our constituents.

Today, Democrats will sign a discharge petition to force Speaker BOEHNER and the House Republicans to bring up a bill to extend unemployment benefits for all Americans who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

These benefits are used to put food on the table, to put gas in the car, so that they can go look for an interview and to pay for rent. Extending these unemployment benefits used to be bipartisan.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

On December 14, 2002, in his weekly radio address, then-President George W. Bush scolded Congress, saying, "No final bill was sent to me extending unemployment benefits for about 750,000 Americans whose benefits will expire on December 28."

He went on to say, "These Americans rely on their unemployment benefits to pay for the mortgage or rent, food, and other critical bills. They need our assistance in these difficult times, and we cannot let them down."

The unemployment rate in December 2002 had just hit 6 percent. Congress then extended unemployment benefits by a vote of 416-4. If it was an emergency then, it is an emergency now. It is time to do the right thing and extend unemployment insurance benefits for Americans.

It is an emergency for my constituents, like Alfordeen, who I met at a local Workforce Connection center as she searched for work.

It is an emergency for Monty, who recently signed up for Medicaid because of the Affordable Care Act. He is homeless now; and because Congress failed to act, his unemployment insurance has been cut.

It is an emergency for Tamika, who I brought as my guest to the State of the Union. She is an electrician, and she knows what it means to work hard, but has fallen on hard times and can't find work.

The Nevadans on unemployment insurance that I meet are scrambling to make ends meet, and no one wants to live on unemployment insurance; and no, Mr. Speaker, they are not lazy.

Despite repeated Democratic efforts, Republicans in Congress refuse to listen and have callously rejected restoring this vital economic lifeline that serves as a financial bridge for those who are looking for work, so this discharge petition is an extraordinary step.

But for my constituents, there is no time for politics, and there is no time for waiting. Action to create jobs and build an economy that works for everyone must start with renewing unemployment insurance benefits for those Americans who were laid off at no fault of their own. It is time to extend unemployment insurance now.

I encourage the Speaker, after this discharge petition is signed by Members, to bring up a vote so that we can provide this important lifeline to 2 million Americans, 26,000 Nevadans, families, and veterans who desperately need this benefit.

REPAY SUPPLIES ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, every day, teachers across our Nation

reach into their own pockets to pay for classroom supplies like books, software, and pencils, without ever being reimbursed by their schools; and since 2002, teachers could at least count on a \$250 above-the-line tax deduction to help defray the cost of these purchases.

But at the end of last year, this tax deduction was allowed to expire, meaning that teachers are not able to claim it on their individual returns this tax season or count on it next year, as they continue to purchase supplies for their classrooms and their students.

The REPAY Supplies Act, introduced by CAROL SHEA-PORTER and cosponsored by more than 50 of our colleagues from both parties, aims to fix this problem and make the educator expense deduction permanent.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER and I were disappointed to learn that this modest deduction was not included in the recent tax reform proposals, and we will send a letter in the coming days to ask that a hearing on the REPAY Supplies Act be held as soon as possible.

I hope that my colleagues will join us in signing this letter to the Ways and Means Committee and give teachers the opportunity to testify before Congress about the impact the deduction has had on their checkbooks and on their classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, I am a former Florida-certified teacher, and I know how important it is that students come to school prepared and ready to learn; but without the basic supplies needed to take part in lessons, students are put at a disadvantage in the classroom, forced to rely on outdated materials and without essential learning tools, and too often, teachers go into their own pockets to make up the difference.

For many educators, teaching is more than a full-time job. They arrive at the school while many of us are still getting ready for work. They stay late into the evening. They prepare lesson plans, grade papers, and deal with parents and grandparents, like us, who can admittedly be a handful when guaranteeing that their child is receiving the best education possible.

Teachers care deeply about their students and are often willing to sacrifice personal needs in order to provide them with the best learning experience possible. According to the latest status of the American public school teacher report by the National Education Association, educators are spending approximately \$477 per year on basic school supplies for their students and their classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, we all want the best for our children. We work hard every day in this Congress to make sure that our children have a bright future; and education, we know, is a key to this success, an essential component of that brighter future that we are trying to create for the next generation.

□ 1015

But it doesn't seem to make a whole lot of sense that we are hamstringing the very people we have entrusted with their education. Teachers are giving up their own time and money to help students learn and be engaged in school. The least we can do is to provide them with this modest \$250 deduction to help mitigate the financial and personal sacrifices that they are already making.

Every 2 years since 2002, Congress has come together in a bipartisan manner to extend this deduction on behalf of our country's educators. By making this tax deduction permanent, Congress can give teachers certainty that at least some of their purchases will be paid back, that it will improve access to essential learning materials, and that it will give our educators the recognition they deserve.

I urge Members to join Ms. SHEA-PORTER and me in this fight, and I look forward to working with all of us to ensure that our Nation's teachers and our children have the education and the tools necessary to succeed.

PERSONALIZE YOUR CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Recently, the Reverend Billy Graham, in his latest book, talked about the situation that families face in the difficult circumstances surrounding end of life.

Reverend Graham said:

Refusing to act on the practical issues that confront us as we grow older or simply ignoring them often becomes a sure recipe for turmoil and conflict within a family.

Former Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, who was a physician long before he entered politics, said in an op-ed that appeared in one of the Capitol Hill publications:

In the absence of advanced care planning, patients are much more likely to receive medical interventions that can actually prolong or worsen their suffering and will certainly increase expense for their loved ones.

Yesterday, I had an opportunity to work with the American Society of Oncology, who gave us further evidence. They have a report and recommendations that are coming forward that I think ought to be commended to each and every one of us. They pointed out that palliative care is not an either/or choice in terms of therapies. They found in one study that people who receive both palliative care and chemotherapy lived 3 months longer and more comfortably than people who just got the medical intervention.

Additionally, further in their study, they pointed out that it isn't just the patient; it is the people who help serve ill patients who receive palliative care therapy. They suffer less emotional

stress. ICU and hospital deaths are associated with more psychiatric illness among bereaved caregivers compared with home hospice.

Yet, as they pointed out, the sad truth is, for many insurance companies and our Federal Government, that although patients are entitled to make informed choices about their palliative care and treatment options, our Nation's health care system currently places no value on conversations that can guide these decisions.

It is true; Medicare will pay \$100,000 on a complex surgical procedure on a 90-year-old woman with terminal cancer, but it won't pay \$200 for her and her family to understand the circumstances that they face, understand what their choices are and make sure that their choices, whatever they are, are respected.

It, frankly, is embarrassing to me that Congress and the administration have not been able to respond to an issue that is supported by 90 percent of the American public, that will cost us no money, and that will assure that patients receive better treatment and we reduce the stress on their families.

That is why my friend, Congressman PHIL ROE, himself a physician from Tennessee, and I have introduced the Personalize Your Care Act, H.R. 1173. This would provide for voluntary advance care planning consultation in Medicare and Medicaid every 5 years or in case there is a change in health status. It would provide grants to establish or expand physician orders for life-sustaining treatment programs, require that certified electronic health records display current advance directives and physician orders for life-sustaining treatment—what people want—and help make sure that their wishes follow them when they cross State lines.

Currently, we have over 50 bipartisan cosponsors of this simple, common-sense approach to give American families what they need and what they say they want. I would strongly urge my colleagues to look at this legislation, to join us in cosponsoring it, and move in Congress and with the administration to remedy this serious oversight.

THE ENFORCE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the ENFORCE Act.

When crafting the timeless document that is our Constitution, the Founding Fathers emphasized the need to prevent the emergence of an imperial monarch. In their wisdom, they gave Congress the power to make laws and tasked the President with the responsibility to enforce those laws—not just the laws he agrees with or the laws that are politically convenient, but every law.

Mr. Speaker, President Obama has not lived up to this responsibility. By picking and choosing which laws are worthy of enforcement, this administration is undermining the very foundation of our representative democracy.

The ENFORCE Act seeks to restore the balance of powers that the Framers of our Constitution envisioned. The Constitution grants Congress—not the President—the power to make the laws. Mr. Speaker, this is why I support the ENFORCE Act, to provide Congress with the ability to push back against the Obama administration's executive overreach.

EXTEND FEDERAL UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, sometimes you just have to say enough is enough. I stand before you today in the hopes that we can come together and understand that today is that day. Enough is enough.

Federal unemployment insurance must be extended—and extended quickly. It is time. In fact, it is past time. There are now more than 2 million Americans struggling to get some kind of existence in place each day after having this critical lifeline cut off this past December. The number climbs each day.

I could talk to you about the human toll of this disgraceful play of putrid and petty partisan politics, like the 57-year-old woman preparing to live in her car, the 34-year-old mother wondering how she will pay rent and feed the kids at the same time, and the 47-year-old man who made himself a career in manufacturing but lost his job due to layoffs a year ago and now describes himself as “in a panic.”

These and millions of other Americans, including almost 35,000 in my home State of Missouri alone, are hard-working people who have played by the rules and found themselves out of work through no fault of their own. And now new data shows that some 200,000 of those who have been brushed aside are veterans. They have gone to Iraq. They have gone to Afghanistan. These are men and women we should not throw aside.

Let's stop the harmful and fact-free rhetoric that paints these fellow Americans—our neighbors, our friends, and our veterans—as people trying to game the system, people trying to get something for nothing, people who just “don't want to work.” Phooey. Rats. Sheesh. Yecch. It is time for us to act.

The contrary is true. Recipients of unemployment insurance are a very diverse group, with almost half having completed at least some college and almost 5 million of them holding bach-

elor's degrees or higher. The stereotypes don't work here; and when we stereotype, we move our constituents to corroborate.

These are people for whom the stakes could not be higher. These are people who have worked all or most of their lives and gotten hit—and hit hard—in the recession that ominously hit in 2008. These are people who want to work, spend their days trying to find work, and now are slowly sinking into a financial abyss while we here in Washington play games.

Sometimes you just have to say enough is enough. There are times when we must just put politics aside and act on what is in the best interests of the country.

It is my hope, Mr. Speaker, that this Congress will act—and act quickly.

REMEMBERING COLONEL GERALD F. RUSSELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the world recently lost a great American hero and one among the last remaining of the Greatest Generation, Colonel Gerald F. Russell of Centre County, Pennsylvania. Today, I rise to honor the life and the legacy of this brave combat veteran. One of only two surviving Iwo Jima battalion commanders, Colonel Russell passed away on Monday, February 24, 2014, at the age of 97. It is an honor to have called Gerry my friend.

As one of the most decorated marines in World War II and with over 28 years of military service, Colonel Russell spent a life serving his country. And while his military career was second to none, Russell's humanitarian and philanthropic work was equally remarkable. Indeed, it was his commitment to service and serving others that made him a pillar for both the Nation's military and his local community, which encompasses much of central Pennsylvania and well beyond.

A graduate of Boston College, Russell was one of the first alternates for the 1940 U.S. Olympic track team in the 800 meters, a sport he loved with a passion.

Immediately following his completion of undergraduate studies, Russell began his career in uniform when he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. During his service, Colonel Russell took part and played a role in seminal moments in the country's history.

As one of the youngest battalion commanders in World War II, at the age of 27, Russell was responsible for leading 1,000 troops during the first major offensive by Allied forces against the Empire of Japan—the Battle of Guadalcanal. Russell suffered shrapnel wounds during the campaign after being hit by Japanese aircraft during landing.

At the ripe age of 29, Russell landed in the third assault wave on Iwo Jima, Red Beach One, and fought for all 36 days. Again wounded during battle, Russell went on to witness the historical raising of the American flag on Mount Suribachi.

These are just a few of the many remarkable experiences of this amazing individual, Mr. Speaker.

Following his retirement from the Marine Corps, Russell went on to serve others through roles in academia and philanthropy, including as associate dean of the College of Health and Physical Education at Pennsylvania State University.

During this time and after, Russell was always a tireless community and volunteer advocate.

He was the founder and chairman of the local United Way Day of Caring, served as a member of the United Way board of directors, and played an active role in the Pennsylvania Special Olympics, the Centre Country Toys for Tots, and many other programs that benefit our local community.

Mr. Speaker, in all of these endeavors, Russell inspired so many to give back and pushed his community to do the same. He led a life built on service, sacrifice, and a commitment to others.

Colonel Russell once stated that he hoped that he would be remembered for the impact that his life had on others and that he made a difference. Well, Mr. Speaker, I rise today as one more voice among the countless others across Pennsylvania, the country, and the world to praise Colonel Russell for doing just that. We thank you for your unparalleled service to this Nation and our community. May you rest with God, my friend.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 30 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Jason Parks, Refuge Church, Huntsville, Alabama, offered the following prayer:

Father God, thank You for the rich blessings You've lavished on the United States of America.

We are so unworthy of Your grace and Your mercy. Today, we pray for the men and women of the United States House of Representatives.

Give them great wisdom, protection, and steadfast resolve. In their personal lives we ask that You replace turmoil with peace, bitterness with joy, and doubt with encouragement.

For our country, Father, we ask that You give us a renewed sense of gratitude, an unquenchable zeal for serving those who are in need, and unity toward the common purpose of liberty.

Above all else, Father, we honor You today. We humbly intercede on behalf of our country and her leaders.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from Kansas (Ms. JENKINS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. JENKINS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND JASON PARKS

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, it is with great privilege that I welcome Pastor Jason Parks to the House of Representatives and thank him for serving as today's guest chaplain.

Jason is the lead pastor of Refuge Church in Huntsville, Alabama.

He received an undergraduate degree in communications arts from the University of North Alabama, an MBA from Liberty University, and a master of divinity from Rockbridge Seminary.

Pastor Jason currently serves on the ALS Association Patient Care Committee, Calhoun Community College EMS Advisory Board, and as faculty at Huntsville Bible College. He is also a former Crestwood Medical Center associate chaplain and is credentialed as a board-certified pastoral counselor.

Pastor Jason resides in Hazel Green, Alabama, with his wife and three children.

I appreciate the work he has done for our community and his passion for serving the people of north Alabama.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEWART). The Chair will entertain up

to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches from each side of the aisle.

K9S FOR WARRIORS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize K9s for Warriors, a remarkable Florida organization that is providing therapeutic service dogs for veterans suffering from issues like posttraumatic stress disorder, PTSD.

One in five of our heroes returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan have PTSD, a tragic epidemic that can disrupt the transition to civilian life and often causes the loss of hope, damage to family relationships, or harm to themselves and others.

Since its inception, K9s for Warriors has provided over 100 therapy dogs to veterans, at no cost to the veterans, teaching, certifying, housing, and feeding each warrior as they learn to train the dog to address their specific disabilities and assist in mitigating posttraumatic stress.

K9s for Warriors is not only healing invisible disorders and putting suffering veterans on the path to recovery, but it is also giving new hope to the heroes and their families who put their lives on the line to defend ours.

NIAGARA FALLS AIR RESERVE STATION

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station is one of western New York's most critical resources. It is not only an asset to our region's economy, but also to our Nation's security. Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station employs over 3,500 western New Yorkers and has an economic impact of more than \$200 million annually.

I am proud to be a part of a large group of community stakeholders who are deeply invested in the successful future of the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station. Last year, Customs and Border Protection selected the base as their top choice for construction of a new border patrol station.

Mr. Speaker, I am committed to help see this proposal through, in addition to others that will ensure that the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station remains a fixture in our community for many years to come.

RELIEF FROM THE HEALTH CARE LAW

(Ms. JENKINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commend this Chamber for passing three pieces of legislation this week that will offer Americans relief from the President's health care law.

These bills, which passed with bipartisan support, reaffirm America's commitment to the ideals of religious freedom, volunteerism, and military service. Unfortunately, the President's health care law has put all three of these in jeopardy.

As written, the law would force Americans with a conscientious religious objection to buy health insurance and count volunteer firefighters, other emergency responders, Active military members, and our Nation's veterans toward the employer mandate tax thresholds.

I am a proud cosponsor of three of these bills because they all will ensure the Affordable Care Act does not discriminate against Americans on the basis of religion or sacrifice.

EXTEND LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

(Mr. CARTWRIGHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, last week, the number of those cut off from emergency unemployment insurance surpassed 2 million Americans—men and women who worked hard but lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

I represent northeastern Pennsylvania, and my district has been particularly hard hit. In Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania, the unemployment rate is 7.5 percent; in the Scranton/Wilkes Barre area it is 7.7 percent.

Congress could and simply should reinstate the expired Federal program. These Americans lost their jobs due to no fault of their own. They don't deserve to lose their homes as well. I will shortly be introducing legislation to implement a 6-month moratorium on foreclosures for people who have lost their unemployment insurance but are otherwise paid up on their mortgages due to this congressional inaction.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and to vote to extend long-term unemployment compensation.

SEPARATION OF POLITICAL POWER

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, as the House takes up the topic of executive overreach this week, we should take a minute to note that this issue is institutional, not partisan.

In a recent LA Times column, Jonathan Turley, after acknowledging that he agreed with many of the policies of the current administration, went on to say:

In our system, it is often more important how we do something than what we do. Priorities and policies and Presidents change. Democrats will rue the day of their acquiescence to this shift of power when a future President negates an environmental law, or an antidiscrimination law, or tax laws.

The separation of political power among three equal branches was designed to guard against too much power accumulating in the hands of any one person or branch. This system is one of the main reasons our government has endured for nearly a quarter of a millennium.

We should not cast it aside lightly.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MASTER SERGEANT DAVID POIRIER

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Master Sergeant David Poirier, a Rhode Islander who served in the New Hampshire National Guard.

On February 28, Master Sergeant Poirier died in a noncombat-related incident while serving in the United States Air Force in Qatar in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He was laid to rest on March 10 with military honors.

Master Sergeant Poirier was from North Smithfield, Rhode Island. After serving in the United States Air Force, he joined the Rhode Island National Guard, where he was trained as a life support journeyman. In 1995, he transferred to the New Hampshire Air National Guard and continued his service as a member of the 157th Operations Support Squadron for over 19 years.

Our Nation calls upon our brave men and women in uniform to protect our great democracy. There are no greater heroes than the men and women who answer this call and make the ultimate sacrifice to keep us safe. It is because of their service that we are able to enjoy the great freedoms, privileges, and rights we have here at home.

Master Sergeant Poirier will be remembered for his friendly personality, warmth, and enduring selflessness, and I extend my thoughts and prayers to Master Sergeant Poirier's family—his wife, Kim, four children, and two grandchildren.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

(Mr. STEWART asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEWART. Madam Speaker, every day when I am talking to constituents, their top concern is always the economy and jobs. They are frustrated—as I am—that we have something like 3.8 million Americans who have been unemployed for more than 27

weeks now. And I am consistently asked by people: What can be done? How can we make this better?

In addition to urging the Senate to pass numerous pieces of jobs legislation that have moved through the House, the President needs to approve the Keystone XL pipeline. It has been more than 2,000 days since the pipeline application was submitted for approval, 2,000 days that the administration has delayed something like 20,000 direct jobs and 120,000 indirect jobs. It took less time to fight and win World War II. It took much less time to build the Empire State Building, and it has taken us much longer to do this than to build the first computer.

If we can win world wars and create an entire industry for computers, we can surely make a decision about the Keystone pipeline. Mr. President, do the right thing. Approve the pipeline.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, NEVADA

(Mr. HORSFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HORSFORD. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor today to commemorate my home State of Nevada's upcoming birthday on March 21, which will mark 150 years since Nevada was admitted to the Union in 1864. On that historic day, President Abraham Lincoln signed legislation allowing the Nevada Territory to draft its own constitution and form a State government, making us a true "Battle Born State."

Throughout its history, Nevada has embodied the rugged and adventurous spirit of the West. People from all walks of life have journeyed to our State to seek new opportunities, eventually settling down and contributing to Nevada's rich diversity.

On March 21, Nevada will come together to celebrate our State's history and achievements, but we will also be looking toward the future. Nevada's best days are yet ahead, and I look forward to seeing what comes next.

Happy birthday, Nevada.

SUPPORTING MEDICARE ADVANTAGE: LET SENIORS KEEP THE PLANS THEY DEPEND ON

(Mr. MARCHANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I hear from seniors in my district every day that they are very pleased with their Medicare Advantage plans but are greatly concerned about the recently announced program cuts caused by ObamaCare. These cuts will result in higher out-of-pocket costs and benefit reductions. These cuts will be especially hard hitting on the 40 percent of Medicare Advantage enrollees who earn \$20,000 a year or less. Some plans are already cutting doctors that were

previously available to Medicare Advantage beneficiaries.

This is only the tip of the iceberg. Many seniors are only now hearing about these cuts. The larger problem is that most of the cuts to Medicare Advantage are all back loaded in ObamaCare—the worst is yet to come. I call on the administration to give immediate relief to our seniors and allow them to keep the Medicare Advantage plans that they depend on every day.

□ 1215

PASS IMMIGRATION REFORM

(Ms. HAHN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage my colleagues to bring real comprehensive immigration reform to this House floor.

This week, the House will consider the ENFORCE Act, which would effectively force the deportation of our Nation's Dreamers. The Dreamers are the young people of this country, children of immigrants who were brought to this country when they were very young and have grown up loving this country just like you or I.

Forcing the President's hand in this way is yet another way of placing politics ahead of people. The President has granted deferred action status for so many of these Dreamers because of the inaction of this House.

Now my Republican colleagues are trying to take away the President's ability to help these young Americans; young Americans such as Laura Nunez, a Dreamer whom I met last month when my office helped her to obtain her deferred action status. Her family came to the United States from Mexico when she was just 7 years old. Today, Laura lives in Wilmington, California, and continues her education at LAUSD. America is Laura's home, and she is just one of 1.4 million Dreamers who need action from this House, not more politics.

Mr. Speaker, I call on my colleagues, please, let's do real comprehensive immigration reform now.

GET WASHINGTON OUT OF THE WAY

(Mr. BROOKS of Alabama asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask a simple question: Are we willing to accept America's economy as a new normal? Is America to accept a growth rate of only 2.4 percent every year? Are we to accept 3.8 million of our fellow Americans being stuck without jobs for 27 weeks or more?

I say that is simply unacceptable. Americans deserve better.

House Republicans have a plan to grow our economy and get more Americans back to work. We want to increase opportunity and help Americans keep more of the money they earn. Step number one is getting Washington out of the way. If Washington will end its job-killing policies, everyday Americans will do what they have always done—strive and work to success and prosperity.

SEPARATION OF POWERS

(Mr. MORAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to address the issue of separation of powers. I do think that the administration is entirely in the right when it implements, through the Environmental Protection Agency, the authority given to it by the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act.

I do have some concern, though, that the legislative branch continually seems to cede the power of the purse granted to it by the Constitution; in other words, the appropriations process to the executive branch, which obviously would like to fund its spending priorities, many of which I don't disagree with.

What I am most concerned with in regard to this separation of powers was cited in a New York Times editorial today, and that is the fact that two successive Presidents have now absolved the Central Intelligence Agency for its conduct with regard to illegal detention, rendition, torture, and fruitless harsh interrogation of terrorism suspects. I don't care about Khalid Sheikh Mohammad's pain, frankly, but that is not the point. The point is that we have a responsibility in the legislative branch to oversee the conduct of our Intelligence Committees.

When the chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence in the Senate says that the CIA improperly searched computers that were her committee staff members' computers, that is wrong. The entire legislative branch should stand behind her in upholding our responsibilities as the legislative branch, an equal branch under the Constitution.

CREATING JOBS AMERICANS NEED

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, far too many of our fellow Americans, my fellow Texans, continue struggling in this economy; 3.8 million Americans have been out of work for 27 weeks or more.

Americans and Texans have had enough of this sluggish economy, and massive government overreach is only

making things worse. We need to rein in Washington so our economy can grow, so we can create more jobs, and so more people can take home more of their hard-earned money.

House Republicans have never lost our laser focus on creating the jobs America needs. We are committed to real solutions to get our country back to work.

PASS COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

(Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak against the misguided, anti-immigration bills being considered in the House today.

The ENFORCE Act would challenge the executive order that halts the deportation of young people who are studying and working to become contributing members of our society. This is another attack on immigrant communities by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. It is proof that their actions don't match their rhetoric. They want the Latino community's support, but they refuse to allow a vote on comprehensive immigration reform. Instead of working to keep hard-working families together, they are punishing communities by pushing misguided legislation.

To my Republican colleagues: you can't have it both ways. The facts are simple. Passing comprehensive immigration reform would grow our economy by \$1.4 trillion and reduce our deficit by \$850 billion. You can't just say you support Latinos, Asians, and other immigration communities. You have to do something about it. You have to walk the walk.

Here is some free advice: if you don't want an empty conference room when you are attempting minority outreach, then pass comprehensive immigration reform.

ENERGY SECURITY AND JOBS

(Mr. WOODALL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, you know, back home, folks don't think we find areas of agreement. I have only been on the floor for about 20 minutes this morning, and I have already found areas of agreement with my colleague from California. You can't just walk the walk and talk the talk. You have got to get in here and make things happen.

We have an opportunity today as we talk about jobs, as we talk about energy security in Ukraine, we have an opportunity today to move forward on

the Keystone pipeline, which has languished for more than 2,000 days. The President cannot say he is interested in energy security and then thwart those very proposals that would provide it. The President cannot commit to energy security for our friends overseas, and then thwart those efforts that would provide it.

Mr. Speaker, we are blessed in this country, blessed by the Lord God Almighty with more energy resources than any other nation on the planet, and yet the President is standing between the American people and those resources.

It is about national security, Mr. Speaker, and yes, it is about jobs.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4138, EXECUTIVE NEEDS TO FAITHFULLY OBSERVE AND RESPECT CONGRESSIONAL ENACTMENTS OF THE LAW ACT OF 2014, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3973, FAITHFUL EXECUTION OF THE LAW ACT OF 2014

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 511 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 511

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4138) to protect the separation of powers in the Constitution of the United States by ensuring that the President takes care that the laws be faithfully executed, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-43. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are

waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3973) to amend section 530D of title 28, United States Code. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. An amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-42 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary; (2) the further amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, if offered by Representative Ellison of Minnesota or his designee, which shall be in order without intervention of any point of order, shall be considered as read, shall be separately debatable for 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question; and (3) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEWART). The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the rule, H. Res. 511, which provides for a structured rule as relates to H.R. 4138, ENFORCE the Law Act, and H.R. 3973, the Faithful Execution of the Law Act. The rule gives the House an opportunity to debate a variety of amendments, all offered by Members from the other side of the aisle.

Both of the underlying bills, the ENFORCE the Law Act and the Faithful Execution of the Law Act, aim to halt an increasingly Imperial Presidency.

The Faithful Execution of the Law Act is straightforward legislation that

expands reporting requirements, forcing increased disclosure and transparency when the executive branch employs a policy of nonenforcement of Federal laws.

Current law dictates that a report must be submitted to Congress when the nonenforcement policy is adopted on the grounds that a Federal law is unconstitutional. This bill would simply expand that report to include any instance in which a policy of not enforcing Federal law is established, regardless of the reason. For the self-proclaimed "most transparent administration in history," this really shouldn't be a problem.

The other piece of underlying legislation, the ENFORCE the Law Act, puts procedures in place to allow authorizations of lawsuits against the President for failure to faithfully execute the laws. It would also expedite judicial review, which is badly needed given the length of time it takes for these types of cases to be heard; mostly, they are never heard.

The fact of the matter is that we desperately need a way to ensure the executive branch is upholding its responsibility to enforce the law faithfully. Every day it seems the President is using more and more unilateral actions to achieve his agenda. I understand that Congress and the administration are going to have differences over time. Our Constitution basically guarantees there are going to be differences between the administration and the House and the Senate, but I would like to think that a President wouldn't just abandon our constitutional principles of governing because it is difficult to get what he wants.

I am sure some will argue that a legislative fix to the President's unilateral actions aren't needed. They will say the President has prosecutorial discretion and so that entitles him to make these changes in enforcement or delay certain provisions of the law.

□ 1230

But we are really not talking about individual cases, Mr. Speaker. We are not here today because we are concerned with the administration using discretion on a case-by-case basis. What we are concerned with is the President employing blanket policies of nonenforcement. In some instances, the President isn't just ignoring enforcement of the laws; he is effectively rewriting them.

Now, I understand the President isn't the first to expand executive power under his watch. He is not the first President to do that. In fact, Congress has failed to protect article I powers for decades. This House and the Senate have been in dereliction because they haven't actually protected article I powers.

The pace of expansion of power, though, should alarm every Member of

this body. Take the President's recess appointments, for example. They have already been deemed unconstitutional by the D.C. circuit court in a unanimous—unanimous—decision.

The court rejected the administration's argument that the President has the discretion to determine when the Senate is in recess.

The court explained:

Allowing the President to define the scope of his own appointments power would eviscerate the Constitution's separation of powers.

Mr. Speaker, the President's actions aren't in danger of disrupting the legislative process; they already are disrupting it.

What assurances do we have that the President won't just change the law once we have passed it? What guarantees do we have that the President won't suspend parts of the law that we believe are important?

The truth is, Mr. Speaker, we don't have that assurance. The truth is, Mr. Speaker, we can't trust the President to enforce any would-be law equally and faithfully, and that is a shame.

If anyone thinks the President's unilateral actions aren't a big deal because they happen to agree with him on the policy, well then, Mr. Speaker, they have badly missed the point.

All Presidents—all Presidents—have probably pushed the limit of their power, and it is our responsibility, this House, to check that power. We are a nation of laws. We ought to fight to keep it that way. We can no longer sit by and watch Congress' constitutional role in our government eroded.

This rule is to allow us to consider legislative addressing this growing problem. This rule ensures that ideas from Members on either side of the aisle are included in consideration of the underlying legislation.

I support this rule, and I hope all my colleagues will also.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. NUGENT), my good friend, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, somehow, against all odds, the Republican leadership of this House keeps coming up with new and creative ways to waste everybody's time. This is getting to be embarrassing, quite frankly.

Last night in the Rules Committee, I joked that I picked the short straw, so I am handling the rule today. The reason why I said that is because what we are doing today really is a joke.

This is not serious legislating. Even if there was some substance to the concerns the gentleman raised, the bills that have been written are written in such a way that they are purely political.

This is not about serious legislating, this is about political statements, this is about political press releases, and I think the American people, quite frankly, have had enough.

The Congressional Research Service says that it costs \$24 million a week to run this place. I am going to tell you that what we are doing right now is wasting taxpayers' dollars.

With all that needs to be done—with all that needs to be done, this is another politically motivated week of let's go after the President. That is the way it has been since this President has been elected, and I think people are getting tired of it.

Week after week, month after month, and year after year now, this Republican majority continues to bring bills to the floor that have no chance of passing the Senate and have no chance of being signed into law that are just, again, political press releases.

What is worse, the bills that are being brought forward do nothing—absolutely nothing—to help rebuild our economy or put people back to work. My friend, the gentleman from Florida, talks about our responsibility as Members of Congress.

Well, our responsibility as Members of Congress is to help people, is to legislate, is to deliberate, is to debate serious issues passionately. That is what we are here to do, not this. This belongs in the Republican National Committee. This is a press conference that my friend should have outside of this great building, quite frankly.

Mr. Speaker, this economy is slowly recovering, but Republicans insist on doing nothing to actually strengthen that recovery. They refuse to consider any meaningful jobs legislation. We should have a highway bill to put millions of people back to work.

Putting millions of people back to work with the increased revenue and taxes, you could actually pay down the deficit and the debt, but they don't bring anything like that to the floor. They block every attempt to increase wages for workers.

We need to raise the minimum wage in this country. It is unacceptably low. People who work full-time ought not to live in poverty; yet we can't even get a minimum wage bill scheduled on the floor of the people's House. They won't even talk about it. We can't get them to even allow us to have an amendment on the minimum wage.

They continue to ignore the plight of the long-term unemployed in this country. Over 1.7 million Americans are unemployed. These are people who are looking for jobs and still can't find them. The answer to them from this Republican Congress is you are on your own.

I wonder sometimes whether any of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have ever met somebody who is unemployed or have talked to anybody

who have lost their long-term unemployment benefits.

Their answer is go ask daddy for a loan or go sell some stocks, that will take care of it. They have no idea what people in this country are going through; they have no idea how hard it is to struggle in poverty.

Somehow, they find the time to take 51 votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act, 51 votes. Now, I get it, you don't like it, so you vote to repeal it once; you can vote to repeal it twice, maybe five times, okay. But 51 times that we have wasted the taxpayers' money debating a repeal of the Affordable Care Act, it is ludicrous. It is unreal. People don't understand this behavior outside of the beltway.

Mr. Speaker, they also, quite frankly, find time to waste millions of tax dollars defending an antigay marriage law that is plainly discriminatory. That is okay for them to use taxpayer dollars to do that to stop any kind of reversal of this discriminatory law.

Today's entry in the sweepstakes of useless legislation is the so-called Imperial Presidency of Barack Obama. Never mind the fact that President Obama is using the same kinds of executive authority that President Bush and others before him used.

Let me repeat that. President Obama is using the same kind of executive authority that President Bush and other presidents before him have used.

Never mind the fact that the people supporting this legislation were more than happy to let George W. Bush and Dick Cheney ignore and contravene Congress at every single opportunity.

In fact, they defended what I think is some really questionable behavior of the Bush/Cheney team, and never mind the fact that the last people on Earth who should be complaining about imperialism continue to vote for closed rules, continue to ignore regular order, and continue to shut Democrats out from the legislative process.

By the way, one of the bills that we are debating today was introduced the day before it was marked had no hearings—so much for the promise that Speaker BOEHNER made that we are going to go back to regular order—no hearings, introduced the day before, then going right to America.

Let's be honest, even if President Obama did everything in the world that the Republicans say they are asking him to do, they would still find a reason to complain. My friends on the other side of the aisle, you guys just don't like the President; I get it.

But do you know what? Get over it because, at this point in time, our job is to work with the Senate and with the President to move this country forward; instead, my Republican friends have spent every single second since this President was elected trying to obstruct every single initiative that he has put forward. Even when he puts

forward initiatives that they originally proposed, they complain.

The bills that the Republicans bring before us today are likely unconstitutional, violate the separation of powers, would result in scores and scores of frivolous lawsuits, and would be costly and impractical to apply.

They don't deserve to be on this floor, and they certainly do not deserve to pass. When you read the way they were drafted, as I said before, they are written in a very political partisan way.

Mr. Speaker, I consider myself an institutionalist. I love the House of Representatives. I am proud to serve here. It is a privilege to serve here. Our Founders created the Congress as a co-equal branch of government, and this institution should never be overlooked or sidestepped.

There is a strong argument to be made that, over the past 30 years, Congress has allowed itself to become so bogged down in gridlock that it has allowed executive power to grow far too large. That is a worthy debate for us to have.

Now, that being said, the executive branch has the authority to make certain regulations and take certain executive actions, and this President—any President—has a responsibility to lead when Congress can't get its act together and do its job.

We are elected to legislate, but time after time, instead of tackling issues like immigration reform, climate change, jobs, the minimum wage, bringing our troops home safely from Afghanistan, feeding our hungry—we have 50 million people in the richest country in the history of the world that are hungry; we all should be ashamed of that—but instead of dealing with that or issues like ending poverty or rebuilding our infrastructure or helping the long-term unemployed, this Republican majority chooses instead to bring up partisan messaging bills that will justifiably die.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve so much better than this. We are wasting time; we are wasting taxpayer dollars doing this kind of stuff. They deserve a Congress that tries to improve the lives of every American, instead of placating an extreme right wing.

They deserve a Congress that actually does its job. I will say to my friends: this is not doing our job. The bills before us today go exactly in the opposite direction of what we should be doing.

I urge my colleagues to defeat this rule and defeat the underlying legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I need to go back to when I first took the oath of office as a police officer outside of Chicago and then as a deputy sheriff in Florida and then a sheriff in Florida and then here in this body and also when I joined the military.

It was to support and defend the Constitution, not to ignore the Constitution, not to utilize it when we think it is okay or when it is necessary, not to just skip over article I and say: Do you know what? Forget about it because our Congresses have done that.

My good friend from Massachusetts pointed that out. They have done it for 30 years, but that doesn't make it right. At some point in time, we have got to set the record straight.

Somebody has got to step up and say: Do you know what? The Constitution matters, what we do here matters, and that all of us—the three branches of government—need to work, and they are coequal, not one above the other.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the rule, as well as the underlying bills.

Mr. Speaker, the instances of executive branch overreach are numerous.

Whether it is the multiple episodes of the President of the United States unilaterally delaying and waiving aspects of his signature law, the Affordable Care Act, or the failure to enforce this Nation's immigration laws by unilaterally implementing aspects of the DREAM Act, this President has shown an appalling lack of concern for the laws which his oath demands that he enforce.

Someone who holds the office of the Presidency cannot pick and choose which laws he wants to enforce and which laws he wants to ignore.

I was astonished when, during the State of the Union speech, many in this Chamber stood and applauded when the President said that if Congress didn't act on issues which he felt were important, he would just go around Congress and act on his own.

This followed his now infamous "I've got a pen and I've got a phone" statement earlier.

□ 1245

Is that really how the legislative branch should feel about its constitutional position in the Republic?

The "pen and phone" approach to his executive duties is disastrous to the Founding Fathers' vision of liberty protected by limited government which is spread across multiple, equal branches.

Where is the President's respect for the rule of law? He expects Vladimir Putin to respect international law with respect to Ukraine while the President, himself, at the same time, continues to disregard the laws passed by the United States Congress.

The legislative branch was designed as an equal branch of government. In fact, the establishment of the executive branch was easy for the Founding Fathers, who didn't wish to see imperialism in a Presidency, and they intentionally chose to limit that branch's powers. It was the legislative branch where they spent most of their time—deliberating, designing, and enumerating the powers which we hold—and it is past time for this body to say "no" to Presidential overreach.

No, Mr. President. You cannot write laws via executive orders. No. You must enforce the laws passed by Congress or actually lead in an effort to change the laws with which you may disagree.

In 1787, when asked what form of government the Framers had given us, Ben Franklin reportedly replied, "A Republic if you can keep it."

Mr. Speaker, I am afraid we are slowly losing grip on our Republic—the government designed by this Nation's Founding Fathers that has provided over 200 years of freedom and prosperity.

It is time for the people's House to regain its constitutional authority as the sole legislative body.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would urge my colleagues to remember the words "physician heal thyself." While my friends are complaining about the President of the United States, they should kind of look inward and look at the imperial Republican majority that has kind of taken over here in this House of Representatives.

We had the chairman of the Oversight Committee literally stop a member of the Democratic Party from engaging in legitimate and appropriate debate. In fact, he shut off the microphone and ended the hearing. I mean, is that what our Founding Fathers had envisioned for this Congress? Is that what upholding the Constitution is all about?

As someone who serves on the Rules Committee and who welcomed the statement by Speaker BOEHNER that we would return to regular order, I am still looking for it. We just saw the most closed session in the history of this Congress last year. We had the most closed rules in a single year, the most closed rules in a single week, the most closed rules in a single day. I mean, the Rules Committee I love to serve on because of the great history. My former boss Joe Moakley was the chairman of the Rules Committee. I have great admiration for my colleagues on the Rules Committee, but the Rules Committee is becoming the place where democracy goes to die. Serious issues are routinely cut out.

We had a Republican Member yesterday, Mr. GIBSON of New York, who had a great idea about trying to hold the

Executive accountable when it comes to the War Powers Act. It is an important issue. That is actually a legitimate issue for us to discuss. It was perfectly germane. On a party line vote, the Rules Committee voted that down. They said we won't have that debate here on the House floor.

The way this place is supposed to operate is that all of us—all 435 of us—whether we are Republicans or Democrats, ought to be considered important, and we all represent the same number of constituents. I understand that the party in control gets to kind of control the agenda, but that doesn't mean the party not in control gets shut out on a regular basis on very important issues. Yet that has become the pattern here. Not only that, but we have seen more and more instances where committees of jurisdiction are not even relevant anymore—where bills are introduced the day before there is a markup, where there are no hearings. Sometimes we have bills that just mysteriously appear in the Rules Committee.

My colleagues know that I have great difficulty with their approach to dealing with the SNAP program, formerly known as “food stamps.” They proposed a \$40 billion cut on the poorest of the poor to pay for subsidies for rich agribusinesses. I thought it was a bad thing to do. I am also on the Agriculture Committee. That bill never even went to the Agriculture Committee. We never had a hearing on it. We never had a markup on it. It mysteriously appeared in the Rules Committee, and then it came to the floor.

This is the way this place is being run. So, when you talk about “imperial” anything, look in the mirror. We need to change the way we do business here. This place would operate a lot better if you would let the people's House work its will. If you brought the Senate-passed immigration reform bill to this floor, it would pass, but it is being blocked because a small group within the Republican caucus doesn't want to deal with the issue of immigration reform. Important issues are routinely being denied consideration on this floor. This is a place where trivial issues get debated passionately and where important ones not at all, and people are getting fed up with it.

This politically motivated piece of legislation is politically motivated because of Minority Leader CANTOR's memo to, I guess, Republicans after their retreat. They talked about having an Imperial Presidency week to kind of embarrass the President. I guess that is what they call serious legislating, but this really is a joke. I urge my colleagues to vote all of this stuff down.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, all I can tell you is that I don't take it as a joke in our defending and protecting the Constitution, which gives us the ability to serve here today. The people gave us the ability to be here based upon what the Constitution laid out for us. That is the plan.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY).

Mrs. ROBY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of Alabama's Second Congressional District to lend my support to H.R. 4138, the ENFORCE the Law Act and, of course, to the rule that is being debated here today.

I appreciate my friend and colleague from South Carolina, TREY GOWDY, for bringing forth this very important legislation.

We are here today to answer one question, Mr. Speaker: Will we stand idly by while an imperial President ignores the rule of law and unravels the separation of powers so carefully woven into our Constitution?

The answer is “no.”

Probably, more than anything else, my constituents ask me: What are we doing to address the pattern of executive overreaches and disregard for the law by President Obama and his administration?

Good, God-fearing Americans who work hard, who pay their taxes, and who obey the law are understandably frustrated by a President who acts as though he is above the law. The abuses are well documented: selective enforcement of immigration laws, waiving compliance for “welfare to work” laws and what has become almost weekly attempts to delay, waive, or to just not enforce parts of ObamaCare because of the political implications. These are just to name a few.

Mr. Speaker, our constitutional constraints on government may not be convenient for the President or for his political or policy goals, but they are necessary for preserving the checks and balances that ensure this government still derives its authority from the people and not the other way around.

We now seek the intervention of the judicial branch to rein in the executive branch and reconstitute our proper separation of powers. I believe in our Constitution, and I believe it is worth fighting for. That is why I urge my colleagues to support the ENFORCE the Law Act and the rule and to join the fight to restore the checks and balances.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It is funny. Again, I love that this all of a sudden has become an issue for my colleagues.

There is a Washington Post article from July 24, 2006. Let me read the first couple of paragraphs:

A panel of legal scholars and lawyers assembled by the American Bar Association is sharply criticizing the use of “signing statements” by President Bush that assert his right to ignore or not enforce laws passed by Congress.

In a report to be issued today, the ABA task force said that Bush has lodged more challenges to provisions of laws than all previous Presidents combined.

The panel members described the development as a serious threat to the Constitution's system of checks and balances, and they urged Congress to pass legislation permitting court review of such statements.

I can go on and on and on. The point is “silence” on the other side during all of that time. Then they said: Well, now we have got religion on this issue, and we want to hold everybody accountable. Yet, when Mr. GIBSON had his amendment yesterday to actually bring up a legitimate focus where, I think, the Executive over the years has kind of abused its powers—and that is on the War Powers Act—he brought a germane amendment to the floor, and that was ruled out of order—we will deal with it another time—the translocation of which means in this imperial Congress that it will never see the light of day.

This House is being run in the most imperial way, where anybody who has a different view is routinely shut out from debate, with more closed rules than any Congress in history. I think it is probably more avoiding regular order—never mind the closed rules—than any Congress in history. That is one of the reasons some of the stuff we bring to the floor here is so contentious. It is because it is written in such a flawed way.

I think it is a legitimate topic of discussion to talk about the appropriate powers of the Executive and the appropriate powers of the legislature, but to do that, I think, in a serious way means doing it in a bipartisan way, and there are ways for both Republicans and Democrats to come together. Again, this has never been about a serious attempt to deal with that issue. I mean this was one of their political talking points at their convention, at their retreat, that my friends had. This is not a serious attempt at anything. This is a political press release. We taxpayers spend \$24 million a week to keep this place in session here, and this is how my friends use the taxpayers' money—to deal with these kinds of things?

The gentlelady from Alabama talked about her constituents all talking about this issue. Boy, I have got to tell you that, where I am from, what people talk about is: When are you going to pass a highway bill? They want to know when we are going to deal with the issue of jobs. My constituents and the people I meet all over the country want to know what we are going to do about raising the minimum wage. How are we going to deal with a pay equity bill so that women don't get discriminated against and get paid less than

men do for doing the same job? They talk about global warming, which is like the worst thing you could talk about here because my friends don't even admit that it exists. They want to know what we are going to do to protect our planet and what we are going to do to help the long-term unemployed.

Those are real issues. Those are about helping people. This is politics, and I think people have had enough of it. So I would urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to say "no" to this stuff.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just want to make a couple of things clear.

In the Judiciary Committee, they did have two hearings on this. Now, they took some action to bring forward one of these bills based upon the hearings and the testimony that they did have.

I truly believe in the open process. We want to see that, and I think we agree on that. My good friend from Massachusetts even read an article about George W. Bush and about that Presidency and that someone said that this Congress—or that Congress back then—should actually do something to allow it to go to court. I believe that was the statement. I am paraphrasing it. That is exactly what this does. I can't help it. I wasn't here when George W. Bush was President—I wasn't here 4 years ago—but I am here today, and I am here to defend and support this Constitution.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), a good friend of mine.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, this is very clear, the purpose of today's debate. The Take Care Clause is to faithfully execute laws that are passed. This is about standing statute. In fact, this is the centerpiece of the President's whole Presidency. He is choosing what will be enforced and what will not be enforced. The Take Care Clause, known as the "Faithful Execution Clause," was actually derived from Pennsylvania's 1776 constitution, crafted by Pennsylvania's State executives during the Revolutionary War.

I want you to just let your mind drift back to when people left Europe to come to America. They got in rickety, old, wooden boats with not very good nav systems, but they came here for a reason. They set their course true north. They were coming to get away from a monarchy. They were coming to get away from an imperialist. They were coming to get away from tyrants. Why did they come here, and what did they craft? It is so carefully laid out in our Constitution. So why are we having this debate about this being silliness?

This is who we are, not as Republicans and Democrats, but who we are as Americans. Why would we turn our backs on our Constitution?

□ 1300

I understand the Executive Office has great power. I also understand that the Constitution harnesses that. It does not allow it to run roughshod over the people.

Mr. DUNCAN very clearly talked about the State of the Union, when the President says to this body:

America cannot stand still, and neither will I. So whenever and whatever steps I can take with that legislation, that is what I am going to do.

That is chilling. People gave him a standing ovation—and not just a standing ovation, but from the House of Representatives, where that very power is being taken from. That is our responsibility. That is our duty.

You cannot take that pledge and then turn around and say, Well, this is just about some kind of political maneuvering. This is not about a political maneuvering. That is about the protection of our Constitution. These things have been enshrined for us.

It is critical that we look at this. The Executive cannot make exceptions and just enforce the law as he or she wants. That is not who we are as a people. We left monarchs and tyrants to come here.

This is a government by the people, for the people, and of the people. If we ever forget that is what our job is as Members of the House of Representatives, then what are we doing here?

I would just ask my colleagues on the other side to please take a look at this. This is very chilling. You may like where the President is taking us, I may not like where the President is taking us, but there is a process that we all must follow. This is statute that is being trampled upon by an Executive that has an overreach that we have never seen before.

Can we not please return to those days and why those folks came here. What were they seeking? Freedom and liberty. What have we allowed those people to do? Turn their back and turn away from it and turn away from a Constitution that over a million people have given their lives to make sure that we could have this today.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that some sense of responsibility, and not politics, comes into this House.

Mr. McGOVERN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, just to make sure the record is correct, what I am understanding from staff is that while there were some hearings on the subject, one of the bills had no hearings. So, again, under regular order I think it would be important that the actual bill have a hearing.

The other thing, my colleague from Florida said that he would like a more

open process. Let me make a suggestion: then vote for one. Because consistently in the Rules Committee, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle routinely vote for closed rules. They routinely vote against allowing amendments, including germane amendments, to be made in order, including what I think would be an amendment that has bipartisan support, the one by Mr. GIBSON on the War Powers Act that could have brought us together. That is a legitimate subject.

The reason why this legislation before us is such a waste of time is because it does not reflect deliberative process. It does not reflect any kind of bipartisan cooperation. It is a political press release. It is a waste of taxpayers' money.

I will say to the gentleman from Pennsylvania, I, too, took a pledge to uphold and defend the Constitution, and part of that pledge is to make sure that I represent all of the people, not just some of the people, not just those who give big contributions to political parties, but all of the people.

The fact that we have nearly 2 million people in this country who are cut off from unemployment benefits, what does anybody say to them when you meet people who come up and say that they are looking for a job and they can't find one? Maybe my friends don't talk to those people.

I will tell you it is heartbreaking that this Congress, the people's Congress that is supposed to represent them too, has turned their backs on them. What do you say to people who get cut off of their food benefits, who see their food benefit getting slashed, who end up at food banks trying to make ends meet to put food on the table for their families.

We sit here and debate this, a partisan bill, and we don't do anything about that?

Or, increasing the minimum wage—if you want to help people get off of food stamps, increase the minimum wage. Millions of people would automatically get off of public assistance. We can't even get a vote on that. We are not even allowed to bring that to floor.

People are asking me, When are you going to pass comprehensive immigration reform? The Senate passed it in a bipartisan way. Why can't you bring it on the floor of the House? The answer is because the imperial Republican majority in this House has declared that no, we are not going to even talk about it, and the Rules Committee, again, has been used as a place to shut off democracy and to not have these kinds of important issues brought to the floor.

So here we are debating a partisan bill that is purely partisan. You couldn't write it more partisan if my friends tried. Here we are debating this kind of bill while so many other things need to be addressed. This is a waste of time. It is a waste of taxpayer dollars. It diminishes this institution.

We are better than this. We should be talking about putting people back to work. We should be talking about helping to improve this economy at a more rapid pace. We should be talking about making sure that no one falls through the cracks; that we extend unemployment insurance benefits to people who need it.

We should be talking about those issues. We should be talking about global warming. Instead, we are doing this. Again, written in a very partisan way, which I regret very much.

Again, I urge my colleagues to reject this and reject the rule.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

All I can say, again, is that as it relates to these bills, there was discussion in the hearings and testimony taken to the concept and the ideas behind these bills.

Mr. Speaker, we hear about, this is partisan. It doesn't say "President Barack Obama." This says "the President." It doesn't matter if it is Republican or Democrat, Mr. Speaker. It says "the President." It has nothing to do specifically with President Obama, but it has everything to do with protecting the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The gentleman says that this has nothing to do with President Obama. The committee report only cites President Obama, in terms of this issue, and their political document, the memorandum that came from ERIC CANTOR to the House Republicans, talks about the Imperial Presidency, and says President Obama has provided new clarity of what constitutes an Imperial Presidency. President Obama, President Obama, and on and on.

It just defies logic for anybody to think for one second that this isn't about trying to attack this President of the United States, because what we have seen time and time again from the time this President was elected has been nothing but obstructionism and attack, obstructionism and attack, obstructionism and attack. I get it. There are differences in philosophies between the two parties.

What is troubling to me is that in this imperial Republican Congress President Obama's ideas don't even get a chance to have their day on the floor, where we are routinely shut out.

In this imperial Republican Congress we cannot bring to the floor a bill to increase the minimum wage. We cannot bring to the floor a bill to extend unemployment benefits for those over 2 million long-term employed. We cannot bring to the floor a jobs bill. We cannot bring to the floor the bipartisan Senate-passed comprehensive immigration reform bill, which would do the

right thing on behalf of a number of immigrants in this country, but would also, by the way, we are told, reduce our deficit.

We can't even bring those things to the floor for debate. Under this imperial Republican leadership, our hands are tied. So we try procedural motions. We are trying discharge petitions. We are trying whatever we can to try to be heard.

I think it is important for the American people to know where people stand. So if my friends on the other side of the aisle don't believe the American people deserve a raise, if they don't believe we should increase the minimum wage, vote against it. Go on record. Let the American people see where you stand. On immigration reform, if you don't want to reform the immigration system, fine. Vote against it when it comes to the floor.

When my friends on the other side of the aisle routinely and regularly deny us the opportunity to even consider these things, that hurts our democracy. It diminishes this institution.

If you want to talk about imperialism, what is that?

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I am ready to close.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I am urging my colleagues to defeat the previous question. If we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up H.R. 4209, Mr. JOHN TIERNEY's bill that contains the historic bipartisan, bicameral agreement on a permanent fix to the sustainable growth rate of Medicare, which will ensure fairness to doctors and strengthen Medicare.

My colleagues on both sides of the aisle have heard from the medical community on this issue. My Republican friends, unfortunately, have proposed a "poison pill" amendment that would kill this bipartisan agreement with an offset attacking the Affordable Care Act.

Mr. TIERNEY's bill instead includes a commonsense pay-for that finances the bipartisan doc fix by putting limits on our spending on wars overseas. We already have these sorts of caps on spending for almost everything else in the budget, and it is time we capped our war spending as well.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD, along with extraneous material, immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. This amendment simply caps the OCO. We give the administration 1 more year of the Over-

seas Contingency Operations spending without any contingencies, but beginning in 2016, OCO is subject to budget caps just like everything else.

Funding the war in Afghanistan is not emergency spending. We have been there for over a decade. We all know what the costs entail. The OCO is a so-called emergency account to keep the war in Afghanistan funded.

I don't know about you, Mr. Speaker, but the fact that we have troops in Afghanistan is no longer a surprise and is no longer an unexpected development.

In addition, the OCO has become a slush fund for Congress and the Pentagon to stick in goodies for procurement and operations and maintenance that it couldn't find room for in the Pentagon's half-trillion dollar base budget.

Now that Afghanistan President Karzai has made it perfectly clear that he doesn't want the United States or its military in Afghanistan, we should, at a minimum, cap the OCO and bring our troops home now.

So if we can find billions and billions of dollars to fund a war that nobody wants in a country where the government insults our troops every single day, then we can use those moneys to fund real needs right at home, like permanently fixing the SGR once and for all.

We talk about trying to find common ground. I think there is a lot of common ground on this issue amongst Democrats and Republicans. I think there are a lot of Republicans who are just as sick of this endless war and this over-the-top, unaccounted for spending in these wars as Democrats are.

So I think this is a sensible offset, and I would urge my colleagues to support our initiative.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and to defeat the previous question, and vote "no" on the underlying bills for all the reasons I said before. We should be using the taxpayer dollars to do things to help people on this House floor, not to advance political agendas.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I agree with much of what my colleague from Massachusetts said, particularly as it relates to our involvement in Afghanistan and the Karzai regime.

Let me read you some quotes, Mr. Speaker, and let's see who we thought said these quotes:

The power of what has begun to be termed the Imperial Presidency grows, and the ability of our Democratic institutions, especially the Federal legislative branch to constrain it, seems more uncertain.

The next quote:

We are a coequal branch of government, and if our system of checks and balances is going to operate, it is imperative that we understand how the executive branch is enforcing or ignoring the bills that are signed into law.

And:

We are talking about a systematic extra-constitutional mode of conduct by the White House. The conduct threatens to deprive the American people of one of the basic rights of any democracy, the right to elect Representatives who determine what the law is, subject only to the President's veto. That does not mean having a President sign those laws but then say he is free to carry them out or not as only he sees fit.

Another quote:

I believe it is in all of our interests to work together to rein in any excesses of the executive branch, whether it is in Democratic, Republican, or even Libertarian hands.

Lastly, I will suggest to you that all those quotes I just read were from a highly respected Democrat, Mr. CONYERS, talking about the George W. Bush Presidency.

□ 1315

What has changed? That is what we are talking about today.

This isn't about Republicans or Democrats. Even Mr. CONYERS said that that is a problem, that we are giving up what we are supposed to be doing here in the legislative branch, legislating.

The President has a right to veto, but when he signs it into law, he has an obligation to faithfully execute the laws that he signs, he signs into law.

Mr. Speaker, in an interview with *The New York Times* last July, the President was asked whether or not he had the legal constitutional authority to delay the employer mandates, and the President's response was this, Mr. Speaker, speaking about Members of Congress: "I am not concerned about their opinions. Very few of them, by the way, are lawyers, much less constitutional lawyers."

Well, Mr. Speaker, he is right in one regard. Most of us aren't constitutional lawyers, and I am certainly glad the President is proud of his academic achievements.

It doesn't take a constitutional lawyer to understand that we have separation of powers in this country, and that is what makes us unique. It doesn't take a constitutional lawyer to understand that the President can't just pick and choose which laws to enforce and which ones, don't worry about; we don't have to enforce it. Any eighth-grade civics student can tell you that.

Our Constitution explicitly states, the President shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed. It is even in the oath of office. It doesn't say if I disagree with them that means I don't have to worry about that. It is in the oath of office that he is supposed to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I take that oath to support and defend the Constitution very seriously. I did it when I raised my hand at 18 years old when I went into the Air Force. I did it when I was 21 years old when I became a police officer outside of Chicago. I did it again

when I was a deputy sheriff. I did it again when I was sheriff, and I did it when I got elected to Congress, now, a second time. I take that oath personal.

I have three sons that serve this country today. They have all raised their hand to support and defend this Constitution, not when it is convenient, not when it meets what I need out of it. It says you do it.

That is the law. That is the Constitution, and we kind of forget that. We say it is just a document. It is a dusty document.

That is not the case, Mr. Speaker. It talks about how we conduct ourselves as a government of the people and by the people, not because of who we are.

I am concerned, on quite a few instances now, this President clearly hasn't faithfully executed those laws. Just recently, the President yet again announced a delay in the implementation of ObamaCare. The administration says they will continue to allow insurance companies to offer plans that don't meet ObamaCare's coverage requirements.

How many delays does that make, Mr. Speaker?

I have no idea. I have lost count. I haven't kept track. There have been a lot of them because they all hit the front page, most of them hit the front page of the papers.

Just because the President's health care law isn't working doesn't mean the President can just change it on the fly. I understand it is what he wants. It is the implementation of a law, but don't say you can just change it willy-nilly. The President is literally making it up as he goes along.

Delaying the consequences of ObamaCare, however, does not fix them. Perhaps our colleagues are facing frustrated constituents that just aren't quite ready to defend the law yet. Maybe that is the case.

Perhaps it is themselves that these delays are really meant for. I don't know.

Nevertheless, I don't object to delaying ObamaCare, just the President's desire not to have come to Congress to do it. Congress enacted it. Congress has a right, then, to modify it, not the President.

The fact is, a lot of these plans are good fits for consumers. Cancellations they face, the higher premiums and deductibles, are a real hardship. That doesn't change the fact that the means through which the President changed the policy is wrong, and we all know it.

It is time for this body to come together to prevent our constitutional role from disintegrating further. It matters not what has occurred in the last 40 years, it matters what occurs today. It matters to the people I represent that I faithfully support and defend the Constitution.

It is time this body pushed back against any Presidency that would as-

sert itself, whether it was Mr. CONYERS speaking of the prior Presidents or it is us speaking about this current President.

I am confident that the underlying legislation, the rule that it provides for, will start the process, and I urge my colleagues, if you care about protecting our three-branch system of government, support this rule and support the underlying legislation.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the rule for H.R. 4138, The ENFORCE THE LAW Act of 2014 and the underlying bill.

H.R. 4138 purports to provide a mechanism for one House of Congress to enforce the "take care" clause in article II, section 3 of the United States Constitution, which requires the President to "take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed."

The bill authorizes either chamber of Congress to bring a civil action against the executive branch for failure to faithfully execute existing laws.

My colleagues on the other side argue that lawsuits by Congress to force the administration to enforce federal laws will prevent the president from exceeding his constitutional authority,

But the Supreme Court has constantly held that the exercise of executive discretion being taken by President Obama is within the president's powers under the Constitution.

That is why I offered an amendment to the bill that simply protects the ability of the Executive Branch to comply with judicial decisions interpreting the Constitution or Federal laws.

It is hard to believe that I would even need an amendment which instructs the Executive Branch that it is okay to—ENFORCE THE LAW.

If separation-of-powers principles require anything, it is that each branch must respect its constitutional role.

When a court issues a decision interpreting the Constitution or a federal law, the other branches must abide by the decision.

The Executive Branch's ability to fulfill its obligation to comply with judicial decisions should not be hampered by a civil action by Congress pursuant to this bill.

Basic respect for separation of powers requires adoption of this amendment.

In our constitutional democracy, taking care that the laws are executed faithfully is a multifaceted notion.

And it is a well-settled principle that our Constitution imposes restrictions on Congress' legislative authority, so that the faithful execution of the Laws may present occasions where the President declines to enforce a congressionally enacted law because he must enforce the Constitution—which is the law of the land.

Additionally, H.R. 4138, The ENFORCE Act, has problems with standing, separation of powers, and allows broad powers of discretion incompatible with notions of due process.

The legislation would permit one House of Congress to file a lawsuit seeking declaratory and other relief to compel the President to faithfully execute the law. Any such decision would be reviewable only by the Supreme Court.

These are critical problems. First, Congress is unlikely to be able to satisfy the requirements of Article III standing, which the Supreme Court has held that the party bringing suit have been personally injured by the challenged conduct.

In the wide array of circumstances in which the bill would authorize a House of Congress to sue the president, that House would not have suffered any personal injury sufficient to satisfy Article III's standing requirement in the absence of a complete nullification of any legislator's votes.

I ask my colleagues to reject this legislation. The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 511 OFFERED BY
MR. MCGOVERN OF MASSACHUSETTS

Strike all after the resolved clause and insert:

That immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4209) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided among and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means, and the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

Sec. 2. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 4209.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT
IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's *Precedents of the House of Representatives* (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's

ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated, control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's *Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives*, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 227, nays 190, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 118]

YEAS—227

Aderholt	Graves (MO)	Perry
Amash	Griffin (AR)	Petri
Bachmann	Griffith (VA)	Pittenger
Bachus	Grimm	Pitts
Barletta	Guthrie	Poe (TX)
Barr	Hall	Pompeo
Benishek	Hanna	Posey
Bentivolio	Harper	Price (GA)
Bilirakis	Harris	Reed
Bishop (UT)	Hartzler	Reichert
Black	Hastings (WA)	Renacci
Blackburn	Heck (NV)	Ribble
Boustany	Hensarling	Rice (SC)
Brady (TX)	Herrera Beutler	Rigell
Bridenstine	Holding	Roby
Brooks (AL)	Hudson	Roe (TN)
Brooks (IN)	Huelskamp	Rogers (AL)
Broun (GA)	Huizenga (MI)	Rogers (KY)
Buchanan	Hultgren	Rogers (MI)
Buchanan	Hunter	Rohrabacher
Burgess	Hurt	Rokita
Byrne	Issa	Rooney
Calvert	Jenkins	Ros-Lehtinen
Camp	Johnson (OH)	Roskam
Campbell	Johnson, Sam	Ross
Cantor	Jones	Rothfus
Capito	Jordan	Royce
Carter	Joyce	Runyan
Cassidy	Kelly (PA)	Ryan (WI)
Chabot	King (IA)	Salmon
Chaffetz	King (NY)	Sanford
Coble	Kingston	Scalise
Coffman	Kinzinger (IL)	Schock
Cole	Kline	Schweikert
Collins (GA)	Labrador	Scott, Austin
Collins (NY)	LaMalfa	Sensenbrenner
Conaway	Lamborn	Sessions
Cook	Lance	Shimkus
Cotton	Lankford	Shuster
Cramer	Latham	Simpson
Crawford	Latta	Smith (MO)
Crenshaw	LoBiondo	Smith (NE)
Culberson	Long	Smith (NJ)
Daines	Lucas	Smith (TX)
Davis, Rodney	Luetkemeyer	Southerland
Denham	Lummis	Stewart
Dent	Marchant	Stivers
DeSantis	Marino	Stockman
DesJarlais	Massie	Stutzman
Diaz-Balart	McAllister	Terry
Duffy	McCarthy (CA)	Thompson (PA)
Duncan (SC)	McCaul	Thornberry
Duncan (TN)	McClintock	Tiberi
Ellmers	McHenry	Tipton
Farenthold	McKeon	Turner
Fincher	McKinley	Upton
Fitzpatrick	McMorris	Valadao
Fleischmann	Rodgers	Wagner
Fleming	Meadows	Walberg
Flores	Meehan	Walden
Forbes	Messer	Walorski
Fortenberry	Mica	Weber (TX)
Fox	Miller (FL)	Webster (FL)
Franks (AZ)	Miller (MI)	Wenstrup
Frelinghuysen	Mullin	Westmoreland
Gardner	Mulvaney	Whitfield
Garrett	Murphy (PA)	Williams
Gerlach	Neugebauer	Wilson (SC)
Gibbs	Noem	Wittman
Gibson	Nugent	Wolf
Gingrey (GA)	Nunes	Womack
Gohmert	Nunnelee	Woodall
Goodlatte	Olson	Yoder
Gowdy	Palazzo	Yoho
Granger	Paulsen	Young (AK)
Graves (GA)	Pearce	Young (IN)

NAYS—190

Barber	Brady (PA)	Cartwright
Barrow (GA)	Braley (IA)	Castor (FL)
Bass	Brown (FL)	Castro (TX)
Beatty	Brownley (CA)	Chu
Becerra	Bustos	Ciulline
Bera (CA)	Butterfield	Clark (MA)
Bishop (GA)	Capps	Clarke (NY)
Bishop (NY)	Capuano	Clay
Blumenauer	Carney	Cleaver
Bonamici	Carson (IN)	Clyburn

Cohen	Kelly (IL)	Peterson	Barr	Guthrie	Pitts	Esty	Lowenthal	Richmond
Connolly	Kennedy	Pingree (ME)	Benishek	Hall	Poe (TX)	Farr	Lowey	Roybal-Allard
Conyers	Kildee	Pocan	Bentivolio	Hanna	Pompeo	Fattah	Lujan Grisham	Ruiz
Cooper	Kilmer	Polis	Bilirakis	Harper	Posey	Foster	(NM)	Ruppersberger
Costa	Kind	Price (NC)	Bishop (UT)	Harris	Price (GA)	Frankel (FL)	Luján, Ben Ray	Ryan (OH)
Courtney	Kirkpatrick	Quigley	Black	Hartzler	Rahall	Fudge	(NM)	Sánchez, Linda
Crowley	Kuster	Rahall	Blackburn	Hastings (WA)	Reed	Gabbard	Lynch	T.
Cuellar	Langevin	Rangel	Boustany	Heck (NV)	Reichert	Gallego	Maffei	Sanchez, Loretta
Cummings	Larsen (WA)	Richmond	Brady (TX)	Hensarling	Renacci	Garamendi	Maloney,	Sarbanes
Davis (CA)	Larson (CT)	Roybal-Allard	Bridenstine	Herrera Beutler	Ribble	Garcia	Carolyn	Schakowsky
Davis, Danny	Lee (CA)	Ruiz	Brooks (AL)	Holding	Rice (SC)	Grayson	Maloney, Sean	Schiff
DeFazio	Levin	Ruppersberger	Brooks (IN)	Hudson	Rigell	Green, Al	Matheson	Schneider
DeGette	Lipinski	Ryan (OH)	Broun (GA)	Huelskamp	Roby	Green, Gene	Matsui	Schrader
Delaney	Loeb sack	Sánchez, Linda	Buchanan	Huizenga (MI)	Roe (TN)	Grijalva	McCarthy (NY)	Schwartz
DeLauro	Lofgren	T.	Bucshon	Hultgren	Rogers (AL)	Gutiérrez	McCollum	Scott (VA)
DelBene	Lowenthal	Sanchez, Loretta	Burgess	Hunter	Rogers (KY)	Hahn	McDermott	Scott, David
Deutch	Lujan Grisham	Sarbanes	Byrne	Hurt	Rogers (MI)	Hanabusa	McGovern	Serrano
Doggett	(NM)	Schakowsky	Calvert	Issa	Rohrabacher	Hastings (FL)	McIntyre	Sewell (AL)
Doyle	Luján, Ben Ray	Schiff	Camp	Jenkins	Rokita	Heck (WA)	McNerney	Shea-Porter
Duckworth	(NM)	Schneider	Campbell	Johnson (OH)	Rooney	Higgins	Meeks	Sherman
Edwards	Lynch	Schrader	Cantor	Johnson, Sam	Ros-Lehtinen	Himes	Meng	Sinema
Enyart	Maffei	Schwartz	Capito	Jones	Roskam	Hinojosa	Michaud	Sires
Eshoo	Maloney,	Scott (VA)	Carter	Jordan	Ross	Holt	Miller, George	Slaughter
Esty	Carolyn	Scott, David	Cassidy	Joyce	Rothfus	Honda	Moore	Smith (WA)
Farr	Maloney, Sean	Serrano	Chabot	Kelly (PA)	Royce	Horsford	Moran	Speier
Fattah	Matheson	Sewell (AL)	Chaffetz	King (IA)	Runyan	Hoyer	Murphy (FL)	Swalwell (CA)
Foster	Matsui	Shea-Porter	Coble	King (NY)	Ryan (WI)	Huffman	Nadler	Takano
Frankel (FL)	McCarthy (NY)	Sherman	Coffman	Kingston	Salmon	Israel	Napolitano	Thompson (CA)
Fudge	McCollum	Sinema	Cole	Kinzinger (IL)	Sanford	Jackson Lee	Neal	Thompson (MS)
Gallego	McDermott	Sires	Collins (GA)	Kline	Scalise	Jeffries	Negrete McLeod	Tierney
Garamendi	McGovern	Slaughter	Collins (NY)	Labrador	Schock	Johnson (GA)	Nolan	Titus
Garcia	McIntyre	Smith (WA)	Conaway	LaMalfa	Schweikert	Johnson, E. B.	O'Rourke	Tonko
Grayson	McNerney	Speier	Cook	Lamborn	Scott, Austin	Kaptur	Owens	Tsongas
Green, Al	Meeks	Swalwell (CA)	Cotton	Lance	Sensenbrenner	Keating	Pallone	Van Hollen
Green, Gene	Meng	Takano	Cramer	Lankford	Sessions	Kelly (IL)	Pascarell	Vargas
Grijalva	Michaud	Thompson (CA)	Crawford	Latham	Shimkus	Kennedy	Pastor (AZ)	Veasey
Gutiérrez	Miller, George	Thompson (MS)	Crenshaw	Latta	Shuster	Kildee	Payne	Vela
Hahn	Moore	Tierney	Culberson	LoBiondo	Simpson	Kilmer	Pelosi	Velázquez
Hanabusa	Moran	Titus	Daines	Long	Smith (MO)	Kind	Perlmutter	Visclosky
Hastings (FL)	Murphy (FL)	Tonko	Davis, Rodney	Lucas	Smith (NE)	Kirkpatrick	Peters (CA)	Walz
Heck (WA)	Nadler	Tsongas	Denham	Luetkemeyer	Smith (NJ)	Langevin	Peters (MI)	Wasserman
Higgins	Napolitano	Van Hollen	Dent	Lummis	Smith (TX)	Larsen (WA)	Peterson	Wasserman
Himes	Neal	Vargas	DeSantis	Marchant	Southerland	Larson (CT)	Pingree (ME)	Schultz
Hinojosa	Negrete McLeod	Veasey	DesJarlais	Massie	Stewart	Lee (CA)	Pocan	Waters
Holt	Nolan	Vela	Diaz-Balart	McAllister	Stivers	Levin	Polis	Waxman
Honda	O'Rourke	Velázquez	Duffy	McCarthy (CA)	Stockman	Lipinski	Price (NC)	Welch
Horsford	Owens	Visclosky	Duncan (SC)	McCaul	Stutzman	Loeb sack	Quigley	Wilson (FL)
Hoyer	Pallone	Walz	Duncan (TN)	McClintock	Terry	Lofgren	Rangel	Yarmuth
Huffman	Pascarell	Wasserman	Ellmers	McHenry	Thompson (PA)			
Israel	Pastor (AZ)	Schultz	Farenthold	McKeon	Thornberry			
Jeffries	Payne	Waters	Fincher	McKinley	Tiberi			
Johnson (GA)	Pelosi	Waxman	Fitzpatrick	McMorris	Tipton			
Johnson, E. B.	Perlmutter	Welch	Fleischmann	Rodgers	Turner			
Kaptur	Peters (CA)	Wilson (FL)	Fleming	Meadows	Upton			
Keating	Peters (MI)	Yarmuth	Flores	Meehan	Valadao			
			Forbes	Messer	Wagner			
			Fortenberry	Mica	Walberg			
			Fox	Miller (FL)	Walden			
			Franks (AZ)	Miller (MI)	Walorski			
			Frelinghuysen	Mullin	Weber (TX)			
			Gardner	Mulvaney	Webster (FL)			
			Garrett	Murphy (PA)	Webster (FL)			
			Gerlach	Neugebauer	Westmoreland			
			Gibbs	Noem	Whitfield			
			Gibson	Nugent	Williams			
			Gingrey (GA)	Nunes	Wilson (SC)			
			Gohmert	Nunnelee	Wittman			
			Goodlatte	Olson	Wolf			
			Gowdy	Palazzo	Womack			
			Granger	Paulsen	Woodall			
			Graves (GA)	Pearce	Yoder			
			Graves (MO)	Perry	Yoho			
			Griffin (AR)	Petri	Young (AK)			
			Griffith (VA)	Pittenger	Young (IN)			
			Grimm					

NOT VOTING—13

Amodei	Engel	Lowey
Barton	Gabbard	Miller, Gary
Cárdenas	Gosar	Rush
Dingell	Jackson Lee	
Ellison	Lewis	

□ 1346

Mr. RANGEL, Ms. MENG, and Mr. CLEAVER changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the previous question was ordered.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 229, noes 192, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 119]

AYES—229

Aderholt	Bachmann	Barber
Amash	Bachus	Barletta

Barrow (GA)	Carney	Crowley
Bass	Carson (IN)	Cuellar
Beatty	Cartwright	Cummings
Becerra	Castor (FL)	Davis (CA)
Bera (CA)	Castro (TX)	Davis, Danny
Bishop (GA)	Chu	DeFazio
Bishop (NY)	Cicilline	DeGette
Blumenauer	Clark (MA)	Delaney
Bonamici	Clarke (NY)	DeLauro
Brady (PA)	Clay	DelBene
Braley (IA)	Cleaver	Deutch
Brown (FL)	Clyburn	Doggett
Brownley (CA)	Cohen	Doyle
Bustos	Connolly	Duckworth
Butterfield	Conyers	Edwards
Capps	Cooper	Ellison
Capuano	Costa	Enyart
Cárdenas	Courtney	Eshoo

NOES—192

Carney	Crowley
Carson (IN)	Cuellar
Cartwright	Cummings
Castor (FL)	Davis (CA)
Castro (TX)	Davis, Danny
Chu	DeFazio
Cicilline	DeGette
Clark (MA)	Delaney
Clarke (NY)	DeLauro
Clay	DelBene
Cleaver	Deutch
Clyburn	Doggett
Cohen	Doyle
Connolly	Duckworth
Conyers	Edwards
Cooper	Ellison
Costa	Enyart
Courtney	Eshoo

NOT VOTING—9

Amodei	Engel	Lewis
Barton	Gosar	Miller, Gary
Dingell	Kuster	Rush

□ 1353

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 119, had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 12, 2014 at 10:52 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to S.J. Res. 32.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PERMISSION FOR MEMBER TO BE CONSIDERED AS FIRST SPONSOR OF H.J. RES. 43

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that I may hereafter be considered to be the first sponsor of H.J. Res. 43, removing the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment, a bill originally introduced by Representative Robert Andrews of New Jersey, for the purposes of adding cosponsors and requesting reprintings pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

EXECUTIVE NEEDS TO FAITHFULLY OBSERVE AND RESPECT CONGRESSIONAL ENACTMENTS OF THE LAW ACT OF 2014

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on H.R. 4138.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 511 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4138.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1457

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4138) to protect the separation of powers in the Constitution of the United States by ensuring that the President takes care that the laws be faithfully executed, and for other purposes, with Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, our system of government is a tripartite one, with each branch having certain defined func-

tions delegated to it by the Constitution. The President is charged with executing the laws, the Congress with writing the laws, and the judiciary with interpreting them.

The Obama administration, however, has ignored the Constitution's carefully balanced separation of powers and unilaterally granted itself the extraconstitutional authority to amend the laws and to waive or suspend their enforcement. This raw assertion of authority goes well beyond the executive power granted to the President and specifically violates the Constitution's command that the President is to take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

Mr. Chairman, from ObamaCare to welfare and education reform to our Nation's drug enforcement laws and other areas of the law, President Obama has been picking and choosing which laws to enforce. In place of the checks and balances established by the Constitution, President Obama has proclaimed that "I refuse to take 'no' for an answer" and that "where Congress won't act, I will."

Throughout the Obama Presidency, we have seen a pattern: President Obama circumvents Congress when he doesn't get his way, but the Constitution does not confer upon the President the executive authority to disregard the separation of powers and rewrite acts of Congress based on his policy preferences. It is a bedrock principle of constitutional law that the President must faithfully execute the laws passed by Congress.

We cannot continue to allow the President to ignore the constitutional limits on executive power. The President's far-reaching claims of executive power, if left unchecked, will vest this and future Presidents with broad domestic policy authority that the Constitution does not grant.

As prominent law professor, Jonathan Turley, who testified that he voted for President Obama, warned in testimony before the Judiciary Committee:

The problem with what the President is doing is that he is not simply posing a danger to the constitutional system. He is becoming the very danger the Constitution was designed to avoid, that is, the concentration of power in a single branch.

That is why I join with Representative GOWDY and Chairman ISSA to introduce H.R. 4138, the ENFORCE the Law Act. This legislation puts a procedure in place to permit the House or the Senate to authorize lawsuits against the executive branch for failure to faithfully execute the laws.

The courts have held that lawsuits alleging institutional injuries must be brought by the injured institution itself, and H.R. 4138 is solidly in line with those judicial precedents. In addition, because it is an act of Congress, the ENFORCE the Law Act can apply

special court procedural rules to significantly increase the speed at which cases challenging the President's failure to faithfully execute are considered by the courts. These provisions are critical to ensure the President cannot simply stall a lawsuit until his term is up.

In addition, these provisions are similar to those that were in the Line Item Veto Act. Litigation challenging the constitutionality of the line item veto proceeded through the district court and was decided by the Supreme Court within 7 months of being filed.

The ENFORCE the Law Act will help overcome the hostility the courts have shown toward deciding disputes between the political branches in the past.

The Constitution's Framers did not expect the judiciary to sit on the sidelines and watch as one branch aggrandized its own powers and exceeded the authority granted to it by the Constitution; rather, the Constitution gives the Federal courts very broad jurisdiction to hear "all cases . . . arising under this Constitution and the laws of the United States." However, over time, the courts have read their own powers much more narrowly, refusing to exercise a vital check over unconstitutional action by the executive branch.

□ 1400

When the courts refuse to step in and umpire these disputes, they cede the field to this and future Presidents. The separation of powers is not strengthened by the refusal of the judicial branch to referee the division of power between the branches.

As then-Senator Obama observed in 2008:

One of the most important jobs of the Supreme Court is to guard against the encroachment of the executive branch on the power of other branches. And I think the Chief Justice has been a little bit too willing and eager to give an administration, whether its mine or George Bush's, more power than I think the Constitution originally intended.

The ENFORCE the Law Act will help ensure that, when Congress brings a lawsuit against the administration for its refusal to enforce the laws, the courts take up the cases and decide it expeditiously.

This legislation is a good first step toward ending this crisis and restoring balance to our system of government.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, the ENFORCE Act, like so many other bills that we have considered this Congress, is truly a solution in search of a problem.

It was made clear during the two full committee oversight hearings that we held on the Constitution's Take Care Clause, the President, in fact, fully met

his obligation to faithfully execute the laws.

So let us acknowledge what this legislation is really about. It is simply yet another attempt by the majority to prevent the President of the United States from implementing duly enacted legislative initiatives that they oppose.

Allowing the flexibility and the implementation of a new program, even where the statute mandates a specific deadline, is neither unusual nor a constitutional violation. It is the reality of administering sometimes complex programs and is part and parcel of the President's duty to "take care" that he "faithfully" execute laws.

This has been especially true with respect to the Affordable Care Act. The President's decision to extend certain compliance dates to help phase-in the act is not a novel tactic. And even though not a single court has ever concluded that reasonable delay in implementing a complex law constitutes a violation of the Take Care Clause, the majority insists that there is a constitutional crisis.

Additionally, the exercise of enforcement discussion is a traditional power of the Executive. For example, the decision to defer deportation of young adults who were brought to the United States as children, the DREAMers, is a classic exercise of such discretion.

H.R. 4138 could also have the perverse effect of preventing the President from taking steps to protect people's rights.

If H.R. 4138 had been law in 1861, the Congress could have sued President Lincoln for issuing the Emancipation Proclamation because Congress could have concluded that President Lincoln had failed to enforce then-existing laws protecting the institution of slavery, like the Fugitive Slave Law.

Likewise, if H.R. 4138 had been law in 1948, Congress could have sued President Truman for issuing Executive Order 9981, which desegregated the armed services in contravention of then-existing military policy.

And, it is no surprise that the Supreme Court has consistently held that the exercise of such discretion is a function of the President's power under the Take Care Clause.

As the Court held in *Heckler v. Chaney*:

An agency's decision not to prosecute or enforce, whether through civil or criminal process, is a decision generally committed to an agency's absolute discretion.

Even assuming there is a problem to address, H.R. 4138 is itself flawed because it violates fundamental separation of powers principles and may be unconstitutional as applied.

The ENFORCE Act would essentially allow Federal courts to second-guess decisions by the executive branch in a potentially vast range of areas that are committed under the Constitution to the discretion of the political branches like the conduct of foreign affairs.

Additionally, it is highly unlikely that Congress could satisfy the standing requirements of Article III of the Constitution, which are meant to reinforce the Constitution's separation of powers principles.

To meet those standing requirements, a plaintiff must show that it suffered a concrete and particularized injury. The kind of injury that would be the subject of a civil action under H.R. 4138, however, would amount only to an alleged violation of a right to have the administration enforce the law in a particular way.

In closing, I want to ask my colleagues when is enough enough? At what point can we say its time to put away the partisan rhetoric, the demagoguery, and the synthetic scandals and start really working on the issues the American people want solutions to.

The American people are waiting for us to take action on a host of issues that this House refuses to address—from securing fair pay for a fair day's work, extending unemployment insurance, and fixing our broken immigration laws.

So lets stop the games and finally get to work. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, at this time it is my distinct pleasure to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. GOWDY), a member of the Judiciary Committee and the chief sponsor of the legislation.

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank Chairman GOODLATTE for his leadership on this bill and a host of others in the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. Chairman, I want to have a pop quiz. That may seem unfair to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, but I am going to give them a hint: the answer to every one of the questions is the same. I am going to read a quote and then you tell me who said it:

These last few years, we have seen an unacceptable abuse of power, having a President whose priority is expanding his own power.

Any guess on who said that? Mr. Chairman, it was Senator Barack Obama.

Here is another one:

No law can give Congress a backbone if it refuses to stand up as the coequal branch the Constitution made it.

That was Senator Barack Obama.

What do we do with a President who can basically change what Congress passed by attaching a letter saying I don't agree with this part or that part?

Senator Barack Obama.

I taught the Constitution for 10 years. I believe in the Constitution.

Senator Barack Obama.

And my favorite, Mr. Chairman:

One of the most important jobs of the Supreme Court is to guard against the encroachment of the executive branch on the power of the other branches. And I think the Chief Justice has been a little too willing and eager to give the President more power than I think the Constitution originally intended.

So my question, Mr. Chairman, is how in the world can you get before the Supreme Court if you don't have standing? What did the President mean by that when he looked to the Supreme Court to rein in executive overreach? If you don't have standing, how can you possibly get before the Supreme Court?

So my question is, Mr. Chairman, what has changed? How does going from being a Senator to a President rewrite the Constitution? What is different from when he was a Senator?

Mr. Chairman, I don't think there is an amendment to the Constitution that I missed. I try to keep up with those with regularity, but what I do know is this: process matters. If you doubt it, Mr. Chairman, ask a prosecutor or a police officer, both of whom, as my friends on the other side of the aisle know, both of them are members of the executive branch. What happens when a police officer fails to check the right box on a search warrant application? The evidence is thrown out even though he was well-intended, even though he had good motivations, even though he got the evidence, because process matters.

What happens when the police go and get a confession from the defendant? He did it. This is not a who-done-it; he admitted he did it. You got the right person for the right crime, but what happens if he doesn't follow the process? The defendant walks free. The criminal defense attorneys who are now Congressmen on the other side of the aisle know that is exactly what they argued when they were before the judge; not that the end justifies the means. Don't look at the motivations, look at the process.

Mr. Chairman, we are not a country where the end justifies the means, no matter how good your motivations may be. We all swore an allegiance to the same document that the President swears allegiance to: to faithfully execute the law. So I will be listening intently during this debate for one of my colleagues to explain to me what does that phrase mean. What does it mean, not to execute the law, but when the Framers thought enough of that phrase to add the modifier "faithfully"? What does that mean?

If a President does not faithfully execute the law, Mr. Chairman, what are our remedies? Do we just sit and wait on another election? Do we use the power of the purse, the power of impeachment? Those are punishments; those are not remedies. The remedy is to do exactly what Barack Obama said to do: to go to court, to go to the Supreme Court and have the Supreme Court say once and for all.

We don't pass suggestions in this body, Mr. Chairman, we don't pass ideas; we pass laws, and we expect them to be faithfully executed.

□ 1415

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN), who is the ranking member of the Constitution Subcommittee of House Judiciary.

Mr. COHEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate you yielding.

Mr. Chairman, as some of my colleagues said so eloquently during last week's Judiciary markup on this bill, that the majority's attempts to turn routine exercises of Presidential discretion into constitutional violations is nothing but a show and a pretext to attack the President of the United States.

The hearing we had reminded me of a Woody Allen saying in a movie called *Bananas*. Acting as Fielding Mellish, he said this is "a travesty of a mockery of a sham of a mockery of a travesty of two mockeries of a sham." That is what this bill is, that is what that hearing was, and that is what this proceeding is.

H.R. 4138 would establish a process by which one House of Congress could sue the President when it determines the President failed to faithfully execute a law—one House, not two Houses. They talk about the separation of powers.

The separation of powers is executive and legislative, and legislative is Senate and House. The House originates spending bills, and the Senate confirms judges and things like that.

There was some discussion yesterday, and the chairman brought up a situation where the Senate went to the court on an issue concerning some appointments, which the Senate had exclusive jurisdiction on, but it is when they had exclusive jurisdiction.

In situations where there is a bill passed and the Senate and the House coshare equally, unless the Senate and the House both want to act, it is not separation of powers; it is one House trying to act as a star Chamber to take down the President of the United States.

This bill would, if enacted, represent a massive upending of the carefully calibrated separation of powers of our Constitution—one House, not the two Houses of Congress acting.

One of the gentleman who tried to defend this law in Rules Committee talked about something in Florida. Well, Florida, whatever they have got, they have got some kind of situation; but that was a quo warranto action where the Governor was acting beyond his authority, *ultra vires*.

It wasn't where the President is acting within his authority in his discretion and determining what is the best way to act, a difference between taking action and not taking action and taking action you are authorized not to take and taking action you are authorized to take. They didn't defend their position once correctly.

Congress lacks the standing to sue, and Mr. CONYERS has brought that up.

Standing requirements are necessary. Also, by drafting Federal Courts into deciding what are essentially political questions, the bill further upsets that separation of powers.

Questions about when and how to implement and enforce laws are within the President's discretion as the Take Care Clause makes clear. It is the President's duty alone to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, not the courts' and not Congress'. The courts rightly avoid involving themselves of disputes between the branches on questions of how law is executed. This bill flies in the face of such.

Ultimately, though, this bill and the larger debate surrounding it have nothing to do with the finer points of constitutional law. That is a red herring. It is a part of a broader attempt by Republicans to delegitimize anything that this President, Barack Obama, does.

Here, the majority complains, among other things, about the fact the President delayed implementation of certain provisions of the Affordable Care Act, like the employer mandates for medium and large businesses. The Rolling Stones had a song, sometimes you get what you want, sometimes you get what you need.

With the Affordable Care Act, they got what they wanted and what the President thought the country needed. Now, they are against it, holding the President up to ridicule and claiming it is the process, even though they are in agreement with the substance.

In Yiddish, that is called *chutzpah*; in law, it is called *estoppel*. In a Congress, it is called not being able to take yes for an answer.

I find it odd that this is what they choose to emphasize, that this President is acting in an allegedly unconstitutional way to undermine his own signature legislation.

It shows the depths of what Dana Milbank referred to as Obama derangement syndrome, where the President's opponents are so determined to thwart him, they will say anything, including reversing their own long-held views, if they believe doing so will weaken his stature.

This is unfortunate because President Obama has led where this Republican House has failed on immigration reform, on financial reform, on environmental protection, on the minimum wage, and, yes, on health care.

The thanks President Obama gets from this majority for his efforts to implement and enforce the laws as thoughtfully as he could is to be accused of violating the Constitution.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, at this time, it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GERLACH), another chief cosponsor of this legislation.

Mr. GERLACH. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of this legislation that strives to restore the coequal balance of power between the legislative and executive branches and would establish a procedure for making sure all Presidents are accountable for meeting their constitutional obligation to faithfully execute all duly-enacted laws.

Chairman GOODLATTE, Congressman GOWDY, and members of the Judiciary Committee have done an outstanding job highlighting the need for such legislation and explaining to the American people why it is important to ensure the legislative and executive branches are functioning as intended by the framers.

The bill before us today represents a collaborative effort to craft an effective legislative response to a series of unilateral actions by the President that he has taken in the last few years to selectively apply, enforce, and ignore duly-enacted laws.

The Affordable Care Act—or ObamaCare—a law written and enacted exclusively by the President and Members of his party, has been delayed, amended, and effectively rewritten about two dozen times in the past year.

The law hasn't changed by coming to Congress and working with us on reasonable changes or following the legislative process we were taught in high school civics. No, the law was modified because the President and his administration simply declared it to be changed, in most cases, on late Friday afternoons or right before a major holiday like Thanksgiving.

Today's vote is not about rehashing the debate over ObamaCare. The President has also unilaterally acted to suspend enforcement of immigration laws, stop the prosecution of nonviolent drug offenses, and nullify sections of Federal laws and education.

It is as if the President thinks our laws are written in pencil and it is his job to take a giant eraser to the parts he doesn't agree with and then scribble in some new words that fit his agenda; or as George Washington University Law Professor Jonathan Turley noted during his testimony recently:

President Obama's become the very danger the Constitution was designed to avoid, the concentration of power in any one of the branches.

If a President can unilaterally change the meaning of laws in substantial ways or refuse to enforce them, it takes offline that very thing that stabilizes our system.

After that hearing, I was able to introduce legislation to create a fast-track independent judicial review process that would settle disputes over whether a president has exceeded his constitutional authority and whether he has met his duty to faithfully execute the law.

The legislation today before us accomplishes those same goals. It represents a commonsense procedural reform that establishes a practical, effective solution to resolve serious questions of Executive overreach.

Our system of checks and balances was designed to prevent a President—or any other branch of the Federal Government—from being able to unilaterally declare a law by whatever that individual says it is at that point in time after the law was enacted.

No doubt Madison, Jefferson, and other Framers understood that allowing a concentration of power in one branch was a recipe for chaos and instability; so if Congress does not act and fails to hold a President accountable for executing the laws as written, how can we expect citizens to have any respect for the laws passed by this Chamber?

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support this bill to restore and preserve the delicate constitutional balance among the three branches of our Federal system and to take an important step in restoring the confidence of the public in our system of governance.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from California (Ms. LOFGREN), who is the ranking member of the Immigration Subcommittee on Judiciary.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Chairman, in the committee report that accompanies these bills, on page 13 and 14, there are three items that the majority says that the President can't do.

One is to defer action for the DREAMers, young people who are brought here innocently in violation of immigration laws; two, to allow the wives of American soldiers who are undocumented to stay and not be deported; and, finally, to allow parents who have been arrested for immigration to try and preserve their parental rights.

Is it legal for the President to take these actions? Certainly, it is. In *Heckler v. Chaney*, as well as in the *Arizona v. United States* court decision, the Supreme Court makes clear that, in immigration, the ability to enforce or decide not to enforce is part of the broad executive authority; and further, the United States Congress has actually delegated to the executive branch, at 6 U.S. Code 202, the national immigration enforcement priorities and policies to the President.

Now, is this anything new? No. We have paroled-in-place Cubans since John F. Kennedy was President. In 2010, a bipartisan group of members, including Congressman MICHAEL TURNER and MAC THORNBERRY from the Armed Services Committee and myself wrote and said: Please, Mr. President, don't deport the wives of American soldiers.

The President used his authority to do that as prior Presidents had done.

The use of parole in place is delegated to the President and nothing new.

Now, why is this important? These bills are drafted to keep the President from doing the things that he did to allow the children to stay and to allow the wives of American soldiers not to be deported.

I think that what the majority wants to do is to not only have a do-nothing Congress, but to have a do-nothing President. When it comes to immigration, this is very serious. We have had one vote on immigration here in the Congress that was on Congressman KING's bill to deport the DREAM Act kids.

We have heard a lot of discussion about a bill supposedly that is going to be brought forward by the majority about the innocent children who have been brought here, but we haven't seen a bill; instead, we see these bills, which would allow the Congress to overrule the President's action, so that the DREAM Act kids will be deported, so that the wives of soldiers who are in battle in Afghanistan would be deported, so that individuals who are caught up in an immigration problem would lose their children to social services, would lose their parental rights.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, at this time, it is my pleasure to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR), the majority leader.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Chairman, I thank Chairman GOODLATTE from Virginia for his leadership on this effort.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the ENFORCE the Law Act. Our Founders created a series of checks and balances for our democracy, to prevent any one of the three branches of government from becoming too powerful. This separation of powers has always been one of the most important pillars of our political system and an example of good governance for the world to follow.

For over 200 years, America has prospered because we adhere to a Constitution that makes each branch's role explicitly clear: the elected representatives in Congress pass laws, the President faithfully enforces them, and an independent judiciary adjudicates disputes.

This lesson is so important that we teach it to our school children and articulate it to our citizens, so they understand the rules of the road.

When we fail to uphold this system and one branch of government begins to tip the scales of power in its favor, we descend towards chaos. Today, we are seeing the system break down.

This administration's blatant disregard for the rule of law has not been limited to just a few instances. From gutting welfare reform and No Child Left Behind requirements to refusing to enforce immigration and drug laws, the President's dangerous search for expanded powers appears to be endless.

Whether one believes in the merit of the end goal or not, this is not how the executive branch was intended by our Founders to act.

These actions not only weaken the credibility of our political institutions, they also threaten our chances of returning to a time of robust job growth by creating uncertainty in the economy.

□ 1430

This has become most evident with the implementation of the President's disastrous health care law, which is wreaking havoc on small businesses, which is wreaking havoc on wage earners and families. Even *The Washington Post* ran a story this weekend detailing how arbitrary changes to ObamaCare are creating mass confusion for consumers. Our constituents deserve better.

Steps taken by this administration show that it doesn't care for the rule of law or for the balance of powers designed by our Founders. The only way to reestablish the intent of our Constitution is to create a process by which either Chamber of Congress can take the matter to court, which is what this legislation does. It goes hand in hand with the Faithful Execution of the Law Act, which we will consider later today. That bill requires the administration to tell Congress when they have decided that they don't like a law and are refusing to do the constitutional duty and enforce it.

These bills are not just about President Obama. What if future Republican Presidents decide that they don't like the tax increases enacted by Democrats in Congress or by a past Democratic President? Can that President just refuse to collect those taxes or resist enforcing laws he doesn't like? No. Any future President must work with Congress to seek changes in laws that need to be reformed. As James Madison said, "To see the laws fruitfully executed constitutes the essence of the executive authority."

We have an opportunity today to stand together in a bipartisan manner and put mechanisms in place to prevent the executive branch from continually abusing its power, and they will remain in place no matter which party controls the White House. So let us pass this legislation and show the American people that we are committed to a government that functions the way it was intended to—within the framework of our Constitution.

I want to thank Chairman GOODLATTE, Representative GOWDY, Representative DESANTIS, and the rest of the Judiciary Committee, who have worked so hard on this very important issue. I strongly urge my colleagues in the House to support the bill.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ).

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Chairman, the goal of the ENFORCE Act is to ensure that this do-nothing Congress forces President Obama to be a do-nothing President as well. It is not enough for the Republican majority to be setting records for how little they are doing. They expect the same do-nothingness from the President, especially on immigration.

What the Republicans have failed to do is to work with their Democratic colleagues to bring serious, realistic, and achievable immigration reform legislation to the floor, reform that is overwhelmingly popular with the American people. They worked with us for months. Then they decided they would rather deploy their sound bite strategy that the President can't be trusted to enforce the law—and walked away from negotiations. The Republicans put forward broad, vague but sensible principles they said would guide their reform efforts. Then, just as quickly, they decided they would deploy their sound bite strategy that the President can't be trusted to enforce the law—and walked away from the legislation.

I want to take a moment to show you this, and I want to point it over to my Republican colleagues in case they forgot. It is signed by LAMAR SMITH and Henry Hyde.

Here is what it says:

There has been widespread agreement that some deportations were unfair and resulted in unjustifiable hardships. If the facts substantiate the presentations that have been made to us, we must ask why the INS pursued removal in such cases when so many other, more serious cases existed.

You wrote the President of the United States, and asked then-President Clinton to use his discretionary power.

You said further in your letter:

It is well-grounded the prosecutorial discretion of the initiation and termination of removal proceedings. See attached referendum. Optimally, removal proceedings should be initiated—that is deportations—or terminated only upon specific instructions from authorized INS officials and issued in accordance with agency guidelines. However, the INS, apparently, has not yet promulgated such guidelines.

That is what the President of the United States did. He promulgated guidelines which you said that then-President Clinton would not promulgate. What were they? It was DACA. That is what he promulgated. He promulgated guidelines, and please don't tell me it was a group of people and that they had to do it individually. Tell the thousands of DREAMers who have been denied DACA that they didn't apply individually. Each and every case was applied individually. Each of them came before the authorities and said: I want to apply for this program under these guidelines promulgated by President Obama.

When he does it, I guess you don't care. I guess then we can't trust them.

No, you can't trust them, because you do not want to act, and you want to use it as an excuse.

Moreover, I want to read to you from the Republican principles on immigration. This is what your caucus put forward:

One of the greatest founding principles of our country was that children would not be punished for the mistakes of their parents. It is time to provide an opportunity for legal residence and citizenship for those who were brought to this country as children through no fault of their own and have no other place.

Yet, today, you want to take that very ability from the President of the United States.

The CHAIR. Members are reminded that they must direct their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds to point out that this legislation does two things: one, it expedites any court consideration of lawsuits brought under this legislation; two, it recognizes the distinction between constitutional standing and other standing that has been court created.

It says that that standing can be waived. That does not in any way determine what a court's ruling might be or even what its ruling would be on the standing of a particular lawsuit brought, but it strengthens the hand of the Congress—any Congress—and under the control of any leadership to determine whether or not to bring lawsuits.

At this time, it is my pleasure to yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), a leader of the House and a former chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. First of all, I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, for yielding me time, and I want to thank the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. GOWDY) for introducing this bill.

Mr. Chairman, very quickly in order to respond to what the gentleman from Illinois just said, quite frankly, he is smarter than that. He knows that the letter had to do with individual prosecutorial discretion, and he knows the President basically exempted broad categories of individuals and went far beyond individual discretionary prosecution.

H.R. 4138 authorizes either Chamber of Congress to challenge, as an institution, the administration's failure to faithfully execute the laws, and in accordance with the constitutional "separation of powers" doctrine, it protects the legislative branch of government from an overreaching Executive.

The Obama administration has ignored laws, failed to enforce laws, undermined laws, and changed laws by executive orders and administrative actions. These include laws covering health care, immigration, marriage,

drugs, and welfare requirements. Other Presidents have issued more executive orders, but no President has issued so many broad and expansive executive orders that have stretched the Constitution to its breaking point.

As for not enforcing laws, in 2011, the President instructed the Attorney General of the United States not to defend the Defense of Marriage Act in court. Recently, the Attorney General declared that State attorneys general are not obligated to defend laws they believe are discriminatory. At other times, the President has decided not to enforce immigration laws as they apply to entire categories of individuals, as I just mentioned, and the President has decreed a dozen changes to the Affordable Care Act, also known as ObamaCare.

But neither the President nor the Attorney General, himself, has the constitutional right to make or change laws.

The President and the Attorney General have a constitutional obligation to enforce existing laws. If they think a law is unconstitutional, they should wait for the courts to rule. Their opinions are no substitutes for due process and judicial review. It is their job to enforce existing laws, whether they personally like them or not.

Ours is a nation of laws, not a nation of random enforcement. All true reform starts with the voice of the people. If American voters rise up and speak loudly enough, they will be heard. Today, the United States House of Representatives is listening to them by bringing the ENFORCE the Law Act to the floor. I urge its adoption.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased now to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON), a ranking member of a subcommittee on the House Judiciary Committee.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H.R. 4138, the ENFORCE Act.

The ENFORCE Act seeks to diminish the power of the executive branch by giving Congress the ability to act as an enforcement agency.

As the most do-nothingness House of Representatives in American history, this body doesn't need any extra responsibilities, especially that which would be unconstitutional. The seminal case of *Marbury v. Madison* not only establishes judicial power to review the constitutionality of laws and actions, but it affirms the fact that we have three separate, coequal branches of government. If there is an issue with the President's failing to execute the laws, the Supreme Court has the authority by way of writ of mandamus to compel the President to act.

Have my righteously indignant friends on the other side of the aisle sought to use that process to check the alleged abuse of authority by the President?

No, they have not.

Why haven't they sued to force this President to enforce laws that they contend he has refused to implement?

They haven't sued because they know that they would not present a truthful case. They know that they would lose the case. They know that this President has not exceeded his constitutional authority.

This legislation is simply a showcase for the false narrative that the Republicans continue to perpetuate upon the American people. That false narrative is that this President is not an American, that he is not one of us, and that the President is a Communist-Socialist, who is doing everything he can to turn this Nation into a Third World country. That is a false narrative. Our Forefathers, by way of the United States Constitution, have already put safeguards in place to ensure that the Executive faithfully executes the laws passed by the legislative branch.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I offered an amendment to this patently absurd piece of legislation when it was considered by the Judiciary Committee. My amendment stressed the importance of protecting the delicate balance of power that the Constitution affords the legislative and executive branches.

The President has the right to choose how to set enforcement priorities with respect to immigration policy as well as the power to exercise discretion in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, at this time, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the chairman for yielding time.

Mr. Chairman, the Constitution and the laws of the land are not mere suggestions for any President, whether it is this President, future Presidents, or Presidents before us; but this administration, for some reason, continues to enforce laws that Congress passes and that have been signed by other Presidents.

Despite the constitutional phrase that the executive will "faithfully execute the law," the administration ignores the "faithful" part. He has been unfaithful in many cases of executing the laws of the land. The former constitutional law professor in the White House said he will rule by pen and phone.

Whatever happened to ruling by the Constitution? I guess we don't use that anymore.

If the administration doesn't like a law, the administration ignores the law. If the administration wants to

change a law rather than to go to Congress and let us work with the President to amend the law, the President just issues an edict and changes the law.

This has created a constitutional nightmare, a constitutional crisis—constitutional chaos—because we never know what is going to happen with the law of the land. Is it a mere suggestion or is it in concrete?

□ 1445

This is a democracy, not a kingdom. The United States President is not supposed to be an emperor, and not supposed to rule down from Mount Sinai about what he thinks the law should be.

We disagree on whether the President has abused that power or not. We will disagree on future Presidents. So what do we do about that?

Well, let's go to court. Let's resolve those issues in a court of law, where the Constitution and the law of the land is followed, Mr. Chairman.

That is all this bill does. It gets us in the courtroom. It allows us to make our case, they make their case on any particular issue, and then we will let an impartial judge make the decision.

I support the legislation.

And that's just the way it is.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure to yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlelady from California (Ms. CHU).

Ms. CHU. Mr. Chairman, once again, Republicans are attempting to restrict the President's constitutional authority of prosecutorial discretion.

Deferring deportations of DREAMers is squarely within the President's authority. It is right there under the Constitution's Take Care Clause.

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program is legally sound, makes sense, and is the right thing to do. These kids study in our schools. They play in our neighborhoods. They pledge allegiance to our flag. All they want to do is to continue calling their home "home."

Every day that Republicans stone-wall immigration reform, another 1,100 people are deported and families are split up. Instead, the ICE Parental Interest Directive protects the parental rights of detained parents. It does not limit immigration enforcement at all.

The directive is about family values. It is about American values. Bills like this waste time while thousands of families are separated. This must end now.

I urge a "no" vote on this bill.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire how much time is remaining on each side?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia has 11 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Michigan has 11½ minutes remaining.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, at this time it is my pleasure to yield 1½

minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER), the chairman of the House Administration Committee.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Chair, in our Republic, Congress debates and passes the laws, the President signs and enforces the law, and the judicial branch interprets the law. These checks and balances protect freedom and prevent the kind of tyranny which our revolution defeated by keeping any single branch or individual from gaining too much power.

Article II, section 3 of the Constitution says the President "shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed," and not maybe or not if it isn't really working the way that he would like. It says the President "shall faithfully execute the law."

The ENFORCE Act that we are debating today will simply give a House of Congress standing in Federal court to bring suit to make certain that the President upholds his constitutional responsibility to faithfully execute the law.

I have been listening to this debate. If my friends on the other side of the aisle and the President believe that all of the actions this administration has taken on ObamaCare are constitutional, then they should have no fear, Mr. Speaker, of giving Congress this standing.

I would urge all of my colleagues to join me in standing up for our Constitution and ensuring that the rule of law is followed in our great Nation.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, it is with great pleasure I yield 3 minutes to the gentlelady from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, let me thank the ranking member for his kindness, the managers of this legislation, and all of my colleagues that have come to the floor to try to seek truth.

We have often said, Truth to power. The Constitution is the powerful document that all of us abide by. We take an oath of office to do so.

Going through the markup, as we do in regular order, we as the loyal opposition over and over again try to query what was the truth of this legislation, what was the purpose of it, and how was it going to be valid in light of the Constitution and the powers that are inured to the Presidency.

The Presidency has executive powers, and those powers were on the basis of his or her ability to work with the three branches of government. Now we have legislation that wants to do a number of things, like abolish the powers of the Presidency—abolish them because you disagree with policy.

Believe me, all of us would like standing to challenge anything. We understand that when we made that attempt on several occasions, the courts

have said, You don't have standing; it is to the people.

So now we want to orchestrate that so that rather than the legislative process, which is given to the Congress, we desire to go and put ourselves in place on immigration reform; on protecting the environment; on questions of justice, whether it has to be ensuring that the election is unimpeded, whether it has to do with correcting policies that need to be corrected. We now want to get in front of that rather than doing it through the legislative process.

I am glad my colleagues have spoken about immigration, because one of the bills that did not come forward was to abolish a position that the administration has every right to utilize dealing with advocacy for undocumented who are in a detention center who are not charged particularly with criminal acts.

We already know that there is a veto threat, and it is a veto threat not for the present President of the United States but to uphold the Constitution.

So the charge is that there is no trust in this President and there is a violation of the Constitution—I can assure you that people beyond this body would raise the issue of constitutionality if it was real. It is not.

There are some professors who want to write a variety of law review papers and want to talk about how far we are exceeding our powers. These are purely addressing the question of the law and making sure that the law is applied fairly.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. I yield the gentlelady an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman very much.

I will conclude by saying that what this bill is doing is seeking to usurp the powers of the President, particularly President Obama, and my friends on the other side, although I never attribute any malfeasance or bad intentions to Members that come on this floor, we never did this with President Bush.

There was some question about signing statements, and some of us wanted to address the question of signing statements, but we never decided to be able to put on the floor of the House the complete abolishment of the powers of the Presidency.

I ask my colleagues to vote down this legislation because it is unconstitutional.

The purpose of the bill is to provide a mechanism for one House of Congress to enforce the "take care" clause in article II, section 3 of the United States Constitution, which requires the President to "take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed."

The bill authorizes either chamber of Congress to bring a civil action against the executive branch for failure to faithfully execute existing laws.

My colleagues on the other side argue that lawsuits by Congress to force the administration to enforce federal laws will prevent the president from exceeding his constitutional authority.

But the Supreme Court has constantly held that the exercise of executive discretion being taken by President Obama is within the president's powers under the Constitution.

But we must uphold the Constitution and that is why my amendment which I will hopefully bring before the House shortly, addresses situations.

It is hard to believe that I would even need an amendment which instructs the Executive Branch that it is okay to—ENFORCE THE LAW.

If separation-of-powers principles require anything, it is that each branch must respect its constitutional role.

When a court issues a decision interpreting the Constitution or a federal law, the other branches must abide by the decision.

The Executive Branch's ability to fulfill its obligation to comply with judicial decisions should not be hampered by a civil action by Congress pursuant to this bill.

Basic respect for separation of powers requires adoption of this amendment.

But that is exactly what this bill is doing—in seeking to usurp the powers of the president—particularly President Obama—my colleague whom I realize was a former prosecutor—has put forth a piece of legislation which baffles me.

In our Constitutional Democracy, taking care that the laws are executed faithfully is a multifaceted notion.

And it is a well-settled principle that our Constitution imposes restrictions on Congress' legislative authority, so that the faithful execution of the Laws may present occasions where the President declines to enforce a congressionally enacted law because he must enforce the Constitution—which is the law of the land.

In fact Mr. Chair, if the legislation raises no question of constitutionality, the laws that we pass in this pose complicated questions, and executing them can raise a number of issues of interpretation, application or enforcement that need to be resolved before a law can be executed.

This bill, H.R. 4138, The ENFORCE Act, has problems with standing, separation of powers, and allows broad powers of discretion incompatible with notions of due process.

The legislation would permit one House of Congress to file a lawsuit seeking declaratory and other relief to compel the President to faithfully execute the law. Any such decision would be reviewable only by the Supreme Court.

These are critical problems. First, Congress is unlikely to be able to satisfy the requirements of Article III standing, which the Supreme Court has held that the party bringing suit have been personally injured by the challenged conduct.

In the wide array of circumstances in which the bill would authorize a House of Congress to sue the president, that House would not have suffered any personal injury sufficient to satisfy Article III's standing requirement in the absence of a complete nullification of any legislator's votes.

Second, the bill violates separation of powers principles by inappropriately having courts address political questions that are left to the other branches to be decided.

And Mr. Chair I thought the Supreme Court had put this notion to rest as far back as *Baker v. Carr*, a case that hails from 1962. Baker stands for the proposition that courts are not equipped to adjudicate political questions—and that it is impossible to decide such questions without intruding on the ability of agencies to do their job.

Third, the bill makes one House of Congress a general enforcement body able to direct the entire field of administrative action by bringing cases whenever such House deems a President's action to constitute a policy of non-enforcement.

This bill attempts to use the notion of separation of powers to justify an unprecedented effort to ensure that the laws are enforced by the president—and I say one of the least creative ideas I have seen in some time.

I ask my colleagues to reject this legislation.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 15 seconds to remind those here that during the time that the other party was in the majority, they sued the Bush administration to enforce a subpoena related to Harriet Miers. All we are trying to do is that, when you do that, we make it very clear that there will be an expedited process.

We have sued to get documents for the Fast and Furious matter. That is more than 4 years old.

So we are only trying to make this process of holding up the powers of the House work better.

At this time I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO), a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Chairman, the President has shown a complete disregard for the rule of law. Rather than upholding and enforcing the laws as written by Congress, President Obama has decided to rewrite them however it pleases him.

The United States Constitution, to which every President swears an oath, commands that the President:

shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

As a former U.S. Attorney, I took an oath to execute fully my duties. I took this oath very seriously, and that meant following the rule of law, even though I disagreed with it.

It is time to hold the President accountable for violating his oath of office and restore balance between the three branches of government.

I would like to remind my colleagues that there is an old saying:

Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Just recently, the President was caught on an open mic saying:

I'm the President; I can do what I want.

My colleagues, I ask you to join me in supporting H.R. 4138, introduced by

my esteemed colleague on the Judiciary Committee, Representative TREY GOWDY.

The CHAIR. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I would like to remind my friend, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, that subpoenas are a regular exercise of power in the House of Representatives.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FOSTER).

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in opposition to the ENFORCE Act.

For 20 years, our immigration system has been left to rot due to congressional inaction. As a result, today we have over 11 million undocumented immigrants living in the shadows.

After 20 years of neglect, we finally have a commonsense immigration reform package that has already passed the Senate with bipartisan support and has an unprecedented array of support from religious groups, law enforcement, and business leaders throughout the country. It is rare to find a subject that labor leaders and the Chamber of Commerce can agree on, but both have called on Congress to promptly pass comprehensive immigration reform. Speaker BOEHNER and the House Republican leadership have ignored the millions of voices calling for reform, refusing even to bring it up for a vote.

Now, today, we are preparing to vote on the ENFORCE Act, legislation that would have the practical effect of ripping millions of young men and women away from the only home they have ever known.

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program has allowed countless undocumented youth to remain in the U.S. to attend our schools and to contribute to our economy.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chair, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. FOSTER. Instead of fixing our broken immigration system, Republicans are doubling down on costly deportation and detention practices that are costing taxpayers millions and tearing families apart.

Mr. Chairman, we can't fix the problem by ignoring the symptoms. We cannot fix our broken immigration system either with more deportations or specious constitutional arguments, which is exactly what Republicans are attempting to do today with the ENFORCE Act.

It is time for Republicans to stop inventing incoherent, self-serving, and self-contradictory lines of constitutional reasoning and to start listening to the millions of voices calling for action and pass comprehensive immigration reform.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to

the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Chairman, in our exceptional system of government the House and Senate pass laws which the President must "take care to faithfully execute." This is a bedrock principle of our Constitution.

President Obama has repeatedly exceeded the boundaries of the executive powers allowed to him in the Constitution. We have worked to check this overreach in the House, but the President has unilaterally decided to ignore, waive, or change laws without authorization from Congress.

Notably, President Obama has repeatedly created exemptions and delayed provisions to cover for the many broken promises of his health care law.

The legislation under consideration today will grant the House and Senate the authority to file suit against the President to simply force him to carry out his constitutional duty and enforce the law.

This should not be a partisan issue. The ENFORCE Act will protect all Americans and our system of government from overreach by Presidents of any political party.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Nevada (Ms. TITUS).

Ms. TITUS. I rise today in opposition to both H.R. 4138, the so-called ENFORCE Act, and H.R. 3973, Faithful Execution of the Law Act.

□ 1500

These bills reveal a Republican majority that is more interested in undermining the President that in serving the American people.

These bills could undo the critical actions that President Obama has taken to protect DREAMers. DACA gives DREAMers, including almost 10,000 who have applied in Nevada, the chance to pursue their American Dream. We should be encouraging these bright young people to explore their options and develop their talent, not to hide away in the shadows. These bills would take that opportunity away.

The bills would also undermine another executive action that gives the undocumented families of military members and veterans the chance to stay in the United States as long as they don't have a criminal record. Do we really want to tear apart the families of those who serve our Nation?

Instead of taking real steps to address the many problems our country faces, we are wasting time with these cheap political gimmicks, these sham constitutional arguments. So I would urge my colleagues to reject those and to vote against these harmful, unconstitutional bills.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire how much time is remaining on each side?

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee). The gentleman from Vir-

ginia has 6¾ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Michigan has 5 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 1 minute.

I want to respond to my good friend and the ranking member of the committee, Mr. CONYERS, regarding his comment about lawsuits brought with regard to a subpoena when the Democrats were in the majority.

I also want to point out, and I will ask at the appropriate time that the first page, since it is voluminous, and only the first page of each of four lawsuits that were brought by the gentleman from Michigan against three separate Presidents, Ronald W. Reagan, George W. Bush, and interestingly, Barack Obama, be inserted into the RECORD.

I would only point out that this legislation simply—when there is consensus, as there was not in those cases because only a few other Members joined the gentleman, but when there is consensus in an entire body, the House or the Senate votes to bring a lawsuit, that this would do two things.

It would expedite that process, so we don't have it drag on for years and years like the Fast and Furious case has been dragging on, and it would also make sure that only the standing issues that are in the United States Constitution would be a bar to bringing the lawsuit, and not court-administered, court-created standing issues.

So I urge my colleagues again to support the legislation.

[From LexisNexis]

John Conyers, Member, United States House of Representatives, et al., Appellants v. RONALD WILSON REAGAN, individually, and as President of the United States, et al.

No. 84-5171

United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit
765 F.2d 1124; 246 U.S. App. D.C. 371; 1985 U.S. App. Lexis 30754

January 18, 1985, Argued

June 28, 1985

Prior History: [*1] Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of Columbia (D. C. Civil Action No. 83-3430)

Counsel: Margaret A. Burnham, a member of the bar of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, pro hac vice, by special leave of court, with whom Michael D. Ratner, Frank E. Deale, John W. Garland, and William Genego, were on the brief, for Appellants.

John M. Rogers, Attorney, Department of Justice, with whom, Richard K. Willard, Acting Assistant Attorney General, Joseph E. DiGenova, United States Attorney, and Leonard Schaitman, Attorney, Department of Justice, were on the brief, for Appellees.

Theodore M. Lieberman, Ira J. Katz, and Alan Dranitzke, were on the brief for Amici Curiae National Lawyers Guild, et al., urging reversal.

Daniel J. Popco and Paul D. Kamenar, were on the brief for Amici Curiae U.S. Senators Strom Thurmond, et al., urging affirmance.

Judges: Tamm, Wald, and Bork, Circuit Judges. Opinion for the court filed by Circuit Judge Tamm.

Opinion by: Tamm.

Opinion: [*1125] Tamm, Circuit Judge:

This is an appeal from the dismissal, 578 F. Supp. 324, of a suit brought by eleven members of the United States House of Representatives challenging [**2] as unconstitutional the military invasion of Grenada in October of 1983. Because the actions complained of have long since ended, we dismiss the appeal as moot.

I. Background

A. The Invasion of Grenada

On October 25, 1983, United States military forces invaded the island nation of Grenada. At the time of the invasion, the political situation in Grenada was unstable: Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and other government officials had been assassinated on October 19, political power had been seized by a newly established Revolutionary Military Council under the leadership of Army Commander General Hudson Austin, and a 24-hour curfew had been declared. President Reagan stated that he [*1126] ordered the invasion to protect innocent lives, including approximately 1,000 Americans living in Grenada, to prevent further chaos and to assist in restoring law and order and government institutions to Grenada.

[From LexisNexis]

John Doe I, John Doe II, John Doe III, John Doe IV, Jane Doe I, Susan E. Schumann, Charles Richardson, Nancy Lessin, Jeffrey McKenzie, John Conyers, Dennis Kucinich, Jesse Jackson, Jr., Sheila Jackson Lee, Jim McDermott, Jose E. Serrano, Sally Wright, Deborah Regal, Alice Copeland Brown, Jerrye Barre, James Stephen Cleghorn, Laura Johnson Manis, Shirley H. Young, Julian Delgaudio, Rose Delgaudio, Danny K. Davis, Maurice D. Hinchey, Carolyn Kilpatrick, Pete Stark, Diane Watson, Lynn C. Woolsey, Plaintiffs, Appellants, v. George W. Bush, President, Donald H. Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, Defendants, Appellees.

No. 03-1266

United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit

323 F.3d 133; 2003 U.S. App. Lexis 4477

March 13, 2003, Decided

Subsequent History: As Amended March 18, 2003.

Rehearing denied by Doe v. Bush, 322 F.3d 109, 2003 U.S. App. Lexis 4830 (1st Cir., Mar. 18, 2003)

Prior History: [**1] Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts. Hon. Joseph L. Tauro, U.S. District Judge.

Doe v. Bush, 240 F. Supp. 2d 95, 2003 U.S. Dist. Lexis 3451 (D. Mass., 2003)

Doe v. Bush, 257 F. Supp. 2d 436, 2003 U.S. Dist. Lexis 2773 (D. Mass., 2003)

Disposition: Affirmed.

Counsel: John C. Bonifaz, with whom Cristobal Bonifaz, Law Offices of Cristobal Bonifaz, Margaret Burnham, Max D. Stern, and Stern Shapiro Weissberg & Garin were on the brief, for appellants.

Michael Avery on the brief for seventy-four concerned law professors, amici curiae.

D. Lindley Young on the brief amicus curiae in propria persona.

Gregory G. Katsas, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, with whom Robert D. McCallum, Jr., Assistant Attorney General, Michael J. Sullivan, United States Attorney, Douglas N. Letter, Attorney, Civil Division, Scott R. McIntosh, Attorney, Civil Division, and Teal Luthy, Attorney, Civil Division, were on the brief, for appellees.

Judges: Before Lynch, Circuit Judge, Cyr and Stahl, Senior Circuit Judges.

Opinion by: Lynch.

Opinion: [*134] Lynch, Circuit Judge. Plaintiffs are active-duty members of the military, parents of military personnel, and members of the U.S. House of Representatives. They filed a complaint in district court . . .

[From LexisNexis]

Honorable John Conyers, Jr., et al., Plaintiffs, v. George W. Bush, et al., Defendants.

Case No. 06-11972

United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division

2006 U.S. Dist. Lexis 80816

November 6, 2006, Decided

Counsel: [*1] For John Conyers, Jr., John D. Dingell, Honorable, Representing Michigan's 15th District, Charles B. Rangel, Representing New York's 15th district, George Miller, Honorable, Representing California's 7th District, James L. Oberstar, Honorable, Representing Minnesota's 8th District, Barney Frank, Honorable, Representing Massachusetts' 4th District, Collin C. Peterson, Honorable, Representing Minnesota's 7th District, Bennie Thompson, Honorable, Representing Mississippi's 2nd District, Fortney Pete Stark, Honorable, Representing California's 13th District, Sherrod Brown, Honorable, Representing New York's 29th District, Louise M. Slaughter, Honorable, Representing New York's 28th District, Plaintiffs: Mayer Morganroth, Lead Attorney, Morganroth and Morganroth, Southfield, MI.

For George W. Bush, President of the United States, Mike Johanns, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Carlos Guterrez, Secretary of the Department of Commerce, Margaret Spellings, Secretary of the Department of Education, Michael O. Leavitt, Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, Michael Chertoff, Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, Alphonso Jackson, Secretary of the [*2] Department of Housing and Urban Development, Norman Mineta, Secretary of the Department of Transportation, John Snow, Secretary of the Treasury, Bradley D. Belt, Executive Director, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, Leonidas Ralph Mecham, Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts; Defendants: Brian G. Kennedy, U.S. Department of Justice (Civil Division), Washington, DC.

For John F. Bovenzi, Chief Operating Officer, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Thomas Holzman, Lead Attorney, Federal Deposit Insurance Corp (Arlington), Arlington, Va.

Judges: Honorable Nancy G. Edmunds, United States District Judge.

Opinion by: Nancy G. Edmunds.

Opinion: Order Granting Defendants' Motions to Dismiss [17, 18]

This matter comes before the Court on Defendants' motions to dismiss, brought pursuant to Rules 12(b)(1) and 12(b)(6) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Defendants' motions argue that Plaintiffs do not have standing to bring this lawsuit; and, even if they did, the "enrolled bill rule" announced in *Marshall Field & Co. v. Clark*, 143 U.S. 649, 12 S. Ct. 495, 36 L. Ed. 294 (1892), forecloses Plaintiffs' from [*3] stating a claim for the relief they seek. For the reasons discussed below, Defendants' motions are Granted.

[From LexisNexis]

Dennis Kucinich, et al., Plaintiffs, v. Barack Obama, et al., Defendants.

Civil Action No. 11-1096 (RBW)

United States District Court for the District of Columbia

821 F. Supp. 2d 110; 2011 U.S. Dist. Lexis 121349

October 20, 2011, Decided

October 20, 2011, Filed

Counsel: [**1] For Dennis Kucinich, Member, U.S. House of Representatives, Ron Paul, Member, U.S. House of Representatives, Timothy V. Johnson, Member, U.S. House of Representatives, John J. Duncan, Jr., Member, U.S. House of Representatives, Howard Coble, Member, U.S. House of Representatives, Dan Burton, Member, U.S. House of Representatives, Michael E. Caputo, Member, U.S. House of Representatives, Roscoe Bartlett, Member, U.S. House of Representatives, John Conyers, Jr., Member, U.S. House of Representatives, Walter B. Jones, Member, U.S. House of Representatives, Plaintiffs: Jonathan Turley, Lead Attorney, George Washington Law School, Washington, DC.

For Barack Hussein Obama, II, President of the United States of America, Robert Gates, Secretary of Defense, Defendants: Eric R. Womack, Lead Attorney, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Judges: Reggie B. Walton, United States District Judge.

Opinion by: Reggie B. Walton.

Opinion: [*112] *Memorandum Opinion*

Is case in which the plaintiffs, ten members of the United States House of Representatives, filed a five-claim complaint against the defendants alleging, among other things, violations of the War Powers Clause of the United States Constitution, U.S. Const. art. I, §8, cl. 11, [**2] and the War Powers Resolution, 50 U.S.C. §§1541-1548 (2006), is before the Court on the defendants' motion to dismiss. For the reasons explained below, the defendants' motion will be granted.

1 In deciding the defendants' motion, the Court considered the following filings made by the parties: the Complaint for Injunctive and Declaratory Relief ("Compl."); the Memorandum in Support of Defendants' Motion to Dismiss ("Defs.' Mem."); the Plaintiffs' Memorandum of Points and Authorities in Opposition to Defendants' Motion to Dismiss ("Pls.' Opp'n"); and the Reply in Support of Defendants' Motion to Dismiss ("Defs.' Reply").

I. Background

2 Because the defendants' motion to dismiss raises purely legal questions, the Court will only briefly describe the facts underlying this lawsuit.

Viewed in the light most favorable to the plaintiffs, the facts currently before the Court are as follows. On . . .

Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. GOWDY).

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Chairman GOODLATTE.

I also want to thank my friend and colleague from the great State of South Carolina, Mr. TOM RICE, whose legal research and expertise and acumen and leadership is one of the reasons we are here today.

I also am curious about this notion of prosecutorial discretion. I am curious, even though I was a prosecutor for 16

years. I guess I am curious, Mr. Chairman, as to whether there are any limitations on this thing they call prosecutorial discretion.

Can the President refuse to enforce discrimination laws under that same theory of prosecutorial discretion?

Can the President refuse to enforce election laws under that same theory of prosecutorial discretion?

Mr. Chairman, how about term limits? Do we have to have an election in November?

I mean, if he is well-intentioned, as long as his heart is in the right place, if you can suspend other categories of laws, why not?

If prosecutorial discretion is as broad as our colleagues on the other side of the aisle want us to believe it is, are there any limits, Mr. Chairman, to this thing they call prosecutorial discretion?

There are laws that prohibit conduct, like laws against possession of child pornography. There are laws that require conduct, like filing a tax return in April. Is the Chief Executive equally capable of suspending both categories of law, Mr. Chairman? Is he?

Can he suspend those that require conduct as well as those that prevent conduct?

I am just trying to get an idea of what limits, if any, exist to this thing you call prosecutorial discretion.

Hearing none, Mr. Chairman, I know a little bit about it. It is case by case. It is on the facts. It is not the wholesale refusal to enforce the law.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Chairman, this legislation isn't just about bringing a lawsuit. I think it is important to note on page 13, 14 of the committee report, item 3, it says, unlawful extension of parole in place.

I think that shows what the majority thinks about that, and shockingly enough, that is the action that was taken by the President pursuant to express statutory authority, section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, to allow the wives of American soldiers to not be deported.

In July of 2010, a letter was sent to the Department signed by nine Democrats and nine Republicans. I will insert the letter into the RECORD. And we said this:

Although many of the immigration issues experienced by our men and women in uniform require legislative action, Congress has already given you tools to provide some relief to these brave soldiers and their families.

We urged them to consider deferred action, to favorably exercise parole authority for close family members and to forbear from initiating removal in certain cases.

Now, this is nothing new. We have used parole authority pursuant to the

Immigration Act in faithful enforcement of the law to prevent Cubans from being deported back to Cuba since John F. Kennedy was President of the United States.

For the majority to suggest that keeping the wives of American soldiers who were under fire in Afghanistan from being deported is, and I quote, "an unlawful extension of parole in place," I think it is a truly shocking, and I would say, very distressing and disturbing phenomenon. We knew that the majority wanted to deport the DREAM Act kids because they voted for the King amendment last year. When Democrats took the DREAM Act up for a vote, all but eight voted against it.

But that you want to deport the wives of American soldiers in Afghanistan, I am sorry, is a new low.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 9, 2010.

Hon. JANET NAPOLITANO,
Secretary of Homeland Security, Department of Homeland Security, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY NAPOLITANO: We write to commend your attention to a May 8, 2010 New York Times article entitled, "Illegal Status of Army Spouses Often Leads to Snags." It describes the struggle of U.S. Army Lt. Kenneth Tenebro to serve his country while at the same time navigating a complex immigration system that has, thus far, failed to grant legal immigration status for his wife, Wilma.

The article explains that Lt. Tenebro, served one tour of duty in Iraq, dodging roadside bombs, and he would like to do another. But throughout that first mission, he harbored a fear he did not share with anyone in the military. Lieutenant Tenebro worried that his wife, Wilma, back home in New York with their infant daughter, would be deported.

Although Lt. Tenebro would like to continue deploying for combat, today he does not volunteer for deployment for fear of losing his wife to deportation and because he does not know what would happen to his three-year-old daughter while he is away on a military mission.

Lt. Tenebro is not alone. Many soldiers are unable to secure legal immigration status for their family members, even as they risk their lives for our country. Some have testified before Congress about their own stories and those of fellow soldiers they seek to assist.

This is not only an issue of keeping U.S. citizen families together. It is a military readiness issue. After 33 years of service, Retired Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, a former commander of ground forces in Iraq, stated in a 2008 letter to the House Committee on the Judiciary, "We should not continue to allow our citizenship laws and immigration bureaucracy to put our war-fighting readiness at risk." He explained:

As a battlefield commander, the last thing I needed was a soldier to be distracted by significant family issues back home. Resolving citizenship status for family members while serving our country, especially during combat, must not be allowed to continue detracting from the readiness of our forces. When soldiers have to worry about their families, individual readiness falters—which can lead to degradation in unit effectiveness

and the risk of mission failure. I have personally witnessed this on the battlefield.

Although many of the immigration issues experienced by our men and women in uniform require legislative action, Congress has already given you tools to provide some relief to these brave soldiers and their families. We hope that you will use all the power at your disposal to assist Lt. Tenebro and other soldiers, veterans, and their close family members to attain durable solutions. For example, DHS can join in motions to reopen cases where there may be legal relief available; consider deferred action where there is no permanent relief available but significant equities exist, such as deployment abroad; favorably exercise its parole authority for close family members that entered without inspection; forbear from initiating removal in certain cases where equities warrant exercise of prosecutorial discretion; and, other tools that would ease the burden for soldiers suffering from immigration-related problems to the extent that the current law allows. Of course, we expect that you will continue to conduct all necessary national security and criminal background checks before providing relief in any case.

As this country is engaged in two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, we must do everything we can to address the immigration needs of our soldiers. As Lt. Gen. Sanchez stated,

It matters greatly that those who fight for this country know that America values their sacrifices. As leaders, it is our duty to sustain the readiness, morale and war-fighting spirit of our warriors. We must not fail them for America's future depends on their sacrifices and their willingness to serve.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your immediate response.

Sincerely,
Zoe Lofgren; John Conyers, Jr.; Mac Thornberry; Mike Pence; Howard Berman; Silvestre Reyes; Solomon Ortiz; David Price; Henry Cuellar; Xavier Becerra; Susan Davis; Ileana Ros-Lehtinen; Sam Johnson; Michael Turner; Adam Putnam; Lincoln Diaz-Balart; Mario Diaz-Balart; Anh "Joseph" Cao.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, at this time I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. HURT).

Mr. HURT. Mr. Chair, I thank the chairman for yielding, and I thank the gentleman from South Carolina for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the ENFORCE Act which reins in the growing problem of executive overreach in this administration, and helps reestablish the checks and balances inherent in our Constitution.

Our founders crafted a Constitution with limited and enumerated powers for the three branches of government. Unfortunately, executive branch overreach, especially into the prerogatives of the legislative branch, has significantly increased in recent years.

This overreach is so significant that this administration has not only ignored and undermined statutory requirements, it has effectively made law without congressional consent.

While the executive branch undoubtedly has great powers, the Constitution expressly prohibits it from picking and

choosing which laws it will enforce. If the constitutional limits on executive power are simply being ignored, it is up to Congress to demand accountability on behalf of the American people.

This should not be a partisan issue but, instead, should focus on restoring the proper role of the executive to ensure that the laws of Congress that are passed are faithfully executed.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this legislation which restores the balance of power to our government and preserves the foundation of our Constitution.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to close if the other side is ready.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, we have only one closing speaker remaining, so if the gentleman is prepared to close, we will close right after.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Ladies and gentlemen, let's acknowledge that this legislation is really another attempt by some of the Members here in the majority to prevent the President of the United States from implementing duly-enacted legislative initiatives that they oppose. It is rather unusual.

But I want to ask my colleagues, friends, when is enough enough?

At what point can we say, it is time to put away rhetoric of a partisan nature, of demagoguery, and of synthetic scandals and start really working on the issues that many people in this country really want solutions to?

We have constituents, and so do you, that are waiting for us to take action on a host of problems that this House refuses to address, from securing fair pay for a fair day's work, to extending unemployment insurance, and also in the Judiciary Committee, fixing our broken immigration laws. So let's put aside some of the business that has gone on here today and finally get to work.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

This House has passed close to 200 bills that are piled up in the United States Senate that create jobs, that promote domestic energy production, that reform our out-of-control Federal regulatory process in this country, but it is also well worth taking our time to protect this institution's prerogatives and the people.

Here in the people's House, we represent the interests of the people of this country, and to uphold the powers, the article I powers of the House, is vitally important.

The Constitution provides that "all legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States."

Yet, the current administration has unilaterally sought to rewrite the law,

not by working with the people's elected representatives, but through:

blog posts like this one, which removes penalties for employers who would otherwise be required to provide insurance coverage for their employees;

regulatory "fact sheets" like this one, which creates an entirely new category of businesses and exempts them from their responsibility under the law;

letters such as this one, which acknowledges that people are having their health insurance terminated under ObamaCare, in violation of the President's promise that "if you like your health care plan, you can keep it," and then claims to suspend the law's insurance requirement to a date uncertain.

This one letter alone suspends the application of eight key provisions of ObamaCare, namely, those requiring fair health insurance premiums, guaranteeing the availability of coverage, guaranteeing renewable coverage, prohibiting exclusions for preexisting conditions, prohibiting discrimination based on health status and others.

Why is this being done?

To delay the terrible consequences of ObamaCare until after the next election. As this headline from The Hill newspaper announced just last week: "New ObamaCare delay to help mid-term Dems: Move will avoid cancellation wave before Election Day."

These actions are not supported by the United States Constitution. It is time for Congress and the judiciary to act. This bill would empower the Congress and the judiciary to remind the President that ours is a system of government consisting of three separate, coequal branches, not one-branch control of our government.

Support the ENFORCE the Law Act, and restore the constitutional basis for the American system of government and the rule of law.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1515

The Acting CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-43. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 4138

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Executive Needs to Faithfully Observe and Respect Congress-

sional Enactments of the Law Act of 2014" or the "ENFORCE the Law Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION TO BRING CIVIL ACTION FOR VIOLATION OF THE TAKE CARE CLAUSE.

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Upon the adoption of a resolution of a House of Congress declaring that the President, the head of any department or agency of the United States, or any other officer or employee of the United States has established or implemented a formal or informal policy, practice, or procedure to refrain from enforcing, applying, following, or administering any provision of a Federal statute, rule, regulation, program, policy, or other law in violation of the requirement that the President take care that the laws be faithfully executed under Article II, section 3, clause 5, of the Constitution of the United States, that House is authorized to bring a civil action in accordance with subsection (c), and to seek relief pursuant to sections 2201 and 2202 of title 28, United States Code. A civil action brought pursuant to this subsection may be brought by a single House or both Houses of Congress jointly, if both Houses have adopted such a resolution.

(b) *RESOLUTION DESCRIBED.*—For the purposes of subsection (a), the term "resolution" means only a resolution—

(1) the title of which is as follows: "Relating to the application of Article II, section 3, clause 5, of the Constitution of the United States."

(2) which does not have a preamble; and

(3) the matter after the resolving clause which is as follows: "That _____ has failed to meet the requirement of Article II, section 3, clause 5, of the Constitution of the United States to take care that a law be faithfully executed, with respect to _____." (the blank spaces being appropriately filled in with the President or the person on behalf of the President, and the administrative action in question described in subsection (a), respectively).

(c) *SPECIAL RULES.*—If the House of Representatives or the Senate brings a civil action pursuant to subsection (a), the following rules shall apply:

(1) The action shall be filed in a United States district court of competent jurisdiction and shall be heard by a 3-judge court convened pursuant to section 2284 of title 28, United States Code.

(2) A final decision in the action shall be reviewable only by appeal directly to the Supreme Court of the United States. Such appeal shall be taken by the filing of a notice of appeal within 10 days, and the filing of a jurisdictional statement within 30 days, of the entry of the final decision.

(3) It shall be the duty of the United States district courts and the Supreme Court of the United States to advance on the docket and to expedite to the greatest possible extent the disposition of any such action and appeal.

The Acting CHAIR. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part A of House Report 113-378. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. CONYERS

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part A of House Report 113-378.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add, at the end of the bill, the following:

(d) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this Act limits or otherwise affects any action taken by the President, the head of a department or agency of the United States, or any other officer or employee of the United States in order to—

- (1) combat discrimination; or
- (2) protect the civil rights of the people of the United States.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 511, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen of the House, my amendment would exclude actions to combat discrimination and protect civil rights enforcement from the scope of this bill before us.

The last thing we should want to do as a Congress is to pass legislation that makes it more difficult to protect our citizens' civil rights, by executive action or otherwise; yet if H.R. 4138 had been law, several of the most critical civil rights milestones of our Nation would have been subject to unnecessary congressional challenge in the courts.

In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued perhaps the most important executive order in our Nation's history, the Emancipation Proclamation; and by this order, Lincoln freed the slaves in those southern States that were engaged in military conflict with the Union.

By doing so, Lincoln not only encouraged slaves to take up arms in fighting the Civil War for the Union, he also struck a blow for freedom that resonated around the world.

By issuing the order, however, President Lincoln made a decision to not enforce then-existing laws, protecting the institution of slavery, including the Federal Fugitive Slave Act.

Clearly, history has shown Lincoln's decision to be not only a legal and a military turning point, but morally correct; and clearly, had the so-called ENFORCE Act been law, the Emancipation Proclamation could have been subject to an unnecessary and unhelpful legal challenge in the courts from the Congress.

Another example is President Truman's Executive Order 9981 issued in 1948 that desegregated the United States military. With more than 125,000 African Americans serving overseas in World War II, this was a worthwhile and appropriate action by the President.

Nevertheless, by issuing this order, Truman contravened the then-military

policy of segregating certain African American military units from white units.

Again, had this bill before us been law, it would have permitted an unnecessary congressional legal challenge in the courts, and such a challenge would not have been politically unpopular in many quarters.

Remember that 1948 was the year that Strom Thurmond bolted from the Democratic Party to form the Dixiecrats and went on to carry four States and strongly compete in many others in the Presidential election.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to please consider the unintended consequences of the legislation before us. It would not only represent a permanent stain on the principle of separation of powers written by our Founding Fathers into the Constitution, but it would make it far more difficult to protect our citizens' civil rights and other constitutional protections.

Accordingly, I urge a "yes" vote to protect civil rights, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I oppose this amendment, as it would allow the President to rewrite the civil rights laws on his own without any accountability in court.

The amendment, if adopted, would literally provide that nothing in the bill shall affect any action taken by the President or by the head of an agency or, indeed, any action taken by "any other officer or employee of the United States," with regards to the protections provided under the civil rights laws.

If adopted, this amendment would immunize from accountability in court this President and any President and other Federal employees when they fail to enforce the civil rights laws, as written.

What if a President decides that certain groups should not be protected under the civil rights laws and fails to enforce those laws to protect certain groups?

Indeed, what if any entry-level employee of the Federal Government decides the civil rights laws should not be enforced to protect certain groups that are protected under the clear terms of the civil rights laws?

This amendment, if adopted, would immunize the President or any entry-level employee of the executive branch from accountability.

In fact, this amendment stands for the very policy this bill opposes. This bill provides for holding accountable the President or any other Federal employee whenever they fail to faithfully execute the law.

This amendment, in stark contrast, would prevent the Federal courts from ordering the President and other Federal officials to enforce the civil rights laws when they are failing to faithfully execute them.

It was a sad day when Members of this House stood up and applauded this President when he said, during his State of the Union Address, that he would seek to circumvent Congress when the people's duly elected Representatives oppose his proposals and when a senior member of the Senate called for the President to unilaterally stop enforcing the law against certain individuals if legislation is not passed by September, as Senator SCHUMER did last Thursday.

It is another sad day when an amendment is offered to explicitly shield the President or any other Federal employee from accountability when their actions are not authorized by the laws enacted by the people's elected Representatives.

The President should not be above the law; and by that, I mean any law, not the least of which are the civil rights laws of the United States.

Because this amendment would codify the terrible policy of allowing a President carte blanche to enforce or not enforce the civil rights laws as he deems fit, it should be opposed by every Member of this body, especially those who would like to see the civil rights laws protect everyone, as they are written.

Mr. NADLER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOODLATTE. I would be happy to yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. NADLER. I thank the gentleman. Isn't it true, sir, that the language that you read from the amendment says "nothing in this bill"? It means that if the amendment were passed, the ability of the Congress or the courts to enforce the law against the President would be exactly the same as if the bill didn't pass, so it wouldn't immunize the President from the current law.

It would immunize him from whatever new thing the bill would do, but not from the current law and whatever ability the courts have to restrain the President from not enforcing civil rights laws right now.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Reclaiming my time, the amendment is clear that it would prohibit the language of the bill from bringing a lawsuit when the President fails to enforce the civil rights laws.

Mr. Chairman, I oppose the amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Chair, as chair of the Committee on Rules, I want to take a moment to address the procedural status of the resolutions discussed in this measure. It is my understanding that the resolutions contemplated

by H.R. 4138 would not be privileged or otherwise subject to expedited procedures in the House. Because there would be no procedural ramifications for a measure failing to adhere to the statutory prescription, there should be no occasion for the Chair to rule on whether or not that measure meets the definition of a "resolution" as that term is used in H.R. 4138.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. NADLER

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part A of House Report 113-378.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add, at the end of the bill, the following:

(d) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this Act limits or otherwise affects the constitutional authority of the executive branch to exercise prosecutorial discretion.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 511, the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment adds a new section to the bill to ensure that the President retains the well-established constitutional authority to exercise prosecutorial discretion when enforcing our laws.

H.R. 4138 would empower either the House or the Senate to file a lawsuit whenever one House disagrees with how the executive branch is implementing a law. The bill applies to enforcement decisions made by any officer or employee of the United States, thus reaching into every decision across hundreds of thousands of "Federal statutes, rules, regulations, programs, policies, or other laws."

H.R. 4138 is a practical nightmare. It invites endless costly litigation over policy disagreements that do not raise any legitimate constitutional concerns. We need look no further than the examples cited by the sponsors of this bill to see that this is true.

Far from representing a violation of the Take Care Clause, President Obama's decision to delay—not to refuse—enforcement of various deadlines under the Affordable Care Act are reasonable implementation decisions

that are designed to ensure the ultimate success of the President's signature law. Delaying implementation of a complex law is not unusual.

Similarly, the administration's setting of immigration enforcement priorities falls well within its exercise of prosecutorial discretion and raises no legitimate constitutional concern.

The administration's decision to provide temporary relief from removal for certain DREAMers—young adults brought to the United States as children—complies both with Congress' statutory directive to establish national immigration enforcement priorities and within the President's responsibility to exercise prosecutorial discretion under the Take Care Clause of the Constitution.

While my colleagues now seek to drag courts into nonjusticiable political disputes, the fact of the matter is that no court has ever found delay in implementation of a law or the routine exercise of criminal or civil enforcement powers to constitute a violation of the Take Care Clause.

The fact is that courts likely will refuse jurisdiction over lawsuits brought by Congress against a President because H.R. 4138 violates bedrock principles of constitutional law.

The Supreme Court has long recognized that the Take Care Clause vests the President with "broad" discretion to determine when, against whom, how, and even whether to prosecute apparent violations of the law.

In *Heckler v. Chaney*, for example, the Court confirmed this core principle when it recognized that:

An agency's refusal to institute proceedings shares to some extent the characteristics of the decision of a prosecutor in the executive branch not to indict—a decision which has long been regarded as the special province of the executive branch, inasmuch as it is the Executive who is charged by the Constitution to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed."

The injection of Congress and the courts into decisions that the Constitution squarely commits to the President's discretion raises significant separation of powers concerns. It also lies beyond the purview of the courts to accept any such case under the Supreme Court's political question jurisprudence.

In *Baker v. Carr*, the Supreme Court made clear that the courts cannot and will not interfere in matters that the Constitution commits to a coordinate branch of government.

My amendment seeks to mitigate H.R. 4138's unconstitutional encroachment into the President's authority to faithfully execute the law by adding a new subsection (d) to ensure that nothing in H.R. 4138 "limits or otherwise affects the clearly established constitutional authority of the executive branch to exercise prosecutorial discretion."

My amendment cures one of H.R. 4138's many constitutional infirmities.

I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, Mr. NADLER's amendment purports to clarify that nothing in this legislation limits or otherwise affects prosecutorial discretion. If this amendment is adopted, it will only serve to cause confusion regarding the scope of the President's duty under the Take Care Clause and the ability of Congress to bring a lawsuit pursuant to this legislation.

The underlying bill provides that the House or Senate may authorize a lawsuit based upon adoption of a resolution declaring that the executive branch "established or implemented a formal or informal policy, practice, or procedure to refrain from enforcing" Federal law in violation of the Take Care Clause.

Adoption of a "policy, practice, or procedure" is not an exercise in prosecutorial discretion; rather, the exercise of prosecutorial discretion involves a determination as to whether a particular individual or entity should be the subject of an enforcement action for past conduct.

□ 1530

In other words, nothing in this bill limits prosecutorial discretion. Thus, inserting into the bill an exception for the undefined term "prosecutorial discretion" would only serve to cause confusion.

Worse, including an exception for prosecutorial discretion would also allow the executive branch to move to dismiss every case brought pursuant to this bill on the grounds that it was merely exercising prosecutorial discretion. This would result in costly and wasteful delays in the court's ability to decide the merits of these important separation of powers disputes in a timely manner.

Additionally, if adopted, the amendment would cause confusion as to the meaning of the Take Care Clause itself. The clause imposes an affirmative duty on the President to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed." This amendment proposes to interpret that duty by codifying into statutory law that there is a "constitutional authority of the executive branch to exercise prosecutorial discretion."

However, unlike the duty imposed by the Take Care Clause, the words "prosecutorial discretion" appear nowhere in the text of the Constitution. We should not place an undefined limit on the Take Care Clause into the United States Code.

Finally, the amendment would, in practice, act to prohibit the Federal

courts from further refining the contours of appropriate prosecutorial discretion. The base bill seeks to encourage courts to engage in active constitutional issues, not to put entire categories of subjects off-limits from review by the Federal courts.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, how much time remains?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from New York has 1½ minutes remaining.

Mr. NADLER. I will yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Chairman, this is about deporting the DREAM Act students. On page 13 of the committee report, the majority calls out for condemnation the exercise of prosecutorial discretion relative to the DREAMers. It is quite a departure from when Republicans joined with Democrats to say that it is well established that prosecutorial discretion can be used in immigration cases and asking that guidelines be developed and be implemented and used for categories of individuals.

In fact, the “discretion” in “prosecutorial discretion” comes from the Take Care Clause. That is what the Supreme Court has told us. That is the guidance we have from the highest law in the land.

What this is really about, Mr. Chairman, is about the majority’s apparently voracious appetite to deport these young people. That is why the deportation of DREAMers is called out in the committee report. It is why they oppose prosecutorial discretion. I think it is quite a shame.

Mr. GOODLATTE. May I inquire how much time each side has remaining?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia has 2½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from New York has 30 seconds remaining.

Mr. GOODLATTE. At this time, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. GOWDY).

Mr. GOWDY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, prosecutorial discretion encompasses the executive power to decide whether to bring charges, seek punishment, penalties, or sanctions. This next line is really important. It does not include the power to disregard other statutory obligations.

Mr. Chairman, that is from a United States Supreme Court case. So, I guess my question is: I have heard about immigration. I haven’t mentioned immigration. I want to talk about mandatory minimums in drug cases. That has been the law for 20-something years. You have X amount of methamphetamine, you get X amount of time in prison. It is called a mandatory min-

imum. Are you telling me that the phrase “prosecutorial discretion” includes the Attorney General telling his prosecutors to disregard the law, not to not prosecute the case? That would be consistent. He is not telling them not to prosecute the case. He is telling them don’t inform the judiciary of the drug amounts. That is not prosecutorial discretion; that is anarchy.

So, yes, Mr. NADLER, I agree—or my friend from New York, I agree, Mr. Chairman, with the concept of prosecutorial discretion. I used it for 16 years. But your amendment does not define it. And my fear is—while my friend from New York would never do this, my fear is some may overread it to include allowing a President to disregard obligations that we place on him or her, and under no theory of prosecutorial discretion is that legal.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I don’t have the time to answer all of Mr. GOWDY’s arguments except to say that if this bill were to pass, which it won’t because the Senate won’t look at it, but if the bill were to pass and if my amendment were adopted, it would simply make it easier for the courts to define what prosecutorial discretion is and is not, and I am confident that they would agree with Mr. GOWDY as to some of the horrors not being prosecutorial discretion. But since it would put prosecutorial discretion as an exception to the bill, then you could get a judicial determination as to what prosecutorial discretion is and what it isn’t.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, for the reasons already cited, I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment which would gut the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York will be postponed.

The Acting CHAIR. The Committee will rise informally.

The Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GOWDY) assumed the chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

EXECUTIVE NEEDS TO FAITHFULLY OBSERVE AND RESPECT CONGRESSIONAL ENACTMENTS OF THE LAW ACT OF 2014

The Committee resumed its sitting.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON LEE

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina). It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part A of House Report 113-378.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add, at the end of the bill, the following:

(d) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this Act limits or otherwise affects the ability of the executive branch to comply with judicial decisions interpreting the Constitution or Federal laws.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 511, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, frankly, maybe I should offer a good thanks to the distinguished members of the majority, the Republicans, my chairman and others, for giving us an opportunity to have a deliberative constitutional discussion that reinforces the sanctity of this Nation and how well it is that we have lasted some 400 years operating under a Constitution that clearly defines what is constitutional and what is not.

The ENFORCEMENT Act is not constitutional, but it gives us an opportunity to raise these issues. That is what freedom is. That is what the opportunity of democracy is all about. So the Jackson Lee amendment engages in this discussion to reinforce that there are constitutional problems with the ENFORCE Act.

My amendment excludes from the scope of the bill any executive action taken to comply with judicial decisions interpreting the constitutional Federal laws. The amendment would ensure that one House of Congress cannot initiate dilatory legal challenges when executive actions were taken to comply with the judicial decisions.

A couple of weeks ago, I believe in the month of February, the Speaker of the House came forward regarding a serious issue when they announced that they were prepared to move forward with discussions on immigration reform. Then, less than 5 days later, the Speaker took to the airwaves and indicated that that offer of bipartisanship has been pulled down because of the trust question of the President of the United States.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot tell you what happened in those 5 days. The President led the country; the President

provided for the country; the President listened to the American people; the President has been the Commander in Chief; and the President has provided that kind of fiscal responsibility working on the omnibus, the budget, and I don't know what happened.

But what I will say to you is I can see no reason for this kind of legislation to come to the floor of the House and to be able to clearly poke a spear, if you will, in the eye of article 2 that says, "The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America." This President has that power.

My amendment will ensure that whatever passes here allows the President to be able to handle the business of the American people through judicial and Federal statutes without interference. I would ask my colleagues to support my amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Chair, I thank you for allowing a chance to explain my amendment.

The purpose of H.R. 4138 is to provide a mechanism for one House of Congress to enforce the "take care" clause in article II, section 3 of the United States Constitution, which requires the President to "take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed—but in fact has the opposite effect."

That is why my amendment protects the ability of the Executive Branch to comply with judicial decisions interpreting the Constitution or Federal laws.

The Jackson Lee Amendment excludes from the scope of the bill any executive action taken to comply with judicial decisions interpreting the Constitution or Federal laws.

The amendment would ensure that one house of Congress could not initiate dilatory legal challenges when executive actions were taken to comply with judicial decisions.

The bill authorizes either chamber of Congress to bring a civil action against the executive branch for failure to faithfully execute existing laws.

My colleagues on the other side argue that lawsuits by Congress to force the administration to enforce federal laws will prevent the president from exceeding his constitutional authority, but the Supreme Court has constantly held that the exercise of executive discretion being taken by President Obama is within the president's powers under the Constitution.

It is hard to believe that I would even need an amendment which instructs the Executive Branch that it is okay to—ENFORCE THE LAW.

If separation-of-powers principles require anything, it is that each branch must respect its constitutional role.

When a court issues a decision interpreting the Constitution or a federal law, the other branches must abide by the decision.

The Executive Branch's ability to fulfill its obligation to comply with judicial decisions should not be hampered by a civil action by Congress pursuant to this bill.

Basic respect for separation of powers requires adoption of this amendment.

But that is exactly what this bill is doing—in seeking to usurp the powers of the presi-

dent—particularly President Obama—my colleague whom I realize was a former prosecutor—has put forth a piece of legislation which baffles me.

In our Constitutional Democracy, taking care that the laws are executed faithfully is a multifaceted notion.

And it is a well-settled principle that our Constitution imposes restrictions on Congress' legislative authority, so that the faithful execution of the Laws may present occasions where the President declines to enforce a congressionally enacted law because he must enforce the Constitution—which is the law of the land.

In fact Mr. Chair, if the legislation raises no question of constitutionality, the laws that we pass in this pose complicated questions, and executing them can raise a number of issues of interpretation, application or enforcement that need to be resolved before a law can be executed.

This bill, H.R. 4138, The ENFORCE Act, has problems with standing, separation of powers, and allows broad powers of discretion incompatible with notions of due process.

The legislation would permit one House of Congress to file a lawsuit seeking declaratory and other relief to compel the President to faithfully execute the law. Any such decision would be reviewable only by the Supreme Court.

These are critical problems. First, Congress is unlikely to be able to satisfy the requirements of Article III standing, which the Supreme Court has held that the party bringing suit have been personally injured by the challenged conduct.

In the wide array of circumstances in which the bill would authorize a House of Congress to sue the president, that House would not have suffered any personal injury sufficient to satisfy Article III's standing requirement in the absence of a complete nullification of any legislator's votes.

Second, the bill violates separation of powers principles by inappropriately having courts address political questions that are left to the other branches to decide.

And Mr. Chair, I thought the Supreme Court had put this notion to rest as far back as *Baker v. Carr*, a case that hails from 1962. *Baker* stands for the proposition that courts are not equipped to adjudicate political questions—and that it is impossible to decide such questions without intruding on the ability of agencies to do their job.

Third, the bill makes one House of Congress a general enforcement body able to direct the entire field of administrative action by bringing cases whenever such House deems a President's action to constitute a policy of non-enforcement.

This bill attempts to use the notion of separation of powers to justify an unprecedented effort to ensure that the laws are enforced by the president—and I say one of the least creative ideas I have seen in some time.

I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee Amendment, which again, protects the ability of the Executive Branch to comply with judicial decisions interpreting the Constitution or Federal laws.

Mr. Chair, the United States Constitution is sacrosanct—let's support it!

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I oppose this amendment, as it would gut the bill.

Read the text of the amendment. The amendment would explicitly prohibit the bill from affecting the executive branch's compliance with judicial decisions interpreting the Constitution or Federal laws. But that is exactly the point of the base bill.

The base bill encourages the courts to decide constitutional issues relating to the Constitution's separation of powers between the branches of government. We would of course expect the President to obey those decisions from the courts, yet this amendment would grant the President the authority to defy those very court decisions by making sure that the President did not have to be, quote, affected by them.

This amendment only adds insult to injury. It would take a bill designed to encourage the Federal courts to engage in the constitutional issues of the day and amend it to explicitly allow the President to defy the decisions of those courts.

There is no reason to exempt court decisions from the bill's coverage. The base bill allows Congress to bring lawsuits if the President fails to faithfully execute the laws. The President is obligated to follow Federal court decisions to the same extent he must follow Federal statutes, treaty obligations, and, of course, the Constitution itself.

Rather than furthering the bill's goal of enforcing the Take Care Clause, the amendment would create an enormous loophole in the bill's coverage, and so I must urge my colleagues to reject this gutting amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, how much time remains?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Texas has 2½ minutes remaining.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Let me make this point, and I will yield 15 seconds to the distinguished gentlelady from California.

But I thank the gentleman from Virginia for his eloquence. Obviously, he is from the great State of Thomas Jefferson, and I certainly am from the great law school of Thomas Jefferson, the University of Virginia School of Law.

But let me just say that what this bill intends to do, the power the bill purports to assign to Congress to sue the President over whether he has properly discharged his constitutional obligations to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, exceeds—he knows it exceeds any constitutional boundaries. He is challenging the President on decisions that they don't agree with that are political. They don't agree with deferred adjudication. They don't agree with the DREAM Act youngsters. They don't agree that we

should move forward on immigration reform. They are challenging him on his right to exert his power.

I yield 15 seconds to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Chairman, I agree with the amendment.

I would note that the late Henry Hyde signed the letter urging for prosecutorial discretion. That is part of the law recognized by the Supreme Court in the Arizona case. I do not believe that the late Henry Hyde would have urged the administration to do something that did not comport with the Constitution or the law, and I include for the RECORD this letter.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,

Washington, DC, November 4, 1999.

Re Guidelines for Use of Prosecutorial Discretion in Removal Proceedings

Hon. JANET RENO,
Attorney General, Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Hon. DORIS M. MEISSNER,
Commissioner, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Washington, DC.

DEAR ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO AND COMMISSIONER MEISSNER: Congress and the Administration have devoted substantial attention and resources to the difficult yet essential task of removing criminal aliens from the United States. Legislative reforms enacted in 1996, accompanied by increased funding, enabled the Immigration and Naturalization Service to remove increasing numbers of criminal aliens, greatly benefitting public safety in the United States.

However, cases of apparent extreme hardship have caused concern. Some cases may involve removal proceedings against legal permanent residents who came to the United States when they were very young, and many years ago committed a single crime at the lower end of the "aggravated felony" spectrum, but have been law-abiding ever since, obtained and held jobs and remained self-sufficient, and started families in the United States. Although they did not become United States citizens, immediate family members are citizens.

There has been widespread agreement that some deportations were unfair and resulted in unjustifiable hardship. If the facts substantiate the presentations that have been made to us, we must ask why the INS pursued removal in such cases when so many other more serious cases existed.

We write to you because many people believe that you have the discretion to alleviate some of the hardships, and we wish to solicit your views as to why you have been unwilling to exercise such authority in some of the cases that have occurred. In addition, we ask whether your view is that the 1996 amendments somehow eliminated that discretion. The principle of prosecutorial discretion is well established. Indeed, INS General and Regional Counsel have taken the position, apparently well-grounded in case law, that INS has prosecutorial discretion in the initiation or termination of removal proceedings (see attached memorandum). Furthermore, a number of press reports indicate that the INS has already employed this discretion in some cases.

True hardship cases call for the exercise of such discretion, and over the past year many Members of Congress have urged the INS to develop guidelines for the use of its prosecutorial discretion. Optimally, removal proceedings should be initiated or terminated

only upon specific instructions from authorized INS officials, issued in accordance with agency guidelines. However, the INS apparently has not yet promulgated such guidelines.

The undersigned Members of Congress believe that just as the Justice Department's United States Attorneys rely on detailed guidelines governing the exercise of their prosecutorial discretion, INS District Directors also require written guidelines, both to legitimate in their eyes the exercise of discretion and to ensure that their decisions to initiate or terminate removal proceedings are not made in an inconsistent manner. We look forward to working with you to resolve this matter and hope that you will develop and implement guidelines for INS prosecutorial discretion in an expeditious and fair manner.

Sincerely,

Representatives Henry J. Hyde; Barney Frank; Lamar Smith; Sheila Jackson Lee; Bill McCollum; Martin Frost; Bill Barrett; Howard L. Berman; Brian P. Bilbray; Corrine Brown; Charles T. Canady; Barbara Cubin; Nathan Deal; Lincoln Diaz-Balart.

David Dreier; Bob Filner; Eddie Bernice Johnson; Sam Johnson; Patrick J. Kennedy; Matthew G. Martinez; James P. McGovern; Martin T. Meehan; F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.; Christopher Shays; Henry A. Waxman; Kay Granger; Gene Green; Ciro D. Rodriguez.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, how much time remains?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Texas has 1¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time to close.

□ 1545

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, as I indicated, this is a political fight. I thought we had settled that fight with *Baker v. Carr*, a case that hails from 1962. Baker stands for the proposition that courts are not equipped to adjudicate political questions, and that it is impossible to decide such questions. Now our friends want to give Congress the right to expedite their lawsuit over the average citizen on a political question, first in a three-judge court, and then right to the Supreme Court of the United States, while the American people suffer because they want that particular position. It is a political question because it is the Republicans who want to be able to move beyond the authority given in the Constitution.

I yield 15 seconds to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

Mr. CONYERS. I thank the gentlewoman very much because this is an important amendment. It doesn't gut the bill, and it isn't a loophole. This is a narrow amendment that only ensures that the President can comply with court decisions. The separation of powers principle is very important, and this amendment clarifies and adds to it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman for that very astute analysis,

and I want to conclude, if I might, by saying that I respect the separation of powers, and I understand what my colleague said, and Mr. CONYERS is very right. This amendment does not gut the legislation, but I understand what my colleagues are saying. What I would argue is that we all want the same thing—that the authority of the President remains that, the Congress, and the judiciary, and there is no exceeding. I believe we can do it in a better way. I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I will be brief and just say for the reasons already cited, this is a very harmful amendment. It would gut the bill. For that reason, I oppose it and urge my colleagues to oppose it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. CICILLINE

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part A of House Report 113-378.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add, at the end of the bill, the following:

SEC. 3. REPORT.

Not later than the last day of the first fiscal year quarter that begins after the date of the enactment of this Act, and quarterly thereafter, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committees on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Senate, a report on the costs of any civil action brought pursuant to this Act, including any attorney fees of any attorney that has been hired to provide legal services in connection with a civil action brought pursuant to this Act.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 511, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Chairman, clearly as my colleagues have noted, the ENFORCE Act is a deeply flawed piece of legislation. It would give any legislative majority a blank check to challenge in court by filing a lawsuit any decision of the executive branch that it disagrees with.

Instead of considering legislation to create jobs, to fix our broken immigration system, repair our crumbling infrastructure or raise the minimum wage, today the majority has brought to this floor a partisan measure to increase only one thing: congressional litigation. The bill raises serious constitutional questions, and fails to put in place responsible safeguards to prevent abuse. This is a dangerous attack that threatens the careful balance of power developed by our Founding Fathers.

At a time when the American people have lost so much confidence in Congress, my Republican colleagues are offering yet another bill that will do nothing to improve the lives of Americans. Instead this bill will only add to the American people's scorn and ridicule of Congress. Just what we need, more contention, more division here in Congress by encouraging congressional lawsuits.

In addition to its questionable purpose and substantive defects, the ENFORCE Act also fails to adequately protect taxpayer money, as it would open the floodgates to litigation for nearly any executive branch decision that a majority in either chamber disagrees with, and it would do so without a transparent accounting of taxpayer money spent.

That is why I am offering this amendment today which simply requires quarterly reporting of the costs associated with the litigation under this act. Specifically, it would require the Comptroller General of the United States to issue quarterly reports to the House and Senate Judiciary Committees on the cost of civil actions brought pursuant to this act, including any attorney fees.

Since many of my colleagues have previously and routinely expressed significant concern about ensuring taxpayer dollars are used appropriately and carefully, one would expect the ENFORCE Act to have clear oversight and transparency provisions in place. However, it does not.

That is why I urge my colleagues to support my amendment, which would provide a transparent, quarterly accounting of the costs of pursuing legal action under this act.

As many of my colleagues know, litigation can be extremely expensive. So let's ensure Members of Congress and the public are aware of exactly how much taxpayer resources are being spent on pursuing legal action under this act. While disbursement reporting requirements already exist for Federal expenditures, recent experience underscores their inadequacy to provide timely, transparent disclosure of precisely how much has been spent on litigation.

For example, over the last few years, the House of Representatives, at the direction of the majority and over strong

objections by Leader PELOSI and Whip HOYER, hired outside counsel to defend the Defense of Marriage Act in court. What began as a contract for up to \$500,000 in legal services to defend DOMA has grown through a series of contract extensions to be up to \$3 million, and it is hard to determine at what point and at what cost the majority's pursuits will end.

Today, nearly 9 months since the United States Supreme Court struck down section 3 of DOMA as unconstitutional, we still don't have an adequate accounting of how much the House majority has spent on defending this discriminatory law, or whether it continues to spend taxpayer funding on this matter.

As minority members of the House Administration Committee reported during this legal challenge in 2012:

No one seems to know where the funds are coming from. There has been no appropriation for this expense. There has been no mention of the funding source in the contract extensions. There is no record of a payment being made in the statement of disbursements.

Clearly, the existing reporting requirements are insufficient to inform Members of Congress and the general public of its litigation disbursements. While Members may disagree on the merits of DOMA, as well as the legislation before us today, we should all recognize that neither side, nor the public interest, is served by obscuring the disclosure of litigation expenses.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support my amendment, a simple reporting requirement that will safeguard and provide transparency to ensure that spending under this very misguided legislation is made clear.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I rise to claim the time in opposition to the amendment even though I do not oppose the amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Virginia is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I will support the adoption of this amendment. This amendment basically codifies, at least as far as the House of Representatives is concerned, requirements that already exist regarding reporting the costs of congressional litigation. When the House engages in litigation, the costs of that litigation are already reported to the House Appropriations Committee and the Committee on House Administration. This amendment merely expands these existing reporting requirements to include the Government Accountability Office.

Had the gentleman from Rhode Island prefiled this amendment during Judiciary Committee consideration of

the bill, we may have been able to consider it during markup. However, without notice of the amendment, we were not able to determine at markup whether the amendment implicated any attorney-client privilege concerns. We are now satisfied, given existing reporting requirements, that this amendment does not present a privilege problem.

For these reasons, I support the adoption of this amendment, and urge my colleagues to do so.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman for his support, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE).

The amendment was agreed to.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIR

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in part A of House Report 113-378 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 1 by Mr. CONYERS of Michigan.

Amendment No. 2 by Mr. NADLER of New York.

Amendment No. 3 by Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas.

The Chair will reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. CONYERS

The Acting CHAIR. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 188, noes 227, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 120]

AYES—188

Barber	Butterfield	Cleaver
Barrow (GA)	Capps	Clyburn
Bass	Capuano	Cohen
Beatty	Cárdenas	Connolly
Becerra	Carney	Conyers
Bishop (GA)	Carson (IN)	Cooper
Bishop (NY)	Cartwright	Costa
Blumenauer	Castor (FL)	Courtney
Bonamici	Castro (TX)	Crowley
Brady (PA)	Chu	Cuellar
Braley (IA)	Cicilline	Cummings
Brown (FL)	Clark (MA)	Davis (CA)
Brownley (CA)	Clarke (NY)	Davis, Danny
Bustos	Clay	DeFazio

DeGette
Delaney
DelBene
Deutch
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Gibson
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
McIntyre
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick

NOES—227

Aderholt
Amash
Bachmann
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford

Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pocan
Polis

Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schiff
Schneider
Schradler
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey

Amodei
Bera (CA)
DeLauro
Dingell
Edwards

Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)

NOT VOTING—15

Frankel (FL)
Gosar
Matsui
Meng
Pelosi

□ 1621

Messrs. BENTIVOLIO, CAMPBELL, RENACCI, and YOHO changed their vote from “aye” to “no.”

Messrs. MCNERNEY, MAFFEI, and HINOJOSA changed their vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. NADLER

The Acting CHAIR (Mr. FLEISCHMANN). The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 190, noes 225, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 121]

AYES—190

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Bass
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)

Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield

Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)

Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DelBene
Denham
Deutch
Diaz-Balart
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Hinojosa
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer

Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Luján, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney, Carolyn
Matheson
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne

NOES—225

Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte

Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Richmond
Ros-Lehtinen
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Schiff
Schneider
Schradler
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Valadao
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Waxman
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Hultzena (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)

Kline	Nunnelee	Shimkus	Brady (PA)	Hastings (FL)	O'Rourke	Hunter	Miller, Gary	Schock
Labrador	Olson	Shuster	Braley (IA)	Heck (WA)	Pallone	Hurt	Mullin	Schweikert
LaMalfa	Palazzo	Simpson	Brown (FL)	Higgins	Pascarell	Issa	Mulvaney	Scott, Austin
Lamborn	Paulsen	Smith (MO)	Brownley (CA)	Himes	Pastor (AZ)	Jenkins	Murphy (PA)	Sensenbrenner
Lance	Pearce	Smith (NE)	Bustos	Hinojosa	Payne	Johnson (OH)	Neugebauer	Sessions
Lankford	Perry	Smith (NJ)	Butterfield	Holt	Perlmutter	Johnson, Sam	Noem	Shimkus
Latham	Petri	Smith (TX)	Capps	Honda	Peters (CA)	Jones	Nugent	Shuster
Latta	Pittenger		Capuano	Horsford	Peters (MI)	Jordan	Nunes	Simpson
LoBiondo	Pitts	Southerland	Cárdenas	Hoyer	Pocan	Joyce	Nunnelee	Smith (MO)
Long	Poe (TX)	Stewart	Carney	Huffman	Polis	Kelly (PA)	Olson	Smith (NE)
Lucas	Pompeo	Stivers	Carson (IN)	Israel	Price (NC)	King (IA)	Owens	Smith (NJ)
Luetkemeyer	Posey	Stockman	Cartwright	Jackson Lee	Quigley	King (NY)	Palazzo	Smith (TX)
Lummis	Price (GA)	Stutzman	Castor (FL)	Jeffries	Rahall	Kingston	Kaulsen	Southerland
Maloney, Sean	Reed	Terry	Castro (TX)	Johnson (GA)	Richmond	Kinzinger (IL)	Pearce	Stewart
Marchant	Reichert	Thompson (PA)	Chu	Johnson, E. B.	Roybal-Allard	Kline	Perry	Stivers
Marino	Renacci	Thornberry	Cicilline	Kaptur	Ruiz	Labrador	Peterson	Stockman
Massie	Ribble	Tiberi	Clark (MA)	Keating	Ruppersberger	LaMalfa	Petri	Stutzman
McAllister	Rice (SC)	Tipton	Clarke (NY)	Kelly (IL)	Rush	Lamborn	Pittenger	Terry
McCarthy (CA)	Rigell	Turner	Clay	Kennedy	Ryan (OH)	Lance	Pitts	Thompson (PA)
McCaul	Roby	Upton	Cleaver	Kildee	Sánchez, Linda	Lankford	Poe (TX)	Thornberry
McClintock	Roe (TN)	Wagner	Clyburn	Kilmer	T.	Latham	Pompeo	Tiberi
McHenry	Rogers (AL)	Walberg	Cohen	Kind	Sanchez, Loretta	Latta	Posey	Tipton
McKeon	Rogers (KY)	Walden	Connolly	Kirkpatrick	Sarbanes	LoBiondo	Price (GA)	Turner
McKinley	Rogers (MI)	Walorski	Conyers	Kuster	Schiff	Long	Reed	Upton
McMorris	Rohrabacher	Weber (TX)	Cooper	Langevin	Schneider	Lucas	Reichert	Valadao
Rodgers	Rokita	Webster (FL)	Costa	Larsen (WA)	Schrader	Luetkemeyer	Renacci	Wagner
Meadows	Roskam	West	Courtney	Larson (CT)	Schwartz	Lummis	Ribble	Walberg
Meehan	Ross	Westmoreland	Crowley	Lee (CA)	Scott (VA)	Marchant	Rice (SC)	Walden
Messer	Rothfus	Whitfield	Cuellar	Levin	Scott, David	Marino	Rigell	Walorski
Mica	Royce	Williams	Cummings	Lewis	Serrano	Massie	Roby	Weber (TX)
Miller (FL)	Runyan	Wilson (SC)	Davis (CA)	Lipinski	Sewell (AL)	McAllister	Roe (TN)	Webster (FL)
Miller (MI)	Ryan (WI)	Wittman	Davis, Danny	Loeback	Shea-Porter	McCarthy (CA)	Rogers (AL)	Wenstrup
Miller, Gary	Salmon		DeFazio	Lofgren	Sherman	McClintock	Rogers (KY)	Westmoreland
Mullin	Sanford	Wolf	DeGette	Lowenthal	Sinema	McHenry	Rogers (MI)	Whitfield
Mulvaney	Scalise	Womack	Delaney	Lowe	Lujan Grisham	McIntyre	Rohrabacher	Williams
Murphy (PA)	Schock	Woodall	DeBene	Lujan	(NM)	McKeon	Rokita	Wilson (SC)
Neugebauer	Schweikert	Yoder	Deutch	(NM)	Slaughter	McKinley	Ros-Lehtinen	Wittman
Noem	Scott, Austin	Yoho	Doggett	Luján, Ben Ray	Smith (WA)	McMorris	Roskam	Wolf
Nugent	Sensenbrenner	Young (AK)	Doyle	(NM)	Speier	Rodgers	Ross	
Nunes	Sessions	Young (IN)	Duckworth	Lynch			Rothfus	

Amodei	Gosar	Pingree (ME)
DeLauro	Johnson, E. B.	Rangel
Dingell	Matsui	Rooney
Edwards	Meng	Schakowsky
Frankel (FL)	Pelosi	Velázquez

Barrow (GA)	Becerra	Bishop (NY)
Bass	Bera (CA)	Blumenauer
Beatty	Bishop (GA)	Bonamici

Chaffetz	Foxx
Coble	Franks (AZ)
Coffman	Frelinghuysen
Cole	Gardner
Collins (GA)	Garrett
Collins (NY)	Gerlach
Conaway	Gibbs
Cook	Gingrey (GA)
Cotton	Gohmert
Cramer	Goodlatte
Crawford	Gowdy
Crenshaw	Granger
Culberson	Graves (GA)
Daines	Graves (MO)
Davis, Rodney	Griffin (AR)
Denham	Griffith (VA)
Dent	Grimm
DeSantis	Guthrie
DesJarlais	Hall
Diaz-Balart	Hanna
Duffy	Harper
Duncan (SC)	Harris
Duncan (TN)	Hartzler
Ellmers	Hastings (WA)
Farenthold	Heck (NV)
Fincher	Hensarling
Fitzpatrick	Herrera Beutler
Fleischmann	Holding
Fleming	Hudson
Flores	Huelskamp
Forbes	Huizenga (MI)
Fortenberry	Hultgren

Amodei	Gosar	Rangel
DeLauro	Matsui	Rooney
Dingell	Meng	Schakowsky
Edwards	Pelosi	Velázquez
Frankel (FL)	Pinsree (ME)	

Is a separate vote demanded on the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the adoption of the amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I am opposed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Ruiz moves to recommit the bill H.R. 4138 to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

Add, at the end of the bill, the following:

SEC. 3. PROTECTING STATES' RIGHTS.

Nothing in this Act limits or otherwise affects any action taken by the President, the head of a department or agency of the United States, or any other officer or employee of the United States, in order to prevent an unconstitutional intrusion into States' rights.

SEC. 4. RESTORING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS FOR AMERICA'S JOB SEEKERS.

This Act shall not take effect until the most recent percentage of the insured unemployed (those for whom unemployment taxes were paid during prior employment) who are receiving Federal or State unemployment insurance (UI) benefits when they are actively seeking work is at least equal to the percentage receiving such benefits for the last quarter of 2013, as determined by the Department of Labor's quarterly UI data summary measurement of the Unemployment Insurance reciprocity rate for all UI programs.

Mr. GOWDY (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

The gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage as amended.

Right now, House leadership is forcing a vote on a bill that they know will go nowhere. Instead of working to find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing problems, they have chosen to put politics above the needs of the American people.

They have chosen to put politics above jobs, the economy, health care, comprehensive immigration reform and, again, they are playing politics with millions of hardworking families who have lost their job through no fault of their own and are currently looking for jobs.

Currently, over 2 million people have lost unemployment insurance because

of these political games. Every week, 72,000 people, on average, are losing their unemployment benefits nationwide while they are looking for jobs. In my home State of California, almost 350,000 people are living on the brink of financial disaster because of these games. This is exactly the kind of political gamesmanship that the American people are sick and tired of.

House leadership continues to refuse to restore these vital economic lifelines that help people support their families and pay their bills while they look for a new job.

Long-term unemployment remains an enormous challenge for millions of Americans and our overall economy, which is exactly why we should put the American people first and renew this important program. We need a focus on creating new jobs and help American families temporarily weather the storm.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my point of order and rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The point of order is withdrawn.

The gentleman from South Carolina is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk for just a moment as colleagues—not as Republicans or Democrats, not as members of the majority or the minority, but colleagues who are blessed to serve in the United States House of Representatives, the people's House, with all the tradition, with all the history, with all the laws that have been passed, with all the lives that have been impacted. I want us to talk as colleagues. Because our foundational document gave us, as the House, unique powers and responsibilities. We run every 2 years because they intended for us to be closest to the people.

□ 1645

The President was given different duties and powers. The President was given the duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed.

So my question, Mr. Speaker, is what does that mean to you, that the laws be faithfully executed?

We know the President can veto a bill for any reason or no reason. We know the President can refuse to defend the constitutionality of a statute, even one that he signs into law.

We know the President can issue pardons for violations of the very laws that we pass, and we know the President has prosecutorial discretion, as evidenced and used through his U.S. attorneys.

Mr. Speaker, that is a lot of power. What are we to do when that amount of power is not enough?

What are we to do when this President, or any President, decides to selectively enforce a portion of a law and ignore other portions of that law?

What do we do, Mr. Speaker, regardless of motivation, when a President nullifies our vote by failing to faithfully execute the law?

How do we explain waivers and exemptions and delays in a bill passed by Congress and affirmed by the United States Supreme Court?

How do we explain away a refusal to enforce mandatory minimums that were passed by Congress and affirmed by the Supreme Court?

Why pursue, Mr. Speaker, immigration reform if Presidents can turn off the very provisions that we pass?

You know, in the oaths that brand new citizens take, it contains six different references to the law. If it is good enough for us to ask brand new citizens to affirm their devotion to the law, is it too much to ask that the President do the same?

If a President can change some laws, can he change all laws? Can he change election laws? Can he change discrimination laws? Are there any laws, under your theory, that he actually has to enforce?

What is our recourse, Mr. Speaker?

What is our remedy?

Some would argue the Framers gave us the power of the purse and the power of impeachment, but Mr. Speaker, those are punishments, those are not remedies.

What is the remedy if we want the Executive to enforce our work?

This bill simply gives us standing when our votes are nullified. This bill allows us to petition the judicial branch for an order requiring the executive branch to faithfully execute the law.

Mr. Speaker, we are not held in high public esteem right now. Maybe Members of Congress would be respected more if we respected ourselves enough to require that when we pass something, it be treated as law.

Maybe we would be more respected if we had a firmly rooted expectation that when we pass something as law, it be treated as law.

Maybe we would be more respected if we put down party labels and a desire to keep or retain or acquire the gavel and picked up the history, the tradition, and the honor of this, the people's House.

Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives does not exist to pass suggestions. We do not exist to pass ideas. We make law.

While you are free to stand and clap when any President comes into this hallowed Chamber and promises to do it, with or without you, I will never stand and clap when any President, no matter whether he is your party or mine, promises to make us a constitutional anomaly and an afterthought. We make law.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage of the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 187, noes 228, not voting 15, as follows:

[Roll No. 123]

AYES—187

Barber	Green, Gene	Neal
Barrow (GA)	Grijalva	Negrete McLeod
Bass	Gutiérrez	Nolan
Beatty	Hahn	O'Rourke
Becerra	Hanabusa	Owens
Bera (CA)	Hastings (FL)	Pallone
Bishop (GA)	Heck (WA)	Pascarell
Bishop (NY)	Higgins	Pastor (AZ)
Blumenauer	Himes	Payne
Bonamici	Hinojosa	Perlmutter
Brady (PA)	Holt	Peters (CA)
Braley (IA)	Honda	Peters (MI)
Brown (FL)	Horsford	Peterson
Brownley (CA)	Hoyer	Pocan
Bustos	Huffman	Polis
Butterfield	Israel	Price (NC)
Capps	Jackson Lee	Quigley
Capuano	Jeffries	Rahall
Cárdenas	Johnson (GA)	Richmond
Carney	Johnson, E. B.	Roybal-Allard
Carson (IN)	Kaptur	Ruiz
Cartwright	Keating	Ruppersberger
Castor (FL)	Kelly (IL)	Rush
Castro (TX)	Kennedy	Ryan (OH)
Chu	Kildee	Sánchez, Linda
Cicilline	Kilmer	T.
Clark (MA)	Kind	Sanchez, Loretta
Clarke (NY)	Kirkpatrick	Sarbanes
Clay	Kuster	Schiff
Cleaver	Langevin	Schneider
Clyburn	Larsen (WA)	Schrader
Cohen	Larson (CT)	Schwartz
Connolly	Lee (CA)	Scott (VA)
Conyers	Levin	Scott, David
Cooper	Lewis	Serrano
Costa	Lipinski	Sewell (AL)
Courtney	Loebach	Shea-Porter
Crowley	Lofgren	Sherman
Cuellar	Lowenthal	Sinema
Cummings	Lowe	Sires
Davis (CA)	Lujan Grisham	Slaughter
Davis, Danny	(NM)	Smith (WA)
DeFazio	Luján, Ben Ray	Speier
DeGette	(NM)	Swalwell (CA)
Delaney	Lynch	Takano
DelBene	Maffei	Thompson (CA)
Deutch	Maloney,	Thompson (MS)
Doggett	Carolyn	Tierney
Doyle	Maloney, Sean	Titus
Duckworth	Matheson	Tonko
Engel	McCarthy (NY)	Tsongas
Enyart	McCollum	Van Hollen
Eshoo	McDermott	Vargas
Esty	McGovern	Veasey
Farr	McIntyre	Vela
Fattah	McNerney	Visclosky
Foster	Meeks	Walz
Fudge	Michaud	Wasserman
Gabbard	Miller, George	Schultz
Gallego	Moore	Waters
Garamendi	Moran	Waxman
Garcia	Murphy (FL)	Welch
Grayson	Nadler	Wilson (FL)
Green, Al	Napolitano	Yarmuth

NOES—228

Aderholt	Bachus	Barton
Amash	Barletta	Benishek
Bachmann	Barr	Bentivolio

Bilirakis	Hanna	Pitts
Bishop (UT)	Harper	Poe (TX)
Black	Harris	Pompeo
Blackburn	Hartzler	Posey
Boustany	Hastings (WA)	Price (GA)
Brady (TX)	Heck (NV)	Reed
Bridenstine	Hensarling	Reichert
Brooks (AL)	Herrera Beutler	Renacci
Brooks (IN)	Holding	Ribble
Broun (GA)	Hudson	Rice (SC)
Buchanan	Huelskamp	Rigell
Bucshon	Huizenga (MI)	Roby
Burgess	Hultgren	Roe (TN)
Byrne	Hunter	Rogers (AL)
Calvert	Hurt	Rogers (KY)
Camp	Issa	Rogers (MI)
Campbell	Jenkins	Rohrabacher
Cantor	Johnson (OH)	Rokita
Capito	Johnson, Sam	Ros-Lehtinen
Carter	Jones	Roskam
Cassidy	Jordan	Ross
Chabot	Joyce	Rothfus
Chaffetz	Kelly (PA)	Royce
Coble	King (IA)	Runyan
Coffman	King (NY)	Ryan (WI)
Cole	Kingston	Salmon
Collins (GA)	Kinzinger (IL)	Sanford
Collins (NY)	Kline	Scalise
Conaway	Labrador	Schock
Cook	LaMalfa	Schweikert
Cotton	Lamborn	Scott, Austin
Cramer	Lance	Sensenbrenner
Crawford	Lankford	Sessions
Crenshaw	Latham	Shimkus
Culberson	Latta	Shuster
Daines	LoBiondo	Simpson
Davis, Rodney	Long	Smith (MO)
Denham	Lucas	Smith (NE)
Dent	Luetkemeyer	Smith (NJ)
DeSantis	Lummis	Smith (TX)
DesJarlais	Marchant	Southerland
Diaz-Balart	Marino	Stewart
Duffy	Massie	Stivers
Duncan (SC)	McAllister	Stockman
Duncan (TN)	McCarthy (CA)	Stutzman
Ellmers	McCaul	Terry
Farenthold	McClintock	Thompson (PA)
Fincher	McHenry	Thornberry
Fitzpatrick	McKeon	Tiberi
Fleischmann	McKinley	Tipton
Fleming	McMorris	Turner
Flores	Rodgers	Upton
Forbes	Meadows	Valadao
Fortenberry	Meehan	Wagner
Fox	Messer	Walberg
Franks (AZ)	Mica	Walden
Frelinghuysen	Miller (FL)	Walorski
Gardner	Miller (MI)	Weber (TX)
Garrett	Miller, Gary	Webster (FL)
Gerlach	Mullin	Wenstrup
Gibbs	Mulvaney	Westmoreland
Gibson	Murphy (PA)	Whitfield
Gingrey (GA)	Neugebauer	Williams
Gohmert	Noem	Wilson (SC)
Goodlatte	Nugent	Wittman
Gowdy	Nunes	Wolf
Granger	Nunnelee	Womack
Graves (GA)	Olson	Woodall
Graves (MO)	Palazzo	Yoder
Griffin (AR)	Paulsen	Young (AK)
Griffith (VA)	Pearce	Young (IN)
Grimm	Perry	
Guthrie	Petri	
Hall	Pittenger	

NOT VOTING—15

Amodei	Frankel (FL)	Pingree (ME)
DeLauro	Gosar	Rangel
Dingell	McCollum	Rooney
Edwards	Matsui	Schakowsky
Ellison	Meng	Velázquez
	Pelosi	

□ 1656

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 233, noes 181, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 124]

AYES—233

Aderholt	Granger	Pearce
Amash	Graves (GA)	Perry
Bachmann	Graves (MO)	Peterson
Bachus	Griffin (AR)	Petri
Barletta	Griffith (VA)	Pittenger
Barr	Grimm	Pitts
Barrow (GA)	Guthrie	Poe (TX)
Barton	Hall	Pompeo
Benishek	Hanna	Posey
Bentivolio	Harper	Price (GA)
Bilirakis	Harris	Rahall
Bishop (UT)	Hartzler	Reed
Black	Hastings (WA)	Reichert
Blackburn	Heck (NV)	Renacci
Boustany	Hensarling	Ribble
Brady (TX)	Herrera Beutler	Rice (SC)
Bridenstine	Holding	Rigell
Brooks (AL)	Hudson	Roby
Brooks (IN)	Huelskamp	Roe (TN)
Broun (GA)	Huizenga (MI)	Rogers (AL)
Buchanan	Hultgren	Rogers (KY)
Bucshon	Hunter	Rogers (MI)
Burgess	Hurt	Rohrabacher
Byrne	Issa	Rokita
Calvert	Jenkins	Ros-Lehtinen
Camp	Johnson (OH)	Roskam
Campbell	Johnson, Sam	Ross
Cantor	Jones	Rothfus
Capito	Jordan	Royce
Carter	Joyce	Runyan
Cassidy	Kelly (PA)	Ryan (WI)
Chabot	King (IA)	Salmon
Chaffetz	King (NY)	Sanford
Coble	Kingston	Scalise
Coffman	Kinzinger (IL)	Schock
Cole	Kline	Schweikert
Labrador	Labrador	Scott, Austin
Collins (GA)	LaMalfa	Sensenbrenner
Collins (NY)	Lamborn	Sessions
Conaway	Lance	Shimkus
Cook	Lankford	Shuster
Cotton	Latham	Simpson
Cramer	Latta	Smith (MO)
Crawford	LoBiondo	Smith (NE)
Crenshaw	Long	Smith (NJ)
Cuellar	Lucas	Smith (TX)
Culberson	Luetkemeyer	Southerland
Daines	Lummis	Stewart
Davis, Rodney	Marchant	Stivers
Dent	Marino	Stockman
DeSantis	Massie	Stutzman
DesJarlais	McAllister	Terry
Diaz-Balart	McCarthy (CA)	Thompson (PA)
Duffy	McCaul	Thornberry
Duncan (SC)	McClintock	Tiberi
Duncan (TN)	McHenry	Tipton
Ellmers	McKeon	Turner
Farenthold	McKinley	Upton
Fincher	McMorris	Valadao
Fitzpatrick	Rodgers	Wagner
Fleischmann	Meadows	Walberg
Fleming	Meehan	Walden
Flores	Messer	Walorski
Forbes	Mica	Weber (TX)
Fortenberry	Miller (FL)	Webster (FL)
Fox	Miller (MI)	Wenstrup
Franks (AZ)	Miller, Gary	Westmoreland
Frelinghuysen	Mullin	Whitfield
Gallego	Mulvaney	Williams
Gardner	Murphy (PA)	Wilson (SC)
Garrett	Neugebauer	Wittman
Gerlach	Noem	Wolf
Gibbs	Nugent	Womack
Gibson	Nunes	Woodall
Gingrey (GA)	Nunnelee	Yoder
Gohmert	Olson	Yoho
Goodlatte	Palazzo	Young (AK)
Gowdy	Paulsen	Young (IN)

NOES—181

Barber	Green, Gene	Neal
Bass	Grijalva	Negrete McLeod
Beatty	Gutiérrez	Nolan
Becerra	Hahn	O'Rourke
Bera (CA)	Hanabusa	Owens
Bishop (GA)	Hastings (FL)	Pallone
Bishop (NY)	Heck (WA)	Pascarell
Blumenauer	Higgins	Pastor (AZ)
Bonamici	Himes	Payne
Brady (PA)	Hinojosa	Perlmutter
Braley (IA)	Holt	Peters (CA)
Brown (FL)	Honda	Peters (MI)
Brownley (CA)	Horsford	Pocan
Bustos	Hoyer	Polis
Butterfield	Huffman	Price (NC)
Capps	Israel	Quigley
Capuano	Jackson Lee	Richmond
Cardenas	Jeffries	Roybal-Allard
Carney	Johnson (GA)	Ruiz
Carson (IN)	Johnson, E. B.	Ruppersberger
Cartwright	Kaptur	Rush
Castor (FL)	Keating	Ryan (OH)
Castro (TX)	Kelly (IL)	Sánchez, Linda
Chu	Kennedy	T.
Cicilline	Kildee	Sanchez, Loretta
Clark (MA)	Kilmer	Sarbanes
Clarke (NY)	Kind	Schiff
Clay	Kirkpatrick	Schneider
Cleaver	Kuster	Schrader
Clyburn	Langevin	Schwartz
Cohen	Larsen (WA)	Scott (VA)
Connolly	Larson (CT)	Scott, David
Conyers	Lee (CA)	Serrano
Cooper	Levin	Sewell (AL)
Costa	Lewis	Shea-Porter
Courtney	Lipinski	Sherman
Crowley	Lofgren	Sinema
Cummings	Lowenthal	Sires
Davis (CA)	Lowey	Slaughter
Davis, Danny	Lujan Grisham	Smith (WA)
DeFazio	(NM)	Speier
DeGette	Luján, Ben Ray	Swalwell (CA)
Delaney	(NM)	Takano
DeBene	Lynch	Thompson (CA)
Deutch	Maffei	Thompson (MS)
Doggett	Maloney,	Tierney
Doyle	Carolyn	Titus
Duckworth	Maloney, Sean	Tonko
Ellison	Matheson	Tsongas
Engel	McCarthy (NY)	Van Hollen
Enyart	McCollum	Vargas
Eshoo	McDermott	Veasey
Esty	McGovern	Vela
Farr	McIntyre	Visclosky
Fattah	McNerney	Walz
Foster	Meeks	Wasserman
Fudge	Michaud	Schultz
Gabbard	Moore	Waters
Garamendi	Moran	Waxman
Garcia	Murphy (FL)	Welch
Grayson	Nadler	Wilson (FL)
Green, Al	Napolitano	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—16

Amodei	Loeb sack	Rangel
DeLauro	Matsui	Rooney
Dingell	Meng	Schakowsky
Edwards	Miller, George	Velázquez
Frankel (FL)	Pelosi	
Gosar	Pingree (ME)	

□ 1703

Mr. CONYERS changed his vote from "aye" to "no."

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 3633

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 3633.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. ROSELEHTINEN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Connecticut?

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1239

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Virginia, Representative RANDY FORBES, be taken off of H.R. 1239, the Accessing Medicare Therapies Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

FAITHFUL EXECUTION OF THE LAW ACT OF 2014

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 511, I call up the bill (H.R. 3973) to amend section 530D of title 28, United States Code, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 511, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-42, is adopted. The bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 3973

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Faithful Execution of the Law Act of 2014".

SEC. 2. AMENDMENT TO SECTION 530D OF TITLE 28, UNITED STATES CODE.

Section 530D(a)(1)(A) of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting "or any other Federal officer" before "establishes or implements a formal or informal policy"; and

(2) in clause (i), by striking "on the grounds that such provision is unconstitutional" and inserting "and state the grounds for such policy".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. After 1 hour of debate on the bill, as amended, it shall be in order to consider the further amendment printed in part B of House Report 113-378, if offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) or his designee, which shall be considered read, and shall be separately debatable for 10 minutes equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent.

The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3973, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I now yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), the distinguished chairman of the full Judiciary Committee.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, article II, section 3 of the United States Constitution declares that the President "shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed."

However, President Obama has failed on many occasions to enforce acts of Congress that he disagrees with for policy reasons and has stretched his regulatory authority to put in place policies that Congress has refused to enact.

Although President Obama is not the first President to stretch his powers beyond their constitutional limits, Executive overreach has accelerated at an alarming rate under his administration.

To help prevent Executive overreach and require greater disclosure when it occurs, the gentleman from Florida, Representative DESANTIS, introduced H.R. 3973, the Faithful Execution of the Law Act.

I want to thank Representative DESANTIS for introducing this commonsense legislation to ensure that there is greater transparency and disclosure regarding the executive branch's enforcement of Federal law.

The Justice Department is currently required by law to report to Congress whenever it decides to adopt a policy to refrain from enforcing a Federal law on the grounds that the law in question is unconstitutional.

The Faithful Execution of the Law Act strengthens this provision by requiring the Attorney General to report to Congress whenever a Federal official establishes or implements a formal or informal policy to refrain from enforcing a Federal law and the reason for the nonenforcement, regardless of whether it is being done on constitutional or policy grounds.

As Professor Jonathan Turley observed regarding this legislation in testimony before the Judiciary Committee:

It is hard to see the argument against such disclosures. Too often, Congress has only been informed of major changes by leaks to the media.

Congress should not have to rely on media leaks and other unofficial sources to find out that the executive branch has decided not to enforce Federal laws.

Congress cannot possibly know the extent of executive branch nonenforcement of the laws without mandatory disclosure of all nonenforcement policies by the person who should be fully aware of such policies, namely, the Attorney General, the Nation's chief law enforcement officer.

Passage of H.R. 3973 is essential if Congress is going to play an active role in overseeing that the separation of powers between the branches is maintained and that the President is faithfully executing the laws.

I thank the gentleman from Arizona, the chairman of the subcommittee, for yielding me this time, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. COHEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, more of the same. As with our consideration of the "ENFORCE Act," H.R. 4138, I must note the lack of deliberative process pertaining to consideration of this bill.

The gentleman from South Carolina spoke eloquently on the other bill and talked about the need for process—the importance of process. Process can be important, but process was not important on this bill.

It wasn't important in the other bill. Like that other bill, the Judiciary Committee failed to hold a single legislative hearing.

The process is you have a hearing. People come in and talk—experts—then you have a markup. You first start at the subcommittee. The subcommittee has a hearing, and they have a markup, and then you have a hearing and a markup in the full committee.

This one, not a hearing in the subcommittee, not a markup in the subcommittee, not a hearing in the committee; simply, all of a sudden—pres-to—markup, process nixed. That is how we came up with the last bill and this bill.

When coupled with the fact that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle provided only the minimum notice regarding this bill, it is hard to believe that this is a serious attempt to legislate because it tramples on the legislative process, the rights of the minority to have notice, the rights of the public to have notice, and the right to have a hearing with experts testifying.

Unfortunately, the end product evidences what happens when you don't follow regular order, which is due process, notice, and a hearing. We do the same thing here.

Here are just a few of the problems with this bill: H.R. 3973 would impose burdensome and wasteful requirements on the Justice Department to the detriment of its law enforcement functions. They would probably have to hire new personnel and increase the debt, which, of course, the other side always talks about being passed on to the next generation.

Section 530D of title 28 of the United States Code already requires the Attorney General to report to Congress any instance in which the Attorney General or any Justice Department official establishes or implements a formal or informal policy against enforcing, applying, or administering a provision of

Federal law on the grounds that such provision is unconstitutional, and there are 94 U.S. attorneys and a whole bunch of agency heads and a whole bunch of cabinet members and folks.

Current law, therefore, allows an administration to refuse to enforce a law in the extremely limited circumstance where law is deemed unconstitutional. No other reason is sufficient.

H.R. 3973 fails to define exactly which individuals in the Federal Government would qualify as a "Federal officer." There is nowhere in the USCA that I have seen—and we have researched it—where this Congress has defined a Federal officer, and yet we are instructing Federal officers.

□ 1715

Now, the courts might have had some gibberish, but this Congress never did.

As a result of this oversight, the Attorney General would have to review enforcement decisions by hundreds—if not thousands—of individuals who work in the executive branch and may qualify as officers in order to determine whether their decisions trigger the requirements in this bill. This burden would drain already limited resources in the Justice Department for its law enforcement responsibilities, which is its charge.

The majority's real purpose of H.R. 3973 is to prevent the President's implementation of duly enacted legislative initiatives that they oppose and to stymie the President's discretion in enforcement of those laws.

Allowing flexibility in the implementation of a new program, even where the statute mandates a specific deadline, is neither unusual nor a constitutional violation. And it has happened with administration to administration to administration.

Such flexibility is inherent in the President's duty to "take care" that he "faithfully" execute the laws. And the exercise of enforcement discretion is a traditional power of the Executive.

Not surprisingly, the Supreme Court has consistently held that the exercise of such discretion is a function of the President's powers under the Take Care Clause, and this was reiterated by the Court as recently as 2012 in *Arizona v. United States*. This is particularly true if the bill's proponents intend to reach decisions like the deferred action on removing DREAMers from the country. That decision was a routine exercise of enforcement discretion, but H.R. 3973 would require the Attorney General to report on every such routine decision to Congress. You can't enforce every law to the fullest, and prosecutors and people make decisions on which are the most important and which are prioritized.

Professor Christopher Schroeder, the minority witness on the Judiciary Committee, noted that the number of such enforcement decisions is simply too numerous to count.

Given the foregoing, I must reiterate that this process is a waste of our time, especially when there are other far more pressing concerns to address.

How many times have we had people call us and tell us that they need unemployment compensation, that they don't have money to buy goods, to buy food for their child, to buy food for themselves, or to provide shelter? And yet unemployment insurance has lapsed.

How many times do we have people say they want to work and get a job, but we haven't passed an infrastructure bill. That is usually a bipartisan measure. For years, it has been bipartisan. Mr. Bill Young worked well on these bills getting things done. We don't have infrastructure bills to keep us going and deliver goods and services and put people to work.

How many times have people come up and talked to us about their concerns about health care, when we could be maybe coming together and finding ways to make health care even more affordable? The Affordable Care Act was a beginning, giving a lot of people health care they otherwise didn't have. In my district, the differential between African American women and White women in morbidity on breast cancer is the greatest it is in the country. And throughout the country, African American women are more likely to die of breast cancer than Caucasian.

Why is that?

It is not in their genes. No, Madam Speaker, it is not in their genes. It is because they have not had access to insurance and health facilities to get mammograms, to get checkups, and to get treated. They don't have the ability to get to those health centers which have been funded through the Affordable Care Act, more and more community health centers because of the Affordable Care Act, and to get insurance, which they are getting insurance. But in the past they haven't gotten it, their morbidity rate is greater, and they have died. Sometimes it is because they don't have transportation to get to the doctors, and that is because of our limited resources that we put in funding mass transit.

So in so many areas which we have neglected and should be dealing with now on health care issues, on the environment, on immigration, taking people out from the shadows and putting them to work legally where they pay taxes and where young people brought here with their parents made great grades in school, could go to college and stay here, participate and fulfill their dream and fulfill their potential, work hard and play by the rules, we are not doing that.

Instead of using this limited legislative time we have got, this is yet another opportunity to bash immigrants or to rail against giving health insurance to those who would otherwise be

without it. We should be addressing these broken systems that we have on immigration, helping struggling homeowners and students buried in debt and fighting discrimination among many other challenges facing our great Nation, allowing people every opportunity to vote rather than taking voting opportunities away from them at every opportunity possible. That is the antithesis of America, trying to deny people the opportunity to vote under the veil of identity.

We are doing a disservice to the American people in choosing to spend our time on these issues which are issues that are not going to pass the Senate and see the light of day—and we know it—instead of trying to come together and work with each other. I have reached out to Members on the other side and said: Why don't we find common ground and pass something? They kind of look at me and say: I get my orders, too. Unfortunately, the orders aren't working for the American people.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I now yield myself such time as I may consume.

I begin by just pointing out, contrary to the gentleman's assertion, the term "Federal officer" is mentioned 238 times in the Federal Code, and the Dictionary Act defines "officer." It includes any person authorized by law to perform the duties of the office.

Contrary to some of the other discussions, this bill is focused on trying to make sure that we faithfully enforce the laws and that we understand when the laws are perhaps being not enforced for persons suggesting that they are unconstitutional or otherwise.

So, Madam Speaker, it is inherent, I suppose, in the nature of Washington, D.C., politics that, at a certain point, all of the back-and-forth discussion eventually turns into white noise, and the continual debating, reporting, and blaming is so commonplace that many Americans tune it out entirely.

And just as the partisanship in Washington causes so many to tune out the substance of the debate, so do we also become accustomed sometimes to hearing lofty rhetoric and allusions to our Founding Fathers. But tonight, I pray that we can all truly listen anew to the men whose ideas so revolutionized the world because the challenges we now face were not unforeseen, Madam Speaker.

James Madison, in Federalist Paper 48, expressed his concern that eventually the mere rule of law might not be enough to restrain those who really had a mind to abuse the power of their office. He said:

Will it be sufficient to mark, with precision, the boundaries of these departments, in the Constitution of the government, and to trust to these parchment barriers against

the encroaching spirit of power? But experience assures us, that the efficacy of the provision has been greatly overrated; and that some more adequate defense is indispensably necessary for the more feeble, against the more powerful, members of the government.

When Madison originally published this paper in 1788, he did so using the title, "These Departments Should Not Be So Far Separated as to Have No Constitutional Control Over Each Other."

Mr. Madison expressed these concerns only 12 years after America had declared its independence. And I would submit that in the intervening 226 years, these abuses have spiraled out of control.

I would urge Americans to ask themselves: Has this administration moved our Nation back toward the noble dream imagined by men like James Madison when all laws were equally enforced and all people are equal under those laws, or has this administration worsened the trend Madison detected so early on?

President Obama infamously said on this very floor, Madam Speaker:

We are not just going to be waiting for legislation in order to make sure that we are providing Americans the kind of help they need. I have got a pen, and I have got a phone. And I can use that pen to sign executive orders and take executive actions and administrative actions that move the ball forward.

To this I would humbly respond, Madam Speaker, no, he can't, not if what he is doing is abrogating the Constitution of the United States. That is exactly the sort of overreach Madison warned us about, and it is exactly what we are referencing when we talk about an Imperial Presidency.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, we are dealing with a President who has admitted he would prefer to be unconfined by constitutional limitations. He specifically said:

Wherever and whenever I can take steps without legislation, that is what I am going to do.

Madam Speaker, they say that to be forewarned is to be forearmed. This President has not been shy about his intentions to go beyond the Constitution when he is inclined. Under this administration, the IRS has become a political tool used against those who oppose the President's policies. The Justice Department has adopted a policy of selective law enforcement, essentially rewriting the law by only enforcing the ones they prefer. The Senate's role in the appointment process has been ignored outright, with the administration making so-called recess appointments, even though the Senate was not in recess.

The legislative branch has been deemed little more than an inconvenient hurdle, with legislation like the DREAM Act and ObamaCare being either imposed via fiat or grossly and repeatedly modified without the input,

consent, or action on the part of Congress.

We have seen the unconstitutional seizure of reporters' phone records, reported spying even on Members of Congress, and attempting to force small businesses to disclose their political affiliations before being considered for Federal contracts. At what point, Madam Speaker, do we say enough is enough?

I would remind all of us of the pleading words of DANIEL WEBSTER to all Americans when he said:

Hold on, my friends, to the Constitution, and to the Republic for which it stands, for miracles do not cluster, and what has happened once in 6,000 years may never happen again. So hold on to the Constitution, for if the American Constitution should fall, there will be anarchy throughout the world.

Madam Speaker, the Faithful Execution of the Law Act is one very important step in the right direction. This bill will help prevent executive overreach and require greater disclosure when it does occur.

I want to thank Congressman DESANTIS for bringing this legislation forward. I want to thank Chairman GOODLATTE for his steadfast leadership on bringing this administration's executive overreach to light, and I would urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COHEN. Before I yield to Ms. LOFGREN, I would just like to comment a couple of things.

Without disrespect to our Founding Fathers—I revere them all alike—but Mr. FRANKS was talking about President Madison and the noble experiment and asked the rhetorical question, all people were equal under the law—except for African Americans who were slaves, people who couldn't pay a poll tax, and women. So let's get away from this homogenized perspective of the way the world was and try to get to the way the world should be.

DANIEL WEBSTER has a quote up there, by bringing forth all of our resources, develop our resources and our land and its institutions, so that while we are here, we, in our day and our generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered.

Well, we are not doing that today. And the references to the IRS have been debunked. They were equally applied to people who used organizations, 501(c)(4)s, beyond their original purpose. It was not anything political. And that goes to show the basic nature of this, because it is another attack on the President of the United States.

The President said: whenever I can take action without legislation. When he can take it without legislation, when he is permitted.

With that, I yield as much time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, either this bill does nothing because it is

vague or it does something that is a serious problem. In the committee report for this bill, it specifically calls out as something that is wrong the DREAM Act, apparently suggesting that the DREAMers should be deported.

Now, I don't believe that what happened with the DREAMers, the deferred action, was beyond the President's authority. And I have this letter here that was sent in 1999 signed by the late Henry Hyde and two Republicans who went on to chair the Judiciary Committee, Mr. SMITH and Mr. SENSENBRENNER, urging then-President Clinton to do the same thing that President Obama has now done, which is to come up with actual standards that are then applied. So I don't think that this bill should change that.

But let's say it does. Let's say that we would have to report each time a DREAMer applies for deferred action. I think what we are talking about is that 500,000 or so DREAMers, their names and addresses, would have to be reported in to the Congress. Is that really what we want to do, to have all those kids be reported in to the Congress?

Let's talk about another thing mentioned in the earlier bill, specifically on page 14 in the committee report, the so-called point 3, unlawful extension of parole in place. What the President did—as prior Presidents have done—is to parole the immediate family, the husbands and wives, of American soldiers who are in immigration trouble.

□ 1730

The reason for that, and the military asked us to do that, the last thing you want, you have a soldier in Afghanistan dodging bullets, you don't want that soldier worrying about what is going to happen to his wife, the visa got lost and she is facing deportation, and so parole in place was used.

Now, we believe, and I mentioned, there is a specific statutory authority for that, section 212(d)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, but apparently the majority believes it is unlawful. So what would this bill mean? I guess that all of the wives and husbands who are not deported, and I guess their little children, their names and addresses should be reported in to the Congress. So we have a little list here of people who are Americans in every way but their papers, whose husbands are off fighting for our country, but we are going to create a list of them. I think they are going to feel exposed and at risk.

If the bill does anything, it does something very dangerous and wrong. We should not vote for this. I oppose it. I oppose the deportation of the DREAMers, as the majority has asked be done in these two bills, and I hope my colleagues vote against it.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS).

Mr. DESANTIS. I thank the chairman for yielding me this time.

Madam Speaker, I have to tell you, listening to the other side, I don't know what world they are living in. We didn't have a hearing on the bill? I testified at the hearing; I don't think I made that up, I think that happened.

The idea that we are going to be reporting people's names and phone numbers for this bill—no. The Attorney General will go and say we have established a policy not to enforce ObamaCare mandates, for example. We have a situation now where these policies are illegal under the law. So if you actually looked up the law, they would be illegal, but the executive branch has taken the position that we are not going to enforce that for a couple of years, so there is a divergence between the law on the books and the law in action, and those are the types of instances, policy decisions not to enforce that will be done. That ultimately is what we are talking about here.

Some people want different policy outcomes one way or another, but the important part of this is we are talking about power and we are talking about authority. So in some of these instances, I don't agree with those ObamaCare mandates; I would like to get them off the books, and so policywise I agree with that, but as a matter of authority, the President cannot simply suspend that law that was enacted. That ultimately is what we are talking about, clarity and how the government is operating.

Ultimately, the power resides with the American people, not with Members of Congress or with the President. The people own power under the Constitution, and then we exercise that authority consistent with the power that they have delegated to us. We have the authority under article I of the Constitution to legislate, and we have the exclusive authority to legislate.

The President has the duty to take care that the laws are faithfully executed. He does not have authority delegated him to amend, suspend, or change duly enacted laws, and this is a fundamental principle of our constitutional system, that there are separated powers and checks and balances.

George Washington, in his farewell address, admonished the Nation that to preserve these checks must be as necessary as to institute them.

The problem that I keep running into is, if I don't know what the limiting principle in some of these things is, if you can suspend the ObamaCare insurance mandate and you can suspend the business mandate and you can suspend the individual mandate, can a Republican President come in and just suspend the whole shebang? If not, why not? What is the difference?

Make no mistake about it, when there is a Republican President, there is going to be pressure on that Presi-

dent to suspend provisions of law that those voters who elected that individual don't like. If we start going back and forth where one side enforces what they like and the other side enforces what they like, then you don't really have a legislative body passing laws. We are essentially passing suggestions, and then it is ultimately the Executive who determines what will be enforced and what will not be enforced. That is not a road, I think, we want to go down.

The good thing about this bill is it is just saying put your cards on the table. If you are going to not enforce certain provisions of law, then report it to Congress and let us know about that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman.

Mr. DESANTIS. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

So put your cards on the table. We should not in Congress have to rely on a leak to the press or find a blog post or look in some footnote in some unrelated Federal rule to know whether some of these things are being suspended, and the American people deserve to know whether or not their laws are being enforced.

So at the end of the day, this is really a transparency provision. It has worked with, in terms of the constitutional questions—Attorneys General Gonzalez, Mukasey, and Holder have reported to the Congress when the Federal Government has adopted policies of nonenforcement due to constitutional concerns.

So this says if you are going to take the position that as a matter of policy you are not going to enforce clear mandates in law, then provide that to us, offer your justification so we can evaluate it.

Ultimately, I think it is now just common parlance in the press here that a lot of these ObamaCare delays are done to help Democrats in the midterm elections, that maybe they won't lose as many seats if you can do that. Well, this is stuff that I think the American people need to know. That is a completely unacceptable reason to suspend laws.

So ultimately, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

The only way it could potentially be burdensome is if their people throughout the bureaucracy are instituting nonenforcement policies left and right. The average Federal official does not have the authority to decide to institute a policy of nonenforcement. They may be able to institute discretion on a case-by-case basis. I was a prosecutor, I couldn't just decide not to enforce drug laws anymore, so some of this stuff is a red herring.

I thank the chairman for yielding me the time, and I thank the chairman of

the full committee for offering this bill. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, first, I would like to say that Federal officer may be mentioned many times in the code, but not defined; not defined.

Madam Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, if you look at the actual statute that is being proposed here, it says the report shall be made by any Federal officer, undefined, establishes or implements these policies, to refrain.

I would note, and it was hardly a secret when the deferred action program was started, it was a memorandum on June 15, 2012. It was made available to the committee and to Congress, and it points out on page 2 that the exercise of prosecutorial discretion will be made on an individual basis for those who fit within the category. So I think if this means anything, and it may not because it is vague, it means that each time an individual receives the benefit of that prosecutorial discretion on a case-by-case basis, they would have to be reported to the Congress.

Now, what information would be reported? I don't know; presumably the name or the case file or the phone number. There are many John Smiths in that group of kids, so I presume that you would need more than just the name, perhaps an address or other identifier. The point is, we are creating a little list here. It is a little list that I think will feel very dangerous to those who are identified, and unwarranted by those whose hearts are very touched by DREAM Act kids who were brought here as children. As the principles released by the Republican leadership pointed out, these are young people who committed no offense, whose only country is the United States; and but for pay-for, they would be Americans. I don't think it is something that we should do, to have their names released, to deport them, to turn our backs on them, as this bill would do.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I would just point out that this bill does not anticipate the appropriateness of one law or another, just the inappropriateness of ignoring the law in general.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOH).

Mr. YOH. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding.

We talk about this country as a country of law, and transparency gets thrown around, as does accountability, all the time, yet we fail. We come up short time and time again.

The current administration has made multiple attempts to bypass its article II duties and instead assumed the article I legislative powers reserved for Congress. The numerous changes to the Affordable Care Act and the implemen-

tation of a one-size-fits-all prosecutorial discretion policy are just a few examples of the Executive's failure to faithfully execute existing Federal laws.

Under current law, the Attorney General must report to Congress whenever a Department of Justice official implements a policy to enforce a Federal law. H.R. 3973, the Faithful Execution of the Law Act, simply extends that requirement to apply to all Federal officials. This is a commonsense bill that will bring transparency to the current and future administrations' execution of the law.

By requiring these reports to Congress, the American people will get clarity on which laws are not being executed and assurance that these decisions are correctly made. This will also bring healthy debate and an opportunity for the Executive to tell Congress why a law is changed, in what fashion it is changed, and why it is necessary. For that reason, I would think the administration would welcome this legislation. However, the administration has stated that this bill would overburden the Attorney General because he would have to know every law in every Federal agency. Madam Speaker, who else but the chief legal officer of the United States is better equipped to argue over whether or not to change existing law?

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle may disagree with the motivation for bringing this bill forward, but they cannot deny that it sets precedent to help both Democrat and Republican Congresses to keep future administrations in check. I ask my colleagues to imagine a Republican President not enforcing the law that they support, and remind them that it is easy to overlook a violation of process when one agrees with the substance.

There could come a day when you, like us today, will not be able to overlook a similar violation of the process. The beauty of our Constitution is that it has no subjective bias or political preference, but rather, it applies equally and without agenda.

I thank my good friend from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS) and the chairman for introducing this straightforward but necessary piece of legislation. I encourage all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill to keep the rule of law and to protect our constitutional Republic.

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES).

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank the gentleman for yielding. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to a bill that perhaps could more appropriately be called the "Failure to Execute Our Legislative Responsibilities Act."

This bill is a legislative solution in search of a problem. There is no evidence, there is no basis, there is no

record to rationally conclude that the President of the United States has breached his obligations under the law in a manner that is inconsistent with the Constitution.

Now I recognize, Madam Speaker, that there are some individuals in this town who believe that the President of the United States broke the law in January of 2009 when he first took the oath of office, but there is no room for hyperbole or hypocrisy or hysteria in the legislative process.

This matter is another diversion from the business of the American people that we actually should be doing. We stand here again today wasting the time and the treasure of the American people. We should be dealing with comprehensive immigration reform, but House Republicans are blocking it. We should be increasing the minimum wage, but House Republicans are blocking it. We should be extending unemployment insurance, but House Republicans are blocking it. This bill is a distraction.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" and let's get back to doing the business of the American people.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS).

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, when I rise today, it is amazing that I have actually come to the floor and heard said it is a waste of time, it is problematic talking about the very structure of our government, the very structure that was formed, and how we interact with each other. I just don't get it. I never thought I would come to the floor of the House and actually hear those words actually uttered.

□ 1745

And I do remind my friends from across the aisle that there was that nirvana just a few years ago, and I do it every time because we talk about immigration reform in which there is basically control of everything, and you just chose not to act on it.

So let's move past the point when we can look at what we are doing here today, and that is looking at a law that actually goes back to the understanding of why we are here.

Every time I go home and every time I am up here, I get calls, I get notes, saying: Why is there the ability to change the law?

It is not prosecutorial discretion. It is saying: there is a black letter date, I am changing it, I don't like it.

That is wrong. When you are looking at discretion, it is not an issue of do I want to do it or not; it is an issue of what does the law say?

People back home could care less about Washingtonspeak. They could care less about what goes inside the beltway. They care about their lives, and they care about a government that

they read about in textbooks that said here is how a bill becomes a law and here is how it works. We even had a little jingle about it on Schoolhouse Rock.

But we decided to move away from that. In fact, if the Republicans were not here talking about this, you would not have heard about some of these things because they are buried in many places—the very things that we talking about here, but the American people, especially in my district, want us to do more. They want us to say: reaffirm your article I responsibilities.

Now, the interesting thing here is we have had testimony, yes, in committee talking about this issue. The gentleman in which we disagree on policy, Mr. Turley, has said you may not like it, and I like some of what has been done, but this is not the way to do it.

It goes back to just really an understanding of what undermines Congress. We talk about our approval rating, we talk about our lack, but we don't do what we are supposed to do because we are not holding article I responsibility and accounting transparency from an executive who blatantly disobeys it.

So what do we need to do? We have got to reassert that article I authority. It is not only in bills like this and also the one we just passed, but it is also looking at our article I responsibility with budgeting. It is our article I responsibility to say we have got to come to an agreement and say this is the law and the executive has to enforce that law.

This is something that we can—and my good friend from Tennessee, we disagree on a lot of things—but we can agree on one thing today. We can work together on this because I remember, when you all was back watching on C-SPAN just a few years ago, the same outrage. Why would the President make signing statements?

In fact, we talk about Imperial Presidency. I remember the first time Imperial Presidency came up. It happened to be from the ranking member of our committee, Mr. CONYERS, when he wrote about the Imperial Presidency of Bush.

So let's take the hyperbole out.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. So the question that comes to mind is: Why are we here?

It is because of the folks that I see every day that want to say: Congress doesn't do anything, the President does whatever he wants to do, why is Congress not doing anything?

We are doing something. These bills that we are passing today move forward and say we are asserting our responsibility and our role.

But this is what breaks my heart, really frankly, is that this should be

bipartisan. This should be something we come down here and both agree on. It should be bipartisan that we should work together.

For me, this is not an issue of who resides at 1600 Pennsylvania. That is irrelevant to me. What is important to me is this institution that was set up to make laws, to execute laws, and to judge the constitutionality of laws. That is the way our system was set up.

It has changed through the years. If the Attorney General or the administration feels that there is a law that is wrong or unconstitutional, then the process is to come back to Congress and say here is our ideas, and you come to the elected representatives of the people.

You don't continue to just say I don't like it, I am not going to enforce it; and for many of these, to say this is just simply prosecutorial discretion is an affront to the American people.

The reason we are here today is Congress is asserting itself and asserting its role, and for the Ninth District of Georgia, that is why they sent me, is to do what Congress is supposed to do, but also hold the administration accountable for what they are supposed to do because back home they don't get it.

They remember I am just a bill, just an ordinary bill. That is the way it was supposed to work.

It is time we start rewriting the textbooks. It is time to get back to transparency and faithfully executing the law.

With that, I ask for support of this bill.

Mr. COHEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just like to respond a little bit to what was said, and it was said in a previous discussion by my friend from South Carolina about why Congress is in such disrepute. He was thinking, if we pass this bill, people will think better of us.

I would submit the reason Congress is in such disrepute is because the GOP shut down the government. People don't know about how you make a bill, per se, but they know they want their government opened. When they come to Washington, they want to go to different places. The GOP shut down the government for 17 days, and that is wrong.

Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, I would just like to note that, in 2010, the House of Representatives did pass the DREAM Act. Eight Republicans voted against it. It was killed by Republicans in the Senate, but we did our best to pass the DREAM Act.

In fact, it did pass this House, and I still have the gavel that Speaker PELOSI used while presiding over that measure displayed proudly in my office.

I think, also, as we discuss matters, we can help undercut confidence in our system of government. Yes, we are fans of article I because we are in the Congress, but article II has its role as well.

I think it is important to note that the Supreme Court itself has, as recently as last year, noted—and that is in the Arizona case—that Federal immigration officials have broad discretion, including “whether it makes sense to pursue removal at all” as part of their authority under the Constitution.

Further, we have delegated to the President by statute, 6 U.S. Code 202, for the administration using its article II authority to establish the national immigration enforcement policies and priorities, which is what the President did.

So let's not instill anxiety and confusion among our constituents by somehow saying, when the President uses the authority that we have granted to him that the Supreme Court has noted he has, that somehow that is improper. It is not.

I would say further, on the merits of the case, this is not just random authority, as the gentleman from Arizona suggested earlier. It is the majority who specifically mentions the DREAM Act on page 2 of their report—of the committee report, as being problematic and a reason for this legislation.

It was the majority report, not me, who suggested that. I think it is very mistaken and wrong on a policy matter, wrong on a legal matter, and wrong constitutionally.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING).

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman, the chair of the Constitution Subcommittee, for yielding to me.

I rise in support of this act. I am a little bit astonished by some of the debate and the dialogue that has taken place here throughout this day, especially on the topic matter that is Executive overreach.

We have had extensive hearings in the Judiciary Committee. It should be clear to all that, when the liberal constitutional professors are concerned about our country, a tipping point in our Constitution, it is time for maybe a little bit more of an open dialogue here and I think more of an objective dialogue.

I would bring to your attention, Madam Speaker, some language that was in The Wall Street Journal today. It was in support of the Faithful Execution of the Law Act and then the reporting act that we are talking about.

It is a perfect example of why this bill is necessary in a report in The Wall Street Journal. It says, in today's issue, describing yet another ObamaCare delay that flies in the face of the statutory text:

This latest political reconstruction has received zero media notice, and the Health and Human Services Department didn't think the details were worth discussing in a conference call, press materials, or fact sheet. Instead, the mandate suspension was buried in an unrelated rule that was meant to preserve some health plans that don't comply with ObamaCare benefit and redistribution mandates. Our sources only noticed the change this week.

Madam Speaker, this is not the way Congress should be informed of the President's failure to faithfully execute the law or his utter defiance of the law or his executive endeavor to amend the law outside the bounds of his article II constraints.

Madam Speaker, when the President or any other Federal official adopts a policy of failing to enforce a law or refusing to enforce a law, it should immediately inform Congress in writing, so the duly elected representatives of the American people can respond appropriately.

To have to find out in a newspaper article or find out on a Web site or, worse yet, in one of the earlier unconstitutional overreach efforts of the President to amend the ObamaCare law, we found out on a third-tier U.S. Treasury Web site.

Now, what of 316 million Americans responsible to know what the law says and do our best to comply with it can be cruising around on a third-tier U.S. Department of Treasury Web site, to see if the President has gotten up that morning or gone to bed late the night before, maybe a little bleary-eyed, and issued some kind of an order that there is going to be another change in ObamaCare?

ObamaCare, it has his name on it, Madam Speaker, the President's name, ObamaCare on the top and his signature on the bottom.

We had a constitutional review meeting this morning with constitutional scholars, and I said: Is it 31 times that the President has, by the stroke of his pen or the word of his mouth, amended ObamaCare?

They corrected me. They said: no, it is 38 times.

I don't have that list. I hope I get that list because I would like to examine some of them that I am missing, but the President of the United States has no authority to amend ObamaCare.

Yes, there is executive discretion on the implementation of it, but the starkest violation of the Constitution and the starkest amendment to ObamaCare is the one that people agreed with, and it is this: that the President announced that he was going to delay ObamaCare, the employer mandate, for an extra year when the bill itself says the implementation of the employer mandate shall commence in each month after December of 2013.

Now, I don't know how the gentleman from California's dialogue gets around that very, very strict language

that was written into ObamaCare. It doesn't say if the President changes his mind; it doesn't say if Democrats are vulnerable. It says shall commence in each month after December of 2013; yet the President decided he would just simply delay that for a year. Now, there are, what, 30 or 37—pick your number—different times the President has done this?

I remember criticism from last summer when I was asked by the press and the public and the demand from people on the other side of the aisle, ObamaCare is the law of the land, so we are obligated to fund it through the appropriations process.

That was a big debate here on the floor of this House. I said, then, we don't know what the law is because the President has so stirred the pot with his executive orders, his executive pen, his cell phone, his ink pen, or his press conferences, that no one today knows what ObamaCare is or says.

Even if we think we knew, we would have to be a contemporary scholar of the bill, and we couldn't go to bed to-night thinking we knew what it would be tomorrow morning because it is likely to change again. That is what is going on, simply, with just ObamaCare.

By the way, I would add conscience protection, when we were assured—and it was to be written into the bill—that the conscience protection would be there for those folks who had a concern.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arizona has 3 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Tennessee has 9½ minutes remaining.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman.

I want to make a point. The President even amended ObamaCare by press conference, which is completely outrageous.

Not to get to the immigration components of this, there is nothing in this that deports anyone. The things that we did with my amendment addressing the DACA language are also the President's overreach; and by the way, the prosecutorial discretion says on an individual basis only seven times in that order, but it creates entire classes of people—four classes of people—encompassing hundreds of thousands of people.

You can't describe hundreds of thousands of people of being individuals. They are groups created unconstitutionally by the President.

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First, I want to set the record straight before we get too much revi-

sionist history here. Yesterday in the Rules Committee, the distinguished chairman of the Rules Committee, Mr. SESSIONS, said that President Obama liked the law so much—the Affordable Care Act—that he had it named for himself. Today, my friend from Iowa said they put his name on it.

□ 1800

Well, he didn't define "they." It wasn't us. It's the Affordable Care Act, Patient Protection Act. It was the opponents of the bill, them, that started calling it "ObamaCare," thinking that would be a pejorative, and they have gotten so used to it, they think we did it. Take credit for what you do, but forgive them, for maybe they don't know what they do.

I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this burdensome and unnecessary piece of legislation.

We all know this is a message bill, a one-House bill that is not going anywhere in the Senate and is intended only as political propaganda against the President. It is a sham, and we all know it. In fact, we have come to expect it.

Never mind that there are real problems facing the American people that we can and should be working on, like raising the minimum wage, reforming our broken immigration system, creating jobs, extending unemployment insurance.

I guess it's not enough for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to ignore America's real problems. They have to waste time on invented problems that don't really exist.

That brings us to the bill before us today. This bill would require the Attorney General to report to Congress any instance when any Federal officer establishes a policy to refrain from enforcing, applying, or administering any Federal law, as well as to state the grounds underlying such a nonenforcement policy.

It expands the current law, which requires the Attorney General to report instances when he determines not to enforce the law because he believes that law to be unconstitutional. This new burdensome mandate would not only result in confusion and drain already-limited law enforcement resources, but would present separation-of-powers concerns as to its constitutionality.

The bill would require the Attorney General to oversee every single Federal officer, every U.S. attorney, every deputy U.S. attorney, every agent of any Federal agency, thousands of people, and would require him to determine in every instance when they prioritize enforcement of some classes of cases over others whether such exercises of discretion constitute a "policy" of non-enforcement. What a complete mess.

Millions of decisions every year. Talk about your bureaucratic nightmare, not to mention your waste of taxpayers' dollars.

What is even worse is this bill is a thoroughly flawed solution in search of an imaginary problem. Over the course of two oversight hearings on the topic, the bill's supporters have failed to identify a single example of the President really failing to "faithfully execute" the law.

It is clear that they have confused constitutional violations with the President's legitimate exercise of enforcement discretion, which is not only well within his authority, but is in fact required by the Constitution's Take Care Clause.

Whether it be increasing the minimum wage with Federal contractors, which he is allowed to do; allowing the DREAMers to stay in the country by deferred deportation orders, for which there is much precedent; or even delaying implementation of certain provisions of the Affordable Care Act, all of these actions are well within the President's legal authority. Of course the President has the authority to set guidelines for Federal contractors or to prioritize immigration enforcement dollars away from deporting children. Even when it comes to delaying deadlines of provisions in the Affordable Care Act, his goal was not to undermine the law. It was the exact opposite—to ensure that the law continues to work well for the millions of Americans who are benefiting from it: the children under age 26 who can remain on their parents' policies, those with preexisting conditions who can get insurance, women and seniors benefiting from increased preventive care services, of course the millions of previously uninsured who now have health insurance.

So, Madam Speaker, I hope my colleagues will be content with their message bill based on half-truths, completely unworkable technically, and completely without any benefit to the millions of Americans who want more from Congress than silly messages.

Americans want results. They want higher wages, a better immigration system, and affordable health care. I guess the Republicans are content to have them wait and to try to entertain them with silly nonsense. It is really sad. I hope we can get down to dealing with serious issues in this Congress.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I now yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I heard my friend from Tennessee talk about revisionist history, and yet he has also talked about the Republicans shutting down the government.

So that we get this accurate, the truth is this body here proposed and passed three different compromises.

One was going to suspend ObamaCare for a year. The Senate would not even take that up; they wanted a shutdown. Then we sent down a bill we passed from here that would actually just suspend the individual mandate—that the President has done unconstitutionally and unilaterally for Big Business. Then when that didn't work, we passed a bill that said: Look, here's our conferees; you appoint yours; we will have a deal worked out by morning. HARRY REID wanted the Congress and all of the Federal Government shut down, and so he did nothing.

So, we know who shut things down, but I want to read a quote:

These last few years we have seen an unacceptable abuse of power at home. We've paid a heavy price by having a President whose priority is expanding his own power. The Constitution is treated like a nuisance.

Barack Obama said that, and he could not be more right as to classification of his own conduct.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I would ask if the gentleman is prepared to close.

Mr. COHEN. Yes, I am.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just like to say that while this legislation and the previous legislation is going nowhere, we should be dealing with the issues that face the American people, the serious issue of jobs and the environment and global warming and immigration reform and drug reform and freedom and liberty and justice and the American way.

I admire the Speaker. She is a fine woman and does a great job and has done a good job presiding today. And many of the Republicans, even though I don't agree with them, I think they are nice people, and most people here try to do the right thing. Unfortunately, some of the policies that they have I think put the country in a wrong direction, but they are basically nice people.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the remainder of the time.

I would say, Madam Speaker, in spite of the many unrelated issues that my friends on the left have brought up to bear on this bill, this bill is about the rule of law. Madam Speaker, I would remind all of us that the rule of law is what we had that little unpleasant discussion with England about so many years ago. After that we wrote a Constitution, and every person in this body swore to defend that Constitution, and that is what we are trying to do here.

If we now, as legislators in the United States Congress, are willing to stand idly by and let the President of the United States arrogate legislative

power unto himself and dismiss the Constitution, then we would be obligated, Madam Speaker, to apologize for our oaths and dismiss the dream of human freedom and step back and board this place up and go home.

I would suggest to you, Madam Speaker, that some of us are not prepared and willing to do that. And so to that end, to the end that we can uphold the rule of law, I would encourage my colleagues to pass this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3973, The Faithful Execution of the Law Act of 2014.

One of the areas in which the Executive Branch should be least hamstrung is in its ability to respond to imminent threats to national security or public safety and the Jackson Lee Amendment prevents the President from being shackled by Congressional litigation from protecting America.

A fundamental role of government is to ensure citizens' physical security.

While government should not be given unfettered power in the name of security, neither should we allow a lawsuit by Congress to hamper the President in responding to imminent threats.

H.R. 3973 expands upon preexisting reporting requirements.

Already, Madam Speaker, under 28 U.S.C. Section 53013(a)(1)(A), the Attorney General is required to report to Congress whenever any officer of the Department of Justice (including the Attorney General himself) "establishes or implements a formal or informal policy to refrain" from (i) enforcing any federal statute, rule, or regulation on the grounds that the provision is unconstitutional, or (ii) enforcing or complying with a final decision of any court that interprets or applies the Constitution or a statute, rule, or regulation.

H.R. 3973 would expand 530D(a)(1)(A) in three respects.

First, it would require the Attorney General to report on nonenforcement policies adopted by federal officers outside of the Department of Justice.

Second, it would extend reporting requirements to all nonenforcement policies, regardless of their rationale.

Third, it would require the Attorney General to specify the grounds for declining to enforce any federal statute, rule, or regulation in his report to Congress.

To summarize Madam Speaker, the U.S. Code would look like the following:

(a) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall submit to the Congress a report of any instance in which the Attorney General or any officer of the Department of Justice or any other Federal officer—

(A) establishes or implements a formal or informal policy to refrain—

(i) from enforcing, applying, or administering any provision of any Federal statute, rule, regulation, program, policy, or other law whose enforcement, application, or administration is within the responsibility of the Attorney General or such officer and state the grounds for such policy on the grounds that such provision is unconstitutional; . . .

Again, Madam Speaker, an area in which the Executive Branch should be least hamstrung is in its ability to respond to imminent

threats to national security or public safety, which is the amendment I would have offered in the Rules Committee last night.

A fundamental role of government is to ensure citizens' physical security.

While government should not be given unfettered power in the name of security, neither should we allow a lawsuit by Congress to hamper the President in responding to important matters of state.

I urge my colleagues to reject this Bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate on the bill has expired.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. ELLISON

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, I have an amendment at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Add, at the end of the bill, the following:

SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.

Section 2, and the amendments made by section 2, shall take effect only beginning on the date that the Attorney General finds that sufficient amounts have been appropriated to cover the costs of additional reports that the Attorney General is required to submit by reason of such amendments, including costs to Federal agencies and to Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 511, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, if my colleagues who are offering this bill believe that it is a good idea, they should agree with my amendment. We will see.

My amendment is very simple. It just says that if the voluminous number of reports that may be generated by this bill are so burdensome that they shut down and interfere and gnarl up the instrument of government, then it would be legitimate for the Executive to waive the reporting requirements provided in the bill if sufficient funds are not available to generate the increased volume. It makes simple sense to do so.

My colleagues say they want transparency. They also say all the time that they want to cut red tape, that they want to cut extra reports, that they want to get government out of the way. Their bill is getting government in the way, for sure. If they are sincere about their desire for less government, then I am certain that they would be willing to put in a provision by which we would waive reporting requirements provided in the bill if sufficient funds were not available to deal with all of these reports that they are generating.

But do you know what?

It may just be, Madam Speaker, that, given that we had a 16-day shutdown and given that we just saw the Oversight Committee chairman cut off the mike and given that we have just seen sequestration and the cutting off of government, maybe, right now, what

we are seeing is an effort to just bog down government—snarl it, wrap it up, get it twisted up—so that it doesn't really function. Whether you are shutting down or are cutting off or are bogging down, it is all interfering with the American people's government and its ability to serve them.

I would ask for a "yes" vote on my amendment because my amendment makes sense given that the general theme around here has been less government, particularly not unfunded mandates and things like that. We certainly are not sending an appropriation along that is compliant with this bill. We are certainly not sending money along and extra staff to be able to generate the reports that would come about as a result of this bill.

It just seems to me that it would be fair for the Executive to say that that is not a constitutionally implicated provision for which we are using our discretion to either formally or not formally enforce; therefore, we don't need to write a report but for this amendment. Yet, since we don't have the money and since, I am sure, that my friends on the Republican side wouldn't want to bog down government, they should just be able to waive the requirement if there are not sufficient funds to comply.

I want to point out, Madam Speaker, that this particular bill would have the effect of burdening government unless we do have some provision for the Executive to escape it given its overburdening nature. This particular bill would be an undue burden.

I also think it is important to point out—I think it is very important for everyone listening to this debate to know, Madam Speaker—that existing law already requires the Department of Justice to submit a report to Congress when it determines that nonenforcement is recommended because the law is unconstitutional. So, when we need a report, the law already requires that we would get one; but informal? Think about the way this bill is written. It would require a Federal agency to issue a report even in the case of informal nonenforcement.

Does that mean that if somebody decides not to charge out a case that one has to write a report on it? Does that mean that if EPA officials cannot get down to every single polluter because they are dealing with the big ones that they have got to write a report about it? Does that mean that the FBI cannot prioritize the dangerousness of crimes and go after the most dangerous people and work with local law enforcement to deal with the other ones?

This is a ridiculous piece of legislation being offered. It would generate all types of burdens, and in order to meet and comply with it, it would require all types of expenses and extra staff. Since my Republican friends and I agree that it would not be a good idea

to just push unfunded mandates on the government, I am sure that I will be able to get a lot of votes from both sides of the aisle that would allow the executive branch to waive reporting requirements.

Mr. COHEN. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ELLISON. I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. COHEN. You said you would definitely get a whole bunch of folks on both sides of the aisle?

Mr. ELLISON. In reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman from Tennessee. I am sure we will get plenty of people on both sides.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I claim time in opposition to the gentleman's amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

□ 1815

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I would oppose the amendment, as it would explicitly grant the Attorney General the unilateral power to negate the entire bill based on his own subjective determination of what constitutes "sufficient" appropriations.

This amendment would shield from accountability the President, the Attorney General, and any other Federal employee from the duty to take care that the laws are faithfully executed.

Madam Speaker, we know that this bill will not cost the taxpayers any money, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. As stated in their official view submitted, CBO estimates:

Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or revenues.

CBO estimates that implementation of the bill would not have a significant effect on the budget because such reporting costs are small and subject already to the availability of appropriated funds.

So, Madam Speaker, why does this amendment grant the Attorney General the unilateral authority to conclude otherwise?

Well, Madam Speaker, the Attorney General works for the President, and when given the opportunity to immunize the President from accountability, what does one think the Attorney General would do? It is logical to assume he would shield the President from accountability.

The base bill is specifically designed to hold the President accountable. This amendment, on the other hand, would allow his own Attorney General to shield the President from accountability, thereby gutting the bill, and so this amendment should be roundly defeated.

Madam Speaker, we have had significant debate here, but it is important to

remind ourselves what it really is all about. The rule of law is truly the only context in which human freedom on Earth can exist. It is incumbent upon those of us who have taken an oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States to protect that rule of law here tonight. This is the intention of this bill. This is the deep commitment that should be on the part of all of us.

With that, I hope my colleagues would defeat this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended, and on the amendment by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON).

Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of H.R. 3973 is postponed.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO IRAN—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 113-97)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared on March 15, 1995, is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 2014.

The crisis between the United States and Iran resulting from the actions and policies of the Government of Iran has not been resolved. The Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) between the P5+1 and Iran went into effect on January 20, 2014, for a period of 6 months. This marks the first time in a decade that Iran has agreed to and taken specific actions to halt its nuclear program and to roll it back in key respects. In return for Iran's actions on its nuclear program, the P5+1, in coordination with the European Union, are taking actions to implement the limited, temporary, and reversible sanctions relief outlined in the JPOA.

Nevertheless, certain actions and policies of the Government of Iran are contrary to the interests of the United States in the region and continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary

threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to Iran and to maintain in force comprehensive sanctions against Iran to deal with this threat.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, March 12, 2014.

45TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to applaud the Minority Business Development Agency on its 45th anniversary.

The Minority Business Development Agency was established by executive order on March 5, 1969, and has worked to promote the growth and global competitiveness of a critical segment of the U.S. economy, the minority business community. Through their nationwide network of MBDA Business Centers, the MBDA has helped minority firms access contracts, capital, and enter market opportunities, both domestic and global.

Over the last 5 years specifically, this assistance has provided minority firms access to nearly \$20 billion in contracts and capital. I thank the MBDA for all it has accomplished over the last 45 years, especially the work at the Memphis MBDA Business Center in Tennessee Nine, my congressional district in Memphis, Tennessee.

In the coming years, the growth of America's workforce will come from minorities, and we need strong minority businesses to achieve maximum economic growth. I am certain the MBDA will lead the Nation to achieving our full potential.

HONORING DON MANN

(Mr. SCHRADER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCHRADER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a man who has spent over 37 years in public service, including 20 years in my district in beautiful Newport, Oregon.

I am speaking, of course, about Don Mann, who recently retired as general manager of the Port of Newport after 18 years at the helm. Don's tenure at the Port was marked by significant changes that will reverberate in that region for years to come. His leadership and vision are beginning to make the central Oregon coast an economic hub.

Don led the charge, putting together the proposal that relocated NOAA's Pacific Marine Operations to Newport, Oregon, against all odds and some pret-

ty big cities to the north. It is an incredible achievement that cannot be understated.

Not to rest on his laurels, Don has continued to work hard improving the international Port of Newport, which will also provide significant economic development for that region.

I just want to say, Don, it has been a pleasure working with you. I have enjoyed it immensely. Your tireless work on behalf of Oregonians is recognized. I wish you and Carolyn all the best in retirement.

Take care, my friend.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to yield to my dear friend, Mr. LAMALFA.

Mr. LAMALFA. I appreciate my good friend from Texas. Thank you for yielding time tonight.

I wanted to speak a little bit about some issues affecting California and the wise use of U.S. taxpayer dollars.

California's high-speed rail, on its surface, may have sounded promising to voters when they acted on it in the 2008 election—until you take a closer look at it.

Once the planning on the project began, the public found it would take billions of dollars to build and operate beyond what they were promised when it was on the ballot. What had been a \$33 billion ballot pricetag was exposed at a November 2011 public hearing as a nearly \$100 billion project.

After some scrambling to make plan changes, which likely render it illegal from the enabling legislation voters passed as Prop 1A, we now see the current \$69 billion plan, which uses low-speed modes in the urban areas of San Francisco and LA, again, found illegal under Proposition 1A. The tripled, then discounted, doubled pricetag is far from what 52 percent of California voters said "yes" to.

High-speed rail's ballot measure was delayed by the State legislature two election cycles before finally placing the High Speed Rail Initiative on the 2008 ballot, where Californians approved what they thought would be a reasonably managed project to connect San Francisco to Los Angeles with a 220-mile per hour train.

Because of Proposition 1A, the State could fund a portion of the construction with \$9.95 billion in bond funds, with the assumption that the rest of the money would come from private investors. At the time, the 2009 stimulus act was unknown.

The high-speed rail project that we have today has been plagued with poorly drafted funding plans, with little or

no accountability to anyone for the absurd amounts of money spent so far. No accountability means millions of dollars spent on consultants, environmental impact reports, even lobbying here in Washington, D.C., and on numerous lawsuits from Californians who stand to lose their homes, farms, and businesses because they are in the path the high-speed rail would travel.

Recently, a Superior Court judge ruled that the High Speed Rail Authority needed to redraft a 2011 funding plan for the project. The judge halted all bond sales because the Authority hadn't attained the necessary environmental clearances for the areas of the State where construction is planned to begin, nor shown there was even a plan of financing to complete even the first phase of the project.

Meanwhile, the State schemes to inappropriately use truck weight fees or to use cap-and-trade funds in order to prop up the high-speed rail's bottom line.

If a Superior Court judge says that Californians can't spend any more money on the planning and construction of high-speed rail, why should America taxpayers via the Federal Government?

Nearly \$3.3 billion in grant money has been awarded to the High Speed Rail Authority by the Federal Government via the aforementioned stimulus package that was approved in 2009 by a different Congress. This is to spend on construction. However, the Federal grant award is based on California's ability to match the Federal dollars with State funds from the bond. So it is my hope the Federal Government will put all the money earmarked for the high-speed rail on hold.

Mr. Speaker, given the judge's recent ruling, I don't believe it is in the best interest of California's taxpayers or America's taxpayers to continue throwing money down this high-speed rathole. These Federal dollars should be used for pretty much anything else, such as building more freeway lanes, expanding airports, or, especially in this time of severe drought in California and the West, redirecting these scarce dollars to alleviate drought now and in the future with new water storage and infrastructure, which all Californians will benefit from.

Instead, even after the judge's ruling, the High Speed Rail Authority said that they would continue to press forward the funding efforts to seize land from farms and businesses and hurriedly perform the necessary and very expensive environmental reviews. They now plan to front-load the project with funding from the U.S. taxpayer via the Federal funds we saw in the stimulus package because the State funding has been put on hold by the judge unless we in D.C. say "no."

California has \$8.6 billion in bond dollars left to spend on building the high-

speed rail, as nearly \$1 billion has already been spent without yet turning a shovel. Assuming they still receive the \$3.3 in stimulus funding and the total cost to build is the lowball number of \$69 billion, this means the High Speed Rail Authority has less than one-sixth of the funding necessary secured at this time. To me, the math doesn't add up. Perhaps in Fantasyland, where the monorail rail runs, it does.

Would you continue to invest in something that has a majority of the already-secured funding put on hold because your illegal business plan has holes big enough to drive a train through? I think not.

The Authority also hasn't shown any restraint in using taxpayer dollars. To date, they have spent upwards of \$600 million on engineering and environmental consultants without ever breaking ground. The Madera-to-Fresno segment alone is going to cost \$987 million—an unbelievable amount of taxpayer dollars for a segment that can't even operate trains as a stand-alone project.

So many affected residents of the Central Valley, and all over the State, are happy the funding has been put on hold. Their farms, residences, and businesses are threatened to be seized, shut down, and destroyed for a project that will not ever happen.

I hope California wakes up and realizes that this project is just a pipe dream that has hit none of its goals for cost or ridership. The legislature has had many opportunities to stop this high-speed rail boondoggle, and they will have another chance again next year. State Senator Andy Vidak has revived my "Revote the Rail" measure that I tried to get legislated back in 2010 and 2011, and will try to get the high-speed rail issue on the November 2014 ballot.

As the LA Times poll says, 55 percent of Californians would like to vote again on the high-speed rail issue, and 59 percent say they would vote down high-speed rail. I support Senator Vidak's proposal, as I did before. It needs to move forward to give people choice, now that they have seen the real numbers.

Here in D.C., we need to stop Federal dollars for the rail and instead direct those funds towards real needs such as tried and true water storage projects, infrastructure that will turn the water, and the jobs, back on in the Valley, and keep California, the Nation's fruit and vegetable capital that it is, producing, in some cases, over 90 percent of U.S. fresh fruit and nut crops that U.S. consumers need and desire.

Once again, let's not put U.S. taxpayers on the hook for a high-speed rail boondoggle that benefits only those that make money off of it. Californians don't want, don't need, and can't afford it.

□ 1830

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, sometimes it is very helpful to set the record straight, as my friend from Tennessee talked about earlier, and I thought that would be highly appropriate, given some of the lighthearted and sometimes mean-spirited barbs that have been sent the way of former Governor, Vice Presidential candidate Sarah Palin.

So I just wanted to set the record straight, Mr. Speaker, so that people will understand, and the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD will properly reflect just how prescient that Sarah Palin has been in the past.

We are going back 5½ years, but this was an interview that Charles Gibson did that gave rise to a "Saturday Night Live" skit. This was Charles Gibson, quoting verbatim from him, and then Sarah Palin.

Gibson: Let me ask you about specific national security situations. Let's start, because we are near Russia. Let's start with Russia and Georgia. The administration has said, we have got to maintain the territorial integrity of Georgia. Do you believe the United States should try to restore Georgia and sovereignty over South Ossetia and Abkhazia?

Sarah Palin: First off, we're going to continue good relations with Saakashvili there. I was able to speak with him the other day and giving him my commitment, as JOHN MCCAIN's running mate, that we will be committed to Georgia. And we've got to keep an eye on Russia. For Russia to have exerted such pressure in terms of invading a smaller democratic country, unprovoked, is unacceptable, and we have to keep—Gibson interrupted and said: You believe unprovoked?

Palin: I do believe unprovoked. And we have got to keep our eyes on Russia. Under the leadership there.

Gibson: What insight into Russian actions particularly in the last couple of weeks, does the proximity of this state give you?

This is the operative line here. Sarah Palin said: "They're our next door neighbors, and you can actually see Russia from land here in Alaska."

Gibson: You are in favor of putting Georgia and the Ukraine into NATO?

The interview goes on, but that is what Sarah Palin said: "They're our next door neighbors, and you can actually see Russia from land here in Alaska."

That should be relevant to people. If you are living next door on 1 acre of land, and the people that own the acre next to you have been guilty in the past of breaking into other neighbors' sheds and buildings, then certainly that is something that you ought to be watching more closely than people on the other side of the town that don't live next door. I mean, proximity can be an important matter.

But here is the text of what “Saturday Night Live” did on September 13, 2008. We know that “Saturday Night Live” has altered sketches that, in the past, at least once I recall seeing, where they were afraid it might make President Obama look bad, and they certainly didn’t want to do that.

Okay to take shots at Republicans, but they certainly didn’t want to be fair and hit back at President Obama the same way, and even as Lorne Michaels, comic genius that he is, has indicated, yeah, they do lean left there at “Saturday Night Live.”

This was a sketch involving Tina Fey as Sarah Palin, Amy Poehler as Hillary Clinton. They were appearing together in the sketch, and these quotes are verbatim from the sketch.

Tina Fey, as Sarah Palin says: “But tonight we’re crossing party lines to address the now very ugly role that sexism is playing in the campaign.”

Then Amy Poehler, as Hillary Clinton: “An issue which I am frankly surprised to hear people suddenly care about.”

Tina Fey, as Palin: “You know, Hillary and I don’t agree on everything.”

Poehler as Clinton says: “Anything. I believe that diplomacy should be the cornerstone of any foreign policy.”

Then Tina Fey, acting as Sarah Palin said: “And I can see Russia from my house.”

So that is where the line came from. There are many in the United States that actually believe Sarah Palin said “and I can see Russia from my house.” It was a very clever sketch. It was funny. I laughed when I saw it.

I also knew how intelligent, and what a great leader and Governor Sarah Palin had been, and what a great leader she is, but we can all laugh at ourselves.

I just didn’t realize that that was going to take off, and by the writers at “Saturday Night Live” giving Hillary Clinton a line that said, “Anything. I believe that diplomacy should be cornerstone of any foreign policy,” sounding like a diplomat or a politician, and then trying to make Sarah Palin sound very much less so, when, actually, the best quote remembered from Hillary Clinton will probably go down as the statement made here on Capitol Hill in reference to the four American heroes serving in harm’s way whose lives were taken by radical Islamists in an act of terrorism that had nothing to do with the video.

Our Secretary of State, having suffered a blow to the head, we were told that kept her from testifying originally, she was able to say: “What difference, at this point, does it make?” Not realizing, obviously, that when Americans are murdered, who are working for this government, and even working for her with her as the boss, it is rather important to find out precisely why those people were murdered.

In fact, some Libyans told me that very thing back before Christmas. They said, so many Americans want to know who killed your four Americans. That is important, but an even more important question is why they were killed.

So we have Hillary Clinton, who is saying, at this point, what difference does it make why they were killed, how they were killed?

Just the reverse of the way “Saturday Night Live” made those two individuals look through the caricature, Sarah Palin called the shot with Ukraine years ago. I would say prophetic, but it is not prophetic. It is a bit prescient, but it has more to do with someone who has studied international relations, understands leaders like Putin, understands their lust for power, and understands they have got to be stopped, instead of carrying a plastic button over to dogmatic, totalitarian, wannabe leaders of Russia and saying, here, let’s press this button and we will restart, reset everything.

That is no way to conduct foreign policy. The greatest strides in the security and safety and acquiring the security and safety of the world have come when people knew they were dealing with an evil empire and stood up to it.

I was asked just shortly ago, why did you vote “no” on the bill that was brought to the House floor to provide money, give loans to the Ukrainian people?

I developed a great love and care for Ukrainian people as a college student on a summer exchange program, and I found a lot of commonality with college students, some of the college students there in Ukraine.

I made the mistake of saying “the Ukraine,” Mr. Speaker, but one of my Ukrainian college friends corrected me when I was there as an exchange student. He said: Do you say I am going home to “the Texas”? I said, no.

He said: We don’t say “the Ukraine.” You come to Ukraine. It doesn’t need the article “the.”

So there in Ukraine, people are suffering. They feel the boot of Russian power coming at them, at first from the Crimea, and it may go farther.

I understand, having been there a number of times, in Ukraine, that there are parts of Ukraine that have sympathies with Russia, that love the days of the Soviet Union when they didn’t have to look for a job themselves.

The government would tell them how far they were allowed to go in school. They would tell them what their job would be. You step out of line, you could go to Siberia. They actually miss those days.

Whereas most Ukrainians seem to have that yearning that George W. Bush talked about as President, a yearning to be free—not all people have it, as we have seen. Some prefer secu-

rity over complete freedom, and that needs to be understood.

As Franklin was quoted, paraphrased as saying: Those who would give up liberty for security deserve neither.

I know there were Soviets after the fall of the Iron Curtain, after the demise of the Soviet Union, who were panic-stricken. You mean, I have got to find a job? I mean, the government has always told me everything to do.

I will never forget being in Ukraine in recent years, and I had gone with a Ukrainian translator friend. My Russian has gotten pretty bad since college, not having any need to use it.

We were in a Ukrainian restaurant. It was off the beaten road, and so it was mainly Ukrainians there. But in one area of the restaurant there was a very large, extended Russian family. That was clear. And the patriarch was clearly Russian, speaking Russian. He appeared to have had too much to drink.

A little trio came by, a couple with musical instruments, one, a young Ukrainian, with an incredible operatic voice, and they would perform at tables and do requested songs.

They came over to the extended table with the extended Russian family, and the patriarch called out that he wanted to hear “Moscow Nights,” and I bet the group knew “Moscow Nights,” but they said that they didn’t know that.

□ 1845

So they asked for another song, and they performed it. It was magnificent. Then the boisterous Russian patriarch said—and the translator was helping me—he said: We never knew why you, in Ukraine, wanted to pull away from Russia. We love you Ukrainians. We love you. We wanted to stay together, as brothers. We never understood Ukraine wanting to pull away and not be part of Russia.

And the guy was probably late twenties, maybe 30, that was the singer; and he very politely said in Russian to the Russian: Have you been here to Kiev before?

And the Russian said: Yes, but it has been perhaps 20 years.

And the young Ukrainian said: Ah, so how do you find it now compared to 20 years ago?

And the Russian patriarch, having had too much to drink, said: It is magnificent. You have done a fantastic job. Oh, we love all of the buildings, all of the growth, all of the wonderful things you have done here. We want to be brothers. You have done a magnificent job.

And the young Ukrainian singer yelled: That is why we wanted to be apart from Russia. You kept us oppressed. You took away the best we had. You stepped on us. You mistreated us. You would not let us reach our potential. That is why we want to be separate from Russia. That is why we separated from Russia. That is why we do

not want to be part of Russia. You took the best we had and left us nothing. We can do much greater things when you allow us, as Ukrainians, to be in charge of Ukraine.

And I wanted to stand up to give the young man a standing ovation. I was just thrilled that he was so passionate and felt so strongly about Ukrainian freedom.

There are so many in Ukraine who feel that way. They don't want the Russian boot on their throat. Some are not aware that when—perhaps the most evil man of the 20th century, Hitler—Hitler's forces marched into Ukraine, they were actually met initially with banners and lauding that the Ukrainians looked upon them as liberators from Russia.

And if they had not been so consumed by the ridiculous superrace mentality that they had sold themselves on, they would have recognized that the Ukrainians would have helped them; but, instead, they brutalized them, wantonly killed Ukrainians, and forcefully turned the Ukrainians against the Nazis.

Had the Nazis not been so consumed with their narcissism and self-aggrandizement, they probably could have used the Ukrainians' help and never suffered such a brutal winter in Russia as they did. That is history.

And I am very proud that we have a former Governor from Alaska that understands people like Putin, understands that Putin may have suffered from a debility, like Stalin did. Stalin described it—the English translation was “with power, dizziness.”

So Putin gets a little bit dizzy. Gee, let's take the Crimea—because he has done, as Khrushchev did of our late, great President John Kennedy—Kennedy was a brilliant man. There was no question he was a man of courage, as illustrated during World War II.

We are told that he was taking a number of medications when they met in Vienna in the summer of 1961; but he also acknowledged, after his meeting with Khrushchev, that Khrushchev just brutalized him, and he seemed to be embarrassed with how he performed.

Khrushchev, on the other hand, had said he was immature. He was weak. That was his assessment of Kennedy because he already knew that he had backed Kennedy down during the Bay of Pigs.

The plan that was hatched during the Eisenhower administration, Kennedy was apprised of, but then it was changed. Kennedy takes office as our President, and he finds out there is going to be more American involvement.

Unfortunately, within 3 days of the invasion to be launched into the Bay of Pigs to attempt to overthrow Fidel Castro in Cuba, President Kennedy got cold feet and pulled back on the support that was going to be offered.

The people were devastated, killed, or taken prisoners. It was a disaster. Kennedy said, later, that he would have preferred an all-out invasion to appearing so weak, words to that effect.

A meeting between Khrushchev and Kennedy in Vienna—I believe it was June of 1961—reaffirmed in Khrushchev's mind that this was a weak, immature leader.

Then toward the end of July of 1961, President Kennedy gave a powerful speech, basically making clear that we have a commitment to West Berlin. We have a commitment to West Germany; and we would not, under any circumstances, allow the Soviets to prevent us from making good on our promises.

He even used the word “force.” We didn't want to use force; but if it was required, it would be used. Khrushchev had already taken his measure of the man, knew he could push him further, and the Berlin Wall began being built.

The United States did nothing; and it reaffirmed, in Khrushchev's mind, that what he had assessed in Vienna—that Kennedy was immature, was weak—was even more true than he had thought before.

He knew he could push this man; and as a result, he was willing to risk thermal nuclear war to put missiles with nuclear weapons into Cuba. He would never have been so brazen as to put nuclear weapons on missiles within 90 miles of Florida had it not been for his repeated assessment in the first year of John Kennedy's Presidency that he was weak.

Well, he misread him. Kennedy showed weakness in 1961 at least three times, but he did have courage. It just took him a while to get up to it.

But as a result of the weakness that was assessed by Khrushchev, we almost came to mutually assured destruction, where the Soviet Union and the United States would have launched nuclear weapons toward each other. It was a very, very dangerous time for the world.

We are now under the administration of President Barack Obama; and I cannot imagine any Russian leader perceiving anything but just absolute weakness, as a leader, when the microphone picked up what President Obama said before the election: you know, tell Putin that, after the election, I will have a lot more flexibility.

The message was clear. I am willing to cave on all kinds of things. I have to look strong right now, but I will cave on all kinds of things once we get past the 2012 election.

For all the things that he is, Putin is not stupid. He knew exactly what that message was, though most of the voters in the 2012 election did not; and as a result of that and so many other things, Russia believes they can cow America, and we will not stand up.

When this President draws red lines, they won't be enforced.

I am going to go back to something Sarah Palin pointed out in her interview, and this is actually in NewsBusters. It talks about the interview that Sarah Palin gave with Charlie Gibson, and it sets the record straight.

Palin foresaw that, because of Putin's actions and Russia's movement against Georgia, that if we did not send a very clear message that such offensive border-neglecting actions were not rebutted, then there would be other invasions to follow.

She has been skewered for saying, back in 2008, that if Russia was not stopped, then next, they would move against Ukraine. She was belittled for that; and yet, she had read Vladimir Putin far better than anybody in this administration.

She knew what they were capable of. She knew what they wanted to do, and she knew there is only one way to deal with bullies, and it is not to repeatedly give them your lunch money. If you continue to attempt to appease bullies, not only will they continue to take more and more and more, but they will have no respect for you whatsoever.

That is also a problem we have had with radical Islamist leaders in the world. They understand one thing: strength. That is why the United States Marines were sent to the shores of Tripoli.

It was not the negotiations that Thomas Jefferson and others engaged in with the Barbary pirates, those radical Islamists. That didn't do any good. It wasn't until the Marines fought as bloody or tough or tougher than the radical Islamists that they realized, gee, we had better leave these guys alone.

But for the valiant, fervent fighting of the Marines, then we would have continued to have to pay huge portions of our United States budget for extortion to get our sailors back.

Sarah Palin understood that. She understood that you have got to stand up to bullies, so I think it is important that the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD properly reflect that Sarah Palin had it right.

Saturday Night Live assessed her wrong. Sarah Palin had Putin pegged. She had the actions of Russia pegged. She knew what they would do next.

So what have we done? Ukrainian borders are violated by Russia, and we want to go by as our friend is being brutalized, assaulted, and throw money at our friend who is being brutalized.

□ 1900

That is not much of a friend. If I am being assaulted, I would hope a friend would stop and help me and not just throw money on the way by. In fact, we have agreements in writing that require more than simply throwing

money at Ukraine when they are being brutalized by Russia. Russia's economy is not all that strong. And I don't know if Ukraine would get this desperate or not, but we know that Putin, just to show Ukraine that they can hurt them, has stopped the flow of natural gas before.

Perhaps at some point, Ukraine will get desperate enough to say: Well, they may have a very weak leader over in the United States that will not come help us, but something we can do to hurt you, Mr. Putin, you do one more thing and those pipelines of yours that bring you so much money into your treasury will be history, and then see how you do.

I hope it never gets to that point. I hope that Russia doesn't continue to push matters until they push us, as Khrushchev did, to the brink of world war again. But in seeing the debate between President Obama and Governor Romney in which President Obama chided him by saying the 1980s called and they want their foreign policy back, we have now seen the appeasement repeatedly of this administration. And that is why I have said before that Neville Chamberlain called to this administration, and he wants his foreign policy back, because it appears it is being utilized once again. It didn't work for England against Hitler, and it will not work now against Russia and Putin.

I was very small as a kid in elementary school, but I learned early on I may get my nose bloodied, but I am going to make the big bully hurt. And when I made him hurt enough, after he had bloodied my nose, he left me alone. He could have hurt me. But it doesn't matter whether you are big or small, if you want to deal with bullies by appeasement over and over and over again, then it is clear you are going to continue to encourage bullying. I was never for bullying. I would stand up to it as a young kid in elementary school, and I am for standing up against it when we have the most powerful military in the history of the world—until this administration finishes with it. We still do for now.

Well, here is something else that is pretty powerful. Sarah Palin in her speech to the Conservative Political Action Committee on March 8, 2014, said this:

Those policies that the Cabinet have to explain and justify, how do you convey to Putin the threat that sounds like, "Vladimir, don't mess around, or you're going to feel my flexibility, because I got a phone and I got a pen and, um, I can dial real fast and poke you with my pen. Pinkie promise."

Well, obviously, she was having some fun herself, but she makes the point. A phone and a pen won't do it. When you are talking about a bully that does not mind violating borders, killing people, and subjugating masses of people, you have to stand up to them.

I think one of the clear indications not only that we had a weak administration on foreign policy, but also we didn't use common sense in protecting ourselves came very clearly before the Boston bombing when the Russians, the Russian leaders—the Russian people like us pretty well, but the Russian leaders don't like us particularly and certainly don't respect us. But even so, they realized that we actually have a common enemy, and that is radical Islam, radical Islam that would love to see Russia fall, Ukraine fall, and the United States fall, would love to see them all fall under a giant global caliphate. So we have that common enemy who wants to destroy each of our ways of life.

So Russia, despite their dislike and distaste in some ways for the United States, actually reached out and said: Hey, we are not sure you realize, but this Tsarnaev, he has been radicalized, and he is dangerous. We are not going to reveal too many secrets here, but any intelligent administration will take what we have said that Tsarnaev is dangerous, he has been radicalized, and he is a threat to you and do some digging. And the best we can find out, even after questioning the Director of the FBI, the best we can find out is they apparently went and talked to Tsarnaev himself.

Well, okay, I guess you've got to do that. Good idea. If somebody is very good at questioning, if somebody really understands the radical Islamist mind, if he knows who the Islamic authors are that have inspired radicalism, if he knows who the imams are that have helped radicalize people, then you can ask the right questions about which imams you have been around, what authors are your favorite authors, what do you think of Qutb in Egypt and the writing that he had, that milestone that Osama bin Laden credited with helping radicalize him. If you know the questions to ask, you can find out whether somebody has really been radicalized.

But as a few of us have found out when we reviewed the material purged from FBI training material, we are not allowing our FBI agents to be properly trained as to the threat and the beliefs of radical Islamists. Again, as one of our intelligence officers has told me, we have blinded ourselves of the ability to see our enemy. And it continues. We continue to have people advise this administration who have known associations with radical Islamists. The Egyptian paper, back when it was controlled by the Muslim Brotherhood, bragged that they had six Muslim brothers who were top advisers in top positions in this administration. So we are not allowing our FBI, our intelligence officials and agents, to be trained to properly see this threat.

So the Russians say: Hey, this guy is a threat to you. You had better check

him out, and you will find out what we are talking about. He had been to an area where people were often radicalized. He had gone to an area that he came to America claiming asylum, to need asylum from, and he goes back to that area? Well, that should have been a red flag right there. He didn't need asylum from that area. He just went back and got radicalized. But our blinded FBI agents were not able to ask those questions, and when I chided the FBI Director for not even going out to the Muslim mosques to talk to people out there, to ask questions, to ask questions to find out if the Tsarnaevs have been radicalized, the FBI Director said that they did go out there to the mosque. I didn't hear it at the time, but I heard it on the replay when he adds, "as part of our outreach program."

They didn't go out there to investigate the Tsarnaevs to save Bostonians' lives. He didn't even know that the Islamic Society of Boston was started by a man named Al-Amoudi, who is in prison for 23 years for supporting terrorism. After being a very important adviser, he helped find Muslims to go into the military as Muslim chaplains. He helped the Clinton administration. He actually helped the George W. Bush administration early on until they figured out, whoa, this guy is supporting terrorism, and they had him arrested I believe it was 2003 out at Dulles Airport, and he is in prison now because they recognized what he is. But our FBI Director, the FBI agents didn't even know you had a terrorist supporter that started the mosque where the Tsarnaevs went.

So when the Russians see that we give America—that we don't really like, we don't really trust, but we give them a heads-up to actually save American lives, and even with a heads-up like they gave us, we can't properly protect the people of Boston because of political correctness in this administration, well, it just adds to the assessment by Putin and the other leaders in Russia that these are people that don't recognize danger when it is pointed out to them with a big sign saying "danger" on it.

So, of course, just like Khrushchev's assessment that turned out in the end to be wrong, I hope and pray that we don't get to the brink of nuclear war because leaders around the world have assessed, as Khrushchev did, that the American President is weak and can be pushed around indefinitely. I don't think President Obama can be pushed around indefinitely, but I sure don't want him to be pushed all the way to nuclear war before we finally take a stand, as Kennedy did. And you don't have to get that far if you stand up against the bullies early on, as Neville Chamberlain was not willing to do, and as a result, millions and millions died,

and millions suffered unthinkable tragic suffering because leaders wanted to go the appeasement route.

For all the flack Sarah Palin has taken, she had Russia pegged. And it is not because she ever said "I can see Russia from my house." She never said that. She accurately said you can see Russia from parts of Alaska—not her house.

□ 1915

She was willing to laugh at the skit, but now we are not talking about laughable things. We are talking about freedom being taken at the point of military weapons in Crimea, in Ukraine.

We see China moving in areas and places they have never had the courage to move because they knew America would not stand for it and we would rally other nations against China. The Chinese leaders know that at times, as good as the economy seemed to be going, they are a fragile economy. As I have said before, I think if China knew that they could call all the debt of the United States and push us into a bankruptcy-type mode in the United States, they would except they would suffer dramatically, and if they ever get to the point where they think that they can take this Nation down financially without losing their own, they would do it. That is why it is a terrible wrong as a government to allow ourselves to become further and further indebted to China.

Today, apparently the news we were seeing, their economy has taken a hit today. I look forward to learning more about that this evening, but it is time Americans woke up, Mr. Speaker, and realize that appeasement of bullies, of thugs, has never worked. It will never work, and when you are the most powerful, have the most powerful military in world history in the face of growing bully power, you don't abandon yours.

We want to help those who cannot feed themselves in America. We want to help those who cannot provide for themselves in America. Certainly we differ on our side of the aisle. For those who are able-bodied and can work, let's get the economy going so that people have a job and can do for themselves and make more. Let's don't continue to make people more and more dependent on the government.

I know my friends across the aisle do not want to see the world fall into war as it did in World War II, do not want to see us come to the brink of thermonuclear annihilation as it almost did during President Kennedy's term, but it is important to understand from history that is where you go when you show weakness.

We can defend ourselves without putting tens of thousands or 100,000 troops into a country like we did in Afghanistan. For heaven's sake, we defeated the Taliban with less than 500 Ameri-

cans in there helping the Northern Alliance. We helped them with weapons, we helped them with air cover, we helped them with intel, and they defeated our enemy for us, and this administration will point to the Northern Alliance and call them war criminals because they fought like the Taliban fought. We can fight our enemies by empowering the enemy of our enemy. They are Muslims. We can live with the Northern Alliance as long as they don't ever turn on us. As long as they are going to fight our enemy, then let them fight our enemy.

Yet for the government that was given to Afghanistan at our pushing—a tribal, regional country like Afghanistan was given a strong centralized government that would lead to nothing but corruption. We should have known it when it happened, so how do we deal with the problem there? As my friend, former Vice President Masood said, You help us get an amendment into our Constitution that allows us to elect our governors, elect our mayors, pick our own police chiefs, take that power away from the appointment power of the President, and we can protect our regions and keep the Taliban from taking over.

This administration does not seem to want to push for something like that. It can't even get a status of forces agreement that was teed up completely for them by President Bush in Iraq but then was fumbled by this administration.

I was meeting, had a visit with a Baloch friend today. If you have done homework, you know, Mr. Speaker, that the Taliban is apparently getting supplied mainly from Pakistan, and much of the supplies come through the more southern area, the Baloch area of Pakistan. We also know that the Baloch have been victimized, oppressed, persecuted, killed, and terrorized by the Pakistani military, the Pakistani government. Iran has done the same thing because the Baloch people are indigenous to the southern part of Pakistan and on into the most mineral-rich areas of Iran. So we don't have to go to war with Iran, we don't have to go to war with Pakistan, but if you start assisting the Baloch people to stop the oppression and perhaps have their own independent country, the Taliban stop getting supplied by Pakistan. Iran doesn't have all of the minerals. They have those mineral areas, a big part, an important part of them at least are run by the Baloch people, and we can do business with them.

There are ways to deal with the enemy of our enemies so that they keep areas around the world in check so you don't have to lose so much American lives. Most people are not aware that most Americans have been killed under the administration of this President. It is time we stood firm. It

is time we let the bullies of the world know Sarah Palin was right, and we need to stand up to them.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3189, WATER RIGHTS PROTECTION ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4015, SGR REPEAL AND MEDICARE PROVIDER PAYMENT MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2014; AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 17, 2014, THROUGH MARCH 21, 2014

Mr. BURGESS (during the Special Order of Mr. GOHMERT), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 113-379) on the resolution (H. Res. 515) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3189) to prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer, relinquishment, or other impairment of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4015) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and for other purposes; and providing for proceedings during the period from March 17, 2014, through March 21, 2014, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

MONEY IN POLITICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SALMON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the Chamber this evening. I want to talk about the topic of money in politics, which is something I think Americans across the country are increasingly anxious about because it really jeopardizes the voice they should have in their politics, in their democracy in their own government.

Yesterday, there was a special election in Florida's 13th Congressional District, and the results of that election will get commented on at length

in the coming days. People will try to make forecasts about what it means for the 2014 election cycle. Generally, they will analyze it. They will look at the data and they will prognosticate as to what the implications of it are going forward.

A lot of that commentary will miss what I think is the most sinister aspect of the election yesterday that was held in Florida, and that is the tremendous amount of money, the tremendous amount of money that poured into that election, not from ordinary, everyday citizens, not from the people who really have a stake in the outcome. They were the ones asked to go to the polls, but the money that poured in there that bought advertisements, to the tune of about \$12.7 million, almost \$13 million spent on that campaign, about 30 percent of it was donated to the candidates themselves. So 30 percent of that \$13 million was donated to the candidates themselves. The rest of the money came from outside sources—party committees, super PACs, anonymous donors, the ones who have been flooding the airwaves in the last couple of election cycles with negative advertising. That is where the great majority of the money that came into that special election yesterday was sourced, and that, I think, is a harbinger of things to come.

If you look back at the 2010 cycle, you look at the 2012 election cycle, both at the congressional level and at the Presidential level, tremendous amounts of money pouring into campaigns and into elections, much of it coming from sources that don't identify themselves, secret money, these big super PACs who weigh in and try to determine the outcome of elections.

Where does that leave the everyday citizen? Where does that leave the person out there who is sitting at their kitchen table, who is watching their television and is seeing all of these negative TV commercials pouring in? Where does that leave them in terms of their feeling about whether they have a voice in the process?

I talk to my constituents, I listen to the way they feel about the current system of funding campaigns, and there is an increasing sense of disillusionment out there, deep cynicism that election outcomes are determined by Big Money and special interests and that the voices and opinions and priorities and concerns of everyday citizens are being cast aside. That is the legacy of the influence of Big Money and special interests on our politics today.

So yesterday's election in the 13th District of Florida put a fine point on it. It demonstrated how much money can go into one special election. It was historic, \$13 million being spent. More importantly, it is a lesson as to what we are looking at down the road. This idea that if you have got a big wallet you get an extra voice in our democ-

racy, that somehow your opinion and your ideas count more because of the size of your wallet and your ability to throw millions of dollars into campaigns, well, that is not what a democracy is about; that is plutocracy. That is a government and a system that is dominated by Big Money and special interests and leaves the voices of everyday citizens behind so that they start asking themselves: Does my voice matter? Can I have an impact? Do my ideas count? If I am only able to write a check for \$25 to a candidate who I think will do the right thing for me, can that \$25 check compete against a \$1 million check that some big donor can write to fund a Super PAC?

This is why people across the country, it is not the only reason, but it is one of the main reasons why people across the country are so disaffected with Washington and Congress and government, because they feel like their voice is being drowned out by the big-moneyed interests out there.

Mr. Speaker, we have to do something about this because if we are going to restore the confidence and trust of Americans across this country, they need to believe again that their voice matters. They need to believe that when they are trying to understand the issues in an election and follow the debate and become informed, that that information will come to them from responsible sources, not from these shadowy hidden secret donors out there that have found a way to dominate the airwaves.

So that special election yesterday I think was a warning to us all that this trend towards Big Money and special interests weighing in to what ought to be a democratic process that is owned and invested in by everyday citizens, that that trend is continuing and it is worsening.

□ 1930

At the end of that path lies deep, deep cynicism on the part of the American people. You can feel it; you can almost touch it when you go out into your district and you talk to your constituents who are angry and frustrated and want to see this place respond to their concerns and to their needs.

So what can we do about this? I said a moment ago that we have got to do something soon; we have to address this cynicism that people are feeling, or they are not going to trust us at all. They are not going to believe that we can deliver for them in the people's House.

This is the House of Representatives. It has the name the "people's House." We run every 2 years. We are as close to the people as elected representatives can be. They want to see that we are listening to them.

Right now—I said this last week—in some ways, when it comes to the relevance of this body to the average

American out there, we are hanging on by a thread.

We are hanging on by a thread because, increasingly, they think that we answer to Big Money and special interests, and we stop listening to the average person out there.

So we need to do something about this. We need to fix this. We need to recognize that there is a problem, and we need to take meaningful steps to address it.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, about a month ago, joined by over 125 original cosponsors, I was proud to introduce something called the Government by the People Act, which is an effort to create a new way of funding campaigns that puts everyday citizens back at the center of the equation.

It says: no longer are we going to seed the financing and funding of campaigns to Big Money and special interests. We are going to come up with another way of doing it, a way that puts everyday citizens in a place of owning their democracy again, of feeling like they have a voice.

Already within the last month, we have seen, across this country, more than 400,000 people who have become citizen cosponsors of the Government By the People Act because they are desperate to see a change which gives them their voice back at a time when they feel—as those residents of the 13th District in Florida felt over the last few weeks—that their voice isn't the one that matters; it is the voice of Big Money and special interests and the super-PACs that seems to carry the day.

So the Government by the People Act would encourage people to participate in the funding of campaigns, small donors who would be assisted by a tax credit—a refundable tax credit of \$25, to make it easier for them to participate on the funding side of campaigns.

It would bring matching dollars from a freedom from influence matching fund that would come in behind those small donations and amplify them and lift them up, so that candidates would begin to pay attention to everyday citizens for the funding of their campaigns and not be so dependent on Big Money and special interests. That is the promise of reform that is embodied in the Government by the People Act.

We even provide that candidates who are true grassroots candidates who go out there and make the case to their constituents and earn the support of their constituents in these small donations, that those candidates, when they get into the final days of a campaign in an election, if a super-PAC starts to come at them and try to wipe them off the field—off the playing field, there is some additional resources that can help them stay in the game, can keep their voice in the mix, so they can get to Election Day.

I believe that, under those circumstances, many of those candidates

who turn to their own constituents, who turn to small donors, who turn to everyday citizens to fund their campaigns can be competitive and can win, even in the face of these super-PACs and the big money that is pouring into campaigns.

So this is real reform, Mr. Speaker. I was very pleased, as I said, that we had a number of original cosponsors who joined us when we introduced the bill about a month ago.

One of them, who has been listening as carefully as anybody out there, to what everyday citizens are saying about this and joined us as a cosponsor on the bill and can really speak to this, I believe, from the heart, is my colleague ALAN LOWENTHAL from California.

I would be happy to yield some time to him now.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Thank you. I really want to thank the fine gentleman from Maryland, who has worked so long and tirelessly on ensuring that unlimited campaign spending does not drown out the voice of the people. I want to thank him for putting together a bill that gives the public a chance to be heard over big money interests.

A little bit, Mr. Speaker, about my own experience, when I first ran many years ago for city council and then I went on to the State and came here to Congress—when I first ran for city council, it was a very difficult time in my district.

It was a time where we actually had a period of where—when I first was elected, where we had martial law because we had rioting because of—after the Rodney King decision in southern California.

I walked my district, and I heard from everyone that their voices weren't being heard, that the city at the time was not listening to them; so I felt, as important as any piece of legislation, was to give people a chance to come together to create something to have their voices heard.

I spent that first year, when I was elected, working with my community in groups, and we decided that campaign reform limiting the size of contributions would enable our city to move forward again and would bring people together, and they wanted to be able to have a chance to participate. We did it, and we put it on the ballot, and it overwhelmingly passed.

I realized, as I went forward, first to the State legislature and now, here, to Congress, that the best way to fight against unlimited campaign spending by outside individual action committees and individuals who are capable of spending unlimited amounts of money—short of amending the Constitution to repeal Citizens United—is to do exactly what Congressman SARBANES has done, give a voice to ordinary citizens. That is what we should be doing.

Congressman SARBANES' bill, H.R. 20, the Government by the People Act, is a comprehensive reform package, designed to combat the influence of Big Money politics. As equally important, it is to raise civic engagement, and it really is to amplify the voice of ordinary Americans. That is what we should be hearing. That is what we are hearing every day in our districts.

The bill would magnify the impact of small donations from average citizens, allowing Congressional candidates who only take small donations to be competitive with candidates who are backed by outside groups, who are capable of raising and spending large amounts of money.

For example, if this bill becomes law, individuals will be given a \$25 refundable "my voice" tax credit per year to help incentivize and spur small-dollar donations to candidates for Congressional office. People would be feeling that the government is asking them to contribute and to participate.

Candidates now who forego contributions from super-PACs and only accept donations of under \$1,000 would be eligible to a 6 to 1 match by small donors—that is people who are donating under \$150—from a newly established freedom from influence fund.

Do you know what this will mean to the average American who says: If I contribute a small amount, it doesn't mean anything?

All of a sudden, we are saying: you count, your contribution means something.

According to the Federal Election Commission, in 2012, individual small donors were outspent 3 to 1 by outside groups. We need to figure out how to empower average citizens whose voices are drowned out by outside money from shadowy organizations.

We have to shift this balance of power away from wealthy interests to ordinary Americans, to people who are asking that their government be responsive to them.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 20, the Government by the People Act, and I urge the Speaker of this House to bring this vital bill to the floor of the House of Representatives.

Give us the opportunity to vote for democracy, to vote for the people of this country.

Mr. SARBANES. I thank the gentleman. I might ask him one question because my sense is that, if you have a system like this in place, not only will you empower everyday citizens to feel like their voice truly does count—and that would increase participation—you would have people, I think, coming back into the political town square who have now fled the town square because they are cynical and disillusioned.

But my sense is it would also create more access for candidates who, right now, are shut out of the process be-

cause they may not be in a position to raise the big dollars that you have to raise these days to run a race.

There is a lot of good people out there who would like to try to run for Congress, perhaps, but they don't know a lot of people who have a lot of money; but if there was a system that rewarded small donations to their campaign and provided public matching funds coming in behind that, they might be able to run, and they might be able to be competitive.

I wonder if you have some thoughts about that.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. I agree completely.

People decide to run frequently—or want to run—maybe even better than decide, they don't decide—they want to run because they believe that they can be the voice for those that do not have a voice, for people in their community who feel disenfranchised, people like themselves who just want to participate and feel that they have no voice.

Then they get involved in this process, or they think about it, and they realize that that doesn't matter. It doesn't matter who you are listening to. It doesn't matter who you are accountable to. It doesn't matter that you really care about creating a sense of community and involvement and that people have a responsibility to participate themselves.

All that matters is how much large money you can raise, and that is what the rules are.

I think that that balance between funding elections and listening to people has gotten way out of whack. That has discouraged so many people from wanting to run because they are now confronted with the reality.

It makes no difference that you are tied to a community and you give voice to people in that community. The only thing that makes a difference is how much money you can raise from large interests. I think that does a tremendous disservice to this institution and to all institutions that depend upon public support.

Mr. SARBANES. Again, I want to thank my colleague for his support of this reform effort, for joining us as an original cosponsor of the Government by the People Act.

We think there is real momentum here. We have 140 Members of this body now that have joined as cosponsors; but there is something else happening, which is exciting, and I think offers some new opportunities for this kind of legislation.

We have had these efforts in the past, and some of them have gotten attraction you would like to see; others have not.

But there is something new happening. There are organizations—national organizations across this country who are forming a coalition. This consists of many of the good government groups and reform groups that have been in this space for a long time.

□ 1945

But there are other people coming to this issue. There are other people who are joining the fight to push back on the influence of Big Money and special interests in our politics and in our government. Environmental groups like the Sierra Club and Greenpeace, civil rights organizations like the NAACP, and labor organizations are getting behind this effort because they understand that the change they want to see—protecting the environment, making sure that our civil rights laws are being enforced—too often is being thwarted by the influence of Big Money, so they have adopted this issue as a priority for their organizations. They are joining this coalition.

This is not just about the influence of Big Money on the outcome of elections. Oftentimes, that is where the focus gets placed. This is also the effect that Big Money has when it comes to governing because the reality of it is that, if you have an institution that becomes increasingly dependent on Big Money and special interests, then when it comes time to vote on important policy matters, it is just human nature that the institution will tend to lean in the direction of where that money comes from and lean away from everyday citizens.

The promise of this legislation is that, if everyday citizens and matching funds become the source of powering campaigns, then when the candidates who are elected get here to Washington, the only people they will owe are those everyday folks who helped to power their campaigns. They will have an independence that will allow them when they go to make policy to really think about the issues that are at stake. The fact of the matter is the tremendous amount of money that pours into this place from PACs and other special interests can gum up the system so that it doesn't work.

I would be interested in my colleague's observations on a couple of quotations of former Members of Congress. These are very interesting. I am going to read a quotation from former Senator Bob Dole, Republican minority leader, who said in 1982:

When these political action committees give money, they expect something in return other than good government. It is making it much more difficult to legislate. We may reach a point where, if everybody is buying something with PAC money, we can't get anything done.

That was Republican Minority Leader Bob Dole in 1982 before the trend had gotten to the point where it is now.

I would be interested in my colleague's observations just on how money comes in and how it can actually begin to influence the way policy gets made here in Washington.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. On many different levels.

Thank you, Congressman.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that, today, people say that government—the House of Representatives and the Senate—is dysfunctional. Yet, as you pointed out in that quote, Senator Dole saw a long time ago, when at least some things were getting done and more things were getting done, that we were beginning to go down the wrong path, that the influence of money was stopping us from really looking at the critical policies that affect the Nation and from debating those and listening to ordinary citizens here.

As we talked about, when ordinary citizens are cut out and when the only people who get to visit and to talk to us are those who contribute large amounts of money to our campaigns, it is they who have special access. Theirs are the bills that get brought up. They are the ones we listen to because everyone stops being beholden to the policies that brought them here—what they want to do to form good government—and they are beholden to what will get them reelected and to the large amounts of money that come in.

So I agree. It is interesting that Senator Dole said that. That is now over 30 years ago when we did not heed the warning of listening to citizens of creating a system that not only would decrease the role of large, outside interests but would, as you have done, increase the role of ordinary citizens to actually be listened to and be able to bring their thoughts to bear because we would become accountable to them. I think that is where we are today as that accountability is not there.

Mr. SARBANES. I appreciate it, and I will follow up on what you just said.

There is another quote that I would love to read from Senator Warren Rudman, a Republican from New Hampshire, who was a force here on Capitol Hill when he served.

He said:

Money affects whom Senators and House Members see, whom they spend their time with, what input they get; and make no mistake about it, the money affects outcomes as well.

This is exactly what you just said. You can understand why everyday Americans are getting so fed up.

I went and hired a film crew. I decided I was going to go interview some people in my district at one of the local fairs. I just wanted to get their views on this issue. So I went out. I spent 2 hours and stood in the central artery of this festival.

I said: I am Congressman SARBANES. I want to just ask you two questions. The first question is: What do you think of Congress?

They said: Do you really want to know?

I said: I wouldn't be here otherwise.

They told me what they thought about Congress, and you know what they think about Congress. All you have to do is look at the latest survey,

which shows that our approval rating is hovering around 10 or 12 percent. You can't run a country if the institutions that are supposed to be the instruments of democracy are held in such low esteem.

The second question I asked them was: What do you think about the influence of Big Money on our politics?

What was amazing—these were Republicans, Democrats, Independents—is that it was as though they had gotten together ahead of time and had scripted their answers, because they were all the same: the fix is in; the Big Money crowd runs things in Washington; my voice can't be heard; my voice doesn't matter. This is the way people feel when you actually ask them to talk about this issue, so we have to do something about this.

The good news is that we have a bill that we have worked on really well. We have gotten a lot of people from not just here in the Chamber, who are people who are sensitive to this, but from people out there in the country who care about this issue. We have crafted something that, I think, passes the test of addressing in a meaningful way the cynicism and anger that people feel, this desire to get their government back, to get their voice back. They should know that there are people here who are determined to make this kind of change with the help and support and momentum and advocacy that can come from people—everyday citizens—around the country.

I am very pleased that we are joined as well this evening with another person who was an original cosponsor of the Government by the People Act. He is relatively new to Congress but not new to a commitment and a passion around this issue. One of the first conversations we had was about: How do you reach out to everyday citizens and make them feel that they are really part of the process? that their voices really can be heard?

It is a real pleasure to yield to my colleague from Texas, BETO O'ROURKE.

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I am very honored to be here with my colleagues from California and from Maryland. I am especially honored that my colleague from Maryland would invite me to say a few words today. He has been, truly, one of the real bright spots for me in my first session in Congress.

To give you a little context and a little background on why that is the case, like my colleague from California, I had the privilege of serving on the city council in El Paso for two terms. I represented there a constituency of between 60,000 and 70,000 people, so about a tenth of the constituency that we represent here in Congress.

To win those elections to be able to serve on the city council, like my good friend from California, I went door-to-door to meet my constituents—to meet

those who were likely to vote in this election—to make my case for why I might be the best alderman or council member to represent their interests on the city council. Then, by Election Day, after having spent maybe \$40,000 or \$50,000 total—a tenth of what you would have to spend in a very conservatively managed congressional race—we ended up having the good fortune to win and serve in the city council.

Not only was that the best way to get elected, but it was for me, as a new member of the city council in El Paso, Texas, the best way for me to understand what my constituents' interests were, the questions that they wanted to have answered and what their expectations were of me as their representative on the city council.

So, when I made the decision to run for Congress, I chose to run for a seat that was currently held by an incumbent Member of Congress. I ran for that seat in the primary, which was going to be the decisive election in that election cycle. Precisely because we didn't have access to the kind of big money that we are talking about today—the political action committee money, the big donor money across this country and even the big money in El Paso, Texas—as the mother of invention with the necessity of finding those voters and in being able to connect with them, we went door-to-door again, this time in a constituency of 700,000 people. It was a very broad and a very long canvassing effort that lasted over 9 months and had me knocking personally on more than 16,000 doors.

While my good friend from Maryland has actually modeled the Government by the People Act concept in his own district, I think, more out of virtue and more out of an effort to prove that this works and to understand what the opportunities and limits are of a different campaign funding paradigm—and I can't thank him enough for doing that because he has tested it and has proven it—we did something similar but out of necessity. Again, as with the city council races, we were fortunate enough that the case we made to the voters prevailed. We were fortunate enough to be elected to sit here in this Congress with these great colleagues I serve with now.

I will tell you that a very rude awakening was delivered when after I had won this seat through the primary election, which was the dispositive election of the two in our election cycle, the number one issue that anyone wanted to talk with me about was not what policies were I likely to support, what committees did I want to serve on, what did I want to get done in my first term in Congress. Most of the conversations, unfortunately, revolved around money. Where was I going to raise my money from? Who was I going to give the money that I raised to? Who was I going to hire as the cam-

paign person in Washington, D.C.? I didn't know that the creature existed until that point because we had had the good fortune of being, in some ways, buffered from money in that first race.

So much centered around money as I came to Congress. You don't run for Congress to raise money. You don't run for Congress to spend money. You don't run for Congress to meet lobbyists and to meet those who run political action committees; although, there are plenty of nice people in those categories. You run for Congress because you want to get something done, because you believe in ideas that are bigger than yourself—things that are going to help the communities that you serve, issues that are going to help define your country that you want your communities to have a voice in. Those are the reasons I ran for Congress. Unfortunately and sadly, those were not the things that most people up here wanted to talk about.

I was able to talk with Lawrence Lessig, a professor at Harvard, who is somebody, if you haven't seen his lectures, you can find on YouTube—or if you have the chance to see one in person, you really should. He is someone who has put a lot of thought into and who has written about this subject and who has delivered some very compelling lectures about the influence of money in politics.

So, as I was met with this challenge of how to respond to the demands for money in politics and in my new career as a Member of Congress, I started to do some searches on the Internet, and I found one of Lawrence Lessig's lectures. He brought up a really important point, which was, when we have an election for Congress, there are really two elections.

□ 2000

There is the election that we all think about when we think about an election for Congress, and that is the election that takes place at the ballot box, but there is also an election before that for the money. How do you convince the people who have control and access of the money that typically goes into a congressional race that you are a good bet, that you fit within their interests, and that you are going to be accessible to them should you win that second election at the ballot box? That first election, in most cases, is really the decisive one.

So one of the things I like so much about the Government by the People Act is it opens up that first money election to not just the special interests, not just those who have legislation pending before Congress, who have an ax to grind, literally, here on the floor, but to those people that we represent in all of the different precincts in El Paso County and all the different neighborhoods, the streets, the homes.

Those people, through a refundable tax credit, are able to have their voice heard and help decide who the field will be in a congressional race. I think that is awfully important and desperately missing right now to encourage truly competitive congressional elections.

When you look at the reelection rate for a Member of Congress from 1950 to today, when you look at the rate, I think it is somewhere around 93 percent. That really shouldn't be the case. We want this body to reflect the diversity, the difference of opinion of race and gender, and all the great things that make up who this country is.

By and large, it is very difficult to do today, because once you are in Congress, you have access to that money. You win that first election for the money, almost deciding that second election at the ballot box, and it makes it very difficult to have competitive elections against incumbent Members of Congress.

I am sure that we are in the minority of our colleagues here who want to encourage more competition for our jobs. I really think that is the right thing to do.

If we want to renew our democracy, have a Congress truly reflective of this country, I think we want to make sure that every single person has a voice in the elections that decide the makeup of this body.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I am just very honored to be an original cosponsor on this bill, honored to join in this effort, and honored to join all the great grassroots organizations across this country that are raising the level of awareness about the need to change our campaign finance and our election system in this country.

I am very hopeful that we will be able to prevail upon our colleagues, especially those on the other side of the aisle, to see that it is in everyone's interest to have a body that truly reflects the American people.

Mr. SARBANES. I thank my colleague.

Before we wrap up, I want to ask him and my colleague from California as well to comment on the kind of response they are getting as they talk to their constituents about this kind of reform.

We are all very familiar with the cynicism and frustration. We encounter that on a daily basis. Sometimes it is so deep that it can be hard to get the attention of people to say to them, We hear you. We understand the frustration. We are trying to do something about it.

I have begun to find that as I talk to people about the Government by the People Act, about this idea of a My Voice tax credit that would help them make a small contribution to support a good candidate that they want to see be competitive and successful, when I talk to them about the Freedom From

Influence Matching Fund, think about that.

Right now this institution is largely shackled by dependence and influence of Big Money. The Freedom From Influence Matching Fund comes in behind those small donations and makes it possible for a candidate to run their campaign by turning to everyday citizens.

So as I talk to people about that and our ability to begin pushing back on super PACs, I am encountering some hope out there. People are skeptical. They have a right to be. I would rather have them be skeptical than cynical. I would rather have them have some hope and be ready to get out there and fight for this reform because I think we can make a difference.

I would be curious to hear from my colleagues because I am starting to feel that. I am seeing a positive, cautious response that this can really make a difference as we move forward in elections and governing.

I would be curious to hear, ALAN, what is happening in your district as you talk about it.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. In listening to this discussion and to your presentation about the bill to basically give government back to the people, listening to Congressman O'ROURKE talking about what it is like to go door to door and talk to people, and then you are asking what are people saying, I think what I am hearing as I go out is that we have lost, in many ways—what has happened because of money in politics—the ability to talk to people. It is not necessary anymore.

The thing is, when you talk to people, this is what they say: I want to have a voice. I want to participate. I want to be part of this great democracy.

Less and less does that make any difference. You can win office without talking to people. You don't have to talk to people anymore. You just have to raise large amounts of money and let that money spread a message. What we are saying is, that is not only bad for the institution, that is horrible for the democracy that we live in.

It is time to give back this democracy to our communities. It is time to recreate a sense of community. It is time to do what Congressman O'ROURKE has said, which is to create competitiveness, to create a sense that people can listen and they can participate. They can if they are not part of the purchasing of this House, and that is what it has been now—the purchasing of this House.

Rather than having the selection of people being due to your being able to convince people that you are listening to them and what you are proposing is in their best interest, it is really what is in the best interest of those that are contributing. That is what it is all about. This takes us another step closer.

When I talk to people, first, they are very grateful that I am even talking to them now. They are thankful that I am coming out to talk to them about this. Not enough people are talking because we don't have the time to talk to people because too much time is spent raising money.

Mr. O'ROURKE. I have to agree with much of what my friend from California just said.

El Paso, Texas, just had its primary elections this past week. In El Paso, the turnout was 11 percent. So really one of the smallest minorities of citizens who are able to vote, who have that right, have the freedom to exercise it, actually chose to do that.

That small minority, 11 percent of voting age in El Paso, made the decisions for who is going to represent us in county government, in Congress, and on down the line.

So that cynicism that you heard at the outdoor market in Maryland we see reflected in the polls and the turnout in El Paso. I think it is because of the same reasons that you cited. I think people feel that it is a closed system, they don't have access to it, why bother participating. The rules are going to be the same, regardless.

By nature, we are social people. I don't know that we would be in these positions if we weren't. I like town hall meetings. We hold a general interest town hall every month. We hold special town halls. We have held town halls on the public bus system where we get to talk to our constituents. They have no place to go. They can't get out the doors because the bus is moving. We get to tell them what we are doing up here, and I am accountable to them. I have to answer the questions that they raise with me.

As my friend from California said, it is wonderful. It shouldn't be this way, but they are impressed I am even there and listening. That should be. That should be the bar below which we never drop. We should always be there to listen and engage and solicit opinion and feedback and direction from our constituents.

Government By the People will encourage that. Right now, if you have to raise a lot of money for a congressional race, which probably accounts for many, if not most, of the Members that we serve with, your time simply from a time value perspective is best spent with those large donors who can write the biggest checks.

With Government By the People, you now have the incentive to spend time with your constituents, compel them with your argument and with what you have been able to do in office and what you are committing to do in office that you are the best bet to represent them for their future and for their children's future. With that you earn not only their vote in the ballot box, but that first vote that Professor Lessig talks

about—that financial commitment to you as a viable candidate.

I think my constituents want me making that pitch to them, both as voters and potential donors, much more than they want me to make that pitch here to corporate interests who are headquartered in D.C., who may never have been to El Paso, Texas, and have no real understanding or sensitivity to the concerns and needs that we have here.

The last thing that I will say that really contributes to that sense of a closed system, again quoting from my favorite source on this, Professor Lessig, who says:

The pernicious effect of these large-dollar donations is not really on your core issues.

Issues 1 through 10 are your core convictions. That is what you ran on. That is what people expect from. You are never going to sway from them. No amount of money is going to buy you off, but issues 11 to 1,000—and we vote on thousands of issues every year—become much more persuadable for Members, I think, when you have large amounts of money involved. If you don't know much about issue number 259 because it doesn't really affect your district, you are not a subject matter expert in it, you have never really thought about it before, and someone is offering to give you \$5,000, you are probably going to listen to their side of the story and you may not listen to other one.

So I don't know if that is corruption. It certainly comes quite close to it. It is certainly not the way that I want nor my constituents want this body to run itself and govern our country.

Again, Mr. SARBANES, I am so grateful that you introduced this. I am so grateful that we have so many cosponsors. I look forward to working with you to hopefully pass this and make this law in this country.

Mr. SARBANES. I want to thank my colleagues for joining me here this evening to talk about this critical issue of the influence Big Money and special interests on our politics and the way we govern here.

Professor Lessig has gotten a good shout out—and he deserves it—because he has really studied the effect of money on this institution.

There is a path to reform, and that is what the Government by the People Act is. I will close by sort of capturing this as a matter of voter empowerment.

In this country we view as sacrosanct the right to vote. We do everything we can—or we should do everything we can—and we even have legislation in front of us to make sure that we are preserving people's access to the ballot box, to the voting booth because the franchise is the most important thing in a democracy. It is the foundation of what American democracy is all about—protecting that franchise and

making sure that people have that franchise.

If people go into the voting booth and they pull the lever and they exercise their franchise, and the day the person they send to Washington arrives and has to start representing Big Money and special interests, then what happens to the franchise? What happens to the voice of the person who went in there and pulled that lever?

So the journey of empowerment, getting to the ballot box is just part of it. You have to protect that franchise so that when the candidate gets there, they can keep representing the interests of the people that voted to send them to Washington.

That is what the Government by the People Act is all about, because if you power your campaign with funds from small donors and a Freedom From Influence Matching Fund, when it comes time to cast your vote, the only people you are answering to are those citizens that you represent. That is the promise of the Government by the People Act—to create a government that is truly of, by, and for the people.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PUBLICATION OF BUDGETARY MATERIAL

REVISIONS TO THE AGGREGATES AND ALLOCATIONS OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2014 BUDGET RESOLUTION

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2014.

MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 404 of H. Con. Res. 25, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2014, I hereby submit for printing revisions to the aggregates and allocations set forth pursuant to such Concurrent Resolution, as deemed in force by section 113 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, Public Law 113-67. The revision reflects the budgetary impact of H.R. 4015, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014. A corresponding table is attached.

This revision represents an adjustment for purposes of enforcing sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974. For the purposes of the Congressional Budget Act, these revised aggregates and allocations are to be considered as aggregates and allocations included in the budget resolution,

pursuant to section 101 of H. Con. Res. 25 and H. Rept. 113-17, as adjusted.

Sincerely,

PAUL D. RYAN,
Chairman.

BUDGET AGGREGATES			
(On-budget amounts, in millions of dollars)			
	Fiscal Year		
	2014	2014–2023	
Current Aggregates:			
Budget Authority	2,924,837		¹
Outlays	2,937,044		¹
Revenues	2,311,026	31,095,742	
SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment and Modernization Act of 2014 (H.R. 4015):			
Budget Authority	900		¹
Outlays	900		¹
Revenues	600	– 12,700	
Revised Aggregates:			
Budget Authority	2,925,737		¹
Outlays	2,937,944		¹
Revenues	2,311,626	31,083,042	

¹ Not applicable because annual appropriations acts for fiscal years 2015 through 2023 will not be considered until future sessions of Congress.

DIRECT SPENDING LEGISLATION—AUTHORIZING COMMITTEE 302(a) ALLOCATIONS FOR RESOLUTION CHANGES

(Fiscal years, in millions of dollars)

House Committee on Energy & Commerce	2014		2014–2023 total	
	Budget Authority	Outlays	Budget Authority	Outlays
Current Allocation	358,134	358,717	4,927,478	4,926,519
SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment and Modernization Act of 2014 (H.R. 4015)	900	900	– 46,200	– 46,200
Revised Allocation	359,034	359,617	4,881,278	4,880,319

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION REFERRED

A joint resolution of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S.J. Res. 32. Joint resolution providing for the reappointment of John W. McCarter as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution; to the Committee on House Administration.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 13 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 13, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4960. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Irish Potatoes Grown in Modoc and Siskiyou Counties, California, and in All Counties in Oregon, Except Malheur County; Termination of Marketing Order No. 947 [Doc. No.: AMS-FV-13-0036; FV13-947-1 FR] received February

26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4961. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Tomatoes Grown in Florida; Increased Assessment Rate [Doc. No.: AMS-FV-13-0076; FV13-966-1 FR] received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4962. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Irish Potatoes Grown in Colorado; Decreased Assessment Rate for Area No. 2 [Doc. No.: AMS-FV-13-0072; FV13-948-2 FR] received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4963. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Irish Potatoes Grown in Washington and Imported Potatoes; Modification of the Handling Regulations, Reporting Requirements, and Import Regulations for Red Types of Potatoes [Doc. No.: AMS-FV-13-0068; FV13-946-3 IR] received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

4964. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting annual report on the current and future military strategy of Iran; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4965. A letter from the Administrator, Energy Information Administration, Department of Energy, transmitting a report on The Availability and Price of Petroleum and Petroleum Products Produced in Countries Other Than Iran; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4966. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting memorandum of justification; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4967. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4968. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4969. A letter from the Comptroller General, Government Accountability Office, transmitting the U.S. Government's Fiscal years 2013 and 2012 Consolidated Financial Statements; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4970. A letter from the Chairman, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's Strategic Plan for 2014 through 2017; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4971. A letter from the Chair, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the FY 2013 Agency Financial Report; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4972. A letter from the HR Specialist, Small Business Administration, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

4973. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries Off West

Coast States; Coastal Pelagic Species Fisheries; Annual Specifications [Docket No.: 130717633-4069-02] (RIN: 0648-XC772) received February 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4974. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pollock in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands [Docket No.: 121018563-3148-02] (RIN: 0648-XD093) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4975. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Property Transferred in Connection with the Performance of Services Under Section 83 [TD 9659] (RIN: 1545-BJ15) received February 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4976. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — 2014 Calendar Year Resident Population Figures [Notice 2014-12] received February 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4977. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — United States and Area Median Gross Income Figures (Rev. Proc. 2014-23) received March 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4978. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Change of Address for Requests: Testimony by Employees and the Production of Records and Information in Legal Proceedings, Claims Against the Government under the Federal Tort Claims Act of 1948, and Claims under the Military Personnel and Civilian Employees Claim Act of 1964 [Docket No.: SSA-2013-0064] (RIN: 0960-AH65) received February 20, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4979. A letter from the Secretary and Attorney General, Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice, transmitting the Annual Report on the Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control (HCFAC) Program for Fiscal Year 2013; jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. BURGESS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 515. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3189) to prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer, relinquishment, or other impairment of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture; providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4015) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and

for other purposes; and providing for proceedings during the period from March 17, 2014, through March 21, 2014 (Rept. 113-379). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California (for himself, Mr. SHERMAN, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 4208. A bill to ensure stability in FHA maximum mortgage amount limitations for areas experiencing decreases in median home prices; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. TIERNEY:

H.R. 4209. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, the Judiciary, and the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SCHRADER:

H.R. 4210. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to authorize the extension of the initial open enrollment period for up to 1 month, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. WALORSKI:

H.R. 4211. A bill to require the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct studies on enrollment by racial and ethnic minorities and by low-income seniors in the Medicare Advantage program; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. NEAL, Mr. GERLACH, and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 4212. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the 15-year recovery period for qualified leasehold improvement property, qualified restaurant property, and qualified retail improvement property; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. WHITFIELD (for himself, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, and Mr. WALBERG):

H.R. 4213. A bill to direct the Federal Trade Commission to revise the regulations regarding the definitions for funeral industry practices; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. COLE:

H.R. 4214. A bill to promote the academic achievement of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian children with the establishment of a Native American language grant program; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. CONNOLLY:

H.R. 4215. A bill to strengthen privacy and data security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. CONYERS (for himself and Ms. DEGETTE):

H.R. 4216. A bill to amend title V of the Social Security Act to provide grants to States to establish State maternal mortality review committees on pregnancy-related deaths occurring within such States; to develop definitions of severe maternal morbidity and data collection protocols; and to eliminate disparities in maternal health outcomes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. FORBES:

H.R. 4217. A bill to prohibit a reduction in funding for the defense commissary system in fiscal year 2015 pending the report of the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself and Mr. PASTOR of Arizona):

H.R. 4218. A bill to reauthorize the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. LATTA (for himself, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. MATHESON):

H.R. 4219. A bill to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to provide for the recognition of voluntary certification programs for air conditioning, furnace, boiler, heat pump, and water heater products; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 4220. A bill to authorize the exchange of certain Federal land and non-Federal land in the State of Minnesota; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. SIRES:

H.R. 4221. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the expansion, intensification, and coordination of the programs and activities of the National Institutes of Health with respect to Tourette syndrome; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. SOUTHERLAND:

H.R. 4222. A bill to correct the boundaries of John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in Florida, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. WOLF:

H.R. 4223. A bill to restrict United States nationals from traveling to countries in which foreign governments or anti-government forces allow foreign terrorist organizations to engage in armed conflict for purposes of participating in such armed conflict or from providing material support to entities that are engaged in such armed conflict, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. JEFFRIES (for himself, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. RICHMOND, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. RUSH, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. NADLER, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Mr. TONKO, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. OWENS, and Mr. MEEKS):

H. Res. 514. A resolution honoring Thomas Jennings of New York City as the first African-American to be granted a patent by the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California:

H. Res. 516. A resolution expressing support for the designation of Journeymen Linemen

Recognition Day; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania introduced A bill (H.R. 4224) for the relief of Victor Hugo Santos; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California:

H.R. 4208.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. TIERNEY:

H.R. 4209.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. SCHRADER:

H.R. 4210.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 1; and Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. WALORSKI:

H.R. 4211.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution

By Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4212.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress enacts this bill pursuant to Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. WHITFIELD:

H.R. 4213.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

The Congress shall have Power *** To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

By Mr. COLE:

H.R. 4214.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article I, Section 8 which grants Congress the power to regulate Commerce with the Indian Tribes.

This bill is enacted pursuant to Article II, Section 2, Clause 2 in order the enforce treaties made between the United States and several Indian Tribes.

By Mr. CONNOLLY:

H.R. 4215.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Clause 18 of the United States Constitution

By Mr. CONYERS:

H.R. 4216.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8. The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States;

By Mr. FORBES:

H.R. 4217.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress "to provide for the common Defense", "to raise and support Armies", "to provide and maintain a Navy" and "to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces" as enumerated in Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GRIJALVA:

H.R. 4218.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

U.S. Const. art. I, §§1 and 8.

By Mr. LATTA:

H.R. 4219.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, cl. 3

The Congress shall have the power . . . to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the states, and with Indian Tribes;

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 4220.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is provided by Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, specifically clause I (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress), and Article IV, section 3, clause 2, (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. SIRES:

H.R. 4221.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Pursuant to clause 3(d) (1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee finds the authority for this legislation in article I, section 8 of the Constitution.

By Mr. SOUTHERLAND:

H.R. 4222.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

SUCH AS

Article IV, section 3 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact this bill. The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

By Mr. WOLF:

H.R. 4223.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests in the preamble of the Constitution providing for the "common defense" and in the powers governing national security in Article I, Section 8.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H.R. 4224.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 of the US Constitution

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 6: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. FARENTHOLD, and Mr. NEUGEBAUER.

H.R. 118: Ms. SPEIER.

H.R. 460: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 485: Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 494: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 506: Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 532: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 596: Ms. LOFGREEN.

H.R. 630: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas and Mr. GALLEGOS.

H.R. 645: Mr. LEWIS.

H.R. 713: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.

H.R. 718: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 755: Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 792: Mr. PEARCE.

H.R. 820: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 822: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. HOLT, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. HUFFMAN, and Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 921: Mr. RIBBLE, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, and Mr. MASSIE.

H.R. 954: Mrs. BUSTOS and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 975: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 988: Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 1008: Mr. GRIMM and Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 1009: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 1020: Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H.R. 1078: Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 1144: Mr. FALEOMAVEGA and Mr. Cárdenas.

H.R. 1175: Mr. SIRES.

H.R. 1179: Mr. DELANEY.

H.R. 1240: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 1362: Mr. JOYCE.

H.R. 1380: Mr. YODER.

H.R. 1428: Mr. SCHNEIDER.

H.R. 1507: Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. GALLEGOS.

H.R. 1515: Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. HECK of Washington, and Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 1528: Mr. LANGEVIN.

H.R. 1563: Mr. VALADAO and Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 1579: Ms. HAHN.

H.R. 1692: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 1694: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 1783: Mrs. CAPPS.

H.R. 1843: Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 1915: Mr. STIVERS, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.

H.R. 1918: Mrs. BUSTOS and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 2068: Ms. DELBENE.

H.R. 2143: Mr. LANCE.

H.R. 2235: Mr. MAFFEI.

H.R. 2283: Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Ms. SHEAPORTER.

H.R. 2317: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 2377: Mr. VEASEY, Mr. STIVERS, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. SCHRADER, and Mr. GOWDY.

H.R. 2413: Mrs. HARTZLER.

H.R. 2414: Mr. HARRIS, Mr. LATHAM, and Mr. JORDAN.

H.R. 2499: Mr. WALZ and Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 2527: Mr. MCGOVERN and Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 2548: Mr. YOHIO and Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 2690: Mr. PIERLUISI.
 H.R. 2725: Ms. KUSTER.
 H.R. 2805: Ms. BASS.
 H.R. 2863: Mr. BUTTERFIELD and Ms. MOORE.
 H.R. 2870: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
 H.R. 2892: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.
 H.R. 2921: Ms. KUSTER.
 H.R. 2932: Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. McNERNEY, Mr. MORAN, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. BARBER, and Mr. SHUSTER.
 H.R. 2935: Ms. MOORE.
 H.R. 2962: Mr. HONDA.
 H.R. 3040: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. GRAYSON.
 H.R. 3116: Mr. HUFFMAN and Mr. ROHR-ABACHER.
 H.R. 3240: Mr. VARGAS.
 H.R. 3305: Ms. SINEMA.
 H. R. 3322: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. POLIS, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
 H.R. 3335: Mr. AMODEI.
 H.R. 3361: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
 H.R. 3364: Mr. TURNER.
 H.R. 3446: Mr. COHEN.
 H.R. 3453: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.
 H.R. 3485: Mr. MESSER.
 H.R. 3529: Mr. ROKITA.
 H.R. 3530: Ms. BASS and Ms. TITUS.
 H.R. 3531: Ms. JENKINS.
 H.R. 3544: Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. YODER, Mr. PITTS, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. RIBBLE.
 H.R. 3546: Mr. SCHNEIDER, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 3548: Mr. MEEHAN.
 H.R. 3560: Mr. HONDA and Mr. O'ROURKE.
 H.R. 3571: Ms. MATSUI and Mr. SCHIFF.
 H.R. 3635: Mr. CONNOLLY.
 H.R. 3658: Mr. BARROW of Georgia, Ms. BASS, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARNEY, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Ms. CHU, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COSTA, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. DINGELL, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. EDWARDS, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. GALLEGGO, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. GOWDY, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HANNA, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. HOLT, Mr. HOYER, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KIND, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LEWIS, Mr.

LOEBACK, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. MAFFEI, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. McNERNEY, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. MICA, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. NOLAN, Mr. OWENS, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. PELOSI, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. PETERS of Michigan, Mr. PETERSON, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RICHMOND, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHRADER, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WALZ, Ms. WATERS, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. STOCKMAN.
 H.R. 3670: Mr. SARBANES and Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
 H.R. 3678: Mr. CAPUANO.
 H.R. 3698: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 3708: Mr. STUTZMAN, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. POSEY, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. HURT, Mr. McINTYRE, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
 H.R. 3722: Mr. LOEBACK.
 H.R. 3732: Mr. HENSARLING.
 H.R. 3757: Mr. LOEBACK.
 H.R. 3769: Mr. LATHAM.
 H.R. 3862: Mr. ROTHFUS.
 H.R. 3867: Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. SIRES, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. DENT, Ms. GABBARD, Mr. COLLINS of Georgia, Mr. McALLISTER, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, Mr. COOK, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. CAPPS, and Mr. ISRAEL.
 H.R. 3877: Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
 H.R. 3930: Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. OLSON.
 H.R. 3963: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. GRAYSON, and Mr. PIERLUISI.
 H.R. 3969: Mr. RENACCI.
 H.R. 3978: Ms. SLAUGHTER and Mr. CICILLINE.
 H.R. 3991: Mr. JONES, Mr. HUELSKAMP, and Mr. ROKITA.
 H.R. 3992: Mr. STEWART and Mr. AMODEI.
 H.R. 4012: Mrs. HARTZLER.
 H.R. 4015: Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. McCAUL, Mr. LoBIONDO, and Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania.
 H.R. 4026: Ms. BORDALLO.
 H.R. 4031: Mr. SHUSTER and Mr. AMODEI.
 H.R. 4035: Mr. DEFazio.
 H.R. 4040: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.
 H.R. 4046: Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. MORAN, and Mr. POCAN.
 H.R. 4049: Mr. SENSENBRENNER and Mr. KIND.
 H.R. 4058: Mr. KLINE.
 H.R. 4064: Mr. HUDSON, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. YOUNG of Indiana, and Mr. PALAZZO.

H.R. 4075: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.
 H.R. 4092: Mr. CUMMINGS and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
 H.R. 4119: Ms. NORTON, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Ms. BROWN of Florida.
 H.R. 4143: Mrs. BLACK.
 H.R. 4155: Mr. FARENTHOLD.
 H.R. 4157: Mr. SIMPSON and Mr. HUELSKAMP.
 H.R. 4163: Mr. HOLT.
 H.R. 4186: Mr. COLLINS of New York.
 H.R. 4188: Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. MARCHANT, and Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.
 H.J. Res. 34: Mr. BISHOP of New York.
 H.J. Res. 110: Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
 H. Con. Res. 27: Ms. CLARKE of New York.
 H. Con. Res. 86: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. COSTA.
 H. Con. Res. 91: Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
 H. Res. 36: Mr. BACHUS.
 H. Res. 72: Mrs. HARTZLER.
 H. Res. 418: Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. HOLT, Mr. SIRES, and Ms. EDWARDS.
 H. Res. 494: Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. BARTON, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, and Mr. DeSANTIS.
 H. Res. 505: Mr. CICILLINE and Mr. LATTA.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY Mr. TIPTON

The amendment filed to H.R. 3189 by me does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of House rule XXI.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 1239: Mr. FORBES.
 H.R. 3633: Mr. COURTNEY.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

KATIA MERAZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Katia Meraz for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Katia Meraz is a 10th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Katia Meraz is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Katia Meraz for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

HONORING ANTHONY
DEFFENBAUGH

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Anthony Deffenbaugh. Anthony is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 865, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Anthony has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Anthony has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Anthony has earned the rank of Tom-Tom Beater in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Anthony has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Anthony redesigned the trailer for the Blue Springs High School marching band, including the welding, fabricating and assembly of the parts needed to properly protect the instruments during transportation.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Anthony Deffenbaugh for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. HUFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on March 11, 2014, I was absent for rollcall vote 116. Had I been present for rollcall vote 116, on passage of H.R. 3979, I would have voted "yes."

HONORING PAST AND CURRENT
AFRICAN AMERICAN UNITED
STATES SENATORS

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor our past and current African American Senators.

Following the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, and beginning with the Reconstruction Era of our great nation, nine African Americans have served in the upper chamber of the United States Congress. Yet, the 113th Congress marked the first time in our nation's history that two African Americans served concurrently in the Senate.

In celebration of Black History Month, U.S. Senator TIM SCOTT of South Carolina brought together a panel of past and present African American Senators. The Honorable James H. Billington, Ambassador Carol Moseley Braun, the Honorable Roland Burris, the Honorable William "Mo" Cowan, as well as newly elected Senator COREY BOOKER discussed their individual paths to Congress. In their deliveries, it was clear that we have come a long way. Each of their unique stories represents the progress that this country has made.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend Senator SCOTT for hosting such an important event. It was truly an honor to be in attendance.

KARLA LOPEZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Karla Lopez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Karla Lopez is an 8th grader at Wheat Ridge 5-8 and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Karla Lopez is exemplary of the type of achievement

that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Karla Lopez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent during the week of February 24, 2014. If I were present, I would have voted on the following:

Rollcall No. 63, H.R. 1211, "yea"; rollcall No. 64, H.R. 1123, "yea"; rollcall No. 65, Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule, "nay"; rollcall No. 66, H. Res. 487, "no"; rollcall No. 67, H.R. 1944, "yea"; rollcall No. 68, Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 3865, "yea"; rollcall No. 69, Final Passage of H.R. 3865, "no"; rollcall No. 70, Agreeing to the Polis of Colorado Amendment to the Title, "aye"; rollcall No. 71, Rothfus/Barr Amendment, "no"; rollcall No. 72, Connolly Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 73, Jackson-Lee Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 74, Jackson-Lee/Johnson Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 75, George Miller/Courtney Amendment No. 10, "aye"; rollcall No. 76, George Miller/Courtney Amendment No. 11, "aye."

Rollcall No. 77, Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 2804, "aye"; rollcall No. 78, Final Passage of H.R. 2804, "no"; rollcall No. 79, Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule, "nay"; rollcall No. 80, H. Res. 492, "no"; rollcall No. 81, Rigell Amendment, "no"; rollcall No. 82, DeSantiis Amendment, "no"; rollcall No. 83, Moore Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 84, Motion to Recommit H.R. 3193, "aye"; rollcall No. 85, Final Passage of H.R. 3193, "no"; rollcall No. 86, Cummings Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 87, Connolly Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 88, Jackson-Lee Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 89, Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 899, "aye"; rollcall No. 90, Final Passage of H.R. 899, "no."

HONORING JACK KNIPP

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jack Knipp. Jack

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 865, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jack has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jack has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jack has earned the rank of Firebuilder in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Jack has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jack led fellow members of his swim team in putting together a class for basic swim lessons, providing a valuable life lesson to the children he taught.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jack Knipp for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE JAMIE GRODSKY PRIZE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LAW SCHOLARSHIP

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the fourth anniversary of the Jamie Grodsky Prize for Environmental Scholarship. It is awarded annually to a George Washington law student who contributes an original paper to the environmental law field. The award is given in memory of Jamie Grodsky, a law professor at George Washington University, who passed away on May 22, 2010.

There is no doubt in my mind that legal scholarship in the field of environmental law plays a critical role in developing innovative ideas and thoughts to help preserve our citizens' quality of life, health, and safety. As a result, the annual award of the Jamie Grodsky Prize serves as not only a fitting tribute to Professor Grodsky, but helps preserve and protect our environment and our planet.

The Grodsky Prize is funded through the generosity of her family and friends, and is awarded annually to a George Washington law student who contributes an original paper to the environmental law field, as judged by a panel of experts. Tomorrow will mark the fourth time this award has been given. This year's recipient is Molly Masterton, who wrote on "Promoting Marine and Hydrokinetic Energy and Managing Environmental Risk: Toward an Adaptive Management Strategy."

Past Grodsky Award recipients include:

In 2011, Renee Martin-Nagle for her paper titled "Fossil Aquifers: A Common Heritage of Mankind."

In 2012, Lieutenant Commander Jonathan Dowling's paper titled "Improving Energy Security with the Great Green Fleet: The Case for Transitioning from Ethanol to Drop-In Renewable Fuels."

In 2013, Joel Meister, for his paper titled "Sunny Dispositions: Modernizing Investment Tax Credit Recapture Rules for Solar Energy Project Finance After the Stimulus."

We look forward to the award of many more Grodsky prizes to deserving George Washington University students.

The fourth anniversary of the award is also an opportunity to recognize the life of Professor Grodsky, a preeminent member of the Nation's environmental bar, whose legal imprint continues to this day. Although time and space limitations do not permit me to itemize all of Jamie's contributions and unique talents and gifts, I would like to note a few highlights (many of Jamie's contributions were referenced in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD by Rep. MILLER on September 15, 2010):

Prof. Grodsky left an indelible mark on all three branches of government, countless law students at the University of Minnesota and George Washington University, and the environmental and legal community as a whole.

Jamie served the Congress initially as an analyst with the then Official of Technology Assessment, and later as counsel to the Natural Resources Committee in the House, and the Judiciary Committee in the Senate.

She served as Senior Advisor to the General Counsel of the Environmental Protection Agency during the Clinton Administration.

She served as clerk to the Chief Judge of Ninth Circuit, the Hon. Proctor Hug, who referred to Jamie as "the most multi-talented person I have ever met."

Jamie was dedicated to environmental causes, acting as Educational Director of the San Francisco Oceanic Society and she conducted marine research at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute in Massachusetts.

After leaving government service, Jamie dedicated herself to passing along her passion for the environment through her work in academia, eventually becoming a tenured Professor of Environmental Law at George Washington University.

Although Jamie's passing was a tremendous loss to us all, I am pleased that that her legacy is continuing to inspire the next generation of attorneys through the annual award of the Jamie Grodsky Prize.

JOHNNIE DINA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Johnnie Dina for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Johnnie Dina is an 11th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Johnnie Dina is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Johnnie Dina for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedi-

cation and character in all of her future accomplishments.

HONORING DONOVAN CHAMBERS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Donovan Chambers. Donovan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 865, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Donovan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Donovan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Donovan has earned the rank of Firebuilder in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Donovan has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Donovan led a food drive at his church, St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church, on behalf of the food pantry for Sacred Heart—Guadalupe Catholic Church in Kansas City, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Donovan Chambers for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF MS. ANN LALLY OF SALEM, NEW HAMPSHIRE

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of one of my district's finest residents and greatest contributors: Ann R. Lally, of Salem, New Hampshire. Next week, Ms. Lally, who serves as President of Salem Co-operative Bank, will be honored with the Chief John P. Ganley Community Service Award, which recognizes outstanding individuals who exhibit great concern, involvement, and leadership in the town of Salem in New Hampshire's southern tier.

The award is named in honor of John P. Ganley, who served the Salem community as police chief before his death in 1989. Ms. Lally honors Chief Ganley's memory each day through her tireless efforts to strengthen the community, both through her work at the bank and on the many local boards on which she serves.

Over 28 years at Salem Co-operative, Ms. Lally has helped to support countless children and other community members through the bank's charitable wing, the Salem Community Benefit, which provides funding for education, youth development, and other community agencies. As a board member of the Greater

Salem Chamber of Commerce, she was instrumental in the creation of the Hidden Jewel Awards, which honor deserving women for their contributions to the Salem area; and as president of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Salem, she helped lead a capital campaign to help fund renovations and expansion at the community center.

Through her dedicated service to these and other organizations, Ms. Lally has made Salem a stronger, healthier, and happier place to live, work, and raise a family. On March 17, the Greater Salem Boys and Girls Club will honor her with the prestigious Ganley Award. As the Salem community celebrates Ms. Lally, I urge all Granite Staters and all Americans to join them in honoring her many contributions to our state and our Nation.

IN MEMORIAM OF THE HONORABLE BUCKNER MELTON, SR.

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a generous community leader and outstanding public servant, and friend of longstanding, the Honorable Buckner F. "Buck" Melton, Sr., Former Mayor of Macon, Georgia. Sadly, Mr. Melton passed away on Wednesday, March 5, 2014. His passing leaves a tremendous void in the hearts of his family, friends and the Macon, Georgia community.

On Saturday, March 8, 2014, friends and family gathered to celebrate the life and career of this influential man at a memorial service held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Macon.

Buck Melton was born on October 24, 1923, in Arlington, Georgia to the Reverend and Mrs. Henry Martin Melton. He grew up in Moultrie, Georgia, but moved to Macon to attend Mercer University. He went on to graduate from Mercer University's Walter F. George School of Law and began his career as an attorney in Macon.

After serving as city attorney during the 1960s, Attorney Melton was elected to the office of Mayor in 1975. During his one term as Mayor, Mr. Melton helped to establish Mercer University's School of Medicine as well as the city's local option sales tax, which is still used today. Mr. Melton was also particularly proud of the seventy miles of roads paved in Macon during his tenure.

The World War II and Korean War veteran loved his adopted hometown of Macon and he served his community in many capacities. He was president of the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce in 1971, president of the Macon Bar Association in 1973 and he served on the board of the Macon-Bibb County Urban Development Authority, among the numerous other civic organizations he belonged to during his life.

George Washington Carver once said, "No individual has any right to come into the world and go out of it without leaving behind distinct and legitimate reasons for having passed through it." Buck Melton left behind a legacy of leadership and kindness that is still felt

throughout the Macon, Georgia community today.

Buck is survived by his loving wife of 60 years, Tommie; children, Leigh and Buckner, Jr.; grandson, Grady; nephews, Tim, Hank and Will; and niece, Mary Ann.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me, my wife, Vivian, and the Macon, Georgia community in honoring the life of Former Mayor Buckner Melton, Sr. He will truly be missed, but his legacy will not soon be forgotten.

JOANNA MOSMAN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud JoAnna Mosman for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. JoAnna Mosman is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by JoAnna Mosman is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to JoAnna Mosman for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

HONORING THE 102ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE GIRL SCOUTS

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 102nd anniversary of the Girl Scouts of the USA.

On this day in 1912, Juliette 'Daisy' Gordon Low officially registered the organization's first eighteen Girl Scouts in Savannah, Georgia.

Since that first meeting, more than 59 million young women have been inspired, challenged, and empowered as Girl Scout alumnae.

Thanks to Daisy Gordon's vision, millions of girls have learned the values of personal responsibility, conservation, friendship, community, and teamwork.

Girl Scouts carry these important lessons with them for the rest of their lives.

The Girl Scouts and I share a birthday and on this Girl Scout Day, I applaud the Girl Scouts for affording millions of girls across the country with the opportunity to be part of something much bigger than themselves.

OBSERVING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in observance of International Women's Day, March 8—recognized by the United Nations. Today, we celebrate the social, political, economic, cultural and intellectual achievements of women around the globe. The United Nations' theme for this year's international recognition—"Equality for women is progress for all"—emphasizes empowerment of women and women's full enjoyment of human rights and stresses the vital role of women as agents of change in our society. Today, courageous women like Bui Thi Minh Hang need our immediate attention.

Two years ago on this occasion, I stood on the House floor recognizing and advocating for Ms. Hang, who was sentenced without trial for participating in peaceful protests related to the Eastern Sea. She was eventually released but face ongoing harassment from the Vietnamese authorities. Recently, Ms. Hang and her friends were brutally beaten and unlawfully detained while on their way to visit a former prisoner of conscience. It has been almost one month and Ms. Hang is still detained without any due process for "obstructing traffic". I am once again recognizing Ms. Hang for her ongoing efforts to for social and political issues in Vietnam. Ms. Hang has inspired many Vietnamese women, youth and fellow human rights activists.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in recognizing International Women's Day and women like Bui Thi Minh Hang who are advocating for freedom and democracy in their communities, and call on governments like Vietnam to immediately and unconditionally release Bui Thi Minh Hang and all prisoners of conscience.

HONORING TOM CLEMENTS

HON. CORY GARDNER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Tom Clements of Monument, Colorado. Mr. Clements served for two years as Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Corrections and made many improvements to the prisons of Colorado before he tragically lost his life in March of 2013.

During his time at the Colorado Department of Corrections, Mr. Clements had an enormous impact on Colorado's prison system. He implemented reforms to benefit staff and inmates and developed innovative solutions to some of the Department's most persistent problems. Mr. Clements also worked to improve the lives of Coloradans both inside and outside of the prison system by providing inmates with the counseling and skills necessary to become successful members of society upon release. In rehabilitating these individuals, Mr. Clements helped create a better future for our state.

The loss of Mr. Clements has been a loss for all of Colorado. His kindness, compassion, and dedication to public service must never be forgotten. Please join me in remembering this extraordinary man.

IN HONOR OF MASTER SERGEANT
DAVID POIRIER

HON. ANN M. KUSTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, today, I honor the life of Master Sergeant David Poirier, a New Hampshire National Guardsman who passed away late last month while serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Master Sergeant Poirier was an exemplary Guardsman, a long-serving Postmaster in his hometown of Atkinson, and a great family man. His service reminds us of the sacrifice our National Guardsmen and their families make on behalf of our state and our country.

In recent years, we have asked these brave men and women to leave friends and family at home as they supported Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, and performed humanitarian missions around the world. We must not forget how much our Guardsmen give to keep us all safe, prosperous, and free. May Master Sergeant Poirier rest in peace, and may we honor him by celebrating the service and sacrifice of all those who wear the uniform each and every day.

UNITED STATES PARALYMPIANS
FROM THIRD DISTRICT OF COLO-
RADO TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the two outstanding athletes from Colorado's 3rd district who are competing in the 2014 Winter Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia. With their dedication, passion, and spirit, these two women are fine examples of the best our nation has to offer, and they serve as role models for young people around the world. To formally acknowledge their distinction and excellence, I stand to recognize these athletes from Colorado's 3rd district:

Melanie Schwartz of Aspen, Colorado, will represent the United States in Alpine Skiing. Ms. Schwartz began her Paralympic career in her home country of Canada during the 2010 Vancouver games. In 2012 and 2013, Ms. Schwartz chose to represent the United States in two World Cups, placing first in the slalom event in 2013. Earlier this year, she took second place at the 2014 U.S. National Championships for downhill. When she isn't representing us on the mountain, she spends much of her time giving back to her community through volunteer services, including serving as a ski instructor for children with disabilities.

Heidi Jo Duce of Ouray, Colorado, will take to the slopes to compete in the challenging

snowboard cross events. Ms. Duce has rapidly become a champion athlete since she won the U.S. National Championships in 2013, her first year of competing professionally. She is currently ranked second in the world for para-snowboard cross. An avid outdoorswoman, she enjoys all that Colorado has to offer, including rock climbing, mountain biking, backpacking, and hunting.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to recognize these fine athletes. Together, they show us what determination and passion can accomplish. Ms. Schwartz and Ms. Duce continue to inspire all of us and it is an honor to congratulate them on their extraordinary careers as they represent the best of America to the world.

JESUS CORTEZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jesus Cortez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jesus Cortez is an 8th grader at Everitt Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jesus Cortez is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jesus Cortez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 115, 116, 117, I was unavoidably detained because of airplane mechanical issues on my return trip to Washington. Had I been present I would have voted "yes" on each of these suspension votes.

IN OPPOSITION TO H.R. 2804 AND
H.R. 899

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2804, the so-called "All Economic Regulations are Transparent (ALERT)

Act and H.R. 899, the so-called "Unfunded Mandates Information and Transparency Act."

This week, the House took up a series of rehashed bills—under the guise of the "Stop Government Abuse Week"—that would limit the ability of federal agencies to enforce commonsense rules and regulations. While supporters of H.R. 2804 and H.R. 899 claim they are needed to curb overregulation, in reality, they would prevent federal agencies from doing their jobs and working to ensure there are safeguards in place to protect consumer health and safety.

My Republican colleagues contend that the two bills before us are a response to the "tsunami" of regulations under the Obama Administration. However, this is simply not true. In fact, federal agencies under President Obama have issued significantly less rules during his first four years in office when compared to President Bush's first term. Moreover, the ALERT Act would actually create more red tape by imposing unnecessary new procedures on agencies and adding over 60 new barriers in the federal rulemaking process.

Much like the ALERT Act, H.R. 899 would also introduce uncertainty into agency decision-making and undermine the ability of agencies to provide critical public health and safety protections. It would also weaken our democracy by giving powerful special interests and private industry an unfair advantage in the rulemaking process. Specifically, it would require agencies to consult with private industry—but not most other stakeholders, such as public health or food safety experts—before proposing rules.

I was disappointed that amendments offered by Representative CUMMINGS and Representative CONNOLLY were not adopted. Rep. CUMMINGS' amendment would have overturned a provision in the bill that directly compromises the autonomy of independent regulatory agencies—including the CFPB, SEC, and CPSC—by requiring that they report proposed rules to the OMB. Rep. CONNOLLY's amendment would have simply evened the playing field and ensured that public interest organizations and other stakeholders are provided the same opportunity for consultation afforded to special interest groups and private industry under this bill.

Over the last four years, President Obama has implemented significant reforms to the rulemaking process. In January 2010, the President signed an Executive Order that required agencies to determine if the benefits of proposed rules are justified considering their cost to society. He required an interagency review of overlapping rules and regulation between agencies that may prevent innovation in the private sector and instituted a policy to allow agencies to consider input from affected public and private stakeholders and experts when developing rules and regulations.

There is also a mechanism in place that already requires agencies to adhere to specific requirements of Federal law before issuing a rule or regulation. The Administrative Procedure Act, the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA), the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA), the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), and the Congressional Review Act all serve the purpose of making sure that agencies are not overstepping their bounds when issuing rules and enforcing existing regulations.

At a time when Congress should be doing everything it can to create jobs and improve the economy, these bills are nothing but a distraction. They are unnecessary and potentially harmful to the public health and safety. I urge my colleagues to oppose each of them.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker on rollcall No. 117, H.R. 499, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

DR. STEVEN R. SWANSON TRIBUTE

HON. SCOTT R. TIPTON

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Steven R. Swanson, a United States Astronaut who will launch on his third trip to the International Space Station (ISS) on March 25 from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. Dr. Swanson will spend six months on the station, serving three months as the ISS Commander.

I'm proud to say that Dr. Swanson lives in Colorado's 3rd Congressional District, in Steamboat Springs, with his wife, Mary and their three children. Dr. Swanson attended the University of Colorado, where he received a degree in Engineering Physics. He has also received both Masters and Doctorate degrees in Computer Science.

Since joining NASA in 1998, Dr. Swanson has led a remarkable career, earning the NASA Exceptional Achievement Medal, the Johnson Space Center Certificate of Accommodation, and the Flight Engineering Award. He travelled on the space shuttle to help assemble the ISS in June of 2007 and again in March of 2009. It is fitting that he now becomes the station's commanding officer.

Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to recognize such a distinguished ambassador of the sciences. I rise today to thank him for his continued service in the name of exploration and congratulate him on his truly remarkable career.

KASSIDY LINDLEY

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kassidy Lindley for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Kassidy Lindley is an 8th grader at Moore Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kassidy Lindley is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Kassidy Lindley for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

HONORING THE MEMBERS OF STILLWATER TRINITY LU- THERAN CHURCH

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor members of Stillwater Trinity Lutheran Church and acknowledge their recent efforts to feed more than half a million people in a community food drive called "Meals from the Heart." This ambitious initiative will provide nutritious meals to be distributed through a variety of organizations from the Saint Croix Valley all the way to Tanzania.

"Meals from the Heart" is a community-led, full-scale mission to address hunger—both here at home and around the world. Beginning in 2008, Trinity Lutheran Church, located in Stillwater, Minnesota, has partnered with churches, schools, nonprofits, and local businesses, including Andersen Windows, to provide meals for those in need. Working together, their benevolent efforts have produced impressive results. During the past five years, 10,500 volunteers have packed more than 3 million meals that have been delivered to diverse locations, ranging from a church in Saint Paul to an orphanage in Haiti.

Access to affordable, nutritious food is fundamental to the health and economic success of communities. Unfortunately, for far too many, access to nutritious food is not dependable. Food insecurity is rising at an alarming rate, causing regional conflicts and forcing 1 billion people worldwide to struggle with chronic hunger and disease. In America, economic strain from the Great Recession continues to place significant financial hardships on families looking to put food on the table.

Just last month, our nation celebrated the 50th Anniversary of President Johnson's "War on Poverty." While President Johnson's call to action has resulted in profound change for a generation of Americans, our nation still must confront the stark reality that poverty, hunger, and income inequality persist today. To be successful in the fight against hunger, it will take collective action between public, private, and community forces—just as we have seen with the "Meals from the Heart" program.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride I submit this statement for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, recognizing the benevolent actions of local volunteers and businesses who have collaborated to make a difference in combating hunger across the globe and in our own neighborhoods in the United States.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TULSI GABBARD

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, on March 12, 2014, I was unavoidably detained and was unable to record my vote for rollcall No. 118. Had I been present I would have voted "nay" on ordering the previous question.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DOMINIQUE GELIN

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Dominique Gelin. Born and raised in Miami, Florida, Dominique is the proud daughter of immigrant parents. She has worked to shape policy and mobilize members of her community.

Dominique moved to Orlando to attend the University of Central Florida in the fall of 2008. It was there that she got her first taste of organizing her peers, encouraging them to vote and become a part of the process. After receiving her Bachelor's degree, she continued her community service, becoming a Youth Outreach Director and extending her work to high school students and young professionals.

Over the years, Dominique has had the opportunity to work with organizations like Ruth's List Florida, the National Congress of Black Women, and most recently, as an Aide at the Florida House of Representatives. In 2011, Dominique was awarded the Achievement Award by the Florida Commission on the Status of Women.

She looks forward to continuing her work by advocating for those with the most urgent needs through compassionate leadership.

I am happy to honor Dominique Gelin, during Women's History Month, for her contributions to her community.

RECOGNIZING THE LEADERSHIP OF SENATOR GERALDINE

F. THOMPSON

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Florida Senator Geraldine Thompson. Senator Thompson began serving the people of Florida in 1970 when she worked as a Secretary for State Representative Gwendolyn Sawyer Cherry, the first African American female to serve in the Florida House of Representatives. During her time with Representative Cherry, she learned that conditions could be changed and lives improved through the enactment of legislation.

After working for several years, Senator Thompson enrolled at Florida State University from which she received a M.S. in Communication in 1973. She and her husband moved to Orlando and immediately became active in the Central Florida community. She later became the Assistant to the President at Valencia Community College where she served for 24 years. Among her many accomplishments

was the establishment of the "College Reach Out Program." The program enabled thousands of low income and disadvantaged students to fulfill their dream of going to college.

As a public historian, Senator Thompson's passion for history led her to conduct research and compile documents which resulted in the publication of a book, *Black America Series: Orlando, Florida*, in 2003. She is also credited with preserving one of Orlando's unique landmarks, The Wells' Built Hotel, which housed some of America's most prominent citizens, including Justice Thurgood Marshall, Ray Charles, Ella Fitzgerald, Jackie Robinson and many more. She helped secure funds to convert the hotel into a museum which is known today as The Wells' Built Museum of African American History and Culture.

In November 2006, Thompson was elected to serve as the first African American female to represent District 39 in the Florida House of Representatives. As a state representative, she worked to bring about change, including sponsoring legislation to give pregnant women protection under the Florida Civil Rights Act, and establishing a lottery Ticket for the Cure to benefit breast cancer victims. On November 18, 2008, she was unanimously selected by her legislative colleagues to serve as the Democratic Leader Pro Tempore, the second highest ranking Democrat in the Florida House of Representatives. In November 2012, Thompson was elected to the Florida Senate. In December 2012, Senator Thompson was elected Chairman of the Orange County Legislative Delegation. She is the first female and African-American to hold the position of Chair.

Senator Thompson has been recognized with numerous awards. She received the Florida Education Association's Mary McLeod Bethune Humanitarian Award and the National Education Association's prestigious Mary Hatwood Futrell Award for her outstanding human rights work toward the advancement and education of women and girls. She is also a recipient of the Executive Women Award, the Legislative Award from the American Cancer Society, and the Martin Luther King Award from the Greater Orlando Alliance of Black School Education. She is also an Executive Board Member of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators.

Senator Thompson enjoys every opportunity to give back, such as arranging to have 40 students from Jones High School in Orlando attend the inaugurations of President Barack Obama in 2009 and 2013. She is married to the Honorable Emerson R. Thompson, Jr. She has three children, Laurise, Emerson III, and Elizabeth, and is the proud grandmother of four.

I am happy to honor Senator Geraldine Thompson, during Women's History Month, for her leadership and service to the Central Florida community.

RECOGNIZING THE LEADERSHIP OF CHERYL GRIEB

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Cheryl Grieb. Cheryl's recently widowed mother moved her and her three brothers from New Jersey to Kissimmee, Florida in 1974. Cheryl's Mom did not come from money and worked very hard in real estate to support her four young children. Following in her mother's footsteps, Cheryl started her career as a realtor at the

age of 18. At age 24, she purchased her Mom's real estate company and opened her second real estate company at age 30.

Cheryl's Mom raised her to be active in her community and give back to society. In her twenties, Cheryl was appointed to the Osceola County Parks and Recreation Committee where she served for seven years. While on the Committee, she was involved with the purchase of the Overstreet property which became a 400 acre regional park. In addition to her passion for the environment, Cheryl loves historic structures. She spearheaded a task force that successfully preserved the historic Osceola High School for over five years, until the devastating hurricanes of 1994 finally sealed its fate. Cheryl was also on a task force which formed the first historic district in downtown Kissimmee and began a historic home tour in the downtown area.

As a realtor, Cheryl recognized the need to help low-income individuals to secure affordable housing. Along with a handful of dedicated people, she formed Habitat for Humanity of Osceola County. Habitat has helped numerous people in Osceola County realize the dream of homeownership. Her other community activities include Co-Chairing the Kissimmee Relay for Life for the American Cancer Society. The cause is near and dear to Cheryl's heart as her partner, Patti, is a cancer survivor.

After her election as City Commissioner in 2006, Cheryl became even more involved in her community. She has served as a Board Member of Community Vision, two-time Chair of the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, Chair and Council Member of the Tourist Development Council, Chair of the Greater Osceola Partnership or Economic Prosperity, and Director for Florida PACE. In addition, she was instrumental in passing domestic partner benefits for the employees of the City of Kissimmee. This victory won her the "Voice for Equality" award from Equality Florida.

In June of 2007, Cheryl's Mom had an asthma attack that caused a fatal heart attack claiming her life. In response to the tragic loss of her Mom and role model, Cheryl decided to have an event that would showcase downtown Kissimmee and raise funds for the American Heart Association, as both her parents had succumbed to heart attacks. Cheryl's efforts helped create Kissimmee Main Street and the first annual Kiss-im-mee 5K.

This past February was the sixth annual race which brought hundreds of people to downtown Kissimmee and raised thousands of dollars to help combat heart disease.

I am happy to honor Cheryl Grieb, during Women's History Month, for her dedication to her community.

RECOGNIZING THE CAREER AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF PEGEEN HANRAHAN

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Pegeen Hanrahan. Pegeen is a registered Professional Engineer and Principal of Community and Conservation Solutions, LLC. A native and lifelong resident of Gainesville, Florida, she served as its Mayor from 2004 to 2010, and as a City Commissioner from 1996 to 2002, leaving office both times as a result of term limits.

Pegeen has over twenty-five years of experience in environmental remediation, public participation, grant writing, land conservation, and local government finance. With the Trust for Public Land, she has helped develop and pass ten successful bond or sales tax initiatives for land conservation and parks in Florida. She also serves as a leader of Florida's Water and Land Legacy (FWLL), a statewide citizen's initiative to provide sustained funding for land and water conservation and ecosystem management.

With the support of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Pegeen has assisted communities in the adoption of a clean energy program known as feed-in-tariffs (FITs). Gainesville is the first city in the U.S. to implement a solar FIT, also known as a CLEAN (Clean Local Energy Accessible Now) Program. With over 18 megawatts of solar power installed, Gainesville is now in the top ten in installed solar per capita in the U.S. Pegeen also assisted in the adoption of CLEAN programs in Ft. Collins, Colorado and Palo Alto, California. She has spoken on the topic in over 20 communities in the U.S., Canada, Germany, and Brazil.

Pegeen served as an Engineer and Hazardous Materials Program Manager for the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department for over five years, a Senior Vice President of Terra-Com Environmental Consulting for five years, and an Executive Director of Alachua Conservation Trust for three years. She has been the Engineer of Record on numerous remediation projects to remove hazardous contaminants from soil and groundwater. She has also completed work in the fields of landfill design, stormwater management, hazardous waste management, climate change, sustainability, and energy conservation. She has completed projects for over forty different cities, counties, water management districts, state agencies, non-profits, and private clients.

Pegeen has served as President of the Florida League of Mayors and Chair of the Alachua County Library District. In addition, she serves on the boards of Florida State University's LeRoy Collins Institute, the Mayors' Innovation Project, ICLEI-USA: Local Governments for Sustainability, the Children's Movement of Florida, Innovation Gainesville, the Alliance for Renewable Energy, Ruth's List, and Alachua Conservation Trust.

She has received numerous honors, including being named a "Woman Who Makes a Difference" by the Gateway Girl Scout Council, a "Woman of Distinction" by Santa Fe College, and a "Voice for Equality" by Equality Florida. She is also a Florida Audubon "Women in Conservation" award winner and was named "The Female Democratic Elected Official of the Year" three times by the Alachua County Democratic Executive Committee.

A member and former alumni sponsor of the prestigious Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society, Pegeen holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Environmental Engineering, and a Bachelor's in Sociology from the University of Florida. She is a member of Leadership Florida and Florida Blue Key, UF's Leadership Honorary.

Pegeen is married to Tony Malone, a Professional Engineer in the field of civil infrastructure. Together they are the delighted parents of Evylen Mary (age eight), Quinn Joseph (age seven), and Tess Lucille (age three).

I am happy to honor Pegeen Hanrahan, during Women's History Month, for her many contributions to the state of Florida.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF MARY JANE ARRINGTON

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Mary Jane Arrington. Led by her mother's example, Mary Jane has devoted her life to community involvement. Beginning in childhood, Mary Jane served her community through her church, school, 4-H, and Girl Scouts. Public service is something she is very passionate about. She began her public service 44 years ago when she first moved to Osceola County, working in her children's schools and serving on numerous community organization boards and committees.

Elected in 1994, she is the first and is still the only woman to be elected to the Osceola County Board of County Commissioners. Mary Jane was elected by her peers to serve as Commission Chairman and served as a County Commissioner until 2002. During her tenure she was a true visionary working to promote regionalism and improve transportation in the Central Florida region. Mary Jane championed the restoration of Osceola County's historic courthouse and oversaw the construction of the new courthouse and administrative buildings.

After her time on the commission she continued her public service as one of the founding Supervisors of the Toho Water Authority, a regional water authority. She continued in this role until 2008 when she was elected as Osceola County Supervisor of Elections.

Setting milestones is something Mary Jane continues to do in her capacity as the Osceola County Supervisor of Elections. She has worked diligently to enhance the services provided to the voters of Osceola County. By bringing the latest technology to the Elections Office she has streamlined procedures and made the voting process easier and more accessible for voters. Her insightful leadership has received national recognition.

Mary Jane has a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration from the University of Central Florida and is a graduate of Leadership Florida. She is one of only 800 nationally certified elections professionals and, this year, will be designated a Florida Master Certified Election Professional.

Outside of her responsibilities as Supervisor of Elections she is very active in the community where she serves as Chairman of the Osceola County YMCA Board of Directors and as a Member of the Executive Board of the Central Florida YMCA. She is also a very dedicated and involved member of the First United Methodist Church of Kissimmee.

Mary Jane and her husband of 46 years, Curtis, have passed on their love of public service to their four children who also serve the Osceola County community and the Central Florida region in varying capacities. They are also extremely proud grandparents of three grandsons. Mary Jane follows her personal creed of "living each day trying to accomplish something, not merely to exist."

I am happy to honor Mary Jane Arrington, during Women's History Month, for her dedication to the Central Florida community.

RECOGNIZING THE LEADERSHIP AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF DONNA SINES

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Donna Sines, Executive Director and Founder of Community Vision. After a stint in banking, Donna dedicated her life to helping Osceola County, Florida. As Executive Vice President of the Kissimmee/Osceola County Chamber of Commerce, she worked to redevelop Downtown Kissimmee, transforming it from a troubled area into a point of pride for the city.

She also launched Leadership Osceola County (LOC) which is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. LOC has educated and inspired more than 1200 graduates to contribute to the betterment of their community and make holistic decisions regarding community wellbeing. LOC has hosted programs spanning the spectrum from middle-school kids and teens to senior citizens. Donna was twice recognized by the late Florida Governor Lawton Chiles for programs and projects she oversaw. She also led the effort to restore the Historic Kissimmee train station, the first volunteer project of its kind in Osceola County. A number of community playground builds in economically challenged areas can also be credited to Donna.

In 1995, Donna left the Chamber to start a grass-roots, non-profit organization called Community Vision. Working out of her living room, Donna worked to unite her community in a shared vision. Thousands from all walks of life participated and a movement was born. In 2004, when four hurricanes ravaged Osceola County, including Community Vision's office and her home, Donna oversaw an "unmet needs committee" which raised \$750,000 to help residents restore their homes and lives. Community Vision utilizes a collective impact model in addressing issues. It functions as the umbrella organization bringing the public, private and independent sectors together to develop innovative solutions to complex, systemic problems confronting the Osceola community. Donna's impact can be felt throughout Osceola County. She secures financial resources and volunteer support to take on the impossible.

Donna's touch is most felt when addressing those community issues that affect our most vulnerable and at-risk residents. She secured a \$1.3 million federal grant to provide free primary healthcare to the un- and underinsured through the Mobile Medical Express initiative. Beginning with the Mobile Medical Express, the community developed a secondary care network which includes two free clinics.

Most recently, Donna has focused her efforts on the plight of the homeless. Community Vision offers intensive, career-readiness initiatives to put folks back on payrolls and families on the road to self-sufficiency. Community Vision also has an employment coach for the long-term unemployed and a full time Impact Homelessness Director.

It is her selfless spirit, love of community and "can do" attitude that drives Donna to address those tough challenges and makes her a valued community treasure.

Donna touts her greatest accomplishment as raising and educating her son Derrick, who

exemplifies success as a father, husband and bread winner. She is also blessed with beautiful and smart grandchildren, Connor and Kendall, who brighten her world with their love.

I am happy to honor Donna Sines, during Women's History Month, for her many contributions to the Osceola County community.

JOCELIN ALONSO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jocelin Alonso for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jocelin Alonso is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jocelin Alonso is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jocelin Alonso for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING FULL SAIL UNIVERSITY

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Full Sail University on the occasion of its 35th anniversary. Since its founding in 1979, Full Sail's vision has been to help creative students pursue their dreams in the entertainment industry.

When Full Sail first opened its doors 35 years ago, it aimed to couple traditional classroom work with career-specific development as well as training in real world production studios to propel students into the sound and music industry. As its students' dreams and passions grew, so did the university. Full Sail quickly evolved and now offers 44 unique degrees including animation, games, web design and film. In 2013, Full Sail earned a top ten spot on StudentAdvisors.com's list of "Top 100 Social Media Colleges."

Full Sail University boasts over 42,000 graduates, and is currently providing its 17,000 students with an innovative education to help achieve their goals. Graduates have continued on to companies such as Disney, ESPN and HBO Studios.

I am pleased to recognize Full Sail for its dedication to equipping students for fulfilling careers, and I thank the University for continuing to bolster the educations and passions of future generations.

HONORING MR. DAN KIMBALL

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Dan Kimball, and to congratulate him on his retirement. Mr. Kimball is an outstanding individual who has served as the Superintendent of Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks.

A 27-year veteran of the National Park Service, Mr. Kimball has previously served as Chief of the NPS Water Resources Division. In this capacity he successfully led efforts to settle national park water resources, specifically in the western United States in parks such as Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks. Mr. Kimball has also served as Assistant to the National Park Service Deputy Director in Washington, DC, Incident Commander representing the U.S. Department of the Interior, and at the Florida Peninsula Command Post in response to the Deepwater Horizon/BP Oil Spill.

Throughout his career, Mr. Kimball has been recognized for his exceptional work. His vast array of awards includes the Department of the Interior's Superior Service Award, the Pacific Northwest Regional Director's Award for Professional Excellence in Natural Resources, the Southeast Region's Superintendent of the Year Award, the President Rank Award—Meritorious Executive, and the American Recreation Coalition's Legends Award.

Having known Mr. Kimball for a number of years, I know that he has consistently demonstrated the highest degree of integrity, character, and professionalism. He has been dedicated to his career and has worked tirelessly for the protection of our environment and, more specifically for Florida, the preservation of the Everglades. The state of Florida and the nation as a whole have truly been lucky to have such an exceptional individual heading our national parks. Beyond that, over the years I have had the privilege of getting to know Dan on a personal level, and am honored to now call him my friend. I wish nothing but the best for Dan, his wife Kit and their son, and again congratulate him on his retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Mr. Dan Kimball for his tremendous service to Florida, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE TWENTIETH ANNUAL TOP 10 AWARDS CEREMONY OF THE GREATER DETROIT CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. PETERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Greater Detroit Chapter of the National Association of Women

Business Owners (NAWBO) as its members gather for the Twentieth Annual Top 10 Awards Ceremony. The Top 10 Awards provides the Greater Detroit Chapter of NAWBO with an opportunity to recognize women business owners and executives for their outstanding endeavors to expand the influence of women in business.

Chartered in 1980, the Greater Detroit Chapter of NAWBO was founded to further the mission of its national organization in Southeast Michigan region; to expand the access of women to the top echelons of decision-making in social, economic and political endeavors around the world. To execute this mission, the members of NAWBO, both in Detroit and across the country, engaged in an exchange of knowledge and experiences that allowed them to develop and hone their entrepreneurial skills. Specifically, NAWBO sponsors programming that is designed to strengthen the capacity of its members to promote economic development, create innovative and effective change in business culture, build strategic partnerships and influence public policy discussions.

To support these goals and its mission, the Greater Detroit Chapter of NAWBO hosts a number of events like Entrepreneur-YOU, which provides women entrepreneurs with a workshop to support the development of critical skills for creating and running a business; expos that allow members and the community at-large with a chance to build their social and business networks; and the Circle of Learning, which allows members to directly interact with each other in an effort to strengthen their brand, work culture and performance.

The Top 10 Awards allows NAWBO to recognize leading women in business from Southeast Michigan, whose work is expanding the opportunities for women, to be recognized by their peers for their commitment, their vision and, most importantly, their excellence. I am pleased to congratulate this year's winners: Barbara Whittaker, Suzanne Bobbitt, Eva Scurlock, Mary Buchzeiger, Ann Reinman, Jmai Moore, Pamela Smith, Mashell Carissimi, Mary Ann Lievois, Carla Walker-Miller and Shirley R. Stancato, on the remarkable impact they are making on the Greater Detroit community.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate National Women's History Month and reflect upon the remarkable impact women have made on our country, I am honored to recognize the Greater Detroit Chapter of NAWBO and this year's Top 10 Awards winners for the work they are doing to expand opportunities for women in business. For the last thirty-four years, the members of NAWBO in Southeast Michigan have been at the forefront of supporting women in business and I wish them continued success in their future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DIANE BLACK

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 86 (Cummings Amendment), rollcall No. 87 (Con-

nolly Amendment), rollcall No. 88 (Jackson Lee Amendment) and rollcall No. 89 (Motion to Recommit), which took place Friday, February 28, 2014; I am not recorded because I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

On rollcall No. 90 (Final Passage of H.R. 899), I would have voted "aye."

JULIE VILLEGAS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Julie Villegas for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Julie Villegas is a 12th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Julie Villegas is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Julie Villegas for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,495,622,444,209.79. We've added \$6,868,745,395,296.71 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

RECOGNITION OF SAM SIMON AND THE ACTUAL DANCE

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Samuel A. Simon on the success of his important one man performance, The Actual Dance. By creating and performing this moving and evocative show, Sam has helped to increase awareness about the lesser-known experience of spouses who have lost loved

ones to breast cancer, a cruel and devastating disease that continues to affect far too many Americans.

Mr. Simon, a resident of Fairfax County, Virginia, and a close family friend, was inspired to create his one man show when his wife, Susan, was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2000. Sam used his family's personal struggle as a source of inspiration to create a one man drama, so that he could educate and mobilize audiences across the country. He first told the story of his spiritual journey at the 2013 Capital Fringe Festival, right here in Washington, DC. Since then he has performed across the Mid-Atlantic and in New York City, where his performance has earned the praise of audiences and critics alike. He was honored with the 2013 Northern Virginia Theater Alliance Award for Best Production of an Original Play, as well as Best Overall Production. The NVT also nominated Sam for Best Actor, and in New York, the Midtown International Theatre Festival nominated Sam for Best Playwright.

Clearly, Mr. Simon's show is an artistic success. But more than that, by sharing his family's personal experience with breast cancer, Sam has given voice to Americans all across the country who have battled this disease: mothers, sisters, spouses, even Members of Congress. In my home state of Virginia, the number of women diagnosed each year now tops 6,200. Advocates like Sam Simon, who are willing to share their experience and strength, give hope to all the families that suffer because of this terrible disease. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to recognize the contribution of Samuel A. Simon, wish him heartfelt congratulations on his achievements, and urge him on to even greater artistic excellence.

RECOGNIZING THE MIAMI BRAIN FAIR

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Brain Awareness Week, which runs from March 10–16 of this year.

Brain Awareness Week serves to educate students and the general public on brain science in Miami, and across the country. During this week, neuroscientists around the world educate individuals through informative activities on the wonders of the human brain. These activities contribute to a public understanding of brain function, scientific research, and also bring awareness to the brain disorders and diseases that affect the lives of the nearly 100 million Americans.

In recognition of Brain Awareness Week, I would like to specifically highlight the Miami Brain Fair. At this year's Miami Brain Fair, students from the area will be able to learn about the brain through hands-on activities and participate in either the Brain Bee or Brain Jeopardy competitions. In previous years, over 3,000 children attended the event. This year's event will include five local universities, and over 70 scientists presenting at 30 different exhibits.

Serving as a member of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations, I understand that programs like the Miami Brain Fair play a major role in inspiring the next generation of scientists. It is imperative that we support important educational activities such as the Miami Brain Fair, so that we can continue to improve the lives of the nearly 100 million Americans who suffer from brain-based diseases and disorders.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Brain Awareness Week and I ask my colleagues to join me in observing the contributions that thousands of dedicated scientists are making in the field of brain science.

MARKING THE THREE YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN SYRIA

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the three-year anniversary of the humanitarian crisis in Syria. This horrific conflict has left over 100,000 people dead, a population roughly the size of Boulder, Colorado. Of those 100,000 casualties of war, 10,000 were children. As I speak, 5.5 million living children are dangerously vulnerable, having "lost lives and limbs, along with virtually every aspect of their childhood," according to the United Nations. And the displacement crisis continues to explode, with some 6.5 million Syrians internally displaced within their own country and 2.4 million Syrians living as refugees in neighboring countries.

Mr. Speaker, it is easy to become desensitized by numbers of this scale. But these are not merely newspaper headlines. These statistics are made up of real people who had real hopes and real dreams, too many of which have been crushed by war and violence. The international community must draw on the full spectrum of diplomatic and development tools to bring swift, lasting stability to Syria and the surrounding countries. Three years is three years too long. The time for peace is now. We cannot wait a moment longer.

HONORING CHANG DUK HUH, OWNER OF JOHNNIE'S CHICAGO RED HOTS

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. PASTOR of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a small business owner from Arizona's Seventh Congressional District who has left his indelible mark on the Phoenix Metropolitan Area through his much-beloved "Johnnie's Chicago Red Hots" restaurant.

Chang Duk Huh, also known as "Johnnie," was born in Seoul, South Korea, on February 25, 1953. The eighth of nine children, Chang

immigrated to the United States in 1976. By 1978 he and his wife, Hae, settled in the greater Phoenix area where the couple raised their two daughters. Chang and Hae purchased "Johnnie's Chicago Red Hots" in August of 1985 from its original owner, Johnnie Dieffenbach.

In business now for nearly three decades, Johnnie's restaurant is best known for its 100 percent Vienna beef, Chicago-style hot dogs—complete with mustard, onions, neon relish, tomatoes, pickles, celery salt and sport peppers—encased in a steamed poppy seed bun and served with a side of homemade French fries. The dogs have been featured in a variety of local news publications over the years, including The Arizona Republic and the Phoenix New Times "Best of" issue. What started out as a tiny three-table restaurant with a handful of bar stools became a Phoenix mainstay that has been frequented by many prominent community figures such as Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, Phoenix Suns Coach Jeff Hornacek, and sports executive Jerry Colangelo.

What really defines the heart and soul of this small mom-and-pop shop, however, has been its loyal patrons through the years. Chang and his wife, Hae, take great pride in their product (Chang has eaten a hot dog for lunch every day for almost 30 years), and the couple has a strong love and appreciation for their customers. They have strived to provide quality food and great service with a smile. They have found great joy in making their customers happy.

I have been one of those happy customers, not just because of the quality food and service, but also because they have allowed me, as their Congressman, to watch them grow their restaurant into a well-respected and thriving eatery. Small businesses are the heart of America's local economies and they are critical for our Nation's strength. Immigrants have especially driven entrepreneurship and job creation throughout the country, and Chang and Hae are a perfect example of this.

After nearly three decades in business, the establishment sadly closed its doors on February 27, 2014. In recognition of their success, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Chang Duk Huh and his wife, Hae.

A TRIBUTE TO NICHOLAS LEE

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Nicholas Choung Lee, a Los Angeles police officer who selflessly served his community.

Nicholas was born on May 8, 1973, in Seoul, Korea. When he was six years old he moved to California with his father Heung Jae Lee, mother Choung Ja Lee, younger brother Danny, and sister Jenny. They settled in Los Angeles' Koreatown, and Nicholas attended high school in Los Angeles and college at California State University Fullerton. He joined the Los Angeles Police Department on August 31, 1998.

After probationary training, Nicholas transferred first to the Van Nuys Division, and later to the Hollywood Division, where he was assigned to a patrol car. He worked as both a Field Training Officer and Vice Officer in Wilshire, before returning to patrol in the Hollywood Division in 2008. In his 16 years as a police officer, Nicholas received more than 70 commendations. He was recently among the officers featured in a birthday video for a 7-year-old-boy with leukemia, which was just one of the many ways Nicholas constantly demonstrated his selfless desire to help others.

As much as he contributed to Los Angeles as a police officer, everyone who knew him would agree that his family always came first. Nicholas married Cathy Kim in 2001, and they went on to have two daughters, Jalen and Kendall. He could frequently be seen riding a scooter alongside the two girls on their way to school. When the family would have barbecues, Nicholas was always the person serving his family and friends. His wife described him as a great provider and loving husband and father.

Tragically, and much too soon, Nicholas passed away on March 6, 2014, when a truck hit his patrol car in Beverly Hills. He is survived by his wife Cathy, and daughters Jalen and Kendall.

We depend upon the bravery and dedication of police officers every moment of every day, and we often forget the dangers and challenges they face on our behalf. I ask all members to join me in expressing our condolences to the Lee Family and the Los Angeles Police Department and pledge to remember the courage and commitment of Officer Nicholas Lee, a man who cared deeply about his family and the Los Angeles community.

HONORING BRAD CUMMING

HON. E. SCOTT RIGELL

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. RIGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to honor Mr. Brad Cumming, a resident of Virginia Beach, Virginia, on the occasion of his retirement from the U.S. Navy's Program Executive Office for Aircraft Carriers after more than 32 years of dedicated service to the federal government.

Mr. Cumming has a long history of service to the aircraft carrier community and has emerged as one of the leaders in lifecycle engineering. His keen leadership, innovation, dedicated teamwork, and proven technical and programmatic expertise were critical to his success in ensuring that *Nimitz* Class Aircraft Carriers are ready to provide 50 years of service defending our national interests.

Mr. Cumming's current duties as the Deputy Program Manager's Representative for the Carrier Planning Activity (CPA), located at Norfolk Naval Shipyard, include oversight of the overall planning, direction and timely execution of CPA's mission to provide centralized aircraft carrier life cycle management and maintenance engineering. Prior to his joining the PEO Carriers Team, Mr. Cumming spent

over 26 years with the Engineering Division at Norfolk Naval Shipyard where he progressed from a design engineer for electronics countermeasures to eventually becoming the Planning Yard Division Head.

His post retirement plans include more traveling, spending time with family, gardening and continuing to work with youth through the Young Life Ministry. Mr. Cumming currently lives with his wife Laurie in Virginia Beach.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join with me today to honor Mr. Cumming. His long and dedicated service to the United States of America is an inspiration to all of us. It is with great pride that I congratulate Mr. Cumming on his retirement and wish him the best of luck in the future.

HONORING THE LIFE OF COACH DON SHOWS

HON. VANCE M. McALLISTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. McALLISTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Coach Don Shows, who passed away on Monday, March 3, 2014 at the age of 75.

I am proud to recognize the life of such an accomplished and admirable man, worthy of high recognition. Coach Shows had the pleasure of coaching at four high schools in Louisiana, being named head coach of the West Monroe Rebels in 1989. No stranger to success, Coach Shows led his team to eight state championships during his tenure and was inducted into the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame in 2011.

Amongst his list of impressive achievements, perhaps the most notable is the life he led both on and off the field, impacting the lives of not only the players he coached, but the student body as well. Many students and players credit Coach Shows for inspiring their own achievements and success in life.

As we honor his life and legacy today, let us always remember that with dedication, hard work and sacrifice, we can achieve anything. I thank Coach Shows for displaying this valuable lesson and for the pride he has brought to the Fifth District of Louisiana. He was a tremendous leader and example to all who had the honor of knowing him and his example and leadership will remain in our hearts forever.

JILLIAN BLUE-NORTON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jillian Blue-Norton for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jillian Blue-Norton is an 8th grader at Moore Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jillian Blue-Norton is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jillian Blue-Norton for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

A RECORD OF SERVICE

HON. SCOTT H. PETERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Todd Gloria on his excellent service as San Diego's Interim Mayor.

When Todd stepped in as Interim Mayor, San Diegans needed a leader more than ever. Even during his short tenure, Todd was able to reenergize San Diego's government. He continued his work from his position on the City Council, building the manufacturing and technology sectors, creating more jobs for San Diegans. He also continued developing an innovative solution for San Diego's backlog of infrastructure projects. A true public servant, he has worked diligently at forward-thinking strategies to maintain San Diego as one of America's finest cities.

In addition to his service as Interim Mayor, Todd has served as City Council President since 2013. We share many priorities: ensuring the livelihood of the middle class, protecting our environment in ways that actually address climate change, and keeping infrastructure in San Diego up-to-date and functional. I admire Todd for his commitment to practical solutions and for his ability to get things done.

It came as no surprise in 2013 when he was recognized by the Aspen Institute as one of the nation's most promising young political leaders, a fellowship bestowed on him because of his commitment to sensible and bipartisan governance. I eagerly look forward to Todd's continuing service leading the City Council, and expect him to continue doing great things for San Diego.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Todd Gloria for his hard work for the City of San Diego. I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Todd for his excellent service as San Diego Interim Mayor.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 64 (On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended H.R. 1123) I was unavoidably

detained and did not cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted, "yea."

SUPPORT FOR H.R. 938 AS
AMENDED

HON. MIKE KELLY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 938, the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014.

At a time of regional turmoil and uncertainty, as Iran continues its relentless drive for a nuclear weapons capability, it is absolutely crucial that we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Israel, our close friend and ally.

H.R. 938 strengthens this key alliance by designating Israel as a "major strategic partner" of the United States. The U.S.-Israel relationship is truly multifaceted and thus this bill expands our cooperation in military and homeland security areas as well as in the areas of trade, energy, water, and agriculture.

Passing this bill will give continued assurance to our ally Israel that the United States is no fair weather friend but is truly a friend for all seasons.

I urge support for H.R. 938.

REGARDING H.R. 938

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a cosponsor of H.R. 938, the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act. I want to thank Representatives ROS-LEHTINEN and DEUTCH for their work on this important and broadly bipartisan bill.

H.R. 938 will help strengthen the strategic partnership the U.S. shares with Israel in addition to helping Israel better meet the new security challenges it faces in the region. By enhancing cooperation between the U.S. and Israel in such areas as intelligence, trade and energy, H.R. 938 continues our commitment to helping Israel maintain its qualitative military edge while creating opportunities for U.S. companies and educational institutions to benefit from the deepening academic and commercial ties that will arise as a result of the bill.

H.R. 938 also addresses homeland security priorities shared by our two countries by encouraging our cooperation against cyber threats and by advocating for the participation of Israel in the Visa Waiver Program—when it has fully met the requirements of membership. Permitting Israel to join the Visa Waiver Program should help reduce paperwork and make travel easier for citizens of both our countries. Membership in the program carries with it the obligation of full reciprocity. To that end, as the process moves forward, the State Department must work with Israel to ensure that all Americans are treated fairly in the program

without any discrimination based on ethnicity, religion or race.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ROBERT
HARPER

HON. VANCE M. McALLISTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. McALLISTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Robert Harper, who passed away on Tuesday, March 4, 2014, at the age of 88 at his home in West Monroe, LA.

Mr. Harper was born on August 9, 1925, in Center, TX. He was an Army Veteran and a World War II Prisoner of War. It is with great respect that I commend the service of this brave man who joined hands with countless others to fight for our great nation. We owe a debt of gratitude to all POWs and MIAs for weathering agonizing uncertainty during such trying times. We, and countless people around the world, are the beneficiaries of their courage, vigilance and bravery.

In addition to his selfless service to our country, Mr. Harper was a faithful servant to Mt. Olive Baptist Church and his family. A devoted husband, father and grandfather, he will be dearly missed by his wife, Ellen, his children, grandchildren, friends, and community. It is my hope that today's generation of young men and women will follow the example of patriotism and dedication to freedom set by Mr. Harper.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring the life of Robert Harper. He was a leader, parent, husband, friend, and example to all of us. Countless lives have been changed for the better by his brave efforts, and he will remain in our hearts forever.

JEREMY NELSON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jeremy Nelson for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jeremy Nelson is an 8th grader at Drake Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jeremy Nelson is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Jeremy Nelson for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 13, 2014 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's record.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 25

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

10 a.m.

Committee on Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine Syria after Geneva, focusing on the next steps for United States policy.

SD-419

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To receive a closed briefing on challenges to maintaining United States military technology superiority.

SVC-217

MARCH 26

10 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine reauthorization of the "Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act".

SD-226

Committee on Veterans' Affairs

To hold a joint hearing with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of The American Legion.

SD-G50

2:15 p.m.

Special Committee on Aging

To hold hearings to examine preventing Medicare fraud, focusing on the best way to protect seniors and taxpayers.

SD-562

2:30 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support

To hold hearings to examine the current readiness of United States forces in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

Committee on Armed Services
Subcommittee on Strategic Forces

To hold hearings to examine strategic forces programs of the National Nuclear Security Administration and the Office of Environmental Management of the Department of Energy in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-222

Committee on Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the President's proposed budget request for fiscal year 2015 for Tribal Programs.

SD-628

MARCH 27

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Navy in review of the Defense Authorization Re-

quest for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

APRIL 1

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine U.S. European Command and U.S. Transportation Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

2:15 p.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

To hold hearings to examine proliferation prevention programs at the Department of Energy and at the Department of Defense in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.

SR-222

APRIL 2

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support

To hold hearings to examine military construction, environmental, energy,

and base closure programs in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

10 a.m.

Committee on the Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the Comcast-Time Warner Cable merger and the impact on consumers.

SD-226

APRIL 3

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-G50

APRIL 10

9:30 a.m.

Committee on Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine the posture of the Department of the Air Force in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2015 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SD-106

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Thursday, March 13, 2014

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 13, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Madam Speaker, the young lady in the white dress in this picture is a role model for all young people. Her whole family are role models. They are the family you want living on your street.

They always shovel and salt their driveway. Their house is always spotlessly clean, and all of the children are on the honor roll. They make me proud to live in Chicago.

Liz and her three older siblings are all U.S. citizens. When Republicans say to me that President Obama is not enforcing the immigration laws, I think of Liz's face.

When the President says there is nothing more he can do to keep immigrant families together, I think of her face, too. When citizens say to me that it really doesn't matter whether they vote or not, I want them to think of Liz.

Liz has a father who is facing deportation. He has lived in the United States for more than 20 years and raised a beautiful, healthy, upstanding American family.

But LUIS—I hear my Republican colleagues say to me—all of this deportation nonsense is in your head. The administration is fudging the numbers to make it look like they are enforcing the law, the Republicans say.

But hundreds of thousands of American families are being split up. Over a 2-year period, according to Applied Research Center, 200,000 parents of American citizens, like Liz's parents, were deported.

And I hear my colleagues in the Judiciary Committee talk about Latinos—especially immigrant Latinos—that they are all criminals and drug cartel kingpins; and, therefore, we have to arrange our entire immigration system as if they are all violent felons.

But what about Liz and her family? Liz is not a drug kingpin in her fourth grade class. Her parents and her siblings are not meth heads and meth chemists, but the random deportation wheel landed on them; and according to Republicans, they are willing to sue the President in Federal court if he takes action to spare this father of four American citizen children from deportation.

But LUIS—I hear my Democratic colleagues say—for several years, President Obama has instituted programs at Homeland Security to help families, removing noncriminals and parents and DREAMers from the deportation queue.

And, indeed, the President and Homeland Security constantly talk about how many gangbangers and hardened criminals they are removing from the country; but that doesn't change the reality for Liz or her family. That doesn't change the fear that families, like Liz's, face every day.

People who have lived here peacefully and raised a proud American family are just a broken taillight or an unlucky encounter away from losing everything, losing their children.

And what about going out and coming back in “the right way,” as the Republicans always suggest? Despite 20 years in the U.S., despite four U.S. citizen children in his family who are willing to petition for their dad, Congress, two decades ago, made it impossible for this family to ever live together in the U.S. legally, unless we change the law again.

But Republicans refuse to allow a vote on immigration reform when they know a majority of Members of the House of Representatives would vote to allow families, like Liz's, to continue living together and prosper.

Sorry, Liz. Politics is more important than an American family or two or 200 American families or even 200,000; and the President has said he cannot do more to alleviate the fear that American kids, like Liz, face.

The political price of helping Americans, like Liz, is too high. It is shameful that the Speaker of the House and the President of the United States are putting politics and election calculations ahead of Liz's family.

To Liz, the solution is clear. If you will not act, she will. She said recently:

No child should ever have to be separated from their parents. When I grow up, I want to be a U.S. Senator because I want to be in a position to help people when they need it and pass laws that are good for people.

I wish my colleagues felt the same way this young lady, Liz, feels. I don't know if she will ever be a U.S. Senator when she is eligible to run in 20 or 30 years, but I will tell you one thing I am pretty sure of: in less than 10 years, she will be old enough to vote, and her older siblings, even sooner than that.

Madam Speaker, do you think she will remember which party prevented reform or threatened to sue the President if he spared her dad from deportation?

Take a look at the picture. Republicans, they are hoping the dad gets deported and the mom never becomes a citizen; but the poor children are Americans already and will someday have a vote and, from the looks of it, will be voting for decades to come. I suggest, Madam Speaker, you do the math.

JOBS BILLS STYMIED IN THE SENATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MARINO. Madam Speaker, earlier this week, our friends on the other side of the Capitol, the Democrats, burned the midnight oil in a strange effort to call attention to global warming. Unfortunately, for some of our friends in the Senate, hot air from the Chamber will not bring down the temperature in our atmosphere.

Instead of stoking the rhetorical flames through hours of meaningless grandstanding, I hope the Democrat Senate will use some of its time to hotline the critical job-creating bills that have been put on ice on HARRY REID's desk.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Madam Speaker, our constituents don't want to be left out in the cold. We need action today on bills to create jobs.

Madam Speaker, I hope Members of this body will join me and hold the Democrat Senate's feet to the fire by calling on them to pass bills that will refire America's economic engine.

TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, nearly 4 years ago, I stood in this Chamber and talked about a deficit that was chipping away at our government. No, it wasn't the fiscal deficit, though that certainly is weighing us down; rather I warned of the deficit of trust that has caused the American people to lose faith in government and, quite simply, give up on Washington.

Back then, stories of scandals and ethics violations led nightly newscasts, and trust in government was at an all-time low of just 19 percent. Now, 4 years later, trust in government is still at 19 percent, though Congress' rating has dropped even lower, to 9 percent in recent polls. I regret to say that little has changed, including our efforts to rebuild that trust.

If Illinois politics has taught me anything, it is very hard to lead without that trust, and the only way to earn it back is to increase transparency and openness throughout our government. As Justice Brandeis said, Sunlight is the best of disinfectants.

That is why I am introducing the Transparency in Government Act, which will shine a light on every branch of the Federal Government, strengthening our democracy, and promoting an efficient, effective, and open government because the fact is that the mission of government matters.

What we do here in this Chamber matters, so much so that it is written in the very bedrock of American Government. We have been sent here to form a more perfect union, to promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, but how we execute this mission matters.

The Transparency in Government Act utilizes 21st century technology to expand access to information, strengthen oversight of Federal spending, increase disclosures from both lawmakers and lobbyists, and improve judicial transparency.

The TGA will bring unprecedented accountability to the Federal Government and empower everyday citizens to be the government's best watchdog.

American taxpayers have a right to know how their hard-earned dollars are being spent, so TGA requires Members of Congress to post their official ex-

penditures online, allowing every constituent to scrutinize their Representative's office budgets and spending reports.

It also requires Members to be up front about their personal finances, providing greater details about foreign travel and gifts; and when it comes to knowing who is working to influence the legislative process, the TGA establishes new definitions for lobbyists and stricter rules governing how and with whom they meet.

This bill also ensures Americans have access to the same expert nonpartisan information that shapes the policy decisions we make every day. It makes taxpayer-funded reports available for free to the public and requires all committees to make public hearing schedules, witness testimony, and even transcripts and recordings available online.

In the executive branch, the TGA requires clear and prominent disclosure when communications and advertising are sponsored using Federal funds; and it improves access to visitor logs for the White House and agency heads, so we know who is meeting with our Nation's highest leaders.

It strengthens the Freedom of Information Act, requiring agencies to put all completed FOIA requests online in a format that is searchable, sortable, and downloadable, and ensures that all agencies utilize the Web site FOIAonline to log, track, and publish requests.

Finally, the TGA calls for the judiciary branch to meet similar financial disclosure requirements that are already applied to the executive and legislative branches and make those disclosure statements publicly available online for anyone to review.

For the first time, this bill inscribes into law the public's right to hear oral arguments in the Supreme Court as they are delivered; and in an effort to use 21st century technologies, this legislation calls for a study on using live-stream video to air Supreme Court proceedings.

These are just a few of the bill's many reforms that will pull our government out of the past and modernize public access to information. The Transparency in Government Act has ambitious goals, but these reforms are no less than what our constituents expect and deserve.

It has been 4 years since I first introduced this bill, and we can't waste another minute allowing the status quo to erode Americans' faith in government. The time to act is now.

Let's usher in a new era of open government, win back the people's trust, and prove to our constituents that we are worthy of the responsibility we have been entrusted with.

PRESIDENT OBAMA IS DIFFERENT THAN SENATOR OBAMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. OLSON. Madam Speaker, 2014 started out the exact way President Obama wanted. Over \$2 trillion of more debt piled upon our kids and grandkids. President Obama is very different than Senator Obama. These are the Senator's words on the Senate floor March 16, 2006:

The fact that we are here today to debate raising America's debt limit is a sign of leadership failure. It is a sign that the U.S. Government can't pay its own bills. It is a sign that we now depend on ongoing financial assistance from foreign countries to finance our government's reckless fiscal policies.

Over the past 5 years, our Federal debt has increased by \$3.5 trillion to \$8.6 trillion. That is trillion with a t. That is money that we have borrowed from the Social Security trust fund, borrowed from China and Japan, borrowed from American taxpayers.

Numbers that large are sometimes hard to understand. Some people may wonder why they matter. Here is why: This year, the Federal Government will spend \$220 billion on interest.

□ 1015

Senator Obama later explained:

That is more money to pay interest on our debt this year than we will spend on education, homeland security, transportation, and veterans' benefits combined.

After talking about Hurricane Katrina, Senator Obama shifted to the debt tax:

And the cost of our debt is one of the fastest growing expenses in the Federal budget. This rising debt is a hidden domestic enemy, robbing our cities and States of critical investments in infrastructure like bridges, ports, and levees; robbing our families and our children of critical investments in education and health care reform; robbing our seniors of the retirement and health security they have counted on.

Every dollar we pay in interest is a dollar that is not going to investment in America's priorities. Instead, interest payments are a significant tax on all Americans—a debt tax that Washington doesn't want to talk about.

Senator Obama finally brought up our debt to unfriendly nations:

Now, there is nothing wrong with borrowing from foreign countries. But we must remember that the more we depend on foreign nations to lend us money, the more our economic security is tied to the whims of foreign leaders whose interests might not be aligned with ours.

Increasing America's debt weakens us domestically and internationally. Leadership means that "the buck stops here." Instead, Washington is shifting the burden of bad choices today onto the backs of our children and grandchildren. America has a debt problem and a failure of leadership. Americans deserve better.

I therefore intend to oppose the effort to increase America's debt limit.

Today, America's debt is over \$18 trillion—with a t. Clearly, President Obama has forgotten Senator Obama's words. But the American people remember, and on their behalf, I ask

President Obama to decrease our debt by working with Congress to end the debt tax by growing our economy and shipping American natural gas to friendly countries like Ukraine, like India, like Japan, and like South Korea.

WELCOMING ENDA KENNY TO CAPITOL HILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MESSER). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, as the world prepares to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and this afternoon we welcome the Irish Prime Minister of the Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, here to the Capitol, I want to pause for a moment to recognize the anniversary of a pivotal event in the peace process in the north of Ireland.

Twenty years ago, against the advice of his own State Department, President Bill Clinton granted a visa to the leader of Sinn Féin and its president, Gerry Adams, to visit the United States. It was at the time an unpopular decision, but history has proven it to be a catalyst for the peace process which, again, has proved to be most durable. It helped to bring an end to the longest standing political dispute in the history of the Western World. Simply put, Bill Clinton took an extraordinary risk that has paid huge dividends.

I was one of a handful of Members of Congress at the time who urged President Clinton to approve the visa. When Gerry Adams arrived in the United States after stopping in Boston, he made his way to my hometown of Springfield, Massachusetts, and addressed a core group of thousands at the John Boyle O'Reilly Club, and he thanked them for their support.

During his campaign for President, we had urged then-candidate Clinton to make peace in the island of Ireland a top foreign policy priority if he was to be elected. After his inauguration, to our great and pleasant surprise, he sent his National Security Adviser at the time, Tony Lake, to Capitol Hill to tell us that they were to elevate Ireland to the same category of priority as the Middle East.

A year later, on January 31 of 1994, the visa was issued to Gerry Adams, and the American dimension to the Irish peace process was born. Fourteen years later, the Good Friday Agreement was signed, and a society in the north of Ireland was transformed overnight.

On the night that Mr. Clinton offered that visa—it was one of the more memorable events in my career—I defended the Clinton administration that night on the BBC's Newsnight Hour, which would be the equivalent of Nightline here in America. I debated the leader of the UUP, Ken Maginnis.

Later today, I am hosting a briefing with Gerry Adams and the Congressional Friends of Ireland, and I urge our friends to visit with him if they can, and later on to meet the Irish Prime Minister at 3:30 this afternoon.

When we contrast where America and Ireland were in this special relationship that dates back three centuries, it is important to recall what it looked like in the north of Ireland 30 years ago. There were 30,000 British soldiers in an area the size of the State of Connecticut. There was a police force that held the position that nationalists need not apply—the Royal Ulster Constabulary. The British soldiers are gone and the Royal Ulster Constabulary are gone today. The watchtowers that monitored the activities largely of the nationalist community have been taken down, and you can cross from Derry to Donegal without knowing that you have moved from the north of Ireland to the Republic of Ireland or through Newry and County Down, as well, without being stopped, searched, and, in some instances, being frisked by British soldiers.

America's role in bringing about this success story provides an argument for the reach and the role of the United States in addressing some of the most difficult issues in the world. Ireland represented the longest standing political dispute in the history of the Western World, and America's role was pivotal to helping make that change. That model has become, today, something that could be emulated worldwide, and, in fact, the people who participated travel the world to talk about how they found common ground and a path forward.

There is a representative democracy in Belfast today in what is known as Stormont, where parties sit some days in disagreement and other days in agreement, but always with the idea that they are in charge of their own destiny and their own future. That is the genius of representative democracy.

I call attention to this issue today because of many of the stubborn problems that plague the world, with the understanding that men and women of good will in the crucible of politics can indeed chart a path forward, and not to miss the fact that it was still the risk-taking of the Clinton administration that took up the notion that the nationalist voice on the island of Ireland and in the north of Ireland and six small counties should be heard, and today the result is all around us.

So as the political parties visit on the eve of St. Patrick's Day all across the island of Ireland, we can satisfy ourselves with this achievement: the notion, once again, that good will and understanding the other side's arguments can, in fact, be heralded in the sense of achievement, but also, again, in the Stormont government that has been duly elected.

So, today, we in America take great satisfaction as to the role our men and women played in bringing about this success story and also to recognize something on a personal basis. I and many others here were allowed to participate in all of these "it can never happen" moments. Thanks, America, for help, once again, in leading the way.

CONCERNS OF INADEQUATE CBP STAFFING AT MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a great sense of urgency over the critical need to have more Customs and Border Protection officers at Miami International Airport, known as MIA. MIA, which I humbly represent, is not only the busiest airport in the State of Florida, but it is also the second largest international gateway in the Nation. In fact, international passenger traffic at MIA has steadily grown over the last few years far more than any other U.S. international gateway. However, the insufficient Customs and Border Protection officers, known as CBP, staffing levels at MIA pose a threat to this welcome growth of travel and tourism into our country.

Passengers are experiencing long wait times for immigration and customs processing. For example, just a few days ago, last Wednesday, the 7,681 passengers who arrived at the Federal Inspection Service at MIA's North Terminal were held in line for more than 2 hours. Out of the 72 lanes available to assist passengers, only 20 were open. And there is only one simple explanation for this problem. CBP staffing does not meet the numbers needed for the safe and efficient processing of passengers and cargo going through our airport.

As time passes by, this endemic problem has only proven to deteriorate. The Miami-Dade congressional delegation and MIA officials have long been focused on how to fix this problem while ensuring a safe and seamless travel experience for our local residents and our many, many visitors.

Earlier this week, I wrote a letter to Secretary Johnson of the Department of Homeland Security asking for his immediate action on alleviating the ongoing shortage of CBP officers, a deficiency that sets back efforts to make Florida competitive; and it hurts our travel and tourism, two vital engines to our Nation's economy.

The entire Miami-Dade congressional delegation, including our Senators, is united on this bipartisan, bicameral effort.

With a strategic location to handle connections between the Americas and

Europe, MIA serves as the doorstep to the United States. In 2013, a record 40 million passengers passed through MIA's doors as they made their way to their final destinations. These people come to our port of entry either to visit south Florida or to make connections to other national and international destinations. We need to welcome them with the world-class airport that MIA can be and not with long lines, hassles, and congestion.

Under the leadership of Dr. Emilio Gonzalez, the director of the Miami-Dade Aviation Department, MIA has taken a number of steps to ease the lack of CBP officers. How have they done this? Installing automated passport control self-serve kiosks; also, increasing the Miami-Dade Aviation Department staffing, participating in a reimbursable fee agreement pilot program approved by Congress which allows for needed overtime, and by closing certain gateways in order to concentrate CBP officers in appropriate areas.

However, despite MIA's innovative approach, CBP's insufficient staffing levels continue to pose serious challenges to the airport's daily operations. With the growing number of passengers arriving or transitioning through MIA and with the World Cup in Brazil approaching, MIA will have an even busier summer. We need to be prepared. And that is why we ask for Secretary Johnson's assistance in providing much-needed CBP staffing and to remember that MIA's success is our Nation's success.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot stress enough the pressing need for Federal staffing at MIA, which will only allow for a further streamlining of long lines and will also help in the reduction of wait times for visitors and for residents, alike.

END HUNGER NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, this week, as part of my End Hunger Now series, I want to focus on one of the most important and successful Federal antihunger and nutrition programs, the WIC program. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, commonly known as WIC is a fantastic program that is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. It truly is an amazing program, one that has been a tremendous success for 40 years.

WIC is a short-term intervention program designed to influence nutrition and health behaviors in a targeted high-risk population. What does that mean? Well, Mr. Speaker, it means that it provides nutritious food and nutrition education, among other services, to pregnant women, infants, and young children.

□ 1030

Specifically, WIC provides quality nutrition education and services, breast-feeding promotion and education, a monthly food prescription, and access to maternal, prenatal, and pediatric health care services.

Not only has WIC been around for 40 years, it has served millions of women and children over that time. For example, more than 10,000 clinics served 8.7 million women and children each month in 2013. That figure includes 853,000 pregnant women, 595,000 breast-feeding women, 598,000 postpartum, 2 million infants, and 4.6 million children. Those are monthly figures, Mr. Speaker.

Let's be clear: this is an important antipoverty program. It helps poor pregnant women, postpartum mothers, and their children receive both nutritious food and nutrition education. That's right, this program serves poor people—and does so successfully.

To qualify for WIC, participants' income level must be at or below 185 percent of the poverty level or they must be on Medicaid. That is about \$36,000 a year for a family of three. We are not talking about wealthy people here, Mr. Speaker. In fact, nearly three-fourths of all WIC participants live in families with incomes below the Federal poverty level. That means most families of three are making less than \$36,000. In fact, according to the latest data available, the average income of a participant was \$16,842 a year.

The services WIC provides are critically important, and they are based on sound science. For example, we know how important it is for women to breast-feed their children. Breast milk contains important nutrients infants need to grow and to develop. We know that breast-fed infants tend to be healthier because they receive antibodies from the breast milk, antibodies that protect these young kids against infection. Did you know that breast-feeding has also been proven to save money? That's right. If 90 percent of U.S. mothers exclusively breast-fed their infants for 6 months, the U.S. would save \$13 billion annually in medical expenses and prevent 900 deaths a year.

Another important part of WIC that is based on science is the food package that is made available to each client. They are designed specifically for each person, whether you are a pregnant mother, nursing mother, or a child. The foods available are approved by the scientists and the researchers at the Institute of Medicine. That's right, not Members of Congress or non-science-based administrators in a Federal agency that approve or deny certain foods from the WIC package. We know that proper nutrition can make people healthier, reduce instances of illness and disease, and prevent or reduce hospital visits and stays. I guess my moth-

er was right when she said, An apple a day keeps the doctor away.

That is why it is so maddening and so disappointing when special interests try to change the WIC food package just so they can see a little bit more money for their product. Proper nutrition can save money—something I think should be popular in this Congress—and ignoring science because special interests want to make a quick buck is just wrong.

That is why I am so proud of this program. A few years ago, there was an attempt in the House of Representatives to underfund WIC—to deny these important services to poor women and their children. The backlash was fierce. That funding was quickly restored, and we haven't seen an attempt to cut WIC since. I only wish that were true for other Federal antihunger programs.

You see, Mr. Speaker, this program is what is best about America. Ironically, it was a program that was born in the Nixon administration. In fact, it came from the first and only White House conference on hunger, something I wish this President, President Obama, would convene before his term is over.

For 40 years WIC has ensured that poor women and their children have access to nutritious food and nutrition education. It is just that simple. These women and children have a lifeline to making their lives healthier and better. It is safe to say that the millions of people served by WIC would be worse if it weren't for this program.

I am proud of this program. I am proud of the people who work at WIC clinics, and the administrators, and those who administer the program in every State. I am proud of the people who advocate and fight for this program. I look forward to the day when we don't need WIC because we have eradicated poverty once and for all. Until that day comes, I am proud that we have WIC to help make the lives of the women and children they serve just a little bit better.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH RATE FIX

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. DUFFY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUFFY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to discuss the issue of Medicare and Medicare reimbursement payments to doctors who provide health care for our seniors.

Currently, the reimbursement formula for our doctors who provide these services is one that has become so low that many doctors in America aren't providing services and care to our seniors.

It brings me to a bill that is coming up tomorrow in the House. It is the doc fix. It is a fix to the SGR. What that means is, there is on the horizon a 24 percent cut coming to Medicare reimbursements for our doctors who provide care for our seniors.

If that cut goes into effect, it is going to have a devastating impact on the care that our seniors can receive. So tomorrow we are going to have a fix on the floor that takes away the threat of the 24 percent cut, and we pay for it. What we do is we bring certainty to the doctors who provide this care for our seniors and stability to the payment system.

Now, this isn't the first time this issue has been brought up. This has been an ongoing problem, and so today, on throwback Thursday, we are going to take a trip down memory lane. Four years ago, during the ObamaCare debate, House Republicans brought up this very issue and said: Listen, let's not hold our seniors hostage. Let's actually come forward together and have a doc fix that is paid for to make sure our seniors don't get cut in regard to reimbursements. My colleagues across the aisle said "no" to this fix that was paid for, and in the end we have had to have short-term fixes that I think threaten the care for our seniors.

I hope all my colleagues tomorrow will stand with us to have a long-term fix to this program, to make sure our seniors aren't held vulnerable to potential inaction by Congress.

I also want to talk about what happened in regard to our seniors in the ObamaCare debate. Instead of fixing payment in Medicare to our doctors for our seniors, instead of shoring up a plan that helps our seniors, instead of doing that, what my friends across the aisle did in ObamaCare is they looked for a pay-for, and they saw a pot of money in Medicare, and they took almost a trillion dollars out of Medicare to use for ObamaCare.

News flash: the CBO, and the President, everybody acknowledges that Medicare is on a pathway to going broke. Twelve years from now it runs out of money. So instead of shoring up the fund, making sure that we meet the promise to our seniors, my friends across the aisle took almost a trillion dollars out of it, making it more vulnerable.

Then, a program that works well, especially for my seniors back in Wisconsin, Medicare Advantage—taking money out of Medicare Advantage, a program that actually works, giving some choice and control to our seniors. I think our seniors deserve better than this. The war on the seniors should stop, and is going to stop hopefully tomorrow with a bipartisan effort that does what we should have done in the ObamaCare debate but fixes payments to doctors so they can continue to provide lifesaving health care to our seniors.

Let's stand together as a House. Let's stand with our seniors. Let's get this done tomorrow.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this morning we are now in the midst of Women's History Month. I want to associate myself with the women's history Special Order that was on the floor last evening. I look forward through the rest of the month of March to continue or to acknowledge women from my own congressional district.

This morning, however, I wish to comment on a woman who has loomed large in our political eyes, and I thought out of fairness to give the record of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton a fair shot. The reason I chose to do that, Mr. Speaker, is over the weekend, as many occurrences occur, political meetings abound in this Nation, and the Conservative Political Action Conference met.

Interestingly enough in the reporting, the newspaper noted that Hillary Rodham Clinton had a presence at the Nation's largest gathering of conservative activists. Interestingly enough, former Secretary Clinton was not there, obviously not invited. I think it is important to take note of some of the comments that were made that really require some kind of addressing.

One comment was that women should not be used. Another came from the former Speaker and charged that if Secretary Clinton decided to run for President, it would be like a prison guard for the past. Words I think that may be political rhetoric but really do a great disservice to a woman with a very strong historical record.

Early in her life, former Secretary Clinton met Dr. Martin Luther King, born in Chicago to parents whose political beliefs, or part of their political beliefs, were different from Secretary Clinton's today. She was an active young woman and through her church had the opportunity to meet Dr. Martin Luther King. You can imagine her thoughts a few years later when Dr. King was assassinated. It may have had a major impact on her belief in serving her country and helping America.

Hillary Clinton is a graduate of Wellesley College and Yale Law School. She worked on migrant worker issues for Walter Mondale's staff. Also, she was on the law editorial board—I would suggest, at that time, certainly one of the pioneering women at Yale Law School.

Of course many of us know that she worked for the Children's Legal Defense Fund and really honed her skills of concern about making children our number one priority. I would offer to say that when I came to the United States Congress, former Secretary Clinton was First Lady. At that time I organized and founded the Congressional Children's Caucus. During the 1990s it was very clear that the First

Lady at that time was very concerned still with children's issues and held one of the first conferences on 0 to 3 months, and how a baby could learn and how we should be nurturing that infant. It was a very major conference to focus our legislative agenda on that issue. It was during that time that Marian Wright Edelman continued to work with the former Secretary of State on the issues of dealing with the whole comprehensive child, what a child needs from 0 on to adulthood. Even today I would argue that we do not have a children's agenda.

I will soon be offering a briefing promoting a children's budget that came out of the efforts and collaboration with the former Secretary of State during her tenure in the White House as First Lady. As First Lady she traveled to emphasize the importance of freedom for women around the world. She was not yet Secretary. One of the first acts that we remember, among the acts that we remember, is her going to China and declaring that women's rights are human rights.

I would venture to say that the words at the CPAC convention do not in any way characterize the leadership of Hillary Rodham Clinton. Certainly she has gone on to many other successes, which include her leadership as Secretary of State, the constant work of freeing women, women's rights. I would say, Mr. Speaker, that she is a fine example of a mother, a wife, a leading national figure, a historic figure who represents Women's History Month.

USA CAN'T POLICE THE WORLD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, President Kennedy, in a 1961 speech at the University of Washington, said:

We must face the fact that the United States is neither omnipotent or omniscient—that we are only 6 percent of the world's population—that we cannot impose our will upon the other 94 percent of mankind—that we cannot right every wrong or reverse each adversity—and that therefore there cannot be an American solution to every world problem.

□ 1045

The major difference now than when he spoke in 1961 is that we are only 4 percent of the world's population, and we are over \$17 trillion in debt. President Kennedy was right then, and we should carefully listen to his words today.

Many people are trying to prove that they are great world statesmen and are supporting policies that will commit us to spend billions we do not have on Ukraine. We don't need to be sending billions to Ukraine, and we especially should not escalate this situation into some type of military confrontation.

We should have trade and tourism and cultural and educational exchanges with other countries and help, to a limited extent, during humanitarian crisis; but we cannot be the policemen of the world.

The Ukrainians are going to have to solve most of their problems on their own, and we need to start taking better care of our own country and our own people. In fact, Mr. Speaker, we are long past the time when we need to start putting our own people first and stop trying to run the whole world, creating a lot of resentment toward the U.S. in the process.

REMEMBERING OAKLAND OFFICERS MURDERED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, for the Bay Area law enforcement community, few days are sadder and more tragically memorable than Saturday, March 21, 2009.

It is a day that everyone in the community will always recall where they were when they heard the news. March 21 will always be remembered as the day that four brave police officers of the Oakland Police Department were killed in the line of duty, in service to the people they swore an oath to protect.

I rise to recognize four men who died 5 years ago the same way they lived—as heroes. I rise to recognize Sergeant Mark Dunakin, Sergeant Ervin “Erv” Romans, Sergeant Daniel Sakai, and Officer John Hege. We lost these officers on the same day at the hands of the same murderer, but we make sure today that they were not taken in vain and that this killer did not extinguish their memories.

Sergeant Mark Dunakin was devoted to the East Bay. Raised in Pleasanton, he graduated from Chabot College in Hayward and served the Oakland Police Department for 18 years. He worked in the patrol division, the homicide unit, and the traffic operations section.

He loved driving through the streets of Oakland on his Harley-Davidson, making sure the East Bay was safe. He was even a part of the Oakland Police Department’s motorcycle drill team, which went all over the State of California.

Not only was Sergeant Dunakin a terrific officer, he was a loving husband to his wife Angela, who also served as a Dublin police officer for the Alameda County Sheriff’s Office. He was a father and a friend. He also was an avid sports fan, rooting for his Ohio State Buckeyes and Pittsburgh Steelers.

Officer John Hege had been with the Oakland Police Department for 10 years. Before joining the force, he

taught at Tennyson High School in Hayward. Even after he became a police officer, he continued to serve his community by working with kids as a high school baseball umpire.

John always wanted to work as a motorcycle officer. A few months before his tragic murder, he reached that goal.

A great neighbor and friend, John was willing to help someone in need. This continued even in death, for as an organ donor, his organs were used to save the lives of four other people.

Sergeant Ervin Romans’ life was full of service. For 9 years, he served our country and kept us safe as a distinguished member of the United States Marines.

Erv continued his service with the Oakland Police Department, a dream job for him, for 13 years. He was a dedicated member of the SWAT team, always striving to improve and keep up with the latest training. In 1999, after helping residents escape a fire, he was awarded the Medal of Valor.

Sergeant Dan Sakai spent his career serving the public. Following graduation from the University of California at Berkeley, he worked as a community service officer with the UC Berkeley Police Department. After 5 years there, he joined the Oakland Police Department in 2000.

Described as a rising star, Dan quickly progressed in the Oakland Police Department, including serving as a patrol officer in the K9 unit and eventually as a SWAT team entry leader. It is not surprising that he was the valedictorian of his police academy class.

Besides being a terrific member of the Oakland Police Department, Dan was devoted to his family and friends. As a resident of Castro Valley in the 15th Congressional District, he enjoyed all kinds of outdoor activities.

It is hard to believe that it has already been 5 years since that fateful day when these four heroes were taken from us.

I was working that day as an Alameda County prosecutor when we lost Mark, Erv, Dan, and John; and I, like so many, was shocked and shaken by the news. The magnitude of loss that the murder of these four officers caused was unmeasurable and hit everyone in the community. Equally unmeasurable was the community’s response.

In the hours and days after the news, the law enforcement community came together to support the families of the officers and the colleagues they served with.

Immediately after the news, hundreds of Bay Area law enforcement community members held an informal vigil at the only place they knew to gather, The Warehouse, a grill around the corner from the Oakland Police Department.

In the following days, the Oakland Police Officers’ Association, with the

support of brothers and sisters from neighboring Bay Area police agencies, grieved together and put on a funeral at the Oakland Arena worthy of the officers’ bravery.

I attended that funeral and was stunned to see officers from not just the Bay Area, but across the United States. I will never forget the Boston police officers who crossed the country to attend and lifted the spirits of the mourners.

In the House Chamber today, representing the Police Officers’ Association of California, is John Rudolph, President of the Alameda County Deputy Sheriffs’ Association. He is in town to support the Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund.

The following year, I had the opportunity to attend the 2010 Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C., to witness each officer’s name permanently placed on the marble wall with 19,000 other officers who have given their life across our country in service to the public.

Their names are etched into that wall, their memories are deep in our mind, and their courage is stitched forever into our hearts.

Mark, Erv, Dan, and John, you were taken too young, but forever we will remember your service.

SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to a critical issue that is hurting our communities, it is hurting our economy and our environment, and that issue is climate change.

Climate change is already having real impacts, affecting real people and real communities with more extreme storms, severe droughts, heat waves, and more. We are beginning to see long-term and serious impacts on public health, on agriculture, and natural resources.

Of course, climate change not only impacts us here onshore, but offshore as well. Ocean acidification, one of the most serious impacts of climate change, is changing the chemistry of our oceans and threatening the economic future of our coastal communities.

As our oceans absorb more and more carbon from the atmosphere, they grow more and more acidic, threatening many marine organisms and the communities that depend upon them.

Experts are telling us that today’s rate of ocean acidification may be unprecedented in the Earth’s history. It is estimated to be increasing 10 to 100 times faster than any time in the past 50 million years.

Ocean acidification threatens everything from the tiny plankton to form

the foundation of marine food webs, to the larger shellfish that we all enjoy. These impacts will not only hurt our ocean ecosystems and environment, but they will significantly hurt our economy as well.

The oceans support one in every six American jobs; so without healthy oceans, we stand to lose a lot of American jobs and economic opportunities, not to mention the cultural, ecological, and recreational losses to our coastal communities.

In my district, there is a diverse array of fishermen, scientists, and non-governmental organizations who are all seriously concerned about this issue. They are coming together to find ways to better understand and mitigate the effects of ocean acidification on key fisheries and ecosystems.

While the initial costs may be felt locally, the long-term costs of ocean acidification will be felt around this globe. We simply can't afford to continue ignoring this critical problem. While we certainly must cut the greenhouse gas emissions that are driving climate change and ocean acidification, we must also prepare for the inevitable impacts.

That is why I am working with my colleagues to find bipartisan solutions to increase our understanding of ocean acidification and to develop adaptation strategies.

That means supporting efforts to increase research and to monitor a better understanding of the problem, and it means coordinating and planning on a local level to prepare communities for changing coastal landscape. That means forming strategic partnerships to increase our capacity to find creative solutions.

There are many things we can do to help, but there is one thing we must all agree upon: inaction is not an option.

Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility to help prepare our communities and our economy from the impacts of climate change. We cannot afford to sit on our hands and do nothing.

I urge my colleagues to join me in taking action to save our oceans to combat global climate change.

JOSH HARDY'S STRUGGLE WITH CANCER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge a story of hardship and compassion. Josh Hardy, a young boy from Fredericksburg, Virginia, survived a battle with cancer when he was just 9 months old. Today, at the age of 7, he is currently suffering from a life-threatening infection acquired during his cancer treatment at St. Jude Children's Hospital.

A pharmaceutical company, Chimerix, produces the medication Josh's doctors believe could help save his life. Unfortunately, the drug was still in trial testing, and the company has been unable to provide access due to the number of requests for the drug and the rate of its production in the testing stage.

Physicians at St. Jude's Hospital and members of Josh's family pleaded for Josh to obtain access to the drug. Last Friday, Matt Hardy, Josh's uncle, of Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, a constituent of mine, contacted my office to request our support in seeing if the drug could get approved.

Josh's story has become widely known across the country. Yesterday, Chimerix agreed to provide Josh access to their environmental antiviral drug for his treatment. This small business should be commended for their compassion and making tough decisions. We hope they can continue with expedience to bring their product to market in order to help others like Josh.

Mr. Speaker, through these tough times, our thoughts and prayers remain with Josh, his family, and the countless individuals committed to making lives better through cutting edge medical research.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell a story of a 17-year-old Catholic school girl from the Seattle suburbs whose dreams to join the Marine Corps were destroyed by a sexual predator.

The girl's recruiter, after discussing sexual harassment policy with her, decided to give her a big hug, then lifted her on his lap and fondled her breasts. He then tried to get her to perform oral sex on him at another visit to the Marine recruiting office; and on a third occasion, he had her fondle his genitals while the girl was riding in his car.

She told the King County District Attorney's Office that she felt pressured into the sexual contact to get a position within the Corps.

While King County investigators found the girl's claims to be credible, the recruiter's chain of command within the Marine Corps did not and returned him to his job after a brief suspension, while the high school student was denied justice and denied the job of her dreams.

Just Google "Marines sex scandal," and you will find this article and several other scandalous stories about soldiers who hold these positions of trust.

These are exactly the type of stories that prompted Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel to issue a directive last May to require the screening of sexual assault counselors, recruiters, and drill

sergeants in all the services, looking for any criminal wrongdoing or unethical behavior.

It appears the Army took Secretary Hagel's directive seriously, as it screened 20,000 soldiers, disqualified 588, and is moving to get rid of at least 79 soldiers in these sensitive posts for offenses that include sexual assault.

□ 1100

Between the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, however, only a handful of servicemembers were disqualified. The Navy, after screening more than 10,000 soldiers, first said it only disqualified five, but just yesterday, we learned that the number has skyrocketed as the Navy has actually disqualified 151 sailors from these positions of trust. The Air Force just revealed Tuesday it disqualified two soldiers after at first initially reporting none were disqualified, and the Marine Corps so far has disqualified absolutely no one.

We all know, without question, that sexual assault in the military is a crisis and that it is not simply limited to the Army. It appears to be quite clear that the services used widely divergent methodology in assessing the suitability for these servicemembers and that the different services interpreted Hagel's directive very differently. It is my understanding that one of the service's interpreted Hagel's directive so narrowly that it simply checked the civilian sexual predator registry. Hagel has, apparently, discussed with top brass in the Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps the 588 disqualifications in the Army and whether the other services will pursue a follow-up review. He has reportedly stopped short, however, of issuing another directive.

I believe Secretary Hagel should issue a directive to rescreen the officers in the other services, and I sent him a letter Tuesday urging him to do so because choosing the wrong people for these positions of trust is a betrayal for our troops. The numbers of those disqualified, by the way, were not voluntarily made public. They continue almost weekly to be unearthed by an enterprising reporter at USA Today. The DOD also hasn't revealed what actions it has taken against those who were disqualified. The public has a right to know.

I do salute the Army for scrubbing what has been a cancerous culture, evidenced by the pending court-martial of Sergeant Gregory McQueen, whose job it was to help prevent sexual assault but who, instead, was allegedly running a prostitution ring at Fort Hood.

Until the Marine Corps, Air Force, and Navy follow the Army's path, however, I have little faith that the Department of Defense is capable of stamping out military sexual assault by weeding out sexual predators and other criminals in these highly important positions of trust.

WORLD WATER DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, on Capitol Hill, we are watching several hundred dedicated volunteers fan out to share their vision of the United States' providing leadership for safe drinking water and sanitation around the globe.

They will point out that, today, women will spend 200 million hours gathering water for their families—200 million hours that will not be spent farming or in economic enterprise, 200 million hours that will not be spent in school, 200 million hours that too often take them away from the village and put them at risk for physical sexual assault. They will be talking to our colleagues on Capitol Hill about some critical legislation that my colleague TED POE and I have introduced, H.R. 2901, the Paul Simon Water for the World Act, which will, in a deficit-neutral fashion, help refine the approach that the United States, the USAID, and the State Department take in providing water assistance around the globe.

I must say, this morning I heard, in an eloquent fashion, Congressman POE lay out the need, the vision, and the solution. I cannot say enough about the bipartisan leadership of my colleague from Texas. He points out that, as a Democrat from the Northwest, I don't have all that much in common with my Republican friend from Texas, but this is an area in which we are united. The United States must do all it can to prevent unnecessary disease and death from contaminated water, but it goes beyond issues of disease and sanitation.

Look at what has happened in Syria. Between 2006 and 2011, nearly 60 percent of Syria's landmass was ravaged by a severe drought. The water table was already too low because of irresponsible farming practices. It wiped out the livelihoods of almost a million Syrian farmers, and it created a massive population of drought refugees that flooded into the cities and added to the instability of that tragic country.

It did not cause the civil war, but the failure of the government to respond to the drought played a huge role in fueling the uprising, made possible by that sad, tragic consequence of events. Now the fourth largest city in Jordan is a refugee camp where men and women and children are fighting for survival and water as they cross the border to escape the violence. And this is a growing problem. The global population has now passed 7 billion people, and much of that growth has taken place in Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, two regions of the world in greatest need when it comes to water and sanitation.

Mr. Speaker, we have within our capacity the ability to make a difference,

and I am pleased to have worked with volunteers from coast to coast—from churches and rotary clubs and students—who are making a difference in their own communities. It is important for Congress to pass the Water for the World Act and to support the terrific work of Congresswomen GRANGER and LOWEY, on the Appropriations Committee, that has protected and has actually enhanced a little bit this important money that the United States provides—a small amount in the overall scheme of things but one that has a tremendous impact on lives around the world.

I urge my colleagues to take the time to listen to these dedicated volunteers. They have a message we should take to heart and act upon.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 7 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Gracious God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

In this Chamber where the people's House gathers, we pause to offer You gratitude for the gift of this good land on which we live and for this great Nation which You have inspired in developing over so many years. Continue to inspire the American people, that through the difficulties of these days we might keep liberty and justice alive in our Nation and in the world.

Bless the Members of this assembly with the wisdom they need to conduct the Nation's business with an eye toward the benefit of all, especially those most in need.

Bless as well the citizens of Ukraine, whose Prime Minister visits the Congress today. May our Nation be a good friend to that nation during these turbulent times, and may peace prevail in that part of the world.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF CAPTAIN JAMES HENRY CULLEN

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Captain James Henry Cullen. Captain Cullen was born in my hometown of Cincinnati, Ohio, on January 9, 1923, and died in Springfield, Virginia, on September 9 last year. He grew up in Price Hill, attended Elder High School, and was a graduate of Xavier University.

Captain Cullen led a distinguished life and an honorable one as a devoted husband and father and as an accomplished naval officer.

As executive officer of the USS *Gua-dalcanal*, he oversaw the recovery of the *Apollo 9* space capsule in the Atlantic Ocean. He also served as director of operations, Pearl Harbor, and chief of staff Third Fleet, with responsibility for antisubmarine warfare in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, and was awarded the Gold Star.

Captain Cullen epitomized the term "America's Greatest Generation." Our country has benefited greatly from his service, and as Americans, we owe him a debt of gratitude.

Full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery for Captain Cullen will take place on March 24.

Well done, Captain Cullen, and may you rest in peace.

FREEDOM OF THE INDIVIDUAL

(Mr. BERA of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Speaker, today, I want to speak about a case the Supreme Court is going to hear in a week, the Hobby Lobby case.

As a doctor, I took an oath to provide my patients with the best medical advice possible and empower them to make the decisions that impact their

lives and to put them in charge. Women should be free to make the health care decisions that work best for them and respect their own faith and personal circumstances.

Allowing bosses to pick and choose the health care their employees receive sets a very dangerous precedent that could have far-reaching consequences. That is why the Hobby Lobby case that will be argued before the Supreme Court later this month is so important.

CEO David Green may oppose birth control—and that is his personal decision—but individual Hobby Lobby employees have their own moral and religious views, and they shouldn't have to subscribe to his.

This case isn't about the rights of corporate CEOs. It is about the rights of workers and patients everywhere. It is about the individual freedom to choose and make your own health care decisions.

We need to stop bosses and out-of-touch politicians who want to come into our exam room and make those health care decisions. Let's keep these bosses out of the exam room and allow women to make the health care decisions that impact their own lives.

OBAMACARE ENROLLMENT

(Mr. WILLIAMS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILLIAMS. When the Federal Government intervenes in the private sector, like ObamaCare, we end up with a celebrity in chief who chooses to spend valuable time marketing his product—ObamaCare—on comedy shows rather than focusing on our wavering economy, jobs, and crises in Ukraine, Syria, Venezuela, Israel, and North Korea.

This week, the administration released its number for total enrollment in the President's health care law—4.2 million. This falls miserably short of the President's goal to enroll 7 million people by the end of this month. And what is worse is that health care experts estimate that the majority of the 4.2 who have enrolled already had insurance. The White House won't admit this, even though they know exactly how many previously insured are part of the 4.2 million.

Mr. Speaker, this law was designed to insure the uninsured, but it is failing in every single way. It is not helping those it was supposed to help, and it is hurting those with coverage they wanted to keep in the first place. The President needs to put the will of Americans ahead of his own agenda and fix this mess he has created.

ObamaCare has turned into ObamaScare.

May God bless America, and in God we trust.

WOMEN'S UNEMPLOYMENT

(Ms. BROWNLEY of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, this Women's History Month, we learned that women continue to struggle with long-term unemployment. In fact, long-term unemployment among women increased from 34.8 percent in January to 37.7 percent in February.

According to a recent Pew Research Center study, women are the sole or primary breadwinner in 4 in every 10 American households with children. When women who have jobs only receive 77 cents to every dollar a man makes, when 70 percent of Americans in poverty are women and children, in a country where women, out of the gate, start out behind, refusing to extend long-term unemployment compensation to those who have looked for a job but cannot find one is particularly hurtful.

For all these reasons, we must renew emergency unemployment compensation—because when women succeed, then Ventura County succeeds; and when Ventura County succeeds, America succeeds.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

(Mr. POMPEO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POMPEO. Mr. Speaker, I am here this morning to acknowledge the Wichita State University men's basketball team and its unparalleled success this year. The number 2 ranked Shockers are the only team in the Nation that remains undefeated. At 34-0, the Wichita State Shockers are taking more wins into the NCAA basketball tournament than any team in the history of Division I basketball in the NCAA.

Our Shockers' head coach this year, Gregg Marshall, was just named the National Coach of the Year. The players on the court say proudly they have not played a single game that is tougher than any of their practices, and their play proves that team trumps individual every time.

It is said that some of these players were not five-star recruits, and that may be true, but I know them, and I can tell you they are five-star human beings. They come from places like Rockford, Illinois; Scott City, Kansas; Middletown, New York; and right in Wichita, Kansas. They come with no silver spoons. They are grinders; they are hard workers; they are scrappy; and they are fighters with big hearts.

They reflect our town and the best of America, and we love them. Godspeed to them.

Go Shocks.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

(Ms. FUDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, as our economy continues to experience high levels of unemployment and a flat labor participation rate, now is not the time to further decimate vital assistance to those who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. I will not abandon 2 million Americans, including 200,000 veterans. We must give them a hand up.

Yesterday, I signed a discharge petition to force action on extending unemployment insurance benefits, a move supported by more than three-fourths of the American people.

Additionally, nationally, there are three unemployed people for each job created. For the long-term unemployed, there is just a 12 percent chance of finding a new job in any given month.

Congress must extend unemployment benefits to help keep American families out of poverty as they seek jobs. Each week we fail to act, another 72,000 people lose their benefits. We must act now.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION MEANS FREEDOM TO PRACTICE YOUR FAITH

(Mr. LANKFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, when a family runs a business by the principles of their faith—which used to be protected in America—can a President step in and say: I disagree with your faith, so I will pass a regulation that says you can no longer practice your faith at work—you can at home, but not at work?

Hobby Lobby is a family-owned business that doesn't want Washington to be their boss. They believe that abortion takes the life of a child and that every child deserves a chance at life. What is wrong with that?

If a Federal employee disagrees with the faith practice of someone in a company, does that business have to change to the faith of the Federal employee, or can they keep their own faith?

It is now the rule that to open a company, work in a job, or get health care, you have to have the same religious convictions as the President of the United States. If you don't, you will be fined until you change your faith practice.

Just days ago, the President spoke at the National Prayer Breakfast about the cornerstone right of the free expression of religion. Does that include Americans who believe that children are a gift of God and they should be nurtured and cared for, not discarded as tissue?

Washington is not the boss of every American. Our Constitution matters; freedom of religion matters; and, quite frankly, children matter.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, on December 28, emergency unemployment benefits for Americans were cut off; and since then, 2 million Americans have lost their essential lifeline and have been missing their rent payments, missing their mortgage payments, trying to keep the house warm and put food on the table. Congress has failed to act.

What is particularly concerning to me is some of the rhetoric that I hear would imply that those unemployed Americans are seeking benefits because they don't want to work. And, in fact, yesterday, I read a quote from the Budget Committee chairman—and I will try to get this correct—saying that, in America, there is a culture in our inner cities of men not even thinking about working or learning the value and the culture of work.

That is not the problem. The problem is a lack of opportunity. So I will take the chairman at his word that he was intending to say: so, therefore, we need to fully fund after-school programs, we need to fully fund pre-K programs, and we need to fully fund summer youth employment so that those young people do have a chance to experience the benefit and value of work, and that we provide a safety net to make sure that when they are not working, they don't lose their house, their car, and their family.

RECOGNIZING THE COLORADO FLOOD RESPONDERS

(Mr. GARDNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the dedicated men and women who have assisted the State of Colorado in our effort to recover from the devastating floods last September.

On September 11, Colorado experienced a major flood event which took the lives of beloved neighbors, destroyed over 2,000 homes and damaged 17,000 others. Our communities, friends, and neighbors had their lives changed forever and are still putting the pieces back together and rebuilding.

In the wake of the flood, local and State officials, private businesses and individuals, first responders, National Guard, FEMA personnel, and dedicated volunteers worked tirelessly to help Coloradans get life back to normal. While the recovery effort remains unfinished and won't be complete for some time, we are on a positive path

forward. If it hadn't been for the committed and devoted people on the ground, Colorado would not be on that path today.

As with all natural disasters and tragedies of this magnitude, Coloradans rallied together and helped in the recovery effort. We still have more work to do. But I want to recognize on the House floor all those who joined together in these recovery efforts and helped Colorado in a desperate time of need.

As a fifth-generation Coloradan, I offer my deep appreciation on behalf of the State.

□ 1215

HONORING OFFICER NICHOLAS CHOUNG LEE

(Mr. SCHIFF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Nicholas Choung Lee, a Los Angeles police officer who selflessly served his community.

Nicholas served for years in the LAPD, first in the Van Nuys division and later in the Hollywood division, assigned to a patrol car. He had worked as both a field training officer and vice officer in Wilshire before returning to patrol in the Hollywood division in 2008. In his 16 years of service he received more than 70 commendations.

Even as a police officer, family came first for Nicholas, who had a wife, Cathy, and two young daughters, Jalen and Kendall.

Tragically, and much too soon, Nicholas passed away on April 6 when a truck hit his patrol car in Beverly Hills.

We depend upon the bravery and dedication of police officers every moment of every day, and we often forget the dangers and challenges they face on our behalf. I ask all members to join me in expressing our condolences to the Lee family and the entire LAPD.

HONORING AMOS ROJAS, JR.

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, Amos Rojas, Jr., was sworn in yesterday as the U.S. Marshal for our southern district of Florida.

A consummate public servant, Marshal Rojas served 24 years of his career with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, including 8 years as a special agent in charge of the Miami region's operations center.

Marshal Rojas was most recently deputy director of the South Florida Money Laundering Strike Force within the Miami-Dade County State Attorney's Office.

The U.S. Marshal Service traces its roots back to the Judiciary Act of 1789 under President George Washington and has played many important roles throughout our Nation's history.

I am proud to see Marshal Rojas join this elite and storied law enforcement agency.

Congratulations, again, to south Florida's new top cop.

HOBBY LOBBY V. SEBELIUS

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court will soon hear oral arguments in the case commonly referred to as Hobby Lobby v. Sebelius. The outcome of this case will determine whether or not a for-profit company has the right to limit a female employee's access to health care under the guise of religious freedom.

Already the Supreme Court has wrongly declared that corporations have a right to "freedom of speech," as determined in the case of Citizens United. In just a few short years, this ruling has led to a flood of undisclosed money into our elections and corrupted our political system. Corporations' latest attempts to secure the constitutionally-protected rights of citizens is equally as dangerous.

Only a living, breathing woman should have the right to decide how and when she wants to have a family. Regardless of her decision, that choice belongs to her and not to the corporation for which she works.

Millions of women depend upon birth control pills for reasons beyond preventing unintended pregnancies, including a 13-year-old girl in my district, who would rather be in her classroom learning but who spends lots of time in a doctor's office trying to control uncontrollable bleeding. Yet, through no fault of her own, she finds herself at her doctor's office often, and then just recently had to have a blood transfusion.

This young woman relies upon birth control medication to control her bleeding, a medication that her family can only afford because her mother's access to contraceptive care is not violated by her employer.

If the Supreme Court once again interprets our Federal law to grant citizen freedoms to a corporation, it will directly threaten the rights of this young girl and millions of women around the country. We cannot allow that to happen.

HONORING LIEUTENANT NATE KING

(Mr. PITTENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Lieutenant Nate King of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department.

Just a few days ago, Lieutenant King was conducting routine police business when a frantic mother drove up and placed a seemingly lifeless baby into his arms. Six-month-old Lily was choking to death. Without losing his cool, Lieutenant King quickly began life-saving measures, and soon little Lily started screaming and crying. Thanks to Lieutenant King's efforts, little Lily is alive today.

Even better, the doctors who examined Lily that day at the hospital determined she was fine and had made a full recovery.

On behalf of Congress and the people of North Carolina's Ninth Congressional District, thank you to Lieutenant King for your exceptional service. You make us all proud.

Thank you to all the brave men and women of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department who face diverse difficult challenges, even placing their lives on the line to serve us each day.

CONGRESSIONAL DIGITAL DAY OF ACTION

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the millions of women who now have access to essential preventive health services, including birth control, without financial barriers.

Nearly every American woman will choose to use birth control at some time in her life. It helps women plan for the time they are healthy enough and financially ready to start a family. That is better for her and for her family.

That is why the Institute of Medicine deemed it an essential preventive health service for women. Women across the Nation support it being available to them with no copay.

Now, some women have found that their bosses think they know better than they do, that their CEO has more at stake in her health care decisions than her doctor. This is not right. Every woman has the right to be in charge of her body and her health. Suggesting otherwise is offensive, out of touch, and out of bounds.

KEYSTONE XL

(Mr. WEBER of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to voice my support for the approval of the Keystone XL pipeline.

As many Americans know, this pipeline will provide an immediate boost to our economy and strengthen national

security. That is important. Ask the Ukrainians. This pipeline will create over 40,000 jobs, foster a more energy independent North America, bolster our Nation's weakened infrastructure system, contribute approximately \$3.4 billion to our GDP, and generate needed tax revenues in several States.

After a thorough review of the pipeline proposal, the State Department determined it would have no significant negative environmental impact.

The Department's inspector general also concluded that the pipeline's environmental impact study was sound. This is the latest in a slew of reports rejecting the administration's excuses on Keystone.

Mr. Speaker, this President has vowed that this will be a year of action. House Republicans urge him to act. He should immediately approve the Keystone XL pipeline and put Americans back to work.

I am RANDY WEBER, and there you have it.

INSURANCE-COVERED CONTRACEPTION

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the congressional digital day of action on the Hobby Lobby Supreme Court case. Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, 27 million women have access to insurance-covered contraceptives. Nearly 2 million of those women come from my home State of Texas.

Unfortunately, Hobby Lobby, the largest importer in my district, asserts that employers should control the choices of women to have access to contraception and preventive care. However, 70 percent of Americans disagree with that heinous assertion.

While individuals have their own religious beliefs and consciences, businesses that employ thousands of hardworking Americans do not. The implication that a boss could potentially decide what health care treatments any employee can receive are more far-reaching than just contraceptive care.

What can be next? An employer denying coverage of routine immunizations or vaccinations because of religious belief?

It is offensive that an employer believes they have the right to make these personal decisions for their employees. I urge my colleagues to stand up and fight against this discriminatory action taken by Hobby Lobby.

THE IMPERIAL PRESIDENCY

(Mr. MESSER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, a headline in today's Roll Call reads:

White House, Democrats cry foul over GOP push to enforce immigration and other laws.

Really? The Constitution is clear about how our government is supposed to work. Congress makes the laws; the President enforces them. President Obama should know that, since he used to lecture about constitutional law.

The President isn't the first to stretch the bounds of executive authority, but the proper constitutional limits on the President's power are long in this administration's rearview mirror. He has disregarded laws that he disagrees with, even when they are his own.

The American people are demanding respect for the rule of law. They want our system of checks and balances restored so that their government reflects the will of all, not just one. That is why we passed the ENFORCE the Law Act yesterday, and that is why we will continue to demand the President do his job, not ours.

FALLING UNEMPLOYMENT AND FAIR PAY

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight an issue impacting constituents in my district and all across the Nation. Recently, statistics were published lauding Texas' falling unemployment rate. Articles say that Texans are finding good jobs.

I want to rise today to speak on behalf of those that have a hard time making it each month. Many of these so-called good paying jobs, after working 40 hours a week, pay about \$15,000 a year. Sometimes these hardworking Americans have to work two or three jobs just to make it at the end of the month.

Mr. Speaker, the truth is that Texas families are hurting and struggling every day just to put food on the table and to put clothes on their kids' backs.

I was talking to a lady at Luby's just the other day that asked me, What are we going to do about the minimum wage? We need to vote on the minimum wage—H.R. 1010, that would raise the minimum wage and bring over 5 million Americans out of poverty.

I have signed the discharge petition and urge you to bring this bill up for a vote.

REMEMBERING PHILIP WOOD

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, last weekend 239 passengers on a Malaysian airplane were lost. As of this morning, I don't think we yet know their fate. According to the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, one of those residents used to

call Keller, Texas, home. I want to share with the body what his family had put out as a public statement:

Philip Wood was a man of God, a man of honor and integrity. His word was gold. Incredibly generous, creative, and intelligent, Phil cared about people, his family, and above all, Christ. Though our hearts are hurting, we know so many families around the world are affected, just as much as us, by this terrible tragedy. We ask for your prayers, not only for ourselves but for all involved during this difficult time.

As a family, we are sticking together through Christ to get through this. Thank you for your understanding.

Words I think we can all take to heart while we ponder the fate of those individuals lost on that plane.

EXTENDING EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

(Mr. JOHNSON OF GEORGIA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart. I ran for Congress to help people. It is past time to extend emergency unemployment insurance, and I am ready to vote to do so today.

Unfortunately, this Republican Congress is denying more than 2 million people across the country the opportunity to support their families and get back on their feet.

Extending emergency unemployment insurance is simply the right thing to do. Have Republicans lost their compassion or have they simply lost touch with reality? Every week, another 72,000 Americans run out of unemployment insurance. In Georgia, 75,000 people have already been cut off. This is supposed to be a lifeline for people who are involuntarily unemployed. No one wants to be unemployed.

It is essential we show the compassion our forefathers displayed when America was rebuilding itself after the Great Depression. We must come to compromise when it comes to helping those looking for work.

□ 1230

PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS

(Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago, I stood here to advocate for better economic policies for women because what this Congress takes up week after week doesn't reflect the priorities of the women I talk to at home.

When I talk to the women in my district, the common thread is clear. Women just want a fair shot. They want to know, if they work hard and play by the rules, they will succeed and their families will succeed.

Unfortunately, there are some that just don't get it. Just last month, we had to fight against an unconscionable bill attacking a woman's right to choose her own health care decisions. The Hobby Lobby case the Supreme Court will hear in a few weeks will decide if a woman's boss can choose what type of care and medicine she can access.

When it comes to ensuring that women get a fair shot, we have to protect a woman's right to make her own health care decisions and her ability to plan for her family and her future.

That is why I am proud to stand with my colleagues from the Pro-Choice Caucus in signing the amicus brief to ask our Supreme Court to protect this critical right for women and their families.

EMPOWERING FAMILIES TO CHOOSE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(Mr. POLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, just as the storied competition between the New York Yankees and the Boston Red Sox works to improve both teams, so does school choice and empowering families to choose the public school that best fits their kids to improve all of our public schools.

Our Education and the Workforce Committee this week had an excellent hearing on charter schools, which I encourage my colleagues to look at the record of. We heard testimony from across the country about the tremendous role that charter schools are playing as part of our public education system in ensuring that all students have access to a quality education.

In addition to charter schools, making sure that States have policies like Colorado does for open enrollment within a district and between districts, parents should be empowered to choose their neighborhood school, a magnet school, a charter school, another public school, with an educational model that fits the unique learning needs of their kid.

In this way, we can ensure that the next generation of American children are prepared to succeed in the 21st century.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK.
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 13, 2014.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 13, 2014 at 9:39 a.m.: that the Senate passed S. 611.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

PROVIDING FOR THE REAPPOINTMENT OF JOHN W. McCARTER AS A CITIZEN REGENT OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 32) providing for the reappointment of John W. McCarter as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

S.J. RES. 32

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, in accordance with section 5581 of the Revised Statutes (20 U.S.C. 43), the vacancy on the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, in the class other than Members of Congress, occurring by reason of the expiration of the term of John W. McCarter of Illinois on March 14, 2014, is filled by the reappointment of the incumbent. The reappointment is for a term of 6 years, beginning on March 15, 2014, or the date of enactment of this joint resolution, whichever occurs later.

The joint resolution was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3189, WATER RIGHTS PROTECTION ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4015, SGR REPEAL AND MEDICARE PROVIDER PAYMENT MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2014; AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 17, 2014, THROUGH MARCH 21, 2014

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 515 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 515

Resolved, That at any time after adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3189) to prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer, relinquishment, or other impairment of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. Upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 4015) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided among and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the chair and

ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and (2) one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

SEC. 3. On any legislative day during the period from March 17, 2014, through March 21, 2014—

(a) the Journal of the proceedings of the previous day shall be considered as approved; and

(b) the Chair may at any time declare the House adjourned to meet at a date and time, within the limits of clause 4, section 5, article I of the Constitution, to be announced by the Chair in declaring the adjournment.

SEC. 4. The Speaker may appoint Members to perform the duties of the Chair for the duration of the period addressed by section 3 of this resolution as though under clause 8(a) of rule I.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 515 provides for consideration of H.R. 3189, the Water Rights Protection Act, under a structured amendment process, making in order three amendments and providing for extra time for debate for the substitute amendment, which will be offered by Mr. POLIS.

The rule also provides for the consideration of H.R. 4015, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014 with one amendment, offered by Chairman CAMP from the Ways and Means Committee, being self-executed in order to ensure that the legislation has a valid pay-for.

This is necessary so that the bill before us does not run afoul with the majority's rule on CutGo. As is customary, the rule allows the minority to offer a motion to recommit on each bill. Finally, the rule provides for the customary district work period authority.

H.R. 3189, the Water Rights Protection Act, addresses a concern of a number of our Western State colleagues who have experienced the Federal Government threatening to take over the private water rights of businesses and private citizens held on public lands.

The bill, sponsored by Representative SCOTT TIPTON from Colorado, is a bipartisan effort to protect water supplies and property rights designated for recreation, agriculture, local conserva-

tion, and municipal use from Federal Government overreach.

The bill protects water users and upholds State water laws by prohibiting Federal agencies from extorting water rights through their use of permits, leases, and other land management arrangements.

If the floor debate on this bill is anything like the debate which members of the Rules Committee observed last night, this discussion will be spirited, as this issue deeply affects Western States, where so much of their land is controlled by the Federal Government.

The second bill, H.R. 4015, the SGR repeal legislation, is an issue that I have worked on my entire congressional career. It reflects years of bipartisan, multicommittee, bicameral discussions and negotiations, bringing together Members of all ideological stripes, as well as those from the outside, to coalesce around a policy to help patients and to help their care providers get out from under the constant threat of payment cuts under the current sustainable growth rate structure for Medicare payments.

Everyone agrees, Mr. Speaker, that the Medicare sustainable growth rate has got to go; but today, we are considering an actual framework to realistically accomplish that goal.

This formula—the sustainable growth rate formula—was enacted as part of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 in an ultimately misguided means by which to restrain Federal spending in Medicare Part B.

The formula consists of expenditure targets, which are established by applying a growth rate, which is designed to bring spending in line with the expenditure targets over time.

Since 2002, this formula has called for a reduction to physician reimbursement rates. However, every Congress has consistently passed legislation to override this formula. This has led this body to find over \$150 billion with no solution out of this annual mess.

If Congress were to let the SGR go into effect, physicians would face a 24 percent reduction in reimbursement rates in just a few weeks' time. This unrealistic assumption of spending and efficiency have plagued the health care profession and our Nation's seniors.

The bill before us repeals the SGR—let me repeat that because it is so important—this bill repeals the sustainable growth rate formula, avoiding potentially devastating across-the-board cuts slated for 2014 and does so at a cost far lower than what Congress has already spent or would likely spend over the next 10 years' time.

The bill provides for 5 years of payment transition, essential to allow us to ensure continued beneficiary access, to allow medicine to concentrate on moving to a broad adoption of quality reporting, and allow Congress to move past the distraction of this formula to

identify Medicare reforms that can further benefit beneficiaries.

This bill will also allow providers the time to develop and the time to test quality measures and clinical practice improvement activities, which will be used for performance assessment during other phases of this bill. During the 5-year stability period, physicians will receive annual increases of $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1 percent.

I know, I can hear it already. That is not very much. Correct, it is not; but it is more in aggregate than what has been provided over the last several years. More importantly, it provides that stability so physician offices can plan and plan ahead on how to take care of their patients.

□ 1245

The quality measures implemented in what is called the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System will be evidence-based and developed through a transparent process that will seek input from provider groups, from patient groups, and from other stakeholders.

Quality reporting will involve a provider's being judged against its practice rather than a one-size-fits-all, generic standard of care that does not take into account the unique practices of various specialty providers.

Providers will also self-determine their measures. We consolidate three reporting programs into the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System, easing the administrative burden on doctors while retaining the congressionally established goals of quality, resource use, and meaningful use.

The new reimbursement structure ensures continued access to high-quality care while providing physicians with certainty and security in their reimbursements. Physicians will be aware of the benchmarks they are competing against, and unlike current law, all penalties assessed from those not meeting the benchmarks will go to those who are. This keeps the dollars in the Medicare system, and that, ultimately, drives the quality, which benefits Medicare patients.

Standards against which providers will be measured will be developed by professional organizations in conjunction with existing programs and will incorporate ongoing feedback to doctors, thus further ensuring that optimal care is ultimately provided to the patient.

Realtime feedback will be gained through registries and performance data, and doctors are encouraged to participate in the process through data reporting. For eligible professionals who choose to opt out of the fee-for-service program, alternative payment models will be available. These alternative models may include patient-centered medical homes, whether they are primary or specialty models, and bun-

dles or episodes of care. By encouraging alternative payment models, care coordination, and disease management, our proposed solution will inspire innovation. Qualifying practices that move a significant number of their patients into one of these alternative payment methods will see a 5 percent quality bonus. The bill will also take affirmative steps to improve the accuracy of relative values and misvalued services.

But even though we are taking these important steps toward ensuring quality care, the bill specifically states that these quality measures are not creating a Federal right of action or a legal standard of care or a duty of care owed by the health care provider to the patient.

Mr. Speaker, we have had a lot of discussion. I know my friends on the other side of the dais may disagree with having to pay for new spending, but this is an important reform that Republicans put in place when they reclaimed the majority after the 2010 elections. If you want to increase mandatory spending, you should reduce mandatory spending elsewhere. This is a simple concept, and I know that my constituents and many Americans agree with this.

The Democrats' substitute highlights the difference between the parties on this issue. Democrats have embraced a budget gimmick to offset their bill, a gimmick that even the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has said is not scorable. There is no way that it will pay for anything, because the score is zero.

Republicans want to reform Medicare and the payment system in a responsible way and do so in a way that is paid for. If my colleagues on the other side can find a legitimate offset, I am happy to review it. In fact, this is exactly what we are asking of the United States Senate. You don't like our offset. Offer one of your own, and let's work together to pass these much-needed reforms.

This bill is consistent in its themes throughout. We provide payment stability, reduce and streamline the administrative burden, increase predictability in doctors' interactions with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, build transparency into systems, encourage innovation and the delivery of services, and keep providers in the driver's seat.

I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" on the rule and "yes" on the underlying bills.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we have two bills before us under this rule, which I will briefly discuss before getting into the more important topic of what bills are not

being considered on the floor of the House this week.

Notably, despite comprehensive immigration reform's having passed the Senate with more than two-thirds support, despite the fact that there are more than 10 million people here in this country illegally, despite the fact that our borders are porous and that people are sneaking across, as well as illicit goods, despite the fact that we have no meaningful workplace enforcement, despite the fact that farmers and the faith-based community are crying out for reform—the business community, the tech community, labor—there is no immigration bill on the floor of the House today. Instead, we are discussing two bills.

We are discussing one SGR fix. Now, that sounds obscure to people, "SGR fix." What is that? This is the reimbursement rate for doctors under Medicare, and there is a budgetary fiction that long predates me in this place. I assume that, at the time, Republicans and Democrats created this elaborate budgetary fiction together as this degree of budgetary fiction requires both parties' most creative thoughts to possibly put it together. So we pretend every year that there are going to be large cuts to Medicare. I think Republicans and Democrats know that that is not likely to happen. Those cuts would completely gut Medicare. Doctors would drop Medicare patients if those cuts were to occur.

So each year and sometimes shorter than a year—sometimes 6 months, sometimes 3 months, sometimes 2 years—Democrats and Republicans have to come together to figure out how to avoid those automatic cuts that otherwise occur. That discussion is about how to pay for avoiding those cuts each time.

Democrats have suggestions to pay for it—let's eliminate oil and gas loopholes; let's use the overseas contingency fund. Republicans have ideas about how they want to pay for it—in this case, the 52nd repeal of ObamaCare. By the way, they want to keep all of the taxes from ObamaCare; they just want to get rid of some of the benefits. So they are going to keep all of the taxes from ObamaCare—those Republicans love those taxes—but they are getting rid of some of the benefits. That is the secret of what they are using to pay for it, just so you know.

The real discussion is how to do it, but in this case, the Republicans are presumably so embarrassed about their pay-for—the fact that they are using the ObamaCare taxes to pay for Medicare—that they are slipping it into the rule in what is called the "deem and pass" language, or what is characterized by some as the "demon pass" language.

This rule says:

The amendment printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted.

That means there is not even going to be a vote on the actual way to pay for avoiding the Medicare cuts. It is in the rule, itself. This is the most costly rule I have ever seen. This rule costs \$138 billion of ObamaCare taxes that the Republicans want to use. This is an expensive rule, Mr. Speaker. If there is a real desire to talk with Democrats about ways to pay for the Medicare SGR fix, also called the “doc fix,” we are happy to do it. We were hoping that you would allow a Democratic pay-for sponsored by Mr. TIERNEY, who will talk about the previous question. Our idea is to use the Overseas Contingency Fund to avoid any cut to Medicare beneficiaries, but this rule does not allow us to do that. This rule doesn’t even allow the House to vote on using ObamaCare taxes to pay for SGR. It includes the “deem and pass” language in the rule, itself—a rule, itself, that includes self-executing language that costs \$138 billion. That is one expensive rule, Mr. Speaker, and I certainly hope my colleagues vote “no.”

This rule also includes H.R. 3189, the Water Rights Protection Act. As my colleague said, those of us in the West feel that whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting about. I think the debate on the Rules Committee last night and the upcoming debate here on the floor will probably reflect that old adage. The genesis of this particular bill is something that Mr. TIPTON and I and, I think, many Members of this body agree on. We wanted to address a narrow dispute between the U.S. Forest Service and ski permit holders that directly impacts my district and impacts Mr. TIPTON’s district.

I support Mr. TIPTON’s efforts in that regard, and I was hoping we could have gotten the bill to a point where it would have passed near unanimously or unanimously. Instead, this bill has become a job-killing Republican water grab that even the counties that it was designed to help oppose. The counties in my district that have ski resorts—Eagle, Rand, Summit County, famous resorts like Winter Park, Vail, Arapahoe Basin, Breckenridge, among others—now oppose this bill because it will destroy jobs in their counties by destroying recreational opportunities like white-water rafting, fishing, year-round tourism opportunities, which are critical to the economic success of my district.

These changes to this job-killing Republican water grab have caused this bill to snowball into an effort that will hurt our rivers’ health, destroy recreational opportunities, and the underlying bill jeopardizes the agreements that leave waters in streams and rivers, which allow our tourism industry to be so vibrant. Even some of the counties, as we mentioned in the Rules Committee yesterday—certainly not all of those counties—like Pitkin County and the home of Aspen and Mr.

TIPTON’s district, also oppose this bill. Again, there was an overreaching decision by the U.S. Forest Service that required ski area permittees to transfer the ownership of water rights to the Federal Government. In 2012, that water directive was overturned by a U.S. District Court judge.

It is important to note that I believe in the purpose of this bill, and I hope that we can address it through the amendment that I have offered, which allows for 20 minutes of floor debate under this bill. This bill can still be saved by this body’s endorsing the amendment that I have offered as part of this bill, which is also supported by ski area representatives from across the Mountain West, along with my colleagues from Colorado Ms. DEGETTE and Mr. PERLMUTTER.

Unfortunately, this job-killing Republican water grab bill uses the ski area directive as a pretense for making wholesale job-killing changes. Look, ski areas have been a punching bag for U.S. Forest Service’s misguided policies for the last decade. I think we can find common cause around a narrow solution. In that time, the Forest Service has changed the ski area water policies four times. It has inconsistently enforced others’ water clauses. It has left ski areas subject to the agency’s whim. They are very capital-intense ski areas. They are the major economic driver of the mountain areas of my district, but they have been at the whim of sometimes arbitrary Federal actions. Ski areas collectively hold water rights worth hundreds of millions of dollars that are critical for their businesses.

Now, my colleagues might wonder what kind of improvements a ski area might want to make. In 2011, this body unanimously voted to support the Ski Area Recreational Opportunity Enhancement Act, which allowed ski areas to expand summertime activities, like zip lines and mountain biking. Amongst some of those other summertime activities that ski resorts benefit from are white-water rafting, fishing—the very kinds of recreational opportunities that will be impacted by this job-killing Republican water grab.

I entered several pieces of testimony into the record in the Rules Committee yesterday—statements from water districts and from counties—with regard to how this bill will impact recreational opportunities in Colorado. Along with Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. KUSTER, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, and Mr. HUFFMAN, I was proud to offer an amendment that would fix and address the issues in H.R. 3189 and return the bill to its original purpose.

The amendment ensures that any U.S. Forest Service directive will not condition ski area permits on the transfer title of any water right or require any ski area permittee to acquire

a water right in the name of the United States. The amendment ensures the long-term viability of ski areas, and it makes sure that this bill is not the job-killing Republican water grab that it has become.

It is important to note that the narrow dispute that was the genesis of this bill could have been solved with a suspension measure. We have offered language repeatedly to Mr. TIPTON and his staff, to the committee and its staff, but we were not taken up on that offer, sadly. Instead, we have before us a job-killing Republican water grab bill that would devastate my district.

□ 1300

Instead, the manager’s amendment was offered, as well as additional language in committee.

This bill is riddled with problems that are not addressed. The bypass flows issue is not solved in the manager’s amendment, which does address the Endangered Species Act component but does nothing to address the issues around the Forest Service, BLM, Interior, and Agriculture agencies that also have relevant authority under a number of statutes, including the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, Forest Service and Park Service Organic Act, and Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, to impose bypass flows.

Simply put, the manager’s amendment doesn’t make the necessary improvements to make this a bipartisan measure—they are simply window dressing for a job-killing Republican water grab.

Let’s talk about some of the issues in the underlying legislation.

In the West, water rights are State-based, and any challenge to a right or to the system itself is a very delicate proposition to years of precedence and claims, subordinate and senior, with regard to water.

As a result, this legislation only serves to cast doubt on the complicated laws and authorities that make up our Nation’s and State water laws, and that companies, individuals, and counties have made decisions on and already have economic investments in.

In addition, this bill, absent my amendment, muddles the message of disapproval over the 2011 decision.

What exactly are we saying with regard to this bill? A bill that was meant to address the needs of ski areas because of the 2011 directive instead has become an all-encompassing, job-killing Republican water grab, which is not even a clear signal of our unhappiness with the original directive.

I think not only would there be a much cleaner path to actually become the law of the land if we were to consider a targeted approach encompassed by the amendment that I have offered, but it also, even absent becoming law, would send a clear and unambiguous message to the U.S. Forest Service of

congressional disapproval of the directive.

Instead, I think they will just shrug their shoulders and say, That is that crazy House of Representatives.

This bill is not going to become law. This bill will not have any impact—and the message is lost with regard to the 2011 directive.

If they think this is the House's reaction—muddled, job-killing, water-grabbing—to this sort of thing, what is to stop them from doing this again? What is to stop them from targeting ranchers? What is to stop them from targeting recreation areas?

When this kind of thing occurs, we need a targeted reaction that can become law or a clear and unambiguous message that the House will not stand for it.

In summary, this rule contains \$183 billion in ObamaCare taxes that are spent for another purpose and allows two bills to come to the floor, both of which could be negotiated in good faith with the Democrats, and both of which have not.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to respond to some of this, just to put things in context on a timeline.

H.R. 4015 was introduced on February 6, 2014. The bill has been available to all Members and the public for more than a month. The bill is cosponsored by the bipartisan chairs and ranking members of the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Ways and Means, and the Senate Finance Committee.

We are recommending no changes to the underlying substance of H.R. 4015, which has been negotiated on a bipartisan basis.

I do believe that providing offsets for new spending is an appropriate course of action. Therefore, the Camp amendment saves almost \$170 billion over the next 10 years, and this rule ensures that we aren't making future generations foot the bill.

I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON).

Mr. TIPTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, it is with some dismay that I have to address some of the comments that have been made by my good friend and colleague from Colorado.

Unfortunately, through their own words, they are willing to throw farmers and ranchers—hardworking Americans—under the bus, for an ideological cause, something that we simply cannot accept in the West. In the Western United States, water is the lifeblood of our communities. H.R. 3189 codifies that existing right.

The water grab that is taking place is not by this legislation but by the very Federal Government that our opponents seem to want to be able to protect and put in a position of authority over State rights and the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution.

As a sponsor of this bipartisan legislation, I support the rule on H.R. 3189, and I encourage an open debate because I believe the merits of this bill will truly speak for themselves.

Federal attempts to be able to manipulate Federal permit, lease, and land management processes to circumvent long-established State water law and hijack privately held water rights have sounded the alarm bell for all non-Federal water users that rely on these water rights for their livelihood.

The most recent case of the Federal Government's overreach and infringement on private property rights involves a U.S. Forest Service attempt to require the transfer of privately held water rights to the Federal Government as a permit condition on National Forest System lands. There is no just compensation for the transfer of these privately held rights, despite the facts that many stakeholders have invested millions of their own capital in developing them and, in many cases, rely on them for their livelihoods.

This Forest Service permit condition has hurt a number of stakeholders in my home State of Colorado, including the Powderhorn ski area near Grand Junction. The Aspen ski area in my district, which he cited, supports this legislation.

Despite having been excellent stewards of the environment and their water rights, the Forest Service has demanded the relinquishment of State-granted water rights from these ski areas in order to continue their operations.

The same tactics have been used in Utah, Nevada, and other Western States where agencies have required the surrender of possession of water rights in exchange for approving the conditional use of grazing allotments.

This water grab has broad implications that have begun to extend beyond the recreation and farming and ranching community, and are now threatening municipalities and other businesses.

As a result of efforts that began in 2011 and encompass testimony from several hearings by the Natural Resources Committee, conversations with numerous stakeholders across Colorado and the West, and close collaboration with my friends on the committee, I introduced this bipartisan Water Rights Protection Act.

This legislation provides critical protection for water rights holders from Federal takings by ensuring that Federal agencies cannot extort private property rights through uneven-handed negotiations. The Water Rights Protection Act offers a sensible approach that preserves water rights and the ability to develop water requisite to living in the arid West without interfering with water allocations for non-Federal parties or allocations that protect the en-

vironment that is cherished by all Westerners.

To this end, the bill prohibits Federal agencies from pilfering water rights through the use of permits, lease, and other land management arrangements for which it would otherwise have to pay just compensation under the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution. The bill also prohibits Federal land management agencies from forcing water users to apply for or acquire water rights from the United States rather than for the water users themselves.

Finally, this commonsense legislation provides certainty by upholding longstanding Federal deference to State water law in which countless water users rely.

As the American Farm Bureau states in their letter of support:

H.R. 3189 grants no new rights to any party, nor does it in any way infringe on existing rights of individuals, States, or the Federal Government. This legislation simply reaffirms what has been existing law for generations in the West.

I am proud that this important piece of legislation that is supported by a broad coalition of stakeholders is now present. Water is our most precious resource in the West, and long-held private property rights to it must be protected from uncompensated Federal takings.

I urge adoption of the rule.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), to further discuss the rule that allows for the debate of the job-killing Republican water grab and the bill to keep ObamaCare taxes and remove the benefits.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman very much.

Might I make a March plea in this March madness?

Can't we all get along and work together on important items such as water rights and the SGR?

I rise, first of all, to make it very clear that I am a strong supporter of providing adequate compensation to our physicians who serve Medicare patients. It is important for our seniors to know that Medicare will be there when they need it. But it is equally important that there are physicians who are willing to attend to them without going broke.

Let it be very clear that I believe my record has been extremely strong on the idea of making sure the benefits for seniors are not cut.

The misrepresentation that the Affordable Care Act cuts Medicare benefits is not true. Now we have the sustainable growth rate, which we had bipartisan support for, and all of a sudden we have a poison pill of a self-executing rule, which was challenged in the Rules Committee, to take money from the Affordable Care Act to allegedly help the doctors.

Every doctor I speak to wants a permanent fix for the SGR. There are a number of suggestions made in the other body, somewhat unpleasant, but we were willing to look at those particular suggestions.

As with any business, medical clinics and physician offices have payrolls to meet, bills to pay, and expenses to meet as they become due. Why are we playing with them when, in essence, we know that this is not going anywhere? Why are we not taking care of these physicians who spend 8 years and hundreds of thousands of dollars to work to gain a degree because they are healers, they believe in it, they want to serve the public. Now, rather than have a bipartisan bill—in the spirit of St. Patrick's Day—and be able to come together and work together, no, we have a bill that poses a serious problem.

I oppose the rule because it corrupts what would otherwise be a strongly supported bipartisan bill to sustain physician reimbursement rates, and it is another attempt, again by our friends on the other side, to disregard and mislead the public about the Affordable Care Act.

Let me clearly say that 11 groups representing the Nation's seniors—doctors and advocates—sent a letter to congressional leaders urging the House to reject the Republicans' toxic doc fix, the GOP's 51st vote to repeal.

From the letter:

The undersigned organizations representing Medicare beneficiaries and providers appreciate the bipartisan, bicameral work done to repeal the Sustainable Growth Rate, SGR, and reform the Medicare reimbursement system. The current effort to link, however, SGR reform with changes to the Affordable Care Act injects partisan politics in bipartisan legislation.

Access to health care for more than 50 million Americans with Medicare is a serious matter. We should not schedule a vote that does not take seriously the idea of making sure our doctors get sufficient compensation.

The other wrongheaded approach to this is there are no amendments being allowed. No amendments, Mr. Speaker. A closed rule. I just saw some documentation of how many closed rules we have had in this House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK). The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. I yield the gentlewoman an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentleman.

The Jackson Lee amendment that was not allowed would have ensured that, notwithstanding any provision of this act, no delay in the application of any provision of the Affordable Care Act would have occurred. It would have called for some studies about Medicare providers. It would have given us real information.

Jackson Lee amendment No. 2 would have required the Secretary to submit a report on cost savings.

The real point is, between skewing the water rights of people and the SGR, this rule should be opposed. We should get back to the drawing board.

Can't we all get along and work together on the right kind of legislation for water rights? More importantly, Mr. Speaker, our doctors deserve better, and I will say to them, you will get better from us.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in strong opposition to the Rule for H.R. 4015, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014.

Let me say first that I am a strong supporter of providing adequate compensation to our physicians who serve Medicare patients. It is important for our seniors to know that Medicare will be there when they need it. But it is equally important that there are physicians who are willing to attend to them without going broke.

That is why we have a Sustainable Growth Rate or "SGR." Medicare reimbursement enables rural physicians and hospitals to remain open for business.

As with any business, medical clinics and physician offices have payrolls to meet, bills to pay, and expenses to meet as they become due. If revenues are not sufficient to cover costs, the business will not long survive.

Thus, it is critical that we not disrupt timely and adequate payment to Medicare providers.

The problem with H.R. 4015 is what happened in the Rules Committee.

The Rules Committee, on a party line vote, added language to the Rule for H.R. 4015 that would delay the Affordable Care Act's implementation of the individual mandate.

I oppose the Rule for two reasons:

It corrupts what would otherwise be a strongly supported bipartisan bill to sustain physician reimbursement rates for medical services approved under Medicare, and

It is another attempt by the Republicans to mislead the public regarding the Affordable Care Act.

The Jackson Lee Amendments offered to the Rules Committee for H.R. 4015 would have improved the bill by removing the uncertainty that physicians would not keep the reimbursement rates they now have for treating patients under Medicare.

Jackson Lee Amendment #1 would have ensured that notwithstanding any provision of this Act, no delay in the application of any provisions of the Affordable Care Act's individual mandate can take effect before January 21, 2017.

Jackson Lee Amendment #2 would have required the Secretary of Health and Human Services to submit a report to Congress on the impact of the Medicare provider payments on the diversity and availability of physicians and hospitals to underserved rural and urban communities.

Jackson Lee Amendment #3 would have required the Secretary of Health and Human Services to submit a report to Congress on the cost savings associated with people no longer using emergency rooms or acute care facilities as their primary means of obtaining health care.

Jackson Lee Amendment #4 would ensure that the bill cannot be construed or interpreted

to permit or require a delay in the application of the Affordable Care Act's individual mandate.

I know that many predicted that the Affordable Care Act would cause havoc on the nation's health care system. But it is not the ACA that is causing havoc—it is the 50 desperate but futile attempts by the Tea Party to scuttle a law that has been passed by Congress, signed by the President, upheld by the Supreme Court.

The most threatening actions to our nation's healthcare system by Tea Party Republicans are their attacks on Medicare.

In 2014, according to the Kaiser Foundation 16% of the nation's people have medical insurance under Medicare:

Texas has 12% of its residents insured under Medicare;

Arkansas, Florida and Vermont have 19% of their residents insured under Medicare; and

West Virginia and Maine have 21% of their residents insured under Medicare.

Kentucky; Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Wisconsin, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Oregon have 18% of their residents insured under Medicare.

Every state has more than 10% of their residents insured by Medicare.

The uncertainty created by the majority regarding Medicare reimbursement over the last several years has forced physicians to reevaluate continuing their medical practice and frustrated hospitals working to make budget projections over several years into the future—this is critical to business decision making.

Because of uncertainty created by Medicare physician reimbursement—physicians and hospitals have been forced to close their offices, reduce services, or merge.

When patients find they cannot keep their physician or that their options for health care are being affected—it is not because of the Affordable Care Act.

Our nation has taken a momentous step in creating a mindset that good health is a personal responsibility with the enactment of the Affordable Care Act. The health care law did not automatically enroll all citizens into the program; it was specifically designed to be an opt-in process.

There are tens of thousands of visitors each day to the website and despite problems with the initial rollout of the online health insurance registration process, millions have enrolled and experience the peace of mind that comes from having affordable, high quality health insurance that is there when you need it.

I have held many events in my District to inform and connect people with Navigators and Community Health Centers and send a strong message to my constituents encouraging them that now is the time for them to obtain affordable, accessible, and high quality health insurance for themselves and their families.

So it is puzzling that with less than 70 legislative days remaining in the Second Session of the 113th Congress, we are still seeing attempts to end the Affordable Care Act.

The fact that a bill that is critical to the provision of payments to physicians that treat Medicare patients is not safe from the politics of the moment is troubling.

I ask my colleagues to support Medicare patients and their physicians by rejecting this Rule.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to the amount of time that remains.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 15½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Colorado has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. BURGESS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I yield myself 2 minutes.

I wanted to just list some of the exemptions from the individual mandate—those passed in a bipartisan manner by the House of Representatives and those instituted by executive action by the President:

July 17, we delayed the individual mandate until 2015. Twenty-two Democrats voted in favor of that.

March 10, 2014, delayed the individual penalty for individuals who fail to have health care coverage. Twenty-seven Democrats voted in favor.

March 11, H.R. 1814, exempted individuals with certain religious beliefs. Passed by a voice vote. Not a single dissenting vote.

March 11, we exempted volunteer firefighters and emergency responders from the individual mandate. The vote was 410–0. 186 Democrats voted in favor.

March 11, we exempted individuals who receive health coverage under TRICARE, VA, from being counted towards the employer mandate under the ACA. 183 Democrats voted in favor of that exemption.

This is not something that is exclusive to the House of Representatives.

□ 1315

Just last week, the administration quietly excused millions of people from the requirement to purchase health insurance or else pay the tax. Now all you need to do is fill out a form attesting that your plan was canceled and you believe that the plan options available in the marketplace in your area are more expensive than your canceled insurance policy. You believe that to be true. You don't have to prove it. You believe it to be true. It is self-attestation. So the President has already delayed the individual mandate for another 2 years' time.

This is a reasonable proposal, what is out there today. Yes, doctors do need relief, but we need to pay for that. I believe the proposal before the Congress today will do just that.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The Republicans are getting worse and worse on these ObamaCare votes. You would think that you would get better with practice, after 52 times they would be better at repealing ObamaCare. That is because this body, the House of Representatives, has voted to repeal ObamaCare, in whole or in part, 52 times.

Those votes started out where it was very simple. The votes were to repeal

everything that was in the Affordable Care Act. That is how those votes started. Now they have gotten to the point where the Republicans want to keep the taxes from ObamaCare and get rid of the benefits. I don't think anybody wants that.

I mean, if you are talking about repealing the Affordable Care Act, you still have people that are split on that. You might have a few more people that agree with you or a few more that agree with us, but the American people have different opinions about that. But if you offered any of them keep all the taxes and get rid of the benefits, I can't imagine anybody wants that.

I would hope that, after so much practice, the Republicans would be quite good at this. It seems to be the core competency they are developing. Almost every week, in fact, this body repeals ObamaCare, but now they are repealing it in a way that keeps all the taxes and gets rid of the benefits; so I am quite surprised that the old adage of "practice makes perfect" is far from true with regard to the Republican approach to this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND).

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Colorado for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, we have an opportunity in this session of Congress of getting rid of an onerous policy that has affected the delivery of health care throughout our country since 1997, the so-called sustainable growth rate. That is the reimbursement that our doctors, our physicians receive in Medicare.

We have been working hard at this for a number of years. I commend my good friend and colleague from Texas for the leadership that he has shown on this issue.

The policy behind the SGR repeal that is going to be before this Congress tomorrow has been bipartisan in support. It moves the health care system in the direction where it needs to go, with an emphasis on quality and value, as opposed to the volume of services and moving away from the so-called fee-for-service reimbursement schedule that we have right now.

I believe that if we continue to drive the health care system in that direction, we can get much better quality of care for all Americans, but at a much better price. There are a lot of tools under the Affordable Care Act that are moving us in that direction now to a more integrated, coordinated, patient-centered health care delivery system, but also a reimbursement system that finally is based on the value or the quality of care that is given and no longer the volume of services that are rendered.

In fact, just recently, the Institute of Medicine at the National Academy of Sciences came out with their analysis of the health care system, and found

that we are spending close to \$750 billion every year on things that don't work. They don't improve patient care. It is the overutilization that is costing us so much and, most of the time, leading to worse outcomes rather than better outcomes; yet the bill with the SGR before us would correct a lot of this with different payment models, with the emphasis on quality and value, with value incentives built into it.

The problem that we have before us tomorrow is how they are going to pay for it. It is this itch that they have to scratch over and over again called the Affordable Care Act, or so-called ObamaCare. They can't help themselves but to keep going back to that well in order to find offsets and pay-fors for other measures where there is bipartisan support and agreement on.

So we will go through this ruse yet again tomorrow. We will have this debate. The vote will probably be along partisan-lines, knowing that it is not going to advance anywhere in the Senate, nor would the President embrace this type of pay-for eliminating the individual responsibility component of the Affordable Care Act. And then we will be right back to where we are today, and that is having to sit down, talk to one another, find some reasonable offsets in order to finally repeal the SGR.

Repeal of SGR is on sale right now. The Congressional Budget Office has been very kind in their score on what repeal would look like—roughly \$138 billion. Still a lot of money. In fact, where current per capita health care spending is going right now, it keeps getting better month after month. We are at the lowest per capita health care spending in the last 50 years, certainly lower than anything that we have ever seen under Medicare and Medicaid.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 45 seconds.

Mr. KIND. So there are some powerful trends that are leading to a reduction in overall health care spending, things that we should study and explore and try to sustain.

But moving forward with an SGR repeal based on pay-fors that are being offered is just a dead-end road, it is not going to advance, and this is too important of a topic, too serious of an issue throughout our health care system to play these partisan, political games all over again.

So let's scratch this itch once again, and then, next week, let's come back together and see if we can, in a bipartisan fashion, find some commonsense, reasonable offsets that both parties can agree to, that the Senate can work on, that the President will sign, so we can finally get rid of this SGR onus that has been hanging over us.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, again I remind the body that this language, this compromise, this bipartisan, bicameral compromise has been available for all to see since February 6. During that time, what response have we gotten from the United States Senate as the responsible way to pay for this legislation? Crickets. Zero. Nothing.

We are offering this bill today with the pay-for that has been embraced by both sides in a bipartisan fashion, as I have demonstrated to you already. This would not be necessary if the Senate had provided us feedback on what their approach to a method of paying for this legislation would be, but they did not.

We know the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, the Finance Committee in the other body, the chairwoman has now gone to a different occupation, so there is a new chairperson in the other body on the Finance Committee, but that shouldn't have been an obstacle. There was a way forward to provide the discussion, a preconference conference, if you will, because we had all agreed on the policy. This was not a mystery. This was not something that one body had done in secret. This had all been done out in the open for the past 2 years. So that pathway was available.

But for whatever reason, the other body said no deal. We don't want to deal with the House. We want to jam the House at the last minute and get them to accept something. Or better yet, let's just do another patch and get us past our Election Day. That is a very cynical approach.

Mr. Speaker, today before us on the floor we are taking a responsible approach. And guess what. Because we have taken this approach, the Senate is now talking once again about their way forward, which, ultimately, I think is a good thing.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inquire of the gentleman if he has any remaining speakers.

Mr. BURGESS. As the gentleman from Colorado knows, I am capable of filling whatever volume of time remains on my own, but, no, I don't see other speakers seeking recognition.

I would inquire of the gentleman from Colorado his status of additional speakers.

Mr. POLIS. I am prepared to close. I have 6 minutes, and I wanted to yield to the gentleman if he has remaining speakers who wanted to speak before I close.

Mr. BURGESS. I am prepared to close.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, sadly, with these two bills, while the Republican job-killing water grab bill and the ObamaCare tax bill are both not going to become law,

they both have a genesis in a real issue, one that calls for bipartisan co-operation, one that affects the water rights of ski areas that we have offered language in an amendment that would address, the other, my colleague, Mr. KIND, addressed.

This body has a long tradition of coming together around figuring how to pay for SGR. Now, the gentleman mentioned February 6 the language was available. The language regarding the SGR fix is not what is in dispute. The way of paying for the SGR fix is what is the topic of debate between Democrats and Republicans. That language was not seen February 6. That language is not even going to be voted upon under this rule. It is contained in the rule itself.

Sadly, while we take up our time on these bills that are not going to become law, we continue to avoid action on the pressing issue of reforming our immigration system. In August, a number of us sent a letter to Speaker BOEHNER saying that he should introduce comprehensive immigration reform legislation. If he failed to do so, we would work with a diverse group of our colleagues to introduce a bill for comprehensive immigration reform in the House. There were crickets, and so my colleagues and I, in October, introduced H.R. 15, comprehensive immigration reform, a bill that has bipartisan cosponsors, over 200 sponsors from both sides of the aisle.

Immigration reform is supported by an unprecedented coalition, including business and tech companies, faith leaders from across the country, police, security specialists, but most importantly, the American people, who are sick and tired of having over 10 million people in our country illegally.

We need to restore the rule of law. We need to allow American families to succeed in our country and to live their dreams. We need to have control of our border. We need to implement mandatory workplace authentication to ensure that people who are here illegally cannot work. Every day that passes is a failure of this body to address these issues, and the solution to all of these issues, workplace authentication, securing our border, uniting families, those are all in H.R. 15.

Look, we are ready to talk. If you don't want to bring H.R. 15 to a vote, Mr. Speaker, what are your immigration bills? What is the package of bills that will address these? Because we know it will take a multifaceted approach. A wall alone on the southern border doesn't solve this issue. The day after that wall is erected, there are still 10 million people here illegally, and the fact that half the people who are here illegally don't sneak across that border, they come here legally and then they outstay their welcome and work illegally. So this requires a solution that I think this Congress is capable of. I think we can work together.

Rather than consider divisive, job-killing water grab bills, rather than consider divisive ObamaCare tax bills that the Republicans want to use ObamaCare taxes, rather than repeal them, let's come together around immigration reform. House Republicans need to reject offensive and unproductive rhetoric and show real leadership that the business community in our country is calling out for.

A few weeks ago, a Wall Street Journal op-ed criticized Republicans' failure to act on commonsense reform. The Wall Street Journal said: "Republicans have killed immigration reform for now, but the Farm Bureau study shows that in the real economy it's still needed."

We could increase GDP by 3.3 percent. We can raise American wages by \$470 billion with immigration reform. We can create 121,000 jobs for Americans each year by bringing comprehensive immigration reform to the floor.

Over 70 percent of the American people support immigration reform. It is time to act.

Mr. Speaker, if we defeat the previous question, I will offer an amendment to the rule to bring up the reasonable solution that would permanently fix the SGR and is offset by capping spending on the Overseas Contingency Fund.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD along with extraneous material immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, but I regret to say unsurprisingly, the Republicans continue to play politics with Medicare, politics with water that is the lifeblood of the American West and the economic lifeblood of the counties that I represent in Eagle and Summit County. And all we have here to vote on today is, once again, an attempt to undermine the Affordable Care Act, to keep the taxes and remove the benefits, and an attempt to grab the water from those who would use it for fishing and recreation in the Mountain West.

□ 1330

I hope that we can do better.

If we can reject this \$183 billion rule, I think it will send a message to the Speaker that we are ready for immigration reform.

We are ready to reach out our hand on the SGR, on the doc fix, and figure out the best way to pay for it, taking the best ideas that Republicans and Democrats have to offer, working with the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) and others to bend the cost curve, so that we can deliver a better quality of services to American seniors and contain costs more effectively.

I urge my colleagues to vote “no” and defeat the previous question and vote “no” on the underlying bills.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to direct Members' attention to yesterday's Wall Street Journal, the article entitled “ObamaCare's Secret Mandate Exemption,” which goes into some detail about the self-attestation for the so-called hardship exemption, which the administration included as part of an unrelated rule last week.

As a consequence, there is an exemption from the individual mandate for the next 2 years for anyone who simply wants to go and say: I am sorry; this is too tough for me to do.

Mr. Speaker, today's rule provides for the consideration of two important bills, one dealing with critical water rights and the other addressing the serious problem in the Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate.

I certainly want to thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) on H.R. 3189, as well as thank the chairmen and the ranking members of the House Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means, as well as the Senate Finance Committee, for coming together for our Nation's doctors and seniors.

As I close, I would like to note that each committee's work is represented in H.R. 4015. H.R. 4015's base policy has the backing of the House and Senate negotiators and all three committees of jurisdiction. The original cosponsors of the bill include the chairmen and the ranking members of the full committees of jurisdiction, as well as their health subcommittees.

The bill has gained support from the GOP Doctors Caucus, as well as many physicians on the other side of the aisle. We have over 100 bipartisan cosponsors. The bill's policy has been embraced by organized medicine, with well over 700 State and national groups in support of the bill.

From primary care to specialists to surgeons to organized nursing and everyone in-between, we have support for this policy. We will not be able to accomplish this goal without substantive and immediate bipartisan dialogue seeking agreement on reforms to offset the costs associated with the policies in H.R. 4015.

While the delay of the mandate has received bipartisan support, I understand the problems that arise and the opposition that arises.

These reforms must receive the necessary majority support, not only of the House and Senate, but also be agreed to by the White House. However, no one Chamber can negotiate on such an important task in a vacuum.

This action by the House is a means of clearly demonstrating that the legislative policies contained within H.R.

4015 and S. 2000 not only have the support of the committees of jurisdiction and organized medicine, but can gain the necessary support to pass the House.

Mr. Speaker, this is clearly not the end of this conversation. It is another step—another step of many that have been taken in demonstrating to both sides of the Capitol that the committees of jurisdiction have produced significant policy that can serve as the solution to the sustainable growth rate formula that most of us have sought throughout our congressional careers.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to take a moment to thank some of the staff members who have done so much work. I really wanted to start with Dr. John O'Shea, who no longer is on the staff, but now works at the Brookings Institute.

Dr. O'Shea, a physician from New York, was hired by committee staff for the express purpose of helping develop the policy for repealing the sustainable growth rate. In addition, James Decker on my staff assists me with rules issues.

J.P. Paluskiewicz, known affectionately by his friends as J.P., has put in extraordinary hours on this project, as have Sarah Johnson and Adrianna Simonelli on my personal staff.

On the committee staff, Clay Alspach and Robert Horne have additionally put in hours well above and beyond what ordinarily would be required of committee staff in order to see this project come to fruition.

I certainly want to thank Chairman UPTON for making this a priority during his chairmanship of the Committee on Energy and Commerce; and I thank all of the staff—staff on Ways and Means and staff on Senate Finance—who have worked on this issue and will continue to work on this issue until it is solved.

Every success we have had at every point in this process was further than we have ever come before, and that involved a lot of working weekends; but ultimately, if we use this action to springboard to full bicameral engagement on the package that can go to the White House and get signed by the President, indeed, I think all involved would agree that it would be worth it.

I look forward to passage. I look forward to continuing the process with this Chamber and the other Chamber to embrace the underlying policy and ultimately identify the offsets that can get this badly needed policy into law. I urge my colleagues to support the rule and both underlying bills.

[From the Hill, March 13, 2014]

OBAMACARE'S SECRET MANDATE EXEMPTION

ObamaCare's implementers continue to roam the battlefield and shoot their own wounded, and the latest casualty is the core of the Affordable Care Act—the individual mandate. To wit, last week the Administration quietly excused millions of people from

the requirement to purchase health insurance or else pay a tax penalty.

This latest political reconstruction has received zero media notice, and the Health and Human Services Department didn't think the details were worth discussing in a conference call, press materials or fact sheet. Instead, the mandate suspension was buried in an unrelated rule that was meant to preserve some health plans that don't comply with ObamaCare benefit and redistribution mandates. Our sources only noticed the change this week.

That seven-page technical bulletin includes a paragraph and footnote that casually mention that a rule in a separate December 2013 bulletin would be extended for two more years, until 2016. Lo and behold, it turns out this second rule, which was supposed to last for only a year, allows Americans whose coverage was cancelled to opt out of the mandate altogether.

In 2013, HHS decided that ObamaCare's wave of policy terminations qualified as a “hardship” that entitled people to a special type of coverage designed for people under age 30 or a mandate exemption. HHS originally defined and reserved hardship exemptions for the truly down and out such as battered women, the evicted and bankrupts.

But amid the post-rollout political backlash, last week the agency created a new category: Now all you need to do is fill out a form attesting that your plan was cancelled and that you “believe that the plan options available in the [ObamaCare] Marketplace in your area are more expensive than your cancelled health insurance policy” or “you consider other available policies unaffordable.”

This lax standard—no formula or hard test beyond a person's belief—at least ostensibly requires proof such as an insurer termination notice. But people can also qualify for hardships for the unspecified nonreason that “you experienced another hardship in obtaining health insurance,” which only requires “documentation if possible.” And yet another waiver is available to those who say they are merely unable to afford coverage, regardless of their prior insurance. In a word, these shifting legal benchmarks offer an exemption to everyone who conceivably wants one.

Keep in mind that the White House argued at the Supreme Court that the individual mandate to buy insurance was indispensable to the law's success, and President Obama continues to say he'd veto the bipartisan bills that would delay or repeal it. So why are ObamaCare liberals silently gutting their own creation now?

The answers are the implementation fiasco and politics. HHS revealed Tuesday that only 940,000 people signed up for an ObamaCare plan in February, bringing the total to about 4.2 million, well below the original 5.7 million projection. The predicted “surge” of young beneficiaries isn't materializing even as the end-of-March deadline approaches, and enrollment decelerated in February.

Meanwhile, a McKinsey & Company survey reports that a mere 27% of people joining the exchanges were previously uninsured through February. The survey also found that about half of people who shopped for a plan but did not enroll said premiums were too expensive, even though 80% of this group qualify for subsidies. Some substantial share of the people ObamaCare is supposed to help say it is a bad financial value. You might even call it a hardship.

HHS is also trying to pre-empt the inevitable political blowback from the nasty 2015

tax surprise of fining the uninsured for being uninsured, which could help reopen ObamaCare if voters elect a Republican Senate this November. Keeping its mandate waiver secret for now is an attempt get past November and in the meantime sign up as many people as possible for government-subsidized health care. Our sources in the insurance industry are worried the regulatory loophole sets a mandate non-enforcement precedent, and they're probably right. The longer it is not enforced, the less likely any President will enforce it.

The larger point is that there have been so many unilateral executive waivers and delays that ObamaCare must be unrecognizable to its drafters, to the extent they ever knew what the law contained.

TEXAS MEDICAL ASSOCIATION,
Austin, TX, March 13, 2014.

Hon. MICHAEL C. BURGESS, MD,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE BURGESS: On behalf of the 47,000-plus physician and medical student members of the Texas Medical Association, I am writing to reiterate our strong support for the work you have done to effectuate the repeal of Medicare's Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula. In conjunction with your Texas colleague, Kevin Brady, you have gotten closer to solving this challenging issue than ever before. And you have done so with the support of every member of the Texas delegation, both Democratic and Republican, on the Energy & Commerce and Ways & Means Committees.

Perhaps more than anyone in Congress, you understand the frustration and anxiety that the ongoing SGR uncertainty creates for practicing physicians. You have worked tirelessly to craft a piece of legislation that not only repeals the SGR immediately, but also guarantees positive updates for physicians for five years, removes potential causes of liability against physicians, and eliminates some unnecessary bureaucratic red tape that prevents physicians from concentrating on patient care.

We especially appreciate your ongoing consultation and dialogue with TMA and Texas physicians throughout this process.

As you know well, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014 has made it this far because of a bipartisan, bicameral agreement on the need to replace the SGR. We are committed to helping you finish the task.

Sincerely,

STEPHEN L. BROTHERTON, MD,
President.

The material previously referred to by Mr. POLIS is as follows:

AN AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 515 OFFERED BY
MR. POLIS OF COLORADO

Strike section 2 and replace with:

Sec. 2. Immediately upon adoption of this resolution the Speaker shall, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4209) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided among and controlled by the chair and ranking mi-

nority member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means, and the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the Committee of the Whole rises and reports that it has come to no resolution on the bill, then on the next legislative day the House shall, immediately after the third daily order of business under clause 1 of rule XIV, resolve into the Committee of the Whole for further consideration of the bill.

At the end of the resolution, add the following new section:

Sec. 5. Clause 1(c) of rule XIX shall not apply to the consideration of H.R. 4209.

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Republican majority agenda and a vote to allow the Democratic minority to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives (VI, 308-311), describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

The Republican majority may say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution . . . [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the Republican Leadership Manual on the Legislative Process in the United States House of Representatives, (6th edition, page 135). Here's how the Republicans describe the previous question vote in their own manual: "Although it is generally not possible to amend the rule because the majority Member controlling the time will not yield for the purpose of offering an amendment, the same result may be achieved by voting down the previous question on the rule. . . . When the motion for the previous question is defeated,

control of the time passes to the Member who led the opposition to ordering the previous question. That Member, because he then controls the time, may offer an amendment to the rule, or yield for the purpose of amendment."

In Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: "Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Republican majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Mr. BURGESS. With that, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of adoption of the resolution.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 227, nays 193, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 125]

YEAS—227

Aderholt	Cole	Garrett
Amash	Collins (GA)	Gerlach
Bachus	Collins (NY)	Gibbs
Barletta	Conaway	Gibson
Barr	Cook	Gingrey (GA)
Barton	Cotton	Gohmert
Benishek	Cramer	Goodlatte
Bentivolio	Crawford	Gowdy
Bilirakis	Crenshaw	Granger
Bishop (UT)	Culberson	Graves (GA)
Black	Daines	Graves (MO)
Blackburn	Davis, Rodney	Griffin (AR)
Boustany	Denham	Griffith (VA)
Brady (TX)	Dent	Grimm
Bridenstine	DeSantis	Guthrie
Brooks (AL)	DesJarlais	Hall
Brooks (IN)	Diaz-Balart	Hanna
Broun (GA)	Duffy	Harper
Buchanan	Duncan (SC)	Harris
Bucshon	Duncan (TN)	Hartzler
Burgess	Ellmers	Hastings (WA)
Byrne	Farenthold	Heck (NV)
Calvert	Fincher	Hensarling
Camp	Fitzpatrick	Herrera Beutler
Campbell	Fleischmann	Holding
Cantor	Fleming	Hudson
Capito	Flores	Huelskamp
Carter	Forbes	Huizenga (MI)
Cassidy	Fortenberry	Hultgren
Chabot	Fox	Hunter
Chaffetz	Franks (AZ)	Hurt
Coble	Frelinghuysen	Issa
Coffman	Gardner	Jenkins

Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul
McClintock
McHenry
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin

NAYS—193

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Beatty
Becerra
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards

Mulvaney
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce
Perry
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise

Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southerland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Trentham
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

Rahall
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus

Amodei
Bachmann
Bass
Courtney

Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus

NOT VOTING—10

Dingell
Gosar
Payne
Rangel
Rush
Wagner

□ 1404

Mr. GALLEG0 changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Messrs. BRADY of Texas, MEEHAN, and CALVERT changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the previous question was ordered. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I have the honor to transmit herewith a facsimile copy of a letter received from Mr. Gary J. Holland, Assistant Director of Elections, Office of the Secretary of State of Florida, indicating that, according to the preliminary returns of the Special Election held March 11, 2014, the Honorable David W. Jolly was elected Representative to Congress for the Thirteenth Congressional District, State of Florida.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk.

Enclosure.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
DIVISION OF ELECTIONS,
Tallahassee, FL, March 12, 2014.

Hon. KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MS. HAAS: This is to advise you that the preliminary results reported on the night of March 11, 2014, for the special election for the Thirteenth Congressional District of Florida, reflected the following preliminary returns (which includes all early voting and Election Day results, along with all but two regular absentee ballots, provisional ballots, and the overseas absentee ballots which could be received within 10 days after the election):

David W. Jolly, REP, 89,099, 48.52%
Alex Sink, DEM, 85,642, 46.64%
Lucas Overby, LPF, 8,893, 4.84%
Michael S. Levinson, WRI, 0, 0%

The first set of unofficial results are not due to be reported until noon, March 15, 2014. It is only when the first set of unofficial re-

sults are reported that we will know if a recount actually becomes necessary. Florida law requires a recount when a candidate is defeated by ½ of a percent or less of the votes cast. To the best of our knowledge, there is no contest to this election; however, a contest may be filed at any time within 10 days after the state's Election Canvassing Commission certifies the election, which is scheduled to occur on March 26, 2014.

We will follow up with you after we receive the unofficial results and again after we have the official Certificate of Election, which we will transmit as required by law.

Sincerely,

GARY J. HOLLAND,
Assistant Director.

SWEARING IN OF THE HONORABLE DAVID W. JOLLY, OF FLORIDA, AS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Florida, the Honorable DAVID W. JOLLY, be permitted to take the oath of office today.

His certificate of election has not arrived, but there is no contest and no question has been raised with regard to his election.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER. Will Representative-elect JOLLY and the members of the Florida delegation present themselves in the well.

All Members will rise and the Representative-elect will please raise his right hand.

Mr. JOLLY appeared at the bar of the House and took the oath of office, as follows:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter, so help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations, you are now a Member of the 113th Congress.

WELCOMING THE HONORABLE DAVID W. JOLLY TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as dean of the Florida delegation, it is my pleasure to welcome the newest Member of this proud body, Congressman DAVID JOLLY.

Today is a significant progression for DAVID, from staffer to elected Representative; a progression beginning from his many years working for his

community as a staffer for our esteemed late colleague, Congressman Bill Young.

I am confident that DAVID has returned to these Halls to ensure that Bill's legacy is carried on, one of extraordinary constituent service, as well as his unwavering respect and civility for all of us in this Chamber. I also know that DAVID will, in his own words, "bring his own deep desire and drive to get things done for this country."

DAVID is a fifth-generation Floridian, and is joined in the gallery today by his rightfully proud parents and family to mark this momentous occasion. I am certain that he will work hard to maintain that sentiment with each of them, as well as his constituents in Pinellas County. He is a welcomed addition to our Florida delegation familia—a fresh and strong voice for our Sunshine State and our great Nation.

Before I yield to my distinguished colleague, CORRINE BROWN, let me also say that just like you, DAVID, I, too, won a special election to fill the seat of a legend of this institution, so believe me when I say that having big shoes to fill should be seen as both an exceptional honor as well as an exceptional opportunity.

Congratulations, and welcome from all of us.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. BROWN).

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome our newest Member to Congress and to the Florida delegation.

As I am sure he already knows, Congressman JOLLY has big shoes to fill. Bill Young was a true statesman who put the needs of his district and our home State above politics, and Florida is a better place to live because of it.

I always say, to whom God has given much, much is expected. When you are born, you get a birth certificate, and when you die, you are going to get a death certificate, and that little dash in between is what you have done to make this a better place.

I am looking forward to working with the Congressman to make Florida and the United States the best that it can be.

I also want to say that the St. Petersburg mayor is here, Rick Kriseman; welcome.

Congressman JOLLY, welcome to the United States House of Representatives.

I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. JOLLY).

(Mr. JOLLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank you and my new colleagues. Ms. ROSELEHTINEN and Ms. BROWN, thank you very much. To the people of Florida's 13th Congressional District, I want to

say thank you today for giving me a remarkable life opportunity, the opportunity to serve.

For my new colleagues, I simply want you to know two things about this new Member. First, I believe in this institution, the people's House. I believe in all that is good and right about this institution, the opportunity that this institution has to make our Nation better, to direct our Nation down the right path, to solve problems for all of us, and to secure for every American the sacred blessings of liberty.

The second thing I would like you to know about this new Congressman is I believe in civility. I had a wonderful opportunity to work for a man with whom you each served, and he left an indelible legacy in this House—one of civility. We are all elected to fight for our communities and to fight for our constituents. We are elected to fight for our convictions, for the causes we believe in, but it is a fight for the future of our country; it is not a fight against each other, and I know that.

We have had a nationally watched race. That race is over, and now it is time for me as a Member of Congress of this body to join with each of you to follow in the footsteps you have made in serving your community as I begin to serve mine.

You have my commitment today to work with each and every one of you. I look forward to it. I look forward to working with each and every one of you, and I would like to say thank you one more time to my friends and neighbors and my community, Florida's 13th Congressional District, that has given me this honor today. God bless each and every one of you.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this moment.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the administration of the oath to the gentleman from Florida, the whole number of the House is 432.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3189, WATER RIGHTS PROTECTION ACT; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4015, SGR REPEAL AND MEDICARE PROVIDER PAYMENT MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2014; AND PROVIDING FOR PROCEEDINGS DURING THE PERIOD FROM MARCH 17, 2014, THROUGH MARCH 21, 2014

The SPEAKER. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER. The question is on adoption of House Resolution 515.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 228, noes 184, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 126]

AYES—228

Aderholt	Griffin (AR)	Perry
Amash	Griffith (VA)	Petri
Bachus	Grimm	Pittenger
Barber	Guthrie	Pitts
Barletta	Hall	Poe (TX)
Barr	Hanna	Pompeo
Barton	Harper	Posey
Benishek	Harris	Price (GA)
Bentivolio	Hartzler	Reed
Bilirakis	Hastings (WA)	Reichert
Bishop (UT)	Heck (NV)	Renacci
Black	Hensarling	Ribble
Blackburn	Herrera Beutler	Rice (SC)
Boustany	Holding	Rigell
Brady (TX)	Hudson	Roby
Bridenstine	Huelskamp	Roe (TN)
Brooks (AL)	Huizenga (MI)	Rogers (AL)
Brooks (IN)	Hultgren	Rogers (KY)
Broun (GA)	Hunter	Rogers (MI)
Buchanan	Hurt	Rohrabacher
Bucshon	Issa	Rokita
Burgess	Jenkins	Rooney
Byrne	Johnson (OH)	Ros-Lehtinen
Calvert	Johnson, Sam	Roskam
Camp	Jolly	Ross
Campbell	Jones	Rothfus
Cantor	Jordan	Royce
Capito	Joyce	Runyan
Carter	Kelly (PA)	Ryan (WI)
Cassidy	King (IA)	Salmon
Chabot	King (NY)	Sanford
Chaffetz	Kingston	Scalise
Coble	Kinzinger (IL)	Schock
Coffman	Kline	Schweikert
Cole	LaMalfa	Scott, Austin
Collins (GA)	Lamborn	Sensenbrenner
Collins (NY)	Lance	Sessions
Conaway	Lankford	Shimkus
Cook	Latham	Shuster
Cotton	Latta	Sinema
Cramer	LoBiondo	Smith (MO)
Crawford	Long	Smith (NE)
Crenshaw	Lucas	Smith (NJ)
Culberson	Luetkemeyer	Smith (TX)
Daines	Lummis	Southerland
Davis, Rodney	Marchant	Stewart
Denham	Marino	Stivers
Dent	Massie	Stockman
DeSantis	McAllister	Stutzman
DesJarlais	McCarthy (CA)	Terry
Diaz-Balart	McCaul	Thompson (PA)
Duncan (SC)	McClintock	Thornberry
Duncan (TN)	McHenry	Tiberi
Ellmers	McIntyre	Tipton
Farenthold	McKeon	Turner
Fincher	McKinley	Upton
Fitzpatrick	McMorris	Valadao
Fleischmann	Rodgers	Walberg
Fleming	Meadows	Walden
Flores	Meehan	Walorski
Forbes	Messer	Weber (TX)
Fortenberry	Mica	Webster (FL)
Fox	Miller (FL)	Wenstrup
Franks (AZ)	Miller (MI)	Westmoreland
Frelinghuysen	Miller, Gary	Whitfield
Gardner	Mullin	Williams
Garrett	Mulvaney	Wilson (SC)
Gerlach	Murphy (PA)	Wittman
Gibbs	Neugebauer	Wolf
Gibson	Noem	Womack
Gingrey (GA)	Nugent	Woodall
Gohmert	Nunes	Yoder
Goodlatte	Nunnelee	Yoho
Gowdy	Olson	Young (AK)
Granger	Palazzo	Young (IN)
Graves (GA)	Paulsen	
Graves (MO)	Pearce	

NOES—184

Barrow (GA)	Becerra	Bishop (GA)
Beatty	Bera (CA)	Bishop (NY)

Blumenauer	Hahn	Neal
Bonamici	Hanabusa	Negrete McLeod
Brady (PA)	Hastings (FL)	Nolan
Braley (IA)	Heck (WA)	O'Rourke
Brown (FL)	Higgins	Owens
Brownley (CA)	Himes	Pallone
Bustos	Hinojosa	Pascarell
Butterfield	Holt	Pastor (AZ)
Capps	Honda	Pelosi
Capuano	Horsford	Perlmutter
Cardenas	Hoyer	Peters (CA)
Carney	Huffman	Peters (MI)
Carson (IN)	Israel	Peterson
Cartwright	Jackson Lee	Pingree (ME)
Castro (TX)	Jeffries	Pocan
Chu	Johnson (GA)	Polis
Cicilline	Johnson, E. B.	Price (NC)
Clark (MA)	Kaptur	Quigley
Clarke (NY)	Keating	Rahall
Clay	Kelly (IL)	Richmond
Cleaver	Kennedy	Roybal-Allard
Clyburn	Kildee	Ruiz
Cohen	Kilmer	Ruppersberger
Connolly	Kirkpatrick	Ryan (OH)
Conyers	Kuster	Sánchez, Linda T.
Cooper	Langevin	Sanchez, Loretta
Costa	Larsen (WA)	Sarbanes
Courtney	Larson (CT)	Schakowsky
Crowley	Lee (CA)	Schiff
Cuellar	Levin	Schneider
Cummings	Lewis	Schrader
Davis (CA)	Lipinski	Schwartz
Davis, Danny	Loebach	Scott (VA)
DeGette	Lofgren	Scott, David
Delaney	Lowenthal	Serrano
DeLauro	Lowe	Sewell (AL)
DeBene	Lujan Grisham	Shea-Porter
Deutch	(NM)	Sherman
Doggett	Luján, Ben Ray	Sires
Doyle	(NM)	Slaughter
Duckworth	Lynch	Smith (WA)
Edwards	Maffei	Speier
Ellison	Maloney,	Takano
Engel	Carolyn	Thompson (CA)
Enyart	Maloney, Sean	Thompson (MS)
Eshoo	Matheson	Tierney
Esty	Matsui	Titus
Farr	McCarthy (NY)	Tonko
Fattah	McCollum	Tsongas
Foster	McDermott	Vargas
Frankel (FL)	McGovern	Veasey
Fudge	McNerney	Vela
Gabbard	Meeke	Velázquez
Galleo	Meng	Vislosky
Garamendi	Michaud	Walz
Garcia	Miller, George	Wasserman
Grayson	Moore	Schultz
Green, Al	Moran	Waters
Green, Gene	Murphy (FL)	Welch
Grijalva	Nadler	Wilson (FL)
Gutiérrez	Napolitano	

NOT VOTING—19

Amodei	Gosar	Swalwell (CA)
Bachmann	Kind	Van Hollen
Bass	Labrador	Wagner
Castor (FL)	Payne	Waxman
DeFazio	Rangel	Yarmuth
Dingell	Rush	
Duffy	Simpson	

□ 1423

Ms. SINEMA changed her vote from "no" to "aye."

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WATER RIGHTS PROTECTION ACT

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill H.R. 3189.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. YODER). Is there objection to the re-

quest of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 515 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3189.

The Chair appoints the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

□ 1425

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3189) to prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer, relinquishment, or other impairment of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture, with Ms. FOXX in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) and the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

President Obama has made no secret of the fact that he is willing to act unilaterally to impose new laws and regulations on the American people, declaring that he has "a pen and a phone."

Over the last 5 years, there have been numerous examples of what has become an Imperial Presidency. Under the administration, the reach of the Federal Government has extended into nearly every sector of our economy and ensnared it in new red tape and regulations.

An egregious example of this is the Federal Government's concerted effort to take water away from individuals and businesses. Water is the lifeblood of communities and essential for a strong economy. Cities, ranchers, farmers, businesses, along with the jobs they support, all depend on a stable supply of water to survive.

For over a century, there have been established laws upholding a State's right to manage its water and its water laws, but now, this administration is threatening to undermine those laws and seeks to take away private property rights—or private water rights governed under State laws.

Madam Chairman, that is why we are here today, to consider H.R. 3189, the Water Rights Protection Act. This bipartisan bill would protect private property rights from Federal overreach that threatens to take water supplies away from water users, such as ski

areas, ranchers, cities, towns, and local conservation efforts.

This bill is responding to a very real threat as the Obama administration has sought to extort water from individuals and businesses through the permitting process.

Now, how is this done, Madam Chairman? Federal agencies are threatening to withhold permits needed to operate on Federal lands, unless private water rights are turned over to the Federal Government.

Put more simply, the Federal Government is holding necessary permits hostage unless water rights are relinquished; and they are demanding that water rights be signed over without payment, which of course is a violation of the Constitution's guarantee of just compensation.

Unfortunately, these businesses that are affected need both the permits and the water in order to operate, so what the Federal Government is doing is forcing them into an impossible situation where either choice puts them in danger of losing their livelihood or their businesses.

□ 1430

During today's debate, we will hear specific examples of businesses and families, including ski resorts and ranchers, who have experienced this heavy-handed tactic of the Federal Government's.

It is important to be clear about the risk posed by the Federal Government's action. This is not simply a threat to ski resorts and to ski areas located on Federal land as, I am sure, some will argue on the floor here today. The known problem is much greater. We have heard testimony in our committee to that fact, and the threat is not limited to one part of the country.

If a Federal agency can demand that a ski resort in Vail or that a rancher in Utah has to hand over his water to get a Federal permit, then a Federal agency can certainly do the same thing in other States—Ohio, Florida, West Virginia. Water may be more plentiful in these regions of the country than in the arid West, but the Federal Government's appetite has no geographical limits when it comes to expanding its regulatory control and its disrespect for private property and the livelihoods of American citizens. This is a threat being felt first by the West, but the risk is real, and it exists for the entire country.

Madam Chairman, regardless of where the Federal Government seeks to take water and from whom it is trying to take it, it is simply wrong, and it must be stopped. That is why H.R. 3189 is necessary, and it is why the bill is endorsed by numerous national and regional groups, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Ski Areas Association, the American

Farm Bureau Federation, the National Cattlemen's Association, the Natural Water Resources Association, and others.

Now, in the course of the debate, there will be claims and assertions made today that this bill is overly broad and that it will have a whole range of unintended consequences. Madam Chairman, I certainly don't blame those who support the Federal takings of private water rights from wanting to change the subject, but this bill is very focused. It has only one consequence, and that consequence is absolutely intended. It stops the Federal Government from taking the water of American citizens without paying for it. It does nothing else.

In fact, this bill carefully states that this prohibition will not affect irrigation water contracts, FERC licensing, endangered species recovery, national parks, or any other legal authorities. Important environmental restoration, wildlife protection and conservation work that has been occurring for years in a positive, cooperative manner—and that is whether it is in Puget Sound, which is in my State, in the Chesapeake Bay, nearby here, or in the Florida Everglades—will all continue, and all are protected. Such efforts will not be changed by this legislation.

Madam Chairman, I want to thank and recognize the sponsor of this legislation, our colleague from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), for all of his hard work in advancing this important, common-sense, bipartisan legislation.

It is time for the legislative branch to exert itself on behalf of the American people and rein in the imperial overreach of the executive branch and this administration. No law gives Federal agencies the authority to take private property rights as the administration is seeking to do. In fact, the Constitution prohibits such takings. It is time to put an end to such tactics, so I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and send a strong signal to this administration—to leave private property rights alone.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The legislation we have to consider today is flawed on many levels—it is flawed on process; it is flawed on policy; and it is flawed in claiming that it protects States' water rights. H.R. 3189 does not solve the problem—it creates more problems—because it is so broadly written and has no chance of being enacted into law.

The majority introduced the Water Rights Protection Act as a way to protect private property rights. It is not about protecting private property rights. It is not about protecting States' water rights. It goes in the opposite direction, that of creating a new Federal definition of a "water right"

when we have not had a hearing on that particular point.

Water rights have, for more than four centuries in American law, been defined as a matter of State law. If the majority is really concerned about Federal overreach, creating a sweeping new Federal definition of a "water right" without even a single hearing is not the best choice. H.R. 3189 only had a hearing, and it was held during the government shutdown, during the sequestration. As a result, the agencies affected were not able to provide expert analysis because they were not able to be at the hearing to talk to the bill's impacts. The bill's incomplete legislative record was worsened by the committee markup, whereby a clumsily drafted savings clause was added. This only added to the confusion as to the purpose of the bill, negating the purpose of the legislation, which I understand now makes it a broader bill in addressing some of the issues, as have been stated by my colleague, that it is overreach by the Obama administration, thus negating the water rights.

Today, the manager's amendment, with four additional savings clauses, continues to show the magnitude of the unintended negative consequences that H.R. 3189 would have on various activities that require a Federal permit.

There is some agreement on this bill. We both agree that the starting point of this legislation involves a conflict between the Forest Service and the ski resorts, which was the focus of the hearing. Unfortunately, the Forest Service issued a declaration, a release, that mandated certain things that are objectionable to my colleagues, and they are now having to set out a new policy directive that is under consideration by the OMB. We have not waited for the results of the OMB. We can't tell until after the comment period is given to the general public, and then it can be published.

There are currently 121 ski resorts located in 13 States that are operating on Federal Forest Service land. That is public land that belongs to the general public. It doesn't belong to the ski resorts, and it doesn't belong to this body. It belongs to the people. Through long-term special use permits, these resort companies are operating on public—taxpayer—land, belonging to the American people, for private profit. In many cases, these companies purchase water rights in order to operate the resort.

The Forest Service is currently struggling with what happens with the permitting of sales of water rights. How could the agency find a new operator if there is no water to go with that land and if it is not available, if there is no water for the land? The Forest Service issued a directive in 2011 requiring that, as a condition of these special use permits, the applicant must place its water rights in the name of

the United States. Who is the United States if it isn't the American taxpayer?

To be clear, this was not because President Obama is mad with power and wants to own water rights, as some have alluded to. Rather, it was so that the Forest Service could include those water rights as part of the package when seeking a new operator and issuing a new contract for an existing ski area on public—taxpayer—land.

The court validated that directive on procedural grounds, and the Forest Service is currently working on a new directive, as they have stated in the letter to this committee. One, they have said, will not involve permit applicants transferring their water rights to the Federal Government. It would be appropriate to consider legislation that really pinpoints and clarifies that ski area permits may not be conditioned on the transfer of water rights to the government. New legislation devising a real solution to this problem would not only be welcomed, it would be a necessity. This is why we support the Polis amendment, which addresses the narrow conflict between the ski resorts and the Forest Service, which is the real conflict.

This bill would prevent the entire Department of Agriculture and the entire Department of the Interior from conditioning any use of public property on the impairment of any water right. This bill goes well beyond ski resorts and well beyond the Forest Service to fundamentally alter public—taxpayer—land management, including the management of all units of the National Park System.

If this bill were to become law, grazing permits could no longer require that some water be left in the streams for the cattle, and bypass flows would be impacted. Any and all uses of public lands which touch on water would be affected. Without the ability to condition permits or authorizations on reasonable protections for water-dependent resources, such as habitat, timber, or recreation, agencies will not be able to comply with the conservation and multiple-use mandates required currently by law. The bill is so broad and so irresponsible that, if it were to be enacted, it would mean the very end of the public lands activities it is supposed to protect, because those activities could no longer be managed responsibly.

Congress should get out of the way, respect States' rights, and allow the Forest Service to issue its new directive, which is not the taking of anyone's property. Rather, it is placing responsible conditions on a permit allowing private companies to profit from their use of public—taxpayer—lands.

Finally, Madam Chair and Members, it is unfortunate that we are dedicating time and energy to this aspect

of water management when our constituents and our communities are facing so many more important water challenges. Most of the U.S., especially the Western U.S., is suffering from drought. While 53 percent is facing moderate to exceptional drought, the entire State of California, my State, is in drought. We certainly have more fish to fry than talking about a bill that is limited to ski resorts and the Forest Service.

I do urge my colleagues to worry less about these resorts and more about the drought that is ravaging our West, the wildfires that are threatening our lives and property, and climate change, which, if we continue to fail to act or accept, makes snow skiing a thing of the past. Some would say that this goes far beyond ski resort issues and affects nationwide entities. I say let's deal with the ski issue and the Forest Service separately, and let's support the Polis amendment.

Madam Chair, I submit for the RECORD a letter dated February 11, 2014, from the National Ski Areas Association. In the very first sentence, they are including:

I am writing on behalf of the ski industry to express the reasons ski areas strongly support passage of the bipartisan Water Rights Protection Act, H.R. 3189/S. 1630, and to advocate changes to the bill to narrow its scope.

I oppose the legislation. I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill and to support the Polis amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

NATIONAL SKI AREAS ASSOCIATION,

February 11, 2014.

Re: Support for Water Rights Protection Act

Rep. SCOTT TIPTON,
Cannon HOB, Washington, DC.

Rep. JARED POLIS,
Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Sen. JOHN BARRASSO,
Dirksen Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Sen. MARK UDALL,
Hart Office Building Suite,
Washington, DC.

GENTLEMEN: I am writing on behalf of the ski industry to express the reasons ski areas strongly support passage of the bipartisan Water Rights Protection Act, H.R. 3189/S. 1630, and to advocate changes to the bill to narrow its scope. At the outset, the ski industry would like to express our deep appreciation of your effort to protect ski area water rights from federal encroachment over the past couple of years. Your leadership on protecting water rights and your commitment to working in a bipartisan fashion to solve this problem on behalf of ski areas and other permittees on federal land have had very positive and real effects to date. While ski areas have enjoyed a long and successful partnership with the Forest Service spanning almost eight decades, Forest Service water policy is an issue on which we simply do not agree. We have invested too much in water rights to simply hand them over to the federal government.

As you are well aware, the Water Rights Protection Act would stop the federal government from illegally seizing water rights

from private parties that develop them, such as ski areas, in violation of State water law and 5th Amendment property rights protections. The intent of the bill is narrow—to protect valuable assets of ski areas and other permittees that use federal land from seizure without compensation by the federal government. Essentially everyone agrees on the need for this protection, given recent (and past) Forest Service policy that demands transfer of valuable water rights to the U.S. without compensation. This policy threatened to rock the foundation of over a hundred years' worth of water law in the West, and again, thanks to your intervention, beneficial changes are expected in the future.

The intention of the Water Rights Protection Act is not to impact stream health or aquatic species in any way. Some conservation groups contend that HR 3189 has a broader effect than simply protecting water rights, and in fact would hinder federal efforts to protect stream health and fish. Ski areas and other stakeholders strongly disagree with this interpretation of the bill and would never support a bill that had this result. In fact, a "savings clause" was included in the bill to explicitly state that the measure had no other impacts than to protect permittees' water rights from forced transfers. More importantly, the bill does not alter in any way the minimum stream flow protections that are set and enforced by the states on virtually every river and stream. Ski areas support and abide by these minimum stream flow requirements and would never take action to undermine them.

However, to make it abundantly clear that ski areas have a narrow and pointed agenda with respect to this legislation and that we are committed to maintaining stream and aquatic species health, we are now advocating changes to the bill to narrow its scope even further. These changes include narrowing the scope of the bill to apply just to the U.S. Forest Service, and clarifying that the bill prohibits forced transfers of ownership of water rights to the United States by inserting the term "title" into the bill. We offer these changes to demonstrate emphatically our unwavering commitment to maintain stream health and aquatic species, and our narrow focus of simply protecting our valuable water rights assets. These changes are directed at solving the concrete problem at hand, which is overreaching policy by the Forest Service that requires a forced transfer of ownership of water rights from permittees to the United States. The bill will continue to benefit all permittees on Forest Service lands, not just ski areas.

The release of a new water policy is expected from the Forest Service sometime in 2014. Ski areas welcome this new policy change, which we understand will not require a forced transfer of ownership of water rights. The release of this policy will not change the need for federal legislation however. First, the new policy is expected to apply prospectively, such that existing water rights subject to past Forest Service water clauses could continue to be in jeopardy of a taking by the Forest Service. Ski areas are proposing an amendment to the bill to protect against the implementation of such clauses beginning with the effective date of this bill. Ski areas have experienced four changes in Forest Service water policy in the last ten years. Only Congress can help stop the pendulum from swinging and provide ski areas the kind of stability they need to grow and succeed in the future.

After prevailing on our challenge of the Forest Service's water rights takings policy

in federal court in 2012, ski areas offered an alternative approach for the Forest Service to consider that would not involve forced transfers of water rights. We offered this alternative in the spirit of partnership, and as a way for the Forest Service to work cooperatively with ski areas to support their viability, and the viability of mountain communities, over the long term. The alternative offered by ski areas was to require resorts to provide successors in interest an option to purchase water rights at fair market value upon sale of a ski area. We continue to support this approach as a viable alternative that meets the needs of the agency, provides ski areas needed flexibility, and respects state water law.

Ski areas are great stewards of water resources. It is important for everyone to remember that only a small portion of water that is used for snowmaking is consumed. Most of the water diverted from streams for snowmaking returns to the watershed. Although it varies from region to region, studies show that approximately 80 percent of the water used for snowmaking returns to the watershed. Since the majority of water used for snowmaking is water purchased by a ski area, brought onsite through diversions, stored on-slope, and typically released more slowly back into the watershed with the seasonal melting of the winter snowpack, snowmaking typically benefits the watershed in which it is taking place, as well as downstream users, and can help counteract the harmful effects of drought. In addition to using a whole array of conservation measures, many resorts impound or store water in reservoirs for use during low flow times of the year without affecting fish or aquatic habitat. The ability to control our water assets and investments—which will be the outcome of passage of the Water Rights Protection Act—will enable us to continue this stewardship in the future. It will also allow us to continue to provide a high quality recreation opportunity for millions of people on the National Forests.

In closing, we thank you for your work to date on this issue, and we look forward to continuing to work together in cooperation to ensure the bill's passage.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BERRY,
President.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), the sponsor of this legislation.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chair, after listening to our Democrat colleague's statement, probably the best thing that we can do to be able to allay their fears is for them to read the bill. It actually protects private property rights, and let me fill in the balance of the story from the letter that you just cited:

The ski areas are saying that they strongly support the passage of the bipartisan Water Rights Act, H.R. 3189.

I would like to submit for the RECORD letters from over 40 different organizations—farmers, ranchers, ski areas, municipalities—that are supporting this legislation to be able to protect private property rights in the United States.

Madam Chair, the fear in Washington is palpable. Yesterday, we heard from

the White House of the threat of a veto, a veto against a piece of legislation which is just codifying what is protected in the Constitution—private property rights in this country. There is going to be a headline in tomorrow's paper. With the affirmative passage of this legislation, it will read that the House of Representatives stood with the American people—stood with private property rights—to stop a job-killing Federal water grab. That is what this legislation is about.

A very clear choice exists today. You can choose to stand with farmers, with ranchers, with municipalities, with our ski areas to be able to protect the Constitution regarding the Fifth Amendment for just compensation, or you can embrace the heavy hand of government and support a job-killing Federal water grab. That is the clear choice that we face today.

This bill is narrow in scope. In fact, the manager's amendment that I will be putting forward is actually going to make sure that many of the concerns that we have just heard expressed are reasserted in that legislation to be able to protect the Endangered Species Act, to make sure that authorities are not currently under law or exceeded, and to make sure that our tribes are actually protected from the heavy hand of government being used as a tool for another Federal water grab.

□ 1445

This is a commonsense piece of legislation—legislation that is designed to stand for the very principle that we have in this country of private property rights.

Protect the water of the West. Protect that private property right. This is simple, 2-page legislation.

Madam Chair, this is legislation which serves the interests of this country, serves the interests of the West, and I ask for its adoption.

COLORADO CATTLEMEN'S
ASSOCIATION

Arvada, CO, March 12, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER AND MINORITY LEADER PELOSI: The Colorado Cattlemen's Association (CCA) and Colorado Public Lands Council strongly support the Water Rights Protection Act (WRPA), (H.R. 3189). The CCA and PLC represent Colorado's public and private lands ranching industries through a grassroots network of affiliates and individual members. Many of our members hold private water rights on federal lands, which serve as an integral part of their operations; thus, these water rights keep our members in business and rural communities thriving. However, landowners face an unprecedented threat to the future of their water rights on lands managed by the USFS and potentially other federal agencies.

H.R. 3189, introduced by Congressmen Scott Tipton (R-Colo.), Mark Amodei (R-Nev.), Rob Bishop (R-Utah), Tom McClintock (R-Calif.), and Jared Polis (D-Colo.) dis-

allows the USFS and the Bureau of Land Management from seizing water rights without just compensation. An issue that arose in a USFS directive applicable to ski areas was seen by industry as an issue that could threaten all water users, including ranchers, as they depend on water rights on public land (and private) to keep their businesses viable. It is important that H.R. 3189 pass without limitation to specific industries—ensuring ranchers have access to the water rights they own, maintain and have developed.

We support an amendment by Representative Tipton that would make revisions to the legislation which would clarify the intent of the bill. We also understand that several additional amendments have been submitted that would too narrowly focus the legislation so as to not protect livestock producers, and one amendment in particular that would cause the legislation to become applicable only to ski operations. CCA and PLC strongly oppose any amendment with exclusive language that will jeopardize the efficacy of the bill for our constituency, ranchers. Our members face the same threats as ski companies do—perhaps, with more at stake, as they are individuals and families depending on these water rights for their livelihood. It is important to include all industries that may be impacted in the legislation, to keep our rural communities thriving. Rep. Tipton's bill accomplishes the purpose of protecting all water right holders, including ranchers.

There is no justification to include an amendment that will only protect one type of water use, and we strongly urge all members of the House to vote against any such amendment.

We thank you for your attention to this crucial issue, and for supporting America's ranchers as they continue to be an essential part of rural communities and stewards of our public lands.

Sincerely,

GENE MANUELLO,
President,

Colorado Cattlemen's Association.

TIM CANTERBURY,

Chair,

Colorado Public Lands Council.

EAGLE RIVER WATER & SANITATION
DISTRICT, UPPER EAGLE REGIONAL
WATER AUTHORITY,

Vail, CO, February 27, 2014.

Rep. SCOTT TIPTON,
Washington, DC.

Rep. JARED POLIS,
Washington, DC.

Senator MICHAEL BENNET,
Washington, DC.

Senator MARK UDALL,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES POLIS AND TIPTON AND SENATORS BENNET AND UDALL: Please be advised that we are in receipt of the February 10, 2014 letter to you on the letterhead of the Water Quality/Quantity Committee of the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG) regarding H.R. 3189, the Water Rights Protection Act, and its companion bill, S-1630. That letter gives the improper impression that all of the listed members, associate members, and participating water and sanitation districts support the position taken in that letter. They do not.

As the largest municipal water provider within NWCCOG, serving the over 60,000 customers from Vail to Wolcott, we strongly support H.R. 3189 and S. 1630, and do not agree with the amendments proposed by the

NWCCOG letter. In particular, the Forest Service does not have the legal authority to impose bypass flows and a Federal Water Rights Task Force has so determined, and any amendment that they do would be a major expansion of federal authority over state granted water rights. Federal bypass requirements are really just a taking of water rights by another name and on a smaller scale. It is hard to imagine that the members of NWCCOG support the federalization and taking of any of the property of their residents and area businesses regardless of the name the federal government gives to its taking. Moreover, bypass flows should not be thought of as an environmental solution to low stream flows as they are not water rights that can be administered by a water commissioner and shepherded downstream. Rather, senior water rights from public lands that are required to be bypassed can simply be taken up by a junior water right holder just past the Forest Service boundary. This is one of the main reasons why the Colorado Water Conservation Board, which is the State agency with exclusive authority to obtain in-stream flows, has consistently opposed federal attempts to impose bypass flows.

We have enclosed a copy of a piece prepared by The Federal Water Rights Task Force entitled "The Colorado 'Bypass Flow' Controversy" for your review. It is an excellent review of the limitations on existing rights of the Forest Service to impose bypass flows and practical reasons why imposing such flows is not a good idea. (The link for the entire report is <http://www.fs.fed.us/land/water/>.)

We believe that many of the largest water users within NWCCOG agree with our position.

Very truly yours,

FREDERICK P. SACKBAUER, IV,
Eagle River Water & Sanitation District,
Chairman of the Board.

GEORGE GREGORY,
Upper Eagle Regional Water Authority,
Chairman of the Board.

COLORADO RIVER DISTRICT
Glenwood Springs, CO, October 9, 2013.
Re H.R. 3189.

Hon. SCOTT TIPTON,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN TIPTON: The Colorado River Water Conservation District sincerely appreciates your leadership in Colorado and Western water matters. H.R.3189 is just one more example. The Colorado River District will recommend that its Board support H.R. 3189 with the consensus amendments developed by your staff, the national ski areas and the River District.

With the clarifying amendments, H.R.3189 provides responsible side boards to agency actions when permitting allowable activities and uses on federal lands. It prohibits the transfer of ownership of privately held water rights in exchange for required permits. We are also pleased that your staff will prepare a sponsor's statement to confirm that the bill will not change existing law that allows reasonable permit conditions that can protect both the natural environment and present and future downstream water users dependent on the forest for critical water supplies.

I want to express my genuine appreciation for your and your staff's willingness to work with us on language that accomplishes our mutual goals of protecting private property interests in western water while maintaining

the authority to condition permits to ensure responsible exercise of those rights.

Sincerely,

R. ERIC KUHN,
General Manager.

COLORADO RIVER DISTRICT,

Glenwood Springs, CO, November 12, 2013.

Re H.R. 3189, Markup

Hon. SCOTT TIPTON
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN: As we've discussed previously, the River District board appreciates your leadership on Colorado water matters including your recent introduction of H.R. 3189. We deeply appreciate your and your staff's continuing engagement with us to refine and clarify the language to address the critical issues of water rights' equity and ownership while avoiding unintended consequences or inviting litigation.

Adam Eckman from the subcommittee staff shared final draft language in preparation for markup. I believe the new and amended language is an improvement and consistent with the River District Board's existing support for the bill.

The River District looks forward to continuing to work with you in support of this important legislation. Thank you and best wishes for a successful markup.

Sincerely,

R. ERIC KUHN,
General Manager.

CENTER CONSERVATION DISTRICT,

Center, CO, October 25, 2013.

Hon. SCOTT TIPTON,
Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JARED POLIS,
Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPS. TIPTON AND POLIS: The Center Conservation District commends you for your introduction of H.R. 3189, the Water Rights Protection Act and endorses the Tipton-Polis bill, and will work closely with you to broaden bipartisan support for this measure and to gain its swift consideration and approval by the House of Representatives.

It is our understanding that the H.R. 3189 grants no new rights to any party, nor does it in any way infringe on existing rights of individuals, states or the federal government. This legislation simply reaffirms what has been existing law for generations and which is expressed in numerous places in federal law, including the Mining Act of 1866; the 1897 Organic Act establishing the U.S. Forest Service; the Taylor Grazing Act; and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

There is no provision in federal law authorizing or permitting the Forest Service or the Bureau of Land Management to compel owners of lawfully acquired water rights to surrender those rights or to acquire them in the name of the United States. Thus, H.R. 3189 does nothing more than assure holders of BLM or Forest Service permits that their lawfully acquired rights will not be abridged and that federal agencies may not unlawfully use the permit process to acquire rights they do not currently possess.

We look forward to working with you on this important legislation and again commend you for your leadership in this important area.

Sincerely,

DANNY NEUFELD,
President.

NWRA,

Washington, DC, March 10, 2014.

Hon. DOC HASTINGS,
Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN HASTINGS, On behalf of the Board of Directors and the members of the National Water Resources Association (NWRA), I write in support of H.R. 3189, the Water Rights Protection Act. The NWRA is a nonprofit federation made up of agricultural and municipal water providers, state associations, and individuals dedicated to the conservation, enhancement and efficient management of our nation's most important natural resource, water. Our members provide clean water to millions of individuals, families, agricultural producers and other businesses throughout the western United States.

Collectively, NWRA members have spent billions of dollars investing in the development of state issued water rights and the associated infrastructure in order to provide a safe and reliable water supply to their customers. Their ability to continue meeting the nation's growing demand for clean water is dependent upon access to this vital resource. The Water Rights Protection Act would protect NWRA members' water rights and those who depend on the water they deliver by preventing federal agencies from making a permit, permit renewal or other action conditional upon surrendering a water right. The protection of water rights is of the utmost importance to our members. Water rights constitute a valuable property right and as such are valuable assets that are often irreplaceable.

For more than eighty years NWRA members have helped finance, maintain and manage some of the most valuable and iconic water systems in the world and have turned virtual deserts into some of the most productive agricultural land on the planet. To accomplish this irrigators have worked collaboratively with federal agency partners at the Bureau of Reclamation and Army Corps of Engineers. That collaborative partnership, formed through contracts and other agreements, is protected by this bill. Our members are gravely concerned by recent efforts by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) that have made agency actions contingent upon the relinquishment or modification of a water right. These efforts go counter to the principle foundations of western water law, fly in the face of state law and set a dangerous precedent. Our members count on federal infrastructure to deliver both project and non-project water. Non-project water is privately owned; it has not been appropriated, acquired by, or apportioned to, the United States. In addition, many of our members deliver water through facilities that cross USFS or BLM land. The creation of a process through which water deliveries could be made contingent on the modification, relinquishment or surrender of a water right is unacceptable. Moreover, allowing such a precedent would cause this assault on state water rights to spread in various forms to other agencies within the Agriculture and Interior Departments. Congress, needs to provide the respective Secretaries with clear guidance on this subject, H.R. 3189 provides this guidance.

The USFS and BLM efforts to curtail water rights have been focused on western states, but the implementation of this kind of policy would have ramifications throughout the nation. According to the United

States Geological Survey, nearly seventy five percent of the irrigated agriculture in the U.S. is found in the seventeen western states. These states on average receive less than twenty inches of rain each year, making the reliable delivery of irrigation water vital. In order to protect our members' water rights, assure the continued delivery of clean water to millions of people and protect the integrity of Western water law the NWRA supports the Water Rights Protection Act.

On behalf of NWRA's members I thank you for your attention to the critical water supply issues facing our nation, and for supporting our members as they continue to be stewards of our nation's water supply and a critical part of the economy.

Sincerely,

ROBERT W. JOHNSON,
Executive Vice President.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, there is opposition to this bill from 90 conservation, recreation, and sportsmen groups, including the Grand County Board of Commissioners, Summit County Board of Commissioners, Eagle County Board of Commissioners, besides the other agencies.

LETTERS IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 3189

Hinsdale County; Rio Grande Watershed Association of Conservation Districts; Conejos County Board of County Commissioners; Colorado River District; National Cattlemen's Beef Association; National Association of Conservation Districts; National Ski Areas Association; National Water Resources Associations; Western Governors Association*

*WGA has taken a neutral stance on H.R. 3189.

LETTERS IN OPPOSITION TO H.R. 3189

U.S. Department of Interior; U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service; Grand County Board of Commissioners; Summit County Board of Commissioners; Eagle County Board of Commissioners.

90 CONSERVATION, RECREATION, AND SPORTSMAN'S GROUPS INCLUDING:

California Environmental Groups; Alabama Rivers Alliance; American Bird Conservancy; American Rivers; American Whitewater; Appalachian Mountain Club; Atlantic Salmon Federation; California Sportfishing Protection Alliance; CalTrout; Chesapeake Bay Foundation; Clean Water Action; Connecticut River Watershed Council; Deerfield River Watershed Association; Defenders of Wildlife; Earthjustice; Foothill Conservancy; Friends of Butte Creek; Friends of Merrymeeting Bay; Friends of the Rivers of Virginia; Friends of the White Salmon River; Gunpowder Riverkeeper; Hydropower Reform Coalition; Idaho Rivers United; Lower Mississippi River Foundation; Maine Rivers; National Audubon Society; National Parks Conservation Association; Native Fish Society; Natural Resources Defense Council; Northwest Resource Information Center; Rivers Alliance of Connecticut; Shenandoah Riverkeeper; Sierra Club; Stewards of the Lower Susquehanna, Inc.; Tennessee Clean Water Network; Upstate Forever; Utah Rivers Council; WaterWatch of Oregon; Yadkin Riverkeeper Inc.

I yield such time as he may consume to my colleague from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. Well, here we are again. We had a real problem. The Forest Service did overreach and trigger this issue.

Later on, we will have an amendment offered by Mr. POLIS from Colorado—whose ski areas originally brought this issue to him and who now opposes this bill—to narrow the scope of this bill down to assure that the Forest Service doesn't re-propose the rule which they have withdrawn, which would have caused the problem.

The rule was offered. There was litigation. A new rule was begun. The Forest Service withdrew the rule. There is no rule pending. But we are going to pass legislation that affects all water rights in the Western United States because of a problem that doesn't currently exist.

This is fairly extraordinary. Because we held a hearing on this when the government was shut down, not very many people knew about or got to participate in the hearing. I was there. I read the bill. That is a bad habit I have. I pointed out that the bill was so broadly written that it would impact any and all Federal actions that have to do with water in the United States of America. That goes way beyond ski areas and water rights. It goes way beyond farmers or individual property rights. It has untold consequences.

As a consequence, Republicans at the time denied it. But now this bill has six savings clauses. What does that mean?

Well, the bill was so broadly and poorly drafted to begin with, they now are carving out six exemptions to say, Oh, we didn't mean to say we would take away tribes' water rights; we didn't mean to say that we couldn't have any control of Bureau of Reclamation projects and deal with flood control. Oh, we didn't mean this or that. So there are six savings clauses in this bill because it is so poorly and broadly drafted and has so many unfathomable and unintended effects. Then there is the sixth savings clause which says this bill does nothing.

Now how could that be? Well, because we are here about headlines. We are here about a headline that will be meaningless by some gullible reporter somewhere who actually believes what they are saying on that side of the aisle.

Here is the final savings clause of this unbelievably poorly drafted bill with unbelievable, unintended consequences:

Nothing in this act limits or expands any existing authority of the Secretaries . . .

That is, Interior and Agriculture.

. . . to condition any permit, approval, license, lease, allotment, easement, right-of-way, or other land use or occupancy agreement on Federal lands subject to the respective jurisdictions.

So in the body of the bill they create a whole bunch of problems by threatening concessionaires in parks, issues relating to the Columbia River in Washington and Oregon, and a whole host of projects that relate to use of the water in the West. It is a very sen-

sitive issue, the use of the water in the West. Then they carve out five particular exceptions, which are really hot button issues. Then they have this uber exception which says this bill doesn't do anything.

So what does the bill do? Well, that is the whatever thousand-dollar question here today. It may do something unbelievably destructive to private property rights.

On that side of the aisle we hear about this all the time. A couple of weeks ago, they passed another show bill pretending to deal with the drought in California by preempting 100 years of water law in the State of California. The Federal Government preempting it.

Now they are going to fight for water rights in the West—or, at least that is the headline they hope they get out of this. But that is not what they are doing because for the first time this bill has a Federal definition in statute of water right, which would seem to preempt or contradict the States. But it has sort of got a savings clause. So it says we are creating a new Federal water right, but it really doesn't mean anything because we are not affecting the States. And oh, by the way, we have got a clause at the end saying we are not doing anything at all anyway.

So why are we here? We are here because there was a narrow issue which we could have, in a bipartisan way, agreed to deal with. It could have been what is called a suspension bill. We probably wouldn't have even had a vote on it on the floor of the House—one of those routine bills we pass generally on Mondays or Tuesdays, travel days, requiring a two-thirds vote because they are noncontroversial.

It could have been done that way. But no, that wouldn't have got a headline. It would have solved a problem—a problem that used to exist and doesn't exist anymore and might exist in the future. It would have solved that problem if it ever existed again, if the Forest Service proposed the rule again, which they aren't going to. But let's just say some future administration chose to do that. We could have preempted them that way.

But no, we couldn't just do that because how could you come here and say you are fighting for cattlemen and you are fighting for agriculture and you are fighting for the little guy and private property rights and all those wonderful buzz words around here, when you are not really doing that, but get an undeserved headline out of it if you find a gullible reporter.

That is why we are here today. It is kind of a waste of time, to tell the truth. If you want to fix the bill and potentially fix a future problem if they do go after the ski area water rights again, vote for the Polis amendment. Go back to the narrow scope of the bill. That is where we started.

If that is adopted, that would be great, and we could vote for it. If that is not adopted, I would recommend that Members think long and hard about it because you may be causing unintended effects with this bill by defining a Federal water right that potentially preempts and upends hundreds of years of precedent in the Western United States and causes untold damage. It will certainly make a lot of lawyers happy, but it is not probably going to make your farmers and ranchers happy, who you think you are pleasing here today.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS), a member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Madam Chair, this act reinforces our century-long system, working well in our States, where the States pass water law and administer State water law. State law is crucial in the West.

For example, take how a ski area permit is supposed to work. The Forest Service issues a permit for the use of the land, but the water is administered in accordance with State water law. The water does not belong to the Federal Government.

The headline here should be, "Keep your mitts off our water."

If the Federal Government wants water rights, it has to pay for them, or get in line, just like other citizens and businesses. But now, instead of waiting its turn or paying fair value, the Forest Service is demanding water rights as a condition of ski area permits. They are demanding the full value of water rights it had no role in developing.

The Forest Service isn't just going after ski areas. It is targeting ranchers with grazing permits as well.

The Federal Government claims it needs the water rights because the Federal Government knows best how to manage water for ski recreation and grazing. The reality is the Federal Government doesn't know best at all, and that is why States are in control of water law.

Sound water management and conservation is necessary in the arid and semi-arid West, and the real work is done at the State and local level by individuals. These efforts will only be harmed if we let Federal agencies trample on State water law, substituting their judgment for those who live near water and depend on it for their well-being.

Madam Chair, I have spent thousands of hours of my life irrigating Wyoming's beautiful meadows.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield the gentlelady an additional 1 minute.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Madam Chair, when you are still and you are out in a meadow, you can hear the water bubble into

the ground, and I swear you can hear the grass grow. It is the most amazing, fulfilling thing, and some of the happiest hours I have spent in my entire life. This is personal with me.

Madam Chair, I urge my colleagues to support the Tipton bill.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, may I inquire how much time remains?

The Acting CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California has 15½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Washington has 18 minutes remaining.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Madam Chair, I will include in the RECORD a list of amendments proposed that the Rules Committee did not find in order that are asking to exempt Allegheny National Forest, Delaware River Watershed, and Delaware Water Gap from the effects of the bill.

We also have the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, the Long Island Sound Watershed, the Puget Sound Watershed, and Olympic National Park Watershed. They all want to be excluded from this bill.

SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE RULES COMMITTEE FOR H.R. 3189—WATER RIGHTS PROTECTION ACT

SUMMARIES DERIVED FROM INFORMATION PROVIDED BY SPONSORS

[Listed in Alphabetical Order]

Cartwright (PA): No. 1—Exempts the Allegheny National Forest, Delaware River Watershed, and Delaware Water Gap from the effects of the bill.

Connolly (VA), Van Hollen (MD), Sarbanes (MD), Scott, Bobby (VA), Edwards (MD), Cartwright (PA): No. 13—States that no provisions of the bill shall affect water rights agreements within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Holt (NJ): No. 5—Exempts the Delaware River watershed from this Act.

Israel (NY), DeLauro (CT), Esty (CT), Crowley (NY), Engel (NY), Tonko (NY), McCarthy, Carolyn (NY), Bishop, Tim (NY), Courtney (CT): No. 8—Exempts the Long Island Sound watershed from any provision in the legislation.

Kilmer (WA), Heck, Denny (WA), Larsen, Rick (WA), Smith, Adam (WA): No. 9—Clarifies that nothing in the legislation would affect or apply to the Puget Sound watershed.

Kilmer (WA): No. 10—Affirms that nothing in the legislation would affect or apply to the Olympic National Park watershed.

Kilmer (WA), Huffman (CA): No. 11—Clarifies that nothing in the legislation would impact or diminish the treaty rights of federally recognized tribes and nothing would impact water rights of federally recognized tribes.

Langevin (RI), Cicilline (RI): No. 7—Exempts the Nanagansett Bay watershed and the Wood Pawcatuck watershed.

Lujan (NM): No. 2—Notification requirements for the implementation of water settlements.

Mullin, Markwayne (OK): No. 4—Ensures that the federal government cannot make Native American tribes, apply for or acquire water rights under state law for the federal government rather than acquiring the rights for themselves. Prohibits the federal government from using permits, approvals, and other land management agreements to take the water rights of Native American tribes

without just compensation. Ensures that nothing in the Act limits or expands the reserved water rights or treaty rights of federally recognized Native American tribes.

Polis (CO), DeGette (CO), Perlmutter (CO), DelBene (WA), Kuster, Ann (NH), Cartwright (PA), Huffman (CA): No. 5—SUBSTITUTE Requires the U.S. Forest Service to issue a new draft water directive within 60 days that does not condition ski area permits on the transfer of title of any water right or require any ski area permittee to acquire a water right in the name of the United States.

Speier (CA), Miller, George (CA), Lee, Barbara (CA): No. 6—Excludes the California Bay Delta system from the provisions of the bill.

Tipton (CO): No. 12—MANAGERS Makes several clarifying technical changes to the bill, and clarifies that the Act will have no effect on Bureau of Reclamation contracts, implementation of the Endangered Species Act, certain existing federal reserved water rights, and certain authorities under the Federal Power Act.

Tonko (NY): No. 14—LATE Ensures that nothing in this Act will affect or apply to the Hudson and Mohawk River watersheds.

Tsongas (MA): No. 3—States that Nothing in this Act shall affect or apply to the Lowell National Historical Park and Minute Man National Historical Park.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET, WASHINGTON, DC, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 2014.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY H.R. 3189—WATER RIGHTS PROTECTION ACT

(Rep. Tipton, R-Colorado, and 15 cosponsors)

The Administration opposes H.R. 3189, which would prohibit the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) from exerting some control over the exercise of water rights located on Federal lands. The bill threatens the Federal government's longstanding authority to manage property and claim proprietary rights for the benefit of Indian tribes and reserved Federal lands, and the broader public that depends on the proper management of public lands and resources. It adversely affects DOI's and USDA's ability to manage water resources to: (1) protect ongoing public lands uses and the environment; (2) allow for maximum beneficial use of Federal water facilities; and (3) ensure adequate water is available for fisheries or threatened or endangered species.

H.R. 3189 is overly broad and could have numerous unintended consequences. For example, the bill could impede private water rights holders from entering into voluntary agreements with Federal agencies, which benefit State, Federal, and private water rights holders' interests and improve water resource management.

The bill was introduced, in part, to address the U.S. Forest Service's ski area water rights clause proposal, which the Forest Service has changed in response to public feedback and will soon be publishing. The Administration looks forward to working with Congress to address any remaining concerns regarding the ski area water rights proposal after its publication and to developing legislation that maintains the Federal government's interest in protecting public lands and waters, allows for the continuance of voluntary agreements between the Federal government and other water rights holders, and ensures adequate protection of the environment.

Madam Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUFFMAN).

Mr. HUFFMAN. Madam Chair, H.R. 3189 is too broad. It would not solve the problem that it purports to address, but it would indeed impede ongoing collaborative efforts across this country.

Once again, I am afraid that the majority has ignored an opportunity for a bipartisan, solution-oriented engagement on an issue and instead chosen the same old attack-and-accuse and overreach politics.

This legislation stems from a very legitimate concern that was raised by the ski industry regarding how the Forest Service was proposing to handle water rights in public leases for ski areas. This was something that we could have worked together on. In fact, I think the House could have found a constructive bipartisan solution. We could have had this resolved by now.

Instead, the Republican leadership held a hearing on this issue during the government shutdown, meaning that we did not have the opportunity to question the Forest Service. Instead of the benefit of a dialogue and a conversation, we had an empty chair. Of course, the attacks on that empty chair ensued as part of the political theater.

Had the GOP bothered to actually talk to the Forest Service, they would have found a receptive partner in a solution to this problem. They would have found, in fact, that a solution was already in the works.

Had the Republican majority actually worked with the Forest Service, they could have influenced a proposal that is being revised right now by the Forest Service. Instead, we are dealing with a bill here today that goes far beyond the scope of the issue at hand and could affect voluntary agreements and contracts across this country.

In fact, this bill before us today could stop the Federal Government from taking the very actions that could help ensure recreational opportunities for Americans, like skiing, rafting, kayaking, and fishing. Preventing water right holders from entering into agreements with Federal agencies could put our recreational economy at risk and could impede our ability to implement important water agreements throughout the West.

We still have an opportunity to get back on a constructive track here. We have a chance to pass an amendment—the Polis amendment—that narrows the bill's scope to its original intent and would address the concerns of the ski areas.

I urge my colleagues to support the Polis amendment to address the ski area water rights issues, and I encourage my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to work with us to try to salvage this bill and focus on the real concern at hand.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I am very pleased to

yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK), another member of the Natural Resources Committee.

□ 1500

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Madam Chairman, people need to understand exactly what is going on here. The U.S. Forest Service and other Federal agencies have begun demanding that privately-owned businesses surrender their long-held water rights simply as a condition of receiving routine renewals in their special use permit so that they can continue to operate on public land.

This is a radical departure from more than 100 years of Federal deference to State law on this issue. It amounts to an uncompensated taking and is a violation of the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution, and it is an affront to State law, under which the Federal Government must acquire water rights through the proper channels as would any other user.

Now, there are 121 ski areas on Federal public lands that are affected by this practice; 14 of them are in my district. These businesses rely on their water rights for snowmaking. They use this water as collateral for financing to build and maintain their facilities and for supplying water to the local communities they support.

In 2011, the Forest Service issued a directive that would effectively take these private property rights without compensation, in violation of State law, while jeopardizing these enterprises all together and all the direct employment, spinoff economic activity, and tax revenues that they provide.

This involved far more than ski resorts. Our Subcommittee on Water and Power has also received reports of similar tactics directed against farm and ranch operations that rely on State-recognized water rights for irrigation and stock watering.

Mr. TIPTON's bill simply directs Federal agencies to stop perverting what should be a routine permitting process into an excuse to extract long-held water rights from private owners.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I now yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. TSONGAS).

Ms. TSONGAS. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3189 because it could have severe unintended consequences for the Third District of Massachusetts, which I represent.

A hearing on the bill was held in a most untimely manner, during a government shutdown, thus preventing the Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service or any other administration official from answering questions on this legislation.

Given the harsh statements about these very important agencies coming from the other side of the aisle, it

seems only fair to have given them a chance to address these charges. According to "Views" of this legislation submitted by the Department of Interior after the fact, this bill "could significantly impact the Department's ability to manage water-related resources within public lands." It also goes on to say that "the legislation is overly broad and could have numerous unintended consequences that would affect existing law and voluntarily agreements."

My constituents echo this statement. From a local organization that works tirelessly to protect our rivers and watershed in Massachusetts, they say: "The bill is so very broad it is fairly impossible to assess its true impact. On those very grounds it should not be passed."

I will be supporting the Polis amendment to narrow the scope of this legislation to its original purpose and to address the legitimate concerns of the ski industry. If this amendment is not adopted, I urge my colleagues to heed the advice of my constituents and to reject this bill.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP), a member of the House Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Chair, when the ranking member was speaking, he quoted from the bill and said: This does not limit the Secretary's right, nor does it expand the Secretary's right. So he said then, What does it actually do?

What it does is very simple. It stops the Federal Government from hurting people. This came to view in the Federal Government trying to take away water rights from ski resorts, and not just in Colorado. It was all ski resorts. As I have said repeatedly, the ski resorts in Utah are far more significant and far better than the ski resorts in Colorado. It affects all of us.

It is not just limited to ski resorts. We also found out these same tactics have been used by BLM and other entities to affect farmers and ranches, same concept, same area.

So what the Tipton bill is trying to do is solve the problem for everybody, not just for a few people. Even people in the East who have water rights will be protected by this bill, whether they recognize that or not.

I want to introduce you to a guy by the name of Tom Lowry. He came to our committee to testify about what they were doing. This is a person, as soon as he got his ranch, the Federal Government—the BLM in this case—started to attack his private water rights. It took him \$800,000 in legal fees to go through the system to try and protect his rights.

He eventually got to the Idaho Supreme Court and won, where the Supreme Court said: You are right, the

Federal Government was wrong, they have to back up. But it cost him 800 grand in legal fees to do it. That is what the Tipton bill is trying to solve—the rights of those ranchers and those farmers, the rights of ski resorts to actually conduct business and have their rights protected.

That is why any effort to try and limit this down to say, oh, let's just deal with the ski resorts because we care about them, and forget the Tom Lowrys of this world, is a ridiculous approach. The issue is, How can we protect the rights of our people? That is what Congress is supposed to do. The Forest Service hasn't solved their problem yet. They have withdrawn their rules but haven't changed the rules. They have still yet to propose new ones. It is the purpose, and the right, and the responsibility of Congress to step in.

The CHAIR. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. It is the responsibility of Congress to tell the bureaucracy what they can and cannot do. We establish laws, not their rules and regulations, and we should tell them they have to respect the rights of individuals, and treat them as real people, and not take away their personal property rights, and that is exactly what the Tipton bill does.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, may I ask how many speakers my colleague from the other side has?

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chair, I have at least four others, besides myself, that want to address this very important issue.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SMITH) another member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Madam Chairwoman, I am proud to stand here with my colleagues today in support of H.R. 3189, the Water Rights Protection Act. With the drought going on in California, and the Federal Government strong-arming private property owners into giving up their water rights, I am afraid that some of my colleagues may think that the Federal confiscation and mismanagement of water resources only affects the West.

Let me tell you, this issue of the Federal Government intruding on private property and water rights is not just limited to the West. In my district in southeast Missouri, time and time again, ill-thought Federal policy has threatened, and will continue, unfortunately, to threaten, private landowners.

In my now 9 months and 8 days in Congress, we have already had to fight

back Federal attempts to restrict citizens in my district from using water.

The Department of the Interior tried to create restrictive "buffer zones" as a part of the National Blueway System that would have taken away private property rights. Fortunately, we got this program stopped. While the legal framework for water rights is different in the West, this administration's disregard for private landowners applies everywhere.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill to protect water rights not only because it will protect holders of water rights in Western States, but also because it sends a strong, direct message that Congress is tired of these schemes to administratively take away private property rights.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, there is no taking of anybody's water rights in this case and the majority knows it. Claiming this is a taking is misleading and irresponsible.

The only way State or private water rights could, I repeat, could be transferred or diminished in any way is if the owner of those rights volunteers to a transfer or a limitation to a portion of those rights as part of a deal to receive the permission to use Federal land.

Volunteering to limit your water rights in exchange for the use of Federal land, taxpayer land, is the opposite of taking.

The various court cases the majority has thrown around deal with legitimate, I repeat, legitimate water rights issues; cases where there are overlapping or conflicting claims over the same water. This is not that type of a case.

I defy my colleagues to produce any case law holding that a decision to give up a water right, voluntarily, in order to get another Federal benefit is a taking. There are no such cases.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER), who I think was a member of the committee but is not anymore.

Mr. GARDNER. Madam Chair, I thank the chairman for his work on this very important issue, and my colleague from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) for his hard work to protect Colorado water rights.

You know, if you go to the capitol of Colorado, you go into the rotunda of that great and beautiful building, there on the wall on a mural are the words of a poem by Thomas Hornsby Ferril, and that poem says: "Here is a land where life is written in water."

The foundational laws of our great State deal with the waters of Colorado, the four corners of our State, whose agriculture, commerce, industry, and municipalities depend on that water and,

yes, our ski industries, our farmers, our ranchers.

Thank goodness for legislation like this that will protect our water rights. Thank goodness for legislation like this that will make sure that the State's water law remains supreme.

How dare this body think that the Federal Government has a right to control our water or to condition permits based on the blackmail of a permit issuance from a ski resort, from a farmer, from a city.

These rights have gone through Colorado water law for decades, over a century. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent in Colorado to adjudicate these rights.

To think that the Federal Government can come in and take them because they won't issue a permit unless you give it to them, that is a taking of water. The Federal Government has no right to do that.

It is our State law in water that remains supreme. It is our State law that must remain supreme when it comes to the water of our land.

Here is a land where life is written in water. Those words will remain in our great State. Our laws will remain, and thank goodness for legislation like this to make sure that our State can control its water, not Washington, D.C.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, the base bill actually creates all kinds of uncertainty, and allows a ski area owner to sell their water rights.

If you are a local business owner in that area who depends on the ski resort business, let's say you own a restaurant or an equipment store or have a hotel, H.R. 3189 means that you have no idea, from one year to the next, whether the resort, which brings people to town, will still be operating if it has water.

If the water rights are not tied to the resort in any way, which is what H.R. 3189 wants to ensure, there is no guarantee that the owners won't sell the water, leaving the Forest Service holding a ski resort that cannot operate without that water because the water rights have been previously sold.

It is the Forest Service that is trying to create some minimal certainty that the resort would have current water rights to keep running, even if the current owners were to leave.

It is H.R. 3189 that is trying to prevent that certainty.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chair, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), a former member of the House Natural Resources Committee.

□ 1515

Mr. SCALISE. I thank the chairman for yielding, and I want to thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) for leading on this issue.

Madam Chair, I rise in strong support of this legislation that finally puts a check and a balance on Federal agencies that are literally out there shaking down landowners over their property rights.

When you look at what the Federal Government is doing and you wonder why people are losing faith in the government, why people don't trust government, when a Federal agent shows up and says the only way you can get a permit is if you give up your property rights to your water, literally, extortion is coming from Federal bureaucrats.

This is not the way our government is supposed to operate, Madam Chair. This is what this legislation is here to remedy.

When you look at what is going on, it is not just the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture. We have seen this from other Federal agencies. Look at what the EPA does with their sue-and-settle process, where they literally go behind the cloak of darkness and cut secret deals and, again, force people to do things that aren't even in statute, just as a condition of getting basic permits. This is not how government is supposed to operate.

So while we have seen some of the egregious abuses limited in the Western parts of our country, this is not just a Western issue, Madam Chair. All Americans ought to be concerned when the Federal Government is literally shaking down and extorting Americans and forcing them to give away their private property rights just as a condition of getting a permit.

It is not right. It is not the right way to treat people. It is not the right way for the Federal Government to operate. This bill finally remedies that problem. It stops those abuses. I urge strong support of the legislation.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, H.R. 3189 turns the status quo on its head in order to provide a certain class of users a new advantage over all other users of our public lands.

It strikes me as interesting that I have heard farmers and ranchers mentioned a couple of times, although this, apparently, also affects grazing lands, which I believe farmers and ranchers do use; and unfortunately, I am sure they have not looked at it well enough to understand what really could happen.

The status quo is that Federal land managers have to try to balance multiple competing uses of our public/taxpayer lands—recreation, timber, grazing, conservation, energy production, and the list goes on.

Under the status quo, one of the tools land managers use to achieve this balance is the ability to condition certain uses of public lands—taxpayer lands—on an agreement to transfer or limit water rights.

If you want the ability to graze or cut timber or build a dam on public lands, you have to agree to leave some water in the river for other uses, like recreation, habitat protection, et cetera.

If that authority is taken away, as the bill would do, then certain kinds of users of our public lands get to take all the water they want, leaving everybody else literally hanging high and very dry.

The status quo is balanced. H.R. 3189 tips the scale all the way in favor of a certain class of users and turns the status quo into chaos.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL), a member of the Rules Committee.

Mr. WOODALL. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Madam Chair, this is often characterized as a Western issue, and it is not a Western issue. The water wars that go on in the West are certainly a special type of battle; but this is an American issue in what it does.

There are two really interesting things going on, on the House floor today, that I hope all of my colleagues and I hope the American people are watching.

On the one hand, there is a really neat moment of agreement that is happening here. You hear so much about disagreement in Washington. The Federal Government issues an order that says, in order to continue to exercise your business, you must surrender your private property to the government. Well, we could all agree that is outrageous.

I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) for leading in the effort to repeal that, which has been a bipartisan effort on both sides of the aisle. We have an actual order—an actual proposal, and we can come together and agree that this is not who we are, as a people. It is very interesting, and I am glad that we are able to do that.

The second thing that is happening, Madam Chair, is that there is a concern that a certain class of citizen is going to get a higher and better use of land; and I just want to point out that that certain class is the owner of a private property right. Right? That is actually the debate that is happening here.

If you own something, if something belongs to you, should you be allowed to use it? Or in the name of creating a better country, in the spirit of maximizing the utility of Federal lands, should the Federal Government be able to take that from you and redistribute it, so that things are fairer? That is a legitimate discussion to have.

I come down on the side of my friend from Colorado who says not only is it outrageous that the government tried

to take private property rights in this circumstance; but why not take this step now to recognize that private property means something? Not only are we going to protect our ski resorts, but we are going to make sure this never happens to any other American citizens again.

“Extortion” is a strong word. It is a strong word, but I can think of no other word to apply to what the government was trying to do here today. I am grateful to my friends on both sides of the aisle for moving to stop that.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. I reserve the balance of my time, Madam Chair.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chair, I am very pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA), a member of the Natural Resources Committee.

Mr. LAMALFA. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Madam Chair, I am glad to be able to speak today on H.R. 3189. This bill will have a great impact on many of the resource holders in my district here in the northeast part of California.

Yes, we are going through a drought, but this isn't just an issue that might affect ski resorts or even ranchers. This is a property rights issue that we should be looking at all across the country.

It is very dangerous when the U.S. Forest Service or BLM can just come in and arbitrarily decide, after long-held water rights—some of these ranches have been around 150 years or more—that they can change the game—change the rules.

The ranches have been around longer than some of these bureaucracies; yet they want to come in and say: we are going to change the game because we have decided it should be different.

Now, when you have this type of right under fire for something as beneficial—farming and ranching, grazing is actually beneficial to forest land, towards fire suppression—and yet, we have people who think that this is somehow a special right or something that is going to take additional water away from other people.

These are already adjudicated water rights—pre-1914 water rights in California. They are not taking more than what already belongs to them, so it is really a misnomer to think that we are now somehow rejiggering this because it is going to take more from other people.

For 150 years, they have been around; and now, in this day and age, because of the thoughts of a few bureaucrats who want to do this by extortion—which is what it is—you get a permit only if you give up something that has belonged to you for many, many years.

It belongs to them because it is a long-held water right—a long-held property right, so I am glad to help sponsor and support this bill.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My colleague is right, but then let's hold a hearing on the water rights themselves and bring the impacted and affected parties to the table, so that there is a fair hearing which is open, transparent, and fair, but we haven't done that.

We are talking about H.R. 3189, which essentially was set up to deal with the differences between the ski resorts and the Forest Service.

Water belongs to the State, and the State gives people the right to use it. It is owned by the people of the United States.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Colorado, Congressman POLIS.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Madam Chair, I want to make it clear that I was an original sponsor of this bill. Like my colleague from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), I wanted to address the 2011 directive as it affected ski resorts.

However, this bill, in markup and through the manager's amendment, became worse. We were unable to get the improvements that we needed to narrow the scope; and it became a Republican job-killing, water-grabbing bill, which was not the original intent.

Even the areas where the intent was to help the ski areas—in Summit County and Eagle County in my district, in Pitkin County in Mr. TIPTON's district—the counties have all come out against this very bill.

It is a Republican water-grabbing, job-killing bill, and absent the amendment that I proposed, it is not something that I can support. I encourage my colleagues on my side of the aisle who value recreational opportunities, like fishing and white-water rafting, to join me in opposing this bill, unless the Polis amendment is incorporated into the bill.

We will soon begin a debate on that amendment. This debate would focus the actual bill to fulfill its purpose, and I hope that this body will adopt it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I will advise my friend from California that I am prepared to close and will reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I am certainly grateful for the opportunity to have this dialogue, and I think it is very important for the American people to listen in and understand that one bill that was meant to cover a specific issue has been turned into a gigantic—I would say—mess.

We understand the reasoning behind it, to some extent, and we trust that

our colleagues understand and are prepared to vote on something that may have unintended consequences in their own backyards.

This bill is flawed. It is flawed on process, on policy, and in claiming that it does protect State water rights. The Governors Association has indicated that they wanted to ensure that the states' water rights remain protected.

We welcome legislation that devises a real solution to a targeted problem, which the amendment that Mr. POLIS has on the floor will address. We are supportive of that amendment and hope others will support his amendment, which was made in order.

We, unfortunately, feel that H.R. 3189 does not solve the problem. It creates more problems and has no chance of being enacted into law, and I trust that we will do the right thing by the people because we are talking about protecting the U.S. public, their lands, and their water.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself the balance of the time.

Madam Chairman, let me just comment on a few points here that were made by my friends on the other side of the aisle. There was some concern about the timing of the hearing and the people who were invited.

I just want to make this point: when the hearing was held, we have to have advance notice. We had witnesses coming in from across the country, so we are going to have the hearing on the day we said because of the expense incurred by those private citizens who wanted to come here and testify to help protect private water rights.

The second point is this was a bipartisan bill, as my colleague from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) admitted. He was an original cosponsor of the bill. Maybe that was a reason why my friends on the other side of the aisle did not call a witness for or against the original legislation.

I just wanted to make that point. The hearing was scheduled, and it had to go through because of the expense of the private citizens coming in to testify.

I want to make another point, too, that some of my colleagues have made. Several of them have said that this legislation redefines Federal water rights.

Madam Chairman, that is simply not true. If they read the bill, they would see that the definition is for the purpose of this act only, meaning that the definition is only for this act, so that doesn't hold up either.

Just about all of my colleagues on the other side that talked about the Federal lands and so forth—I will acknowledge that this is about Federal activity on Federal lands, but nowhere—nowhere did my colleagues suggest or say that the Federal Government had the water rights.

Why? Because that is states' rights; and as my colleague from Wyoming

said: Yes, it is Federal land; but it is State water, and you have to mesh those together.

And finally—I think this is probably more important than anything else, and frankly, a debate like this has been going on for some time.

□ 1530

We agree—we agree, both sides—that ski resorts have been potentially compromised by the threat of the Federal Government saying “no permit unless you give up water.” Both sides agree on that. The question is, What is the remedy?

The big difference I think between the two sides is this. Their remedy is, well, the rulemaking isn't over. Let's find out what the rulemaking is, and then we will respond to it. Our side takes a different approach. Our side says wait a minute. We are the House of Representatives. We are part of the Congress. We make the law.

That is what this legislation does. It makes the law saying the Federal Government cannot extort, through the permitting process, State water rights. It is as simple as that. And so if we are going to continue to have the debate in this House on divisions between the two parties and what their philosophy is, frankly, I welcome this, because it appears every time we have a debate similar to this, their side says let the bureaucracy write the laws. We say wait a minute. That is not the way it is supposed to be. We are the Congress. We write the laws. That is what this debate is about here today, and I look forward to the amendment process.

In the meantime, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. It has been characterized as a Western piece of legislation, but as Mr. WOODALL says, indeed, it is not. It affects all water rights which are the province of the States.

It is good legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Chair, this legislation before us today claims to resolve a local and narrow conflict over water rights between the U.S. Forest Service and the Colorado ski industry. Unfortunately, this bill's scope and impacts have been expanded far beyond its originally stated intent.

Under the guise of addressing a specific local water rights issue the Republican majority is once again trying to tie the hands of agencies across the government as they work to protect and restore our waterways, public lands, and watersheds by restricting all actions that require a federal permit.

The deleterious effects, both intended and unintended, resulting from this deeply flawed bill will ripple far and wide across our country including in my region, most notably the Chesapeake Bay.

The Chesapeake Bay watershed is a national treasure stretching more than 64,000 square miles, encompassing six states, 150 major rivers and streams, and is home to more than 17 million people. It is America's

largest estuary. But the Bay is in need of restoration.

Since 1983 federal, state, and local stakeholders have worked together to implement and refine the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement. As a result we have seen significant improvements in phosphorus and sediment pollution reduction, better management of fisheries including the restoration of blue crab, and restoration of habitats and wetlands.

According to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's 2012 State of the Bay Report, of the 13 indicators being monitored, improvements have been made in five and only one indicator declined. Of particular importance, habitat scores received a B+ and rockfish and crab fishery restoration received an A and B+ respectively.

That progress has been achieved only by using all the tools at our disposal, including requiring conditional permitting for water rights.

There is still more work to be done to get the Bay restored to full health. That is why I offered an amendment with colleagues from Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania that would ensure that no provisions in the bill would affect water rights agreements within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Sadly, the Republican-controlled Rules Committee refused to allow a floor vote on this.

One wonders about the true intent of this bill. Why didn't Republicans accept our amendment to protect the Bay? Why did they refuse similar amendments that would protect other local treasures including the Long Island Sound in the Northeast, the Puget Sound in the Northwest, and the California Bay Delta? All of these projects are threatened by this bill.

Unless this bill is amended to address these discrete local issues, I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 3189, an overreach that will harm watersheds across the nation.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3189, a contradictory piece of legislation that would confuse the issue of water rights across the country.

As initially written, this bill, which attempts to solve a dispute between Colorado ski resorts and the U.S. Forest Service, was so broad that it would have impacted the permitting process for the Conowingo dam in Maryland and our local efforts to restore threatened species in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. While I appreciate that the Manager's amendment narrowly addresses the issue of dam permitting, I remain concerned that contradictory sections in this bill will create confusion and litigation that will prevent agencies from ensuring proper stewardship of federal lands.

When private entities request permits to operate on public lands, federal agencies have a responsibility to taxpayers to ensure that their operations would not harm the resources on those lands. If agencies cannot guarantee protections, they may simply deny permits and prohibit private use. This bill, by attempting to rewrite years of water rights law in a few short pages, introduces so much uncertainty into the process that those denials are likely to become a common occurrence.

Congressman POLIS has offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute that would restore the narrow focus on the disputed ski resort water rights. I urge my colleagues to support his effort and oppose the bill as currently written.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources, printed in the bill, shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule and shall be considered read.

The text of the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 3189

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Water Rights Protection Act".

SEC. 2. TREATMENT OF WATER RIGHTS.

The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture—

(1) shall not condition the issuance, renewal, amendment, or extension of any permit, approval, license, lease, allotment, easement, right-of-way, or other land use or occupancy agreement on the transfer of any water right directly to the United States, or any impairment of title, in whole or in part, granted or otherwise recognized under State law, by Federal or State adjudication, decree, or other judgment, or pursuant to any interstate water compact; and

(2) shall not require any water user to apply for or acquire a water right in the name of the United States under State law as a condition of the issuance, renewal, amendment, or extension of any permit, approval, license, lease, allotment, easement, right-of-way, or other land use or occupancy agreement.

SEC. 3. DEFINITION.

For purposes of this Act, the term "water right" means any surface, groundwater, or storage use filed, permitted, certificated, confirmed, decreed, adjudicated, or otherwise recognized by a judicial proceeding or by the State in which the user acquires possession of the water or puts it to beneficial use.

SEC. 4. IMPACT ON EXISTING AUTHORITY.

Nothing in this Act limits or expands any existing authority of the Secretaries to condition any permit, approval, license, lease, allotment, easement, right-of-way, or other land use or occupancy agreement on Federal lands subject to their respective jurisdictions.

The CHAIR. No amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part A of House Report 113-379. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. TIPTON

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part A of House Report 113-379.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 13, insert "(including joint and sole ownership)" after "water right".

Page 4, line 9, insert "legally recognized" after "existing".

Page 4, line 10, insert "issue, grant, or" before "condition".

Page 4, after line 13, insert the following:

SEC. 5. EFFECT ON RECLAMATION CONTRACTS.

Nothing in this Act shall in any way interfere with existing or future Bureau of Reclamation contracts entered into pursuant to Federal reclamation law (the Act of June 17, 1902 (32 Stat. 388, chapter 1093), and Acts supplemental to and amendatory of that Act).

SEC. 6. EFFECT ON ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT.

Nothing in this Act shall affect the implementation of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

SEC. 7. EFFECT ON FEDERAL RESERVED WATER RIGHTS.

Nothing in this Act limits or expands any existing reserved water rights of the Federal Government on lands administered by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture.

SEC. 8. EFFECT ON FEDERAL POWER ACT.

Nothing in this Act limits or expands authorities pursuant to sections 4(e), 10(j), or 18 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 797(e), 803(j), and 811).

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 515, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chair, I offer this amendment to further strengthen and improve this bipartisan bill. As we heard during general debate, the bill has one goal: to eliminate Federal extortion of private property.

The Federal Government cannot and should not take and seize what it does not own without compensation, but that has been happening, and the threat continues to exist for a host of individuals and businesses who responsibly use our public lands for multiple purposes.

This bill ends this Federal property rights grab; however, we just heard a litany of charges that the bill impacts other Federal actions. Nothing could be further from the truth. The bill already has a savings clause ensuring that any existing Federal authorities are not impacted. Importantly, the Federal Government does not have the authority to take private property rights without just compensation; but, to further clarify, my amendment reiterates the specific actions into the bill—the protection of existing Federal water contracts.

The Colorado River Water District, the Family Farm Alliance, the National Water Resources Association, all organizations whose members have contracts with the Bureau of Reclamation, already support this bill, and that should have been enough. Yet we heard rhetoric from the other side today that water contracts are in danger despite the ardent support of water organizations.

This amendment specifically reiterates this protection, ensuring imple-

mentation of the Endangered Species Act and any flows needed for the species, the protection of reserved water rights for national parks and other Federal lands, and continuing the hydropower relicensing process for non-Federal dams. These additions to the bill are a simple reiteration of protections already built into the bipartisan bill.

Yet, in a good-faith effort to dispel any myths, I offer these provisions to ensure, once and for all, that the only thing the bill does is protect private water rights owners from being extorted by the Federal Government through underhanded administrative means.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. TIPTON. I certainly yield to the chairman.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I thank the gentleman for his work on the underlying bill and his amendment. I support the amendment.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, the amendment doesn't fix the bill because the bill cannot be fixed.

The savings clause in the base bill and the savings clauses that will likely be added by the manager's amendment are symptoms of the problem with the initial bill, not the solution.

If you have a 4-page bill and you need to insert five different savings clauses, you have a problem, my friends. The need to insert layer upon layer of text trying to explain that you don't mean for the bill to do this or that proves beyond any doubt that the bill is a massive and dangerous overreach.

We have no idea how these savings clauses operate in the context of the bill, but what we do know is that, even with the five savings clauses, you haven't caught all the problems.

The only responsible policy is the one offered by Mr. POLIS in his substitute amendment which focuses, again, strictly on the main issue that brought this to the forefront, and that was the Forest Service and the ski resorts. Everything else is just a failed attempt to fix the bill.

Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chair, I suppose I can bring some good news. It is not a 5-page bill, but actually a 3-page bill that we have actually put forward.

What I think we are really frustrated about is that we often hear from our colleagues that they want to be able to have bipartisanship. They are concerned about endangered species. While it is already protected in the bill, we add a further savings clause to be able to protect it.

They are concerned about the Federal Government being able to continue operations under legal authority—already protected in the original bill. We put in an additional savings clause to be able to address that.

We are concerned even more than they are, apparently, about standing up for Native American tribes in some proposed amendments that we are going to be putting forward to protect them from using Native tribes as a tool to extort water for the Federal Government.

This is a commonsense, sensible piece of legislation. Our colleagues want to say that it is expanded. Actually, I have the original bill in my hand. They say it is simply about ski resorts. We have common ground. I, too, want to be able to protect ski resorts, but I am not willing to sacrifice, on the altar of the Federal Government, our farm and ranch communities in addition to our municipalities.

Looking at the original bill, it doesn't mention ski areas once, yet an author of an amendment today said it has become more broad. Show me how.

This is a good piece of legislation. The manager's amendment addresses their very concerns.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to my colleague from Colorado (Mr. POLIS).

Mr. POLIS. Madam Chair, I want to be clear that the concerns are by no means limited to the Endangered Species Act. The Republicans may care about endangered species, but they don't care about jobs. The Forest Service, the BLM, Interior, and Agriculture agencies all have relevant authority with regard to bypass flows. None of those are mentioned under this particular manager's amendment.

What this manager's amendment shows is Republicans care more about endangered species than they do about jobs in our mountain resort areas. This manager's amendment added the term "impairment of title." We wanted this limited to "transfer of title" because "impairment of title" actually expands the scope of the bill from the original bill. In addition, the so-called savings clause actually appears to negate the very bill that it appears in.

This takes a bill that we had offered language to the committee and to Representative TIPTON to make this a bipartisan bill. I think it could have very closely unanimously passed the House, certainly enough to pass a suspension, and instead they made a bill that even the very ski areas that they are claiming to help—actually, all the counties that I have that have ski resorts actually oppose this job-killing Republican water grab bill.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chair, how much time remains?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Colorado has 1½ minutes remaining. The

gentlewoman from California has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chair, for the point of clarity, to ease the concerns of my colleague from Colorado, the National Ski Areas Association endorses this bill today. That has not changed. Also, to alleviate the concerns that you just demonstrated, no existing authorities will be impacted under this legislation. No existing authorities will be impacted. No bypass flows will be impacted.

Effectively, what this bill is doing, Madam Chair, is we are codifying existing practice, which I think we all agree is a desirable thing to have continue.

This is about political theater. The job-killing part of what is happening right now is being conducted by the Federal Government. They are killing jobs with a Federal Government water grab.

Either you stand with the farmers, the ranchers, and long-held practices of the West or you don't. If you don't, I do, and that is what this bill continues to support.

Madam Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I know I have said it before, the ski resort association wants to focus on this bill, so I am suggesting that we do approve the Polis amendment and then hold a hearing—an open hearing and a transparent hearing—for those agencies that are impacted so they may have the ability to have a word and be able to move this forward. I might add that the savings clause does not include the national parks. So all the units, Grand Canyon and others, are impacted.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chair, again, I will refer my colleagues to the text of the bill. No Federal water rights that they currently have are going to be impaired. That includes national parks.

We continue to hear about the upcoming Polis amendment. The original bill that Mr. POLIS and I introduced never specifically mentioned just ski areas. It talks about any permit. So if you care about farmers, if you care about ranchers, if you care about municipalities, and if you care about ski areas, which we all share, let's protect those private property rights from Federal extortion.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, when we considered the bill in committee, the majority claimed the bill had nothing to do with the ESA or the bypass flows or FERC or reclamation projects, which we pointed out that it did. Now they have a savings clause for each one of those issues. Now they admit their mistakes. Sadly, when a bill has this many holes in it, no amendment can fix them all, so this bill cannot be saved by this amendment.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. MULLIN

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part A of House Report 113-379.

Mr. MULLIN. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the table.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 3, line 18, insert "(including any federally recognized Indian tribe)" after "water user".

Page 4, line 7, insert after the period "Such term shall include water rights for federally recognized Indian tribes."

Page 4, after line 13, insert the following:

SEC. 5. EFFECT ON INDIAN WATER RIGHTS.

Nothing in this Act limits or expands any existing reserved water right or treaty right of any federally recognized Indian tribe.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 515, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma.

Mr. MULLIN. Madam Chair, protecting the rights of the sovereign tribes is a top priority of mine, and I am proud to work with Congressman TIPTON in supporting the Water Rights Protection Act and offering this amendment to clarify protections for the water rights of American Indian tribes. Many tribes rely on reserved water rights and water rights guaranteed by treaty to provide critical water supplies for their people. This amendment makes clear that these water rights are fully protected.

This amendment also ensures that the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture can't use one-sided permits, licenses, approvals, and other land management tools to take water from Indian tribes without just compensation. American Indian tribes have a distinguished record of being outstanding stewards of their water supplies and should never have to fear forfeiture of their water rights to the Federal Government. By prohibiting these Federal agencies from using heavy-handed tactics to take Indian water rights, we can proactively protect tribes from the potential Federal water grabs.

□ 1545

Taken together, H.R. 3189 and this amendment provide comprehensive water rights protections for all water users and help ensure the water supply certainty and jobs that are dependent on those rights.

I thank the chairman and urge a "yes" vote on this amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, this amendment does not fix the bill because the bill cannot be fixed.

The savings clause in the base bill and the savings clause that Mr. MULLIN's amendment includes are symptoms of the problem that we pointed out before in this bill, not the solution. The amendment would be the sixth savings clause added to this 4-page bill.

I do support Representative MULLIN's and Representative COLE's efforts in protecting our Native American communities' water rights. As the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) mentioned at the Rules Committee last night, Native American water rights are the oldest water rights in the system. They are time immemorial, and yet we choose to ignore them.

I remember Congressman KILDEE repeatedly saying, under the Constitution, they hold the first water rights in the United States, and yet we do not recognize them. Yet, since Republicans took the majority 4 years ago, there has been no legislation, no oversight hearings on any Indian water rights settlements.

If we want to support Native American water rights, Congress should consider tribal water rights legislation, enact tribal water rights legislation, and fund tribal water rights legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MULLIN. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington, Chairman HASTINGS.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I want to commend the gentleman from Oklahoma for his hard work on behalf of Native Americans.

American Indian tribes rely on their water rights to provide critical supplies to their people and to promote and expand their local economies. These rights must be protected from Federal regulations that are designed to take water without paying for that water, and this amendment does just that.

This forward-looking amendment simply allows tribes to have the same protections that are afforded to others in the bill by prohibiting the Federal Government from using routine permits to extort private water rights. It also preserves the water rights guaranteed to tribes by treaty and by Federal reservation. Although this bill already does the latter, we believe it is important to clarify this important protection, so I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense amendment. I commend the gentleman for offering it.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MULLIN. In Indian country, we have learned that we can never just

take something that the Federal Government says and take it as truth. We have to always verify. This is simply trying to clarify that the Federal Government has no rights to come onto the Indian land and tell us how we can and can't use our water. This is just simply saying, look, we have the rights; the treaties say we have the rights, and we want to make sure that the Federal Government doesn't come in and grab our water rights. There should be zero opposition to this. There should be bipartisan support.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, this bill is so badly written we really have no idea—I repeat, no idea—what impact this may have on tribes. Yes, Mr. MULLIN, I totally support water rights for Native Americans. We have been working on that for at least 8 years in my subcommittee, as well as other water rights owners. We don't oppose your amendment, and we honestly really truly hope this will offer adequate protection to tribes. They deserve it. It is a long time coming. But, as we have said, the bill is beyond repair. Even if we were to adopt the amendment, H.R. 3189 is dangerous legislation that must be defeated.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this amendment; although, I don't oppose the amendment, but I do oppose the bill, H.R. 3189.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part A of House Report 113-379.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Chair, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. PROHIBITION ON CONDITIONING SKI AREA PERMIT ON TRANSFER OR ACQUISITION OF WATER RIGHTS ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES.

The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall not—

(1) condition the issuance, renewal, amendment, or extension of any ski area permit on the transfer of title or ownership, including joint ownership, of any water right granted or otherwise recognized under State law, by Federal or State adjudication, decree, or other judgment, or pursuant to any interstate water compact, directly to the United States; or

(2) require any ski area permittee to apply for or acquire a water right in the name of the United States under State law as a condition of the issuance, renewal, amendment, or extension of any ski area permit.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 515, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Chair, my colleague, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), mentioned the National Ski Areas Association, and I include their February 11 letter for the RECORD. It states here, in part:

However, to make it abundantly clear that ski areas have a narrow and pointed agenda with respect to this legislation and that we are committed to maintaining stream and aquatic species health, we are now advocating changes to the bill to narrow its scope even further. These changes include narrowing the scope of the bill to apply just to the U.S. Forest Service, and clarifying that the bill prohibits forced transfers of ownership of water rights to the United States by inserting the term "title" into the bill.

I believe that my amendment is consistent with the position of the National Ski Areas Association.

I am a strong believer in the original purpose of this bill. Yes, the U.S. Forest Service overstepped its authority by issuing a policy that requires ski area permittees to transfer ownership of their water rights to the Federal Government.

Ski areas are the lifeblood of our mountain communities in Colorado and many communities across the Nation. Their economic viability and strength is extraordinarily important for working families. Ski areas have invested hundreds of millions of dollars of capital, and they can't be simply required to hand over their water rights to the Federal Government. This harmful policy hinders ski resort growth and expansion and harms the economy. My amendment fixes it.

There is a legitimate issue here, and Congress could be solving it in a bipartisan manner. We agree that the 2011 U.S. Forest Service directive is a problem. This could have been a suspension bill, but H.R. 3189, despite our best efforts from my side of the aisle, does not reflect a bipartisan agreement to the water rights issue.

There is not one comparable Federal water rights directive like the U.S. Forest Service directive, but the Republicans couldn't help themselves here, and they have, instead of fixing an issue, created a job-killing, water-grabbing Republican bill that will destroy jobs in Colorado and in mountain resorts across the country.

This process has become convoluted and the bill overly broad. This legislation only serves to cast doubt on the complicated laws and precedents and authorities that make up our Nation's and States' water laws, and that it is critical to remain stable and predictable over time. This expansive legislation undermines jobs and recreational opportunities, from white-water rafting to fishing. Sportsmen's groups oppose this legislation. Ski counties in my district oppose this legislation.

It was brought up in committee yesterday, could the opposition be "political." Well, I want to be clear, one of

the ski counties in my district, all three of the commissioners are Republican. Grand County, they oppose this bill unanimously, as do Summit County and Eagle County. Rafting and paddling groups oppose this legislation because it impacts our world-class, white-water runs.

I hope we can fix this bill. We have tried hard throughout this process to offer language in the committee that would make this a bipartisan bill, to offer language to the chief sponsor, Representative TIPTON. Up to this point, we have been rebuffed. This is our last hope to fix this bill and create something that actually responds to the flawed Forest Service directive of 2011. Without this change, this bill has nothing to do with the 2011 directive. It is just talk. It doesn't even respond to the issue it is designed to solve, which is why some of the very same ski communities that wanted a response to the 2011 directive don't even support this bill at this point.

Since ski area water rights are a valuable asset that need to be protected, I am proud to have offered this amendment with Representative KUSTER, Representative DEGETTE, Representative PERLMUTTER, Representative DELBENE, Representative CARTWRIGHT, and Representative HUFFMAN that would fix H.R. 3189, return the bill to its original purpose, lead to a strong House vote, and ensure that any U.S. Forest Service directive will not condition ski area permits on the transfer of title of any water right or require any ski area permittee to acquire a water right in the name of the United States.

I reserve the balance of my time.

NATIONAL SKI AREAS ASSOCIATION,

February 11, 2014.

Re Support for Water Rights Protection Act.

Hon. SCOTT TIPTON,

Cannon HOB,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JARED POLIS,
Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BARRASSO,
Dirksen Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MARK UDALL,
Hart Office Building,
Washington, DC.

GENTLEMEN: I am writing on behalf of the ski industry to express the reasons ski areas strongly support passage of the bipartisan Water Rights Protection Act, H.R. 3189/S. 1630, and to advocate changes to the bill to narrow its scope. At the outset, the ski industry would like to express our deep appreciation of your efforts to protect ski area water rights from federal encroachment over the past couple of years. Your leadership on protecting water rights and your commitment to working in a bipartisan fashion to solve this problem on behalf of ski areas and other permittees on federal land have had very positive and real effects to date. While ski areas have enjoyed a long and successful partnership with the Forest Service spanning almost eight decades, Forest Service water policy is an issue on which we simply do not agree. We have invested too much in water rights to simply hand them over to the federal government.

As you are well aware, the Water Rights Protection Act would stop the federal government from illegally seizing water rights from private parties that develop them, such as ski areas, in violation of State water law and 5th Amendment property rights protections. The intent of the bill is narrow—to protect valuable assets of ski areas and other permittees that use federal land from seizure without compensation by the federal government. Essentially everyone agrees on the need for this protection, given recent (and past) Forest Service policy that demands transfer of valuable water rights to the U.S. without compensation. This policy threatened to rock the foundation of over a hundred years' worth of water law in the West, and again, thanks to your intervention, beneficial changes are expected in the future.

The intention of the Water Rights Protection Act is not to impact stream health or aquatic species in any way. Some conservation groups contend that H.R. 3189 has a broader effect than simply protecting water rights, and in fact would hinder federal efforts to protect stream health and fish. Ski areas and other stakeholders strongly disagree with this interpretation of the bill and would never support a bill that had this result. In fact, a "savings clause" was included in the bill to explicitly state that the measure had no other impacts than to protect permittees' water rights from forced transfers. More importantly, the bill does not alter in any way the minimum stream flow protections that are set and enforced by the states on virtually every river and stream. Ski areas support and abide by these minimum stream flow requirements and would never take action to undermine them.

However, to make it abundantly clear that ski areas have a narrow and pointed agenda with respect to this legislation and that we are committed to maintaining stream and aquatic species health, we are now advocating changes to the bill to narrow its scope even further. These changes include narrowing the scope of the bill to apply just to the U.S. Forest Service, and clarifying that the bill prohibits forced transfers of ownership of water rights to the United States by inserting the term "title" into the bill. We offer these changes to demonstrate emphatically our unwavering commitment to maintain stream health and aquatic species, and our narrow focus of simply protecting our valuable water rights assets. These changes are directed at solving the concrete problem at hand, which is overreaching policy by the Forest Service that requires a forced transfer of ownership of water rights from permittees to the United States. The bill will continue to benefit all permittees on Forest Service lands, not just ski areas.

The release of a new water policy is expected from the Forest Service sometime in 2014. Ski areas welcome this new policy change, which we understand will not require a forced transfer of ownership of water rights. The release of this policy will not change the need for federal legislation however. First, the new policy is expected to apply prospectively, such that existing water rights subject to past Forest Service water clauses could continue to be in jeopardy of a taking by the Forest Service. Ski areas are proposing an amendment to the bill to protect against the implementation of such clauses beginning with the effective date of this bill. Ski areas have experienced four changes in Forest Service water policy in the last ten years. Only Congress can help stop the pendulum from swinging and provide ski areas the kind of stability they need to grow and succeed in the future.

After prevailing on our challenge of the Forest Service's water rights takings policy in federal court in 2012, ski areas offered an alternative approach for the Forest Service to consider that would not involve forced transfers of water rights. We offered this alternative in the spirit of partnership, and as a way for the Forest Service to work cooperatively with ski areas to support their viability, and the viability of mountain communities, over the long term. The alternative offered by ski areas was to require resorts to provide successors in interest an option to purchase water rights at fair market value upon sale of a ski area. We continue to support this approach as a viable alternative that meets the needs of the agency, provides ski areas needed flexibility, and respects state water law.

Ski areas are great stewards of water resources. It is important for everyone to remember that only a small portion of water that is used for snowmaking is consumed. Most of the water diverted from streams for snowmaking returns to the watershed. Although it varies from region to region, studies show that approximately 80 percent of the water used for snowmaking returns to the watershed. Since the majority of water used for snowmaking is water purchased by a ski area, brought onsite through diversions, stored on-slope, and typically released more slowly back into the watershed with the seasonal melting of the winter snowpack, snowmaking typically benefits the watershed in which it is taking place, as well as downstream users, and can help counteract the harmful effects of drought. In addition to using a whole array of conservation measures, many resorts impound or store water in reservoirs for use during low flow times of the year without affecting fish or aquatic habitat. The ability to control our water assets and investments—which will be the outcome of passage of the Water Rights Protection Act—will enable us to continue this stewardship in the future. It will also allow us to continue to provide a high quality recreation opportunity for millions of people on the National Forests.

In closing, we thank you for your work to date on this issue, and we look forward to continuing to work together in cooperation to ensure the bill's passage.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BERRY,
President.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington.
Madam Chair, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The CHAIR. The gentleman is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Chair, I want to thank the gentleman from Colorado for recognizing that the Federal Government's taking of water rights and economic collateral of ski areas is wrong. His amendment also acknowledges that Congress must act to provide long-term certainty rather than rely on vague assurances from bureaucrats that are subject to change at any time.

I also appreciate the gentleman's initial support for the bill as introduced. His attention to this matter and willingness to fight for the ski areas in his district is commendable and has certainly been noted by colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

However, the amendment he offers today completely undermines the bill he originally added his name to in support. The bill, as introduced and in its current improved form, protects private property rights for all—Madam Chairman, all—water users across the country, not just ski areas. By limiting the bill's scope to ski area permits by the Forest Service, the Polis amendment transforms the bill so that it favors one special group at the expense of all others. Ski areas under his amendment would be protected, but any other water owner or user anywhere in the country would be subject to Federal extortion. It frees the Federal Government to continue targeting the water rights of family farms and ranches and municipalities.

Madam Chair, it is not just wrong for the Federal Government to take water away from ski areas, it is wrong to do it to anyone. There should be no discrimination in this manner. The Polis amendment would eliminate protections for farms and ranches, our Nation's food suppliers. That is why the American Farm Bureau opposes this amendment and supports the underlying bill. The Farm Bureau's members have already been victimized by this Federal overreach, and this amendment would allow that to continue.

Because the Polis amendment is a complete substitute text for the underlying bill, it would strike out all of the protections currently in the bill. The Polis amendment would even eliminate the protections for the Indian treaty rights and Indian water rights that the House just adopted a moment ago with the Mullin amendment.

It is true that the ski areas have suffered greatly at the hands of this Federal overreach. For this reason, the underlying bill does fully protect ski areas, along with every other water user. How many times do we have to say that? It protects ski areas and all water users, and that is why, as has been mentioned several times, the National Ski Areas Association wrote in February after the committee markup that it strongly supports the bill.

When it comes to protecting the water and private property of American citizens, the Congress shouldn't be picking winners and losers; and Congress should be making the law for that protection, not the bureaucrats. The legislative branch should act to protect all citizens of the executive branch.

It is for these reasons I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the Polis amendment.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1600

Mr. POLIS. Madam Chair, it is my honor to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO), the ranking member of the committee.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Chair, I thank Mr. POLIS for yielding.

I must say that, again, I must direct attention to the fact that the February 11 letter from the ski resorts focuses on narrowing the bill, not the bill in total, but narrow focus.

Mr. POLIS joined Mr. TIPTON on this bill in an attempt to seek a reasonable solution to the problem facing ski resorts in the West, but when Mr. POLIS tried to work with the majority and when we on the committee tried to work with the majority to make reasonable, responsible changes to the bill, we were told no.

We were told the majority wanted a big, broad bill that goes way beyond the resorts and way beyond the Forest Service. We pointed out that when you start drafting big, broad bills that go beyond the original issue, you will have unintended consequences, but they would not listen.

Mr. POLIS' amendment is the last chance to make this a narrow, bipartisan bill that can actually pass, and we should adopt it.

Again, we don't want a job killing. We don't want a water grab. We don't want specific people to favor. I think the people need to understand it is the farmers and ranchers who benefit.

The six savings clauses the bill needs is not needed. It is in the Polis amendment because the amendment narrows the scope only to ski resorts and National Forest Service.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Chairman, this amendment creates two different classes of citizens: ski resorts and everybody else.

It leaves the portion of the bill that protects ski resorts from being forced to relinquish their water rights as a condition of continuing to operate in the Federal forests, and that is good, but then it creates a tier of second class citizens.

Unless you own a ski resort, you are fair game for the same demands by these Federal agencies to either give up your water rights or be forced out of business.

For example, our subcommittee heard testimony from Randy Parker. He is the CEO of the Utah Farm Bureau. He told us that the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management have threatened to force farmers that have grazing allotments to give up their water rights as a condition of continuing to use the public lands.

In some cases, these are permits that family businesses have held for generations. The water rights are accorded to them under State law. The Federal Government has no right to usurp that law or to force anybody into the Hobson's choice of closing their business or surrendering their water rights.

This amendment is an affront to the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment, as well as to the Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment. These rights are fundamental constitutional rights that are unalienable for every American, not just those who happen to operate ski resorts.

Let's not take the Orwellian position that all Americans are equal, but some are more equal than others.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Chair, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlelady from New Hampshire (Ms. KUSTER), a cosponsor of the amendment.

Ms. KUSTER. Madam Chairman, I first want to thank my friend, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) for his work on this issue and for leading this amendment.

I rise today in support of this substitute amendment that I am offering with Mr. POLIS and several colleagues in an effort to fix the issues with this legislation, but I wish I wasn't even here today to talk about this amendment. That is because this bill was originally introduced as a bipartisan bill to address a specific problem.

As we have seen all too often around here, the bill that is on the floor today doesn't look anything like it did when it was introduced. The bill that we are considering today wouldn't just address a water rights issue between ski areas and the Forest Service. It would go much further than that, impacting our national park system, wildlife refuges, hydropower relicenses, and so much more.

Where I come from, that doesn't make much sense. I came here to work with both parties to find common ground and to get things done. Instead of pushing partisan legislation that has no chance of becoming law, we should be working together on real solutions. That is why I joined Mr. POLIS to offer this substitute amendment.

What it will do is simple. It will narrow this bill so that it only addresses the issue between ski areas and the Forest Service. There is no need for this legislation to do anything more than that.

Let's pass the Polis amendment and start working together on common-sense policies to create jobs and opportunity for the middle class.

Again, I thank Mr. POLIS for his work on this issue.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time I have remaining?

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Washington has 4½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Colorado has 2½ minutes remaining.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TIPTON), the sponsor of the underlying legislation.

Mr. TIPTON. Madam Chair, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

We continue to hear letters of support, ironically, out of my colleague from Colorado's home district. Eagle River Water and Sanitation District supports this legislation as we put it forward.

Colorado River Water Conservation District, Colorado Water Congress, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, and Family Farm Alliance support this bill.

When we look at the original incorporating legislation that my colleague and I introduced, it doesn't fit the narrow scope that they now want to talk about; so we do have to ask that question: Why are they so willing to be going to disregard farmers, ranchers, municipalities? Aren't they worthy of concern? I believe that they actually are.

We actually just received an email that came from the National Ski Association, which is dated March 12, supporting the bill with the Tipton manager's amendment. We are addressing their specific concern, but we aren't stopping there.

We think that that right to private property is inviolable, something that must be protected. If our friends want to say that farmers and ranchers and communities aren't worth protecting, we say they are.

That is what this legislation will do. We have worked with the minority. We have got a bipartisan piece of legislation that is standing up for those private property rights and to be able to assure that that constitutional right to receive just compensation that it is taking is actually preserved.

Madam Chair, I urge rejection of this amendment.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I am prepared to close. I have the right to close, so I will reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Chairman, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Ski area water rights are valuable assets that must be protected. Rather than disguise that in a catchall Republican job-killing water-grabbing bill, we have the opportunity through the Polis-DeGette-Perlmutter-DelBene-Kuster-Cartwright-Huffman amendment for this House to come together around something that helps the economy grow in our ski resort areas across the country.

As so many times on issues of even greater importance, there is a fork in the road for this House, a decision to make, between the partisan-charged route of job-destroying Republican water-grabbing legislation or the opportunity to fix this bill and come together to make sure that our ski resort communities are secure in their water rights and can continue to justify their capital investments and grow. That is the choice we have with the Polis amendment.

This amendment improves the bill. It helps turn the bill from a controversial

bill into something that I think the vast majority of this body can and will agree on.

The amendment ensures that any U.S. Forest Service directive will not condition ski area permits on the transfer of title of any water right or require any ski area permittee to acquire a water right in the name of the United States.

That is the issue from the directive on 2011 that gives us a reason to even have the bill; but instead of addressing that issue in a focused way, this bill has tried to essentially rewrite centuries of water law in a superficial 2-page bill that has the impact of destroying jobs in Colorado and other mountain resort communities across the country.

We can and we must do better—better for my district in Colorado. Many of the ski resort counties—like Pitkin County represented by Mr. TIPTON, and Eagle, Summit, and Grand Counties that I represent—that benefit directly from the ski resort economy have come out opposed to this bill because it actually hurts their economy rather than helps it.

If the very folks that this bill was supposedly written to help oppose this bill, what on Earth are we doing here?

Thankfully, we have an amendment right now that can fix this bill. We tried in committee, we tried through the manager's amendment, and now, we are trying on the floor. Let's do it. Let's fix the bill.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment and, unless it is incorporated, oppose the underlying bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I yield myself the balance of the time.

I have to say, the debate on the underlying bill in this amendment I find rather interesting—no, maybe bizarre is better than that.

The issue here is whether we should protect the State's responsibility to write water law or allow the Federal Government to extort from private individuals that water. That is what the issue is all about here.

He had bipartisan support when the bill was heard in committee, but then it changed for some reason. Now, we have in front of us the Polis amendment, which would very narrowly put this protection only to ski areas and not to everybody else that has private property rights.

The consequences if this were to become law—which it is not going to, I am convinced, with this amendment—but the effect of this would be this: okay. Ski areas are protected this year. Next year, it will be a rancher that is abused, so we will come back, and we will write a law to protect the rancher.

Next, it will be a water conservation district someplace that will be affected

because of the directive, so we will come back and fix that. Then it will be some municipality someplace that will be affected because they don't have water rights because it was extorted by the Federal Government, so we will have a fix for that.

Madam Chairman, there is a better way to do that. Let's just simply respect states' rights to regulate water law and to codify that with this language.

Finally, just let me make this observation. The effect of adopting this, as I mentioned in my opening statement, as it relates to tribal rights, what this amendment really does more than anything else is it puts ski resorts' water rights above tribal rights. That is really what the adoption of this amendment does.

So I would say that the underlying bill is a bill that is the responsibility of us as the legislative branch in this Congress. It deserves our support. This amendment does nothing to advance that at all and should be defeated.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no," and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS).

The question was taken; and the Chair announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. POLIS. Madam Chair, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado will be postponed.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. YODER) having assumed the chair, Ms. FOXX, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3189) to prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer, relinquishment, or other impairment of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture, had come to no resolution thereon.

DIRECTING THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO MAKE TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS IN THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 3370

Mr. GRIMM. Mr. Speaker, I send to the desk a concurrent resolution and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 93

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That, in the enrollment of the bill (H.R. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes, the Clerk of the House of Representatives shall make the following corrections:

(1) In section 12—

(A) in the matter preceding the new subsection added by the amendment made by such section, strike “, as amended by the preceding provisions of this Act, is further” and insert “is”; and

(B) in the new subsection added by the amendment made by such section, strike “(e)” and insert “(d)”.

(2) In section 14, before the closing quotation marks that immediately precede the period at the end insert “and”.

(3) In section 30—

(A) in the matter that precedes paragraph (1), strike “is” and insert the following: “, as amended by section 27 of this Act, is further”;

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in the matter that precedes subparagraph (A), strike “subparagraph (B)” and insert “subparagraph (C)”;

(ii) in subparagraph (A)—

(I) strike “subparagraph (A)” and insert “subparagraph (B)”;

(II) strike “subparagraph (D)” and insert “subparagraph (E)”;

(C) in paragraph (2), strike “and (C) as subparagraphs (D), (E), and (G)” and insert “(C), and (D) as subparagraphs (D), (E), (F), and (H)”;

(D) in paragraph (3), in the matter preceding the new subparagraphs inserted by the amendment made by such paragraph, strike “subparagraph (B)” and insert “subparagraph (D)”;

(E) in paragraph (4)—

(i) in the matter preceding the new subparagraph inserted by the amendment made by such paragraph, strike “subparagraph (E)” and insert “subparagraph (F)”;

(ii) in the new subparagraph inserted by the amendment made by such paragraph, strike “(F)” and insert “(G)”.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FAITHFUL EXECUTION OF THE LAW ACT OF 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of H.R. 3973 will now resume.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 191, nays 227, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 127]

YEAS—191

Barber	Green, Al	Neal
Barrow (GA)	Green, Gene	Negrete McLeod
Beatty	Grijalva	Nolan
Becerra	Gutiérrez	O'Rourke
Bera (CA)	Hahn	Owens
Bishop (GA)	Hanabusa	Pallone
Bishop (NY)	Hastings (FL)	Pascarell
Blumenauer	Heck (WA)	Pastor (AZ)
Bonamici	Higgins	Payne
Brady (PA)	Himes	Pelosi
Braley (IA)	Hinojosa	Perlmutter
Brown (FL)	Holt	Peters (CA)
Brownley (CA)	Honda	Peters (MI)
Bustos	Horsford	Peterson
Butterfield	Hoyer	Pingree (ME)
Capps	Huffman	Pocan
Capuano	Israel	Polis
Cárdenas	Jackson Lee	Price (NC)
Carney	Jeffries	Quigley
Carson (IN)	Johnson (GA)	Rahall
Cartwright	Johnson, E. B.	Richmond
Castor (FL)	Kaptur	Roybal-Allard
Castro (TX)	Keating	Ruiz
Chu	Kelly (IL)	Ruppersberger
Cicilline	Kennedy	Ryan (OH)
Clark (MA)	Kildee	Sánchez, Linda
Clarke (NY)	Kilmer	T.
Clay	Kind	Sánchez, Loretta
Cleaver	Kirkpatrick	Sarbanes
Clyburn	Kuster	Schakowsky
Cohen	Langevin	Schiff
Connolly	Larsen (WA)	Schneider
Conyers	Larson (CT)	Schrader
Cooper	Lee (CA)	Schwartz
Costa	Levin	Scott (VA)
Courtney	Lewis	Scott, David
Crowley	Lipinski	Serrano
Cuellar	Loeback	Sewell (AL)
Cummings	Loftgren	Shea-Porter
Davis (CA)	Lowenthal	Sinema
Davis, Danny	Lowe	Sires
DeFazio	Lujan Grisham	Slaughter
DeGette	(NM)	Speier
Delaney	Luján, Ben Ray	Swalwell (CA)
DeLauro	(NM)	Takano
DelBene	Lynch	Thompson (CA)
Deutch	Maloney,	Thompson (MS)
Doggett	Carolyn	Tierney
Doyle	Maloney, Sean	Titus
Duckworth	Matheson	Tonko
Edwards	Matsui	Tsongas
Ellison	McCarthy (NY)	Van Hollen
Engel	McCollum	Vargas
Enyart	McDermott	Veasey
Eshoo	McGovern	Vela
Esty	McIntyre	Velázquez
Farr	McNerney	Visclosky
Fattah	Meeks	Walz
Foster	Meng	Wasserman
Frankel (FL)	Michaud	Schultz
Fudge	Miller, George	Waters
Gabbard	Moore	Welch
Gallego	Moran	Wilson (FL)
Garamendi	Murphy (FL)	Yarmuth
García	Nadler	
Grayson	Napolitano	

NAYS—227

Aderholt	Campbell	Diaz-Balart
Amash	Capito	Duffy
Bachus	Carter	Duncan (SC)
Barletta	Cassidy	Duncan (TN)
Barr	Chabot	Ellmers
Barton	Chaffetz	Farenthold
Benish	Coble	Fincher
Bentivolio	Coffman	Fitzpatrick
Bilirakis	Cole	Fleischmann
Bishop (UT)	Collins (GA)	Fleming
Black	Collins (NY)	Flores
Blackburn	Conaway	Forbes
Boustany	Cook	Fortenberry
Brady (TX)	Cotton	Fox
Bridenstine	Cramer	Frelinghuysen
Brooks (AL)	Crawford	Gardner
Brooks (IN)	Crenshaw	Garrett
Broun (GA)	Culberson	Gerlach
Buchanan	Daines	Gibbs
Bucshon	Davis, Rodney	Gibson
Burgess	Denham	Gingrey (GA)
Byrne	Dent	Gohmert
Calvert	DeSantis	Goodlatte
Camp	DesJarlais	Gowdy

Granger	Massie	Ross
Graves (GA)	McAllister	Rothfus
Graves (MO)	McCarthy (CA)	Royce
Griffin (AR)	McCaul	Runyan
Griffith (VA)	McClintock	Ryan (WI)
Grimm	McHenry	Salmon
Guthrie	McKinley	Sanford
Hall	McMorris	Scalise
Hanna	Rodgers	Schock
Harper	Meadows	Schweikert
Harris	Meehan	Scott, Austin
Hartzler	Messer	Sensenbrenner
Hastings (WA)	Mica	Sessions
Heck (NV)	Miller (FL)	Sherman
Hensarling	Miller (MI)	Shimkus
Herrera Beutler	Miller, Gary	Shuster
Holding	Mullin	Simpson
Hudson	Mulvaney	Smith (MO)
Huelskamp	Murphy (PA)	Smith (NE)
Huizenga (MI)	Neugebauer	Smith (NJ)
Hultgren	Noem	Smith (TX)
Hunter	Nugent	Southerland
Hurt	Nunes	Stewart
Issa	Nunnelee	Stivers
Jenkins	Olson	Stockman
Johnson (OH)	Palazzo	Stutzman
Johnson, Sam	Paulsen	Terry
Jolly	Pearce	Thompson (PA)
Jones	Perry	Thornberry
Jordan	Petri	Tiberi
Joyce	Pittenger	Tipton
Kelly (PA)	Pitts	Turner
King (IA)	Poe (TX)	Upton
King (NY)	Pompeo	Valadao
Kingston	Posey	Walberg
Kinzinger (IL)	Price (GA)	Walden
Kline	Reed	Walorski
Labrador	Reichert	Weber (TX)
LaMalfa	Renacci	Webster (FL)
Lamborn	Ribble	Wenstrup
Lance	Rice (SC)	Westmoreland
Lankford	Rigell	Whitfield
Latham	Roby	Williams
Latta	Roe (TN)	Wilson (SC)
LoBiondo	Rogers (AL)	Wittman
Long	Rogers (KY)	Wolf
Lucas	Rogers (MI)	Womack
Luetkemeyer	Rohrabacher	Woodall
Lummis	Rokita	Yoder
Maffei	Rooney	Yoho
Marchant	Ros-Lehtinen	Young (AK)
Marino	Roskam	Young (IN)

NOT VOTING—13

Amodei	Franks (AZ)	Smith (WA)
Bachmann	Gosar	Wagner
Bass	McKeon	Waxman
Cantor	Rangel	
Dingell	Rush	

□ 1642

Messrs. POSEY, MARCHANT, BUCSHON, RYAN of Wisconsin, and MAFFEI changed their vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Mr. HIGGINS and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I am opposed to the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Michelle Lujan Grisham of New Mexico moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3973 to the Committee on the Judiciary with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Add at the end of the bill the following:

SEC. 3. PROTECTING NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION FROM FOREIGN ENEMIES AND SAVING TAXPAYER DOLLARS.

The amendments made by this Act do not apply to information that would expose critical national security and foreign policy legal, strategic, and tactical positions to terrorists, drug cartels, money launderers, or foreign enemies of the United States.

□ 1645

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New Mexico is recognized for 5 minutes in support of her motion.

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard passionate arguments in support of and in opposition to this bill. We have heard Members argue that this bill is needed to prevent the Obama administration's overreach on issues such as immigration and health care.

Conversely, we have heard Members note that the Republican leadership has refused to pass comprehensive immigration reform, refused to raise the minimum wage, and refused to compromise on a budget until they had shut down the Federal Government. These Members argue that this has forced the President to act within his constitutional authority to faithfully execute the law.

That sharp rhetoric and disagreement is a result of the political realities that we find ourselves in today, and it reflects Congress's failure to work together and solve problems on behalf of the American people.

I oppose the underlying bill, but I more strongly oppose the gridlock that has consumed this Congress and is leading it to become the most unproductive Congress and uncompromising Congress in the history of the United States.

I believe that we can move past that today by coming together and supporting my amendment, which would address significant national security concerns raised by this legislation.

My amendment would ensure that the bill's requirement that the executive branch explain why it prioritizes resources would not impact or expose critical national security and foreign policy interests, positions, or strategies to terrorists, drug cartels, and foreign enemies of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, Sandia National Laboratories and Los Alamos National

Laboratory are located in my home State of New Mexico. These laboratories ensure the safety, reliability, and effectiveness of the Nation's nuclear deterrent.

The experiments and tests that they conduct are at the cutting edge of science and human understanding. They work every day to study, analyze, solve, and prepare for emerging and potential national security threats, contingencies, and risks.

They help inform our Nation's defense and foreign policy decision-makers on how to confront the increasingly complex dangers that our Nation faces.

I am sure there is not one Member of this body that would want the sensitive national security work conducted at the National Laboratories and other government agencies to be revealed to terrorists, to drug cartels and foreign enemies. But that is the risk that all of us will bear if we pass this bill today with this current broad language.

This bill requires the Attorney General to monitor every executive branch agency and every Federal officer who issues a formal or informal policy that refrains from enforcing any Federal statute, rule, regulation, program or policy.

So let me say that again: it would require the Attorney General to monitor every Federal officer's alleged non-enforcement of any Federal statute, rule, regulation, program, or policy.

The language would include Federal officials who are making decisions on national security concerns and interests, based on information and assistance supplied, in many cases, by the national labs in my home State.

This could put the Attorney General in the dangerous position of choosing between keeping strategic foreign policy positions and information from foreign enemies, and complying with the requirements of this legislation.

This would, undoubtedly, lead to litigation, court cases, and appeals, costing the American government embarrassing legal battles and leaving taxpayers to foot the bill.

That time and money is better spent on the activity that these national security agencies are intended to conduct: providing for the safety of the American people.

It just doesn't make sense to impose costly reporting requirements on activities that could potentially hurt national security interests. You wouldn't require a general to reveal his strategy and tactics before he goes into battle.

Mr. Speaker, we came together just last week to pass an aid package for Ukraine to address national security concerns due to recent Russian aggression. We passed that bill on an overwhelmingly bipartisan basis. Leaders of both parties came together in solidarity.

We can do that again today with the adoption of this amendment, which ensures that nothing in this bill adversely impacts our Nation's security.

I want to be clear. The adoption of this amendment will not prevent the passage of the underlying bill. If adopted, it will be incorporated into the bill and will be immediately voted upon.

Although we may all disagree on the need for the underlying bill, we have an opportunity to stand united and support our Nation's vital policy and foreign policy goals.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this final amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, we have in this country a government of laws, not of men. The Congress passes laws, the President executes laws, and the courts adjudicate disputes under those laws.

One law on the books already requires the Attorney General to report to Congress when the executive branch suspends enforcement of a law due to constitutional concerns, and AGs ranging from Holder to Gonzalez have done this.

When the executive branch suspends execution of the law for other reasons, this same reporting requirement should apply, and, in fact, may even be more important on separation of powers grounds. This transparency will help Congress safeguard its constitutional authority, and will allow the American people to evaluate the actions of the executive branch.

Now, why is this necessary?

Yesterday's paper, The Wall Street Journal:

Last week the administration quietly excused millions of people from the requirement to purchase health insurance or else pay a tax penalty.

This latest political reconstruction has received zero media notice, and the Health and Human Services Department didn't think the details of this delay were worth discussing in a conference call, press materials, or fact sheet. Instead, the mandate suspension was buried in an unrelated rule that was meant to preserve some health plans that don't comply with ObamaCare benefits and redistribution mandates.

This is no way to run a government. Surely, this is not consistent with being the most transparent administration in history.

Now, some have said that the transparency requirements would be burdensome, but this raises the question, exactly how many laws is this administration suspending?

This bill can only be burdensome if the administration is consistently suspending duly enacted laws.

My question is: What is wrong with a little sunlight?

Now, I have not heard the President's defenders articulate a limiting principle regarding his actions. "If Congress does not do what I want, I will do it anyway" is not a limiting principle, and is not consistent with constitutional government.

Here is a limiting principle. U.S. Supreme Court, *Kendall v. United States*:

To contend that the obligation imposed on the President to see the laws faithfully executed implies a power to forbid their execution is a novel construction of the Constitution, and is entirely inadmissible.

Now, news reports have detailed how the latest ObamaCare suspensions are tailored to help the President's party in the midterm elections. Now, this is not sufficient justification. Of course there is always going to be another election around the corner.

Once you do suspension to get to 2014, well, you are going to have 2016. Do you need to get Hillary across the finish line?

Then when a Republican President takes over, guess what? That President's supporters are going to say, hey, they suspended these provisions. Why don't you suspend the provisions that we don't like?

Pretty soon, you end up with Presidents of both parties picking and choosing what they want to enforce.

Here is the deal. Short-term political advantages and fleeting policy victories do not trump our duty to support and defend the Constitution. This is true whether the President is a Democrat or a Republican.

I would much rather lose out on my preferred policy outcomes and see my party lose an election while safeguarding our constitutional order, because it is, ultimately, that Constitution which does the most to protect our freedoms.

If we go down the road where Presidents of both parties simply enforce what is good for their party and disregard what is not, then we will no longer be a government of laws, but a government of men, and this institution will be forever diminished.

The Constitution delegates the Congress the power to make law, not to make suggestions. The Faithful Execution of the Law Act will help shine a light on executive branch failures to faithfully execute the laws of our land.

A vote for this bill is a vote for transparency, for the rule of law, and for constitutional government.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this motion, and vote "yes" to pass this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage of the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 192, noes 225, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 128]

AYES—192

Barber	Green, Gene	Neal
Barrow (GA)	Grijalva	Negrete McLeod
Beatty	Gutiérrez	Nolan
Becerra	Hahn	O'Rourke
Bera (CA)	Hanabusa	Owens
Bishop (GA)	Hastings (FL)	Pallone
Bishop (NY)	Heck (WA)	Pascarell
Blumenauer	Higgins	Pastor (AZ)
Bonamici	Himes	Payne
Brady (PA)	Hinojosa	Pelosi
Braley (IA)	Holt	Perlmutter
Brown (FL)	Honda	Peters (CA)
Brownley (CA)	Horsford	Peters (MI)
Bustos	Hoyer	Peterson
Butterfield	Huffman	Pingree (ME)
Capps	Israel	Pocan
Capuano	Jackson Lee	Polis
Cardenas	Jeffries	Price (NC)
Carney	Johnson (GA)	Quigley
Carson (IN)	Johnson, E. B.	Rahall
Cartwright	Kaptur	Richmond
Castor (FL)	Keating	Roybal-Allard
Castro (TX)	Kelly (IL)	Ruiz
Chu	Kennedy	Ruppersberger
Cicilline	Kildee	Ryan (OH)
Clark (MA)	Kilmer	Sánchez, Linda
Clarke (NY)	Kind	T.
Clay	Kirkpatrick	Sanchez, Loretta
Cleaver	Kuster	Sarbanes
Clyburn	Langevin	Schakowsky
Cohen	Larsen (WA)	Schiff
Connolly	Larson (CT)	Schneider
Conyers	Lee (CA)	Schrader
Cooper	Levin	Schwartz
Costa	Lewis	Scott (VA)
Crowley	Lipinski	Scott, David
Cuellar	Loebbeck	Serrano
Cummings	Loftgren	Sewell (AL)
Davis (CA)	Lowenthal	Shea-Porter
Davis, Danny	Lowe	Sherman
DeFazio	Lujan Grisham	Sinema
DeGette	(NM)	Sires
Delaney	Luján, Ben Ray	Slaughter
DeLauro	(NM)	Speier
DeBene	Lynch	Swalwell (CA)
Deutch	Maffei	Takano
Doggett	Maloney,	Thompson (CA)
Doyle	Carolyn	Thompson (MS)
Duckworth	Maloney, Sean	Tierney
Edwards	Matheson	Titus
Ellison	Matsui	Tonko
Engel	McCarthy (NY)	Tsongas
Enyart	McCollum	Van Hollen
Eshoo	McDermott	Vargas
Esty	McGovern	Veasey
Farr	McIntyre	Vela
Fattah	McNerney	Velázquez
Foster	Meeks	Visclosky
Frankel (FL)	Meng	Walz
Fudge	Michaud	Wasserman
Gabbard	Miller, George	Schultz
Gallego	Moore	Waters
Garamendi	Moran	Welch
Garcia	Murphy (FL)	Wilson (FL)
Grayson	Nadler	Yarmuth
Green, Al	Napolitano	

NOES—225

Aderholt	Benishek	Boustany
Amash	Bentivolio	Brady (TX)
Bachus	Billirakis	Bridenstine
Barletta	Bishop (UT)	Brooks (AL)
Barr	Black	Brooks (IN)
Barton	Blackburn	Broun (GA)

Buchanan	Holding	Price (GA)
Bucshon	Hudson	Reed
Burgess	Huelskamp	Reichert
Byrne	Huizenga (MI)	Renacci
Calvert	Hultgren	Ribble
Camp	Hunter	Rice (SC)
Campbell	Hurt	Rigell
Cantor	Issa	Roby
Carter	Jenkins	Roe (TN)
Cassidy	Johnson (OH)	Rogers (AL)
Chabot	Johnson, Sam	Rogers (KY)
Chaffetz	Jolly	Rogers (MI)
Coble	Jones	Rohrabacher
Coffman	Jordan	Rokita
Cole	Joyce	Rooney
Collins (GA)	Kelly (PA)	Ros-Lehtinen
Collins (NY)	King (IA)	Roskam
Conaway	King (NY)	Ross
Cook	Kingston	Rothfus
Cotton	Kinzinger (IL)	Royce
Cramer	Kline	Runyan
Crawford	Labrador	Ryan (WI)
Crenshaw	LaMalfa	Salmon
Culberson	Lamborn	Sanford
Daines	Lance	Scalise
Davis, Rodney	Lankford	Schock
Denham	Latham	Schweikert
Dent	Latta	Scott, Austin
DeSantis	LoBiondo	Sensenbrenner
DesJarlais	Long	Sessions
Diaz-Balart	Lucas	Shimkus
Duffy	Luetkemeyer	Shuster
Duncan (SC)	Lummis	Simpson
Duncan (TN)	Marchant	Smith (MO)
Ellmers	Marino	Smith (NE)
Farenthold	Massie	Smith (NJ)
Fincher	McAllister	Smith (TX)
Fitzpatrick	McCarthy (CA)	Southerland
Fleischmann	McCaul	Stewart
Fleming	McHenry	Stivers
Flores	McKeon	Stockman
Forbes	McKinley	Stutzman
Fortenberry	McMorris	Terry
Fox	Rodgers	Thompson (PA)
Frelinghuysen	Meadows	Thornberry
Gardner	Meehan	Tiberi
Garrett	Messer	Tipton
Gerlach	Mica	Turner
Gibbs	Miller (FL)	Upton
Gibson	Miller (MI)	Valadao
Gingrey (GA)	Miller, Gary	Walberg
Gohmert	Mullin	Walden
Goodlatte	Mulvaney	Walorski
Gowdy	Murphy (PA)	Weber (TX)
Granger	Neugebauer	Webster (FL)
Graves (GA)	Noem	Wenstrup
Graves (MO)	Nugent	Westmoreland
Griffin (AR)	Nunes	Whitfield
Griffith (VA)	Nunnelee	Williams
Grimm	Olson	Wilson (SC)
Guthrie	Palazzo	Wittman
Hall	Paulsen	Wolf
Hanna	Pearce	Womack
Harper	Perry	Woodall
Harris	Petri	Yoder
Hartzer	Pittenger	Yoho
Hastings (WA)	Pitts	Young (AK)
Heck (NV)	Poe (TX)	Young (IN)
Hensarling	Pompeo	
Herrera Beutler	Posey	

NOT VOTING—14

Amodei	Dingell	Rush
Bachmann	Franks (AZ)	Smith (WA)
Bass	Gosar	Wagner
Capito	McClintock	Waxman
Courtney	Rangel	

□ 1702

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated against:

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 128 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

(By unanimous consent, Mr. MEEHAN was allowed to speak out of order.)

CONGRESSIONAL HOCKEY CHALLENGE

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to address our colleagues for 1 minute on behalf of the Congressional Hockey Caucus and our colleagues from both sides of the aisle who now, for the sixth year, have participated in what we call the Congressional Hockey Challenge.

This is the game for charity in which we have Members of Congress who play hockey and three of our friends from the Parliament in Canada, representing the lawmakers, play against a team of lobbyists. The game specifically supports hockey for children in underprivileged communities who would not otherwise have access to the game.

In addition, it has raised dollars for scholarships for children from underprivileged communities to go on to play hockey in college. This was the sixth annual game, and to date, we have raised over a \$500,000 for that charity.

Let me just close with this observation. In addition to being able to play with our colleagues and the lobbyists, we were joined on each side by very, very special guests. They were members of the Wounded Warriors ice hockey team.

The lobbyist team was privileged to have retired Army reservist Joseph Bowser, who lost a leg in Iraq, playing on their team. Our side was joined by retired Army Captain Mark Little, who lost both legs in Iraq.

I might tell you that there is no more inspirational thing than to see the courage of two young men who have found hockey as a way to find continued aspiration and accomplishment.

I will close my observations by saying that the winning goal—and this was no giveaway. This was a remarkably competitive game. The winning goal was scored by Captain Mark Little.

So on behalf of my colleagues, I am pleased to report that the pride of the institution is intact. Congress won 7-5.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 244, noes 171, not voting 16, as follows:

Aderholt
Amash
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bera (CA)
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Bustos
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fox
Frelinghuysen
Gallego
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)

Beatty
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)

[Roll No. 129]

AYES—244

Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Maffei
Maloney, Sean
Marchant
Marino
Massie
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCauley
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan
Messer
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mullin
Mulvaney
Murphy (FL)
Murphy (PA)
Neugebauer
Noem
Nugent
Nunes
Nunnelee
Olson
Palazzo
Paulsen
Pearce

NOES—171

Brownley (CA)
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright

Perry
Peters (CA)
Peterson
Petri
Pittenger
Pitts
Poe (TX)
Pompeo
Posey
Price (GA)
Rahall
Reed
Reichert
Renacci
Ribble
Rice (SC)
Rigell
Roby
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rokita
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothfus
Royce
Runyan
Ryan (WI)
Salmon
Sanford
Scalise
Schneider
Schock
Schradler
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Sinema
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland
Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutiérrez
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee

Amodei
Bachmann
Bass
Becerra
Courtney
Dingell

Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Loebach
Loftgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maloney
Carolyn
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascarelli

NOT VOTING—16

Franks (AZ)
Gosar
Hinojosa
Rangel
Richmond
Rush

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1714

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York changed her vote from "aye" to "no."

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WATER RIGHTS PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 515 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3189.

Will the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEBSTER) kindly take the chair.

□ 1716

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole

House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3189) to prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer, relinquishment, or other impairment of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture, with Mr. WEBSTER of Florida (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole rose earlier today, a request for a recorded vote on amendment No. 3 printed in part A of House Report 113-379 by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) had been postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, the unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on amendment No. 3 printed in part A of House Report 113-379 offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIR. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIR. This will be a 2-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 175, noes 236, not voting 20, as follows:

[Roll No. 130]

AYES—175

Beatty	DelBene	Keating
Bera (CA)	Deutch	Kelly (IL)
Bishop (GA)	Doggett	Kennedy
Bishop (NY)	Doyle	Kildee
Blumenauer	Duckworth	Kilmer
Bonamici	Edwards	Kind
Brady (PA)	Ellison	Kirkpatrick
Braley (IA)	Engel	Kuster
Brown (FL)	Enyart	Langevin
Brownley (CA)	Eshoo	Larsen (WA)
Bustos	Esty	Larson (CT)
Butterfield	Farr	Lee (CA)
Capps	Fattah	Levin
Capuano	Foster	Lewis
Cárdenas	Frankel (FL)	Lipinski
Carney	Fudge	Loeb sack
Carson (IN)	Gabbard	Lofgren
Cartwright	Galleo	Lowenthal
Castor (FL)	Garamendi	Lowey
Castro (TX)	Garcia	Lujan Grisham
Chu	Grayson	(NM)
Ciilline	Green, Al	Lujan, Ben Ray
Clark (MA)	Green, Gene	(NM)
Clarke (NY)	Grijalva	Lynch
Clay	Hahn	Maffei
Cleaver	Hanabusa	Maloney, Sean
Clyburn	Hastings (FL)	Matsui
Cohen	Heck (WA)	McCarthy (NY)
Connolly	Higgins	McCollum
Conyers	Holt	McDermott
Cooper	Honda	McGovern
Costa	Horsford	McNerney
Crowley	Hoyer	Meeks
Cummings	Huffman	Meng
Davis, Danny	Israel	Michaud
DeFazio	Jackson Lee	Miller, George
DeGette	Jeffries	Moore
Delaney	Johnson, E. B.	Moran
DeLauro	Kaptur	Murphy (FL)

Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascarell
Pastor (AZ)
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Roybal-Allard

Aderholt
Amash
Bachus
Barber
Barletta
Barr
Barrow (GA)
Barton
Benishak
Bentivoglio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Cassidy
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Cole
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton
Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Cuellar
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foxy
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gibbs
Gibson

NOES—236

Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)
Griffith (VA)
Grimm
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Himes
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham
Latta
LoBiondo
Long
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Lummis
Maloney,
Carolyn
Marchant
Marino
Massie
Matheson
McAllister
McCarthy (CA)
McCauley
McClintock
McHenry
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinley
McMorris
Rodgers
Meadows
Meehan

Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Walberg
Walden
Walorski
Weber (TX)

Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf

NOT VOTING—20

Amodei	Franks (AZ)	Rush
Bachmann	Gosar	Scalise
Bass	Gutiérrez	Smith (WA)
Becerra	Hinojosa	Wagner
Courtney	Johnson (GA)	Waters
Davis (CA)	Rangel	Waxman
Dingell	Richmond	

□ 1720

Ms. DUCKWORTH changed her vote from “no” to “aye.”

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Chair, on roll-call No. 130, had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

The Acting CHAIR. The question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIR. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON) having assumed the chair, Mr. WEBSTER of Florida, Acting Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3189) to prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer, relinquishment, or other impairment of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture, and, pursuant to House Resolution 511, he reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole?

If not, the question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. I am opposed in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mrs. Kirkpatrick moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3189 to the Committee on Natural Resources with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith, with the following amendment:

Page 3, line 7, strike “The Secretary” and insert the following: “Unless necessary to—

“(1) protect Tribal treaty rights;

“(2) preserve recreational fishing;

“(3) mitigate drought conditions in an area covered by an emergency drought declaration; or

“(4) facilitate fire suppression; the Secretary”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arizona is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill. It will not kill the bill nor send it back to committee. If it is adopted, this bill will immediately proceed to final passage.

Water is a critical issue in Arizona and especially in my district. Water can be, also, a divisive issue. In Congress, we need to provide leadership and work together on long-term solutions that protect our water sources, communities, tribes, and local economies.

In particular, I believe this bill needs language added to strengthen the rights of our tribal governments. Arizona's District 1 is over 90 percent public lands. It contains several important waterways, national forests, and recreation areas, and it has 12 Native American tribes.

In my previous term, I introduced the White Mountain Apache Tribe Water Quantification Act, which was signed into law. It was a historic agreement that created jobs, protected tribal water rights, and established reliable water sources for many of Arizona's communities.

As this legislation moves forward, I want to ensure that we protect the following priorities: our tribal communities, our fishing and sportsmen, our drought mitigation efforts, and our ability to fight wildfires. And we need to manage water rights and land-use permits in a balanced way. We can do this in a way that respects tribes, preserves recreation, and protects our communities from droughts and wildfires that have already caused so much devastation in Western States. In my view, these issues should be our priorities.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, the underlying bill does one thing and one thing only: it stops the Federal Government from extorting water rights from private citizens and businesses without just compensation. That is what the underlying bill does.

But, Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you that there seems to be a common thread here over the last several weeks—maybe even a year—on the differences of governance between the two parties, between this side of the aisle and that side of the aisle.

The reason why this is important as it relates to water law is simply because water law has always been the province of the States. There have been Federal courts that have said that over and over and over. Yet, when we come to the floor here, we hear constantly from the other side that there should be conditions on certain rights. This falls into that category.

The debate we had on the floor earlier was that there is acknowledgment that the Federal Government was taking water rights as a condition for permits. Their answer from that side of the aisle was, well, let's let the process go; our side was, let's respect the law. Big difference.

So now we have this motion to recommit, and if you look at the motion to recommit, it conditions, again, State water law. I think the best way that we should approach these debates is to say that we trust the people and we trust the Federal system, and the Federal system as it relates to water law is that States' water law is premier. This motion to recommit is another attempt—another attempt—to qualify that, to give the Federal Government more authority.

I urge my colleagues to say “no” to the motion to recommit and pass the underlying bill to protect states' rights and water law.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 183, noes 227, not voting 21, as follows:

[Roll No. 131]

AYES—183

Barber
Barrow (GA)
Beatty
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici

Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano

Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline

Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Galego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel

Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loebach
Loebach
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham (NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray (NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney
Maloney, Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore
Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor (AZ)

Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (CA)
Peters (MI)
Pingree (ME)
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Rahall
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Welch
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOES—227

Aderholt
Amash
Bachus
Barletta
Barr
Barton
Benishek
Bentivolio
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Black
Blackburn
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Bridenstine
Brooks (AL)
Brooks (IN)
Broun (GA)
Buchanan
Bucshon
Burgess
Byrne
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Chabot
Chaffetz
Coble
Coffman
Collins (GA)
Collins (NY)
Conaway
Cook
Cotton

Cramer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Culberson
Daines
Davis, Rodney
Denham
Dent
DeSantis
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Duffy
Duncan (SC)
Duncan (TN)
Ellmers
Farenthold
Fincher
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fleming
Flores
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fox
Frelinghuysen
Gardner
Garrett
Gerlach
Gibbs
Gibson
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Goodlatte
Gowdy
Granger
Graves (GA)
Graves (MO)
Griffin (AR)

Griffith (VA)
Guthrie
Hall
Hanna
Harper
Harris
Hartzler
Hastings (WA)
Heck (NV)
Hensarling
Herrera Beutler
Holding
Hudson
Huelskamp
Huizenga (MI)
Hultgren
Hunter
Hurt
Issa
Jenkins
Johnson (OH)
Johnson, Sam
Jolly
Jones
Jordan
Joyce
Kelly (PA)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kinzinger (IL)
Kline
Labrador
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Lance
Lankford
Latham

Latta	Perry	Shimkus	Bucshon	Hudson	Pompeo	Green, Gene	Luján, Ben Ray	Ruiz
LoBiondo	Peterson	Shuster	Burgess	Huelskamp	Posey	Grijalva	(NM)	Ruppersberger
Long	Petri	Simpson	Byrne	Huizenga (MI)	Price (GA)	Hahn	Lynch	Ryan (OH)
Lucas	Pittenger	Smith (MO)	Calvert	Hultgren	Reed	Hanabusa	Maffei	Sánchez, Linda
Luetkemeyer	Pitts	Smith (NE)	Camp	Hunter	Reichert	Hastings (FL)	Maloney,	T.
Lummis	Poe (TX)	Smith (NJ)	Campbell	Hurt	Renacci	Heck (WA)	Carolyn	Sanchez, Loretta
Marchant	Pompeo	Smith (TX)	Cantor	Issa	Ribble	Higgins	Matsui	Sarbanes
Marino	Posey	Southerland	Capito	Jenkins	Rice (SC)	Himes	McCarthy (NY)	Schakowsky
Massie	Price (GA)	Stewart	Carter	Johnson (OH)	Rigell	Holt	McColum	Schiff
Matheson	Reed	Stivers	Cassidy	Johnson, Sam	Roby	Honda	McGovern	Schneider
McAllister	Reichert	Stockman	Chabot	Jolly	Roe (TN)	Horsford	McNerney	Schwartz
McCarthy (CA)	Renacci	Stutzman	Chaffetz	Jones	Rogers (AL)	Hoyer	Meeks	Scott (VA)
McCaul	Ribble	Terry	Coble	Jordan	Rogers (KY)	Huffman	Meng	Scott, David
McClintock	Rice (SC)	Thompson (PA)	Coffman	Joyce	Rogers (MI)	Israel	Michaud	Serrano
McHenry	Rigell	Thornberry	Cole	Kelly (PA)	Rohrabacher	Jackson Lee	Miller, George	Sewell (AL)
McKeon	Roby	Tiberi	Collins (GA)	King (IA)	Rokita	Jeffries	Moore	Shea-Porter
McKinley	Roe (TN)	Tipton	Collins (NY)	King (NY)	Rooney	Johnson (GA)	Moran	Sires
McMorris	Rogers (AL)	Turner	Conaway	Kingston	Ros-Lehtinen	Johnson, E. B.	Murphy (FL)	Slaughter
Rodgers	Rogers (KY)	Upton	Cook	Kinzinger (IL)	Roskam	Nadler	Napoli	Speier
Meadows	Rogers (MI)	Valadao	Costa	Kirkpatrick	Ross	Kaptur	Napolitano	Swalwell (CA)
Meehan	Rohrabacher	Walberg	Cotton	Kline	Rothfus	Keating	Neal	Takano
Messer	Rokita	Walden	Cramer	Labrador	Royce	Kennedy	Negrete McLeod	Thompson (CA)
Mica	Rooney	Walorski	Crawford	LaMalfa	Runyan	Kildee	Nolan	Thompson (MS)
Miller (FL)	Ros-Lehtinen	Weber (TX)	Crenshaw	Lamborn	Ryan (WI)	O'Rourke	Pallone	Tierney
Miller (MI)	Roskam	Webster (FL)	Cuellar	Lance	Salmon	Kilmer	Pascarell	Titus
Miller, Gary	Ross	West	Culberson	Lankford	Sanford	Kind	Pastor (AZ)	Tonko
Mullin	Rothfus	Westmoreland	Daines	Latham	Scalise	Kuster	Payne	Tsongas
Murphy (PA)	Royce	Whitfield	Davis, Rodney	Latta	Schock	Langevin	Pelosi	Van Hollen
Neugebauer	Runyan	Williams	Dent	LoBiondo	Schrader	Larsen (WA)	Perlmutter	Vargas
Noem	Ryan (WI)	Wilson (SC)	DesSantis	Long	Schweikert	Larson (CT)	Peters (CA)	Veasey
Nugent	Salmon	Wittman	DesJarlais	Lucas	Scott, Austin	Lee (CA)	Peters (MI)	Vela
Nunes	Sanford	Wolf	Diaz-Balart	Luetkemeyer	Sensenbrenner	Levin	Pingree (ME)	Velázquez
Nunnelee	Scalise	Womack	Duffy	Lummis	Sessions	Lewis	Pocan	Visclosky
Olson	Schock	Woodall	Duncan (SC)	Duffy	Shimkus	Lipinski	Polis	Walz
Owens	Schweikert	Yoder	Duncan (TN)	Marchant	Shuster	Loebach	Price (NC)	Wasserman
Palazzo	Scott, Austin	Yoho	Ellmers	Marino	Simpson	Lofgren	Quigley	Schultz
Paulsen	Sensenbrenner	Young (AK)	Farenthold	Matheson	Sinema	Lowenthal	Rahall	Waters
Pearce	Sessions	Young (IN)	Fincher	McAllister	Smith (MO)	Lowey	Richmond	Welch
			Fitzpatrick	McCarthy (CA)	Smith (NE)	Lujan Grisham	Roybal-Allard	Wilson (FL)
			Fleischmann	McCaul	Smith (NJ)	(NM)		Yarmuth
			Fleming	McClintock	Smith (TX)			
			Flores	McHenry	Southerland			
			Forbes	McIntyre	Stewart			
			Fortenberry	McKeon	Stivers			
			Fox	McKinley	Stockman			
			Frelinghuysen	McMorris	Stutzman			
			Gardner	Rodgers	Terry			
			Garrett	Meadows	Thompson (PA)			
			Gerlach	Meehan	Thornberry			
			Gibbs	Messer	Tiberi			
			Gibson	Mica	Tipton			
			Gingrey (GA)	Miller (FL)	Turner			
			Gohmert	Miller (MI)	Upton			
			Goodlatte	Miller, Gary	Valadao			
			Gowdy	Mullin	Walberg			
			Granger	Murphy (PA)	Walden			
			Graves (GA)	Neugebauer	Walorski			
			Graves (MO)	Noem	Weber (TX)			
			Griffin (AR)	Nugent	Webster (FL)			
			Griffith (VA)	Nunes	Wenstrup			
			Grimm	Nunnelee	Westmoreland			
			Guthrie	Olson	Whitfield			
			Hall	Owens	Williams			
			Hanna	Palazzo	Wilson (SC)			
			Harper	Paulsen	Wittman			
			Harris	Pearce	Wolf			
			Hartzler	Perry	Womack			
			Hastings (WA)	Peterson	Woodall			
			Heck (NV)	Petri	Yoder			
			Hensarling	Pittenger	Yoho			
			Herrera Beutler	Pitts	Young (AK)			
			Holding	Poe (TX)	Young (IN)			

NOT VOTING—21

Amodei	Franks (AZ)	Rangel
Bachmann	Gosar	Richmond
Bass	Grimm	Rush
Becerra	Gutiérrez	Smith (WA)
Cassidy	Hinojosa	Wagner
Courtney	McIntyre	Waters
Dingell	Mulvaney	Waxman

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1735

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 131 I was unavoidably detained at the physician's office. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 238, noes 174, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 132]

AYES—238

Aderholt	Barton	Boustany
Amash	Benishek	Brady (TX)
Bachus	Bentivolio	Bridenstine
Barber	Bilirakis	Brooks (AL)
Barletta	Bishop (UT)	Brooks (IN)
Barr	Black	Brown (GA)
Barrow (GA)	Blackburn	Buchanan

Beatty	Cicilline	Doggett
Bera (CA)	Clark (MA)	Doyle
Bishop (GA)	Clarke (NY)	Duckworth
Bishop (NY)	Clay	Edwards
Blumenauer	Cleaver	Ellison
Bonamici	Clyburn	Engel
Brady (PA)	Cohen	Enyart
Braley (IA)	Connolly	Eshoo
Brown (FL)	Conyers	Esty
Brownley (CA)	Cooper	Farr
Bustos	Crowley	Fattah
Butterfield	Cummings	Foster
Capps	Davis (CA)	Frankel (FL)
Capuano	Davis, Danny	Fudge
Cardenas	DeFazio	Gabbard
Carney	DeGette	Gallego
Carson (IN)	Delaney	Garamendi
Cartwright	DeLauro	Garcia
Castro (TX)	DelBene	Grayson
Chu	Deutch	Green, Al

NOES—174

Doggett	Doyle	Duckworth
Edwards	Ellison	Engel
Enyart	Eshoo	Esty
Farr	Fattah	Foster
Frankel (FL)	Fudge	Gabbard
Gallego	Garamendi	Garcia
Grayson	Green, Al	

NOT VOTING—19

Amodei	Franks (AZ)	Rush
Bachmann	Gosar	Sherman
Bass	Gutiérrez	Smith (WA)
Becerra	Hinojosa	Wagner
Castor (FL)	McDermott	Waxman
Courtney	Mulvaney	
Dingell	Rangel	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining.

□ 1741

Messrs. LOWENTHAL, NOLAN, and POCAN changed their vote from "aye" to "no."

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to prohibit the conditioning of any permit, lease, or other use agreement on the transfer of any water right to the United States by the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 132, had I been present, I would have voted "no."

RAISING A QUESTION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to rule IX, I rise in regard to a question of the privileges of the House.

The form of the resolution is as follows:

Whereas on March 5, 2014, during a hearing before the House Committee on

Oversight and Government Reform, Committee Chairman DARRELL E. ISSA gave a statement and then posed ten questions to former Internal Revenue Service official Lois Lerner, who stated that she was invoking her Fifth Amendment right not to testify;

Whereas the committee's ranking member, Representative ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, clearly sought recognition to take his turn for questions under committee and House rules;

Whereas Chairman ISSA then unilaterally adjourned the hearing and refused to allow him to make any statement or ask any questions;

Whereas Ranking Member CUMMINGS protested immediately, stating: "Mr. Chairman, you cannot run a committee like this. You just cannot—"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

The Chair is going to ask, in the name of decorum of the House, that Members not display their electronic devices. It is a violation of the House rules. Regular order would be putting the iPads down. The House will not proceed until there is decorum in the House.

The gentleman will suspend. Proceedings will not resume until there is decorum in the House.

□ 1745

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, where is it specifically in the rule stated that Members cannot display their iPads? What rule is it?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the precedents of the House, Members are not allowed to stage an exhibition. The Chair has ruled based on the precedents of the House.

The Chair asks that Members not display their iPhones and iPads.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, may I proceed?

Mr. Speaker, the Members have removed their iPads. May I proceed?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. When decorum has been restored, the gentleman may proceed.

Only a Member under recognition for debate can display an exhibit.

Mr. KILDEE. For the purposes of display, this is what the Members have been holding.

May I proceed?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman may proceed.

Mr. KILDEE. Whereas Ranking Member CUMMINGS protested immediately, stating: "Mr. Chairman, you cannot run a committee like this. You just cannot do this. This is, we are better than that as a country, we are better than that as a committee.";

Whereas Chairman ISSA then returned and allowed Ranking Member CUMMINGS to begin his statement, but when it became clear that Chairman ISSA did not want to hear what Ranking Member CUMMINGS was saying, turned off Ranking Member CUMMINGS' microphone, ordered Republican staff to "close it down," and repeatedly signaled to end the hearing with his hand across his neck;

Whereas Ranking Member CUMMINGS objected again, stating: "You cannot have a one-sided investigation. There is absolutely something wrong with that.";

Whereas Chairman ISSA made a statement of his own and posed questions during the hearing, but refused to allow other members of the committee, and in particular, the ranking member, who had sought recognition, to make statements under the 5-minute rule in violation of House rule XI;

Whereas Chairman ISSA instructed the microphones be turned off and adjourned the hearing without a vote or a unanimous consent agreement in violation of rule XVI because he did not want to permit Ranking Member CUMMINGS to speak;

Whereas Chairman ISSA's abusive behavior on March 5 is part of a continuing pattern in which he has routinely excluded members of the committee from investigative meetings, has turned off Members' microphones while they were questioning a witness, attempted to prevent witnesses from answering questions, and has provided information to the press before sharing it with committee members;

Whereas on July 18, 2003, former Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Bill Thomas, asked the United States Capitol Police to remove minority members of the committee from the library where they were having a discussion about a pending committee markup, and subsequently came to the well of the U.S. House of Representatives to publicly apologize for his belligerent behavior;

Whereas Chairman ISSA has violated clause 1 of rule XXIII of the Code of Official Conduct which states that "A Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer or employee of the House shall behave at all times in a manner that shall reflect creditably on the House"; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives strongly condemns the offensive and disrespectful manner in which Chairman DARRELL E. ISSA conducted the hearing of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on March 5, 2014, and requires that he come to the well of the House to issue a public apology to Members of the House.

That concludes the reading of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan is recognized to offer the resolution.

Does the gentleman offer the resolution?

Mr. KILDEE. Yes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The text of resolution is as follows:

PRIVILEGED RESOLUTION AGAINST THE OFFENSIVE ACTIONS OF CHAIRMAN DARRELL E. ISSA

Whereas on March 5, 2014, during a hearing before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Committee Chairman Darrell E. Issa gave a statement and then posed ten questions to former Internal Revenue Service official Lois Lerner, who stated that she was invoking her Fifth Amendment right not to testify;

Whereas the committee's ranking member, Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, clearly sought recognition to take his turn for questions under committee and House rules;

Whereas, Chairman Issa then unilaterally adjourned the hearing and refused to allow him to make any statement or ask any questions;

Whereas Ranking Member Cummings protested immediately, stating: "Mr. Chairman, you cannot run a committee like this. You just cannot do this. This is, we are better than that as a country, we are better than that as a committee.";

Whereas, Chairman Issa then returned and allowed Ranking Member Cummings to begin his statement, but when it became clear that Chairman Issa did not want to hear what Ranking Member Cummings was saying, turned off Ranking Member Cummings' microphone, ordered Republican staff to "close it down," and repeatedly signaled to end the hearing with his hand across his neck;

Whereas Ranking Member Cummings objected again, stating: "You cannot have a one-sided investigation. There is absolutely something wrong with that.";

Whereas Chairman Issa made a statement of his own and posed questions during the hearing, but refused to allow other members of the committee, and in particular, the ranking member, who had sought recognition, to make statements under the 5-minute rule in violation of House rule XI;

Whereas Chairman ISSA instructed the microphones be turned off and adjourned the hearing without a vote or a unanimous consent agreement in violation of rule XVI because he did not want to permit Ranking Member Cummings to speak;

Whereas Chairman ISSA's abusive behavior on March 5 is part of a continuing pattern in which he has routinely excluded members of the committee from investigative meetings, has turned off Members' microphones while they were questioning a witness, attempted to prevent witnesses from answering questions, and has provided information to the press before sharing it with committee members;

Whereas on July 18, 2003, former Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Bill Thomas asked the United States Capitol Police to remove minority members of the committee from the library where they were having a discussion about a pending committee markup, and subsequently came to the well of the U.S. House of Representatives to publicly apologize for his belligerent behavior;

Whereas Chairman Issa has violated clause 1 rule XXIII of the Code of Official Conduct which states that "A Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer or employee of the House shall behave at all times in a manner that shall reflect creditably on the House"; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives strongly condemns the offensive and disrespectful manner in which Chairman Darrell E. Issa conducted the hearing of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on March 5, 2014, and requires that he come to the well of the House to issue a public apology to Members of the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution qualifies.

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I move to lay the resolution on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to lay the resolution on the table.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 217, noes 173, answered “present” 10, not voting 31, as follows:

[Roll No. 133]

AYES—217

Aderholt	Fortenberry	Marchant
Amash	Fox	Marino
Bachus	Frelinghuysen	Massie
Barletta	Gardner	McAllister
Barr	Garrett	McCarthy (CA)
Barton	Gerlach	McCaul
Benishek	Gibbs	McClintock
Bentivolio	Gibson	McHenry
Bilirakis	Gingrey (GA)	McKeon
Bishop (UT)	Gohmert	McKinley
Black	Goodlatte	McMorris
Blackburn	Granger	Rodgers
Boustany	Graves (GA)	Meadows
Brady (TX)	Graves (MO)	Messer
Bridenstine	Griffin (AR)	Mica
Brooks (AL)	Griffith (VA)	Miller (FL)
Brown (GA)	Grimm	Miller (MI)
Buchanan	Guthrie	Miller, Gary
Bucshon	Hall	Mullin
Burgess	Hanna	Murphy (PA)
Byrne	Harper	Neugebauer
Calvert	Harris	Nugent
Camp	Hartzler	Nunes
Campbell	Hastings (WA)	Nunnelee
Cantor	Heck (NV)	Olson
Capito	Herrera Beutler	Palazzo
Carter	Holding	Paulsen
Cassidy	Hudson	Pearce
Chabot	Huelskamp	Perry
Chaffetz	Huizenga (MI)	Petri
Coble	Hultgren	Pittenger
Coffman	Hunter	Pitts
Cole	Hurt	Poe (TX)
Collins (GA)	Jenkins	Pompeo
Collins (NY)	Johnson (OH)	Posey
Cook	Johnson, Sam	Price (GA)
Cotton	Jolly	Rahall
Cramer	Jones	Reed
Crawford	Jordan	Reichert
Crenshaw	Joyce	Renacci
Culberson	Kelly (PA)	Rice (SC)
Daines	King (IA)	Rigell
Davis, Rodney	King (NY)	Roby
Denham	Kingston	Roe (TN)
DeSantis	Kinzing (IL)	Rogers (AL)
DesJarlais	Kline	Rogers (KY)
Diaz-Balart	Labrador	Rogers (MI)
Duffy	LaMalfa	Rohrabacher
Duncan (SC)	Lamborn	Rokita
Duncan (TN)	Lance	Rooney
Ellmers	Lankford	Ros-Lehtinen
Farenthold	Latham	Roskam
Fincher	Latta	Ross
Fitzpatrick	LoBiondo	Rothfus
Fleischmann	Long	Royce
Fleming	Lucas	Runyan
Flores	Luetkemeyer	Ryan (WI)
Forbes	Lummis	Salmon

Sanford
Scalise
Schock
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Southernland

Stewart
Stivers
Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Walberg
Walden
Walorski

Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westmoreland
Williams
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

NOES—173

Barrow (GA)
Beatty
Bera (CA)
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DeBene
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene

Grijalva
Hahn
Hanabusa
Hastings (FL)
Heck (WA)
Higgins
Himes
Holt
Honda
Horsford
Hoyer
Huffman
Israel
Jackson Lee
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilmer
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Kuster
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee (CA)
Levin
Lewis
Lipinski
Loeb sack
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Lowey
Lujan Grisham
(NM)
Lujan, Ben Ray
(NM)
Lynch
Maffei
Maloney,
Carolyn
Maloney, Sean
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Michaud
Miller, George
Moore

Moran
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Negrete McLeod
Nolan
O'Rourke
Owens
Pallone
Pascarell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters (MI)
Peterson
Pocan
Polis
Price (NC)
Quigley
Richmond
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sewell (AL)
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Sinema
Sires
Slaughter
Speier
Swalwell (CA)
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Tsongas
Van Hollen
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

ANSWERED “PRESENT”—10

Brooks (IN)
Capuano
Clarke (NY)
Conaway

Dent
Deutch
Gowdy
Issa

Meehan
Sánchez, Linda
T.

NOT VOTING—31

Amodei
Bachmann
Barber
Bass
Becerra
Courtney
Davis (CA)
Davis, Danny
Delaney
Dingell
Franks (AZ)

Gosar
Gutiérrez
Hensarling
Hinojosa
Mulvaney
Noem
Pastor (AZ)
Peters (CA)
Pingree (ME)
Rangel
Ribble

Ruiz
Rush
Scott, David
Smith (WA)
Vargas
Wagner
Waxman
Welch
Whitfield

□ 1810

So the motion to table was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote No. 133, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, March 13, 2014 I was unable to be in Washington, D.C. and vote on the legislative business of the day.

On Ordering the Previous Question for consideration of H. Res. 515, a resolution providing for consideration of both H.R. 3189, Water Rights Protection Act and H.R. 4015, SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014, rollcall vote No. 125, had I been present I would have voted “yes.”

On Adoption of H. Res. 515, a resolution providing for consideration of both H.R. 3189, Water Rights Protection Act and H.R. 4015, SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014, rollcall vote No. 126, had I been present I would have voted “yes.”

On Agreeing to the Ellison of Minnesota Amendment No. 1 to H.R. 3973, Faithful Execution of the Law Act of 2014, rollcall vote No. 127, had I been present I would have voted “no.”

On the Motion to Recommit with Instructions H.R. 3973, Faithful Execution of the Law Act of 2014, rollcall vote No. 128, had I been present I would have voted “no.”

On Passage of H.R. 3973, Faithful Execution of the Law Act of 2014, rollcall vote No. 129, had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

On Agreeing to the Polis of Colorado Substitute Amendment No. 3 to H.R. 3189, Water Rights Protection Act, rollcall vote No. 130, had I been present I would have voted “no.”

On the Motion to Recommit with Instructions H.R. 3189, Water Rights Protection Act, rollcall vote No. 131, had I been present I would have voted “no.”

On Passage of H.R. 3189, Water Rights Protection Act, rollcall vote No. 132, had I been present I would have voted “yes.”

On the Motion to Table the Question of the Privileges of the House, rollcall vote No. 133, had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO THE BOARD OF VISITORS TO THE UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BENTIVOLIO). The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 6968(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, of the following Member on the part of the House to the Board of Visitors to the United States Naval Academy:

Mr. THOMAS J. ROONEY, Florida

BOB MURRAY

(Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a respected community leader and a great friend to so many in central Illinois.

On February 26, longtime broadcaster, weatherman, and radio host Bob Murray lost his battle to brain cancer at the age of 66.

Throughout his career, Bob took his work incredibly seriously. He used to be my weatherman. I would watch on TV while growing up, but in his later life, he was a radio broadcaster. He arrived at the radio station at 1:30 in the morning to prepare for the day because he felt an informed community was important—from community fundraisers, to what was happening with government, to the weather, and to the breaking local news.

I had the privilege of being interviewed by Bob dozens of times over the last 18 months, and I can tell you without a doubt that he was one of the most honest, respectful, and professional members of the media I have ever met.

Bob's family is honoring his life by having memorials made to the Illinois News Broadcasters Association Foundation for a scholarship to be awarded in his name. I can't think of a better way to ensure that he is remembered for years to come.

So thank you, Bob Murray, for the years of service you provided to the families in central Illinois.

Thank you to Bob's family for sharing him with us for more than 40 years and for allowing him to become a part of our family.

DON'T CUT OUR MILITARY

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, last night, I held a telephone town hall and called almost 60,000 homes back in Texas. I heard from southeast Texans about a lot of things that were on their minds, but the number one concern I heard about was cuts to the military.

Mr. Speaker, one citizen said to me: We, the United States, were not prepared militarily for World War II. Why are we doing the same thing now? We need to be increasing, not decreasing, our military capabilities.

I even took a poll and asked those who were listening in on the call: Do you think we should reduce our military? An overwhelming 85 percent of the people on the call said: No.

Mr. Speaker, our men and women in the military should be the last thing we cut from the Federal budget. The world is getting more and more dan-

gerous as time goes on. We should not lose sight of the enemies we face. Both countries and terrorists who wish to do us harm still exist. Our military is the best in the world—and we must make sure it stays that way.

And that's just the way it is.

□ 1815

CHILDREN'S BUDGET

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this happens to be Women's History Month. I will continue to salute the dynamic women of this Nation.

I rise today as a founder and cochair of the Congressional Children's Caucus and indicate to my colleagues that I believe we are overdue for naming children as our number one priority. Working with First Focus, I intend to introduce a children's budget for the needs of our children. We have left children behind. Many times, the issues around children are discussed in a partisan way. Who wants early childhood education? Who wants universal pre-K or around-the-clock child care?

In actuality, the consumers and beneficiaries of funding for those very important issues are our children. We should give them the security, protection, and resources to prevent child abuse and for bringing families together and providing intervention for families that are troubled that result in not only child abuse, but violence against these children.

What about the best education they can have? What about the best health care they can have?

Mr. Speaker, children are our number one priority. I truly believe that a children's budget in the United States of America is long overdue.

Join me on the children's budget.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 3370. An act to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1086. An act to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

S. 2137. An act to ensure that holders of flood insurance policies under the National Flood Insurance Program do not receive premium refunds for coverage of second homes.

PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 3, 2013, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. POCAN. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to be here on behalf of the Progressive Caucus today for the Progressive Caucus Special Order hour. We want to talk about the need to extend unemployment benefits in this country.

Since the end of December, millions of Americans have lost their extended unemployment benefits and are struggling just to get by in this economy.

We have had two really positive developments this week. One, the House Democrats have an initiative, led by Representative BRAD SCHNEIDER of Illinois, to do a discharge petition, which is a procedural motion to force the leadership of this body to let us vote on extending unemployment benefits, which it refuses to do.

We have to get 218 signatures—a majority of the House—to sign the discharge petition. If that happens, we can force a vote and make sure that people who have lost their benefits since the end of December get their benefits.

That is the first important thing that has happened.

The second important thing is, today, just this afternoon, it was announced there is a bipartisan agreement in the Senate by several senators to make sure that we can extend benefits through the month of May of this year.

We need to do everything possible not only to make sure that the Senate passes that, but to make sure that this House takes up that action. Because if we don't, millions of people—and many more every single week—will not get access to unemployment benefits.

So the Progressive Caucus is here today to highlight this issue and to raise awareness and explain why it is so important that we pass these benefits—and we pass them now—on behalf of the millions of people in this country that need those.

I am joined by several of my colleagues here today. I would like to make sure that they have a chance to talk about the unique situations in their area and why this is so important.

I would first like to yield to my colleague from the great State of Oregon, Representative SUZANNE BONAMICI.

Ms. BONAMICI. Thank you very much, Congressman POCAN. Thank you for leading this discussion. The discussion about extending the emergency unemployment compensation program is such an important topic.

Last week, the country marked a troubling milestone. The number of Americans who lost their emergency unemployment insurance hit 2 million. Thousands more will lose this lifeline every week if we do not extend this critical benefit.

The impact of losing unemployment benefits is immediate and devastating to our constituents. I recently spoke to a constituent in Oregon who was laid off from a large employer in my district. His unemployment benefits ended early this year when the program was cut off. Since then, unfortunately, things have gone from bad to worse. He has been in his home for about 10 years, and now he is in default because he cannot pay his mortgage.

I want to thank our colleague, Congressman MATT CARTWRIGHT, for leading the effort to provide my constituents and yours the opportunity to get a bit of relief. He is sponsoring the Stop Foreclosures Due to Congressional Dysfunction Act. That would put a 6-month moratorium on foreclosures of Federally-backed mortgages for individuals who have exhausted their unemployment benefits.

I have to say this is the least that we can do for our constituents who are still suffering because this House refuses to allow an "up-or-down" vote on extending unemployment compensation.

My constituent is actively looking for work. He continues to look for work. But he keeps getting passed over for jobs. They are being filled by employers who seem to be looking for younger, maybe less expensive workers.

He is one of many constituents across the country. What he and other constituents like him tell me is that it is particularly difficult for the more mature job seekers to find work, even though they have decades of productive experience.

His efforts to find work haven't stopped. And I have to emphasize this: the unemployment benefits that he was getting weren't making him lazy. They were allowing him to survive. But instead of giving him the resources he needs to help lift him up and out of this situation, we are abandoning him and constituents across the country when they really need that lifeline.

We need to extend this lifeline while we are tackling the problems of long-term unemployment in this country. The long-term unemployed need better access to job training; workforce development programs; resources; programs to engage employers and help connect the long-term unemployed, particularly older workers, with suitable employment.

All Americans must realize that being among the long-term unemployed does not diminish one's abilities, value, or potential contribution to the workforce and the economy. I want to emphasize that point, because when I had a roundtable discussion in my district, there were several constituents there who were unemployed. They get down and concerned that they aren't worthy. We wanted to emphasize to them, You are worthy. Keep looking. You can find work.

We should be extending this lifeline.

My home State of Oregon has been a bright spot in the midst of the recovery. In January, Oregon recorded its lowest unemployment rate since 2008. There is a recent report that shows that Oregon added more than 43,000 jobs last year—that is great news—adding to the unemployment base by 2.6 percent.

Unfortunately, the economic improvement provides little relief for the still about 30,000 long-term unemployed Oregonians who have lost these benefits over the last 2 months and are still struggling to reenter the workforce.

They need these resources to have a car to get to job interviews, to have a cell phone.

As the economy continues to recover, we must stimulate it, not stifle it. The Emergency Unemployment Compensation program doesn't just help the millions of Americans who are struggling to get by every day, it provides an economic boost.

When people get these benefits, they aren't saving this money. They put the benefits right back into the economy. While they look for work they use the unemployment benefits to pay their mortgages, to buy groceries, to keep the lights on.

We shouldn't be arguing over extending this lifeline to millions of hard-working Americans. I was glad to hear the news that the Senate has a bipartisan proposal. I hope they pass that and get it over to us right away.

Yesterday, I joined many other of our colleagues in signing the discharge petition calling for a vote to extend emergency unemployment. There is no better cause than helping the hard-working members of our country who desperately want to go back to work.

Thank you again, Representative POCAN, for organizing this hour. I hope that we can draw the attention of the Nation, but especially of our colleagues, about the effects of ending the benefit.

I urge our colleagues on the other side of the aisle and in leadership to reconsider this and put it up for a vote so we can help our constituents who are looking for work, trying to get back to work, and need that lifeline.

Thank you again, Representative POCAN, for leading this important discussion.

Mr. POCAN. Thank you, Representative BONAMICI. I am sorry to hear about your constituent losing housing.

For the State of the Union in this very Chamber, I brought a constituent of mine who had lost their benefits. Rather than be foreclosed on, they put their home up for sale. They are still looking for work.

It is a situation happening all too often. There is an article in today's Huffington Post talking about the number of people who are being evicted because they can no longer pay their

rent or mortgage simply because of the loss of benefits.

Thank you for sharing that story, and thank you for your work on behalf of Oregon.

I would also like to yield to my colleague from California, Representative JARED HUFFMAN, who would like to talk a little bit about the problem of extending unemployment benefits.

Representative HUFFMAN.

Mr. HUFFMAN. I want to thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for your leadership in organizing this hour of debate on such an important subject. I certainly want to lend my voice to the voices of my colleagues on this important matter.

What we are asking for is very simple. We simply want an immediate "up-or-down" vote on whether to extend these Federal long-term unemployment insurance benefits. We are asking that because I think in all of our districts we see that too many of our constituents are unnecessarily suffering from Congress' failure to act. We owe it to our neighbors and their families—people who lost their jobs through no fault of their own, people who want to work, who continually are searching for work—we owe it to them to provide the support they need to get back on their feet.

In my own home State of California, we have got over 339,000 Californians who have lost unemployment benefits. The number continues to grow the longer Congress waits, the longer we fail to act.

California's currently got an unemployment rate of about 8.3 percent, but in many parts of my district—I include some rural areas—that rate is much higher. In fact, in Trinity County we have an unemployment rate that is over 11 percent.

It is very important to remember that this is not an abstract issue. This is an immediate and deeply personal issue about real people and real struggles. Since the Federal benefits expired in December of last year, I have received thousands of emails and phone calls from my constituents asking for Congress to wake up and take action.

One of them very recently is a great example. It is from Lisa in Eureka. She wrote to me:

I have been on unemployment for just over 6 months now and I am not able to make my mortgage payment. I am a worker, not a lazy bum. I want to work, and I am still looking and hopeful. But in the meantime, I can't live without a little help from unemployment.

That is very typical of the kind of feedback and pleas that I am hearing and that I know you, Mr. POCAN, and many of us are hearing from hard-working folks in our district every single day.

So, again, I think it is important to emphasize this is not a handout. This is about offering a hand up to real people during a difficult time. Without the

extension of this crucial lifeline, 181,000 children in California—let's remember the impact on families and children—will be hurt.

No one should be forced to make the unbearable choice between paying their rent and feeding their family simply because they lost their job due to no fault of their own. Extending these benefits should not remain a casualty to congressional gridlock.

Just today, we got some great news. I think we are all encouraged that Democrats and Republicans in the Senate are working together on a tentative agreement to extend unemployment insurance benefits for 5 months—an agreement that, as I understand it, would provide retroactive payments to people like Lisa in my district.

So, Mr. Speaker, let's help the economy. Let's help our constituents who are looking for work. This House should follow the Senate's lead and work together to find a solution.

Again, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin.

□ 1830

Mr. POCAN. Thank you, Representative HUFFMAN, for all the work on behalf of your constituents in northern California. I appreciate your words and sharing the story of your constituent.

Again, 72,000 people every single week will lose benefits until this Congress acts, real people in California, Oregon, and real people in the State of Illinois.

Next it is my privilege to yield time to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER), the person who led the initiative on behalf of the House Democrats, led the initiative to discharge the bill so that we could force a vote in this House to ensure that everyone across the country and in the State of Illinois can get the benefits they need so they can continue to get by to find work.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you again, Congressman POCAN, not just for your friendship, but tonight for organizing and bringing us here to have this conversation.

For us in Illinois and Wisconsin, throughout the country it has been a harsh winter. Everyone has talked about the weather and the snow and the storms, but for some it has been a harsher winter than for others.

In January, I hosted a roundtable on unemployment, long-term unemployment. At that roundtable I met a young mother, 29 years old, with two young children, and she told me how, at the end of the day, she comes home, she makes dinner for her kids, and they crawl into bed under the covers to eat dinner and watch TV because she had to make the choice between paying her rent and paying her heat.

I met another woman who has been looking for work now for over a year. Her story was a little different. She

was in an industry, travel agency, that is shrinking. She has two kids, high school age, who are looking forward to going to college, and she is now in the position of having to deplete the kids' college accounts so that they can simply make ends meet as she looks for work.

This is the reality for 2 million people around the country, and the numbers, as you have pointed out, grow by 72,000 people every single week. In Illinois alone, there are more than 116,000 people who have lost their unemployment insurance and are struggling just to survive.

Yet, in this Chamber, in this House of Representatives, we have not had a single vote to extend or address the unemployment insurance challenge. Partisan gridlock, partisanship and gridlock have already cost millions their emergency unemployment insurance, and the next year it is estimated that it will cost the U.S. economy 240,000 jobs.

Failing to extend unemployment insurance is hurting families, it is hurting businesses, it is hurting our communities, and it is hurting our national economy. That is why yesterday I filed this discharge petition to end the gridlock and to bring to the floor a vote on extending unemployment insurance.

Now, look, I understand some of my colleagues may disagree, and I respect their perspective and I respect their right to vote "no," but not allowing a vote on the floor, not allowing us to voice our vote in this House of Representatives on unemployment insurance is simply unacceptable.

I believe extending unemployment insurance is not just smart policy, it is the right thing to do. That is why I celebrate the passage, or the agreement in the Senate, bipartisan agreement, to extend unemployment insurance by 5 months. I look forward for that to come into this House, and I hope we will have a chance to vote to it.

I know the path ahead is not going to be easy, but our constituents deserve better than partisan gridlock.

Thank you for sharing your time, and thank you for organizing this evening. Thank you so much.

Mr. POCAN. Thank you, Representative SCHNEIDER. Your efforts for this body, leading the House Democrats on that discharge position—we didn't know today the Senate was going to come up with something that may pass and may be able to get through this House. But your leadership made sure that those over 110,000 people in Illinois, and each and every week more people adding to that, can get those benefits.

So thank you for your efforts. We hope that we can force this House to have us vote to extend unemployment benefits.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I hope it happens soon. Thank you.

Mr. POCAN. I would now like to yield to the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. CLARK), one of the newest Members of the House.

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Thank you, Mr. POCAN, for your leadership on this critical issue. I also want to thank the gentleman from Illinois for all he has done to try and bring this vote to the floor.

A majority of Americans support renewing unemployment insurance, but the majority here in the House continue to show that they are out of step with American families by refusing to extend unemployment insurance for the 2 million Americans who need it, and the families of my home district in Massachusetts are left to suffer because of it.

This out-of-touch majority has invested billions of dollars in tax breaks for the ultra-rich and for wealthy corporations that have often shipped our jobs overseas. Yet, they are refusing to help those who are looking for work, our job-seekers who are struggling to care for their families and put food on the table.

I cringe when I hear some of the Members of the majority blame poverty on the poor, and then vote to give tax breaks for the wealthy. It is the same majority that looks to slash the budget and put that burden on the backs of our children and seniors.

Some have said that Democrats want to give children a full stomach and an empty soul, but I would say, people who would deny a hungry child lunch, they are the ones who need to worry about the condition of their soul.

In Massachusetts, more than \$100 million has been taken out of our economy as Congress has failed to act on this issue. I signed the discharge petition to force a vote on unemployment insurance on behalf of the nearly 80,000 workers in Massachusetts who have lost their unemployment benefits. They cannot afford to wait for the majority to catch up with the rest of the country, who know this is the right thing to do.

Again, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin for this opportunity, and I thank you for your work.

Mr. POCAN. Thank you so much. You deserve a lot of credit for hitting the ground running in Congress. Thank you so much for representing the people of Massachusetts so very ably and defending the unemployment benefits that we need to extend.

This is something that—the Progressive Caucus, earlier this week, released our budget, and our budget is the Better Off Budget, to make sure that people are better off, their families, they have access to opportunity for their families.

That budget offered extending the benefits to the full 99 weeks. So the Progressive Caucus was there from the very beginning to make sure that we

can get these benefits extended for every single American, the 2 million Americans, including 40,000 people in the State of Wisconsin, that they can get these benefits.

We are very proud that the Progressive Caucus looked at this as a priority, and that is why so many Members tonight were here to discuss it.

It is interesting, I am going to read a couple of quotes from people that you wouldn't expect to hear coming out of the Progressive Caucus.

One is a quote from someone back in 1983, someone that often gets quoted in this Chamber, but usually by people on the other side of the aisle, former President Ronald Reagan. His quote was: "Unemployment insurance is a lifeline that extends to millions of Americans." A lifeline. That is Ronald Reagan saying that unemployment insurance is a lifeline to the Americans who need it. He got it, in 1983.

Now, let me read another quote. In the year 2002, another person that people on this side of the aisle don't quote too often, former President George W. Bush, this is what he said: "These Americans rely on their unemployment benefits. They need our assistance in these difficult times, and we cannot let them down."

We cannot let them down. That is from President George W. Bush. These are two Republican leaders who understood that unemployment compensation is not a political toy.

It is not something about brinksmanship. It is the demand that we need to make sure that people who pay into the system, who have worked hard and played by the rules all their lives, have that lifeline when they need it because they have put in their dues. They have worked hard, and now, through no fault of their own, they are out of work and looking for work. We should be able to extend those benefits. So that is exactly what we are here to talk about tonight.

Forty thousand people in my home State of Wisconsin, and more every week, are losing their benefits because this Congress has refused to act up to now.

Now, they still can either act through the discharge petition the Democrats have put forth, they can sign the discharge petition to make sure we can get a vote in this body, or we can hope that the Senate does pass this bipartisan deal just from this afternoon, come to this House, and see that we do the right thing here and extend the benefits so that 72,000 people each and every week don't continue to lose their benefits.

This costs the economy. It was mentioned earlier, but it has been estimated, just in January and February alone, we have cost the economy \$3 billion by not extending these benefits, and that is more than \$51 million in my home State of Wisconsin, just during the months of January and February.

Folks, we need to make sure these benefits are passed, not just for the families struggling, but for our economy that is also struggling. We are coming back, but we can't keep putting roadblocks in front of our economy, things like this, that stop unemployment benefits for all too many Americans.

Now, it also is estimated that this will cost the economy 240,000 jobs this year alone by not extending the benefits, 240,000 jobs.

So here we are trying to bring the economy back, and by not doing the right thing, by not extending the unemployment benefits, we are going to cost 240,000 jobs in this country, on top of the people now who don't have benefits.

Now, you heard some stories tonight from people who talked about constituents, telling their very real stories about what this means to them.

Well, let me tell you about a constituent I had who came in this very body, and I quickly referenced it before: Brian Krueger of Mount Horeb, a hardworking person, a steamfitter.

As we know, the construction industry, when the economy gets a cold, the construction industry gets pneumonia. That is just the way it happens. It dries up even more. So people aren't back to work yet in this industry.

This is a hardworking person who was working as a steamfitter, trying to find work. His benefits were cut off at the end of December, and he is struggling to get by, looking for work each and every single day.

He even put his home up for sale so that it wouldn't be foreclosed on, just as he is trying to get by, someone who has played by the rules and worked hard each and every single day.

Today there is an article in the Huffington Post, Mr. Speaker, and I am going to read a little bit from that. The headline was: "Some Jobless Facing Eviction After Loss of Benefits."

These are the very real stories that you were just hearing a little bit earlier tonight. Let me tell some more of these stories, and I am going to read directly from The Huffington Post article:

Craig Bruce, 45, told The Huffington Post that he and his wife were evicted Tuesday from their apartment in California. He said they're fighting the eviction in court, but they spent Tuesday night in a motel room and bunked with family Wednesday.

"I can't get a job. Either I'm over-qualified or somebody else is closer and they don't have to pay them any moving fees to take the job," he told the Huffington Post.

Bruce, a gulf war veteran, lost his quality assurance analyst job at an engineering company in the fall of 2012. He said his unemployment's been hard on him and his wife, who is still looking for work in quality assurance.

"There's been a lot of depression on my end," he said. "She's scared. She's terrified right now."

That is a real story of a real person who has worked hard and had a job for

many years who, because of the economy, is out of work and can't get the benefits. And the result of this body not acting, the result has been he has been evicted from his home as of Tuesday.

That is wrong. That is not America. That is not the way we should be acting.

Now, I want to yield some time to the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES), another colleague of mine, someone who has been a fighter for working families throughout New York and across the country.

Mr. JEFFRIES. I thank my good friend, the distinguished gentleman from the Badger State, for yielding some time, as well as for the leadership that you have continued to provide, week after week, in the context of this Congressional Progressive Caucus Special Order, and on behalf of the people that you represent, and indeed, people all across America, in bringing issues to the forefront that we, in this House of Representatives, should be dealing with in order to improve the quality of life of everyone who we represent.

Now, unfortunately, I stand today on the House floor again, finding myself in a situation where the only obstacle to progress is the House GOP majority. Once again, we are placed in a situation where the American people could stand to benefit from congressional action, but, because of obstinacy and obstruction on the other side, you have got close to 2 million long-term unemployed Americans who find themselves in a distressed financial situation.

Now, earlier today we were informed that a bipartisan agreement was reached in the Senate and, hopefully, that means we will see progress in that Chamber at some point this month, which means that we have a real opportunity here in the House of Representatives to act in a manner that would benefit long-term unemployed Americans.

Why should we do that?

Well, because there are many individuals all across this country, in the district that I represent in Brooklyn and in Queens, but all across America, who find themselves unemployed, not because of their lack of interest, not because of lack of effort, not because of an unwillingness to work, but because of structural changes that have occurred in our economy, particularly in the aftermath of the Great Recession of 2008.

□ 1845

We know that when the economy collapsed in 2008, that didn't have anything to do with folks on Main Street America. That didn't have anything to do with folks in urban America, in the district that I represent. That didn't have anything to do with folks in rural America who are struggling.

It was because of the behavior of some reckless institutions on Wall

Street and connected to the financial services industry whose actions collapsed the world's economy, and Americans have suffered as a result, so those consequences are still being felt.

We are no longer technically in a recession. This is one of the arguments that our good friends on the other side of the aisle point out. So what is the emergency? The emergency is you still have an unacceptably high unemployment rate, and a disproportionately high number of those individuals happen to be long-term unemployed.

Now, the argument that is often advanced by our good friends on the other side of the aisle, as they attempt to justify the obstruction that has taken place in blocking unemployment insurance from being extended, is that we are enabling these individuals—enabling these individuals. What kind of myth is that? There is no evidence to support that argument.

First of all, it is important to note that, in order to qualify for unemployment insurance, as the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin knows, you have to demonstrate conclusively that you are actively engaged in an employment search. Otherwise, you are ineligible.

There is this caricature that has been created, as if these are these individuals who are sitting at home like couch potatoes, channel surfing, whose only exercise is when they run outside of the house in order to pick up the unemployment insurance check from the mailbox, and then run back in and continue to channel surf.

Can't we have an evidence-based discussion, Mr. Speaker, as opposed to fictional caricatures created to justify your harshness and refusal to move forward and provide assistance to these unemployed Americans? We know it is a fictional caricature that you have created to justify your indifference because the facts suggest otherwise.

We know that, for every 258 Americans who are searching for employment, only 100 jobs exist. I am no mathematician, but it suggests to me that, given the nature of the economy, it is impossible for every one of those individuals who would otherwise be eligible for unemployment insurance to secure employment because of structural realities in the economy.

That doesn't even account for the fact that, often, there will be a skills mismatch as our economy continues to change, a shift away from manufacturing jobs and a shift into technology and innovation. That is a good thing, but there is a skills mismatch that has to be dealt with.

So the choice that we have been given is to deem these individuals and brand them as lazy Americans when the facts are to the contrary? Why? Why would we leave these unemployed Americans on the recessionary battlefield?

We know that there has been a very schizophrenic recovery. Corporate profits are way up. Unemployment is still up, but the stock market is up, and CEO compensation is up; yet middle class families and those who aspire to be part of the middle class are increasingly struggling in America.

Whenever I am back home in Brooklyn, I am often approached by individuals who are in fear that they could lose their home, given the reality that they have been harshly and callously cut off by the obstruction of the House GOP majority.

I am just hopeful that for the good of America—because there are unemployed in blue States, and there are unemployed in red States; there are unemployed individuals in urban America, in suburban America, in rural America, all across this great country. Can't we find the compassion and the will to address this issue?

As I prepare to take my seat and yield back to the distinguished gentleman, I would also point out that what has occurred here is another example of us here in this Congress doing things affirmatively to prevent jobs from being created.

We allowed sequestration to take effect on April 1 of last year, notwithstanding the fact that independent economists suggested that we would lose 750,000 jobs in America if we allowed it to occur; yet the majority steadfastly stood behind sequestration. Then in October of 2013, we had a reckless, unreasonable, unnecessary government shutdown.

It cost the economy \$24 billion, according to Standard and Poor's, in lost economic productivity. Well, you complain that Americans are supposedly sitting at home channel surfing, staying on the couch, not looking for work while you affirmatively damage the economy.

Now, as a result of your failure to deal with the unemployment insurance issue, if this were to continue throughout this year, you will cost us another 200,000 jobs.

I will just say that for a wide variety of reasons—because it is in the best interests of the American economy, the best interests of the people that we represent, and that it represents the best values of America—that we allow a vote to take place on the floor of the House of Representatives because I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that if you do, the votes exist to pass this into law, and we can put this sad chapter in the 113th Congress behind us.

I thank the distinguished gentleman again for his continued leadership.

Mr. POCAN. Thank you so much, Representative JEFFRIES, for your always eloquent fight on behalf of the working people across the State of New York and the need for the benefits.

I am glad you debunked some of the myths that are out there because I re-

member, during the debate we had on food stamps, there was discussion of a surfer dude from California who talked about gaming the system.

We were basically cutting \$39 billion from food stamps because there was a surfer who abused the system from the State of California. Rather than governing by analysis, they govern by anecdote, and it is something that we need to get done and this body needs to get done.

Let me just share one final story, if I can, of someone from the State of California, again, from The Huffington Post article. This is Ricki Ward of Rancho Cucamonga, California, and I will read from the article.

Ward, who told The Huff Post Tuesday that she expects to be evicted next month, said she has worked all her life from paycheck to paycheck and raised two kids as a single mother. For the past 5 years, Ward worked in offices, retail stores, and fast food before being laid off from a customer service job for a cable provider in March 2013.

Ward said she suspects she is having difficulty finding work because of her age.

"I took the year that I graduated from high school off of my resume, and I started getting calls," Ward said. "Yet once they saw me, I wasn't what they wanted for their front counter. I'm 59 years old, but I'm a very young 59 years old. I keep myself in good shape. I'm nowhere near ready to stop working."

She said her landlord has been fair with her and that she has received some help from family and friends, but she keeps falling further behind.

"It's so humiliating to have to have everybody else try to take care of you," Ward said. "It's just not what I'm used to. I've worked all my life."

These are the stories that we have talked about during this past hour from people across the country who, again, have played by the rules, worked hard and, because of a turn in the economy a few years ago, have lost work.

The commitment that we have to those people is that if they are working hard. We need to do everything we can to make sure that they have the help that they have paid into: unemployment benefits. We need to, in a time like this, pass those emergency benefits.

I would like to yield my final time to a Representative from Ohio who has done an absolutely amazing job for a number of years representing her constituents and is a great University of Wisconsin alumni.

I have to say that, being from Wisconsin, but she is a great colleague, Representative MARCY KAPTUR from the great State of Ohio.

Ms. KAPTUR. I want to thank Congressman POCAN for just a phenomenal presentation this evening and for lifting up those across our country who worked hard for a living and have fallen on hard times.

Trying to hold their families together, they go try to get a job, and 1,000 people show up for one job. What are they supposed to do? They have

lost footing. They haven't been able to make their mortgage payments. They can't send their kids to college. Many of them get sick. They lose their health benefits. It is not so easy getting a job in today's America.

You have been such a leader not just on unemployment benefit extensions, but also on job creation. Since we are commemorating the second anniversary of the passage of the U.S.-Korean so-called "free-trade agreement," I thought I would bring a startling chart to the floor to show why we have unemployment in this country.

One of the aspects of the U.S.-Korean so-called "free-trade agreement," passed 2 years ago without my support, was that we were supposed to increase exports and decrease imports.

It was supposed to actually be good for America. We were supposed to create more jobs here at home when, in fact, we have actually lost 40,000 jobs when they told us we were going to gain 70,000 jobs as a result of that agreement. Those people who were supposed to have those jobs fell on unemployment benefits, large numbers of them.

Here is a chart that shows what has happened. This gives you a sense of how big the difference is.

All right. The idea is we are supposed to export cars from here to Korea. Well, guess what, folks? This is how much we export; and this is how much they export to us, so we have fallen so deeply in the red.

What happens is, with every \$1 billion of trade deficit, you get another 4,000 people out of work. Factories shut down. Suppliers shut down. The math is very simple. You just need to understand it.

Now, you know, if you look at the individuals who stand in those unemployment lines, they were told that we were supposed to sell thousands and thousands of vehicles to Korea.

Well, I will tell you what: we have sold 3,400 more vehicles in that country—3,400.

Guess how much—since the trade agreement was signed with Korea, how many more they have sold to us. 125,000. 125,000.

Now, according to my math, they have sold to us 121,600 more cars than we have sold them. That means unemployment in Wisconsin. It means unemployment in Ohio. It means unemployment across this country. It means unemployment in the steel industry, unemployment in the machine tool industry. You can tick it off.

Now, they tell us agriculture was supposed to save us. Right? We have positive trade accounts in agriculture, and we are supposed to increase our exports to Korea. Guess what has happened. They are off by 41 percent—not just 4 percent, but 41 percent.

Our exports of poultry have fallen since this agreement was signed by 39

percent. Pork exports are down 34 percent. Beef exports are down to Korea 6 percent. U.S. meat producers have lost a combined total of \$442 million in poultry, beef, and pork exports to Korea in the first 22 months of the agreement. That means more than \$20 million lost every month.

So, Congressman POCAN, I am sure you have seen the impacts of this in Wisconsin. We have certainly seen it in Ohio, and we see these big trainloads coming through on rail of all these cars that they bring in here from the west coast that come from points over the Pacific or the Atlantic coming in to our country.

If you go to those countries and you look around on the streets, they not only don't buy U.S. cars; they don't buy cars from anyplace else but themselves.

□ 1900

So part of what we are doing with unemployment benefits is we are trying to make up for failures in our trade policy that have turned people away, away from the world of work and trying to struggle to make ends meet.

I will insert into the RECORD tonight a special report done by Public Citizen regarding the impacts of the U.S.-Korean so-called free trade agreement, and if this is the same template that the administration intends to use for bringing trade promotion authority in the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement up here, don't even start. Don't even start, because we have to reduce this and increase this, and until an agreement does that, we are not going to create more jobs in this country.

I will show you something. This is the big hole we are digging out of. We hear a lot about the budget deficit. Well, why do we have a budget deficit? We have a budget deficit because we have a trade deficit. We have had it now for one-quarter century, and every time we get into another one of those trade deals that are lopsided, what happens? We go deeper, deeper, and deeper into trade deficit. More and more companies close down; more and more people lose their work; and then we have to subsidize the differential between imports and exports through unemployment benefits.

We are trying to keep the hold, but we are not addressing this problem. This is after China PNTR. They told us: Oh, that will be so great; we are going to sell all this stuff to China. We fell deeper into deficit.

CAFTA—then they told us: Oh, Latin America, that will make it better. This is after Korea. It went down again.

What are we doing to America? We are ceding away our sovereignty in industry after industry. They have always said that electronics are going to save us. Those big, bad auto States? We are going to do better. Well, guess what? We have now fallen into deficit

in advanced electronics. We are not even succeeding in exporting those. The people of this country have to pay attention because the heart and soul is being chipped away piece by piece. Try to find something made in this country—coats? shoes? cars? Some.

What we have is state economies like China competing against merchant economies like our own. And the auto industry got in such shape that it took the Government of the United States to prop it up and save it. We were faced with: Will the United States have an automobile industry or not? That is going to happen in other sectors. That is going to happen in steel, and that is going to happen in shoes. They didn't even fight. But if you look at every sector, unemployment, unemployment, unemployment—appliances, unemployment.

You can see it by census statistics. No matter what community you go to, we have had these lost jobs; and you look over 10 years, 2000 to 2010, poverty quadruples. Don't tell me those people don't want to work. They had jobs. The jobs disappeared.

You can go to these sweatshop countries and you can go find the production. Guess what? You can find TRICO now in Mexico. They used to make windshield wipers in Buffalo, New York. It was a major employer. The man who founded the company had a decent soul. He had a huge foundation that helped that community. It still does to this day. But all those jobs have moved down south of the border. No decent wage, no benefits, nothing. No corporate conscience at all.

That is happening from one end of this country to the other. America has a rude awakening ahead of her. It goes through Democratic and Republican administrations, and the American people know it. They know that it doesn't change here. Unemployment benefits are the least we can do for the American people—the people who went to work, they believed in making a good product, and now they have fallen onto hard times. Don't tell me it is all their fault.

I have done job fairs in my district. Thousands of people show up. There aren't enough jobs for everyone that wants to work. I would invite any President, any former President.

I would like to invite George Bush II to travel with me, because he came to my district. I would like to take him and show him where in Mexico these jobs have gone. Come with me to Guangdong province in China. I will show you where our jobs have gone. I will take you to Honduras. Then, do you know what? I am going to make everybody who comes with me work like those women work, and then you tell me why we face an unemployment benefit crisis in this country and what kind of a society we have here.

Those are earned benefits. Those belong to the people who have devoted

their lives to going to work, earning a living, and trying to get ahead in an honorable way and in an honest way, and they deserve them.

So I want to thank you, Congressman POCAN, for giving me time this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I place this article from Public Citizen in the RECORD that summarizes everything that has gone haywire with the U.S.-Korean so-called free trade agreement.

ON SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF U.S.-KOREA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT, U.S. EXPORTS DOWN 11 PERCENT, IMPORTS FROM KOREA UP AND DEFICIT WITH KOREA BALLOONS 47 PERCENT—FUELING CONGRESSIONAL SKEPTICISM ABOUT OBAMA TPP EXPORT PROMISES

EXPORT DECLINE HITS U.S. FARMERS AND AUTO WORKERS PARTICULARLY HARD, DISMAL OUTCOMES OF PACT-USED AS TPP TEMPLATE WILL BOLSTER OPPOSITION TO OBAMA BID FOR FAST TRACK AUTHORITY

WASHINGTON, DC.—Two years after the implementation of the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA), government data reveal that the Obama administration's promises that the pact would expand U.S. exports and create U.S. jobs are exactly opposite of the actual outcomes: a downfall in U.S. exports to Korea, rising imports and a surge in the U.S. trade deficit with Korea. Using the administration's export-to-job ratio, the estimated drop in net U.S. exports to Korea in the FTA's first two years represents the loss of more than 46,600 U.S. jobs.

The damaging Korea FTA record, detailed in a new Public Citizen report, undermines the administration's attempt to use the same failed export growth promises to sell an already skeptical Congress on Fast Track authority for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a sweeping deal for which the Korea FTA was the template.

Contrary to the administration's promise that the Korea FTA would mean "more exports, more jobs":

U.S. goods exports to Korea have fallen below the pre-FTA average monthly level for 21 out of 22 months since the deal took effect.

The United States has lost an average of \$385 million each month in exports to Korea, given an 11 percent decline in the average monthly export level in comparison to the year before the deal.

The United States lost an estimated, cumulative \$9.2 billion in exports to Korea under the FTA's first two years, compared with the exports that would have been achieved at the pre-FTA level.

Average monthly exports of U.S. agricultural products to Korea have fallen 41 percent.

The average monthly U.S. automotive trade deficit with Korea has grown 19 percent.

The U.S. exports downfall is particularly concerning given that Korea's overall imports from all countries increased by 2 percent over the past two years (from 2011 to 2013).

The average monthly trade deficit with Korea has ballooned 47 percent in comparison to the year before the deal. As U.S. exports to Korea have declined under the FTA, average monthly imports from Korea have risen four percent. The total U.S. trade deficit with Korea under the FTA's just-completed second year is projected to be \$8.6 billion higher than in the year before the deal, assuming that trends during the FTA's first 22 months continue for the remaining two months for which data is not yet available.

Meanwhile, U.S. services exports to Korea have slowed under the FTA. While U.S. services exports to Korea increased at an average quarterly rate of 3.0 percent in the year before the FTA took effect, the average quarterly growth rate has fallen to 2.3 percent since the deal's enactment—a 24 percent drop.

"Most Americans won't be surprised that another NAFTA-style deal is causing damage, but it's stunning that the administration thinks the public and Congress won't notice if it recycles the promises used to sell the Korea pact—now proven empty—to push a Trans-Pacific deal that is literally based on the Korea FTA text," said Lori Wallach, director of Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch. "The new evidence of the Korea FTA's damaging record is certain to make it even more difficult for the Obama administration to get Congress to delegate its constitutional trade authority via Fast Track for the TPP."

The decline in U.S. exports under the Korea FTA contributed to an overall zero percent growth in U.S. exports in 2013, rendering virtually impossible Obama's stated goal to double exports by the end of 2014. At the export growth rate seen over the past two years, the export-doubling goal would not be reached until 2054. While the Korea pact is the only U.S. FTA that has led to an actual decline in U.S. exports, the overall growth of U.S. exports to nations that are not FTA partners has exceeded combined U.S. export growth to U.S. FTA partners by 30 percent over the past decade.

"The data simply do not support the Obama administration's tired pitch that more FTAs will bring more exports," said Wallach. "Faced with falling exports and rising, job-displacing deficits under existing FTAs, the administration needs to find a new model, not to repackaging an old one that patently failed."

The Korea FTA has produced very few winners; since the FTA took effect, U.S. average monthly exports to Korea have fallen in 11 of the 15 sectors that export the most to Korea, relative to the year before the FTA. And while losing sectors have faced relatively steep export declines (e.g. a 12 percent drop in computer and electronics exports, a 30 percent drop in mineral and ore exports), none of the winning sectors has experienced an average monthly export increase of greater than two percent. Ironically, many sectors that the administration promised would be the biggest beneficiaries of the Korea FTA have been some of the deal's largest losers.

AGRICULTURE: While the administration argued for passage of the FTA in 2011 by claiming, "The U.S.-Korea trade agreement creates new opportunities for U.S. farmers, ranchers and food processors seeking to export to Korea's 49 million consumers," average monthly exports of U.S. agricultural products to Korea have fallen 41 percent under the FTA.

U.S. average monthly poultry exports to Korea have fallen 39 percent.

U.S. average monthly pork exports to Korea have fallen 34 percent.

U.S. average monthly beef exports to Korea have fallen 6 percent.

Compared with the exports that would have been achieved at the pre-FTA average monthly level, U.S. meat producers have lost a combined \$442 million in poultry, pork and beef exports to Korea in the first 22 months of the Korea deal—a loss of more than \$20 million in meat exports every month.

AUTOS AND AUTO PARTS: The administration also promised the Korea FTA would

bring "more job-creating export opportunities in a more open and fair Korean market for America's auto companies and auto workers," while a special safeguard would "ensure . . . that the American industry does not suffer from harmful surges in Korean auto imports due to this agreement." The U.S. average monthly automotive exports to Korea under the FTA have been \$12 million higher than the pre-FTA monthly average, but the average monthly automotive imports from Korea have soared by \$263 million under the deal—a 19 percent increase. So while U.S. auto exports have risen very modestly under the FTA, those tiny gains have been swamped by a surge in auto imports from Korea that the administration promised would not occur under the FTA.

In January 2014, monthly auto imports from Korea topped \$2 billion for the first time on record.

About 125,000 more Korean-produced Hyundais and Kias were imported and sold in the United States in 2013 (after the FTA) than in 2011 (before the FTA).

Sales of U.S.-produced Fords, Chryslers and Cadillacs in Korea increased by just 3,400 vehicles.

The post-FTA flood of automotive imports has provoked a 19 percent increase in the average monthly U.S. auto trade deficit with Korea. The Obama administration has sought to distract from this dismal result by touting the percentage increase in U.S. auto sales to Korea. This allows the sale of a small number of cars beyond the small pre-FTA base of sales to appear to be a significant gain when in fact it is not.

Mr. POCAN. Thank you so much, Representative KAPTUR, again for your history of support not only for working families across Ohio. I know we are going to talk more about trade in this body. Thank you for sharing that information.

With that, I am going to close the Special Order hour for the Progressive Caucus. It is imperative that this body pass the extension of the emergency unemployment benefits. The House Democrats have filed a discharge petition. We will do everything we can to force a vote off that; but we are hoping that the Senate, now that they have a bipartisan agreement, can get that passed as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time on behalf of the Progressive Caucus.

KEYSTONE PIPELINE AND ENERGY SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, we have just gone through an hour of talking about uninsured, and I want to talk an hour about creating jobs and that it is time to build the Keystone pipeline.

The Keystone pipeline has just reached its 2,001st day of the birth of its permit, 2,001 days that this country has waited for our President to sign the permit allowing the construction of the Keystone pipeline.

Why is the Keystone pipeline important to us? First of all, the Keystone pipeline brings oil from Canada into the United States to six of our refineries. This provides us a level of energy security that is absolutely necessary in today's world. In fact, when I talk about today's world, let's talk about current events for just 1 second here.

This is a newspaper article that was just released a few hours ago:

Retired General James Jones told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Thursday that approving the pipeline would send a message to Russian President Vladimir Putin and other "international bullies" that they cannot use energy security as a weapon.

Jones said rejection of the Canada-to-Texas pipeline would "make Mr. Putin's day and strengthen his hand."

The Senate panel was holding its first hearing on the pipeline 5 years after it was proposed as Democrats wrestle with its impact on the outcome of next fall's election.

The reality is, in a geopolitical sense, Russia is using energy as a new economic weapon to control the countries that it once dominated as the Soviet Union. We have a new energy—well, it is a renaissance. Because of new technologies and new abilities, we are finding oil and natural gas within our own borders; but if we can team up with Canada's oil in a North American oil pact, the reality is we will no longer be relying on Venezuela. In fact, the amount that comes through the pipeline, the proposed Keystone pipeline, would completely offset Venezuelan oil. It doesn't matter what your party registration is; I think all of us would agree that if we didn't have to rely on Venezuelan oil, that makes us a more secure country.

Now, I want to talk about some of the other advantages besides just geopolitical. The first is 42,000 jobs. Now, I know a lot of the opponents to this pipeline say that it is a myth that it creates 42,000 jobs, but the reality is that when you add the direct jobs—for example, the hundreds if not 1,000 people from Nebraska that would go to work on the pipeline as it comes through Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas—but what it also employs are all that we would call downstream, the downstream that would work on the refineries to upgrade them to be able to handle the additional oil and the oil that would come to them, and those refineries are in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Kansas.

But then we can look about, okay, what are all the other indirect jobs? For example, Mr. GRIFFIN is going to talk about and mention a company in his district in Arkansas that actually fabricates, takes the steel that is hopefully made in America and fabricates it into the pipeline. So there are thousands of indirect jobs that rely on the construction.

Now, when I am out and about, I hear all these myths that have been perpet-

uated on the Keystone pipeline, and I just want to bat a few of them down tonight.

First of all, some of the environmental extremists that are opposing the Keystone pipeline tell people that it will increase CO₂, or carbon, in our air. The reality is the environmental studies and the final study concluded that not only does it not increase carbon, but because it will transfer transportation of the oil from train and trucks to a zero-emission pipeline, it will actually reduce carbon output; because the reality is the carbon output to extract the oil from the oil sands is diminishing, and the reality is that oil, as it is pumped out or created there, will be used. So if you stop the Keystone pipeline, the reality is there will be more carbon emitted.

In a recent meeting with the Canadian officials, they stressed to me that they are going ahead with their pipelines reversing the flow so that they can pump oil from the oil sands to the east coast of Canada and then will export it. Then they also have already accumulated all of the right-of-way necessary for a pipeline to the west and will build a second one to the west.

What that means is that, okay, they used the pipeline, but now it goes on a ship and is sent to China, so we lose the opportunities except for what can be brought by train and truck into the United States and makes us less secure.

Now, those are environmental studies that have done this. This is science. This is from reputable engineering firms in one of our national laboratories.

One of the other myths is that this pipeline won't be safe, that there have been leaks in the first Keystone pipeline that is already carrying some of the oil over. The reality is there were leaks in the first Keystone pipeline. They were defective seals that have been replaced, and the leaks have stopped.

Now, this pipeline has been studied safetywise more than any others. The liquid pipeline industry's safety performance initiative reflects these conclusions: first of all, that pipeline safety statistics deliver 99.999 percent of crude oil and petroleum products each year safely; 14 billion barrels of crude oil and petroleum products delivered in the pipeline in 2012; 62 percent decline in the number of pipeline releases since 2001; and 47 percent decline in the number of barrels released since 2001.

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The reality is not only are pipelines becoming safer, but the pipeline, this Keystone pipeline has 59 special conditions placed upon it above all other pipelines. Most of these are to mitigate any risk of spilling or of a leak. If there is a leak, one of the other conditions is that they have to have people

within a 2-hour drive to be able to stop that leak, thereby minimizing that leak.

Now, there is another myth about it hurting the Ogallala aquifer. They said that hasn't been studied, but the reality is that 22,000 pages of environmental studies that have been submitted to the State Department and made final clearly state that it has a minimal impact on the Ogallala aquifer. And when you read into the facts of the Ogallala—I learned something, growing up in Nebraska. We assumed that it was a big underground lake. What it is, it is a series of rock formations that capture water. So when you have a heavy crude, if it would leak, it is easier to pick up than a lighter crude or a gas. And because it is a rocky formation, it would trap it and not allow it to leak where they could get down there to where the leak was and be able to pump it out without further injuring the Ogallala aquifer. So the fact that it can pollute this huge underground lake that doesn't really exist all of the way down to Kansas is a myth, if you talk to the real geologists and the environmental folks, experts, in this area.

Now, does the Keystone pipeline have an economic impact? Yes. It will have \$2 billion worth of earnings throughout the U.S., property tax revenue, through the property taxes paid along the pipeline to the communities that will help schools and counties with their budgets.

Now, one other thing that I hear once in a while is that Canadian oil sands are more dangerous or dirtier than other oils. The fact is that the U.S. currently imports 1.4 million barrels of this crude daily. Nearly all of it is transported by already existing pipelines or trucks or trains, and there has not been a single recorded pipeline rupture caused by the oil sands. That is one of the other things—because of the chemical that they use to help it slide down the pipeline and be pumped, that somehow that weakens the pipeline, but that is just not true.

Then I hear, and this is another one that is famous: the Keystone XL pipeline is going to increase gas prices. Well, first of all if you know economics, if you know oil economics, you go: Huh? How can that be? It just defies logic and defies common sense. The reality is that in a memo by the Department of Energy regarding Keystone XL, it asserted that the gasoline prices in all markets served, and this is the Department of Energy saying it, the Obama administration Department of Energy saying this, they asserted that gasoline prices in all markets served by refineries on the east coast and the gulf would decrease, including in the Midwest. The discount from WTI crude does not and has not translated into lower gasoline prices in the Midwest.

This is because the Midwest must import gasoline from outside of the region, forcing buyers to pay global market prices. Bringing new pipeline capacity online would allow WTI to reconnect with other benchmark prices while simultaneously helping to drive down the price of oil and gasoline.

This dovetails into my last myth, and that is all of this oil is just going to be exported anyway, so why risk any environmental issues in the United States if all it is going to be is put on ships and exported.

That is just pure bull. That is an emotional argument that has no basis in truth. There are six refineries that are contracting for this oil to refine it into gasoline and other products. The United States uses gasoline. The gasoline that is refined from this product and those six refineries is going to stay in the United States.

Can you say that 100 percent of every barrel is not going to be exported? No, because there are a variety of products made from a barrel of oil, including lubricants that are not even used in the United States but are used in other places. Those will be exported. Some of the diesel will be exported. But the reality is that the gasoline that we care about stays in the United States. It is just a fact that it will stay here. It just baffles me that people say that it is all going to be exported and it is going to raise gas prices, and none of it is true.

At this time I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA).

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the gentleman yielding. I rise today to discuss our country's energy future, and specifically the role of the Keystone XL pipeline.

I am going to reiterate a little bit what the leader of this Special Order has already stated.

Due to recently technological innovations, the United States is the number one producer of natural gas in the world today. That is hard to believe when you think about 20 years ago and what the naysayers were saying where we were going to be.

In oil production, we are set to pass Saudi Arabia by the year 2020. This is a long way from the gas lines of the 1970s, when there were restrictions at gas stations on how many gallons you could buy or on what days you could buy gas. I can remember going to gas stations and you had a number on the end, and they said this is the number we are taking today. If you didn't have it, you weren't buying gas. But today, that has changed. It has changed.

Today, we are on the cusp of a bright promising energy future where millions of jobs will be created because of it. We must ensure that the right policies are in place in order to realize our great energy potential. Again, that potential is there.

The Energy and Commerce Committee has heard testimony and passed

numerous pieces of legislation aimed at ensuring that America is on the right path to energy prosperity. One of the quickest solutions is to build the Keystone XL pipeline. Thanks to Mr. TERRY's leadership on the Keystone XL pipeline, we passed a bill to approve it. The expansion of the pipeline will bring additional jobs, income, and investment into the United States. The project will produce up to 42,000 manufacturing, construction, and indirect jobs.

In my home State of Ohio, the project is projected to bring 2,419 jobs by 2015. These jobs will offer high wages, strong benefits, and a resurgence of America's hardworking taxpayers. The project will also produce approximately \$20 billion in economic activity from food, lodging, construction equipment, supplies, and investments during the project development.

In my home district, the Fifth District, I have visited companies that are going to be making equipment for drilling and parts for large machinery that will bring oil from the pipeline. Not too long ago, I was at one company that was very proud to tell me that they are going to be adding on to their company today because they are going to be making equipment that will be used in the pipeline in its construction.

There is also a company that makes parts for the large machinery that will be operating up in Canada. Those are jobs in northwest Ohio, and those are the jobs that we want to keep. These are permanent jobs for people looking for good employment.

In our committee hearings, we had one panel that was very interesting. At one end of the table we had a representative from TransCanada, and at the other end of the table we had an individual who was representing the trades, whose men and women will be actually building this pipeline. It was very hard for them to understand why we weren't going forward with this project today to put these people to work because these people are going to be working. They will make sure that they have roofs over their families' heads, food on the table, and will be saving money for their kids' education and putting money away for their own retirement.

This pipeline is going to bring about 830,000 barrels of oil into the United States every day. We have a great friend and neighbor to the north, Canada. For every \$1 we send to Canada, we will get about 90 cents back. We send billions of dollars every year overseas for oil to some countries who aren't our greatest friends.

As we speak, due to the President's foot dragging, Canada is studying an eastern route across her southern border that would bypass the United States and send her oil to her eastern ports to ship that oil some place else. What is wrong with this picture? They

want to send it south, not east. Talk to them.

Another point about the Keystone pipeline is that it is a \$7 billion privately funded project. Once that oil would reach its destination in the United States, as Mr. TERRY has already said, it will be refined into many products, putting Americans again to work.

The pipeline is expected to generate more than \$585 million in State and local taxes in the States the pipeline passes. I was a county commissioner for 6 years, and I know what that means to be putting back into local government.

Approval of this energy project should not be controversial, but President Obama and his administration have made this commonsense, shovel-ready project a cornerstone of partisanship and needless delays. Two thousand days have passed since the Keystone XL pipeline application was filed. This pipeline has undergone more State and Federal assessment than any previous pipeline, and every assessment has come back to the same conclusion: that the pipeline will have minimal environmental impact. Further, the Keystone XL pipeline will be the most advanced pipeline in operation, using the most reliable materials and innovative technology. In fact, the pipeline will include 57 extra safety measures, which led the U.S. State Department to declare that the project would have a degree of safety over any other.

Another benefit: the Keystone XL will provide additional capacity to our current pipeline infrastructure.

Finally, again to point out what Mr. TERRY has already said, that this is about our security, not just energy security, but our national security, because as Americans pick up their paper and look at the news in the evening and they see what is happening in Ukraine, people in Europe are fearful of what is going on because energy is being used as a weapon against them. We want to make sure that we are independent in this country. We want to make sure that Americans can go to bed every night and say we can take care of ourselves, and we can take care of ourselves with oil from a country north of us who is one of our greatest friends and neighbors.

This project has the support of the American people, the United States House and Senate, and it is time for the President to put jobs, community investment, and energy security before politics and approve this pipeline.

I thank Mr. TERRY for leading this very important energy Special Order tonight.

Mr. TERRY. I thank the gentleman from Ohio.

I think if there is someone watching C-SPAN and they watched the first hour, the Democratic hour, and now

they are watching us, they are seeing how they advocated for unemployment insurance, and we are advocating for jobs. It is quite a stark difference in our philosophies showing on the House floor tonight.

At this time I yield to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. GRIFFIN).

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support once again for the immediate approval of the Keystone XL pipeline. I feel like I have been doing this year after year, calling for the President to move forward with the Keystone pipeline, and I realize I have been doing this year after year, pretty much since I got here in 2011.

And every day, as the gentleman from Nebraska mentioned, every day there is another name added to the list of folks who say: You know what, this does make sense.

When I look closely at the articles, I see that it is a former Obama administration official, and the next day, another former Obama administration official, and again and again and again. There was another one today, as the gentleman mentioned.

Just a few weeks ago, more than 2 years after President Obama first rejected the Keystone pipeline and more than 5 years after the application to build it was first submitted to the State Department, the government's latest environmental analysis of the Keystone pipeline project was released.

This analysis showed very clearly that this project will have little environmental impact, provide much-needed jobs, and contribute \$3.4 billion to our economy.

What you have in this situation now is the President waiting for a report; the report comes out from his State Department. Waiting for another report, and then one comes out from the Academy of Sciences. If he keeps waiting, there are not going to be any reports left, and the only decision left will be his decision. That is really where we are.

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Hardworking Americans are ready for a real, all-of-the-above energy strategy. The need for this is made more and more clear by what has been going on with Russia and Ukraine, but the Obama administration continues to block this critical infrastructure project and all the good-paying jobs it would create.

I believe they are doing it for one reason and one reason only—politics—because they have some extreme supporters that they want to keep relatively happy in an election year. That is what this is all about.

Where I live in Little Rock, Arkansas, workers at a company called Welspun have manufactured hundreds of miles of pipe, but it is just sitting in a storage yard because the President

refuses to let the Keystone XL pipeline be built.

In fact, I was wondering whether there was still some out there, and we confirmed today there is still about 350 miles of pipe sitting out there in the yard.

Last September, Dave Delie, the head of Welspun, testified to Congress that the Keystone XL project has so far employed more than 600 Arkansans for over 1½ years at Welspun alone.

Imagine how many other people could get paychecks, could have a job, for all the other work related to the pipeline, including construction work and operation of the pipeline. Americans are looking for work right now. They have waited long enough. It is time to build this pipeline.

I understand that folks—some folks—are worried about protecting the environment and making sure our families and children have clean water to drink. I am too, so let's not argue over settled science.

Research released last year from the National Academy of Sciences concludes that the oil sands crude Keystone will transport is no more corrosive than other crude oils and does not increase the risk of leaks.

We all saw what happened when a train carrying oil in Canada derailed last July. Most of an entire town was obliterated, and nearly 50 people were killed. That was tragic and devastating.

We know that pipelines are safer. We know this. The solution is clear. We need to improve and modernize our pipeline infrastructure, and the Keystone XL project will include over 50 additional safety measures.

President Obama and Secretary Kerry should do the right thing for our environment and the right thing for American workers. Let's create jobs. Let's build Keystone now.

Mr. TERRY. I thank the gentleman from Arkansas.

At this time, I want to yield to our friend from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE).

Mr. LANCE. Thank you, Mr. TERRY, and thank you for your leadership on this issue. I am honored to serve on the subcommittee that you chair.

The discussion this evening has been on unemployment insurance, and that is a worthy discussion. Almost all Americans want to work. The best way for Americans to work is for jobs to be created. The unemployment rate in this country is far too high and the labor participation rate in this country is at a 30-year low.

To those of us who are concerned particularly about the labor participation rate, the best way to get that rate up and to have jobs created is to create jobs, and that is what the Keystone pipeline will do.

Like many Americans and, certainly, like many Americans whom I represent in north/central New Jersey, I have

been incredibly frustrated by the repeated and unnecessary delays in moving forward with the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline.

As Chairman TERRY has pointed out, it has been more than 2,000 days since TransCanada filed its first application to build Keystone. This is a disappointing milestone for this important economic and energy project.

2,000 days is a long time, and not making a decision is making a decision. It is making a negative decision. The people of the United States deserve a decision to be made and, in my judgment, deserve an affirmative decision.

We, of course, have passed legislation in this regard. I am very proud of the Energy and Commerce Committee on which Mr. TERRY and I serve. American-made energy production is one of the few bright spots in today's struggling U.S. economy.

This is due to a series of factors, and of course, our abundance of American gas is at the heart of that. As innovation leads to greater production, the Energy and Commerce Committee, under the leadership of Chairman FRED UPTON and of the united effort of those of us on the Republican side, we have been working together to pass measures that will bring increased American-made energy to consumers and businesses.

The Keystone XL pipeline is an important piece of our all-of-the-above energy policy strategy, and we believe—and I think this is demonstrated conclusively—that this will help lower energy costs, create jobs, and reduce our dependence on foreign sources of oil.

Foreign sources of oil, of course, come from dangerous parts of the world, not only the Middle East, but Venezuela as well. We need to be less dependent on foreign sources of oil, and that is why we have promoted the all-of-the-above strategy.

Those who have opposed the Keystone project cite environmental concerns. I certainly respect environmental concerns. I try to be a strong environmentalist, and I know my colleagues on both sides of the aisle try to be strong environmentalists.

The U.S. State Department report regarding environmental concerns related to Keystone found that the project would have a minimal negative impact on the environment. I believe that we should look at the science and what has been demonstrated, that this would not negatively affect the environment in any meaningful way.

The State Department report also outlined some of the other benefits that would come with the project—as Chairman TERRY has pointed out—42,000 direct and indirect jobs, this at a time when our economy needs to have more in the workforce, so that we can rely less heavily on unemployment insurance, rely more heavily on getting

Americans back to work, and make sure that our labor participation rate increases.

The report also indicates that there would be 3,900 construction jobs. These are high-paying jobs. This is what America should really be about: construction, making things. That has been the history of America, certainly in most parts of this country.

This would be of enormous benefit not only to the center of the country, but, in my judgment, to the entire country. Of course, the report also says that there is an estimated \$3.4 billion in a boost to our economy.

I was interested to read the testimony today of General James Jones, the distinguished former National Security Adviser to President Obama. He came out in favor of the Keystone pipeline today, as has been referenced by Chairman TERRY and by my distinguished colleague from Arkansas, and I am sure by others who will speak this evening.

General Jones has had a distinguished career in service to the United States of America, a career regarding our national security.

There are national security concerns, Chairman TERRY, regarding the Keystone pipeline. Canada is one of our best friends. Canada has stood with us. We can recall all of the times in the past where Canadians have come to help the United States.

Recently, in Mexico, there was a summit among the Prime Minister of Canada, the President of Mexico, and the President of the United States. Certainly, the Prime Minister of Canada favors the construction of Keystone. That is one of the many reasons that we should move forward with Keystone.

Most important of all is our own national security, our own creation of jobs, but also we should be a friend to Canada as Canada has been a friend to us. If we do not build it, then, of course, the Canadians might look elsewhere. They might turn east to China, yet another reason to build Keystone.

Of course, the situation that now exists regarding Russia and its terrible actions involving the Crimea and perhaps even other parts of Ukraine, yet another reason, in my judgment, to build Keystone.

After enduring more than 5 years of review of red tape and of delay, I do not believe there is any reason left for President Obama not to approve Keystone XL and to approve it immediately.

I would urge the President, in all sincerity, to examine what is best in the interest of the United States, to examine what is best in the interest of making sure that we move forward together.

It is time to create U.S. jobs from this aspect of energy. It is time to reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil

from unstable sources. It is time to build the Keystone pipeline, long past time.

Mr. TERRY, I commend your leadership this evening.

Mr. TERRY. Thank you. It was about a year ago this time that H.R. 3, one of our leadership bills, came through our Energy and Commerce Committee that would have permitted the Keystone pipeline passed overwhelmingly with bipartisan support in this Chamber.

It has been sitting on Senator REID's desk for over a year now—42,000 jobs that could be created collecting dust.

I yield to our friend from Virginia, Mr. MORGAN GRIFFITH. If you would give us your thoughts on the Keystone pipeline?

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Well, I have to tell you, first of all, I appreciate your leadership on this. Ever since I got to Congress 4 years ago, this has been an important item for you, not just because it will help the United States, not just because it will help your district, but because it is the right thing to do.

I commend you for that hard work that you have been doing and will continue to do until this project is actually approved. I hope that will be sooner than later.

It would be nice if our bill that we had passed with bipartisan support would have action taken on it by the Senate. I don't know how the good Senator sits down with all those bills in his back pocket. He has got a lot of our good bills back there.

Mr. TERRY. We in the House have passed about 430 bills. 89 of them actually gotten out of the Senate. Well over about 100, I guess—maybe even more than 100—actually are like the Keystone pipeline, that would create—immediately create jobs, but yet they are sitting on a desk.

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. That is what we need in this country. We need opportunities. We need abilities. Bottom line, we need policies that will create jobs. I have got to tell you that one of the favorite things that I do as a United States Congressman is I go to the high schools in my district, and I talk with the students.

Sometimes, it is middle school students. Most of the time, it is senior high students. I talk to them, and I talk about how the decisions that we are making in Washington and the policies that we set here in the Nation's Capital will affect them far more than they affect me because, long-term, when you look at the debt and the deficit and you look at the effects on our health care system that have been coming down with various policies, these will all have a greater impact on them than they will on us.

Particularly talking about debt and deficit, I will often say to them: Well, who do you think is going to pay more of that, me at 55 or you at 17 or 18?

They get it real quick. One of the things I always make sure I try to put into the question and answer process as I am talking with the students is this: the United States of America is a great country. We are the number one economic nation. There are a lot of other countries out there that would like to be the number one economic nation.

While things do not look good in the short run, if those of us in Washington, including the President of the United States and the Senate and the House, make the right policies and have a true all-of-the-above energy policy for this country, we can be the number one economic nation, not just for the next decade, not just for the next 20 years, but I submit to you for the next 100 years.

□ 1945

That's a big deal.

That means jobs and prosperity for the people of the United States for a long, long time. Then I say, but if we make mistakes in Washington—if we don't have a true all-of-the-above policy where we use North American oil, natural gas, coal, wind, solar, nuclear, across the board—we can slip out of that number one spot, and we won't have the advantages that the number one economic nation has had throughout history, and I always mention the Keystone XL pipeline. The reason I mention the Keystone XL pipeline is that it sends a message to the world that the United States is open for business, that we want jobs in this country.

We can send those jobs to China if we want, like we have done in so many other areas, but we want those jobs. We want the jobs in laying the pipeline. We want the jobs in doing the refining. We want the jobs that come from having that extra supply right here in our country, whether it be the oil or the gas that is produced from this oil or whether it be the chemicals that we can make cheaper because we have an abundant supply in North American oil.

It is true, as my colleagues have said, that we also want to make sure that we send a message to the world that we are going to stand with our friends in Canada. As the general said today, a former Obama adviser: Let's send a message to Vladimir Putin.

These are all combined in the Keystone XL pipeline, and when you have the reports on the environment that indicate minimal effect—in fact, some would argue that there may even be positive effects by the pipeline because you don't have to worry about the train system—then what you have got is the situation of “why?” Why would the President, with all of the reports and with the 2,000 days of study and jumping through hoops, not have already signed it? I am surprised he is not having a press conference as we speak to sign the Keystone XL pipeline. Let's get on with it.

I had one person tell me today that he believes that this is better than the oil that we are importing from Venezuela because it has a less negative impact on the environment, our using this oil from Canada, and the Canadians are working to make their process even better so that it has less of an impact on the environment.

So I thank you, Mr. TERRY, for all of your hard work. If you can explain it to me, I would love to hear it, but I can't explain to the high school students in the Ninth District of Virginia why we are not pursuing the Keystone XL pipeline with haste instead of with delay when we know that it will create jobs for American citizens and for people like these high school students will be in a few years when they finish their educations.

Mr. TERRY. I am baffled, too, so I appreciate your comments.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to sum up here:

2,001 days since the permit for this pipeline was filed and over 22,000 pages of scientific review. This permit has been sitting around longer than it took the United States to win World War II. This permit has been here longer than it took Lewis and Clark to explore the Louisiana Purchase and come back. Eleven Federal agencies have participated in reviewing the Keystone pipeline—11 Federal agencies on top of the scientific studies. Every State in which the proposed Keystone pipeline route goes through has approved the pipeline and has independently reviewed it.

Six weeks ago, the President, right behind my right shoulder here, said that he would take out his phone and his pen and would act.

Mr. President, tonight, we ask you to pick up your phone. Call Prime Minister Harper and tell him, Yes, I am ready to sign the permit. Then take out your permit, sign it, and let's get 42,000 people back to work.

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Mr. TERRY, even though I believe I know the answer to this question, I would just ask you: If the President needs a pen to sign that, would you take it down to him on Pennsylvania Avenue?

Mr. TERRY. I have got an extra one, and I will let him keep it.

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. There you go.

Mr. TERRY. I would even let him keep it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MUSEUM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAMALFA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY) for 30 minutes.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank all of you

for joining us this evening. I am delighted to be here to speak about the importance of the National Women's History Museum. I am so pleased to be joined by some of my colleagues who will speak about outstanding women from their States and in the history of our country, women who deserve to be recognized in this museum.

First, I would like to thank my colleague in this effort to create a national museum for women on or near The Mall. She is MARSHA BLACKBURN, from the great State of Tennessee, whose passion and unyielding commitment to making the National Women's History Museum a reality is unrivaled. She is a godsend, an inspiration, and a great friend to women, and I thank her so much for her extraordinary leadership and for the announcement I hope she will make tonight about March 25—moving our legislation forward.

Women stand on historical quicksand. With each step we take forward, the steps behind us disappear. Women have to re-create the wheel with every generation.

Think about what is taught in our American history classes. It is mostly written by men and focuses on their experiences. As my daughter said: It is usually about a bunch of wars between men. Where are the stories about the women?

In large part, women are invisible. History is empowering. It shapes who we are and provides role models to guide us.

We need a museum for half the generation, half the population—women. There are women's museums that focus on aspects of women First Ladies, of women artists, but not one in the United States or around the world, which I am aware of, that focuses on the sole accomplishments and contributions of half our population—women.

I now yield to my colleague, MARSHA BLACKBURN.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased to stand on the floor of the House and join my female colleagues from both sides of the aisle as we work together to make the dream a reality, which is the dream of a women's history museum, to celebrate the cause of wonderful women who have participated in the push and preservation of freedom here in the United States. It will, indeed, be a wonderful day when we see this as a reality.

As Mrs. MALONEY mentioned, we are moving forward legislation that would allow for the establishment of a commission to study where to place a museum. By the way, I think everyone will find it so interesting, which is that the women of this great Nation have said that we don't want any Federal money at all involved in this project. We are going to privately raise every

single penny that is necessary for the location, for the physical facilities, for the exhibits, for the maintenance and upkeep and endowment. This is a project by the women of this Nation for the women of future generations to celebrate the accomplishments that women have made to the Nation.

Indeed, let's think about what has transpired in each and every State, and I hope, over the next few weeks, we have the option, as we celebrate Women's History Month, to talk about what women have accomplished in our country and what our States have contributed.

In Tennessee, we talk a good bit about what transpired when women got the right to vote. We had had all of the process through the fight with suffrage, and it came down to the point of ratification of the amendment to give women the right to vote and to make certain that we had the 36 States to ratify the 19th Amendment. It had been through 35 States, and on August 18 of 1920, it went to the Tennessee Legislature.

Guess what?

It was voted to a tie. There was a State rep, Harry Burn, and he was the one who broke the tie. As we often hear, the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. Indeed, this is a story that is a great example of that because Harry Burn changed his vote and gave women the right to vote. Harry Burn did it because Harry got a letter from his mother. Here is the letter:

Dear Son, hurrah and vote for suffrage. Don't keep them in doubt. I noticed some of the speeches against. They were bitter. I have been watching to see how you stood, but have not noticed anything yet. Don't forget to be a good boy, and help Mrs. Catt put the "rat" in ratification.

Sincerely, your mother.

Harry Burn changed his vote, and Tennessee became the "perfect 36"—the State that gave women the right to vote.

So, because of that, we are able to stand today in Women's History Month and push for a museum to celebrate the accomplishments of people like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the suffragettes and so many other women whom we will have the opportunity to learn about and talk about.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. My colleague pointed out the historic importance of Tennessee in its giving women the right to vote.

It is interesting that both of our States played such a crucial effort in the women's leadership in achieving this right—Tennessee, the final vote, giving women the right to vote, and, New York, the birthplace of the women's movement and of the first resolutions and efforts to gain that right to vote—in Seneca Falls, New York, with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and Susan B. Anthony. Incidentally, they were all Republicans, and

yet they gave their lives so that we could have the right to vote.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I think it is so significant that, again, those two States joined in pushing forward H.R. 863.

I want to commend Chairman CANDICE MILLER and the Admin Committee for the hearing they have already held on the legislation and to take the opportunity to announce that Chairman HASTINGS and the Natural Resources Committee will hold their hearing on March 25. So it is another step as our States and women from our States move forward on moving this to becoming a reality—something women have wanted in this country since they got the right to vote.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. The gentlelady is so correct. We are making history tonight, and we are making history with these hearings.

It was noteworthy of CANDICE MILLER, from the great State of Michigan, that the day she held the hearing was the day that Mary Barra came up the ranks from an intern to the head and CEO of one of America's greatest companies, General Motors.

So I look forward to hearing from my colleagues here. In order of appearance, MARCY KAPTUR, from the great State of Ohio, is a great leader for women and, really, all people, thank you for joining me. You are making history, too, with all of your hard work.

Ms. KAPTUR. Thank you. It is just great to be here this evening and to have so many women gathered on the floor—women Members. That in itself is historic.

As an Ohio Representative, I want to voice my support of your bill, H.R. 863, the National Women's History Commission Act, to study the potential creation of a National Women's History Museum in Washington, D.C., on our mall of democracy, our Nation's Mall.

I can't thank CAROLYN MALONEY of New York and MARSHA BLACKBURN of Tennessee more on behalf of the people whom I represent. The part of Ohio that I come from has really been the leading region of our State to elevate women to public life. I will enter some of that in the RECORD this evening, but in a personal way, let me say that, when I first got here in the 1980s, there were 24 women who were serving in the House.

□ 2000

A dear, dear Member from Louisiana, Congresswoman Lindy Boggs, took me and shepherded me through those rather unusual days. I can remember finally being elected to the Appropriations Committee. When I walked in, there were only the two of us. Virginia Smith from Nebraska was there. Virginia was a Republican. That was it. And me. It was just a different experience. It was like you ended up in heaven and you just saw who was there for the first time.

Over the years, I befriended many people. In 1995, I wrote a book about the women of Congress. I thought it would be easy. But what I found so difficult was, where were the primary materials? I ended up spending more time doing research on women who had served up to that point. I thought, Wow, this is really a huge vacuum.

I drove up to Maine to interview then retired-Senator Margaret Chase Smith. I recorded her. She had created next to her home a tiny little museum where she had some of her papers, and I thought, Oh, my gosh, there really isn't any place for this nationally, and yet this is such a significant person—the first woman to have served both in the House and the Senate.

So as I got into that book, I realized how these materials were all over the country and not really well gathered at all. Then, one of the women from our State, Mary Regula, who was married to former Congressman Ralph Regula of Ohio, worked for years to build the National First Ladies Museum in Canton, Ohio. I went there for the dedication. I am on the board. I saw how Mary and Ralph fought for that for years. It should have been so easy, but it was so hard.

As you go through that particular museum and you start reading the lives of the First Ladies, you are actually shocked to read what really happened and the materials that have been brought together. It was proof to me that the history of women really is yet to be recorded.

So I came down here tonight to compliment you on your efforts and to say that in the region that I come from, we have now seen women rise to positions of heading universities and major corporations. Obviously, women are the anchors for their families and communities in so many ways. They are physicians, engineers, attorneys, judges, athletes, Justices of our Supreme Court. Janet Yellen is now the first woman to head the Federal Reserve of our country. Finally, maybe she will straighten things out.

They are military personnel and legislators. They are career paths that had once been blocked or not even considered for women.

I wanted to come down here this evening and say I stand with you.

I am dedicating my remarks tonight in honor of a constituent of my own district, Mrs. Mattie McAlister, who has just celebrated her 90th birthday. Even as she begins her tenth decade of life, she maintains a full schedule. She is a grandma to all. She teaches children—and she has for years—full time at the Grace Community Center in the heart of our community of Toledo.

The lessons she has learned in her own life are passed on to new generations as the children learn through example. Mrs. McAlister maintains an active social life as well and is involved

in civic and church life. Throughout her life she has never hesitated to be involved serving her family, church, and community with dignity and grace.

She deserves to be honored in this Women's History Month because she is, fundamentally, a teacher. No child that walks by her doesn't learn. All these years that she has technically been retired, she still teaches in a community that is most in need of her shepherding ways and her incredible gifts as a teacher.

So I want to compliment both of you for allowing the American people to record the history of over half of our citizenry in a way that brings them into full view.

I can guarantee you that you have begun a project that is going to take the rest of your lives to complete. It is a mammoth undertaking, and one that certainly deserves our attention here in the Congress. How great to be living in this great moment in history where we can actually make it a reality.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Thank you so much for your inspiring comments.

I would just to briefly note that one needs to go no further than today's history textbooks to see why our museum is so important.

Approximately 10 percent of historic references in U.S. history textbooks refer to women. Less than 8 percent of the statues in National Parks are of women leaders. Our U.S. Capitol building, which hosts millions of tourists each year, displays only 15 statues of women out of the more than 200 currently on exhibit.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. We are so delighted that Mrs. LUMMIS is here to join with us. I have to tell you she was quite a trailblazer in her State before coming to Congress, as she served as her State's treasurer.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. At this time I yield to the gentlelady from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS).

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentlelady from New York and the gentlelady from Tennessee. Along with the gentlelady from Ohio, and someone we will hear from shortly, the gentlelady from Florida, it is an honor to be with you tonight.

I represent the State that is officially known as the "Equality State," and that is for this reason: Wyoming is the first government in the world to continuously and fully grant women the right to vote.

Most people think that had to have been some State associated with the Eastern intelligentsia, but here is the real story.

In the Wyoming Territory, the legislature passed into law on December 10, 1869, a measure stating:

That every woman at the age of 21 years, residing in this territory, may, at every election, to be holden under the laws thereof, cast her vote.

This Suffrage Act granted women in the Wyoming Territory the right to vote with full civil and judicial equality with men.

The first woman to cast her ballot pursuant to those rights was Louisa Swain. She voted in Laramie on September 6, 1870, becoming the Nation's first woman voter under laws guaranteeing absolute political equality with men.

Now think about that. That is 1870. That is 50 years before the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. She was a 70-year-old woman.

Here is the account of her vote in the Laramie Daily Sentinel:

It is comforting to note that our first woman voter was really a lady . . . of the highest social standing in the community, universally beloved and respected. The scene was in the highest degree interesting and impressive. There was just too much good sense in our community for any jeers or sneers to be seen on such an occasion.

And so it was. Wyoming became the inspiration for the rest of the country.

Wyoming didn't become a State until 1890, and that brought upon the codification of this suffrage right through the ratification of the new Wyoming State constitution.

The Congress of the United States—the very Congress in which we stand—threatened to withhold statehood from Wyoming because we had granted women the right to vote. The Territory's legislators replied with a telegram stating that Wyoming would remain out of the union a hundred years rather than join without women's suffrage.

So President Benjamin Harrison, deferring to the wiser Wyoming territorial legislature, on July 10, 1890, signed into law a bill admitting Wyoming into the union and recognizing it as the Nation's Equality State.

Once again, events of the first woman voter happened in Wyoming 50 years before every woman in this country received the same rights. Consequently, Wyoming has an exemplary early history.

We have the first woman elected to statewide office in the Nation in 1804. She was Wyoming's superintendent of public instruction, Estelle Reel.

Why does that matter? Because she died and her estate and her belongings are currently in a little tiny, neglected museum in a town in the district belonging to the chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, Doc HASTINGS, giving our chairman, who is going to hold a hearing later in this Congress, pride and reason to help us support obtaining Estelle Reel's property for this museum.

In 1870, Esther Hobart Morris from South Pass, Wyoming, was the first woman to hold judicial office in the world.

The first women delegates to both the national Democratic and the national Republican convention came from Wyoming.

We had the first woman elected Governor in the United States in 1925. She became the first woman director of the U.S. Mint.

By the way, Estelle Reel later became the first woman national superintendent of Indian schools.

The list goes on and on. We had the first woman bailiff and the first woman grand juror.

Wyoming's history is illustrious. That is why we are called the Equality State. We want very much to share that history with the rest of the country, and thanks to the gentlewomen here tonight who are leading the effort to share women's history in this country, that may become a reality.

I want to thank and salute the gentlewomen from New York and Tennessee who are leading this Special Order tonight and are leading this effort to create a national women's history museum. Wyoming looks forward to being a proud contributor. I look forward to being at the ribbon-cutting. I want to send so much history to you and share it with the people of this country. I am so delighted that you are leading this effort.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I thank the gentlelady from Wyoming for sharing that incredible equality history and really inspiring me and Congresswoman BLACKBURN to work harder and harder to pass this important bill.

Imagine how much more inspired, confident, and successful women in general could be if our national narrative included an equal proportion of women's stories? I firmly believe that we wouldn't be trying to lean in—we would already be in.

Also helping us with this museum is the Representative from the great State of Florida. After very personal observation, I can tell you she is very hardworking. She happens to live with me. We share what we call the Members' House together. She is a trailblazer who keeps on knocking down trails and building new opportunities.

In addition to being an outstanding Member of Congress, she was elected and appointed by the President of the United States to chair the National Democratic Committee.

So I now yield to DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, my very good friend and housemate. Thank you for joining us tonight and thank you for all of your hard work.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Thank you so much to my friend, the gentlelady from New York. It is an absolute privilege and pleasure to be your friend, to be your housemate, and to join you and our distinguished colleagues and friends on the House floor tonight to continue the press and the push for a national women's museum. This has been a longtime goal and passion of yours.

I was so pleased when you came home and told me of your excitement that

you had enlisted the gentlelady from Tennessee to cosponsor this effort. I just knew between the two of you, it is very clear that this is going to happen, because the combination of BLACKBURN and MALONEY is just unstoppable, there is no question.

□ 2015

It is wonderful to be here with our colleague from Wyoming. We have had an opportunity to travel internationally together and actually, specifically, to the state of Israel, in which we had an incredible opportunity to bond.

That is what the women Members—in spite of maybe some of the disagreements and vitriol that, sadly, permeates the House of Representatives from time to time, the women Members really do have a bond.

The wonderful thing about our Women's Caucus is that we come together around issues like this, so when everything else is swirling around us in disagreement, the Women's Caucus' goal is always to come together and try to find some common ground and advance the cause of women.

Let me just take a moment to honor and acknowledge our wonderful colleague from Ohio, MARCY KAPTUR, because she is too humble and modest to brag on herself.

We should point out that she is actually currently the dean of women, the longest-serving woman in the House of Representatives today, and someone who I have the honor of serving on the House Appropriations Committee with.

She does a wonderful job, is an incredible advocate for the State of Ohio and for the Midwest, so I wanted to make sure we acknowledged her.

I am here, I am proud to join you, not only to continue our quest for a National Women's History Museum, but also to honor and acknowledge Women's History Month. We do that each March, where we honor and we remember the women who came before us, the women who worked to make the world a better place, who blazed trails for us to walk on and who opened doors for us to walk through.

I think each of us could tell a story about a woman whose shoulders we stand on. I know that, when I ran for the Florida House of Representatives when I was 25 years old, 21 years ago, that would never have been possible without the trail blazed by the women in Florida who came before me, who had it so tough, and who made it possible for me to even think about the possibility of running at that stage of my life.

So, really, we are here during Women's History Month to honor our foremothers and create a Women's History Museum to do just that.

We have historical activists like Mildred Loving, who, in 1967, successfully challenged the banning of interracial marriage in the U.S. Supreme Court.

We have more recent leaders, like Janet Yellen, who, this past year, became the first woman to chair the Federal Reserve.

Amazing women that I have met and come to know in my own home district in South Florida:

Ronnie Oller, a community organizer and philanthropist who organizes an annual event to provide children with free health care and education services;

Josie Bacallao, the leader of Hispanic Unity, which provides Hispanic and other immigration communities with the services and tools they need to live productive, civically engaged lives;

And a young woman who is named Valeria Hansen who, at just 15 years old, is the founder of the first south Florida chapter of Girl Up, a campaign that promotes girls' empowerment and education worldwide through social media, fundraising, and advocacy.

We celebrate all of these women, not only for their accomplishments, but for having the drive and tenacity to overcome barriers to equal opportunity and lead by example.

The challenges of sexism, discrimination, and inequality future generations of daughters will have to face are significantly diminished thanks to the brave women who have come before us.

I think we should also acknowledge our colleague, Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN of Florida, who was the first Hispanic woman elected to Congress, someone who is a great friend of all of ours, who we are so proud of, and is so collegial, so warm, and such a wonderful person and leader to work with.

Former Congresswoman Carrie Meek, and our current colleague, Congresswoman CORRINE BROWN, who were the first African American women elected to Congress from Florida. These are tremendous sources of pride for us as women leaders.

I want to congratulate the gentlelady from New York and the gentlelady from Tennessee on their commitment to building the National Women's History Museum. We really need to build it, so that we can note the accomplishments and progress of women throughout American history because it is important to do that in so many ways.

As the mother of two young daughters—and each of the women here tonight have met my daughters on numerous occasions—and are all about girls' empowerment, we are a girl power caucus as women Members.

If we build this National Women's History Museum, we are going to have an opportunity to have a showcase—a place where we can show our daughters everything that is possible because of the achievements of who came before us.

Instead of having to try to thumb through a history book and hope that a teacher or a professor along the way gave them some understanding about

what was possible, we give them a place that they can go, show them what is possible, and show generations of younger women coming behind them as well.

Thank you so much.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I thank my good friend for her inspiring and thoughtful remarks.

Women's history is not focused strictly on the accomplishments and contributions of individuals; rather it includes recognition of the collective efforts of women to enrich society.

After all, it was women who lobbied pasteurization of milk, vaccinations for our children, and sewage systems for our communities. Women banded together during World War II to support the war effort.

They planted victory gardens, donated nylons to be used for making equipment, and even took up collections that yielded enough money to purchase aircraft bombers.

Clearly, women have succeeded in shaping our Nation in important and lasting ways. A women's museum would chronicle those important achievements of women throughout history that are scattered across the Nation, as MARCY said, and we need to work to make this happen.

I yield to my good friend and colleague in this effort, Congresswoman BLACKBURN.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Thank you, Mrs. MALONEY.

I want to talk for just a moment about some of the women from Tennessee who have made such a significant contribution.

Now, each of us standing on the floor tonight have stood in this Chamber and have fought for children.

Dr. Mildred Stahlman—Millie Stahlman—is from Nashville and is part of the Vanderbilt University Medical Center team. She is a pioneering professor in pediatrics and pathology at Vanderbilt.

Anyone who has ever been in a neonatology unit has seen some of the pioneering work of Dr. Stahlman because she was the first to ever look at, study, and develop methods for monitoring lung disease in premature babies.

With over 1,300 preemies born every single day, if you were to go into a hospital neonatology unit, you would see some of the knowledge, the experience, the insight, and the discovery that has been brought about by Dr. Stahlman in helping these young babies to live.

I would also like to mention Beth Harwell. Beth is our speaker of the house in Tennessee. She is the first female speaker of the house ever in our State's history.

Beth started her career in public service when she was elected to the general assembly in 1988; and then, in 2011, she was unanimously elected to serve as speaker of the Tennessee House.

She is a diligent worker. She is very devoted to public service, and she represents our State so well.

Chief justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court, Connie Clark, who is one of my constituents.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from New York's time has expired.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MUSEUM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) for 30 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, we are so excited about our talking, we didn't realize that the time had to be split, but so be it. We women stand and abide by the rules of the House, and so we will accept the acknowledgment of the change of time.

I will return to directing our attention to Chief Justice Connie Clark in Tennessee. What is so important about her career is that she was first appointed to the State court by a Democrat Governor, again served under a Democrat Governor, and then chief justice under a Republican Governor.

Justice Clark is such an incredible inspiration to women in our State. She has proven herself, has really been devoted to the judiciary and the law field, and is so active in our community, a tremendous role model.

If we step outside of the venue of politics and law, Amy Grant, who is a singer, songwriter, a native of Nashville, has had such a successful music career. Amy Grant became the first artist in Christian music to ever have a platinum record, and she went on to become a crossover sensation in the music world.

Amy Grant has pioneered the Christian music genre, and she has also blazed quite a trail in the music industry.

When we look at the world of sports, another Tennessean, from Clarksville, Tennessee, which is in my district, Wilma Rudolph, many of you will recognize her name. She was a Tennessee State University track star.

On September 7, 1960, in Rome, she became the first American woman to win not one or two, but three gold medals in the Olympics. She was a track-and-field champion and was regarded as a civil rights and women's rights pioneer and is warmly remembered and treasured in our State.

Pat Summitt, who was the head coach of the Lady Vols at the University of Tennessee and is now the head coach emeritus, she was at the helm of the Lady Vols for 38 seasons. She is the all-time winningest coach in NCAA history—the all-time winningest coach in all of NCAA history. That is men and women's teams.

She is forthright, well-respected, ethical, and a winner in every sense of the word.

Sandra Cochran, who is the president and CEO of Cracker Barrel, Incorporated, she became the president and CEO on September 12 of 2011, following her service as Cracker Barrel's president and chief operating officer. Cracker Barrel is headquartered in Lebanon, Tennessee.

Ms. Cochran was previously CEO at the Nation's third largest book retailer, Books-A-Million. She is serving our community and country well.

Ms. Cochran is a chemical engineering graduate from Vanderbilt University and a masters of business administration from Pacific Lutheran University.

After graduating from Vanderbilt, she entered the United States Army, where she ultimately served as a captain in the 9th Infantry Division.

There are so many other influential women that come from our State, and we are delighted to know that we will have the opportunity to recognize them and their contributions and the contributions of all women who have contributed to the cause of freedom in that Nation.

I yield to the gentlelady from New York.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I thank the gentlelady for giving that overview of the wonderful contributions of women from the great State of Tennessee, and I think it really is historic that the birthplace of the movement for the women's right to vote began in New York and really was completed in the great State of Tennessee. How historic is that?

I must say that the great men who built this Nation and shaped our society did not do it alone. I want to tell you about some of the women from the great State of New York.

First, I would like to speak about one of my mentors, a great friend, a great leader, Geraldine Ferraro, whose run for Vice President inspired me and countless other women who followed her into office.

As a young woman, she demonstrated her extraordinary capacity for hard work and dedication by skipping three grades and graduating high school at the age of 16. After college, she taught second grade in New York public schools and put herself through Fordham Law School at night.

□ 2030

After her children were born, she spent 13 years as a homemaker, after which she did something that was unusual at the time: she went back to work as an attorney in the Special Victims Bureau of the New York District Attorney's Office.

Later on, she ran for Congress and became an outstanding Member representing Queens, New York. During

her three terms in Congress, Ferraro became known as a strong advocate for her district and for issues such as protecting Medicare and Social Security.

Then, in 1984, she literally made history when she became the first female candidate for a major party for Vice President. She is a symbol of the possibility that women could achieve their dreams, break the glass ceiling, and aspire to the highest realm in their chosen profession.

Ferraro is the type of woman I hope inspires my daughters just as she inspired me. Her life is the story girls and boys should hear when they come to our Nation's Capitol, but too often the stories of women are swept under the rug and not remembered. That is why we need this museum.

But Geraldine Ferraro would not have had the opportunity to be such an important trailblazer without the hard work of some of the amazing New York suffragettes: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucretia Mott. Their statue is in the rotunda of the Capitol, and it was a bill of Connie Morella's and mine to move the women out of the basement into the rightful living room of the Capitol with the country's other great revolutionary leaders.

Stanton met Mott in 1840 when they both were refused seats at the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London on account of their sex. It was there that they first discussed the need for a convention to address the condition of women in the United States. This led to the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York, which was attended by Anthony. Together, they championed the National American Woman Suffrage Association, dedicating their lives to achieving equality and the right to vote for women.

The activist work of Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Lucretia Mott are the roots under the women's movement in this country. None of them lived to see women gain the right to vote, but it would have been literally impossible without their hard work and dedication. They literally dedicated their lives working daily to raise awareness, build coalitions, and to pass the 19th Amendment.

Without their dedication to women's rights, Alice Paul, the author of the Equal Rights Amendment, would not have been inspired to secure a woman's right to vote. Alice Paul, incidentally, was a relative of my late husband, Clifton Maloney, from the great State of New Jersey. Without their dedication, I would not have been inspired to continue the work on the amendment to our Constitution which we coauthored to ensure equality for women and men in all areas of society.

But there are also countless women whose work has had a tremendous impact on our lives and in our communities. For all intents and purposes, they have been forgotten.

Nellie Bly was one of the most influential journalists of the 19th century. She pioneered the field of investigative journalism at a time when our Nation was rapidly undergoing industrialization. She also emulated the voyage of Mr. Fogg, Jules Verne's character made famous in the classic novel, "Around the World in 80 Days." But Bly pointed out, however, that he made the trip in 72 days.

While working for Joseph Pulitzer's The New York World, Bly went undercover and feigned insanity to report on the deplorable conditions of the Blackwell Island insane asylum. She exposed the horrific physical and emotional cruelty she had seen patients endure. Her work caused an uproar in New York, resulting in more money to help people with mental illnesses and a change in care for the people in the asylum. Bly's work helped open the profession to future generations of women journalists who wanted to write hard news rather than the light features in society columns.

Lillian Wald, another great New Yorker, was a progressive-era reformer setting the standards for modern social work and community nursing. She left medical school in the 1890s to work with poor immigrant families on New York's Lower East Side and founded the Henry Street Settlement, which still serves New Yorkers, and Visiting Nurse Services, which still serves our country and which continues to offer health care and social services to the needy.

Wald tirelessly campaigned for the rights of women and minorities and undertook some amazing humanitarian efforts to improve our country helping to found the United States Children's Bureau, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and the NAACP. The New York Times nominated her as one of the 12 greatest living American women in 1922, and she later received the Lincoln Medallion for her work as an outstanding citizen of New York.

There are untold numbers of women like those that I have mentioned who have made great contributions to this Nation. In addition to learning about their specific contributions, we are only now gaining a full understanding of how civilization evolves through the power of feminine values and women's enduring traditions.

Nowhere can one find a place for all of these contributions and traditions in one place. That is what we want to accomplish for women. I want to note that there are numerous museums in and around The Mall. We have museums for stamps. We have museums for law and order and for space. We have the great Smithsonian. We have museums for African Americans. We have museums for Indian Americans, and we have museums for the media—the important media. We have over 22 different museums right in this area, but

not one is focusing on the valid and incredibly important contributions of women.

They say women hold up half the sky, but where do you find it? It is not in the history books. It is not in the museums. It is nowhere to be found. Now, if all these other museums had sections focused on the contributions of women, maybe we wouldn't need this museum. But they don't.

As my daughter used to say when I would read stories to her at night, she would say: Mommy, Mommy, why aren't there any stories about girls? Why are all the stories about boys? Can't you read me a story about girls? We don't focus on the contributions of women. There is a woman who rode longer and farther than Paul Revere, and nobody even knows her name. Let's build this museum and talk about her contributions, too.

If we and future generations are to learn all the lessons of the past upon which to build a future, we must be aware of the true experiences, the hardships, the successes, and the contributions of women.

I have here some people I feel deserve to be in that museum:

Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman to serve on the Supreme Court, one of the first elected to serve in the State legislature, an outstanding attorney;

Eleanor Roosevelt, from the great State of New York, an outstanding First Lady who helped so many;

Rosa Parks, who was tired and decided not to give her seat to a White and started an entire civil rights movement that literally changed this country and the opportunities for all people; and

Sally Ride, the great astronaut who went into space.

We don't really chronicle the women scientists and the explorers, all these incredibly important women.

MARSHA, I know—I know—that we would not have these hearings and we would not have the momentum—we have over 84 cosponsors of our bill now. This would not have happened without your hard work and your leadership. I know she has been reaching out to her colleagues that chair these committees, to the leadership of the majority and others to move this effort forward and to gain momentum. So on behalf of the women I am privileged to represent, I want to thank you for all of your hard work. It is historic.

A NATIONAL MUSEUM FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY
(By Rep. Renee Ellmers, R-NC)

Throughout history, conservative women have impacted our nation's future and become an important voice in our democratic republic. We have proven ourselves as pioneers, innovators, leaders and decision-makers. We have created and contributed to many aspects of history—be it agriculture, medicine, politics, philosophy, science, and art. We have touched countless lives and shaped history, yet rarely does society

teach, recognize or display our contributions—and it is time for this to change. In an effort to change this, I have joined my colleagues in advocating to establish the National Women's History Museum (NWHM) in Washington D.C.

Young women deserve a space to call their own—a physical space they can visit to hear and read about those who came before them and changed history. We need a tangible place that encourages our girls to wonder, to feel empowered, and to inquire about the people who fought to provide them with the freedom and opportunities they enjoy today. We need to share the stories of the strong women who have shaped our past and present so that young girls can learn the true meaning of perseverance and courage. There are too many women whose achievements have gone unrecognized and too many women whose efforts have been underappreciated. With such a vibrant history, it is a shame that we have yet to formally establish a museum dedicated to honoring their accomplishments. However, we are making strides.

This past December, my friend Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) sponsored legislation with Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.) to create a commission that would recommend site locations and funding for the NWHM. This bill would have no additional cost for taxpayers, as the commission would be entirely paid for without federal funds. Information gathered by the commission would then be relayed to both the president and Congress. This past December, Reps. Blackburn and Maloney testified before the House Committee on Administration to relay the importance of establishing this commission. Joan Wages, president and CEO of the National Women's History Museum, an organization dedicated to establishment of the museum, also testified. Yet, nearly four months later, there has been no movement on this bill. With more than 82 bipartisan cosponsors in the House, 19 in the Senate, and a plethora of national women's groups supporting the bill, there is no excuse for this inaction.

As one of only 19 Republican women in the House of Representatives, I see firsthand how our underrepresentation can impact our future opportunities. But as we continue to increase our ranks, our daughters need an environment to learn about the conservative heroes who made this possible—women like Jeanette Rankin, Sandra Day O'Connor and Condoleezza Rice. These women have earned their place in history, and our girls should have every opportunity to study them and feel inspired by their contributions.

If there were a museum that honored and proudly displayed our history, perhaps more women would be encouraged to run for political office, to seek out top-tier leadership positions, or to launch a new business. By establishing the NWHM on the National Mall, the notion of conservative women holding office could become less of a rarity and more of the norm.

As Republican women, we must continue to demonstrate that conservative principles—like fiscal responsibility, individual liberty, and a strong defense—are values worth pursuing. We need to make women's history a part of mainstream society. We need to have our story told, and we need to lead the way for other young conservative women. Let's honor our mothers and daughters by providing them with a place to learn and feel inspired. Let's establish the National Women's History Museum in Washington, D.C.

[From CNN.com, Mar. 3, 2014]

THE WOMEN YOU DON'T KNOW—YET

(By Rep. Marsha Blackburn, Rep. Carolyn Maloney, Sen. Susan Collins and Sen. Barbara Mikulski)

(Editor's note: Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tennessee), Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-New York), Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-Maryland) are part of a bipartisan effort in Congress to establish the National Women's History Museum in Washington.)

Did you know that the "frequency hopping" technology that is vital to much of our military technology and helps keep your cell phone and your GPS devices secure was developed and patented by a famous movie star?

Did you know that there was an amazing 16-year-old patriot who outdid Paul Revere, riding 45 miles in the pouring rain to warn New York colonial militias that "the British are coming"?

Did you know that there was a secret agent, code named "355," who worked for George Washington's band of spies, the Culper Ring? The agent supplied key intelligence on British activities during the Revolutionary War, and she was so good at keeping a secret that we still don't know her real name.

If you don't know about all these people, it's understandable. Their stories aren't told widely or often—perhaps because they were all women. For some reason or other, when the story, of our country is told, women—really great women—have tended to be left out of the telling.

You see the results everywhere you look:

A survey of U.S. history textbooks found that only 10% of the individuals identified in the texts were women;

Less than 8% of the 2,560 national historic landmarks chronicle the achievements of women;

Of the 210 statues in the U.S. Capitol, only 15 are of female leaders.

That's the bad news. The good news is that thanks to a strong bipartisan effort in Congress, we may soon be one step closer to addressing this imbalance by establishing a National Women's History Museum in Washington. Together, we have introduced a common-sense bill to move this idea forward.

We have more than 73 bipartisan cosponsors in the House, 19 in the Senate and a national coalition of women's groups behind us. We recognize money is tight—that's why we're not asking for taxpayer support. Private donations would fund the museum's construction and operation.

A vital part of recognizing equal rights for women is acknowledging and commemorating the deep and lasting contributions women have made throughout history. When young people visit our nation's capital, they should have a chance to be just as inspired by women's accomplishments as men's.

We establish and operate museums, not just as some kind of giant drawer in which to store our memorabilia but as way to celebrate our accomplishments, affirm our shared values and preserve the full and accurate story of our common history. And unfortunately, only half of that story is presently being told.

The stories of courageous and pioneering Americans such as abolitionist Harriet Tubman, astronaut Sally Ride, Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and the founder of the Girl Scouts, Juliette Gordon Low, will inform and inspire future generations.

The remarkable women who helped to make this country what it is today deserve

to have their histories told and preserved for the ages. Their stories of success are the stories that will inspire and encourage millions of women. Our daughters and our sons deserve the chance to learn the story—the full story—of how this amazing country came to be.

And by the way, the movie star inventor? That was Hedy Lamarr.

The 16 year-old who rode farther than Paul Revere was Sybil Ludington.

And the spy, code named “355”? Well, we still don’t know the name—but we know the patriot was a “she.”

And just wait until you see all the other amazing women and American history you’ll learn about one day soon when the National Women’s History Museum opens.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentlelady from New York.

I want to yield to the gentlelady from Wyoming for some other comments on our conversation this evening.

Mrs. LUMMIS. I thank the gentlelady from Tennessee and New York.

The gentlelady from New York mentioned the name of a woman who, at The New York World, was a trailblazer for women journalists. Today, my daughter, a journalist, a graduate of Columbia’s Pulitzer School of Journalism, is a journalist at The New York World; and without that kind of leadership on the part of women, we wouldn’t have the opportunities for ourselves and our children to lead. That is why we need to memorialize what women have done, so women and young girls can envision themselves in these roles.

I was recently in Moscow, and we toured the Museum of the Cosmonauts there, and the efforts the United States has currently with Russia, Russia now leading the international space station, so we can continue those efforts. We met with an American woman astronaut and a Russian male cosmonaut. We were led on this tour, and you could see the little kids flock to them as heroes. Well, women and girls need role models. The women in this room are role models.

All of us here this evening are at an age when we remember what it was like not to have intermural women’s sports in high school, what it was like to have to wear skirts to high school and to junior high and grade school, not even having the opportunity to wear pants. I remember when I applied for my first job, I was told that we are not going to hire a woman to be an agricultural loan officer because men don’t like to ask women for money—and it was legal. It was legal for them to say that to me in a job interview, and they hired the man instead of me.

Well, it just made me mad, and it made me determined. I know by looking at the ages of my colleagues here this evening that you each had similar experiences somewhere in your careers. Our own daughters can’t even imagine being told that. This is recent history. These are the kinds of stories that we

need to be able to share, what we even went through.

It is a recent history, and it is a long-fought battle. That is why I am so proud, so proud, A, to serve with these wonderful women Members of Congress today who are leading this effort, so proud to be a woman Member of this institution, and, B, so proud that you are going to leave this legacy that will create and memorialize the history of women in the United States in order to provide an exemplary and visionary picture for our own daughters, granddaughters, and Americans long after we are gone.

Thank you so much to the gentlelady from Tennessee, to the gentlelady from New York, to the wonderful woman from Ohio with whom I served on the House Appropriations Committee. You are fine leaders, exemplary women. I have great respect for the work you are doing this evening.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. How true it is that we have to take the time to pause and paint that vision for future generations so that they do know the trails that have been blazed and the roadblocks that have been removed to make their way easier so that they are able to excel, to achieve, to have, and to do. Isn’t that what we would desire for them to be able to do, to dream big dreams and make those dreams come true and to have role models and examples who may have been through those same struggles and found a way to make it work?

I yield to the gentlelady from Ohio.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank Congresswoman BLACKBURN so much and Congresswoman MALONEY. I share the same passion as Congresswoman LUMMIS. We want to just lift you and be a part of this team for H.R. 863. We hope that everyone listening this evening will co-sponsor this important legislation.

As I listened to you talk, I thought I would give some background, having lived through it here. You talk about museums, Congresswoman MALONEY, and you go around the Capitol itself, it is a museum, and you go: This doesn’t look like America.

For three decades, we have been trying to hang portraits of women who chaired committees in this institution, and it has been a herculean struggle. We finally rehung a portrait in the Education and the Workforce Committee for Mary Norton, who chaired that committee. She wrote some of the most important legislation in this country and was the first woman ever to chair that committee. They had her portrait in a closet—in a closet—just like these statues of suffragettes had to be brought up into the main Capitol.

□ 2045

When I first arrived in Congress, there were only the statues. There was the portrait of Pocahontas in the main room, and then the statue on the very

top, Liberty, on the top of the Capitol. But as you looked at the other portraits, you never saw women. Well, Congressman Bob Ney of Ohio, who headed House Administration many years ago, heard our plea and he finally arranged to have Jeannette Rankin, a Republican and progressive from Montana, but it took us until the 21st century to do it. She was actually elected before the 19th Amendment was passed to the Constitution. She came from Montana, and we didn’t even have her portrait in the Capitol hung.

In addition, Shirley Chisholm of New York, she is now hung on the first floor. She was the first woman of color to run for President of the United States.

The lack of their presence to me is just so blatant, and that is why I want to thank both of you marvelous, marvelous Members and women for seeing this gap in American history.

Even the Women’s Room in the Capitol is behind closed doors so the general public doesn’t always see the women. It is very interesting. I think we are about to open another door and allow the fullness of American history to come forward.

I would like to place in the RECORD the names of citizens from northern Ohio:

Toledo’s Geraldine Macelwane, appointed the first woman on the Lucas County Common Pleas bench. She won election for four consecutive terms;

Julia Bates, our current county prosecutor in Lucas County, Ohio, and Ohio Supreme Court Justices Alice Robie Resnick and Maureen O’Connor, the only two women ever in American history to be elected to the supreme court of our State;

In northern Ohio, we have sent many fine women. Obviously, Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE, who serves with us now, and Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones before her, the first two African American women ever elected to Congress from the State of Ohio, now joined by JOYCE BEATTY of Columbus; Mary Rose Okar; and State legislators Nina Turner, Capri Cafaro, Shirley Smith, Nikki Antonio, Nan Baker, Sandra Williams, Barbara Boyd, Theresa Fedor Edna Brown, Linda Furney and Marijean Valiquette, all women who were trailblazers on the political front.

Toledo has had a woman mayor, Donna Owens. Tina Skeldon Wozniak is a Lucas county commissioner; and Anita Lopez, our county auditor.

Sister Ann Francis Klimkowski was the founding president of Lourdes University, and all of the sisters, the Roman Catholic sisters—the Franciscans, the Sisters of Notre Dame, the Sisters of Mercy, the Sisters of St. Joseph, and the Ursuline Sisters who served selflessly across this country in

hospitals and schools and gave themselves to their communities almost unrecognized. There was a traveling display of them that finally went around the country, and I hope that becomes a part of this museum. They gave their lives for us.

All of those women helped build us and on whose shoulders we are standing, and, as with Congresswoman LUMMIS, I just wish to place in the RECORD—when I was young, I thought I would go to the Air Force Academy, and when I sent my letter in and was rejected because I was a woman, I didn't really completely put it together in my mind. I just tried to do something else, and so I applied to Notre Dame University, and was rejected because I was a woman. They didn't allow women to be students there in those days. And then finally to the FBI. I thought it would be great to work for my country. I would be a female Elliot Ness. And, of course, I was rejected because I was a woman.

So another door always opened, but in the area in which I grew up, it wasn't possible.

Finally, let me say in memory of our mother, who was never able to obtain her degrees until after she retired. She had a very hard life, and received her high school degree after she went on Social Security. One of her very first jobs was working in a restaurant where, when the minimum wage went into effect her boss, who was an animal, basically cashed the check with the additional amount in it, and then he kept the difference. We didn't have enforcement at the Department of Labor. So each of us have stories about what happened in our lives, and they deserve recording in a museum for the women of America.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentlelady for sharing those stories and her insight and what she has experienced in her career and seeking to remove those barriers to overcome obstacles and to make the way smoother for future generations.

Indeed, as Congresswoman MALONEY and I move forward on H.R. 863, we do, as the gentlewoman from Ohio said, invite and are hopeful that every Member of this body will join us in supporting this legislation and that they will pay attention to the hearing on March 25, and we commend Chairman HASTINGS and the House leadership for moving this bill forward, for making it a priority and saying, let's have the hearing, let's move the bill forward to markup, let's support women who are willing to give of their time, their talent and efforts, raise all the money for the museum, for the exhibits, for the upkeep, for the endowment, and to make what has been a dream for decades, make it a reality in this great Nation.

I thank my colleagues for joining us tonight, and I yield back the balance of my time.

REDUCING REGULATORY BURDEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) for 30 minutes.

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, it is amazing when we get a chance to be able to talk about something simple: Can a company run its own business? That seems like a very straightforward statement. Of course a company can run its own business. But it is fascinating to me when we begin to go down the process of how many regulations and how many things a company has to do to fulfill Federal mandates, and it begs one simple question: Is Washington the boss of every company in America? Is Washington the boss of every family in America? Quite frankly, is Washington the boss of every employee in America? We don't work for ourselves anymore unless we are given permission by the Federal Government.

Now lest someone think I may be carrying this overboard, tonight we want to have a little conversation on what is happening in our Nation right now, when we have a Nation that is so focused on how we can wrap around every business to decide what is best for the employees, what is best for the employer, and what is best for everyone around them.

There are several Members here as well, and I want to yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN), who has been an amazing Member of this House of Representatives in the work he has done, and he comes with this small business perspective. He knows how to grow a business. He grew a small business to a very large business that was very significant, even through all of the regulatory process.

I yield to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN).

Mr. MULLIN. I thank Mr. JAMES LANKFORD from Oklahoma. What a wonderful colleague you are. You are absolutely correct, and the only reason I stand in front of you today is truly the biggest threat I had as a business owner, from a gentleman who literally had the opportunity to have a very small company and see how the Lord can bless it and take it until now we employ over 120 people across the State of Oklahoma, when I woke up one day and realized that the biggest threat I have to my company is the Federal Government, that is a sad reality.

You are absolutely correct. It is ridiculous to sit and think we have to ask Washington, D.C., for permission to be able to hire. They literally regulate who we can hire and how we can fire them. We don't ever want to fire an employee, but the truth is sometimes you have to move on. The relationship doesn't work, and yet you are told how you have to do that.

As a business owner, we want to hire the best people and keep the best peo-

ple. That is how we grow the company. But at the end of day when we have to constantly ask permission how we do our job, can we do our job this way, are we allowed to grow the company, are we allowed to complete it, what agencies do we have to go through just to get a permit to do something that needs to be accomplished, it gets out of hand. We woke up one day and we realized we were spending 40 cents out of every dollar that comes into our company to simply comply with a mandate or a regulation coming down from the government. Forty cents out of every dollar.

I was questioned one time on an interview. They said, How is that possible? Aren't you including taxes?

I said: No, this doesn't include taxes.

The person said I don't believe what you are saying, and I challenge you.

I told them, just walk the halls with me in my office, and you will go past a compliance office, you will go past a payroll department, which is strongly regulated. You will go by a H.R. department that is strongly regulated, and so on and so on. I said you will be shocked how much we spend on payroll just to meet those certain mandates and those regulations.

It is literally laughable when you have people up here in Washington, D.C., get up and say they got a job package. If they were really that good at creating jobs, why didn't they do it before they got here? The truth is they don't know because if they did, the only thing they would have to do is start reining in the regulations. At the end of the day, is America the land of opportunity because right now if Washington, D.C., if the Federal Government continues to overregulate, the opportunities and the entrepreneurial spirit that exists in America is no longer going to exist.

I would like to thank the gentleman for bringing this to our attention and taking the time and your time to say hey, enough is enough.

Mr. LANKFORD. I thank the gentleman.

As the husband of an amazing lady and a dad of two amazing two young daughters, I enjoyed the previous Special Order that happened here about Women's History Month. I, as a dad, want to see my daughters be able to succeed and have every single opportunity of every single other American, and so I would like to yield to my colleague from New York so she is able to enter some things into the RECORD.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. I thank the gentleman for his beautiful words. Certainly the museum will not be achieved without like-minded men who support it.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to include for the RECORD an op-ed that MARSHA BLACKBURN and I wrote called "The Women You Don't Know Yet," and a beautiful, beautiful op-ed

written by RENEE ELLMERS representing the great State of North Carolina called "A National Museum For Women's History."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. LANKFORD. I want to continue on this ongoing conversation. How do decisions get made in America?

It is the assumption again that if you are a landowner or a farmer and rancher, you look around your farm and you look for what is best for your land and for your family, as well as for the families around you. No one takes better care of the land than farmers and ranchers all across America.

But it is interesting, as you go across western Oklahoma, you will drive for miles and you will see barbwire fences. At the bottom of it, they will have a small, little ribbon all the way across it. People from outside the State might wonder what that is, but landowners know what it is. That is the Fish and Wildlife Service has stepped onto their private property and said that if you are going to have a fence there in that spot, you have to mark the bottom wire in case a lesser prairie chicken were to be in your area.

So hundreds of miles of fences have now been marked. People have been hired or families have spent their precious time, instead of farming or ranching, instead tagging barbwire in case there is a lesser prairie chicken somewhere in the area, which I remind you, is not an endangered species. It is a species that is being discussed to possibly be threatened at some future point, but it is not listed as threatened. It is not listed as endangered. But millions of dollars have been spent on things like tagging barbwire fences and limiting roads.

□ 2100

Now, landowners have to go to the Fish and Wildlife Service and ask permission for how many head of cattle that they can have in a certain area, in case a lesser prairie chicken happens to be in the area.

It is an interesting day that we have in America, that whether you are farming, ranching, running a plumbing company, or whether you are a contractor, it seems that Washington is the boss of us, and we make decisions based on that.

I would like to be able to welcome in a colleague of mine from my same class, who has been a leader not only in his State legislature, but is now a leader here in this legislature, Mr. ALAN NUNNELEE. I would like to be able to invite him to be able to come and continue on this conversation.

Mr. NUNNELEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend from Oklahoma for his leadership in bringing focus to this important issue.

The foundation for our country rests on the shoulders of "we the people." Under our constitutional form of government, we the people are the boss, and Washington is the servant.

Unfortunately, under this current administration, there is not a week that goes by without more evidence of out-of-control bureaucracies attempting to run local businesses through unnecessary rules and regulations.

I could give many examples, but in the interest of time, I will just give one. Columbus Brick Company is located in Columbus, Mississippi. They have been making clay bricks since 1890. Mr. Al Puckett is the fourth generation of that family to run that business.

After they spent substantial sums much money to bring the factory into compliance with new Environmental Protection Agency regulations, the EPA is now threatening new, even more expensive regulations without any input from the public, from the stakeholders, from Congress, or from we the people.

Last June, Mr. Puckett appeared before the House Judiciary Committee. He testified:

If EPA uses the same approach that they have followed on recent rules, Columbus Brick may cease to exist after almost 125 years of operation. I expect a minimum of having to shut down 2 or 3 kilns. That will mean a permanent job loss of 45 to 50 families in our small rural community.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, it gets worse. These EPA regulations do not result in any significant benefit to the environment. The brick industry in general—Columbus Brick Company in particular—is already operating well within safe levels. Unfortunately, Columbus Brick Company is not unique in the impact this rule would have on small businesses. Many would be forced to close their doors.

Only in Washington are rules handed down to businesses without allowing the affected parties the ability to weigh in before the settlement agreements are adopted. Environmental regulations should be fair, reasonable, and they should balance costs versus benefits.

This body understands this concept, and that is why, in February, we passed the ALERRT Act, which would require the administration to account for the cost of excessive regulations to minimize the impact on small businesses.

Mr. Puckett stated it best:

We are not asking for the rule to go away. We are asking that the practice of establishing unreasonable deadlines without input from the impacted industries go away.

Mr. Speaker, Mississippians know that the power and drive of America is in the individual, and the great solutions to the great challenges facing our country don't come in Washington, neither do they come in our State capitals. The challenges to our solutions

can be found around our kitchen tables and our homes and our churches and our communities.

Unfortunately, it is the mentality that the government is the boss. It has been oppressive on companies like Columbus Brick, but their spirit of survival is what has allowed them to survive for several generations. Washington, and particularly not the EPA, is not the boss of Columbus Brick.

Mr. LANKFORD. I thank the gentleman from Mississippi for being here and being part of this conversation because this does affect every single corner of our Nation.

Everywhere we go, this tends to be the same issue repeated over and over again. How do individuals make decisions and not have to wait for the Federal Government to be able to give them permission to be able to do this?

We could go on and on, but let me just give you several other examples that some people may know well and some people may not know well.

If you are going to put in a traffic light, just a simple installation, maybe a day or two at an intersection, to be able to put in a traffic light at an intersection, somewhere in the vicinity of that, there will be a board that has been placed up by the company.

There will be 24 different posters stapled to that board to give instructions to anyone who happens to be at that job site installing a traffic light for a day or two of all of their rights under the Department of Labor rules—24 posters posted outside somewhere in the vicinity around where they are doing construction on a traffic light.

Does anyone think that is common sense? I would assume not; but yet it is all over the country. Every company that is installing traffic lights or working on roads or bridges or anywhere they may be, they are hauling around this giant board and putting it up because the Federal Government makes them do it. As they install it, they all think the same thing. Do I work for the government, or does the government work for me?

Many banks in America now, after the Dodd-Frank regulations were passed just 5 years ago, when those regulations were passed—or that law was passed and the regulations are now promulgated, banks will tell you, all over the country—small banks, family-owned banks in small rural communities, medium-sized banks, banks that had nothing to do with the meltdown that happened in our economy in 2008 and 2009—these community banks will tell you many of them have a regulator sitting there full time now.

If not full time, multiple times a year, for weeks on end, a government regulator comes and sits down at their bank and goes through every single piece of everything.

Many of these banks will tell you, if they call one of these regulators and

say: Hey, I am thinking about making a loan, and I am considering this, I need to know, when you evaluate my bank, what are you going to say on this, many of the regulators will say: Well, I will evaluate it when I see it.

They won't give them proactive advice. They won't actually help them in advance, but they will show up at the end of it and be able to downgrade them if they made the wrong decision.

That is not a government that is designed to serve you. That is a government that we serve. Banks have suddenly become entities of the Federal Government, constantly worried about some Federal regulator coming in and what they may or may not do. Again, Washington is not our boss.

The overtime rules that were just proposed today by the President, it seems like a such a nice thing to do. If someone works overtime, they should get additional pay, but leaving out this simple fact: people all over America worked hourly and worked to get to a salaried position, so then they saw that as a promotion.

Suddenly, the President of the United States is stepping in and saying: I am going to actually demote you again and put you back on an hourly-type situation, that if you make a certain amount, you are going to have to count your hours.

Well, what really happens in real life with that? Well, I can tell you immediately after that rule gets promulgated, Pam Parks, who owns Blue Wave and Silver Wave Boats in Seminole, Oklahoma, contacts me immediately and says: Does the President have any idea what this would mean in real life in a real business?

I can tell Pam probably not because what it will mean in real life for her, what it will mean in real life for her employees, what it will mean in real life for companies all over America are multiple things, that when the President in Washington shows up at a business and says it is obvious you don't take care of your employees, so we are going to force you to do this, and we are going to take over your business, and we are going to run your payroll different than how you are running it, what really happens is salaried workers suddenly step back down to hourly workers, and someone who really wants to succeed and is going to put in the time to do that, the boss has to step in to them onsite and say: you can't work more than 40 hours. I know you wanted to be here and to do extra stuff and try to work your way up the ladder. No, you can't do that; because at a certain pay level, there is a cut off there, and you have to have extra overtime.

Now, someone who may make a little bit more, they can stay extra, they can work their way up the ladder, but someone else now will be prohibited from doing that.

As odd as it sounds, what just occurred was the President just imposed a new ceiling in workplaces all over the country with no one passing a law, with no regulation being promulgated, just a declaration, and everything just changed for a lot of Americans all over the country, and a new cap was just placed in a lot of places.

People that worked for years to move to salary just got demoted back to hourly, and now, their boss is watching over them. Sadly, that boss is Washington, D.C. That is not right for Blue Wave and Silver Wave Boats in Seminole, Oklahoma. That is not right for businesses all over America.

If I get into an issue that is somewhat controversial, excuse me, but let me count the ways that ObamaCare demonstrates that Washington, D.C., wants to be the boss of every business and of every American.

ObamaCare, when it passed, said to every American: I know that you plan your budget and you plan your life in certain ways. We don't like how you do that. You are suddenly going to do it our way. You are going to buy a product you haven't purchased before, whether you are healthy or not, because we want you to, because we are your boss and we are going to tell you what products you are going to buy. If you want to buy a different insurance policy, I am sorry. That insurance policy is not good enough for us in Washington. You have got to pick the one that we pick in Washington.

That is not American. Now, it is a great thing to make sure that everyone in America has access to health care, but to then go to every family and say: It is going to be more than just access to, it is going to be requirement for, whether it fits your budget or not, and by the way, the government is going to pick what fits your budget.

That means Washington is suddenly the boss of you. In every workplace across the country, Washington, D.C., is now trying to decide which insurance policies work best for them—that is, Washington, not for the people in that company. Washington is not the boss of us. We are individuals that have freedom.

There is a company named Hobby Lobby. It happens to be based in my hometown. It is an absolutely amazing family that has lived out their faith for years. People see Hobby Lobby as this giant company.

Just a few decades ago, Hobby Lobby was in a garage and was a couple of sons cutting out picture frames for their dad, and they were selling these little tiny picture frames and starting their own tiny little frame shop.

That tiny little frame shop is now all over this country and is known to be this great retailer Hobby Lobby. They have practiced faith principles from the very beginning of their company. They close on Sundays. They close

early on Wednesdays. They pay well more than minimum wage. They have always had great health care coverage.

They are a company that lives out biblical values in the workplace. They play Christian music even over the loudspeakers at the stores. They are a place that, when you shop, you enjoy shopping there. People love to take care of people there. That is part of their corporate mentality.

It is also a couple of owners and that family that is also opposed to abortion. They have the unusual belief that millions and millions of other Americans believe that children are valuable and that children are important and precious. They happen to have a faith that believes that the child deserves life.

Well, the President disagrees with that faith; so when ObamaCare—literally, the regulations say to that business: You cannot operate your business under faith principles if that faith principle is different than the President's.

Why do I say that? Because if Hobby Lobby did not provide insurance at all—at all to their employees, they would be fined \$2,000 per person, per year, if they refuse to provide insurance.

If they provide all insurance with everything included in it that ObamaCare requires, except for four abortifacient drugs—just leave out those four. Based on religious views they don't agree with, those four abortifacient drugs—if they don't provide those four, their fine is \$36,500 per employee, per year.

Let me run this past you again: \$2,000 per employee if they provide nothing; \$36,500 per employee if they provide everything, except those four abortifacient drugs.

How serious is this administration about being the boss of that company and telling them: If your faith practice is different than ours, it is obvious the consequences are shutting down a company?

□ 2115

No one can afford a fine of \$36,500. So, basically, the Green family has to choose to either live their faith or to keep their business open, but they can't do both at the same time.

What kind of country is this? What have we become when the simple freedom of religion can be swept aside by a Washington that says: If I don't agree with your faith, you have to change your practice?

Washington is not the boss of our companies. Washington is not the boss of our faith. We have a constitutional right to be able to live out our faith.

I received a letter and information from a great Oklahoma company in Stillwater, Oklahoma. It is Frontier Electronic Systems. It is interesting to be able to read what they are dealing with day-to-day just with Federal regulations. Here is one statement.

They wrote:

A phrase I have borrowed regarding most of these Federal regulations is that they “do not scale.” As a company with 113 employees, we are as accountable for compliance as if we had 113,000 employees. Needless to say, we have far fewer resources available—dollars and people power—than a larger employer has to ensure compliance. Also, compliance with many of the regulations requires some level of knowledge and experience in specific human resources specialties—staffing, benefits, et cetera—due to the fact that many of the laws are complicated and interrelated. Many smaller companies are fortunate to have even one experienced HR professional, let alone one that has extensive knowledge in multiple HR specialties.

What are they talking about with that?

Let me just give you an example. Because this great company also occasionally does some Federal contracting, here is the list of the regulations that this company must fulfill. To be a company and to be open in America right now, this is what this particular company has to fulfill. They have to follow these specific regulations:

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act; the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009—the regs that are in there; the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012; the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Black Lung Benefits Act; the Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009; the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986; the Copeland Act of 1934; the Consumer Credit Protection Act; the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act; the Davis-Bacon Act; the Dodd-Frank Act of 2011; the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988; the Employee Polygraph Protection Act; the Employee Retirement Income Security Act; the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act; the Equal Pay Act; Executive Order 11246 of 1965; Executive Order 13201; the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act; the Federal Corrupt Practices Act; the Fair Credit Reporting Act; the Fair Labor Standards Act; the Family and Medical Leave Act; the Federal Employees’ Compensation Act; the Federal Insurance Contributions Act; the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act; the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act; the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act; the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act; the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment Act of 2010; the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986; the Immigration and Nationality Act; the Jury Service and Selection Act; the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act; the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2007; the Longshore and Harbor Workers’ Compensation Act; the McNamara-O’Hara Service Contract Act; the Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2008; the Mental Health Parity Act; the Migrant and

Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act; the National Labor Relations Act; the Newborns’ and Mothers’ Health Protection Act of 1996; the Norris-LaGuardia Act of 1932; the Occupational Safety and Health Act; the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard; the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act—that is a big one; that is ObamaCare—the Pension Protection Act of 2006; the Pregnancy Discrimination Act; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Sarbanes-Oxley Act; the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890; title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures of 1978; the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994; the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2004; the Vietnam Era Veterans’ Readjustment Assistance Act; the Walsh-Healey Act; the War Hazards Compensation Act; the Women’s Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998; the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act; and the Workforce Reinvestment and Adult Education Act.

Can anyone keep up with that? This business has to. With 113 employees, how many people does it take just to keep up with those regulations?

Mr. Speaker, we have a problem. We have a Washington, D.C., that has become arrogant. I don’t think it is intentional. Quite frankly, I think everyone is trying to be very kind—overly kind—and they stack on one regulation on another, and there suddenly becomes a day when no company can keep up with this.

The attitude is simple: we know better than you. You won’t run your company like it should be run, so we are going to come tell you how to run it. You won’t run your family like it should be run, so we are going to tell you how to run your family farm. You won’t run your bank like it should be run, so we are going to come run it for you. You won’t run your insurance company like it should be run, so we are going to come run it for you. You mistreat your employees, so we are going to take over your health care system, and we will run it for you.

Mr. Speaker, that is not what we are as Americans. We are a nation that became strong because we are a nation that is free. We changed the world with a simple work ethic and the ability for people to be able to achieve success. That did not include a laundry list of protections from the Federal Government that swallow up a business.

Is there anything wrong with the government’s setting the boundaries for business? No. It is part of the role of government. But when it becomes this, we are drowning. Now, suddenly, Washington is the boss of us, and this has got to turn around.

Mr. Speaker, simple decisions have to be made.

Can States do things that the Federal Government is currently doing?

Yes, there are things the Federal Government is doing it has no business doing. They are the responsibility of a State.

Should families go back to making decisions and businesses making decisions?

Yes, they should. That means there is risk. With risk comes great reward. We became the strongest and most prosperous nation on the planet because our people were not afraid of risk and the rest of the world was. We can get back to that, but we have got to make a simple decision: Is Washington the boss of us or are the American people the boss of Washington?

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker’s table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2137. An act to ensure that holders of flood insurance policies under the National Flood Insurance Program do not receive premium refunds for coverage of second homes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o’clock and 22 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, March 14, 2014, at 9 a.m.

OATH OF OFFICE MEMBERS, RESIDENT COMMISSIONER, AND DELEGATES

The oath of office required by the sixth article of the Constitution of the United States, and as provided by section 2 of the act of May 13, 1884 (23 Stat. 22), to be administered to Members, Resident Commissioner, and Delegates of the House of Representatives, the text of which is carried in 5 U.S.C. 3331:

“I, AB, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.”

has been subscribed to in person and filed in duplicate with the Clerk of the House of Representatives by the following Member of the 113th Congress, pursuant to the provisions of 2 U.S.C. 25:

DAVID W. JOLLY, Thirteenth District of Florida.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4980. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the Board's final rule — Prohibition Against Federal Assistance for Swaps Entities (Regulation KK) [Docket No.: R-1458] (RIN: 7100-AD96) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4981. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final rule — Schedule of Controlled Substances: Placement of Alfaxalone into Schedule IV [Docket No.: DEA-370] received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4982. A letter from the Chief, Policy and Rules Division, OET, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Amendment of Part 15 of the Commission's Rules to Establish Regulations for Tank Level Probing Radars in the Frequency Band 77-81 GHz; Amendment to Part 15 of the Commission's Rules to Establish Regulations for Level Probing Radars and Tank Level Probing Radars in the Frequency Bands 5.925-7.250 GHz, 24.05-29.00 GHz and 75-85 GHz; Ohmart/VEGA Corp., Request for Waiver of Section 15.252 to Permit Marketing of Level Probing Radars in the 26 GHz Band [ET Docket No.: 10-23] [ET Docket No.: 10-27] received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4983. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Retrospective Analysis under Executive Order 13579 [NRC-2011-0246] received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4984. A letter from the Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; Trip Limit Reduction [Docket No.: 0010052281-0369-02] (RIN: 0648-XD134) received March 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4985. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Shrimp Fishery Off the Southern Atlantic States; Closure of the Penaeid Shrimp Fishery Off South Carolina [Docket No.: 120919470-3513-02] (RIN: 0648-XD122) received March 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4986. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area; Amendment 102 [Docket No.: 130306200-4084-02] (RIN: 0648-BD03) received March 5, 2014,

pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4987. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Herring Fishery; Amendment 5 [Docket No.: 100203070-4003-02] (RIN: 0648-AY47) received March 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4988. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's "Major" final rule — Endangered Fish and Wildlife; Final Rule To Remove the Sunset Provision of the Final Rule Implementing Vessel Speed Restrictions To Reduce the Threat of Ship Collisions With North Atlantic Right Whales [Docket No.: 110819518-3833-02] (RIN: 0648-BB20) received March 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

4989. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; BWRC Southwest Showdown Three; Parker, AZ [Docket No.: USCG-2013-1034] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4990. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone, Vessel Movement, Christina River; Wilmington, DE [Docket Number: USCG-2013-1002] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4991. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Bone Island Triathlon, Atlantic Ocean; Key West, FL [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0905] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4992. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Houma Navigation Canal, Mile Marker 35.5 to 36.5, and Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, Mile Marker 59.0 to 60.0, West of Harvey Locks, bank to bank; Houma, Terrebonne Parish, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2012-0880] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4993. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Olympus Tension Leg Platform [Docket Number: USCG-2013-0070] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

4994. A letter from the Paralegal Specialist, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca S.A. Turboshift Engines [Docket No.: FAA-2013-1003; Directorate Identifier 2013-NE-33-AD; Amendment 39-17724; AD 2014-01-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received March 10, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. SMITH of Texas: Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. H.R. 1786. A bill to reauthorize the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113-380, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure discharged from further consideration. H.R. 1786 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, and ordered to be printed.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mrs. WAGNER:

H.R. 4225. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide a penalty for knowingly selling advertising that offers certain commercial sex acts; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself and Mr. HUFFMAN):

H.R. 4226. A bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to exclude a loan secured by a non-owner occupied 1- to 4-family dwelling from the definition of a member business loan, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California

(for himself, Ms. DELAUNO, Mr. NADLER, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. HONDA, Mr. ENYART, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. GRAYSON, Ms. MOORE, Mr. POCAN, Mr. SABLON, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. HOLT, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY):

H.R. 4227. A bill to amend title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other statutes to clarify appropriate liability standards for Federal antidiscrimination claims; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, the Judiciary, and Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. MCCAUL, Mr. BARBER, and Mr. DAINES):

H.R. 4228. A bill to require the Department of Homeland Security to improve discipline, accountability, and transparency in acquisition program management; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself,

Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. SIREN, Mr. SALMON, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. DESANTIS, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. BLIRAKIS, and Ms. FRANKEL of Florida):

H.R. 4229. A bill to seek international sanctions against the Government of Venezuela with respect to foreign persons responsible for or complicit in ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, the commission of serious human rights abuses against citizens of Venezuela, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Ways and Means, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. RUNYAN (for himself and Mr. GARAMENDI):

H.R. 4230. A bill to limit the retirement of KC-10 aircraft; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4231. A bill to prohibit United States assistance to the East-West Center; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Ms. GABBARD (for herself and Mr. GIBSON):

H.R. 4232. A bill to clarify the cancellation of loans of members of the Armed Forces under the Federal Perkins Loan Program; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. BISHOP of New York (for himself, Mr. HURT, and Mr. ISRAEL):

H.R. 4233. A bill to authorize the President to award the Medal of Honor posthumously to Lance Corporal Jordan C. Haerter and Corporal Jonathan Yale of the Marine Corps for acts of valor during Operation Iraqi Freedom in April 2008; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BUCSHON (for himself and Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia):

H.R. 4234. A bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to reduce the shortage of psychiatrists in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs by offering competitive employment incentives to certain psychiatrists, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. BUSTOS (for herself and Mr. BRALEY of Iowa):

H.R. 4235. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to remove the maximum payment amount for certain qualified losses under the Traumatic Injury Protection under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 4236. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Truth in Lending Act to clarify the application of prepayment amounts on student loans; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee (for himself and Mr. PASCRELL):

H.R. 4237. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide that the volume cap for private activity bonds shall not apply to bonds for facilities for furnishing of water and sewage facilities; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HARRIS:

H.R. 4238. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for requirements for employers of H-2B nonimmigrants, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr.

GARAMENDI, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. FARR, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. BERRA of California, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. SWALWELL of California, and Mr. CARTWRIGHT):

H.R. 4239. A bill to provide drought assistance to the State of California and other affected western States; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Transportation and Infrastructure, the Budget, Agriculture, Energy and Commerce, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico (for herself, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. VARGAS, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO):

H.R. 4240. A bill to expand access to health care services, including sexual, reproductive, and maternal health services, for immigrant women, men, and families by removing legal barriers to health insurance coverage, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LYNCH (for himself, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. GRIMM, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. KEATING, Mr. WOLF, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. MICHAUD, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. TONKO, Mr. HIGGINS, and Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts):

H.R. 4241. A bill to withdraw approval for the drug Zohydro ER and prohibit the Food and Drug Administration from approving such drug unless it is reformulated to prevent abuse; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. NOLAN (for himself and Mr. PAULSEN):

H.R. 4242. A bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1930 to provide for the import of donated firefighting and rescue and relief equipment and supplies free of duty and other restrictions for purposes of inspection and subsequent donation and export of such equipment and supplies to countries and organizations in need, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4243. A bill to amend title 40, United States Code, to permit commercial filmmaking and photography on the United States Capitol grounds, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. PETERS of Michigan (for himself, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, and Mr. SCHRADER):

H.R. 4244. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the small employer health insurance credit, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. QUIGLEY:

H.R. 4245. A bill to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, the Rules of the

House of Representatives, the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, and the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 to improve access to information in the legislative and executive branches of the Government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on Rules, House Administration, the Judiciary, Ethics, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. REICHERT (for himself, Mr. MATHESON, and Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California):

H.R. 4246. A bill to provide construction, architectural, and engineering entities with qualified immunity from liability for negligence when providing services or equipment on a volunteer basis in response to a declared emergency or disaster; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. RUIZ (for himself, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. ENYART, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, and Mr. HECK of Nevada):

H.R. 4247. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that disabled veterans with a disability rating greater than or equal to 70 percent receive preference with respect to employment in the competitive service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. TAKANO (for himself and Mr. FLORES):

H.R. 4248. A bill to require institutions of higher education to disseminate information with respect to the completion rates, employment rates, and retention rates of recipients of GI Bill funding; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Ms. TITUS (for herself, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. MOORE, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. POLIS, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. DEUTCH, and Mr. SERRANO):

H.R. 4249. A bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to expand and improve Federal programs to reduce child hunger; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. WHITFIELD (for himself and Mr. DINGELL):

H.R. 4250. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide an alternative process for review of safety and effectiveness of nonprescription sunscreen active ingredients and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GRIMM:

H. Con. Res. 93. Concurrent resolution directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make technical corrections in the enrollment of H.R. 3370; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. KILDEE:

H. Res. 517. A resolution raising a question of the privileges of the House.

By Mr. ELLISON (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. MCCOLLUM, and Mr. NOLAN):

H. Res. 518. A resolution expressing support for designation of March 2014 as "Multiple System Atrophy Awareness Month" to increase public awareness of this progressive neurodegenerative disorder that affects the autonomic functions of the body; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. LEE OF CALIFORNIA (for herself, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. ELLISON, Ms. NORTON, Ms. MOORE, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. HOLT, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. HONDA, Mr. RUSH, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. TITUS, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. LEWIS, Ms. BASS, Mr. BARBER, and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN):

H. Res. 519. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Professional Social Work Month and World Social Work Day; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

175. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina, relative to a Concurrent Resolution memorializing the Congress to enact legislation revising or requiring revisions of the Southeastern United States federal outer continental shelf administrative district boundaries established by BOEM of the Department of the Interior; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

176. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the State of Ohio, relative to Senate Joint Resolution No. 5 urging the Congress to propose a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

177. Also, a memorial of the Senate of the State of New Mexico, relative to Senate Memorial No. 2 calling upon the New Mexico Congressional Delegation in Washington D.C., to vote in favor of legislation that would remove the deadline for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mrs. WAGNER:

H.R. 4225.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress in Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution: "To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

Additional authority derives from Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution: "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. ROYCE:

H.R. 4226.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the U.S. Constitution to regulate commerce.

By Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California:

H.R. 4227.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina:

H.R. 4228.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following: Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution enumerates to Congress the power to "provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States." This legislation sets out parameters reforming the way that the Department of Homeland Security purchases the equipment and services it needs to defend the homeland.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN:

H.R. 4229.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution

By Mr. RUNYAN:

H.R. 4230.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. SALMON:

H.R. 4231.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7—"No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time."

By Ms. GABBARD:

H.R. 4232.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The U.S. Constitution including Article 1, Section 8.

By Mr. BISHOP of New York:

H.R. 4233.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. BUCSHON:

H.R. 4234.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mrs. BUSTOS:

H.R. 4235.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 4236.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, §8

By Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee:

H.R. 4237.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HARRIS:

H.R. 4238.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 which states that the Congress has power "to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States . . ."

By Mr. HUFFMAN:

H.R. 4239.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1: The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Office thereof.

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7: No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

By Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico:

H.R. 4240.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. LYNCH:

H.R. 4241.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 section 8 Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. NOLAN:

H.R. 4242.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1, which states that "The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defence and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States."

By Ms. NORTON:

H.R. 4243.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

By Mr. PETERS of Michigan:

H.R. 4244.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1

The Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States.

By Mr. QUIGLEY:

H.R. 4245.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of article I of the Constitution

By Mr. REICHERT:

H.R. 4246.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3, of Section 8, of Article I of the Constitution, which states that the United States Congress shall have power "to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and

among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.”

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 4247.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 18 of section 8 of article I of the Constitution

By Mr. TAKANO:

H.R. 4248.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States.

By Ms. TITUS:

H.R. 4249.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. WHITFIELD:

H.R. 4250.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3: The Congress shall have Power *** to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 6: Mrs. CAPITO and Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 46: Mr. SMITH of Nebraska.
H.R. 118: Mrs. DAVIS of California.
H.R. 182: Mr. MCKINLEY.
H.R. 184: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 455: Mr. GARAMENDI.
H.R. 562: Mr. PETERS of Michigan.
H.R. 594: Mr. PASCRELL and Mr. KENNEDY.
H.R. 597: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 647: Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. HIGGINS, and Mr. SCALISE.
H.R. 755: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 863: Mr. LATTI, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, and Mr. THOMPSON of California.
H.R. 935: Mrs. NOEM.
H.R. 953: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 958: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 962: Mr. MAFFEI and Mr. HECK of Washington.
H.R. 1008: Mr. MCALLISTER.
H.R. 1074: Mr. LIPINSKI and Mr. ENYART.
H.R. 1084: Mr. ENYART.
H.R. 1091: Mrs. WAGNER and Mr. GRAVES of Georgia.
H.R. 1098: Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 1150: Mr. RYAN of Ohio.
H.R. 1173: Mr. SHIMKUS.
H.R. 1175: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H.R. 1249: Mr. SHIMKUS and Mr. PETRI.
H.R. 1250: Mr. FINCHER.
H.R. 1286: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 1318: Mr. DOYLE, Mr. STOCKMAN, and Mr. PETRI.
H.R. 1343: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico.
H.R. 1354: Ms. BORDALLO and Mr. JOYCE.
H.R. 1431: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Ms. HANABUSA.
H.R. 1566: Mr. WENSTRUP.
H.R. 1652: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. KILMER, and Ms. ESHOO.
H.R. 1728: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.
H.R. 1736: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 1750: Mr. AMODEI.
H.R. 1761: Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Ms. HANABUSA.
H.R. 1832: Mr. KEATING.

H.R. 1838: Mr. BRALEY of Iowa and Ms. SPIER.

H.R. 1851: Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 1893: Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 1913: Mr. DUFFY.

H.R. 1920: Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 2084: Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 2130: Mr. WELCH.

H.R. 2144: Mr. TONKO and Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 2160: Mr. SIRE.

H.R. 2291: Mr. COLLINS of New York, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. TONKO.

H.R. 2302: Mr. OWENS.

H.R. 2376: Mr. ROTHFUS.

H.R. 2377: Mr. MULVANEY, Mr. DENT, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. ISSA.

H.R. 2387: Mr. BISHOP of New York.

H.R. 2459: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 2523: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts and Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 2536: Mr. SCHWEIKERT.

H.R. 2537: Mr. STOCKMAN.

H.R. 2591: Mr. CAMPBELL.

H.R. 2773: Mr. WALZ.

H.R. 2825: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 2901: Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 2919: Mr. PETERSON and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 2932: Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. POSTER, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HONDA, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. MOORE, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUSH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. SEWELL of Alabama, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Ms. TITUS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. VISCLOSKEY, Ms. WATERS, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. BARROW of Georgia, Mr. KIND, Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. PALAZZO, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. YODER, and Mr. FITZPATRICK.

H.R. 2939: Mr. BARBER, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. MCHENRY.

H.R. 2959: Mr. JOYCE, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, and Mr. TIBERI.

H.R. 2992: Mr. COLLINS of Georgia.

H.R. 2995: Mr. STIVERS.

H.R. 2996: Mr. MARCHANT.

H.R. 3086: Mr. REED, Mr. HURT, Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. DAINES, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. YODER, and Ms. JENKINS.

H.R. 3155: Mr. LANCE and Mr. LONG.

H.R. 3179: Mr. HANNA.

H.R. 3180: Mr. COFFMAN.

H.R. 3186: Ms. FRANKEL of Florida.

H.R. 3222: Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 3305: Mr. HUNTER.

H.R. 3318: Mr. ENYART and Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 3384: Mr. WALBERG.

H.R. 3392: Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 3395: Mrs. NEGRETE MCLEOD.

H.R. 3461: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.

H.R. 3481: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. KLINE, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. COOPER, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. COOK, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 3489: Ms. TITUS.

H.R. 3494: Mr. QUIGLEY, Ms. MOORE, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H.R. 3505: Mr. RIBBLE and Mrs. BEATTY.

H.R. 3525: Mr. PITTINGER.

H.R. 3544: Mr. SCALISE.

H.R. 3546: Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 3560: Mr. SERRANO and Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.

H.R. 3600: Mr. MARINO, Ms. EDWARDS, and Mr. COLE.

H.R. 3601: Mr. NUGENT.

H.R. 3678: Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee.

H.R. 3686: Mr. SALMON and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 3698: Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 3749: Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 3782: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 3836: Ms. JENKINS, Mr. NEAL, and Mr. TURNER.

H.R. 3867: Ms. ESHOO, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. KILDEE, and Mr. GARCIA.

H.R. 3877: Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 3897: Mr. NEAL, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, and Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H.R. 3930: Mr. BARTON, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. TAKANO, and Mr. COTTON.

H.R. 3965: Mr. VISCLOSKEY.

H.R. 3988: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

H.R. 3992: Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 4026: Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. JACKSON LEE, and Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 4031: Mr. TIBERI.

H.R. 4035: Mr. HINOJOSA.

H.R. 4041: Mr. MORAN and Mr. SWALWELL of California.

H.R. 4042: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.

H.R. 4045: Mr. BERA of California, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mr. GRIMM, Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania, and Mr. YOHIO.

H.R. 4057: Mr. CONYERS and Mr. LEVIN.

H.R. 4060: Mr. ROYCE and Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 4092: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 4107: Ms. EDWARDS.

H.R. 4117: Mr. PIERLUISI.

H.R. 4119: Mr. HONDA.

H.R. 4135: Ms. JENKINS, Mr. SHUSTER, and Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 4139: Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. HUNTER, and Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 4148: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. FARR, Mr. O'ROURKE, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. TIERNEY, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. HANABUSA, and Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 4149: Mr. HINOJOSA and Mr. BUTTERFIELD.

H.R. 4151: Mr. COOK.

H.R. 4154: Mr. PERRY.

H.R. 4162: Mr. OWENS.

H.R. 4188: Mr. GERLACH, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. BUCSHON, Mr. BARBER, Mr. REED, Mr. LATTI, and Mr. WENSTRUP.

H.R. 4193: Ms. NORTON.

H.R. 4209: Mr. O'ROURKE, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. HOLT, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Ms. TSONGAS.

H.R. 4213: Mr. PETERSON.

H. J. Res. 68: Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.

H. Con. Res. 61: Mr. VARGAS and Mr. BERA of California.

H. Con. Res. 91: Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. HANABUSA, and Mr. SCHIFF.

H. Res. 30: Mr. KIND.

H. Res. 109: Mr. ELLISON and Mr. PERRY.

H. Res. 418: Mr. PETERSON.

H. Res. 428: Mr. BROWN of Georgia.

H. Res. 456: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. WALZ.

H. Res. 484: Mr. ELLISON, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. RANGEL, and Mrs. DAVIS of California.

H. Res. 494: Mr. PIERLUISI, Mr. RUNYAN, Mr. SHERMAN, Mrs. ELLMERS, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. HALL, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. MARINO, and Mr. NOLAN.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII, petitions and papers were laid on the clerk's desk and referred as follows:

72. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the City of Lauderdale Lakes, Florida, relative to Resolution No. 2014-09 supporting the Congressional Democrats' proposal to

raise the minimum wage to Ten and 10/100 (\$10.10) Dollars per hour; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

73. Also, a petition of Patchogue-Medford Schools, Patchogue, New York, relative to

three resolutions passed buy the Board of Education; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

SENATE—Thursday, March 13, 2014

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHN E. WALSH, a Senator from the State of Montana.

PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain Dean Chambers, who is the associate pastor of Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, Elkview, WV.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Our heavenly Father, we come before You humbly to thank You for the awesome privilege it is to live in this great Nation. Thank You for all the many blessings You have given us past and present, as well as the continued blessings of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as we continue toward the future.

We ask that You protect us from all who threaten the cause of liberty. We especially pray that Your hand of protection be upon all those serving in our Armed Forces and all those who serve the cause of freedom around our world.

In this assembly today, we invite Your leadership and guidance as the affairs of state are pursued. I ask also that You give to each person wisdom and understanding for the decisions that are made. In times of debate and difference, may we remember that at the end of the day we are, indeed, "one Nation under God."

May the love of God the Father, the grace and mercy of the Lord Jesus, and the communion of Your spirit rest upon the Members of our Senate today.

In Jesus's Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 13, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable JOHN E. WALSH, a Senator from the State of Montana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WALSH thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Following my remarks and those of the Republican leader, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m. this morning, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half.

Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1086, the child care and development block grant reauthorization bill.

We did extremely well yesterday. I expect more rollcall votes on it today. We are also working on an agreement on flood insurance, we are working on additional executive nominations, and we are seeing what we can do on minimum wage. We have Ukraine sanctions out there someplace, and we are trying to put it all together. We hope we can finish that today, but it is not guaranteed.

Senators will be notified with as much notice as possible when votes are scheduled.

CAMPAIGN DISTORTION

Mr. REID. Over the last couple of weeks I have taken some heat from Senate Republicans and conservative pundits for exposing two multibillionaires. These are two oil barons, and they are trying to rig the political system to favor the rich and especially favor themselves.

After the 14th statement adverse to me issued by a spokesman for the Koch brothers, it seems abundantly clear I have gotten under their skin.

As the saying goes, from the great Senator Pat Moynihan: "Everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but not to his own facts."

But I had guessed the Koch brothers have been able to buy their facts over the years, not paying any attention to whether they are true or false. This week media outlets from New York, and especially the New York Times, to the Washington Post, to the Detroit

News, revealed the truth. The truth is millions in political ads sponsored by these two multibillionaires are misleading at best and outright false in many instances.

The truth is the Koch brothers are willing to do anything, even exploit Americans suffering from cancer, to advance their campaign of distortion.

I am not afraid of the Koch brothers. None of us should be afraid of the Koch brothers. These two multibillionaires can spend millions of dollars of their money rigging the political process for their own benefit, but that doesn't mean we have to lie down and take it—because we are not going to. They may believe that whoever has the most money gets the most free speech. That is wrong, it is unfair, and it is untrue. I will do whatever it takes to expose their campaign, their campaign to rig the American political system to benefit the wealthy at the expense of the middle class.

A number of Republican Senators have rushed over here to defend the Koch brothers. That is hard to comprehend, but they have done it. If someone asked me—and no one has, but I will give my opinion anyway—billionaires seem perfectly capable of defending themselves. They do it with hundreds of millions of dollars. I am sure it has over the past couple of years reached close to \$1 billion spreading these falsehoods. Remember, they don't just do it under the phony banner of Americans for Prosperity, they divert money to a lot of other organizations; for example, millions of dollars to the chamber of commerce, which runs ads against Democratic Senators.

They are capable of defending themselves. But when Senate Republican Senators rush to defend the Koch brothers, they are also defending the Koch brothers' radical philosophy—and it is radical. How do we know it is radical? Because they said it is radical. They said so. I am not making those words up. One of the brothers kept harping on the fact that he had a radical philosophy, and they do.

I ask my Republican colleagues in the Senate, is even one—even one—willing to stand and disavow the Koch brothers' radical agenda? It is radical. It is radical because they say it is radical—and it is radical. All we have to do is look at it.

Will Senate Republicans reject the Koch brothers' radical plan to privatize Social Security?

Will they come to the floor and reject the Koch brothers' radical plan to end Medicare as we know it?

Will Senate Republicans reject the Koch brothers' radical plan to end the

guarantee of affordable, quality, health care and put insurance companies back in charge so tens of millions of Americans are again one heart attack or car accident away from bankruptcy?

Will Senate Republicans reject the Koch brothers' radical plan to allow insurance companies to deny coverage for a child with a heart murmur, a survivor of breast cancer, a teen who suffers from acne or absolutely anyone with a preexisting condition no matter how minor?

Will Senate Republicans reject the Koch brothers' radical plan to eliminate minimum-wage laws and workplace safety standards? That is what the Koch brothers want.

Will Senate Republicans reject the Koch brothers' radical plan to decimate America's public education system? That is what they want.

Will Senate Republicans reject the Koch brothers' radical plan to roll back environmental safeguards and give themselves the unfettered right to pollute our air and water? We have to look out for our children and our grandchildren having pure water to drink, good air to breathe—not with the Koch brothers. That isn't what they want.

Will Senate Republicans reject the Koch brothers' radical plan to give more tax breaks to the richest of the rich—to profitable oil companies, corporations who ship jobs overseas, and billionaires who pay lower taxes than their secretaries?

Not one Republican stepped forward, so obviously they must agree with the Koch brothers' radical philosophy. Republicans are willing to defend the Koch brothers on the floor of this Senate, but are they willing to defend the Koch brothers' radical agenda as well? I guess that is what they are doing by coming to the floor.

If Republicans don't support the Koch brothers' "survival of the richest" philosophy, all they have to do is say so because the truth is it will be terrible to allow the Koch brothers to buy Congress and to buy our country. And that is what they are trying to do.

It would be catastrophic to allow the Koch brothers' Congress to devastate the American middle class with their richest-take-all policy agenda.

This discussion isn't only about fairness or the democratic way. This discussion isn't only about the inherent danger in allowing two multibillionaire oil barons to buy America's political system. This is also about how these two multibillionaires would use a political system, once they have bought it, and how they would abuse it in order to add zeros to the bottom line while hurting middle-class families.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

U.S. TRAGEDIES

Mr. McCONNELL. I begin this morning by extending my sympathy to families of the victims in yesterday's explosion in Harlem. News reports suggest a truly tragic loss of life and a lot of injuries, so it is a very sad day in New York today.

As usual, in a catastrophe such as this, the response from firemen, police, and first responders was both quick and courageous. Many ordinary citizens who just happened to be in the area showed a lot of humanity and a lot of heroism too.

We are grateful for them and we are all hoping and praying for a fully speedy recovery for those who were injured. These kinds of tragic accidents always take a big toll on the communities where they take place.

A few months back there was a horrible house fire in western Kentucky that took the lives of eight children and their mother. It was devastating to the entire community and still is, so we are thinking of them also today.

ANTI-FREE SPEECH

Mr. McCONNELL. I wish to take a moment to address anti-free speech legislation the Obama administration has made a priority for this term. It is a regulation that comes in the wake of an unprecedented IRS attack on Americans' civil liberties and it represents a direct assault on the First Amendment.

First, let's be clear. This is not some partisan issue. Right across the political spectrum the American people agree this is a terrible idea. That is probably why it has generated more public backlash than any similar regulation in our entire lifetime.

Americans on the left hate it. Americans on the right hate it. Unions, business groups, environmentalists, conservatives, the ACLU, all of them have expressed concern. It is very rare to see a coalition that broad agree on anything in this town. Yet it is easy to see why Americans would be so united in opposition to this regulation.

The First Amendment exists to protect political speech. That was what the Founders had in mind when they wrote First Amendment political speech. The government should be doing everything it can to protect that right, not hurt it.

That is why we saw a record number of Americans register their complaints with the IRS. In fact, there were more than 140,000 comments—140,000 comments—on this regulation, which I hear is the highest number ever received in the agency's entire history. And let's not forget the IRS has a long way to go to regain public trust these days. Too many Americans look at the agency and see an instrument of political harassment rather than a bureau of tax processors. So if the agency wants to regain trust and return to its true mission, then it simply has to get out of the speech regulation business altogether. The IRS needs to get out of the speech regulation business altogether, and the Obama administration can do that.

Look. The administration ran this idea up the flagpole. In the midst of a historic crisis of public confidence at the IRS, it decided to upend more than half a century of practice and rewrite the rules on how Americans could express themselves, how they could be heard. They asked for comments, and the American people let them know what they thought in over 140,000 comments, almost all of them in opposition.

This regulation needs to go. This regulation needs to go, and it needs to go now. It is in the administration's power to make that happen. All it has to do is to listen to the American people who are speaking out in record numbers—record numbers—and put an end for good to the idea that the law should be used to harm political enemies.

Let's protect the First Amendment and restore integrity to the IRS at the same time by withdrawing this awful regulation.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CAPTAIN DAVID I. LYON

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to speak about a U.S. airman lost in battle who has left behind a saddened but grateful country. Capt. David I. Lyon of Sandpoint, ID, was killed in action on December 27, 2013, in Kabul, Afghanistan, when his convoy was intentionally and deliberately attacked by the enemy with explosive devices. Captain Lyon's mission was an advisory one for the Afghan National Army Commandos. He was 28 years old.

For his service in uniform, Captain Lyon received several medals, awards, and decorations, including the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Combat Action Medal, the Meritorious Unit Award, the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, the Air Force Organizational Excellence Award, the Air Force Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Small Arms

Expert Marksmanship Ribbon, and the Air Force Training Ribbon.

As a cadet at the U.S. Air Force Academy, David was a star track and field athlete. As a team captain who is still ranked third all-time in academy history for indoor and outdoor shot put, his teammates gave David the nickname "Leonidas"—after the ancient Greek warrior-king of Sparta—for his courage against fearful odds.

"Oh captain, my captain, Leonidas, we salute you. You will never be forgotten," says Scott Irving, who was David's assistant coach. David "knew the risk he was taking and embraced it without hesitation or fear," Scott adds. "That's another Leonidas trait, I would say."

David's wife, Capt. Dana Lyon, is an officer in the U.S. Air Force and an Air Force Academy graduate, where she herself was a two-time NCAA champion in the javelin throw. Her family hails from Lexington, KY, and I had the honor of speaking with them and hearing firsthand about David's service and tragic sacrifice.

"Dave was known as a tender warrior and a protector," says Rick Pounds, Dana's father and David's father-in-law. "He was lighthearted and a gentle giant. Kind and compassionate to everyone he met, Dave's smile would light up a room. If my daughter would have given me the task of 'go find me a husband anywhere,' he is who I would have picked."

"Dave loved the principles upon which our country was founded, and died in defense of them," Rick continued. "More importantly, he was a faithful follower of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, in whom our liberty and freedom is derived."

David attended the Air Force Academy, where he graduated in 2008. While there, he was a 3-year letter winner for the track and field team. He became a Mountain West Conference champion and was named to the National Strength and Conditioning Association All-American Team and received the Laura Piper Ironman Award. This award is named for a 1991 Air Force Academy graduate and former track and field star who was killed in action in Operation Desert Shield in Iraq. David's shot put throw of 57 feet, 11 inches earned him a place in the academy's record books.

"That gives you a sense of his intensity and his drive and his determination," said Scott Irving. "When he was team captain, he would get upset with other[s] . . . if they didn't give everything they could give—it bothered him if they didn't try to take their God-given talents to the highest level. That was David, day in and day out."

After graduation from the academy, David excelled in his Air Force career. Lt. Col. James Lovewell, his former squadron commander, recalls how much David impressed him. "The con-

sistency of his character showed across many facets of his life," Lieutenant Colonel Lovewell says. "He was very humble and tireless in serving others. He had a superb work ethic. He was a servant leader—he served people just as much as he led them."

Assigned to the 21st Logistics Readiness Squadron at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado, David was picked over more senior officers to become the group commander's right-hand man. He worked above and beyond what was asked of him.

"I joked I was going to start calling him 'Boomerang,' because he would come into work and I told him there's nothing more he could do, and invariably he would just come back," said Lieutenant Colonel Lovewell. "He was sticking around to make sure I was taken care of."

David and Dana were both serving their country in Afghanistan at the same time. David worked in logistics, Dana in acquisitions. "He would always talk about how proud he was of her over there, taking care of the mission, as he was," Lieutenant Colonel Lovewell recalls.

Just before David's tragic death, the couple were able to have Christmas dinner together one final time.

"Every day was always the best day of my life with him, so every day just got better," Dana said. "The last 2 days were the best 2 days we've spent together."

Because they were based in Colorado Springs, David and Dana maintained their ties to the Air Force Academy. They coached and mentored young athletes, sponsored cadets, and volunteered with the Air Force Wounded Warrior Program. They had members of the academy track and field team over for meals. David also enjoyed camping, hiking, lifting weights, and listening to country music with the windows down with his wife.

Dana's brother Eric Pounds is also an Air Force captain and admired his brother-in-law both as a dedicated airman and a beloved member of the family. "They both loved the Air Force," Eric says of his sister and brother-in-law. "They both wanted to fight, and they both wanted to protect their country. [David] did that at home, and he did that in the Air Force. He was a protector and a provider, and I'm just really proud of him."

We are thinking of David Lyon's beloved ones today, including his wife Dana; his parents Bob and Jeannie Lyon; his brother Sean Lyon; his parents-in-law Rick and Nancy Pounds; his grandparents Ray and Imogene Davis; his step-grandmother Beth Davis; his brothers-in-law Eric Pounds and Darren Pounds; and many other beloved family members and friends.

It was my honor to speak with the family members of Captain Lyon, just as it is an honor for me to share his

story with my colleagues in the Senate today. I know we as a nation send our condolences to this brave military family for the loss of such an incredible husband, son, friend, and dedicated airman. I want them to know the Senate has paused today in memoriam to Capt. David I. Lyon to pay tribute to his life of service and sacrifice half a world away. He will be remembered, and he will be missed by those who knew him and loved him.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half.

The Senator from Wyoming.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, tomorrow President Obama is scheduled to sit down for an interview with a health care Web site called WebMD. The President will take questions about his health care law, and he is going to try one more time to convince people across the country that his health care law hasn't really been a complete disaster.

It is a little bit ironic that the President will be doing this interview because under his health care law, before we know it, healthcare.gov is going to be linking directly to WebMD. People are going to have to spend a lot more time on Web sites like that one because the President's health care law is going to make it tougher for many of them to see a real health care provider.

America is facing a looming shortage of doctors, nurses, and physician assistants. When President Obama and Democrats were ramming ObamaCare through this Congress, they focused on hiring IRS agents—agents to force Americans to buy expensive coverage—instead of training more doctors and nurses to deliver care to patients.

Now, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges, we are looking at a shortage of 90,000 physicians by the end of this decade. About half of those are family physicians, primary care providers, and about half of them specialists. We see the same numbers, if not even higher shortages, in terms of nurses.

There is an old proverb: "Physician, heal thyself." Well, apparently the slogan of ObamaCare is now going to be "Patient, heal thyself."

The old doctor-patient relationship is going to be gone. Medicine as we know it is going to continue to change. Even when you can get time with your doctor, there is going to be a lot more of that time spent with the doctor looking not at you but at a computer screen because of the law, and that is because of the burdensome new rules and the recordkeeping requirements under the law.

As more people try to get appointments with fewer doctors, some Americans are going to start seeing actual rationing of care. Here is how one economist described it in a blog post for the New York Times. He talked about the health care law's limits on payments to doctors and other providers, and he wrote:

If patients are lucky, the demand for doctors will be low enough that the limits will not matter. But if the new law results in a significant net increase in physician demand, the payment limits will help remind us of Soviet-era limits on the price of bread, with queues and black markets to follow.

We know the President's Web site back this past fall was a complete failure. Four days before it was unveiled the President said: Oh, it is going to be easier to use than Amazon. The rates will be cheaper than your cell phone bill. You will be able to keep your doctor.

But the Web site was just the tip of the iceberg. People are seeing higher premiums.

It is interesting, Mr. President, as I was putting this together and thinking about what remarks I would make, I hadn't even seen this morning's newspaper. Today in the Wall Street Journal—Thursday, March 13—Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius says: Higher premiums likely in 2015.

Higher premiums. What did the President promise? He said premiums would go down by \$2,500 per family.

So the Web site is just the tip of the iceberg. People are seeing higher premiums now, and now the Secretary of HHS says there will be higher premiums again in 2015.

People have received notices of cancellation—over 5 million across the country. Many people can't keep their doctor and are worried about fraud and identity theft which has been reported as a result of the Web site and is ongoing. Then, of course, there are higher copays and higher deductibles—more money out of patients' pockets.

There is a report which brings this additionally to the fore in terms of concerns the people are having from people who supported the health care law originally. This report was put out last week by a major labor union discussing how badly this health care law is hurting its members.

To put this into perspective, this is a labor union which actually supported then-Senator Obama and endorsed him

when he was running for President a number of years ago, and they supported the health care law. Now this union has come out with a report which says: The law's unintended consequences will hit the average hard-working American where it hurts—in the wallet.

We can go through this report called "The Irony of ObamaCare Making Inequality Worse." To read from this:

The ACA threatens the middle class with higher premiums, loss of hours, and a shift to part-time work and less comprehensive coverage.

It goes on with examples of various individuals who are members of this labor union whose lives are being hurt by the President's health care law. One, a woman from the majority leader's home State, talks about her job as a housekeeper and how, if she tries to buy the Obama health care program, the Web site says she would have to pay \$8,057 a year more to keep the insurance she has now—which is a \$3.87 per hour pay cut for her. She said, "We work hard for our insurance. Why should we have to take a cut in pay for it?"

This is not what the President promised. So it is not a surprise that even the unions that had endorsed the President and supported the law are unhappy with what they see as the true results of the health care law.

The Democrat majority leader has said all the horror stories about the health care law are untrue. Is he also saying these union leaders and the people who have been made reference to in the union report are lying? Is this what the majority leader is saying? Is that what he is saying about this woman from his own State?

According to the media report, the union said the law "will inevitably lead to the destruction of the health care plans we were promised we could keep."

Everybody remembers the President's promises. They remember what the President said. Everybody remembers the President's statement: "If you like what you have, you can keep it." The press has called it "The Lie of the Year."

More than 5 million Americans received cancellation letters from their insurance companies. It turned out to be so embarrassing that President Obama had to delay the rules which caused it. It has continued to be a big problem, so the administration is delaying the rule again—not just until after the 2014 election but with the potential of going beyond the 2016 election as well.

Here we go, dozens of delays. This is a calendar of 2013 and 2014. There are more delays to come—another delay, another lawless ObamaCare rewrite.

The Obama administration continues to announce delays. We have seen one change after another to major parts of

the law which are now "politically inconvenient" for the President.

Republicans warned that these were real problems and that they would hurt hardworking Americans all across the country. I was on the floor during all of the debates, talking about the problems to come with the health care law, offering solutions, offering suggestions—every one of them rejected because Democrats just didn't care.

They only cared the second they realized that all their grandiose plans were actually causing more problems than they ever anticipated because they didn't listen.

The President had an event last week where he said that the law is "working the way it should." This is what he said—"working the way it should." Is it working the way it should after he made all of these changes? Is that what he means—"working the way it should."

So if it is working the way it should, why has the President had to change it so many times? Does he not know what the rest of his administration is doing? Does he not know what the rest of this country is seeing? Is the President delusional or is he just in denial?

The American people want to know, and they deserve to hear from the President when he does this WebMD interview. When President Obama sits down to talk with WebMD on Friday, I hope they ask him about all of these delays and the changes he is making to the law. I hope they ask him whether he believes it is really working the way it should, which is what he said last week. I hope they ask him about how his health care law is going to reduce the time people get to spend with their doctors—if they can even keep their doctors. I hope they ask him about some of the ways the law is hurting Americans and America.

I hope the President answers that he is finally ready to make some of these delays permanent, to start over again, to work in a bipartisan way, to try to help patients get the care they need from a doctor they choose at a lower cost. This is what health care reform was supposed to be about in the first place.

It is so interesting. Just pick up the papers. Yesterday, March 12, the Washington Post: "Health Exchange Signups Slowed in Past Month." The New York Times: "Health Care Enrollment Falls Short of Goal, With Deadline Approaching. Signing Up for Insurance, But Well Below Targets."

Then, so many questions are asked of the White House and the Secretary of Health and Human Services. The headline in Politico today: "W.H. Playing Dumb on ACA Enrollments, Insurers Say."

I think the President needs to come clean with the American people and tell them about what a disaster his health care law has become, how it has

impacted their lives, how few people have actually been able to sign up—or have been able to but have found the cost is too high for them to sign up—and admit to the American people that when they talk about some of these numbers of sign-ups, many of those are people who got cancellation notices. They are not newly-insured individuals.

A study out last week shows that only about one in four people who have actually signed up on the Web site didn't have insurance before. So the people this was intended to help are not being helped. Many people are being harmed.

It is time to work together to help patients get the care they need from the doctor they choose at lower costs.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The assistant majority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, across the country every day millions of Americans are working in low-wage jobs, going back to school to increase their skills in order to pay their bills and take care of their families. They do their best to balance work and family obligations, but too many moms and dads really struggle with the high cost of quality, safe childcare.

One out of three families with young children earns less than \$25,000 a year, and childcare can cost \$4,800 to \$16,000 a year. In many parts of the country childcare for two children now exceeds average rental payments.

According to a recent report by Child Care Aware America, in more than half the States—including my own State of Illinois—it costs families more to put an infant in childcare than to cover tuition and fees in a public college. In many parts of the country, childcare for children now exceeds average rental payments. Low-income families spend almost half their salaries on childcare. It is a significant part of the family's budget. Child care and development block grant is an important program that helps low-income working families with the cost of childcare and afterschool programs. This program serves more than 1.6 million children in the United States every month. In Illinois, more than 50,000 children receive support.

As we learn more about the significance of the first few years in the life

of a child's development, it is not enough just to improve access; we have to improve the quality of childcare for young children. Children in their early years are facing some of the most important moments of development, and their experiences in the first few years could literally shape their young lives. Early childhood education gives kids the solid foundation they need, not just to kindergarten but beyond. Working parents who don't have good options for quality childcare face an unfair dilemma.

Just ask Tabatha Okamoto of Chicago, IL. Tabatha has faced the challenge of finding adequate childcare for her son since he was an infant. On days when she cannot find a spot in a childcare center she hopes that maybe a family member or maybe a neighbor will be able to take care of him. She worries about losing her job, and she was almost fired because there were so many days she was late because of childcare issues.

Even when she finds reliable childcare, she still has a tough time figuring out how to pay for it. Tabatha is a good mom, but she has a lot of expenses and a low-income job. She pays her rent, health insurance, and other bills and \$800 monthly for her son to attend Little Fox Day School in Lincoln Square Center. It would be too much for her to handle on her own. Because of this program being debated on the floor of the Senate, Tabatha's out-of-pocket costs are now between \$250 and \$375 a month for this daycare at Little Fox Day School. It is less than half. It is still a sacrifice to come up with \$250 to \$400 a month, but at least she has a fighting chance to make sure her son has good daycare. More importantly, this program is giving Tabatha the peace of mind to know her son is in the right place when she goes to work every day.

It has been more than 20 years since we started this block grant. We need to update it. The grant program before us on the floor today, the child care and development block grant, would make much-needed updates to the law, expanding access to toddlers and infants and lower income families, strengthening health and safety standards and training, and ensuring the program is meeting the needs of children with disabilities, and expanding background checks for childcare providers.

I want to thank Senators BARBARA MIKULSKI and TOM HARKIN, who have been champions of children and working Americans, for all the work they put into this bill. I want to thank Senator RICHARD BURR on the other side of the aisle and LAMAR ALEXANDER as well for making this a true bipartisan effort.

I hope my colleagues will join me today when this bill comes up for a vote. This is the kind of bipartisan bill we all should support. Working moms

and dads need peace of mind knowing their kids are in a safe place that would help their children develop in the right way.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I take this time to talk about the child care and development block grant bill that is before us and will be before us soon. I want to congratulate my colleagues, Senator MIKULSKI for her leadership on this bill, and Senator HARKIN, Senator ALEXANDER, and Senator BURR. This is truly a bipartisan effort, and we very much appreciate the child care and development block grant. It is critically important.

The last time we authorized this program was 1996. I know that very well because I was serving in the House of Representatives at the time and had the opportunity to be the ranking member on the Human Resources Subcommittee in the Ways and Means Committee that was considering welfare reform and childcare, and how we could reward families for work, and how our welfare system could become a transitional program rather than a permanent program that would allow people, particularly moms, to be able to get into the workforce, stay in the workforce and climb up the economic ladder.

As part of welfare reform we recognized we had to do things about the major cost concerns of someone, a mom, giving up her welfare in order to go to work. One of those issues was health care. We passed transitional health care for people coming off of cash assistance. We also had to deal with childcare, because childcare is an extremely costly part of being able to get into the workforce.

In 1996 we consolidated many programs that were out there. We coordinated eligibility. There were different eligibility rules for many of these programs. We simplified the rules so we could get maximum dollars of help for people who entered the workforce. The goal was self-sufficiency through education, training, and being able to get a job.

Today, under the CCDBG, under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program, there are 1.6 million eligible children. It is not just a safe environment for those children, because 70 percent of their parents are working—not just a safe environment, it is early childhood education. These children who are in childcare will do better later in life. There have been many studies that verify this.

This is a win-win situation, providing a safe environment for children so their parents can work and educational opportunity for the children at the same time. It pays off big-time for the workforce. A TANF study showed that parents who had their children in childcare for 2 years or more were more likely to remain in the employment

field. So it provides stable employment, help for the child, and a win-win situation.

The eligibility for the program is it cannot exceed 85 percent of the State median income, to give you an idea of the type of people we are talking about who benefit from this program.

In Maryland, for a family of two the maximum income is \$24,000 and for a family of four the maximum income is \$35,000. In my State, Maryland, the average cost for childcare for an infant is about \$12,000 a year. For a child over 4 years of age, it is about \$9,000 a year.

We heard about the income levels and how a family is eligible for this program. It is clear that low-wage families cannot afford childcare on their own. We need to help, and that is what this program does, so that they can move up the economic ladder and not be a burden on the cash-assistance program.

Today, as we did prior to 1996, we have combined discretionary and mandatory programs for our childcare. Today discretionary spending is at \$2.36 billion and \$2.9 billion in mandatory spending.

The legislation before us also makes improvements, as it should. It allows the States to develop 13 specific health and safety standards, such as first aid and CPR, and SIDS, sudden infant death syndrome. It is keeping our children safer in childcare by having safety standards that are developed. It requires the States to do inspections of childcare centers, comprehensive background checks for those who are involved in childcare, online information, more transparency in the program, and additional State flexibility on how they can set priorities within the childcare program. That is exactly what federalism should be.

The Federal Government establishes a broad policy that we want to see families self-sufficient, we want to make sure there is a safe environment for children, and we want to make sure we do this in a way that is consistent with our national priorities. We also need to give flexibility to the State and local governments to be able to set their priorities to meet the needs of their citizens, and that is what this bill does.

I will take a moment now to give real-life examples of how this program is critically important to our community. A great example is the Judy Centers of Maryland. We have 25 Judy Centers in Maryland. They are named after Congressman STENY HOYER's wife Judy, who died of cancer in 1997. Judy was a longtime advocate for quality early childhood education and comprehensive family support services. I knew Judy very well, and she was an incredibly dedicated leader and advocate for our children.

I have a couple of specific examples from the Judy Center as to how the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program is critically important

to their existence. According to the testimony given before a committee, Judy Center employees discovered a dad who lost his job and a mom who only worked part time. They could not make ends meet or look for jobs or go on interviews because they had no childcare for their 2- and 3-year-old children. The Judy Center enrolled them in KinderCare, a childcare partner, and provided tuition assistance.

Since they lost their health insurance when their dad became unemployed, they were given an application for the Maryland CHIP program, the health insurance program. The 3-year-old had a behavioral issue and was referred to the Judy Center behavioral specialist, who worked with her extensively. She also received tutoring services.

Dad is now employed full time. Thanks to safe childcare, dad is now employed full time. After much encouragement, mom enrolled in adult education classes and received her GED. She has also completed a medical assistance program and is now enrolled in the College of Southern Maryland to pursue an associates degree. The children are now in elementary school and are doing well in school.

I could give many more examples like this family. I could talk about many other success stories that would not have been possible without the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program, and that is why it is critically important that we reauthorize the program.

I see my colleague from Maryland is on the Senate floor. I congratulate her for her leadership in getting this bill to the floor—not just getting this bill to the floor, which is important, but doing it in a way that we can get it passed in the Senate and accomplish our objectives so we can get women into the workforce and have early childhood education to help children succeed in life. We can help American families and strengthen America.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, before my colleague leaves the floor, I want to express my appreciation for his statement today and in particular when he spoke about the Judy Center, which has meant so much in Maryland to show the way childcare should be addressed. The Judy Center is a family-oriented organization that is focused on children. Their so-called wrap-around services help the child not only with all that is necessary in a well-run childcare facility, but they also work with the family, strengthen the family, and help the family by giving them information about other opportunities to improve their life, such as educational benefits. I think it is a national model.

If I had my way, I would like to adopt the Judy Center model throughout America.

Again, I thank the Senator for speaking about the Judy Center.

I also thank my friend for his steadfast advocacy for children, the way he has worked for the children's health program, particularly focusing on the dental services for that little boy Deamonte, the child who died. He is a real fighter.

Senator CARDIN is also well known for getting rid of lead paint poisoning in Maryland. So now he wants the lead out of bureaucracy and the lead out of the Senate. Again, I thank him for his comments.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the bill.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1086, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1086) to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Harkin amendment No. 2811, to include rural and remote areas as underserved areas identified in the State plan.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I am going to give a recap of where we are and then note the absence of a quorum as we sort through our amendments.

This is the second day of the Senate's consideration of S. 1086, the child care and development block grant reauthorization on which 1.5 million American children depend, including 20,000 children from the State of Maryland. We have been working on this bill for over 2 years, and now it is our second day of moving this legislation.

We have made an impressive amount of progress. Yesterday the Senate agreed to nine amendments—three by rollcall vote and six by voice vote. We had a great group of bipartisan amendments. Of the nine amendments that were adopted, three were sponsored by Republicans, two were sponsored by Democrats, and four amendments were bipartisan. The amendments yesterday improved the underlying bill. They streamlined Federal early learning programs; made sure tribes get the funding they need; required States to develop childcare disaster plans; and ensures that CDBG, as it is known, also serves an often much-overlooked population—foster care.

We also had a healthy debate on the floor in which women Senators came down to show their support for this bipartisan bill. Today we hope to continue our due deliberation of amendments.

Last night we identified approximately 29 to 30 amendments that remain. It is the hope of the chair and ranking member that sometime today—around 11:30 a.m., before the lunch—we will move to votes. We expect to have voice votes, possibly a rollcall vote, and I will give a further progress report. The timeline for all amendments is closed. We are now sorting through those amendments to see which we can adopt by agreement or adopt by a voice vote so we can move ahead.

I also say to my colleagues, there are many who have excellent ideas about childcare issues, and some are relevant to children but not necessarily relevant to this bill. As we wrap up the legislation, we hope to focus only on germane amendments to the bill today, and those other ideas, as meritorious as they are for consideration, that they either be withdrawn or find another vehicle for discussion and consideration.

We thank our colleagues for the quality of the amendments that have been brought forth. It shows that the Senate—on both sides of the aisle—has been thinking about children and has actually been listening to this compelling need around childcare and its availability and affordability, its safety and helping children get their education. Not all of the amendments—although they are focused on children—are relevant to the block grant, which is a voucher program to help low-income women qualify for childcare.

I will give further updates as the morning progresses and we sort through this. In the meantime, we invite Senators to come to the floor and talk about this very important topic facing American families.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me begin by commending my colleagues Senator MIKULSKI, Senator HARKIN, Senator ALEXANDER, and Senator BURR for their hard work to reauthorize the child care development block grant. This is a modest piece of legislation and I urge my colleagues to support it.

The main point I wish to briefly make this morning is that even if this modest piece of legislation passes, it will not begin to address the very serious problems we face in childcare in

our country and, even more importantly, in childhood poverty.

The United States is the wealthiest Nation in the history of the world. Unfortunately, despite our great wealth, we have the most unequal distribution of wealth and income of any major country on Earth. We have more people today living in poverty than at any time in the history of our country. Most significantly, and related to the discussion we are having about childcare today, the United States of America has, by far, the highest rate of childhood poverty of any major country on Earth. In my opinion, we have a moral responsibility to address that issue and we should put our energy and our minds to focusing on how we eliminate childhood poverty in America.

I will be offering an amendment today which is a very simple amendment. My amendment says the President of the United States should submit a plan to Congress which substantially reduces childhood poverty over the next 5 years. That is the amendment—that the President of the United States submit a plan to Congress which substantially reduces childhood poverty over the next 5 years. I hope and expect we would have unanimous support for this amendment.

As the Presiding Officer will recall, not too long ago, during the Winter Olympics at Sochi, Americans there were shouting out to our great athletes: “USA, USA! We are No. 1.” That was something I think many of us in America supported. We wanted our athletes in the Winter Olympics to be No. 1.

While we want to be No. 1 in terms of our athletic prowess, while we want to be No. 1 in terms of our scientific and intellectual accomplishments, while we want to be No. 1 in terms of economic growth and prosperity, we surely do not want to be No. 1 in the world in terms of childhood poverty. That is where we are today, with almost 22 percent of our kids living in poverty.

The reason, quite obviously, we do not want to be No. 1 in terms of childhood poverty is not only the moral issue of turning our backs on millions and millions of our most vulnerable people—kids who are 6 months old, kids who are 2 years old, kids who are 8 years old; human beings who cannot fend for themselves—it seems to me, as a caring people, we have the moral responsibility to make sure all of our children receive the basic necessities of life and not live in poverty.

I think there is a moral obligation to make sure we eliminate childhood poverty, but there is also an economic reality as well. I will get to that in a minute. But the first point to be made is that when we look at childhood poverty in America, which is 21.8 percent, we should examine what is going on in other countries.

Is it possible to go forward and significantly reduce or eliminate child-

hood poverty? The answer is yes. All we have to do is look around the world. In Denmark, child poverty is 3.7 percent. In Finland, it is 3.9 percent; in Norway, it is 5.1 percent; in Iceland, it is 7.1 percent; in Austria, 8.2 percent; Sweden, 8.2 percent; Germany, 9.1 percent; in South Korea, 9.4 percent; in the United Kingdom, 9.4 percent; France, 11 percent; New Zealand, 13 percent; Poland, 13.6 percent; Canada, 14 percent. But in the United States of America, the childhood poverty rate is 21.8 percent.

As I mentioned a moment ago, this is clearly a moral issue. A powerful Nation which, in recent years, has seen huge increases in the number of millionaires and billionaires, we should not be a society in which almost one out of four of our kids gets their nutrition from food stamps. We should not be a society where a significant number of young people are dropping out of high school, standing out on street corners and destroying their lives.

This is not just a moral issue; it is an economic issue. My colleagues, please tell me what kind of economic future we have when we are competing against countries around the world which are doing a better job than we are in providing the intellectual and emotional support their kids need; that are doing a better job than we are in educating their young people. How do we compete against these countries in the very competitive international global economy? Do we say to the young children who are living in poverty: Sorry. We can't afford to provide the preschool education you need; we can't afford to provide the childcare your parents need for you, and we are really sorry the odds are that many of you may drop out of school and that some of you will end up in jail.

We have more people in jail in the United States of America than in any other country on Earth. Clearly, one of the reasons for that has to do with the fact that we have the highest rate of childhood poverty in the industrialized world. We pay for these things one way or we pay for them another way. The way we are paying for it is by spending \$50,000 or \$60,000 a year incarcerating huge numbers of people rather than making sure our kids get the nourishment—intellectual, emotional, nutritional—they need in order to do well in life.

It is important for us to look at what happens around the world, to see what we can learn, and to see what is working well around the world. It is important for us to learn and to understand that in countries such as Denmark, Finland, and Norway, where childhood poverty is very low, childcare is free to all of its workers. Workers in these countries get paid maternity leave. That means when a mom has a baby, she has the opportunity to stay home with her baby during the most important months of a baby's life and not

have to worry about going to work and making a living, because those societies have said the right thing—that they want kids and mothers to bond and fathers to bond well, for those kids to do well. In this country, if a person is low income and working class and they have a baby, they have to get to work right away, because if they don't have that income, how do they take care of their families? Those countries have done the right thing and it is important to learn from them.

In many countries around the world, workers get allowances from their governments to take care of their children. Their workers are guaranteed a 4-week paid vacation. Health care is a right and not a privilege for their citizens. In France, for example, if both parents go back to work after having a child, they are entitled to receive strong childcare benefits. In Germany—hard for us to believe—but if children get sick, their parents get up to 25 days of paid leave to stay home and take care of those children. These are just a few of the many benefits people in other countries—our competitors—receive. Maybe we can learn something from them.

Unfortunately, workers in our country—in this great Nation—have none of those benefits. Here is what has happened as a result. More than one in five children in America lives in households that lack consistent access to adequate food because their parents don't make enough money. In other words, the number of millionaires and billionaires is growing—more and more income in wealth inequality—and millions and millions of families today who are raising kids are wondering how they are going to have enough food on the table to provide basic nutrition to those kids. Should that be happening in the United States of America?

The number of homeless children living in America has gone up by 73 percent since 2006. In every State in the country, including my State of Vermont, there are families living with their kids in cars or in emergency shelters. Is that the way we give kids the opportunity they need to advance in their lives?

The psychologists tell us over and over that the most important years of a human being's life in terms of intellectual and emotional growth are those years between 0 and 4. Yet, in this country today, less than half of 3- and 4-year-olds are enrolled in preschool. Ninety-six percent of infants and toddlers living in low-income families don't receive the early education they need through the early Head Start Program. More than 220,000 American children are currently on waiting lists for childcare assistance. And on and on it goes.

What does this mean in English? This is what it means. It means in Vermont, in New Jersey, in Maryland—it means

in States all over this country—a mom and dad wake up in the morning with a 3-year-old and they are worried about the quality and affordability of the childcare they can find for that kid. So they go to work and they are saying, what is happening? I have to go to work. I can't stay home with my child. We need to make money. Yet, I cannot find quality, affordable childcare for my child. And in this country that is exactly what we should be providing.

According to a recent study by the Children's Defense Fund, childhood poverty costs this Nation at least \$500 billion each and every year in extra education, health and criminal justice expenses, and in lost productivity. In other words, rather than learning what other countries are doing—investing in our kids, nurturing our kids, making sure our kids get the great education they deserve—we turn our backs on millions of kids and then we are shocked—just shocked—that they turn to drugs or crime or self-destructive activity, and we spend a fortune incarcerating them. Think about all of the intellectual and emotional destruction that takes place in this country because we ignore the needs of our children.

We hear our fellow Senators come to the floor and talk about how the United States is the greatest country on Earth, and I share that sentiment. But I do not believe the greatest country on Earth should have, by far, the highest rate of childhood poverty in the industrialized world.

The amendment I have offered is a very simple amendment. I hope it is accepted. I hope it will be supported unanimously. I hope it will allow us to go forward.

What the amendment says, again, is very simple. It says the President of the United States should submit a plan to the Congress which allows us to substantially reduce childhood poverty in the next 5 years. That is it.

With that, I yield the floor and hope very much this amendment is adopted. Thank you.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, we are in the process of sorting out the amendments that are pending, again, to see what we could accept by UC, what we could accept by voice vote, and those that might require a rollcall vote. The chairman and the ranking member of the committee, Senator HARKIN and Senator ALEXANDER, are discussing this, and we are looking forward to some type of votes on or about 11:30 a.m.

But I see there are a lot of amendments out here about streamlining this and duplicating this and others—very thoughtful—but I wish to clarify exactly what is the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program. This is a program that meets a particular need to help people have access to childcare, and we are strengthening the quality requirements. It does not solve all of the childcare problems in the United States of America.

The overall need of childcare for both poor women and middle-class women or families is well known. It is one of the agonizing choices families need to make.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Program—and this is why we are looking at a variety of other issues. We have on the books the childcare tax credit bill, where many of us hope to expand the deduction. Senator GILLIBRAND has others. But today we are focusing on the child care and development block grant. It is the primary Federal grant program to provide childcare assistance for working families.

It was passed originally in 1990, under George Herbert Walker Bush. Before 1996, there were four childcare programs for low-income families. All of them had different eligibility criteria and work requirements—exactly what we have talked about here, the need to streamline. Three were targeted to families in or at risk of being in the welfare system. One was targeted to low-income families outside of welfare.

But in 1996 under welfare reform, on a bipartisan basis, we created one unified program to serve low-income families with one set of eligibility criteria and work requirements. It was then streamlined. The overarching purpose of the childcare bill in welfare reform was to give parents aid, substantial assistance, so they could go from welfare to work or get the training to go to work.

It has been a very successful program—a very successful program. One and one-half million children in America benefit from it; 20,000 in Maryland alone—a substantial waiting list if we had more vouchers.

What we are doing in this bill is reauthorizing, following the spirit of 1996, streamlining and taking now what we know—new knowledge and best practices of how to help children in childcare be able to be safe, have a sense of security and stability, and then also enhance their ability to learn. We know now—all the research shows—from infancy to age 5 is one of the greatest growth spurts for brain development in a person's life. Vocabulary development and so many other things occur.

So what our bill does is help improve that, but we do not so overmandate to the States that we do not allow for local flexibility. So we are trying to

streamline the bill, have a better emphasis on quality, without stringent new Federal mandates, and at the same time streamline this legislative process by moving through our amendment process.

I now look forward to conferring with my colleague. Members should stay tuned. If they would like to speak on this or the matter of childcare, we welcome them. We have had an open amendment process. We have had an open dialogue. We have had an open floor. I think this has been very constructive.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

Mr. BURR addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator withhold?

Ms. MIKULSKI. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I thank my friend and colleague for withholding on that quorum call.

We have made tremendous progress. Our joint staffs worked well into the night with Members who have amendments to this bill that they think improve the bill. We have worked aggressively to try to work out as many of those as we possibly can, and I am here to report to our colleagues we have made tremendous progress. We have processed, since we started yesterday, a number of amendments and this bill has become better. We still have several on both sides that we are still working on with our Members to try to accommodate their intent with language that is acceptable and continues to improve this bill, and we will do that.

Let me say to our colleagues who still might have amendments, if you have them, we need you to come to the floor. We need you to offer those amendments. If you have amendments that have yet to be cleared, I would urge you to come to the floor and work with Senator MIKULSKI and myself and our staffs to figure out how we can process those in a timely fashion.

It is our intent that in approximately 1 hour, with agreement from our leaders, we would move to votes—both recorded and voice votes—on all amendments that remain on this bill in the hopes that Members could then leave to go to their caucus lunches, and after returning from those lunches, hopefully, we would be in a position to have final passage on this legislation; again, that is with the chairman's, the ranking member's, and the leaders' blessings, but that is certainly the intent of Senator MIKULSKI and myself.

We can only do that if, in fact, those Members who want to offer amendments offer them and those who still have some to be worked out come and try to work out those differences.

I urge my colleagues now, we have over an hour before we intend to move

to a period where we might process the remainder of the amendments. We would like to be in a situation where we can give certainty—at least as it relates to the disposition of this bill—to our Members that we would finish shortly after the lunch. I encourage all of our colleagues, if they have interest in this bill, come to the floor. Work with us.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I want to give an update. We had originally thought we would be voting around 11:30. We are going to delay that until on or about 12:15—nothing fixed, nothing mandatory. People have said: Well, what are you all doing? Look at the Senate floor. Where is the action? This is a compelling issue.

Actually, there is a lot of action going on in the sense that we are reviewing over 20 amendments that are still outstanding to see what could be accepted by unanimous consent, what could be accepted by a voice vote, and what requires a mandatory rollcall vote. So there is a lot of discussion going on, and Senators and their staffs are talking.

It is not to be debated; it is to be discussed right now. I think it is so healthy. This is one of the first times in a couple of years where we have had an open amendment process. In some ways we are getting adjusted to how that actually works. This is terrific. So just because you do not see Senators in intense debate, there are intense conversations about how we help children, how to not create new bureaucracies, how we have the sense that all this is child focused and yet not creating lots of new mandates or whatever.

So this has been really very good. I compliment Senator HARKIN, who is the chair of the full HELP Committee. It is under his leadership that Senator BURR and I held some hearings. His advocacy for children is so well known. If we can move this bill today, we will have accomplished two major goals. We would have reauthorized the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program, made improvements and new reforms, and refreshed the program.

At the same time I think we have improved the process in the Senate to show we can govern by moving bills, by offering amendments, by discussion and by debate. But we could not have done it had Senator HARKIN not been willing to establish such a great tone with Senator ENZI and Senator ALEXANDER while Senator BURR and I did this.

This is the way the Senate ought to be. There were differences. But differences do not mean that you have to be filled with rancor and ranting all the time. At the end of day, when all is said and done, people want us to get more done and less said.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, a lot of work has gone into this bill. The person who led that whole work for a 2-year period of time was Senator MIKULSKI. I happen to be chair of the committee. But it was Senator MIKULSKI and Senator BURR, working together, who really have brought this to fruition. It is a good bill.

Senator ALEXANDER always says that our committee probably has the biggest divergence ideologically of any committee in the Senate. Yet we have reported out, I think, 19 bills out of our committee, 10 of which have been signed into law during this Congress. We are able to do that because people work together. We work things out.

That is what has happened with this bill. There are a lot of crosscurrents on this bill. There are a lot of items that Senator MIKULSKI would like to have had in the bill, that I would have liked to have had in the bill, and I am sure I can say the same thing for the Republican side.

But over a 2-year period of time—I know it has been at least that—Senator MIKULSKI has worked on this. We made our agreements, and we worked it out to the point where the bill passed our committee unanimously. We have, as I said, a wide divergence of ideological views on our committee. So, here is a bill that passed unanimously. We will have an open process here of debate, deliberation, and amending.

I think at this time we have a pretty defined universe of the amendments, unless something else pops up that I did not know about.

We are working on those. The staffs are working on those now with the Senators. With any legislation that comes through, let's face it, as Senators we probably would like to change something here or there. I understand that. I have been in the Senate a long time, and I know I have wanted to add an amendment to something to change it, to do something different, maybe, that I cared about.

But in the interests of the broader perspective of the legislation at hand, I didn't offer it. I would wait until some other point in time to offer it or perhaps to offer a different pathway. That

is what I am asking Senators on both sides of the aisle to think about.

We have a great bill. It is sorely needed. It updates a law that hasn't been changed. I know Senator MIKULSKI has told us many times, and it bears repeating. We have not addressed this since 1996, and a lot has changed since 1996 in terms of childcare.

This bill updates, modernizes, and does some things that will move us ahead and better this country in terms of the child care and development block grant program.

I know that different people have different ideas, saying: Well, I would like to change this or modify that. I get it; I understand that.

But if there is a problem in terms of bringing an amendment up that might jeopardize the bill, I ask Senators to consider whether their interests, whatever it might be, and I am not saying it is not legitimate, but if it upsets the balance we have worked out in this committee with this broad, ideological spectrum, I ask them to reconsider whether they would want to jeopardize this bill, which we are so close to passing. I think we could actually pass this bill this afternoon.

I ask Senators, if they have those kinds of amendments, to reconsider maybe the broader implications of this legislation and whether they would want to jeopardize it for their legitimate interests, as I said. I don't deny any Senator the right to offer an amendment and to push an interest that he or she might have. Some of them I might agree with. But if it really jeopardizes the bill, then I would have to say, no, I wouldn't support it because of the broader interests of getting the bill passed.

Senator MIKULSKI and her staff, Senator ALEXANDER, Senator BURR, and my staff, we are working together on this. I still hope we can bring this bill to fruition sometime early this afternoon.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. I come to the floor today to thank the bipartisan leadership that has brought us to the place where we are considering reauthorizing this important child care and development block grant bill.

In my home State of Washington there is a young woman named Janelle who is a single mom. She lives in southeast Seattle and was looking for opportunities to support her family. But before she could go back to school or participate in a job-training program so she could advance her career, she had to find affordable childcare for two of her children.

Thankfully, with the assistance of this Child Care and Development Block Grant Program, she was able to get some subsidies to help cover the costs. She now works. She works part-time,

and she is attending school and becoming a surgical tech.

This Federal grant program expands opportunities to parents such as Janelle and so many families across our country by helping them with the cost of childcare. That is why I support this effort to reauthorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program.

We all know the cost of childcare has soared in recent decades. The Census Bureau found that childcare costs have nearly doubled since the 1980s, and that high cost hits low-income families especially hard. For working families who live below the poverty line, the cost of childcare can eat up more than 30 percent of their monthly income. For single parents, if they only have one income, it is an even bigger burden. When low-income parents don't have access to reliable and affordable childcare, they can't work. They can't go back to school. They can't advance their skills with job training. They are stuck.

That, as we know, is particularly problematic for women. Women are more likely than men to cut back their hours at work or quit their jobs all together so they can take care of their children.

In the long run, that puts women on an uneven playing field with their male counterparts, both in terms of earnings and of opportunities to advance in the workplace.

We have to break down those barriers. We need to make sure that working doesn't become cost prohibitive for parents, and we have to strengthen access for low-income families so they can get affordable, quality childcare.

This bipartisan Child Care and Development Block Grant Act is part of the solution. These grants expand opportunities for parents with low income. It allows them to work, to go to school or to get job training—all with the peace of mind that their kids are taken care of in a safe childcare center.

In 1990 President George H. W. Bush signed this grant program, as we know it, into law. Today it helps 1.6 million kids get childcare.

To participate a parent has to have a job or be enrolled in school or in a job training program. That has helped countless parents across our country.

I want to mention a woman who has contacted us. She is a single mom whose name is Star. She lives in Skagit County, a rural part of my State. She wants to advance her skills to support her family, as so many people do today.

With this assistance she is able to go to a community college 1 hour away from home, knowing that her kids are OK in a reliable childcare program. There is nothing more important to a parent than the safety and well-being of their child. I have said many times: You do a better job at work if you know your kids are safe. If you are

worried about whether your kids are OK, you can't do a good job at work. Reauthorizing this program is a critical part of this, and it helps parents such as Star feel comfortable when they are away from their kids.

In this reauthorization bill we are looking at ways to improve these grants. We know that stability is critically important for a young child's development. But before kids could lose their spot in childcare, if their parents didn't meet the eligibility requirements, even temporarily, that disruption in care is exactly what we need to work to avoid.

I have seen this a lot in my work on behalf of foster kids, military students, and homeless children. These are highly mobile populations. Now with this legislation and the work that has been done, we have ensured that these kids have a mandatory 12 months to access that care so they don't have that disruption of stability in their lives. That is critically important.

This bill also reduces barriers for homeless families to access childcare and will train more childcare providers in identifying and serving homeless kids and families so they can get the support they need. I truly appreciate the inclusion of those provisions.

For many families it can be very difficult, as we know, to find quality childcare. This legislation authorizes a toll-free hotline and a Web site so parents can get and find good-quality care in their own community. Those provisions are why I am such a strong supporter and so delighted we are at the point where we are able to pass this critical piece of legislation.

Let me end by saying in Washington State there is a young couple named Edward and Constance. They are struggling to make ends meet on a very low income. They are working, and they are studying to ensure that times won't always be as tough as they are today. Because of childcare assistance with this grant money, Edward now works full time. When Constance is not working at her part-time job, she is training to become a dental assistant. Supporting parents such as this couple, giving them these opportunities to make sure their kids are in a safe, quality childcare program is what the grants are about in this program.

I urge our colleagues to support this legislation, and again, I thank the Senators who have participated in making this a strong bipartisan proposal.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I thank the Senator from Washington for her comments and her leadership in the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, as well. She has been a consistent spokesman for children, especially for homeless children.

I want to make an observation about the Child Care and Development Block

Grant Program that the Presiding Officer from New Jersey will especially find of interest because of his work with children and schools in New Jersey. We have heard this morning a great deal of support for the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act, which is a very remarkable piece of legislation in terms of the way it is structured, if we think about it.

It has been around for about 20 years, but it takes 5 to 6 billion Federal dollars each year and gives it to States—a block grant with a lot of flexibility. Then the money is distributed as vouchers to individual parents—low-income women, mostly—who then choose among thousands of certified childcare centers. That, I would argue, while it was done 20 years ago, fits the Internet age.

Newt Gingrich—and I have sometimes accused Newt of being Vesuvian in his qualities because he has such a steady flow of new ideas—has done some very interesting work recently. He quotes a computer programmer named Tim O'Reilly who made a suggestion for how the Internet could transform government. Mr. O'Reilly said:

The best way for government to operate is to figure out what kinds of things are enablers of society and make investments in those things. The same way that Apple figured out, "If we turn the iPhone into a platform, outside developers will bring hundreds of thousands of applications to the table."

In a way, the developers of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program in the early 1990s, under the first President Bush, were ahead of their time because, rather than having a big burdensome program run from Washington with lots of rules made here, we have a piece of legislation that survived for more than two decades and that helps 1.5 million children this year.

It enables people such as the mother in Memphis I talked about on the floor yesterday who became eligible for a childcare voucher in Tennessee. She was at LeMoyne-Owen College studying for her business degree and was able to place her infant in a childcare center of her choice. The State gave her \$500 to \$600 a month for a voucher—infant care is more expensive. She earned her degree and is now an assistant manager at Walmart. She now has a second child in the same childcare center—but she can afford to pay for it herself.

That is a perfect example of enabling her, using taxpayer money, to move up the economic ladder, to reach the American dream and succeed. Rather than making her do it or mandating her to do it, we enabled her to do it.

We also do this—and we have done it very successfully since World War II—with college grants and loans, which also have virtually unanimous support in the Senate on both sides of the aisle.

Beginning with the GI bill for veterans in 1944, we have given vouchers

to veterans, and those vouchers follow them to any educational institution of their choice. At the beginning, many of them went to high schools. Some of them went to colleges overseas.

That was the beginning of our current system of Federal Government support for grants and loans, and now half of our college students have a Federal grant or a loan to help pay for college. All of those grants and loans follow them to the institution of their choice. That is a lot of money. It is over \$100 billion in loans—new loans—every year. It is \$33 billion in Pell grants each year.

We followed Tim O'Reilly's suggestion there as well. We haven't set up a lot of complicated Washington programs and managers. We have simply said this. If you are eligible and go to an accredited institution—whether it is public, private, for-profit, nonprofit, Yeshiva, Notre Dame or Rutgers—the money will follow you to the college of your choice. That is what we have done since World War II with college students—and since the era of George Walker Bush, with children—we have given them tickets to the institutions of their choice.

But what have we done in the middle? We have vouchers for college students and vouchers for very young children, but what about students who go to elementary school? And what about students who go to high school? Especially, what about students who are low-income students who are trapped in failing schools? Our childcare vouchers are for low-income parents, mainly women. Our vouchers for college students are for low-income students. We call those Pell grants. But we give our K-12 money to the schools instead of allowing it to follow students to the schools of their choice.

I have always wondered, if we have had such success with the GI bill and the Pell grant and the student loan and the childcare voucher, why don't we try it with kindergarten through the 12th grade? Many enterprising mayors and Governors have tried that, usually facing a lot of resistance from people who see something un-American about vouchers. It is not very un-American if it is the GI bill, not very un-American if it is a Pell grant, not very un-American if it is a childcare voucher, but something somehow is wrong with it if you are in third grade or the seventh grade or the ninth grade.

So I have introduced something called Scholarships for Kids, which is almost like the child care development block grant for students who are in elementary and secondary schools. It would take 80 Federal education programs that spend about \$24 billion a year and say to New Jersey or Tennessee or Iowa: You can take all that money, whatever your share of that is, and create a \$2,100 scholarship for every single child in your State below

the Federal poverty level, and it can follow that child to whatever school in your State the child attends.

If you live in a city or a State where you want the child to be able to go to any accredited institution, public or private, the way we do with Pell grants, you may do that. If you believe that Federal dollars for elementary and secondary schools should only go to public schools, you may do that. You may design the program however you want to do it in your State. But the idea would be that we would enable low-income children, the ones who are below the Federal poverty level—and there are 11 million of those in our country—we would allow you to pin \$2,100 to their shirt to follow that child to school. I think we know what would happen if we were to do that. Those children may need to be in school longer each day. They may need a meal. They may need to be there during vacation time. They may need to be there in the summer. And if the teacher has the extra money and the freedom to use it, that gives that school more autonomy and that helps that child succeed.

Does every school succeed at the same rate? No. Not every college succeeds at the same rate. Not every childcare center succeeds at the same rate. But if we have 70 years of experience with colleges of creating autonomy and choice and letting the money follow the students to the school—and people all around the world tell us we have the best system of colleges in the world—why don't we try it with our schools?

I see the Senator from Oklahoma, and I will wind down so he can wind up. I thank him for his contribution to the debate.

While we are in the middle of so much testimony about what a great thing the child care development block grant is—vouchers to little children who are poor—and while we all believe Pell grants are a great idea—vouchers to college students who are low income—should we not think about doing exactly the same thing with elementary and secondary school students as a way to help them succeed? And not as a Federal mandate but simply giving Governors and State legislators and educators the opportunity to say: Give us that share of our \$24 billion. Give every one of our children who is below the Federal poverty level \$2,100 each and let us decide how it follows them to the school they attend.

So I wanted to make that observation. And I am delighted to know the Senator from New Jersey is presiding today because of the work he has done in his State in that area.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator from Oklahoma wish to speak?

Ms. MIKULSKI. Oh, I am sorry, I thought the Senator from Oklahoma was involved in a conversation with the Senator from Iowa.

Mr. COBURN. I was, but I would like to speak, if I might.

Ms. MIKULSKI. No way we want to inhibit the Senator's ability to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I was going to call up amendment No. 2829, but I have chosen not to do that because of the plan of the manager of the bill to table it. So I will talk about what it is and make a few observations.

Four years ago we got the GAO to start a process on duplication, to look at what we are doing in a multitude of areas across the whole Federal Government. That will be finished, and for the first time it will have taken a complete look. We will see it at the end of this month, the first part of the fourth report.

One of their findings was, according to early learning and childcare programs, within 8 different departments there are 45 separate programs—8 different departments within the administration, 45 separate programs, spending \$16 billion a year. So the amendment I was going to offer would have forced us to do the metrics to look at what our outcomes are. It would have forced us to consolidate programs, other than major programs such as this one we are debating today, which has been markedly improved and enhanced.

Now, I don't want to put the Senate through a timely vote when I know what the outcome is going to be, so I won't call up that amendment. But I would remind my colleagues that the only way we are really ever going to get control of our budget is to do the hard work of eliminating duplication, so that when we have a program, such as the one the manager of the bill has on the floor today, it is really directed, it is focused, it has metrics, and we know what we are getting for what we are spending.

Most people don't realize we have 45 of these programs in 8 different departments spending \$16 billion a year.

So I hope we will consider that this is a great movement on this one particular bill, and I congratulate the people who worked on it—Senator HARKIN and his staff, Senators BURR and ALEXANDER and their staff—because I think they have done a good job. But it is not enough because we are still going to have 44 other programs and we are still going to have programs that don't have a metric on them. We are spending money on them, and we don't know if they are accomplishing what we want them to accomplish.

The whole purpose of the amendment was to force us to do that. I understand that is not going to move, and I am

fine with that. I will work in every other way behind the scenes to try to accomplish the same purpose.

Mr. HARKIN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. COBURN. I yield for a question.

Mr. HARKIN. First of all, I just want to say—and I mentioned it on the floor the other day—that I spent this weekend in Iowa at two early learning centers, and what became clear to me was the number of different conduits of funding and the different programs, qualifications, requirements, and paperwork.

I said at the time: I am confused.

The man at the center said: If you think you are confused, how do you think we feel about it?

That is why I was very supportive of the amendment offered by Senator ENZI. The Enzi amendment was a mandate on HHS, I believe, to take a look at all of these things and have a report back within a certain amount of time—I think it was 1 year—on how we can better coordinate these.

I agree with the Senator. There are way too many conduits into childcare, and it is horribly confusing, and there are all these different requirements that overlap, and this just causes confusion.

I wanted to ask the Senator if he had looked at the Enzi amendment, which gives us some time, and I can assure the Senator that our committee—and I am sure I can speak for Senator BURR on this on the Republican side—will be riding herd on this because I think we all agree with the Senator from Oklahoma that it has to be fixed.

Mr. COBURN. To answer the Senator's question, I supported the Enzi amendment. I don't think it went far enough because you are not going to look at some of the programs that are outside the purview of the Senator's committee. We have eight different Federal departments running these programs. They come from eight different sets of authorizations.

So the point is that I am going to work behind the scenes with Senator BURR and with Senator HARKIN to try to accomplish this.

AMENDMENT NO. 2830

Now I would like to call up amendment No. 2830 and ask unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Will the Senator yield to me before he offers his amendment?

Mr. COBURN. Yes.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Well, actually, I want to comment on how I want to work together with the Senator. Go ahead and offer the amendment, and then I would like to comment and not engage in klutzy conversation by asking questions. I think we are on the same broadband.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to setting aside the pending amendment?

Hearing no objection, the clerk will report the amendment.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Oklahoma [Mr. COBURN] proposed an amendment numbered 2830.

Mr. COBURN. I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered as read.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COBURN. The desk has a modification of that amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the modification?

Hearing no objection, the amendment is so modified.

The amendment (No. 2830), as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To establish a \$1,000,000 asset limit for eligibility for child care assistance)

On page 138, line 8, insert “, and whose family assets do not exceed \$1,000,000 (as certified by a member of such family)” after “size”.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, what we are trying to accomplish with this amendment—and I have cleared it on our side, and I think it is being cleared on the other side as well—is to make sure the significant amount of money we spend in this area goes to people who really need it. So all this amendment does is require a self-certification when an individual acquires one of these grants that they don't have real assets greater than \$1 million. If they do, maybe they should be spending their money rather than taxpayers' money on their kids' childcare.

That is all this amendment does. All we have done is to put in there, in the application process, a box they have to check that says: I don't have real assets in excess of \$1 million. This will ensure that we know that at least the vast majority—and by the way, 16 percent of this money has gone to people who are very wealthy, in terms of these vouchers. I have that data. I don't have it with me. Actually, I may have it with me, and I will pull it up and speak about that in a minute.

But the fact is we want this money to help the people who need help, not to help people who don't need the help. So that is the purpose of this amendment. I have agreed, if it becomes acceptable, to have a voice vote.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Before the Senator from Oklahoma leaves the floor and we proceed to a voice vote, et cetera, I wish to thank him for his steadfast advocacy in getting more value out of the taxpayers' dollar for the taxpayers' contribution to the Federal Treasury. He has been a well-known advocate for the consolidation and streamlining of existing programs, and I salute him for that.

Going back to 1996, we actually started this with streamlining childcare bills. In 1996, because I was here during

the welfare reform debate and passage, we had four different childcare bills, with four different eligibility requirements, with four different levels of bureaucracy. So the money was going into the bureaucracy's determining eligibility rather than into childcare. In the 1996 welfare reform bill, we consolidated so that we have the child care and development block grant. That is how we got to where we are.

The Senator from Oklahoma talks about how he has data that cuts across eight different Federal agencies. I pledge to him, as the chair of the Appropriations Committee, to actually sit down and look at this data, to put our heads together. And really, with money as tight as it is, the stringent budgets we are under, particularly when it comes to funding the kinds of compelling human needs that are in health and human services and education, we want to get more value for the dollar. We don't want to get more bureaucracy for the dollar.

So I say to the Senator from Oklahoma that we appreciate his withdrawing his amendment. We know the Senator from Wyoming Mr. ENZI has offered an amendment to get a report as well. But as we look at our appropriations for this year, I invite my colleague, with the greatest sincerity—and I pledge to him my word as a Senator—to sit down and review these documents and see how we can put this suggestion he has into action. I look forward to it, and, quite frankly, I am eager to see what we can get done.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I wish to join in. One, as the Senator from Maryland said, I recognize he has been out front in trying to get value for the taxpayers' dollar; and, second, he is working in a cooperative way to help us get a result. Those are two great characteristics in a body of 100 people which operates by unanimous consent. So I am grateful for that.

On the first point, I completely agree with him on the early childhood money. We have about \$18 billion from various streams of Federal dollars aimed at children below 5 or 6; then we have State dollars; then we have local dollars; then we have private dollars. We have grappled with ways to try to make sure we spend that money more effectively. One way is to emphasize centers of excellence, like Oklahoma City, Nashville, or Jersey City, where they try to put all that money together.

But I am committed to work with Senator HARKIN and Senator MIKULSKI to take the research which Senator COBURN has done and see if we can consolidate, streamline, and get more value for early childhood.

Second, he has called attention to a problem which I would appreciate his

help in solving with his "Millionaires' Amendment," which I think we will be voting on in a little while. Let me give an example, if I may.

The application form students fill out for Federal grants and loans to attend college is ridiculous. If I had it in my hand and held it up here, it would go from up here all the way to the floor. It is 100 questions. We had testimony in our committee that if we just answered two questions, in 95 percent of the cases it would be accurate. One: What was your family income 2 years ago? And, two: How many people are in your family? But the other 5 percent is the problem, because there could be abuse of the kind the Senator is talking about here.

What I would like to do—and I think others here would like to do—is to simplify the application form for Federal grants and loans, but do it in such a way we make sure the money goes where it is supposed to go. When there are 100 complicated questions to fill out, it discourages a lot of low-income people from going to college who we hope would, and it wastes time and money of administrators and families. Many of these families are not families with college degrees and accountants to help them fill out these long forms.

So we need the Senator from Oklahoma's help when we get to that discussion, sometime, of: How do we simplify the form of application for Federal grants and loans? And, with the 5 percent which remains, how do we narrow that down to 4, 3, 2, 1, to make sure almost all the money we are appropriating goes where it is supposed to go?

I salute him for both amendments. I look forward to supporting his amendment on the child care block grants, and hope it is a first step for dealing with the misapplication of Federal dollars aimed to help people move up the economic ladder.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. BALDWIN). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, if I could have the attention of Senator ALEXANDER and Senator BURR. I am about to propose a unanimous consent request.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that at 12:15 p.m. today, the Senate proceed to votes in relation to the following amendments in the order listed: Coburn No. 2830, as modified; Portman No. 2827; Tester No. 2834; Thune No. 2838; Warren No. 2842; Bennet No. 2839, as modified; further, that no second-degree amendments be in order to any of these amendments prior to the votes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. For the information of all Senators, it is our understanding we will need one roll call vote in this se-

quence and the remaining amendments can be disposed of by voice vote.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the pending amendments be set aside and the following amendments be made pending: Portman No. 2827; Tester No. 2834; Thune No. 2838; Warren No. 2842; and Bennet No. 2839, as modified.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Ms. LANDRIEU. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I realize the Senator is trying to move through this very important bill on the floor, which I fully support and thank him for the amendment.

Does the Senator know what the action of the Senate will be once this bill is completed? And is the intention to do final passage of this bill today?

Mr. HARKIN. I say to my friend I am hopeful we will have final passage today. We are working through it. We are down to just a couple of amendments. I haven't seen any others pop up right now. So I am hopeful we will have this series of votes, people will go to lunch, we will come back, and hopefully we will dispose of maybe a couple more amendments and then we will have final passage.

Ms. LANDRIEU. So final passage could potentially be—is it the Senator's understanding through the Chair—about 3 or so?

Mr. HARKIN. If we don't have any kind of extended debate on the floor, I would say probably at least by 3, I would hope we would be finished. If we work out agreement on a couple amendments, we might be done before that.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I thank the Senator.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the unanimous consent request?

Without objection, the clerk will report the amendments, en bloc.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. HARKIN] proposes amendments numbered 2827, 2834, 2838, 2842, and 2839, as modified.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 2827

(Purpose: To provide for evidence-based training that promotes early language and literacy development)

On page 78, line 9, insert "and early language and literacy development" after "readiness".

AMENDMENT NO. 2834

(Purpose: To permit the Secretary of Health and Human Services to waive the prohibition on the use of amounts by Indian tribes and tribal organizations for construction or renovation of facilities for child care programs if the use will result in an increase of the level of child care services)

On page 136, strike line 16 and all that follows through page 137, line 7, and insert the following:

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end the following:

“(D) LICENSING AND STANDARDS.—In lieu of any licensing and regulatory requirements applicable under State or local law, the Secretary, in consultation with Indian tribes and tribal organizations, shall develop minimum child care standards that shall be applicable to Indian tribes and tribal organizations receiving assistance under this subchapter. Such standards shall appropriately reflect Indian tribe and tribal organization needs and available resources, and shall include standards requiring a publicly available application, health and safety standards, and standards requiring a reservation of funds for activities to improve the quality of child care provided to Indian children.”; and

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

“(C) LIMITATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the Secretary may not permit an Indian tribe or tribal organization to use amounts provided under this subsection for construction or renovation if the use will result in a decrease in the level of child care services provided by the Indian tribe or tribal organization as compared to the level of child care services provided by the Indian tribe or tribal organization in the fiscal year preceding the year for which the determination under subparagraph (B) is being made.

“(ii) WAIVER.—The Secretary shall waive the limitation described in clause (i) if—

“(I) the Secretary determines that the decrease in the level of child care services provided by the Indian tribe or tribal organization is temporary; and

“(II) the Indian tribe or tribal organization submits to the Secretary a plan that demonstrates that after the date on which the construction or renovation is completed—

“(aa) the level of child care services will increase; or

“(bb) the quality of child care services will improve.”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2838

(Purpose: To specify that child care certificates may be included in State strategies to increase the supply of child care)

On page 88, line 5, insert “offering child care certificates to parents,” after “tions.”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2842

(Purpose: To allow funds reserved under section 658C(a) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 to be used to connect child care staff members with Federal and State financial aid, or other resources, in order to assist the staff members in pursuing relevant training)

On page 111, strike line 17 and insert the following:

early neurological development of children; and

“(L) connecting child care staff members of child care providers with available Federal and State financial aid, or other resources, that would assist child care staff members in pursuing relevant postsecondary training.

AMENDMENT NO. 2839, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To expand the requirement that space allotted to child care providers in Federal buildings will be used to provide child care services to children of whom at least 50 percent have 1 parent or guardian employed by the Federal Government)

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. ____ ALLOTMENT OF SPACE IN FEDERAL BUILDINGS FOR CHILD CARE.

Section 590 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (a) through (g) as subsections (b) through (h), respectively;

(2) by inserting before subsection (b) (as so redesignated) the following:

“(a) DEFINITION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEE.—In this section, the term ‘Federal employee’ does not include a person that—

“(1) is not employed by the Federal Government; and

“(2) meets the requirements described in subsection (c)(2)(C)(i)(II).”;

(3) in paragraph (2)(C) of subsection (c) (as so redesignated), by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

“(i) the space will be used to provide child care services to children of whom at least 50 percent have 1 parent or guardian who—

“(I) is employed by the Federal Government; or

“(II)(aa) has met the requirements for a master’s degree or a doctorate degree from an institution of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)); and

“(bb) is conducting research in the Federal building under an arrangement between the parent or guardian and a Federal agency.”; and

(4) in subsection (d) (as so redesignated), by striking “subsection (b)” each place it appears and inserting “subsection (c)”.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that following disposition of the Bennet amendment, the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, en bloc: Calendar Nos. 634, 625, and 550; that the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action and the Senate then resume legislative session; further, that there be 2 minutes for debate, equally divided in the usual form prior to each vote, and that the votes be 10 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. I am told we expect the amendments we are bringing up to be voice-voted this afternoon.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2830

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is now on agreeing to amendment No. 2830, as modified, offered by the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. COBURN.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 100, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 75 Leg.]

YEAS—100

Alexander	Gillibrand	Murphy
Ayotte	Graham	Murray
Baldwin	Grassley	Nelson
Barrasso	Hagan	Paul
Begich	Harkin	Portman
Bennet	Hatch	Pryor
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reed
Blunt	Heitkamp	Reid
Booker	Heller	Risch
Boozman	Hirono	Roberts
Boxer	Hoeven	Rockefeller
Brown	Inhofe	Rubio
Burr	Isakson	Sanders
Cantwell	Johanns	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Chambliss	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Coburn	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cochran	Landrieu	Tester
Collins	Leahy	Thune
Coons	Lee	Toomey
Corker	Levin	Udall (CO)
Cornyn	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Crapo	Markey	Vitter
Cruz	McCain	Walsh
Donnelly	McCaill	Warner
Durbin	McConnell	Warren
Enzi	Menendez	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Merkley	Wicker
Fischer	Mikulski	Wyden
Flake	Moran	
Franken	Murkowski	

The amendment (No. 2830), as modified, was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I move to reconsider the vote and to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2827

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the Portman amendment No. 2827.

The amendment (No. 2827) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2834

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the Tester amendment No. 2834.

The amendment (No. 2834) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2838

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the Thune amendment No. 2838.

The amendment (No. 2838) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2842

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to the Warren amendment No. 2842.

The amendment (No. 2842) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT 2839, AS MODIFIED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2839, as

modified, offered by the Senator from Colorado Mr. BENNET.

The amendment (No. 2839), as modified, was agreed to.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I move to reconsider and then move to lay those motions on the table, for all the voice votes we just considered.

The motions to lay on the table were agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF PUNEET TALWAR TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

NOMINATION OF JOSEPH PIUS PIETRZYK TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

NOMINATION OF DWIGHT L. BUSH, SR., TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nominations of Puneet Talwar, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State; Joseph Pius Pietrzyk, of Ohio, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation; and Dwight L. Bush, Sr., of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Morocco.

VOTE ON TALWAR NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the Talwar nomination.

Who yields time? The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. I yield back the remaining time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Puneet Talwar, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Secretary of State?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON PIETRZYK NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the Pietrzyk nomination.

Who yields time?

Mr. BURR. I yield back the remaining time.

Mr. HARKIN. We yield back our remaining time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Joseph Pius Pietrzyk, of Ohio, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON BUSH NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the Bush nomination.

Who yields time?

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, we yield back all time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Dwight L. Bush, Sr., of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Morocco?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table, the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate will resume legislative session.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I think the end is in sight, hopefully, on this bill. Our staff has been working hard. We have all been working hard to get amendments worked out. I know both sides have conference lunches that are taking place now. So we hope to come back shortly after these lunches conclude. We will then be able to move ahead.

As I understand it, there are three amendments pending. We don't know whether they will have votes, but we are working on that right now. So I hope we can have final passage on this bill very shortly.

Does my friend, the Senator from North Carolina, concur with that?

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I do concur. I urge those Members who might be the subject of us trying to work out some language on their amendments, if they have not spoken on them, they exercise the opportunity between 1 o'clock and 2 o'clock, while the caucuses are at lunch, to come to the floor and speak on their amend-

ments. But we are confident we have made tremendous progress and we think we can wrap this up shortly after lunch on the remaining amendments, as well as on passage of the bill.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 10 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. UDALL of New Mexico pertaining to the introduction of S. 2129 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

AMENDMENT NO. 2827

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I rise today to thank my colleagues for adopting a moment ago an important amendment to this underlying bill. It is an amendment to provide for evidence-based training in efforts that promote early language development and literacy development. This is really important for kids to get them ready for kindergarten, and, again, I appreciate the fact that on a voice vote that was adopted earlier this afternoon.

Madam President, I now rise to urge the Senate to support a child safety amendment I have submitted to the child development block grant bill. I thank Senator ALEXANDER, Senator BURR, Senator MIKULSKI, and Senator HARKIN for all their help on this amendment. I appreciate their working with us.

I like the underlying legislation. It is a good bill because it goes a long way to ensuring that our Federal dollars are spent in a way that does keep our children in safe learning environments and care facilities. I believe my amendment makes a good bill even better.

Currently, this legislation prohibits individuals who have been convicted of a felony from working in a childcare facility that is funded through these Federal block grants. That is a good start, but by limiting the prohibition only to felonies, we are leaving other people out. We are leaving a pool of individuals who have been convicted of crimes against children eligible for employment in a setting where they could prey on vulnerable kids.

So the amendment simply expands to ensure that we are covering those people. It ensures the health and safety of children by clarifying that adults who are convicted of misdemeanor violent crimes against children—child abuse, child endangerment, sexual assault—or of a misdemeanor involving child pornography are also identified in criminal background checks and are not permitted to work in a childcare facility that receives support through these child care development block grants.

Let me give a couple examples of crimes that under the bill as currently drafted would not prevent an individual from working in a childcare facility funded by the legislation.

In my home State of Ohio, we just had a terrible example. An Ohio daycare worker was accused of sprinkling drugs on snacks to get children to sleep. She was fined \$250 and then had her charges reduced to a misdemeanor count of child endangerment after a plea agreement. So she did not get charged with a felony in the end because she pled it down to a misdemeanor. But certainly you do not want someone like this working in one of these facilities.

There are lots of other examples.

A Utah woman pled guilty to two class A misdemeanors recently for child abuse. These charges were reduced from five second-degree felonies for intentionally inflicting serious physical injury on a child. She had been arrested for physically and emotionally abusing her daughter. According to the police report, she hit her daughter with a closed fist and choked her. But she pled, again, guilty to two misdemeanors because of the plea agreement.

These are just a couple cases. There are many more, and these are just ones that have been decided in the last few months.

Under the legislation as currently written, these individuals would be eligible to work in a childcare facility that receives Federal funds.

This amendment is very simple. It only seeks to protect children and to bar individuals who would commit crimes against the most vulnerable among us from receiving these Federal tax dollars. I urge my colleagues to accept the amendment.

Again, I thank the authors of the underlying bill for working closely with us on this amendment to improve legislation that is already a good and is doing a lot to protect our kids.

I yield back my time.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, as we talk today about passing new laws, I would like to take a few minutes to talk about enforcing the laws the Congress has already passed.

I want to talk today about something that I believe has been pushed to the

wayside too many times by the current administration, and that would be the Constitution of the United States.

Article II, section 3 of the U.S. Constitution declares that the President—coming right out of the Constitution—that the President “shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed.” Simply put, constitutional requirements are just that—they are constitutional requirements. They are not constitutional suggestions. This is not something the Constitution does not clearly define. The branches of government in the Constitution are the judicial, the legislative, and the executive. And the job of the executive is, again, to do what? To “take care that the laws be faithfully executed.”

Yet time and again President Obama has refused to enforce the law and shown a willingness, frankly, to misuse regulations, in my view, to sidestep the Congress, to sidestep what the law intended to do and, more importantly, to step around the Constitution. Whether it is issuing waivers to States from the work requirements contained in the bipartisan Welfare Reform Act of 1996 or announcing yet another change—and we are now at over two dozen changes and delays—in the President’s own health care law, the current administration has sought ways, over and over again, to circumvent the Congress by picking and choosing which laws it wants to enforce—clearly not a power given the President in the Constitution.

In fact, there is a reason the legislative branch is article I of the Constitution. Because the Founders clearly saw the legislative branch as the branch that would determine the direction of the country, and the President’s job was not to write the law, the President’s job was to execute the law, to enforce the law.

People all over America are rightly concerned about government overreach. They are rightly concerned about government dysfunction. They are rightly concerned about a Senate that has not brought the appropriations bills to the floor the way they should come to the floor for over 7 years now, so we are not debating our priorities.

But it is the overreach, the dysfunction, the lack of compliance with the law and the seeming belief that somehow that is the President’s job, to decide which laws we comply with as a country and which ones we do not, which laws the government enforces and which ones it does not enforce. That is not the President’s job.

I introduced a bill this week to stop this overreach and to force President Obama to uphold the Constitution. The ENFORCE the Law Act, which is cosponsored by more than half of my Republican Senate colleagues, and which passed the House yesterday, permits Congress to authorize a lawsuit against

the President if he fails to uphold the constitutional obligation to uphold the law.

Whenever we are asked, all of us as Members of the Senate, by people that we work for: How can the President decide he is not going to enforce the law, one of the responses we all have thoughtfully given to the other question of: What are you going to do about it, is at this point there is no standing of individual Members of Congress or even the entire body of the Senate or the body of the House to go to court and say: We have standing in court to have this law enforced.

This bill would become law, and a law that would give the Congress that standing. It effectively permits the Congress, either House of the Congress, to authorize a lawsuit against the President if he fails to uphold his constitutional obligation to faithfully execute the law.

If the President has a defense, this is a lawsuit. His side can go to court and defend that. But if he does not have a defense, he has sworn, as we have, to uphold the Constitution. This is not a partisan matter. This bill is important because it gives Congress the ability to combat executive disregard for the Congress no matter what party controls the White House or no matter what party controls the Congress.

The courts have ruled that individual Members of Congress lack standing to take the administration to court. We are not considered individually so-called “aggrieved parties.” That is why Members, whether it was the National Labor Relations Board case where the President thought he could decide whether the Senate was in session, instead of the Senate deciding whether the Senate was in session—I joined many of my colleagues to file an amicus brief. I am not a lawyer, but I am able to do that as a citizen, to file an amicus brief, a friend-of-the-court brief, saying why we thought the President was wrong and why we thought the people who were challenging the rules that this group created, that were put in power in an unconstitutional way—we could file that but we could not initiate that. We could not go to court and say: We believe the law is not being enforced.

The ENFORCE Act removes that procedural barrier, so that a Member of the House, a Member of the Senate, can be empowered to bring a lawsuit in Federal court challenging the administration’s refusal to enforce the law, challenging the administration’s belief that on their own they can suspend the law, they can postpone the law, they can delay the law.

If the law gives the President the ability to do that, it is going to be in the clear black-and-white letters of the law. It is not there now. The ENFORCE Act provides an expedited process so that if this lawsuit is initiated this

way, by one or both Houses of the Congress against the administration for not faithfully executing the law, it goes immediately to a three-judge panel in the U.S. district court and then goes directly to the Supreme Court if there is an appeal.

This is an easy way to solve this problem. It is a way that creates standing to define who is constitutionally obligated to do a job that they are not doing. It is time we reestablished the proper limits on the executive branch. The Founders believed in separation of powers. It is the responsibility of the Congress to protect the idea they came up with in a document for the first time that was a governing document, the idea of checks and balances. If you eliminate that idea of checks and balances, you eliminate the miracle of the Constitution.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me and others in supporting this effort to stop executive overreach and encourage the President to enforce the law. The Constitution still matters. The Constitution deserves to be defended. This is a way the Members of the Congress of the United States can give themselves the ability to launch that defense.

Again, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill that the House passed yesterday. All we have to do to do our part is step forward and pass this legislation.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that at 2:30 p.m. today, the Senate proceed to Executive Session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 686; that the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nomination; that the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session; further, that there be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to each vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. I yield back all time, and ask that the vote start immediately, and all Senators should be advised that we will start the vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF CAROLINE DIANE KRASS TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HIRONO). Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the Krass nomination which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Caroline Diane Krass, of the District of Columbia, to be General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Has the unanimous consent request been approved?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The unanimous consent request has been approved.

All time has been yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Caroline Diane Krass, of the District of Columbia, to be General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency?

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 95, nays 4, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 76 Ex.]

YEAS—95

Alexander	Crapo	Kirk
Ayotte	Donnelly	Klobuchar
Baldwin	Durbin	Landrieu
Barrasso	Enzi	Leahy
Begich	Feinstein	Lee
Bennet	Fischer	Levin
Blumenthal	Flake	Manchin
Blunt	Franken	Markey
Booker	Gillibrand	McCain
Boozman	Graham	McCaskill
Boxer	Grassley	McConnell
Brown	Hagan	Menendez
Burr	Harkin	Merkley
Cantwell	Hatch	Mikulski
Cardin	Heinrich	Murkowski
Carper	Heitkamp	Murphy
Casey	Hirono	Murray
Chambliss	Hoeven	Nelson
Coats	Inhofe	Portman
Coburn	Isakson	Pryor
Cochran	Johanns	Reed
Collins	Johnson (SD)	Reid
Coons	Johnson (WI)	Risch
Corker	Kaine	Roberts
Cornyn	King	Rockefeller

Rubio	Stabenow	Walsh
Sanders	Tester	Warner
Schatz	Thune	Warren
Schumer	Toomey	Whitehouse
Sessions	Udall (CO)	Wicker
Shaheen	Udall (NM)	Wyden
Shelby	Vitter	

NAYS—4

Cruz
Heller

Paul
Scott

NOT VOTING—1

Moran

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ACT OF 2014—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from Louisiana.

AMENDMENT NO. 2845, AS MODIFIED

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 2845 and ask that it be modified with the changes at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the pending amendment is set aside.

The clerk will report the amendment, as modified.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Louisiana [Mr. VITTER] proposes an amendment numbered 2845, as modified.

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To require the Secretary (acting through the Assistant Secretary for Children and Families) to prepare an annual report that contains a determination about whether States have complied with a priority requirement, and to require the Secretary to withhold funds from States that fail to comply with such priority requirement)

On page 99, strike line 19 and insert the following:

“(ii) REPORT BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September 30 of the first full fiscal year after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, and September 30 of each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary (acting through the Assistant Secretary for Children and Families of the Department of Health and Human Services) shall prepare a report that contains a determination about whether each State uses amounts provided to such State for the fiscal year involved under this subchapter in accordance with the priority for services described in clause (i).

“(II) PENALTY FOR NONCOMPLIANCE.—For any fiscal year that the report of the Secretary described in subclause (I) indicates that a State has failed to give priority for services in accordance with clause (i), the Secretary shall—

“(aa) inform the State that the State has until the date that is 6 months after the Secretary has issued such report to fully comply with clause (i);

“(bb) provide the State an opportunity to modify the State plan of such State, to make the plan consistent with the requirements of clause (i), and resubmit such State plan to the Secretary not later than the date described in item (aa); and

“(cc) if the State does not fully comply with clause (i) and item (bb), by the date described in item (aa), withhold 5 percent of the funds that would otherwise be allocated to that State in accordance with this subchapter for the first full fiscal year after that date.

“(III) WAIVER FOR EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES.—Notwithstanding subclause (II) the Secretary may grant a waiver to a State for one year to the penalty applied in subclause (II) if the Secretary determines there are extraordinary circumstances, such as a natural disaster, that prevent the state from complying with clause (I). If the Secretary does grant a waiver to a state under this section, the Secretary shall, within 30 days of granting such waiver, submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees on the circumstances of the waiver including the stated reason from the State on the need for a waiver, the expected impact of the waiver on children served under this program, and any such other relevant information the Secretary deems necessary.

“(iii) CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL SYSTEM.—”

Mr. VITTER. Madam President, I will briefly summarize this amendment, but I first want to thank the chairman and ranking member of the committee for working through this amendment and agreeing to what I think will be a quick consideration and adoption by voice vote.

This amendment is very simple, straightforward, but important. Present law with regard to child care and development block grants—present Federal law—says that States should and must prioritize for two categories of children: low-income kids and children with special needs. I think we all agree with that prioritization. The problem is, as recent reports have indicated, about half of all the States—23 to be exact—do not do that. They just basically ignore that Federal law.

This simple, straightforward amendment would bring accountability to the system and make sure all States follow present Federal law and give that appropriate priority treatment to children with special needs as well as low-income kids. It would do this by saying that there is going to be some accountability; that the Federal Department involved in the program already will annually make sure States follow this aspect of present law and that if a State is not doing that, it gets 6 months to cure the problem, but if it does not cure that within 6 months, then that State would feel the pinch by

having 5 percent of its block grant funds withheld until it corrects the situation.

The amendment also gives the Secretary waiver authority for extraordinary circumstances, such as natural disasters and other emergencies.

Again, I appreciate the chairman and ranking member working out this provision. I do think it is important that all States follow Federal law, and we give these children—special needs children, low-income children—the priority treatment they deserve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, the amendment has the admirable goal of prioritizing funds to low-income families who have children with disabilities. I applaud Senator VITTER's efforts and hope this provides significant reinforcement of what has been the law since 1996—that States must prioritize children from very low-income families who have children with disabilities. This amendment reinforces that by saying the Department of Health and Human Services must meet that promise. There is a provision in there that gives them adequate time to make sure they do that.

Again, I thank the Senator from Louisiana for working with us. As I said when this amendment first came up, yes, as someone who has worked on disability issues for most of my adult life, I agreed with exactly what he wanted to do; there were just some language problems. That is the way we get legislation done around here—we work things out and we find the middle ground on which everybody can agree. I thank the Senator from Louisiana for his willingness to work this out. We support the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I also want to thank my colleague from Louisiana and the chairman of the committee for working out this amendment.

Madam President, I know of no further debate on this amendment, and I would ask us to proceed to a vote on the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment, as modified.

The amendment (No. 2845), as modified, was agreed to.

Mr. HARKIN. I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

SECTION 8(b)

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I want to first and foremost express my thanks to the chairman, and his colleagues, for this bipartisan bill—a long overdue effort that clearly is the result

of a painstaking, patient effort by the committee to reauthorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant.

I wanted to discuss very quickly one provision, section 8(b), that I feel needs additional clarification.

Given that the overall priority of all of us to increase quality while ensuring that States can effectively navigate the federal standards—while maintaining their authority to set their own standards—would the Senator agree that the intent of this law is not to rewrite other existing Federal laws or evade requirements of other Federal laws that might diminish services for children?

Mr. HARKIN. Yes, I would agree. As our committee report explains, it is intended that “States exercise this provision in an attempt to maximize the effective administration and delivery of Federally subsidized childcare, and not for purposes that have a minor effect on childcare.”

I firmly believe, and I know my colleagues will agree, that this provision is not intended, nor should it be interpreted, as one that can be used to rewrite any other current laws, evade central provisions of other current laws, or undermine the goals and purposes of other laws. Certainly, it is not our intent to allow States to change, undermine or threaten in any way current laws.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I thank the chairman.

HHS RULEMAKING

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I have a question for my friend from Iowa, the chairman of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. The Department of Health and Human Services, HHS, in May 2013 issued a notice of proposed rulemaking to the Child Care and Development Fund, CCDF, that would make several health and safety, quality, background checks, and other related changes. That NPRM is currently in the comment period and has yet to be finalized.

Am I correct in my understanding that HHS has shared with you, as well as with me, their interpretation that, should S. 1086, the Child Care Development Block Grant Reauthorization which we are considering in the Senate today along with any subsequent changes through the legislative process, become law, the proposed rulemaking for the CCDF would be overridden by S. 1086?

Mr. HARKIN. The Senator from North Carolina is correct that HHS has shared with me that S. 1086, and any further congressional changes made to S. 1086, would override the May 2013 notice of proposed rulemaking to the CCDF.

Mr. BURR. I thank the distinguished chairman for this important clarification and for his hard work in developing this important legislation.

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, with 20 kids and grandkids, I understand the

importance and value of quality, affordable childcare. I applaud those individuals seeking to attain further education and training in order to improve their situations, and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Program assists them in that pursuit.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Program has been in place since 1990, and as a part of welfare reform in 1996, three other childcare initiatives were consolidated into this program, which provides formula-based block grant funding to States to subsidize childcare and emphasizes work, personal responsibility and parental choice. In my State of Oklahoma, 17,000 families and 28,000 children benefit directly from these funds.

This legislation not only reauthorizes the program for another 5 years, but it also does not add to the deficit and makes some important reforms, while preserving State flexibility in how the funds are used. S. 1086 adds new safety and health standards, calls for annual, unannounced onsite monitoring of licensed providers, requires background checks of childcare staff and providers and expands compliance with child abuse reporting requirements. Additionally, the Senate adopted 18 amendments, which I also supported, including Amendment 2822, which sets aside at least 2 percent of a State's CCDBG funds for Indian tribes and tribal organizations—of significance for Oklahoma. I also co-sponsored two adopted amendments: Amendment 2813, which extends a grace period to foster youth so that they can begin receiving CCDBG services while families compile medical documentation; and Amendment 2814, which requires States to have a plan in place to coordinate existing services and programs for children in foster care. I support S. 1086 and am encouraged by the example of regular order restored to Senate business.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam President, Americans believe in the power of hard work as the key to getting ahead, the key to prosperity, the key to a better future. We also believe in the importance of family, and in the responsibility we all share for making sure that America's children are cared for and protected.

The legislation before us today furthers both these values the value of hard work and the value of family. It would update and modernize a program that for two decades has helped families pursue rewarding employment or important education and training while obtaining essential care for their children. It is bipartisan legislation, unanimously approved in committee, with support from a broad range of education and child advocacy groups.

For all working parents, but particularly for low-income families, the demands of work and parenting are enormous challenges. Quality childcare can be hard to find and expensive so expen-

sive that, for many families, the cost all but wipes out their paycheck. The Child Care and Development Block Grant Program is designed to help families meet this challenge. The program provides block grants to States so they can provide financial assistance to families coping with childcare expenses. Nationwide, more than 1.5 million children receive care through these grants. In Michigan, these grants helped more than 50,000 children receive the care they needed in Fiscal Year 2013.

The legislation Senators HARKIN and ALEXANDER have brought to the floor reauthorizes the block grant program so this important assistance can continue. The bill also makes important improvements. It requires States to establish education and training requirements for childcare workers, and ensures that States will inspect childcare facilities before they are granted licenses, and at least once a year thereafter. These requirements will improve our ability to ensure that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. The bill makes important changes to improve care for children with special needs. It makes changes to eligibility requirements to make assistance more stable and dependable for families.

More than 30 national education, child-advocacy, parenting and violence prevention advocacy groups have endorsed this legislation, strongly supporting the reauthorization of the grant program and the changes to make the program more modern and effective. These groups also point out that in addition to authorization, programs require appropriations to be successful. Childcare is one of many important domestic priorities that Congress could more effectively address if we are willing to reach a balanced deficit reduction agreement that eliminates sequestration and provides needed funding. I remain hopeful we can reach such an agreement.

I wish to thank Senator HARKIN, chairman of the HELP Committee, and Senator ALEXANDER, Ranking Member of the HELP Committee, as well as Senators MIKULSKI, BURR, GILLIBRAND, and AYOTTE for sponsoring this important legislation. I support its passage and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mrs. HAGAN. Madam President, I wish to speak today in support of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014.

First, I applaud the hard work of my colleagues on the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee—Chairman TOM HARKIN and Ranking Member LAMAR ALEXANDER.

I also commend Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, my predecessor as chairman of the Subcommittee on Children and Families, and Senator RICHARD BURR for their commitment to improving the

lives of children and their families as the sponsors of this important legislation.

We can all agree that supporting our children should be a priority of the utmost importance, and I am proud of the bipartisan work done by my colleagues toward that end.

The childcare and development block grant is an invaluable program that provides assistance to low-income working families. In North Carolina 78,000 children are served every month by CCDBG funding. These children and families deserve high quality childcare so that parents, like the ones I hear from in my State every day, can go to work with the knowledge that their children are safe and receiving high quality care.

Last year, I visited Elm Street Day Care Center in Greensboro, NC, where I saw the importance of childcare, and development block grant funding firsthand. I saw how this program is helping working families in North Carolina and noted ways we could update this law to make it to work better and more efficiently.

I am pleased this bill takes a significant step toward providing more information to parents about their children's care and encourages States to follow North Carolina's lead and increase the quality of childcare centers.

Currently, States must spend at least 4 percent of their Federal childcare funds on improving the quality of childcare—including providing professional development for childcare providers, licensing and monitoring childcare facilities, and providing consumer education, so that parents have the information they need to make informed choices.

This reauthorization raises the minimum amount to be spent on quality improvements to 10 percent by 2020. As a result, we can help to ensure that children in all 50 States are receiving quality care by passing this legislation.

I am also particularly pleased to support this bill because it includes key provisions of the Child Care Infant Mortality Prevention Act, which I introduced with Senators DIANNE FEINSTEIN and SUSAN COLLINS in September.

These provisions will allow for the use of Federal funds to train childcare providers in sleep practices, first aid, and CPR for infants.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and the American Academy of Pediatrics, safe sleep practices can reduce by one-half the annual number of cases of Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome—a tragedy that touches approximately 100 families in North Carolina each year.

Roughly 20 percent of all cases of Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome occur in child care settings, and—with this provision—we can provide child care providers with the resources they need to prevent these unnecessary tragedies.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act.

Mr. REED. Madam President, I am pleased to support the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, and would like to commend the bipartisan work of Senators MIKULSKI and BURR and Chairman HARKIN and Ranking Member ALEXANDER of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee in bringing this important legislation to the floor. There have been several previous attempts to reauthorize this critical program in the past, including when I was a member of this committee. It is my hope we can come together and finally carry this important legislation across the finish line to the benefit of children and families across the country.

Access to affordable, high quality, safe and secure childcare is essential for working families. Yet, such care is very hard to find. According to a 2013 Child Care Aware survey, the cost of full-time, center-based care for two children is the highest single household expense in the Northeast, Midwest and South. This high cost often puts fully licensed programs out of reach for low-income families.

The child care and development block grant has not been reauthorized since 1996. At that time, the primary focus of the program was to enable people to move from welfare to work. Today, knowing the critical importance of early brain development and the role early education plays in school readiness and successful outcomes for young people, we must work to achieve the dual goals of CCDBG to ensure affordable and quality childcare options for children and families. And we cannot achieve these goals without addressing the issue of payment rates, the level at which states reimburse childcare providers who care for low-income children who receive a child care subsidy.

That is why during previous attempts to reauthorize the child care and development block grant during the 107th, 108th and 109th Congresses, I introduced the Child Care Quality Incentive Act to provide incentives to States to set equitable payment rates so that low-income families would have access to affordable and high quality care for their children. I am pleased that the bill before us today includes some of the key provisions of my legislation, such as requiring States to conduct a statistically valid and reliable survey of market rates for childcare, report the results of the survey publicly, and set the rates based on the survey results, taking into consideration the cost of providing higher quality care. Raising the payment rates for childcare is an integral component to improving quality.

The other essential element to improving quality and affordability is our

investment in childcare and early education programs. According to the Congressional Research Service, seven percent fewer children were served in fiscal year 2012 than had been served in fiscal year 2011. According to Kids Count Rhode Island, since peaking in 2003, the number of childcare subsidies in the State has decreased by 45 percent. The \$154 million increase for childcare that we included in the fiscal year 2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act was a step in the right direction. Clearly, we need to do more.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to advance this legislation to expand our support for working families, and ensure that all children have the quality of education and care to reach their full potential.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, for the information of Senators, we are now down to two voice votes on two pending amendments that have been cleared. We will then have a rollcall vote on final passage. I am hopeful that is going to happen within a very short period of time. In maybe 5 minutes or 10 minutes, I hope we will be ready for a final vote on this bill.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 2847 AND 2846

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, we have no further debate on the two pending amendments—Portman No. 2847 and Sanders No. 2846—and the substitute. I know of—Madam President, I was misinformed. I thought those amendments had already been called up.

Madam President, I would like to call up in order Portman amendment No. 2847 and Sanders amendment No. 2846 and ask for their immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Iowa [Mr. HARKIN] proposes, en bloc, for Mr. PORTMAN, an amendment numbered 2847, and for Mr. SANDERS an amendment numbered 2846.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 2847

(Purpose: To provide that a child care staff member who has been convicted of a violent misdemeanor against a child or a misdemeanor involving child pornography is ineligible for employment by certain child care providers)

On page 120, strike line 12 and insert the following:

preceding 5 years; or

“(E) has been convicted of a violent misdemeanor committed as an adult against a child, including the following crimes: child abuse, child endangerment, sexual assault, or of a misdemeanor involving child pornography.

AMENDMENT NO. 2846

(Purpose: To express the sense of the Senate on significantly reducing child poverty by calendar year 2019)

On page 141, insert at the end the following:

SEC. 13. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCING CHILD POVERTY BY CALENDAR YEAR 2019.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) the United States has the highest rate of childhood poverty among 34 major countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, including Denmark, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Cyprus, Austria, Sweden, the Czech Republic, Germany, Slovenia, Hungary, South Korea, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Ireland, France, Malta, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Estonia, Belgium, New Zealand, Poland, Canada, Australia, Japan, Portugal, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Spain, and Bulgaria;

(2) a record-breaking 46,496,000 individuals lived in poverty in the United States in 2012, which is an increase of 14,915,000 individuals since 2000;

(3) 16,073,000 children in the United States lived in poverty in 2012, which is an increase of 4,486,000 children since 2000;

(4) more than 7,100,000 children in the United States, 40 percent of children living in poverty in the United States, live in extreme poverty (defined as living in families with an income that is less than half of the poverty level);

(5) nearly 1,200,000 public school students in the United States were homeless in the 2011-2012 school year, an increase of 73 percent since the 2006-2007 school year;

(6) in an average month in fiscal year 2011, 1,200,000 households with children in the United States did not have any cash income and, for food, depended only on benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.);

(7) in 2012, government assistance programs removed from poverty 9,000,000 children, including 5,300,000 children through the earned income tax credit under section 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the child tax credit under section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and 2,200,000 children through the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.);

(8) in 2012, child poverty would have been 57 percent higher, and extreme poverty would have been 240 percent higher, without government tax credits and food, housing, and energy benefits;

(9) in 2013, an individual working full-time at the Federal minimum wage could not afford the fair market rent for a 2-bedroom rental unit and have enough money for food, utilities, and other necessities;

(10) in school years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, less than half of children ages 3 and 4 were enrolled in preschool;

(11) Early Head Start programs carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.) served only 4 percent of the 2,900,000 eligible poor infants and toddlers each day in fiscal year 2012, and Head Start programs carried out under such Act served only 41

percent of the 2,000,000 eligible poor children ages 3 and 4;

(12) more than 220,000 children are on waiting lists for child care assistance; and

(13) child poverty costs the United States not less than \$500,000,000 each year in additional education, health, and criminal justice costs and in lost productivity.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the President should immediately present to Congress a comprehensive plan to significantly reduce child poverty in the United States by calendar year 2019.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, as I said, I know of no further debate on those amendments. We are ready to vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, if the Senator will yield, as we close into the final minutes of this bill, I just want to say that today will be a great victory for America's children because we will pass the child care and development block grant. I think it is a great victory for the Senate to show that we could govern ourselves with an open amendment process. We could do it diligently, and we could do it with courtesy and civility. This is the way the Senate should be. Within 2 days we have arrived at a great bill, with cooperation and civility on both sides of the aisle. I hope this becomes a model for the way the Senate will conduct itself for the rest of the session.

I have been very proud to be part of this bill. I thank Senator RICHARD BURR of North Carolina, my Republican counterpart on the children's committee, with all of the due diligence we did for a year and a half. I also thank Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER for his steadfast leadership and input, and of course I thank TOM HARKIN, our leader, who, as he wraps up his Senate career, will never wrap up his advocacy for America's children.

I thank all of our staff for the great work they did in the 100 meetings with stakeholders and the 200 meetings with us.

Madam President, I am ready for the vote and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Madam President, I would like to take this quick opportunity to thank my colleague Senator MIKULSKI for those kind words and, more importantly, for her passion on this issue. I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their help. But more importantly, I would like to thank the committee staff and personal staffs who have been over here for the last several days and late last night trying to work out amendments. I thank the Members who have been very accommodating to changes so we could get this bill up.

I might take a personal privilege to say that part of this bill was done by a

former staff member of mine, Celia Sims, and she is one proud woman today because of that being included in this bill and its passage. I look forward to it.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I will not extend this more than 2 minutes, but I think it is instructive to colleagues to note what the Senator from Maryland, the Senator from North Carolina, and the Senator from Iowa have done. We started this bill about 24 hours ago, right after lunch. More than 40 amendments were filed. More than half of them have been considered and disposed of. There was no objection to a motion to proceed. There was no cloture vote filed. There was no filibuster. And on both sides of the aisle, anyone who showed up with an amendment relevant to the childcare discussion had a chance to have it considered without anybody picking their amendment. Finally, on this side and that side of the aisle, many Members showed a lot of restraint and courtesy in adjusting their amendments so that we could get here. We will not be able to do this every time, but it is a modest step in a very good direction toward the way the Senate should work.

I want to especially thank the Senator from Iowa, the Senator from Maryland, and the Senator from North Carolina for their leadership.

I would also like to extend my deep thanks and sincere appreciation to the dedicated staff that worked on this bill for the past year. Without their hard work and tireless effort we wouldn't have been able to reach the successful conclusion on the passage of this important bill.

I would like to thank Senator BURR's staff, Christopher Toppings and Natasha Hickman for working so closely with my staff and working so well together and with our Republican offices.

I would also like to thank Senator MIKULSKI's staff, Brent Palmer and Jessica McNiece for their hard work and steady support of getting this bill through the Senate.

The Chairman of the committee has an outstanding staff who are all very capable and dedicated, especially Mario Cardona, Mildred Otero, and his new Staff Director, Derek Miller. I thank them for their close working relationship with my staff.

We know that these bills don't just suddenly appear. Legislative Counsel staff work long hours on the bill and then on the amendments, so I would like to especially thank Liz King, Kristin Romero, Katie Grendon, Bill Baird, and Rob Silver.

And we always rely on our experts at the Congressional Research Service to give us good information in a timely manner, so I extend our thanks to Karen Lynch.

Finally I would like to thank my staff. They have put in a lot of time and effort to make this a process the Senate can be proud of, and I appreciate their efforts and late nights on this bill. So my thanks go out to Diane Tran, Bill Knudsen, Marty West, Patrick Murray, Peter Oppenheim, Michael Merrell, David Cleary, Liz Wolgemuth, and Jim Jeffries.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendments en bloc.

The amendments (Nos. 2847 and 2846) were agreed to en bloc.

The Senator from Iowa.

AMENDMENT NO. 2811 WITHDRAWN

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I withdraw my pending amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The amendment is withdrawn.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, again, I know of no further amendments or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on the adoption of the committee substitute, as amended.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I would like to join my colleagues and thank everyone for getting this bill done. This is a good bill. First, I would again say thanks to both Senator BURR and Senator MIKULSKI. This is really their bill. They spent the better part of 2 years working this out.

I would like to say that we have had a good day here to work this out, as Senator ALEXANDER said. But a lot of that is the preliminary work that goes into developing a bill such as this over a long period of time. So my respect—my great respect—and my thanks to both Senator BURR and Senator MIKULSKI for getting this bill to where we are now.

My thanks to my good friend Senator ALEXANDER and for the great partnership we have working together on the committee. As he said the other day, no other committee has a wider divergence of ideological views than our committee, but I believe, if I am not mistaken, this is the 19th or 20th bill we have gotten through our committee this Congress.

Mr. REID addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Will my friend yield for a brief comment?

Mr. HARKIN. Yes, of course I will yield.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it would be improper if we did not acknowledge the work MIKE LEE was involved with in this legislation. He should be complimented for working to help get this passed.

Mr. HARKIN. The leader is right. Senator LEE was very accommodating in letting us move forward on this bill. I appreciate that.

We accomplished a lot in the floor process, as Senator ALEXANDER said. I think we can adopt the legislation, making it an even stronger bill. I would now like to thank a lot of the staff. I hope I do not miss anyone. David Cleary, Peter Oppenheim, Patrick Murray, Marty West, and Bill Knudsen of Senator ALEXANDER's staff.

I would like to thank Chris Toppings and Natasha Hickman of Senator BURR's staff.

I would like to commend the work of Jessica McNiece and Brent Palmer of Senator MIKULSKI's staff.

Finally, I would like to thank Pam Smith, who is not here but who worked on this for a long time, Derek Miller, Mildred Otero, Mario Cardona, Soncia Coleman, Michael Gamel McCormick, Leanne Hotek, Brit Moller, and Aissa Canchola of my staff.

I also wish to thank, from the staffs of Senator MURRAY, Sarah Bolton; Senator SANDERS, David Cohen; Senator CASEY, Sara Mabry and Christina Baumgardner; Senator HAGAN, Ashley Eden; Senator FRANKEN, Gohar Sedighi and Maggie Henderson; Senator BENNET, Juliana Herman and Molly Fishman; Senator WHITEHOUSE, Rick Van Buren; Senator BALDWIN, Michael Dinapolo; Senator MURPHY, Yoon Hayne; Senator WARREN, Julie Morgan; Senator ENZI, Kristin Chapman; Senator ISAKSON, Brett Layson; Senator PAUL, Natalie Burkholter; Senator HATCH, Katie Neal; Senator ROBERTS, Joshua Yurek; Senator MURKOWSKI, Karen McCarthy; Senator KIRK, Cabe Clurman; and Senator SCOTT, Elizabeth Simmons.

As I said at the beginning of this bill's consideration, this bill represents a strong, positive shift for working families in America who benefit from the childcare subsidy program. I hope my colleagues will join all of us in voting to give this an overwhelming vote of yes on final passage.

I know of no further debate on the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall it pass?

Mr. HARKIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 96, nays 2, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 77 Leg.]

YEAS—96

Alexander	Franken	Murphy
Ayotte	Gillibrand	Murray
Baldwin	Graham	Nelson
Barrasso	Grassley	Paul
Begich	Hagan	Portman
Bennet	Harkin	Pryor
Blumenthal	Hatch	Reed
Blunt	Heinrich	Reid
Booker	Heitkamp	Risch
Boozman	Heller	Roberts
Boxer	Hirono	Rockefeller
Brown	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Isakson	Sanders
Cantwell	Johanns	Schatz
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Carper	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Casey	Kaine	Sessions
Chambliss	King	Shaheen
Coats	Kirk	Shelby
Cochran	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Collins	Landrieu	Tester
Coons	Leahy	Thune
Corker	Levin	Toomey
Cornyn	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Crapo	Markey	Udall (NM)
Cruz	McCain	Vitter
Donnelly	McCaskill	Walsh
Durbin	McConnell	Warner
Enzi	Menendez	Warren
Feinstein	Merkley	Whitehouse
Fischer	Mikulski	Wicker
Flake	Murkowski	Wyden

NAYS—2

Coburn Lee

NOT VOTING—2

Inhofe Moran

The bill (S. 1086), as amended, was passed as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014”.

SEC. 2. SHORT TITLE AND PURPOSES.

Section 658A of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9801 note) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 658A. SHORT TITLE AND PURPOSES.

“(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This subchapter may be cited as the ‘Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990’.

“(b) **PURPOSES.**—The purposes of this subchapter are—

“(1) to allow each State maximum flexibility in developing child care programs and policies that best suit the needs of children and parents within that State;

“(2) to promote parental choice to empower working parents to make their own decisions regarding the child care that best suits their family's needs;

“(3) to assist States in providing high-quality child care services to parents trying to achieve independence from public assistance;

“(4) to assist States in improving the overall quality of child care services and programs by implementing the health, safety, licensing, training, and oversight standards established in this subchapter and in State law (including regulations);

“(5) to improve school readiness by having children, families, and child care providers engage in activities, in child care settings, that are developmentally appropriate and age-appropriate for the children and that promote children's language and literacy and mathematics skills, social and emotional development, physical health and development, and approaches to learning;

“(6) to encourage States to provide consumer education information to help parents make informed choices about child care serv-

ices and to promote involvement by parents and family members in the education of their children in child care settings;

“(7) to increase the number and percentage of low-income children in high-quality child care settings; and

“(8) to improve the coordination and delivery of early childhood education and care (including child care).”.

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

Section 658B of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858) is amended by striking “subchapter” and all that follows, and inserting “subchapter, such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2020.”.

SEC. 4. LEAD AGENCY.

(a) **DESIGNATION.**—Section 658D(a) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858b(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking “chief executive officer” and inserting “Governor”; and

(2) by striking “designate” and all that follows and inserting “designate an agency (which may be an appropriate collaborative agency), or establish a joint interagency office, that complies with the requirements of subsection (b) to serve as the lead agency for the State under this subchapter.”.

(b) **COLLABORATION WITH TRIBES.**—Section 658D(b)(1) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858b(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in subparagraph (D), by striking the period and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(E) at the option of an Indian tribe or tribal organization in the State, collaborate and coordinate with such Indian tribe or tribal organization in the development of the State plan.”.

SEC. 5. APPLICATION AND PLAN.

(a) **PERIOD.**—Section 658E(b) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858c(b)) is amended, by striking “2-year” and inserting “3-year”.

(b) **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.**—Section 658E(c) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858c(c)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “or established” after “designated”; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by inserting a comma after “care of such providers”; and

(B) by striking subparagraphs (D) through (H); and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) **MONITORING AND INSPECTION REPORTS.**—The plan shall include a certification that the State, not later than 1 year after the State has in effect the policies and practices described in subparagraph (K)(i), will make public by electronic means, in a consumer-friendly and easily accessible format, organized by provider, the results of monitoring and inspection reports, including those due to major substantiated complaints about failure to comply with this subchapter and State child care policies, as well as the number of deaths, serious injuries, and instances of substantiated child abuse that occurred in child care settings each year, for eligible child care providers within the State. The results shall also include information on the date of such an inspection and, where applicable, information on corrective action taken.

“(E) **CONSUMER EDUCATION INFORMATION.**—The plan shall include a certification that the State will collect and disseminate (which dissemination may be done, except as otherwise specified in this subchapter, through

resource and referral organizations or other means as determined by the State) to parents of eligible children and the general public—

“(i) information that will promote informed child care choices and that concerns—

“(I) the availability of child care services provided through programs authorized under this subchapter and, if feasible, other child care services and other programs provided in the State for which the family may be eligible;

“(II) if available, information about the quality of providers, including information from a Quality Rating and Improvement System;

“(III) information, made available through a State website, describing the State process for licensing child care providers, the State processes for conducting background checks, and monitoring and inspections, of child care providers, and the offenses that prevent individuals and entities from serving as child care providers in the State;

“(IV) the availability of assistance to obtain child care services;

“(V) other programs for which families that receive child care services for which financial assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter may be eligible, including the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families established under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), Head Start and Early Head Start programs carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), the program carried out under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.), the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children established under section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786), the child and adult care food program established under section 17 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1766), and the Medicaid and State children's health insurance programs under titles XIX and XXI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq., 1397aa et seq.);

“(VI) programs carried out under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.); and

“(VII) research and best practices concerning children's development, including language and cognitive development, development of early language and literacy and mathematics skills, social and emotional development, meaningful parent and family engagement, and physical health and development (particularly healthy eating and physical activity);

“(ii) information on developmental screenings, including—

“(I) information on existing (as of the date of submission of the application containing the plan) resources and services the State can deploy, including the coordinated use of the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment program under the Medicaid program carried out under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) and developmental screening services available under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.), in conducting developmental screenings and providing referrals to services, when appropriate, for children who receive assistance under this subchapter; and

“(II) a description of how a family or eligible child care provider may utilize the resources and services described in subclause (I) to obtain developmental screenings for children who receive assistance under this subchapter who may be at risk for cognitive or other developmental delays, which may include social, emotional, physical, or linguistic delays; and

“(iii) information, for parents receiving assistance under the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) and low-income parents, about eligibility for assistance provided in accordance with this subchapter.

“(F) COMPLIANCE WITH STATE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall include a certification that the State involved has in effect licensing requirements applicable to child care services provided within the State, and provide a detailed description of such requirements and of how such requirements are effectively enforced.

“(ii) LICENSE EXEMPTION.—If the State uses funding received under this subchapter to support a child care provider that is exempt from the corresponding licensing requirements described in clause (i), the plan shall include a description stating why such licensing exemption does not endanger the health, safety, or development of children who receive services from child care providers who are exempt from such requirements.

“(iii) REQUESTS FOR RELIEF.—As described in section 658I(d), a State may request relief from a provision of Federal law other than this subchapter that might conflict with a requirement of this subchapter, including a licensing requirement.

“(G) TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall describe the training requirements that are in effect within the State that are designed to enable child care providers to promote the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children and that are applicable to child care providers that provide services for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter in the State.

“(ii) REQUIREMENTS.—The plan shall provide an assurance that such training requirements—

“(I) provide a set of workforce and competency standards for child care providers that provide services described in clause (i);

“(II) are developed in consultation with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care (designated or established pursuant to section 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i)));

“(III) include an evidence-based training framework that is designed to promote children's learning and development and school readiness and to improve child outcomes, including school readiness and early language and literacy development;

“(IV) incorporate knowledge and application of the State's early learning and developmental guidelines (where applicable), and the State's child development and health standards; and

“(V) to the extent practicable, are appropriate for a population of children that includes—

“(aa) different age groups (such as infants, toddlers, and preschoolers);

“(bb) English learners;

“(cc) children with disabilities; and

“(dd) Native Americans, including Indians, as the term is defined in section 4 of the In-

dian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b) (including Alaska Natives within the meaning of that term), and Native Hawaiians (as defined in section 7207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517)).

“(iii) PROGRESSION OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.—In developing the requirements, the State shall develop a statewide progression of professional development designed to improve the skills and knowledge of the workforce—

“(I) which may include the acquisition of course credit in postsecondary education or of a credential, aligned with the framework; and

“(II) which shall be accessible to providers supported through Indian tribes or tribal organizations that receive assistance under this subchapter.

“(iv) ALIGNMENT.—The State shall engage the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care, and may engage institutions of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)), and other training providers in aligning training opportunities with the State's training framework.

“(v) CREDENTIALS.—The Secretary shall not require an individual or entity that provides child care services for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter to acquire a credential to provide such services. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a State from requiring a credential.

“(H) CHILD-TO-PROVIDER RATIO STANDARDS.—

“(i) STANDARDS.—The plan shall describe child care standards, for child care for which assistance is made available in accordance with this subchapter, appropriate to the type of child care setting involved, that address—

“(I) group size limits for specific age populations;

“(II) the appropriate ratio between the number of children and the number of providers, in terms of the age of the children in child care, as determined by the State; and

“(III) required qualifications for such providers.

“(ii) CONSTRUCTION.—The Secretary may offer guidance to States on child-to-provider ratios described in clause (i) according to setting and age group but shall not require that States maintain specific child-to-provider ratios for providers who receive assistance under this subchapter.

“(I) HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS.—The plan shall include a certification that there are in effect within the State, under State or local law, requirements designed to protect the health and safety of children that are applicable to child care providers that provide services for which assistance is made available in accordance with this subchapter. Such requirements—

“(i) shall relate to matters including health and safety topics (including prevention of shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma) consisting of—

“(I) the prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunization) and the establishment of a grace period that allows homeless children and children in foster care to receive services under this subchapter while their families (including foster families) are taking any necessary action to comply with immunization and other health and safety requirements;

“(II) handwashing and universal health precautions;

“(III) the administration of medication, consistent with standards for parental consent;

“(IV) the prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and other allergic reactions;

“(V) prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleeping practices;

“(VI) sanitary methods of food handling;

“(VII) building and physical premises safety;

“(VIII) emergency preparedness and response planning for emergencies resulting from a natural disaster, or a man-caused event (such as violence at a child care facility), within the meaning of those terms under section 602(a)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5195a(a)(1));

“(IX) the handling and storage of hazardous materials and the appropriate disposal of biocontaminants;

“(X) identification of and protection from hazards that can cause bodily injury such as electrical hazards, bodies of water, and vehicular traffic;

“(XI) for providers that offer transportation, if applicable, appropriate precautions in transporting children;

“(XII) first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation; and

“(XIII) minimum health and safety training, to be completed pre-service or during an orientation period, appropriate to the provider setting involved that addresses each of the requirements relating to matters described in subclauses (I) through (XII); and

“(ii) may include requirements relating to nutrition, access to physical activity, or any other subject area determined by the State to be necessary to promote child development or to protect children's health and safety.

“(J) COMPLIANCE WITH STATE AND LOCAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS.—The plan shall include a certification that procedures are in effect to ensure that child care providers within the State, that provide services for which assistance is made available in accordance with this subchapter, comply with all applicable State and local health and safety requirements as described in subparagraph (I).

“(K) ENFORCEMENT OF LICENSING AND OTHER REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS.—

“(i) CERTIFICATION.—The plan shall include a certification that the State, not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, shall have in effect policies and practices, applicable to licensing or regulating child care providers that provide services for which assistance is made available in accordance with this subchapter and the facilities of those providers, that—

“(I) ensure that individuals who are hired as licensing inspectors in the State are qualified to inspect those child care providers and facilities and have received training in related health and safety requirements, child development, child abuse prevention and detection, program management, and relevant law enforcement;

“(II) require licensing inspectors (or qualified inspectors designated by the lead agency) of those child care providers and facilities to perform inspections, with—

“(aa) not less than 1 prelicensure inspection for compliance with health, safety, and fire standards, of each such child care provider and facility in the State; and

“(bb) not less than annually, an inspection (which shall be unannounced) of each such child care provider and facility in the State for compliance with all child care licensing standards, which shall include an inspection for compliance with health, safety, and fire

standards (although inspectors may or may not inspect for compliance with all 3 standards at the same time); and

“(III) require the ratio of licensing inspectors to such child care providers and facilities in the State to—

“(aa) be maintained at a level sufficient to enable the State to conduct inspections of such child care providers and facilities on a timely basis in accordance with Federal and State law; and

“(bb) be consistent with research findings and best practices.

“(ii) CONSTRUCTION.—The Secretary may offer guidance to a State, if requested by the State, on a research-based minimum standard regarding ratios described in clause (i)(III) and provide technical assistance to the State on meeting the minimum standard within a reasonable time period, but shall not prescribe a particular ratio.

“(L) COMPLIANCE WITH CHILD ABUSE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—The plan shall include a certification that child care providers within the State will comply with the child abuse reporting requirements of section 106(b)(2)(B)(i) of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5106a(b)(2)(B)(i)).

“(M) MEETING THE NEEDS OF CERTAIN POPULATIONS.—The plan shall describe how the State will develop and implement strategies (which may include the provision of compensation at higher payment rates and bonuses to child care providers, the provision of direct contracts or grants to community-based organizations, offering child care certificates to parents, or other means determined by the State) to increase the supply and improve the quality of child care for—

“(i) children in underserved areas;

“(ii) infants and toddlers;

“(iii) children with disabilities, as defined by the State; and

“(iv) children who receive care during non-traditional hours.

“(N) PROTECTION FOR WORKING PARENTS.—

“(i) MINIMUM PERIOD.—

“(I) 12-MONTH PERIOD.—The plan shall demonstrate that each child who receives assistance under this subchapter in the State will be considered to meet all eligibility requirements for such assistance and will receive such assistance, for not less than 12 months before the State redetermines the eligibility of the child under this subchapter, regardless of a temporary change in the ongoing status of the child's parent as working or attending a job training or educational program or a change in family income for the child's family, if that family income does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size.

“(II) FLUCTUATIONS IN EARNINGS.—The plan shall demonstrate how the State's processes for initial determination and redetermination of such eligibility take into account irregular fluctuations in earnings.

“(ii) REDETERMINATION PROCESS.—The plan shall describe the procedures and policies that are in place to ensure that working parents (especially parents in families receiving assistance under the program of block grants to States for temporary assistance for needy families under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)) are not required to unduly disrupt their employment in order to comply with the State's requirements for redetermination of eligibility for assistance provided in accordance with this subchapter.

“(iii) PERIOD BEFORE TERMINATION.—At the option of the State, the plan shall demonstrate that the State will not terminate

assistance provided to carry out this subchapter based on a factor consisting of a parent's loss of work or cessation of attendance at a job training or educational program for which the family was receiving the assistance, without continuing the assistance for a reasonable period of time, of not less than 3 months, after such loss or cessation in order for the parent to engage in a job search and resume work, or resume attendance at a job training or educational program, as soon as possible.

“(iv) GRADUATED PHASEOUT OF CARE.—The plan shall describe the policies and procedures that are in place to allow for provision of continued assistance to carry out this subchapter, at the beginning of a new eligibility period under clause (i)(I), for children of parents who are working or attending a job training or educational program and whose family income exceeds the State's income limit to initially qualify for such assistance, if the family income for the family involved does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size.

“(O) COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall describe how the State, in order to expand accessibility and continuity of quality early childhood education and care, and assist children enrolled in prekindergarten, Early Head Start, or Head Start programs to receive full-day services, will efficiently coordinate the services supported to carry out this subchapter with—

“(I) programs carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), including the Early Head Start programs carried out under section 645A of that Act (42 U.S.C. 9840a);

“(II) programs carried out under part A of title I, and part B of title IV, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6311 et seq., 7171 et seq.);

“(III) programs carried out under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.);

“(IV) the maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting programs authorized under section 511 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 711), as added by section 2951 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148);

“(V) State, Indian tribe or tribal organization, and locally funded early childhood education and care programs;

“(VI) programs serving homeless children and services of local educational agency liaisons for homeless children and youths designated under subsection (g)(1)(J)(ii) of section 722 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii));

“(VII) State agencies and programs serving children in foster care and the foster families of such children; and

“(VIII) other Federal programs supporting early childhood education and care activities, and, where applicable, child care programs funded through State veterans affairs offices.

“(ii) OPTIONAL USE OF COMBINED FUNDS.—If the State elects to combine funding for the services supported to carry out this subchapter with funding for any program described in subclauses (I) through (VII) of clause (i), the plan shall describe how the State will combine the multiple sets of funding and use the combined funding.

“(iii) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in clause (i) shall be construed to affect the priority of children described in clause (i) to receive full-day prekindergarten or Head Start program services.

“(P) PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS.—The plan shall demonstrate how the State encourages partnerships among State agencies, other public agencies, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and private entities to leverage existing service delivery systems (as of the date of the submission of the application containing the plan) for early childhood education and care and to increase the supply and quality of child care services for children who are less than 13 years of age, such as by implementing voluntary shared services alliance models.

“(Q) PRIORITY FOR LOW-INCOME POPULATIONS.—The plan shall describe the process the State proposes to use, with respect to investments made to increase access to programs providing high-quality early childhood education and care, to give priority for those investments to children of families in areas that have significant concentrations of poverty and unemployment and that do not have such programs.

“(R) CONSULTATION.—The plan shall include a certification that the State has developed the plan in consultation with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care designated or established pursuant to section 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i)).

“(S) PAYMENT PRACTICES.—The plan shall include a certification that the payment practices of child care providers in the State that serve children who receive assistance under this subchapter reflect generally accepted payment practices of child care providers in the State that serve children who do not receive assistance under this subchapter, so as to provide stability of funding and encourage more child care providers to serve children who receive assistance under this subchapter.

“(T) EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDELINES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall include an assurance that the State will develop or implement early learning and developmental guidelines that are appropriate for children from birth through entry into kindergarten, describing what such children should know and be able to do, and covering the essential domains of early childhood education and care and early childhood development for use statewide by child care providers. Such child care providers shall—

“(I) be licensed or regulated under State law; and

“(II) not be a relative of all children for whom the provider provides child care services.

“(ii) ALIGNMENT.—The guidelines shall be research-based, developmentally appropriate, and aligned with State standards for education in kindergarten through grade 3.

“(iii) PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.—The plan shall include an assurance that funds received by the State to carry out this subchapter will not be used to develop or implement an assessment for children that—

“(I) will be the sole basis for a child care provider being determined to be ineligible to participate in the program carried out under this subchapter;

“(II) will be used as the primary or sole basis to provide a reward or sanction for an individual provider;

“(III) will be used as the primary or sole method for assessing program effectiveness; or

“(IV) will be used to deny eligibility to participate in the program carried out under this subchapter.

“(iv) EXCEPTIONS.—Nothing in this subchapter shall preclude the State from using

a single assessment (if appropriate) for children for—

“(I) supporting learning or improving a classroom environment;

“(II) targeting professional development to a provider;

“(III) determining the need for health, mental health, disability, developmental delay, or family support services;

“(IV) obtaining information for the quality improvement process at the State level; or

“(V) conducting a program evaluation for the purposes of providing program improvement and parent information.

“(v) NO FEDERAL CONTROL.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize an officer or employee of the Federal Government to—

“(I) mandate, direct, or control a State’s early learning and developmental guidelines, developed in accordance with this section;

“(II) establish any criterion that specifies, defines, or prescribes the standards or measures that a State uses to establish, implement, or improve—

“(aa) early learning and developmental guidelines, or early learning standards, assessments, or accountability systems; or

“(bb) alignment of early learning and developmental guidelines with State standards for education in kindergarten through grade 3; or

“(III) require a State to submit such standards or measures for review.

“(U) DISASTER PREPAREDNESS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The plan shall demonstrate the manner in which the State will address the needs of children in child care services provided through programs authorized under this subchapter, including the need for safe child care, during the period before, during, and after a state of emergency declared by the Governor or a major disaster or emergency (as such terms are defined in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122)).

“(ii) STATEWIDE CHILD CARE DISASTER PLAN.—Such plan shall include a statewide child care disaster plan for coordination of activities and collaboration, in the event of an emergency or disaster described in clause (i), among the State agency with jurisdiction over human services, the agency with jurisdiction over State emergency planning, the State lead agency, the State agency with jurisdiction over licensing of child care providers, the local resource and referral organizations, the State resource and referral system, and the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care as provided for under section 642B(b) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)).

“(iii) DISASTER PLAN COMPONENTS.—The components of the disaster plan, for such an emergency or disaster, shall include—

“(I) guidelines for the continuation of child care services in the period following the emergency or disaster, including the provision of emergency and temporary child care services, and temporary operating standards for child care providers during that period;

“(II) evacuation, relocation, shelter-in-place, and lock-down procedures, and procedures for communication and reunification with families, continuity of operations, and accommodation of infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions; and

“(III) procedures for staff and volunteer training and practice drills.”

(3) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “as required under” and inserting “in accordance with”;

(B) in subparagraph (B)—

(i) by striking “The State” and inserting the following:

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The State”;

(ii) by striking “and any other activity that the State deems appropriate to realize any of the goals specified in paragraphs (2) through (5) of section 658A(b)” and inserting “activities that improve access to child care services, including use of procedures to permit immediate enrollment (after the initial eligibility determination and after a child is determined to be eligible) of homeless children while required documentation is obtained, training and technical assistance on identifying and serving homeless children and their families, and specific outreach to homeless families, and any other activity that the State determines to be appropriate to meet the purposes of this subchapter (which may include an activity described in clause (ii))”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(ii) REPORT BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September 30 of the first full fiscal year after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, and September 30 of each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary (acting through the Assistant Secretary for Children and Families of the Department of Health and Human Services) shall prepare a report that contains a determination about whether each State uses amounts provided to such State for the fiscal year involved under this subchapter in accordance with the priority for services described in clause (i).

“(II) PENALTY FOR NONCOMPLIANCE.—For any fiscal year that the report of the Secretary described in subclause (I) indicates that a State has failed to give priority for services in accordance with clause (i), the Secretary shall—

“(aa) inform the State that the State has until the date that is 6 months after the Secretary has issued such report to fully comply with clause (i);

“(bb) provide the State an opportunity to modify the State plan of such State, to make the plan consistent with the requirements of clause (i), and resubmit such State plan to the Secretary not later than the date described in item (aa); and

“(cc) if the State does not fully comply with clause (i) and item (bb), by the date described in item (aa), withhold 5 percent of the funds that would otherwise be allocated to that State in accordance with this subchapter for the first full fiscal year after that date.

“(III) WAIVER FOR EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES.—Notwithstanding subclause (II) the Secretary may grant a waiver to a State for one year to the penalty applied in subclause (II) if the Secretary determines there are extraordinary circumstances, such as a natural disaster, that prevent the State from complying with clause (i). If the Secretary does grant a waiver to a State under this section, the Secretary shall, within 30 days of granting such waiver, submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees on the circumstances of the waiver including the stated reason from the State on the need for a waiver, the expected impact of the waiver on children served under this program, and any such other relevant information the Secretary deems necessary.

“(iii) CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL SYSTEM.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—A State may use amounts described in clause (i) to establish

or support a system of local or regional child care resource and referral organizations that is coordinated, to the extent determined appropriate by the State, by a statewide public or private nonprofit, community-based or regionally based, lead child care resource and referral organization.

“(II) LOCAL OR REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.—The local or regional child care resource and referral organizations supported as described in subclause (I) shall—

“(aa) provide parents in the State with consumer education information referred to in paragraph (2)(E) (except as otherwise provided in that paragraph), concerning the full range of child care options, analyzed by provider, including child care provided during nontraditional hours and through emergency child care centers, in their political subdivisions or regions;

“(bb) to the extent practicable, work directly with families who receive assistance under this subchapter to offer the families support and assistance, using information described in item (aa), to make an informed decision about which child care providers they will use, in an effort to ensure that the families are enrolling their children in high-quality care;

“(cc) collect and analyze data on the coordination of services and supports, including services under section 619 and part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1419, 1431 et seq.), for children with disabilities (as defined in section 602 of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1401));

“(dd) collect and analyze data on the supply of and demand for child care in political subdivisions or regions within the State and submit such data and analysis to the State;

“(ee) work to establish partnerships with public agencies and private entities to increase the supply and quality of child care services in the State; and

“(ff) as appropriate, coordinate their activities with the activities of the State lead agency and local agencies that administer funds made available in accordance with this subchapter.”;

(C) in subparagraph (D)—

(i) by striking “1997 through 2002” and inserting “2015 through 2020”; and

(ii) by striking “families described in paragraph (2)(H)” and inserting “families with children described in clause (i), (ii), (iii), or (iv) of paragraph (2)(M)”;

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(E) DIRECT SERVICES.—From amounts provided to a State for a fiscal year to carry out this subchapter, the State shall—

“(i) reserve the minimum amount required to be reserved under section 658G, and the funds for costs described in subparagraph (C); and

“(ii) from the remainder, use not less than 70 percent to fund direct services (provided by the State) in accordance with paragraph (2)(A).”;

(4) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

“(4) PAYMENT RATES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The State plan shall certify that payment rates for the provision of child care services for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter are sufficient to ensure equal access for eligible children to child care services that are comparable to child care services in the State or substate area involved that are provided to children whose parents are not eligible to receive assistance under this subchapter or to receive child care assistance under any other Federal or State program and shall provide a summary of the facts re-

lied on by the State to determine that such rates are sufficient to ensure such access.

“(B) SURVEY.—The State plan shall—

“(i) demonstrate that the State has, after consulting with the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care designated or established in section 642B(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b(b)(1)(A)(i)), local child care program administrators, local child care resource and referral agencies, and other appropriate entities, developed and conducted (not earlier than 2 years before the date of the submission of the application containing the State plan) a statistically valid and reliable survey of the market rates for child care services in the State (that reflects variations in the cost of child care services by geographic area, type of provider, and age of child);

“(ii) demonstrate that the State prepared a detailed report containing the results of the State market rates survey conducted pursuant to clause (i), and made the results of the survey widely available (not later than 30 days after the completion of such survey) through periodic means, including posting the results on the Internet;

“(iii) describe how the State will set payment rates for child care services, for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter—

“(I) in accordance with the results of the market rates survey conducted pursuant to clause (i);

“(II) taking into consideration the cost of providing higher quality child care services than were provided under this subchapter before the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014; and

“(III) without, to the extent practicable, reducing the number of families in the State receiving such assistance to carry out this subchapter, relative to the number of such families on the date of enactment of that Act; and

“(iv) describe how the State will provide for timely payment for child care services provided in accordance with this subchapter.

“(C) CONSTRUCTION.—

“(i) NO PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to create a private right of action.

“(ii) NO PROHIBITION OF CERTAIN DIFFERENT RATES.—Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed to prevent a State from differentiating the payment rates described in subparagraph (B)(iii) on the basis of such factors as—

“(I) geographic location of child care providers (such as location in an urban or rural area);

“(II) the age or particular needs of children (such as the needs of children with disabilities and children served by child protective services);

“(III) whether the providers provide child care during weekend and other nontraditional hours; or

“(IV) the State’s determination that such differentiated payment rates are needed to enable a parent to choose child care that is of high quality.”; and

(5) in paragraph (5), by inserting “(that is not a barrier to families receiving assistance under this subchapter)” after “cost sharing”.

(c) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 658F(b)(2) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858d(b)(2)) is amended by striking “section 658E(c)(2)(F)” and inserting “section 658E(c)(2)(I)”.

SEC. 6. ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE.

Section 658G of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858e) is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 658G. ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE.

“(a) RESERVATION.—

“(1) RESERVATION FOR ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE QUALITY OF CHILD CARE SERVICES.—A State that receives funds to carry out this subchapter for a fiscal year referred to in paragraph (2) shall reserve and use a portion of such funds, in accordance with paragraph (2), for activities provided directly, or through grants or contracts with local child care resource and referral organizations or other appropriate entities, that are designed to improve the quality of child care services and increase parental options for, and access to, high-quality child care, provided in accordance with this subchapter.

“(2) AMOUNT OF RESERVATIONS.—Such State shall reserve and use—

“(A) to carry out the activities described in paragraph (1), not less than—

“(i) 6 percent of the funds described in paragraph (1), for the first and second full fiscal years after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014;

“(ii) 8 percent of such funds, for the third and fourth full fiscal years after the date of enactment; and

“(iii) 10 percent of such funds, for the fifth full fiscal year after the date of enactment and each succeeding fiscal year; and

“(B) in addition to the funds reserved under subparagraph (A), 3 percent of the funds described in paragraph (1), for the first full fiscal year after the date of enactment and each succeeding fiscal year, to carry out the activities described in paragraph (1) and subsection (b)(4), as such activities relate to the quality of care for infants and toddlers.

“(b) ACTIVITIES.—Funds reserved under subsection (a) shall be used to carry out not fewer than 2 of the following activities:

“(1) Supporting the training, professional development, and professional advancement of the child care workforce through activities such as—

“(A) offering child care providers training and professional development that is intentional and sequential and leads to a higher level of skill or certification;

“(B) establishing or supporting programs designed to increase the retention and improve the competencies of child care providers, including wage incentive programs and initiatives that establish tiered payment rates for providers that meet or exceed child care services guidelines, as defined by the State;

“(C) offering training, professional development, and educational opportunities for child care providers that relate to the use of developmentally appropriate and age-appropriate curricula, and early childhood teaching strategies, that are scientifically based and aligned with the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children, including offering specialized training for child care providers who care for infants and toddlers, children who are English learners, and children with disabilities (as defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401));

“(D) providing training concerning the State early learning and developmental guidelines, where applicable, including training concerning early mathematics and early

language and literacy development and effective instructional practices to support mathematics and language and literacy development in young children;

“(E) incorporating effective use of data to guide instruction and program improvement;

“(F) including effective behavior management strategies and training, including positive behavioral interventions and supports, that promote positive social and emotional development and reduce challenge behaviors;

“(G) at the option of the State, incorporating feedback from experts at the State’s institutions of higher education, as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002), and other early childhood development experts and early childhood education and care experts;

“(H) providing training corresponding to the nutritional and physical activity needs of children to promote healthy development;

“(I) providing training or professional development for child care providers to serve and support children with disabilities;

“(J) providing training and outreach on engaging parents and families in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways to expand their knowledge, skills, and capacity to become meaningful partners in supporting their children’s learning and development;

“(K) providing training or professional development for child care providers regarding the early neurological development of children; and

“(L) connecting child care staff members of child care providers with available Federal and State financial aid, or other resources, that would assist child care staff members in pursuing relevant postsecondary training.

“(2) Supporting the use of the early learning and developmental guidelines described in section 658E(c)(2)(T) by—

“(A) developing and implementing the State’s early learning and developmental guidelines; and

“(B) providing technical assistance to enhance early learning for preschool and school-aged children in order to promote language and literacy skills, foster school readiness, and support later school success.

“(3) Developing and implementing a tiered quality rating system for child care providers, which shall—

“(A) support and assess the quality of child care providers in the State;

“(B) build on licensing standards and other State regulatory standards for such providers;

“(C) be designed to improve the quality of different types of child care providers;

“(D) describe the quality of early learning facilities;

“(E) build the capacity of State early childhood education and care programs and communities to promote parents’ and families’ understanding of the State’s early childhood education and care system and the ratings of the programs in which the child is enrolled; and

“(F) provide, to the maximum extent practicable, financial incentives and other supports designed to help child care providers achieve and sustain higher levels of quality.

“(4) Improving the supply and quality of child care programs and services for infants and toddlers through activities, which may include—

“(A) establishing or expanding neighborhood-based high-quality comprehensive family and child development centers, which may serve as resources to child care providers in order to improve the quality of early childhood education and care and early

childhood development services provided to infants and toddlers from low-income families and to help eligible child care providers improve their capacity to offer high-quality care to infants and toddlers from low-income families;

“(B) establishing or expanding the operation of community or neighborhood-based family child care networks;

“(C) supporting statewide networks of infant and toddler child care specialists, including specialists who have knowledge regarding infant and toddler development and curriculum and program implementation as well as the ability to coordinate services with early intervention specialists who provide services for infants and toddlers with disabilities under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.);

“(D) carrying out initiatives to improve the quality of the infant and toddler child care workforce, such as providing relevant training, professional development, or mentoring opportunities and linking such opportunities to career pathways, developing career pathways for providers in such workforce, and improving the State credentialing of eligible providers caring for infants and toddlers;

“(E) if applicable, developing infant and toddler components within the State’s quality rating system described in paragraph (3) for child care providers for infants and toddlers, or the development of infant and toddler components in a State’s child care licensing regulations or early learning and developmental guidelines;

“(F) improving the ability of parents to access information about high-quality infant and toddler care; and

“(G) carrying out other activities determined by the State to improve the quality of infant and toddler care provided in the State, and for which there is evidence that the activities will lead to improved infant and toddler health and safety, infant and toddler development, or infant and toddler well-being, including providing training (including training in safe sleep practices, first aid, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation).

“(5) Promoting broad child care provider participation in the quality rating system described in paragraph (3).

“(6) Establishing or expanding a statewide system of child care resource and referral services.

“(7) Facilitating compliance with State requirements for inspection, monitoring, training, and health and safety, and with State licensing standards.

“(8) Evaluating and assessing the quality and effectiveness of child care programs and services offered in the State, including evaluating how such programs and services may improve the overall school readiness of young children.

“(9) Supporting child care providers in the pursuit of accreditation by an established national accrediting body with demonstrated, valid, and reliable program standards of high quality.

“(10) Supporting State or local efforts to develop or adopt high-quality program standards relating to health, mental health, nutrition, physical activity, and physical development and providing resources to enable eligible child care providers to meet, exceed, or sustain success in meeting or exceeding, such standards.

“(11) Carrying out other activities determined by the State to improve the quality of child care services provided in the State, and for which measurement of outcomes relating

to improved provider preparedness, child safety, child well-being, or school readiness is possible.

“(C) CERTIFICATION.—Beginning with fiscal year 2015, at the beginning of each fiscal year, the State shall annually submit to the Secretary a certification containing an assurance that the State was in compliance with subsection (a) during the preceding fiscal year and a description of how the State used funds received under this subchapter to comply with subsection (a) during that preceding fiscal year.

“(d) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Each State receiving funds under this subchapter shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Secretary, which shall include information about—

“(1) the amount of funds that are reserved under subsection (a);

“(2) the activities carried out under this section; and

“(3) the measures that the State will use to evaluate the State’s progress in improving the quality of child care programs and services in the State.

“(e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall offer technical assistance, in accordance with section 658I(a)(3), which may include technical assistance through the use of grants or cooperative agreements, to States for the activities described in subsection (b).

“(f) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as providing the Secretary the authority to regulate, direct, or dictate State child care quality activities or progress in implementing those activities.”.

SEC. 7. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 658G the following:

“SEC. 658H. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—A State that receives funds to carry out this subchapter shall have in effect—

“(1) requirements, policies, and procedures to require and conduct criminal background checks for child care staff members (including prospective child care staff members) of child care providers described in subsection (c)(1); and

“(2) licensing, regulation, and registration requirements, as applicable, that prohibit the employment of child care staff members as described in subsection (c).

“(b) REQUIREMENTS.—A criminal background check for a child care staff member under subsection (a) shall include—

“(1) a search of each State criminal and sex offender registry or repository in the State where the child care staff member resides and each State where such staff member resided during the preceding 10 years;

“(2) a search of State-based child abuse and neglect registries and databases in the State where the child care staff member resides and each State where such staff member resided during the preceding 10 years;

“(3) a search of the National Crime Information Center;

“(4) a Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint check using the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System; and

“(5) a search of the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16901 et seq.).

“(c) PROHIBITIONS.—

“(1) CHILD CARE STAFF MEMBERS.—A child care staff member shall be ineligible for employment by a child care provider that is licensed, regulated, or registered by the State

or for which assistance is provided in accordance with this subchapter, if such individual—

“(A) refuses to consent to the criminal background check described in subsection (b);

“(B) knowingly makes a materially false statement in connection with such criminal background check;

“(C) is registered, or is required to be registered, on a State sex offender registry or repository or the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16901 et seq.); or

“(D) has been convicted of a felony consisting of—

“(i) murder, as described in section 1111 of title 18, United States Code;

“(ii) child abuse or neglect;

“(iii) a crime against children, including child pornography;

“(iv) spousal abuse;

“(v) a crime involving rape or sexual assault;

“(vi) kidnapping;

“(vii) arson;

“(viii) physical assault or battery; or

“(ix) subject to subsection (e)(4), a drug-related offense committed during the preceding 5 years; or

“(E) has been convicted of a violent misdemeanor committed as an adult against a child, including the following crimes: child abuse, child endangerment, sexual assault, or of a misdemeanor involving child pornography.

“(2) CHILD CARE PROVIDERS.—A child care provider described in paragraph (1) shall be ineligible for assistance provided in accordance with this subchapter if the provider employs a staff member who is ineligible for employment under paragraph (1).

“(d) SUBMISSION OF REQUESTS FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A child care provider covered by subsection (c) shall submit a request, to the appropriate State agency designated by a State, for a criminal background check described in subsection (b), for each child care staff member (including prospective child care staff members) of the provider.

“(2) STAFF MEMBERS.—Subject to paragraph (4), in the case of an individual who became a child care staff member before the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, the provider shall submit such a request—

“(A) prior to the last day described in subsection (i)(1); and

“(B) not less often than once during each 5-year period following the first submission date under this paragraph for that staff member.

“(3) PROSPECTIVE STAFF MEMBERS.—Subject to paragraph (4), in the case of an individual who is a prospective child care staff member on or after that date of enactment, the provider shall submit such a request—

“(A) prior to the date the individual becomes a child care staff member of the provider; and

“(B) not less often than once during each 5-year period following the first submission date under this paragraph for that staff member.

“(4) BACKGROUND CHECK FOR ANOTHER CHILD CARE PROVIDER.—A child care provider shall not be required to submit a request under paragraph (2) or (3) for a child care staff member if—

“(A) the staff member received a background check described in subsection (b)—

“(i) within 5 years before the latest date on which such a submission may be made; and

“(ii) while employed by or seeking employment by another child care provider within the State;

“(B) the State provided to the first provider a qualifying background check result, consistent with this subchapter, for the staff member; and

“(C) the staff member is employed by a child care provider within the State, or has been separated from employment from a child care provider within the State for a period of not more than 180 consecutive days.

“(e) BACKGROUND CHECK RESULTS AND APPEALS.—

“(1) BACKGROUND CHECK RESULTS.—The State shall carry out the request of a child care provider for a criminal background check as expeditiously as possible, but in not to exceed 45 days after the date on which such request was submitted, and shall provide the results of the criminal background check to such provider and to the current or prospective staff member.

“(2) PRIVACY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The State shall provide the results of the criminal background check to the provider in a statement that indicates whether a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) is eligible or ineligible for employment described in subsection (c), without revealing any disqualifying crime or other related information regarding the individual.

“(B) INELIGIBLE STAFF MEMBER.—If the child care staff member is ineligible for such employment due to the background check, the State will, when providing the results of the background check, include information related to each disqualifying crime, in a report to the staff member or prospective staff member.

“(C) PUBLIC RELEASE OF RESULTS.—No State shall publicly release or share the results of individual background checks, however, such results of background checks may be included in the development or dissemination of local or statewide data related to background checks, if such results are not individually identifiable.

“(3) APPEALS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The State shall provide for a process by which a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) may appeal the results of a criminal background check conducted under this section to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in such member's criminal background report.

“(B) APPEALS PROCESS.—The State shall ensure that—

“(i) each child care staff member shall be given notice of the opportunity to appeal;

“(ii) a child care staff member will receive instructions about how to complete the appeals process if the child care staff member wishes to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in such member's criminal background report; and

“(iii) the appeals process is completed in a timely manner for each child care staff member.

“(4) REVIEW.—The State may allow for a review process through which the State may determine that a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) disqualified for a crime specified in subsection (c)(1)(D)(ix) is eligible for employment described in subsection (c)(1), notwithstanding subsection (c). The review process shall be consistent with title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.).

“(5) NO PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to create a private right of action if the provider is in compliance with State regulations and requirements.

“(f) FEES FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS.—Fees that a State may charge for the costs of processing applications and administering a criminal background check as required by this section shall not exceed the actual costs to the State for the processing and administration.

“(g) CONSTRUCTION.—

“(1) DISQUALIFICATION FOR OTHER CRIMES.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent a State from disqualifying individuals as child care staff members based on their conviction for crimes not specifically listed in this section that bear upon the fitness of an individual to provide care for and have responsibility for the safety and well-being of children.

“(2) RIGHTS AND REMEDIES.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to alter or otherwise affect the rights and remedies provided for child care staff members residing in a State that disqualifies individuals as child care staff members for crimes not specifically provided for under this section.

“(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

“(1) the term ‘child care provider’ means a center-based child care provider, a family child care provider, or another provider of child care services for compensation and on a regular basis that—

“(A) is not an individual who is related to all children for whom child care services are provided; and

“(B) is licensed, regulated, or registered under State law or receives assistance provided in accordance with this subchapter; and

“(2) the term ‘child care staff member’ means an individual (other than an individual who is related to all children for whom child care services are provided)—

“(A) who is employed by a child care provider for compensation;

“(B) whose activities involve the care or supervision of children for a child care provider or unsupervised access to children who are cared for or supervised by a child care provider; or

“(C) who is a family child care provider.

“(i) EFFECTIVE DATE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A State that receives funds under this subchapter shall meet the requirements of this section for the provision of criminal background checks for child care staff members described in subsection (d)(1) not later than the last day of the second full fiscal year after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014.

“(2) EXTENSION.—The Secretary may grant a State an extension of time, of not more than 1 fiscal year, to meet the requirements of this section if the State demonstrates a good faith effort to comply with the requirements of this section.

“(3) PENALTY FOR NONCOMPLIANCE.—Except as provided in paragraphs (1) and (2), for any fiscal year that a State fails to comply substantially with the requirements of this section, the Secretary shall withhold 5 percent of the funds that would otherwise be allocated to that State in accordance with this subchapter for the following fiscal year.”.

SEC. 8. REPORTS AND INFORMATION.

(a) ADMINISTRATION.—Section 658I of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858g) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by inserting a comma after “publish”; and

(ii) by striking “and” at the end;

(B) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

“(3) provide technical assistance to States (which may include providing assistance on a reimbursable basis), consistent with (as appropriate) scientifically valid research, to carry out this subchapter;” and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) disseminate, for voluntary informational purposes, information on practices that scientifically valid research indicates are most successful in improving the quality of programs that receive assistance with this subchapter;

“(5) after consultation with the Secretary of Education and the heads of any other Federal agencies involved, issue guidance, and disseminate information on best practices, regarding use of funding combined by States as described in section 658E(c)(2)(O)(ii), consistent with law other than this subchapter.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) PROHIBITION.—Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed as providing the Secretary the authority to permit States to alter the eligibility requirements for eligible children, including work requirements that apply to the parents of eligible children.”.

(b) REQUESTS FOR RELIEF.—Section 658I of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, as amended by subsection (a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

“(d) REQUEST FOR RELIEF.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The State may submit to the Secretary a request for relief from any provision of Federal law (including a regulation, policy, or procedure) affecting the delivery of child care services with Federal funds, other than this subchapter, that conflicts with a requirement of this subchapter.

“(2) CONTENTS.—Such request shall—

“(A) detail the provision of Federal law that conflicts with that requirement;

“(B) describe how modifying compliance with that provision of Federal law to meet the requirements of this subchapter will, by itself, improve delivery of child care services for children in the State; and

“(C) certify that the health, safety, and well-being of children served through assistance received under this subchapter will not be compromised as a result.

“(3) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall consult with the State submitting the request and the head of each Federal agency (other than the Secretary) with responsibility for administering the Federal law detailed in the State’s request. The consulting parties shall jointly identify—

“(A) any provision of Federal law (including a regulation, policy, or procedure) for which a waiver is necessary to enable the State to provide services in accordance with the request; and

“(B) any corresponding waiver.

“(4) WAIVERS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and after the joint identification described in paragraph (3), the head of the Federal agency involved shall have the authority to waive any statutory provision administered by that agency, or any regulation, policy, or procedure issued by that agency, that has been so identified, unless the head of the Federal agency determines that such a waiver is inconsistent with the objectives of this subchapter or the Federal law from which relief is sought.

“(5) APPROVAL.—Within 90 days after the receipt of a State’s request under this sub-

section, the Secretary shall inform the State of the Secretary’s approval or disapproval of the request. If the plan is disapproved, the Secretary shall inform the State, in writing, of the reasons for the disapproval and give the State the opportunity to amend the request.

“(6) DURATION.—The Secretary may approve a request under this subsection for a period of not more than 3 years, and may renew the approval for additional periods of not more than 3 years.

“(7) TERMINATION.—The Secretary shall terminate approval of a request for relief authorized under this subsection if the Secretary determines, after notice and opportunity for a hearing, that the performance of a State granted relief under this subsection has been inadequate, or if such relief is no longer necessary to achieve its original purposes.”.

(c) REPORTS.—Section 658K(a) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858i(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(B)—

(A) in clause (ix), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in clause (x), by inserting “and” at the end; and

(C) by inserting after clause (x), the following:

“(xi) whether the children receiving assistance under this subchapter are homeless children;” and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “1997” and inserting “2014”; and

(B) in subparagraph (A), by striking “section 658P(5)” and inserting “section 658P(6)”.

(d) REPORT BY SECRETARY.—Section 658L of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858j) is amended—

(1) by striking the section heading and inserting the following:

“SEC. 658L. REPORTS, HOTLINE, AND WEB SITE.”;

(2) by striking “Not later” and inserting the following:

“(a) REPORT BY SECRETARY.—Not later”;

(3) by striking “1998” and inserting “2016”; and

(4) by striking “to the Committee” and all that follows through “of the Senate” and inserting “to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) NATIONAL TOLL-FREE HOTLINE AND WEB SITE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall operate a national toll-free hotline and Web site, to—

“(A) develop and disseminate publicly available child care consumer education information for parents and help parents access safe, affordable, and quality child care in their community; and

“(B) to allow persons to report (anonymously if desired) suspected child abuse or neglect, or violations of health and safety requirements, by an eligible child care provider that receives assistance under this subchapter.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall ensure that the hotline and Web site meet the following requirements:

“(A) REFERRAL TO LOCAL CHILD CARE PROVIDERS.—The Web site shall be hosted by ‘childcare.gov’. The Web site shall enable a child care consumer to enter a zip code and obtain a referral to local child care providers described in subparagraph (B) within a specified search radius.

“(B) INFORMATION.—The Web site shall provide to consumers, directly or through linkages to State databases, at a minimum—

“(i) a localized list of all State licensed child care providers;

“(ii) any provider-specific information from a Quality Rating and Improvement System or information about other quality indicators, to the extent the information is publicly available and to the extent practicable;

“(iii) any other provider-specific information about compliance with licensing, and health and safety, requirements to the extent the information is publicly available and to the extent practicable;

“(iv) referrals to local resource and referral organizations from which consumers can find more information about child care providers, and a recommendation that consumers consult with the organizations when selecting a child care provider; and

“(v) State information about child care subsidy programs and other financial supports available to families.

“(C) NATIONWIDE CAPACITY.—The Web site and hotline shall have the capacity to help families in every State and community in the Nation.

“(D) INFORMATION AT ALL HOURS.—The Web site shall provide, to parents and families, access to information about child care 24 hours a day.

“(E) SERVICES IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES.—The Web site and hotline shall ensure the widest possible access to services for families who speak languages other than English.

“(F) HIGH-QUALITY CONSUMER EDUCATION AND REFERRAL.—The Web site and hotline shall ensure that families have access to child care consumer education and referral services that are consistent and of high quality.

“(3) PROHIBITION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to allow the Secretary to compel States to provide additional data and information that is currently (as of the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014) not publicly available, or is not required by this subchapter.”.

(e) PROTECTION OF INFORMATION.—Section 658K(a)(1) of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858i(a)(1)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(E) PROHIBITION.—Reports submitted to the Secretary under subparagraph (C) shall not contain individually identifiable information.”.

SEC. 9. RESERVATION FOR TOLL-FREE HOTLINE AND WEB SITE; PAYMENTS TO BENEFIT INDIAN CHILDREN.

Section 658O of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858m) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary”;

(ii) by striking “1 percent, and not more than 2 percent,” and inserting “2 percent”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) LIMITATIONS.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall only reserve an amount that is greater than 2 percent of the amount appropriated under section 658B, for payments described in subparagraph (A), for a fiscal year (referred to in this subparagraph as the ‘reservation year’) if—

“(i) the amount appropriated under section 658B for the reservation year is greater than

the amount appropriated under section 658B for fiscal year 2014; and

“(i) the Secretary ensures that the amount allotted to States under subsection (b) for the reservation year is not less than the amount allotted to States under subsection (b) for fiscal year 2014.”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) NATIONAL TOLL-FREE HOTLINE AND WEB SITE.—The Secretary shall reserve not less than \$1,000,000 of the amount appropriated under this subchapter for each fiscal year for the operation of a national toll-free hotline and Web site, under section 658L(b).”; and

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end the following:

“(D) LICENSING AND STANDARDS.—In lieu of any licensing and regulatory requirements applicable under State or local law, the Secretary, in consultation with Indian tribes and tribal organizations, shall develop minimum child care standards that shall be applicable to Indian tribes and tribal organizations receiving assistance under this subchapter. Such standards shall appropriately reflect Indian tribe and tribal organization needs and available resources, and shall include standards requiring a publicly available application, health and safety standards, and standards requiring a reservation of funds for activities to improve the quality of child care provided to Indian children.”; and

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting the following:

“(C) LIMITATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in clause (ii), the Secretary may not permit an Indian tribe or tribal organization to use amounts provided under this subsection for construction or renovation if the use will result in a decrease in the level of child care services provided by the Indian tribe or tribal organization as compared to the level of child care services provided by the Indian tribe or tribal organization in the fiscal year preceding the year for which the determination under subparagraph (B) is being made.

“(ii) WAIVER.—The Secretary shall waive the limitation described in clause (i) if—

“(I) the Secretary determines that the decrease in the level of child care services provided by the Indian tribe or tribal organization is temporary; and

“(II) the Indian tribe or tribal organization submits to the Secretary a plan that demonstrates that after the date on which the construction or renovation is completed—

“(aa) the level of child care services will increase; or

“(bb) the quality of child care services will improve.”.

SEC. 10. DEFINITIONS.

Section 658P of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858n) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (4) and inserting the following:

“(3) CHILD WITH A DISABILITY.—The term ‘child with a disability’ means—

“(A) a child with a disability, as defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1401);

“(B) a child who is eligible for early intervention services under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1431 et seq.);

“(C) a child who is less than 13 years of age and who is eligible for services under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794); and

“(D) a child with a disability, as defined by the State involved.

“(4) ELIGIBLE CHILD.—The term ‘eligible child’ means an individual—

“(A) who is less than 13 years of age;

“(B) whose family income does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size, and whose family assets do not exceed \$1,000,000 (as certified by a member of such family); and

“(C) who—

“(i) resides with a parent or parents who are working or attending a job training or educational program; or

“(ii) is receiving, or needs to receive, protective services and resides with a parent or parents not described in clause (i).”;;

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (5) through (9) as paragraphs (6) through (10), respectively;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (4), the following:

“(5) ENGLISH LEARNER.—The term ‘English learner’ means an individual who is limited English proficient, as defined in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801) or section 637 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832).”;;

(4) in paragraph (6)(A), as redesignated by paragraph (2)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “section 658E(c)(2)(E)” and inserting “section 658E(c)(2)(F)”; and

(B) in clause (ii), by striking “section 658E(c)(2)(F)” and inserting “section 658E(c)(2)(I)”;;

(5) in paragraph (9), as redesignated by paragraph (2), by striking “designated” and all that follows and inserting “designated or established under section 658D(a).”;;

(6) in paragraph (10), as redesignated by paragraph (2), by inserting “, foster parent,” after “guardian”;;

(7) by redesignating paragraphs (11) through (14) as paragraphs (12) through (15), respectively; and

(8) by inserting after paragraph (10), as redesignated by paragraph (2), the following:

“(11) SCIENTIFICALLY VALID RESEARCH.—The term ‘scientifically valid research’ includes applied research, basic research, and field-initiated research, for which the rationale, design, and interpretation are soundly developed in accordance with principles of scientific research.”.

SEC. 10A. PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

Section 658Q of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858o) is amended—

(1) by inserting before “Nothing” the following:

“(a) IN GENERAL.—”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) PARENTAL RIGHTS TO USE CHILD CARE CERTIFICATES.—Nothing in this subchapter shall be construed in a manner—

“(1) to favor or promote the use of grants and contracts for the receipt of child care services under this subchapter over the use of child care certificates; or

“(2) to disfavor or discourage the use of such certificates for the purchase of child care services, including those services provided by private or nonprofit entities, such as faith-based providers.”.

SEC. 11. STUDIES ON WAITING LISTS.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct studies to determine, for each State, the number of families that—

(1) are eligible to receive assistance under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.);

(2) have applied for the assistance; and

(3) have been placed on a waiting list for the assistance.

(b) REPORT.—The Comptroller General shall prepare a report containing the results of each study and shall submit the report to the appropriate committees of Congress—

(1) not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act; and

(2) every 2 years thereafter.

(c) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “State” has the meaning given the term in section 658P of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858n).

SEC. 12. CONFORMING AMENDMENT.

Section 319C-1(b)(2)(A)(vii) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d-3a(b)(2)(A)(vii)) is amended by inserting “or established” after “designated”.

SEC. 13. REVIEW OF FEDERAL EARLY LEARNING AND CARE PROGRAMS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education, shall conduct an interdepartmental review of all early learning and care programs in order to—

(1) develop a plan for the elimination of duplicative and overlapping programs, as identified by the Government Accountability Office’s 2012 annual report (GAO-12-342SP); and

(2) make recommendations to Congress for streamlining all such programs.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretary of Education and the heads of all Federal agencies that administer Federal early learning and care programs, shall submit to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives, a detailed report that outlines the efficiencies that can be achieved by, as well as specific recommendations for, eliminating duplication, overlap, and fragmentation among all Federal early learning and care programs.

SEC. 14. SAFE CHILD CARE ACT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Safe Child Care Act of 2014”.

(b) BACKGROUND CHECKS.—Section 231 of the Crime Control Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 13041) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “subsection (b)(3)” and inserting “paragraph (3)”; and

(B) by redesignating paragraph (2) as paragraph (4);

(2) by moving paragraphs (2) and (3) of subsection (b) to subsection (a), and inserting them after paragraph (1) of that subsection;

(3) in subsection (a)(3), as redesignated by paragraph (2) of this subsection, by striking “subsection (a)(1)” and inserting “paragraph (1)”;;

(4) in subsection (b), by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) A background check required by subsection (a) shall be initiated through the personnel programs of the applicable Federal agencies.

“(2) A background check for a child care staff member under subsection (a) shall include—

“(A) a search, including a fingerprint check, of the State criminal registry or repository in—

“(i) the State where the child care staff member resides; and

“(ii) each State where the child care staff member previously resided during the longer of—

“(I) the 10-year period ending on the date on which the background check is initiated; or

“(II) the period beginning on the date on which the child care staff member attained 18 years of age and ending on the date on which the background check is initiated;

“(B) a search of State-based child abuse and neglect registries and databases in—

“(i) the State where the child care staff member resides; and

“(ii) each State where the child care staff member previously resided during the longer of—

“(I) the 10-year period ending on the date on which the background check is initiated; or

“(II) the period beginning on the date on which the child care staff member attained 18 years of age and ending on the date on which the background check is initiated;

“(C) a search of the National Crime Information Center database;

“(D) a Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint check using the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System;

“(E) a search of the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16901 et seq.); and

“(F) a search of the State sex offender registry established under that Act in—

“(i) the State where the child care staff member resides; and

“(ii) each State where the child care staff member previously resided during the longer of—

“(I) the 10-year period ending on the date on which the background check is initiated; or

“(II) the period beginning on the date on which the child care staff member attained 18 years of age and ending on the date on which the background check is initiated.

“(3) A child care staff member shall be ineligible for employment by a child care provider if such individual—

“(A) refuses to consent to the background check described in subsection (a);

“(B) makes a false statement in connection with such background check;

“(C) is registered, or is required to be registered, on a State sex offender registry or the National Sex Offender Registry established under the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006; or

“(D) has been convicted of a felony consisting of—

“(i) murder, as described in section 1111 of title 18, United States Code;

“(ii) child abuse or neglect;

“(iii) a crime against children, including child pornography;

“(iv) spousal abuse;

“(v) a crime involving rape or sexual assault;

“(vi) kidnapping;

“(vii) arson;

“(viii) physical assault or battery; or

“(ix) subject to paragraph (5)(D), a drug-related offense committed during the preceding 5 years.

“(4)(A) A child care provider covered by paragraph (3) shall submit a request, to the appropriate State agency designated by a State, for a background check described in subsection (a), for each child care staff member (including prospective child care staff members) of the provider.

“(B) In the case of an individual who is hired as a child care staff member before the date of enactment of the Safe Child Care Act of 2014, the provider shall submit such a request—

“(i) prior to the last day of the second full fiscal year after that date of enactment; and

“(ii) not less often than once during each 5-year period following the first submission

date under this subparagraph for that staff member.

“(C) In the case of an individual who is a prospective child care staff member on or after that date of enactment, the provider shall submit such a request—

“(i) prior to the date the individual becomes a child care staff member of the provider; and

“(ii) not less often than once during each 5-year period following the first submission date under this subparagraph for that staff member.

“(5)(A) The State shall—

“(i) carry out the request of a child care provider for a background check described in subsection (a) as expeditiously as possible; and

“(ii) in accordance with subparagraph (B) of this paragraph, provide the results of the background check to—

“(I) the child care provider; and

“(II) the current or prospective child care staff member for whom the background check is conducted.

“(B)(i) The State shall provide the results of a background check to a child care provider as required under subparagraph (A)(ii)(I) in a statement that—

“(I) indicates whether the current or prospective child care staff member for whom the background check is conducted is eligible or ineligible for employment by a child care provider; and

“(II) does not reveal any disqualifying crime or other related information regarding the current or prospective child care staff member.

“(ii) If a current or prospective child care staff member is ineligible for employment by a child care provider due to a background check described in subsection (a), the State shall provide the results of the background check to the current or prospective child care staff member as required under subparagraph (A)(ii)(II) in a criminal background report that includes information relating to each disqualifying crime.

“(iii) A State—

“(I) may not publicly release or share the results of an individual background check described in subsection (a); and

“(II) may include the results of background checks described in subsection (a) in the development or dissemination of local or statewide data relating to background checks if the results are not individually identifiable.

“(C)(i) The State shall provide for a process by which a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) may appeal the results of a background check required under subsection (a) to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in the criminal background report of the staff member.

“(ii) The State shall ensure that—

“(I) the appeals process is completed in a timely manner for each child care staff member;

“(II) each child care staff member is given notice of the opportunity to appeal; and

“(III) each child care staff member who wishes to challenge the accuracy or completeness of the information in the criminal background report of the child care staff member is given instructions about how to complete the appeals process.

“(D)(i) The State may allow for a review process through which the State may determine that a child care staff member (including a prospective child care staff member) disqualified for a crime specified in paragraph (3)(D)(ix) is eligible for employment by

a child care provider, notwithstanding paragraph (3).

“(ii) The review process under this subparagraph shall be consistent with title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.).

“(E) Nothing in this section shall be construed to create a private right of action against a child care provider if the child care provider is in compliance with this section.

“(F) This section shall apply to each State that receives funding under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.).

“(6) Fees that the State may charge for the costs of conducting a background check as required by subsection (a) shall not exceed the actual costs to the State for the administration of such background checks.

“(7) Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to prevent a Federal agency from disqualifying an individual as a child care staff member based on a conviction of the individual for a crime not specifically listed in this subsection that bears upon the fitness of an individual to provide care for and have responsibility for the safety and well-being of children.

“(8) In this subsection—

“(A) the term ‘child care provider’ means an agency of the Federal Government, or a unit of or contractor with the Federal Government that is operating a facility, described in subsection (a); and

“(B) the term ‘child care staff member’ means an individual who is hired, or seeks to be hired, by a child care provider to be involved with the provision of child care services, as described in subsection (a).”; and

(5) by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

“(c) **SUSPENSION PENDING DISPOSITION OF CRIMINAL CASE.**—In the case of an incident in which an individual has been charged with an offense described in subsection (b)(3)(D) and the charge has not yet been disposed of, an employer may suspend an employee from having any contact with children while on the job until the case is resolved.”

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on October 1 of the second full fiscal year after the date of enactment of this Act.

SEC. 15. ALLOTMENT OF SPACE IN FEDERAL BUILDINGS FOR CHILD CARE.

Section 590 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (a) through (g) as subsections (b) through (h), respectively;

(2) by inserting before subsection (b) (as so redesignated) the following:

“(a) **DEFINITION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEE.**—In this section, the term ‘Federal employee’ does not include a person that—

“(1) is not employed by the Federal Government; and

“(2) meets the requirements described in subsection (c)(2)(C)(i)(II).”;

(3) in paragraph (2)(C) of subsection (c) (as so redesignated), by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

“(i) the space will be used to provide child care services to children of whom at least 50 percent have 1 parent or guardian who—

“(I) is employed by the Federal Government; or

“(II)(aa) has met the requirements for a master’s degree or a doctorate degree from an institution of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)); and

“(bb) is conducting research in the Federal building under an arrangement between the

parent or guardian and a Federal agency.”; and

(4) in subsection (d) (as so redesignated), by striking “subsection (b)” each place it appears and inserting “subsection (c)”.

SEC. 16. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCING CHILD POVERTY BY CALENDAR YEAR 2019.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) the United States has the highest rate of childhood poverty among 34 major countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, including Denmark, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Cyprus, Austria, Sweden, the Czech Republic, Germany, Slovenia, Hungary, South Korea, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Ireland, France, Malta, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Estonia, Belgium, New Zealand, Poland, Canada, Australia, Japan, Portugal, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Spain, and Bulgaria;

(2) a record-breaking 46,496,000 individuals lived in poverty in the United States in 2012, which is an increase of 14,915,000 individuals since 2000;

(3) 16,073,000 children in the United States lived in poverty in 2012, which is an increase of 4,486,000 children since 2000;

(4) more than 7,100,000 children in the United States, 40 percent of children living in poverty in the United States, live in extreme poverty (defined as living in families with an income that is less than half of the poverty level);

(5) nearly 1,200,000 public school students in the United States were homeless in the 2011–2012 school year, an increase of 73 percent since the 2006–2007 school year;

(6) in an average month in fiscal year 2011, 1,200,000 households with children in the United States did not have any cash income and, for food, depended only on benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.);

(7) in 2012, government assistance programs removed from poverty 9,000,000 children, including 5,300,000 children through the earned income tax credit under section 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the child tax credit under section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and 2,200,000 children through the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.);

(8) in 2012, child poverty would have been 57 percent higher, and extreme poverty would have been 240 percent higher, without government tax credits and food, housing, and energy benefits;

(9) in 2013, an individual working full-time at the Federal minimum wage could not afford the fair market rent for a 2-bedroom rental unit and have enough money for food, utilities, and other necessities;

(10) in school years 2009–2010 and 2010–2011, less than half of children ages 3 and 4 were enrolled in preschool;

(11) Early Head Start programs carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.) served only 4 percent of the 2,900,000 eligible poor infants and toddlers each day in fiscal year 2012, and Head Start programs carried out under such Act served only 41 percent of the 2,000,000 eligible poor children ages 3 and 4;

(12) more than 220,000 children are on waiting lists for child care assistance; and

(13) child poverty costs the United States not less than \$500,000,000 each year in additional education, health, and criminal justice costs and in lost productivity.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the President should immediately present to Congress a comprehensive plan to significantly reduce child poverty in the United States by calendar year 2019.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

CHANGE OF VOTE

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, on rollcall vote 77 I voted “aye.” It was my intention to vote “nay.” I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to change my vote since it will not affect the outcome.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The foregoing tally has been changed to reflect the above order).

SUPPORTING SOVEREIGNTY AND DEMOCRACY IN UKRAINE—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 329, S. 2124, which is the bill to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The clerk will report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 329, S. 2124, to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 3370 AND S. 2137

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 317, H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act; that there be up to 45 minutes of debate prior to a vote on passage of the bill, with the majority controlling 30 minutes and the Republicans controlling 15 minutes; further, that upon disposition of H.R. 3370, the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. 2137, introduced earlier today by Senator LEE; that the bill be read a third time and the Senate proceed to vote on passage of the bill; that each bill be subject to a 60 affirmative vote threshold, with all of the above occurring with no intervening action or debate; finally, that there be 2 minutes equally divided in between the votes; and that Senator COBURN be recognized for up to 30 minutes following the votes for his remarks relative to the flood insurance bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following disposition of S. 2137, the Senate proceed to

executive session to consider the following two nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 647 and 551; that the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action and the Senate then resume legislative session; further, that there be 2 minutes for debate equally divided in the usual form prior to each vote, and that the votes be 10 minutes in length.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

HOMEOWNER FLOOD INSURANCE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2013

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 3370.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3370) to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there are now 45 minutes for debate.

The Senator from Utah.

Mr. LEE. Mr. President, this particular bill has not been examined in committee—not in the Senate, not even in the House. It was rushed to the floor of the House without amendment, and it is rushed to the floor here without amendment. This is not how the legislative process is supposed to work—especially not here in the Senate.

My opponents may say we already had our chance to impact this policy, but what we have before us now is a different bill—a bill which we have never seen before. This bill is not a conference report. It takes zero cues from the Senate bill. Not a single representative of the American people has been given the opportunity to offer even a single amendment to this legislation.

All I have been asking for is a vote on an amendment which eliminates certain insurance rebates for second homes. My amendment would not change homeowners’ flood insurance policies or even reduce the new taxpayer subsidy we are going to give them. It simply removes a retroactive reimbursement for second homes. Essentially we ask that working families around the country, including taxpayers in my State, not have to cut an additional check to the owners of coastal vacation houses. I know of no one who objects to my provision on policy grounds. Let me repeat that. I

don't know of anyone, not one person who has raised a policy objection to the amendment I have offered. It is an objective improvement to the underlying policy and this is what the Senate is supposed to do. Yet the supporters of the bill have been blocking any amendments that may garner bipartisan support to hold together a deal that has been negotiated in a backroom, written in secret by only a few Members, perhaps with the influence of a few people who may be interested in that. These "masters of the universe" as my friend Senator SESSIONS has sometimes referred to them, are shutting the American people out of the process.

I asked for 10 minutes and a vote on a single unobjectionable germane amendment to a bill the public has never before seen, but it seems this may be a bridge too far for the "masters of the universe," as my friend from Alabama likes to call them.

So in an effort hopefully to change one of the more offensive policies in the bill, one that provides a refund of premiums paid under the law to homeowners of second vacation homes from a program that is already \$24 billion in the hole, I agree to a vote on my amendment as a stand-alone bill. I have assurances from the House majority leader that he will work to get the policy considered in the House and I take him at his word.

I urge my colleagues to support my bill to protect the American people from being asked to fund—to refund premiums paid under current law to owners of second homes and vacation homes.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I am opposed to H.R. 3370 because it abandons the much-needed reforms to the National Flood Insurance Program, NFIP, that were instituted in the Biggert-Waters Reform Act of 2012. That bill set the NFIP on a course to quickly remove Federal subsidies from the program and make it actuarially sound. If these policies had been fully implemented, it would have allowed the development of a private insurance marketplace for flood insurance, which does not currently exist. H.R. 3370 prevents flood insurance policies from being written at an actuarially sound rate when homes are sold to a new buyer or when a flood insurance policy lapses. New purchasers of homes in areas that require flood insurance should not be subsidized for making that decision. H.R. 3370 puts in doubt the hope that NFIP's subsidies are eliminated.

Thank you, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to urge a "yes" vote for final passage of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, the legislation we are here to consider. I will say the

Senate went through a considerate, deliberate process where amendments were openly considered. I believe at the end of the process there was a 67-to-32 vote. We don't normally get two-thirds of the Senate agreeing on major issues, but we did at that time in a bipartisan effort.

My understanding is the legislation that ultimately we are considering today, which is basically foundationally what we agreed to here with some changes in the House, for which there was vigorous back-and-forth negotiation, passed by over 300 votes of the House of Representatives. So it seems to me it has a broad bipartisan support and was vigorously debated in that Chamber.

We have an opportunity to once again, after the bill we just passed, show this body can work. We had a respectable debate on good-faith amendments that were germane to the bill, lived up to the ideals of the Senate when it was before us. We were able to have bipartisan negotiations to improve the House-passed version of our bill so it would provide the levels of relief that are necessary. As a result, we are now poised to pass some critical legislation with overwhelmingly bipartisan support which provides real relief to millions of American families.

Just very briefly, because I hope to basically not use all the time so we can come to a vote and get our Members on their way, this new legislation is first of all budget neutral. It does not add a dime to the deficit, nor does it hurt the solvency of the National Flood Insurance Program. It prevents skyrocketing rate increases by implementing the following measures: One, it creates a firewall on annual rate increases. It repeals the property sales trigger that was depressing the values of homes. It repeals the new policy sales trigger. It reinstates grandfathering. It refunds homeowners who overpaid. It has something that I thought was critically important, that I thought was so important when we passed Biggert-Waters that I included it by amendment in the banking committee—an affordability goal.

Let us have the ability to ensure the solvency of the National Flood Insurance Program, but let us have an affordability mechanism which FEMA was, under the law that exists today, required to report to the Congress so we could ultimately come up with an affordability mechanism that would ensure that we have a solvent program and that we have an affordable program.

At the end of the day, insurance is about spreading risk over a wide pool and in doing so keeping rates affordable. With rates that I heard from homeowners in New Jersey that went from \$1,000 to \$10,000 or \$15,000, not only is that not affordable but you are going to ultimately reduce the size of

the risk pool in the National Flood Insurance Program. That means that is going to continue to drive up the cost, and we have a self-fulfilling cycle that ultimately does not provide for solvency.

So we have kept some of the most important reforms under Biggert-Waters, but we created a window of opportunity to make sure we get to affordability, that we help the real estate market, at a time when it desperately needs help, to be able to continue to prosper. The people's most significant asset in their life was built over a lifetime to buy a home, and that is where they ultimately have their greatest asset. It is where they leverage for their kid's education or emergency in health care and a whole host of plans for retirement.

So for millions of people in my State and across the country who ultimately did the right thing, followed rules, paid their premiums, met the higher standards, now to be told that in addition to—in New Jersey's case the consequences of Hurricane Sandy, and throughout the Northeast, flooding in Colorado or the Mississippi or a whole host of other places—but despite the fact they did everything right, through no fault of their own and having paid their fees, they are now in rate shock, an inability to keep flood insurance, which sometimes triggers a default on the mortgage, if they have a mortgage, or makes it impossible to sell their home.

That is what we are rectifying. It is our collective purpose. I urge a strong "yes" vote.

Finally, I wish to thank my colleagues who have worked with me on a bipartisan basis: My lead cosponsor Senator ISAKSON. I don't believe there is anybody in the Senate who has a greater depth of knowledge in the real estate industry and how this legislation affects that but also understands the consequences of individual families and is working in an incredibly strong way so we can get to this bipartisan moment. I appreciate all of his work.

Also, I have to say the tenaciousness and the ability to bring us to this point is that of Senator LANDRIEU, who has become an expert out of necessity from what happens in her State with Hurricane Katrina. The people of Louisiana are extraordinarily fortunate to have her as one of their Senators. She has been a guiding light throughout this process, tremendously helpful in getting us to today.

Lastly, I appreciate the leadership on both sides to get us to this moment so we could have this vote.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. I am going to be very brief in the interest of time. I wish to

thank Senator MENENDEZ for his leadership, Senator LANDRIEU for her leadership. Without their work this would not happen.

Let me tell you what this does. This bill corrects the unintended consequence of denying liquidity to coastal Americans in their housing and causing the unintended consequence of people not buying insurance and putting themselves and this country at greater risk in those areas that are prone to floods. It aggressively addresses the need we have to make this system more solvent and make it work better.

The Senate today will be solving a greater problem for coastal American residents and those in flood areas. They will be doing the right thing at the right time to correct an unintended consequence of an action of the Congress. I am honored to be a part of it.

I commend Senator MENENDEZ and Senator LANDRIEU and thank them for their effort.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. First, I thank my colleague from Louisiana for letting me butt in a little bit.

I also praise the three people who are on the floor, one can say without each of whom this would not have happened. I don't think we can say that about anyone else here, myself included, but you can say that about these three. Senator MENENDEZ, our lead sponsor on the bill, who is indomitable and smart about crafting legislation; JOHNNY ISAKSON, who was able to make this a bipartisan bill and in his gentle, friendly, and persuasive way brought many people on board, prevented people from blocking it; and the dynamo—we would all agree—the dynamo of this operation, Senator MARY LANDRIEU, who did not quit. I would say MARY LANDRIEU and I have had probably 200 phone calls in the last month about flood insurance—three or four a day. Whenever there was a blockage, she was like a jackhammer getting through it. So I thank her.

I am going to be very brief as well—not quite as brief as my colleague from Georgia, but brief for me and brief for the Senate.

This is a very important day for the people of New York. We have thousands of homeowners who either have had their flood insurance rise or are fearful of their flood insurance rising. Most of them are middle-class people in places such as Staten Island, Brooklyn, Queens, the Rockaways, out to the southern shore of Long Island and up the Hudson River. To be a homeowner is to have your little piece of the rock if you are a middle-class person. Basically, it is all you own. To have that taken away from you by an irrational Washington force called Biggert-Waters made no sense. Yet, when peo-

ple's flood insurance bills would go up from \$500 to \$4,000, when they were told if they sold their house it might go up to \$10,000, their piece of the rock—their home—was in true jeopardy.

We all know there is an increase in flooding. We all know the huge damage Katrina and Sandy caused. But to put it on the backs of homeowners, as FEMA was doing by both increasing rates and expanding flood maps beyond what flood zones should be made no sense.

We had so many people in New York who were damaged—I know this is true of my colleague from New Jersey as well—who were damaged by Sandy, who painstakingly rebuilt their home, getting some money from insurance and some money from FEMA and some money from Sandy and going to relatives and friends. After their home was finally rebuilt to be told, now here is your \$5,000 flood insurance bill, when these people are in debt, it was awful, a double whammy.

This bill isn't perfect, but it will stop all of that. It grandfathered homes in so people who sell their homes will not see the price go way up, and because of the efforts we made in the Senate, the bill the House is sending us has an individual limit on how much flood insurance can go up. Eighteen percent is still not as low an amount as we would like—and we may be able to revisit that down the road—but it certainly is not a 700-, 2,000- or 5,000-percent increase, which is what people were getting.

So this is a good day. It is a good day for the shorefront areas of New York which contain close to 1 million people. It is a good day for the coastal areas throughout America, the areas by rivers throughout America. Do you know what it means? It means that the American dream of working hard, buying a home, and having your little piece of the rock will not be destroyed by some unknown, misunderstood, and irrational force from Washington on flood insurance. Flood insurance will now be a friend once again rather than a foe.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I wish to speak on this for 2 minutes now, because I know people are anxious to vote on final passage of this important bill, and I will speak at length after the vote.

I just wish to say thank you to the two leaders who are on the floor, Senator MENENDEZ from New Jersey, Senator JOHNNY ISAKSON from Georgia. They were the team who brought the coalition together when it was very hard—and still is difficult—to build a coalition on any subject. This subject is complicated. It is difficult. There are very strong feelings on all sides. There are different parts of the country that look at this in different ways, and

there are debts that need to be paid attached to this program. So this was not an easy negotiation, and the leaders both did an extraordinary job keeping us on track.

No. 2, this compromise—and that is what it represents—the best of the compromise was, in fact, debated at length on this Senate floor; it was debated at length in the House of Representatives; and it was voted on 67 to 32 in the Senate favorably and 306 to 91 in the House favorably. The minority view—represented by the Senator from Utah, which would throw this bill into a conference committee right now—is not what the American people want, and it is not what the majority of Republicans or the majority of Democrats want, as demonstrated by the vote I just put into the RECORD.

We could all take this bill and rewrite sections of it that would work better for our home State, but that is not what this place is about. This place is not about perfection. It is about the art of the possible, and it is about listening to our constituents and responding to them when they have a great need.

In the State of Louisiana, I have 400,000 people who are afraid they will lose their homes. For many of these families, that is the greatest asset they have, and they are close to losing it. They don't want us to go to the conference committee and perfect this bill. They want us to pass it today, right now, and that is what I think we are going to do.

I know the Senator from Utah is disappointed. He may know the masters of the universe, but I am still looking for them. I could use a lot more wisdom and strength. If they are around here, I would like them to present themselves. All we have right now is each other—human beings trying to do the very best we can with a difficult circumstance. It may not be a perfect bill, but the concept of this bill got 67 votes in the Senate and 306 votes in the House. We have passed it in record time, given the pace around here. I am very proud.

I see the Senator from Florida. I know he would like to say a word.

Mr. NELSON. Will the Senator yield?

Ms. LANDRIEU. Yes.

Mr. NELSON. I thank the Senator from Louisiana, who has been the sparkplug behind this bill. As a result of her hard work, there are a lot of people in Florida who will be saved unconscionable increases.

Again, my thanks to the Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I yield and turn the floor over to the leader, Senator MENENDEZ. I believe the time will be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I understand we are going to be able to act

on the Lee bill with a voice vote. As a result, I ask consent that the order with respect to a 60-affirmative-vote threshold with respect to S. 2137 be vitiated with all of the provisions of the previous order remaining in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, in the interest of getting this bill to the President's desk and giving relief to flood victims across the country, and many other homeowners, we yield back the remainder of our time and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall it pass?

The yeas and nays have been ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) and the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER), the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HEITKAMP). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 72, nays 22, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 78 Leg.]

YEAS—72

Ayotte	Grassley	Portman
Baldwin	Hagan	Pryor
Begich	Harkin	Reed
Bennet	Heinrich	Reid
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Rockefeller
Blunt	Hirono	Rubio
Booker	Hoeven	Sanders
Brown	Isakson	Schatz
Burr	Kaine	Schumer
Cantwell	King	Scott
Cardin	Kirk	Sessions
Casey	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Chambliss	Landrieu	Stabenow
Coats	Leahy	Tester
Cochran	Levin	Toomey
Collins	Manchin	Udall (CO)
Coons	Markey	Udall (NM)
Cruz	Menendez	Vitter
Donnelly	Merkley	Walsh
Durbin	Mikulski	Warner
Feinstein	Murkowski	Warren
Franken	Murphy	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Murray	Wicker
Graham	Nelson	Wyden

NAYS—22

Alexander	Enzi	McCain
Barrasso	Fischer	McConnell
Boozman	Flake	Risch
Carper	Hatch	Roberts
Coburn	Johanns	Shelby
Corker	Johnson (SD)	Thune
Cornyn	Johnson (WI)	
Crapo	Lee	

NOT VOTING—6

Boxer	Inhofe	Moran
Heller	McCaskill	Paul

The bill (H.R. 3370) was passed.

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I was unable to attend the roll call vote on passage of H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014. Had I been present for this vote, I would have voted yea. •

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, when Hurricane Betsy roared ashore in Grand Isle on September 9, 1965, it wrought havoc in Louisiana and Mississippi and became the first natural disaster to cost American taxpayers more than \$1 billion. It fundamentally changed the way our nation prepared for and responded to disasters. Private insurers fled the market, making it necessary for the federal government to step in and help communities rebuild and recover. The National Flood Insurance Program established building standards for flood prone areas to limit communities' exposure to flooding and rewarded responsible homeowners with affordable flood insurance that was no longer available in the private market.

In response, Congress, led by Hale Boggs, passed the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 with the explicit goal of making "... flood insurance available on reasonable terms and conditions ..."

Affordability was one of the primary goals of the National Flood Insurance Program when it was created, and it remains an essential priority today. Unfortunately, affordability was virtually eliminated by the 2012 NFIP reform legislation known as Biggert-Waters, and we had to fight to get it reinstated in the compromise bill that cleared the House last Wednesday, March 5 with a strong, bipartisan vote of 306–91.

On January 16, Speaker BOEHNER flatly refused to consider comprehensive flood insurance reform legislation in the House, telling an AP reporter bluntly: "We're not going to do that." The decisive 67–32 Senate vote to pass the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act on January 30 demonstrated the breadth and depth of our coalition and provided the necessary momentum for House leadership to get engaged and support this strategy.

Senior leaders of both parties worked closely with Rep. MAXINE WATERS, Rep. CEDRIC RICHMOND, Majority Leader ERIC CANTOR and Rep. MICHAEL GRIMM to reach a fair, bipartisan, bicameral compromise that can get to the President's desk, and we owe it to our constituents to act as soon as possible with an up or down vote.

The National Flood Insurance Program is one of the earliest examples of large scale community planning in America. It made community based mitigation a requirement for rebuild-

ing. In order to be eligible for federally subsidized, low-cost flood insurance, communities had to pass ordinances restricting future development in floodplains. Taxpayers for Common Sense, the National Wildlife Federation and others would have you believe that NFIP encourages development in flood plains, but the reality is that it does the exact opposite.

By removing affordability from the core of the National Flood Insurance Program, Biggert-Waters put every policyholder on the path to Full Risk Rates whatever they may be. Speaking in support of the compromise bill, STEVE SCALISE, my colleague from Louisiana and Chair of the conservative Republican Study Committee, explained the problem clearly and directly saying:

"Sending somebody a \$10,000 or a \$20,000-a-year bill on a \$200,000 house that never flooded is not an actuarially sound rate. It's a death sentence."

Whether it takes 2 years or 20 years to get there, full risk rates of \$20,000 or more will continue to freeze the housing market, depress property values, and prevent responsible homeowners from purchasing flood insurance. Program participation is already anemic with just over half—60 percent—of those required by law to have flood insurance in compliance and even less market penetration in low-risk areas where we want people to purchase voluntary flood insurance policies to grow and diversify the risk pool. The Senate bill delayed the worst rate increases until FEMA completed the affordability study and proposed an affordability framework to protect people from impossibly high premiums.

This indiscriminate march to Full Risk Rates is further complicated by a fundamentally flawed mapping process that wipes local levees off the maps and excludes impacted communities from the mapping process. At my request last summer, David Miller, Association Administrator for the Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration—the man in charge of the National Flood Insurance Program, stood on top of a \$450 million levee in Lafourche Parish that was completely wiped off the map when FEMA released their new flood map in 2008. Their map remains under appeal to this day.

The parish was one of 25 sites nationally included in the pilot program for FEMA's new Levee Analysis and Mapping Procedures, LAMP, that were designed to fix this problem, but that process only began last summer and has a long way to go before it is ready for prime time. The Senate bill delayed rate increases based on new flood maps until FEMA certified that their maps were accurate and reliable.

Whereas the Senate sought to delay the worst parts of Biggert-Waters until maps were accurate and the affordability study was complete, the House

took a different approach by repealing these provisions and replacing them with other annual fees and rate increases. We had a healthy discussion and debate about our two approaches and eventually arrived at a compromise we could all live with that will protect people from the most aggressive rate hikes included in Biggert-Waters.

I commend Rep. WATERS and Rep. RICHMOND for the leadership in reinstating affordability as an essential element of this program. Since Representative CANTOR unveiled his bill on February 21, we successfully amended it to include an 18 percent annual cap on individual premium increases and an overall affordability target of 1 percent of the value of the policy.

While I would have preferred lower annual premium increases and stricter standards on overall affordability, this bill is a decent compromise that will address the most pernicious pieces of Biggert-Waters and attract the bipartisan support necessary to get it to the President's desk. This is another important step in our ongoing efforts to provide affordable, accessible and sustainable flood insurance to middle class Americans, but this bill is not the end of the battle. Nothing is perfect. Nothing is permanent.

After nearly 2 years of arduous work and steadfast determination by a broad coalition of individuals, business groups and community leaders, the most pernicious provisions and draconian rate increases of Biggert-Waters have successfully been stopped and affordability has been returned as the centerpiece of the National Flood Insurance Program. The passionate debate we had during the last 2 years—one that will continue—has shown that affordable flood insurance is about more than just actuarial numbers on a page. It is about protecting our unique culture, our treasured way of life, and preserving the historic coastal communities that built this nation and continue to drive its economy today.

As Chair of the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Committee, I will hold FEMA accountable for implementing this bill in a timely and transparent manner that provides homeowners and housing markets with the immediate relief they need to recover from these draconian rate hikes. Over the course of the past week, we were able to improve the original Cantor bill by removing onerous and unnecessary bureaucratic provisions, but I am not confident that FEMA will execute this either efficiently or effectively.

The great coalition of home builders, realtors, bankers, insurance agents, mayors, local governments and individual homeowners that fought to make flood insurance reform a national priority must remain vigilant and engaged. The National Flood Insur-

ance Program expires in 2017, and we will need to include strict affordability language to protect responsible homeowners from impossible premiums.

The compromise bill that passed the House last week with a vote of 306-91 has the support of the coalition that helped secure the strong 67-32 vote in the Senate earlier this year. Some of the key industry groups behind the bill are:

Greater New Orleans Inc.—GNO Inc,
National Association of Realtors,
National Home Builders Association,
National Association of Counties—NACo,
National League of Cities,
American Bankers Association,
Independent Community Bankers of America, and the
Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of America—Big “I”.

Biggert-Waters was built backwards and upside down. It authorized immediate rate increases on responsible homeowners without any understanding of how they would impact individual policyholders or the program at large and before FEMA was able to certify that their maps are accurate and reliable.

Lafourche Parish has been appealing their new map since 2008 because FEMA cannot figure out how to give them credit for local levees, including an 8-16 foot, 40 mile ring levee that was authorized by Congress in 1965—the Larose to Golden Meadow Hurricane Protection Project. To date, \$450 million has been invested in this project, including \$200 million from the Federal government. This past summer, FEMA began a pilot program that is supposed to solve the problem, but it will be another 2-3 years before that process is complete. FEMA needs to get their flood maps right the first time.

Currently, only 60 percent of the homeowners and businesses that are REQUIRED to have flood insurance actually do, and the aggressive rate increases authorized under Biggert-Waters threaten to make that problem a whole lot worse. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that every 10 percent increase in premiums leads to a 3 percent drop in overall program participation.

Katherine in Houma, LA cannot sell her home because a pernicious provision in Biggert-Waters that immediately increases premiums hundreds or thousands of dollars when you sell your house. When the young couple that was trying to buy her house went to closing, they learned that the flood insurance would go from \$1,400 to \$8,000 and could no longer afford the house. Katherine is stuck with a house she cannot sell and insurance she cannot afford.

Biggert-Waters threatens the very foundation of home ownership, the cornerstone of the American Dream. Fixing this flawed legislation is about protecting people's homes and equity and preserving the American dream that if

you work hard and play by the rules you can have a secure future.

Our bill structures NFIP in an affordable, comprehensive and sustainable way. For decades, the program was sustainable until the 2005 storm season resulted in an unprecedented \$17 billion in claims. Prior to that, it had an annual average deficit of just \$19 million per year.

This is not just a Louisiana or coastal issue. Fifty-five percent of our nation's population lives within 50 miles of the coast—and that doesn't include those living along inland waterways. Ten percent of the homes in the United States have a one-in-four chance of flooding in the lifetime of their mortgage.

In 2010, the 15 percent of U.S. counties that are located directly on open ocean, the Great Lakes, major estuaries or coastal flood plains contributed \$8.3 trillion—55 percent—to the Nation's Gross Domestic Product, and these communities proved more resilient during the 2007 recession, actually growing employment by 1.4 percent while the national employment rate fell by 2.3 percent.

This is not about millionaires in mansions on the beach. This is about middle class Americans who need affordable flood insurance so they can live where they need to work to harvest fresh seafood, produce domestic energy, and manufacture and transport the goods we need to maintain America's competitive advantage in the 21st century.

In response to all the concern I have heard from my constituents, I launched “My Home, My Story” to show you, literally, show some of the people and properties facing these rate increases that we are aiming to help. These aren't mansions, these aren't millionaires. These are middle class, working people living in normal, middle class houses doing their best to raise their kids, contribute to their communities and make a living.

I received over a hundred pictures and stories from my constituents.

Cody put his home on the market for less than its value and still couldn't sell it because of the high premium on his flood insurance.

Rachel lives in a 1,000 square foot elevated home with no central air or heat, one small bathroom, a quaint front porch and a beautiful sycamore tree. Three months after moving in, her flood insurance increased by \$750 per year, and she's struggling to make payments.

Maggie is a 66-year-old woman who has lived in the same house since 1974 and plans to stay there for the remainder of her life. She lives on a very strict budget and just received her first Social Security payment. If the law is not changed, it will be impossible for her to stay in her home or sell her home.

It provides basic consumer protections to responsible homeowners who built to code and played by the rules are struggling to stay in the NFIP.

It protects home equity. In St. Charles Parish, LA, the Assessor is reducing home values up to 30 percent because of the dramatic rate hikes that take effect overnight when a person goes to sell their home.

Based on the average mortgage, every \$1,000 increase in annual flood insurance premiums reduces an individual's purchasing power by \$20,000.

This provision affects 20 percent of all NFIP policyholders—1.1 million properties nationwide.

It ensures FEMA Flood Maps are Accurate. In 2011, FEMA acknowledged the failings of its “without levees” policy that resulted in local levees being literally wiped off the map, but it took them over two years to develop a new policy—the Levee Analysis and Mapping Procedures, LAMP. A pilot program for 25 sites nationwide—including 5 in Louisiana—Lafourche, Terrebonne, St. Charles, Plaquemines and St. Tammany—began in July, but it will be another 2–3 years before that process will be complete.

It allows FEMA to Complete the Affordability Study. FEMA must complete the affordability study mandated by Biggert-Waters and propose solutions for Congressional review. Our bill creates an expedited process for Congress to take action on these recommendations while maintaining critical checks and balances on FEMA's authority.

Provides Fair Credit for Local Levees—Removes the penalty on locally-financed flood protection projects and ensures that local and state investments in mitigation are accurately factored into the flood mapping process.

I thank the following Senate cosponsors for all their hard work throughout this process:

ROBERT MENENDEZ, JOHNNY ISAKSON, MARY L. LANDRIEU, THAD COCHRAN, JEFF MERKLEY, DAVID VITTER, JOHN HOEVEN, TIM SCOTT, ROGER WICKER, HEIDI HEITKAMP, CHUCK SCHUMER, KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND, ED MARKEY, BILL NELSON, MARK BEGICH, ELIZABETH WARREN, AL FRANKEN, JOE MANCHIN, ROBERT CASEY, AMY KLOBUCHAR, CORY BOOKER, KAY HAGAN, LINDSEY GRAHAM, BRIAN SCHATZ, RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, JACK REED, SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, LISA MURKOWSKI, RON WYDEN, SUSAN COLLINS and DEBBIE STABENOW.

This bill does not incentivize unsustainable development—In order to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program, communities have to adopt national building codes governing new development in flood prone areas. Our bill provides basic consumer protections to homeowners that build to code and played by the rules. It does not alter or amend any rules governing

new construction. The National Flood Insurance Program is one of the earliest examples of federal land use planning.

It does not put American Taxpayers on the hook for a small sub-set of NFIP policyholders. Prior to Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, NFIP was basically self-sustaining with an average annual deficit under \$20 million over that 26-year span. The \$24 billion debt incurred as a result of 2005 and 2008 storm seasons was the driving force behind the rate reforms in Biggert-Waters which required NFIP policyholders, not American taxpayers, to pay down that debt and establish a reserve fund for future catastrophic events. Our bill does not change that, it merely gives responsible policyholders a little more time to adjust to the higher premiums they have to pay as a result of Biggert-Waters.

FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate estimates that the NFIP saves taxpayers \$1.6 billion every year in avoided flood losses and disaster response costs due to the national building codes each participating community and policyholder were required to adopt and adhere to.

I would also like to thank the following staff members for their hard work throughout this process: Jason Tuber, Kirby Mayo, Karissa Willhite and Tim Del Monico in Senator MENENDEZ' office; Zack Rosenblum and Meghan Tiara in Senator SCHUMER's office; Joan Kirchner in Senator ISAKSON's office; Adam Telle in Senator COCHRAN's office; Travis Johnson in Senator VITTER's office; Claire O'Rourke, Liz Craddock, Matt Lehner and Wes Kungel in my office; Lisa Lederberger in MAXINE WATERS' office; Zach Butterworth in CEDRIC RICHMOND's office; Dill Dauster and Alex McDunah in Senator REID's office and all of the exceptional floor staff. On behalf of myself, the Senate cosponsors, and the entire flood insurance reform coalition, thank you.

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM PREMIUM REFUNDS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. 2137, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2137) to ensure that holders of flood insurance policies under the National Flood Insurance Program do not receive premium refunds for coverage of second homes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on S. 2137.

Who yields time?

Mr. COBURN. Madam President, we yield back the time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall it pass?

The bill (S. 2137) was passed, as follows:

S. 2137

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. NO REFUNDS UNDER NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM FOR COVERAGE OF SECOND HOMES.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “National Flood Insurance Program” means the program established under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.).

(b) NO REFUNDS FOR COVERAGE OF SECOND HOMES.—Notwithstanding section 3(a)(4) of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 or any other provision of law, in the case of flood insurance coverage under the National Flood Insurance Program for a residential property that is not the primary residence of an individual (as that term is used in section 1307(a)(2)(A) of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4014(a)(2)(A))), the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency may not refund any premium for such coverage collected in excess of the rates required under the provisions of, and amendments made by, section 3 of the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF ARUN MADHAVAN KUMAR TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE AND DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES AND FOREIGN COMMERCIAL SERVICE

NOMINATION OF TIMOTHY M. BROAS TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nominations of Arun Madhavan Kumar, of California, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service; and Timothy M. Broas, of Maryland, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

VOTE ON KUMAR NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on the Kumar nomination.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask that all time be yielded back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Arun Madhavan Kumar, of California, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON BROAS NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on the Broas nomination.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I yield back that time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, all time is yielded back.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Timothy M. Broas, of Maryland, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of the Netherlands?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

SUPPORTING SOVEREIGNTY AND DEMOCRACY IN UKRAINE—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The Senator from Oklahoma.

FLOOD INSURANCE

Mr. COBURN. I will try to make my remarks short. I know several of my colleagues have places they need to be and have a time schedule they are on. I was involved in a committee hearing this afternoon and could not contribute to the debate on the floor on the Flood Insurance Program.

I have about 8 months left in the Senate. I just want to remind us of what we have just done. We have solved a very short-term problem and made a long-term problem significantly worse. We did not really do our work because we were in such a hurry to take the political pressure off of the increases in the flood insurance rate.

Addressing that issue was important, and I agree that we needed to make some adjustments. But what we did is we chose politicians to win and the future to lose when it comes to flood risk mitigation and flood risk cost for the American public. Are there some posi-

tive things in the bill? Yes. But what we did once again is we put our political positions ahead of the best interests of this country.

The Biggert-Waters bill was a great reform bill. What happened is when we passed it, we did not recognize the tremendous rate increases many people would have. In the last 5 years in this country, we spent \$1.6 billion at FEMA reevaluating all of the flood plains in this country. The whole purpose behind that was to really put a risk of what is out there based on what we have and slowly get to a point where we are actually measuring the risk.

What have we actually done when we just passed this bill and sent it to the President? What you did is you asked everybody in the future to continue to pay an exorbitant amount of money for their insurance so people who are at risk will not have to pay ultimately what is due them. The only time we are going to see that actually happens now is when a property sells. That is when we are going to see it. Vacation homes are excepted. I understand that. We are not going to give rebates to people. I understand that. But the big problem is we undermined the incentive to mitigate for risk. We undermined it.

So we now have a new flood insurance program. We have \$18 billion worth of problems. We are getting ready to go to \$26, \$28 billion worth of problems, and that is on the heads of our kids. So we once again chose a position that put our kids at risk so we politically can be better off because we are going to alleviate the parochial scream. Rather than actually fix the scream, we are going to alleviate it, and we have eliminated all of that.

So my disappointment is not that we responded to parochial requests; it is that we did not do the hard work of actually fixing the problem and addressing some of the parochial problems and anecdotal notes of massive increases in flood insurance. We could have done both, but we chose not to.

It is so heartbreaking to me and to this country that we continually choose the politically expedient path that will bury our kids when we do not have to. That is a function of a lack of real leadership, of solving the real problems rather than treating the symptoms of the problems, which is what we did. We have wasted \$1.6 billion now, essentially. We might recover it 30 years from now. But the Flood Insurance Program is now not in any better shape and will not be in any better shape 20 years from now than it is today.

So I hope we are happy that we have solved the parochial problems, but when you go to sleep tonight think about who is going to pay that bill. It is not the people who are getting the benefit from the very large subsidized flood insurance. It is the kids of this country and what is not going to be

provided for them. It is those on the really low rung of the ladder economically. We are not going to have the finances to actually care for those who need the care from us the most. Really, it is the well-healed or the more well-healed and the more well-connected. They won again. The builders and the developers won. The real estate firms won. Less than two-tenths of 1 percent of this whole thing, without even modifying Biggert-Waters, applied to people in the lower 40 percent of income in this country. Less than two-tenths of 1 percent. Seventy percent applied to the top 20 percent of the people. So we gave a break to the most well off people. Those are the numbers. You cannot dispute those numbers. So because they screamed and do not want to pay their fair share, we have now damaged the future potential for our children.

I would say congratulations. We continue to do the same thing. No wonder the American people say: What is up with Congress? They do not have the courage to make a difficult, tough decision. What they do is they always make the politically expedient one.

That is exactly what we did today. That is what the House did today. To me, it is sickening.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, what now is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed to S. 2124 is the pending business.

Mr. REID. What is the subject matter of that bill?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Ukraine bill.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by me, after consultation with Senator MCCONNELL, the motion to proceed be agreed to; that there be 1 hour of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the bill be read a third time and passed, with all of the above occurring with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Reserving the right to object—I will not object—Madam President, the majority leader has asked that we move and pass this legislation which was considered in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. It was open for amendment. Several amendments were adopted. Several were rejected. By a vote of 14 to 3, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported out this bill.

Why should we care about this legislation? I will try to be as brief as possible, but I urge my colleagues' attention to the latest New York Times report today: "Russia Massing Military Forces Near Border With Ukraine." Russian forces are massing near the border with Ukraine. Airborne; ground capabilities; the parachute drop was on

a scale not seen since the collapse of the Soviet Union; the units involved artillery batteries, assault helicopters, and at least 10,000 soldiers.

In other words, right now as we speak, Vladimir Putin is either planning on or contemplating an invasion of eastern Ukraine. We have seen the movie before: provocateurs, people having to come and restore order, and there is no order, so then we see military intervention, and then there is going to be another referendum such as is supposed to take place on Sunday in the Crimea, which I predict 80 percent of the vote will do so when that is clearly not what the will of the people of Crimea is.

So, incredibly, incredibly, there will be an objection from this side to this legislation when the people of the Ukraine are crying out for our help and our assistance.

My friend Senator BARRASSO will now be proposing the House bill that has not one single sanction in it—not one sanction. I am surprised that the Senator would want to propose a bill that does not have any punishment for the Russians for what they are doing right now.

Then another one of my colleagues will probably come out and object to us taking up and passing the bill that was put through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—open to amendments—in a process that could not be criticized by anyone.

So what is the message we are sending to the Ukrainian people? What is the message we are sending them? That we have a problem with a fix for the IMF.

Then also there are some who are demanding changes in the regulation by the Treasury Department concerning campaign contributions. What has happened? Where are our priorities? Is the IMF—no matter whether it is fixed or not fixed with this legislation—more important than the lives of thousands of people? Is that what we are talking about?

You know, I will say to my friends who are objecting to this—and there are a number of them on my side—you can call yourself Republicans—that is fine—because that is on your voter registration. Do not call yourself Reagan Republicans. Ronald Reagan would never—would never—let this kind of aggression go unresponded to by the American people.

We are not talking about troops on the ground. We are talking about responses that impose sanctions and punishment for Vladimir Putin, who clearly has said that his goal—the greatest disaster of the 20th century was the dissolution, the collapse of the then-Soviet Union. We know what Vladimir Putin is all about. We know what he understands.

So now because of an IMF fix or a campaign finance fix, we are now going

to reject a piece of legislation that was done on a bipartisan basis with the leadership of the chairman, whom I see on the floor, of which I am proud, and with the ranking member, Senator CORKER of Tennessee. We are going to say no.

Do you know what the most ridiculous thing about all of this is? That the majority leader has filed cloture. We have well over 60 votes. So we are going to be back in about 11 or 12 days, whatever it is, and cloture will have expired. We have well over 60 votes. We will pass this.

Instead, our signal to the people of Ukraine today, as Russian military forces are massing on their border: Wait a minute. It is more important that we get our campaign finance regulations fixed. It is more important that we have the IMF fix as a higher priority than the lives of the men and women in the Ukraine.

I have been embarrassed before on the floor of the Senate, I will tell the Presiding Officer, but I have not been embarrassed this way about Members of my own party. One of the proudest aspects I have always felt of our Republican Party and the leadership of Ronald Reagan is we stood up for people. We stood up for people when the Iron Curtain was there. We stood up for Natan Sharansky. We said, “Tear down this wall.” Now we have a guy who is trying to reinstate the old Russian Empire, which he has said himself, and what are we saying? No. A shameful day. I will not object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, reserving the right to object—and it is not my ultimate intention to object but hopefully to persuade my colleagues not to object.

I have been watching my colleagues on television, in committee, and on the Senate floor rail about what is happening in Ukraine and about the lack of action from their perspective. We are at a moment—that after a very considered process in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which I am privileged to chair, working alongside the ranking member Senator CORKER and with Senator MCCAIN, another distinguished member of the committee—with a very strong bipartisan vote on a major piece of legislation, that, in fact, when it comes time to act, we have those who say no, even though they go on TV and bemoan the lack of action.

I find it incredibly difficult to suggest that what the House passed can be the only response to what is happening in Ukraine. Yes, it is a loan guarantee which we include in our legislation, but everything we do we pay for. So for those who are fiscally conservative and are concerned about it, we have paid for what we seek to do. That cannot be said about the House.

Secondly, we go beyond a loan guarantee. As important as that loan guar-

antee is to making an expression to the Ukrainian Government, to the Ukrainian people, to our partners in Europe and in NATO, we say there has to be responsibility taken for those who corrupted the Ukrainian Government, for those who undermined its sovereignty, for those who undermined its security.

We have provisions, both permissive and mandatory, to sanction individuals who have been found to have, in fact, corrupted the circumstances and/or affected the territorial integrity or sovereignty of Ukraine. One of them was sponsored by Senator MCCAIN, which was adopted unanimously, a mandatory provision.

If we want to be doing something about Russia, we can't do it with the House bill, we can only do it with the Senate bill. Then, yes, the IMF. I respect people who for some reason have an ideological difference about international monetary institutions, but if we want to talk about security, we will not have security in Ukraine if we cannot stabilize it economically, and a \$1 billion loan guarantee isn't enough to make that happen.

It is the IMF that is going to be the singular force to create the opportunity for economic stability inside of Ukraine, which is fundamental to meeting our security challenge as well.

To hold IMF reform hostage to the question of whether unlimited campaign money can go into our elections without deciding whether that is being done appropriately under the law as it exists is outrageous.

There is a reason we care about Ukraine. It is not simply because we want to do the right thing by a country that has been invaded in the Crimea and for which thousands of Russian troops and equipment are amassing along its border in Eastern Ukraine, it is because this has a global consequence.

If the West doesn't act what will China say when it is looking at its territorial desires in the South China Sea? What will Iran say as we are negotiating with them about nuclear weapons?

What will others in the world, in North Korea—whose march to nuclear weapons on a greater scale is in play—all of them will be looking at what we and the West do as it relates to Ukraine and making a decision: How far can I go? What can I get away with?

To be able to stabilize Ukraine, we need to ultimately have the International Monetary Fund. To hold that hostage because of investigations going on—wherever they may lead and however they may lead to the question of campaign finance moneys may be inappropriately, ultimately, being used in violation of law—is outrageous.

What is at play is our national interests, our national security, the sovereignty of the people of the Ukraine, the message that we will send across

the world about what we stand ready to do. That should not be hostage to political interests that have nothing to do with those issues.

For all those who have been standing and making speeches, for all those who have been going on TV with plenty of criticism, this is your opportunity to act and act now. There is no reason we cannot do that at this moment.

I withdraw my reservation and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. I will be brief. I wish to say first to the leader, we certainly have had some discussions regarding operations on the Senate floor and the speed with which we deal with things and the amount of debate, but I thank him for trying to bring this issue to a vote today.

I thank him for what he is going to do in a moment; that is, to file cloture on this piece of legislation that passed out of our committee with strong bipartisan support, so that immediately when we get back we will take up the bill.

I wish we could do it tonight. We have a group of seven or eight Senators on their way to Ukraine. Nothing would be better than for them to know we passed this strong piece of legislation this week, while there is going to be a referendum that is going to take place early next week in Crimea, while we have Russian troops on the border, while we have a Prime Minister who was here last night showing extreme courage, as a 39-year-old young man, in dealing with the issues he is facing today.

I lament the fact that we are not going to have the opportunity as a body—the most deliberative body in the world, some say—to take action on this issue.

I do wish to say that whenever we bring up the bill—it appears it will not be tonight; hopefully it will be as soon as we get back—this is a strong piece of legislation. It deals both with giving Ukraine a bridge to the future while they are dealing with economic issues internally; it deals with sanctions to isolate Russia, which is what we all know needs to happen to keep them from continuing this activity; and it puts in place reforms our country has already agreed to that Congress has not taken action on—and that makes the IMF more fully able to deal with this issue, which is a poster child for why we would want the IMF to operate in a responsible and strong manner.

I strongly support this legislation. I thank the chairman for working with us the way he did. I thank Senator McCAIN for his leadership on these issues.

Again, I thank the majority leader for placing this in an urgent manner before the Senate today. I lament the fact that we will not vote on it today,

but hopefully we will pass it broadly when we return.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Reserving the right to object, I am going to be brief, but I wish to make this point, that it is rare we take an action in the Senate that is watched around the world, and that is happening tonight. That is happening tonight because the crisis in Ukraine and in the Crimea has focused the attention of the world on Russian aggression, aggression by a country which hosted the Sochi Olympics—a charm offensive so we could see the new Russia—and then the final day of the ceremonies they sent their troops into Crimea.

That isn't the new Russia. That is the old Russia. It is a Russia many of us are familiar with, a Russia for those of us who have Lithuanian blood. My mother was born there and remembered full well what the Soviets did in the Baltics and what it meant to those poor people for such a long time.

We remember and we know that the ambitions of Vladimir will only be stopped with the resolve of the West. The resolve of the West starts in this Chamber tonight. It is an opportunity for Members on both sides of the aisle to stand and approve the measure which passed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday 14 to 4, with the great leadership of Senator MENENDEZ of New Jersey and Senator CORKER of Tennessee.

It was a bipartisan effort to say that what the Russians have done is wrong; that if they continue this course we will initiate political and economic sanctions; and that we will join the international community in strengthening the Ukrainian economy so it can prosper, embrace democracy, and the Western values which we treasure. That is what is at stake with this request this evening.

To hear people say let's not do it because we should debate the future of the IMF—for goodness' sake. Can't we save that for another day.

For the people in Ukraine, for those in America of Ukrainian descent who have family in Ukraine, can't we say we will save the debate on the IMF for another day.

Others have suggested there is another course of action. They say if we want to help Ukraine, we have to say the U.S. Department of Treasury cannot investigate violations of 501(c)(4) organizations.

What does that have to do with Ukraine? Nothing.

This is what it boils down to. Those who are making that demand are saying we cannot protect Ukraine unless we are prepared to protect the Koch brothers from the possibility of investigation and prosecution for wrongdoing. That is what it comes down to.

That is an outrage. If we submitted that as a plot line to "House of Cards," they would reject it and say nothing could be so outlandish. We have heard it not once but many times.

Let's stand tonight in the Senate and send a message to Russia and to Ukraine that we stand behind those people whose lives are at stake as they try to move forward toward democracy and as they move forward toward a free election. Let's stand behind them tonight and not hide behind some procedural effort.

I object to this measure and I hope the unanimous consent request is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, reserving the right to object, today Russia's Defense Ministry announced new military operations in regions along the Ukrainian border, a disturbing development that comes 1 day after Ukraine's interim Prime Minister visited President Obama and met with Members of this body.

We are now faced with the inescapable reality that the Senate is about to enter a recess week, having taken no meaningful action to aid the interim government in Kiev. We are left with one option, taking up and passing the House-passed bill, which authorizes \$1 billion in loan guarantees. We can pass that measure now by unanimous consent and assure our friends in Ukraine that they are not forgotten.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee bill contains provisions related to the International Monetary Fund that are unrelated to the crisis in Ukraine and not needed immediately and must be debated by this body.

The bill also contains sanctions, cuts to the Department of Defense, and other appropriations provisions.

The Foreign Relations Committee bill touches the jurisdiction of several committees and is certain to be met with opposition and perhaps a protracted conference with the House where, were we to take it up today, in the face of Russian armored vehicles, we are offering rhetoric, despite the fact that the committee bill addresses jurisdiction within the Armed Services Committee, the Appropriations Committee, and cuts Defense Department spending.

The chairman of the committee refused yesterday to allow me to offer amendments concerning the export of natural gas to markets in Europe. The Senate should debate whether helping Ukrainians through the export of natural gas is in our interest, as dozens of newspapers around the country talk about Moscow tightening the squeeze on Ukraine over energy.

The Washington Post says: "Europe needs an alternative to Russian natural gas."

The Wall Street Journal: "West Tries to Loosen Russia's Gas Grip."

The New York Times: "U.S. Hopes Boom in Natural Gas Can Curb Putin."

The Senate should debate whether helping the Ukrainians through the export of natural gas is in our interest. It should have that debate and pass sanctions, but none of those matters can be addressed today—none of them.

The only bill that can get to the President quickly is the House-passed bill, and we should pass it now.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 4152

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 328, H.R. 4152.

I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. I was talking to my friend, the senior Senator from Arizona, a little while ago. He and I came to the Senate together many years ago from the House of Representatives.

We came to the Senate together. We were separated because Arizona has more people and Nevada seniority. During those many years that we have been together, we have had some experiences in the Senate that are memorable. I don't know as much—and that is an understatement—about military preparedness and the military as JOHN MCCAIN does. That is a gross understatement. He is somebody we should listen to when it comes to things dealing with aggression and military operations.

Ukraine is kind of personal to me. A baby was born. His parents named him Israel Goldfarb. He, with his parents, came to the United States. His name was changed. That man is my wife's dad, my father-in-law. He was born in Ukraine. My wife Landra and I have been to Ukraine. But this is dealing with more than someone's father-in-law, may he rest in peace; it deals with 45 million freedom-loving people who are being threatened by the big bear wanting to return to the days of the Soviet Union.

So for my friend, the Senator from Wyoming, to come here and say there is nothing we can do about this today, that is absolutely wrong. There is plenty we can do about it today. But we are not going to do that. Why? Well, my friend says there are committees who are concerned about jurisdiction.

How do the people in Ukraine feel about that one? How do they feel about that—that the bipartisan heavy vote we got out of the markup in the For-

eign Relations Committee may have stepped on someone's toes dealing with the jurisdiction of a committee? This is much more important than that.

The International Monetary Fund is very much related to Ukraine, and my friend from Wyoming knows that. He is on the committee. He knows about the importance of the IMF.

But 45 million people are desperate for help. They are afraid. They are afraid. Russia has deployed paratroopers to the border with Ukraine. They didn't drive in; they were dropped from the air. These are Russian Cold War tactics.

I want to make a suggestion to President Putin, and that is this. He is going to have this plebiscite on Sunday in Crimea. Why doesn't he have one in Chechnya? What would happen there? Would they support Russia? No. They are an oppressed people because of Vladimir Putin. If he wants to have a vote on what the people of the Russian Federation want to do, let him have a vote in Chechnya and see how that vote would turn out. This is so transparent what he is doing—illegally.

These are Cold War tactics to try to intimidate the 45 million people in Ukraine. That is just what it is—intimidation. The entire world condemns what he has done with rare exception, and they are going to condemn it even more if he goes further because action will have to be taken to isolate Russia and its economy. This robust bill which was passed by the Foreign Relations Committee and sent to the floor is important.

I don't throw around a lot of accolades, especially for my Republican colleagues. I should do more, but I don't, and I have to get better at that. But I have told him personally, and I tell the people of Tennessee and the people of this country and the people around the world that the speech that was given yesterday by the ranking member of that committee, the junior Senator from Tennessee, was historic. It was a wonderful speech that set aside all partisanship and directed its attention to what is going on in a part of the world that must concern us.

This measure that comes from the House of Representatives, I can't do better than what the senior Senator from Arizona said. How could we send eight of our Senators to Ukraine and say: Yes, we decided to do something, but we are not going to do anything to suggest in any way that what Russia has done is wrong. There is not a sanction that would cause anything to happen with what the House has done. I can't imagine—I can't imagine—how anyone in good conscience, after what has gone on in the last few days—how anyone could agree that our great country should go to Ukraine and tell them that we have passed something that helps you, although we don't condemn Russia in any fashion in the reso-

lution. We are being asked to agree to that? I don't think so.

The role of the IMF in stabilizing Ukraine's economy and keeping Ukraine free is important. But it is important not only for the Ukrainians; it is important for this country. It is a part of our national security interests.

So we know people are upset about committee jurisdiction, and we know because it is out in public. I have kept this to myself for quite some time because it was done when we were doing other things, such as the omnibus. Efforts were made at that time to give up on the investigations of the Koch brothers and all the others. Remember, Treasury is not investigating only Republican super PACs. They are investigating super PACs, as they should—Republican super PACs, tea party super PACs, libertarian super PACs—all of them. If that isn't something that should be investigated, I don't know what is.

I have talked about Senator MCCAIN's efforts in recognizing and identifying for us, and we listen because of his experience in the military. But we should also listen to what he says about campaign spending. I am sorry to take so long. I know people are wanting to leave, but I want to say this. I have been a part of raising money here in Washington for a long time—more than three decades. When I first came here, for the only money you could get you listed where they worked, their address, and everything about them. Then we all will remember both parties found a way to sneak stuff through. We did it through corporations. We funneled the money through State parties, and I remember that. I felt so unclear, for lack of a better description. People would give you these big checks to give to the State party. Then McCain-Feingold passed. For the next election it was as if I had taken a bath—a bath after having run a marathon.

JOHN MCCAIN understands why we need to investigate all this soft money—the super PAC money. When he says it, we should listen. Maybe our colleagues don't want to listen to me, but they should listen to JOHN MCCAIN because he has a record of substantiating his efforts in that regard.

So this thing is being objected to—what we are trying to do here to protect the 45 million in Ukraine—because of this investigation of the Koch brothers and others. I am not going to get into the details about social welfare organizations and all that, but we all know they are political front groups that spend millions of dollars in misleading ads, and it is unfortunate.

So it is too bad we have this. It is hard to believe that some are so wedded to the Koch brothers and others that they would torpedo a bill that is vital to the national security of this country and the freedom of tens of millions of Ukrainians and the birthplace

of my wife's dad. This is wrong, and I am very disappointed in my friend from Wyoming that he would come forward and do this. I have to tell you it takes a lot of courage because there isn't a lot of academic integrity in that. Strike the word integrity. There isn't a lot of foundation for what he has done. It is unreasonable. It is unfair and it is without substantiation, and I object.

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. I know the Senator from Alabama wants to speak, and I assure him I will not remain on the floor to hear it because I know what the Senator from Alabama is going to say that has something to do with paying for it out of defense spending. I will match my record with the Senator from Alabama on defense spending anytime, day or night.

The fact is, this money is taken out of programs that were already canceled and were going to be returned to the Treasury. If they had been used for defense, then it would have busted the budget agreement the Senator from Alabama has so stoutly defended time after time. So in a bit of preemption of the Senator from Alabama, his argument is wrong that this is taking money out of defense. He is dead wrong.

So all I would say to my colleagues is that the Senator from Wyoming came down and wants us to take up and pass a bill passed by the House of Representatives which has not a single binding sanction in it—not one. Not one binding sanction in it. Not one strong message to the people of Ukraine that we are supporting them.

Russia's defense ministry announced: New military operations in several regions near the Ukrainian border on Thursday. Even as Chancellor Angela Merkel warned the operations came as Ukraine's Acting President Oleksandr V. Turchynov—the Acting President of the Ukraine was quoted by Ukrainian news media as saying Russian forces amassed near the border were ready to invade.

So we now have Russian forces ready to invade a sovereign nation, and what are we talking about? An IMF fix. Suppose the Senator from Alabama was right and this sum of money is being taken out of national defense. How much money are we going to have to spend on national defense if Vladimir Putin goes unchecked throughout Europe?

The next target, by the way, will be the Baltic countries because they have Russian speaking populations as well, and we may have to have provocations there; Moldova, where Russia occupies Transnistria; Georgia, where Russia occupies Abkhazia and South Ossetia. But what are we arguing about?

Whether the IMF fix is appropriate or not. What are we arguing about? Whether it is in dispute as to whether this is actually some reduction in defense spending. Where in the world are our priorities? Where in the world is our sympathy and our concern and our need to support the people of Ukraine in this hour of need?

I don't want to go on too long, but the issue of natural gas, we all know that is the way out of it long term. Does anybody think including a provision on natural gas is going to have any effect whatsoever on events that are now happening and will happen in the next few days? Of course not. I am a strong supporter of getting natural gas to these countries, but it is not going to happen in the next days, weeks, months or maybe even years. So to use that is an excuse, of course, again.

I have watched in the last few months two fool's errands. One was when we shut down the government. We were all so proud we shut down the government, turned away 600,000 people from our national parks, took \$27 million out of the economy of my State on a fool's errand that was not going to succeed. Now we see another fool's errand because the majority leader will file cloture and there will be well over 60 votes, and 10 or 11 or however many days from now we will pass it and these sanctions will be enacted.

In the meantime—in the meantime—the first message to the people of Ukraine, who have Russians—in the view of the Ukrainian President—ready to invade, is that we are telling them no, because we don't agree with an IMF fix or we think the money may be or may not be coming out of defense.

Mr. MURPHY. Will the Senator yield for a brief question?

Mr. MCCAIN. I will be glad to.

Mr. MURPHY. I thank the Senator.

Senator MCCAIN and I were in Ukraine at the end of last year. We had the privilege to speak on the Maidan in front of about half a million people, maybe even a million people who were there protesting the current government, the corruption that had reined free, their decision to move away from an orientation towards Europe. After Senator MCCAIN's remarks, the crowd rose up with the chant of "Thank you, USA. Thank you, USA."

Wherever we went during that trip, as we heard also from the new prime minister yesterday, they were desperate for the help of the United States. They are grateful for the fact that both the House and the Senate are moving forward on the issue of providing loan guarantees—loan guarantees that aren't nearly enough. That is why we need to have the IMF reforms, so they can deliver the bulk of the assistance. But they feel as though they are standing virtually alone as Russia marches across their borders, and des-

perately want the United States to lead an international consensus to make it clear to the Russians there is a price to be paid.

The Russians marched into Crimea in large part because they didn't believe the United States and Europe would enact the crippling sanctions which would have otherwise caused them to make a different decision. What this moment could be about, right now on the floor of the Senate, as we head back over to Ukraine to again express our support, is there is bipartisan consensus in the Senate and the House that we are not only going to stand with them on the question of economic support, but we are going to enact a set of sanctions which will make Russia consider a different decision.

My question to Senator MCCAIN is: As important as economic support is, that is not what they are asking for here. They are not asking for passage of the House bill. They are asking for the United States, as we have time and time again, to lead an international consensus to send a strong message to Russia. We are going to go over there and I believe have a good series of meetings this weekend, but we could have had a much stronger message brought to them if we had answered their call ultimately to provide them economic support and stand with our partners in Europe, sending a strong message to the Russians.

Mr. MCCAIN. I thank my friend from Connecticut. I say if we take up and pass the House bill, it does one thing: It gives them loan guarantees for \$1 billion. There is not one other single binding provision in the House bill which my colleague from Wyoming wanted to take up and pass, instead of this bill, which went through the committee—with the input, by the way, of the administration. There is bipartisan and administration cooperation on it.

I urge my colleagues to read the provisions of this bill. They are tough. They are tough, enforceable provisions which will make Vladimir Putin and his kleptocratic oligarchy uncomfortable.

And, by the way, one of the reasons why Vladimir Putin is doing what he is doing is he is afraid a free, independent, and noncorrupt Ukraine on his border might send a message to the Russian people who are sick and tired of him anyway.

Sanctions on persons in the Russian Federation, complicit in or responsible for significant corruption, are a major provision of this bill; Sanctions on persons responsible for violence or undermining the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, or territorial integrity of Ukraine. There are many other provisions in this bill which are binding which will make life very uncomfortable.

Instead, my dear friend—and he is my dear friend—from Wyoming wants

to take up and pass a bill which has one thing, and one thing only, and that is a \$1 billion loan guarantee. By the way, the EU has just given them \$15 billion.

So all I can say is we will pass this legislation, and we will go and we will assure our Ukrainian friends that this bill will be passed and we will act.

I hope people at home who know Ukraine and know the people of Ukraine and know the friends and relatives and others will make it known to their elected representatives that for us to sit by and not help these people would be writing a disgraceful chapter in American history.

I thank my colleague.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, if I could add to the comments of Senator MCCAIN.

Last night we all met with the Prime Minister. They don't even need this economic aid today. They have to sign an IMF agreement first. It is weeks before they even need what the Senator from Wyoming wished to pass.

On the other hand, what we are trying to do is push Russia back. As the leader mentioned, this bill has tough sanctions. And, by the way, Europe is meeting on Monday to begin looking at the sanctions they want to put in place. So if we were to pass the sanctions which we have in this bill—which are tough sanctions, sanctions which we have never imposed before, sanctions on economic extortion, sanctions on corruption—what that would do is help boost the European community along to do the same thing, and our goal here is to isolate Russia to keep them from continuing to put pressure on Ukraine.

So I couldn't agree more. Why would we pass a bill which does no good as it relates to trying to push Russia back and isolate them, when we have an opportunity right now to pass a bill which shows we are willing to isolate Russia and actually give strength to what the European community is getting ready to do hopefully this next week.

So I agree. I wish we were taking up the bill which we all worked on together and passed by a huge bipartisan majority, and I wish we could send you all with the sanctions in hand, passed out of the Senate, to show the people of Ukraine that while militarily there may not be involvement, we stand together with them to do everything we can to isolate Russia, to isolate Putin, and to make sure economically they pay a huge price if they try to take any other actions in this area. So I agree with the Senator.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. GILLIBRAND). The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, there has been an objection. I think unfairly,

there has been an objection. Everyone should understand, the first legislative matter we will take up when we get back here is going to be this. There is nothing I know of at this time that is more important.

So Senators should be aware, this is nothing we are going to run from. We are going to act on it as soon as we get back. It is really too bad we haven't been able to move forward. We should have. We could have. We are not going to. But we are going to move to it as soon as we get back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, what has happened in Ukraine is a real disaster. It should never have happened. It is so bad, and it reflects a weakness in American foreign policy which goes deep. The American people understand that. I think the whole world is baffled at the lack of clarity in American foreign policy. I would say, if JOHN MCCAIN had been elected President and were President today, we would have never had this invasion by the Soviet Russians into Ukraine and Crimea.

This is a big problem. It is not going away. It is a very deep and serious problem.

The fundamental thing we can do today—and we should do today—is move forward with what the United States can contribute to this situation, which is to pass the \$1 billion loan fund. The European Union is doing their \$15 billion through the IMF. Why don't we do that? Why don't we do that?

The reason is, this leadership is determined to push forward a policy change in the International Monetary Fund which has been up here before the Congress since 2010 and has not been passed and does not have to be passed today. They have insisted on that.

They have placed Ukraine in second place through their reforms which they have been pushing for with the IMF, and there are serious problems with that. It gives Russia more clout, among other things; not a lot, but it gives them more clout in the International Monetary Fund. And it costs money and violates the budget.

I am the ranking member on the Budget Committee. It is subject to a budget point of order. There is no doubt about that. Anybody can suggest otherwise if they want to, but it violates the budget, and we ought not to be doing this in violation of the budget. We don't have to.

But this administration negotiated with Senator MCCAIN and Senator CORKER and the Democratic leadership in the Senate and they agreed this would be the policy. Not what the House passed. But they would add more to it, they would reform the IMF, and then we are all just supposed to accept it.

I told the Senator from Tennessee—a very fine Senator—I am ranking member on the Budget Committee. He knows that. We have worked together to try to adhere to the spending limits Congress has imposed on ourselves. We just voted on this. Ten weeks ago the President signed this reform which raised the spending but limited it, and they want to spend more in a way which is not legitimate. So I am baffled.

Why in the world would we not take advantage of the—yes, what the House has sent to us, pass this legislation, and allow us to make our individual contribution of \$1 billion? And, by the way, we are scoring it at about \$350 million because it is unlikely we will be fully paid back.

So why don't we do that? Is it pride? Is it pique? Is it politics? I can't imagine. So you don't get everything you want, colleagues. Take what you can get. It is really the only thing which amounts to anything now. The IMF has put up \$15 billion. They don't need this reform to do their loan, their aid to Ukraine. They don't need this legislation for that. Why is it so important?

Senator DURBIN said: Well, why can't we debate this another day. Right. Why can't we debate the IMF another day? But if his bill were to pass, the debate is over; the law the President wants to pass would pass, without congressional involvement in it.

Members of Congress have been dealing with these issues for a long time. It is a serious question. It does not need to be here today on this legislation. It just does not.

I have warned our colleagues that we do not need to be passing legislation which is not paid for in this fashion, and I would object to it. They had time here to fix it, but no attempt was made to fix it.

It is a little disturbing to me to see our colleagues, who have themselves decided what the best solution is, come to the floor and attack those of us who have a good-faith objection to it, when we are perfectly prepared to support the fundamental thing which needs to be done—and that is the \$1 billion loan package the United States has agreed to fund, the House has agreed to support, I support, virtually every Member of Congress supports. But not this big reform package of IMF which is not justified.

I feel deeply this is a big mistake. Why in the world we wouldn't act today and take yes for an answer, I can't imagine. It goes beyond what I think is realistic.

I would conclude by saying again, something is very wrong with the foreign policy of the United States of America. Whether we reform the IMF is not going to send a message to Russia. The idea that somehow we are going to affect them by exactly what has passed here today I believe is incorrect. I believe fundamentally this

package is what we can do, what we should do, and we should do it today. Then we should come back and be prepared to impose serious sanctions or whatever the President asks for.

Finally, I am disappointed the President of the United States is not more consultative with Congress in order to determine what legislation we need to pass and would continue to insist on passing reform legislation of the International Monetary Fund, which, in all likelihood, will be rejected by the House.

I feel as though we are through the looking glass here. I hate that tensions are so high. But if we would take yes for an answer, pass this House bill, come back and have a full evaluation of reform of IMF, and pass sanctions as we go forward, that would be the right thing for us to do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I commend the Senator from Alabama and the Senator from Wyoming for their leadership on this important issue.

The crisis in Ukraine has riveted our attention for the last 4 months as we have seen brave men and women standing in freezing cold, standing for freedom, standing for their desire to stand with the West, to stand with Europe, to stand with America, and to be free from the domination of Putin's Russia.

We all strongly support the efforts of the Ukrainian people to choose a different path from subjugation to Russia, to choose a path toward economic and political liberty and toward a close friendship with the West.

Madam President, all of us on both sides of the Chamber are united in decrying the military aggression of Russian strongman Vladimir Putin, as he has invaded a sovereign nation with military force, committing an act of war. No one should be confused as to what Mr. Putin is attempting to do. Indeed, acting Ukraine Prime Minister Yatsenyuk said very clearly that Putin is trying to reestablish the borders of the old Soviet Union. He is expanding, sadly, into a vacuum of leadership the United States has not been filling. Russia is filling that vacuum, and the seizure of Crimea is only the beginning of Putin's aggressiveness. He will continue, I would predict, to be aggressive unless and until he meets significant resistance.

We are also united in believing there is an important role for the United States to play in responding to this crisis. I believe we should take concrete actions to respond to Russia's invasion of Crimea.

No. 1, we should press to expel Russia from the G8.

No. 2, the administration should immediately begin enforcing the Magnitsky Act—which he has failed to do up to this point—designed to punish

human rights atrocities by Russian Government officials. Indeed, we should expand it to include Ukrainian human rights abusers.

No. 3, we should immediately install the ballistic missile batteries in Eastern Ukraine that were scheduled to go in that President Obama mistakenly canceled in an effort to appease Mr. Putin. That effort did not succeed, and we should go forward with allowing eastern Europe to defend itself.

Additionally, there is a great deal we can do to aid the people of Ukraine. The President should immediately offer the Government of Ukraine a free-trade agreement indicating that their goods are welcome in the United States and our goods in their country.

We should explore other options to assist them in economic recovery consistent with free market principles, including moving as expeditiously as possible to allow them access to U.S. energy exports and in particular liquidified natural gas. Russia uses natural gas and energy as a tool of economic blackmail. It is critical to the source of Russia's power not just over Ukraine but over much of Europe. The United States is blessed with abundant supplies of natural gas. It is only foolhardy government policy that stands in the way of our exporting that natural gas, meeting the need and helping Ukraine be free of the economic blackmail. We should move immediately in that regard not just because it would help Ukraine, not just because it would represent a serious blow to Russia when Russia relies on the revenue from those energy exports—if the United States steps up and provides it to them instead, that would be a serious economic blow to Russia—not just that but because it makes perfect sense from the perspective of the United States of America, our economic interests at a time when we have the lowest labor rate participation since 1978. When millions of people are out of work and hurting, we should be developing and expanding our resources, and energy provides an opportunity to transform the geopolitical playing field, to use our abundant resources in a free market manner to respond and help liberate the people of Ukraine.

There is also a financial component of the assistance for—Ukraine that it makes a world of sense should come from the International Monetary Fund, to which the United States is a contributor. That is what the IMF was created to do, and the IMF today stands fully capable of meeting that need.

My friend from Arizona has an admirable passion on this issue for the people of Ukraine and for standing up to Mr. Putin, and I commend my friend from Arizona for his passion in this regard. However, the reason this bill has not passed today is because the majority of this Chamber—the majority leader made a decision, the chairman of the

Senate Foreign Relations Committee made a decision to inject into the aid and sanctions plan for Ukraine an extraneous issue, an issue of the IMF that has nothing to do with the underlying issue. That was a mistake. That was a mistake.

I would suggest that the so-called IMF reforms are misguided policy. They don't make sense for four separate reasons.

No. 1, they are unnecessary. There is no need whatsoever for these reforms. Indeed, the IMF is perfectly capable of managing the task on hand, and estimates have shown that Ukraine aid would cost no more than 5 percent of its current resources. So the IMF portions are unnecessary, extrinsic. I agree with the Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER, who says these so-called IMF reforms are unnecessary and extrinsic to this bill.

No. 2, these IMF provisions, if passed into law, would dramatically expand the financial exposure of the United States of America, effectively doubling our contribution, expanding our exposure. If that is good policy, that should be debated on its merits. We should not be opening the U.S. taxpayers to billions in additional financial liability without a debate on the merits. It shouldn't be just tied to Ukrainian aid and forced through the Senate. That is the wrong approach.

No. 3, most inexplicably, these so-called reforms, if passed, would diminish U.S. influence on the IMF; would reduce our ability to control the decisions of the IMF; indeed, would move the funds from a fund in which we have veto authority into one in which we no longer have veto authority. We would have a smaller portion of influence over the IMF.

Astonishingly, No. 4, this bill would expand Russia's influence and control over the IMF. Let me repeat that. A bill that is being ostensibly introduced to punish Russia for their acts of war and aggression would expand Russia's influence over the IMF and decrease the influence of the United States of America.

I agree with my friend from Alabama who suggested moments ago that this is "Through the Looking Glass." This makes no sense. I would challenge any of my friends here to stand here and explain why a sensible response to what Russia has done is to expand Russia's influence in the IMF and to diminish America's influence. That makes no sense whatsoever.

Madam President, I wish to close with two points. No. 1, we could pass aid for the people of Ukraine right now—today. The Senator from Wyoming rose and asked for unanimous consent to pass the bill that has already passed the House. Had the majority leader not stood up and objected on behalf of Senate Democrats, that bill would have passed into law. It would be

already headed to the President's desk for signature. It is only because the majority leader objected that we are not sitting here today having already passed aid for the people of Ukraine.

I would note, by the way, that the majority leader had extended commentary about two businessmen, the Koch brothers, who I am beginning to think are characters almost out of "Dr. Seuss" in the majority leader's mind. They are the grinch who stole Christmas in his telling. I would note that the majority leader focuses on the IRS rules—not focusing on the abuse of power by the IRS, the Treasury inspector general chronicles, but instead on the need for a vote to regulate the IRS's abuse of power.

Let me say very simply that the House bill on Ukraine doesn't mention the IRS at all, doesn't mention P4s at all. So when the majority leader stood on the floor, this is all because of the nefarious Koch brothers. Set aside the impropriety of the majority leader of the U.S. Senate picking two private citizens—individuals engaged in political speech, standing up for what they believe, and the majority leader using his position of political power to lambaste them, to target them.

Interestingly enough, the majority leader does not seem to have a problem with the California billionaire who has publicly pledged to put \$100 million behind Democrats to press them to pass climate change legislation that would cost millions of jobs across this country from blue-collar workers, from hard-working Americans. That billionaire, in the majority leader's view, is perfectly free to spend \$100 million in the election, but the Koch brothers, because the two of them have stood and expressed their views, are subjected to vilification and personal attack from the majority leader.

The Senate rules allow a Member of this body, if his or her integrity is impugned, to raise an objection. Let me ask you something, Madam President. What Senate rule allows a private citizen to raise an objection when his integrity is impugned by the majority leader?

Those two brothers are not Members of this body, so they can have their reputation dragged through the mud. Yet they are denied a point of personal privilege to come and defend themselves. That is not the job of the U.S. Senate, to vilify private citizens.

I would note that the provision he is talking about is not in the House bill, which means when the Senator from Wyoming stood and asked for consent to pass the House bill, if the majority leader had simply refrained from objecting, we would have passed aid to Ukraine tonight. It has nothing to do with the Koch brothers, nothing to do with the IRS. That is not in the House bill. The reason the majority leader objected is that he wants to hold aid to

Ukraine hostage to force through these misguided IMF reforms. That is the wrong decision.

One final point I wish to make. The world should understand, Russia should understand, the people of Ukraine should understand, and Mr. Putin should understand that all of us are united in standing with the people of Ukraine, that the United States will act. I am convinced it will act decisively to impose sanctions and serious consequences on Russia for this unprovoked act of war. We will act decisively to stand with the people of Ukraine. There should be no doubt in any observer's mind that this will unify both parties. We will stand together. We would have done so tonight had the majority leader not made the cynical decision to hold aid for Ukraine hostage to force a partisan bill that does not enjoy sufficient support in this body to pass otherwise. Politics should end at the water's edge, and I think it is unfortunate to see the majority leader trying to use the crisis in Ukraine for political advantage. That is a mistake.

But there should be no ambiguity. We will impose sanctions. We will stand with Ukraine. And the people of America understand that Mr. Putin's aggression is reliving the days when the Soviet Union was an evil empire. It is reliving those days Mr. Putin called the collapse of the Soviet Union "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of modern times." Well, all of us surely hope he does not succeed in his intentions of restoring the Soviet Union, restoring that evil empire, restoring the cloud of oppression across Europe and across the world, and we stand united with the people of Ukraine and with the people surrounding Russia in support of freedom and against his unconscionable act of war.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the Senator from Texas for his comments and for his eloquence. I believe he has touched on the right issues.

I would just add one thing. I was in Ukraine about 3 years ago; a delegation was there. We met with State Department people. We met with Tymoshenko, the fabulous leader of the Orange Revolution. She had those beautiful braids in her hair like peasants in the Ukraine wear, and she was concerned that she would be put in jail. I just couldn't believe it. The Ambassador told us she hadn't committed any crime, but she was placed in jail and served 2½ years. They have released her now. She was in a wheelchair, and you could tell she suffered from that.

I truly believe the people of Ukraine did a fabulous, wonderful thing when they stood for their country, for democracy. We need to stand with them. I stand with them just as I stood with

and defended the people of Georgia when the Russians invaded Abkhazia and Ossetia.

I want to say unequivocally, bipartisanly, that this Congress—House and Senate—stands firmly with the people of the Ukraine. We want to help them. The one thing substantively we can do today that would make a difference for the people of Ukraine is to pass this bill that provides \$1 billion in help to them. I truly believe we should do that. I am deeply disappointed that the majority insists that unless they get their reform of the International Monetary Fund that they want to see happen, which is unrelated directly to the needs of Ukraine, that they won't accept the legislation the House has already passed. I think that would be a mistake.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

UKRAINE

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I return to the floor because I can't let some of what has been said go unchallenged.

First of all, as it relates to the majority leader, the issue of the connection that has been made between IMF reform and the C-4 investigation—the unlimited, undefined, not-known secret money that goes into these entities in elections—was not first raised by the majority leader. It was first raised by Senator CORKER in an article. It was subsequently raised today on the floor by Senator MCCAIN. So casting aspersions upon the majority leader and suggesting he is ultimately impugning the reputation of anyone is pretty outrageous when the Members of his own side of the aisle recognize that it was simply wrong to connect IMF reform and the ability to help Ukraine in the most powerful way now with some C-4 investigation.

Secondly, only in Washington could someone have you believe that IMF reforms we are promoting means more power for Russia. Yes, we are rushing in this Chamber—JOHN MCCAIN and BOB CORKER are rushing into this Chamber to give more power to Russia. Only in Washington could anybody believe that.

Only in Washington could someone have you believe that our other colleagues on the committee who voted for the legislation to have IMF reform were actually voting—our Republican colleagues were voting—to give Russia more power so they could continue to oppress people. It stretches the incredulous nature of that argument.

On the contrary, why are we in the mess we are in? Because when Ukraine was having serious economic challenges, it was Putin and Russia that were coming with their money, not the IMF which—in a way—might have ultimately been important because the IMF needs the resources and the

leveraging we create by virtue of this legislation.

You can't divorce it. If you really want to help Ukraine, you need to have the resources of the IMF that ultimately guarantees the full ability to bring Ukraine back into economic order, and from that, build on all the other elements of security as well.

Thirdly, the budget point of order: The ranking member on our committee made it very clear when he said, I want to be supportive, but we have to have this paid for, and we did. People can disagree with the pay-for, but it is paid for, which is something the House of Representatives didn't do. Let me tell you what else the House of Representatives didn't do. They didn't do anything about sanctions—nothing, zero, nada.

The bottom line is, we would send a message that, yes, we want to partially help Ukraine, but not in the most significant way we can, which is with IMF reform and the leveraging of the resources and our voice that we would bring to them in determining their future and the next crisis in the world, which is unfortunately around the corner.

So for those who claim they are all for helping Ukraine and national security, they should have allowed us to have this vote tonight.

Lastly, with reference to my dear friend and colleague, for whom I have a great deal of respect, Senator BARRASSO, who said I didn't permit his amendment on LNG to move forward, his amendment was ruled out of order because it was not within the jurisdiction of the committee. The reality is on the merits of it, it is not about helping Ukraine right now. Ukraine doesn't have the infrastructure for LNG. They obviously don't have the resources to build the infrastructure for LNG.

Turkey, which controls the Bosphorus Strait, has said they are not going to let the LNG go through because of their concerns for security. So the bottom line is that is not about helping Ukraine today. If all of that can be accomplished—infrastructure, the resources to build it, and getting Turkey on board—then maybe in the future that is part of a further, longer term solution, but it is not about right now.

What it is about right now is the loan guarantees. It is about the sanctions to make sure the Russians and those in Ukraine understand they are going to be subject to real consequences by virtue of corrupting Ukraine and undermining its territorial integrity. Lastly, having the long-term ability through the IMF to achieve the goals of stabilizing Ukraine economically and also preparing for the next emergency, that is what was at stake tonight.

We will get there, but when you see movements of Russian troops and the circumstances that are unfolding, and I

hear colleagues say, "We are not doing enough," and then just want to do a fraction of what is necessary to help the Ukraine, I begin to seriously wonder.

I hope the majority leader will have this as the first order of business when we return. I think there is bipartisan support for the package the way it is now. It is unfortunate that as our colleagues travel to Ukraine, they can't go with the final message that this was passed today, but it will pass.

As I said to the Prime Minister of Ukraine yesterday—an extraordinary individual who met with members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—in the long history of the world, only a few are called upon to answer the call of freedom in some of its most dangerous moments in history. He has been called upon to do that on behalf of his country at this time. We are called upon to stand against the aggression and to help a country be able to do so.

I hope we will be able to get past this issue of linking IMF reform with the whole question of campaign finance issues so we can achieve that goal.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

DEFENSE BUDGET

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I very much appreciate the importance of the discussion going on, but I would like to talk about another very important issue that is facing us. One of the biggest problems our country faces at the current time is one Washington has created—the out-of-control spending and our lack of fiscal discipline to put our country back on a path to fiscal responsibility.

Last week President Obama released his budget proposal for fiscal year 2015. That proposal continues Washington's reckless spending. It offers little in the way of real help to the millions of Americans struggling to get by in this very stagnant economy, which has not been helped by the President's policies.

What is worse is that the President finds a way to support the projects and priorities of his base but can't continue our country's commitment to our men and women who served and are serving our Nation in uniform.

The defense budget proposes to slash even more benefits our military families need. The Military Officers Association of America is rightfully highlighting these proposed cuts to military compensation and health care benefits.

The Washington Times published a story on this topic yesterday, saying retired servicemembers weighed in with frustration and anger, and rightfully so.

The proposal again caps the military pay raise at 1 percent, although the private sector wage growth is 1.8 percent. MOAA, the Military Officers As-

sociation, calculated what these cuts would mean to the bottom line of our active-duty military. An Army sergeant stands to lose nearly \$5,000 in benefits annually and an Army captain will lose nearly \$6,000 in benefits annually. This is certainly the wrong message to send to our men and women who put their lives on the line for this country.

When the President was elected, he promised to go through the budget with a scalpel; however, the only thing he seems capable of dissecting is military pay and benefits.

I am here today to say that these cuts on our military families are unacceptable. I will fight to preserve the benefits our military families were promised. Fortunately, as has been the case with the President's budgets from the past few years, this proposal will likely never see the light of day. Even the majority in the Senate doesn't have the desire to bring that proposal up for a vote. But this does not excuse those who continue to propose savings that come at the expense of our men and women in uniform or those who have served us in the past.

Our military members, their families, and our veterans should not have to bear the burden for Washington's irresponsible spending. Taking away benefits from our servicemembers has become a recurring problem. This is very troubling.

I stood here less than 2 months ago talking about our need to restore military retiree cuts that were unjustly taken away to help rein in spending. I opposed the budget agreement that cut the retirement benefit of our veterans and reducing the cost-of-living adjustment because it unfairly aimed to balance the budget on the backs of our retired military. Now the President seems determined to continue down that path.

We were able to restore most of those misguided military retirement cuts, but these benefits should have never been a target. Now the President wants to target servicemembers again. It is unconscionable considering he is intent on interjecting the Federal Government into private sector labor issues. He wants to force private entities to raise wages and increase benefits in a poor economy that his policies have created. When it comes to our men and women in uniform, he is all for stripping away their hard-earned benefits so he can continue to redistribute wealth, raise taxes, and increase Federal spending another \$1 trillion.

We need to keep the promise we made to our servicemembers and maintain these benefits. Washington needs to find savings somewhere else. It can and must be done.

With that, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mrs. HAGAN. Madam President, I come to the Senate floor today to discuss an issue of enormous importance to my State, our country, and future generations.

I thank my colleagues for bringing attention to the critical issue of climate change earlier this week. This is a pressing problem that needs to be addressed and too often gets pushed to the back burner.

As a Senator from North Carolina, I represent a State that is home to some of our country's most treasured landmarks and most precious natural resources—from the Great Smoky Mountains in the west to the Uwharrie National Forest in the Piedmont to Cape Hatteras National Seashore in the east.

Like so many North Carolinians, my family and I love spending time together outdoors whether it is hiking, fishing, biking, or just enjoying the views and being outside.

Visitors from across the country travel to North Carolina to experience the Blue Ridge Parkway in the fall or to take a vacation on the Outer Banks in the summer. Tourism is an important part of our State's economy—generating \$25 billion in economic activity and supporting over 390,000 jobs in my State. However, rising temperatures and extreme weather are putting those landmarks and resources at risk.

In 2012, North Carolina experienced a total of 40 broken heat records, 4 broken snow records, 13 broken precipitation records, and 19 large wildfires.

Since 2000, North Carolina has issued 14 disaster declarations from severe storms and flooding. This extreme weather doesn't just jeopardize the beauty of our coastline or put our forest at risk for wildfires, it also affects our economy and impacts people's everyday daily lives.

In 2011 Hurricane Irene ravaged our coast and affected approximately 1.3 million North Carolinians. Roads and highways were destroyed, homes and businesses were left inaccessible. The damage left some families with no other option but to live in tents.

The storm decimated tourism for the eastern part of our State at the height of the tourist season. The region got back on its feet only to be hit again a year later by Hurricane Sandy, which totally sliced through Highway 12, which is the lifeline of the Outer Banks. It cut it right down the middle.

This changing weather impacts another key part of North Carolina's economy, agriculture, which is our State's biggest industry. Agriculture generates \$77 billion in economic activity and employs nearly one-fifth of our workforce.

Last year record rainfall flooded several counties in North Carolina, and our farmers lost tens of millions of dollars' worth of food crops. Tomatoes were wrought with disease. In some

fields half of all of the sweet corn had been destroyed. Experts predicted losses could double for producers, some of whom are thinking twice before they plant a crop next year.

We are seeing the very real impact climate change is having on my State and its economy today. In the absence of action, this extreme weather is here to stay. Recent reports have shown that by 2099 climate change could increase temperatures by as much as 10.5 degrees Fahrenheit and cause over 1,000 more heat-related deaths just in my hometown of Greensboro. By midcentury, Greensboro is expected to increase from a historical average of 8 heat-excessive days in the summer to 59 and to reach a total of 70 days by the end of the century. This current path is unsustainable, and we must take steps now to slow and stop the effects of climate change.

This is a challenge that will need to be addressed from many different directions, but I am proud of the steps we took in North Carolina when I was in the State senate to invest in energy innovation. A bill I worked on in 2007 made North Carolina the only Southeastern State with a mandatory renewable energy standard, requiring electrical utilities to meet up to 12.5 percent of their energy needs through renewable sources by 2021. We also enacted the Clean Smokestacks Act in 2012, which made significant emission reductions from coal-fired powerplants in North Carolina and Tennessee.

I am proud of those accomplishments, but we must do more. I believe North Carolina and the United States are well positioned to lead and to take advantage of opportunities in the 21st-century energy economy.

I look at North Carolina's Research Triangle Park, which has become an international model for bringing together industry, research institutions, and government to help develop clean energy technologies that reduce carbon emissions and make our country less dependent on fossil fuels. Companies and institutions across North Carolina are developing ways to reduce energy more efficiently, harnessing smart grid technologies and using renewables to provide new, power-intensive data centers in my State.

While addressing carbon emissions presents new economic opportunities, we must also be sure to minimize any economic burdens on the least fortunate and make efforts to ensure that we do not harm our global economic competitiveness.

The challenge before us is great, but if we come together, Democrats and Republicans, we can move forward with commonsense measures that reduce emissions, increase our energy independence, and put the United States back on a sustainable path, all while getting the people of this great country back to work.

Thank you, Madam President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, as we wrestle with the Ukraine situation, I hope we can—I wish we could have gotten together to be able to pass the core responsibility of this Congress, which would be to allow the loan program to go through—a \$1 billion loan program that I think everybody in the House and the Senate agrees on, Republicans and Democrats. It was, in fact, complicated and made impossible tonight because the majority insisted that IMF reform, which is opposed and is unrelated to the Ukraine, be a part of this legislation. The House has not passed it. I don't think the House will pass it. So why were they insisting on that and refusing to take the money we were able to give tonight? It is just baffling to me.

I appreciate Senator MENENDEZ. He has shown real leadership and insight into international relations. He chairs the Foreign Relations Committee. I don't mean to attack his integrity or anything of that nature, but he is incorrect in saying this bill is paid for or doesn't violate the budget. It absolutely violates the budget. The Congressional Budget Office has analyzed the numbers, and they have concluded just what my Budget Committee staff has concluded, which is that it violates the budget. The numbers are plain.

Look, a lot of things around here are not perfect, but the idea that we would insist on passing International Monetary Fund reform that does not have to be a part of this bill and is not related to this situation, is going to cost \$315 million to fund that program, that reform, which is very controversial, and half of the money explicitly comes from the Defense Department—Air Force missiles and Army procurement and aviation—at a time when the Russian army is occupying the Crimea in the Ukraine, we want to now cut the Defense Department and the Army of the United States even more.

The Budget Control Act has really tightened the military's defense budget. They are doing all they can do to meet that budget. I have tried to support the budget. I believe all of us need to tighten our belts. But I will just say this: We don't need to take more money out of the Defense Department budget at a time when we are already asking them to take unprecedented reductions. I feel strongly about that. It is disturbing to me that we have not reached that agreement.

In fact, what has happened is the Defense Department was forced to make some tough decisions, so they rescinded some of the money they had, and they intended to use it on other priorities, things they need to spend the money on. They made tough choices. What has Congress come in

here now to do? Reach in there and take the money the Defense Department was trying to save so they can move it to something of high priority and spend it on this program. There is \$4 trillion in U.S. Government spending. We can't find some other place to find this money? Aren't there legitimate offsets that don't violate the budget?

For the most part, all of these offsets for both programs are not legitimate. They are basically gimmes. We need to get away from that. We need honesty in budgeting. We really do need it. When we have a priority we want to act on, such as this Ukraine situation, there are plenty of opportunities for us to identify lesser priority spending and take that money and spend it. That is what the Defense Department was doing when they executed rescissions. They were making choices, setting priorities.

We should not do this. It is not a little bitty matter. Frankly, the House needs to be more careful about how they do their business. The bill they sent over here has problems with it. But to take another whack at a controversial program—\$315 million—and take half the money from the military is really unacceptable.

I warned people about this in advance, but they persisted. They thought they could get to the last minute and they would stand here on the floor and emotionally argue that our objection had something to do with not caring about or being supportive of the people of the Ukraine, that we would just fold and give it to them. Well, that day is becoming a day of the past.

Somebody needs to stand here and say we are going to do these things right or we are going to have real problems on the floor of the Senate. If I have to do it, I will do it.

I am proud of the Senator from Wyoming, who sought to pass the House bill. We just have to accept it. That is something we could do and get it done tonight, and I would be willing to support that. I certainly want to help the Ukraine, and we can do it and do it in the right way.

I thank the Chair for the opportunity to speak tonight. I know we all love the country, and we are going to have to wrestle now with serious questions about Russia—what their agenda is, what kind of actions they may be taking. There needs to be no doubt that this Senator has no intention of standing idly by while Russia attempts to take over independent, sovereign nations on its border. It is absolutely unacceptable. We cannot accept it. It should not have happened. I believe if this President had been more firm and clear in his policies, it likely would not have happened, but it has.

The whole world now has to confront this crisis and deal with it. It is not

going to be easy. I think all of us need to work hard to put our politics aside on this question and try to do what is in the national interests.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor. I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Madam President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed to S. 2124.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk that I would ask the Chair to report.

I have to sign it and send it there first.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 329, S. 2124, a bill to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Robert Menendez, Debbie Stabenow, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Carl Levin, Joe Donnelly, Christopher A. Coons, Jack Reed, Maria Cantwell, Barbara A. Mikulski, Tom Harkin, Tim Kaine, Jeanne Shaheen, Jon Tester.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF CHRISTOPHER REID COOPER TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 581.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Christopher Reid Cooper, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented

under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Christopher Reid Cooper, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Debbie Stabenow, Robert Menendez, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Carl Levin, Bernard Sanders, Joe Donnelly, Maria Cantwell, Barbara A. Mikulski, Tom Harkin, Tim Kaine, Jeanne Shaheen, Jon Tester.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I move to proceed now to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF M. DOUGLAS HARPOOL TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 582.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of M. Douglas Harpool, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Missouri.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk on this nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of M. Douglas Harpool, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Missouri.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Debbie Stabenow, Robert Menendez, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Carl Levin, Bernard Sanders, Joe Donnelly, Maria Cantwell, Barbara A. Mikulski, Tom Harkin, Tim Kaine, Jeanne Shaheen, Jon Tester.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF GERALD AUSTIN MCHUGH, JR. TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 583.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Gerald Austin McHugh, Jr., of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Gerald Austin McHugh, Jr., of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Debbie Stabenow, Robert Menendez, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Carl Levin, Bernard Sanders, Joe Donnelly, Maria Cantwell, Barbara A. Mikulski, Tom Harkin, Tim Kaine, Jeanne Shaheen, Jon Tester.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF EDWARD G. SMITH TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 584.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Edward G. Smith, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of M. Edward G. Smith, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Debbie Stabenow, Robert Menendez, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Carl Levin, Bernard Sanders, Joe Donnelly, Maria Cantwell, Barbara A. Mikulski, Tom Harkin, Tim Kaine, Jeanne Shaheen, Jon Tester.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent we proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CORINTHIAN COLLEGES

Mr. DURBIN. Last December I spoke about a news article that revealed another disturbing scam perpetuated by the for-profit college industry. The ar-

ticle reported that Corinthian Colleges, Incorporated, a publicly-traded corporation, that owns for-profit schools in the United States and Canada, has engaged in deceptive job placement practices in order to artificially boost job placement rates and avoid scrutiny by its creditors.

It turns out Corinthian schools were paying employers what they called an onboarding fee of \$2,000 per student so the companies would hire their graduates temporarily so that could be counted as an official permanent job placement.

Corinthian college subsidiary schools have been criticized in the past for having high dropout rates, high tuition, and some of the highest loan default rates in the Nation. Nearly 40 percent of Corinthian college students who should have begun to pay their Federal student loans in 2008 were defaulting on their student loans. This is the highest rate of any publicly-traded company in that sector. Yet, over the last 10 years Corinthian Colleges has been rewarded for its poor performance with \$10 billion in Federal student aid. On an annual basis American taxpayers fund more than 80 percent of Corinthian Colleges' total revenue. This includes the salary of Corinthian's CEO, Jack Massimino, who received compensation of \$3.1 million in 2012, thanks to the taxpayers. This was seven times the average compensation for presidents of public universities, which is about \$440,000.

Corinthian also spent \$400 million on marketing and admissions in 2013, about \$3,700 for each newly admitted student. How could they afford it? Because the taxpayers are subsidizing this for-profit college. Corinthian's marketing strategy has come under scrutiny recently because it targets low-income people. Why? If you are a low-income new student at Corinthian you automatically qualify for a Pell grant and a college student loan. They can't wait for you to come through the door, sign the papers, and then watch what happens next. Most of these students falter, fail, drop out, or if they were, I guess, lucky—and I use that word advisedly—they end up with a worthless diploma. These students attracted by the prospect of a better life and the dream of a college education end up far worse off, deeply in debt with nothing to show for it.

Eric Parms, an Everest college grad, completed a 9-month heating, ventilation, and air conditioning repair program. What he ended up with at the end of it was a \$17,000 student loan for a 9-month program on HVAC and no job. After he graduated he had to beg the career counselors at Everest to set up some interviews. Frankly, Eric wasn't worth that much to them after he graduated. They wanted him to sign up for the loans. He did it and they lost interest in him.

Finally, he was set up by career services to work in a contract position laying electric wires. However, after less than 2 months on the job he was laid off and cut off from any career service counseling at Everest College, part of the Corinthian operation.

The school had effectively placed Eric in a short-term internship program, and once it was over, there was no incentive for that company to hire him when they could vacate a space for another graduate who would get a \$2,000 Corinthian subsidy, so their numbers would look better to the public and to the Federal Government. Then Everest could shuttle in another graduate for a part-time position leading nowhere.

Eric lost out on the deal with a \$17,000 student loan for a worthless education at Everest College, part of the Corinthian family of schools. To get a Georgia HVAC contractor license he needed to have significant work experience and references. No one would hire him with a degree from Everest. Everest College, part of Corinthian, gave him a worthless degree.

After reading the December article and stories like Eric's, I sent four letters. One letter was to the CEO of Corinthian, asking him to explain these practices and to outline steps the company is going to take to put an end to it. His response to me was not surprising but disappointing. Corinthian's CEO Jack Massimino, the multimillion dollar CEO defended the school's policies and practices. He did admit that at one time three Everest campuses provided incentives to employees.

This is a scandal that has to come to an end. I tell folks repeatedly, if you want to know about for-profit schools and universities in America, remember three numbers: 10 percent of high school grads end up in for-profit colleges; 20 percent of all the Federal aid to education goes to these colleges; 46 percent of all the student loan defaults come out of these colleges. These are worthless, by and large. There are some exemptions, but most of them are worthless, and we as taxpayers are being taken to the cleaners by this industry.

When we don't have enough money to do the important things in America such as medical research and assistance for education at good, worthwhile schools, we ought to say shame on ourselves for not taking a look at this for-profit college industry which is fleecing the American taxpayers.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. First let me thank Senator DURBIN for his commitment on this issue. We know education is a great equalizer in America. We know there are major concerns on access to higher education because of costs, and that we have to do a better job to make

college education affordable. We also have to have accountability in higher education, to make sure those institutions are providing quality products to their students and are doing it in a cost-effective way, particularly when taxpayers are providing a lot of the aid.

Mr. DURBIN. If I could ask the Senator from Maryland to yield for a moment.

Mr. CARDIN. I would be glad to.

Mr. DURBIN. I just had a meeting with people from the Pentagon and we talked about military education, members of the military who are seeking education while in the military through the GI bill and such. We talked about some of the worst examples of for-profit schools. The best example I could come up with of a worthy education through the military is the University of Maryland. They have been doing it for decades. I steer all my friends in the military and their families to the flagship university in the Senator's State of Maryland. Maryland does a good job.

Mr. CARDIN. I am glad I yielded to my colleague. We are very proud of the University of Maryland and the programs for the Department of Defense. We believe it is a cost-effective way and a quality education, exactly what the Senator from Illinois is talking about; and that is we have to get value for our dollars and we have to get accountability. I appreciate the Senator bringing that to our attention.

FILING CLOTURE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, the majority leader, the Senator from Nevada, came to the floor last night to take exception to my criticisms of how the Senate operates these days.

I have criticized the actions of the current majority leadership, of which he is the head.

However, I would like to point out that I have tried to avoid singling him out personally because it is not my intention to engage in personal attacks or name calling.

Still, the fact that he takes my criticisms of the Senate's dysfunction so personally should tell us something.

Yesterday, I criticized the abuse of same-day cloture motions.

In response, Senator REID said, "He claims that I file too many cloture motions."

Well, it often is the majority leader who files the cloture motions, but sometimes it is other members of the majority leadership, and on rare occasions, other Senators.

The fact is, this majority leader has instigated more of the cloture motions than any leader in recent times.

Senator Frist filed about 72 percent of all cloture motions when he was Majority Leader, Senator Daschle filed about 32 percent during his leadership,

Senator Lott about 69 percent, and Senator Dole about 50 percent.

Senator REID has personally filed 94 percent of all the cloture motions since he became majority leader.

And, that is 94 percent of a much bigger number since cloture filings have more than doubled under this majority leadership.

So if the Senator from Nevada takes my criticism of cloture abuse personally, perhaps there is a reason he does.

He also blames Republicans for the fact that he has abused the cloture process, just as I predicted in my speech, which struck such a nerve.

However, I want to be absolutely clear that my criticisms were focused on same-day cloture filings related to legislative business.

In other words, I was specifically criticizing the practice of moving to end consideration of a legislative matter that is subject to amendment before there has been an opportunity for any debate or amendments.

The majority leader went off on a tangent complaining about how many nominees are waiting for confirmation. I don't need to remind anybody that the ability of the minority party to block nominees was eliminated using the nuclear option. Besides, the focus of my speech was on the legislative process.

We can argue about how much debate is too much and how many amendments are too many. But no one can claim that same-day cloture motions were in response to Republican obstruction when there hasn't been any deliberation whatsoever before they are filed.

The majority leader can criticize me and stoop to petty name-calling, but the data I cited was from the non-partisan Congressional Research Service.

This data on same-day cloture speaks for itself. His excuse, "The Republicans made me do it" won't fly. In fact, Senator REID has been caught before trying to blame Republicans for his cloture motions.

The Washington Post Fact Checker gave him two Pinocchios for his claim that Republicans were to blame for a record number of cloture motions.

He tried to claim that every cloture motion represented a Republican filibuster. However, the source he cited was a report by the Congressional Research Service containing a long section under the heading "Cloture Motions Do Not Correspond With Filibusters."

That heading pretty much says it all, but it contains about a page and a half of explanation as to why it is erroneous to claim that all cloture motions are in response to filibusters.

Certainly, cloture motions which are filed before there has been one word of debate cannot possibly be in response to a filibuster. Those are the cloture motions my criticism was directed at yesterday.

This is also the problem addressed by the Stop Cloture Abuse Resolution which I introduced yesterday with 25 of my colleagues.

The majority leader did not even attempt to defend the practice of same-day cloture, and understandably so. There is no justification for it.

The majority leader's refusal to acknowledge such a blatant problem, much less put a stop to it, just confirms the need for the Stop Cloture Abuse Resolution.

I should add that the deliberative process can work if it is allowed to, and the bill we have been debating yesterday and today is evidence of that.

It isn't just Republicans who would prefer to go back to the way we did things when the Senate functioned as a deliberative body as it was designed to.

The manager of S. 1086, Senator MIKULSKI, said earlier today, "This is one of the first times in a couple of years where we have had an open amendment process, and in some ways we're getting adjusted to how that actually works. This is terrific."

So even prominent Members of the majority party acknowledge an open amendment process is the way things should work. I have offered a constructive idea along with 25 colleagues to make that the norm again.

Instead of criticizing me, the majority leader should join me and become part of the solution instead of part of the problem.

TRIBUTE TO JOAN BARRON

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, at a small desk on the third floor of the Wyoming State Capitol sits Joan Barron. For 48 years, Joan has served as a reporter for the Casper Star Tribune, sharing Wyoming's government with Wyoming's people. On March 21, 2014, Joan is retiring.

Joan started her career in Rock Springs, WY. She was a nurse, but answered an ad to freelance for the Casper Star Tribune in 1966. The editors were impressed with Joan's work, and asked her to move to Cheyenne. Armed with a notebook and a typewriter, she became the capitol bureau reporter in 1969—a position she has held to this day.

Historians will undoubtedly use Joan's work to understand the State of Wyoming. She covered seven governors, 50 legislative sessions, three boom and bust cycles. She knows the issues, she knows the players, she does her homework. Throughout her career, Joan has been a trusted source, delivering the news of the day to the people of Wyoming. When an article has the byline, Joan Barron, Star-Tribune capitol bureau, a reader can be assured of fact-based, comprehensive reporting.

While Joan says she never wanted to be the story, she has had a tremendous impact on how those in Wyoming gov-

ernment conduct business. She was integral to the creation of the Wyoming Open Meetings Law in 1973. Due in part to Joan's observations, questions and perseverance, the Wyoming legislature passed ethics legislation. She held people accountable—and our State is better for it.

Just last week, Joan quietly announced her retirement—not wanting any fanfare. That is typical of her. She is always the observer, never the center of attention.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Joan Barron for 48 years of reporting. She has recorded over one-third of Wyoming's history—and her perspective will be missed. Wyoming owes her a great debt of gratitude.

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO PREVENTIVE SERVICES

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, the U.S. Supreme Court will soon hear arguments on the Tenth Circuit's overly expansive decision to allow a secular, for-profit corporation's owners or shareholders to impose their religious beliefs on employees by denying female employees access to preventive health care, including insurance coverage for contraception.

As detailed in the amicus brief filed by myself and 18 fellow Senators in January, Congress never intended such a broad and unprecedented expansion of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, RFRA, to deny women access to health care benefits. We urged the Court to clarify that RFRA does not allow for-profit companies to deny health coverage to employees based on the religious objections of the company's owners.

It should be clear that the Tenth Circuit's decision runs counter to a plain-text reading of RFRA and the law's extensive and informative legislative history. Congress passed RFRA to advance a single, limited purpose: to restore the compelling-interest test to government actions that burden the free exercise of religion. But the test only extended free-exercise rights only to individuals and religious, non-profit organizations. No Supreme Court precedent had extended free-exercise rights to secular, for-profit corporations.

Congress enacted the Affordable Care Act with full understanding of RFRA—and of its limited purpose. Congress also recognized the need to balance the government's compelling interest in extending women's access to preventive health care with respect for the traditional free-exercise rights of individuals and religious organizations, which is why Congress included the Affordable Care Act's religious exemptions for individuals and religious organizations. These exemptions strike such a balance precisely and accurately, and appropriately recognize the

free-exercise rights Congress intended for RFRA to protect.

It's unacceptable and inappropriate for bosses at for-profit corporations to pick and choose which health care services their employees can receive. So far, 360,000 Oregon women have benefited from expanded access to preventive services, including contraceptives. Women's health choices should be made between them and their doctors—not their bosses.

TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Madam President, I wish to speak about U.S.-Taiwan relations. In just a few weeks, on April 10, 2014, we will recognize the 35th anniversary of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act, TRA. This important legislation has served as the legal basis for our relations with Taiwan and has been critical in defining our diplomatic, economic, and strategic relationship.

Although I was not yet a Member of Congress in 1979 when this legislation was passed, I have had the pleasure over the past 28 years to be active in U.S.-Taiwan matters and have seen the benefits of the TRA.

Over the past several decades we have seen our relationship with Taiwan grow. Taiwan's innovative and expanding economy has led to significant trade opportunities for both of our countries. Particularly in the area of agriculture—which is South Dakota's No. 1 industry—Taiwan has grown to be a key trading partner, representing one of the most significant consumers of South Dakota corn, soybeans, and wheat. Our trade relationship has only strengthened over the years, and I am hopeful that market opportunities will continue to expand.

While we mark this important milestone in U.S.-Taiwan relations, I would also like to say farewell to Representative King Pu-tsung, Taiwan's chief envoy to the United States. Ambassador King was recently appointed to be the Secretary-General of the Republic of China (Taiwan)'s National Security Council, a position equivalent to our National Security Advisor to the President. I congratulate him on this new opportunity and trust that in his new role we will continue to work together to further strengthen close ties between our two countries.

The people of Taiwan have proven to be true friends of the United States, and I look forward to continuing this friendship well into the future.

SUPPORTING JOSH HARDY

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I would like to take a moment to express sincere gratitude to the students, faculty and staff of Hugh Mercer Elementary School and the entire Fredericksburg, VA region—for the way the community has rallied together to support

one of their own: seven-year-old Josh Hardy.

Josh is at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis recovering from a life-threatening virus following a bone marrow transplant in January. This week, I am pleased our office had an opportunity to work with Josh's family and Josh's friends and fans in Fredericksburg to get this young fighter access to an experimental medication that could save his life.

Since Josh was an infant, he has battled cancer—successfully. While he was undergoing chemotherapy—in kindergarten, mind you—Josh and his two brothers worked to raise almost \$5,000 to help other sick children who were being treated at St. Jude Children's Hospital.

Doctors at St. Jude Children's Hospital believe the only drug that can help Josh is still in the testing phase by its manufacturer, Chimerix. And unfortunately, it appeared that policies of the FDA and Chimerix would prevent Josh from receiving the drug.

Upon hearing that news, family, friends, Mercer teachers and classmates, local businesses, and nonprofit groups across the Fredericksburg region rallied together to make sure that Josh's voice was heard, here on Capitol Hill and across the country.

They used social media to enlist the support of tens of thousands of people from across the country and around the world. Josh's family and friends contacted our office to see if we might be able to help.

That is when we reached out both to the FDA and the drug manufacturer to try to expedite the process to allow Josh to get access to this potentially life-saving medication. We got the good news Tuesday night, directly from the CEO of Chimerix. By the following morning, Josh was undergoing treatment with this new drug. It is still too soon to know if this experimental medication will help, but we are all pulling for this remarkable boy.

Today I want to salute Josh's teachers and classmates at High Mercer Elementary School for all that they have done to rally around this family. The commitment of Josh's teachers to advocate on behalf of the Hardy family is a testament to their dedication to public service and to creating stronger communities and a better Virginia.

And I am grateful and proud of the Fredericksburg community, where folks truly came together in a good cause on behalf of Josh and his family. Their persistence and dedication exemplifies what we call "the Virginia spirit."

I also want to publicly thank the executives and employees of Chimerix, and officials at the Food and Drug Administration, for moving so quickly to look for a way to be helpful to the Hardy family. My staff is already in conversation with the FDA about ways

we might streamline the process to allow families in the Hardy's situation to have easier access to potentially life-saving drugs even as these drugs are being evaluated by the FDA.

We are all pulling for Josh Hardy. We are praying for his family and his medical team, and we are so grateful for the tremendous support Josh Hardy is receiving from his Hugh Mercer teachers and classmates and the entire Fredericksburg community.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

OUR ENERGY FUTURE

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I ask that a copy of my remarks to the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners be printed in the RECORD.

The remarks follow.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGULATORY UTILITY COMMISSIONERS

Five years ago, all the talk in the United States was about a cap-and-trade program and deliberately raising the price of energy as a way of achieving clean energy independence. Two years ago, I visited Germany—a country that has adopted such a policy—and what I found was an energy mess.

The Germans are subsidizing wind and solar, and closing their nuclear plants—but because they are a big manufacturing country they still need nuclear, coal and natural gas for reliable electricity. So to meet those needs, the Germans are buying nuclear power from France, and gas from an unreliable partner, Russia. They're even building their own new coal plants in order to have enough reliable electricity.

The end result of this bizarre policy is that Germany has among the highest household electricity prices in the European Union. When I asked an economic minister what he would say to a manufacturer concerned about energy costs in Germany, he said, "I would suggest he go somewhere else."

This concern in Germany is spreading across Europe. A recent headline in the New York Times reads "Europe, Facing Economic Pain, May Ease Climate Rules." The accompanying article stated that "the European Union proposed an end to binding national targets for renewable energy production after 2020."

Europeans may end some of their climate targets to avoid throwing a big, wet regulatory blanket over their economies. The point is: in a competitive world, energy policies have a lot to do with a country's economic well-being.

When you compare our country's energy needs with the example of Germany, you can see that we are at a fork in the road on our national energy policy. Which path we take will help determine how well the United States competes in a 21st-century economy.

The surest path toward cheap, clean, reliable energy is to end Washington's obsession with wasteful energy subsidies and to instead rely on free enterprise and government-sponsored research.

Or, we can take the path of Germany, which is where we are headed if we continue to waste tax dollars on subsidies that prop up one type of energy over another.

In the United States today, production of electricity from natural gas has grown to 28

percent of total production. This is at the expense of coal, which is down to 39 percent. Nuclear power holds relatively steady at 19 percent. Hydro is 7 percent. Wind, solar, biomass and geothermal make up only 6 percent, of which 4 percent is wind.

In Washington and in state capitols, there are debates about whether to push this 6 percent of electricity by renewables to a much higher number by forcing a so-called national renewable energy standard, or by further subsidizing an energy source because it's deemed "clean," or by implementing carbon regulations even though Congress has never approved carbon regulations. To avoid the path of Germany and maintain our competitiveness, I suggest four grand principles for the United States' energy future: 1) cheaper, not more expensive, energy; 2) clean, not just renewable, energy; 3) research and development, not government mandates; and 4) free market, not government picking "winners and losers."

The first step on the right path to our energy future—and a prime example of how to apply these principles—is to not extend the massive wind production tax credit that expired on January 1. I believe energy companies basically should enjoy the same tax benefits non-energy companies receive, which is largely the case today with traditional forms of energy.

I believe that through tax reform we should simplify the tax code and eliminate most preferences for specific types of energy production. This would save a lot of money, which could be better spent on doubling energy research and reducing the federal debt.

The worst culprit for wasteful energy subsidies is Big Wind. Under current law, the wind production tax credit will have provided an estimated \$22 billion to wind producers between 1992 and 2022, according to the Congressional Research Service. And that doesn't include the \$12.9 billion that wind received from President Obama's federal stimulus bill.

I've been fighting against this subsidy for years because I think it is a bad deal for American taxpayers, a bad deal for rate payers, and a bad deal for U.S. competitiveness. And if we want to see what the result of those policies would be let's look again at Germany, and other parts of Europe.

Just last week energy expert Daniel Yergin wrote that one of the biggest themes at this year's World Economic Forum in Davos was "competitiveness." "This particular rivalry [competitiveness] pits the United States head-on against Europe," he said.

Yergin says that energy is one way to measure competitiveness, and that was the focus at Davos. He went on to say, "European industrial electricity prices are twice as high as those in some countries and are much higher than those in the United States. To a significant degree, this is the result of a pell-mell push toward high-cost renewable electricity (wind and solar), which is imposing heavy costs on consumers and generating large fiscal burdens for governments." A January 2014 New York Times article entitled "German Energy Official Sounds a Warning" reports that, "The minister, Sigmar Gabriel, in his first major policy speech, said at an annual energy conference organized by the publication Handelsblatt in Berlin that annual consumer costs for renewables of about 24 billion euros, or about \$32.5 billion, were already pushing the limits of what the German economy, Europe's most powerful, could handle." In a BBC News article, "Can Germany afford its energy bender? shift to green power?" a minister for economics in Germany says that

Germany's "law on renewable energy will not only lead to increased electricity prices, but it is also a non-market, planned system that endangers the industrial base of" the German economy.

This doesn't sound like the path down which America should go to build a 21st-century economy. And yet, forces in Congress are preparing to renew the expired wind subsidy and continue to take us down the path that's currently causing problems in Germany. The problem here is not being "for or against renewable" energy or just wasting taxpayers' tax dollars. The problem is that these huge subsidies are propping up renewable energy at the expense of reliable energy. In the case of wind, this increases the occurrence of negative pricing.

Government subsidies are so generous that in some markets wind developers can give away electricity and still make a profit. Such negative pricing rewards expensive, unreliable power like wind and undercuts and punishes cheap, reliable power from nuclear and coal plants. This is a growing problem in the U.S. The more wind we subsidize and the more we build, the bigger the problem becomes. For a snapshot of where we are going, let's take another look at Europe.

A Wall Street Journal opinion piece by Rupert Darwall entitled "Europe's Stark Renewables Lesson" reports that "the European Commission acknowledges that, because member states over-incentivized investment in renewables, they compounded the challenges" posed by non-dispatchable electricity generation like wind.

The same threat applies to some markets here in the U.S., according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Negative pricing' caused by wind power tied to energy subsidies undercuts the operation of nuclear plants and could contribute to closing as many as 25 percent of our nuclear plants by 2020.

So, these subsidies are putting at risk our largest source of clean, cheap, reliable electricity—nuclear—and more importantly, putting at risk energy diversity.

This audience understands more than most the importance of energy diversity to help reduce price spikes and have a more reliable grid.

The recent polar vortex cold wave reminded us of the importance of diversity. When natural gas prices spiked, and demand was unusually high, nuclear and coal generations saved the day. You can't put a price on diversity, but when you need the lights to come on and the heater to kick in, diversity can be lifesaving, and wind subsidies are threatening that.

We need to go down a path to cheap, clean, reliable electricity.

That path would provide a pro-growth, pro-jobs energy policy that puts us more firmly on the path toward a competitive future and protects households and business across the country, especially during extreme conditions.

To start, the best way to achieve cheap, clean, reliable energy is through market-driven solutions. Some will say, well what about oil and gas, what about nuclear subsidies? The president in his State of the Union address called for an end to tax policy that gives "\$4 billion a year to fossil fuel industries." To begin with, fossil fuels contribute 67 percent of our electricity. "Big Wind" received \$1.4 billion through the wind production tax credit last year but only produces 4 percent of America's electricity.

The president often likes to cite the billions of dollars in subsidies for the oil and

gas industry. But here's the catch: many of these "Big Oil" subsidies the president likes to highlight are the same or similar to tax provisions that benefit other industries.

For example, Xerox, Microsoft and Caterpillar all benefit from tax provisions like the manufacturing tax credit, amortization, or depreciation of used equipment that the president is counting as "Big Oil" subsidies. And, of course, wind energy companies also benefit from many similar tax provisions—but the production tax credit for wind is in addition to regular tax code provisions that benefit many companies.

We should end wasteful, long-term special tax breaks, both for "Big Oil" and "Big Wind." We should use the money we save from ending wasteful subsidies to reduce the federal debt and double energy research. Then we can let the free market determine the course forward, rather than the government picking "winners and losers."

In addition to supporting research, I believe it is appropriate for the government to jumpstart new technologies to allow time for the free enterprise system to take the reins, but these should be narrowly defined and temporary.

For example: Unconventional gas benefited from government research and a temporary tax credit—that expired in 1992. The full tax credit for plug-in electric cars was capped at 200,000 vehicles per manufacturer. The government provided research and licensing support for small modular reactors—but that ends after five years. There is a production tax credit for nuclear power plants but it's limited to 6,000 megawatts.

On the other hand, we have the temporary wind production tax credit that was enacted in 1992 to jumpstart an industry, and according to the Congressional Research Service will cost taxpayers a total of \$22 billion from 1992 through 2022. The most recent one-year extension—which gives wind developers 10 years of subsidies—would cost \$12 billion over 10 years, according to the Joint Committee on Taxation. This is for what President Obama's former energy secretary called a "mature technology" that produces only 4 percent of our electricity and only works when the wind blows.

President Reagan used to say "the nearest thing to eternal life we'll ever see on this Earth is a government program" and that's too often the case with energy subsidies. The most glaring example is the more than 20-year-old subsidy for wind power, a technology that has matured. The United States uses 20 percent of all the electricity produced in the world for our computers, our businesses, our homes and our national defense. To rely on unreliable wind power when nuclear, coal and natural gas are available is the energy equivalent of going to war in sailboats. Those who oppose the path I am suggesting like to say that nuclear and coal aren't clean forms of electricity.

While this path isn't without its challenges, I'll take that argument on. Nuclear power is our largest source of air-pollution-free electricity, 60 percent. Then people opposing nuclear power will say, "what about the waste?" This is an issue of great concern to many of you. To address this challenge, I have cosponsored legislation with Senators Wyden, Murkowski and Feinstein that would implement the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future.

The bill would create a new federal agency to oversee the nuclear waste program, and ensure that progress on consolidated storage sites and repositories moves along parallel

tracks. The federal government should not be collecting fees without keeping its promise to dispose of the nuclear waste now sitting in your states. The D.C. Court of Appeals opinion in your case has made this point clear.

The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has held two hearings on the legislation, and we are working toward having the committee hold a markup and favorably report the bill so it can move to the Senate floor.

We know how to control mercury, smog and soot, and many utilities are leading the way in installing these technologies, including the Tennessee Valley Authority.

So in order to burn coal in a clean way, the only remaining obstacle is carbon emissions from coal plants. The best way to solve that problem is not through a cap-and-trade system, which would raise prices, but instead through research and development, which could lower them. Finding a way to capture carbon from coal plants and turn it into a product that can be sold is the Holy Grail of energy research—and we are working on solutions that will do just that.

ARPA-E, a small energy research agency, is working with private companies to take the carbon from coal plants and feed it to microbes that with electricity can produce liquid transportation fuels. Such a solution might even make coal cheaper than it is today.

When you think about it that way, this crossroads I'm talking about—this fork in the road between clean, cheap, reliable energy and the mess of Germany and other European countries—is not just a challenge, but an opportunity.

It's true that our energy needs are great, and that there are obstacles to meeting them. But we also have an opportunity to get Washington out of the way and to liberate our free enterprise system. If we do, the path toward cheap, clean, reliable energy is full of possibility.●

TRIBUTE TO MITCH FOX

● Mr. HELLER. Madam President, today I wish to honor Nevelan Mitch Fox for his dedication to journalistic fairness and quality of character.

With almost 39 years of experience working for Las Vegas PBS, Mitch has come to be recognized as a journalist of integrity. Facilitating debate over a multitude of topics, Mitch has shown nothing but respect to his guests, always appreciating and inviting differences of opinion. Whether moderating a debate or a roundtable interview, the respect that Mitch commands encourages quality conversation and civil dialogue.

Mitch's legacy of nonpartisan journalism has made him a go-to source for news coverage. He serves as a shining example within his profession.

I will remember Mitch's welcoming and professional demeanor fondly, and I wish him luck on the next phase of his already distinguished career.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this respectable Nevada journalist.●

TRIBUTE TO WILLIE McTEAR

● Mr. HELLER. Madam President, I wish to honor long-time Las Vegas

resident and veteran, Willie McTear, who served our Nation in Vietnam.

Our Nation's veterans—the very men and women who put themselves in harm's way—protect the freedoms that Americans enjoy every day. I am grateful to these brave men and women in the Armed Forces, as well as their families, who make significant sacrifices in service to our Nation.

I am humbled to honor Mr. McTear for his dedication while serving in the military as a Rifleman/90mm Specialist. Mr. McTear is a veteran of Charlie Company, which was one of the last combat infantries of 160 men to be drafted, trained, and sent to fight in Vietnam. Despite significant risks and challenges, the men of the 4th Battalion of the 47th Infantry saw their service as a rite of passage. However, it did not come without the wounds of war and the loss of close comrades, and for that, our Nation is indebted to these servicemembers.

Serving on the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, I recognize that Congress has a responsibility not only to honor these brave individuals, but to ensure they are cared for when they return home. I remain committed to upholding this promise for our veterans and servicemembers in Nevada and throughout the Nation.

Today, we commend Mr. McTear for his acts of valor and the continuous sacrifices made by all of our servicemembers to ensure the safety and security of our Nation. We owe them and their families a great deal of gratitude for their commitment to America. I am proud to join the citizens of Nevada in recognizing Mr. McTear, and I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring him for his service on behalf of this great Nation.●

2014 PARALYMPIANS

● Mr. HELLER. Madam President, today I wish to extend a well-deserved congratulations to Amy Purdy, a Nevadan who has earned the unique distinction of being named to the 2014 United States Paralympic Team. Amy is the only double amputee competing in snowboard cross. Ranking internationally as the No. 2 athlete in the sport in her field, I am proud to recognize her and some of our Nation's greatest athletes as members of Paralympic Team USA.

A Las Vegas native, Amy embodies the epitome of battle born having defeated a number of setbacks after contracting a deadly strain of meningitis at only 19 years of age. Amy overcame this significant challenge without hesitation and stands stronger than ever today. Just 3 months after her release from the hospital in 2001, Amy was back on her snowboard, shredding all statistics that said she should not have been alive.

The snow is not the only place where Amy showcases her talents. Upon her

return from Sochi, Amy will compete on season 18 of *Dancing with the Stars*, where she hopes to raise awareness for the Paralympic movement.

In addition to challenging herself athletically, Amy champions all unique levels of abilities through her founding work with Adaptive Action Sports, an action sport development program for youth, young adults, and wounded veterans, all with permanent, physical disabilities.

I wish Amy the best of luck on her trip in Sochi. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating this remarkable athlete and Silver State citizen as we show support for the entire U.S. Paralympic Team.●

TRIBUTE TO ED VOGEL

● Mr. HELLER. Madam President, I wish to honor Nevadan Ed Vogel for his longtime dedication to journalistic integrity and for providing Nevadans with quality reporting. Working 35 years with the Las Vegas Review-Journal, Ed has covered the gamut of news stories as the RJ's Capital Bureau Chief.

My fondest memories of Ed go as far back as when I served as secretary of state. It was with great pleasure that Ed and I operated with an open-door policy. Whenever he walked into my office, I knew I should settle in for an interesting story or an entertaining anecdote. I look back on those conversations fondly. Ed is a true character, and one that will be greatly missed in the halls of our Nation's Capitol.

Well-known throughout Nevada for his endless curiosity, Ed was introduced to the Nevada Newspaper Hall of Fame in 2012. His experience spans the better part of four decades, beginning back in 1971, he serves as an example within his profession. Committed to the story, truth above all, his words' worth today is immeasurable.

As Ed announces his retirement, I reflect fondly upon our interviews together and wish him the best of luck in his new era of life.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this upstanding Nevada journalist.●

TRIBUTE TO LAWRENCE SELLERS

● Mr. KIRK. Madam President, on the afternoon of January 29, 2013, Lawrence D. Sellers, Jr. and his friends were relaxing in Chicago's Vivian Gordon Harsh Park after finishing their high school final exams. Shots rang out. Lawrence pushed his girlfriend out of harm's way. A bullet struck his left leg below the calf. And as the group tried to run away, Lawrence heard a scream and turned around to see his friend, Hadiya Pendleton, falling to the ground.

Hadiya's murder has become a rallying cry in Chicago to give law en-

forcement the tools they need to reduce gang and gun violence. I remain committed to passing legislation that bears her name to stop the straw purchasing and trafficking of guns that can end up in the hands of dangerous gangs like the Gangster Disciples. I will continue working with Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy to ensure additional Federal resources are promptly delivered to implement a holistic, all-of-government strategy to make our communities safer.

But today I wish to recognize Lawrence for his bravery and heroism—because inside this tragedy, we can find a spark of hope to restore our faith in what is possible when good people are not afraid to do the right thing. Lawrence is that spark.

A senior at King College Prep in North Kenwood with aspirations of becoming a math teacher, Lawrence is an Eagle Scout, and, just last month, he received the Honor Medal from the Boy Scouts of America.

"Doing the right thing, you shouldn't get an award for it," Lawrence said with great humility. "But I am honored to receive it, of course; I just feel like it's just the right thing."

In a community torn apart by gang violence, it is not always easy to do the right thing—or to always know what the right thing is in the first place. That is what makes groups like the Boy Scouts and other community youth groups so important in a holistic antigang violence strategy.

I am proud to join the Boy Scouts of America in honoring Lawrence Sellers. Lawrence is a role model to his peers and a reminder that supporting civic-minded youth organizations like the Boy Scouts must be a part of our antiviolence, antigang strategy.●

TRIBUTE TO PATRICK SULLIVAN

● Mr. KIRK. Madam President, I wish to recognize and thank Mr. Patrick Sullivan, the retiring director of the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center—FHCC—in North Chicago, IL. Lovell Hospital is a first-of-its-kind partnership between the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense—DoD—integrating all medical care into the Nation's first truly joint Federal health care facility with a single combined VA and Navy mission. The men and women of Lovell Hospital serve approximately 67,000 servicemembers, veterans, and their families through a network of eight facilities in Illinois and Wisconsin.

Mr. Sullivan served as the facility's first director when it was formally established in October 2010. As director, he took on the daunting task of integrating the North Chicago VA Medical Center and Naval Health Clinic Great Lakes and combining the missions of

caring for active duty military members, their families, military retirees and veterans.

Mr. Sullivan has skillfully led a VA/DoD team of over 3,000 as they have developed a national model for integrated Federal health care.

Mr. Sullivan had a long and successful career caring for our Nation's heroes. He served as the director of the North Chicago VA Medical Center before its integration into the Lovell FHCC. He has worked at VA Medical Centers across the country, including centers in Prescott, AZ, Portland, OR, Martinez, CA and Poplar Bluff, MO. Mr. Sullivan also extends his leadership skills to his community, serving on the board of several community organizations in Lake County, Ill.

I wish to personally thank Pat Sullivan for his service to our country and its veterans. His tireless efforts to make the Lovell Hospital vision a reality will not be forgotten. His work was ahead of its time and stands as a model for the future.●

● Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I rise today to honor GEN Robert Cone, commanding general of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. After 35 years of service, General Cone has announced he will retire from the Army on March 17, 2014, and it is my pleasure to celebrate General Cone's career and express the pride that all New Hampshire citizens feel in recognizing his accomplishments. As one of only 10 4-star generals in the U.S. Armed Forces, General Cone has reached the pinnacle of success for a professional soldier. Perhaps more importantly, he has left an indelible mark on the character of the U.S. Army and the young men and women who comprise the heart and soul of it.

Born and raised in Manchester, NH, General Cone is a graduate of Memorial High School, where as a member of the football team he was inspired by his coach to pursue an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. After successfully completing his studies at West Point, General Cone was commissioned as an armor officer and began a career that would take him around the United States and the world in a range of leadership roles, including Afghanistan as the commander of the Combined Security Transition Command and Iraq as commander of the III Corps.

In addition to his role as an Army officer, General Cone embraced the role of scholar, earning a master's degree in sociology from the University of Texas, Austin, which he leveraged as an instructor and assistant professor at West Point in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership. General Cone also earned advanced degrees from the Command and General Staff College and the Naval War College. Fully engaged in the Army's efforts to improve training and leadership devel-

opment, General Cone was appointed military director of the Joint Advanced Warfighting Program at the Institute of Defense Analysis, and also led the Joint Forces Command's Lessons Learned Team in Iraq. During his command of the Army's National Training Center at Fort Irvin, General Cone oversaw a shift in training towards counterinsurgency operations at a crucial time in the War on Terror.

In 2011 General Cone assumed command of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, TRADOC, placing him at the forefront of planning for the future of the Army. He has approached each challenge with the fundamental understanding that war is a human endeavor dependent on a person's will just as much as equipment and machinery. Just one of many examples of the leadership and foresight exhibited by General Cone, he has served as an articulate proponent of "Soldier 2020", a service-wide effort to maximize combat effectiveness by casting aside gender constructs. General Cone leaves behind a well-established legacy as commander of TRADOC.

The U.S. Army will no doubt continue to benefit from General Cone's leadership and vision for years to come. I ask my colleagues and all Americans to join me in thanking GEN Robert Cone for his service to our country and wish him the best in his retirement.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:31 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 4138. An act to protect the separation of powers in the Constitution of the United States by ensuring that the President takes care that the laws be faithfully executed, and for other purposes.

At 4:34 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the

following joint resolution, without amendment:

S.J. Res. 32. Joint resolution providing for the reappointment of John W. McCarter as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

At 7:38 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 93. Concurrent resolution directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make technical corrections in the enrollment of H.R. 3370.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 4138. An act to protect the separation of powers in the Constitution of the United States by ensuring that the President takes care that the laws be faithfully executed, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the second time, and placed on the calendar:

S. 2122. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and to improve Medicare and Medicaid payments, and for other purposes.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bills were read the first time:

H.R. 3474. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of the employer mandate under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

H.R. 3979. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 2148. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4927. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Oranges and Grapefruit Grown in Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas and Imported Oranges; Change in Size Requirements for Oranges" (Docket No. AMS-FV-14-

0009; FV14-906-1 IR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 13, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4928. A communication from the Associate Administrator of the Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Oranges and Grapefruit Grown in Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas; Change in Size and Grade Requirements for Oranges" (Docket No. AMS-FV-14-0015; FV14-906-2 IR) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2014; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4929. A communication from the Regulatory Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Base III Conforming Amendments Related to Cross-References, Subordinated Debt and Limits Based on Regulatory Capital" (RIN1557-AD73) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2014; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4930. A communication from the Secretary of Labor, transmitting, pursuant to law, the 2013 report (covering trade in calendar year 2012) relative to the impact of the Andean Trade Preference Act on U.S. trade and employment; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4931. A communication from the Chief of the Trade and Commercial Regulations Branch, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Extension of Import Restrictions on Archaeological and Ecclesiastical Ethnological Materials from Honduras" (RIN1515-AE00) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4932. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Application of Section 871(m) to Specified Equity-Linked Instruments" (Notice 2014-14) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4933. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Information Reporting of Minimum Essential Coverage" ((RIN1545-BL31) (TD 9660)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 11, 2014; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4934. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report certifying for fiscal year 2014 that no United Nations agency or United Nations affiliated agency grants any official status, accreditation, or recognition to any organization which promotes and condones or seeks the legalization of pedophilia, or which includes as a subsidiary or member any such organization; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-4935. A communication from the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Valuing and Paying Benefits" (29 CFR Part 4022) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12,

2014; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4936. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Strategic Plan for the Department of Health and Human Services for fiscal years 2014-2018; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4937. A communication from the Members of the Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's Congressional Justification of Budget Estimates Report for fiscal year 2015; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-4938. A communication from the Senior Procurement Executive, Office of Acquisition Policy, General Services Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "General Services Administration Acquisition Regulation; Electronic Contracting Initiative (ECI)" (RIN3090-AJ36) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2014; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4939. A communication from the Director, Office of Government Ethics, transmitting, pursuant to law, the strategic plan for the Office of Government Ethics for fiscal years 2014 through 2018; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4940. A communication from the President of the James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Foundation's Annual Report for the year ending September 30, 2013; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-4941. A communication from the Deputy Associate Director for Management and Administration and Designated Reporting Official, Office on National Drug Control Policy, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Director of National Drug Control Policy, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2014; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-4942. A communication from the Deputy Director of the Regulation Policy and Management Office of the General Counsel, Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Disclosures to Participate in State Prescription Drug Monitoring Programs" (RIN2900-AO45) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2014; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

EC-4943. A communication from the Chairwomen of the Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Federal Trade Commission Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2014-2018"; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4944. A communication from the Administrator, Transportation Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the Administration's decision to enter into a contract with a private security screening company to provide screening services at Kansas City International Airport; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4945. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled

"Safety Zone; Houma Navigation Canal, Mile Marker 35.5 to 36.5, and Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, Mile Marker 59.0 to 60.0, West of Harvey Locks, bank to bank; Houma, Terrebonne Parish, LA" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2012-0880)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4946. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Bone Island Triathlon, Atlantic Ocean; Key West, FL" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0905)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4947. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Vessel Movement, Christina River; Wilmington, DE" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-1002)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4948. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; BWRC Southwest Showdown Three; Parker, AZ" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-1034)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4949. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone for Ice Conditions; Baltimore Captain of the Port Zone" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0509)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4950. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Olympus Tension Leg Platform" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0070)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4951. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Potomac and Anacostia Rivers; Washington, D.C." ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-1050)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4952. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Security Zone; On the Water in Kailua Bay, Oahu, HI" ((RIN1625-AA87) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0934)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to

the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4953. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Security Zone; North American International Auto Show; Detroit River, Detroit, MI" ((RIN1625-AA87) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0034)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4954. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Security Zone; Mississippi River, New Orleans, LA" ((RIN1625-AA87) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0994)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4955. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Special Local Regulations; Eleventh Coast Guard District Annual Marine Events" ((RIN1625-AA08) (Docket No. USCG-2013-0361)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4956. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Anchorage Grounds and Safety Zone, Delaware River; Marcus Hook, PA" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2013-1014)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4957. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Anchorage Regulations: Pacific Ocean at San Nicolas Island, CA; Restricted Anchorage Areas" ((RIN1625-AA01) (Docket No. USCG-2012-0967)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4958. A communication from the Attorney-Advisor, U.S. Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Zone; Alaska Marine Highway System Port Valdez Ferry Terminal, Port Valdez; Valdez, AK" ((RIN1625-AA00) (Docket No. USCG-2012-0365)) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on February 18, 2014; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-4959. A communication from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report related to the Colorado River System Reservoirs for 2014; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4960. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Annual Report to Congress on the Medicare and Medicaid Integrity Programs Report for Fiscal Year 2012"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-4961. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Review Group, Farm Service Agency, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Farm Storage Facility Loan Program; Security Requirements" (RIN0560-AI19) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on March 12, 2013; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4962. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country regarding any possible affects such a sale might have relating to Israel's Qualitative Military Edge over military threats to Israel (OSS-2014-0271); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EXECUTIVE REPORT OF COMMITTEE

The following executive report of a nomination was submitted:

By Mr. CARPER for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

*L. Reginald Brothers, Jr., of Massachusetts, to be Under Secretary for Science and Technology, Department of Homeland Security.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEE—TREATIES

The following executive reports of committee were submitted:

By Mr. MENENDEZ, from the Committee on Foreign Relations:

Treaty Doc. 112-4: Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing with 1 declaration (Ex. Rept. 113-1);

Treaty Doc. 113-1: Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean with 1 declaration (Ex. Rept. 113-2);

Treaty Doc. 113-2: Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean with 1 declaration (Ex. Rept. 113-3); and

Treaty Doc. 113-3: Amendment to the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries with 1 declaration (Ex. Rept. 113-4)

The text of the committee-recommended resolutions of advice and consent to ratification are as follows:

[Treaty Doc. 112-4 Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing]

RESOLUTION OF ADVICE AND CONSENT TO RATIFICATION OF THE PORT STATE MEASURES AGREEMENT

Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration.

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Agreement on Port State

Measures to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing, done at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in Rome, Italy, November 22, 2009, and signed by the United States November 22, 2009 (the "Agreement") (Treaty Doc. 112-4), subject to the declaration of section 2.

SEC. 2. Declaration.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration: The Agreement is non self-executing.

[Treaty Doc. 113-1 Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean]

RESOLUTION OF ADVICE AND CONSENT TO RATIFICATION OF THE HIGH SEAS FISHERIES CONVENTION—SOUTH PACIFIC

Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration.

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean, done at Auckland, New Zealand, November 14, 2009, and signed by the United States January 31, 2011 (the "Convention") (Treaty Doc. 113-1), subject to the declaration of section 2.

Sec. 2. Declaration.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration: The Convention is not self-executing.

[Treaty Doc. 113-2 Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean]

RESOLUTION OF ADVICE AND CONSENT TO RATIFICATION OF THE HIGH SEAS FISHERIES CONVENTION—NORTH PACIFIC

Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration.

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean, done at Tokyo February 24, 2012, and signed by the United States May 2, 2012 (the "Convention") (Treaty Doc. 113-2), subject to the declaration of section 2.

Sec. 2. Declaration.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration: The Convention is not self-executing.

[Treaty Doc. 113-3 Amendment to the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries]

RESOLUTION OF ADVICE AND CONSENT TO RATIFICATION OF THE AMENDMENT TO HIGH SEAS FISHERIES CONVENTION—NORTH ATLANTIC

Resolved, (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein),

Section 1. Senate Advice and Consent Subject to a Declaration.

The Senate advises and consents to the ratification of the Amendment to the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries, adopted at the Twenty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the North Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) (the "Amendment") in Lisbon, Portugal, September 28, 2007 (Treaty Doc. 113-3), subject to the declaration of section 2.

Sec. 2. Declaration.

The advice and consent of the Senate under section 1 is subject to the following declaration: The Amendment is not self-executing.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota:

S. 2125. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2126. A bill to launch a national strategy to support regenerative medicine through the establishment of a Regenerative Medicine Coordinating Council, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. LEE (for himself, Mr. TESTER, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2127. A bill to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 relative to the powers of the Department of Justice Inspector General; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 2128. A bill to name the Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Waco, Texas, as the "Doris Miller Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. UDALL of New Mexico:

S. 2129. A bill to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act to improve technology transfer at the Department of Energy by reducing bureaucratic barriers to industry, entrepreneurs, and small businesses, as well as ensure that public investments in research and development generate the greatest return on investment for taxpayers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 2130. A bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to temporarily waive certain vehicle weight limits for covered logging vehicles, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BEGICH (for himself and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 2131. A bill to amend the statutory authorities of the Coast Guard to strengthen Coast Guard prevention and response capabilities in the Arctic, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. THUNE, and Mr. ENZI):

S. 2132. A bill to amend the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act of 2005, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. WARREN, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. FRANKEN):

S. 2133. A bill to amend title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other statutes to

clarify appropriate liability standards for Federal antidiscrimination claims; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MANCHIN:

S. 2134. A bill to withdraw approval for the drug Zohydro ER and prohibit the Food and Drug Administration from approving such drug unless it is reformulated to prevent abuse; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. LEVIN):

S. 2135. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that products derived from tar sands are crude oil for purposes of the Federal excise tax on petroleum, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY:

S. 2136. A bill to ensure that oil transported through the Keystone XL pipeline into the United States is used to reduce United States dependence on Middle Eastern oil; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. LEE:

S. 2137. A bill to ensure that holders of flood insurance policies under the National Flood Insurance Program do not receive premium refunds for coverage of second homes; considered and passed.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 2138. A bill to provide a payroll tax holiday for newly hired veterans; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself and Mr. TOOMEY):

S. 2139. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the exclusion for small business stock, to provide incentives for small business high technology research investment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. UDALL of New Mexico):

S. 2140. A bill to improve the transition between experimental permits and commercial licenses for commercial reusable launch vehicles; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. REED (for himself and Mr. ISAACSON):

S. 2141. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide an alternative process for review of safety and effectiveness of nonprescription sunscreen active ingredients and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. NELSON, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2142. A bill to impose targeted sanctions on persons responsible for violations of human rights of antigovernment protesters in Venezuela, to strengthen civil society in Venezuela, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN:

S. 2143. A bill to increase access to capital for veteran entrepreneurs to help create jobs; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Mrs. MCCASKILL:

S. 2144. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to apply Medicare competitive bidding to vacuum erection systems and to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to implement a national mail order program for such devices; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. REID, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 2145. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to permit facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs to be designated as voter registration agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. COBURN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. FLAKE):

S. 2146. A bill to establish a United States Patent and Trademark Office Innovation Promotion Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mrs. HAGAN (for herself, Mr. RUBIO, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 2147. A bill to amend Public Law 112-59 to provide for the display of the congressional gold medal awarded to the Montford Point Marines, United States Marine Corps, by the Smithsonian Institution and at other appropriate locations; considered and passed.

By Mr. REED (for himself, Mr. HELLER, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BROWN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. KIRK):

S. 2148. A bill to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes; read the first time.

By Mr. ENZI (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. BARRASSO):

S.J. Res. 34. A joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to give States the right to repeal Federal laws and regulations when ratified by the legislatures of two-thirds of the several States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. WALSH):

S. Res. 383. A resolution designating March 2014 as "National Middle Level Education Month"; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WARNER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. KING, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. CRUZ):

S. Res. 384. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate concerning the humanitarian crisis in Syria and neighboring countries, resulting humanitarian and development challenges, and the urgent need for a political solution to the crisis; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. ENZI):

S. Res. 385. A resolution expressing the Sense of the Senate regarding the use of electronic devices on the floor of the Senate; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota):

S. Res. 386. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Professional Social Work Month and World Social Work Day; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. BEGICH):

S. Res. 387. A resolution celebrating the 2014 Arctic Winter Games, in Fairbanks, Alaska; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself and Mr. CASEY):

S. Res. 388. A resolution designating March 22, 2014, as "National Rehabilitation Counselors Appreciation Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. Res. 389. A resolution designating the week of March 9, 2014, through March 15, 2014, as "National Youth Synthetic Drug Awareness Week"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. HATCH):

S. Res. 390. A resolution designating March 11, 2014, as "World Plumbing Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. HATCH):

S. Res. 391. A resolution designating Jean M. Manning as Chief Counsel for Employment Emeritus of the United States Senate; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Res. 392. A resolution to authorize document production and representation in *Care One Management LLC, et al. v. United Healthcare Workers East, SEIU 1199, et al.*; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 15

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 15, a bill to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law.

S. 56

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 56, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the credit for employers establishing workplace child care facilities, to increase the child care credit to encourage greater use of quality child care services, to provide incentives for students to earn child care-related degrees and to work in child care facilities, and to increase the exclusion for employer-provided dependent care assistance.

S. 132

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the names of the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) were added as cosponsors of S. 132, a bill to provide for the admission of the State of New Columbia into the Union.

S. 375

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 375, a bill to require Senate candidates to file designations, statements, and reports in electronic form.

S. 557

At the request of Mrs. HAGAN, the name of the Senator from South Caro-

lina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 557, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to medication therapy management under part D of the Medicare program.

S. 772

At the request of Mr. NELSON, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 772, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to clarify the Food and Drug Administration's jurisdiction over certain tobacco products, and to protect jobs and small businesses involved in the sale, manufacturing and distribution of traditional and premium cigars.

S. 842

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 842, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an extension of the Medicare-dependent hospital (MDH) program and the increased payments under the Medicare low-volume hospital program.

S. 895

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 895, a bill to improve the ability of the Food and Drug Administration to study the use of antimicrobial drugs in food-producing animals.

S. 933

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 933, a bill to amend title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the authorization of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program through fiscal year 2018.

S. 987

At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the names of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) and the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 987, a bill to maintain the free flow of information to the public by providing conditions for the federally compelled disclosure of information by certain persons connected with the news media.

S. 1011

At the request of Mr. JOHANNES, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. ALEXANDER), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1011, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the centennial of Boys Town, and for other purposes.

S. 1086

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a co-

sponsor of S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

S. 1114

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1114, a bill to provide for identification of misaligned currency, require action to correct the misalignment, and for other purposes.

S. 1174

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1174, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 65th Infantry Regiment, known as the Borinqueneers.

S. 1188

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. ENZI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1188, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the definition of full-time employee for purposes of the individual mandate in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

S. 1256

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1256, a bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to preserve the effectiveness of medically important antimicrobials used in the treatment of human and animal diseases.

S. 1406

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. WALSH) were added as cosponsors of S. 1406, a bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to designate additional unlawful acts under the Act, strengthen penalties for violations of the Act, improve Department of Agriculture enforcement of the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1410

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 1410, a bill to focus limited Federal resources on the most serious offenders.

S. 1456

At the request of Ms. AYOTTE, the names of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1456, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 1462

At the request of Mr. JOHANNES, his name was added as a cosponsor of S.

1462, a bill to extend the positive train control system implementation deadline, and for other purposes.

S. 1507

At the request of Mr. MORAN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1507, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify the treatment of general welfare benefits provided by Indian tribes.

S. 1622

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1622, a bill to establish the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children, and for other purposes.

S. 1708

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1708, a bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to the establishment of performance measures for the highway safety improvement program, and for other purposes.

S. 1729

At the request of Mr. KAINE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1729, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to provide further options with respect to levels of coverage under qualified health plans.

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 1729, *supra*.

S. 1737

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1737, a bill to provide for an increase in the Federal minimum wage and to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend increased expensing limitations and the treatment of certain real property as section 179 property.

S. 1956

At the request of Mr. SCHATZ, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1956, a bill to direct the Secretary of Defense to review the discharge characterization of former members of the Armed Forces who were discharged by reason of the sexual orientation of the member, and for other purposes.

S. 2013

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2013, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the removal of Senior Executive Service employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs for performance, and for other purposes.

S. 2037

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from South Da-

kota (Mr. JOHNSON) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 2037, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to remove the 96-hour physician certification requirement for inpatient critical access hospital services.

S. 2058

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2058, a bill to establish a loan guarantee program for natural gas distribution grids to be installed in areas with extremely high energy costs.

S. 2059

At the request of Mr. BEGICH, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2059, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit for the purchase of heating and cooling equipment which meets the Energy Star program requirements and is used in certain high-cost energy communities, and for other purposes.

S. 2066

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2066, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit the intentional discrimination of a person or organization by an employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

S. 2067

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2067, a bill to prohibit the Department of the Treasury from assigning tax statuses to organizations based on their political beliefs and activities.

S. 2068

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2068, a bill to provide for the development and use of technology for personalized handguns, to require that, within 3 years, all handguns manufactured or sold in, or imported into, the United States incorporate such technology, and for other purposes.

S. 2069

At the request of Mr. KAINE, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2069, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand and modify the credit for employee health insurance expenses of small employers.

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. 2069, *supra*.

S. 2082

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 2082, a bill to provide for the development of criteria under the Medicare program for medically necessary short inpatient hospital stays, and for other purposes.

S. 2086

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) were added as cosponsors of S. 2086, a bill to address current emergency shortages of propane and other home heating fuels and to provide greater flexibility and information for Governors to address such emergencies in the future.

S. 2091

At the request of Mr. HELLER, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2091, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processing by the Department of Veterans Affairs of claims for benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 2105

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2105, a bill to prohibit the Federal funding of a State firearms ownership database.

S. 2118

At the request of Mr. BLUNT, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2118, a bill to protect the separation of powers in the Constitution of the United States by ensuring that the President takes care that the laws be faithfully executed, and for other purposes.

S. CON. RES. 33

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the names of the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL) and the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) were added as cosponsors of S. Con. Res. 33, a concurrent resolution celebrating the 100th anniversary of the enactment of the Smith-Lever Act, which established the nationwide Cooperative Extension System.

S. RES. 377

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the names of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN), the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. ROCKEFELLER), the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE), the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY), the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON), the Senator from West Virginia (Mr. MANCHIN) and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 377, a resolution recognizing the 193rd anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States.

AMENDMENT NO. 2807

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2807 intended to be proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2808

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2808 intended to be proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2810

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2810 intended to be proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2822

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2822 proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2834

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2834 proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2835

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2835 intended to be proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2839

At the request of Mr. BENNET, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2839 proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2842

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2842 proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2843

At the request of Mr. FRANKEN, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2843 intended to be proposed to S. 1086, a bill to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota:

S. 2125. A bill to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to ensure the integrity of voice communications and to prevent unjust or unreasonable discrimination among areas of the United States in the delivery of such communications; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss a widespread problem affecting rural communities in South Dakota and across our country. This issue represents both a public safety and economic issue for rural America.

For far too long, rural communities have experienced problems with long-distance or wireless telephone calls that are not being properly connected. The call completion problem extends beyond South Dakota and has affected telephone customers in dozens of states. These call failures create frustration and concern for family members trying to connect with friends and family, as well as small businesses losing business because they miss calls from customers. The problem also poses a serious public safety threat, such as when a police dispatcher cannot reach law enforcement or when a doctor cannot call a patient regarding follow-up care. Rural telephone customers affected by this problem are rightfully frustrated and demand a solution.

I first learned about this issue from the manager of a rural health clinic in Canistota, SD. The clinic has experienced a decline in business as a result of the call completion problems. Incoming calls regularly do not reach the clinic and therefore go unanswered. Additionally, some patients have heard misleading messages about the clinic's number being disconnected, which leads them to believe the clinic has closed. This is just one example of the negative impact this problem is having on communities and Main Street businesses across rural America.

To be honest, I could barely believe it when I first learned about this issue. Today, we should be worried about narrowing the digital divide not worrying whether rural communities have access to basic telephone service. While many factors could be at play, the Federal Communications Commission believes the use of third-party "least cost routers" to connect calls is a leading cause

of the problem. It appears that some of these intermediate providers are failing to properly complete calls to avoid the higher access charges associated with rural telephone networks. It is particularly challenging to resolve the problem because calls are often dropped before they reach the rural telephone network, making it difficult for rural providers to pinpoint when and where problems occur.

Over the past few years, I have worked with many of my Senate colleagues, the FCC, telephone providers, and consumers to fix this problem and hold those causing this problem accountable. I would like to say a special thank you to Senators AMY KLOBUCHAR and DEB FISCHER for joining me in introducing a Sense of the Senate resolution last May that directed the FCC to take action to end these discriminatory practices. Since our resolution was introduced, the commission unanimously approved rules to strengthen its ability to monitor and enforce the delivery of calls to rural areas. Although the commission's rulemaking and ongoing investigation represent a step in the right direction, a more immediate resolution is needed.

Today, I introduced the Public Safety and Economic Security Communications Act. This legislation takes immediate action to stop the bad actors that are failing to complete calls to rural areas. The bill includes common sense reforms that will help end the discriminatory delivery of calls by requiring voice providers to register with the FCC and comply with basic service quality standards. The legislation will help ensure that small businesses, families, and emergency responders in every corner of South Dakota and across our country can once again rely upon connection of their incoming telephone calls.

I invite my colleagues to join me in stopping this problem by cosponsoring the Public Safety and Economic Security Communications Act.

By Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mr. CRUZ):

S. 2128. A bill to name the Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Waco, Texas, as the "Doris Miller Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2128

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

- (1) On October 12, 1919, Doris Miller was born in Waco, Texas.
- (2) On September 16, 1939, Miller enlisted in United States Navy as mess attendant,

third class at Naval Recruiting Station, Dallas, Texas to serve for a period of six years.

(3) On February 16, 1941, Miller received a change of rating to mess attendant, second class.

(4) On June 1, 1942, Miller received a change of rating to mess attendant, first class.

(5) On June 1, 1943, Miller received a change of rating, to cook, third class.

(6) On November 25, 1944, Miller was presumed dead by the Secretary of the Navy a year and a day after being carried as missing in action since November 24, 1943 while serving aboard U.S.S. Liscome Bay when that vessel was torpedoed and sunk in the Pacific Ocean.

(7) Miller was awarded the Navy Cross Medal, Purple Heart Medal, American Defense Service Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, and World War II Victory Medal.

(8) Miller's citation for the Navy Cross said "for distinguished devotion to duty, extraordinary courage and disregard for his own personal safety during the attack on the Fleet in Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii, by Japanese forces on December 7, 1941. While at the side of his Captain on the bridge, Miller, despite enemy strafing and bombing and in the face of a serious fire, assisted in moving his Captain, who had been mortally wounded, to a place of greater safety, and later manned and operated a machine gun directed at enemy Japanese attacking aircraft until ordered to leave the bridge."

(9) On June 20, 1973, the U.S.S. Miller (FF-1091), a Knox-class frigate, was named in honor of Doris Miller.

SEC. 2. NAME OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER, WACO, TEXAS.

The Department of Veterans Affairs medical center in Waco, Texas, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Doris Miller Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center". Any reference to such medical center in any law, regulation, map, document, record, or other paper of the United States shall be considered to be a reference to the Doris Miller Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

By Mr. UDALL of New Mexico:

S. 2129. A bill to amend the Department of Energy Organization Act to improve technology transfer at the Department of Energy by reducing bureaucratic barriers to industry, entrepreneurs, and small businesses, as well as ensure that public investments in research and development generate the greatest return on investment for taxpayers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. President, New Mexico is blessed with some of the world's finest scientists. Each day, brilliant researchers at our universities and national labs go to work, and the results are amazing. At the same time, entrepreneurs in New Mexico and across the country are looking for opportunities to leverage innovation and to create new high-tech products and applications.

I rise to introduce the Accelerating Technology Transfer to Advance Innovation for the Nation—what we are

calling the ATTAIN Act. That is a long title and an important goal: to improve the Department of Energy's technology transfer mission and to move innovation from the lab to the market. This grows our economy and creates a greater impact from our research and development dollars.

But before I talk to my colleagues about what the bill does, I wish to explain why it is so important. Tech transfer may seem to be just some technical issue, affecting bureaucratic rules or regulations, but it is more. It is how innovation in the lab today helps create jobs tomorrow.

In the 21st century, our national labs are the birthplace of innovation that creates new products and businesses and entire industries. Scientists are developing cutting-edge ways to power computers, to transmit new information, to heal the body. These innovations have great market potential in aviation, the military, medicine. They can be spun into high-tech businesses, changing the world, putting people to work.

In New Mexico, many companies have been formed as a result of discoveries at Los Alamos and Sandia National Labs. For example, Mustomo, Inc., a startup using technology developed at LANL, provides 3D ultrasound tomography for the detection of breast cancer, and technology from Sandia, used by TEAM Technologies, has created a device that can disable improvised explosive devices. Since 2010 over 4,000 units have been deployed and are saving lives in war zones right now.

But despite these amazing successes, we are operating at just a fraction of the potential. My home State could do so much more. New Mexico has all the ingredients to become a high-tech powerhouse. There are great minds at our national labs and military bases. We have fantastic universities and a booming energy industry. We need to create an environment to allow it to reach that potential. This is a major initiative of mine to help create the right formula to help industry take off in New Mexico. That is the purpose of my bill.

Almost a decade ago Congress created a Department of Energy Technology Transfer Coordinator to move innovation from the lab bench to the marketplace, to spur businesses and cutting-edge product development in New Mexico and across the Nation, to help entrepreneurs outside of the big-city powerhouses on the coasts get access to capital, to help them find partners in industry. But the Department has not come close to meeting its potential. A recent inspector general's report tells the story. It cited numerous deficiencies at DOE. The Department is over 7 years delinquent in finalizing its Technology Transfer Execution Plan, nor has DOE implemented a forward-looking process for its commercializa-

tion fund—over 2 years after being directed to do so by the former Secretary. In addition, the Technology Transfer Coordinator post at the Department has been vacant since April 2013. That is nearly 1 year after the previous Coordinator's departure. This position should be filled as quickly as possible with a qualified and motivated candidate.

Technology transfer is important in New Mexico and to the Nation, and the Department's failure to perform is unacceptable. My bill addresses these shortfalls. We can do better, and we have to. The first step is to make tech transfer a priority. Our goals are clear: consolidate bureaucracy, streamline contracting, and use models that have proven successful.

There are three key elements to my legislation.

First, it permanently authorizes new tools for the Secretary of Energy's new Department-wide technology transfer office to enable DOE and DOE's new Tech Transfer Coordinator to meet their responsibilities and to measure and report their progress. Better coordination is absolutely crucial so we can reduce barriers and efficiently use the limited resources available. My bill requires that this office be accountable and responsible, that it work with the national labs and with industry in the right way at the Department and fully implement the EPACT Energy Technology Commercialization Fund—something DOE has yet to do according to Congress's original intent.

Second, the bill authorizes a new tech transfer corps, modeled on the National Science Foundation's Innovation Corps, to support investments in entrepreneurs, mentors, scientists, and engineers. It authorizes technology commercialization challenges that push—getting innovative technologies into the market—and also pull—enabling partnerships with industry to identify and focus on common challenges. It will also improve coordination of technology transfer and entrepreneurship priorities with universities, foundations, and nonprofits, both regionally and nationally.

Third, we adapt an existing public-private partnership model used by the Small Business Administration and apply it to technology transfer to increase access to capital for promising startup companies.

We are not asking for more money. We need to do more with what we have. We are not asking—and I want to emphasize that—we are not asking for more money. We need to do more with what we have. The bill requires DOE and SBA to work together, to use the strengths of each agency—DOE's innovative technology and SBA's financial acumen—and it increases investment in new technologies via the SBIC Impact and Early Stage Initiatives. The Impact Initiative includes SBA matching funds of up to \$1 billion, and the

Early Stage Initiative includes \$1 billion more.

This collaboration addresses an important concern. Since 2008 less than 6 percent of these venture capital funds have been invested in seed funds and tech maturation, and 70 percent of that went into just three States—California, New York, and Massachusetts. There are great opportunities outside these three States. This bill will help those funds find them. States such as New Mexico have a surplus of innovative ideas and a lack of investment dollars. With this bill we can balance that equation.

The benefits are clear: new technology, new partnerships, and new opportunities. Cutting-edge research today means high-paying jobs tomorrow. American inventions and intellectual property fuel our economy. Mr. President, 75 U.S. industries are classified as intellectual property intensive. They added \$5.8 trillion to U.S. output last year. They are 38 percent of our GDP. They directly or indirectly supply over 55 million jobs—jobs that on average pay 30 percent higher wages. These IP companies account for 74 percent of our exports.

We need to do all we can to support innovation and to improve technology transfer—the bridge between new discovery and new opportunity—to grow our economy, to create high-paying jobs. I believe this is something we can all support.

Last August I cohosted a tech transfer conference in Santa Fe. I met with nearly 200 of New Mexico's most successful entrepreneurs, innovators, and investors. We talked about the challenges and opportunities of technology transfer and how important it is to the future.

We have always succeeded by being one step ahead of the competition. American innovation has led the world in industry, in health care and transportation, in science and technology. The ATTAIN Act will help move that innovation from the lab to the marketplace, helping businesses grow, creating jobs, and keeping us competitive in a global marketplace.

For a student with a bright idea, for an entrepreneur with the drive to chase their dream, it can be a long road. Fortunately, they do not give up easily. They are as tough as they come. They are already giving so much with hard work, with taking risks. They do their part. DOE needs to do its part as well.

We all want to move innovation forward and to better coordinate the handoffs. I am committed to working with the Department of Energy to make this a reality. This is an important goal, and it should be an equally important priority. That is why I am introducing this bill today.

By Mr. BARRASSO (for himself, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. THUNE, and Mr. ENZI):

S. 2132. A bill to amend the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act of 2005, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce S. 2132, the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act Amendments of 2014.

In recent years, the Committee on Indian Affairs has received concerns from Indian tribes and the energy industry that the Federal laws governing the development of tribal energy resources are complex and often lead to significant costs, delays, and uncertainty for all parties. These costs, delays, and uncertainties discourage development of tribal energy resources and drive investments away from tribal lands.

According to the National Congress of American Indians, Indian tribes hold nearly a quarter of American onshore oil and gas reserves. Yet, existing tribal energy production represents less than 5 percent of the current national production. If we can remove the costs and delays of developing energy on Indian lands, we could potentially see the country's energy production, and thus energy independence, increase significantly.

Over 8 years ago, Congress passed the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act. This act created a new, alternative process for Indian tribes to take control of developing their energy resources on their own lands without the burdens of administrative review, approval, and oversight. This approach gives Indian tribes the option to enter into tribal energy resource agreements with the Secretary of the Interior. Once an Indian tribe enters into this agreement, it has the authority to enter into subsequent leases, business agreements, and rights-of-way affecting energy development, without further review and approval by the Secretary—a significant departure from the standard laws, and consequent bureaucracy, applicable to tribal contracts. That approach was a step in the right direction.

However, the agreements and process authorized under the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act have not been utilized to the extent that they could be, primarily because the implementation of the act has been made more complex than it should be. It is time we make key improvements to the law so that Indian tribes can take advantage of these agreements and significantly reduce bureaucratic burdens to energy development. Years of consultation and outreach to Indian tribes have produced targeted solutions to address the concerns about the process for entering these agreements.

The bill that I am introducing today, S. 2132, would streamline the process

for approving the tribal energy resource agreements and make it more predictable for Indian tribes.

I would like to highlight some of the key provisions in this bill. This bill includes a number of amendments to improve the review and approval process for the tribal energy resource agreements. For example, the bill provides clarity regarding the specific information required for tribal applications for these agreements. In addition, the bill sets forth specific timeframes for Secretarial determinations on the agreement applications. Moreover, if an application is disapproved, this bill would require the Secretary of the Interior to provide detailed explanations to the Indian tribe and steps for addressing the reasons for disapproval.

This bill also has various provisions that would improve technical assistance and consultation with Indian tribes during their energy planning and development stages. The bill also includes an amendment to the Federal Power Act that would put Indian tribes on a similar footing with States and municipalities for preferences when preliminary permits or original licenses for hydroelectric projects are issued.

Additionally, S. 2132 would allow Indian tribes and third parties to perform appraisals to help expedite the Secretary's approval process for tribal agreements for mineral resource development. This bill does not focus on only traditional resource development, but includes renewal resource development components as well. For example, the bill would create tribal biomass demonstration projects to provide Indian tribes with more reliable and potentially longterm supplies of woody biomass materials.

My bill is intended to provide Indian tribes with the tools to develop and use energy more efficiently. In passing this bill, Congress will enhance the ability of Indian tribes to exercise self-determination over the development of energy resources located on tribal lands, thereby improving the lives and economic well-being of Native Americans.

Before I conclude, I would like to thank Senators ENZI, THUNE, HOEVEN, and MCCAIN for joining me in cosponsoring the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act Amendments of 2014. I urge my colleagues to join me in advancing S. 2132 expeditiously.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. REID, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 2145. A bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to permit facilities of the Department of Veterans Affairs to be designated as voter registration agencies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise to reintroduce the Veteran Voting

Support Act, which is cosponsored by Senators LEAHY, DURBIN, and REID.

Almost 7 years ago, during the previous administration, I learned that a Department of Veterans Affairs facility in California had barred voter registration groups from accessing veterans in the facility. Similar reports emerged in other parts of the country.

This was unacceptable. Therefore, then-Senator Kerry and I worked with the VA to establish a fair, nonpartisan policy to facilitate voter registration and voting for veterans who receive services at VA facilities.

We held a hearing in the Rules Committee on a previous version of this bill on September 15, 2008, when I was Chairman of that committee.

One week before that hearing, the VA issued a directive that created a new and substantially improved policy to permit state and local election officials, as well as nonpartisan groups, to access VA facilities.

Yet many expressed concerns that it did not go far enough. For example, the Brennan Center for Justice, American Association for People with Disabilities, Common Cause, Demos, and the League of Women Voters sent me a letter stating that the directive was "an important step in the right direction" but stressed "that the VA's recent directive will not be sufficient to protect the voting rights of the men and women served by the VA."

Paul Sullivan, then Executive Director of Veterans for Common Sense, said: "There is a veteran voting rights crisis. As many as 100,000 of our veterans living in VA facilities may not be able to vote in our November 4 election."

Mr. Sullivan also explained a key problem facing veterans who live at a VA facility: "When a veteran moves into a VA facility, the veteran's old registration becomes invalid. The veteran must re-register before he or she can vote again."

In short, while many believed the VA's directive was not perfect, they also acknowledged it was an improvement.

I am sad to report that the 2008 voting assistance directive expired at the end of September 2013. That means no voting assistance directive is in place at the VA, with the mid-term elections only a few months away.

This is unacceptable. There is no justification for it. Veterans' voting rights, like the voting rights of others, do not have an expiration date.

There is no question about the continuing need for VA action in this area.

While the VA's directive was in place, from 2008 to 2012, veteran voter registration ticked up only slightly, from 77 to 78 percent, according to the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey.

But during the same period, actual voting by veterans dropped as a per-

centage of the veteran population—from 70.9 percent to 70.3 percent.

In raw numbers, there remain over 4.6 million veterans who either are unregistered or for whom the Census Bureau's data reports no response.

In the 2012 election, there were over 6.2 million veterans who either did not vote or for whom the Census data reports no response.

Thus, there is much more to do to help our veterans register and cast their ballots.

The VA is the agency best suited to do the job because it comes into contact with several million veterans each year.

In fact, in 2013, according to the VA's latest statistics, there were over 6.41 million unique patients in the VA health care system, up from 5.65 million in 2008, a 15 percent increase.

Today, I am reintroducing the Veteran Voting Support Act, which, unlike a VA directive, cannot be rescinded by the VA and would not expire.

This bill would take important steps to improve veterans' ability to register and vote.

First, the bill would require the VA to provide a veteran seeking to enroll in the VA health care system with a mail-in voter registration form. Such a form would also have to be provided to currently enrolled veterans upon a change of address or enrollment status.

The VA would be required to send such forms to the appropriate state election official within 10 days, or within five days if the form is received within five days before a registration deadline.

Second, the VA would be required to provide assistance to veterans seeking to register to vote using the mail-in form. Such assistance would be nonpartisan.

Third, the bill would require the director of a VA community living center, domiciliary, or medical center to provide assistance to veterans with respect to voting by absentee ballot, consistent with state and local laws. This section is limited to residents of a community living center or domiciliary and inpatients of a medical center.

Fourth, the bill would ensure that the VA provides access for nonpartisan organizations to provide voter registration and assistance at VA facilities.

This is subject to reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions, including limiting activities to regular business hours and requiring advance notice to the facility.

Fifth, the bill would prevent the VA from prohibiting access to VA facilities by election administration officials at the state and local levels, as long as the officials provide only nonpartisan information about voting, such as voter registration, voting systems, absentee balloting, and polling locations. This is also subject to reasonable, time, place, and manner restrictions.

Finally, the bill would require the VA to report annually on the number of veterans helped by this bill.

We owe our veterans a great debt. That debt includes a promise we will not deny them the right to vote and will commit to involving them in the process of choosing leaders who may send Americans into harm's way. This bill would help veterans register to vote, and it would help veterans living in VA facilities cast their ballots.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Veteran Voting Support Act.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. COBURN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. FLAKE):

S. 2146. A bill to establish a United States Patent and Trademark Office Innovation Promotion Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to protect and secure the user fees paid by America's inventors and businesses to the Patent and Trademark Office, and to stabilize that Office's funding, by introducing the Patent Fee Integrity Act. I want to thank my co-sponsors on this bill, Senators COBURN, KLOBUCHAR, and FLAKE.

Throughout most of its history, taxpayers supported the operations of the Patent and Trademark Office, or PTO, through appropriations from general funds. However, in 1990, Congress established a 69 percent user fee "surcharge," so that the PTO became funded entirely through fees paid by its users, the American inventors who make our country the world's technological leader.

Unfortunately, almost immediately, Congress began using the funds that inventors paid to protect their inventions for other purposes. In 1992, \$8.1 million in user fees were diverted. In 1993, \$12.3 million was diverted. In 1994, \$14.7 million. So it continued, growing each year, until what started as a trickle became a flood in 1998, with \$199 million in PTO user fees diverted.

PTO user fees continued to be diverted in most of the following years, at varying levels. In fiscal year 2011, as Congress was finishing its work on major patent reform, a new fee diversion record was set, a staggering \$209 million in user fees diverted from the PTO that year.

Meanwhile, at the same time that these fees were being taken away, the length of time that it took to get a patent out of the Patent Office steadily increased. In fiscal year 1991, average patent pendency was 18.2 months. By fiscal year 1999, it had increased to 25 months. By fiscal year 2010, average patent pendency had increased all the way to 35.3 months.

These are not just numbers. This is innovation being stifled from being brought to market. The longer it takes

to get a patent approved, the longer a new invention, a potential technological breakthrough, sits on the shelf, gathering dust instead of spurring job growth and scientific and economic progress.

Ultimately, this dulls our country's competitive edge in the global economy. America's record of innovation is the envy of the world; it has provided us a marked competitive edge over the decades and even centuries. When we stifle the progress of our innovation within the PTO, we lose some of this competitive advantage, and the jobs and other economic benefits that accompany it.

Obviously, there is a direct relationship between fee diversion and patent pendency. The more fees that are diverted away from the PTO, the fewer patent examiners they can hire, the more patents each examiner has to process, and the longer it takes them to get to any individual patent—a longer patent pendency.

But it is not just the time that it takes to get a patent that is hurt by diversion of resources. The quality of the patents issued is harmed as well.

As members of this body know, the Senate Judiciary Committee is actively considering legislation to address abuses of the patent system, and the House of Representatives passed its own legislation on the subject by a strong bipartisan vote of 325–91.

A variety of businesses all over the country are being sued and subjected to letters demanding payment, often based on very questionable patents that should never have been issued by the Patent Office in the first place.

Businesses and lawyers have asserted patents for, by way of example: Scanning and e-mailing a document; completing a purchase on a website with one click; as opposed to multiple clicks; and e-mailing a press release, something that I think it's safe to say that every member of this body does many times each month.

When there aren't enough patent examiners to give patent applications sufficient attention, bad patents get issued.

As the President and CEO of the Internet Association, which represents leading Internet companies like Amazon, eBay, Expedia, Facebook, Hotels.com, Netflix, Twitter, and Yahoo!, puts it: "the Patent Fee Integrity Act . . . would provide the Patent and Trademark Office with adequate funding and resources to improve overall patent quality. Improving patent quality is an essential step in improving the entire patent ecosystem by shutting off the supply of low-quality patents that fuel litigation by patent trolls." The Coalition for Patent Fairness, which includes such major companies as Blackberry, Cisco, Dell, Google, Oracle, and Verizon, notes that "When patent quality suffers, innova-

tion throughout America's economy is stymied, and patent trolls are able to prosper."

To make sure the Patent and Trademark Office has the resources it needs to issue patents in a timely manner and to improve patent quality, in 2011, in the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act, we gave the PTO the authority to increase its user fees.

Some of us fought at that time to end the practice of fee diversion, led by my co-sponsor Senator COBURN, to make sure that the users got the full benefit of their increased fees. Unfortunately, our colleagues on the other side of the Capitol watered down the language that the Senate passed to accomplish this purpose.

One of the sponsors defended that language when it came back to the Senate, arguing that the bill "creates a PTO reserve fund for any fees collected above the appropriated amounts in a given year—so that only the PTO will have access to these fees."

I warned then that the House's changes provided no assurance that that is what would actually happen.

So what happened? Well, the PTO went ahead and raised its fees, as expected.

Did it get to keep all those new fees?

Unfortunately, the government wasted little time in diverting the new fees. In fiscal year 2013, \$121 million in PTO user fees were diverted, due to sequestration. This pushed the total of PTO user fees diverted since PTO was made self-sufficient in 1990 to over \$1 billion, \$171 million, to be exact.

Requiring the payment of higher patent fees which are then used for general government purposes really amounts to a tax on innovation which is the last thing we should be burdening in today's technology-driven economy.

The fact that this latest round of fee diversion occurred through sequestration provides another reason why the legislation we are introducing today is needed. PTO never should have been subject to sequestration in the first place. As I have described, it is not supported at all by taxpayer funds—it is completely funded by user fees. These users pay for a service when they send in their fees: the timely consideration and processing of their patent or trademark application or renewal. They are entitled to have the benefit of what they paid for. These funds should not be sequestered, to pay for other government services, for which there is a deficit. The PTO does not contribute at all to the deficit, and that has been the case for more than 20 years.

As a result of PTO's budgetary shortfall, in which sequestration played a significant part: information technology modernization was scaled back significantly; the process of opening new PTO satellite offices, called for in the America Invents Act, was frozen;

hiring of most support personnel was stopped; and travel and training was virtually eliminated.

Last fall brought another unfortunate budgetary disruption: the shutdown of the federal government. Fortunately, the PTO was able to keep operating for that limited time, with the balances it had in its account. However, had the shutdown continued, PTO, too, would have been forced to close up—despite the fact that it collects fees that make it self-sustaining.

There is no good reason why PTO should be subject to sequestration and shutdown. As the Business Software Alliance states in their supporting letter, "This bill would ensure the USPTO can continue conducting self-funded operations that produce tremendous economic and social value for the United States."

The Patent Fee Integrity Act strikes current language that makes PTO subject to the appropriations process, which has been the principal avenue through which its funding has been diverted, and ensures that it can keep its funding. However, we also include measures to maintain accountability for the agency; the bill: requires the PTO Director to submit an annual report and operations plan to Congress; requires the PTO Director to submit an annual spending plan to the Appropriations Committees; and requires an annual independent financial audit.

This bill is supported across the width and breadth of the patent user community. It is endorsed by: Bayer Corporation; Biocom; The Biotechnology Industry Organization; BSA, The Software Alliance; The Coalition for Patent Fairness; The Coalition for 21st Century Patent Reform, which represents a broad group of nearly 50 global corporations who employ hundreds of thousands of Americans in a variety of sectors, including 3M, Caterpillar, General Electric, General Mills, Procter & Gamble, Johnson & Johnson, Medtronic, and Northrop Grumman; Fallbrook Technologies; The Innovation Alliance, which includes innovative small, medium, and large businesses, including Dolby Laboratories and QUALCOMM; the Intellectual Property Owners Association, which represents more than 200 companies and 12,000 individuals in the U.S. who own intellectual property; The Internet Association; Mattel; Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association; National Association of Manufacturers; Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America; and Xerox.

Many of these groups disagree vehemently with each other about patent reform. However, they all come together to unite in support of the bill we are introducing today, the Patent Fee Integrity Act.

BSA, The Software Alliance aptly observes, "with their funds constantly

under attack, the USPTO faces an endless and unnecessary challenge to provide the services for which American innovators have already paid. The Patent Fee Integrity Act will help the USPTO continue to increase patent quality, provide critical, time-sensitive services, and guarantee continuity of its operations independent of continually-shifting political considerations."

I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this critical bill. As the Coalition for 21st Century Patent Reform and others observed in the letter they sent to me in support of this bill: "Your legislation would empower the USPTO to fully support America's innovators without adding a single penny to the deficit."

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that letters of support be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

BSA/THE SOFTWARE ALLIANCE,
Washington, DC, March 13, 2013.

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR FEINSTEIN: On behalf of BSA/The Software Alliance and its members, which are among the world's most innovative companies, I write to express strong support for the Patent Fee Integrity Act, which would remove the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) from the congressional appropriations process. This bill would ensure the USPTO can continue conducting self-funded operations that produce tremendous economic and social value for the United States.

The USPTO plays an indispensable role in sparking the growth of America's economy by protecting intellectual property (IP) and promoting innovation. Over the last two decades, however, the federal government has withheld, diverted, or sequestered more than \$1 billion in USPTO user fee collections. This bill recognizes that with their funds constantly under attack, the USPTO faces an endless and unnecessary challenge to provide the services for which American innovators have already paid.

The Patent Fee Integrity Act will help the USPTO continue to increase patent quality, provide critical, time-sensitive services, and guarantee continuity of its operations independent of continually-shifting political considerations. Moreover, it will protect against reducing the USPTO's operating capacity at a time when it needs to expand to enable American businesses to bring new innovations to market.

We commend you for your leadership in introducing the Patent Fee Integrity Act and look forward to working with you and others to ensure it garners the broad bipartisan support it deserves.

Sincerely,

VICTORIA A. ESPINEL,
President and CEO.

MARCH 13, 2014.

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR FEINSTEIN: We commend you for introducing the Patent Fee Integrity Act and we offer our full support.

America's economic future depends on our continued ability to innovate and commer-

cialize new products and processes. American businesses are among the most dynamic and innovative in the world. We develop the technology that creates jobs and stimulates our economy. Our nation's universities partner with business to conduct the ground-breaking research, as well as educate the creative people, that fuel the innovative dynamism of the business sector. Such investment is not without risk, which is why the Patent Fee Integrity Act has never been more critical.

U.S. innovators rely on patents to protect their investment in the research and development of breakthrough innovations such as manufacturing and product technologies and life-saving drugs. Valid and enforceable patent rights are essential in this process and enable the United States to maintain its competitive edge. An adequately funded United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is vital in ensuring that high quality patent rights are promptly granted. Yet, the precarious funding situation of the USPTO makes the realization of this essential mission impossible.

Over the last two decades, the government has withheld, diverted, or sequestered hundreds of millions of USPTO user fee dollars. With uncertain and insufficient funding, the USPTO faces an endless and unnecessary challenge in providing the services for which American innovators have requested and paid. The Patent Fee Integrity Act would end this problem by removing the USPTO from the Congressional appropriations process and allow all of its user fees to fund its operations. Your legislation would empower the USPTO to fully support America's innovators without adding a single penny to the deficit.

Our innovation based economy demands a fully-funded USPTO. The USPTO needs predictability and certainty in its budgeting so that it can provide the patent protection needed champion America's innovators. We support quick passage of the Patent Fee Integrity Act.

American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA); Bayer Corporation; Biocom; Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO); Boston Scientific Corporation; Bristol-Myers Squibb Company; Caterpillar Inc.; Corning Incorporated; The Cummins Allison Corporation; Cummins Inc.; DuPont; Eli Lilly and Company; Greatbatch, Inc.; IBM Corporation; Illinois Tool Works (ITW); International Test Solutions Inc.; Johnson & Johnson; Leggett & Platt; The Manitowoc Company, Inc.; Mattel, Inc.; Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association; National Association of Manufacturers (NAM); Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America; PPG Industries, Inc.; The Procter & Gamble Company; Smiths Group; United Technologies Corporation; Xerox Zimme.

COALITION FOR
PATENT FAIRNESS

Washington, DC, March 13, 2014.

Statement on the Patent Fee Integrity Act.

The Coalition for Patent Fairness (CPF) thanks Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) for introducing the Patent Fee Integrity Act.

As patent holders, CPF members recognize the importance of an adequately funded U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO). We applaud Senator Feinstein for taking steps to ensure that the PTO has the resources it needs to fulfill its essential mission and to maintain patent quality.

Improving patent quality is a vital piece of the patent puzzle. When patent quality suffers, innovation throughout America's economy is stymied, and patent trolls are able to

prosper. Quite clearly, patent reviews conducted today will have a lasting impact in the future; by helping to establish adequate funding of the PTO, the Patent Fee Integrity Act will support innovation.

The U.S. patent system plays an important role in helping America's economy flourish, and abuses of that system pose a significant threat to innovation and economic growth. We thank Senator Feinstein for her leadership and will continue to work with her and her colleagues toward the passage of patent litigation reform.

FALLBROOK TECHNOLOGIES,
Cedar Park, TX, March 13, 2014.

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR FEINSTEIN: As CEO of an emerging technology company with roots in California, I write to enthusiastically endorse your effort to introduce patent legislation that is critically important to America's innovation ecosystem and the U.S. economy, the Patent Fee Integrity Act. Although Fallbrook Technologies cautions the Senate to tread extremely cautiously with other proposed patent legislation, the Patent Fee Integrity Act represents the only patent reform bill which advances the one issue that unifies intellectual property stakeholders across the innovation spectrum and thus should be advanced by the Senate without delay.

Fallbrook is an emerging manufacturing and technology development company dedicated to improving the flexibility of power transmission within a wide variety of mechanical devices. Currently, Fallbrook is located in Texas, but we have California ties as our technology was invented in Fallbrook, California, a large number of our investors are in California and some key employees currently reside in San Diego. Our core technology is the patented and award-winning NuVinci® continuously variable planetary (CVP) transmission system. Fallbrook's NuVinci CVP technology is a standard component on more than 60 major bicycle brands throughout Europe, and can improve the performance and efficiency of products that use a transmission, such as automobiles, agricultural equipment, light electric vehicles, outdoor power equipment and wind turbines. Fallbrook employs over 130 people in the U.S. (as of the date of this letter), including about 30 of the best engineers in the transmission sector. We currently hold over 600 patents and pending applications worldwide and are working with our key automotive licensees to bring gas-saving vehicles to the marketplace.

As you are aware, for more than a decade, American innovators like Fallbrook have had our U.S. Patent and Trademark Office user fees diverted by Congress for other purposes. Essentially, such fee diversion has worked as an innovation tax which slows the technology development process and hinders job creation. The Patent Fee Integrity Act will repeal this innovation tax and is long overdue. Full USPTO funding will provide the USPTO the resources it needs to improve patent quality while Congress determines whether further actions may be needed to improve the patent system.

We applaud you and your bipartisan co-sponsors for introducing the bill and stand ready to assist you in any way necessary.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM KLEHM,
Chairman and CEO.

INNOVATION ALLIANCE,
MARCH 13, 2014.

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR FEINSTEIN: The Innovation Alliance, a coalition of research and development-focused companies, thanks you and your cosponsors for introducing the Patent Fee Integrity Act, which will put an end to fee diversion once and for all. We have long maintained that ending fee diversion, and thereby giving the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office ("USPTO") all of the fees it is paid by patent applicants, is the single most important change policymakers can make to improve the U.S. patent system.

Over the last 20 years, approximately \$1 billion in fees paid by patent applicants has been diverted from its proper use at the USPTO. This unwarranted diversion of fees has resulted in more than 600,000 unexamined patent applications and more than 28 months in the average patent pendency time. Ending this tax on innovation is perhaps the one change to the patent law that unites stakeholders from all parts of the innovation ecosystem in the United States.

The Innovation Alliance thanks you for your leadership on this critically important issue for the patent system. We look forward to working with you and your cosponsors to pass the Patent Fee Integrity Act into law as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

BRIAN POMPER,
Executive Director.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
OWNERS ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2014.

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR FEINSTEIN: Intellectual Property Owners Association (IPO) writes to express its strong support for the Patent Fee Integrity Act, to provide for the permanent funding of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).

IPO is a trade association representing companies and individuals in all industries and fields of technology who own or are interested in intellectual property rights. IPO's membership includes more than 200 companies and more than 12,500 individuals who are involved in the association either through their companies or as inventor, author, law firm, or attorney members. Our members all agree that the United States needs a fully-funded USPTO to keep our nation competitive, encourage innovation and create new jobs.

Over the last two decades the government has withheld, diverted or sequestered about \$1 billion in USPTO user fee collections. Removing the USPTO from the congressional appropriations process is the most promising approach we know for stopping the hemorrhaging of USPTO fees. We hope the Senate will move ahead with the bill as soon as possible.

Thank you for your help in securing full, permanent funding for the USPTO. We stand ready to assist in any way we can.

Sincerely,

HERBERT C. WAMSLEY,
Executive Director.

THE INTERNET ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, March 13, 2014.

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL BECKERMAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE INTERNET ASSOCIATION, ON SENATOR FEINSTEIN'S INTRODUCTION OF THE PATENT FEE INTEGRITY ACT

The Internet Association commends Senator Feinstein's introduction of the Patent Fee Integrity Act, which would provide the Patent and Trademark Office with adequate funding and resources to improve overall patent quality. Improving patent quality is an essential step in improving the entire patent ecosystem by shutting off the supply of low-quality patents that fuel litigation by patent trolls. That is why The Internet Association also supports an expanded review of the covered business method patent program to eliminate patents that never been granted in the first instance. An expanded review program, coupled with strong fee shifting and discovery provisions, make up the necessary components of a meaningful response to the patent troll epidemic. We look forward to working with Senator Feinstein and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee as they prepare to address these important issues in the coming weeks.

ABOUT THE INTERNET ASSOCIATION

The Internet Association, the unified voice of the Internet economy, represents the interests of the leading Internet companies including Airbnb, Amazon, AOL, eBay, Expedia, Facebook, Gilt, Google, IAC, LinkedIn, Lyft, Monster Worldwide, Netflix, Practice Fusion, Rackspace, reddit, Salesforce.com, SurveyMonkey, TripAdvisor, Twitter, Uber Technologies, Inc., Yelp, Yahoo!, and Zynga. The Internet Association is dedicated to advancing public policy solutions to strengthen and protect Internet freedom, foster innovation and economic growth, and empower users. <http://www.internetassociation.org>.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 383—DESIGNATING MARCH 2014 AS "NATIONAL MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION MONTH"

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. WALSH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 383

Whereas the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the Association for Middle Level Education, the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, and the National Association of Elementary School Principals have declared March 2014 as "National Middle Level Education Month";

Whereas schools that educate middle level students are responsible for educating nearly 24,000,000 young adolescents between the ages of 10 and 15, in grades 5 through 9, who are undergoing rapid and dramatic changes in their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and moral development;

Whereas young adolescents deserve challenging and engaging instruction, knowledgeable teachers and administrators who are prepared to provide young adolescents with a safe, challenging, and supportive learning environment, and organizational structures that banish anonymity and pro-

mote personalization, collaboration, and social equity;

Whereas the habits and values established during early adolescence have a lifelong influence that directly affects the future health and welfare of the United States;

Whereas research indicates that the academic achievement of a student in eighth grade has a larger impact on the readiness of that student for college at the end of high school than any academic achievement of that student in high school; and

Whereas in order to improve graduation rates and prepare students to be lifelong learners who are ready for college, a career, and civic participation, the people of the United States must have a deeper understanding of the distinctive mission of middle level education: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 2014 as "National Middle Level Education Month";

(2) honors and recognizes the importance of middle level education and the contributions of the individuals who educate middle level students; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Middle Level Education Month by visiting and celebrating schools that are responsible for educating young adolescents in the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 384—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN SYRIA AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, RESULTING HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES, AND THE URGENT NEED FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS

Mr. KAINE (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WARNER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. KING, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. CRUZ) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 384

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 2139, adopted on February 22, 2014, expresses grave alarm at the significant and rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Syria, in particular the dire situation of hundreds of thousands of civilians trapped in besieged areas, most of whom are besieged by the Syrian armed forces and some by opposition groups, as well as the dire situation of over 3,000,000 people in hard-to-reach areas, and deplores the difficulties in providing, and the failure to provide, access for the humanitarian assistance to all civilians in need inside Syria;

Whereas widespread and systematic attacks on civilians, schools, hospitals, and other civilian infrastructure, in violation of international humanitarian law, continue in Syria, and parties to the conflict are blocking humanitarian aid delivery, including food and medical care from many civilian areas;

Whereas the World Health Organization estimates that 70 percent of Syria's health professionals, up to 80,000 people, have fled the country, cases of typhoid, tuberculosis, polio and other diseases are rampant and increasing, and medical personnel inside Syria are

deliberately targeted by parties to the conflict;

Whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has registered more than 2,500,000 Syrian refugees, nearly 80 percent of whom are women and children, and by the end of this year, the United Nations estimates the number of refugees will increase to 4,000,000;

Whereas nearly 500,000 refugees from the Syrian conflict are children under the age of five, and more than 11,000 children have been killed and thousands more have suffered severe injuries, including burns, shrapnel wounds, the severing of limbs, and spinal cord injuries;

Whereas over 5,000,000 children affected by the conflict desperately need food, clean water, shelter, medical care and psychosocial support;

Whereas, since 2011, nearly 3,000,000 Syrian children have been forced to quit their education as fighting has destroyed classrooms, left children too terrified to go to school, and forced families to flee the country;

Whereas the refugee crisis threatens the stability of the Middle East, putting immense burdens on Syria's neighbors, most notably Lebanon and Jordan, as well as Turkey and Iraq; and

Whereas the United States Government has played a leading role in addressing the Syria crisis, providing \$1,700,000,000 in humanitarian assistance to those suffering inside Syria, as well as to refugees and host communities in the neighboring countries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) strongly condemns the unlawful use of violence against civilians by all parties to the conflict in Syria, particularly the ongoing violence and widespread human rights violations perpetrated against the people of Syria by the Government of Syria;

(2) urges all parties to the conflict to immediately halt indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure;

(3) affirms the neutrality of medical professionals providing humanitarian assistance and health care on a non-political basis, and condemns attacks against such personnel or interference in the provision of medical care;

(4) urges all parties in Syria to allow for and facilitate immediate, unfettered access to humanitarian aid throughout the Syrian Arab Republic, respecting the safety, security, independence, and impartiality of humanitarian workers and ensuring freedom of movement to deliver aid;

(5) supports the immediate and full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2139 (2014), which calls for unimpeded access of humanitarian assistance to all Syrians to addresses the rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Syria, in particular the dire situation of hundreds of thousands of civilians trapped in besieged areas, most of whom are besieged by the Syrian armed forces and some by opposition groups, as well as the dire situation of over 3,000,000 people in hard-to-reach areas;

(6) calls on the international community to assist the people of Syria, especially internally displaced persons and refugees, in meeting basic needs, including access to food, health care, shelter, and clean drinking water;

(7) calls on the international community to support civilians and innocent victims of the conflict in Syria, particularly women and children who are displaced and vulnerable to physical and psychological exploitation;

(8) calls on the international community to implement steps that prevent gender-

based violence, and assure the protection of women and girls against sexual exploitation, human trafficking, and rape;

(9) calls on the international community to continue to support neighboring countries and host communities who are generously supporting refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria;

(10) calls on the international community to increase investment for education in host communities to expand learning opportunities for refugee children and to support programs that help children gain access to quality education, protect them from violence and abuse, and provide counseling and psychosocial support;

(11) calls on countries that are hosting refugees in the region to support refugee self-reliance and dignity by expanding employment opportunities for refugees;

(12) calls on international donors and aid agencies to integrate humanitarian relief and longer term development programs through a comprehensive regional strategy to address the protracted crisis in Syria; and

(13) calls on the President to develop and submit to the appropriate committees of Congress within 90 days from adoption of this resolution a strategy for United States engagement in addressing the Syrian humanitarian crisis, to include assistance and development, and protecting human rights inside Syria and in the region.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, today, along with Senator RUBIO, I am submitting a bipartisan resolution to coincide with the third anniversary of the Syria crisis.

We are witnessing one of history's greatest humanitarian catastrophes unfolding before our eyes. The numbers are staggering. Nearly 3 million Syrians have fled to neighboring countries. Syrians are about to pass Afghans as the world's biggest refugee population.

The UN released a report this week stating Syria has become the world's most dangerous place for children. This is truly heartbreaking. More than 5.5 million children are in need of desperate humanitarian assistance and three million are out of school. 40,000 babies have been born as refugees.

Conditions inside Syria are even worse. There are nearly 7 million internally displaced persons and over 9 million in need of humanitarian assistance. Nearly 250,000 remained besieged, mostly at the hands of the Assad regime, and are suffering from disease and starvation.

The Syria Humanitarian Resolution of 2014 strongly condemns the unlawful use of violence against civilians by all parties to the conflict in Syria, particularly the ongoing violence and widespread human rights violations perpetrated against the people of Syria by the Government of Syria.

The resolution urges all parties to the conflict to immediately halt indiscriminate attacks on civilians and to allow for immediate, unfettered access to humanitarian aid throughout the Syrian Arab Republic, respecting the safety, security, independence, and impartiality of humanitarian workers and ensuring freedom of movement to deliver aid. We call on the international

community to assist the people of Syria, especially internally displaced persons and refugees, in meeting basic needs, including access to food, health care, shelter, and clean drinking water. Finally we call for the full implementation of UN Security Council 2139 and call on the President to submit to the appropriate committees of Congress within 90 days a strategy for United States engagement in addressing the Syrian humanitarian crisis, to include assistance and development, and protection of human rights inside Syria and in the region.

The solution to the Syrian conflict will be complicated. But the people of Syria should not continue to suffer in the interim. I refuse to accept that there is nothing more we can do to end the suffering. Humanitarian relief and access are fundamental principles all parties should adhere to. History will harshly judge those who do not.

SENATE RESOLUTION 385—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES ON THE FLOOR OF THE SENATE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. ENZI) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 385

Resolved, That it is the Sense of the Senate that—

(1) certain uses of electronic devices by Senators on the floor of the Senate are necessary and proper in the conduct of official Senate business, would not distract, interrupt, or inconvenience the business of Members of the Senate, and should therefore be permissible, including—

(A) delivering floor remarks from text displayed on personal digital assistant devices and tablet computers;

(B) reviewing and editing documents on personal digital assistant devices and tablet computers while seated or standing at a desk, except when the Senator who wishes to use the device holds the floor or seeks to be recognized; and

(C) sending email and other data communication using personal digital assistant devices and tablet computers while seated or standing at a desk, except when the Senator who wishes to use the device holds the floor or seeks to be recognized;

(2) necessary and proper uses of electronic devices on the floor of the Senate do not include—

(A) transmitting sound for any purpose other than through earphones or in such a manner as would not disturb proceedings on the floor of the Senate for the purpose of assisting a person with a disability;

(B) using telephones or other devices for voice communication; or

(C) using desktop computers, laptop computers, or other large devices;

(3) the Committee on Rules and Administration should consider an amendment to the Rules for the Regulation of the Senate Wing consistent with the principles stated above; and

(4) any amendment to the Rules for the Regulation of the Senate Wing should take

into account possible future changes in technology.

SENATE RESOLUTION 386—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH AND WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY

Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LEVIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, and Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 386

Whereas the social work profession has been instrumental in achieving advances in civil and human rights in the United States and across the world for more than a century;

Whereas the primary mission of social work is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic needs of all people, especially the people who are most vulnerable;

Whereas the programs and services provided by professional social workers are essential elements of the social safety net in the United States;

Whereas social workers have a critical impact on adolescent and youth development, aging, family caregiving, child protection and family services, health care navigation, mental and behavioral health treatment, assistance to members and veterans of the Armed Forces, nonprofit management and community development, and poverty reduction;

Whereas social workers function as specialists, consultants, private practitioners, educators, community leaders, policy-makers, and researchers;

Whereas social workers influence many different organizations and human service systems and are employed in a wide range of workplaces, including private and public agencies, hospices and hospitals, schools, clinics, businesses and corporations, military units, elected offices, think tanks, and foundations;

Whereas social workers seek to improve social functioning and social conditions for people in emotional, psychological, economic, or physical need;

Whereas social workers are experts in care coordination, case management, and therapeutic treatment for biopsychosocial issues;

Whereas social workers have roles in more than 50 different fields of practice;

Whereas social workers believe that the strength of a country depends on the ability of the majority of the people to lead productive and healthy lives;

Whereas social workers help people, who are often navigating major life challenges, find hope and new options for achieving their maximum potential; and

Whereas social workers identify and address gaps in social systems that impede full participation by individuals or groups in society: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Professional Social Work Month and World Social Work Day;

(2) acknowledges the diligent efforts of individuals and groups who promote the importance of social work and observe National Professional Social Work Month and World Social Work Day;

(3) encourages the people of the United States to engage in appropriate ceremonies

and activities to promote further awareness of the life-changing role that social workers play; and

(4) recognizes with gratitude the contributions of the millions of caring individuals who have chosen to serve their communities through social work.

SENATE RESOLUTION 387—CELEBRATING THE 2014 ARCTIC WINTER GAMES, IN FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself and Mr. BEGICH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation:

S. RES. 387

Whereas the Arctic Winter Games, held every 2 years, is a premier sporting and cultural event and a true celebration of athletic competition, friendship, and cooperation among individuals living in the Arctic;

Whereas the Arctic Winter Games, as envisioned over 40 years ago by Alaska Governor Wally Hickel and commissioners from the Northwest Territories and Yukon, continues to promote the core values of its creation: athletic competition, cultural exhibition, and social interchange;

Whereas the Fairbanks North Star Borough has a uniquely qualified community to welcome the vast cultural benefits that accompany serving as the host of the 2014 Arctic Winter Games;

Whereas the 2014 Arctic Winter Games welcomes more than 1,400 athletes from 9 contingents, representing nations that include the United States, Canada, Greenland, and Russia;

Whereas the State of Alaska is proud to contribute to the Arctic Winter Games 287 Alaskan athletes, ages 13 to 24; and

Whereas the 2014 Arctic Winter Games marks the fifth Arctic Winter Games hosted in Alaska since the first competition in 1970: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the dedicated athletes, coaches, volunteers, leaders, and staff who contribute to the mission and success of the 2014 Arctic Winter Games;

(2) welcomes the return of the Arctic Winter Games to Fairbanks, Alaska, for the first time since 1988; and

(3) celebrates the continuing friendly competition among northern circumpolar countries and the great cultural exchange that keeps northern traditions alive.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today in support of a resolution I submitted in recognition and celebration of the 2014 Arctic Winter Games. This year's games are being held in Fairbanks, AK, and run for one week, from this Saturday to next. I feel honored that I am able to attend. In fact, I will be attending the opening ceremony with the honorable Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, and Chair of the Arctic Council. I am excited to be able to show her Fairbanks and cheer on our respective teams.

The Arctic Winter Games was envisioned over 40 years ago by Alaska Governor Wally Hickel and commis-

sioners from the Northwest Territories and Yukon to provide an opportunity for athletic competition for northern athletes and coaches. Today, the games have grown to be an important opportunity to share cultural values from northern regions around the world, and have some good old fashioned fun.

The 2014 games welcome more than 2,100 athletes from 9 contingents, from the United States, Canada, Greenland, and Russia, including 287 Alaskans. Twenty different sports are included, both winter and summer—from dog mushing to hockey to gymnastics to soccer to wrestling. I wish the best of luck to all the athletes. I thank Fairbanks for hosting the event, as well as the 2,600 volunteers who will contribute to the success of this year's games.

I hope you will join me in supporting this resolution.

SENATE RESOLUTION 388—DESIGNATING MARCH 22, 2014, AS "NATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELORS APPRECIATION DAY"

Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 388

Whereas rehabilitation counselors conduct assessments, provide counseling, support families, and plan and implement rehabilitation programs for individuals in need of rehabilitation;

Whereas the purpose of professional organizations for rehabilitation counseling and education is to promote the improvement of rehabilitation services available to individuals with disabilities through quality education for counselors and rehabilitation research;

Whereas various professional organizations have vigorously advocated up-to-date education and training and the maintenance of professional standards in the field of rehabilitation counseling and education, including—

(1) the National Rehabilitation Association;

(2) the Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association;

(3) the National Council on Rehabilitation Education;

(4) the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association;

(5) the American Rehabilitation Counseling Association;

(6) the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification;

(7) the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation; and

(8) the Council on Rehabilitation Education;

Whereas, on March 22, 1983, Martha Walker of Kent State University, who was President of the National Council on Rehabilitation Education, testified before the Subcommittee on Select Education of the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives, and was instrumental in bringing the need for qualified rehabilitation counselors to the attention of Congress; and

Whereas the efforts of Martha Walker led to the enactment of laws that require rehabilitation counselors to have proper credentials, in order to provide a higher quality of

service to those in need of rehabilitation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 22, 2014, as “National Rehabilitation Counselors Appreciation Day”; and

(2) commends—

(A) rehabilitation counselors, for the dedication and hard work rehabilitation counselors provide to individuals in need of rehabilitation; and

(B) professional organizations, for the efforts professional organizations have made to assist those who require rehabilitation.

SENATE RESOLUTION 389—DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF MARCH 9, 2014, THROUGH MARCH 15, 2014, AS “NATIONAL YOUTH SYNTHETIC DRUG AWARENESS WEEK”

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. GRASSLEY, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 389

Whereas around the United States, there have been many incidents of violent acts, some leading to serious injury and death, committed by people under the influence of synthetic drugs;

Whereas the effects of synthetic drugs on their users include elevated heart rate and blood pressure, hallucinations, seizures, and extreme agitation;

Whereas a lack of public understanding of the potential harm of synthetic drugs makes raising public awareness about the dangers posed by such drugs extremely important;

Whereas deceptive marketing by sellers of synthetic drugs and easy access to synthetic drugs online and in many convenience stores create a false perception, particularly among youth, that synthetic drugs are legal and safer than street drugs;

Whereas in 2010, 18-year-old David Rozga of Indianola, Iowa committed suicide shortly after ingesting a synthetic drug called “K2”, making his death one of the first in the United States linked to synthetic drugs;

Whereas March 17, 2014, marks the third anniversary of the tragic death of 19-year-old Trevor Robinson, who overdosed on a synthetic drug called “2C-E” at a house party in Blaine, Minnesota;

Whereas in addition to Trevor Robinson, 10 other teens and young adults at the same house party had to be rushed to hospitals after snorting the same drug, illustrating the urgent need to raise awareness among youth about the dangers of synthetic drugs;

Whereas according to the 2012 Monitoring the Future survey of youth drug-use trends, 1 in every 9 United States high school seniors surveyed admitted to using synthetic marijuana in the past year;

Whereas according to a 2013 report by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration Drug Abuse Warning Network, there were 28,531 emergency department visits involving a synthetic cannabinoid product and 22,904 emergency department visits involving bath salts in 2011; and

Whereas educating the public, and especially our youth, on the dangers of synthetic drugs and promoting prevention of synthetic drug abuse are critical components of what must be a multi-pronged effort to curb synthetic drug abuse: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of March 9, 2014, through March 15, 2014, as “National Youth Synthetic Drug Awareness Week”; and

(2) urges communities to carry out appropriate programs and activities to educate parents and youth about the dangers associated with synthetic drug abuse.

SENATE RESOLUTION 390—DESIGNATING MARCH 11, 2014, AS “WORLD PLUMBING DAY”

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. HATCH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 390

Whereas the plumbing industry plays an important role in safeguarding the public health of the people of the United States and the world;

Whereas 780,000,000 people around the world do not have access to safe drinking water;

Whereas 2,500,000,000 people around the world live without adequate sanitation facilities;

Whereas the lack of water and sanitation is the largest barrier to childhood survival, public health, education, and economic productivity;

Whereas in the developing world, 24,000 children under the age of 5 die every day from preventable causes, such as diarrhea contracted from unclean water;

Whereas safe and efficient plumbing saves money and reduces future water supply costs and infrastructure costs;

Whereas the installation of modern plumbing systems must be accomplished in a specific, safe manner by trained professionals in order to prevent widespread disease, which can be crippling and deadly to the community;

Whereas the people of the United States rely on plumbing professionals to maintain, repair, and rebuild the aging water infrastructure of the United States;

Whereas Congress and plumbing professionals across the United States and the world are committed to safeguarding public health; and

Whereas the founding organization of World Plumbing Day, the World Plumbing Council, is actively supported by organizations in the United States such as the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate designates March 11, 2014, as “World Plumbing Day”.

SENATE RESOLUTION 391—DESIGNATING JEAN M. MANNING AS CHIEF COUNSEL FOR EMPLOYMENT EMERITUS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE

Mr. REID (for himself, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. HATCH) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 391

Whereas Jean M. Manning will retire from the United States Senate after having served with distinction as the Senate’s first Chief Counsel for Employment from 1993 to 2014;

Whereas Jean M. Manning has dedicated her Senate service to providing legal representation, legal advice and legal training to all senators and their management staff with respect to all matters arising under the Government Employee Rights Act of 1991, and the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995;

Whereas Jean M. Manning has represented Senate offices with distinction before the federal courts;

Whereas Jean M. Manning has upheld the high standards and traditions of the Senate with abiding devotion and has performed her Senate duties in an impartial, professional manner; and

Whereas Jean M. Manning has earned the respect, affection and esteem of the United States Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That, upon her retirement on March 19, 2014, as a token of the appreciation of the Senate for her long and faithful service, Jean M. Manning is hereby designated as Chief Counsel for Employment Emeritus of the United States Senate.

SENATE RESOLUTION 392—TO AUTHORIZE DOCUMENT PRODUCTION AND REPRESENTATION IN CARE ONE MANAGEMENT LLC, ET AL. V. UNITED HEALTHCARE WORKERS EAST, SEIU 1199, ET AL

Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 392

Whereas, in the case of *Care One Management LLC, et al. v. United Healthcare Workers East, SEIU 1199, et al.*, No. 2:12-cv-06371, pending in the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey, the plaintiffs have issued a subpoena for testimony and production of documents from Senator Richard Blumenthal;

Whereas, pursuant to sections 703(a) and 704(a)(2) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, 2 U.S.C. §§288b(a) and 288c(a)(2), the Senate may direct its counsel to represent Members of the Senate with respect to any subpoena, order, or request for testimony relating to their official responsibilities;

Whereas, by the privileges of the Senate of the United States and Rule XI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, no evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may, by the judicial or administrative process, be taken from such control or possession but by permission of the Senate; and

Whereas, when it appears that evidence under the control or in the possession of the Senate may promote the administration of justice, the Senate will take such action as will promote the ends of justice consistent with the privileges of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That Senator Blumenthal is authorized to provide documents in the case of *Care One Management LLC, et al. v. United Healthcare Workers East, SEIU 1199, et al.*, except concerning matters for which a privilege or objection is asserted.

SEC. 2. The Senate Legal Counsel is authorized to represent Senator Blumenthal in this matter.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2844. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2845. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, supra.

SA 2846. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, *supra*.

SA 2847. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, *supra*.

SA 2848. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2849. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2850. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2851. Mr. REID (for Mr. BENNET) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1456, to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

SA 2852. Mr. REID (for Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. KIRK, and Mr. LEE)) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 376, supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2844. Mr. COBURN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 138, line 8, insert "and whose family assets do not exceed \$1,000,000" after "size".

SA 2845. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 99, strike lines 16 through 20 and insert the following:

tivity described in clause (iii)).";

(iii) by striking ", with priority" and all that follows through the period and inserting the following: ". In using those amounts for child care services, the State shall give priority for services first to children with disabilities from low-income families (whose family income does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size), then to children of families with very low family incomes (taking into consideration family size), and then to children with disabilities."; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

"(i) REPORT BY INSPECTOR GENERAL.—

"(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September 30 of the first full fiscal year after the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014, and September 30 of each fiscal year thereafter, the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services shall prepare and submit to the Secretary a report that contains a determination about whether each State uses amounts provided to such State for the fiscal year involved under this subchapter in accordance with the priority for services described in clause (i).

"(II) PENALTY FOR NONCOMPLIANCE.—For any fiscal year that the report of such Inspector General described in subclause (I) indicates that a State has failed to give pri-

ority for services in accordance with clause (i), the Secretary shall—

"(aa) inform the State that the State has until the date that is the last day of such fiscal year, or 6 months after the Inspector General has issued such report, whichever is later, to fully comply with clause (i); and

"(bb) if the State does not so comply, by the date described in item (aa), withhold 5 percent of the funds that would otherwise be allocated to that State in accordance with this subchapter for the first full fiscal year after that date.

"(iii) CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL SYSTEM.—"

SA 2846. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 141, insert at the end the following:

SEC. 13. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCING CHILD POVERTY BY CALENDAR YEAR 2019.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate finds that—

(1) the United States has the highest rate of childhood poverty among 34 major countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, including Denmark, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Cyprus, Austria, Sweden, the Czech Republic, Germany, Slovenia, Hungary, South Korea, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Ireland, France, Malta, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Estonia, Belgium, New Zealand, Poland, Canada, Australia, Japan, Portugal, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Spain, and Bulgaria;

(2) a record-breaking 46,496,000 individuals lived in poverty in the United States in 2012, which is an increase of 14,915,000 individuals since 2000;

(3) 16,073,000 children in the United States lived in poverty in 2012, which is an increase of 4,486,000 children since 2000;

(4) more than 7,100,000 children in the United States, 40 percent of children living in poverty in the United States, live in extreme poverty (defined as living in families with an income that is less than half of the poverty level);

(5) nearly 1,200,000 public school students in the United States were homeless in the 2011–2012 school year, an increase of 73 percent since the 2006–2007 school year;

(6) in an average month in fiscal year 2011, 1,200,000 households with children in the United States did not have any cash income and, for food, depended only on benefits under the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.);

(7) in 2012, government assistance programs removed from poverty 9,000,000 children, including 5,300,000 children through the earned income tax credit under section 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and the child tax credit under section 24 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, and 2,200,000 children through the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.);

(8) in 2012, child poverty would have been 57 percent higher, and extreme poverty would have been 240 percent higher, without government tax credits and food, housing, and energy benefits;

(9) in 2013, an individual working full-time at the Federal minimum wage could not afford the fair market rent for a 2-bedroom

rental unit and have enough money for food, utilities, and other necessities;

(10) in school years 2009–2010 and 2010–2011, less than half of children ages 3 and 4 were enrolled in preschool;

(11) Early Head Start programs carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.) served only 4 percent of the 2,900,000 eligible poor infants and toddlers each day in fiscal year 2012, and Head Start programs carried out under such Act served only 41 percent of the 2,000,000 eligible poor children ages 3 and 4;

(12) more than 220,000 children are on waiting lists for child care assistance; and

(13) child poverty costs the United States not less than \$500,000,000 each year in additional education, health, and criminal justice costs and in lost productivity.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the President should immediately present to Congress a comprehensive plan to significantly reduce child poverty in the United States by calendar year 2019.

SA 2847. Mr. PORTMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; as follows:

On page 120, strike line 12 and insert the following:

preceding 5 years; or

"(E) has been convicted of a violent misdemeanor committed as an adult against a child, including the following crimes: child abuse, child endangerment, sexual assault, or of a misdemeanor involving child pornography.

SA 2848. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 98, strike line 15 and insert the following:

view.

"(U) IDENTIFICATION.—The plan shall contain an assurance that the State will—

"(i) require, as a condition of eligibility for assistance for child care services under this subchapter, that each parent who applies for the assistance with respect to a child furnish to the State the child's social security account number (or numbers, if the child has more than one such number); and

"(ii) check the number before providing the assistance.";

SA 2849. Mr. LEE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 98, strike line 15 and insert the following:

view.

"(U) IDENTIFICATION.—The plan shall contain an assurance that the State will—

"(i) require, as a condition of eligibility for assistance for child care services under this subchapter, that each parent who applies for the assistance with respect to a child furnish each number for the child that is required

under section 1137(a)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b-7(a)(1)); and

“(ii) check the number furnished before providing the assistance for child care services.”;

SA 2850. Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. TESTER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1086, to reauthorize and improve the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 136, strike lines 16 and 17 and insert the following:

(2) in subsection (c)—

(A) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—From amounts reserved under subsection (a)(2), the Secretary may make grants to or enter into contracts with Indian tribes or tribal organizations that submit applications under this section, for the planning and carrying out of programs or activities consistent with—

“(i) the purposes of this subchapter; and

“(ii) the goals of the Native American Languages Act (25 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.).

“(B) EFFECT.—Nothing in subparagraph (A) affects any grant made or contract entered into under that subparagraph before the date of enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014.”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end the following:

SA 2851. Mr. REID (for Mr. BENNET) proposed an amendment to the bill S. 1456, to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres; as follows:

On page 4, line 18, strike “in honor of” and insert “to”.

SA 2852. Mr. REID (for Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. KIRK, and Mr. LEE)) proposed an amendment to the resolution S. Res. 376, supporting the goals of International Women's Day; as follows:

Strike the twelfth whereas clause of the preamble.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. Speaker, I would like to announce for the information of the Senate and the public that a hearing has been scheduled before the Senate Committees on Energy and Natural Resources. The hearing will be held on Tuesday, March 25, 2014, at 10 a.m., in room SD-366 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The purpose of this oversight hearing is importing energy, exporting jobs. Can it be reversed?

Because of the limited time available for the hearing, witnesses may testify by invitation only. However, those wishing to submit written testimony for the hearing record may do so by sending it to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-6150, or by e-mail to John_Assini@energy.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact Todd Wooten at (202) 224-3907, Abigail Campbell at (202) 224-4905, or John Assini (202) 224-9313.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Committee on Indian Affairs will meet on Wednesday, March 26, 2014, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “the President's Fiscal Year 2015 Budget for Tribal Programs.”

Those wishing additional information may contact the Indian Affairs Committee at (202) 224-2251.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 13, 2014, at 9:30 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 13, 2014, at 10 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 13, 2014, at 11 a.m. in room SR-253 of the Russell Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “The U.S. Aviation Industry and Jobs: Keeping American Manufacturing Competitive.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Finance be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 13, 2014, at 10 a.m. in room SD-215, Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “Innovative Ideas to Strengthen and Expand the Middle Class.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 13, 2014, at 11:15 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled, “Keystone XL and the National Interest Determination.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 13, 2014, at 9:30 a.m. in room SD-430 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “Protecting the Public Health: Examining FDA's Initiatives and Priorities.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 13, 2014, at 10 a.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “The Homeland Security Department's Budget Submission for Fiscal Year 2015.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Indian Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 13, 2014, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Tribal Transportation: Pathways to Infrastructure and Economic Development in Indian Country.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 13, 2014, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Select Committee on Intelligence be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 13, 2014, at 2 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Emergency Management, Intergovernmental Relations, and the District of Columbia of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on March 13, 2014, at 2:30 p.m. to conduct a hearing entitled “The Federal Emergency Management Agency's

Budget Submission for Fiscal Year 2015."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AWARDING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO SHIMON PERES

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 1456, and the Senate proceed to its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1456) to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I know the day is long; I feel it as much, if not more, than anyone else. But before consent is granted, I can't let the night go by and this about to pass without saying something about this good man.

I have had the good fortune to travel the world meeting Kings, Presidents, Prime Ministers, and many people, but I have never met anyone more impressive than this man. He is a visionary. What he has done for the small country of Israel, which is so important to us, is something the history books will report for generations to come.

I spoke with him earlier this week about another matter. I haven't been to Israel a lot of times, but I have been there a few times. Every time I go, I make sure to take my delegation to visit him. I always tell them this is my favorite. I think so much of this man. It is the least we can do for someone who has done so much for world peace and so much for our country.

I will be fairly quick. I was a Member of the House of Representatives and was on a delegation led by the late Tom Lantos, a Hungarian Jew who escaped the Holocaust because of Raoul Wallenberg. There have been a lot of Members of Congress there and a number of delegations, but Tom Lantos said to him in that beautiful speaking voice he had in that Hungarian accent: Here is our delegation, Mr. Prime Minister. We are so sorry to bother you. We know how busy you are, how many difficult situations you have in your country.

I will never forget this. He said: You don't understand. I am never too busy to meet with the delegation from the Congress of the United States. They have done so much for my country.

He said a few other things. I have said—and I want the RECORD to so reflect—this is something we need to do as quickly as possible.

AMENDMENT NO. 2851

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent the Bennet amendment, which is at the

desk, be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read three times and passed, and the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2851) was agreed to, as follows:

On page 4, line 18, strike "in honor of" and insert "to".

The bill (S. 1456) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time and passed, as follows:

S. 1456

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Shimon Peres was born in Poland in 1923.

(2) The Peres family emigrated to Tel Aviv in 1934, and all of the family members of Shimon Peres who remained in Poland were murdered during the Holocaust.

(3) Before Israel gained independence, Shimon Peres earned the respect of senior leaders in the independence movement in Israel, most notably David Ben-Gurion.

(4) The founding generation of Israel was central to the development of Israel, and Shimon Peres is the only surviving member of that founding generation.

(5) Shimon Peres has served in numerous high-level cabinet positions and ministerial posts in Israel, including head of the Israeli Navy, Minister of Defense, Foreign Minister, Prime Minister, and President, among many others.

(6) Shimon Peres has honorably served Israel for over 70 years, during which he has significantly contributed to United States interests and has played a pivotal role in forging the strong and unbreakable bond between the United States and Israel.

(7) By presenting the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres, the first to be awarded to a sitting President of Israel, Congress proclaims its unbreakable bond with Israel and reaffirms its continual support for Israel as we commemorate the 65th anniversary of the independence of Israel and the 90th birthday of Shimon Peres, which are both significant milestones in Israeli history.

(8) Maintaining strong bilateral relations between the United States and Israel has been a priority of Shimon Peres since he began working with the United States in the days of John F. Kennedy. The strong bond is exemplified by the following:

(A) President Reagan said to Shimon Peres upon his visit to the United States, "Mr. Prime Minister, I thank you very much for your visit. It's been an occasion to renew a friendship and to review and enhance the strength of our unique bilateral relationship."

(B) At another point President Reagan said of Shimon Peres, "His vision, his statesmanship and his tenacity are greatly appreciated here."

(C) While visiting with Shimon Peres at the Residence of the President in Jerusalem, President Obama described Shimon Peres as "... a son of Israel who's devoted his life to keeping Israel strong and sustaining the bonds between our two nations".

(D) On March 20, 2013, Shimon Peres reaffirmed his belief in the relationship between the United States and Israel, stating,

"America stood by our side from the very beginning. You support us as we rebuild our ancient homeland and as we defend our land. From Holocaust to redemption."

(E) On March 21, 2013, Shimon Peres stated, "... America is so great and we are so small. But I learned that you don't measure us by size, but by values. When it comes to values, we are you and you are us. ... As I look back, I feel that the Israel of today has exceeded the vision we had 65 years ago. Reality has surpassed our dreams. The United States of America helped us to make this possible."

SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall make appropriate arrangements for the award, on behalf of Congress, of a single gold medal of appropriate design to President Shimon Peres.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For the purpose of the award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions to be determined by the Secretary.

SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

Under such regulations as the Secretary of the Treasury may prescribe, the Secretary may strike duplicate medals in bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 2 and sell such duplicate medals at a price sufficient to cover the costs of the medals, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

SEC. 4. NATIONAL MEDALS.

Medals struck pursuant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

SEC. 5. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF CHARGES.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund, such amounts as may be necessary to pay for the costs of the medals struck pursuant to this Act.

(b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals under section 3 shall be deposited in the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.

PROVIDING FOR THE DISPLAY OF THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. 2147, introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2147) to amend Public Law 112-59 to provide for the display of the Congressional Gold Medal awarded to the Montford Point Marines, United States Marine Corps, by the Smithsonian Institution and at other appropriate locations.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the bill be read three times and passed and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 2147) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time and passed, as follows:

S. 2147

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DISPLAY OF CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL BY THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.

Section 2 of the Act entitled “An Act to grant the congressional gold medal to the Montford Point Marines”, approved November 23, 2011 (31 U.S.C. 5111 note), is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the gold medal in honor of the Montford Point Marines, United States Marine Corps, under subsection (a), the gold medal shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution, where it will be displayed as appropriate and made available for research.

“(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should make the gold medal received under paragraph (1) available for display elsewhere, particularly at other appropriate locations associated with the Montford Point Marines, United States Marine Corps.”.

HHEATT ACT OF 2014

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to H.R. 4076, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4076) to address shortages and interruptions in the availability of propane and other home heating fuels in the United States, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 4076) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time and passed.

ALLOWING LEASE OR TRANSFER OF CERTAIN LAND

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Indian Affairs Committee be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 2650 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2650) to allow the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in the State of Minnesota to lease or transfer certain land.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I further ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 2650) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

CONCERNING CRISIS IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 324, S. Res. 375.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 375) concerning the crisis in the Central African Republic and supporting United States and international efforts to end the violence, protect civilians, and address root causes of the conflict.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution, which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations, with an amendment and an amendment to the preamble, as follows:

(Insert the part printed in italic.)

(Strike the preamble and insert the part printed in italic.)

S. RES. 375

Whereas, for more than 50 years, successive governments in the Central African Republic have struggled to build a durable system of democratic institutions, to effectively secure and control the country's territory and borders, and to ensure a basic level of socio-economic development for the country's people;

Whereas, despite its natural resource wealth, the Central African Republic remains one of the poorest countries in the world and one of the lowest ranking countries in terms of human development according to the United Nations Development Program;

Whereas, in January 2013, regional leaders brokered the Libreville Agreements between the government of then-President Francois Bozizé and the loosely allied rebel militia known as Séléka, which resulted in the formation of a government of national unity;

Whereas, despite the Libreville Agreements, President Bozizé was ousted in March 2013 by the Séléka coalition, and the Séléka leader, Michel Djotodia, declared himself president;

Whereas, in April 2013, regional leaders issued the N'djamena Declaration in an effort to pursue a return to constitutional order based on the Libreville Agreements;

Whereas an influx of foreign fighters, especially from Chad and Sudan, has been a major factor in the increased number of Séléka fighters, from approximately 5,000 in March 2013, to an estimated 20,000 as of December 2013;

Whereas both Séléka forces and armed militia groups known as “anti-balakas”, some of which formed initially as a means of protecting communities against Séléka, have been implicated in ethnically-motivated violence and grave and systemic human rights abuses against civilians;

Whereas, over the course of the crisis, Séléka and anti-balaka groups have displayed weak control and command structures, and committed crimes against humanity with impunity;

Whereas, according to UNICEF, thousands of child soldiers are involved in armed groups in the Central African Republic, amid the near-total collapse of the country's primary education system;

Whereas interethnic, intercommunal, and interreligious tensions and violence have risen to alarming levels and led to systematic human rights abuses in the Central African Republic, including targeted killings, rapes, acts of torture, looting, and arbitrary detention;

Whereas the United States Embassy in Bangui suspended operations on December 28, 2012, and the ordered departure of country team staff has temporarily suspended the diplomatic presence and consular services of the United States in the Central African Republic;

Whereas more than 700,000 civilians have been internally displaced; another 290,000 have sought refuge in neighboring countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad, Cameroon, and South Sudan; 2,600,000 people, or over half of the population of the Central African Republic, are in need of humanitarian assistance; and 60 percent of households have no available food stocks;

Whereas a failure of the international community to appropriately respond to and address the rapidly deteriorating situation in the Central African Republic could result in further atrocities, mass displacement, and protracted instability with significant repercussions for regional and international security;

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 2127 (2013) called for urgent and increased international assistance to the African Union International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) to ensure that the force can fulfill its mandate to restore security and protect civilians, and placed an arms embargo on the Central African Republic;

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 2127 requested the Secretary-General to establish an international commission of inquiry to investigate reports of human rights abuses in the Central African Republic in order to ensure accountability for perpetrators of violence;

Whereas the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic has been hindered by a lack of resources and constrained by insecurity;

Whereas, consistent with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2127, the Government of France launched a stabilization operation, Operation Sangaris, in the Central African Republic to assist MISCA in fulfilling its mandate;

Whereas, on March 3, 2014, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recommended to the United Nations Security Council a transition to a United Nations peacekeeping mission with a primary mandate to protect civilians; and

Whereas the United States Government has provided crisis and humanitarian assistance commitments totaling \$182,500,000 in response to instability in the Central African Republic, including support for conflict resolution efforts, humanitarian assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons, and assistance to troop contributing countries to MISCA such as airlift, non-lethal equipment, military logistics, and training, as well as logistical support for French forces: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the violence, atrocities, abuses, and human rights violations committed by all parties to the conflict in the Central African Republic;

(2) commends the efforts of religious and community leaders in the Central African

Republic condemning violence and engaging in conflict prevention and conflict resolution activities;

(3) welcomes the mobilization of international peacekeeping, conflict mitigation, humanitarian, and diplomatic resources, and encourages continued efforts to help address humanitarian needs, bring an end to the violence, and develop sustainable democratic institutions in the Central African Republic;

(4) welcomes the January 2014 decision of the Transitional National Council on the election of Catherine Samba-Panza as the Central African Republic's new transitional president;

(5) commends the African Union and its troop and police contributing countries for their work establishing and supporting MISCA;

(6) recognizes the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAS) for its leadership in the political transition process;

(7) commends France for its swift intervention under United Nations Security Council Resolution 2127, and for its contributions to stabilization efforts and other forms of assistance;

(8) welcomes the United Nations Security Council support for MISCA and the Department of Peacekeeping Operation's ongoing contingency planning for a possible transition to a United Nations peacekeeping operation;

(9) affirms support for multilateral peacekeeping and policing capacities and recognizes the important contributions these efforts have made in protecting civilians in the Central African Republic and promoting international peace and stability;

(10) calls on the President to work with international partners to develop a short-term strategy to support a full and immediate cessation of armed conflict in the Central African Republic, including attacks targeting civilians and the recruitment of child soldiers;

(11) calls on the President to develop a long-term United States strategy, in support of international and domestic efforts, to establish a durable peace and greater security for the Central African Republic and to enhance regional stability, including—

(A) engagement and coordination with the international community, including the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States, the United Nations, and other partners;

(B) appropriate assistance to help provide emergency relief and support reconciliation for the people of the Central African Republic;

(C) technical, logistical and other forms of assistance, as appropriate, in support of effective disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of fighters; and

(D) support for appropriate mechanisms to ensure accountability for perpetrators of human rights abuses and violence; and

(12) urges the Secretary of State to consider the expeditious reestablishment of a United States diplomatic presence in the Central African Republic.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I further ask unanimous consent that the committee-reported amendment to the resolution be agreed to, the resolution, as amended, be agreed to, the committee-reported amendment to the preamble be agreed to, the preamble, as amended, be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee-reported amendment to the resolution was agreed to.

The resolution (S. Res. 375), as amended, was agreed to.

The committee-reported amendment in the nature of a substitute to the preamble was agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 325, S. Res. 376.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 376) supporting the goals of International Women's Day.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the amendment to the preamble, which is at the desk, be agreed to; the preamble, as amended, be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 376) was agreed to.

The amendment (No. 2852) to the preamble was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To strike the quotation from the United States Agency for International Development regarding educated women)

Strike the twelfth whereas clause of the preamble.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

193RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF GREECE

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 326, S. Res. 377.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 377) recognizing the 193rd anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, that the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 377) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 10, 2014, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration en bloc of the following resolutions which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 388, S. Res. 389, S. Res. 390, S. Res. 391, and S. Res. 392.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

S. RES. 392

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this resolution concerns a subpoena for documents and deposition testimony in a civil action pending in New Jersey Federal District Court. Plaintiffs in the case own and manage five assisted-living facilities in Connecticut and are in a labor dispute with the employees of those facilities. They have sued the union representing those employees for allegedly criminal and fraudulent tactics in this labor dispute.

Plaintiffs have sent a subpoena to Senator BLUMENTHAL seeking testimony and documents involving a broad scope of matters beyond merely the underlying labor dispute. Senator BLUMENTHAL has agreed to seek Senate authorization to provide written communications between his office and the union regarding the underlying labor dispute. However, the Senator believes this subpoena presents an undue burden as it is overly broad in scope and seeks material that is not relevant to the lawsuit, and also encroaches on areas subject to privilege, and therefore objects to producing other documents and to the request for deposition testimony.

This resolution would authorize the production of documents from Senator BLUMENTHAL's office except where a privilege or objection is asserted. The resolution also authorizes the Senate Legal Counsel to represent Senator BLUMENTHAL in this matter.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table en bloc, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

(The resolutions, with their preambles, are printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

PROVIDING FOR TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS IN THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 3370

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to H. Con. Res. 93.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 93) directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make technical corrections in the enrollment of H.R. 3370.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 93) was agreed to.

MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2122

Mr. REID. I understand S. 2122 is due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2122) to amend titles XVII and XIX of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and to improve Medicare and Medicaid payments, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. I object to any further proceedings with respect to this bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME—H.R. 3474, H.R. 3979, AND S. 2148

Mr. REID. I am told there are three bills at the desk and I ask for their first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bills by title for the first time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2148) to provide for the extension of certain unemployment benefits, and for other purposes.

A bill (H.R. 3474) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of the employer mandate under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

A bill (H.R. 3979) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Mr. REID. Have all three titles been read, Madam President?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. They have.

Mr. REID. I now ask for a second reading of each of the bills but object to my own request, en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bills will receive their second reading on the next legislative day.

APPOINTMENT AUTHORIZATION

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the upcoming recess or adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences, or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SIGNING AUTHORIZATION

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that during the adjournment or recess of the Senate from Thursday, March 13 through Monday, March 24, Senators KING, REED, ROCKEFELLER, and CASEY be authorized to sign duly enrolled bills or joint resolutions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SENATE AGENDA

Mr. REID. Madam President, I have a brief statement that I know everyone is excited to hear, but everyone should be advised that when we return after next week, there is so much, so much to do. We need to pass the Ukrainian bill that Foreign Relations reported yesterday. We have a new bipartisan unemployment insurance compromise introduced today that was put together by a group of bipartisan Senators. We have the SGR, the so-called doc fix, to prevent a 24-percent cut in Medicare payments to doctors, which would be extremely hurtful to patients. We have to do that. We have a backlog of nominations we have to do.

Everyone should understand—I hope it is not necessary—because of the enormous amount of work we have to do this month, Senators should be on notice—all Senators—that there is a high probability that we need to be in session on the weekend of March 29 and 30, before the end of the month.

ORDERS THROUGH MONDAY, MARCH 24, 2014

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn and convene for pro forma sessions only with no business conducted on the following dates and times; and that following each pro forma session, the Senate adjourn until the next pro forma session: Friday, March 14, at 10:30 a.m.; Tuesday, March 18, at 10:30 a.m.; and Friday, March 21, at 9 a.m.; and that the Senate adjourn on Friday, March 21 until 2 p.m. on Monday, March 24, 2014; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, and the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day; and that following any leader remarks, the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 2124; that at 5:30 p.m. the Senate vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to S. 2124.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Madam President, the next rollcall vote will be on Monday, March 24, at 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it adjourn under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 8:15 p.m., adjourned until Friday, March 14, 2014, at 10:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

JOHN W. DEGRAVELLES, OF LOUISIANA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA, VICE JAMES J. BRADY, RETIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

DEIRDRE M. DALY, OF CONNECTICUT, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE DAVID B. FEIN, RESIGNED.

JAMES WALTER FRAZER GREEN, OF LOUISIANA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE DONALD J. CAZAYOUX, JR., RESIGNED.

RONALD LEE MILLER, OF KANSAS, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE DISTRICT OF KANSAS FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE WALTER ROBERT BRADLEY, RETIRED.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

JUDITH M. DAVENPORT, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING FOR A TERM EXPIRING JANUARY 31, 2020, VICE DAVID H. PRYOR, TERM EXPIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

BRADFORD RAYMOND HUTHER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, VICE DOUGLAS A. CRISCITELLO.

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS VICE COMMANDANT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AND TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 47:

To be vice admiral

VICE ADM. PETER V. NEFFENGER

IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

LT. GEN. BRADLEY A. HEITHOLD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be brigadier general

COL. ROBERT I. MILLER

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY TO THE GRADE INDICATED WHILE ASSIGNED TO A POSITION OF IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 601:

To be lieutenant general

MAJ. GEN. BENNET S. SACOLICK

IN THE NAVY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF CHAPLAINS, UNITED STATES NAVY, AND APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 5142:

To be rear admiral

REAR ADM. (LH) MARGARET G. KIBBEN

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. MICHELLE C. SKUBIC

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. DAVID A. LANE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. BRENT W. SCOTT

IN THE ARMY

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

RANDOLPH S. WARDLE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADE INDICATED IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

To be colonel

RODNEY E. GARFIELD

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate March 13, 2014:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DWIGHT L. BUSH, SR., OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO.

TIMOTHY M. BROAS, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS.

LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION

JOSEPH PIUS PIETRZYK, OF OHIO, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION FOR A TERM EXPIRING JULY 13, 2014.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

PUNEET TALWAR, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE (POLITICAL-MILITARY AFFAIRS).

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

ARUN MADHAVAN KUMAR, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE AND DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES AND FOREIGN COMMERCIAL SERVICE.

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

CAROLINE DIANE KRASS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING ZEIDERS ENTERPRISES ON ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the many contributions of Zeiders Enterprises in communities here and across the Nation since its founding 30 years ago in Prince William County, VA.

The more than 1,000 staff members of Zeiders Enterprises serve in crucial roles as clinical counselors, victim advocates, new parent support specialists, personal financial counselors, transition specialists, spouse education and career counselors, and relocation specialists. Through these activities, Zeiders Enterprises has made a direct, positive difference in the lives of individuals, families, their communities, and the organizations in which they serve. Particularly noteworthy is the role that Zeiders plays in supporting the special needs of military servicemembers and their families. Zeiders Enterprises is a founding sponsor of The Quality of Life Foundation, whose mission is to honor and serve our severely injured combat servicemembers and their families by helping them face the life-changing challenges unique to their situations.

Employees at Zeiders contribute outside the workplace through extensive volunteer service. They support the American Red Cross, Peace Corps, local schools, youth development programs, mentoring programs, victim advocate programs, youth sports programs, community orchestras, volunteer fire and rescue departments, and the National Guard and Reserve. Leading by example and helping to create a culture of public service is Mr. Michael Zeiders, CEO and founder. Mr. Zeiders has supported families of wounded warriors nationwide through the Quality of Life Foundation, served on the Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board, and is working with the City of Virginia Beach to develop the American Dream Theater to foster emerging artists.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join with me to congratulate Zeiders Enterprises on its 30th anniversary and to pay tribute to the significant contributions its employees have made in improving our communities and the lives of our brave men and women who serve in the United States Armed Forces.

HONORING CAPTAIN CHRISTOPHER MERCER, USN

HON. JOHN K. DELANEY

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. DELANEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize and honor Captain Christopher Mercer, USN, for his incredible courage and bravery on September 16, 2013 during the Navy Yard Shooting.

Captain Mercer served admirably, as he both ensured the safety of himself and three others during the shooting, and helped the police in their efforts, all while trapped inside of his office in the Navy Yards Building 197. His incredible courage should not be left in vain.

I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues help me in honoring Captain Christopher Mercer, USN, for his distinguished acts of courage during the Navy Yard Shooting on September 16, 2013. Captain Mercer is a hero for his acts on that day, and should be recognized for his remarkable bravery.

CONGRATULATING THE MOTHER MCAULEY LIBERAL ARTS HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE BOWL TEAM ON THEIR REGIONAL SCIENCE BOWL VICTORY

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School Science Bowl Team on their Regional Science Bowl win on February 22, 2014. This victory advances the school to the National Science Bowl Championship held in Washington D.C. I appreciate all of the hard work and dedication the team members have put in to advance their knowledge of science and would like to congratulate them on this tremendous accomplishment.

The Department of Energy created the National Science Bowl in 1991 to encourage students to excel in mathematics and science and to pursue careers in these fields. More than 225,000 students have participated in the National Science Bowl through its 23-year history. It is one of the nation's largest science competitions.

The Regional Science Bowl Competition held at Evanston High School brought both middle school and high school science bowl teams together to compete by answering questions in a round robin format covering a range of science topics including biology, physics, math, astronomy, earth science, and computer science. The Mother McAuley team could not be beat that day and won a paid trip

to Washington D.C. for Nationals, where they will compete in a fast-paced question-and-answer format solving technical problems and answering questions on a range of science topics.

The winning Mother McAuley Science Bowl team is the only one from Illinois to advance to Nationals. This winning team is comprised of 8 students, Seniors Tiffany Anderson, Siobhan Bennett, Rayn Davis, Montana Ford, and Diana Sanchez, and Juniors Sarah Dynia, Juliana Magnan, and Jessica Marchetti.

Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School is a Catholic educational community sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy and is committed to providing a quality secondary education for young women. The school opened in 1956 and is located in the Third Congressional District on the Southwest Side of Chicago.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Mother McAuley Science Bowl Team on their remarkable achievement and I wish them the best at Nationals.

35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the robust U.S.-Taiwan relationship and mark the 35th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, TRA, of 1979.

The TRA set in motion a bond between the people of the United States and Taiwan that continues today. It is more critical now than ever before that we understand the value of that bond and work to promote it at every opportunity. Members of Congress who have been here long enough to see the benefits of the TRA in action know that it is an integral part of sustaining the mutual security and commercial interests of our two governments.

Our commitment to Taiwan has remained steady in times of amity and times of crisis. In July 1995, when Beijing conducted a series of missile tests in the Taiwan Strait in a brazen attempt to intimidate the Taiwanese people, the U.S. deployed the largest military fleet in Asia since the Vietnam War. Thankfully, disaster was averted. Today, an atmosphere of peaceful coexistence is maintained across the Taiwan Strait. But our nation's choices during that tense period were a potent symbol of our steadfast support of Taiwan.

The United States recognizes Taiwan's unfailing determination to promote a free and fair democratic society. We, as a nation, have supported their efforts over the last three and a half decades by providing military assistance and fostering commercial exchange. Today, Taiwan is a close ally and collaborator in global efforts to combat terrorism. Recently, Taiwan was invited for the first time to attend the

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

38th assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization, ICAO, as a special guest of Council President Roberto Kobeh Gonzalez. Through their active engagement with ICAO, Taiwan provides a multiplier effect to our own efforts to ensure safe and secure air travel and protect air passengers from the threat of hijackings and terrorist attacks. Such collaboration among partners would not have been possible without the TRA.

Today, 35 years after the passage of the TRA and nearly two decades since the Taiwan Strait Crisis, I would like to reassert our nation's role in maintaining peace and stability abroad. Our ongoing engagement with Taiwan and preservation of the TRA demonstrates our commitment to all of our allies in the Asia-Pacific region.

While we recognize the TRA, it is also important that we recognize the departure of Ambassador King Pu-tung who has fostered the U.S.-Taiwan relationship for the last 18 months as their chief envoy to the United States. Ambassador King will soon return to Taiwan to serve as Secretary-General. Under the guidance of Ambassador King, the U.S. and Taiwan have enjoyed a very successful era. I have enjoyed the opportunity to work with Ambassador King and look forward to working with his successor in the future as we continue to strengthen our unique relationship.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 25TH
ANNIVERSARY OF KIDSFIRST

HON. DOUG LaMALFA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 25th Anniversary of KidsFirst, an organization located in Roseville, California, dedicated to ending child abuse and neglect through prevention.

Since 1989, KidsFirst has provided services to parents and children with difficult life circumstances across the Sierra-Sacramento region. In last year alone, KidsFirst served nearly 6,000 children, teens, and adults through direct programs such as counseling, healing therapy, free education programs, and community outreach.

Their commitment and vision has served to strengthen and empower families and communities to provide an ideal environment for children to thrive and experience the benefit of happy, health, and safe childhoods.

Mr. Speaker, I commend KidsFirst for their exceptional work throughout Northern California and join them in the recognition of National Child Abuse Prevention Month during the month of April.

MANUEL FLORES

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Manuel Flores

for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Manuel Flores is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Manuel Flores is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Manuel Flores for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. ANNE TIDWELL

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, one of the great pleasures that I have had as an elected official has been getting to know families like that of Mr. & Mrs. Tidwell, whom I met doing what is called community organizing. Mrs. Annie Tidwell was blessed to possess one of God's greatest gifts, the ability to cook. She of course was an avid churchgoer, a wonderfully engaged Christian and churchgoer, one who looked after her husband and family, and their home was always open for civic and community activities.

Some of my best block club remembrances took place in the Tidwell home because everybody in the neighborhood knew that if you were at the Tidwells' there would be a great environment and some of the best food on this side of heaven.

The Tidwell family is a prime example of what has been the underpinning of Black development in this country, making use of whatever skills, talents, training and hard work they could produce. For many years Mr. Tidwell was my plumber and together, the two of them were stalwarts in the Austin Community and great friends to everyone. It seems as though the poet Sam Walter Foss must have had them in mind when he wrote, the House by the side of the Road.

THE HOUSE BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

There are hermit souls that live withdrawn
In the place of their self-content;
There are souls like stars, that dwell apart,
In a fellowless firmament;
There are pioneer souls that blaze the paths
Where highways never ran—
But let me live by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
Where the race of men go by—
The men who are good and the men who are
bad,

As good and as bad as I.
I would not sit in the scorner's seat
Nor hurl the cynic's ban—
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.
I see from my house by the side of the road
By the side of the highway of life,

The men who press with the ardor of hope,
The men who are faint with the strife,
But I turn not away from their smiles and
tears,

Both parts of an infinite plan—
Let me live in a house by the side of the road
And be a friend to man.

I know there are brook-gladdened meadows
ahead,

And mountains of wearisome height;
That the road passes on through the long
afternoon

And stretches away to the night.

And still I rejoice when the travelers rejoice
And weep with the strangers that moan,
Nor live in my house by the side of the road
Like a man who dwells alone.

Let me live in my house by the side of the
road,

Where the race of men go by—
They are good, they are bad, they are weak,
they are strong,

Wise, foolish—so am I.
Then why should I sit in the scorner's seat,
Or hurl the cynic's ban?

Let me live in my house by the side of the
road

And be a friend to man.

A COMMEMORATION OF NIKA
FLEISSIG

HON. ANN KIRKPATRICK

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize the life and work of Nika Fleissig. As a young woman, Ms. Fleissig lost her entire family during the Holocaust in Poland, but she survived to tell a heroic and inspiring story.

Ms. Fleissig was born Bronislawa Felicia Kohn in 1920 and was raised by her loving family in Krakow, Poland, until Nazi anti-Jewish laws caused her father to lose his business and forced the family to move from their home. By 1942, both of Ms. Fleissig's parents and her younger brother had been killed by the Nazis. She was left completely alone. Through the goodwill of virtuous and brave friends, and with her own talent for languages, she survived on her own.

After surviving the bombing of Warsaw and near-starvation living in bombed-out buildings, Ms. Fleissig was eventually captured and incarcerated in a prisoner of war camp in Oberlangen, Germany. Throughout 1944 and 1945, Ms. Fleissig survived unthinkable hunger, abuse and deprivation until April 12, 1945, when she was freed from the concentration camp by Polish and Canadian forces.

Ms. Fleissig immediately began working with Allied forces to assist refugees and other victims of the war. As a speaker of English, French, German and Polish, Ms. Fleissig was an unrivaled contributor to this cause. Ms. Fleissig first served the British military by accompanying officers to displaced persons camps to help people rebuild their lives. She then assisted the American Army in a similar capacity. Ms. Fleissig was given an American uniform and the rank of Lieutenant.

On February 14, 1946—Valentine's Day—Ms. Fleissig arrived in New York City and for the first time saw the Statue of Liberty and

America. Her new life in her new country had begun.

NEVADA'S BATTLE BORN HISTORY

HON. DINA TITUS

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, every year on March 21st we take a moment to celebrate Nevada's conception and our unique, Battle Born history. From Reno to Las Vegas, from the mountains to the desert, from the sage grouse to the neon lights, "Home Means Nevada."

One hundred and fifty years ago, the country was in the middle of the bloodiest war in our history, President Lincoln's re-election was in jeopardy, and the proposed 13th amendment, which would end slavery, lacked the necessary votes to pass.

With little time left in the thirty-eighth Congress, the outlook was bleak; but the Republican-dominated Nevada Territory offered an opportunity to secure the necessary votes to pass the 13th Amendment and ensure the re-election of President Lincoln.

Anxious to gain the support of the Nevada Territory before the end of the session, Congress rushed to pass an enabling act for Nevada statehood through the legislature. On March 21, 1864, President Lincoln signed the bill to pave the way for Nevada's admission to the Union.

This unique history proves that though Nevadans rarely do things by the book, we always endure. We may be down, but we are never out. Over the past decade we have seen Nevada hit hard by the housing crisis; unemployment soared; and our economy suffered worse than most during the Great Recession. But we are coming back. New businesses are relocating to the state; gaming revenues are up; and we've been chosen as a site for the exciting new FAA Federal UAV testing program. I have no doubt that we will come back stronger than ever, because we are Battle Born.

KRITI DHUNGEL

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kriti Dhungel for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Kriti Dhungel is a 12th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kriti Dhungel is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Kriti Dhungel for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent during the week of March 3, 2014. If I were present, I would have voted on the following:

Rollcall No. 91: H.R. 3370, "yea"; rollcall No. 92: H. Res. 488, "yea"; rollcall No. 93: Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4118 and H.R. 3826, "nay"; rollcall No. 94: H. Res. 497, "no"; rollcall No. 95: H.R. 938, "yea"; rollcall No. 96: Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 4118, "yea"; rollcall No. 97: H.R. 4118, "nay"; rollcall No. 98: H.R. 2126, "yea"; rollcall No. 99: Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 2641 and H.R. 2824, "nay"; rollcall No. 100: H. Res. 501, "nay"; rollcall No. 101: Smith (TX)/Schweikert Amendment, "no"; rollcall No. 102: Capps/McNerney Amendment, "aye."

Rollcall No. 103: Schakowsky/Lowenthal Amendment "aye"; rollcall No. 104: Waxman Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 105: Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 3826, "yea"; rollcall No. 106: Final Passage of H.R. 3826, "no"; rollcall No. 107: Motion to Table the Fudge Privileged Resolution, "nay"; rollcall No. 108: Jackson-Lee Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 109: McKinley Amendment, "no"; rollcall No. 110: Nadler Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 111: Johnson Amendment, "aye"; rollcall No. 112: Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 2641, "aye"; rollcall No. 113: H.R. 2641, "no"; rollcall No. 114: H.R. 4152, "yea."

HONORING SHARON JONES

HON. JASON T. SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sharon Jones, who has been a valuable asset to Cape Girardeau County for over 28 years through her work with the Cape Girardeau County Sheriffs Office in the Communications Division. Sharon has shown her dedication and commitment to her profession by attending many hours of training on Missouri laws, supervisory training, 9-1-1 communications training and countless hours of continuing education. Sharon worked as a supervisor of the 9-1-1 emergency communications call center, answering emergency calls, as well as serving as the TAC officer for Cape Girardeau County Sheriffs Office for many years. Sharon personally implemented a number of important programs for the community,

such as the Sex Offender Registration for Cape Girardeau County and the Carry Conceal Weapon program.

During her years of service, Sharon oversaw and maintained high standards for the 9-1-1 communications division for the protection of our officers and our citizens. Her community recognized her in 2001 with the Timothy J. Ruopp Award. Her dedication in serving Cape Girardeau helped countless residents, and it is my pleasure to recognize her efforts and achievements before the House of Representatives.

RECOGNIZING THE 2014 FLORIDA STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

HON. DENNIS A. ROSS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the 2014 Florida Strawberry Festival, which was held from February 27 through March 9, 2014 in the Winter Strawberry Capital of the World—Plant City, Florida. This event, which began in 1930, recognizes and celebrates the historical legacy of the Florida strawberry, and its importance to Hillsborough County.

Hillsborough County produces about 15 percent of our nation's strawberries annually—with virtually all grown during the winter months. More than 10,000 acres of strawberries are grown in Hillsborough County, and 50,000 American jobs are impacted directly by the local strawberry industry. In total, this industry has an economic impact on our community exceeding \$700 million per year.

With attendance at the annual Florida Strawberry Festival regularly topping half a million attendees, this is one of the premiere festivals in the country, and I am proud to recognize its success.

LOVIE SCHMITTER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Lovie Schmitter for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Lovie Schmitter is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Lovie Schmitter is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Lovie Schmitter for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

THE INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO
PERMIT COMMERCIAL FILMING
AND PHOTOGRAPHY ON THE
GROUNDS OF THE U.S. CAPITOL

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to introduce a bill to permit commercial filming and photography on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol. Currently, such filming and photography is only authorized on Union Square. The bill would permit commercial photography and filming outside of the Capitol and congressional office buildings by permit. In today's world, where many societies are facing upheavals, our country, with an exemplary model of democracy, should be the first to encourage commercial photography and filming to record various scenes of the legislature, which symbolizes U.S. democracy at work. The time is overdue to allow to commercial filming and photography of the exterior of the historic 19th century Capitol building. There is no good reason filming should be confined to Union Square. Specifically, my bill gives the Capitol Police the discretion, depending on the circumstances in and around the Capitol, to issue a permit authorizing commercial filming activity on any parcel of Federal property under the control of the Capitol Police with views of the Capitol and congressional office buildings, under the same conditions as those in Union Square. Such areas might include Independence Avenue on the House side, and Constitution Avenue on the Senate side.

No policy or security reason exists to justify the limit of commercial filming and photography of the Capitol complex to only one location, Union Square, particularly considering that permits are necessary. The blanket selection of only one location for such filming raises serious First Amendment issues. People are regularly seen on East Capitol Street (east of 2nd street), where they get a full view of the Capitol building taking pictures, demonstrating how arbitrary it is to limit commercial filming to Union Square.

My bill would allow commercial filming and photography from areas with views of the Capitol and congressional buildings that are under the jurisdiction of the Capitol Police, in addition to Union Square, which is located directly west of the Capitol. In addition, the Capitol Police would have the authority to charge a fee to cover any costs incurred by the Architect of the Capitol as a result of the issuance of the permit, to be deposited into the Capitol Trust Account. The Capitol Trust Account was established to accept proceeds from any fees collected for commercial filming permits for Union Square. Amounts in the Capitol Trust Account would be available without fiscal year limitation for such maintenance, improvements, and projects with respect to the Capitol grounds as the Architect of the Capitol considers appropriate, subject to the approval of the Committees on Appropriations of the House of Representatives and Senate.

Vistas of the U.S. Capitol are among America's most iconic. Limiting commercial filming and photography of the Capitol, an important

vehicle for telling the nation's story, does not serve the American people. Indeed, most of the world's people know our country and revere our system of government largely through commercial photography and films of the Capitol, which symbolizes our democracy at work. Commercial films and photographs of the Capitol, the seat of our democracy, are perhaps the best modern vehicles for telling the nation's story and showcasing its democratic system of government. My bill would enable appropriate, permitted commercial filming and photography of the Capitol, and would create economic benefits for the nation, the city, and private business.

I urge support of this bill.

EVERY WORLD PROBLEM DOES
NOT HAVE AN AMERICAN SOLUTION

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, President Kennedy, in a 1961 speech at the University of Washington, said:

... We must face the fact that the United States is neither omnipotent or omniscient—that we are only six percent of the world's population—that we cannot impose our own will upon the other 94 percent of mankind—that we cannot right every wrong or reverse each adversity—and that therefore there cannot be an American solution to every world problem.

Today we are less than four percent of the world's population and we are over 17.5 trillion dollars in debt.

Many people are trying to prove that they are great world statesmen and are supporting policies that will commit us to spend billions we do not have on Ukraine.

I wish everyone would read a recent book called *Ike's Bluff* by Evan Thomas. This book is about the foreign policy of President Eisenhower and explains that he stayed out of many situations that were worse than what is going on in Ukraine, because he did not have to prove that he was a great military leader or world statesman.

We should have trade and tourism, and cultural and educational exchanges with other countries, and help to a limited extent during humanitarian crisis.

But we cannot be the policemen of the world. The Ukrainians are going to have to solve their own problems, and we need to start taking better care of our own Country and our own people.

HONORING GLORIA CRUZ

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the contributions and efforts of Ms. Gloria Cruz, a resident of the Bronx and an advocate for reducing gun violence by enacting

sensible gun safety laws. Since 2005, she has served as the Bronx President of the Million Mom March, and she has been tireless in her advocacy for the children, and all residents, of the Bronx. After 9 years of incredible effort, she will be stepping back from her volunteer duties.

Ms. Cruz's forceful advocacy over the years has been in honor of her niece, who sadly, was a victim of gun violence. Naiesha Pearson was killed in the Bronx at the age of 10 by a stray bullet—her life cut short in an instant by a senseless act of violence. This tragedy shocked everyone in our community, but for Gloria, it was a call to action.

Since that time, she has been a leading voice in our borough and state for stronger gun laws. Ms. Cruz established Bronx chapter for New Yorkers Against Gun Violence, and organized an annual Bronx Million Mom March. She has tirelessly worked to get illegal guns off our streets, to increase background checks, and to create safe neighborhoods for our children. She has comforted the families of other victims of gun violence, and stood by law enforcement in their efforts to reduce gun crimes. The breadth and depth of her advocacy work has been truly amazing.

Last year, I had the honor to invite Ms. Cruz as my guest to the President's State of the Union address. During the speech, the President eloquently and passionately outlined the need for common sense improvements to our nation's gun control laws. For many years, Gloria Cruz has brought that same message to both the Bronx and to New York City.

Mr. Speaker, through her work, Ms. Cruz has been an inspiration and mentor to many, and a comfort to those who have lost loved ones as a result of gun violence. She has truly honored Naiesha's memory in all of her work. I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Gloria Cruz for all that she has done to help make the Bronx a safer place for our children.

KAYLEE BOREN

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kaylee Boren for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Kaylee Boren is a 10th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kaylee Boren is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Kaylee Boren for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

CONGRATULATING THE VILLAGE
OF SCHILLER PARK ON THEIR
CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Village of Schiller Park, Illinois, which is celebrating its 100th Anniversary.

The village just outside the City of Chicago incorporated in 1914 as Kolze was later named Schiller Park in 1926. Although several areas were annexed into the village during the 1920s and 1930s, few homes were built. In 1932, Julia Kolze, daughter-in-law of the founder, became the first woman village president or mayor in Illinois. Her avowed strategy was to employ kitchen table economics, running government on a budget the way she ran her household.

Today, Schiller Park is home to over 11,000 residents, hundreds of businesses, numerous schools and religious institutes, and a variety of parks and recreational facilities. They strive for that small town feeling while located in a great metropolitan area which is incorporated in their motto: "Small town feel with a world at its touch."

The Village of Schiller Park is a prime example of what any community should be. They provide services to residents of all ages. For the past six years, Schiller Park has hosted "Make a Difference Day," an initiative to engage members of the community in acts of kindness to benefit seniors and disabled residents of the village. These projects include leaf raking, yard cleaning, or running simple errands for their elderly and disabled neighbors. Schiller Park also hosts a wide range of events such as Family Fun Day, car shows, village garage sales, blood drives, canned food drives, concerts in the park, and farmers markets.

I am proud to represent the Village of Schiller Park as it prospers today under the leadership of Mayor Barbara Piltaver.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the residents of the Village of Schiller Park on their 100th Anniversary. I am truly honored to have such an outstanding village in my district.

RECOGNIZING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS
ACT AND REPRESENTATIVE
KING PU-TSUNG

HON. ALAN S. LOWENTHAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, close cooperation between Taiwan and the United States has been of critical importance since the Taiwan Relations Act was signed on April 10, 1979—35 years ago next month. With the TRA, the United States has been able to forge a strong and mutually beneficial economic, cultural, and security relationship with Taiwan while ensuring peace in the Taiwan Strait.

Taiwan remains a true friend of the United States and a partner in democracy, trade, and human rights. This anniversary is an opportunity to reflect on this successful partnership and to further strengthen the ties between our two governments.

Since the TRA was signed in 1979, Taiwan has grown into a bustling free-market economy and vital trading and investment partner to the United States. But our work is far from over. On the 35th anniversary of the TRA, I urge my fellow colleagues to join me in honoring the deep partnership and friendship between Taiwan and the United States.

It is in this spirit that we should recognize the departure of Representative King Pu-tsung who has fostered greater ties between the U.S. and Taiwan for the last 18 months as Taiwan's chief envoy to the United States. I have enjoyed the opportunity to work with Representative King and wish him all the best as he returns to Taiwan. I also look forward to working with his successor to continue to strengthen our unique relationship with Taiwan.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE MAPLEWOOD
NORTH LIONS CLUB

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the members of the Maplewood North Lions Club, past and present, on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. Since it was founded and chartered on March 23, 1964 in Maplewood, Minnesota, members have focused on serving individuals and organizations throughout the Maplewood community and beyond.

Within seven years after the Village of Maplewood was incorporated, the Maplewood North Lions Club was chartered by dedicated members, including Lion Dick Dean who remains a member today. The Lions and Lionesses originally met at Maplewood Bowl before constructing their own hall in Maplewood, which served as the location for meetings, fundraising events and community gatherings.

Both the Maplewood North Lions and Lionesses have established a legacy of service to local organizations throughout the community. Numerous local organizations have benefitted from the Maplewood North Lions Club's direct volunteer efforts as well as donations, including: schools, food shelves, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Special Olympics, Youth Service Bureau, Salvation Army, Union Gospel Mission, Ramsey County Care Center, Wakefield Park, and the East County Line Fire Department. The Maplewood North Lions Club may be best known for its commitment to the "gift of sight." The club has generously donated to the University of Minnesota Lions Eye Bank and currently provides thousands of pairs of eyeglasses each year to people in need around the world.

Mr. Speaker, the valuable contributions of time, talents and generous donations by mem-

bers of the Maplewood North Lions Club made during the past five decades are commendable and deserve to be celebrated. In honor of the 50th anniversary of the Maplewood North Lions Club, it is a privilege to submit this statement to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

KRISTINA RUSSO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kristina Russo for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Kristina Russo is a 7th grader at Oberon Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kristina Russo is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Kristina Russo for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

IN TRIBUTE TO FRED A. KAHN

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding achievements and remarkable life story of Fred A. Kahn. In addition to his 30 years of distinguished service as a federal employee, Mr. Kahn is credited for his role as an original architect of the modern American Presidential debate and for his work to promote tolerance and understanding through Holocaust education.

Mr. Kahn was born to Jewish parents in Wiesbaden, Germany on December 19, 1932. In January 1933, when Hitler rose to power as Chancellor of Germany, Mr. Kahn's parents fled to Belgium, leaving their infant son behind in Germany in the care of his Uncle Siegfried and Aunt Rosa. On October 1, 1938, six weeks before the terror of Kristallnacht, Siegfried and Rosa arranged for six-year-old Fred's dramatic escape and successful reunification with his parents on the German-Belgian border. Following the occupation of Belgium by the Germans in May 1940, the family went into hiding until Belgium's liberation in September 1944. Sadly, Siegfried and Rosa were both murdered by the Nazis.

Mr. Kahn immigrated to the United States when he was 19, settled in Baltimore, Maryland, and was inducted into the U.S. Army on March 17, 1953. He became a naturalized U.S. citizen on November 24, 1953 at Fort

Bragg, North Carolina while serving with the 82nd Airborne Division. After basic training, he was assigned to the 525th Military Intelligence Service where he worked as an intelligence analyst. In March 1954, he returned to Germany, this time as an American soldier.

After his honorable discharge from the Army in 1955, Mr. Kahn enrolled in the University of Maryland. Mr. Kahn devised an idea that would later become a revered tradition in American politics. In 1956, Mr. Kahn approached the University administration with a novel idea—a proposal for an on-campus Presidential debate. The Maryland Board of Regents rejected the proposal. However, former First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt endorsed the idea. When Mr. Kahn attended the 1958 Brussels World's Fair as an employee of the U.S. Department of State, he met with Gov. Adlai Stevenson, the Democratic Party's Presidential candidate in 1952 and 1956. Governor Stevenson endorsed the idea as well. In 1960 the League of Women Voters organized the first Presidential debate between Richard Nixon and John F. Kennedy.

After graduating from the University of Maryland, Mr. Kahn was awarded a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship to the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University. He spent the next 30 years as a political economist for the U.S. government and was instrumental in the creation of the Job Corps for the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity. He later finished his career as an economist for the U.S. Department of Labor. Mr. Kahn served on the Board of the National Council of the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA), the Board of Editors of the Public Administration Review, and the Board of Directors of the Society of Government Economists. He was awarded a Distinguished Career Service Award by the U.S. Secretary of Labor.

After his 1992 retirement from federal service, Mr. Kahn continued to serve his community as a teacher of Holocaust history, promoting tolerance and understanding. In 2005 Maryland Governor Robert Ehrlich appointed Mr. Kahn to his Task Force to Implement Holocaust, Genocide, Human Rights and Tolerance Education. Today, he moderates an online Holocaust remembrance group of over 300 members worldwide and is an active member of the Maryland-Washington, D.C. chapter of the World Federation of Child Survivors of the Holocaust.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize the extraordinary life and achievements of Fred A. Kahn. Throughout his life, Mr. Kahn has worked tirelessly to make our world more tolerant and compassionate. He has made outstanding contributions to our government, our country, and our community, and I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing our appreciation for his service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote No.

120 regarding the "Conyers Amendment." Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote No. 121 regarding the "Nadler Amendment." Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote No. 122 regarding the "Jackson Lee Amendment." Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote No. 123 regarding the "Motion to Recommit H.R. 4138." Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and so I missed rollcall vote No. 124 regarding the "ENFORCE the Law Act of 2014." Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,501,576,037,738.02. We've added \$6,874,698,988,824.94 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

LILIANA MERAZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Liliana Meraz for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Liliana Meraz is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Liliana Meraz is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Liliana Meraz for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PATIENT SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK AND THE NATIONAL PATIENT SAFETY FOUNDATION

HON. ANN KIRKPATRICK

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, this week is Patient Safety Awareness Week, and today I'd like to recognize the National Patient Safety Foundation and the Organizations in my district that work to promote and improve patient safety.

In Arizona's District One, we have several facilities that are committed to patient safety, including Oro Valley Hospital, Flagstaff Medical Center, and Ventana Medical Systems.

Oro Valley Hospital has been nationally recognized for its efforts, which include daily safety huddles and employee empowerment. At Flagstaff Medical Center, their patient safety program also encourages employee collaboration.

My district is home to Ventana Medical Systems, a world leader in developing solutions for tissue-based diagnoses. Ventana has a new advisory board that brings together experts to review patient safety.

I applaud the National Patient Safety Foundation and the hospitals and companies in my district and nationwide who are leading the way to keep patient safety as a top priority.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY

HON. MIKE KELLY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to describe the unique opportunity for the United States to meet a number of national goals through the utilization of nuclear energy.

The nuclear industry has played an instrumental role in promoting economic growth and energy security in America. I have witnessed firsthand the benefits of nuclear energy back home in Western Pennsylvania, where the Westinghouse Electric Company employs thousands of hardworking Americans. Founded in 1886 by American entrepreneur and engineer Thomas Westinghouse, the company was initially known for helping to bring electricity to homes throughout our country. Today, nearly 50 percent of the nuclear power plants in operation worldwide, including nearly 60 percent in the United States, are based on Westinghouse technology.

These positive impacts on our domestic economy are only a part of nuclear energy's overall benefits. The U.S. commercial nuclear energy sector yields enormous influence over global nonproliferation policy. The sector is also responsible for assuring international nuclear safety through the exportation of U.S. advanced reactor designs and America's operational expertise. Thus, by exporting U.S. nuclear technology, we ensure the highest levels of plant safety and influence over nonproliferation policies throughout the globe.

Mr. Speaker, a successful nuclear trade and export policy is paramount to international nuclear nonproliferation and power plant safety. I urge my colleagues to recognize the benefits of our nation's participation in the expanding global market for nuclear energy technologies.

NORTHERN IRELAND: INSUFFICIENT ATTEMPTS TO DEAL WITH THE PAST

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I convened a hearing that inquired into the Northern Ireland peace process, particularly that aspect of it which is called "dealing with the past."

Sadly, much of what we heard about amounts to failures to deal with the past, as in the rejection of the recent proposal made by Dr. Richard Haass. Dr. Haass served as Chair of the Panel of Parties in the Northern Ireland Executive—that is, he was asked to assist in brokering an agreement to move the peace process forward. In that capacity Dr. Haass spent months consulting and formulating a proposal. In the end, the proposal was not accepted by all of the parties, though it clarified where progress can be made and where sticking points remain.

One of the most important questions that Dr. Haass and the parties dealt with is what will be done with the Historical Enquiries Team (HET) and the Police Ombudsman of Northern Ireland (PONI)—two key bodies established by the Good Friday agreement to investigate unsolved murders.

We discussed Dr. Haass' proposal to replace the HET and PONI with a Historical Investigations Unit and Baroness O'Loan's suggestion to replace them with a rather different Investigative Commission during the hearing. For now I want to underline this: both agree that the status quo way of dealing with Troubles crimes should be replaced. Likewise the parties in the Northern Ireland executive reportedly agreed with this aspect of Dr. Haass' proposal. So the agreement is broad on this point. It's time to move to a better system.

As Dr. Haass' proposal stated: "The multiplicity of institutions and vehicles for justice in respect of conflict-related incidents, however, creates confusion and places enormous burdens on the police. The HET, PONI, and inquests also suffer from the perception that they have proceeded too slowly."

The facts alone tell this story: of the more than 3,000 Troubles-related deaths that occurred between 1968 and 1998, the HET has yet to review some 600 cases, involving 800 deaths.

Dr. Haass' proposed Historical Investigations Unit has much to say for it—by establishing a single unit with full investigative power it would eliminate the overlaps, contradictions, and waste of resources in the mandates of the HET and PONI.

Likewise the suggestion of Baroness O'Loan—who served very successfully as Police Ombudsman from 2000 to 2007—for an

Investigative Commission that would be a "totally independent investigative fully empowered and fully resourced body with a remit to examine any Troubles related cases involving death up to 2006 . . ." Lady O'Loan's proposal emphasizes the need for an unimpeachably independent agency in order to win the trust of both communities.

In any case Dr. Haass' proposal remains extremely important on all points—those involved most closely in the peace process have expressed their confidence that it accurately reflects the current divisions and positions of the parties, and will likely serve as an important basis for future discussions.

We also heard about the Finucane case and the British Military Reaction Force. These aspects of 'dealing with the past' were not covered by Dr. Haass' proposal to the Northern Ireland political parties—because they deal with matters that are the responsibility of the British Government.

First, the British Government's failure to conduct the promised inquiry into collusion in the 1989 murder of Patrick Finucane. The British Government has a solemn obligation to initiate the full, independent, public, judicial inquiry that was agreed as part of the overall peace settlement in Northern Ireland during the Weston Park negotiations in 2001. This obligation, which was undertaken by both governments as part of the Belfast Agreement—one of the outstanding diplomatic achievements of recent decades—was an extremely serious undertaking. In order for the peace process to move forward, the British Government must honor it.

While Prime Minister Cameron admitted to "shocking" levels of collusion between the state and loyalist paramilitaries in the murder of Patrick Finucane, and apologized to the Finucane family for it, this does not substitute for a full exposition of the facts behind the British State's involvement in the murder. Rather the steady increase in the amount of evidence being revealed publicly that the British State colluded with the killers has made honoring that commitment more important than ever.

The British Government committed to implement the recommendation of a judge of international standing on six inquiry cases; in 2004, Judge Peter Cory recommended a public inquiry in the case of Patrick Finucane. To date, it remains the only case investigated where the recommendation has not been honored, a situation that is deeply unsatisfactory for many reasons but not least because it is evidently the one where the British Government is most culpable. Conversely, it is also the case in which—until the Prime Minister's announcement in December 2012—there has been the greatest level of sustained official denial by various state agencies.

The many previous denials and time that has passed have drained public confidence in the peace process and diminished respect for the rule of law in Northern Ireland. It must be said that there are those who oppose the peace process and their opposition is dangerous. The failure to address the case of Patrick Finucane in the manner promised by the British Government provides a readily available propaganda tool for those who would abuse it to further their own ends. In our view,

this represents yet another reason why the Finucane case is one of the most important unresolved issues in the peace process.

Second, there is the matter of killings committed by the British Army's Military Reaction Force. From approximately 1971–1973 the British Army ran an undercover unit of approximately 40 soldiers, who operated out-of-uniform and in unmarked cars, mostly around Belfast.

On November 21, 2013, the BBC program Panorama aired a documentary in which former members of MRF broke silence on aspects of the unit's operations, confirming what many had suspected for a long time. The BBC reported that, "we've investigated the unit and discovered evidence that this branch of the British states sometimes . . . shot unarmed civilians."

The BBC spoke to seven former members of the MRF, and though the men were careful not to incriminate themselves or each other in specific killings, they made plain that, as The Independent fairly characterized the report, "The unit . . . would carry out drive-by shootings against unarmed people on the street without any independent evidence they were part of the IRA."

As one of the former members admitted to the BBC, "We were not there to act like an army unit—we were there to act like a terror group."

Now the onus is on the British Government to investigate and punish these crimes. The British Ministry of Defense has said that it has referred the matter to the police for investigation. Unfortunately, the BBC reported that "these soldiers were undercover, and what they did has been airbrushed from the official record."

LUCERO RIVERA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Lucero Rivera for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Lucero Rivera is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Lucero Rivera is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Lucero Rivera for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

TRIBUTE TO "MAGGIE" SILVER

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Marjorie P. "Maggie" Silver Smith, a female pioneer, entrepreneur and a legend in the American Rail Industry who passed away on March 9, 2014. I was privileged to work with Maggie and was honored to know her both as a good friend and strong advocate for our Nation's railroads.

Maggie was a leader in the American rail business and a most respected member of various railroad infrastructure panels. She came from a railroad family, working with her father at Pinsly Railroad in 1965, and succeeded him as President in 1977 becoming Chairman of the Board in 2000. After her father's death, she was advised to sell the company. However Maggie was determined to run Pinsly holdings because she understood and embraced the changes that were occurring in the railroad industry, especially under the Staggers Act.

Under her leadership, she grew the Pinsly Railroad companies to eight short line railroads and railroad distribution companies serving 200 customers. She was a member and officer on the Board of the American Short Line Railroad Association and also played a leadership role at the Massachusetts Railroad Association and the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association.

Maggie was recognized by all as a knowledgeable, vocal and effective spokesman for the rail industry. Her innovation and good business sense made her one of the most important and significant leaders in the short line industry. She was renowned for being tough but fair, thoughtful and forward thinking, continually encouraging women to enter and succeed in the railroad industry. Her wonderful wit, enthusiasm, energy and presence always had a positive impact, and she will be truly missed.

My deepest sympathy is extended to her husband, Robert; daughters, Anne, Leslie and Lindsey; and sons, John, Marc and James.

I ask all Members of the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the distinguished life and service of Marjorie P. "Maggie" Silver Smith.

HONORING CLAN "BUD" PROFFER

HON. JASON T. SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Clan "Bud" Proffer who has been a valuable asset to Cape Girardeau County for over 32 years through his dedication and work with the Sheriff's Office in the Patrol Division, as Captain of Field Operations. Bud has shown his commitment to law enforcement by attending many hours of training on Missouri laws, crime investigations, supervisory training, reporting crimes, and count-

less hours of continuing education. He was appointed to the Cape Girardeau/Bollinger County Major Case Squad in 1983. Bud has served the community and his fellow employees as the Captain of the Field Operations Division for over 27 years.

Bud has shown dedication and commitment to his profession by leading the Sheriff's Office in their endeavor to automate the operations of the Sheriff's Office by obtaining, installing and maintaining computer programs, software and equipment to keep the Sheriff's Office automated for over 25 years. Over the years, Bud has received numerous awards such as the Timothy J. Ruopp Award for Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer in 1987 and again in 2012.

It is with the utmost respect and deepest gratitude that I recognize and thank Bud Proffer for his many years of service to the Cape Girardeau County Sheriff's Office. I wish him health and happiness in his future endeavors and in his retirement. I am grateful that we have such caring members of the Cape Girardeau community; it is my pleasure to recognize his achievements before the House of Representatives.

CELEBRATING THE GIRL SCOUTS
OF AMERICA**HON. LEONARD LANCE**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Girl Scouts of America as the organization celebrates its 102nd anniversary. More than 60 million Americans, and thousands of young women in my district, have been part of the premier leadership organization for girls.

The mission of the Girl Scouts has been to introduce girls to positive role models and experiences. Activities in science and technology, business and economic literacy, outdoor awareness and team building make them women of courage, confidence and character.

I applaud the Girl Scouts for more than a century of distinguished public service and the girls in my community for their achievements.

MAKENZIE MATTHEWS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Makenzie Matthews for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Makenzie Matthews is a 10th grader at Pomona High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Makenzie Matthews is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their edu-

cation and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Makenzie Matthews for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

USS BATTLESHIP "TEXAS" CELEBRATES 100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, fittingly titled after the Lone Star State, the USS *Texas* was the most powerful warship the world had seen. Commissioned on March 12, 1914, she participated in the most important battles of the first half of the Twentieth Century, spanning both World Wars and including the invasion of North Africa, Normandy, Iwo Jima and Okinawa. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the commissioning of this important Battleship named after our great state.

To commemorate her 100th anniversary, the Battleship *Texas* Foundation along with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department are throwing a Texas-sized celebration for the Battleship on March 15, 2014 in La Porte at the San Jacinto Battleground Park. The all day festival will feature live music, food, fireworks, and activities for children as well as tours of the battleship. This month, don't pass up a great opportunity to go aboard and get a firsthand look of the last of the great Dreadnought battleships.

As a kid growing up in Spring Branch, I always looked forward to the long days of the hot Houston summers. Long days meant more time to play outside. I didn't know that summers in the other parts of the world were not steamy like here in Houston. (I now those from up north that Houston has two seasons: Summer and August.) Like most kids in the neighborhood, my sister and I played outdoors a good portion of the day and didn't come in til dark. We knew when the porch light came on, we had to be home within five minutes of seeing the "beacon" or there would be consequences. Occasionally, we got to take summer excursions with the family to the battle-grounds, the Monument and of course the Battleship *Texas*. That is where my love for the USS *Texas* began.

As kids, we thought it was "cool" that Texas had its own Battleship. We would pretend to shoot the guns on the ship, run through the countless corridors, nooks and crannies, climb the ladders as far as was allowed and reenact battles on the great battlewagon. My best friend Pete Cliburn and I would climb from top to bottom of the "Mighty T," firing every gun and squeezing down every port hole along the way. We explored and climbed the ladders to the upper decks as high as we could go. When you reached the top of the ladder of the highest point, you better remember that the metal deck you were about to lay your forearms on was as hot as a cast iron skillet! But, as kids we couldn't care less; we were fighting on the greatest battleship to have ever sailed.

As I grew older, my fondness for the USS *Texas* remained, and I learned more about the amazing legacy of BB 35. Her most notable contributions came in WWII, firing at Nazi defenses during the D-Day invasion at Normandy. Called the "smartest man o'war afloat," the *Texas* was an integral part of many US victories.

As the flagship of the US fleet, the *Texas* was the first of her kind to mount anti-aircraft guns, to use the first commercial radar, to launch an aircraft and to lay claim to the First Marine Division in 1941. At the end of the War, she made three trips bringing American servicemen home.

On April 21, 1948, the *Texas* was decommissioned and her place in history took root right here in our backyard. School children across Texas saved their nickels to help pay to dry dock the Battleship at the site of the Battlegrounds on the San Jacinto River. As a kid, it was obvious to me why General Sam routed Santa Anna—we had a battleship! It took me awhile to figure out that the *Texas* Revolution was in the 1800s, and the Battleship *Texas* was used in the 1900s. After all they retired her on San Jacinto Day. While that all made perfectly good sense back then, my love for *Texas* history in the years to come taught me that they were not one in the same, and General Sam's accomplishments became far more impressive.

Texas still has an "Honorary" Texas Navy. In the 1980s, the Governor of Texas appointed me as an Admiral in the Texas Navy. (Everyone in the Navy is an Admiral.) During my tenure as a judge, the "Mighty T" found its way back into my life, and the lives of offenders I ordered to be "enlisted" into the "Texas Navy." I ordered probationers who were skilled welders, painters, plumbers and electricians to help in the restoration efforts of the Battleship. As one of many creative sentences, this became another effective tool that both served the public and the probationer—a few even went on to be hired by the Parks and Wildlife Department.

During the '80s, the ship needed repairs so it could be taken to Galveston for refurbishing. Several groups helped with the entire operation spearheaded by the Texas Parks Service. The First Texas Volunteers provide major restoration projects and have kept this old ship alive for thousands of visitors each year. The volunteers are working extra hard to prepare the ship for her 100th birthday bash.

Today, the Battleship *Texas* serves as a museum and a reminder of wars long past. In 1948, she was designated a National Historic Landmark. The *Texas* has an onboard museum that details her efforts in our fight for freedom and a history of the sailors that called her their own. The San Jacinto State Historical Park is just a short drive—tour the ship, enjoy the festivities, and relive some history aboard the magnificent USS *Texas*. And that's just the way it is.

IN RECOGNITION OF INTEL
SCIENCE TALENT SEARCH FI-
NALISTS KATHY CAMENZIND,
ESHA MAITI, AND EMILY PANG

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize three finalists for the Intel Science Talent Search: Kathy Camenzind and Esha Maiti from California High School, and Emily Pang from Dougherty Valley High School, all from San Ramon, California in my congressional district.

These bright high school students are among the forty finalists selected from over 1,800 entrants in the Intel Science Talent Search, which is a competition that challenges students to tackle difficult scientific questions. Entrants are judged on the originality and creativity of their science research projects.

I am inspired by the passion Kathy, Esha, and Emily have shown for their science projects, which highlight not only their intellect, but also their drive and determination to help solve today's most difficult problems. Kathy researched and build inexpensive optical tweezers using a low power laser and generic microscope; Esha developed a mathematical simulator to predict the distribution of secondary tumors in cancer patients; and Emily researched immune protein receptors critical to the growth and suppression of tumors for cancer therapies.

Kathy, Esha, and Emily's exceptional work show that we have the best and brightest among us in the East Bay.

Congratulations again to Kathy, Esha, and Emily. I hope you will continue your efforts, and I look forward to hearing about your future successes.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

RECOGNIZING THE LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE OF SARA
SHAW

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Sara Shaw. Sara is a City Commissioner and the owner of a small flooring business in her hometown of Kissimmee, Florida. She is also a lifelong resident of Osceola County where she began volunteering in her youth with Civil Air Patrol specializing in search and rescue.

Sara Shaw currently serves as the Director of several boards: the Tr-County League of Cities, the Education Foundation, the Transition House, and ESAH 360. Her memberships include the Osceola County Bar Association, Tr-County League of Cities Legislative Advocacy Team, and Florida League of Cities Environmental, Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

Prior to being elected, Sara served as a volunteer board member for Kissimmee's Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. She is very

proud of Kissimmee's state of the art Lakefront Park. Her volunteer activities include Kissimmee Relay for Life, Kissimmee 5K, and serving as a Guardian Ad Litem to protect the rights of foster children. She has advocated to change Kissimmee Utility Authority (KUA) policies and to change the KUA Board of Directors appointment process.

Sara engages the community on a personal basis. She actively seeks out the concerns and opinions of the citizens and business owners and encourages everyone to get involved civically. She has even been known to help push a disabled vehicle out of the street or give rides to citizens in need.

Growing up in poverty, Sara feels that she must give back to the community that helped her so much. She is a hard worker and a fierce defender of those who cannot defend themselves. She tries to lead by example and serve her city, ever mindful of the Athenian Oath:

We will never bring disgrace to this our city, by any act of dishonesty or cowardice; nor ever desert our suffering comrades in the ranks, we will fight for the ideal and sacred things of the city, both alone and with many; we will revere and obey the city's laws and do our best to incite a like respect in those above us who are prone to annul or set them at naught; we will strive unceasingly to quicken the public's sense of civic duty. Thus, in all these ways we will transmit this city not only, not less, but greater and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.

I am happy to honor Sara Shaw, during Women's History Month, for her service to her hometown of Kissimmee, Florida.

RECOGNIZING THE LEADERSHIP OF COMMISSIONER DAISY
WILLIAMS LYNUM

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Commissioner Daisy Williams Lynum. Commissioner Lynum was elected to the Orlando City Council on April 14, 1998. Born and raised in Leesburg, Florida, Ms. Lynum earned an undergraduate degree in Sociology at Bethune-Cookman College and a graduate degree in clinical Social Work from Florida State University.

As a Rockefeller Foundation Scholar recipient, she completed her post-baccalaureate studies at Haverford and Bryn Mawr colleges in Pennsylvania. She then completed her teaching certification at the University of Central Florida. Following her election, Commissioner Lynum completed the John F. Kennedy School of Government Program for Executives at Harvard University in 2000. In 2005, Florida Metropolitan University awarded Commissioner Lynum an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters. Commissioner Lynum joined the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., in 1966 and Gamma Phi Delta Sorority, Inc. in December 2008.

After more than 30 years of employment, Commissioner Lynum retired in 2002. She began her career as a fifth grade teacher then became a social worker and administrator for the Department of Health & Rehabilitative Services and a Special Services Social Worker for Orange County Public Schools.

Commissioner Lynum's primary focus has been increasing quality of life through sustainable neighborhoods for residents in District 5 and the City of Orlando. Her community and

civic involvement has included numerous organizations, boards, committees, and taskforces: Florida League of Cities Board of Directors; Board of Directors for the National League of Cities; Vice Chair BBIF Board of Directors; President of the National League of Cities Women In Municipal Government; President of the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials; President of the National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials Foundation Board; President of the Florida Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials; African American Women's Technology Caucus; Chairman of MetroPlan Orlando Transportation Board; Secretary of the Central Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Alliance; Orange County Voter's League; Life Member of the NAACP; and Member of the Nemours Advisory Council.

For two years, Commissioner Lynam worked on constructing the Blueprint, adopted by Orlando City Council, which created over 1,000 jobs for the homeless, ex-felons and residents in the Parramore community. Commissioner Lynam also created the Orlando Medical Careers Partnership. The partnership takes a comprehensive approach to engage at-risk residents from elementary school through adulthood, with a four-tier system focusing on breaking barriers, youth engagement, advancing adults, and careers in science and healthcare related fields. The program launched on September 6, 2013.

Commissioner Lynam has also represented Orlando and the U.S. in Japan, Africa, and China through her participation in business exchanges like the US-China Exchange Association's US Business Matchmaking Conference. In addition, she has visited many Caribbean and European countries as a visitor. She enjoys reading, traveling, and gardening and is a member of the New Covenant Baptist Church of Orlando.

I am happy to honor Commissioner Daisy Lynam, during Women's History Month, for her contributions to the Central Florida community.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF JOSEPHINE
MERCADO

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Josephine Mercado. A native New Yorker, of Puerto Rican descent, she was raised in Spanish Harlem. After 18 years as a homemaker, she enrolled in college, as an urban legal scholar. Six years later, she graduated from law school, with a Juris Doctor. She practiced law for 17 years, devoting much of her time to Latino health issues, among other volunteer and community involvement.

Throughout her career, Josephine has formed and directed nonprofits which implement programs that have provided access to health care, education, and wellness services to tens of thousands of people, first in New York City and now in Central Florida.

Josephine is the Founder and Executive Director of Hispanic Health Initiatives, Inc. (HHI), a private, non-profit, health education, prevention, and referral organization focused on chronic diseases impacting the medically underserved. HHI serves the communities of Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Volusia Counties.

Ms. Mercado was one of the first in her field to launch language-specific, culturally-com-

petent health campaigns on early detection, preventive medicine, and screening. HHI's programs provide access (Abriendo Caminos) to existing health care services and medical "homes."

HHI's work includes: disproving myths preventing people from seeking care; reducing barriers and disparities; and enhancing health literacy among low-income, uninsured, and underserved populations.

Josephine is a staunch advocate of the community involvement. She is a member of a variety of entities serving the medically underserved in Central Florida, the state, and the nation. She has won local and national recognition for her innovative "Take It to the Community" health and wellness initiatives. These initiatives offer welcoming, informal settings for risk assessments, wellness, and prevention education.

Both Josephine and HHI have received numerous recognitions, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation "Community Health Leader" award, the FamiliesUSA "Consumer Health Advocate" award, and the Intercultural Cancer Council "National HOPE" award. Josephine has also been profiled many times, in both English and Spanish media, as HHI is considered the "Voice" of Hispanic health in Central Florida.

I am happy to honor Josephine Mercado, during Women's History Month, for her contributions to the health and wellness of the community.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF STATE
REPRESENTATIVE LINDA STEWART

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize State Representative Linda Stewart. Elected in 2012, Linda currently serves in the Florida House of Representatives representing District 47. She sits on the Regulatory Affairs Committee, Select Committee on Claims Bills, State Affairs Committee, Agriculture & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee, and Transportation & Highway Safety Subcommittee.

Prior to her election to the Florida Legislature, Linda served as Orange County Commissioner for District 4 from 2002 to 2010. Her other public service includes serving on the City of Orlando Parks Board, the Library Governance Board, and the Orange County Canvassing Board.

An active member of her community, Linda has served as Chairwoman and Member of Metroplan Orlando, Orange County Vice Mayor, a Member of the Saint Johns River Restoration Group, and Vice Chairman for Phase II Housing Component for Mentally III.

Linda is an advocate for women and for equality. She is a member of the Harvey Milk Foundation Advisory Board and the Rainbow Democrats. In 2010, Equality Florida honored her with the "Voice of Equality Award" and in 2004 she was Women's Executive Council's "Downtown Woman of the Year." She also received the "Commissioner Leadership Award" (FLERA) from the Sierra Club in 2011.

I am happy to honor State Representative Linda Stewart, during Women's History Month, for her leadership and service to the Central Florida community.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF MARTHA OGDEN HAYNIE

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, in honor of Women's History Month, to recognize Martha

Ogden Haynie, CPA. Haynie graduated with honors from the University of West Florida in 1973 with a degree in accounting. She worked at Walt Disney World, Ernst and Young (previously Ernst and Whinney), her own accounting practice, and the Florida Symphony Orchestra before being elected as the Orange County Comptroller in 1988.

In her capacity as Comptroller, Haynie made improving citizens' trust in local government her top priority. Using her experience in the public, private and non-profit sectors, she emphasized providing quality service and accountability. By presenting audit reports directly to citizens through public presentations and the media, Haynie emphasized her role as a watchdog and the value of her independence as an elected official who answers to the public, not to other County officers.

In 1992, Haynie undertook an initiative to gain authority to collect and audit Orange County's resort tax. Her proactive measure has since produced more than \$20 million in added revenues for the County. In 1996, Haynie's auditing authority was expanded by a Charter amendment, allowing her to audit other offices in the County in addition to the Board of County Commissioners and the Comptroller's Office.

The Florida Institute of CPAs named Haynie the 1998 Outstanding CPA in Government for her efforts to promote the CPA designation as the premier professional credential for government accounting, auditing, and finance professionals.

Between 2007 and 2011, Haynie saved Orange County nearly \$77 million. She took action to prevent a \$57 million loss in county funds that were invested with the state investment pool, and saved \$20 million after identifying errors made in the state of Florida's Medicaid billing process.

Haynie is professionally affiliated with the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the Florida Court Clerks and Comptroller Association, Florida Executive Women, Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the Florida Government Finance Officers Association, and the National Association of Local Government Auditors.

Always civically engaged, Haynie has been a board member to several community institutions such as the Women's Resource Center, Planned Parenthood of Greater Orlando, Hamilton Holt School of Rollins College, the Mental Health Association of Central Florida, the Florida Symphony Orchestra, and WEEKENDS of Greater Orlando.

Haynie's public engagement helped facilitate the passage of the Orange County Domestic Partner Registry in 2012, earning her Equality Florida's "Voice for Equality" award. In addition, the Orlando Business Journal named Haynie the 2013 "Executive of the Year."

I am happy to honor Martha Haynie, during Women's History Month, for her service to Orange County and the Central Florida community.

KOHLETON PRIBBLE

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Kohlton Pribble for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Kohlton Pribble is an 8th grader at Oberon Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Kohlton Pribble is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Kohlton Pribble for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR WINNING FIRST PLACE IN THE 2014 REGIONAL SCIENCE BOWL COMPETITION

HON. DOUG LaMALFA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. LaMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University Preparatory School from Redding for winning first place in the 2014 Regional Science Bowl competition.

The National Science Bowl is an annual competition sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy that brings together some of the best and brightest students from across our country. Teams compete in a face-off competition featuring questions on a range of science disciplines including biology, chemistry, earth science, physics, energy, and math. The event, while very competitive, also promotes and encourages discovery, innovation, and teamwork and a commitment to bettering our Nation's future.

We are very proud of all the north State teams that competed against dozens of California high schools for a chance to represent California at the National Science Bowl. Their interest and diligent studies in math and science are a testament to the outstanding work from our students, educators, and parents across our region.

Best of luck to Joban, Christian, Leo, Logan, and Melia who will be traveling to Washington, DC, next month to compete against teams from across the country in the National Science Bowl. I know you will make us proud. Good luck.

HONORING RICK ALLEN JAUERT

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Ricky "Rick" Allen Jauert. Mr. Jauert passed away before his time at the age of 59 on June 2, 2013, after a brave battle with Multiple Systems Atrophy. Tuesday, March 18, 2014, would have been his 60th birthday.

Mr. Jauert was born on March 18, 1954, to Russell and Norma (Olson) Jauert in Luverne, Minnesota. The fourth of seven children, he was raised on a dairy farm outside of Luverne. He lost his father at age twelve. Mr. Jauert was active in 4-H and began his political career while still in high school. After graduating from Luverne High School in 1972, Mr. Jauert was a foreign exchange student in the Philippines. He returned and became the first person in his family to attend college.

While at the University of Minnesota-Morris, he served in a wide variety of leadership capacities including as resident assistant, dorm director and serving as Chairman of the Budget Advisory Committee. He was a vociferous lobbyist for students' rights and student involvement in the decision making of the campus. He graduated with honors from the university in 1976. Soon after, Mr. Jauert moved to Washington, DC to intern in Rep. Rick Nolan's congressional office.

Over the next three decades, Mr. Jauert worked for ten members of Congress in various capacities including chief of staff, legislative director and communications director. He is part of an elite group of people to have worked in so many congressional offices and the only person from Minnesota to have done so. In addition to being a savvy political operative, Mr. Jauert was a great story teller. He always had a witty, wise, and anecdotal story to tell of his childhood or early years on the Hill.

Rick lived on Capitol Hill during his time in Washington, maintaining a three-story townhouse just blocks from the U.S. Capitol. Rick's welcoming and generous spirit, as well as hundreds of pieces of political memorabilia, drew roommates ranging from members of Congress to college interns from Luverne and Morris, and everyone in between. Rick had no children, but referred to many of his renters as "his kids."

I had the honor of working with Mr. Jauert for the last three years of his career. He served as my communications director, senior advisor and dear friend. Mr. Jauert practiced the idea that politics is about improving people's lives—he would always go the extra mile to help someone. He ended every e-mail with this quote from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "Not only will we have to repent for the sins of bad people; but we also will have to repent for the appalling silence of good people." I have fond memories of Mr. Jauert pushing everyone around him to do whatever they could to make the world a better place, or to at least put a smile on someone's face.

Mr. Jauert moved back to Luverne in 2012 after his diagnosis, but continued to be deeply involved with politics. He was proud to be able

to travel to Washington one last time on January 3, 2013, for Rep. Nolan's swearing in ceremony. We are all better off because of his life of service. Mr. Jauert, thank you for your service and the wonderful legacy you left for us to continue fulfilling.

RECOGNIZING THE NOMINEES FOR THE AGNES MEYER OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD FOR PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the nominees for the Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award for Prince William County Public Schools.

The Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award program was established by The Washington Post to "recognize excellence in teaching, to encourage creative and quality instruction, and to contribute in a substantive way to the improvement of education in the Washington metropolitan area."

The annual recipients include one representative from each of the nineteen metropolitan public school systems and a single representative from the area private schools. The winner selected from Prince William County Public Schools will also be named the Prince William County Teacher of the Year. Teachers who meet the criteria for the award are those who instill in students a desire to learn and achieve, understand the individual needs of students, and demonstrate a thorough knowledge of subject matter and have the ability to share it effectively with students.

I would like to extend my personal congratulations to the 2013-2014 Prince William County nominees for the Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award:

Peter Alouise—Battlefield High School, Barbara Babauta—Graham Park Middle School, Kimberly Black—Henderson Elementary School, Janine Byers—Patriot High School, Matthew Carbo—Brentsville District High School, Carlos Castro—Woodbridge High School, Dina DaSilva—Stonewall Jackson High School, Robert Donaldson—Stonewall Jackson High School, Frank Dunn—Potomac High School, Gerald Fowkes—Gar-Field High School, Frances Gabor—New Dominion Alternative Center, Sara Gill—Osborn Park High School, Scott Howard—Hylton High School, Lynn Maletick—Bristow Run Elementary School.

Ashley Meyer—King Elementary School, Jeanine Mitchell—Buckland Mills Elementary School, Donna Notarantonio—Pennington Traditional School, Matthew Piette—Ronald Wilson Reagan Middle School, Kristen Putman—T. Clay Wood Elementary School, Jennifer Ramsey—T. Clay Wood Elementary School, Ramona Richardson—Coles Elementary School, Paul Rischard—Hylton High School, Bethany Robbins—Battlefield High School, Amanda Taylor—Gainesville Middle School, Alyssa Tice—Bel Air Elementary School, William Watts—PACE West School, Nancy Weaver—T. Clay Wood Elementary School, Dorothy Wright—Bel Air Elementary School.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending the nominees for the Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award in Prince William County and in thanking them for their dedication to our children. Their continued service will ensure that Prince William County students are provided with a world class education in a more vibrant learning community.

CONGRESSWOMAN CELEBRATES
AVISTA'S 125TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Avista Corporation of Spokane, Washington as it celebrates its 125th anniversary. I take great pride in representing this company which has diligently sought to capture the character of Eastern Washington and the entire Pacific Northwest.

Avista is a company that seeks to reflect the community in which it does business. In fact, during its 125 years, Avista has not only been enriched by the people and landscape that surround it but it has enriched all of Eastern Washington. In 1889, faced with increasing demand for electricity in the booming young city of Spokane Falls, Washington, trustees of the Edison Electric Illuminating Company sought funding from their backers in New York to build a power station on the Spokane Falls. Their request was denied because, as they were told, water power held little or no value. Not so easily dissuaded, ten stakeholders founded The Washington Water Power Company, now known as Avista, who opted to proceed with the project themselves. Since The Washington Water Power Company forged ahead in proving the value of what today we called "hydropower", hydropower has become the most prominent form of electricity generation in Washington State. The decision of few investors in Spokane began a long tradition of a company and community joining forces to advance the economy, care for the Eastern Washington's natural resources, and promote a lifestyle that we enjoin in the Pacific Northwest. Avista has repeatedly been honored for its environmental stewardship. The company also contributes more than \$1 million per year to non-profit organizations throughout its service territory, and it has been named in the top 25 in the Puget Sound Business Journal's list of top Washington philanthropists for the past four years.

In its early years, The Washington Water Power Company built six hydroelectric facilities, contributing to an era of growth for the company. Fast forward 125 years, hydropower continues to bring countless opportunities to the Pacific Northwest with Washington State getting over 70% of its power from this clean and renewable energy source. Seeking to further diversify and expand, in 1983, Avista's Kettle Falls generating station commenced operation as the first utility-owned electric generating station of its kind in the United States constructed for the sole purpose of producing electricity from wood waste, or biomass. The

award-winning plant, combined with Avista's legacy hydroelectric power projects, has contributed to Avista being listed among the greenest investor-owned utilities in the country. That facility produces up to 52 megawatts of electricity—enough to power 46,000 homes. Supporting over 100 jobs in the region where I grew-up, the Kettle Falls generating station also greatly contributes to the economy in Northeastern Washington and continues to add to a vibrant community.

Avista currently serves their 680,000 customers in a service territory of more than 30,000 square miles with a mix of hydro, natural gas, wind, biomass, and coal generation delivered over 2,200 miles of transmission line, 18,000 miles of distribution line, and 7,600 miles of natural gas distribution mains. While a Spokane-based company, Avista's electric and natural gas services support community's in Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana and, soon, we expect, Alaska.

I am also proud of the Avista's close ties with the Spokane community which have remained steadfast for the last 125 years. Avista is the City of Spokane's eighth largest non-government employer, employing more than 1,600 people. So today, I recognize Avista for achieving this historic 125-year milestone and applaud the entire community for the contributions they have made to Eastern Washington throughout the years.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. LUCILLE
ROBINSON FAULKNER

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Lucille Robinson Faulkner was born in August of 1930 in Portland, Arkansas in the Mississippi Delta, eight miles from Parkdale, Arkansas where I was born and lived until I was nineteen years old. Mrs. Faulkner moved with her grandmother and family to Chicago where she attended Waller High School and graduated in 1948, which made her one of the more educated Black persons in her community at that time.

Mrs. Faulkner married her husband Mr. Derrell Faulkner in 1949, and to this union, thirteen children were born. Mrs. Faulkner worked as a seamstress, took care of her children and eventually was hired by Samuel Adams Sr., an outstanding, colorful and very successful attorney who is known far and wide. This was a position which she held until she retired. Mrs. Faulkner was a great cook and actively involved with church and the community in which she lived.

I am indeed proud of the fact that I was able to know and represent individuals and groups of people like the Faulkner family whose heritage is so closely aligned with mine that I feel a great sense of personal kinship.

Bless you Mrs. Lucille Faulkner and may your soul rest in peace.

RECOGNIZING THE TEACHERS OF
PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC
SCHOOLS RECEIVING CERTIFICATION FROM THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Prince William County Public Schools teachers who recently received certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The National Board is an independent nonprofit organization governed by classroom teachers, school administrators, school board leaders, governors, state legislators, higher education officials, teacher union leaders, and business and community leaders.

The teachers have met the standards established by the National Board and have undergone a rigorous application process that required they demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and accomplishments that comprise teaching excellence. A Board Certified teacher supports a vision of teaching based on the following five core principles:

1. Teachers are committed to students and their learning;
2. Teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to students;
3. Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning;
4. Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience; and
5. Teachers are members of learning communities.

I would like to extend my personal congratulations to the following National Board Certified Teachers for receiving their respective certifications.

Salome Atkins—Battlefield High School (Renewal), Kellie Bernal—Gravely Elementary School, Nicole Boissiere—Rosa Parks Elementary School, Sara Bosse—Pennington Traditional, Frantzie Cadet—Vaughan Elementary School, Carla Drew—Osborn Park High School, Kristina Ferrell—Osborn Park High School, Donna Garzione—Loch Lomond Elementary School, Erin Hart—Nokesville Elementary School, Mya Hatfield—Marumsco Hills Elementary School, Kelly Haynes—Ashland Elementary School, Anne Hicock—Woodbridge Middle School, Shana Higginbotham—Triangle Elementary School, Marjorie Lathers—Triangle Elementary School.

Nicholas Maneno—Old Bridge Elementary School (Renewal), Bridget Mathwin—Coles Elementary School, Courtney McDonald—Bull Run Middle School, Melissa Miller—Ashland Elementary School, Janell Mills—Featherstone Elementary School, Stephanie Richards—Tyler Elementary School, Melanie Riley—Signal Hill Elementary School, Teresa Shaffstall—Loch Lomond Elementary School, Carla Shaw—Glenkirk Elementary School, Katherine Sherman—Rosa Parks Elementary School, Jayne Sherman—Occoquan Elementary School, Margaret Stout—Antietam Elementary School, Kelle Stroud—Buckland Mills Elementary School, Tammy Vice—River Oaks Elementary School.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending these teachers for their commitment to education and professional development. Prince William County Public Schools delivers a world class education thanks to the tireless efforts of teachers who make excellence the standard.

HONORING STANLEY "SCOTT"
ANDERSON

HON. JASON T. SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Stanley "Scott" Anderson, who has been a valuable asset to the Cape Girardeau County for over 29 years through his work with the Sheriff's Office as the Maintenance Supervisor. Scott has shown his commitment to the Sheriff's Office by working 29 years on the day-to-day maintenance operations such as vehicle maintenance, equipment maintenance and by learning new advanced information systems to secure the continued operations of the heating/cooling systems of the two-building complex of the Sheriff's Office and Jail. By taking care of inventory, ordering, stocking and securing the most economical solutions for supplies, he enabled the day-to-day operations of the Sheriff's Office. Scott has always upheld a professional standard when working with the public, fellow employees, outside agencies and office holders. Scott always provided jokes and stories to anyone that would listen and kept the work day lively.

It is with sincere respect and deep appreciation that I recognize and thank Scott for his loyalty and many years of dedicated commitment to Cape Girardeau County and the Sheriff's Office. I wish him health and happiness in his future endeavors and in his retirement. He will be truly missed. I am grateful that we have such caring, hardworking members of the Cape Girardeau community; it is my pleasure to recognize his achievements before the House of Representatives.

A COMMEMORATION OF U.S.
MARINE SGT. LANCE DAVISON

HON. ANN KIRKPATRICK

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, Lance Clinton Davison was born on January 8, 1979, the first son of John and Desbah Davison.

In Navajo tradition, Lance is of the Hashtl'ishnii Clan and born for Bilagaana. Lance was raised in Flagstaff, Arizona, and graduated from Flagstaff High School in 1997. Upon graduation, Lance joined the U.S. Marine Corps, where he excelled and became an especially accomplished marksman and scout/sniper.

Immediately following the tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001, Lance was deployed to Afghanistan

for duty in the 3rd Battalion 23rd Marines 1st Marine Division, for which he received several medals and commendations, including the Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

Like so many veterans, Lance not only served his country but he came home and helped strengthen his own community. He became a police officer with the Flagstaff Police Department and founded Raven2 O.D.G., a disabled veteran-owned business that provides enhanced training for SOCOM Operatives and agency professionals with precision marksmanship skills.

Lance's dedication to his country and community was surpassed only by his dedication to and love for his son, Korben. Lance was a true hero.

American poet Thomas William Parsons once wrote about the men and women who sacrificed for our country: "On thy grave, the rain shall fall from the eyes of a mighty nation."

Sgt. Lance Davison, a valiant Marine and devoted father, is one of the reasons our nation is mighty.

We remember, honor and mourn him—Lance left us far too soon.

Lance and all of our veterans deserve a community and a country that stand up for our soldiers when they come home. These men and women have served honorably, but they may also struggle mightily.

For years, I've kept a quote on my desk—it was given to me by a veteran, and it says: "Because they have already paid the price, fight for veterans with all of your might."

Fight for veterans with all of your might. This is how we will honor Lance.

MAC HOPPER

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Mac Hopper for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Mac Hopper is a 7th grader at Mandalay Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Mac Hopper is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Mac Hopper for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

HONORING THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENACTMENT OF THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment today to recognize the 35th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, TRA, enacted April 10, 1979. While our friendship with Taiwan spans longer than 35 years, the TRA has been vital in strengthening this mutually-beneficial partnership.

Since the enactment of the TRA, Taiwan has emerged as a model democracy and an economic powerhouse in the Asia-Pacific region and the world. The People of Taiwan enjoy self-governance with a democratic system and direct elections. They also enjoy a booming economy with an innovative tech community.

The success of the TRA cannot be understated. Because of the TRA, the U.S. has been able to enjoy mutually beneficial trade with Taiwan, greater national and international security, and a rich cultural relationship. Our trade relationship with Taiwan is stronger than ever. Time and time again, Taiwan has proven its willingness to engage in substantive trade negotiations. We have enjoyed a positive relationship with them, and it is my hope that Taiwan will soon be admitted to the Trans-Pacific Partnership, TPP.

Over the last 35 years, we have watched Taiwan's contributions to international development and security. Continually, they have come to our aid to assist our antiterrorism efforts. These contributions, and more, have made it clear that, as we strengthen our relationship with Taiwan, we succeed in advancing U.S. interests.

RECOGNIZING THE PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINEES FOR PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Principal of the Year Award nominees for Prince William County Public Schools.

The Principal of the Year for Prince William County will receive the Distinguished Educational Leadership Award from The Washington Post. Among other skills, nominees must demonstrate the ability to manage effectively, demonstrate and encourage creativity and innovation, and foster a cooperative relationship with students, parents, faculty, staff, and the community.

I would like to extend my personal congratulations to the 2013–2014 nominees for Prince William County Schools, Principal of the year award.

Skyles Calhoun—Woodbridge Middle School, Robert Eichorn—New Directions,

Anita Flemons—Old Bridge Elementary School, David Huckestein—Woodbridge High School, Kathy Notyce—Mullen Elementary School, Amy Schott—Rockledge Elementary School.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending Principal of the Year Award nominees for Prince William County Public Schools and in thanking them for their dedication to leadership in our school system. Their continued service will ensure that Prince William County students are provided with a world class education in a more vibrant learning community.

HONORING SIMON URBANIC

HON. RANDY K. WEBER, SR.

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the birthday of my friend and treasured member of the gulf coast community, Mr. Simon Urbanic, who will turn seventy years old on March 15, 2014. Simon is a resident of League City, Texas along with his lovely wife, Pamela.

Born on Galveston Island in 1944, Simon has committed himself to being a successful business owner, principled conservative and devoted follower of Christ. He also served our country honorably in the United States Navy as an Opticalman 3rd Class. Simon continues to be a devoted servant in Galveston County, serving on several boards in the area.

As an area realtor, Simon has worked tirelessly to help many—including my family—find a house to call home. Not only has he served others through his work and church, he has also worked tirelessly to promote the Republican Party and conservative ideals. Simon is a dedicated and passionate volunteer for the Republican Party, the Galveston County Republican Network and other conservative political causes. A passionate learner of conservative thought, Simon is dedicated to organizing conservative ideology in Texas.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Simon Urbanic on this milestone. I thank

him for his many contributions to Galveston Island, Texas District 14, and the United States. I am proud to join his friends and family in celebrating his 70th year. Simon is a friend of mine and a friend of Galveston County and I wish him continued health and happiness.

IN SUPPORT OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2014

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Women's History Month and H.R. 863, the National Women's History Commission Act. I would like to recognize a few of the many important women from Texas.

While there have been many women leaders in Dallas, one that stands out in my mind is former mayor Annette Strauss, the second female mayor and also the second Jewish mayor. Before her election to the Dallas City Council, Strauss worked tirelessly as a fundraiser for many organizations, poignantly for the arts in Dallas. During her tenure as Mayor-Pro Tem and as mayor, Strauss successfully provided a refuge for the many Texas families that fell into homelessness during the economic crisis. Today, the Annette G. Strauss Family Gateway remains a facility that provides empowerment for homeless people and families to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty. Strauss served as Ambassador-at-large for the city of Dallas until her death from cancer in 1998.

In the world of education, Yvonne Ewell is a Texas legend. Ewell began her teaching career at Phyllis Wheatley Elementary School in Dallas. Ewell was the first African American woman appointed as the district-wide elementary school consultant and subsequently was named associate superintendant of the Dallas Independent School District (DISD). During her time as the court-appointed school desegregation monitor for DISD, Ewell began planning for a magnet school with her fellow com-

mittee members. From her vision, the Yvonne A. Ewell Townview Magnet Center was born and is extremely successful in educating students in its six semi-independent subject-based high schools. Ewell maintained a strong, controversial stance on education in Dallas schools until her death in 1998 of pancreatic cancer.

When recognizing Dallas leaders, it is impossible to not highlight Margaret McDermott. At the age of 102, McDermott will lend her name to the second signature bridge which connects downtown Dallas to west Dallas over the Trinity River. McDermott and her late husband Eugene McDermott have been philanthropists and friends to civic, cultural, and educational organizations nationwide. Some recipients of the McDermotts' generosity include the University of Texas at Dallas, the Dallas Museum of Art, the Hockaday School, the AT&T Performing Arts Center, the Meyerson Symphony Center, and even the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. While McDermott takes little credit for her philanthropic activities, she continues to do more civic good in her hometown of Dallas.

While there are many women that we should recognize for their historic leadership in Dallas, we must recognize the young leaders in our community as well. Ariel Atkins, a senior basketball player at Duncanville High School, currently has her eye on a third state championship. The fourth-ranked prospect in the ESPNW HoopGurlz Top 100 for the class of 2014, Atkins has already made the decision to play basketball at the University of Texas next year. Despite her hard work and talent on the court, Atkins is committed to helping others, which she says she feels is her sole purpose in life. Young women like Atkins need encouragement from parents, coaches, and teachers so that they can reach their goals and beyond.

The women I have recognized are true visionaries. I urge my colleagues to support Women's History Month so that we can empower women at every age to be leaders in their fields and in their communities.

SENATE—Friday, March 14, 2014

The Senate met at 10:31 and 14 seconds a.m., and was called to order by the Honorable ANGUS S. KING, a Senator from the State of Maine.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The bill clerk read the following letter.

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 14, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable ANGUS S. KING, a Senator from the State of Maine, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. KING thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TUESDAY,
MARCH 18, 2014, AT 10:30 A.M.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until Tuesday, March 18, 2014, at 10:30 a.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:31 and 42 seconds a.m., adjourned until Tuesday, March 18, 2014, at 10:30 a.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Friday, March 14, 2014

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RIBBLE).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 14, 2014

I hereby appoint the Honorable REID J. RIBBLE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Compassionate and merciful God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

During the upcoming week of constituency visits, give the Members of this assembly insight, inspiration, and industry to work for the good of our country. Sustain our citizens with Your power, that they might be true to the highest and best they know and are able to achieve.

As Members visit with those whom they represent, may solutions that work toward the betterment of all in our Nation emerge in open and respectful conversation.

May the assurance of Your love and the presence of Your truth abide in all our hearts and all our homes.

And may all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. MULLIN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MULLIN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 5 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

WE ALL KNOW THAT OBAMACARE IS AN ABSOLUTE FAILURE

(Mr. MULLIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MULLIN. Mr. Speaker, time and time again, we have been reassured by this administration that ObamaCare is working, but when I talk to my constituents in Oklahoma's Second District, this is not the case. When I read the news headlines and discover yet another delay in ObamaCare, this is not the case.

Even this week, this administration was unable to provide—you know, I am up here, and I am reading talking points to you that you have heard over and over and over again, and yet we all know that ObamaCare is an absolute failure.

We all know that. The media knows that. This President knows that; and yet, he continues to force it down the throat of the American people, just because it is his signature piece of legislation.

What is sad is that this is just one of many things that has made this President and his administration an absolute failure. What is unfortunate is the American people are the ones that are having to pay for his mistakes. I, for one, have had enough.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ERNEST J. REYES

(Mr. CÁRDENAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the life and legacy of a very positive man, my friend, Ernest J. Reyes, who passed away recently at the age of 73. Though Mr. Reyes is sorely missed by friends and family, I know his legacy will endure.

Ernest J. Reyes was a native of Madera, California. He was dedicated to the California real estate community and used his knowledge to help families thrive and realize the American Dream of homeownership.

He cofounded the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Profes-

sionals and advocated for Spanish language services and documents for Hispanic homeownership. Mr. Reyes was also an exceptional public servant, holding various roles throughout his long career.

I extend my sincerest condolences to his wife of 50 years, Patricia Pedregon Reyes, along with his children, Denise Johnson and Daren Reyes, and his three grandchildren.

Mr. Reyes was an inspiration, and I know his loss will be felt by many, including the 29th Congressional District.

POLAR PLUNGE FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, last Saturday, I had the opportunity to celebrate the cold winter in Minnesota by getting together with hundreds of others and jumping through a hole in the ice and into a freezing lake.

Now, while some may think that many Minnesotans consider this normal recreational activity in the winter, it actually was to raise money for a very worthwhile cause.

The Polar Plunge, which takes place throughout Minnesota and other areas of the country all winter long, raises millions of dollars for the Special Olympics programs. This important funding allows more than 7,200 Special Olympics athletes in Minnesota to grow and thrive through a variety of competitions.

I want to thank our State's law enforcement for organizing the plunges, Channel 9's Ian Leonard for giving his selfless time and energy to support this cause and events, to all those who pledged their support for the participants, and of course, those who are crazy enough to jump in the middle of the winter through a hole in the ice.

Mr. Speaker, I want to offer and congratulate the support for the Special Olympics, an organization that is truly life-changing for its participants and their families.

GIRL SCOUTS

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and honor the service of our Nation's Girl Scouts.

On this week, more than 100 years ago, Juliette "Daisy" Gordon Low officially registered the Girl Scouts' first 18 members. Since that time, the Girl Scouts experience has enriched the lives of millions of girls, their families, and our communities.

I am especially proud to highlight the hard work of Felicia Dodge, a Girl Scout from Glenville, New York. Felicia is currently working on her Gold Award project to help create a sustainable sewing program at a local school in Haiti.

Felicia's project empowers the community to clothe themselves and hone the skills to run a sustainable business. Her hard work and certainly her involvement will send over 600 pounds of materials and supplies to the school. I applaud Felicia for her thoughtful and certainly inspiring endeavor.

On behalf of the citizens of the 20th Congressional District of New York, I thank the Girl Scouts of northeastern New York for their commitment and for their service to our communities.

EDUCATION IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT

(Mr. FLEISCHMANN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor America's teachers. I do that because I spoke with my 17-year-old son, who is a junior at Silverdale Baptist Academy, and he was asking me about teachers.

Now, most of you all know I had two elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high schools in my own career. I told my son how important teaching is. Just think about it: all across America today and in all of our 50 States, teachers are teaching and inspiring our children.

Education is critically important, whether it is in the private sector or in the public sector. It is so critically important that we get it right, and teaching is such a noble profession.

I wanted to rise today, Mr. Speaker, and just say thank you to our Nation's teachers. Keep up the great work. Keep inspiring our young minds, so that we can continue to move ahead as a great Nation.

THOMSON PRISON

(Mrs. BUSTOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the Thomson Correctional Center, a facility that has sat vacant in the town of Thomson, a small village in northern Illinois, since it was built by the State of Illinois in 2001.

For more than a decade, the people of my region have been thirsting for the jobs and the economic opportunity

that the opening of this facility would bring.

Yesterday, we received the very good news that we had been waiting for, for a long time. This was delivered to us from the Bureau of Prisons, which announced that they will designate the funding to activate the Thomson Correctional Center.

This investment means construction can soon begin. It means that workers can soon begin competing for good-paying jobs, and it means that northern Illinois will no longer be home to an empty prison.

When fully open, the Thomson Correctional Center will add 1,100 jobs to our region and will add \$200 million in annual economic impact. The prison's activation will not only be good for our economy, but it will also generate a sense of pride among the people I serve in the surrounding communities. We finally will see the dormant facility put to good use.

REINING IN EXECUTIVE OVERREACH

(Mr. SMITH of Missouri asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, President Obama and the administration have taken the uber-Presidency to a whole new level.

Time and time again, we have seen President Obama stretch the constitutional limits of the office. When President Obama simply disagrees with a law, he just ignores it. Mr. Speaker, no person is above the law.

The House of Representatives is committed to living by the Constitution and holding the administration accountable. The ENFORCE Act will give Congress the ability to bring a lawsuit against the President for failing to execute our laws.

The Faithful Execution of the Law Act will require any Federal official who is not enforcing a Federal law to report to Congress on the reason for nonenforcement. Mr. Speaker, the ENFORCE Act and the Faithful Execution of the Law Act uphold the Constitution.

These bills send a clear message that no one is above the law, and we will not have the Constitution be disregarded.

TUBEROUS SCLEROSIS COMPLEX

(Mr. MCNERNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting the important research being done at the Department of Defense into treating tuberous sclerosis complex or TSC.

Individuals with TSC experience tumors in the brain and other vital or-

gans, which can result in seizures, kidney failure, and other serious health problems. I have had the opportunity to meet with people affected by this illness and understand how critical it is to continue medical research into treatments while scientists develop a cure for TSC.

Funding the DOD TSC research program is essential in developing new clinical treatments and medical breakthroughs for the disorder. In addition, this research has applications for other medical conditions, such as traumatic brain injuries, which are common in combat and sports injuries. TSC research breakthroughs will likely also have applications to some specific cancers.

By committing support and funding for this important research, we give hope to those living with TSC and other chronic illnesses to help them live long and healthy lives.

SITES RESERVOIR

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, California is suffering from its worst drought in at least 35 years, maybe as much as 400 years; though lately, the Good Lord has sought to bless us with about 5 inches of rain on my farm and my neighborhood, we can't let that be a cause for inaction. Indeed, the Good Lord helps those who help themselves.

It is time to build. It has been time to build, for a long time, the type of water storage that moves California ahead and supplies farms, cities, and environmental needs.

We have this opportunity in a project that has long awaited our authorization, the Sites Reservoir in the western part of Colusa and Glenn Counties, a district that I used to represent in the State legislature and which my colleague, JOHN GARAMENDI, now represents in Congress.

We will soon be introducing a piece of legislation to move forward on the Sites Reservoir with an authorization for the funds needed to complete the studies and get started.

Some may say: Well, it will take 7 or 10 years to get this done.

Had we started 7 or 10 years ago, we would be right near completion; so we need to start today, and the people will thank us 7 or 10 years from now when we get this done. This will be introduced, hopefully, soon.

□ 0915

MILITARY TRANSITION SUPPORT PROJECT

(Mr. PETERS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the

Military Transition Support Project, an innovative program to ease the transition for recently discharged veterans as they return to civilian life, which I helped launch last month.

Each year, over 15,000 servicemembers are discharged in San Diego, and around half will choose to stay there. Over the past year, we have worked with our local veteran leadership, our Navy and Marine commanders, and the San Diego philanthropic community to create a central system to help servicemembers navigate through their transition process.

This unique effort will improve the quality of life for servicemembers across San Diego. The program will begin in the last year of service and will give these dedicated men and women access to resources and continuous support throughout the transition process, beginning while they are still in uniform, by providing a central portal for benefits, employment, and housing.

This program has the potential to serve as a model for military communities around the country. It represents a groundbreaking, collaborative effort where the military, nonprofits, and private sector stakeholders can come together in the cooperative spirit that is a hallmark of San Diego to get our veterans to work.

SGR REPEAL AND MEDICARE PROVIDER PAYMENT MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2014

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 515, I call up the bill (H.R. 4015) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to repeal the Medicare sustainable growth rate and improve Medicare payments for physicians and other professionals, and for other purposes to amend section 530D of title 28, United States Code, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 515, the amendment printed in part B of House Report 113-379 is adopted and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 4015

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Repealing the sustainable growth rate (SGR) and improving Medicare payment for physicians’ services.
- Sec. 3. Priorities and funding for measure development.

Sec. 4. Encouraging care management for individuals with chronic care needs.

Sec. 5. Ensuring accurate valuation of services under the physician fee schedule.

Sec. 6. Promoting evidence-based care.

Sec. 7. Empowering beneficiary choices through access to information on physicians’ services.

Sec. 8. Expanding availability of Medicare data.

Sec. 9. Reducing administrative burden and other provisions.

SEC. 2. REPEALING THE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH RATE (SGR) AND IMPROVING MEDICARE PAYMENT FOR PHYSICIANS’ SERVICES.

(a) STABILIZING FEE UPDATES.—

(1) REPEAL OF SGR PAYMENT METHODOLOGY.—Section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4) is amended—

(A) in subsection (d)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(A), by inserting “or a subsequent paragraph” after “paragraph (4)”; and

(ii) in paragraph (4)—

(I) in the heading, by inserting “AND ENDING WITH 2013” after “YEARS BEGINNING WITH 2001”; and

(II) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “and ending with 2013” after “a year beginning with 2001”; and

(B) in subsection (f)—

(i) in paragraph (1)(B), by inserting “through 2013” after “of each succeeding year”; and

(ii) in paragraph (2), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by inserting “and ending with 2013” after “beginning with 2000”.

(2) UPDATE OF RATES FOR APRIL THROUGH DECEMBER OF 2014, 2015, AND SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—Subsection (d) of section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4) is amended by striking paragraph (15) and inserting the following new paragraphs:

“(15) UPDATE FOR 2014 THROUGH 2018.—The update to the single conversion factor established in paragraph (1)(C) for 2014 and each subsequent year through 2018 shall be 0.5 percent.

“(16) UPDATE FOR 2019 THROUGH 2023.—The update to the single conversion factor established in paragraph (1)(C) for 2019 and each subsequent year through 2023 shall be zero percent.

“(17) UPDATE FOR 2024 AND SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—The update to the single conversion factor established in paragraph (1)(C) for 2024 and each subsequent year shall be—

“(A) for items and services furnished by a qualifying APM participant (as defined in section 1833(z)(2)) for such year, 1.0 percent; and

“(B) for other items and services, 0.5 percent.”.

(3) MEDPAC REPORTS.—

(A) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than July 1, 2016, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission shall submit to Congress a report on the relationship between—

(i) physician and other health professional utilization and expenditures (and the rate of increase of such utilization and expenditures) of items and services for which payment is made under section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4); and

(ii) total utilization and expenditures (and the rate of increase of such utilization and expenditures) under parts A, B, and D of title XVIII of such Act.

Such report shall include a methodology to describe such relationship and the impact of

changes in such physician and other health professional practice and service ordering patterns on total utilization and expenditures under parts A, B, and D of such title.

(B) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than July 1, 2020, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission shall submit to Congress a report on the relationship described in subparagraph (A), including the results determined from applying the methodology included in the report submitted under such subparagraph.

(C) REPORT ON UPDATE TO PHYSICIANS’ SERVICES UNDER MEDICARE.—Not later than July 1, 2018, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission shall submit to Congress a report on—

(i) the payment update for professional services applied under the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act for the period of years 2014 through 2018;

(ii) the effect of such update on the efficiency, economy, and quality of care provided under such program;

(iii) the effect of such update on ensuring a sufficient number of providers to maintain access to care by Medicare beneficiaries; and

(iv) recommendations for any future payment updates for professional services under such program to ensure adequate access to care is maintained for Medicare beneficiaries.

(b) CONSOLIDATION OF CERTAIN CURRENT LAW PERFORMANCE PROGRAMS WITH NEW MERIT-BASED INCENTIVE PAYMENT SYSTEM.—

(1) EHR MEANINGFUL USE INCENTIVE PROGRAM.—

(A) SUNSETTING SEPARATE MEANINGFUL USE PAYMENT ADJUSTMENTS.—Section 1848(a)(7)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(a)(7)(A)) is amended—

(i) in clause (i), by striking “or any subsequent payment year” and inserting “or 2017”; and

(ii) in clause (ii)—

(I) in the matter preceding subclause (I), by striking “Subject to clause (iii), for” and inserting “For”; and

(II) in subclause (I), by adding at the end “and”; and

(III) in subclause (II), by striking “; and” and inserting a period; and

(IV) by striking subclause (III); and

(iii) by striking clause (iii).

(B) CONTINUATION OF MEANINGFUL USE DETERMINATIONS FOR MIPS.—Section 1848(o)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(o)(2)) is amended—

(i) in subparagraph (A), in the matter preceding clause (i)—

(I) by striking “For purposes of paragraph (1), an” and inserting “An”; and

(II) by inserting “, or pursuant to subparagraph (D) for purposes of subsection (q), for a performance period under such subsection for a year” after “under such subsection for a year”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) CONTINUED APPLICATION FOR PURPOSES OF MIPS.—With respect to 2018 and each subsequent payment year, the Secretary shall, for purposes of subsection (q) and in accordance with paragraph (1)(F) of such subsection, determine whether an eligible professional who is a MIPS eligible professional (as defined in subsection (q)(1)(C)) for such year is a meaningful EHR user under this paragraph for the performance period under subsection (q) for such year.”.

(2) QUALITY REPORTING.—

(A) SUNSETTING SEPARATE QUALITY REPORTING INCENTIVES.—Section 1848(a)(8)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(a)(8)(A)) is amended—

(i) in clause (i), by striking “or any subsequent year” and inserting “or 2017”; and

(ii) in clause (ii)(II), by striking “and each subsequent year”.

(B) CONTINUATION OF QUALITY MEASURES AND PROCESSES FOR MIPS.—Section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4) is amended—

(i) in subsection (k), by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(9) CONTINUED APPLICATION FOR PURPOSES OF MIPS AND FOR CERTAIN PROFESSIONALS VOLUNTEERING TO REPORT.—The Secretary shall, in accordance with subsection (q)(1)(F), carry out the provisions of this subsection—

“(A) for purposes of subsection (q); and

“(B) for eligible professionals who are not MIPS eligible professionals (as defined in subsection (q)(1)(C)) for the year involved.”; and

(ii) in subsection (m)—

(I) by redesignating paragraph (7) added by section 10327(a) of Public Law 111-148 as paragraph (8); and

(II) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(9) CONTINUED APPLICATION FOR PURPOSES OF MIPS AND FOR CERTAIN PROFESSIONALS VOLUNTEERING TO REPORT.—The Secretary shall, in accordance with subsection (q)(1)(F), carry out the processes under this subsection—

“(A) for purposes of subsection (q); and

“(B) for eligible professionals who are not MIPS eligible professionals (as defined in subsection (q)(1)(C)) for the year involved.”.

(3) VALUE-BASED PAYMENTS.—

(A) SUNSETTING SEPARATE VALUE-BASED PAYMENTS.—Clause (iii) of section 1848(p)(4)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(p)(4)(B)) is amended to read as follows:

“(iii) APPLICATION.—The Secretary shall apply the payment modifier established under this subsection for items and services furnished on or after January 1, 2015, but before January 1, 2018, with respect to specific physicians and groups of physicians the Secretary determines appropriate. Such payment modifier shall not be applied for items and services furnished on or after January 1, 2018.”.

(B) CONTINUATION OF VALUE-BASED PAYMENT MODIFIER MEASURES FOR MIPS.—Section 1848(p) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(p)) is amended—

(i) in paragraph (2), by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(C) CONTINUED APPLICATION FOR PURPOSES OF MIPS.—The Secretary shall, in accordance with subsection (q)(1)(F), carry out subparagraph (B) for purposes of subsection (q).”; and

(ii) in paragraph (3), by adding at the end the following: “With respect to 2018 and each subsequent year, the Secretary shall, in accordance with subsection (q)(1)(F), carry out this paragraph for purposes of subsection (q).”.

(C) MERIT-BASED INCENTIVE PAYMENT SYSTEM.—

(I) IN GENERAL.—Section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(q) MERIT-BASED INCENTIVE PAYMENT SYSTEM.—

“(I) ESTABLISHMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the succeeding provisions of this subsection, the Secretary shall establish an eligible professional Merit-based Incentive Payment System (in this subsection referred to as the ‘MIPS’) under which the Secretary shall—

“(i) develop a methodology for assessing the total performance of each MIPS eligible professional according to performance standards under paragraph (3) for a performance period (as established under paragraph (4)) for a year;

“(ii) using such methodology, provide for a composite performance score in accordance with paragraph (5) for each such professional for each performance period; and

“(iii) use such composite performance score of the MIPS eligible professional for a performance period for a year to determine and apply a MIPS adjustment factor (and, as applicable, an additional MIPS adjustment factor) under paragraph (6) to the professional for the year.

“(B) PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.—The MIPS shall apply to payments for items and services furnished on or after January 1, 2018.

“(C) MIPS ELIGIBLE PROFESSIONAL DEFINED.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this subsection, subject to clauses (ii) and (iv), the term ‘MIPS eligible professional’ means—

“(I) for the first and second years for which the MIPS applies to payments (and for the performance period for such first and second year), a physician (as defined in section 1861(r)), a physician assistant, nurse practitioner, and clinical nurse specialist (as such terms are defined in section 1861(aa)(5)), and a certified registered nurse anesthetist (as defined in section 1861(bb)(2)) and a group that includes such professionals; and

“(II) for the third year for which the MIPS applies to payments (and for the performance period for such third year) and for each succeeding year (and for the performance period for each such year), the professionals described in subclause (I) and such other eligible professionals (as defined in subsection (k)(3)(B)) as specified by the Secretary and a group that includes such professionals.

“(ii) EXCLUSIONS.—For purposes of clause (i), the term ‘MIPS eligible professional’ does not include, with respect to a year, an eligible professional (as defined in subsection (k)(3)(B)) who—

“(I) is a qualifying APM participant (as defined in section 1833(z)(2));

“(II) subject to clause (vii), is a partial qualifying APM participant (as defined in clause (iii)) for the most recent period for which data are available and who, for the performance period with respect to such year, does not report on applicable measures and activities described in paragraph (2)(B) that are required to be reported by such a professional under the MIPS; or

“(III) for the performance period with respect to such year, does not exceed the low-volume threshold measurement selected under clause (iv).

“(iii) PARTIAL QUALIFYING APM PARTICIPANT.—For purposes of this subparagraph, the term ‘partial qualifying APM participant’ means, with respect to a year, an eligible professional for whom the Secretary determines the minimum payment percentage (or percentages), as applicable, described in paragraph (2) of section 1833(z) for such year have not been satisfied, but who would be considered a qualifying APM participant (as defined in such paragraph) for such year if—

“(I) with respect to 2018 and 2019, the reference in subparagraph (A) of such paragraph to 25 percent was instead a reference to 20 percent;

“(II) with respect to 2020 and 2021—

“(aa) the reference in subparagraph (B)(i) of such paragraph to 50 percent was instead a reference to 40 percent; and

“(bb) the references in subparagraph (B)(ii) of such paragraph to 50 percent and 25 per-

cent of such paragraph were instead references to 40 percent and 20 percent, respectively; and

“(III) with respect to 2022 and subsequent years—

“(aa) the reference in subparagraph (C)(i) of such paragraph to 75 percent was instead a reference to 50 percent; and

“(bb) the references in subparagraph (C)(ii) of such paragraph to 75 percent and 25 percent of such paragraph were instead references to 50 percent and 20 percent, respectively.

“(iv) SELECTION OF LOW-VOLUME THRESHOLD MEASUREMENT.—The Secretary shall select a low-volume threshold to apply for purposes of clause (ii)(III), which may include one or more of a combination of the following:

“(I) The minimum number (as determined by the Secretary) of individuals enrolled under this part who are treated by the eligible professional for the performance period involved.

“(II) The minimum number (as determined by the Secretary) of items and services furnished to individuals enrolled under this part by such professional for such performance period.

“(III) The minimum amount (as determined by the Secretary) of allowed charges billed by such professional under this part for such performance period.

“(v) TREATMENT OF NEW MEDICARE ENROLLED ELIGIBLE PROFESSIONALS.—In the case of a professional who first becomes a Medicare enrolled eligible professional during the performance period for a year (and had not previously submitted claims under this title such as a person, an entity, or a part of a physician group or under a different billing number or tax identifier), such professional shall not be treated under this subsection as a MIPS eligible professional until the subsequent year and performance period for such subsequent year.

“(vi) CLARIFICATION.—In the case of items and services furnished during a year by an individual who is not a MIPS eligible professional (including pursuant to clauses (ii) and (v)) with respect to a year, in no case shall a MIPS adjustment factor (or additional MIPS adjustment factor) under paragraph (6) apply to such individual for such year.

“(vii) PARTIAL QUALIFYING APM PARTICIPANT CLARIFICATIONS.—

“(I) TREATMENT AS MIPS ELIGIBLE PROFESSIONAL.—In the case of an eligible professional who is a partial qualifying APM participant, with respect to a year, and who for the performance period for such year reports on applicable measures and activities described in paragraph (2)(B) that are required to be reported by such a professional under the MIPS, such eligible professional is considered to be a MIPS eligible professional with respect to such year.

“(II) NOT ELIGIBLE FOR QUALIFYING APM PARTICIPANT PAYMENTS.—In no case shall an eligible professional who is a partial qualifying APM participant, with respect to a year, be considered a qualifying APM participant (as defined in paragraph (2) of section 1833(z)) for such year or be eligible for the additional payment under paragraph (1) of such section for such year.

“(D) APPLICATION TO GROUP PRACTICES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Under the MIPS:

“(I) QUALITY PERFORMANCE CATEGORY.—The Secretary shall establish and apply a process that includes features of the provisions of subsection (m)(3)(C) for MIPS eligible professionals in a group practice with respect to assessing performance of such group with respect to the performance category described in clause (i) of paragraph (2)(A).

“(II) OTHER PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES.—The Secretary may establish and apply a process that includes features of the provisions of subsection (m)(3)(C) for MIPS eligible professionals in a group practice with respect to assessing the performance of such group with respect to the performance categories described in clauses (i) through (iv) of such paragraph.

“(ii) ENSURING COMPREHENSIVENESS OF GROUP PRACTICE ASSESSMENT.—The process established under clause (i) shall to the extent practicable reflect the range of items and services furnished by the MIPS eligible professionals in the group practice involved.

“(iii) CLARIFICATION.—MIPS eligible professionals electing to be a virtual group under paragraph (5)(I) shall not be considered MIPS eligible professionals in a group practice for purposes of applying this subparagraph.

“(E) USE OF REGISTRIES.—Under the MIPS, the Secretary shall encourage the use of qualified clinical data registries pursuant to subsection (m)(3)(E) in carrying out this subsection.

“(F) APPLICATION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS.—In applying a provision of subsection (k), (m), (o), or (p) for purposes of this subsection, the Secretary shall—

“(i) adjust the application of such provision to ensure the provision is consistent with the provisions of this subsection; and

“(ii) not apply such provision to the extent that the provision is duplicative with a provision of this subsection.

“(G) ACCOUNTING FOR RISK FACTORS.—

“(i) RISK FACTORS.—Taking into account the relevant studies conducted and recommendations made in reports under section 2(f)(1) of the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014, the Secretary, on an ongoing basis, shall estimate how an individual's health status and other risk factors affect quality and resource use outcome measures and, as feasible, shall incorporate information from quality and resource use outcome measurement (including care episode and patient condition groups) into the MIPS.

“(ii) ACCOUNTING FOR OTHER FACTORS IN PAYMENT ADJUSTMENTS.—Taking into account the studies conducted and recommendations made in reports under section 2(f)(1) of the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014 and other information as appropriate, the Secretary shall account for identified factors with an effect on quality and resource use outcome measures when determining payment adjustments, composite performance scores, scores for performance categories, or scores for measures or activities under the MIPS.

“(2) MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES UNDER PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES.—

“(A) PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES.—Under the MIPS, the Secretary shall use the following performance categories (each of which is referred to in this subsection as a performance category) in determining the composite performance score under paragraph (5):

“(i) Quality.

“(ii) Resource use.

“(iii) Clinical practice improvement activities.

“(iv) Meaningful use of certified EHR technology.

“(B) MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES SPECIFIED FOR EACH CATEGORY.—For purposes of paragraph (3)(A) and subject to subparagraph (C), measures and activities specified for a performance period (as established under paragraph (4)) for a year are as follows:

“(i) QUALITY.—For the performance category described in subparagraph (A)(i), the quality measures included in the final measures list published under subparagraph (D)(i) for such year and the list of quality measures described in subparagraph (D)(vi) used by qualified clinical data registries under subsection (m)(3)(E).

“(ii) RESOURCE USE.—For the performance category described in subparagraph (A)(ii), the measurement of resource use for such period under subsection (p)(3), using the methodology under subsection (r) as appropriate, and, as feasible and applicable, accounting for the cost of drugs under part D.

“(iii) CLINICAL PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES.—For the performance category described in subparagraph (A)(iii), clinical practice improvement activities (as defined in subparagraph (C)(v)(III)) under subcategories specified by the Secretary for such period, which shall include at least the following:

“(I) The subcategory of expanded practice access, which shall include activities such as same day appointments for urgent needs and after hours access to clinician advice.

“(II) The subcategory of population management, which shall include activities such as monitoring health conditions of individuals to provide timely health care interventions or participation in a qualified clinical data registry.

“(III) The subcategory of care coordination, which shall include activities such as timely communication of test results, timely exchange of clinical information to patients and other providers, and use of remote monitoring or telehealth.

“(IV) The subcategory of beneficiary engagement, which shall include activities such as the establishment of care plans for individuals with complex care needs, beneficiary self-management assessment and training, and using shared decision-making mechanisms.

“(V) The subcategory of patient safety and practice assessment, such as through use of clinical or surgical checklists and practice assessments related to maintaining certification.

“(VI) The subcategory of participation in an alternative payment model (as defined in section 1833(z)(3)(C)).

In establishing activities under this clause, the Secretary shall give consideration to the circumstances of small practices (consisting of 15 or fewer professionals) and practices located in rural areas and in health professional shortage areas (as designated under section 332(a)(1)(A) of the Public Health Service Act).

“(iv) MEANINGFUL EHR USE.—For the performance category described in subparagraph (A)(iv), the requirements established for such period under subsection (o)(2) for determining whether an eligible professional is a meaningful EHR user.

“(C) ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS.—

“(i) EMPHASIZING OUTCOME MEASURES UNDER THE QUALITY PERFORMANCE CATEGORY.—In applying subparagraph (B)(i), the Secretary shall, as feasible, emphasize the application of outcome measures.

“(ii) APPLICATION OF ADDITIONAL SYSTEM MEASURES.—The Secretary may use measures used for a payment system other than for physicians, such as measures for inpatient hospitals, for purposes of the performance categories described in clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (A). For purposes of the previous sentence, the Secretary may not use measures for hospital outpatient departments, except in the case of emergency physicians.

“(iii) GLOBAL AND POPULATION-BASED MEASURES.—The Secretary may use global measures, such as global outcome measures, and population-based measures for purposes of the performance category described in subparagraph (A)(i).

“(iv) APPLICATION OF MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES TO NON-PATIENT-FACING PROFESSIONALS.—In carrying out this paragraph, with respect to measures and activities specified in subparagraph (B) for performance categories described in subparagraph (A), the Secretary—

“(I) shall give consideration to the circumstances of professional types (or subcategories of those types determined by practice characteristics) who typically furnish services that do not involve face-to-face interaction with a patient; and

“(II) may, to the extent feasible and appropriate, take into account such circumstances and apply under this subsection with respect to MIPS eligible professionals of such professional types or subcategories, alternative measures or activities that fulfill the goals of the applicable performance category.

In carrying out the previous sentence, the Secretary shall consult with professionals of such professional types or subcategories.

“(v) CLINICAL PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES.—

“(I) REQUEST FOR INFORMATION.—In initially applying subparagraph (B)(iii), the Secretary shall use a request for information to solicit recommendations from stakeholders to identify activities described in such subparagraph and specifying criteria for such activities.

“(II) CONTRACT AUTHORITY FOR CLINICAL PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE CATEGORY.—In applying subparagraph (B)(iii), the Secretary may contract with entities to assist the Secretary in—

“(aa) identifying activities described in subparagraph (B)(iii);

“(bb) specifying criteria for such activities; and

“(cc) determining whether a MIPS eligible professional meets such criteria.

“(III) CLINICAL PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES DEFINED.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘clinical practice improvement activity’ means an activity that relevant eligible professional organizations and other relevant stakeholders identify as improving clinical practice or care delivery and that the Secretary determines, when effectively executed, is likely to result in improved outcomes.

“(D) ANNUAL LIST OF QUALITY MEASURES AVAILABLE FOR MIPS ASSESSMENT.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Under the MIPS, the Secretary, through notice and comment rule-making and subject to the succeeding clauses of this subparagraph, shall, with respect to the performance period for a year, establish an annual final list of quality measures from which MIPS eligible professionals may choose for purposes of assessment under this subsection for such performance period. Pursuant to the previous sentence, the Secretary shall—

“(I) not later than November 1 of the year prior to the first day of the first performance period under the MIPS, establish and publish in the Federal Register a final list of quality measures; and

“(II) not later than November 1 of the year prior to the first day of each subsequent performance period, update the final list of quality measures from the previous year (and publish such updated final list in the Federal Register), by—

“(aa) removing from such list, as appropriate, quality measures, which may include the removal of measures that are no longer meaningful (such as measures that are topped out);

“(bb) adding to such list, as appropriate, new quality measures; and

“(cc) determining whether or not quality measures on such list that have undergone substantive changes should be included in the updated list.

“(i) CALL FOR QUALITY MEASURES.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Eligible professional organizations and other relevant stakeholders shall be requested to identify and submit quality measures to be considered for selection under this subparagraph in the annual list of quality measures published under clause (i) and to identify and submit updates to the measures on such list. For purposes of the previous sentence, measures may be submitted regardless of whether such measures were previously published in a proposed rule or endorsed by an entity with a contract under section 1890(a).

“(II) ELIGIBLE PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION DEFINED.—In this subparagraph, the term ‘eligible professional organization’ means a professional organization as defined by nationally recognized multispecialty boards of certification or equivalent certification boards.

“(iii) REQUIREMENTS.—In selecting quality measures for inclusion in the annual final list under clause (i), the Secretary shall—

“(I) provide that, to the extent practicable, all quality domains (as defined in subsection (s)(1)(B)) are addressed by such measures; and

“(II) ensure that such selection is consistent with the process for selection of measures under subsections (k), (m), and (p)(2).

“(iv) PEER REVIEW.—Before including a new measure or a measure described in clause (i)(II)(cc) in the final list of measures published under clause (i) for a year, the Secretary shall submit for publication in applicable specialty-appropriate peer-reviewed journals such measure and the method for developing and selecting such measure, including clinical and other data supporting such measure.

“(v) MEASURES FOR INCLUSION.—The final list of quality measures published under clause (i) shall include, as applicable, measures under subsections (k), (m), and (p)(2), including quality measures from among—

“(I) measures endorsed by a consensus-based entity;

“(II) measures developed under subsection (s); and

“(III) measures submitted under clause (ii)(I).

Any measure selected for inclusion in such list that is not endorsed by a consensus-based entity shall have a focus that is evidence-based.

“(vi) EXCEPTION FOR QUALIFIED CLINICAL DATA REGISTRY MEASURES.—Measures used by a qualified clinical data registry under subsection (m)(3)(E) shall not be subject to the requirements under clauses (i), (iv), and (v). The Secretary shall publish the list of measures used by such qualified clinical data registries on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

“(vii) EXCEPTION FOR EXISTING QUALITY MEASURES.—Any quality measure specified by the Secretary under subsection (k) or (m), including under subsection (m)(3)(E), and any measure of quality of care established under subsection (p)(2) for the reporting period under the respective subsection begin-

ning before the first performance period under the MIPS—

“(I) shall not be subject to the requirements under clause (i) (except under items (aa) and (cc) of subclause (II) of such clause) or to the requirement under clause (iv); and

“(II) shall be included in the final list of quality measures published under clause (i) unless removed under clause (i)(II)(aa).

“(viii) CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT ELIGIBLE PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS.—Relevant eligible professional organizations and other relevant stakeholders, including State and national medical societies, shall be consulted in carrying out this subparagraph.

“(ix) OPTIONAL APPLICATION.—The process under section 1890A is not required to apply to the selection of measures under this subparagraph.

“(3) PERFORMANCE STANDARDS.—

“(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—Under the MIPS, the Secretary shall establish performance standards with respect to measures and activities specified under paragraph (2)(B) for a performance period (as established under paragraph (4)) for a year.

“(B) CONSIDERATIONS IN ESTABLISHING STANDARDS.—In establishing such performance standards with respect to measures and activities specified under paragraph (2)(B), the Secretary shall consider the following:

“(i) Historical performance standards.

“(ii) Improvement.

“(iii) The opportunity for continued improvement.

“(4) PERFORMANCE PERIOD.—The Secretary shall establish a performance period (or periods) for a year (beginning with the year described in paragraph (1)(B)). Such performance period (or periods) shall begin and end prior to the beginning of such year and be as close as possible to such year. In this subsection, such performance period (or periods) for a year shall be referred to as the performance period for the year.

“(5) COMPOSITE PERFORMANCE SCORE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the succeeding provisions of this paragraph and taking into account, as available and applicable, paragraph (1)(G), the Secretary shall develop a methodology for assessing the total performance of each MIPS eligible professional according to performance standards under paragraph (3) with respect to applicable measures and activities specified in paragraph (2)(B) with respect to each performance category applicable to such professional for a performance period (as established under paragraph (4)) for a year. Using such methodology, the Secretary shall provide for a composite assessment (using a scoring scale of 0 to 100) for each such professional for the performance period for such year. In this subsection such a composite assessment for such a professional with respect to a performance period shall be referred to as the ‘composite performance score’ for such professional for such performance period.

“(B) INCENTIVE TO REPORT; ENCOURAGING USE OF CERTIFIED EHR TECHNOLOGY FOR REPORTING QUALITY MEASURES.—

“(i) INCENTIVE TO REPORT.—Under the methodology established under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall provide that in the case of a MIPS eligible professional who fails to report on an applicable measure or activity that is required to be reported by the professional, the professional shall be treated as achieving the lowest potential score applicable to such measure or activity.

“(ii) ENCOURAGING USE OF CERTIFIED EHR TECHNOLOGY AND QUALIFIED CLINICAL DATA REGISTRIES FOR REPORTING QUALITY MEAS-

URES.—Under the methodology established under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall—

“(I) encourage MIPS eligible professionals to report on applicable measures with respect to the performance category described in paragraph (2)(A)(i) through the use of certified EHR technology and qualified clinical data registries; and

“(II) with respect to a performance period, with respect to a year, for which a MIPS eligible professional reports such measures through the use of such EHR technology, treat such professional as satisfying the clinical quality measures reporting requirement described in subsection (o)(2)(A)(iii) for such year.

“(C) CLINICAL PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES PERFORMANCE SCORE.—

“(i) RULE FOR ACCREDITATION.—A MIPS eligible professional who is in a practice that is certified as a patient-centered medical home or comparable specialty practice pursuant to subsection (b)(8)(B)(i) with respect to a performance period shall be given the highest potential score for the performance category described in paragraph (2)(A)(iii) for such period.

“(ii) APM PARTICIPATION.—Participation by a MIPS eligible professional in an alternative payment model (as defined in section 1833(z)(3)(C)) with respect to a performance period shall earn such eligible professional a minimum score of one-half of the highest potential score for the performance category described in paragraph (2)(A)(iii) for such performance period.

“(iii) SUBCATEGORIES.—A MIPS eligible professional shall not be required to perform activities in each subcategory under paragraph (2)(B)(iii) or participate in an alternative payment model in order to achieve the highest potential score for the performance category described in paragraph (2)(A)(iii).

“(D) ACHIEVEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT.—

“(i) TAKING INTO ACCOUNT IMPROVEMENT.—Beginning with the second year to which the MIPS applies, in addition to the achievement of a MIPS eligible professional, if data sufficient to measure improvement is available, the methodology developed under subparagraph (A)—

“(I) in the case of the performance score for the performance category described in clauses (i) and (ii) of paragraph (2)(A), shall take into account the improvement of the professional; and

“(II) in the case of performance scores for other performance categories, may take into account the improvement of the professional.

“(ii) ASSIGNING HIGHER WEIGHT FOR ACHIEVEMENT.—Beginning with the fourth year to which the MIPS applies, under the methodology developed under subparagraph (A), the Secretary may assign a higher scoring weight under subparagraph (F) with respect to the achievement of a MIPS eligible professional than with respect to any improvement of such professional applied under clause (i) with respect to a measure, activity, or category described in paragraph (2).

“(E) WEIGHTS FOR THE PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Under the methodology developed under subparagraph (A), subject to subparagraph (F)(i) and clauses (ii) and (iii), the composite performance score shall be determined as follows:

“(I) QUALITY.—

“(aa) IN GENERAL.—Subject to item (bb), thirty percent of such score shall be based on performance with respect to the category described in clause (i) of paragraph (2)(A). In

applying the previous sentence, the Secretary shall, as feasible, encourage the application of outcome measures within such category.

“(bb) FIRST 2 YEARS.—For the first and second years for which the MIPS applies to payments, the percentage applicable under item (aa) shall be increased in a manner such that the total percentage points of the increase under this item for the respective year equals the total number of percentage points by which the percentage applied under subclause (II)(bb) for the respective year is less than 30 percent.

“(II) RESOURCE USE.—

“(aa) IN GENERAL.—Subject to item (bb), thirty percent of such score shall be based on performance with respect to the category described in clause (ii) of paragraph (2)(A).

“(bb) FIRST 2 YEARS.—For the first year for which the MIPS applies to payments, not more than 10 percent of such score shall be based on performance with respect to the category described in clause (ii) of paragraph (2)(A). For the second year for which the MIPS applies to payments, not more than 15 percent of such score shall be based on performance with respect to the category described in clause (ii) of paragraph (2)(A).

“(III) CLINICAL PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES.—Fifteen percent of such score shall be based on performance with respect to the category described in clause (iii) of paragraph (2)(A).

“(IV) MEANINGFUL USE OF CERTIFIED EHR TECHNOLOGY.—Twenty-five percent of such score shall be based on performance with respect to the category described in clause (iv) of paragraph (2)(A).

“(i) AUTHORITY TO ADJUST PERCENTAGES IN CASE OF HIGH EHR MEANINGFUL USE ADOPTION.—In any year in which the Secretary estimates that the proportion of eligible professionals (as defined in subsection (o)(5)) who are meaningful EHR users (as determined under subsection (o)(2)) is 75 percent or greater, the Secretary may reduce the percent applicable under clause (i)(IV), but not below 15 percent. If the Secretary makes such reduction for a year, subject to subclauses (I)(bb) and (II)(bb) of clause (i), the percentages applicable under one or more of subclauses (I), (II), and (III) of clause (i) for such year shall be increased in a manner such that the total percentage points of the increase under this clause for such year equals the total number of percentage points reduced under the preceding sentence for such year.

“(F) CERTAIN FLEXIBILITY FOR WEIGHTING PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES, MEASURES, AND ACTIVITIES.—Under the methodology under subparagraph (A), if there are not sufficient measures and clinical practice improvement activities applicable and available to each type of eligible professional involved, the Secretary shall assign different scoring weights (including a weight of 0)—

“(i) which may vary from the scoring weights specified in subparagraph (E), for each performance category based on the extent to which the category is applicable to the type of eligible professional involved; and

“(ii) for each measure and activity specified under paragraph (2)(B) with respect to each such category based on the extent to which the measure or activity is applicable and available to the type of eligible professional involved.

“(G) RESOURCE USE.—Analysis of the performance category described in paragraph (2)(A)(ii) shall include results from the methodology described in subsection (r)(5), as appropriate.

“(H) INCLUSION OF QUALITY MEASURE DATA FROM OTHER PAYERS.—In applying subsections (k), (m), and (p) with respect to measures described in paragraph (2)(B)(i), analysis of the performance category described in paragraph (2)(A)(i) may include data submitted by MIPS eligible professionals with respect to items and services furnished to individuals who are not individuals entitled to benefits under part A or enrolled under part B.

“(I) USE OF VOLUNTARY VIRTUAL GROUPS FOR CERTAIN ASSESSMENT PURPOSES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of MIPS eligible professionals electing to be a virtual group under clause (ii) with respect to a performance period for a year, for purposes of applying the methodology under subparagraph (A)—

“(I) the assessment of performance provided under such methodology with respect to the performance categories described in clauses (i) and (ii) of paragraph (2)(A) that is to be applied to each such professional in such group for such performance period shall be with respect to the combined performance of all such professionals in such group for such period; and

“(II) the composite score provided under this paragraph for such performance period with respect to each such performance category for each such MIPS eligible professional in such virtual group shall be based on the assessment of the combined performance under subclause (I) for the performance category and performance period.

“(ii) ELECTION OF PRACTICES TO BE A VIRTUAL GROUP.—The Secretary shall, in accordance with clause (iii), establish and have in place a process to allow an individual MIPS eligible professional or a group practice consisting of not more than 10 MIPS eligible professionals to elect, with respect to a performance period for a year, for such individual MIPS eligible professional or all such MIPS eligible professionals in such group practice, respectively, to be a virtual group under this subparagraph with at least one other such individual MIPS eligible professional or group practice making such an election. Such a virtual group may be based on geographic areas or on provider specialties defined by nationally recognized multispecialty boards of certification or equivalent certification boards and such other eligible professional groupings in order to capture classifications of providers across eligible professional organizations and other practice areas or categories.

“(iii) REQUIREMENTS.—The process under clause (ii)—

“(I) shall provide that an election under such clause, with respect to a performance period, shall be made before or during the beginning of such performance period and may not be changed during such performance period; and

“(II) shall provide that a practice described in such clause, and each MIPS eligible professional in such practice, may elect to be in no more than one virtual group for a performance period; and

“(III) may provide that a virtual group may be combined at the tax identification number level.

“(6) MIPS PAYMENTS.—

“(A) MIPS ADJUSTMENT FACTOR.—Taking into account paragraph (1)(G), the Secretary shall specify a MIPS adjustment factor for each MIPS eligible professional for a year. Such MIPS adjustment factor for a MIPS eligible professional for a year shall be in the form of a percent and shall be determined—

“(i) by comparing the composite performance score of the eligible professional for

such year to the performance threshold established under subparagraph (D)(i) for such year;

“(ii) in a manner such that the adjustment factors specified under this subparagraph for a year result in differential payments under this paragraph reflecting that—

“(I) MIPS eligible professionals with composite performance scores for such year at or above such performance threshold for such year receive zero or positive incentive payment adjustment factors for such year in accordance with clause (iii), with such professionals having higher composite performance scores receiving higher adjustment factors; and

“(II) MIPS eligible professionals with composite performance scores for such year below such performance threshold for such year receive negative payment adjustment factors for such year in accordance with clause (iv), with such professionals having lower composite performance scores receiving lower adjustment factors;

“(iii) in a manner such that MIPS eligible professionals with composite scores described in clause (ii)(I) for such year, subject to clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (F), receive a zero or positive adjustment factor on a linear sliding scale such that an adjustment factor of 0 percent is assigned for a score at the performance threshold and an adjustment factor of the applicable percent specified in subparagraph (B) is assigned for a score of 100; and

“(iv) in a manner such that—

“(I) subject to subclause (II), MIPS eligible professionals with composite performance scores described in clause (ii)(II) for such year receive a negative payment adjustment factor on a linear sliding scale such that an adjustment factor of 0 percent is assigned for a score at the performance threshold and an adjustment factor of the negative of the applicable percent specified in subparagraph (B) is assigned for a score of 0; and

“(II) MIPS eligible professionals with composite performance scores that are equal to or greater than 0, but not greater than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the performance threshold specified under subparagraph (D)(i) for such year, receive a negative payment adjustment factor that is equal to the negative of the applicable percent specified in subparagraph (B) for such year.

“(B) APPLICABLE PERCENT DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘applicable percent’ means—

“(i) for 2018, 4 percent;

“(ii) for 2019, 5 percent;

“(iii) for 2020, 7 percent; and

“(iv) for 2021 and subsequent years, 9 percent.

“(C) ADDITIONAL MIPS ADJUSTMENT FACTORS FOR EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a MIPS eligible professional with a composite performance score for a year at or above the additional performance threshold under subparagraph (D)(ii) for such year, in addition to the MIPS adjustment factor under subparagraph (A) for the eligible professional for such year, subject to the availability of funds under clause (ii), the Secretary shall specify an additional positive MIPS adjustment factor for such professional and year. Such additional MIPS adjustment factors shall be determined by the Secretary in a manner such that professionals having higher composite performance scores above the additional performance threshold receive higher additional MIPS adjustment factors.

“(ii) ADDITIONAL FUNDING POOL.—For 2018 and each subsequent year through 2023, there

is appropriated from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund \$500,000,000 for MIPS payments under this paragraph resulting from the application of the additional MIPS adjustment factors under clause (i).

“(D) ESTABLISHMENT OF PERFORMANCE THRESHOLDS.—

“(i) PERFORMANCE THRESHOLD.—For each year of the MIPS, the Secretary shall compute a performance threshold with respect to which the composite performance score of MIPS eligible professionals shall be compared for purposes of determining adjustment factors under subparagraph (A) that are positive, negative, and zero. Such performance threshold for a year shall be the mean or median (as selected by the Secretary) of the composite performance scores for all MIPS eligible professionals with respect to a prior period specified by the Secretary. The Secretary may reassess the selection under the previous sentence every 3 years.

“(ii) ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCE THRESHOLD FOR EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE.—In addition to the performance threshold under clause (i), for each year of the MIPS, the Secretary shall compute an additional performance threshold for purposes of determining the additional MIPS adjustment factors under subparagraph (C)(i). For each such year, the Secretary shall apply either of the following methods for computing such additional performance threshold for such a year:

“(I) The threshold shall be the score that is equal to the 25th percentile of the range of possible composite performance scores above the performance threshold with respect to the prior period described in clause (i).

“(II) The threshold shall be the score that is equal to the 25th percentile of the actual composite performance scores for MIPS eligible professionals with composite performance scores at or above the performance threshold with respect to the prior period described in clause (i).

“(iii) SPECIAL RULE FOR INITIAL 2 YEARS.—With respect to each of the first two years to which the MIPS applies, the Secretary shall, prior to the performance period for such years, establish a performance threshold for purposes of determining MIPS adjustment factors under subparagraph (A) and a threshold for purposes of determining additional MIPS adjustment factors under subparagraph (C)(i). Each such performance threshold shall—

“(I) be based on a period prior to such performance periods; and

“(II) take into account—

“(aa) data available with respect to performance on measures and activities that may be used under the performance categories under subparagraph (2)(B); and

“(bb) other factors determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(E) APPLICATION OF MIPS ADJUSTMENT FACTORS.—In the case of items and services furnished by a MIPS eligible professional during a year (beginning with 2018), the amount otherwise paid under this part with respect to such items and services and MIPS eligible professional for such year, shall be multiplied by—

“(i) 1, plus

“(ii) the sum of—

“(I) the MIPS adjustment factor determined under subparagraph (A) divided by 100, and

“(II) as applicable, the additional MIPS adjustment factor determined under subparagraph (C)(i) divided by 100.

“(F) AGGREGATE APPLICATION OF MIPS ADJUSTMENT FACTORS.—

“(i) APPLICATION OF SCALING FACTOR.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—With respect to positive MIPS adjustment factors under subparagraph (A)(ii)(I) for eligible professionals whose composite performance score is above the performance threshold under subparagraph (D)(i) for such year, subject to subclause (II), the Secretary shall increase or decrease such adjustment factors by a scaling factor in order to ensure that the budget neutrality requirement of clause (ii) is met.

“(II) SCALING FACTOR LIMIT.—In no case may be the scaling factor applied under this clause exceed 3.0.

“(ii) BUDGET NEUTRALITY REQUIREMENT.—

“(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (iii), the Secretary shall ensure that the estimated amount described in subclause (II) for a year is equal to the estimated amount described in subclause (III) for such year.

“(II) AGGREGATE INCREASES.—The amount described in this subclause is the estimated increase in the aggregate allowed charges resulting from the application of positive MIPS adjustment factors under subparagraph (A) (after application of the scaling factor described in clause (i)) to MIPS eligible professionals whose composite performance score for a year is above the performance threshold under subparagraph (D)(i) for such year.

“(III) AGGREGATE DECREASES.—The amount described in this subclause is the estimated decrease in the aggregate allowed charges resulting from the application of negative MIPS adjustment factors under subparagraph (A) to MIPS eligible professionals whose composite performance score for a year is below the performance threshold under subparagraph (D)(i) for such year.

“(iii) EXCEPTIONS.—

“(I) In the case that all MIPS eligible professionals receive composite performance scores for a year that are below the performance threshold under subparagraph (D)(i) for such year, the negative MIPS adjustment factors under subparagraph (A) shall apply with respect to such MIPS eligible professionals and the budget neutrality requirement of clause (ii) shall not apply for such year.

“(II) In the case that, with respect to a year, the application of clause (i) results in a scaling factor equal to the maximum scaling factor specified in clause (i)(II), such scaling factor shall apply and the budget neutrality requirement of clause (ii) shall not apply for such year.

“(iv) ADDITIONAL INCENTIVE PAYMENT ADJUSTMENTS.—In specifying the MIPS additional adjustment factors under subparagraph (C)(i) for each applicable MIPS eligible professional for a year, the Secretary shall ensure that the estimated increase in payments under this part resulting from the application of such additional adjustment factors for MIPS eligible professionals in a year shall be equal (as estimated by the Secretary) to the additional funding pool amount for such year under subparagraph (C)(ii).

“(7) ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESULT OF ADJUSTMENTS.—Under the MIPS, the Secretary shall, not later than 30 days prior to January 1 of the year involved, make available to MIPS eligible professionals the MIPS adjustment factor (and, as applicable, the additional MIPS adjustment factor) under paragraph (6) applicable to the eligible professional for items and services furnished by the professional for such year. The Secretary may include such information in the confidential feedback under paragraph (12).

“(8) NO EFFECT IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—The MIPS adjustment factors and additional

MIPS adjustment factors under paragraph (6) shall apply only with respect to the year involved, and the Secretary shall not take into account such adjustment factors in making payments to a MIPS eligible professional under this part in a subsequent year.

“(9) PUBLIC REPORTING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, in an easily understandable format, make available on the Physician Compare Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services the following:

“(i) Information regarding the performance of MIPS eligible professionals under the MIPS, which—

“(I) shall include the composite score for each such MIPS eligible professional and the performance of each such MIPS eligible professional with respect to each performance category; and

“(II) may include the performance of each such MIPS eligible professional with respect to each measure or activity specified in paragraph (2)(B).

“(ii) The names of eligible professionals in eligible alternative payment models (as defined in section 1833(z)(3)(D)) and, to the extent feasible, the names of such eligible alternative payment models and performance of such models.

“(B) DISCLOSURE.—The information made available under this paragraph shall indicate, where appropriate, that publicized information may not be representative of the eligible professional's entire patient population, the variety of services furnished by the eligible professional, or the health conditions of individuals treated.

“(C) OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW AND SUBMIT CORRECTIONS.—The Secretary shall provide for an opportunity for a professional described in subparagraph (A) to review, and submit corrections for, the information to be made public with respect to the professional under such subparagraph prior to such information being made public.

“(D) AGGREGATE INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall periodically post on the Physician Compare Internet website aggregate information on the MIPS, including the range of composite scores for all MIPS eligible professionals and the range of the performance of all MIPS eligible professionals with respect to each performance category.

“(10) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall consult with stakeholders in carrying out the MIPS, including for the identification of measures and activities under paragraph (2)(B) and the methodologies developed under paragraphs (5)(A) and (6) and regarding the use of qualified clinical data registries. Such consultation shall include the use of a request for information or other mechanisms determined appropriate.

“(11) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SMALL PRACTICES AND PRACTICES IN HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into contracts or agreements with appropriate entities (such as quality improvement organizations, regional extension centers (as described in section 3012(c) of the Public Health Service Act), or regional health collaboratives) to offer guidance and assistance to MIPS eligible professionals in practices of 15 or fewer professionals (with priority given to such practices located in rural areas, health professional shortage areas (as designated under in section 332(a)(1)(A) of such Act), and medically underserved areas, and practices with low composite scores) with respect to—

“(i) the performance categories described in clauses (i) through (iv) of paragraph (2)(A); or

“(ii) how to transition to the implementation of and participation in an alternative payment model as described in section 1833(z)(3)(C).

“(B) FUNDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of implementing subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall provide for the transfer from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund established under section 1841 to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Program Management Account of \$40,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2019. Amounts transferred under this subparagraph for a fiscal year shall be available until expended.

“(ii) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—Of the amounts transferred pursuant to clause (i) for each of fiscal years 2015 through 2019, not less than \$10,000,000 shall be made available for each such year for technical assistance to small practices in health professional shortage areas (as so designated) and medically underserved areas.

“(12) FEEDBACK AND INFORMATION TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE.—

“(A) PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Beginning July 1, 2016, the Secretary—

“(I) shall make available timely (such as quarterly) confidential feedback to MIPS eligible professionals on the performance of such professionals with respect to the performance categories under clauses (i) and (ii) of paragraph (2)(A); and

“(II) may make available confidential feedback to each such professional on the performance of such professional with respect to the performance categories under clauses (iii) and (iv) of such paragraph.

“(ii) MECHANISMS.—The Secretary may use one or more mechanisms to make feedback available under clause (i), which may include use of a web-based portal or other mechanisms determined appropriate by the Secretary. With respect to the performance category described in paragraph (2)(A)(i), feedback under this subparagraph shall, to the extent an eligible professional chooses to participate in a data registry for purposes of this subsection (including registries under subsections (k) and (m)), be provided based on performance on quality measures reported through the use of such registries. With respect to any other performance category described in paragraph (2)(A), the Secretary shall encourage provision of feedback through qualified clinical data registries as described in subsection (m)(3)(E)).

“(iii) USE OF DATA.—For purposes of clause (i), the Secretary may use data, with respect to a MIPS eligible professional, from periods prior to the current performance period and may use rolling periods in order to make illustrative calculations about the performance of such professional.

“(iv) DISCLOSURE EXEMPTION.—Feedback made available under this subparagraph shall be exempt from disclosure under section 552 of title 5, United States Code.

“(v) RECEIPT OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary may use the mechanisms established under clause (ii) to receive information from professionals, such as information with respect to this subsection.

“(B) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Beginning July 1, 2017, the Secretary shall make available to each MIPS eligible professional information, with respect to individuals who are patients of such MIPS eligible professional, about items and services for which payment is made under this title that are furnished to such individuals by other suppliers and providers of

services, which may include information described in clause (ii). Such information may be made available under the previous sentence to such MIPS eligible professionals by mechanisms determined appropriate by the Secretary, which may include use of a web-based portal. Such information may be made available in accordance with the same or similar terms as data are made available to accountable care organizations participating in the shared savings program under section 1899, including a beneficiary opt-out.

“(ii) TYPE OF INFORMATION.—For purposes of clause (i), the information described in this clause, is the following:

“(I) With respect to selected items and services (as determined appropriate by the Secretary) for which payment is made under this title and that are furnished to individuals, who are patients of a MIPS eligible professional, by another supplier or provider of services during the most recent period for which data are available (such as the most recent three-month period), such as the name of such providers furnishing such items and services to such patients during such period, the types of such items and services so furnished, and the dates such items and services were so furnished.

“(II) Historical data, such as averages and other measures of the distribution if appropriate, of the total, and components of, allowed charges (and other figures as determined appropriate by the Secretary).

“(13) REVIEW.—

“(A) TARGETED REVIEW.—The Secretary shall establish a process under which a MIPS eligible professional may seek an informal review of the calculation of the MIPS adjustment factor applicable to such eligible professional under this subsection for a year. The results of a review conducted pursuant to the previous sentence shall not be taken into account for purposes of paragraph (6) with respect to a year (other than with respect to the calculation of such eligible professional's MIPS adjustment factor for such year or additional MIPS adjustment factor for such year) after the factors determined in subparagraph (A) and subparagraph (C) of such paragraph have been determined for such year.

“(B) LIMITATION.—Except as provided for in subparagraph (A), there shall be no administrative or judicial review under section 1869, section 1878, or otherwise of the following:

“(i) The methodology used to determine the amount of the MIPS adjustment factor under paragraph (6)(A) and the amount of the additional MIPS adjustment factor under paragraph (6)(C)(i) and the determination of such amounts.

“(ii) The establishment of the performance standards under paragraph (3) and the performance period under paragraph (4).

“(iii) The identification of measures and activities specified under paragraph (2)(B) and information made public or posted on the Physician Compare Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services under paragraph (9).

“(iv) The methodology developed under paragraph (5) that is used to calculate performance scores and the calculation of such scores, including the weighting of measures and activities under such methodology.”

(2) GAO REPORTS.—

(A) EVALUATION OF ELIGIBLE PROFESSIONAL MIPS.—Not later than October 1, 2019, and October 1, 2022, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report evaluating the eligible professional Merit-based Incentive Payment System under subsection (q) of section 1848 of the So-

cial Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4), as added by paragraph (1). Such report shall—

(i) examine the distribution of the composite performance scores and MIPS adjustment factors (and additional MIPS adjustment factors) for MIPS eligible professionals (as defined in subsection (q)(1)(c) of such section) under such program, and patterns relating to such scores and adjustment factors, including based on type of provider, practice size, geographic location, and patient mix;

(ii) provide recommendations for improving such program;

(iii) evaluate the impact of technical assistance funding under section 1848(q)(11) of the Social Security Act, as added by paragraph (1), on the ability of professionals to improve within such program or successfully transition to an alternative payment model (as defined in section 1833(z)(3) of the Social Security Act, as added by subsection (e)), with priority for such evaluation given to practices located in rural areas, health professional shortage areas (as designated in section 332(a)(1)(a) of the Public Health Service Act), and medically underserved areas; and

(iv) provide recommendations for optimizing the use of such technical assistance funds.

(B) STUDY TO EXAMINE ALIGNMENT OF QUALITY MEASURES USED IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROGRAMS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report that—

(I) compares the similarities and differences in the use of quality measures under the original Medicare fee-for-service program under parts A and B of title XVIII of the Social Security Act, the Medicare Advantage program under part C of such title, selected State Medicaid programs under title XIX of such Act, and private payer arrangements; and

(II) makes recommendations on how to reduce the administrative burden involved in applying such quality measures.

(ii) REQUIREMENTS.—The report under clause (i) shall—

(I) consider those measures applicable to individuals entitled to, or enrolled for, benefits under such part A, or enrolled under such part B and individuals under the age of 65; and

(II) focus on those measures that comprise the most significant component of the quality performance category of the eligible professional MIPS incentive program under subsection (q) of section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4), as added by paragraph (1).

(C) STUDY ON ROLE OF INDEPENDENT RISK MANAGERS.—Not later than January 1, 2016, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report examining whether entities that pool financial risk for physician practices, such as independent risk managers, can play a role in supporting physician practices, particularly small physician practices, in assuming financial risk for the treatment of patients. Such report shall examine barriers that small physician practices currently face in assuming financial risk for treating patients, the types of risk management entities that could assist physician practices in participating in two-sided risk payment models, and how such entities could assist with risk management and with quality improvement activities. Such report shall also include an analysis of any existing legal barriers to such arrangements.

(D) STUDY TO EXAMINE RURAL AND HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREA ALTERNATIVE

PAYMENT MODELS.—Not later than October 1, 2020, and October 1, 2022, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report that examines the transition of professionals in rural areas, health professional shortage areas (as designated in section 332(a)(1)(A) of the Public Health Service Act), or medically underserved areas to an alternative payment model (as defined in section 1833(z)(3) of the Social Security Act, as added by subsection (e)). Such report shall make recommendations for removing administrative barriers to practices, including small practices consisting of 15 or fewer professionals, in rural areas, health professional shortage areas, and medically underserved areas to participation in such models.

(3) **FUNDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION.**—For purposes of implementing the provisions of and the amendments made by this section, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall provide for the transfer of \$80,000,000 from the Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund established under section 1841 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395t) to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Program Management Account for each of the fiscal years 2014 through 2018. Amounts transferred under this paragraph shall be available until expended.

(d) **IMPROVING QUALITY REPORTING FOR COMPOSITE SCORES.**—

(1) **CHANGES FOR GROUP REPORTING OPTION.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1848(m)(3)(C)(ii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(m)(3)(C)(ii)) is amended by inserting “and, for 2015 and subsequent years, may provide” after “shall provide”.

(B) **CLARIFICATION OF QUALIFIED CLINICAL DATA REGISTRY REPORTING TO GROUP PRACTICES.**—Section 1848(m)(3)(D) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(m)(3)(D)) is amended by inserting “and, for 2015 and subsequent years, subparagraph (A) or (C)” after “subparagraph (A)”.

(2) **CHANGES FOR MULTIPLE REPORTING PERIODS AND ALTERNATIVE CRITERIA FOR SATISFACTORY REPORTING.**—Section 1848(m)(5)(F) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(m)(5)(F)) is amended—

(A) by striking “and subsequent years” and inserting “through reporting periods occurring in 2014”; and

(B) by inserting “and, for reporting periods occurring in 2015 and subsequent years, the Secretary may establish” following “shall establish”.

(3) **PHYSICIAN FEEDBACK PROGRAM REPORTS SUCCEEDED BY REPORTS UNDER MIPS.**—Section 1848(n) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(n)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(11) **REPORTS ENDING WITH 2016.**—Reports under the Program shall not be provided after December 31, 2016. See subsection (q)(12) for reports under the eligible professionals Merit-based Incentive Payment System.”.

(4) **COORDINATION WITH SATISFYING MEANINGFUL EHR USE CLINICAL QUALITY MEASURE REPORTING REQUIREMENT.**—Section 1848(o)(2)(A)(iii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(o)(2)(A)(iii)) is amended by inserting “and subsection (q)(5)(B)(ii)(II)” after “Subject to subparagraph (B)(ii)”.

(e) **PROMOTING ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT MODELS.**—

(1) **INCREASING TRANSPARENCY OF PHYSICIAN FOCUSED PAYMENT MODELS.**—Section 1868 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ee) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(c) **PHYSICIAN FOCUSED PAYMENT MODELS.**—

“(1) **TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**—

“(A) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established an ad hoc committee to be known as the ‘Payment Model Technical Advisory Committee’ (referred to in this subsection as the ‘Committee’).

“(B) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

“(i) **NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.**—The Committee shall be composed of 11 members appointed by the Comptroller General of the United States.

“(ii) **QUALIFICATIONS.**—The membership of the Committee shall include individuals with national recognition for their expertise in payment models and related delivery of care. No more than 5 members of the Committee shall be providers of services or suppliers, or representatives of providers of services or suppliers.

“(iii) **PROHIBITION ON FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT.**—A member of the Committee shall not be an employee of the Federal Government.

“(iv) **ETHICS DISCLOSURE.**—The Comptroller General shall establish a system for public disclosure by members of the Committee of financial and other potential conflicts of interest relating to such members. Members of the Committee shall be treated as employees of Congress for purposes of applying title I of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-521).

“(v) **DATE OF INITIAL APPOINTMENTS.**—The initial appointments of members of the Committee shall be made by not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this subsection.

“(C) **TERM; VACANCIES.**—

“(i) **TERM.**—The terms of members of the Committee shall be for 3 years except that the Comptroller General shall designate staggered terms for the members first appointed.

“(ii) **VACANCIES.**—Any member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which the member’s predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of that term. A member may serve after the expiration of that member’s term until a successor has taken office. A vacancy in the Committee shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

“(D) **DUTIES.**—The Committee shall meet, as needed, to provide comments and recommendations to the Secretary, as described in paragraph (2)(C), on physician-focused payment models.

“(E) **COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in clause (ii), a member of the Committee shall serve without compensation.

“(ii) **TRAVEL EXPENSES.**—A member of the Committee shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for an employee of an agency under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from the home or regular place of business of the member in the performance of the duties of the Committee.

“(F) **OPERATIONAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—The Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation shall provide technical and operational support for the Committee, which may be by use of a contractor. The Office of the Actuary of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services shall provide to the Committee actuarial assistance as needed.

“(ii) **FUNDING.**—The Secretary shall provide for the transfer, from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund

under section 1841, such amounts as are necessary to carry out clause (i) (not to exceed \$5,000,000) for fiscal year 2014 and each subsequent fiscal year. Any amounts transferred under the preceding sentence for a fiscal year shall remain available until expended.

“(G) **APPLICATION.**—Section 14 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Committee.

“(2) **CRITERIA AND PROCESS FOR SUBMISSION AND REVIEW OF PHYSICIAN-FOCUSED PAYMENT MODELS.**—

“(A) **CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING PHYSICIAN-FOCUSED PAYMENT MODELS.**—

“(i) **RULEMAKING.**—Not later than November 1, 2015, the Secretary shall, through notice and comment rulemaking, following a request for information, establish criteria for physician-focused payment models, including models for specialist physicians, that could be used by the Committee for making comments and recommendations pursuant to paragraph (1)(D).

“(ii) **MEDPAC SUBMISSION OF COMMENTS.**—During the comment period for the proposed rule described in clause (i), the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission may submit comments to the Secretary on the proposed criteria under such clause.

“(iii) **UPDATING.**—The Secretary may update the criteria established under this subparagraph through rulemaking.

“(B) **STAKEHOLDER SUBMISSION OF PHYSICIAN FOCUSED PAYMENT MODELS.**—On an ongoing basis, individuals and stakeholder entities may submit to the Committee proposals for physician-focused payment models that such individuals and entities believe meet the criteria described in subparagraph (A).

“(C) **TAC REVIEW OF MODELS SUBMITTED.**—The Committee shall, on a periodic basis, review models submitted under subparagraph (B), prepare comments and recommendations regarding whether such models meet the criteria described in subparagraph (A), and submit such comments and recommendations to the Secretary.

“(D) **SECRETARY REVIEW AND RESPONSE.**—The Secretary shall review the comments and recommendations submitted by the Committee under subparagraph (C) and post a detailed response to such comments and recommendations on the Internet Website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

“(3) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to impact the development or testing of models under this title or titles XI, XIX, or XXI.”.

(2) **INCENTIVE PAYMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN ELIGIBLE ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT MODELS.**—Section 1833 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395l) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(z) **INCENTIVE PAYMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN ELIGIBLE ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT MODELS.**—

“(1) **PAYMENT INCENTIVE.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In the case of covered professional services furnished by an eligible professional during a year that is in the period beginning with 2018 and ending with 2023 and for which the professional is a qualifying APM participant, in addition to the amount of payment that would otherwise be made for such covered professional services under this part for such year, there also shall be paid to such professional an amount equal to 5 percent of the payment amount for the covered professional services under this part for the preceding year. For purposes of the previous sentence, the payment amount for the preceding year may be an estimation for the full preceding year based on a period of such preceding year that is less than the full year.

The Secretary shall establish policies to implement this subparagraph in cases where payment for covered professional services furnished by a qualifying APM participant in an alternative payment model is made to an entity participating in the alternative payment model rather than directly to the qualifying APM participant.

“(B) FORM OF PAYMENT.—Payments under this subsection shall be made in a lump sum, on an annual basis, as soon as practicable.

“(C) TREATMENT OF PAYMENT INCENTIVE.—Payments under this subsection shall not be taken into account for purposes of determining actual expenditures under an alternative payment model and for purposes of determining or rebasing any benchmarks used under the alternative payment model.

“(D) COORDINATION.—The amount of the additional payment for an item or service under this subsection or subsection (m) shall be determined without regard to any additional payment for the item or service under subsection (m) and this subsection, respectively. The amount of the additional payment for an item or service under this subsection or subsection (x) shall be determined without regard to any additional payment for the item or service under subsection (x) and this subsection, respectively. The amount of the additional payment for an item or service under this subsection or subsection (y) shall be determined without regard to any additional payment for the item or service under subsection (y) and this subsection, respectively.

“(2) QUALIFYING APM PARTICIPANT.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘qualifying APM participant’ means the following:

“(A) 2018 AND 2019.—With respect to 2018 and 2019, an eligible professional for whom the Secretary determines that at least 25 percent of payments under this part for covered professional services furnished by such professional during the most recent period for which data are available (which may be less than a year) were attributable to such services furnished under this part through an entity that participates in an eligible alternative payment model with respect to such services.

“(B) 2020 AND 2021.—With respect to 2020 and 2021, an eligible professional described in either of the following clauses:

“(i) MEDICARE REVENUE THRESHOLD OPTION.—An eligible professional for whom the Secretary determines that at least 50 percent of payments under this part for covered professional services furnished by such professional during the most recent period for which data are available (which may be less than a year) were attributable to such services furnished under this part through an entity that participates in an eligible alternative payment model with respect to such services.

“(ii) COMBINATION ALL-PAYER AND MEDICARE REVENUE THRESHOLD OPTION.—An eligible professional—

“(I) for whom the Secretary determines, with respect to items and services furnished by such professional during the most recent period for which data are available (which may be less than a year), that at least 50 percent of the sum of—

“(aa) payments described in clause (i); and

“(bb) all other payments, regardless of payer (other than payments made by the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code, or title 38, United States Code, or any other provision of law, and other than payments made under title XIX in a State in which no medical home or al-

ternative payment model is available under the State program under that title),

meet the requirement described in clause (iii)(I) with respect to payments described in item (aa) and meet the requirement described in clause (iii)(II) with respect to payments described in item (bb);

“(II) for whom the Secretary determines at least 25 percent of payments under this part for covered professional services furnished by such professional during the most recent period for which data are available (which may be less than a year) were attributable to such services furnished under this part through an entity that participates in an eligible alternative payment model with respect to such services; and

“(III) who provides to the Secretary such information as is necessary for the Secretary to make a determination under subclause (I), with respect to such professional.

“(iii) REQUIREMENT.—For purposes of clause (ii)(I)—

“(I) the requirement described in this subclause, with respect to payments described in item (aa) of such clause, is that such payments are made under an eligible alternative payment model; and

“(II) the requirement described in this subclause, with respect to payments described in item (bb) of such clause, is that such payments are made under an arrangement in which—

“(aa) quality measures comparable to measures under the performance category described in section 1848(q)(2)(B)(i) apply;

“(bb) certified EHR technology is used; and

“(cc) the eligible professional (AA) bears more than nominal financial risk if actual aggregate expenditures exceeds expected aggregate expenditures; or (BB) is a medical home (with respect to beneficiaries under title XIX) that meets criteria comparable to medical homes expanded under section 1115A(c).

“(C) BEGINNING IN 2022.—With respect to 2022 and each subsequent year, an eligible professional described in either of the following clauses:

“(i) MEDICARE REVENUE THRESHOLD OPTION.—An eligible professional for whom the Secretary determines that at least 75 percent of payments under this part for covered professional services furnished by such professional during the most recent period for which data are available (which may be less than a year) were attributable to such services furnished under this part through an entity that participates in an eligible alternative payment model with respect to such services.

“(ii) COMBINATION ALL-PAYER AND MEDICARE REVENUE THRESHOLD OPTION.—An eligible professional—

“(I) for whom the Secretary determines, with respect to items and services furnished by such professional during the most recent period for which data are available (which may be less than a year), that at least 75 percent of the sum of—

“(aa) payments described in clause (i); and

“(bb) all other payments, regardless of payer (other than payments made by the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of Veterans Affairs under chapter 55 of title 10, United States Code, or title 38, United States Code, or any other provision of law, and other than payments made under title XIX in a State in which no medical home or alternative payment model is available under the State program under that title),

meet the requirement described in clause (iii)(I) with respect to payments described in item (aa) and meet the requirement de-

scribed in clause (iii)(II) with respect to payments described in item (bb);

“(II) for whom the Secretary determines at least 25 percent of payments under this part for covered professional services furnished by such professional during the most recent period for which data are available (which may be less than a year) were attributable to such services furnished under this part through an entity that participates in an eligible alternative payment model with respect to such services; and

“(III) who provides to the Secretary such information as is necessary for the Secretary to make a determination under subclause (I), with respect to such professional.

“(iii) REQUIREMENT.—For purposes of clause (ii)(I)—

“(I) the requirement described in this subclause, with respect to payments described in item (aa) of such clause, is that such payments are made under an eligible alternative payment model; and

“(II) the requirement described in this subclause, with respect to payments described in item (bb) of such clause, is that such payments are made under an arrangement in which—

“(aa) quality measures comparable to measures under the performance category described in section 1848(q)(2)(B)(i) apply;

“(bb) certified EHR technology is used; and

“(cc) the eligible professional (AA) bears more than nominal financial risk if actual aggregate expenditures exceeds expected aggregate expenditures; or (BB) is a medical home (with respect to beneficiaries under title XIX) that meets criteria comparable to medical homes expanded under section 1115A(c).

“(3) ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

“(A) COVERED PROFESSIONAL SERVICES.—The term ‘covered professional services’ has the meaning given that term in section 1848(k)(3)(A).

“(B) ELIGIBLE PROFESSIONAL.—The term ‘eligible professional’ has the meaning given that term in section 1848(k)(3)(B).

“(C) ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT MODEL (APM).—The term ‘alternative payment model’ means any of the following:

“(i) A model under section 1115A (other than a health care innovation award).

“(ii) The shared savings program under section 1899.

“(iii) A demonstration under section 1866C.

“(iv) A demonstration required by Federal law.

“(D) ELIGIBLE ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT MODEL (APM).—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘eligible alternative payment model’ means, with respect to a year, an alternative payment model—

“(I) that requires use of certified EHR technology (as defined in subsection (o)(4));

“(II) that provides for payment for covered professional services based on quality measures comparable to measures under the performance category described in section 1848(q)(2)(B)(i); and

“(III) that satisfies the requirement described in clause (ii).

“(ii) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENT.—For purposes of clause (i)(III), the requirement described in this clause, with respect to a year and an alternative payment model, is that the alternative payment model—

“(I) is one in which one or more entities bear financial risk for monetary losses under such model that are in excess of a nominal amount; or

“(II) is a medical home expanded under section 1115A(c).

“(4) LIMITATION.—There shall be no administrative or judicial review under section 1869, 1878, or otherwise, of the following:

“(A) The determination that an eligible professional is a qualifying APM participant under paragraph (2) and the determination that an alternative payment model is an eligible alternative payment model under paragraph (3)(D).

“(B) The determination of the amount of the 5 percent payment incentive under paragraph (1)(A), including any estimation as part of such determination.”.

(3) COORDINATION CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 1833 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395l) is further amended—

(A) in subsection (x)(3), by adding at the end the following new sentence: “The amount of the additional payment for a service under this subsection and subsection (z) shall be determined without regard to any additional payment for the service under subsection (z) and this subsection, respectively.”; and

(B) in subsection (y)(3), by adding at the end the following new sentence: “The amount of the additional payment for a service under this subsection and subsection (z) shall be determined without regard to any additional payment for the service under subsection (z) and this subsection, respectively.”.

(4) ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING OF CERTAIN MODELS.—Section 1115A(b)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1315a(b)(2)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by adding at the end the following new clauses:

“(xxi) Focusing primarily on physicians’ services (as defined in section 1848(j)(3)) furnished by physicians who are not primary care practitioners.

“(xxii) Focusing on practices of 15 or fewer professionals.

“(xxiii) Focusing on risk-based models for small physician practices which may involve two-sided risk and prospective patient assignment, and which examine risk-adjusted decreases in mortality rates, hospital readmissions rates, and other relevant and appropriate clinical measures.

“(xxiv) Focusing primarily on title XIX, working in conjunction with the Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services.”; and

(B) in subparagraph (C)(viii), by striking “other public sector or private sector payers” and inserting “other public sector payers, private sector payers, or Statewide payment models”.

(5) CONSTRUCTION REGARDING TELEHEALTH SERVICES.—Nothing in the provisions of, or amendments made by, this Act shall be construed as precluding an alternative payment model or a qualifying APM participant (as those terms are defined in section 1833(z) of the Social Security Act, as added by paragraph (1) from furnishing a telehealth service for which payment is not made under section 1834(m) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(m)).

(6) INTEGRATING MEDICARE ADVANTAGE ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT MODELS.—Not later than July 1, 2015, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit to Congress a study that examines the feasibility of integrating alternative payment models in the Medicare Advantage payment system. The study shall include the feasibility of including a value-based modifier and whether such modifier should be budget neutral.

(7) STUDY AND REPORT ON FRAUD RELATED TO ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT MODELS UNDER THE MEDICARE PROGRAM.—

(A) STUDY.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the In-

spector General of the Department of Health and Human Services, shall conduct a study that—

(i) examines the applicability of the Federal fraud prevention laws to items and services furnished under title XVIII of the Social Security Act for which payment is made under an alternative payment model (as defined in section 1833(z)(3)(C) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395l(z)(3)(C)));

(ii) identifies aspects of such alternative payment models that are vulnerable to fraudulent activity; and

(iii) examines the implications of waivers to such laws granted in support of such alternative payment models, including under any potential expansion of such models.

(B) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study conducted under subparagraph (A). Such report shall include recommendations for actions to be taken to reduce the vulnerability of such alternative payment models to fraudulent activity. Such report also shall include, as appropriate, recommendations of the Inspector General for changes in Federal fraud prevention laws to reduce such vulnerability.

(F) IMPROVING PAYMENT ACCURACY.—

(1) STUDIES AND REPORTS OF EFFECT OF CERTAIN INFORMATION ON QUALITY AND RESOURCE USE.—

(A) STUDY USING EXISTING MEDICARE DATA.—

(i) STUDY.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this subsection referred to as the “Secretary”) shall conduct a study that examines the effect of individuals’ socioeconomic status on quality and resource use outcome measures for individuals under the Medicare program (such as to recognize that less healthy individuals may require more intensive interventions). The study shall use information collected on such individuals in carrying out such program, such as urban and rural location, eligibility for Medicaid (recognizing and accounting for varying Medicaid eligibility across States), and eligibility for benefits under the supplemental security income (SSI) program. The Secretary shall carry out this paragraph acting through the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation.

(ii) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the study conducted under clause (i).

(B) STUDY USING OTHER DATA.—

(i) STUDY.—The Secretary shall conduct a study that examines the impact of risk factors, such as those described in section 1848(p)(3) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(p)(3)), race, health literacy, limited English proficiency (LEP), and patient activation, on quality and resource use outcome measures under the Medicare program (such as to recognize that less healthy individuals may require more intensive interventions). In conducting such study the Secretary may use existing Federal data and collect such additional data as may be necessary to complete the study.

(ii) REPORT.—Not later than 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the study conducted under clause (i).

(C) EXAMINATION OF DATA IN CONDUCTING STUDIES.—In conducting the studies under subparagraphs (A) and (B), the Secretary shall examine what non-Medicare data sets, such as data from the American Community Survey (ACS), can be useful in conducting the types of studies under such paragraphs

and how such data sets that are identified as useful can be coordinated with Medicare administrative data in order to improve the overall data set available to do such studies and for the administration of the Medicare program.

(D) RECOMMENDATIONS TO ACCOUNT FOR INFORMATION IN PAYMENT ADJUSTMENT MECHANISMS.—If the studies conducted under subparagraphs (A) and (B) find a relationship between the factors examined in the studies and quality and resource use outcome measures, then the Secretary shall also provide recommendations for how the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services should—

(i) obtain access to the necessary data (if such data is not already being collected) on such factors, including recommendations on how to address barriers to the Centers in accessing such data; and

(ii) account for such factors in determining payment adjustments based on quality and resource use outcome measures under the eligible professional Merit-based Incentive Payment System under section 1848(q) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(q)) and, as the Secretary determines appropriate, other similar provisions of title XVIII of such Act.

(E) FUNDING.—There are hereby appropriated from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund under section 1841 of the Social Security Act to the Secretary to carry out this paragraph \$6,000,000, to remain available until expended.

(2) CMS ACTIVITIES.—

(A) HIERARCHICAL CONDITION CATEGORY (HCC) IMPROVEMENT.—Taking into account the relevant studies conducted and recommendations made in reports under paragraph (1), the Secretary, on an ongoing basis, shall, as the Secretary determines appropriate, estimate how an individual’s health status and other risk factors affect quality and resource use outcome measures and, as feasible, shall incorporate information from quality and resource use outcome measurement (including care episode and patient condition groups) into provisions of title XVIII of the Social Security Act that are similar to the eligible professional Merit-based Incentive Payment System under section 1848(q) of such Act.

(B) ACCOUNTING FOR OTHER FACTORS IN PAYMENT ADJUSTMENT MECHANISMS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Taking into account the studies conducted and recommendations made in reports under paragraph (1) and other information as appropriate, the Secretary shall, as the Secretary determines appropriate, account for identified factors with an effect on quality and resource use outcome measures when determining payment adjustment mechanisms under provisions of title XVIII of the Social Security Act that are similar to the eligible professional Merit-based Incentive Payment System under section 1848(q) of such Act.

(ii) ACCESSING DATA.—The Secretary shall collect or otherwise obtain access to the data necessary to carry out this paragraph through existing and new data sources.

(iii) PERIODIC ANALYSES.—The Secretary shall carry out periodic analyses, at least every 3 years, based on the factors referred to in clause (i) so as to monitor changes in possible relationships.

(C) FUNDING.—There are hereby appropriated from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund under section 1841 of the Social Security Act to the Secretary to carry out this paragraph and the application of this paragraph to the Merit-based Incentive Payment System under section 1848(q) of such Act \$10,000,000, to remain available until expended.

(3) STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ACCESSING RACE AND ETHNICITY DATA.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop and report to Congress on a strategic plan for collecting or otherwise accessing data on race and ethnicity for purposes of carrying out the eligible professional Merit-based Incentive Payment System under section 1848(q) of the Social Security Act and, as the Secretary determines appropriate, other similar provisions of title XVIII of such Act.

(g) COLLABORATING WITH THE PHYSICIAN, PRACTITIONER, AND OTHER STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITIES TO IMPROVE RESOURCE USE MEASUREMENT.—Section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4), as amended by subsection (c), is further amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(r) COLLABORATING WITH THE PHYSICIAN, PRACTITIONER, AND OTHER STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITIES TO IMPROVE RESOURCE USE MEASUREMENT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In order to involve the physician, practitioner, and other stakeholder communities in enhancing the infrastructure for resource use measurement, including for purposes of the value-based performance incentive program under subsection (q) and alternative payment models under section 1833(z), the Secretary shall undertake the steps described in the succeeding provisions of this subsection.

“(2) DEVELOPMENT OF CARE EPISODE AND PATIENT CONDITION GROUPS AND CLASSIFICATION CODES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In order to classify similar patients into care episode groups and patient condition groups, the Secretary shall undertake the steps described in the succeeding provisions of this paragraph.

“(B) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF EXISTING EFFORTS TO DESIGN AN EPISODE GROUPER.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall post on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services a list of the episode groups developed pursuant to subsection (n)(9)(A) and related descriptive information.

“(C) STAKEHOLDER INPUT.—The Secretary shall accept, through the date that is 60 days after the day the Secretary posts the list pursuant to subparagraph (B), suggestions from physician specialty societies, applicable practitioner organizations, and other stakeholders for episode groups in addition to those posted pursuant to such subparagraph, and specific clinical criteria and patient characteristics to classify patients into—

- “(i) care episode groups; and
- “(ii) patient condition groups.

“(D) DEVELOPMENT OF PROPOSED CLASSIFICATION CODES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Taking into account the information described in subparagraph (B) and the information received under subparagraph (C), the Secretary shall—

“(I) establish care episode groups and patient condition groups, which account for a target of an estimated ¾ of expenditures under parts A and B; and

“(II) assign codes to such groups.

“(ii) CARE EPISODE GROUPS.—In establishing the care episode groups under clause (i), the Secretary shall take into account—

“(I) the patient's clinical problems at the time items and services are furnished during an episode of care, such as the clinical conditions or diagnoses, whether or not inpatient hospitalization is anticipated or occurs, and the principal procedures or services planned or furnished; and

“(II) other factors determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(iii) PATIENT CONDITION GROUPS.—In establishing the patient condition groups under clause (i), the Secretary shall take into account—

“(I) the patient's clinical history at the time of each medical visit, such as the patient's combination of chronic conditions, current health status, and recent significant history (such as hospitalization and major surgery during a previous period, such as 3 months); and

“(II) other factors determined appropriate by the Secretary, such as eligibility status under this title (including eligibility under section 226(a), 226(b), or 226A, and dual eligibility under this title and title XIX).

“(E) DRAFT CARE EPISODE AND PATIENT CONDITION GROUPS AND CLASSIFICATION CODES.—Not later than 180 days after the end of the comment period described in subparagraph (C), the Secretary shall post on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services a draft list of the care episode and patient condition codes established under subparagraph (D) (and the criteria and characteristics assigned to such code).

“(F) SOLICITATION OF INPUT.—The Secretary shall seek, through the date that is 60 days after the Secretary posts the list pursuant to subparagraph (E), comments from physician specialty societies, applicable practitioner organizations, and other stakeholders, including representatives of individuals entitled to benefits under part A or enrolled under this part, regarding the care episode and patient condition groups (and codes) posted under subparagraph (E). In seeking such comments, the Secretary shall use one or more mechanisms (other than notice and comment rulemaking) that may include use of open door forums, town hall meetings, or other appropriate mechanisms.

“(G) OPERATIONAL LIST OF CARE EPISODE AND PATIENT CONDITION GROUPS AND CODES.—Not later than 180 days after the end of the comment period described in subparagraph (F), taking into account the comments received under such subparagraph, the Secretary shall post on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services an operational list of care episode and patient condition codes (and the criteria and characteristics assigned to such code).

“(H) SUBSEQUENT REVISIONS.—Not later than November 1 of each year (beginning with 2017), the Secretary shall, through rulemaking, make revisions to the operational lists of care episode and patient condition codes as the Secretary determines may be appropriate. Such revisions may be based on experience, new information developed pursuant to subsection (n)(9)(A), and input from the physician specialty societies, applicable practitioner organizations, and other stakeholders, including representatives of individuals entitled to benefits under part A or enrolled under this part.

“(3) ATTRIBUTION OF PATIENTS TO PHYSICIANS OR PRACTITIONERS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In order to facilitate the attribution of patients and episodes (in whole or in part) to one or more physicians or applicable practitioners furnishing items and services, the Secretary shall undertake the steps described in the succeeding provisions of this paragraph.

“(B) DEVELOPMENT OF PATIENT RELATIONSHIP CATEGORIES AND CODES.—The Secretary shall develop patient relationship categories and codes that define and distinguish the relationship and responsibility of a physician or applicable practitioner with a patient at

the time of furnishing an item or service. Such patient relationship categories shall include different relationships of the physician or applicable practitioner to the patient (and the codes may reflect combinations of such categories), such as a physician or applicable practitioner who—

“(i) considers himself to have the primary responsibility for the general and ongoing care for the patient over extended periods of time;

“(ii) considers himself to be the lead physician or practitioner and who furnishes items and services and coordinates care furnished by other physicians or practitioners for the patient during an acute episode;

“(iii) furnishes items and services to the patient on a continuing basis during an acute episode of care, but in a supportive rather than a lead role;

“(iv) furnishes items and services to the patient on an occasional basis, usually at the request of another physician or practitioner; or

“(v) furnishes items and services only as ordered by another physician or practitioner.

“(C) DRAFT LIST OF PATIENT RELATIONSHIP CATEGORIES AND CODES.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall post on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services a draft list of the patient relationship categories and codes developed under subparagraph (B).

“(D) STAKEHOLDER INPUT.—The Secretary shall seek, through the date that is 60 days after the Secretary posts the list pursuant to subparagraph (C), comments from physician specialty societies, applicable practitioner organizations, and other stakeholders, including representatives of individuals entitled to benefits under part A or enrolled under this part, regarding the patient relationship categories and codes posted under subparagraph (C). In seeking such comments, the Secretary shall use one or more mechanisms (other than notice and comment rulemaking) that may include open door forums, town hall meetings, or other appropriate mechanisms.

“(E) OPERATIONAL LIST OF PATIENT RELATIONSHIP CATEGORIES AND CODES.—Not later than 180 days after the end of the comment period described in subparagraph (D), taking into account the comments received under such subparagraph, the Secretary shall post on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services an operational list of patient relationship categories and codes.

“(F) SUBSEQUENT REVISIONS.—Not later than November 1 of each year (beginning with 2017), the Secretary shall, through rulemaking, make revisions to the operational list of patient relationship categories and codes as the Secretary determines appropriate. Such revisions may be based on experience, new information developed pursuant to subsection (n)(9)(A), and input from the physician specialty societies, applicable practitioner organizations, and other stakeholders, including representatives of individuals entitled to benefits under part A or enrolled under this part.

“(4) REPORTING OF INFORMATION FOR RESOURCE USE MEASUREMENT.—Claims submitted for items and services furnished by a physician or applicable practitioner on or after January 1, 2017, shall, as determined appropriate by the Secretary, include—

“(A) applicable codes established under paragraphs (2) and (3); and

“(B) the national provider identifier of the ordering physician or applicable practitioner

(if different from the billing physician or applicable practitioner).

“(5) METHODOLOGY FOR RESOURCE USE ANALYSIS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In order to evaluate the resources used to treat patients (with respect to care episode and patient condition groups), the Secretary shall—

“(i) use the patient relationship codes reported on claims pursuant to paragraph (4) to attribute patients (in whole or in part) to one or more physicians and applicable practitioners;

“(ii) use the care episode and patient condition codes reported on claims pursuant to paragraph (4) as a basis to compare similar patients and care episodes and patient condition groups; and

“(iii) conduct an analysis of resource use (with respect to care episodes and patient condition groups of such patients), as the Secretary determines appropriate.

“(B) ANALYSIS OF PATIENTS OF PHYSICIANS AND PRACTITIONERS.—In conducting the analysis described in subparagraph (A)(iii) with respect to patients attributed to physicians and applicable practitioners, the Secretary shall, as feasible—

“(i) use the claims data experience of such patients by patient condition codes during a common period, such as 12 months; and

“(ii) use the claims data experience of such patients by care episode codes—

“(I) in the case of episodes without a hospitalization, during periods of time (such as the number of days) determined appropriate by the Secretary; and

“(II) in the case of episodes with a hospitalization, during periods of time (such as the number of days) before, during, and after the hospitalization.

“(C) MEASUREMENT OF RESOURCE USE.—In measuring such resource use, the Secretary—

“(i) shall use per patient total allowed charges for all services under part A and this part (and, if the Secretary determines appropriate, part D) for the analysis of patient resource use, by care episode codes and by patient condition codes; and

“(ii) may, as determined appropriate, use other measures of allowed charges (such as subtotals for categories of items and services) and measures of utilization of items and services (such as frequency of specific items and services and the ratio of specific items and services among attributed patients or episodes).

“(D) STAKEHOLDER INPUT.—The Secretary shall seek comments from the physician specialty societies, applicable practitioner organizations, and other stakeholders, including representatives of individuals entitled to benefits under part A or enrolled under this part, regarding the resource use methodology established pursuant to this paragraph. In seeking comments the Secretary shall use one or more mechanisms (other than notice and comment rulemaking) that may include open door forums, town hall meetings, or other appropriate mechanisms.

“(6) IMPLEMENTATION.—To the extent that the Secretary contracts with an entity to carry out any part of the provisions of this subsection, the Secretary may not contract with an entity or an entity with a subcontract if the entity or subcontracting entity currently makes recommendations to the Secretary on relative values for services under the fee schedule for physicians' services under this section.

“(7) LIMITATION.—There shall be no administrative or judicial review under section 1869, section 1878, or otherwise of—

“(A) care episode and patient condition groups and codes established under paragraph (2);

“(B) patient relationship categories and codes established under paragraph (3); and

“(C) measurement of, and analyses of resource use with respect to, care episode and patient condition codes and patient relationship codes pursuant to paragraph (5).

“(8) ADMINISTRATION.—Chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, shall not apply to this section.

“(9) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(A) PHYSICIAN.—The term ‘physician’ has the meaning given such term in section 1861(r)(1).

“(B) APPLICABLE PRACTITIONER.—The term ‘applicable practitioner’ means—

“(i) a physician assistant, nurse practitioner, and clinical nurse specialist (as such terms are defined in section 1861(aa)(5)), and a certified registered nurse anesthetist (as defined in section 1861(bb)(2)); and

“(ii) beginning January 1, 2018, such other eligible professionals (as defined in subsection (k)(3)(B)) as specified by the Secretary.

“(10) CLARIFICATION.—The provisions of sections 1890(b)(7) and 1890A shall not apply to this subsection.”.

SEC. 3. PRIORITIES AND FUNDING FOR MEASURE DEVELOPMENT.

Section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4), as amended by subsections (c) and (g) of section 2, is further amended by inserting at the end the following new subsection:

“(s) PRIORITIES AND FUNDING FOR MEASURE DEVELOPMENT.—

“(1) PLAN IDENTIFYING MEASURE DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES AND TIMELINES.—

“(A) DRAFT MEASURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN.—Not later than January 1, 2015, the Secretary shall develop, and post on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, a draft plan for the development of quality measures for application under the applicable provisions (as defined in paragraph (5)). Under such plan the Secretary shall—

“(i) address how measures used by private payers and integrated delivery systems could be incorporated under title XVIII;

“(ii) describe how coordination, to the extent possible, will occur across organizations developing such measures; and

“(iii) take into account how clinical best practices and clinical practice guidelines should be used in the development of quality measures.

“(B) QUALITY DOMAINS.—For purposes of this subsection, the term ‘quality domains’ means at least the following domains:

“(i) Clinical care.

“(ii) Safety.

“(iii) Care coordination.

“(iv) Patient and caregiver experience.

“(v) Population health and prevention.

“(C) CONSIDERATION.—In developing the draft plan under this paragraph, the Secretary shall consider—

“(i) gap analyses conducted by the entity with a contract under section 1890(a) or other contractors or entities;

“(ii) whether measures are applicable across health care settings;

“(iii) clinical practice improvement activities submitted under subsection (q)(2)(C)(iv) for identifying possible areas for future measure development and identifying existing gaps with respect to such measures; and

“(iv) the quality domains applied under this subsection.

“(D) PRIORITIES.—In developing the draft plan under this paragraph, the Secretary

shall give priority to the following types of measures:

“(i) Outcome measures, including patient reported outcome and functional status measures.

“(ii) Patient experience measures.

“(iii) Care coordination measures.

“(iv) Measures of appropriate use of services, including measures of over use.

“(E) STAKEHOLDER INPUT.—The Secretary shall accept through March 1, 2015, comments on the draft plan posted under paragraph (1)(A) from the public, including health care providers, payers, consumers, and other stakeholders.

“(F) FINAL MEASURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN.—Not later than May 1, 2015, taking into account the comments received under this subparagraph, the Secretary shall finalize the plan and post on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services an operational plan for the development of quality measures for use under the applicable provisions. Such plan shall be updated as appropriate.

“(2) CONTRACTS AND OTHER ARRANGEMENTS FOR QUALITY MEASURE DEVELOPMENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall enter into contracts or other arrangements with entities for the purpose of developing, improving, updating, or expanding in accordance with the plan under paragraph (1) quality measures for application under the applicable provisions. Such entities shall include organizations with quality measure development expertise.

“(B) PRIORITIZATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—In entering into contracts or other arrangements under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall give priority to the development of the types of measures described in paragraph (1)(D).

“(ii) CONSIDERATION.—In selecting measures for development under this subsection, the Secretary shall consider—

“(I) whether such measures would be electronically specified; and

“(II) clinical practice guidelines to the extent that such guidelines exist.

“(3) ANNUAL REPORT BY THE SECRETARY.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than May 1, 2016, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall post on the Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services a report on the progress made in developing quality measures for application under the applicable provisions.

“(B) REQUIREMENTS.—Each report submitted pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall include the following:

“(i) A description of the Secretary's efforts to implement this paragraph.

“(ii) With respect to the measures developed during the previous year—

“(I) a description of the total number of quality measures developed and the types of such measures, such as an outcome or patient experience measure;

“(II) the name of each measure developed;

“(III) the name of the developer and steward of each measure;

“(IV) with respect to each type of measure, an estimate of the total amount expended under this title to develop all measures of such type; and

“(V) whether the measure would be electronically specified.

“(iii) With respect to measures in development at the time of the report—

“(I) the information described in clause (ii), if available; and

“(II) a timeline for completion of the development of such measures.

“(iv) A description of any updates to the plan under paragraph (1) (including newly

identified gaps and the status of previously identified gaps) and the inventory of measures applicable under the applicable provisions.

“(v) Other information the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

“(4) **STAKEHOLDER INPUT.**—With respect to paragraph (1), the Secretary shall seek stakeholder input with respect to—

“(A) the identification of gaps where no quality measures exist, particularly with respect to the types of measures described in paragraph (1)(D);

“(B) prioritizing quality measure development to address such gaps; and

“(C) other areas related to quality measure development determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(5) **DEFINITION OF APPLICABLE PROVISIONS.**—In this subsection, the term ‘applicable provisions’ means the following provisions:

“(A) Subsection (q)(2)(B)(i).

“(B) Section 1833(z)(2)(C).

“(6) **FUNDING.**—For purposes of carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall provide for the transfer, from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund under section 1841, of \$15,000,000 to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Program Management Account for each of fiscal years 2014 through 2018. Amounts transferred under this paragraph shall remain available through the end of fiscal year 2021.”.

SEC. 4. ENCOURAGING CARE MANAGEMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH CHRONIC CARE NEEDS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1848(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(8) **ENCOURAGING CARE MANAGEMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH CHRONIC CARE NEEDS.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In order to encourage the management of care by an applicable provider (as defined in subparagraph (B)) for individuals with chronic care needs the Secretary shall—

“(i) establish one or more HCPCS codes for chronic care management services for such individuals; and

“(ii) subject to subparagraph (D), make payment (as the Secretary determines to be appropriate) under this section for such management services furnished on or after January 1, 2015, by an applicable provider.

“(B) **APPLICABLE PROVIDER DEFINED.**—For purposes of this paragraph, the term ‘applicable provider’ means a physician (as defined in section 1861(r)(1)), physician assistant or nurse practitioner (as defined in section 1861(aa)(5)(A)), or clinical nurse specialist (as defined in section 1861(aa)(5)(B)) who furnishes services as part of a patient-centered medical home or a comparable specialty practice that—

“(i) is recognized as such a medical home or comparable specialty practice by an organization that is recognized by the Secretary for purposes of such recognition as such a medical home or practice; or

“(ii) meets such other comparable qualifications as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

“(C) **BUDGET NEUTRALITY.**—The budget neutrality provision under subsection (c)(2)(B)(ii)(II) shall apply in establishing the payment under subparagraph (A)(ii).

“(D) **POLICIES RELATING TO PAYMENT.**—In carrying out this paragraph, with respect to chronic care management services, the Secretary shall—

“(i) make payment to only one applicable provider for such services furnished to an individual during a period;

“(ii) not make payment under subparagraph (A) if such payment would be duplicative of payment that is otherwise made under this title for such services (such as in the case of hospice care or home health services); and

“(iii) not require that an annual wellness visit (as defined in section 1861(hhh)) or an initial preventive physical examination (as defined in section 1861(ww)) be furnished as a condition of payment for such management services.”.

(b) **EDUCATION AND OUTREACH.**—

(1) **CAMPAIGN.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this subsection referred to as the “Secretary”) shall conduct an education and outreach campaign to inform professionals who furnish items and services under part B of title XVIII of the Social Security Act and individuals enrolled under such part of the benefits of chronic care management services described in section 1848(b)(8) of the Social Security Act, as added by subsection (a), and encourage such individuals with chronic care needs to receive such services.

(B) **REQUIREMENTS.**—Such campaign shall—

(i) be directed by the Office of Rural Health Policy of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Minority Health of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services; and

(ii) focus on encouraging participation by underserved rural populations and racial and ethnic minority populations.

(2) **REPORT.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than December 31, 2017, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the use of chronic care management services described in such section 1848(b)(8) by individuals living in rural areas and by racial and ethnic minority populations. Such report shall—

(i) identify barriers to receiving chronic care management services; and

(ii) make recommendations for increasing the appropriate use of chronic care management services.

SEC. 5. ENSURING ACCURATE VALUATION OF SERVICES UNDER THE PHYSICIAN FEE SCHEDULE.

(a) **AUTHORITY TO COLLECT AND USE INFORMATION ON PHYSICIANS’ SERVICES IN THE DETERMINATION OF RELATIVE VALUES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1848(c)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(c)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(M) **AUTHORITY TO COLLECT AND USE INFORMATION ON PHYSICIANS’ SERVICES IN THE DETERMINATION OF RELATIVE VALUES.**—

“(i) **COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may collect or obtain information on the resources directly or indirectly related to furnishing services for which payment is made under the fee schedule established under subsection (b). Such information may be collected or obtained from any eligible professional or any other source.

“(ii) **USE OF INFORMATION.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, subject to clause (v), the Secretary may (as the Secretary determines appropriate) use information collected or obtained pursuant to clause (i) in the determination of relative values for services under this section.

“(iii) **TYPES OF INFORMATION.**—The types of information described in clauses (i) and (ii) may, at the Secretary’s discretion, include any or all of the following:

“(I) Time involved in furnishing services.

“(II) Amounts and types of practice expense inputs involved with furnishing services.

“(III) Prices (net of any discounts) for practice expense inputs, which may include paid invoice prices or other documentation or records.

“(IV) Overhead and accounting information for practices of physicians and other suppliers.

“(V) Any other element that would improve the valuation of services under this section.

“(iv) **INFORMATION COLLECTION MECHANISMS.**—Information may be collected or obtained pursuant to this subparagraph from any or all of the following:

“(I) Surveys of physicians, other suppliers, providers of services, manufacturers, and vendors.

“(II) Surgical logs, billing systems, or other practice or facility records.

“(III) Electronic health records.

“(IV) Any other mechanism determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(v) **TRANSPARENCY OF USE OF INFORMATION.**—

“(I) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to subclauses (II) and (III), if the Secretary uses information collected or obtained under this subparagraph in the determination of relative values under this subsection, the Secretary shall disclose the information source and discuss the use of such information in such determination of relative values through notice and comment rulemaking.

“(II) **THRESHOLDS FOR USE.**—The Secretary may establish thresholds in order to use such information, including the exclusion of information collected or obtained from eligible professionals who use very high resources (as determined by the Secretary) in furnishing a service.

“(III) **DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.**—The Secretary shall make aggregate information available under this subparagraph but shall not disclose information in a form or manner that identifies an eligible professional or a group practice, or information collected or obtained pursuant to a nondisclosure agreement.

“(vi) **INCENTIVE TO PARTICIPATE.**—The Secretary may provide for such payments under this part to an eligible professional that submits such solicited information under this subparagraph as the Secretary determines appropriate in order to compensate such eligible professional for such submission. Such payments shall be provided in a form and manner specified by the Secretary.

“(vii) **ADMINISTRATION.**—Chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, shall not apply to information collected or obtained under this subparagraph.

“(viii) **DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE PROFESSIONAL.**—In this subparagraph, the term ‘eligible professional’ has the meaning given such term in subsection (k)(3)(B).

“(ix) **FUNDING.**—For purposes of carrying out this subparagraph, in addition to funds otherwise appropriated, the Secretary shall provide for the transfer, from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund under section 1841, of \$2,000,000 to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Program Management Account for each fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 2014. Amounts transferred under the preceding sentence for a fiscal year shall be available until expended.”.

(2) **LIMITATION ON REVIEW.**—Section 1848(i)(1) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(i)(1)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (D), by striking “and” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (E), by striking the period at the end and inserting “, and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(F) the collection and use of information in the determination of relative values under subsection (c)(2)(M).”

(b) **AUTHORITY FOR ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO ESTABLISHING PRACTICE EXPENSE RELATIVE VALUES.**—Section 1848(c)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(c)(2)), as amended by subsection (a), is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(N) **AUTHORITY FOR ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO ESTABLISHING PRACTICE EXPENSE RELATIVE VALUES.**—The Secretary may establish or adjust practice expense relative values under this subsection using cost, charge, or other data from suppliers or providers of services, including information collected or obtained under subparagraph (M).”

(c) **REVISED AND EXPANDED IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIALLY MISVALUED CODES.**—Section 1848(c)(2)(K)(ii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(c)(2)(K)(ii)) is amended to read as follows:

“(ii) **IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIALLY MISVALUED CODES.**—For purposes of identifying potentially misvalued codes pursuant to clause (i)(I), the Secretary shall examine codes (and families of codes as appropriate) based on any or all of the following criteria:

“(I) Codes that have experienced the fastest growth.

“(II) Codes that have experienced substantial changes in practice expenses.

“(III) Codes that describe new technologies or services within an appropriate time period (such as 3 years) after the relative values are initially established for such codes.

“(IV) Codes which are multiple codes that are frequently billed in conjunction with furnishing a single service.

“(V) Codes with low relative values, particularly those that are often billed multiple times for a single treatment.

“(VI) Codes that have not been subject to review since implementation of the fee schedule.

“(VII) Codes that account for the majority of spending under the physician fee schedule.

“(VIII) Codes for services that have experienced a substantial change in the hospital length of stay or procedure time.

“(IX) Codes for which there may be a change in the typical site of service since the code was last valued.

“(X) Codes for which there is a significant difference in payment for the same service between different sites of service.

“(XI) Codes for which there may be anomalies in relative values within a family of codes.

“(XII) Codes for services where there may be efficiencies when a service is furnished at the same time as other services.

“(XIII) Codes with high intra-service work per unit of time.

“(XIV) Codes with high practice expense relative value units.

“(XV) Codes with high cost supplies.

“(XVI) Codes as determined appropriate by the Secretary.”

(d) **TARGET FOR RELATIVE VALUE ADJUSTMENTS FOR MISVALUED SERVICES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1848(c)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(c)(2)), as amended by subsections (a) and (b), is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(O) **TARGET FOR RELATIVE VALUE ADJUSTMENTS FOR MISVALUED SERVICES.**—With respect to fee schedules established for each of 2015 through 2018, the following shall apply:

“(i) **DETERMINATION OF NET REDUCTION IN EXPENDITURES.**—For each year, the Secretary shall determine the estimated net reduction in expenditures under the fee schedule under this section with respect to the year as a result of adjustments to the relative values established under this paragraph for misvalued codes.

“(ii) **BUDGET NEUTRAL REDISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS IF TARGET MET AND COUNTING OVERAGES TOWARDS THE TARGET FOR THE SUCCEEDING YEAR.**—If the estimated net reduction in expenditures determined under clause (i) for the year is equal to or greater than the target for the year—

“(I) reduced expenditures attributable to such adjustments shall be redistributed for the year in a budget neutral manner in accordance with subparagraph (B)(ii)(II); and

“(II) the amount by which such reduced expenditures exceeds the target for the year shall be treated as a reduction in expenditures described in clause (i) for the succeeding year, for purposes of determining whether the target has or has not been met under this subparagraph with respect to that year.

“(iii) **EXEMPTION FROM BUDGET NEUTRALITY IF TARGET NOT MET.**—If the estimated net reduction in expenditures determined under clause (i) for the year is less than the target for the year, reduced expenditures in an amount equal to the target recapture amount shall not be taken into account in applying subparagraph (B)(ii)(II) with respect to fee schedules beginning with 2015.

“(iv) **TARGET RECAPTURE AMOUNT.**—For purposes of clause (iii), the target recapture amount is, with respect to a year, an amount equal to the difference between—

“(I) the target for the year; and

“(II) the estimated net reduction in expenditures determined under clause (i) for the year.

“(v) **TARGET.**—For purposes of this subparagraph, with respect to a year, the target is calculated as 0.5 percent of the estimated amount of expenditures under the fee schedule under this section for the year.”

(2) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 1848(c)(2)(B)(v) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(c)(2)(B)(v)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subclause:

“(VIII) **REDUCTIONS FOR MISVALUED SERVICES IF TARGET NOT MET.**—Effective for fee schedules beginning with 2015, reduced expenditures attributable to the application of the target recapture amount described in subparagraph (O)(iii).”

(e) **PHASE-IN OF SIGNIFICANT RELATIVE VALUE UNIT (RVU) REDUCTIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1848(c) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(7) **PHASE-IN OF SIGNIFICANT RELATIVE VALUE UNIT (RVU) REDUCTIONS.**—Effective for fee schedules established beginning with 2015, if the total relative value units for a service for a year would otherwise be decreased by an estimated amount equal to or greater than 20 percent as compared to the total relative value units for the previous year, the applicable adjustments in work, practice expense, and malpractice relative value units shall be phased-in over a 2-year period.”

(2) **CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 1848(c)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(c)(2)) is amended—

(A) in subparagraph (B)(ii)(I), by striking “subclause (II)” and inserting “subclause (II) and paragraph (7)”; and

(B) in subparagraph (K)(iii)(VI)—

(i) by striking “provisions of subparagraph (B)(ii)(II)” and inserting “provisions of subparagraph (B)(ii)(II) and paragraph (7)”; and

(ii) by striking “under subparagraph (B)(ii)(II)” and inserting “under subparagraph (B)(ii)(I)”.’

(f) **AUTHORITY TO SMOOTH RELATIVE VALUES WITHIN GROUPS OF SERVICES.**—Section 1848(c)(2)(C) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(c)(2)(C)) is amended—

(1) in each of clauses (i) and (iii), by striking “the service” and inserting “the service or group of services” each place it appears; and

(2) in the first sentence of clause (ii), by inserting “or group of services” before the period.

(g) **GAO STUDY AND REPORT ON RELATIVE VALUE SCALE UPDATE COMMITTEE.**—

(1) **STUDY.**—The Comptroller General of the United States (in this subsection referred to as the “Comptroller General”) shall conduct a study of the processes used by the Relative Value Scale Update Committee (RUC) to provide recommendations to the Secretary of Health and Human Services regarding relative values for specific services under the Medicare physician fee schedule under section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4).

(2) **REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report containing the results of the study conducted under paragraph (1).

(h) **ADJUSTMENT TO MEDICARE PAYMENT LOCALITIES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 1848(e) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) **USE OF MSAS AS FEE SCHEDULE AREAS IN CALIFORNIA.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to the succeeding provisions of this paragraph and notwithstanding the previous provisions of this subsection, for services furnished on or after January 1, 2017, the fee schedule areas used for payment under this section applicable to California shall be the following:

“(i) Each Metropolitan Statistical Area (each in this paragraph referred to as an ‘MSA’), as defined by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget as of December 31 of the previous year, shall be a fee schedule area.

“(ii) All areas not included in an MSA shall be treated as a single rest-of-State fee schedule area.

“(B) **TRANSITION FOR MSAS PREVIOUSLY IN REST-OF-STATE PAYMENT LOCALITY OR IN LOCALITY 3.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—For services furnished in California during a year beginning with 2017 and ending with 2021 in an MSA in a transition area (as defined in subparagraph (D)), subject to subparagraph (C), the geographic index values to be applied under this subsection for such year shall be equal to the sum of the following:

“(I) **CURRENT LAW COMPONENT.**—The old weighting factor (described in clause (ii)) for such year multiplied by the geographic index values under this subsection for the fee schedule area that included such MSA that would have applied in such area (as estimated by the Secretary) if this paragraph did not apply.

“(II) **MSA-BASED COMPONENT.**—The MSA-based weighting factor (described in clause (iii)) for such year multiplied by the geographic index values computed for the fee schedule area under subparagraph (A) for the year (determined without regard to this subparagraph).

“(ii) OLD WEIGHTING FACTOR.—The old weighting factor described in this clause—

“(I) for 2017, is %; and

“(II) for each succeeding year, is the old weighting factor described in this clause for the previous year minus ½.

“(iii) MSA-BASED WEIGHTING FACTOR.—The MSA-based weighting factor described in this clause for a year is 1 minus the old weighting factor under clause (ii) for that year.

“(C) HOLD HARMLESS.—For services furnished in a transition area in California during a year beginning with 2017, the geographic index values to be applied under this subsection for such year shall not be less than the corresponding geographic index values that would have applied in such transition area (as estimated by the Secretary) if this paragraph did not apply.

“(D) TRANSITION AREA DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term ‘transition area’ means each of the following fee schedule areas for 2013:

“(i) The rest-of-State payment locality.

“(ii) Payment locality 3.

“(E) REFERENCES TO FEE SCHEDULE AREAS.—Effective for services furnished on or after January 1, 2017, for California, any reference in this section to a fee schedule area shall be deemed a reference to a fee schedule area established in accordance with this paragraph.”.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT TO DEFINITION OF FEE SCHEDULE AREA.—Section 1848(j)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(j)(2)) is amended by striking “The term” and inserting “Except as provided in subsection (e)(6)(D), the term”.

(i) DISCLOSURE OF DATA USED TO ESTABLISH MULTIPLE PROCEDURE PAYMENT REDUCTION POLICY.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall make publicly available the information used to establish the multiple procedure payment reduction policy to the professional component of imaging services in the final rule published in the Federal Register, v. 77, n. 222, November 16, 2012, pages 68891–69380 under the physician fee schedule under section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4).

SEC. 6. PROMOTING EVIDENCE-BASED CARE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1834 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(p) RECOGNIZING APPROPRIATE USE CRITERIA FOR CERTAIN IMAGING SERVICES.—

“(1) PROGRAM ESTABLISHED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a program to promote the use of appropriate use criteria (as defined in subparagraph (B)) for applicable imaging services (as defined in subparagraph (C)) furnished in an applicable setting (as defined in subparagraph (D)) by ordering professionals and furnishing professionals (as defined in subparagraphs (E) and (F), respectively).

“(B) APPROPRIATE USE CRITERIA DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘appropriate use criteria’ means criteria, only developed or endorsed by national professional medical specialty societies or other provider-led entities, to assist ordering professionals and furnishing professionals in making the most appropriate treatment decision for a specific clinical condition. To the extent feasible, such criteria shall be evidence-based.

“(C) APPLICABLE IMAGING SERVICE DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘applicable imaging service’ means an advanced diagnostic imaging service (as defined in subsection (e)(1)(B)) for which the Secretary determines—

“(i) one or more applicable appropriate use criteria specified under paragraph (2) apply;

“(ii) there are one or more qualified clinical decision support mechanisms listed under paragraph (3)(C); and

“(iii) one or more of such mechanisms is available free of charge.

“(D) APPLICABLE SETTING DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘applicable setting’ means a physician’s office, a hospital outpatient department (including an emergency department), an ambulatory surgical center, and any other provider-led outpatient setting determined appropriate by the Secretary.

“(E) ORDERING PROFESSIONAL DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘ordering professional’ means a physician (as defined in section 1861(r)) or a practitioner described in section 1842(b)(18)(C) who orders an applicable imaging service for an individual.

“(F) FURNISHING PROFESSIONAL DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘furnishing professional’ means a physician (as defined in section 1861(r)) or a practitioner described in section 1842(b)(18)(C) who furnishes an applicable imaging service for an individual.

“(2) ESTABLISHMENT OF APPLICABLE APPROPRIATE USE CRITERIA.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than November 15, 2015, the Secretary shall through rulemaking, and in consultation with physicians, practitioners, and other stakeholders, specify applicable appropriate use criteria for applicable imaging services only from among appropriate use criteria developed or endorsed by national professional medical specialty societies or other provider-led entities.

“(B) CONSIDERATIONS.—In specifying applicable appropriate use criteria under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall take into account whether the criteria—

“(i) have stakeholder consensus;

“(ii) are scientifically valid and evidence based; and

“(iii) are based on studies that are published and reviewable by stakeholders.

“(C) REVISIONS.—The Secretary shall review, on an annual basis, the specified applicable appropriate use criteria to determine if there is a need to update or revise (as appropriate) such specification of applicable appropriate use criteria and make such updates or revisions through rulemaking.

“(D) TREATMENT OF MULTIPLE APPLICABLE APPROPRIATE USE CRITERIA.—In the case where the Secretary determines that more than one appropriate use criteria applies with respect to an applicable imaging service, the Secretary shall permit one or more applicable appropriate use criteria under this paragraph for the service.

“(3) MECHANISMS FOR CONSULTATION WITH APPLICABLE APPROPRIATE USE CRITERIA.—

“(A) IDENTIFICATION OF MECHANISMS TO CONSULT WITH APPLICABLE APPROPRIATE USE CRITERIA.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall specify qualified clinical decision support mechanisms that could be used by ordering professionals to consult with applicable appropriate use criteria for applicable imaging services.

“(ii) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary shall consult with physicians, practitioners, health care technology experts, and other stakeholders in specifying mechanisms under this paragraph.

“(iii) INCLUSION OF CERTAIN MECHANISMS.—Mechanisms specified under this paragraph may include any or all of the following that meet the requirements described in subparagraph (B)(ii):

“(I) Use of clinical decision support modules in certified EHR technology (as defined in section 1848(o)(4)).

“(II) Use of private sector clinical decision support mechanisms that are independent from certified EHR technology, which may include use of clinical decision support mechanisms available from medical specialty organizations.

“(III) Use of a clinical decision support mechanism established by the Secretary.

“(B) QUALIFIED CLINICAL DECISION SUPPORT MECHANISMS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this subsection, a qualified clinical decision support mechanism is a mechanism that the Secretary determines meets the requirements described in clause (ii).

“(ii) REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements described in this clause are the following:

“(I) The mechanism makes available to the ordering professional applicable appropriate use criteria specified under paragraph (2) and the supporting documentation for the applicable imaging service ordered.

“(II) In the case where there are more than one applicable appropriate use criteria specified under such paragraph for an applicable imaging service, the mechanism indicates the criteria that it uses for the service.

“(III) The mechanism determines the extent to which an applicable imaging service ordered is consistent with the applicable appropriate use criteria so specified.

“(IV) The mechanism generates and provides to the ordering professional a certification or documentation that documents that the qualified clinical decision support mechanism was consulted by the ordering professional.

“(V) The mechanism is updated on a timely basis to reflect revisions to the specification of applicable appropriate use criteria under such paragraph.

“(VI) The mechanism meets privacy and security standards under applicable provisions of law.

“(VII) The mechanism performs such other functions as specified by the Secretary, which may include a requirement to provide aggregate feedback to the ordering professional.

“(C) LIST OF MECHANISMS FOR CONSULTATION WITH APPLICABLE APPROPRIATE USE CRITERIA.—

“(i) INITIAL LIST.—Not later than April 1, 2016, the Secretary shall publish a list of mechanisms specified under this paragraph.

“(ii) PERIODIC UPDATING OF LIST.—The Secretary shall identify on an annual basis the list of qualified clinical decision support mechanisms specified under this paragraph.

“(4) CONSULTATION WITH APPLICABLE APPROPRIATE USE CRITERIA.—

“(A) CONSULTATION BY ORDERING PROFESSIONAL.—Beginning with January 1, 2017, subject to subparagraph (C), with respect to an applicable imaging service ordered by an ordering professional that would be furnished in an applicable setting and paid for under an applicable payment system (as defined in subparagraph (D)), an ordering professional shall—

“(i) consult with a qualified decision support mechanism listed under paragraph (3)(C); and

“(ii) provide to the furnishing professional the information described in clauses (i) through (iii) of subparagraph (B).

“(B) REPORTING BY FURNISHING PROFESSIONAL.—Beginning with January 1, 2017, subject to subparagraph (C), with respect to an applicable imaging service furnished in an

applicable setting and paid for under an applicable payment system (as defined in subparagraph (D)), payment for such service may only be made if the claim for the service includes the following:

“(i) Information about which qualified clinical decision support mechanism was consulted by the ordering professional for the service.

“(ii) Information regarding—

“(I) whether the service ordered would adhere to the applicable appropriate use criteria specified under paragraph (2);

“(II) whether the service ordered would not adhere to such criteria; or

“(III) whether such criteria was not applicable to the service ordered.

“(iii) The national provider identifier of the ordering professional (if different from the furnishing professional).

“(C) EXCEPTIONS.—The provisions of subparagraphs (A) and (B) and paragraph (6)(A) shall not apply to the following:

“(i) EMERGENCY SERVICES.—An applicable imaging service ordered for an individual with an emergency medical condition (as defined in section 1867(e)(1)).

“(ii) INPATIENT SERVICES.—An applicable imaging service ordered for an inpatient and for which payment is made under part A.

“(iii) ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT MODELS.—An applicable imaging service ordered by an ordering professional with respect to an individual attributed to an alternative payment model (as defined in section 1833(z)(3)(C)).

“(iv) SIGNIFICANT HARDSHIP.—An applicable imaging service ordered by an ordering professional who the Secretary may, on a case-by-case basis, exempt from the application of such provisions if the Secretary determines, subject to annual renewal, that consultation with applicable appropriate use criteria would result in a significant hardship, such as in the case of a professional who practices in a rural area without sufficient Internet access.

“(D) APPLICABLE PAYMENT SYSTEM DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘applicable payment system’ means the following:

“(i) The physician fee schedule established under section 1848(b).

“(ii) The prospective payment system for hospital outpatient department services under section 1833(t).

“(iii) The ambulatory surgical center payment systems under section 1833(i).

“(5) IDENTIFICATION OF OUTLIER ORDERING PROFESSIONALS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—With respect to applicable imaging services furnished beginning with 2017, the Secretary shall determine, on an annual basis, no more than five percent of the total number of ordering professionals who are outlier ordering professionals.

“(B) OUTLIER ORDERING PROFESSIONALS.—The determination of an outlier ordering professional shall—

“(i) be based on low adherence to applicable appropriate use criteria specified under paragraph (2), which may be based on comparison to other ordering professionals; and

“(ii) include data for ordering professionals for whom prior authorization under paragraph (6)(A) applies.

“(C) USE OF TWO YEARS OF DATA.—The Secretary shall use two years of data to identify outlier ordering professionals under this paragraph.

“(D) PROCESS.—The Secretary shall establish a process for determining when an outlier ordering professional is no longer an outlier ordering professional.

“(E) CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS.—The Secretary shall consult with physicians,

practitioners and other stakeholders in developing methods to identify outlier ordering professionals under this paragraph.

“(6) PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FOR ORDERING PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE OUTLIERS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning January 1, 2020, subject to paragraph (4)(C), with respect to services furnished during a year, the Secretary shall, for a period determined appropriate by the Secretary, apply prior authorization for applicable imaging services that are ordered by an outlier ordering professional identified under paragraph (5).

“(B) APPROPRIATE USE CRITERIA IN PRIOR AUTHORIZATION.—In applying prior authorization under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall utilize only the applicable appropriate use criteria specified under this subsection.

“(C) FUNDING.—For purposes of carrying out this paragraph, the Secretary shall provide for the transfer, from the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund under section 1841, of \$5,000,000 to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Program Management Account for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2021. Amounts transferred under the preceding sentence shall remain available until expended.

“(7) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as granting the Secretary the authority to develop or initiate the development of clinical practice guidelines or appropriate use criteria.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 1833(t)(16) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395l(t)(16)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(E) APPLICATION OF APPROPRIATE USE CRITERIA FOR CERTAIN IMAGING SERVICES.—For provisions relating to the application of appropriate use criteria for certain imaging services, see section 1834(p).”.

(c) REPORT ON EXPERIENCE OF IMAGING APPROPRIATE USE CRITERIA PROGRAM.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report that includes a description of the extent to which appropriate use criteria could be used for other services under part B of title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395j et seq.), such as radiation therapy and clinical diagnostic laboratory services.

SEC. 7. EMPOWERING BENEFICIARY CHOICES THROUGH ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON PHYSICIANS' SERVICES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall make publicly available on Physician Compare the information described in subsection (b) with respect to eligible professionals.

(b) INFORMATION DESCRIBED.—The following information, with respect to an eligible professional, is described in this subsection:

(1) Information on the number of services furnished by the eligible professional under part B of title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395j et seq.), which may include information on the most frequent services furnished or groupings of services.

(2) Information on submitted charges and payments for services under such part.

(3) A unique identifier for the eligible professional that is available to the public, such as a national provider identifier.

(c) SEARCHABILITY.—The information made available under this section shall be searchable by at least the following:

(1) The specialty or type of the eligible professional.

(2) Characteristics of the services furnished, such as volume or groupings of services.

(3) The location of the eligible professional.

(d) DISCLOSURE.—The information made available under this section shall indicate, where appropriate, that publicized information may not be representative of the eligible professional's entire patient population, the variety of services furnished by the eligible professional, or the health conditions of individuals treated.

(e) IMPLEMENTATION.—

(1) INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION.—Physician Compare shall include the information described in subsection (b)—

(A) with respect to physicians, by not later than July 1, 2015; and

(B) with respect to other eligible professionals, by not later than July 1, 2016.

(2) ANNUAL UPDATING.—The information made available under this section shall be updated on Physician Compare not less frequently than on an annual basis.

(f) OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW AND SUBMIT CORRECTIONS.—The Secretary shall provide for an opportunity for an eligible professional to review, and submit corrections for, the information to be made public with respect to the eligible professional under this section prior to such information being made public.

(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ELIGIBLE PROFESSIONAL; PHYSICIAN; SECRETARY.—The terms “eligible professional”, “physician”, and “Secretary” have the meaning given such terms in section 10331(i) of Public Law 111-148.

(2) PHYSICIAN COMPARE.—The term “Physician Compare” means the Physician Compare Internet website of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (or a successor website).

SEC. 8. EXPANDING AVAILABILITY OF MEDICARE DATA.

(a) EXPANDING USES OF MEDICARE DATA BY QUALIFIED ENTITIES.—

(1) ADDITIONAL ANALYSES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), to the extent consistent with applicable information, privacy, security, and disclosure laws (including paragraph (3)), notwithstanding paragraph (4)(B) of section 1874(e) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395kk(e)) and the second sentence of paragraph (4)(D) of such section, beginning July 1, 2015, a qualified entity may use the combined data described in paragraph (4)(B)(iii) of such section received by such entity under such section, and information derived from the evaluation described in such paragraph (4)(D), to conduct additional non-public analyses (as determined appropriate by the Secretary) and provide or sell such analyses to authorized users for non-public use (including for the purposes of assisting providers of services and suppliers to develop and participate in quality and patient care improvement activities, including developing new models of care).

(B) LIMITATIONS WITH RESPECT TO ANALYSES.—

(i) EMPLOYERS.—Any analyses provided or sold under subparagraph (A) to an employer described in paragraph (9)(A)(iii) may only be used by such employer for purposes of providing health insurance to employees and retirees of the employer.

(ii) HEALTH INSURANCE ISSUERS.—A qualified entity may not provide or sell an analysis to a health insurance issuer described in paragraph (9)(A)(iv) unless the issuer is providing the qualified entity with data under section 1874(e)(4)(B)(iii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395kk(e)(4)(B)(iii)).

(2) ACCESS TO CERTAIN DATA.—

(A) ACCESS.—To the extent consistent with applicable information, privacy, security,

and disclosure laws (including paragraph (3)), notwithstanding paragraph (4)(B) of section 1874(e) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395kk(e)) and the second sentence of paragraph (4)(D) of such section, beginning July 1, 2015, a qualified entity may—

(i) provide or sell the combined data described in paragraph (4)(B)(iii) of such section to authorized users described in clauses (i), (ii), and (v) of paragraph (9)(A) for non-public use, including for the purposes described in subparagraph (B); or

(ii) subject to subparagraph (C), provide Medicare claims data to authorized users described in clauses (i), (ii), and (v), of paragraph (9)(A) for non-public use, including for the purposes described in subparagraph (B).

(B) PURPOSES DESCRIBED.—The purposes described in this subparagraph are assisting providers of services and suppliers in developing and participating in quality and patient care improvement activities, including developing new models of care.

(C) MEDICARE CLAIMS DATA MUST BE PROVIDED AT NO COST.—A qualified entity may not charge a fee for providing the data under subparagraph (A)(ii).

(3) PROTECTION OF INFORMATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), an analysis or data that is provided or sold under paragraph (1) or (2) shall not contain information that individually identifies a patient.

(B) INFORMATION ON PATIENTS OF THE PROVIDER OF SERVICES OR SUPPLIER.—To the extent consistent with applicable information, privacy, security, and disclosure laws, an analysis or data that is provided or sold to a provider of services or supplier under paragraph (1) or (2) may contain information that individually identifies a patient of such provider or supplier, including with respect to items and services furnished to the patient by other providers of services or suppliers.

(C) PROHIBITION ON USING ANALYSES OR DATA FOR MARKETING PURPOSES.—An authorized user shall not use an analysis or data provided or sold under paragraph (1) or (2) for marketing purposes.

(4) DATA USE AGREEMENT.—A qualified entity and an authorized user described in clauses (i), (ii), and (v) of paragraph (9)(A) shall enter into an agreement regarding the use of any data that the qualified entity is providing or selling to the authorized user under paragraph (2). Such agreement shall describe the requirements for privacy and security of the data and, as determined appropriate by the Secretary, any prohibitions on using such data to link to other individually identifiable sources of information. If the authorized user is not a covered entity under the rules promulgated pursuant to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, the agreement shall identify the relevant regulations, as determined by the Secretary, that the user shall comply with as if it were acting in the capacity of such a covered entity.

(5) NO REDISCLOSURE OF ANALYSES OR DATA.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), an authorized user that is provided or sold an analysis or data under paragraph (1) or (2) shall not redisclose or make public such analysis or data or any analysis using such data.

(B) PERMITTED REDISCLOSURE.—A provider of services or supplier that is provided or sold an analysis or data under paragraph (1) or (2) may, as determined by the Secretary, redisclose such analysis or data for the purposes of performance improvement and care coordination activities but shall not make

public such analysis or data or any analysis using such data.

(6) OPPORTUNITY FOR PROVIDERS OF SERVICES AND SUPPLIERS TO REVIEW.—Prior to a qualified entity providing or selling an analysis to an authorized user under paragraph (1), to the extent that such analysis would individually identify a provider of services or supplier who is not being provided or sold such analysis, such qualified entity shall provide such provider or supplier with the opportunity to appeal and correct errors in the manner described in section 1874(e)(4)(C)(ii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395kk(e)(4)(C)(ii)).

(7) ASSESSMENT FOR A BREACH.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a breach of a data use agreement under this section or section 1874(e) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395kk(e)), the Secretary shall impose an assessment on the qualified entity both in the case of—

(i) an agreement between the Secretary and a qualified entity; and

(ii) an agreement between a qualified entity and an authorized user.

(B) ASSESSMENT.—The assessment under subparagraph (A) shall be an amount up to \$100 for each individual entitled to, or enrolled for, benefits under part A of title XVIII of the Social Security Act or enrolled for benefits under part B of such title—

(i) in the case of an agreement described in subparagraph (A)(i), for whom the Secretary provided data on to the qualified entity under paragraph (2); and

(ii) in the case of an agreement described in subparagraph (A)(ii), for whom the qualified entity provided data on to the authorized user under paragraph (2).

(C) DEPOSIT OF AMOUNTS COLLECTED.—Any amounts collected pursuant to this paragraph shall be deposited in Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund under section 1841 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395t).

(8) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Any qualified entity that provides or sells an analysis or data under paragraph (1) or (2) shall annually submit to the Secretary a report that includes—

(A) a summary of the analyses provided or sold, including the number of such analyses, the number of purchasers of such analyses, and the total amount of fees received for such analyses;

(B) a description of the topics and purposes of such analyses;

(C) information on the entities who received the data under paragraph (2), the uses of the data, and the total amount of fees received for providing, selling, or sharing the data; and

(D) other information determined appropriate by the Secretary.

(9) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection and subsection (b):

(A) AUTHORIZED USER.—The term “authorized user” means the following:

(i) A provider of services.

(ii) A supplier.

(iii) An employer (as defined in section 3(5) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974).

(iv) A health insurance issuer (as defined in section 2791 of the Public Health Service Act).

(v) A medical society or hospital association.

(vi) Any entity not described in clauses (i) through (v) that is approved by the Secretary (other than an employer or health insurance issuer not described in clauses (iii) and (iv), respectively, as determined by the Secretary).

(B) PROVIDER OF SERVICES.—The term “provider of services” has the meaning given such term in section 1861(u) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(u)).

(C) QUALIFIED ENTITY.—The term “qualified entity” has the meaning given such term in section 1874(e)(2) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395kk(e)).

(D) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(E) SUPPLIER.—The term “supplier” has the meaning given such term in section 1861(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395x(d)).

(b) ACCESS TO MEDICARE DATA BY QUALIFIED CLINICAL DATA REGISTRIES TO FACILITATE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT.—

(1) ACCESS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—To the extent consistent with applicable information, privacy, security, and disclosure laws, beginning July 1, 2015, the Secretary shall, at the request of a qualified clinical data registry under section 1848(m)(3)(E) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(m)(3)(E)), provide the data described in subparagraph (B) (in a form and manner determined to be appropriate) to such qualified clinical data registry for purposes of linking such data with clinical outcomes data and performing risk-adjusted, scientifically valid analyses and research to support quality improvement or patient safety, provided that any public reporting of such analyses or research that identifies a provider of services or supplier shall only be conducted with the opportunity of such provider or supplier to appeal and correct errors in the manner described in subsection (a)(6).

(B) DATA DESCRIBED.—The data described in this subparagraph is—

(i) claims data under the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act; and

(ii) if the Secretary determines appropriate, claims data under the Medicaid program under title XIX of such Act and the State Children's Health Insurance Program under title XXI of such Act.

(2) FEE.—Data described in paragraph (1)(B) shall be provided to a qualified clinical data registry under paragraph (1) at a fee equal to the cost of providing such data. Any fee collected pursuant to the preceding sentence shall be deposited in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Program Management Account.

(c) EXPANSION OF DATA AVAILABLE TO QUALIFIED ENTITIES.—Section 1874(e) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395kk(e)) is amended—

(1) in the subsection heading, by striking “MEDICARE”; and

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) by inserting after the first sentence the following new sentence: “Beginning July 1, 2015, if the Secretary determines appropriate, the data described in this paragraph may also include standardized extracts (as determined by the Secretary) of claims data under titles XIX and XXI for assistance provided under such titles for one or more specified geographic areas and time periods requested by a qualified entity.”; and

(B) in the last sentence, by inserting “or under titles XIX or XXI” before the period at the end.

(d) REVISION OF PLACEMENT OF FEES.—Section 1874(e)(4)(A) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395kk(e)(4)(A)) is amended, in the second sentence—

(1) by inserting “, for periods prior to July 1, 2015,” after “deposited”; and

(2) by inserting the following before the period at the end: “, and, beginning July 1,

2015, into the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Program Management Account”.

SEC. 9. REDUCING ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN AND OTHER PROVISIONS.

(a) MEDICARE PHYSICIAN AND PRACTITIONER OPT-OUT TO PRIVATE CONTRACT.—

(1) INDEFINITE, CONTINUING AUTOMATIC EXTENSION OF OPT OUT ELECTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 1802(b)(3) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395a(b)(3)) is amended—

(i) in subparagraph (B)(ii), by striking “during the 2-year period beginning on the date the affidavit is signed” and inserting “during the applicable 2-year period (as defined in subparagraph (D))”;

(ii) in subparagraph (C), by striking “during the 2-year period described in subparagraph (B)(ii)” and inserting “during the applicable 2-year period”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) APPLICABLE 2-YEAR PERIODS FOR EFFECTIVENESS OF AFFIDAVITS.—In this subsection, the term ‘applicable 2-year period’ means, with respect to an affidavit of a physician or practitioner under subparagraph (B), the 2-year period beginning on the date the affidavit is signed and includes each subsequent 2-year period unless the physician or practitioner involved provides notice to the Secretary (in a form and manner specified by the Secretary), not later than 30 days before the end of the previous 2-year period, that the physician or practitioner does not want to extend the application of the affidavit for such subsequent 2-year period.”.

(B) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subparagraph (A) shall apply to affidavits entered into on or after the date that is 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION ON OPT-OUT PHYSICIANS AND PRACTITIONERS.—Section 1802(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395a(b)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (5), by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(D) OPT-OUT PHYSICIAN OR PRACTITIONER.—The term ‘opt-out physician or practitioner’ means a physician or practitioner who has in effect an affidavit under paragraph (3)(B).”;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (5) as paragraph (6); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following new paragraph:

“(5) POSTING OF INFORMATION ON OPT-OUT PHYSICIANS AND PRACTITIONERS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Beginning not later than February 1, 2015, the Secretary shall make publicly available through an appropriate publicly accessible website of the Department of Health and Human Services information on the number and characteristics of opt-out physicians and practitioners and shall update such information on such website not less often than annually.

“(B) INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED.—The information to be made available under subparagraph (A) shall include at least the following with respect to opt-out physicians and practitioners:

“(i) Their number.

“(ii) Their physician or professional specialty or other designation.

“(iii) Their geographic distribution.

“(iv) The timing of their becoming opt-out physicians and practitioners, relative to when they first entered practice and with respect to applicable 2-year periods.

“(v) The proportion of such physicians and practitioners who billed for emergency or urgent care services.”.

(b) GAINSHARING STUDY AND REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services, shall submit to Congress a report with legislative recommendations to amend existing fraud and abuse laws, through exceptions, safe harbors, or other narrowly targeted provisions, to permit gainsharing or similar arrangements between physicians and hospitals that improve care while reducing waste and increasing efficiency. The report shall—

(1) consider whether such provisions should apply to ownership interests, compensation arrangements, or other relationships;

(2) describe how the recommendations address accountability, transparency, and quality, including how best to limit inducements to stint on care, discharge patients prematurely, or otherwise reduce or limit medically necessary care; and

(3) consider whether a portion of any savings generated by such arrangements should accrue to the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act.

(c) PROMOTING INTEROPERABILITY OF ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD SYSTEMS.—

(1) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACHIEVING WIDESPREAD EHR INTEROPERABILITY.—

(A) OBJECTIVE.—As a consequence of a significant Federal investment in the implementation of health information technology through the Medicare and Medicaid EHR incentive programs, Congress declares it a national objective to achieve widespread exchange of health information through interoperable certified EHR technology nationwide by December 31, 2017.

(B) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

(i) WIDESPREAD INTEROPERABILITY.—The term “widespread interoperability” means interoperability between certified EHR technology systems employed by meaningful EHR users under the Medicare and Medicaid EHR incentive programs and other clinicians and health care providers on a nationwide basis.

(ii) INTEROPERABILITY.—The term “interoperability” means the ability of two or more health information systems or components to exchange clinical and other information and to use the information that has been exchanged using common standards as to provide access to longitudinal information for health care providers in order to facilitate coordinated care and improved patient outcomes.

(C) ESTABLISHMENT OF METRICS.—Not later than July 1, 2015, and in consultation with stakeholders, the Secretary shall establish metrics to be used to determine if and to the extent that the objective described in subparagraph (A) has been achieved.

(D) RECOMMENDATIONS IF OBJECTIVE NOT ACHIEVED.—If the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines that the objective described in subparagraph (A) has not been achieved by December 31, 2017, then the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report, by not later than December 31, 2018, that identifies barriers to such objective and recommends actions that the Federal Government can take to achieve such objective. Such recommended actions may include recommendations—

(i) to adjust payments for not being meaningful EHR users under the Medicare EHR incentive programs; and

(ii) for criteria for decertifying certified EHR technology products.

(2) PREVENTING BLOCKING THE SHARING OF INFORMATION.—

(A) FOR MEANINGFUL EHR PROFESSIONALS.—Section 1848(o)(2)(A)(ii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(o)(2)(A)(ii)) is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, and the professional demonstrates (through a process specified by the Secretary, such as the use of an attestation) that the professional has not knowingly and willfully taken any action to limit or restrict the compatibility or interoperability of the certified EHR technology”.

(B) FOR MEANINGFUL EHR HOSPITALS.—Section 1886(n)(3)(A)(ii) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395ww(n)(3)(A)(ii)) is amended by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, and the hospital demonstrates (through a process specified by the Secretary, such as the use of an attestation) that the hospital has not knowingly and willfully taken any action to limit or restrict the compatibility or interoperability of the certified EHR technology”.

(C) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to meaningful EHR users as of the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(3) STUDY AND REPORT ON THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A WEBSITE TO COMPARE CERTIFIED EHR TECHNOLOGY PRODUCTS.—

(A) STUDY.—The Secretary shall conduct a study to examine the feasibility of establishing mechanisms that includes aggregated results of surveys of meaningful EHR users on the functionality of certified EHR technology products to enable such users to directly compare the functionality and other features of such products. Such information may be made available through contracts with physician, hospital, or other organizations that maintain such comparative information.

(B) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the website. The report shall include information on the benefits of, and resources needed to develop and maintain, such a website.

(4) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) The term “certified EHR technology” has the meaning given such term in section 1848(o)(4) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(o)(4)).

(B) The term “meaningful EHR user” has the meaning given such term under the Medicare EHR incentive programs.

(C) The term “Medicare and Medicaid EHR incentive programs” means—

(i) in the case of the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act, the incentive programs under section 1814(l)(3), section 1848(o), subsections (l) and (m) of section 1853, and section 1886(n) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395f(l)(3), 1395w-4(o), 1395w-23, 1395ww(n)); and

(ii) in the case of the Medicaid program under title XIX of such Act, the incentive program under subsections (a)(3)(F) and (t) of section 1903 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396b).

(D) The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(d) GAO STUDIES AND REPORTS ON THE USE OF TELEHEALTH UNDER FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND ON REMOTE PATIENT MONITORING SERVICES.—

(1) STUDY ON TELEHEALTH SERVICES.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study on the following:

(A) How the definition of telehealth across various Federal programs and Federal efforts can inform the use of telehealth in the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.).

(B) Issues that can facilitate or inhibit the use of telehealth under the Medicare program under such title, including oversight and professional licensure, changing technology, privacy and security, infrastructure requirements, and varying needs across urban and rural areas.

(C) Potential implications of greater use of telehealth with respect to payment and delivery system transformations under the Medicare program under such title XVIII and the Medicaid program under title XIX of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.).

(D) How the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services conducts oversight of payments made under the Medicare program under such title XVIII to providers for telehealth services.

(2) STUDY ON REMOTE PATIENT MONITORING SERVICES.—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study—

(i) of the dissemination of remote patient monitoring technology in the private health insurance market;

(ii) of the financial incentives in the private health insurance market relating to adoption of such technology;

(iii) of the barriers to adoption of such services under the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act;

(iv) that evaluates the patients, conditions, and clinical circumstances that could most benefit from remote patient monitoring services; and

(v) that evaluates the challenges related to establishing appropriate valuation for remote patient monitoring services under the Medicare physician fee schedule under section 1848 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4) in order to accurately reflect the resources involved in furnishing such services.

(B) **DEFINITIONS.**—For purposes of this paragraph:

(i) **REMOTE PATIENT MONITORING SERVICES.**—The term “remote patient monitoring services” means services furnished through remote patient monitoring technology.

(ii) **REMOTE PATIENT MONITORING TECHNOLOGY.**—The term “remote patient monitoring technology” means a coordinated system that uses one or more home-based or mobile monitoring devices that automatically transmit vital sign data or information on activities of daily living and may include responses to assessment questions collected on the devices wirelessly or through a telecommunications connection to a server that complies with the Federal regulations (concerning the privacy of individually identifiable health information) promulgated under section 264(c) of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, as part of an established plan of care for that patient that includes the review and interpretation of that data by a health care professional.

(3) **REPORTS.**—Not later than 24 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to Congress—

(A) a report containing the results of the study conducted under paragraph (1); and

(B) a report containing the results of the study conducted under paragraph (2).

A report required under this paragraph shall be submitted together with recommendations for such legislation and administrative action as the Comptroller General determines appropriate. The Comptroller General may submit one report containing the results described in subparagraphs (A) and (B)

and the recommendations described in the previous sentence.

(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION REGARDING HEALTHCARE PROVIDER STANDARDS OF CARE.—

(1) **MAINTENANCE OF STATE STANDARDS.**—The development, recognition, or implementation of any guideline or other standard under any Federal health care provision shall not be construed—

(A) to establish the standard of care or duty of care owed by a health care provider to a patient in any medical malpractice or medical product liability action or claim; or

(B) to preempt any standard of care or duty of care, owed by a health care provider to a patient, duly established under State or common law.

(2) **DEFINITIONS.**—For purposes of this subsection:

(A) **FEDERAL HEALTH CARE PROVISION.**—The term “Federal health care provision” means any provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148), title I or subtitle B of title II of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-152), or title XVIII or XIX of the Social Security Act.

(B) **HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.**—The term “health care provider” means any individual or entity—

(i) licensed, registered, or certified under Federal or State laws or regulations to provide health care services; or

(ii) required to be so licensed, registered, or certified but that is exempted by other statute or regulation.

(C) **MEDICAL MALPRACTICE OR MEDICAL PRODUCT LIABILITY ACTION OR CLAIM.**—The term “medical malpractice or medical product liability action or claim” means a medical malpractice action or claim (as defined in section 431(7) of the Health Care Quality Improvement Act of 1986 (42 U.S.C. 11151(7))) and includes a liability action or claim relating to a health care provider's prescription or provision of a drug, device, or biological product (as such terms are defined in section 201 of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act or section 351 of the Public Health Service Act).

(D) **STATE.**—The term “State” includes the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and any other commonwealth, possession, or territory of the United States.

(3) **PRESERVATION OF STATE LAW.**—No provision of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111-148), title I or subtitle B of title II of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-152), or title XVIII or XIX of the Social Security Act shall be construed to preempt any State or common law governing medical professional or medical product liability actions or claims.

SEC. 10. DELAY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH INDIVIDUAL HEALTH INSURANCE MANDATE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 5000A(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) **DELAY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF PENALTY.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection, the monthly penalty amount with respect to any taxpayer for any month beginning before January 1, 2019, shall be zero.”

(b) **DELAY OF CERTAIN PHASE INS AND INDEXING.**

(1) **PHASE IN OF PERCENTAGE OF INCOME LIMITATION.**—Section 5000A(c)(2)(B) of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking “2014” in clause (i) and inserting “2019”, and

(B) by striking “2015” in clauses (ii) and (iii) and inserting “2020”.

(2) **PHASE IN OF APPLICABLE DOLLAR AMOUNT.**—Section 5000A(c)(3)(B) of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking “2014” and inserting “2019”, and

(B) by striking “2015” (before amendment by subparagraph (A)) and inserting “2020”.

(3) **INDEXING OF APPLICABLE DOLLAR AMOUNT.**—Section 5000A(c)(3)(D) of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking “2016” in the matter preceding clause (i) and inserting “2021”, and

(B) by striking “2015” in clause (ii) and inserting “2020”.

(4) **INDEXING OF EXEMPTION BASED ON HOUSEHOLD INCOME.**—Section 5000A(e)(1)(D) of such Code is amended—

(A) by striking “2014” (before amendment by subparagraph (B)) and inserting “2019”, and

(B) by striking “2013” and inserting “2018”.

(c) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendments made by this section shall apply to months beginning after December 31, 2013.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS), the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP), and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) each will control 15 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on H.R. 4015.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the sustainable growth rate, or SGR, is the formula through which Medicare reimburses physicians. Since 2003, Congress has voted 17 times for temporary patches, or “doc fixes,” to avert ever larger cuts to providers.

The uncertainty of the SGR threatens doctors' ability to continue practicing medicine and accepting Medicare patients and endangers seniors' access to care.

Absent congressional action, providers face a 24 percent cut on April 1, 2014. To stave off this cut, we can either pass another “patch” and kick the can down the road again, or we can repeal this flawed formula for good.

Today's bill, H.R. 4015, firmly repeals the SGR and replaces it with payment reform policy that has been agreed upon by the bipartisan leaders of the Energy and Commerce, the Ways and Means, and Senate Finance Committees.

As chairman of the Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee, I have been working for the past 3 years on legislation to permanently repeal the SGR, and I am very pleased that on

February 6, 2014, we reached a bipartisan, bicameral agreement, embodied in today's legislation.

Unfortunately, since then, Senate Majority Leader REID has refused to negotiate with us on how to pay for this package. So we have brought forward H.R. 4015, which is fully paid for by delaying implementation of the individual mandate—a policy supported by both Republicans and Democrats.

The bill enjoys more than 100 cosponsors and the support of over 700 national and State provider and stakeholder groups. So I urge all of my colleagues to vote for H.R. 4015 to ensure that our seniors have access to the doctors they know and trust.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, to start the debate on our side, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. I thank my friend from California for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition, not to the policy before us, but to the poison pill pay-for attached to this much-needed SGR repeal-and-replace legislation.

I support the bipartisan, bicameral agreement contained in H.R. 4015 for numerous reasons. There is almost universal agreement that the sustainable growth rate is a flawed formula and, therefore, Congress has been left to temporarily patch physician reimbursement for far too long.

This bill permanently repeals the SGR and provides physicians with a small increase in pay for the first 5 years. I want to see our physician workforce fairly compensated for providing high-quality care to our constituents. The SGR fails to adequately do this. This legislation incentivizes physicians to focus on providing quality care instead of a high quantity of care.

Finally, while it has always been extremely expensive to permanently repeal and replace the SGR, it is now estimated to cost less than \$140 billion. This is less than half the cost of what it would have been a few years ago. While the costs remain significant, I believe that it is imperative we permanently fix physician payment now.

That is why I am so furious Republicans are wasting valuable time by pairing this much-needed legislation with yet another ridiculous Affordable Care Act repeal vote. After more than 50 repeal votes, I think it is clear to everyone where both Democrats and Republicans stand on the Affordable Care Act. We don't need another repeal vote.

The current SGR patch expires in 17 days. We should be focused on finding bipartisan pay-fors to permanently fix the SGR instead of having Republicans push through yet another bill that will surely die in the Senate.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gen-

tleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY), one of the cochair of the Doctors Caucus, who has contributed a great deal to accomplish this bipartisan agreement.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today we vote to repeal the sustainable growth rate, a formula that was flawed from its 1997 beginning, and it has run its ugly course.

As cochairman of the House GOP Doctors Caucus, I would like to thank the Energy and Commerce Committee, especially Chairman UPTON, Ranking Member WAXMAN, Health Subcommittee Chairman PITTS and Ranking Member PALLONE, and especially a member of the Doctors Caucus, Vice Chair Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS, and, of course, the Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee and their staffs for their tireless work to produce a policy which will help to ensure that seniors continue to have access to quality providers.

Included in this legislation is my bill, and it is called the Standard of Care Protection Act. It provides much-needed clarity to the practice of medicine by confirming that Federal quality incentives are no substitute in a medical malpractice case for the standards of care developed by specialty societies and determined and practiced by physicians. This is an extremely important determination that will provide fairness to both patient plaintiffs and doctors.

With the vote today, we take an important step toward replacing the flawed formula, while at the same time protecting Americans by delaying the individual mandate of ObamaCare by 5 years. While the current administration continues to add delays when it is politically expedient, this policy gives certainty to individuals that they won't be taxed or fined, Mr. Speaker, for not complying with a law that they can't afford.

This may not be the final version of the bill, but it is time for the Senate to pass their own version and appoint conferees. SGR repeal is too important for both seniors and their doctors, and we have come too far for this policy to not reach the President's desk this year.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Let me just say again, we have come too far for this policy to not reach the President's desk, and I mean this year. The Senate Majority Leader needs to come to the table. Let's find a suitable path forward, and let's repeal this unsustainable physician payment policy.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from the State of Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE).

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, every year, sometimes more than once a

year, since 2003 Congress has had to step in to prevent a cut in physician payments. With input from a wide variety of stakeholders, we have tried to work together for many, many years on a solution to the flawed system to the sustainable growth rate formula. Until this year, we were out of luck, and the price tag for fixing the formula was ever increasing.

The underlying legislation that we consider today was 11 years in the making. I am very proud to cosponsor this bill because it is a compromise solution for the formula we agreed on. But sadly—sadly—the majority has prescribed a bitter pill to swallow for passage of this important bill for patients and doctors. Instead of coming to the negotiating table to discuss mutually acceptable ways to pay for this bill, the majority has decided to pay for it by delaying important provisions of the Affordable Care Act.

Everybody knows that this provision is a nonstarter. It is a nonstarter in the other body and in my Caucus right here in the House. Because of this shortsighted tactic, the Republicans have almost guaranteed that we are going to need yet another short-term SGR patch before the current one expires on March 31.

This is bad for the doctors of America. This is bad for the patients of America. Let's get real. Let's fix this problem for good. And you know, Mr. GINGREY just recognized that this bill is not going anywhere. So let's sit down. Let's do what we did with the SGR itself, and let's figure out how to pay for it.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire about how much time remains on each side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 10¼ minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 11 minutes remaining.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), a valuable member of the Health Subcommittee.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today supporting repealing the SGR formula. The SGR cuts would reduce doctors' compensation for treating Medicare patients by 24 percent. H.R. 4015 repeals and replaces SGR with a merit-based incentive payment system—MIPS—that pays doctors based on quality, not volume.

Paying doctors based on quality incentivizes physicians to be as efficient and effective as possible in keeping their patients healthy. MIPS is fully paid for by a delay of ObamaCare's individual mandate—a tax on Americans to force them to purchase more expensive health care that doesn't meet their needs.

This bill will provide doctors who treat Medicare patients with certainty, incentivize and reward doctors to keep seniors healthy with better care, and provide individuals relief under ObamaCare.

Support our seniors, our doctors, and fairness for individuals under ObamaCare. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4015.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS), my good friend.

Mrs. CAPPS. I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I have long been a supporter of a permanent fix to the sustainable growth rate, or SGR. The flawed SGR harms providers and consumers alike and keeps us from true innovation in the health care sector, but for too long, the conversation has ended with everyone recognizing a problem but no one willing to find a middle ground to fix it.

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Instead, we lumber from patch to patch, kicking the can down the road with piecemeal delays or fixes here in Congress, such as we are doing today. These disagreements let the issue linger, causing more instability in our communities while the cost of a fix continues to rise. That is why I have been so proud to be part of crafting the bipartisan, bicameral SGR fix policy.

This policy provides a positive payment update to our providers, pushes us toward a system rewarding quality and fixing the GPCI, ensuring that central coast providers and others will finally gain accurate Medicare reimbursement.

But today, this bipartisan process is being derailed once again. By tying a delay of the individual mandate to this policy, the House majority has poisoned such a bipartisan process. Access to health care for more than 50 million seniors and persons with disabilities is a serious matter. These partisan games could very well end our Nation's best shot at amending a bad policy.

I urge the majority to pull this bill, go back to the negotiating table with all of us, and help us fix Medicare provider payments once and for all.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HECK), another member of the Doctors Caucus.

Mr. HECK of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4015. I have always stated that the number one threat to Medicare and seniors' access to health care is the flawed SGR formula. At no time prior have we been so close in a bipartisan, bicameral way to ensuring that our seniors have access to the health care providers of their choosing, and now when we are so close is not the time to derail the progress made by using controversial pay-fors.

I will vote in favor of H.R. 4015 today because of the policy changes it represents. I ask my friends on the other side of the aisle to vote "aye" so we can send this bill to the Senate, and I call on the Senate to pass legislation that includes the agreed-to policy provisions with the pay-for of their choosing. Then, let's go to conference and fix the SGR once and for all.

Providing stability and predictability to our health care providers will result in stability and predictability for our seniors. Passing SGR reform is the fiscally responsible thing to do. The longer we delay, the more it will cost.

Let's give seniors the peace of mind they deserve, so that they will be able to see the Medicare provider of their choice. Let's pass H.R. 4015.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), who is ranking member of the Health Subcommittee.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. WAXMAN.

Mr. Speaker, today the Republican leadership once again chooses politics over substance and what is good for the American people. The current SGR patch will expire on March 31, at which point Medicare's payment to physicians will be cut by almost 24 percent. It is critical that we take meaningful action to fix the SGR before the end of the month.

We all know that the SGR formula is flawed. After 10 years of patching these cuts, after wasting \$150 billion, enough is enough. It is why we began last year seriously looking at this issue, and we came up with a bipartisan, bicameral solution. In fact, it was quite the lesson in legislating. Particularly, we ended up arriving at a consensus bill on the SGR.

So I ask the Republican leadership: For what reason have you poisoned this process with an unacceptable pay-for?

This bill will pass today and go nowhere. It will not be taken up by the Senate or signed by the President. You have singlehandedly, in my belief, stomped on months and months of hard work and effort by my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and our staffs. Late nights, weekends, hard compromises. We all saw the greater good in finally getting a permanent policy replacement for the SGR. But instead of working with our leadership, the Republicans have turned this into their 51st vote to repeal or undermine the ACA, and you are going to leave 13 million Americans uninsured if you were ever to succeed in repealing the ACA.

This is just a poison pill. The pay-for is a poison pill for something that we agreed on in terms of the substance of fixing the SGR. You could have picked other ways of paying for this. I think we are close to a consensus on the pay-for. Instead, you put in this poison pill.

You are wasting valuable time where you will basically do nothing.

We only have 2 weeks left. Let's defeat this bill today, sit down over the next 2 weeks and come up with a pay-for that makes sense, not a pay-for that simply repeals the Affordable Care Act, which is working well. More and more people are signing up. I had an enrollment event this weekend in my district. People are signing up. Don't destroy the process. We have a good SGR fix.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON), the distinguished chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, one of the chief architects of this bill.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, first I want to commend Republicans and Democrats for getting the policy right. This is a tough nut to crack. It was 51-0 in our committee, led by JOE PITTS, Dr. BURGESS, the Doc Caucus, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. DINGELL, and Mr. PALLONE. We worked long and hard to get the policy right, and we worked with the other committees to do it as well.

The difficulty we always knew was going to be on the pay-for. I would suggest this: we want to work with the Senate; we want to get this thing done; pay-for is the toughest part, but let's go to conference. Let's work with the Senate to get a pay-for that can work.

Now, we know that there is a deadline coming up at the end of this month. As we look to try and find a pay-for, let me go through some of the other delays that this administration has already done:

Individual mandate delay, Americans with canceled coverage due to ObamaCare; delayed.

Individual mandate, deadline for purchasing coverage; delayed.

Individual mandates for non-ACA compliant plans; delayed by the administration.

Annual limit requirement; delayed.

MLR requirement; delayed.

MA cuts through demo bonus money; delayed.

Employer reporting; delayed.

Employer mandate; delayed.

Subsidies only in State-run exchanges; delayed.

High-risk pool closure; delayed.

Out-of-pocket waiver for group health plans; delayed.

Verification of eligibility for exchange subsidies; delayed.

Reinsurance fee for some unions; delayed.

Nondiscrimination requirement for employer coverage; delayed.

Subsidies only through the exchange; delayed.

Shop employee choice delay; delayed.

Shop online purchasing; delayed.

Numerous HealthCare.gov technical; delayed.

This was never ready for prime time. We have said that from the start. If the

administration has decided to delay all these things, almost two dozen, why not delay this, too? And why not use the savings then not only to help the physicians, we have to think about the seniors.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. PITTS. I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. UPTON. This isn't just to help our physicians, it is to help the most vulnerable, our seniors, because if we don't reimburse our docs, the "closed" sign is going to come up where they go for services. They are going to be denied the coverage that they have paid taxes for, that they expect to have, and yet another broken promise will be there.

If the administration can delay these things, why don't we delay this? Why don't we use the savings then to pay for a program that works, and I would suggest that we vote for this. Let's work with the Senate to get it done.

Mr. Speaker, we are here today to vote for a bill that would provide certainty and peace of mind to our nation's seniors and fairness for all Americans under the president's health care law. Repeal of the system of physician cuts under Medicare, or SGR, has been a problem that has plagued seniors, doctors, and Congress for well over a decade. These cuts have threatened access to our seniors' health care and the Medicare promise that our country has made to every American—both those in the program today and those who count on it as part of their future retirement.

Our purpose here today is Medicare reform so that we can keep the promise made to all seniors, current and future. The Medicare program is going insolvent, and Congress will need to act if we are to prevent bankruptcy. Today is one step toward keeping the Medicare promise. Many of us did roundtables with our doctors back home, I did so in Michigan, and we visited with countless seniors. We heard their concerns loud and clear and have acted.

H.R. 4015, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act, is the product of years of bipartisan efforts to remove the threat of SGR. The legislation would once and for all repeal the broken SGR and replace it with a system that promotes the highest quality of care for seniors, eases the burden on physicians who are struggling under an increasing number of government programs that take time away from patients, and promotes new forms of health care delivery and innovation with an eye on the future.

We stand here today on the House floor in no small part because of our speaker, JOHN BOEHNER, who charged the Energy and Commerce Committee to find a workable solution to get rid of SGR. This has been a long journey with many important players on both sides of the aisle, and in both chambers. I do want to commend Health Subcommittee Chairman JOE PITTS for helping lead the effort and the bill's sponsor Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS, for his tireless commitment from day one. We also would not be here without the efforts and support of the GOP Doctors Caucus—a group

who understands all too well the threat that SGR has posed. And of course I appreciate our partnership with my good friend DAVE CAMP and the Ways and Means Committee.

While this is a significant milestone, the cost of SGR repeal is not insignificant. We have strived over the past few months to find common ground with the Senate to identify a way to pay for this agreement that both chambers can support. Time is not on our side as the current patch is set to expire at the end of this month. So today the House has chosen to act rather than stand idly by and is prepared to send a bill to the Senate with a bipartisan payfor: relief for individual Americans from the mandate that they purchase government-approved insurance.

The White House has already seen fit to delay many parts of the president's health care law, including the employer mandate. And it has also quietly delayed the individual mandate for the millions of Americans whose health care plans the law cancelled. If Senate Democratic colleagues don't want to afford individuals the same rights as special interests with a direct line to the president, then I would ask them to simply pass their own fully offset SGR package and let's go to conference to iron out our differences. But make no mistake, SGR must be paid for.

We have never come this far in finding a permanent solution. But there is still much work to be done after today's vote, and I call on my Chairman RON WYDEN to pick up the torch and work with Majority Leader HARRY REID to put politics aside, stand up for our seniors and doctors, and let's solve SGR this year.

I urge all my colleagues to support H.R. 4015 and the millions of seniors who are watching us here today.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that none of the delays that Mr. UPTON indicated on that chart would result in 13 million people losing insurance coverage and raise premiums 10–20 percent. This is not a delay that we can agree to. It hurts the Affordable Care Act, and it is a betrayal of our working together on a bipartisan basis to resolve this problem. We worked together on the policy, but we were never brought in to work together on funding that policy.

At this time I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN).

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express strong objection to the decision to use the Affordable Care Act's individual responsibility requirement to pay for the SGR reform.

This bill hijacks a thoughtful solution to a problem that has been harming Medicare beneficiaries, providers, and our budget for years and turns it into a political stunt. This decision is a poison pill and nothing more than more partisan politics.

Congress has overridden the SGR-mandated cuts to Medicare physician payments each year since 2003. Year after year, these temporary patches have been costly and disruptive. Re-

forming the system is long overdue. Temporary fixes to SGR are a losing situation. The money still has to be spent, but only to just maintain the broken status quo.

The bipartisan, bicameral SGR bill is the closest we have come to fixing this problem once and for all, and this decision gets us further from that goal. Repealing the ACA is a game we have played now 51 times. Holding SGR reform hostage to destroy the ACA and deny millions of Americans access to managed care is disgraceful. Our seniors, our doctors, including the AMA, the Texas Medical Association, the California Medical Association, and the American people deserve better.

In order for our health care system to work, Americans must have insurance. Delaying or repealing the requirement that individuals obtain coverage would drive up premiums and leave millions uninsured. Again, this is purely a partisan pay-for which proves that there is not a sincere effort to finally enact SGR reform but rather just another political game.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD a letter from the Texas Medical Association in support of this legislation.

TEXAS MEDICAL ASSOCIATION,
Austin, TX, March 13, 2014.

Hon. MICHAEL C. BURGESS, MD,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE BURGESS: On behalf of the 47,000-plus physician and medical student members of the Texas Medical Association, I am writing to reiterate our strong support for the work you have done to effectuate the repeal of Medicare's Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula. In conjunction with your Texas colleague, Kevin Brady, you have gotten closer to solving this challenging issue than ever before. And you have done so with the support of every member of the Texas delegation, both Democratic and Republican, on the Energy & Commerce and Ways & Means Committees.

Perhaps more than anyone in Congress, you understand the frustration and anxiety that the ongoing SGR uncertainty creates for practicing physicians. You have worked tirelessly to craft a piece of legislation that not only repeals the SGR immediately, but also guarantees positive updates for physicians for five years, removes potential causes of liability against physicians, and eliminates some unnecessary bureaucratic red tape that prevents physicians from concentrating on patient care.

We especially appreciate your ongoing consultation and dialogue with TMA and Texas physicians throughout this process.

As you know well, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014 has made it this far because of a bipartisan, bicameral agreement on the need to replace the SGR. We are committed to helping you finish the task.

Sincerely,
STEPHEN L. BROTHERTON, MD,
President.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON), another member of the Doctors Caucus.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this legislation. As

a practicing physician for over 15 years, the majority of my patients were Medicare patients. I know firsthand how flawed the SGR is. By not repealing this flawed system, to remain in business, many doctors across America will be forced to limit the number of Medicare patients that they see, and many may refuse to see Medicare patients all together.

Failing to act or voting “no” on this legislation will limit seniors’ access to their doctors. This will be especially dangerous in rural areas where there are already physician shortages. It is time we finally solve this problem and ensure that Medicare patients have access to their chosen doctors.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for all of the seniors in America and support this legislation.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD).

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this bill. This began as a bipartisan effort, but, predictably, this has devolved into nothing but another attempt by House Republicans to dismantle the Affordable Care Act. Here we go again. Over 4.2 million people have signed up for affordable insurance so far, and the numbers are growing.

We all support a permanent repeal of the sustainable growth rate because the SGR in current law is anything but sustainable. We are demanding more out of our doctors and health care professionals. We are asking that they operate with maximum efficiency to play their part in reining in health care spending, and they deserve the same from Congress.

Unfortunately, my Republican colleagues don’t share that view. That is why they have offered a pay-for that they know will be completely unacceptable to most Democrats and certainly stands no chance of passage in the Senate. The President has even said he would veto this bill, and rightfully so.

The American Medical Association, which represents most of the doctors throughout the country, and I am disappointed that the Texas Medical Association is at variance with their national association, but the AMA and the AARP and a dozen other organizations representing health care providers and hospitals and seniors have decried Republican partisan tactics. They don’t like this.

We have 5 legislative days before the last SGR extension runs out on March 31. Five days. Should Republicans not come to their senses in time, I want doctors to know that a nearly 30 percent cut to their reimbursement should be laid squarely at the feet of my Republican friends here in the House. Doctors need predictability and certainty so they can best serve their patients. If a permanent solution to the

SGR is not reached soon, doctors will be forced to make tough decisions about which patients they will see and those which they can no longer afford to see.

Mr. PITTS. May I inquire of the time remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Pennsylvania has 4¾ minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 3½ minutes remaining.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE), another cochair of the Doctors Caucus.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, this physician rises in strong support of H.R. 4015, the SGR repeal. This bicameral, bipartisan compromise will preserve seniors’ access to needed medical care and give physicians certainty about how Medicare will pay them for their services.

□ 0945

This bill also lays the groundwork for a gradual transition to a reimbursement system that rewards value instead of volume.

The House, by passing H.R. 4015, will take a big step toward the permanent repeal of a flawed payment formula that has hampered physicians since 1997, but we can’t allow the process to stop here.

I encourage our Senate colleagues to pass a bill as soon as possible, so that we can move into conference and find a mechanism to repeal this bill.

I would like to thank the members and staff of the committees for their tireless efforts on this bill, particularly my friend Dr. MIKE BURGESS, who has long championed this reform.

I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 4015. Mr. Speaker, the American Medical Association represents less than 20 percent of the physicians in this country.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from North Carolina (Mrs. ELLMERS), who is another important member of the Health Subcommittee.

Mrs. ELLMERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4015, the SGR repeal.

This has been a long time coming, and I am very excited to be part of it. I want to see this legislation move forward.

I want to agree and disagree with my esteemed colleagues across the aisle. This does boil down to patient care. This will negatively affect our seniors if we do not solve this problem for Medicare reimbursement. It is patient access that is the core of this issue.

However, when we speak about associations, such as the AMA—or the American Medical Association—we are

talking about a group who only represents about 11 percent of physicians across this country, and that number decreases every year.

There is a reason for that. They are not representing doctors in this country, and their voice is not as strong as it once was and should be.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this time, and I thank my colleagues for this important message today. I hope all Members support the SGR reform.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

This should be a moment of bipartisanship where we finally fix this sustainable growth rate in Medicare physician reimbursement. None of us think it is supportable. Doctors are always facing the peril of a deep cut if we don’t patch it up or fix it permanently. It is time to fix it permanently.

We worked together on a bipartisan basis on our committee and came up with a policy to replace the SGR. The Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee followed us, and they did their approach, and we all worked out one uniform approach with the idea that we are finally going to end this nonsense of threatening the doctors that take care of Medicare patients.

This is an issue of patient access to medical care that has been promised under Medicare; yet the Republicans are now insisting we pay for the permanent fix. Well, this has come up many, many times. Sometimes, we paid for it, but sometimes, we didn’t pay for it; but we always made sure that there was a fix on a bipartisan basis.

Instead, today, the Republicans, without talking to us—they wanted to talk to us about the policy, but without talking to us—are trying to pay for this by hurting the Affordable Care Act.

What they are doing is putting a partisan poison pill offset, an offset that would cause 13 million people to lose insurance coverage and would raise premiums by 10 to 20 percent for everybody else in the exchange. They have to know this is not acceptable; we can’t support it.

They are now coming here to the floor saying that there is some attempt by the Democrats to undermine our policy agreement. Well, let’s stop blaming each other. Let’s get to work and resolve this problem and vote down this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire of the minority how many speakers they have left?

Mr. WAXMAN. I have one more speaker.

Mr. PITTS. We have one more speaker. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WAXMAN. You have one more speaker? I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PITTS. At this time then, Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Texas, Dr. BURGESS, the prime sponsor of this legislation, who has worked tirelessly to achieve this day.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend from Pennsylvania for yielding me the time, the chairman of the subcommittee, for making this possible to bring this bill to the floor today.

I want to thank Chairman UPTON of the full committee and Ranking Member WAXMAN of the full committee for also making this possible. It has been a lot of hard work getting us to this point.

Chairman UPTON talked about delays. I would just point out that there has been yet another delay, the delay of the closure of the risk pools because—let's be honest—the Affordable Care Act is not ready to take on those people who have preexisting conditions, so they felt it necessary to keep the risk pools open for an additional length of time.

I want to talk to my friends on the Democratic side of the aisle. I particularly want to talk to those who have only been here one or two terms. The last time we had a bill like this on the floor of the House, Democrats were in charge.

Mr. DINGELL was chairman of our Energy and Commerce Committee. He brought a bill to the floor, H.R. 3961, which was an SGR repeal bill.

This bill had already been rejected by the Senate, so it really had no chance of going anywhere. This bill was not paid for. The policy was awful and would have given us two SGRs, instead of one; but nevertheless, that bill came to the floor.

It only garnered one Republican vote. I was that vote. I was that vote because I thought it was important that the Nation's doctors heard that we were willing to work together across party lines, if need be, to solve this problem for them. I wanted to preserve the process going forward.

Ladies and gentlemen, the bill you have on the floor today, H.R. 4015, is not the destination. It is the key that gets you through the door to get to that destination.

For 4½ weeks, since February 6, the policy has been out there for all to see. We have awaited anyone from the Senate side who wanted to talk to us about negotiating bipartisan pay-fors—radio silence.

Look, I don't know what rule XIV is over in the Senate, but it is apparently pretty important. The majority leader in the other body has brought this bill up under rule XIV; but they were doing nothing before.

For 4 weeks, this policy languished without them picking it up. Now that the House is moving—now that the House is moving a bill and will likely

pass the bill today with a decent pay-for that is, in fact, bipartisan because 27 Democrats voted for this very pay-for last week on the floor of this House—in fact, it was unanimous if we were exempting firefighters or veterans from the individual mandate in the Affordable Care Act.

This is a bipartisan pay-for. It has passed the floor of this House in a bipartisan fashion. It is ready to go. We call upon our colleagues in the other body. Use whatever Senate procedures you need to, but get this done because the clock is ticking. The clock is ticking towards March 31.

We all know what happens to the Nation's seniors on that date. We all know what happens to their doctors. Let us get this done.

Mr. PITTS. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to strongly support H.R. 4015, the SGR Repeal and Provider Payment Modernization Act, as amended.

The Ways and Means Committee and Energy and Commerce Committee and Senate Finance Committee have worked in a bipartisan manner to develop a permanent physician payment fix repeal.

Years of hearings, discussion drafts, and ongoing dialogues with stakeholders have resulted in H.R. 4015, a bipartisan, bicameral agreement on SGR replacement policy.

This bill has over 100 cosponsors, has the support of 18 Members of the House Doctors Caucus, and 600 national and State organizations representing physicians and other professionals.

There is a reason for all of this support. H.R. 4015 has a lot to like. It repeals the outdated SGR formula and gives seniors the certainty that they will have access to their doctors.

It incentivizes better care and better results for seniors that rely on the Medicare program, and it breaks the cycle of uncertainty for doctors and their patients, providing permanent relief and improving how Medicare pays doctors.

We must not let this opportunity pass by. Time is short. If we do not act, in just 2 weeks, doctors will see a 24 percent cut in their Medicare reimbursement, jeopardizing seniors' access to care.

We must safeguard taxpayer dollars. That is why we pay for permanent repeal by delaying the health care law's individual mandate for 5 years. Americans across the country are facing higher costs, losing the coverage they have and like, and are seeing smaller paychecks as a result of ObamaCare.

Last week, the administration announced that it would continue to expand certain exemptions from the individual mandate for 2 years. This proposal would extend that further—would

extend further what the administration is already doing and give all Americans relief from the mandates and penalties of ObamaCare. It is only fair.

I urge all Members to support H.R. 4015. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) control the remainder of the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

What is going on here? The Republicans are bringing up a totally partisan bill to thwart a bipartisan bill. They are tossing aside common ground for barren ground, another Affordable Care repeal vote. They are throwing out a historic bipartisan breakthrough to permanently end and replace the broken Medicare physician payment formula, once again turning to totally partisan politics.

The breakthrough achieved by our committees would permanently replace the deeply flawed SGR formula with a system designed to build on delivery system reform, reforms that move Medicare physician payments toward a more accountable value-driven system.

The underlying policy agreement is broadly supported by both provider communities and beneficiaries; but today's exercise is opposed by groups representing seniors, doctors, health plans, and others because it guts the Affordable Care Act through a 5-year delay to the individual mandate.

What would the result be? According to CBO and the Joint Task Committee, the Republican bill would increase the number of uninsured Americans by 13 million. What is more, the bill would raise individual market health insurance premiums by 10 to 20 percent for those who remain insured.

Last week, we saw the 50th vote. This is now the 51st vote to undermine the Affordable Care Act. So much for good faith and so much for good will.

Instead of working to find common ground to finish the job on a bipartisan solution vital to fixing a problem in our health care system, House Republicans are taking once again a cynical step in a very familiar direction, concerned only about the November election.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no," and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Enough really is enough. The unfair way Medicare pays our local doctors to treat our seniors has gone on for far too long.

It is making it harder for seniors to see a doctor they know and who knows them. It is chasing local doctors out of Medicare and out of private practice,

and it is encouraging too much waste and too many unnecessary procedures within Medicare.

As chairman of the Health Subcommittee of Ways and Means, my top priority has been to find a permanent, reliable 21st century solution that both political parties and physicians can embrace.

□ 1000

H.R. 4015 repeals the current flawed formula for reimbursing our doctors, and it ends the yearly threat of massive cuts.

In working with America's physicians, it establishes a more patient-centered approach that provides stability to our doctors, rewards them for high-quality care, begins to streamline the red tape our physicians face, and encourages better coordination and prevention. Over time, it transitions to a model that rewards value over volume by using the real-life approaches that doctors use, not what Washington wants.

H.R. 4015 is a solid foundation from which to build an even better Medicare system, and it has overwhelming support from physicians. This is a major step forward, but we need to finish the job. We need to work together—Republicans and Democrats, the House and the Senate—to figure out how to make this policy a reality in a way that doesn't increase the deficit.

There may be disagreements over how to pay for this reform. That is understandable as it is difficult, and today's bill is not the last word. Let's continue to advance this long overdue solution and commit to finding a bipartisan solution between the House and the Senate. The clock is ticking, so let's act together today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL).

Mr. RANGEL. Thank you, Chairman LEVIN.

Mr. Speaker, this bill has nothing to do with paying the doctors who work every day in giving medical care to Medicare patients. It has to do with destroying the Affordable Care Act for the 51st time.

I am certain that those who are listening to the debate and who know what is going on believe it is ridiculous to try to defeat a bill that has been signed into law, because they know that the Senate is not going to pass it, and they know—the Republicans, that is—that the President would veto it.

So why do they do it?

They do it because there is a small group of people in the Republican Party that doesn't mind politically dying. I don't mind their taking down the party if that is their intent, but they are taking down the Democrats

and the reputations of the House of Representatives as well. Somewhere along the line, the Speaker has to do again what he has done before, and that is to say, "Enough of this. We are not going to allow the wings of the Congress to be broken on one side just because some people want their way."

So I assume that nobody in these districts has insurance problems. I assume that everyone is insured and is working in these districts in which they are trying to destroy the Affordable Care Act and that they don't have any preconditions that restrict them from getting health care. They all are working and they all are happy. I just hope that, one day before this year ends, the Republicans will come to their senses and will try to gain the respectability and the credibility that they once enjoyed.

I am a die-hard Democrat, but I don't want this country just to have one party. We do need two responsible parties in order to guide this Nation through its democratic process.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY), a physician and a key member of the Ways and Means Committee. I cannot describe how much of an important role he has played in finding this new solution to how we reimburse doctors under Medicare.

Mr. BOUSTANY. I applaud Chairman BRADY's leadership on this issue. He has been instrumental in getting us to this point.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill after 3 long years of working on the policy to actually get to a bipartisan, bicameral agreement on policy and divided government. It has not been easy, but we have managed to get an agreement on a policy to repeal automatic annual cuts to physicians. A 24 percent cut in just a matter of weeks is facing doctors under this flawed formula.

Now, Congress first promised to repeal this formula more than a decade ago. Democrats repeated the promise when we were debating ObamaCare. They failed to put it in there. They failed to address it in ObamaCare. The passage of this important bipartisan legislation would finally honor that promise, that of protecting seniors' access to doctors. A doctor-patient relationship is built on trust and high quality. It ensures quality measures going forward, and it creates certainty for physicians and seniors.

I want to point out something because our friends have not given the full story here.

We have agreed on the policy, but we have a problem in coming up with the pay-fors. It is a tough conversation, but the talks have broken down in a divided government. Senate leadership has refused to negotiate in good faith and to discuss responsible ways to pay

for the bill's \$138 billion price tag. We are going to pass this bill to get those discussions started. Republicans proposed savings from the delay of ObamaCare's very unpopular individual mandate.

Now, I don't think it is acceptable to do nothing, and I don't think it is acceptable for the Senate Majority Leader and others in the Senate to just put their heads in the sand on this. I hope that the Senate will pass a version of H.R. 4015, giving us time to get together to hash out the differences. We are so close. We are on the goal line in this work that has been undone for years. It is time to get it done.

The President's own budget lists bipartisan Medicare reforms that the President put on the table that could easily raise the bulk of savings needed to repeal the SGR, and we could do this without shifting more costs to our Nation's credit card and without resorting to budget gimmicks or by imposing massive new cuts on hospitals and other providers. We have a clear path. We can get this done in a bipartisan way.

Mr. Speaker, as a heart surgeon who has cared for thousands of seniors under the Medicare program, I urge my House and Senate colleagues to pass this bill. Let's get down to the negotiations of how we are going to pay for it in good faith, and let's finalize an agreement on how to fix this long-standing problem, which has been a thorn not only in the sides of doctors but which has been a real problem for Medicare access, a real problem for seniors seeking access to a high-quality doctor-patient relationship.

Mr. Speaker, I have had enough. It is time to get this done. Pass this bill.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

I say to my colleague that what you are doing, essentially, is undercutting bipartisanship with pure partisan politics. Pointing to the Senate is pure mythology.

I now yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT), the ranking member on the Health Subcommittee.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, this 51st attempt to repeal the ACA by stopping the individual mandate is part of the long-term propaganda campaign done by the Republicans to destroy the health care plan that the President put together.

They know that we agree on the policy—everybody here agrees on the policy—but they put a poison pill in it. They knew that this amendment of how to pay for it—that is, by delaying the mandate—would kill any Democratic support in the House. They have no intention of passing this bill. This bill is directed at the propaganda campaign to the people at Koch Brothers and at FOX News so that anybody who is watching this will get the idea that somehow it is a bad bill.

The fact is that people are benefiting every single day. The AARP and the American Medical Association have denounced this bill because they want the SGR—the doctors' payment reform—to go through, and they know that the Republicans have designed this to fail.

A mandate that has been supported even by the Tea Party—before the Tea Party said “we have got to be against it”—is what is at issue here. Doctors and health insurance companies will not be able to operate if you don't have an individual mandate. The Republicans said this. The Heritage Institute said it. Everybody said it, but they want to kill it.

This is an alternative universe that we are creating with this propaganda campaign. We see wild claims about people who live in inner cities in that they are somehow worthless and that they don't want to take care of their families and feed them, and we hear things coming out of the Speaker's office that clearly aren't true about the ACA.

Let's suppose that actually happened. What would happen if we repealed and destroyed the ACA today?

We would get rid of 13 million people on the rolls by 2018. We would take away health insurance. Health insurance premiums would rise 10 to 20 percent by 2018. Millions of Americans would not be able to afford the health care they need.

This is a failure of leadership. They would rather run a propaganda campaign to hold onto the House. We watched in Florida just in the last week when \$13 million, I guess, was spent on that campaign to tar the Affordable Care Act. That is what this is all about. No one should be the least bit confused. That is not what America wants. America wants health security.

Vote “no” on this bill.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am really pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLY), a gentleman who is one of the newest members of the Ways and Means Committee. He is a businessman, but he is a real fighter for Pennsylvania's seniors and doctors.

Mr. KELLY of Pennsylvania. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, there are very few times in my life in which I have really had the privilege of representing people who are so dear to me. I just think, if you were to look at our generation, we would all have to agree that we grew up in the greatest towns, at the greatest times, with the greatest parents, preachers, teachers, and coaches, grandmas and grandpas, and aunts and uncles.

This is the people's House. This is not a Republican House or a Democrat House. This is the people's House. What are we talking about today?

My goodness. This is so disappointing that we are so worried about the next

election that we can't see the direction that we are going in—to be able to offer peace of mind to those folks who have made the greatest sacrifices, who have made the greatest contributions, and who have done the best that they could to make sure that the next generation had the same opportunities they had.

This is not a doc fix. This is a senior fix.

As my mother lay dying and my sister and my father, they were surrounded by a loving family, and they were also surrounded by caring doctors. Why would we make this about an election? Why would we not look inward to whom it is we are trying to protect? Why can we not protect the most vulnerable in our society right now, especially in their end days and in their end times and say, “You can lay your head on a pillow tonight, knowing that your doctor is going to be there for you, that I will be beside you, that I will be by your bed, saying the rosary; and when you have finally gone, I can't wait until the next time we are able to meet each other again in Heaven”? Why would we make their last days so difficult? Why would we make it so uncertain?

So we talk about an SGR, but where I come from, it is not bad, and it is not a doc fix—it is a senior fix.

When can we possibly put politics behind us and start to look at what is best for the people we represent?

I am a Representative of Pennsylvania's Third District—so privileged and so proud to be able to do it, not boastful proud, but thankful proud that I can actually go and do something for the people who raised me, who taught me, who coached me, and who have walked me through the most difficult parts of my life and that I can look back at their lives and say, “But you sacrificed so much that I could be here.”

Can we not just come together and do something that really is a big thank-you and a kiss on the forehead as they lay there, wondering, “Where are those folks that we did so much for?”

My goodness. My friends on the other side, this is not about politics—this is about people. We are in the people's House, and these are things that we must do.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you so much for doing this and for bringing peace of mind to the people we represent, but I can't tell you how disappointing it is today to hear this turn into some kind of political debate that has nothing to do with the fate of those seniors and of those people whom we love so much and who have done so much for us.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

I say to the gentleman from Pennsylvania that the problem is your bill is nothing but a political bill. It is nothing except about the November election—nothing but.

I now yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), an active, distinguished member of our committee.

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Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, Mr. LEVIN.

I was somewhat embarrassed by the remarks of my friend, who is from Butler, Pennsylvania, the hometown of my wife, because it is the Republicans who have decided to make this bill about the next election.

There is no reason the House Republicans put the medical community through this charade again and again, year after year, except to use the SGR as a tool for power, partisan advantage, and fundraising.

This political tool disrupts the lives of millions of medical providers and tens of millions of their patients who rely upon them.

We had, in fact, been making remarkable progress in both the Commerce Committee and the Ways and Means Committee on a bipartisan solution. Instead, the Republicans have hijacked this bipartisan solution and made it so bad that even the American Medical Association rejects it.

What then should we do? First, we should reject this bill overwhelmingly. It certainly will never be enacted into law.

What should we do then? I would argue that we ought to just reset the baseline.

Remember the alternative minimum tax? We finally decided it would never be imposed. Adjusted the budget to reflect the fact that it will never happen. And if you won't do that, at least give the medical community procedural fairness.

KEVIN BRADY said, Let's work in a bipartisan approach. He admits that this isn't going to be the last word. Well, let's try procedural fairness. Allow the bipartisan proposal on the floor under an open rule for a full debate and amendment.

Now there is a novel thought. Let the legislative process work and let the House work its will. Then this shameful charade will end.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) has 5 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) has 5 minutes remaining.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED), one of our key members of the Ways and Means Committee, who has brought the concerns of New York doctors to our attention.

Mr. REED. I thank Chairman BRADY for yielding the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the very important issue that

this bill is here to address. We have at the end of the month a cliff where our providers under Medicare are going to be looking at a 24 percent cut in their reimbursements for caring for our seniors.

What are we doing today? The other side is engaging in political theater rather than deal with the issue at hand.

We have an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to fix a problem out of Washington, D.C., that has repeatedly been coming up since 2003—and do it on a long-term, permanent basis. We have spent \$150 billion in minor patches to the doc fix over that period of time.

Today, we have an opportunity—through the bipartisan work on the policy that will resolve this issue once and for all—to do it at a cost of \$138 billion. That would take care of this threat to our seniors and to the doctors that are providing for them on a permanent basis. That is the right thing to do.

So what is the argument over? Well, how we are going to pay for it?

My friends in the other Chamber on the other side of this esteemed building here feel we should continue the status quo of Washington, D.C., and not pay for our policy decisions that we decide here in Washington.

We have put forth a proposed solution on this side of the aisle to say, Look, let's take what you are doing to the employer mandate under the Affordable Care Act by extending a delay for the employer mandate that they have already done for the White House to the individuals who are subject to the Affordable Care Act.

Doesn't that make sense? Isn't that the fair thing to do? Isn't that the right thing to do?

If you are going to delay it for Big Business, why don't you delay it for moms and pops and sons and daughters across America and use that money in savings to pay for a permanent solution here in Washington, D.C., when it comes to paying for our doctors as they care for our elderly and our seniors?

That is a commonsense proposal, and yet we play political theater on this important issue. We can't do that. Our hardworking taxpayers back home, Mr. Speaker, deserve better.

I came here to Washington, D.C., to do something: to change the status quo. We have an opportunity to take an issue that has been pending ad nauseam since 2003 and get it taken care of permanently and give that certainty, that ability for our providers, for our seniors, to know what they are going to get paid and to make sure that our seniors have the comfort of knowing that their doctors are going to have their doors open to take care of them when they need them the most. That is what we should be focusing on, Mr. Speaker.

I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation and get this permanent solution in place.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL), a member of our committee.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, to quote a very famous President:

There they go again.

This is an alternative universe, through the Speaker, that you are trying to create.

For years, we have been talking about how to reform SGR and how to pay for our Medicare providers. I, along with my Democratic colleagues—and some Republicans—supported past efforts to repeal and replace SGR once and for all, but we have never been able to get it done.

That changed late last year. The Energy and Commerce Committee passed unanimously a bill to repeal and replace SGR. Building on that proposal, Republicans and Democrats on the Senate Finance Committee and in the Ways and Means Committee here, which I sit on, came together and passed the bill that repeals SGR and replaces it with a payment system that rewards providers for delivering quality care to our seniors.

What you have done, through the Speaker, is to take months of thoughtful bipartisan policymaking and thrown it away in order to score some really poor and cheap political points. All you are trying to do is undermine affordable care.

What are you going to do with the 13 million people who can't get affordable care if we delay the personal mandate? You have never come up with an answer. You have never had an answer to what are you going to do about health care. All you can do is criticize and criticize.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. PASCRELL. Delaying the individual mandate will result in 13 million fewer Americans getting health insurance through the ACA and higher premiums for those with health insurance.

You want it to fail. You don't want it to succeed. You forgot what you did back 9 years ago when we passed the premium D. We went back to our districts and made it work, even though we voted against it. That is the American way.

Learn the American way. It works. Don't go on recess.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would ask Members to address their remarks to the Chair and not to others in the second person.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. NOLAN).

Mr. NOLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my colleague DAN KILDEE's efforts to reinstate the health care tax credit. Unfortunately, it was rejected

by the House Republicans under yet another closed rule.

Having served in this Congress at an earlier time in my life, I am astonished how undemocratic this institution has become. Back in the day, if you had an amendment, you got an opportunity to offer it. You had an opportunity to debate it until all the debate was exhausted and then you had an opportunity to vote on it. What a tragedy that the people's House seems to hardly be a democratic institution any longer.

When this program that I am talking about here, the health care tax credit, expired in January, thousands of retired workers on the Iron Range in my district of Minnesota saw their pensions cut in half. These are former employees of companies like LTV and National Steel—giants in American manufacturing. Some of these hardworking men and women are responsible for pulling America out of the Great Depression, helping us win World War II, supplying the world with superior products made in America.

Mr. Speaker, let us have a vote. Let's start opening up the rules in this Chamber.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. It is now my pleasure to yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from California (Ms. PELOSI), our very distinguished leader.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his relentless and persistent leadership in helping America's seniors, today manifested in his support for the SGR and his opposition to this ill-designed approach by the Republicans.

Mr. Speaker, today, House Republicans are proving that their obsession with tearing down the Affordable Care Act is blurring their vision and that it has no boundaries.

For their 51st vote to repeal or undermine the Affordable Care Act, Republicans are turning their partisanship against the health and security of our Nation's seniors.

The House Republican leadership's political games are threatening to derail months of bipartisan, bicameral—House and Senate—progress on a permanent Medicare doc fix, threatening our seniors' ability to see their doctors and get the health care they need.

Earlier this week, the AARP, the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, the National Council on Aging, and other key seniors' advocacy groups wrote to congressional leadership to make it clear that the Republicans' actions would "inject partisan politics into bipartisan legislation," and that this "undermines the months of hard work done by committees, their staffs, and concerned stakeholders."

The Republicans' approach has been rejected not only by the senior advocacy groups but by providers, doctors, insurers, and seniors. Yet they persist with their reckless partisan antics even as time quickly runs down to address the sustainable growth rate formula before the end of the month.

Twice this week, Republicans blocked the House from considering a fully paid-for measure that includes the reforms to the SGR supported by both Democrats and Republicans in the House and in the Senate and on the committees.

Why have Republicans chosen to proceed in this manner after months of bipartisan progress? Why didn't Republican leadership work with Democrats to find acceptable offsets? We need to get this done—and Republicans know that their badly partisan effort is a nonstarter.

If passed, it would spike health insurance premiums by 10 to 20 percent, according to the Congressional Budget Office. It would cause 13 million fewer Americans to be insured, says the Congressional Budget Office.

What does this mean to families? If you have a child in your family between the ages of 18 and 26, they would no longer be able to be on their parents' policy. Under the Affordable Care Act, being a woman is no longer a pre-existing medical condition. The Republican actions here today would reverse that and take us back to a time where women paid more for policies simply because they were women.

It would, again, reject, eliminate the very important provision of the Affordable Care Act about not being denied coverage because you have a pre-existing medical condition. Tens of millions of families—probably a hundred million people—are affected by not being denied coverage because of a preexisting medical condition. That is how many people it would affect.

□ 1030

It would eliminate the requirement of the Affordable Care Act that there be no cap, either annual or lifetime limit, on the health insurance that you would receive. For these and other reasons, this is a really bad idea.

We may only hope that, after this 51st vote, Republicans' fever will break, and they will return to work with Democrats to pass bipartisan, bicameral legislation as a permanent doc fix that seniors need before the end of the month.

We are going out today, again, with work undone; 10 days before we come back the 24th of March. The SGR expires at the end of March.

We shouldn't be wasting time on this foolishness and recklessness. We should be finding a solution. That is what the American people sent us here to do.

The Republican fixation with destroying the health security of millions

of Americans through their efforts to destroy the Affordable Care Act imperil the permanent "doc fix," and that must stop.

Congress is wasting time again, as I said, on these endless, wasteful votes. Time should be spent renewing emergency unemployment insurance, raising the minimum wage, rebuilding America by investing in education and building our infrastructure, creating jobs.

The American people deserve better than this. They deserve a Congress that works to strengthen the middle class, tackle the opportunity gap, create jobs, and build an economy that works for everyone.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill, and I hope that when we return after the recess week, yet another recess week, Republicans will be ready to get serious and be ready to get back to work for a permanent doc fix so that our seniors will be served.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY) has 2 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) has 1 minute remaining.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I will place into the RECORD the following letters from American Health Insurance Plans, Blue Cross Blue Shield, the California Medical Association, from AFSCME, and also from the Alliance for Retired Americans. These are just a few of the examples of letters and communications from opponents.

You know, you can just boil this down to a few words. The Republicans are so intent on manipulating everything so that they think they can strengthen themselves for November that they put a poison pill into a bipartisan product, a product that we worked months to perfect.

So there is no shame. March is irrelevant; November seems to be everything.

This bill cannot become law. This is an effort simply of a political nature.

I very much urge you, at this last minute, rethink what you are doing. It is so transparent. It is so transparent.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

MARCH 11, 2014.

HON. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

HON. NANCY PELOSI,
House Democratic Leader, House of Representatives
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER AND LEADER PELOSI: On behalf of America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association (BCBSA), we are writing to express our strong opposition to repealing or delaying the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) individual mandate as part of the Medicare physician payment reform bill.

Our members believe it is critically important to modernize the Medicare physician

payment system to promote improvements in quality, value, and patient outcomes. However, we have deep concerns about packaging the Medicare physician payment bill with legislation that would sever the link between the ACA's individual mandate and its market reforms. The experience of states that attempted this in the 1990s demonstrates that removing this important linkage will result in more uninsured Americans, higher costs, and reduced choices for individuals and families. To avoid these outcomes, we are asking Congress to reject efforts to repeal or delay the individual mandate in the debate on Medicare physician payment reform.

Thank you for considering our views on these important issues.

Sincerely,

KAREN IGNAGNI,
President and CEO,
America's Health Insurance Plans.
SCOTT P. SEROTA,
President and CEO,
BlueCross BlueShield Association.

— AFSCME,
Washington, DC, March 11, 2014.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES: On behalf of the 1.6 million workers and retiree members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I write with regret to oppose legislation which reforms physician payments under Medicare (H.R. 4015). AFSCME strongly supports repealing and replacing the flawed Medicare payments system for physicians. However, we oppose this bill because it pays for the needed reforms by robbing seniors and millions of families of the peace of mind that comes from having affordable health care insurance.

For decades, Congress has had an annual ritual of blocking a scheduled cut to physicians' Medicare reimbursement payments as required under the Sustainable Growth Rate. Each time Congress has approved a short-term relief for the scheduled cut to physicians' Medicare payments, it has increased beneficiaries' Part B premiums. Congress should reform Medicare payments for doctors, but it should hold seniors harmless and not undermine the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in the process.

The bill delays the individual mandate in the ACA. This will hurt families trying to get affordable health coverage through the health care exchanges in their states. H.R. 4015 threatens important consumer protections. The ACA prohibits denying coverage due to a pre-existing condition, charging individuals more for coverage based on health status and dropping coverage if an individual becomes ill. Without a required duty that the uninsured must get coverage, these consumer protections become harder to sustain.

Medicare is a huge success story because it shares the cost from unexpected illness and injury among a large group of healthy and less healthy seniors. Like Medicare, the ACA depends on a good balance of young and healthy individuals along with older and sicker individuals. The required duty to obtain coverage will drive more of the uninsured (including the young and healthy) to seek information about the ACA. When they do, they will discover that good quality, affordable coverage is available to them at last. The so-called savings from delaying the individual mandate creates an imbalance in the population covered. This leads to higher costs for everybody in the exchange.

By the end of February, four million individuals had obtained private insurance coverage through the federal and state exchanges. Every day, more families are gaining the peace of mind that comes with comprehensive and affordable health coverage. We urge you to oppose H.R. 4015 so that more families can realize that peace of mind.

Sincerely,

CHARLES M. LOVELESS,
Director of Government Affairs.

CALIFORNIA MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, March 10, 2014.

Re H.R. 4015 "The SGR Repeal and Medicare Modernization Act of 2014"

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

CMA POSITION: SUPPORT THE POLICY; OPPOSE
THE OFFSET AS A NON-VIABLE, BICAMERAL
OPTION

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER AND LEADER PELOSI: On behalf of the California Medical Association, I want to express our strong support for the hard-fought and long-awaited Medicare SGR reform POLICY in the bipartisan and bicameral legislation, H.R. 4015 "The SGR Repeal and Medicare Modernization Act of 2014." We applaud the work and the perseverance of the House and Senate Committees to achieve a bipartisan agreement to repeal the flawed Medicare SGR and institute a reasonable new payment system. Congress has not made this much progress in a decade.

While we share the frustration that there is not a clear legislative path for bipartisan funding offsets, we are extremely disappointed with the recent decision to pursue a partisan funding source—the repeal of the ACA's individual mandate. Regardless of our position on the ACA, this is not an acceptable, viable funding option in the U.S. Senate. And therefore, it could result in another 9-month patch which is simply unacceptable to California physicians.

Congress' failure to address this issue has harmed access to care for all patients in California. It has forced California physicians out of Medicare and some out of practice. Medicare rates lag 25% behind the costs to provide care. It has stifled innovation and left small practices without the resources to invest in quality and electronic health records. The cost of a decade of short-term patches total \$153 billion—more than the cost to adopt this legislation. Even the Wall Street Journal has called the SGR budgeting a "sham" and called upon Congress to "simply pass the bill as is and forgo the pretense of fake-paying for it."

We strongly urge Congress to build on the bipartisan, bicameral process for finalizing this important legislation. We urge a negotiation on bipartisan funding sources before March 31.

Sincerely,

RICHARD E. THORP, MD,
President.

ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED
AMERICANS,
Washington, DC, March 13, 2014.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the four million members of the Alliance for Retired Americans, I am writing to oppose the passage of H.R. 4015, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act. While the February 2014 agreement

reached by the House and Senate to fix the sustainable growth rate formula in Medicare's physician reimbursement was bicameral and bipartisan, this legislation is not.

This legislation turns its back on a good faith agreement by including an irresponsible pay-for. Under this egregious proposal, doctors would be paid on the backs of uninsured Americans. This is simply unacceptable. To add insult to injury, the legislation permanently fixes SGR and provides a 0.5 percent update for doctors, but does not permanently extend the Qualified Individual (QI) program, an extender that always accompanies the SGR patch.

The QI program pays the monthly Medicare Part B premiums for seniors and individuals with disabilities who have incomes of 120% to 135% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)—about \$13,700 to \$15,300 for an individual—and assets no higher than \$7,080 for an individual. It is disturbing to us that the authors of this proposal found money to provide an update for physicians, who on average make upwards of \$200,000 per year, but not for low-income Medicare beneficiaries.

The Alliance for Retired Americans is supportive of fixing Medicare's physician payment formula and stands ready to work with Congress to come up with an acceptable offset. Financing options could include using the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds or the Medicare Drug Discount Act, which would save the government \$141 billion over ten years. These options would cover the permanent fix without shifting costs on to Medicare beneficiaries.

However, as it currently stands, we cannot support this legislation that slams uninsured Americans. We urge you to oppose H.R. 4015.

Sincerely,

RICHARD J. FIESTA,
Executive Director.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

First, I want to commend and thank our Democrat colleagues on the Ways and Means Committee and the staff for working so hard, along with Energy and Commerce and the Finance Committee in the Senate, to find a good, solid solution. I think we have made a big step forward. We have got some work to do. I know we can do it.

I went to see my doctor the other week. He is 66 years old, looks like he is 46; kind of makes me mad. But he has got a successful practice, a very good doctor.

He told me he would like to keep practicing for another 5 or 6 years, and he said: But KEVIN, I am not going to. This will probably be my last year. Medicare has just made it too hard for him to stay this practice.

As I left the examining room, I looked at his assistant who has been with him 30-some years, all his professional staff, a full waiting room, and I thought, what are we doing chasing a doctor like this out of practice early? Who is going to replace him? Who is going to take care of these people?

He is not alone. In Texas, less than half of Texas family physicians take new Medicare patients. Many of them are rethinking their relationship with Medicare. Others are closing their private practices. So more and more sen-

iors are chasing fewer and fewer doctors, and that is the dilemma we face today.

Maybe I am an optimist, but I think we are 90 percent of the way toward solving this solution. We have broad support for this policy and this bill.

We have a duty to make sure our seniors have access to their doctors, and Democrats and Republicans have been putting in a lot of work to solve this problem. Yeah, we have some work to do.

Now is the time to permanently fix the way we reimburse our doctors. As we move forward, let's work in a bipartisan way, across the Chambers, across the parties to get it done. I am absolutely confident we can do that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 4015, a transparently phony attempt to fix the flawed Medicare payment system.

For 17 years, we have neglected to address the erring formula by which we compensate Medicare physicians. By repealing and replacing the inadequate Sustainable Growth Rate, we have the power to improve Medicare for our seniors and more fairly reimburse their health care providers.

Today's vote should be about redesigning the Medicare payment structure so that we reward physicians for the quality of health care provided, not the quantity of procedures performed. We should be considering how to transform our health care system to one that encourages value driven care and incentivizes the coordination of critical services to meet the needs of our aging population.

But today's vote is not a sincere effort to improve the delivery of care for the nearly 50 million seniors and people with disabilities who rely on Medicare. In fact, today's vote is yet another attempt to destabilize the private health insurance market and subvert the Affordable Care Act. The Republicans have presented a false choice between jeopardizing access to care for our seniors, or dangerously increasing the cost of health care for all Americans by delaying the Affordable Care Act's individual responsibility provision. Make no mistake: shifting access to affordable health insurance farther and farther out of reach for millions of Americans is not an "offset"—it is a scandal.

While I support the underlying attempt to replace the Sustainable Growth Rate, I cannot in good conscience vote for this bill because this "fix" creates far more problems than it solves.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the version of H.R. 4015 that Republican leadership has brought to the floor of the House.

The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 created SGR in an attempt to control spending in the Medicare program, and it was adopted for TRICARE as well. For years, this methodology has consistently produced unrealistic expenditure targets. These targets trigger untenable reductions in payment rates to doctors providing services to Medicare patients.

As a result, Congress has buried the true cost of this policy through annual Congressional overrides of these scheduled cuts. Each

of these short-term “fixes” has achieved the important goal of averting an immediate crisis in access to physicians for Medicare beneficiaries, but has exacerbated a longer-term crisis in Medicare financing.

Continued short term patches create instability in the health care system and the economy as a whole. Doctors have been hamstrung by yearly doubt about what reimbursement rates will be, and patients have had to pay the eventual price in uneven, substandard quality of care.

The SGR needs to be repealed and the Medicare payment system needs to be reformed now. To accomplish this, I signed on as a co-sponsor of the original version of the bipartisan bill H.R. 4015, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014.

H.R. 4015 proposes five years of 0.5% payment increases for the Medicare physician fee schedule before freezing payments at that level for five additional years. It also supports alternative payment models, and creates a new Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) for those who stay on the fee-for-service payment model.

Despite months of bipartisan work to forge this compromise, House Republicans amended the bill to delay the individual mandate requirement in the Affordable Care Act. This unconscionable political stunt to undermine the Affordable Care Act puts our Medicare health system in jeopardy at a critical time, with payment rates set to drop dramatically on April 1, 2014.

I am committed to reforming our Medicare system and repealing the SGR, but the bill House Republican leadership brought to the House floor fails to strengthen Medicare, or help Americans get access to affordable health care. I cannot support the flawed amended version of the bill.

Medicare has guaranteed essential health protections to seniors and certain disabled persons for nearly four decades. I believe Medicare is more than just a program, it is a covenant that exists between the government and the American people.

I support fixing and reforming this system permanently, but H.R. 4015 as amended is not the way to do that, and so I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition of H.R. 4015, legislation Republicans have introduced to gut the Affordable Care Act to pay for a bipartisan, bicameral agreement to repeal Medicare's broken Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) formula.

For months, we have worked in a bipartisan, good-faith effort to develop a permanent solution for Medicare's physician payment system that has threatened seniors' access to care for more than a decade. In February 2013, I introduced the bipartisan Medicare Physician Payment Innovation Act (H.R. 574) with Rep. JOE HECK (R-NV) to repeal the SGR and set out a clear path toward comprehensive reforms of Medicare payment and delivery systems. Last month, three committees, including Ways and Means, on which I serve, announced a bipartisan, bicameral agreement that incorporates the overarching framework of my legislation and includes several specific provisions.

Finding common ground on a responsible way to pay for a permanent SGR fix was

never going to be easy, but that does not mean it should be used to score political points. Seniors must have access to their doctors and time is running out. I strongly urge Republicans to join Democrats to act on this significant bipartisan opportunity to enact a permanent solution that provides more security and certainty for seniors and their doctors.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I cannot be present for today's session, as I am joining Admiral Mike Connor, Commander of our nation's submarine forces, on a visit to an in-service Virginia class submarine to see firsthand the skill of our submariners and the vital role they play in our nation's defense. It will also give me a chance to review and discuss the Navy's FY 15 request for Virginia class submarine construction and the Ohio Class Replacement Program, critical issues for the Second District of Connecticut. Had I been present, however, I would have voted “no” on the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act (H.R. 4015).

For too long, the sustainable growth rate (SGR) formula has created a weight of uncertainty not only for Medicare beneficiaries and veterans, but more broadly throughout our health care system. For the past decade, health care providers from around the country have had to leave their practices to travel to Washington and ask for relief from SGR's automatic rescission. This is not right. It is counterproductive and wasteful. And, a permanent fix—which I strongly support and have worked on a bipartisan basis to achieve—is long overdue.

Committee efforts in the House and Senate to repeal the SGR formula permanently have been a bipartisan, bicameral bright spot in the 113th Congress. Unfortunately, the injection of a partisan fiscal offset into H.R. 4015 has decimated previous, widespread endorsements of the proposal, now generating opposition from the American Medical Association (AMA) and the American Association of Retired People (AARP). The White House has also announced that if President Obama were presented with this measure, he would veto it. As amended, I too cannot support H.R. 4015 and had I been present for the vote on the legislation, I would have voted “no.”

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of legislation to repeal the Sustainable Growth Rate and update Medicare's payment system without the amendment to undermine the individual mandate of the Affordable Care Act.

While there are positive provisions in H.R. 4015, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014, an amendment added by Chairman DAVE CAMP would delay the Affordable Care Act's individual mandate by five years.

Commonly referred to as the “doc fix,” SGR Repeal has been on the table since the beginning of this Congress and desperately requires action. This legislation would repeal the cuts to physician Medicare payments and allow for small increases over 10 years. The second part of this legislation would make MEDPAC and GAO report more to Congress, including new payment rules that became final this year. There would also be additional protections against Medicare fraud.

However, if this legislation passes with the Camp Amendment, the 5-year delay of the in-

dividual mandate provision will increase the number of uninsured Americans by 13 million in 2018. A CBO analysis said that premiums would likely increase 10–20 percent in the individual marketplace during the years without a mandate penalty.

I urge my colleagues to heed my warning about this new effort to undermine the Affordable Care Act.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in strong opposition to H.R. 4015, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act of 2014 because of the passage of the Rule to this bill.

I am not alone in opposing this irresponsible measure. I am joined by AARP, Alliance for Retired Americans, American Academy of Family Physicians, American Geriatrics Society, American Osteopathic Association, Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc., Families USA, Medicare Rights Center, National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, and the National Council on Aging.

I strongly support providing adequate compensation to our physicians who serve Medicare patients. Medicare patients in very state make up 10 percent or more of those who have health insurance.

Medicare patients and the medical payments made to their physicians and medical service providers is critical to our nation's health care economy.

It is important for our seniors to know that Medicare will be there when they need it. But it is equally important that there are physicians who are willing to attend to them without going broke.

That is why we have a Sustainable Growth Rate or “SGR.” Medicare reimbursement enables rural physicians and hospitals to remain open for business.

As with any business, medical clinics and physician offices have payrolls to meet, bills to pay, and expenses to meet as they become due. If revenues are not sufficient to cover costs, the business will not long survive.

Thus, it is critical that we not disrupt timely and adequate payment to Medicare providers, but that is exactly what will happen at the end of this month if the SGR is not approved by the House and the Senate and signed into law by President Obama.

The problem with H.R. 4015 is what happened when the Rule for this bill passed the House.

The rule for H.R. 4015 added language that would delay the Affordable Care Act's implementation of the individual mandate.

I oppose the bill for two reasons:

It corrupts what was a strongly supported bipartisan bill to sustain physician reimbursement rates for medical services approved under Medicare, and

It is another attempt by the Republicans to mislead the public regarding the Affordable Care Act.

I know that many predicted that the Affordable Care Act would cause havoc on the nation's health care system. But it is not the ACA that is causing havoc—it is the 50 desperate but futile attempts by the Tea Party to scuttle a law that has been passed by Congress, signed by the President, upheld by the Supreme Court.

The most threatening actions to our nation's healthcare system by Tea Party Republicans are their attacks on Medicare.

In 2014, according to the Kaiser Foundation 16 percent of the nation's people have medical insurance under Medicare:

Texas has 12 percent of its residents insured under Medicare;

Arkansas, Florida and Vermont have 19 percent of their residents insured under Medicare;

West Virginia and Maine have 21 percent of their residents insured under Medicare; and

Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Wisconsin have 18 percent of their residents insured under Medicare.

Every state has more than 10 percent of their residents insured by Medicare.

The uncertainty created by the majority regarding Medicare reimbursement over the last several years has forced physicians to re-evaluate continuing their medical practice and frustrated hospitals working to make budget projections over several years into the future—this is critical to business decision making.

Because of uncertainty created by Medicare physician reimbursement—physicians and hospitals have been forced to close their offices, reduce services, or merge.

When patients find they cannot keep their physician or that their options for health care are being affected—it is not because of the Affordable Care Act.

Our nation has taken a momentous step in creating a mindset that good health is a personal responsibility with the enactment of the Affordable Care Act. The health care law did not automatically enroll all citizens into the program; it was specifically designed to be an opt-in process.

There are tens of thousands of visitors each day to the Web site and despite problems with the initial rollout of the online health insurance registration process, millions have enrolled and experience the peace of mind that comes from having affordable, high quality health insurance that is there when you need it.

So it is puzzling that with less than 70 legislative days remaining in the Second Session of the 113th Congress, we are still seeing attempts to end the Affordable Care Act.

It is very troubling that a bill critical to the provision of payments to physicians that treat Medicare patients is not safe from the partisan political games of the House of Republicans.

The House should be considering legislation to address the most pressing needs of the American people. Today, we should be debating legislation to extend emergency unemployment insurance benefits. The House should be debating a jobs creation bill to put Americans who are seeking employment back to work.

We know that for every person who gets a job—three others are still searching for employment.

This is another attempt to undermine the Affordable Care Act. Instead of trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act, House Republicans are now seeking ways to impede or frustrate its implementation.

After shutting down the federal government last year in an attempt to end the Affordable Care Act, they have resorted to their latest gimmick of attaching to a critically needed piece of legislation to make sure our nation's

seniors continue to have access to physicians and hospitals an attempt to harm Obamacare.

I ask my colleagues to support Medicare patients and their physicians by rejecting the bill.

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, today I will vote against H.R. 4015 despite being a cosponsor of the original bill. It should not have been that way. H.R. 4015 as originally drafted repealed the misguided SGR formula and laid out a reasonable path toward reimbursing doctors based on the quality of care that they provide. The bill had 118 bipartisan cosponsors. I heard from medical professionals all over Oregon who were hopeful that Congress would actually be able to pass H.R. 4015 and finally do away with short term SGR fixes.

Unfortunately Republican House leadership squandered this opportunity. Instead of finding a bipartisan way to pay for H.R. 4015, House Republican leadership inserted an ideological pay-for that would leave 13 million people uninsured according to the Congressional Budget Office. Because of this partisan gimmick, the Senate will never take up H.R. 4015. That leaves our nation's medical professionals exactly where they were before the vote—facing an approximately 27% cut in Medicare and TRICARE reimbursements if Congress doesn't fix the SGR before March 31st.

In 1997 I voted against creating the faulty SGR formula. I opposed the 1997 law because it balanced the budget on the backs of seniors and health care providers by substantially cutting Medicare. By delaying these cuts instead of permanently fixing the SGR formula, the potential cuts have grown every year.

Rather than cutting medical coverage for 13 million Americans, Congress should pay for H.R. 4015 by allowing Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices. Every single other developed country in the world permits their government to negotiate drug prices for all of their citizens. In the U.S. private insurance companies negotiate prices, and the Veterans Administration negotiates prices, but the federal government is prevented from negotiating drug prices for Medicare. This means that drug companies are free to charge Medicare recipients higher prices than anyone else in the world. Allowing the federal government to negotiate drug prices for Medicare would fully pay for the SGR fix. The House could have ensured proper reimbursements for doctors and reduced drug prices for seniors in one bill today. Instead we voted on a bill that is going nowhere.

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to oppose H.R. 4015, the SGR Repeal and Medicare Provider Payment Modernization Act.

For years, I have worked with my colleagues, hospitals, and doctors to temporarily repair a permanent problem. We have continued placing a Band-Aid on a gunshot wound. The Band-Aid doesn't work anymore. We need some serious treatment for this SGR wound. However, the suture we need is not H.R. 4015.

This bill is just another attempt by Republicans to undermine the law that is the Affordable Care Act. Their weak attempt at yet another delay of ACA's individual mandate will not be accepted by the American people. Millions of Americans are benefiting from ACA.

They now have access to free preventative care; they are now no longer denied coverage due to preexisting conditions; and parents can now keep their children on their healthcare plan until age 26.

It is important to recognize that the bill, in its original form, stood as a bipartisan agreement. It was a permanent fix to the SGR problem. To have physicians paid based on merit, using a metric system to access doctors on the quality of care given not the quantity of patients seen, served to benefit the medical community and the patients in their care.

However, the Republicans have poisoned this bipartisan agreement making it impossible for me to vote "yes" on H.R. 4015. Specifically, they are delaying ACA's individual mandate for five years by changing the penalty for failing to purchase health insurance to zero (0) until 2019.

There is no argument that a SGR permanent fix is necessary. However, it should not, and will not, be at the expense of hard-working Americans who now have access to health care that they may not have had before the Affordable Care Act.

It is imperative that we continue to work in a bipartisan way to seek a solution to the SGR problem, because H.R. 4015—in its current form—is not the solution.

I ask my colleagues to join me in voting "no" on this bill.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, using Medicare as a political pawn in their 51st attempt to undermine the Affordable Care Act is a new low, even for House Republicans.

Americans are waiting for Congress to stop wasting time and start passing constructive solutions to the real challenges this country faces. The broken Medicare physician payment system is one such challenge. And there is a bipartisan, bicameral plan to reform Medicare physician payments to promote quality and efficiency.

Unfortunately, today's vote isn't about that plan at all. We know this because the bill includes a poison pill that guarantees it will never become law. This is nothing more than one more tired exercise in Republicans indulging their obsessive hatred of the Affordable Care Act. Rather than working with Democrats to reach agreement on how to advance Medicare payment reform in a fiscally responsible way, Republicans instead attached a five-year delay of the Affordable Care Act's requirement that everyone take responsibility for having health insurance. The White House has indicated the President would veto this bill if it were to reach his desk.

Private health insurers object to today's anti-Obamacare exercise. America's Health Insurance Plans and Blue Cross BlueShield Association wrote:

"we have deep concerns about packaging the Medicare physician payment bill with legislation that would sever the link between the ACA's individual mandate and its market reforms. The experience of states that attempted this in the 1990s demonstrates that removing this important linkage will result in more uninsured Americans, higher costs, and reduced choices for individuals and families. To avoid these outcomes, we are asking Congress to reject efforts to repeal or delay the individual mandate in the debate on Medicare physician payment reform."

The American Academy of Family Physicians had this to say:

"It is disturbing that work designed to expand access to quality health care would be advanced alongside a policy that deliberately removes access to quality health care coverage. Providing access to health care coverage for millions of Medicare beneficiaries while eliminating access to health care coverage for millions more is simply poor public policy and we urge that such approach be abandoned."

This vote today is further evidence—as if any more were needed—that Republicans in Congress simply are not serious about addressing our real challenges. We need to fix Medicare physician payments. We need to improve opportunity in this country. We need to raise the minimum wage. We need to renew extended unemployment benefits. Currently over two million Americans out of work through no fault of their own have been left in the lurch by Republicans' refusal to renew these benefits. We were elected to this body to solve problems, not to posture endlessly.

If Congressional Republicans were serious about fixing Medicare physician payments, they would not pull stunts like this. If they cared more about solving problems than they do about fulfilling their anti-Obamacare fetish, they would not pull stunts like this. Americans deserve better. Medicare beneficiaries deserve better, as do the doctors who treat them. To the majority, I say, stop wasting everyone's time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 515, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. LOEBSACK. I am opposed in its current form.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order against the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Loeb sack moves to recommit the bill H.R. 4015 to the Committee on Ways and Means with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

At the end of the bill, add the following:

SEC. ____ PROHIBITION ON MEDICARE CUTS OR VOUCHERS.

Nothing in this Act shall reduce benefits under the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act, eliminate guaranteed health insurance benefits available to seniors or individuals with disabilities under such program, or establish a Medicare voucher plan that provides limited payments to Medicare beneficiaries in order to purchase health care in the private sector.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Iowa is recognized for 5 minutes in support of his motion.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to the bill, which will not kill the bill or send it back to the committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage, as amended.

I regularly meet with seniors across Iowa, and far too often I hear that many of them are struggling to make ends meet, just as I am sure that many of my colleagues hear from their seniors as well. They tell me how much they rely on Medicare in order to stay healthy and just to afford their daily necessities.

Mr. Speaker, our seniors did not get us into this fiscal mess that we are in today, and I think we have to keep that in mind. It is unfair to punish them for Washington's irresponsible behavior. That is why we have got to protect Medicare for seniors who have worked a lifetime to pay into it.

This also is an issue I will say that is personal to me. I grew up in a family that struggled to make ends meet. I often talked about how I grew up in poverty. My mom was a single parent who struggled with mental illness, and literally, in the fourth grade, we landed at the doorstep of my maternal grandmother.

My grandmother often relied on Social Security survivor benefits to care for me and my siblings. Without the promise of health care through Medicare, she would not have been able to afford to put food on the table.

No senior—and I think all of us in this body can agree—no senior should have to choose between paying their bills or paying for their medication.

Mr. Speaker, replacing Medicare with a voucher system would end the guarantee of health care and financial security for our seniors as well. Vouchers would force seniors to pay more and more of their health care costs out of pocket.

In these tough economic times, we need to find ways to be more efficient while maintaining quality care.

I know that seniors don't want a voucher that forces them to buy insurance that may not meet their needs because they tell me that every single time I meet with them. They do not want their health care to be subject to the whims of insurance companies looking to make a profit when they, those seniors, get sick.

They don't want higher costs, and they certainly don't want reduced benefits. They want to keep Medicare the way it is, a guaranteed benefit they can count on when they need it. They paid into it, and they deserve it.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this final amendment to the bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my point of order and claim the time in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation is withdrawn.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, to begin with, I would just like to acknowledge all the good work on both sides of the aisle in reaching the bipartisan policy agreement in the SGR, and especially want to thank our staff, Clay Alspach and Robert Horne and Chris Pope, and everyone on both sides of the aisle and their staff, for all the good work.

Mr. Speaker, this bill before us presents each and every Member of this body a simple choice: Do we patch Medicare, or do we fix it?

Do we choose to fight for the Medicare promise that this country has made to every American, or do we vote against it?

My friends, I am voting today to keep the Medicare promise to Americans. We must not let another opportunity to save Medicare for our seniors fall by the wayside.

If Washington is broken, today is an opportunity to fix it. The bill before us is bipartisan, and the pay-for is one President Obama has used himself many times in the past.

My colleagues, did you scream hypocrisy when President Obama delayed the mandate for special interests here in D.C.? Then why would you scream hypocrisy now?

The time for political games is over. It is time for Members of this body to choose. Are you on the side of seniors in your district that depend on Medicare, or are you against them? Are you on the side of younger Americans who keep telling us they are struggling under an ObamaCare plan that forces them to choose between groceries and health care? Are you for saving Medicare, or will you vote to let it go bankrupt?

What kind of country are we living in when our own government has reduced the American Dream to a choice between health care and groceries?

This motion to recommit embraces the tired gimmicks of yesterday that the public has grown to distrust. You have a clear choice. You either vote "no" and stand up for what is right, to give our seniors the peace of mind they deserve, or you can vote "yes" on this motion to recommit and demonstrate to the American public that political games are more important to you than their health and welfare.

I, for one, will be voting with seniors this morning, and I would encourage all of my colleagues to do the same.

Vote "no" on the motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, the Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the minimum time for any electronic vote on the question of passage of the bill.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 191, nays 226, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 134]

YEAS—191

Barber	Gutiérrez	Nolan
Barrow (GA)	Hahn	O'Rourke
Beatty	Hanabusa	Owens
Becerra	Hastings (FL)	Pallone
Bera (CA)	Heck (WA)	Pascarell
Bishop (GA)	Higgins	Pastor (AZ)
Bishop (NY)	Himes	Payne
Blumenauer	Hinojosa	Pelosi
Bonamici	Holt	Perlmutter
Brady (PA)	Honda	Peters (CA)
Braley (IA)	Horsford	Peters (MI)
Brown (FL)	Hoyer	Peterson
Brownley (CA)	Huffman	Pingree (ME)
Bustos	Israel	Pocan
Butterfield	Jackson Lee	Polis
Capps	Jeffries	Price (NC)
Capuano	Johnson (GA)	Quigley
Cárdenas	Johnson, E. B.	Rahall
Carney	Kaptur	Rangel
Carson (IN)	Keating	Richmond
Cartwright	Kelly (IL)	Roybal-Allard
Castor (FL)	Kennedy	Ruiz
Castro (TX)	Kildee	Ruppersberger
Chu	Kilmer	Ryan (OH)
Cicilline	Kind	Sánchez, Linda T.
Clark (MA)	Kirkpatrick	Sanchez, Loretta
Clarke (NY)	Kuster	Sarbanes
Clay	Langevin	Schakowsky
Cleaver	Sarbanes	Schiff
Clyburn	Larson (CT)	Schneider
Cohen	Lee (CA)	Schradner
Connolly	Levin	Schwartz
Conyers	Lewis	Scott (VA)
Cooper	Lipinski	Scott, David
Costa	Loeb sack	Serrano
Crowley	Lofgren	Sewell (AL)
Cuellar	Lowenthal	Shea-Porter
Cummings	Lowe y	Sherman
Davis (CA)	Lujan Grisham	Sinema
DeFazio	(NM)	Sires
DeGette	Luján, Ben Ray	Slaughter
Delaney	(NM)	Speier
DeLauro	Lynch	Swalwell (CA)
DelBene	Maffei	Takano
Deutch	Maloney,	Thompson (CA)
Doggett	Carolyn	Thompson (MS)
Doyle	Maloney, Sean	Tierney
Duckworth	Matheson	Titus
Edwards	Matsui	McCarthy (NY)
Ellison	McCarthy (NY)	McCollum
Engel	McCollum	McDermott
Enyart	McDermott	Tsongas
Eshoo	McGovern	Van Hollen
Esty	McIntyre	Vargas
Farr	McNerney	Veasey
Fattah	Meeks	Vela
Foster	Meng	Velázquez
Fudge	Michaud	Visclosky
Gabbard	Miller, George	Walz
Galleo	Moore	Wasserman
Garamendi	Moran	Schultz
Garcia	Murphy (FL)	Waters
Grayson	Nadler	Waxman
Green, Al	Napolitano	Welch
Green, Gene	Neal	Yarmuth
Grijalva	Negrete McLeod	

NAYS—226

Aderholt	Bachus	Barr
Amash	Barletta	Barton

Benishak	Hanna	Pittenger
Bentivolio	Harper	Pitts
Bilirakis	Harris	Poe (TX)
Bishop (UT)	Hartzler	Pompeo
Black	Hastings (WA)	Posey
Blackburn	Heck (NV)	Price (GA)
Boustany	Hensarling	Reed
Brady (TX)	Herrera Beutler	Reichert
Bridenstine	Holding	Renacci
Brooks (AL)	Hudson	Ribble
Brooks (IN)	Huelskamp	Rice (SC)
Broun (GA)	Huizenga (MI)	Rigell
Buchanan	Hultgren	Roby
Bucshon	Hunter	Roe (TN)
Burgess	Hurt	Rogers (AL)
Byrne	Issa	Rogers (KY)
Calvert	Jenkins	Rogers (MI)
Camp	Johnson (OH)	Rohrabacher
Campbell	Johnson, Sam	Rooney
Cantor	Jolly	Ros-Lehtinen
Capito	Jones	Roskam
Carter	Jordan	Ross
Cassidy	Joyce	Rothfus
Chabot	Kelly (PA)	Royce
Chaffetz	King (IA)	Runyan
Coble	King (NY)	Ryan (WI)
Coffman	Kingston	Salmon
Cole	Kinzing er (IL)	Sanford
Collins (GA)	Kline	Scalise
Collins (NY)	Labrador	Schock
Conaway	LaMalfa	Schweikert
Cook	Lamborn	Scott, Austin
Cotton	Lance	Sensenbrenner
Cramer	Lankford	Sessions
Crawford	Latham	Shimkus
Crenshaw	Latta	Shuster
Daines	LoBiondo	Simpson
Davis, Rodney	Long	Smith (MO)
Denham	Lucas	Smith (NE)
Dent	Luetkemeyer	Smith (NJ)
DeSantis	Lummis	Smith (TX)
DeJarlais	Marchant	Southerland
Diaz-Balart	Marino	Stewart
Duffy	Massie	Stivers
Duncan (SC)	McAllister	Stockman
Duncan (TN)	McCarthy (CA)	Stutzman
Ellmers	McCaul	Terry
Farenthold	McClintock	Thompson (PA)
Fincher	McHenry	Thornberry
Fitzpatrick	McKeon	Tiberi
Fleischmann	McKinley	Tipton
Fleming	McMorris	Turner
Flores	Rodgers	Upton
Forbes	Meadows	Valadao
Fortenberry	Meehan	Wagner
Fox	Messer	Walberg
Frelinghuysen	Mica	Walden
Gardner	Miller (FL)	Walorski
Garrett	Miller (MI)	Weber (TX)
Gerlach	Miller, Gary	Webster (FL)
Gibbs	Mullin	Wenstrup
Gibson	Mulvaney	Westmoreland
Gingrey (GA)	Murphy (PA)	Whitfield
Gohmert	Neugebauer	Williams
Goodlatte	Noem	Wilson (SC)
Gowdy	Nugent	Wittman
Granger	Nunes	Wolf
Graves (GA)	Nunnelee	Womack
Graves (MO)	Olson	Woodall
Griffin (AR)	Palazzo	Yoder
Griffith (VA)	Paulsen	Yoho
Grimm	Pearce	Young (AK)
Guthrie	Perry	Young (IN)
Hall	Petri	

NOT VOTING—14

Amodei	Davis, Danny	Rokita
Bachmann	Dingell	Rush
Bass	Frankel (FL)	Smith (WA)
Courtney	Franks (AZ)	Wilson (FL)
Culberson	Gosar	

□ 1107

Mr. MICA changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

Ms. LOFGREN and Mr. CICILLINE changed their vote from “nay” to “yea.”

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 134, the motion to recommit for H.R. 4015, had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 238, nays 181, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 135]

YEAS—238

Aderholt	Gibbs	Messer
Amash	Gibson	Mica
Bachus	Gingrey (GA)	Miller (FL)
Barber	Gohmert	Miller (MI)
Barletta	Goodlatte	Miller, Gary
Barr	Granger	Mullin
Barrow (GA)	Graves (GA)	Mulvaney
Barton	Graves (MO)	Murphy (FL)
Benishak	Griffin (AR)	Murphy (PA)
Bentivolio	Griffith (VA)	Neugebauer
Bera (CA)	Grimm	Noem
Bilirakis	Guthrie	Nugent
Bishop (UT)	Hall	Nunes
Black	Hanna	Nunnelee
Blackburn	Harper	Olson
Boustany	Harris	Palazzo
Brady (TX)	Hartzler	Paulsen
Bridenstine	Hastings (WA)	Pearce
Brooks (AL)	Heck (NV)	Perry
Brooks (IN)	Hensarling	Peters (CA)
Broun (GA)	Herrera Beutler	Peterson
Buchanan	Holding	Petri
Bucshon	Hudson	Pittenger
Burgess	Huelskamp	Pitts
Byrne	Huizenga (MI)	Poe (TX)
Calvert	Hultgren	Pompeo
Camp	Hunter	Posey
Campbell	Hurt	Price (GA)
Cantor	Issa	Rahall
Capito	Jenkins	Reed
Carter	Johnson (OH)	Reichert
Cassidy	Johnson, Sam	Renacci
Chabot	Jolly	Ribble
Chaffetz	Jones	Rice (SC)
Coble	Jordan	Rigell
Coffman	Joyce	Roby
Cole	Kelly (PA)	Roe (TN)
Collins (GA)	King (IA)	Rogers (AL)
Collins (NY)	King (NY)	Rogers (KY)
Conaway	Kingston	Rogers (MI)
Cook	Kinzing er (IL)	Rohrabacher
Cotton	Kline	Rokita
Cramer	Labrador	Rooney
Crawford	LaMalfa	Ros-Lehtinen
Crenshaw	Lamborn	Roskam
Daines	Lance	Ross
Davis, Rodney	Lankford	Rothfus
Denham	Latham	Royce
Dent	Latta	Runyan
DeSantis	LoBiondo	Ryan (WI)
DesJarlais	Long	Salmon
Diaz-Balart	Lucas	Sanford
Duffy	Luetkemeyer	Scalise
Duncan (SC)	Lummis	Schneider
Duncan (TN)	Marchant	Schock
Ellmers	Marino	Schweikert
Farenthold	Massie	Scott, Austin
Fincher	Matheson	Sensenbrenner
Fitzpatrick	McAllister	Sessions
Fleischmann	McCarthy (CA)	Shimkus
Fleming	McCaul	Shuster
Flores	McClintock	Simpson
Forbes	McHenry	Sinema
Fortenberry	McIntyre	Smith (MO)
Fox	McKeon	Smith (NE)
Frelinghuysen	McKinley	Smith (NJ)
Garcia	McMorris	Smith (TX)
Gardner	Rodgers	Southerland
Garrett	Meadows	Stewart
Gerlach	Meehan	Stivers

Stockman
Stutzman
Terry
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tipton
Turner
Upton
Whitfield
Valadao

NAYS—181

Beatty
Becerra
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bonamici
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown (FL)
Brownley (CA)
Bustos
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cárdenas
Carney
Carson (IN)
Cartwright
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delaney
DeLauro
DelBene
Deutch
Doggett
Doyle
Duckworth
Edwards
Ellison
Engel
Enyart
Eshoo
Esty
Farr
Fattah
Foster
Frankel (FL)
Fudge
Gabbard
Galleo
Garamendi
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene

NOT VOTING—12

Amodi
Bachmann
Bass
Courtney

□ 1115

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall No. 132 on H.R. 3189, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall No. 129 on H.R. 3973,

Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Womack
Woodall
Yoder
Yoho
Young (AK)
Young (IN)

and I would have voted "yes" on rollcall No. 135 on H.R. 4015.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment bills and a concurrent resolution of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 2650. An act to allow the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in the State of Minnesota to lease or transfer certain land.

H.R. 4076. An act to address shortages and interruptions in the availability of propane and other home heating fuels in the United States, and for other purposes.

H. Con. Res. 93. Concurrent resolution directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make technical corrections in the enrollment of H.R. 3370.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1456. An act to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Shimon Peres.

S. 2147. An act to amend Public Law 112-59 to provide for the display of the congressional gold medal awarded to the Montford Point Marines, United States Marine Corps, by the Smithsonian Institution and at other appropriated locations.

ADJOURNMENT TO TUESDAY,
MARCH 18, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, March 18, 2014.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McALLISTER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, due to National Women's History Month every March, we celebrate the tremendous contributions of women who have helped make this Nation the greatest on Earth.

But when thinking about our amazing female forebearers, what becomes clear is that their primary mission was one of education. Education is the key in getting girls and boys, women and men to believe in themselves, to have the confidence and know-how to use their individual, God-given abilities to better their own lives and improve the condition of our communities.

As we celebrate the wonderful legacy that our American heroines have left across the United States, let's not for-

get that the mission of education is not yet finished.

As a former Florida certified teacher, Mr. Speaker, I have witnessed the transformational impact that education can have. Let's follow the lead of great women that we are honoring this month, and let's continue working together to make a quality education a reality for all, both here in our great Nation and around the world.

EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT
INSURANCE

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, the bipartisan Senate legislation on unemployment insurance is a major step forward for millions of job-seeking Americans. It has been 76 days since the Federal unemployment insurance expired for 1.3 million job-seeking Americans. During that time, an additional 700,000 people have seen their lifeline cut off, hindering their efforts to get work and hurting our economy.

When you add it up, as a result of failure to act, \$3 billion has been taken out of the economy in January and February alone.

Upon passage in the Senate, I urge Republicans in the House to follow this bipartisan path to assist the long-term unemployed who have been without Federal assistance since December 28. They and their families' needs are urgent. It is the responsibility of this, the people's House, to act on behalf of the people, the millions of long-term unemployed looking for work.

HONORING THE LIFE OF COLONEL
WAYNE T. FRYE

(Mr. WENSTRUP asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Colonel Wayne T. Frye of Manchester, Ohio. Colonel Frye was beloved in his community, and is remembered not only for his extraordinary achievements but also for his humble character.

In 1948, Wayne Frye joined the United States Marines, and went on to attend the Naval Academy in Annapolis. While a student, he competed with the 1952 Olympic rowing team, known as the "Great Eight," winning a gold medal for Team USA.

After graduating from Annapolis, he joined the newly established Air Force and later served in Vietnam, where he was a commander with the 555th "Triple Nickel" Fighter Squadron, flying 266 combat missions. For his service, he received two Silver Stars for valor, five Distinguished Flying Crosses, 15 Air Medals, and a Purple Heart.

Wayne Frye's legacy also lies in his deep-rooted commitment to his community, and his inspiration to future

generations through his character, faith, and humility.

Colonel Wayne T. Frye, thank you for your service. A grateful Nation salutes you. Rest in peace. Rest in peace.

SYRIA NEEDS UNRESTRICTED HUMANITARIAN ACCESS NOW

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the third anniversary of the crisis in Syria which will be commemorated on March 15. The United Nations estimates that over 100,000 people have been killed since the violence and unrest began in 2011; 9.3 million people, half of the Syrian people, need humanitarian assistance. 240,000 of them are living under siege, surviving under the constant threat of shelling and aerial bombardment. Moreover, they have faced life-threatening shortages of food, water, and medical supplies for more than a year. Children are literally starving to death, while military forces show no respect for humanitarian workers.

A diplomatic end to the crisis must be pursued. At the same time, the humanitarian crisis must be ameliorated. Humanitarian relief must be allowed to reach the civilians, and the wounded and the sick must receive the medical attention that they need. Indiscriminate aerial bombardments must cease, and civilians must be granted safe passage out of the besieged areas. The Syrian people need unrestricted humanitarian aid now.

UNICEF.

New York, NY, Mar. 11, 2014.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN SUFFERING MORE THAN DOUBLES IN THIRD YEAR OF SYRIA CONFLICT AMONG HARDEST HIT ARE 1 MILLION CHILDREN UNDER SIEGE AND IN HARD-TO-REACH AREAS

As the conflict in Syria approaches another sombre milestone, more than twice as many children are now affected compared to 12 months ago, says a new report by UNICEF published today. Particularly hard hit are up to a million children who are trapped in areas of Syria that are under siege or that are hard to reach with humanitarian assistance due to continued violence.

Under Siege—the devastating impact on children of three years of conflict in Syria focuses on the immense damage caused to the 5.5 million children now affected by the conflict and calls for an immediate end to the violence and increased support for those affected.

The report includes the accounts of children whose lives have been devastated by the three year old war, and highlights the profound traumas many have experienced. Children such as four-year-old Adnan, who fled with his family to Lebanon, suffered facial scarring when his home was bombed and still suffers from emotional distress. “He cries all night,” his mother is quoted as saying. “He is scared of everything and is afraid when we leave him, even for a second.”

UNICEF estimates that there are 2 million children like Adnan in need of psychological support or treatment.

“For Syria’s children, the past three years have been the longest of their lives. Must they endure another year of suffering?” said UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake.

The report warns that the future of 5.5 million children inside Syria and living as refugees in neighbouring countries hangs in the balance as violence, the collapse of health and education services, severe psychological distress and the worsening economic impact on families combine to devastate a generation.

The report draws attention to the suffering experienced by children and their families who have been trapped in areas under siege for many months. Cut off from aid, living in rubble and struggling to find food, many Syrian children have been left without protection, medical care or psychological support, and have little or no access to education. In the very worst cases children and pregnant women have been deliberately wounded or killed by snipers.

In host countries, 1.2 million Syrian children are now refugees living in camps and overwhelmed host communities, and have limited access to clean water, nutritious food or learning opportunities.

The report says that three years on, Syrian children have been forced to grow up faster than any child should. UNICEF estimates that 1 in 10 refugee children is now working and 1 in every 5 Syrian girls in Jordan is forced into early marriage.

The report calls on the global community to undertake six critical steps:

End the cycle of violence in Syria now
Grant immediate access to the under-reached 1 million children inside Syria
Create an environment where children are protected from exploitation and harm
Invest in children’s education
Help children’s inner healing through psychological care and support and

Provide support to host communities and governments to mitigate the social and economic impact of the conflict on families.

“This war has to end so that children can return to their homes to rebuild their lives in safety with their family and friends. This third devastating year for Syrian children must be the last,” said Lake.

BALANCE OF POWER

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the Constitution is very clear: the elected Representatives in Congress pass the laws and the President enforces those laws. This system of checks and balances has served to limit abuses of power and hold government accountable to the people.

From our immigration laws to the 2010 health care overhaul, the current White House has selectively enforced our laws, and in many cases acted unilaterally to change or alter them. In fact, the majority leader’s office recently released a report outlining 40 separate instances where the Obama administration broke this fundamental responsibility.

Yesterday, the House acted on two measures to hold the executive branch accountable and restore balance to the separation of powers. H.R. 4138, the EN-

FORCE Act, which deals with lawsuits against the executive branch for failure to execute the laws, and H.R. 3973, the Faithful Execution of the Law Act, which requires the Attorney General to report to Congress any time a Federal official implements a policy to refrain from enforcing Federal law.

Mr. Speaker, no matter which party is in the White House, our laws must be faithfully executed. Americans deserve as much.

SUPPORTING DEMOCRACY IN UKRAINE

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, just a couple of weeks ago the eyes of the world were looking at the people of Russia, and all of the world gathered together at the international Olympics, athletes of varying backgrounds harmoniously competing in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration. Certainly those of us in the United States watched with great pride our athletes represent our Nation and their own special talent. It is unfortunate today that President Putin has undermined and destroyed all of that goodwill.

I believe it is important that the United States continue to engage with Ukraine, a sovereign nation, and continues to encourage Secretary Kerry, as the President is doing, for diplomatic resolution. A couple of days from now there will be a vote to cede away from Ukraine, a sovereign nation. President Putin has boots on the ground on soil that is not his, and the world must stand up in a manner that collaborates and embraces. No, I am not calling for military action by the United States, collaboration with NATO. But they are people who desire democracy, and we are a democracy and we should be there and stand alongside of them.

COMMEMORATING SKILLS ACT ANNIVERSARY

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, this Saturday will mark the 1-year anniversary of House passage of H.R. 803, the SKILLS Act. This bill, which I sponsored, would bring much-needed reform and reorganization to our broken Federal workforce development system.

There is bipartisan agreement that the current mishmash of Federal workforce programs is not meeting the needs of America’s job seekers. The President called for reforms in his 2012 State of the Union Address. Republicans in the House responded to that call with the SKILLS Act. This bill

would streamline 35 ineffective and duplicative programs, including 26 identified as being ineffective in a 2011 GAO report. The SKILLS Act empowers job creators, promotes accountability, and gives workers access to the resources they need to fill jobs that are available now.

I call on our colleagues in the Senate to act on this vital piece of legislation. America needs a workforce development system that works for job seekers, not bureaucrats.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces a correction to an earlier vote tally. On rollcall vote No. 135, the “yeas” were 238 and the “nays” were 181.

□ 1130

SIGN THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE DISCHARGE PETITION

(Mr. HORSFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HORSFORD. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor to congratulate the two Senators from my home State—Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID and Senator DEAN HELLER—for putting together a bipartisan unemployment insurance benefit extension. I am thankful on behalf of the 2 million Americans who are depending on UI benefits that the Senate is expected to act soon.

But here we go again, Mr. Speaker. The pressure is now on the House. I think it is wrong that one person in the House out of 435 can hold hostage a financial lifeline for 2 million Americans, including 26,000 Nevadans.

Every Member of Congress now has a choice to make: sign the discharge petition to bring up unemployment insurance in a vote; or don't and abandon the Americans who desperately need our help.

I have signed, and I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to do the same. Moderate House Republicans can do something before they leave today. Sign the discharge petition. Show your constituents that you stand with them and bring up a vote to extend unemployment insurance benefits.

MEDICARE ADVANTAGE

(Mr. DENHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, more than 14 million seniors nationwide depend on Medicare Advantage plans for their health care needs. In two of the counties that I represent in California's Central Valley, over 60,000 seniors are enrolled in Medicare Advantage.

The program is an absolute necessity for them because it limits their out-of-pocket expense, protecting them from the threat of bankruptcy due to a complicated and an ongoing medical condition.

The President's massive government overhaul of our health care system has raided \$300 million from Medicare Advantage plans and created a health care tax that has just started this year. These payment cuts and the new health insurance tax are already being felt with canceled plans, reduced benefits, and increased co-payments.

There are 33,000 seniors in my county—Stanislaus County—making under \$20,000 a year, who are going to be hit with almost \$100 per month. They have a right to know when this tax is going to hit them, what the expense is going to be. Seniors on limited incomes should have the right to know, which is why I authored the Seniors' Right to Know Act.

BIG LAKE

(Mr. GALLEGOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GALLEGOS. Mr. Speaker, everyone in Texas knows about the Permian Basin's reputation for oil and gas. Every UT Longhorn or Texas A&M Aggie knows about the Permanent University Fund.

Not everyone knows the critical role that Big Lake played in each of these, so today, my 23 in 1—taking people to the 23rd District in 1 minute—is about Big Lake.

The first well to hit on university lands was the Santa Rita well, which is now enshrined on the UT campus in Austin. Just outside of Big Lake was the site. It was named for the patron saint of the impossible because no one really expected the well to hit.

The population went from 100 people to over 2,000. Today, those wells have produced great, great resources for the University of Texas and A&M over a long period of time.

There was once a lake in Big Lake; it is dry now. It was fed by springs that are no longer there. They are there only when it has had significant rain. Big Lake is a wonderful place to visit. If you ever have the opportunity, please go.

WEST VIRGINIA WOMEN

(Mrs. CAPITO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, women have played a significant role in our Nation's history and in my home State of West Virginia. I would like to recognize a few who have had wonderful achievements in art, literature, sports, government, education, and volunteerism.

Anna Johnson Gates was the first female elected to the State legislature from Kanawha County; Elizabeth Drewry, the first African American elected to the legislature from McDowell County, West Virginia; Elizabeth Kee, the first woman elected to Congress from Bluefield, West Virginia.

One West Virginian has given us a national holiday—Anna Jarvis, the founder of Mother's Day, from Grafton, West Virginia.

In the sciences, Dr. Harriet Jones broke down barriers to become the first licensed physician in West Virginia from Marshall County.

We have two women who reached the very pinnacle of their field. Novelist Pearl Buck, from Hillsboro, West Virginia, won the Nobel Prize for literature. In athletics, no one could forget West Virginia's own Mary Lou Retton when she made history by achieving her perfect 10s in 1984.

The stories of West Virginian women and all women must be told. That is why I support H.R. 863, the National Women's History Commission Act.

It is my privilege to talk about so many wonderful West Virginia women.

TRIMBLE TECH STUDENTS AT SXSW FESTIVAL

(Mr. VEASEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to the tragic events that took place in Austin, Texas, on Thursday at the annual South by Southwest Festival.

A suspected drunk driver being chased by the Austin police slammed his car into the festival crowd. Two of those injured were in high school. Curtisha Davis—known as “Tish”—and Deandre Tatum—called “Dre”—students at Trimble Tech High School in my hometown of Fort Worth, Texas.

Curtisha is a senior and has broken bones and other injuries, and Deandre is in the intensive-care unit under a medically induced coma at the University Medical Center at Brackenridge.

Please continue to pray for the Trimble Tech family. It is a very close-knit family at Trimble Tech High School, known as the Bulldogs. I ask for the prayers of everyone.

There was a death involved in this particular tragedy, and I ask for prayers for all the families affected, including these two young people from my hometown, Curtisha and Deandre.

HONORING THE LIFE OF LES BOTELHO

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, last week I was deeply saddened to hear the

news of the passing of my friend and Hawaii island resident, Les Botelho. I share my heartfelt condolences with his family and his friends.

Les was a committed family man and also dedicated to serving his community. He lived simply and led by example, always understanding the importance of servant leadership and giving back.

Les was a native of Laupahoehoe and graduated from Laupahoehoe High School and Hawaii Technical School. He worked for the County of Hawaii for many years, working his way up to administration before he retired.

Those of us who had the privilege of knowing Les knew we could always count on him. He was very often the first call that people made when they needed help with anything.

He was a mentor to so many and a great example for all to follow, as he always taught the next generation to become involved, to be a part of making a positive impact in our community, and to undertake the great responsibility of being leaders in our future.

Aloha nui, Les, we miss you very much. Mahalo for your lifelong commitment to serving Hawaii. Aloha.

GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FLORES), my new friend.

REMEMBERING RETIRED UNITED STATES AIR FORCE COLONEL ROBERT DARDEN "PETE" PETERSON

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor retired United States Air Force Colonel Robert Darden "Pete" Peterson who passed away on March 2.

Colonel Peterson was a member of America's Greatest Generation. He not only served our counsel selflessly during World War II, but also during the Korean war and the Vietnam war.

Colonel Robert Darden Peterson was born in Jonesboro, Arkansas, in 1923. After graduating from high school, Pete would go on to attend the University of Mississippi with a football scholarship.

After his first football season at Ole Miss, he enlisted in the United States Army Air Corps to aid the war effort in Europe. Colonel Peterson trained as a B-17 pilot and became an aircraft commander at age 20. During World War II, he was a member of the 8th Air Force and completed 28 combat missions.

After World War II, Pete briefly returned to civilian life only to be recalled to Active Duty in 1947. He would serve as assistant chief of directorate

of combat operations during the Korean war and the Vietnam war.

He was responsible for all surveillance and control of the Strategic Air Command winged resources within Southeast Asia.

During 1967 and 1968, Colonel Peterson served as air operations planner for all tactical and support air activities in the southern portion of North Vietnam and the Southeast Asia interdiction area. He remained a combat pilot, flying 19 combat missions in support operations in Vietnam.

In 1968, Colonel Peterson was assigned to the Pentagon as Air Force actions officer for programs pertaining to the Strategic Air Command.

In 1970, he was assigned to the Joint Chiefs of Staff Operational Directorate. Following his assignments in Washington, he accepted the post of deputy base commander at Dyess Air Force Base, a Strategic Air Command base in Abilene, Texas.

In 1976, Colonel Peterson retired from military service and lived most of his retirement years in Texas. During his 33 years of service to our country, he flew B-17s, B-36s, and B-52s and logged over 7,000 flying hours.

He was so trusted and experienced, that he was assigned to America's nuclear Air Force in the Strategic Air Command. As a pilot, he was one of the first in our country to fly with atomic weapons and hydrogen weapons.

Colonel Peterson was a highly decorated officer. His military honors include the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal, the Bronze Star, and numerous other medals and awards that reflected his dedication to serving our country in the United States Air Force.

A review written by a commanding officer during Colonel Peterson's military career best sums up the way he lived his life at home and when on duty. The CO wrote:

Peterson requires a lot of his crew. However, he gives more than he demands of others.

Colonel Peterson passed away earlier this month and was laid to rest on March 7.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Colonel "Pete" Peterson. His survivors include 7 children, 15 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

He will be forever remembered as a patriot, a pilot, a soldier, a husband, a father, a grandfather, and as an American hero. We thank him and his family for their outstanding service and sacrifice to our country.

As I close, I ask everyone to continue praying for our country during these difficult times and for our military men and women who protect us from external threats and our first responders who protect us from internal threats right here at home.

God bless our military men and women, and God bless the United States of America.

Mr. GOHMERT. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED), my friend, such time as he may consume.

NO MORE WEEK

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me time to address the Chamber today.

I rise today to talk about the NO MORE campaign. NO MORE is the first unifying symbol meant to express support for ending sexual assault and domestic violence, similar to the Pink Ribbon campaign for breast cancer.

Mr. Speaker, next week, March 17-21 is NO MORE week. This symbol will be active throughout social media, ad campaigns, and throughout our country, to highlight for men and women across the country to come together to stand up to end sexual violence by saying "No more."

This proliferation is supported by organizations, such as the Avon Foundation for Women, Mary Kay, National Alliance to End Sexual Violence, National Network to End Domestic Violence, the YWCA, and Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women.

Mr. Speaker, I come here today to say no more because of something very personal to me. Within the last year, my family experienced firsthand the issues of sexual assault.

My beautiful niece, 18 years old, was raped. We saw that event impact a young life—our family—in a way that I cannot express, Mr. Speaker.

□ 1145

I come here today to say, "No more."

Last night, I had an opportunity to speak with my niece. I said: If you had an opportunity to address the country and to address the Chamber of the U.S. House of Representatives, what would you say? How would you answer the question "no more because"?

Essentially, what she said was: "No more because" there are no excuses.

No one can make an excuse as to why sexual assault is acceptable. No one should offer an excuse that a woman wanted it, that a woman asked for it.

Mr. Speaker, we need to change the culture in our country as we are afraid to talk about this issue. So many women have been impacted. Men across the country have not been taught how to deal with this issue in an open and honest fashion. March 17 to 21 is an opportunity for us as a nation to say, "No more." We are going to come together in a national effort and say: Sexual violence is not acceptable; domestic violence is not acceptable. We are going to discuss it openly and amongst our country and fellow countrymen in a way that ultimately will lead to there being no more.

In having had to experience this firsthand for the last 12 months, I can tell you that it is time.

On behalf of my niece and my family, Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members and all people across the country to look at the NO MORE campaign and to look at this symbol and to discuss it with your sons, your daughters, your sisters, your brothers, your mothers, and your fathers and say: We can't accept this any longer.

Then we end sexual violence once and for all, because now is the time to say, "No more."

God bless my niece. God bless my family. God bless this great country.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you for those stirring and important words.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING), my friend.

MACK PIERCE

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, a small but vibrant community called Nahunta, which is hidden off the beaten track in eastern North Carolina, sadly said good-bye last year to one of its most beloved residents. Mack Pierce, who lived and breathed Nahunta for 81 years, passed away on November 3.

Now, up here in Washington, D.C., the title "Pork King" might not be a compliment, but in Nahunta, Mack Pierce's company wore the crown proudly. He founded the Nahunta Pork Center in 1975, and grew it into one of the largest pork retail displayers in the Nation. In the eastern portion of my congressional district, it is impossible to miss the enormous yellow signs up and down the interstate that declare the Nahunta Pork Center as the "Pork King," a treasured title in one of the country's largest pork-producing States.

Mack had a keen insight for business and an unwavering commitment to his family, his faith, and his community. Rather than taking his business to a larger city as it grew, Mack chose to build a successful, stable business that would bring employees and customers alike to his hometown of Nahunta. As a result, thanks to Mack, Nahunta is a household name in eastern North Carolina, and it is recognizable to its customers up and down the east coast. The Nahunta Pork Center has remained in the same location since it opened, and it has grown substantially as its customer base has increased. Throughout his life, Mack focused on providing the best product and outstanding service, and his hard work helped put Nahunta on the map. Business, though, was second to family and community.

If there were an opportunity to volunteer, Mack was first in line. For over 70 years, he was a member of the Nahunta Friends Meeting, where he served in many capacities. At his church, Mack served as an elder and as a finance committee member. He sang in the choir, taught Sunday school, and mentored young folks at the church. In the community, Mack was a founding

member of the Nahunta Fire Department. He served as a trustee at the nearby Mount Olive College, and he sat on the board of directors of the BB&T Bank. At home, he and his wife, Jean, spent 61 wonderful years together. They had two sons, Larry and Freddie, and four grandchildren. Mack cherished his role as a husband, as a father, and as a grandfather.

In his lifetime, Mack Pierce enriched the community of Nahunta in too many ways to count, and he will be greatly missed.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, there are many great Americans. There are some who are exceptional, and it is always a pleasure to hear about a life well lived, someone who will meet his Maker and who will hear the words "well done, good and faithful servant."

We have some who do a rather sloppy job with the duties they are given. It specifically brings to mind, Mr. Speaker, the National Journal Daily. It has got a picture of my friend JUSTIN AMASH on the front with the words—in big letters—"Drunken Karaoke with Justin Amash." Yet, when you read the story, it is very clear that JUSTIN AMASH didn't have anything to drink. It was not a drunken karaoke event.

As my friend Mr. AMASH puts it in a letter that many of us have signed:

The story concerned a fundraiser for Representative Thomas Massie, which was held earlier this week. The fundraiser was hosted by a number of Virginia Young Republicans at an Irish pub in Clarendon. One of your reporters who regularly covers House Republicans attended the event. As you reported, Representative Amash spoke as a guest at the event. He introduced Representative Massie, and talked briefly to a crowd of young people about public policy and principles that many Republicans share.

After the event officially ended—not part of the event—Representative Amash stuck around to take pictures with fans in the crowd as a courtesy to the Young Republican hosts, and there were some who stayed for the usual Tuesday night karaoke. Representative Amash did not participate in any karaoke singing or drinking.

That is even noted in the article. That is why it was such a surprise that the National Journal would have as the headline—front page, top story—"Drunken Karaoke with Justin Amash." That is libelist. That is outrageous, and particularly—I did some checking—it turns out that the National Journal has a contract with the House of Representatives to provide everybody a copy of the print version for \$617,000 per year.

With that kind of sleazy title, I think it is time to relook at that contract. I mean, we all know the National Journal's ratings of conservatives. JUSTIN AMASH usually gets rated by the National Journal as one of the more liberal when he is, if not the most conservative, one of the most conservative. So we have known that National Journal reporting in some areas has

been very suspect, but that is just as sleazy as it gets. A front-page, top-story apology to JUSTIN AMASH is owed by the National Journal. That is the least they can do.

Since we are part of the government here in Congress, it is important to note when things go well, and it is important to note when things don't go well and when there are problems.

There was a major story yesterday afternoon. The Daily Caller reports "Health and Human Services Official Resigns, Pens a Must-Read Rebuke of Federal Bureaucracy." It is an article posted by Caroline May, and its original publication is in AAAS news.sciencemag.org by Jocelyn Kaiser.

This story from The Daily Caller reports:

A Health and Human Services official has resigned after dealing with the frustration of the "profoundly dysfunctional" Federal bureaucracy which left him "offended as an American taxpayer."

In a resignation letter obtained by ScienceInsider, David Wright, Director of the Office of Research Integrity, ORI, which oversees and monitors possible research misconduct, offers a scathing rebuke of the unwieldy and inefficient bureaucracy that he dealt with for the 2 years he served in that position.

In his letter to Assistant Secretary for Health Howard Koh, Wright explains that the 35 percent of his job that was spent working with science investigators in his department "has been one of the greatest pleasures of my long career." The majority of his duties, however, represented his worst job ever. "The rest of my role as ORI Director has been the very worst job I have ever had, and it occupies up to 65 percent of my time. That part of the job is spent navigating the remarkably dysfunctional HHS bureaucracy to secure resources and to, yes, get permission for ORI to serve the research community. I knew coming into this job about the bureaucratic limitations of the Federal Government, but I had no idea how stifling it would be."

I want to add parenthetically here that he is talking about the remarkably dysfunctional Health and Human Services Department that wants to make your decisions for you about your health care. They want to tell you and have told millions and millions of Americans that your health insurance is no good even though most Americans liked the insurance they had and wanted to keep it and were promised by the President and so many friends across the aisle, if they liked it, they could keep it. It turns out that was absolutely not true.

The HHS, the Health and Human Services Department, in being as bureaucratic, as negligent, and as dysfunctional as they are, is what every Democrat in this body and in the Senate and without a single Republican vote wanted to shove in control of every American's health care. Now we are finding out just how disastrous that was.

This article about Director Wright goes on to read:

According to Wright, activities that in his capacity as an academic administrator took a day or two, took weeks and months in the Federal Government. He recalled an instance in which he could not get approval for a \$35 cost to have cassette tapes converted to CDs. He eventually was able to get them converted in 20 minutes for free by a university. In another instance, he "urgently needed to fill a vacancy," but was told there was a secret priority list. Sixteen months later, he wrote, the position was still unfilled.

Again, parenthetically as to this article about HHS dysfunctionality, it is important to note that these people who took 16 months and still didn't fill a position because they had a secret priority list are the same ones who are going to have a list as to who can get what surgery at what age. Some people bristled when Sarah Palin called it a "death panel," but they are going to decide who can get a pacemaker, at what age, and who cannot. So, as I had to do a couple of times, they are not going to have to actually sign an order sentencing somebody to death, but it is basically not that different. When you say someone who must have a pacemaker in order to live can't have it, you might as well be signing a death penalty order.

□ 1200

This is an organization that cannot get their act together—not to build a Web site, not to protect people's most personal information, not to even get a \$35 authorization to convert cassettes to CD. If they can't do that, do you really want them deciding whether you get a pacemaker or not? Whether you get a bypass surgery you need or not?

A conversation with somebody in my district who came from Canada keeps coming back to me. He told me about his father, in the Canadian glorious health care system that everybody got shoved under, where the government controlled who got pacemakers, who got surgery, who got what, needed bypass surgery, and was on a list. Two years later, he didn't get it. And he died because he hadn't had bypass surgery.

I said, Well, that is amazing. I didn't know it took 2 years. What was the problem? He said, They kept moving people on the list in front of him. I said, My understanding is it is a crime in Canada to give anything of value to get someone to move you up the list. He said, That's right, but there is a panel that moves people up the list as they feel appropriate. They didn't move my father up the list. He didn't get bypass surgery for 2 years. And so he died.

If someone, unknown of whether he has insurance or not, were to go into a hospital here in Washington or in my hometown in Tyler, Texas, or Longview, or basically anywhere, and he is immediately found to need a bypass, they are going in and doing the bypass. But not in Canada. Not in England.

And not here in the United States, once the group that shoved ObamaCare down the throats of the American people have their way and this bureaucracy with secret priority lists gets to tell you what you get or don't get in the way of health care.

I just cannot imagine thinking Americans wanting the government, and particularly Health and Human Services, making those kind of decisions.

We found out this week, when my friend TOM PRICE asked how many people have paid for their health insurance, they couldn't tell us. Secretary Sebelius doesn't know. Can't know.

Do you think they are going to know when you, Mr. Speaker, need bypass surgery? They won't.

Some will say, Well, in Congress they probably get special treatment. They have no idea. We won't get special treatment. We will end up like the people in Canada, going on a list.

I read an article sometime back about England. They have got a new target, it said. They were trying to adjust down the amount of time it took to get surgery or treatment or whatever a doctor prescribed after it was prescribed. They knew it wouldn't be done overnight, but if everybody pitched in, everybody worked hard, they thought they might get the delay in getting the surgery or treatment you needed down to a 10-month wait. If everybody worked hard, eventually they could get it down to 10 months.

I thought, Good grief. And you want to do that to America? You don't have to wait 10 months for a mammogram or surgery or a biopsy, if it's needed.

These people that keep saying, You Republicans have no alternatives. We have all kinds of alternatives.

What I keep encouraging our conference and the RSC to do—and I am hoping one of our groups here is going to do it—is start having informal hearings and bring in witnesses so that we do what President Obama promised when he was a senator. If I am President, he promised us, we are going to have debate over health care. We are going to do it on C-SPAN. We want the whole country to see who is standing up for whom.

That is what I want. That is what we need. Let America see who stands for them and who stands for the big, bloated, secret priority-listed bureaucracies like Health and Human Services.

This article goes on about HHS. David Wright, who has now resigned, said:

On another occasion I asked your deputy why you didn't conduct an evaluation by the Op Division of the immediate office administrative services to try to improve them. She responded that that had been tried a few years ago and the results were so negative that no further evaluations have been conducted.

David Wright closed by saying he plans to publish his daily log to further shed light on his work. He said:

As for the rest, I'm offended as an American taxpayer that the Federal bureaucracy—at least the part I've labored in—is so profoundly dysfunctional. I'm hardly the first person to have made that discovery, but I'm saddened by the fact that there is so little discussion, much less outrage, regarding the problem. To promote healthy and productive discussion, I intend to publish a version of the daily log I've kept as ORI Director in order to share my experience and observations with my colleagues in government and with members of the regulated research community.

These people at HHS, who couldn't find their rear end with both hands, are going to tell you what you can have done to your body?

I have heard friends across the aisle for so many years now talk about how they want the government out of our bedroom. Are you kidding me? With ObamaCare, they are in your bedroom, they are in your nightstand, they are in your bathroom, your kitchen cabinet. They are everywhere in your house and outside your house you try to go. This puts them in charge of your most personal private matters.

It is time to repeal ObamaCare. It is time to have an alternative that some of us have brought to the front.

One of the things we need to do is not make sure everybody has high cost insurance. It is to make sure everybody has accessible, affordable health care.

When you combine all the money the Federal Government and the State governments spend providing Medicare and Medicaid and you divide it by the number of households in America that have someone on Medicare or Medicaid, which my office tried to do back in 2009 and 2010, it was tough getting the information on how much we are spending on all this. People could only give you an estimate. The same people that want to run your life and tell you what you can have in health care can't even tell you what they are doing.

But the best estimates we can get from these government sources and the best estimates from the Census Bureau—because they couldn't give us an exact number—indicates that back 4 years ago we were spending about \$20,000 to \$30,000 per household for people that had somebody on Medicare and Medicaid. It was most likely closer to the \$30,000 number.

That is what inspired me. I told Newt Gingrich about it, and he said, You have got to get that in bill form and get it scored. It may change the whole debate in Congress about health care. This is nearly a year before ObamaCare was passed.

So we got it in bill form, and it included giving seniors the option for the first time since the sixties to really control their own health care. Because we would buy them not bronze or some other kind of health insurance, we would buy them the best Cadillac insurance you can get. We wouldn't require that they had to have maternity

care, because there are not that many 80- and 90-year-old people that need the maternity care that this administration is forcing.

It would give them Cadillac insurance for what they did need, and give them a high deductible. At this point, we might say the deductible would be \$5,000, \$7,000, or something like that. Whatever the amount the high deductible was, my bill, my proposal, was we are better off giving every senior on Medicare or Medicaid cash in a health savings account with a debit card that is coded so it will only pay for purely health care items, and you empower a senior to get what they need—to go to the doctor or health care provider they want to go to and not need some bureaucratic fool in HHS to tell you whether or not you can see this person.

We have got to get power back into the hands of our seniors and into the hands of the poor. They are entitled to be able to choose who they want to go to, I would think.

Let's empower people and quit punishing people simply because they are middle class and they have got a job and they are paying taxes. Let them have the same opportunities as those they are paying for.

What is going on is outrageous. And just when we think it wouldn't get much worse, we have this article in Power Line, "Bill Henck: Inside the IRS," by Scott Johnson. He notes:

As noted at the top, William Henck has worked inside the IRS office . . .

And that is the IRS office. How is the IRS linked to a discussion about health care? They are going to enforce ObamaCare. We have got the IRS, as if they don't have enough power now, is going to be in charge of enforcing health care.

Most of the Republicans I know want to eliminate the IRS. Some want to go to a fair tax. I would like to have a flat tax. I think it is time to have that debate and go to whichever wins the debate and gets rid of the IRS.

My brilliant friend—and I am surprised he let's me call him his friend, but he is a brilliant man—Arthur Laffer, the genius behind turning the devastating economy around under President Carter, I talked to Arthur about this and I said, I would like to go to a flat tax—I know a lot of people want to go to a fair tax—so we can get rid of the IRS, but somebody is going to have to enforce it. How would we do that if there were no IRS? Arthur says, I have got it all spelled out. I have got it written out.

I am hoping some of my colleagues here will meet with Arthur and let him give them the one, two, threes.

He said, You don't need an IRS. He said, The big mistake with the IRS is that the Federal Government set up an entity that not only gets to pick and choose whom they audit, they get to enforce what they find and what they do.

So they can pick either at random or intentionally and maliciously. Even though that violates the law—we have seen it happen already—they can pick who they want to audit, whose life they want to make miserable. And then if they don't comply with what they find and what they order, even though it may be very wrong, then they are capable or have the authority to take everything they have.

That is why my brilliant friend, Arthur Laffer, says, You set up a very small auditing entity, but you cannot give them the power to enforce their audits. That is too much power for one government agency.

□ 1215

So you have a very small auditing agency and, as Arthur said, you don't allow them to ever pick who they want to audit. Every audit is selected at random, so they don't get to pick on people they dislike. They only audit whatever person or entity randomly is selected by the system. And if they were to do otherwise, they would break the law and be subject to punishment themselves.

These days, now, if somebody calls the IRS out, then they are normally going to get hit up with an audit and be treated maliciously by the IRS.

So this article goes on. It says:

I have been an attorney in the IRS Office of Chief Counsel for over 26 years. Over a number of years, I have attempted, largely unsuccessfully, to alert the public to abuse within the IRS. One of my kids suggested I contact a blog, and Power Line has graciously agreed to publish this account.

I do not personally know whether the IRS has targeted conservative groups or individuals, but I do know that the environment within the agency, the IRS, is ripe for such activity, and there is nothing to prevent it from occurring.

As stated in more detail below, I have personally witnessed improper giveaways of billions of dollars to taxpayers with inside access at the agency, bullying of elderly taxpayers, the coverup of managerial embezzlement and misappropriation of thousands of dollars in government funds, and a retaliatory audit.

I have also heard credible accounts of, among other things, further improper giveaways, blatant sexual harassment, and anti-Semitism. All of these have been swept under the rug.

Parenthetically, in this article, where this person, this attorney in the Office of Chief Counsel for over 26 years, points out, anti-Semitism in the IRS? We are seeing it grow.

I mean, when I heard, as a child, in history class, about the Holocaust, and I read that Eisenhower required that people in the community be required to come help clean up these horrid concentration camps where gas ovens and other ways were used to torture and kill Jews, I thought, for Eisenhower to order that, that is a little rough, you know, for these people to have to come out and clean that up. I mean, nobody will ever deny there was a Holocaust.

There is too much information about it.

Now we have people denying there is a Holocaust, and as I understand it, there are five main Jewish groups that support Israel, and all of them are being mistreated by the IRS, and they don't want anybody to talk about it because they don't want to get targeted any more than they already have.

Then we see, from an attorney in the Office of the Chief Counsel, or general counsel, for 26 years, he says, I have seen the anti-Semitism within the IRS. So I hope my Jewish friends on the other side of the aisle, my Jewish friends across the country that have not been involved in politics, will wake up and help us clean up the mess in the Federal Government by speaking up about the prejudice and the bias that they have had to live with.

This article goes on:

A number of years ago, a manager in my office, there in the Chief Counsel's Office, the IRS, was embezzling thousands of dollars in travel funds. His actions were common knowledge, but other managers, including a currently high-ranking executive in the Office of Chief Counsel, did not report him.

I did report his conduct to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, but they did not investigate the matter for a considerable length of time. After I complained to my local Congressman's office, the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration finally forwarded the matter to the Office of Chief Counsel to be handled internally.

Eventually, the Office of Chief Counsel made the manager pay the money back, but took no other disciplinary action, even though others who committed the same type of scheme were punished severely.

The manager in question has led a charmed life. Several years after this episode he decided to retire, but was starting a new job at a different city 2 months before he was eligible to retire.

He could have retired early and taken annual leave for 2 months before retiring. However, he did not want to take annual leave because Federal employees can cash out annual leave when they retire.

Rather than have him burn at least \$20,000 in annual leave, the IRS transferred him back to the new city, but did not give him any work, allowing him to work at his new job while still receiving a government paycheck.

I obtained an email from this manager in which he admitted that he had no work, that the IRS was not planning to give him any work in the new city, and that he was working on matters related to his new job while at the IRS.

I forwarded this email to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, TIGTA, but of course was ignored by both TIGTA and the Office of Chief Counsel.

TIGTA has a well-deserved reputation for protecting IRS managers. In fact, a TIGTA agent once stated that "We don't investigate IRS managers."

At the same time, the manager was embezzling travel funds. I was working on a case involving what I call the Elmer's Glue scam. Tax shelter operators misused synthetic fuel credit.

And for those who don't know what that means, that is part of the green

economy that this administration wants us all to participate in. The bottom line is, it gives them more control over our personal lives. That is what the movement is about.

But nonetheless, there are some that are dedicated to it that really believe in it. But the people at the top, they know it is all about more government controlling people's lives.

But anyway, he says:

Tax shelter operators misused a synthetic fuel credit by spraying watered down household glue on marketable coal, degrading the coal, but producing huge tax credits for investors. This was costing the Treasury at least \$3 billion a year. The IRS turned a blind eye toward this activity and harassed those of us in the agency who were trying to stop it.

Since I had witnessed TIGTA help cover up embezzlement, I decided to go to the press about the Elmer's Glue scam. The Wall Street Journal published a story about it, but the scam continued.

As a result of complaining about TIGTA's inaction regarding embezzlement that is within the IRS, and speaking out about the Elmer's Glue scam, my wife and I were subjected to a retaliatory IRS audit.

After an experienced revenue agent from Fairfax spent an entire day auditing our tax returns, he stated that they were clean. Soon thereafter, he called me and apologetically stated that his "special projects" manager had ordered him to return to Richmond and keep digging into our returns. He stated that his regular manager would not have ordered this.

In parentheses David Wright says:

I believe that because in 26 years at the IRS, I have never heard of an agent being sent back to continue a straightforward individual return that had been judged to be clean.

So David Wright says:

I contacted The Washington Post, gave them my privacy waiver to discuss our tax returns with the Service. When the Post presented that waiver to the Service, they quickly dropped our audit.

Now, I happen to know many IRS agents who are decent, good, hard-working, honorable people. They are the kind of people I would want working in an auditing agency like Arthur Laffer has talked about because I know they would be fair, they are honest.

These are the kind of people that complained to me when the Secretary of the Treasury was given to Tim Geithner, even though he had signed, 4 years in a row, under oath, under penalty of perjury, that he would pay the tax on the funds the International Monetary Fund were paying him if they would not deduct the money he was supposed to pay, so he swore he would pay it personally. And then he blamed it on TurboTax, and he paid it back after he was appointed Secretary of the Treasury.

But there were IRS agents, honest, honorable, decent IRS agents all over the country who were outraged that Timothy Geithner was appointed to the Secretary of the Treasury, to be the boss of people, these people, these

front-line workers in the IRS, who made it very clear, if they ever even underpaid, so they had to pay additional taxes at the end of the year, they would be fired.

And here was a guy who didn't pay his taxes for 4 years, not until he got appointed to be Secretary of the Treasury, that was put in charge of all of these very honest, upright, decent people who happen to work at an agency that includes some who are incredibly corrupt and who protect the corruption as David Wright is pointing out.

Well, David Wright goes on and says:

Within the past few years, the IRS has used a "cadre" to pursue a particular type of case. I was assigned one of those cases that was in Tax Court. I believed we should concede the case in question because our legal position was incorrect. As a result, I was called a quitter and a coward, was threatened with retaliation and, in fact, suffered retaliation.

The cadre—he says I hate that term, but that is what they call themselves, pushed cases with an obvious legal defect. Taxpayers were denigrated in writing as "upper class twits." And one cadre member stated that, despite the weakness in our legal position, the taxpayers in these cases were typically elderly, and could be forced into settling their cases.

I stated my ethical concerns to management, and they were answered with a short non-response and did not even bother to ask for the name of the cadre member who stated that we could bully elderly taxpayers into settling their cases.

He adds, the Tax Court ultimately rejected the Service's position regarding that legal issue.

I mean, it ought to scare Americans profoundly that the IRS that is going to be in charge of enforcing the health care law thinks it is okay, at least some think it is okay, to bully elderly because they are elderly and they will get scared and they will pay the government rather than have the government come down on them. So even though they don't owe it, we can scare them into paying money because they are elderly.

I mean, Americans ought to be up in arms over this kind of abuse. And to think that a majority in Congress in 2010 wanted this same government controlling everybody's health care?

Americans need to wake up. This is a danger to their life and their liberty.

He goes on and points out more abuses that shock the conscience. It is outrageous what the IRS—I am sorry—some in the IRS have been able to get away with, this same government that a majority in 2010 trusted with every American's health care.

□ 1230

We have a story this week from Breitbart. Robert Wilde reports that there are emails now that reveal the Obama administration shut down the World War II Memorial, knowing the World War II veterans were coming.

One email that they cite from a government official says:

While I understand that these memorials have remained accessible to the public during past shutdowns (I'd imagine with the Mall being so open, it'd probably be more manpower-intensive to try to completely close them), I wanted to do my due diligence and make 100 percent sure that people could visit the outdoor memorials on the National Mall in the event of a shutdown.

I can say, from having been out there on October 1 and having pulled one of the two barricades aside so that our World War II veterans could go through the open-air memorial dedicated to them and to their friends that died serving with them—and I saw that, wow, they have shut down an open-air, open-sidewalk, walk-through, roll-through in your wheelchair memorial.

It has cost them money to bring in all these barricades, and I have been there at all hours of the day and night, to the Lincoln Memorial, to the World War II Memorial; and most of the time, it is hard to see a park employee out there, but eventually, if you look hard enough, you will see one or two out there.

The day after the gentleman from Mississippi, STEVE PALAZZO, and I picked those barricades up and moved them back after I cut the yellow tape, the next day, I counted them—16 Park Service police—many of them on mounted horses that you never see out there, out there to try to intimidate World War II veterans from being able to go through for the one time they were in Washington in their lives to see those places that listed where they fought and where friends died.

As one man with tears told me—he pointed to the islands in the Pacific that were listed, the names of his friends who fought with him and died on each of those islands, and this administration, which wants to control everybody's health care, wanted to deprive those World War II veterans—knowingly deprive them of just this one chance to roll through in a wheelchair and see what was dedicated to them. It is tragic, what is going on. It is time Americans awoke.

Ben Franklin is credited with saying, in essence, those who are willing to give up liberty for security deserve neither. We are seeing that. Americans have given up so much liberty over and over, saying: well, at least it is going to keep me safer.

At what point do you say enough giving the Federal Government power? We want our liberty that the Founders established in the Constitution, that war after war was fought to provide, that the Declaration acknowledged were rights that were endowed by our Creator.

Some ask: Well, if these rights are endowed by our Creator to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness, why doesn't everybody in the world have them?

It is real easy. God, the Creator, gave us freedom of choice. We are free to choose things that would do us harm

and free to choose the right way that would lead to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.

We happen to have been blessed by either being born here or have come to a Nation where we had those liberties, where they were fought for, where the things that were taught in church, that were spoken of in the Bible—the Bible is the most quoted book in the history of this Chamber, especially in the first 150 years, and especially by those who fought against slavery, saying: How can we expect God to continue blessing America when we are putting our brothers and sisters in chains and bondage?

Those individuals laid the groundwork—the foundation for us to have this life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. We owe them to leave it to the next generation.

Poll after poll say this is probably the first time in American history that a generation will leave a country less free, with less opportunity to their children.

That is why I ran for Congress. I want to do everything I can to keep that from happening.

I was taught as a Boy Scout—especially as an Eagle Scout—we were never to leave a place worse off than we found it; and if we don't turn this thing around, we will be the generation that does that. God help us and God forgive us if we do. We simply cannot do that.

When we have people who have stepped forward, as these in the IRS and Health and Human Services have, to say: Warning, red flag, red light, stop. There is too much abuse here. Demand your freedom back. Quit turning it over to Federal agencies.

When those people are rising up and saying wake up, America, we had better wake up. When we have a President who said, over and over as a Senator, that we cannot allow a President to usurp more and more power away from Congress, it showed us that he knew right from wrong in this government.

Now, the same President is, by executive order, changing the law repeatedly, and it is time this House rose up and said: we are not funding one single part of the executive branch that usurps power that is not afforded it in the Constitution.

We have the power to do that. Why? Because the Founders put it in the Constitution, and just like our Creator endowed us with certain inalienable rights, just like some parents have plenty to endow to their children when they die, the children don't enjoy those benefits if they won't claim them and be willing to fight for them.

There are always people—evil people who want to take away those benefits, take away those rights; so no matter what someone inherits, if they don't accept it, claim it, and be willing to fight for it, they will not keep those benefits.

We owe the next generation what we were given and better, and until we start holding the executive branch accountable—at least those in it that are not complying with the law, that are violating the law—we are destined to be that evil, narcissistic, self-serving generation that leaves the country worse off than we found it.

Mr. Speaker, I hope and pray that enough of us will arise to prevent that from happening.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

AID TO PAKISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) for 30 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, for 2 months, public attention has been riveted on Ukraine. Today, I suggest it is harmful to our security to just focus on Ukraine and ignore the battle against radical Islam and the ensuing threat of China that is far more dangerous to us than which direction Crimea goes.

Yesterday, Secretary of State John Kerry requested that Congress approve aid to Pakistan. That is foreign aid to Pakistan. The administration is requesting \$881.8 million for aid to Pakistan. The Congress and the American people should pay attention to this request.

Since 9/11, the United States has given Pakistan over \$25 billion, with over \$17 billion of that going to the Pakistani security services, services that target and kill American soldiers through helping those elements in that part of the world that kill American soldiers and terrorize civilian populations.

Our generosity has only emboldened Pakistan's military clique—that clique that actually rules the country, that clique that gave refuge to Osama bin Laden.

Most importantly, Pakistan has not been acting as our friend—not just that clique, but the government itself of Pakistan; and we don't need to be supplementing the countries and supporting the countries and giving aid to the countries that are hostile to America's interests and hateful of our way of life.

It is a charade to believe that our aid is buying Pakistan's cooperation in hunting down terrorists, as Secretary Kerry stated yesterday. Frankly, that is wishful thinking, but that is not facing the reality of what we confront in South Asia.

A Pakistani commission reported on the bin Laden raid—the raid that brought bin Laden, the murderer of so many Americans, to justice—and the Pakistani commission points out negative developments in U.S.-Pakistan re-

lations in recent years, and it is, in their view, “a growing American threat” to Pakistani interests.

These are not the sentiments of a regime that wants to work with us. These are not the sentiments of friends.

Remember, when our SEAL teams went to get Osama bin Laden, the Pakistani Government took the wreckage of one of our helicopters—a stealth helicopter, cutting-edge technology that was used in that raid—and gave it to the Communist Chinese.

Of course, the Pakistanis call the Chinese their all-weather friend, and we are supposedly just their fair-weather friend; yet we should be giving, according to this administration, over \$881 million more in aid, on top of the billions that we have already given the Pakistanis.

Indeed, a study by the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project found that 81 percent of those surveyed in Pakistan were favorable to Communist China—Communist China—which represses its own Muslim population, murders Christians, and is a dictatorship of a clique—of a crony capitalist clique that controls that country.

When 81 percent of those surveyed in Pakistan are favorable to that country, while only 11 percent are favorable to the United States, should we be spending money that we are borrowing from China, in order to give money to a country that likes China more than it likes the United States, and we end up giving money to the country and to the people that don't like us?

Well, no. We should cut off our aid to Pakistan because it is not an ally, and any money we send to them only strengthens their ability to act against us and against our friends in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

We cannot buy the friendship of the people of Pakistan, nor can we buy the friendship of the Government of Pakistan. These are people who feel that their core interests and their values go totally against what we believe in and who we are, as a country.

At a time of tight budgets, we should reserve our aid for friends and allies. We should never give assistance to those who target and kill Americans or even support those elements that do target and kill Americans. Perhaps we could reexamine our motives and our ability to provide such assistance throughout the world.

Obviously, we can't be supporting our enemies like this; but even with our friends in friendly countries, we are having to borrow money from China and elsewhere, in order to give money, as aid, to other countries. That makes no sense to me.

□ 1245

We need to restructure our aid situation. Yes, America does have a moral

obligation to try to help others in need, but perhaps we should focus on emergency situations and limit our aid to those countries who have tsunamis or earthquakes or other catastrophes in which much of their population is in grave danger or is suffering. That type of foreign aid is something we can be proud of, and we can channel it to any group of people in the world who are ordinary people who are in danger. We can then reach out and show our generosity, and perhaps we will receive some gratitude from people who are in a desperate situation rather than transferring our money to governments that are often anti, against, everything America stands for.

How do we know that Pakistan still has a government that considers—at least a clique that runs their government and that tells their government—that considers the United States less than a friend, perhaps an enemy? It is very easy to see.

We should never forget. And the real bellwether for this is the treatment of Dr. Afridi. As we ponder our policies, let us not forget Dr. Afridi, the heroic Pakistani doctor who was instrumental in the effort to capture or kill bin Laden. Dr. Afridi was arrested on May 22, 2011, 3 weeks after the United States raid which brought Osama bin Laden to justice. He has been in a Pakistani jail ever since. He was initially held beneath the ISI's headquarters in Islamabad. There he was tortured and kept blindfolded for 8 months and handcuffed for a year, leaving physical damage on this heroic friend of America.

This man is a hero who risked his life to bring to justice the terrorist monster who organized the 9/11 attack that killed 3,000 Americans. Dr. Afridi risked his life to bring justice, and we leave him in Pakistan in a dungeon. We abandon him. We leave him to rot in that dungeon. In May 2012, Dr. Afridi was moved to the Peshawar Central Jail after being sentenced to 33 years in jail.

Dr. Afridi told FOX News he helped the CIA out of love for the United States and swore that he would help America again despite the fact that these people were torturing him. We have not only abandoned him, but Congress is considering, as I say, giving even more, hundreds of millions of dollars. In fact, the total amount of aid that they want to give to Pakistan this year is \$1.3 billion in American aid to Pakistan.

This is an abomination. It is shameful. It is cowardly. It is a cowardly betrayal of a man who risked his life for us. Who else, who will stand with us in the future if we treat our friends this way?

America all so often treats our friends in a shabby way, abandons them at a time, and then our government has the gall to request that we

give aid to those people who are the tormentors of Dr. Afridi. In fact, these are the men who we know this government in Pakistan is run by and controlled by a clique of people who hid Osama bin Laden, gave refuge to the murderer of 3,000 Americans for years, and then, of course, they claim they didn't know he was there—there—right next to the school where they train all of their military officers.

Pakistan is supporting America's enemies who are attacking American soldiers in Afghanistan and have targeted and, of course, brutally murdered other Americans and brutally murdered other people throughout that region who are hostile to their radical Islamic terrorist agenda.

Secretary Kerry says that we must give support to placate the positive elements in Pakistan. It sort of reminds me of when somebody was saying back before World War II, we better try to get with Hitler because there are some really bad guys in the Nazi Party, even worse than Hitler. Give me a break. Hitler was an evil man, and the people in Pakistan, the clique that runs that country and engages in terrorism is an evil clique, and we should not be providing them the resources they need to build their military capabilities.

Well, Pakistan's fight against militancy is, of course, against our military. It is very evident because what we have got is attacks being conducted by what? By people who are stationed, whose operations they are operating out of areas in Pakistan. And that has been going on for years. Well, trying to give them money, from the United States to the Pakistani Government, is not buying us friendship, and it is not buying future or even current peace.

By the way, the money that we give them that isn't being used to attack Americans and friends of ours is being used to butcher their own people and suppress the opposition within Pakistan to this brutal regime. They are terrorizing; the Pakistani Government is terrorizing whole populations of their country like the Balochis and the Sindhis.

The Balochis and the Sindhis are people that would prefer not to be under the heel of a Pakistani Government run in Islamabad. The Baloch people live in an area of South Asia now claimed by Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan. But in Pakistan in particular, they comprise an important segment of the population, and they live in the least developed province. Unfortunately, it may be the least developed province, and it is where the poorest of all Pakistanis reside. All of that, if you take a look at being the poorest and least developed, but you also look at one other factor, it is the richest in natural resources of all the provinces of Pakistan. So what we have is a looting of Balochistan by that clique

that runs the Pakistani Government in a way that does not, of course, benefit the people of Balochistan.

Until the arrival of the British Empire, the Baloch people had organized themselves into sort of a confederation of tribal chiefs. That is where the power was, very similar to Afghanistan's tribal and village system. And these people, the Balochi, who recognize themselves as a national entity, they would like to control their own destiny again. But the Balochi people have been terrorized and beaten into submission by the Pakistani military.

We provide the Pakistani military with the weapons and the resources they need to conduct their terrorism not only against their neighbors, not only against Christians throughout the world, but against their own people. The Pakistani military has been unrelenting in its attacks and targeted terror raids against the Baloch population. Baloch aspirations for independence have been checked by force and by denying basic human rights and the unleashed brute force against them by a basically state terrorist repression of their people by their own government.

One particularly grotesque method of intimidation of the Baloch is called "kill and dump." That is when the body of a man or woman who has disappeared from a village is later dumped in the middle of that village. And who do you think is doing this? We are talking about the Pakistani military authorities who are conducting this type of terrorism on their own people, even, as we have said, the same people who gave safe haven to bin Laden who had massacred 3,000 Americans, the same people who offered their territory as a staging area to launch attacks into Afghanistan supporting the Taliban.

This abysmal human rights record is the record of the Pakistani Government, and it is shameful. It is shameful that we are even considering giving a government like this more American aid, and we are even going to have to borrow that aid from China to give it to them.

It is even worse, of course, because American foreign and military aid contributes to the security forces which, of course, are killing the Baloch. We are not just giving foreign aid; we are giving military aid as well. The Baloch people have a right to self-determination and not to live under the control of Islamabad if that is what they choose. At the very least, no military aid should be given to Pakistan to be used against its own people, whether they be Baloch or Sindhi or any other minority.

I have already proposed legislation, H.R. 1790, to end all aid to Pakistan, and have also offered amendments to both the Defense and State Department authorization bills to end this aid, but what needs to be seriously discussed is not just ending aid. We need

to seriously discuss a fundamental shift in America's policy towards South Asia, a strategy. We have had the same strategy since the cold war, but those policies that we established during the cold war no longer make sense.

In the 1960s, China fought battles in both India and the Soviet Union. The India-Soviet alignment at that point alienated the United States during the cold war, and what resulted was clearly an adversarial relationship with India.

When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979, the U.S. and Pakistan worked together to support the Afghan insurgents who were then battling against Soviet occupation troops. Yes, during the cold war, Pakistan was an ally, but the cold war is over. And even then when we fought with them, when they helped us support the mujahideen fight against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, they channeled our money, they channeled the lion's share of our support to radical Islamist terrorists who should never have had any support from the United States. Much of it went to a fellow named Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. This man is horrendous. He has a horrendous record. Even then they knew that, when this man was in college, he would throw acid into the faces of young women who refused to wear burkas. And we were giving our aid to Pakistan who gave it to a man like that?

Well, the cold war is over, and there is no reason for us to give them aid that they can pass on to terrorists any more. Yes, the cold war is over, and since the Soviet Union's collapse in the early 1990s, basic elements of American security have fundamentally changed.

The Pakistani-China friendship since that time has deepened. And who is our adversary today? It is no longer—Russia gets in the news, but who is really our threat? Radical Islam and an emerging China that is much more aggressive than the Russians could conceive of being.

It is ever more intense and is now clearer that an alliance with India against Pakistan is in the interest of the United States because Pakistan is clearly moving in the direction of becoming a self-declared enemy of the United States even as we give them military and other types of aid. Pakistan's gut hostility towards India and its shaping of its now ever-increasing alliance with China puts them not only as an enemy to India, but as an adversary at the very least, an adversary to the United States.

Pakistan is in partnership with terrorist groups like the Taliban, and that is very clear to people who are active in that part of the world. We should not be treating this enemy as a friend. In fact, we should reach out to India and try to reestablish, just to establish—perhaps not reestablish, but to establish a positive relationship that will

lead to a stronger stance for peace and stability in that part of the world as we offset the terrorist support that is coming from Pakistan.

□ 1300

We should not be treating an enemy country like Pakistan as a friend. It will not make them our friend. It will, instead, make them disdain us. They will disdain our giving people money who are our enemies. They will look at it as we are cowardly; and it is an example of such cowardice. We are giving billions to a military and a government that is controlled by a military clique that despises us and is cooperating with those who would destroy us. Not one cent to Pakistan. The money going to Pakistan is going contrary to our interests, to our security, and to the stability of South Asia. Let us double our efforts to work with India and other countries in South and Central Asia that truly desire to be America's friends.

And nowhere, of course, is our hesitancy to do that, to reach out and to try to support our friends, nowhere is that hesitancy more evident than now and what we are doing with Egypt. I would call the attention of the American people to what is going on in Egypt. In terms of the long run, it is far more important to American security and the stability of the world and world peace what is going on in Egypt right now than what is happening in the Crimea right now.

The Egyptian army is the most potent force standing between radical Islam and its objective to terrorize and subjugate whole populations throughout the Middle East and thus put themselves into a position of facing down and defeating Western civilization.

We are talking about radical Islamists who believe in what they believe in. Just as in the cold war, the communists believed in that gobbledygook. But the fact is, radical Islam sees that, and they see Western civilization as the enemy, and the United States as the foundation of Western civilization, and they see any government that is trying to be democratic as their adversary and enemy.

It is clear the Egyptian people understood that when they rejected the radical overtures of the former regime that was in power in Egypt. They rose up against that government, the Morsi government, and right now whether or not Egypt is a sucked into a turmoil and whether radical Islam takes over that country, it is now in the hands of a very few leaders of that country who are we shunning. It is clear that our reluctance to back the stance of Egypt is emboldening the radical Islamic terrorist elements who now will target Egypt because we are hesitant to get behind General al-Sisi and the Egyptian military, who, by the way, are committed to bringing back demo-

cratic elections and having democratic elections and a democratic process as compared to the regime that they will be replacing, which was dedicated to establishing an Islamic caliphate and was in the process of trimming back the democratic capabilities of the Egyptian people.

How ironic is it that if Egypt falls, there will be chaos and radical Islamic expansionism in that part of world, and how important it is for us not to have that for world stability and our own national security. How ironic is it that we are holding back, but Russia, under Mr. Putin, just last month provided, maybe 2 months ago, went over to Egypt and provided \$2 billion worth of military aid to help them defeat radical Islam. Russia's proposed arms deal with Egypt and its endorsement of Egypt's military ruler, General al-Sisi, and his efforts to run for President is a signal to the Arab leaders that, unlike the United States, Russia will back those courageous enough to take on the radical Islamic threat to human freedom and human progress.

The Egyptian people were saved from Islamic extremist rule. They were saved by a small group of people who we are putting roadblocks in the way of General al-Sisi. We actually convinced the Egyptian military to be dependent on the United States over the years, and now, when they are in a crisis, we are refraining from selling them the helicopters and the spare parts they need to thwart the radical Islamic terrorists who threaten a battle in the Sinai desert. If we let the Egyptian military down and we send that signal, we abandon them, as we have abandoned Dr. Alfridi. No one in the world will ever trust us again. There will be a major expansion of radical Islamic terrorist regimes, and the world we know will be far less stable and far less secure. Our country, and other democratic countries in the world, will be in dramatic danger.

The Egyptian people were saved from Islamic extremist rule by a very courageous group of people. We can't let them hang out on a branch by themselves. And yes, the United States and the rest of the world were saved by the actions of a small group of people who stood up as Morsi and the former government was cutting away the freedom of those people and establishing this radical Islamic caliphate. Well, a small group of courageous people stood up to side with the people who had gone into the streets to oppose that and said, No, we are not going to let this government superimpose this type of regime. It is contrary to the will of the Egyptian people. And they have, I might add, put Egypt back on a course towards free elections.

Egypt, of course, is one of the most strategic countries. Yet, as I say, we don't hear our administration, this administration, coming here to plead the

case about giving aid to those brave people in Egypt who are fighting radical Islamic terrorism. Instead, they are requesting hundred of millions of dollars, yes, over a billion dollars in aid to Pakistan, which is aiding radical Islamic terrorists and siding with China.

Well, if you think that none of this makes sense, you are right, it doesn't, but it is up to us, the American people, to hold our own government accountable, to make sure that we do not give aid to our enemies and to make sure that our government is doing things that make sense. We should be sticking with our friends and opposing our enemies. How much more common sense does it take, although our government has not been operating that way. It is up to us, the American people, to make sure that we do not give aid to Pakistan and we support those people who would have Western democratic government in Egypt, and to support the people like the Baloch and the Sindhis, who are struggling under the oppression of radical Islamic terrorist regimes, to try to find their own way and have their own government and have their own democratic system.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

METRO-NORTH TRAIN SAFETY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for 30 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the Federal Railroad Administration's examination of the Metro-North railroad safety apparatus has been completed.

I begin by offering my sincere condolences to the family and friends of Mr. James Romanoff, a Metro-North employee and a constituent of mine, a Yonkers resident, who died Monday after being hit by a train while performing track maintenance. My thoughts go out to his relatives and all who knew him, and I am deeply sorry for the family's loss.

This morning, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration released a report to Congress entitled, "Operation Deep Dive: Metro-North Commuter Railroad Safety Assessment." This report was prompted by the horrific train derailment that occurred in my district on December 1, 2013, which killed four and wounded dozens.

I am sure I speak for all of my colleagues when I say that the safety and welfare of my constituents, of all of our constituents, is our number one priority. That is why I was dismayed to learn of the profoundly ineffective standards under which Metro-North—a rail system that thousands of my constituents depend on daily—has been operating.

According to the FRA's report, which concentrated on Metro-North's "safety culture," this system is hampered by a strict adherence to train schedules; a safety apparatus that does not seek out potentially dangerous situations, but instead responds to complications after they arise; and inadequate training procedures.

These ailments are indefensible and unwarranted. The FRA's report states:

Detectable safety issues exist across multiple disciplines that should have been discovered by the Metro-North management.

That is an indictment of Metro-North's management. No people should be killed because of incompetence. No people should have been killed because the person driving the train apparently fell asleep. Metro-North's failure to monitor potential safety hazards is downright reckless. According to the Metropolitan Transit Authority, approximately 281,000 travelers use Metro-North trains every week, and those passengers' commutes are at risk from these safety hazards cited in the report.

Getting people in and out of New York City, in and out of Manhattan, is an important task, and if it can't be done safely, then what good it is.

The FRA's report makes several recommendations that, if implemented, might help prevent accidents in the future. According to the report, Metro-North is plagued by three fundamental problems: a destructive emphasis on timely departures and arrivals; the absence of proactive rather than reactive responses to safety concerns; and defective training procedures. Four serious Metro-North accidents occurred just last year, and that is four too many.

I call upon Metro-North to immediately begin implementing the safety recommendations contained in the FRA report. The safety of thousands of passengers and Metro-North employees depends on it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CULBERSON (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of sickness.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

SENATE ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTION SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled joint resolution of the Senate of the following title:

S.J. Res. 32. Joint resolution providing for the reappointment of John W. McCarter as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Tuesday, March 18, 2014, at 1 p.m.

OATH FOR ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

Under clause 13 of rule XXIII, the following Members executed the oath for access to classified information:

Robert B. Aderholt, Rodney Alexander*, Justin Amash, Mark E. Amodei, Robert E. Andrews*, Michele Bachmann, Spencer Bachus, Ron Barber, Lou Barletta, Garland "Andy" Barr, John Barrow, Joe Barton, Karen Bass, Joyce Beatty, Xavier Becerra, Dan Benishek, Kerry L. Bentivolio, Ami Bera, Gus M. Bilirakis, Rob Bishop, Sanford D. Bishop, Jr., Timothy H. Bishop, Diane Black, Marsha Blackburn, Earl Blumenauer, John A. Boehner, Suzanne Bonamici, Jo Bonner*, Madeleine Z. Bordallo, Charles W. Boustany, Jr., Kevin Brady, Robert A. Brady, Bruce L. Braley, Jim Bridenstine, Mo Brooks, Susan W. Brooks, Paul C. Broun, Corrine Brown, Julia Brownley, Vern Buchanan, Larry Bucshon, Michael C. Burgess, Cheri Bustos, G. K. Butterfield, Bradley Byrne, Ken Calvert, Dave Camp, John Campbell, Eric Cantor, Shelley Moore Capito, Lois Capps, Michael E. Capuano, Tony Cardenas, John C. Carney, Jr., André Carson, John R. Carter, Matt Cartwright, Bill Cassidy, Kathy Castor, Joaquin Castro, Steve Chabot, Jason Chaffetz, Donna M. Christensen, Judy Chu, David N. Cicilline, Katherine M. Clark, Yvette D. Clarke, Wm. Lacy Clay, Emanuel Cleaver, James E. Clyburn, Howard Coble, Mike Coffman, Steve Cohen, Tom Cole, Chris Collins, Doug Collins, K. Michael Conaway, Gerald E. Connolly, John Conyers, Jr., Paul Cook, Jim Cooper, Jim Costa, Tom Cotton, Joe Courtney, Kevin Cramer, Eric A. "Rick" Crawford, Ander Crenshaw, Joseph Crowley, Henry Cuellar, John Abney Culberson, Elijah E. Cummings, Steve Daines, Danny K. Davis, Rodney Davis, Susan A. Davis, Peter A. DeFazio, Diana DeGette, John K. Delaney, Rosa L. DeLauro, Suzan K. DelBene, Jeff Denham, Charles W. Dent, Ron DeSantis, Scott DesJarlais, Theodore E. Deutch, Mario Diaz-Balart, John D. Dingell, Lloyd Doggett, Michael F. Doyle, Tammy Duckworth, Sean P. Duffy, Jeff Duncan, John J. Duncan, Jr., Donna F. Edwards, Keith Ellison, Renee L. Ellmers, Jo Ann Emerson*, Eliot L. Engel, William L. Enyart, Anna G. Eshoo, Elizabeth H. Esty, Eni F. H. Faleomavaega, Blake Farenthold, Sam Farr, Chaka Fattah, Stephen Lee Fincher, Michael G. Fitzpatrick, Charles J. "Chuck" Fleischmann, John Fleming, Bill Flores, J. Randy Forbes, Jeff Fortenberry, Bill Foster, Virginia Foxx, Lois Frankel, Trent Franks, Rodney P. Frelinghuysen, Marcia L. Fudge, Tulsi Gabbard, Pete P. Gallego, John Garamendi, Joe Garcia, Cory Gardner, Scott Garrett, Jim Gerlach, Bob Gibbs, Christopher P. Gibson, Phil Gingrey, Louie Gohmert, Bob Goodlatte, Paul A. Gosar, Trey Gowdy, Kay Granger, Sam Graves, Tom Graves, Alan Grayson, Al Green, Gene Green, Tim Griffin, H. Morgan Griffith, Raúl M. Grijalva, Michael G. Grimm, Brett Guthrie, Luis V. Gutiérrez, Janice Hahn, Ralph M. Hall, Colleen W. Hanabusa, Richard L. Hanna, Gregg Harper, Andy Harris, Vicky Hartzler, Alcee L. Hastings, Doc Hastings, Denny Heck, Joseph J. Heck, Jeb Hensarling, Jaime Herrera Beutler, Brian Higgins, James A. Himes,

Rubén Hinojosa, George Holding, Rush Holt, Michael M. Honda, Steven A. Horsford, Steny H. Hoyer, Richard Hudson, Tim Huelskamp, Jared Huffman, Bill Huizenga, Randy Hultgren, Duncan Hunter, Robert Hurt, Steve Israel, Darrell E. Issa, Sheila Jackson Lee, Hakeem S. Jeffries, Lynn Jenkins, Bill Johnson, Eddie Bernice Johnson, Henry C. “Hank” Johnson, Jr., Sam Johnson, David W. Jolly, Walter B. Jones, Jim Jordan, David P. Joyce, Marcy Kaptur, William R. Keating, Mike Kelly, Robin L. Kelly, Joseph P. Kennedy III, Daniel T. Kildee, Derek Kilmer, Ron Kind, Peter T. King, Steve King, Jack Kingston, Adam Kinzinger, Ann Kirkpatrick, John Kline, Ann M. Kuster, Raúl R. Labrador, Doug LaMalfa, Doug Lamborn, Leonard Lance, James R. Langevin, James Lankford, Rick Larsen, John B. Larson, Tom Latham, Robert E. Latta, Barbara Lee, Sander M. Levin, John Lewis, Daniel Lipinski, Frank A. LoBiondo, David Loebsack, Zoe Lofgren, Billy Long, Alan S. Lowenthal, Nita M. Lowey, Frank D. Lucas, Blaine Luetkemeyer, Ben Ray Lujan, Michelle Lujan Grisham, Cynthia M. Lummis, Stephen F. Lynch, Daniel B. Maffei, Carolyn B. Maloney, Sean Patrick Maloney, Kenny Marchant, Tom Marino, Edward J. Markey*, Thomas Massie, Jim Matheson, Doris O. Matsui, Vance M. McAllister, Carolyn McCarthy, Kevin McCarthy, Michael T. McCaul, Tom McClintock, Betty McCollum, James P. McGovern, Patrick T. McHenry, Mike McIntyre, Howard P. “Buck” McKeon, David B. McKinley, Cathy McMorris Rod-

gers, Jerry McNeerney, Mark Meadows, Patrick Meehan, Gregory W. Meeks, Grace Meng, Luke Messer, John L. Mica, Michael H. Michaud, Candice S. Miller, Gary G. Miller, George Miller, Jeff Miller, Gwen Moore, James P. Moran, Markwayne Mullin, Mick Mulvaney, Patrick Murphy, Tim Murphy, Jerrold Nadler, Grace F. Napolitano, Richard E. Neal, Gloria Negrete McLeod, Randy Neugebauer, Kristi L. Noem, Richard M. Nolan, Eleanor Holmes Norton, Richard B. Nugent, Devin Nunes, Alan Nunnelee, Pete Olson, Beto O’Rourke, William L. Owens, Steven M. Palazzo, Frank Pallone, Jr., Bill Pascrell, Jr., Ed Pastor, Erik Paulsen, Donald M. Payne, Jr., Stevan Pearce, Nancy Pelosi, Ed Perlmutter, Scott Perry, Gary C. Peters, Scott H. Peters, Collin C. Peterson, Thomas E. Petri, Pedro R. Pierluisi, Chellie Pingree, Robert Pittenger, Joseph R. Pitts, Mark Pocan, Ted Poe, Jared Polis, Mike Pompeo, Bill Posey, David E. Price, Tom Price, Mike Quigley, Trey Radel*, Nick J. Rahall II, Charles B. Rangel, Tom Reed, David G. Reichert, James B. Renacci, Reid J. Ribble, Tom Rice, Cedric L. Richmond, E. Scott Rigell, Martha Roby, David P. Roe, Harold Rogers, Mike Rogers, Mike Rogers, Dana Rohrabacher, Todd Rokita, Thomas J. Rooney, Peter J. Roskam, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Dennis A. Ross, Keith J. Rothfus, Lucille Roybal-Allard, Edward R. Royce, Raul Ruiz, Jon Runyan, C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger, Bobby L. Rush, Paul Ryan, Tim Ryan, Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan, Matt Salmon, Linda T. Sánchez, Loretta Sanchez,

Mark Sanford, John P. Sarbanes, Steve Scalise, Janice D. Schakowsky, Adam B. Schiff, Bradley S. Schneider, Aaron Schock, Kurt Schrader, Allyson Y. Schwartz, David Schweikert, Austin Scott, David Scott, Robert C. “Bobby” Scott, F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., José E. Serrano, Pete Sessions, Terri A. Sewell, Carol Shea-Porter, Brad Sherman, John Shimkus, Bill Shuster, Michael K. Simpson, Kyrsten Sinema, Albio Sires, Louise McIntosh Slaughter, Adam Smith, Adrian Smith, Christopher H. Smith, Jason T. Smith, Lamar Smith, Steve Southerland II, Jackie Speier, Chris Stewart, Steve Stivers, Steve Stockman, Marlin A. Stutzman, Eric Swalwell, Mark Takano, Lee Terry, Bennie G. Thompson, Glenn Thompson, Mike Thompson, Mac Thornberry, Patrick J. Tiberi, John F. Tierney, Scott R. Titton, Dina Titus, Paul Tonko, Niki Tsongas, Michael R. Turner, Fred Upton, David G. Valadao, Chris Van Hollen, Juan Vargas, Marc A. Veasey, Filemon Vela, Nydia M. Velázquez, Peter J. Visclosky, Ann Wagner, Tim Walberg, Greg Walden, Jackie Walorski, Timothy J. Walz, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Maxine Waters, Melvin L. Watt*, Henry A. Waxman, Randy K. Weber, Sr., Daniel Webster, Peter Welch, Brad R. Wenstrup, Lynn A. Westmoreland, Ed Whitfield, Roger Williams, Frederica S. Wilson, Joe Wilson, Robert J. Wittman, Frank R. Wolf, Steve Womack, Rob Woodall, John A. Yarmuth, Kevin Yoder, Ted S. Yoho, C. W. Bill Young*, Don Young, Todd C. Young.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the first quarter of 2014 pursuant to Public Law 95-384 are as follows:

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, BARTON FORSYTH, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JAN. 31 AND FEB. 3, 2014

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Barton Forsyth	1/31	2/3	Germany		1,812.36		423.73		1,303.04		3,539.13
Committee total					1,812.36		423.73		1,303.04		3,539.13

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.

BARTON FORSYTH, Mar. 4, 2014.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, DELEGATION TO SWITZERLAND, GERMANY, AND POLAND, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JAN. 22 AND JAN. 27, 2014

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Eric Cantor	1/23	1/25	Switzerland		2,010.00		³ 35.00				2,045.00
Hon. Jeb Hensarling	1/23	1/25	Switzerland		1,390.00		³ 5,769.30				7,159.30
Hon. Kay Granger	1/23	1/25	Switzerland		888.00		³ 6,379.90				7,267.90
Hon. Mario Diaz-Balart	1/23	1/25	Switzerland		888.00		³ 5,417.20				6,305.20
Hon. Darrell Issa	1/22	1/25	Switzerland		1,512.00		³ 1,273.45				2,785.45
Hon. Patrick McHenry	1/23	1/25	Switzerland		1,310.00		³ 4,654.90				5,964.90
Rory Cooper	1/23	1/25	Switzerland		1,310.00		³ 35.00				1,345.00
Robert Karem	1/23	1/25	Switzerland		1,390.00		³ 35.00				1,425.00
Hon. Eric Cantor	1/25	1/26	Germany		362.00		(⁴)				362.00
Hon. Carolyn Maloney	1/25	1/26	Germany		362.00		³ 666.70				1,028.70
Hon. Darrell Issa	1/25	1/26	Germany		362.00		(⁴)				362.00
Rory Cooper	1/25	1/26	Germany		362.00		(⁴)				362.00
Robert Karem	1/25	1/26	Germany		362.00		(⁴)				362.00
Hon. Eric Cantor	1/26	1/27	Poland		295.68		(⁴)				295.68
Hon. Carolyn Maloney	1/26	1/27	Poland		295.68		(⁴)				295.68
Hon. Darrell Issa	1/26	1/27	Poland		295.68		(⁴)				295.68
Rory Cooper	1/26	1/27	Poland		295.68		(⁴)				295.68
Robert Karem	1/26	1/27	Poland		295.68		(⁴)				295.68
Committee total					⁴ 13,986.40		24,266.45				38,252.85

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
³ Military air transportation.
⁴ Actual lodging costs authorized as necessary by the U.S. Department of State.

HON. ERIC CANTOR, Feb. 26, 2014.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS,
ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4995. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Suspension of Community Eligibility [Docket ID: FEMA-2013-0002] [Internal Agency Docket No.: FEMA-8522] received March 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

4996. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Irradiation in the Production, Processing, and Handling of Food [Docket No.: FDA-1999-F-2405 (formerly 1999F-5522)] received March 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4997. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; State of Missouri [EPA-R07-OAR-2013-0698; FRL-9907-32-Region 7] received March 4, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4998. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Washington: State Implementation Plan Miscellaneous Revisions [EPA-R10-OAR-2013-0628; FRL-9907-38-Region 10] received March 4, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4999. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Fluopicolide; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0941; FRL-9906-19] received March 4, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5000. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Metconazole; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0656; FRL-9906-13] received March 4, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5001. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Triflumizole; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0949; FRL-9906-47] received March 4, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5002. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Revisions to Headboat Reporting Requirements for Species Managed by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council [Docket No.: 130802673-4053-02] (RIN: 0648-BD49) received March 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5003. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Adminis-

tration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Reallocation of Pacific Cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 121018563-3148-02] (RIN: 0648-XD111) received March 5, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5004. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic [Docket No.: 101206604-1758-02] (RIN: 0648-XC464) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5005. A letter from the Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Greater Than or Equal to 60 feet Length Overall Using Pot Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 121018563-3148-02] (RIN: 0648-XD101) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5006. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — National Appeals Office Rules of Procedure [Docket No.: 101019524-3999-02] (RIN: 0648-BA36) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5007. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone for Ice Conditions; Baltimore Captain of the Port Zone [Docket Number: USCG-2013-0509] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 25, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5008. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety; Alaska Marine Highway System Port Valdez Ferry Terminal, Port Valdez, Valdez, AK [Docket No.: USCG-2012-0365] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5009. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; Mississippi River, New Orleans, LA [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0994] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5010. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone, Potomac and Anacostia Rivers; Washington, DC [Docket No.: USCG-2013-1050] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5011. A letter from the Attorney-Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; North American International Auto Show; Detroit River, Detroit, MI [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0034] (RIN: 1625-AA87) re-

ceived February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5012. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Security Zone; On the Waters in Kailua Bay, Oahu, HI [Docket No.: USCG-2013-0934] (RIN: 1625-AA87) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5013. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Effluent Limitations Guidelines and Standards for the Construction and Development Point Source Category [EPA-HQ-OW-2010-0884; FRL-9906-51-OW] (RIN: 2040-AF44) received March 4, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

5014. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Method Changes for Tangible Property Dispositions (Rev. Proc. 2014-17) received March 6, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

5015. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Annual price inflation adjustments for passenger automobiles first placed in service or leased in 2014 (Rev. Proc. 2014-21) received February 27, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. CAMP: Committee on Ways and Means. H.R. 2810. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reform the sustainable growth rate and Medicare payment for physicians' services, and for other purposes, with an amendment (Rept. 113-257 Pt. 2) Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. PASCRELL (for himself and Mr. ROONEY):

H.R. 4251. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to establish a surveillance system regarding traumatic brain injury, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ROTHFUS:

H.R. 4252. A bill to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to allow mutual capital certificates to satisfy capital requirements for mutual depositories, to amend the Revised Statutes of the United States to establish mutual national banks, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah (for himself, Mr. AMODEI, Mr. PEARCE, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska):

H.R. 4253. A bill to permanently withdraw, reserve, and transfer Bureau of Land Management lands used for military purposes in Alaska, Nevada, and New Mexico to the appropriate Secretary of the military department concerned; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. WOLF, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California):

H.R. 4254. A bill to impose sanctions on individuals who are complicit in human rights abuses committed against nationals of Vietnam or their family members, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Ways and Means, and Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. HORSFORD, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. NOLAN, Ms. HAHN, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. FARR, Mr. HONDA, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. TONKO, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. LYNCH, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. RUSH, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. NEAL, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. DOYLE, Ms. CHU, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Ms. LOFGREN, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. CLAY, and Ms. DELAUNO):

H.R. 4255. A bill to require the Federal Housing Finance Agency to establish a 6-month moratorium on foreclosure of mortgages guaranteed by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac on homes of individuals who have lost Federal unemployment insurance as a result of the expiration of such program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. STEWART (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Mr. CHAFFETZ):

H.R. 4256. A bill to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to require, in counting the number of a species in a State for purposes of determining whether the species is an endangered or threatened species, inclusion of the number of the species on State and private lands as determined by the State, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CALVERT (for himself, Mr. ROKITA, Mr. NUNES, Mr. COTTON, Ms. GRANGER, and Mr. ISSA):

H.R. 4257. A bill to provide for a limitation on the number of civilian employees at the Department of Defense, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. NAPOLITANO (for herself, Ms. GABBARD, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. CART-

WRIGHT, Mr. COSTA, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. SIREN, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. HAHN, Mr. PASTOR of Arizona, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. TAKANO):

H.R. 4258. A bill to reauthorize and update certain provisions of the Secure Water Act; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. DELBENE (for herself and Mr. HANNA):

H.R. 4259. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to lower the cost of college education by establishing pilot programs to expand student access to digital course materials; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. ELLMERS (for herself, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas):

H.R. 4260. A bill to ensure that the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act program is as effective as possible in saving lives and preventing the spread of the HIV epidemic by ensuring that funding allocations are evidenced-based and by promoting greater utilization of patient-centered care; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. COFFMAN (for himself, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, and Mr. MICHAUD):

H.R. 4261. A bill to improve the research of Gulf War Illness, the Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 4262. A bill to apply the requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act to the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana (for herself, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PALAZZO, and Mr. SWALWELL of California):

H.R. 4263. A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to authorize the Department of Homeland Security to establish a social media working group, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. FORTENBERRY:

H.R. 4264. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to enter into a lease involving the South Central Agricultural Laboratory in Clay County, Nebraska, to facilitate the improvement of the laboratory to support cooperative State and Federal agricultural research; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. HUNTER (for himself, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. VARGAS, and Mr. COLE):

H.R. 4265. A bill to direct the Secretary and the Attorney General to promptly take all steps necessary or appropriate to execute and implement the San Luis Rey settlement agreement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. MATSUI (for herself, Mr. GARAMENDI, and Mr. BERA of California):

H.R. 4266. A bill to amend the Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Study and Facilities Act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to participate in the design, planning, and construction of the South Sacramento County Agriculture and Habitat

Lands Water Recycling Project in Sacramento County, California; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. MCALLISTER:

H.R. 4267. A bill to amend the Commodity Exchange Act to provide relief for end users who use physical contracts with volumetric optionality; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. NUNNELEE (for himself, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. HARPER, and Mr. PALAZZO):

H.R. 4268. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to United States Route 78 in Mississippi, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. POLIS (for himself and Mr. PAYNE):

H.R. 4269. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to improve teacher and principal effectiveness, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. RENACCI (for himself, Mr. HIMES, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. FLORES, and Mr. SHERMAN):

H.R. 4270. A bill to clarify that funding for the standard setting body designated pursuant to section 19(b) of the Securities Act of 1933, the Securities Investor Protection Corporation, and the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board is not subject to the sequester; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. RUIZ (for himself, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. KUSTER, and Mr. GARCIA):

H.R. 4271. A bill to authorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States to use 3 percent of its profits for administrative expenses; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. WALDEN:

H.R. 4272. A bill to stop implementation and enforcement of the Forest Service travel management rule and to require the Forest Service to incorporate the needs, uses, and input of affected communities before taking any travel management action affecting access to units of the National Forest System derived from the public domain, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. WALDEN (for himself, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. SCHRADER):

H.R. 4273. A bill to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in The Dalles, Oregon, as the "Loren R. Kaufman Memorial Veterans' Clinic"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. ROYCE (for himself and Mr. ENGEL):

H. Res. 520. A resolution calling for an end to attacks on Syrian civilians and expanded humanitarian access; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. TAKANO):

H. Res. 521. A resolution supporting the goals and ideals of "National Middle Level Education Month"; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. TIBERI (for himself and Mr. NEAL):

H. Res. 522. A resolution expressing support for designation of September 2014 as "National Brain Aneurysm Awareness Month"; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. PASCRELL:

H.R. 4251.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ROTHFUS:

H.R. 4252.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 of the Constitution of the United States "[t]o regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah:

H.R. 4253.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is found in Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of the United States Constitution which states, "The Congress shall have the Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory of other Property belonging to the United States". Additional constitutional authority lies with the power of Congress "to provide for the common Defence", "to raise and support Armies", "to provide and maintain a Navy" and "to make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces" as enumerated in Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. ROYCE:

H.R. 4254.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8: "To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any Department or Officers thereof."

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT:

H.R. 4255.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I; Section 8; Clause 3 of the Constitution states The Congress shall have Power To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes . . . And Article I; Section 8; Clause 4 of the Constitution states The Congress shall have Power To establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States . . .

By Mr. STEWART:

H.R. 4256.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 8 allows Congress "[t]o make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof."

Article IV, Section 3 "The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the

Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State."

Article X "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

By Mr. CALVERT:

H.R. 4257.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution, specifically Clauses 1 (relating to providing for the general welfare of the United States) and 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress) of such section.

OR

The constitutional authority of Congress to enact this legislation is Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 and Clause 18.

By Mrs. NAPOLITANO:

H.R. 4258.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact this bill.

By Ms. DELBENE:

H.R. 4259.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mrs. ELLMERS:

H.R. 4260.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The authority to enact this bill is derived from, but may not be limited to, Clause 1 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution. Congress shall have the power to provide for the general Welfare of the United States as long as it is applied uniformly throughout the United States. In this case, the Ryan White Program provides for the general Welfare of a class of people nationwide.

By Mr. COFFMAN:

H.R. 4261.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. DUFFY:

H.R. 4262.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8: To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana:

H.R. 4263.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States

By Mr. FORTENBERRY:

H.R. 4264.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. HUNTER:

H.R. 4265.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution, which provides Congress with the power to regulate commerce and relations between the United States and Native American Tribes.

By Ms. MATSUI:

H.R. 4266.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. MCALLISTER:

H.R. 4267.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 3 of Section 8 of Article I of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. NUNNELEE:

H.R. 4268.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3 and Article I, Section 8, Clause 17.

By Mr. POLIS:

H.R. 4269.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 (relating to the power of Congress to provide for the general welfare of the United States) and Clause 18 (relating to the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out the powers vested in Congress)

By Mr. RENACCI:

H.R. 4270.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18: The Congress shall have Power to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

Article I, Section 9, Clause 7: No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

By Mr. RUIZ:

H.R. 4271.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

clause 18 of section 8 of article 1 of the Constitution

By Mr. WALDEN:

H.R. 4272.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 (relating to the power of Congress to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States).

By Mr. WALDEN:

H.R. 4273.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 24: Mr. ROTHFUS, Mr. REED, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, and Mr. COOK.

H.R. 93: Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 523: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.

H.R. 628: Mr. HONDA, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. HOLT.

H.R. 721: Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 755: Mr. LANKFORD.
H.R. 784: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 822: Mrs. BEATTY.
H.R. 935: Mr. CRAMER.
H.R. 942: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, and Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 1020: Mr. TURNER.
H.R. 1070: Mr. GERLACH.
H.R. 1102: Mr. COHEN.
H.R. 1180: Mr. RIGELL, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Mr. MORAN.
H.R. 1186: Mr. WHITFIELD.
H.R. 1199: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.
H.R. 1201: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 1278: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 1333: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 1339: Mr. ELLISON and Mr. CARSON of Indiana.
H.R. 1386: Mr. ROSKAM.
H.R. 1461: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.
H.R. 1507: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ and Mr. YOUNG of Indiana.
H.R. 1523: Ms. TITUS.
H.R. 1554: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida and Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 1555: Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 1556: Mr. O'ROURKE.
H.R. 1652: Mr. SCHRADER and Mr. MATHE-SON.
H.R. 1666: Mr. ELLISON.
H.R. 1698: Mr. HECK of Washington.
H.R. 1709: Mr. CONYERS, Ms. BROWN of Florida, and Mr. RICHMOND.
H.R. 1710: Mr. CONYERS, Ms. BROWN of Florida, and Mr. RICHMOND.
H.R. 1725: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.
H.R. 1726: Mr. HUFFMAN and Mr. BERA of California.
H.R. 1738: Mr. BEN RAY LUJÁN of New Mexico, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. MORAN, Mr. CLYBURN, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. JEFFRIES, Mr. FARR, and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
H.R. 1915: Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.
H.R. 2012: Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 2016: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 2028: Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 2143: Mr. KING of New York.
H.R. 2240: Ms. NORTON.
H.R. 2328: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 2377: Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. DELANEY, Mr. GUTIÉRREZ, and Mr. MCCARTHY of California.
H.R. 2502: Mr. LOESACK.
H.R. 2504: Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. HORSFORD, Ms. EDWARDS, and Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 2537: Mr. WESTMORELAND.
H.R. 2540: Ms. BORDALLO.
H.R. 2548: Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER and Mr. BARR.
H.R. 2654: Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. CARNEY, and Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 2690: Ms. BROWN of Florida and Ms. HANABUSA.
H.R. 2707: Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 2745: Mr. POSEY.
H.R. 2772: Mr. SMITH of Texas.
H.R. 2841: Mr. NUGENT.
H.R. 2901: Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LEWIS, and Mr. KIND.
H.R. 2955: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 2957: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. SINEMA, Ms. HANABUSA, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, and Ms. BORDALLO.
H.R. 2959: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania and Mr. GOHMERT.
H.R. 2996: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 3069: Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 3090: Ms. MATSUI and Mr. HONDA.
H.R. 3133: Mr. SMITH of Texas.

H.R. 3135: Mr. SCHRADER and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 3150: Mr. FARR.
H.R. 3211: Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 3240: Mr. COSTA.
H.R. 3335: Mr. COBLE.
H.R. 3383: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Mr. PETERS of California.
H.R. 3435: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 3449: Mr. KILMER.
H.R. 3461: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.
H.R. 3471: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona.
H.R. 3531: Mr. TURNER.
H.R. 3556: Mr. WHITFIELD.
H.R. 3658: Mr. SALMON, Mr. COOK, Mr. DESANTIS, Mrs. WALORSKI, Mr. PITTENGER, Mr. HOLDING, Mr. WENSTRUP, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. BARTON, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. POE of Texas, and Mr. TURNER.
H.R. 3673: Mr. CLAY and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
H.R. 3714: Mr. BENTIVOLIO.
H.R. 3717: Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.
H.R. 3728: Mrs. ELLMERS and Mr. NUGENT.
H.R. 3740: Ms. LEE of California, Ms. MOORE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. ESHOO and Ms. MCCOLLUM.
H.R. 3761: Mr. LATTI.
H.R. 3776: Mr. HUIZENGA of Michigan.
H.R. 3784: Mr. COOK, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, and Mr. BENTIVOLIO.
H.R. 3859: Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Ms. CHU, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. HANABUSA, and Mr. POCAN.
H.R. 3916: Mr. WELCH.
H.R. 3929: Mr. GUTIÉRREZ.
H.R. 3970: Mr. GRIJALVA and Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.
H.R. 3978: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia and Ms. BROWNLEY of California.
H.R. 4031: Mr. LATHAM and Mr. NEUGEBAUER.
H.R. 4036: Mr. BISHOP of Utah.
H.R. 4040: Mr. GRAYSON.
H.R. 4042: Ms. JENKINS.
H.R. 4048: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.R. 4060: Mr. PITTENGER and Mr. HECK of Nevada.
H.R. 4067: Mr. HUELSKAMP and Mr. DAINES.
H.R. 4068: Mr. BROUN of Georgia.
H.R. 4069: Mr. AMODEI.
H.R. 4070: Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. LONG, and Mr. BENTIVOLIO.
H.R. 4080: Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio.
H.R. 4092: Mr. KEATING.
H.R. 4101: Mr. JONES and Mr. MCINTYRE.
H.R. 4102: Mr. COFFMAN.
H.R. 4103: Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H.R. 4122: Mr. CICILLINE.
H.R. 4143: Mr. COTTON.
H.R. 4149: Mr. COLLINS of New York, Ms. NORTON, and Mr. JONES.
H.R. 4158: Mr. LUETKEMEYER.
H.R. 4163: Mr. FOSTER.
H.R. 4188: Mr. REICHERT.
H.R. 4199: Mr. FARENTHOLD, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. WILLIAMS, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. BARTON, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. HALL, Mr. CARTER, Mr. STOCKMAN, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. OLSON, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mr. VELA, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GALLEGOS, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. MCCAUL, and Mr. MARCHANT.
H.R. 4210: Ms. BONAMICI.

H.R. 4213: Mr. LATHAM and Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 4225: Mrs. NOEM, Mrs. ELLMERS, and Mr. WOLF.
H.R. 4228: Mr. HUDSON and Ms. JACKSON LEE.
H.R. 4229: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. MURPHY of Florida.
H.R. 4240: Mr. PASTOR of Arizona and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H.J. Res. 50: Mr. MARINO.
H. Res. 412: Mr. FARENTHOLD and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H. Res. 418: Mr. TIERNEY and Mr. PETERS of California.
H. Res. 476: Mr. BROOKS of Alabama.
H. Res. 482: Ms. LOFGREN.
H. Res. 484: Ms. BONAMICI and Mr. PETERS of California.
H. Res. 494: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. KEATING, Mr. CICILLINE, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. CARTER, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. COBLE, and Mr. STOCKMAN.
H. Res. 503: Mr. CICILLINE and Ms. LEE of California.
H. Res. 505: Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas.
H. Res. 507: Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. BERA of California, Ms. HANABUSA, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. COSTA, and Mr. MCNERNEY.
H. Res. 519: Mr. CLAY.

DISCHARGE PETITIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XV, the following discharge petition was filed:

Petition 8, March 12, 2014, by Mr. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER on House Resolution 490, was signed by the following Members: Bradley S. Schneider, Steny H. Hoyer, James E. Clyburn, Sam Farr, Sanford D. Bishop, Jr., Joseph Crowley, Terri A. Sewell, Eddie Bernice Johnson, Adam B. Schiff, Sander M. Levin, Sheila Jackson Lee, Nydia M. Velázquez, Rubén Hinojosa, Zoe Lofgren, Janice D. Schakowsky, Marcy Kaptur, Daniel T. Kildee, John Conyers, Jr., Richard M. Nolan, Steven A. Horsford, Joe Courtney, Mark Pocan, Linda T. Sánchez, Paul Tonko, Janice Hahn, Jim McDermott, Marc A. Veasey, Ann Kirkpatrick, Xavier Becerra, David Scott, Lois Capps, George Miller, José E. Serrano, Alcee L. Hastings, Denny Heck, Derek Kilmer, Suzan K. DelBene, Alan S. Lowenthal, Robin L. Kelly, Gregory W. Meeks, Doris O. Matsui, Susan A. Davis, Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr., Sean Patrick Maloney, Carolyn B. Maloney, Joyce Beatty, Louise McIntosh Slaughter, Niki Tsongas, Tammy Duckworth, Timothy H. Bishop, Hakeem S. Jeffries, Eric Swalwell, Julia Brownley, Michelle Lujan Grisham, Dina Titus, John B. Larson, Donna F. Edwards, Betty McCollum, John Garamendi, Gene Green, Mark Takano, Mike Thompson, Lucille Roybal-Allard, Jared Huffman, Katherine M. Clark, Keith Ellison, Barbara Lee, Marcia L. Fudge, Cheri Bustos, Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, Judy Chu, Elijah E. Cummings, Donald M. Payne, Jr., Brian Higgins, Tony Cardenas, Yvette D. Clarke, Luis V. Gutiérrez, James P. Moran, Michael F. Doyle, Juan Vargas, Steve Cohen, David N. Cicilline, Al Green, Mike Quigley, Theodore E. Deutch, Jim Cooper, John F. Tierney, Frank Pallone, Jr., Bennie G. Thompson, Joaquin Castro, William L. Enyart, Loretta Sanchez, Corrine Brown, Suzanne Bonamici, Ann M. Kuster, James P. McGovern, Robert A. Brady, Peter A. DeFazio, Colleen W. Hanabusa, Danny K. Davis, Elizabeth H. Esty, Ben Ray Lujan, Jerry McNerney, William L. Owens, Joseph P. Kennedy III, Albio Sires, Michael H. Michaud, Rush Holt, Bill

Foster, Gloria Negrete McLeod, Raúl M. Grijalva, Patrick Murphy, Chris Van Hollen, G. K. Butterfield, John C. Carney, Jr., David Loebsack, Bill Pascrell, Jr., Brad Sherman, Gerald E. Connolly, Anna G. Eshoo, Ed Pastor, Kyrsten Sinema, Stephen F. Lynch, Allyson Y. Schwartz, Ami Bera, James A. Himes, Henry A. Waxman, Nita M. Lowey, John A. Yarmuth, Rick Larsen, Daniel B. Maffei, Timothy J. Walz, John Lewis, Bruce L. Braley, Jared Polis, John P. Sarbanes, Scott H. Peters, William R. Keating, Karen Bass, Frederica S. Wilson, Michael E. Capuano, Carolyn McCarthy, Nick J. Rahall II, Wm. Lacy Clay, Eliot L. Engel, John K.

Delaney, Bobby L. Rush, Ron Barber, Jackie Speier, Diana DeGette, Adam Smith, Maxine Waters, Chaka Fattah, James R. Langevin, Gary C. Peters, Ron Kind, Kathy Castor, Carol Shea-Porter, Matt Cartwright, Lloyd Doggett, Daniel Lipinski, Beto O'Rourke, Cedric L. Richmond, Rosa L. DeLauro, Grace Meng, Michael M. Honda, Earl Blumenauer, Alan Grayson, André Carson, Grace F. Napolitano, Joe Garcia, Filemon Vela, Henry Cuellar, Lois Frankel, Chellie Pingree, Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Nancy Pelosi, Peter Welch, Ed Perlmutter, C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger, Jerrold Nadler, Emanuel Cleaver, Tulsi Gabbard, David E. Price, Raul

Ruiz, Tim Ryan, Jim Costa, Richard E. Neal, Gwen Moore, Steve Israel, and Charles B. Rangel.

DISCHARGE PETITIONS—
ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

The following Members added their names to the following discharge petition:

Petition 7 by Mr. BISHOP of New York, on the bill (H.R. 1010): Carolyn McCarthy, John Barrow, and Ed Pastor.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

MCKINNEY BARTELS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud McKinnley Bartels for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. McKinnley Bartels is an 8th grader at Everitt Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by McKinnley Bartels is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to McKinnley Bartels for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING THE WINTER GARDEN, TAVARES AND GULF RAILROAD DEPOT

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. WEBSTER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Winter Garden, Tavares and Gulf Railroad Depot on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.

The railroad station, built in 1913, was purchased in 1973 for one dollar by the Central Florida chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. Located in the historic Tavares and Gulf Railroad depot, the Central Florida Railroad Museum opened in 1983. Through partnership with the Winter Garden Heritage Foundation, extensive private collections of local, state and national memorabilia have been made accessible to the public.

I commend the Winter Garden, Tavares and Gulf Railroad Depot for their preservation of the rich history of Central Florida's railways.

HONORING GIRL SCOUTS OF THE U.S.A. ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR FOUNDING

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Girl Scout Day, the anniver-

sary of founding of Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA). On March 12th, 102 years ago, Juliette Gordon Low held the first Girl Scout meeting with the vision of empowering women through service, education, and community. The Girl Scouts have continued to build on their decorated legacy by instilling their values into the young women who will grow up to be the leaders and thinkers of future generations.

For over a century, the GSUSA has successfully spread the principles of egalitarianism through its leading role in the women's movement. The GSUSA has been at the forefront of many social justice movements as a result of its longstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion. Recently, they joined with other leaders to call attention to unfair double standards and stereotypes of women in leadership roles by launching the "Ban Bossy" campaign. I applaud the GSUSA for highlighting the workplace in this regard, and for demanding equality in all areas of society.

The 18-member organization that Juliette Gordon Low started in 1912 has seen participation of over 60 million women, including 2.3 million current active members. I thank the GSUSA for all its active involvement in Washington's 7th district and communities throughout America. I am proud to take part in Girl Scout Day, and I wish the GSUSA continued success for years to come.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MR. SHIRLEY QUICK

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Shirley Kenneth Quick, who regrettably passed away on March 9, 2014.

A lifelong resident of Western New York, Mr. Quick was the husband of the late Catherine Mack, and was a beloved father to his son Kevin, daughter Karen, and their respective spouses Carol and Bill. A grandfather of six, Mr. Quick is also survived by a brother and a sister.

Through my association with others who knew him well, the word I consistently hear in description of him is "gentleman." A loving and devoted husband and father, good mechanically with his hands and patient and kind with his words, Mr. Quick was a stalwart resident of neighborhoods in the Black Rock/Riverside neighborhoods of Buffalo and, in his later years, in the town of Hamburg.

Though I did not have the fortune of knowing Mr. Quick well, I am very well acquainted with his son and daughter-in-law, Kevin and Carol Quick of the town of Tonawanda. Kevin and Carol were devoted children to Mr. Quick and this loss must surely hit them, and their

entire family, very hard. I am honored, Mr. Speaker, to have this opportunity to celebrate Mr. Quick's life with you and with our colleagues in the House, and to wish the Quick family Godspeed as they begin this new chapter in their respective lives, confident in the understanding and knowledge of the love and support of their late patriarch. May he rest in peace.

A TRIBUTE TO CHERYL DAVIS—
28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Cheryl Davis of La Crescenta.

Ms. Davis was raised in San Jose and moved to Southern California to attend the University of California, Los Angeles, where she earned her Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry. Currently, Ms. Davis is a Law Firm Administrator at Bradley & Gmelich in Glendale.

Ms. Davis is very active in her community. She served as President of the Crescenta Valley Town Council for four years, and now serves as the Corresponding Secretary. Ms. Davis is the current coordinator for the Montrose-Glendale Christmas Parade, Treasurer for Prom Plus and the CV Fireworks Association, and Secretary for the Glendale Educational Foundation—Summer School. In addition, Ms. Davis is a member of CV DOGS, the volunteer group responsible for establishing the first Los Angeles County operated dog park at Crescenta Valley Park. Ms. Davis is also an avid volunteer at the Fire House Youth Center.

Ms. Davis and her husband Mark have one daughter, Katie, who is a student at Crescenta Valley High School.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Cheryl Davis.

NICOLE AHRENS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Nicole Ahrens

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Nicole Ahrens is an 8th grader at Drake Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Nicole Ahrens is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Nicole Ahrens for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

HONORING THE BONHAM POST OFFICE ON ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Bonham Post Office, an historic building that has been an integral part of the Bonham community.

The Bonham Post Office, which celebrates its 100th year in March 2014, is a historical building of which the residents of Bonham are proud. Although the interior of the building has been altered to accommodate changing times, the beautiful exterior of the building with granite, large columns and stone remain today. At the time the Bonham Post Office was built, top-of-the-line materials were used to make it what many thought was the best looking building in the state of Texas. Prior to the building's opening as a working post office, it is estimated one thousand people visited the new building, which exemplifies the significance of the grand opening in 1914. The building is a reminder of the proud history of Bonham and Fannin County.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to congratulate the Bonham Post Office on 100 years of achievement. I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating this important milestone.

HONORING BELL FLAVORS & FRAGRANCES FOR BEING THE TOP EXPORTER IN ILLINOIS' TENTH DISTRICT

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to honor Bell Flavors & Fragrances in Northbrook, Illinois (part of the suburban Chicago district I represent) for being the top exporter in the Congressional district.

After more than 100 years of providing innovative and unique flavor services, Bell Flavors

& Fragrances today is a global leader in the field and an example of true success in the 21st Century global marketplace. A family-owned company, Bell Flavors & Fragrances has achieved tremendous success in the food, hygiene, fragrance and many more industries.

Bell Flavors & Fragrances constantly reimagines and reinvents its approach and products, ensuring its ability to enter new markets and find success all around the globe.

During a recent tour of the Bell Flavors & Fragrances facility, I was struck by the passion and dedication to excellence of all the managers and employees I met and truly impressed by the outstanding commitment to research and development.

Despite its global footprint, Bell Flavors & Fragrances remains a truly American success story, embedded in the community, employing hundreds and working to enrich the area it calls home.

Family-owned and operated companies like Bell Flavors & Fragrances, rooted deeply in the community, are the foundation of the Tenth District's strength. I am proud that innovative, growing companies like Bell Flavors & Fragrances call the Tenth District home.

HONORING BYRON MEADOR

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Byron Meador. Byron is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 135, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Byron has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Byron has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Byron has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Byron constructed a set of stairs to the outdoor classroom at Hawthorne Elementary School in Kearney, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Byron Meador for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

A TRIBUTE TO BARBARA FERRIS—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding

women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Barbara Ferris of Los Feliz.

Ms. Ferris is the Managing Director of Symphony In The Glen (SIG), which she co-founded in 1994 with Arthur B. Rubinstein, a renowned film and television composer. Since the organization's founding, Ms. Ferris has fostered cooperative relationships with city agencies, managed the organization's finances, spearheaded fundraising efforts, and reviewed the day-to-day operations that helped shape the vibrant, thematic programming that SIG audiences have come to expect. Ms. Ferris also developed SIG's pre-concert child/parent activities to introduce children to basic musical concepts such as how to play notes, how to conduct an orchestra, and how to recognize different instruments in the orchestra.

Through her work organizing free concerts with Symphony In The Glen, Ms. Ferris has been instrumental in fulfilling the organization's mission of cultivating new generations of classical music enthusiasts. Concerts were held at the Old Zoo at Griffith Park, on the lawn of the Griffith Observatory, and at the Los Angeles Zoo. This year Symphony In The Glen also coordinated the fourth annual "EEK! at The Greek," a community Halloween celebration held in collaboration with the Greek Theatre and Nederlander Concerts.

In addition to her work at SIG, Ms. Ferris is also an avid participant in civic life. She has long been involved with the Los Feliz Neighborhood Council and served a four-year term as Vice President of Administration. In 2011, Ms. Ferris was elected to the Board of the Los Feliz Improvement Association, which is the oldest residents' association in Los Angeles.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Barbara Ferris.

ROMAINE AKAKPO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Romaine Akakpo for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Romaine Akakpo is a 12th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Romaine Akakpo is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Romaine Akakpo for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF REVERENDS
CLIVE AND RUTH KNIGHTS ON
THE OCCASION OF ATTAINING
AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two of our country's newest citizens, Reverends Clive and Ruth Knights. For over ten years, Clive and Ruth have been an integral part of the Northwest Florida community, and I am pleased to congratulate them on their attaining U.S. Citizenship.

Clive and Ruth were both born and raised in the United Kingdom. Reverend Clive Knights was educated at Edgware School, followed by North London and Salford Universities. He then received ministerial training from St. Alban's Diocese at Stevenage and Madingly Hall, Cambridge University, commencing his Anglican ministry on St. Matthew's Day, September 21, 1987. Reverend Ruth Knights, the daughter of a reverend, received her higher education at Southlands Teacher Training College and Birmingham University, where she majored in Divinity and Theology. Following graduation, Ruth taught Religious Studies in high school and became head of a religious studies department.

In 2003, the Lord called Reverends Clive and Ruth Knights to come to the United States. The Knights settled in Northwest Florida, where Reverend Clive Knights became Senior Pastor at Chumuckla Community Church. Reverend Ruth Knights also helped serve the community's religious needs when she joined the staff at Gulf Breeze United Methodist Church, where she currently serves as an Associate Pastor. After nearly a decade at Chumuckla Community Church, Reverend Clive Knights moved to Bagdad United Methodist Church, where he is the Senior Pastor.

As former President Theodore Roosevelt said, "Free institutions rest upon the character of citizenship." Reverends Clive and Ruth Knights exemplify the high character, leadership, and faith that have been the hallmarks of so many great American citizens. On behalf of the entire United States Congress, my wife Vicki and I congratulate Clive and Ruth and welcome them as fellow citizens of this great Nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to state that on March 4, 2014, I would have voted in favor of H. Res. 488, supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democracy, a reduction in violent crime and calling for an end to recent violence. I am pleased that this resolution expressing support for basic human rights passed the House decisively.

IN RECOGNITION OF BOBBY
O'GUREK, RECIPIENT OF THE
PANTHER VALLEY IRISH AMERI-
CANS ASSOCIATION SHAMROCK
AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Bobby O'Gurek, who on March 17, 2014 will receive the Shamrock Award from the Panther Valley Irish Americans Association. Bobby was born on St. Patrick's Day in 1982, to Robert and Patricia O'Gurek. He has lived with cerebral palsy since birth, and become an indispensable part of his community.

He graduated from Panther Valley High School in 1999, where he was named the "Most Persistent Student." Bobby went on to Lehigh County Community College, where he earned his associate's degree as a Computer Specialist with a concentration in Web Development. After college, Bobby began designing websites for S & O Computers, LLC. In 2010, he established his own web design business. To date, Bobby's company has designed and maintained 19 websites for local government offices and small businesses.

Since he was a teenager, Bobby has volunteered his time to keep his community safe as a member of the volunteer Diligence Fire Company No. 1 in Summit Hill, Pennsylvania. After joining in 1994, he is now a senior member, auditor and trustee of the Fire Company, and he contributes his technological expertise to designing and maintaining the Fire Company's web page.

Although cerebral palsy prevents him from walking and speaking on his own, Bobby is involved with many outreach programs to spread awareness about disabilities. In 1998, he started speaking via the assistance of technology at the Pittsburgh Employment conference, hosted for speech pathologists and individuals with all kinds of disabilities who use augmentative communication technologies. Bobby was selected in 2007 to receive the Edwin and Ester Prentke AAC Distinguished Lecture Award in Boston, an award presented annually to a community activist who uses a communication device. He was asked to give a speech at a Massachusetts conference entitled "My Life with Assistive Technology and Community Interactions." Bobby is also a participant of "Through Their Eyes" conference at East Stroudsburg University, where he has addressed students majoring Speech Pathology. He is also an ambassador for Prentke Romich Company, increasing knowledge across Pennsylvania about the assistive technology that helps him communicate.

Bobby O'Gurek's work throughout his life has made his community a safer and brighter place. His perseverance in overcoming cerebral palsy to get his education and start his own business, his willingness to devote his time and technological skills to serve the Panther Valley, and his refusal to let his disability prevent him from achieving his goals are nothing short of inspirational. I congratulate Bobby O'Gurek on his years of service to his community and wish him many more.

DEMANDING JUSTICE FOR GAO
ZHISHENG

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I submit a piece published in the Wall Street Journal on February 27 highlighting the latest disappearance into the Chinese security system of the prominent human rights defender Gao Zhisheng. It is deeply alarming that Mr. Gao has been in and out of the Chinese prisons, disappeared, and tortured for almost a decade now. As the op-ed piece by Jared Genser, Gao's pro bono legal counsel, notes, "... no one has seen or heard from him since January 2013." Following his most recent disappearance, Gao's courageous wife, who has testified before the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, filed a complaint to the United Nations, urging it to conduct an investigation into his whereabouts.

I have "adopted" Gao through the Defending Freedoms Project, an initiative of the Lantos Commission, launched in conjunction with the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom and Amnesty International. I am committed to continuing work towards the day when he can breathe the fresh air of freedom. I echo the sentiments of Mr. Genser, who concluded in the Journal piece, "It is time to reunite Gao Zhisheng with his family. He and his loved ones have suffered long enough."

DEMANDING JUSTICE FOR GAO ZHISHENG

(By Jared Genser)

Gao Zhisheng, one of China's most prominent and courageous human-rights lawyers and prisoners of conscience, has again disappeared into the bowels of the Chinese state's security system. For more than a year, his family has desperately tried to access him in Shaya prison in Xinjiang, a remote province in western China. But all these efforts have been rebuffed and no one has seen or heard from him since January 2013. In response to Mr. Gao's most recent disappearance, his wife on Thursday in Geneva filed a complaint to the United Nations, urging it to conduct an investigation into his whereabouts.

A self-taught advocate and legal rights defender, Mr. Gao was once recognized among the country's top 10 lawyers by China's Ministry of Justice. Yet his advocacy for the country's most vulnerable, including factory workers, coal miners, victims of land seizures, and persecuted Christians and Falun Gong practitioners, led the authorities to target Mr. Gao and his family with threats and intimidation starting in 2005. He has been in and out of prisons and subject to disappearances and torture for nearly a decade.

Officials closed his law firm, disbarred him and placed his wife, Geng He, and their young children under 24-hour surveillance. Police stationed inside the family's home repeatedly harassed them. In school, the children were taunted and put under constant watch by the police—even when using the restroom. Because of this unbearable treatment, Geng He and her children fled China and have since been granted asylum in the United States.

Mr. Gao's family is safe now, but he remains in danger. In 2006, he made a coerced confession to "inciting subversion" and was

given a suspended three-year prison term. In 2007, Chinese officials tortured him by shocking him with electric batons, holding lit cigarettes up to his eyes, and piercing his genitals with toothpicks. On other occasions, they put him in restraints and beat him repeatedly with handguns. In 2009 and 2010, police disappeared Mr. Gao and tortured him further.

In December 2011, just before the expiration of his suspended sentence and after 20 months of having been held in unknown locations, the Xinhua news agency announced that Mr. Gao would be imprisoned for the remainder of his original sentence. Since then, family members have been allowed to visit him only twice for half an hour on each occasion. Although scheduled for release on Aug. 22, he has now disappeared once again, leaving his family with renewed and urgent questions about his health and safety.

Mr. Gao's imprisonment, torture and disappearances have brought tremendous suffering to him and his family. In testifying recently before the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Mr. Gao's daughter Grace reflected on her family's insurmountable pain and loneliness. "I believe that when we speak out for my father . . . we protect our own freedom and values," she said.

Despite Mr. Gao's latest disappearance, it is hoped he is managing to endure. But hope must be accompanied by action and it is more urgent than ever that China not be allowed to disappear Gao Zhisheng again with impunity.

On Thursday, his wife lodged a complaint with the U.N. Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances, a body of the Human Rights Council. The submission notes that Mr. Gao's family is "distracted because they have no idea whether he is even alive." It goes on to emphasize the Chinese government is violating its own laws allowing for regular family visits, written correspondence, and access to counsel.

Ms. Geng hopes the Working Group will urge the Chinese government to conduct an investigation into Mr. Gao's disappearance. Although the process itself can take many months, the Working Group has a good history of receiving specific replies from the Chinese government to its concerns. In addition, merely by highlighting Mr. Gao's disappearance publicly and triggering a U.N. inquiry, his family has put intense pressure on the Chinese government to respond. While this alone is a helpful step forward, much more needs to be done.

The international community, including the United States and United Nations, must demand proof from the Chinese government that Mr. Gao is alive and insist that his family be granted monthly access to him as is required by Chinese law. The world must urge Mr. Gao's immediate and unconditional release.

At a minimum, foreign leaders should press Beijing to release Mr. Gao on time instead of finding renewed excuses to extend his detention, as it has done in other cases. Washington must also exert pressure on the Chinese government to confirm that Mr. Gao will be provided a Chinese passport and the ability to travel to America upon his release.

It is time to reunite Gao Zhisheng with his family. He and his loved ones have suffered long enough.

A TRIBUTE TO ALICE STEERE
COULOMBE—28TH CONGRES-
SIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF
THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Alice Coulombe of Pasadena.

Born and raised in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Ms. Coulombe received her Bachelor's degree in Humanities and her Master's degree in Education from Stanford University. At Stanford, she met Joe Coulombe, and they got married when both were still students at the university.

In 1958, the Coulombes founded Pronto Markets, a chain of grocery stores in Southern California. In 1967, Joe, the original Trader Joe, added a South Seas motif to the stores and changed the name to Trader Joe's. During this time, the Coulombes moved to San Marino, where they raised their three children, Joe, Charlotte and Madeleine, and eventually moved to Pasadena in 1983.

A community volunteer for over forty years, Ms. Coulombe is a passionate advocate for the arts and arts education. She was a founding member and former Chair of the Pasadena Arts Commission, a member of the City of Pasadena's Centennial Committee, and a docent at the Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens for thirty-five years, where she helped design its school tours of the Japanese Garden. As a volunteer at the Music Center of Los Angeles for three decades, Ms. Coulombe served as Chair of Music Center Presentations and Coordinator of Volunteer Activities.

Ms. Coulombe's special love is opera, and to that end, she was founding president of the Music Center Opera League, as well as one of the founders of the Los Angeles Opera Company, where she currently serves on its board. For the past nine years, she has served on the Colburn School Board of Directors as a member of their Governance Committee and as Chair of the Board Relations Committee. Additionally, she is President of Metropolitan Associates, a local non-profit that raises funds to support the arts for children. For her selfless service to supporting the arts, Ms. Coulombe received the YWCA Pasadena-Foothill Valley's Woman of Distinction Award and has been honored by the Los Angeles Master Chorale.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Alice Steere Coulombe.

SABRINA HILL

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Sabrina Hill for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Sabrina Hill is an 8th grader at Everitt Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Sabrina Hill is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Sabrina Hill for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

CELEBRATING THE 125TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF THE MARKET
STREET MISSION

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Market Street Mission located in Morris County, New Jersey, as it celebrates its 125th Anniversary.

The Market Street Mission ministers to those who suffer in the battle against alcoholism, drug abuse, and homelessness in the northern New Jersey area. The Mission provides its ministries through physical, emotional, and spiritual support that will guide those who suffer toward responsible and productive lives.

Established in 1889 by the Reverend Dr. F.W. Owen and his wife, Mrs. Louisa Graves Owen, the Market Street Mission began as a residential program for alcoholic husbands in the Morristown area. With support from the South Street Presbyterian Church, the Mission provided meals, lodging, clothing, and temporary employment for homeless men. Throughout its first decade, the Mission started support meetings and programs for the homeless and drug addicted.

In 1926, a series of explosions at the Picatinny Arsenal left many families homeless and without food or clothes. The Mission was able to help these displaced families by providing them with shelter and other basic necessities.

During the Great Depression, the Market Street Mission ended its affiliation with the Presbyterian Church and added the "Industrial Department," a self-supporting thrift store that provided jobs during difficult economic times.

Today, residents of the Mission continue to work at the Industrial Department as part of

the successful "New Reality of Recovery" program, as well as attend chapel and classes. The Market Street Mission has added an Emergency Assistance program that provides meals and lodging for disadvantaged men, women, and children. In addition to its growing development throughout the years, the Mission continues to focus on alcohol and drug treatment programs, incorporating new treatments each year.

The Market Street Mission is proud to celebrate its history and looks forward to its continuous growth in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Market Street Mission and their dedicated employees as they celebrate 125 years of serving the northern New Jersey community.

THE NEED FOR REFOCUSING AMERICAN HUMANITARIAN AID IN SYRIA

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the third anniversary of the ongoing conflict in Syria. As the war stretches into its fourth year and the regional humanitarian crisis shows little signs of improvement, the United States must do more to ensure that its aid is utilized to the greatest effect possible.

According to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, more than 140,000 people, including 7,000 children, have been killed. Nearly 2.5 million refugees have fled to neighboring countries, including 1.2 million children. Within Syria, nearly seven million people have been displaced from their homes and 19 million are in need of emergency food support. It is projected that by the end of this year, 75 percent of the Syrian population will need humanitarian assistance.

The civilian population inside Syria faces systematic starvation, shelling of residential neighborhoods, government use of chemical weapons, and threats from improvised barrel-bombs filled with explosives and dropped by military helicopters into residential areas.

In the dozens of refugee camps now surrounding Syria, food remains scarce, access to sanitation and clean water is limited, and diseases like polio—on the verge of eradication worldwide—have resurfaced.

The United States has rightly pledged and contributed a combined \$1.7 billion in humanitarian assistance since the start of the crisis. These funds are critical for the Syrian people caught in the middle of the conflict. Their survival, and indeed the future stability of the region, hangs in the balance. As a leader in the international community, we must ensure that these funds are used efficiently and distributed in a manner that reaches as many people as possible.

I recently heard a story about a school in the Aleppo Province that continued to hold classes despite the war raging around it. When the school's funding inevitably ran out—and with international aid not immediately

available—extremists in the area also fighting the Assad regime came forward with the resources that the school needed. In return, they demanded that the school dispose of its moderate textbooks for more politically-charged texts, and required the teaching of the Koran.

Accepting assistance from extremist groups in exchange for loyalty is a decision faced by Syrians on a daily basis. For most civilians, the radical views expressed by the extremists are not in line with their own moderate views. Many are simply trying to carry on with their lives.

Organizations like the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have had considerable success in distributing school materials, food, medical supplies, and vaccines. However, Syria is a war zone, and these large-scale operations are often not equipped to distribute materials and aid at the local level—like the school in Aleppo—where they are needed most.

But, imagine if these organizations could know which schools had exhausted their resources, which hospitals were in immediate danger of running out of supplies, and which neighborhoods were being most affected by the lack of incoming food relief. Making this process more efficient is no small task, but it is possible. If we are to avoid greater catastrophe in Syria, it is also necessary.

Since the beginning of the Syrian conflict, I have urged Congress and the President's administration to increase cooperation with Syrian non-government organizations (NGOs) to get aid where it needs to go. Increased engagement with Syrian and Syrian-run groups is essential to expanding assistance inside Syria and making every dollar of foreign aid count. Syrian aid groups are now working in nearly every sector of the humanitarian response, delivering flour to bakeries, medical supplies to field clinics, and helping to protect refugees.

Already, USAID and other NGOs in the region rely on information and distribution networks of local aid groups to deliver supplies to areas most in need. Empowering these Syrian groups will make our impact on the region even greater. These groups have the most at stake and work at great personal expense and risk.

The Department of State and USAID should work together to establish training, capacity building, and aid delivery partnerships with Syrian relief organizations in order to expand their operations. With proper oversight and strict training on the international standards governing the delivery of aid, the United States can enable hundreds of Syrian civilians to take greater control of their country's future while assisting those inside Syria who are not reachable by other means.

Mr. Speaker, the United States has shown leadership in providing aid for the humanitarian crisis in Syria, but we must do more with the international community and Syrian refugee host nations to improve our aid delivery systems while pressuring the Assad regime and its supporters. As the war drags on with no end in sight, time is in fact running out.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM/UI EXTENSION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Congressional Women's Working Group on Immigration Reform I rise to support the women in my district and around the country who are fasting for a vote on reform legislation.

Mr. Speaker, our system has been broken for far too long and now is the time to fix it.

Every day hardworking women all over America are living in fear that they will be separated from their family. They have been systematically left out of the programs that their tax dollars help support.

That is why I am proud to have joined Congresswoman MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM to introduce the HEAL Act that would guarantee access to safety net programs like Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Mr. Speaker, instead of bringing up bills to create jobs and grow the economy, Republicans continue to play political games—bringing up GOP message bills to nowhere.

It is time to pass comprehensive immigration reform. It is time to pass an extension of Unemployment Insurance.

We have the votes. Let's do it now.

IN RECOGNITION OF RICHARD F. CROSSIN, RECIPIENT OF THE 2014 GREATER WILKES-BARRE FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK MAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in acknowledgment of Richard "Rich" F. Crossin, who on March 14, 2014 will receive the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick Man of the Year award. Each year the Friendly Sons recognizes a person who has distinguished themselves in the community through hard work and charitable efforts, and Rich Crossin is an exemplary selection.

Mr. Crossin is the son of Ann and the late Joseph Crossin and a resident of Kingston, Pennsylvania. He graduated from Bishop O'Reilly High School, and continued his education at York College, where he received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in 1978.

Rich has spent much of his career at Bonner Chevrolet, Inc., which was started by his grandfather, John R. Bonner, in 1932. Rich now serves as President of the family business and works alongside his brothers Joe, Tom and Paul. In the past 35 years, Bonner Chevrolet has grown to be one of the largest new and used automobile inventories in the area, under Rich's leadership.

Along with being a leader in the business community, Rich has also been a pillar of his local service community. He served as president of the West Side Jaycees and has also

worked with Big Brothers Big Sisters for several years, helping the group mentor many disadvantaged youth.

Rich and his wife Virginia have three children—Andrew, Julia, and Elizabeth—all of whom currently attend high school. Andrew, a senior at Holy Redeemer High School, is a member of the golf team which competed and won the State Championship title. Rich's daughters Julia and Elizabeth both attend Wyoming Valley High School, and were longtime dancers with the Emerald Isle Step Dancers and had the opportunity to dance in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in New York City.

Northeastern Pennsylvania is stronger as a community because of citizens like Rich Crossin, and I am proud to recognize his life's contributions.

A TRIBUTE TO NADINE TRUJILLO—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Nadine Trujillo of Silver Lake.

Ms. Trujillo has lived in Los Angeles since 1956. In 1993, Ms. Trujillo launched her own business and opened a Mexican restaurant. She is the proud owner and operator of the Alegria on Sunset, where she also serves as its Executive Chef, and can still be found cooking for the daily lunch crowd in addition to fulfilling her CEO duties.

Ms. Trujillo first got involved in her community by providing local schools, charitable organizations and churches with discounted menus for teachers as well as donations to school events. She has continued to give back by volunteering her time and sharing her knowledge of catering and event planning. She has organized Hollywood Sunset Free Clinic's annual fundraisers and continues to support HSFC by providing pozole to over two hundred "Pilgrims" in the annual observance of the traditional Mexican Christmas Posada.

In 2010, Ms. Trujillo joined the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council after she completed Level One Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. She has served as Co-Chair of the Public Safety Committee and today serves as an at large board member. Ms. Trujillo organized the first annual "September is National Preparedness Month" Expo. Ms. Trujillo and her two daughters are residents of Silver Lake.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Nadine Trujillo.

SAYRA ARANA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Sayra Arana for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Sayra Arana is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Sayra Arana is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Sayra Arana for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

HONORING THEO ROGERS

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Theo Rogers. Theo is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 125, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Theo has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Theo has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Theo has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Theo built fire pits for a church camp in Far West, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Theo Rogers for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, on March 12, 2014 I was unavoidably detained for roll call votes 120–124. Had I been present, this is how I would have voted: on rollcall vote 120: Conyers of Michigan Amendment, I would have voted "yes"; on rollcall vote 121: Nadler of New York Amendment, I would have voted "yes"; on rollcall vote 122: Jackson Lee

of Texas Amendment, I would have voted "yes"; on rollcall vote 123: Democratic Motion to Recommit, I would have voted "yes"; on rollcall vote 124: Final Passage of H.R. 4138, Executive Needs to Faithfully Observe and Respect Congressional Enactments of the Law Act of 2014, I would have voted "no."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, from March 4 through 6, 2014, I was absent from the House due to a sudden, unfortunate family matter and missed rollcall Votes 93 through 114. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 95, 96, 97, 98, 102, 103, 104, 105, 108, 110, 111, 112, and 114. I would have voted "nay" on rollcall votes 93, 94, 99, 100, 101, 106, 107, 109, and 113.

ON THE BIRTH OF MARY PARKER DEPASS

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate Emily and William Brunson DePass, III, on the birth of their new baby girl. Mary Parker DePass was born at 2:46 p.m. on March 8, 2014 weighing 7 pounds, 6 ounces and measuring 20 and 1/2 inches long.

Mary joins a wonderful family who is devoted to her well-being and bright future. Grandparents Mrs. and Mrs. William B. (Rusty) DePass, Jr., Mrs. Jane Arnold Barnhill, and Mr. Edward D. Barnhill, Jr., are thrilled with the new addition. I would also like to congratulate Mary's three great-grandmothers, Mrs. Marshall J. Parker, Mrs. Ira Lee Arnold, and Mrs. Edward D. Barnhill, along with the late Mrs. Kathryn Macaulay DePass, who are all extraordinary role models for their dear great-granddaughter.

A TRIBUTE TO SONIA TATULIAN—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Sonia Tatulian of Tujunga.

Born in Armenia, Ms. Tatulian and her family immigrated to the United States in 1974

when she was a teenager. While attending Hollywood High School, she went to work in a Beverly Hills bridal shop doing a variety of jobs, including pressing, altering, and selling wedding gowns. This began her career in the retail industry, which would go on to span two decades.

In 1989, Ms. Tatulian bought her home in Tujunga, and soon after she obtained her real estate license and began a part-time flower business. After changing careers for a position with Wells Fargo, Ms. Tatulian realized she wanted to help businesses and become more involved in her community. She was able to fulfill this aspiration once she started her new position as Manager at the Sunland Bank of America. Ms. Tatulian then became a member of the Sunland-Tujunga Chamber of Commerce, Sunland-Tujunga Rotary Club and the Sunland-Tujunga Lions Club. She served as President of the Sunland-Tujunga Chamber of Commerce and increased membership from 63 to 175 members, all while being the Treasurer of the Rotary and Lions Clubs.

Ms. Tatulian also founded the non-profit organization, the Sunland-Tujunga-Shadow Hills Community Fund, which is the parent company of Voice of the Village, a local newspaper. The Fund took over the organization of the annual Fourth of July Fireworks event, with the proceeds and matching grants going to Verdugo Hills High School programs. Proceeds from the newspaper support the high school's journalism class. Recently, Ms. Tatulian founded the "Welcome to the Foothills" company, a free service where she visits new home owners, welcomes them and provides them with important information about the community. In addition, she volunteers with the Verdugo Hills Family YMCA.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Sonia Tatulian.

NAYELI LYNCH-BOLANOS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Nayeli Lynch-Bolanos for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Nayeli Lynch-Bolanos is a 7th grader at Wayne Carle Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Nayeli Lynch-Bolanos is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Nayeli Lynch-Bolanos for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING RUSSELL A. MITTERMEIER, CARL SAFINA, AND PATRICIA C. WRIGHT

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise to congratulate Stony Brook University and its faculty for an unprecedented achievement. Three of the six finalists for the prestigious Indianapolis Prize, the world's leading award for animal conservation, are members of Stony Brook's faculty.

This is the first time that one university has had three finalists for the award given by the Indianapolis Zoo for "extraordinary contributions to conservation efforts." All three professors, Russell A. Mittermeier, Carl Safina, and Patricia C. Wright, hold Ph.D.s and have made major contributions to science. Their selection as finalists for this coveted award reflects the excellence and dedication of Stony Brook's faculty and brings honor to all of Long Island.

Dr. Mittermeier is president of Conservation International and has worked to preserve primates and turtles in South America, Madagascar and other places. He has used the concept of biodiversity "hotspots" to focus conservation efforts and raise \$1 billion for endangered habitats. He has an adjunct research appointment in the Department of Anatomical Sciences.

Dr. Safina co-founded Blue Ocean Institute to raise awareness of threats to the world's oceans and inspire solutions to these dangers. He is a research professor in Stony Brook's School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences. Episodes of his show "Saving the Ocean with Carl Safina" aired nationwide on PBS in 2012.

Dr. Wright discovered a new species of lemur, the golden bamboo lemur, while working in Madagascar in 1986. She also rediscovered another species which had been considered extinct. Her efforts helped establish the Ranomafana National Park in Madagascar which she believes has saved three species of lemur from extinction. She is a professor of anthropology at Stony Brook.

It is not surprising that these three eminent conservation pioneers have been tapped for international recognition. Their ongoing efforts have helped save our planet and its species from degradation. They are committed and passionate about their research. It is through the efforts of people like these who are able to inspire others to see the importance of conservation that our oceans, our endangered species and biodiversity of our plant will be preserved.

Indeed, these three professors and their tremendous achievements are most worthy of our recognition and of the Indianapolis Prize. They are representative of the pursuit of excellence and world-class research capabilities that define Stony Brook's reputation as a global leader in innovation and scientific breakthroughs. With this achievement, the professors take their place with Stony Brook University as the pride of Long Island and an example for aspiring scientists to follow.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of New York's first congressional district, I would like to thank

Professors Mittermeier, Safina, and Wright for the vital work they are doing. The fact that they are all members of Stony Brook faculty is yet another measure of the quality of this fine university.

HONORING SID REYES

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Sid Reyes. Sid is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 135, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Sid has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Sid has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Sid has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Sid completed necessary maintenance on the outdoor classroom at Hawthorne Elementary School in Kearney, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Sid Reyes for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING NEVADA 150

HON. JOSEPH J. HECK

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. HECK of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to mark the beginning of Nevada's journey to becoming the 36th State admitted to the Union.

Many know the story of the Nevada constitution being sent to Washington via the newly-invented telegraph machine to expedite our admission to the Union in late October of 1864. But a lesser known—though not less important—even in our state's history will celebrate its 150th anniversary next week.

On March 21, 2014—next Friday—it will have been one hundred and fifty years since this body voted to allow the People of the Territory of Nevada to form a Constitution and State Government for the purpose of admission into the Union.

Nevada's constitutional convention began on the fourth of July, 1864.

Among the first words of our constitution were the absolute prohibition of slavery, freedom of religious worship, and one issue very near to the work of Nevada's current Congressional delegation, the ownership status of the land.

The convention adjourned July 28 having laid the foundation for Nevada's admission to the Union and our future governance.

Voters of the territory approved the Constitution the first week of September, paving

the way for Abraham Lincoln to admit Nevada as the 36th State on October 31, 1864.

But all of these events were set in motion by a bill approved in this very Chamber, Mr. Speaker. Without this critical first step, the journey to statehood would not have been possible.

I'm proud to call the Battle Born State home and join with Nevadans from Elko to Laughlin in celebrating the sesquicentennial of March 21, 1864.

CONGRATULATING THE CORNING AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and congratulate the Corning Area Chamber of Commerce on its 100th anniversary. Over the past 100 years, the Corning Area Chamber of Commerce has successfully provided small businesses and local entrepreneurs with the resources, expertise and advice needed to succeed.

The Corning community is stronger and more vibrant because of the Chamber. The Chamber has proven to be an invaluable resource in promoting business in our community through a powerful, united voice—a voice that successfully advances opportunities for growth time and time again. Due to the Chamber's unrelenting work in promoting and assisting commerce, local businesses continue to provide well-paying jobs and high-quality products and services to our region.

In addition to helping established businesses, the Chamber has a strong history of providing grants to organizations that assist local entrepreneurs in starting new businesses in Corning. The Chamber continues to give Corning citizens the tools necessary to succeed.

Once again I wish to congratulate the Corning Area Chamber of Commerce on 100 successful years of service and wish them another hundred prosperous years in the beautiful city we call home.

A TRIBUTE TO SHELLI-ANNE COUCH—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Shelli-Anne Couch of Atwater Village.

As President of Friends of Atwater Elementary, Ms. Couch has led the turnaround of this Title I public elementary school, bringing new

life to the volunteer support group which serves nearly 400 families in the Atwater Village area. She found innovative ways to generate new revenue streams, raised over \$100,000 in support of enrichment, educational and capital improvement programs for Atwater Avenue Elementary School, and created strategic partnerships with local, national and international businesses, non-profit organizations and individuals. Ms. Couch has founded and produced many events and programs that support the elementary school, including the First Annual Day of the Dead Festival with celebrity chef Curtis Stone which drew close to one thousand attendees and raised a substantial amount of money for the school.

Ms. Couch also formed a partnership with executives from Paul Mitchell Hair Products and Enrich LA to sponsor the school's first outdoor classroom program, which provides free tuition for students to learn how to make healthy life choices by gardening, eating seasonal produce, and composting. She also led the effort for school uniforms and created a "Care Closet" for families in need. In addition, she forged partnerships between the school and local organizations such as the Northland Village Church, which provides free weekly tutoring called "Homework Helpers," and the local Lions Club, which provides scholarships and free eye tests to students.

Prior to her dedicated volunteer work in Atwater Village, Ms. Couch was an international business and media executive with over twenty-five years of experience transforming how companies and people build their commerce, content and community, guiding clients like Universal Studios, Diane Von Furstenburg, and the Australian Consulate. She co-founded Billion Dollar Babes, the world's first global designer fashion sales event. Her agency's showrooms in Los Angeles, New York and London pioneered celebrity dressing and editorial placement. An award-winning journalist, Ms. Couch, who moved from her native Australia to Los Angeles in 1997, has been featured in magazines and newspapers such as Vogue, The New York Times, The LA Times, and People, and on the television show, Good Morning America.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Shelli-Anne Couch.

NICOLE PAPPADAKIS

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Nicole Pappadakis for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Nicole Pappadakis is an 8th grader at Moore Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Nicole Pappadakis is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential stu-

dents at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Nicole Pappadakis for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 116, I was unable to attend. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DONNA F. EDWARDS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, due to attending a previously scheduled meeting at the White House with President Obama, I was absent from votes in the House on Wednesday afternoon (March 12) and missed rollcall votes 1201–124. Had I been present, I would have voted: "yea" on rollcall No. 120 (Conyers amendment); "yea" on rollcall No. 121 (Nadler amendment); "yea" on rollcall No. 122 (Jackson-Lee amendment); "yea" on rollcall No. 123 (Motion to Recommit H.R. 4138 with Instructions); and "nay" on rollcall No. 124 (final passage of H.R. 4138, the ENFORCE the Law Act).

TRIBUTE TO JAMES C. DOWDLE

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, on February 17th, we lost an extraordinary American with the passing of James C. Dowdle, who was 79. I rise today to do something a bit out of character. As many folks know, I am a proud University of Michigan Wolverine. Jim, on the other hand, was a Notre Dame grad. In the Midwest, the Wolverines and Fighting Irish mix, at least in athletics, about as well as the Hatfields and McCoys. In fact, Jim was a physically gifted athlete who played basketball for the Irish. It takes a special individual for me to put aside a rivalry that runs that deep. Jim Dowdle was that unique.

I got to know Jim on a professional level. He was hired by Tribune Company in Chicago in the early 1980s to head its broadcast operations until his retirement in 1999. Tribune Company remains the largest media company headquartered in the Midwest. Of particular interest to me, Jim engineered the Tribune's purchase of the Chicago Cubs from the

Wrigley family. As a lifelong, diehard Cubs fan, Jim and I agonized over the team's progress many an afternoon at Wrigley Field. Jim also persuaded legendary Hall of Fame broadcaster Harry Caray to be the Cubs' play-by-play announcer on Tribune's WGN-TV. That powerful combination spread WGN's telecasts throughout the land as cable systems and home satellites grew WGN into a national superstation. What makes the story even more remarkable is that Jim was a proud Irish-American son of Chicago's Southside, that sliver of greater Chicagoland where your allegiance is to the White Sox and whatever team is playing the Cubs. Jim used to say, "Thank God my father is buried in Calvary Cemetery. If he knew I bought the Cubs, I'm not sure he would talk to me." Over the years, Jim gambled on the future of television—investing in little-known cable channels such as the Food Network and others, adding to Tribune's broadcast station holdings, the value of which is now in the billions.

Jim Dowdle's family and civic legacy is just as remarkable. He married his beloved Sally Sayers in 1956 shortly after graduating from Notre Dame. To all, they are known as Honey and Doods. He was the father of five and grandfather of eighteen. At his funeral Mass, nine handsome grandsons, all at least six foot two, dressed in suits and Kelly green ties, served as pallbearers. At the altar, two Catholic monsignors, twelve priests and his godson (a deacon) celebrated his Mass before as many as 1,500 mourners—a powerful, visible testament to a life well led.

Long before I got to know him, Jim had conquered alcohol addiction. For decades, he counseled countless others, often complete strangers. When the word spread that Jim was nearing death, the family received numerous calls and messages from people who wanted them to know how Jim Dowdle had impacted them—saving careers, marriages, and lives. Without those unsolicited testimonials, no one would have known.

A former Marine lieutenant, years later, Jim received the Marine Corps' Semper Fidelis Award. He also received the broadcast industry's highest honor, the National Association of Broadcasters' Distinguished Service Award, as well as the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences' Trustee Award and induction into the Broadcasting and Cable Hall of Fame. A devout Catholic, Jim was a director of Mundelein Seminary's Board of Advisors and Big Shoulders Fund. He served as a former board chairman of Junior Achievement of Chicago, director of Loyola University's Health Systems, director of Robert R. McCormick Foundation, director of Hazelden Chicago, and trustee of Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry. I mention these. There are more.

Throughout his remarkable life, Jim Dowdle never lost the common touch. He stayed humble. He volunteered. He served. He gave. He never forgot what is truly important in life. I think the Marine's motto aptly describes the great man: "Semper Fidelis!" Always Faithful! It was my great privilege to know him and my honor to pay tribute. God bless Jim Dowdle.

RECOGNIZING LORIN LEWIS AS THE 2014 OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PERSON OF THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Mrs. Lorin Lewis as the 2014 Okaloosa County Educational Support Person of the Year. For over six years, Mrs. Lewis has served the students and community of Okaloosa County, and I am pleased to honor her achievements.

A product of the Okaloosa County School District, Mrs. Lewis was born and raised in Crestview, Florida. Upon graduating from Crestview High School in 2005, she began studying at Northwest Florida State College. The following year, she began her professional career in the Okaloosa County School District as a classroom assistant at a Department of Juvenile Justice facility. It was in this capacity that Mrs. Lewis developed a passion for working with at-risk youth. The patience and compassion she exerted enabled her to inspire and positively impact the lives of some of the most vulnerable, despite the rigors of the challenging environment.

Her love for bettering the lives of students continued to grow, and in 2011, she joined the faculty at Pryor Middle School as the Discipline Secretary. She became the Bookkeeper in 2012, where she continues her supporting role at the school. In addition to her strong faith, Mrs. Lewis credits her success and achievements to the support provided by her colleagues. It is her dedication and commitment to excellence, however, that has proven her to be an invaluable asset to the Okaloosa County School District and has earned her the title of Educational Support Person of the Year.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Lorin Lewis and her great achievements. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Mrs. Lewis and her husband, Bryan, and we wish them all the best for continued success.

A TRIBUTE TO MARTHA BURNS—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Martha Burns of La Cañada Flintridge.

Ms. Burns was born and raised in Minnesota. She obtained her degree in Mathematics from Colorado College, where she joined Kappa Alpha Theta, a sorority she con-

tinues to be active. After graduation, she worked as a Financial Analyst at General Mills in Minneapolis. Seven years later, she moved back to Colorado Springs, where she met and married Tom Burns while both were working for Burroughs Corp. In 1979, a job transfer moved the family to Glendale, and in 1981 they purchased a home in La Cañada Flintridge. Ms. Burns wasted no time in joining the La Cañada Flintridge Newcomers Club and the La Cañada Junior Women's Club.

As a young mother, Ms. Burns served as President and Treasurer of the La Cañada Elementary School Parent Teacher Association (PTA). She has also served in various positions with La Cañada High School's PTA and Cañada Council of PTA. Ms. Burns has also volunteered as a Leader and Den Mother for Campfire Girls and Cub Scouts, a Team Mom for American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO), and as a "Classroom Mother."

Well-known in the area for her accounting and computing skills, Ms. Burns has volunteered her services to numerous service groups and businesses. She was the first woman to lead the softball arm of the La Cañada Jr. Baseball/Softball Association, for which she also served as Treasurer. She is an active member Assistance League of Flintridge (ALF) and previously served as Chairperson of the Summer School Program, Summer School Treasurer, Computer Chair, and Treasurer of ALF's Auxiliary. She was also the Treasurer of the Board of Directors of the La Cañada Flintridge Educational Foundation, the La Cañada Flintridge Chamber of Commerce, and the La Cañada-AM Kiwanis Club. Ms. Burns modernized the bookkeeping system for La Cañada Congregational and St. George's Episcopal Churches and their preschools. She has also developed database and accounting systems for the Community Center of La Cañada Flintridge and its preschool. An avid animal lover, Ms. Burns has volunteered as a bookkeeper for the Recycled Pets Rescue Organization and as Treasurer for the Pasadena Animal League, an auxiliary of the Pasadena Humane Society. Ms. Burns also received a La Cañada Council of PTA Service Award and a La Cañada Flintridge Coordinating Council Les Tupper Community Service Award.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Martha Burns.

ROSELINE MUGARUKA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Roseline Mugaruka for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Roseline Mugaruka is a 12th grader at Standley Lake High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Roseline Mugaruka is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and

perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Roseline Mugaruka for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

IN RECOGNITION OF CHARLES J. GRIMES, RECIPIENT OF THE 2014 GREATER PITTSSTON AREA FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK SWINGLE AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in acknowledgment of Charles J. Grimes, who on March 17, 2014, will receive the Swingle Award from the Greater Pittston Area Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. Charles J. Grimes was born in Plymouth, Pennsylvania on November 9, 1946 to Joseph and Helen Grimes. He attended St. Vincent's Catholic School and Plymouth High School. After school, Charlie began his career in 1970 as a Driver and Sales Representative with Freedman Express. He later went on to work for Conway Freight for 15 years.

Charlie has dedicated himself to membership and leadership roles in multiple charitable organizations. He currently serves as a sustaining Fourth Degree member of the President John F. Kennedy Council 372 Knights of Columbus, and previously served as the Grand Knight. He is also a member and past President of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. Charlie also volunteers with Meals on Wheels of Greater Pittston and the Salvation Army.

Charlie now resides in Jenkins Township with his wife, Rose Ferentino Grimes. He and his wife have six children and thirteen grandchildren, of which they are extremely proud.

It is a great honor to congratulate Charles J. Grimes on this award to commemorate his dedication to charity and community service. Charlie is a tribute to the Pittston area, and I thank him for his many valuable contributions to the public good.

HONORING THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE, LIEUTENANT GENERAL RICHARD C. HARDING

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Lieutenant General Richard C. Harding, who is retiring after thirty-four years of accomplished and distinguished military service. Throughout his career as a senior officer, General Harding has provided invaluable

testimony and advice to this body and in particular to the Armed Services Committee. Specifically, General Harding has provided his expert military advice on a wide range of defense and national security issues and especially on the workings of the military justice system in relation to the sexual assault crisis in which the military finds itself. I think I speak for all of my colleagues on the Armed Services Committee when I say that his depth of knowledge, outstanding leadership and professionalism, and deep respect and consideration for all of our men and women in uniform will be greatly missed.

The son of an Air Force officer and grandson of a Naval officer, General Harding entered the Air Force with a direct commission in 1980 after receiving his Bachelor of Science degree and Juris Doctor degree from the University of Arkansas. Over the course of his career, General Harding served six tours as a staff judge advocate at the unified command, major command, numbered air force and wing levels. He also served in a variety of staff positions at Headquarters Air Force and as the Deputy Chief Counsel for U.S. Transportation Command. Before serving as The Judge Advocate General (TJAG) General Harding was the Commander of the Air Force Legal Operations Agency.

During his tenure as TJAG, General Harding led the Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps during one of the most turbulent periods in military law and most challenging budget crises in history. He innovatively orchestrated the creation and implementation of the Federal Government's first-ever Special Victims' Counsel Program, ensuring legal representation for victims of sexual assault. This Program was subsequently adopted by the Secretary of Defense and implemented across the Department of Defense.

Additionally, General Harding's focused processing initiatives revitalized the military justice system by drastically reducing court-martial processing times. He also resurrected the publication of the Air Force's standards of professional conduct by leading the drafting, coordinating, and publishing of the first-ever, Air Force Instruction 1-1, Air Force Standards, and he keenly consolidated the Judge Advocate and Inspector General inspection processes by creating a single two-tiered evaluation system to standardize and improve the delivery of legal services. Finally, General Harding astutely guided the Air Force through one of the most challenging budget crises in history by providing sage legal support for multiple manpower and personnel reductions, headquarters reorganizations, and field operating agency consolidations.

Through my role as Member of the Armed Services Committee I have had the pleasure of working directly with General Harding during this time. He has faithfully executed his oath of office and constitutional duties as the top uniformed military lawyer for the United States Air Force and provided this committee and congress with honest, direct, and sound advice. He will leave a lasting legacy on our Armed Forces.

For thirty-four years General Harding has performed his job professionally, honestly, and with great dedication. We will miss his leadership and vision, and wish him all the best as

he retires from active duty service to our nation.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ERNEST J. REYES

HON. TONY CÁRDENAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. CÁRDENAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of our friend Ernest J. Reyes who passed away recently at the age of 73. Though Mr. Reyes is sorely missed by friends and family, I know his legacy will endure. He had an illustrious career and was a passionate, hard-working advocate.

Mr. Reyes, a native of Madera, CA, was dedicated to the California real estate community. He was a licensed broker since 1972, served on the San Diego Real Estate Board, and founded Network Realty, a real estate brokerage firm. He also tapped into his knowledge of the real estate market to help families thrive and realize the American dream of homeownership. He co-founded the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals. Under his leadership, NAHREP has become "The Voice for Hispanic Real Estate" and proud champions of homeownership for the Hispanic community." Mr. Reyes was also Chairman of the San Diego Home Loan Counseling Center, a non-profit serving low and moderate-income families through economic literacy education.

Additionally, Mr. Reyes was an exceptional public servant. He was a member of the Hollister Elementary School District Board and served as Secretary. And in 1976, the California Senate Rules Committee appointed Mr. Reyes to serve on the Employment Services Board. He was also appointed by the U.S. Small Business Administration's Administrator Karen G. Mills to Chair the Regulatory Fairness Board, Region IX. And notably, Mr. Reyes served on the staff of the Honorable Leon E. Panetta while he was in Congress.

I extend my sincerest condolences to his wife of 50 years, Patricia Pedregon Reyes, along with his children, Denise Johnson and Daren Reyes, and his three grandchildren. Mr. Reyes was an inspiration and I know his loss will be felt by many, including the 29th Congressional District.

AMOS RUTHERFORD

HON. MARK MEADOWS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Amos Rutherford on his 100th birthday, which he celebrates today, March 14th, 2014.

Mr. Rutherford is an exemplary citizen and lifelong resident of Caldwell County. Born in Morganton in 1914, Mr. Rutherford joined the military in 1942. As a medical aidman in World War II, Mr. Rutherford was awarded a Good Conduct Medal, American Theatre Service

Medal, and a Victory Medal. These awards reflect Mr. Rutherford's character and the incredible size of his heart.

Returning to Morganton in 1946, Mr. Rutherford worked for Mullis Motor Company, and then spent 30 years at the Esso Exxon station in Lenior. I am proud to honor Mr. Rutherford today, as he has shown time and again an unwavering commitment to our district.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the entire 11th District of North Carolina, I congratulate Mr. Rutherford on his milestone 100th birthday and thank him for his service to Western North Carolina and to our nation.

A TRIBUTE TO ALEXANDRA
HELFRICH—28TH CONGRES-
SIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF
THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Alexandra Helfrich of Burbank.

When her eldest daughter began elementary school, Ms. Helfrich learned that the school did not have any arts programs. She began to fundraise and sought out grant opportunities to bring arts education back into the classroom. Ms. Helfrich worked with other parents, the PTA and Booster organizations to provide opportunities so every Burbank Unified School District (BUSD) student could experience music, visual art, theater, dance, and media arts. Through these collaborations, art programs became available at schools during the school day and after school as well.

Ms. Helfrich has served as a member of the Board of Directors for the Burbank Arts For All Foundation since 2007 and served as its co-chair from 2010 to 2013. The Burbank Arts For All Foundation works to ensure every student in Burbank public schools receives a quality arts education as a part of their core curriculum. To support the foundation's mission, Ms. Helfrich continues to serve on its Executive Committee. Ms. Helfrich's volunteer efforts have provided opportunities as well as increased access for children to become creative learners.

Ms. Helfrich has also served the Burbank Unified School District as a parent representative to the District Safety Committee, where she helped update the Special Education Parent Handbook. She is currently serving on the District Local Control Accountability Plan Committee. In addition, Ms. Helfrich, who is a committed school fundraiser, has consistently served on Booster Club Boards since 2007.

Ms. Helfrich is married to Mark Helfrich, a feature film editor and director, and they have two teenage daughters.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Alexandra Helfrich.

SERGIO MARTINEZ

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Sergio Martinez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Sergio Martinez is an 8th grader at Wheat Ridge 5-8 and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Sergio Martinez is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Sergio Martinez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of his future accomplishments.

TRIBUTE TO JORGE PAVEZ

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to a dear friend of mine, Jorge Pavez. Jorge passed away on Saturday, March 8, 2014. Riverside County has been fortunate to have community members whose personal stories have contributed immensely to the rich history of Southern California. Jorge Pavez was one of these individuals. He was truly the definition of the American Dream fulfilled and served as an incredible inspiration to those around him. A resident of Corona for over 40 years, Jorge was a pillar of the community and will be deeply missed.

The story of Jorge's incredible life began in 1963 when he boarded a plane in his home nation of Chile, with a one way ticket to Miami. He wasn't sure what the United States of America would hold for him, but was ready to tackle any challenge that came his way. With only \$150 in his pocket upon arrival, success proved distant. He struggled without any knowledge of the English language and just a small bed at the local YMCA that ran him \$5 a night. After a series of unfortunate events, Jorge decided to head west to California by driving a Buick convertible there for its owner.

Jorge, who was still learning English and developing his skills, was not discouraged by the tough job market, and eventually landed a job as a parking attendant in Santa Monica. He was soon transferred to another parking lot, and the move proved to be a testament to fate, when he met his future wife, Joyce, who worked in management there. She became responsible for helping him learn English when she gave him a book to assist in the process. With the love and support of Joyce, proven hard work at the parking lot, and a new knowl-

edge of the English language, a neighborhood insurance agent took notice of Jorge's natural work ethic and decided to give him a chance with a job. Insurance was not an industry Jorge had come to know while growing up in South America, so while he was initially skeptical, he ultimately proved to be a natural at selling policies after a few short weeks of getting accustomed to the nature of the business.

Following a tragic event in the community where an insurance policy had a real impact, Jorge became a believer in the industry and developed a passion for the craft. This would ultimately be the beginning of a long and successful career. After starting his own agency, CPI Financial & Insurance Services, in two locations and acquiring another agency all within a matter of 10 years, Jorge became one of the preeminent insurance agents in the Inland Empire.

Through all of his success, Jorge remained committed to helping others fulfill their "American Dream." By promoting employment opportunities within his insurance companies, he has been able to help others looking for a chance to achieve their own form of success. From moving to the country virtually penniless, to being responsible for creating economic growth for many in the Inland Empire, Jorge proved that it is possible to accomplish your goals with a lot of hard work and dedication. On March 14, 2014, Jorge would have celebrated his 50th Anniversary in the United States of America.

On March 20, 2014, a memorial honoring Jorge's extraordinary life will be held. He is survived by his loving wife and children. Jorge will always be remembered for his incredible work ethic, generosity, contributions to the community and love of family. His dedication is a testament to a life lived well and a legacy that will continue. I extend my condolences to Jorge's family and friends; although Jorge may be gone, the light and goodness he brought to the world remain and will never be forgotten.

HONORING ELIZABETH BIESTER

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, Elizabeth Biester is a Bucks County woman who has made a difference in the global and local community with years of leadership, social advocacy, and volunteerism. She is being honored with the March 2014 Bucks County Women's History Month Award. As a volunteer, she has made an indelible imprint on our community and beyond.

Elizabeth Biester has advocated on behalf of the children of the world who were abandoned, orphaned, or experienced discrimination through her work with the Pearl S. Buck Foundation/Pearl S. Buck International and Welcome House.

The local organizations in which she has also tirelessly contributed include: American Red Cross, Network of Victim Assistance, Teachers for Tomorrow, League of Women Voters, YWCA of Bucks County and the Bucks County Symphony.

We recognize a dedicated woman of integrity and generous spirit who brings heart felt compassion to her endeavors. As we also acknowledge the impact she has had on many lives, we are grateful to Elizabeth Biester for setting an example of service and social advocacy for others to follow.

**HONORING JORDAN
FOTHERINGHAME**

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jordan Fotheringhame. Jordan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 135, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jordan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jordan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jordan has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jordan constructed a picnic shelter at Mac Porter Park in Kearney, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jordan Fotheringhame for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

**IN RECOGNITION OF DR. SHAWN
CASEY, RECIPIENT OF THE 2014
FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK
MAN OF THE YEAR AWARD**

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Dr. Shawn Casey, who will receive the 2014 Friendly Sons of St. Patrick Man of the Year Award on Monday, March 17, 2014. Dr. Casey was born in Pittston to Suzanne Walker Malloy and the late George T. Casey of Pittston. He graduated from Wyoming Area High School and Wilkes University, and studied Dentistry at the University of Pittsburgh. After graduation, Dr. Casey returned to the Pittston Area in 1994 to establish his dental practice.

In 2005, Dr. Casey founded Casey Dental, which now employs multiple dentists and specialists to provide comprehensive dental care in one location. Dr. Casey's office also accommodates Special Needs Dentistry for individuals with developmental disabilities, which he dedicated to his aunt, Mary Casey. Recently, Casey Dental expanded into Convention Hall in Pittston Township, where the brand new facility is equipped with 39 dentists and technicians to meet the growing need of patients in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Shawn is a board member of the Pennsylvania Academy of General Dentistry, a member of the American Dental Association, Academy of General Dentistry, and Gnathos Orthodontic. He is also an active member of local charities, church organizations, school districts, and public service organizations. In particular, Shawn takes great pride in his Irish heritage and has been an active member with the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick for over 20 years. He won the Swingle Award for community service in 2003, and previously served as the President of the organization. He will also soon accept the organization's 2014 Man of the Year award.

Shawn now resides in Jenkins Township with his wife of 21 years, Michele, and their three children, George, Shawna, and Samantha. Since joining in 1992, Shawn now enjoys yearly banquets and introducing his son, George, to the Friendly Sons to carry on the Casey Tradition.

I proudly offer my congratulations to Dr. Casey for receiving this award from the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. I applaud his commitment to providing dental care to Pennsylvanians, including those with special needs, and his lifetime of service to the Pittston area.

**A TRIBUTE TO BLAIRE LENNANE—
28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR**

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Blaire Lennane of Elysian Valley.

Since 2011, Ms. Lennane has been an unstoppable force in the Elysian Valley community. Especially dedicated to serving the area's youth, she is the Founding President of Partners of Dorris (POD). POD is a non-profit organization committed to supporting public education programs affected by budget cuts and the advancement of students at Dorris Place Elementary School. POD supports the school's teachers and contributes to the beautification and safety of Elysian Valley through outreach and volunteerism. A consummate organizer, Ms. Lennane has formed partnerships with local businesses, non-profit organizations, community groups, and corporations to generate funds and in-kind donations for the school. She spearheaded the complete makeover and re-opening of the school library, partnered with Home Depot to accomplish the leveling, re-building, and planting of the school garden and worked with Office Depot to provide supplies for the entire school.

Ms. Lennane's greatest achievement through POD is the Instrumental Music Program, where she partnered with the non-profit group Education Through Music-Los Angeles, to bring musical instrument instruction (violin,

cello, ukulele, and recorder) to the school, as well as organized afterschool ensemble practice.

Ms. Lennane has founded and organized many events which have become beloved annual traditions highly anticipated by the community. Such events include the Training Day Fitness Fair & Walkathon, the Fine Arts Expo, and the Save the Music Program Fall Festival. Ms. Lennane is also active with the Elysian Valley Arts Collective, the Los Angeles City Parks Advisory Board for the Elysian Valley Recreation Center, and the Los Angeles Unified School District's Parent Community Advisory Committee. She sits on several committees for Dorris Place Elementary School. Ms. Lennane and her husband, Chad Gordon, have one daughter, Gala Lennane-Gordon.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Blaire Lennane.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, on the afternoon of March 13, 2014, I was attending a meeting at the White House to discuss a sensitive constituent issue and was absent for rollcall vote 126. Had I been present for rollcall vote 126, on passage of H. Res. 515, I would have voted "no."

**OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT**

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$17,491,372,091,598.45. We've added \$6,864,495,042,685.37 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$6.8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

**CONGRATULATING CAMBRIA COUNTY
ON ITS 210TH ANNIVERSARY**

HON. KEITH J. ROTHFUS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the residents of Cambria County, Pennsylvania, who celebrate the 210th anniversary of the County's founding on March 26, 2014. Cambria County is nestled in the Laurel Highlands of Western Pennsylvania and is home to many great hard working Americans.

On March 26, 1804, the Pennsylvania Assembly formed a new county from portions of

Huntingdon, Somerset, and Bedford Counties. They named it Cambria, an old name for Wales. To determine the location of the county seat, Cambria County held a census. Because Ebensburg had the largest population of 150 to Johnstown's 60, it became the new county seat. Over two centuries later, Ebensburg remains the county seat.

Today, more than 140,000 Pennsylvanians call Cambria County home. It contains more than sixty-three municipalities including thirty-two boroughs, thirty townships, and the city of Johnstown. The county is home to leading hospitals, educational institutions, defense contractors, manufacturers, coal mines, and other businesses.

From Northern Cambria to Nanty Glo to Portage, Cambria County is blessed with beautiful vistas. Visitors travel from all over to see the breathtaking view from the Johnstown Inclined Plane and the natural beauty of Prince Gallitzin State Forest and Laurel Ridge State Park.

Cambria County is also fortunate to have plentiful natural resources. Our hardworking men and women drove the steel industry that built our Nation and developed its abundant coal and natural gas. Today, many Cambria County residents continue to work in the steel and energy industries.

The county was the location of the Johnstown Flood, one of the worst natural disasters in our Nation's history. In the midst of great challenges, the people of Cambria have overcome and pressed on to build the vibrant community that we celebrate today.

Mr. Speaker, and fellow Members, please join me in congratulating Cambria County on the 210th anniversary of its founding.

**HONORING THE DIRECTOR OF THE
AIR FORCE SEXUAL ASSAULT
PREVENTION AND RESPONSE OF-
FICE, MAJOR GENERAL MAGGIE
H. WOODWARD**

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Major General Maggie H. Woodward, who is retiring after 31 years of faithful and distinguished service to her nation. Throughout her career, and especially as a senior officer, General Woodward has provided invaluable testimony, advice, and service to this body. Specifically and most recently, General Woodward provided updates and insight in relation to sexual assault in the military and on her progress in leading the fight against this scourge as Director of the new Air Force Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office.

Inspired by her grandfather, one of the United States' first military pilots, General Woodward sought to fly aircraft in defense of her nation. She entered the Air Force in 1983 as an ROTC graduate of Arizona State University. Over the course of her distinguished career, she commanded at the squadron, group, wing, and numbered Air Force levels, including Air Forces Africa in Germany and the 89th Airlift Wing at Andrews Air Force base, home of Air Force One.

General Woodward flew and commanded in Operations Just Cause, Northern and Southern Watch, Allied Force, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Additionally, General Woodward served as Coalition Forces Air Component Commander during Operation Odyssey Dawn—the first female Component Commander in our nation's history. Her most lasting impact will be the momentum she provided in turning back the tide of sexual assault in our military; her compassion for victims, relentless pursuit of perpetrators, and dedication to reinforcing a climate of dignity and respect within the Air Force has set a new standard for military leaders everywhere. She retires as a command pilot with more than 3,800 flying hours in multiple aircraft, and the respect of both military members and civilians alike.

For 31 years General Woodward has performed her job professionally, honestly, and passionately. We will miss her leadership, courage, and dedication, and wish her all the best as she retires from active duty service to our great nation.

**A TRIBUTE TO DRIAN JUAREZ—
28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR**

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Drian Juarez of Hollywood.

Born in Juarez, Mexico and raised by her grandmother, a five-year-old Ms. Juarez joined her mother in the United States after her grandmother's passing.

Ms. Juarez's artistic talents were noticed early on by many of her teachers. She entered a Los Angeles Times art contest, won, and was awarded with art lessons throughout middle school. With these art lessons, Ms. Juarez was able to build a portfolio and gain entry into the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts. Upon graduation, she was accepted to Otis College of Art and Design, where she attained a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Art.

In 2005, Ms. Juarez was shot in the face at a Halloween event and lost sight in her right eye. After this tragic incident, Ms. Juarez decided to make a change in her life. For the first time, she connected with Los Angeles transgender support groups and increased her involvement in local events and activism. She became a member of the West Hollywood Transgender Task Force, which is now known as the West Hollywood Transgender Advisory Board, and also became a member of the Transgender Service Provider Network. In 2009, Ms. Juarez was invited to become a member of the Transgender Law Center's Transgender Leadership Council and the Transgender Economic Development Initiative.

For the past 6 years, Ms. Juarez has served as Program Manager of the Transgender Eco-

nomics Empowerment Project (TEEP) at the Legal Services Department of the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center. She has demonstrated remarkable entrepreneurial skills and passion for empowering clients who are struggling with immigration, employment, and race issues due to their gender identity.

TEEP, in conjunction with Trans-Unity Pride, held its first job fair in 2008. Since then, TEEP has collaborated with the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce on a yearly job fair. As part of this job fair, Ms. Juarez has provided Gender and Sexual Diversity in the Workplace trainings to human resources professionals and employers. Ms. Juarez has presented over 400 transgender cultural competency trainings to thousands of people, including at conferences sponsored by the Transgender Service Provider Network and the HIV Drug & Alcohol Task Force, LA Youth at Work, the City of L.A. Career Fair, Women's Resource & Job Fair, Trans Action/Friends Community Center, among others. In addition to all of her accomplishments, Ms. Juarez designed a plaque with an inscribed poem for the City of West Hollywood, which was dedicated in 2009 during the Transgender Day of Remembrance, a day to memorialize those who were killed due to anti-transgender hatred and prejudice.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Drian Juarez.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 117, I was unable to attend. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

**HONORING THE 2014 ACADEMY
NOMINEES OF THE 11TH CON-
GRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF NEW
JERSEY**

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, every year, more high school seniors from the 11th Congressional District trade in varsity jackets for navy pea coats, Air Force flight suits, and Army brass buckles than most other districts in the country. But this is nothing new—our area has repeatedly sent an above average portion of its sons and daughters to the nation's military academies for decades.

This fact should not come as a surprise. The educational excellence of area schools is well known and has long been a magnet for families looking for the best environment in which to raise their children. Our graduates are skilled not only in mathematics, science, and social studies, but also have solid backgrounds in sports, debate teams, and other extracurricular activities. This diverse upbringing makes military academy recruiters sit up

and take note—indeed, many recruiters know our towns and schools by name.

Since the 1830's, Members of Congress have enjoyed meeting, talking with, and nominating these superb young people to our military academies. But how did this process evolve? In 1843, when West Point was the sole academy, Congress ratified the nominating process and became directly involved in the makeup of our military's leadership. This was not an act of an imperial Congress bent on controlling every aspect of Government. Rather, the procedure still used today was, and is, a further check and balance in our democracy. It was originally designed to weaken and divide political coloration in the officer corps, provide geographical balance to our armed services, and to make the officer corps more resilient to unfettered nepotism and handicapped European armies.

In 1854, Representative Gerritt Smith of New York added a new component to the academy nomination process—the academy review board. This was the first time a Member of Congress appointed prominent citizens from his district to screen applicants and assist with the serious duty of nominating candidates for academy admission. Today, I am honored to continue this wise tradition in my service to the 11th Congressional District.

The Academy Review Board is composed of six local citizens who have shown exemplary service to New Jersey, to their communities, and to the continued excellence of education in our area—many are veterans. Though from diverse backgrounds and professions, they all share a common dedication that the best qualified and motivated graduates attend our academies. And, as true for most volunteer panels, their service goes largely unnoticed.

I would like to take a moment to recognize these men and women and thank them publicly for participating in this important panel. Being on the board requires hard work and an objective mind. Members have the responsibility of interviewing upwards of 50 outstanding high school seniors every year in the academy review process.

The nomination process follows a general timetable. High school seniors mail personal information directly to the Military Academy, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy, and the Merchant Marine Academy once they become interested in attending. Information includes academic achievement, college entry test scores, and other activities. At this time, they also inform my office of their desire to be nominated.

The academies then assess the applicants, rank them based on the data supplied, and return the files to my office with their notations. In late November, our Academy Review Board interviews all of the applicants over the course of 2 days. They assess a student's qualifications and analyze character, desire to serve, and other talents that may be hidden on paper.

This year the board interviewed over 40 applicants. The Board's recommendations were then forwarded to the academies by January 31, where recruiters reviewed files and notified applicants and my office of their final decision on admission.

As these highly motivated and talented young men and women go through the acad-

emy nominating process, never let us forget the sacrifice they are preparing to make: to defend our country and protect our citizens. This holds especially true at a time when our nation is fighting the war against terrorism. Whether it is in Afghanistan or other hot spots around the world, no doubt we are constantly reminded that wars are fought by the young. And, while our military missions are both important and dangerous, it is reassuring to know that we continue to put America's best and brightest in command.

ACADEMY NOMINEES FOR 2014, 11TH DISTRICT CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

AIR FORCE ACADEMY

Justin M. Blumas, Roseland, West Essex H.S.

Jennifer E. Lam, Boonton, Air Force Academy Prep

Sean M. Lyons, Morristown, Morristown H.S.

Angela E. Martone, Lincoln Park, Trinity Christian H.S.

Michael J. Predojevic, Woodland Park, Passaic Valley H.S.

MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

Justin C. Corio, Bloomfield, Bloomfield H.S.

Clay C. Dundas, Sparta, Massachusetts Maritime Academy

Zachery F. Flake, Denville, Morris Knolls H.S.

Seung H. Hwang, Wayne, Wayne Hills H.S.

Scott R. Johnston, Wayne, Wayne Valley H.S.

Tyler G. Macejka, Pompton Plains, Pequannock H.S.

Jennifer L. Pezzuti, Riverdale, Pompton Lakes H.S.

MILITARY ACADEMY

Chris-John H. Bosch, Wayne, Seton Hall Prep

Anthony Costagliola, Wayne, Wayne Hills H.S.

Michael T. Herbert, Whippany, New Mexico Military Institute

Daniel K. Iskander, Madison, Madison H.S.

Parker F. Meytrott, Montville, MAPS

Dylan V. Panicucci, Sparta, Sparta H.S.

John C. Phillips, Sparta, Blair Academy

Andrew S. Vena, Chatham, Chatham H.S.

Nicholas D. Wilde, Madison, Madison H.S.

Austin JC Williams, Verona, Verona H.S.

NAVAL ACADEMY

Joshua C. Corbett, Mendham, Gill St. Bernards

Patrick E. Dugan, Morristown, Oratory Prep

Jacob S. Ferraro, Kinnelon, Kinnelon H.S.

Jack W. Frey, Sparta, Pope John XIII H.S.

Nicholas R. Maletto, North Haledon, Passaic County Technical Institute

Michael B. Meisel, Sparta, Sparta H.S.

Nicholas A. Markferding, Florham Park, Seton Hall Prep

Michael E. McGlone, Boonton, Iona College

Dylan P. Pennell, West Orange, West Orange H.S.

Patrick K. Stanton, Hopatcong, Hopatcong H.S.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOSEPH J. JOYCE, JR., RECIPIENT OF THE 2014 FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

HON. MATT CARTWRIGHT

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in acknowledgment of Joseph J. Joyce, who will receive the Achievement Award from the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick on Monday, March 17, 2014. Joe is a graduate of St. John's High School, Pittston, Pennsylvania, and Luzerne County Community College, Nanticoke, Pennsylvania. He went on to major in Business Education & Accounting at Bloomsburg University.

In 1989, Joe became licensed in Property and Casualty, Life, Accident and Health insurance and joined Joyce Insurance Group. Today, he focuses his efforts on commercial insurance, overseeing the Commercial Lines Division and company-to-agency relations, specializing in governmental and self-funded entities.

Throughout his life, Joe has done charity work with several organizations. He is a member of St. John's Roman Catholic Church, Pittston, PA; the Jolly Boys Association, Avoca, Pennsylvania; the Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce; the Avoca Lions Club, where he served as Secretary to the Board of Directors; and the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, Greater Pittston Chapter, where he served as President and Treasurer. Among his many accomplishments, Joe was the 2012 recipient of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick Swingle Award, which honors a member for assisting and giving back to his community.

Currently, Joe resides in Hughestown with his wife Anna. They have raised five children: Joseph, John, Brent, Kahli and Aidan. They are also proud grandparents of four grandchildren: Annabel, Joey, Adeline, and Remy Mack Joyce.

I am proud to congratulate Mr. Joyce for receiving this acknowledgment from the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons, and for his many years of service to the Pittston Area.

HONORING PATRICK L. SULLIVAN ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AS DIRECTOR OF THE CAPTAIN JAMES A. LOVELL FEDERAL HEALTH CARE CENTER

HON. BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to honor Director Patrick L. Sullivan on the occasion of his retirement from the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center in the suburban Chicago district that I represent.

In 2010, the nation's first integrated Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)—Department of Defense (DoD) federal health care center opened its doors with Pat Sullivan as Director.

The Lovell Federal Health Care Center (FHCC) at Naval Station Great Lakes was the culmination of years of vision, planning and hard work. It was and is an example of excellence for all other VA and DoD health care facilities.

I am incredibly proud that Illinois's Tenth District is home to the Lovell FHCC and Naval Station Great Lakes, the Navy's only recruit training command. It's here that the Navy trains more than 40,000 new sailors each year. It's here that the nation's first integrated federal health care center was created. And it was here that Director Sullivan's leadership helped make the vision of an integrated health system a reality, raising the bar of achievement to new heights.

Director Sullivan has done a remarkable job leading an outstanding team of more than 3,000 dedicated professionals. His leadership, drive, determination and forward-thinking approach have been key to Lovell FHCC's success and will be sorely missed.

Serving veterans, active duty personnel, military families and recruits each year, the Lovell FHCC demonstrates an unwavering commitment to preparing warriors and caring for heroes.

Director Sullivan's accomplishments have laid the foundation for the care of many future generations of sailors, families and veterans. I want to personally thank Director Sullivan for everything he has done, and congratulate him at the successful completion of a distinguished career with the Lovell FHCC.

HONORING TYLER THORNE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Tyler Thorne. Tyler is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 135, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Tyler has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Tyler has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Tyler has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Tyler Thorne for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING THE LIFE AND DEDICATED SERVICE OF EVANGELIST STEVE HILL

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and dedicated service of

Evangelist Steve Hill, who passed away on March 9, 2014, after a courageous battle with melanoma. Pastor Hill served as a mentor and an inspiration to countless individuals. The loss of a devoted husband, father, and unparalleled servant of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is felt not only in Northwest Florida but throughout this great Nation and around the world.

Pastor Hill was born to a military family in 1954 in Ankara, Turkey. It was during his teen years, after his family moved to Huntsville, Alabama, where Pastor Hill felt the power of prayer for the first time more than ever. Though, this was only the beginning; Pastor Hill's love for God and helping others only grew.

Leaving behind a difficult past, Pastor Hill attended David Wilkerson's Twin Oaks Bible Academy located in Lindale, Texas. He met the love of his life there, the former Ms. Jeri Larson, and the two were married in 1979. Both began serving Christ through full-time ministry with Outreach Ministries of Alabama and then as youth pastors in Panama City and Tallahassee, Florida. Pastor Hill and his wife then felt the Lord's calling to serve His people abroad. Within seven years, they had managed to spread God's Word throughout South America and Europe, establishing ministries and churches.

In 1995, Pastor Hill touched the Northwest Florida community when he spoke at a revival at Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Florida. Following his sermon, what would become known as the Brownsville Revival was ignited, attracting millions of people from all over the world. Pastor Hill's ability to encourage and empower those seeking the Lord led to one of the longest running church revivals throughout our Nation's history. Preaching four nights a week for five years during the revival and leading thousands of individuals to Christ, Pastor Hill was inspired to continue the revival around the world.

In 2003 and 2004, Pastor Hill established Heartland World Ministries Church and Heartland School of Ministry in Irving, Texas, where he served as the senior pastor up until 2012. Despite facing a difficult health battle, his passion and heart for helping others did not cease, and his service to Christ continued, as he ministered through his website, *ProdigalsOnly.com*; his writing; and television broadcasts.

For over three decades, Pastor Hill was deeply committed to spreading the word of the Lord and helping others find salvation. Northwest Florida and the countless individuals whose lives were touched by Steve Hill mourn the loss of an exceptional man of God.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to honor the service and contributions of Evangelist Steve Hill to the Northwest Florida community and around the world. My wife Vicki and I offer our prayers to his wife, Jeri; son, Ryan; daughters, Shelby and Kelsey; and the entire Hill family and friends.

HOBBY LOBBY AND CONESTOGA WOOD SPECIALTIES CASES

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my concerns about two cases being argued before the Supreme Court this month, *Sebelius v. Hobby Lobby Stores* and *Conestoga Wood Specialties v. Sebelius*. I am a strong supporter of our Constitution, which allows for religious liberty, but religious liberty does not include the right to impose your own religious beliefs on others. If Hobby Lobby CEO David Green opposes birth control, he's entitled to his opinion, but he is not entitled to impose his beliefs on others by deliberately refusing contraceptive coverage for his female employees. This coverage makes a difference, especially for women working in entry level positions that too often leave them below the poverty line. Women need to be able to make their own decisions about their reproductive health care without interference from their bosses. It is their right, and it should not be trampled upon.

SAMANTHA FLORES

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Samantha Flores for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Samantha Flores is a 12th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Samantha Flores is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Samantha Flores for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

A TRIBUTE TO RUTH WILLIAMS—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding

women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Ruth Williams of West Hollywood.

Ms. Williams is one of the original founders of the City of West Hollywood. Incorporated in 1984, West Hollywood has been her home for over sixty years. Her history of activism and volunteerism in West Hollywood is astonishing. She has served as a member of the Eastside Redevelopment Project Area Committee since its inception, is a former board member of Good Neighbors, and has organized the annual Fourth of July Picnic and Holiday Food Drive for many years. With a strong commitment to public safety issues, Ms. Williams helped create the original Disaster Volunteer Core Committee, worked tirelessly with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to create neighborhood watch groups, and served on West Hollywood's Public Safety Commission. Ms. Williams also founded Citizens for Seniors and helped draft West Hollywood's first rent control ordinance while serving on the City's Rent Stabilization Commission.

As Director of Advocacy at the National Council of Jewish Women/Los Angeles (NCJW/LA), Ms. Williams has firsthand knowledge of the need for providing social services in the community. She strives to educate the community about current issues such as child abuse, human trafficking, domestic violence, teen bullying, and human rights, as well as advocate for domestic violence shelter funding. Many of the NCJW/LA programs under Ms. Williams' leadership have received statewide and federal recognition.

In addition to Ms. Williams' work in the community and with NCJW/LA, she is also active in the Hollywood National Organization for Women, is a former Chair and life member of the Fairfax High School Alumni Association, current Vice Chair of the Fairfax Business Association, and is involved in various political organizations. Ms. Williams has received numerous awards, including the 2010 Los Angeles County Older American Recognition Day

Award, a City of West Hollywood Senior Advisory Board Award, and a city proclamation to recognize March 15, 2013 as "Ruth Williams Day" in honor of her 75th birthday.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Ruth Williams.

A TRIBUTE TO CHRISTY SCHILLING—28TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2014

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District. I would like to recognize a remarkable woman, Christy Schilling of Glendale.

Ms. Schilling grew up in Burbank and Glendale and graduated from Burbank High School in 1990. She went on to attend California State University, Northridge, where she majored in Sociology/Social Welfare. Ms. Schilling is dedicated to improving the quality of life for people living throughout the Los Angeles area. From childhood, Ms. Schilling has been concerned about those less fortunate than herself. She interned with the Haven Hills Domestic Violence Shelter, after completing her degree in 1995, working to improve the lives of battered women and their children. She not only counseled victims of domestic violence, but also counseled pregnant and parenting teens.

In addition to her other volunteer efforts for people, she is a fierce protector of and advocate for animals. As she started volunteering with different animal groups, her passion for

animal welfare grew. She realized that by helping pets, she was helping people and the whole community. Ms. Schilling has been an avid animal welfare volunteer for more than 15 years, resulting in her founding of The Animal Protectorates (TAPS), a non-profit animal advocacy organization. Ms. Schilling is devoted to educating people about the importance of spaying and neutering their animals, adopting animals, and reducing euthanasia rates in shelters. TAPS is dedicated to protecting animals in every possible way, supports other organizations aligned with the TAPS mission, and advocates unity among animal welfare organizations. With its committed and enthusiastic team and Board of Directors, TAPS is making a tremendous and positive difference for thousands of animals.

Ms. Schilling is the voice of abused and helpless creatures, and her contributions are reaching far and wide. Her mission to eliminate the sale of puppy mill pets in Glendale culminated in 2012 when the Glendale City Council passed its ordinance eliminating the sale of all puppy mill animals in Glendale. With the passage of this ordinance, Ms. Schilling's attention turned to a similar draft of a puppy mill ordinance in the City of Burbank, and Burbank's City Council passed the ordinance as well.

Throughout the years, Ms. Schilling has been a selfless volunteer. Her volunteer activities have included fundraising for the YMCA child care programs and capital campaigns, Christmas in April home improvement projects for low income families, and planting seedlings with underprivileged children at Tree People. Her current volunteer activities include working with a local guild of Children's Hospital Los Angeles, and regularly donating blood at the Glendale American Red Cross. Ms. Schilling and her husband, Craig Schilling, live in Glendale.

I ask all Members to join me in honoring an exceptional woman of California's 28th Congressional District, Christy Schilling.

SENATE—Tuesday, March 18, 2014

The Senate met at 10:30 and 12 seconds a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JACK REED, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island.

**APPOINTMENT OF ACTING
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The assistant bill clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 18, 2014.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JACK REED, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. REED thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

**ADJOURNMENT UNTIL FRIDAY,
MARCH 21, 2014, AT 9 A.M.**

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9 a.m. on Friday, March 21, 2014.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:30 and 45 seconds a.m., adjourned until Friday, March 21, 2014, at 9 a.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, March 18, 2014

The House met at 1 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PETRI).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 18, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS E. PETRI to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Gracious God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

You have blessed us with all good gifts, and with thankful hearts we express our gratitude. You have created us with opportunities to serve other people in their need, to share together in respect and affection, and to be faithful in the responsibilities we have been given.

In this moment of prayer, please grant to the Members of the people's House, as they meet with their respective constituents, the gifts of wisdom and discernment, that in their words and actions they will do justice, love with mercy, and walk humbly with You.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(a) of House Resolution 515, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following

enrolled bills were signed by the Speaker on Friday, March 14, 2014:

H.R. 2650, to allow the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in the State of Minnesota to lease or transfer certain land;

H.R. 3370, to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes;

H.R. 4076, to address shortages and interruptions in the availability of propane and other home heating fuels in the United States, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2650. An act to allow the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa in the State of Minnesota to lease or transfer certain land.

H.R. 3370. An act to delay the implementation of certain provisions of the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, and for other purposes.

H.R. 4076. An act to address shortages and interruptions in the availability of propane and other home heating fuels in the United States, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(b) of House Resolution 515, the House stands adjourned until 10 a.m. on Friday, March 21, 2014.

Thereupon (at 1 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Friday, March 21, 2014, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5016. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medical Devices; Reports of Corrections and Removals; Technical Amendment [Docket No.: FDA-2014-N-0011] received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5017. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Current Good Manufacturing Practices, Quality

Control Procedures, Quality Factors, Notification Requirements, and Records and Reports, for Infant Formula; Correction [Docket No.: FDA-1995-N-0063 (formerly 95N-0309)] (RIN: 0910-AF27) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5018. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medical Device Reporting; Electronic Submission Requirements [Docket No.: FDA-2008-N-0393] (RIN: 0910-AF86) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5019. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Administrative Detention; Corrections [Docket No.: FDA-1977-N-0222] received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

5020. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting expanding the scope of the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13660 of March 6, 2014; (H. Doc. No. 113—98); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

5021. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Catcher Vessels Less Than 60 Feet (18.3 Meters) Length Overall Using Hook-and-Line or Pot Gear in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 121018563-3148-02] (RIN: 0648-XD114) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5022. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; Trip Limit Increase [Docket No.: 101206604-1758-02] (RIN: 0648-XD100) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5023. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Pacific Cod by Pot Catcher/Processors in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 12018563-3148-02] (RIN: 0648-XD104) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5024. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer [Docket No.: 121009528-2729-02] (RIN:

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

0648-XD063) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5025. A letter from the Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; Trip Limit Reduction [Docket No.: 101206604-1758-02] (RIN: 0648-XD078) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

5026. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulations and Reports Clearance, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Medicare Determinations and Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amounts to Medicare Part B Premiums; Conforming Changes to Regulations [Docket No.: SSA-2012-0011] (RIN: 0960-AH47) received February 26, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin: Committee on the Budget. H.R. 1872. A bill to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to increase transparency in Federal budgeting, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 113-381, Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

DISCHARGE OF COMMITTEE

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XIII, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform discharged from further consideration. H.R. 1872 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. BARBER:

H.R. 4274. A bill to amend the Honoring the Families of Fallen Soldiers Act to provide a permanent appropriation for funds for the payment of death gratuities for survivors of

deceased members of the uniformed services in event of any future period of lapsed appropriations; to the Committee on Appropriations.

By Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana (for herself and Mr. KIND):

H.R. 4275. A bill to amend the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for cooperative and small employer charity pension plans; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CASSIDY (for himself and Mr. MCCARTHY of California):

H.R. 4276. A bill to extend and modify a pilot program on assisted living services for veterans with traumatic brain injury; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska (for himself, Ms. MOORE, Mr. COLE, Mr. HECK of Washington, Ms. HANABUSA, and Mr. KILDEE):

H.R. 4277. A bill to reauthorize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act of 1996, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. BARBER:

H.R. 4274.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, To raise and support armies

Article I, Section 8, To provide and maintain a navy

By Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana:

H.R. 4275.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. CASSIDY:

H.R. 4276.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress as stated in Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:

H.R. 4277.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 6: Mr. DENT and Mr. BRIDENSTINE.

H.R. 129: Mr. MCALLISTER.

H.R. 184: Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 401: Mr. JOYCE, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. UPTON.

H.R. 485: Ms. CHU and Mr. SCHIFF.

H.R. 792: Mr. NUNES.

H.R. 809: Mr. SCHRADER.

H.R. 1180: Mr. GERLACH.

H.R. 1829: Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 2224: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 2499: Ms. LOFGREN.

H.R. 2735: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Mr. COOK.

H.R. 2959: Mr. HUELSKAMP.

H.R. 3318: Mr. VELA, Mr. NOLAN, and Mr. MORAN.

H.R. 3451: Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. CARTWRIGHT, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. SIREN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. RUIZ, and Mr. NOLAN.

H.R. 3461: Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 3493: Mr. MEEHAN.

H.R. 3665: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 3686: Mr. LATHAM.

H.R. 3707: Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. BARLETTA, and Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 3708: Mr. BROUN of Georgia and Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 3710: Mr. ELLISON.

H.R. 3775: Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana.

H.R. 3810: Mr. PETERS of California.

H.R. 3855: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 3892: Mr. O'ROURKE.

H.R. 3930: Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, and Ms. GRANGER.

H.R. 3969: Mrs. ELLMERS.

H.R. 4062: Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 4065: Mr. HIGGINS.

H.R. 4122: Ms. MCCOLLUM.

H.R. 4143: Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 4157: Mr. YOHO.

H.R. 4227: Mr. CONNOLLY, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, and Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 4241: Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H. Con. Res. 86: Mr. WALZ, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. BONAMICI, and Ms. MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM of New Mexico.

H. Res. 109: Mr. McDERMOTT.

H. Res. 227: Mr. LAMALFA.

H. Res. 302: Mr. GOSAR and Mr. PERRY.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE LIFE AND DEDICATED SERVICE OF GOVERNOR REUBIN ASKEW

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life, accomplishments, and dedicated service of one of Florida's greatest citizens, Former Governor Reubin Askew. Governor Askew was an inspiration to Floridians of all political stripes and ideologies. The State of Florida, and our entire Nation, mourns the loss of a true patriot, political titan, and a great man.

Reubin O'Donovan Askew was born on September 11, 1928 in Muskogee, Oklahoma. At the age of eight, he moved with his mother to her native town of Pensacola, Florida, where he spent the rest of his childhood and adolescence. From a young age, Governor Askew displayed an assiduous work ethic, taking great pride in working to help contribute to the family's finances with jobs as a paperboy, magazine salesman, shoeshine boy, and grocery bagger. After graduating from Pensacola High School in 1946, Governor Askew followed in the footsteps of his two older brothers, who had served in World War II, into military service, joining the Army as a paratrooper.

After two years in the Army, Governor Askew enrolled at Florida State University, where his future in politics was presaged by a term as student government president. During his time at Florida State, Governor Askew also participated in Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), and, upon graduation, he was commissioned as an officer and called to active duty, where he oversaw reconnaissance planes flying missions in Europe. Governor Askew served two years in the Air Force, before enrolling at the University of Florida's School of Law. Upon his graduation in 1956, he moved back to Pensacola, where he was elected assistant county solicitor. That same year, he married his wife of nearly 60 years, Donna Lou.

Governor Askew was a man of great faith, and, when he began his resulting 20-year career in public service, with election to the Florida House of Representatives in 1958, he used the Lord's teachings to govern with a strong moral compass. Following his first term in the Florida House, Governor Askew was elected to the Florida State Senate, where he served two terms before deciding to run for governor in 1970. Despite being relatively unknown on the state level, Governor Askew campaigned on a strong populist platform and emphasized his strong faith and devotion to family to win the governorship.

Governor Askew's list of accomplishments during his time in the Governor's mansion are

legion and far too numerous to fully list in any one space. In fact, so vast were his accomplishments, that the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University named Governor Askew one of the top 10 governors of the 20th century, ranking him with men who went on to serve as President, like Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, as well as a future Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Earl Warren.

Today, Governor Askew is perhaps best remembered for championing and shepherding through one of our Nation's most robust transparency and freedom of information laws, through Florida's Sunshine Law and Amendment, which opened up government meetings and required financial disclosure by all public officials, candidates, and employees. As Governor Askew remarked, "You've got to remember in government whose business you're doing: the people's, and if you're doing the people's business, you've got to give them the tools to judge the product."

Thanks to his strong moral character and determined leadership, Governor Askew became the first governor in Florida's history to be re-elected to consecutive terms. In addition to his successful transparency reforms, Governor Askew will be remembered as a true leader on many of the toughest issues of his day, including racial integration. Governor Askew had long followed his faith and principles on the issue of racial justice, arguing during his time as Florida State University Student Government President for integrating the higher-education system, and during his time as governor he successfully and harmoniously integrated Florida's schools, state government and appointed the first African-American Florida Supreme Court Justice, Joseph W. Hatchett. During his tenure, Governor Askew additionally fought to reduce the tax burden on individual Floridians, while also increasing the homestead exemption and repealing consumer taxes on household utilities and long-term apartment rentals.

Following his second term in office, Governor Askew served two years as the United States Trade Representative. Governor Askew was also highly committed to educating Florida's and our Nation's youth and in the mid 1980s, he began a second career as an educator. For ten years, he taught classes at each of Florida's public universities, before joining the faculty at his alma mater, Florida State University, in 1995, where he taught for the remainder of his life. In 1994, in recognition of his service to the State of Florida, Florida State University, named the School of Public Administration and Policy, the Reubin O'D Askew School of Public Administration and Policy, and in 2006, it named a student life center on campus after him as well. In addition, the University of Florida established the Reubin O'D Askew Institute on Politics and Society to assist Florida's citizens and communities in examining critical issues by bring-

ing policymakers, educators, students, and community members together to aid them in making decisions to enhance Florida's future.

Mr. Speaker, public service is both a calling and a truly noble pursuit. It is not an easy undertaking, and success is not guaranteed. Yet, despite its challenges, there are some individuals who were seemingly created by the Lord to lead in this vital arena. Governor Reubin Askew was one of these individuals. Those who were fortunate enough to know him will be forever inspired by his example, and the entire Northwest Florida community is proud that such a great man and fine public servant hailed from the Florida Panhandle. On behalf of the entire United States Congress, my wife Vicki and I extend our deepest prayers and condolences to Governor Askew's wife, Donna Lou; his children, Kevin and Angela; his many grandchildren; and the entire Askew family.

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASIAN AMERICAN HOTEL OWNERS ASSOCIATION (AAHOA)

HON. AMI BERA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Mr. BERA of California. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to congratulate the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) on celebrating their 25th anniversary. Founded in 1989, AAHOA is the largest hotel owners association in the world and represents over 12,500 members nationwide. My family and I are proud to be counted among them.

AAHOA's achievements over the past quarter century are one of the greatest examples we have today of capturing the American Dream. Comprised of first and second generation Indian Americans, AAHOA members and their families immigrated to the United States seeking opportunity. These entrepreneurs found a niche as hoteliers and soon became a profound influence on the hospitality industry.

Today, AAHOA members own over 40 percent of all hotels in the United States employing over 600,000 people with an annual payroll of almost \$10 billion.

It is also my pleasure to recognize AAHOA's chairman, Mehul "Mike" Patel for his exceptional leadership this year. Mehul and his family came to the United States from Valsad in Gujarat India when he was a teenager and they lived and worked in a motel in Garland, Texas. The lessons of hard work and perseverance he learned while growing up in the motel have served him well and today he is the chairman and CEO of NewcrestImage, Hotel Development and Management Company, with multiple hotel properties across the United States.

Mehul's vision has been instrumental in elevating AAHOA to the next level. Under

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Mehul's stewardship, AAHOA has reached record levels of membership, and advanced its position as the voice of hotel owners with members in nearly every congressional district in the United States. Mehul is a dynamic leader in his community and industry and I am proud to commend his accomplishments.

I would also like to recognize AAHOA's officers, Vice Chairman Pratik Patel, Treasurer Jay "Jimmy" Patel, Secretary Bharat "Bruce" Patel and President Fred Schwartz, along with AAHOA's 24 past chairman whose dedication to the organization and the hospitality industry have helped to create jobs, promote investment in their local communities, and grow America's economy.

I look forward to addressing AAHOA's annual convention later this month and continuing to work with this extraordinary organization in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIÉRREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent in the House chamber for votes on Tuesday, March 10, 2014.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote 115, "yea" on rollcall vote 116, and "yea" on rollcall vote 117.

Due to a last minute meeting at the White House with President Obama on Thursday, March 13, 2014, to discuss the devastating impact of deportations on the immigrant community, I was absent for the following votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote 130, "yea" on rollcall vote 131, "nay" on rollcall vote 132, and "nay" on rollcall vote 133.

RECOGNIZING MICHAEL SANGER

HON. JOHN F. TIERNEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Michael Sanger and thank him both for his service to our country in the United States Army and the Massachusetts National Guard, as well as for his dedication to the constituents of the Sixth District of Massachusetts.

Michael joined my office in 2012 as part of the Wounded Warrior Congressional Fellowship Program. This program provides opportunities for veterans who served on active duty since September 11, 2001. Veterans are accepted into the program to broaden their career opportunities through experience working in a congressional office.

Prior to joining my office, Michael served as an infantryman in the United States Army. He served in Iraq for 15 months with the 725th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, and his career in the Army has spanned over ten years.

While Michael fulfilled his Fellowship, he also served as an Explosives Ordnance Tech-

nician in the Massachusetts National Guard. It was in this capacity that Michael was called upon by the Boston Police Department and the F.B.I. to assist in the aftermath of the Boston Marathon bombings last year.

Michael put the skills and experience he developed in the Army to use as a Veterans Caseworker for my district office. In this capacity, Michael helped ensure that local veterans were able to obtain the benefits which they earned, and that veterans' inquiries were effectively addressed. Michael has been a true asset in these efforts, bringing key insight and perspective to his work.

As Michael embarks on his next endeavor, I congratulate him on his achievements and thank him for his outstanding service.

HONORING MRS. ROSALYN FABIANKE, PROJECT DIRECTOR FOR THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION'S MUSEUM ON MAIN STREET EXHIBIT "THE WAY WE WORKED"

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay a special honor to Mrs. Rosalyn Fabianke, of Red Bay, Alabama, as the project director for the Smithsonian Institution's Museum on Main Street exhibit entitled, "The Way We Worked." It was held in Red Bay from September 14–October 25, 2013. Mrs. Fabianke deserves to be recognized for her unselfish dedication to this project. She is truly one who embodies the American spirit of community.

Each year the Smithsonian Institution partners with Museum on Main Street and chooses six cities to host a traveling exhibit. This year, Red Bay was chosen as the inaugural city to display the exhibit, "The Way We Worked," documenting how industry has shaped our country and how it has changed over the years. Each city is further tasked with taking the exhibits from the Smithsonian and incorporating them into the local culture. Through the creativity of Mrs. Fabianke and her dedicated volunteers, Red Bay integrated the exhibit with its library, museum, churches, local industries, and other aspects of the town's community life.

Red Bay, a town of just over 3,000 residents, had a total of 6,692 visitors to the exhibit, coming from 41 States and four foreign countries. This number broke all previously held records listed by the Alabama Humanities Foundation for the number of people attending a traveling Smithsonian exhibit. Mrs. Fabianke's skilled leadership and guidance drove the momentum of this project and were influential in the success of the event.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege to honor Mrs. Rosalyn Fabianke for her role as the project director of this internationally viewed exhibit and for her enduring impact on her community and the great State of Alabama. I join her family, friends and colleagues in congratulating her on a job well done.

MARKING THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONFLICT IN SYRIA AND THE FLIGHT OF SYRIA'S REFUGEES

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with my colleagues from the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission to mark a tragic milestone in the conflict in Syria. It has now been three years that the nation of Syria has been engulfed in a war that has only grown more violent over time and has fomented increasing stability throughout the region. The men, women, and children of Syria have endured unspeakable violence and devastating attacks that have ruined their homes and neighborhoods.

The scale of displacement in Syria has been called the worst refugee crisis in recent history. Indeed, approximately one-third of the entire population has been forced to flee their homes. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, over 2.5 Syrians have fled the country since March 2011, while another 6.5 million Syrians have been internally displaced. Syria has gone from being one of the largest refugee-hosting nations to surpassing Afghanistan as the largest source of refugees in the world today.

Syria's neighbors have been profoundly affected by the conflict, both by the spillover of violence and the massive influx of refugees that have sought, and continue to seek, safety abroad. Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and Iraq have already taken in about 2.1 million refugees. One million refugees are in Lebanon. As a result, Lebanon's total population has increased by one-fifth. That would be like adding an additional 60 million people to the U.S. population all at once. Turkey has 634,900 refugees and Jordan is sheltering 584,000 Syrians, with 100,000 in the Zaatari refugee camp alone. Even Iraq, which once saw a vast flow of refugees into Syria, is now seeing a significant reverse flow.

These nations, with assistance from the United States, the European Union, the United Nations, and the international community are doing all they can. However, resources are limited and the refugee camps are overcrowded. Additionally, while the refugees may have found protection from the war, many Syrian women and girls are instead encountering alarming levels of sexual and domestic violence. This is no way for the Syrian people to live.

The only solution is for the global community to come together to support a final lasting political resolution that will bring peace and stability and allow these refugees to come home and rebuild their country. I join with my fellow Members to call for renewed efforts to help support the refugees and their host nations, and to finally end this reprehensible conflict once and for all.

RECOGNITION OF OUTSTANDING
PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of outstanding public school teachers in Florida's 16th Congressional District.

I was once told that children are 25 percent of the population, but they are 100 percent of the future.

And it's true. The education of a child is an investment, not only in that student, but in the future of our country.

Therefore, I established the Congressional Teacher Awards to honor educators for their ability to teach and inspire students.

This month, I will present awards to the following teachers chosen by their school district for special recognition:

Ian Ackroyd from Venice Middle School in Venice for his accomplishments as a Band Director;

Gina Barresi from Sarasota High School in Sarasota, for her accomplishments as an English and Reading teacher;

Dana Van Bussum from Southeast High School in Bradenton for her accomplishments as a Language Arts teacher;

Lisa Figueroa from Taylor Ranch Elementary School in Venice for her accomplishments as a Science teacher;

Dudley Leigh from Lee Middle School in Bradenton for his accomplishments as an Art teacher; and

Jennifer Willis from Oneco Elementary School in Oneco for her accomplishments as a First Grade teacher.

On behalf of the people of Florida's 16th District I congratulate each of these outstanding teachers and offer my sincere appreciation for their service and dedication.

315TH BIRTHDAY OF THE CITY OF
BILOXI

HON. STEVEN M. PALAZZO

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the City of Biloxi, Mississippi on the occasion of its 315th birthday.

In 1699, the first permanent settlement in French Louisiana was founded at Fort Maurepas and referred to as Old Biloxi. Following the Seven Years War, Great Britain took control of the city, ruling until 1779, before the Spanish took over for the next nine years. The city came under the control of the United States in 1811 as part of the Mississippi Territory, and finally under the State of Mississippi in 1817.

Over the last 315 years, Biloxi has grown and prospered. It quickly became a tourist destination, famous for the Biloxi lighthouse that is a beacon of the Gulf Coast. The addition of Keesler Air Force Base during World War II was the beginning of Biloxi as a true

military town, a tradition that continues to this day.

Most importantly, Biloxi is a community in every sense of the word. Despite being ravaged by Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and again by the BP oil spill in 2010, Biloxi came together as a community and is stronger than ever.

Today, Biloxi is well-known for its beautiful beaches, world-class seafood, thriving gaming industry, and wonderful people. I am proud to call the City of Biloxi my home.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to honor the City of Biloxi and its citizens for its 315 years of community and citizenship. May God continue to bless it for many years to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote No. 134 for H.R. 4015, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF JOHN
N. DEODES

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, it is with sadness and pride that I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of the grandfather of one of my employees, John Nicholas Deodes, who passed away on February 12, 2014 at the age of 90.

Born Ioannis Nickolas Deodes in the village of Apeiranthos on the Greek island of Naxos, Mr. Deodes took the name John after coming to the United States as a child. He graduated from Roosevelt High School of Washington, DC in 1942, becoming a U.S. citizen shortly thereafter and serving in the Army during World War II. Mr. Deodes then operated a vending machine business in the Washington, DC area for nearly seven decades.

Mr. Deodes served on the national board of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association and a member of the American Legion where he was a past president of his local chapter. He was a founding member of St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Bethesda and in Ocean City, Md., and was a past president of the parish council at the Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral of Washington, DC. He was given the title of archon for his work with the Greek Orthodox Church, which included membership in the "Leadership 100" endowment fund.

John N. Deodes was blessed with a loving family who were all greatly impacted by his insatiable spirit and zest for life. To put it plainly, he and his entire family "never had it so

good." He shared his life with his wife of 64 years, Mary Scounas Deodes, his four children, Nick Deodes, Bill Deodes, Tom Deodes, and Jo Ann D. Calomiris of Washington; and eight grandchildren, Valerie (Michael), John Nicholas, Andrea, John William, Angelica, Dimitri, Alexa and Julia.

Mr. Speaker, John N. Deodes great man in the many communities in which he lived and worked. I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating his life, and honoring the many people whose lives are better for having intersected their paths with his.

TRIBUTE TO PRINCIPAL FRANK
DEANGELIS

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Ms. DeGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Frank DeAngelis, Principal of Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado for his service as an educator, mentor, and community leader.

For 35 years at Columbine High School as a teacher, coach, and administrator, Principal DeAngelis has guided generations of students from the Columbine community. Mr. DeAngelis taught social studies for 12 years and has served as Columbine's assistant principal, dean of students, and principal for the last 18 years. In 2013, Principal DeAngelis was named the Colorado High School Principal of the Year and has twice been recognized as the National Principal of the Year. In addition, Principal DeAngelis has again been named a finalist for the 2014 National Principal of the Year.

Principal DeAngelis has been a cornerstone of the Columbine family in both its brightest and darkest days. When Principal DeAngelis heard gunshots ring out in the halls of Columbine on April 20, 1999, he ran towards danger and directed students to safety. In the aftermath of the horrific and tragic shootings, Principal DeAngelis provided much needed comfort to students, parents, and fellow teachers so they could begin to heal from the unspeakable pain. In the wake of an unprecedented tragedy, Principal DeAngelis promised the freshman class in 1999 he would remain with them at Columbine until they walked at graduation. He delivered on his promise to those students and many more.

Principal DeAngelis put his experiences to use and traveled across the Nation to counsel other communities touched by tragedy. In the wake of the mass shooting at Virginia Tech, Principal DeAngelis came to Blacksburg, Virginia to offer comfort. Most recently, Principal DeAngelis offered his guidance as keynote speaker at the Sandy Hook Symposium and the National Leadership Conference for Youth.

Beyond his role as an administrator, Mr. DeAngelis contributed to the Columbine community's athletic programs for many years. Throughout his 13-year career as assistant coach on the football team and head coach for varsity baseball, Coach DeAngelis guided student athletes to success on the field and imparted valuable lessons beyond athletics.

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Last August, Principal DeAngelis announced his intention to retire at the end of the 2013–2014 school year. As he wrote to parents, students, and fellow teachers, Principal DeAngelis’ “heart will always be with Columbine,” and his legacy at Columbine High School will live on for years to come. We are truly blessed to have such an extraordinary leader in our community and wish him all the best in his retirement.